

Halton Borough Council
Selective Licensing
Consultation Document



Introduction from Cllr Angela Ball - Leader of Halton Borough Council.

Everyone in Halton deserves a safe, warm and well-managed home. Good housing is the foundation for good health, strong families, thriving communities and a better quality of life.

The private rented sector is an important part of Halton's housing offer. It provides homes for many residents across the borough and plays a vital role in meeting local housing need. We recognise the important contribution made by responsible landlords who provide good quality homes and manage them well.

However, we also know that in some parts of Halton, too many private rented homes are affected by poor conditions, older housing stock, low energy efficiency and wider deprivation. This is not just a housing issue. Poor quality homes can affect people's health, increase financial pressures, undermine confidence in neighbourhoods and hold back our wider ambitions for regeneration and inclusive growth.

That is why the council is consulting on proposals to introduce selective licensing in parts of the borough. The proposed scheme is targeted at areas where the evidence shows that action is needed most. Its purpose is simple: to raise standards, support responsible landlords, protect tenants and make sure private rented homes are safe, well managed and properly maintained.

The council is not proposing selective licensing because it believes all landlords are poor landlords. It is proposing selective licensing because the evidence shows that, in specific parts of Halton, private renting overlaps with poorer property conditions, older stock, lower energy efficiency, deprivation and household vulnerability.

Selective licensing would give the council a more proactive way to improve housing conditions. Rather than relying only on tenants reporting problems, it would allow us to set clear expectations, check standards and take action where landlords fail to meet their responsibilities.

This proposal is part of our wider commitment to tackling inequality, improving health and wellbeing, supporting town centre regeneration and making Halton a better place to live. We want to work with tenants, landlords, residents, businesses and partners to make sure any scheme is fair, proportionate and effective.

No final decision has been made. This consultation is an opportunity for everyone affected by the proposals to have their say. I encourage you to read the information, consider what it means for you and your community, and share your views with us.

Your feedback will help us make the right decision for Halton.

Executive Summary

Halton Borough Council is consulting on a proposal to introduce a Selective Licensing scheme for privately rented homes in specific parts of the borough. No final decision has been made. This consultation is an opportunity for tenants, landlords, managing and letting agents, residents, businesses, community organisations and partner agencies to comment on the proposal before the Council decides whether to proceed.

The private rented sector plays an important role in Halton's housing market. It provides homes for a range of households, including families, single people, younger residents, lower-income households and people who need flexible housing options. Many landlords in Halton provide good-quality, well-managed accommodation and make a positive contribution to the borough.

However, evidence gathered by the Council shows that in some parts of Halton, private rented housing is more concentrated and is more likely to overlap with poor property conditions, older housing stock, lower energy efficiency, affordability pressures, deprivation and household vulnerability. These issues can affect tenants' health, wellbeing and financial resilience, and can also place pressure on local services and wider neighbourhoods.

The Council is therefore proposing to introduce Selective Licensing in the following areas:

- Central and West Bank ward
- Appleton ward
- Mersey and Weston ward
- Bridgewater ward
- LSOA E01012379 in Highfield

The proposed scheme would cover an estimated 3,485 private rented households. Based on 2021 Census data, this represents around 43.4% of the borough's private rented households.

Selective Licensing is a regulatory tool available to local authorities under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004. It allows councils to require landlords of privately rented properties in designated areas to apply for a licence and comply with conditions relating to property condition, safety and management. The purpose of licensing is to raise standards, protect tenants, support responsible landlords and provide a more proactive way of identifying and addressing poor housing conditions.

Halton Borough Council is consulting on the proposed scheme on the grounds of poor housing conditions and high levels of deprivation. The Council has used a range of evidence to identify the proposed areas, including Census data, energy performance data, housing condition complaints, local enforcement records, BRE stock condition modelling, deprivation indicators and local intelligence.

The evidence shows that Halton's private rented sector is relatively modest at borough level, accounting for around 14.3% of households. However, it is much more concentrated in specific wards. Mersey and Weston, Appleton, Bridgewater and Central and West Bank all have private

rented sector levels above the national benchmark used in this assessment. These areas also show evidence of housing condition concerns and wider deprivation.

The property condition evidence is significant. Between 2020 and 2026, the four proposed full wards accounted for 257 housing condition complaints, representing around 39% of all such complaints in Halton. Central and West Bank and Mersey and Weston recorded the highest and second highest number of complaints in the borough. BRE stock condition modelling also estimates that 22% of private rented homes in Mersey and Weston, 20% in Appleton, 19% in Bridgewater and 14% in Central and West Bank have Category 1 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

The evidence also shows that the proposed wards sit within the more deprived half of Halton's ward ranking. Central and West Bank ranks first out of 18 wards for overall deprivation concern, Appleton ranks fifth, Mersey and Weston ranks seventh and Bridgewater ranks eighth. This demonstrates that in these areas, higher levels of private renting overlap with wider social and economic pressures.

The Council has also considered smaller areas where private renting is concentrated within wards that do not, as a whole, meet the proposed threshold. Four Lower Super Output Areas were reviewed in more detail. Following this analysis, only LSOA E01012379 in Highfield is proposed for inclusion. This area has a private rented sector rate of around 23.0% and shows evidence of both stock condition concern and wider deprivation.

If introduced, the scheme would apply to privately rented properties within the designated areas that are let or occupied under a tenancy or licence, unless exempt by law. This would include properties occupied by a single household, properties occupied by two unrelated sharers, and smaller Houses in Multiple Occupation that are not required to be licensed under the mandatory HMO licensing regime. Properties already required to be licensed as HMOs under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 would not fall within the Selective Licensing scheme.

Landlords and managing agents of licensable properties would need to apply for a licence and comply with licence conditions. The proposed conditions include requirements relating to gas safety, electrical safety, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, furniture safety, tenancy management, repairs, property standards, overcrowding, waste management, security, tenancy deposit protection and action to address nuisance or anti-social behaviour linked to the property. The conditions are intended to ensure that privately rented homes are safe, well managed, properly maintained and suitable for occupation.

The proposed licence fee is £685 per property for the full licence period, which would usually be up to five years. This is equivalent to approximately £137 per year, £11.41 per month or £2.63 per week. The fee would be split into two parts: Part A, payable when the application is submitted, and Part B, payable once the Council has assessed the application and decided to grant the licence.

The Council proposes to offer a £100 discount to applicants who are current accredited members of the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA), reducing the total fee payable to £585. Applicants would need to provide valid evidence of current NRLA accredited

membership when submitting a complete licence application. The discount would not be applied retrospectively.

The fee has been calculated on a cost-recovery basis and is intended to cover the cost of administering, monitoring and enforcing the scheme.

The Council has considered alternatives to licensing, including continued use of existing enforcement powers, prosecutions and civil penalties, voluntary accreditation and improvement grants. These measures will continue to have a role, but the Council does not consider that they would provide a sufficient response on their own. Existing powers are largely reactive and often depend on tenants reporting problems. Selective Licensing would provide a more proactive framework in the areas where the evidence shows the greatest overlap between private renting, poor property conditions and deprivation.

The proposed scheme is intended to support a number of outcomes. These include raising standards in private rented homes, improving tenant safety and wellbeing, strengthening landlord responsibility, improving energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty risks, supporting better neighbourhood conditions, improving the Council's intelligence about the private rented sector and making better use of enforcement resources.

The proposal also supports Halton Borough Council's wider policy priorities. It aligns with the Corporate Plan, the Housing Strategy, the Safer Halton Partnership Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment by supporting safer, warmer and healthier homes, reducing inequality, improving neighbourhood conditions and addressing the wider determinants of health.

This consultation will run for a minimum of 10 weeks. During this period, the Council is seeking views on the proposed designation areas, the evidence base, the proposed licence conditions, the proposed fee structure, the likely impacts of the scheme and whether Selective Licensing is an appropriate and proportionate response to the issues identified.

All responses received during the consultation period will be reviewed and considered before any final decision is made. A consultation report will be prepared summarising the feedback received and the Council's response. The Council will then decide whether to introduce the proposed Selective Licensing designation, amend the proposal, or not proceed.

1. Introduction

The private rented sector is an important part of Halton's housing market. It provides accommodation for a wide range of households, including families, single people, younger residents, lower-income households and people who need flexible housing options. Many landlords in Halton provide well-managed, good-quality homes and make a positive contribution to the borough's housing offer.

However, evidence gathered by Halton Borough Council indicates that, in some parts of the borough, private rented homes are more likely to be linked with poor property conditions, older housing stock, lower levels of energy efficiency and wider deprivation. In some neighbourhoods, these issues can affect tenants' health, wellbeing and financial resilience, and may also contribute to wider community impacts and additional pressure on local services.

This consultation document sets out Halton Borough Council's proposals to introduce a Selective Licensing scheme for privately rented homes in specific parts of the borough.

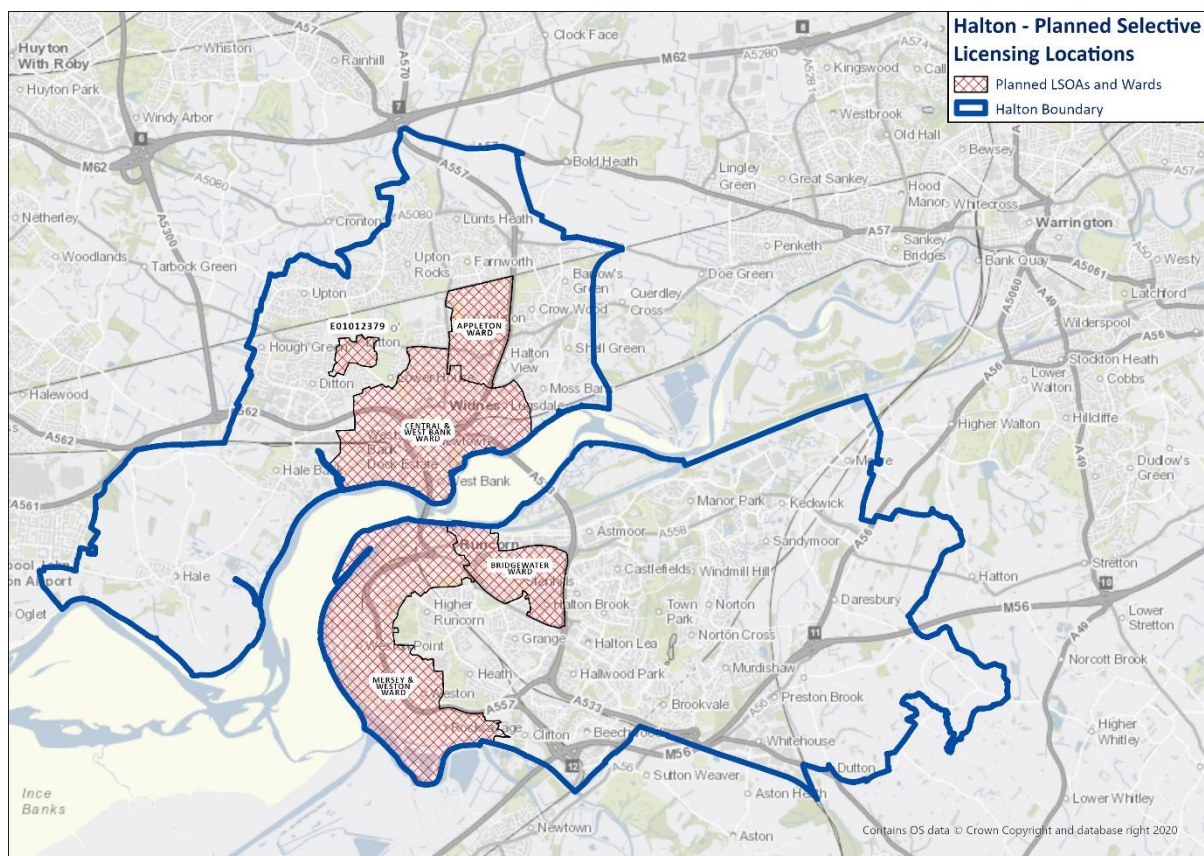
It explains the evidence behind the proposals, including the scale and concentration of issues relating to poor property conditions, deprivation and property management within Halton's private rented sector. It also describes the proposed designation areas, the licensing requirements, draft licence conditions, proposed fee framework, scheme objectives, and the council's proposed approach to enforcement and compliance.

No final decision has been made. The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the proposals from those who may be affected, including tenants, landlords, managing agents, residents, businesses, service providers and community organisations in the proposed designation areas and surrounding areas.

Subject to the outcome of this consultation, Halton Borough Council is proposing to introduce a Selective Licensing scheme covering five areas of the borough:

- Central and West Bank ward
- Appleton ward
- Mersey and Weston ward
- Bridgewater ward
- LSOA E01012379 in Highfield

The proposed scheme would cover an estimated 3,485 private rented households. Based on 2021 Census data, this represents around 43.4% of the borough's private rented households. The map shows these locations, with more detailed maps provided in Appendix 1.



If introduced, the scheme would apply to privately rented properties within the designated areas that are let or occupied under a tenancy or licence, unless exempt by law. This would include properties occupied by a single household, properties occupied by two unrelated sharers, and smaller Houses in Multiple Occupation that are not required to be licensed under the mandatory HMO licensing regime. Properties that are already required to be licensed as HMOs under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 would not fall within the Selective Licensing scheme.

The council considers that Selective Licensing would provide a targeted and proportionate response to the issues identified. It would allow the council to take a more proactive approach to improving standards, supporting tenants and working with landlords in the areas where evidence indicates that risks are greatest.

Before making any designation, Halton Borough Council is required under Section 80 of the Housing Act 2004 to:

- Take reasonable steps to consult all persons likely to be affected by the proposed scheme;
- Consider all representations received; and
- Ensure that the proposal is evidence-based, necessary and proportionate.

This consultation forms part of that statutory process.

The feedback received will help the council decide whether Selective Licensing is an appropriate and proportionate response to the issues identified.

After reading this consultation document, please provide your feedback by completing the consultation survey available on Halton Borough Council's website.

[Selective Licensing](#)

The web page includes details of the proposals, supporting documents, the consultation questions and information on how to submit your response. All responses must be received by the consultation closing date in order to be considered before a final decision is made.

2. The Private Rented Sector in Halton

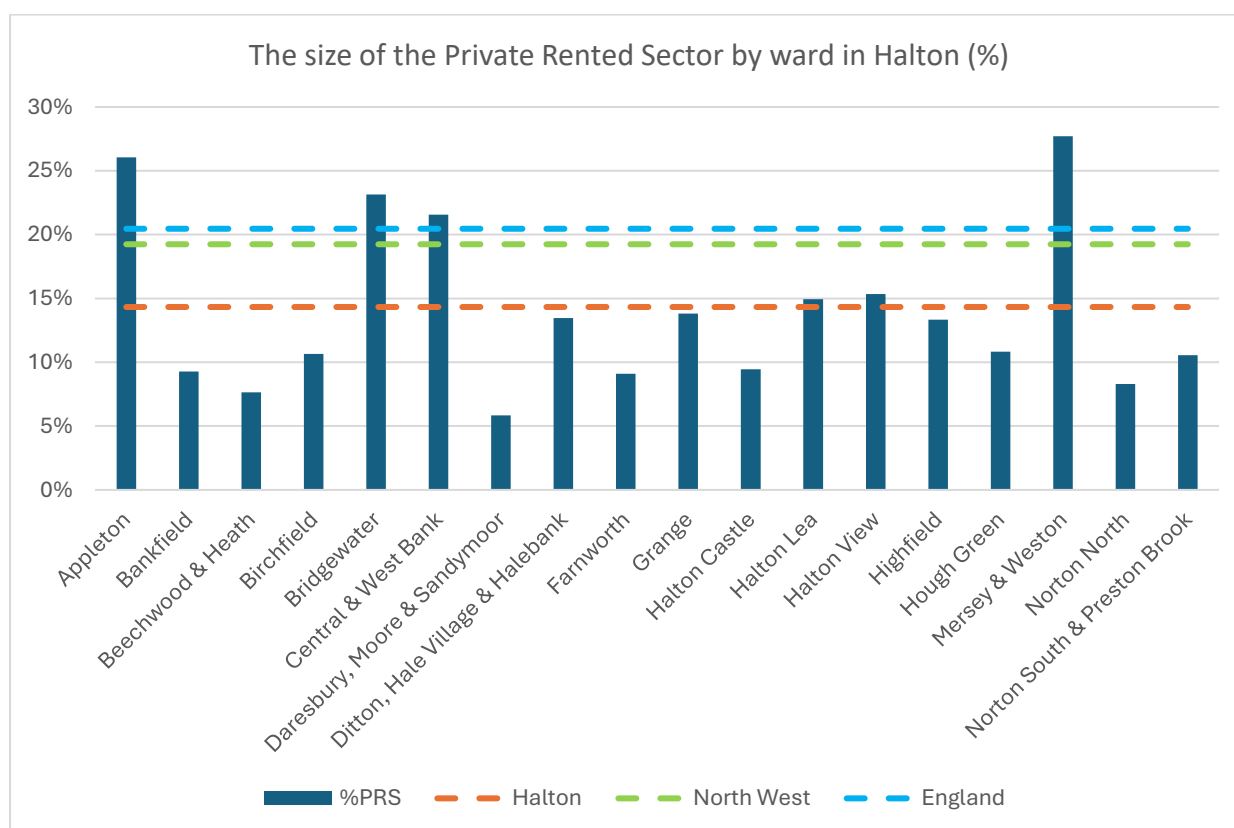
This section provides an overview of the role, scale and characteristics of the private rented sector in Halton. It explains the contribution the sector makes to the borough's housing market and considers the pressures that can affect tenants, landlords and local communities.

The analysis considers how the private rented sector is distributed across Halton, where it is most concentrated, and how this relates to wider housing and social challenges, including older housing stock, poor property conditions, lower energy efficiency, fuel poverty, deprivation, overcrowding and affordability pressures.

The purpose of this section is not to suggest that all privately rented homes are poor quality. Many landlords in Halton provide well-managed accommodation and play an important role in meeting local housing need.

2.1 Housing Tenure and Growth of the Private Rented Sector

The private rented sector in Halton forms a smaller share of the housing market than is seen nationally and regionally, but it remains an important part of local housing provision in specific wards. Based on the 2021 Census, the private rented sector accounts for around 14.3% of households in Halton, compared with approximately 19.2% across the North West and 20.5% across England.



Source: Census 2021

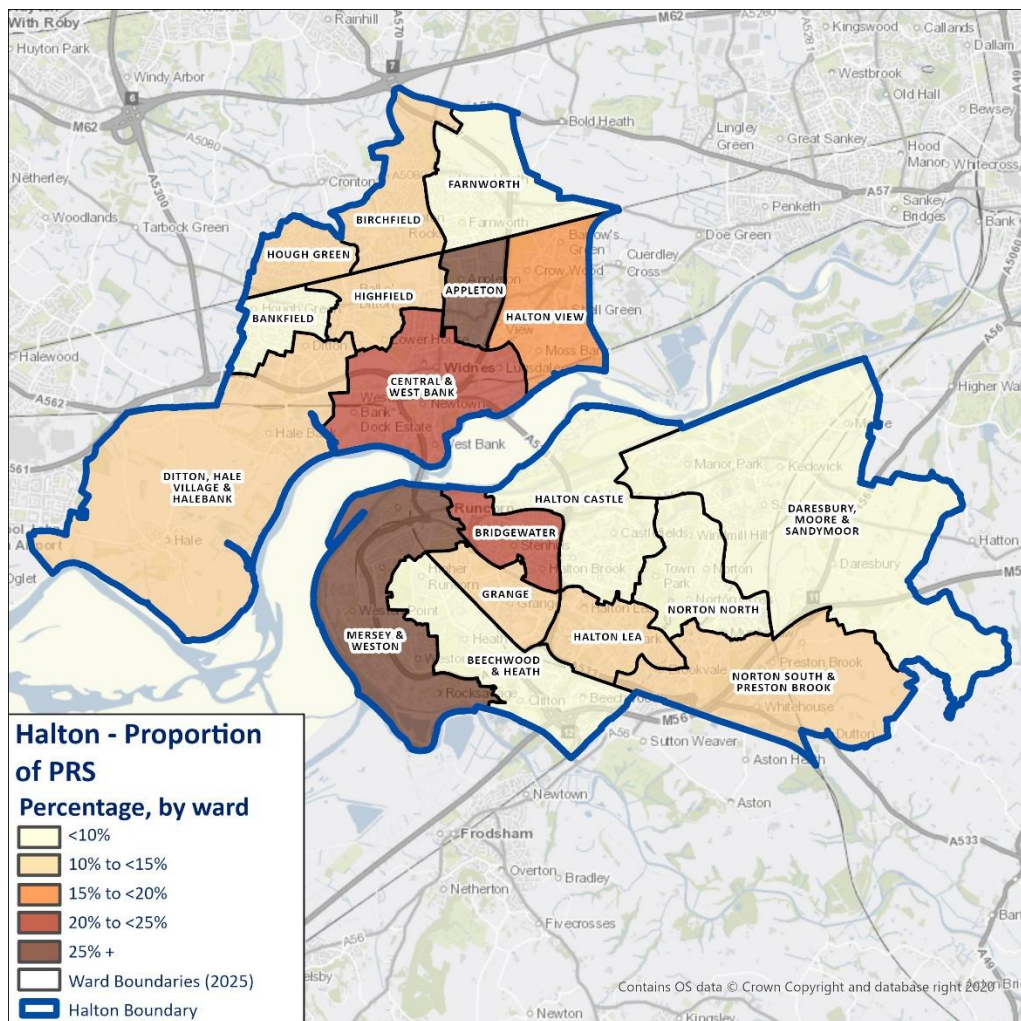
However, the private rented sector is not evenly distributed across Halton. The map shows clear ward-level concentrations, with some areas having a much larger private rented sector than the borough average and wider regional and national benchmarks.

The highest concentrations of private rented sector households are in:

- Mersey and Weston – around 27.7%;
- Appleton – around 26.1%;
- Bridgewater – around 23.1%; and
- Central and West Bank – around 21.6%.

By contrast, much of the rest of the borough has lower levels of private renting. Wards such as Farnworth, Hough Green, Birchfield, Halton Castle, Daresbury, Moore and Sandymoor, and Norton South and Preston Brook have private rented sector levels below 15%, with several below 10%.

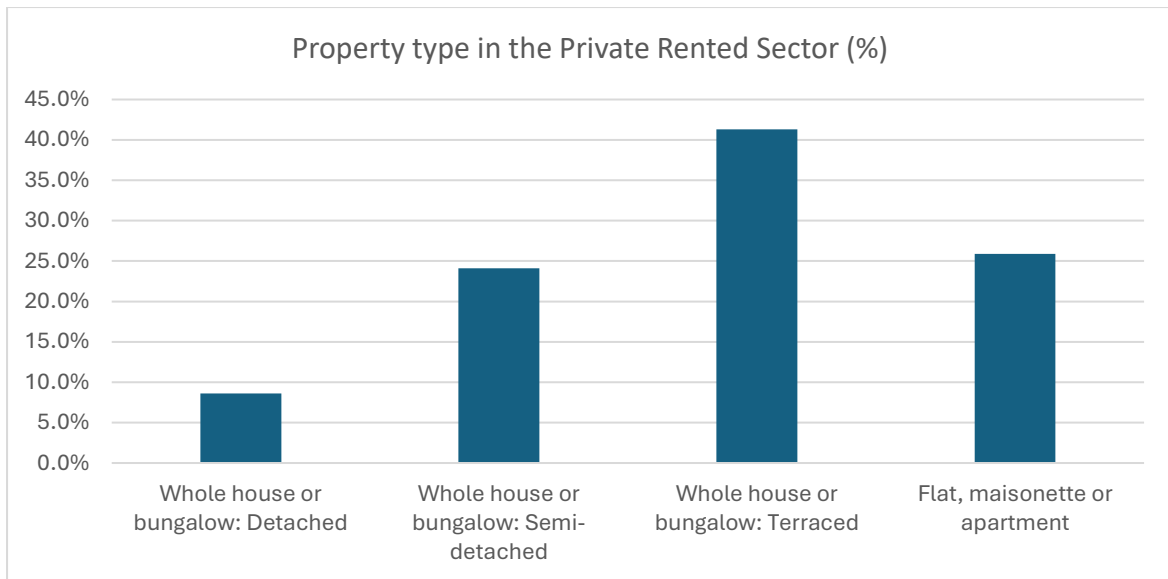
This shows that Halton's private rented sector is relatively localised, with the highest concentrations focused in specific wards rather than spread evenly across the borough. This supports a targeted approach to further analysis, focusing on areas where private renting is most concentrated and where there is also evidence of poor property conditions and/or deprivation.



This suggests that while Halton’s private rented sector is relatively modest at borough level, there are specific neighbourhoods where private renting forms a much more significant part of the local housing market. These areas are likely to play an important role in accommodating households who cannot access home ownership or social housing, including low-income households, younger households, families, and residents with more limited housing options. The uneven distribution of the private rented sector also means that any policy response, including selective licensing, should be carefully targeted toward those wards where private renting is most concentrated and where wider rented-sector pressures are evident.

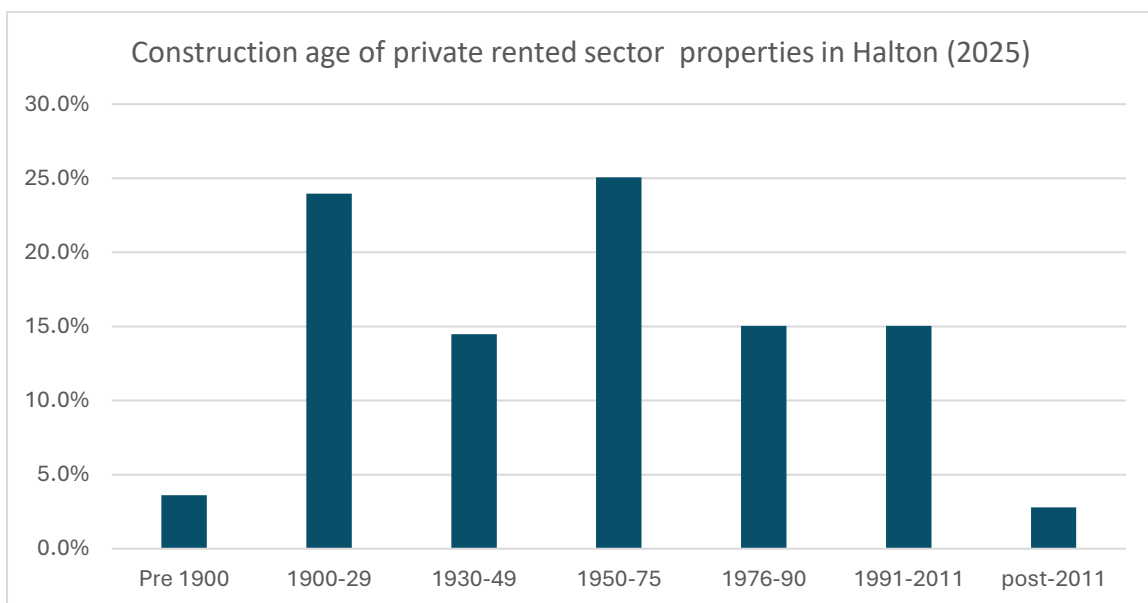
2.2 Age and Type of Stock

The type and age of privately rented homes are important indicators of potential housing quality, maintenance and management risks. Older homes, terraced properties, flats and converted accommodation can be more difficult and costly to maintain, and may be more likely to experience issues such as damp and mould, excess cold, poor ventilation, low energy efficiency and fire safety concerns.



Source: 2021 Census, RM003

Halton's private rented sector is made up mainly of terraced housing, flats and semi-detached properties. Terraced houses are the largest property type, accounting for around 41% of private rented homes. Flats, maisonettes and apartments account for approximately 26%, while semi-detached houses account for around 24%. Detached properties make up a much smaller proportion of the sector, at around 9%. This profile is relevant because terraced housing and flats can present particular condition and management issues. In older terraced stock, common risks include poor insulation, inefficient heating, damp and mould, excess cold, and deterioration of roofs, walls, windows and drainage. In flats and converted properties, additional issues can include fire safety, shared access, ventilation, refuse storage, noise transfer and the management of communal areas.



Source: EPC Certificate-level Data (2025)

The age profile of Halton's private rented sector also points to a reliance on older stock. Around 3.5% of private rented sector properties were built before 1900 and a further 24% were built between 1900 and 1929. This means that more than a quarter of the sector was built before 1930. A further 14.5% was built between 1930 and 1949, and the largest single age band is 1950 to 1975, accounting for around 25% of private rented sector properties.

Overall, around two-thirds of Halton's private rented sector was built before 1976. This is significant because older homes are more likely to need investment to meet modern expectations for safety, energy efficiency, thermal comfort and internal standards. Properties built before more recent building regulations may have poorer insulation, older heating systems, limited ventilation, solid walls or layouts that are less suited to current household needs.

Newer private rented stock makes up a much smaller part of the sector. Properties built between 1976 and 1990 account for around 15%, and those built between 1991 and 2011 also account for around 15%. Only around 3% of the private rented sector was built after 2011. This suggests that Halton's private rented market is not being substantially refreshed by newer homes and remains heavily dependent on existing older stock.

The physical profile of the sector increases the potential for hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), particularly where properties have not been maintained or improved over time. The main risks associated with older terraced housing, flats and converted accommodation include:

- damp and mould;
- excess cold;
- poor insulation and low energy efficiency;
- outdated or inefficient heating systems;
- structural deterioration;
- condensation and poor ventilation;
- fire safety risks in flats or converted accommodation; and
- poor internal layouts or overcrowding in some cases.

These issues are most likely to affect tenants where landlords have not kept pace with repair, maintenance and energy-efficiency requirements. Poor housing conditions can have a direct effect on health and wellbeing, contributing to respiratory illness, fuel poverty, stress and wider health inequalities.

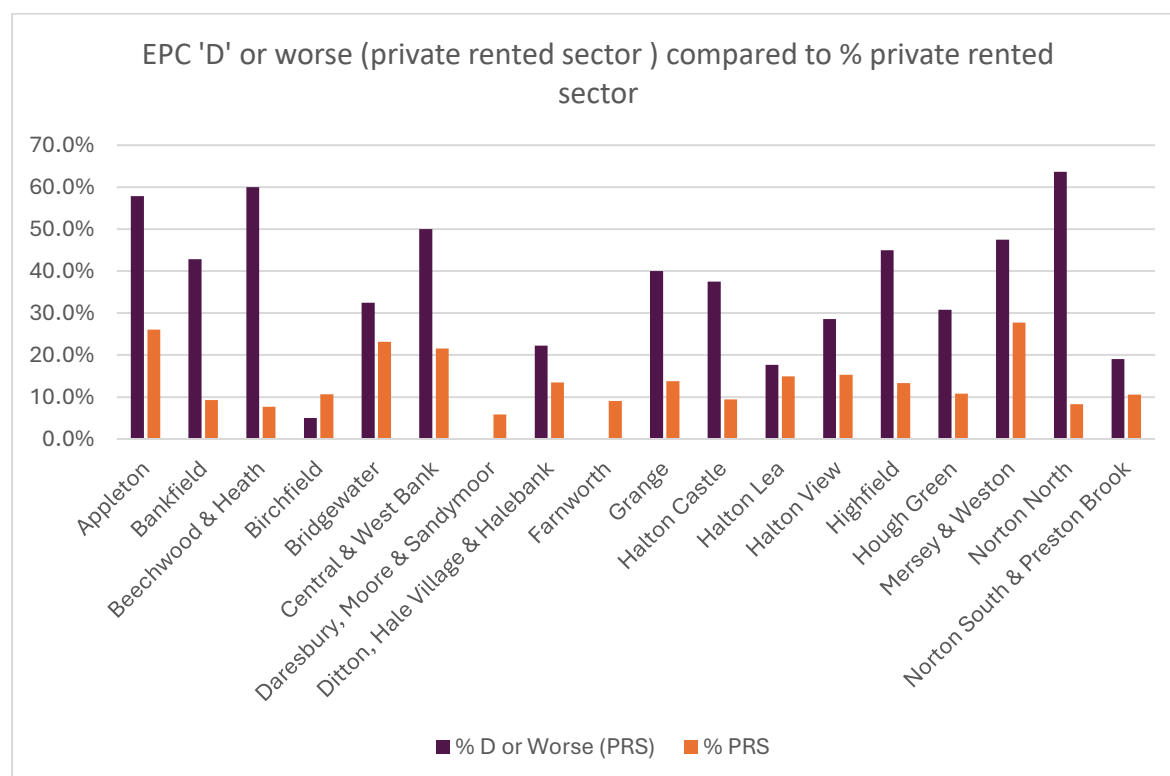
2.3 Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty

Energy efficiency is an important indicator of housing quality, affordability and tenant wellbeing. Homes with poor energy performance are more expensive to heat and are more likely to be associated with cold living conditions, condensation, damp and mould. These issues can have a direct impact on health, particularly for low-income households, families with children, older residents and people with long-term health conditions.

In Halton, energy performance is a particular concern in areas where the private rented sector is more concentrated. Some wards may have poor EPC performance but relatively small private rented sectors. However, the greatest policy concern is where weaker energy efficiency overlaps with higher levels of private renting, because this means a larger number of private tenants may be affected.

Poor energy efficiency also contributes to wider affordability pressures. Private renters living in lower-rated properties are more likely to face higher heating costs and may struggle to keep their homes warm. This can increase the risk of fuel poverty and force households to make difficult choices between heating, rent and other essential costs.

Fuel poverty is usually driven by a combination of low household income, poor thermal efficiency and high energy costs. The issue in Halton is therefore not simply that some private rented homes have EPC ratings of D or below. The concern is that, in several areas, poorer energy performance coincides with a relatively large private rented sector. This increases the likelihood that poor energy efficiency is affecting a larger tenant population and contributing to wider housing stress.

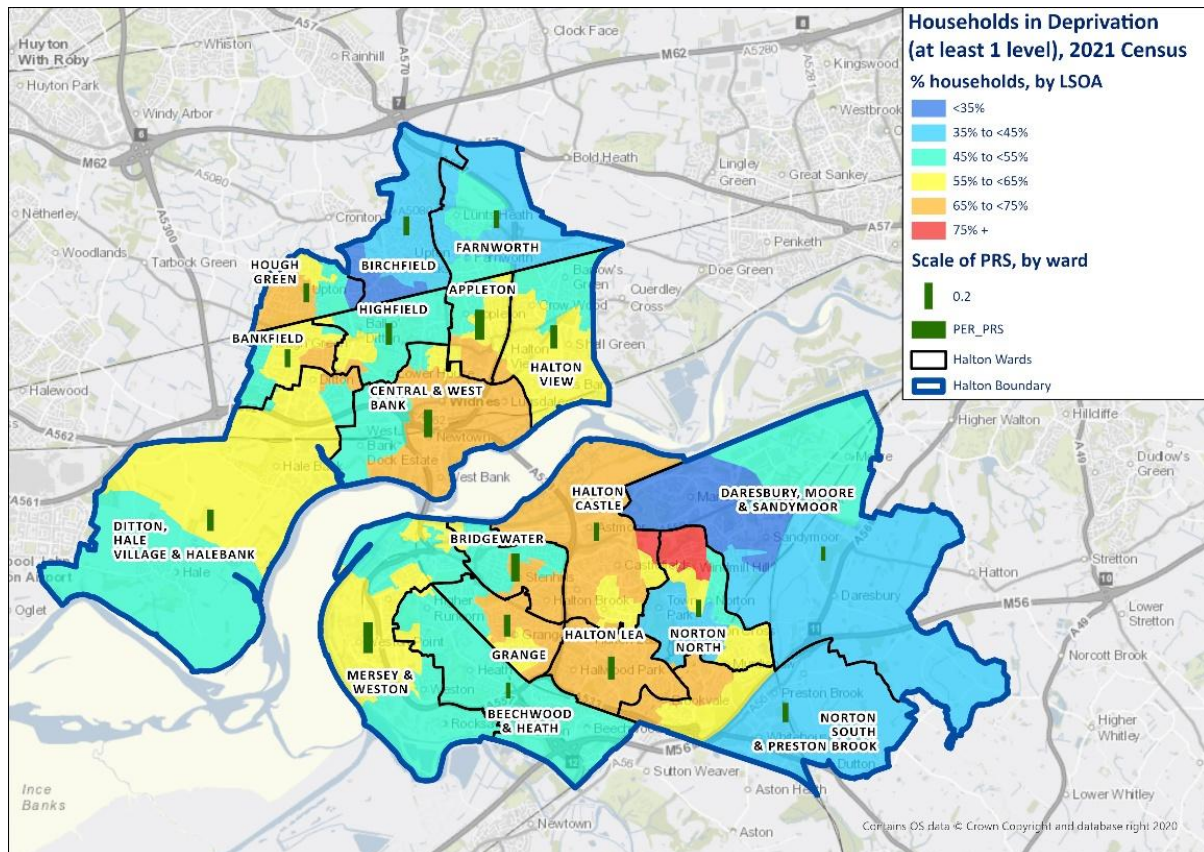


Source: EPC Certificate-level Data (2025) and Census 2021, TS054

2.4 Deprivation and Vulnerability

Household deprivation helps identify where residents may be experiencing wider social and economic pressures. Census 2021 deprivation dimensions measure whether households are deprived in one or more of four areas: employment, education, health and disability, and housing. The housing dimension includes issues such as overcrowding.

This evidence is relevant because Selective Licensing is not based only on the number of private rented homes in an area. It also considers whether poor property conditions, poor management, deprivation and wider local pressures are affecting residents and communities. Where private renting overlaps with high deprivation, there is a stronger indication that tenants may be more vulnerable to poor housing outcomes.



Source: Census 2021 TS011 and TS054

In Halton, deprivation is most concentrated in central and southern parts of the borough. The clearest concentrations are in and around:

- Central and West Bank;
- Appleton;
- Mersey and Weston;
- Bridgewater;
- Halton Lea;
- Halton Castle;
- Grange;
- Halton View; and
- parts of Bankfield and Highfield.

These areas show higher proportions of households deprived in at least one Census dimension. Several of them also have a larger private rented sector, meaning that deprivation and private renting are overlapping in the same neighbourhoods.

The relationship is not identical in every area. Some deprived neighbourhoods have a smaller private rented sector, while some areas with more private renting have lower levels of deprivation. However, the key concern is where the main risk factors come together: a higher concentration of private renting, older or poorer-quality housing, weaker energy efficiency and household deprivation.

This overlap is important because households experiencing deprivation are less likely to have the financial resilience to manage poor housing conditions, high energy bills or insecurity. Where these households live in private rented homes with damp and mould, excess cold, overcrowding, low energy efficiency or poor management, housing conditions can intensify existing disadvantage.

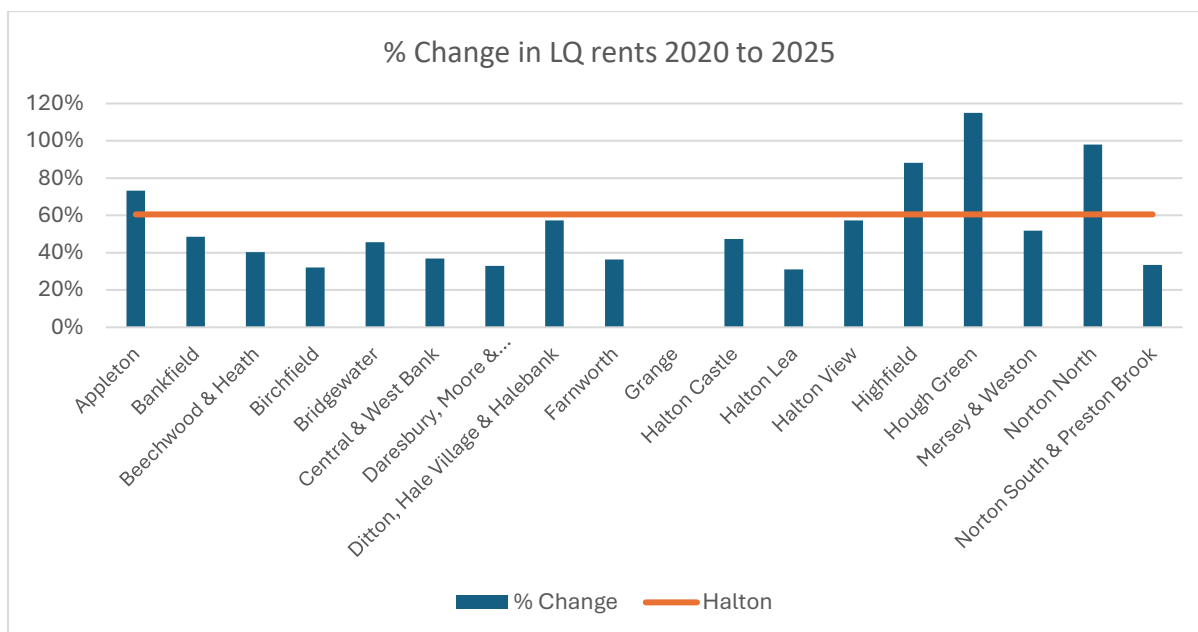
In the worst-affected locations, poor private rented housing can contribute to:

- fuel poverty and cold homes;
- damp, mould and respiratory health risks
- difficulty affording rent, bills and other essentials
- overcrowding or unsuitable housing;
- reduced ability for tenants to challenge poor landlord practice; and
- increased pressure on health, housing options, homelessness and enforcement services.

2.5 Affordability Pressures

Affordability shapes the choices available to households. When rents rise faster than incomes or benefit support, lower-income households have fewer options and may be more likely to accept poor quality, insecure or overcrowded accommodation. Affordability pressures can also increase the risk of rent arrears, homelessness and displacement.

Lower quartile rents are a useful measure of entry-level affordability because they represent the cheapest 25% of homes available in the rental market. They are particularly relevant for lower-income households, households trying to access private rented accommodation for the first time, and households who rely on Local Housing Allowance to meet their housing costs.



Source: Zoopla Lettings

The chart shows that lower quartile rents in Halton increased by around 60% between 2020 and 2025. This represents a substantial rise in the cost of the lower end of the private rented market over a relatively short period. It indicates that even the cheapest private rented homes have become significantly less affordable.

This level of rent growth is likely to place additional pressure on lower-income and vulnerable households. Where Local Housing Allowance does not keep pace with market rents, households have fewer realistic options, face greater competition for the cheapest homes, and are more likely to experience affordability stress.

Rising rents can also affect housing quality choices. In a tight and more expensive rental market, some households may feel they have little option but to accept poorer-quality accommodation because it is the only housing they can afford. This is particularly concerning where affordability pressures overlap with older stock, poor energy efficiency, deprivation and higher concentrations of private renting.

This evidence supports the case for targeted intervention in areas where private rented households are most exposed to the combined effects of affordability pressure and property condition risks.

2.6 Enforcement Activity in the Private Rented Sector

Halton Borough Council has a range of statutory powers to respond to poor housing conditions in the private rented sector, including Improvement Notices, Prohibition Orders, Emergency Prohibition Orders and Emergency Remedial Action. However, these powers are usually triggered when a property comes to the council's attention through a complaint, referral or specific intelligence.

Between 2020 and May 2026, 25 formal enforcement actions were recorded across the wards shown in the table.

Action	Appleton	Beechwood and Heath	Grange	Halton Castle	Highfield	Mersey and Weston	Total
s.11 Improvement Notice	1	7	0	0	2	2	12
s.12 Improvement Notice	1	0	3	0	2	1	7
s.40 Emergency Remedial Action	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
s.43 Emergency Prohibition Order	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Emergency Prohibition Order	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Prohibition Notice	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	2	10	4	1	4	4	25

Source: Halton Borough Council

The relatively low number of formal enforcement actions should not be read as evidence that poor conditions are uncommon. Wider evidence indicates a larger underlying issue. The BRE Integrated Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database estimated that 1,454 private rented homes in Halton had Category 1 HHSRS hazards, equivalent to 16% of the sector.

This is supported by the Halton Housing Need Assessment 2024/25, which found that 36.2% of private rented households were dissatisfied with the quality of their accommodation, compared with 17.2% of households overall and 7.4% of owner occupiers.

Taken together, the evidence suggests a gap between the scale of likely housing condition issues and the number of cases reaching formal enforcement. This is likely to reflect the limitations of a mainly reactive approach. Some tenants may not report poor conditions because of concerns about rent increases, eviction, landlord relationships, limited housing choices, or uncertainty about their rights.

Selective Licensing would help address this gap by giving the council a more proactive route into the sector. Landlords in the designated areas would need to identify themselves and their properties, apply for a licence and comply with conditions on property standards and management. This would improve intelligence, support more systematic inspection and compliance activity, and help identify poor conditions before they become more serious.

The issue is therefore not that the council lacks enforcement powers. It is that existing powers are often used only after problems are reported or identified. Selective Licensing would provide a more preventative framework in areas where private renting, poor housing conditions and household vulnerability overlap.

2.7 Summary of Key Issues

The evidence shows that Halton's private rented sector is relatively modest at borough level, but is much more concentrated in specific wards. This means that borough-wide averages can understate the scale of private renting and associated housing pressures in particular neighbourhoods.

The highest concentrations of private rented households are in Mersey and Weston, Appleton, Bridgewater, and Central and West Bank. These areas have a much larger private rented sector than the Halton average and therefore warrant closer consideration, particularly where private renting overlaps with poorer housing conditions, older stock, lower energy efficiency, deprivation and affordability pressures.

The stock profile of the private rented sector also presents potential risks. A large proportion of private rented sector homes are terraced houses, flats and semi-detached properties, and around two-thirds of the sector was built before 1976. Older homes and converted or flatted accommodation can be more difficult to maintain and may be more likely to experience issues such as damp and mould, excess cold, poor ventilation, low energy efficiency and fire safety concerns.

Energy efficiency is a particular concern where weaker EPC performance overlaps with high levels of private renting. In these areas, a larger number of tenants may be exposed to higher heating costs, cold homes, condensation, damp and mould. This can contribute to fuel poverty and wider health inequalities, especially for low-income households, families with children, older residents and people with long-term health conditions.

The evidence also shows that deprivation is concentrated in parts of central and southern Halton, including Central and West Bank, Appleton, Mersey and Weston, Bridgewater, Halton Lea, Halton Castle, Grange, Halton View, and parts of Bankfield and Highfield. The key concern is where deprivation, private renting and housing condition risks overlap, as households in these areas may have less ability to manage poor conditions, rising costs or insecure housing.

Affordability pressures add to this picture. Lower quartile rents in Halton increased by around 60% between 2020 and 2025, suggesting that even the lower end of the private rented market has become significantly less affordable. Where rents rise faster than incomes or benefit

support, lower-income households may have fewer choices and may be more likely to accept poorer-quality accommodation.

Formal enforcement activity has been relatively limited, with 25 formal enforcement actions recorded between 2020 and May 2026 across the wards shown. However, this should not be read as evidence that poor conditions are uncommon. Wider evidence indicates a larger underlying issue, including BRE modelling which estimated that 1,454 private rented homes in Halton had Category 1 HHSRS hazards, equivalent to 16% of the sector, and the Halton Housing Need Assessment 2024/25, which found that 36.2% of private rented households were dissatisfied with the quality of their accommodation.

Taken together, the evidence points to a gap between the likely scale of poor housing conditions and the number of cases reaching formal enforcement. This reflects the limitations of a mainly reactive approach, as some tenants may not report poor conditions due to concerns about rent increases, eviction, landlord relationships, limited housing options or lack of confidence in the system.

Overall, the evidence suggests that targeted intervention may be appropriate in those parts of Halton where the private rented sector is most concentrated and where there is also evidence of poor housing conditions, deprivation, weak energy efficiency and affordability pressure. Selective Licensing would provide a more proactive framework for identifying landlords and properties, improving intelligence, strengthening compliance activity and addressing poor conditions before they become more serious.

3. Types of Property Licensing Scheme (Legal Framework)

3.1 What is Property Licensing?

Property licensing is a regulatory tool available to local authorities to help improve standards within the private rented sector. It allows councils to require landlords (or those managing rented accommodation) to obtain a licence and comply with specific conditions relating to the condition and management of their properties.

Property licensing is provided for under the Housing Act 2004, which introduced three forms of licensing:

- Mandatory licensing of certain Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) (Part 2);
- Additional licensing of other HMOs (Part 2); and
- Selective licensing of privately rented homes in designated areas (Part 3).

Licensing schemes are intended to ensure that privately rented homes are safe, well-managed and meet acceptable standards for tenants. They provide councils with a proactive framework to address poor housing conditions, reduce risks to health and safety, and promote responsible landlord practice.

Licences are granted for a fixed period (typically up to five years) and include conditions that landlords must comply with throughout the duration of the licence.

Property licensing helps ensure that:

- **The licence holder is a “fit and proper person”**
Before granting a licence, the council must be satisfied that the landlord or managing agent is suitable. This includes consideration of compliance with housing legislation and any relevant criminal convictions or history of poor property management.
- **Properties meet required safety standards**
Licensing provides a mechanism to ensure that rented homes are safe and free from serious hazards. Conditions may relate to gas and electrical safety, fire precautions, damp and mould, excess cold, overcrowding, and general maintenance.
- **Management arrangements are effective and responsible**
Landlords must demonstrate that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage their properties properly. This includes responding to repairs, communicating effectively with tenants, managing waste appropriately, and taking reasonable steps to address issues linked to their properties.

Overall, property licensing supports councils in raising housing standards, protecting tenants, supporting responsible landlords, and improving neighbourhood conditions.

3.2 What is Selective Licensing?

Selective Licensing applies to privately rented homes within a designated area that are not already subject to mandatory HMO licensing and are not otherwise exempt by law. This can include:

- properties occupied by a single household, such as a family;
- properties occupied by two unrelated sharers; and
- smaller HMOs that are not required to be licensed under the mandatory HMO licensing regime.

HMOs that are already required to be licensed under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 would not require a Selective Licence.

Under the Housing Act 2004 and the Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions) (England) Order 2015, a local authority may introduce Selective Licensing where the area is experiencing one or more of the following issues:

- Poor housing conditions
- High levels of deprivation
- A significant and persistent problem with anti-social behaviour
- High levels of crime
- High levels of migration
- Low housing demand

Halton Borough Council is consulting on proposals to introduce Selective Licensing on the grounds of poor housing conditions and high levels of deprivation. The proposed scheme is intended to improve housing standards, support better property management and help protect tenants in areas where the evidence shows that private renting is concentrated alongside wider housing and social pressures.

4. Proposed Selective Licensing Scheme in Halton

4.1 Introduction

This section explains why Halton Borough Council considers that Selective Licensing may be required in the proposed designation areas. It summarises the evidence supporting the proposal, with particular focus on poor property conditions in the private rented sector and the wider levels of deprivation affecting parts of the borough.

These are the main reasons why Selective Licensing is being considered. The purpose of the proposed scheme would be to improve housing standards, strengthen property management, support tenants and help improve the quality and reputation of the private rented sector in Halton.

Selective Licensing can be introduced on a number of grounds set out in government guidance. In Halton, the case for the proposed scheme is focused on two grounds: poor property conditions and deprivation. In both cases, the council must also be able to demonstrate that the proposed designation areas contain a high proportion of private rented housing.

For poor property conditions, the guidance recognises that councils already have powers to deal with individual properties that are in disrepair or contain hazards. Selective Licensing should not be used simply because a small number of properties require attention. However, it may be appropriate where poor conditions affect a significant number of privately rented homes and where those conditions are having wider effects on tenants, local communities or the character of an area.

For deprivation, the guidance allows councils to consider Selective Licensing where an area is experiencing high levels of deprivation and where housing problems in the private rented sector are contributing to wider local issues. In considering this, the council should look at a range of evidence, including employment, household income, health, access to education and services, housing conditions, the physical environment and crime.

The proposal does not suggest that private rented housing is the sole cause of these issues. Rather, it identifies areas where property condition, property management and tenant vulnerability form part of a wider pattern of local disadvantage, and where Selective Licensing could help address those issues alongside wider council and partner activity.

In both cases, the intended outcome is to improve housing conditions and reduce housing-related problems in the designated areas over the lifetime of the scheme.

4.2 The evidence base

Halton Borough Council has taken a targeted and evidence-led approach to identifying the proposed Selective Licensing areas. The council has reviewed a range of data and local intelligence to ensure that any designation focuses on those parts of the borough where there is both:

- a high proportion of privately rented housing; and

- clear evidence of poor housing conditions and/or elevated levels of deprivation.

The council has sought to ensure that the proposed designation is proportionate and supported by clear evidence. The intention is not to apply licensing more widely than necessary, but to focus intervention on the areas where risks to tenants and communities are greatest and where the evidence indicates that a targeted scheme would be justified.

The first stage of the analysis considers the evidence at ward level. This provides a consistent borough-wide overview of where the private rented sector is most concentrated and how this relates to wider indicators such as property condition, deprivation and housing need.

4.3 Which wards have high proportions and numbers of homes in the private rented sector in Halton

The introduction of a selective licensing scheme to address poor property conditions and deprivation must be supported by clear evidence that the designated areas contain a high proportion of private rented sector housing.

The national average proportion of privately rented homes is 20.5% (Census 2021) and estimated to be 19% in the 2024/25 English Housing Survey. ¹ For the purposes of this evidence assessment, the council has used the 2024–25 English Housing Survey national private rented sector figure of 19% as a benchmark for identifying areas with a high proportion of private rented housing.

Wards	Total: All households (Census)	Percentage of private rented sector	Total Number of Private rented households
Mersey and Weston	3,803	27.7%	1,054
Appleton	3,063	26.1%	798
Bridgewater	3,439	23.1%	796
Central and West Bank	3,060	21.6%	660
Halton View	3,338	15.3%	512
Halton Lea	3,047	14.9%	455
Grange	3,489	13.8%	482
Ditton, Hale Village and Halebank	3,215	13.5%	433
Highfield	2,775	13.3%	370
Hough Green	3,110	10.8%	337
Birchfield	3,071	10.6%	327
Norton South and Preston Brook	3,034	10.5%	320
Halton Castle	3,140	9.5%	297
Bankfield	2,771	9.3%	257
Farnworth	3,290	9.1%	299

¹ [Chapter 1: Profile of households and dwellings - GOV.UK](#)

Norton North	3,158	8.3%	262
Beechwood and Heath	3,285	7.6%	251
Daresbury, Moore and Sandymoor	1,863	5.9%	109

Source: Census 2021

In Halton, the wards with the highest concentrations of private rented sector households above 19% are Mersey and Weston, Appleton, Bridgewater, and Central and West Bank. The evidence set out below demonstrates that these concentrations also coincide with indicators of poor property conditions and/or deprivation. The combination of these factors provides the basis for considering whether Selective Licensing would be an appropriate and proportionate intervention in these areas.

4.4 What is the evidence of poor housing conditions in these wards?

Visual evidence

One element of the evidence used to assess property condition is visual evidence gathered through local inspection and casework activity. As part of this assessment, the council has assembled photographs showing examples of hazards, disrepair and poor property conditions identified in private rented properties in Mersey and Weston, Appleton, Bridgewater, and Central and West Bank wards. A number of case studies are included at Appendix 2 and provide supporting evidence of the types of property condition issues being experienced in the proposed selective licensing areas.

Complaints

Complaints about private rented property conditions provide a useful indication of where tenants are experiencing problems with housing quality and repair. These complaints can highlight problems such as disrepair, damp and mould, excess cold, safety concerns, poor maintenance, defective facilities and inadequate landlord response. They provide an important source of local intelligence because they show where poor conditions are being experienced by tenants, rather than only where risks are suggested by wider housing statistics.

Complaint data provides an important local indicator of where tenants and residents are reporting problems with private rented housing conditions. The data shows that complaints are not evenly distributed across Halton. Instead, they are concentrated in a relatively small number of wards, including the four wards proposed for Selective Licensing.

Between 2020 and 2026, 652 housing condition complaints were recorded across Halton. The four proposed full wards, Central and West Bank, Mersey and Weston, Bridgewater and Appleton, accounted for 257 complaints. This represents around 39% of all complaints in the borough.

These four wards are among the areas with the highest levels of recorded complaints:

- Central and West Bank recorded 78 complaints, the highest number in Halton;
- Mersey and Weston recorded 76 complaints, the second highest number in Halton;
- Bridgewater recorded 55 complaints; and
- Appleton recorded 48 complaints.

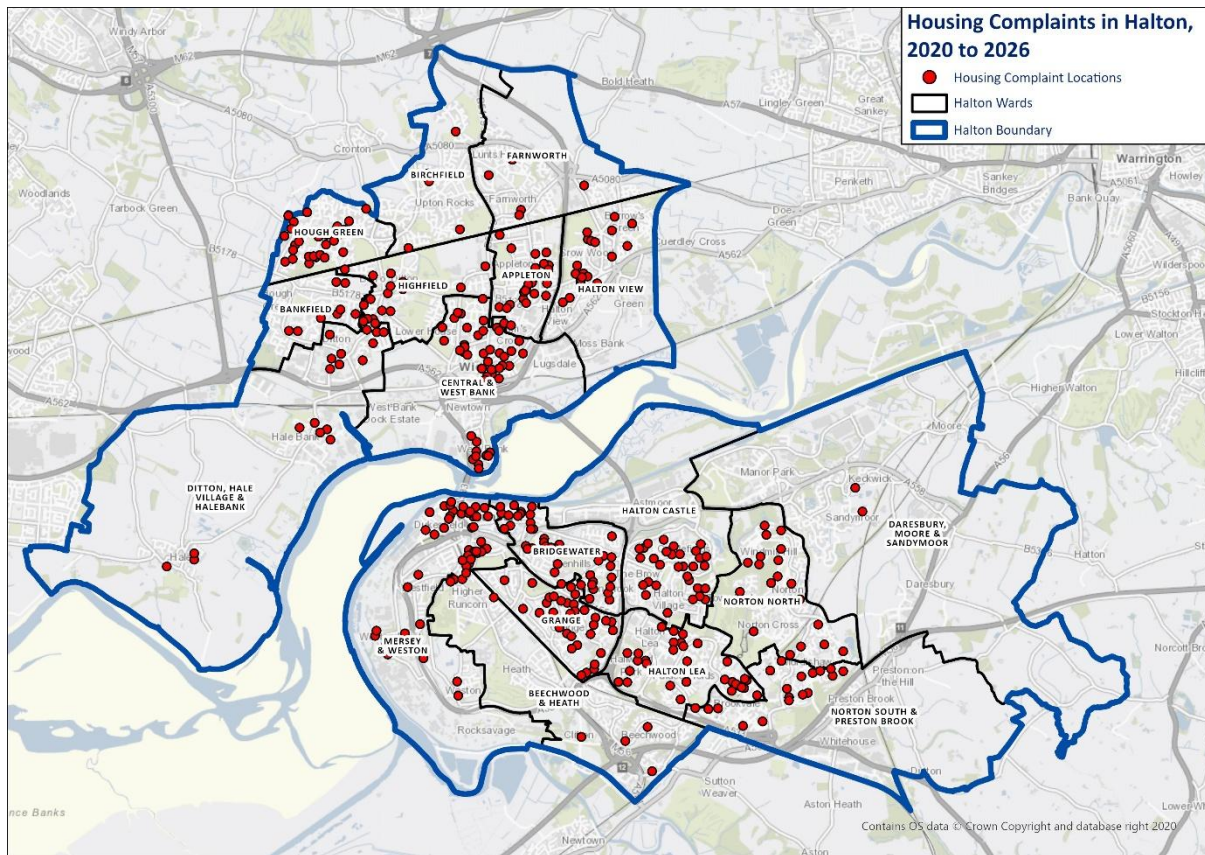
This means that the proposed Selective Licensing wards are not only areas with high levels of private renting, but also areas where significant numbers of housing condition complaints have been made. Central and West Bank and Mersey and Weston stand out particularly clearly, as they have the two highest complaint totals in the borough.

The data also shows that complaints in the proposed wards have occurred over several years, rather than being isolated or one-off incidents. This indicates a recurring pattern of reported housing condition issues. Bridgewater and Appleton also show sustained complaint levels, with both wards recording complaints across most years in the period.

Ward Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 ²	Total Complaints per Ward
Appleton	0	2	12	9	13	8	4	48
Bridgewater	1	8	9	18	10	5	4	55
Central and West Bank	0	11	12	18	20	9	8	78
Mersey and Weston	0	10	24	16	18	7	1	76
Halton	1	92	145	142	144	91	37	652

Source: Halton Borough Council

² 2026 data is partial-year data and should not be compared directly with full calendar years.

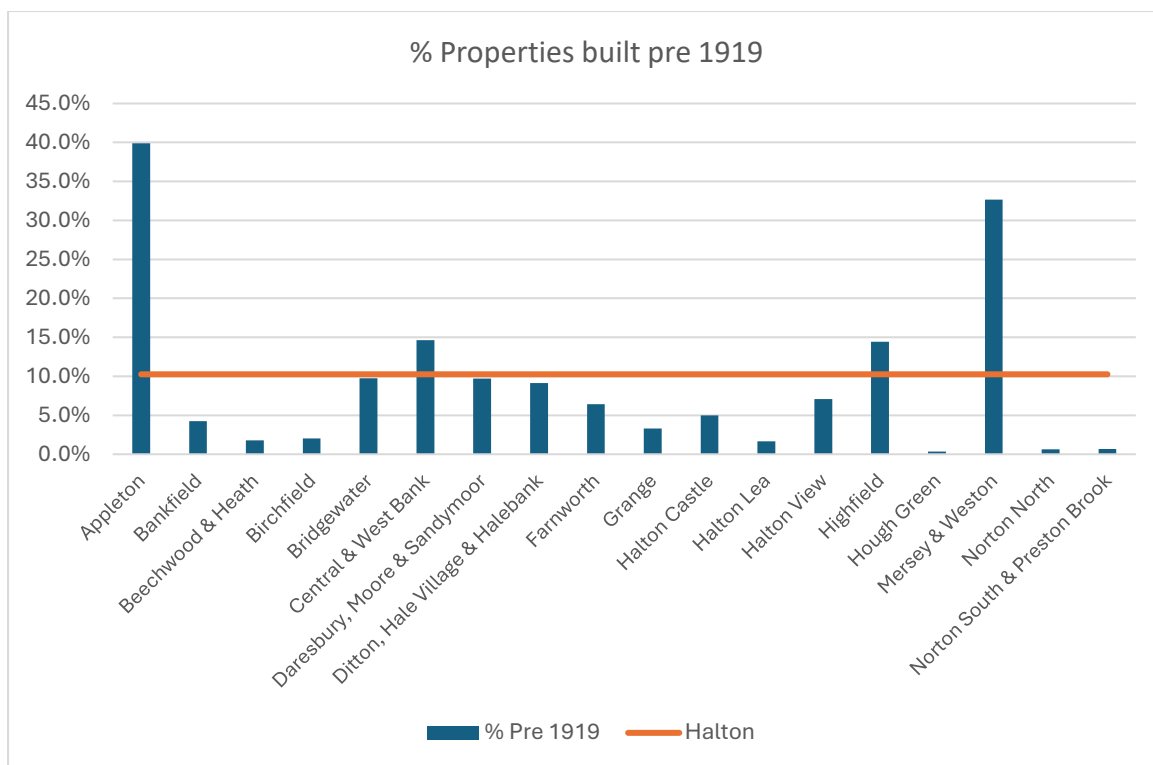


Source: Halton Borough Council

Age of Stock

The age of housing stock is an important indicator of potential property condition risk. Homes built before 1919 are more likely to require ongoing repair, maintenance and investment, and may be more vulnerable to issues such as poor insulation, damp and mould, excess cold, outdated heating systems and structural deterioration.

For Selective Licensing, older stock is most relevant where it overlaps with high levels of private renting. This is because older private rented homes can present greater risks to tenants where landlords have not kept pace with repair, maintenance and energy-efficiency requirements.



source VOA, CTSOP4_1

Appleton and Mersey and Weston have particularly high proportions of pre-1919 homes and sit above the Halton average. This strengthens the case for intervention in these wards, as higher levels of private renting overlap with a greater concentration of older stock.

Central and West Bank also records an above-average proportion of pre-1919 homes, adding to the evidence that older housing stock is a relevant issue in this area.

Bridgewater sits just below the Halton average for pre-1919 homes. However, it remains relevant because it has one of the higher concentrations of private rented housing in the borough. This means that, although older stock is less pronounced than in Appleton or Mersey and Weston, the ward still forms part of the wider pattern of private rented sector risk.

Stock condition evidence

The condition of Halton's housing stock is informed by the BRE Integrated Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database for Halton Borough Council, prepared by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) in 2021. The report was commissioned to provide detailed evidence on the condition, energy efficiency and vulnerability of the borough's housing stock, with a particular focus on private sector housing. It brought together national modelling data with local datasets and provides a stock condition assessment which estimates the likely presence of issues such as Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Category 1 hazards, excess cold, falls hazards, disrepair, fuel poverty, low-income households and energy efficiency standards. This evidence is therefore important in understanding the condition of

private sector stock in Halton and in supporting targeted interventions, including consideration of selective licensing. The table below is reproduced from that report.

The stock condition evidence shows that the four proposed Selective Licensing wards all have significant levels of housing condition risk within the private rented sector. This is particularly important because the data identifies private rented dwellings with Category 1 HHSRS hazards, which are the most serious hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

Across the four wards, the estimated number and proportion of private rented dwellings with Category 1 hazards is substantial:

- Mersey and Weston has the highest number, with 213 private rented sector dwellings estimated to have Category 1 hazards, equivalent to 22% of the private rented sector stock;
- Appleton has 187 private rented sector dwellings with Category 1 hazards, equivalent to 20% of the private rented sector stock;
- Bridgewater has 165 private rented sector dwellings with Category 1 hazards, equivalent to 19% of the private rented sector stock; and
- Central and West Bank has 100 private rented sector dwellings with Category 1 hazards, equivalent to 14% of the private rented sector stock.

This means that all four proposed wards show evidence of poor stock condition in the private rented sector, with around one in five private rented sector homes affected in Mersey and Weston, Appleton and Bridgewater.

The data also shows that fall hazards are a particular issue. These are estimated to affect 121 private rented sector dwellings in Mersey and Weston, 112 in Appleton, 86 in Bridgewater and 58 in Central and West Bank. This suggests that risks within the stock are not limited to thermal comfort or energy performance, but also include safety-related hazards.

Excess cold is recorded at lower levels, but is still present across all four wards. Bridgewater has the highest proportion of private rented sector dwellings affected by excess cold, at 2%, followed by Appleton, Central and West Bank, and Mersey and Weston at around 1% each.

The table also shows wider pressures linked to disrepair, fuel poverty and low income. Low-income households are particularly prominent in the private rented sector across all four wards, ranging from 44% in Appleton to 52% in Central and West Bank. This is important because lower-income tenants may have less ability to manage poor conditions, high heating costs or insecure housing.

Average SimpleSAP ratings are also relatively modest, ranging from 61 in Mersey and Weston to 65 in Bridgewater. Mersey and Weston has the lowest average rating, suggesting weaker overall energy performance within its private rented sector stock.

Private rented sector stock – number and percentage of dwellings for each of the Housing Standards Variables, and average SimpleSAP ratings by ward.

Ward	Dwellings	HHSRS category 1 hazards			Disrepair	Fuel poverty		Low income households	Average SimpleSAP
		All Hazards	Excess cold	Fall hazards		10%	LHC		
Appleton	931	187 (20%)	9 (1%)	112 (12%)	106 (11%)	82 (9%)	186 (20%)	410 (44%)	62
Bridgewater	887	165 (19%)	15 (2%)	86 (10%)	85 (10%)	89 (10%)	167 (19%)	420 (47%)	65
Central and West Bank	700	100 (14%)	5 (1%)	58 (8%)	54 (8%)	80 (11%)	133 (19%)	363 (52%)	64
Mersey and Weston	975	213 (22%)	14 (1%)	121 (12%)	116 (12%)	107 (11%)	199 (20%)	441 (45%)	61

N.B. the information on hazards refers to the number of dwellings with a hazard of the stated type. Because of this there is likely to be some overlap – for example, some dwellings are likely to have excess cold *and* fall hazards *but this dwelling would only be represented once under ‘all hazards’*. The number of dwellings under ‘all hazards’ can therefore be less than the sum of the excess cold plus fall hazards.

4.5 What is the evidence of deprivation in these wards?

To assess deprivation at ward level, Halton Borough Council reviewed a basket of indicators. This approach was used because deprivation is not captured by one measure alone. It can be reflected through a combination of low income, unemployment, reliance on benefits, poor health, crime, fuel poverty, vacant homes and wider Index of Multiple Deprivation measures.

The indicators used were:

- **Average household income**-This shows the estimated average income of households in each ward. Lower household income is a direct indicator of financial pressure. It can reduce a household's ability to meet rent, bills and other essential costs, and can make it harder to move away from poor-quality housing.
- **Unemployment change**-This considers changes in unemployment levels. Higher or increasing unemployment can indicate weaker access to work, economic insecurity and greater vulnerability to poverty. It can also increase reliance on benefits and reduce household resilience.
- **Housing Benefit claimants**-This shows the number or proportion of households receiving Housing Benefit. Higher levels indicate greater reliance on support to meet housing costs and can point to affordability pressures within the local housing market.
- **Households on Universal Credit**-Universal Credit is paid to households who are on a low income, out of work or unable to work. Higher levels of Universal Credit claimants can indicate wider financial hardship, insecure employment, low wages or unemployment.
- **Residents reporting bad or very bad health**-This measures the proportion of residents who describe their health as bad or very bad. Poor health is both an indicator and consequence of deprivation. It can limit people's ability to work, increase living costs and make households more vulnerable to poor housing conditions.
- **Crime rates**-Recorded crime provides an indication of wider neighbourhood stress and community safety issues. Higher crime levels can affect residents' wellbeing, confidence and sense of security, and may be associated with broader social and economic disadvantage.
- **Fuel poverty**-Fuel poverty occurs where households face difficulty keeping their home adequately warm at a reasonable cost. It is usually linked to low income, poor energy efficiency and high fuel costs. It is particularly relevant to private rented housing where older or poorly maintained homes may be more expensive to heat.
- **IMD extent**-The Index of Multiple Deprivation extent measure shows the proportion of a ward's population living in the most deprived small areas. It helps identify wards where deprivation is not only present but affects a significant share of residents.
- **IMD income scale**-The income scale measures the number of people experiencing income deprivation. It shows the scale of income-related hardship in an area and is useful for identifying where larger numbers of residents are affected.
- **IMD income score**-The income score measures the proportion of people experiencing income deprivation. It helps show the intensity of income deprivation within each ward.

- **Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index, scale and score**, -This measures income deprivation affecting children. The scale shows the number of children affected, while the score shows the proportion of children living in income-deprived families. This is important because child poverty is a strong indicator of wider household disadvantage and can be made worse by poor housing conditions, overcrowding or high housing costs.
- **Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index, scale and score**, -This measures income deprivation affecting older residents. The scale shows the number of older people affected, while the score shows the proportion of older people experiencing income deprivation. Older people on low incomes may be particularly vulnerable to cold homes, poor energy efficiency, poor health and difficulty maintaining or adapting their homes.
- **Vacancy rate** -This measures the proportion of homes that are vacant. Higher vacancy can indicate weaker housing market conditions, poor property condition, low demand or neighbourhood decline. Long-term empty homes can also contribute to wider environmental and community impacts.

Each ward was ranked against the other wards in Halton for each indicator, with a lower rank indicating a higher level of concern. The individual ranks were then added together to produce an overall score for each ward. A lower total score therefore indicates a higher overall level of concern across the basket of indicators. The purpose of this analysis is to identify where deprivation and wider vulnerability are most concentrated, and then consider whether these areas also have high levels of private renting. This is important because the case for Selective Licensing is strongest where private renting overlaps with wider indicators of deprivation and housing stress.

Overall rank	Ward	Total score
1	Central & West Bank	52
2	Halton Lea	55
3	Halton Castle	58
4	Norton South & Preston Brook	91
5	Appleton	97
6	Grange	101
7	Mersey & Weston	119
8	Bridgewater	120
9	Ditton, Hale Village & Halebank	121
10	Hough Green	139
11	Bankfield	155
12	Norton North	162
13	Halton View	177
14	Highfield	208
15	Farnworth	217.5
16	Daresbury, Moore & Sandymoor	223.5
17	Beechwood & Heath	230.5

18	Birchfield	238.5
----	------------	-------

The results show that Central & West Bank has the highest overall level of concern across the ward-level deprivation indicators. It ranks first overall, with the lowest total score, and also has a high proportion of private rented households at around 21.6%. This makes it one of the clearest examples of deprivation and private renting overlapping in the same area.

The other proposed Selective Licensing wards also sit within the more deprived half of Halton's ward ranking. Appleton ranks fifth overall and has the second highest proportion of private renting in the borough, at around 26.1%. Mersey & Weston ranks seventh overall and has the highest proportion of private rented households, at around 27.7%. Bridgewater ranks eighth overall and also has a high private rented sector, at around 23.1%.

The ranking also shows that some wards, such as Halton Lea and Halton Castle, score highly for deprivation but have lower levels of private renting. This is important because deprivation alone is not the basis for the proposed Selective Licensing designation. The focus is on those areas where deprivation overlaps with a high concentration of private rented housing and evidence of housing condition concerns.

4.6 Conclusion

The evidence shows that the proposed Selective Licensing wards are not only areas with high concentrations of private rented housing, but also areas where private renting overlaps with property condition problems and wider deprivation.

The property condition evidence is particularly clear. Between 2020 and 2026, the four proposed full wards, Central and West Bank, Mersey and Weston, Bridgewater and Appleton, accounted for 257 housing condition complaints, representing around 39% of all complaints in Halton. Central and West Bank and Mersey and Weston recorded the highest and second highest number of complaints in the borough, with 78 and 76 complaints respectively. Bridgewater recorded 55 complaints and Appleton recorded 48 complaints.

The stock condition evidence also identifies serious hazards in the private rented sector across all four wards. BRE modelling estimates that 22% of private rented sector homes in Mersey and Weston, 20% in Appleton, 19% in Bridgewater and 14% in Central and West Bank have Category 1 HHSRS hazards. This means that all four wards show evidence of serious housing condition risk within the private rented sector.

The deprivation evidence reinforces the case for targeted intervention. Central and West Bank ranks 1st out of 18 wards for deprivation concern, while Appleton ranks 5th, Mersey and Weston 7th and Bridgewater 8th. This shows that the proposed wards sit within the more deprived half of Halton's ward ranking, while also having some of the borough's highest levels of private renting.

Taken together, the evidence demonstrates that the proposed Selective Licensing wards are areas where high levels of private renting coincide with housing condition complaints, serious stock hazards and wider deprivation. This supports the case for a targeted licensing scheme

focused on the areas where tenants and communities are most exposed to poor housing conditions and related vulnerability.

4.7 The additional proposed locations

In identifying the proposed selective licensing area, the first stage of the analysis considered wards in Halton where the proportion of private rented sector properties is above 19%. These wards provide the clearest basis for considering selective licensing at ward level, because the scale of private renting is sufficiently high to indicate that the private rented sector forms a significant part of the local housing market.

The analysis also considered whether there are smaller geographical areas within wards that do not, as a whole, meet the 19% threshold but have levels of private rented homes above 19% at smaller geographies.

To explore this, the evidence was reviewed at Lower Super Output Area level. Lower Super Output Areas, or LSOAs, are small statistical geographies created by the Office for National Statistics, mainly for Census and local area analysis. They are designed to contain broadly similar population sizes, which makes them useful for comparing conditions between small neighbourhoods. LSOA-level analysis allows the council to identify localised patterns that may not be visible at ward level.

This more detailed analysis identified four LSOAs within Halton Lea, Highfield, Halton View and Ditton, Hale Village and Halebank wards where the level of private rented housing is higher than the current estimate in the 2024/25 English Housing survey of 19%.

These four LSOAs are therefore important because they show that there are concentrated pockets of private renting within wards that would otherwise appear less affected.

The LSOAs and level of private rented sector are:

- | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| • | E01012407 | Halton Lea | 25.6% |
| • | E01012379 | Highfield | 23.0% |
| • | E01012412 | Halton View | 20.7% |
| • | E01012443 | Ditton, Hale Village and Halebank | 19.7% |

Further review of these four LSOAs considered whether they also demonstrated evidence of poor stock condition and/or deprivation.

4.8 What is the evidence of poor property conditions in these LSOAs?

The analysis used a basket of property condition-related indicators to understand where poor housing conditions, energy inefficiency, older stock, market stress, complaints, vacancy and overcrowding pressures overlap across Halton's LSOAs.

Each LSOA was ranked against all other LSOAs in Halton for each indicator. A rank of 1 represents the highest level of concern for that indicator. The individual indicator ranks were then added together to produce an overall score. A lower overall score indicates that an LSOA ranks more highly across the basket of indicators and therefore shows a stronger concentration of property condition related pressures.

The indicators used were:

- **Private rented sector concentration**-This measures the proportion of households in the LSOA living in the private rented sector. It is important because Selective Licensing can only be justified where there is a high proportion of private rented housing. A higher private rented sector concentration also means that any property condition issues are likely to affect a larger number of private tenants.
- **HHSRS Category 1 hazards**-This measures the estimated number and proportion of homes with Category 1 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. Category 1 hazards are the most serious housing hazards and provide direct evidence of poor housing conditions.
- **Excess cold**-This measures homes estimated to have an excess cold hazard. It is relevant because cold homes can affect health and wellbeing, particularly for older people, children and residents with existing health conditions.
- **Fall hazards**-This measures homes estimated to have fall hazards. Falls are one of the key risks identified through the HHSRS and can indicate issues with layout, stairs, surfaces, access or poor internal conditions.
- **Disrepair**-This measures properties with estimated disrepair issues. Disrepair is a direct indicator of poor property condition and can point to inadequate maintenance, ageing stock or poor property management.
- **Wall energy efficiency**-This measures homes where wall energy performance is weaker. Poor wall efficiency can contribute to heat loss, higher heating costs and cold living conditions.
- **Window energy efficiency**-This measures homes with poorer window energy performance. Poor windows can contribute to heat loss, draughts, damp, condensation and higher fuel costs.
- **Roof energy efficiency**-This measures homes with poorer roof energy performance. Roof heat loss is an important factor in overall energy efficiency and thermal comfort.
- **Main heating energy efficiency**-This measures homes with weaker heating system performance. Inefficient heating can increase energy costs and make it more difficult for households to keep homes warm.
- **EPC rating D or worse**-This measures the proportion of homes with an EPC rating of D or below. This is a useful summary indicator of weaker energy performance and potential fuel poverty risk.
- **Long-term vacancy rate**-This measures homes that have been empty for a longer period. Higher vacancy can indicate weaker housing market conditions, poor property condition or neighbourhood decline.
- **Private rented sector complaints**-This measures complaints linked to private rented housing. Complaint data is useful because it reflects issues reported by tenants or residents, including problems with repair, maintenance, management or housing standards.

- **Pre-1919 housing stock**-This measures the proportion of homes built before 1919. Older homes are more likely to require repair, maintenance and investment, and may be more vulnerable to damp, excess cold, poor insulation and structural deterioration.
- **Pre-1944 housing stock**-This provides a wider measure of older housing stock. Homes built before 1944 may still be more likely to have poorer thermal performance, ageing components and higher maintenance requirements.
- **Private rented sector overcrowding**-This measures overcrowding within the private rented sector. Overcrowding can indicate pressure in the lower-cost rented market and may contribute to poor health, stress and unsuitable living conditions.

The results are set out below:

LSOA	Ward	Overall stock condition rank	Summary
E01012407	Halton Lea	4 out of 80	Very strong evidence of concern across the stock condition basket
E01012379	Highfield	20 out of 80	High private rented sector concentration with a clear level of stock condition concern
E01012412	Halton View	41 out of 80	Above-average private rented sector concentration, but more moderate overall stock condition ranking
E01012443	Ditton, Hale Village and Halebank	43 out of 80	Above-average private rented sector concentration, but more moderate overall stock condition ranking

The results show that E01012407 in Halton Lea has the greatest level of concern among the four LSOAs. It ranks 4th out of 80 LSOAs, placing it among the areas of highest concern for stock condition indicator. It also has a high private rented sector concentration, with around 25.6% of households living in the private rented sector. This indicates a clear overlap between private renting and stock condition risk.

E01012379 in Highfield also shows a notable level of concern. It ranks 20th out of 80 LSOAs. The LSOA has a private rented sector rate of around 23.0%, which is above the Halton average. This suggests that the area combines a relatively high private rented sector concentration with evidence of stock condition pressures.

E01012412 in Halton View ranks 41st out of 80 LSOAs, placing it around the middle of the overall stock condition ranking. This means the stock condition indicators are less severe than in Halton Lea and Highfield. However, the LSOA still has a high private rented sector concentration, at around 20.7%.

E01012443 in Ditton, Hale Village and Halebank ranks 43rd out of 80 LSOAs, also placing it around the middle of the stock condition ranking. Its private rented sector concentration is around 19.7%, which remains above the Halton average. As with Halton View, the stock condition indicators are more moderate.

4.9 What is the evidence of deprivation in these LSOAs?

This analysis uses the same methodology as the property conditions criteria. This approach avoids relying on a single measure of deprivation and instead provides a broader view of local conditions. The deprivation-related basket of indicators used in the LSOA ranking are the same as those used for the ward analysis.

The results are set out below:

LSOA	Ward	Deprivation rank out of 80 LSOAs	Summary
E01012407	Halton Lea	13 out of 80	Highest level of deprivation concern among the four LSOAs
E01012412	Halton View	31 out of 80	Clear deprivation concern
E01012379	Highfield	38 out of 80	Moderate level of deprivation concern, with high private rented sector concentration
E01012443	Ditton, Hale Village and Halebank	47 out of 80	Lower deprivation concern than the other three, but still above-average private rented sector concentration

The LSOA-level deprivation analysis shows that E01012407 in Halton Lea has the greatest level of concern among the four LSOAs. It ranks 13th out of 80 LSOAs, meaning it is among the more deprived neighbourhoods in Halton. It also has a high private rented sector concentration, with around 25.6% of households living in the private rented sector. This indicates a clear overlap between private renting and wider deprivation.

E01012412 in Halton View also shows a clear level of deprivation concern. It ranks 31st out of 80 LSOAs and has a private rented sector rate of around 20.7%, which is above the Halton average. This suggests that the area combines a relatively high private rented sector concentration with wider indicators of household and neighbourhood vulnerability.

E01012379 in Highfield ranks 38th out of 80 LSOAs. Its deprivation ranking is more moderate than Halton Lea and Halton View, but the area has a high private rented sector concentration, at around 23.0%.

E01012443 in Ditton, Hale Village and Halebank ranks 47th out of 80 LSOAs, which indicates that deprivation is less pronounced than in the other three LSOAs. However, its private rented sector concentration is around 19.7%, which is above the Halton average and close to the 20% threshold.

4.10 Conclusion

The LSOA analysis identified four smaller areas where private renting is above the 19% threshold, even though the wider wards do not meet the threshold for consideration at ward level. These were:

- E01012407 in Halton Lea;
- E01012379 in Highfield;
- E01012412 in Halton View; and
- E01012443 in Ditton, Hale Village and Halebank.

Each of these areas was reviewed against the wider evidence on stock condition and deprivation to determine whether inclusion in the proposed Selective Licensing designation would be justified.

The evidence shows that E01012407 in Halton Lea has a high concentration of private renting and also scores highly for both stock condition and deprivation concerns. However, the higher level of private rented housing in this LSOA is largely attributable to one specific building owned by a landlord that works in partnership with the council. This provides an alternative route for monitoring management standards and stock condition. The council therefore has a level of oversight and engagement in this location which means Selective Licensing is not considered necessary. This conclusion is based on council intelligence about ownership and management arrangements in this location.

E01012412 in Halton View and E01012443 in Ditton, Hale Village and Halebank both have above-average levels of private renting. However, the wider evidence does not show the same level of combined concern around stock condition and deprivation. Their stock condition rankings are more moderate, and the overall evidence does not indicate that the issues are sufficiently concentrated to justify inclusion within the proposed designation.

By contrast, E01012379 in Highfield has a high private rented sector concentration, at around 23.0%, and shows evidence of both stock condition concern and wider deprivation. It ranks 20th out of 80 LSOAs for stock condition concern and 38th out of 80 LSOAs for deprivation concern. Unlike Halton Lea, there is no alternative partnership or oversight arrangement that would provide a comparable route for monitoring and managing the private rented sector in this area.

On this basis, only E01012379 in Highfield is considered to meet the combined criteria of a significant concentration of private rented housing alongside evidence of poor stock condition and deprivation. It is therefore proposed for inclusion in the Selective Licensing designation.

5. How Selective Licensing would address poor property conditions and deprivation

5.1 What are the Benefits of Selective Licensing?

Selective Licensing schemes are designed to deliver improvements across the private rented sector by ensuring that landlords meet required standards of property condition and management. Licensing provides a proactive framework that helps councils identify poor-quality housing, tackle unsafe or badly managed accommodation, and raise standards for tenants and communities.

Selective Licensing is not intended to penalise responsible landlords. Instead, it creates a fair and consistent regulatory environment, supports good practice, and enables targeted enforcement action against the small minority of landlords who fail to comply with their legal responsibilities.

The benefits of Selective Licensing extend across multiple groups, including tenants, landlords, local neighbourhoods, and the council itself.

5.2 Benefits for tenants

Safer, better-quality homes

Selective licensing would help ensure that privately rented homes in the designated areas are safe, well managed and meet legal standards. This includes tackling issues such as damp and mould, excess cold, fire risks, unsafe electrics, disrepair and other serious hazards. A licensing scheme would give the council a more proactive role in checking standards. This means poor conditions could be identified and addressed earlier, rather than only being investigated when a tenant feels able to make a complaint.

More protection for tenants in vulnerable circumstances

Some private renters may be on low incomes, have health conditions, live with disabilities, or have limited housing choices. In areas where poor property conditions overlap with deprivation, licensing can provide additional safeguards by ensuring landlords meet clear standards and by giving the council better routes to intervene where homes are unsafe or poorly managed.

Clearer information about rights and responsibilities

Licensing can help tenants understand what standards their home should meet, what they can expect from their landlord, and where they can go for help if something is wrong. This is particularly important in areas where tenants may be less confident about reporting poor conditions or challenging poor landlord practice.

Better health and wellbeing

Improving housing conditions can reduce the impact of cold, damp, unsafe or poorly maintained homes. This can support better physical and mental health, particularly for households already experiencing financial pressure, fuel poverty, poor health or other forms of disadvantage.

5.3 Benefits for responsible landlords

Fairer conditions for good landlords

Selective licensing helps ensure that landlords who maintain their properties and manage them responsibly are not undercut by landlords who fail to invest in their homes or meet basic legal standards.

Support to meet legal requirements

Licensing can help landlords understand and comply with their duties around property safety, repairs, energy efficiency, tenancy management and wider housing standards. This is particularly important where older or poorer-condition stock may require more active repair and maintenance.

Clear standards for everyone

Licence conditions set out what landlords are expected to do. This creates a clearer and more consistent framework for property condition, management and tenant support across the designated areas.

Better communication with the council

A licensing scheme would create more regular contact between landlords and the council. This can help resolve problems earlier, provide opportunities for advice and guidance, and support landlords to improve properties before issues become more serious.

A stronger local private rented sector

Raising standards in areas affected by poor property conditions and deprivation can improve confidence in private renting locally. It can also help improve the reputation of responsible landlords and support a more stable, better-managed private rented sector.

5.4 Benefits for communities

Reduced impact of poor-quality rented homes

Poorly maintained rented homes can affect not only tenants, but also the wider neighbourhood. Licensing can help address visible disrepair, poorly maintained buildings, unsafe conditions, waste issues and other signs of poor management that can affect confidence in an area.

Cleaner and better-maintained neighbourhoods

By setting clearer expectations for landlords, selective licensing can help improve the external condition of properties, waste storage, garden maintenance and general property management. This is particularly important in areas where deprivation and poor housing conditions overlap.

Support for healthier and more resilient communities

Poor housing can intensify existing disadvantage by contributing to cold homes, fuel poverty, damp and mould, stress and poor health. Improving private rented homes can therefore

support wider efforts to tackle inequality and improve health and wellbeing in the most affected areas.

More stable neighbourhoods

When rented homes are safe, warm and well managed, tenants are more likely to feel settled and able to remain in their homes. This can help support more stable communities, particularly in areas where households may already face financial pressures or limited housing options.

Support for wider improvement and regeneration priorities

Improving the quality and management of private rented homes can support wider neighbourhood improvement, regeneration and public health objectives. Better housing conditions can help improve confidence in local areas and reduce the negative impacts associated with poor-quality housing.

5.5 Benefits for Halton Borough Council

A better understanding of the private rented sector

Selective licensing would give the council clearer information about private rented properties and landlords in the designated areas. This would help build a fuller picture of the sector and identify where poor property conditions, low energy efficiency or poor management are most likely to occur.

A more proactive approach to poor housing conditions

Licensing would help the council move beyond a system that relies mainly on tenants reporting problems. It would provide a framework for identifying, inspecting and addressing poor conditions in areas where the evidence shows that risks are higher.

Better targeting of enforcement resources

By improving intelligence about landlords, properties and conditions, licensing can help the council focus its time and resources on the homes and landlords where intervention is most needed. This is especially important where poor housing conditions overlap with deprivation and household vulnerability.

Earlier intervention before problems escalate

Licence conditions provide a practical way to require improvements and address poor management. This can help resolve issues earlier, reduce the risk of hazards becoming more serious, and support better outcomes for tenants.

Stronger partnership working

Licensing can support closer working between housing, environmental health, public health, community safety, fire and rescue services, and other partners where poor housing conditions are linked to health, deprivation or wider neighbourhood concerns.

Longer-term improvements and reduced pressure on services

By improving property conditions and management standards, selective licensing can help reduce future demand on council services, including environmental health, housing options,

homelessness prevention, public health and neighbourhood services. This supports a more preventative approach to tackling the wider impacts of poor-quality private rented housing.

6. Proposed Licence Conditions

If the Selective Licensing scheme is introduced, all privately rented properties within the designated locations of:

- Central and West Bank ward
- Appleton ward
- Mersey and Weston ward
- Bridgewater ward
- LSOA E01012379 in Highfield

(unless legally exempt) will be required to operate in accordance with licence conditions set by Halton Borough Council under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004.

Licence conditions are a key mechanism through which the council can ensure that privately rented homes are safe, well managed, and properly maintained. They place clear, enforceable responsibilities on landlords and managing agents to meet defined standards relating to property condition, tenancy management and the prevention of anti-social behaviour.

The proposed conditions are designed to:

- Ensure properties are free from serious hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS);
- Improve standards of property repair, maintenance and energy efficiency;
- Promote effective and responsible tenancy management; and
- Protect the health, safety and wellbeing of tenants and neighbouring residents.

All licence conditions will be proportionate, evidence-led and directly linked to the issues identified within the proposed designation areas, particularly poor property conditions and deprivation. Breach of licence conditions may result in enforcement action, including civil penalties or prosecution.

6.1 Summary of Proposed Selective Licensing Conditions

If the Selective Licensing scheme is introduced, landlords and managing agents of licensable properties in the proposed designation areas would need to comply with a set of licence conditions. These conditions are intended to ensure that privately rented homes are safe, well managed, properly maintained and suitable for occupation throughout the life of the licence.

The proposed conditions include mandatory requirements relating to gas safety, electrical safety, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, furniture safety, tenant references and written tenancy or licence agreements. Landlords would be required to hold relevant safety certificates and provide them to the council when requested.

The conditions also include requirements relating to property standards. Landlords would need to ensure that properties are free from Category 1 hazards under the Housing Health

and Safety Rating System, fit for human habitation, properly maintained and not overcrowded. Tenants would need to be given clear information about how to report repairs and what to do in an emergency.

Where a property is a House in Multiple Occupation that is not already subject to mandatory HMO licensing, the licence holder would need to comply with the relevant HMO management regulations and the council's amenity standards for HMOs. This means smaller HMOs covered by the Selective Licensing scheme would still be expected to meet appropriate standards for safety, facilities and management.

The proposed conditions also cover external areas, waste management and security. Landlords would be expected to keep the exterior of properties in reasonable condition, provide suitable waste and recycling facilities, give tenants information about refuse collection arrangements, and ensure that previous tenants' waste is removed at the start of a new tenancy.

Landlords would also need to comply with tenancy deposit protection requirements and take reasonable steps to respond to nuisance or anti-social behaviour linked to their property. This would include co-operating with Halton Borough Council and Cheshire Police where issues are identified.

The licence conditions also require landlords to keep the council informed of changes in ownership, management or contact details, allow licence compliance inspections, and ensure that either the licence holder or managing agent is permanently resident in the United Kingdom.

The full proposed licence conditions are available here:

Appendix 3

The council is seeking views on whether the proposed licence conditions are reasonable, proportionate and appropriate for improving property standards and management in the proposed Selective Licensing areas.

7. Proposed Licensing Fees

7.1 Fee Proposal

Licence applicants will be required to pay a fee for each property that requires a licence under the proposed Halton Selective Licensing Scheme.

The proposed selective licence fee is:

£685 per property

This fee covers the full licence period, which will usually be up to five years. To help applicants and tenants understand the scale of the fee, the equivalent cost is approximately:

- £137 per year
- £11.41 per month
- £2.63 per week

These figures are provided for illustrative purposes only. The licence fee is payable in line with the council's fee payment arrangements and is not charged as a weekly or monthly payment.

Licences will be granted for the duration of the scheme, up to five years, unless the council has concerns about the management, use, condition or occupation of the property. In such cases, a licence may be granted for a shorter period.

Where enforcement action is taken, a licence may be varied or revoked. If a licence is revoked and the property continues to be rented out, a new application will be required, and the full fee will be payable at the prevailing rate.

Licences are not transferable. Where there is a change of licence holder, a new application and fee will be required.

Full payment must be received and cleared before a licence is issued.

7.2 Fee Split

In accordance with legal requirements, the fee will be split into two parts:

Part A

Payable upon submission of the application.

This covers the costs of processing the application and determining whether the proposed licence holder is a fit and proper person and whether the application meets statutory requirements.

If the application is refused, rejected or withdrawn, the Part A fee will not be refunded.

Part B

Payable once the council has assessed the application and decided to grant the licence.

This covers the costs of administering, monitoring, inspecting and enforcing the licensing scheme over its duration.

If the council decides to refuse the licence application, only the Part A fee will be payable.

7.3 Proposed Fee Amounts

Type of Licence	Part A Fee	Part B Fee	Total Fee	Approx. annual equivalent	Approx. monthly equivalent	Approx. weekly equivalent
Selective Licence	£310	£375	£685	£137	£11.41	£2.63

The annual, monthly and weekly equivalent figures are included to show the cost of the licence spread across the proposed five-year scheme period. They do not change the payment arrangements for the licence fee.

7.4 Proposed Discounts

The Council proposes to offer a £100 discount on the standard £685 licence fee to applicants who are current accredited members of the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA). This would reduce the licence fee payable to £585.

To qualify for the discount, applicants must provide valid evidence of current NRLA membership and accreditation when submitting a complete licence application. The discount will not be applied retrospectively where evidence is provided after the application has been submitted.

7.5 How the Fees Have Been Calculated

The proposed licence fee has been calculated to ensure that the scheme is cost-neutral to the council. The council is not permitted to generate a surplus from licensing fees.

The fee reflects:

- the estimated number of licensable properties within the designation;
- staffing costs required to administer and enforce the scheme;
- inspection and compliance activity;
- legal and enforcement costs;
- IT systems and database management;
- ongoing monitoring and intelligence-led enforcement; and
- inflationary pressures over the life of the scheme.

The council has modelled the projected income based on the estimated number of properties requiring a licence.

8. Properties Included and Exemptions

The proposed Selective Licensing scheme would apply to all privately rented properties within the designated locations of:

- Central and West Bank ward
- Appleton ward
- Mersey and Weston ward
- Bridgewater ward
- LSOA E01012379 in Highfield

unless the property:

- Is already subject to mandatory HMO licensing under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004; or
- Is exempt from Selective Licensing under statutory regulations.

Selective Licensing applies to most privately rented single household dwellings and smaller shared properties, including smaller HMOs that are not required to be licensed under the mandatory HMO licensing regime. HMOs that are already subject to mandatory HMO licensing under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 are excluded from the Selective Licensing scheme.

However, certain property types are exempt by law.

Exemptions from Selective Licensing are set out in The Selective Licensing of Houses (Specified Exemptions) (England) Order 2006. These include, but are not limited to:

- Properties let by public sector bodies (for example, local authorities and housing associations);
- Buildings where the landlord is a registered social housing provider;
- Holiday lets;
- Certain business tenancies;
- Properties subject to other specific statutory controls.

A full list of exemptions can be found at:

The Selective Licensing of Houses (Specified Exemptions) (England) Order 2006:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/370/contents/made>

9. Alternatives to Licensing

Halton Borough Council has considered other courses of action, or alternatives to the proposed Selective Licensing scheme. However, the council does not consider that these alternatives would provide an effective means of tackling the poor housing conditions and related issues identified in the proposed designation areas.

The table below summarises the main alternatives considered. The Renters' Rights Act is considered separately because it forms part of the changing national regulatory framework.

Alternative measure	Strengths	Weaknesses
Use of Part 1 Housing Act 2004 enforcement powers, including HHSRS, and public health powers	Following an investigation, formal statutory notices can be served requiring improvements to be carried out to a property. The council can carry out works in default if a notice is not complied with. Landlords may be prosecuted if they fail to comply with a notice, or the council may impose a civil penalty on the person responsible.	These powers do not place an obligation on landlords to be proactive in improving conditions. Formal action can be slow, with appeal provisions against many types of notices, which can delay compliance. Works in default can be effective, but they are expensive and time-consuming for the council, with a risk that not all costs are recovered. Successful prosecutions and civil penalties do not in themselves secure improvements in property conditions, and the council's costs in pursuing legal action may not always be met in full.
Rely on prosecutions and civil penalties for housing offences	Provides landlords with a disincentive to keep properties in poor condition.	These powers do not require landlords to be proactive in improving conditions. Successful prosecutions or civil penalties do not in themselves secure improvements in property conditions. Without licensing, the council has a reduced ability to impose civil penalties in relation to licensing-related breaches.
Wider promotion of voluntary accreditation schemes to improve management	For landlords who take part, accreditation can increase knowledge, competence and the ability to manage properties effectively.	Accreditation depends on voluntary landlord engagement. Landlords who are unwilling to engage, or who are responsible for poor conditions or poor

practices and standards		management, are less likely to take part.
Improvement grants to improve sub-standard properties	Grants can subsidise improvement works, helping to improve standards and providing benefits for landlords and tenants.	Grant funding is generally limited, and the council has restricted scope to offer grants unless external funding is secured. In many cases, grants would fund works that landlords should already be carrying out to meet their legal obligations. Any grant scheme would be discretionary and would rely on voluntary landlord engagement.

9.1 The Renters' Rights Act and the continued need for Selective Licensing

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 has strengthened the wider regulatory framework for the private rented sector. The first phase came into force on 1 May 2026³ and included major tenancy reforms, including the abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions, the introduction of assured periodic tenancies, changes to possession grounds, limits on rent increases, restrictions on rental bidding and rent in advance, and stronger enforcement powers for local councils. The Government's implementation roadmap also confirms that the Private Rented Sector Database is expected to be introduced from late 2026, with the private rented sector Landlord Ombudsman and future reforms, including the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law for the private rented sector, to follow.

These reforms are welcomed and will help improve rights, transparency and enforcement across the private rented sector. However, they do not remove the need for selective licensing in areas where there is a clear local concentration of problems. Government guidance states that selective licensing remains a valuable tool when used appropriately and combined with other measures. It also explains that selective licensing enables local authorities to target improvements in standards and safety in areas affected by poor housing quality, high deprivation and anti-social behaviour, while the Private Rented Sector Database is intended to improve access to information about privately rented properties and ownership.⁴

The proposed scheme would therefore complement national reform rather than duplicate it. The Renters' Rights Act will provide stronger rights and a broader national framework, while selective licensing would provide a targeted, area-based mechanism for the proposed locations. This would allow the council to focus landlord engagement, property inspection, compliance checks and enforcement activity in the wards where the evidence shows the clearest overlap between high private rented sector concentration, poor property conditions, deprivation and tenant vulnerability.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/renters-rights-act-2025-implementation-roadmap/implementing-the-renters-rights-act-2025-our-roadmap-for-reforming-the-private-rented-sector>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-renters-rights-act/guide-to-the-renters-rights-act>

9.2 Proportionality of Selective Licensing

The proposed Selective Licensing designation is:

- **Targeted** – it applies only to four wards and one LSOA where evidence demonstrates higher levels of poor housing conditions and deprivation;
- **Time-limited** – licences would be granted for a fixed period (up to five years);
- **Cost-recovery based** – fees will reflect the cost of administering and enforcing the scheme only;
- **Complementary** – licensing will operate alongside existing enforcement powers rather than replacing them.

The council considers that Selective Licensing represents a practical response because:

- It introduces proactive regulation in defined high-risk areas;
- It requires landlords to demonstrate compliance before serious issues arise;
- It creates enforceable licence conditions tailored to address identified risks;
- It supports wider council objectives relating to housing quality, public health, and neighbourhood improvement.

9.3 Preferred Option

Having considered all reasonable alternatives, Halton Borough Council believes that introducing a Selective Licensing scheme is:

- Necessary to address the identified concentration of poor property conditions and deprivation;
- Proportionate in scope and duration;
- More effective than reliance on existing reactive enforcement alone;
- Consistent with statutory guidance under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004.

For these reasons, this is the council's preferred option.

10. Scheme Objectives

Selective Licensing is one of the ways Halton Borough Council can support its wider ambitions to improve housing conditions, reduce health inequalities and strengthen local neighbourhoods.

The proposed scheme responds to evidence that, in parts of the borough, concentrations of private rented housing are linked with poorer property conditions, older housing stock, lower energy efficiency and, in most of the proposed areas, higher levels of deprivation. The council's evidence identifies four wards with private renting above 19%, alongside one smaller Lower Super Output Area in Highfield where private renting is also concentrated, and property condition and deprivation indicators are particularly poor.

The proposed designation areas are:

- Central and West Bank ward
- Appleton ward
- Mersey and Weston ward
- Bridgewater ward
- LSOA E01012379 in Highfield

Good quality housing is essential to people's health, wellbeing and independence. Where poor housing conditions are found alongside deprivation, the impacts can be wider and more serious. Cold, damp, unsafe or poorly maintained homes can contribute to ill health, fuel poverty and reduced quality of life. They can also affect confidence in neighbourhoods and add pressure to local services.

The council already has powers to respond to poor housing conditions. However, the current approach often depends on tenants reporting disrepair or hazards before action can be taken. In areas where residents may be vulnerable, or where there are wider pressures linked to deprivation, some tenants may be less likely to complain or may not know how to seek help.

Selective Licensing would allow the council to take a more proactive approach. Landlords of licensable properties in the proposed areas would be required to apply for a licence and comply with conditions relating to property standards and management. This would help the council to check that private rented homes are safe, properly managed and maintained throughout the licence period.

The proposed scheme is focused on improving property conditions and, in most of the proposed areas, helping to reduce the risk that poor housing contributes to health inequalities. At this stage, the evidence does not support introducing a scheme specifically on the grounds of crime or anti-social behaviour, although the council will keep these issues under review.

This approach is consistent with Halton's wider housing and public health priorities. The council's proposal states that selective licensing would help improve and maintain standards in the private rented sector, support safer and healthier living environments, contribute to

tackling inequality, and help ensure private rented properties meet required energy efficiency standards.

Government guidance confirms that selective licensing can be used where an area is experiencing poor housing conditions or high levels of deprivation, provided the statutory requirements are met. It also states that, where a council is considering a designation on grounds such as poor housing conditions or deprivation, the area must have a high proportion of private rented housing. For the purposes of this evidence assessment, the council has used the 2024–25 English Housing Survey national private rented sector figure of 19% as a benchmark for identifying areas with a high proportion of private rented housing.

By introducing Selective Licensing in the areas where the evidence shows the greatest need, Halton Borough Council aims to raise standards, support responsible landlords, protect tenants and ensure that private rented housing contributes positively to healthier, more stable and better-managed neighbourhoods.

Scheme Objectives and Outcomes

Raise standards in private rented homes	Licensed properties are expected to meet appropriate safety, repair and management standards. Serious hazards are identified and addressed, including issues relating to damp and mould, excess cold, fire safety, electrical safety, heating, security and general disrepair. Over time, this should support a measurable improvement in the condition of private rented homes in the proposed designation areas.
Move towards more proactive regulation	The council is better able to identify poor conditions before problems escalate. Licensing provides a structured framework for property checks, risk-based inspections and targeted enforcement. This reduces reliance on tenants having to report disrepair before action can be taken.
Improve health, wellbeing and safety for tenants	Tenants benefit from safer, warmer and better-managed homes. Reducing serious housing hazards should help limit the health impacts associated with cold, damp, unsafe or poorly maintained accommodation. This supports the council 's wider aim of ensuring housing contributes positively to residents' health and quality of life.
Reduce the impact of poor housing in areas affected by deprivation	Better housing conditions help reduce the risk that poor-quality accommodation reinforces wider disadvantage. Improvements to warmth, safety, energy efficiency and property management should support residents who may already be experiencing financial pressure, fuel poverty, health inequalities or other forms of vulnerability.
Strengthen landlord responsibility and compliance	Landlords are required to demonstrate that they are suitable licence holders and that effective management arrangements are in place. Licence conditions create clear expectations and provide a basis for action where landlords fail to meet their responsibilities. Good landlords benefit from clearer guidance, improved communication and a more consistent regulatory environment.
Support a fairer and more transparent private rented sector	A licensing scheme creates better information about privately rented properties in the designated areas. This improves the council 's understanding of the sector, supports engagement with landlords and helps ensure that compliant landlords are not disadvantaged by those operating below acceptable standards.
Improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty risks	Licensed properties are expected to comply with relevant energy efficiency requirements, including minimum EPC standards unless a lawful exemption applies. Improved compliance should help reduce excess cold, support warmer homes and lower the risk of tenants facing avoidable heating costs.
Contribute to better neighbourhood conditions	Better-managed rented homes help support cleaner, safer and more stable neighbourhoods. Improved management should reduce issues linked to waste storage, overcrowding, poor maintenance, external

	disrepair and weak property management. This can help improve confidence in local areas and support wider neighbourhood renewal.
Make better use of council resources and intelligence	Licensing provides a stronger evidence base on the location, ownership, condition and management of private rented homes. This enables the council to prioritise inspections, target enforcement more effectively, identify repeat non-compliance earlier, and coordinate activity with wider housing, public health and neighbourhood priorities.
Support responsible landlords and encourage good practice	The scheme provides a clearer framework for landlords who already meet their responsibilities, while helping others understand and achieve the required standards. Through guidance, engagement and consistent expectations, the council can encourage better property management and stronger relationships with landlords and agents.

11. Alignment with Halton policy context

Halton Borough Council's proposed approach to Selective Licensing sits within a wider programme of housing, health and neighbourhood improvement. It is not being developed as a separate or standalone intervention, but as part of the council's broader commitment to improving housing standards, tackling inequality, supporting safer communities, and protecting the health and wellbeing of residents.

The proposed scheme aligns with, and helps to deliver, the priorities set out in the council's Corporate Plan, Housing and Homelessness strategies, and wider health and wellbeing agenda. These policy and strategy documents share a common focus on improving the quality of homes, reducing deprivation, preventing homelessness, addressing environmental and neighbourhood issues, and creating stronger, more inclusive and sustainable communities.

Selective Licensing offers a focused and practical tool for supporting these wider ambitions in the proposed licensing areas by:

- improving standards of accommodation and property management in the private rented sector;
- helping ensure residents have access to safe, warm and properly maintained homes;
- addressing the effects of poor housing conditions on households living in more deprived areas;
- encouraging good landlord practice and clearer landlord responsibilities; and
- supporting wider outcomes around public health, neighbourhood resilience, community stability and sustainable housing growth.

The sections that follow explain how the proposed Selective Licensing scheme will support and add value to Halton Borough Council's existing strategic priorities. This demonstrates that licensing is part of a coordinated, long-term approach to improving housing conditions and neighbourhood outcomes across the borough.

11.1 The Corporate Plan

Halton Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2024–2029⁵ sets out the council's key priorities and ambitions for residents, communities and businesses over the next five years. It is framed around the theme "Our Community, Our Priorities, Our Future" and identifies six priorities: improving health and wellbeing; building a strong, sustainable local economy; supporting children, young people and families; tackling inequality and helping those most in need; working towards a greener future; and valuing and appreciating Halton and its communities.

Selective licensing would support the Halton Corporate Plan 2024–2029 by:

⁵ [corporateplan.pdf](#)

- Improving health and wellbeing by helping residents live in safer, warmer and better-maintained homes. This supports the Plan's aim for people in Halton to feel safe, be healthy and lead better lives.
- Supporting greater independence by reducing housing hazards that can affect people's ability to remain safely in their homes, particularly older people, families, and residents with health conditions.
- Tackling inequality and supporting those most in need by targeting areas where poor property conditions and deprivation are more concentrated. This aligns with the Plan's commitment to support people more likely to experience poverty, inequality and vulnerability.
- Helping residents access decent and affordable homes by improving standards in the private rented sector and holding landlords to account for property condition and management. The Corporate Plan specifically refers to supporting residents to live in decent and affordable homes, surrounded by safe and thriving communities.
- Strengthening neighbourhoods and communities by addressing poor property management, environmental issues and housing-related problems that can affect neighbourhood stability and quality of life.
- Promoting safer and thriving communities by ensuring private rented homes in the proposed licensing areas are better managed and maintained.
- Supporting a greener future by encouraging improvements to energy efficiency, warmth and housing quality, helping to reduce fuel poverty and the impact of inefficient homes.
- Making better use of partnership working and targeted intervention by providing a practical mechanism for the council to work with landlords, tenants and partners to improve outcomes in the areas where intervention is most needed.

11.2 Halton Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy for Halton 2026–2031⁶ sets out the council's vision for delivering quality, affordable and sustainable homes that support thriving communities, stronger local economies, greater opportunity and fairness. It is structured around four priorities: driving economic growth through housing-led investment; creating inclusive housing markets to promote fairness; supporting independent living and strengthening communities; and promoting healthy homes, thriving communities and resilient neighbourhoods.

Selective licensing would support the Housing Strategy by:

- Raising standards in the private rented sector, which is identified as a clear proposal in the Housing Strategy. The strategy specifically refers to raising standards in the private rented sector for the benefit of tenants and their neighbours.
- Supporting the priority to create inclusive housing markets, by helping improve the quality, stability and fairness of private renting. The strategy recognises that many households who cannot access affordable or social housing rely on the private rented sector, making it a vital part of Halton's housing system.

⁶ [housingstrategy.pdf](#)

- Improving health and wellbeing, by targeting poor property conditions that can affect residents' physical and mental health. The strategy states that good housing is central to good health and commits to improving housing conditions, particularly in the private rented sector.
- Protecting vulnerable and disadvantaged households, because the strategy notes that poor management, insecure tenancies, unaffordable rents and poorly maintained homes can fall most heavily on people already facing disadvantage. Selective licensing would help address these risks by setting clearer expectations for landlords in targeted areas.
- Supporting safer, warmer and healthier homes, by helping ensure landlords meet required standards and by providing a stronger framework for tackling hazards, disrepair and poor management in the private rented sector.
- Reducing inequality, by focusing intervention in areas where poor housing quality, deprivation and wider neighbourhood issues are concentrated. This aligns with the strategy's emphasis on fairness, inclusion and improving outcomes for households most in need.
- Strengthening neighbourhoods and communities, as the Housing Strategy recognises that private rented sector issues such as poor property conditions, tenant turnover and anti-social behaviour can affect wider communities, including neighbouring social housing tenants.
- Supporting better regulation and landlord accountability, by requiring landlords in designated areas to meet clear standards. The strategy itself states that the council is considering selective licensing in wards where housing quality, anti-social behaviour and deprivation continue to affect tenants and wider neighbourhoods.
- Helping deliver the strategy's "healthy homes" priority, by giving the council a practical tool to improve housing conditions in the private rented sector, support energy-related improvements, and link housing intervention with wider health and wellbeing objectives.

11.3 Safer Halton Partnership's Strategy for 2024-27

The Safer Halton Partnership Strategy 2024–2027⁷ sets out the Partnership's approach to improving community safety and reducing crime, disorder and harm across Halton. Its overall aim is to make Halton a safe place to live and work by tackling identified crime and disorder priorities and reducing risks to residents. The strategy also recognises that feeling safe and secure in the home and community contributes to people's health and wellbeing.

The strategy identifies nine priorities:

- Anti-social behaviour;
- Domestic abuse and violence against women and girls;
- Serious and organised crime;

⁷ [Safer-Halton-Partnership-Strategy-2024-2027.pdf](#)

- Integrated offender management;
- Counter-terrorism and Prevent;
- Hate crime;
- Substance misuse;
- Serious violence; and
- Road safety.

Selective licensing would support the Safer Halton Partnership Strategy by:

- Helping to reduce anti-social behaviour⁸, by improving landlord accountability and requiring landlords in designated areas to manage properties and tenancies more effectively.
- Strengthening place-based partnership working, by giving the council, landlords, police and other partners a clearer framework for identifying and responding to housing-related issues in the proposed licensing areas.
- Protecting vulnerable residents, by targeting areas where poor housing conditions, deprivation and community safety issues may overlap.
- Supporting earlier intervention, by enabling the council to identify poor management practices, property condition issues and tenancy-related problems before they escalate into wider neighbourhood concerns.
- Contributing to wider prevention work, by helping create better-managed homes and more stable neighbourhoods, supporting the strategy's broader focus on prevention, protection and reducing harm.

11.4 Halton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The Halton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Summary 2024⁹ sets out evidence on the health, wellbeing, population and wider social conditions affecting people in Halton. It explains that the JSNA is used to assess local health needs and inform commissioning of health, wellbeing and social care services. The document is structured around the One Halton Health and Wellbeing Strategy themes: wider determinants of health, starting well, living well and ageing well.

The JSNA identifies significant health and inequality challenges in Halton. It states that health in Halton is generally worse than the England average, that Halton is one of the most deprived local authorities in England, and that life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are lower

⁸ This is not a primary focus for the designation but can be an ancillary benefit

⁹ [JSNA Summary 2024 DRAFT v3.pdf](#)

than national averages. It also highlights internal inequalities, including a 13-year gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived wards.

The JSNA places strong emphasis on the wider determinants of health, which are the social, economic and environmental conditions that affect people's health. These include income, employment, education, access to green space and the homes people live in. It also notes that lower quality housing, lower income, unemployment and poorer access to services are linked to worse health and lower life expectancy.

Selective licensing would support the JSNA priorities by:

- Improving the wider determinants of health, by tackling poor housing conditions in the private rented sector and supporting residents to live in safer, warmer and better-maintained homes.
- Reducing health inequalities, by targeting intervention in areas where poor property conditions and deprivation are concentrated. This supports the JSNA's focus on the unequal distribution of health outcomes across Halton.
- Supporting vulnerable households, by improving housing conditions for residents who may be more exposed to poor health outcomes, including low-income households, families with children, older people and people with long-term health conditions.
- Helping to prevent ill health, by addressing housing hazards such as excess cold, damp, disrepair and fall risks, all of which can contribute to poorer physical and mental health.
- Supporting children and families, by improving the home environment in which children live. The JSNA highlights the importance of children having the best conditions and environment to support their development and life chances.
- Supporting working-age residents, by recognising that health is shaped by the environment in which people live and work, including good standards of housing. Better housing conditions can support wellbeing, stability and quality of life.
- Supporting older residents to age well, by reducing risks in the home such as excess cold and falls, which are particularly important for older people and those living with health conditions.
- Strengthening partnership action on health and housing, by providing a practical housing-led intervention that supports the JSNA's wider aim of using local evidence to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

12. Further Information

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the council to have “due regard” to its equality aims when exercising its public functions. An Equality Impact Needs Assessment has been carried out as part of these proposals. The results of the EINA are attached as Appendix 4.

13. How to Respond

How to Have Your Say

Halton Borough Council is inviting feedback from residents, tenants, landlords, managing and letting agents, businesses, community groups and partner organisations on the proposed Selective Licensing scheme. We want to hear from anyone who may be affected by these proposals before any final decision is made.

You can respond in any of the following ways:



Complete the Online Survey

A dedicated consultation survey is available online at:

[Selective Licensing](#)

The survey includes a combination of multiple-choice questions and open text boxes to allow you to provide detailed comments.



Email Your Comments

You can send written comments to:

Housing.standards@halton.gov.uk

Please include “Selective Licensing Consultation” in the subject line of your email.



Respond by Post

Written responses can be sent to:

The Housing standards Team Halton Borough Council Environmental Health Department P O Box 317, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 9BZ

All postal responses will be logged and recorded in the same way as online submissions to ensure consistency and transparency in the analysis process.



Telephone Support and Freephone Line

If you are unable to complete the consultation online, or require assistance, you may request help by telephone via:

Freephone: 0800 612 9133

Trained consultation staff will be available to:

- Assist with completing the survey over the phone
- Provide clarification about the proposals
- Arrange for paper copies of the consultation documents



Drop-in Sessions and Stakeholder Forums

The council will hold a number of in-person and/or virtual sessions during the consultation period, providing an opportunity to:

- Speak directly with council officers
- Ask questions about the proposals
- Share your experiences of the private rented sector

Details of dates, venues and booking arrangements will be published at:

[Selective Licensing](#)

Hard copy feedback forms will be available at events for those who prefer to respond in writing.



Consultation Period

The consultation will run for a minimum of **10 weeks**, from:

Monday 3rd August at 12pm to Sunday 18th October 2026 at 11.59pm

All responses received within this period will be reviewed and considered before any final decision is made.

What Happens Next?

Once the consultation has closed:

- All responses will be analysed and summarised;
- A consultation report will be prepared outlining the feedback received and the council's response;
- The report will be published on Halton Borough Council's website;
- A decision will then be taken on whether to introduce the proposed Selective Licensing designation.

The consultation report will be available at:

[Selective Licensing](#)

Accessibility and Alternative Formats

If you require this consultation document in an alternative format (for example large print, audio, or translated versions), please contact:

Lynne.shaw@arc4.co.uk

Halton Borough Council is committed to ensuring that this consultation is inclusive, accessible and representative of the borough's diverse communities.

Glossary

Accredited landlord

A landlord who is a member of a recognised landlord accreditation scheme. Accreditation schemes usually require landlords to meet certain standards of property management, training and good practice.

Additional HMO licensing

A type of property licensing that councils can introduce for Houses in Multiple Occupation that are not already covered by mandatory HMO licensing. Additional licensing applies to HMOs in a designated area where the council has decided that extra regulation is needed.

Anti-social behaviour

Behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to other people. In housing terms, this may include persistent noise, intimidation, harassment, criminal behaviour, nuisance, waste issues or behaviour that affects neighbours and the wider community.

Category 1 hazard

A serious housing hazard identified under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. If a property has a Category 1 hazard, the council has a duty to take appropriate enforcement action. Examples may include serious damp and mould, excess cold, fire risks, dangerous electrics or serious fall hazards.

Category 2 hazard

A housing hazard identified under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System that is less serious than a Category 1 hazard but may still require action to protect the health and safety of occupiers.

Civil penalty

A financial penalty that a council can impose as an alternative to prosecution for certain housing offences. Civil penalties can be used where landlords fail to comply with legal requirements.

Deprivation

A measure of disadvantage affecting people or places. Deprivation can include low income, unemployment, poor health, low educational attainment, poor housing, crime and limited access to services.

Designation

The formal legal process by which a council identifies an area where a licensing scheme will apply. If a Selective Licensing designation is approved, landlords of privately rented homes in that area must apply for a licence unless the property is exempt.

Disrepair

Where a property or part of a property is damaged, defective or not properly maintained. Examples include leaking roofs, defective windows, damp, faulty heating, unsafe stairs, broken doors, poor drainage or damaged walls and ceilings.

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)

A certificate that shows how energy efficient a property is. EPC ratings range from A, which is the most efficient, to G, which is the least efficient. Landlords are usually required to provide a valid EPC when a property is let.

Excess cold

A hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. It refers to homes that are difficult or expensive to heat and where cold conditions may affect the health of occupiers.

Exemption

A situation where a privately rented property does not need a Selective Licence because it is excluded by law. Examples may include some properties let by public bodies, registered providers of social housing, holiday lets and certain business tenancies.

Fit and proper person

A legal test used by councils when deciding whether someone is suitable to hold a property licence or manage rented housing. The council may consider matters such as previous housing offences, fraud, violence, drugs offences, unlawful discrimination or poor property management.

Fuel poverty

A household is usually described as being in fuel poverty when it has difficulty keeping the home adequately warm at a reasonable cost. Fuel poverty is often linked to low income, high energy prices and poor energy efficiency.

Hazard

A risk to the health or safety of people living in or visiting a property. Hazards are assessed under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

HHSRS

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System. This is the statutory system used to assess risks to health and safety in residential properties. It covers hazards such as damp and mould, excess cold, fire, falls, electrical hazards, overcrowding and poor sanitation.

HMO

House in Multiple Occupation. This is usually a property occupied by three or more people forming two or more households who share facilities such as a kitchen, bathroom or toilet. Some HMOs require a mandatory HMO licence.

Household

A household may be one person living alone, a family, a couple, or a group of people living together as one household. For HMO purposes, unrelated sharers may count as separate households.

Housing Act 2004

The main legislation that gives councils powers to regulate housing conditions and introduce property licensing schemes, including mandatory HMO licensing, additional HMO licensing and Selective Licensing.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System

See HHSRS.

Improvement Notice

A formal legal notice served by the council requiring a landlord or property owner to carry out works to remove or reduce housing hazards.

Landlord

A person, company or organisation that owns and rents out a property to tenants.

Letting agent

A person or business acting on behalf of a landlord to let or manage a rented property. This may include advertising the property, arranging tenancies, collecting rent, dealing with repairs or managing tenant contact.

Licence

Formal permission granted by the council allowing a privately rented property to be let within a designated licensing area, subject to conditions.

Licence conditions

Rules attached to a property licence that the licence holder must follow. Conditions may relate to safety certificates, repairs, management standards, waste, anti-social behaviour, tenancy management and property occupation.

Licence holder

The person or organisation legally responsible for holding the property licence and complying with its conditions. This may be the landlord or another person accepted by the council as the most appropriate licence holder.

Licensable property

A privately rented property that must be licensed under the proposed Selective Licensing scheme because it is located within the designated area and is not exempt.

Local Housing Allowance

The rate used to calculate Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit for tenants renting from private landlords. It is based on local rent levels and household size.

Lower quartile rent

The rent level at which 25% of rents are lower and 75% are higher. It is often used as a measure of the cheaper end of the private rented market.

Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)

A small statistical area used by the Office for National Statistics. LSOAs are used to analyse local data and compare small neighbourhoods. In this consultation, one LSOA in Highfield is proposed for inclusion in the Selective Licensing scheme.

Mandatory HMO licensing

A national licensing requirement for larger Houses in Multiple Occupation. Mandatory HMO licensing usually applies where a property is occupied by five or more people forming two or more households and sharing facilities.

Managing agent

A person or business appointed by a landlord to manage a rented property. This may include collecting rent, organising repairs, inspecting the property and dealing with tenants.

Overcrowding

A situation where too many people live in a property for the space and facilities available. Overcrowding may be assessed under the Housing Act 1985 or as a hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

Part 1 Housing Act 2004

The part of the Housing Act 2004 that deals with housing conditions and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

Part 2 Housing Act 2004

The part of the Housing Act 2004 that deals with HMO licensing.

Part 3 Housing Act 2004

The part of the Housing Act 2004 that allows councils to introduce Selective Licensing of privately rented homes in designated areas.

Private rented sector

Homes rented from private landlords. This does not usually include homes rented from the council or registered providers of social housing.

Prohibition Order

A formal legal order that restricts or prevents the use of all or part of a property because of serious hazards or unsafe conditions.

Property condition

The physical state of a property, including repair, safety, warmth, damp, ventilation, heating, structure, facilities and general maintenance.

Registered provider

An organisation registered to provide social housing. Registered providers are often housing associations.

Rent repayment order

An order requiring a landlord to repay rent or Housing Benefit/Universal Credit housing costs where certain housing offences have been committed, including operating an unlicensed property when a licence is required.

Responsible landlord

A landlord who manages and maintains rented properties properly, complies with legal duties, responds to repairs, treats tenants fairly and ensures homes are safe and suitable to live in.

Selective Licensing

A type of property licensing that applies to privately rented homes in a designated area. If introduced, landlords must apply for a licence and comply with licence conditions. Selective Licensing is intended to improve property standards and management in areas where there is evidence of specific problems.

Statutory consultation

A consultation that the council is legally required to carry out before making certain decisions. For Selective Licensing, the council must consult people likely to be affected and consider the responses before deciding whether to introduce a scheme.

Tenant

A person who rents and lives in a property.

Tenancy

The legal arrangement between a landlord and tenant that gives the tenant the right to live in the property, usually in return for rent.

Tenancy deposit protection

A legal requirement for landlords to protect most tenancy deposits in a government-approved scheme and provide prescribed information to the tenant.

Universal Credit

A benefit for people who are on a low income, out of work or unable to work. It can include a housing element to help with rent.

Waste management

The arrangements for storing, presenting and disposing of household waste and recycling. In rented housing, this can include providing bins, giving tenants information about collection days and ensuring waste left by previous tenants is removed.

Works in default

Where the council carries out required works because the person responsible has failed to do so. The council may then seek to recover the cost from the owner or landlord.