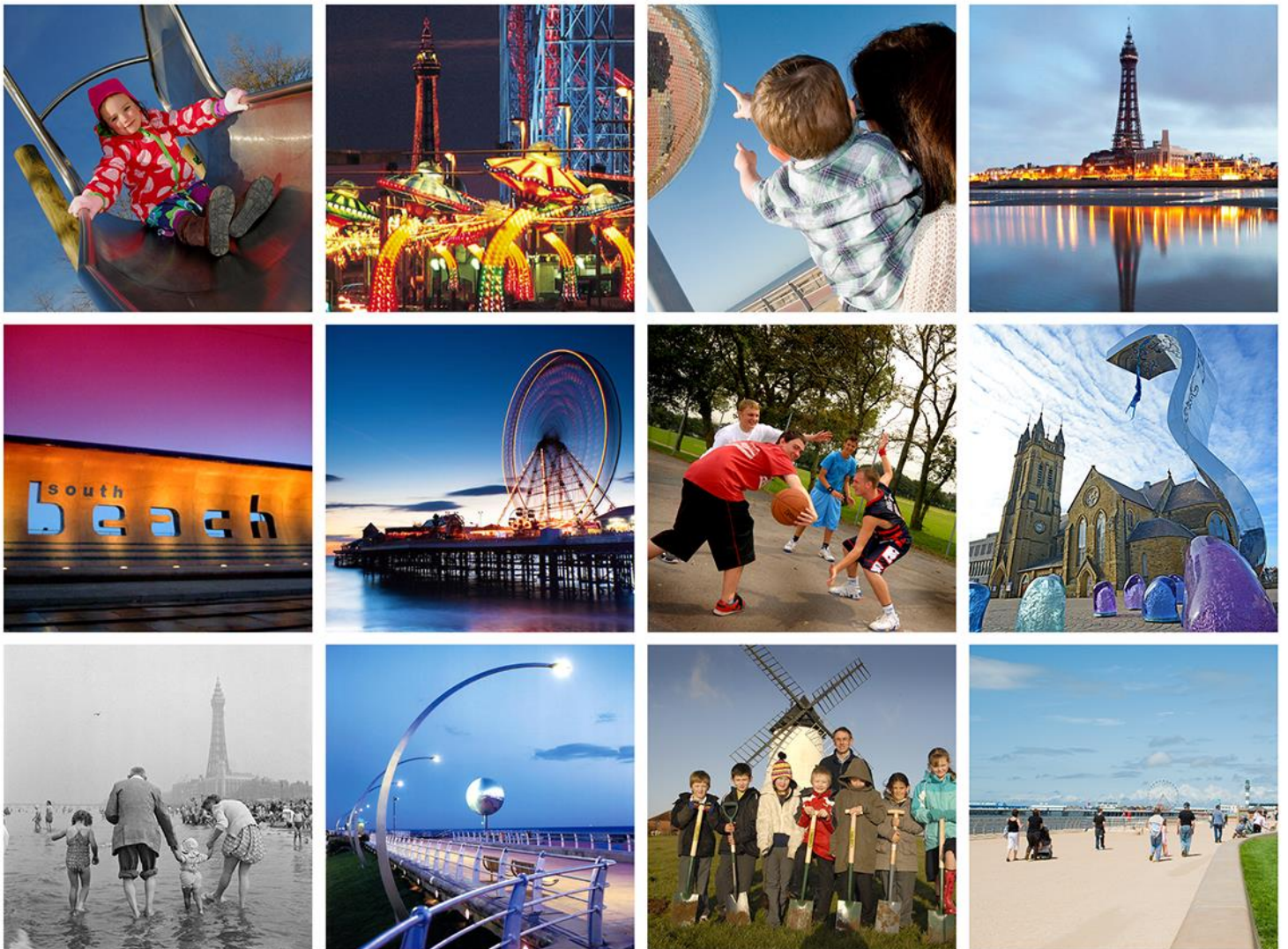


Appendix 3a Proposal to designate a Selective Licensing scheme in the Central area Final Scheme Proposal February 2017

Blackpool Council



Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool

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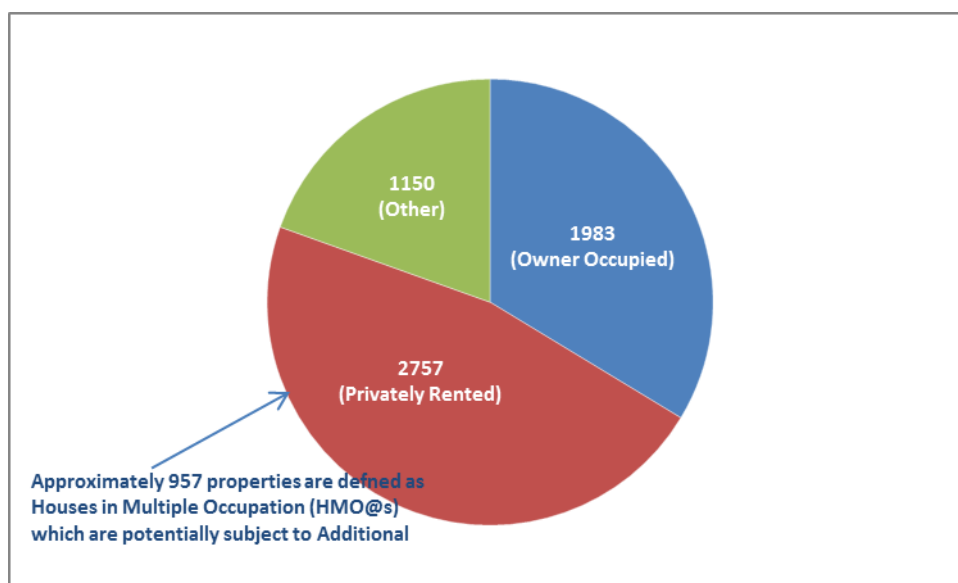
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1. Introduction – About the Designated Area

Blackpool is a British institution, and a global phenomenon – the world’s first mass market seaside resort, with a proud heritage stretching back over 150 years. However, Blackpool is now the site of one of the country’s greatest concentrations of socio-economic deprivation as a consequence of decades of decline in traditional tourism sectors. According to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation Blackpool was ranked the 4th most deprived authority in England in 2015 – up two places from 2010.

The Central area includes parts of three wards, i) Talbot, ii) Brunswick and iii) Bloomfield. The chart below shows a breakdown of the tenure mix within this area. We are satisfied that this is a high proportion of privately rented accommodation and also satisfied that the majority of privately rented properties in this area are occupied either under assured tenancies or licences to occupy.



Blackpool in general has a problem with transience; i.e. the frequent movement of people in the town, particularly within the Central area. Analysis of new Housing Benefit claimants between April 2013 and March 2014 showed the following for each ward:

- Bloomfield - 11% of claimants had a previous address in Blackpool, whilst 89% had a previous address outside of Blackpool
- Brunswick - 16% of claimants had a previous Blackpool address whilst 84% had a previous address outside of Blackpool

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- Talbot - 15% of claimants had a previous address inside Blackpool, whilst 85% had a previous address outside of Blackpool

A recent study of changes to GPs' address registers (over 2 years) found all three wards in the Central area have higher inward migration moves than the overall Blackpool average. The net population change for each of the three areas gave the three highest increases in population of any Council wards.

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2. What is Selective Licensing?

Selective Licensing is a regulatory tool available to Local Authorities to enable the improvement the management and conditions of properties within the privately rented sector (parts 2 and 3 of the Housing Act 2004).

There are two types of scheme that can be considered:

1. Additional Licensing - enables Local Authorities to address issues in smaller Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) with relation to property conditions (internal and external) as well as management conditions.
2. Selective Licensing – enables Local Authorities to address the management of properties and tackle ASB.

Guidance states that if a selective licensing designation will impact more than 20% of privately rented properties within the Borough then the Local Authority must seek Secretary of State Confirmation. Given the South Beach and Claremont existing selective licensing schemes, a further designation within the proposed area will mean more than 20% of properties within Blackpool will be within selective licensing areas and therefore Blackpool Council will need to seek Secretary of State Confirmation.

Central Government introduced further criteria to enable Local Authorities to designate a selective licensing scheme (2015). The guidelines state that a selective licensing designation *“may be made if the area to which it relates satisfies one or more of the following conditions:*

- *low housing demand*
- *a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour*
- *poor property conditions*
- *high levels of migration*
- *high levels of deprivation*
- *high levels of crime”¹*

¹ (“Selective licensing in the private rented sector, A guide for local authorities”, March 2015)

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The Guidance further goes on to say that on the grounds of property conditions, migration, deprivation and crime, the local housing authority may only make a designation if the area has a high proportion of property in the private rented sector.

Properties covered by Selective Licensing

By making the designation, all privately rented properties which fall under selective licensing in the designated area will require a licence. Owners of rented properties will be required to make an application to the Council for a licence and will need to nominate either the Manager or Owner to be the licence holder.

Section 79 (2) of the Housing Act details properties covered by selective licensing (defined as a whole house) that are occupied either under:

- A single tenancy or licence
- Under two or more tenancies or licences in respect of different dwellings contained in it.
- This definition has been interpreted to mean the following:
- A house let under a single tenancy only requires one licence.
- Where the freeholder of a building containing a number of flats, owns all the flats and lets those flats on tenancies or licences (not including long leasehold), then the freeholder will be required to apply for one licence to cover the whole building containing the flats.
- A building containing flats where each flat is owned by a long leaseholder and the flats are individually rented out, the leaseholder will be required to apply for a licence for their individual flat.
- A building containing flats where there is a mixture of different long leaseholders and accommodation owned by the freeholder, each of the leaseholders would require an individual licence for their flat or flats and the remaining accommodation would require a licence applied for by the freeholder.
- Landlords who own more than one 'house' under the above definitions within the designated area will need to apply for a licence for each of those houses.

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Properties used as HMO's which are not subject to Mandatory or Additional Licensing schemes, will need a selective licence.

Licence Applications and Fees

Section 87 of the Housing Act 2004 details the application process for a licence.

In particular this section states that an application must be made in accordance with such requirements as specified by the authority. It also states that the authority may require the application to be accompanied by a fee fixed by the authority.

When fixing fees under this section of the Act, the local housing authority may take into account all costs incurred by the authority in carrying out their functions under this part of the legislation and all costs incurred in carrying out their functions under Part 4 of the Act chapter 1 which relates to management orders.

The application process is detailed within the Act and there are subsequent regulations detailing the contents of an application form. This includes providing information on the property layout, certificates for gas, furniture and fire safety. The Licensing and management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 schedule 2 provides full details on what must be included within an application, including information to determine if the manager or proposed licence holder is a fit and proper person.

This requires the declaration of any unspent convictions, unlawful discrimination and prosecutions under housing, public health, environmental health or landlord and tenant law. The Council will make full checks into a person's 'fit and proper' status and will also request full Police checks if necessary and request owners to submit a full DBS clearance via Disclosure Scotland.

Once an application has been made the local authority must consider whether to grant or refuse the licence and the licence holder must first pass the Fit and Proper Person Test as defined by the Housing Act 2004 (section 66 (2)). This test specifies that the local authority must take into account evidence of any of the conduct detailed below and also applies to anyone "associated or formerly associated with the proposed licence holder or manager "whether on a personal, work or other basis", if relevant. The matters that the local authority needs to have a regard to are:

- Any offence involving fraud, or other dishonesty, or violence or drugs in section 3 of the Sex Offences Act 2003 practised unlawful discrimination of the law in connection with the carrying out of any business

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- Contravened any provision of the law relating to housing or landlord and tenant law – illegal eviction etc.
- Acted other than in accordance with any code of practice for the management of the properties.

N.B. Any “spent” convictions cannot be taken into account. However a lack of conviction may not mean that the incident was not relevant. The manager must send in with their application proof of their status and that they do not have any unspent convictions as specified above.

In the event that the landlord would not pass the fit and proper person test then he/she can nominate a manager in their place who must pass this test. If the local authority is not satisfied then it must refuse the application and give its reasons for this. The local authority must grant a licence if it is satisfied that:

- The property is reasonably suitable
- The licence holder would be a fit and proper person

Conditions and Penalties

If the licence is granted it will have conditions attached to it. Section 90 and Schedule 4 of the Act details the licence conditions that must be included, however there is provision for the local authority to add further conditions that are either specific to the licence in question or that are locally agreed to address specific issues.

A licence will be valid for 5 years; however, the local authority has the discretion to grant the licence for a shorter period of time where there are problems with the application such as evidence of insufficient management.

Once the licence has been issued the licence holder must comply with the conditions attached to the licence. Where there is a breach of those conditions the licence holder may be prosecuted with a fine of up to £5,000 per breach.

If the licence application is refused the local authority must instigate an interim management order. This is where the local authority takes over the management of the property for up to one year or until such time as the owner is able to rectify the reasons for the licence being refused. If the owner is unable to rectify the problems then the local authority can apply for a final management order where they take on the management for up to 5 years.

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In some circumstances rather than refuse the licence it may be possible for the owner to apply for a temporary exemption notice under section 86 of the Act. This allows 3 months for the owner to take such steps as are necessary so the property no longer requires a licence. Where a property requires a licence but the owner has not applied for one the owner can be prosecuted. Failing to apply for a licence could lead to prosecution and a fine of up to £20,000.

In addition to the fine there is a provision under section 96 of the Act for a Rent Repayment Order. This allows amounts paid in respect of a house or other periodical payment payable in connection with a tenancy or licence to be recovered for the period that the property should have been licensed.

Under section 98 of the Act there is also a restriction on terminating tenancies where a property is not licensed. This section states that *'No section 21 notice may be given in relation to a short hold tenancy of the whole or part of an unlicensed house so long as it remains a house'*.

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3. Why is selective licensing being introduced in the Central area?

Improving the quality of private sector properties is a key strategic housing objective for Blackpool Council. The private rented sector accounts for 26% of Blackpool's total housing stock and therefore it is crucial that a high standard of accommodation and management is available for Blackpool residents in this sector. The private rented sector plays an important role in meeting wider council strategies – these are covered in more details in section 5.

The vision from Blackpool Council's Plan 2015-20 is to be the UK's number one family resort with a thriving economy that supports a happy and proud community. In order to make this vision a reality Blackpool needs to overcome core challenges. Selective Licensing supports Priority 1 of Blackpool Council's Plan – The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool.

The need to reduce transience, stabilise communities and improve the quality of private homes are identified as key housing and community safety projects. Selective licensing and the investment of the Transience Programme are at the heart of supporting Blackpool Council to achieve these ambitious goals

The Council acknowledges that whilst there are private sector properties that provide a good level of accommodation and are well managed by landlords, there are many properties that fall below acceptable standards. The introduction of selective licensing will address this issue and encourage both private sector landlords and tenants to play a more active part in the improvement of their neighbourhoods.

Any consideration of Blackpool's economy cannot ignore the failing housing market in parts of the town. Blackpool Council has an obligation to intervene to tackle housing market failure in inner Blackpool where an acute structural imbalance is supporting accelerated levels of socio-economic deprivation. Every year some 8,000 people move into Blackpool without support networks, with the majority renting properties in inner Blackpool, with the Central area at its heart. This is driven by the widespread availability of cheap accommodation and poor quality conversions of Bed and Breakfast stock to Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's), which arose from the decline of the domestic tourist market from the 1960's onwards. Addressing poor quality housing and encouraging the formation of more stable communities is essential to the town's economic prosperity.

Selective licensing helps to stabilise tenants in better managed homes, reducing the high turnover that can lead to homelessness. There will be cases where tenants need to be re-housed from accommodation that is found to be an immediate risk to their health and safety. In these cases, the

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Enforcement team will work closely with the Housing Options service to ensure that alternative accommodation is made available.

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4. Objectives for the introduction of Selective Licensing in the Central area of Blackpool

The local authority must ensure that:

- The exercise of power is consistent with their overall housing strategy AND
- A coordinated approach in connection with dealing with homelessness, anti-social behaviour, regeneration and empty properties affecting the private rented sector is taken and that licensing is combined with other action taken by them and others
- They have considered if there are any other courses of action available that might provide an effective method of achieving what the designation is intended to achieve AND
- That making the designation will significantly assist them to achieve the objective(s).

Additional licensing has already been introduced in the area, under section 56 of the Housing Act 2004 allowing the local authority to extend the Mandatory HMO licensing scheme to include other types of Houses in Multiple Occupation. Section 56 (2) states that;

‘The authority must consider that a significant proportion of the HMOs of that description in the area are being managed sufficiently ineffectively as to give rise, or to be likely to give rise, to one or more particular problems either for those occupying the Houses in Multiple Occupation or for members of the public.’

The objectives for the introduction of selective licensing are to:

- Reduce levels of anti-social behaviour and crime;
- Encourage landlords to manage their properties well and take responsibility to address housing management related issues;
- Offer residents an improved range of good quality accommodation by improving poor property conditions within the private rented sector;
- Reduce transience by offering support for tenants encouraging them to stay longer.

Selective licensing in the Central area will be at the heart of a multi-agency approach to tackling a wide range of socio-economic issues that debilitate and blight the lives of residents. If we want Blackpool to be a place where people not just come, but come and stay, then we need to look at the problems holistically.

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5. Links to Wider Council Strategies

Blackpool Council wants to sustain long-term improvements in the private rented sector and selective licensing is essential to improving the quality of management. Selective licensing supports the below wider council strategies:

Blackpool Council Plan 2015-2020

The vision for the future of Blackpool is to create the UK's number one family resort with a thriving economy that supports a happy and healthy community who are proud of this unique town. The Council Plan focuses on two key areas: boosting the local economy by maximising growth and opportunity and creating, stronger, healthier, more resilient communities.

A Housing Strategy is currently being written which begins with these two priorities, and will include the wider approach to tackling issues within the private rented sector, including licensing schemes.

Town Centre Strategy 2013 – 2028

The vision for Blackpool Council's Town Centre Strategy 2013-28 is for *“Blackpool Town Centre to be a thriving heart of Britain's favourite resort, offering an all year-round high quality shopping, leisure, cultural and entertainment destinations”*

In order to achieve its vision the strategy recognises the importance of improving the quality of homes and buildings within the town centre and to ensure they are managed effectively. The proposed selective licensing scheme covers these areas, thus, being an effective tool to support the strategy outcomes.

Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012 – 2027)

Selective Licensing supports a number of Goals and Objectives for Blackpool's Local Plan Part 1 including:

- Develop sustainable and safer neighbourhoods that are socially cohesive and well connected to jobs, shops, local community services including health and education, culture and leisure facilities

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- Establish balanced and stable communities in the inner areas with sustainable housing regeneration and new landmark residential development which improves housing quality and choice
- Creates a healthy, safe, secure and attractive environment and public realm, which promotes local pride and a sense of place

This strategy identifies the need to address the challenges associated with quality housing and unauthorised residential use within the proposed licensing areas which selective licensing will support to achieve.

Blackpool Community Safety Plan 2012-2015 (ASB)

This builds upon the Blackpool Community Safety Partnership 2012 Strategic Assessment and sets out the analysis of crime, disorder and substance misuse and has identified the priorities that are the greatest threat to local people and where successful interventions will improve the quality of life in Blackpool. These priorities are Domestic Abuse, Violent Crime, Substance Misuse, Drugs, Substance Misuse, Alcohol and Anti-Social Behaviour.

Selective licensing, combined with other measures, will support to address these priorities within the designated area.

Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2014

The Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2014 recognises the expanding use of the private rented sector in Blackpool as important in preventing and relieving homelessness. This reflects the very limited supply of homes in the social rented sector. But many private rented sector homes offer poor quality accommodation and management and these tend to be the last resort for the most vulnerable people, and to be subject to frequent tenancy turnover, increasing incidences of homelessness.

Selective Licensing amongst other tools will work to improve standards of accommodation and address issues that could potentially result in private sector tenants presenting as homeless within the designated area.

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6. Approaches already taken in the area and consideration of new approaches

We have already sought to address issues associated with poorly managed privately rented properties in the Central area in many ways:

- We have invested in Blackpool town centre but it currently has the highest rate of retail leakage of any UK primary urban area and its image is undermined by the close proximity of poorly managed privately rented homes.
- We have established Blackpool Housing Company with an initial £26m of public investment to lead the process of structural change in inner Blackpool, including the Central area, acquiring and refurbishing homes and introducing higher standards of management.
- We are currently undertaking the large scale redevelopment of 500 Council flats at Queens Park in the Brunswick ward, adjacent to the Central area, to deliver 191 attractive new homes. The second half of the re-development is currently starting on site, with completion due by March 2018. We are also facilitating the development of over 400 high quality new homes within the Central area at the Foxhall Village development. Both of these developments will complement the improvement of the private rented sector in the Central area, and together help to create a much more attractive and balanced housing offer.
- We have also invested in a transience team to reach out to vulnerable tenants. This is now independently funded following a successful bid to Government, with funding in place to work alongside the licensing programme over the next two years. The team make contact with tenants and link them into support services and local community activities, training and employment. In this way, underlying problems are addressed and tenants start to develop in their confidence, skills, and sense of responsibility. This investment in pro-actively identifying and supporting vulnerable tenants is of considerable benefit to tenants themselves, their landlords, and the wider community. Interventions through selective licensing will assist in regenerating communities and neighbourhoods through improved management of properties by licence holders.
- Blackpool Council, the Police, and other agencies work together to tackle ASB in Blackpool. The Police are the primary agency in respect of reports of rowdy behaviour, neighbour disputes, vehicle nuisance or incidents of drug or substance misuse.

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- Blackpool Council provides a response to noise complaints, dog barking and fouling, fly tipping and the removal of waste, graffiti and abandoned vehicles. Officers from The Council's Public Protection Department deal with a range of issues including those relating to the condition of housing and problems which relate to properties in the private rented sector.
- The Central area covers parts of Bloomfield, Brunswick and Talbot wards and there are Neighbourhood Policing Teams in each area, who have a policing base in the heart of the communities. Officers work from these bases daily, maximising their availability and visibility to local people. The neighbourhood policing teams work closely with the Council and other agencies within the Community Safety Partnership working to tackle problems and this partnership approach has an excellent track record in reducing ASB and solving other problems affecting communities. The Partnership's response to problems is coordinated through fortnightly tasking and coordinating meetings, where information is shared and action determined. The public can have their say at the monthly Police & Communities Together (PACT) meetings along with regular multi-agency 'walkabouts' coordinated by The Council identify issues affecting the physical environment.
- The Housing Enforcement Team is proactive in identifying issues affecting residents and in particular the tenants of privately rented accommodation where complaints are received, but they are reliant upon tenants making those complaints, something that tenants are not always confident to do for fear of being illegally evicted.
- The Police themselves respond to complaints of ASB and can back up Council staff where there are more serious public order issues, but since 2014's ASB, Crime and Policing Act, the Police rely on Council officers to use the most common tools of Community Protection Warnings and Notices. Council officers have issued 674 Community Protection Warnings, 111 Community Protection Notices, 5 Fixed Penalty Notices and 1 Criminal Behaviour Order, which is amongst the most actions anywhere in the country.
- Blackpool Council continues to work with a number of services and agencies to identify victims who are vulnerable and whose lives are seriously affected by ASB. Information is shared and resources combined to ensure effective action in dealing with perpetrators and supporting victims.
- BC Lets was introduced in 2013 as a homelessness prevention tool and was funded and accessed through Housing Options to build upon the success of the Council's Rent Bond Scheme, which

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had previously been running since 2005. It also has a role to play in the general improvement of stock within the PRS. This is achieved by working closely with landlords encouraging them to raise the standards of their accommodation in exchange for the support package offered by BC Lettings.

- Another way in which Blackpool Council has sought other solutions to the problems experienced in the private rented sector in the area has been through the promotion of the Fylde Coast Landlords Accreditation Scheme, which was established in 2011 and was developed with the neighbouring councils of Fylde and Wyre, as well as with the Fylde Coast Landlords Forum and the Residential Landlords Association. The aim of the scheme was to promote good practice and self-certified standards as set out by all parties involved for landlords owning private rented sector property in the area and incentives were offered to landlords who sign up for the scheme.

Unfortunately the scheme failed to capture the interest of landlords, with less than 25 signed up for membership of it. In the Council's view, it will always be challenging to get widespread membership of voluntary accreditation schemes in a market like the one in the Central area of Blackpool, where tenants are undiscerning and many landlords are not interested in raising the quality of their offer. Accreditation schemes are least likely to attract landlords who are operating properties with the worst conditions and lowest standards of management. The widespread extent of the issues means that a more comprehensive approach is required.

Although our multi agency approach to problems in the area has had many successes, these in themselves are not enough and new approaches are needed to significantly reduce the issues in the different communities making up the Central area that have so blighted the area for residents and business owners.

Despite a number of initiatives and actions which have taken place in the area, progress has been slow and the area has continued to decline. Property values have continued to be low compared with other areas and deprivation levels have continued to be high. The area has many absentee landlords and high levels of privately rented accommodation which is often poorly managed and in a poor condition, including high numbers of empty properties.

The area experiences high levels of worklessness, poor health, high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as physical and social deprivation. It is not surprising therefore that the area is perceived to be rundown and contributing negatively to the overall reputation of Blackpool.

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Research shows that housing conditions play an important part in the health and wellbeing of its residents and statistics are symptomatic of the effect of housing that is poorly managed and in poor condition. Further information is also given below on anti-social behaviour, criminality and housing conditions, which further evidences factors related to the poor management and condition of properties in the Central area.

An HMO Additional licensing scheme was introduced to the Central area from 4th July 2016 to address the highest priority management issues – those in HMOs. However the initial low level of applications from landlords and experience from compliance inspections suggests that fewer properties than anticipated will be subject to HMO additional licensing in the area. While it is too early to determine the impact of the HMO additional licensing scheme, it is clear that this scheme alone will not tackle the density of issues within the Central area of Blackpool. As well as the evidence presented in the consultation proposal and updated in Section 10 below, comprehensive inspections within the area suggest that issues of poor management are prevalent across the privately rented stock and not confined to HMOs. The most effective approach to tackling these issues is by the introduction of selective licensing alongside the existing HMO additional licensing scheme.

This is an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions:

Alternative Solutions	Weaknesses	Strengths
Management and training support to private landlords	Requires landlord voluntary engagement. Could remove responsibility away from landlords. Source of funding unclear. No enforcement powers available.	Improves standards where landlord is engaged with authority and promotes confidence amongst their tenants.
Introduction of private sector leasing scheme	Resource intensive. Does not improve management standards of landlords who choose not to join the scheme. Reactive rather than proactive.	Contributes to homelessness prevention as could be used for allocation to those in need of housing.
Targeted use of Special Interim Management Orders and Empty	Resource intensive. Does not present a long term solution	Removes rogue landlord responsibilities and gives to

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Dwelling Management Orders	to poor management of private rented properties (up to maximum of 5 years – then returned to original owner). Does not tackle poor management techniques. Reactive. Intervention of last resort.	responsible, nominated agent. Improves standards for tenants and local community.
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Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool

7. Consultation on the proposal

Consultation on a proposal for selective and additional licensing in the Central area ran from 17th July - 25th September 2015. Interested parties were contacted through:

- Blackpool Council's website
- The Fylde Coast Landlords Forum
- 8 public consultation meetings
- 7,000 letters which were sent to residents, business owner and landlords within the proposed Central area as well as the wider consultation area.
- Press release to local media/press
- Responses to consultation were received through:
 - 1,141 questionnaires completed by residents and local business owners
 - 267 questionnaires completed by landlords comments recorded at public consultation meetings and individual written responses from landlords
 - written responses from landlord representative organisations – NLA and RLA

A summary of the consultation that ran from 17th July to the 25th September 2015 and the Council's responses to the issues raised through consultation is published separately alongside this final proposal document. The original consultation is sufficient to inform the final selective licensing proposal because the nature of the proposal and reasons for it were sufficiently set out and clear for all to understand and remain fundamentally unchanged.

Two of the main objections raised in the consultation were:

1. Landlords objected to paying such a large licence fee in full at the start of the scheme;
2. Landlords felt that they were not receiving anything back for their licence fee

We have spent time considering a new approach to selective licensing. We researched other licensing schemes and spoke to other Councils across the country and re-visited the suggestion that had been

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made by two landlords who led the campaign against licensing in Blackpool, which was to look at The Home Safe Scheme as introduced in Doncaster and Gainsborough.

The Home Safe Scheme was introduced in Doncaster in 2015 and offers co-regulation. Landlords can either; apply to the Council for a licence, pay fees up front, and have compliance checks carried out by the Council, or pay a much lower fee to the Council and become a member of the Home Safe co-regulation scheme which then ensures compliance with licence conditions for a monthly membership fee. In addition to this Home Safe can offer a bespoke package of benefits and advice and training to landlords to ensure that they have all the tools they need to offer a good standard of accommodation to their tenants.

Home Safe presented their scheme to the Fylde Coast Landlord's Forum on 8th December 2016 and the majority of landlords were in favour of introducing this approach alongside selective licensing, as opposed to just introducing selective licensing in the same way as previous areas.

In the first year of implementing this co-regulatory approach, Doncaster Council has reported the following results:

- 35% reduction in noise complaints
- 44% reduction in complaints of nuisance
- 25% reduction in housing complaints
- 20% reduction in complaints relating to poor property condition

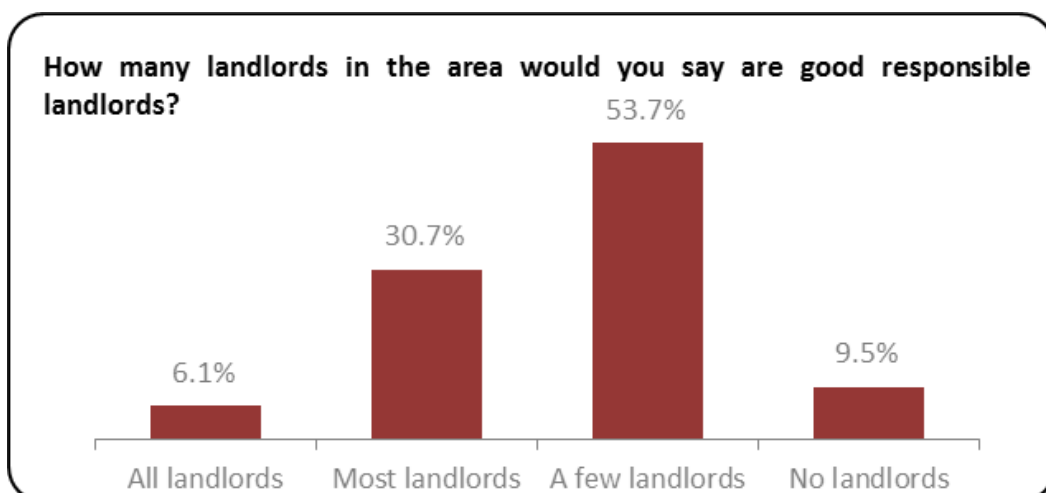
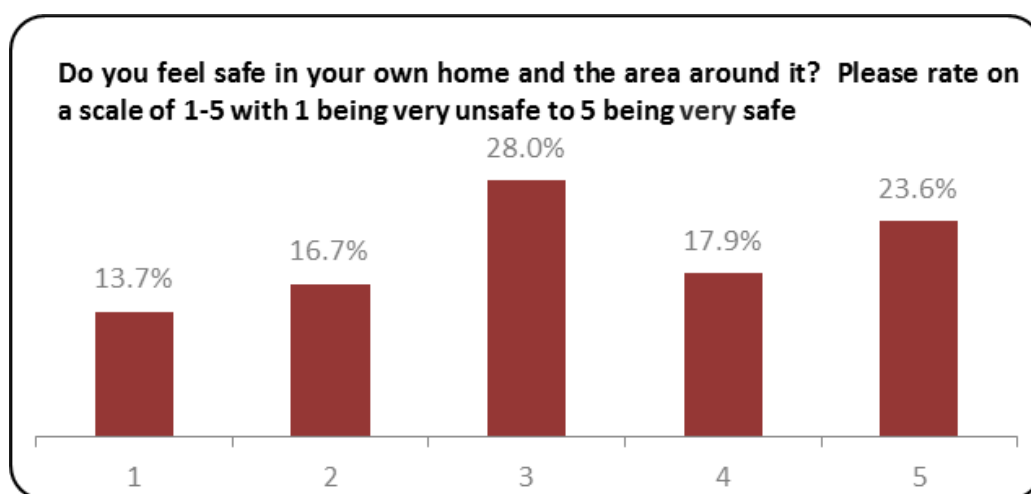
Home Safe have been able to offer a high standard of response to landlords, for example offering weekend reactions to maintenance emergencies and training on licensing conditions and standards.

The Central selective licensing scheme includes the option for landlords of a co-regulatory approach similar to that pioneered in Doncaster, working in partnership with private landlords to address the issues in the Central area of Blackpool.

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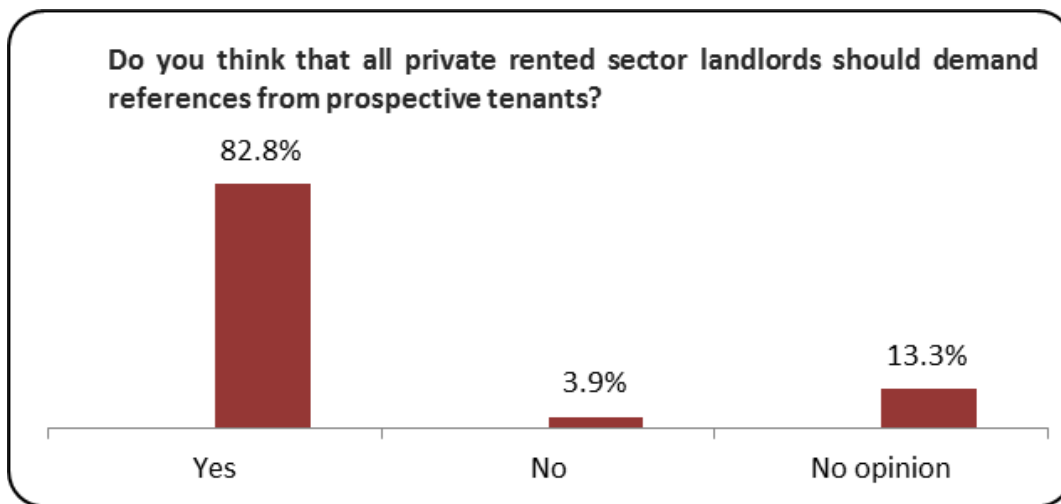
7.1 Summary of Consultation Responses

From the 1,141 questionnaires completed by residents, the three main concerns highlighted were: rubbish dumping (39.7%); no sense of community (31.7%); and neglected/run down properties (30.7%). Residents were asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 on how safe they felt in their own home and around their neighbourhood, with 1 being very unsafe and 5 being very safe. 13.7% of residents felt very unsafe; 16.7% of residents gave the rating of 2 and 28% rated the safety of their home and the neighbourhood as 3.



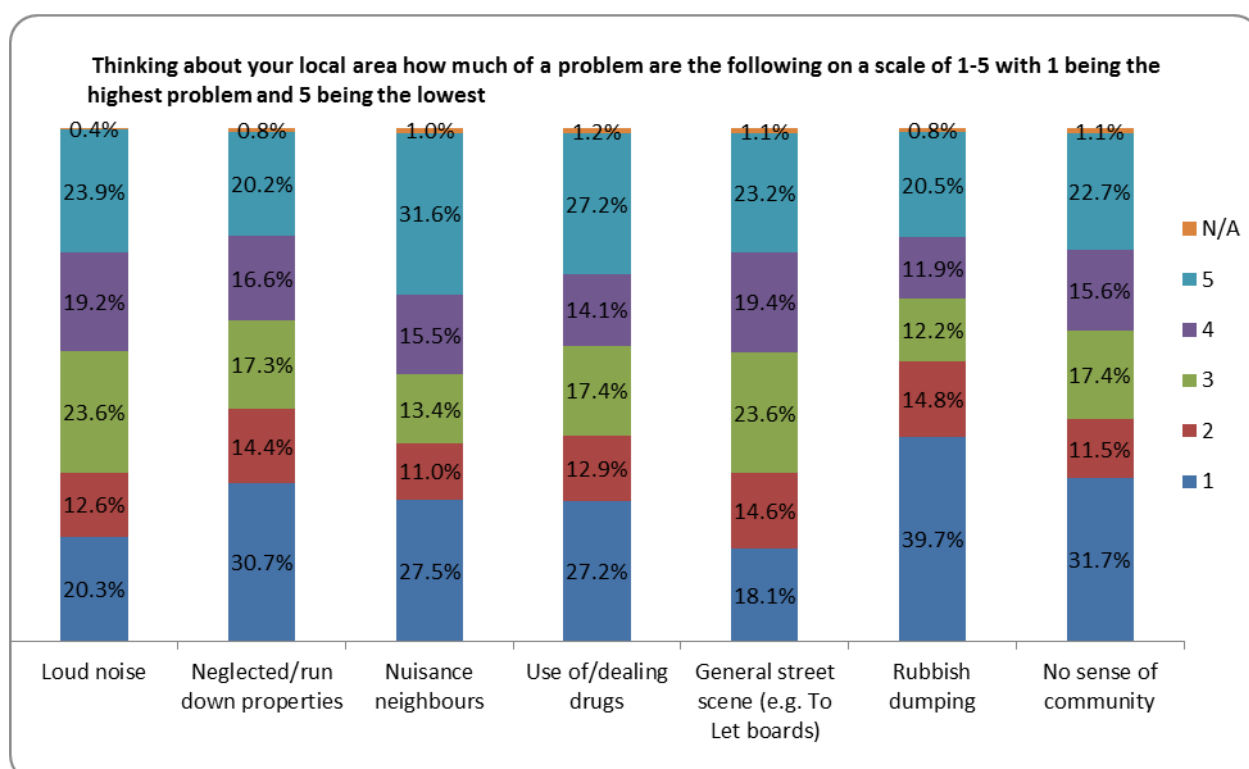
Only 6.1% of respondents believed all landlords in the area to be good and responsible, with 30.7% citing most landlords were good and responsible, and 53.7% said only a few landlords.

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82.8% of respondents felt that all landlords operating in the private rented sector should demand references from prospective tenants.

The chart below gives an overview of problems and how they were rated by respondents in order of importance:



Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool

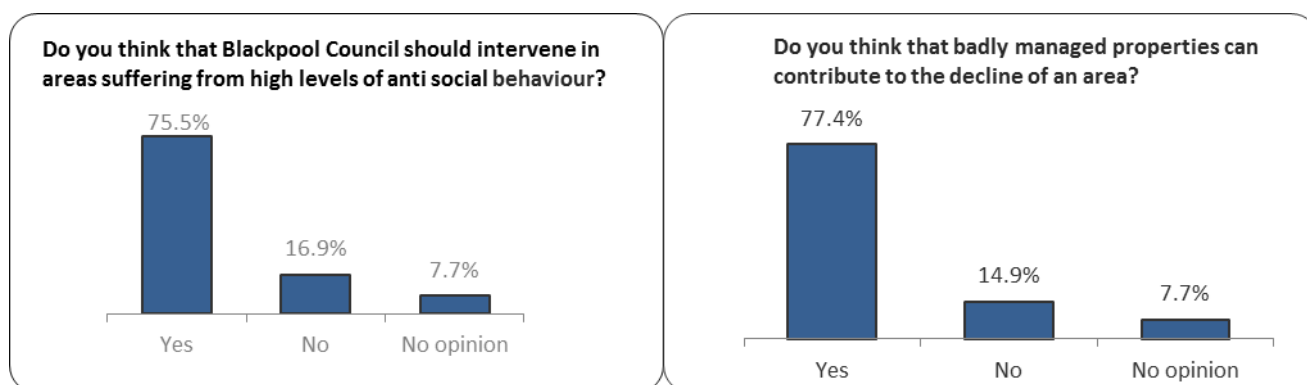
The majority of residents had experienced issues with other privately rented properties with the main issues being: fly tipping (61.8%); neglected/run down properties (45.8%) and loud noise (45%). The three main areas of concern for residents when renting a property were: security (17.3%); damp and mould (16%) and energy efficiency (13.3%).

53.7% of residents felt that most landlords were not good and responsible. 96.1% of residents felt that the responsibility lay with landlords to ensure that properties were in a good condition. Anti-social behaviour is a major concern and residents generally felt that the Council were ineffective in dealing with these issues. 82.1% of residents felt that landlords should be responsible for dealing with nuisance and ASB caused by tenants and their visitors.

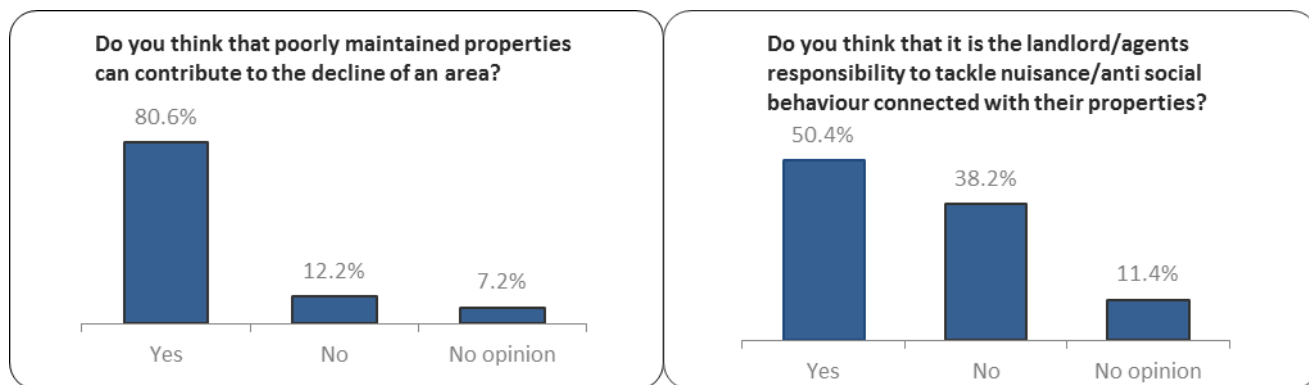
267 landlords completed the survey. To summarise the results, the majority of landlords felt that poorly maintained and managed properties contributed to the decline of an area. The three areas which were deemed to have the most significant problems within the Central area of Blackpool were: anti-social behaviour (18.9%); empty properties (15.8%) and low rent levels (15.7%).

Currently 44.9% of landlords/agents were carrying out reference checks on prospective tenants; the majority (85%) felt that landlords/agents should have satisfactory procedures in place.

The results from the survey show that most landlords/agents felt that selective licensing would not address the issues currently linked to the Central area of Blackpool with 73.4% opposing an introduction of such a scheme. However 75.5% of respondents felt that Blackpool Council should intervene in areas suffering from high levels of anti-social behaviour.



Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool



Some of the concerns raised by landlords and some residents were around the need for additional and selective licensing when they felt the Council already has sufficient authority to respond to issues arising from privately rented properties. The Council responded by saying that although the Housing Act 2004, Part 1 does give Local Housing Authorities powers to deal with property conditions and disrepair categorised under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), these powers alone are not sufficient in dealing with other issues arising from privately rented properties within the proposed area. Licensing will give additional enforcement powers by requiring all landlords to sign up to management conditions that help ensure that they adopt a responsible approach to management of their properties. These management conditions go beyond the normal statutory requirements under the HHSRS, for example, by requiring landlords to undertake tenant referencing and to act responsibly if anti-social behaviour complaints are raised against their tenants.

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8. How will selective licensing work and what will it achieve?

When implemented effectively, and alongside other measures, selective licensing will increase the professionalism of the private rented sector by ensuring that:

- Landlords are 'fit and proper persons';
- Landlords offer good and fair management of tenancy relations;
- Support for landlords is available to engage in regeneration and tackle anti-social behaviour effectively;
- Protection is offered for vulnerable tenants from the worst housing conditions and from bad landlords;
- Strategic knowledge is available to support Blackpool Council in targeting health and safety inspections;
- Landlords are supported to improve the worst properties by helping them to achieve decent minimum standards in housing conditions and management.

Benefits to Blackpool Council include:

- Landlords who have not engaged with Blackpool Council through any other means will be forced to engage;
- Bad landlords will be forced to improve their practices or leave the market;
- Blackpool Council will gain further knowledge about private renting in the Central area which will enable us to target support, information and enforcement much more effectively, whilst also being able to offer support pathways to vulnerable tenants living in the private rented sector.

Benefits to landlords include:

- Responsible landlords will receive information and support;
- All landlords in the private rented sector will be treated the same and expected to adhere to the same standards;
- Poorly performing landlords can access support and training to improve;

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- The reputation of the private rented sector will improve;
- The sector will potentially benefit from shorter void periods and reduced tenant turnover;
- Landlords can be offered incentives and opportunities to access additional support and advice.

Benefits to communities and neighbourhoods in the Central area include:

- Reducing anti-social behaviour which will improve problem areas, making these safer and more desirable places to live
- Reducing environmental costs and costs of associated crimes, such as street cleaning services and the removal of fly-tipping and graffiti
- Encouraging all landlords to get involved in wider strategies including crime reduction initiatives, neighbourhood planning and community led projects to improve the wider area
- The protection of vulnerable groups who are often occupiers of privately rented accommodation which is poorly managed and maintained.

Benefits to tenants include:

- More professional landlords should bring about improvements to the quality and management of property;
- Tenants could also see economic benefits, for example in reduced heating costs and improved likelihood of regaining any deposit paid;
- Improvements to the neighbourhood should also benefit private tenants' security and sense of community;
- Better management practices from landlords and letting agents should help to increase length of tenure and reduced incidence of unplanned moves, abandonments or homelessness.

The Council's overall aim is to improve the quality of life for residents within the area by improving management of tenant behaviour and the condition of properties in the private rented sector through the Selective Licensing scheme. The scheme will also benefit local businesses and visitors.

Selective Licensing is intended to help achieve the economic and social ambitions of Blackpool. Specific benefits for the Central area will include:

Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool

- Reductions in levels of anti-social behaviour
- Improved management and condition of privately rented accommodation
- Support for landlords in dealing with anti-social tenants
- Education for tenants in their responsibilities to behave in a tenant like manner
- Education for tenants to ensure they only live in properties that meet a minimum standard
- Encouraging landlords to operate to higher standards, acting in a professional manner with well written tenancy agreements, inventories and protected deposits
- Encouragement of landlords not to take tenants with a poor reference
- Improvement of the image and desirability of the area
- Improvement in the market to increase rents and values of property in the area

The scheme will deliver a significant improvement in management and property conditions experienced in the private sector as a whole in the area.

Selective Licensing provides the Council with enhanced ability to regulate the private rented sector through the imposition of clear licensing conditions for all affected properties. It also enables resources to be provided in the area to address the long standing issues.

For the approach to succeed in reducing anti-social behaviour and criminality and improving the overall management and standards of property, it is important that the Council works closely with landlords and residents. It is expected that introducing this scheme into the Central area, alongside complementary investment, will have a range of benefits to landlords, tenants, and the wider community.

The complementary investment will include:

- Support for vulnerable tenants and their families through our externally funded Transience Programme;
- Free home fire safety checks and free smoke alarms from Lancashire Fire and Rescue; plus advice and support for landlords on home fire safety;

Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool

- Support and reassurance for victims of crime and ASB from Lancashire Constabulary;
- Benefits advice and help preparing for and finding employment;
- Skills and training;
- Confidence building; community networking and health advice.

By adopting this approach we will offer a holistic approach to tackling property management, ASB, and crime while also offering a comprehensive support service to our most vulnerable residents.

Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool

9. Blackpool Council's new co-regulatory approach to Selective Licensing

Landlords are not wholly against licensing schemes, but do feel that good landlords are penalised by the schemes and treated in the same way as bad landlords. Some of the main concerns raised by landlords are centred around fees, and in particular:

- Landlords object to paying out a large amount (one off payment) up front
- Landlords object to paying the licence fee as they do not see what they receive in return

These views have been expressed through consultation on the Central Additional and Selective Licensing Proposal and Landlord Forum meetings.

As part of Blackpool Council's wider approach to tackling the issues within the private rented sector in inner Blackpool, we have been working with landlords to improve the relationship between the landlord community and the Council, and further to understand what good landlords major concerns are and how we can address these and work more proactively with those landlords that do provide a good standard of accommodation to their tenants.

As part of the consultation on the introduction of an additional and selective proposal for this area in 2015, one suggestion that came directly from landlords was the introduction of a co-regulatory approach to licensing. Since then, this approach has been researched in detail and contact made with other Councils who have introduced this approach and are currently working with a delivery partner.

We now feel in a position to take forward this approach, which expressly takes into account the two main concerns for landlords as mentioned above.

An Overview of Co-Regulation

Under the selective licensing scheme in the Central area landlords will have a choice of whether to apply directly to the Local Authority and pay the full five year licence fee up front or apply to join a co-regulation scheme, where they pay a much lower initial fee to the local authority and then monthly payments to the co-regulation partner. The total cost will be similar over the five year period.

If landlords choose to pay the full fee to the Council, then the Council will undertake all of the compliance checks over the 5 year lifetime of the selective licensing scheme.

If landlords choose the co-regulation scheme, then the co-regulation delivery partner will work with landlords to ensure that licence conditions and the requirements of a wider Code of Practice are met,

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including giving an opportunity for landlords to be trained to inspect their own properties. The Code of Practice for the co-regulation scheme will be agreed between the local authority and the co-regulation provider. The co-regulation provider will work with landlords over the lifetime of the selective licensing scheme to develop measures that help landlords to manage their properties well. Landlords will receive help, support, advice, and training, and discounts negotiated with tradespeople and suppliers should help landlords to manage and maintain their properties to a high standard.

This co-regulatory approach will ultimately allow landlords to become self-regulated, with the right support, training and guidance.

Monitoring the scheme and managing risks

Appendix 4 sets out potential risks of introducing a Selective Licensing scheme into the Central area and mitigating measures.

A robust and comprehensive evaluation framework has been introduced to ensure that we are able to provide information at any point through the scheme to show the effectiveness of it, and the difference it is making to the area.

In order to be clear and transparent it is proposed that performance is monitored not only by members and officers, but is also set out to the public through the Council's website. The Fylde Coast Landlords Forum will also be invited to monitor the statistics to maintain a positive relationship with Blackpool landlords.

Blackpool Council recognises the risks in association with this co-regulatory approach. Robust performance monitoring arrangements will be worked up in conjunction with landlords and the chosen delivery partner to ensure they are held accountable.

Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool

10. The Proposal

It is proposed that Blackpool Council designates the area outlined in blue on Map 1 as a selective licensing scheme, with the boundary in green being the wider consultation area.

The designation will be used to tackle:

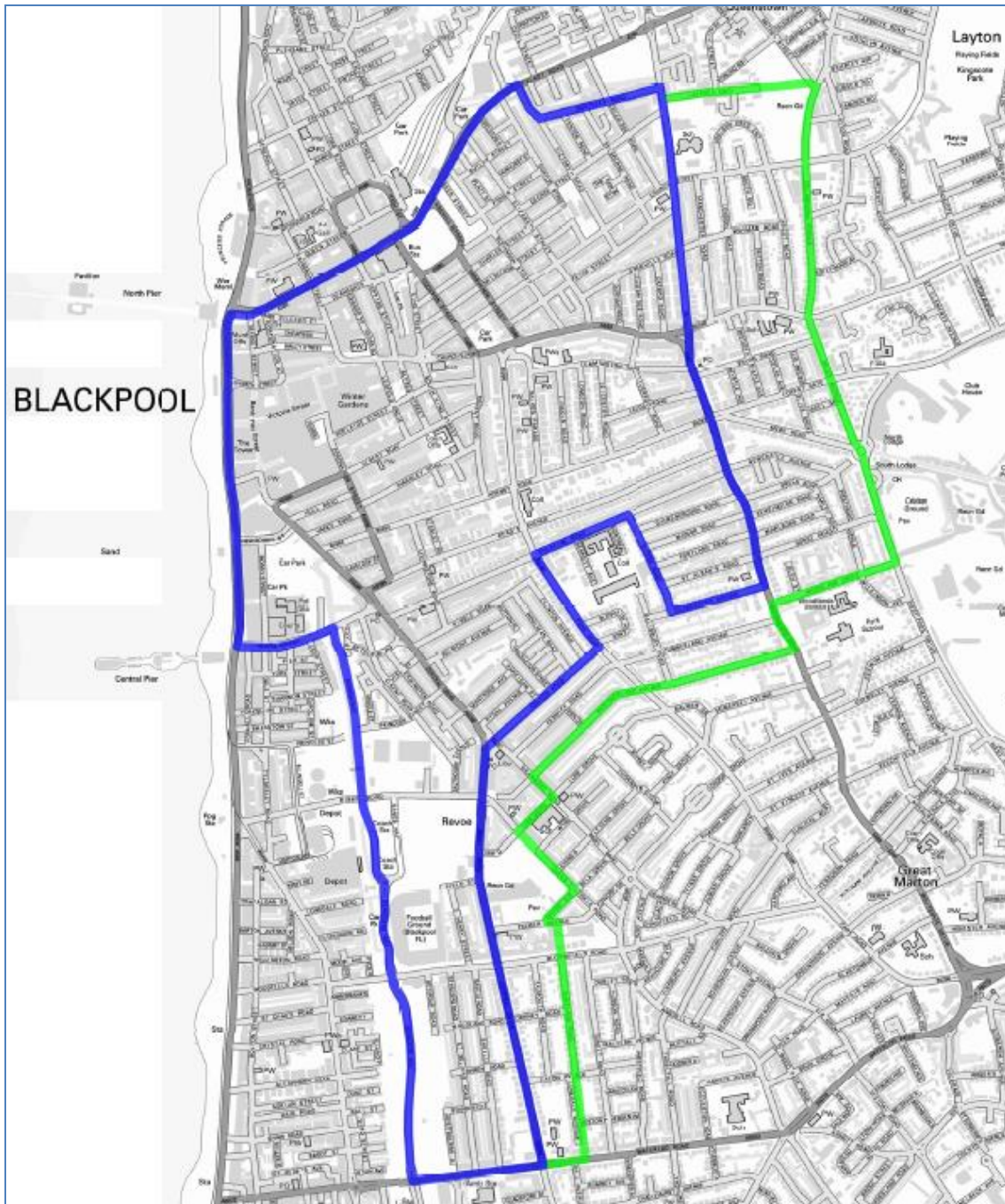
- anti-social behaviour,
- crime,
- property management and property conditions
- deprivation

Every privately rented flat, house or room (unless already licensed as a HMO under the existing mandatory scheme, additional licensing scheme or classed as a business let such as tied accommodation) will require a licence to operate in the area and landlords will be responsible for making an application to the Council for a Selective Licence.

Initially it is expected that compliant landlords will apply for the relevant licence shortly after the designation, however it will be necessary to introduce a comprehensive inspection programme to capture unlicensed properties. As with South Beach and Claremont licensing schemes, enforcement will be carried out on a phased approach in order to effectively coordinate and address identified problems.

Map 1: The proposed selective licensing area (see appendix 1 for full list of streets)

Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool



THE PROPOSED LICENSING AREA IS DEFINED BY THE BLUE BOUNDARY WITH THE WIDER CONSULTATION AREA SHOWN BY THE GREEN BOUNDARY

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To meet the costs involved in running these schemes it is proposed to charge fees for Selective Licensing of: -

Licence Fees – Members of Co-regulation Scheme	
Each property occupied by one household	£101
Each property occupied more than one household	£110
Variations to an existing licence	£101

Note that in addition to these Licence Fees the co-regulation delivery partner will make other charges some of which are paid monthly.

Licence Fees – Application to the Council	
Each property occupied by one household	£670
Each property occupied by up to five households	£940
Each additional household above five	£60
Variations to an existing licence	£101
Available Discounts	
(only available to those applying directly to the Council)	
Applications made during the first three months of the scheme for each property	£100
Landlord is a member of the NWLA; NLA or RLA discount for first five properties, or:	£50
Landlord is a member of a Landlords Accreditation Scheme for first five properties	£100

Landlords will not be able to claim both discounts if a member of the NWLA, NLA or RLA and also accredited with an Accreditation scheme.

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For landlords with a large portfolio of properties Blackpool Council will consider allowing them to pay by instalments on a case by case basis depending on their financial circumstances. The full cost must be paid by the end of the first 12 months of the scheme.

If any details of a licence need to be changed then the landlord or managing agent has to apply for a variation of the licence; for example if the number of units of accommodation within a property changes or the managing agent changes, then a fee of £101 applies. Where the property is sold the licence is not transferable and therefore the new owner will be required to apply for a new licence. The fee will be limited to £101 providing a valid existing licence is already in place.

If the designation is approved the scheme will come into effect no sooner than 3 months later to allow confirmation by the Secretary of State and for details of the scheme to be publicised within the designated area and amongst all interested parties.

By making the designation, all privately rented accommodation in the designated area not fitting into the definition of an Additional HMO or Mandatory Licensable HMO will require a licence. Owners of rented properties will be required to make an application to the Council for a selective licence and will need to nominate either the Manager or the Owner to be the Licence holder.

Landlords will require a licence for any properties they rent out within the designated area. The licence is valid for up to 5 years and will contain a series of conditions that the licence holder will be required to comply with. These conditions will include items relating to the management of the property, fire safety and anti-social behaviour. There will also be a requirement that landlords provide references for tenants that move on from their properties.

The Housing Enforcement Team will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the designation. Where a breach of licence conditions is identified the licence holder may be prosecuted with a fine of up to £5,000 per breach. Failing to apply for a licence could lead to prosecution and a fine of up to £20,000.

During the course of the designation the Housing Enforcement Team will be carrying out a programme of pro-active inspections and will take a firm approach where un-licensed properties or breaches of conditions are found, meaning that landlords in these circumstances are likely to be prosecuted. These enforcement activities will not be met from the revenue from fees.

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11. Evidencing the need for a Selective Licensing Scheme in the Central area of Blackpool²

Selective licensing is being introduced on the grounds of:

- ASB
- Poor Property Conditions
- Deprivation
- Crime

The prevalence of transience in an area can affect community cohesion and stability, and this was highlighted in section 1. High levels of turnover affect community cohesion and stability with there being a proven link between high population inflow rates in an area and crime levels. The 2010 English House Condition survey showed that the average length of time spent in owner occupied properties was 11 years; it was 7 years for social rented properties and just 1 year for privately rented.

The transient nature of the population makes it extremely difficult to understand the needs of the residents in the area and to make a lasting impact by tailoring services to meet those needs.

² Since the initial consultation (August 2015), more recent statistics have been made available which have been used in this proposal.

Proposal to designate a selective licensing scheme in Central Area, Blackpool

11.1 Anti-social behaviour

The Selective Licensing Guidance stipulates that Councils must demonstrate that to use the criterion of a significant and persistent problem caused by ASB³:

“Some or all of the private sector landlords who have let premises in the area are failing to take action to combat such problems that it would be appropriate for them to take.

‘A landlord has responsibility to ensure persons he has permitted to reside at a property do not cause an annoyance or nuisance to other persons residing in it, or other persons living, working or visiting the immediate neighbourhood. If anti-social behaviour is being carried out within the immediate vicinity of the property and is being caused by the occupiers of it, then it would be reasonable to expect a landlord to ensure that those persons are not conducting themselves in a way that is adversely impacting on the local community. This applies equally to visitors of the property’⁴.

This area has many absentee landlords and high levels of privately rented accommodation which is often poorly managed and in a poor condition, including high numbers of empty properties.

Referring back to the consultation responses, only 6.1% of respondents believed all landlords in the area to be good and responsible. 82.8% of respondents felt that all landlords operating in the private rented sector should demand references from prospective tenants.

The majority of residents had experienced issues with other privately rented properties with the main issues being: fly tipping (61.8%); neglected/run down properties (45.8%) and loud noise (45%). 53.7% of residents felt that most landlords were not good and responsible. 96.1% of residents felt that the responsibility lay with landlords to ensure that properties were in a good condition.

82.1% of residents felt that landlords should be responsible for dealing with nuisance and ASB caused by tenants and their visitors.

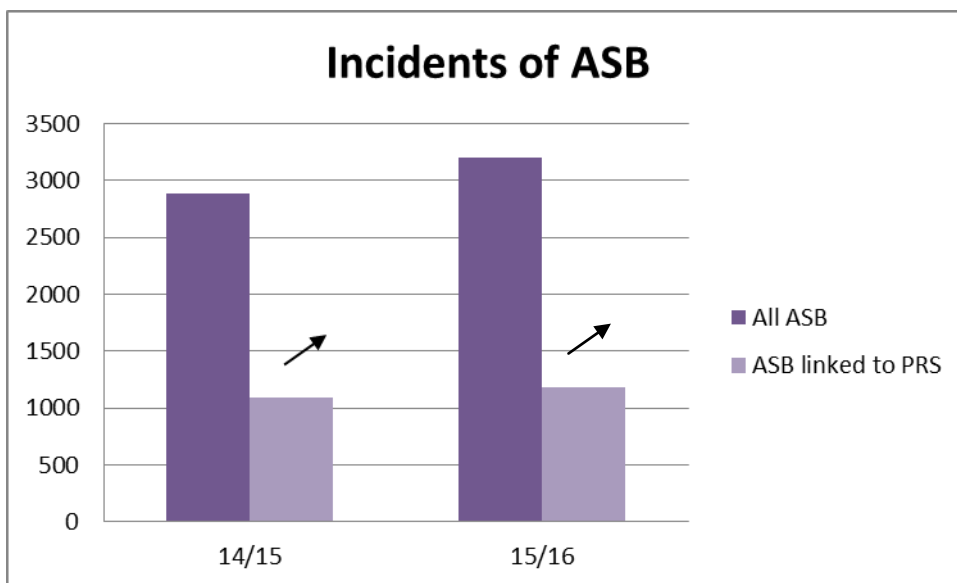
The data below evidences that there are high levels of anti-social behaviour within the proposed licensing area with a significant proportion arising from privately rented properties.

³ *The Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions) (England) Order 2015*

⁴ *(Approval steps for Additional and Selective Licensing designations in England, CLG).*

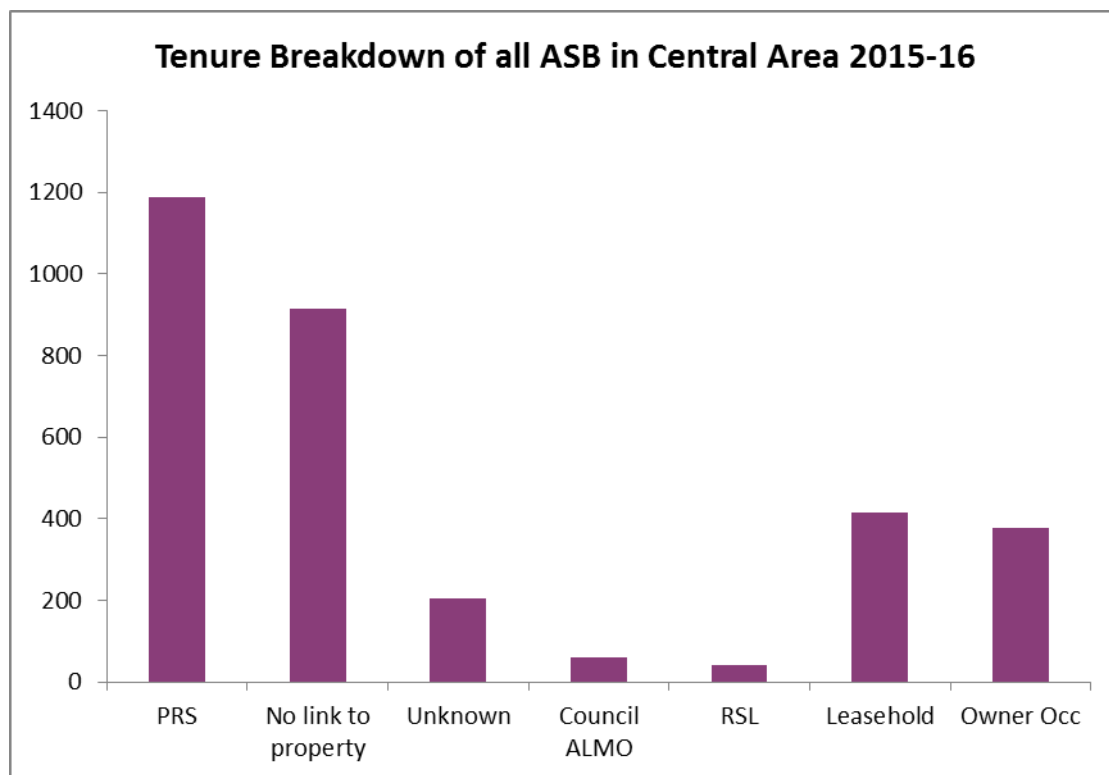
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In the last financial year Lancashire Constabulary recorded 3199 incidents of anti-social behaviour across the designation, of which 1188 can be directly attributed back to privately rented properties in the area. This represents an increase of 10% from last year's overall figure, and a 9% increase in the private sector figures.



Police data shows that 37% of total incidents of ASB in 2015/16 came directly from privately rented properties. Breaking these figures down by taking away the commercial and tourism sectors, the graph below illustrates that 71% of the reported ASB in the area that is associated with a residential address comes from the private rented sector.

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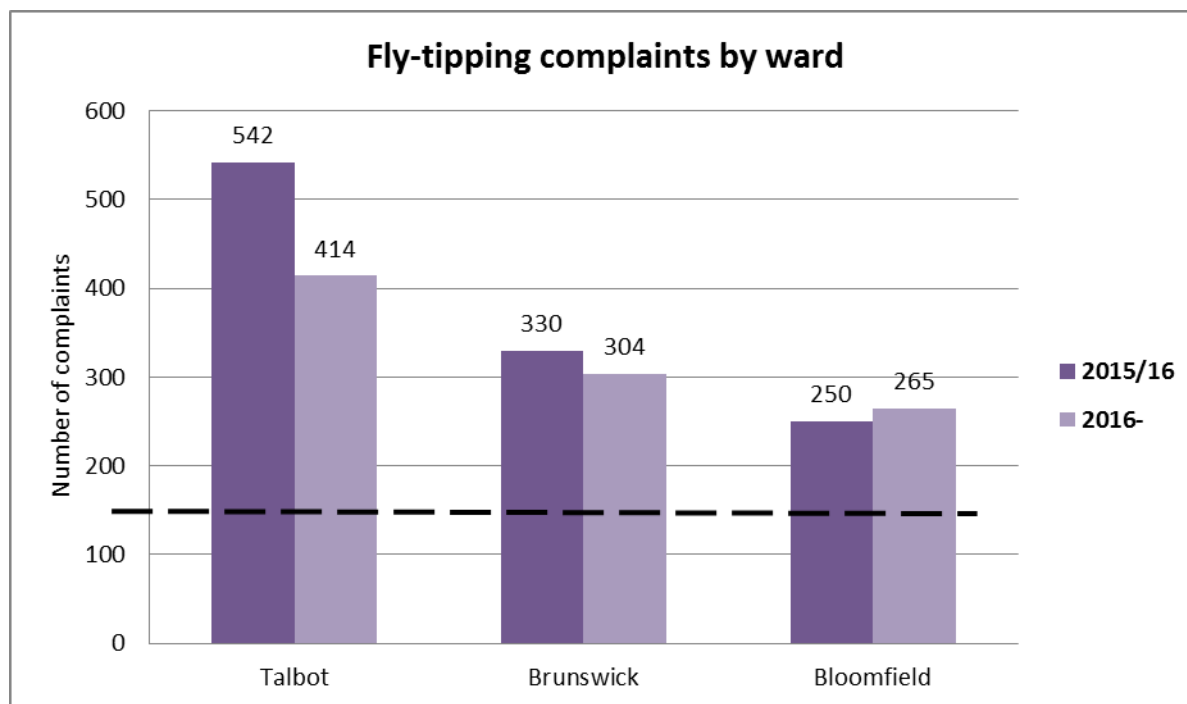


Of the 2,702 private rented sector properties in the proposed Central area, only around 400 are HMO's that fall under mandatory or additional licensing, which means that despite the link to high levels of ASB, we estimate around 81% of properties in the private rented sector are not currently subject to licensing.

Fly Tipping

The graph below illustrates the level of complaints relating to fly-tipping by ward. The three wards within the designated area are all among the top four out of the 21 wards that make up Blackpool. In 2015-16 these three wards accounted for 36% of all complaints of fly tipping across Blackpool, and as represented in the graph below, there are already a higher amount of reported incidents in Bloomfield for this current financial year, with Brunswick not far behind. The black dashed line indicates the Blackpool average which reinforces the level of incidents of fly tipping in these three wards.

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Linking anti-social behaviour back to the Council's wider strategies and initiatives, in order to achieve the objectives set out in the Blackpool Community Safety Plan which is currently under review, selective licensing will enable the Council to work with landlords to develop their own ASB plans. Landlords can work with the Council's Community Safety Team who can provide education; advice and assistance to both landlords to tackle anti-social tenants; and also to tenants who are suffering from anti-social behaviour to develop confidence in dealing with; and reporting of ASB.

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11.2 Crime

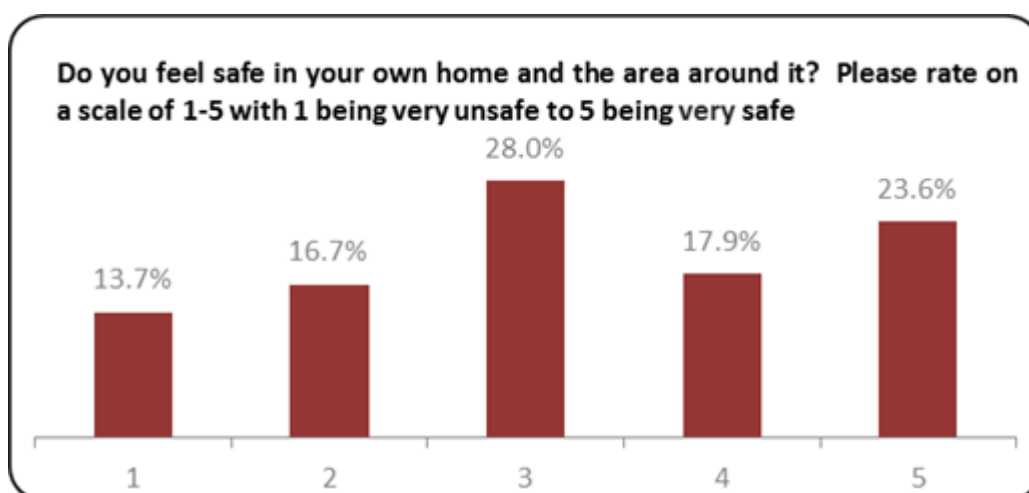
The Selective Licensing Guidance stipulates that Councils must demonstrate that to use the criterion of high levels of crime:

(a) That the area suffers from high levels of crime;

(b) That the criminal activity affects those living in the properties referred to in article 3(1) (a), or other households and businesses in the area; and

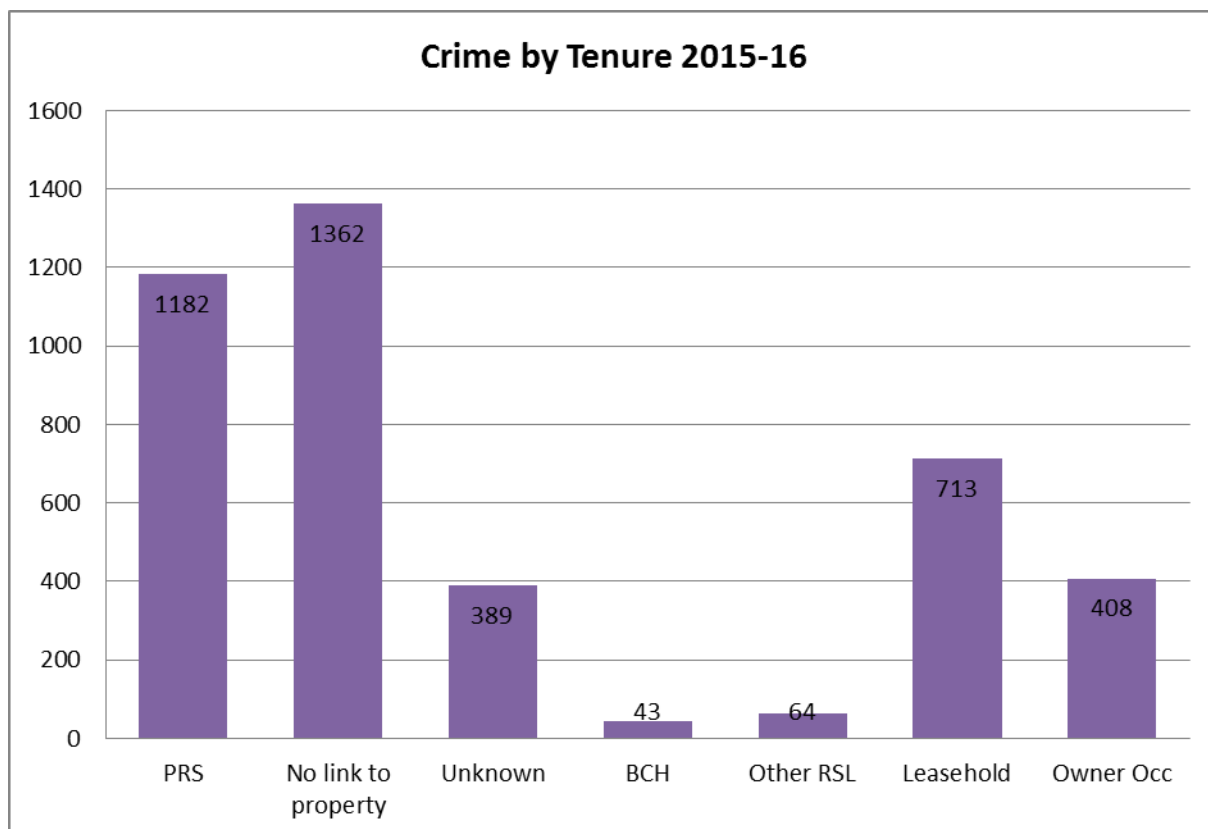
(c) That making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, other persons together with the local housing authority or by the police, contribute to a reduction in the levels of crime in the area, for the benefit of those living in the area.

Referring back to the consultation responses residents were asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 on how safe they felt in their own home and around their neighbourhood, with 1 being very unsafe and 5 being very safe. 13.7% of residents felt very unsafe; 16.7% of residents gave the rating of 2 and 28% rated the safety of their home and the neighbourhood as 3.



The Central area of Blackpool has especially high levels of recorded crime. In the period from April 2015 to March 2016 there were 4161 recorded incidents of crime across the proposed designation, of which 28% were directly linked to privately rented properties (see below chart). However if we remove the 'no link to property' and 'unknown' – ie making an assumption that we are taking out crimes committed in the commercial and tourism sectors, this percentage rises to a significant 49%.

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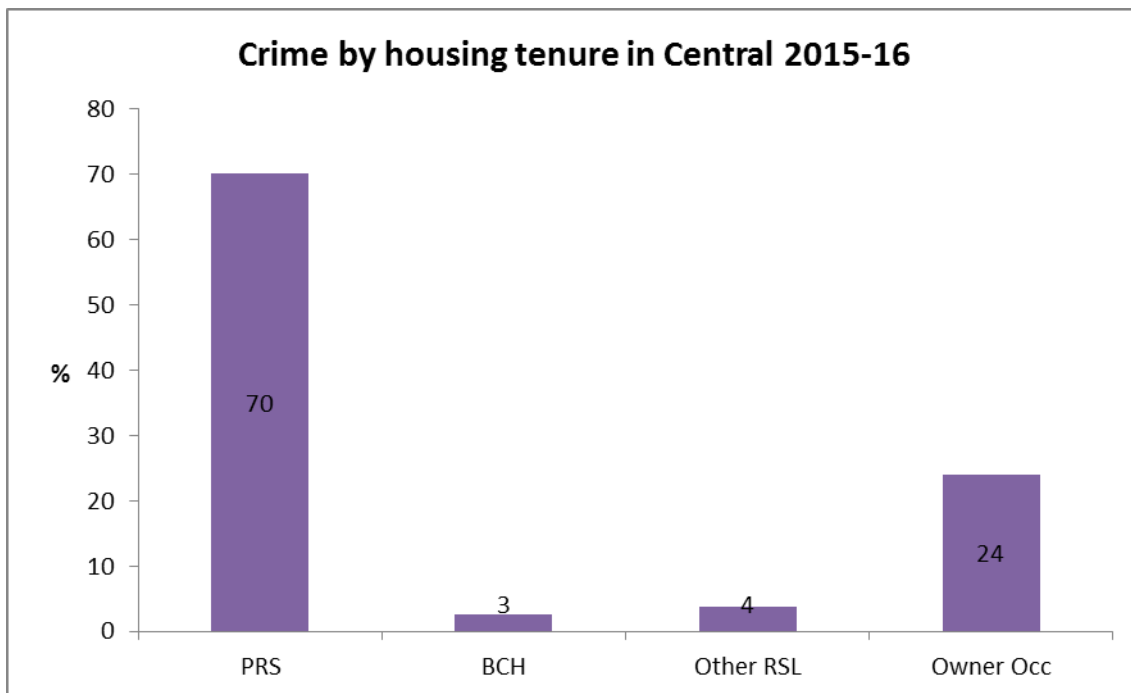
The 'no link to property' figure relates to incidents which cannot be directly linked to a property, for example, shops, take aways, supermarkets, public houses and some hotels.

The 'unknown' category relates to police logs that do not have a recorded tenure type. Upon looking through the logs it is apparent to see that one of the main themes here is consistently around alcohol misuse and centred in the town centre area around Market Street and Promenade area.

The 'leaseholder' category, which is the third highest category, also covers crime recorded in and around the same area, includes 66% retail; 20% commercial and 9% office accommodation.

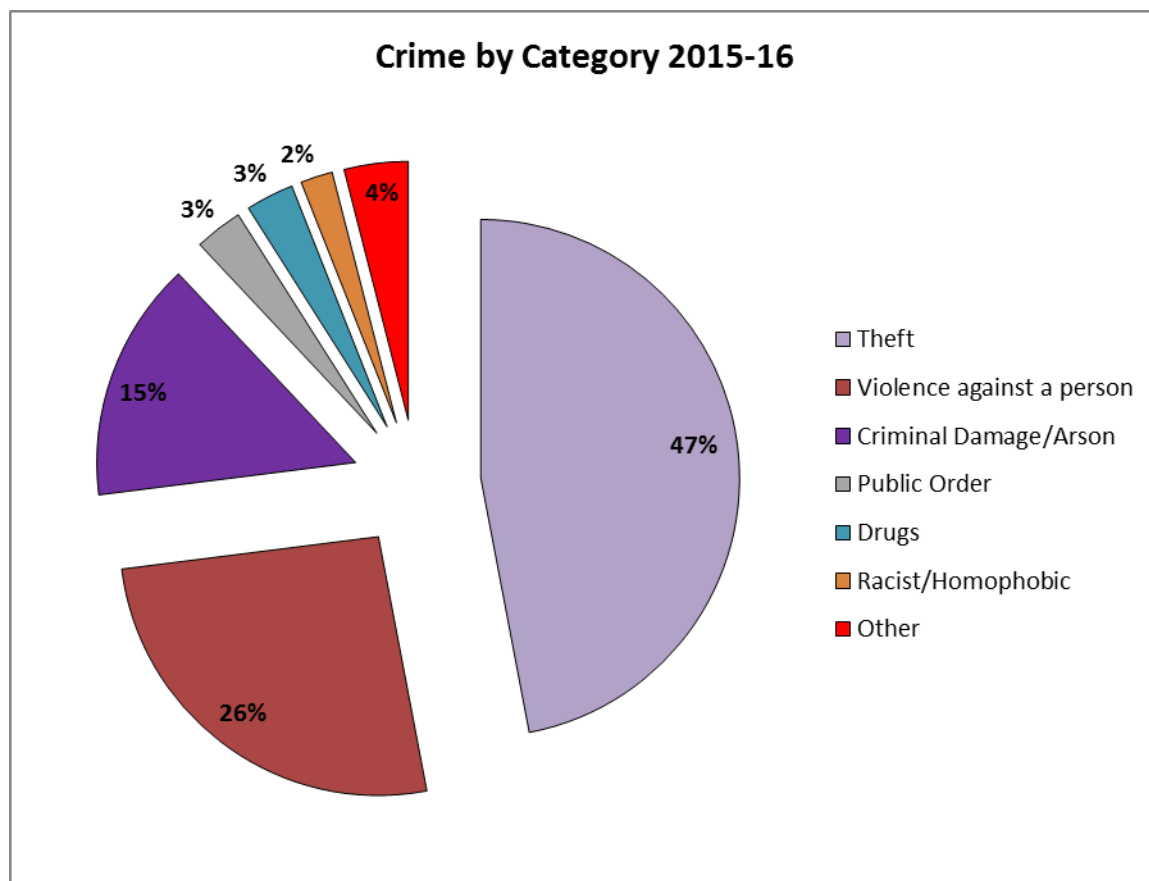
Taking out the 'leaseholder'; 'no link', and 'unknown' categories, this shows that 70% of the reported crime in the area that is associated with a residential address comes from the private rented sector:

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When looking at the Police crime statistics for the designated area as a whole, 47% of all crimes recorded in the last financial year were related to theft; 26% violence against a person and 15% criminal damage/arson. These three categories alone account for 88% of all the recorded crime in the Central area in the last financial year.

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Lancashire Police have provided information of a number of Operations that have been necessary to implement in direct response to the high levels of ASB and crime in the Central area:

Operation Castle

This was a summer 2016 ASB operation on Talbot Ward and Town Centre, aimed at tackling low level youth ASB, street drinking and street begging. This was necessary due to complaints from residents and businesses in this area regarding young people causing harassment, alarm and distress to people visiting the area.

Operation Warrior

This operation focuses on overt targeting of street dealing on Talbot, Claremont and Brunswick Wards, where drug dealing is a prominent issue for local people.

Operation Azure

This operation is focused on Blackpool's overall management of sex workers. The Central area houses many of Blackpool's parlours, and this covers the 'on' street workers on the Palatine Road, Central Drive

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area, and the 'off' street workers that include the management of the parlours around Cookson Street and King Street.

Operation Forager

This is a divisional wide operation using statistical analysis of burglary dwelling patterns, allowing officers to identify where offences have taken place and based on statistical mapping, predict where another burglary is likely to take place. Much of their work under this operation covers the Central Blackpool area.

Linking crime back to the Council's wider strategies and initiatives, in order to achieve the objectives set out in the Blackpool Local Plan Core Strategy, a robust and clear message must be sent out to landlords and tenants, and people living within the private rented sector in the Central area should be able to feel that they live in a safe and secure environment, which promotes a local pride and sense of place. The Core Strategy identifies the need to address the challenges associated with quality housing and the development of sustainable and safer neighbourhoods.

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11.3 Deprivation

The Selective Licensing Guidance stipulates that Councils must demonstrate that to use the criterion of deprivation:

(a) That the area is suffering from a high level of deprivation, which affects a significant number of the occupiers of properties referred to in article 3(1) (a); and

(b) That making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, contribute to a reduction in the level of deprivation in the area.

And in determining whether an area is suffering from a high level of deprivation, the local housing authority may have regard to the following factors in relation to the area:

(a) The employment status of adults;

(b) The average income of households;

(c) The health of households.

The English Indices of Multiple Deprivation is a UK government study of deprived areas in English local councils. It provides a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas (Lower-layer Super Output Areas - LSOAs) across England based on seven different domains of deprivation:

- Income Deprivation
- Employment Deprivation
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation
- Health Deprivation and Disability
- Crime
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- The Living Environment

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The 2015 index ranks Blackpool as the most deprived of 326 Local Authority areas in England, based on both the average LSOA score and concentration of deprivation indicators; 36 of 94 Blackpool LSOAs are in the 10% most deprived in the country.

Within the proposed selective licensing area there are 9 LSOA's, three within Bloomfield, two for Brunswick and four for Talbot ward (mapped to the closest boundary line). All LSOA's within the proposed licensing area are deemed to be within the 5% most deprived in England.⁵

The overall Index of Multiple Deprivation

The overall Index of Multiple Deprivation is a measure based on combining the seven specific dimensions of deprivation. The overall ranking for LSOAs within the proposed selective licensing area shows that deprivation has deteriorated from 2010 apart from Bloomfield 013C where the ranking improved by 1 place (out of 38,000). 7 LSOA areas out of 9 are within 1% of the most deprived places in the country with the remaining 2 falling within in the most 5% deprived.

Employment Deprivation Domain

The Employment Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. This includes people who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities.

The indicators

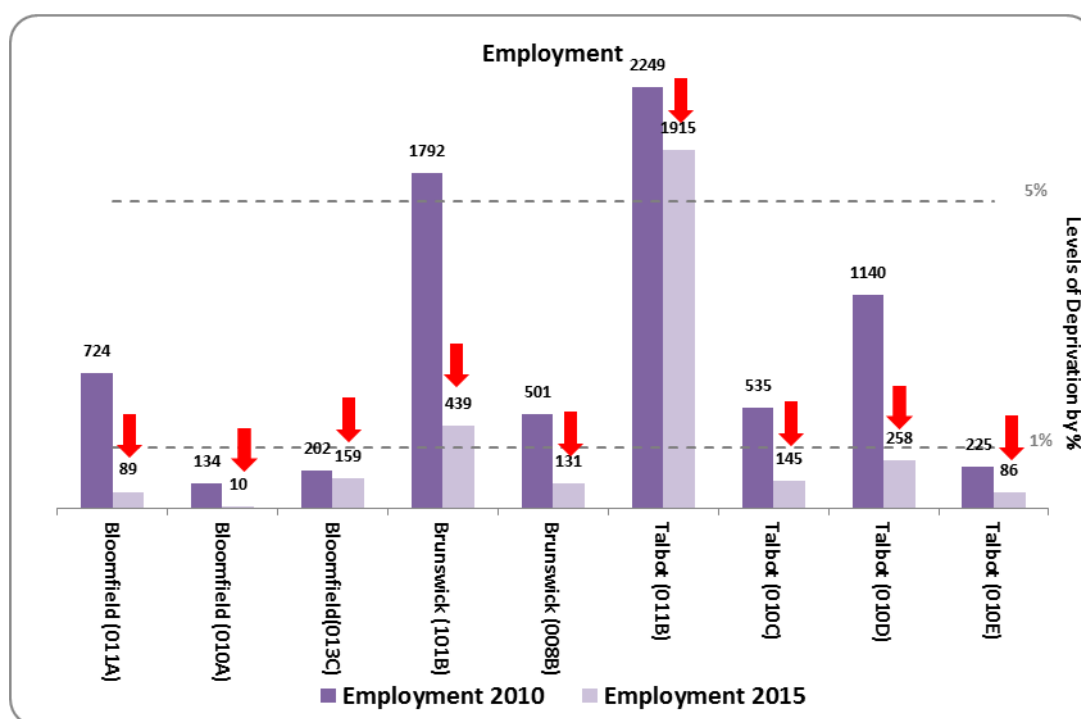
- Claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (both contribution-based and income-based), women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Employment and Support Allowance (both contribution-based and income-based) , women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Incapacity Benefit, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Severe Disablement Allowance, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64

⁵ In the initial consultation proposal for selective and additional licensing (July 2015) IMD 2010 was used, however more recent data has since been released.

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- Claimants of Carer’s Allowance, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64.⁶

All LSOAs within the proposed designated area have seen a decline in ranking since 2015. Apart from Talbot (101B) all other areas fall within the 1% most deprived in the County for employment.



Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Domain

The Education, Skills and Training Domain measure the lack of attainment and skills in the local population. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: one relating to children and young people and the other relating to adult skills. These two sub-domains are designed to reflect the ‘flow’ and ‘stock’ of educational disadvantage within an area respectively. The ‘children and young people’ sub-domain measures the attainment of qualifications and associated measures (‘flow’), while the ‘skills’ sub-domain measures the lack of qualifications in the resident working-age adult population (‘stock’). The two sub-domains are then standardised by ranking and transforming to an exponential distribution and combined with equal weights to create the overall domain score.

The indicators

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464485/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Technical-Report.pdf

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Children and Young People sub-domain

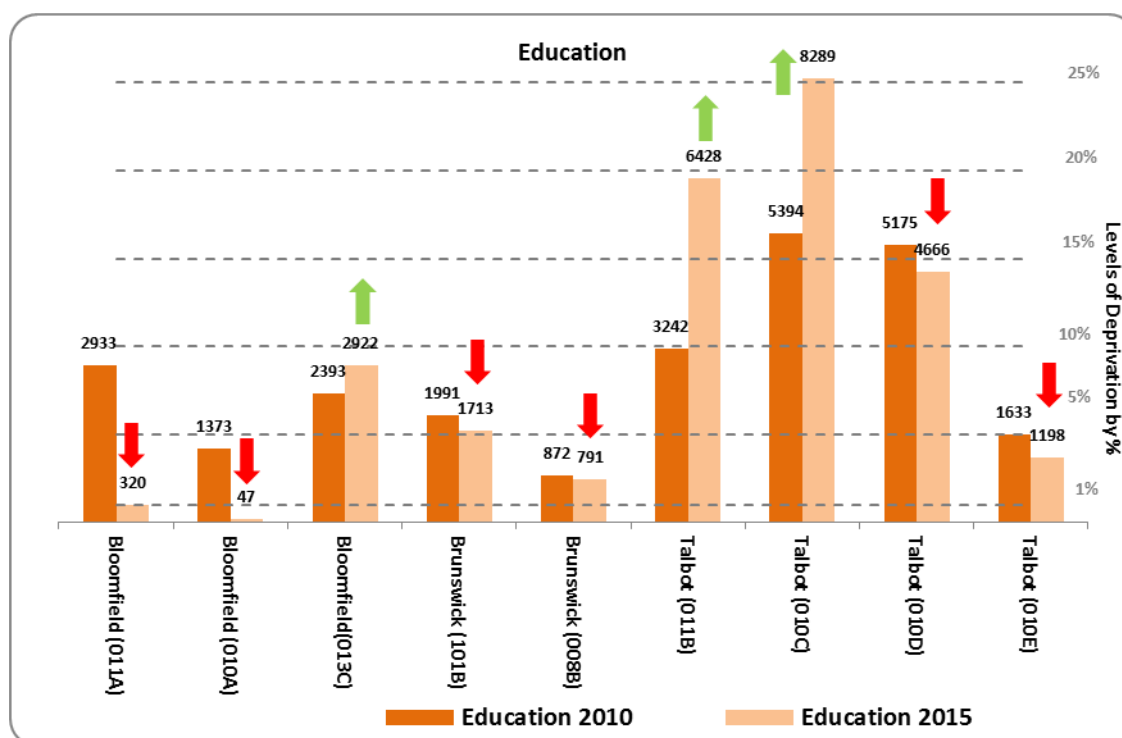
- Key Stage 2 attainment: The average points score of pupils taking reading, writing and mathematics Key Stage 2 exams
- Key Stage 4 attainment: The average capped points score of pupils taking Key Stage 4
- Secondary school absence: The proportion of authorised and unauthorised absences from secondary school
- Staying on in education post 16: The proportion of young people not staying on in school or non-advanced education above age 16
- Entry to higher education: A measure of young people aged under 21 not entering higher education

Adult Skills sub-domain

- Adult skills: The proportion of working-age adults with no or low qualifications, women aged 25 to 59 and men aged 25 to 64
- English language proficiency: The proportion of working-age adults who cannot speak English or cannot speak English well, women aged 25 to 59 and men aged 25 to 64⁷

⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464485/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Technical-Report.pdf

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Six LSOAs have seen a decline in ranking for education. Whilst some LSOA's have seen an improvement in ranking, all wards falls within the 25% of the most deprived areas within the Country for Education.

Income Deprivation Domain

The Income Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the population in an area experiencing deprivation relating to low income. The definition of low income used includes both those people that are out-of-work, and those that are in work but who have low earnings (and who satisfy the respective means tests).^[1]

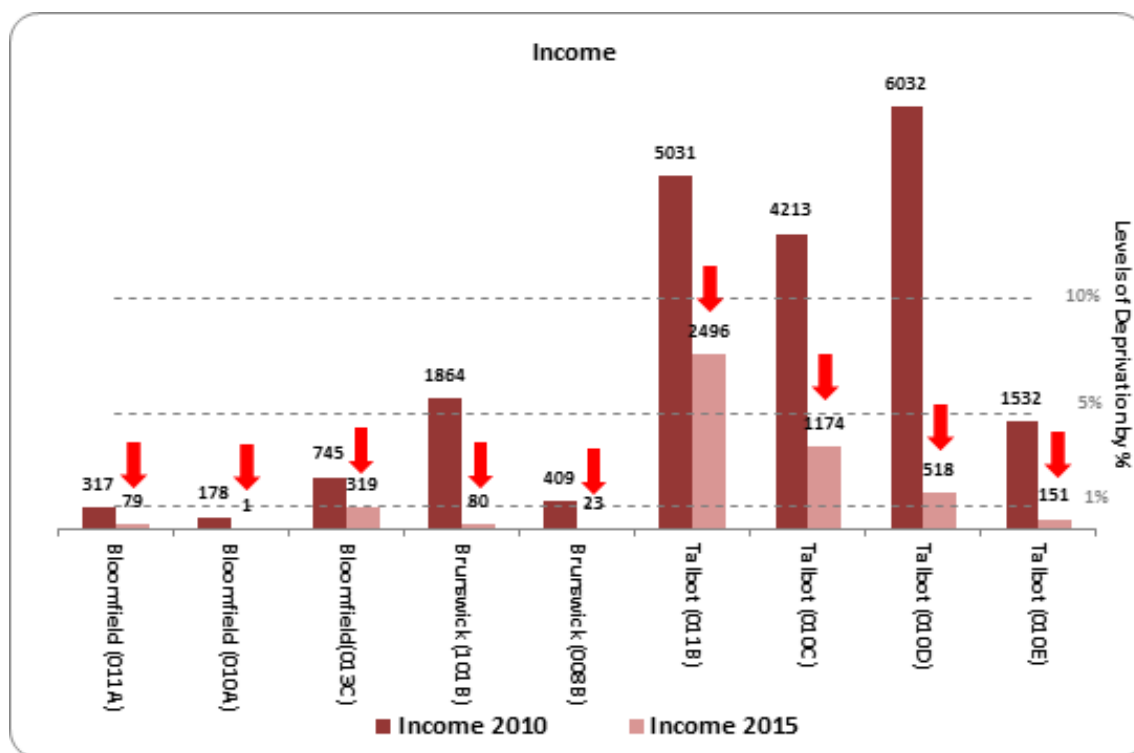
The indicators

- Adults and children in Income Support families
- Adults and children in income-based Jobseeker's Allowance families

^[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464485/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Technical-Report.pdf

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- Adults and children in income-based Employment and Support Allowance families
- Adults and children in Pension Credit (Guarantee) families
- Adults and children in Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit families not already counted, that is those who are not in receipt of Income Support, income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance, income-based Employment and Support Allowance or Pension Credit (Guarantee) and whose equivalised income (excluding housing benefit) is below 60 per cent of the median before housing costs
- Asylum seekers in England in receipt of subsistence support, accommodation support, or both



There has been a significant decline in Income since 2010, particularly in Talbot. 6 wards fall within the 1% of the most deprived wards within the county.

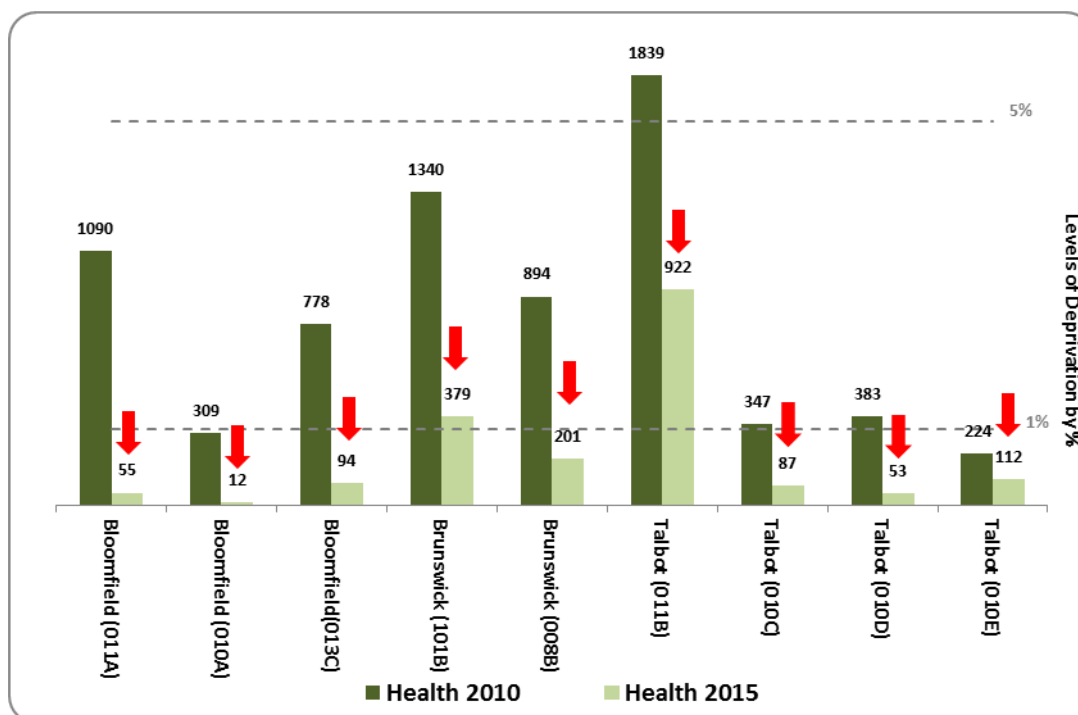
Health Deprivation and Disability Domain

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The Health Deprivation and Disability Domain measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. The domain measures morbidity, disability and premature mortality but not aspects of behaviour or environment that may be predictive of future health deprivation.

The indicators

- Years of potential life lost: An age and sex standardised measure of premature death
- Comparative illness and disability ratio: An age and sex standardised morbidity/disability ratio
- Acute morbidity: An age and sex standardised rate of emergency admission to hospital
- Mood and anxiety disorders: A composite based on the rate of adults suffering from mood and anxiety disorders, hospital episodes data, suicide mortality data and health benefits data.⁸



⁸ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464485/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Technical-Report.pdf

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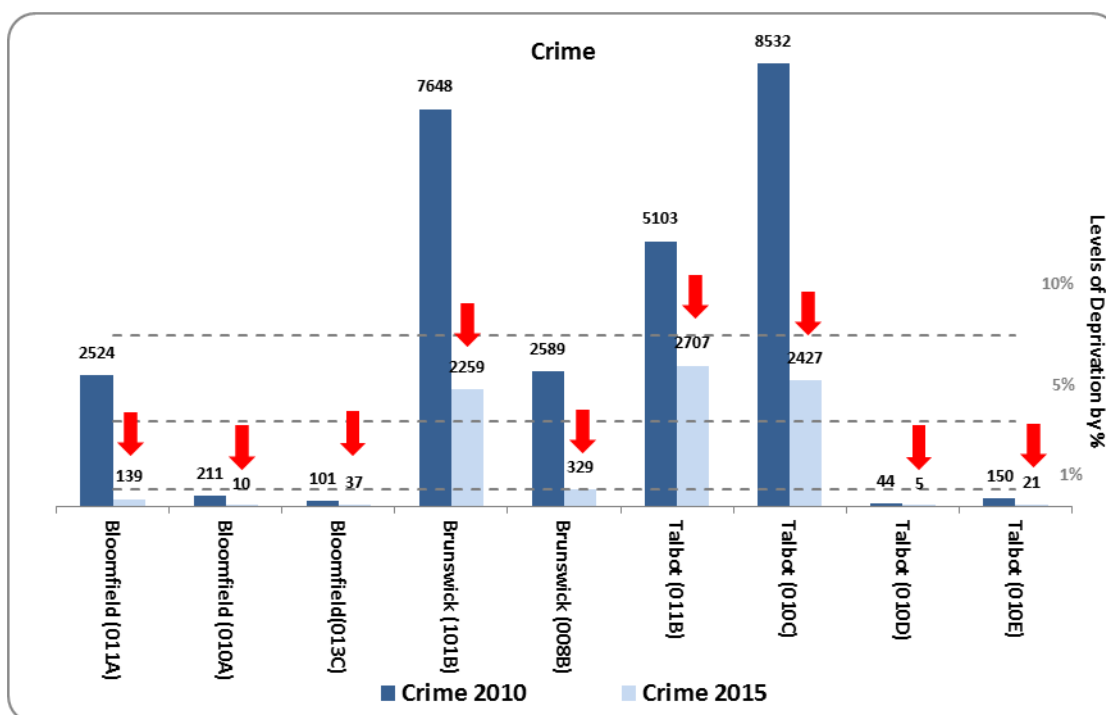
The IMD 2015 for health deprivation shows that within the proposed licensing area residents' health has deteriorated relative to other areas, particularly in parts of Bloomfield, Brunswick and Talbot. All wards fall within 5% of the most deprived in the Country with some areas falling within 1% of the unhealthiest LSOA's.

Crime Deprivation Domain

Crime is an important feature of deprivation that has major effects on individuals and communities. The Crime Domain measures the risk of personal and material victimisation at local level.

The indicators

- Violence: The rate of violence per 1,000 at-risk population
- Burglary: The rate of burglary per 1,000 at-risk properties
- Theft: The rate of theft per 1,000 at-risk population



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Criminal Damage: The rate of criminal damage per 1,000 at-risk populations.⁹

The measures applied by DCLG to rank this domain demonstrates that crime has increased within the proposed licensing areas, relative to other areas, with some parts seeing a significant decline in ranking. All areas within the proposed selective licensing scheme fall within the 10% of most deprived places in the country for crime.

Barriers to Housing and Services Domain

The Barriers to Housing and Services Domain measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: 'geographical barriers', which relate to the physical proximity of local services, and 'wider barriers' which includes issues relating to access to housing such as affordability.

The indicators

Geographical Barriers sub-domain

Road distance to a post office: A measure of the mean distance to the closest post office for people living in the Lower-layer Super Output Area

Road distance to a primary school: A measure of the mean distance to the closest primary school for people living in the Lower-layer Super Output Area

Road distance to a general store or supermarket: A measure of the mean distance to the closest supermarket or general store for people living in the Lower-layer Super Output Area

Road distance to a GP surgery: A measure of the mean distance to the closest GP surgery for people living in the Lower-layer Super Output Area

Wider Barriers sub-domain

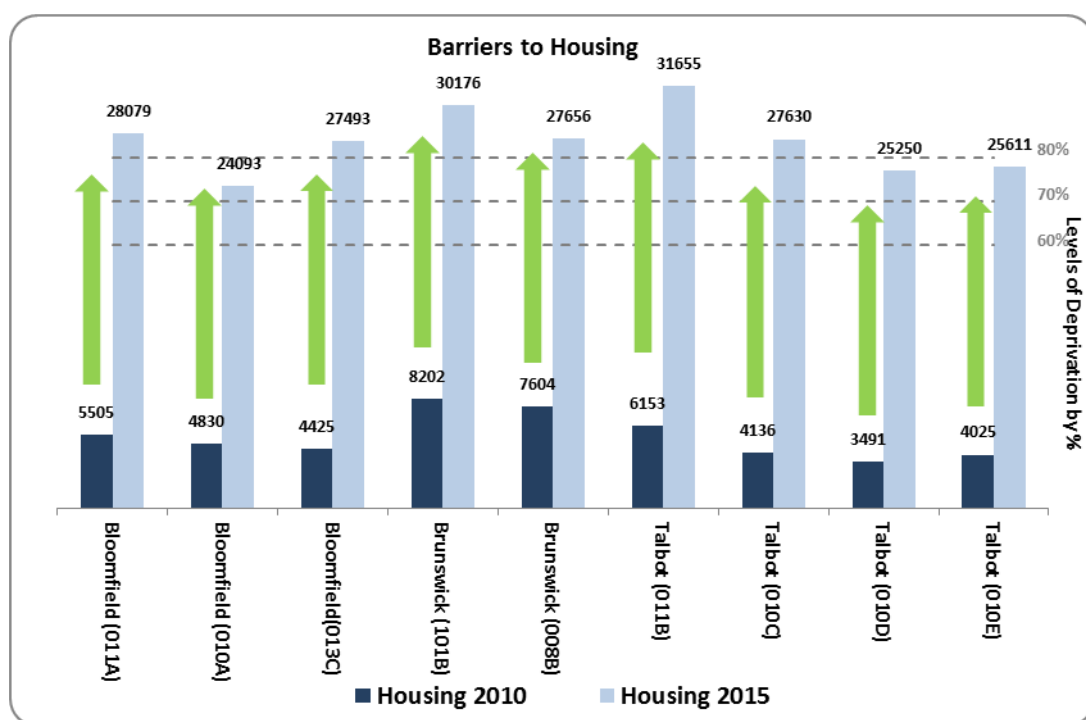
Household overcrowding: The proportion of all households in a Lower-layer Super Output Area which are judged to have insufficient space to meet the household's needs

⁹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464485/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Technical-Report.pdf

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Homelessness: Local authority district level rate of acceptances for housing assistance under the homelessness provisions of the 1996 Housing Act, assigned to the constituent Lower-layer Super Output Areas

Housing affordability: Difficulty of access to owner-occupation or the private rental market, expressed as the inability to afford to enter owner-occupation or the private rental market.¹⁰



Since 2010 there has been a significant improvement in ranking for 'Barriers to Housing and Services' domain. All areas within the proposed licensing scheme scored above 70% demonstrating that this particular domain is considered as the least deprived within the country.

It is important to understand that this domain does not take into account actual property conditions, such as adequate heating and properties being in good decorative conditions. The emphasis is more upon the availability of local amenities and being able to access the private rental market (47% for the proposed area). There are high levels of housing benefit claimants within these areas which is supported by the findings from Employment Domain.

¹⁰ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464485/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Technical-Report.pdf

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Living Environment Deprivation Domain

The Living Environment Deprivation Domain measures the quality of the local environment. The indicators fall into two sub-domains. The 'indoors' living environment measures the quality of housing; while the 'outdoors' living environment contains measures of air quality and road traffic accidents.

The indicators

Indoors sub-domain

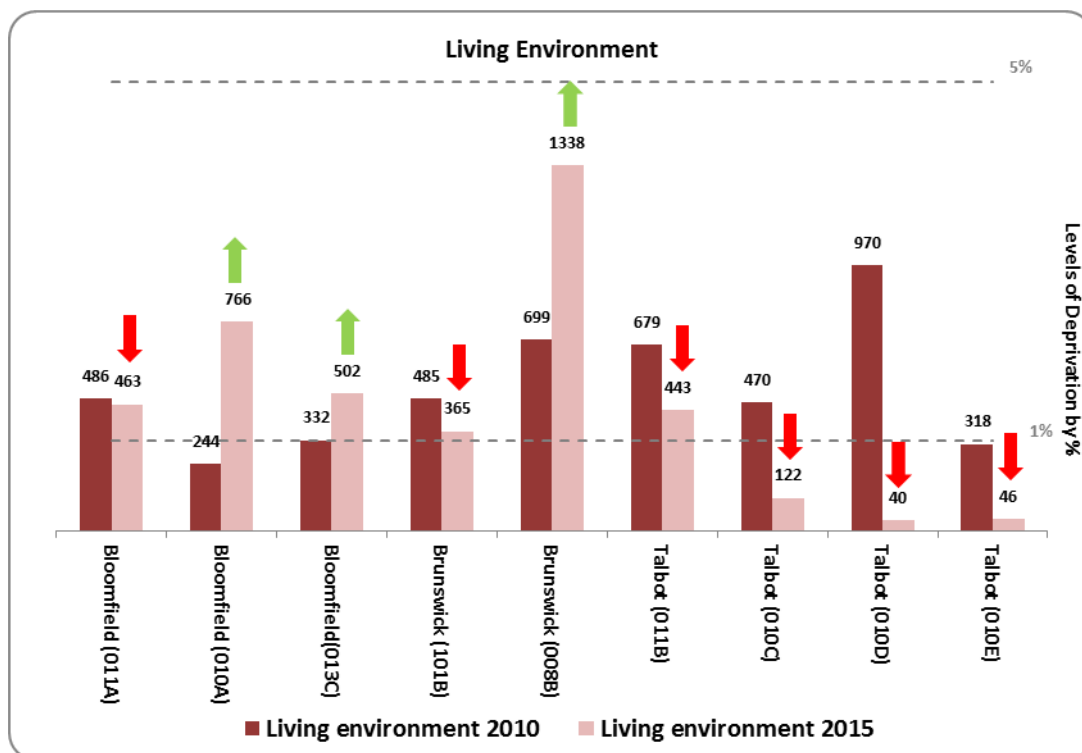
- Houses without central heating: The proportion of houses that do not have central heating or heating which is expensive to run.
- Housing in poor condition: The proportion of social and private homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes standard.

Outdoors sub-domain

- Air quality: A measure of air quality based on emissions rates for four pollutants
- Road traffic accidents involving injury to pedestrians and cyclists.¹¹

¹¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464485/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Technical-Report.pdf

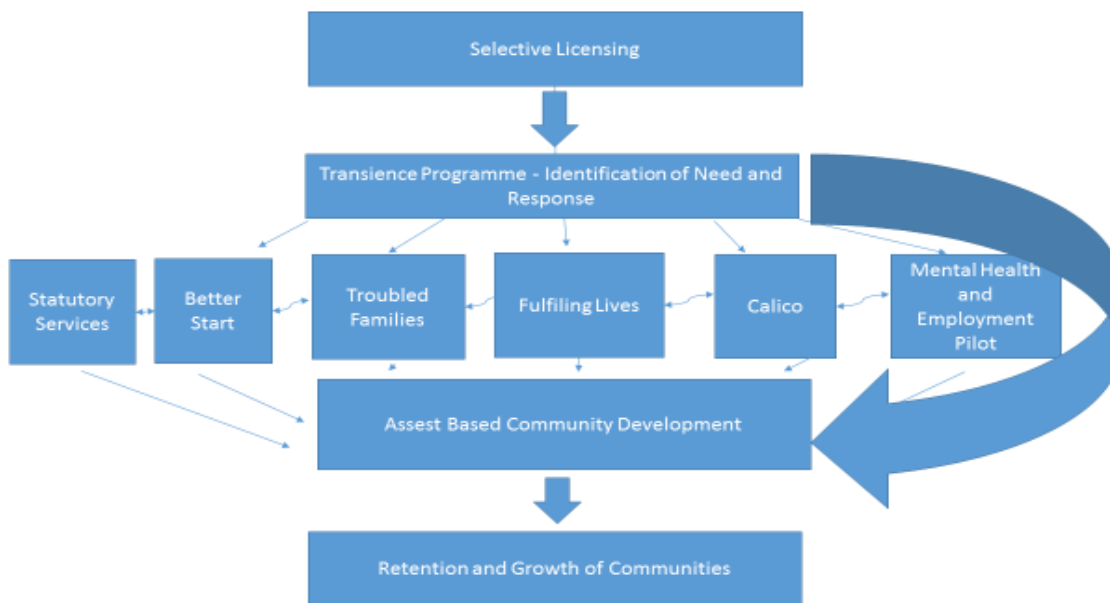
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Whilst some areas within the proposed licensing area have seen an improvement in ranking for the domain of Living Environment, most LSOA's have seen a decline. All LSOA's are considered to be within the 5% of the worst areas within the country emphasising the need to improve property conditions.

Linking deprivation back to the Council's wider strategies and initiatives, alongside the licensing schemes, Blackpool Council obtained external funding to deliver a Transience Project aimed at locating the most vulnerable and deprived members of the town and working with them by providing them access to support services. The model for the project is illustrated below.

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Licensing is not used as a standalone tool, and we feel it is important to address both the people and the property in order to make a real difference to the levels of deprivation in Blackpool.

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11.4 Poor Property Conditions

The Selective Licensing Guidance stipulates that Councils must demonstrate that to use the criterion of poor property conditions:

(a) that having carried out a review of housing conditions under section 3(1) of the 2004 Act, the local housing authority considers it would be appropriate for a significant number of the properties referred to in article 3(1) (a) to be inspected, with a view to determining whether any category 1 or category 2 hazards exist on the premises (1);

(b) that the local housing authority intends to carry out such inspections as referred to in sub-paragraph (a), with a view to carrying out any necessary enforcement action; and

(c) that making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, including any licence conditions imposed under section 90 of the 2004 Act, contribute to an improvement in general housing conditions in the area.

As part of the additional licensing inspection programme in the Central area, a multi-agency team have been 'sweeping' the area and attempting to get property details for as many properties in the area as possible as part of the Council's area housing condition review. The statistics below demonstrate that since the inspections began on 5th October 2016, a total of 175 properties have been accessed, and as a result, 66 schedules of work have been issued following the identification of a total of 814 hazards: 95 Category 1 and 719 Category 2.

It is important to note that a high number of these hazards have been found in non-HMO properties which are not covered under the additional licensing scheme but would however fall under the remit of a selective licensing scheme. In just three months, these figures highlight the need for the introduction of selective licensing in this area:

CAT 1		HMO	Non-HMO
Hazard 02 Excess Cold	88	36	52
Hazard 11 Crowding and Space	1	1	0
Hazard 12 Entry by Intruders	1	1	0
Hazard 23 Electrical Hazards	1	0	1
Hazard 24 Fire	4	4	0

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TOTAL	95	42	53
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CAT 2		HMO	Non-HMO
Hazard 01 Damp and mould growth	150	45	105
Hazard 02 Excess Cold	2	0	2
Hazard 03 Excess Heat	3	0	3
Hazard 06.1 Carbon monoxide	6	3	3
Hazard 09 Uncombusted fuel gas	12	4	8
Hazard 11 Crowding and Space	1	0	1
Hazard 12 Entry by Intruders	22	13	9
Hazard 13 Lighting	5	3	2
Hazard 15 Domestic Hygiene, Pests and Refuse	30	12	18
Hazard 16 Food Safety	72	29	43
Hazard 17 Personal Hygiene, Sanitation, Drainage	63	26	37
Hazard 19 Falls associated with Baths etc.	1	0	1
Hazard 20 Falling on Level Surfaces etc.	39	18	21
Hazard 21 Falling on Stairs etc.	37	15	22
Hazard 22 Falling between Levels	37	16	21
Hazard 23 Electrical Hazards	37	16	21
Hazard 24 Fire	111	69	42
Hazard 25 Flames, Hot Surfaces etc.	25	10	15
Hazard 26.1 Collision and Entrapment	27	11	16
Hazard 28 Position and Operability of Amenities	11	4	7
Hazard 29 Structural Collapse and Falling Elements	28	6	22
TOTAL	719	300	419

The above information gives a very clear and compelling picture and confirms that poor property conditions within inner Blackpool are not restricted to houses of multiple occupation, but highlights the wider issues across the area which would be addressed by selective licensing. We would be able to get behind the front doors of the most vulnerable residents within the town who do not live in HMO's. Blackpool Council are committed to carrying out inspections in these properties with a view to carrying out any necessary enforcement action, but also working with landlords to provide advice and assistance

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in bringing their properties up to standard. We have recently offered subsidised financial support to landlords through the Central Heating Fund and also through other ECO funding and government grants to improve energy efficiency in the private rented sector, however we have received a disappointingly low take up of these measures from landlords. Selective licensing would enable us to identify poor property conditions and management, and work directly with landlords to improve conditions across the sector. There is also a real need to undertake this role to ensure the safety and security of tenants, who in a high proportion of cases will be some of the most vulnerable in the town.

Information from Blackpool Council's housing waiting list supports the prevalence of poor property conditions in the private rented sector. In April 2015 – March 2016 Blackpool Council's Housing Options Team received 113 applications for rehousing from tenants living in privately rented properties on the grounds that their properties were in a poor condition.

Figures from the Office of National Statistics show that in the private rented sector there are more non decent properties which are in serious disrepair than in other tenures. Furthermore, there are more properties with high levels of fuel inefficiency and poor quality of environment than any other tenure.

NHS Blackpool research in 2010 found that Bloomfield, Talbot, and Brunswick had a significantly higher number of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants than the Blackpool average, as well as significantly more claiming Invalidity Benefit (IVB), Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA). They also had a significantly worse level of emergency hospital admissions and levels of mortality. When asked about their levels of health and disabilities, local residents gave answers that were again significantly worse than the Blackpool average in all three ward areas.

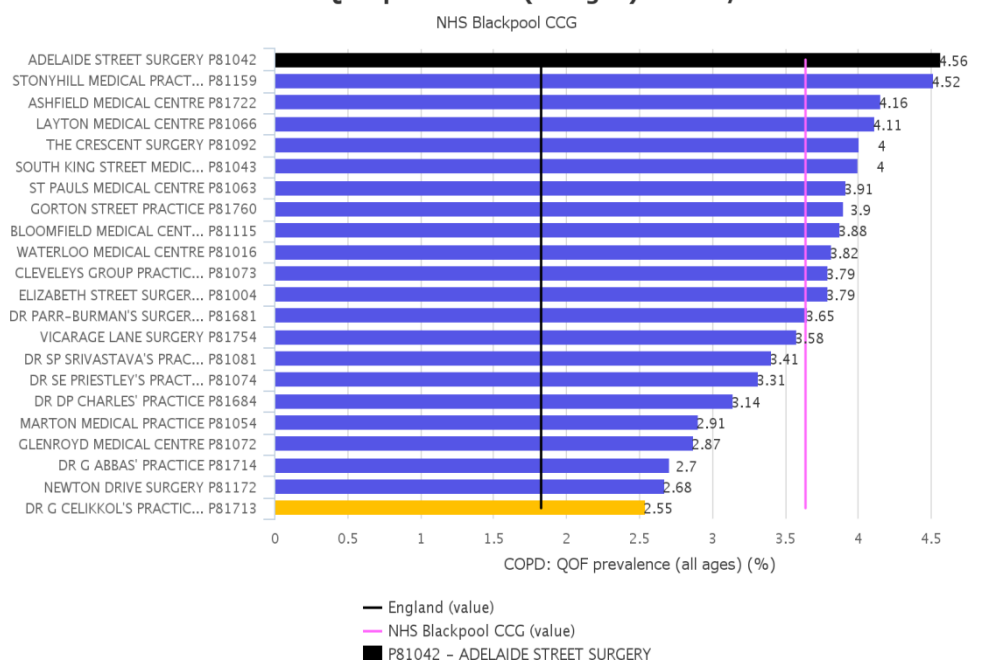
The Impacts of poor housing on health

Poor housing conditions have a detrimental impact on health, costing the NHS at least £600 million per year. Research based on the various sources of housing and health data suggests that poor housing is associated with increased risk of cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases and depression and anxiety.¹² Adelaide Street Surgery is located in the heart of the Talbot ward within the proposed licensing area. It looks after the health needs of approximately 10,786 residents in the locality and has recorded the highest rate of respiratory disease in all the surgeries located within the Blackpool CCG

¹² http://www.parliament.uk/documents/post/postpn_371-housing_health_h.pdf

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COPD: QOF prevalence (all ages) - 2014/15



For many individuals According to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) there is a strong link between mental health problems and insecure, poor quality and overcrowded homes. These environments compound the mental health issues, such as increased noise and the chaotic way of living, especially if overcrowded. Tenants may also find themselves isolated and without support mechanisms. Substandard housing has also been found to impact on socio-emotional development, psychological distress, behavioural problems, and educational outcomes of children and young people. There is a growing base of evidence to indicate that very young children under school age are very susceptible to long term mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, if they are in substandard housing. Some evidence also suggests that there is also a greater impact on women, at home alone, especially if a single parent; and older people who due to disability, lack of simple interventions such as handrails or other support mechanisms find themselves housebound and socially isolated.

Interventions that improve housing conditions have been shown to result in improvements on mental health measures, including reduced anxiety or depression, psychological distress, and improved patient reported health score. Providing a warm home has been clearly shown to benefit both young and old in relation to their feeling of wellbeing as well as reducing the physical risks that can arise from cold homes.

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Children are most likely to live in overcrowded housing compared with working age adults and pensioners. There is building evidence that living in a crowded home can have a negative impact on a child's development and educational attainment. Overcrowding may have both direct and indirect effects. The latter are of course less easily measured. For example, children's education may be affected by overcrowding directly, through a lack of space for homework, as well as indirectly because of school absences caused by illness, which may be related to overcrowding.

Qualitative research, with small numbers of families, has revealed a link between overcrowding and: stress, tension, and sometimes family break-up; anxiety and depression; a lack of privacy, particularly for adolescents and disrupted sleep patterns, which for the young can lead to problems with cognitive development, reading skills and sometimes even the ability to speak with clarity which ultimately will impact on their education and health. The chaotic sleeping arrangements were an underlying cause of many mental health effects.

Excess cold also has an impact with clear evidence linking home temperatures and mental health. The evaluation of the UK Warm Front Scheme, found that increasing the warmth of homes had a clear impact on mental health – those with bedroom temperatures of 21 degrees C were 50% less likely to experience depression and anxiety than those whose bedrooms were only 15 degrees C.

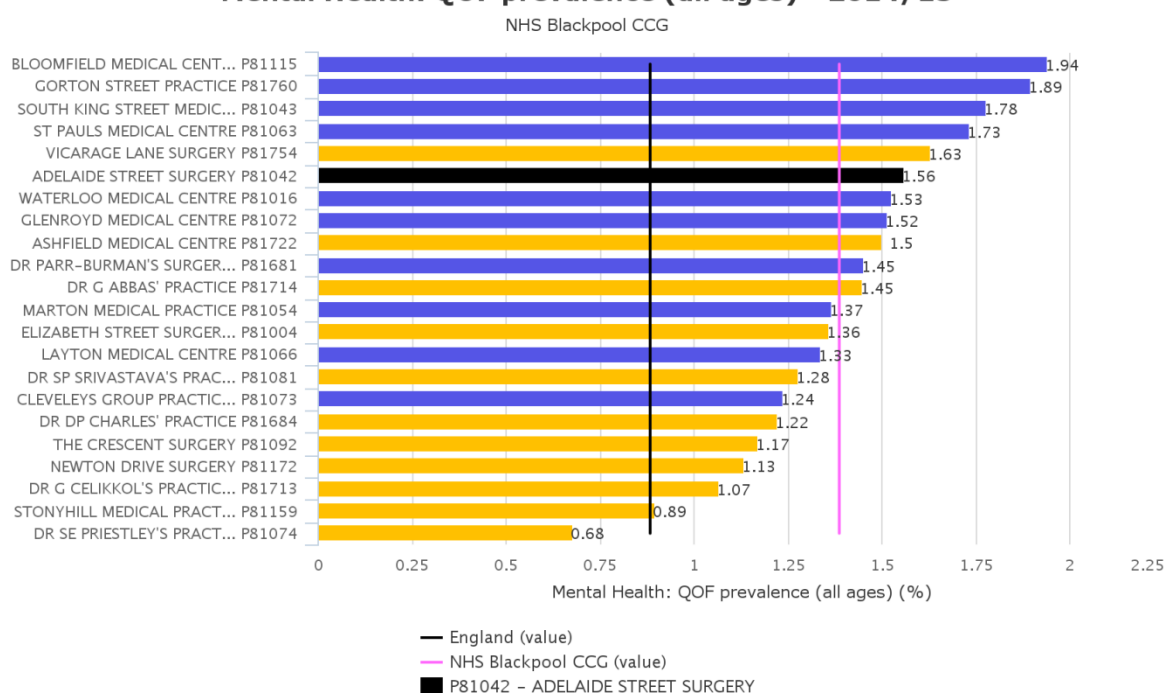
Other housing hazards such as condensation, damp and mould; noise; pests; living in flats; draughts and the age of homes have also been shown to have some connection to mental health.

The cost to the NHS and society of poor housing conditions is already well documented; however current cost estimates often do not include impacts on mental health. This means that it is possible that cost savings would in fact increase due to the reduction in mental illness – which costs England at least £105bn each year. In addition, the social and economic costs associated with mental ill health – in terms of personal suffering and family and community impacts as well as costs to employment and benefits payments – would likely decrease.

In terms of those number of patients in the local area being diagnosed with mental health conditions the top three surgeries within the Blackpool CCG boundary are Bloomfield Medical Centre, Gorton Street Practice and South King Street Medical Centre with Adelaide Street Surgery in 6th position. Patients attending these three surgeries are predominantly in areas of high concentration of private rented accommodation and fall within the proposed selective licensing designation. These reported levels are significantly higher than the average for England.

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Mental Health: QOF prevalence (all ages) - 2014/15



Blackpool Council's Public Health Annual Report 2014 states that 26% of houses in the most deprived areas are not meeting the Decent Homes Standard compared to 17% in the most affluent areas. The highest proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard are found to be in the private rented sector. This is a significant issue for Blackpool where over a quarter (26.1%) of residents live in privately rented accommodation; a much higher proportion than is seen in the North West (15.4%) or across England (16.8%).

The high number of improvement notices issued under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 by Blackpool Council's Housing Enforcement Team evidences the poor condition of properties within the inner areas.

Fuel poverty refers to a household that cannot afford to heat their home to an adequate standard impacting on their health and wellbeing. The quality of housing, the cost of energy and the household income are all contributing factors in determining whether a household finds itself in fuel poverty. In Blackpool 13.5% of households experience fuel poverty compared to 10.4% of households in England.

Around two thirds of all homes that fail the Decent Homes Standard do so because of the lack of thermal comfort, poor energy efficiency or inadequate heating systems. There are many more

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vulnerable people living in private homes that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard in Blackpool than the national average (40.6% as opposed to 23.6% nationally).

Homelessness charity Shelter has highlighted research from a YouGov survey in 2014 showing 10% of 4,544 private renters in England suffered ill health in the past 12 months because their private rented housing was of a poor state.

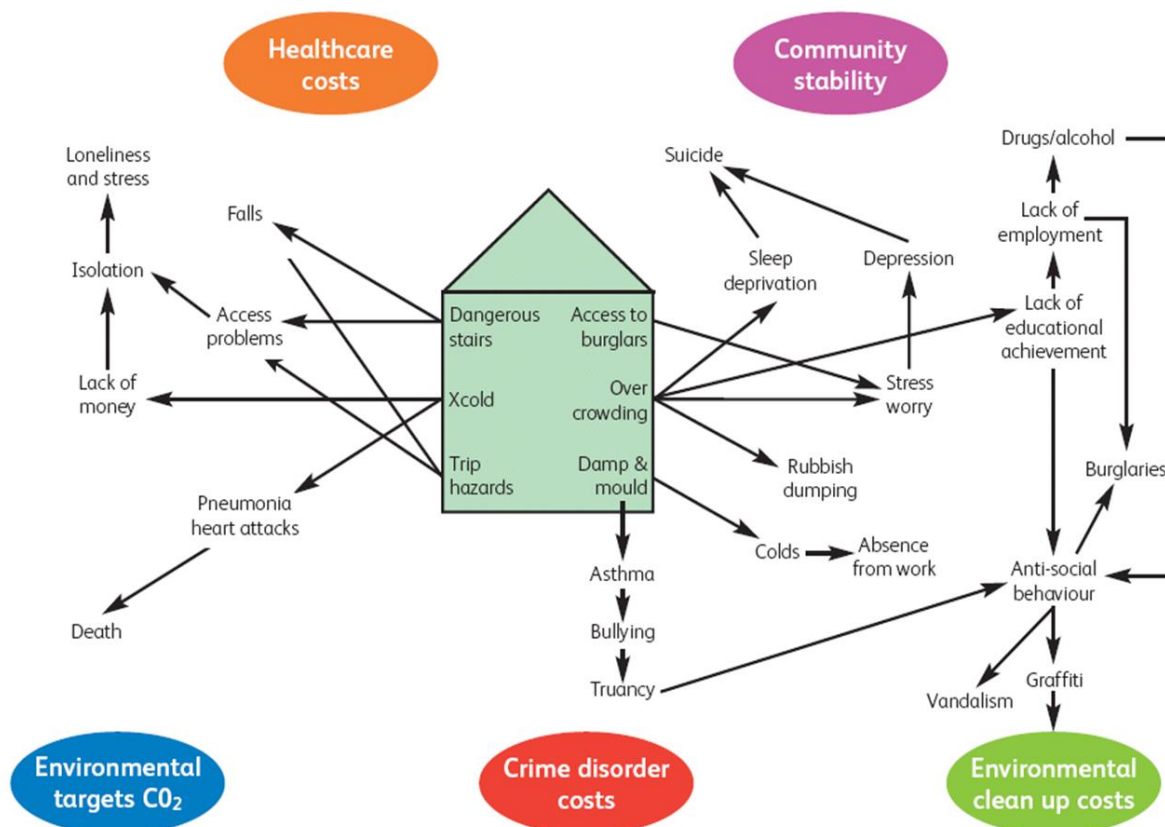
5% of the respondents also said that their family had been threatened with eviction because they told their landlord they would complain to the local council. 2% said they were actually evicted, or served a notice, because they had asked a landlord to carry out repairs and maintenance on their home.

Almost half of the respondents to the survey (48%) said they lived in a property with mould and 44% in a home with damp. These can cause health conditions such as asthma and eczema. Nearly a fifth (19%) lived in accommodation with electrical hazards and 18% reported their homes were infested with animals such as mice, ants and cockroaches.

The Marmott review into health inequalities in England, 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives (2010)' found that mental health conditions such as depression, stress and anxiety are negatively affected by fuel poverty and cold housing, and more than 1 in 4 adolescents living in cold housing are at risk of multiple mental health problems compared to 1 in 20 adolescents who have always lived in warm housing. Cold housing increases the level of minor illnesses such as colds and flu and exacerbates existing conditions such as arthritis and rheumatism. The report also found an indirect link between cold housing and fuel poverty with children's educational attainment, emotional wellbeing and resilience; dietary opportunities and choices; and dexterity and an increased risk of accidents and injuries in the home.

The links between poor housing conditions and public health are further linked below, illustrated by a diagram taken from CIEH, "Good housing leads to good health" (2008). Poor conditions such as overcrowding, damp, indoor pollutants and cold have all shown to be associated with physical illnesses including eczema, hypothermia and heart disease. Housing can also impact on mental health as families try to cope with the stress of living in cold, damp conditions.

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Bloomfield Ward in Blackpool is the most deprived Ward in England and as such fuel poverty and affordable warmth are a major issue. According to statistics from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) published on 30th June 2016, Bloomfield ward has the highest percentage of households in fuel poverty, with an average across the ward of 27.3%. As a numerical value this is an estimated 856 households in the Bloomfield ward who are fuel poor. In the Talbot ward the percentage was slightly lower at 20.4% with an estimated 652 households in fuel poverty and 18% in the Brunswick ward with an average of 614 households who are fuel poor. This shows the high level in these wards in comparison to other wards of Blackpool such as Park ward with 10.3% and Stanley ward with 7.5%. The Blackpool average of those households who are fuel poor is third highest in the North West with a percentage figure of 13.2% with an estimated 8633 households in fuel poverty. According to these figures this shows that 25% of all those 8633 households estimated to be living in fuel poverty in Blackpool live in the three wards of Bloomfield, Talbot and Brunswick.

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A mapping exercise laying health data across Blackpool also shows high levels of cold related health conditions in this Ward, conditions which are generally linked to poor and under-heated housing. The build type and condition of the housing stock in this area rules out easy to treat insulation measures. To date in Bloomfield Ward 706 external wall insulation measures have been installed partly using Central Government funding with additional funding from Public Health to subsidise the cost of installation. The reasoning behind implementing these measures from a Council and Public Health perspective is to improve resident's homes making them a warmer healthier environment.

Residents have reported seeing a difference in their annual fuel bills and have noticed how much warmer their homes are. The intention is to continue the programme in this area and other LSOA's in Blackpool, but without continued support from Public Health this is unlikely to go ahead.

Review of Property Conditions in Blackpool

The 2008 Private Sector House Condition Survey showed that 38.7% of all private sector dwellings in Blackpool were classed as non-decent compared to an average 27.1% for England. The same survey found that poor housing conditions in Blackpool were mostly associated with pre 1919 properties, the private rented sector, converted flats, occupiers on the lowest incomes and those in receipt of benefits. 46.7% of private sector dwellings occupied by vulnerable tenants are estimated to be non-decent with the majority being concentrated in inner Blackpool.

Linking poor property conditions back to the Council's wider strategies and initiatives, in order to achieve the objectives set out in the Homelessness Prevention Strategy, the introduction of selective licensing alongside other tools would enable Blackpool Council to work with landlords to improve standards of accommodation and address issues that could potentially result in private sector tenants presenting as homeless within the designated area.

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12. How Selective Licensing will support reduced ASB and crime, lower levels of deprivation, and improved property conditions

ASB and Crime

Poor management by a significant number of landlords is a major contributor to issues that affect local residents, which can be demonstrated through the day to day work of the Police and Blackpool Council's Enforcement Team. There is strong evidence that many landlords are willing to house tenants without conducting appropriate reference checks or who are known to have a history of causing problems. Many properties are in such a poor quality within the proposed licensing area that it attracts people whom live chaotic lifestyles which more often than not contribute to negative activities in the area such as ASB.

The scale of the issues is such that just focusing on the limited number of individual enforcement actions that result from tenants' complaints is insufficient to address the widespread issues. By licensing these properties it is possible to require landlords to ensure that their tenants are suitable and behave in a way which reduces the risk of their tenants or visitors engaging in nuisance or ASB.

Selective licensing would mean landlords must adhere to the license conditions, to ensure that their premises comply with minimum standards of fire safety and security against burglary. Landlords will be made to ensure they are obtaining tenant references that show the tenant has a good history and is not likely to commit anti-social behaviour or crime.

Through licensing conditions the landlord has to ensure that the premises comply with the space and amenity standards and assessed alongside legislative requirements- see Fylde Coast Amenity and Space Standards guidance.

All properties should have a valid Energy Performance Certificate, which works to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the occupants with regards to the reduction of fuel poverty and national energy efficiency measures. They must be aware of the statutory requirements for EPCs.

Landlords will be required to undertake training, where appropriate, and be able to prove they are competent in meeting the licence conditions and have the right knowledge and experience to maintain their tenants and offer a quality offer of accommodation. This will enable the local authority to provide licence holders with the knowledge and expertise to improve the management of their properties and reduce ASB.

Landlords are also required to provide the local authority with a management plan about how they will deal with complaints of anti-social behaviour regarding their tenants. This will safeguard the wellbeing

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of occupants, persons visiting the premises and persons in the immediate locality and help to reduce ASB.

Deprivation

Selective licensing will give us the opportunity to get behind the front door of properties we may never otherwise be able to. Those vulnerable people living behind those front doors may never otherwise get access to the support and assistance local authority staff and partners can provide through the inspection process. This document provides some case studies however the positive impact on life chances and future quality of life can also be told by those support services who work with us. Police and Fire clearly see the benefits, on individual people; families and more widely on communities. South Beach now can demonstrate stronger and more resilient communities and hoteliers in the area have already been contacting Blackpool Council requesting for a new scheme for a further five years following the expiry of the current scheme in March 2017.

Property Conditions

A high proportion of properties in the private rented sector in the Central area are old and poorly converted. Age is particularly an issue from the Planning Enforcement Team's view, and selective licensing could enable the inspections of many properties which are in need of modernisation and improvements both internally and externally. An example of where selective licensing could encourage more landlords to improve the standard of their properties is detailed below. A property in South Beach was referred to planning enforcement in 2012 by the selective licensing team for poor condition of the property. A letter was issued to the owner requiring improvements to be carried out to the property. Unfortunately no works were carried out, so a s215 notice was authorised and served. The owner was given a period of four months to comply with the works. A visit four months later revealed that some works had been carried out – half of the front of the property had been painted, the front gate had been removed, but a window to the rear had been smashed. A further five months later no further works had been completed, so papers were passed to Legal Services to commence prosecution of the owner for failure to comply with the s215 notice. An initial court hearing was scheduled but then adjourned due to the owner's ill health; a further hearing was scheduled but was once again adjourned, this time due to the owner re-commencing works. 22 months after the initial letter was issued to the owner, they had completed all the required works, so prosecution was withdrawn and the owner accepted a simple caution. This work meant that the owner benefitted from being able to offer a better standard of accommodation; the tenants were able to benefit from a better and safer place to live; and the community benefitted from significant improvements in the external frontage of the property.

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The next section will give an overview of the achievements in South Beach following the introduction of Selective Licensing. A comprehensive evaluation will be carried out at the end of the scheme however it is important to note here that we can demonstrate that previous selective licensing schemes in Blackpool have made a real difference and reduced anti-social behaviour and crime; raised the aspirations of tenants living in the area; encouraged more stabilised and sustainable communities and engagement from landlords who are now offering a higher standard of accommodation.

Having now also had the opportunity to evaluate the first three months of the additional licensing scheme in this area we now feel we are able to benefit from the information contained within this report around the number of hazards identified and the number of vulnerable residents that we have been able to support and signpost into support services as part of our unique multi-agency approach to licensing. It is important to highlight the benefits of such a holistic approach. We now feel that this information supports our proposal to introduce selective licensing and, having seen the extent of issues being identified we feel that now is the right time to proceed with this proposal.

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13. Experiences of previous schemes

The selective licensing scheme in South Beach started in March 2012 and by 31st May 2013 99% of all landlords and managing agents in the area had complied in applying for a licence.

A comprehensive programme of inspections of private rented properties started in September 2012 in order to see if licence conditions are being complied with and this has identified a number of management issues where further action has been necessary. The programme led to:

- A 40% reduction in personal, environmental and nuisance ASB (that is directly linked to private rented properties and excludes night time economy and commercial properties).
- A 75% reduction in environmental ASB in the area, whilst fly tipping in alleys remains a key concern for residents.
- A 44% reduction in drug related crime, 17% in theft related crime; 8.2% reduction in violent crime and a 40% reduction in alcohol related crime.

For the duration of the scheme South Beach has benefitted from a dedicated ASB officer and Housing Enforcement Officer (HEO). As well as the engagement and partnership activity in addition the officers operate a complaints and enquiry service with a telephone answer service available 7 days a week. They complete weekly walkabouts in the area, so are highly visible and known to local residents.

To illustrate the complex nature of the ASB role an evaluation took place from the 1st April 2016 to identify an average week in the life of an ASB officer in South Beach. During the week the officer received 34 ASB complaints which were dealt with immediately and the opening of 11 new cases consisting of ASB of more complex nature requiring referrals and input from partners and dealt with 207 follow up actions.

By the end of the inspection programme our multi-agency team had:

- Engaged over 48% of South Beach residents with a continuing on- going process of engagement – some with complex, multiple needs (41%);
- Supported 39 people with complex needs into employment, for 26 of those people this was their first experience of employment;
- Supported residents with health, social care and other needs, 19% of the total population South Beach:

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- 26% received brief interventions around drugs and alcohol of which 7% were new and previously disengaged clients provided with support to remain engaged of which 75% of clients successfully completed treatment;
- 21% were registered with local GP's and dentists;
- 30% received social inclusion interventions;
- 23% received other health related support;
- 12% were referred into service for adult social care needs (including community mental health and Occupational therapy);
- 14% were supported for lower level adult social care needs.

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APPENDIX 1 CENTRAL DESIGNATED AREA NAMES

Streets in proposed Central Designated Area Page 1		
Abingdon Street	Buchanan Street	Devonshire Road (2-180 & 1-155)
Adelaide Street	Butler Street	Durham Road
Adelaide Street West	Cambridge Road	East Topping Street
Adelphi Street	Counce Street (2-180 & 1-131)	Edelston Road
Albert Road	Cedar Square	Edward Street
Alfred Street	Central Drive	Elizabeth Street
Anderson Street	Chadwick Street	Erdington Road
Back Ribble Road	Charles Street	Fairhurst Street
Back Church Street	Charnley Road	Fenton Road
Back Read Road	Church Street	Field Street
Bank Hey Street	Clifton Street	Fisher Street
Baron Road	Clinton Avenue	Fleet Street
Belmont Avenue	Coleridge Road (36-78 & 29-69)	Freckleton Street
Bethesda Road	Cookson Street	Gainsborough Road
Birley Street	Coronation Street	George Street
Bloomfield Road (31-67 & 76-92)	Corporation Street	Gloucester Avenue (odds)
Boothley Road (evens)	Deansgate	Gloucester Court

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Streets in proposed Central Designated Area Page 2

Gorton Street	Jameson Street	Milbourne Street
Granville Road (1-27 & 2-100)	Kent Road	Montrose Avenue
Grosvenor Street	King Street	Orme Street
Handley Road	King Street South	Oxford Road
Harrison Street	Leamington Road	Palatine Road
Havelock Street	Leeds Road	Park Road (1-147 & 2-100)
Henry Street	Leicester Road	St John's Court
Heywood Street	Leopold Grove	Parker Street
Hornby Road	Lincoln Road	Peter Street
Lawn Court	Liverpool Road	Platt Street
Hornby Court	Livingstone Road	Portland Road
Park Court	Longton Road	Princess Court
Lincoln Court	Louise Street	Princess Street
Courtfields	Manor Road	Princess Court (50-52 & 27-35)
Hull Road	Market Street	Priory Court
Ibbison Court	Maudland Road	Promenade
Iddon Court	Middle Street	Raikes Mews

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Streets in proposed Central Designated Area Page 3

Raikes Parade	South King Street	Winstanley Grove
Reads Avenue	St Albans Road	Wood Street
Regent Road East	St Heliers Road	Woolman Road
Regent Road	Stanley Road	
Ribble Road	Stansfield Street	
Rigby Road (100)	Talbot Road (20-286)	
Ripon Road	Talbot Square	
Rishton Street	Topping Street	
Rydal Avenue	Vance Road	
Salthouse Avenue	Victoria Street	
Sands Way	Victory Road	
Saville Road	West Street	
Seed Street	Westbourne Avenue	
Selbourne Road	West View	
St Georges Court	Westwell Grove	
Selby Avenue	Whitegate Drive	
Seymour Road	Whiteside Street	
Sheppard Street	Winifred Street	

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<u>APPENDIX 2: PROPOSED SELECTIVE LICENCE CONDITIONS</u>	
<u>Conditions of Selective Licences under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004</u>	
1	Gas
	<p>If gas is supplied to the house, the licence holder must provide to Blackpool Council a Gas Safety Certificate issued within the previous 12 months at the time of the application and thereafter annually or on demand.</p> <p>Reason: Mandatory condition required by Schedule 4 of the Housing Act 2004</p>
2	Electrical Appliances
	<p>The Licence Holder must keep all electrical appliances and furniture supplied in a safe condition and must provide a declaration as to their safety at the time of application and thereafter on demand.</p> <p>Reason: Mandatory condition required by Schedule 4 of the Housing Act 2004</p>
3	Furniture and Furnishings
	<p>The Licence Holder must ensure that furniture and furnishings supplied by them are compliant with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended 1989 and 1993) and must provide a declaration as to their safety at the time of application and thereafter on demand.</p> <p>Reason: Mandatory condition required by Schedule 4 of the Housing Act 2004</p>
4	Smoke Alarms:
	<p>The Licence Holder must ensure that smoke alarms are installed in the property and kept in proper working order and provide a declaration as to their condition and positioning to Blackpool Council on demand</p> <p>Reason: Mandatory condition required by Schedule 4 of the Housing Act 2004 & to comply with minimum fire safety standards LACORS</p>
5	Tenant references
	The licence holder must demand references from persons who wish to occupy the house and must

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	<p>provide evidence of pre-let reference checks undertaken to the Council upon request.</p> <p>Reason: Mandatory condition required by Schedule 4 of the Housing Act 2004</p>
6	<p>Terms of Occupation:</p>
	<p>The Licence Holder must supply to the occupiers of the house a written statement of the terms on which they occupy the property. A copy of the terms will be provided to the Council on demand.</p> <p>Reason: Mandatory condition required by Schedule 4 of the Housing Act 2004</p>
7	<p>Numbers of Occupiers</p>
	<p>The Licence Holder must ensure that rooms other than bedrooms are not used for sleeping purposes.</p> <p>Reason: to ensure that the premises comply with the space and amenity standards and assessed alongside legislative requirements- see Fylde Coast Amenity and Space Standards guidance</p>
8	<p>Energy Efficiency</p>
	<p>Each new tenancy will require an Energy Performance Certificate.</p> <p>Reason: To safeguard the health and wellbeing of the occupants with regards to the reduction of fuel poverty and national energy efficiency measures and to be aware of the statutory requirements for Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs).</p>
9	<p>Property Management</p>
	<p>The Licence Holder must ensure that:-</p> <p>All repairs to the house or any installations, facilities or equipment within it are carried out by competent and reputable persons.</p> <p>All occupants of the house receive written confirmation detailing arrangements in place to deal with repairs and emergencies and report nuisance and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>If accommodation is provided on a furnished basis and includes electrical appliances, the Licence Holder must provide the occupier copies of user manuals or equipment provided as part of the agreement for the occupation of the house.</p>

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	<p>All occupiers are made aware of the licence and conditions.</p> <p>Reason: to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of occupants and to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).</p>
10	<p>Common Areas</p> <p>Where the dwelling is a flat in a block and the licence holder is the owner or manager of the block, the licence holder must ensure that:</p> <p>Common areas, including shared living rooms, kitchens, hallways, etc. are not used for sleeping, either by tenants or their guests;</p> <p>Corridors, stairways and lobbies are fitted with emergency lighting in accordance with BS5266;</p> <p>A cleaning regime is demonstrated on request to ensure that all corridors, stairways, lobbies and all exit routes are kept free from obstruction and combustible material;</p> <p>Smoking is not permitted in any common areas and ‘no smoking’ signs should be displayed where the dwelling is a flat in a block and the Licence Holder is the owner or manager of the block. (Health Act 2006).</p> <p>Reason: to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of occupants in the event of fire.</p>
11	<p>Fire Safety</p> <p>The Licence Holder will inform the local authority of any changes to the positioning of smoke alarms and if the property is a house in multiple occupation, produce a Fire detection and alarm certificate on request.</p> <p>Reason: to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of occupants in the event of fire. The Fire Safety Guidance is provided by LACORS, see www.lacors.gov.uk. http://www.lacors.gov.uk/lacors/upload/19175.pdf The Housing- Fire Safety guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing can also be found at Blackpool Council Website www.blackpool.gov.uk under Housing- Selective Licensing.</p>
12	<p>Security</p>

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	<p>The Licence Holder must ensure that:-</p> <p>a) The security provisions for the access to the dwelling (including but not limited to locks, latches, deadbolts and entry systems) must be maintained in good working order at all times.</p> <p>b) Where window locks are fitted, the Licence Holder will ensure that keys are provided to the relevant occupant.</p> <p>c) Where a burglar alarm is fitted to the house, the Licence Holder will inform the occupant in writing the circumstances under which the code for the alarm can be changed, and provide details when required on how this can be arranged.</p> <p>d) Where previous occupants have not surrendered keys, the Licence Holder will arrange for a lock change to be undertaken, prior to new occupants moving in.</p> <p>e) Where alley gates are installed to the rear of the licensed property, the licence holder must take responsibility for holding a key and make satisfactory arrangements for the occupiers' access.</p> <p>Reason: to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of occupants in the event of fire and entry by intruders and reduce ASB</p>
13	External areas, refuse and waste
	<p>The Licence Holder must ensure that:-</p> <p>The exterior of the property is maintained in a reasonable decorative order and state of repair;</p> <p>At all times any gardens, yards and other external areas within the curtilage of the house are kept in reasonably clean and tidy condition and free from rodent infestation, and</p> <p>Suitable and adequate provision is made for storage of refuse generated in the property and that occupants use receptacles provided by the Council for storage prior to collection. The receptacles or plastic refuse sacks where receptacles have not yet been issued must not be exposed for a period longer than 12 hours prior to collection and must not cause obstruction at any time.</p> <p>Access must be available at all times to adequate, external, refuse storage.</p> <p>The Licence Holder must ensure that any kind of refuse which the Council will not ordinarily collect (e.g. large items, hazardous waste) are disposed of responsibly and appropriately.</p>

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	Reason: to ensure that the domestic hygiene and condition of the licensed property is maintained and reduce ASB
14	Training
	<p>The Licence Holder and/or Manager will need to demonstrate competence of managing private rented accommodation and shall undertake property management training courses where required to do so by the authority.</p> <p>Reason: to enable the Council to provide licence holders with the knowledge and expertise to improve the management of their properties and reduce ASB</p>
15	Management/ Anti-Social Behaviour
	<p>The Licence Holder must take reasonable and practical steps to reduce or prevent anti-social behaviour by persons occupying or visiting the house and the use of premises for illegal purposes.</p> <p>The licence holder must:</p> <p>Provide a written action plan to Blackpool Council outlining procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour at the time of application. This must be reviewed annually and submitted on request.</p> <p>Obtain tenant references prior to granting a tenancy as to previous tenancy conduct, including behaviour of the proposed occupier and household. The Licence Holder needs to have due regard to what the reference says and be satisfied that the tenant is not likely to cause any anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>If a Licence holder receives a reference request for a current or former tenant for the purposes of an application to rent a property from another Licence Holder he must respond to the request in writing within a reasonable period and either i) decline the request for a reference ; or ii) when giving a reference state whether or not he is aware of any allegations of anti-social behaviour made against the tenant and if such allegations have been made give details of the same including details of whether (to his knowledge) the allegations have been admitted or have been found proven in any court or tribunal.</p> <p>Require any prospective tenant to disclose unspent criminal convictions when applying for a tenancy. Where the prospective tenant discloses unspent criminal convictions the Licence Holder must demonstrate that due consideration was given to whether those convictions indicate a real risk that the prospective tenant is likely to commit acts of antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>Cooperate with Blackpool Council, Lancashire Constabulary and other agencies in resolving complaints</p>

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	<p>of anti-social behaviour. The Licence Holder and/or their nominated managing agent are required to undertake an investigation of any complaints regarding their tenants. Written records of these will be required.</p> <p>The licence holder/management agents must make regular (at least monthly) inspections of the property to ensure that the property is in a decent state of repair and that the occupiers are not in breach of tenancy terms and conditions.</p> <p>Ensure that each tenant is made aware that they are responsible for their own behaviour and the behaviour of other occupiers and visitors. Tenants must be made aware that if they, other occupiers, or their visitors: Cause nuisance or annoyance to neighbours; or use abusive or threatening language or behaviour to neighbours; or fail to store or dispose of refuse properly; or cause damage to fixtures, fittings, fire prevention or alarm equipment or installations, or to the fabric of the premises; or fail to give access to the landlord or his agent for the purpose of maintaining communal areas or, upon reasonable notice, to inspect or undertake works within their accommodation. They will be liable to enforcement action which may include possession proceedings either under the terms of the tenancy, pursuant to s.21 of the Housing Act 1988 or pursuant to Grounds 13 or 14 of Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1988.”</p> <p>Reason: to safeguard the wellbeing of occupants, persons visiting the premises and persons in the immediate locality and reduce ASB.</p>
16	Notification/Consultation of Changes
	<p>The Licence Holder and managing agents must consult with Blackpool Council before making any material changes to the layout, amenity provision, fire precautions or occupation of the house and must inform Blackpool Council of:</p> <p>Details of any unspent convictions not previously disclosed to the Local Authority that may be relevant to the Licence Holder and/or the property manager and their fit and proper person status and in particular any such conviction in respect of any offence involving fraud or dishonesty, or violence or drugs or any offence listed in Schedule 3 to the Sexual Offences Act 2003;</p> <p>Details of any finding by a court or tribunal against the Licence Holder and /or the manager that he/she has practiced unlawful discrimination on grounds of sex, colour, race, ethnic or national origin or disability in, or in connection with, the carrying on of any business;</p> <p>Details of any contravention on the part of the Licence Holder or manager of any provision of any</p>

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	<p>enactment relating to housing, public health, environmental health or landlord and tenant law which led to civil or criminal proceedings resulting in a judgment or finding being made against him/her;</p> <p>Information about any property the Licence Holder or manager owns or manages or has owned or managed for which a local housing authority has refused to grant a licence under Part 2 or 3 of the Act, or has revoked a licence in consequence of the Licence Holder breaching the conditions of his/her licence;</p> <p>Information about any property the Licence Holder or manager owns or manages or has owned or managed that has been the subject of an interim or final management order under the Housing Act 2004;</p> <p>The property becoming empty:</p> <p>Changes to liability insurance:</p> <p>Notification of repossession/foreclosure</p> <p>Successful claims against the licence holder for default of tenancy deposits.</p> <p>Change in managing agent or the instruction of a managing agent;</p> <p>The undertaking of substantial works to the property, including conversions and modernisations or emergency problems relating to fire, flood or disaster and the tenants are made temporarily homeless.</p> <p>Reason: to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of occupants in the event of changes during the period of the licence and reduce ASB.</p>
17	Absence
	<p>The licence holder is required to have in place suitable emergency and other management arrangements in the event of their absence. The name and contact details of the licence holder and/or manager must be supplied to each occupier and must also be on display in a prominent place.</p> <p>Reason: to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of occupants in the event of temporary absence of persons in control and reduce ASB.</p>
18	Compliance inspections

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	<p>The licence holder must allow the Council to undertake compliance checks. Council Officers will give the licence holder 24 hours' notice of these checks and produce valid authorisation at the time of visit.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the property complies with the Housing Act 2004 and licence conditions.</p>
19	Removal from the Co-regulation Scheme
	<p>Any licence that has been granted based on membership of the co-regulation scheme being offered by our chosen delivery partner, will lapse should the Licence Holder be removed, for whatever reason, from the aforementioned Scheme.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure all licence holders who join the co-regulation scheme comply with the requirements of co-regulation.</p>

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Appendix 3: Risk Assessment Table

Description of Risk	Description of Impact	Probability of Risk	Level of Impact	Risk prevention, management or mitigation
<p>1a. Landlords do not apply or are reluctant to apply for licences.</p> <p>1b. Landlords apply for Judicial Review of the designation.</p>	<p>ASB and other problems are not resolved.</p> <p>Landlords operate illegally.</p> <p>LA resources are taken up with enforcement and prosecutions.</p> <p>LA resources are taken up with defending an application for Judicial Review.</p>	Medium	High	<p>Undertake a thorough consultation process with plenty of opportunities for input, and effective communication of new scheme.</p> <p>Landlords also engaged with by means of the Fylde Coast Landlords Forum.</p> <p>Wide range of detailed evidence gathered to support the scheme</p> <p>Intended outcomes of the proposals promoted to landlords, including an overall improvement in the area.</p> <p>Proposals prepared following all available guidance and best practice learned from other local authorities including those whose schemes have been the subject of Judicial Review applications.</p>
2. A number of landlords evict tenants and sell their properties or leave them	<p>Increase in abandoned and vacant properties.</p> <p>Loss of rental properties</p>	Medium	High	<p>The Council's strategy is to encourage alternative tenures and the de-conversion of HMOs into a smaller number of units with a better balance of house</p>

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<p>vacant. Speculative landlords choose to invest elsewhere</p>	<p>Increase in homelessness.</p>			<p>types. A reduction in HMO uses would be consistent with this transition.</p> <p>Empty properties will be monitored and managed as part of the scheme.</p> <p>There is sufficient capacity within the local market to mean that a small reduction in total numbers of homes available will not lead to increased homelessness.</p> <p>The Housing Options Team will work closely with the Enforcement team around individuals at risk of homelessness because of enforcement action, finding them alternative accommodation.</p>
<p>3. Local Authority inadequately manages the scheme or inadequately resources the scheme</p>	<p>Need to revoke the designation before the end of the 5 year period.</p> <p>ASB and other problems are not resolved.</p> <p>Resources spent in the research and implementation of the scheme are wasted.</p> <p>Inadequate resources</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Full business model drafted to show resource implications for the duration of the scheme and management decisions made on the basis of this.</p> <p>Fees set to cover proportionate costs of the scheme.</p> <p>Additional staff employed as necessary to administer scheme, undertake property inspections and help ensure existing statutory functions are maintained and minimise impact</p>

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	in place to undertake other statutory and non-statutory functions.			on non-statutory functions. Competent and experienced staff employed as necessary. Scheme is managed and resourced for the five year life of the scheme.
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Appendix 4 – Proposed designation

Blackpool Council

Designation of an area for selective licensing

Blackpool Council Designation of an Area for Selective Licensing 2017

Blackpool Council in exercise of their powers under section 80 of the Housing Act 2004 (“the Act”)

Hereby designates for selective licensing the area described in paragraph 4.

CITATION, COMMENCEMENT AND DURATION

1. This designation may be cited as the Blackpool Council Designation for an Area for Selective Licensing 2017.

2. This designation is made on the xx day of x 2016 and shall come into force on the xx Day of xx 2017.

3. This designation shall cease to have effect on the xx day of x 2022 or earlier if the Council revokes the scheme under section 84 of the Act.

NB the designation will be reviewed by the xx of x 2022.

AREA TO WHICH THE DESIGNATION APPLIES

This designation shall apply to the Central area as delineated and edged blue on the map and in the streets listed at Annex A.

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APPLICATION OF THE DESIGNATION

5. This designation applies to any house (1) which is let or occupied under a tenancy or licence within the area described in paragraph 4 unless:-

- (a) The house is a house in multiple occupation and is required to be licensed under Part 2 of the Act (2);
- (b) The tenancy or licence of the house has been granted by a registered social landlord (3);
- (c) The house is subject to an Interim or Final Management Order under Part 4 of the Act;
- (d) The house is subject to a temporary exemption under section 86 of the Act, or
- (e) The house is occupied under tenancy or licence which is exempt under the Act (4) or the occupation is of a building or part of a building so exempt as defined in Annex B;

EFFECT OF THE DESIGNATION

6. Subject to sub paragraphs 5(a) to (e) every house in the area specified in paragraph 4 that is occupied under a tenancy or licence shall be required to be licensed under section 85 of the Act (5)

7. Blackpool Council will comply with the notification requirements contained in section 83 of the Act and shall maintain a register of all houses registered under this designation, as required under section 232 of the Act (6).

This designation is made on the day of xxxx and

THE COMMON SEAL of

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THE BLACKPOOL

COUNCIL was hereunto

affixed in the presence

of: -

Head of Legal Services

1 For the definition of “house” see sections 79 and 99 of the Act

2 Section 55 of the Act defines which Houses in Multiple Occupation are required to be licensed under the Act. See also The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Prescribed Descriptions) (England) Order 2005 (SI 2006/371)

3 Section 79 (3) of the Act. For definition of a Registered Social Landlord see Part 1 of the Housing Act 1996.

4 Section 79 (4) of the Act and SI 370/2006

5 Section 86 of the Act provides for certain temporary exemption. As to suitability see section 89. Note, if the house is not suitable to be licensed, the Council must make an Interim Management Order – see section 102.

6 Section 232 of the Act and paragraph 11 of the SI 373/2006.