

**Promoting good private sector  
housing for local people**

# **Additional HMO and Selective Licensing proposals**

**Evidence for consultation 2025**

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## Glossary

Term	Meaning
<b>Private rented sector (PRS)</b>	The portion of housing in the borough that is rented from private landlords
<b>Privately rented</b>	Homes rented from a private landlord
<b>Socially rented</b>	Homes rented from the Council or a housing association
<b>Selective licensing</b>	A discretionary licensing scheme which requires landlords to have a licence to legally let their property to a family or no more than two unrelated sharers
<b>Additional Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing</b>	A discretionary licensing scheme which requires landlords to have a licence to legally let eligible HMOs occupied by three or four unrelated persons living in two or more separate households sharing one or more basic amenity, which fall outside the scope of Mandatory HMO licensing
<b>Mandatory Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing</b>	A national scheme which requires landlords to have a licence to legally let eligible HMOs occupied by five or more unrelated persons living in two or more separate households sharing one or more basic amenity
<b>Designation</b>	A geographical area chosen for licensing that meets relevant legal tests
<b>Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)</b>	A Government prescribed system that rates housing hazards based on their risk to occupiers' health, safety, and welfare
<b>Category 1 hazard (Category 1)</b>	The most serious hazards under the HHSRS, which include immediate risk to a person's health, safety and welfare
<b>Category 2 hazard (Category 2)</b>	Less serious hazards under the HHSRS. Whilst considered less serious they can still be regarded as placing the occupiers' health, safety and welfare at risk.
<b>Statutory notice</b>	A legal document issued by the Council that requires the recipient to complete specified actions within a specified timeframe
<b>Anti-social behaviour</b>	Behaviour related to the occupiers of, and/or visitors to, a

Term	Meaning
<b>(ASB)</b>	rented property that causes nuisance, annoyance and irritation to neighbours and the community. Most commonly noise, litter and waste
<b>Deprivation</b>	Living on low income and not having the money to pay for some basic requirements.
<b>Indices of Multiple Deprivation</b>	A dataset produced by the government to give a relative value to how deprived an area is, compared to the rest of the country.
<b>Barriers to housing and services</b>	One of the government's measures of deprivation. It combines measures relating to housing affordability, overcrowding and homelessness.
<b>Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)</b>	Regulations that set a minimum energy efficiency standard (EPC rating of E) that applies to privately rented properties.
<b>Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)</b>	EPCs rate how energy efficient properties are using grades from A to G (with 'A' the most efficient grade).
<b>Accreditation</b>	Schemes overseen by various organisations, including local authorities and landlord associations, to provide training and encourage good practice by private landlords.

## 1 Executive Summary

Havering Council is committed to creating a fairer private rented housing sector by improving the condition and quality of properties in the rental market and developing a fair environment for both tenants and responsible landlords, targeting rogue operators and those letting unsuitable properties, driving up standards to the benefit of all. To achieve this, we are consulting on new licensing proposals for the private rented sector (PRS) in the borough. Property licensing is a way of ensuring safer and better standards in private rented homes.

Havering is consistent with the rest of London in that it has a shortage of affordable housing, with house prices remaining out of reach for many. The demand for social housing far outstrips the supply. As a result, private rented property is increasingly becoming the only viable option for many Havering residents, including those who are vulnerable and on low incomes. Currently, 19.3% of Havering's housing stock is in the PRS, and this is expected to continue to rise in the future.

While the majority of properties in the PRS are well maintained and safe, there is a growing number of properties that are substandard and potentially dangerous. Even landlords with good intentions may not always be aware of the latest legal and safety requirements. These properties pose a risk to the health, safety, and wellbeing of tenants, cause issues with neighbours, and require numerous interventions from council teams that are already under pressure. It is crucial for the Council to utilise all available tools to improve the situation for tenants renting properties in this sector. Licensing plays a key role in this effort.

Through the administration and enforcement of Havering's current selective, additional and mandatory licensing schemes, the Council has made strides in improving standards in the PRS. These schemes have provided a regulatory framework requiring landlords to proactively manage and maintain their rented homes through conditions attached to approved licences. Havering private rented homes have been improved since the first additional and selective licencing schemes came into force in 2018 and 2021 respectively through a combination of working with landlords and agents informally and the taking of formal action where necessary.

Despite these improvements, private renting continues to be a necessity rather than a choice for many tenants due to factors such as lack of rent controls and security of tenure. While the Council has improved a large number of privately rented homes, the worst housing conditions are still likely to be experienced by tenants who rent privately, and communities are more likely to be adversely impacted by issues arising from poorly managed privately rented properties.

In order to build on the achievements of the current schemes, the Council is proposing, subject to consultation, to implement new property licensing schemes when the current additional (HMO) and selective licensing schemes expire on 24 January 2026 which would include:

- borough-wide HMO additional licensing scheme – this would apply to all HMOs except those that require a mandatory HMO licence.
- selective licensing scheme for all privately rented homes (excluding HMOs) within seven wards to address the prevalence of poor housing conditions.

These schemes would be implemented concurrently and can be approved by the Council's Cabinet and could be implemented early 2026.

Whether you are a tenant, landlord, managing or letting agent, business, service provider, local authority, voluntary organisation, local resident or another key stakeholder in Havering or a surrounding area, this is your chance to have your say on private rented property licensing in Havering.

## 2 Introduction

This consultation document provides information about the scale of problems relating to poor housing conditions and poor property management in Havering's private rented sector and the evidence to support the Council's proposal to introduce new licensing schemes. It also provides a detailed description of the proposed licensing schemes, licence conditions, fees and scheme objectives.

We want to know your views on our proposals before any final decision is made about the future of property licensing in Havering. We are keen to hear from all those who are likely to be affected by the proposals, including local tenants, landlords, managing agents and members of the community who live, operate businesses or provide services in the proposed designated areas and/or the surrounding areas.

We would encourage you to complete our online survey by visiting:

<https://www.havering.gov.uk/prs>

We shall also be holding a number of forums during the consultation period. If you are interested in sharing your experiences and views, please email

[prsconsultation@havering.gov.uk](mailto:prsconsultation@havering.gov.uk)

The consultation will run for 12 weeks from 14 April to 6 July 2025.

For further information about the proposed new licensing schemes, assistance with completing the questionnaire or to request a paper copy of the consultation please contact:

- Email: [prsconsultation@havering.gov.uk](mailto:prsconsultation@havering.gov.uk)
- Telephone number: 01708 433 890
- Address: London Borough of Havering, Town Hall, Main Road, Romford, RM1 3BB

Once the consultation has closed the Council will review the replies. A full consultation report, including the Council's response to any alternatives suggested, will be published on the property licensing pages of the web site.

### 3 The private rented sector in Havering

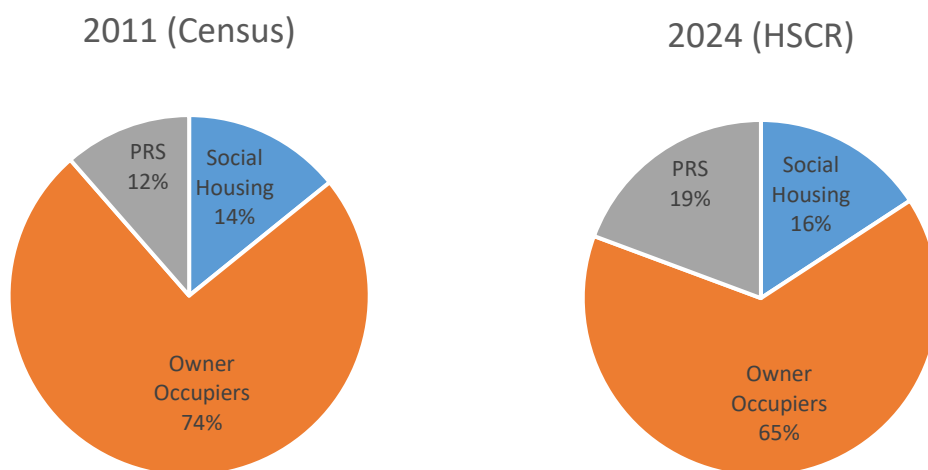
In order to obtain a greater understanding of the private rented sector in Havering, the Council worked with internal and external agencies to review multiple intelligence sources relating to the housing stock in the borough, undertaking analysis to provide estimates of:

- current levels and breakdown of PRS properties and tenure change over time
- levels of serious hazards that might amount to a category 1 hazard (HHSRS)
- other housing related stressors, including service demand, population and deprivation linked to the PRS.

The full results are presented within the Housing Stock Conditions Report (HSCR), which is attached as **Appendix 1** however, some key findings from the report are detailed below.

#### 3.1 Housing tenure

Consistent with the long term nationwide and regional trend, the PRS in Havering has grown steadily from 11.5% in 2011 to 19.3% in 2024. This represents a 68% increase over the last 13 years. There are a total of 109,048 residential dwellings in Havering, 21,082 of which are privately rented.

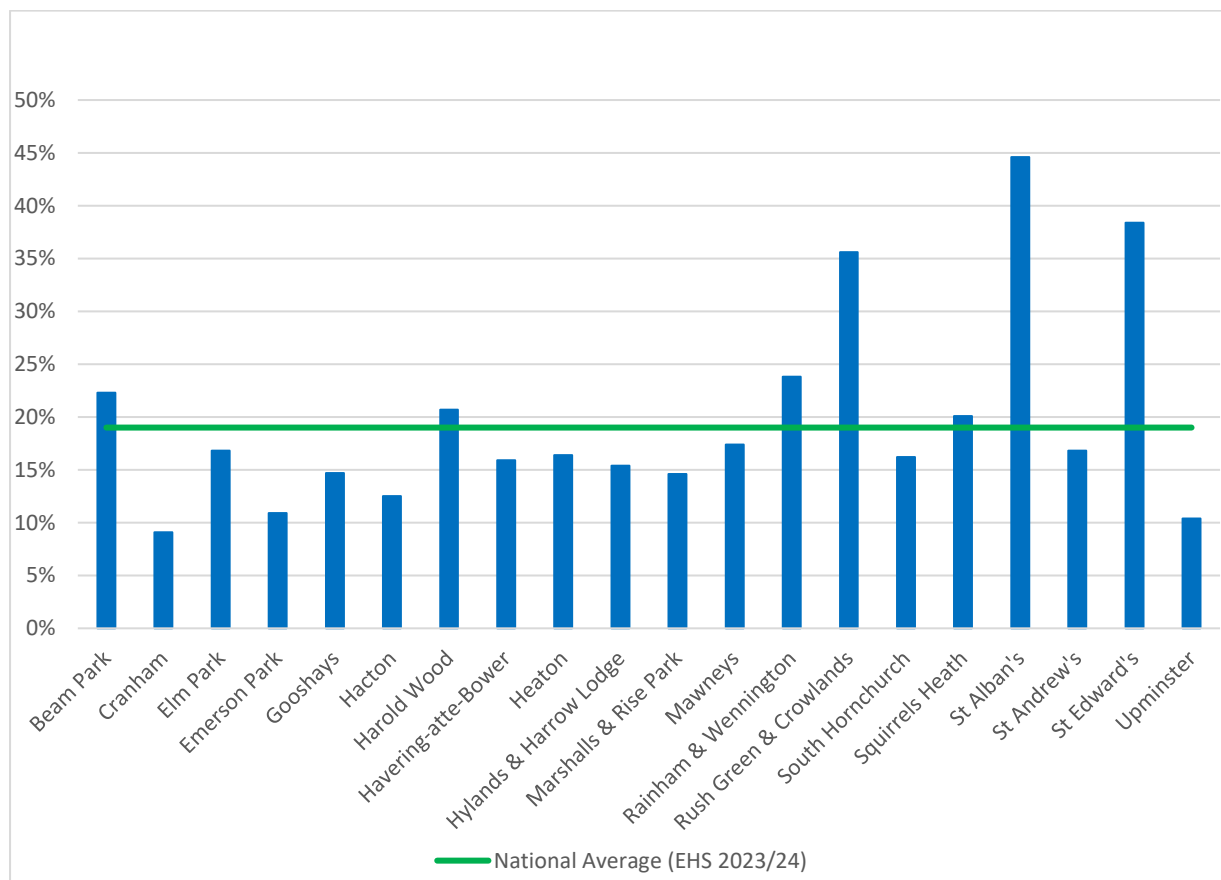


*Tenure profile 2011 & 2024 (Source: ONS & Metastreet HSCR 2024).*

Tenure	2011 (Census) (Households)	2021 (Census) (Households)	2024 (HSCR) (Dwellings)
Social housing	13,799	13,807	17,211
Owner occupiers	72,284	71,355	70,755
PRS	11,116	16,114	21,082
Total	97,119	101,276	109,048

Number of households & dwellings by tenure 2011, 2021 & 2024 (Source: ONS & Metastreet Ti 2024).

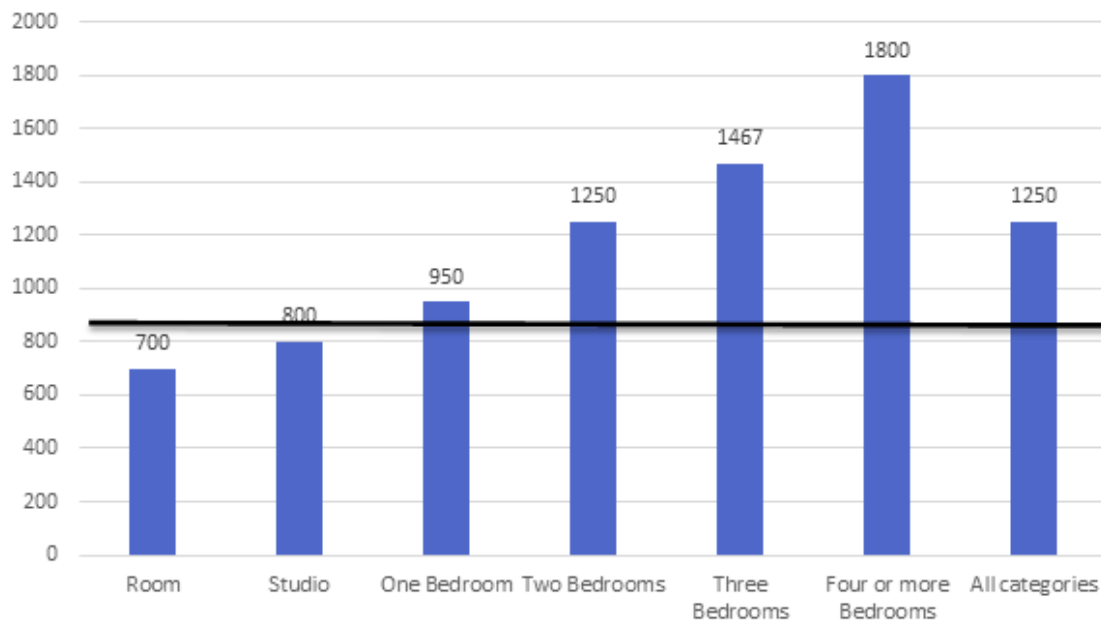
The PRS in Havering is distributed across all 20 wards. The number of PRS properties per ward ranges from 2235 (Rush Green & Crowlands) to 387 (Emerson Park). The percentage of PRS properties in each ward ranges between a maximum of 44.6% (St Albans) and a minimum of 9.1% (Cranham). Therefore, 7 out of 20 Havering wards have an equal to or higher percentage PRS than the national average in 2024 (19%). The average rate of PRS across all wards is 19.3%.



Percentage of PRS dwellings by ward (Metastreet HSCR 2024)

### 3.2 Rent and affordability

One of the major changes to the PRS across London over the last 20 years has been the increase in rent. This has resulted in residents not being able to afford and access decent, affordable housing. Havering has above average rents nationally with 33.2% of median earnings used to pay rent. The national average is 25%.



*Median monthly rents (£) (1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023) (all categories) (Source: VOA 2024). Horizontal black line shows national average (£825). Horizontal red line shows London average (£1,625).*

### 3.3 Deprivation

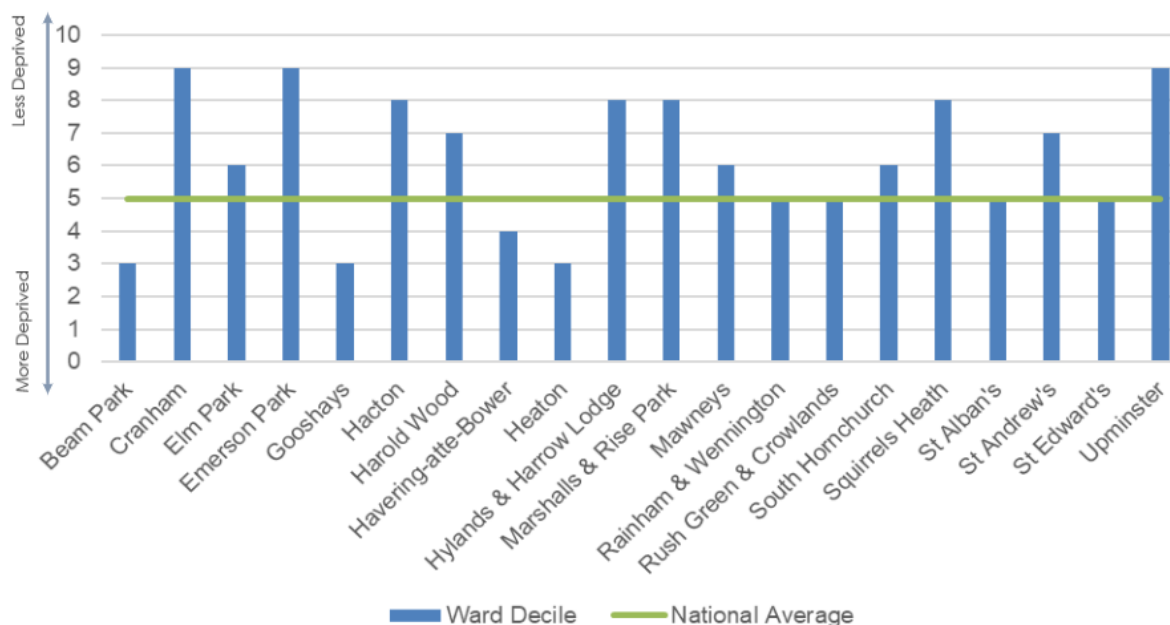
The indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) is a measure of relative deprivation for small areas (Lower Super Output Areas [LSOAs]), based on seven domains of deprivation:

- income
- employment
- education
- health
- crime
- living environment
- barriers to housing and services.

Havering ranks as the 179<sup>th</sup> most deprived borough in England out of 317<sup>1</sup>. Havering

<sup>1</sup> [English Indices of Deprivation 2019 \(ONS\)](#)

has a mixture of high and low deprivation wards with 4 of 20 wards having an aggregated IMD ranking below the national average. On this scale, 1 represents the most deprived and 10 represents the least deprived.



Average IMD decile by ward (ONS 2019)

### 3.4 Fuel poverty

Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low-Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) indicator. Under this indicator, a household is considered to be fuel poor if they are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below and when they spend the required amount to heat their home, their disposable income is below the official poverty line.<sup>2</sup>

In general, fuel poverty relates to households that must spend a high proportion of their household income to keep their home at a reasonable temperature.

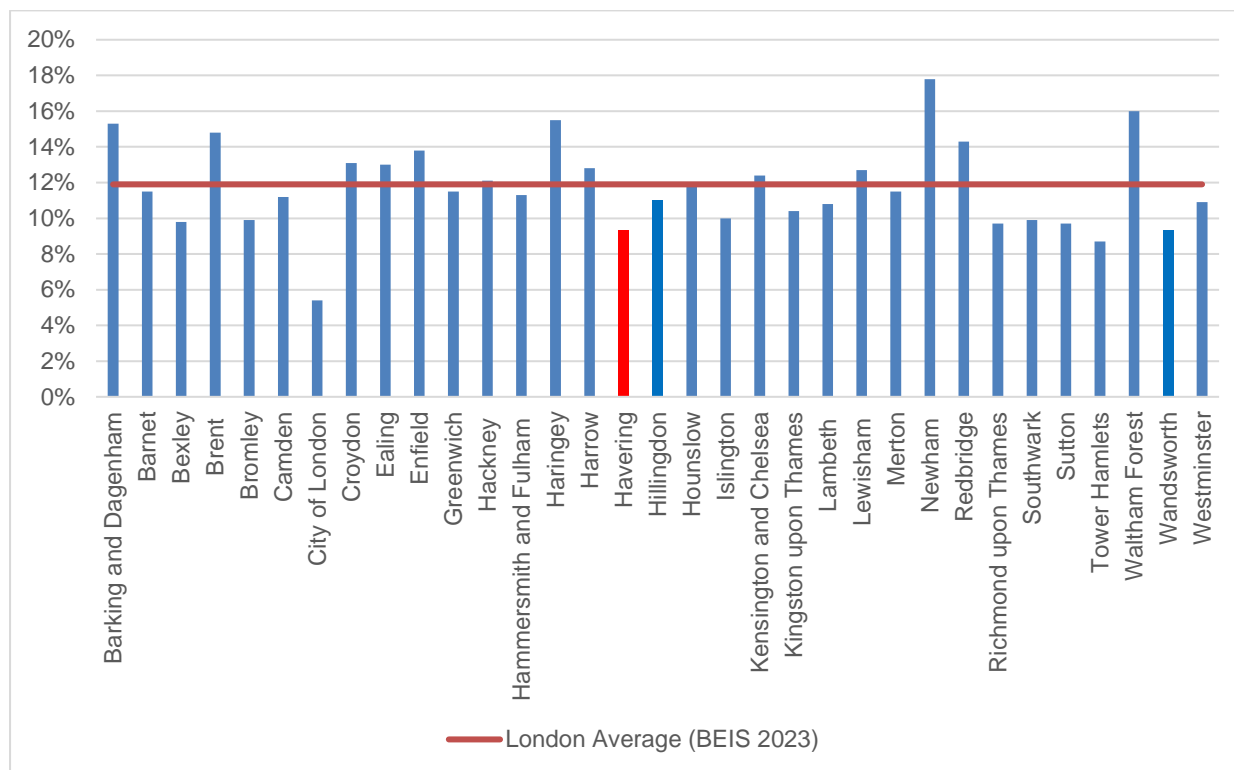
Fuel poverty is affected by three key factors:

- a household's income
- fuel costs
- energy consumption (which in turn is affected by the energy efficiency of the property).

The fuel poverty score produced by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) using 2021 data and published in 2023 shows that

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-statistics#2022-statistics>

currently Havering has a slightly lower proportion of households in fuel poverty (9.3%) than the London average (12%).<sup>3</sup> These figures are likely to significantly change at the next point of publishing as a result of the 2022 acute fuel price increases.



Percentage of households in fuel poverty by London Borough (BEIS 2023)

### 3.5 Housing conditions

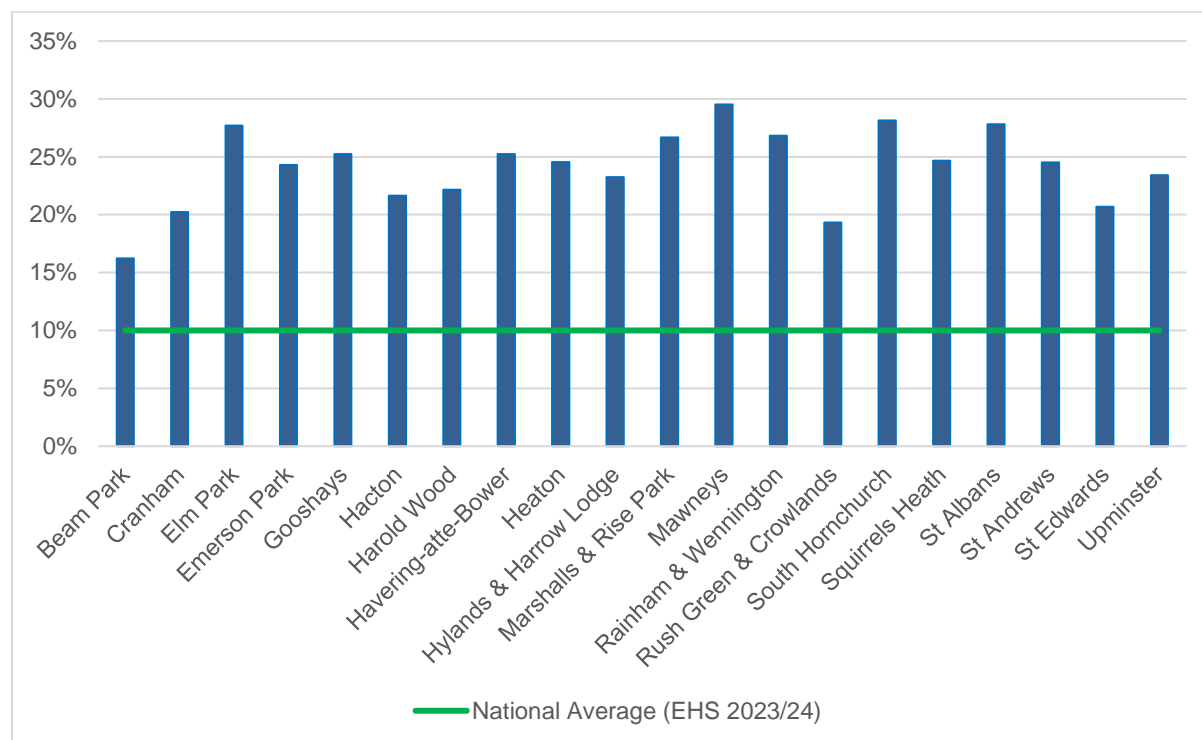
The recent review of Havering’s housing stock has provided insights about the presence and distribution of a range of housing factors in the borough<sup>4</sup>, this was developed independently by Metastreet Ltd who implemented a stock-modelling approach based on metadata and machine learning to provide insights about the prevalence and distribution of a range of housing factors. This approach has been used by several councils to understand their housing stock and relationships with key social, environmental, and economic stressors.

The main finding was that poor property conditions are likely to be widespread in the PRS. Under the HHSRS, category 1 hazards are the most serious housing hazards and may result in the immediate risk to a person's health and safety. A significant category 2 hazard, although less serious or less urgent, can still be regarded as placing the occupiers’ health, safety and welfare at risk.

<sup>3</sup> [Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2023 \(2021 data\) - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>4</sup> Housing Stock and Stressors Report, Metastreet, 2024

Our evidence shows that serious hazards (Category 1 and high scoring Category 2, HHSRS) in Havering's PRS are likely to be distributed across the whole borough, with 5,058 private rented properties (including HMOs) predicted to have at least one serious hazard, representing 24% of Havering's PRS. All wards have predicted rates of serious hazards above the national average (10%).<sup>5</sup>



*Predicted percentage of PRS properties with at least one serious hazard (HSCR 2024)*

<sup>5</sup> [English Housing Survey 2023 to 2024: headline findings on demographics and household resilience.](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2023-to-2024-headline-findings-on-demographics-and-household-resilience) - GOV.UK

## **4 Types of property licensing scheme**

### **4.1 What is property licensing?**

Where the relevant legal test is met, property licensing allows the Council to regulate private rented properties in their area by issuing a licence to the person responsible for the property, usually the landlord. The aim of such schemes is to improve the private rented market by ensuring that the licence holder is a 'fit and proper' person to hold the licence, and that the property is of a decent standard for a landlord to rent out.

Licences come with conditions that relate to the occupation, use and management of the property. Some of these conditions are mandated by Government, however the Council has scope to add its own conditions that are tailored to dealing with specific problems in the designation relating to the private rented sector.

The Housing Act 2004 sets out three types of property licensing schemes and prescribes how the Council can implement them.

### **4.2 Mandatory HMO licensing**

The Housing Act 2004 introduced mandatory licensing for certain privately rented houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). Generally, these are larger HMO properties occupied by five or more persons living in two or more households, and where those persons share facilities, such as kitchens/bathrooms/WCs. All local authorities in England must operate a mandatory HMO licensing scheme.

For the purpose of this consultation, mandatory HMO licensing is not being considered.

### **4.3 Additional HMO licensing (discretionary)**

The Housing Act 2004 allows local authorities to designate areas as being subject to an additional licensing scheme, in relation to some or all of the houses in multiple occupation (HMO) in that area, which are not already subject to mandatory HMO licensing, for a period of up to five years. Generally, these are smaller HMO properties occupied by three or four persons living in two or more households, and where those persons share facilities, such as kitchens/bathrooms/WCs.

Additional licensing can also include properties converted into flats known as Section 257 HMOs. These are buildings which have been converted into and consist entirely of self-contained flats where less than two thirds of the flats are owner-occupied, and

the conversion into flats did not comply with the appropriate building regulations.

#### **4.4 Selective licensing (discretionary)**

A selective licensing scheme for all other privately rented properties and not just HMOs can be implemented in selected or 'designated' areas for a period of up to five years. A selective licensing designation can only be made if the designated area has a high proportion of properties in the PRS and is experiencing one or more of the following criteria:

- low housing demand (or is likely to become such an area)
- a significant and persistent problem caused by ASB
- poor housing conditions
- high levels of migration
- high levels of deprivation
- high levels of crime.

## 5 What are the benefits of property licensing schemes?

Property licensing schemes offer benefits to landlords, tenants, the wider community and the Council. These include the following:

### Benefits to tenants

- Through conditions that accompany any granted licence, licence holders are required to proactively manage and maintain their rented homes.
- Licensing improves the standard of private rented properties. This makes properties safer for tenants who occupy them.
- Licensing allows a local authority to adopt a much more proactive approach to tackling poor housing conditions and raising standards in private rented housing.
- Licensing encourages good practices – if a landlord is not able to demonstrate that they comply with fire, gas and electrical safety conditions, a licence will not be granted.
- Many people who are vulnerable, disabled and living on low incomes rely on private renting. Licensing helps the Council to protect as many tenants living in private renting as possible.
- Through increased communication about licensing, tenants not only become more aware of their rights and responsibilities but also gain an improved understanding and greater access to Council services that can support them.

### Benefits to landlords

- Licensing encourages landlords to proactively manage their properties and to take reasonable action to address problems.
- The Council will work with landlords to help support them and build their professionalism.
- Licensing enables the Council to create a 'level playing field' for responsible landlords by taking a much more robust approach to the minority of 'rogue' landlords who fail to invest in their properties.
- Providing transparent and consistent regulation within the PRS market to ensure rogue or non-compliant landlords cannot undercut responsible ones.

### Benefits to the community

- Poorly managed privately rented properties have a negative impact on many neighbourhoods. Licensing will increase the number of landlords managing their properties effectively, including the enforcement of tenancy conditions to combat neighbourhood nuisance caused by their tenants or people visiting their properties.
- Reducing ASB will make areas safer, more desirable and healthier places to live.
- There is a connection between HMOs and poor waste management. All property licences contain a condition that the holder must provide adequately sized bins and sufficient recycling containers for the occupiers.
- When an HMO is overcrowded, this is often linked to an increase in noise complaints. Through licensing the Council is able to limit the number of occupants in a property, reducing overcrowding and the likelihood of noise nuisance.
- Licensing increases the Council's ability to uncover empty properties and encourage their use back into the housing market.

### Benefits to the Council

- Licensing enables the Council to target support and information for both tenants and landlords more effectively.
- Licensing provides opportunity for easier engagement with landlords, managing agents, lettings agents, and others involved in the sector.
- Licensing creates improved data, enabling an intelligence led approach to enforcement.
- Licensing increases the Council's ability to uncover previously unknown HMOs, some of which will fall under mandatory licensing.

## 6 Property licensing schemes in Havering

### 6.1 Additional & selective licensing

In addition to the national mandatory HMO licensing scheme, Havering has implemented two additional licensing schemes. The first scheme was introduced on 1 March 2018 across 12 wards. This scheme expired on 28 February 2023. A second additional licensing scheme was introduced on 25 January 2021 and applied to the remaining wards not designated in scheme 1. This scheme expires on 24 January 2026.

Both scheme designations applied to all HMOs that do not fall within the scope of mandatory HMO licensing, including all properties shared by three or four people who are not related and share facilities. This includes flats within purpose-built blocks that were previously exempt from licensing under mandatory licensing and also section 257 HMOs.

In January 2021, Havering also introduced a selective licensing scheme which extended licensing to all private rented properties in the Council wards of Brooklands and Romford Town – as a result of the boundary review in 2021 these wards are now known as Rush Green & Crowlands, St Albans and St Edwards. This scheme expires at the same time as the HMO additional licensing scheme 2 – 24 January 2026.

Since the introduction of these licensing schemes, more than 4,076 licences have been granted.

Licence type	Licences granted
Mandatory	382
Additional	241
Selective	3453
<b>Total</b>	<b>4076</b>

Licensing schemes require landlords to proactively manage their properties and take action to address any problems in order to comply with licence conditions. They encourage better standards of property management. Havering has worked collaboratively with landlords to make sure these requirements are met and also carried out enforcement actions when needed to raise standards.

## 6.2 The impact of current licensing schemes

The administration and enforcement of the current licensing schemes has enabled the Council to make considerable progress in achieving its core licensing objectives.

Through robust, targeted enforcement, licensing has created a genuine and tangible deterrent for the minority of rogue landlords, to the benefit of their tenants and the wider community. Havering uses a range of statutory housing and public health notices to address poor housing standards in the PRS. Over a five-year period (2019-24) Havering served 535 housing and public health notices. Enforcement includes using the Housing Act and other public protection legislation to enforce standards and includes civil penalties and prosecutions. During this time, Havering issued 127 penalties and initiated eight prosecutions to address housing offences.

In particular, HMOs across the country are known to contain higher elements of risk, linked to key elements such as inadequate fire detection and protection. Fire risks are found to rise with increased occupancy, multiple ignition sources, vulnerable occupants, poor construction and lack of fire prevention measures. HMO licensing helps to ensure that properties are not overcrowded and are free of serious hazards, including fire safety.

Through the mandatory and discretionary licensing schemes, the Council has been able to improve basic standards, often in the most dangerous housing at the bottom end of the housing market, where some of the most vulnerable people in society live.

All licences have conditions attached which must be complied with, allowing the Council to regulate the PRS, improve housing conditions, and foster better management standards. In particular, we have been able to impose a level of 'self-regulation' in the PRS, as landlords will not be granted a licence unless they are able to demonstrate at the time of application that they are a 'fit and proper' person to be the licence holder and also that the property complies with fire, gas and electrical safety conditions.

The Council has seen a steady increase in the number of service requests made by private sector housing tenants reporting disrepair issues. There was a spike in the number of service requests in 2019/20, which fell slightly in 2020/21 during the pandemic but has steadily increased since 2021/22. This trend is detailed in the table below:

Financial year	Number of disrepair service requests received	Number of all Private Sector Housing Services requests
<b>2019/20</b>	174	1345
<b>2020/21</b>	251	780
<b>2021/22</b>	207	585
<b>2022/23</b>	196	596
<b>2023/24</b>	214	675

*Disrepair service requests received by year*

## Case study 1: Unlicensed property brought into compliance

### Background

The Private Sector Housing Team received a complaint from a tenant regarding significant disrepair in their rented property. The tenant described a persistent leak from the first-floor bathroom, causing water damage to the kitchen below, including damp, mould, and water seeping through the light fixture. Despite repeated attempts to inform the landlord and request repairs, no action was taken. Council officers' initial investigations revealed the property, located in a selective licensing area, was unlicensed, with no application submitted.



### Hazards identified.

On inspection, the property was found to have several hazards identified under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), including a category 1 hazard of damp and mould and category 2 hazards of electrical safety, structural collapse and falling elements, flames and hot surfaces, and food safety.



### Council action

The Council served a Housing Act 2004 improvement notice and comprehensive schedule of works requiring the landlord to address the category 1 and 2 hazards. A licence application was pursued and the Council considered a range of additional enforcement actions in relation to the licensing non-compliance.

### Outcome

The landlord complied with the notice which led to significant improvements in the property, bringing it up to the required standard. A selective licence application was also received.

**The proposed selective licensing scheme would continue to ensure that action is taken against those landlords who choose to neglect their tenants and properties. We shall robustly enforce against any landlords who fail to obtain a licence, who deliberately fail to comply with licensing conditions, or whose properties present serious housing hazards.**

### **6.3 Reduction in ASB**

Poorly managed privately rented properties have a negative impact on many neighbourhoods. In particular, high levels of noise complaints and accumulations of rubbish can be linked to the failure of private landlords to manage their properties and tenancies effectively.

Through partnership working and sharing of intelligence, we continue to educate both landlords and tenants on their responsibilities in terms of waste disposal.

When a property is overcrowded, this is often linked to an increase in noise complaints. Through licensing, we have been able to limit the number of occupants in a property, reducing overcrowding and the likelihood of noise nuisance.

We have seen, through licensing, a notable increase in landlords managing their properties more effectively in order to ensure they do not breach licence conditions. This includes the enforcement of tenancy rules to prevent ASB by tenants or their visitors.

### **6.4 Working with and supporting good landlords and agents**

We recognise that the majority of landlords in the borough are both responsible and cooperative. We have taken a more educational approach seeking to work with landlords and bring about compliance through informal means.

We have particularly encouraged landlords to become accredited to increase their professionalism in managing their properties. Through accreditation, landlords are able to achieve a level of knowledge and competence before letting a home, which is key to raising standards in the PRS. As of 2024, Havering had 1332 landlords accredited to the London Landlords Accreditation Scheme (LLAS).

Detailed guidance for landlords on their legal obligations and responsibilities has been produced and made available online.

Through the licensing schemes, a database of more than 3,208 landlords and agents operating in Havering has been compiled, supporting better communication and engagement with the sector.

## 6.5 Supporting PRS tenants

In promoting tenants' rights and responsibilities, tenants' awareness of the minimum standards to be expected in rented accommodation can dramatically be increased. Tenants have been encouraged to report landlords who have not licensed their properties or who do not comply with licensing conditions. Between 2019 and 2024, the Council has received approximately 1,459 complaints/service requests linked to 1,208 properties from tenants in the PRS, resulting in significant interventions and property improvements.<sup>6</sup>

It is clear from running the discretionary licensing schemes that licensing allows the Council to work proactively with landlords and tenants. Licensing provides clear conditions for landlords to comply with, promotes an improvement in property conditions and enables ASB to be minimised through better, more effective management. Licence conditions can be enforced against much more effectively and quickly than using other powers available to the Council, such as Part 1 of the Housing Act (2004). Formal action under Part 1 is generally a slow process, with appeals allowed for most types of notices, which can significantly delay the time period for compliance. Whilst the mandatory HMO and discretionary licence schemes has enabled the Council to begin to make some progress in raising standards in the PRS, there is still much more to do.

## 6.6 Working in partnership to improve the PRS

The current licensing schemes have been a key tool used alongside other initiatives and partnerships to tackle issues affecting the PRS. We have engaged in several joint working initiatives and partnerships with agencies such as the police, the London Fire Brigade, Justice for Tenants, Safer Renting, and the Citizens Advice Bureau. We will continue to work with these and other stakeholders to ensure the safety and well-being of tenants, improve housing standards, and address any emerging challenges within the PRS.

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<sup>6</sup> Housing Stock and Stressors Report, Metastreet, 2024

## Case study 2: Collaborating with partners to protect the safety and wellbeing of tenants in the PRS

### Background

A healthcare professional, following a visit to a tenant, raised concerns about significant disrepair in the tenant's private rented property. The tenant was reluctant to pursue the matter himself due to fears of eviction. Back-office checks confirmed that the property was licensed. Council officers were able to make immediate contact with the licence holder to arrange an inspection of the property.



### Hazards identified

On inspection, the property was found to have serious disrepair including a leak from the bathroom to the kitchen, security concerns with the ground-floor windows and rear doors, a trip hazard in the kitchen, a slug infestation, a faulty electrical socket, and potential structural problems with the flank wall.



### Council action

A post-inspection letter was sent to the landlord, setting out the issues within the property. The landlord responded promptly, indicating their commitment to addressing the concerns. Remedial works were initiated immediately to rectify the disrepair and ensure the property met all necessary safety standards.



### Outcome

Remedial works were completed within the specified timelines. The tenant now has the benefit of replacement windows throughout, a new rear door, new fitted kitchen. The flank wall issue was highlighted on a structural engineers report to be not significant but works recommended were complied with.

**Licensing enables the Council to work with, advise and support landlords to address poor housing conditions and achieve compliance with licence conditions. Additionally, licensing plays a crucial role in educating tenants about their rights and how to deal with issues that arise in their properties. We will continue to collaborate with partners to help protect the safety and wellbeing of tenants in the PRS**

## 7 Proposal for selective licensing

The PRS in Havering is affected by various housing issues which are worsened by other issues such as ASB, poverty, high rents, fuel poverty and homelessness.

The Council has been truly selective in proposing the areas for this licensing scheme. Thorough evidence gathering and research has been carefully carried out to ensure that the most severe problems in each ward can be dealt with. All properties in the designated areas that are rented to a single household (e.g., a family) or two unrelated sharers (e.g., two friends living together) would need to have a licence to be legally let.

Based on this evidence, it is proposed, subject to consultation, that the Council introduces a selective licensing scheme covering the seven wards in which there is a high percentage of PRS and high levels of poor housing conditions. The seven wards are:

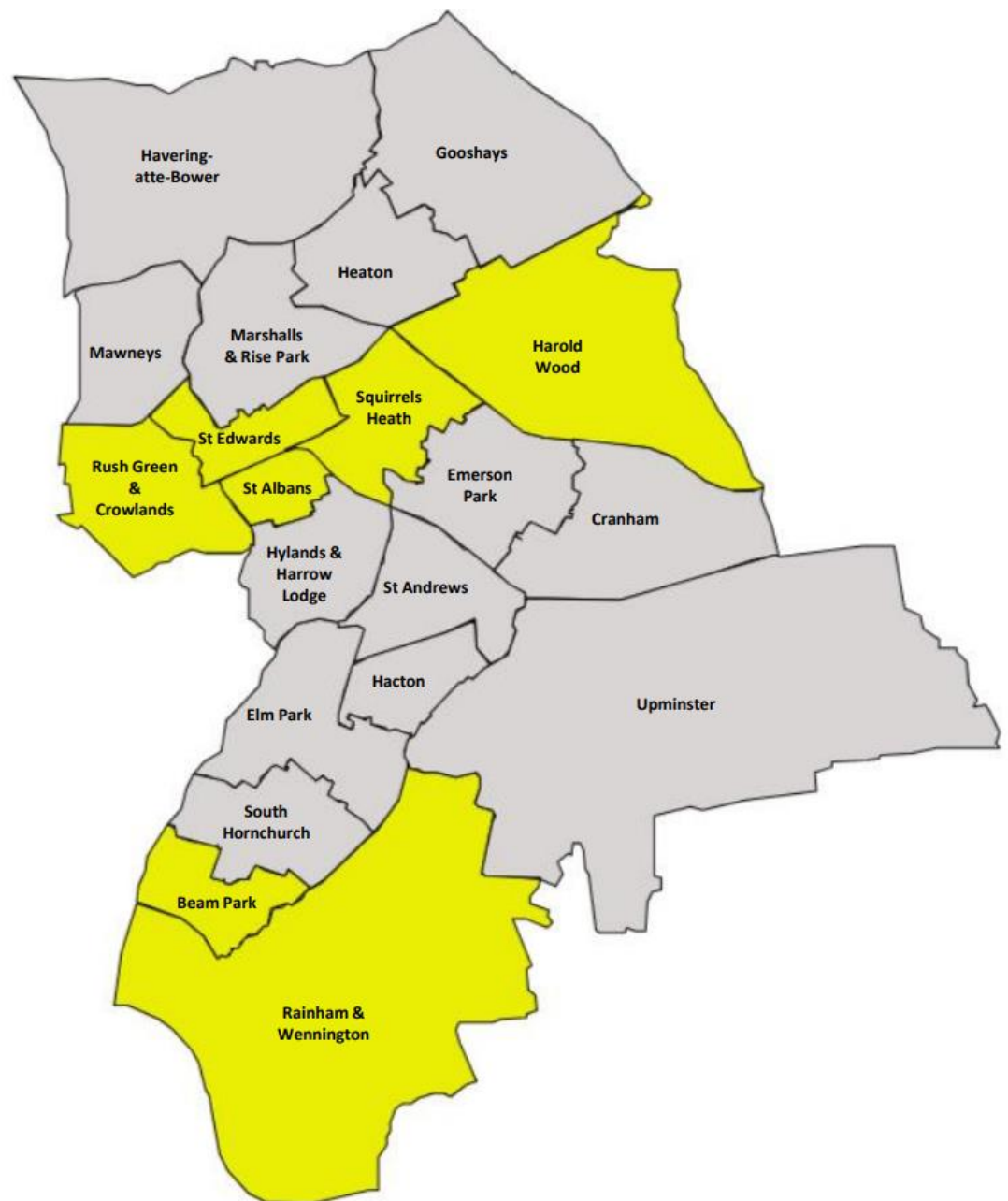
- Beam Park
- Harold Wood
- Rainham & Wennington
- Rush Green & Crowlands
- Squirrels Heath
- St Albans
- St Edwards

The total size of the selective licensing designation would affect 34.5% of the geographical area of Havering and 49.7% of its privately rented housing. Until late 2024, this meant the Council was required to seek approval from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG); councils may now approve the introduction of selective licensing schemes of any size, locally through the Council Cabinet, though they still must satisfy all legal requirements in regards to evidencing the need for a scheme, thoroughness of public consultation and proof that, if introduced, a scheme is being properly administered.

Subject to consideration of the responses in the consultation process, the Council is keen to address the serious problems of poor housing conditions in these seven wards as soon as reasonably practicable and could implement this scheme in early 2026. The designation is subject to change as a result of this consultation and the Council welcomes input into the scheme.

## 7.1 Map of the proposed selective licensing designation

Map of the proposed selective licensing scheme:



## 7.2 Designation criteria: poor housing conditions

### 7.2.1 *What is the evidence of poor housing conditions in this designation?*

Our evidence shows that in the seven wards within this designation, the proportion of PRS properties (excluding HMOs) with at least one serious hazard (Category 1 and high scoring Category 2, HHSRS) is predicted to be higher than the national average of 10%.<sup>7</sup>

The designated wards in Havering are as follows:

- Beam Park (14.6%)
- Harold Wood (21.4%)
- Rainham & Wennington (26.3%)
- Rush Green & Crowlands (18.2%)
- Squirrels Heath (23.6%)
- St Albans (26.8%)
- St Edwards (20.2%).

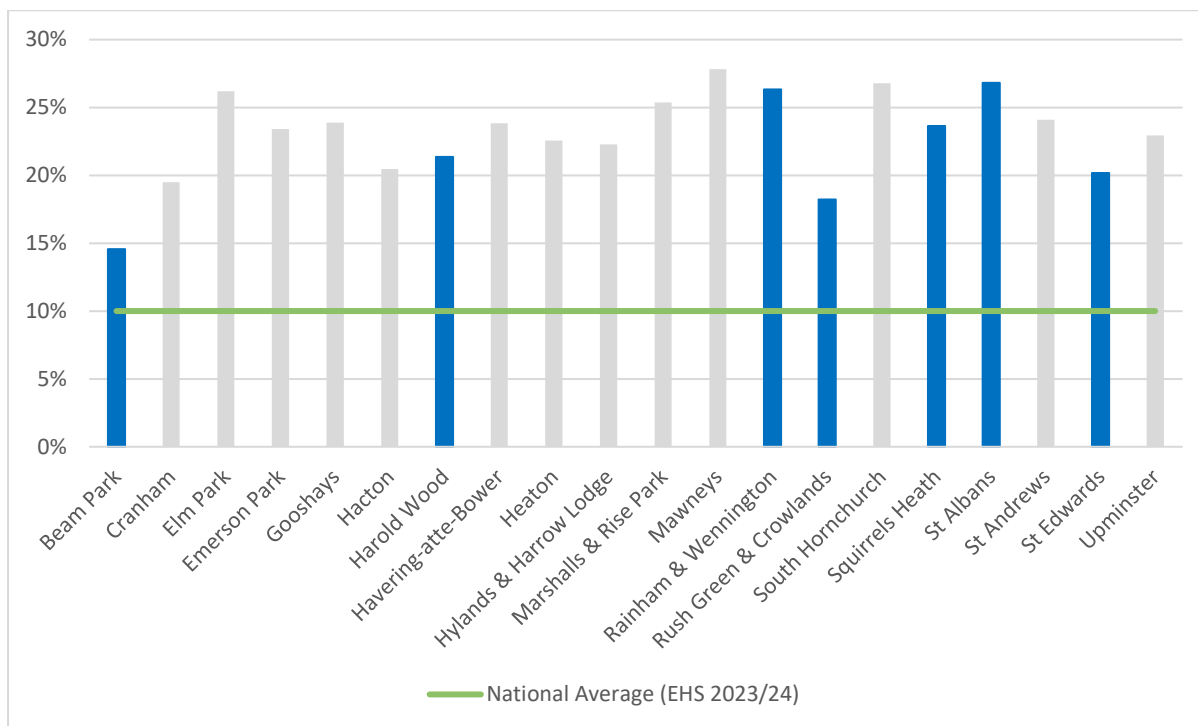
Overall, in these seven wards, 2,192 PRS properties (excluding HMOs) are predicted to have at least one serious hazard.<sup>8</sup>

It is also highly likely that these properties will also have at least one category 2 hazard. A significant number of these properties would need to be inspected to accurately identify and assess the presence of category 1 or 2 hazards.

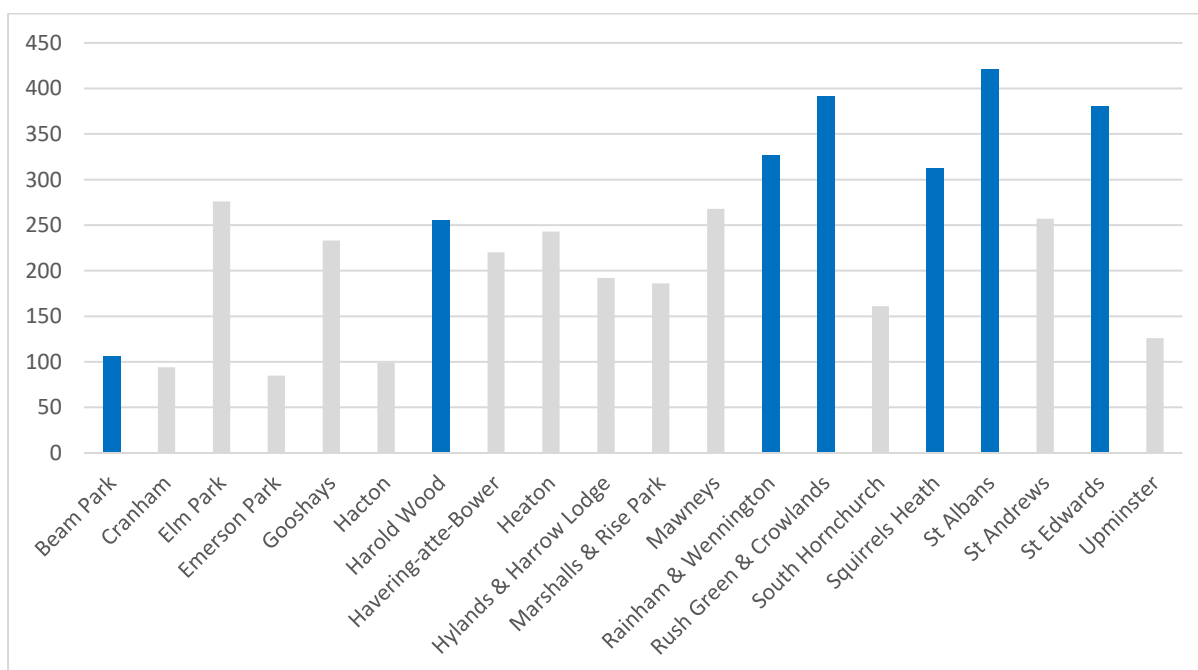
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<sup>7</sup> [English Housing Survey 2023 to 2024: headline findings on demographics and household resilience. - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>8</sup> Housing Stock and Stressors Report, Metastreet, 2024

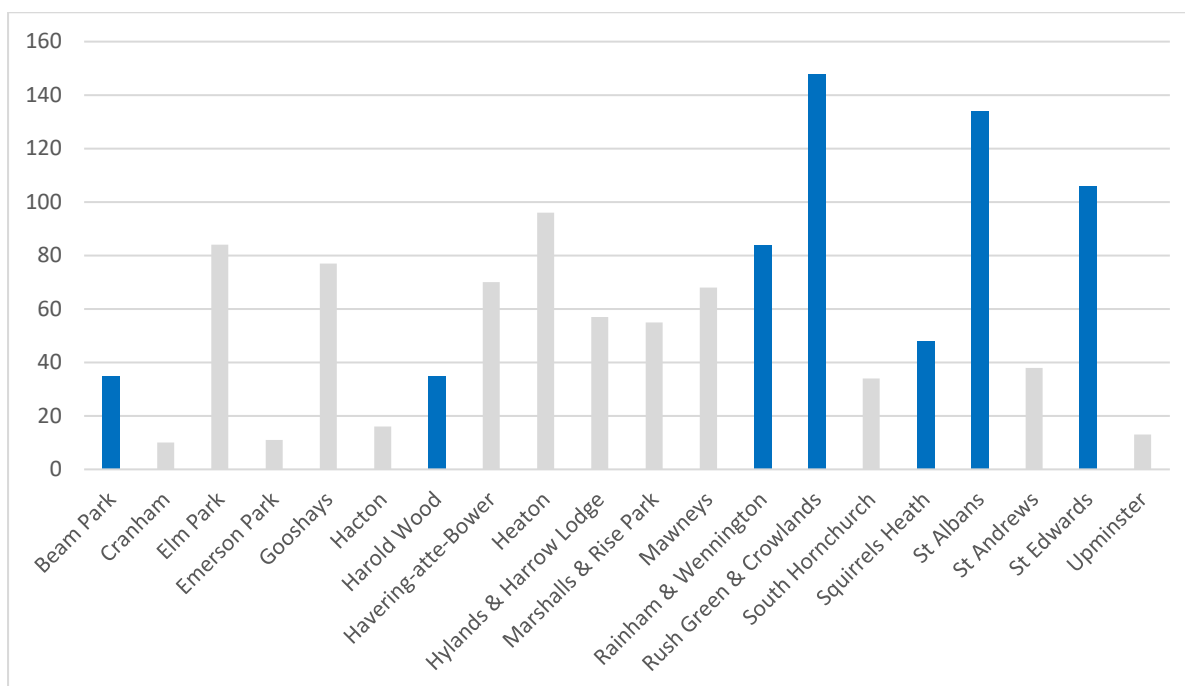


**Predicted percentage of PRS properties (Excl. HMOs) with at least one serious hazard by ward (HSCR 2024)**



**Predicted number of PRS properties (Excl. HMOs) with at least one serious hazard by ward (HSCR 2024)**

Complaints made by PRS tenants and others to the Council about poor housing conditions and inadequate property management are a direct indicator of the poor quality within the PRS. Havering received 1,219 complaints from PRS tenants (excluding HMO tenants) in these seven wards over the period 2021-2024. Rush Green & Crowlands (148) and St Albans (134) had the highest levels of complaints.



**Complaints linked to PRS properties (Excl. HMOs) by ward (HSCR 2024)**

## 7.3 Other factors impacting poor housing conditions

### 7.3.1 Damp and mould

Damp and mould is one of 29 hazards assessed under the HHSRS. The HHSRS is a tool used to assess risks in residential properties. Hazards assessed at the most dangerous level using issued Government guidance are classified as 'category 1'. All other assessable hazards that are judged to be significantly worse than average are 'category 2' hazards. Local authorities have a duty under the Act to take enforcement action on category 1 hazards and a power to take enforcement action on category 2 hazards.

Damp and mould primarily affect the airways and lungs, but they can also affect the eyes and skin. The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and, in the most severe cases, death. The presence of damp and mould can also affect tenants' mental health. This could be due to worries about the health impacts of damp and mould, unpleasant living conditions and destruction of property and belongings, among other concerns.

Everyone is vulnerable to the health impacts of damp and mould, but people with certain health conditions, children and older adults are at greater risk of more severe health impacts. In 2022, the media reported widely on poor conditions caused by damp and mould in social and private rented housing. This was primarily prompted by highlighting the tragic case of two-year-old Awaab Ishak who died in 2020 due to prolonged exposure to mould in his home.

Certain groups are more likely than others to live in homes with damp and mould<sup>9</sup>. This includes:

- people with a long-term illness
- people who struggle to heat their homes and/or are experiencing fuel poverty
- people on low incomes
- people with disabilities
- people from ethnic minority backgrounds
- people living in temporary accommodation.

### **7.3.2 Overcrowding**

Overcrowding is a secondary impact of housing unaffordability. A household is classified as overcrowded if it has fewer bedrooms than it needs to avoid undesirable sharing, based on the age, sex and relationship of household members. 13.6% of privately rented households within Havering are overcrowded. This is slightly lower than the London average of 15%<sup>10</sup>.

Overcrowding exacerbates hazards such as damp and mould due to the increased laundry and cooking activities required to cater to more people in a confined space. Insulation and ventilation cannot generally cope with the extra demand. The HHSRS states that ‘crowded conditions can result in a moisture burden above that which the dwelling is designed to safely deal with, and this can be a cause of condensation and high humidities, giving rise to associated health risk’<sup>11</sup>.

Evidence indicates that poor housing conditions and overcrowding negatively affect physical and mental health and can also have a major impact on educational achievement. 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<sup>12</sup>.

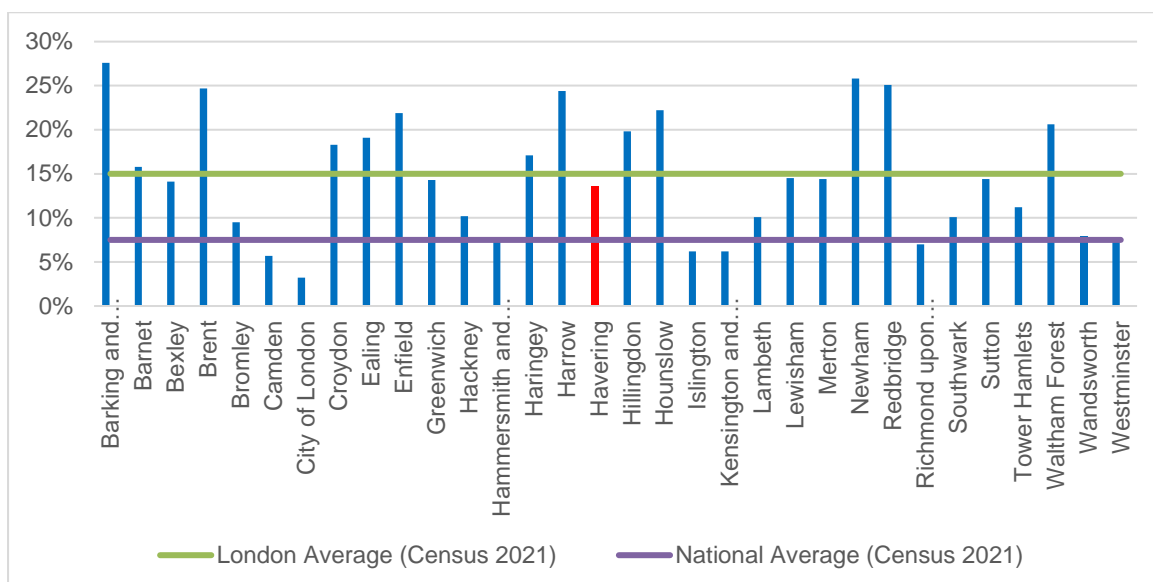
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<sup>9</sup> [Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61221/Understanding_and_addressing_the_health_risks_of_damp_and_mould_in_the_home.pdf) GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

<sup>10</sup> Census 2021

<sup>11</sup> [HHSRS Guidance](#)

<sup>12</sup> [The impact of bad housing on children's lives \(Shelter\)](#)



**Percentage of overcrowded PRS properties by London borough (Census 2021)**

### 7.3.3 Fuel poverty

Whilst energy prices in the UK are no longer near the extreme highs seen in late 2022 and early 2023, energy prices still remain high and unaffordable for many. With growing pressure on household finances because of increasing energy costs and wider concerns about the cost of living, there are reports that households are choosing between “heating or eating” over the winter months.

### 7.3.4 Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)

An EPC rating is an assessment of a property’s energy efficiency. It is primarily used by buyers or renters of residential properties to assess the energy costs associated with heating a house or flat. The rating is from A to G. A indicates a highly efficient property; G indicates low efficiency.

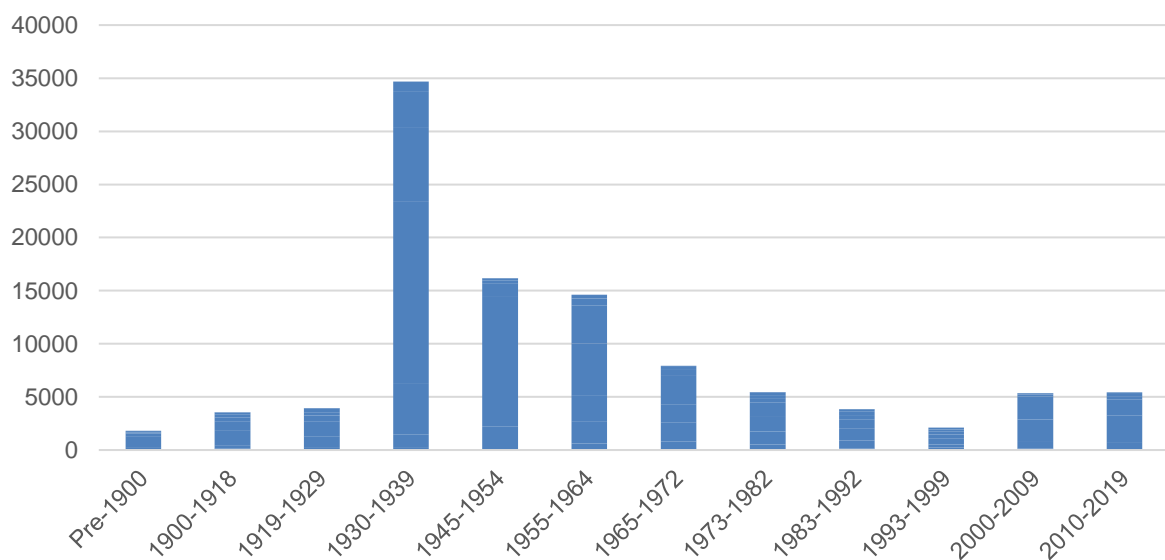
The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) came into force in England and Wales on 1 April 2018. The regulation applies to PRS properties and mandates that all dwellings must have an EPC rating of A-E to be compliant. Currently in Havering 13.9% of PRS properties have an E to G rating with 1.2% having an F and G rating which means that 252 PRS properties are likely to fail the MEES statutory requirement<sup>13</sup>. The statistical evidence shows that there is a continuous relationship between indoor temperature and vulnerability to cold-related deaths<sup>14</sup>. The colder the dwelling, the greater the risk. The percentage rise in deaths in winter is greater in

<sup>13</sup> Housing Stock Condition and Stressors Report (Metastreet 2024)

<sup>14</sup> [Housing Health and Safety Rating System](#)

dwellings with low energy efficiency ratings. Therefore, the F and G properties present a serious risk to the occupants' health, particularly if over the age of 65.

It is notable that there is a gradient of risk with age of the property, the risk being greatest in dwellings built before 1850, and lowest in the more energy efficient dwellings built after 1980. Havering has a significant number of residential properties (41.9%) built pre-Second World War. Wards with many older properties tend to have more hazards such as excess cold, fire & electrical issues, damp and mould<sup>15</sup>



**All housing stock age profile (Source: VOA 2019).**

<sup>15</sup> [Dwellings by Property Build Period and Type \(VOA 2015\)](#)

## 8 Proposals for an additional HMO licensing scheme

The evidence base demonstrates that the criteria for a borough-wide additional licensing scheme is met in that a significant proportion of the borough's HMOs are being poorly managed and are giving rise, or are likely to give rise, to problems affecting their occupiers or members of the public.

Whilst we have made good progress with our mandatory and current additional HMO schemes, there is more to be done as our evidence shows that a significant proportion of HMOs in the borough are being managed ineffectively, proven by the cumulative presence of serious housing hazards.

We are therefore proposing to implement an additional HMO licensing scheme that will apply to all wards in the borough. Subject to consultation and approval, the scheme will come into force in 2026 and last for a period up to five years.

An additional HMO licence will be required for properties that are HMOs rented to three or four occupiers in two or more households that share (or lack) toilet, washing and cooking facilities. This excludes HMOs that require a mandatory HMO licence. Multiple-occupied flats in purpose-built blocks (with over two flats) where more than three people live in the flat are included.

The proposed additional HMO scheme will also apply to converted building HMOs, known as section 257 HMOs. These are properties that

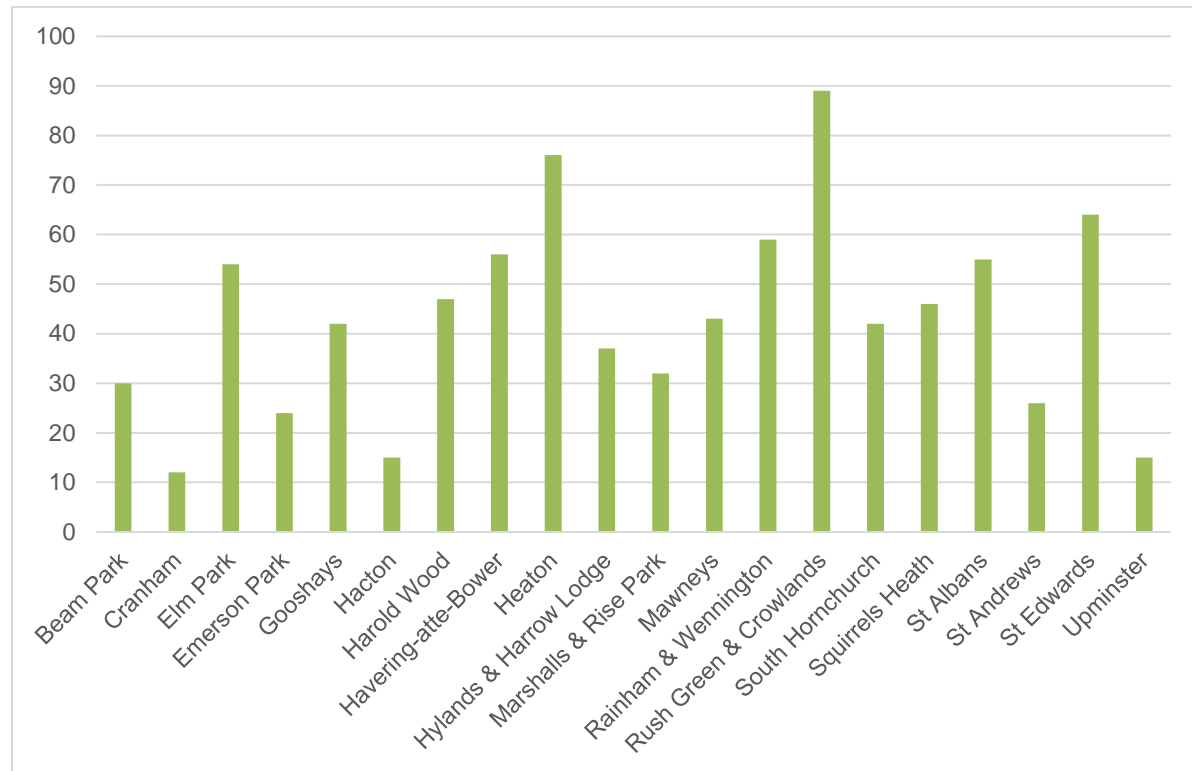
- have been converted into self-contained flats
- the conversion did not comply with the relevant Building Regulations in force at that time and still does not comply; and
- less than two thirds of the flats are owner occupied.

There are some types of buildings which are exempt from HMO licensing by law. These include buildings controlled by public sector bodies (for example, housing associations), some buildings occupied by students, and some owner-occupied buildings. A full list of exemptions can be found at [Housing Act 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/288)

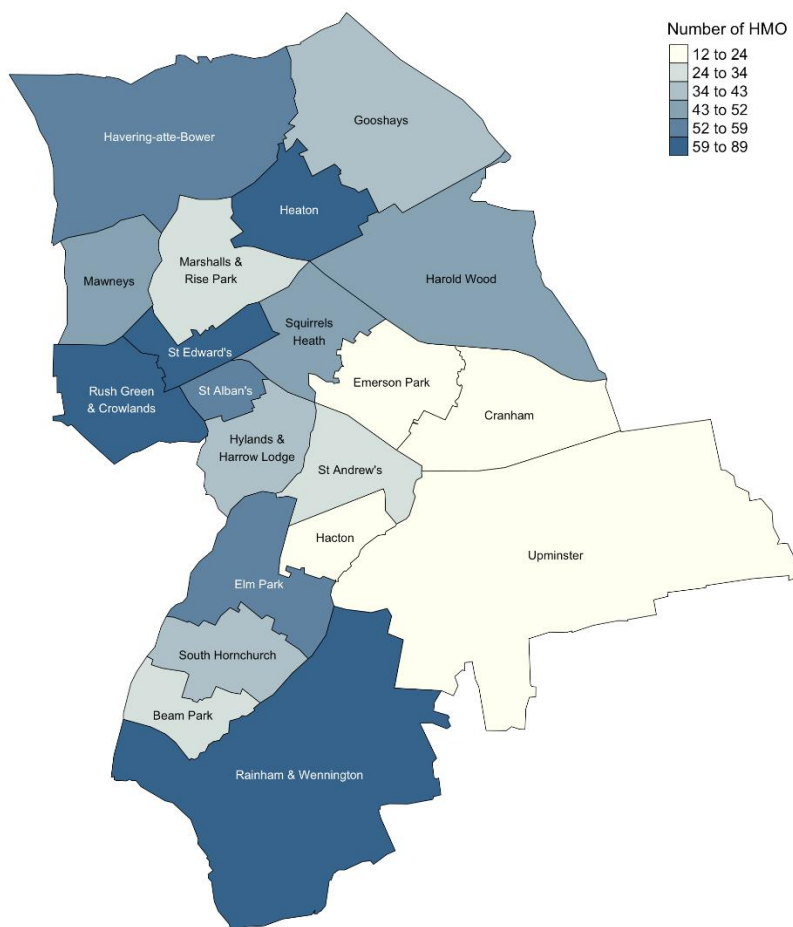
## 8.1 What is the evidence to support the Council’s proposals to implement an additional HMO scheme?

### 8.1.1 Numbers and type of HMO as a subset of the private rented sector

Havering has 864 HMOs (known and predicted) distributed across all 20 wards.



Number of HMOs by ward (HSCR 2024)

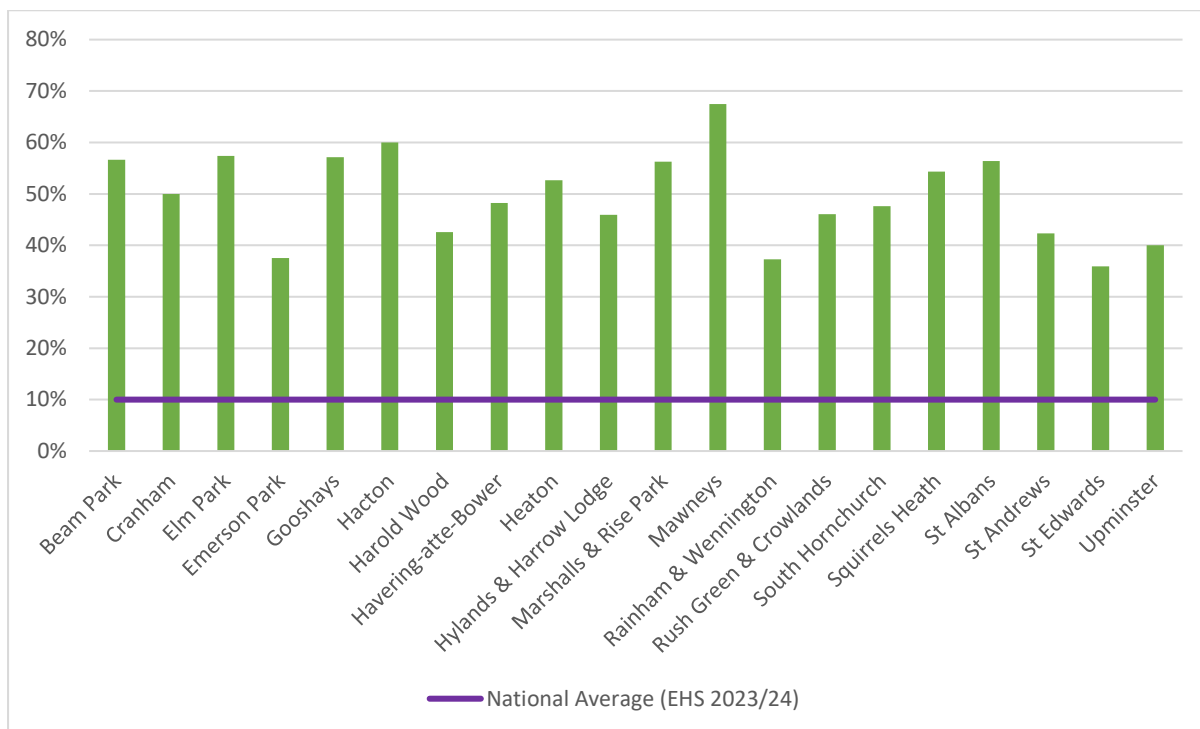


**Map of distribution of HMOs by ward (HSCR 2024)**

### 8.1.2 HMOs & housing conditions

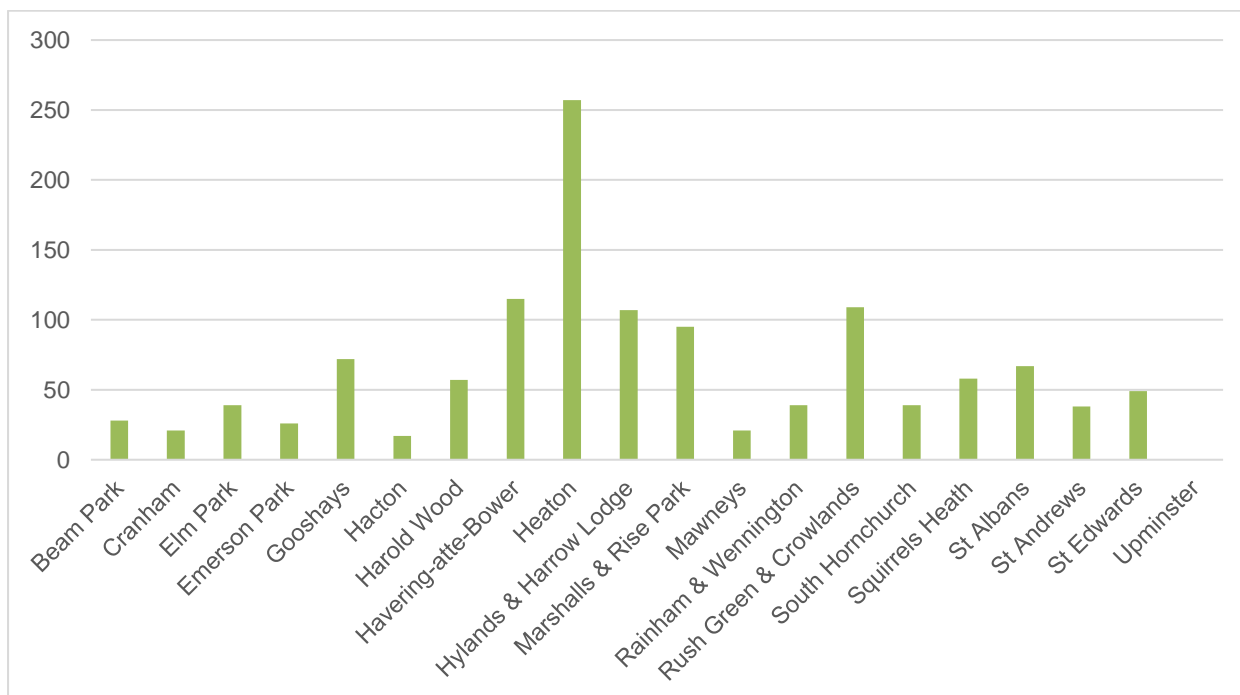
Poor housing conditions are prevalent in Havering's HMOs. The evidence shows that 426 HMOs in Havering are predicted to have serious hazards (Category 1 and high-scoring Category 2). This represents nearly 50% of all HMOs in Havering and is more than quadruple the national average of 10%.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> [English Housing Survey 2023 to 2024: headline findings on demographics and household resilience. - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2023-to-2024-headline-findings-on-demographics-and-household-resilience)



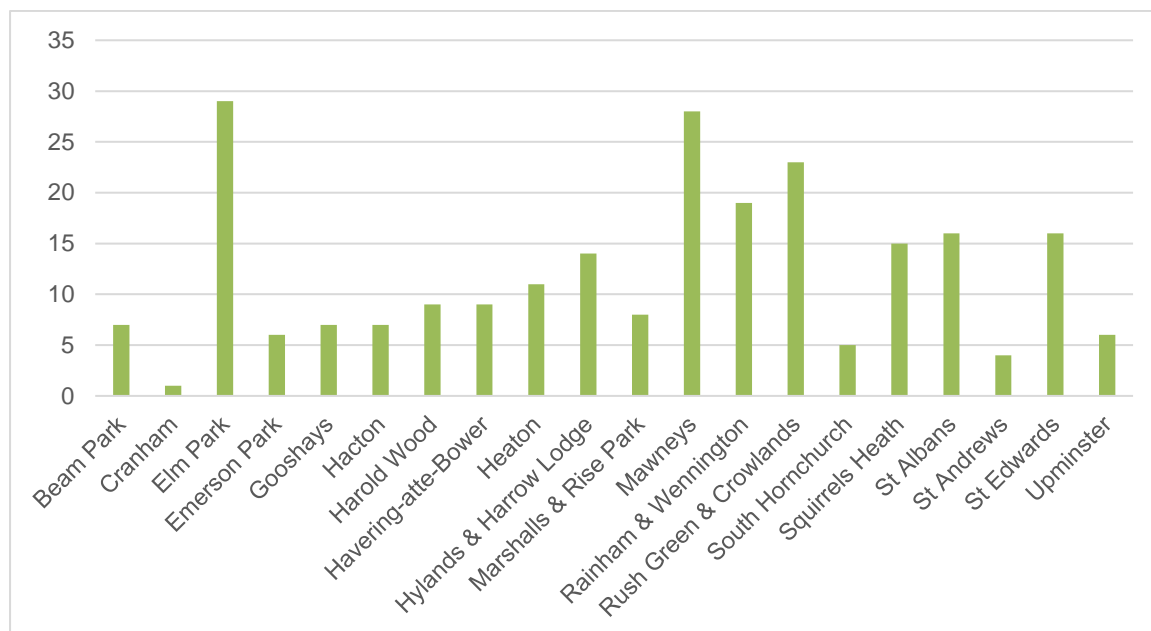
***Predicted percentage of HMOs with serious hazards by ward (HSCR 2024)***

Between 2021-2024 Council officers identified 1254 hazards (Category 1 & 2, HHSRS) during inspections of known HMOs. Therefore 43% of HMOs inspected were found to have at least 1 hazard (Category 1 & 2, HHSRS). Council officers identified the most hazards in HMOs in Heaton (257) and Havering-atte-Bower (115).



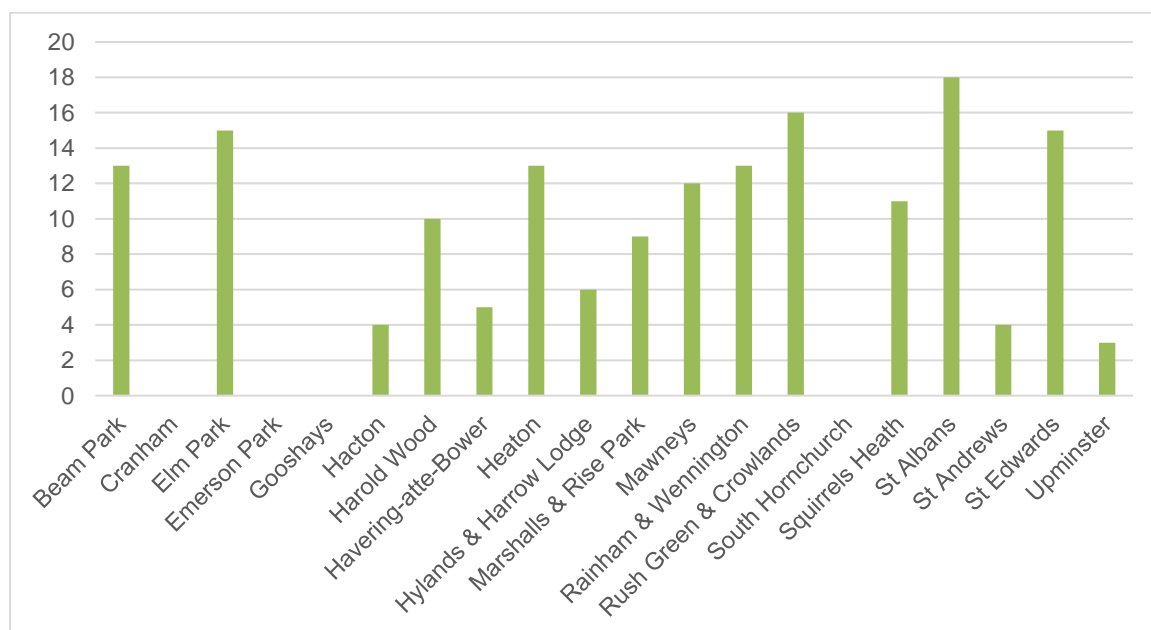
***All hazards identified through inspections by ward (HSCR 2024)***

Complaints made by tenants and others to Havering Council about poor housing conditions and inadequate property management are a direct indicator of low quality and poorly managed HMOs. Between 2021- 2024, Havering received 240 complaints linked to HMOs distributed across all wards with Elm Park (29) and Mawneys (28) having the highest levels.



**Complaints linked to HMOs by ward (HSCR 2024)**

Responding to complaints in HMOs has required a significant number of Council interventions, representing a drain on Council resources. Between 2019-2024, the Council has issued HMOs with 167 housing and statutory housing and public health notices. St Albans (18) and Rush Green & Crowlands (16) required the most statutory notices on HMOs.



**HMO statutory housing and public health notices served by ward (HSCR 2024)**

## **9 Addressing poor conditions and management standards through licensing**

The selective and additional HMO licensing designations would allow the Council to bring about a significant improvement to housing conditions and property management in the area during the life of the schemes, reducing incidences of serious housing hazards and ASB within the borough.

As demonstrated, our evidence shows that a high proportion of PRS properties in the proposed selective licensing designation area are predicted to have unacceptably high levels of category 1 and 2 hazards. The Council believes it is necessary to inspect a large number of these properties to accurately identify the type and severity of category 1 or 2 hazards present. If any hazards are found, the Council will take the required enforcement actions to rectify them.

Our evidence also shows that a high proportion of additional HMOs in the borough are being managed ineffectively, proven by the cumulative presence of serious housing hazards and complaints about poor housing conditions and inadequate property management.

Through these licensing regimes and the granting of licences, standard licence conditions would be imposed that require licence holders to manage their properties proactively and to take reasonable action to address any identified problems.

We will ensure that properties identified as ‘high risk’ are prioritised for inspection by officers to check for hazards and compliance with the licence conditions. This will allow the Council to take enforcement action (under Part 1 of the Housing Act), where necessary, to improve conditions.

The licensing inspection regime will also enable us to identify tenants on low incomes who are living in homes with an E, F or G EPC rating and those who may be affected by fuel poverty. Tenants will be referred to the appropriate services to ensure they receive the available support, and landlords will be advised accordingly. For those whose properties fall below the legal requirement and who ignore the advice and support of the Council, the Private Sector Housing team will work with Trading Standards (currently responsible for enforcement of The Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations) to bring them into compliance.

Licensing also gives the Council further powers to reduce ASB in the PRS. Without licensing the Council are only able to take action against tenants for ASB, as

opposed to licensing, which places a duty on landlords to manage ASB in their properties as well. Landlords will receive guidance and advice on managing tenants involved in ASB, particularly in cases of serious ASB requiring formal court action.

The Council will expect property management issues identified during an inspection to be resolved within a reasonable period, depending on the severity of the issue, improvement notices, overcrowding notices and prohibition orders are formal notices that may be issued to bring about improvements in properties. Landlords who fail to license their properties could also receive a civil penalty or may be prosecuted.

We will also continue to collaborate with the local police, the London Fire Brigade, UK Border Agency and other Council departments to identify properties that need improvement.

The Council will proactively work with landlords to address poor housing conditions and poor property management and help them to comply with the licence conditions in the borough. We will provide information and guidance on managing properties via the Council's web site and through forums (either in person or online).

We will use licensing to empower tenants by educating them on the standards that they should expect from their rented accommodation, their rights and how to access Council services that can support them if needed.

## 10 Proposed licensing scheme conditions

The conditions that the Council proposes to include in licences granted under the selective and additional licensing schemes can be seen in **Appendix 2** and **Appendix 3** and the documents downloadable from the consultation web page.

Each set of proposed licence conditions includes, for ease of reference, both mandatory conditions that the Council is obliged to include under statute, and discretionary conditions that we propose to include in licences granted in Havering.

As part of the consultation process, respondents are able to give us their views about the proposed discretionary conditions for the selective and additional licensing schemes.

Please note, the proposed licence conditions for both schemes represent the conditions that the Council would normally impose in respect of a licence granted on application for a selective or additional licence. However, the Council may impose alternative (bespoke) conditions, where necessary and appropriate, on an individual case basis.

## 11 Proposed licensing scheme fees

### 11.1 Fee proposal

Licence applicants will be required to pay a fee for each property that needs a licence. The proposed selective licence fee is £950 per property and the proposed additional licence fee is £1400 per property. We are also proposing a number of discounts outlined below.

Further information is available in the proposed schedule of fees, charges and discounts, attached as **Appendix 4**. These fees form part of the consultation, and the Council welcomes any views on them.

### 11.2 Fee split

By law, the fee must be levied in two parts.

Part A will be payable on submission of the application and will cover the cost of processing and the administration in determining the eligibility of the application. Should the application be refused or rejected by the council or withdrawn by the applicant this first Part A payment will not be refunded.

Part B will be payable once the application has been assessed, and the decision is made to grant the licence. This will cover the administration, management, and enforcement of the licensing functions for the scheme.

In the event that we decide to refuse a licence application, only the Part A fee will be payable.

### 11.3 Fee amounts

Type of licence	Part A fee	Part B fee	Total fee
<b>Selective</b>	£570	£380	£950
<b>Additional HMO</b>	£840	£560	£1400

## 11.4 Fee discounts

Nature of discount	Amount (Selective)	Amount (Additional)
<b>Multi-dwelling</b>	£100 off Part A	£100 off Part A
<b>EPC rating C and above</b>	£75 off Part B	£75 off Part B
<b>Accredited landlord</b>	£100 off Part B	£100 off Part B

## 11.5 How we calculated the fees

The proposed fees have been calculated on the basis that the schemes will be cost-neutral to the Council and will not generate a profit. Licence fees cover our costs of administering the schemes and meeting the scheme objectives that are set out below. A significant proportion of the licence fee income will meet the necessary staffing costs to deliver the scheme outcomes, but the fees will also meet other running costs, such as IT expenditure, with appropriate allowances made for inflationary increases during the life of the scheme.

The proposed fees are underpinned by assumptions about the level of income the fees will generate, based upon the number of properties that we expect to be licensed during the life of the schemes and the numbers of those properties that we expect to be eligible to discounts.

## 12 Selective and additional licensing exemptions

Selective licensing applies to all privately rented properties within the designations unless they are licensable HMOs or exempt by law. Such exemptions include tenancies granted by public bodies (for example housing associations), holiday homes and some business tenancies. A full list of exemptions for selective and additional licensing can be found at [The Selective Licensing of Houses \(Specified Exemptions\) \(England\) Order 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Schedule 14 of the Housing Act provides an exemption from HMO licensing law for some types of buildings. These include buildings controlled by public sector bodies (for example, housing associations), some buildings occupied by students, and some owner-occupied buildings. A full list of exemptions can be found at [Housing Act 2004 \(https://shorturl.at/v8hfa\)](https://shorturl.at/v8hfa)

## 13 Alternatives to licensing

We have considered other courses of action, or alternatives to the licensing proposals. But we do not believe that they provide as effective means of tackling poor housing conditions and poor property management.

Alternative Measure	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Use of Part 1 Housing Act 2004 enforcement powers [HHSRS] and Public Health powers</b>	<p>Following an investigation, formal statutory notices can be served that require improvements to be carried out to a property.</p> <p>Councils can carry out work in default if a notice is not complied with.</p> <p>Landlords risk being prosecuted if they do not comply with the notice, or the Council can impose a civil penalty on the person responsible.</p>	<p>The powers do not place any obligation on landlords to be proactive in improving conditions. Formal action is generally slow, with appeal provisions against most types of notices served, which can significantly delay the time period for compliance.</p> <p>Work in default can be effective, but it is expensive and time-consuming to the Council, with the risk that not all costs are recovered.</p> <p>Successful prosecutions and civil penalties do not in themselves secure improvements in property conditions and the Council's costs in pursuing legal action are often not met in full.</p>
<b>Rely on prosecutions and civil penalties for housing offences</b>	<p>Provides landlords with a disincentive to keep properties in poor conditions.</p>	<p>These powers do not place any obligation on landlords to be proactive in improving conditions. Successful prosecutions, or the imposition of civil penalties, do not in themselves secure improvements in property conditions. The absence of licensing significantly reduces the scope of the Council to impose civil penalties in respect of identified housing breaches.</p>
<b>Wider promotion of voluntary accreditation</b>	<p>For those landlords who take part, accreditation can</p>	<p>This requires voluntary landlord engagement, and rogue operators are unlikely to attend/engage in</p>

<b>schemes to facilitate improvement in management practices and standards</b>	increase their knowledge and competence and their ability to effectively manage a property.	such schemes.
<b>Improvement grants to improve sub-standard properties</b>	Grants subsidise improvement works, improving standards and giving benefits for landlords and tenants.	<p>Generally, there are few grants available, and the Council has very limited scope to offer grants through successful external funding bids. In the most part, grant awards would fund improvements that the landlord should be carrying out to meet their legal obligations.</p> <p>Any grant scheme would be discretionary and would rely on voluntary landlord engagement.</p>
<b>ASB powers</b>	Formal notices can be served at addresses identified as having ASB issues. This can resolve ASB at the particular address.	<p>Action would generally be taken against the tenant in occupation. The powers do not place any obligations on landlords to be proactive in managing their properties to prevent or reduce the likelihood of ASB occurring.</p>
<b>Renters Rights Bill (Introduced to Parliament September 2024)</b>	Will give the Council greater enforcement and investigatory powers.	Does not put in place a proactive approach to housing standards and still relies on tenants complaining and landlords being upfront about issues.

## 14 Proposed scheme objectives

Licensing is part of a broader, coordinated approach to help improve privately rented properties in Havering. In general terms, we propose to use selective and additional licensing to continue to improve property conditions within the borough and keep our residents safe. We are committed to improving property conditions and management standards in the PRS, so that it contains good quality accommodation, helps us to achieve sustainable communities and continues to contribute positively to the local economy.

The objectives of our proposed schemes are outlined below:

	Objective	Outcome
1.	<b>Improve housing conditions in the PRS by eliminating poor property standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Licensed properties are monitored, and licence conditions robustly enforced and complied with</li><li>• Poor Housing Conditions are improved with category 1 &amp; 2 hazards resolved (including issues such as damp and mould)</li><li>• Improved health, safety and welfare of tenants in the PRS</li><li>• The Council will gain increased knowledge of the private rented sector in the borough. This will enable targeted enforcement and support for landlords</li></ul>
2.	<b>Improve management standards in PRS properties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Landlords actively manage their properties or be enforced against</li><li>• Absentee or unfit landlords employ an agent to actively manage their properties to ensure compliance</li><li>• Prevention of overcrowding through better management of property occupancy</li><li>• Greater number of landlords become accredited improving the professionalism of landlords in the PRS</li><li>• Engagement with landlords improved</li><li>• Landlords are kept informed of latest legislation and good practice</li><li>• Responsible landlords will become more involved in Council licensing schemes and receive information and support</li><li>• Irresponsible landlords will be forced to improve their properties or be enforced against</li></ul>

3.	<b>Increased awareness for tenants of the minimum standards to be expected in rented accommodation and what their other rights are when renting in the PRS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information for tenants on the local licensing scheme advertised and third-party support for tenants made available</li> <li>• Dedicated tenants' advice section created on web site</li> <li>• Officers to provide tenants with information and sign posting to support their housing and wider needs</li> <li>• Improved tenants' support through work with third parties.</li> <li>• Renters know their rights and responsibilities and have greater awareness of and access to Council services that can support them</li> <li>• Tenants will see economic benefits such as reduced heating costs, bringing them out of fuel poverty</li> </ul>
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## 15 Licensing and wider Council strategies

Property licensing is an effective tool in improving conditions for private renters and forms an integral part of the Council's overarching housing strategy. In addition, licensing can support the delivery of several broader Council priorities that recognise the impact of poor-quality housing and ASB in residents' lives.

### 15.1 Havering Corporate Plan

Havering Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2027 focuses on three priorities:

- **People** - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well: Aims to enhance health, support youth, and protect vulnerable groups by promoting preventive healthcare, mental health support, and improved care for at-risk children.
- **Place** - A great place to live, work and enjoy: Seeks to improve public safety, provide affordable housing, and maintain public spaces, focusing on safety initiatives and environmental sustainability.
- **Resources** - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council: Emphasises digital transformation, better data use, and efficient resource management, including updating systems and enhancing service transparency.

A selective licensing scheme will contribute to the Council's priorities and assist in achieving its key ambitions and deliver better standards for private renters. Licensing schemes promote healthier, safer neighbourhoods, sustainability through energy efficiency standards, and equality by ensuring safe, healthy living conditions for all residents regardless of tenure.

### 15.2 Havering Housing Strategy

The Council is currently developing a new Housing Strategy for 2025 onwards. The draft strategy recognises there are many housing challenges facing Havering and seeks to address these challenges in the following way:

- Set out a plan to meet the diverse and evolving housing requirements of Havering informed by the latest data and projections.
- Focus is on the provision of new homes to keep up with the rising costs and affordability challenges of PRS.

The draft Housing Strategy identifies the need to provide better standards for private renters. Eliminating poor performing private sector landlords throughout the borough remains a priority, and the Council will seek to implement new licensing measures to drive improvements into this crucial part of the borough's housing offer.

### 16.3 Havering Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy

Like many areas, Havering is under increasing pressure to find suitable temporary accommodation for families. Havering Prevention of Homelessness Strategy 2020-25 and Rough Sleeping comprehensively sets out Havering's approach, based around four objectives:

**Objective 1:** End long-term rough sleeping

**Objective 2:** Reducing the number of people in temporary accommodation

**Objective 3:** Supporting people who become homeless

**Objective 4:** Provide good value, integrated services that deliver excellent customer care.

Through the implementation of a selective licensing scheme, the Council will be able to enhance its work with landlords, improving their professionalism and understanding of legal obligations. This, along with tenant education on rights and responsibilities, will support tenancy sustainment in the PRS and help in reducing homelessness in the borough.

### 16.4 Empty Homes Programme

As part of the draft Housing Strategy, we have made a commitment to making better use of existing homes. The Council recognises that empty properties are a wasted resource for both the community and the owner and can cause a variety of issues such as reducing the supply of housing and attracting ASB. Bringing empty properties back into use is a priority for the Council and clamping down on those landlords that keep homes empty for years on end is a key step to increasing the supply and availability of affordable homes in the borough.

Bringing empty properties up to standard and back into use as decent livable homes is complementary to the objectives of the proposed selective licensing scheme.

### 16.5 Climate Action Plan

Havering's approach to tackling the climate emergency commitments, both for the Council operations and borough-wide emissions, is focused in nine work streams:

1. Built Environment
2. Business Continuity
3. Energy
4. People
5. Procurement

6. Public Protection
7. Transport
8. Stakeholder & Community
9. Waste

The Havering Climate Action Plan recognises the link between fuel poverty and energy and emissions, and that better insulating homes and making them more energy efficient are key actions in combatting both. Under public protection, part 6, there is focus on comfortable, affordably heated, cost-efficient homes.

Private property licensing schemes will contribute to achieving Havering's climate change vision by enforcing energy efficient standards in the PRS, helping to reduce the overall energy consumption and carbon emissions of the borough.

### **16.6 Anti-Social Behaviour**

As outlined in the Havering Corporate Plan 2024 – 27, we are committed to working with tenants, residents and external partners to ensure that steps are taken to tackle ASB. The borough's Corporate Plan vision is one where Havering is 'A great place to live, work and enjoy' and where the Council 'Seeks to improve public safety, provide affordable housing, and maintain public spaces, focusing on safety initiatives and environmental sustainability'.

To tackle ASB problems, we have made it conditional on all private landlords who hold licences under the additional HMO or selective licensing schemes to prevent and combat ASB associated with properties they manage. Section 57(5) of the Housing Act 2004 gives a definition of ASB for the purposes of licensing under Parts 2 and 3 of the Act.

Additional and Selective Licensing will enable the Council to encourage landlords to work with their tenants to reduce ASB. Information and support will be available both online and through forums.

### **16.7 Regeneration Strategy**

Havering Council has developed a comprehensive regeneration strategy aimed at transforming various areas within the borough to enhance community living, infrastructure, and economic vitality. Key components of the regeneration programme include:

- building modern, energy-efficient homes and well-connected neighbourhoods that are right for our borough
- providing new, high quality Council housing and increasing the amount of family-sized homes
- providing infrastructure to support new homes
- increasing opportunities for home ownership for Havering residents
- supporting healthy communities, fit for future generations
- supporting and investing in our local economy to create a thriving place
- protecting and celebrating our history and heritage
- We are also committed to improving the existing housing stock that we have.

Private property licensing schemes will act as a regulatory tool to ensure that landlords in regenerating areas maintain high property standards, supporting regeneration goals of creating more sustainable, inclusive, and well-maintained communities.

## 16 Further information

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have “due regard” to its equality aims when exercising its public functions. Havering Council believe that an Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) is the best method to demonstrate compliance with the PSED. An Equality & Health Impact Assessment was carried out as part of these proposals. The results of the EqHIA are attached as **Appendix 5**.

## 17 Appendices

Appendix 1	Housing Stock Condition and Stressors Report (Metastreet, 2024)
Appendix 2	Selective Licence Conditions
Appendix 3	Additional HMO Licence Conditions
Appendix 4	Schedule of Proposed Fees, Charges and Discounts
Appendix 5	Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)