

Coventry City Council Consultation on Additional Licensing of HMOs



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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the statutory consultation carried out by Coventry City Council's in relation proposals to introduce a new city-wide additional licensing scheme requiring all Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Coventry to be licensed.

The consultation ran for 12 weeks from 26th February 2024 to 17th May 2024 and sought to gather views on the proposals, including the proposed licensing conditions, fee structure, and alternatives that the Council could consider.

The consultation also looked at respondents' experiences of HMOs, accommodation and maintenance of private rented properties in the city.

A variety of consultation methods were used to allow interested parties to share their views on the proposals. These included an online survey, a dedicated landlord's forum a landlord's focus group and an agent's focus group and 18 ward drop-in sessions throughout the city.

The Council promoted the consultation extensively through various communication channels, both within Coventry and beyond, to encourage landlords, tenants, agents, residents, businesses, and other interested parties to get involved.

In total, the consultation generated 183 survey responses. 150 people attended the landlord's forum, 12 people attended the landlord /agent's focus group and 3 individual organisations responded with written submissions to the consultation.

Background

The increase in the size of the Private Rented Sector (PRS) has been the most significant change in Coventry's housing market in the last ten years. A number of market factors such as house prices, high demand and an increased population have resulted in an increased growth of HMOs with the current predictions suggesting there are now circa 6,800 HMOs. Alongside this growth, Coventry has noted an increase in the prevalence of problems such as poor property conditions and poor management, with correlations to smaller HMOs that do not fall under the statutory mandatory licensing scheme.

Coventry Council is considering introducing a new city-wide additional licensing scheme, which will cover smaller HMOs, which do not fall under the existing Mandatory licensing scheme as well as those HMOs known as s.257 HMOs (converted blocks of flats)

Before making any decision, the Council undertook a consultation exercise to gather views, in particular from landlords, private tenants, agents, residents, businesses and organisations.

Proposals

Coventry City Council is proposing to introduce a new city-wide additional licensing scheme of HMO properties that are privately rented, where 3 or 4 non-related tenants share an amenity, such as a bathroom or kitchen. The proposal also covers Section 257 HMOs, which is a house that is converted into block of self-contained flats where the standard of the conversion does not meet the relevant building standards (Building Regulations 1991) and where fewer than two-thirds of the flats are owner-occupied. Finally, the scheme will also include purpose-built student accommodation run by private providers where students live in “cluster” flats where the accommodation is not managed and controlled by educational establishments.

Under the scheme, landlords of HMOs that fall under the remit of the scheme will be required to obtain a licence to rent out their property (excluding properties falling within certain exemption criteria). Landlords will be charged an associated fee for registration and the scheme will run for a five-year period.

The consultation focused on the degree to which respondents agreed or disagreed with the proposal to introduce the additional licensing scheme, as well as views on the proposed licence fee structure, and conditions. It also looked at respondents’ views of HMOs in the city and experiences of issues in their accommodation.

Public consultation

The approach is primarily governed by the provisions of the Housing Act 2004 and Government guidance (revised April 2010 & March 2015) and contains a statutory requirement to consult for a minimum period of 10 weeks on any proposals to designate an area subject to Additional Licensing. The public consultation took place over a 12-week period starting on 26th of February 2024 and concluding on the 17th of May 2024. This included neighboring areas outside of the city boundary. An online survey was used as the principal method of consultation, and an email address was also provided to gather any written comments or feedback. In summary the consultation methods included the following:

- A dedicated Let’s Talk page containing an online questionnaire tailored to gauge cross section of views on the proposals;
- Consultation with key stakeholder groups i.e. Landlords, Agents, Tenant, Residents and other key organisations such as the Police;
- Drop-in sessions in various parts of the city;
- E-communications through social media and the Council’s website; and
- Workshops with Landlords and Agents to present the proposals.

Communication channels

The survey was promoted by the Council to interested parties within the city, such as landlords, agents, tenants, residents, local businesses and third sector organisations. It was also promoted to parties in neighbouring Local Authorities. The Council sent out emails to all its accredited landlords to help spread the word far and wide and collaborated with local partner organisations and other internal departments to promote the consultation.

A full list of all activities taken to promote the consultation is below:

Table 2: Communications activities (within Coventry)

Communications	
Direct marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflet advertising consultation distributed to tenant's properties which were being inspected as part of current additional HMO licensing scheme. • Email to 22 residents' groups - 1st March 2024 • Email to 5,217 landlords - 21st February 2024 & 11th April 2024. • Email to 128 managing agents - 21st February 2024 & 4th April 2024. • Email to the local Citizens' Advice Bureau via the frontline network - 15th March 2024 & 29th April 2024, who agreed to promote to their clients, which equates to 300 people and over 60 agencies. • Email to Acorn Community Union - 21st March 2024 • Email to surrounding Local Authorities – 19th March 2024 • Coventry Landlord Forum held - 13th March 2024 in conjunction with the NRLA. • Internal stakeholders focus group – 3rd April 2024 • Landlord seminar and focus group – 15th April 2024 • Agent seminar and focus group – 24th of April 2024
Press & Media	<p>Press release was distributed on 6th February 2024 to Local, and National press.</p> <p>Media coverage received:</p> <p>https://www.coventry.gov.uk/news/article/4884/improving-the-way-houses-in-multiple-occupation-are-managed-in-coventry</p> <p>https://btinsider.co.uk/article/19608/coventry-city-council-aiming-to-launch-consultation-to-renew-additional-licensing-scheme-for-hmos</p> <p>https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/coventry-hmo-consultation-set-launched-28580562</p> <p>https://coventryobserver.co.uk/news/coventry-news-have-your-say-in-bid-to-tackle-issues-with-coventry-hmos/</p> <p>https://www.coventrysociety.org.uk/2024/02/23/consultation-on-extended-hmo-licensing-scheme/</p>

	<p>https://thenegotiator.co.uk/news/boom-in-licencing-schemes-to-continue-as-councils-crackdown-on-rogue-landlords/</p> <p>https://www.landlordzone.co.uk/news/big-city-reveals-details-of-huge-landlord-licencing-plans</p> <p>https://www.nrla.org.uk/events/meetings/6160</p>
Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information made available on the Council’s website for the entire consultation period through a dedicated webpage “Let’s Talk”. • Four digital newsletters dedicated to the consultation sent to landlords and agents between 21st February 2024 & 4th April 2024 • Promotions on 30 screens in three Council buildings • Promoted for 11 weeks using digital screens and social media • Social messages published to 120,000 followers • 11,000 reach on social posts • 14,000 impressions on social posts • Advertisement on the council’s staff intranet news board • Email signatures containing a banner publishing the consultation and containing a QR code link to the survey.

The promotional work undertaken in relation to the scheme can be seen in appendix 1.

Views from the public meetings

Feedback was also gathered via public meetings. Many of the participants were landlords or came from this perspective. Some of the key points from these sections within the report are summarised here.

- Several landlords felt that not enough was being done to tackle rogue landlords and wanted to the Council to take more action against those who break the law.
- Many landlords felt that the compliance checks were very helpful to them and asked for more detailed feedback be given, for example in why they had passed their checks or further improvements that they may want to consider.
- Some landlords felt there were inconsistencies in the inspections between the different EHO’s, with one landlord stating that different EHO’s asked for different things within the property.
- A common concern raised by landlords was that it takes too long to receive their licence.
- Several landlords stated that they were confused about the Council’s Article 4 direction and that they had not been provided with enough information.
- Can the Council consider the pricing for the HMO licenses for more than 1 house.

For example, I have 10+ houses, if you assigned us to one inspector, we could do all the houses in one go and that would save numerous different appointments and meetings.

- Disappointed with licence time as property currently empty and was penalised for applying late.
- Expensive, takes a long time
- Representatives from residence association very supportive of scheme

Stakeholder views

A landlord's focus group was held on the 15th of April 2024 in which a presentation was delivered on the proposed scheme, followed by a questionnaire aimed at seeking the attendees' views on certain aspects of the scheme as follows:

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the current licensing scheme has been effective in improving the condition and management of privately rented properties in Coventry?

Agree – 38%

Disagree – 0%

Not sure – 62%

Additional comments:

“Helps improve rental homes”

“The Licensing scheme can better regulate housing standards and help improve housing safety”

“Not aware of the impact that the current scheme has had”

As part of the HMO licensing process one of our Environmental Health Officers will carry out an inspection of your property to ensure it is suitable to be occupied as an HMO and inform you of any improvements needed - As a landlord or Agent does this give you peace of mind of knowing that the property is safe and suitable for your tenants and that you comply with legislation?

Yes – 100%

No – 0%

Additional comments:

“This is great, the issue from time to time is the delay in being able to get an inspection”

If the current licensing scheme ended after the current 5-year term and was NOT continued do you think this would have any impact on your local area?

Yes – 100%

No – 0%

“It would encourage unscrupulous landlords”

“I think the licensing scheme should continue; the local area will become messy if there is no

licence scheme”

Are there any other things you think the Council should consider to improve the condition and management of privately rented properties in Coventry?

Comments:

Several commented “no”

“How are the Council intending to find and deal with offenders who are not licensed? Sometimes it feels as though it is the ones trying to maintain compliance are negatively affected and the non-compliant landlords go under the radar”

“Don’t have enough experience as a landlord in Coventry to comment”

“I think the Council should provide more bins to HMO’s”

“Training and education should be mandatory”

If the current licensing scheme ended after the current 5-year term and was not continued, do you think this would impact on your local area?

The Council is seeking views as to whether it should renew the additional licensing scheme in 2025, which again would include all HMOs within the city - are you in favor of renewing the scheme?

Yes – 88%

No – 12%

“This would be good for honest landlords and will drive out the rogues”

“Licensing is very worthwhile, so long as it is used to assist those landlords who are working to be compliant and pushing only those who are not. It is important not to just charge landlords who are being compliant and missing those that hide from the system and give us all a bad reputation”

“A licence provides standards which will be a positive in the long run. I would like the Council to be understanding of the constraints that landlords have such as size of rooms etc”

Written responses

In total, 6 written responses were provided from various stakeholders, namely landlords, the university, a tenant support group, tenants and a landlord representative association. The verbatim responses can be seen in appendix 2.

Tenant - I think the service is excellent, I live in a HMO and the officer that inspected my room was very professional and friendly. Because of the licensing scheme my landlord has had to make some improvements to the house we live in so it’s better to live in now.

Landlord - I am wondering if you can consider the pricing for the HMO licences for more than 1 house. For example, I have 10 houses, If you assigned us to one inspector, we could do all the houses in one go and that would save 11 different appointments and meetings. It would guarantee consistency across the houses and it could be one report. This would be a great saving for you and hence it could be reflected in my price.

As you can appreciate my costs have gone up considerably – finding tenants, utility bills, moving-out-cleaning bills, gardening, monthly inspections (which includes cleaning the really dirty areas such as toilets, sorting out drains, trying to encourage tidiness and looking after rubbish, checking the use of the beds, checking for wedged doors, the usual alarm and CO monitor checks etc) as well as the usual maintenance costs of all houses like replacing washing machines etc, repairs, painting and more.

Landlord - Due to the arduous requirements of the HMO licensing scheme, and additional costs, landlords like myself have moved from 3 or 4 person student lets, to 2 person family lets. This shift means Coventry would require 100 - 200% more homes in order to accommodate the same number of people. Regulation such as the licensing scheme increases compliance costs for compliant landlords, and offers no consequence to non-compliant landlords, who will continue to overcrowd houses and take payment in cash. This scheme does not achieve the objective of improving housing. Currently HMO enforcement is not working. Someone was murdered on the doorstep of one of my properties. They were murdered by a tenant of the HMO next door. Despite reporting this, Coventry council have allowed the HMO and those who occupy it to continue ruining the neighbourhood. This demonstrates that despite unfairly targeting the wrong people to raise funds, the problem is still not being solved. Consider differentiating between Student Lets and those undesirable HMOs types where drug addicts and criminals fester. Regulation already exists such as gas safety checks and electrical checks that can be used to ensure good quality housing without the need for licensing schemes. A cynic would suspect this is in fact a cash-grab due to the systemic underfunding of local councils, but that discussion is outside the scope of this email.

Landlord association – In summary, the landlord association recognises the need for a healthy private rented sector to compliment other housing in the area but feels that their members lack the experience to tackle some of the burdens placed upon them via the conditions of their licences, such as anti-social behaviour and waste management They specifically request that the Council consider a free low cost service for waste removal, which would help deal with excess waste at the end of tenancies. The association believes the Council already has a wealth of enforcement powers to tackle poor standards in private rented sector and therefore does not agree that the renewal of the additional licensing scheme is the most effective approach to tackling the problems within the sector.

University – The university is fully supportive of Coventry's Additional Licensing Scheme and believes that high quality housing is fundamental to the success of the city. They have welcomed the Additional Licensing scheme's contribution to supporting their students. They recognize the part that Additional Licensing has played in ensuring HMOs are managed properly, with basic standards of safety and provision and that without it, hundreds more properties would not have achieved minimum standards nor had engagement with the Council to ensure property managers are 'fit and proper'. As a result of the scheme, the university have noted a reduction in neighbor complaints about students involving noise, rubbish, housing disrepair and other anti-social behaviour.

Acorn Tenant support group – The group feel that the scheme could be better and has not yet achieved its goal of ensuring that properties are sufficiently efficient. The

group have suggested that whilst the private-rented sector remains as large as it is, is to apply landlord licensing regulations equally to all private landlords instead of only HMO landlords. They believe the Council has proven it can operate a city-wide HMO landlord licensing scheme and now call on the Council to operate a city-wide licensing scheme for all landlords. However, they would like to see more pro-active enforcement of the licence conditions, more inspections after the licence has been issued. On the whole the group have stated their support for wider licensing for all landlords and would also suggest that there should be clearer paths to redress for tenants who find themselves in dispute with their landlord, in particular access to reporting on landlords and access to legal aid should they find themselves in dispute and/or mediation.

In addition to providing an organizational response Acorn also undertook their own outreach work to gauge opinion on Additional HMO Licensing Scheme in Coventry. To do so they set up four public stalls, carried out a door knocking exercise and undertook outreach work with community groups. This resulted in 160 responses from residents in Coventry who were very supportive of the Council's proposal to renew the Additional Licensing Scheme. Of those surveyed 32 were tenants of HMO's and had experienced various issues, such as difficulties getting repairs undertaken and in some instances fear of eviction for reporting such repairs. The majority of the respondents were residents living close to HMO's, 140 in total, and they experienced issues relating to general poor management from landlords, such as waste in gardens and general poor maintenance.

Let's Talk Online Survey

An online survey was hosted on the Council's Let's Talk Coventry webpage for 3 months, which was visited by 799 people with over 360 people downloading at least one document. As well as this drop in sessions were held across the whole city, at least 1 session held in each of the 18 wards.

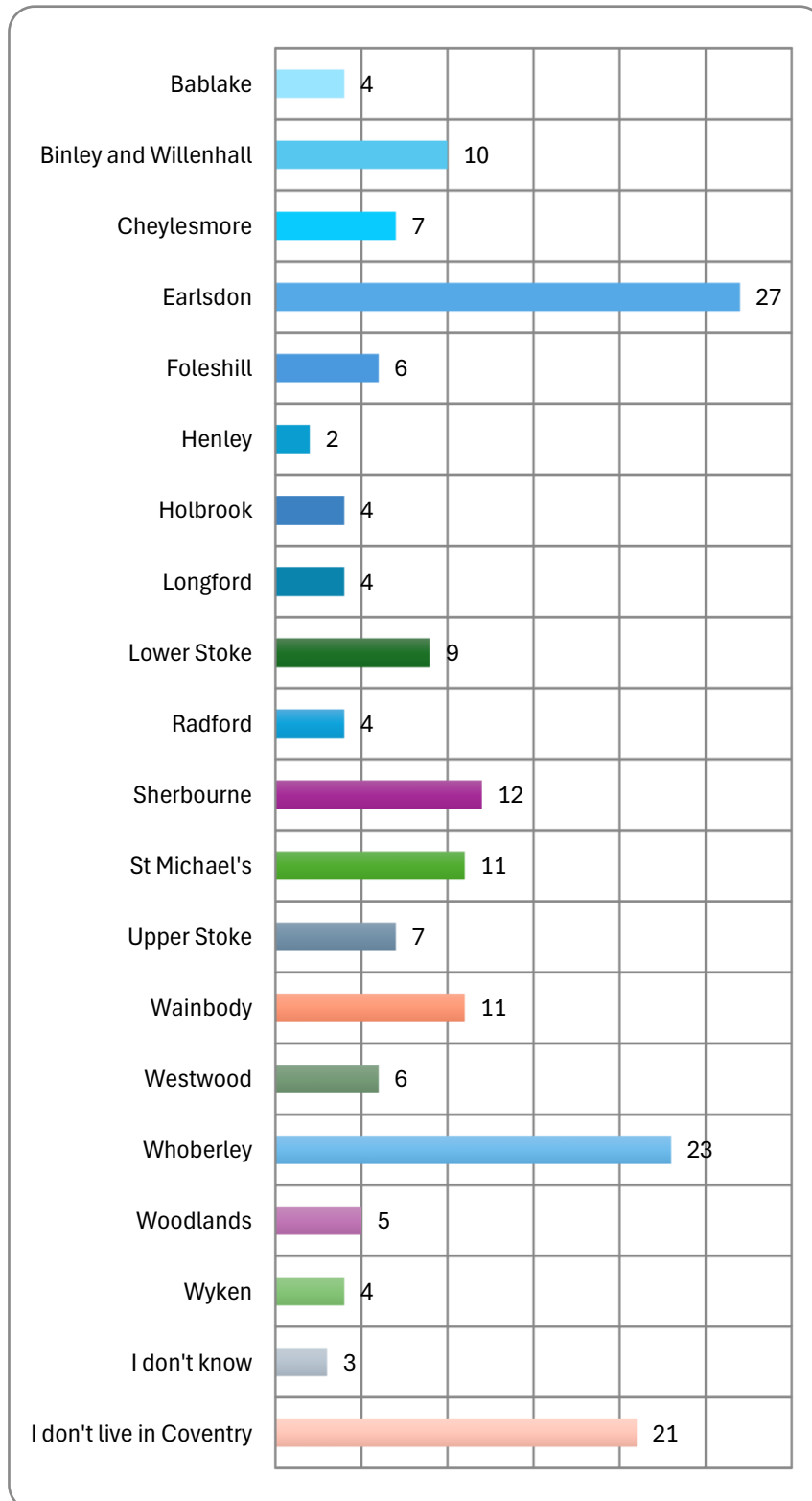
The survey elicited over 200 comments which are summarised as follows, with full list of comments and the Council's response to each being contained in appendix 3:

- The majority of responses were received from respondents who live in Coventry.
- Most responses were received from Earlsdon and Whoberley.
- Respondents who did not live in Coventry, lived in various locations, Warwickshire County Council area and areas around London.
- The majority of respondents were responding as members of the public (77%), followed by landlords (15%)
- 78% of respondents were aware that Coventry has introduced an Additional Licensing Scheme
- Difficulties getting repairs done and lack of contact with the landlord/agency were the most cited issues of people who lived in a HMO although numbers were small.

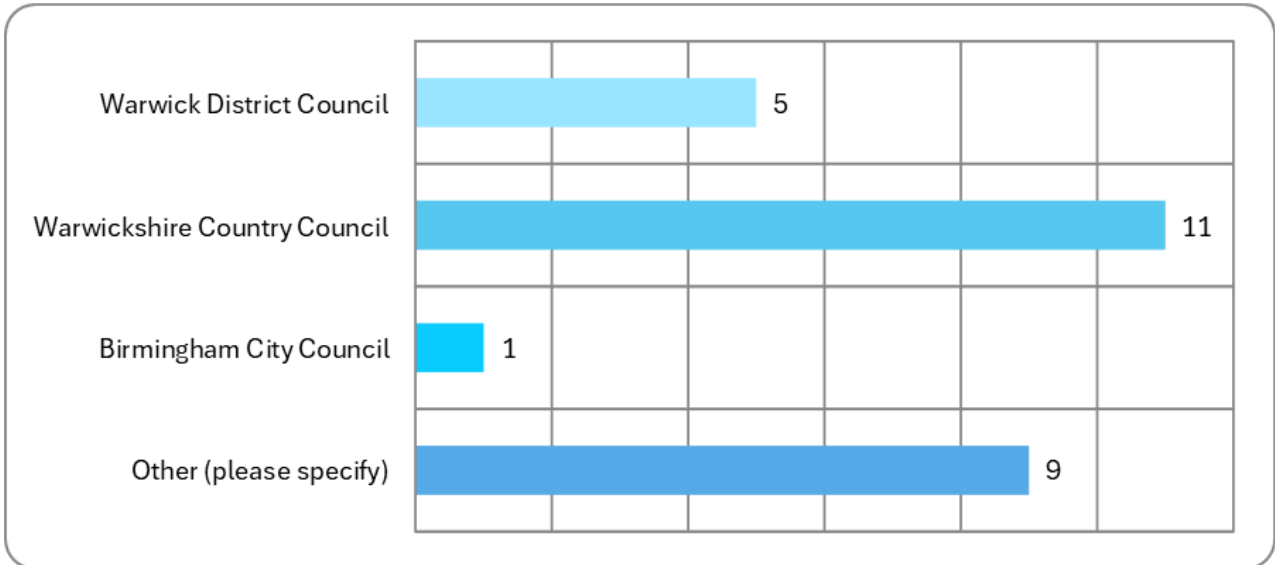
- People that live in Coventry have experienced issues from HMOs mainly being poorly managed refuse, overgrown gardens and poor external appearances of properties.
- The statements that received most disagreement were that additional licensing in Coventry has dealt with the problems associated with HMOS or helped reduced anti-social behaviour.
- 48% agree that the current licensing scheme has been effective in improving the condition and management of privately rented properties in Coventry. 32% disagreed that the scheme has had an improving effect with a further 1 on 5 (20%) not sure.
- 70% of respondents felt that if the scheme was not recommissioned it would have a negative impact on their local area, compared to 10% of respondents thinking it would have a positive impact.
- Three quarters of respondents 75% agreed with the renewal of this scheme (58% strongly agreeing).
- 17% were in disagreement with the renewal of this scheme (13% strongly disagreeing)
- Those that were in disagreement with the renewal felt that the Council does not punish rogue landlords enough and that the process is too bureaucratic and that good landlords are not recognised
- There was overall agreement with both the proposed licence length and the licence conditions.
- In the open ended comments a number of respondents felt that the same standards should apply for all length of licenses, poor landlords should incur penalties and there should be a cap in the number of HMOs in any one area.
- Also there was a strong feeling that all landlords should be regulated not just HMOs.
- Just over a third 34%) of respondents were aged 44 and under. 48% were female.
- 67% were White British. 18% stated they were disabled.

Survey findings

Looking at respondents from Coventry, most were from Earlsdon (27), followed by Whoberley (23)



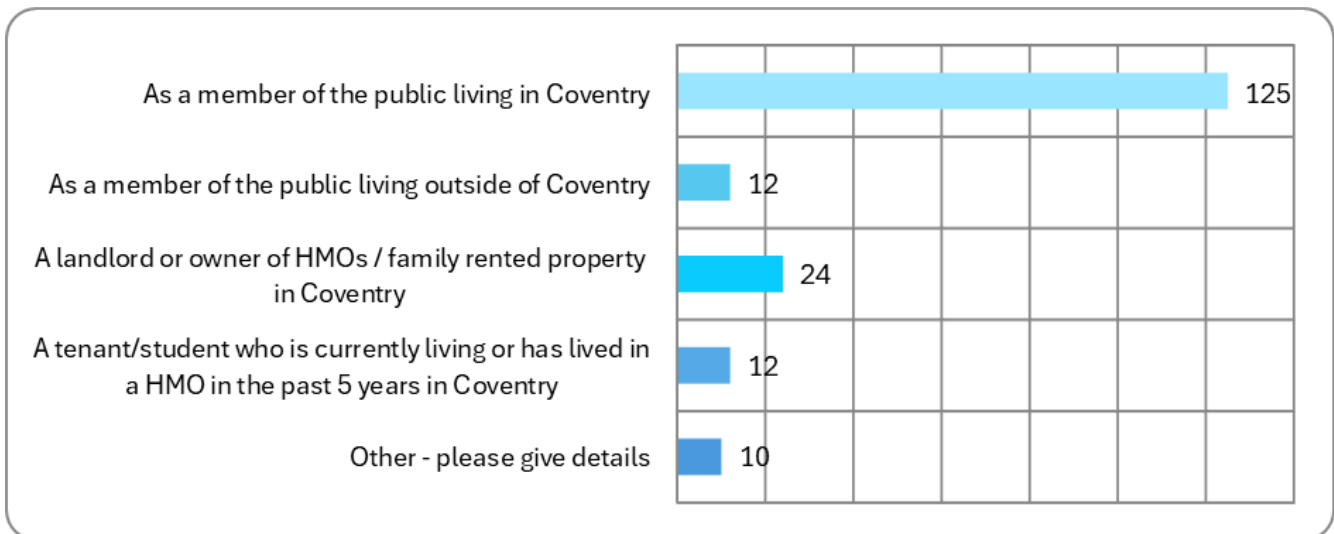
The following revealed that some of the respondents did not live in Coventry and the majority of respondents who stated other location were from London and the surrounding area. Other areas stated were Leicestershire, Nottingham and Wakefield.



Who was responding to the survey?

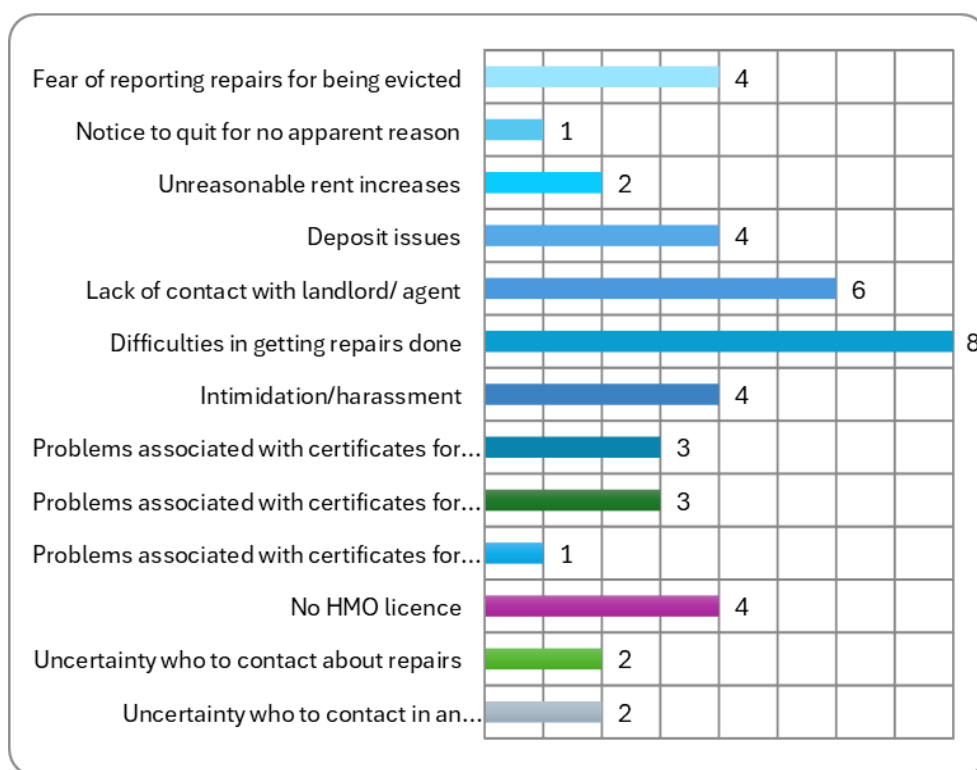
The majority of respondents are responding as members of the public that live in Coventry (125), that is 77%. The next largest category is landlords (24) at 15%.

Those that stated other were predominantly representatives of charities that work in relation to housing, as well as a consultant on fire risk assessment.



Issues experienced by people who have lived in HMOs in Coventry

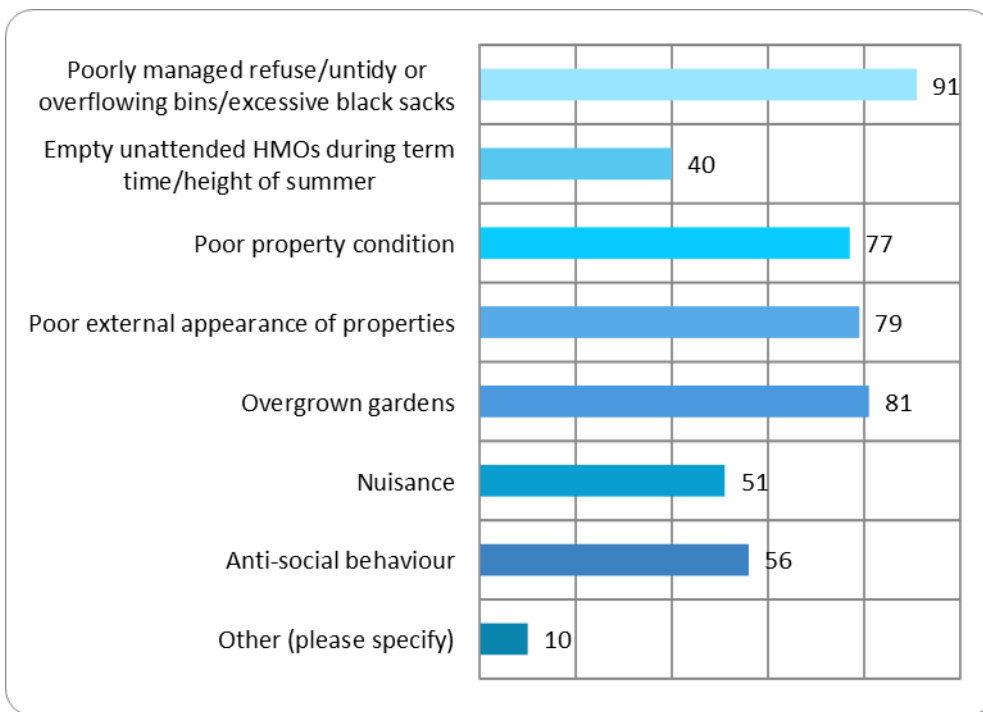
Only 12 respondents stated that they are living or have lived in a HMO. So, the numbers are small but the main issue appears to be difficulties in getting repairs done.



Issues experienced by people who have live in Coventry relating to HMOs

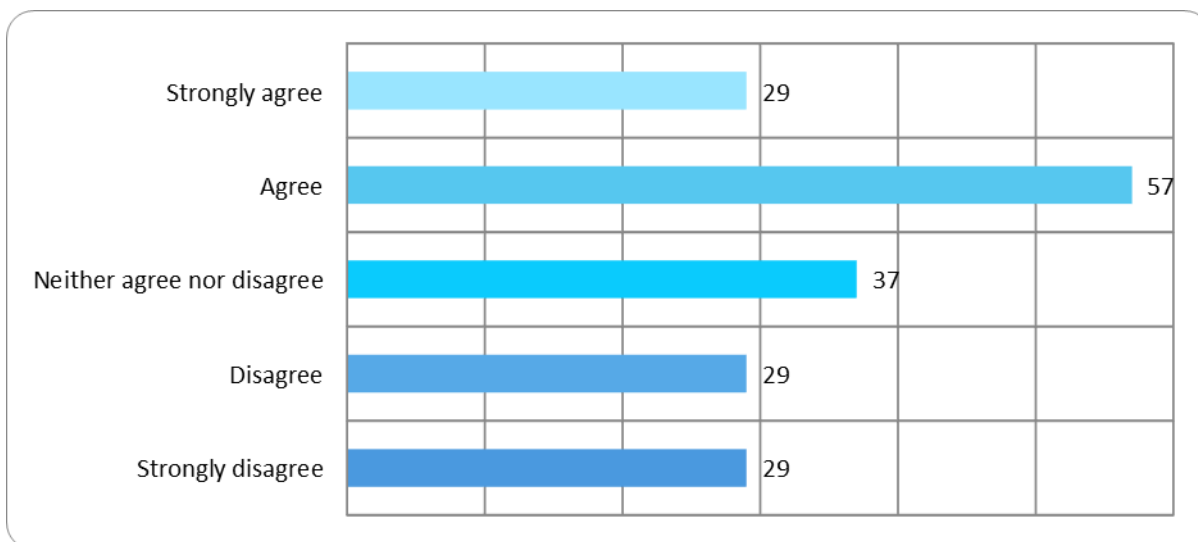
- The main issues were poorly managed refuse, overgrown gardens and general poor appearance and property conditions.
- Other problems stated were:
- Dangerous and un-maintained wiring.
- Excessive parking, complete drain on resources with "families" living in them paying no council tax claiming they are students.
- Damage to my own property by poorly executed property maintenance on the adjacent HMO
- Nothing at present
- Residents or visitors of HMO's obstructing our driveway
- So much crack
- Conversion to HMOs without or with inaccurate planning permission.
- Leaving glass bottles on 2 of our luxury cars (range Rover autobiography's)
- Too many cars

- Aggressive and threatening behaviour from landlord - reported to police



Views on whether the scheme been effective in improving the conditions and management of properties in Coventry

48% of people agree that the current licensing scheme has been effective in improving the condition and management of privately rented properties in Coventry. 32% disagreed that the scheme has had an improving effect with a further 1 on 5 (20%) not sure.



If the current licensing scheme ended after the current 5-year term and was NOT continued or the scheme was reduced to only operate in certain areas of the City, do you think this would have any impact on your local area?

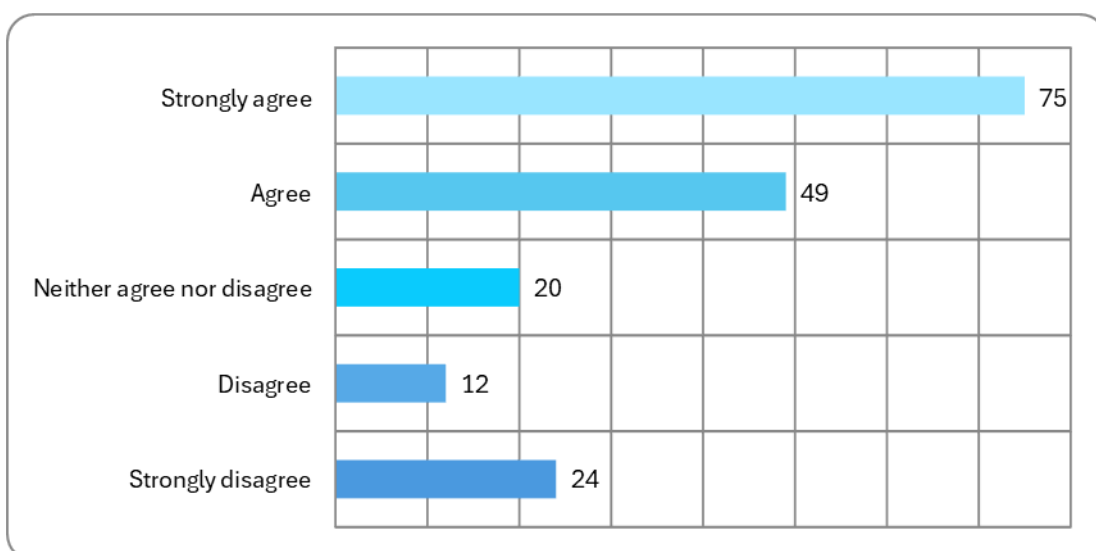
70% of respondents felt that if the scheme was not recommissioned it would have a negative impact on their local area, compared to 10% of respondents thinking it would have a positive impact.

Statement	Number	%
There would be a negative impact on my local area	125	70%
There would be a positive impact on my local area	18	10%
There would be no impact	19	11%
Don't know	17	9%

Respondents were asked if they agree or disagree that the continuation of the Additional Licensing would improve or further improve the condition and management of private tented properties in Coventry

69% of respondents were in agreement that continuing the licensing scheme would improve conditions of rented properties.

20% were not in agreement and a further 11% were not sure.



Respondents were asked if they think there were any alternatives to HMO licensing that would enable the Council to address the issues identified earlier that they might consider instead, or together with a licensing scheme.

The open comments were themed:

Theme	Number
Stricter Licensing/Needs continual review	35
Too many HMOs	15
Need more affordable housing	10
Council does not support landlords/ too bureaucratic	8
Need to have contact details/compulsory register	7
Students	6
Landlords need to be accountable	4

The majority of comments were around the need for the licensing process to be properly enforced. There was also a large number of respondents who felt that the licensing scheme should be applied to all private landlords.

- General inspections of rental properties rather than concentrating on just HMOs would be preferable
- I am a HMO landlord and I have licensed my properties now and I am grateful for the help and support the licensing officers have provided. My property wasn't perfect but I know what I need to do now they have completed the inspection. I think the Council should also look at privately rented properties that are not HMOs as there are a number of these in the streets where I have my HMOs that are not being looked after by the landlords and nothing is being done about it.
- As a community union representing working-class voices we believe all housing providers – especially private, for-profit landlords – should be regulated and held accountable for failures in housing standards. From this position, we naturally agree with the council's stated purpose of the scheme: to "alleviate the housing situation by setting and maintaining minimum standards across the city in the most vulnerable sector of Coventry's private rental market".

There was agreement that there are too many HMOs in Coventry

- There should be a limit on the number of HMOs in any one street or any one area so that there is a fair distribution throughout the city.
- Inner city areas should be banned from HMOs, we have under utilised student accom blocks that need filling.

The need for more affordable housing was raised.

- HMO's are just a means for landlords to make more money. Why charge £850 per month for a house when you can get four times that amount! The council

need to wise up and ban HMO's in Coventry as they are a blight on the surrounding area. What people need is affordable social housing not thousands of new 4 bedroom houses on green fields.

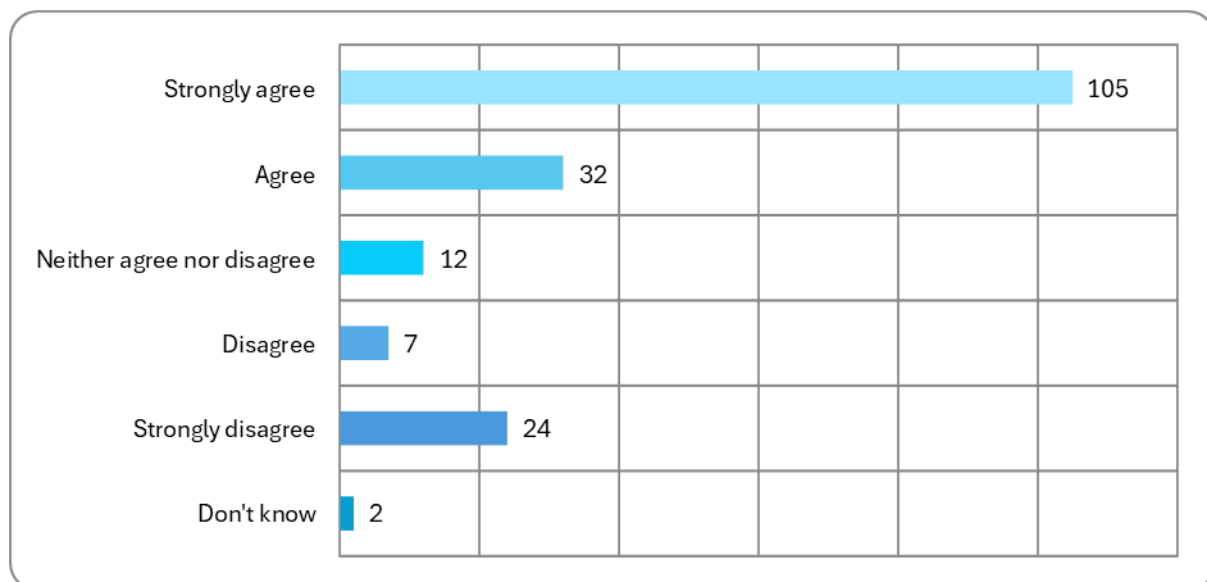
Other issues were the bureaucracy and waiting lists that are involved with the licensing process and a number of respondents suggested the need for an openly available register.

- The solution to tackle rogue landlords is more resources for enforcement, and judging by the 3 years it takes for an application to be approved, the council clearly does not have enough officers to carry out enforcement action.
- Compulsory register of all properties that are rented out.

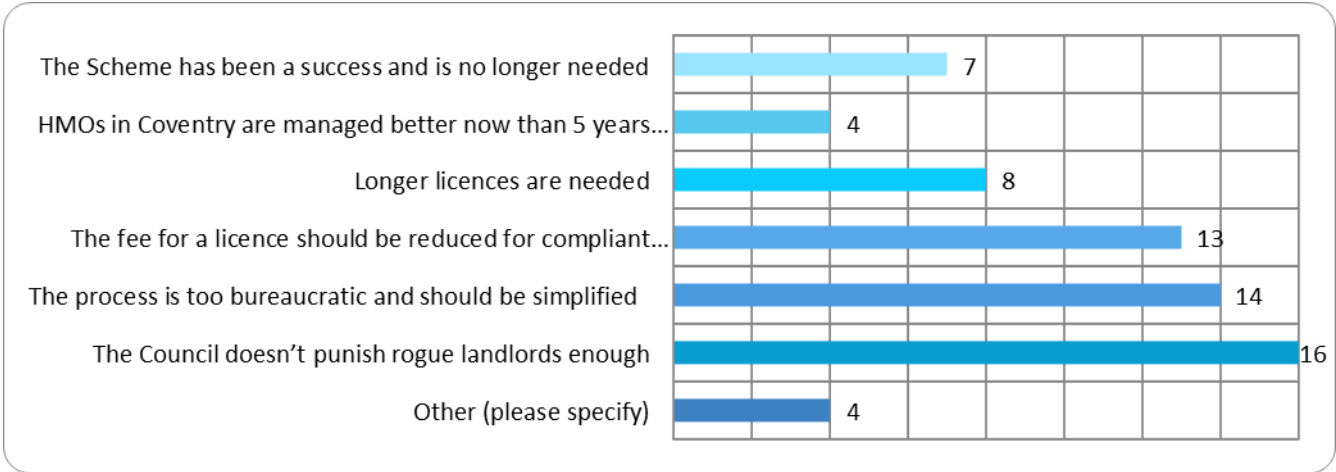
The survey asked respondents whether it should renew the Additional Licensing Scheme in 2025 and again include all HMO's within the city.

Three quarters of respondents 75% agreed with the renewal of this scheme (58% strongly agreeing).

17% were in disagreement with the renewal of this scheme (13% strongly disagreeing)

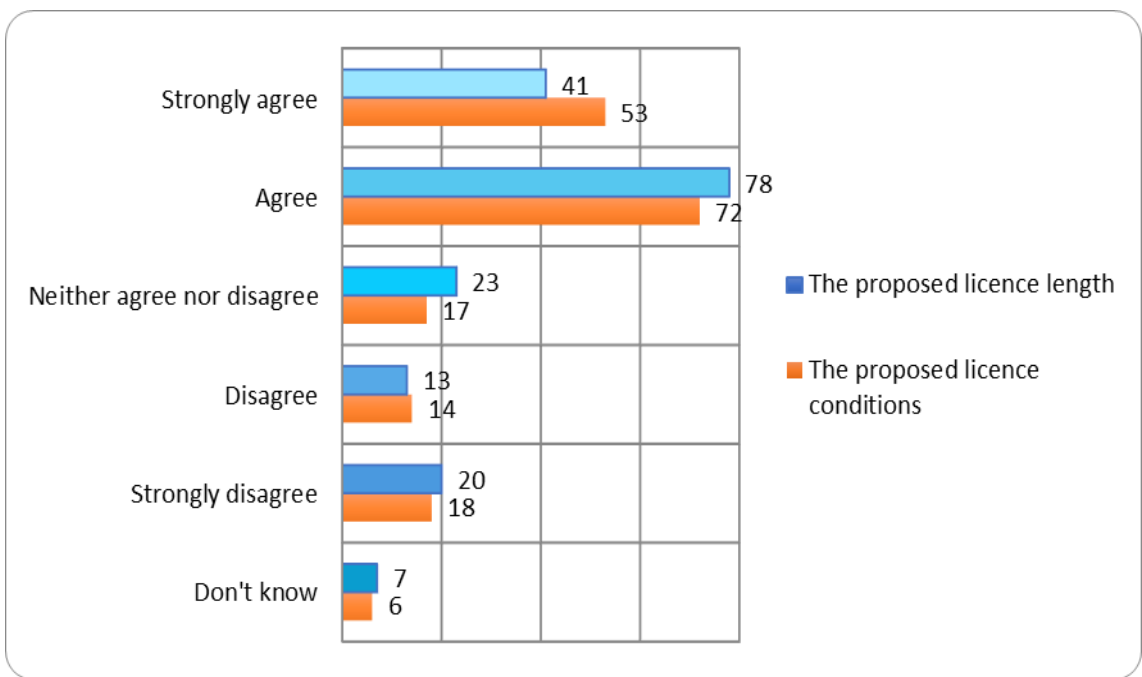


Respondents who disagreed with the renewal of the scheme were then asked, which of the following reasons did they agree with. The majority of respondents felt that the Council does not punish rogue landlords enough and that the process is too bureaucratic and that good landlords are not recognised.



The survey asked respondents if agreed or disagreed with the proposed licence lengths and conditions.

There was overall agreement with both the proposed licence length and conditions



Respondents expressed the following views on the proposed licensing conditions:

Theme	Number
Clear standards/same for all licences	20
Conditions	10
Penalties	8
Cap on number of HMOS	4
Consistency	3

There was overall agreement with both the proposed licence length and conditions

- “The standard licence should be 5 years or longer. The use of a single-year licence is expensive and penalises good landlords while not being effective at stopping bad ones”.
- “I think that, regardless of length, there should be the same conditions as for a 5-year license, as this would ensure that all landlords of HMOS maintain a decent standard of living for their tenants (especially with students)- I can see landlords taking advantage of the 1-year having less requirements”.
- “Under all the licence length periods there should be 6 monthly inspections by council HMO officers PAID for by the landlords, therefore self financing staff positions”.

Many respondents commented on the need for landlords to display information on refuse collections etc and that these should be part of the conditions in the licence.

- “Many issues within HMO's which affect neighbouring properties and communities should be managed/coved by HMO licencing conditions. Items such a gardens and refuse and general kerbside appeal as these issues can greatly affect neighbours and communities!.
- "The licensing conditions need to include more things which would additionally improve tenants' quality of living, including:
 - 1) Taking action against cases of damp and mould.
 - 2) Helping tenants control humidity, for example by requiring extractor fans be fitted with humidistat sensors.
 - 3) Making sure that tenants have access to homes which are energy efficient, for example by requiring landlords take steps towards working to obtaining at least EPC band C ratings on their properties over the next 4 years.
 - 4) Requiring landlords to sign up to the Housing Ombudman scheme.
- Tenants need to be made aware of what the licensing conditions are and they need a way of being able to easily report when the landlord has failed to meet them."

Poor landlord should incur penalties

- “Heavy fines on recurring offenders who do not manage tenants properly - or those who own hmos should contribute financially to local services and community projects where the locals has been negatively affected by too many hmos”.
- “Poor landlords should not be given a licence if they cannot look after their properties correctly”.

There should be a cap on the number of HMOs in any one area

- “There has to be an maximum amount that one area/street can have HMOs. Every other house in my street in now an HMO. There are no family properties left. The road is full of rubbish, bins over flowing, issues with parking, houses in poor condition”.
- “Can there be some aspect of zoning where new licences are not being granted as there is already a large number of HMOs”

Finally the issues of consistency was raised

- “I would like to see more consistency with inspectors”

Landlords were asked if they would be interested in signing up to the Council’s Landlord Accreditation Scheme if it meant that they would get a discount on licensing fees?

28 respondents stated they would be interested in signing up to Coventry Landlords Accreditation Scheme.

Tenants were asked if they would be more likely to move into a property with a landlord or managing agent who has signed up to the Council’s Landlord Accreditation Scheme?

54 respondents which is 88% said they would be more likely to move into a property that is signed up to Coventry Landlords Accreditation Scheme

Finally, respondents were asked if there are any other things they think the Council to improve the condition and management of privately rented properties in Coventry?

All the open-ended comments have been themed manually. The table below shows the themes and the number of comments received per theme.

Theme	No
Enforcement	23
All Landlords	17
Restrict number of HMOs	11
Tenants	8
CLAS	5

Finally, respondents were asked if there are any other things they think the Council to improve the condition and management of privately rented properties in Coventry?

- “A large number of comments related to the need for enforcement and regular checks on properties”.
- “Control the landlords, set standards and police them, make it tough for landlords that do not stick to the rules and much easier for those that do”.
- “Regular inspections of properties and minimum standards ie tidy gardens, bin management, anti-social behaviour dealt with quickly”
- “Introduce fines for landlords who do not comply with regulations and make areas look horrible”

A large number of respondents also stressed the need to regulate all landlords not just HMOs

- “Mandatory and additional licensing should form part of a private rented housing strategy (which could form part of the housing strategy, which is due for updating in 2024).”
- “We hope that the council is already preparing for the introduction of the Renters Reform Bill. One emerging issue is the relationship between the proposed national register of landlords and additional licensing schemes”.
- “We have stated our support for wider licensing for all landlords, and we would also suggest that there should be clearer paths to redress for tenants who find themselves in dispute with their landlord, in particular access to reporting on landlords and access to legal aid should they find themselves in dispute and/or mediation”.

There was general consensus that there are too many HMOs in Coventry

- “To stop extending the scope of the HMO licensing until the current batch of homes can be inspected and kept on top of”.
- “Restrict the number of HMO properties especially to students . There is not the need for them now, what’s needed are homes for families/couples”

It was recognized that tenants need to take responsibility for their actions not just the landlords.

- “There needs to be equal pressure on tenants to meet their obligations instead of just punishing landlords. For example, maintaining gardens and lawns. If this falls on the tenant than the tenant's should be told by the council to sort it out”.

Finally, a few respondents talked about CLAS.

- Signing up for the CLAS should not provide a discount to landlords, it should be the minimum standard for all landlords to be a part of the CLAS prior to receiving a HMO Licence.
- We are already on the CLAS scheme, the licensing scheme is unfair to compliant landlords, and will reduce the housing stock while increasing the cost of renting in regulated areas.
- Over the past 20 odd years, not one tenant has ever asked me whether I am a member of the CLAS. The tenant will take the property if it is in good sound condition, and that's it.

The survey also captured the following equality information:

Age

	Number
16-24	5
25-34	18
35-44	34
45-54	43
55-64	36
65-74	16
75-84	12

Sex

	Number
Male	67
Female	81
In another way	4
Prefer not to say	10

Religion

	Number
Christian	60
Hindu	2
Jewish	2
Muslim	2
Sikh	5
No Religion	48
Atheist	11
Prefer not to say	24

Other	11
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Ethnic background

	Number
White British	114
White Irish	2
Other White Background	9
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	2
Mixed White and Asian	5
Other Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Background	1
Asian or Asian British Indian	8
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	2
Asian or Asian British Chinese	1
Other	3
Prefer not to say	23

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

	Number
Yes	30
No	135

Appendices