SELECTIVE LICENSING
CONSULTATION
LONDON ROAD, ABBEYDALE ROAD
AND CHESTERFIELD ROAD

A proposal to support landlords in providing safe, well managed homes
Sheffield City Council is considering introducing a Selective Licensing scheme for privately rented homes along London Road, Abbeydale Road, and part of Chesterfield Road.

We are asking you to read through this leaflet which explains the proposals. Please let us know what you think about them by completing the questionnaire included with this leaflet.

What you say is important to us and will help us shape final proposals if the scheme goes ahead.

What is Selective Licensing?

Selective Licensing is a discretionary power that councils can choose to use if they think it is necessary. If it is introduced, it means that most homes that are privately rented in a defined area would require a licence from the Council.

A Selective Licensing scheme lasts for 5 years and involves the following:

- If private landlords want to let a property in the designated area they would need to apply to the Council for a licence (including for properties they are already letting)
- A landlord would need a licence for each house or flat that they let out in that area
- It is a criminal offence for landlords to let houses without a licence, or to breach the licence conditions, and upon conviction they may be fined. They could also have their licence refused or taken away from them
- The Council must be satisfied that Landlords or their agents are ‘Fit and Proper’ and that the management arrangements are satisfactory. This means that they have no criminal convictions which may affect their management of the property, they have satisfactory arrangements in place to deal with repair and maintenance issues, and that they have adequate procedures for dealing with problematic tenants
- The licence would have other conditions attached to it, and these conditions would include making sure that the home is in a good, safe condition, and that the landlord must get references from tenants before allowing them to move in to the property
- Other conditions are likely to include requiring landlords and agents to complete housing management training and potentially some requirements relating to occupancy levels
- It is possible that a Selective Licensing scheme can run for less than 5 years if it meets its objectives ahead of this time.

The Council has previously introduced a Selective Licensing scheme in Page Hall, which is due to run until April 2019.
Why London Road, Abbeydale Road and Chesterfield Road?

The proposed Selective Licensing area runs southwards from Sheffield centre and then out toward the south west, following two arterial road routes into the city and the Sheffield to London railway line.

It runs through densely populated and diverse Sharrow, with many specialist shops and a wide range of restaurants along London Road, out along Abbeydale Road through Nether Edge to Millhouses, and also out through Heeley along Chesterfield Road.

The Council is proposing Selective Licensing along London Road, Abbeydale Road and Chesterfield Road because we have concerns about the condition of the private rented properties in the area, particularly those above shops.

We have been visiting these properties for around 2 years, and we have gathered evidence that the area has a very high proportion of private rented properties, and many suffer from poor property conditions.

We have particular concerns relating to fire safety and a range of other issues linked to poor standards of management.
Over 74% of properties assessed following proactive and targeted inspections in the proposed Selective Licensing area were found to have multiple high risk hazards which exposed tenants to serious harm such as fire, falls, excess cold and damp and mould.

In summary, the main issues of concern are:

- Poor fire safety
- Illegal conversions
- Multiple high risk hazards
- Poor standards of management practice
- Build-ups of waste

While the Council acknowledges that some landlords who own property in the area provide good, safe accommodation, maintained to satisfactory standards and managed well, there are some that do not.

Current enforcement action by the Council is undertaken on a reactive basis, and often involves lengthy enforcement procedures, with the Council reliant on tenants making a complaint to them or a referral from another agency such as the fire service.

Introducing Selective Licensing in the area would mean that we would have the information, resources and powers which we need to ensure that all the private rented properties in the area are safe, in good condition and well managed.

The Council also has concerns about the vulnerability of tenants living in the area, who may not be reporting problems that they are experiencing with their homes.

Selective Licensing would build on the success of other work in the area such as South Yorkshire Police’s Dark Nights initiative and the Council’s schemes to reduce the number of empty homes, meaning local people would be safer, property conditions would improve and there would be a better housing offer.
A full list of the addresses within the proposed Selective Licensing area is available on the Selective Licensing Consultation page of the Council’s Citizen Space website: [www.sheffield.gov.uk/selective-licensing-scheme](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/selective-licensing-scheme)

If you are not sure whether or not your home, or a property you own or manage, is within the proposed Licensing area or not, you can call or email us and we will be able to tell you whether or not a property is within the proposed area.

Tel: 0114 273 4680
Email: selectivelicensing2017@sheffield.gov.uk

The effect of Selective Licensing would differ for landlords, tenants, owner-occupiers, or people with other connections to properties in the proposed Selective Licensing area.

- Landlords would be required to apply to the Council for a licence, and pay a licence fee
- To hold a licence you would have to:
  - Be a ‘fit and proper’ person, or show that the property will be managed by a ‘fit and proper’ person
  - Comply with the licence conditions
  - Carry out any works necessary to ensure properties are safe
  - Respond to tenants’ requests for property repairs and general maintenance
- Tenants would be required to provide references before landlords could let a house to them, and the licence could include conditions requiring that tenants behave in a tenant-like manner, and not be involved in any anti-social behaviour relating to the property
- Hopefully owner occupiers, local business owners and their customers would notice that private rented properties in the area are in better condition and are being managed better

Overall, the introduction of Selective Licensing should bring widespread benefits to everyone in the local community, ensuring that all private rented property within the proposed area is safe and in good condition.

Licensing provides a way for landlords to demonstrate the quality of their lettings/rental business.

Other benefits could include improved rental and property values and an improved image and perception of the area.
What does this mean to you?

The map shows the proposed Selective Licensing area (pale pink shading) covering London Road, Abbeydale Road, and part of Chesterfield Road:
Proposed Selective Licensing area
Which properties are exempt from Selective Licensing?

All privately rented properties within the proposed area would be subject to Selective Licensing, but there are some exemptions. The most common exemptions we anticipate being present in the proposed area are:

- Licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation
- The tenancy is a business tenancy
- Certain University/College accommodation occupied by students
- Some tenancies/licences where the landlord lets to certain relatives
- Where the landlord/licensor or certain relatives live at the property and share facilities with the occupier

A full list of the exemptions is at: www.sheffield.gov.uk/selectivelicensing

Licence fee

Councils are allowed to recover the cost of running the scheme through setting a licence fee for private landlords who own property in the proposed area. We are not allowed to make a profit on it.

We don't know exactly how much the licence fee would be yet. But we want to make sure that responsible landlords who apply for a licence straight away pay a lower fee than those who don't.

At this stage, we think a 5 year licence would cost around £750 for the landlords that apply straight away. The standard fee is likely to be £1,000. In cases where applications are submitted but are not valid (are incomplete or without the requested supporting information) the proposal is that the fee would increase to £1,250. Finally, in cases where applications are not submitted and the Council have to pursue or take enforcement action the fee could increase to £1,500. We think this is a fair way to do it.

It is important to note that this is a proposed fee structure.

We will have a better idea of the costs when we have finished this consultation as your feedback will help to shape the final proposal. Please let us know what you think. Remember, landlords have to apply for a licence for each property they rent out.
Why are we consulting with you?

Before councils can introduce Selective Licensing it is important to consult with those likely to be affected by the scheme.

It is very important that we gather as many views as possible, and that we give proper consideration to these views.

All feedback will be gathered together and responded to in a report which will be available at www.sheffield.gov.uk/selectivelicensing

We may also be able to e-mail it to those who have given us their e-mail address.

The report will highlight how your feedback has shaped any future proposal and any issues raised will be responded to where possible.

If you would like help completing the questionnaire or if you wish to meet with a member of our team privately to discuss any specific concerns please call 0114 273 4680 and we can arrange to meet with you individually.

How we will consult

The consultation is open between 27th November 2017 and 23rd February 2018.

We plan to contact every household, every business, and every landlord (and/or their managing agent) who owns private rented property in the proposed Selective Licensing area to let them know about the proposals. We will be asking for their views on the proposals.

We are also writing to homes and businesses in the surrounding areas to give them the chance to let us know how they feel about the proposals.

You should have received a questionnaire with this leaflet. You can either fill in the paper version of the questionnaire or complete it online at www.sheffield.gov.uk/selective-licensing-scheme. You can answer some or all of the questions.

Please return your completed questionnaire in the pre-paid envelope we have sent to you. If you don’t have an envelope, please call 0114 273 4680 to request one, or send it using your own to:

London Road/Abbeylea Road/Chestfield Road Proposed Selective Licensing,
Private Housing Standards Team,
Sheffield City Council, Moorfoot Building, S1 4PL

If you need this questionnaire in an alternative format (including a different language) please call 0114 273 4680 or email selectivelicensing2017@sheffield.gov.uk

Thank you for your answers – your help is much appreciated.

Please visit us at one of the proposed Selective Licensing consultation events or drop in sessions if you would like to speak with us about your views – details are on the next page.
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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Time and Date</th>
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<td>OPEN DROP IN</td>
<td>St Oswalds Church 2 Bannerdale Road</td>
<td>10am - 12 noon Wednesday 6th December 2017</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 Bannerdale Road Sheffield, S7 2DL</td>
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<tr>
<td>EVENING EVENT</td>
<td>St Mary’s Church Bramall Lane Sheffield, S2 4QZ</td>
<td>6pm - 9pm Thursday 14th December 2017</td>
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<td>(London Road) presentations</td>
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<td>targeted at landlords / agents and tenants</td>
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<td>OPEN DROP IN</td>
<td>Chinese Community Centre 157-159 London Road Sheffield, S2 4LH</td>
<td>6pm - 8pm Tuesday 19th December 2017</td>
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<td>EVENING EVENT</td>
<td>Abbeydale Picture House 383 Abbeydale Road</td>
<td>6pm - 9pm Wednesday 10th January 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Abbeydale Road) presentations</td>
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<td>targeted at landlords / agents and tenants</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPEN DROP IN</td>
<td>Meersbrook Park United Reform Church 173 Chesterfield Road Sheffield, S8 0RP</td>
<td>2pm - 4pm Wednesday 17th January 2018</td>
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<td>OPEN DROP IN</td>
<td>Dalton Court Community Centre Sellars Street, Sheffield, S0 YF (enter via Aizlewood Road)</td>
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<td>EVENING EVENT</td>
<td>St Pauls Church 52 Norton Lees Lane</td>
<td>6pm - 9pm Wednesday 31st January 2018</td>
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<td>(Chesterfield Road)</td>
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<td>presentations targeted at landlords / agents and tenants</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPEN DROP IN</td>
<td>Heeley Institute 147 Gleadless Road</td>
<td>10am - 12 noon Tuesday 6th February 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPEN DROP IN</td>
<td>Highfield Trinity Church 11 Holland Place</td>
<td>3pm - 5pm Wednesday 14th February 2018</td>
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<td>SHEFFIELD UNITED FOOTBALL</td>
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<td>Ground Bramall Lane</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPEN DROP IN</td>
<td>Sheffield United Football Ground Bramall Lane Sheffield, S2 4SU</td>
<td>6pm - 9pm Wednesday 21st February 2018</td>
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What happens next?

The findings of the consultation will be published in a report in Spring 2018. This will help us shape any final proposal which would then go the to the Council’s Cabinet to make a decision about whether a scheme will go ahead.

Should a scheme be approved we will provide landlords with a minimum of 3 months to apply for a licence.

Contact us

We’d really appreciate if you could give us your views on this proposal.

You can do this in a number of ways:

- Fill in a proposed Selective Licensing questionnaire and send it back to us in the pre-paid envelope (if you don’t have an envelope please see page 9 ‘How we will consult’) or complete it online at www.sheffield.gov.uk/selective-licensing-scheme
- Call 0114 273 4680 if you have any questions
- E-mail selectivelicensing2017@sheffield.gov.uk
- Pop along to one of our consultation events or drop in sessions

Thank you for taking the time to read this leaflet.