



Report for Private Landlord

Licensing Consultation

On Behalf of Woking Borough Council

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BACKGROUND

This report details the main findings from statutory consultation around the proposal to introduce a private landlord licence in one specific area of the borough. This is being considered as a means of raising the levels of accountability for landlords to ensure that their properties are maintained to a high standard and for the good behaviour of their tenants.

The consultation period ran from February 2017 until the end of April 2017. During this period, Woking Borough Council's (WBC) communications team ran an extensive campaign promoting the consultation amongst letting agents, landlords, tenants and other stakeholder groups.

The consultation was carried out using an on-line questionnaire although a paper based version was also made available on request. During the three month consultation period, **189 people** fully completed the survey although as this was an online questionnaire, a number of other respondents started but did not complete the survey in full. The survey included a highlighted map of the proposed licensing area. 95% agreed that this area was clearly marked. A number of people mentioned that they had found the scale of the map too small or the resolution too low.

Based on those completing the survey, the main respondent groups were as follows:

	Number of responses	% of total
Private landlords	92	49%
Tenant with a private landlord	22	12%
Homeowner	63	33%
Letting or Managing Agent	8	4%

58% of private landlords and letting or managing agents either rent out, or manage properties in the proposed licensing area.

20% of respondents lived within the proposed licensing area whilst a further 65% were living elsewhere in Woking Borough. Many of these had lived in the area for a long time. 81% had lived in the area for more than five years. Only 12% had lived locally for less than two years.

As well as highlighting the overall results, the report will also illustrate the views of different groups of respondents where they significantly differ. In most cases and unless otherwise stated, results have been given as a percentage of the total overall number of valid responses (all answering). These exclude any 'not applicable' responses where they applied to a question. Where percentage values do not add up to 100% this is likely to be due to computer rounding.

There were a number of open ended questions across the survey. Whilst these comments have not been individually coded, some of the key themes expressed by respondents are included in the report. A full list of comments has been supplied separately exactly as they were submitted.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Overall Views on Property Licensing

- 89% agree private landlords should be required to maintain their properties to a high standard. This view is equally reflected by landlords and letting agents.
- There was a mixed response as to whether the Council should be taking action to improve the management of private rented properties. 50% overall agreed and 43% disagreed.
- Overall, more respondents disagreed than agreed that a licensing scheme would improve housing conditions in the area or that it was appropriate for the Council to regulate private rented accommodation in order to improve the condition of housing.

Length of a Property Licence

- 45% of landlords/letting agents described the proposed period of three years as 'too short' with 23% saying the period to be 'about right'. Landlords and letting agents with properties in the proposed area were twice as likely to say that the proposed period of three years was 'too short' (58% v 27%) compared with those without properties in the area.

Proposed Licence Fee

- Overall, 73% said the proposed licence application fee of £560 was 'too high'. Amongst landlords and letting agents, this figure increased to 89%. The group of respondents who were most likely to say that the proposed fee was 'about right' is homeowners (36%).
- On the proposed discounted licence fee of £200, around half (49%) overall described the figure as being 'too high' whilst 28% thought this figure was 'about right'. Amongst landlords and letting agents, 19% said the figure was 'about right' and 62% 'too high'.
- 48% believe that there should be further fee discounts offered in respect of the licence application. Amongst landlords and letting agents, this increased to 66%. A number of very detailed ideas and suggestions were also submitted as to what these could be based on.

Proposed Licence Conditions

- Overall, the same number (43%) agreed with the proposed conditions as disagreed. Just 29% of landlords/letting agents agreed with the proposals whilst over half (52%) disagreed.
- The group of respondents who were most likely to agree with the proposed licence conditions is homeowners (61%) whilst 24% disagreed.
- Even amongst tenants, the number who agreed with the proposals was only marginally higher than those that disagreed (50% v 46%).

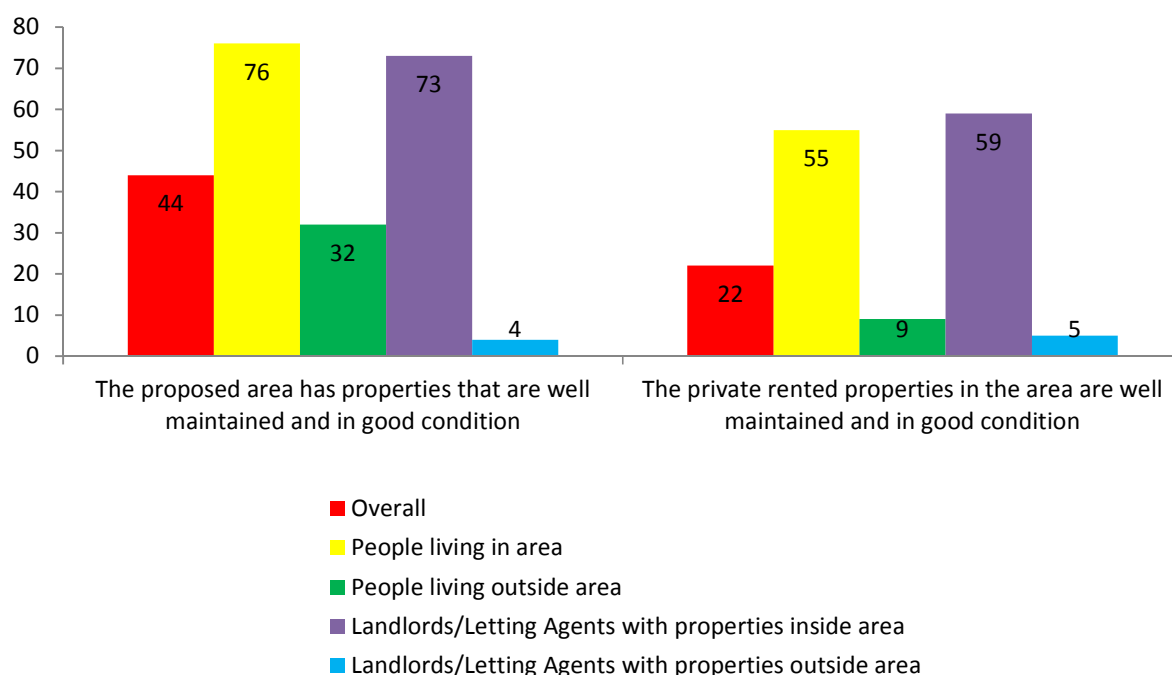
VIEWS ON THE LOCAL AREA

Overall 62% of respondents agreed, that the area where the proposed licensing scheme would take place, is a reasonable place to live. 19% disagreed with the statement. Amongst people living in the area already, the agreement level was higher at 85% whilst for the landlords and letting agents who have properties in the area, the agreement figure is even higher at 93%.

More than eight out of ten (84%) of people living in the proposed area agreed that the properties there are well maintained and in good condition with only 8% disagreeing. Similarly, 81% of landlord and letting agents with properties in the area were satisfied with the quality of properties there with just 7% disagreeing.

There is a huge difference in views on the standard of the private rented properties in the area. Those living inside the proposed area were more than twice as likely (73% v 36%) as people living outside to agree that private rented properties are well maintained. The more qualified views of landlords and letting agents are also interesting. 72% of those with properties in the area said that private rented properties were well maintained compared with 20% without.

The chart below illustrates the net agreement figures for two of these statements. The net agreement figure is the % agreeing with a statement minus the % disagreeing.



The people who live in the proposed area tend to be far more positive about the standard and condition of all properties in their area. However, the net agreement score on the standard of private rented properties even from those living within the proposed area is not especially high.

VIEWS ON PROPERTY LICENSING

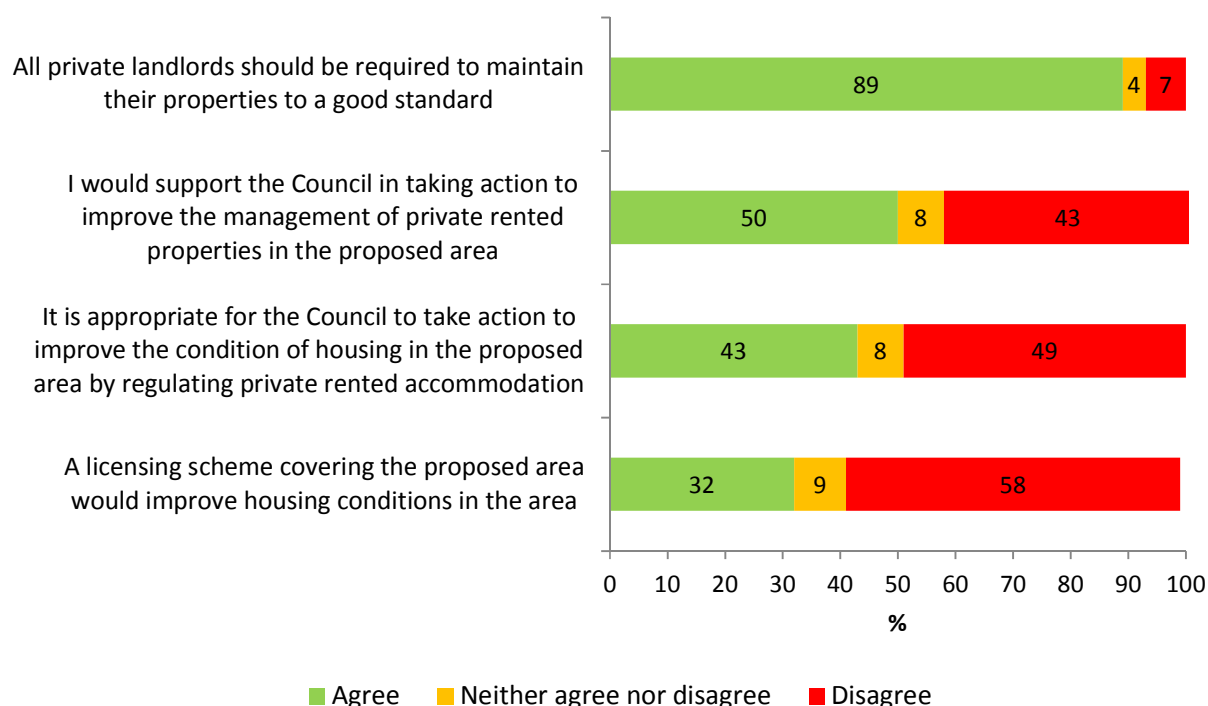
The questionnaire included the following explanatory information.

Poor housing is often linked to poor health. Around one in five private rented properties within the proposed area are not considered a 'decent' home by the Government's Decent Homes Standard. Broadly, this means the health of private tenants living in these homes is put at risk by issues such as damp and mould growth, inadequate heating, unsafe electrics and inadequate fire safety measures.

Almost nine out of ten people overall (89%) agree that private landlords should be required to maintain their properties to a good standard. 93% of landlords or letting agents with properties in the proposed area also agreed with this statement.

When it came to taking action to address the standard of privately rented properties, not everyone was sure it was the role of the Council to lead. 50% overall, supported the Council in taking action to improve the management of private rented properties whilst 43% disagreed.

The chart below illustrates the overall results for these statements.



There was less support for the idea of the Council introducing regulation to private rented accommodation as the means of improving the condition of housing. Overall, 43% agreed with this approach with 49% disagreeing, whilst almost twice as many respondents disagreed than agreed that a licensing scheme would improve housing conditions in the area.

The following table highlights the views of landlords/letting agents and tenants in more detail.

“I would support the Council in taking action to improve the management of private rented properties in the proposed area”

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
Landlords/Letting Agents with properties in area	32%	12%	56%
Landlords/Letting Agents without properties in area	50%	12%	38%
Tenants Only	50%	4%	46%

“It is appropriate for the Council to take action to improve the condition of housing in the proposed area by regulating private rented accommodation”

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
Landlords/Letting Agents with properties in area	24%	10%	66%
Landlords/Letting Agents without properties in area	36%	14%	50%
Tenants Only	50%	4%	46%

“A licensing scheme covering the proposed area would improve housing conditions in the area”

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
Landlords/Letting Agents with properties in area	14%	9%	77%
Landlords/Letting Agents without properties in area	13%	15%	73%
Tenants Only	42%	4%	54%

Two thirds of landlord and agents with properties in the proposed area disagreed with the idea for the Council taking a regulatory approach as did 50% of landlords with properties outside of this area. Similarly, very few landlords/letting agents are convinced that a licensing scheme would improve housing conditions in the area and even amongst tenants more disagreed than agreed that a scheme would make a positive difference to the standard of housing conditions.

LENGTH OF A PROPERTY LICENCE

The next series of questions were only directed to landlords or letting agents. Over half of landlords were not members of any of the accredited landlord associations listed in the questionnaire. The associations with the most representation were NLA 18% and RLA 14%. There were also three members of the Woking Private Landlord Accreditation Scheme. Whilst only eight letting agents responded to the survey, five of these were members of ARLA.

The questionnaire included the following explanatory information.

If the licensing scheme is implemented, all private landlords would be required to apply for a licence for every property they rent privately within the proposed area. It is proposed that any licence granted would last for three years rather than the maximum five year period set out in legislation. This is the same length of licence that is currently granted by the Council for houses in multiple occupation under the requirements of Mandatory HMO (*houses in multiple occupation*) Licensing.

The key question in this section was the reaction to the proposed licence length of three years. The overall results were as follows:

Too short	About right	Too long	Don't know
45%	23%	8%	24%

Whilst 24% were unsure about what the length of the licensing period should be, by far the majority of those who had a view, thought that the period of three years is 'too short'.

There was difference in view between those landlords/agents with properties within the proposed area and those who didn't, which are illustrated in the table below. The landlords/letting agents with properties in the area were more than twice as likely to describe the proposed period as 'too short' compared with those without properties in the area.

	Too short	About right	Too long	Don't know
Landlords/Letting Agents with properties in area	58%	14%	10%	19%
Landlords/Letting Agents without properties in area	27%	37%	5%	32%

37% of landlords/letting agents without properties in the area thought that the proposed licence length was 'about right' compared with 14% of those with properties in the area. If the views of all landlords and letting agents were combined, 23% said that the licence period was 'about right' whilst 43% described the proposed period as 'too short'.

PROPOSED LICENCE FEE

The next section of questions focused on the proposed fees being considered.

The questionnaire included the following explanatory information.

The Council is able to charge for licence applications to recover the Council's administrative costs. It is proposed that landlords are charged £560 per property for each licence application. The fee would be a one-off payment covering the whole proposed licensing period. Where landlords are members of a recognised landlord accreditation scheme, it is proposed that a reduced licence fee of £200 per property will apply. It is proposed that no further discounts will be offered, for example to landlords who submit a licence application before the scheme becomes operative or where the landlord has more than one property in the proposed area.

The table below highlights the views on the proposed licence application fee of £560.

	Too low	About right	Too high	Don't know
Overall	5%	18%	73%	5%
Landlords/Letting Agents Only	-	8%	89%	3%

There is a universal view amongst all respondents that the proposed fee of £560 is 'too high'. No landlord/letting agent thought the proposed fee was 'too low'. The view of landlords/letting agents did not differ significantly whether they had properties in the area or not.

The table below highlights the views on the proposed discounted licence fee of £200.

	Too low	About right	Too high	Don't know
Overall	14%	28%	49%	9%
Landlords/Letting Agents Only	10%	19%	62%	9%

Just under a half of all respondents (49%) thought that proposed figure was 'too high' whilst just over a quarter thought that the figure was 'about right.' Once again, a majority of landlords thought that the figure of £200 was 'too high' although this time there were a number of landlords/letting agents who said it was 'about right' and in some cases 'too low'.

Once again, there was no significant difference in the views of landlords/letting agents on the proposed fee between those with properties in the proposed area and those without.

Just under half (48%) of respondents thought that there should be further fee discounts offered in respect of a licence application. Amongst landlords/letting agents this figure rose to 66% whilst only 24% of landlords/letting agents didn't feel any further discounts should be offered. The survey also asked what any discounts should be based on. Some of the suggestions were:

The age and/or number of properties, the current condition of the property, whether the landlord has a good history of looking after their properties, whether the landlord is accredited or not, type of property (e.g. house v flat) or whether it's rented out directly or via an agent.

The full listing of comments submitted has been supplied in a separate file.

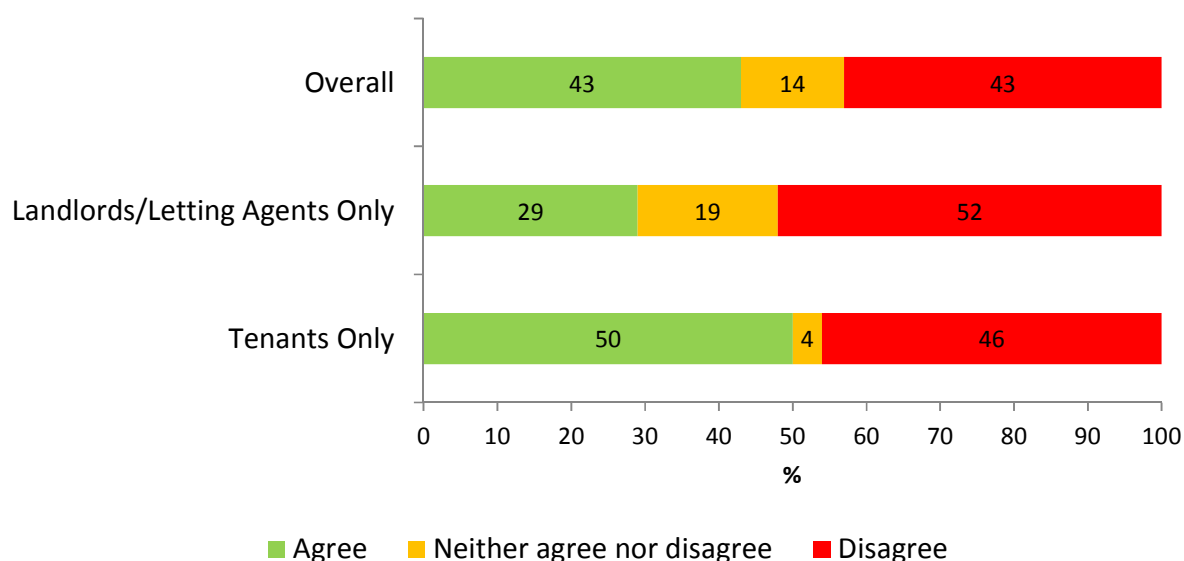
PROPOSED LICENCE CONDITIONS

The next section of questions focused on the proposed licence conditions.

The questionnaire included the following explanatory information.

When a licence is granted, it is proposed that a set of standard licence conditions will be attached to the licence to ensure that all properties are managed to consistent standards. The proposed licence conditions are consistent with the conditions applied to Mandatory HMO Licensing. A link was also provided to view these conditions.

The chart highlights the extent to which respondents agreed with the proposed conditions.



There was a mixed reaction to the proposed licence conditions. Some were in favour of the proposed conditions, but equally similar numbers were opposed. Amongst landlords/letting agents, more than half (52%) disagreed with the proposals with 29% in agreement.

The following table highlights the views of landlords/letting agents in more detail.

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
Landlords/Letting Agents with properties in area	25%	11%	65%
Landlords/Letting Agents without properties in area	34%	29%	37%

The landlords/letting agents with properties in the proposed area were twice as likely to disagree with the proposed conditions as those without properties in the licensing area.



The survey also included an open ended question which asked if any of the proposed licence conditions should be changed or new ones added. Some of the suggestions included:

Too many conditions and too prescriptive, geared towards commercial rather than private landlords, the conditions should relate to the age, location and size of the property, clear standards of condition set for the accommodation, some focus on the obligations of the tenant not just for the landlord, introduce it to other areas not just in the area being proposed.

The full listing of comments submitted has been supplied in a separate file.

FURTHER COMMENTS

The final question in the survey was open ended and invited respondents to add any other comments about the proposed licensing scheme. Whilst these comments have not been individually coded, some of the themes expressed by respondents included:

- A number of people were very unhappy about these proposals
- Many concerns that the 'good' landlords will join the scheme whilst the 'bad' ones will not
- The focus is all on the landlords rather than on the behaviour of the tenant
- Suggestions that this was simply a new money making exercise from the Council
- Existing legislation is already in place to tackle poor housing conditions
- The proposals should be applied to the properties that need this not to all properties
- The proposals wouldn't make any difference to housing conditions
- The outcome of these proposals would be higher rents for tenants

The full listing of comments submitted has been supplied in a separate file.

APPENDIX ONE: VERBATIM COMMENTS

These are listed exactly as they were submitted by respondents.

If you think there should any further discounts offered in respect of a licence application, what do think these should be based on?

- 10 pounds for 3 years.
- 100% discount. This proposal is completely flawed.
- A landlord with only one rental property in the UK. This would allow those moving abroad temporarily to let their home and avoids the risk of properties being left empty. There should be no bulk licence discounts as there needs to be an even playing field between large and small landlords.
- A Landlord's property has to be of a high standard before being let via the WBC PRS. The rent is capped and is now lower than the market value. To pay an additional amount for a licence to fund a scheme to find rogue landlords in a specified area places an unnecessary tax on reputable landlords, especially those who are already assisting the local community by supplying accommodation. If this licencing scheme is implemented, landlords who have already passed the test either via the PRS or via a reputable Estate Agent who insists on relevant certificates for a property, should at least be given additional discounts.
- Ability to pay
- Adding a further tax on the community does not resolve the issues but clearly outlines the council's objective of gaining further funds through the community. I propose the Council introduce a scheme where it awards landlords with certificates and rewards for maintaining high standards rather than looking to tax the people further still. Positive encouragement goes a lot further than simply levying more taxes.
- Age of property and number of properties let out by landlord
- amount of rent charged intention in providing cheap rent to those who would otherwise be unable to live in the area whilst also providing a very high standard of accommodation the property being purchased with the intention of friends living there and paying some rent to allow them to practice providing for their own place to live if the landlord is only that by title, but is in fact a friend trusting those who will be living in the property
- As aforementioned, this whole scheme is unnecessary for our property within the proposed area, and as a professional landlord company, we will be objecting to the scheme in strong terms.
- Based on mortgage of rented property
- Based on the history of the landlord and how they have already maintained their properties over the past years.
- Based on the Landlord using a fully registered Managing Agent who manages the property on the Landlords behalf (which can cost the Landlord up to 15 % of the monthly rental) then I feel a significant discount should be applied as in general these properties are of a significant higher standard.
- Because of it being subjected only to this area, these costs will be eventually passed over to Mr in my rent, so therefore no cost,
- being a good landlord
- Being accredited or having your property managed by an accredited agency.
- By achieving a certain quality score on previous inspection. Or taking action on previous areas of concern.
- Charging landlords £560 will not bring down rents. Have you looked at your own housing stock recently?

- Current tenant's report on the state of the property and if there had been no dispute in terms of the condition of said property.
- discount depending on the number of properties within the borough
- Discount for relatively new properties/blocks (mine was built in 2004) properties/blocks which are managed by independent management companies (I pay £1800/year) if licensing every 3 years, if last inspection was more than satisfactory, discount for next 3 years If landlord owns more than one property in the area
- Discounts based on whether the property is managed by a letting agent. Badly-maintained properties are often the result of a letting/managing agent not communicating with a landlord what tenants need to have fixed in a property.
- discounts should be 100% - it's just another tax
- Earned good track record with other properties.
- Energy efficiency
- Every rental property should be subject to an inspection for a minimal fee; those that pass the inspection should be granted a certificate. Any that fail should be given an improvement notice to comply within in a reasonable time scale and they should then be charged an additional fee for a further inspection, the same again applies for a second fail & third inspection. After the 3rd fail either a hefty fine or a ban on the premises being rented out.
- Free license should be offered for members of accredited landlord association.
- Good performance/behaviour and cancellation of the fee for a period if been good performer. No point having a scheme that affects everyone if only an exception of people not a good landlord.
- How many properties the landlord has and if they passed any council inspections. The managing agents / estate agents should also make more checks, particularly electrical rather than just taking the landlords word that a property is safe. The agents charge high fees and yet seem to take no responsibility.
- I believe that there should be no fees or licensing application.
- I completely disagree that a licencing fee is necessary at all! The council already have the facility to intervene if a landlord is not adhering to standards. Why should law abiding landlords have to suffer this extra unnecessary administration?
- I completely disagree with the fee, but if it goes through I believe that once you have been checked you are a landlord providing a decent property for your tenants you shouldn't have your licence revoked unless a tenant complains about you. I have rented my flat out for 8 years and my tenants have always told me I am a very good and fair landlord. Perhaps there are unscrupulous ones out there but why should the rest of us be penalised. All this will do is create more bureaucracy and push rental prices up as landlords seek to claw back the money from their tenants. You'll be well aware of the changes the government have placed on landlords meaning everyone's profits will be hit, the timing couldn't be worse!
- I disagree with a fee entirely. This is just a moneymaking scheme.
- I do not agree with the proposal at all there are MANY good landlords that have helped make Woking an up and coming town This will discriminate against the good landlords and probably have a detrimental effect on the private rented section which is so essential for providing GOOD affordable accommodation and the growth of Woking The good and good modern properties (like mine) often feature security gates and property management so the housing is secure and maintained. I would imagine any social problems in such properties are very few. In the 10 years I have had property in Woking I have never experienced any. There are bad landlords and poor accommodation but this is not the way to sort out the problem
- I do not support the licensing at all, but if it is implemented the fee should be progressively reduce to reflect a compliant landlords record and should be increase for landlords with a poor

record

- I do not think any fee should be charged at all by the council. I disapprove of any housing licencing scheme to be created by the council.
- I do not think that there should be any fee for an obligatory accreditation scheme. It amounts to an additional tax on private landlords at a time when other taxable expenses (i.e. mortgage loan interest) is being withdrawn.
- I don't think there should be any licence fees to start off with. The council should give further discounts for the landlord own home.
- I feel that there should be no licensing fee.
- I own 9 private rented flats in the proposed area which are kept in top class condition and are professionally managed by reputable accredited estate agents. My tenants have always regarded myself as a complete professional and in all my period of ownership I have never received one complaint to the contrary the tenants have access directly to myself as well as the Management agent in case of emergency. I find it obnoxious that a fee of £560 per property is proposed while a discount of £360 per property is being offered to landlords who are members of toothless bodies. I accept that having worked in the property business in the borough since 1976 that there are many substandard properties being let by unfit landlords who should be pursued earnestly by the local authority. Unfortunately this is not happening with sufficient vigour and quite frankly licensing will only drive these people further underground while the local authority fill their coffers by penalising the many good landlords ? From my own point of view if I have to pay a fee of almost £6000 to obtain licences for properties I already rent at below market value coupled with the new revenue punitive rules I will look to sell my investments and of course this will create a further lack of properties available to the rental market. T J Keelan
- I think if the landlord has multiple properties to let, a small discount for each subsequent property would seem reasonable.
- I think it's not fair the council want a licence fee - If you want help for the safety of tenants the council should provide and pay for the vetting service - I feel this is only being implemented to benefit the council financially.
- I think there should be a nominal fee, if anything at all. I'm strongly against the licensing system in all ways. WBC has insufficient data to progress as currently proposed. They don't know how many of the 180 complaints are material or not. They don't know how many of the complaints come from within the proposed ward. They don't know how many of the complaints relate to the same landlords. They can't even tell you if complaints come from within the Canalside Ward at all. They have had 12 court action successes apparently but again can't tell you if any come from within the proposed ward. I gather that 3 of the court actions are against the same landlord. Even the counsellor for the ward stood up and stated that the objectives of the proposal were wrong and it should be aimed at multiple occupancy properties that currently fall below the level of registering. In all a proposed scheme based on no material facts at all. At the presentation a Zero fee scheme was proposed and I would have no objection to that. Landlords as me running nice properties are being penalised. This looks like money grab scheme from all good landlords. I'd be interested if the proposal goes through to how a class action by landlords would be received by the local judiciary as I feel we would have good grounds to have any licensing overturned in the local courts and if it was a class action reasonably small charges against each landlord participating. Either z zero fee scheme or no licensing at all.
- If property inspected and seen to be above average then feel should be rewarded so qualify for subsequent reduced licence fee
- If property is fit for purpose it should be free otherwise costs will be passed onto tenants
- If the council want people to maintain the quality then aim to do this and not aim to make money from it. I completely disagree with this because it clearly another form tax the council

wants impose on the property owners

- If the landlord is actively improving the accommodation there should be a zero fee
- If the landlord works with the council to improve and maintain their property, they are clearly showing willing and should not be charged a fee for the license. However, landlords who take too long to improve the condition of their properties or who fail to address the council's concerns should be charged appropriately.
- If the property is at or above the legal standard than a landlord should not pay any fee what so ever
- If the property is managed by an accredited agent the fee should be waived completely. A much simpler application should be used. Using a local accredited agent brings employment to the local area, providing benefit to Woking. If there are no complaints or no non-conformances the fee should be reduced
- If the property is rented through a Letting agency then should be no charge. A Tenancy agreement which would be in place for private rentals ALREADY PROVIDES the tenant with the full protection of the law and states all the terms and conditions that both parties have agreed to
- If the property passes without a problem there should be no fee as the landlord is obviously maintaining the property without Council intervention and the scheme is not needed to make the landlord keep the property in a reasonable standard i.e. the scheme is not required for that landlord so the landlord should not have to pay for it or the failings of other less reputable landlords.
- If you are a member of an organisation, such as RLA. If the property is let and managed through a letting agency with regular inspections made. I feel the licenses should only apply to 3 and more bedroom properties.
- If you are an accredited landlord. Or if there have been no complaints about your property
-
- If you want landlords to join and to improve housing stock the licence should be free.
- Involved with the management of a building or area, but not necessarily a fee; how will this money be spent?
- Is the £560 being proposed per property or per landlord? I earn £2,000 per year from our one bed flat and only have this one property so a fee of £560 would be a huge amount to take out of our earnings that year. Why should I pay the same amount as someone who owns 3 or 4 properties? What about if I feel my property has none of the issues that are seen as being the problems? Would there be discounts for those that keep them in good state of repair?
- It should reflect the years and the condition of properties owned by the Landlord in the area
- Just a minute! This is supposed to be a survey to decide whether a licence scheme should be implemented in the designated area. This and the previous questions imply that a licensing scheme will be implemented.
- Landlords who own and rent whole blocks or have a portfolio of (perhaps 10 or more) properties in the area to receive a volume discount.
- Landlords with multiple properties within the area should only be charged for one license. To charge per property is punitive and would seem to be more about raising revenue than standards.
- Landlords with multiple properties. They are likely to maintain all to be same/similar standards.
- Length of membership of a Landlord's Association References from landlord association/letting agent/managing agents as to professionalism as a landlord References from current/ex tenants as to professionalism as a landlord
- Membership of other accreditation schemes

- Multiple property discounts. Shouldn't need to pay at all until a breach occurs
- No fees should apply at all. Whole scheme is based on false data and facts. There is a HMO available that should be enforced rigorously. There is no justification for this scheme what's so ever. It will only generate money for council at the cost of law abiding landlords. Consequently poor tenants will pay the price.
- No fee-this will have an impact on the tenants-no one will want to rent out
- Number of properties Track record
- Number of properties in total in the portfolio of the respective Landlord
- Number of properties. General condition. The flat I own is in a controlled gated area, well supervised with a management company and committee in charge of running the building. If there have been no, or very few problems reported, it does not seem reasonable that every owner has to pay over £560 to show they are in a well-run property. This scheme should be targeted at those whose have properties where there are complaints, your background informs us that 1 in 5 have problems which means 4 out of 5 do not and yet everyone is being forced to join and pay for this scheme.
- on condition of property, landlord do not need licence outside this zone, thus extra burden on landlords and rents will rise or licences only required for multiple occupancy properties? A fee of £50 is reasonable as council has enough law to enforce improvements on housing or properties. This extra burden on central zone.
- Personal history of each landlord's management skills, standard of accommodation rented, personal references from past tenants, personal references from business associates, i.e. letting agents, history of membership of other landlord associations, i.e. Southern Private Landlords' Association and Southern Landlords' Association, long established industry leaders
- PREVIOUS HISTORY - IF THE LANDLORD HAS NO COMPLAINTS AGAINST HIM, THEN NO FEE SHOULD BE PAYABLE AT ALL. THIS WILL ENSURE THAT ONLY THE POOR/ROUGE LANDLORDS PAY FOR THE TROUBLE THEY CAUSE, NOT THE OTHER GOOD LANDLORDS.
- Private landlords who currently rent property which is fully managed by ARLA accredited Letting Agents - as the agents are already enforcing the requirements (e.g. gas safety, electricals, smoke alarms etc.), already keep documentation on improvements, deal with disputes, keep deposits etc... ... in other words the Landlord is already paying the agent to do ALL the things that Woking Council says their scheme is designed to achieve. The Landlord & Tenant would therefore receive NO BENEFIT from this scheme.... but the Landlord is facing extra cost - which means less money to invest into his property. I think there should also be a SMALL LANDLORD DISCOUNT - the current scheme hits the small private landlord (with say 1 or 2 properties) just as hard as the professional landlord with 100+ properties. This cannot be fair. ALSO - the Council do not seem to have considered the situation where, for example, someone is posted abroad for 6 months to 1 year, and temporarily rents out their house rather than leaving it empty.
- property condition
- Property condition
- Smaller properties with fewer tenants should pay less
- The condition of the property and if it is being managed by and ARLA agent. Also is it really necessary to bring properties built since 2000 into the licensing scheme.
- The council appear to be using a sledgehammer to crack a nut; the area proposed to be covered by this scheme is far too large and incorporates a large number of high quality rental properties. Any targeted activity that focuses on sub-standard or poor quality rental property in some of the designated area is to be applauded. At the proposed level of fees (or any fees at all), the real risk is that the licensing costs will simply be added to the rents charged, making the rental market less affordable for young or financially challenged people and undermining the initial

objectives of the scheme. The council need to bear in mind that central government have introduced financial penalties on private landlords in the recent budget (in relation to claiming tax relief on mortgage interest), which in itself could have a detrimental impact on tenants, either through increased rents or reduced maintenance and repair activity. Is the council really wanting to penalise tenants further by adding a potentially further unnecessary layer of costs on to landlords who provide high quality accommodation in some of the designated area?

- The current condition - if good no fees should be applicable. It is to improve bad properties not to make good landlords pay
- The landlords will simply pass some or all of the burden on to the renter. Rents are high enough as it is. If you build a stack of flats within this area, then new builds are not going to be in need of regulating, but you still want to charge £560? That's a tax which will be borne by renters in this area. Perhaps it should be limited to properties over ten years old?? Even then, £560 is ridiculously high.
- The scheme is ludicrously expensive and will only create a further bloated administration within the council. Hardly what we should aim to be doing. It will do little to improve the stock of houses in the area - those that remain well maintained and run through proper management companies will be charged more. Those with poor standards will likely remain so and be driven underground. It is likely that a number of the privately rented property in the Mayford area are not formally rented through tenancies. In short, you will create another layer of bloated administration which will do little to improve conditions.
- There should be a full discount as the fee should not be impossible by the council. Councils up and down the country have ruined private sector in the area of parking by shops on the high street, ridiculous regulations in elderly care that has driven the standards of rest homes down the tubes and countless other areas that have not improved things one iota. the council should stop interfering in matters that do not concern them.....if they wish to offer high standard of housing, buy your own property and manage that - but stop bullying your way into things that you have no investment in and have put no effort into obtaining (arguably through the hideous planning processes you administer, you have actually constrained others obtaining) and have no legitimate right to interfere with.
- There should be absolutely no charge. The council is already funded and should concentrate on enforcement.
- There should be no fee as this is just another way of making money for greedy council.
- There should be no fees either way as the winner is only Woking council to fill their coffers and no benefit to landlords or the poor people who need somewhere to live.
- There should be no licence fee
- This fee should be covered within the council tax for the Property. One of the job of the council should be monitor all properties (rented or not) and check if it worth living for anyone.
- this is just a money making scheme for the council
- This proposal should not go ahead as landlords are already being hit unfairly by the government with tax reforms and increase stamp duty. Rents will be going up as a consequence of this.
- Type of dwelling. For example, where the property is a flat with communal areas maintained by a management company and the landlord is already paying a yearly maintenance fee.
- Value for money
- We rent out a one bed single occupancy property that is managed wholly by a property mgmt. company, only has electricity supply and smoke detectors therefore we would be paying a licence of £560 just to prove that we have electrical safety records and smoke detectors. This licence is wholly unfair to single occupancy properties.
- You have to consider that any fee charged will be passed on to the tenant so it should be low or zero

If you think any of the proposed licence conditions should be changed or new ones added, please write these in the box below?

- Clear standards for the accommodation - such as no mould, pest infestations, fixtures and fittings in good condition, reasonable energy efficiency rating etc. - Without this the licensing is pretty weak. - Some timings on responding to queries, fault fixing are needed else it will be un-enforceable - A clear complaints procedure and fair arbitration, with protection for the tenant from repercussions (such as excessive rent hikes and reluctance to fix faults). - If the conditions are breached there should be: a) Compensation for the tenant b) The option for the management to be taken over by a council appointed 3rd party c) Commitment to allow the tenant to exit their contract with no penalty and cover the tenant's moving costs should the landlord breach the terms of the agreement. (Taking the licence is not enough, because the tenant is hit with the moving costs).
- Selective area coverage is unfair for the landlords - Landlords are already struggling with the high cost of maintenance especially within the Walton court area where WBC is the lease holder and we are already charged with the yearly maintenance fee. - WBC should make appropriate use of the local funds to provide the proposed service, but borough wide, without further charging the Landlords.
- A licence is not required if the property owner can demonstrate that the intention surrounding the arrangement they have with those living in the property is to provide a level of rent significantly lower than the market rate (at or near 50%); providing that those living in the property are satisfied with the standard of accommodation provided.
- All the focus is on the Landlord. In my experience, it is BAD TENANTS who are also a concern to everyone, including neighbours and other tenants. I do not see how this scheme improves the situation. Also, I did not see anything regarding Landlords who have become LIMITED COMPANIES. Are they included?
- Another way of gaining income
- Anti-social behaviour not tolerated should not be displayed. This is an insult to good tenants, implies this type of behaviour has happened before and therefore is a deterrent to letting. Electrical appliances to be kept in safe condition. Comment: Appliances must be in safe condition when tenant checked-in. No landlord can be responsible for how the tenant treats them, especially if he/she does not report that the item has broken. Ensure equipment is maintained. This can only happen if tenant reports a fault.
- Clearly these are appropriate for house shares and HMO's and are not really very well thought out for flats and houses let to professionals and families. A one size fits all approach is wrong!
- condition 1 stipulates notices to be displayed in 'common areas' - if it is a one bedroom flat or even a 3 bedroom home that does not have 'common parts' i.e. not occupied by sharers, this doesn't make sense. Many of these conditions seem to have been lifted from the HMO policy, and so are not very relevant to non-HMO housing. condition 9 part ii - as above.
- Could something be added on problems being solved in a timely way?
- Disagree money making scheme for WBC you charge enough council tax already why can't WBC force the bad landlords to do more to keep their properties maintained in good order this cost will be put on peoples rents will be increased poor tenants will be forced to pay for this license fee as well
- Displaying notices in single family occupied dwellings would consider as an extreme requirement. however except this as standard practice for blocks and or HMOs
- Electrical Certification is normally issued for 5 years if the electrical system is found to be in a good order at an inspection. Annual electrical safety checks are unnecessary unless recommended by the electrical engineer
- Enforce existing HMO law because overwhelmingly rouge landlord convictions in the area are related to multi lets anyway. Property let out under AST to single families are well maintained

in line with rest of the borough. No need for blanket enforce of licensing of every landlord in the area.

- evidence of property insurance to be provided
- Forgive me, however it sounds like the main issues you have around this area are with HMO's, I have seen nothing in your documentation to support your claims in the normal rented sector. We have one rented property in this area, maintained above and beyond legal and moral standards; we pride ourselves on the service and quality of the property that our tenants live in. A licence, paid for initially by the landlord, will not stop rogue people setting up HMO's without complying with the proper rules. All the licence will do is force landlords to raise the rent to cover this cost, therefor it will be the tenant that pays in the end. I suspect this is Woking Borough Council's way of extracting more money from landlords to cover their costs and continue with this government's relentless attack on private landlords, whilst completely missing the point. The point being, that it isn't the law abiding, above board landlords (the ones who will pay for this) you have most of your issues with, it is the unscrupulous, illegal landlords that currently don't pay any attention to the law so certainly won't pay any attention to a licence. By implementing this scheme, the landlords that you are actually after will be completely unfazed. The landlords who already comply with the rules will end up raising rents, ironically enough pushing tenants to these unscrupulous landlords because of the increase in costs; exactly the opposite of what the original aim was.
- HMO licence is specifically for multiple occupancy, same conditions cannot apply to family rented properties.
- I am happy the way things are.
- I am surprised by WBC to choose an area which is predominantly Asian. Is it all about targeting Asian people in Woking or Council had another valid reason behind this proposal.
- I believe the present law protects the tenant and only better education for the tenant is required rather than a charge to the Landlord
- I do not agree with the concept of licensing and therefore I do not agree with any of the conditions. This is just another way to raise more money from Landlords under the guise of dealing with the small number of bad Landlords. This means that all the good ones are required to pay out just because of a few bad ones. This survey is biased and pretty much assumes the licensing is going ahead and asks for responses accordingly. It should be asking whether it should be going ahead at all and asking pertinent questions in that regard. As a good Landlord I am fed up with Government and local government penalising me time after time. Surely you realise that by increasing our overheads we will pass this cost on to the tenants which means that they will have to pay even more, which is contrary to the reasons behind the changes!!
- I do not believe this is required
- I do not think that there should be a licence arrangements for landlords - or rather if one is implemented it should be free of charge
- I feel that these licences be extended to all private rented properties with inside Woking borough, in particular properties of multiple occupancy. Or problems which persist in the proposed area may increase in other parts of the borough as unsatisfactory landlord seek to get round licensing rules.
- I find the whole licence scheme unacceptable. It is a thinly veiled tax.
- I have one small flat that I keep in excellent condition with no damp, mould, or poor heating conditions. I don't see why I should have to pay £560 for a licence when I am upholding my responsibilities but other landlords are not. The main reason I rent through the council is that the kitchen is 30 years old and needs upgrading. When my current tenant moves out in about 3/4 years I intend to upgrade it then. If the council bring in this licence scheme which is going to cost me £560 from my £2,000 pa income then I will seriously have to consider evicting my

tenant, replacing my kitchen and going to the private professional market. The cost implication to me does not make it worth considering council tenants any longer if these proposals go ahead. Having said all that I can see that the council need more ammunition against these rogue landlords but if the landlords are refused a licence won't they just rent to others rather than pay out for the problems to be fixed?

- I own a very well built apartment which is regularly maintained in this area. I do not consider that paying £500+ fair. You should set out standards which are to be maintained and visit properties in rotation and charge Landlords and/or fine them if guidelines are not kept to. This means that only properties that are relevant will contribute towards your costs and Woking BC can ensure that work is completed to remedy.
- I strongly believe there is no need for a licence as the government has these money grabbing schemes to suck every penny out of the landlords. The government already have implemented taxes to be paid on the mortgage plus now the council is coming up with this pathetic idea. The council knows the properties which are not habitable so they should track them down.
- I think it should be reviewed thoroughly as I was at the presentation in HG wells and a lot of the questions were not answered. Also there is a lot of confusion as to how the data was gathered and who is actually being targeted. In the end the good landlords will pay and the bad ones won't and nothing will come of it. I fear it is just a money making ploy by the council. I also feel that this will not happen in three years and that we shall all be forced to pay many extensions and nothing will get resolved. The council should go around the estate those properties that are bad should be dealt with there and then instead of penalising all the good land lords. I strongly reject and object to this charge.
- I think landlords should be provided good safe housing. Poor people are being exploited and they are living in sub-standard accommodation. This scheme will allow the council to monitor landlords.
- I think money and effort should be centred on those landlords who do not treat tenants fairly rather than increasing the costs for all. The money landlords spend on the licence could affect how much landlords have to spend on maintenance and upkeep.
- I think people with less than one or two properties within the zone should be exempted unless MOHC. I family lets should be excluded.
- I think some of your questions rather than to low, right or too high or don't know should also have a strongly disagree option. This smacks of big brother which will insult fit and proper landlords but in practice only capture a small proportion of the rogue landlords. If you want photos of the property or statement from the tenant then let me know, but don't charge me over £500 for the privilege of providing good quality rental housing. I'm inclined to levy a matching or greater charge against WBC for the inconvenience and disruption to my tenant, myself and my letting agent and the monies to be distributed evenly between all three of us, should WBC introduce licensing fees.
- I think the documents should be located in the residence - but not prominently displayed on a wall. From all the documents to be displayed the dwelling will no longer feel like a residence. Maybe - prominently displayed or in a folder.
- I think you should make the area needing a license made bigger it should be expanded to all Maybury , the estate and east hill we are getting inundated with HMO houses (many of which I am sure don't have a license) this is dangerous for people living next door as no fire regs in place
- I totally disagree with this licence as it will only increase the rent for tenants, making things more harder for us
- If the council want to bring in a fee - they should enforce this in the whole borough not just Maybury and Sheerwater. It feels like the hard working tax payers are being targeted once

again.

- If the scheme is implemented and is really about addressing low standards, modern apartment buildings such as Enterprise Place, William Booth Place, Bramwell Place and Grosvenor Court should be exempt, as the overwhelming majority of these properties are no more than 10/12 years old and are let via reputable, ARLA registered letting agents and so standards will already be high. Ideally, the scheme would be altered to mean that if you are using an ARLA registered letting agent then you are exempt and only private landlord who let their only properties should require a license.
- In general I think probably over formalised. I would hope the tenants living in the property should be well placed to judge the conditions of somethings, e.g. Are there smoke alarms without there being excessive inspections/record keeping
- It appears that the proposed license conditions tackle matters of safety but not commercial exploitation in terms of, for example, unreasonable contract terms.
- It feels like excessive bureaucracy for many, and clamping down on the few. The license should be applied to relevant properties, not applied to all within a zone.
- It is another way of the Council's revenue generation programme.
- It should be extended to cover a greater area.
- It's good as it is. When councils interfere then we are challenged and rent is increased cos of interference by the councils
- Landlords and letting agents need to be held more accountable, we haven't seen our landlord for over a year and our shed is falling down and not overly usable anymore. Nothing is being done by leaders. I would like to see more accountability to landlords and some focus on the rent side as well. I'm concerned if we request the landlord complete works he will increase the rent too highly.
- Landlords should be encouraged to improve standards as much as tenants should be encouraged to maintain cleanliness and hygiene within their rented accommodation. This should not be levied through taxes, fines or fees.
- Landlords who breach these conditions should be prevented from letting property
- Leave it as it is
- licencing is not required my opinion
- Licencing should apply to all properties and not just certain areas, if this is not the case the proposal may well face legal challenge.
- May be Woking Council should buy and improve its own housing first rather than buy shopping centres.
- Most of them as they are not are not appropriate for one household. They are for HMOs
- Need to rigorously enforce the proposed licence conditions taking legal action promptly where appropriate, & ensuring rogue landlords are fined / banned & publicly 'named & shamed' in the media.
- No fee should be charged. If a tenant has a problem then the council should make sure that the landlord fixes it. The landlord should provide the cost. How would you implement the scheme?
- No licence conditions should be applied. No licence should be applied.
- NO NEED FOR ANY ADDITIONAL LICENSING. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS JUST GOT NEW POWERS TO ISSUE FIX PENALTIES OF UP TO £30,000 TO ROUGE LANDLORDS; WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT????? £560 FOR A LICENSE JUST SEEMS LIKE A MONEY-MAKING SCHEME BY WBC. MORE RED-TAPE WILL NOT IMPROVE CONDITIONS, IT WILL JUST MAKE RENTS MORE EXPENSIVE!
- Once again the questions assume that the licensing scheme will go ahead and are asking about the details of implementation. At this stage the Council is only proposing to introduce a

licensing scheme - so the first question to be answered is should the scheme go ahead, Yes or No? After that it might be legitimate to ask a question If No, can you say why not . It might also be legitimate to ask questions on details along the lines of If the scheme were to go ahead . . . as long as there is a box which allows the participant to say that he/she does not think that the scheme should go ahead (and so cannot give a view on details).

- Only existing regulations should apply. Regulations for HMO should not be applied to all property types.
- please see previous comment box The proposal will not be in the interest of Woking and is a penalty on good landlords
- Really, please do not create this licence it is a big mistake. It will just push rental prices up which is worse for tenants and penalise the majority of good landlords in Woking. Tenants are free to move wherever they want to, if they're not happy with their accommodation they can move, they can complain to the agent, dispute with ARLA etc. If a landlord is not a good landlord there is a lot of choice in Woking and people will move out. I also think it is very unfair that only part of Woking is affected by this permit. I rent out a one bedroom flat that's affected by this permit but other central Woking flats that I'm competing for tenants with don't have to pay it, which means I have to put my rent up to cover it, thereby looking less attractive to tenants versus flats in areas unaffected. These plans are unnecessary, ill thought out and unfair on landlords that care about their tenants' welfare and happiness in their homes. If there are unscrupulous landlords the onus should be on the estate agents to not work with them and inform other local agents not to either. If estate agents were held responsible for unscrupulous landlords rather than creating more bureaucracy it would be much easier and fairer.
- Regular inspections every three years or so. To be paid for by landlord
- See previous script but strongly against. No material facts from WBC. Poorly thought through and un-democratic. I thought WBC was supposed to represent the needs of all of the community in the borough? Either a Zero fee scheme or no licensing. BTW I asked at the presentation how I could edit my previous response and advised that I couldn't the only way was to generate a new response, so you have received a milder response from me before.
- seems ok
- Should be introduced in stages. This is an added burden on landlords as the recent tax changes should also be taken into account. Stronger action against poor landlords is sufficient.
- Shouldn't be any sort of proposed licence fees.
- The conditions are skewed towards commercial landlords and multiple occupancy rental dwellings. They are disproportionate and inappropriate for private landlords renting out standalone properties to professional tenants.
- The conditions required should relate to the age of the property, its location and size
- The costs are too great and I do not believe that the scheme is necessary or effective. Doubtless you are only doing a consultation as you are required to by law - you will not deviate from what, seemingly, you have already decided to do.
- The Council already has powers to deal with problem tenants and problem landlords, but it is choosing instead to put the problem and the expense at the landlords' door rather than applying their powers to the owners and operators of sub-standard accommodation such as unlicensed HMOs and overspill Council leased properties. Licensing and the attendant bureaucracy is time consuming and create unnecessary expense that managing agents and landlords will pass on to tenants by putting up rents. This may lead to an increase in homelessness. Some of the licensing requirements will also place a burden on the tenants, such as property inspections and the requirement to keep a log of antisocial behaviour in communal areas of apartment buildings.

- The council has existing powers to deal with rogue landlords. Council Tax payers are funding this so why has it not been done?
- The flat I own is in a controlled gated area, well supervised with a management company and committee in charge of running the building. If there have been no, or very few problems reported, it does not seem reasonable that every owner has to pay over £560 to show they are in a well-run property. This scheme should be targeted at those who have properties where there are complaints, your background informs us that 1 in 5 have problems which means 4 out of 5 do not and yet everyone is being forced to join and pay for this scheme.
- The licence conditions are far too detailed and it will take a huge effort by the council to police all of them. If a landlord is already not providing a decent service I do not think adding all of this will change that. Every three years an unscrupulous landlord will tidy up the property, sufficient to get a licence before simply reverting back to current behaviour. The application process and landlord administration will be time consuming. Which will incur potentially significant cost, a cost which is likely to be simply passed onto the tenant, exacerbating the affordability issue. I estimate the additional cost will add another 3%-5% to the rent I charge my tenants. Many of the conditions are simply a restatement of the law, which the Council or other authorities already have the power to enforce. Many of the conditions as written are quite unworkable. It seems you are trying to deal with HMO problems rather than single properties. If so the licence should only apply to HMOs. They are total overkill for single properties, rented to a family or a couple sharing. Item 1 is unworkable. What are the common areas of the property? If a block of flats there could be many individual landlords so all of the licences would simply provide wallpaper to the entrance hallway, making it look ridiculous. Why get involved in gas safety - there are already laws! Item 2 - will the council be able to cope with the submissions and follow up non-submissions? Electrical inspections in a HMO are legally required every 5 years so why are you trying to change this to every 3 years? Item 3 - How will the council check all of this? Item 4 - 14 days is too short. What happens if I am away on holiday? Item 5 - Landlords are not the police and do not have the powers implied in your licences conditions. Also how can an absent landlord possibly comply with this? How will the Council check this? Items 8 & 9 are simply a restatement of the law. Item 10 ii is again quite unworkable. Landlords are not the police and cannot know all that happens inside a property. Item 14, having to keep detailed records of antisocial behaviour is totally unworkable. Firstly landlords are not the police and have no power to intervene. Secondly, how will the council check the records are correct. Item 15 - again the licence holder, not being the police, does not have the power to evict. Item 16 - who determines this? What about a tenant who wants to have a dinner party or quiet gathering?
- The licence conditions should already be written into the tenancy agreement. Is this only a replication exercise?
- The licence should be applicable to houses with multiple occupancy and cover all the Woking area, not just the small Maybury area.
- The proposals are treating each household as a HMO - many households are let as private family accommodation so this does not apply to everyone. I think this needs to be reflected in the licence conditions.
- The proposed conditions seem a little onerous in places, and may detract from being followed. I would suggest reducing them a little in the initial phase, and strengthening later if need be.
- The proposed licence conditions are a serious overstepping of the council's moral rights, and are not merited on past performance. The proposal, and this consultation, seems to be nothing more than the council stepping through the hoops of their own bureaucratic processes rather than any serious attempt at finding out what the tenants of Woking want.
- The terms and conditions appear to be fully comprehensive and not being, or likely to be, a landlord, I cannot add to them.

- The whole idea of licencing is an expensive boondoggle. There should be no licence and, therefore, no licence conditions
- There are already strict requirements placed on professional letting agencies that address many of the matters included in these conditions; surely, if a relevant property is managed by a professional agent, there is completely unnecessary and costly duplication. That unnecessary cost duplication will ultimately be met by the tenant through increased rents.
- There are too many and they are too prescriptive. You cannot hold the landlord responsible for matters over which they have no control and they are not legally required to be notified, e.g. complaints received about the tenants. Some items are common sense, i.e. providing contact information and gas safety certificates. Seems to be giving the Council more powers.
- There should be no license scheme. I was a landlord in Bristol for 25 years, and each group of tenants agreed a contract with me. The system worked well. Outside interference by a third party is unwarranted in my opinion.
- There should be no licensing scheme.
- There should not be a licence scheme. It only covers a small area and if tenants don't like the condition of a rental property they can chose something else. My rental property is in a block of flats that is only about 5 years old and is well maintained. It is ridiculous that I should need a licence. My rental income us my pension.
- Think conditions sufficient and more important that these are met i.e. enforce these properly rather than adding to list.
- This is a ridiculous amount of administration and cost for absolutely no benefit the properties in this area especially the private rented one such as my complex (Palace Court, Maybury Road) are already maintained to an incredibly high standard and by due diligence from good private landlords. This proposal is not required and adds absolutely no benefit and serves purely as a means for the council to charge yet more money than they already do for no foreseeable or certainly tangible benefit or improvement.
- This is all highly unnecessary, and quite frankly a damn insult to the majority of Landlords!
- This is just an excuse to raise more money by the council and the thin end of the wedge. It will no doubt be rolled out over other areas of the borough and used as cash cow to extract more money. This will force good landlords (the vast majority) to put up rentals to pay the additional costs and the bad ones will just not comply / avoid the whole system somehow. All properties let through a regulated agency should be excluded as tenant is protected by terms of the tenancy agreement.
- To add to the requirement Documents to be submitted to the local authority when asked (Point 5 of Appendix 6 of the Proposal), the licence holder should maintain a log of complaints and action taken, and make this available not just to the Council, but also to occupiers and to potential occupiers prior to entering the rental agreement.
- To apply for 3 and more bedroom properties only.
- Unfortunately in this survey the questions have been biased towards the assumption that a licensing system will take place. There is nothing in the survey to give a responder the opportunity the question the realistic workings of the licence.
- We had a 'fair rent' system in place in the 1950-1960s and then the Tories scrapped it for the landlord's sake. Tenants had Security of Tenure as well as a Fair Rent, will this be implemented also? It's too little too late for most tenants of private landlords, the rents are horrendous to say the least as well as Fees up front and large Deposits! It needs a new governmental thinking about the whole of the British Isles on this issue, not just little ole Woking.
- We have been developer and letting agent, currently a landlord with several properties in the designated area and around Woking. From our experience the property stock let is in good and clean condition, the concept of licensing for this area brings absolutely nothing new. To the table and is a further hindrance and unnecessary to landlords trying hard to bridge the massive

gap, between ownership and the huge demand for good properties to let. The rogue landlords are in the extreme minority, but this scheme hits out at all landlords, it will further drive up rents at the expense of the tenants, plus reduce the number of properties to let.

Please let us have any further comments you have about the proposed licencing scheme?

- 1. What about Limited Companies? 2. This scheme disproportionately hits smaller private landlords (1, 2 or 3 properties) 3. Scheme is unnecessary for Landlords who use Letting Agents to fully manage their property. As these Letting Agents are effectively already doing what this Licence Scheme proposes, there should be an exemption for these landlords. 4. How are the reported improvements that licenced landlords are supposed to make, actually going to be checked? 5. What about temporary landlords who just rent out a home while working abroad, for example? 6. The scheme talks about common areas? In a block of flats with a mixture of owners and landlords, the common areas are shared by all... including possibly multiple landlords - how is that going to be resolved? i.e. you cannot just apply the HMO rules
- 1. I think it is expensive, burdensome and unfair to the vast majority of reasonable/good landlords. 2. There are already many enforcement powers available which Local Authorities can use to take action against landlords who do not keep their properties to a reasonable standard. These target those who actually cause the problems. 3. It is not always the landlord who is at fault, some tenants can be dreadful e.g. drying wet clothes inside without opening windows and without turning heating on = mould.
- A licensing scheme should benefit both landlords and tenants. Tenants get an enhanced certainty about the standard of the property they rent is maintained appropriately and that the landlord's dealings with them will be reasonable. Landlords have an improved status as reasonable people from whom to rent.
- A limit on the maximum number of licenses the council will grant in the area and per landlord
- A student from Bangkok told me a few years ago that he looked at accommodation in Maybury. Three different properties advertising Rooms To Let. He said that he was led into each room in the house to find TEN MATTRESSES on the floor! When asked where is the room to let he was told 'Here you share with others! No doubt the other room-mates were illegals!
- After the initial period the scheme should be extended to a wider area
- Already stated in previous answers but our main concerns relate to its applicability to single occupancy homes which is unfair and also that it should cover all of Woking not just the proposed area. This is a poorer area of Woking so it directly affects property prices for owner occupied properties and discriminates against the renters as well. Do all of Woking not just a bit of it.
- Any landlord will try his or her best to keep his/her property in good order and condition. The landlords in these areas cannot be compared with the rich people and the royals who own most of the land in the UK. The area under consideration is the most economically deprived area in Woking and Surrey. If the economic condition in these areas is improved, housing standards will improve. Council should, therefore, provide opportunities to improve the economic condition of the people in the area. Instead of spending millions and millions of pounds nearest to these areas, they should provide resources to the inhabitants including investments in educating people to improve their housing standards.
- As a landlord, developer and managing agent in Woking for the last 30 years I am also familiar with selective licensing schemes in different areas of the UK. I strongly object to the specific area designated for selective licensing. If I've understood correctly the proposal is to include an entire Ward for selective licensing. This Ward is effectively split into 2 distinct areas; to the West of Stanley Road the area is made up of generally modern purpose built flats, flats largely converted in the last 10 years within older commercial buildings and refurbished flats in older buildings. There is clearly no requirement for selective licensing in the roads to the West of

Stanley Road. I would challenge Woking Council to confirm how many rental properties are situated West of Stanley Road & what percentage of those properties they regard as 'poor quality accommodation'. As a letting and managing agent with 30 years' experience in Woking town I would estimate that less than 2% of properties in these roads would be regarded as lower quality accommodation. Indeed, I would go further to say that the area to the West of Stanley Road offers some of the highest quality accommodation in the whole of Woking. In which case why are the roads in this area of Woking being included in selective licensing? Is this simply a thinly veiled attempt to raise cash to subsidise the Council's proposed selective licensing scheme by including high quality modern purpose built accommodation & relatively recently refurbished older stock, operated by responsible landlords, within the scheme? It also feels fundamentally unfair to charge good landlords £560 per unit to subsidise the chasing of landlords offering poor quality property in a neighbouring area, and to pay for the failings of the education system, government policy, the local council planning and environmental departments. Where selective licensing is in operation in England it is standard practice for Council's to include ONLY roads where a high percentage of rental properties are in need of improvement. Selective licensing is typically operated on a ROAD specific basis NOT WARD specific. Clearly the area of concern is the older terraced properties to the East of Chertsey Road and Stanley Road, some of which have been converted into flats. If a selective licensing area is to be imposed it should be restricted to these specific roads which have a tendency towards providing poorer quality accommodation. Having observed first hand selective licensing schemes in Hartlepool and Easington in the North East of England I am NOT in favour of this type of intervention as it simply does not work. What I have witnessed is that the schemes normally fail and cease to operate at the end of the 3 or 5 year period. The main reason appears to be because the responsible landlords in the area will 'sign-up' and in the majority of cases are already complying with the conditions of the scheme. However, the 'rogue' landlords do not 'sign-up' and are simply driven further underground to avoid being detected and complying with the conditions. If the Council are intent on considering a scheme purely for the properties East of Stanley Road (going away from the town centre) proper consideration MUST be given on how the Council intends to identify the rogue landlord element and enforce compliance with the scheme conditions. The other major reason many Council's impose a selective licensing area is to deal with anti-social behaviour. However, this generally has the effect of forcing tenants alleged to be causing anti-social behaviour to vacate their properties and disperse into other areas. It simply moves the problem elsewhere. However, I note this is not regarded as a particular issue in the designated area of Woking. It therefore seems rather draconian to introduce selective licensing simply to deal with a limited number of poor quality homes in the area East of Stanley Road. Rather than simply burden hard working and responsible landlords with yet another 'tax', perhaps the Council should consider taking responsibility for the problem and deal with offending Landlords in Woking using the powers designated to their Environmental Health officers? Incidentally, your proposal note mentions what Woking Council have operated an Accreditation Scheme for landlords, but that this has failed to raise standards. As I say, I have been operating as a landlord and agent in Woking for 30 years. This is the first time I have heard that such a scheme is in existence. I know many landlords and not one has ever mentioned Woking's accreditation scheme. Has the Council considered that their Landlord Accreditation scheme could be better promoted?

- As a very responsible landlord working closely with a highly reputable letting agent, I have an excellent relationship with my tenants, a young family, who have renewed their tenancy over multiple years. I maintain the property to a high standard and deal very promptly with any problems they have. In these circumstances, I do not see why I should have to pay for an extra layer of bureaucracy that is clearly aimed at rogue operators. There is a plethora of regulation already, and rather than duplicate effort I would far rather see a campaign of education so that

tenants know their rights and responsibilities, and that there are appropriate prosecutions of operators who fail to deal with issues.

- As the criteria for your licensing proposals depend on statistics how do you establish the private rental market percentage in the area designated or in the rest of the borough. What access do you have to this kind of data? Without proof of this basis how can you avail of the statutory regulations under which you propose to make these licensing provisions.
- As we are a large portfolio housing provider, should the licencing be mobilized we will require a phased time frame to implement the application process.
- Bearing in mind the licensing cost will be passed on to the tenants the proposed charge is far too high.
- Excellent idea.
- Exploitative landlords are likely to evade licensing.
- Extend to all rented property over time
- Fine Landlords whose properties fall below standards. Do not penalise those who keep their properties in good condition.
- From experience as a landlord in other parts of the UK this type of licensing just does not work for anyone.
- Good landlords will join, rouge landlords who do not maintain their property will not. This is not a scheme that will improve the condition of the housing in the area. It will generate income for the council and penalise good landlords. Charge only the landlord who fail to maintain their properties. From the figures in your proposal the council has received an average of 177 complaints per year in the last 3 years. There are 6566 properties rented in the private sector. This means that the complaint rate is less than 1.8% per year. Is it really necessary to bring in this scheme?
- Good morning in response to the proposal to licence private dwellings, I would like to comment as follows. It seems that it is the same old story that the landlords who provide decent accommodation get tarred with the same brush as landlords who rip off their tenants and end up paying the price for regulating the market. I think it is unfair that landlords that do provide decent accommodation end up paying the price for a situation that they have not created personally. It would seem, as usual, people who adhere to decent standards as landlords are penalised, whilst, quite possibly, the exploiting landlords of properties deemed unsafe are probably going to be the ones who neglect to register their properties. You are obviously already aware of the relevant properties that are rented out privately, so why is there a need for a licensing scheme? It seems that this is just another way of raising extra finance for the local council. Also, it is probably the unscrupulous landlord who needs regulation who will try and avoid paying for the licence, so I am guessing it will only end up regulating the properties that quite frankly don't need to be regulated. Thanks for the opportunity to make my views heard, but I am a little sceptical that my views will make any difference to the outcome.
- I agree that private landlords should ensure that their properties are safe and secure for the tenants. I also think they should be responsible for the exterior appearance of their properties, and the upkeep of their gardens. The house next door to me has had a broken front garden fence for the five years I have lived here and I had rats from the overgrown back garden of the property. This two bedroom property has up to nine people living in it at any one time. I have many more such stories, but look forward to the licensing stopping the problem
- I am opposed to the proposed selective licensing scheme for the following reasons: 1. Bad landlords will be driven out of the selected area and will set up elsewhere in the Borough, thus just moving the problem. 2. The Council already has powers to deal with problem landlords but is failing to properly apply them, choosing instead to put the problem and the expense at the landlords' door. 3. Selective licensing creates an additional expense for landlords that they will need to pass on to tenants by putting up rents.

- I am unable to see how a licensing scheme of the kind proposed by Woking Borough Council will achieve the Council's stated aims of improving the quality of the rented housing stock. It would appear to me that the Council is proposing to levy a tax on all rented property in one small but densely populated part of the Council Area in order to finance enforcement action against landlords operating in any part of the Borough, rather than using its existing powers to deal with problem tenants and problem landlords effectively. This proposal is pernicious and should either be applied to the entire Woking Borough Council area or not at all.
- I believe better education on tenants' rights is required; the council has laws to protect tenants already and to fine Landlords already. A further tax on the Landlord will change nothing.
- I believe that there is a wide range of properties in the area. A number of which are purpose built blocks commanding reasonable rentals and aimed at the professional market. I believe that if these properties are not maintained to a good standard then reputable letting agents will not deal with them and they will be difficult to let, thus market forces will operate and the condition of the properties will improve. Tenants in these properties have a wide choice of properties to rent from and there is an active and deep rental market in Woking. This is an unnecessary measure which will do nothing to improve the standards of these flats yet will cost the landlord (and possibly their tenants) a significant sum of money. If the council feels there is a problem with some properties within this area, it should concentrate its efforts on the problem properties and landlords.
- I believe this is a money pulling exercise for the council and is not fair on the land lord or the tenants. I can see tenants losing out. Why is it not being rolled out across the whole country rather than on specific area
- I believe this is unfair to the area, because other areas such as old Woking, Kingfield, Westfield have houses in even worse conditions than that in Maybury, which are on rent. I have rented a few properties in Maybury all of to be in good standard and good price. I believe cos of this action by the council my cost of living will go up, and rent will go up, as it is already expensive to live in Woking
- I consider myself to be a good landlord, and have been part of the Responsible landlords scheme in Sheffield - however, bad landlords or illegal landlords will not surface because of this scheme and as ever it will only be the responsible landlords who will, 1) respond and 2) comply. I consider that instead of raising money through further taxing those who are responsible and comply, there should be stronger measures taken to heavily fine and close down those disreputable landlords who are causing this problem. There should be a black list put in place for the bad landlords who are circulated to all estate agents and councils so that bad landlords are not able to buy or continue to rent under any circumstances. Bad landlords will not pay a licence fee nor comply and if they are illegal they will be under the radar anyway.
- I consider the Woking borough council proposal to set up a selective licensing scheme for the Canalside Ward to be poorly focussed and disproportionate. I am disappointed that a Conservative council is seeking to impose additional bureaucracy and charges on the private sector. No explanation has been given as to how the £560 charge has been calculated? Why is it so expensive to administer a scheme whereby landlords must submit a gas certificate, electrical installation report and their properties are inspected once every three years? How can a cost of £450k be justified to run the scheme for three years (using 2011 census number of private rented dwellings in the area)? All that is going to happen is that rentals in the ward will rise to absorb the £560 additional charge and this will affect precisely the sector that the council is trying to help. It is mentioned that a landlord accreditation scheme was launched by the council in September 2016, three months before the publication of the proposal for a proposed licensing scheme. I have not heard of the scheme and would be interested to see what it entails. It is stated that response to the voluntary accreditation scheme has been low. Is three months really sufficient time to measure its effectiveness? How many resources have been used to publicise

the accreditation scheme? In my opinion, more time and effort need to be put into this voluntary action instead of precipitously implementing a more punitive measure. Disproportionate and marginal. The justification that Canalside ward suffers from poor property conditions seems very marginal. According to the David Adamson survey rates of “non-decency in the Canalside Ward area are slightly above the national average”. Nationally 19.8% of homes fall below the decent home standard, whereas in the ward it is 21.9%. This difference of 2% could easily be explained by statistical sampling error. The same survey indicates that the number of homes falling below the decent home standard could be as low as 15.9%, which is well below the national average of 19.8%. Poorly focussed The David Adamson survey estimated that only 19.4% of the private rented sector in the ward is non-compliant with the decent homes standard. Why is this proposal targeting the private rental sector when it is in line with the national average? The proposal does not differentiate between the age of the housing stock. According to the David Adamson survey, 89.2% of the post 1980 constructed dwellings meet the decent home standard, which is well above the national average. This is further emphasized by the fact that all category one hazards are exclusively present in dwellings constructed before 1919. Furthermore, all homes constructed after 1980 are compliant from a repair point of view. Why does the proposal not target the older dwellings and especially the pre-1919 dwellings where non-compliance is a real problem? Benefits of Licensing scheme The proposal lists a number of laudable objectives for the scheme, but is very sketchy and general how such a scheme will achieve such objectives, especially as the scheme excludes social and owner occupied housing which according to the David Adamson survey account for more 56% of the housing stock. According to the David Adamson survey decent housing in area will be improved by investment of £1.3m. The council should concentrate in incentivising / facilitating such an investment instead adding more bureaucracy and costs to the private sector. Other The council proposal fails to mention that housing in the Canalside ward has; 1) Home energy efficiency ratings that are superior to the national average. According to the David Adamson survey, energy ratings are better than the national average, Energy consumption; alongside other factors is an indication of the quality of housing. 2) Other environmental indicators that according to the David Adamson survey are “apparent but generally of minor impact”.

- I disagree that the licencing scheme should be imposed in Woking. The council should use current adequate powers to deal with rogue landlords.
- I disagree with it. There is no demand for it, and the fees are not justified.
- I do not agree that the council has made a case for the introduction of licensing. a) Adequate laws exist for the council to enforce housing standards but are poorly enforced. It is a common problem amongst councils. b) The record of 11 successful prosecutions on this subject over a 3 year period is wholly inadequate to justify the introduction of a licensing scheme. Either there is not much of a problem or the council has been poor in prosecutions. c) I do not see any statistics on the actual number of housing complaints from the chosen areas, so either they have been modest in number or the problems have been solved by council intervention not requiring prosecutions. In either case, clearly licensing is not justified and the council is doing its job under its existing powers. d) The impression is clearly there that this is a money raising venture by a council clearly strapped for resources.
- I do not believe the selective licencing proposal for certain areas of Woking Town Centre and Maybury is a good idea. I am a private landlord with properties in Woking, which are located outside the selected areas proposed for licensing. Complaints have never been made about my properties and I take pride in maintaining a good living environment for tenants. The council says that it is concerned about spiralling rents, however introducing a charge of £560 per property and increased onerous licence conditions, is only going to make rent levels higher. If the costs of the landlord implementing the licence conditions is roughly the same as the council costs, this would mean an additional cost of £1,120 per property, or £373 per year / £31 per

month. This is a significant amount of money for tenants to bear, if they are on low incomes and/or in receipt of means tested benefits. I believe it is unfair for the 80% of landlords who rent properties in the area with acceptable housing conditions, who will be required to increase their rents, due to this scheme and comply with all the additional requirements. I believe the council should concentrate on working with the landlords of the 151 dwellings, which fail the decent homes standard, in a positive manner, to implement some of the proposed conditions. If landlords are not currently meeting standard rental requirements, I find it hard to believe that they will comply with even more detailed requirements under the licencing scheme. Although I understand the reasons for the area that has been selected, I am concerned that Woking Borough Council will expand the area to the meet the 20% limit of private sector housing stock in the Borough, as it is a scheme that raises significant funds. I would like to understand what the £560 charge is for other than inspecting the property once during the life of the scheme. If significant health and safety hazards are found, surely, enforcement action would take place anyway and should not be covered by these fees. The council will be raising £450,000 through introducing the licensing scheme, which seems a great deal of money for the property visits.

- I do not think that the scheme should go ahead - for the following reasons: 1. The private rented sector is an important part of the housing market. History has shown that if measures are taken that make the job of a landlord too difficult or not sufficiently profitable then landlords will leave the market or increase rents and the market will shrink, putting even more pressure on other parts of the housing market. The licensing scheme will make the job of a landlord more difficult and increase his or her costs. Existing legislation should be used to its full extent to deal with the problem of badly maintained properties and those that do not meet legal requirements. 2. The proposed licensing scheme has an air of discrimination about it. It is greatly regretted that some councillors, speaking in the council chamber, clearly disapprove of landlords, and my concern is that this is filtering through into this licensing proposal. The area proposed for the licensing scheme also gives rise to an unwelcome feeling that there might be a racial colouring to the proposal. 3. There is a wide assumption that landlords are bad while tenants can do no wrong. This, of course, is quite a wrong assumption. It would not be accepted if it was suggested that, if landlords are to be licensed then tenants should be too. But before landlords are licensed more should be done to give them better protection against the likes of vexatious and over-demanding tenants, tenants who do not look after the property, tenants who do damage to the property, tenants that leave the property without proper notice, tenants that do not return the keys to a property, and so on and so on. Landlords should also be taken more into account in the rules for charging council tax to ensure that landlords are not unduly penalised, for instance during periods when the property is empty in between tenancies, when being renovated, or when awaiting sale or when tenants leave early.
- I do not think the licencing of private rental properties is going to make a great difference to rogue landlords. For those of us who already follow the rules and look after our rental property, it is unfair and another way of extracting money from us. Where is the fee money going to go? Who is going to monitor these licences? How can a property be assessed by paperwork and tick box exercises? Is this not another way to boost WBC coffers? As much as I understand the reasoning behind the scheme, it is always the 'good guys' who comply and pay dearly for the bad practices of others. By the way, the rent on my property has not been increased in three years - not all landlords are greedy, preferring to value our good tenants so they look after our assets!
- I don't think it is appropriate to publish the exact addresses of properties where the council has successfully secured prosecutions. I suspect this breaches the Data Protection Act (sensitive data). It is also unnecessary information. All that was needed was to say how many successful prosecutions there had been in the proposed area and what the offence was; the address doesn't add any value to the argument.
- I feel that the proposed favours tenants far more than landlords and the fact the scheme is being

used for the council to make money rather than benefiting anyone from the public.

- I feel this is just a money making idea for the council.
- I have concerns that this is the first step in rolling this out across the whole borough which will be a ploy to raise revenue and nothing more. There is legislation & powers in place for the council to deal with any breach of standards and these should be used as opposed to a revenue raising scheme. Secondly the area proposed is mainly an Asian (I am white British) area which gives rise to the question whether or not this scheme is racist.
- I have a lot of compassion for the vulnerable people who are residents in this area. I do want solutions to be found to the poor conditions and feel that criminal landlords should be prosecuted but object to the scheme to license landlords as outlined in the current proposal based on the following: 1) Further regulation is not needed. What is needed is better enforcement of current legislation. 2) Probably ineffectiveness of current proposal. Landlords who are currently operating illegally and immorally will probably not change their disposition with the addition of more regulations. There is also a probability that the problem will not be solved, but only displaced as rogue landlords move their investment property to other areas outside the regulated zone. Extension of the regulation areas will increase council costs and could damage the entire Woking rental market. 3) Endangerment to vulnerable tenants. The increases in costs will be passed on to tenants. If owning rental properties in the area becomes too onerous, the number of available properties for tenancy may be reduced. 4) Penalising law-abiding landlords in the area. Landlords who are currently complying with regulations are being penalised as they will pay and comply with new regulations, while unscrupulous landlords will not. There is a danger of damaging property value in the area as restrictions imposed in a single area will make purchasing inside the regulated area less attractive. 5) The solution does not address the root of the problem. This is a complex issue. The root of this issue is the lack of affordable housing and a significant illegal immigrant population in the area. This is creating demand that is being supplied by unscrupulous landlords. Vilifying landlords and placing extra burdens on them may have the appearance of tackling the problem, but a single prong approach will not solve the situation. A full strategy needs to be in place to tackle this issue and not simply burden the law abiding landlords who provide a valuable service. I would be in support of stricter enforcement of current legislation for law breakers without burdening law abiding landlords further. If this scheme is passed, I would request that further consideration be given to law abiding landlords so as not to unfairly disadvantage them. I believe that the discount is not sufficient for those accredited landlords. I think there should be a minimal administration fee to record their accreditation online.
- I said it all in my last comments but in short this is just another way to get money out of Landlords under the pretences of desalting with bad Landlords, of which there are far less than good ones. This is just another way to hammer the Landlords and get more income for the Council. I do not agree with this initiative at all!!
- I strongly disagree with any sort of proposed licensing fees as this will not benefit me any way what so ever. If any costs are increased on the landlord it will have an impact on my personal situation as a tenant.
- I strongly disagree with the proposed scheme as I feel it is another excuse to tax the average man. The scheme is an extreme move and the fees proposed are not justified by any stretch of the imagination. If the objective is to improve the standards of the community overall, there should be awareness campaigns, education for the landlords and tenants likewise rather than taxing the community. Those increased costs will only be passed onto the tenants and they will be forced to pay even more in an already expensive area. Awarding landlords with multiple properties with recognition, certifications and using them as case studies is the way to move forward. The council needs to seriously re-think it's draconian strategies of redeveloping and re-enterprising the community.

- I think council should keep its nose out.
- I think it's unfair where the landlords who have got their properties to a reasonable standard that they are being targeted as well as the one's who's properties are in a very bad condition.
- I think that charging landlords would only result in rising rents. Maybe to make this a scheme that won't increase rents and encourage a high standard of housing, provide a refund to landlords who fully comply throughout the licensing period, essentially making it a deposit-type scheme.
- I think the proposal sounds like a good idea. I did have second thoughts about the fees and discounts, though I'm probably not coming at the issue from the same financial mind set as landlords or the Council. My initial reaction was that £560 to register was quite high, though I do concede that most landlords would make that back very quickly, and when you consider that the cost covers three years, it is somewhat reasonable. I also think that there's a considerable difference in cost depending on whether you're a member of an accredited scheme or not. My initial thought was that the difference was surprisingly large. However, I don't know the full details of what being accredited costs and means; if being accredited encourages higher standards of accommodation, and having a lower Council fee will encourage landlords to become accredited, then it sounds good. £200 as a registering fee sounds reasonable.
- I think this is terrible for private landlords. Woking BC is blatantly discriminating against landlords in a specific designated area of Woking. I think this looks more like a money making scheme than actual concerns about tenants. The costs you have included for the application etc. are ridiculously high. At the end of the day, you will be negatively affecting the economy of Woking. Bad landlords are in the minority so too put in place harsh practices across the board is unfair and wrong. The conditions you are proposing along with the costs will mean many landlords will give tenants notice as renting housing will just be commercially unviable. In difficult economic times you will make things harder for landlords! If anything, your proposals seem to be targeting a 'specific' ethnic community. Not very inclusive and diverse to me, some may even call it 'targeted racism'! I am not in support of this and hope Ray Morgan /Cabinet at Woking scrap these proposals.
- I think this proposal is a total waste of time and rogue landlords will not be found and decent landlords following all the guidelines are being penalised. Landlords who rent via a letting agent have to abide by the conditions stated regarding health and safety of tenants or the agents will not take on the property. This legislation could lead to good landlords pulling out of Woking and the said area deteriorating further. I own and rent a fairly new one bedroomed flat with a management committee and secure gates and the tenants are found and managed by a reputable letting agent. I am very upset that I should be classed as a rogue landlord and discriminated against.
- I think this this proposal should be scrapped all together.
- I would not be in favour of extending the area proposed as I feel the majority of rented properties in Woking are well maintained and would not need these measures
- If the landlord does not want to sign up to the licensing scheme, then an option to go to an approved local letting agent should be available. The letting agent will then become responsible for meeting the standards and answering to the council
- If the proposed scheme is to be effective and protect the living standards of the tenants, it is ESSENTIAL that (a) the proposed rent is agreed (and frozen for the licence period) and the property is subject to a formal inspection BEFORE any licence is granted. Subject to a minimum standard, it is reasonable that the rental should reflect the facilities offered (b) good standards are ENFORCED and any deficiencies are remedied within an agreed SHORT period at no expense to the tenant (c) the property is subject to random inspection and enforcement notices must be issued as appropriate (d) the whole scheme is a legal requirement and does not rely on complaints by vulnerable tenants who can then be victimised and bullied by their landlords
- If you are going to do this, apply to properties that need it, not ones that are brand new or a

million miles away from needing it. Use common sense.

- I'm sure this scheme would improve the general state of housing. However, the costs are likely to in some way be passed on to the tenants. In some cases this may make their current accommodation unaffordable to them which would be unfortunate. The council already has the ability to order improvements to be made. This could be done where complaints have been made - my assumption is the tenants can tell when they are in poor conditions. The cost of the license sounds relatively significant relative to cost of corrective maintenance and likely rental income from a small property, it will also unnecessarily affect the good properties as well as the bad.
- Increasing legislation by creating a licence will not improve poor landlord standards, or ensure property managers do their job well. Dog licences did not help dogs & Landlord licences will not help tenants. WBC could offer property improvement grants. This action might actually result in improvements. The local authority should not charge a fee for their licence, or charge for a renewal. It would appear to be profiting from the private rental sector where they have failed to house those in need. Money may be diverted from potential household maintenance or improvements into the council or financed by even higher rental charges. The local authority has only served to hinder my property renovation to create an excellent small rented house situated just a few yards of my own home. WBC planning department demanded a huge sum of money for nothing. This is another of their dubious money making ventures at the expense of local residents. Simply legislating or stating that something must be done is slow, expensive and often not effective. WBC does not comply with specified standards. How on earth do they think this will put everything right? Practical building workers are needed, not office workers.
- Insert the limit of cost about rent.
- It is a good idea as long as it is enforced to many landlords just care about the money and not people's safety
- It is a huge concern that tenants living very happily in our properties (which are newly renovated and of a high spec) could be caused unnecessary disturbance and even forced to move if the property falls foul of any 'technicalities' of the licensing. For example, in a three bedroom home there are three people all on one tenancy agreement (effectively as one household), and one of these people is living in the single bedroom, which falls just below the 6.5 sq. m minimum room size. What happens? If the licence is revoked on this basis the landlord will be forced to remove that person from the room where they have been very happily living - or demolish a wall to move it 2 inches encroaching another person's bedroom causing huge unsettlement and stress for all involved. When people rent a three bedroom home the landlord can't stop them putting beds in rooms of their choosing. If a landlord has been providing good quality accommodation for many years with no complaints or issues at all but fails a DBS check on the licence application, again this would cause huge problems for both the landlord and tenants unnecessarily. Overall, we need assurance that common sense will be applied and the application of rules/conditions can take account of individual circumstances.
- It is important to be realistic, to ensure sufficient uptake and adherence. Best to get a key group onside first, this should help with wider adoption.
- It is not clear how this fee will be invested; as such why is it required and in what way will it deter bad management or lead to improvement? Is the aim to reduce the level of private rental? There is an equally big problem with landowners letting the property they live in fall into a poor condition.
- It should not be implemented at all. I think there are not enough questions about should the scheme be given the go ahead or not. Most landlords will be against it as it's just another penalty they have to pay even though they maintain their properties to a high standard. The landlord will not gain anything from this. Its rubbish to suggest living standards will go up. Most people live happily in their homes and tenants have a choice.

- It will encourage to landlords to increase the rent towards the tenants. As the landlord is paying tax on mortgages alongside home improvements. It is not the good idea to implement these licence fee to landlords.
- It will just force a very small sector of the private rented sector (the dodgy end) further underground
- It would be better to find ways of supporting landlords to invest in improving properties rather than damaging ever decreasing budgets for repairs and renewals with significant application fees and administration requirements. Recent Government tax changes will significantly limit funds landlords have to invest in properties which is a great shame.
- It'd be interesting to see how this plays out with properties that are managed by someone other than the property owner (e.g. estate agents) as our landlord is very reasonable but dealing with the agent who actually manages the property is like pulling teeth. Especially in the cases of monitoring ASB, subletting etc. I don't see how a property owner who lives in another county could monitor that properly... personally I think more needs to be done about property managers because the best I can tell is that they are all ratbags (to put it politely)
- It's outrageous that good landlords and well-kept properties must belong to this scheme!
Prosecute and fine bad Landlords .
- I've had supportive comments from Jonathan Lord MP for Woking and Will Forster Warner to my objections. Before giving your analysis to WBC I think you should make sure you contact the Counsellor for the Canalside Ward as applying a scheme where even the local Counsellor thinks it is wrong would seem obscure.
- Just another tax which would be passed on to renters with no benefits to anyone other than the councils picket.
- Maybury Ward is a proud and diverse neighbourhood containing a great variety of properties, including many modern dwellings owned and let out by professionals like me. Your proposed licensing scheme is poorly designed. It unreasonably tars all landlords in Maybury with the same brush. It is poor policy and frankly very unfair to compare my modern apartment - which is less than 10 years old, meets all the latest health and safety regulations, and is let to a professional tenant - with a run-down, overcrowded Victorian terraced house that has been let as bedsits and where maintenance and safety have been neglected. The proposed flat rate fee is also disproportionate if applied, as you propose, to all landlords, irrespective of property type. Your proposed discount for landlords who are members of an accredited association is utterly mind boggling; it is private individuals like me who maintain the highest standards – we are the backbone of Maybury's regeneration - and yet you wish to pursue a vindictive policy that penalises us in favour of conglomerates and commercial entities that take far less personal interest in this area. Incidentally, £560 every three years is far too expensive for an individual, fully compliant private landlord and yet it's peanuts for the commercial firms, so will have no effect on them. This is a very odd approach to take. Whilst I recognise the need to tackle cowboys and rogue landlords, you should realise that the individuals you're really targeting with this one-size-fits-all policy will pay no attention to the new regulations and their non-compliance will simply tie the Council up in law suits and administrative expenses. You will, however, succeed in alienating the hardworking professionals like me who have chosen to move to Woking and whose investment in high quality modern accommodation is vital to Woking's continued transformation. I let my property because my job takes me overseas; I am not in it for commercial gain. The presence of private landlords like me has done more to drive out the vagabonds and frauds than this half-baked licensing scheme ever will. Maybury has improved beyond recognition in the past thirty years and the ward has significantly benefited from the modern blocks of flats that I and fellow professionals have bought into, which have already replaced many derelict properties and commercial sites beset by criminality. We have personally contributed to raising the standards for thousands of professionals who are now proud to

consider themselves Maybury residents. In targeting only one ward within Woking Borough your proposal will also unacceptably distort capital values and the sale-ability of apartments in this part of town, which is an area that continues to need sustained, high levels of private investment. Why should I pay a 'tax' on my modern two-bedroom apartment let to professionals when the owner of an identical property let to similar individuals just the other side of the railway tracks does not have to? Your licensing scheme will simply incentivise private landlords like me to divest from the area, which will exacerbate the problem you have set out to solve. Pursuing such a discriminatory policy singling out just one ward in the town may also land the Council in legal hot water. This licensing plan is regressive, discriminatory, poorly thought through and runs completely counter to the ethos of a forward-looking, modern and tolerant town, which seeks investment from private individuals, looking for a quality investment close to London. If you wish to flush out the rogues and the charlatans from the private rental sector, then use the ample range of statutory powers you already have to hold them to account. But do remember that people like me have choices as to where we invest. Your plan is likely to have the very opposite effect to its goals and should not be pursued.

- Money making scheme for the council. Tenants can always complain about the property and the landlord should fix it. Easy
- Mr Neil Coles can, respectfully, abolish this whole matter before it goes any further.
- My comment concerns the whole principle of regulation. Yes I am sure there are gross abuses, especially in the area designated for this trial, but I believe the solution is to support landlords and make letting easier so that more people do it. The only real way to improve standards is by competition. If there are more landlords they will be gradually forced to drop their charges and offer better practice in order to get tenants. This constant crackdown on the private rented sector (with new taxes, extra stamp duty and licences) just has the effect of putting people off becoming landlords, and makes existing small landlords consider quitting. The end result - even less availability - more overcharging and abuse. I have a nice clean and tidy shared house to rent at moderate rents. The demand is huge - I get swamped and have to turn people away disappointed. More good places are urgently needed.
- My husband and I - fairly new to Woking - are very pleased with the proposed scheme. Tenants need more protection and the scheme will benefit the town as a whole.
- new properties - say less than 10 years old should be excluded from the need to licence
- No just think it's outrageous that something like this is even being considered. Why can't you just penalise and act on the landlords who you get complains about rather than penalising every landlord in the borough and charging them for a licence. I am a lawyer and I am certain WBC cannot do this. I will take this through the courts if I have too. It just seems silly money Making scheme by WBC. Makes my blood boil
- NO NEED FOR ANY ADDITIONAL LICENSING. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS JUST GOT NEW POWERS TO ISSUE FIX PENALTIES OF UP TO £30,000 TO ROUGE LANDLORDS; WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT????? £560 FOR A LICENSE JUST SEEMS LIKE A MONEY-MAKING SCHEME BY WBC. MORE RED-TAPE WILL NOT IMPROVE CONDITIONS; IT WILL JUST MAKE RENTS MORE EXPENSIVE AS LL PASS ON COSTS TO TENANTS. CHANGES TO TAXATION OF RENT WILL MEAN LESS MONEY FOR LANDLORDS TO INVEST IN PROPERTIES. HAVING MORE RED-TAPE AND COSTS ON GOOD LANDLORDS JUST PUSH TENANTS TO POOR LANDLORDS WHO OBVIOUSLY CHARGE LESS RENT FOR WORSE PROPERTIES. WBC ALREADY HAVE ENFORCEMENT POWERS WHICH THE DON'T USE - MORE POWERS ON LICENSING WILL NOT CHANGE ANYTHING.
- No need to interfere. As it is good as it is. Other areas of Woking e.g. old Woking, king field, Westfield are in a worse condition
- Not at this point. I agree that the council should take a more proactive stance on private housing in this area of the town. The houses have the potential to be nice - however, having bought a place that was previously privately rented out - it was apparent enough the landlord's interests

were to maximise rental income by subdividing a place into very small rooms with no common areas other than a tiny kitchen and a bathroom that needed a lot of work to improve it.

- Not that I can see.
- Only as stated previously and of course it will drive investors to other areas bearing in mind also that the town centre will be a building site for many years to come.
- Please do not go ahead with it. It will not help; it will make renting in Woking more expensive, and put people off investing in Woking.
- Please drop this scheme which is just a way of the council raising money from private landlords. I am considering selling my property if this comes into effect as the costs are so great that would mean one less rental property in the area.
- please scrap it
- Rogue Landlords are not going to apply for a licence. My understanding is that no one has the authority to knock on doors to find out details of a property, e.g. whether owner occupied or let, and if tenanted inspect the condition of the property, so how is the scheme going to work? By applying for a licence, does that mean one is giving authority for the property to be inspected, or simply meaning that that Landlord is ticked off and eliminated from enquiries and would be funding authorities to make further searches to find rogue landlords?
- See previous comments re enforcement.
- See previous comments. I don't feel this is the solution for those landlords that are complying with the law and providing decent accommodation already.
- See previous text box, where you will note I am not a happy landlord at present, thank you!
- Should be targeted to private landlords only, not those using a reputable ARLA agent
- Simply not required and just an excuse for the Council to charge excessive fees.
- Some landlords are making money at behest of tenants and have substandard properties. People like me are providing a service and charge reasonable rents and always try to keep updating the properties. It also depends on tenants looking after the property. I find some are disgrace as well as landlords. I hope this does not become money making machine like in Croydon. With connections get away while others do their discounting. Are family lets included?
- Supporting documents supplied by WBC cannot be accepted. The representation that only that specific area is more affected and in particular the state of the stock. Comparison is parts of Old Woking which have higher ASBO rate and crimes reported. Taking the facts into account it leaves the Councils selected area as targeting certain ethical minority Landlords who own the majority of the housing in this area. The area should cover the whole of Woking as a Borough rather than select Roads by discretion of a local Council. As a planning Solicitor I do expect to challenge WBC should they bring into force this scheme on the current outlines. Woking is a place for all not racially divided and that will not change anytime soon.
- The basic intent should be that the standard of living should be improved. Therefore if landlords can demonstrate this by being member of accredited landlord associations, then they should not be penalised any further. Be under no illusions, part of this extra cost will somehow be passed on to the tenants one way or another. So you are making life harder for both; the tenants and the landlords. No doubt, properties managed by the estate agents, will probably be passing most of the cost to the tenants. This will make living in the area almost unaffordable. Woking is already an expensive place to live; you are making it even harder. Stop this non-sense and try to make Woking more attractive place to live rather than creating obstacles in the way!!!
- The consultation paper refers to any number of regulatory and other legal provisions for the protection of tenants which already exist! The very idea of this proposal is an indictment of the council's failure to properly apply these protections. An additional requirement for licencing will be no more effective, in the council's hands, than the existing protections. Furthermore there will be an additional financial burden on the landlord which will, obviously, be passed on to the

tenant! I also suspect that the licencing fee will prove to be inadequate to cover the costs. Civil servants are expensive. This will simply increase the financial pressure which already exists on Council budgets. I also have a problem with the statistics used. It must be the case that a decent homes test must be subjective. I have a real problem with consultants employed by the council. They will always come up with the answer required. Furthermore we are not given the percentage of homes which fail this test nationally. Why not? Is it possible that this area is actually no worse than any similar central urban area? Also what is the justification for the claim that private rented accommodation is so bad? All of the claims seem to be very woolly and not well substantiated. In short I do believe that this will be an expensive scheme; and will yield no further benefits to anyone other than a handful of civil servants.

- The council should also consider taking action against estate agents who seem unconcerned by renting out properties of a clearly unacceptable standard.
- The council should concentrate on using its existing powers rather than creating more. This scheme will be a blanket scheme taking both good and not so good landlords. They should concentrate on the bad landlords and get them to pay for any issues rather than everyone paying. The scheme will add cost to people's rent, as it will be passed onto already high rents.
- The council urgently need to reconsider the geographical area they are planning to cover with this proposed licensing and also clearly understand the ultimate objectives of such licensing and what the impact will be on the unsuspecting tenants. I am strongly in favour of rogue landlords being dealt with firmly, but the council's proposals lack any sort of targeted approach and there must be far better ways of targeting the activity?
- The flat I own is in a controlled gated area, well supervised with a management company and committee in charge of running the building. If there have been no, or very few problems reported, it does not seem reasonable that every owner has to pay over £560 to show they are in a well-run property. This scheme should be targeted at those who have properties where there are complaints, your background informs us that 1 in 5 have problems which means 4 out of 5 do not and yet everyone is being forced to join and pay for this scheme. Although I feel it is appropriate for the Council to take action to improve the condition of housing in the proposed area by regulating private rented accommodation, forcing everyone in the area to join is too much of a blunt instrument. £560 is a huge sum to pay if one is running a well-run property. This sum seems very high if this is meant to only covers costs. Should this be the case, then the running costs need to be significantly reduced.
- The licence fee for a private landlord is higher than that of an HMO. Will it cover multiple properties? Will the council provide a recommended list of previous tenants that have rented within the borough and been good tenants? How does the council propose to make sure that all landlords within the targeted area take part in the scheme? Will letting agents be asked to only rent properties that carry the correct licence in the targeted area? What inspections and how frequent will they be? Where will the revenue from the licences go? What will the penalties be for unlicensed landlords
- The licensing scheme should be self-funding, with the Council's direct costs for the scheme being covered by the fee income.
- The proposals are grossly unfair to responsible landlords like me who has purchased a modern flat and let it to a professional tenant. Having professional tenants in the area contributes substantially to the economy of Woking. Obviously there is a need to control unscrupulous landlords, but penalising all the responsible landlords is not the way to do it. Furthermore this tick-box survey does not enable objections to be fully stated; hence my negative replies to certain questions although I am of course in favour of protecting vulnerable tenants from manipulative landlords.
- The proposed licensing scheme is a bad idea and unfairly targeting properties that are mainly owned by Asian and Italian landlords. Most properties are in a good state. Landlords are already

being hit by higher stamp duty and tax reforms. This already is going to increase rent in the area. If the proposed licensing scheme goes ahead then we will see the costs passed onto tenants.

- The proposed licensing scheme seeks to address a situation which may be the circumstances that some live in, with an action that applies to all. Those Landlords, including the Council, who are not providing suitable accommodation, do need to be challenged. I would like you to consider that some of us have a different approach to owning a property which is made more difficult by the proposed scheme, this is something you may have overlooked or 'missed' to use your language. I entered the venture of buying this property in order to provide some friends with their desired opportunity to live in Woking which they would not otherwise have had. The rent charged is approximately 50% of the market rate, in order that they do learn the discipline of paying for their accommodation, but can also continue the work they are involved in in Woking. They are very satisfied with the flat, and very grateful for the provision. It is my practice to immediately respond to any concerns they do have. It is not the intention to by any means maximise the return one might expect on the property. I imagine your efforts would be much better invested in responding to individual circumstances where what happens at a property is of concern to those living there or their neighbours. I note that a situation which one culture might consider to be overcrowding might be the usual way of life in another culture. What is an acceptable standard of living, which I would provide, may be far better than that which others may consider acceptable.
- The proposed selective licensing scheme is targeted at rogue landlords. As a professional landlord I find it unfair that your scheme is also covering 80% of properties which you consider do not fail the decent homes standard. Most landlords of flats use letting agents and adhere to the conditions in their license through their Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreements, Management Agreements with letting agents, Managing Agents agreements with Boards of Directors and Rules and Regulations for the Building by the Boards of Directors of the building. There are very many such developments in the area of Canalside Ward which should not be included in your proposed selective licensing. I know of several landlords who feel the same way and who have properties elsewhere in the Borough. I would suggest that treating them in the same way as rogues may not encourage them to enter into agreements with the Council in the letting of other properties they may own.
- The scheme as proposed is a bureaucratic burden to the council and many landlords, who properly manage their properties. If a scheme is really necessary then there should be a tiered approach, with a simple process for single properties and a more comprehensive approach to HMOs, which seems to be the main problem you are trying to address. You are trying to have the landlord act as the police, which is not possible. I suggest you look at the Croydon selected licence scheme, which is more balanced.
- The scheme is unworkable and will only add to costs which will be passed on to tenants. Any improvements made will be marginal and only apply to a very small section of the rented market. Many of the aims stated in the proposal are not achievable through council efforts particularly related to the anti-social atmosphere. It would appear all that will happen is an ever increasing bloated council payroll ultimately funded by tenants. Schemes like this have been rolled out over the country and have already been proven not to work. Landlords are subjected to increasing costs and government or council schemes only increase costs and ultimately reduce availability of private rented accommodation.
- There is a clear difference between landlords who comply and work positively with the council and those who are driven by financial motives and do not look after their properties and tenants. I think these proposals need to reflect that. Also, these landlords provide much needed and cost effective accommodation. I would worry that these proposals might put some landlords off and result in fewer properties being available to tenants - this would put the price of rental properties up and would have a more negative effect for all tenants. Please consider this.

- There is no benefit for the landlords but all laws seem to favour tenants. Secondly the charges for the license seem too high and are sign of money making scheme for the council rather than a proposed beneficial plan.
- Think full fee of £560 for 3 years is very high although reduced fee is a much better level. Would welcome a scheme that tackles rogue landlords who are giving landlords a bad name.
- This is a blanket charge to be imposed on a selected area. Rogue landlords are likely to avoid it. So far only aggregate evidence has been presented by the council to support their case. Much more targeted (disaggregate) evidence should be presented, including the number of repeat offenders and the total number of rogue landlords and the type of property (e.g. HMOs) involved. The council already has powers to deal with HMO properties. This approach would be to the benefit of the borough as a whole.
- This is a ridiculous amount of administration and cost for absolutely no benefit the properties in this area especially the private rented one such as my complex (Palace Court, Maybury Road) are already maintained to an incredibly high standard and by due diligence from good private landlords. This proposal is not required and adds absolutely no benefit and serves purely as a means for the council to charge yet more money than they already do for no foreseeable or certainly tangible benefit or improvement.
- This is a terrible idea. Many tenants mistreat the properties they rent (out of spite? Ignorance? Lazyness? Who knows?) Why not regulate and inspect tenants? The law seems to protect them more than landlords who are somehow seen as these Victorian-era money-pits.
- This is just a money-making scheme and will have little impact on the conditions of tenants. Many of the poor conditions that tenants face are either already covered by existing laws, or should be covered by new regulations, but these should apply to ALL rented property ESPECIALLY that rented through housing associations as in my long experience they can be the worst offenders. STOP trying to punish people for doing well for themselves and get on with doing your jobs of REPRESENTING the public not trying to bleed them dry.
- This is not required as your survey and results are based for the whole of Woking and not particular to this area. I have never had any problems living in this area. Best location ever. Lived in old Woking few years ago. Hated it because most all landlords do not rent to black and Asian people
- This scheme will do no good to tenants or landlords at all. Landlord will rent up or to cover the cost. Poor tenant will pay the price. It's clearly discriminatory policy too.
- This should be confined to the area of need only and not applied to every landlord in the borough. Otherwise this will just be seen as a revenue collection opportunity with no genuine benefit to the good landlord who already complies with all necessary legislation and is under increasing financial pressure from recent government decisions.
- Use of existing regulations being enforced would achieve acceptable standards, this scheme amounts to another form of taxation, another level of regulation and bureaucracy in an already heavily regulated sector. Furthermore, if implemented, this scheme would further increase the cost of renting properties in the area to the detriment of local residents in rented properties. Should this scheme ever be adopted, it should be applied fairly to all landlords, it would be totally disproportionate to penalise those landlords in such a small area of the borough. In addition, in order to allow landlords to pass on the additional cost, there would need to be a lead-in time of 1 year.
- WBC may be able to monitor and improve housing accommodation relative to a specific house unit. They however cannot improve an area of housing stock no matter how much control or money the Council throw at it. Areas in the Borough have always been noted as poorer areas and this cannot be changed by proposed licensing. Woking is noted as an area where a large part of the housing stock is rented; fantastic fast access to London from the Station has mainly done this. Can the Council prove that money for licensing will be ring fenced and actually used for Housing

improvement. I suspect not. In my opinion the proposals are yet another way for the Executive of WBC to raise more money to fund pie in the sky schemes which in the great scheme of things will not improve Woking. It has no heart to the Town compared with other Town centres and no amount of money spent will alter this fact.

- What will you do with the £450,000 that you raise every three years...build some social housing...or spend it flashing a bit more thigh at M&S and Hilton???
- While I am fully supportive of ensuring rental accommodation is up to a minimum standard I feel that this can be achieved with current legislation. I am opposed to the current proposals for the following reasons: - There should be no fee. It is in effect an additional tax on landlords at a time when, for private landlords who own a property with mortgage they are losing their ability to claim mortgage interest as a business expense. - The fee and conditions imposed will affect house prices in the area - landlords looking to purchase in the area will look more favourably on a property in a street not in the Canalside area then an adjacent street where additional fees and conditions are imposed - I fear that the imposition of the fees will be simply passed to tenants through higher rents at a time when rent is currently already very high for many - Our tenants rent the property as their home. I think they will strongly oppose having a set of prominently displayed notices up in their home. It is bad enough having the gas safe certificate on a pin board - having all the other required notices up will make the place look like an institution.
- Whilst I feel that the proposal is largely an excellent one, I am concerned that the cost of the license would be passed onto tenants in the form of increased rent. Hopefully there will be some way to mitigate this, such as ensuring that rental increases are in line with those of previous years (just as an example)
- Woking borough council is corrupt
- Worth expanding it
- You have enough powers already



APPENDIX TWO: CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire Supplied by Woking Borough Council

Consultation on Licensing Private Rented Accommodation

Woking Borough Council is committed to creating sustainable communities with a high quality built environment where people want to live. The high demand for housing combined with the growth of the private rented sector in recent years has resulted in an imbalance of housing tenure in some areas of Woking. This has led to an increased prevalence of private renting in some areas.

The private rented sector is sometimes characterised by poorer housing conditions than is found in owner occupation housing. To improve the housing conditions in Woking where it is most needed, we are proposing to introduce a licensing scheme for all privately rented properties in parts of Woking Town Centre and Maybury.

If implemented, the proposed licensing scheme will come into force from November 2017. Full details of the proposal are in the Proposal document. A printed version of this is available to read at Woking Borough Council's reception desk.

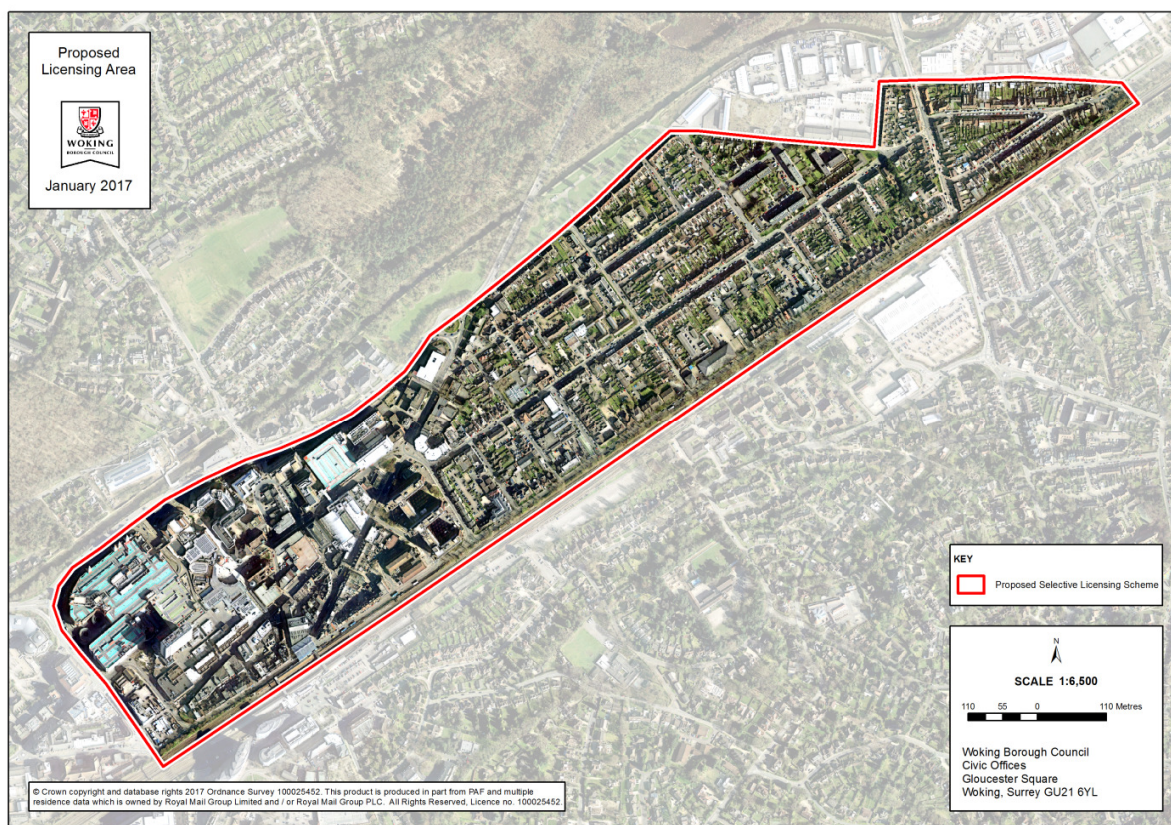
Please complete this questionnaire before Sunday 30 April 2017 and use the stamped addressed envelope provided to send to The Halo Works Ltd.

The questionnaire should only take between five and ten minutes to complete, however we suggest setting aside some time to read the accompanying proposal document before starting the survey. All responses are being analysed by The Halo Works Ltd, an independent market research company, who are evaluating the consultation responses on behalf of Woking Council and in accordance with the UK Market Research Society Code of Conduct.

If you have any queries about the consultation, please contact The Housing Standards Team at Woking Borough Council by email to propertylicensing@woking.gov.uk, or call 01483 743646.

The Proposed Area

The proposed area, marked with a red boundary line on the map, has been considered for the privately rented landlord licensing scheme. It has one of the highest proportions of homes in Woking Borough that are classed as privately rented accommodation.



Please tell us your views on the proposed area and private rented housing.

1 Do you think the proposed licensing area within the red boundary line is clearly marked on the map?

- € Yes
€ No

1.1 If 'no' how could this be improved?

2 Which of the following applies? (Please tick any that apply).

- ☐ I am a private landlord
- ☐ I am a letting or managing agent
- ☐ I am a tenant with a private landlord..... Go to Q3
- ☐ I am a tenant of New Vision Homes or Housing Association..... Go to Q3
- ☐ I am a home owner (with or without a mortgage)..... Go to Q3
- ☐ Other..... Go to Q3
- ☐ Prefer not to say..... Go to Q3

For those who responded to the first two options in question 2 above, please answer question 2.1.

2.1 Do you rent out, or manage rented properties in the proposed licensing area?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3 Where do you live?

- ☐ Within the proposed licensing area (within red boundary on map)
- ☐ Elsewhere within the borough of Woking
- ☐ Elsewhere in Surrey.....Go to Q5
- ☐ Outside of Surrey.....Go to Q5

3.1 How long have you lived in the area?

- ☐ Less than a year
- ☐ Between one and two years
- ☐ Between three and five years
- ☐ More than five years

4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

(Please tick one option only per row).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The proposed area is a reasonable place to live?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The proposed area has properties that are well maintained and in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The <u>private rented properties</u> in the proposed area are well maintained and in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your Views on Property Licencing

Poor housing is often linked to poor health. Around one in five private rented properties within the proposed area are not considered a 'decent' home by the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

Broadly, this means the health of private tenants living in these homes is put at risk by issues such as damp and mould growth, inadequate heating, unsafe electrics and inadequate fire safety measures.

For more information on the Decent Homes standard, please see the document:

'A Decent Home: Definition and guidance for implementation - June 2006 update'. A printed version of this is available to read at Woking Borough Council's reception desk.

Please tell us your views on whether you feel the Council should take action to intervene in the private rented sector in the proposed area.

5 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
(Please tick one option only per row).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
All private landlords should be required to maintain their properties to a good standard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would support the Council in taking action to improve the management of private rented properties in the proposed area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is appropriate for the Council to take action to improve the condition of housing in the proposed area by regulating private rented accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A licensing scheme covering the proposed area would improve housing conditions in the area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Length of the Property Licence

If the licensing scheme is implemented, all private landlords would be required to apply for a licence for every property they rent privately within the proposed area. It is proposed that any licence granted would last for three years rather than the maximum five year period set out in legislation. This is the same length of licence that is currently granted by the Council for houses in multiple occupation under the requirements of Mandatory HMO (houses in multiple occupation) Licensing.

Please tell us your views on the length of the proposed licenses to be granted.

6 Do you feel that the proposed licence length of three years is:

- ☐ Too short
- ☐ About right
- ☐ Too long
- ☐ Don't know

7 Which of these accredited landlord associations are you a member of?

(Please select any that apply)

- ☐ Residential Landlords Association (RLA)
- ☐ National Landlord Association (NLA)
- ☐ Woking Private Landlord Accreditation Scheme
- ☐ London Landlord Accreditation Scheme
- ☐ UK Landlord Accreditation Partnership
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None of these

8 Are you a member of the Association of Residential Lettings Agents?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Proposed Licence Fees

The Council is able to charge for licence applications to recover the Council's administrative costs and it is proposed that landlords are charged £560 per property for each licence application. The fee would be a one-off payment covering the whole proposed licensing period. Where landlords are members of a recognised landlord accreditation scheme, it is proposed that a reduced licence application fee of £200 per property will apply. However, it is proposed that no further discounts will be offered, for example to landlords who submit a licence application before the scheme becomes operative or where the landlord has more than one property in the proposed area.

Please tell us your views on the proposed licence fees.

9 Do you think the proposed licence application fee of £560 is:

- € Too low
- € About right
- € Too high
- € Don't know

10 Do you think the proposed discounted licence fee of £200 is:

- € Too low
- € About right
- € Too high
- € Don't know

11 Do you think there should be any further fee discounts offered in respect of a licence application?

- € Yes
- € No
- € Don't know

11.1 If 'yes', what do you think these discounts should be based on?



Proposed Licence Conditions

When a licence is granted, it is proposed that a set of standard licence conditions will be attached to the licence to ensure that all properties are managed to consistent standards. The proposed licence conditions are consistent with the conditions applied to Mandatory HMO Licensing.

Please tell us your views on the proposed licence conditions.

Further information on property licence conditions, can be found under appendix 6 in the Proposal document.

12 How far do you agree or disagree with the proposed licence conditions?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

13 If you think any of the proposed licence conditions should be changed or new ones added, please write these in the box below?

**Further Comments**

Have we missed anything, or do you have any further comments?

14 Please let us have any further comments you have about the proposed licencing scheme.

You can continue overleaf if necessary.

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. All the views we receive are important and will be carefully considered by the Council before it decides whether or not to introduce a property licensing scheme in Woking.