

Landlord & Agent Forum

10 November 2022

10.00 start

www.oxford.gov.uk



Agenda

- 10:00 Welcome
- 10:10 Fire Safety - Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue
- 10:35 HMO & Selective Licensing update
- 11:00 Break
- 11:20 Private Rented Tenancy Sustainment
- 11:40 Cost of Living Support
- 12:00 Close



Welcome

Councillor Linda Smith,
Cabinet Member for Housing



HMO & Selective Licensing

Gail Siddall

HMO Enforcement Team Manager



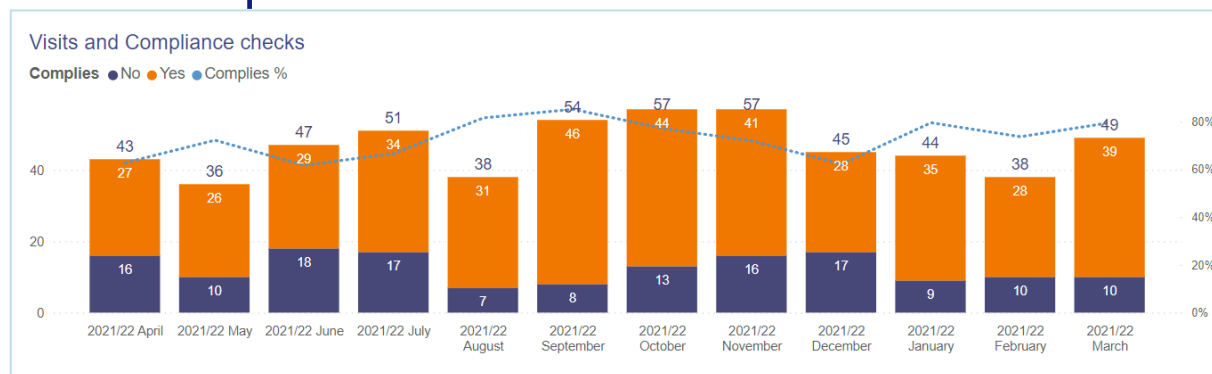
HMO Licensing Scheme 2021

- **Scheme was renewed and started in June 2021**
- **More emphasis on improving compliance**
- **Changes in criteria for longer licences**
- **More emphasis on sec 257 HMOs (buildings converted into and consisting of self contained flats not meeting Building Regulations)**



Year 1 - Actions

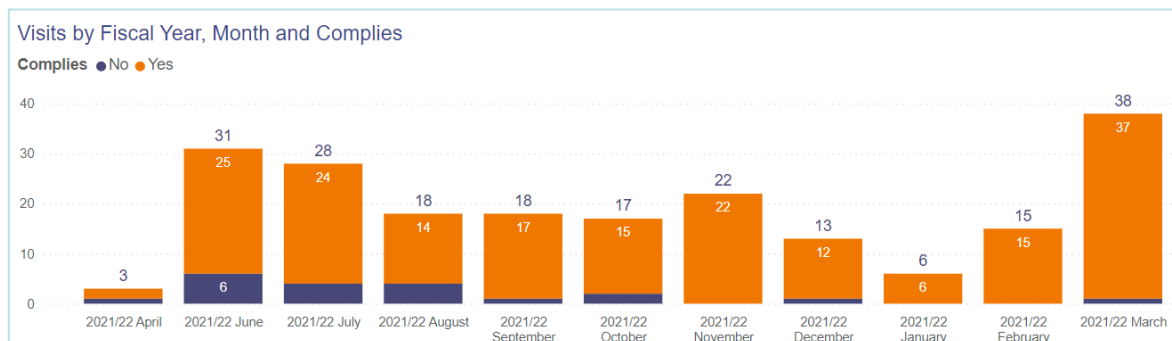
- 2532 Applications received – including variations and Temporary exemptions
- 2190 Licences issued
- 559 compliance checks



- 73% of properties were found to be compliant following compliance visit/check



- Periodic or Full inspections (5 yearly)
- 209 visits/audits undertaken



- Common issues found includes
 - Room sizes
 - Changes in tenancy/letting arrangements leading to increase in fire safety provisions
 - General disrepair
- Increase in Variations to request for improvement works



Service Requests

- 871 received not including service requests in relation to tenancy relations, noise and anti- social behaviour.
- 25% related to disrepair and non-compliance
- 142 suspected HMOs operating without a licence.
- Overall 95% of the service requests were responded to within 5 working days
- 294 Verification visits – for new licence applications



Unlicensed HMOs

- COVID 19 – restricted number of such visits as unplanned
- 158 cases were investigated
- 20% resulted in licence applications
- 46% were found not to be HMOs
- 14% required a future proactive check



Enforcement Action

- **81 HMOs were charged a higher renewal fee for non-compliance**
- **11 notices were served to remove hazards from HMOs**
- **7 financial penalties were served**
 - 4 breaches of HMO licence conditions
 - 1 breaches of HMO management regulations
 - 1 overcrowding in a HMO
 - 1 operating an unlicensed HMO
- **1 prosecution for unlicensed HMO – fines & costs awarded**
- **1 County Court Judgement has been obtained for financial penalty debt**



Selective Licensing Scheme 2022

- Introduced 1st September following central government approval in April 22
- New online system for applications
- New applications team set up to process applications
- 2700 plus applications received to date
- End of Early bird scheme is 30th November



Next steps

- Applications are being prioritised for inspection as part of processing
- Draft licences being issued and representations being considered.
- Unlicensed properties will be proactively pursued
- Proactive inspections to commence
 - check for hazards eg disrepair, unsafe electrics, fire safety
 - check certification is current



Thank you for listening

Any questions ?



BREAK

15 minutes





Call Before
You Serve





What is Call B4 You Serve?

Call B4 You Serve is an early intervention landlord advice service, offering free specialist advice to landlords within the city with the aim to prevent homelessness and keep tenants within their private tenancies.





Our Aim

To provide advice and support to landlords and their tenants to keep their current tenancy stable.

To make healthier and more trustworthy relationships between the private sector and Oxford City Council.





What can we help with?

- Rent repayment plans
- Help when communication has broken down
- Advice on correct service of notice
- Mediate between landlord and tenant
- Signpost /link tenants with support



What we are not

- We can not complete notices on your behalf
- We are not a service to clear all rent arrears
- We are not a rehousing service



Case Study

- Single parent at risk of homelessness, we were able to agree a plan for parent to return to work in order to be able to pay the rent(OCC can help with employment and training in PRS)
- CB4YS were able to pay a small amount of arrears to save the tenancy.
- A Landlord wanted their property back and gave tenant notice on a handwritten note giving 3 months notice. I discussed this with the landlord and directed them to the correct way to serve a notice. Correct notice was served and the Landlord was able to legally get their property back.





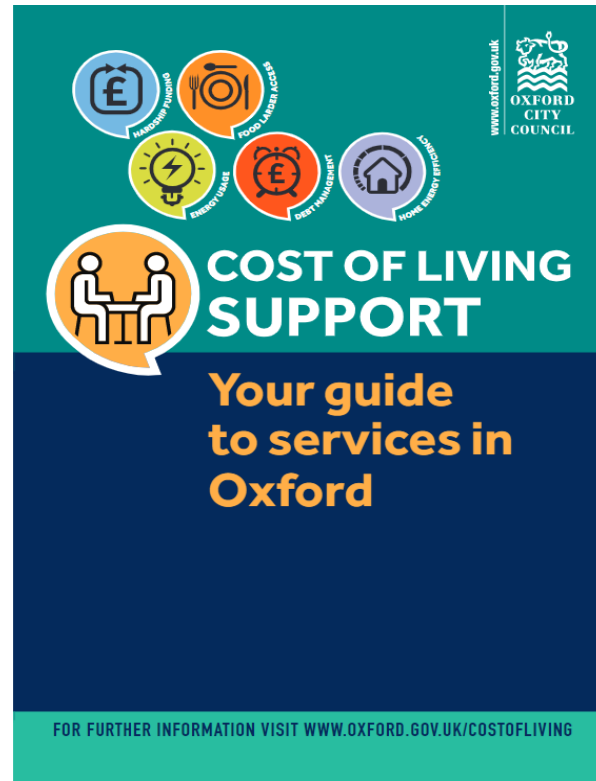
Are you considering giving notice to your tenants?

If so please contact Call B4 You Serve for help with:
Rent arrears Mediation Communication issues Help
and advice Leasing your property



We know that eviction is often the last resort and is a costly and stressful process. We are committed to preventing homelessness at the earliest opportunity and we urge you to Call B4 You Serve so that we can help you and your tenants before it's too late.
For assistance and more information about this service please contact the CB4YS team:
Tel: 01865 252559 Email: CB4YS@oxford.gov.uk

Cost of Living update



Landlords Forum 10th November
Leanne Cooper – Locality Manager
Alexa Bailey- Locality Support Manager

Intro Slide

- ❖ What we have done so far
- ❖ Continued work
- ❖ Household Support Fund (HSF)
- ❖ Food System Support
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Questions

What we have done so far.....

- ❖ Cost of living roadshows - Town Hall and local communities
- ❖ Cost of living booklets distributed across the city.
- ❖ Attended established events across the city to continue to promote the cost of living support that is available
- ❖ Supported vulnerable residents to claim the energy rebate
- ❖ Cost of living webpage
- ❖ Developed a warm and welcoming spaces network
- ❖ Trained staff on referral pathways



Continued work

- ❖ Household Support Fund –we are continuing to support the food network, we are expecting a further allocation from HSF 3 which would help with support to 1st April 2023.
- ❖ Attend events across Oxford to continue the conversations around cost of living support.
- ❖ We will be attending BBC Radio Oxford's Cost of Living event at Templar's Square on the 26th November 10-1

Household Support Fund

- ❖ We will be receiving a portion of the £3.4 million funding from the county council to support tenants during the crisis in Oxford
- ❖ We will be looking at ways we can reach tenants who don't ask for support and are in need
- ❖ Targeting diverse communities through our locality teams and partner organisations
- ❖ The funding is available to support tenants with energy, food and household essentials, including white goods and clothing

Food system support

- ❖ Signposting to sustainable food options including Community Food Larders
- ❖ Promotion of free or low cost food options
- ❖ Signposting to food banks
- ❖ All food options across the city are available on the Oxford City Council webpage under cost of living
- ❖ Food vouchers are available from advice centres as well as Oxford City Council
- ❖ All information on how to refer for support is available on our website

Communication

- ❖ Attend events across the city where tenants can attend
- ❖ Continue to deliver booklets to areas that are used frequently i.e doctor's, dentists, places of worship, community centres
- ❖ Add regular updates of what is available to tenants in the landlord's newsletter

Questions

- ❖ What else can we do to support tenants?
- ❖ How can you use this information to support your tenants?

Thank you for coming

Please sign up to our newsletter

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/selectivelicensing>

Click on the link to sign up

