

SELECTIVE LICENSING

Consultation Report Appendices

April 2022

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Example Social Media Posts

West Lindsey DC
@WestLindseyDC

Everyone can play a part in shaping the way that we achieve our goals to improve standards in private rented housing across West Lindsey.

Visit west-lindsey.gov.uk/selectivelicen... and find out how you can help.



8:01 pm · 4 Mar 2022 · Hootsuite Inc.

1 Like

West Lindsey District Council

This is the official West Lindsey District Council WLDC Facebook for local news, travel and events.

Page · Government organisation
Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, United Kingdom
01427 676676
customer.services@west-lindsey.gov.uk
west-lindsey.gov.uk
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Intro
2 March

Private rented property licensing allows us to set standards on how private rented homes should be managed and helps tackle poor housing conditions. If you're a renter in #Hemswell, share your experiences with us and give us your views on our proposals. Visit <http://west-lindsey.gov.uk/selectivelicensing2022> Gen-Rent UK Shelter Citizens Advice YMCA Lincolnshire



1 Like 2 shares

West Lindsey District Council
1 March

This week is National Empty Homes Week. Take a look below at this transformation as part of the West Lindsey District Council Empty Property Grant initiative - as a result of this scheme, 44 properties were renovated in total and brought back to life, predominately in the Gainsborough South West area. The pictures below are before and after images for a residential property.

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Closed now

Intro
28 February

Council today's critical meeting of the Central Lincolnshire joint strategic planning committee wher... See more

1 Like

West Lindsey District Council
28 February

Our communities in West Lindsey continue to grow and we want to ensure that there is decent housing now and for future generations; that's why we are consulting on a new Selective Licensing scheme. Visit www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/selectivelicensing2022 to let us know what you think of our plans.



1 Like 2 shares

West Lindsey District Council
27 February

If you feel like you are struggling at the moment – a confidential

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Press Coverage

News > Local News > Gainsborough

Planned Lincolnshire licensing scheme could affect up to 5,000 landlords

West Lindsey District Council is consulting with landlords about its plans

SHARE   

 COMMENTS

By [Oliver Pridmore](#) Trainee reporter
16:46, 14 FEB 2022

NEWS

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In    YourArea



The offices of West Lindsey District Council in Gainsborough. (Image: Lincolnshire Live)

Great Sleep Starts Here.

 **Westend**
BED COMPANY

BOOK CONSULTATION

Planned Leaflet Insert for Council Tax Letters

Please note these were not distributed as the consultation was halted)



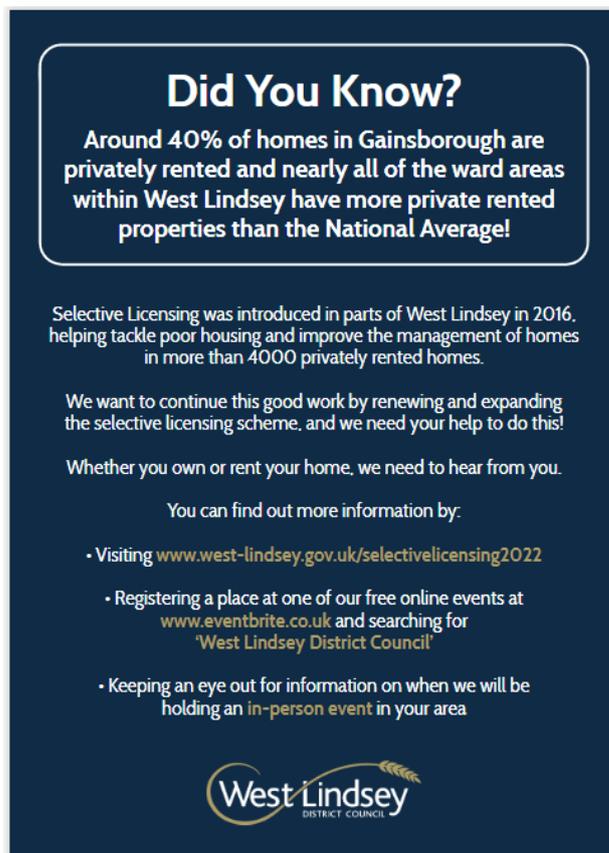
The leaflet has a light blue background. At the top is the West Lindsey District Council logo. Below it is the title 'Selective Licensing Consultation' in a bold, dark blue font. The main text asks for public input to improve housing. At the bottom, there is a URL and an illustration of three colorful houses (red, blue, green) with yellow trees in front of them.

West Lindsey
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Selective Licensing Consultation

We need your views to help us improve homes across the District! Take part in our consultation and let us know your views on private rented housing in West Lindsey.

For more information, visit:
west-lindsey.gov.uk/selectivelicensing2022



The leaflet has a dark blue background. It features a white-bordered box at the top with the title 'Did You Know?' and a statistic about private rented properties in Gainsborough. Below this, it explains the selective licensing scheme and provides information on how to get involved, including a list of ways to participate and the council's logo at the bottom.

Did You Know?

Around 40% of homes in Gainsborough are privately rented and nearly all of the ward areas within West Lindsey have more private rented properties than the National Average!

Selective Licensing was introduced in parts of West Lindsey in 2016, helping tackle poor housing and improve the management of homes in more than 4000 privately rented homes.

We want to continue this good work by renewing and expanding the selective licensing scheme, and we need your help to do this!

Whether you own or rent your home, we need to hear from you.

You can find out more information by:

- Visiting www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/selectivelicensing2022
- Registering a place at one of our free online events at www.eventbrite.co.uk and searching for 'West Lindsey District Council'
- Keeping an eye out for information on when we will be holding an **in-person event** in your area

West Lindsey
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Sample of Written Responses to the Consultation

Email Response 1

As you know, we spent £730 on two licences for two properties in 2020, only for the scheme to be ended half a year later. We weren't even offered a partial refund. This was a huge loss for us.

We have had some very bad experiences with one of our tenants who was paying her rent on time when we first bought the house then she fell behind with payments. We found out she had actually bought another dog during lockdown (she already had one and the house smelt pretty bad). She'd also let her (ex) boyfriend (who was not on the tenancy agreement) have a key to the house, and when they broke up, he kept returning to the house and repeatedly kicked down the back door to get in or he would let himself in through the front door with the key she gave him. We had no idea this was going on until the police and enforcing officer [removed] got involved. We were issued with a letter threatening to fine us if we did not make the house secure within 24 hours. The tenant refused to answer the phone the door when the agent tried to arrange for someone to do the repairs which ended up costing hundreds (new back door and new lock for the front).

My complaint to Rebecca was that in what part of the scheme does it protect us landlords from tenants like this? If we, as landlords are expected to have reserves to pay for this kind of vandalism, why do they not even have the money to pay the rent which is the same every month? Yet she can afford to buy a dog/ pay for the upkeep of two dogs. She is still in arrears now.

These are investments we have worked hard for and sometimes we wonder why we do it. We believe we are good landlords as we are responsive to our tenants' needs.

Why don't you make landlords who are not proactive pay for a licence instead of punishing ones who look after their tenants?

Another reason why I am completely against the licence is that they cost the equivalent of more than a month's rent each.

Another question I have for you is that if it goes ahead, will I get any kind of refund for the 5 year licences I paid for?

Email Response 2

On opening the 'online-survey' on your letter it is listed as for Southwark?!?!?! Seems strange. Furthermore:

My previous experience of the Gainsborough Licensing was poor in that the inspection on my property took place one month before the scheme finished after me paying hundreds of pounds for the 'privilege' of renting my property to someone who needed accommodation!

When I reported a really bad property to your department nothing was done about it then when I contacted your department I was asked to advise the tenants to complain

When I complained to your department about excess rubbish and bins being left on the street and a property using the street as a dump -nothing was done about it and I eventually got the support of a local councillor then action was taken by a different department.

I need to be convinced that the licensing scheme is not a money making racket which encourages people like me to invest in other areas rather than Gainsborough

I would appreciate a response

Email Response 3

I have some queries regarding the above proposals that I am hoping you can answer.

With regard to the draft selective license conditions: -

1. Sections 4, 5 and 6. Will the council on request be providing information on potential tenants such as - where they are known to have been involved in anti-social behaviour or previous rent arrears.
2. Sections 11 & 12. License holders are required to ensure that smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are kept in proper working order, what happens when they are disabled by the occupiers unbeknown to the license holder?
3. What happens when occupiers do not report damage to electrical fittings or other items which may cause a safety issue?
4. Section 21. Will the council be providing a summary, either in writing or on their website so it can be printed, that provides the information required concerning waste and recycling?
5. Section 23 refers to regular checks regarding rubbish. What constitutes "regular checks"? Monthly, quarterly or every 6 months.
6. If occupiers do not respond positively to letters regarding rubbish what action do you want license holders to take?
7. Section 26. If it is felt that a pest infestation is due to the activities of the tenant (there being none present when the tenancy commenced) what steps must the license holder take within the 7 days mentioned.
8. Section 31 g. If a tenant moves out and work is undertaken to, say, improve the EPC rating of the property in advance of legislation changes would that need to be notified to the council?
9. Section 39. Can you please confirm where I can find the definition of "over crowding"?
10. Section 40. Does the council have set wording for the "anti-social behaviour agreement"?

General: -

11. Will the license be per landlord or per property?
12. Other than the ability to continue to legally let properties, what benefit is there to landlords who are already fulfilling their legal obligations to becoming licensed?
13. Are social landlords under similar obligations to those proposed for private landlords?

Email Response 4

Having heard about the wldc on line meeting regarding the proposed selective licencing we noted the following points.

The Anti Social Behaviour criteria is only included for the South Ward areas.

The proposed north ward areas do not include ASB.

The criteria for the north ward / village areas are:

1. property management & safety
2. waste management
3. tenancy management

4. ASB (not included)
5. security
6. health and safety & occupation of the property

I believe certain areas in the north ward do not have issues in these areas and therefore should be removed from the list / considered for exemption.

These areas also charge the owners a management fee for the grounds and are looked by an external company.

Such areas included modern housing (ie less than 20 years old) for example

Sunningdale Way estate, Bob Rainsforth estate etc

I would therefore suggest that to request that these areas be removed,

Email Response 5

Further to your email link to the above survey we would like to inform you that a lot of the questions are irrelevant to us as we use a management agency

1. My properties are inspected on a regular basis.
2. If any work needs to be done it is arranged immediately by the agent or myself
3. The properties are always kept in tip top order for the benefit of the tenants
4. All gas and electrical certificate tests are carried out annually
5. This will just add another layer of bureaucracy to the system
6. It will add more costs to each tenants rent, as the cost will need to be passed on, which will cause hardship on our tenants for no benefit to them.
7. If the tenants have any complaints, then the rental agreement covers all current legislation which protect their interests, this includes the protection of their deposit in the tenancy deposit scheme, held by the agent.
8. Please provide a full breakdown of how these proposed costs are calculated and justified by WLDC

Email Response 6

Following on from the online Forum last week I still have a major concern that from a responsible landlord's point of view it is all "stick" (financially, administratively and time) and no "carrot."

The argument that it "levels the playing field" for landlords holds no water when properties are more geographically dispersed and so what happens at one end of the Ward has no effect on properties at the other, coupled with demand for rental properties locally outstripping supply.

I would suggest that if the council is not prepared to exempt those landlords whose properties already meet the selective license conditions, then you should, as a minimum: -

1. Provide a named individual at the council landlords can contract for confirmation as to whether a potential tenant has been involved in anti-social behaviour or rent arrears requiring housing benefit to be paid direct to the landlord, at any time in the past 5 years. If the potential tenant does not give consent for the information to be shared then the council to state such to the Landlord.

2. Provide details of who to contact if a tenant is in sufficient rent arrears such that the Landlord wants to apply for housing benefit to be paid direct to themselves. This request is speculative as Landlords have no way of confirming whether most tenants are in receipt of housing benefit or not.
3. Confirmation that Landlords will be charged at occupant rates for disposing of discarded furniture, electrical appliances etc rather than the enhanced rate if they can confirm they have followed the council's procedures for attempting to get the tenant to deal with the matter.
4. Introduce dedicated web pages for landlords and tenants on the council website. This would include: -
 - a) A copy of the license conditions attached to each Ward.
 - b) The document regarding anti-social behaviour conditions potential tenants need to sign up to.
 - c) A section bringing together all information concerning possible grants (local and national government schemes plus others) landlords and tenants can apply for to upgrade properties.
 - d) With Data Protection legislation in mind a summary of the legislation that requires Landlords to share information concerning tenants with the council (often asked by tenants.)
 - e) The names and contact details of the dedicated Housing and Enforcement Officers assigned to each Ward as well as general contact details.
 - f) A regularly updated table, by Ward, showing things such as number of inspections carried out, main issues discovered, enforcement action taken, etc both this month and to date.
 - g) Examples of category 1 hazards encountered and practical solutions.
 - h) Visual images showing the likely differences in appearance of penetrating or rising damp and condensation.
 - i) Information on causes of condensation and how tenants can mitigate it by the correct use of ventilation and heating.
 - j) Contact details for who to approach if the tenant wants to make a housing benefit claim.
 - k) Contact details for who to approach at the council if a dwelling needs adapting to allow a tenant to remain in it.
 - l) Contact details and links as to who to contact if a tenant faces eviction or wants to apply for social housing.
 - m) Password protected documents that landlords can access including: -
 - I. Model tenancy agreements and inventory schedules.
 - II. Checklists for information needed pre letting.
 - III. Template reference letters for sending to previous landlords and others.
 - IV. Council waste disposal information you want shared with tenants.
 - V. Checklists for statutory and license condition information that needs to be provided to new tenants.
 - VI. Property inspection checklists.
 - VII. Checklists/flowcharts for the procedure to take when anti-social or waste issues arise.
 - VIII. Template letters re anti-social behaviour.
 - IX. Template letters re waste/cleanliness issues.
 - X. Template letter for sending to tenants when they can no longer rent the property due to the age of their children and overcrowding regulations.

- XI. Template letter to send to a prospective new landlord regarding a former tenant.
- XII. Lists of council approved plumbers, electricians, builders etc that landlords may engage.

While quite extensive I hope this shows what the council could do relatively easily which would accelerate the rate at which the housing stock/tenants' behaviour improves

Email Response 7

I am the landlord of [address] in Gainsborough. Regarding the criteria laid down for selective licensing, i have been contacted by the letting agent suggesting that i contact you requesting that the [address] estate be removed from the list.

The reason for this is that they believe that the criteria set by yourselves do not apply to this particular area,

I look forward to hearing from you on this matter

Email Response 8

Having advised by my representative who attended the wldc on line meeting regarding the proposed selective licencing we noted the following points.

The Anti Social Behaviour criteria is only included for the South Ward areas.

The proposed north ward areas do not include ASB.

The criteria for the north ward / village areas are:

1. property management & safety
2. waste management
3. tenancy management
4. ASB (not included)
5. security
6. health and safety & occupation of the property

I believe certain areas in the north ward do not have issues in these areas and therefore should be removed from the list / considered for exemption.

These areas also charge the owners a management fee for the grounds and are looked by an external company.

Email Response 9

To whom it may concern

Having heard about the wldc on line meeting regarding the proposed selective licencing the following points were noted:

The criteria for the north ward / village areas are:

1. property management & safety
2. waste management
3. tenancy management
4. ASB (not included)
5. security
6. health and safety & occupation of the property

I believe certain areas in the north ward do not have issues in these areas and therefore should be removed from the list / considered for exemption.

These areas also charge the owners a management fee for the grounds and are looked by an external company.

Such areas included modern housing (ie less than 20 years old) for example

Sunningdale Way estate, Bob Rainsforth estate, Juniper Way, Horsley Road, Willoughby Chase, Marshalls Rise

I would like my property [address] to be considered for removal from the selective licence due to the above issues raised

Email Response 10

Good afternoon,

I strongly believe certain areas do not have issues in these areas and therefore should be removed from the list / considered for exemption, rather than blanket coverage. These areas also charge the owners a management fee for the grounds and are looked after by an external company. Such areas include modern housing (ie less than 20 years old) for example:

Sunningdale Way estate, Willoughby Chase/Meldrum Drive, Riverside Approach, Pilgrims Way & The Wharf at Morton.

I hope common sense will prevail & landlords are not hit with yet another stealth tax

Email Response 11

Selective licensing at hemswell cliff. As private landlords of four houses at hemswell cliff who look after our houses and tenants , why would we not look after our investments? I completely understand that some landlords {the minority} just take the rent in sub standard houses but there are a lot of very good landlords with nice houses that care about their tenants and indeed their properties.

It appears that because of a handful of rogue landlords you are trying to penalize and more to the point make us pay through the nose to do exactly what we are already doing. We as a family would like to strongly appose SELECTIVE LICENSING.

Its so wrong to put yet another unecessary charge on us as landlords. I certainly hope that you listen to myself and many other good caring landlords who rely on the rental income to live

Email Response 12

Dear Sir or Madam

I wish to register my objection in the strongest possible terms to the proposed introduction of the above scheme which I feel is already covered under current legislation. I only have one property which I let through an agent who makes sure that I already comply with the existing legislation. As Below.

EPC – Minimum rating of E or above with more ambitious targets in the pipeline. EICR – Electrical compliance certification to be carried out in last 5 years.

Gas Safety Certificate – Annual test and certificate required, where applicable. Deposits – Must be held in a separate Bank Account and registered with an approved Scheme.

Legionella Test – If water system is deemed at risk.

If all of this is not already enough, you wish to add even more at a cost to me of more than 600 gbp per annum, this is already almost 15% of my gross rental return and would force me (a caring and responsible Landlord) to either withdraw from renting completely or pass this cost onto the tenant. How would that improve what exists currently? This proposal is completely unnecessary in my opinion and I object in the strongest possible terms!

Email Response 13

I am a landlord and own two properties in Gainsborough. They consist of one three-bedroom house and two one-bedroom flats, for both properties I own the freehold.

I am conducting research into Selective Licensing for Private Rented Property and yesterday on the Landlord Today website discovered two relevant things; the first was that there had been a consultation regarding Selective Licensing being extended in Gainsborough and the other was that this had been discontinued due to a report and the information it contained.

Landlord Today Article dated 16th March 2022 paragraph 1.

The leader of West Lindsey council, Owen Bierley, has issued a statement saying: “Following a full council meeting ... councillors voted in favour of halting the selective licensing consultation at this time, to allow for further considerations to be made into both the scheme and the consultation.

Paragraph 4

The decision to suspend it came following criticism by local landlords and a new report to the council which included the statement: “The selective licensing scheme can improve the quality of accommodation however, it has had limited success in many other areas such as anti-social behaviour, community safety and crime levels. It is therefore essential before we extend the selective licensing scheme we gain a far better understanding of how many of these other issues can be addressed.”

I would very much like a copy of the report referred to in paragraph 4 and the comments the landlords made. Might you know to whom I need to apply for these copies. In addition, and from my research to date often independent research companies are employed by local authorities to assist

in carrying out the consultation procedure and producing a report based on the demographics of participants plus their responses. If West-Lindsey employed such a company, who were they?

The Landlord Today website also states in paragraph, 'next steps will not be considered until a committee meeting in early May'. If the council's decision is to continue with the consultation, please may I be included?

Awaiting your response,

Email Response 14

Please see below my context and question I would like to be put before the council at their meeting on the 7 March 2022 specifically in relation to Selective Licensing.

Question regarding claims that a high percentage of PRS houses in the SW ward are predicted to have a CAT 1 hazard - A serious or immediate risk to a person's health and safety that is related to housing

Most professional landlords would welcome effective, consistent, inclusive and fair regulation throughout the PRS sector which holds to account not only landlords, but local authorities and the tenants themselves to improve the quality of the housing stock and the communities we live in.

The SW ward has been the subject of a 5 year licensing scheme, paid for by landlords and it has generally not been seen, by landlords, tenants and some local Councillors, as the success that is being hailed by WLDC. There is much concern that inspections for compliance of HHSRS, for example, over that 5 year term were often inconsistent and incorrect. However, it is generally recognised that the standard of homes provided by PRS in SW ward is higher having been subject to yearly inspections and any hazards identified being dealt with, within a mandatory time period. Many Landlords however, are concerned that some CAT1 hazards, which may have been counted in the justification report to re-new the scheme in the SW ward may in fact be 'hazards' that are measured against modern day standards and cannot be resolved in a 100 year old plus house. An example of this would be that several houses were identified as having a CAT1 hazard which was actually the measurement of the stair tread depth and width on the original stairs which cannot be changed. To mitigate any risk of falling, every property was or has been fitted with an appropriate hand rail but this would still remain a CAT1 hazard. It has been conceded by enforcement officers that this can't be changed but can be managed. I am not aware of any accidents or injuries having been caused by the stair installations.

Justification to renew the Selective Licensing scheme in the SW ward relies heavily on data published in the report by Metastreet. It is acknowledged that 98% of the PRS landlords in the area complied with the scheme and some 2196 HHSRS compliance checks were carried out of 809 properties, yet it is predicted that 792 CAT1 hazards still exist in these previously licensed properties.

Could we please see a full breakdown of what these CAT1 hazards are 'likely' to be and why is it such a high number, an average of one CAT1 hazard per licensed property, after a 'successful' scheme implemented over the last 5 years?

Email Response 15

Please see below my context and question I would like to be put before the council at their meeting on the 7 March 2022 specifically in relation to Selective Licensing.

Unfortunately, I am away with work in Hampshire so am unable to attend the meeting in person. My understanding is that I can submit a question for consideration and presentation on my behalf in my absence.

"The previous WLDC Selective Licence Scheme ran for 5 years. A sum of in excess of £300,000 was collected from Private Sector Landlords to fund the scheme. The accounts / usage of the money has not been made easily publicly available to the service receivers, i.e. the landlords, to justify the expense. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) was one of the key areas that the previous scheme was, and now proposed scheme is supposed to tackle. ASB was and is supposed to be a partnership approach between landlords and other "Stakeholders" within the scheme. Landlords have received little and more often no help in addressing ASB of their and neighbouring tenants. Good landlords will always ensure that ASB clauses feature within tenancy agreements and will speak with their relevant tenant offenders. ASB is traditionally reduced through regular gainful employment of individuals, which could not be within the general remit of any landlord. Evidence has also not been produced as to from where ASB manifested, i.e. was it from within Private Rental Sector (PRS) habitations, privately owned properties, shopping and public areas? How do we reasonably know it is manifested from within tenanted properties of Selectively Licensed Landlords? According to national crime statistics it also appears that ASB has fallen and is not a problem within the South West Ward of WLDC, the previous and proposed target area for Selective Licencing.

Therefore, bearing in mind the afore mentioned information my question is - How can a new scheme be legally and ethically justified when a previous scheme failed to provide financial and physical evidence tackling ASB issues, when in fact it may not actually be a Selective Licence issue and perhaps more of a Police enforcement issue for which residents pay Council Tax for anyway?

Email Response 16

Landlords have increased rents to cover additional costs imposed by central and local government. Private landlords are selling up in Licensing areas, myself included.

The extension and expansion of SL will increase rents further and more small competent landlords will sell and stifle investment in the area.

These detrimental knock on effects on tenants have neither been researched nor considered by WLDC.

Why not?

Part of the consultation should include research into these unintended consequential rent increases and reduction of available housing as a result of Selective Licensing.

Email Response 17

As members of the DASH Landlords Accreditation Scheme, which is supported by WLDC, we were recently alerted to the above Consultation document. Subsequently we have attended a Zoom session run by WLDC outlining some features of the proposed Selective Licensing proposals, which will affect us as landlords. The following day, DASH organised a Zoom meeting discussing issues of relevance to landlords, and mentioned the WLDC proposals. Although we were licensed by WLDC under the first SW Ward Selective Licensing Scheme, we have heard nothing about a new scheme from that database. Further, information of relevance to Landlords during the five year scheme was noticeable largely by its absence, and we waited in vain for a nudge that EICR would become mandatory towards the end of the scheme. We must stress the importance of good, supportive and relevant, communication to inform all landlords. Why no dialogue with scheme members?

As we shall be affected by the current proposals, if they are introduced, we would put on record that we prefer long-term tenancies, we like good tenants who make their home in the property. We manage our property ourselves, and therefore have sought advice and guidance through membership of NRLA and accreditation with DASH. During the Lockdown period the NRLA ran several online webinars for members, supportive especially of landlords whose tenants were falling into arrears, but we heard nothing from WLDC's SWWard Licensing Scheme.

We strive to keep up to date with legislation affecting landlords, and aim to respond promptly to any report by a tenant of repairs needed. We have a good support network of local tradesman. Our rents are on the low side, and in the current economic situation we hesitate to impose any increases. It is therefore frustrating to learn that an extra levy may be made by the Council in the near future on all landlords, good and bad.

Social housing is in short supply locally and we offer suitable accommodation for the lower end of this market. Managing our own property can be very time-consuming and hard work, so it is particularly galling to see that no credit is given for membership of DASH, even though that makes the initial license application very straightforward for the Council.

While we appreciate the importance of the underlying aims of the proposals, we expect there to be practical and realistic guidance on thermal insulation and carbon reduction for all the rented properties.

The following points are made as pertinent to the consultation.

1. Education for all landlords on managing their properties — this should be a key feature of any scheme. It is high time that old fashioned ideas about grasping landlords are replaced by realistic acceptance that for most landlords their properties are investments that need looking after, and this means looking after the tenants too. “Rogue” Landlords must of course be dealt with.

2. ASB — not necessarily always linked to rental properties of course, but reports often highlight particular streets or addresses. In Gainsborough North ward, in our experience of living there, and having tenants there, ASB is largely confined to a minority of streets, just as in SWWard, which are easily identifiable. Rising house prices in the ward, would also suggest that it is viewed favourably as a place to live by home owners, who do not see ASB as a problem in the area. We would therefore oppose a Selective Licensing Scheme for the whole of Gainsborough North Ward. As regards the other wards to be included, we have no particular insight into conditions there. To be fair, Councils and the Police often struggle to deal with ASB too. It is in our opinion unwise to expect Landlords to easily eradicate ASB. They will need the support a scheme must offer.

3. Tenant Responsibility. The individual landlord who houses tenants in substandard properties obviously does not look after his investments, blights a neighbourhood, and certainly needs to be targeted — but so do problem tenants — who accept substandard living conditions, with presumably low rents. It is therefore essential that improving tenant responsibility is a key objective of any scheme. If tenants refused to accept poor conditions, the bad landlord will lose his income. In the online meeting we attended, early presentation of waste was also highlighted — it is hard to see how a landlord can be expected to solve this long running problem without support and guidance. It is not a widespread problem in Gainsborough North.

Whether the majority of reasonable landlords should pay for this work is of course what the consultation is all about. It is hopefully not a stealth tax. This is why we place so much emphasis on the value of communication with all the landlords. By limiting the area of the Licensing Scheme, the costs would be covered by those most directly affected by ASB. Charging per property will raise considerable income for the scheme, contrasting sharply with the DASH scheme, which is per landlord, on a sliding scale according to the number of properties owned

Email Response 18

The West Lindsey District Council has asked for submissions concerning the wisdom of extending the landlord licensing scheme from its present sphere of application in the South-West Ward to (potentially) the whole of Gainsborough, so these are our submissions.

The negative side of our attitude

The name of our is [removed] and we embrace all the philosophies of this famous philanthropist of Victorian times. We would accordingly support any initiative which would improve our tenants' lives, but do not believe this is one that would.

As a landlord in the private sector, we are wholly opposed to such an initiative and not just for our own self-serving interests: this will fall heavily on tenants at a time when the general cost of living is inflating at a rate not seen since the 1980s and can only therefore be a further big contributory factor to a wage/price spiral, which threatens already to get out of control. Furthermore, we see no need for such a scheme, as it would merely add an extra layer of bureaucracy to a market for private lettings which is by and large already working well and efficiently.

Having said that, all of our Lincolnshire let properties are either in the wards of Scotter and Blyton or Gainsborough East, so the proposal for Designated Area 2 cannot apply to our hereditaments. So we have no direct conflict of interest to declare in this matter. We are concerned, however, that there may one day be a Designated Area 3, which would be even more pointless than Designated Area 2. I realise these are serious assertions but I intend to back them up in this submission.

Each year, a Council officer contacts us and asks for information about the rents we are charging in the Gainsborough area and we give that information, in the knowledge that we pitch our rents at at least £25.00 below the monthly rent prevalent in the market. All philanthropy aside, we do that also for sound business reasons, in that this is conducive to social stability and therefore to costs. So, if landlords are to be faced with a levy on each let property to support a licensing scheme, those landlords will either have to take less by way of profit or pass the extra cost on to tenants. The idea that being a landlord is a cushy number is way off the mark. As a semi-retired person | spend an awful lot of valued time dealing with electrical safety, gas safety, insurance, six-monthly inspections, repairs and maintenance. This takes up a great deal of my life and I do not suppose that | am any different from a lot of other landlords. It is therefore imperative that this is reflected in the level of profitability our firm enjoys.

When | look at the accounts I submit to HMRC, I find that the return on invested capital comes out at a very modest revenue profit of just 4.35%. And this takes no account at all of all the time spent on dealing with tenancies, as I make no charge for my time: this is simply the net return on invested capital. As local house prices rocket, there is a great temptation to sell up, as percentage profitability declines. If too many landlords are to be squeezed too hard they are likely to sell up and pay off their mortgages, leading to an exacerbation in the already short supply of private rental. There is not enough social housing to take up the slack. So this would inevitably force up rents. We know some local landlords who are already saying it is not worth their effort and are selling up in this climate.

I suppose we are fairly typical of any compliant landlord. So the conclusion is simple: we cannot justify having to pay a levy to keep our tenants as comfortable in their homes as they already are, it would just be poor economic management.

So the cost of the levy would immediately be passed on to tenants as a rent rise. We have asked our tenants what they think of this idea. They are uniformly opposed to it. Evidence can be readily supplied.

Most tenants are not rich. They are currently facing unprecedented rises in their costs of living. To add another twist to this inflationary spiral would seem almost spiteful.

In short, both we and our tenants are opposed to any extension of the current licensing scheme as too expensive, bureaucratic and unnecessary. And most untimely.

East Ward: the positive side

To focus, now, on the East Ward, where I do have to declare an interest, as I manage a number of DASH-registered properties there, I note from your interesting document "Selective Licensing in West Lindsey" that when it comes to Cat.1 hazards and complaints that this ward is only behind three other wards for volume of complaint: the worse ones being South-West, North and Market Rasen. This high level of hazard/complaint would puzzle me, but for my intimate knowledge of the whole of this ward. Most of it is entirely harmonious. But I could point out a crime hot-spot in Riby Close, another in Riseholme Road and the very houses where these problems fester. It is the fact that there are so few problems which might cause puzzlement. However, there is one particular building which is of more concern to me - and ought to be to the Council - than all the rest of the East Ward put together: Pilham Court.

East Ward: the negative side

Not only do I frequently deliver pizzas there, but for upwards of twenty years I have owned a flat in this thirty-unit block and I do not like what I see and hear.

When I first purchased this flat I let it to tenants, who turned out to be unsatisfactory. When they left I was so intimidated by the whole ethos of the block that I gave up on letting it and left it vacant for four years, barricading it in with steel grills. Eventually, either the Council did a "clean-up" job and evicted a lot of problem tenants, allowing to remain or come in only those over 25 years of age and with no convictions for drugs or violence, so I began to let the flat again. At present I have a long-term and most agreeable couple in this flat. But I believe only three other of the thirty flats are privately-owned and the rest are managed by [removed]. Over the past few years as. has let matters slide again: the place is riddled with drugs, drug-dealing happens every day and there has been considerable violence, as might be expected where drugs are endemic.

Email Response 19

WLDC Selective Licensing - Landlords Issues / Concerns / Questions /Comments

Previous Scheme General

1. What was the money from the last SL spent on, how was it used? –
 - We should see an analysis / the accounts / evidence of how the money was used.
2. Previous scheme did not solve problems in SW ward, it may have improved some of the housing but the main reasons for the scheme to run again are still apparent e.g. ASB, Crime etc, such issues that should be addressed through other agencies, and not solely, if at all, a landlord issue for enforcement.

3. Why has there been virtually no support from WLDC for tenant arrears (up until most recently due to a "COVID Fund" from HMG)?
 - For example when tenants fall into arrears and they receive their benefits from LHA or UC then this is public money allocated for rent. When a tenant makes the choice not to pay their rent then this is surely misuse of public funds, possibly even fraud, therefore assistance should be provided to take action and in support of a criminal offence. It is known that there is a move by other Local Authorities and District Councils to take such an approach in the future.
4. Scheme hasn't given any focus on tenants, landlords have full focus when it was not them who should be responsible, what action has been taking against tenants by WLDC?
5. The scheme seems to be extremely landlord focussed - there seems to be little contribution from the WLDC departments that can make a difference – i.e. waste collection/enforcement etc, The police – [removed] who is a very experienced pro-active PCSO covering the Hemswell camp has not even heard of the SL proposals for her area - why has she been involved in the consultation?
6. Why has the previous SL Scheme failed to address the issues of tenant passport / referencing as promised? - WLDC said a tenant black list would be available to landlords, where is it?
7. No support for landlords with problem tenants e.g. WLDC Housing department workers advising tenants to quote squatters rights when served notice of eviction.
8. Tenant accountability - there has been / is none. No enforcement around littering/rubbish despite reports being made direct to WLDC with evidence etc. As explained there is no assistance with problem tenants just bullying tactics against the landlords.
9. WLDC did not respond fast enough on complaints by tenants regarding issues reported to them, especially if they are anonymous through fear of retribution?
10. The previous scheme was riddled with inconsistent inspections. One landlord's experience example was predominantly with Home Safe. Any new scheme must have clear, consistent, quality inspections by qualified HHSRS inspectors, not "has been" fire / police officers with little or no training or experience in land-lording and property inspections
11. A number of rental properties remained unlicensed from the last scheme. The same goes for unoccupied properties. Some of us as ex cops all know owners /landlords can easily be identified and found for these properties - why do they still exist after 5 years?

Anti Social Behaviour

12. ASB has apparently fallen in the area – why is this being used as a reason for a renewed SL Scheme in SWW?
13. Do councillors understand what ASB is by definition?
 - How can this be the responsibility of the landlord?
14. Why has the previous SL Scheme failed to address anti-social behaviour of tenants and in particular ASB from tenant's neighbours?
15. Why has the previous scheme failed to assist landlords in taking action on ASB offenders?
 - One particular landlord has lost 4 sets of good tenants in 6 years due to one set of disruptive neighbours.
16. What proportion of ASB is attributed to housing associations, private houses and private rented that is actually at that property?

CAT 1 Hazards

17. It is mentioned that continued CAT 1 Hazards remain an issue in SWW and hence a need to continue a scheme. Why was action not taken or why has the action taken not been effective in 5 years?
18. What is the breakdown of the CAT 1 hazards identified?
19. If the majority of, and hence justification for, the CAT1 Hazards are stair case related what is the context?
 - It has been proved on at least 4 separate cases that these were not reasonable and approved safe (with previously existing mitigating measures) by WLDC officer/s.
20. If the CAT1 hazard resolution relating to 1 st to 2 nd floor stair cases mean preventing the use of 2nd floor this will reduce the number of bedrooms of use and hence number of available properties for larger families which in turn places more strain on the housing requirement provision by WLDC
 - . House checks need to be sympathetic to the age of the houses ie, tread depths and stair steepness?
 - One exemplar landlord in the last 10 years of owning 3 houses in particular that have stair steepness and tread depth that may fall within CAT1 Hazard none of the tenants have fallen, caused in injury to themselves or made complaint as a consequence of the stairs

Decent and Safe Homes Accreditation (DASH)

21. DASH (Decent and Safe Homes) operated by Derbyshire Council but for East Midlands landlords is endorsed by WLDC. DASH accredit landlords and inspect their properties in much the same way as the previous WLDC SL scheme did. DASH do this at minimal, often at no, cost to the Landlord. Why do WLDC need to charge such a high amount and why are WLDC not using DASH and / or their model for running a future scheme?
22. DASH also provide frequent CPD sessions for their landlord members. Remembering this if mainly free, why was there only 2 CPD sessions for high fee paying WLDC SL Landlords in the 5 years?

Concerns of Renewal of Scheme Legislation

23. Why is the emphasis placed on landlords to help control ASB and Littering when this is almost completely beyond their control?
 - There is existing legislation to combat this that seems not to be being used effectively.
24. Surely there is existing and effective legislation for enforcement to tackle the key areas used to justify the renewal of a new scheme. Why then is SL needed?
 - Is it to raise money due to insufficient funding to tackle the problems hence penalising Private Sector Landlords?

Housing Authorities / Associations

25. Why are Housing Authorities / Associations such as ASIS not being subjected to SL?
 - It has been apparent and various media reports have evidenced that HA have significant substandard accommodation that needs addressing and was covered in the PRS SL Scheme.

Rogue Landlords

26. SL is apparently divisive. Whilst it is agreed by some that landlords should be licensed, it should be ALL landlords not just some in certain areas. The selective nature of SL means that

rogue landlords (the main issue we were sold it was to address) just move to different areas within the district. Therefore, does not solve the rogue landlord issue.

- Tenants have a choice not to rent from rogue landlords.
- Why can't local authorities refuse to pay housing benefit as rent to landlords that do not meet agreed requirements? Eg proof of checks, insurance etc?

Good Landlords & Investment

27. SL has caused and is causing Landlords to sell up. This in turn could cause a squeeze of available properties and competent landlords where there is already insufficient social housing supply and hence a need for PRS.
28. Do WLDC not appreciate the investment and ongoing costs landlords have?
 - Remember when Private Landlord invest in the property they are also contributing to the community by using local trades, services and supplies, thus promoting business and development. Can Local HA's say the same to that extent as they will often keep everything in house and bring in people and services from outside the area?
29. Is it the case that WLDC are seeking to marginalise and reduce the PRS sector in order for housing associations, companies and charities to take over?

WLDC SL Team & Process

30. [removed] cannot be trusted to give an unbiased view of the scheme and its ability to solve the issues in this area.
31. Why haven't councillors met in person with landlords for consultation before continuing and expanding this scheme?
32. Nothing in the consultation informing private homeowners that this could affect their mortgages and mortgage offers and the potential for house values to decrease
33. The survey produced by WLDC was very leading, which was accepted as true in an email from (Removed). The consultation is supposed to be with everyone effected and this has not taken place.
34. A separate survey has been produced by a Landlord Group which is given a very different picture to the one produced by WLDC.

General

35. There is a working group in place made up of police, council, schools and housing association, why isn't there a rep from the private sector?
36. Even the neighbourhood plan said nothing about SW Ward!
37. License fee for previous licensed landlords is ridiculous! If a landlord has had a fit and proper check it does not need doing over again?
38. Generic Comments by disgruntled long term local landlords;
 - "How do we vent our spleen to the council so that anything we say can be taken into consideration alongside the survey results. Good landlords don't need selective licensing and it will make no difference to rogue landlords. It will drive yet more good landlords out of the rental market and open the door still further for rogue landlords. As per usual, complete blinkered thinking by the council who simply want to bolster their coffers and provide nothing constructive in return to good landlords. One of their questions on the survey is do you take references but this can be a waste of time as some landlords have no option but to provide a positive reference to a bad tenant simply to get them out or shoot themselves in the foot! The council don't check if a tenant has bad credit or if they

are in rent arrears with a previous landlord. If they did and then deducted a portion of the 5 housing benefit to pay back the arrears to the previous landlord then the problem would soon disappear. Instead they simply kick the can down the road. Central and local government policy has a strangle hold on decent landlords and is ignoring the biggest culprits that put tenants in unsuitable housing; some of the worst being the housing associations. I could go on but needless to say that wide sweeping policy changes are required to make both decent landlords and tenants lives easier. Starting by reversing (George Osborne's) section 24 and the stamp duty increases more recently brought in.

- “Like so many others I am now considering selling up and moving out of Gainsborough. I totally agree what is happening is they are going to lose good landlords. I have never increased the rent in any of my properties once good tenants move in, the longest one I have owned for nine years and still at the same rent. All my tenants are more than happy with the service I provide and have been with me for years. All repairs, replacements and problems have been instantly attended to and my tenants show their appreciation by paying their rent on time. It is a system that works well for both tenant and landlord. However, if SL comes in I face two choices, increase my rents at a time when people are already struggling with the steep rise in the cost of living or move out of Gainsborough. At the moment leaving Gainsborough and investing elsewhere is heading the choice. I just hope my good tenants get a decent caring new landlord. One tenant told my managing agent he was so happy he wouldn't leave until they took him out in a wooden box. I recently purchased another rental property in Gainsborough only because the SL had finished. What a mistake that was!!!!”
- “Trouble is this won't affect the rogue landlords. They will just carry on as usual, and they will be laughing at the system.”
- “Got rid of 5 last year, going to get rid of one more before this comes in. Such a shame, lovely long term tenants and a lovely house on Acland Street. My friend has a barn conversion in Heapham, she has just given her tenants an eviction notice and is going to sell. All they are achieving is getting rid of decent landlords.”
- “This goes ahead. I am seriously thinking of selling all mine in Gainsborough. Sick of it. Let someone else have the joys. So if any of you might be interested inbox me. Then maybe take it from there.”
- “Glaring elephant in room remains : Housing Associations are exempt from adhering to same standards and being held accountable in way PRS is. Thus, they can continue to preside over appalling conditions for months, even years (As revealed in recent excellent series of ITN reports), which would see us convicted, fined, imprisoned even, with apparent impunity. Why ?

Email Response 20

I am writing to you regarding the proposed introduction of selective licensing across certain West Lindsey wards. I believe the council are currently consulting on the proposal and that this consultation comes to an end on the 11 April.

I have no doubt that selective licensing can be a useful tool in combatting 'slum landlords' and areas of deprivation or antisocial behaviour. Nonetheless, I have been contacted by a number of people, both landlords and tenants, with grave concerns and reservations about the proposed scheme and the current consultation.

There are obviously statutory requirements to be met when introducing selective licensing but there are also government guidelines on how best to implement such a scheme and, in this instance, it seems that most of the concerns expressed to me have some merit.

There appears to be a consensus about the lack of active engagement with stakeholders that will be affected by the scheme. In the run up to the consultation, to my knowledge, no private landlords or tenants were contacted nor was any actual data gathered from them. I am informed that an algorithm was used to generate the evidential data for the study supporting selective licensing.

Government guidance on selective licensing clearly advocates the need for active engagement with both landlords and tenants and it emphasizes the need for transparency. It also stresses the necessity for a thorough consultation and an active dialogue. Algorithms are inherently biased and there is no replacement for engaging with tenants and landlords on the ground.

More pertinent is the criticism is that West Lindsey have chosen to include whole wards in the scheme. This seems illogical. There may be areas of deprivation and 'slum landlords' in every ward, these do not spread across the entirety of a ward. Government guidance points out the dangers of including large areas in selective licensing and emphasizes the need for a very targeted and precise approach. The

scheme should be just that: 'selective'. What West Lindsey is proposing, in its current form, does not appear to be selective.

The lack of engagement and transparency has left many in the sector very concerned about the broad brush stroke approach the council are adopting and, they feel that this consultation is not really a consultation at all. If there is a lack of knowledge about stakeholders surely the best way to remedy this is through engaging that sector and not moving immediately to license it.

Further concerns about the legitimacy and punitive nature of the license conditions have been raised with me. Tenants have expressed strong reservations that, amongst other things, the regular inspections would spoil their right to the quiet enjoyment of their home. The phrase 'it would feel like I was being policed in my own home' has been used.

The unintended consequences of selective licensing have also been brought up. Good landlords, faced with increased financial and administrative costs, will invariably end up passing this cost on to the tenant. At a time when the cost of living is already on the increase and personal budgets are stressed, this is far from desirable. Other landlords have indicated that this may push them to sell, resulting in tenants being made homeless.

My fear is that West Lindsey are adopting a one-size-fits-all approach to a scheme. This scheme should be targeted and precise. Whilst selective licensing may be appropriate in certain areas, normally it must be said in high density urban areas, it is patently obvious to anyone that this is not the case across whole wards. The last thing that must be allowed to happen is for the good to be thrown out with the bad and for there to be a raft of unintended consequences that negatively impact good tenants and the private rental sector.

I believe a motion has been tabled to end the current consultation. Given the concerns that I have highlighted here, this seems to be a sensible suggestion. This would provide the opportunity for an active dialogue with both landlords and tenants. West Lindsey could use this to build on what they have learned. The proposed scheme could then be refined and tailored to have maximum impact on bad landlords and minimum, or no, impact on good landlords. After all, that is the point of the scheme.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Written Response 21

Dear Sirs,

REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF PROPOSED ADDITIONAL
SELECTED LICENSING AREAS BY WLDC
PROPOSED NEW AREAS TO INCLUDE SUNNINGDALE
WAY, ESTATE, BOB RAINSFORTH ESTATE, JUNIPER
WAY, HORSLEY ROAD, WILLOUGHBY CHASE, RIVERSIDE
APPROACH, MARSHALLS RISE

We understand that WLDC intend to introduce
Selective Licensing to additional areas in
Gainsborough and as Landlords in one of the
proposed areas this would affect us.

We understand these selective licenses will
only apply to private landlords NOT
Housing Associations or home owners in the
same areas.

2.

We are Landlords for 2 relatively new properties
In [REDACTED] we bought
new in 2012 [REDACTED] 2016 (4 yrs old).

We would like to register our concerns &
views on your proposals & let you know we
strongly disagree with your proposals for
the following reasons. -

We understand that WLDC propose to
inflict a fee of £675 per property for any
& only private landlords with property in
the newly proposed selective licensing areas.
This being an additional cost to the rates
already being paid to WLDC on these
properties.

This is wrong on so many levels -

I quote - The Government's defined criteria
guidelines required to meet selective
licensing

" These areas tend to suffer from low
housing demand and/or high levels of
anti social behaviour or deprivation
or indeed additional criteria - A
designation may be made to combat
problems in an area experiencing poor

3.

property conditions, an influx of migration, a high level of deprivation or high levels of crime."

As you are aware Marshalls Rise is a relatively new development just off the main town centre area being Marshalls Yard.

As you are also aware it does not then meet any of the Government's defined criteria as listed above for selective licensing to be inflicted.

Regarding WLDC's own criteria for imposing these additional charges —

- 1/ property management + safety
- 2/ waste management
- 3/ tenancy
- 4/ ASB (not included in North Ward)
- 5/ security
- 6/ health & safety + occupation of the property!

Once again none of these criteria apply to Marshalls Rise. On this basis alone Marshalls Rise should be removed from the list. These areas also charge owners a management fee for grounds + are looked

4.

after by an external company. In any event - surely this is what we pay our rates for. All of the criteria listed, both Government & WLDC should already be covered by the rates we pay.

This is just another easy way to extract even more easy money from the law abiding. It is wrong & it is unfair.

WLDC does not need this scheme to identify rogue landlords or indeed rogue tenants/housing association tenants. From a cursory drive by through Gainsborough it is fairly obvious to all where problems of inadequate housing & other elements of your criteria might be met. You & other Agencies will no doubt receive complaints from tenants about bad landlords & equally from landlords about bad tenants.

As someone having worked in Local Government I am well aware that it is usually a few people who are persistent offenders & are well known to all the various Agencies.

WLDC needs to take these reports seriously & act on them - not penalise law abiding residents for the antisocial behaviour etc being committed by others. WLDC are targeting the wrong people & the wrong areas.

5.

We pay our rates & we should not then be picking up the bill for anti-social behaviour etc by others. By all means target the culprits but not the innocent.

It would be nice if the Council showed their loyalty to private landlords & tenants who do maintain & look after their properties & tenants not penalise them. We are just easy money making targets.

In 10 yrs of renting out 2 properties we can categorically say that we have had no bad tenants & nor are we bad landlords. We do everything by the book - We have used the same local agents for 10 yrs - they carry out full letting procedures, they make sure we are totally up to date with the latest legal & safety regulations & we abide fully with all regulations. (All of which incur extra expenses for Landlords).

We would like to add, from our experience, nuisance behaviour etc often comes from tenants occupying housing association homes (who it appears are exempt from these charges).

6.

Indeed we have heard many stories over the years from property maintenance people about the sheer vandalism caused inside & outside some of these properties.

Another reservation we have - surely labelling these areas as requiring selective licensing will decrease the value of properties in these areas.

If you do inflict selective licensing then it should just be applied on the culprits be they from private landlords, tenants, housing association tenants or indeed private home owners. It should not be law abiding citizens who foot this bill. Again, these services should be covered by the rates we pay. As stated WLDC & all the various Agencies will be fully aware where the problems are. These people are the ones to target & need to be held accountable for their actions & dealt with appropriately & swiftly. They should not be allowed to re-offend over & over again making the lives of their neighbours & law abiding people unbearable.

7.

Finally, when we bought the first rental property in 2012, we were told that the land to the corner Lhs of the road (where building had started) up to Marshalls Rise & the land to the rhs (derelict land) were the next phase of this development & building works to the rhs were due to start. 10 yrs later nothing else has happened on the Lhs & the derelict land to the rhs is a neglected eyesore on the approach to Marshalls Rise. It is areas such as these that attract flytipping.

I think it is fair to say that it is time this area was developed or tidied up & looked after. Perhaps WLDC could now carry out their obligations regarding this eyesore.

Given there is a lack of housing in Gainsborough why in 10 yrs has this land not been developed, thereby getting rid of the eyesore it is & the avoidance of it becoming a magnet for flytipping.

Instead of WLDC wasting yet more time & money setting up yet more Committees to think up ways & excuses to extract

8.

more money from your law abiding tax payers
I would respectfully suggest you use the powers
& rates you ^{already} have to deal with specific home
owners, Landlords, Tenants, Housing Association
tenants who are well known to all your
various agencies & deal with the actual
individuals who abuse the system.

We look forward to hearing from you & your
response to the issues ~~issues~~ raised

Feedback on the Previous Scheme from the Landlord Focus Group Communication

Promote the need to license and help landlords and tenants to comply with, and understand the benefits of, addressing standards.

Tell us about your experience around this?

Do more of?	Do less of?	Do differently?	Stop?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ongoing dialogue between council and landlords b. Carryout activities to raise tenants' awareness of their responsibilities c. Link different relevant partners (e.g., Police) into the service where they have a responsibility e.g., ASB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Unfulfilled promises - When the scheme came in, landlords were offered training - only two sessions offered early in the scheme, also promised CCTV in the previous scheme and not delivered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. No complaints process or clear communications of upcoming inspections b. Calls felt like they were going to a call centre. Emails could be used for communication if there was a clear SLA to respond c. HomeSafe had high staff turnover and therefore hard to build relationship with the org. d. More pragmatic approach (e.g., stair treads relate to property age and cannot be easily changed) - these are misrepresented as hazards. When landlords discuss with council decided that it is not an issue. This is not communicated to inspectors who may for later inspections note it as an issue. This undermines the professionalism of the landlords and can cause issues between landlords and tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Using HomeSafe to administer the scheme b. Inconsistent and unqualified inspections / inspectors resulting in fines and inconsistent changes required from landlords

Apply for a licence

Check that landlord has necessary information and can apply for (and easily get,) correct license.

Tell us about your experience around this?

Do more of?	Do less of?	Do differently?	Stop?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. More customer focus around way forms etc were developed 	

Improve property conditions

Work with **landlords and tenants** to improve property standards and management, where needed. This isn't just about addressing a deficit but also **recognising good landlords and promoting tenant's responsibility**.

Tell us about your experience around this?

Do more of?	Do less of?	Do differently?	Stop?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inspections carried out by HHSRS qualified staff b. Involving other agencies c. Support landlords with difficult tenants d. Council didn't respond to tenants' complaints in a timely manner e. Provide more focus on unlicensed properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. HomeSafe would <u>no</u> respond to calls or email (later in the scheme and particularly during the pandemic) – inconsistent inspections towards the end of the scheme b. Revisit guidance and decisions after they had been agreed, i.e., <u>reinspections</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Making other people responsible, including tenants, as landlords are being asked to deal with ASB. Supporting landlords with they ask for help b. Promises not kept, i.e., tenants' referencing scheme but then onus was on the landlords – nothing came from previous discussions c. 'Fit and proper tenant check' If asking previous landlord the info would include rent arrears, parking fines, keep the property in a good condition — the council do not share this info d. West Lindsey's Tenant referencing form – too long, not user friendly and asking for unnecessary/personal info e. Could the council run a referencing service like estate / managing agent or NLA schemes – gives an indication on how the tenant has been w.r.t to ASB and other issues so landlords no what they are getting f. Provide landlords with a clear checklist of newer regulations g. Lack of transparency and consistency of types of Cat 1 hazards in the previously and possible designated areas – provide clarity. Are stair treads being used as part of Cat 1 hazards to justify new scheme, when the council have agreed that this is an acceptable risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Run the scheme by the council not by a private business which is concerned with profit b. Pressure on landlords to manage tenants regardless of who they get

Report and learn

Constantly learn lessons from delivering the service and from customer experience.

Tell us about your experience around this?

Do more of?	Do less of?	Do differently?	Stop?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sharing scheme achievements 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consistent application of hazards guidance and assessment of risks – factoring the age of properties – common sense approach b. Blanket fee is applied to all landlords – fine landlords where they have had issues. Tarring all landlords with the same brush. All being charged the same without justification o how that money is being spent c. Lack of clarity on what the fees/finances have been spent on 	

Summary

Overarching themes

- Introduce a fit and proper approach for tenants
- Differential charging approach – why are good landlords charged the same as poor landlords
- Need to make other stakeholders accountable not just landlords
- Need to demonstrate licensing is part of a strategic Council approach to improving housing standards and management practices

Logged issues

- Need to justify cost of licenses through transparent approach
- How was money spent on last scheme
- Want more consultation and time to carry it out
- What is breakdown of Cat 1 Hazards from previous scheme
- What has previous scheme achieved
- Participants were keen to understand what will be different this time as last scheme over promised and under delivered
- Need to carryout series of activities to raise tenants' awareness of their responsibilities
- How is ASB distributed across other housing sectors?
- Council working group, with representatives from police, housing and schools should include a PRS Landlord representative as well