

This newsletter is from B&NES Housing Services and is designed to provide you with current information relevant to your Licensed HMO.

## HMO Licensing in Bath and North East Somerset

The Council has two HMO licensing schemes in B&NES covering around 10% of the private rented stock:

- Mandatory licensing which covers all HMOs with 3 or more floors and 5 or more people sharing facilities. There are currently around 460 properties in the mandatory scheme across the whole of B&NES.
- Additional licensing which covers all HMOs (3 or more people) with shared facilities (regardless of storeys) in the Oldfield, Westmoreland and Widcombe area. There are over 1,000 properties in the additional scheme.

## Free gull nest and egg removal treatments

\*Free roof treatments to remove gull nests and eggs are on offer in B&NES as one of many measures being taken by the Council to manage the gull problem in the area.

If you have a gulls nest on your property or you know of a nest on a neighbouring property within the following wards, visit the website [www.bathnes.gov.uk/gulls](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/gulls) or call NBC Bird & Pest Solutions on 0330 353 0060 to register interest and provide details.

Wards qualifying for free treatment: **Abbey, Kingsmead, Newbridge, Twerton, Westmoreland and Widcombe please**

\*This free treatment is available as part of the Council's 2016 gull strategy and is subject to funding being available.

## Enforcement

The Council recently took a successful prosecution against a property owner for failing to licence a property in Oldfield Park. The landlord was convicted under the Housing Act 2004 and ordered to pay a total of £2,600 including fine and costs.

Since the introduction of the Additional Licensing scheme in Bath, the Council have issued 15 Simple Cautions to landlords for failing to licence properties including five since January this year.

A simple caution is a formal warning that is given to a person who has admitted an offence. It remains on their record for 3 years and can be taken into consideration by the Courts if the person is convicted of a further offence.

We are continuing our work to identify unlicensed HMOs in the area and follow up intelligence. If you know of any HMOs which are operating without a licence, please email us with the details to [hmo\\_licensing@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:hmo_licensing@bathnes.gov.uk) so we can investigate.

## Find out more

- Web: [www.bathnes.gov.uk/hmos](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/hmos)
- Email: [hmo\\_licensing@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:hmo_licensing@bathnes.gov.uk)
- Tel: 01225 396 444

## Legislation update

Housing and Planning Bill: This is a UK Government Bill about social and private rented housing, rogue landlords, estate agents, planning and compulsory purchase. It also includes the possible introduction of penalty charge notices for housing offences including failure to licence. It is passing through the House of Lords but is scheduled to return to the House of Commons in early May. For updates visit [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)

Mandatory licensing: The Government is currently considering changing the criteria for mandatory licensing and there is the possibility that the threshold at which a mandatory licence is required may be lowered. This could mean that smaller HMOs are included in the mandatory scheme. We hope to be in a better position to advise you later on in the year. Our website will be updated when we have confirmation.

## Mandatory HMO Licensing fees

As part of the Council's financial planning it is necessary to review the HMO Licensing fees that apply to mandatory licensable properties.

A decision has not yet been made with respect to the fee and the fees structure, but it is expected that there will be an increase in the basic fee and there will no longer be any discounts including the accreditation discount. This is to ensure the Council fully covers its costs.

Any change to the fees will apply to mandatory licensing only, and will include both new licences as well as renewals. Once a decision is made the website will be updated.

**Bath & North East  
Somerset Council**

## Student move out

This is often a testing time of year that can result in neighbourhood problems.

We would appreciate your help in visiting your properties as soon as possible after tenants vacate to identify if any waste that has been left so it can be removed straight away.

Waste Services are working hard to encourage students to plan ahead and not leave clearing out to the last minute, to donate items to charity and to utilise the existing waste and recycling collections in the weeks leading up to them moving.

Students can also access the household waste collection site using their student ID cards and use British Heart Foundation donation banks at both University campuses and in the local area.

For more information visit: [www.bathnes.gov.uk/wasteservices](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/wasteservices)

Guidance on meeting licence conditions for gardens and rubbish is available via [www.bathnes.gov.uk/hmos](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/hmos) under 'Latest News'

## Give us your feedback

Let us know what you think about our service by completing the 2 minute online feedback form: [bathnes.gov.uk/feedbackhousing](http://bathnes.gov.uk/feedbackhousing)



[westofenglandrentalstandard.co.uk](http://westofenglandrentalstandard.co.uk)

The rental standard includes a guide to [minimum property standards](#) and endorses existing accreditation providers. The following bodies have been endorsed to display the Rental Standard logo:

- [Bristol Association of Letting and Management Agents \(BALMA\)](#)
- [Bristol SU Lettings](#)
- [National Approved Letting Scheme \(NALS\)](#)
- [Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors \(RICS\)](#)
- [South West Landlords Association \(SWLA\)](#)