

Changes to the HMO Licensing Standards

We have updated our HMO Licensing Standards which can be accessed [here](#).

The changes include kitchen facilities for HMOs above restaurants, where occupants have no constant access to the kitchen facilities.

We have also clarified what doors are acceptable for bedrooms in HMOs and also added some more details concerning the total communal living space standards in larger HMOs.

Rent Repayment Order (RRO)

Tenants from one of Bath's HMOs received most of their rent they paid during the time when the property was not licensed when it should have been. The First Tier Tribunal Property Chamber (Residential Property) ordered the landlord to repay each of the seven tenants £4,895.81, totalling £34,270.67.

The Rent Repayment Order is available to all tenants who live or lived in an unlicensed HMO. They need to apply for RRO. Our duty is to inform the tenants of the Order during our investigation of unlicensed HMOs.

Update – Licensing

Since 1st of October 2018 we have received nearly 1900 applications for new and renewal HMO licences. All applications have been validated. We are now working to draft and issue licences as soon as possible. However this could still be several months in some cases. Please note that once you submitted a valid application, you have fulfilled your obligation and comply with the legislation and can continue to rent your property out.

If you have not received your proposed licence, please be patient as you will receive your copy as soon as it is signed.

Our office has also investigated a large number of potentially unlicensed HMOs. We have so far issued 17 Warning Letters, one Simple Caution and one Financial Penalty.

To report an unlicensed HMO, visit [HERE](#).

Energy Performance Certificate

One of the licence conditions is that each HMO needs to have an EPC rating of A, B, C, D or E. Landlords should make any necessary improvements to achieve the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard to ensure compliance with the licence conditions and The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015, as amended.

Exemption from this requirement is available under some circumstances, information on how to apply for an exemption can be found in the guidance referred to below.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-private-rented-property-minimum-energy-efficiency-standard-landlord-guidance>

To apply for a new licence or renewal, visit:
www.bathnes.gov.uk/hmoapp

For more information about standards and other useful links, visit:
www.bathnes.gov.uk/hmos

Waste

Bath's Student Community Partnership and Bath and North East Somerset Council would like to remind all landlords that appropriate waste and recycling containers should be provided for tenants and these can be requested via the Council's website on <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/bins-rubbish-and-recycling/order-container> if necessary. If your property will have more than 5 student tenants, a 240L wheeled bin can be requested.



Also, the Partnership would like to inform you of the annual Good Neighbour Campaign, which will happen throughout October to encourage all Bath residents to meet their neighbours. They will give out waste and recycling advice, as well as information on safety near the river and on a night out.

Tenants Fee Act 2019

Please read the [guidance for landlords and agents](#).

From June 2019 you can only charge:

- the rent
- a refundable tenancy deposit capped at no more than five weeks' rent where the annual rent is less than £50,000, or six weeks' rent where the total annual rent is £50,000 or above
- a refundable holding deposit (to reserve a property) capped at no more than one week's rent
- payments to change the tenancy when requested by the tenant, capped at £50, or reasonable costs incurred if higher
- payments associated with early termination of the tenancy, when requested by the tenant
- payments in respect of utilities, communication services, TV licence and council tax;
- A default fee for late payment of rent and replacement of a lost key/security device, where required under a tenancy agreement

Low cost Wessex Energy Loans

Wessex Resolutions offers homeowners and landlords across Bath and North East Somerset low cost loans at 4.2% fixed rate for the term of the loan and with flexible repayment arrangements to improve the energy efficiency of properties or to install renewable energy measures, such as solar PV panels.

For more information visit Bath & North East Somerset Council's energy at home advice service:

www.energyathome.org.uk or
www.wessexresolutions.org.uk

Team changes

Tomos Jenkins and Melody Taylor have left our team. If your property was inspected by them and you need to get in contact with the team regarding any outstanding works, please contact the HMO licensing team on HMO_Licensing@bathnes.gov.uk