

# Newham Private Rented Sector E-Bulletin

September 2022

Private Sector Housing Standards

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## Message from Councillor Mohammed - Lead Cabinet Member for Housing

Welcome to our Newham landlords, licence holders and agents. Thank you to everyone who responded to our property licensing consultation. Your views are highly valued and have been a significant part of the consultation process.

In this edition we will be providing you with an update on the proposed property licensing schemes, cost of living help and support where tenants are in arrears. There is an update on our energy efficiency team's work as well as our ongoing request for good accommodation for our temporary housing use.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022, Cabinet decided to approve the proposed additional HMO licensing and selective licensing schemes. Please read the article next as it will provide important information on the Additional HMO Licensing designation and details of when and how you can renew your Additional HMO licence/s.

As part of this administration's ongoing agenda to champion the rights of private renters living in Newham, the two licensing schemes are amongst the most important tools the Council has to tackle exploitative practices and support our residents as well as providing a level playing field for landlords complying with their licensing conditions. The new property licensing schemes for the coming five-year period will support our Building a Fairer Newham 2022 manifesto.

Our intentions are to enhance the inspection regime of the private rented sector in our borough through robust and rigorous enforcement activity; demonstrate zero tolerance of poor and rogue landlords, which will make it a fairer playing field for our good landlords; introduce a 'Fairer Newham' standard in the private rented sector so that all landlords provide higher quality housing that have good space standards. We want safe and well-managed properties in the private rented sector which meet our minimum standards of energy efficiency and security.

## Property Licensing schemes

Licensing helps us to tackle poor property conditions, deprivation, anti-social behaviour and poor management of properties by some landlords. From 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022, we consulted on our proposed property licensing scheme.

M·E·L Research, an independent research company, carried out the consultation and completed a report for the Council. Click [here](#) to view the Consultation Report. The Council considered this report and the additional HMO licensing scheme and selective scheme were approved by Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022. Click [here](#) to read the Cabinet Report.

### **Additional HMO licensing update:**

The additional HMO licensing scheme designation notice was confirmed. The date of the new additional HMO designation is 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023. Click [here](#) to see the Designation of an Additional HMO Licensing Notice.

Landlords renting a house in multiple occupation, shared by three to four tenants living in two or more households will have to obtain a licence from the council unless exempt

An additional HMO licence costs £1250, for up to 5 years. However, there are discounts available including an early bird discount, reducing the fee to £800 for those who successfully apply before 1st January 2023. There are also discounts for warmer homes and being a certified member of a landlord accreditation organisation, which reduces the fee to £700 for the licence.

The Council will be accepting additional HMO licence renewal applications from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022. [Apply for a property licence – Rented property licensing – Newham Council](#)

### **Selective Licensing update:**

After Cabinet approval, a selective licensing confirmation application was made on 25<sup>th</sup> July to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities and we anticipate feedback on their decision in around November 2022. There will be further publicity circulated to Selective licence holders on the outcome of this decision. The current scheme expires at the end of February 2023.

For further information and updates please visit our webpages:

[www.newham.gov.uk/propertylicensingconsultation](http://www.newham.gov.uk/propertylicensingconsultation)

[Apply for a property licence – Rented property licensing – Newham Council](#)



## Cost of Living : High Energy Bills



### Are your tenants struggling with the cost of living or high energy bills?

If they are struggling with the **rising cost of living** they can apply to Our Newham Money [Emergency Support](#), our local welfare scheme.

For support with **energy bills**, tenants can make use of the [Seasonal Health Intervention Network \(SHINE\)](#), an energy advice service which offers support to low-income residents, as well as older people, families with young children, and those with long-term illnesses or disabilities.

Tel: 0300 555 0195 to speak to an advisor  
Open Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

If you are considering **improving the thermal efficiency** of your property or properties this autumn, landlords may be able to take advantage of the [Keep Warm Keep Well Scheme](#) which offers free home insulation for homes with an EPC of D or lower where tenants are on low incomes or in receipt of certain benefits.

[The Green Homes Grant](#) can also help landlords cover two-thirds of improvement works such as insulation or triple glazing, where the home has an EPC of D or lower and the tenants are on low incomes.

Please pass the flyer on the next page on to your tenants.

# STRUGGLING FINANCIALLY?

If you're struggling to meet your energy and food costs or facing an emergency you can apply to Our Newham Money Emergency Support, our local welfare scheme.



## You need to be:

- living in Newham
- receiving a means tested benefit such as Universal Credit, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit or Housing Benefit.



## In addition, one of the following must apply to you:

- you're affected by the current cost of living
- there's been a significant change in circumstances or a life changing event causing hardship
- have taken all reasonable steps to maximise your income.

Even if you don't meet the criteria, we might still be able to help you. Please apply and we will consider your application.

For further information and to apply:

[www.ournewhammoney.co.uk/emergency-support](http://www.ournewhammoney.co.uk/emergency-support)



112-118 The Grove, Stratford E15 1NS  
020 8430 2041

**WE ARE NEWHAM.**

## Improving housing standards in the private rented sector

London Borough of Newham has been granted £75,392 as a result of participating in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Compliance and Enforcement Competition.

### **What are the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards?**

Since April 2020 privately rented homes in England and Wales are required to meet the [minimum energy efficiency standard](#) of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band E before they can be let, unless a valid exemption is in place.

These requirements are set out in [The Energy Efficiency \(Private Rented Property\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2015 \('the PRS Regulations'\)](#).

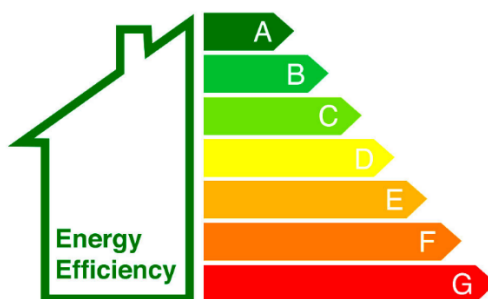


Image: Right Survey 2020

### **What will the grant fund?**

The competition supports local authorities to raise awareness of the PRS Regulations among both landlords and tenants as well as building capacity to tackle the identification of non-compliant landlords. The funding can also be used to support local authorities to create processes to enforce the PRS Regulations.

At Newham, the grant will fund 5 landlord drop-in sessions around the borough. The session will be an opportunity for Newham, landlord to speak to our Energy Efficiency Team about what the Minimum Energy Efficiency standards means for their properties and ask any specific questions they may have. The team will also be able to provide more details on grants and support currently available.

### **Preliminary drop in dates:**

Stratford Town Hall – 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022, 4-7pm

East Ham Town Hall – 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022, 4-7pm

Albersbrook Community Centre – 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022, 4-7pm

Beckton (The Globe) – 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023, 4-7pm

Canning Town (community Neighborhood Centre and Library) – 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023, 4-7pm

### **Who is funding the grant?**

The £6.3 million competition is funded by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and managed by the Midlands Net Zero Hub. The second round of the PRS MEES competition will see a further 26 local authorities receive funding to improve the energy efficiency standards of domestic properties in the private rented sector. This iteration builds on the success of the previous scheme, which saw 59 local authorities supported.

## Energy Efficiency case work

As part of Newham's work to improve the energy efficiency of properties in the borough, our Energy Efficiency Team has been investigating properties in breach of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (properties with an EPC rating of F or G).

By using our licensing data and the Government EPC database, 166 properties were identified as potentially being rented out with an EPC rating of F or G and therefore not complying with these regulations.

The team identified a property in Leader Avenue which was being rented and had an EPC rating of G (the worst possible rating). As this was in breach of the regulations, the officers sent letters to the landlord requesting for the property to be improved.

Despite these requests, the property remained 'substandard' and as it was still in breach of the regulations the landlord was served with a penalty notice of £750.

The landlord appealed the penalty notice at the First-Tier Tribunal. On 23 June 2022, the appeal was dismissed and the penalty was upheld. The Judge stated that "The penalty imposed could have been substantially higher than it is" and that the Authority "have acted, as far as I can see, in an entirely fair way".

Find your property's EPC rating at <https://www.gov.uk/find-energy-certificate>

Find out more about the Minimum Energy Efficiency standards at <https://www.newham.gov.uk/housing-homes-homelessness/minimum-energy-efficiency-standards-meas>



*The image above shows the property with a poor EPC rating of G.*



## Letting your property to us

If you have a property to let, and you would like to rent it to Newham Council, then please contact us by **emailing [PRSsupply@newham.gov.uk](mailto:PRSsupply@newham.gov.uk) or phone us on 020 3373 1149.**

If you let your property with us, we will pay you **£200** to reserve the property. There are no hidden fees or commission charges.

Depending on the size of the property, we can offer our accredited landlords up to **£4,000** in addition to a Rent Guarantee insurance\*. *\*Insurance policy purchased is for first 12 months via Help2Rent, Help2Rent Policy terms and conditions apply.*

For further details and to see if you qualify please visit:

[www.newham.gov.uk/housing-homes-homelessness/letting-property-us/1](http://www.newham.gov.uk/housing-homes-homelessness/letting-property-us/1)



## Tenants in arrears

The COVID-19 pandemic hit us all in many ways. Some people sadly lost loved ones, others may have lost their job, or are now on reduced working hours. Others are simply struggling to keep up with the increasing cost of living. As a result some tenants have found it extremely difficult to pay their rent and could have fallen into arrears, or even worse, facing eviction. Newham wants to help.

If you have a tenant who is finding it hard to make their rent payments, or is now in arrears, we may provide financial assistance. If we can help sustain a tenancy and avoid a potential eviction please let us know by emailing [dutytorefer@newham.gov.uk](mailto:dutytorefer@newham.gov.uk). In the subject box, please indicate 'TENANT IN ARREARS' and we will make sure the case is prioritised.



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