

Newham Private Rented Sector E-Bulletin

November 2021

Private Sector Housing Standards

Email: Propertylicensing@newham.gov.uk

Ph: 020 3373 1950



Message from Councillor Mohammed – Lead Cabinet Member for Housing

Welcome to all our Newham landlords & agents.

Our Property Licensing consultation is now open and we want to hear from landlords and agents, tenants and other residents regarding the Councils' proposals by 26th January 2022. We have also provided the headline findings from our summer landlord and resident survey and how we can all support those suffering from domestic violence.

Councillor Shaban Mohammed, Cabinet Lead for Housing, said:

“We want to hear from everyone in the borough who has a stake in safe, secure, and well-managed private rented homes.

“We want to keep delivering for you tenants and landlords by regulating the sector in a way that helps everyone to thrive, so it's vital that you have your say on how our licensing is working for you.

“Democracy starts from the ground-up so I want to encourage everyone to take part. This is your Council and your borough, we work for you.”

WE ARE CONSULTING.

WE ARE
NEWHAM.



Property licensing – have your say

Property licensing helps define standards for tenants and landlords alike on the quality of the private rented sector. Licensing helps us to tackle poor property conditions, deprivation, anti-social behaviour, crime and substandard management of properties by some landlords. Whether you are a private tenant, landlord, local resident or business, we want your views on property licensing, as the current scheme expires in 2023.

We really welcome your views, as they are important to us.

You can view and respond to the consultation by the 26th January 2022 by following the link below or scanning the QR code.

www.newham.gov.uk/propertylicensingconsultation



People at the Heart
of Everything We Do

Property Licensing Consultation

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National Residents Landlords Forum

Newham Council is very interested to hear from landlords and licence holders to understand their views. We recently presented at an online National Residents Landlords Forum in November, with Richard Blanco. If you would like to attend the next event, please email propertylicensing@newham.gov.uk or phone us on 0203 373 1950.

For more information about the previous webinars please [click here](#).



Enforcement Action

Since our current licencing scheme started in 2018 we have carried out the following:

- Over 26,000 landlords have been issued with licences for **40,000** rented homes;
- We have dealt with over **95,000** requests and contacts from private landlords/tenants;
- Carried out **15,300** inspections and licence audits;
- Served **570** notices relating to property standards;
- Imposed **290** Financial Penalty Notices on non-compliant landlord.

40,000 Property Licences Issued!!

The Property Licensing Team has issued over **40,000** Property Licences in Newham, this is a great achievement for the service.

Prior to a Property Licence being issued, checks are carried out on the tenure, occupation, ownership, property history and on the proposed licence holder. We also carry out checks to see if any proposed licence holders are on the Rogue Landlord database.

One of our top priorities is carrying out investigations on properties where the landlord has failed to apply for a licence. This is done with the use of joint departmental data analysis and information from the public so that we can continue to identify properties that require a licence and have failed to apply for one. Rogue landlords who have been evading Property Licensing are being significantly reduced.

If you suspect that a private rented property within the borough is unlicensed, you can let us know by using our online form. [Report an unlicensed property or concerns with a licensed property - Newham Online Forms \(achieveservice.com\)](https://www.achieveservice.com)



Results of Newham Council Landlord Engagement Survey



Thank you to everyone who participated in the Newham Landlords survey that was carried out between 10th May 2021 and 9th June 2021. We received a total of 176 responses.

- Some of the key issues that landlords experience with tenants include subletting, rent arrears, poor cleanliness, anti-social behaviour, vandalism (and crime/s as a result).
- Landlords would like to be supported by the Council in areas relating to: collecting rent arrears, eviction, dispute mediation, Newham's housing standard requirements and license conditions, housing health and safety rating system inspections as well as the negative COVID 19 pandemic impacts through a liaison officer within the Council.
- 80% of landlords would like more information about energy efficiency and energy grants for their private rented properties;
- 63% of landlords requested more information on the Landlord's Accreditation Scheme;
- 52% of landlords said that they would consider a training course on Private Rented Sector legal requirements; and
- 46% of responding landlords said that they would consider a training course on landlords' roles and responsibilities.

Next Steps

We have produced an information pack to assist landlords with the issues identified from our survey and will be putting it on our website. For further information, please see <https://www.newham.gov.uk/housing-homes-homelessness/landlord-survey>

If you would like information about the Landlord's Accreditation Scheme, legal requirements within the private rented sector and landlords' roles and responsibilities, you can contact the Private Sector Housing team by emailing: privatehousing@newham.gov.uk or via [Landlord accreditation scheme](#).

Tenant survey in partnership with Generation Rent

A survey conducted between 10th May and 9th June 2021 by Newham, in partnership with Generation Rent, found that 70 per cent of private renters have never contacted the council about home or tenancy issues, despite 84 per cent encountering problems.

In response to the findings, Newham Council is conducting a dedicated programme of further research and engagement with private renters in the borough. All private renters were encouraged to sign up for the project, which began with dedicated focus groups that ran in the week commencing 18th October. For further information please visit: <https://www.newham.gov.uk/rentersurvey>

If any of your tenants living in privately rented accommodation in Newham would like to attend a focus group in the future, or if you would like to receive further information about the survey including the results, then please email us at: privatehousing@newham.gov.uk

A digital tenant pack has been produced to provide information for tenants, if any of your tenants would like a copy, please download it from <https://www.newham.gov.uk/rentersurvey> or contact us by emailing: privatehousing@newham.gov.uk



Letting Agents - a fair deal for Newham tenants and landlords

Newham Council's Private Sector Housing Standards & Trading Standards are carrying out unannounced inspections of letting agents and property management agents in the borough. This is to ensure agents are compliant with the Consumer Rights Act, which includes displaying fees and charges and other legislation making it mandatory for agents to be a member of a redress scheme and a client money protection scheme.

We want to ensure that there is a level playing field for compliant letting agents to undertake their business activities. The team will be carrying out unannounced inspections of agents' offices and their websites. Although many agents will be compliant, those not operating in compliance with the legal requirements will face increased fines and potentially criminal prosecution.

Letting and property management agents can find information on the legal requirements on the Council website, along with the London Trading Standards Lettings Enforcement Policy which the Council has adopted, for further details please visit; [Letting Agent Information – Newham Council](#).

Tenants who are concerned about unfair trading practices can report concerns directly to Trading Standards to investigate by emailing Trading.Standards@newham.gov.uk or can call the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133. Newham Trading Standards advise tenants renting in the borough that if a letting agent asks for something unusual, like a payment for something that is not rent or a refundable deposit, then you should question this and seek advice if unsure.



Domestic Abuse

By Deidre Cartwright, former PRS Lead at Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse.



daha

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance



The news this past month has been full of horrific evidence of violence against women and girls, most prominently the tragic murders of Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa.

Home is often seen as a place of safety and refuge, but for the millions of women and children living with perpetrators of domestic abuse, home is a place of fear and violence.

Even as COVID-19 restrictions reduce, domestic abuse has drastically increased, and many women and children still struggle to access safety and support systems. As a result, many feel their only choices are to leave their home, becoming homeless or remain with the perpetrator, where the risk of severe harm or death becomes increasingly likely.

Currently 4.6 million households in England, are living in the private rental sector, nearly 30% of domestic abuse occurs within the private rented sector. As PRS landlords, you are uniquely placed to access people in their homes and offer help in simple yet effective ways.

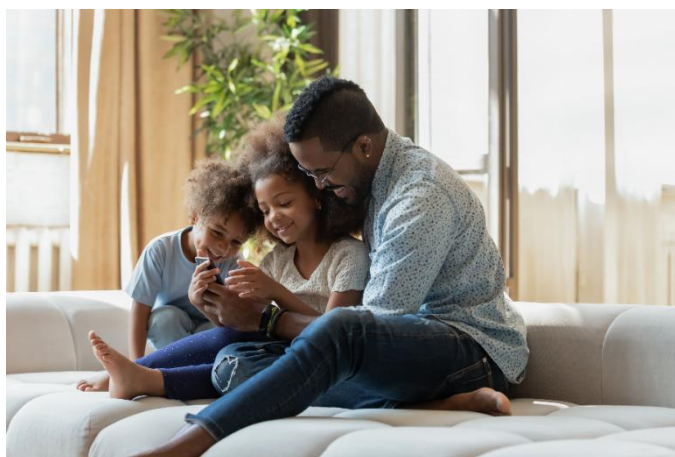
- Looking out for the signs of abuse and safely asking your tenants the right questions about their experience when they are safe and alone.
- Provide tenants with information about local and national support options and helping them to stay safe in their homes through services such as the Sanctuary Scheme, which provides free security measures such as lock changes and additional alarms for private and social housing tenants.
- Support tenants to safely leave their home if they need to do so to become safe from further harm.

For more information on how to support your tenants, please refer to the [Domestic Abuse Guidance for Private Rented Sector Landlords](#) provided by the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA). You can find out more on the [DAHA PRS webpage](#). Also speak to your local authority PRS team about the local domestic abuse support options.

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 or phone us on 020 3373 1149.** We have local families who can move in immediately.

For further details please visit: www.newham.gov.uk/housing-homes-homelessness/letting-property-us/1



Help 2 Rent

Help2Rent is a landlord legal and rent protection scheme that could potentially revolutionise the private rented market. Instead of a deposit and rent in advance, Help2Rent provides insurance to landlords for up to £50k worth of damages and 12 months' rent loss. For new tenants referred through the scheme, Newham will pay the landlord's fee for the first year. It provides cover for people who may be on Universal Credit or Housing Benefit. The insurer will also cover legal fees and expenses.

For more about what Help2Rent can offer, please visit the website [HELP2RENT || Social Housing Made Simple](#). Or email our Private Rented Solutions Team Leader, Shezad at Shezad.Khan@newham.gov.uk

Tenants in arrears

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit us all in many ways. Some people have 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. In the subject box, please indicate 'TENANT IN ARREARS' and we will make sure the case is prioritised.

'MyNewham' is changing

We will be upgrading the 'MyNewham' portal in the New Year. This upgrade will provide a more intuitive system and will make it easier for you to carry out important tasks with the Council.

The new look portal will provide:

- A greater range of online services
- Smart email notifications
- Ability to track your requests easily

What happens next:

If you did not log into your current 'MyNewham' account by 14th November 2021, your account will no longer be active after this change and you will need to follow the sign up process to re-register.

To ensure you do not lose access to our online services, login to your 'My Newham' account now at <https://www.newham.gov.uk>.

If you no longer require the use of your 'MyNewham' account, please ignore this email as there is no further action for you to take.

If you do require further assistance please visit the contact us page on our website at <https://www.newham.gov.uk/contact-information/contact-newham-council> or telephone Customer Services on 0208 430 2000.



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