Property Licensing Scheme FAQs

What is a Property Licensing Scheme?

Everyone deserves a decent and safe home in Barking and Dagenham.

Property Licensing Schemes help councils to protect private tenants and crack down on rogue landlords. They help to:

- improve the quality of private rented homes, ensuring they are safe for tenants to live in;
- reduce antisocial behaviour associated with poorly managed rented properties and
- allow the council to act against landlords who provide a poor standard of accommodation

All landlords and property managing agents, who let properties in this borough, need to apply for a licence.

Don’t we already have a Property Licensing Scheme in place?

The council currently has a Discretionary Licensing scheme which comes to an end on Saturday 31 August 2019.

Earlier this year, the Government approved a Selective Licensing Scheme for five years, right across the borough – the first of this kind to be given government approval anywhere in the country.

The new, borough wide, five-year Selective Licensing Scheme will start on Sunday 1 September 2019 and continue until 31 August 2024.

We also have a Mandatory HMO (Houses in multiple occupation) Licence Scheme for landlords that rent a property that is occupied by five or more people (including children), living in two or more households.

Why has the council brought in the new Selective Licensing Scheme?

Over the last five years, private rented homes have been the fastest growing housing provision in the borough. They make up 27 per cent of the borough’s housing and provide accommodation to an increasing number of vulnerable individuals and families.

We are absolutely determined to protect our tenants, making sure they live in safe homes that are in good condition and are well managed.
The new scheme means approximately 20,000 households in the borough’s private rental sector will be protected from rogue landlords through our Selective Licensing Scheme, and will be able to rent, knowing their properties have satisfied conditions, and are safe to live in.

**How do Property Licensing Schemes protect tenants?**

Landlord licensing protects tenants from poor living conditions by ensuring they have safe homes that are in good condition and well managed.

As part of our Licensing Schemes we assess properties to make sure they are safe and we carry out checks to ensure people are fit to be landlords.

We set standards and conditions for the management of each property, ensure safety measures are in place, and enforce against landlords that do not meet the required conditions.

**How do Property Licensing Schemes support landlords?**

The Council supports landlords to provide decent and safe homes to rent.

We give you information and advice about your responsibilities as a landlord and help you to comply with the conditions of your licence.

We can also provide support to help you to run your rental business and improve your property management.

For further information please contact us on 020 8724 8898.

**Have the current Property Licensing Schemes improved housing conditions?**

Yes, the current schemes have helped us to weed out rogue landlords who put tenants at risk, and to crack down on crime, antisocial behaviour and overcrowding.

They have helped us to enforce against rogue landlords that put profits above people.

The current schemes have helped the council to start 70 prosecutions, and serve 570 enforcement notices requiring properties to be made safe.

We have also carried out over 100 operations working in partnership with the Metropolitan Police and London Fire Brigade to ensure properties are regulated and safe.
When will the new Selective Licensing Scheme start?

The new, borough wide, five-year Selective Licensing Scheme will start on Sunday 1 September 2019.

Under the Licensing laws, every privately rented property in Barking and Dagenham will need to be licensed and comply with strict conditions to ensure each property is safe and properly managed.

How long will a Selective Licensing Scheme licence last for?

The Selective Licence Scheme has been granted from Sunday 1 September 2019 until 31 August 2024. Licences will be issued within the above dates.

Do landlords that rent Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) also need to apply for the new Selective Licensing Scheme?

No, HMOs which are occupied by five or more people (including children) living in two or more households, must apply for a Mandatory HMO Licence.

Landlords that currently hold a Mandatory HMO Licence do not need to reapply for a licence, until their current licence expires.

New landlords that rent a property that is occupied by five or more people (including children) living in two or more households, should apply for a Mandatory HMO Licence here: https://lbld.metastreet.co.uk/

The Council is working to introduce an Additional HMO Licence for HMOs that are occupied by three or more non-related people that share some facilities such as a kitchen or bathroom.

I’m a landlord and I already have a Discretionary Property Licence – do I have to register and pay for the new Selective Licensing Scheme?

Yes. The Discretionary Licensing Scheme comes to an end on Saturday 31 August 2019. The new Selective Licensing Scheme starts on Sunday 1 September 2019 and all landlords (apart from landlords that already have a Mandatory HMO Licence) must apply and pay for a licence – the licence will be valid until 31 August 2024.

Landlords that have held a current licence with Barking and Dagenham Council for at least two years and have not been subject to any enforcement action, including convictions, cautions or civil penalties, will be given a 50% discount on the Part B payment.
How much do landlords have to pay?

All applicants will need to pay a Part A payment of £470.

There is also a Part B payment of £430.

Landlords that have held a current licence with Barking and Dagenham Council for at least two years and have not been subject to any enforcement action, including convictions, cautions or civil penalties, will be given a 50% discount on Part B.

How do I apply for a licence?

You can apply for a licence via our new online system. [https://lbbd.metastreet.co.uk/](https://lbbd.metastreet.co.uk/)

What happens to landlords and managing agents that haven’t applied for a licence?

It is a criminal offence to rent out a property in Barking and Dagenham without applying for a licence.

We work closely with the police, London Fire Brigade and other agencies to identify unlicensed properties. We also carry out compliance visits to all licensed properties.

We use a range of enforcement actions if landlords rent properties without a licence, including fines and prosecutions.

Can the council refuse my application for a licence?

Yes. We carry out checks to make sure people are ‘fit and proper’ to be landlords and if we decide a landlord isn’t, we can refuse a licence.

How can I check if my landlord has a licence?

Tenants can check if their landlord has a licence by looking at our public register. This function will be available in September 2019.

Who do I contact if I have concerns?

Tenants who need further support can call us on 020 8724 8898.

Landlords can get advice and support by calling us on 020 8724 8898.

You can report an unlicensed property by e-mailing PRPL@lbbd.gov.uk
Why are landlords charged for a Property Licence?

The Selective Licence Scheme will help us to protect tenants and crack down on rogue landlords. We have to charge for licences to help cover the cost of the assessing applications, issuing licences and accompanying documents, inspections, licensing enforcement and monitoring properties.

Did you consult with people about the new Selective Licensing Scheme?

Yes. We carried out a comprehensive consultation with key groups including tenants, landlords, managing agents, neighbouring boroughs, and the emergency services:

- 66% of tenants and 60% of borough residents said continuing the scheme in 2019 would have a positive impact, and 59% agreed that the scheme should be borough-wide

- tenants and residents said it would have a particularly important impact on antisocial behaviour, property conditions and overcrowding.

The full results of the consultation can be viewed here.