

# Bolton Selective Licensing Area - Update

## Background

Selective Licensing came into force in the Tonge Moor area of Bolton on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008, as it was deemed an appropriate tool to help tackle some of the anti-social behaviour being experienced, as well as supporting wider regeneration activities in the area. Running for five years, the aim of this scheme is to

- reduce and tackle anti-social behaviour
- provide support and training for private landlords
- Improve the quality of the housing stock
- Improve property management standards
- Improve the image and perception of the area

During the time this scheme has been running, all of the privately rented houses in the designated area have been inspected using the Housing Health & Safety Rating System. Where hazards within the properties have been identified the Housing and Public Health Unit have worked with Landlords/Managing Agents to ensure that appropriate works have been undertaken, thereby improving property standards.

## Regeneration

Over the last 10 years Bolton at Home, on behalf of the Council, has undertaken significant regeneration works within the Tonge area. The continuing work in the area now concentrates on Yates Street and Union Road. All of the properties on Yates Street have been purchased by agreement and subsequently demolished. Negotiations continue with the remaining owners of 3-77 Union Road to purchase these by agreement. Once this has been completed discussions will continue regarding the future redevelopment of the area.



**Yates Street before demolition**



**Yates Street after demolition**

## Licensing

There are currently 114 licences in force, which place a number of conditions on the licence holder. Bolton Council and its partners use a graduated approach to ensure all landlords are aware of and meet their responsibilities, especially around tenancy management and anti-social behaviour. This is supported by various workshops that have been held to offer additional support and guidance as required.

Despite best attempts to licence all the rented properties, it has been necessary to bring prosecutions against two landlords for operating without a licence. Both were found guilty at Bolton Magistrates Court resulting in fines and costs being awarded. As a criminal offence was committed the persons/companies found guilty may not be deemed appropriate to hold other licences, in Bolton or other boroughs under the Housing Act 2004.



Landlords of licensed properties are reminded that requirements include (see conditions for full list):

- Gas appliances – It is a legal requirement that gas safety checks are carried out annually by a gas safe engineer and the tenant is provided with a copy of the gas safety record.
- All properties must have a satisfactory periodic electrical inspection report undertaken every five years.
- Written tenancy agreements must be issued and they should contain a specific clause relating to anti-social behaviour and steps must be taken to tackle any issues if a problem arises.
- All tenants must be advised of the licensing scheme and its implications for them
- References must be obtained for new tenants.

### **Landlord Accreditation Scheme**

Bolton Council encourages all private landlords to join the Bolton Accredited & Residential Landlord Organisation [BARLO] and take advantage of the services offered. During June 2011 BARLO adopted a new Code of Standards developed in partnership with ten Greater Manchester Authorities. Free membership and one application makes it much easier for new and existing members of BARLO to register and access all the benefits of the Greater Manchester Landlord Accreditation Scheme which include:

- Over 4000 applicants on our housing waiting list looking for a new home
- Former tenant reference checks, tenancy agreements, inventories, Notices and many more tenancy management forms and documents
- Assistance in dealing with problem tenants and antisocial neighbours
- Information workshops i.e. Reducing Rent Arrears, Possession Proceedings and Legal Notices
- Regular landlord events, forums and workshops offering Continuing Professional Development
- Greater access to qualified and experienced housing professionals for advice & information
- Weekly online Newsletter containing details of housing related announcements and publications
- Advisory List of Contractors operating locally, grants, discounts or special offers.

BARLO can help you find suitable tenants by marketing your accredited property to let across Bolton and Greater Manchester; we carry out additional former tenant reference checks to help you avoid problem tenants. We advertise on websites, property pages in local newspaper, and display adverts in housing office reception areas. You can also download and print your property adverts to display in the window of the property or local shops, along with your accreditation certificates.

Request a membership application form and copy of the Greater Manchester Code of Standards by contacting BARLO direct on Tel 01204 338721, Email [barlo@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:barlo@bolton.gov.uk) or visit [www.barlo.org.uk](http://www.barlo.org.uk)

### **Useful contacts**

#### **All issues in relation to selective licensing and property standards:**

Housing & Public Health Unit  
Castle Hill Centre, Castleton Street, Bolton, BL2 2JW

Tel: 01204 336500 Email: [housingandpublichealth@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:housingandpublichealth@bolton.gov.uk)

#### **Reporting anti-social behaviour:**

Tel: 01204 336500 email: [asbreporting@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:asbreporting@bolton.gov.uk)  
In an emergency dial 999 or for non-emergency Police assistance call 101

