

HMO Licensing Policy 2020 - Comments from Consultation Respondents

The key points raised in responses to the consultation were:

- A Fees and costs of running the scheme
- B Duplicity between HMO licensing and Rent Smart Wales requirements
- C Comments on licence conditions
- D Concerns about anti-social behaviour
- E Licensing process and enforcement
- F Need for additional licensing scheme.

Comments from Respondent	Key points
Not clear on need for review of Policy. Is there a shortfall in accommodation for students or young professionals?	F
Too many controls on private landlords. Duplicity of licensing controls between Rent Smart Wales and local councils. How will scheme stop or reduce nuisance.	B, F
HMOs should be required to have soundproofing. Garages at properties should be made available for occupiers and they should not qualify for residents' parking.	C, D
Could Declaration of Understanding be changed to say that taking of drugs is prohibited? Could renewal of HMO licences be done via the Council's website?	C, D, E
Suggestion that HMO landlords pay £1,300 per year for HMO fees in line with Council Tax to enable the money to spent on more bins, more street cleaners, more officers to deal with signs, more Police to patrol the streets to prevent county lines and refuse officers to clean mess away that landlords leave in the lanes.	A, D
More information about anti-social behaviour in the Declaration of Understanding for both the landlord and tenant would be helpful as it applies both inside and outside the property.	C, D
No objection to proposals, but uncertain how licence condition relating to a licence holder making regular inspections of their property would identify issues of anti-social behaviour. Complaints would come via neighbours.	D
Welcome new licensing policy. Concerned that conditions will not be adhered to without effective enforcement, which is due to lack of resources. Additional resources could be funded by increasing licence fee to cover administering HMO licence system in broadest sense. There must be a wide discretion so that refusal of an application for an HMO licence could be considered for repeated breaches of licence conditions, which may not be the most serious, but when repeated cause community tension and a drain on the resources of the authority.	A, E

<p>Opposed to continuation of additional licensing in Castle and Uplands and introduction of additional licensing in St Thomas. Evidence base for proposed policy is weak. Fees are too high and place additional burdens on landlords. Licence processing times should be set out. HMOs could be inspected when planning applications are submitted. Duplicity of licensing controls between Rent Smart Wales and local councils. Councils should fully use existing enforcement powers rather than additional licensing schemes. No account taken of the amount of informal enforcement activity undertaken between local authorities and private landlords. Little evidence that licensing schemes improve housing standards. Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 will be sufficient to improve housing standards. Council Tax records should be used to identify private rented properties and landlords rather than licensing schemes.</p>	<p>A, B, E, F</p>
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