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Sefton Council

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: Thursday 3rd December, 2026

TIME: 10.00 a.m.

VENUE: Assembly Hall, Town Hall, Bootle

DECISION MAKER: **CABINET**

Councillor Atkinson (Chair)
Councillor Dowd
Councillor Hart
Councillor Harvey
Councillor Christine Howard
Councillor Lappin
Councillor Moncur
Councillor Diane Roscoe
Councillor Williams

COMMITTEE OFFICER: Debbie Campbell
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The Cabinet is responsible for making what are known as Key Decisions, which will be notified on the Forward Plan. Items marked with an * on the agenda involve Key Decisions

A key decision, as defined in the Council's Constitution, is: -

- any Executive decision that is not in the Annual Revenue Budget and Capital Programme approved by the Council and which requires a gross budget expenditure, saving or virement of more than £100,000 or more than 2% of a Departmental budget, whichever is the greater
- any Executive decision where the outcome will have a significant impact on a significant number of people living or working in two or more Wards

If you have any special needs that may require arrangements to facilitate your attendance at this meeting, please contact the Committee Officer named above, who will endeavour to assist.

We endeavour to provide a reasonable number of full agendas, including reports at the meeting. If you wish to ensure that you have a copy to refer to at the meeting, please can you print off your own copy of the agenda pack prior to the meeting.

A G E N D A

Items marked with an * involve key decisions

	Item No.	Subject/Author(s)	Wards Affected	
	1	**Apologies for Absence**		
	2	**Declarations of Interest** Members are requested at a meeting where a disclosable pecuniary interest or personal interest arises, which is not already included in their Register of Members' Interests, to declare any interests that relate to an item on the agenda. Where a Member discloses a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, he/she must withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest, except where he/she is permitted to remain as a result of a grant of a dispensation. Where a Member discloses a personal interest he/she must seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or staff member representing the Monitoring Officer to determine whether the Member should withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest or whether the Member can remain in the meeting or remain in the meeting and vote on the relevant decision.		
	3	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting** Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2026		(Pages 5 - 18)
*	4	**Redesign of Intermediate Care Services** Report of the Assistant Director - Commissioning and Transformation	All Wards	(Pages 19 - 34)
*	5	**Selective and Additional (HMO) Licencing Schemes Business Case**	Birkdale; Blundellsands; Bootle East; Bootle West;	(Pages 35 - 272)

			Cambridge; Dukes; Kew; Litherland; Waterloo	
		Report of the Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets		
*	6	**Sandway Business Update** Report of the Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets	All Wards	(Pages 273 - 282)
	7	**Corporate Performance Report Quarter 2 2026/27** Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Resources / S151 Officer	All Wards	(Pages 283 - 310)
*	8	**Financial Management 2026/27 to 2029/30 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2026/27 – December Update** Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Resources / S151 Officer	All Wards	(Pages 311 - 326)

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THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER 2026. MINUTES NOD. 74 (7) AND (9) ARE NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL-IN".

CABINET

MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM, TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON THURSDAY 5TH NOVEMBER, 2026

PRESENT: Councillor Atkinson (in the Chair)
Councillors Dowd, Hart, Harvey, Christine Howard, Lappin, Moncur, Diane Roscoe and Williams

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

68. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.

69. CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE REGIONAL CARE COOPERATIVE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education that sought approval for the Council to continue participating in the funded foundation and mobilisation phase of the Cheshire and Merseyside Regional Care Cooperative (RCC). The report indicated that the RCC was a Department for Education-supported reform programme, bringing together the nine local authorities in Cheshire and Merseyside with health, police, voluntary and community sector and other strategic partners. It would provide the regional framework for stronger sufficiency planning, market shaping, commissioning, data and intelligence. Established and developing programmes, including Foster4, Home Again and Appropriate Places of Care, would align through this framework where this improved outcomes and avoided duplication. The report set out the current regional governance, the role of the Council as host authority and the work planned during the foundation phase. It did not transfer the Council's statutory duties for individual children, commit the Council to a future operating model or approve future Council funding.

Cabinet Members raised the following matters:

- The report be welcomed as a significant step in strengthening the regional framework.
- Statutory responsibility and accountability for Sefton's children, remained with Sefton, there was no financial commitment required and the RCC was about participation only, and Sefton was proud to be the Host authority for the RCC.

Decisions Made:

That

(1) the Council's continued participation in the Department for Education-funded foundation and mobilisation phase of the Cheshire and Merseyside Regional Care Cooperative, be approved;

(2) the RCC Executive Board, chaired by the Chief Executive of Cheshire West and Chester Council, to lead the development of detailed proposals for regional sufficiency planning, market shaping, commissioning, data and intelligence and workforce development, including the appropriate alignment of Foster4, Home Again and Appropriate Places of Care, be supported;

(3) it be noted that the Council is the host authority for the RCC and that all statutory responsibility and accountability for individual children remains with each constituent local authority;

(4) it be noted that the foundation phase is for design and mobilisation only and that any proposal creating a material financial commitment, pooled budget, transfer or delegation of functions, workforce change or substantive governance arrangement for the Council will be subject to legal and financial advice and brought back through the Council's normal decision-making arrangements;

(5) authority be delegated to the Executive Director – Children's Social Care and Education , in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Children, Schools and Families, to represent the Council in the RCC foundation phase and agree non-material operational arrangements necessary to support its development, provided these create no new unfunded commitment or transfer of the Council's statutory responsibilities; and

(6) the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families be authorised to continue to engage with Cabinet Members across the Cheshire and Merseyside local authorities, supported by the Leader of Sefton Council, and to be appraised on any progress to help inform future direction.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The proposal supported the Council's priority by seeking to increase the availability of safe, stable and loving homes, improve placement choice and enable more children to live closer to their families, schools and communities, where this was consistent with their needs.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The Council could withdraw from the RCC. This would avoid involvement in developing the regional model but would reduce the Council's ability to shape it, limit access to funded regional capacity, and leave the underlying sufficiency and market pressures to be addressed locally. This option was not recommended.

The Council could defer a decision until the full operating and financial model was available. This would reduce early engagement but could weaken influence during the design phase and did not recognise that the present recommendation was limited to funded foundation activity with future commitments reserved. This option was not recommended.

The recommended option was to participate in the funded foundation phase, with clear limits and further formal approval required for material commitments.

70. PRE-PROCUREMENT - ARBORICULTURAL WORKS, TREE PLANTING AND ESTABLISHMENT

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director - Operational In-House Services that sought approval to procure a new contract for arboricultural works and tree planting and establishment, and to award the contract to the tenderer submitting the lowest priced compliant bid, that met all pre-determined minimum quality requirements.

Decisions Made:

That

(1) the tender process to procure the provision of Arboricultural Works and Tree Planting and Establishment, to be published on the Councils' e-procurement system, using an open tender process, be approved; and

(2) the Assistant Director - Operational In-House Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Public Health and Wellbeing, be granted delegated authority to award the Contract upon completion of the procurement process and to award any extensions thereof, and any such documents be sealed and signed by the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer, or delegates.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The existing contract was due to expire on 31 May 2027. Establishing a replacement contract would provide the Council with sustainable arrangements for commissioning arboricultural work on a planned and responsive basis. It would avoid additional costs that were likely to be incurred from procuring such work on an ad-hoc basis and provide a service in response to emergencies or callouts outside of normal office hours.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not to replace the existing contract would result in arboricultural work having to be undertaken in an ad-hoc way, outside of contractual arrangement, which would result in increased costs and risks to service delivery.

71. PRE-PROCUREMENT: HIGHWAY WEED CONTROL CONTRACT

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director - Operational In-House Services that sought approval to commence the procurement of a new Highway Weed Control Contract to replace the current arrangements which expired in October 2026 and to delegate authority to award the contract following completion of a compliant procurement process.

Cabinet Members raised the following matters:

- Members welcomed the proposed approach to weed control, noting that the issue was becoming increasingly challenging for local authorities to manage.

Decisions Made:

That

(1) the commencement of a procurement process for a new Highway Weed Control Contract, in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, be approved; and

(2) the Assistant Director - Operational In-House Services, in consultation with the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer and Cabinet Member - Cleansing and Street Scene, be authorised to award the Contract and any subsequent extensions to the highest scoring Tenderers, and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer, or delegates, to seal the contract.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The current weed control contract was included in a suite of contracts which were initially awarded in 2016 for a core period of 6 years with an option to extend by a maximum of a further 4 years. Cabinet approval was

subsequently given to enact the extension options and allow the maximum 10-year contract period. Having considered the effectiveness of managing the contracts, previous performance against the contracts, and suitability for expected future needs, it was proposed to seek tenders from suitably qualified contractors.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Consideration had been given to delivering the weed control service in-house. This was not considered a viable option at the present time due to insufficient operational capacity within the service and the requirement for investment in specialist equipment, vehicles, training, depot accommodation and associated resources.

Consideration had also been given to alternative contracting arrangements, including the use of multiple providers. A single-provider model was considered to offer the most appropriate balance of operational consistency, accountability, contract management, and value for money for a borough-wide service.

72. SOUTHPORT BUSINESS PARK PLANNING SECTION 106

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets updating on the work with the business, EFT Group, in supporting the delivery of a new headquarters and for business premises for the market at Southport Business Park; and outlining the process underway in providing grant support to the development through the provision of available and targeted planning Section 106 monies.

Cabinet Members raised the following matters:

- The importance of taking opportunities through Section106 agreements to prioritise skills, jobs and apprenticeships for Sefton.

Decisions Made:

That

(1) support for this development be approved and the decision on the level of support to be awarded be delegated to the Assistant Director - Economic Growth and Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Regeneration, Economy and Skills, and any advice from specialist consultants on viability, costs and the viability GAP and level of support necessary to progress the project, be noted;

(2) the Assistant Director - Economic Growth and Housing, together with the Chief Legal Officer, be authorised to prepare a Grant Fund

Agreement for the award of a grant, reflective of all legal/financial requirements and related obligations; and

(3) a supplementary capital estimate of £686,850 fully funded by Section 106 monies already received by the Council, be approved; and it be noted that should additional support be provided from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, then this will be subject to separate approval.

Reasons for the Decisions:

An award of a Grant supported by the Section 106 monies ring fenced to the delivery of employment floor space at Southport Business Park, was an appropriate use of the available funds which were time limited and at risk on that basis.

In addition to the importance of not losing access to these monies by virtue of them becoming 'timed out', the proposed development was consistent with wider objectives linked to jobs and skills growth in Sefton and was wholly consistent with the Sefton Economic Strategy. The process adopted for determining the level of award was robust.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not to award funds to the EFT Group in support of this development at this late stage in the timescales for the Planning Section 106 agreement would almost certainly result in the loss of these monies to the site, to Southport and to Sefton.

Any proposals coming forward on an alternative site on Southport Business Park subsequent to the reporting of the EFT Group proposal, would involve the lengthy process of agreement on terms on a disposal, plus lead time in preparing and submitting and having approved planning consent and subsequent construction within the life of the Planning Section 106 Agreement.

There had been prior interest from potential investors in the site and use of S106 funding, but none of which developed to any meaningful position of deliverability. There were currently no alternative proposals at a stage in progress to delivery which would present as an alternative to the EFT Group development proposal.

The proposal to support the EFT Group development at Southport Business Park, in addition to meeting the requirements of the Section 106 agreement, had followed a rigorous process in establishing the need for support and level of support appropriate to ensure the development occurred.

73. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POSITION TO SEPTEMBER 2026

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Corporate Resources / S151 Officer that provided a review of the Treasury Management activities undertaken to 30 September 2026.

Decision Made:

That the Treasury Management update to 30 September 2026 be noted, together with the review of the effects of decisions taken in pursuit of the Treasury Management Strategy, and consideration of the implications of changes resulting from regulatory, economic and market factors affecting the Council's treasury management activities.

Reasons for the Decision:

To ensure that Members were fully appraised of the treasury activity undertaken to 30 September 2026 and to meet the reporting requirements set out in Sefton's Treasury Management Practices and those recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) code.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

74. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2026/27 TO 2029/30 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2026/27 – NOVEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Corporate Resources / S151 Officer informing the Cabinet of:

1) The current position relating to the 2026/27 revenue budget.
2) The current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2026/27.
3) The monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of September 2026:
    - The forecast expenditure to year end.
    - Variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members.
    - Updates to spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects.
4) The latest prudential indicator information for 2026/27.

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix A – Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2028/29.

Cabinet Members raised the following matters:

- Members noted that all local authorities continued to operate within a challenging financial environment and welcomed the positive update on the remediation work being undertaken in Sefton.
- Members welcomed the progress made in delivering the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) schemes as outlined on Page 71 of the agenda.

Decisions Made:

That

Revenue Outturn

(1) the current position relating to the 2026/27 revenue budget be noted;

(2) the actions being taken to refine forecasts and identify mitigating efficiencies to ensure each service achieves a balanced position be noted;

(3) the previously approved remedial action measures outlined in section 3 of the report be noted;

(4) the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2026/27 revenue budget be recognised and it be acknowledged that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed, and remedial actions put in place, to ensure a reduced forecast overspend outturn position;

Capital Programme

(5) the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme, as set out at paragraph 7.1 of the report, be noted;

(6) the latest capital expenditure position as at 30 September 2026 of £21.987m, as set out at paragraph 7.6 of the report; and that the latest full year forecast is £118.347m, as set out at paragraph 7.7 of the report, be noted;

(7) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary capital estimate of £4.500m for Southport Eastern Approaches Phase 2, funded by an external grant from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, as set out at paragraph 7.14 of the report;

(8) a supplementary capital estimate of £0.463m for Bootle High (Browns Lane), funded by an external grant for the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA), as set out at paragraph 7.17 of the report, be approved;

(9) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary capital estimate of £0.060m for Ainsdale Neighbourhood Centre,

funded by right to buy sharing agreement capital receipts, as set out at paragraph 7.19 of the report;

(10) the programme outputs and progress to September, as set out at paragraphs 7.20 – 7.37 of the report, be noted;

(11) it be noted that capital resources will be managed by the Executive Director - Corporate Resources / S151 Officer to ensure the capital programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council, as set out at paragraphs 7.38-7.40 of the report; and

Prudential Indicators

(12) the forecasts for the Prudential Indicators relating to capital expenditure and financing as at 30th September 2026, as set out at section 8 of the report, be noted.

Reasons for the Decisions:

To ensure the Cabinet was informed of the current position in relation to the 2026/27 revenue budget.

To provide an updated forecast of the outturn position with regard to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

To keep Members informed of the progress of the Capital Programme against the profiled budget for 2026/27 and agreed allocations for future years.

To progress any changes that were required in order to maintain a relevant and accurate budget profile necessary for effective monitoring of the Capital Programme.

To approve any updates to funding resources so that they could be applied to capital schemes in the delivery of the Council's overall capital strategy.

To ensure the Cabinet was informed of the latest prudential indicators.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

75. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To comply with Regulation 5(2) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, notice had been published regarding the intention to consider the following matters in private for the reasons set out below.

The Leader of the Council indicated that the agenda suggested seeking to exclude the press and public to enable the Cabinet to discuss confidential information that supported the items at agenda items 12 and 13. However, as the information was confidential only because it contained commercially sensitive information, it was proposed to continue in public and move straight to Agenda Item 14. (Minute No.78 below refers).

Decision Made:

That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

76. FORMBY POOL TRUST - EXEMPT APPENDICES

The Cabinet had received exempt information provided by the Assistant Director – Communities in relation to the Formby Pool Trust and the exempt information would be considered as part of the report in relation to Formby Pool Trust in order that an informed decision might be made. (Minute No. 78 below refers).

77. SEFTON 2030 PHASE 1 SITE DISPOSALS - EXEMPT APPENDIX

The Cabinet had received exempt information provided by the Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets in relation to the Sefton 2030 Phase 1 Site Disposals and the exempt information would be considered as part of the report in relation to Sefton 2030 Phase 1 Site Disposals in order that an informed decision might be made. (Minute No. 79 below refers).

78. FORMBY POOL TRUST

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director – Communities indicating that negotiations had been ongoing between Sefton Council, Formby Pool Trust (FPT) and Formby Land Trust (FLT) to agree future arrangements for the provision of Formby Leisure Centre, Elbow Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 4ED. The new arrangements would reduce the annual subsidy payable by the Council and secure future operations of the facility. The report highlighted the key changes to the arrangements and sought approval of the exempt documents provided to Cabinet Members.

The following exempt appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix ‘A’ Deed of Termination Operating Agreement - exempt
- Appendix ‘B’ Funding Agreement - exempt
- Appendix ‘C’ Lease for land at Duke Street, Formby (Library Car Park) - exempt
- Appendix ‘D’ Agreement to Surrender of Head Lease Premises known as Formby Pool - exempt
- Appendix ‘E’ Deed of Surrender of Head Lease Premises known as Formby Pool – exempt.

Cabinet Members raised the following matters:

- Members noted that the Council would continue to subsidise Formby Pool Trust and that facilities would remain operational for the local community.

Decisions Made:

That

(1) the new arrangements for the provision of Formby Leisure Centre be approved;

(2) in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, it be authorised that Appendix 'A' Deed of Termination Operating Agreement; Appendix 'B' Funding Agreement; Appendix 'C' Lease for land at Duke Street, Formby (Library Car Park); Appendix 'D' Agreement to Surrender of Head Lease Premises known as Formby Pool; and, Appendix 'E' Deed of Surrender of Head Lease Premises known as Formby Pool, will be sealed and signed by the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer, or delegates;

(3) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director - Communities (or such other officer as may be nominated by the Executive Director - Operations and Partnerships), in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Corporate Services, to negotiate and approve any amendments to the Operating Agreement, Lease, Funding Agreement and Deed of Termination, and any related documentation, where such amendments are necessary to facilitate completion of the transaction or the ongoing operation of the arrangements and do not constitute a material change to the terms approved by the Cabinet, and any such documents to be sealed and signed by the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer, or delegates; and

(4) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Communities, or such other officer as may be nominated by the Executive Director - Operations and Partnerships, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Corporate Services, to approve and execute any future amendments, variations, waivers, extensions or supplemental agreements relating to the Operating Agreement, Lease, Funding Agreement and Deed of Termination, providing that such changes are not materially adverse to the Council's interests and do not result in a fundamental change to the arrangements approved by the Cabinet, and any such documents be sealed and signed by the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer, or delegates.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The new arrangements would reduce the annual subsidy payable by the Council and secure future operations of the facility.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Alternative Options included no change to the existing operating agreement and related financial contributions.

79. SEFTON 2030 PHASE 1 SITE DISPOSALS

Further to Minute No. 76 0f 6 November 2025, the Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets indicating that the Cabinet had previously approved the establishment of a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) with the Sovini Group (Sefton 2030), to help meet the target of delivering 1,000 new affordable homes across Sefton by 2030. The Partnership aimed to increase the delivery of new affordable housing to address the housing pressures being faced in Sefton, including a large number of households and families waiting for new social housing and record numbers of households and families in temporary accommodation. Alongside the approval that individual council-owned sites would be brought forward for development within the Sefton 2030 Partnership, a commitment had given previously that future disposals would be reported back to Members on a case-by-case basis once financial terms had been agreed. Following detailed work by officers, heads of terms and gross land values had now been agreed with the Sovini Group for five of the Cabinet approved sites, as detailed in the accompanying Heads of Terms at Appendix 1 to the report. Sites would be sold pending the award planning consent, expected in 2027.These sites would be the first phase of sites to progress through the Sefton 2030 Partnership.

The following exempt appendix was attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 – Heads of Terms - exempt

Cabinet Members raised the following matters:

- Members welcomed the report and noted the importance of bringing new high-quality affordable housing forward for development and noted that the Sefton 2030 Partnership will bring wider added value benefits for local residents.

Decisions Made:

That

(1) the progress made under the Sovini Local Strategic Partnership and the emerging housing development proposals for the Phase I sites, which are designed to deliver over and above policy-compliant affordable housing, be noted;

(2) conditional land sale contracts be finalised for the freehold disposal of the five Phase I sites in line with the agreed heads of terms;

(3) it be noted that the terms of the disposals, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, are anticipated to meet best consideration requirements in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972;

(4) authority be delegated to the Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Regeneration, Economy and Skills to:

- Conclude the land transactions once feasibility work has been completed to confirm the final net purchase price and planning permission has been determined; and
- Agree the final mix of housing on each site;

(5) the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer be authorised to finalise the appropriate legal documentation required to complete the transfer of the sites; and

(6) approval be granted to use up to 4% of the capital receipts for each site to meet the incidental costs of a disposal, as allowed under the Local Authority Capital Accounting Regulations.

Reasons for the Decisions:

Approval of the five Phase I sites for disposal to the Sovini Group through the Sefton 2030 Partnership presented an opportunity to bring forward new, high-quality homes to be development on predominantly brownfield land across Sefton. The focus of new home delivery would be to provide affordable housing across a range of tenure options that would be driven by housing need and demand of local areas, whether this be homes for rent or homes for low-cost home ownership.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Option 1: Direct Delivery - The Council could progress the direct delivery of sites to develop further Council Housing though it did not have the skills, capacity, expertise or finances to be able to progress a housing development programme at the scale or pace that Sovini could deliver. Direct delivery still had a place, and a new strategy would be developed to enable the Council to add value to the Borough's social and affordable housing delivery.

Option 2: Site Disposal to Registered Providers – Disposal to a wider market of Registered Providers had been considered though this approach would not deliver the place making approach to development that the Council wanted to see for its communities and would not deliver the added value benefits for residents and communities that the LSP was able to offer nor meet wider strategic objectives.

Option 3: Disposal to the market – Disposal on the open market would test the market with respect of values and would create a competitive process ensuring “bidding up the land” to maximise the capital receipt. This would require Council investment prior to bringing to market including site due diligence to provide sufficient information for developers to progress bid proposals and enable assessment of offers on a like-for-like basis. Completion of a land sale would be conditional upon the site delivering affordable housing in line with current planning policy. This would see an open market sale led housing scheme come forward for development with only a proportion of affordable housing provided. This would not maximise the opportunity to provide new affordable housing across Sefton and additionally would not respond directly to housing need in local areas through the Borough. Disposal on the open market would deliver a site-specific scheme and would not deliver wider community, place making and economic benefits that the Sefton 2030 Partnership was committed to delivering. The report set out the benefits of the Council working in partnership with Sovini and disposal through the partnership would help see benefits realised such as housing specifically targeted to housing need, investment in local communities, training, apprentice and employment opportunities and opportunities for local supply chains.

Cabinet Report	Sefton Council
Report Title:	**Redesign of Intermediate Care Services**

Date of meeting:	3 December 2026		
Report to:	Cabinet		
Report of:	Assistant Director Commissioning and Transformation		
Portfolio:	Adult Social Care and Health		
Wards affected:	All		
Is this a key decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

This report seeks Cabinet approval to strengthen and modernise bed-based Intermediate Care provision, ensuring residents have access to sustainable, high-quality services that support timely hospital discharge, recovery and greater independence. The proposed redesign includes the procurement of up to 15 residential Intermediate Care beds in the north of the borough, providing a more flexible and sustainable model that is better aligned to current and future demand. To enable this improvement, the report also seeks approval to commence formal consultation with affected employees regarding the proposed future of Chase Heys, recognising the limitations of the existing building and the significant future capital investment that would otherwise be required.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to approve the following:

(1) Approve the proposed approach to redesign the delivery of bed-based intermediate care services.

(2) Approve the proposed procurement approach and authorise officers to commence a procurement exercise for the commissioning and delivery of up to 15 residential Intermediate Care beds within the north of the borough.

(3) Approve the proposed approach to staff consultation and authorise Council officers and Sefton New Directions to commence the formal consultation process in January 2027, in accordance with the Council's and Sefton New Directions relevant workforce policies and procedures.

(4) Delegate authority to the Executive Director - Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health, to approve the final procurement documentation; undertake the

procurement exercise; award and enter into the resulting contract(s); agree any associated implementation; and mobilisation arrangements.

(5) Subject to the satisfactory completion of the formal staffing consultation process, Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, to take the final decision to vacate the Chase Heys building and to oversee the implementation of the transitional arrangements.

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

1.1. Intermediate Care services play an important role in supporting hospital discharge, avoiding unnecessary admissions and enabling residents to regain independence through short-term reablement support. Sefton New Directions and Chase Heys staff have been a fundamental part of this over several years.

1.2. The condition of the Chase Heys building has been a significant consideration in determining the future sustainability of the service. An independent review undertaken in 2023 identified that substantial capital investment would be required to modernise the facility and bring the environment up to a standard suitable for the long-term delivery of contemporary intermediate care. The building has several limitations, including restricted bedroom sizes, a lack of en-suite facilities and insufficient space to safely accommodate equipment and rehabilitation aids. The review estimated that comprehensive refurbishment and reconfiguration would require capital investment of approximately £7.4m to £10.1m (2023 costs), before subsequent construction cost inflation, equipment, furnishing and ongoing revenue implications are considered.

1.3. There are also ongoing infrastructure concerns. The heating boilers have been assessed as being at the end of their operational life, with replacement parts now obsolete, creating a risk that significant failure could result in the facility having to cease operations. Previous condition assessments have also identified requirements relating to the roof, windows, ventilation, fire safety and emergency lighting. While maintenance and remedial works have been undertaken where necessary to manage immediate risks, these do not address the fundamental limitations or long-term sustainability of the building.

1.4. Importantly, despite the building condition issues outlined above, the provision remains safe to operate. Health and safety is being actively monitored and managed, with appropriate controls in place to ensure there is currently no identified risk to residents, staff or visitors.

1.5. The condition of the Chase Heys building should be clearly distinguished from the quality and effectiveness of the service being delivered. Staff continue to provide high-quality care and support and have achieved positive outcomes for residents, including successfully reducing lengths of stay. This reflects the dedication and expertise of the workforce and provides a strong foundation upon which to develop the proposed future model of Intermediate Care.

1.6. On this basis, continued significant investment in Chase Heys is not considered to represent a sustainable or proportionate long-term solution, particularly given the Council's strategic direction to reduce reliance on bed-based care and strengthen reablement and community-based support. The proposed closure therefore provides an opportunity to move services to more modern, fit-for-purpose provision while avoiding substantial future capital investment in a building that no longer adequately supports the Council's future model of care.

1.7. It is the Council's intention, subject to the outcome of formal consultation and consideration of individual circumstances, to seek to protect the employment of affected staff wherever reasonably possible. Redeployment opportunities are expected to be available within the new Birchbrook Extra Care Housing service, alongside other appropriate options considered through the consultation process. Birchbrook is a new, purpose-built, technology-enabled Extra Care Housing scheme in Ainsdale, comprising 90 homes for people aged 55 and over. The skills and experience of the Chase Heys workforce would be valuable in supporting mobilisation and delivery of the new service and the Council's wider ambition to provide modern, community-based care and support.

1.8. As a result, and subject to the outcome of formal consultation, there is a need to secure up to 15 residential Intermediate Care beds within an existing care facility in the north of the borough through a competitive procurement exercise.

1.9. This exercise will provide the Council with the opportunity to establish contractual arrangements that clearly define service expectations, quality standards, performance measures and outcomes, whilst ensuring value for money.

1.10. The proposed procurement approach will enable the Council to and demonstrates

- Secure access to Intermediate Care capacity through contractual arrangements.
- Support Better at home principles.
- Promote independence through reablement-focused delivery.
- Support hospital discharge and system flow.
- Create a sustainable model of provision capable of responding to future demand.
- Establish clear quality and performance requirements.

1.11. The procurement exercise will evaluate bids based on quality and cost to ensure the Council secures the most economically advantageous solution while maintaining high standards of care and support.

1.12. The procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

1.13. It is proposed that providers will be evaluated against:

- Quality of service delivery
- Ability to deliver reablement-focused care

- Workforce arrangements
- Mobilisation proposals
- Value for money and pricing
- Social value commitments

1.14. The detailed procurement documentation and evaluation methodology will be developed in consultation with Procurement Services and Legal Services.

1.15. The procurement process will support the commissioning of up to 15 Intermediate Care beds, with the aim to secure this provision in a single existing care home setting.

1.16. It is envisaged that the procurement exercise will commence in early 2027 and run in parallel with consultation involving staff working at the existing facility. The procurement and mobilisation timetable will be managed to support continuity of provision.

2. Financial Implications

2.1. The procurement exercise seeks to secure value for money through a competitive process that balances quality and cost.

2.2. It is envisaged that the procurement will encompass the commissioning of up to 15 beds with a maximum annual contract value being in the region of £0.940m.

2.3. Subject to approval, this expenditure would be funded through a re-allocation of existing expenditure within the Better Care Fund, currently £0.468m, with the remaining £0.472m diverting from within the existing ASC budget. The virement would be actioned in line with scheme of financial delegation.

2.4. A final contract value will be determined through the procurement process and will be subject to affordability checks and budget approval requirements prior to contract award. The final financial assessment will confirm the net revenue and implementation implications of the proposed model, including any workforce and decommissioning costs, and will be considered prior to contract award and implementation.

3. Legal Implications

3.1 The Care Act 2014 places duties on the Council in relation to wellbeing, prevention, meeting eligible care and support needs and promoting a sustainable care market. The proposed procurement is intended to support the discharge of these duties. The final procurement route and documentation will be developed and validated in consultation with Legal Services and Procurement Services to ensure compliance with the Procurement Act 2023, relevant regulations and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

4. Risk Implications

4.1. There is a risk that failure to secure appropriate Intermediate Care capacity could adversely impact hospital discharge pathways and recovery services.

4.2. The Council seeks to mitigate this risk through the procurement and commissioning of Intermediate Care provision under formal contractual arrangements, with the procurement exercise taking place within a timeline that ensures continuity of provision.

4.3. Market engagement undertaken to date has indicated that there is sufficient provider capacity within the north of the borough to respond to the identified requirement. This provides reasonable assurance regarding market deliverability; however, final availability, quality and value for money will be determined through the competitive procurement process.

5. Staffing HR Implications

5.1. It is the Council's intention, subject to the outcome of formal consultation and consideration of individual circumstances, to seek to protect the employment of affected staff wherever reasonably possible. Potential redeployment opportunities include roles within the new Birchbrook Extra Care Housing service, alongside other options available under the relevant workforce policies and procedures.

5.2. These workforce implications associated with the future delivery model for Intermediate Care services, including any consultation requirements, redeployment opportunities, or changes affecting existing service provision, will be managed separately in accordance with the HR policies and procedures and the appropriate governance processes.

5.3. The Council has maintained ongoing engagement with the Trade Unions (TU's) throughout the development of the proposals. The TU's have expressed their support for the proposed approach, including the Council's commitment to protecting local employment, safeguarding employees' interests and ensuring that any workforce implications are managed transparently and through appropriate consultation arrangements.

5.4. Subject to Cabinet approval, a formal staff consultation process will commence on 11 January 2027 for a period of up to 30 days. The consultation will provide affected employees with a meaningful opportunity to understand the proposals, consider the potential implications for them, ask questions and provide feedback before any final decisions affecting individual employees are taken.

5.5. Throughout the consultation period, 1:1 meeting will be offered to all affected employees, providing dedicated time to discuss their individual circumstances, preferences and any concerns they may have. Appropriate management and HR support will be available throughout the process.

5.6. As part of the consultation, employees will be able to consider a range of options, including Voluntary Redundancy (VR) where applicable and redeployment opportunities within New Directions. Every reasonable effort will be made to identify

suitable alternative employment and retain the skills and experience of affected employees within the organisation wherever possible.

5.7. Employees will also have access to confidential employee assistance and wellbeing support throughout the consultation period, recognising that organisational change can create uncertainty for individuals and their families.

5.8. The consultation will be undertaken in an open, fair and transparent manner, with employee feedback properly considered before the process concludes. The approach is intended to balance the requirement to progress the proposed service changes with the Council's commitment to supporting employees, protecting employment wherever reasonably possible and managing organisational change responsibly.

5.9. No final decisions affecting individual employees will be taken until the consultation process has concluded and the representations and individual circumstances of affected employees have been appropriately considered.

6. Conclusion

6.1. The proposed redesign provides a sustainable approach to the future delivery of bed-based Intermediate Care, supporting hospital discharge, recovery and independence while addressing the limitations and significant future investment requirements associated with the existing Chase Heys facility. The proposed procurement will enable the Council to secure high-quality, value-for-money provision within the north of the borough, with clear contractual standards and outcomes. The workforce approach is intended to protect employment wherever reasonably possible and retain the skills and experience of the existing workforce, subject to the outcome of the formal consultation.

6.2. Cabinet is therefore asked to approve the recommendations set out within this report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Option 1: Rent external Intermediate Care Beds and Redeploy Chase Heys Staff

This option was not considered viable due to its short-term nature, and ongoing revenue cost. It would not provide a sustainable long-term solution aligned to the Council's strategic ambitions for intermediate care provision.

Option 2: Relocate Intermediate Care Provision to Birchbrook Extra Care Housing

Homes England advised that this proposal would not comply with the conditions attached to the grant funding used to develop the scheme.

Option 3: Relocate Intermediate Care Beds to the Short-Term Assessment Unit

Extensive public consultation has already been undertaken regarding the future purpose of the STAU, with a clear intention for the service to support people with learning disabilities, autism, and mental health needs. Repurposing the facility for Intermediate

Care could create reputational challenges and undermine stakeholder confidence in previously agreed plans.

Option 4: Procure External Intermediate Care Beds with TUPE Arrangements

This option considered procuring up to 15 Intermediate Care beds from an external provider, with a requirement for eligible Chase Heys staff to transfer under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) as part of the service specification.

This option was not recommended because it would potentially require eligible employees to transfer to an external provider under TUPE arrangements and would therefore provide less certainty regarding the Council's objective of retaining the existing workforce within New Directions and protecting local employment wherever reasonably possible.

Option 5: Relocate IMC beds to Ormskirk Community Hospital Site

Whilst this opportunity has been explored with Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (MWL), the relocation of Chase Heys beds and staff outside of the borough would not align with Sefton Council's strategic objectives. The proposal would result in Intermediate Care provision being delivered approximately 12 miles outside of Sefton, reducing local accessibility for residents and creating additional travel requirements for social care, health, and operational staff involved in assessment, review, and discharge planning activities.

Option 6: Rebuild and redesign the existing Building

Significant capital investment would be required to secure the long-term future of Chase Heys. The Council does not currently have identified capital funding to meet these requirements and, given the reduced demand for this type of bed-based provision, such investment would not represent a proportionate or sustainable use of Council resource.

Equality Implications: An Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 1. The assessment has considered the potential impact of the proposed service redesign on residents, employees and people sharing protected characteristics. No disproportionate adverse equality impact has been identified at this stage. The proposals have the potential to provide positive outcomes, particularly for older and disabled residents, through more accessible, modern and reablement-focused provision. Potential workforce and transitional impacts will be mitigated through individual assessment, reasonable adjustments, formal staff consultation, redeployment opportunities and appropriate transition planning. The Equality Impact Assessment will remain under review throughout consultation, procurement and implementation.
Impact on Children and Young People: The proposals relate to Adult Social Care services and no direct impact on children and young people has been identified.
Climate Emergency Implications:

No significant climate implications have been identified. Environmental and social value considerations will be included within the procurement process where appropriate.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The S151 Officer (FD.10015/26) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.6715/26) have been consulted, and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Consultation has taken place with Integrated Care Board (ICB) partners on the proposed commissioning / procurement work.

Implementation Date for the Decision:

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Cabinet decision.

Contact Officer:	Megan McElroy
Telephone Number:	N/A
Email Address:	Megan.mcelroy@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment.

Background Papers:

None

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council

Adult Social Care Department

Initial Equality Impact Assessment

1. 1. The Proposal

Service area:	**Commissioning - Intermediate Care Beds Procurement**
Lead Officer:	**Megan McElroy**
Links to budget proposal? (Yes/No):	**Yes**
Date of assessment:	**November 2026**

2. Description of the proposal:

The Council is proposing to redesign its bed-based Intermediate Care model to ensure that residents continue to have access to high-quality, sustainable provision supporting timely hospital discharge, recovery, reablement and independence.

The proposal includes:

- procuring up to fifteen residential Intermediate Care beds within the north of the borough.
- moving towards provision, better able to support contemporary rehabilitation and reablement requirements.
- commencing formal consultation with employees affected by the proposed future closure of Chase Heys; and
- seeking to protect employment and retain workforce skills through redeployment opportunities wherever reasonably possible.

The proposal represents a redesign rather than withdrawal of Intermediate Care. Evidence considered by the Council indicates that reduced bed-based capacity can meet assessed demand as more residents are supported through reablement and community-based pathways. Maintaining access under the redesigned model depends on replacement bed-based provision and those community-based pathways meeting residents' assessed needs; this will remain under review through procurement and mobilisation.

The redesign also addresses limitations of the existing Chase Heys environment, including restricted bedroom sizes, the lack of en-suite facilities and insufficient space to safely accommodate equipment and rehabilitation aids.

3. People new and / or who access and use services - equality impact summary.

People new and/or who access and use services - equality impact summary.

No significant adverse equality impact has been identified at this stage. The EIA will be reviewed if consultation, procurement, or mobilisation identifies new evidence or a differential impact.

4.Will the proposal have a disproportionate impact on any of these groups?

Impact Level Insert X into one box per row, for impact level and type.					**Impact type**		
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**None**	**Positive**	**Neutral**	**Negative**
Disabled people			X	The provision is expected to benefit adults with physical, sensory, cognitive, or other impairments by providing recovery and reablement support. The specification will require accessible premises, reasonable adjustments, appropriate equipment, accessible information, and person-centered care.	**X**		
People from different ethnic groups			X	No disproportionate impact is expected. Access will be based on assessed need. Providers will be required to deliver culturally appropriate care and provide accessible information and interpretation where required.		**X**	
Men or women (including pregnant women or those on maternity leave)			X	No disproportionate impact is expected. Access and service standards will be applied consistently. Individual needs, including pregnancy and maternity considerations where relevant, will be addressed through assessment and care planning.		**X**	
Lesbian, gay, or bisexual people			X	No disproportionate impact is expected. Providers will be required to deliver inclusive care, respect for privacy and relationships, and protect people from discrimination.		**X**	
People on a low income			X	Access will be based on assessed need. Accessible		**X**	

				information and discharge planning will be required so that financial or communication barriers do not prevent people participating in decisions about their care.			
People in particular age groups			X	The proposal is likely to benefit older people and other eligible adults who require short-term recovery support. Referral, access, and outcomes will be monitored by age where data is available.	**X**		
People in particular faith groups			X	No disproportionate impact is expected. Providers will be required to respect religious and cultural needs, including diet, worship, and observance.		**X**	
People who are married or in a civil partnership			X	No disproportionate impact is expected. Consistent access and service standards will apply, with carers, partners and families involved in discharge planning where appropriate and with the person's agreement.		**X**	
Transgender people			X	No disproportionate impact is expected. Providers will be required to protect dignity and privacy and deliver inclusive, non-discriminatory care.		**X**	
Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing. Please specify:			X	The proposal may benefit carers and families by supporting recovery, independence, and timely discharge. It also supports health and wellbeing by reducing avoidable long-term residential care and promoting a return home wherever possible.	**X**		

4. Explanation of people who access and use services and or new impact.

The proposal is expected to have an overall positive equality impact by maintaining access to short-term, reablement-focused support and helping people recover and return home. No significant adverse impact has been identified. Equality, accessibility, and reasonable adjustment requirements will be included in the specification and evaluated through the tender process and contract monitoring.

5. Workforce equality impact summary

Are there any staffing implications for this proposal? YES

Explanation of staff impact
If yes, please describe the impact including the number of posts that could be affected? State whether they are currently vacant or filled permanently or temporarily.

Detailed Equality Impact Assessment
Equality objectives
The assessment has considered whether the proposals could have a disproportionate adverse impact on people sharing a protected characteristic, create barriers to accessing Intermediate Care, affect residents' recovery and independence, create differential impacts for employees, or provide opportunities to advance equality through more accessible and appropriate care environments. Consideration has been given to age and disability.
Assessment of protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Potential impact	Assessment and mitigation
Age	Potential positive impact with some transitional risk, particularly for older or frail residents and employees affected by the change.	Local bed-based capacity will be maintained in the north of the borough. Individual needs will determine placement and workforce decisions will be based on individual circumstances and fair employment processes.
Disability	Potential positive impact from provision better able to accommodate mobility, rehabilitation equipment, and accessibility needs. A negative impact could arise if alternative provision does not meet individual accessibility or communication requirements.	Accessibility and the ability to meet physical, sensory, and cognitive needs will be explicit in the procurement specification and evaluation. Reasonable adjustments and personalised care planning will continue to apply.
Sex	No disproportionate adverse impact identified at this stage, although there may be workforce implications if the affected workforce is disproportionately male or female.	Consultation, redeployment, and other employment decisions will be undertaken fairly and in accordance with HR procedures.

Race	No disproportionate adverse impact identified. Residents or employees may require communication support or information in another language or format.	Translation and interpretation support will be available where required and culturally appropriate care will form part of service expectations.
Religion or belief	No disproportionate adverse impact identified.	Provision will respect dietary requirements, religious observance, and access to faith support.
Sexual orientation	No disproportionate adverse impact identified.	The provider will demonstrate person-centered, inclusive practice and ensure dignity and respect.
Gender reassignment	No disproportionate adverse impact identified.	Care will respect identity, privacy, dignity, and individual circumstances.
Pregnancy and maternity	No direct adverse impact on service users identified, but this may be relevant to employees.	Individual circumstances will be considered through consultation and applicable employment protections.
Marriage and civil partnership	No disproportionate adverse impact identified in service delivery.	Any workforce implications will be managed consistently and fairly.

Impact on residents using Intermediate Care

Overall, the proposals are expected to have a neutral to positive equality impact, provided the identified safeguards are incorporated into procurement and implementation. The new model will maintain access to bed-based Intermediate Care in the north of Sefton while supporting more people to recover and remain independent at home wherever appropriate.
The principal equality risk is ensuring that replacement provision remains accessible and capable of meeting individual needs. To mitigate this risk:

- Accessibility requirements will be incorporated into the procurement specification.
- Bidders will demonstrate their ability to support people with physical, sensory, and cognitive impairments.
- individual assessments will determine whether a placement is appropriate.
- reasonable adjustments will be made where required.
- communication, cultural and religious needs will be reflected in care planning; and
- Accessibility for families and carers will be considered in placement and transition arrangements.

Keeping replacement provision within the north of Sefton mitigates travel and accessibility impacts. An option involving provisions approximately twelve miles outside Sefton was rejected partly because it would reduce local accessibility and create additional travel requirements.

Workforce equality impact

Any workforce equality implications will remain under review through formal employee consultation. Subject to Cabinet approval, consultation is proposed to begin on 11 January 2027 for up to 30 days. The approach includes individual meetings, consideration of personal circumstances, redeployment, voluntary redundancy where applicable, HR and management support, employee assistance and wellbeing support, and consideration of representations before final decisions.

The Council's approach includes:

- individual 1:1 meeting for affected employees.
- consideration of individual circumstances.
- exploration of redeployment opportunities.
- voluntary redundancy where applicable.
- management and HR support.
- employee assistance and wellbeing support; and
- consideration of employee representations before final decisions are made.

Redeployment opportunities are expected to include the new Birchbrook Extra Care Housing service, supporting the Council's objective of protecting employment and retaining the skills and experience of the existing workforce wherever reasonably possible.

As part of the consultation process, workforce equality data should be reviewed to identify whether the proposals, redeployment arrangements or any resulting redundancies could disproportionately affect employees sharing a protected characteristic.
Workforce equality data will be reviewed, where available and appropriate, to identify whether the proposals, redeployment arrangements or redundancies could disproportionately affect employees sharing a protected characteristic.

Consultation and engagement
Development of the proposals has included engagement with health partners and the Joint Trade Unions. Formal workforce consultation will provide a further opportunity to identify equality impacts not apparent at this stage. This EIA will remain a live document and will be reviewed following consultation and before final implementation.

Mitigating actions

Action	Intended outcome
Include accessibility and equality requirements within the Intermediate Care procurement specification and evaluation.	Replacement services meet the needs of disabled people and other protected groups.
Require person-centered assessment before placement.	Physical, cognitive, communication, cultural and religious needs are identified.
Maintain provision within the north of the borough.	Reduces travel and accessibility impacts for residents, families, and professionals.
Undertake individual employee consultation and provide reasonable adjustments.	Personal circumstances are carefully considered and employees can participate meaningfully.
Review workforce equality data and explore redeployment or suitable alternative employment.	Identifies disproportionate impacts, protects employment, and reduces redundancy risk.
Monitor equality implications during mobilisation and update the EIA after consultation and procurement.	Emerging issues are identified and equality considerations influence final implementation.

Overall Equality Impact Assessment
At this stage, the assessment has not identified evidence that the proposed redesign would result in a disproportionate adverse impact on people sharing a protected characteristic. This is a provisional finding: resident impacts remain subject to the accessibility and transition safeguards identified in this assessment, and workforce impacts remain under review through employee

consultation and review of workforce equality data. The proposals could deliver positive impacts, particularly for older and disabled residents, by maintaining local capacity while moving towards provision better able to accommodate modern rehabilitation, accessibility and reablement requirements.

Potential transitional impacts for residents and workforce impact for employees can be mitigated through individual assessment, inclusive procurement requirements, careful transition planning, reasonable adjustments, formal consultation, and consideration of individual circumstances. The EIA will remain under review through procurement, workforce consultation and mobilisation, and any material equality impacts will be addressed before final implementation decisions.

6. Review and Sign Off

Directorate Adult Social Care SMT

When this assessment was reviewed, state date:

24/11/26

If 'yes,' when will the further assessment be completed?

The assessment will be reviewed before tender publication, during mobilisation and before contract commencement. Ongoing monitoring will include referrals, access, outcomes, complaints, and feedback. Any new evidence of adverse or differential impact will result in the EIA and mitigation actions being updated.

Service Manager:

Neil Watson

Date: 23/11/26

Please ensure this EIA is approved by Adult Social Care SMT.

If this assessment identifies a potential medium or high impact, then a Full Equality Impact Assessment needs to be completed.

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Cabinet Report	Sefton Council
Report Title:	**Selective and Additional (HMO) Licencing Schemes Business Case**

Date of meeting:	3 December 2026		
Report to:	Cabinet		
Report of:	Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets		
Portfolio:	Housing and Highways		
Wards affected:	Bootle East, Bootle West, Litherland, Blundellsands, Waterloo, Bootle West, Dukes, Kew, Cambridge, Birkdale		
Is this a key decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

To consider the need to re-designate both the Selective licensing scheme and 2 x Additional Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing schemes in designated areas of the borough and introduce the Business case to support the re-designation of the schemes.

To consider the implementation of a 12-week consultation in relation to the re-designation of the selective licensing scheme and 2 additional HMO licensing schemes.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to:

(1) To approve in principle (subject to public consultation) the re-designation of the selective licensing scheme in the Bootle area and 2 Additional HMO licensing schemes in central Southport and areas of Waterloo/Seaforth.
(2) To agree to a 12-week public consultation for the implementation of the schemes.
(3) To give authority to the Assistant Director - Economic Growth & Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Housing and Highways to:

(i) Procure and appoint consultants to undertake the required public consultation on the 3 proposed schemes, and

(ii) Agree any minor/technical changes to the Business Case in advance of the formal consultation.

(4) To approve in principle the draft licensing conditions

1. Background

1.1 Section 80 of the Housing Act 2004 allows local authorities to apply for selective licensing of privately rented properties in the whole of their district or in an area of their district. The main provisions in respect of selective licensing came into force in April 2006.

1.2 The Act provides a discretionary power, subject to carrying out consultation and to the approval of the appropriate national authority (Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government), for Local Housing Authorities to license all private landlords in a designated area with the intention of ensuring that a minimum standard of management is met.

1.3 Additional Licensing under section 56 of the Housing Act 2004 allows the local authority to designate either the whole of their district or an area within their district as subject to an additional (HMO) licensing scheme. A local authority must consider that a significant proportion of the HMOs of a defined description, in either a designated area or across the whole of the borough are being managed insufficiently enough to give rise to one or more particular problems either for those occupying the property or for members of the public.

1.4 **Appendix 1** of this report presents the Business Case to re-designate the Selective Licensing Scheme and 2 Additional (HMO) Licensing Schemes in Sefton.

2. Sefton Context

2.1 As of 2021 it was estimated that around 18.2% of households live in the private rented sector – this compared with 17.1% for the region and 20.3% nationally at that time. The number of households living in the private rented sector has risen significantly in line with national increases – an estimated 22,457 households live in private rented accommodation (2021) an increase of 42% between 2011 and 2021 and 133% between 2001 and 2021.

2.2 The Private Sector Stock Condition modelling commissioned by Sefton and undertaken by Sustenic in Sept 2026 estimated that; 11760 of all dwellings in the private sector had a category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Hazard. This equates to 10% of all private sector properties in the Borough. As a proportion of all private houses with Category 1 hazards in Sefton is slightly worse than the national rate, at 8.6%.

2.3 They also estimated 3116 dwellings in the Privately Rented Sector (PRS) have Category 1 HHSRS hazards. This equates to 12% of properties within the PRS as suffering from these health and safety issues.

3. Selective licensing

3.1 Selective Licensing will be compulsory and applies to all private rented properties in a designated selective licensing area with the exception of those already subject to Mandatory HMO Licensing or those exempt from licensing. In the areas where selective licensing would be applied, all landlords will be required to hold a license in order to rent out a property. The licenses last for the duration of the 5-year scheme.

3.2 To qualify for a license a landlord must be able to demonstrate that they are acting within the law and taking adequate steps to manage their properties and keep them safe. During the 5 year licence period a compliance inspection will be carried out on the majority of properties to ensure they meet the required standards for residential accommodation. In addition, a 'fit and proper' person test will be applied to test the landlord's suitability to manage a tenancy.

3.3 The council is satisfied that the area proposed for a selective licensing designation meets three of the six legal tests set out in the Housing Act 2004. The designation is proposed on the basis of anti-social behaviour, housing conditions and deprivation. A designation based on migration, low demand or crime is not proposed. Only one test needs to be proved to make a designation lawful.

4. Additional (HMO) Licensing

4.1 Additional (HMO) Licensing will operate in the same way and alongside the existing Mandatory HMO Licensing scheme that operates across the Borough. Mandatory licensing requires that a certain type of HMO must have a licence. These are those that house 5 or more people who form 2 or more households and do not have all facilities within a self-contained unit, i.e. bathroom or kitchen. The same process will be followed, with the same legal obligations and penalties for failing to comply with the requirements.

4.2 Additional Licensing will require **all** privately rented HMOs of any description, which are located within designated areas, to be licensed. Sefton proposes to implement Additional licensing in parts of Southport and Waterloo/Seaforth/Brighton Le Sands.

4.3 Before making an Additional HMO licensing designation for a particular area, a local authority must consider that a significant proportion of the HMOs of that description in the area are being managed sufficiently ineffectively as to give rise, or to be likely to give rise, to one or more particular problems either for those occupying the HMOs or for members of the public.

4.4 The Council is satisfied that the 2 proposed areas for an Additional (HMO) licensing designation do meet the criteria.

5. Justification for the re-designation of the licensing schemes

5.1 The Business Case has reviewed the current scheme which commenced in March 2023. Although improvements are showing across property conditions, deprivation and ASB for the areas where licencing has operated during this period these areas still show elevated levels of poor property condition, deprivation and ASB compared to the borough average. The redesignation of these schemes for another 5 years to further improve the housing conditions and management for our residents in the private rented sector and to prevent progress made to date being lost is critical in order to fully achieve Sefton's strategic housing vision.

5.2 The positive impact of the current scheme is clear and since the commencement of the licencing schemes in March 2023 to the end of August 2026, 198 licensable properties have had serious Category 1 hazards removed. The total number of hazards removed from

all licensable properties is 1518 of which 379 have been the most serious Category 1 hazards. The main hazards that have been removed from the properties are hazards relating to fire safety, electrical hazards, damp & mould, excess cold and falls between levels.

5.3 In the first 3 years of the current schemes 811 compliance visits took place. Of those inspections, 331 properties were non-compliant on first inspection, equating to 41%. However, following intervention by the Housing Standards Team, 97% of these properties became compliant. The main reasons for non-compliance was the failure to have a Gas Safe report for the property, failure to have an Electrical Installation Condition Report where required, and failure to have smoke alarms fitted.

5.4 To summarise, there is evidence to indicate that the licensing schemes are leading to improvements in housing conditions. Selective and Additional (HMO) licensing and the need to obtain a licence has helped Sefton Council identify high risk properties requiring intervention, often where tenants would not have risked complaining to their landlord. The application process has highlighted just how many properties do not have the minimum requirements such as a Gas Safe Certificate. Without licensing, it is fair to conclude that most of these properties would remain without one, leaving tenants at serious risk

5.5 Since the introduction of Selective licensing within Bootle, there has been a significant overall reduction in the rate of anti-social behaviour in every single one of the individual Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA), that comprise the licensing boundary. Although the overall ASB rate and specifically the environmental ASB rates are falling in the Bootle Selective Licensing area, the ASB data still highlights that this area still has some way to go in terms of reducing the impacts of all ASB to a rate that is similar or equal to the overall Borough rates. Therefore, there is a strong argument presented, regarding the continuation of a selective licensing scheme in Bootle.

5.6 All the LSOAs in the Bootle Selective Licensing area are ranked within the most deprived quintile (20%) nationally. Within this Selective Licensing boundary there are areas suffering from severe deprivation, four are ranked within the most deprived 1% nationally and nine are ranked within the most deprived 5%. Therefore, this Selective Licensing area can be considered as suffering from extremely high levels of deprivation.

5.7 In relation to the proposed Additional (HMO) Licensing schemes re-designation, evidence of poor management practices are demonstrated through poor conditions or within the local community including ASB and crime. Over the 3.5-year period of the current Additional Licensing schemes, 232 service requests were received from HMO properties. 205 of those were from HMOs within the licensing areas equating to 88%. This provides evidence of poor property management across this sector and specifically within the proposed designated areas. Parts of Waterloo/Seaforth and central Southport have high levels of deprivation, being within the worst 10% most deprived areas nationally. Both areas also have above the national average of flats/maisonettes within the PRS and have a significant stock of larger style properties that in recent years have been prone to conversion, to either bedsits or self-contained flats. The highest level of empty properties (over 24 months) are located in central Southport (Oct 2024). Hence there is a strong correlation between these issues and the location of the PRS.

5.8 Re-designating the Additional (HMO) Licensing areas will continue to build upon improvements to the management standards in this sector, improve living conditions and ultimately lead to a better quality of life for residents. It will help the areas to be more

conducive to good landlords but provide an environment that is less opportunistic and attractive for poor and rogue landlords.

6. Fees

6.1 The proposed licence fees below have been based on knowledge-based estimate of the number of properties that will require a licence. This calculated income stream, although cannot be guaranteed as it is dependent upon the number of applications received when the scheme is launched, is a reliable estimate, as the current licensing schemes have provided a sound evidence base for the number of properties that will require a licence. The fees are subject to annual review to ensure recovery of all relevant costs.

Selective Licensing	£	Annual Equiv. £	Weekly Equiv. £
Full Fee	875	175	3.37
Accreditation	700	140	2.69
Accredited Managing Agents	700	140	2.69

In addition to the above fee:
For each additional unit (under the same ownership, within the same building) a charge of £55 per additional unit will apply.

Additional (HMO) Licensing	£	Annual Equiv.	Weekly Equiv.
Full Fee	1250	250	4.80
Accreditation	1150	230	4.42
Accredited Managing Agents	1150	230	4.42

In addition to the above fee:
For each additional unit (under the control of the same proposed licence holder, within the same building) a charge of £55 per additional unit will apply.

6.2 A review of fees will be undertaken annually and will be adjusted to reflect changes in costs. The fees are in line with the findings of the decision of Hemming v Westminster City Council, which ruled that fees should be paid in 2 stages : on application a fee is charged that amounts purely to the costs of the authorisation procedures and once the application is successful, a further fee to cover the costs of enforcement of the scheme is paid.

7. Resources

7.1 The schemes generate a significant workload and require dedicated staffing resources to support their delivery. An established team of 13.5 FTE is already in place and will continue

to administer and enforce the proposed schemes. The team is resourced to process Selective and Additional (HMO) licence applications, undertake compliance inspections and carry out associated enforcement activity. The costs of the team are funded through licence application fees.

8. Consultation

8.1 Consultation is a key feature of the development of the proposals. Section 56 (3) & Section 80 (9) of the Housing Act 2004 requires that before making a designation, the local authority is required to undertake a formal consultation process on the proposed implementation of the selective and additional licensing designations and take reasonable steps to consult with persons likely to be affected. This should include local residents, including tenants, landlords, managing agents and other members of the community who live or operate businesses or provide services within the proposed designation and neighbouring areas that may be affected.

8.2 Our engagement and consultation process will last for a period of 12 weeks, which is scheduled to commence, subject to Cabinet Approval, in Spring/Summer 2027.

8.3 To provide an impartial consultation Sefton intends to commission an external consultant to undertake the consultation process.

8.4 Further information about the consultation process and how to get involved will be provided on Sefton's website and everyone who is likely to be directly affected by the proposals will be contacted and invited to participate in the consultation. The consultation will be widely promoted.

9. Licence conditions

9.1 Licence holder will be required to comply with conditions on their licence. Some of these conditions are mandatory and have to be applied to each licence, as defined in the Housing Act 2004. Each licence will also have a further set of conditions that are specific to Sefton. The draft Selective licensing conditions are in **Appendix 2 of the Business Case**. The draft Additional (HMO)Licensing conditions are attached in **Appendix 4 of the Business Case**.

10. Areas

10.1 Selective licensing is proposed to be introduced in an area of Bootle. See **Appendix 1 of the Business Case**.

10.2 Additional (HMO) Licensing is proposed in 2 areas of the Borough. One in central Southport and one in the Waterloo/Seaforth area. See **Appendix 3 of the Business Case**.

11. Financial Implications

11.1 The proposed schemes will be delivered using the existing licensing team, which is already in place to administer and enforce landlord licensing arrangements.

11.2 The schemes have been costed on a full cost recovery basis and are intended to be self-

financing through licence fee income. Over the five-year designation period, expenditure is estimated at £3.939m which is fully recoverable from the licence fee income.

11.3 Accordingly, the schemes are not expected to create any additional pressure on the Council's General Fund budget, with operating costs being met from licence fee income. Licence fees will be reviewed during the life of the schemes to ensure continued cost recovery.

12. Legal Implications

12.1 Part 2 & 3 of the Housing Act 2004 sets out the legislative framework for Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing. Section 80 of the Housing Act 2004 allows the local authority to designate the area of their district or an area in their district as subject to selective licensing. Section 56 of the Housing Act 2004 allows the local authority to designate the area of their district or an area in their district as subject to additional licensing.

13. Risk Implications

13.1 Recommissioning a landlord licensing scheme presents a number of strategic, financial and operational risks for a local authority. If the scheme is not renewed, the authority may experience a reduction in its ability to proactively regulate standards within the private rented sector, potentially leading to poorer housing conditions, increased tenant complaints, and reduced oversight of landlords who fail to meet their legal responsibilities.

13.2 Conversely, recommissioning the scheme carries risks relating to affordability, stakeholder opposition and legal challenge, particularly if landlords perceive the licensing requirements or associated fees as disproportionate.

13.3 There is also a risk that insufficient staffing, enforcement capacity or contractor performance could undermine the effectiveness of the scheme, resulting in reputational damage and failure to achieve intended outcomes.

13.4 Financially, demand for licences may be lower than forecast, impacting cost recovery assumptions, while changes in legislation or government policy could require future amendments to the scheme. A robust business case, clear evidence of housing need, effective stakeholder engagement and strong contract management arrangements are therefore essential to mitigate these risks and ensure the scheme delivers improved housing standards and community outcomes.

14. Staffing HR Implications

14.1 The staffing implications relating to this decision are outlined in the body of the report.

15. Conclusion

15.1 The analysis outlined in the Business Case clearly shows the improvements resulting from the current landlord licencing schemes. However, it also highlights the scope for further improvements in the privately rented properties included in the licencing schemes. If the current schemes are not redesignated it is also reasonable to conclude that the benefits gained to date from landlord licencing will be lost.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Cabinet could choose not to redesignate landlord licencing in the borough, however, based on the evidence and analysis outlined in the Business Case there is a significant risk that the clear benefits from these schemes in terms of the quality of privately rented accommodation and the management of these properties will be lost.

Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.
Impact on Children and Young People: There is a positive impact on Children and Young People as these schemes will ensure that Children and Young People living in privately rented properties in the licencing schemes live in safe well managed homes.
Climate Emergency Implications: The recommendations within this report will have a Positive impact as it will consider the Minimum Energy Efficiency Rating for privately rented properties in these licencing schemes.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources / S151 Officer (FD.2032/26) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.1022/26) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Not Applicable.

Implementation Date for the Decision :

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Cabinet decision.

Contact Officer:	Stephen Watson
Telephone Number:	0151 934 3710
Email Address:	Stephen.watson@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Selective Licensing Designated Area – Bootle

Appendix 2 - Selective Licensing Conditions

Appendix 3 - Additional Licensing Designated Areas Southport, Seaforth & Waterloo

Appendix 4 - Additional (HMO) Licensing Conditions

Appendix 5 - Selective & Additional HMO Licensing - Case Studies & Enforcement Actions

Appendix 6 - Fit and Proper Person Policy Sefton Council

Appendix 7 - Civil Penalty Policy

Appendix 8 - Risk Analysis of Redesignation of Licensing Schemes across defined areas and mitigating measures

Appendix 9 - Requirements for the Designation Of an Area for Selective Licensing

Appendix 10 – Business Case

Background Papers:

None

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Appendix 1

Selective Licensing Designated Area - Bootle

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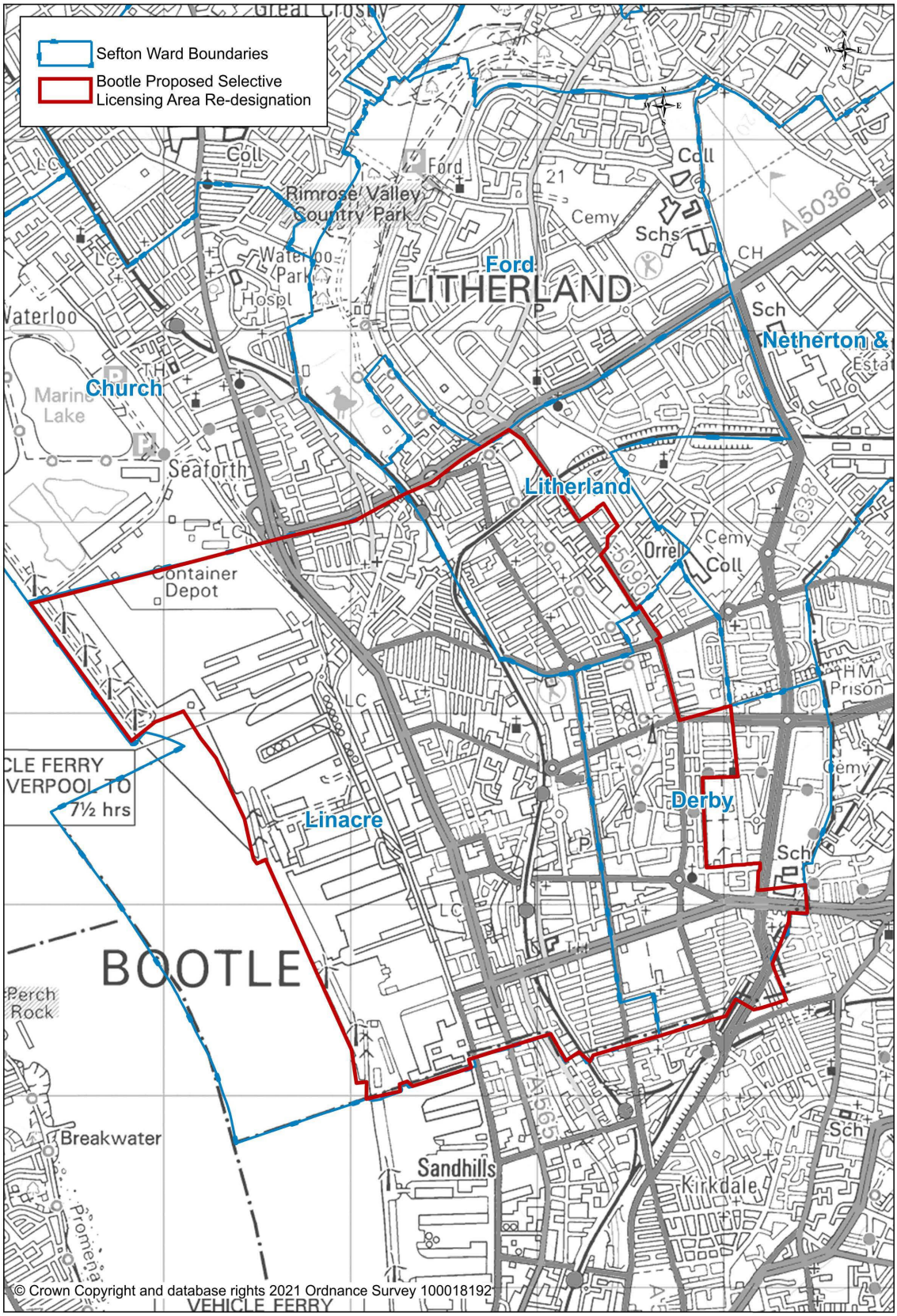
Bootle Selective Licensing Boundary



Bootle Selective Licensing Boundary – List of included roads

Road Names	Ward
ADDISON STREET	Linacre
AINTREE ROAD (Numbers 1-29 Odds, 2-64 Evens)	Derby
AKENSIDE STREET	Linacre
ALPHA STREET	Litherland
ALT ROAD	Litherland
ALTCAR ROAD	Litherland
ANTONIO STREET	Derby
ANVIL CLOSE	Linacre
ARCTIC ROAD	Linacre
ASH GROVE	Linacre
ASH STREET	Derby
ATLANTIC ROAD	Linacre
ATLAS ROAD	Linacre
AUGHTON ROAD	Derby
AUGUST STREET	Derby
AUTUMN WAY	Derby
AYLWARD PLACE	Linacre
BACK STANLEY ROAD	Derby
BALFE STREET	Linacre
BALFOUR AVENUE	Linacre
BALFOUR ROAD	Linacre
BALLIOL ROAD	Derby
BALLIOL ROAD	Linacre
BALTIC ROAD	Linacre
BANK ROAD	Linacre
BARKELEY DRIVE	Linacre
BARNTON CLOSE	Litherland
BEATRICE STREET	Derby
BEATRICE STREET	Linacre
BEDFORD ROAD	Derby
BEDFORD ROAD (Numbers 1-277 Odds, 2-274 Evens)	Linacre
BEECH GROVE	Linacre
BEECH STREET	Derby
BEECHWOOD ROAD	Litherland
BELLINI CLOSE	Linacre
BENBOW STREET	Linacre
BENEDICT STREET	Derby/Linacre
BERESFORD STREET	Linacre

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Road Names	Ward
BERGEN CLOSE	Derby
BERRY STREET	Linacre
BIANCA STREET	Linacre
BIBBYS LANE	Linacre
BLISWORTH STREET	Litherland
BLOSSOM STREET	Derby
BOSWELL STREET	Linacre
BOWDEN STREET	Litherland
BOWLES STREET	Linacre
BRABY ROAD	Litherland
BRASENOSE ROAD	Linacre
BREEZE HILL (Numbers 1-39 Odds, 36-48 Evens)	Derby
BREWSTER STREET (Numbers 73-75 Odds 46-100 Evens)	Derby
BRIDGE ROAD	Litherland
BRIDGE STREET	Linacre
BROMYARD CLOSE	Linacre
BROOK ROAD	Linacre
BROOKHILL CLOSE	Derby
BROOKHILL ROAD	Derby
BROWNING STREET	Linacre
BRYANT ROAD	Litherland
BULWER STREET	Linacre
BURNS STREET	Linacre
BUSHLEY CLOSE	Linacre
BYNG STREET	Linacre
BYRON STREET	Linacre
CAMBRIDGE ROAD	Derby
CAMPBELL STREET	Linacre
CANAL STREET	Linacre
CAPRICORN WAY	Linacre
CARADOC ROAD	Linacre
CARISBROOKE ROAD (Numbers 137-175 Odds 140-178 Evens)	Derby
CAROLINA STREET	Linacre
CARRIAGE GROVE	Derby
CASPIAN PLACE	Derby
CASSIO STREET	Derby
CATHERINE STREET	Litherland
CECIL ROAD	Linacre
CEDAR STREET	Derby

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Road Names	Ward
CHAPEL TERRACE	Linacre
CHAUCER STREET	Linacre
CHELSEA ROAD	Litherland
CHESNUT GROVE	Linacre
CHURCH GARDENS	Linacre
CHURCH GROVE	Linacre
CHURCH ROAD	Linacre
CHURCH STREET	Linacre
CHURCH VIEW	Linacre
CHURCH WALK	Linacre
CLAIRVILLE CLOSE	Linacre
CLARE ROAD	Derby
CLARENDON ROAD	Linacre
CLAYFIELD CLOSE	Derby
CLEARY STREET	Linacre
COBB AVENUE	Litherland
COLERIDGE STREET	Linacre
COLLEGE VIEW	Linacre
COLLINS CLOSE	Linacre
COMPTON WALK	Linacre
COOKSON ROAD	Linacre
CORAL DRIVE	Derby
CORNWALL ROAD	Derby
CORPORATION WHARF	Derby
COWPER STREET	Linacre
CRESCENT ROAD	Linacre
CRICKLADE CLOSE	Linacre
CROSBY ROAD SOUTH (Numbers 171-275 Odds)	Linacre
CROXTETH AVENUE	Litherland
CROXTETH ROAD	Litherland
CUNARD ROAD	Litherland
DACRE STREET	Linacre
DAISY MEWS	Litherland
DANIEL CLOSE	Linacre
DAVIES STREET	Derby
DEEPDALE AVENUE	Linacre
DELAWARE ROAD	Linacre
DELTA ROAD	Litherland
DERBY ROAD (Numbers 119-327 Odds 42-318 Evens)	Linacre
DORSET CLOSE	Derby

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Road Names	Ward
DOUGLAS PLACE	Linacre
DOWNING ROAD	Derby
DRAKE STREET	Linacre
DRYDEN STREET	Linacre
DUNDAS STREET	Linacre
EARL ROAD (1-31 Odds only)	Derby
EATON AVENUE	Litherland
EFFINGHAM STREET	Linacre
ELIOT STREET	Linacre
ELM DRIVE	Linacre
ELM ROAD	Linacre
EMPIRE ROAD	Litherland
ESSEX WAY	Derby
EVERTON VIEW	Linacre
EXETER ROAD	Linacre
FALCONER STREET	Linacre
FERN GROVE	Derby
FERNHILL CLOSE	Derby
FERNHILL GARDENS	Derby
FERNHILL MEWS EAST	Derby
FERNHILL MEWS WEST	Derby
FERNHILL ROAD (Edith Villas, Oxford House, Sefton Villas, Numbers 7-23 Odds 20-48 Evens)	Derby
FERNHILL WAY	Derby
GEMINI CLOSE	Linacre
GEORGIA CLOSE	Linacre
GIRTON AVENUE	Derby
GLADSTONE ROAD	Linacre
GLOBE ROAD	Linacre
GLOUCESTER ROAD	Derby
GLOVER PLACE	Linacre
GOLDSMITH STREET	Linacre
GONVILLE ROAD	Derby
GOWER STREET	Linacre
GRAY STREET	Linacre
GRIMSHAW STREET	Linacre
GREEN LANE (Numbers 56-60 Evens)	Linacre
GROVE STREET	Linacre
GUION ROAD	Litherland
HALIDON COURT	Linacre
HALSALL ROAD	Litherland

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Road Names	Ward
HANDS STREET	Litherland
HAPSFORD ROAD	Litherland
HARTWELL STREET	Litherland
HAVELOCK ROAD	Litherland
HAWARDEN GROVE	Linacre
HAWTHORNE ROAD (Numbers 1-513 Odds 2-556 Evens)	Derby/Litherland
HEATHFIELD CLOSE	Litherland
HEATHFIELD DRIVE	Litherland
HEMANS STREET	Linacre
HEMER TERRACE	Linacre
HERO STREET	Derby
HERTFORD ROAD	Linacre
HICKS ROAD	Linacre
HILLCREST	Derby
HILLHEAD ROAD	Derby
HILLSIDE CLOSE	Derby
HINTON STREET	Litherland
HOGARTH STREET	Linacre
HOLLY GROVE	Linacre
HOLLY STREET	Derby
HOLMES LANE	Litherland
HOOD STREET	Linacre
HORNBY AVENUE	Linacre
HORNBY BOULEVARD	Litherland
HORNBY ROAD	Derby/Linacre
HORNBY STREET	Linacre
HUMPHREY STREET	Litherland
IBSTOCK ROAD	Litherland
IBSTOCK ROAD	Litherland
INCE AVENUE	Litherland
INMAN ROAD	Litherland
IRLAM ROAD	Linacre
ISMAY ROAD	Litherland
JACOBS CLOSE	Litherland
JERSEY CLOSE	Linacre
JERSEY STREET	Linacre
JOSEPH GARDNER WAY	Linacre
JUBILEE ROAD	Litherland
JULY STREET	Derby
JUNE STREET	Derby

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Road Names	Ward
KARA CLOSE	Derby
KEATS STREET	Linacre
KEBLE ROAD	Linacre
KEN MEWS	Litherland
KENILWORTH STREET	Linacre
KENT CLOSE	Derby
KEPLER STREET	Linacre
KILBURN STREET	Litherland
KINGS ROAD	Linacre
KIPLING STREET	Linacre
KIRK ROAD	Litherland
KNOWSLEY ROAD	Linacre/Litherland
LABURNUM PLACE	Derby
LANDER ROAD	Litherland
LANGDALE STREET	Derby
LATHOM ROAD	Litherland
LAWLER STREET	Litherland
LEICESTER ROAD	Derby
LIBREX CLOSE	Litherland
LILY ROAD	Litherland
LIME GROVE	Linacre
LINACRE LANE (Numbers 11-109 Odds 2-58 Evens)	Derby/Litherland
LINACRE ROAD	Litherland
LINCOLN CRESCENT	Linacre
LITHERLAND ROAD	Derby
LITHERLAND ROAD	Litherland
LONGFELLOW STREET	Linacre
LONGFIELD ROAD	Litherland
LUNT ROAD	Litherland
LYDIATE ROAD	Litherland
LYSTER ROAD	Linacre
LYTTON GROVE	Linacre
MALVERN ROAD	Litherland
MANOR CLOSE	Derby
MANSFIELD ROAD	Linacre
MAPLE CLOSE	Linacre
MARBLE CLOSE	Linacre
MARGARET AVENUE	Litherland
MARKFIELD ROAD	Litherland
MARSH LANE	Derby/Linacre

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Road Names	Ward
MARYLAND GROVE	Linacre
MAY CLOSE	Litherland
MAY STREET	Derby
MEADOW HEY	Linacre
MELLING ROAD	Derby
MERTON GROVE	Linacre
MERTON ROAD	Derby/Linacre
MIDDLESEX ROAD	Derby
MILDMAY ROAD	Litherland
MILL LANE	Derby
MILLERS BRIDGE	Linacre
MILTON STREET	Linacre
MIRANDA ROAD (Numbers 7-47 Odds 2-56 Evens)	Derby/Linacre
MOORE STREET	Linacre
MUSPRATT ROAD	Linacre
NAPIER STREET	Linacre
NELSON ROAD	Litherland
NELSON STREET	Linacre
NEW FORT WAY	Linacre
NEW STRAND MARINERS WAY	Linacre
NEW STRAND MEDWAY	Linacre
NEW STRAND MONS SQUARE	Linacre
NEW STRAND PARKSIDE	Linacre
NEW STRAND RAVENWAY	Linacre
NEW STRAND SERVICEWAY	Linacre
NEW STRAND THE ESPLANADE	Linacre
NEW STRAND THE HEXAGON	Linacre
NEW STRAND THE PALATINE	Linacre
NEWTON WALK	Linacre
NORFOLK CLOSE	Derby
NORFOLK PLACE	Linacre
NORTON STREET	Linacre
NUFFIELD ROAD	Linacre
OAK STREET	Derby
OAKLAND CLOSE	Litherland
OCEAN ROAD	Litherland
OLIVIA STREET	Derby/Linacre
ONEILL STREET	Linacre
OREGON CLOSE	Linacre
ORIEL ROAD	Linacre

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Road Names	Ward
ORLANDO STREET	Linacre
OXFORD AVENUE	Derby
OXFORD ROAD	Derby
PACIFIC ROAD	Linacre
PALMERSTON AVENUE	Litherland
PALMERSTON DRIVE	Litherland
PARK PLACE	Derby
PARK STREET	Derby
PEEL ROAD	Linacre
PEMBROKE ROAD	Linacre
PENNINGTON ROAD	Litherland
PENPOLL CLOSE	Litherland
PENRHYN AVENUE	Litherland
PERCY STREET	Linacre
PETER MAHON WAY	Linacre
PETERHOUSE MEWS	Derby
PINE GROVE	Derby
PLEASANT STREET	Linacre
PLEASANT VIEW	Linacre
PLUM GROVE	Linacre
POPE STREET	Linacre
POPLAR GROVE	Linacre
PRINCES STREET	Linacre
PRINCESS WAY	Linacre
PRIOR STREET	Linacre
PROVINCE ROAD	Derby
QUARRY ROAD	Derby
QUEENS ROAD	Linacre
RALEIGH STREET	Linacre
RAWSON ROAD	Linacre
REDWOOD GROVE	Derby
REGENT ROAD	Linacre
RICHMOND COURT	Litherland
RIDDOCK ROAD	Litherland
RIMMER CLOSE	Litherland
RIMROSE ROAD	Linacre
RIVERSIDE CLOSE	Linacre
ROBY STREET	Derby
RONAN CLOSE	Linacre
ROPEWORKS CLOSE	Derby
ROSE AVENUE	Litherland

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Road Names	Ward
ROSSINI STREET	Linacre
ROXBURGH STREET (161-175 Odds 144-176 Evens)	Derby
ROYAL SEAFORTH DOCK	Linacre
RUFFORD ROAD	Litherland
RUSKIN CLOSE	Linacre
RUTLAND STREET	Derby
SALISBURY ROAD	Linacre
SANDFIELD PLACE	Linacre
SANDFIELD ROAD	Derby
SANDY ROAD (Numbers 1 – 15 Odds only)	Linacre
SCARISBRICK AVENUE	Litherland
SCHOOL LANE	Linacre
SCOTT STREET	Linacre
SEAFIELD ROAD	Linacre
SEAFORTH ROAD	Linacre
SEAFORTH VALE NORTH	Linacre
SEAFORTH VALE WEST	Linacre
SEAVIEW ROAD	Linacre
SEFTON AVENUE	Litherland
SEFTON STREET (Numbers 1 and 1A	Litherland
SERVIA ROAD	Litherland
SEYMOUR ROAD	Litherland
SEYMOUR STREET	Linacre
SHAKESPEARE STREET	Linacre
SHELLEY STREET	Linacre
SHORE ROAD	Linacre
SIDNEY ROAD	Derby
SMOLLETT STREET	Linacre
SNAVE CLOSE	Litherland
SNOWDROP MEWS	Litherland
SOMERSET ROAD	Derby
SOUTH PARK WAY	Derby
SOUTHEY STREET	Linacre
SOUTHPORT ROAD (Numbers 2-44 Evens only)	Derby
SPENSER STREET	Linacre
SPRINGS CLOSE	Derby
ST ALBANS ROAD	Linacre
ST ALBANS SQUARE	Linacre
ST ANDREWS ROAD	Linacre/Litherland
ST CATHERINES ROAD	Linacre

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Road Names	Ward
ST EDMONDS ROAD	Linacre
ST JAMES DRIVE	Linacre
ST JOANS CLOSE	Linacre
ST JOHNS ROAD	Linacre
ST JOHNS TERRACE	Linacre
ST MARYS CLOSE	Linacre
ST PAULS PLACE	Derby
STANLEY ROAD	Derby/Linacre/Litherland
STRAND ROAD	Derby/Linacre
STRAND VIEW	Linacre
SUFFOLK STREET	Derby
SUMMER ROAD	Derby
SUMMERSEAT	Linacre
SURREY STREET	Derby
SUSSEX CLOSE	Derby
SUSSEX STREET	Derby
TALISMAN WAY	Linacre
TENNYSON STREET	Linacre
THE GRANGE	Litherland
THORNTON ROAD	Derby/Litherland
THORNTON STREET	Litherland
TOWCESTER STREET	Litherland
TRINITY PLACE	Derby
TRINITY ROAD	Derby/Linacre
UNIVERSITY ROAD	Derby
URSULA STREET	Derby
VERDI AVENUE	Linacre
VERDI STREET	Linacre
VERDI TERRACE	Linacre
VERMONT WAY	Linacre
VIOLA STREET	Linacre
VIOLET ROAD	Litherland
WADHAM ROAD	Derby
WADHAM ROAD	Linacre
WALLER STREET	Linacre
WARTON STREET	Linacre
WARTON TERRACE	Linacre
WARWICK ROAD	Derby
WASHINGTON PARADE	Linacre
WATERWORKS STREET	Derby
WAVERLEY STREET	Linacre

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Road Names	Ward
WEBSTER STREET	Litherland
WELL LANE	Derby
WELL LANE GARDENS	Derby
WELLINGTON ROAD	Litherland
WILLIAM HENRY STREET	Linacre
WOOD STREET	Litherland
WOOLFALL TERRACE	Linacre
WORCESTER ROAD	Derby
WORDSWORTH STREET	Linacre

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Appendix 2

Selective Licensing Conditions

Selective Licensing Conditions

In these conditions, “house” is meant to refer to the building or part of a building, which is licensed under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004. “Authority” is meant to refer to the local housing authority, namely Sefton Council.

The licence for this dwelling is not transferable to another person/organisation or another premises once granted in accordance with Section 91(6) of the Housing Act 2004.

Our licensing conditions will be amended to reflect any legislative changes to definition.

1. Mandatory Conditions – Schedule 4 of the Housing Act 2004

1.1 Gas

The licence holder must:

If gas is supplied to the house, to produce to the local housing authority annually for their inspection a gas safety certificate obtained in respect of the house within the last 12 months.

1.2 Electrical Appliances & Installation and Furniture

The licence holder must:

(a) keep electrical appliances and furniture made available by him in the house in a safe condition;

(b) supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the safety of such appliances and furniture;
additionally

(c) (i) ensure that every electrical installation in the house is in proper working order and safe for continued use; and

(ii) supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the safety of such installations;

(d) for the purposes of paragraph (c) “electrical installation” has the meaning given in regulation 2(1) of the Building Regulations 2010.

1.3 Smoke Alarms

The licence holder must:

(i) ensure that a smoke alarm is installed on each storey of the house on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation, and

(ii) keep each such alarm in proper working order and

(iii) supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the condition and positioning of such alarms.

1.3.1 Carbon Monoxide

The licence holder must:

(i) Ensure that a carbon monoxide alarm is installed in any room in the house which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance; other than a gas cooker

(ii) Keep each such alarm in proper working order; and
(iii) Supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the condition and positioning of such alarms.

For the purposes of 1.3.1 i) “room” includes a hall or landing
For the purposes of 1.3.1 ii) a bathroom or lavatory is to be treated as a room used as living accommodation

1.4 Terms of occupation

The licence holder must supply to the occupiers of the house a written statement of the terms on which they occupy it.

1.5 Tenant references

The licence holder must demand references from persons who wish to occupy the house, prior to a tenancy being granted.

2. Sefton Council Licensing Conditions

2.1 Tenancy Management

The licence holder will provide the tenant with documents required by law and information necessary to report repairs, emergencies and management issues for example and not limited to:
(a) A true copy of the licence to which these conditions apply;
(b) A notice with the name, address, daytime and emergency contact number of the licence holder or managing agent; (*This information is also to be provided to Sefton Council)* Any changes in contact details should be provided to occupiers within 7 days of the changes.
(c) True copy of current gas safety certificate
(d) True copy of the current Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) that must not be more than 5 years old.
(e) True copy of current energy performance certificate
(f) Statement of the terms of occupation
(g) Details of arrangements for the storage and disposal of waste;
(h) Tenants responsibilities in the storage and presenting of refuse for disposal.
(i) Details explaining how the tenant can make a complaint in relation to matters concerning their occupation and how the licence holder/manager will deal with such, including the timescales for completion of repair works.
(j) Where a deposit has been taken in connection with the tenant’s occupation of the property, information on the prescribed form required by s213(5) Housing Act 2004.
(k) A user manual/written instruction for the correct operation and setting of the fixed form of heating.
(l) A user manual/written instruction for any other installations or equipment provided as part of the agreement for the occupation of the house

2.1.1. The Licence holder must:-

(a) carry out ‘Right to Rent’ checks in accordance with Home Office requirements prior to agreeing to a tenancy (guidance downloadable from www.gov.uk);

(b) where the Authority has reasonable grounds to investigate compliance with this licence or the management of the property, the licence holder shall make available relevant records within 14 days of a written request.

2.2 Property Management

2.2.1 The licence holder must ensure that any remedial works to rectify disrepair issues identified are undertaken within a reasonable period of time, and within the timescales notified to the occupiers under condition 2.1(i). The works must be carried out by competent and reputable persons.

2.2.2 The licence holder or manager should inspect the property regularly and at least once every six months.

2.2.3 The licence holder must ensure, insofar as reasonably possible, that emergency works necessary to protect the security of the property are undertaken within 24hrs of notification e.g. damage to windows/ entrance points to the property.

2.2.4 The licence holder must ensure that as well as the declaration and Mandatory condition of providing annual Gas Safe Certificate, landlords of a property also have further duties under the Gas Safety (Installation and use) Regulations 1998, whereby they are required to provide on-going maintenance of the gas installation Landlords/Licence holders should not assume that by carrying out annual gas safety checks will be sufficient to provide effective maintenance; advice of a competent person should be sought. All such maintenance works to be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

2.2.5 As far as is reasonably practicable, the landlord/licence holder shall not allow the property to become overcrowded.

2.2.6 The licence holder must provide adequate facilities and amenities (such as toilets, baths, showers, washing and cooking facilities) as per the number of occupiers. All facilities and any equipment provided including cupboards, shelving or fittings etc. must be maintained in good repair and working order as far as is reasonably practicable.

2.2.7 The licence holder/manager shall take reasonable steps to ensure that the property is free from any pest infestation at the start of a tenancy and where necessary ensure that a treatment programme is carried out to eradicate the pest infestation. Record of such treatment programmes must be kept and provided to Sefton Council on request.

2.2.8 The licence holder must ensure that any persons involved with the management of the house are to the best of their knowledge “fit and proper persons” for the purposes of the Act.

2.3 External areas, refuse & waste

The licence holder must ensure that:

(a) The exterior of the property is maintained in a reasonable decorative order and state of repair;

(b) At the commencement of a new tenancy any gardens, yards and other external areas within the curtilage of the house must be in a reasonably clean and tidy condition and free from rodent infestation, and
(c) Suitable and adequate provision is made for storage of refuse generated in the property and that occupants use receptacles provided by Sefton Council for storage prior to collection. (wheeled bins or refuse sacks)
(d) The tenants are adequately informed of their duty with regards to refuse collection particularly that the wheeled bins or plastic refuse sacks (if wheeled bins are not provided) must not be presented for collection for a period of more than 12 hours prior to collection.
(e) Any new occupant of the building is notified of the date of collection for the wheeled bins/refuse sacks
(f) Any items cleared from the property before the start of a new tenancy are properly disposed of
(g) Tenants are advised of how to dispose of 'bulky waste', including details of the councils service.

2.4 Security

The licence holder must ensure that:

(a) The security provisions for the access to the dwelling (including but not limited to locks, latches, deadbolts and entry systems) must be maintained in good working order at all times.
(b) Where window locks are fitted, and keys are available the licence holder will ensure that keys are provided to the relevant occupant.
(c) Where a burglar alarm is fitted to the house, the licence holder must provide the occupant with instructions on how to operate the alarm and how to report a fault with the system and must inform the Local Authority of the key holder contact details
(d) Where previous occupants have not surrendered keys, the licence holder will arrange for a lock change to be undertaken, prior to new occupants moving in.
(e) Where alley gates are installed to the rear of the licensed property, the licence holder must at the time of letting, provide all new tenants with the appropriate alley-gate key and replace any such keys prior to any tenancy starting. The licence holder must ensure that all tenants surrender the alley gate key at the end of their tenancy

2.5 Energy Performance

The Licence Holder must provide the tenant of the licenced dwelling with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). The Licence Holder must provide a copy of the EPC to the Council on reasonable request. The licence holder shall comply with the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards and any subsequent legislation.

2.6 Training

Where the Authority has reasonable grounds to be concerned about the management of the property, it may require the licence holder or manager to attend an approved property management course within six months.

2.7 Absence

The licence holder is required to have in place suitable emergency and other management arrangements in the event of their absence. The name and contact details of the licence holder and/or manager must be supplied to each occupier.

2.8 Compliance Inspections

The licence holder must allow the Council to undertake compliance checks. Council Officers will give the licence holder and/or the tenant at least 24 hrs notice of these checks and produce valid authorisation at the time of the visit.

2.9 Anti-Social Behaviour

The licence holder must:

(a) Take all reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour by any person occupying or visiting the property and to prevent the use of the premises for any illegal or unlawful purpose.

(b) Ensure that all tenancies granted following the issue of this licence are appropriately monitored and managed to minimise the risk of nuisance, anti-social behaviour, harassment to neighbours and other residents of the local area.

(c) Effectively address all problems of anti-social behaviour resulting from the conduct on the part of a tenant, occupiers, or visitors to the premises by complying with the" ASB information for Landlords" pack or an equivalent process.

(d) Co-operate with Sefton Council, Merseyside Police and other agencies in resolving complaints of anti-social behaviour.

(e) Undertake an investigation of any complaints of anti-social behaviour regarding their tenants. Written records of these will be required excluding any information which the licence holder reasonably believes to have been provided to him in confidence by a third party.

(f) Provide the occupiers of the property with written confirmation detailing arrangements in place to report nuisance and anti-social behaviour. Records required by this condition shall be retained for the duration of the licence and produced to the Council upon reasonable request.

2.10 HMOs

The licence holder must ensure that the house is compliant with Sefton Council's approved standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation.

2.11 Variations

The licence holder must notify the Authority in writing within 14 days of any of the following:

a) Any change in the number of persons or households occupying the licensed property.

b) For licensed HMOs, any proposed change to the use or occupancy of any room or part of the property that may affect compliance with licence conditions or housing standards.

c) Any change in the ownership, management or control of the property.

d) Any change to the contact details of the licence holder or manager, including their address, telephone number or email address.

e) The appointment of a new manager or the ending of a management arrangement.

f) Any material change to the layout of the property, amenities provided, or fire safety measures.

g) Any matter that may affect the fit and proper person status of the licence holder, manager, owner, or any person involved in the management of the property, including any relevant criminal conviction, civil penalty, banning order, licence revocation, or breach of housing-related legislation.

h) The licence holder must provide any further information reasonably requested by the Authority in relation to these changes.

Appendix 3

Additional Licensing

Designated Areas Southport, Seaforth & Waterloo

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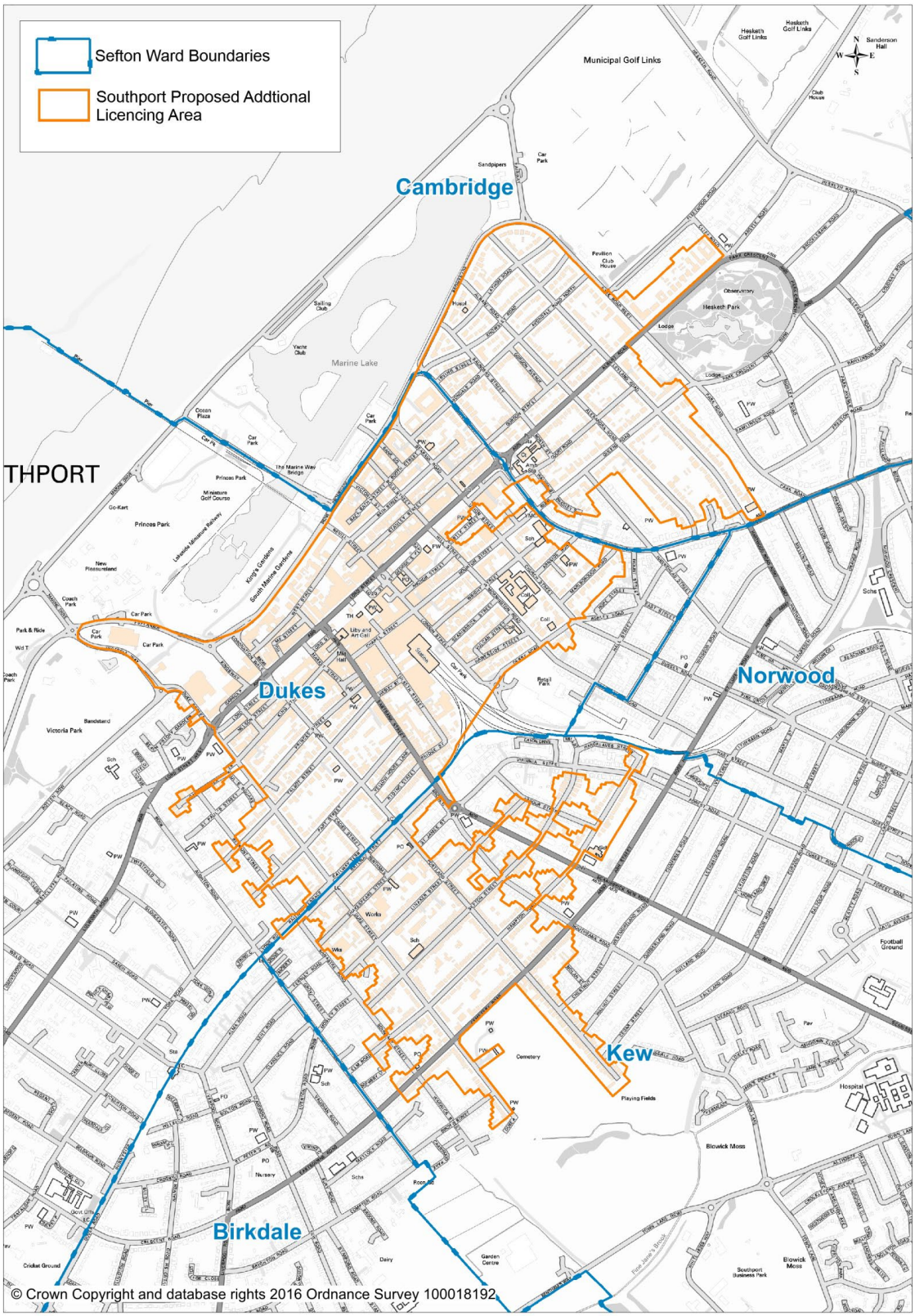
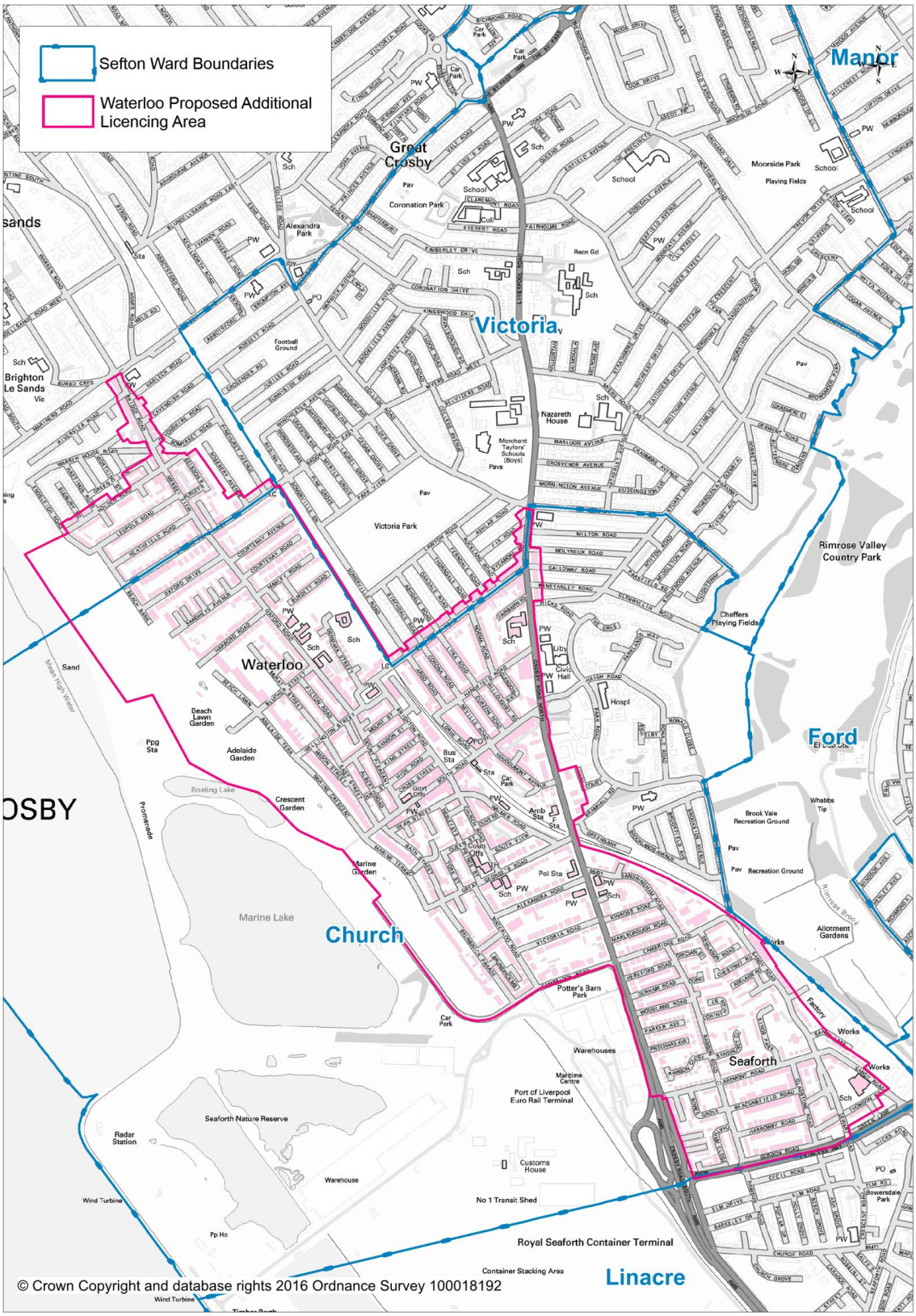
Southport Additional HMO Licensing Boundary



Seaforth/Waterloo Additional HMO Licensing Boundary



Southport Additional HMO Licensing Boundary – List of included roads

Road Name	Ward
ALBANY ROAD	Cambridge
ALBERT PLACE	Duke's
ALBERT ROAD	Cambridge
ALEXANDRA ROAD	Cambridge
ANCHOR STREET	Duke's
ARNSIDE ROAD	Duke's
ARNSIDE TERRACE	Duke's
ASHTON PLACE	Duke's
AVONDALE ROAD	Duke's
AVONDALE ROAD NORTH	Cambridge
BACK BATH STREET	Duke's
BALLS PLACE	Duke's
BANK PASSAGE	Duke's
BANK SQUARE	Duke's
BATH STREET	Duke's
BATH STREET NORTH	Duke's
BEACH PRIORY GARDENS	Duke's
BELMONT STREET	Duke's
BENTHAM STREET	Kew
BOLD STREET	Duke's
BOOTH STREET	Duke's
BRADLEY PLACE	Duke's
BRADLEY STREET	Cambridge
BRIDGE STREET	Duke's
CABLE STREET	Duke's
CAMBRIDGE ARCADE	Duke's
CAMBRIDGE WALKS	Duke's
CASTLE STREET	Duke's
CASTLE WALK	Duke's
CEMETERY ROAD	Kew
CHAPEL STREET	Duke's
CHURCH STREET	Duke's
CORONATION WALK	Duke's
CORPORATION STREET	Duke's
COURT ROAD	Cambridge
CROSS STREET	Duke's
DERBY ROAD	Duke's
DUKE STREET	Duke's
EASTBANK STREET	Duke's
EASTBANK STREET SQUARE	Duke's
ERICSON DRIVE	Kew
ESPLANADE	Duke's
GLEBE PLACE	Duke's
GORDON AVENUE	Cambridge
GORDON STREET	Duke's
GORDON WAY	Duke's
HAMPTON ROAD	Kew
HARGREAVES STREET	Kew
HAWESSIDE STREET	Duke's
HILL STREET	Duke's

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Road Name	Ward
HODGE STREET	Duke's
HOGHTON GROVE	Duke's
HOGHTON PLACE	Duke's
HOGHTON STREET	Duke's
HULME STREET	Duke's
IRVING STREET	Cambridge
JOHNSON STREET	Duke's
KING STREET	Duke's
KINGSWAY	Duke's
KNOWSLEY ROAD	Cambridge
LATHOM ROAD	Cambridge
LEICESTER STREET	Duke's
LEYLAND ROAD	Cambridge
LINAKER STREET	Kew
LIVERPOOL ROAD	Duke's
LONDON SQUARE	Duke's
LONDON STREET	Duke's
LORD STREET	Duke's
LOWER PROMENADE	Duke's
MANCHESTER ROAD	Duke's
MARBLE PLACE	Duke's
MARKET STREET	Duke's
MARLBOROUGH ROAD	Duke's
MORNINGTON ROAD	Duke's
NELSON STREET	Duke's
NEVILL STREET	Duke's
NORTH STREET	Cambridge
PARK ROAD WEST	Cambridge
PART STREET	Duke's
PENTY PLACE	Duke's
PORTLAND STREET	Duke's
POST OFFICE AVENUE	Duke's
PRINCES STREET	Duke's
PROMENADE	Duke's
QUEEN ANNE STREET	Duke's
QUEENS ROAD	Cambridge
RAILWAY STREET	Kew
RAILWAY TERRACE	Duke's
RIDING STREET	Duke's
RIMMERS AVENUE	Duke's
ROYAL TERRACE	Duke's
SAUNDERS STREET	Cambridge
SCARISBRICK AVENUE	Duke's
SCARISBRICK STREET	Duke's
SEABANK ROAD	Duke's
SEFTON STREET	Kew
SHAKESPEARE STREET	Kew
SHARROCK STREET	Duke's
SIMPSONS PLACE	Duke's
ST ANDREWS PLACE	Duke's
ST GEORGES PLACE	Duke's
ST PAULS SQUARE	Duke's

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Road Name	Ward
STANLEY STREET	Duke's
TALBOT DRIVE	Duke's
TALBOT STREET	Duke's
THE WALK	Kew
TRINITY GARDENS	Duke's
TRINITY MEWS	Duke's
TULKETH STREET	Duke's
UNION STREET	Duke's
VICTORIA STREET	Duke's
VICTORIA WAY	Duke's
VIRGINIA STREET	Kew
VULCAN STREET	Duke's
WALTON STREET	Cambridge
WARWICK STREET	Kew
WAVERLEY STREET	Duke's
WAYFARERS ARCADE	Duke's
WELLINGTON STREET	Duke's
WESLEY STREET	Duke's
WEST STREET	Duke's
WRIGHT STREET	Duke's
YELLOW HOUSE LANE	Duke's

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Seaforth/Waterloo Additional HMO Licensing Boundary – List of included roads

Road Name	Ward
ADELAIDE ROAD	Church
ADELAIDE TERRACE	Church
ALBERT ROAD	Church
ALEXANDRA ROAD	Church
ARGO ROAD	Church
ASHDALE ROAD	Victoria
BACK BRIDGE ROAD	Blundellsands
BACK MERSEY VIEW	Blundellsands
BACK MOUNT STREET	Church
BACK SOUTH ROAD	Church
BATH STREET	Church
BEACH BANK	Church
BEACH LAWN	Church
BEACONSFIELD ROAD	Church
BEDFORD PLACE	Church
BELGRAVE ROAD	Church
BIRCHDALE ROAD	Victoria
BLUCHER STREET	Church
BOWER GROVE	Church
BRAMHALL ROAD	Church
BRIDGE ROAD	Blundellsands
BRIGHTON ROAD	Church
BROOKE ROAD WEST	Blundellsands
BROWNING ROAD	Church
BRUNSWICK MEWS	Church
BRUNSWICK PARADE	Church
BURBO BANK ROAD SOUTH	Church
BURDETT ROAD	Church
CAMBRIDGE ROAD	Church
CANNING STREET	Church
CHATHAM CLOSE	Church
CHESNUT ROAD	Church
CHURCH ROAD	Church
CLAREMONT CLOSE	Church
CLAREMONT ROAD	Church
COACH HOUSE MEWS	Church
COOPERS ROW	Church
CORINTHIAN STREET	Church
CORONA ROAD	Church
COURTENAY AVENUE	Church
COURTENAY ROAD	Church
CROSBY ROAD NORTH	Church
CROSBY ROAD SOUTH	Church
CROSS STREET	Church
CURZON ROAD	Church
DEACON CLOSE	Church
DEACON COURT	Church
DEAN STREET	Church
DENMARK STREET	Church
DEWLANDS ROAD	Church

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Road Name	Ward
DORIC STREET	Church
DUKE STREET	Church
DURHAM ROAD	Church
EAST STREET	Church
EWART ROAD	Church
FAIRBAIRN ROAD	Church
FERNDALE ROAD	Victoria
FIR ROAD	Church
GALLOWAY ROAD	Church
GLADSTONE AVENUE	Church
GLADSTONE ROAD	Church
GLENBANK	Blundellsands
GLENDOWER ROAD	Church
GORDON AVENUE	Church
GORDON ROAD	Church
GREAT GEORGES ROAD	Church
GRECIAN STREET	Church
GREEN LANE	Blundellsands
HAIGH ROAD	Church
HANDFIELD ROAD	Church
HARBORD ROAD	Church
HARBORD TERRACE	Church
HARROWBY ROAD	Church
HEATHFIELD ROAD	Blundellsands
HEREFORD ROAD	Church
HICKS ROAD	Church
HOLDEN GROVE	Blundellsands
HOLDEN ROAD	Blundellsands
HOLDEN ROAD EAST	Blundellsands
HOLDEN TERRACE	Blundellsands
HOUGOUMONT AVENUE	Church
HOUGOUMONT GROVE	Church
HYDE ROAD	Church
IONIC STREET	Church
KING STREET	Church
KINGS PARK	Church
KINROSS ROAD	Church
LATHOM AVENUE	Church
LATHOM CLOSE	Church
LEOPOLD ROAD	Blundellsands
LORNE ROAD	Church
LULWORTH AVENUE	Church
LYRA ROAD	Church
MANLEY ROAD	Church
MARINE CRESCENT	Church
MARINE TERRACE	Church
MARLBOROUGH ROAD	Church
MASON STREET	Church
MELROSE ROAD	Church
MERSEY VIEW	Blundellsands
MIDLAND TERRACE	Church
MILTON ROAD	Church

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Road Name	Ward
MOLYNEUX ROAD	Church
MOUNT PLEASANT	Church
MOUNT STREET	Church
MURAT GROVE	Church
MURAT STREET	Church
NEVILLE ROAD	Church
NORMA ROAD	Church
OAKDALE ROAD	Victoria
OLIVE ROAD	Church
OXFORD DRIVE	Church
OXFORD ROAD	Church
PARKER AVENUE	Church
PICTON ROAD	Church
PINEHURST AVENUE	Blundellsands
PORTLAND AVENUE	Church
PRINCE STREET	Church
PRITCHARD AVENUE	Church
PROMENADE	Church
PURLEY ROAD	Blundellsands
QUEEN STREET	Church
RAWSON CLOSE	Church
RAWSON ROAD	Church
RIVER VIEW	Blundellsands
RIVERSDALE ROAD	Church
RIVERSLEA ROAD	Blundellsands
ROCKLAND ROAD	Church
ROSEBERY AVENUE	Blundellsands
SANDHEYS AVENUE	Church
SANDHEYS GROVE	Church
SANDHEYS TERRACE	Church
SANDHURST CLOSE	Church
SANDON STREET	Church
SANDOWN ROAD	Church
SANDPIPERS COURT	Blundellsands
SANDRINGHAM AVENUE	Church
SANDRINGHAM ROAD	Church
SANDY LANE	Church
SANDY ROAD	Church
SEASIDE CLOSE	Church
SEAVIEW TERRACE	Church
SELSDON ROAD	Blundellsands
SOMERVILLE ROAD	Victoria
SOUTH ROAD	Church
SOUTH VIEW	Church
ST JOHNS PLACE	Church
ST JOHNS ROAD	Church
STANLEY ROAD	Church
SUDBURY ROAD	Blundellsands
SWEDEN GROVE	Church
SYCAMORE ROAD	Victoria
THE ESPLANADE	Church
THOMSON ROAD	Church

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Road Name	Ward
VICTORIA ROAD	Church
WALMER ROAD	Church
WARRENHOUSE ROAD	Blundellsands
WATER STREET	Church
WATERLOO CLOSE	Church
WATERLOO ROAD	Church
WELLINGTON STREET	Church
WESLEY STREET	Church
WESTWARD VIEW	Blundellsands
WILLOUGHBY ROAD	Church
WINSTANLEY ROAD	Church
WOODLAND ROAD	Church
WORTHING STREET	Blundellsands
YORK STREET	Church

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Appendix 4

Additional (HMO) Licensing Conditions

(HMO) Licensing Conditions

In these conditions, “house” is meant to refer to the building or part of a building, which is licensed under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004. “Authority” is meant to refer to the local housing authority, namely Sefton Council.

The licence for this dwelling is not transferable to another person/organisation or another premises once granted in accordance with Section 68(6) of the Housing Act 2004.

Our licensing conditions will be amended to reflect any legislative changes to definition.

1. Mandatory Conditions – Schedule 4 of the Housing Act 2004

1.1 Gas

The licence holder must:

If gas is supplied to the house, to produce to the local housing authority annually for their inspection a gas safety certificate obtained in respect of the house within the last 12 months.

1.2 Electrical Appliances & Installation and Furniture

The licence holder must:

(a) keep electrical appliances and furniture made available by him in the house in a safe condition;

(b) supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the safety of such appliances and furniture;

additionally

(c) (i) ensure that every electrical installation in the house is in proper working order and safe for continued use; and

(ii) supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the safety of such installations;

(d) for the purposes of paragraph (c) “electrical installation” has the meaning given in regulation 2(1) of the Building Regulations 2010.

1.3 Smoke Alarms

The licence holder must:

(i) ensure that a smoke alarm is installed on each storey of the house on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation, and

(ii) keep each such alarm in proper working order and

(iii) supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the condition and positioning of such alarms.

1.3.1 **Carbon Monoxide**

The licence holder must:

(i) Ensure that a carbon monoxide alarm is installed in any room in the house which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance; other than a gas cooker
(ii) Keep each such alarm in proper working order; and
(iii) Supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the condition and positioning of such alarms.

For the purposes of 1.3.1 i) “room” includes a hall or landing

For the purposes of 1.3.1 i) a bathroom or lavatory is to be treated as a room used as living accommodation

1.4 Terms of occupation

The licence holder must supply to the occupiers of the house a written statement of the terms on which they occupy it.

1.5 Minimum floor space requirements/age of persons occupying rooms used as sleeping accommodation

1.5.1 **1.5.1 The licence holder must**

- ensure that the floor area of any room in the HMO used as sleeping accommodation by one person aged over 10 years is not less than 6.51 square metres;
- ensure that the floor area of any room in the HMO used as sleeping accommodation by two persons aged over 10 years is not less than 10.22 square metres;
- ensure that the floor area of any room in the HMO used as sleeping accommodation by one person aged under 10 years is not less than 4.64 square metres;
- ensure that any room in the HMO with a floor area of less than 4.64 square metres is not used as sleeping accommodation.
- notify the local housing authority in writing if any room in the HMO with a floor area of less than 4.64 square metres.
- Ensure any part of the floor area of a room in relation to which the height of the ceiling is less than 1.5 metres is not to be taken into account in determining the floor area of that room for the purposes of this condition.

1.5.2 **1.5.2 The licence holder must ensure that**

- where any room in the HMO is used as sleeping accommodation by persons aged over 10 years only, it is not used as such by more than the maximum number of persons aged over 10 years specified in the licence;
- where any room in the HMO is used as sleeping accommodation by persons aged under 10 years only, it is not used as such by more than the maximum number of persons aged under 10 years specified in the licence;
- where any room in the HMO is used as sleeping accommodation by persons aged over 10 years and persons aged under 10 years, it is not used as such by more than the maximum number of persons aged over 10 years specified in the licence and the maximum number of persons aged under 10 years so specified.

1.5.3 The licence holder must rectify the breach within the specified period where;

(a) Any of the requirements imposed by conditions 1.5.1 and 1.5.2 relating to floor area have been breached in relation to the HMO.

(b) The licence holder has not knowingly permitted the breach, and
(c) The local housing authority have notified the licence holder of the breach,

The specified period means the period which is specified in the notification, which shall be not more than 18 months beginning with the date of the notification, unless otherwise stated.

1.6 Household waste

The licence holder must comply with any scheme which is provided by the local housing authority to the licence holder and which relates to the storage and disposal of household waste at the HMO pending collection.

2. Sefton Council Licensing Conditions

2.1 Tenancy Management

The licence holder will provide the tenant with documents required by law and information necessary to report repairs, emergencies and management issues for example and not limited to:

(a) A true copy of the licence to which these conditions apply;
(b) A notice with the name, address, daytime and emergency contact number of the licence holder or managing agent; (*This information is also to be provided to Sefton Council)* Any changes in contact details should be provided to occupiers within 7 days of the changes.
(c) True copy of current gas safety certificate
(d) True copy of the current Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) that must not be more than 5 years old.
(e) True copy of current energy performance certificate
(f) Statement of the terms of occupation
(g) Details of arrangements for the storage and disposal of waste;
(h) Tenants responsibilities in the storage and presenting of refuse for disposal.

(i) Details explaining how the tenant can make a complaint in relation to matters concerning their occupation and how the licence holder/manager will deal with such, including the timescales for completion of repair works.
(j) Where a deposit has been taken in connection with the tenant's occupation of the property, information on the prescribed form required by s213(5) Housing Act 2004.
(k) A user manual/written instruction for the correct operation and setting of the fixed form of heating.
(l) A user manual/written instruction for any other installations or equipment provided as part of the agreement for the occupation of the house

2.1.2. The Licence holder must:-

(a) carry out 'Right to Rent' checks in accordance with Home Office requirements prior to agreeing to a tenancy (guidance downloadable from www.gov.uk);

(b) where the Authority has reasonable grounds to investigate compliance with this licence or the management of the property, the licence holder shall make available relevant records within 14 days of a written request.

2.2 Property Management

2.2.1 **The licence holder must ensure that any remedial works to rectify disrepair issues identified are undertaken within a reasonable period of time, and within the timescales notified to the occupiers under condition 2.1(i). The works must be carried out by competent and reputable persons.**

2.2.2 **The licence holder or manager should inspect the property regularly and at least once every six months.**

2.2.3 **The licence holder must ensure, insofar as reasonably possible, that emergency works necessary to protect the security of the property are undertaken within 24hrs of notification e.g. damage to windows/ entrance points to the property.**

2.2.4 **The licence holder must ensure that as well as the declaration and Mandatory condition of providing annual Gas Safe Certificate, landlords of a property also have further duties under the Gas Safety (Installation and use) Regulations 1998, whereby they are required to provide on-going maintenance of the gas installation Landlords/Licence holders should not assume that by carrying out annual gas safety checks will be sufficient to provide effective maintenance; advice of a competent person should be sought. All such maintenance works to be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.**

2.2.5 **As far as is reasonably practicable, the landlord/licence holder shall not allow the property to become overcrowded.**

2.2.6 **The licence holder must provide adequate facilities and amenities (such as toilets, baths, showers, washing and cooking facilities) as per the number of occupiers. All facilities and any equipment provided including cupboards, shelving or fittings etc. must be maintained in good repair and working order as far as is reasonably practicable.**

2.2.7 **The licence holder/manager shall take reasonable steps to ensure that the property is free from any pest infestation at the start of a tenancy and where necessary ensure that a treatment programme is carried out to eradicate the pest infestation. Record of such treatment programmes must be kept and provided to Sefton Council on request.**

2.2.8 **The licence holder must ensure that any persons involved with the**

management of the house are to the best of their knowledge “fit and proper persons” for the purposes of the Act.

2.3 External areas, refuse & waste

The licence holder must ensure that:

(a) The exterior of the property is maintained in a reasonable decorative order and state of repair;
(b) At the commencement of a new tenancy any gardens, yards and other external areas within the curtilage of the house must be in a reasonably clean and tidy condition and free from rodent infestation, and
(c) Suitable and adequate provision is made for storage of refuse generated in the property and that occupants use receptacles provided by Sefton Council for storage prior to collection. (wheeled bins or refuse sacks)
(d) The tenants are adequately informed of their duty with regards to refuse collection particularly that the wheeled bins or plastic refuse sacks (if wheeled bins are not provided) must not be presented for collection for a period of more than 12 hours prior to collection.
(e) Any new occupant of the building is notified of the date of collection for the wheeled bins/refuse sacks
(f) Any items cleared from the property before the start of a new tenancy are properly disposed of
(g) Tenants are advised of how to dispose of 'bulky waste', including details of the councils service.

2.4 Security

The licence holder must ensure that:

(a) The security provisions for the access to the dwelling (including but not limited to locks, latches, deadbolts and entry systems) must be maintained in good working order at all times.
(b) Where window locks are fitted, and keys are available the licence holder will ensure that keys are provided to the relevant occupant.
(c) Where a burglar alarm is fitted to the house, the licence holder must provide the occupant with instructions on how to operate the alarm and how to report a fault with the system and must inform the Local Authority of the key holder contact details
(d) Where previous occupants have not surrendered keys, the licence holder will arrange for a lock change to be undertaken, prior to new occupants moving in.
(e) Where alley gates are installed to the rear of the licensed property, the licence holder must at the time of letting, provide all new tenants with the appropriate alley-gate key and replace any such keys prior to any tenancy starting. The licence holder must ensure that all tenants surrender the alley gate key at the end of their tenancy

(f) All final exit doors must be provided with a secure lock. Any doors fitted with a lock, including final exit doors from the building or any that form part of the means of escape in the event of a fire, must be capable of being opened from the inside without the use of a key.

2.5 Energy Performance

The Licence Holder must provide the tenant of the licenced dwelling with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). The Licence Holder must provide a copy of the EPC to the Council on reasonable request. The licence holder shall comply with the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards and any subsequent legislation.

2.6 Training

Where the Authority has reasonable grounds to be concerned about the management of the property, it may require the licence holder or manager to attend an approved property management course within six months.

2.7 Absence

The licence holder is required to have in place suitable emergency and other management arrangements in the event of their absence. The name and contact details of the licence holder and/or manager must be supplied to each occupier.

2.8 Compliance Inspections

The licence holder must allow the Council to undertake compliance checks. Council Officers will give the licence holder and/or the tenant at least 24 hrs notice of these checks and produce valid authorisation at the time of the visit.

2.9 Anti-Social Behaviour

The licence holder must:

(a) Take all reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour by any person occupying or visiting the property and to prevent the use of the premises for any illegal or unlawful purpose.

(b) Ensure that all tenancies granted following the issue of this licence are appropriately monitored and managed to minimise the risk of nuisance, anti-social behaviour, harassment to neighbours and other residents of the local area.

(c) Effectively address all problems of anti-social behaviour resulting from the conduct on the part of a tenant, occupiers, or visitors to the premises by complying with the" ASB information for Landlords" pack or an equivalent process.

(d) Co-operate with Sefton Council, Merseyside Police and other agencies in resolving complaints of anti-social behaviour.

(e) Undertake an investigation of any complaints of anti-social behaviour regarding their tenants. Written records of these will be required excluding any information which the licence holder reasonably believes to have been provided to him in confidence by a third party.

(g) Provide the occupiers of the property with written confirmation detailing arrangements in place to report nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

Records required by this condition shall be retained for the duration of the

licence and produced to the Council upon reasonable request.

2.10 HMOs

The licence holder must ensure that the house is compliant with Sefton Council's approved standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation.

2.11 Variations

The licence holder must notify the Authority in writing within 14 days of any of the following:

a) Any change in the number of persons or households occupying the licensed property.

b) For licensed HMOs, any proposed change to the use or occupancy of any room or part of the property that may affect compliance with licence conditions or housing standards.

c) Any change in the ownership, management or control of the property.

d) Any change to the contact details of the licence holder or manager, including their address, telephone number or email address.

e) The appointment of a new manager or the ending of a management arrangement.

f) Any material change to the layout of the property, amenities provided, or fire safety measures.

g) Any matter that may affect the fit and proper person status of the licence holder, manager, owner, or any person involved in the management of the property, including any relevant criminal conviction, civil penalty, banning order, licence revocation, or breach of housing-related legislation.

h) The licence holder must provide any further information reasonably requested by the Authority in relation to these changes.

Appendix 5

Selective & Additional HMO Licensing - Case Studies & Enforcement Actions

Case Studies: Improving Housing Conditions Through Licensing Compliance

Scheme: Selective Licensing

Case Study 1: Single Family House

As part of a routine compliance inspection linked to a Selective Licence application, Sefton Council's Housing Standards Team inspected a privately rented single family property. The inspection identified a range of serious deficiencies, including multiple Category 1 Hazards and High Category 2 Hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

The most significant issues included:

- Inadequate heating and hot water provision, creating an Excess Cold Category 1 Hazard. Portable heaters were being relied upon throughout the property and there was insufficient fixed heating.
- Significant fire safety concerns arising from an inner-room sleeping arrangement, hoarding, obstructed escape routes and the absence of suitable fire detection systems.
- Serious electrical safety defects, including an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) assessed as "unsafe for continued use" with 12 potentially dangerous C2 defects identified.
- Additional hazards associated with dampness, drainage defects and hygiene-related pest issues.

Housing Standards Officers worked proactively with the landlord, explaining the nature of the hazards, the required remedial works and the potential enforcement options available should improvements not be completed. The landlord had initially been unresponsive, but engagement with the Licensing Team and clear communication regarding possible formal action encouraged compliance.

As a result, the landlord commissioned a new electrical inspection, completed extensive electrical repairs, upgraded safety measures within the property and undertook works to address the heating, fire safety and property condition issues. According to the Housing Standards Team, the landlord subsequently became fully engaged with the process and completed the required improvements.

Outcome

This case demonstrates how Sefton's licensing regime helps identify serious housing hazards that may otherwise go unaddressed. Through inspection, advice, monitoring and the credible threat of enforcement action, the Council secured significant improvements to the safety and condition of the property without the need for formal legal proceedings. The intervention resulted in:

- Improved electrical safety and compliance with Electrical Safety Standards Regulations.
- Enhanced fire precautions and means of escape.
- Improved heating and thermal comfort for occupants.
- Resolution of drainage and property condition issues.

- Greater engagement and understanding from the landlord regarding their statutory responsibilities.

Value of Licensing

Licensing provides an effective mechanism for identifying high-risk properties, engaging landlords and securing improvements that directly benefit tenants. This case evidence how licensing inspections can prevent harm, improve housing standards and achieve positive outcomes for both tenants and responsible landlords through early intervention and targeted regulatory acti

Before	After
	
	

Case Study 2: Flat in High Rise Block

A tenant of a Flat, reported ongoing disrepair issues within the property and advised that the landlord was not engaging with requests to address the concerns. Further enquiries established that the managing agents, who were also the licence holders, had withdrawn from management of the property due to the extent of the disrepair. Consequently, the property licence was revoked.

This resulted in the property becoming both unlicensed and unmanaged, with the landlord residing overseas and essential repair works remaining outstanding. To assess the situation, a Licensing

Compliance Officer arranged an inspection directly with the tenant and identified a range of defects requiring attention.

Following the inspection, the Licensing Compliance Officer issued the landlord with a detailed schedule of works outlining the repairs required to bring the property up to the required standard. In addition, formal correspondence was sent requiring the landlord to appoint a suitable managing agent to ensure appropriate management arrangements were in place.

Outcome

Following this intervention, newly appointed managing agents made contact to confirm that a contractor had been instructed to undertake the necessary remedial works. The agents also advised that an application for a new property licence would be submitted within 14 days.

Value of Licensing

This case highlights the importance of proactive licensing enforcement in addressing poor property conditions, restoring effective management arrangements, and ensuring compliance with licensing requirements to safeguard tenant welfare.

The main hazards-

Previous hob was tripping the electrics and could not be used

Extractor in bathroom not functioning

Before	**After**
	

Case Study 3: Complaint of Disrepair from a tenant in a single-family property

A complaint was received from the tenants regarding a significant number of outstanding repair issues that had been repeatedly reported to the managing agent without response. Given the nature of the concerns, a Licensing Compliance Officer arranged a property inspection directly with the tenants.

During the inspection, several defects were identified, including damp and mould growth within bedrooms occupied by a family with young children. The findings were formally reported to the managing agent, and correspondence was issued requiring the necessary works to be scheduled and completed within a specified timescale.

Despite multiple follow-up calls and emails, no acknowledgement or update was received from the managing agent. As a result, a Notice of Entry was prepared and hand-delivered directly to the agent's office to ensure the matter progressed.

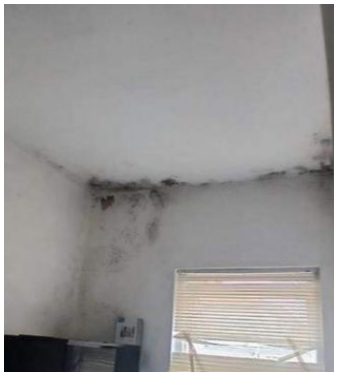
Outcome

The following day, the Licensing Compliance Officer met representatives of the managing agent at the property alongside their contractors. An inspection was undertaken immediately, and arrangements were made for the required remedial works to commence. Since then, the managing agent has maintained regular communication regarding progress, and a further inspection is planned upon completion of the works to verify compliance.

During the visit, the Licensing Compliance Officer also identified a neighbouring property in a state of disrepair. The property appeared unsecured, with overgrown vegetation extending onto the pavement and presenting a risk of unauthorised access. The matter was subsequently referred to Building Control and the Empty Homes Team for further investigation and appropriate action.

Value of Licensing

This case demonstrates the importance of proactive enforcement, persistence in engaging with managing agents, and a wider neighbourhood-focused approach to identifying and addressing housing issues that may impact both tenants and the local community. The 'After' pictures show that the property is now undergoing a major renovation.

Before	After
	
	
 	

Case Study 4: High Rise Block

Following complaints from several occupiers of a high-rise block of flats within the Selective Licensing area, concerns were raised regarding fire safety within the building. In response, a joint inspection was arranged between Sefton Council and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service to investigate the issues and assess compliance with relevant housing and fire safety legislation.

The inspection was attended by the building's managing agent, who facilitated access and assisted officers throughout the visit. By working collaboratively, all parties were able to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the property and consider the concerns raised by residents.

The primary purpose of the inspection was to examine the reported fire safety concerns and ensure that appropriate fire precautions and management arrangements were in place to protect residents.

Through the joint visit, officers from the Council and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service were able to combine their respective expertise to assess the building's compliance with relevant legal requirements and identify any areas requiring improvement. This partnership approach ensured that concerns raised by tenants were thoroughly investigated and that any necessary actions could be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Since this building is situated within the Selective Licensing area, the inspection also provided an opportunity for the Council to assess housing conditions within several individual flats. Officers carried out inspections to identify any hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and determine whether accommodation standards were being maintained.

The joint inspection demonstrated the benefits of close partnership working between enforcement agencies, managing agents, and property owners. By coordinating activity, the Council and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service were able to take a holistic approach to safety and housing standards within the building.

Any concerns identified during the inspection were discussed with the managing agent, ensuring that they understood the findings, the rationale behind any required actions, and their responsibilities for maintaining safe and compliant accommodation.

The ability to inspect individual flats under the Selective Licensing scheme also enabled officers to identify housing issues that may otherwise have remained undetected. This provided an opportunity to address both building-wide concerns and issues affecting individual residents, resulting in a more comprehensive intervention.

Outcome

The inspection provided reassurance to residents that their concerns had been taken seriously and investigated thoroughly by the relevant authorities.

Through the joint working arrangements, fire safety measures and management practices were reviewed, while additional housing hazards identified within individual flats were addressed through

the Council's licensing powers. This helped to improve living conditions within the building and ensure that accommodation met the standards expected within the private rented sector.

The intervention also strengthened engagement with the managing agent, helping to promote ongoing compliance and reinforce the importance of effective building management and resident safety.

Value of Licensing

This case highlights the additional benefits delivered through the Selective Licensing scheme. The licensing designation enabled officers not only to respond to residents' concerns regarding fire safety but also to inspect individual properties within the building and identify wider housing hazards.

Without the licensing framework, the Council's ability to proactively assess conditions within multiple flats would have been more limited. The scheme therefore provided an important mechanism for identifying risks, securing improvements, and ensuring that residents were living in safe, well-managed accommodation.

The case demonstrates how Licensing supports multi-agency working, enables early intervention, and helps improve both property conditions and tenant confidence, contributing to safer and healthier communities across the borough.



Case Study 5 : Small block of flats

As part of the Council's Selective Licensing Scheme, a routine compliance inspection was undertaken at a small block of flats, to assess property conditions, management standards and licence compliance.

The inspection was attended by a representative acting on behalf of the landlord.

Upon entering the property, an overwhelming smell of gas was immediately apparent within the communal entrance area. This concern was raised with the managing agent present at the inspection; however, they did not initially believe there was an issue and suggested the smell was not significant.

Three of the four flats within the property were inspected. During the inspection, access was gained to the rear of the building via Flat 3, where the smell of gas became even more pronounced. Based on the severity of the odour and the potential risk to occupants, Council Officers made the decision to contact the emergency gas service despite reservations expressed by the agent.

The emergency gas engineers attended and confirmed that there was a **major gas leak** affecting the property. As a result, the gas supply was immediately disconnected to all flats to ensure the safety of residents, and emergency repair works were undertaken.

Outcome

The intervention prevented a potentially serious incident and ensured that a significant hazard was identified and addressed before harm occurred to tenants or neighbouring residents.

The following day, the landlord contacted the inspecting officer by email to confirm the findings and express gratitude for the actions taken during the visit, acknowledging that the issue may not otherwise have been detected.

Whilst no Category 1 hazards were identified within the individual flats inspected, several Category 2 hazards were identified. Details of these defects were subsequently provided to the landlord with recommendations for remedial action to improve property standards.

Benefit of Selective Licensing

This case demonstrates the value of proactive property inspections delivered through the Selective Licensing Scheme. A routine compliance visit not only ensured ongoing monitoring of housing conditions but directly led to the identification of a major gas leak that posed a significant risk to occupants.

Without the inspection, the leak may have remained undetected, potentially resulting in serious consequences for residents. The case highlights how Selective Licensing supports improved property management, tenant safety and early intervention where housing risks exist.

Additional Licensing Area

Case Study 6: House in Multiple Occupation

This property was purchased by a local businessman as an investment opportunity within the area. As a first-time landlord, he had limited experience in property management and no previous knowledge of the legal requirements associated with operating a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

Despite his lack of experience, the landlord was aware that the property required an Additional Licence and submitted an application to the Council. This proactive approach enabled the property to be assessed at an early stage and provided an opportunity for officers to work with the landlord to achieve compliance before the building reached full occupancy.

Following receipt of the licence application, a compliance inspection was undertaken. At the time of the visit, only two of the five self-contained flats were occupied.

During the inspection, the landlord openly expressed concerns regarding the general condition of the property. Whilst he recognised that repairs and improvements were required, he was uncertain about the extent of the works needed to comply with the Housing Act 2004 and HMO management and licensing standards, particularly in relation to fire safety.

The inspection identified several Category 1 and Category 2 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), including significant deficiencies in fire precautions. These issues presented potential risks to the health, safety and welfare of current and future occupiers and required remedial action before the property could be considered fully compliant.

During the inspection, officers took the opportunity to explain the hazards that had been identified and the reasons why remedial works were necessary. Focus was given to explaining the fire safety requirements applicable to HMOs and the practical measures required to reduce the risks to residents.

The landlord engaged positively throughout the process, asking questions and seeking advice to better understand both his legal responsibilities and the standards expected of licensed accommodation. Through constructive discussions and guidance from officers, he developed a clear understanding of the improvements required and the importance of maintaining safe housing standards.

This collaborative approach enabled the landlord to view compliance not as a regulatory burden but as an investment in the long-term quality and sustainability of the property.

Outcome

The landlord cooperated fully with the licensing process and completed all required works within a reasonable timeframe.

As three of the five flats were vacant at the time of the inspection, he was able to undertake the improvements without causing significant disruption to residents. This provided greater flexibility to complete the works to a high standard and address issues comprehensively rather than through temporary or piecemeal repairs.

The completed works resulted in significant improvements to the safety, condition and management of the property. Fire safety standards were enhanced, identified hazards were removed or reduced, and the accommodation was brought up to the standard expected of a licensed HMO.

As a result, all five self-contained flats are now in use, providing safe and well-managed accommodation.

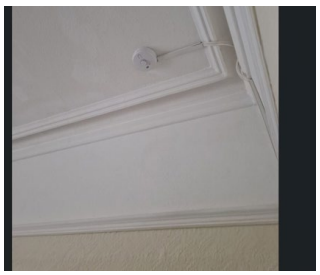
Value of Licensing

This case demonstrates how the licensing process can support inexperienced landlords in understanding and meeting their legal obligations. The application process triggered an early inspection, allowing hazards to be identified and addressed before the property became fully occupied.

Without this intervention, significant hazards, including fire safety deficiencies, may have remained unaddressed, potentially placing tenants at risk. Instead, the licensing scheme enabled constructive engagement between the Council and the landlord, resulting in improved housing standards, increased tenant safety, and the provision of good quality accommodation within the private rented sector.

The case highlights the preventative role of licensing in identifying risks, supporting compliance, and ensuring that residents have access to safe, secure and well-managed homes.

Basement - Before Exposed pipes Lack of fire separation	After The fire alarm has been extended into the basement. The ceiling now provides 30-minute fire separation.
	

	Additional smoke alarms/heat detectors installed in high-risk rooms (installed in each flat, to give early warning)

Case Study 7: HMO

A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) located within Sefton's Additional Licensing area. The case originated following a complaint from the occupier of Flat 1, who contacted the Council to report concerns relating to damp and mould within their accommodation.

In response, a property inspection was arranged to investigate the reported issues and assess the condition of the accommodation.

During the inspection of Flat 1, officers confirmed the presence of damp and mould; however, the visit also identified several additional hazards affecting both the individual flat and other parts of the building.

Since the property was subject to Additional Licensing, officers were able to utilise licensing powers to inspect the remaining flats within the building, together with the common areas. This comprehensive approach enabled a full assessment of housing conditions throughout the property rather than limiting the investigation to the original complaint.

The inspections identified a range of hazards affecting several parts of the building, including issues relating to:

- Fire safety
- Damp and mould
- Falls on the level
- Personal hygiene, drainage and sanitation

These hazards had the potential to negatively impact the health, safety and wellbeing of occupiers and required remedial action to bring the property up to the required standard.

Following the inspection, the identified deficiencies and required works were discussed with the landlord. Officers provided guidance regarding the necessary improvements and the standards expected under housing legislation and the licensing scheme.

The landlord engaged positively with the process and cooperated fully with the Council throughout. By working collaboratively, a programme of remedial works was agreed and completed to address the hazards identified during the inspections.

Outcomes

As a direct result of the intervention, a total of 25 hazards were remedied across seven flats and the communal areas of the building.

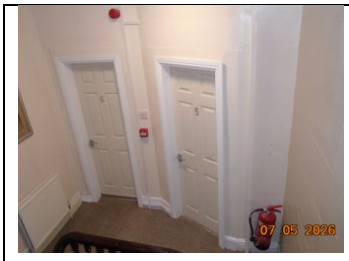
The completed works significantly improved the safety and condition of the accommodation, reducing risks to residents and ensuring that the property met the standards required under the licensing regime.

The landlord expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the process and welcomed the improvements that had been made to the property. The intervention not only resolved the original complaint relating to damp and mould but also addressed a range of additional hazards that may otherwise have remained unidentified.

Value of Licensing

This case demonstrates the wider benefits of the Additional Licensing scheme. Although the Council's involvement was initially prompted by a complaint regarding damp and mould in a single flat, the licensing framework enabled officers to inspect the entire building and take a holistic approach to improving housing conditions.

	The local authority asked for escape windows on the third floor. The landlord of his own accord replaced all windows throughout the property.
	The fire alarm system has been upgraded into all the flats and the high- risk rooms
	All flat doors are now FD30s

	
	Roof has been repaired

Case Study 8: Supporting Partner Authorities to Tackle Rogue Landlords and Agents

Sefton Council worked in partnership with Liverpool City Council to support enforcement action against Roach Estates & Property Management Ltd, culminating in the First-tier Tribunal issuing a one-year Banning Order effective from 12 January 2026. The order prohibits the company from letting housing, undertaking letting agency work, or carrying out property management activities in England.

The application was based on a pattern of serious and persistent non-compliance. In October 2024, the company was convicted of failing to comply with an Improvement Notice relating to a property on Goodison Road, Liverpool. A month later, it was convicted at Sefton Magistrates' Court for failing to licence two flats in Bootle that were located within a Selective Licensing area.

In reaching its decision, the Tribunal found that the company's offending was both widespread and persistent. It noted that Roach Estates had previously been fined for 29 separate licensing offences in 2019 involving multiple properties across different streets, demonstrating systemic failures rather than isolated incidents.

The Tribunal was particularly concerned by evidence that a landlord had paid Roach Estates to obtain property licences, yet the company failed to submit the applications. The Tribunal considered this indicative of a degree of intentional misconduct, rather than a simple administrative oversight.

Further concerns related to the condition of properties under the company's management. The Tribunal reviewed evidence regarding a property that had been subject to enforcement action and accepted the Council's position that management standards were extremely poor. It concluded that previous enforcement measures, prosecutions, and inclusion on the Rogue Landlord and Property Agent Database had failed to secure compliance.

The Tribunal also noted that the company's directors chose not to meaningfully engage with the proceedings. It found that they had failed to provide evidence of improved management practices or demonstrate that the offending properties were exceptions within an otherwise compliant portfolio. As a result, the Tribunal considered a Banning Order to be an appropriate and necessary sanction.

This case highlights the importance of effective partnership working between local authorities in tackling rogue operators, raising standards in the private rented sector, and protecting tenants from poor housing management practices. Landlords previously using Roach Estates have been advised to appoint alternative managing agents to ensure their properties remain compliant and appropriately managed.

Prosecutions, Civil Penalty Fines & Rent Repayment Orders

Prosecution: Prosquare Limited, Bootle (2026)

Offence: Operating a privately rented property without the required licence under Sefton Council's licensing scheme.

Outcome: Following a successful prosecution by Sefton Council, Prosquare Limited pleaded guilty. The company received a fine of £6,000, reduced to £4,000 due to its early guilty plea, together with a victim surcharge of £1,600 and prosecution costs of £1,000, resulting in a total financial penalty of **£6,600**.

Value of Licensing : The case demonstrates that failure to obtain a licence can result in significant financial penalties, even where no additional housing hazards are identified. It highlights the Council's commitment to enforcing licensing requirements across the private rented sector.

Sefton landlord faces fine approaching £7,000 for failing to license a rented property

Prosecution: Glenn McDowall (2025)

Offence: Failure to licence a privately rented property in an area covered by Sefton Council's Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing Schemes.

Outcome: Mr McDowall pleaded guilty to the charges and was ordered by the Magistrates' Court to pay **£10,900**, including fines and costs.

Value of Licensing: This prosecution reinforced that licensing is a legal requirement rather than an administrative formality. The case demonstrates how licensing schemes support wider housing standards objectives, enabling the Council to identify and address poor management practices and property hazards.

Substantial fines for Sefton landlord after Council Licence prosecution

Prosecution: Unlicensed Property Following Fire Investigation, Bootle (2023)

Offence: Failure to licence a rented property between March 2018 and December 2022 under Sefton Council's licensing schemes. The offence came to light following a fire that gutted the property.

Outcome: The landlord was prosecuted by Sefton Council and ordered to pay a **£35,000 fine**, together with **£721.12 prosecution costs** and a **£170 victim surcharge**, bringing the total penalty to almost **£36,000**. Magistrates found the landlord's prolonged failure to obtain a licence to be reckless and noted that licensing may have led to earlier identification of serious safety issues, including the absence of smoke detectors. [sefton.gov.uk]

Value of Licensing: This case provides a strong example of the wider public safety benefits of licensing. It demonstrates how licensing schemes can identify and mitigate serious risks before incidents occur, while also providing a robust enforcement framework where landlords fail to comply.

Failing to apply for licence proves costly for Sefton landlord after successful Council prosecution

Prosecution: Mr Puvirasa Thankavel, Bootle (October 2024)

Offences:

- Breach of an Emergency Prohibition Order (EPO).
- Continuing to rent out properties despite serious health and safety risks.
- Operating an unlicensed property. [sefton.gov.uk]

Background: Sefton Council served an Emergency Prohibition Order on three properties on Hawthorne Road, Bootle, after inspections identified serious hazards including risk of electrocution, fire, excess cold, damaged electrical installations and inadequate fire separation. A subsequent inspection found the properties were still occupied despite the prohibition order being in force.

Outcome: Mr Thankavel pleaded guilty and was ordered to pay **£22,630**, including a **£20,000 fine** for breaching the prohibition order and renting the property unlicensed. The Court noted tenants were at "immediate risk" and that any fire could have been "catastrophic".

Value of Licensing: This case demonstrates the importance of licensing and inspection regimes in identifying serious property hazards and highlights the Council's willingness to prosecute where landlords continue to place tenants at risk.

Prosecution: Housing Management Companies Prosecution (December 2024)

Defendants:

- Lev Properties
- Roach Estates
- Singh Elite Properties

Offences:

- Managing or being in control of properties without the required Selective Licence.
- Failure to provide information.
- Housing standards offences including damp, mould, overcrowding, lack of carbon monoxide alarms and electrical safety deficiencies.

Outcome: Following **10 successful prosecutions**, fines totalling **£45,000** were imposed:

- Lev Properties: £25,000
- Roach Estates: £20,000
- Singh Elite Properties pleaded guilty, with sentencing adjourned.

Value of Licensing This case demonstrates how licensing enforcement can uncover wider property management failures affecting tenant safety. It also evidences the Council's ability to take action against portfolio landlords and management companies operating multiple non-compliant properties.

Fines of £45,000 imposed after housing standards & licensing prosecutions by Council

Case Study 6: Neil McCann, Crosby (2025)

Offences:

- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice.
- Breach of a Prohibition Order.
- Exposing tenants to risk of serious harm.

Background: Following a tenant complaint, Council inspections identified significant hazards in a block of four flats, including:

- No electricity supply in one flat.
- No working smoke detectors.
- No front door.
- Damp and mould.
- Inadequate fire precautions.
- Lack of fixed heating.
- Structural concerns.

A Prohibition Order was served on one flat whilst Improvement Notices were served on the remainder. Subsequent inspections found none of the required works had been completed and one prohibited flat remained occupied.

Outcome: Mr McCann was successfully prosecuted and ordered to pay approximately **£14,000 plus legal costs**.

Value of Licensing This case illustrates how enforcement powers can be used where landlords fail to respond to formal notices and continue to expose tenants to unacceptable living conditions.

Big fine for Sefton landlord for allowing tenants to live in dangerous conditions - Property Soup

Case Study 7: Cosmas Eze, Essex (2025)

Offence: Failure to licence a property within a designated Selective Licensing area.

Mr Eze, a landlord with a portfolio of multiple properties, failed to licence a property that was required to be licensed under the Selective Licensing Scheme. Despite having previously been convicted of the same offence, the property remained unlicensed until enforcement action was commenced by Sefton Council.

The matter was heard before the Magistrates' Court, where Mr Eze was represented by Counsel and entered a guilty plea.

In mitigation, Mr Eze advised the Court that he had experienced health issues and stated that correspondence sent by the Licensing Team had been sent to an outdated email address, meaning he had not become aware of the matter sooner. He accepted responsibility for failing to monitor and update his contact details and acknowledged that this oversight was negligent. He further advised that he applied for the required licence immediately upon becoming aware of the situation.

When sentencing, the Magistrates noted that this was Mr Eze’s second conviction for the same type of offence. The Court considered this to be a significant aggravating factor, highlighting that as an experienced landlord with multiple properties, Mr Eze should have been fully aware of his legal responsibilities and the licensing requirements applicable to his portfolio.

Sentence:

- Fine: £1,258
- Victim Surcharge: **£503**
- Prosecution Costs: **£1,245**

Total Financial Penalty: £3,006

Outcome:
The successful prosecution reinforces the Council’s commitment to ensuring landlords comply with licensing requirements and demonstrates that repeat offenders will face increased scrutiny and financial penalties where they fail to meet their legal obligations.

Case Study 8: Robert Edwards, Crosby (2025) - Offence: Failure to licence five properties within designated Selective Licensing areas.

Mr Edwards failed to obtain the required Selective Licences for five privately rented properties within a designated licensing area, despite being aware of his obligations as a landlord. Enforcement action was subsequently undertaken by Sefton Council, resulting in prosecution proceedings.

The case was heard before the Magistrates' Court, where Mr Edwards entered guilty pleas to the offences at the earliest opportunity.

In mitigation, Mr Edwards explained that his father had passed away in January 2023 and submitted that this had impacted his ability to manage his affairs. He also stated that he had instructed consultants in December 2024 to address the licensing requirements for the properties. The Court considered these representations alongside the circumstances of the offending.

When sentencing, the Magistrates noted that this was the second occasion on which Mr Edwards had committed the same type of offence. The Court also took into account previous enforcement action, including the service of a Civil Penalty Notice. The Magistrates indicated that, given the repeat nature of the offending, a total fine of £15,000 would have been appropriate. However, Mr Edwards was afforded full credit for his early guilty plea, resulting in a one-third reduction in the financial penalty imposed.

Sentence:

- Fine: £2,000 per property (£10,000 total)
- Victim Surcharge: **£2,000**
- Prosecution Costs: **£1,037.86**

Total Financial Penalty: £13,037.86

Outcome:
The successful prosecution demonstrates the Council's commitment to tackling non-compliance within the private rented sector and highlights the significant financial consequences for landlords who repeatedly fail to meet their licensing obligations. The case also reinforces that previous enforcement history and repeat offending will be treated as aggravating factors by the Courts, leading to substantially higher penalties.

Rent Repayment Order

Following this successful prosecution the Council applied to the First-Tier Property Tribunal for 4 Rent Repayment Orders totalling £22,477. This has been successful and has resulted in this landlord having to repay £22,477 in Housing Benefit payments that was paid to him during a 12-month period when the properties were rented but not licensed.

Overall Impact

Since the introduction of Selective and Additional Licensing in Sefton, the Council has successfully used its enforcement powers to tackle non-compliance within the private rented sector. Several prosecutions have been secured against landlords and property management companies for operating unlicensed properties, breaching prohibition orders, and failing to maintain acceptable housing standards. These cases demonstrate the important role that licensing plays in identifying poor property management practices, improving housing conditions and safeguarding tenants from serious health and safety risks.

Collectively, the prosecution outcomes show that licensing enforcement:

- Provides a strong deterrent to landlords who fail to comply with statutory requirements.
- Promotes better property management and encourages early engagement with the Council.
- Enables the identification and remediation of significant hazards, including fire safety deficiencies, electrical hazards, damp and mould, excess cold and overcrowding.
- Improves living conditions and protects vulnerable tenants by ensuring properties meet required standards.
- Equips the Council with effective enforcement tools where advice, support and informal interventions have not secured compliance.

These cases demonstrate the wide-ranging benefits of licensing, both as a preventative measure and as a mechanism for formal enforcement. They also highlight the significant financial consequences of non-compliance, with courts imposing substantial penalties on landlords who fail to meet their legal obligations. Furthermore, the prosecutions provide tangible evidence of the Council's commitment to raising standards across the private rented sector and maintaining safe, well-managed homes for residents.

Civil Penalty Fines

Between March 2023 and end of July 2026, officers have also served 37 Civil Penalty fines as an alternative to prosecutions, for offences of failure to licence or breaches of licence conditions. Those fines have totalled £156,520.

Appendix 6

Fit and Proper Person Policy Sefton Council

Policy on tests for fit and proper person and satisfactory management arrangements for a Mandatory or Additional HMO Licence and Selective Licence

(Fit and Proper Person Policy)

1. Introduction

1.1. Under the Housing Act 2004 is it a requirement that the proposed licence holder and manager of a licensable house/dwelling under Part 2 and/or Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 to be a fit and proper person and the most appropriate person to hold the licence. In addition, in deciding whether a licence may be granted or not, Sefton Council (also referred to as *the Council* in this document) must be satisfied that there are satisfactory management arrangements in place or that such arrangements can be put in place by the imposition of conditions in the licence.

1.2. In considering whether the management arrangements are satisfactory Sefton Council will have regard to the following:

i) the suitability of the proposed licence holder and manager (if different) (called the 'fit and proper test');

ii) the competence of the proposed licence holder/manager to manage the building;

iii) The suitability of the management structures;

iv) the adequacy of the financial arrangements and any other matter considered relevant to the application.

1.3. A licence application will be refused if it is considered that the licence holder and / or manager is unfit.

2. The fit and proper test

2.1. In deciding to grant a licence Sefton Council must be satisfied that the proposed licence holder "is a fit and proper person to be the licence holder" and that "the proposed manager of the house is a fit and proper person to be the manager of the house.

2.2. This requirement is to ensure that those responsible for operating the licence and managing the premises are of sufficient integrity and good character to be involved in the management of the particular residential premises to which the application relates and as such they do not pose a risk to the health, safety or welfare of persons occupying and visiting the premises.

2.3. When considering whether a person is 'fit and proper' Sefton Council will have regard to any 'wrong doings' of the relevant person concerned. This is evidence that the person has:

i) committed any offence involving fraud or other dishonesty, violence or drugs and certain types of sexual offences;

ii) practised unlawful discrimination on the grounds of sex, colour, race, ethnic or national origins or disability, in connection with the carrying out of business;

iii) contravened any provision of housing or landlord and tenant law or

iv) acted otherwise than in accordance with an approved code of practice or the membership requirements of a recognised trade association or accreditation scheme

2.4. The above list is not exhaustive, and Sefton Council can and will consider whether a relevant person has committed other relevant wrong doings, for example, discrimination under Regulation 5 of the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007. A relevant person may not be deemed unfit, solely because of poor management, although this is highly relevant to determining any question of suitability or competence.

2.5. Sefton Council do not adopt a blanket policy with its consideration of factors under a fit and proper person test. Each case will be considered on its own merits and regard will be had to information provided/omitted from an application form and information held by Sefton Council relating to the premises and/or any relevant person connected with the licence application.

2.6. In an application for a licence the applicant must provide details of the following in relation to him/herself and the proposed manager (if the applicant is not to be the licence holder)

i) unspent convictions;

ii) any findings of a court/tribunal that the person has practised unlawful discrimination;

iii) any judgement entered against that person in relation to a contravention of housing or landlord and tenant law (and, in so far it relates to the housing or landlord and tenant law, any contravention of any enactment relating to public or environmental health);

iv) any control order made in respect of any house or HMO under his/her management or ownership (and also in respect of any former house or HMO he/she owned or managed);

v) any enforcement action in respect of any house or HMO under his/her management or ownership (and also any former HMO or house he/she owned or managed) under the housing health and safety rating system in Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 so far as that enforcement action related to a category one hazard;

vi) details of any refusal to grant a licence, or details of the revocation of a licence granted for non-compliance of a condition or conditions in respect of any house or HMO under his/her management or ownership (and also in relation to any former HMO or house/dwelling he/she owned or managed);

vii) details of any interim or final management orders made by a Local Housing Authority in respect of any house or HMO under his/her management (and also in respect of any former HMO or house/dwelling he/she owned or managed).

2.7. An applicant for a licence must disclose any wrong doings which relate to themselves, the proposed manager and any other relevant person. Sefton Council should therefore normally have sufficient information to decide a person's fitness based on the application. However, if Sefton Council is not satisfied that it has sufficient information (being that supplied in connection with the application) to make a determination, it may require the applicant to provide further details and/or undertake their own further enquiries with other relevant Council departments and external bodies, as it deems necessary.

2.8. Sefton Council may require cooperation in obtaining Disclosure & Barring Service checks (DBS) information in confirmation of the above and reserve the right to carry out a full DBS check. The Council may also approach other external agencies including but not limited to local authorities, the Police Authority, Fire & Rescue Service, Office of Fair Trading, etc. for information and confirmation. The completion and signing of the Selective Licence or an HMO application form will be taken as your agreement to any such action and the sharing of information between other Local Authorities for all relevant persons associated with the property and application for a Part 2 or 3 licence. Checks will also be made internally with other Council departments such as Licensing, Trading Standards, Planning, Building Control, Council Tax and Housing Benefit.

2.9. Other reasons for further investigation may include, but are not limited to, the following:

i) Sefton Council has evidence of a history of complaints or problems with the landlord (which in themselves might not amount to 'evidence' of unfitness to meet the test), therefore further investigation may be required;

ii) the applicant has been evasive, untruthful or has failed to disclose a relevant fact in their application for a licence;

iii) the applicant, or proposed manager, is unknown to Sefton Council and has not demonstrated any history or competence of managing HMOs or other private rented properties;

iv) Sefton Council has reasonable grounds to suspect that the applicant, or the proposed manager, has committed an offence which is relevant to the determination of any question of his/her fitness or

v) the premises provide accommodation mainly to vulnerable persons.

2.10. In deciding whether a wrongdoing (including a criminal offence) is relevant to the determination of a person's fitness the Council may wish to consider the following factors:

i) the relevance of the wrongdoing(s) in relation to the person's character and integrity to manage residential premises and in particular the type of premises to which the licence relates;

ii) the seriousness of the wrongdoing(s) in terms of impact, or potential impact, upon the residents and the wider community, including if more than one incident of wrongdoing has been carried out the cumulative impact;

iii) the length of time since any wrong doing and

iv) any mitigating circumstances.

2.11. Other considerations which the local authority will have regard to:

i) The Council will consider whether any of the following affect the persons' ability to be a fit and proper person:

ii) The proposed licence holder has previously been inefficient or incompetent in managing the property;

iii) The proposed licence holder has been abusive towards the Councils' staff;

iv) The proposed licence holder has persistently delayed/refused to cooperate with the Council in its investigations i.e. in submitting paperwork to the Council, none attendance at PACE interview, failure to attend at the property when inspections are taking place, generally uncooperative.

v) The proposed licence holder and manager should have the competence and ability to engage in the day to day management of the tenancy in compliance with the licence conditions and if there is concern over the licence holder or managers fitness in relation to this, the Council may refuse a licence.

This is not an exhaustive list and each case will be determined on its own merits.

3. Consideration of 'persons associated or formerly associated' with the proposed licence holder or manager

3.1. If there is evidence that a person associated, or formally associated, with the person proposed to be the licence holder or manager of the property, has committed any wrong doings that evidence may be taken into account in determining the proposed licence holder's or manager's fitness (even if that person has himself or herself an unblemished record).

3.2. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that only a fit and proper person holds the licence or involved in the management of a licensed property. It would not be appropriate for a licence to be granted to someone, or for someone to be the manager of a property, if that person was merely acting as a 'front' for someone else who, if he or she were not unfit, would be entitled to be the manager or licence holder.

3.3. An example might be that of a husband and wife, where the husband is the landlord (or indeed both he and his partner are joint landlords), but only the wife has applied for the licence. If there is evidence that the husband has committed wrong doings and those wrong doings are relevant to the wife's management of the property or licence, then Sefton Council may refuse to grant her a licence.

3.4. Likewise, if a landlord with an unsatisfactory record nominated a "manager" who had a clean record but had acted for him whist the wrong doings were committed, Sefton Council may consider the managing agent by association to be unfit also in respect of that application.

4. Management standards

4.1. Sefton Council must be satisfied that the proposed management arrangements

…are satisfactory" before granting a licence. Those arrangements include (but are not limited to) consideration of whether:

i) the persons proposed to be involved in the management of the premises has a sufficient level of competence to be involved:

ii) the persons proposed to be involved with the management of the premises are actually involved in the management;

iii) those persons are 'fit and proper' (which is discussed above) and;

iv) the proposed management structures and funding arrangements are suitable.

4.2. If there are concerns about the competencies and structures in place to manage the premises, then conditions can be imposed on the licence to ensure that the necessary arrangements are or can be put in place. However, if such conditions will still not be possible or practical to impose then it may be necessary to refuse to grant a licence.

4.3. It is for the Council to determine whether a person has sufficient competence to be involved in the management of premises and, of course, the level of competence required will in some measure be determined by the complexity of the management challenges posed. In general, the Council should, therefore, be looking at the applicant's experience and track record of managing residential premises and, in particular where he/she is the existing manager, the premises to which the application relates. The test should not, however, be set too high. Competent managers need to know their legal obligations and work within them, but it does not mean they need a formal housing or legal qualification. Where a deficiency is identified and can be addressed this should be done through a licence condition (e.g. requirement to attend a training course). In most cases landlords who belong to a recognised trade association or are members of an accreditation scheme should be regarded as having the necessary competence to be involved in the management of the premises because, at least such organisations can be called upon for advice and assistance where necessary.

4.4. The management structures must be such that the manager is able to comply with any licence conditions and deal with the day to day operational management issues that arise as well as being able to deal with longer term management issues. In considering whether the structures are appropriate the Council may wish to take account of the following:

i) evidence as to whether the systems in place are sufficient to enable the manager to comply with any condition of a licence or

ii) if such systems can be put in place through a condition of a licence to ensure compliance;

iii) evidence of the systems for dealing with:

- emergency repairs and other issues
- routine repairs and maintenance to the premises and its curtilage
- cyclical maintenance
- management and the provision of services (if any) to the building and its curtilage
- management of tenancies or occupants
- management of the behaviour of tenants, occupants and their visitors to the premises

- neighbourhood issues (including disputes)
- evidence of structures for engagement with the local authority, police and other agencies, where appropriate

4.5. In order to be able to demonstrate much of the above evidence it is likely that the manager will need to operate within a reasonable proximity to the premises, so that he/ she can attend to matters promptly and retain an overview on the condition of the premises and the management of the tenancies. The Council must also be satisfied that the financial arrangements relating to the premises are suitable. In that regard the manager must be sufficiently funded or have access to funding to carry out his obligations under the licence and his/her general management functions. To satisfy this obligation the licence holder must be both reasonably available and the most appropriate person to be the licence holder.

4.6. Sefton Council can vary or revoke a licence at any time during the licence period if there is sufficient evidence to support these decisions. Unannounced visits of licensed dwellings/houses and HMO's can be undertaken during the licence period to check for compliance with the licensing and management regimes which apply. Breach of any such legislation is a strict offence for which further action may be taken in accordance with the Council's own enforcement policies. The Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) also apply to dwellings/ houses/ HMO's and remedial works can also be enforced via this legal mechanism.

5. Making the decision

5.1. Should Sefton Council be made aware or have information that may affect the applicant's/property manager's ability to be determined "fit and proper" and/or proposed management structures and funding arrangements are not suitable the Housing Standards "Officer Group" will convene and

consider evidence/information gathered and to determine if whether the applicant and/or property manager can be determined "fit and proper",

consider evidence/information gathered and to determine if whether proposed management structures and funding arrangements for the licensable property are suitable,

5.2. The Officer Group to consist of:

i) Senior Housing Practitioner,

ii) Housing Standards Manager (or in absence- 2nd Senior Housing Practitioner),

iii) appropriate representative from Legal Services (for advisory purposes only)

5.3. All members of the Officer Group need to be present to reach an agreement on whether the applicants/property managers can/cannot be determined “fit and proper” and/or proposed management structures and funding arrangements are/are not suitable.

5.4. In advance of the Officer Group meeting, both the case officer and Senior Housing Practitioner will complete and circulate an ‘evidence sheet’ to all group members, at least 7 days before the meeting. This sheet to include background information on the case being considered and the Senior Housing Practitioner’s recommendation to the Officer Group. In advance of the Officer Group meeting, the proposed licence holder will be made aware of the Council’s concerns and be offered an opportunity to make representations to be considered at the meeting.

5.5. At the Officer Group meeting the, Senior Housing Practitioner will present the contents of the ‘evidence sheet’.

5.6. After consideration of all the material facts to the application, Sefton Council will either: -

i) Grant the licence with or without conditions.

ii) Refuse to grant the licence.

5.7. A record will be kept of the Officer Group Meeting and include details of the matters considered and the reasoning for the decision reached

6. Granting the licence

6.1. If Sefton Council propose to grant either a Part 2 or Part 3 licence, then the following procedure will be implemented: -

6.2. The applicant and each relevant person will be served with a notice under Schedule 5, Paragraph 1 which states that Sefton Council are proposing to grant the licence; will set out the main terms of the licence together and will confirm the date of the end of the consultation period.

6.3. Where a valid email address has been provided by an applicant the notice will be sent to the applicant by email.

6.4. The consultation period is an opportunity for the applicant and each relevant person to provide further evidence to the Council if they wish, e.g. in response to any conditions outlined on the notice.

6.5. It is important that any representations which the applicant and relevant person(s) wish to make are made in good time ahead of the end of the consultation period. If information is not received by the end of the consultation date, then the Council will make a final decision in its absence. Representations must be in writing/email and must be accurate and truthful.

6.6. The Officer Group 2 (Senior Housing Practitioner with no dealings in the case, Housing Standards Manager, Legal representation) will meet to consider any representations. The Council will then be in a position to make a final decision for the application. The Officer Group 2 may have to make further checks with departments internally or externally, as with the original application, based on any further information that is provided.

6.7. If the Council decide to grant a licence the applicant and relevant parties will be informed of this decision.

6.8. If the Council decide to grant a licence with modifications in accordance with the representations made, a notice under Schedule 5, Paragraph 3 will be served on the applicant and each relevant person(s) outlining the proposed modifications, the reasons for them and the end of a further consultation period.

6.9. Once the end of the consultation period(s) has passed, a final decision will be made regarding the licence application.

6.10. If the Council decided to grant a licence, a notice under Schedule 5, Paragraph 7 will be served on the applicant and each relevant person. This notice will include a copy of the licence and will state the reasons for deciding to grant the licence, the right of appeal against the decision and the time period for the appeal.

6.11. The notice will be sent out by email to the applicant where a valid email address has been provided to the council

7. Refusing to grant the licence

7.1. If Sefton Council do not propose to grant a Part 2 or Part 3 licence, then the following procedure will be implemented:-

7.2. The applicant and each relevant person will be served with a notice under Schedule 5, Paragraph 5 of the Housing Act 2004 which states that Sefton Council are proposing to refuse to grant the licence and will set out the reasons for refusing to grant the licence and the end of the consultation period.

7.3. The notice will be sent out by email to the applicant where a valid email address has been provided to the council.

7.4. The consultation period is an opportunity for the applicant and each relevant person to provide evidence to the Council to further support their application for the licence. The applicant may also decide to provide alternative information to the original application, such as the nomination of a new manager or licence holder for the Council to consider.

7.5. It is important that any representations which the applicant and relevant person(s) wish to make are made in good time ahead of the end of the consultation period. If information is not received by the end of the

consultation date, then the Council will make a final decision in its absence. Representations must be in writing/email and must be accurate and truthful.

7.6. If representations are made, the Officer Group 2 will meet to consider these representations. Upon consideration of any representations, the Council will then be in a position to make a final decision for the application. The Officer Group 2 may have to make further checks with departments internally or externally, as with the original application, based on any further information which is provided.

7.7. The Council may decide to grant a licence based on the additional information received and the applicant and relevant parties will be informed of this decision. However, the Council may decide that any representations provided are still not considered compliant with the requirements of the licensing regime and the licence will still not be granted.

7.8. Where the decision to refuse to grant a licence has been made the applicant and all relevant person(s) will be served with a notice under Schedule 5, Paragraph 8 of the Housing Act 2004. This will state the Councils decision not to grant the licence and the reasons for this decision. The notice will be sent out by email to the applicant where a valid email address has been provided to the council.

7.9. There is a right of appeal against this decision notice to the First tier Tribunal (Property Chamber – Residential Property).

Dated June 2020

Appendix 7

Civil Penalty Policy

Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation

This policy applies once the Council has made a decision to commence civil penalty proceedings.

In this policy, the term ‘landlord’ should be read as including letting agents, managing agents, licensors, property owners, corporate landlords, directors of corporate landlords, registered providers of social housing and any other person involved in the letting or management of accommodation.

In this policy, the term ‘corporate landlord’ should be read as referring to a body corporate that meets the definition of ‘landlord’ above.

In this policy, the terms ‘House in Multiple Occupation’ or ‘HMO’ are defined by the Housing Act 2004.

The following breaches are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £7,000:

- Failure to give a written statement of terms and any other prescribed information under Section 16D of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to let a property for a fixed term under Section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to end a tenancy by service of a notice to quit under Section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Attempting to end a tenancy orally or requiring that it is ended orally under Section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Serving an eviction notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed Section 8 process under Section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Relying on a ground where the landlord does not reasonably believe that the landlord is/will be able to obtain possession under Section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used under Section 16E of the Housing Act 1988.
- Failure to give an existing tenant prescribed information about changes made by the Renters’ Rights Act 2025 in the prescribed form and timeframe under paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters’ Rights Act 2025.
- Discrimination relating to children in the lettings process under Section 33 of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025.
- Discrimination relating to benefits in the lettings process under Section 34 of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025.
- Failure to specify proposed rent within a written advertisement or offer under Section 56 of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025.
- Inviting, encouraging or accepting any offer of rent greater than the stated rate under Section 56 of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025.
- Failure by the responsible person to secure the removal of a Category 1 hazard at qualifying residential premises, other than the common parts of a building containing one or more flats, where it would have been reasonably practicable for them to do so, under Section 6A of the Housing Act 2004.

The following breaches are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £40,000:

- Breach of duty under Regulation 3, 3B, 3C, and 3D of The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020.

The following offences are subject to a civil penalty with a statutory maximum of £40,000:

- Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier under Section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977.
- Continuation of conduct subject to a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) after the 28-day period (or, if appealed, after conclusion of the appeal) where the final notice has not been withdrawn under Section 16J of the Housing Act 1988
- Conduct giving rise to liability under s.16I, where within the preceding five years the landlord has either (i) had a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) imposed for different conduct and the final notice has not been withdrawn, or (ii) been convicted under s.16J for different conduct under Section 16(J) of the Housing Act 1988.
- Relying on a ground knowing the landlord would not be able to obtain possession or being reckless as to whether they would under Section 16J of the Housing Act 1988.
- Breach of restrictions relating to reletting (s16(E)(2) Housing Act 1988) or remarketing (s16(E)(3) Housing Act 1988) a property within restricted period after using Grounds 1 or 1A of Schedule 2 Housing Act 1988 under Section 16J of the Housing Act 1988.
- Breach of a banning order under Section 21 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
- Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice under Section 30 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Contravention of an overcrowding notice under Section 139 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to obtain a selective licence under Section 95 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to obtain an HMO licence under Section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Knowingly permitting over-occupation of an HMO under Section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to comply with management regulations in respect of HMOs under Section 234 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to comply with HMO licence conditions under Section 72 of the Housing Act 2004.
- Failure to comply with selective licence conditions under Section 95 of the Housing Act 2004.

If a landlord has committed multiple breaches or offences, a separate civil penalty can, and usually will, be imposed for each breach and offence. In each case, the level of any civil penalty imposed will be determined in accordance with this policy.

If multiple landlords have committed the same breach or offence at the same property, a separate civil penalty can, and usually will, be imposed on each offender. In each case, the level of civil penalty imposed on each offender will be in accordance with this policy.

This policy outlines the Council's methodology and mechanism for assessing and setting the level of a civil penalty at all stages where a civil penalty is under consideration, including the preparation of a notice of intent, and where a final decision has been made to impose a civil penalty.

When applying the civil penalties matrix, interim calculations at individual stages may result in figures that exceed the statutory maximum. Where the final amount reached following application of all relevant steps exceeds the statutory maximum, the civil penalty will be reduced to the applicable statutory maximum.

The Council considers the need for transparency and consistency to be of primary importance to ensure fairness in the discharge of its functions. The general objective of this policy is, therefore, to promote both transparency and consistency in the imposition of financial penalties so that those involved in the letting or management of accommodation (a)

know how the Council will generally penalise relevant breaches and offences and (b) are assured that, generally, like cases will be penalised similarly, and different cases penalised differently.

The Council recognises that, despite its best efforts, landlords may operate unlawfully for a significant period without detection, and that only a proportion of those committing relevant breaches and offences will be identified. Accordingly, the Council seeks to ensure that civil penalties are set at a level that makes it clear to the landlord concerned and to others that operating unlawfully as a landlord is financially disadvantageous when compared to operating lawfully.

The Council has a duty to act fairly, transparently and consistently when assessing civil penalties. To maintain fairness between all landlords, the Council will not give weight to claims advanced as factors that might reduce the amount of a civil penalty unless those claims are supported by evidence that the Council reasonably considers to be relevant, reliable, credible, and sufficient in scope and detail to enable proper assessment of the claim, having regard to the nature of the claim, the information ordinarily available to the landlord, and the need for consistent and fair decision-making. Allowing inadequately evidenced assertions to influence outcomes would risk rewarding those who provide incomplete or misleading information and would create an unfair advantage over landlords who provide a full and properly evidenced account. Accordingly, the Council expects landlords against whom a civil penalty is being considered to provide all documents and records that would ordinarily exist if their account were accurate. Where such evidence is not provided, and no explanation that the Council considers adequate is given, the Council may draw an adverse inference.

Where claims are advanced without sufficient supporting evidence, the Council may request specified supporting material before determining whether to issue a final notice or whether any mitigation has been sufficiently evidenced so as to justify a lower civil penalty.

The further objectives of using financial penalties as a means of enforcing the above breaches and offences are explained below.

Statutory Guidance

The Government has issued statutory guidance entitled “Civil penalties under the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and other housing legislation”. The Council has regard to this guidance in the exercise of their functions in respect of civil penalties.

The Council has considered the following factors in developing this civil penalty policy to help ensure that the civil penalty is set at an appropriate level.

Severity of the breach or offence. The more serious the breach or offence, the higher the penalty should be.

Culpability and track record of the offender. A higher penalty will be appropriate where the offender has a history of failing to comply with their obligations and/or their actions were deliberate and/or they knew, or ought to have known, that they were in breach of their legal responsibilities.

The harm caused to the tenant. This is a very important factor when determining the level of penalty. The greater the actual harm or the potential for harm, principally to the tenant but also potentially the local community, the higher the penalty should be.

Punishment of the offender. The penalty should, in a way that is fair, both punish the offender and demonstrate the consequences of not complying with their responsibilities.

Deter the offender from repeating breaches or offences. The ultimate goal is to prevent any further offending and help ensure that the offender fully complies with all of their legal responsibilities in future. The level of the penalty should therefore be set at a level that it is likely to have a very significant deterrent effect.

Deter others from committing similar breaches or offences. While the fact that someone has received a civil penalty may not be in the public domain, the civil penalty policy itself will be and local authorities should consider how their formal enforcement activity can be effectively publicised.

An important part of deterrence is the realisation on the part of landlords that the local housing authority is proactive in levying civil penalties where the need to do so exists and the civil penalty will be set at a high enough level such that operating lawfully will be the sensible financial choice.

Remove any financial benefit the offender may have obtained as a result of committing the breach or offence. The principle here is that it should not be in the offender’s financial interest to commit a breach or offence rather than comply, for example that the penalty for breaching licensing conditions in respect of occupancy of a property is less than the additional rent received as a result of the over-crowding. The absence of any financial benefit to the landlord does not mean though that the penalty should be reduced.

Civil Penalties Matrix

In determining the level of a civil penalty, officers will have regard to the matrix set out below. The matrix consists of the following sequential steps:

1. Determining the starting point based on the seriousness of the breach or offence.
2. Adjustment for factors relating to the type of landlord; size and type of portfolio controlled, owned or managed; experience of the landlord ("Landlord Type")
3. Mitigating and aggravating factors the Council deems significant including, but not limited to, factors relating to the track record and culpability of the landlord and the actual or potential harm to the occupants.
4. Financial considerations.
5. Applying the totality principle.

Starting point based of seriousness of the breach or offence

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government has provided statutory guidance that prescribes starting points for all breaches and offences based on the seriousness of the breach or offence. The exception to this prescription is for breaches of licensing conditions under sections 72(3) and 95(2) of the Housing Act 2004, where the Council has determined its own starting levels based on the seriousness of the specific licence condition or type of licence condition that has not be complied with.

Adjustment for factors relating to the type of landlord; size and type of portfolio controlled, owned or managed; experience of the landlord ("Landlord Type")

While all landlords are expected to comply fully with their legal obligations, the Council considers that a higher standard of professionalism and regulatory awareness is reasonably expected of landlords who operate at greater scale, who have greater experience, or who are involved in more complex forms of letting. Where such landlords fail to comply with their obligations, this will ordinarily justify a higher civil penalty.

A higher degree of professionalism is expected of landlords who:

- Control, own, or manage a significant portfolio of properties;
- Have significant experience in the letting or management of property;
- Are or have been involved in the letting or management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs);
- Are corporate landlords; or
- Are or have been directors of corporate landlords.

An upward adjustment of 20% of the applicable starting point will be applied where the landlord meets any one or more of the following criteria:

- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed six or more properties. These properties need not have been held concurrently or at the time civil penalty proceedings are brought.
- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed three or more properties that operated as HMOs, whether or not concurrently.
- The landlord is, or has previously been, a director of a corporate landlord.
- The landlord is a corporate landlord.
- The landlord has, in the Council's assessment and by reference to the available evidence, significant experience in the letting or management of property.

A downward adjustment of 20% of the applicable starting point will be applied only where all of the following criteria are met:

- The landlord has, at any point in time, controlled, owned, or managed no more than two properties.
- The landlord has controlled, owned, or managed no more than one property that has operated as an HMO, at any point in time.
- The landlord has, in the Council's assessment and by reference to the available evidence, very limited experience in the letting or management of property.

Mitigating and aggravating factors the Council deems significant including, but not limited to, factors relating to the track record and culpability of the landlord and the actual or potential harm to the occupants

To promote fairness and consistency in the administration of civil penalties, the Council will apply a structured and consistent framework when determining the extent to which mitigating and aggravating factors affect the quantum of any civil penalty.

General approach

Each breach or offence may have offence-specific mitigating and/or aggravating factors, which will be considered alongside the generic factors set out below.

Where multiple civil penalties are issued under this policy against the same landlord at the same time, and except where expressly stated otherwise, mitigating and aggravating factors will be considered and applied separately to each civil penalty when determining the quantum of each penalty.

Mitigating factors

The Council may reduce the level of a civil penalty by up to 20% of the applicable starting point to reflect the presence of mitigating factors.

Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this policy in respect of mitigating factors and apply a reduction in excess of 20%. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple mitigating factors.

Within the framework of this policy, the Council has not sought to provide an exhaustive list of mitigating factors, recognising that a wide range of circumstances may potentially give rise to

mitigation. However, the following generic mitigating factors will be considered in respect of each breach or offence:

Steps taken to remedy the basis of the breach or offence

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Promptly remedying all elements of the breach or offence after receiving communication from the Council.
- Promptly remedying all the significant elements of the breach or offence leaving only less significant elements of the breach or offence.

A high level of cooperation

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Proactive provision of significant information the Council reasonably considers relevant beyond that required by statutory notice.

Acceptance of liability

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Accepting liability before or within the period for representations.

Where a landlord relies on a reasonable excuse defence or otherwise contests liability, this mitigating factor will not usually apply.

Health circumstances

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- A serious health condition or medical incident experienced by the landlord during, or in the period immediately preceding, the breach or offence, where there is clear and reliable evidence that the condition had a direct and material impact on the landlord's ability to comply with the relevant legal obligation. Examples may include, but are not limited to, a heart attack, stroke, cancer diagnosis, or other acute or serious medical event causing significant incapacity or impairment.

Diminished culpability (limited responsibility)

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- A joint landlord who has evidenced that compliance arrangements for the subject property were directed and controlled by another joint landlord, and not by them.
- A landlord who became involved only after an unforeseen change in circumstances (such as the death of the previous landlord) and who committed the breach or offence only for a limited period while putting their affairs in order.
-

The instruction of a managing or letting agent, or reliance on an agent's actions or omissions, will not of itself constitute diminished culpability.

Aggravating factors

The Council may increase the level of a civil penalty by up to 20% of the applicable starting point to reflect the presence of aggravating factors.

Only in exceptional circumstances may the Council depart from the application of this policy

in respect of aggravating factors and apply an increase in excess of 20%. Exceptional circumstances are rare and unusual and are not established merely by the presence of multiple aggravating factors.

The following generic aggravating factors will be considered in respect of each breach or offence:

Previous history of non-compliance.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Previous successful prosecutions (including relevant spent convictions), previous civil penalties, previous rent repayment orders, previous works in default, previous simple cautions.

Concurrent investigations or proceedings relating to other civil penalties, prosecutions, or rent repayment orders will not be treated as previous non-compliance.

Non-cooperation with the Council.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Failure to comply with notices issued under Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, Section 235 of the Housing Act 2004, or Section 114 of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Failing to provide a substantive response to a letter of alleged offence.
- Failing to attend previously agreed meetings.

Where the Council has prosecuted, or is pursuing a prosecution, in respect of the same act or omission involving failure to provide legally required information (including failure to comply with a statutory notice), that conduct will not also be treated as an aggravating factor for the purposes of setting the civil penalty, in order to avoid double counting.

Where multiple civil penalties are imposed against the same landlord at the same time, this aggravating factor will be applied only to the civil penalty with the highest starting point, unless there is a clear and reasoned basis for applying it differently.

Deliberate intent or negligence when committing the offence.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- Knowledge that the breach or offence was occurring.
- Continuation of offending after communication from the Council.
- Premeditation or planning, including steps taken to prevent detection or effective investigation.
- Providing false or misleading information to the Council.
- Applying pressure to occupants to deter cooperation with the Council.

The number of occupants affected.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- 3-5 occupants affected.

Duration of non-compliance.

Non-exhaustive examples include:

- The offence or breach occurred over a 3–6 month period.

Vulnerability of occupants

Non-exhaustive examples include children and young adults, persons vulnerable by reason of age, disability or sensory impairment, persons with drug or alcohol dependency, victims of domestic abuse, children in care, persons with complex health needs, persons who do not speak English as a first language, victims of trafficking or sexual exploitation, refugees, asylum seekers, and pregnant women.

Financial considerations

The Council will review the quantum of the civil penalty and consider whether it is sufficient to act as an effective deterrent to future non-compliance. Where the Council has evidence that it considers to be sufficiently reliable regarding rental income and/or asset value from the landlord's, it may determine that an increase in the level of the penalty is appropriate in order to achieve effective deterrence.

It is essential that, as an absolute minimum, landlords do not financially benefit from their offending behaviour.

Financial circumstances will ordinarily be considered after any written representations have been received and as part of the determination of any final notice.

Where a landlord seeks to rely on a strained or limited financial position as a basis for reducing the level of a civil penalty, that position must be supported by appropriate and verifiable evidence sufficient to enable the Council to assess the landlord's financial position consistently, objectively, and transparently. Unsupported assertions, partial disclosure, or selective provision of information will not be given weight.

At a minimum, and where such information exists, the following should be provided as part of any written representations:

- The last three full tax years full self-assessment tax returns filed with HMRC, including all additional and supplemental pages;
- The last three full tax years' SA302 documents & tax year overviews;
- The last three months' payslips;
- The last three years P60 certificates;
- The last twelve months' Universal Credit payment statements;
- A list of all property assets owned or jointly owned (not limited to rental properties), together with corresponding Land Registry title documents;
- A list of all property assets owned, or held on a long lease, by any corporate entity in which the landlord has a beneficial interest, together with corresponding Land Registry documentation;
- The most recent annual mortgage statement for each property, or the last twelve months' mortgage statements where the mortgage has been in place for less than twelve months;
- Valuation statements for all ISAs held;
- Statements from any cryptoasset exchange accounts showing balances and valuations;
- A list of all shareholdings;
- Recent bank statements for any account holding a balance in excess of £5,000;
- Recent statements for all secured and unsecured loans;
- Bankruptcy orders and official notifications of bankruptcy.

Where the Council is not satisfied that it has been provided with sufficiently reliable, complete, and accurate information to assess the landlord's financial position, the Council may draw the inference that the landlord is able to pay the civil penalty as imposed.

A claimed inability to pay will not, of itself, outweigh the need to ensure effective deterrence or to remove any financial benefit obtained as a result of the breach or offence.

The totality principle

The Council will have regard to the totality principle to ensure that the overall outcome of its enforcement action is just and proportionate. In exceptional cases, and having regard to the particular circumstances of the case, the Council may take account of totality at an earlier stage by deciding not to pursue a civil penalty in respect of a specific breach or offence where doing so would render the overall outcome disproportionate.

In general, however, the application of the totality principle will form the final step in the Council's decision-making process, undertaken after any written representations have been considered and before final notices are issued, once the level of each individual civil penalty has been assessed in accordance with this policy.

As a final step before issuing final notices, the Council will consider whether multiple civil penalties being imposed under this policy against the same landlord at the same time result in an aggregate amount that is just and proportionate. Where the Council concludes that the aggregate amount would not be just and proportionate, it will consider whether a proportionate reduction of the penalties is appropriate.

The totality principle does not operate across different legal persons who are separately liable in law, nor does it operate across civil penalties imposed at different times. In general, it applies only to multiple civil penalties imposed under this policy on the same person at the same time. Where, however, legislation provides that an officer of a body corporate, or a person concerned in its management, may be separately liable in relation to the same conduct as the body corporate, and that officer also holds a shareholding interest in the body corporate, the Council will, where civil penalties are imposed at the same time on both the body corporate and the officer arising from that same conduct, consider whether the combined outcome results in punitive duplication and is therefore not just and proportionate.

Where a reduction is applied under the totality principle, the Council will ordinarily do so by applying a uniform percentage reduction across all relevant civil penalties being issued at the same time, being those civil penalties that form part of the same totality assessment. Where, however, the application of the totality principle is required to address punitive duplication arising from a shared economic interest between a body corporate and an officer, the Council may apply a differential adjustment to ensure that the overall outcome is just and proportionate.

This approach reflects the statutory guidance on the application of the totality principle and is intended to promote consistency, transparency, and proportionality, while avoiding arbitrary or selective adjustment of individual penalties.

In accordance with the statutory guidance, any rent repayment orders made in respect of the same breach or offence will be disregarded for the purposes of assessing the totality of civil penalties under this policy.

Offences and breaches where a civil penalty may be levied and relevant considerations as to the level of that penalty

Protection from Eviction Act 1977 offences

Unlawful eviction and harassment of occupier - Section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£35,000	£40,000	£28,000	£35,000	£42,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Violence or threats of violence.
- Disposal of possessions or threats to dispose of possessions.
- Breach or evasion of an injunction or undertaking.
- Loss of home.

Housing Act 1988 breaches and offences

Failure to give a written statement of terms and any other prescribed information - Section 16D of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- Provision of some of the required terms and prescribed information within the required period.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Attempting to let a property for a fixed term - Section 16E(1)(a) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Attempting to end a tenancy by service of a notice to quit - Section 16E(1)(b) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- Tenant vacates property within four months of the attempt to end a tenancy by service of a notice to quit.
-

Attempting to end a tenancy orally or requiring that it is ended orally - Section 16E(1)(c) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting	Statutory	Landlord Type	No Landlord	Landlord Type

point	maximum civil penalty amount	downward adjustment	Type adjustment	upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- Tenant vacates property within four months of the attempt to end a tenancy orally.

Serving a possession notice that attempts to end a tenancy outside the prescribed Section 8 process - Section 16E(1)(d) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- Tenant vacates property within four months of the attempt to end a tenancy outside the prescribed Section 8 process.

Relying on a ground where the person does not reasonably believe that the landlord is, will, or may be able to obtain possession on that ground and the tenant(s) surrendered the tenancy within the period of four months beginning with the date of the contravention, without an order for possession of the dwelling-house being made - Section 16E(1)(e) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Failing to provide a tenant with prior notice that a ground which requires it may be used - Section 16E(1)(f) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£3,000	£7,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Failure to give an existing tenant prescribed information about changes made by the Renters' Rights Act 2025 in the prescribed form and timeframe - paragraph 7(2) of schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025 (The power to impose a civil penalty for this breach is contained in Section 16I(1) of the Housing Act 1988, as amended by paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 6 to the Renters' Rights Act 2025)

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- Provision of some of the required prescribed information within the required period.
- Provision of prescribed information but not in the prescribed form.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Continuation of conduct subject to a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) after the 28-day period (or, if appealed, after conclusion of the appeal) where the final notice has not been withdrawn — Section 16J(3) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Double the starting level for the two constituent breaches added together	£40,000	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Conduct giving rise to liability under s.16I, where within the preceding five years the person has either (i) had a relevant penalty (under s.16I or s.16K Housing Act 1988) imposed for different conduct and the final notice has not been withdrawn, or (ii) been convicted under s.16J for different conduct – Section 16(J)(4) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Double the starting level for the two constituent breaches added together	£40,000	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches	Dependent on the constituent breaches

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- Dependent on the most recent conduct giving rise to liability to a civil penalty under Section 16I of the Housing Act 1988.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Dependent on the most recent conduct giving rise to liability to a civil penalty under Section 16I of the Housing Act 1988.

Relying on a ground where the person knows that the landlord would not be able to obtain an order for possession on that ground, or being reckless as to whether the landlord would be able to do so and the tenant(s) surrendered the tenancy within the period of four months beginning with the date the ground was relied on, without an order for possession of the dwelling-house being made – Section 16J(1) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£30,000	£40,000	£24,000	£30,000	£36,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Breach of restrictions relating to reletting (s16(E)(2) Housing Act 1988) or remarketing (s16(E)(3) Housing Act 1988) a property within restricted period after using Grounds 1 or 1A of Schedule 2 Housing Act 1988 - Section 16J(2) of the Housing Act 1988

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Housing and Planning Act 2016 offences

Breach of a banning order - Section 21(1) of the Housing and Planning Act 2016

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£35,000	£40,000	£28,000	£35,000	£42,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- A single, isolated incident.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- Concealment or evasion.

Renters Rights Act 2025 breaches

Discrimination relating to children in the lettings process – Section 33(1) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Discrimination relating to benefits in the lettings process – Section 34(1) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Failure to specify proposed rent within a written advertisement or offer – Section 56(2) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£3,000	£7,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.
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Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.
-

Inviting, encouraging or accepting any offer of rent greater than the stated rate – Section 56(3) of the Renters' Rights Act 2025

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£7,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 breach of duties

Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (3)(b), (3)(d), (3)(e). Regulation 3D: (a), (b), (c), (f)

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£5,000	£40,000	£4,000	£5,000	£6,000

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- The report or record evidences that the electrical installations were compliant at all points.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.
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Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c), (3)(a), (3)(c), (3)(ca), (5)(b), (5)(c). Regulation 3B: (1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c). Regulation 3C: (1), (2)(a). Regulation 3D: (d), (e)

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£12,500	£40,000	£10,000	£12,500	£15,000

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- The report or record evidences that the electrical installations were compliant at all points.

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.
-

Failure to comply with The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector and Social Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 Regulation 3: (4), (5a), (6). Regulation 3C: (2)(b), (4)

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- None.
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Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- The number or nature or severity of the issues observed on the report or record.
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Housing Act 2004 breaches and offences

Failure by the responsible person to secure the removal of a Category 1 hazard at qualifying residential premises, other than the common parts of a building containing one or more flats, where it would have been reasonably practicable for them to do so - Section 6A of the Housing Act 2004.

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£6,000	£7,000	£4,800	£6,000	£7,200

Breach-specific mitigating factors:

- Access prevented by occupant(s) despite appropriate landlord steps

Breach-specific aggravating factors:

- None.

Failure to comply with an improvement notice - Section 30(1) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of hazard(s) that are present once the deadline for compliance has passed.
- Whether the property is unoccupied once the deadline for compliance has passed.
- Access to the property was prevented by the actions or refusal of the occupant(s) and a landlord can evidence that they took steps to obtain access to the property for the purpose of carrying out the required works, but those steps fell short of establishing a reasonable excuse for non-compliance.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of hazard(s) that are present once the deadline for compliance has passed.

Failure to comply with an overcrowding notice - Section 139(7) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The level of overcrowding present.

Failure to obtain a selective licence - Section 95(1) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£12,000	£40,000	£9,600	£12,000	£14,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The landlord has knowledge or experience of licensing requirements.

Failure to obtain an HMO licence - Section 72(1) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£17,000	£40,000	£13,600	£17,000	£20,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- None.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The landlord has knowledge or experience of licensing requirements.
- The condition and/or facilities of the unlicensed property.
-
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Knowingly permitting over-occupation of an HMO - Section 72(2) of the Housing Act 2004

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment

£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- There are suitable amenity and space provisions in the HMO.

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The level of over-occupation present.

Failure to Comply with The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation [England] Regulations 2006 and The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 – Section 234(3) of the Housing Act 2004

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 impose duties on the persons managing HMOs in respect of:

- Providing information to occupiers [Regulation 3]
- Taking safety measures, including fire safety measures [Regulation 4]
- Maintaining the water supply and drainage [Regulation 5]
- Supplying and maintaining gas and electricity, including having these services/appliances regularly inspected [Regulation 6]
- Maintaining common parts [Regulation 7]
- Maintaining living accommodation [Regulation 8]
- Providing sufficient waste disposal facilities [Regulation 9]

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007 impose duties on the persons managing HMOs as defined by Section 257 Housing Act 2004 in respect of:

- Providing information to occupiers [regulation 4]
- Taking safety measures, including fire safety measures [regulation 5]
- Maintaining the water supply and drainage [regulation 6]
- Supplying and maintaining gas and electricity, including having these services/appliances regularly inspected [regulation 7]
- Maintaining common parts [regulation 8]
- Maintaining living accommodation [regulation 9]
- Providing sufficient waste disposal facilities [regulation 10]

Where there are multiple breaches of a single Management Regulation at a single HMO, a single civil penalty will be imposed which will cover all the breaches of that Management Regulation.

Where multiple Management Regulations have been breached at a single HMO, a separate civil penalty will be imposed for each Management Regulation that has been breached.

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to provide information to occupier	£3,000	£40,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
- The landlord has refused to provide any outstanding contact information more than 48 hours after it has been requested by an occupant or on behalf of an occupant.
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-

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to take safety measures	£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
-
-

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to maintain water	£10,000	£40,000	£8,000	£10,000	£12,000

supply and drainage					

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
-

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to supply and maintain gas and electricity	£12,000	£40,000	£9,600	£12,000	£14,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
-
-

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to maintain common parts, fixtures, fittings and appliances	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
-
-

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty of manager to maintain living accommodation	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The number, nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
-
-

Name of Management Regulation	Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
Duty to provide waste disposal facilities	£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of offences within the specific regulation
- The lack of sufficient refuse and/or litter containers either inside and/or outside the property has been previously reported
- The refuse and/or litter that requires disposal includes hazardous materials
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Breach of licence conditions – Section 72(3) Housing Act 2004

All granted HMO licences impose a set of conditions on the licence holder. It is important that the licence holder of a licensed property complies with all imposed conditions, but the Council recognises that a failure to comply with certain licence conditions is likely to have a much bigger impact on the safety and comfort of residents than others.

The starting levels for each different type of licence condition breach is set out below based on the seriousness of the offence. Where a licence condition could be interpreted to fall within two different potential starting levels, the higher starting level will be chosen.

Where multiple licence conditions have been breached at a single property, a separate civil penalty will be imposed for each licence condition that has been breached.

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***Signage or the provision of information for tenants***
- ***Provision of written terms of occupancy for tenants***
- ***Procedures regarding complaints***
- ***Procedures regarding vetting of incoming tenants***
- ***Compliance with deposit protection legislation***
- ***The recording and provision of information regarding rent payments***
- ***Procedures relating to rent collection***
- ***The provision of information regarding occupancy of the property***
- ***The provision of information regarding change of managers or licence holder details***
- ***The provision of information related to changes in the property***
- ***Requirements relating to the sale of the property***
- ***Attending training courses***
- ***Requirements to hold insurance***
- ***The provision of insurance documentation***
- ***The provision of or obtaining of suitable references***
- ***The provision of keys and alarm codes***
- ***Security provisions for access to the property***
- ***The provision of suitable means for occupiers to regulate temperature***
- ***Carrying out items on a schedule of works not otherwise mentioned in the HMO licence conditions section of this policy, relating to non-compliance with items on a schedule of works***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£4,000	£40,000	£3,200	£4,000	£4,800

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***Procedures and actions regarding Inspections***
- ***Procedures regarding Repair issues***
- ***Maintenance and use of common parts (including gardens, outbuildings and property exterior) and living areas***
- ***Safeguarding occupiers and minimising disruption during works***
- ***The provision of information regarding alterations and construction works***
- ***Procedures regarding emergency issues***
- ***Waste and waste receptacles, pests, minor repairs, alterations or decoration.***
- ***Giving written notice prior to entry***
- ***Allowing access for inspections***
- ***Minimising risk of water contamination***
- ***The compliance of furnishings or furniture with fire safety regulations***
- ***Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to provision of mechanical extraction or electrical sockets***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£7,000	£40,000	£5,600	£7,000	£8,400

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***The provision of documentation regarding energy performance certificates, fire detection and prevention, emergency lighting, carbon monoxide detection, fire risk assessments, gas installations, electric installations and appliances***
- ***Notification of legal proceedings, contraventions and other relevant information that may affect a fit and proper person status***
- ***Procedures and actions regarding ASB***
- ***Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to the provision of personal hygiene facilities, kitchen facilities or heating***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£12,500	£40,000	£10,000	£12,500	£15,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach
-
-

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***Minimum floor areas***
- ***Occupancy rates***
- ***Occupancy of rooms or areas that are not to be used as sleeping accommodation***
- ***Limits on number of households allowed to occupy the property or part of the property***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£20,000	£40,000	£16,000	£20,000	£24,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***The condition or existence of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, emergency lighting, gas installations, electric installations and appliances, fire detection or other fire safety features or requirements***
- ***The provision and maintenance of safe means of escape, including requirements to keep escape routes and exits free from obstruction***
- ***Carrying out items on a schedule of works in relation to fire safety or the provision of a Carbon Monoxide detector***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£25,000	£40,000	£20,000	£25,000	£30,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Breach of licence conditions – Section 95(2) Housing Act 2004

All granted selective licences impose a set of conditions on the licence holder. It is important that the licence holder of a licensed property complies with all imposed conditions, but the Council recognises that a failure to comply with certain licence conditions is likely to have a much bigger impact on the safety and comfort of residents than others.

The starting levels for each different type of licence condition breach is set out below based on the seriousness of the offence. Where a licence condition could be interpreted to fall within two different potential starting levels, the higher starting level will be chosen.

Where multiple licence conditions have been breached at a single property, a separate civil penalty will be imposed for each licence condition that has been breached.

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***Signage or the provision of information for tenants***
- ***Provision of written terms of occupancy for tenants***
- ***Procedures regarding complaints***
- ***Procedures regarding vetting of incoming tenants***
- ***Compliance with deposit protection legislation***
- ***The recording and provision of information regarding rent payments***
- ***Procedures relating to rent collection***

- ***The provision of information regarding occupancy of the property***
- ***The provision of information regarding change of managers or licence holder details***
- ***The provision of information related to changes in the property***
- ***Requirements relating to the sale of the property***
- ***Attending training courses***
- ***Requirements to hold insurance***
- ***The provision of insurance documentation***
- ***The provision of keys and alarm codes***
- ***Security provisions for access to the property***
- ***The provision of suitable means for occupiers to regulate temperature***
- ***Carrying out items on a schedule of works not otherwise mentioned in the selective licence conditions section of this policy, relating to non-compliance with items on a schedule of works***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£3,000	£40,000	£2,400	£3,000	£3,600

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***Procedures and actions regarding Inspections***
- ***Procedures regarding Repair issues***
- ***Maintenance and use of common parts (including gardens, outbuildings and property exterior) and living areas***
- ***Safeguarding occupiers and minimising disruption during works***
- ***The provision of information regarding alterations and construction works,***
- ***Procedures regarding emergency issues***
- ***Waste and waste receptacles, pests, minor repairs, alterations or decoration.***
- ***Giving written notice prior to entry***
- ***Allowing access for inspections***
- ***Minimising risk of water contamination***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment

£5,250	£40,000	£4,200	£5,250	£6,300

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***The provision of documentation regarding energy performance certificates, fire detection and prevention, emergency lighting, carbon monoxide detection, fire risk assessments, gas installations, electric installations and appliances***
- ***Notification of legal proceedings, contraventions and other relevant information that may affect a fit and proper person status***
- ***Procedures and actions regarding ASB***
- ***Minimum floor areas***
- ***Occupancy rates***
- ***Occupancy of rooms that are not to be used as sleeping accommodation***
- ***Limits on number of households allowed to occupy the property or part of the property***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£9,375	£40,000	£7,500	£9,375	£11,250

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Failure to comply with licence conditions related to:

- ***The condition or existence of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, emergency lighting, gas installations, electric installations and appliances, fire detection or other fire safety features or requirements***
- ***The provision and maintenance of safe means of escape, including requirements to keep escape routes and exits free from obstruction***

Starting point	Statutory maximum civil penalty amount	Landlord Type downward adjustment	No Landlord Type adjustment	Landlord Type upward adjustment
£15,000	£40,000	£12,000	£15,000	£18,000

Offence-specific mitigating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Offence-specific aggravating factors:

- The nature and extent of the licence condition breach

Process for imposing a civil penalty and the right to make written representations

Notice of intent

Before imposing a civil penalty on a landlord, the Council will give the landlord a notice of intent. The notice of intent will set out:

- The amount of the proposed civil penalty
- The reasons for proposing to impose the civil penalty
- Information about their right to make written representations

Right to make written representations

A landlord who is given a notice of intent may make written representations to the Council about the proposal to impose a civil penalty. Any representations must be made within a period of 28 days beginning with the day after the date on which the notice of intent was given.

Decision after the representations period

After the end of the period for representations the Council will:

- Decide whether to impose a civil penalty on the landlord; and
- If it decides to impose a civil penalty, decide the amount of the penalty. This amount can be higher or lower than the amount stated in the notice of intent.

A landlord's rectification of the identified breach or offence during the representations period will rarely, of itself, lead the Council to conclude that the imposition of a civil penalty is inappropriate. However, compliance at that stage will usually be relevant to the assessment of mitigating factors that may reduce the level of any civil penalty imposed.

Similarly, an admission of liability will rarely, of itself, lead the Council to conclude that the imposition of a civil penalty is inappropriate. An admission of liability will, however, usually be relevant to the assessment of mitigating factors that may reduce the level of any civil penalty imposed.

Final notice

If, following the receipt of written representations and/or the expiry of the time period to make written representations, the Council decides to impose a civil penalty on the landlord, it will give the landlord a final notice imposing that penalty.

The final notice will set out:

- The amount of the civil penalty
- The reasons for imposing the penalty
- Information about how to pay the penalty
- The period for payment of the penalty
- Information about rights of appeal
- The consequences of failure to comply with the notice

Discount for prompt payment

Where a civil penalty imposed by a final notice is paid in full within the period specified in that notice (normally 28 days beginning with the day after the final notice is given), the Council will apply a discount of 15% to the amount of the civil penalty.

The availability of the discount is conditional upon full payment being received within the specified period. The discount period will not be extended or suspended by the bringing of an appeal. A landlord who chooses to appeal may still benefit from the discount by paying the civil penalty in full within the specified period; however, where payment is not made within that period, the discount will not apply.

Illustrative example of the application of the discount

The landlord of an HMO property fails to obtain a licence. They only operate two HMO properties and there are no other relevant factors or aggravating features. The starting point for the offence under the Council's civil penalties matrix is £17,000.

Following the issue of a notice of intent proposing a civil penalty of £17,000, the landlord makes written representations. Having considered those representations, the Council determines to impose a civil penalty of £16,000, as set out in the final notice.

If the landlord pays the civil penalty in full within the payment period specified in the final notice, a 15% prompt payment discount is applied, resulting in a discounted payment of £13,600.

Appeals

A landlord who is given a final notice may appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) against the decision to impose a civil penalty and/or the amount of the civil penalty. Any appeal must be made within 28 days beginning with the day after the date on which the final notice was given.

Where an appeal is brought, the final notice is suspended until the appeal is finally determined or withdrawn.

An appeal to the First-tier Tribunal is by way of a re-hearing of the Council's decision. In determining an appeal, the Tribunal may have regard to matters of which the Council was unaware at the time the decision to impose the civil penalty was made.

The Tribunal may dismiss an appeal if it is satisfied that the appeal is frivolous, vexatious, an abuse of process, or has no reasonable prospect of success.

The First-tier Tribunal may invite the parties to consider mediation or another form of alternative dispute resolution. The Council will not generally agree to mediation in relation to the level of a civil penalty, as civil penalties are determined by reference to this Policy to promote fair, consistent, and proportionate outcomes. Agreeing reductions outside the Policy

framework would risk undermining consistency and the Council's enforcement objectives.

On determination of an appeal, the Tribunal may:

- Confirm the civil penalty
- Vary the amount of the civil penalty (whether by increase or reduction)
- Cancel the civil penalty
-

Where the Tribunal varies a civil penalty by increasing its amount, it may do so only up to the applicable statutory maximum for the relevant breach or offence (£7,000 or £40,000, as applicable).

A party to the appeal may apply for permission to appeal the decision of the First-tier Tribunal to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).

Appendix 8

Risk Analysis of Redesignation of Licensing Schemes across defined areas and mitigating measures

Potential Risk	Implication	Risk	Mitigating Measure
Legal challenges to the designation	Delays to implementation and potential financial and reputational costs.	Low	• Ensure robust evidence base, legal review of proposals, adherence to statutory requirements, and comprehensive consultation processes.
Legal challenges to the designation	Delays to implementation and potential financial and reputational costs.	High	• Ensure robust evidence base, legal review of proposals, adherence to statutory requirements, and comprehensive consultation process undertaken by external consultant, for an impartial and transparent process promoting fully the benefits of the schemes. • Elected members and officers do not undertake implementation prior to consultation feedback and due Council process. • Allowances made to amend licence conditions and fees, following consultation feedback.
The fees proposed will be challenged or insufficient to cover costs.	Judicial review if the fee does not reflect the cost of licensing process only. A lower fee will prevent the scheme being self- financing. The process proves to be more resource intensive than planned.	Low	• Fee calculated in line with The Provisions of Services Directive 2009 (as amended), full details of calculations including only permitted costs. Fee to be reasonable and justifiable. • Case law considerations to be kept under review to ensure that the fee is appropriate and legal. • Discounts for landlords offered to encourage compliance. • Fee to be reviewed during designation.

Potential Risk	Implication	Risk	Mitigating Measure
Increased Council resource costs to ensure the schemes are successful.	Additional costs such as enforcement under Housing Act 2004, Part 1 will need to be met from the Council's general funds. Possible increased FOI requests.	**Med**	• The scheme can only recover costs from its fees for specific elements and not enforcement, (Housing Act 2004, Part 1). • Ensure all other council departments are adequately funded to support the schemes • Ensure accuracy of recording data. Robust business plan. • Experience of Selective & Additional (HMO) Licensing schemes has enabled a more accurate forecast of assumed income.
Licence Conditions are unenforceable	Proposed licence conditions to be clear and only imposed on the licence holder (unless another person agrees to be bound by those conditions)..	**Low**	• Legal advice sought. • Consultation feedback is likely to raise any specific issues.
Unprofessional landlords sell properties leading to an increase in empty homes.	Houses become managed by more professional landlords or become owner occupied. Less private rented accommodation available. Homes will become empty because of landlords trying to sell property and flooding the market. A few landlords may attempt to illegally evict a tenant.	**Low**	• Promotion of benefits of licensing with landlords • Support and training offered to landlords. • Encourage landlords to engage with accreditation scheme. • Information sharing between other partners. • Housing Options made aware and giving appropriate advice to tenants. • RRA restrictions on gaining possession and inability to relet within 12 months.

Potential Risk	Implication	Risk	Mitigating Measure
Displacement of poor management practices to neighbouring areas	Improvement within the designated area may result in issues moving elsewhere.	**Med**	• Monitor adjoining areas, share intelligence across teams, and consider future interventions based on evidence gathered.
Non-compliance and unlicensed properties	Undermines effectiveness of the scheme and places tenants at risk.	**Med**	• Proactive intelligence gathering, partnership working, targeted inspections, enforcement action, and publicity of successful outcomes to encourage compliance. • Current and past schemes have provided significant intelligence to identify unlicensed properties.
A higher volume of applications is received than planned for.	Delays in processing would lead to loss of credibility. Additional fee income achieved.	**Low**	• Application process to be as streamlined and efficient as possible. Staffing to be monitored and matched to meet demand. • Staff will be trained and ready to receive and process applications at scheme commencement. • Income sufficient to fund additional staffing.
Some financial institutions may not lend to landlords across areas where licensing is in place.	Landlords may not be able to access mortgages from some companies.	**Low**	• Most landlords will have a mortgage. A mortgage company cannot prevent a property being licensed on the grounds that it doesn't wish it to have one.
Financial burden on landlords passed to tenants	Potential increase in rents and affordability concerns for tenants.	**Low**	• Set reasonable licence fees, offer flexible payment arrangements where appropriate, and communicate that licensing fees should be proportionate to regulatory costs. • RRA 2025 requirements on rent increases and appeal process available to tenants through the Tribunal.

Potential Risk	Implication	Risk	Mitigating Measure
Anti-social behaviour (ASB) increases despite licensing	Focusing only on privately rented properties may not improve behaviour in area.	**Med**	• ASB Team adequately resourced • Resources and support made available to landlords to tackle ASB effectively and in a timely manner. • Enforcement action taken against landlords where licence conditions are breeched, by agreement with all relevant partners, e.g environmental protection, cleansing, ASB, Legal, RSL providers • Monitoring procedures in place. • Regular feedback on ASB involving designated areas across all partners.
Failure to achieve intended housing standards improvements	Reduced confidence in the scheme and missed opportunities to protect tenants.	**Low**	• Robust inspection programme, targeted enforcement, regular review of outcomes, performance indicators, and continuous improvement based on findings.
Licensing has not achieved its objectives at the end of the 5 year designation.	Extension of designation for a further 5 years. Landlord and tenant support needs to be developed.	**Med**	• Ensure schemes have achievable and measurable outcomes. • Robust and regular annual monitoring on agreed outcomes. • Scheme is consistently enforced. • Clear exit strategy. • Staff and partners fully committed to the scheme. • If the scheme focuses on administration and

Potential Risk	Implication	Risk	Mitigating Measure
			• enforcement it will not be effective in changing behaviour and dealing with the main issues. • Mechanisms to be available for improving tenant behaviour, and to support landlords in obtaining references to meet the licensing conditions.
Large numbers of appeals are made to the First-tier Tribunal (Property)	Increased demand on staff resources. Fewer applications are processed and issued. Delay on hearings following implementation of RRA 2025	**High**	• Ensure licence conditions are clear, reasonable and enforceable. • Clear explanation of HMO classification (Additional Licensing) to limit misinterpretation. • Legal advice and support provided. • Clear Enforcement Policy and Civil Penalty Policy in place
Reputational risk to the Council	Public criticism if the schemes are perceived as ineffective	**Low**	• Scheme adequately resourced and staff properly trained. • Scheme is enforced in a consistent and robust manner and supported by all partners. • Regular reporting of outcomes
Lack of landlord engagement due to overseas ownership or absent landlords	Difficulties securing compliance and undertaking necessary improvements.	**Med**	• Use managing agent requirements, formal enforcement powers, alternative contact methods, and partnership working with other agencies where appropriate.
Increased demand on staffing resources	Delays in processing applications, inspections, and enforcement activity.	**High**	• Workforce planning, phased implementation, recruitment of additional officers where required, prioritisation of high-risk cases, and regular performance monitoring.

Poor quality applications or incomplete submissions	Increased administrative burden and delays in granting licences.	**Med**	• Provide clear guidance, online application support, FAQs, and direct assistance for landlords and agents.
Not meeting target for numbers of compliance inspections.	Property condition improvements reduced	**Med**	• Prioritising compliance inspections to properties posing the highest risk to the health and safety of the occupiers.

Overall Assessment

While the redesignation of licensing schemes presents operational, financial, and reputational risks, these can be effectively managed through robust planning, stakeholder engagement, adequate resourcing, proactive enforcement, and regular monitoring. The benefits, which have been seen during the previous schemes, including improved property conditions, enhanced management standards, increased tenant safety, and better intelligence on the private rented sector, are likely to outweigh the identified risks when appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

Appendix 9

Requirements for the Designation Of an Area for Selective Licensing

Requirements for the Designation of an Area for Selective Licensing

Section 83 of the Housing Act 2004, requires the Council to publish the designation. Once published the designation must remain available to the public. The designation must set out:

a) that the designation has been made,
b) that the designation is made under the Housing Act 2004 and is covered by the current General Approval issued under section 82 (including details of the applicable General Approval).
c) the date on which the designation is to come into force, and
d) any other information which may be prescribed.

In addition to the requirements of the Act, the notice must also contain the following information:

- A brief description of the designated area;
- The name, address, telephone number and email address of

- The local housing authority which made the designation;
- The premises where the designation may be inspected; and
- The premises where applications for licences and general advice may be obtained;

- A statement advising any landlord, person managing or tenant within the designated area to seek advice from the local housing authority on whether their property is affected by the designation; and a warning of the consequences of failing to licence a property which is required to be licensed, including the criminal sanctions.

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 places further requirements on this:
Within 7 days after the date on which the designation was confirmed:

- Place the notice on a public notice board at one or more municipal buildings within the designated area,
- Publish the notice on the HBC web site; and
- Arrange for its publication in at least two local newspapers. must be published five more times in the same two newspapers at intervals of no less than two weeks and no more than three

Within 2 weeks after the designation was confirmed, must send a copy of the notice to:

- Any person who responded to the consultation conducted by it under section 80(9) of the Act (this will be by letter and email)
- Any organisation which, to the reasonable knowledge of the local housing authority represents the interests of landlords or tenants; or
- Represents managing agents, estate agents or letting agents, and

- Every organisation within the area which the LA knows or believes provides advice on landlord and tenant matters, including; law centres; citizens' advice bureaux; housing advice centres; and homeless persons' units.

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DRAFT BOOTLE SELECTIVE LICENCE BUSINESS CASE 2023-2028



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SEFTON MBC

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Foreword

Since the introduction of Selective Licensing and Additional (HMO) Licensing in 2018, Sefton Council has worked closely with landlords, tenants, communities and partner organisations to improve standards within the private rented sector. Over the last decade, licensing has become a key component of our wider housing strategy, helping to improve property conditions, support vulnerable residents, tackle anti-social behaviour and strengthen neighbourhoods across Bootle, Waterloo/Seaforth and Southport.

The private rented sector continues to play an increasingly important role in meeting housing need across Sefton. Whilst many landlords provide safe, well-managed accommodation, the Council continues to identify areas where poor housing conditions, ineffective management practices, anti-social behaviour and deprivation can have a negative impact on residents and communities. The evidence gathered during previous licensing designations demonstrates that targeted intervention can deliver meaningful improvements and help ensure that tenants live in safe and decent homes.

Sefton is entering a period of significant opportunity and investment. Through major regeneration programmes, including the Sefton 2030 housing initiative, the Council and its partners are working to create thriving, sustainable communities, increase the supply of quality homes and support economic growth across the Borough. Licensing has an important role to play in ensuring that existing privately rented housing improves alongside new development and regeneration activity.

The housing landscape has also changed considerably since the previous business case was prepared. The implementation of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 has strengthened expectations on landlords and local authorities alike, creating new opportunities to improve standards, increase accountability and provide greater protections for tenants. Sefton Council is committed to using all available powers proportionately and effectively to support responsible landlords whilst taking firm action against poor property management and unsafe housing conditions.

This Business Case sets out the evidence supporting the proposed re-designation of Selective Licensing in Bootle and Additional (HMO) Licensing in Waterloo/Seaforth and Southport for the period **1 April 2028 to 31 March 2033**. It demonstrates that significant challenges remain within these areas and that licensing continues to represent a necessary, proportionate and effective intervention as part of a wider coordinated approach to housing improvement, community safety and regeneration.

The Council remains committed to working collaboratively with landlords, tenants, residents and stakeholders to deliver long-term improvements that will benefit both current and future generations. By continuing these licensing schemes, we aim to support good landlords, improve housing standards, protect vulnerable tenants and contribute to the creation of confident, connected and resilient communities throughout Sefton.

Councillor Phil Hart
Cabinet Member Housing & Highways, Sefton Council

Introduction

This Business Case supports Sefton Council's proposal to re-designate the Selective Licensing Scheme in Bootle and the Additional (HMO) Licensing Schemes in parts of Waterloo/Seaforth and Southport for a further five-year period from **1 April 2028 to 31 March 2033**. The purpose of this document is to assess the effectiveness of the existing schemes, review current evidence relating to housing conditions and neighbourhood sustainability, and determine whether licensing continues to represent the most appropriate intervention for improving standards within the private rented sector.

Sefton's ambition remains to ensure that all residents have access to safe, healthy and well-managed homes. The Council recognises the important role that the private rented sector plays in meeting housing need across the Borough, particularly for households who are unable to access owner occupation or social housing. However, evidence continues to demonstrate that concentrations of privately rented accommodation within parts of Bootle, Waterloo/Seaforth and Southport are associated with poorer housing conditions, higher levels of deprivation, anti-social behaviour and property management issues than experienced elsewhere within the Borough.

Since the introduction of licensing in 2018, and its subsequent re-designation in 2023, significant improvements have been achieved through proactive inspection, landlord engagement, enforcement activity and partnership working. Previous licensing schemes contributed to the removal of serious housing hazards, improvements in landlord compliance, reductions in anti-social behaviour and enhanced intelligence regarding privately rented housing across the designated areas. Despite this progress, the evidence demonstrates that many of the underlying challenges which justified the original designations remain present and continue to require targeted intervention.

The housing sector has also undergone significant change since the previous business case was prepared. The implementation of the Renters Rights Act 2025 has introduced a strengthened regulatory framework for the private rented sector and increased expectations regarding housing standards, property management and landlord accountability. Local authorities are expected to play a more proactive role in regulating the sector and protecting tenants from poor housing conditions. Within this changing legislative environment, property licensing continues to provide an effective mechanism through which Sefton Council can identify, engage with and regulate privately rented accommodation.

The proposed re-designation is also consistent with Sefton Council's wider strategic objectives. Licensing supports the delivery of the Council's Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Empty Homes initiatives and wider regeneration programmes. It complements major investment programmes, including the Sefton 2030 housing initiative, by ensuring that improvements to existing privately rented housing accompany investment in new housing and neighbourhood regeneration.

The evidence presented within this document has been compiled from local authority datasets, partner agencies, national statistics, Census 2021 outputs and updated housing market information. Wherever possible, the methodology used reflects that employed within previous business cases to ensure consistency and allow meaningful comparison over time. This enables the Council to assess trends, measure the impact

of licensing interventions and determine whether the statutory tests for Selective Licensing and Additional (HMO) Licensing continue to be satisfied.

Having reviewed the available evidence, Sefton Council considers that the continuation of licensing remains a necessary, proportionate and effective response to the housing and neighbourhood challenges experienced within the proposed designation areas. The following sections of this Business Case set out the evidence supporting this conclusion and the rationale for the proposed re-designation of the schemes for the period 2028-2033

Chapter 1 Why is Sefton seeking to re-designate the current Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing Schemes

To achieve Sefton's vision, it is clear that although great strides have been made through our current schemes still more needs to be done to improve the housing conditions for our residents in the private rented sector, doing nothing is still not an option and this document determines options available to Sefton Council.

Under Sections 81(3) and 81(4) of the Housing Act 2004, the Council must demonstrate that it has assessed other options capable of delivering the intended outcomes of the proposed designation and explain why selective licensing would make a substantial contribution towards achieving those outcomes. Statutory guidance further emphasises that local authorities should evaluate whether alternative interventions could reasonably secure the same objectives before introducing a selective licensing scheme.

The Local Authority considered whether there are any courses of action, other than re-designating Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing, that might achieve the same objectives in the proposed areas such as;

Voluntary Property Accreditation

Voluntary Property Accreditation continues to be supported by the Local Authority in promoting good property management. The Local Authority will again offer licence fee discounts for members of Sefton's Property Accreditation Scheme as is offered in the current licensing schemes. Most properties accredited continue to be within licensing areas which suggest that many landlords and agents only signed up to receive the licence fee discounts and would not have done so otherwise. Sefton have accredited 444 properties during its current scheme; this is a reduction from 664 during its previous scheme. This reduction clearly demonstrates that any reliance on voluntary accreditation, as an alternative to Selective/ Additional (HMO) Licensing, is not considered to be a viable alternative to licensing. It has no enforcement powers and cannot secure the broad, consistent improvement required across the Private rented sector.

Reactive Enforcement

The Council considered relying solely on reactive enforcement tools, including Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) powers, Environmental Protection Act provisions and anti-social behaviour interventions. Whilst these remain important enforcement mechanisms, they are primarily responsive in nature and only address issues once they arise. Such an approach would not create a comprehensive framework for identifying landlords, monitoring management standards or preventing housing problems before they occur.

Mandatory HMO Licensing

Mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) applies to only a relatively small section of the private rented sector. While it can improve standards

within those properties, it does not address wider concerns affecting the broader rental market, including poor housing conditions and deprivation. Restricting regulatory efforts to HMO licensing would therefore leave many of the challenges identified across the wider sector unresolved

Regeneration Initiatives

Regeneration initiatives can deliver meaningful improvements within targeted neighbourhoods and support long-term community renewal. However, such programmes are generally restricted to specific locations and require extended periods to achieve results. They are therefore unable to tackle immediate management and property condition issues across the wider private rented sector, nor can they effectively prevent poor practices from shifting into neighbouring areas outside renewal boundaries.

Reliance on the Renters' Rights Act 2025

The Council has also considered whether the additional powers and responsibilities introduced through the Renters' Rights Act 2025 could provide a sufficient alternative. While the legislation strengthens protections relating to tenancy rights and evictions, and the “Register your Rental Property” Database will eventually provide a register of all PRS properties, it does not establish a framework for proactive inspections of properties or landlord management standards.

Why these designated areas?

The Council again considered introducing a district-wide scheme for Selective licensing, but this was not taken forward because the evidence is not sufficient to introduce the whole district. Government Guidance states that any area considered for selective licensing must have a high proportion of property in the private rented sector, which is more than the national average.

Nationally, the private rented sector to represents around 19% [1]of households in England. Although Census 2021 indicates that private renting in Sefton has increased from 13.4%[2] to 18.2%[3] of households since 2011.

A recent review of Sefton’s private housing stock[4] by the consultants Sustenic found 19.56% of dwellings were privately rented, showing the dwellings in Sefton’s PRS continues to be around the national average.

The Council has therefore adopted a targeted approach, focusing on specific areas where the private rented sector is concentrated above the Borough average and where evidence demonstrates ongoing housing, environmental and community safety issues. This approach ensures that any proposed designation remains proportionate, evidence-based and consistent with statutory guidance.

The Local Authority has, therefore, concluded that re-designating remains the effective course of action to assist in achieving its objectives. Licensing since 2018 has had a

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[1] English Housing Survey 2022 to 2023: rented sectors - GOV.UK

[2] www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/qs405ew

[3] www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/c2021ts054

[4] Dwelling Level Stock Profiles-Private Sector Housing-SEFTON COUNCIL (SUSTENIC Sept 2026)

substantial impact on landlord and agent behaviour and has improved their engagement and relationship with Sefton.

Licensing of privately rented properties, albeit generally unpopular with landlords can provide several benefits to them. There are also benefits to their tenants and the wider community.

Benefits of Licensing for Landlords

Licensing supports responsible landlords by promoting professional standards, improving compliance and creating a fairer private rented sector.

- Access to advice, guidance and support to address tenancy management and anti-social behaviour issues.
- Improved understanding of legal responsibilities, helping landlords comply with housing legislation, licence conditions and more recently their requirements under the Renters' Rights Act 2025.
- Training and support to improve property management practices and housing standards.
- Increased confidence in the sector through clearer regulation and a more level playing field.
- Improved neighbourhood conditions, helping to protect rental income, reduce void periods and support property values.
- Recognition of responsible landlords through accreditation schemes and licence fee discounts where applicable.
- Stronger partnership working with the Council to tackle persistent nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

Benefits of Licensing for Tenants

Licensing helps ensure that tenants have access to safer, better managed and higher quality homes.

- Greater assurance that properties are safe, well maintained and meet minimum housing standards.
- Increased accountability and professionalism amongst landlords and managing agents.
- Improved housing conditions and reduced exposure to health and safety hazards.
- Greater protection through consistent management standards and compliance with legal requirements.
- Support for tenancy sustainment, helping to reduce housing instability and homelessness.
- Improved health, wellbeing and quality of life through better housing conditions.

Benefits of Licensing for the Community

Licensing contributes to wider neighbourhood improvement and supports sustainable communities.

- Reduced anti-social behaviour and environmental nuisance.
- Better managed private rented properties and improved housing standards.

- Improved appearance and reputation of local neighbourhoods.
- More stable and cohesive communities with increased resident confidence.
- Reduction in vacant and poorly managed properties.
- Reduced incidents of fly-tipping, litter, graffiti and other environmental issues.
- Protection of vulnerable residents living in the private rented sector.
- Support for wider regeneration initiatives and long-term investment in local areas.
- Reduced demand on public services through improved housing conditions, better health outcomes and earlier intervention where problems arise.

This Business Case sets out Sefton Council's rationale for the proposed re-designation of Selective Licensing and Additional (HMO) Licensing schemes for the period **1 April 2028 to 31 March 2033**. It draws upon evidence from the current licensing schemes, together with local and national data relating to housing conditions, property management, anti-social behaviour, deprivation, health inequalities and housing need.

Since licensing was first introduced, significant improvements have been achieved in housing standards, landlord compliance and neighbourhood management. However, evidence shows that challenges remain within parts of Bootle, Southport and Waterloo/Seaforth, particularly in relation to poor housing conditions, ineffective property management and the concentration of vulnerable households within the private rented sector. The Council therefore considers that continuing both licensing schemes remains a necessary and proportionate intervention.

The following sections present the evidence supporting the proposed re-designation and demonstrate how licensing continues to contribute towards improved housing standards, stronger landlord accountability, tenant protection and more sustainable communities. Consideration has also been given to the enhanced regulatory environment created by the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

Wherever possible, the evidence has been compiled using methodologies consistent with previous business cases to enable meaningful comparison over-time. Data has been drawn from a range of sources, including Census 2021, Merseyside Police, the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Council Tax records, Housing Standards service requests and other local authority datasets. This evidence-led approach enables the Council to assess whether the statutory tests for licensing continue to be met and whether licensing remains the most effective mechanism for addressing housing and neighbourhood challenges within the proposed designation areas.

Chapter 2 - Selective Licensing

On 21st September 2017, Sefton Council's Cabinet approved the introduction of a Selective Licensing Scheme covering all privately rented accommodation in the Bootle area of Sefton. The original scheme came into effect on 1st March 2018 and ended on 28th February 2023. A subsequent Scheme was implemented covering the period from 1st March 2023 to 29th February 2028.

What is Selective Licensing?

Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 (the Act) sets out the scheme for licensing private rented properties in a local housing authority area.

Under section 80 of the Act a local housing authority can designate the whole or any part or parts of its area as subject to Selective Licensing. Where a Selective Licensing designation is made it applies to privately rented property in the area. Subject to certain exemptions specified in the Selective Licensing of Houses (Specified Exemptions) (England) Order 2006, all properties in the PRS which are let or occupied under a licence, are required to be licensed by the local housing authority, unless the property is a House in Multiple Occupation and is required to be licensed under Part 2 of the Act.

This business case outlines the proposed re-designation.

The statutory guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) states that a local housing authority may only make a selective licensing designation where, amongst other considerations, the authority can demonstrate that the area contains a high proportion of privately rented homes. The English Housing Survey in 2023 showed that the private rented sector (PRS) accounts for approximately **19% of households in England** (4.7 million households)[5] and has remained broadly stable at around 19% to 20% over the last decade.

Since the introduction of the previous licensing scheme, national PRS levels have therefore remained relatively consistent. In addition, more recent housing tenure estimates are now available from the Office for National Statistics, which estimates that **20.8% of dwellings in England were privately rented in 2023[6]**.

Having reviewed the available evidence and tenure data, it is considered that the most appropriate and prudent approach to the renewal of the Bootle Selective Licensing Scheme is to retain the existing designation boundary. A recent review of the private housing stock found that borough wide the proportion of dwellings that are privately rented to be 19.6%; this is in line with national levels. The same review found that within the existing selective licencing area 32.6% of dwellings where privately rented[7]. Accordingly, the area can reasonably be regarded as having a high proportion of privately rented accommodation for the purposes of selective licensing assessment.

A Selective Licensing designation may be made if the area to which it relates satisfies one or more of the following conditions. The area is one experiencing:

[5] Chapter 1: Profile of households and dwellings - GOV.UK

[6] Subnational estimates of dwellings and households by tenure, England - Office for National Statistics

[7] Dwelling Level Stock Profiles-Private Sector Housing-SEFTON COUNCIL (SUSTENIC Sept 2026)

- low housing demand (or is likely to become such an area)
- a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- poor property conditions
- high levels of migration
- high level of deprivation
- high levels of crime

A designation can only be in force for a maximum of 5 years.

A licence will normally be granted for the duration of the scheme, although the Council may issue a shorter licence where there are concerns regarding management standards, compliance history or obstruction of the licensing process. Licence holders must comply with all licence conditions and legal requirements. Failure to do so may result in enforcement action, including civil penalties, prosecution, or a Rent Repayment Order (RRO) requiring repayment of up to 24 months' rent (effective from 1st May 2026) or housing benefit/universal credit received during the period of the offence. The Council will take a proportionate but robust approach to non-compliance.

When assessing ASB, government guidance says that a Local Authority should consider crime, nuisance neighbours and environmental crime and then assess whether landlords are failing to take appropriate action to help resolve the problem.

The law states that any decision to implement a Selective or Additional (HMO) licensing scheme must be consistent with the Local Authority's housing strategy and must be part of a coordinated approach for dealing with homelessness, empty homes and ASB. The Local Authority must be satisfied that there are no other courses of action that might provide an effective remedy and that the introduction of a licensing scheme will significantly assist in dealing with the problem. So, there is a lot of evidence that Sefton analysed before it introduced its current scheme.

A Local Authority can implement a Selective Licensing scheme provided it meets all the requirements in the Housing Act 2004, and they have consulted with everyone affected by the designation for a minimum of 10 weeks.

Owners of privately rented properties within the designated areas will be required to make an application to the Local Authority for a licence and will need to nominate either the manager or the owner to be the proposed licence holder. The proposed licence holder will need to be determined by Sefton Council as a 'fit and proper' person and the most appropriate person to hold the licence [[Fit and Proper Person].

Exempt from Selective Licensing

1. Owners who reside in property they own as their main residence (owner-occupiers)
2. Homes let to tenants of registered housing providers (housing associations)
3. Those places specifically excluded from the legislation such as care homes, etc.
4. Student accommodation directly managed by educational institutions, e.g. halls of residence [but not those where students have tenancies with private landlords].
5. HMOs that require licensing through Sefton's Mandatory HMO licensing scheme.

6. Homes subject to management orders and exemption notices
7. Households that act as host families for foreign students studying for a short period.
8. Homes with lodgers.

Defining Proposed Areas for Selective Licensing

Selective Licensing will operate in the same way and alongside the existing Mandatory Licensing scheme that operates across the Borough. The same process will be followed, with the same legal obligations and penalties for failing to comply with the requirements.

Selective Licensing requires all privately rented properties, which are located within a designated area, to be licensed. Sefton proposes to re-designate parts Bootle as a Selective licensing area. A map of the designated area and a full list of proposed streets can be found at **Appendix 1**

Scheme details

Each licence granted would be subject to a series of licence conditions,

A full set of conditions can be found at **Appendix 2**

The licensing process will require landlords to complete and submit an application form to Sefton Council along with the required fee. The application form will be online, assistance for landlords who do not have access to a computer can be provided and landlords will be required to provide information about the property

Examples of evidence required include:

- Gas safety - Gas safety record (12 months)
- Energy Performance Certificate
- Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)
- Fire Alarm and Emergency lighting certificates, where applicable
- Floor plan with room sizes and uses clearly shown, where applicable
- Any proposed licence holder or manager of the property will be required to make a declaration that they are a “fit and proper person [Fit and Proper Person]”
- Current occupancy details (**excluding** names)

Anti-social Behaviour

The licence holder shall take all reasonable and proportionate steps to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour, nuisance, annoyance or harassment arising from the occupation and use of the licensed premises.

a) Where the licence holder receives a complaint or otherwise becomes aware of such behaviour, they shall:
b) investigate the matter within a reasonable period;
c) maintain a written record of complaints received, and actions taken;
d) take such reasonable and proportionate management action as is appropriate in the circumstances, including warnings, tenant engagement, mediation, referral to support services, or tenancy enforcement action where justified; and
e) cooperate with the Council, Police and other relevant agencies in addressing anti-social behaviour associated with the licensed premises.

Records required by this condition shall be retained for the duration of the licence and produced to the Council upon reasonable request.

The property must be regularly monitored between tenancies to ensure that it does not cause a nuisance to neighbours or other residents.

Chapter 3 - Additional (HMO) Licensing

On 21st September 2017, Sefton Council's Cabinet approved the introduction of a Additional (HMO) Licensing Scheme covering all Houses in Multiple Occupation in an area of central Southport and an area of Seaforth/Waterloo/Brighton-Le-Sands. The original scheme came into effect on 1st March 2018 and ended on 28th February 2023. A subsequent Scheme was implemented covering the period from 1st March 2023 to 29th February 2028.

What is Additional (HMO) Licensing?

Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 (the Act) sets out the schemes for licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation in a local housing authority area.

Having more than one household living in a property can increase the risk to the health, safety and welfare of the occupiers if the property is not properly managed. Although, it is recognised that HMOs and flats are an essential part of Sefton's housing stock and that there are many good landlords working within Sefton, there is a number of landlords that do not maintain their properties, whereby, leaving tenants at risk, and failing to adequately manage their properties leading to ASB affecting neighbouring premises.

Enforcement action against HMOs is costly, resource intensive and complicated. Sefton's Housing Standards Team continue to respond on a reactive basis to complaints from tenants and neighbours regarding some of the worst properties. The current Additional (HMO) Licensing Scheme has enabled the Team to identify HMO properties that otherwise could have been unregulated, posing a health & safety risk to occupiers.

Mandatory HMO licensing only applies to those HMOs occupied by five or more people where there are two or more households, and the occupiers share an amenity such as a bathroom, kitchen or w.c. or where all the units of accommodation are not fully self-contained. Properties that are required to be licensed under the Mandatory scheme will **not** be required to be licensed under either Additional (HMO) or Selective Licensing.

There are currently 181 Mandatory licenced HMOs in Sefton, and most HMO landlords have complied with the major work requirements linked to the licence. This helps demonstrate that licensing can lead to improved property conditions.

Additional (HMO) Licensing under section 56 of the Housing Act 2004 allows the Local Authority to extend the Mandatory HMO licensing scheme to include other types of HMO. Sefton Council considered that a significant proportion of the HMOs of a defined description, in both current designated areas were being managed insufficiently enough to give rise to one or more problems either for those occupying the property or for members of the public. Sefton proposes once again to include all properties within any prescribed definition of HMO across the proposed Additional (HMO) Licensing designations.

Those HMOs that fall within the definition of section 257, such as converted blocks of flats, are not subject to mandatory licensing, and local authorities that wish to licence such properties need to follow the approval steps for Additional (HMO) Licensing. Sefton's proposal for Additional (HMO) Licensing includes all properties defined under section 257.

Before making an additional HMO licensing designation for a particular area, a Local Authority must:

a. Consider that a significant proportion of the HMOs of that description in the area are being managed sufficiently ineffectively as to give rise, or to be likely to give rise, to one or more particular problems either for those occupying the HMOs or for members of the public
b. Have regard to any information regarding the extent to which any codes of practice approved under section 233 have been complied with by persons managing HMOs in the area
c. Consider whether there are any other courses of action available to them (of whatever nature) that might provide an effective method of dealing with the problem or problems in question
d. That making the designation will significantly assist them to deal with the problem or problems (whether they take any other course of action as well)
e. Consult persons likely to be affected by the designation.

A Local Authority can implement an Additional (HMO) Licensing scheme provided it meets all the requirements in the Housing Act 2004 and they have consulted with everyone affected by the designation for a minimum of 10 weeks.

Defining Proposed Areas for Additional (HMO) Licensing

Additional (HMO) Licensing will operate in the same way and alongside the existing Mandatory Licensing scheme that operates across the Borough. The same process will be followed, with the same legal obligations and penalties for failing to comply with the requirements.

Additional (HMO) Licensing requires all privately rented HMOs, which are located within a designated area, to be licensed. Sefton proposes to re-designate parts of Southport and Waterloo/Seaforth as Additional (HMO) licensing areas. A map of the designated areas and a full list of streets proposed can be found at **Appendix 3**

Duration of licenses

An Additional HMO Licence will normally be granted for a period of **five years**, which is the maximum period permitted. However, the Council may grant a licence for a shorter period where it considers this to be appropriate in the circumstances of a particular case.

A shorter licence period, typically **one year**, may be granted where there are outstanding matters affecting the use or licensing status of the property. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- where a planning application has been submitted or is expected to be submitted to regularise the use of the property;
- where steps are being taken to remove the property from the definition of a House in Multiple Occupation;
- where a change of use planning application has been submitted in respect of a property located within an **Article 4 Direction area**;
- where a property has recently been converted to an HMO and there is uncertainty as to whether the necessary planning permission has been obtained; or

- where the Council considers that a shorter licence period is necessary to monitor compliance with licensing, planning or other regulatory requirements.

What is a HMO?

A HMO is a building or part of a building occupied as a main residence by 3 or more people that form 2 or more households.

A building or part of a building is a “house in multiple occupation” if-

a. it meets the conditions of the standard test
b. it meets the conditions of the self-contained flat test
c. it meets the conditions of the converted building test
d. an HMO declaration is in force in respect of it under section 255 of the Housing Act 2004
e. it is a converted block of flats to which section 257 of the Housing Act 2004 applies

The ‘Tests’

The three tests are as follows:

The Standard Test

A building or a part of a building meets the standard test if-

f. it consists of one or more units of living accommodation, not consisting of a self-contained flat or flats;
g. the living accommodation is occupied by persons who do not form a single household (see section 258);
h. the living accommodation is occupied by those persons as their only or main residence or they are to be treated as so occupying it (see section 259);
i. their occupation of the living accommodation constitutes the only use of that accommodation;
j. rents are payable or other consideration is to be provided in respect of at least one of those persons' occupation of the living accommodation; and
k. two or more of the households who occupy the living accommodation share one or more basic amenities or the living accommodation is lacking in one or more basic amenities.

The Self Contained Test

A part of a building meets the self-contained flat test if-

a. it consists of a self-contained flat; and
b. the living accommodation is occupied by persons who do not form a single household (see section 258);
c. the living accommodation is occupied by those persons as their only or main residence or they are to be treated as so occupying it (see section 259);
d. their occupation of the living accommodation constitutes the only use of that accommodation;
e. rents are payable or other consideration is to be provided in respect of at least one of those persons' occupation of the living accommodation; and

f. two or more of the households who occupy the living accommodation share one or more basic amenities or the living accommodation is lacking in one or more basic amenities.

The Converted Building Test

A building or a part of a building meets the converted building test if-

a. it is a converted building;
b. it contains one or more units of living accommodation that do not consist of a self-contained flat or flats (whether or not it also contains any such flat or flats);
c. the living accommodation is occupied by persons who do not form a single household (see section 258);
d. the living accommodation is occupied by those persons as their only or main residence or they are to be treated as so occupying it (see section 259);
e. their occupation of the living accommodation constitutes the only use of that accommodation; and
f. rents are payable or other consideration is to be provided in respect of at least one of those persons' occupation of the living accommodation."

Section 257 HMO

Premises defined in Section 257 of the 2004 Act will also fall within the classification of a HMO. To be a HMO under Section 257 a HMO must satisfy **all** the following criteria namely:

- It must be a building that has been converted and comprises entirely of self-contained flats, and
- Where the standard of conversion does not meet, at least, that required by the Building Regulations 1991, and
- Where less than two-thirds of the flats are owner-occupied

To be a HMO the property must be used as the tenants' only or main residence and it should be used solely or mainly to house tenants.

Properties let to students and migrant workers will be treated as their only or main residence and the same will apply to properties used as domestic refuges.

For example a HMO can include:

- Buildings containing bedsits and/or non self-contained flats
- Shared houses and hostels
- Self-contained flats
- Converted buildings

What is a household?

The following are 'households' for the purposes of the Housing Act 2004.

Members of the same family living together including:

- couples married to each other or living together as husband and wife (or in an equivalent relationship in the case of persons of the same sex)
- relatives living together, including parents, grandparents, children (and step-children), grandchildren, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces or cousins
- half-relatives will be treated as full relatives. A foster child living with his foster parent is treated as living in the same household as his foster parent.

Any domestic staffs are also included in the household if they are living rent-free in accommodation provided by the person for whom they are working.

Therefore, three friends sharing together are considered three households. If a couple are sharing with a third person that would consist of two households. If a family rents a property that is a single household and had an au-pair to look after their children that person would be included in their household.

Are there any properties that are exempt from Additional (HMO) licensing?

There are some properties that are exempt from licensing. However, they must fall into one of the following categories:

- buildings or parts of buildings, occupied by no more than two households each of which comprise a single person (i.e. two-person flat shares)
- buildings occupied by a resident landlord with up to two lodgers
- managed or owned by a public body (such as the police or the NHS) or an LHA or a registered social landlord (housing association) where the residential accommodation is ancillary to the principal use of the building e.g. religious establishments, conference centres etc.
- student halls of residence, where the education establishment has signed up to an Approved Code of Practice
- buildings regulated otherwise than under the Act, such as care homes, bail hostels etc, and the description of which are specified in regulations
- buildings entirely occupied by freeholders or long leaseholders.

The Local Authority must grant a licence if it is satisfied that:

- The licence holder would be a fit and proper person. If the licence is granted it will have conditions attached to it. Section 90 and Schedule 4 of the Act details the mandatory licence conditions that must be included, however there is provision for the Local Authority to add additional conditions that are either specific to the licence in question or that are locally agreed to address specific issues.

Sefton Council proposes to re-designate Additional (HMO) Licensing schemes to:

- Ensure that HMOs are managed properly
- Improve communities across the designated areas

- Reduce complaints of noise, rubbish, housing disrepair and other ASB related to HMOs
- Continue to improve the HMO private rented sector
- Ensure that the licence holder and manager are suitable
- Ensure that the standards of accommodation provide a safe and healthy environment such as having adequate fire precautions, gas and electrical safety, suitable room sizes and adequate provision of kitchens and bathrooms for the number of occupants
- Identify and deal with rogue landlords.

The licence requires that a HMO is maintained so that it doesn't have a negative impact on the local neighbourhood, and that reasonable steps are taken to deal with any ASB by the occupants.

Landlords and managing agents who own or manage a HMO located within the designated area have a legal obligation to hold a licence and ensure they comply with the conditions. Those not meeting the basic requirements may need to make improvements to the property to bring them up to standard. Landlords failing to do so may incur penalties and could be prosecuted.

Sefton's overall aim is to improve the quality of life for its residents within the area by improving management of tenant behaviour and the condition of Houses in Multiple Occupation under the Additional (HMO) Licensing scheme. The scheme will continue to benefit the wider community, with improvement of the image and desirability of the area, along with improvements in management and property conditions therefore, helping to improve the economic and social position of Sefton by encouraging further investment.

Additional (HMO) Licensing is a tool that provides the Local Authority with the ability to regulate the PRS through the imposition of licensing conditions. It provides the Local Authority with the opportunity to fund resources to tackle issues, in particular ASB. Sefton's ASB Officers will be able to support landlords with problem tenants which may have otherwise been left to escalate.

Scheme detail

The licensing process requires landlords to complete and submit a licence application form to Sefton Council and pay the relevant fee. Applications will be made online, with support available for landlords who do not have access to a computer.

Landlords will need to provide details about the property, including the number of letting rooms or flats, shared bathrooms, toilets and kitchens. They will also be required to supply information on safety measures in place, such as the type and installation of fire detection system.

Examples of evidence required include:

- Gas safety - Gas safety record (12 months)
- Energy Performance Certificate (where applicable)
- Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR), Fire Alarm and Emergency lighting certificates, where applicable
- Floor plan with room sizes and uses clearly shown

- Any proposed licence holder or manager of the property will be required to make a declaration that they are a “fit and proper person” [Fit and Proper Person]
- Current occupancy details (excluding names)

The requirement to provide this documentation is in line with our HMO Mandatory licensing scheme, although, additional evidence is required to enable the landlord to clearly demonstrate competent property management. The requirements are consistent with actions that a responsible landlord should be taking.

A licence will normally be granted for the duration of the scheme, although the Council may issue a shorter licence where there are concerns regarding the planning status of the HMO, management standards, compliance history or obstruction of the licensing process. Licence holders must comply with all licence conditions and legal requirements. Failure to do so may result in enforcement action, including civil penalties, prosecution, or a Rent Repayment Order (RRO) requiring repayment of up to 24 months' rent (effective from 1 May 2026) or housing benefit/universal credit received during the period of the offence. The Council will take a proportionate but robust approach to non-compliance.

Following expiry of a licence issued for less than 5 years, and if an Additional (HMO) Licensing scheme is still designated, a decision will be made on the standard of management of the property and the property relicensed accordingly for another year or remaining duration of the licensing scheme.

It is proposed that the licence is issued in accordance with the Proposed Licence Conditions detailed in Appendix 4

Licence Conditions

The focus of Additional (HMO) Licensing is to address the issues of poor property and tenancy management in the PRS and to ensure that landlords are reputable. Landlords will be required to meet the ‘fit and proper test’ [Fit and Proper Person]. Sefton will check that the management arrangements in place for the property are satisfactory. Landlords who are successful in obtaining a licence will have to comply with the conditions of the licence. These conditions ensure that the property is managed effectively. Landlords, who do not comply with their licence conditions, may find themselves prosecuted and fined. Licensing will introduce a consistent level of property management services among all private landlords in the proposed area.

A full set of proposed licence conditions can be found at **Appendix 4**

Chapter 4 - Review of current Selective Licensing Scheme

As at the 31st July 2026 the Council had issued 2998 Selective Licences. Prior to commencement of the scheme, we estimated that there would be in the region of 3225 privately rented properties to be licenced, by the end of the scheme we estimate the Council will have issued in region of 3611 Selective licences.

As at the 31st July 2026 the Council had issued 241 Additional (HMO) Licences. Prior to commencement of the scheme we estimated that there would be in the region of

240 Additional HMO properties to be licenced. By the end of the scheme, we estimate that the Council will have issued 299 Additional licences.

The scheme has been widely publicised, and officers within the Housing Standards Team have taken a proactive approach to identifying unlicensed properties. This has included undertaking street surveys across the designated licensing areas, reviewing information held within Council Tax and Housing Benefit records, conducting Land Registry searches, and analysing data from the Electoral Register. The Council has also utilised intelligence received from tenants, local residents and partner agencies, including Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, and other Council departments. These activities have assisted the Council in identifying potentially licensable properties, increasing compliance with licensing requirements, and ensuring that landlords meet their legal obligations.

Experience from the current Additional (HMO) Licensing Scheme has shown that **Section 257 HMOs** can be difficult to identify, assess and licence. These properties often have complex ownership arrangements involving multiple leaseholders and freeholders, making it unclear who is responsible for licensing compliance. Changes in ownership or occupancy can also affect whether a building falls within the legal definition of a Section 257 HMO. As a result, these properties require additional investigation, administration and monitoring by both landlords and the Council.

Progress on the outcomes of the scheme is set out in the following sections:

There are several areas where the introduction of the Selective and Additional Licensing schemes has made a positive impact to privately-rented sector residents, and their wider neighbourhoods. Some of these improvements are unmeasurable in the conventional monitoring sense. However, the statistics outlined below, identify comparable information outputs, and can be analysed to show trends to identify wider impacts of the housing licensing schemes in Sefton.

Housing Conditions

Housing Standards Service Requests

There are circumstances in which a significant number of properties in the private rented sector are in poor condition and are adversely affecting the character of the area and/or the health and safety of their occupants. The number of service requests from tenants living in privately rented homes recorded by the Housing Standards team on a range of issues; from poor housing conditions and disrepair to overcrowding can accurately identify local concentrations of poor property conditions by mapping each service request received.

Figure 4.1 below identifies the number and proportion of total (mappable[8]) housing standards service requests received by Sefton Council over a 3½ year period between March 2023 and August 2026. The results highlight that the rate of total service requests in each licensing area is significantly greater than the overall Sefton rate (10.8 requests per 1000 households). This evidence highlights that each of the licensing areas continue to be disproportionally affected by poorer housing stock and poor property conditions.

[8] The total number of service requests received by Sefton Housing Standards was 1422 from 1st March 2023 to 31st July 2026. Of these; 1414(99.44%) could be accurately matched (geocoded) to an address.

Whilst the number of complaints received within the Selective Licensing areas has started to decrease, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the reasons for this. However, there is evidence to suggest that the licensing schemes are having a positive impact on housing conditions across the Borough. In Bootle, the rate of Service Requests has decreased slightly from 40.7%[9] in March 2018 to 38.7% in July 2026. Whilst the reduction is modest, it indicates an improving trend and suggests that fewer tenants are requiring intervention from the Council in relation to housing conditions.

A key contributory factor is the proactive nature of the Selective and Additional Licensing Schemes. Through compliance inspections and the monitoring of electrical and gas safety certification, property hazards are being identified and remediated at an earlier stage. This preventative approach helps to improve housing standards and address issues before they become serious enough to generate tenant complaints.

The licensing schemes have also increased engagement with tenants and improved awareness of the support and reporting mechanisms available to them. Tenants may feel more confident raising concerns within the licensing framework, knowing licensed landlords are subject to regulation and monitoring. Furthermore, whilst concerns regarding retaliatory eviction remain a significant issue within the private rented sector, the licensing regime provides an additional level of oversight and protection that may encourage tenants to report issues that might otherwise be unreported.

Overall, the reduction in complaints should be viewed alongside the wider outcomes being achieved through the licensing schemes. The decrease in the Service Requests rate in Bootle provides some indication of improving conditions within the private rented sector. Whilst it is not possible to attribute this trend solely to licensing activity, the evidence suggests that the schemes are making a positive contribution to housing quality and tenant wellbeing. Continued monitoring of stock conditions, compliance outcomes and service demand will be necessary to fully assess and evidence the long-term impact of the Selective and Additional Licensing Schemes across the Borough.

[9] Business Case Selective & Additional (HMO) Licensing 2023 – 2028

FIGURE 4.1 Housing Standards Service Requests (1st March 2023 to 31st July 2026)

	Waterloo/Seaforth Additional HMO Licencing Area	Southport Additional Licencing Area	Bootle Selective Licencing Area	Total for Licencing Intervention Areas	Sefton Total
Total Housing Standards Service Requests	**108**	**213**	**547**	**868**	**1414**
Proportion of Total Housing Standards Service Requests (%)	**7.6%**	**15.1%**	**38.7%**	**61.4%**	**100.0%**
Service Requests rate per 1000 households*	**19.7**	**28.0**	**36.6**	**31.0**	**10.8**

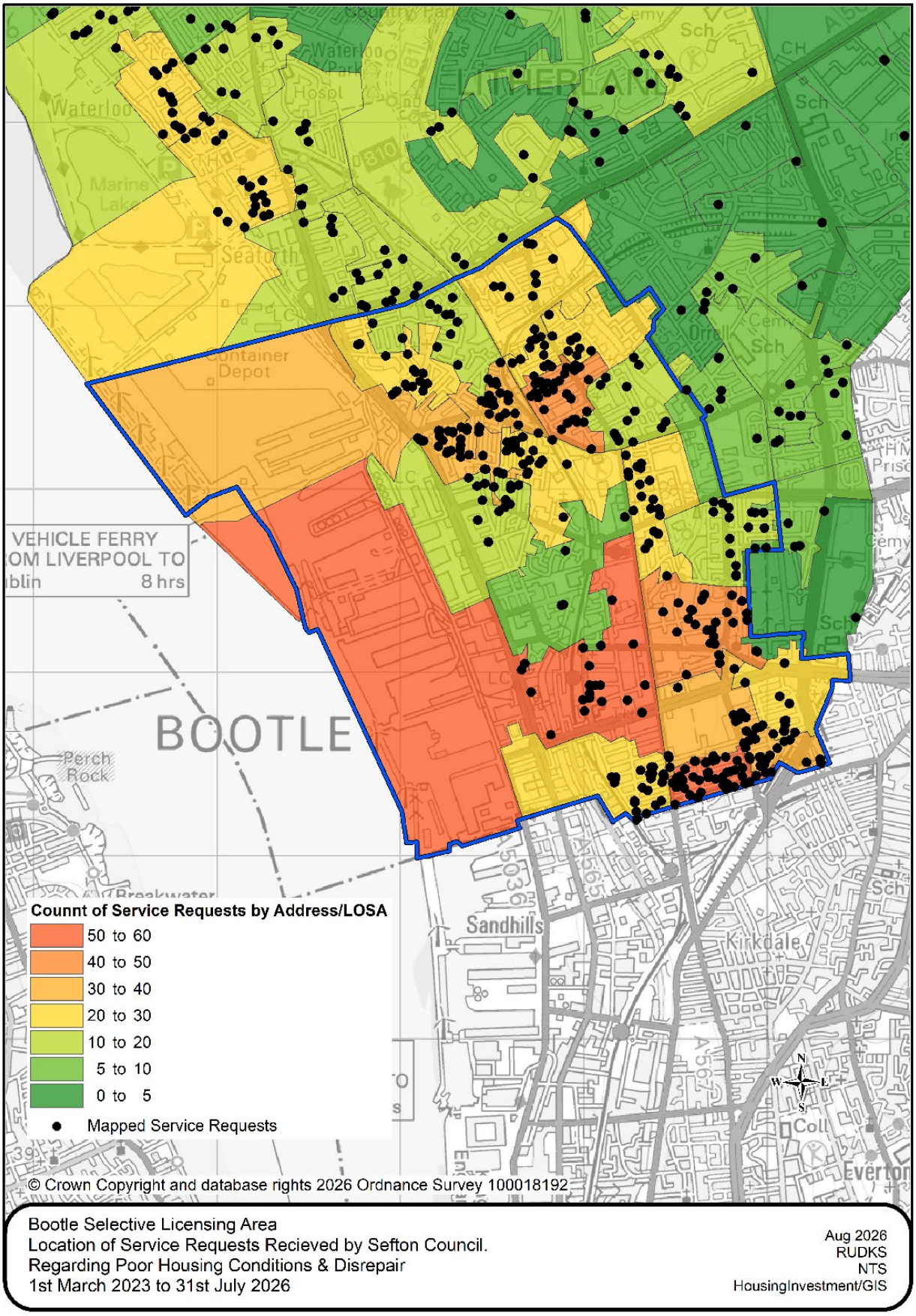
Source: Sefton Council – Flare

*Household Estimate based on 2024 Council Tax Stock Base

When assessing the geographic breakdown of the Housing Standards service requests with regards to poor property conditions and disrepair since the start of the housing licensing schemes (March 2023 to July 2026), the hotspot mapping of service request addresses below, highlight that the current Selective and Additional (HMO) licensing areas remain the main areas of housing disrepair and poor conditions. Therefore, the renewal of the licensing schemes in April 2028 should persist with the same neighbourhood boundaries and streets, to help continue to improve the quality of the private sector properties in these focused areas.

Figure 4.2 shows the number of all service requests per LSOA. The highest recorded number of serivce requests within one LSOA is 57 of which 38 service requests relate to one highrise block containing 168 appartments.

FIGURE 4.2 Bootle: Poor Property Conditions Service Requests



Poor Property Conditions: Homes in Multiple Occupation

Figure 4.3 below identifies the number and proportion of total (mappable[10]) housing standards service requests, relating to Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), received by Sefton Council over a 3 1/2-year period between March 2023 and July 2026. The results highlight that the rate of total HMO service requests in each of the additional (HMO) licensing areas (Waterloo and Southport) is significantly greater than the overall Sefton rate (1.77 requests per 1000 households). This evidence highlights that each of the licensing areas continue to be disproportionally affected by poorer property conditions regarding Homes in Multiple Occupation.

Over the 3.5-year period of the current Additional Licensing schemes, 232 service requests were received from HMO properties. 205 of those were from HMOs within the licensing areas equating to 88%. This provides evidence of poor property management across this sector and specifically within the proposed designated areas.

FIGURE 4.3 total number of HMO service requests received by Sefton Housing Standards

	Waterloo/Seaforth Additional HMO Licencing Area	Southport Additional Licencing Area	Bootle Selective Licencing Area	Total for Licencing Intervention Areas	Grand Total
Total Housing Standards Service Requests	36	121	48	205	232
Proportion of Total Housing Standards Service Requests (%)	15.5%	52.2%	20.7%	88.4%	100.0%
Service Requests rate per 1000 households*	6.58	15.89	3.21	7.32	1.77

Source: Sefton Council – Flare

*Household Estimate based on 2024 Council Tax Stock Base

[10] The total number of HMO service requests received by Sefton Housing Standards was 233 from 1st March 2023 to 31st July 2026. Of these; 232 (99.6%) could be accurately matched (geocoded) to an address.

FIGURE 4.4 Southport: Poor Property Conditions HMO Service Requests

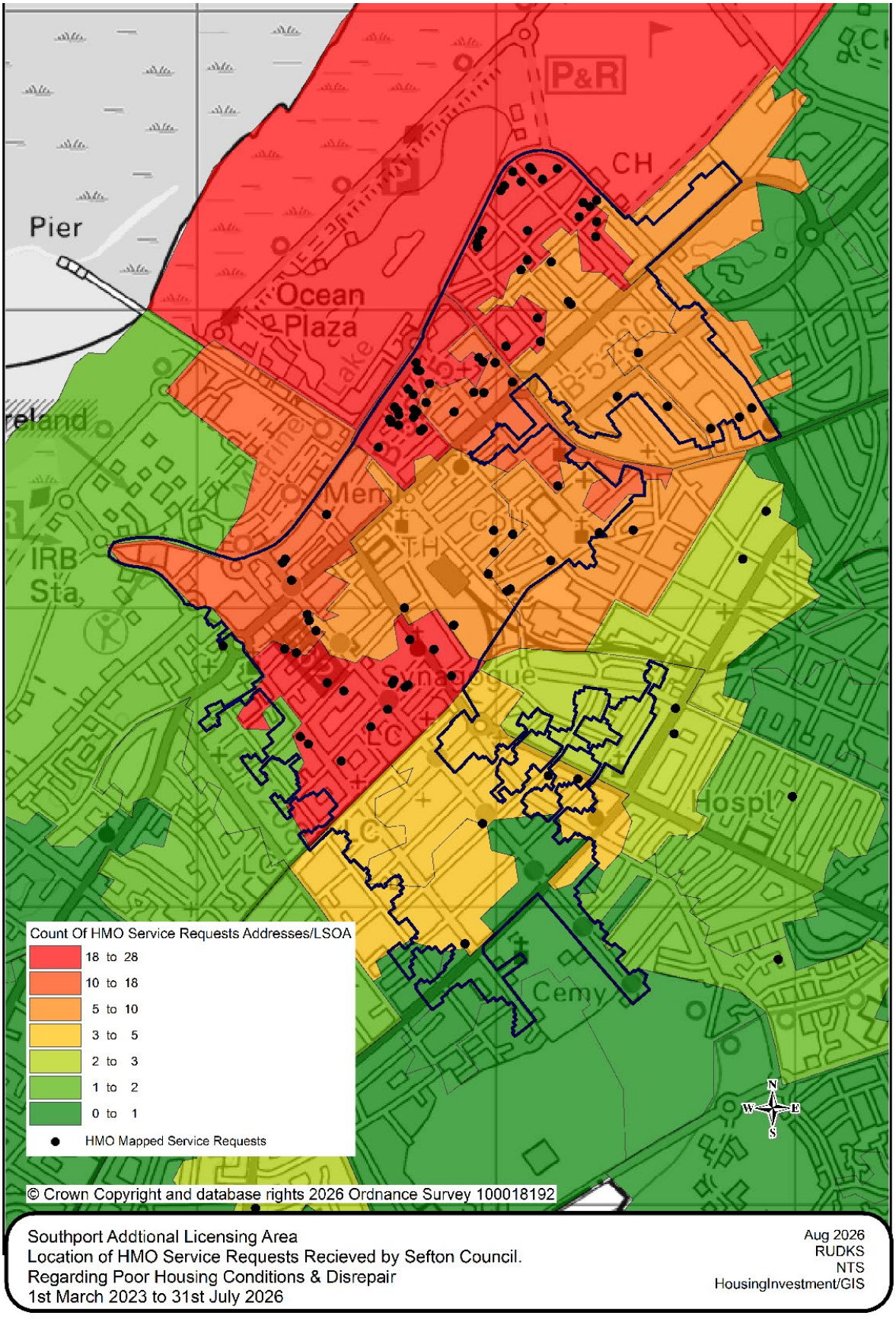
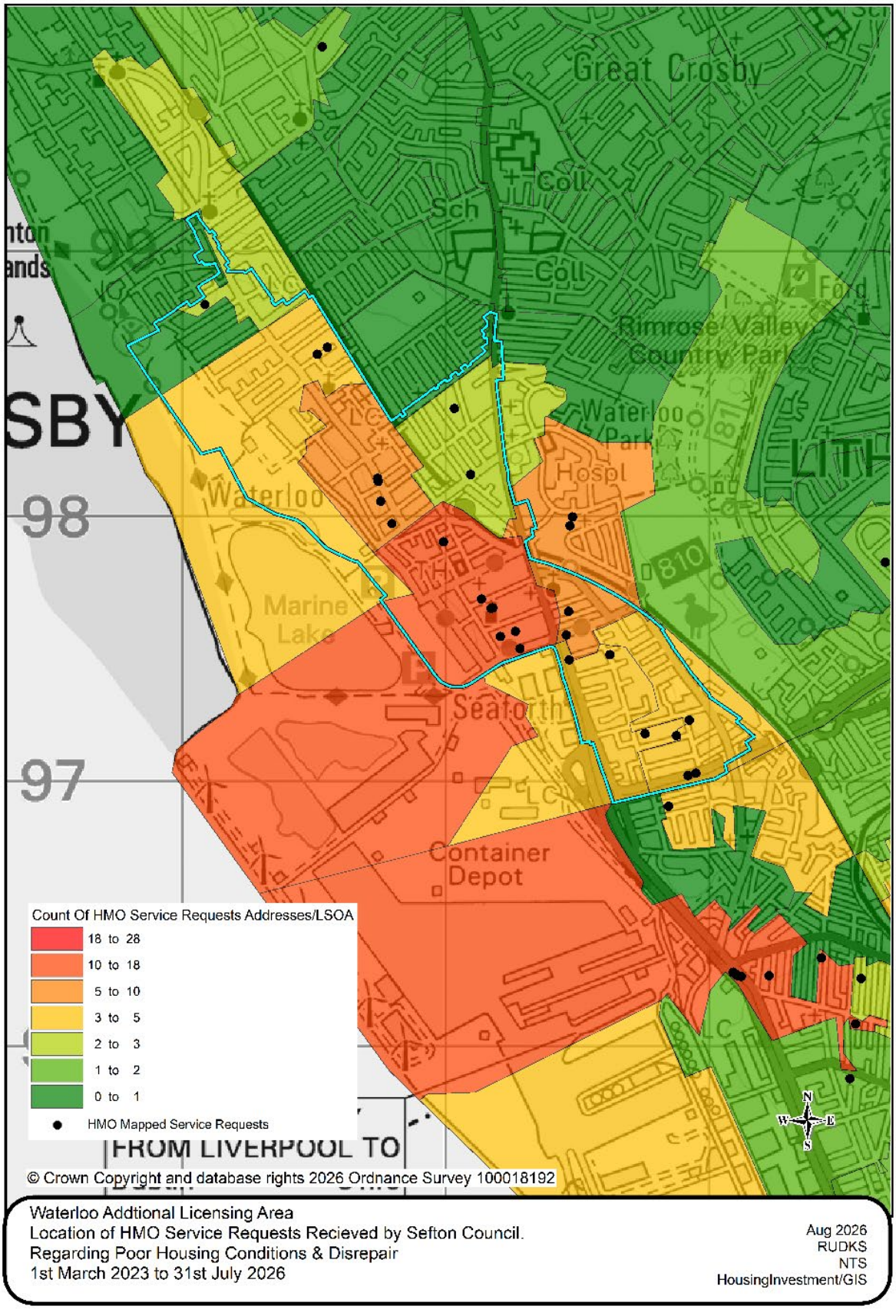


FIGURE 4.5 Waterloo/Seaforth: Poor Property Conditions HMO Service Requests



Poor property conditions are assessed under the Housing Act 2004 using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to carry out statistical based risk assessments on dwellings. It focuses on identifying and tackling the hazards that are most likely to be present in housing and most likely to impact on the health and wellbeing of the occupants. Its intention is to make homes healthier and safer to live in.

The system considers 21 separate hazards relating to:

- Dampness, excess cold/heat
- Pollutants e.g. asbestos, carbon monoxide, lead
- Lack of space, security or lighting, or excessive noise
- Poor hygiene, sanitation, water supply
- Accidents - falls, electric shocks, fires, burns, scalds
- Collisions, explosions, structural collapse

Each hazard is assessed separately, and if judged to be 'serious', with a 'high score', is deemed to be a **category 1 hazard.** All other hazards are called **category 2 hazards.**

The likelihood of an incident arising from the condition of the property and the likely harmful outcome are assessed. Local authorities have a statutory duty to take appropriate action if an officer discovers a category 1 hazard in a property.

To determine an area for Selective Licensing it is recommended that local housing authorities consider the following factors to help determine whether there are poor property conditions in their area:

- The age and visual appearance of properties in the area and that a high proportion of those properties are in the PRS
- Whether following a review of housing conditions under section 3(1) of the Act, the authority considers a significant number of properties in the PRS need to be inspected in order to determine whether any of those properties contain category 1 or 2 hazards. In this context “significant” means more than a small number, although it does not have to be a majority of the private rented stock in the sector. It would not be appropriate to make a scheme if only a few individual properties needed attention.

Without licensing the Team’s work would solely be a reactive service. Once a complaint is made to the Local Authority, a member of the Housing Standards Team will then undertake a HHSRS inspection to determine whether action needs to be taken. Whilst this approach does improve property conditions it is sporadic across the Borough and does not have a concentrated impact in one area. In addition, this power does not tackle property management standards. Through the Selective Licensing designation landlords can attend development days, which cover all aspects of property management including property condition. Through training, advice and support landlords will recognise what improvements need to be made to their properties reducing the need for action under the HHSRS.

Category 1 Hazards

The Private Sector Stock Condition modelling commissioned by Sefton and undertaken by Sustenic in Sept 2026 estimated that; 11760[11] of all dwellings in the private sector had a category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System Hazard[12]. This equates to 10% of all private sector properties in the Borough. As a proportion of all private houses with Cat 1 hazards is slightly worse than the national rate, equating to 8.6[13]%.

Since the last Stock Modelling exercise in 2018 the estimated % of dwellings in the private sector with a Cat 1 hazard has reduced from 12.4% to 10%, which is a welcome improvement but demonstrates that there is still progress to be made.

FIGURE 4.6 Estimates of the numbers and percentage of dwellings meeting the key indicator criteria assessed by the Housing Stock Models and Housing Stock Condition Database by tenure for Sefton.

Tenure		Owner Occupier		Private Rented		Social	
All Tenures		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
		89782		26428		18934	
HHSRS category 1 hazards	All hazards	8944	10%	3116	12%	1203	6%
	Excess cold	3750	4%	827	3%	146	1%
	Fall hazards	4240	5%	1483	6%	775	4%
Disrepair		7187	8%	4123	16%	1356	7%

(Source: Dwelling Level Stock Profiles-Private Sector Housing-SEFTON COUNCIL (SUSTENIC Sept 2026).

Focusing on the properties within the private sector stock the table shows the private rented stock has higher levels for all hazards, fall Hazards, disrepair, these are significantly higher in the PRS compared to other tenures.

Of the estimated 26428 dwellings in the Privately Rented Sector (PRS) 3116 have a Category 1 HHSRS hazard. This equates to 12% of properties within the PRS estimated to be suffering from these health and safety issues. However, since 2018 this estimate has dropped by 2%.

[11] Dwelling Level Stock Profiles-Private Sector Housing-SEFTON COUNCIL (SUSTENIC Sept 2026)

[12] The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assesses 29 housing hazards and the effect that each may have on the health and safety of current or future occupants of the property. If a hazard is a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety, this is known as a Category 1 hazard. If a hazard is less serious or less urgent, this is known as a Category 2 hazard.

[13] 2023-24_EHS_Headline_Report_Chapter_1_Housing_Quality_Annex_Tables_v2.ods

FIGURE 4.7 – Sub Regional Category 1 Hazards (HHSRS) – All Housing Stock

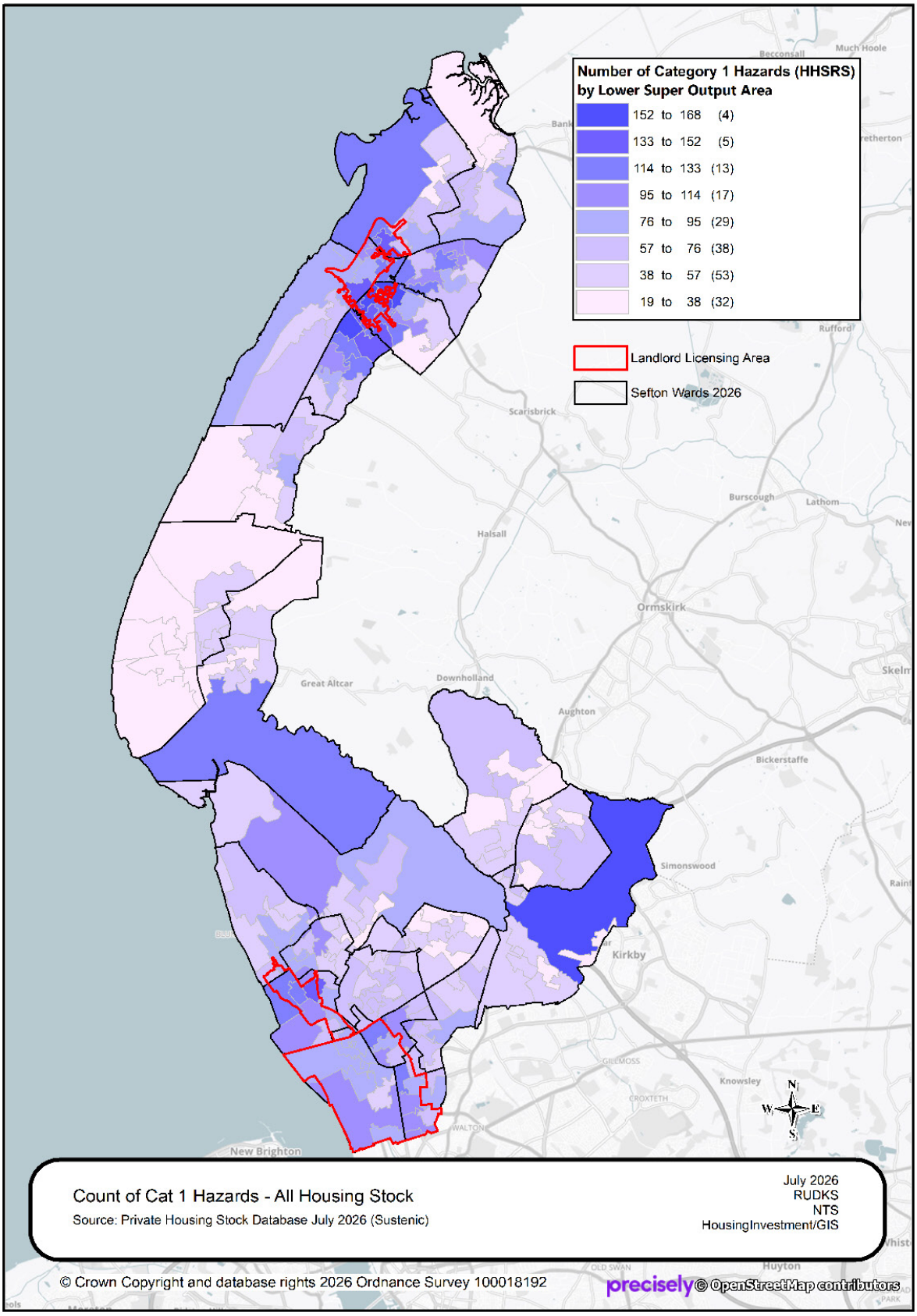
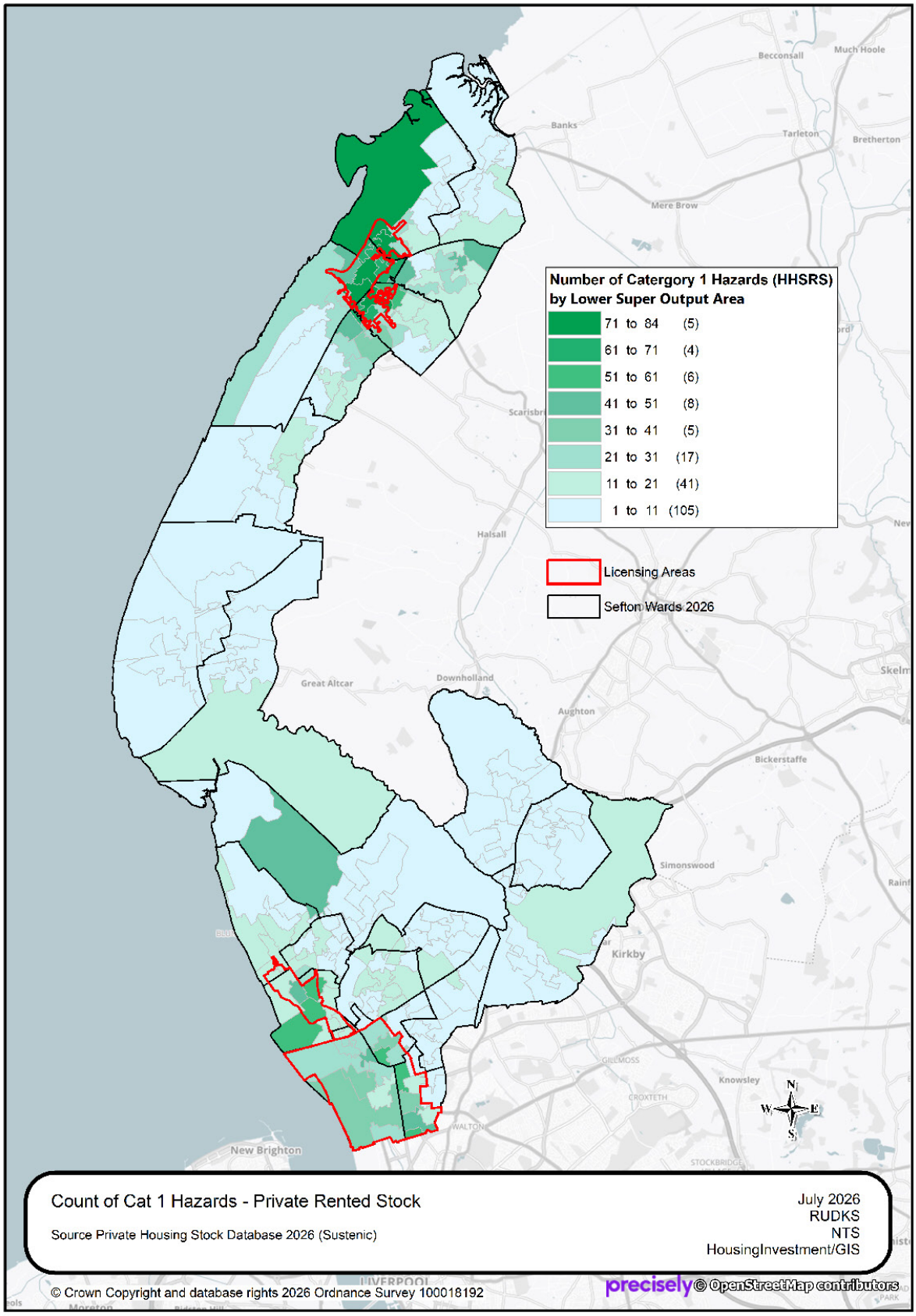


FIGURE 4.8 Sub Regional Category 1 Hazards (HHSRS) – Private Rented



During the current licensing schemes from March 2023 to the end of July 2026, 198 licensable properties have had serious Category 1 hazards removed. The total number of hazards removed from all licensable properties is 1518 and 379 of them being the most serious Category 1 hazards. The main hazards that have been removed from the properties are hazards relating to Fire Safety, Electrical Hazards, Damp & Mould, Excess cold and Falls between levels.

In the first 3 years of the schemes 811 compliance visits took place. Of those 811 inspections, 330 properties were non-compliant on first inspection, equating to 41%. However, following informal intervention by the Housing Standards Team, 97% of these properties became compliant. By the end of July 2026, of the 3570 licence applications that had been received, 782 of them were non-compliant at the time of application in that the properties did not have a Gas Safe report for the property, or an Electrical Condition Report where required. All licence holders of these properties were required to have these safety documents in place, thus identifying any issues with the gas or electrical installations and ensuring compliance.

To summarise, there is evidence to indicate that the licensing schemes are leading to improvements in housing conditions. Selective and Additional (HMO) licensing and the need to obtain a licence has helped Sefton Council identify high risk properties requiring intervention, often where tenants would not have risked complaining to their landlord. The application process has highlighted just how many properties do not have the minimum requirements such as a Gas and Electrical Safety Certificates with many not having any checks undertaken over many years. Without licensing, it is fair to conclude that most of these properties would remain without one, leaving tenants at serious risk.

We have provided further examples of poor conditions and management practices in a number of Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing case studies, which can be found at Appendix 5

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

In deciding whether an area suffers from ASB, a local housing authority should consider whether private sector landlords in the designated area are not effectively managing their properties so as to combat incidences of ASB caused by their tenants or people visiting their properties; and in particular the area suffers from ASB as a result of this failure or because that failure significantly contributes to that problem.

In considering whether the area is suffering from ASB which a landlord should address regard must be had as to whether the behaviour is being conducted within the curtilage of the rented property or in its' immediate vicinity and includes acts of (but not limited to):

- intimidation and harassment of tenants or neighbours
- noise rowdy and nuisance behaviour affecting persons living in or visiting
- animal related problems
- vehicle related nuisance
- anti-social drinking or prostitution
- illegal drug taking or dealing
- graffiti and fly posting
- and litter and waste within the curtilage of the property.

The scheme should state what measures will be taken to address the problems associated with ASB, for example by including conditions in licences requiring landlords to take action to deal with such behaviour, to ensure that properties are not let to persons with a known record of ASB and relating to the use of the property. It should also make clear how the measures taken in the scheme when combined with other specified measures will work together to combat the problems caused by ASB.

Please note: These Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) statistics are for the period April 2025 – March 2026. These dates are considered to be statistically comparable with the 2018 and the 2023 selective licencing business case data (data from Merseyside Police 2015, 2021 & 2025[14]).

The MHCLG state that: ***"The outcome of the selective licensing scheme should be a reduction in, or elimination, of anti-social behaviour (caused by tenants in the private sector) in the designated area".***

Overall ASB rates

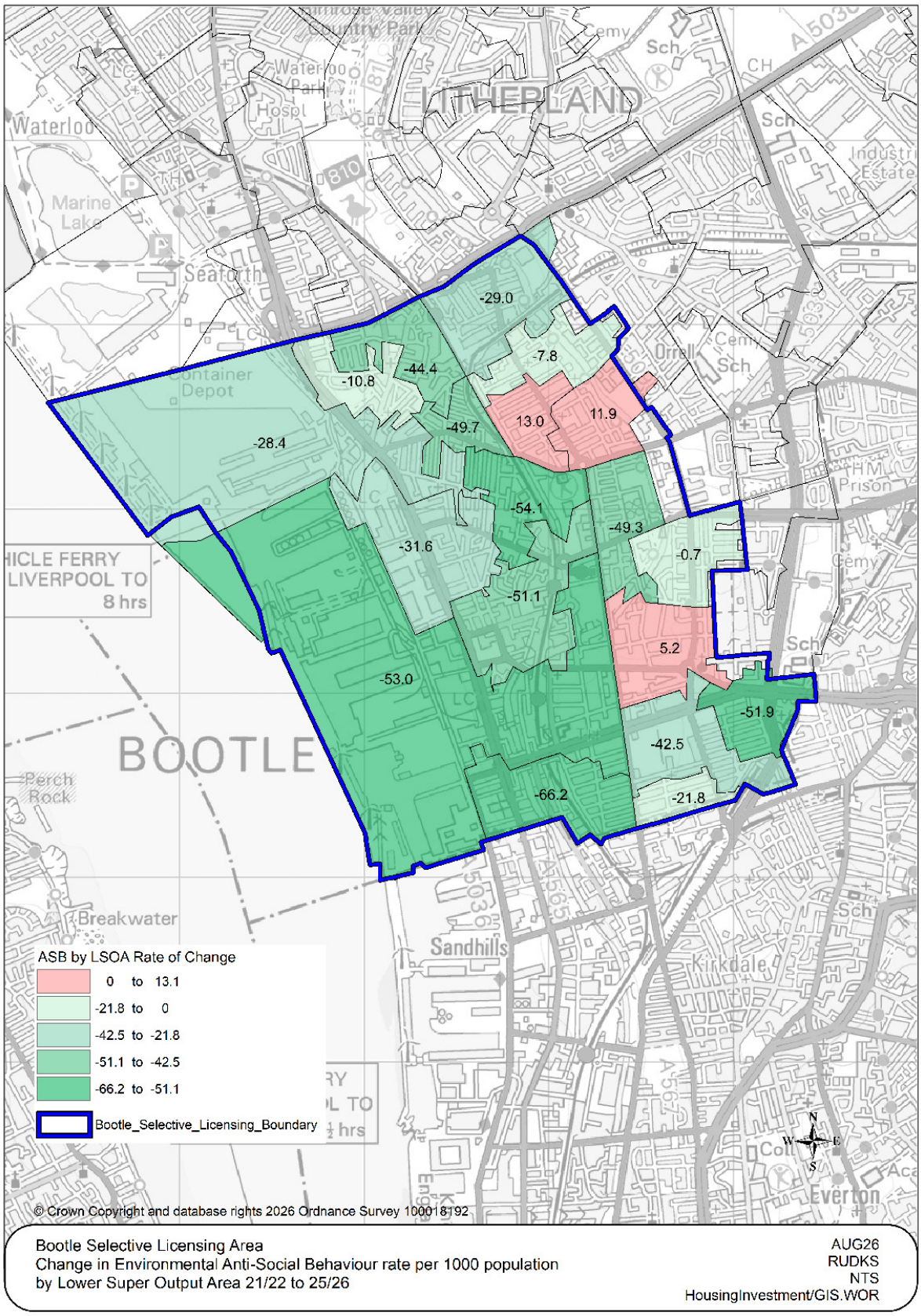
Since the scheme began in 2016 there has been a significant decline in the rate of reported anti-social behaviour per 1000 people across the selective licensing area. From 2015 to 2020 we saw the rate of ASB per 1000 people decrease by 53% across all LSOA in the scheme area. This downward trend has continued across most of the LSOAs in the scheme where the rate of ASB/1000 people declined by 23% from 2021 to 2026.

[14] Home | data.police.uk

FIGURE 4.9 Change in rates of ASB in Bootle SLA

LSOA Code	Ward Old	Ward Name (May 2026)	ASB 21/22 Rate Per 1000 people	ASB 25/26 Rate per 1000 people	Change in ASB Rate - 21/22 to 25/26
E01006961	Derby	Bootle East	25.5	17.5	-26.8%
E01006962	Derby	Bootle East	9.5	6.3	-30.8%
E01006963	Derby	Bootle East	15.1	3.4	-73.1%
E01006964	Derby	Bootle East	12.8	19.8	52.4%
E01006966	Derby	Bootle East	4.8	7.7	62.5%
E01006967	Derby	Bootle East	28.1	45.5	79.6%
E01007003	Linacre	Bootle West	19.4	3.0	-82.6%
E01007004	Linacre	Bootle West	24.7	2.7	-88.6%
E01007005	Linacre	Bootle West	30.3	5.8	-79.1%
E01007006	Linacre	Bootle West	40.5	15.9	-59.6%
E01007007	Linacre	Bootle West	42.1	24.6	-42.6%
E01007008	Linacre	Bootle West	20.9	15.5	-18.5%
E01007009	Linacre	Bootle West	40.4	26.1	-23.6%
E01007010	Linacre	Bootle West	9.0	4.1	-50.0%
E01007011	Linacre	Bootle West	20.2	14.3	-23.3%
E01007012	Litherland	Litherland	25.5	11.3	-51.4%
E01007013	Litherland	Litherland	13.4	13.6	10.0%
E01007016	Litherland	Litherland	34.1	27.9	-16.7%
E01007017	Litherland	Litherland	5.1	26.7	437.5%
Bootle Selective Licensing Area			22.1	15.8	-23.1%
Sefton			12.7	8.5	-31.8%

FIGURE 4.10 Change in ASB to Sefton Council from March 2020 to April 2026.



Environmental Anti-Social Behaviour

Environmental ASB helps to monitors people's perceptions and use or misuse of a local area. Physical settings and surroundings are known to impact positively or negatively on mood and sense of well-being. There can also be a perception that the quality of a particular environment can be undermined, causing those residents effected by that environment to feel undervalued or ignored. Public spaces change over time as a result of physical effects caused, for example, by building but the environment can also change as a result of the people using or misusing that space. For the purposes of this business case we have drawn upon the data collected by Sefton's Anti-Social Behviour service. This relates to calls made to the service to report environmental issues – this includes the following categories: -

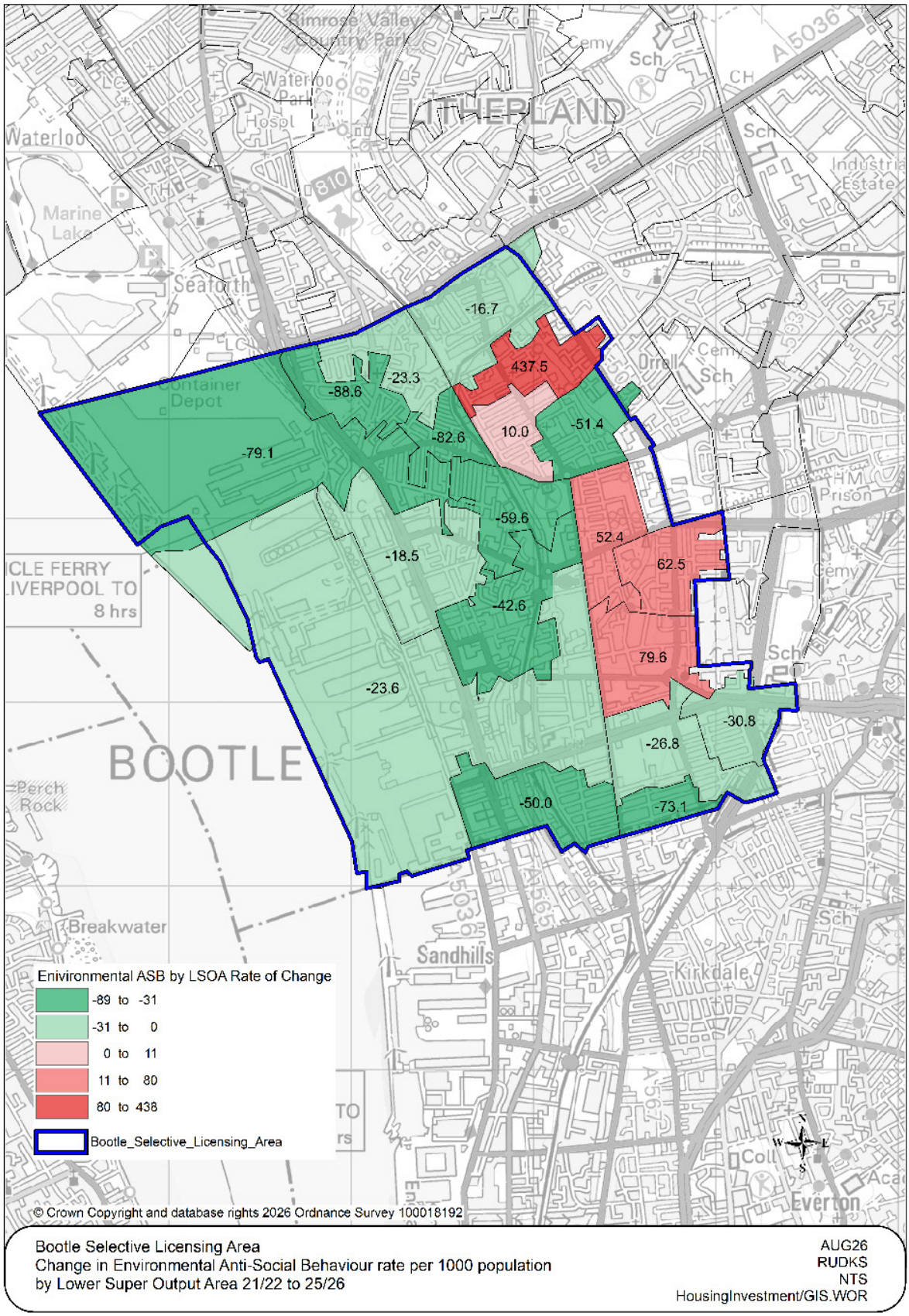
Abandoned Vehicle / Accumulation of Refuse / Dangerous Structures / Dangerous/Aggressive Dogs / Dog fouling / Filthy & verminous premises / Fly-Tipping / Graffiti / Grot Spots / Overgrown land/gardens / Rats / Rear Entries / Stray Dogs / Street Cleansing / Street Sweeping and Vacant & unsecure premises.

The rate of calls to the service over the previous 5 years indicate significant improvements within the Bootle selective licensing area. As with the overall ASB rates, these environmental improvements are again better than the overall improvements experienced throughout the Borough. The overall rate of calls to the service to report environmental ASB has reduced by a third **(-29.4%)** in Sefton (reducing from 30.6 to 21.1 incidents per 1000 people). Within the Bootle selective licensing area the overall rate of environmental ASB has reduced also by a third (**-32.3%),** however the number of incidents per 1000 people is three times greater than in Sefton (106.8 reducing to 67.4).

FIGURE 4.11 All calls for service made to Sefton MBC to report incidents of environmental antisocial behaviour.

LSOA_Code	Ward_Old	Ward_New	ENV 21/22 Rate per 1000 people	ENV 25/26 Rate per 1000 people	ENV Diff 21/22 to 25/26 Rate per 1000 People
E01006961	Derby	Bootle East	115.5	62.5	-42.5%
E01006962	Derby	Bootle East	118.9	54.8	-51.9%
E01006963	Derby	Bootle East	104.0	68.3	-21.8%
E01006964	Derby	Bootle East	85.6	44.0	-49.3%
E01006966	Derby	Bootle East	80.6	78.5	-0.7%
E01006967	Derby	Bootle East	65.9	62.5	5.2%
E01007003	Linacre	Bootle West	142.7	64.5	-49.7%
E01007004	Linacre	Bootle West	91.7	78.1	-10.8%
E01007005	Linacre	Bootle West	210.6	138.8	-28.4%
E01007006	Linacre	Bootle West	105.0	47.1	-54.1%
E01007007	Linacre	Bootle West	106.7	53.2	-51.1%
E01007008	Linacre	Bootle West	105.1	65.7	-31.6%
E01007009	Linacre	Bootle West	140.8	56.0	-53.0%
E01007010	Linacre	Bootle West	91.1	27.8	-66.2%
E01007011	Linacre	Bootle West	139.3	71.6	-44.4%
E01007012	Litherland	Litherland	109.8	112.4	11.9%
E01007013	Litherland	Litherland	61.7	64.2	13.0%
E01007016	Litherland	Litherland	105.9	73.7	-29.0%
E01007017	Litherland	Litherland	69.5	63.4	-7.3%
Bootle Selective Licensing Area			106.8	67.4	-32.3%
Sefton			30.6	21.1	-29.4%

FIGURE 4.12 Change in the number of calls to report environmental ASB to Sefton Council from March 2020 to April 2026.



PROJECT - Anti-Social Behaviour (Environmental) in POETS Streets Neighbourhood, Bootle, L20

Sefton Council and Registered Housing providers in the Poets Streets Area of Bootle have introduced a regular joint inspection and follow up routine focused on fly tipping and excess refuse outside properties, which is a long-standing concern in this area.

Licence holders have a duty, under the Anti-Social Behaviour Housing Licence conditions, to ensure properties are regularly monitored and to that the property does not cause a nuisance to neighbours or other residents.

The aim is to break the cycle of fly tipping and poor-quality environment in the area which will not come only from an enforcement approach. The Council and Registered Housing Providers are therefore keen to work with licence holders and stakeholders in the local area to enable this new joint management approach to make a positive impact, which is in the interests of everyone involved.

It is also clear that some residents will require support to deal with underlying issues and concerns which may make managing their tenancies as they should a challenge. The project welcomes referrals of tenants who may need support from agencies to assist with issues such as debt, physical and mental health and other social and economic issues that may cause them to struggle.

Anti-Social Behaviour Licensing Areas

A clear geographical overlap between ASB hotspot locations and the borough's existing housing licensing designations. The most significant concentrations of anti-social behaviour are evident within L20 (Bootle), L21 (Waterloo/Seaforth) and PR8 (Southport), which correspond with the current Selective Licensing and Additional (HMO) Licensing areas. These neighbourhoods also contain some of the highest concentrations of privately rented accommodation and HMOs within Sefton.

The concentration of ASB within these geographical areas has a direct impact upon tenants, neighbouring residents and local communities. Poorly managed private rented properties and HMOs can contribute to complaints relating to noise nuisance, environmental ASB, criminal activity, substance misuse, neighbour disputes and community disorder.

Recent partnership activity undertaken by Sefton's Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Merseyside Police and other partners has focused on tackling community concerns through coordinated enforcement, engagement and reassurance activity. These interventions have contributed to reductions in reported ASB and improvements in community confidence.

The statistics on ASB, as set out above, do indicate that the selective licensing scheme in Bootle is fulfilling the conditions as set out by the MHCLG. However, although the overall ASB rate and specifically the environmental ASB rates are falling in the Bootle Selective Licensing area. The ASB data still highlights that this area still has some way to go in terms of reducing the impacts of all ASB to a rate that is similar or equal to the overall Borough rates.

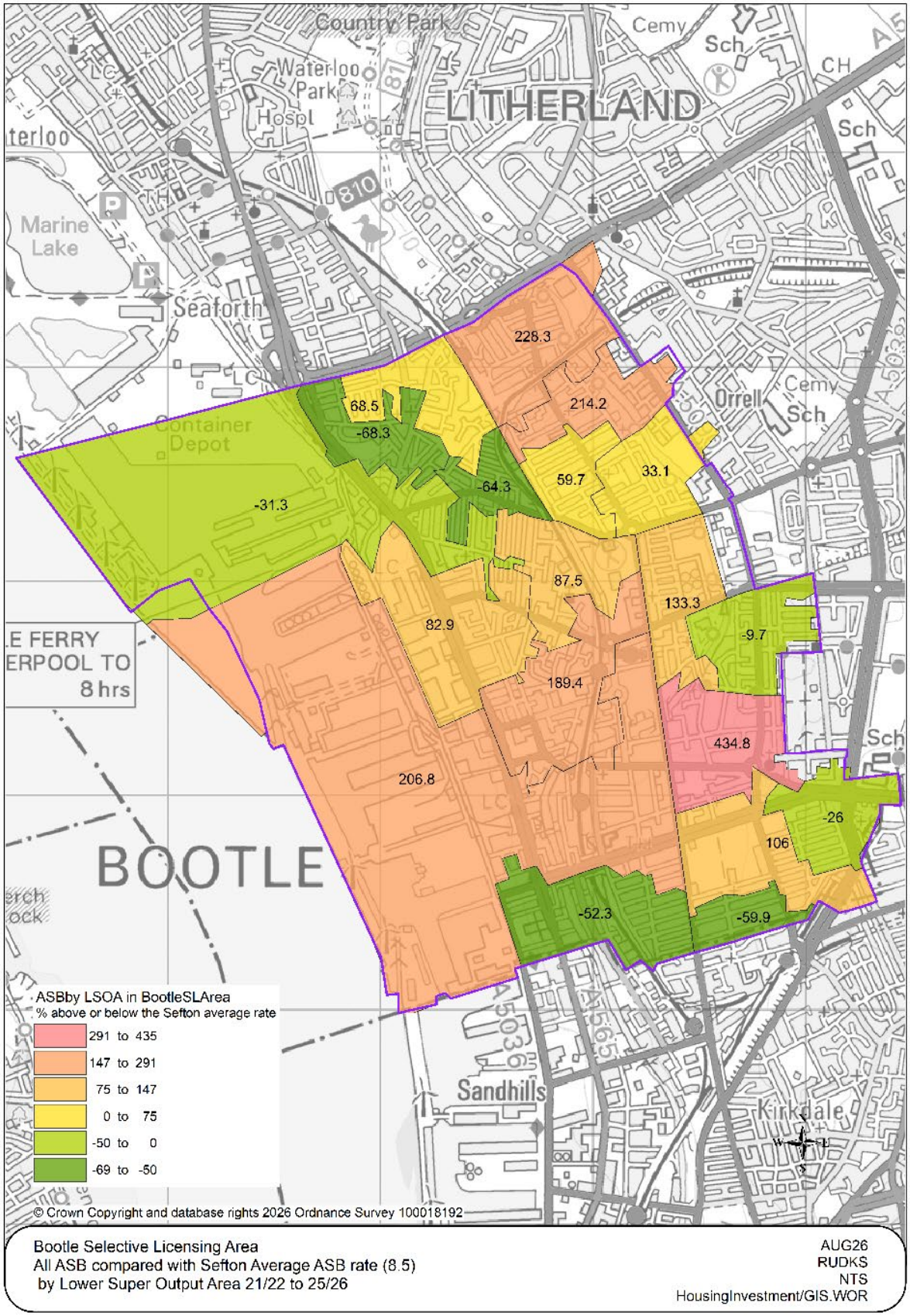
FIGURE 4.13 Rate per 1000 population for ASB and Envi ASB in Bootle SLA (2025/2026)

	Rate per 1000 Population - SEFTON	Rate per 1000 Population – BOOTLE SL area	Difference (rate per 1000 population)
All ASB	8.5	15.8	7.3
Environmental ASB	21.1	67.4	46.3

The map below identifies that there are a number of areas that have overall ASB rates twice the Sefton average. Only one Super Output Area (out of 19) has an ASB rate below the Sefton average.

Therefore, there is a strong argument presented, regarding the continuation of a selective licensing scheme in Bootle. This will help to continue to narrow the gap and improve the quality of the privately rented sector, and ultimately, improve the lives of all residents within the scheme's area.

FIGURE 4.14 – Map showing rates of ASB in Bootle SLA compared to borough average



High Levels of Deprivation

In deciding whether the authority considers the areas to be suffering from high levels of deprivation the authority should consider the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2025, provided by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in comparison to other similar neighbourhoods in the area or within the region.

This data measures overall multiple deprivation experienced by persons living in geographical areas at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) levels. Each LSOA in England is ranked according to its level of deprivation relative to that of other LSOAs.

All the LSOAs in the Bootle Selective Licensing area are ranked within the most deprived quintile (20%) nationally. Within this Selective Licensing boundary there are areas suffering from severe deprivation, four are ranked within the most deprived 1% nationally and nine are ranked within the most deprived 5%. Therefore, this Selective Licensing area can be considered as suffering from extremely high levels of deprivation.

Figure 4.15 below shows the ranking of deprivation across the electoral wards within the proposed Selective Licensing area. If we compare the IMD rank in 2019 to 2025 we see that although the 19 LSOAs that make up the SL area are still all within the top 20% deprived nationally, there has been improvement in ranking across 5 of the 19 LOSAs, indicating the positive impact of the SL scheme in this area.

FIGURE 4.15 Index of Multiple Deprivation Rank in Bootle SLA[15]

LSOA Code	Ward Name (2018)	Ward Name (2026)	IMD National Rank 2025	IMD National Percentile 2019	IMD National Percentile 2025
E01007003	Linacre	Bootle West	174	1	1
E01007006	Linacre	Bootle West	231	1	1
E01007007	Linacre	Bootle West	233	1	1
E01007008	Linacre	Bootle West	193	1	1
E01006963	Derby	Bootle East	646	1	5
E01006964	Derby	Bootle East	1184	5	5
E01006967	Derby	Bootle East	1031	5	5
E01007004	Linacre	Bootle West	920	5	5
E01007005	Linacre	Bootle West	399	1	5
E01007009	Linacre	Bootle West	800	5	5
E01007010	Linacre	Bootle West	1312	5	5
E01007011	Linacre	Bootle West	342	1	5
E01007013	Litherland	Litherland	409	5	5
E01006961	Derby	Bootle East	1962	5	10
E01007016	Litherland	Litherland	3083	10	10
E01007017	Litherland	Litherland	2039	10	10
E01006962	Derby	Bootle East	4935	20	20
E01006966	Derby	Bootle East	4527	20	20
E01007012	Litherland	Litherland	3798	10	20

[15] English indices of deprivation 2025 - GOV.UK

The map below clearly shows the scale of deprivation across the proposed designated area, where all 19 LSOAs are within the top 20% nationally.

FIGURE 4.16 Map of deprivation across Bootle SLA

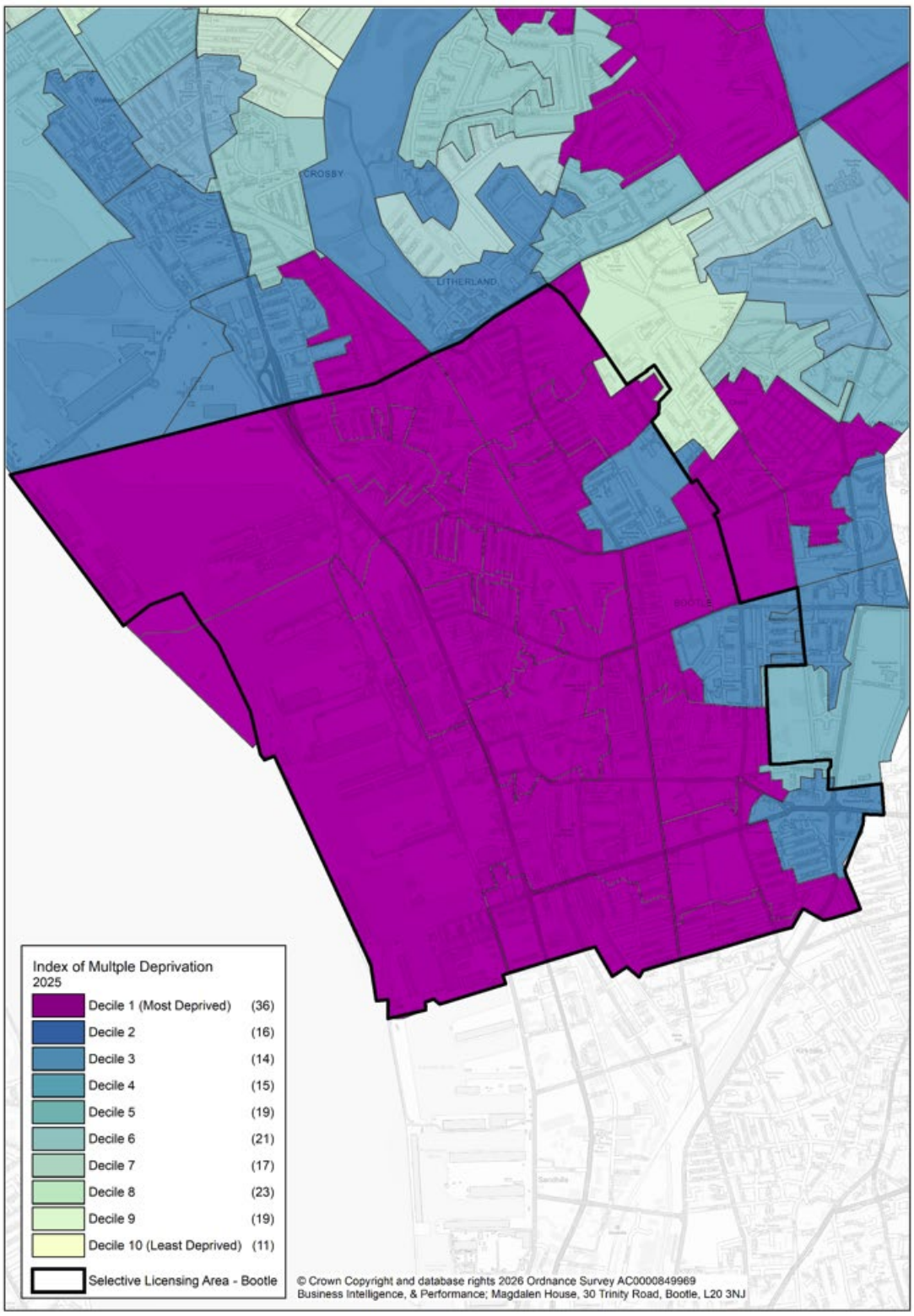


FIGURE 4.17 – estimate of poor housing conditions by tenure.

Tenure		Owner Occupier		Private Rented		Social	
All Tenures		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
		89782		26428		18934	
Fuel Poor Households (LILEE[16])		3972	4%	5394	20%	3274	17%
Likeliness of a Low-income households	High	1827	2%	19774	75%	18934	100%
	High-Medium	8657	10%	5366	20%	0	0%
	Medium	4005	4%	1044	4%	0	0%
	Medium-Low	29164	32%	244	1%	0	0%
	Low	46129	51%	0	0%	0	0%
Non-Decent Homes		18267	20%	8086	31%	2662	14%

Source; Private Dwelling Level Stock Profiles (Sustenic 2026)

Fuel Poverty

Based on the Sub Regional Fuel Poverty data[17] 10% of households in Sefton are fuel poor. This data also reports the levels of fuel poor households in the North West at 10% of households, therefore the levels of fuel poverty in Sefton are the same as the national and regional proportions.

The Sub Regional Fuel Poverty data does not separate the private sector from the total stock. This indicator therefore includes social rented dwellings.

The table above shows that fuel poor households in Sefton's PRS are estimated to be at 20% this is slightly higher than the national average for the PRS 19[18]%.

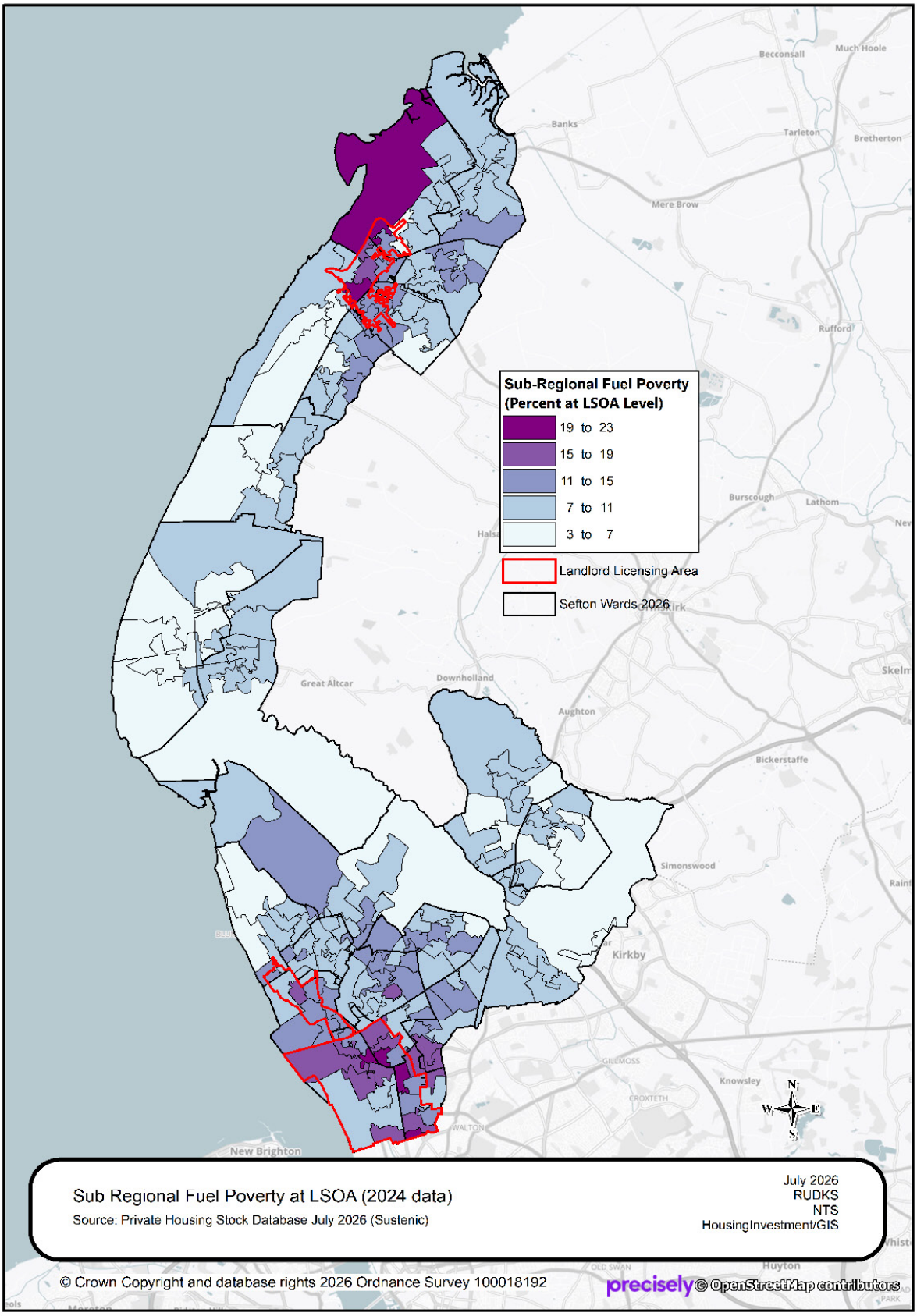
Figure 4.18 shows that fuel poor households are more likely to be found in the licensing areas.

[16] Fuel Poverty Strategy for England

[17] Sub-regional fuel poverty in England, 2026 report (2024 data) (accessible webpage) - GOV.UK

[18] Fuel poverty detailed tables 2026 (2024 data) - GOV.UK

FIGURE 4.18 Sub Regional Fuel Poverty at LSOA (2024 data)



Low income

The Indices of Deprivation income score rate for Sefton (2025) is 25% this is similar to the national average of 23%. However, the rates for Bootle East (44%) and Bootle West Wards (59%), are significantly higher than Sefton and National rates.

Looking more closely at low income by tenure Figure 4.17 indicates the likelihood of low-income households are much higher in the private rented sector (75%) % compared to 2% in the owner-occupied sector.

This estimation has been modelled on proportion of households for a series of indicator within each tenure, dwelling type and Index of Deprivation in the EHS 2023 were applied to Stock Profiles in Sefton[19]. The results for Sefton are banded and provide an indication of where the high to low concentration of low income private sector households may be across the authority - 'Low' being areas where households are least likely to be in receipt of a means tested benefit and 'High' being areas where households are most likely to be in receipt of a means tested benefit in Sefton.

Decent Homes[20]

Local authorities have a statutory duty under the Housing Act 2004 to keep the condition of housing in their area under review and to take action where Category 1 or 2 hazards are identified, and this duty sits alongside their broader responsibilities for tackling fuel poverty and meet Decent Homes Standard (DHS). The DHS has applied to the social rented sector since 2001 but has never been a statutory requirement in the private rented sector. The Renters' Rights Act 2025 changes this, providing the legal basis to extend a reformed DHS to privately rented homes for the first time. Following consultation in 2025, government has confirmed its intention to bring the reformed standard into force in the private rented sector in 2035, with enforcement by local authorities. A home meets the standard if it is free from the most serious health and safety hazards, is in a reasonable state of repair, has reasonably modern facilities and services, and provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

In 2026 an estimated 23% percentage of private sector dwellings in Sefton fail the Decent Homes standard in Sefton compared to England (16%) and the North West (20%). Within the PRS 31% of dwellings in Sefton would fail the decent homes standard.

Defining Proposed Areas for Selective Licensing

The Local Authority is satisfied that the area proposed for a Selective Licensing designation meets three of the six legal tests set out in the Housing Act 2004. The designation is proposed based on deprivation, poor property conditions and ASB. Only one test needs to be proved to make a designation lawful. A designation bases on high levels of migration, low housing demand and crime is not proposed.

The Local Authority considered data from a wide range of sources before coming to this conclusion by using local and national data collected at Lower Super Output Area Level (LSOA's) to identify areas of concern relating to any of the above conditions.

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[19] Dwelling Level Stock Profiles–Private Sector Housing-SEFTON COUNCIL (Sustenic Sept 2026)

[20] A Decent Home: Definition and guidance for implementation June 2006 – Update

Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's) are statistical boundaries that do not rely on streets or wards to mark their boundaries and this data is deemed as more relevant to determine such designations.

In carrying out this process, there also needs to be consideration of the impact of licensing may have on surrounding areas. Selective Licensing may, depending on the nature of the housing, rental values and property prices, result in a displacement of either irresponsible landlords or problem tenants. The area boundaries should consider this aspect.

The Selective Licensing area proposed is Bootle (see map and street names at Appendix 1). Data within this business plan proves that this area meets the above test.

The area proposed (Bootle) suffers from:

Deprivation

- Of the 19 LSOAs in the Bootle Selective Licensing area 16 are within the most deprived quintile (top 10%). Sefton nationally is in the top 10% of most deprived boroughs.
- The Indices of Deprivation 2025 income score rate in Bootle SL area range from 44% to 59% and are significantly higher than Sefton and National rates.
- Contains the highest rate of PRS properties across the Borough at approximately 24.3%
- Suffers from low level educational achievement with low skill and low paid occupations
- Highest rate of lone parents and singles across the Borough
- 8% of people aged 16 and over in Bootle have no qualifications, compared to a 19.7% for the whole borough

Selective Licensing has helped to privately rented properties and had provided an opportunity to develop better relationships between the Local Authority and landlords. By working together there can be benefits for both landlords and tenants. If more households can be helped out of poverty, the prosperity of the area generally will improve making it a more attractive area to live, which in turn should improve the popularity of housing in this area.

Property Conditions

- Housing stock consists of predominantly Victorian terraced properties (47.9% compared to the National average of 23.3% in 2021. (ONS)
- Majority of properties are within Council Tax Band 'A' (80%) far higher than the National average of 24% or Sefton at 30%
- Highest rate of housing disrepair complaints
- Levels of non-decent dwellings in the private sector is in Sefton is estimated to be 23%[21] in Bootle East and Bootle West is estimated to be 28% & 26% respectively.
- The highest levels of fuel poverty are found in Bootle

[21] Dwelling Level Stock Profiles–Private Sector Housing-SEFTON COUNCIL (Sustenic Sept 2026)

Selective Licensing provides additional powers to help the Local Authority inspect and tackle poorly managed privately rented property. As around 24.3% (2021 ONS) of the accommodation in Bootle is in the private rented sector (national average 19%, English Housing survey 2023), improved management standards in this sector should contribute to an overall improvement in living conditions in the area, ultimately leading to a better quality of life for its residents.

ASB

- Significant problem with ASB with all areas of Bootle being above Sefton's average
- When analysed, ASB in the proposed selective licensing area in Bootle is standardised per 1,000 population the rate is 15.8, this is almost double the Sefton ASB rate (8.5).

Selective licensing gives the local authority and landlords additional powers in dealing with those tenants that choose to cause ASB.

Overall, Selective Licensing aims to improve premises conditions including the security of homes, as well as their management and occupation, and contribute to the community they are in. It will aid in protecting the safety and welfare of tenants, provide confidence in the rented sector, and put clear standards in place for the good of all. It will be more conducive to good landlords but provide an environment that is less opportunistic and attractive for poor and criminal landlords.

Therefore, having reviewed the above data in the proposed area, Sefton Council is of the opinion that the legal test for re-designating an area for Selective Licensing has been met.

Chapter 5 - Review of current Additional Licensing Schemes

Waterloo/Seaforth

The designated area of Waterloo/Seaforth, also incorporates parts of Seaforth, located in the South of the Borough, the area contains a number of large properties of which a large number have been converted over time and now come under a prescribed definition of HMO.

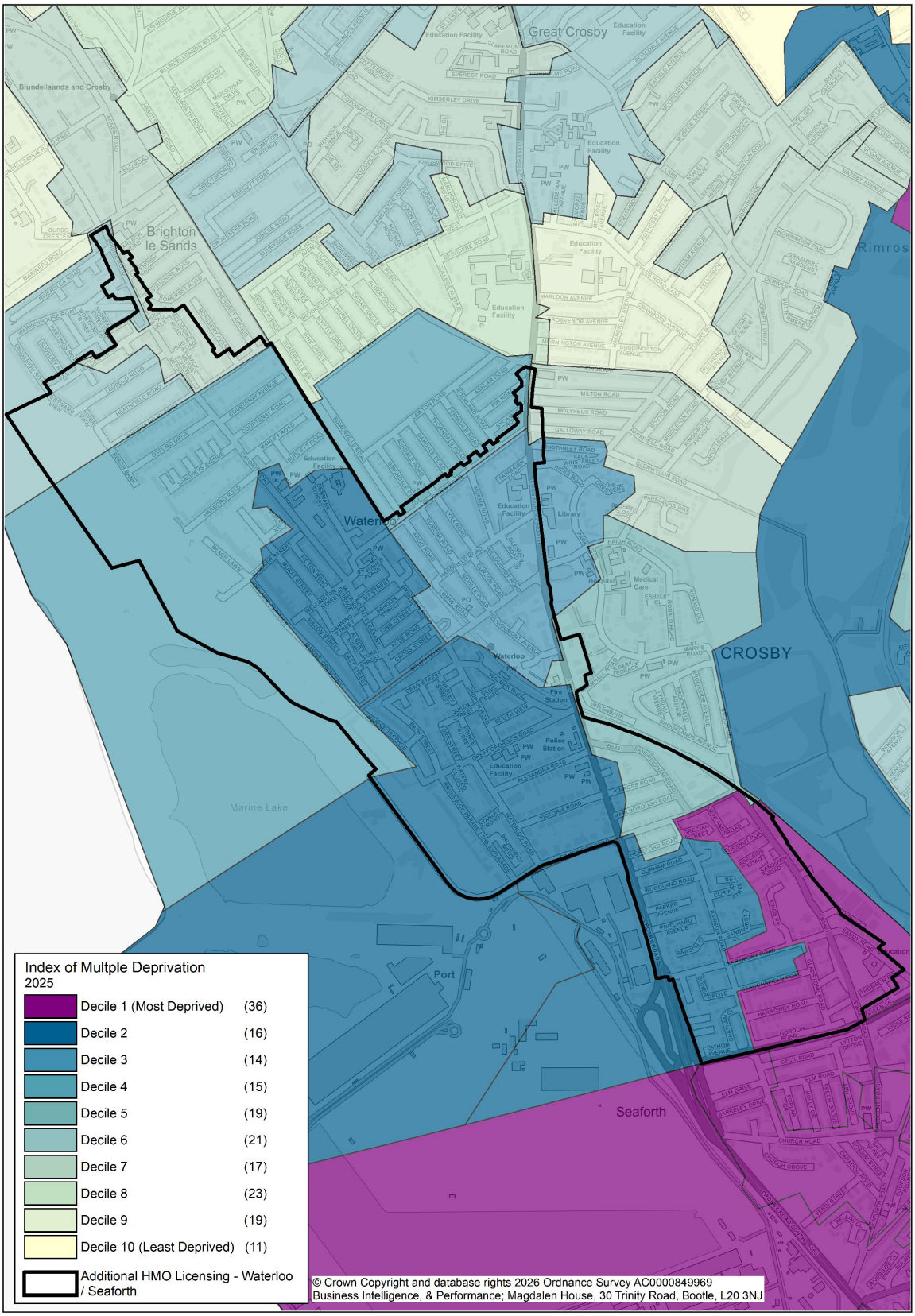
Deprivation (IMD 2025)

One LSOA within the Waterloo/Seaforth Additional (HMO) licensing area is ranked within the most deprived 10% nationally with a further three areas ranked with the most deprived quartile. There are two areas (in Blundellsands) ranked above the 50th percentile for overall deprivation.

FIGURE 5.1 Indices of deprivation in Waterloo Selective Licencing Area

LSOA Code	Ward Name (2018)	Ward Name (2026)	IMD National Ranking (where 1 = most deprived and 32,844 = Least deprived	Proportional IMD Ranking Where < 1% = most deprived and 100% = least deprived
E01006941	Blundellsands	Blundellsands	22,959	70
E01006942	Blundellsands	Blundellsands	17,795	60
E01006952	Church	Waterloo	816	5
E01006953	Church	Waterloo	4,551	20
E01006954	Church	Waterloo	12,332	40
E01006956	Church	Waterloo	7,402	30
E01006957	Church	Waterloo	4,018	20
E01006958	Church	Waterloo	5,149	20
E01006959	Church	Waterloo	15,109	50

FIGURE 5.2 Map showing areas of deprivation within Waterloo ALA



Anti-Social Behaviour (April 2025 – March 2026) – Waterloo/Seaforth

The overall rate of ASB within the area covered by the Waterloo/Seaforth Additional HMO Licencing area is 8.7 incidents per 1000 population. This ASB rate is similar to Sefton ASB averages. However, again there are significant differences in ASB reporting rates within the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the proposed additional (HMO) licensing area. These ASB incident rates range from 1.8 times greater than the Sefton average in central Waterloo to two times lower in areas near Blundellsands to the north of the Waterloo/Seaforth Additional HMO Licencing

FIGURE 5.3 Rate of ASB in Waterloo ALA

LSOA Code	Ward Name (2018)	Ward Name (2026	All ASB rate Per 1000 People
E01006941	Blundellsands	Blundellsands	4.6
E01006942	Blundellsands	Blundellsands	4.1
E01006952	Church	Waterloo	9.6
E01006953	Church	Waterloo	5.4
E01006954	Church	Waterloo	16.0
E01006956	Church	Waterloo	13.5
E01006957	Church	Waterloo	12.5
E01006958	Church	Waterloo	6.0
E01006959	Church	Waterloo	5.2
Waterloo/Seaforth Additional Licensing area			8.7
Sefton			8.5

Source: LG Inform

Crime – (April 2025 – March 2026) Waterloo/Seaforth

The overall rate of all crime within the area covered by the Waterloo/Seaforth Additional HMO Licencing area is 84.0 incidents per 1000 population. This recorded overall crime rate is 11%) higher than the Sefton average. Again, there are large differences in crime rates throughout the proposed additional (HMO) licensing area in Waterloo and Seaforth with almost half of LSOAs having Crime rates in excess of the Borough & national averages.

FIGURE 5.4 Rate of crime across Waterloo ALA

LSOA Code	All Crime rate Per 1000 People	Burglary rate	Criminal Damage & Arson rate	Drugs rate	Robbery rate	Theft rate	Violence & Sexual offences rate
E01006941	29.9	2.6	3.3	2.6	0.0	1.3	15.6
E01006942	36.7	0.7	4.1	2.0	0.0	0.7	19.7
E01006952	110.2	1.5	11.8	5.9	0.7	8.9	67.3
E01006953	110.4	2.0	15.0	4.8	0.0	8.86	64.7
E01006954	58.9	2.6	3.2	4.5	1.3	4.5	30.1
E01006956	125.08	3.1	9.8	6.7	1.2	9.2	62.5
E01006957	127.2	7.7	7.7	7.7	1.8	11.3	61.2
E01006958	83.89	2.7	4.0	7.4	0.7	3.4	43.6
E01006959	69.2	3.9	9.1	6.5	0.0	2.6	34.0
Waterloo/ Seaforth Additional Licensing Area	84.0	5.0	10.4	9.4	0.6	5.7	44.3
Sefton	75.7	3.1	7.5	5.4	0.7	5.0	35.8

Source: Police UK April 2025 – March 2026

Southport

Southport located in the North of the Borough is predominately a tourist town. Many properties have been converted over time from guest house usage into properties under a prescribed definition of HMO. Southport was a prosperous and popular resort, however, over recent years with the economic downturn has a declining image, and with increased incidents of ASB and Crime being a particular concern for its residents.

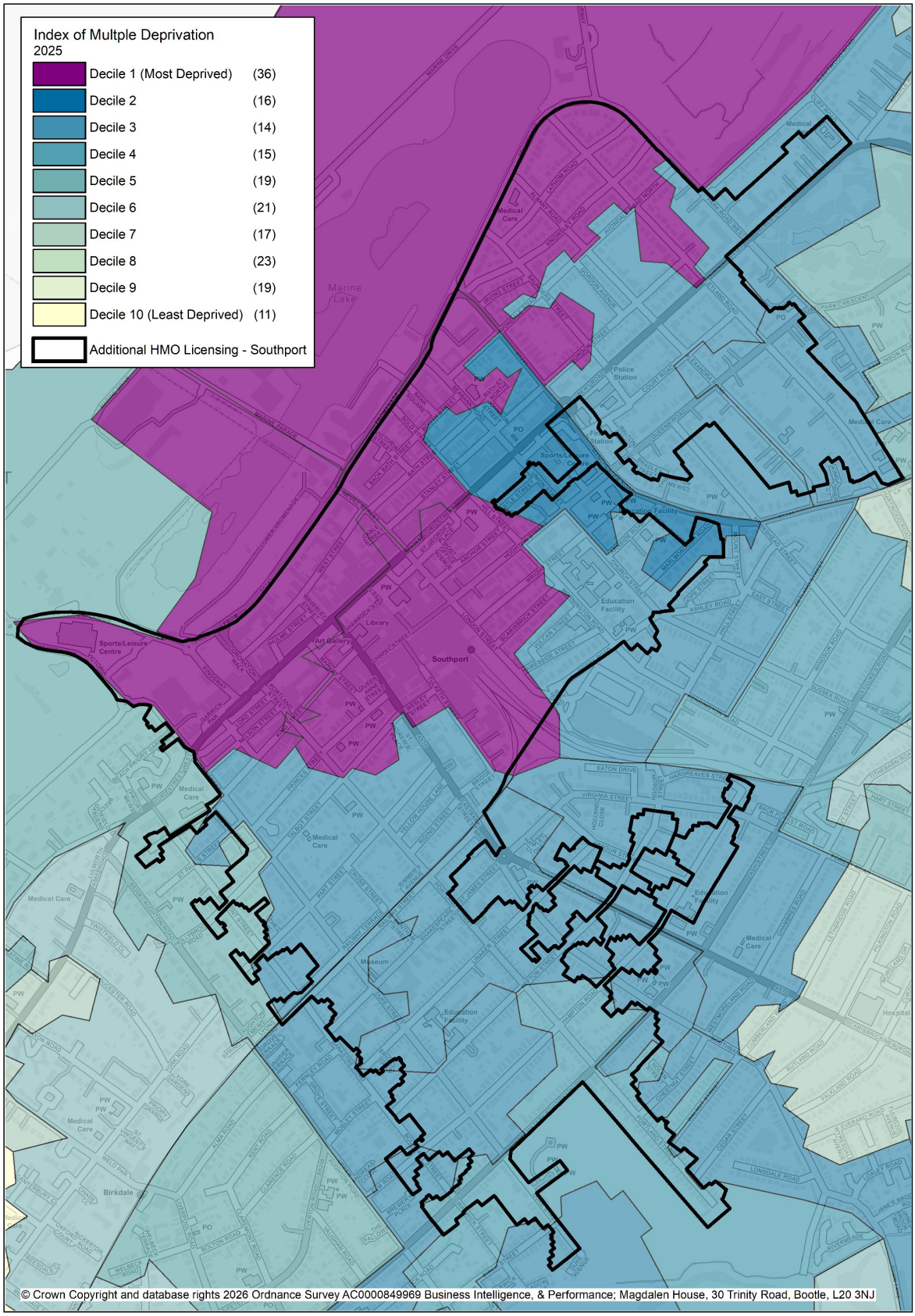
Deprivation (IMD 2025)

Analysing the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2025; two LSOAs within the Southport Additional (HMO) licensing area are ranked within the most deprived 10% nationally, with a further area ranked with the most deprived quartile (25%). No area within the proposed Additional (HMO) licensing area is ranked above the 40th percentile. Therefore, this area can be considered as suffering from high levels of deprivation.

FIGURE 5.5 Indices of Deprivation across Southport ALA

LSOA Code	IMD National Ranking (where 1 = most deprived and 32,844 = Least deprived	Proportional IMD Ranking Where < 1% = most deprived and 100% = least deprived
E01006944	7,718	30
E01006945	8,106	30
E01006950	2,378	10
E01033797	10,602	40
E01033798	8,159	30
E01006969	7,274	30
E01006970	7,967	30
E01006994	7,175	30
E01006996	8,664	30
E01006997	10,602	40
E01006998	8,159	30
E01033094	1,663	5
E01033097	4,119	20

FIGURE 5.6 indices of deprivation across Southport ALA



Anti-Social Behaviour – (April 2025 – March 2026) Southport

The overall rate of ASB within the area covered by the Southport Additional (HMO) Licencing area is **15.8** incidents per 1000 population. There are significant differences in ASB reporting rates within the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) within this licensing area. These ASB incident rates range from over seven times greater in one LSOA, to two times lower in six LSOAs. Figure 5.7 highlights the type of ASB across the individual LSOAs.

FIGURE 5.7 Rate of ASB withing Southport ALA

LSOA Code	All ASB rate Per 1000 People
E01006944	5.4
E01006945	7.8
E01006950	8.6
E01033797	46.8
E01033798	105.6
E01006969	4.6
E01006970	5.2
E01006994	3.5
E01006996	6.3
E01006997	9.5
E01006998	3.2
E01033094	18.8
E01033097	24.4
Southport Additional HMO Licensing Area	15.8
Sefton	8.5

Source: LG Inform

Crime – (April 2025 – March 2026) Southport

The overall rate of all crime within the area covered by the Waterloo/Seaforth Additional HMO Licencing area is **169.8** incidents per 1000 population. This recorded overall crime rate is almost 2.25 times (124%) higher than the Sefton average and is also greater than the English average crime rate. Again, there are large differences in crime rates throughout the proposed Additional (HMO) Licensing area in Southport with the vast majority of LSOAs having Crime rates in excess of the Borough & national averages.

FIGURE 5.8 Crime rate within Southport ALA

LSOA Code	All Crime rate Per 1000 People	Burglary rate	Criminal Damage & Arson rate	Drugs rate	Robbery rate	Theft rate	Violence & Sexual offences rate
E01006944	82.8	0.5	9.7	8.6	0.5	3.2	46.7
E01006945	113.8	1.7	7.3	10.7	1.7	7.3	60.0
E01006950	98.5	0.6	7.3	22.0	0.0	2.4	42.8
E01033797	529.8	10.2	32.4	68.1	7.7	49.4	225.7
E01033798	851.2	15.0	45.8	75.7	15.0	50.2	229.8
E01006969	170.5	2.6	11.8	11.1	0.7	13.7	64.7
E01006970	87.5	0.0	4.7	6.1	0.9	3.3	42.6
E01006994	82.2	2.9	9.3	4.1	1.2	5.8	35.0
E01006996	59.6	0.5	8.4	6.9	0.0	4.2	24.8
E01006997	90.6	0.7	8.9	3.4	0.7	6.1	42.2
E01006998	42.2	2.6	1.3	5.1	0.0	1.9	21.7
E01033094	163.0	4.7	11.8	23.5	1.6	11.0	75.2
E01033097	199.7	6.3	14.2	21.2	3.9	19.7	92.8
Southport Additional HMO Licensing Area	169.8	3.1	11.8	17.5	2.1	11.5	68.3
Sefton	75.7	2.1	6.6	5.7	0.8	5.0	35.8

Defining Proposed Areas for Additional licensing

An Additional (HMO) Licensing designation may be made "if a Local Authority considers that a significant proportion of HMOs of a defined description, in either a designated area or across the whole of the Borough are being managed insufficiently enough to give rise to **one or more** particular problems either for those occupying the property or for members of the public."

Evidence of poor management practices can be evidenced through issues that arise within the property such as poor conditions or within the local community including ASB. Over the 3.5-year period as shown in Figure 4.3, 232 service requests were received from HMO properties 205 of those within the licensing areas equating to 88.4% [Housing Standards Service Request]. Therefore, this provides evidence of poor property management across this sector and specifically within the proposed designated areas.

Parts of Waterloo/Seaforth and central Southport have high levels of deprivation, being within the worst 10% most deprived areas nationally. Both areas also have above the national average of flats/maisonettes within the PRS [Tenure Profile] and have a significant stock of larger style properties that in recent years have been prone to conversion, to either bedsits or self-contained flats. The highest level of empty properties (over 24 months) are located in central Southport (Oct 2024). Hence there is a strong correlation between these issues and the location of the PRS.

The number of service requests received by the Council regarding property conditions within Southport and Waterloo/Seaforth are just over twice the rate of the Sefton average (24.5 service requests per 1000 households compared to the Borough average of 10.8 service requests per 1000 households). This highlights, both areas as having poorer housing conditions, therefore, poor management practice.

Overall, Additional (HMO) Licensing can provide additional powers to help the Local Authority tackle poorly managed privately rented property. Re-designating the Additional (HMO) Licensing areas will continue to build upon improvements to the management standards in this sector, improve living conditions and ultimately lead to a better quality of life for residents. It will help the areas to be more conducive to good landlords but provide an environment that is less opportunistic and attractive for poor and rogue landlords.

Therefore, having reviewed the data across the proposed areas, Sefton Council is of the opinion that the legal test for re-designation of the areas for Additional (HMO) Licensing have been met.

Chapter 6 - Sefton's demographic and economic profile

The following data provides and overview of the Borough's statistical profile which supports the proposed redesignations of the licensing schemes.

Sefton has an estimated population of approximately 286,281 (2024)[22]. After several decades of population decline, Sefton's population has remained stable since 2011 showing a slight population growth of 2% (2011-2021). This rate of growth has been far lower than the rest of the UK, which has shown estimated population growth rates of 6.6% over the same period[23].

Age Profile

Sefton's population profile differs significantly from the Merseyside, North West and the rest of the UK. Sefton has a much older demographic make-up, with a much larger proportion of older people, both those aged 65-84 and those aged 85 and over[24].

FIGURE 6.1 Age Profile comparison

	Proportion of Population aged 0-14	Proportion of Population aged 15-44	Proportion of Population aged 45-64	Proportion of Population aged 65-84	Proportion of Population aged 85+
Sefton	**15.8%**	**34.0%**	**26.5%**	**20.2%**	**3.5%**
Merseyside (Met County)	16.5%	39.6%	24.5%	16.9%	2.5%
North West	17.4%	39.0%	24.8%	16.4%	2.4%
United Kingdom	17.2%	39.2%	25.0%	16.2%	2.5%

Population Projections[25]

The latest (2022 based) Population Projections compiled by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) suggest moderate population growth in the Borough over the next 25 years. It is projected that the population will increase by 26,399 by 2047 or 9.4%. The highest projected growth will be in the over 65s age group, by around 16,254 (24.7%), while the over 85 age group is projected to increase by around 7,099 (73.3%) by 2047. The number of adults of working age is projected to increase by 13,271, or 7.9%. These 2022-based population show an increase in the number of adults of working age

[22] Source: ONS Population estimates - local authority based by five year age band

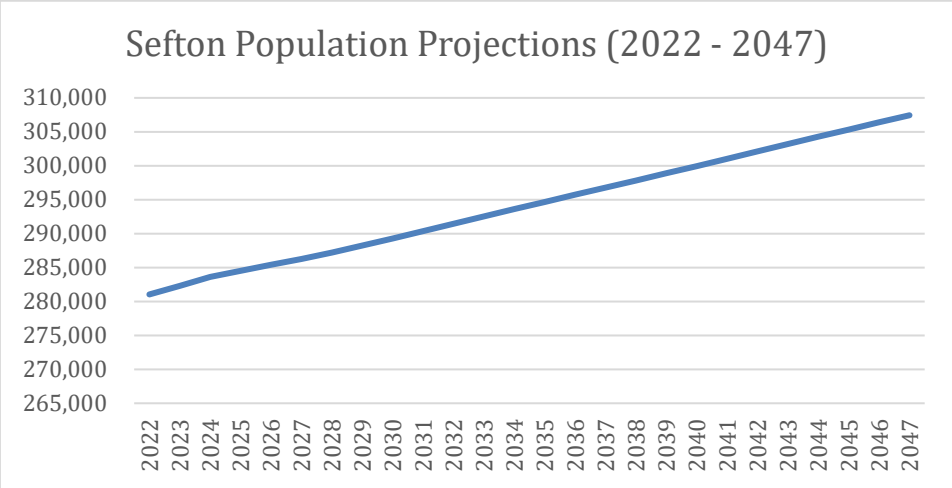
[23] Source: ONS Population estimates - local authority based by five year age band

[24] Source: ONS Population estimates - local authority based by five year age band

[25] Source: ONS Population projections - local authority based by single year of age

since, potentially leading to a higher demand for privately rented properties throughout Sefton, over the next 25 years. It is anticipated that the highest proportions of those over 65 will continue to live in the northern parts of the Borough including Formby and especially Southport.

FIGURE 6.2 ONS Population projections - local authority based by single year of age[26]



[26] Population projections for local authorities by single year of age and sex, England - Office for National Statistics

Age Profile

Figure 6.3 (below) provides a profile of Sefton by age and sub-market area. Overall, the Borough has a comparatively smaller proportion of younger people; 31.1% of its residents are under 29 years of age compared with 36.3% across the North West and 35.8% across England. The authority has a greater proportion of older people; 31.3% of the Sefton population are over 60, compared to 25.2% across the North West and 24.8% across England as a whole. The pattern of age distribution differs within each sub-market area and reflects the difference within each distinct community. Bootle and Netherton have a higher than average population in the 'Under 15' age group at 19.1% and 18.0% respectively and smaller 75+ populations, at just 6.0% in Bootle. Formby, Southport and Aintree however have significantly older populations than the average for the North West and England. 18.2% of Formby's population are 75+ for example, compared to just over 9% in both the North West and England.

FIGURE 6.3 Census Population Profile by Sub-Area

Population Proportions (%)						
Area	**Under 15**	**15 -29**	**30 - 44**	**45 - 59**	**60 - 74**	**75+**
Southport	14.4	14.4	17.7	19.4	20.1	**14.1**
Formby	14.5	13.2	14.3	19.5	20.4	**18.2**
Maghull/Aintree	15.2	14.5	18.2	18.4	20.3	**13.4**
Crosby	15.1	14.4	19.3	19.2	20.6	**11.5**
Bootle	19.1	18.6	22.5	18.2	15.6	**6.0**
Netherton	18.0	17.0	20.0	19.0	17.8	**8.2**
Sefton	15.8	15.3	18.8	19.0	19.3	**12.0**
North West	17.4	18.9	20.2	18.5	16.0	**9.2**
England	**17.2**	**18.6**	**20.5**	**18.9**	**15.5**	**9.3**

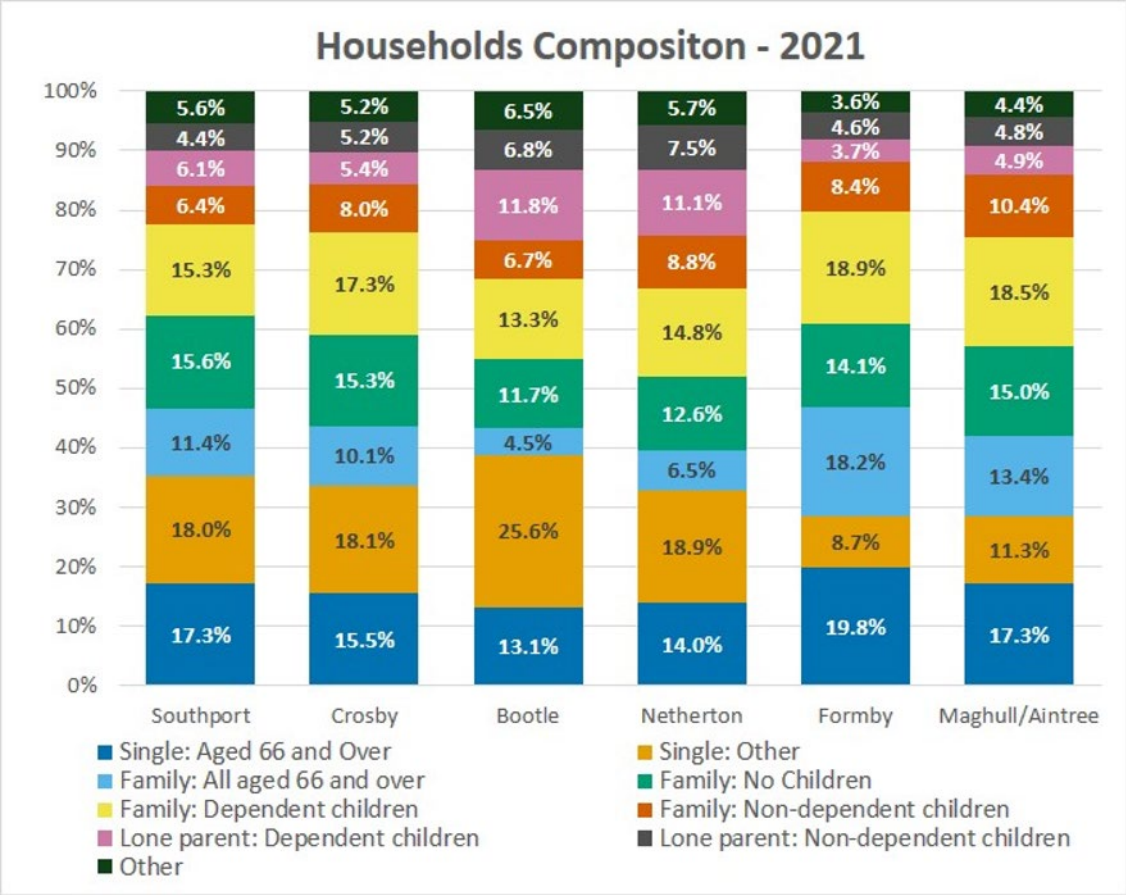
Source: Census 2021

Household Structure

Figure 6.4 shows the household structure in the study area according to the Census in 2021 (again to allow comparisons across areas), compared with the regional and national profiles. Sefton has a higher proportion of pensioners in only households and relatively few households with dependent children. In total, 27% of households in Sefton are entirely composed of people aged 65 and over; this compares with 22% both regionally and nationally.

For sub-areas there are also some notable differences with Formby in particular, having a high proportion of pensioner only households (38%) and Bootle and Netherton having a high proportion of lone parents. Bootle also has a very high proportion of single non-pensioner households – these make up 26% of all household types in this sub-area and compares with 18% of the whole of Sefton and just 9% in Formby.

FIGURE 6.4 Household Composition



(Source: Census 2021)

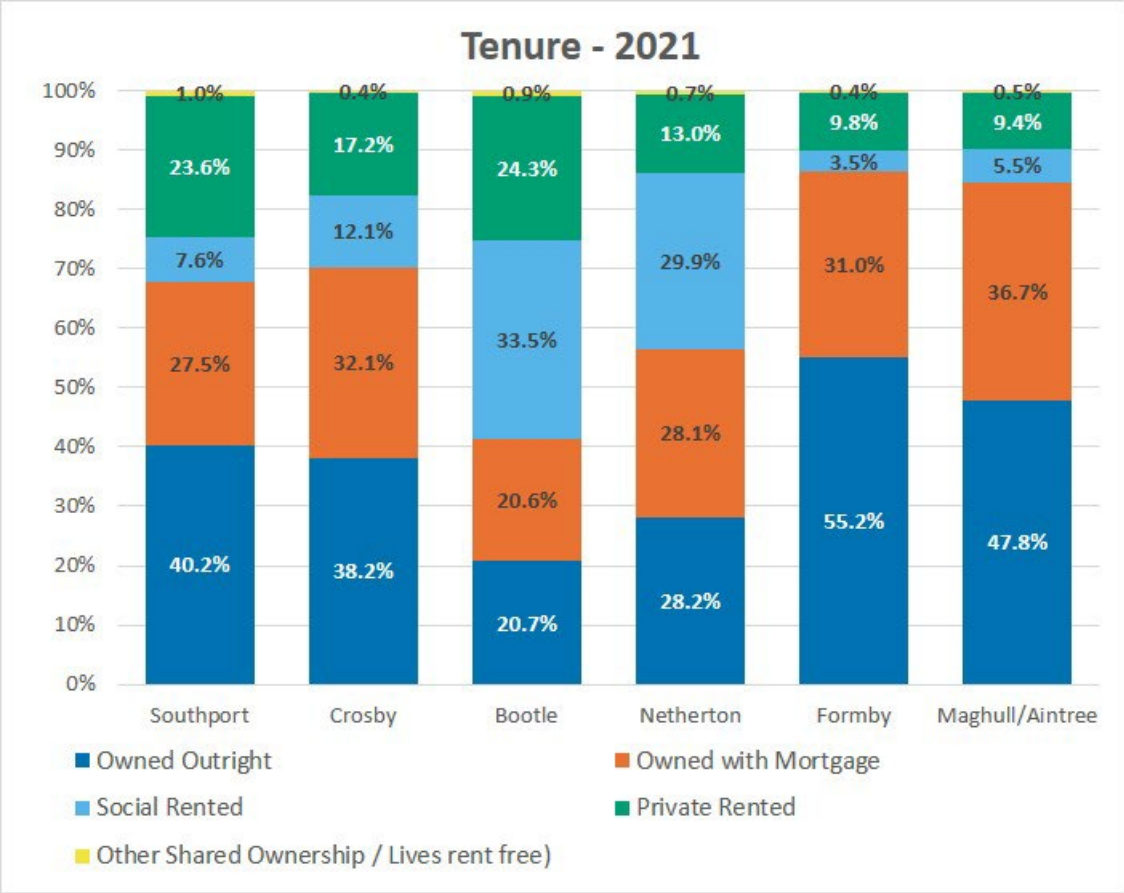
Tenure Profile

In 2021 it was estimated there were 123,073 dwellings in the Borough. Additional analysis of the 2011 Census reveals that around 67% of households in the Borough were owner-occupiers (including shared ownership) – this is notably above both the regional and national average. The social rented sector across Sefton is smaller than found regionally or nationally. The Census data also shows a private rented sector which is smaller than either the regional or national average.

As of 2021 it was estimated that around 18% of households live in the private rented sector – this compared with 19% for the region and 20% nationally at that time. The number of households living in the private rented sector has risen significantly in line with national increases – an estimated 22,457 households live in private rented accommodation (2021) which is 42% higher than the figure (of 15,804) recorded in the 2011 Census.

At a sub-area level, there are particularly high levels of owner-occupation in Formby and Maghull/Aintree (and to a lesser extent Southport and Crosby) with the level of private renting being particularly high in Southport and Bootle. The proportion of households living in social rented stock is also somewhat variable with the most notable figures being the very small numbers in this tenure in Formby and Maghull/Aintree and a high proportion in Bootle and Netherton.

FIGURE 6.5 Tenure



Source: Census 2021

The change in the proportion of households living in different tenures is shown in Figure 6.6. As well as clearly showing the growth in the private rented sector the data also shows a significant reduction in the proportion of households owning homes with a mortgage or loan. This trend is again consistent with regional and national data.

FIGURE 6.6 Change in Tenure 2011 to 2021

Sefton Change in Tenure (2011 – 2021)				
Tenure	2011	2021	Change	% Change
Owned outright	42,334	46,426	4,092	9.7%
Owned with mortgage	40,803	35,565	-5,238	-12.9%
Social rented	17,063	17,735	672	3.9%
Private rented	15,804	22,457	6,653	42.1%
Other	1,926	890	-1,036	-53.8%
Total	117,930	123,073	5,143	4.4%

Source: Census 2011 & 2021

FIGURE 6.7 Change in Privately Rented Tenure

Change in Privately Rented Tenure (2011 – 2024)				
	2011	**2021**	**Change**	**% Change**
England	3,716,000	4,794,889	1,078,889	29.0%
Sefton	15,804	22,457	6,653	42.1%

Source: Census 2011 & 2021

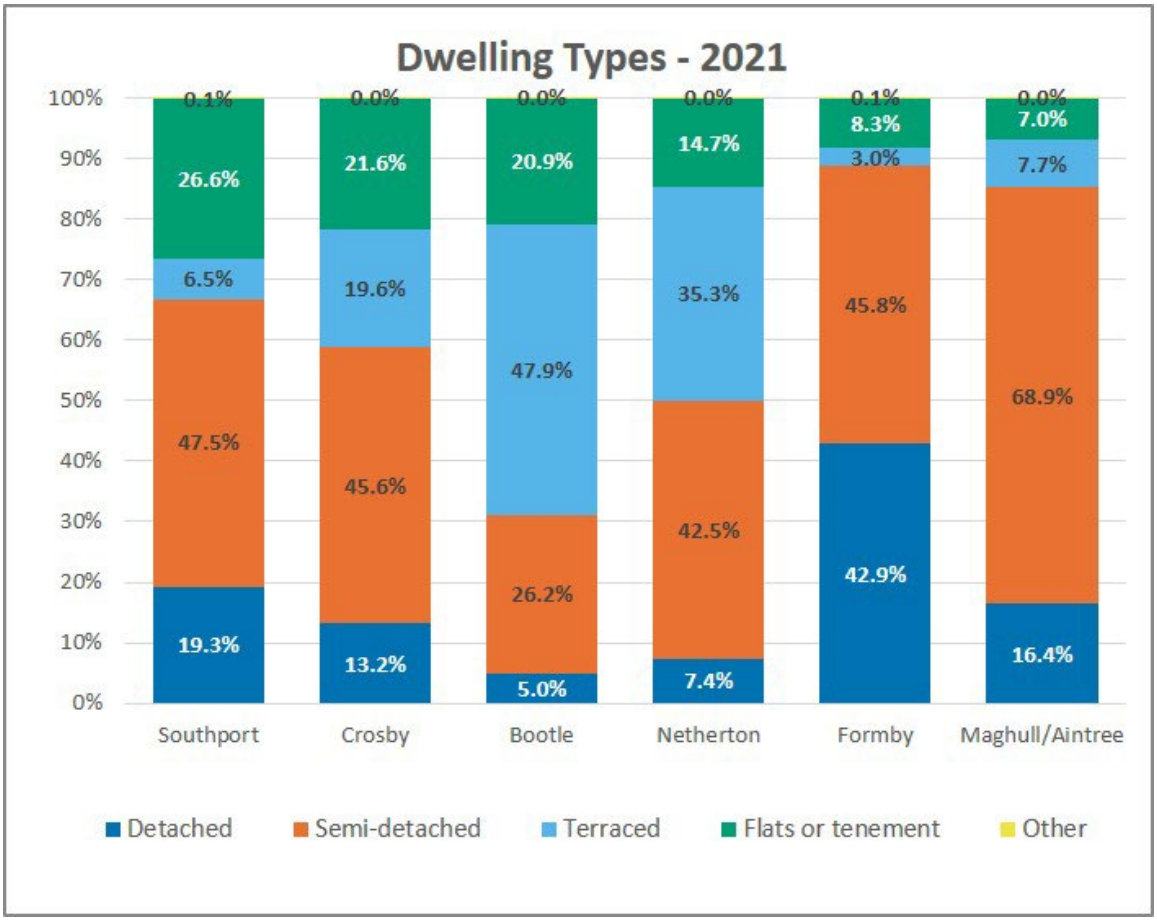
Since the 2011 Census, the proportion of people nationally who rent privately has increased by 4,794,889 from 3,716,000 to 4,794,889 (29.0%). Compared to Sefton which has had a larger increase of 42.1%.

Stock/Dwelling Profile

Figure 6.8 below shows the types of dwelling in the Borough, regionally and nationally, from the 2021 Census. The data shows that Sefton has relatively few terraced homes and detached houses/bungalows when compared with national or regional figures. The proportion of semidetached properties is notably higher than other areas, making up 46% of the housing stock.

We also see marked difference between sub-areas with Formby having a high proportion of detached homes (43%) and Maghull/Aintree a very high proportion of semi-detached properties (69%). Both areas have relatively few flats/terraces. At the other end of the scale the stock in Bootle is more heavily concentrated on terraces (making up 48% of all homes); the highest proportion of flats is however seen in the Southport sub-area where over a quarter of homes are flats/maisonettes. The Crosby area (including Waterloo) has the second highest rate of flats and maisonettes.

FIGURE 6.8 Dwelling Types



Source: Census 2021

Using the 2021 Census data and comparing it with figures from 2011 we can study how the stock has changed over the past ten-years. The figure below shows that the dwelling stock is estimated to have increased by some 5,687 homes with 47% of this increase being of flats/maisonettes. There have been moderate increases in the number of semi-detached and detached homes and a small decrease in the number of terraced properties.

FIGURE 6.9 Change in dwelling types (2011 to 2021)

Sefton Change in Dwelling Types (2011 – 2021)				
Dwelling type	2011	2021	Change	% Change
Detached	18,291	19,926	1,635	8.9%
Semi-detached	55,240	56,728	1,488	2.7%
Terraced	22,704	22,585	-119	-0.9%
Flat / Tenement	21,118	23,774	2,656	12.6%
Other	33	60	27	81.8%
Total	117,386	123,073	5,687	4.8%

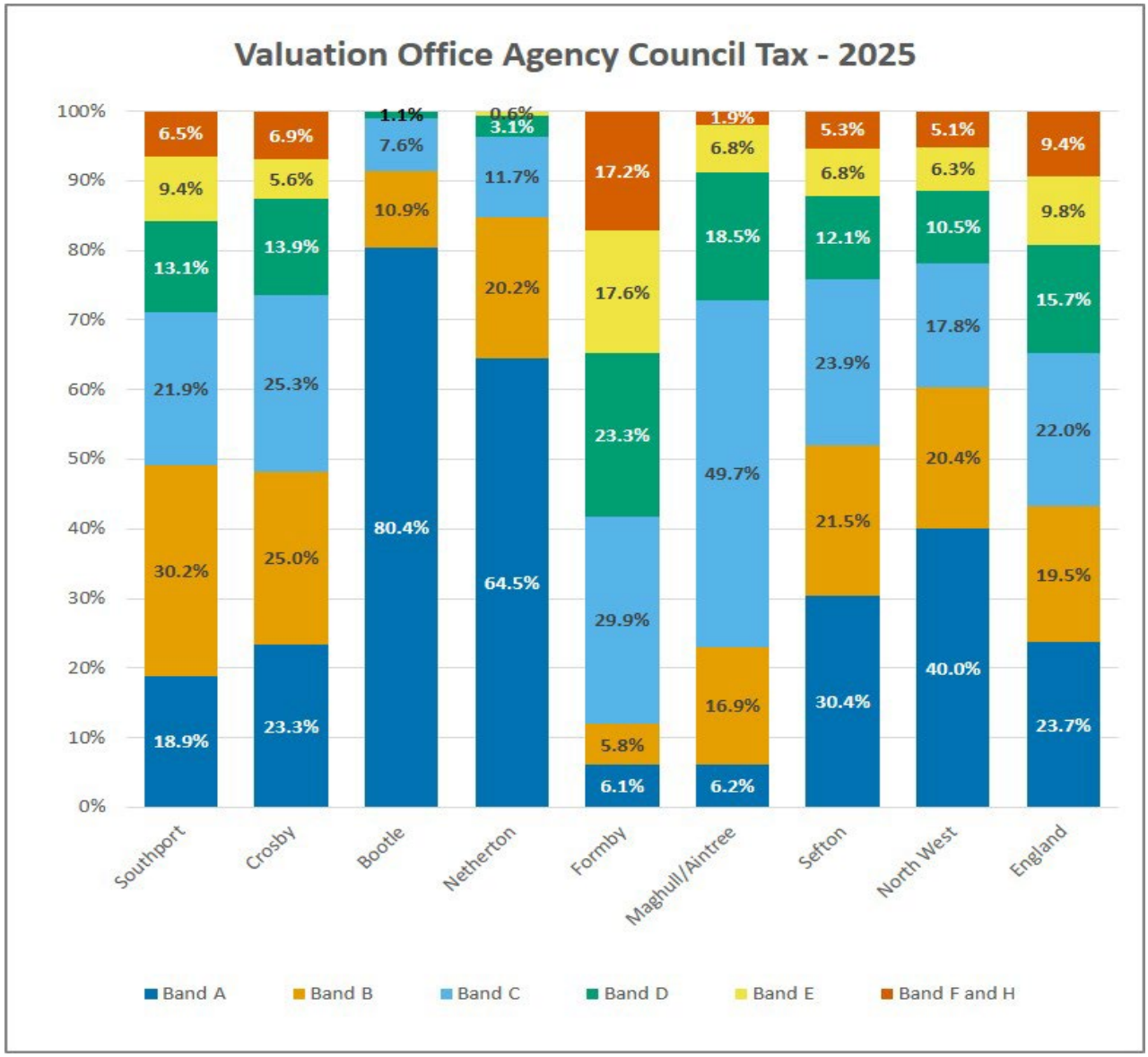
Source: Census 2011 & 2021

Council Tax Band

A good indication of the quality and price structure of the housing stock is the distribution of dwellings by Council Tax Band. The figure below shows that across the whole of the Borough the distribution of Council Tax Bands suggests slightly lower dwelling values when compared with national data but higher values in a regional context. Across Sefton some 52% of homes are in Council Tax Bands A and B; this compares with 62% regionally and 44% nationally.

At a sub-area level differences are even more pronounced with the data indicating very high property values in Formby (and to a lesser extent Maghull/Aintree) with lower values being seen in Bootle and Netherton. In Formby the data shows that only 6% of homes are in Council Tax band A – this compares with around 30% Borough-wide and 80% in Bootle.

FIGURE 6.10 Council Tax Bands 2025

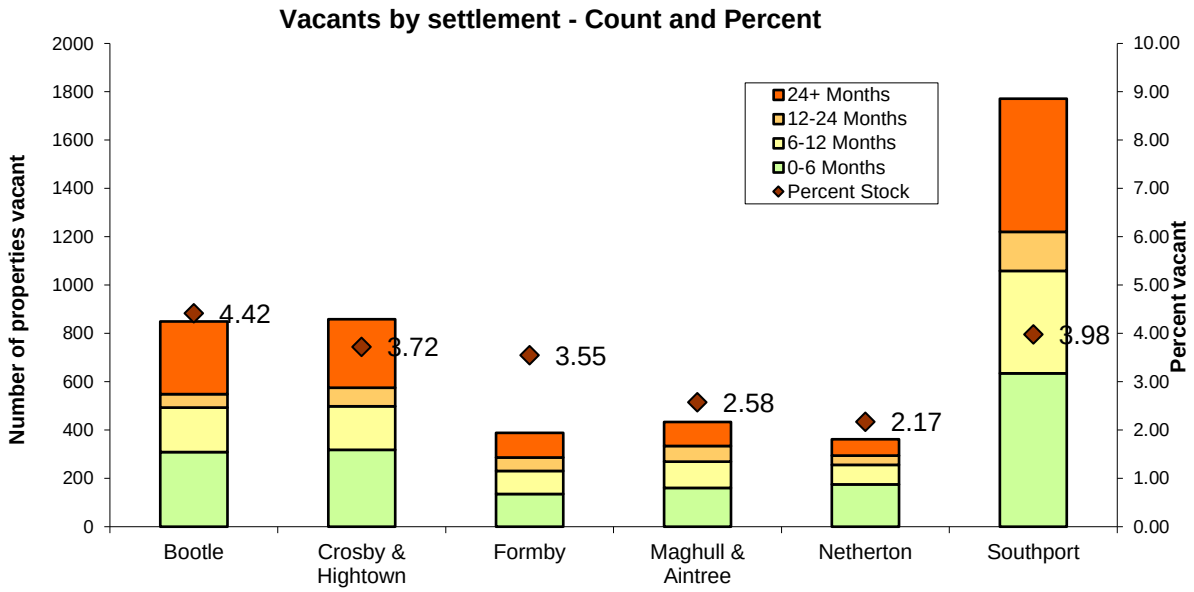


Council Tax VOA 2024-2025

Vacant Homes

The number of vacant (i.e. empty) homes in Sefton is 4664 (based on October 2024 Council tax data), 3.55% of the total stock (including second homes). This has decreased by 666 homes since the introduction of Sefton's housing licensing schemes. Of the total number of vacant homes, 2931 are classed as long-term vacant, i.e. vacant for more than six months (2.23% of the total housing stock). These vacancies are concentrated in south Sefton (mainly Bootle) and central Southport.

FIGURE 6.11 Empty properties by settlement



Source: Sefton Council Tax Oct 2024

FIGURE 6.12 Vacant dwelling hotspots – Bootle Oct 2024

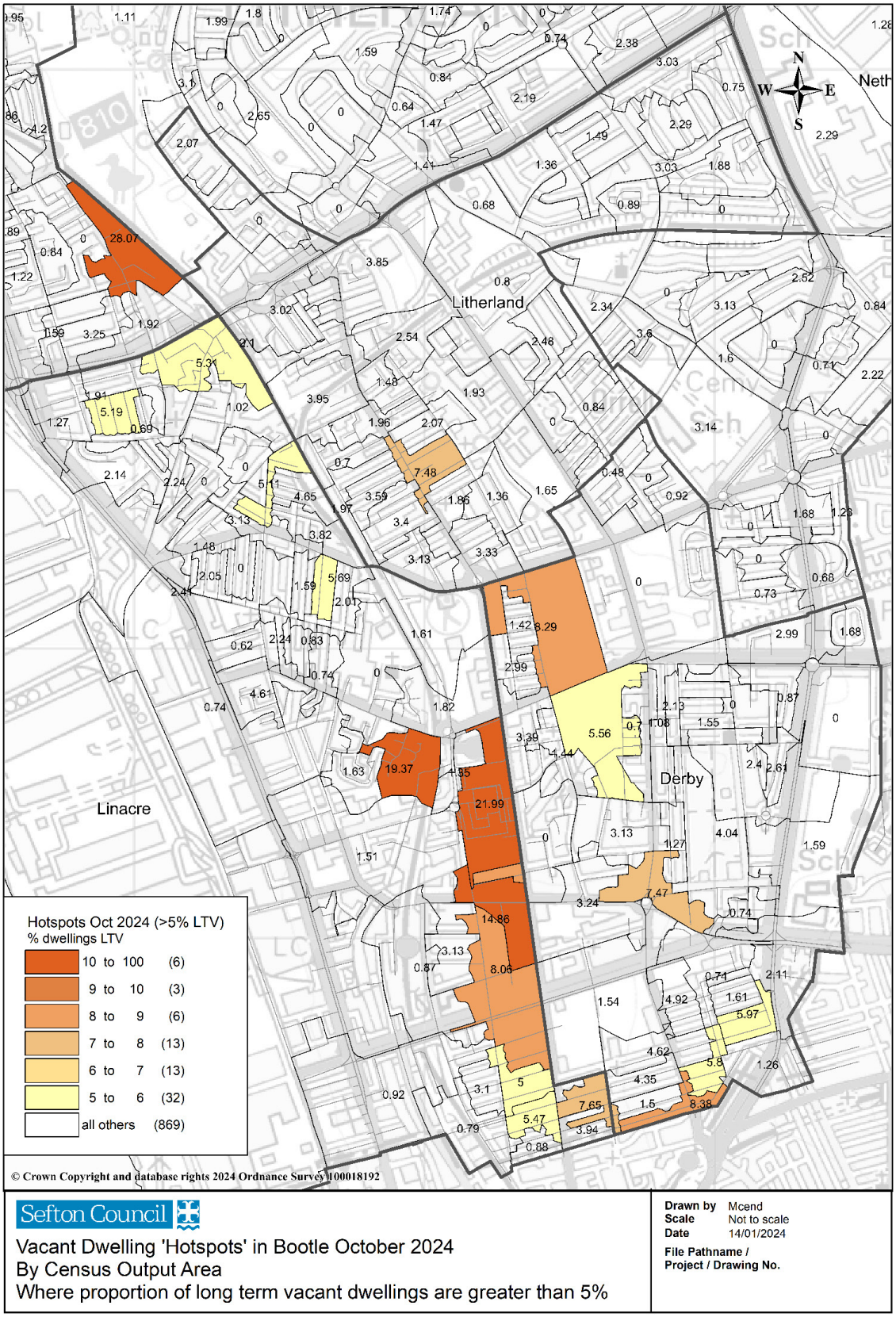


FIGURE 6.13 Vacant dwelling hotspots Waterloo/Seaforth Oct 2024

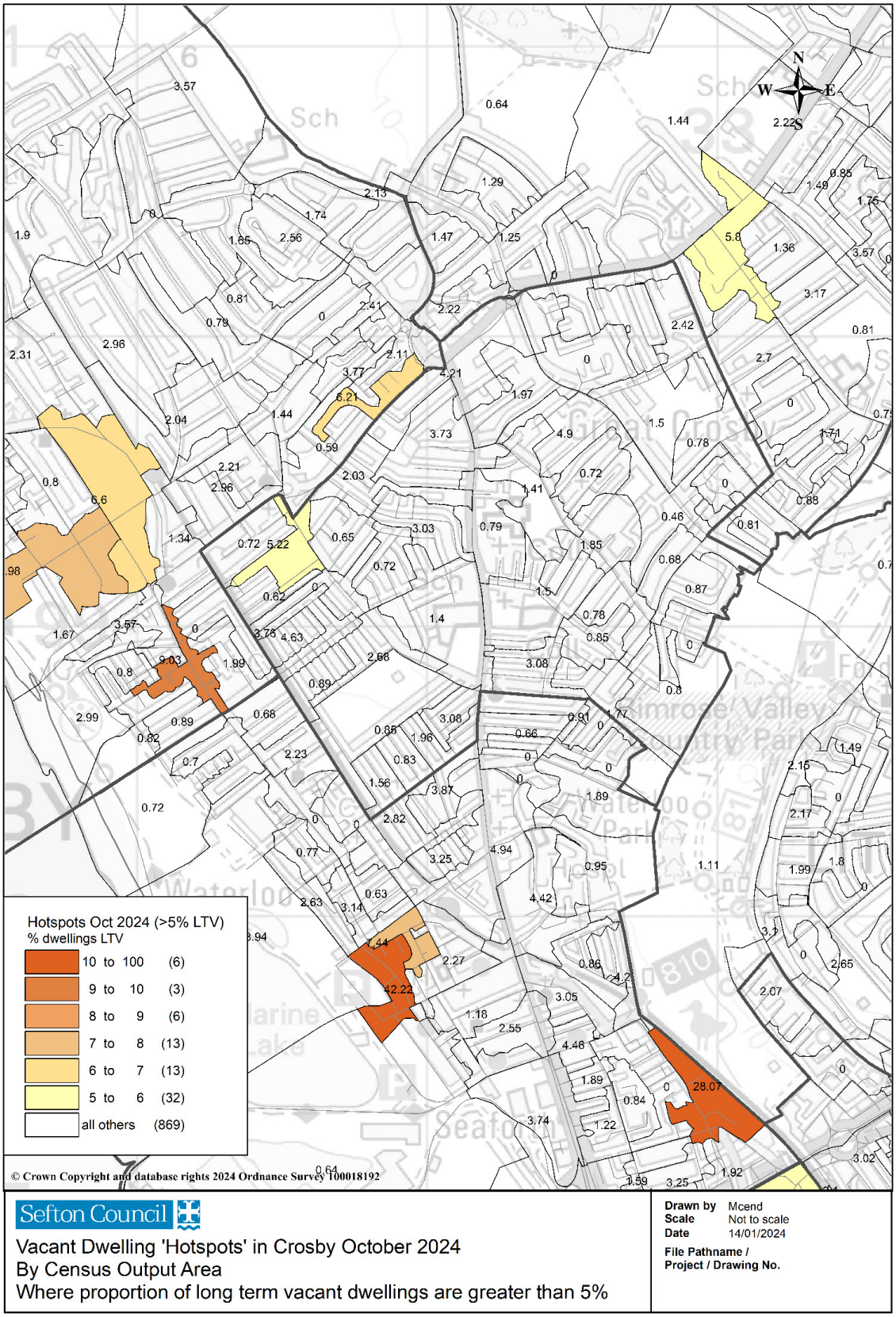
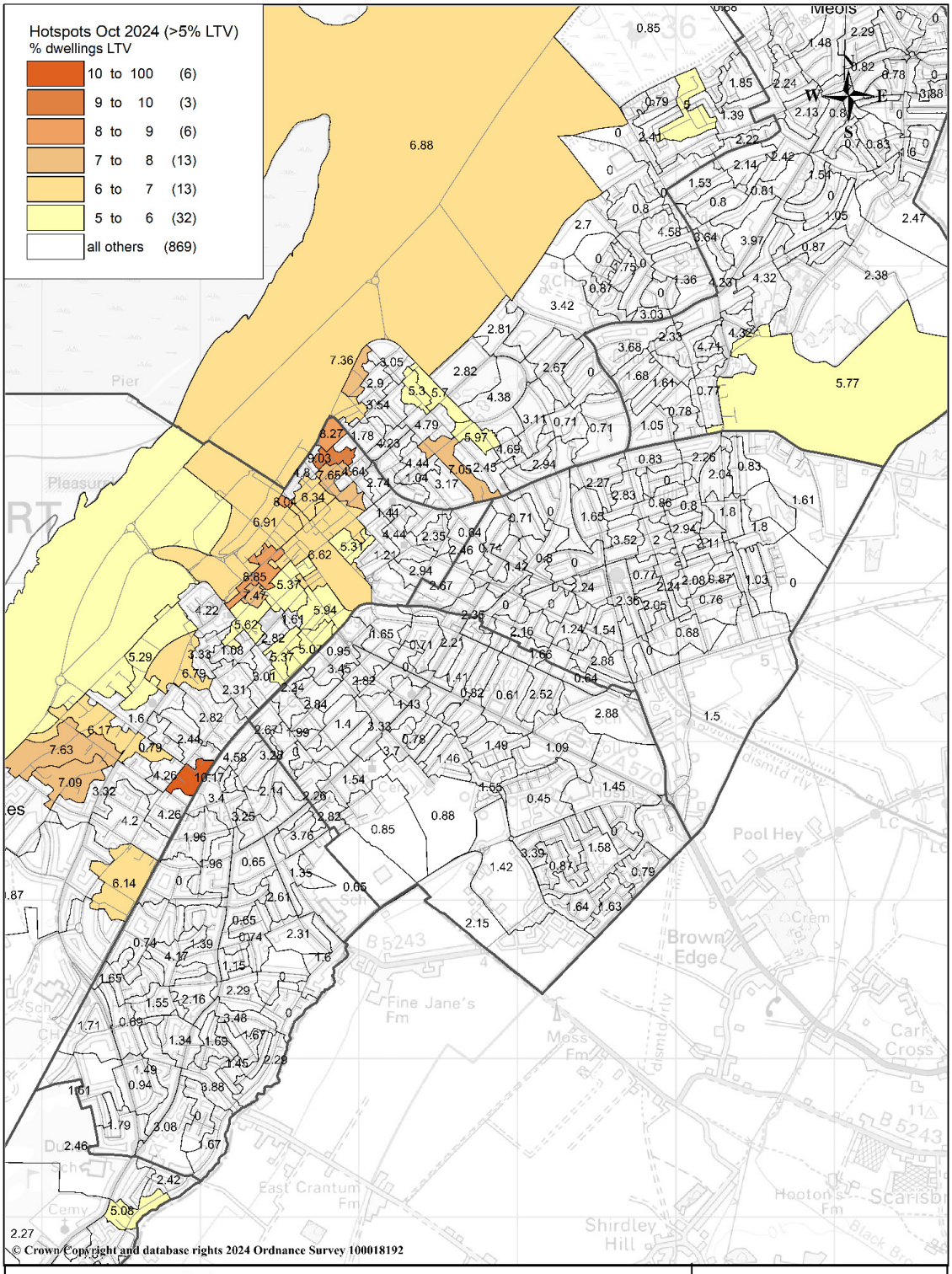


FIGURE 6.14 Vacant dwelling hotspots Southport Oct 2024

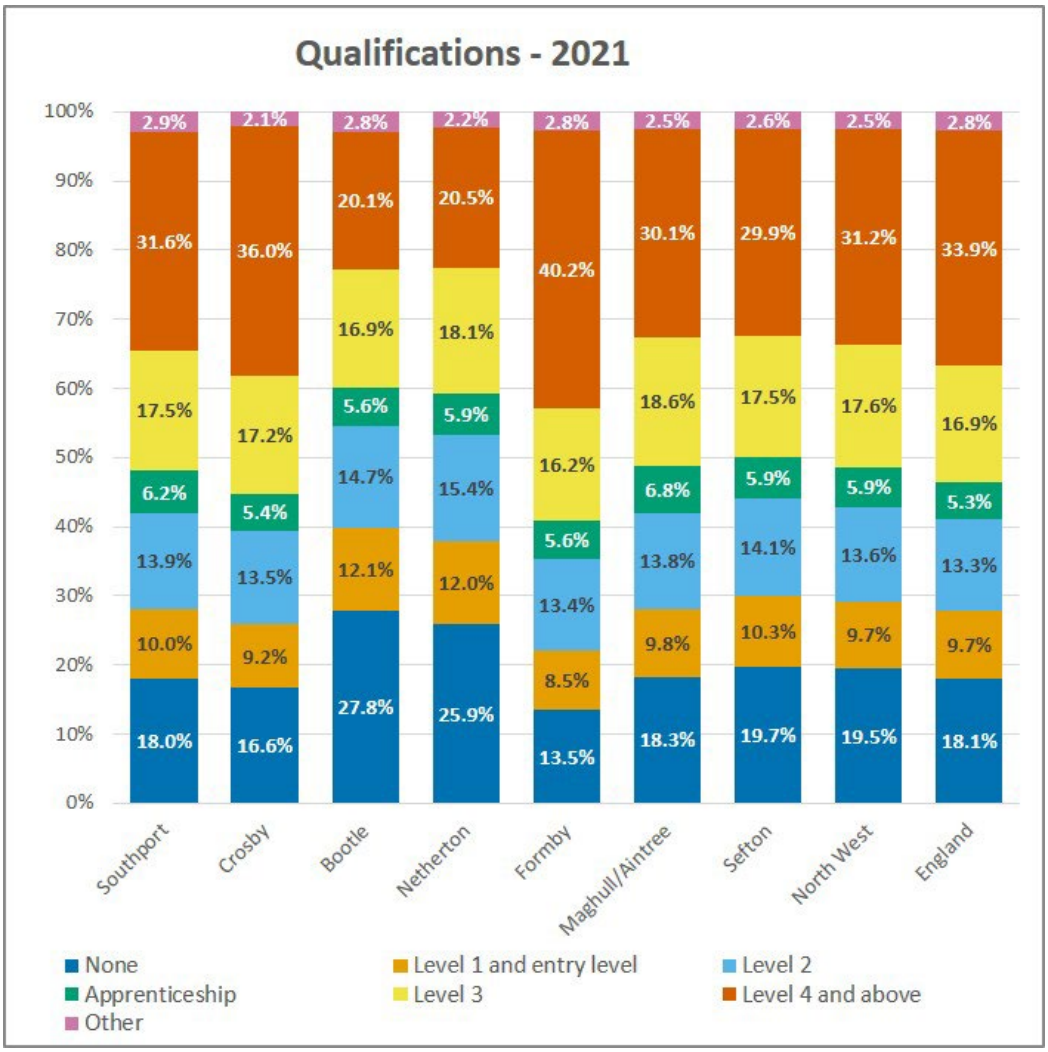


Economic Profile

The skills profile of Sefton suggests a workforce with fairly typical qualification levels. Around 20% of people aged 16 and over have no qualifications with 30% having level 4 qualifications and above (equivalent to degree level). These figures are virtually the same as for the whole of the North West although there are small differences from data for England where only 18% have no qualifications and 34% are qualified to Level 4 or above.

For individual sub-areas we again see some notable differences; only 20% of people in both Bootle and Netherton are qualified to Level 4 or above, this compares with 40% in Formby. Over a quarter of people aged 16 and over in Bootle and Netherton have no qualifications.

FIGURE 6.15 Qualifications

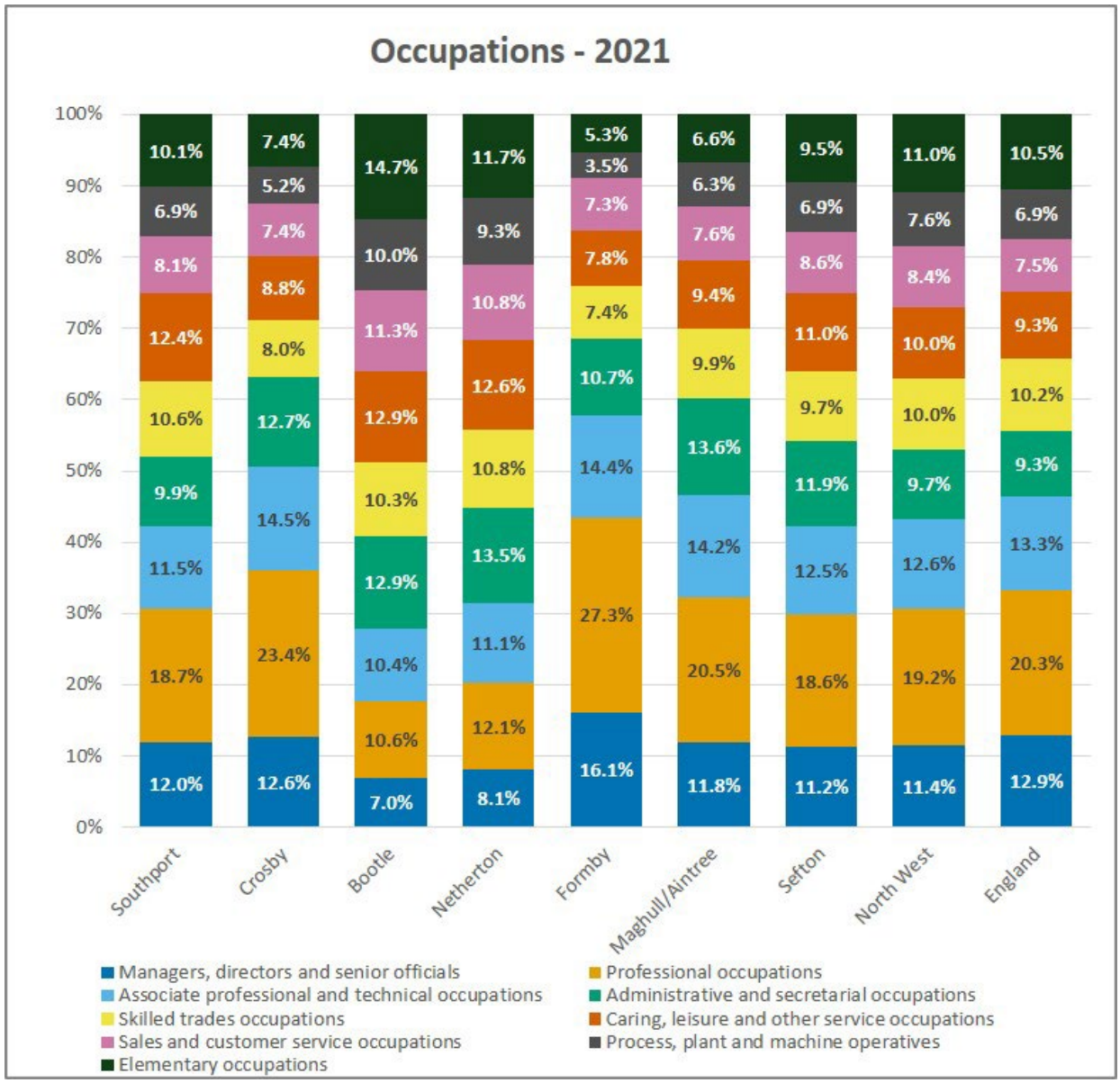


(Source: Census 2021)

The qualifications profile in Sefton is to a strong degree also reflected in the profile of employment by occupations. Sefton has a similar profile of occupations to regional and National figures. The higher level of skills in Formby in particular, can be seen in the occupational profile where there are the highest proportion of managers and those in professional occupations (16% compared with 7% in Bootle and 8% in Netherton. The lower than average skills in Bootle can also be seen with regard to the proportions in

elementary occupations (15% are occupied in elementary occupations compared with 5% in Formby).

FIGURE 6.16 Occupations



Source: Census 2021

Household Incomes

Income has a crucial effect on the level of choice a household has when determining their future accommodation. The figure below shows the median annual income of people in full-time employment from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) for 2015 and 2025. The figure shows that in all areas gross income levels are higher in 2025 than 2015. However, gross annual wages have risen slightly faster than the regional and national averages.

FIGURE 6.17 Median earnings in pounds

Gross Annual Pay of Full Time Employed Residents (2015 -2025) - Median Income			
Area	2015 Wage	2025 Wage	% Change in Wage
Sefton	£24,569	£36,937	50.3%
North West	£25,711	£37,445	45.6%
England	£27,838	£39,243	41.0%

Source: ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis (Median earnings in pounds for employees living in the area)

Conclusion

The consideration of Sefton's socio-economic profile data within this section identified several areas across the Borough, that, as well as having high concentrations of properties within the PRS, compared to the rest of the Borough also suffer from other socio-economic disadvantages. These areas were further investigated in line with and compared to the tests of discretionary licensing (Housing Act 2004).

Although other areas across the Borough may suffer from high levels of deprivation, those areas do not presently meet the legal provision required for consideration within a Selective Licensing designation. The number of PRS properties fall short of the required 19%. For example, areas of Litherland/Netherton which have high levels of deprivation, average around 8% of PRS housing. Notably these areas contain predominantly social housing.

Chapter 7 - How licensing fits with Sefton's strategies

Licensing alone cannot guarantee improvements in the designated areas. It can only be part of the solution. Although there are many issues of concern, some of which will never be controllable at a local level, the Local Authority and its partners recognise that a holistic and joined-up response can achieve beneficial outcomes for the community.

Housing should provide a living environment that is as safe and healthy as possible. Tackling problems of poor housing to protect the health, safety and welfare of the occupants is a significant wider determinant of health. Officers within the Housing Standards team focus primarily on helping tenants living in private rented sector housing, by requiring landlords to carry out necessary repair or improvement works, to remove serious health and safety hazards.

Whilst great improvements have been made in recent years through the Decent Homes programme within the social housing sector, and Housing Market Renewal has sought to redevelop the poorest groups of housing in Bootle together with some improvements to existing housing stock, too much of the borough's existing stock is not fit for purpose, and in its current state risks becoming unsustainable. The Local Plan and Housing Strategy interventions will help provide a further drive to ensure that our existing homes play a full role in raising the quality of place and become part of neighbourhoods where people choose to live, work and invest.

Sefton's Housing Strategy

Sefton Council's Housing Strategy 2022-2027 sets out the Council's vision to build upon the success of previous housing strategies and ensure that Sefton remains a great place to live by providing residents with access to high-quality housing that meets their needs. The strategy recognises the significant role that housing plays in supporting health and wellbeing, tackling inequality, promoting sustainable communities and addressing climate change. A key strategic priority is Driving Housing Quality in Communities and Neighbourhoods, with a particular focus on improving existing housing stock, raising standards across all tenures and improving conditions within the private rented sector.

- The Housing Strategy recognises the success of previous interventions, including the introduction of landlord licensing schemes, which have contributed to the removal of large numbers of serious housing hazards and led to significant improvements in property management standards across the Borough. The strategy confirms the Council's commitment to continuing and strengthening these approaches as part of its wider housing objectives.
- The Housing Strategy identifies the following priorities under the theme of Driving Housing Quality in Communities and Neighbourhoods:
- Raise housing standards across all tenures and reduce the number of poor-quality and non-decent homes, with particular focus on the worst housing conditions.
- Improve the quality of privately rented sector (PRS) housing.
- Regulate and improve Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
- Work closely with social housing providers to ensure residents live in safe, good-quality homes and receive appropriate support and redress when issues arise.

- Reduce the number of long-term empty properties and tackle the negative impact they can have on local communities.
- To deliver these priorities over the period 2022-2027, the Council has committed to:
- Working closely with private sector landlords to support and encourage investment in Sefton and the provision of high-quality homes and management services.
- Redesignating Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing Schemes in Bootle, Waterloo and Southport for a further five-year period (2023-2028).
- Raising housing standards across all tenures and reducing the number of poor-quality homes, particularly those exhibiting the most serious hazards and defects.
- Providing support and guidance to owner-occupiers, particularly vulnerable residents living in the poorest housing conditions, to improve housing standards.
- Using evidence and intelligence to monitor housing conditions across the Borough and target interventions where they are most needed.
- Working in partnership with Registered Providers and Housing Associations to improve housing quality and service provision.
- Supporting the decarbonisation and retrofit of housing stock to improve energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty and contribute to Sefton's Climate Emergency objectives.
- Helping empty property owners bring homes back into use through advice, assistance and early intervention, whilst using the full range of enforcement powers where necessary to address problematic long-term vacant properties.

The Housing Strategy makes clear that licensing forms an integral part of Sefton's wider strategic approach to improving housing conditions and neighbourhood sustainability. Selective and Additional Licensing schemes are specifically identified as tools that support the Council's objectives to improve standards within the private rented sector, address poor management practices, identify serious hazards and protect residents from unsafe housing conditions. The continuation of licensing therefore directly supports the delivery of the Council's adopted Housing Strategy and contributes towards broader objectives relating to housing quality, health, community wellbeing and neighbourhood regeneration.

Empty Homes Plan

Sefton Council remains fully committed to tackling the issue of long-term empty homes and maximising the use of existing housing stock to meet local housing need. The Empty Homes Plan 2025-2030 identifies approximately 4,664 empty properties across the Borough, of which 2,931 have been vacant for more than six months. The Plan recognises that long-term empty homes are a wasted housing resource, can negatively affect neighbourhoods, and contribute to issues such as anti-social behaviour, environmental decline and crime.

The Empty Homes Plan forms part of the wider Sefton Housing Strategy 2022-2027, supporting the strategic objective of improving housing quality and reducing the number of long-term privately owned empty properties across the Borough.

A key priority of the Plan is to focus intervention activity on bringing long-term empty homes back into use, particularly those vacant for more than two years.

Due to the concentration of empty properties within areas covered by Sefton's Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing Schemes, the Plan specifically prioritises intervention in Bootle and Southport, where the proportion of long-term empty homes is significantly above the Borough average. The Plan acknowledges that these areas were originally designated for licensing because of higher levels of private renting, poor housing conditions, crime and anti-social behaviour. The licensing schemes were renewed in 2023 and continue until 2028.

The Empty Homes Plan recognises that Selective and Additional Licensing provides an important mechanism for identifying problematic empty properties, engaging with owners and targeting resources where they can have the greatest impact. The Council's strategic approach focuses on:

- Raising awareness of long-term empty homes as a wasted housing resource.
- Encouraging empty property owners, particularly within licensing areas, to bring properties back into use through advice, assistance and early intervention.
- Using the full range of enforcement powers to address problematic empty properties, with a primary focus on homes empty for more than two years in licensing areas.
- The Council's approach is based on early engagement and support, but where necessary is supplemented by formal enforcement measures, including council tax premiums, debt recovery action, enforced sales and other statutory powers.

The Plan also identifies several benefits associated with bringing empty homes back into use, including:

- Providing additional accommodation for households in housing need.
- Improving neighbourhood appearance and community confidence.
- Reducing opportunities for crime, anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping.
- Supporting wider regeneration objectives.
- Increasing demand for housing in the area and improving the sustainability of local communities.
- Generating additional income through Licensing Schemes where properties return to occupation.

The relationship between the Empty Homes Plan and licensing is particularly important. Evidence cited within the Plan demonstrates that areas with higher concentrations of long-term empty homes often have larger private rented sectors and poorer-quality housing. Consequently, Selective and Additional Licensing schemes are viewed as complementary tools that help improve housing standards, support neighbourhood renewal and reduce the likelihood of properties becoming vacant and remaining empty in the long term.

As such, the continuation of Selective Licensing directly supports the objectives of Sefton's Empty Homes Plan 2025-2030 by providing an established framework for identifying problematic properties, engaging with owners, improving housing conditions and helping to create more stable and sustainable communities.

Homelessness Strategy

Our Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out the Council's vision and aims to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping across the Borough over the next five years and was approved by Cabinet in April 2024.

In the subsequent Homelessness Strategy Action Plan, there are a number of actions relating to Private Rented Sector offer;

- Improve access to affordable housing, with housing strategy and development decisions to be informed by intelligence and priorities from the review.

Bold action is clearly needed in relation to housing supply in Sefton as elsewhere and a business case could be made based on potential cost savings to homelessness services. Detailed recommendations in this area are beyond the scope of our review, and we understand some of the following activities are already planned or underway.

Recommendations

Continue with the HMO licensing scheme to tackle the very poor conditions and harassment from some PRS landlords we heard about in the engagement, especially within Southport. – Housing Standards continuing to deliver into March 2028.

- Implement housing-led oversight within the supported housing pathway and improve data reporting so this can be used to monitor whole system performance.

The consultant recommends a personalised approach to identifying and advocating for settled housing options for those within the supported housing pathway. Given the huge diversity of residents' circumstances and the considerable challenges around affordable housing supply in the borough, this requires a range of coordinated measures, involving support workers, Housing Options, Property Pool Plus, and Rapid Rehousing Pathway staff, with good links to Housing Strategy, and a range of resources to access PRS properties.

Homeless Annual Report 2019/20

Levels of Homelessness in Sefton 2023-2024

Homeless Prevention

The Local Authority places greater emphasis on prevention of homelessness. Finding alternative housing in the PRS has become an increasing means of assisting households threatened with homelessness.

Renting from a private landlord has long been the main housing option for single homeless people. Yet with more people finding home ownership unaffordable and social housing unavailable, the private rented sector is increasingly seen as a long-term solution to broader housing needs.

The sector, however, currently presents real challenges for people regarding access, affordability, standards and security. We hope licensing will help reduce these challenges.

By introducing Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing, the Local Authority will have greater confidence that there are adequate safeguards in place to ensure that any

homeless applicants are allocated appropriate, safe, affordable, good-standard accommodation in a greater number of PRS properties in the Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing areas.

Sefton operates a Bond/Guarantor scheme, to help homeless households access the PRS. This can be a benefit for landlords willing to offer homes to such households.

Meeting Housing Needs

As of June 2026, there were 3,004 active applicants on Sefton's Housing Register seeking rehousing. Of this number, 1443 (48%) of applicants require a one bedroom property, with 451 applicants being under the age of 35.

With welfare reform changes, those people under 35 and reliant on benefit assistance will have their housing cost capped at the LHA single room rate; so only able to afford single room housing such as that usually found in the PRS and HMOs in particular. In the social housing sector, there is a shortage of one-bedroom accommodation and virtually a nil supply of single room (bedsit) accommodation. So many young, single households will become reliant on the PRS and HMOs.

There is established evidence that many vulnerable households live in HMOs. One of the Local Authority's priorities has been to try to protect the most vulnerable. By continuing with Selective Licensing and Additional (HMO) Licensing there will be greater certainty that more households will be able to access suitable and well managed privately rented homes.

Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Action Plan

The Local Authority has been concerned about levels of poverty and the impacts of welfare reform. The Council along with its key partner agencies have adopted a Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Action Plan, which sets out our ambition to take bold and positive steps to address the pressures felt by low income households in Sefton. In particular, Objective 1.4 F highlights the need to work with private landlords as part of the multiple agency approach.

> **Action**
>
> To support the development of multi-agency practices developing as part of the early intervention and prevention agenda
>
> **Method**
>
> To develop a targeted and partnership approach to improve living standards through adopting a Selective Licensing scheme and promoting a quality of living standards

The Action Plan recognises that multiple agencies need to work together to help tackle the problems and issues. It says:

> "We are championing a ONE-SEFTON approach to our plan and encouraging all partners, the community and organisations to play their part."

A Partnership agreement is in place, which multiple agencies have signed up to including One Vision Housing (OVH), who are the largest social housing provider in Sefton and in the proposed licensing area.

Private landlords (together and individually) can play an important part, through their landlord-tenant relationship.

Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)

It is essential that private landlords take their responsibilities seriously and work with local agencies to ensure that communities do not suffer from persistent ASB from their tenants.

Sefton ASB Mission Statement: Statement of Purpose

> *To work collaboratively with our partners to prevent, reduce and resolve anti-social behaviour across Sefton through a coordinated multi-agency response that places victims and communities at the heart of our work. Using Sefton's Ladder of Intervention, we are committed to delivering early intervention, prevention and support wherever possible, while taking fair, proportionate and effective enforcement action when necessary. Together, we will tackle the root causes of anti-social behaviour, promote positive behaviour change, reduce harm and build safer, stronger and more resilient communities.*

This strategy does not sit in isolation but is intended to run alongside existing anti-social behaviour policies as a framework of activity adopted by agencies in Sefton as an overarching approach to tackling anti-social behaviour

Selective Licensing will also help to ensure that landlords fulfil their statutory duties regarding tenancy management. It is important to recognise that the PRS provides housing to many of those excluded from sectors of the market which can include the most vulnerable sections of society, such as those with alcohol or drug misuse and a history of ASB that has previously affected their ability to sustain a tenancy. Both Sefton's ASB and licensing team can offer advice and support to landlords to ensure that they take appropriate action when they receive a complaint about their tenants. The Licensing scheme will facilitate an additional ASB support service for landlords.

Child Poverty Strategy

Sefton's selective and additional landlord licensing schemes make an important contribution to the aims of the Sefton Child Poverty Strategy 2022-2030 by improving the quality, safety and management of privately rented homes, many of which are occupied by low-income families with children.

The Child Poverty Strategy recognises that poverty is influenced not only by household income but also by the quality of the places in which people live. By requiring licensed landlords to meet prescribed standards relating to property condition, management arrangements, fire safety, repairs and tenancy management, the schemes help ensure that families have access to safe, warm and healthy homes. This can reduce the risk of children experiencing the negative impacts associated with poor housing, including respiratory illnesses, accidents in the home, reduced educational attainment and poorer long-term health outcomes. The strategy's focus on creating better "places" for residents is therefore directly supported through the licensing regime's role in raising housing standards and improving neighbourhood conditions.

The licensing schemes also contribute to the strategy's objectives around financial resilience and opportunity. Poor quality housing can impose significant costs on low-income households through higher energy bills, damage to possessions, and adverse health impacts that affect parents' ability to work or children's ability to attend school. By driving improvements in housing conditions and ensuring landlords comply with

their legal responsibilities, landlord licensing can help reduce some of these avoidable pressures on household budgets.

In addition, the schemes support wider neighbourhood renewal by addressing issues such as anti-social behaviour, property neglect and ineffective tenancy management, helping to create more stable communities where children and families can thrive. Through these outcomes, landlord licensing complements the Child Poverty Strategy's ambitions to improve residents' prospects, strengthen communities and tackle the wider social determinants that contribute to poverty and inequality across Sefton.

ARTICLE 4

On 20 September 2017, the Council issued a non-immediate Article 4 Direction covering parts of Bootle, Litherland, Seaforth, Waterloo and Southport. The Direction removed permitted development rights for the change of use of a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a small House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) within these areas. The Direction was confirmed by Cabinet on 21 June 2018 and came into force on 20 September 2018.

Since the introduction of the 2018 Direction, the Council has expanded Article 4 controls across the Borough. Following the implementation of additional Directions, including in Aintree, the Council has now confirmed a Borough-wide Article 4 Direction, meaning that the conversion of a dwellinghouse to a small HMO anywhere in Sefton requires planning permission.

Article 4 Directions are made under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order and remove specified permitted development rights. An Article 4 Direction does not prevent development from taking place; rather, it requires a planning application to be submitted so that the Council can properly assess the proposal. Article 4 Directions are intended to be used where there is evidence that development otherwise permitted under national planning legislation could harm local amenity or undermine the proper planning of an area.

Whilst the Council does not consider that all HMOs have a negative impact on neighbourhoods, it recognises that high concentrations of HMOs, or poorly planned conversions, can contribute to social, economic and environmental issues in certain areas. The introduction of Borough-wide Article 4 controls reflects concerns relating to the impact of HMOs on local character, residential amenity, housing mix, community sustainability, and pressure on local services and infrastructure.

The removal of permitted development rights means that proposals to convert dwellinghouses into HMOs must be assessed through the planning process. This enables the Council to consider the potential impact on future occupiers, neighbouring residents and the wider community, and where appropriate to secure improvements and mitigation measures, such as adequate waste storage, cycle parking, sound insulation, amenity provision and property management arrangements. Planning control therefore complements the Council's licensing powers by helping to ensure that HMOs are developed in suitable locations and to an appropriate standard.

BOOTLE/ SOUTHPORT INVESTMENTS

Bootle Regeneration

Bootle is continuing to benefit from a significant programme of regeneration and investment aimed at revitalising the town centre, attracting new businesses, creating employment opportunities and improving the overall quality of the built environment. Earlier regeneration proposals focused on the Bootle Canalside project, which has evolved into the successful Salt and Tar events and leisure destination adjacent to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. The venue has already become an important cultural and recreational asset, attracting visitors and supporting the local economy.

A key element of the town's regeneration programme is the transformation of Bootle Strand Town Centre. Backed by £20 million of Government funding together with investment from Sefton Council and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, the project is delivering major improvements to the town centre, including the creation of new public spaces, improved connectivity, opportunities for new retail, leisure and cultural activities, and the redevelopment of underused sites.

In January 2026, the Council approved the Bootle Area Action Plan, which was formally adopted later that month. The Plan provides a long-term vision and planning framework for Bootle and surrounding areas over the next two decades. It seeks to support housing growth, town centre renewal, economic development, environmental improvements and investment in local infrastructure, while creating a more attractive, sustainable and prosperous place to live, work and visit.

The Area Action Plan identifies the regeneration of Bootle Strand and surrounding areas as central to the town's future and promotes the delivery of new homes, employment opportunities, improved public realm, leisure facilities and community infrastructure. These initiatives are expected to help attract further private sector investment and contribute to long-term economic growth.

Selective Licensing will support these regeneration objectives by helping to improve property conditions and management standards within the private rented sector. Ensuring that privately rented homes are safe, well-managed and well-maintained will assist in creating sustainable neighbourhoods, improving resident wellbeing and confidence, and supporting the wider regeneration and renewal of Bootle.

Southport Regeneration

In October 2020, Sefton Council submitted a Town Investment Plan as part of its Town Deal bid following extensive engagement and consultation with local stakeholders. In March 2021, Southport was awarded £37.5 million through the Government's Town Deal programme, one of the largest Town Deal allocations awarded nationally, to support an ambitious programme of regeneration projects across the town centre and seafront.

Since the award of Town Deal funding, significant progress has been made in delivering a range of transformational projects designed to strengthen Southport's economy, enhance its visitor offer and create new employment opportunities. These include investment in existing attractions, the development of new year-round visitor attractions, improvements to public spaces and infrastructure, and the creation of enterprise and business hubs to support economic growth and attract inward investment. Collectively, these projects are expected to contribute to the creation of substantial new employment opportunities and help secure the long-term vitality and sustainability of the town.

The Council continues to support the regeneration of Southport through a range of complementary initiatives aimed at attracting investment, increasing footfall, improving housing quality and creating a vibrant and sustainable place to live, work and visit. Within this context, Additional HMO Licensing plays an important role in ensuring that privately rented accommodation is well managed, safe and of a suitable standard. By improving the management and condition of HMOs, the licensing scheme supports wider regeneration objectives, helps maintain neighbourhood stability and attractiveness, and contributes to the creation of sustainable communities that complement the ongoing investment in Southport.

Chapter 8 - How will the schemes be delivered?

The Local Authority is committed to ensuring that the Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing schemes continue to contribute to improvements in housing conditions across the private rented sector. All licensable properties should receive a compliance inspection over the period of the licence. The Local Authority will provide advice and support to landlords to help to bring property conditions up to the required standards along with ensuring that the landlord's statutory responsibilities are also met.

The administration of the licensing application process, including the undertaking of inspections and the provision of general advice and support to landlords will be undertaken by Licensing Compliance Officers. The income received from the fees shall be used to cover the additional costs incurred by the Local Authority in employing these staff with associated costs.

The Housing Standards Team will focus resources proactively with the key aim to improve the physical appearance of neighbourhoods and the quality of housing across the designations, particular focus will be on ensuring that the management of properties meet required standards and where necessary landlords or agents are educated appropriately to improve their management processes ensuring any issues are dealt with promptly and effectively.

Landlords will need to abide by a set of conditions as part of their licence. Draft licence conditions have been drawn up (see Appendix 2 (Selective) and Appendix 4 (Additional (HMO)). These conditions include both mandatory and discretionary elements that support Sefton's priorities for the designated areas. These conditions shall be finalised following feedback from the consultation process.

Licensing has enabled the Council to take a proactive approach to improve the living conditions and environment for tenants, some of which are the most vulnerable. Considerable progress has already been made with landlord engagement and the proposed re-designations should continue to build on this relationship. This will enable the Council to focus resources on housing related enforcement activity within the designated areas, whereby landlords either fail to licence their properties or fail to comply with licence conditions. It is also likely that issues regarding poor housing conditions or ASB across other areas of the Borough may be brought to the attention of the Local Authority as a result of the increased awareness generally brought about by licensing. Where such enforcement action is needed (for example in relation to identified category one hazards within a dwelling) then this shall be referred and dealt with by the existing Private Sector Housing Standards Team who work in accordance with the Local Authority's housing enforcement policy.

Resources

The schemes generate a significant workload and require dedicated staffing resources to support their delivery. An established team of 13.5 FTE is already in place and will continue to administer and enforce the proposed schemes. The team is resourced to process Selective and Additional (HMO) licence applications, undertake compliance inspections and carry out associated enforcement activity. The costs of the team are funded through licence application fees.

Property Accreditation

We propose to continue to offer a discount on the licence fee (on a time limited basis). Landlords and agents will be encouraged to apply for accreditation.

Legal Support

The Housing Standards Team requires appropriate legal support to assist with the operation and enforcement of the licensing schemes. This includes advice and representation in relation to prosecutions, the issuing and recovery of Civil Penalties for breaches of licence conditions and failure to licence properties, appeals to the First and Upper Tier Tribunal, Rent Repayment Order applications, and the recovery of unpaid fines and penalties.

Support for landlords

We recognise that landlords cannot be held solely responsible for the actions of their tenants, but they can, often, have some influence on the behaviour of their tenants. The Local Authority believes that a good landlord would, once they became aware a tenant of theirs was engaged in unacceptable activities that had a detrimental effect on neighbours, try to take some steps to resolve the situation.

- A support package will be available to landlords, which will include resources to address the ASB of their tenant. This includes information regarding the Sefton ASB Partnership Ladder of Intervention to manage ASB which can include mediation sessions, Good Neighbour Agreements, and further remedies. This agreed process to tackle ASB that has been followed by landlords would ultimately support landlords throughout any escalation including legal process, whereby possession of their property was deemed the most appropriate option
- Training - To ensure landlords are kept up to date with their statutory responsibilities, training courses will be offered if required, to licensed landlords at a rate that ensures that only any additional costs borne by the Local Authority are recovered

Licence Application and Fees

Application

Sections 63 & 87 of the Housing Act 2004 detail the application process for a licence. This section states that an application must be made in accordance with such requirement as specified by the authority. It also states that the authority may require the application to be accompanied by a fee fixed. When fixing fees, under these sections of the Act, the local housing authority may take into account all costs incurred by the authority in carrying out their functions under these parts of the legislation and all costs incurred in carrying out their functions under Part 4 of the Act chapter 1 which relates to management orders. The application process is detailed within the Act and there are subsequent regulations detailing the contents of an application form. This includes providing information on the property layout, certificates for gas, furniture, and fire safety. The Licensing and management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 schedule 2 provides full details on what must be included within an application this includes determining if the manager or proposed licence holder is a fit and proper person. This requires the declaration of any unspent convictions, unlawful discrimination and

prosecutions under housing, public health, environmental health or landlord and tenant law. The Licensing Team will make checks into a person's 'fit and proper' status.

The Local Authority must grant a licence if it is satisfied that the licence holder would be a fit and proper person.

If the licence is granted it will have conditions attached to it. Section 67 & 90 and Schedule 4 of the Act details the mandatory licence conditions that must be included, however there is provision for the Local Authority to add additional conditions that are either specific to the licence in question or that are locally agreed to address specific issues.

It is the Local Authority's intention to make the application process for landlords as streamlined as possible. Online applications and payment will, therefore, be the preferred method, keeping processing costs at a minimum.

Fit & Proper Person

In addition to ensuring compliance with both Selective and Additional (HMO) licence conditions, Sefton Council will need to determine the proposed licence holder as a 'fit and proper' person in terms of their suitability to manage their properties before issuing a licence. In deciding for the purposes of sections 64 (3) (b) or (c) & 88(3) (a) or (c) whether a person is a fit and proper person to be the licence holder or the manager of the house, the local housing authority must have regard to:

a. Any offences involving fraud or other dishonesty, or violence or drugs, or any offence listed in Schedule 3 to the Sexual Offences Act 2003.
b. Any unlawful discrimination on grounds of sex, colour, race, ethnic or national origins or disability in, or in connection with the carrying on of any business.
c. Any contravention of any provision of the law relating to housing or of landlord and tenant law.
d. Any person involved in the management of the property has sufficient level of competence to be so involved.
e. Any person involved in the management of the house is a fit and proper person to be so involved

Any "spent" convictions cannot be considered. However, a lack of conviction may not mean that the incident was not relevant. The manager must send in with their application proof of their status and that they do not have any unspent convictions as specified above.

The fit and proper person test is set out in the Housing Act 2004. When determining whether a person is fit and proper to hold a property licence, the Council must have regard to matters including relevant criminal convictions, unlawful discrimination, breaches of housing and landlord and tenant law, and compliance with approved codes of practice. In addition, a person subject to a banning order under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 cannot be regarded as a fit and proper person for licensing purposes. The Council will keep its licensing policies under review and update them to reflect any future legislative or regulatory changes.

If the owner is found not to be a "fit and proper person" against these criteria, then he/she must find someone else agreed by the Local Authority to manage the property. If the Local Authority is not satisfied, then it must refuse the application and give its

reasons for this. **See Appendix 6** for Sefton's fit and proper person policy for housing licensing.

Temporary Exemption Notice

An owner or manager of a property may apply to the Local Authority for a Temporary Exemption Notice (TEN). If a TEN is granted the property is exempt from licensing and accordingly the manager/owner does not commit the offence of operating a property without a licence.

A Local Authority may only grant a TEN if it is satisfied that the applicant is, or will shortly be, taking steps to ensure the property ceases to be subject to licensing. For example, if planning permission has been obtained for the conversion of the HMO to single family occupation. A TEN can only be granted for a maximum period of three months, but in exceptional circumstances the Local Authority may issue a second TEN to last a further three months following the expiry of the original. No more than two consecutive TENs mat be granted in succession for a given property. If a Local Authority refuses to grant a TEN the applicant may appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber), which can either uphold the LHA decision or reverse it.

Termination / Revocation

A licence may be revoked with the agreement of the licence holder, such as when a house ceases to be a licensable property. It also ends automatically after 5 years or after the period specified in the licence (if that is different).

A licence ceases to be in force on the death of a licence holder and for the first three months following the death of that person no licence is required as if a temporary exemption notice had been issued and was in force. Unless the property ceases to be licensable within that period or the Local Authority grants a TEN on the expiry of that period the property must be relicensed, or an Interim Management Order made in respect of it.

Other than in those circumstances, a licence may only be revoked if:

- there has been a significant breach of the licence conditions; or the licence holder and others involved in the management of the house are no longer fit and proper persons
- the property ceases to be an HMO that is subject to licensing
- if the LHA would not have granted a new licence for the HMO at the time it terminates
- the licence because of reasons relating to the structure of the HMO which render the property unsuitable for licensing on similar terms.

On revocation of a licence (unless this is because the HMO no longer requires to be licensed) the Local Authority must grant another licence or make an Interim Management Order.

- Appeals against licensing decisions

An appeal may be made to a First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber), against a decision of the local housing authority to:

- Refuse to grant a licence
- Grant a licence, including any conditions imposed
- Vary a licence
- Revoke a licence
- Refuse to vary or revoke a licence

An appeal must normally be made within 28 days of the decision being made, but if the tribunal thinks there are good reasons to do so, it may extend the period for appeal. In considering an appeal the tribunal rehears the Local Authority decision but can take account of new evidence put forward by the appellant.

Fees

In setting licence fees, the Local Authority must follow certain principles established by The Provision of Services Regulations 2009 (as amended) and associated UK Guidance 2021. In particular, the fee must not exceed the actual and direct costs of processing an application, monitoring compliance, and enforcing the scheme. The fee structure is also required to be reasonable and proportionate.

The licence fee, is therefore, set to cover the administration and associated

costs of the licence. A review of fees will be undertaken annually and can be adjusted to reflect changes in costs. The fees are in line with the findings of the decision of Hemming v Westminster City Council.

A licence would normally be granted for a period of five years and no further fees would be payable during the life of the licence. However, licences are non-transferrable in accordance with sections 68 (6) & 91(6) of the Housing Act 2004. A change of licence holder will, therefore, require a new application fee.

Discounts

The following discounts have been factored into the proposed fee calculations which will be confirmed following consultation feedback.

For the purposes of Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing, an accredited landlord is a landlord who is accredited with the Sefton Property Accreditation Scheme. A landlord who is accredited with the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA) will also benefit from a discount. The ability to apply for an accreditation discount will be available for 6 months after the commencement of the scheme only, (6 months from date of purchase for newly purchased properties, throughout the duration of the schemes).

There is also a discount for managing agents who are part of our Managing Agent Accreditation Scheme and then only if they are the proposed licence holder. Managing Agent accreditation is only available to agents who manage properties for other landlords and a full assessment of managing practices will be made by Housing Standards Officers to achieve accredited status. Further information on managing agent accreditation is available on our website.

An estimated 4000 properties will fall under the proposed Selective Licensing scheme and the licensing programme has, therefore, been designed around licensing this number of properties.

Proposed Fees per property (exc any additional unit charges)

Selective Licensing	£	Annual Equiv. £	Weekly Equiv. £
Full Fee	875	175	3.37
Accreditation	700	140	2.69
Accredited Managing Agents	700	140	2.69

In addition to the above fee:

For each additional unit (under the same ownership, within the same building) a charge of £55 per additional unit will apply.

For Example:	Additional charge £	Total Licence Fee £
3 self-contained flats/bedsits in same property and the building is owned by the same owner	875 + (2 x 55)	985
10 self-contained flats within one purpose-built block or converted house		
Landlord 'A' - owns 2 flats	875 + (1 x 55)	930
Landlord 'B' – owns 7 flats	875 + (6 x 55)	1205
Landlord 'C' – owns 1 flat	Not applicable	875

Although the costs of running the Selective licensing scheme has increased for example higher staffing costs in line with cost of living and additional staffing numbers. Sefton now has more data on the private-rented sector within the Borough, particularly within the Selective (and Additional) licensing areas. The current scheme implemented in 2023 had fees estimated on 3225 Selective licences being issued, a further 386 licensable properties were identified. This additional number of Selective licences has been factored into the above proposed fees. Selective Licensing fees have remained unchanged since 2018. However, rising operational and employment costs mean that a fee increase is now necessary to ensure the scheme remains fully cost-recoverable and can continue to deliver its regulatory functions effectively. The proposed fees reflect these increased costs whilst taking account of the larger licensed property base identified during the current designation period.

Furthermore, feedback from landlords throughout the duration of the current scheme was that they felt it was unfair for larger portfolio landlords to benefit as they only needed to pay one licence fee when they owned multiple flats within the same building. So, although they were receiving higher rental income in relation to another landlord owning only one property in the same building, they paid the same fee. Sefton, therefore, has proposed that in these instances an extra charge will be applicable at the rate of £55 per additional letting unit within the same building. This unit charge is proposed to be included across all housing licensing schemes.

Additional (HMO) Licensing fees for HMOs are proposed to be similar to those charged for mandatory HMO licences under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004.

The proposed Additional (HMO) Licensing fees have been increased to reflect the complexity and resource demands associated with licensing HMOs, particularly Section 257 HMOs. These properties often involve multiple ownership arrangements, changing occupancy patterns and difficulties in establishing licensing responsibility, resulting in significantly higher administration and enforcement costs.

Based on the most recent data collection exercise, the Council estimates that approximately 325 properties will fall within the proposed Additional (HMO) Licensing designation. As with previous schemes, this number is expected to fluctuate due to property sales, changes in tenure and variations in occupancy. The licensing programme and fee structure have therefore been developed on the assumption that around 325 HMOs will require licensing during the designation period.

Additional (HMO) Licensing	**£**	**Annual Equiv.**	**Weekly Equiv.**
Full Fee	1250	250	4.80
Accreditation	1150	230	4.42
Accredited Managing Agents	1150	230	4.42

In addition to the above fee:

For each additional unit (under the control of the same proposed licence holder, within the same building) a charge of £55 per additional unit will apply.

For Example:	**Additional charge £**	**Total Licence Fee £**
4 self-contained flats or bedsits within one property	1250 + (3 x 55)	1415
8 self-contained flats in one building: 6 flats are privately rented and 2 are owner occupied (so not licensable).	1250 + (5 x 55)	1525
Building containing 20 self-contained flats (Section 257 HMO), freeholder is the proposed licence holder 15 flats privately rented (all different leaseholders) 5 are owner occupied (not licensable)	1250 + (14 x 55)	2020

The licence fee will be ring-fenced, and has been calculated to meet all the Council's costs in administering and enforcing the licensing scheme, including:

- Administration – the actual cost of producing the licence.
- On Costs – accommodation, supplies and services, IT services and equipment, finance and legal costs, recruitment costs.
- Enforcement & compliance costs – staffing costs, travel, property inspections, enforcement action including against landlords operating without a licence.

The fee will be split into 2 parts. The first part payable at the time of application, and the second part to be paid once the intention to grant the licence has been issued.

Financial Presumptions

Staffing levels are based on an assumed time taken to carry out relevant activities such as: processing applications; compliance inspections; targeting of unlicensed properties; compliance activities; tenant & landlord support and specialist support such as communications, legal advice and IT support. This is all additional resource to solely deliver this scheme and does not replace existing activity.

The first part of the fee (application and processing) includes all costs associated with processing the application such as staffing, a proportion of IT equipment and training. The second part of the fee (enforcement) covers the cost associated with property inspections, dealing with complaints and compliance enforcement.

There is an assumed level of staff required for what we believe the scheme will entail, the anticipated expenditure and the level of licences granted. To minimise the risk of needing to increase fees mid-scheme, the level of staff will be either reduced or increased accordingly to ensure the scheme covers the costs of delivery only.

Variations must be made, but no additional fee will be charged, for:

- Change of address and contact details for existing licence holder, manager, owner, mortgagor, freeholder, or leaseholder
- Change of Mortgagor, owner freeholder and leaseholder
- Change in number of permitted occupiers/households

Refund policy

We will give a refund for a property licence if an application was made by mistake. Situations considered to be a mistake are if:

- the property is outside the designated area
- a duplicate application has been made
- an application was made for an exempted property.

The proposed fees above are based on an assumed number of licence applications and calculated income stream against the cost of processing and managing/monitoring an individual licence. This cannot be guaranteed at this stage as it is dependent upon the number of applications received when the scheme is launched and reactively from then onwards. The proposed fees (and discounts), however, remain subject to consultation.

Enforcement of Licensing

Prosecutions or Civil Penalty Fines

The Housing Standards Team are responsible for ensuring compliance with the designation. Failing to apply for a licence can lead to prosecution and a fine of any amount or the owner/landlord can be issued with a Civil Penalty fine of up to £40,000 for each offence. Where a breach of licence conditions is identified the licence holder can also be prosecuted with a fine of any amount per breach or be issued with a Civil

Penalty fine up to £40,000 for each offence. This provides the Local Authority with a choice of whether to prosecute or serve a penalty.

From the outset of the current licensing schemes, the Council made it clear that a robust enforcement approach would be taken to ensure responsible landlords were not disadvantaged, financially or otherwise, by submitting licence applications on time. A six-month grace period was provided at the start of the schemes to allow landlords sufficient time to apply for a licence. Following this period, the Council implemented a proactive and robust enforcement programme to address non-compliance and ensure a level playing field across the private rented sector.

Intelligence is gathered on a street-by-street basis to identify private rented properties that do not have a licence. Officers utilise information from Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Land Registry to identify such properties. We also get intelligence from external and internal agencies, Local Councillors, and tenants themselves, to alert the team to an unlicensed property.

Up until end July 2026, 569 properties had been identified through these methods as being properties that are potentially unlicensed. The majority of these have since made the application following a final warning and some have been identified as exempt from licensing. However, 37 have resulted in Final Civil Penalty Notices being issued to landlords and/or Manging Agents, for operating a property without the required licence. The average level of fine for these Notices is £4,238 (based on our approved Civil Penalty Policy). The Council has undertaken 17 successful prosecutions, further details of these are available under Appendix 5 Case Studies

See Appendix 7 for Sefton’s Civil Penalty Policy.

Rent Repayment Orders

Under sections 73 and 96 of the Housing Act 2004, Rent Repayment Orders (RROs) may be made in respect of properties that should have been licensed but were not. Tenants can apply to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) to recover rent paid during the unlicensed period, for up to 12 months (24 months effective from 1/5/26).

The Council may also seek to recover any Housing Benefit or Universal Credit paid while the property was unlicensed, where the person responsible for licensing the property is also the person having control or management of the dwelling

4 Rent Repayment Orders have been applied for by the Council and granted. Totalling £22,477 in Housing Benefit payments that was paid to the landlord during a 12-month period when the properties were rented but not licensed.

Interim Management Order (IMO)

Landlords who continuously fail to licence a property can have control of their property taken away from them through an Interim Management Order. An IMO transfers the management of a residential property to the Local Authority for a period of up to twelve months. The Local Authority may choose to appoint a managing agent to manage properties on its behalf. In particular the IMO allows the Local Authority:

- Possession of the house against the immediate landlord, and subject to existing rights to occupy;
- To do anything in relation to the house, which could have been done by the landlord, including repairs, collecting rents etc.;
- To spend monies received through rents and other charges for carrying out its responsibility of management, including the administration of the house;
- To create new tenancies (with the consent of the landlord).

Under the IMO the Local Authority must pay to the relevant landlord (that is the person(s) who immediately before the order was made was entitled to the rent for the property) any surplus of income over expenditure (and any interest on such sum) accrued during the period in which the IMO is in force.

Circumstances in which an IMO must be made in respect of licensable property

A Local Authority must take enforcement action in respect of a licensable property (which means an HMO subject to Part 2, or other residential property subject to Part 3) by making an Interim Management Order (IMO) if:

The property ought to be licensed, but is not, and the Local Authority considers there is no reasonable prospect of it granting a licence in the near future. An IMO may not, however, be made on this ground if an effective application is outstanding with the authority for the grant of a licence or a temporary exemption notice or if such a notice is in force

- The Local Authority is satisfied that the Health and Safety Condition is met and, therefore, it would not have granted an application for a licence.
- The Local Authority intends to revoke the licence on one or more of the grounds specified in Parts 2 or 3 of the Housing Act 2004 , other than the property has ceased to be licensable, and upon revocation there will be no reasonable

prospect of the property being licensed in the near future (e.g. to another suitable person) or
- The Local Authority is satisfied that when the licence is revoked the Health and Safety Condition test will be met.

Retaliatory Eviction

The legal framework governing possession proceedings in the private rented sector has changed significantly following the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, including the abolition of Section 21 "no fault" evictions. Landlords are now required to rely on specific statutory grounds for possession and must comply with all relevant legal requirements when seeking to end a tenancy.

The Housing & Planning Act 2016

The Housing & Planning Act 2016 introduced additional new measures designed to tackle “rogue landlords”, relating to the following:

Database of Rogue Landlords and Property Agents

The Database of Rogue Landlords and Property Agents is a tool for local housing authorities in England to keep track of rogue landlords and property agents. Database users are able to view all entries on the database, including those made by other local housing authorities. The database can be searched to keep track of known criminals, especially those operating across Council boundaries. This helps the Council and other local housing authorities to target enforcement activities

The Governments statutory guidance states that local housing authorities should always consider whether it would be appropriate to make an entry on the database when a landlord has been convicted of a Banning Order offence or received two or more financial penalties within a 12-month period.

Banning Order Offences include offences relating to both Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing, e.g. Failure to apply for a licence or a breach of a licence condition

Banning Orders

On conviction of a Housing Act offence, a Local Authority may apply to the First-Tier Tribunal for a Banning Order. It is not compulsory. A ban means that a person cannot act as a landlord for a minimum of 12 months.

A Banning Order is an order made by the First-Tier Tribunal which bans a person from:

- Letting houses in England;
- Engaging in English letting agency work;
- Engaging in English property management work; or
- Doing two or more of those things

A local housing authority can make an application for a Banning Order against a person who has been convicted of a Banning Order offence that was committed at a time when the person was a residential landlord or property agent. A Banning Order can be made against an individual or a body corporate. If a Banning Order is applied for against a body corporate that has been convicted of a Banning Order offence, the local housing authority must also apply for a Banning Order against any individual officer who has been convicted of the same offence arising out of the same conduct[4].

Banning Orders are aimed at irresponsible and criminal landlords and property agents who flout their legal obligations and rent out accommodation which is substandard. The Council intends to make robust use of Banning Orders in line with this policy.

A Banning Order must be for a minimum period of 12 months, there is no statutory maximum period for a Banning Order.

Monitoring the schemes

It is important that progress of the licensing schemes be monitored in line with its respective objectives. It is proposed to measure the progress of the schemes through the collection of data on ASB, together with information directly relating to property condition on a regular basis, at least annually.

Other figures have been used to indicate the levels of problems within the area and these will also be revisited during the course of the project to measure the impact of Licensing.

Sefton will use a performance monitoring framework to measure the outcomes of the Licensing Schemes. The monitoring factors are listed below:

- The number of applications received against number of identified private rented sector
- The number of licenced properties
- The number and outcome of any refused licence applications
- The number of appeals
- The number of prosecutions and Civil Penalty Notices issued on landlords of operating unlicensed
- The number of prosecutions and Civil Penalty Notices for breach of licence conditions
- The number of Rent Repayment Orders
- Any impact on empty properties [possible displacement of landlords from the area]
- The number of landlord and tenant complaints with regards to ASB and property condition.

To continue to measure any effects of displacement into neighbouring areas, we will monitor:

- The number of, or growth in service requests from tenants of private landlords in these neighbouring areas about poor property conditions.
- Changes in levels of ASB in neighbouring areas
- Changes in levels of deprivation in neighbouring areas

Mitigating Risks

Local authorities should carefully consider any potential negative economic impact that licensing may have on their area, particularly the risk of increased costs to landlords who are fully compliant with their obligations. It is also important for local authorities to consider some of the possible effects of making a designation and to include any risk assessment they may have carried out.

A risk analysis of introducing licensing schemes along with mitigating risks can be found at Appendix 8.

Chapter 9 - Consultation

Consultation is a key feature of the development of the proposals. Section 80 (9) of the Housing Act 2004 requires that before making a designation, the Local Authority is required to undertake a formal consultation process on the proposed implementation of the Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing designations and take reasonable steps to consult with persons likely to be affected. This should include local residents, including tenants, landlords, managing agents and other members of the community who live or operate businesses or provide services within the proposed designation and neighbouring areas that may be affected.

Our engagement and consultation process will last for a period of 12 weeks, which will commence, in spring/summer 2027, subject to Cabinet Approval.

To provide an impartial consultation Sefton intends to commission an external consultant to undertake the consultation process.

Further information about the consultation process and how to get involved will be provided on Sefton's website and everyone who is likely to be directly affected by the proposals will be contacted and invited to participate in the consultation. The consultation will be widely promoted, including but not limited to, using the following media.

- We will supply a press release to local media
- Sefton Council website and social media
- We will contact landlords, letting and management agents who operate in and around the proposed area, inviting them to complete a questionnaire
- The consultation will be promoted at Sefton's landlord events and Forums to allow people to come along and discuss the licensing proposals. It will also give an opportunity for landlords to talk about the requirements that will be placed on them by the scheme if it is approved.
- We will engage with neighbouring Local Authorities

Evaluation

Following the closure of the consultation period the responses will be evaluated and published on the Sefton Council's website. The responses will be considered and will inform officer recommendations to Members before making a final decision as to whether to proceed with the re-designation of Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing.

Proposed timescales

Following the twelve-week public consultation, the Local Authority will carefully review all representations made. A report will then be submitted to Cabinet for Member consideration and decision.

If Cabinet agree the proposed re-designations for the purpose of Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing (see Appendix 9) the Selective Licensing and Additional (HMO) Licensing designations would become operative on 1 April 2028 with both schemes lasting for a period of five years. If Cabinet decide not to re-designate the area, Sefton could continue solely with the current reactive enforcement regime, linked with the more assertive promotion of Accreditation. These timescales may be subject to change in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

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Cabinet Report			
Report Title:	**Sandway Business Update**		
Date of meeting:	3 December 2026		
Report to:	Cabinet		
Report of:	Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets		
Portfolio:	Housing and Highways		
Wards affected:	All Wards		
Is this a key decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

This report provides Cabinet with an update on Sandway Homes following completion of construction of its final site at Buckley Hill Lane in Netherton.

The report reviews the company against the original objectives set for it and provides Cabinet with an update on the forecast financial position for the company.

In addition to the delivery of 141 new homes in Sefton, and the creation of significant local employment opportunity across the construction projects, the company is expected to return between £10 million and £10.2 million in total to the Council as shareholder.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet are requested to:

1) To endorse the approach being taken to complete the Sandway Homes Business Plan;
2) To note the content of the report, in particular the estimated financial outturn for the company and the additional benefits from the construction of new homes in the borough.

1. Introduction/Background

1.1 Cabinet considered an update on Sandway Homes in December 2025. At this time the construction of the final scheme at Buckley Hill Lane in Netherton was still underway.

1.2 It is anticipated that construction of the final units at the Buckley Hill Lane site will conclude before Christmas, and although the final sales on the site are still ongoing, this report is provided to Cabinet in order to provide a more detailed update of both the impact that the company has had, against the original objectives set for it, as well as the estimated financial outturn position.

2. Objectives for the Company

2.1 When Cabinet considered a report in October 2017 on the creation of the company the following objectives for it were set:

(1) to generate a better financial return on land assets and a revenue stream for the council,
(2) for the council to be seen to directly contribute to the need for 11,000 new homes in the Borough,
(3) to provide good quality homes that meet market needs

2.2 Despite challenging trading conditions for the company during the period it has operated all of the stated objectives for the company are considered to have been met. The company has delivered 141 good homes in the borough, with a mix of tenures, including 49 affordable homes. This has directly contributed to helping meet the need for new homes in the borough. In addition, the company is expected to return circa £10m to the Council as shareholder.

3. Housing Delivery

3.1 The Sandway Homes Business Plan was approved by Cabinet in July 2019 and comprised the development of three sites in Crossens, Ainsdale and Netherton.

3.2 The completion of these sites has realised 92 new high-quality homes for sale and 49 quality new social homes for rent.

Sites	Homes for Sale	Affordable/Social Homes	TOTAL
Bartons Close, Crossens	17	13 (Together Housing)	30
Meadow Lane, Ainsdale	30	18 (Together Housing)	48
Molyneux Gardens (Buckley Hill Lane), Netherton	45	18 (Council Housing)	63
TOTAL	**92**	**49**	**141**

3.3 The specification of the homes for sale developed by the company largely exceeded that of competitors. This allowed the company to ensure that it was competitive in the market and provided purchasers with good value for money.

3.4 Although the buyers of Sandway homes come from a variety of backgrounds a significant proportion of buyers have been ‘first time buyers’, particularly on the Buckley Hill Lane site in Netherton, where 20 of the 35 plots have been sold to, or reserved by first time buyers at the time of writing. On the Bartons Close and Meadow Lane schemes a total of 24 homes were sold to first time buyers and as shared ownership.

3.5 Sales on the Buckley Hill Lane site are still progressing but have been strong. Currently 35 of the 45 plots for sale are either sold or reserved. The site is popular with potential buyers and enquires, and viewings are healthy. It is anticipated that the remaining plots will be fully reserved by the end of the year.

3.6 The affordable housing developed on the first two sites in Crossen's and Ainsdale has been acquired by Together Housing, a Social Housing Provider (Housing Association) registered with the Regulator of Social Housing.

3.7 The 18 apartments located at Buckley Hill Lane have been acquired by the Council, the first directly owned Council Housing in the borough in 20 years. These properties were handed over to the Council in March of this year and have all been let via Property Pool Plus, including 2 apartments that were reserved for care leavers. The properties are managed on behalf of the Council by Crosby Housing Association, a community provider of social housing registered with the Regulator of Social Housing.

3.8 Working with Sandway Homes has allowed the Council to onboard its first Council Housing in 20 years. The model that has been used of working with Sandway, who built the apartment blocks, has allowed the programme to become established and provides the foundation for further growth.

4. Environmental, Economic and Employment Benefits

4.1 Housing construction delivers significant wider economic and social benefits beyond the provision of new homes. Investment in residential development stimulates local economic growth by creating direct jobs in construction and supporting employment throughout the supply chain, including manufacturers, local trades people, professional services and local retailers.

4.2 Based on research undertaken by economic analysts Capital Economics/L.E.K. Consulting the estimated macro economic multiplier of housing construction is that every £1 invested in new housing construction generates approximately £2.84 of total economic activity, reflecting increased spending, business growth and productivity. Across the three Sandway schemes approximately £25m has been invested in construction in Sefton by the company, resulting in £71m of total economic activity.

4.3 New housing also increases local spending power, attracts further private investment, and generates additional Council Tax revenues to support public services. Over the longer term, an increased housing supply can improve labour market mobility, help businesses recruit and retain workers, reduce pressures associated with housing shortages and homelessness, and support the sustainable growth and prosperity of local communities.

4.4 One of the key benefits of the company has been to realise social value for the wider community in which the company operates including the creation of employment opportunities within Sefton, including for apprentices.

4.2 The company has actively encouraged local employment through their Main Contractors which has resulted in several Sefton residents (including site managers/labourers) employed to work on the Company's sites. This was partly achieved by working alongside Sefton@Work to assist with the recruitment of local residents into jobs.

4.3 In September 2023, the Company supported a 12-week voluntary placement of a Sefton resident who was accessing back to work skills via a voluntary Routeway work placements organised by Sefton@Work. The Company has also participated in several work placements for Sefton school students organized by Sefton@Work and Elevate Education Business Partnership.

4.4 Sandway has actively engaged with the local community. As well as holding resident meetings for concerned residents living close to development, they and some of their partners have also engaged in community action projects, included providing assistance to Woodvale Community Centre in winter-proofing paths on community land, as well as supporting Netherton's L30 Centre with some of their collection for the community events. Sandway and its partners have also regularly contributed to the Mayor of Sefton's Toy Appeal.

4.5 Sandway has worked with local schools and colleges to raise awareness of the number of opportunities available within the construction and development sector. This has included site visits and attendance at dedicated careers events and a school sponsorship programme 'Imagine My Future' organised by Elevate Education Business Partnership. As such, Sandway Homes was awarded Elevate EBP 2025 Patron Status.

4.5 Sandway is committed to reducing energy consumption, minimising pollution and partnering with environmentally sustainable organisations. The Main Contractors used by the company, Barnfield and Challenger, are certified Considerate Contractors which is an industry recognised code of best practice in relation to how they respect local community, care for the environment and value their workforce.

4.6 Waste has been further minimised on site utilising timber frame construction on some of the houses eliminating the requirement for a large volume of materials to be stored on site. Specification and design are high quality and consistent across all of the Company's house types. All the open market sale homes at the Buckley Hill Lane site have achieved Energy Performance ratings of A.

5. **Financial Implications**

Financial Challenges

5.1 The period over which Sandway has been operating has been an exceptionally challenging economic environment, facing a succession of shocks that have increased costs, constrained labour supply and weakened consumer confidence.

5.2 Following the 2016 Brexit referendum, the sector experienced uncertainty around future economic growth, reduced availability of skilled European labour and increased costs for imported construction materials due to sterling depreciation. These pressures were compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, which caused widespread site closures, supply chain disruption and material shortages. UK construction output fell sharply during the first lockdown, with new work output declining by around 45% year-on-year in April 2020, before companies faced significant difficulties sourcing labour and materials as the industry reopened.

5.3 As the sector emerged from the pandemic, housebuilders were confronted by a period of unprecedented construction cost inflation. The British Cost Information Service (BCIS) reported that building materials cost inflation reached a 40-year high in 2021, with overall material costs increasing by approximately 19.7% in the year to September 2021. Key

commodities experienced even greater rises, with timber prices increasing by almost 80% and structural steel by more than 60% over the same period. Annual growth in the BCIS Materials Cost Index exceeded 20% during 2022, while the ONS recorded construction output price inflation of 9.6% in June 2022, the highest rate since records began in 2014.

5.4 These inflationary pressures coincided with the wider cost of living crisis, driven by rising energy prices, high inflation and increasing interest rates. Mortgage affordability deteriorated significantly as borrowing costs rose, reducing demand for new homes and placing downward pressure on sales rates.

5.5 At the same time, developers continued to face elevated build costs, higher wage demands and increased financing costs. BCIS data shows that private housing construction cost inflation peaked at 15.3% in 2022, while broader building cost indices suggest that contractor input costs increased by more than 50% between 2015 and 2026.

5.6 Consequently, housebuilders have had to navigate a prolonged period in which both development costs and market uncertainty have been exceptionally high, creating significant challenges for maintaining viability and delivering new housing at pace.

5.7 Despite these exceptional challenges Sandway has continued to develop and has continued to sell high-quality homes. The biggest impact on the company from this period of economic uncertainty was the decision taken to not continue with further sites once the three sites outlined in the 2017 Business Plan were completed. Despite the success that the company has had in meeting its housing objectives, the growing homeless and social housing crisis in the borough meant that the focus shifted away from a private sales-led model to using the Council's assets to both increase the quantum and accelerate the delivery of Affordable Homes in the borough.

5.8 This change in focus is a consequence of housing issues affecting every local authority in the country following the significant economic challenges seen at a national level. In order to help meet the housing needs of over 230 households in Temporary Accommodation, or approximately 3,000 people on the Property Pool Plus waiting list the Council has formed a Local Strategic Partnership with the Sovini Group.

5.8 The Council's Sefton 2030 partnership with Sovini is key to meeting our commitment to deliver 1,000 new Affordable Homes in the borough by 2030, using sites originally intended to be considered for the next phase of Sandway activity.

5.9 In addition, to the housing outputs from the Sefton 2030 partnership will also help provide construction training places for local people, economic opportunities for local businesses as well as improvements to how neighbourhoods are managed.

Loan Funding

5.10 The original Business Plan assumed that peak debt of £5.1m would be reached in December 2021. Due to the delays associated with the programme and more specifically sales periods, the Company submitted a revised business plan to Cabinet in October 2021 seeking an increase in the loan agreement from £5.1m to £8.3m which was subsequently approved following the submission of an agreed risk and exit strategy.

5.11 However, the company has only drawn down £8.138m of the approved loan facility and this remains the outstanding loan repayment sum.

5.12 Based on current estimates of income and expenditure, and the anticipated rate of sales of the remaining plots at Buckley Hill Lane it is expected that the loan will start to be repaid with circa £4.3m expected to be received in December 2026 with the remainder of the loan being repaid to the Council in spring 2027.

5.13 In addition, to the full repayment of the £8.138m principal loan sum the loan interest payment is currently calculated to be £900,483, and following a final loan interest calculation this could increase by a further 10%.

Land Receipts

5.14 Based on the original land valuations for the three sites developed by Sandway as has previously been reported the Council's balance sheet currently shows a credit of £2.23m for land receipts. However, this is based on the Greenfield Gross Valuation for the sites at the time the company was set up.

5.15 As has been outlined above the company has been in operation during a very challenging economic period for house builders and this has reduced the estimated land value that the company is able to pay.

5.16 Residual Land Valuation (RLV) is a recognised development appraisal methodology used to assess the value of land based on its development potential. The approach estimates the completed value of a proposed development and deducts all associated development costs, including construction, finance, professional fees, planning obligations and a reasonable developer's return. The resulting residual figure represents the value attributable to the land and can be used to inform decisions relating to land acquisition, disposal, viability assessments and negotiations with developers.

5.17 RLV is routinely used to establish the value of Council owned land disposals, including disposals to the private sector and to Sovini as part of the Sefton 2030 partnership. In the case of development by Sandway the residual land value for the three sites is not based on the estimated cost of development but rather on known development costs, and sales income, albeit the income from the last few remaining sales at Buckely Hill Lane are yet to be confirmed.

5.18 Taking into account the significant increases in construction costs, and a downward pressure on values due to a tightening up of the market the estimated land receipt has been revised down. However, the exact sum cannot be fully confirmed until the remaining plots at Buckley Hill Lane are sold, and final costs considered.

5.19 Although the final receipt will reflect a downgrade on the original land value, the original valuation was done at a time when the economics of house building were very different to the period the company operated through. Had the Council disposed of these sites for housebuilding over the same period it is very likely that residual land values to the market would have resulted in a lower land receipt because of these economic challenges. In addition, disposal to another developer would have meant that values would be further eroded by the developer's return. In development viability assessments, a developer's profit is often assumed at between 15-20% of Gross Development Value (GDV) for market housing and this would have further eroded the land values for the three sites.

5.20 As the Council is the sole shareholder in Sandway Homes, and therefore the company has not been driven by the same requirement to make profit as developers with private shareholders it has been able to maximise the land value it can return to the Council as

well as deliver the range of benefits from this housebuilding activity set out elsewhere in this report.

5.21 As above, the final land receipt cannot be confirmed at the time of writing, but is expected to total circa £0.8m.

Finance Summary

5.22 In summary, from the provision of a loan of £8.138m, the total repaid to the Council will be circa £10m, from the loan, plus interest, plus the land acquisitions. This is in addition to the quantity and quality of homes created in Sefton, especially for first-time buyers; in addition to the enhancement of places following the development of underused sites and assets; and in addition to the creation of quality local apprenticeship and employment opportunities in construction.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 All legal implications are outlined in the body of the report.

7. Risk Implications

7.1 There is a risk that the last few remaining sales on the Buckley Hill Lane site do not achieve the estimated valuations, however, this is considered to be unlikely considering the experience of sale of the site to date and the fact the vast majority of plots have either been sold or reserved.

7.2 The remaining risks relating to the company are being managed closely and are reducing due to the fact that the company is winding up its activities.

8. Staffing HR Implications

8.1 Staff numbers within the company have been carefully managed to reduce unnecessary overhead as the company has been wound down, but to also ensure that sufficient cover is available to complete the remaining site. The two remaining staff are subject to private agreements relating to their employment with the company.

9. Conclusion

9.1 A Council owned housebuilding company was an innovative approach to help meeting housing needs at the time it was set up. Despite the massive challenges that the company faced during its period of operation it nonetheless delivered what it said it would, helping to meet a housing need for good quality market housing, and social housing in the borough.

9.2 In addition, to meeting its housing objectives it has also delivered a range of wider economic, environmental and employment benefits in the borough.

9.3 Financially it is forecast that the company will fully repay the outstanding loan sum, in addition to, at least, £900,483 in loan payment interest, and the confirmed land receipts. From a loan of £8.138m, this is expected to be between £10m - £10.2m. The first tranche of payment of £4.3m is expected before the end of the calendar year with the balance when the company ceases operations in the spring 2027.

9.4 Although the company has performed well under difficult trading conditions, however, over the period the company has been operating the housing need picture has changes and the Council has responded to changing government and local prioritises through the establishment of the Sefton 2030 partnership with the Sovini Group. This will focus purely on the delivery of affordable homes on available council owned sites, rather than the mix of outright sale, social housing and low cost home ownership through Sandway.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.
Impact on Children and Young People: There is a positive impact on Children and Young People as the company has provided 141 high quality homes, many of which are for families and many which have purchased by First Time Buyers.
Climate Emergency Implications: The recommendations within this report will have a Neutral impact.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources / S151 Officer (FD.2005/26) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.1005/26) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Not Applicable.

Implementation Date for the Decision :

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Cabinet decision.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Development photos and plans

Background Papers:

None

Appendix 1 – Photos and Plans











Cabinet Report	Sefton Council		
Report Title:	**Corporate Performance Report Quarter 2 2026/27**		
Date of meeting:	3 December 2026		
Report to:	Cabinet		
Report of:	Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial		
Portfolio:	Corporate Services		
Wards affected:	All		
Is this a key decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

On the 9th of January 2025 Cabinet received and considered the new corporate performance reporting arrangements for Q1 and Q2 of 2024/25 against the Sefton Corporate Plan (2024 to 2027). Since then, performance has continued to be reported and scrutinised quarterly, with the last report for Q1 of 2026/27 presented to Cabinet on the on the 3rd September 2026.

This report presents the Corporate Performance Report (Annexe A) for Quarter 2 of 2026/27 covering the 3-month period of July, August and September 2026, which demonstrates performance against the commitments agreed in the Sefton Corporate Plan (2024 to 2027).

Recommendation(s):

(1) Receive and consider the corporate performance report for Q2 of 2026/27, against the Sefton Corporate Plan (2024 to 2027).

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

1.1 The key performance indicators detailed in the Q2 2026/27, Corporate Performance Report, set out in Annexe A, are summarised below:

a) Children & Young People. Of the eight core measures: eight have a target set, four of which have been met or exceeded, with one (proportion of cared for children in residential care home placements) only marginally outside target levels. Work continues delivering improvement across all areas of the improvement plan.

b) Adult Social Care. Of the eight core measures, six have a target set, five of which have been met or exceeded. Work continues embedding the 'Better at Home' approach, re-configuration of the contact processes, and Extra Care housing provision.

c) Health & Wellbeing. Of the seven core measures, four have a target set, three of which has been met or exceeded; data for three measures are currently unavailable for Q2 due to timeliness of data access. Work continues on the delivery of the Child Poverty Strategy, Respiratory programme, and Living Well service.

d) Everyday Services. Of the six core measures, four have a target set, four of which have been met or exceeded; one is unavailable for Q2 due to timeliness of data access. The Street Cleansing Service continue to have a significant focus on fly tipping issues, working in collaboration with Environmental Enforcement colleagues as part of the Council's 'Cleaner, Greener, Together' campaign and achieving notable improvements in the volume of FPN's (fixed penalty notices) issued in addition to pursuing prosecution cases of evidential illegal waste handling.

e) Inclusive Growth. Of the six core measures, six have a target set, five of which have been met or exceeded. Significant work continues on the Southport recovery plan and wider regeneration programmes including Bootle Strand, MLEC, and Southport Pier.

f) Financial Sustainability & Corporate Services. Of the eight core measures, six have a target set, three of which have been met or exceeded. The necessary amount of Council Tax income due in the year had been collected and the Council remains on target to achieve the required and estimated long-term collection rate for 2026/27 (97.25%). Similarly for Business Rates, at the end of quarter 2, 57.9% of income due had been collected and again this is therefore on target to reach the required and estimated long-term collection rate for 2026/27 (99%).

1.2 The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's strategic priorities for the short to medium term, aligned to the medium-term financial planning process. It describes where overall the Council is headed (Council priorities) and outlines a roadmap to get there (corporate objectives).

1.3 During 2016 Sefton Council led on developing a new and exciting vision for the future of the borough. Working closely with partners, businesses, private sector organisations, the voluntary, community and faith sector and the wider Sefton community, the aim behind the work was to understand and focus on what is important for the borough and its communities in the future. Imagine Sefton 2030 engaged with thousands of people, local businesses, and potential investors to create a vision that collectively promotes shared prosperity, coordinated public investment, and a healthy environment and population. Vision 2030 was agreed in November 2016 and guides the Council's long-term planning - helping to stimulate growth, prosperity, set new expectation levels and to help focus on what is important for Sefton, its residents, and communities. The Vision 2030 informed the Council priorities and its corporate objectives to deliver those priorities, for the short to medium term, which were set out in its original Corporate Plan (2023-26).

1.4 The revitalised Corporate Plan (2024 to 2027) refines the priorities and reflects the ambition for the Council and for the borough. It is designed to ensure the Council is fit for the challenges and opportunities of the future and can evidence how it has and will deliver for its communities. It will ensure that the Council delivers on its ambition for Sefton to be a confident, thriving and

connected borough that offers the things we all need to start, live and age well, where everyone has a positive and healthier future:

1) Children & Young People - Delivering improved children's services so that Sefton is an inclusive child-friendly borough where children and families thrive.
2) Adult Social Care - Delivering improved adult social care so that people are empowered to live an independent life, exercise choice and control, and be fully informed.
3) Health & Wellbeing - Delivering improved health and wellbeing for everyone in Sefton and reduce inequality.
4) Working for Our Communities Every Day - Delivering on the services that matter to residents, working together to deliver affordable services which achieve the best possible outcomes for our communities.
5) Inclusive Growth - Delivering on our ambition for a prosperous Sefton, to enhance Sefton's offer as a place to live, learn, earn, and visit.
6) Financial Sustainability – driven by medium term financial planning that provides the strategy, basis for annual budget setting and how the Council will spend its financial resources in support of the delivery of the Council's objectives.

1.5 The refreshed Corporate Plan will be used as an opportunity to ensure that underpinning strategies and plans across the organisation reflect the key priorities of the Council over the next period, and it will help to keep the Council priorities front and centre corporately, with partners, and collectively owned.

1.6 The Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge completed in November 2023, recognised the progress that the Council has made to develop a Corporate Plan, which identified Council key priorities and corporate objectives. The Local Government Association (LGA) also recognised the progress that the Council had made to embed the service level improvements in performance management, with regular, collective, and cross-cutting performance discussions at Cabinet. To support the council, it was suggested that there was further opportunity for improvement through monitoring the Corporate Plan objectives with a performance scorecard which tracks progress against the Council's key corporate priorities and ensuring that similarly routine performance information is provided to Scrutiny and all wider members. Suitable corporate monitoring and accountability will also be important for keeping on track, for supporting early and well-informed remedial / corrective action and avoiding any future surprises.

1.7 The Local Government Association (LGA) specifically recommended a review and refinement of the Council's performance management arrangements and to develop a performance management reporting framework, that reflects the Council vision, Council priorities and corporate objectives, with the incorporation of direction of travel and benchmarking to better understand relative performance, and the use of targets to articulate ambition and focus attention on service improvement.

1.8 In January 2024 officers refreshed the Service Planning and Performance Management Framework for the Council, which sets out how performance management will be aligned to the service planning process throughout each layer of the organisation, so that the Sefton Vision 2030, the Council's Core Purpose, the Council priorities and corporate objectives identified in our refreshed Corporate Plan are shared and transparent to our workforce, Members, key partners and our citizens In Sefton. The framework will ensure that the Council achieves what it sets out to do in its Vision, Core Purpose, and Corporate Plan, with a focus

on performance management rather than simply performance measurement. Reflecting on best practice, the Service Planning and Performance Management Framework:

1.9 A set of key performance reporting indicators (KPIs) which form the basis of the refreshed Corporate Performance Report (Annexe A) and are being used to track progress against the key corporate priorities in the Corporate Plan have also been developed.

1.10 The recommended timetable for reporting performance to Cabinet is set out below:

Operating/Fiscal Quarter		**Reporting**
Q1	April, May & June	September
Q2	July, August & September	December
Q3	October, November & December	March
Q4	January, February & March	June/July

1.11 The Corporate Performance Report set out in Annexe A provides the latest report of this new approach and reflects performance for Q2 of 2026/27, using the most recent data available at the time of reporting under the constraints of the reporting timetable. It should be noted that as a result it may not be possible for some services to report on the most recent period due to the time taken to record and validate information before reporting and where reporting is provided for the most recent period this may well be subject to change in subsequent reports due to similar timeliness of recording and processing issues.

1.12 The quantitative measures included the refreshed Corporate Performance Report (Annexe A) are the suggested indicators to be used to measure progress, however, moving forward officers will continually review and make recommendations to Cabinet to amend as necessary the performance measures, to ensure that the Council achieves the right balance between the macro and micro analysis. Some performance data does not lend itself to being reported quarterly, for example school performance and pupil attainment data which could typically be presented annually in September. Therefore, the quarterly performance information may be supplemented with subject specific information at relevant points throughout the fiscal year when relevant data is available. Furthermore, future performance reporting to Cabinet may also draw on the outcome of relative consultation and engagement activity to demonstrating progress and impact using both quantitative and qualitative insight.

2. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications.

3. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

4. Risk Implications

There are no identified risk implications at this stage of developing the corporate performance reporting process.

5 Staffing HR Implications

There are no HR implications.

6 Conclusion

The refreshed Sefton Corporate Plan 2024 to 2027 states the specific corporate objectives to deliver the Council's key strategic priorities over this next period and will be used as an opportunity to ensure that underpinning strategies and plans across the organisation also reflect the key priorities of the Council over the next period. It will help to keep the Council priorities front and centre, corporately, with partners, and collectively owned.

The Sefton Service Planning and Performance Management Framework 2024 sets out how performance management will be aligned to the service planning process throughout each layer of the organization, so that the Sefton 2030 Vision, the Council's Core Purpose, the Council priorities and corporate objectives identified in our Corporate Plan are shared and transparent to our workforce, Members, key partners and our citizens In Sefton.

The refreshed Corporate Performance Report (Annexe A) will continue to be used to track progress against the key corporate priorities in the Corporate Plan and ensure that routine performance information is provided to members. Moving forward officers will continually review and make recommendations to Cabinet to amend as necessary the performance measures, to ensure that the Council achieves the right balance between the macro and micro analysis and will also draw on the outcome of relative consultation and engagement activity to demonstrating progress and impact using both quantitative and qualitative insight.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

Equality Implications: The performance management process reaffirms continued focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
Impact on Children and Young People: The refreshed Corporate Plan shows the Council's continuing commitment to children and young people, and the Corporate Performance Report will be used to demonstrate improving outcomes for children and their families.
Climate Emergency Implications: The performance management process reaffirms the Council's approach to mitigation and adaptation actions and the positive impacts in all aspects of the Council's work.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.2048/26) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.1048/26) have been consulted, and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

Furthermore, the Executive Leadership Team and the Strategic Leadership Board continue to be consulted on the set of key performance reporting indicators (KPIs) which form the basis of the refreshed Corporate Performance Report (Annexe A) and will be used to track progress against the key corporate priorities in the Corporate Plan.

(B) External Consultations

The refresh of the Corporate Plan draws on the previous extensive prior consultation - Imagine Sefton 2030, which engaged thousands of people, local businesses, visitors, and potential investors to create the Sefton Vision 2030 that collectively promotes shared prosperity, coordinated public investment, and a healthy environment and population.

Implementation Date for the Decision :

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Cabinet decision.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

(1) The refreshed Corporate Performance Report, including data for operating/fiscal quarter Q2 2026/27, set out in Annexe A.

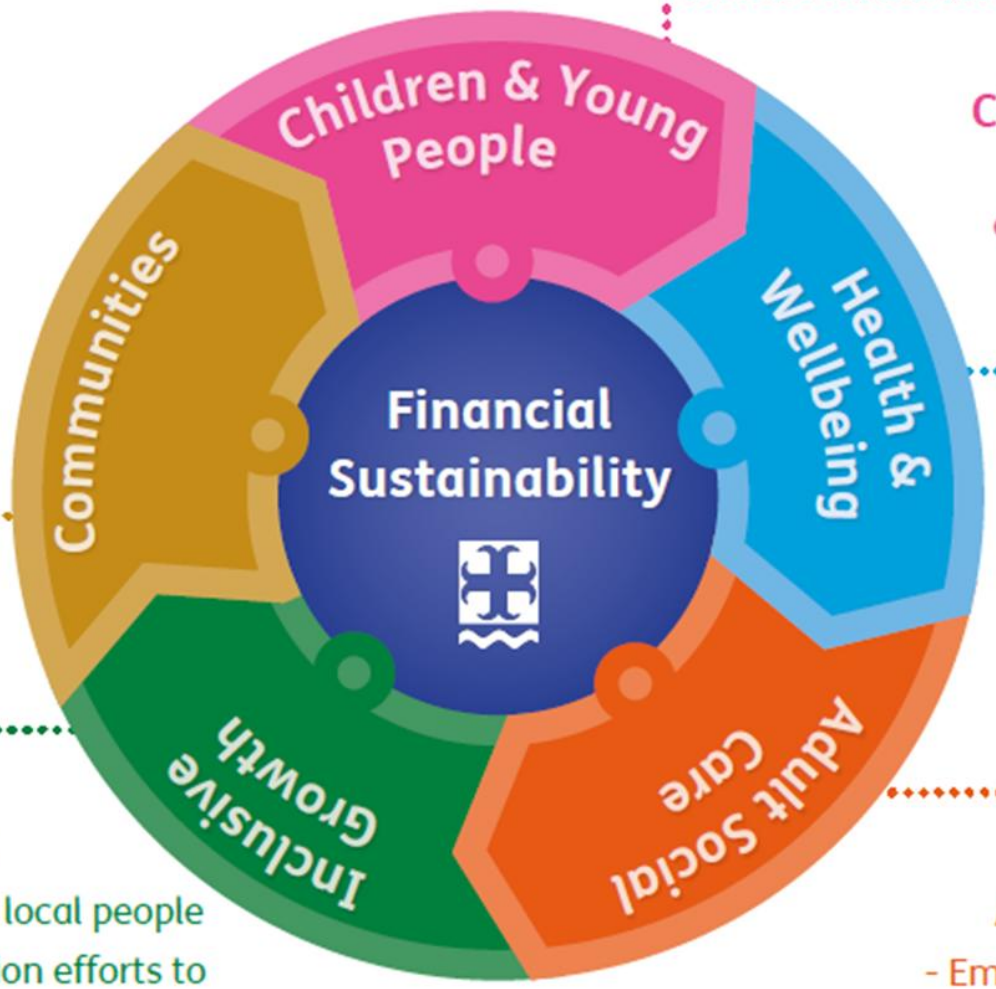
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council

Corporate Performance



2026/27: Quarter 2

Our Council Priorities



Working for Our Communities Every Day

- Working together to deliver affordable services which achieve the best possible outcomes for our communities

Children & Young People

- Sefton is an inclusive child-friendly borough where children and families thrive

Health & Wellbeing

- Improving the health and wellbeing of everyone in Sefton and reduce inequality

Inclusive Growth

- Creating more and better jobs for local people
- Expanding housing and regeneration efforts to stimulate job creation in construction, infrastructure, and related sectors, while improving living standards for Sefton residents

Adult Social Care

- Empowering people to live an independent life, exercise choice and control, and be fully informed

Children & Young People. Of the eight core measures: eight have a target set, four of which have been met or exceeded and one marginally outside target range. Work continues delivering improvement across all areas of the improvement plan.

Adult Social Care. Of the eight core measures, six have a target set, five of which have been met or exceeded. Work continues embedding the 'Better at Home' approach, re-configuration of the contact processes, and Extra Care housing provision.

Health & Wellbeing. Of the seven core measures, four have a target set, three of which have been met or exceeded; data for three measures are currently unavailable for Q2 due to timeliness of data access. Work continues delivery of the Child Poverty Strategy, Respiratory programme, and Living Well service.

Everyday Services (Communities). Of the six core measures, four have a target set, four of which have been met or exceeded; one is unavailable for Q2 due to timeliness of data access. Work has been successfully completed on clearing many major areas of fly-tipping and some sixty-nine rear-entries have been cleared in the south of the Borough.

Inclusive Growth. Of the six core measures, six have a target set, five of which have been met or exceeded; Significant work continues the Southport recovery plan and wider regeneration programmes including Bootle Strand, MLEC, and Southport Pier.

Financial Sustainability & Corporate Services. Of the eight core measures, six have a target set, three of which have been met or exceeded and one marginally outside target range.

Our priority actions

- ❑ Deliver the improvement priorities set out in our vision for children's social care.
- ❑ Develop an effective workforce strategy to help recruitment and retention with a focus on 'growing our own', opportunities and continuous professional development.
- ❑ Improve delivery of SEND services for children and young people to give people the best opportunity to fulfil their potential and improve the financial stability of the Council.
- ❑ Help young people access appropriate education provision that is local.
- ❑ Achieve educational excellence for all.
- ❑ Be an excellent corporate parent.
- ❑ Be a service that reflects the views and needs of children and families of Sefton.

Measuring our success

- ❑ More and more children living safely within their family network.
- ❑ The children in our care achieving their ambitions through education, employment or training.
- ❑ More families accessing the support they need through early intervention such as our family hubs.
- ❑ More children accessing the right type of education support, particularly those with Education Health and Care Plans.
- ❑ Positive external scrutiny, to continue to maintain a good OFSTED rating.
- ❑ More of Sefton children attending Sefton schools and making progress.
- ❑ The number of young people in employment, education or training.
- ❑ More children in care living with our foster carers.
- ❑ A stable and permanent frontline workforce.



The latest quarter shows 75% of all Child and Family Assessments were authorised in timescale. Sefton's performance sits between 76%-78% across the period and remains below the target figure of 82%. The rolling 12 months front-door assessments (not including review) in timescale figure has dropped a little at the end of Q2, achieving 77% compared to 80%-81% in the previous 3 quarters. Performance in timeliness for new, annual review assessments and re-referred children need to continue improving to achieve or surpass target.

Although Sefton's performance for rolling 12 months Initial Child Protection Conferences in timescale has remained level with an average of 94%-95% across the period, Sefton continues to be positioned well above target (81%). Child Protection Review Conferences in timescale continues to surpass target, achieving nearly 100% in each quarter.

We are ambitious in our aim to create a permanent and stable workforce and our target of 20% is below both the England (22%) and regional (26%) average. After a significant drop in percentage of agency workers covering permanent social worker positions between Q3 (22%) and Q4 (12%), figures have slightly increased and currently sits at 14%. The latest figure surpasses Sefton's target, and the reduction is down to a process of reducing agency engagement by carrying out a fast-track exercise to onboard agency to permanent positions and external recruitment processes. Sefton is below national and regional figures.

Following Q3, re-referral figures are between 20%-22% which is below target (24%). The consistency in re-referrals is a key indicator for the DFE that statutory services are effective. At the end of Q2, Sefton is just shy of matching national (21%) and statistical neighbours (19%).

The proportion of young people placed in a Residential Children's Home setting has fallen after seeing 15%-16% between Q3 – Q1 (the latest position at 12% equates to 69 children). Sefton have inversely seen a positive rise in number of children in kinship and mainstream fostering. Whilst there remains more to do to reach target, the decrease continues at a rate which continues to ensure safe care for our children.

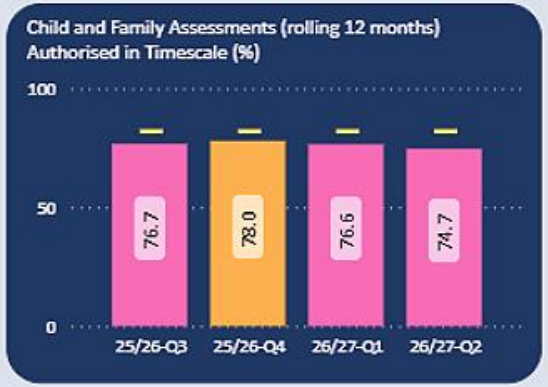
Sefton has fully implemented the *Working Together to Improve Attendance* guidance, with attendance remaining a key priority for both schools and the Local Authority. Strengthened systems, enhanced monitoring and improved multi-agency collaboration have contributed to an increase in overall attendance from 92.0% in 2024/25 to 92.7% in 2025/26, while persistent absence reduced from 19.7% to 16.1%.

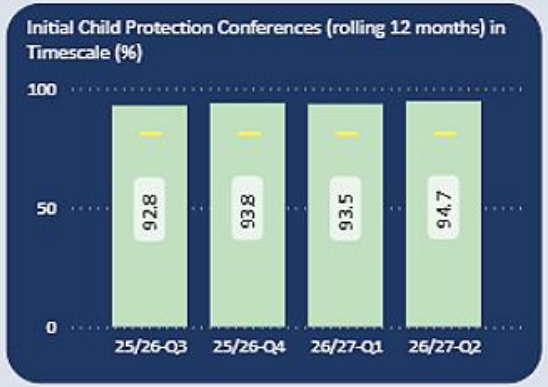
Note: The Agency figures above only show the proportion of agency workers covering permanent social worker vacancies, excluding maternity and sickness.

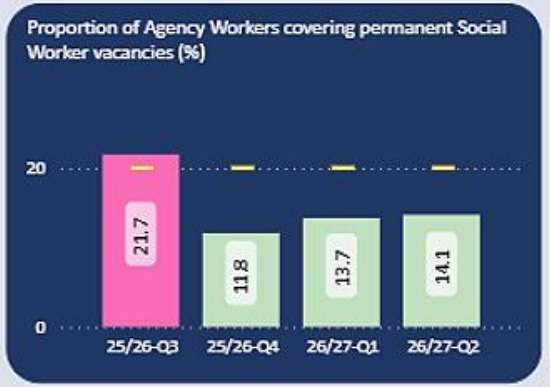


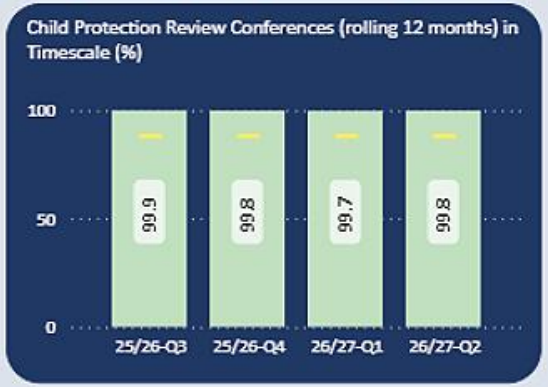
On or better than target
Within 5% of target
Worse than target
Not Targeted
Target

ID	Metric	Good Is	25/26-Q3	25/26-Q4	26/27-Q1	26/27-Q2	Direction of Travel	Target	Distance from Target
C01	Child and Family Assessments (rolling 12 months) Authorised in Timescale (%)	High	76.7	78.0	76.6	74.7	▼ (2.5%)	82.0	7.3 (8.9%)
C02	Initial Child Protection Conferences (rolling 12 months) in Timescale (%)	High	92.8	93.8	93.5	94.7	▲ (1.3%)	81.0	Met / Exceeded
C03	Proportion of Agency Workers covering permanent Social Worker vacancies (%)	Low	21.7	11.8	13.7	14.1	▲ (2.9%)	20.0	Met / Exceeded
C04	Child Protection Review Conferences (rolling 12 months) in Timescale (%)	High	99.9	99.8	99.7	99.8	▲ (0.1%)	88.0	Met / Exceeded
C05	Referrals (rolling 12 months) to Children's Social Care that were within 12 months of a previous referral (%)	Low	21.9	20.7	21.4	21.5	▲ (0.4%)	24.0	Met / Exceeded
C06	Proportion of Cared for Children in Residential Care Home placement at period end (%)	Low	15.9	14.9	14.6	12.0	▼ (17.4%)	11.8	0.2 (2.0%)
C07	Proportion of all children who missed 10% of their possible sessions (Persistently Absent) (%)	Low	20.8	18.5	18.6	23.4	▲ (25.8%)	21.0	2.4 (11.4%)
C08	Proportion of children with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP) issued within 20-weeks completed in period (%)	High	35.8	25.3	19.2	12.2	▼ (36.5%)	50.0	37.8 (75.6%)

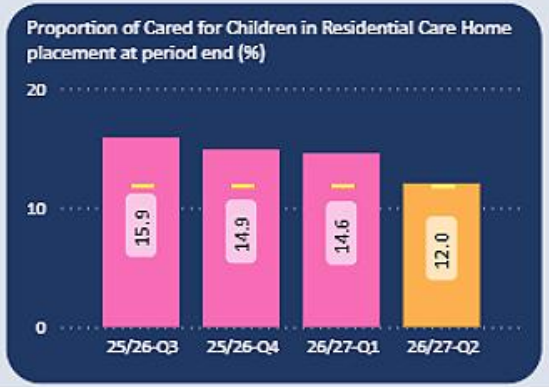


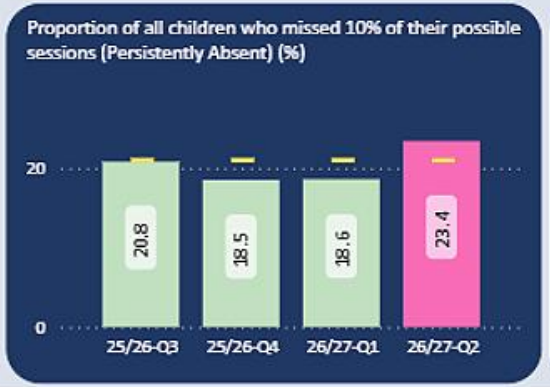


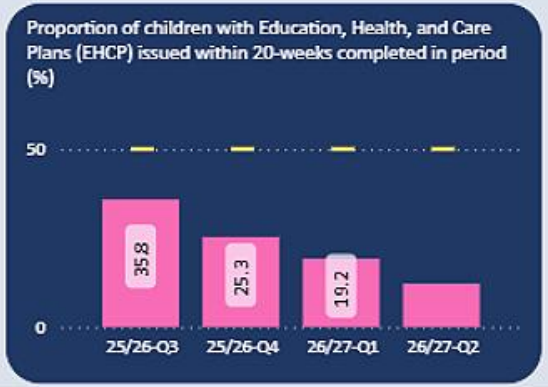










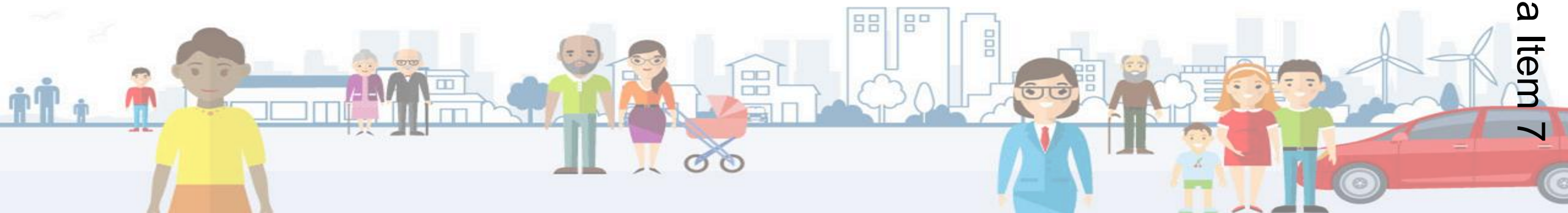


Our priority actions

- ❑ Develop plans for more accommodation that meets the needs of our population e.g. extra care.
- ❑ Create policies to support our commitment to creating more extra care accommodation spaces.
- ❑ Preparing for our Care Quality Commission assessment.
- ❑ Have more people supported at home and in the community accessing early intervention support with less people needing to access long term residential care.
- ❑ Ensure sufficient provision of high-quality care across Sefton.
- ❑ Work in partnership to improve the support services available for people with complex lives.
- ❑ Continue to develop a sustainable and highly skilled adult social care workforce.
- ❑ Increase opportunities for local people with lived experience of care and support to influence our approach to service improvement.
- ❑ Work with the Care Quality Commission to assess our quality of care and identify areas for improvement.

Measuring our success

- ❑ Proportion of individuals supported long term in the community.
- ❑ Proportion of suitable individuals accessing reablement services.
- ❑ Proportion of individuals placed with good or outstanding providers.
- ❑ Proportion of individuals who believe the service is of a high quality.
- ❑ Partnership working to improve the support services available for individuals with complex lives.
- ❑ Development of an effective workforce strategy.
- ❑ Establishment of learning and development programme with focus on leadership and professional practice.
- ❑ Quality assurance framework refreshed and reporting on percentage of case file audits completed.
- ❑ Proportion of individuals who responded about their quality of service.
- ❑ Proportion of service developments co-produced.
- ❑ Continuing to improve adult social care towards a good/outstanding CQC rating.



Quarter 2 2026/27 shows an improving picture for Adult Social Care (ASC), although the direction of travel remains mixed across the eight performance measures. Five measures improved compared with Q1, including people's experience of services, safeguarding outcomes and workforce indicators. Five of the six measures with a numerical target are meeting or exceeding it. Supporting more people in the community remains an area requiring continued focus, alongside the gradual increase in the proportion receiving long-term support in residential care.

The proportion of people supported long term in the community (A01) reduced slightly from 68.1% to 67.8%, remaining below the 70% target. The proportion of individuals in long-term services living in a residential care home (A02) increased from 23.0% to 23.3%. The proportion of people in residential care is higher than we would wish, although placements reflect individuals' assessed needs. Through Better at Home and ongoing commissioning work, we are strengthening community alternatives wherever these can safely meet people's needs.

Progress on future accommodation provides a positive example of this work such as the Birchbrook development in Ainsdale, which will provide 90 extra care apartments for people aged 55 and over with care and support needs. The scheme will combine independent accommodation with 24-hour staffing and care technology. Alongside it, Willow View will provide an eight-bed short-term assessment and support unit for people with learning disabilities and autism who have complex care needs. People with lived experience, families and carers have helped shape Willow View's design. These developments will strengthen the range of local options, although their future capacity should not be treated as an improvement already reflected in Q2 performance.

Performance for older people still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital (A03) remains strong at 91.5%, compared with 92.0% in Q1 and against a target of 82%. Although this represents a small reduction, the measure continues to show that a high proportion remain at home following discharge. Maintaining this position remains important alongside Better at Home's focus on Home First and community support. The slight decline warrants continued monitoring, particularly as the service works to increase the proportion of people supported outside residential care.

uality and experience improved during Q2. The proportion of people who feel positively about their experience of Adult Social Care (A04) increased from 93.0% to 95.0%, remaining well above the 70% rget. The proportion placed in care homes rated Good or Outstanding (A05) also increased, from 79.9% to 80.3%, above the 75% target. In Q2, following a care-home closure, ASC teams worked with a sident's family and the ambulance service to arrange a safe move to a new home closer to loved ones, where she settled well, illustrating how careful assessment and partnership working can protect ıe relationships that matter to people.

laking Safeguarding Personal outcomes (A06) improved substantially, rising from 90.6% in Q1 to 98.0% in Q2 and returning above the 95% target. This is a positive change in the proportion of people whose personal safeguarding outcomes were met. Continued attention to people's wishes, involvement and experience remains important in sustaining this improvement.

Co-production continued to support service development during Q2. Following promotion in July, the Support and Technology Together group held two successful engagement sessions that month, bringing together residents, people with lived experience, providers and council colleagues. Participants explored Technology Enabled Care equipment, the self-assessment tool and Sefton's Virtual House, with positive feedback and strong interest in how technology could support independence. These sessions provided an opportunity for people to influence the development of the local technology offer.

During September, ASC communications marked World Alzheimer's Month by raising awareness of dementia support for residents, families and carers. World Suicide Prevention Day activity encouraged residents to seek help with their mental health and wellbeing, highlighted support across Sefton and showcased the work of Community Mental Health Teams.

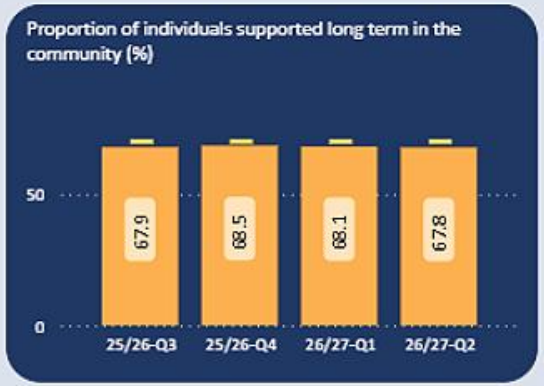
Both workforce measures improved in Q2, with Social Worker staff turnover (A07) reducing from 2.0% to 1.6%, while the proportion of agency workers (A08) fell from 8.7% to 6.5%, remaining below the 18% target. This is encouraging following the increase in turnover reported in Q1. A recent staff survey highlighted strengths in supervision and learning, alongside priorities for improving workload, induction and communication. A staff Task and Finish Group is being established to turn this feedback into practical actions, with the ASC Workforce Board overseeing priorities and monitoring progress.

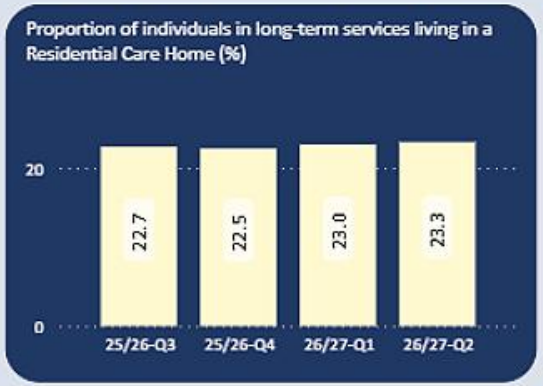
Looking ahead, work is underway around the development of a new five-year Adult Social Care Strategy, with formal consultation planned for the new year. Staff, people who draw on care and support, carers and partners will help shape its priorities, maintaining a focus on independence and the outcomes that matter to local people.

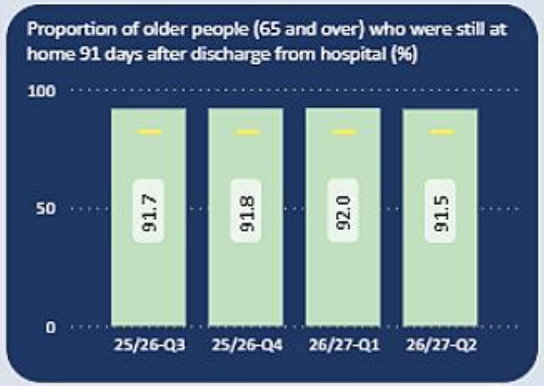


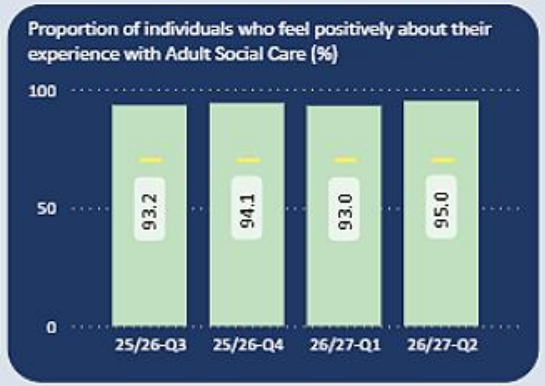
On or better than target
Within 5% of target
Worse than target
Not Targeted
Target

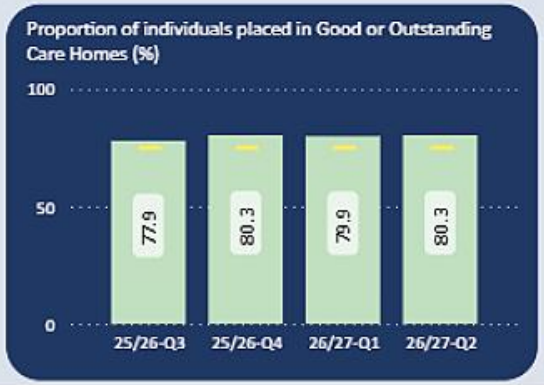
ID	Metric	Good Is	25/26-Q3	25/26-Q4	26/27-Q1	26/27-Q2	Direction of Travel	Target	Distance from Target
A01	Proportion of individuals supported long term in the community (%)	High	67.9	68.5	68.1	67.8	▼ (0.4%)	70	2.2 (3.1%)
A02	Proportion of individuals in long-term services living in a Residential Care Home (%)	Low	22.7	22.5	23.0	23.3	▲ (1.3%)		N/A
A03	Proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital (%)	High	91.7	91.8	92.0	91.5	▼ (0.5%)	82	Met / Exceeded
A04	Proportion of individuals who feel positively about their experience with Adult Social Care (%)	High	93.2	94.1	93.0	95.0	▲ (2.2%)	70	Met / Exceeded
A05	Proportion of individuals placed in Good or Outstanding Care Homes (%)	High	77.9	80.3	79.9	80.3	▲ (0.5%)	75	Met / Exceeded
A06	Proportion of individuals whose 'Making Safeguarding Personal' outcomes were met (%)	High	98.1	95.8	90.6	98.0	▲ (8.2%)	95	Met / Exceeded
A07	Social Worker staff turnover rate, Adult Social Care (%)	Low	2.9	1.2	2.0	1.6	▼ (20.0%)		N/A
A08	Proportion of Agency Workers, Adult Social Care (%)	Low	10.5	10.1	8.7	6.5	▼ (25.3%)	18	Met / Exceeded

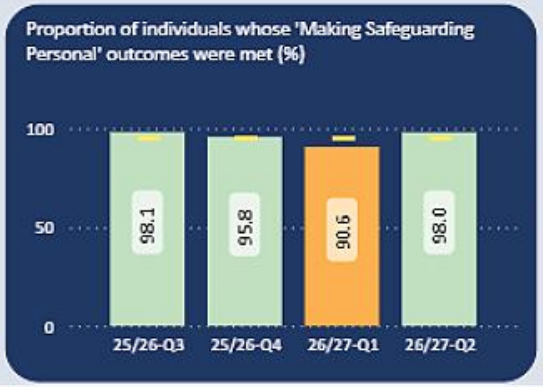




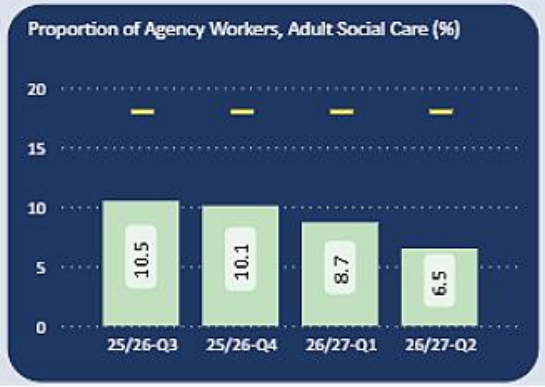












Our priority actions

- ❑ Redevelop and improve the NHS Health Check offer.
- ❑ Develop and renew essential public health programmes, e.g. sexual health.
- ❑ Work with partners to reduce harm from drugs and alcohol.
- ❑ Enable and facilitate the system to implement the Child Poverty Strategy.
- ❑ Collaborate with system partners to develop an oral health strategy for Sefton
- ❑ Continue to prepare and respond to emerging threats to health.
- ❑ Meet our statutory commitments, which in the next 18 months will include the completion of the pharmacy needs assessment
- ❑ Children Northeast commissioned to support Poverty Proofing.
- ❑ Work with partners to promote and develop the Family Respiratory pilot and respond to referrals for early intervention

Measuring our success

- ❑ Public Health Outcomes Framework.
- ❑ Office Health Inequalities and Disparities.
- ❑ UK Health Security Agency.
- ❑ National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Monitoring System.
- ❑ NHS England.
- ❑ Commissioned qualitative insight.
- ❑ Achievement of key programme milestones.



Data for the latest update, Q2 26/27, was available for indicators concerning NHS health checks, adult and children's weight management programmes and health visiting. All except NHS health checks were above target this quarter.

During Q2, 2.4% of eligible residents received a full Health Check, which is below target but a continued improvement on previous quarters. Q2 delivery represents the highest number of NHS Health Checks completed in Sefton since 2013. Southport and Formby PCN is achieving its target, while South Sefton PCN has increased both invitation and delivery rates, supported by additional staff training to expand capacity. Delivery has been impacted by two factors. Firstly, PC24 has confirmed that it will not commence NHS Health Check delivery until April 2027, which will continue to affect overall performance for the remainder of 2026/27. Secondly, Active Sefton has prioritised the rollout of the Health Diagnostics system to enable patient data transfer, resulting in a temporary reduction in delivery capacity during Q2. Despite these challenges, activity levels continue to increase, and performance has improved compared with Q1.

The smoking indicator has been updated with Q1 data and has dropped below target . Q1 referrals increased by 70% compared with the same period last year (1,128 referrals), although this has not yet translated into improved quit outcomes. A decline in quit rates within the most deprived communities was identified in June, prompting a service review and enhanced targeted support. Engagement activity continued to strengthen partnerships and raise awareness of stop smoking support across Sefton. Plans are being explored to expand clinic provision in Litherland to improve accessibility. Early Quarter 2 performance shows signs of improvement, with September quit outcomes still awaiting confirmation.

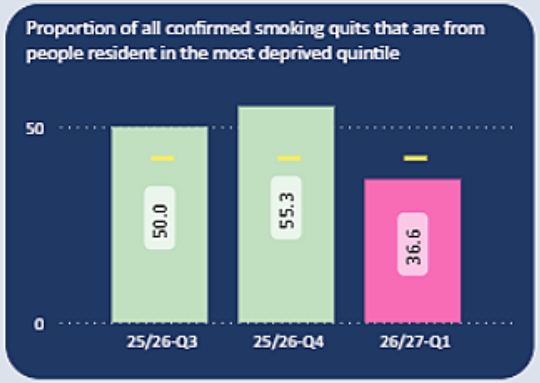
D for alcohol and opiate treatment progress is sourced from NDTMS - Treatment progress. At the time of reporting, data has been published up to Q1 2026/27. Substantial progress for opiates has fa just below the target and substantial progress for alcohol remains below target. Provisional restricted data suggests increases towards targets for both indicators in Q2.

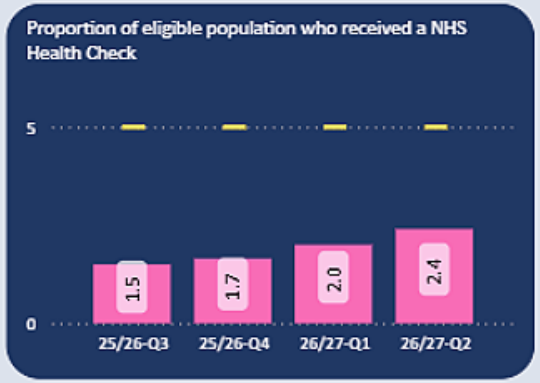
S ral improvements have been introduced to alcohol treatment, including pre-detox groups, open-access and nurse-led assessments to support earlier engagement, and a dedicated H ital Liaison Nurse to improve continuity of care. The service continues to work closely with housing providers to support sustained recovery on exit from treatment, recognising housing stability as a contributory factor within the treatment progress measure. A new third hub in Bootle town centre opened at the end of June 2026, which is expected to improve accessibility and engagement. In addition, the local approach to detoxification is being reviewed with service users, including offering more community detox. For drug treatment, new formulation and care planning goes live in November to improve understanding of service user circumstances and goals. For opiates specifically, a new clinical lead is in post reviewing dose optimisation to reduce illicit use and reviewing those with mental health needs to ensure appropriate referrals are made to mental health service to support cooccurring conditions. An opiate working gro has also been established. As these changes are recent, improvements in performance are expected over the coming quarters rather than within the current published data.

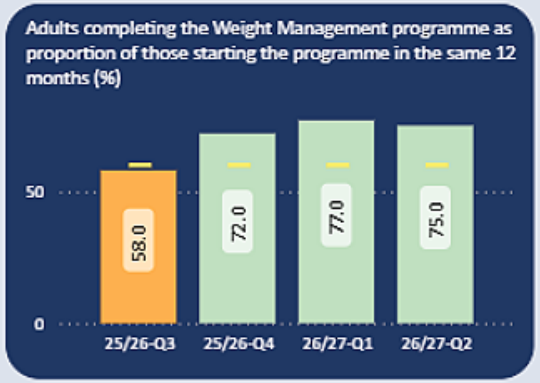


On or better than target
Within 5% of target
Worse than target
Not Targeted
Target

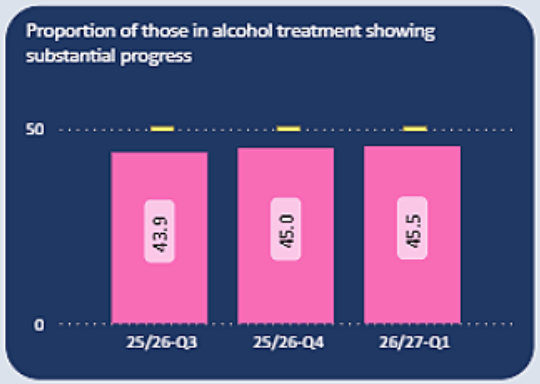
ID	Metric	Good Is	25/26-Q3	25/26-Q4	26/27-Q1	26/27-Q2	Direction of Travel	Target	Distance from Target
H01	Proportion of all confirmed smoking quits that are from people resident in the most deprived quintile	High	50.0	55.3	36.6				N/A
H02	Proportion of eligible population who received a NHS Health Check	High	1.5	1.7	2.0	2.4	▲ (20.0%)	5	2.6 (52.0%)
H03	Adults completing the Weight Management programme as proportion of those starting the programme in the same 12 months (%)	High	58.0	72.0	77.0	75.0	▼ (2.6%)	60	Met / Exceeded
H04	Children completing the Weight Management programme as proportion of those referred to the programme in the same 12 months (%)	High	40.0	51.0	60.9	60.0	▼ (1.5%)	60	Met / Exceeded
H05	Proportion of those in alcohol treatment showing substantial progress	High	43.9	45.0	45.5				N/A
H06	Proportion of those in drug treatment for opiate use showing substantial progress	High	47.6	46.4	45.3				N/A
H07	Proportion of newborn birth visits completed between 10-14 days (%)	High	95.5	94.8	93.4	93.5	▲ (0.1%)	94	Met / Exceeded

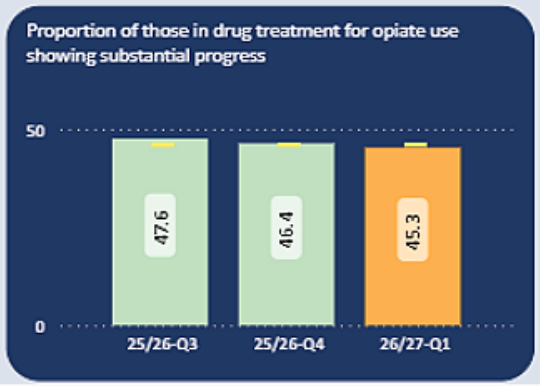


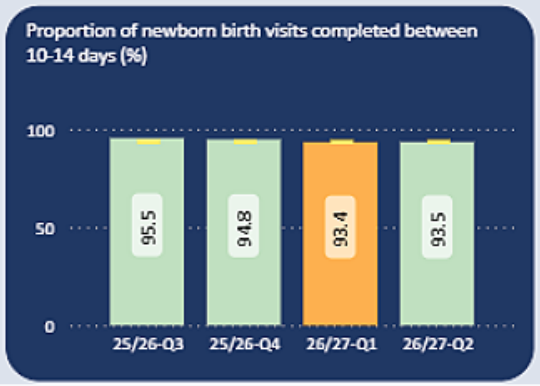












Corporate Performance Report, HW - Overview
Public snapshot
Data updated on 17/11/26, 23:03

Our priority actions

- ❑ Deliver the organisational cultural change to ensure our workforce is equipped with the skills needed for the future – this is to be an enabler for residents and help the community help themselves.
- ❑ Award the contract for our new Integrated Domestic Abuse Service.
- ❑ Deliver our agreed strategies on Community Safety, Culture, Digital, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping.
- ❑ Continue to support our communities with partners through the cost-of-living crisis.
- ❑ Work with our partners to deliver clean and safe neighbourhoods for everyone getting on top of the weed control, fly-tipping and littering.
- ❑ Prepare for changes to how we collect people's waste and increase recycling rates.
- ❑ Meeting the housing needs of all our residents including delivering the first new Council Housing in the borough in a generation.
- ❑ Ensure that those leaving care move into safe high-quality housing of their own.
- ❑ Recommission our award-winning Sefton Homeless Families Project.
- ❑ Everyone in Sefton can take part in a rich and varied cultural life and we enable people to be more active.
- ❑ Sefton Council is committed to reducing carbon emissions.

Measuring our success

- ❑ Number of volunteers / volunteer hours.
- ❑ Number of incidents of fly-tipping removed and prosecutions.
- ❑ Number of bulky household waste collections booked.
- ❑ Number of schemes delivered to support Safer Routes to School programme.
- ❑ Total recorded crime excluding fraud (crime rate per 1,000 for headline offences).
- ❑ Number of people rough sleeping.
- ❑ Percentage of Homelessness Preventions.
- ❑ Number of homeless households in temporary accommodation.
- ❑ Uptake of Leisure Services and Library Services.
- ❑ Recycling rates - percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.
- ❑ Deliver grassroots neighbourhood based cultural projects and activity.
- ❑ Grow the range and diversity of the Active Sefton initiatives.



Local Environmental Quality. The Street Cleansing Service continue to have a significant focus on fly tipping issues, working in collaboration with Environmental Enforcement colleagues as part of the Council's 'Cleaner, Greener, Together' campaign and achieving notable improvements in the volume of FPN's (fixed penalty notices) issued in addition to pursuing prosecution cases of evidential illegal waste handling. The Waste Management Service successfully planned and delivered Phase 4 of the 'Sacks to Bins' project, providing another 600 households in the south of the borough with both grey and brown wheelie bins, collected via standarised model across the borough. This brings excellent waste containment, resulting in cleaner streets, tackles vermin and gull issues, and enables residents a greater opportunity to recycle. The change has been well received by those who have benefited. Weed control has continued to be problematic in pockets across the Borough and this very much remains a focus for the service.

Housing Advice and Homeless Support. Housing Advice and Homeless Support continue to see demand from households in crisis. At 30 September 2026 there were 264 new approaches to the Council however this is lower than the previous year (325 at September 2025). The most frequent reasons reported are family/friend breakdown and end of tenancy with around half of presentations being repeat. New starts in temporary accommodation peaked in June at 58 with a sustained reduction since to 47. 87% of households in temporary accommodation are first time with placement number below those at the same period last year (238 versus 269). Prevention activity in the statutory and pre-statutory areas remain an area of focus, coupled with focussed efforts to secure move-on accommodation. The Implementation of the new framework for purchasing bed spaces is underway. Development of the action plan for the Rough Sleepers, Homelessness and Domestic Abuse grant is underway working with Strategic Housing and closely aligned with the Temporary Accommodation Transformation Programme.

Domestic Abuse. A new specialist domestic abuse perpetrator support team is in development in recognition of the need to increase the increase the approach to tackling abusive behaviour, as outlined in Sefton's Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy. This team will offer 1:1 and behaviour change support to perpetrators of domestic abuse. The team will sit alongside the IDVA team, ensuring close links with specialist victim support which will be an integral part of the delivery model and will work closely with Brighter Kinder Futures to maximise opportunities for engagement and to reduce any potential duplication. Recruitment is currently underway.

…e Atkinson. The Atkinson was preparing for the Books Alive! Event in Southport. In addition to The Jolly Postman town-centre trail, a Festival of Stories will be held at The Atkinson and Southport Library. Developed in …artnership with Children's Books North, the library will welcome a series of free author and illustrator sessions, drama storytelling, interactive installations, performances and creative workshops; each offering different …ays for children and families to take part.

…ctive Sefton. Active schools and Move it figures are low due to school holidays, but this is counter-balanced by attendances at Be Active and Park nights. The One-to-One programme which uses being active to support mental wellbeing remains steady and consistent in this quarter and above target. The Dashboard presents the rolling annual figure on a quarterly basis where participant numbers reflect the school year/holiday periods.

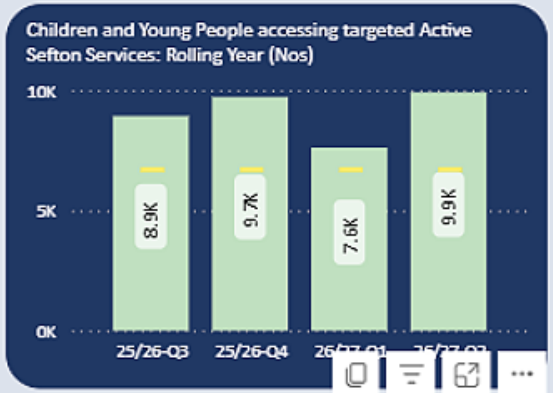
Libraries. Over July and August libraries hosted a total of 1448 activities for children, families and carers. Overall, 3414 children took part in the challenge, an 11% increase from last year, and 2444 completed the challenge, a 10% increase. This year Bootle Library achieved a notable success, increasing the number of children joining the challenge by 75% and completing the challenge increasing by 64%. Formby and Netherton Libraries also recorded significant increases in joiners and completers.
Active Sefton – The Dashboard presents the rolling annual figure on a quarterly basis where participant numbers reflect the school year/holiday periods. Of note, during the summer holidays, Be Active took place at several sites across the borough, a total of 46 sessions and over 256 hours of activity were delivered, with approximately 423 attendances with participants taking part in a range of sessions. With 300 of these attendances being HAF funded. The Park Nights programme ran through July and August across 10 Parks in Sefton offering a host of free activities in Bootle, Netherton, Southport, Maghull and Birkdale. With the total attendances across the 8 weeks of 1,927.

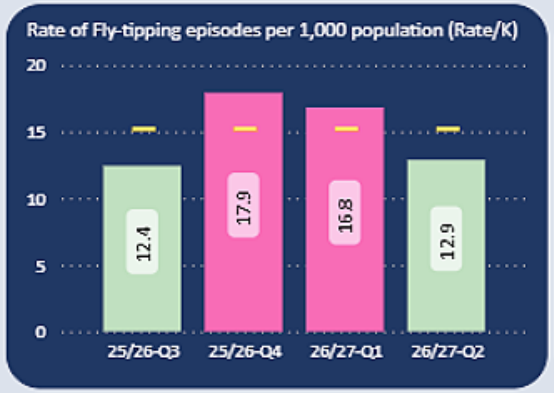
Highways. The second Phase of the Maritime Corridor scheme started on site in Q2. This focuses on the area around Bridle Road and will include further active travel infrastructure and safety improvements complementing the work delivered under Phase 1. Enabling work has been undertaken on the Southport Eastern Access scheme which is due to be delivered on site on Q3. Further development work has been undertaken on the major schemes and minor works and safety programme using Transport for the City Region funding, which is available from April 2027. Phase 2 of The Les Transformation de Southport scheme, focussed on the Promenade in Southport, is moving through the necessary assurance process to secure the funding with Early contractor involvement helping share the scheme. Strong performance seen in rectifying street lighting faults with 100% of 5day faults responded to on time. The number of highway inspections undertaken within 10 days of being reported has remained the same at 84% which is still exceeding the target.

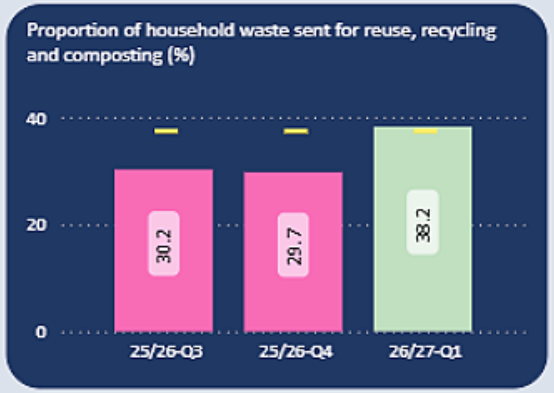


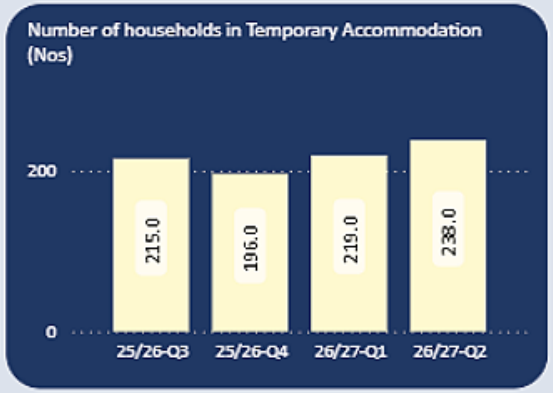
On or better than target
Within 5% of target
Worse than target
Not Targeted
Target

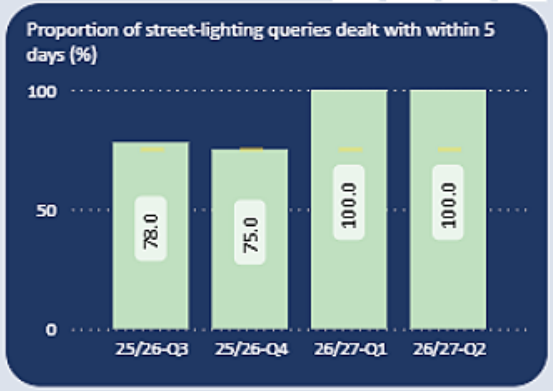
ID	Metric	Good Is	25/26-Q3	25/26-Q4	26/27-Q1	26/27-Q2	Direction of Travel	Target	Distance from Target
W01	Children and Young People accessing targeted Active Sefton Services: Rolling Year (Nos)	High	8929.0	9720.0	7613.0	9911.0	▲ (30.2%)	6700	Met / Exceeded
W02	Rate of Fly-tipping episodes per 1,000 population (Rate/K)	Low	12.4	17.9	16.8	12.9	▼ (23.4%)	15	Met / Exceeded
W03	Proportion of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (%)	High	30.2	29.7	38.2				N/A
W04	Number of households in Temporary Accommodation (Nos)	Low	215.0	196.0	219.0	238.0	▲ (8.7%)		N/A
W05	Proportion of street-lighting queries dealt with within 5 days (%)	High	78.0	75.0	100.0	100.0	↔	75	Met / Exceeded
W06	Proportion of highway maintenance inspections completed within 10 working days (%)	High	94.0	92.0	84.0	84.0	↔	80	Met / Exceeded

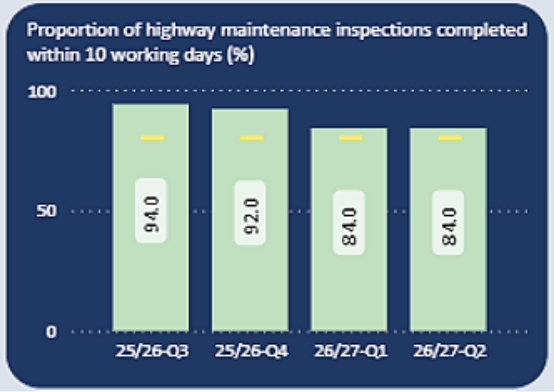












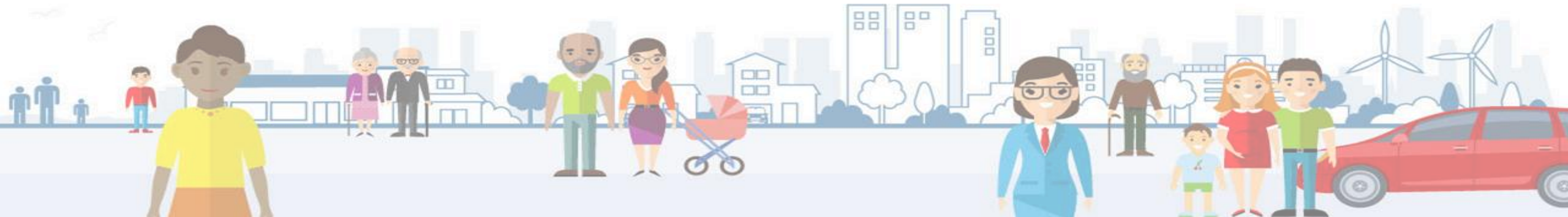
Corporate Performance Report, Cmty - Overview
Public snapshot
Data updated on 17/11/26, 23:03

Our priority actions

- ❑ Inclusive growth – phase 1 of the Strand repurposing; continued delivery of Southport Town Deal projects; restoration work for Southport Pier began in July 2026; and wider programme of projects borough-wide.
- ❑ Business Growth & investment-delivery of business support and inward investment from InvestSefton to help drive new enterprise and business growth across the borough, linked to our key priority areas and sectors
- ❑ Access to Employment – continue quality of services such as Sefton@Work, maximise output from social value linked to major projects and opportunities for young people linked to Salt and Tar.
- ❑ Visiting Sefton – continue to develop our events programme, recognising the distinctiveness of Southport, with new venues such as Salt and Tar and align with the regional visitor proposition where appropriate.
- ❑ Asset Maximisation – momentum with Council asset review; continued engagement with external partners.
- ❑ Establish a Corporate Landlord transformation team to review the current position of the project and begin delivery of the key milestones for the coming year.
- ❑ Progression of Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programme.
- ❑ Delivery of our Council Housing Programme and wider housing ambitions, with emphasis on affordability, and on Extra Care and Supported Living.
- ❑ Strategic transport – programme development and delivery; partnership working with the Combined Authority to maximise opportunities re. rail connectivity, bus reform, green bus corridor, etc.

Measuring our success

- ❑ Employment, education and training figures and early intervention with 16-17 year-olds.
- ❑ Number of workless residents accessing employment support.
- ❑ Number of residents accessing community learning programmes.
- ❑ Capital programme delivery – cost, time, quality, plus social and environmental outcomes.
- ❑ Visitor numbers.
- ❑ New Business Starts: Enterprise (Nos)
- ❑ Vacancy rates in town centres and neighbourhoods.
- ❑ Engagement plans with developers and investors to produce social value benefits including jobs and training.
- ❑ Affordable homes completed (rented and low-cost home ownership).
- ❑ Value of capital receipts received per annum.



Work continues at pace on the Council's growth and strategic investment programme, with work continuing capital projects such as the Marine Lake Events Centre and the Pier in Southport. Work also continues the first phase of the transformation of Bootle Strand, with main contract agreement imminent (at the time of writing). On each project, as across the Council's capital programme, is a robust social value action plan ensuring that the opportunity is maximised to deliver positive economic, social, and environmental outcomes from these projects.

During the Summer and Autumn of 2026, the Council has hosted events across the borough. Salt and Tar's music weekender in Bootle brought more than 15,000 people to the town in August 2026, with independent evaluation of the economic benefit of this event published and plans now established for 2027.

Moreover, Southport's Air Show, Flower Show and British Musical Fireworks Championships also all took place in recent months, with the "Elegantly Eccentric" programme for Southport 2026 scheduled to conclude this Autumn with the Books Alive event.

Close partnership working with the Sovini Group on Sefton 2030 will see the first five sites in phase 1 going through planning this Autumn, with start on site scheduled for each during 2027, and more than 200 new affordable and high-quality homes to be delivered from these projects.

The Council's asset rationalisation programme also continues, with the next round of community assets published for expressions of interest in October 2026, and the next round of the disposals process also progressing – in each case these projects deliver financial benefit to the Council, as well as benefit to communities as underused assets are brought back into suitable use.

'estSefton's business start-up project delivered through Merseyside Expanding Horizons and Safe Regeneration, has, to date, supported 313 residents seeking to become self-employed, eating 112 new businesses and 21 jobs.

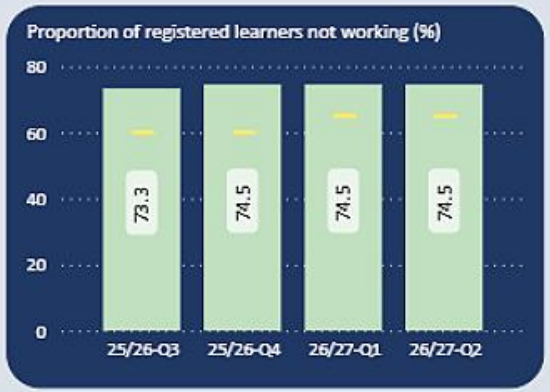
'estSefton was Liverpool City Region's Finance Hub's largest referral partner during the year, referring 48 Sefton businesses for financial support, ahead of all 20 referral organisations. This demonstrates the strength of the borough's business support network and the effectiveness of local referral pathways in helping businesses access appropriate financial support.

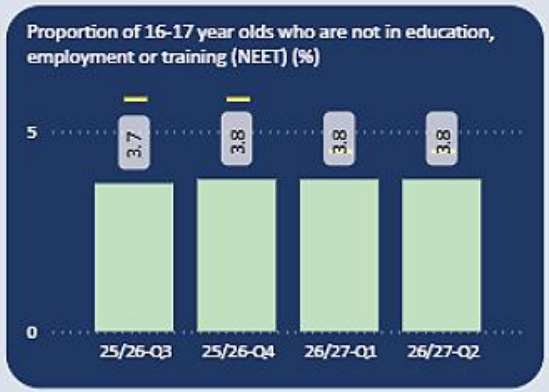
Planning Services. Performance in relation to the determination of Major Planning applications within target date is still well above the national target, however in this quarter performance dropped by 11% - this was due to 1 application going over the deadline date. Similarly, the % of appeals allowed rose by 0.2%, again well above target with only 1 out of 44 appeals allowed.

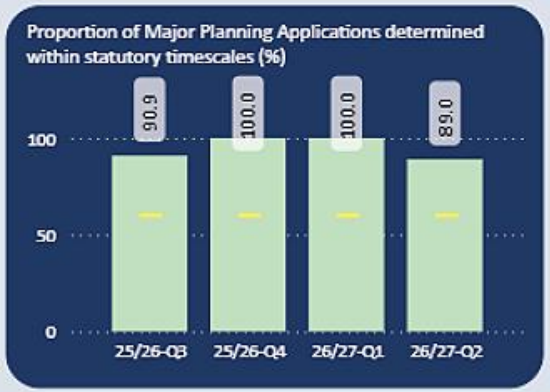


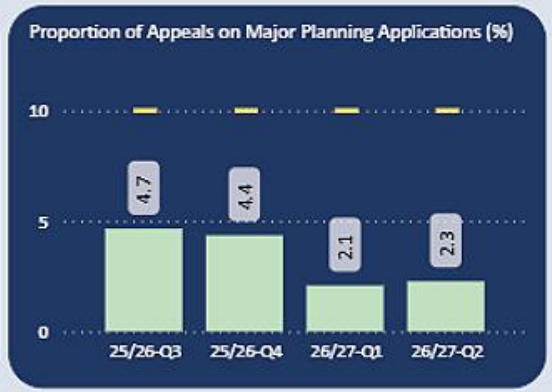
On or better than target
Within 5% of target
Worse than target
Not Targeted
Target

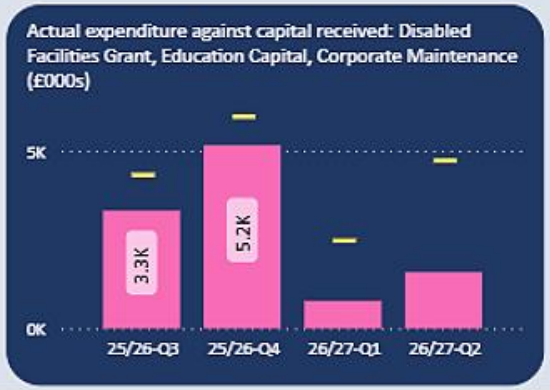
ID	Metric	Good Is	25/26-Q3	25/26-Q4	26/27-Q1	26/27-Q2	Direction of Travel	Target	Distance from Target
G01	Proportion of registered learners not working (%)	High	73.3	74.5	74.5	74.5	↔	65	Met / Exceeded
G02	Proportion of 16-17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (%)	Low	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.8	↔	5	Met / Exceeded
G03	Proportion of Major Planning Applications determined within statutory timescales (%)	High	90.9	100.0	100.0	89.0	▼ (11.0%)	60	Met / Exceeded
G04	Proportion of Appeals on Major Planning Applications (%)	Low	4.7	4.4	2.1	2.3	▲ (9.1%)	10	Met / Exceeded
G05	Actual expenditure against capital received: Disabled Facilities Grant, Education Capital, Corporate Maintenance (£000s)	High	3316.5	5158.9	770.7	1581.9	▲ (105.2%)	4732	3,149.7 (66.6%)
G06	New Business Starts: Comissioned by Sefton MBC (Nos)	High	13.0	4.0	2.0	9.0	▲ (350.0%)	5	Met / Exceeded

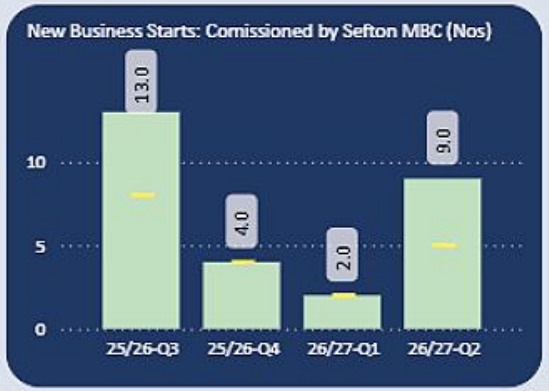










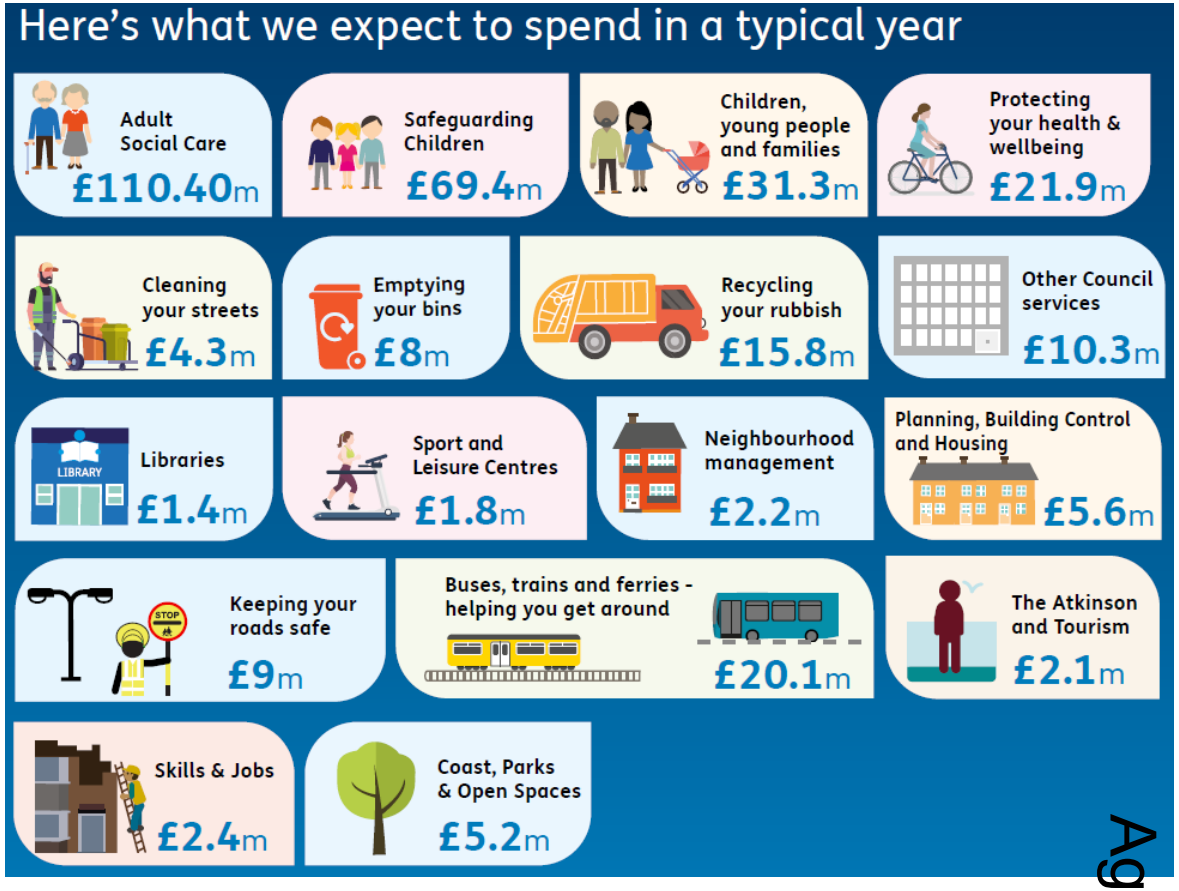


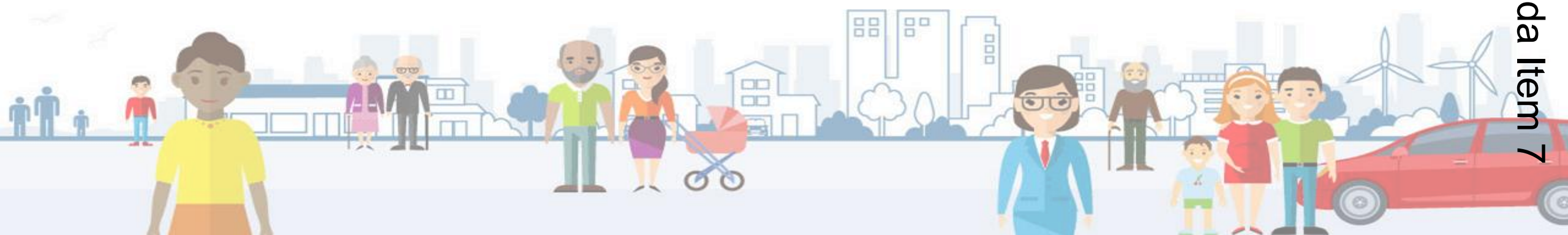
Financial sustainability is at the heart of Council decision making. This is driven by the production of an annual Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) that provides the strategy for resource allocation and basis for annual budget setting. This determines how the Council will spend its financial resources in support of the delivery of the Council's objectives and Corporate Plan.

Within this plan that the Council has developed a transformation programme which covers 6 key areas: Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Home to School transport, Housing and Operational in-House services. This programme will be the core delivery vehicle for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

What this means in practice is that Council investment, reform and savings will come from these areas and will be detailed in annual budget setting. This reflects that due to demand and cost increases the Council now spends more than 70 pence in the pound on demand led services including adult and children's services.

The Council will also continue to deliver its growth programme with substantial investment in a range of projects across the borough including the regeneration scheme at the Strand and the Town Deal investment in Southport, underpinning our ambitions for our local residents





The two main sources of collectable income for the Council are Council Tax and Business Rates.

In respect of Council Tax, at the end of quarter 2, 52.6% of the income due in the year had been collected. This is therefore on target to achieve the required and estimated long-term collection rate for 2026/27 (97.25%) with further income relating to the financial year collected in future years too.

Similarly for Business Rates, at the end of quarter 2, 57.9% of income due had been collected and again this is therefore on target to reach the required and estimated long-term collection rate for 2026/27 (99%) with income still collected in future years.

Both are critical to the financial sustainability of the Council and have been used to inform budget setting for 2026/27. The Council is consistently upper quartile for both Council Tax and Business Rates collection, regionally and nationally and will be again this year.

In respect of unrecovered debt for both Council Tax and Business Rates, the levels reduce throughout the year as collection continues as can be seen from the movement between the previous quarter and this one, therefore there is a direct link to the collection rate metrics. The Council has clear policies and processes in respect of fair debt collection for both sources of income with this being reported to Audit and Governance Committee on a regular basis..

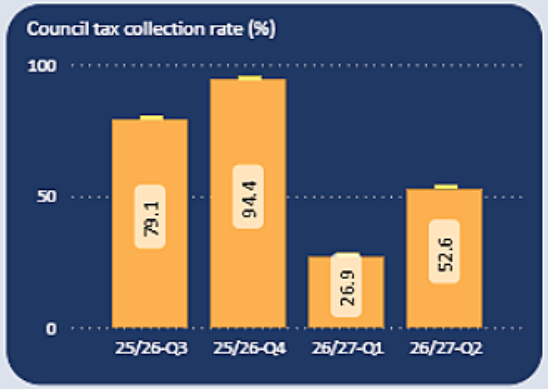
For overall sundry debt outstanding, as would be expected there is a lag on payment hence 47% of debt raised in the quarter 2 remains outstanding at the end of the period. This figure is higher than usual as a significant amount of debt is raised towards the end of the period and so wouldn't become due until early in 2026/27. This will reduce significantly as debt from that period continues to be collected in the next quarter (as can be seen with the improved position in previous quarters). These levels are still expected to be in line with target and as with Council Tax and Business Rates the Council has clear policies and processes in place for debt recovery.

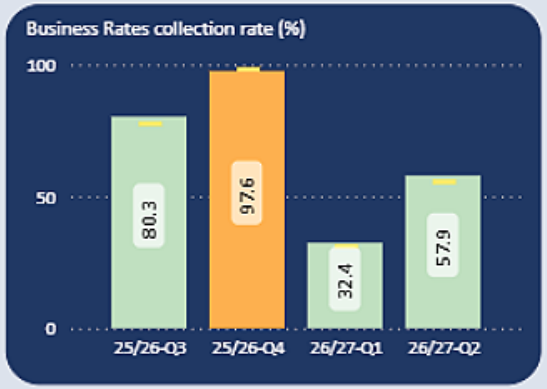
Two areas where we are not hitting target are a timeliness of answering complaints and Freedom of Information Requests (FOI). Weekly reports are sent to senior officers to identify where action needs to be taken for any overdue complaints or FOI requests as well as those near to exceeding timescales. A new 'Everyday Excellence' performance report has been developed to support the Council's transformation intentions and is shared with the Senior Leadership Board monthly, showing performance by department for Compliments, Complaints, Members Enquiries, FOIs, Mandatory Training, and data breach incidents. These actions are having an impact as the direction of travel is an improvement in performance, 89% of complaints recorded and acknowledged within 3 working days, against a target of 90%, 68% of stage 1 complaints resolved in 15 days, against a target of 90%, 82% of FOI requested responded to within 20 days, against a target of 90%. We are now also tracking 84% of Mandatory Training completed on time, against a target of 90%.

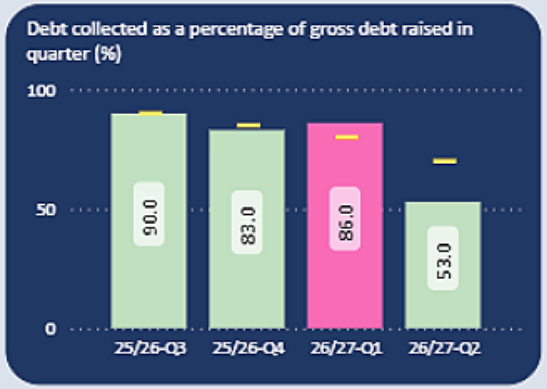


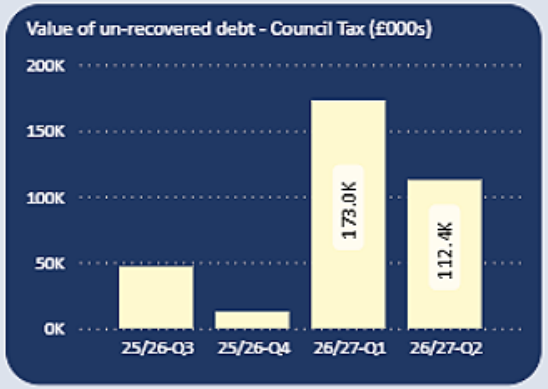
On or better than target
Within 5% of target
Worse than target
Not Targeted
Target

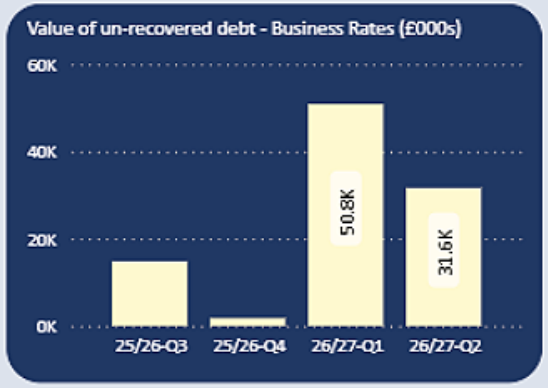
ID	Metric	Good Is	25/26-Q3	25/26-Q4	26/27-Q1	26/27-Q2	Direction of Travel	Target	Distance from Target
F01	Council tax collection rate (%)	High	79.1	94.4	26.9	52.6	▲ (95.5%)	54	0.9 (1.7%)
F02	Business Rates collection rate (%)	High	80.3	97.6	32.4	57.9	▲ (78.7%)	56	Met / Exceeded
F03	Debt collected as a percentage of gross debt raised in quarter (%)	Low	90.0	83.0	86.0	53.0	▼ (38.4%)	70	Met / Exceeded
F04	Value of un-recovered debt - Council Tax (£000s)	Low	46844.0	12577.0	173017.0	112437.0	▼ (35.0%)		N/A
F05	Value of un-recovered debt - Business Rates (£000s)	Low	14823.0	1771.0	50828.0	31648.0	▼ (37.7%)		N/A
F06	Proportion of Contact Centre Calls Answered (%)	High	87.3	86.7	86.8	86.7	▼ (0.2%)	80	Met / Exceeded
F07	Proportion of Complaints answered within timescale (%)	High	77.9	77.1	76.5	76.1	▼ (0.5%)	90	13.9 (15.4%)
F08	Proportion of Freedom of Information requests completed within timescale (%)	High	75.7	81.5	77.6	74.3	▼ (4.3%)	90	15.7 (17.4%)

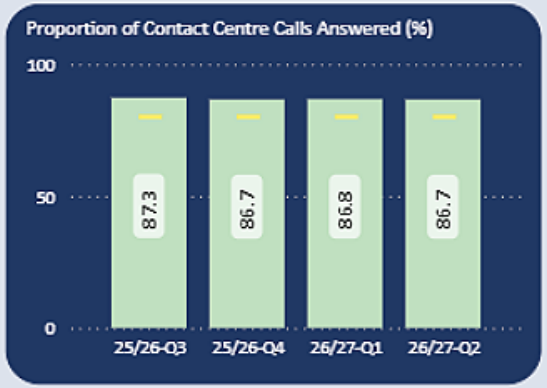


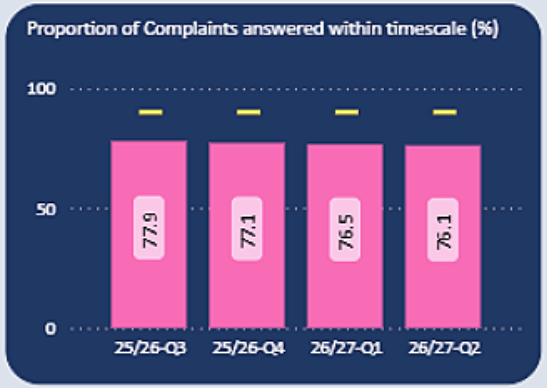


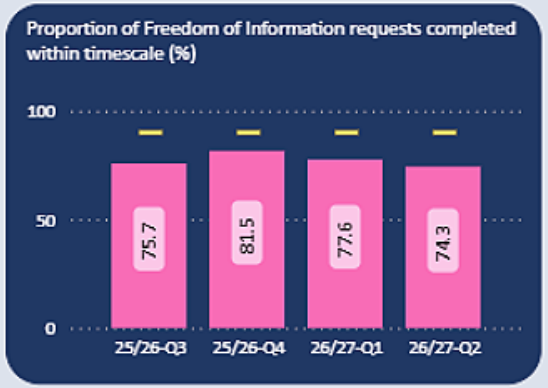












Corporate Performance Report, Fin - Overview
Public snapshot
Data updated on 17/11/26, 23:03

The performance tables in this report highlight a *selection* of key indicators for each theme in the Corporate Plan. Where targets have not currently been provided, they are subject to target setting discussions to determine the most appropriate indicative benchmarks and will be provided in future versions where appropriate.

The data table columns provide:

- The description of the measure.
- Whether or not a high figure or a low figure is generally considered 'good'. Note that these directions may change for some measures over time as they need to be balanced. For example, a measure might have been 'high' last year but became too high and good is now set to low.
- The columns with data in them are titled with the Financial Year and associated Quarter the data relates to. For example: 23/24-Q3 refers to the months of October / November / December in 2023.
- Direction of travel indicates the change between the data in the 'most recent' quarter and the previous quarter as both a number and percent (of change). The arrow represents the direction of travel, and the colour represents the change against what is 'good' for the measure. For example, if high is good and the latest period is down from the previous period then the arrow will point down, and the text will be coloured red. Green represents a change in a 'good' direction, amber represents no change.

  The target column shows the current target for the latest quarter (note targets may change between periods and this is illustrated on the graphs). Targets may be purely local based on existing plans or may represent benchmarking against appropriate other Local Authorities.

  The final column 'Distance from Target' indicates whether the most recent quarter is on target or not. Green indicates the latest period is on or better than target, amber represents numbers that are within 5% of the target, red highlights those that are off target by more than 5%. Where this column is coloured beige there is no current target. Where set, targets are based on local plans or national benchmarking as appropriate for the measure.
- Where a period column contains N/A the data is not available for that period (when this occurs the target and direction of travel is also removed) Where the target column contains N/A there is no target set for the indicator because a suitable benchmark does not currently exist.



Cabinet Report			
Report Title:	**Financial Management 2026/27 to 2029/30 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2026/27 – December Update**		
Date of meeting:	3 December 2026		
Report to:	Cabinet		
Report of:	Executive Director – Corporate Resources / S151 Officer		
Portfolio:	Corporate Services		
Wards affected:	All		
Is this a key decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

To inform **Cabinet** of:

1) The current position relating to the 2026/27 revenue budget.
2) The current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2026/27.
3) The monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of October 2026:
    - The forecast expenditure to year end.
    - Variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members.
    - Updates to spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is recommended to: -

Revenue Outturn

1) Note the current position relating to the 2026/27 revenue budget.
2) Note the actions being taken to refine forecasts and identify mitigating efficiencies to ensure each service achieves a balanced position.
3) Note the previously approved remedial action measures outlined in section 3.
4) Recognise the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2026/27 revenue budget and acknowledge that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed, and remedial actions put in place, to ensure a reduced forecast overspend outturn position.

Capital Programme

5) Note the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme (paragraph 7.1).
6) Note the latest capital expenditure position as at 31st October 2026 of £27.792m (paragraph 7.6); the latest full year forecast is £119.600m (paragraph 7.7).
7) Approve a supplementary capital estimate of £0.298m for Warm Homes Local Grant funded by external grant from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (paragraph 7.11).
8) Note that capital resources will be managed by the Executive Director - Corporate Resources / S151 Officer to ensure the capital programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council (paragraphs 7.12-7.14).

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

To ensure Cabinet are informed of the current position in relation to the 2026/27 revenue budget.

To provide an updated forecast of the outturn position with regard to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

To keep members informed of the progress of the Capital Programme against the profiled budget for 2026/27 and agreed allocations for future years.

To progress any changes that are required in order to maintain a relevant and accurate budget profile necessary for effective monitoring of the Capital Programme.

To approve any updates to funding resources so that they can be applied to capital schemes in the delivery of the Council's overall capital strategy.

1. Introduction

1.1 On 27 February 2026, Members approved the Budget for the financial year 2026/27. This budget was developed throughout the preceding nine months and took account of all known issues at the time that would impact on the Council's finances, including specific services identifying and agreeing the resources that they would require for the following year, especially those with demand led budgets. Within that report, and as with previous years, the inherent financial risk within these budgets, especially with respect to Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, Communities (Temporary Accommodation) and Education Excellence (Travel Support), was identified. This was further reflected within the reserves' strategy for the Council, as reported in the Robustness Report also presented to Budget Council.

1.2 This report is the fifth of the Council's monthly budget monitoring reports for 2026/27 and provides an initial revenue forecast outturn position for all services, including the pressures that have materialised since the budget was set. The report also provides details of various mitigating measures being put in place early in the year to reduce the overall forecast outturn position.

1.3 The report also outlines the current position regarding key income streams for the Authority, namely Council Tax and Business Rates. Variations against expected receipts in these two areas will also affect the Council's financial position in future years.

1.4 The capital section of the report informs Members of the latest estimate of capital expenditure for 2026/27 and forecast expenditure for 2027/28 and 2028/29. The capital budget to date is presented in paragraph 7.1. Paragraphs 7.2 to 7.9 review progress of the Capital Programme. Finally, paragraphs 7.12 to 7.14 confirm that there are adequate levels of resources available to finance the capital programme.

2. Revenue Budget 2026/27 – Forecast Outturn Position as at the end of October 2026

2.1 Members are provided with updates of the Council's forecast financial revenue position each month during the financial year from July. As would be expected, as the year progresses there is more certainty on activity levels and the forecasts are refined with and any variations identified are managed accordingly.

2.2 As at the end of October 2026, the forecast outturn shows a net overspend of **£10.345m**. It should be noted that all services are implementing specific remedial actions to move towards a balanced position at this stage – those identified to date where there is confidence in the value of savings that can be generated are reflected in the forecasts below. As with many local authorities at this time, the Council is operating in a very challenging financial environment. However, it is vital that the Council moves towards a reduced forecast overspend outturn position.

2.3 The table below highlights the variations across services that make up the £10.345m forecast overspend:

	Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Variance to September
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Services				
Strategic Management	4.043	4.041	-0.002	0.000
Adult Social Care	142.065	147.031	4.966	0.028
Children's Social Care	98.426	111.144	12.718	0.677
Communities	15.922	16.610	0.688	-0.048
Corporate Resources	15.032	15.141	0.109	0.051
Economic Growth & Housing	9.303	8.900	-0.403	-0.102
Education Excellence	21.547	23.790	2.243	0.003
Health & Wellbeing	25.109	24.757	-0.352	0.000
Highways & Public Protection	11.113	10.660	-0.453	-0.072
Operational In-House Services	20.985	22.130	1.145	0.010
Property and Strategic Asset Management	0.968	0.754	-0.214	0.016
Total Service Net Expenditure	**364.513**	**384.958**	**20.445**	**0.563**

Provision for Additional Pressures Brought Forward From 2025/26	9.300	0.000	-9.300	0.000
Council Wide Budgets	14.250	13.450	-0.800	0.000
Levies	38.499	38.499	0.000	0.000
General Government Grants	-56.643	-56.643	0.000	0.000
Total Net Expenditure	**369.919**	**380.264**		
Forecast Year-End Deficit			**10.345**	**0.563**

2.4 The key areas relating to the outturn position are as follows:

- **Adult Social Care** – Initial forecasts assume that the Adult Social Care budget has in-year pressures that will lead to an overspend by £4.9m during 2026/27. However, there are a number of significant assumptions and uncertainties that could impact on this position before the year-end. The service has committed to a number of efficiencies and savings that amount to £5.5m, in order to meet the savings as part of the approved 2026/27 budget. The achievement of these savings will be carefully monitored and managed throughout the year. At this time £1.5m of the £5.5m of savings have been delivered, which is below expectations at this stage. The position reported for September reflected that the delivery of these savings in full during this year would no longer be achieved, with the forecast assuming that £2.3m may not be delivered in-year. This will continue to be reviewed in light of savings being achieved. The full year impact of savings achieved to date will mean some of this shortfall will be achieved in 2027/28. The service will continue to identify mitigating savings throughout the remainder of the year to reduce the in-year forecast overspend.

  Like all councils, the Adult Social Care Service is experiencing pressure with demand for services and are seeking to meet the cost of this within the resources available. As would be expected with a budget of this size and volatility, this remains a key risk during the current year, with the uncertainty on the scale of additional demand that will occur during the remainder of the year. Work will continue to be undertaken throughout the year to understand the pressures arising and refine forecasts.

  As an adverse outturn position is currently forecast, work will continue to be undertaken to explore options to ensure that any potential overspend is mitigated as much as possible.

- **Children's Social Care** – The current forecast for the service shows a potential overspend of £12.7m. However, there are a number of significant assumptions and uncertainties that could impact on this position before the year-end.

  In producing forecasts, significant in-depth work has been undertaken across all lines of the budget, focussed on staffing and placement activity. Further work will continue to be undertaken to understand the pressures and refine forecasts. Whilst additional growth was built into the Children's Social Care budget for 2026/27, the Budget Report presented to Budget Cabinet and Council in February 2026 acknowledged that not all pressures relating to Children's Social Care had been built into the 2026/27 Budget, based on the expectation that costs would reduce over time. As described below (in the "Additional Pressures Brought Forward From 2025/26" section), the £9.3m included in the budget has yet to be allocated to specific services. Once allocated, the overall overspend on Children's Social Care will reduce from the position shown.

The current forecast for staffing is an overspend of £2.0m. A report to Cabinet in May 2024 approved a new staffing structure within the Service, with the budget adjusted to reflect this structure. Whilst the new structure continues to be recruited to with permanent staff, existing agency placements have continued to be required to ensure that improvements within the Service can be maintained. Once the structure has been fully recruited to staffing costs are expected to be contained within the approved budget.

Certain areas of accommodation and support packages are forecast to overspend by £9.1m (again, some of this overspend will be offset by the allocation of the corporate "Additional Pressures Brought Forward From 2025/26" provision). Further work continues to be undertaken to assess each individual case across the different care settings. This forensic analysis will continue each month to ensure forecasts for each individual case are as robust as possible.

As an adverse outturn position is currently forecast, work will continue to be undertaken to explore options to ensure that any potential overspend is mitigated as far as possible. This will include continued focus on reviewing high-cost placements, increased commissioning activity and continued benchmarking activity to understand comparative costs and market factors.

In considering this forecast, work will also be undertaken to determine if any of this pressure is temporary or permanent in nature and needs reflecting in future budget setting processes. Together with Adult Social Care this is clearly the biggest risk to the Council's budget and a comprehensive review of all residential and other placements, and all agency staff, will continue to be undertaken in order to inform revised forecasts in future months.

- **Communities –** The current forecast shows a potential net overspend of £0.7m. This is primarily due to an increase in the costs of Temporary Accommodation due to additional people requiring support.

- **Education Excellence -** The current forecast shows a potential net overspend of £2.2m, which relates to the additional cost of Education Travel Support. Additional growth was built into the 2026/27 budget to provide resources for the assumed increase in support required due to the increase in the number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) being approved. However, the 2026/27 approved budget also including savings from transformation work in this area. The forecast currently assumes that not all approved savings will be achieved in full in 2026/27, with full achievement not expected until 2027/28. In addition, work is ongoing to understand any additional financial pressures following the rescheduling and re-procurement of routes from September 2026, including the impact of increasing fuel costs and further increases in the number of EHCPs leading to additional travel support requirements.

- **Operational In-House Services –** There are pressures on certain elements of the service resulting in a forecast overspend of £1.1m. These pressures are mainly within Bereavement Services, the Security Service and the Waste Management and Street Cleansing Service and are continuations of pressures from 2025/26.

- **Other Service Areas** – Nearly all other service areas are currently showing a forecast underspend position. This is partly as a result of the impact of the remedial measures approved by Cabinet in October. Work will continue to refine forecasts as more information on expenditure and income becomes available. Services will need to ensure that additional cost control measures are in place between now and the end of the year, and the mitigating

savings continue to be delivered to offset the overall forecast overspend, to ensure each service delivers an underspend position.

- **Additional Pressures Brought Forward From 2025/26 –** The Budget Report presented to Cabinet and Council in February 2026 highlighted that throughout 2025/26 there had been significant financial pressures across a number of service areas, especially those that are demand led. It acknowledged that whilst some of the pressures have been reflected in the growth provided for individual services in the 2026/27 budget (e.g. Adult Social Care and Temporary Accommodation) other services hadn't based on the expectation that costs would reduce over time. Therefore, given the size of the pressures in 2025/26, including within Children's Social Care, it was considered prudent to make provision to cover costs that may not fully reduce during 2026/27 (£9.300m). Further work is being undertaken to understand what pressures have continued, with the expectation that the provision will be allocated to individual service budgets based on appropriate evidence. For October monitoring the whole provision is shown as offsetting the overall service pressures of £20.445m.

- **Council-Wide Budgets –** As part of a previously approved budget saving, the Council capitalises a set amount of Highways Maintenance expenditure each year. Based on the amount capitalised in 2025/26, it is expected that a further £0.5m can be capitalised in 2026/27 from Highways Maintenance, ICT and potentially other areas across the Council. In addition, employer contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme from 2026/27 have reduced by £0.5m more than forecast.

3. Revenue Budget Summary 2026/27

3.1 An overspend of £10.345m is currently forecast. However, as mentioned in section 2, this is a forecast based on a number of uncertainties and assumptions, particularly around Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care, which both can be volatile. Additional work will continue to be undertaken across service areas to refine the forecasts and identify mitigating efficiencies to ensure each service achieves as close as possible a balanced budget position.

Remedial Actions

3.2 As mentioned, the Council must strive to achieve a reduction in the forecast overspend position. Therefore, Cabinet at its meeting on 1st October 2026 approved a number of remedial actions, including but not limited to, the adoption of financial principles used in previous years, to improve the forecast outturn position, and reduce any call on General Balances to meet the overspend. The approved actions are:

Recruitment Freeze

3.3 The Council has implemented a recruitment freeze until the end of the financial year. This will apply to all services across the Council with exceptions for certain critical posts being approved by the appropriate Executive Director and the S151 Officer. Savings from non-recruitment of current vacant posts have been built into the current forecast, with savings from the non-recruitment of vacancies arising before the end of the financial year will be built into future forecasts (it should be noted that vacancy management has been operating across all services since the start of 2026/27).

No Further Overspend in any Service.

3.4 All services must manage their budgets to ensure that their forecast outturn position does not worsen from that currently reported.

No Further Growth Items or Additionality

3.5 All services to pause any requests for growth or additionality, even if it could be funded from current forecast underspends or further underspends compared to the current forecast position. This will ensure that any further underspends can be used to contribute to mitigating the Council's overall financial position. This doesn't apply to expenditure that can be fully met from external funding received by the Council.

Non-Essential Expenditure

3.6 A full review has been undertaken of all budgets across the Council to identify areas of non-essential spend that could be stopped. This includes reviewing progress on spending in all areas to identify options for where additional expenditure commitments could be paused. This has identified further underspends that can be used to contribute to mitigating the Council's overall financial position. Savings from the initial reviews were built into the September forecast, with services continuing to review all spend. Any additional spend identified before the end of the financial year will be built into future forecasts.

Additional In-Year Funding

3.7 Any additional in-year funding that is made available by the Government will be utilised to offset the spending pressures being experienced.

3.8 Should a residual overspend remain at year-end then this will need to be met from General Balances. As part of the budget setting process for 2026/27 to 2029/30, the Council developed a strategy to increase General Balances over the MTFS period to take into account the risks faced by the Council and the assessment of their adequacy as described in the S151 Officer's Robustness report for 2026/27. This strategy will need to be revised to reflect any utilisation required in 2026/27.

4. Council Tax Income – Update

4.1 Council Tax income is shared between the billing authority (Sefton Council) and the three major precepting authorities (the Fire and Rescue Authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Combined Authority – Mayoral Precept) pro-rata to their demand on the Collection Fund. The Council's Budget included a Council Tax Requirement of £192.691m for 2026/27 (including Parish Precepts), which represents 84% of the net Council Tax income of £230.020m.

4.2 The forecast outturn for the Council at the end of October 2026 is a surplus of £1.013m. This variation is primarily due to: -

- The surplus on the fund at the end of 2025/26 being higher than estimated (-£0.445m).
- Gross Council Tax Charges in 2026/27 being higher than estimated (-£0.595m).
- Exemptions and Discounts (including a forecasting adjustment) being higher than estimated (£0.047m).
- Transactions relating to previous years being higher than estimated (£-0.020m)

4.3 Due to Collection Fund regulations, the Council Tax surplus will not be transferred to the General Fund in 2026/27 but will be carried forward to be recovered from the Collection Fund in future years.

4.4 A forecast surplus of £6.106m was declared on the 14 January 2026 of which Sefton's share is £5.116m (83.96%). This is the amount that will be distributed to the Collection Fund in 2026/27. Any additional surplus or deficit will be distributed in 2027/28 and future years.

5. Business Rates Income – Update

5.1 Since 1 April 2017, Business Rates income has been shared between the Council (99%) and the Fire and Rescue Authority (1%). The Council's Budget included retained Business Rates income of £93.482m for 2026/27, which represents 99% of the net Business Rates income of £94.426m. It should be noted that Business Rates income has historically been very volatile making it difficult to forecast accurately.

5.2 The forecast outturn for the Council at the end of October 2026 is a deficit of £3.012m on Business Rates income. This is due to:

- The surplus on the fund at the end of 2026/27 being higher than estimated (-£1.616m).
- Reduction in the gross charge on rateable properties (£6.838m).
- A number of reliefs announced for 2026/27 were assumed in the NNDR1 return with the loss of income as a result of these reliefs covered by Section 31 grant payments. It is now forecast that the value of these reliefs will be more than anticipated (£0.900m).
- Adjustments relating to prior years (£0.005m)
- Adjustments for Provisions and Allowances being higher than expected (£0.167m)
- Transitional Protection Grant / S31 Grants being higher than expected (-£3.282m)

5.3 When taking into account other additional grants (including a Safety Net Grant payment), a net surplus of £1.566m is forecast.

5.4 Due to Collection Fund regulations, a Business Rates surplus / deficit will not be transferred to the General Fund in 2027/28 but will be carried forward to be recovered in future years.

5.5 A forecast deficit of £0.191m was declared on the 30 January 2026 of which Sefton's share is £0.189m (99%). This is the amount that will be recovered from the Collection Fund in 2026/27. Any additional surplus or deficit will be distributed in 2027/28 and future years.

6. High Needs Budget

6.1 Cabinet and Council have agreed to receive reports from the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education and the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education) with regard to the High Needs budget and the changes that are proposed, details of sufficiency planning, the Council's engagement on the Delivering Better Value Programme and the current high needs deficit and the risk around future central government decision making in respect of this deficit.

6.2 A separate report on the High Needs funding position of the Council will be presented to Cabinet in due course.

7. Capital Programme 2026/27 – 2028/29

Capital Budget

7.1 The Capital Budget and profile of expenditure for the three years 2026/27 to 2028/29 is as follows:

2026/27	**£119.891m**
2027/28	**£105.558m**
2028/29	**£29.001m**

7.2 The following updates have also been made to the capital programme budget since the latest budget monitoring report to Cabinet in November:

- **Education Excellence** – the following budgets have been added to the programme following approval by Cabinet Member in October:
  - £0.175m for Bedform Primary Modular Classroom and Resources
  - £0.120m for Crosby High School Temp Single Modular Classroom
  - £0.300m for Greenacre Nursery Construct Two Small Extensions
  - £0.205m for Hudson Primary Internal Alterations to Extend Existing Classroom & New External Play Area
  - £0.200m for King George V College Refurb of Internal Areas to Create Additional Places
  - £0.380m for Merefield Classroom Extension
  - £0.650m for Newfield at Hatton Hill Create A New Primary SEMH Provision
  - £0.240m for Newfield Special School Thornton Temp Single Modular and Double Modular Classrooms
  - £0.100m for Various Properties Accessibility and Adaptation Works

- **Highways and Public Protection:**
  - Cabinet Member - Housing and Highways has approved a revised 2026/27 Transport, Street Lighting, Drainage, Urban Traffic Control and Highway Structures Maintenance Programme of capital allocations with a value of up to £1m within the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme. The updated budget allocations are shown in Appendix A.
  - £0.140m has been added to the budget for Our Future Coast following approval under delegated authority.

7.3 The following block capital grant allocations were approved by Council following recommendation by Cabinet for inclusion in the Capital Programme 2026/27:

Capital Grant	**2026/27 £**
Adult Social Care	
Disabled Facilities Grant	5,985,019
Education Excellence	
High Needs Provision Capital Allocation	5,000,688

7.4 Authority has been delegated to Cabinet Members to assign funding to individual capital schemes up to a value of £1m for Adult Social Care, and the Schools block allocations listed above. A £4.500m budget for Disabled Facilities Grants has already been approved by Council in February and has been added to the programme. £4.122m of HNPCA capital schemes have

been approved by Cabinet Member for Children's Schools and Families under delegated authority and added to the programme.

7.5 The list of schemes to utilise the remaining grant for 2026/27 is being fully developed and will be presented to the individual Cabinet Members for approval. A full list of the approved capital schemes will be presented in future reports to Cabinet.

Budget Monitoring Position to October 2026

7.6 The current position of expenditure against the budget profile to the end of October 2026 is shown in the table below. It should be noted that budgets are profiled dependent upon the timing of when works are to be carried out and the anticipated spend over the financial year. The budget to date in the table below reflects the profiles of each individual scheme.

	Budget to October	Actual Expenditure to October	Variance to October
	£m	£m	£m
Services			
Adult Social Care	2.985	2.985	-
Children's Social Care	0.268	0.268	-
Communities	0.392	0.358	-0.033
Corporate Resources	0.023	0.023	-
Economic Growth & Housing	8.570	7.963	-0.608
Education Excellence	3.774	4.142	0.368
Highways & Public Protection	9.125	9.720	0.596
Operational In-House Services	0.756	0.845	0.089
Property and Strategic Asset Management	1.214	1.487	0.274
Total Programme	**27.107**	**27.792**	**0.685**

Capital Programme Forecast Outturn 2026/27

7.7 The current forecast of expenditure against the budget profile to the end of 2026/27 and the profile of budgets for future years is shown in the table below:

	Budget 2026/27	Forecast Outturn	Variance	Budget 2027/28	Budget 2028/29
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Services					
Adult Social Care	6.324	6.316	-0.008	-	-
Children's Social Care	0.519	0.519	-	-	-
Communities	2.905	2.793	-0.112	1.080	0.106
Corporate Resources	0.188	0.188	-	-	-
Economic Growth & Housing	44.171	44.172	-0.001	76.913	27.219
Education Excellence	16.332	16.258	-0.074	4.801	-

Highways & Public Protection	31.514	31.514	-	15.791	1.676
Operational In-House Services	9.262	9.259	-0.002	1.357	-
Property and Strategic Asset Management	8.676	8.582	-0.094	5.616	-
Total Programme	**119.891**	**119.600**	**-0.290**	**105.558**	**29.001**

*An expanded list of the capital programme by capital scheme is at **appendix A**.*

7.8 The current 2026/27 budgeted spend is £119.891m with a budgeted spend to October of £27.107m. The full year budget includes exceptional items such as £4.756m Disabled Facilities Grants, £13.512m for Marine Lake Events Centre, £13.295m for The Stand Repurposing Programme, £1.653m for new Housing schemes, £2.262m for the Local Authority Housing Fund, a £1.908m project for Southport Town Hall Square and Gardens, £1.698m for Coastal Regional Monitoring, £12.913m for major Highways projects, a £12.589m project for Southport Pier Decking, £5.100m for Summerhill Primary School Expansion, £3.449m for the Vehicle Replacement Programme, £3.065m for Waste Management schemes, £4.057m for Corporate Maintenance schemes, £1.500m for Ainsdale Coastal Gateway, and £2.186m for Warm Homes Local Grant.

7.9 It should be noted that based on evidence from previous years, it is likely that further reprofiling of spend into 2027/28 will occur as the year progresses, as £120m of capital expenditure would be a significant programme delivered in year. Project Managers are focused on delivery and spend of funding in year, but previous experience suggests potential optimism bias. It remains essential that all projects are reviewed in a robust manner in order that informed financial management and member decision making can be undertaken.

Warm Homes Local Grant

7.10 The Council were awarded Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG) funding from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) to deliver a 3-year programme retrofitting homes, installing energy efficient and low carbon heating measures to reduce fuel poverty. Local authorities that overperform and spend their original allocation can request additional funding from the reserve held by the LCRCA. Sefton are looking to utilise some of these reserves and receive extra funding of £298,144 to the benefit of Sefton residents in fuel poverty.

7.11 Sefton has committed over 90% of the original allocation, and the extra funding should be utilised before the end of the year to avoid disruption in agreement. The LCRCA has provided written agreement of the additional allocation from reserves. Cabinet is therefore requested to approve a supplementary estimate of £0.298m, funded by external grant from the LCRCA.

Programme Funding

7.12 The table below shows how the capital programme will be funded in 2026/27:

Source	**£m**
Grants and Other Contributions	101.353
Prudential Borrowing	15.968
Capital Receipts	2.555
Revenue Contributions	0.014
Total Programme Funding	**119.891**

7.13 The programme is reviewed on an ongoing basis to confirm the capital resources required to finance capital expenditure are in place, the future years programme is fully funded, and the level of prudential borrowing remains affordable.

7.14 The Executive Director of Corporate Resources / S151 Officer will continue to manage the financing of the programme to ensure the final capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council.

2. Financial Implications

All financial implications are reflected within the report.

3. Legal Implications

None

4. Corporate Risk Implications

This report highlights the financial position of the Council in 2026/27, which supports its Financial Sustainability in 2026/27 and future years.

5 Staffing HR Implications

None

6 Conclusion

Based on current forecasts, the Council is again faced with a challenging financial environment during 2026/27 as a result of service pressures. A revenue overspend of £10.345m is currently forecast. Work continues to identify and quantify additional mitigations, and the forecast will be revised accordingly.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.
Impact on Children and Young People: None
Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will have a **Neutral** impact. The allocations of capital funding outlined in section 7 may be spent on projects that will have a high climate change impact as they could relate to new build, rebuild, refurbishment, retrofit and demolition proposals. Environmental consideration will be taken into account when specific projects are designed and tendered – which will help to mitigate negative impacts.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources / S151 Officer is the author of this report (FD.2051/26).

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.1051/26) has been consulted, and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

None

Implementation Date for the Decision:

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Cabinet decision.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

APPENDIX A – Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2028/29

Background Papers:

None

APPENDIX A – Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2028/29

Capital Scheme	Budget		
	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Adult Social Care			
Digitising Social Care	97,079	-	-
Disabled Facilities Grants	4,756,376	-	-
Occupational Therapist Support	214,423	-	-
Wider Social Care Programme	945,116	-	-
Community Equipment	311,350	-	-
Children's Social Care			
Community Equipment	173,099	-	-
Children's Social Care Transformation	200,000	-	-
Children's Social Care – Property Improvement Grants	145,806	-	-
Communities			
Local Authority Housing Fund	2,262,833	-	106,000
Temporary Accommodation	-	1,000,000	-
Leisure Centres – Essential Works	442,051	80,000	-
Libraries Projects	179,715	-	-
Neighbourhoods Schemes	20,556	-	-
Corporate Resources			
ICT Development & Transformation	50,306	-	-
ICT Data Centre Relocation	14,364	-	-
ICT Equipment Refresh	103,257	-	-
Atamis Commercial Management System (CMS)	20,000	-	-
Economic Growth & Housing			
Strategic Acquisitions – Ainsdale	401,474	-	-
Marine Lake Events Centre	13,512,004	49,793,633	27,219,138
Enterprise Arcade	116,262	-	-
The Strand – Repurposing Programme	13,294,683	11,740,101	-
UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Community & Place	155,032	-	-
Cambridge Road Redevelopment - Phase 2	800,000	-	-
Brownfield Housing Fund	463,192	-	-
Council Housing at Buckley Hill Lane	71,954	-	-
Council Housing Early Acquisitions Scheme	750,000	-	-
Red Rose Park Works	34,240	-	-
Property Pool Plus	25,000	25,000	-
Southport Town Hall Square and Gardens	1,908,279	7,860,000	-
Southport Pier	12,589,304	7,494,675	-
Southport Market Improvements	50,000	-	-
Education Excellence			
Early Years	328,774	-	-
General Planned Maintenance	650,845	-	-
Schools Programme	7,021,191	2,160,144	-

	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Sporting Betterment of Schools	1,148,901	-	-
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	7,182,219	2,640,876	-
Highways and Public Protection			
Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management	1,698,436	-	-
The Pool & Nile Watercourses	75,000	1,542,997	-
Highway Asset Management	836,245	632,397	-
Accessibility	884,496	-	-
Healthy Lifestyles	606,346	-	-
Road Safety	133,106	-	-
A565 Route Management and Parking	426,627	-	-
A59 Route Management Strategy	299,522	73,516	-
Strategic Planning	1,572,539	-	-
Traffic Management & Parking	558,175	50,000	60,196
Highway Maintenance	6,106,476	-	-
Bridges & Structures	2,439,743	-	-
Drainage Improvement	288,917	-	-
Street Lighting Columns	400,000	-	-
Southport Eastern Access	6,914,994	4,570,000	-
Maritime Corridor	5,997,997	7,306,230	-
Urban Traffic Control	658,928	-	-
Highways Capitalisation	1,616,000	1,616,000	1,616,000
Operational In-House Services			
Thornton and Southport Crematoria – Abatement Systems	510,000	890,000	-
Parks Schemes	696,676	102,989	-
Tree Planting Programme	715,541	244,123	-
Land Management	114,000	-	-
Green Sefton – Vehicles, Plant & Machinery	353,212	-	-
Playground Fund	120,000	120,000	
Street Cleansing	237,726	-	-
Vehicle Replacement Programme	3,449,258	-	
Waste Management	3,065,183	-	-
Property and Strategic Asset Management			
Council Wide Essential Maintenance Phase 2:		-	-
- Corporate Buildings	2,785,457	171,608	-
- Other Civic Buildings	950,148	88,000	-
- Adult Social Care	33,651	96,449	-
- Car Parks	40,782	-	-
- Leisure, Health & Wellbeing	7,414	-	-
- Green Sefton	9,335	-	-
- Localities	72,733	-	-
- Economic Growth	-	159,304	-
- Asset Management	1,611	-	-
- Project Support	154,914		

	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Sefton Climate & Retrofit Action Project	2,682	-	-
Solar PV Panels	96,500	-	-
Warm Homes Local Grant	2,186,358	2,013,896	-
Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS)	201,609	1,545,316	-
Harris Drive Shops Refurbishment	283,764	-	-
Ainsdale Coastal Gateway - Toad Hall	1,500,000	-	-
CAMF System	150,000	-	-
Vine House Demolition	-	1,500,000	-
Crosby Coastal Park Toilets	199,000	41,000	-
Total Programme	**119,890,786**	**105,558,254**	**29,001,334**