

HRA Committee Meeting: Monday 14 October 2019

HMO Presentation – Additional Information. Chris McGeehan, SCC principal HMO Licensing Surveyor

“House in multiple occupancy”

- Rented property occupied by three or more people forming two or more households sharing facilities
- Or owner-occupied property with more than two lodgers

Current Schemes:

- Mandatory – changed in October 2018. 5 or more people forming two or more households.
- Previously the requirement for mandatory licencing was >5 people and three or more storeys.
- Additional licencing has two schemes in Southampton:
 - Designation 2: Basset, Freemantle, Millbrook and Shirley. Commenced 20th October 2015 expires 19th October 2020.
 - Designation 3: Bargate, Bevois, Portswood, Swaythling. Commenced 1st October 2018 expires 30th September 2023

Previously:

- Designation 1 covering Swaythling, Portswood, Bevois, Bargate commenced 1st July 2013, expired 30th June 2018.
- 3226 licences were issued in designation 1. Including 518 in Swaythling and 823 in Portswood.

Since October 2018

- Designation 3: 320 applications in Portswood. 307 in Swaythling.
- Mandatory: 509 in Portswood. 247 in Swaythling.
- Total: 829 Portswood. 554 in Swaythling.
- These figures suggest a decrease of 52 in Portswood and an increase of 20 in Swaythling.

About HMO Licences:

- Are effectively always granted but if the property is not meeting standards the landlord has a set time to put this right. NB **SCC Licencing** HMO is a different department from **SCC Planning** for HMO
- Last for five years for mandatory licences or until the designation expires
- Reduced period licences can be issued but rarely are
- Limits the number of people in the property, but a variation will effectively always be given to increase this

The public register:

- Contains details of all the properties with a licence
- Is somewhat slow to be updated
- Downloadable list on website with limited information
- Full public register contains further information including licence holder’s contact address

Note: You can e-mail SCC HMO Department with a specific address and ask if the property holds an HMO. If it does, the council will send details and the Landlord’s contact but there is a back log due to limited staffing

Effect of HMO licensing

- Anecdotally the condition of properties is improving
- Properties being licenced for the second time are less likely to have conditions applied to the licence.

- In combination with the planning environment and changing market landlords are telling us that letting to students is getting harder, and the bottom of the HMO market seems to be being affected more.
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