



MANCHESTER  
CITY COUNCIL

# Consultation on proposed Selective Licensing of Private Rented Homes

Crumpsall 2016

Performance and Intelligence Team  
12 December 2016

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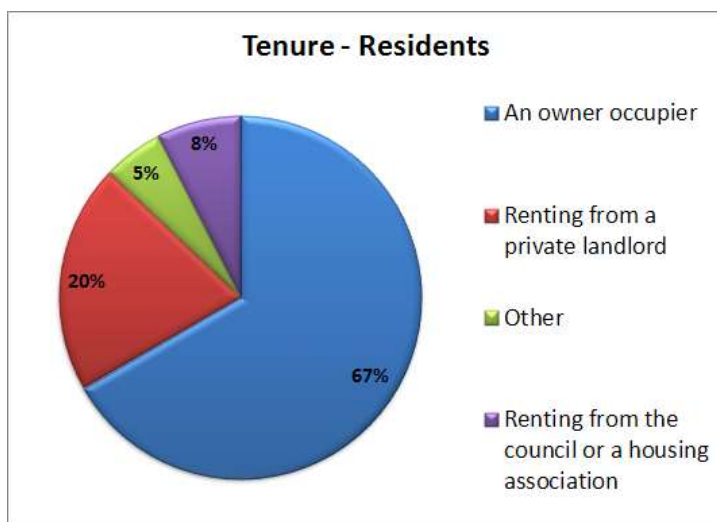
Public consultation for the proposed Crumpsall Selective Licensing area took place via an online survey on the Council's website between 19 August and 31 October 2016. Details of the scheme and the proposed area and streets to be covered were provided and views were invited from local residents and landlords or letting agents with property in the proposed area (with different survey questions for each group).

A total of 40 responses were received from Landlords and Managing agents and 93 responses were received from residents. The survey was voluntary, and self-selecting so is not a truly random sample of the whole population. It should be treated as indicative of the residents and landlords who took part in the survey, but not necessarily that of all residents or landlords in the area.

### 1. Responses from Residents

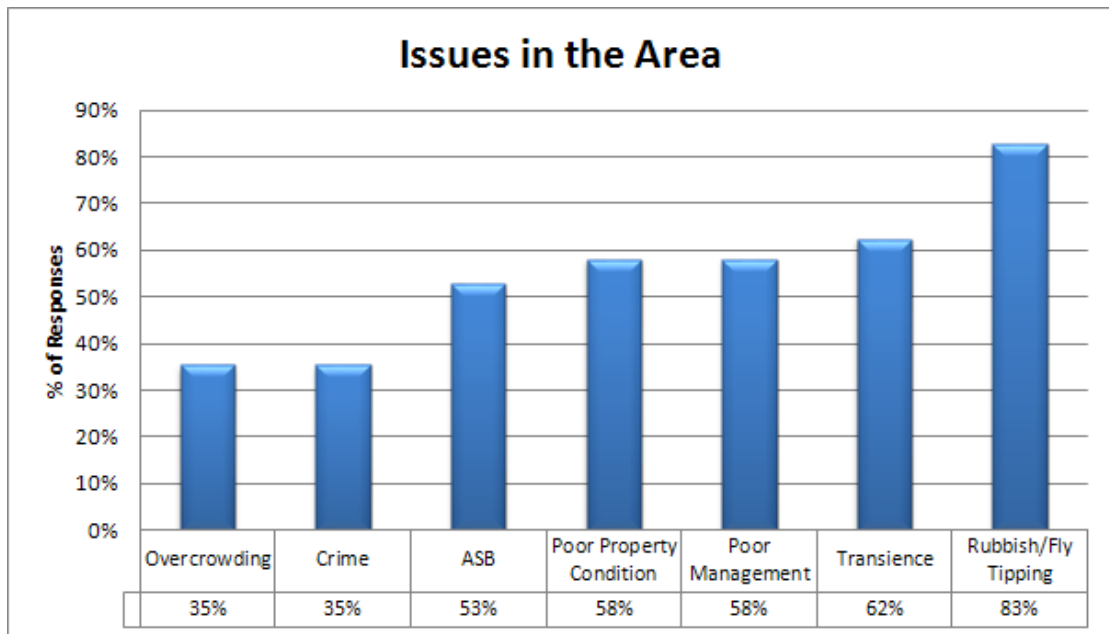
93 residents responded, of which 87 were from the local area which is around 13% of households. The majority of responses from residents were owner occupiers with 20% responses from residents' renting property in the area. Approximately 54% of the area is Private Rented so the consultation is somewhat under-representative of private tenants in the area.

Note that all apart from 6 respondents also live in the local area and 5 of the respondents also owned a business in the local area.

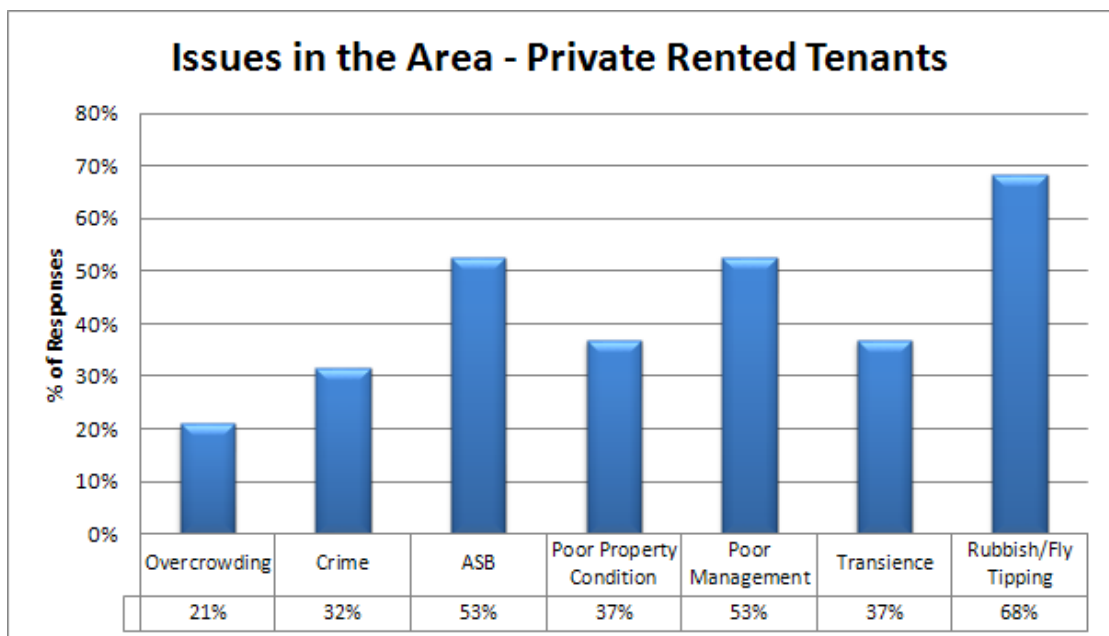


#### 1.1 Issues affecting the local area

Residents were asked to state which of the following issues affected the local area. Crime, anti-social behaviour, rubbish or fly tipping, poor house condition, poor property management, and high turnover/transience. The most frequently ticked issues were poor property condition/management, people moving in and out of the area often (i.e. transience) and rubbish or fly tipping. 6 respondents did not pick any of the issues. Other issues reported were poorly kept gardens, people congregating in certain streets and issues with parking.



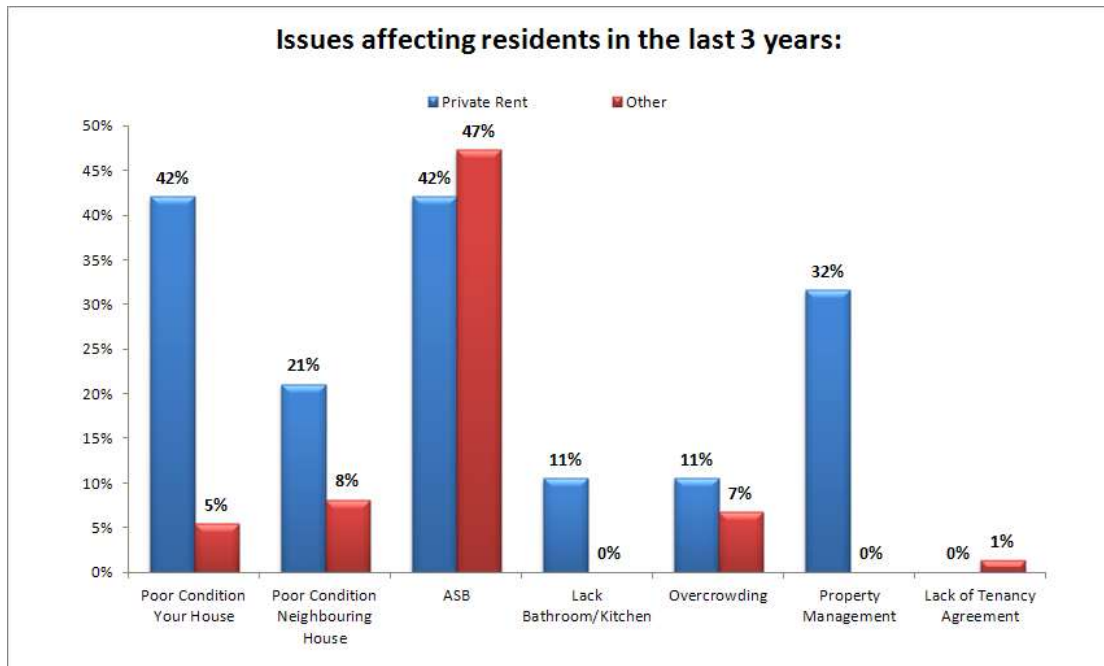
Note that of the 20 private rented residents who responded – the levels were broadly similar albeit with fewer concerned about transience and less concern about property condition.



## 1.2 Issues directly affecting the resident or their family

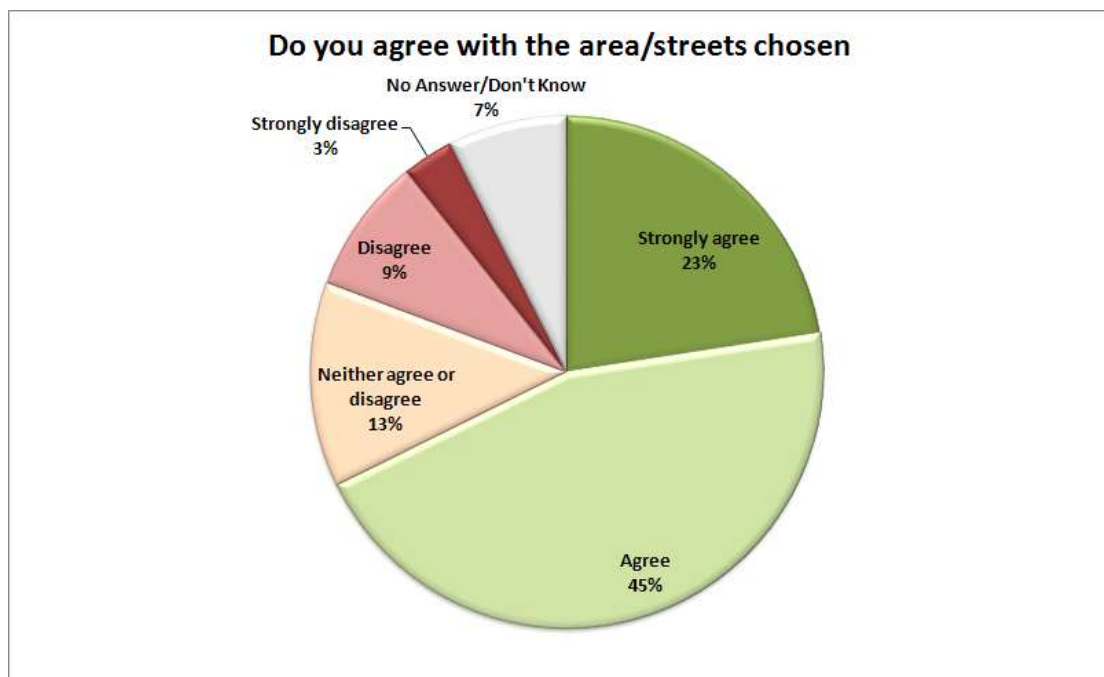
60% of respondents had been directly affected by poor condition of their house or a neighbouring house, Anti-social behaviour, lack of suitable bathroom or kitchen, overcrowding, property management or a lack of tenancy agreement.

The most frequently reported issue for private rented tenants was property condition and anti social behaviour, and 32% reported problems relating to property management. Other issues raised include problems with the alley-gates and high levels of noise at night.



### 1.3 Residents views of the choice of area and streets for selective licensing

68% of all respondents said they strongly agreed, or agreed with the area identified for Selective Licensing. Just 12% (11 respondents) disagreed with the chosen area.



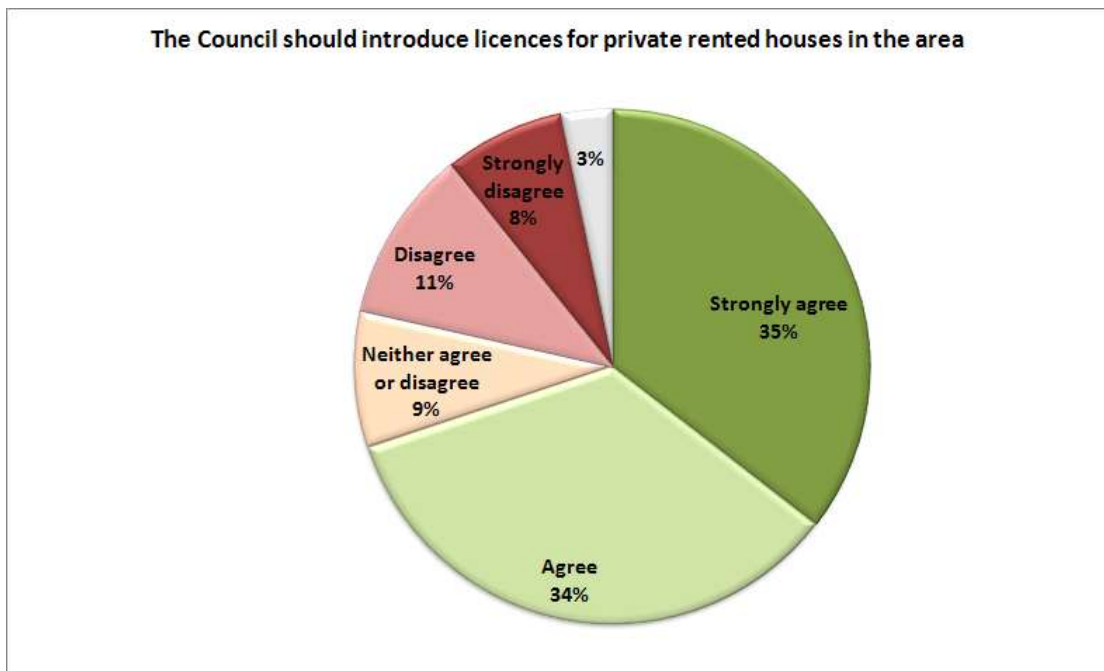
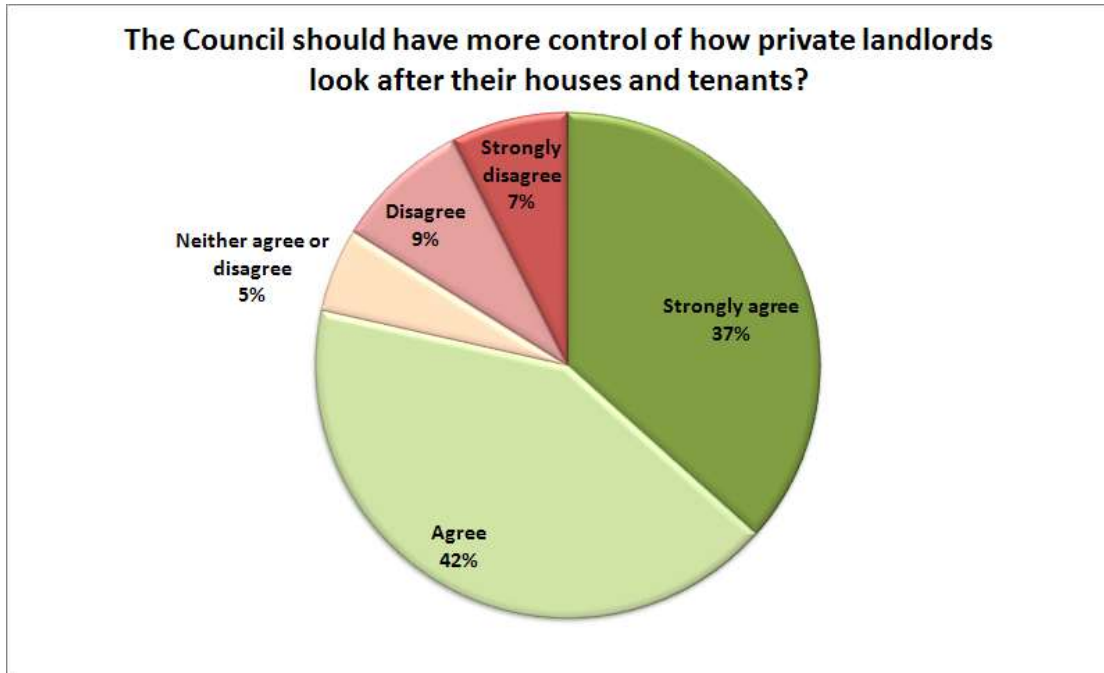
The following issues were raised by respondents who disagreed with the area chosen:

- Will raise rents
- Could stigmatise or devalue the area/put off first time buyers
- Wider area should be chosen
- Three respondents stated that the area had no problems or was fine as it was.

- Two respondents felt that the Parkhill Avenue and Cleveland Road area should be included in the scheme.

### 1.4 Should the Council introduce selective licensing?

79% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that the Council should have more control over how private landlords look after their tenancies, 70% agreed or strongly agreed we should introduce selective licensing into the area.



Of residents who agreed the Council should have more control over private rented tenancies, 5 were unsure or neither agreed nor disagreed with Selective Licensing, and 2 did not agree with Licensing.

Of those who disagreed with either selective licensing, or more control over private rented tenancies reasons given included the following:

- The council should not have more control,
- It would push up rents / the cost would be passed on to tenants,
- May harm relations between landlord and tenant or make it harder to find properties to rent.
- Would not be effective or make a difference.

### 1.5 Would licensing improve things?

Around 70% of the respondents agreed that the scheme would improve property management, house condition and the area in general. Respondents were less sure that the scheme would reduce anti-social behaviour – many residents disagreed or were unsure of this.

	Would Improve Management	Would improve house condition	Would reduce ASB	Would Improve the Area
Agree/Strongly Agree	70%	69%	54%	71%
Neither Agree or Disagree	12%	11%	19%	9%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	16%	16%	18%	16%
Don't Know/No Answer	2%	4%	9%	4%

### 1.6 Other Comments

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments at the end of the questionnaire. These are summarised/paraphrased below

- People are selling below market value to leave the area and properties are going to rogue landlords
- Cost of licensing will be passed on to the tenant
- Could increase empty properties of rents go up
- Could increase lodging and over occupancy
- May decrease property values
- Issues with noise/fly tipping/refuse and ASB
- Lack of vetting by property agents
- Issues with landlords not passing alley gate keys to tenants
- Licensing is long overdue
- Thank you for engaging with local concerns.
- Parkhill Avenue, Moss Bank and Lansdowne Road were flagged up as additional locations of concern.

“All councils have powers to make the physical and social environment safe for everyone. Many councils already use them effectively, so this action is long overdue. Rogue landlords exploit by overcrowding, and failure to maintain. A dirty physical environment and constant tenant turnover destroys any hope of social cohesion, and causes great distress to permanent residents, many of whom are elderly, and feel threatened by the behaviour around them. Research by London boroughs has shown high correlation between poorly maintained housing and anti social behaviour.”

“Better regulation of standards of accommodation is needed: some endangers health and safety of families. Too much regulation can make it even harder for those who already find it hard to get housing (e.g. asylum seekers, refugees, DHS) to be housed.”

“There is a need for tight controls to ensure properties are kept in good order and the tenants respect the area which we live in.”

“What is the benefit of the licence to the landlord? If they rent a property and need support for improvements, is there any grant funding?”

“It would be useful to know the landlord more and engage with residents who live on the street”

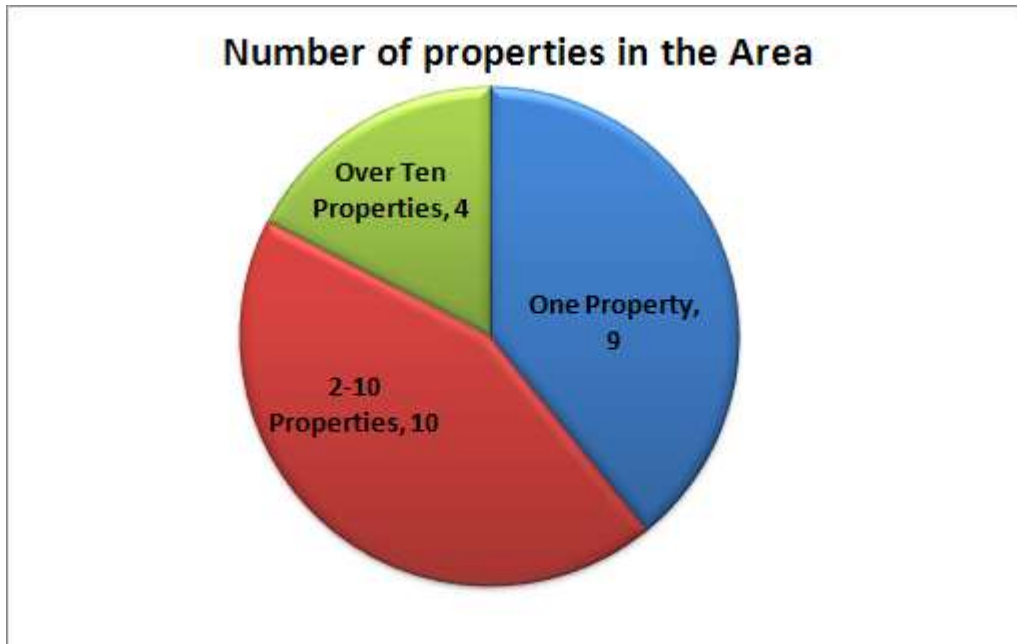
“The system needs to cease to be based on reaction to complaints, and instead to provide for a tight licensing arrangement with a duty on landlords to comply -and then to levy the substantial fines allowable in law.



## 2.0 Responses from Landlords and Agents

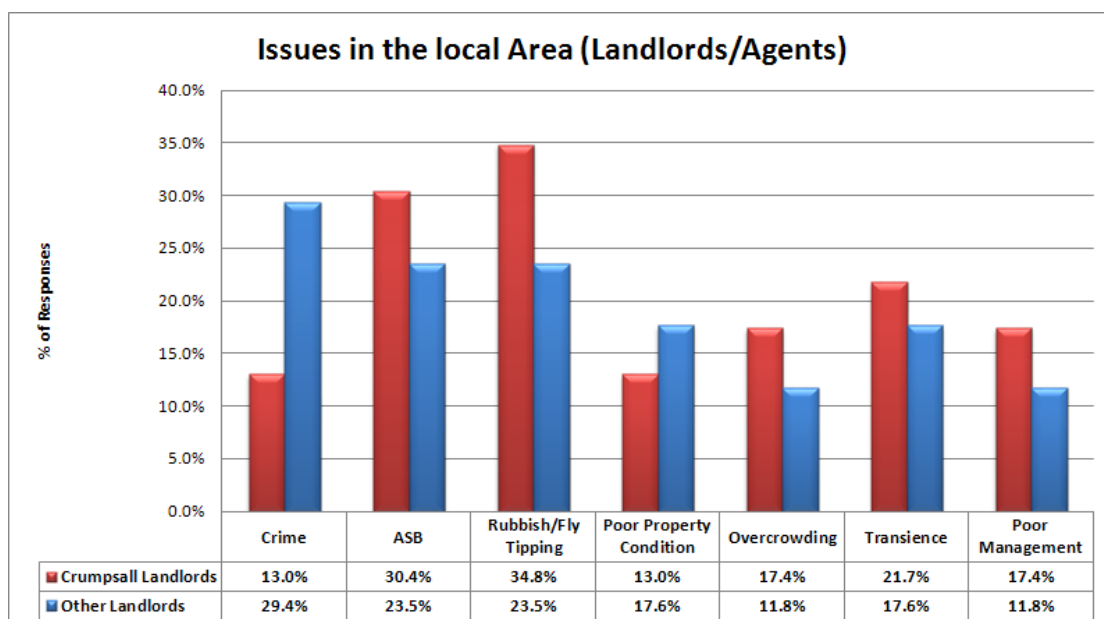
40 completed questionnaires were received from the landlord's consultation of which 38 were from landlords or letting agents, one from a related business and one from a professional body.

Of the responses 17 were from landlords or agents who did not have properties in the proposed licensing area. The majority of respondents had less than 10 properties in the area, and 9 had just one property.



## 2.1 Issues in the local area

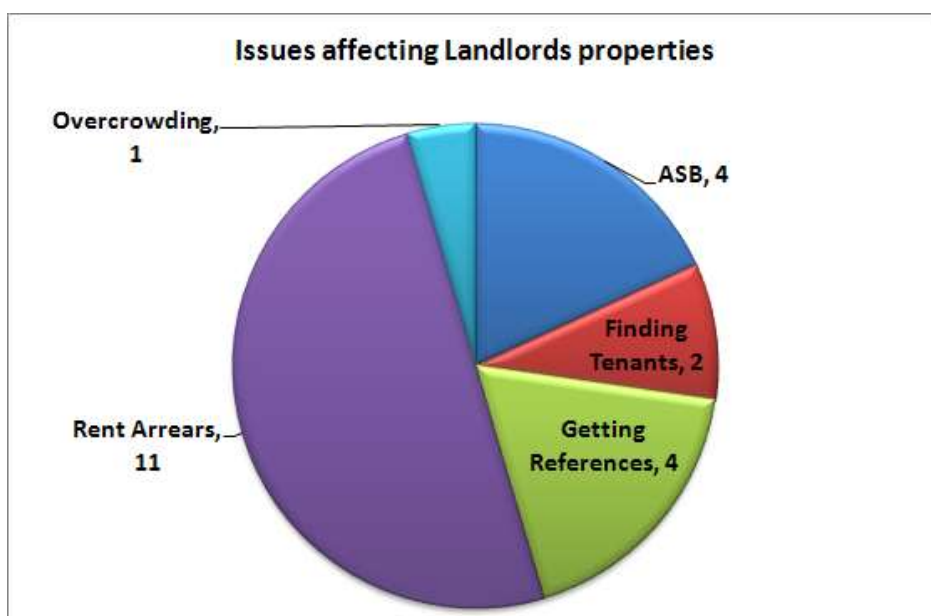
The issue most landlords felt was an issue in the area was rubbish and fly-tipping. Note that landlords without property in the area also commented on the issues they felt affected the area and these are presented separately on the chart below.



Other issues mentioned by landlords included concerns regarding damp and litter on the street.

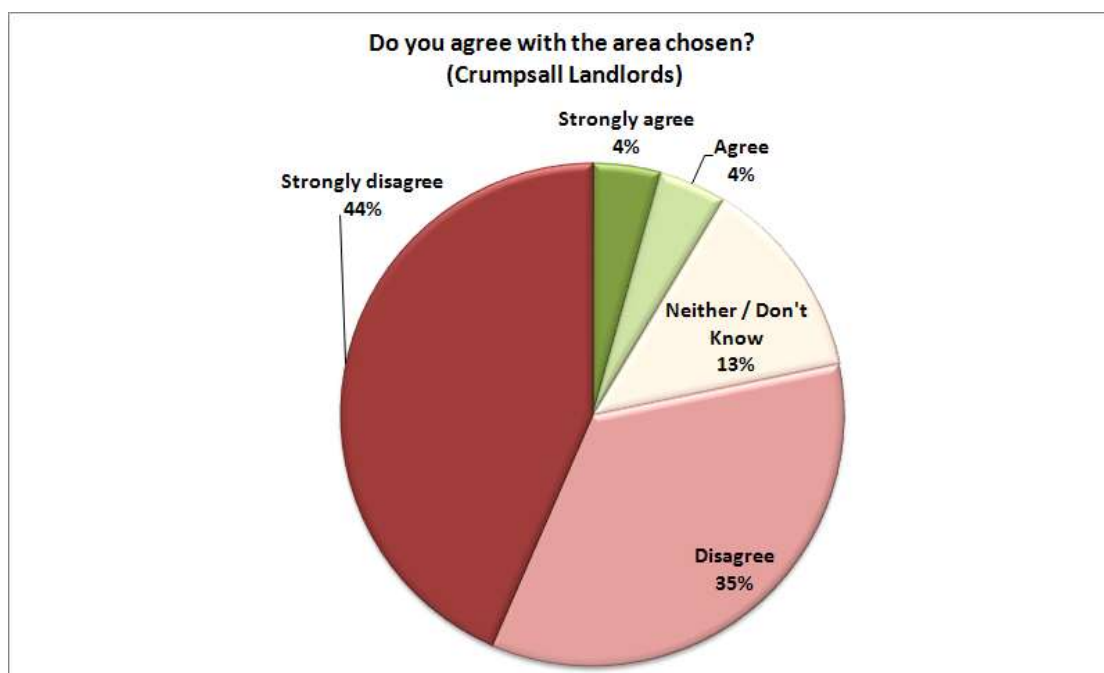
### 2.2 Issues that have affected Landlords properties in the area

Landlords were asked whether any of their property had been affected by ASB, finding tenants and getting references, rent arrears and overcrowding. Landlords without property in Crumpsall also answered this question – the results below are only from Crumpsall landlords. The most frequently mentioned issue was rent arrears – less than 5 respondents said their properties were affected by the other issues. Other comments included problems with fly tipping and housing benefit being paid directly to tenants.

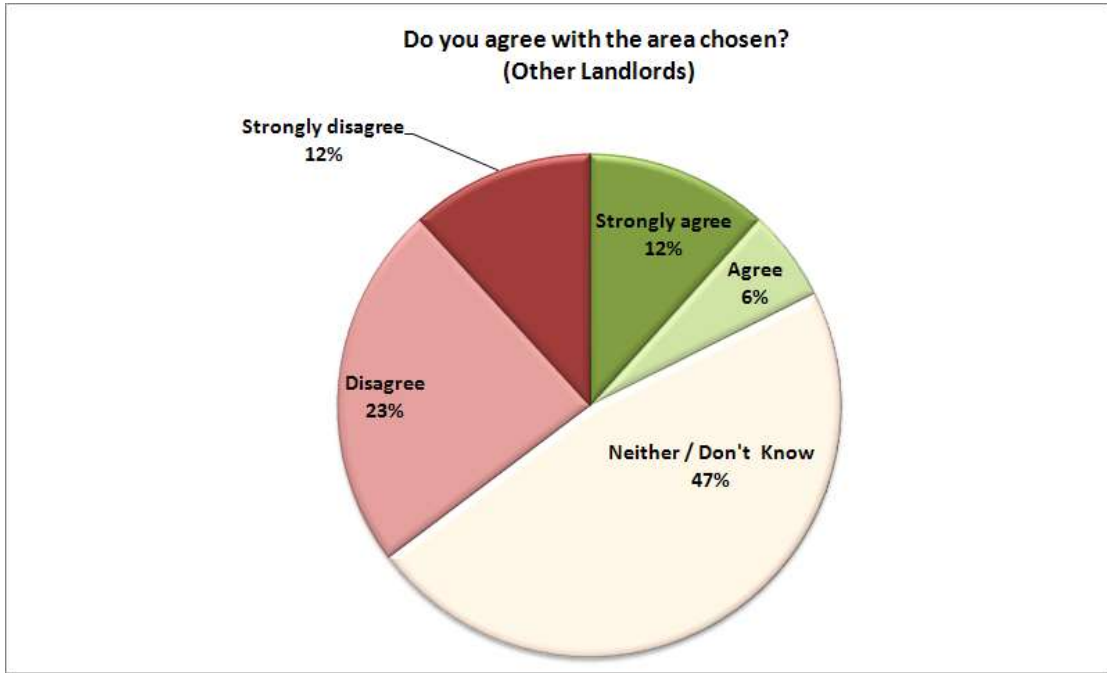


### 2.3 Landlords views of the choice of area and streets for selective licensing

The majority of landlords with properties in Crumpsall disagreed with the choice of this area.



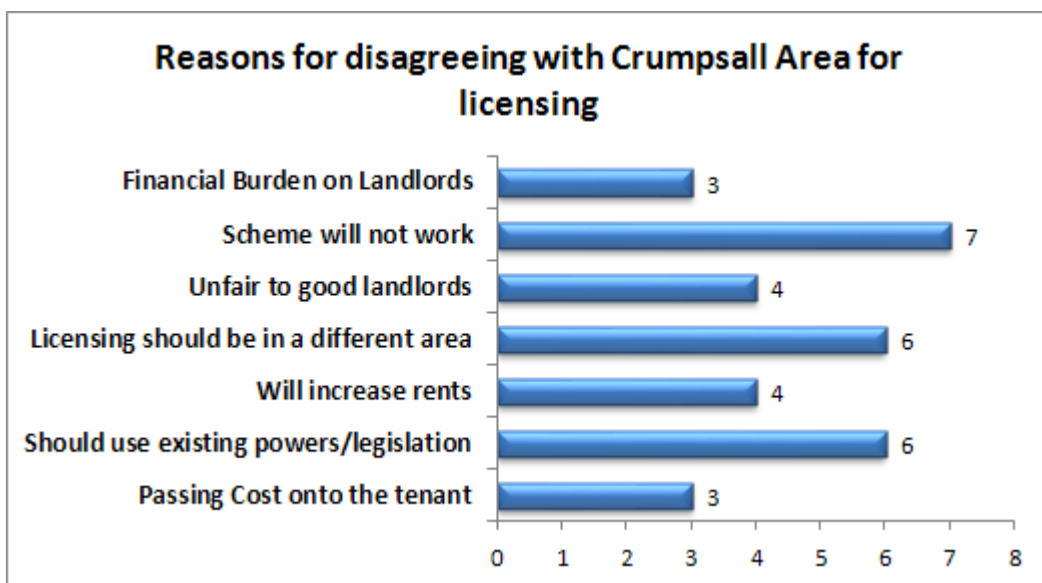
The response from other landlords is below:



Landlords were asked to comment on why they did or did not agree with the Crumpsall as the selective licensing area. Of those who did not the responses generally related to the licensing scheme in general rather than the choice of Crumpsall as the area although 6 felt that the should be introduced in a different area introduced in a different area.

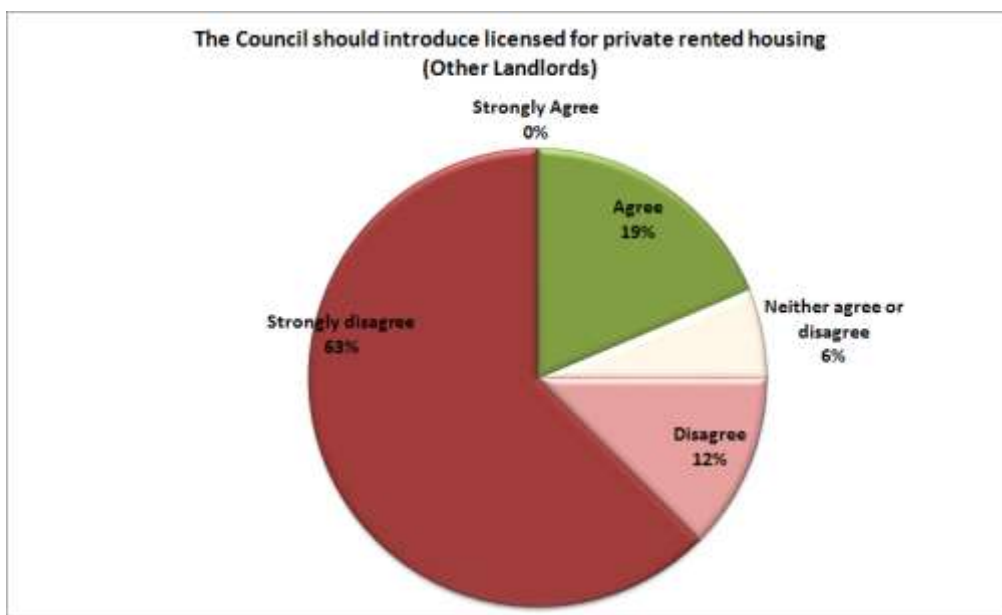
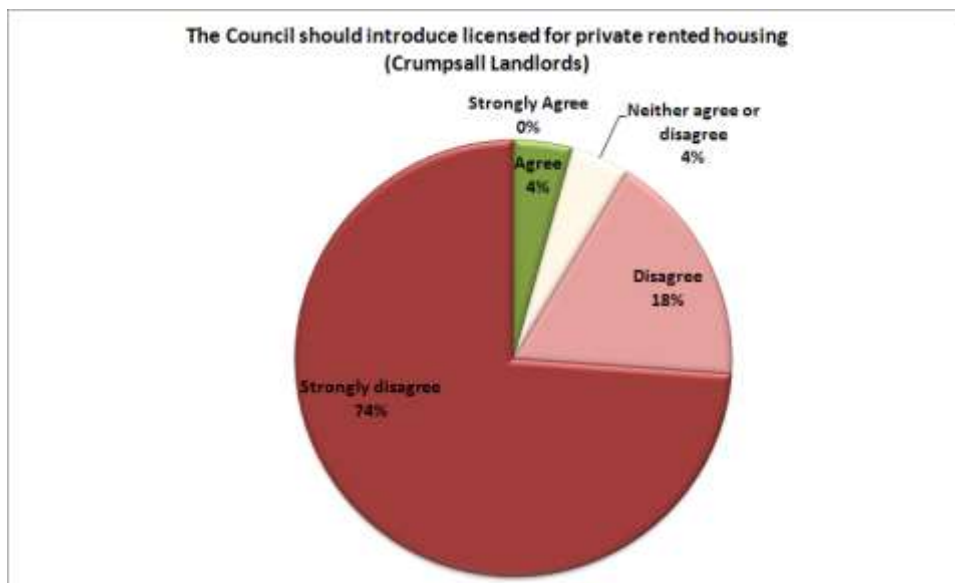
Other comments included concerns that the scheme would not work, was not necessary in this area and that the cost would be passed on to tenants and landlords would raise rents to cover the cost.

Some respondents suggested alternative areas for the scheme – these include Moston, a larger area to include Kathkin Avenue, or to include Ash Tree Road, Cravenwood Road, Station Road and the top of Crumpsall Lane.



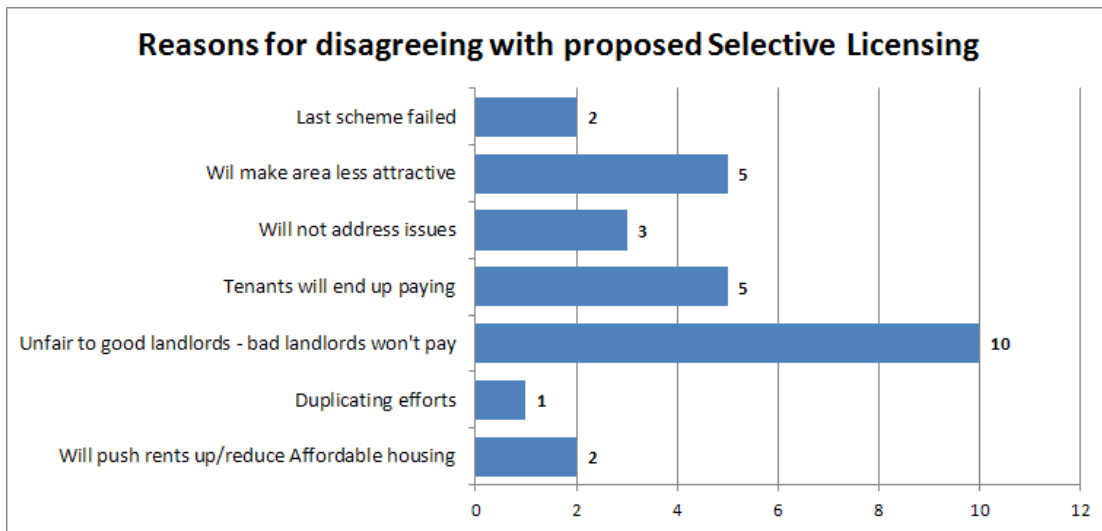
Landlords view of whether to introduce selective licensing in the area

33 out of the 40 landlord respondents (82%) disagree or strongly disagree with the proposal to introduce selective licensing (of which 27 strongly disagree). Of the landlords who did not own property in the area, a larger proportion agreed with licensing (17%) but 70% disagree with the proposal. 91% of landlords with properties in Crumpsall disagree with the proposal.



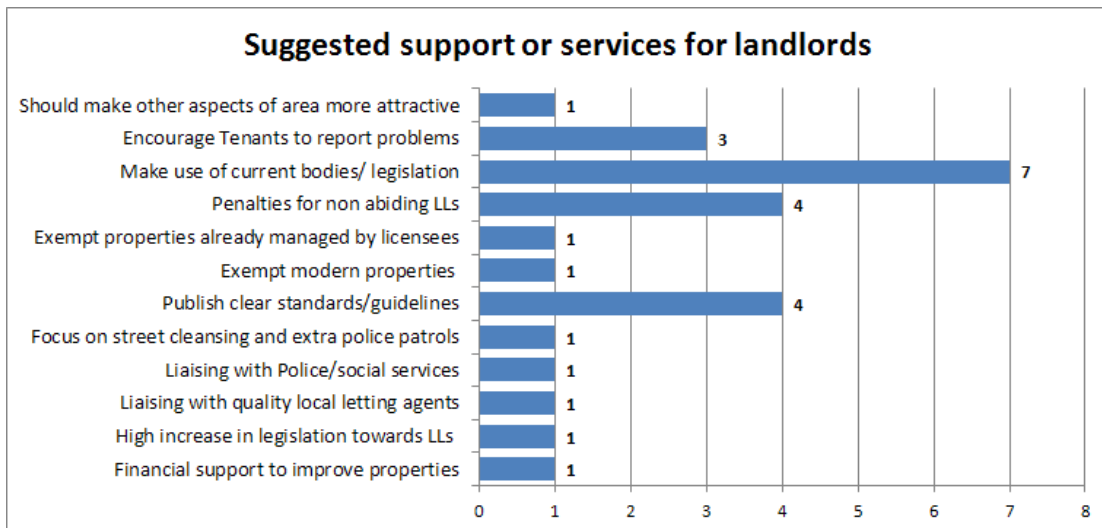
## 2.4 Reasons for disagreeing with the proposal for selective licensing

The comments from respondents regarding whether they disagreed with the proposal are summarised below. The most frequent comment was that it was unfair to good landlords, the cost would be passed on to tenants increasing rents and that it would stigmatise Crumpsall as a bad area and make it less attractive to landlords and tenants.



## 2.5 What support services do you think could be given to landlords to make sure they manage their properties to a high standard?

The most frequently mentioned service or support was that the council should make use of existing legislation and penalties for non compliant landlords. The responses are summarised below:



## 2.6 Other Comments

The most frequent comment (6 respondents) was that they felt it would encourage landlords to sell up or not invest further in the area. Additional comments are quoted verbatim below where they make a specific point not covered in the above summary

“Licensing would garner much more support if it can be shown to have material results and not just a tax on tenants.”

“You’re not doing this to improve things – you’re doing it for tax revenue reasons”

“It would be a fair outcome if landlords that were accredited under the previous scheme and/or accredited members of a recognised landlord association were allowed a significantly discounted fee structure.”

“The causes of ASB are many and varied. It is not, in our view, reasonable to expect agents and landlords to play a disproportionately large part in tackling them. As private businesses, PRS landlords and their agents, whilst having clear responsibilities to manage their properties professionally cannot reasonably be expected to tackle wider social problems.”

“Either the landlord uses an agent who can be asked to ensure the property complies or the tenants can be asked to complete a "tick" sheet to ensure the landlord complies. Neither requires a licence.”

“Having this imposed implies that you consider all landlords to be rogues who do not care, and this is totally untrue. I consider this action to be unwarranted, and shall probably seek to sell our flat if licensing comes into effect within the area.”

“There are no incentives to do anything positive to improve their properties”

“Remove Harrow Street as this is predominantly owner occupiers”

“Lots of drink and drug problems in the area – “

“It would be fairer to charge a one off fee to become licensed (proving that the landlord knows their responsibilities) at say £250 and then £100 per property per annum to be inspected.”

“Responsible landlords already strive to keep their property in good order and are not displaying antisocial behaviour ....there is a lack of support from councils for landlords to deal with these problem tenants...It is the unscrupulous landlords that you need to seek out, and not tar us all with the same brush, assuming that all landlords are rogues... energies may be better invested in supporting improvements to community projects, education and youth schemes and other such positive support for all the residents of the area”