

Consultation on Proposed Selective Licensing of Private Rented Homes in Rusholme and Moss Side

02 May 2017

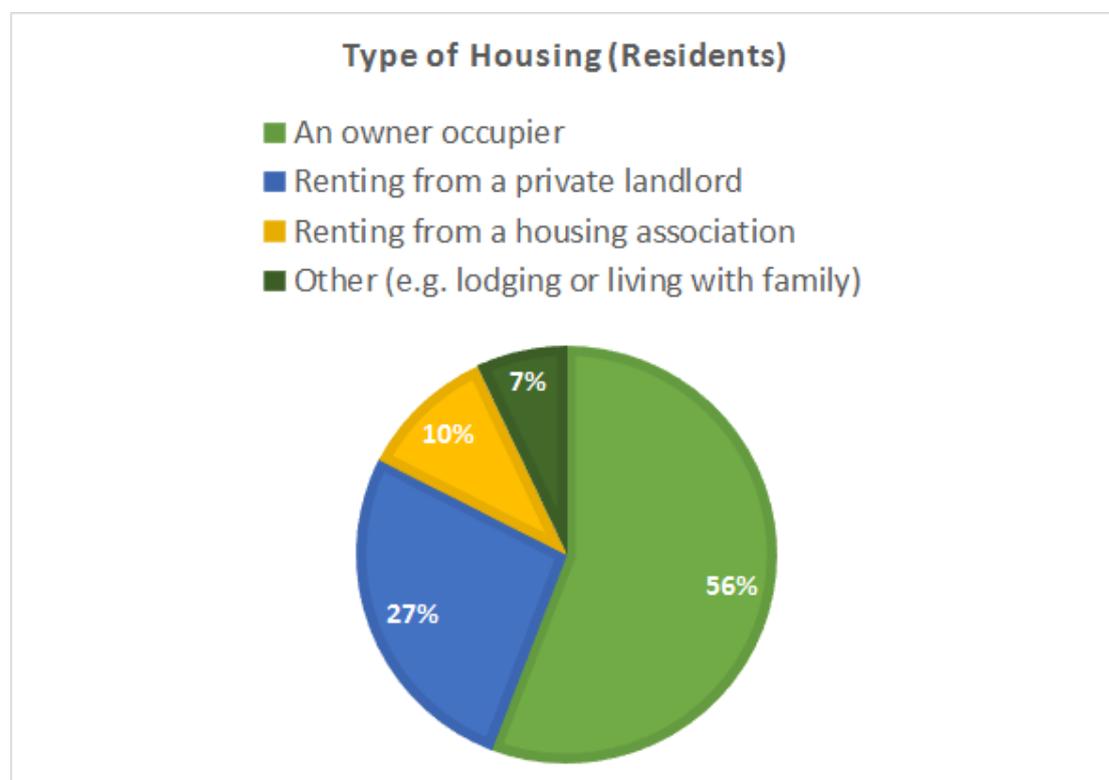
Public consultation with regard the proposed Rusholme and Moss Side Selective Licensing area took place via an online survey between 6 February and 21 April 2017. Details of the scheme and the proposed area and streets to be covered were provided and views were invited from local residents and landlords or letting agents with property in the proposed area (with different survey questions for each group).

A total of 79 responses were received from Landlords and Managing agents and 98 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 views of local residents and landlords who took part in the survey, but not necessarily representative of all residents or landlords in the area.

1. Responses from Residents

98 residents responded, of which 86 were from the local area (and therefore 4% of households in the proposed licensing area)

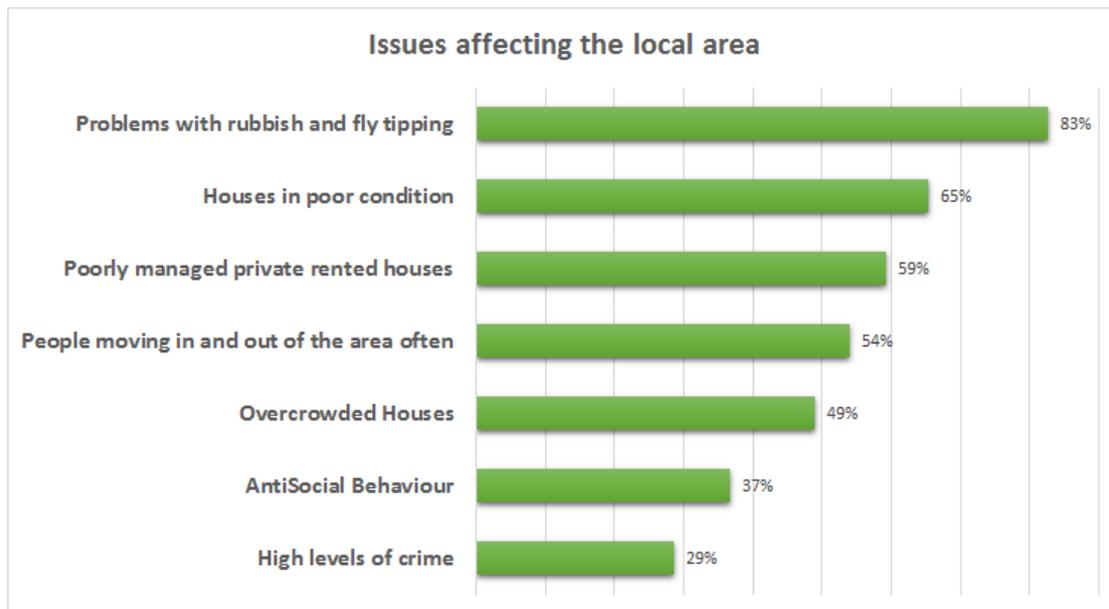
The majority of responses from residents were Owner Occupiers with 27% responses from resident's actually renting property in the area.



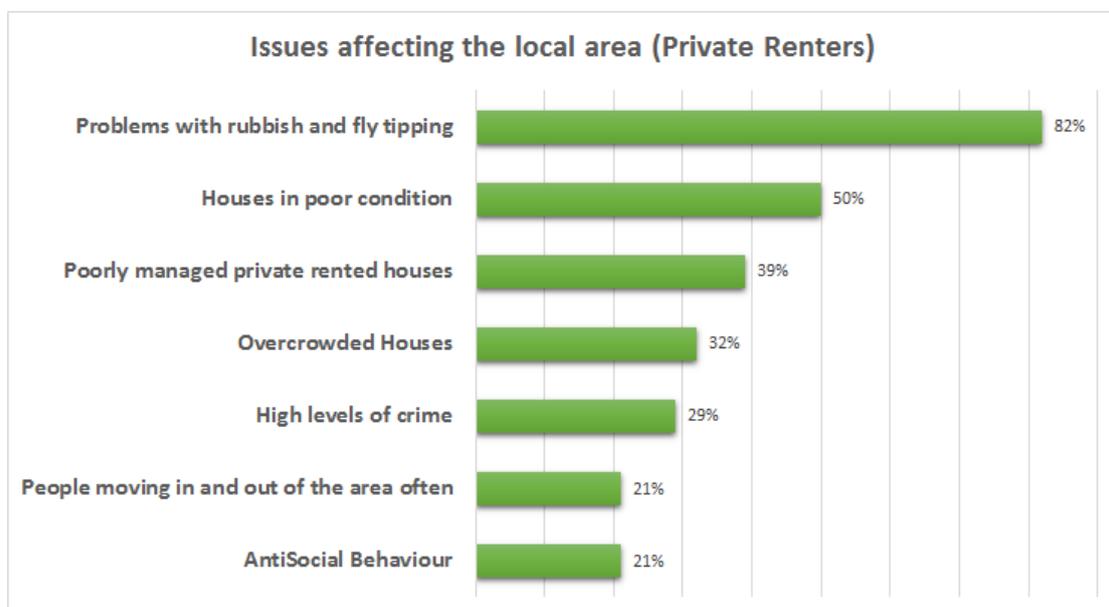
1.1. Issues affecting the local area

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 problems with rubbish and flytipping (83%), Houses in poor condition (65%), poorly managed rented houses (59%) and people frequently moving in or out of the area (54%). Other issues raised included parking and highways issues, rent levels and litter.



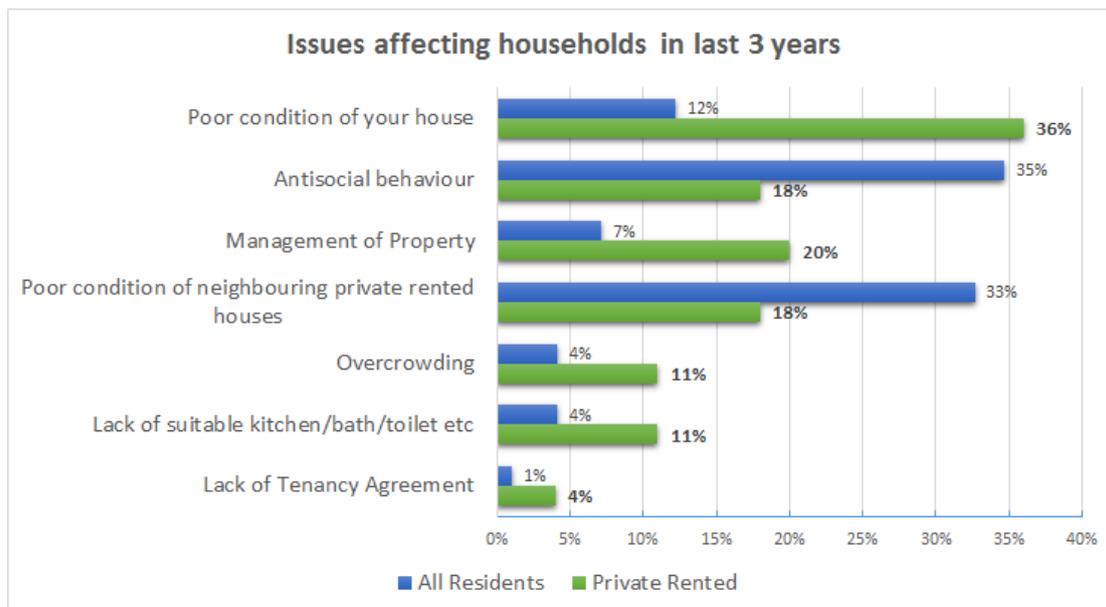
Note that of the 28 private rented residents who responded – the issues are ranked in similar order, but a much lower percentage felt Anti-Social behaviour and people frequently moving was an issue.



1.2. Issues directly affecting the resident or their family in the last three years

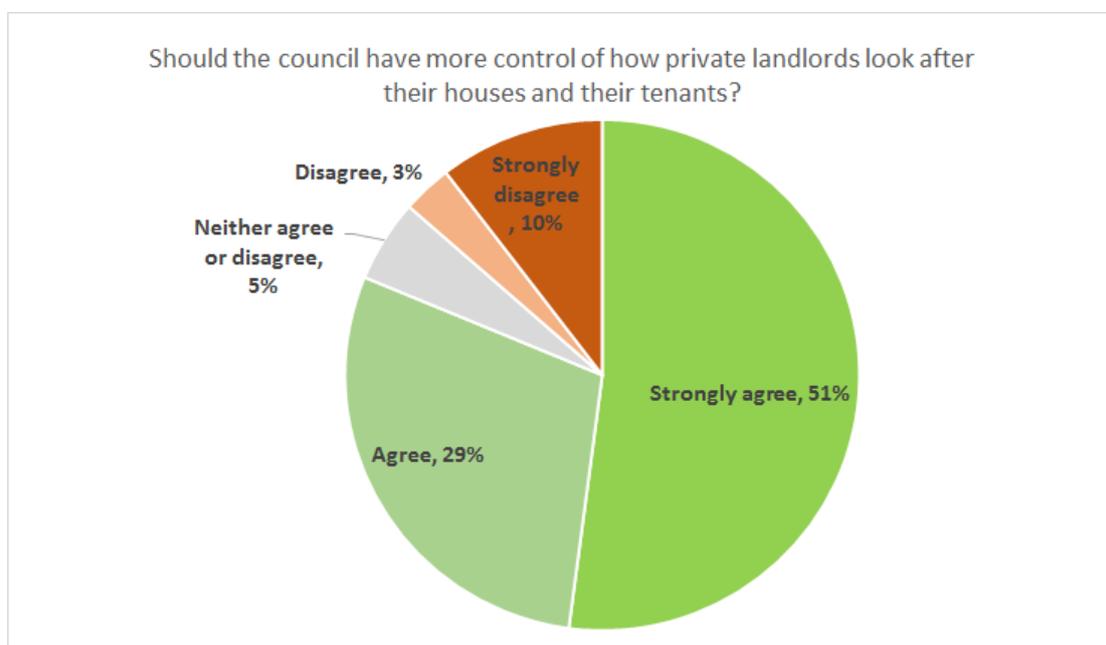
1/3rd of all respondents had been directly affected by poor condition of their house or a neighbouring house and 35% had been affected by antisocial behaviour in the area. 20% of Private Rented respondents had an issue with the way their property was looked after by a landlord or letting agent, and 36% had been affected by the condition of their property. Other issues raised included speeding cars, pest infestation, bin collection, households leaving

rubbish outside properties and noise at night. Several respondents mentioned issues with properties having conversions/works without planning permission.

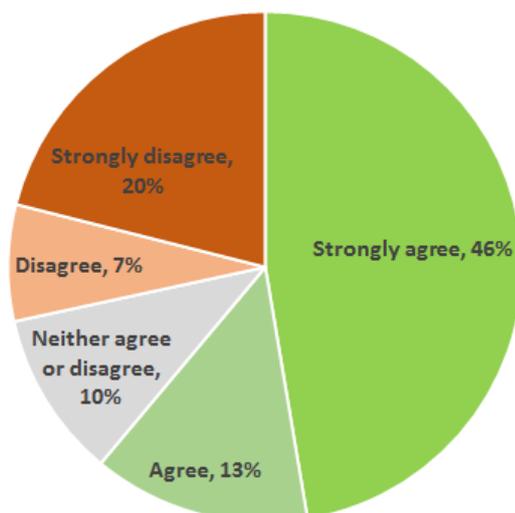


1.3. Should the Council introduce selective licensing?

80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should have more control over how private landlords look after their tenancies and of those 51% were strongly in agreement. 59% agreed or strongly agreed we should introduce selective licensing into the area.



Should we introduce licenses for private rented houses in the area?



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

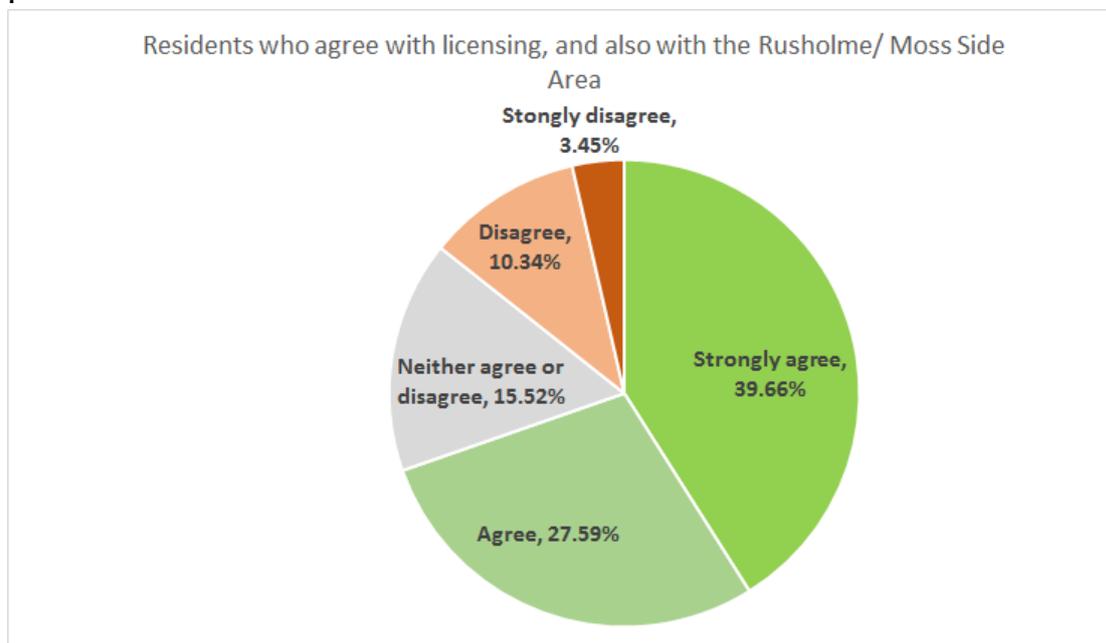
- Landlords should be more accountable for the internal/external standard of housing they provide and the local area
- Would make landlords more responsible for their tenants behaviour
- Would reduce evictions / homelessness
- May reduce littering/fly tipping
- Would ensure landlords respond to complaints / repairs
- Would improve rights for tenants
- Would protect property values
- Would prevent alterations / extensions without permission
- Would reduce anti-social behaviour

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

- It would push up rents / the cost would be passed on to tenants,
- It would reduce house prices
- Landlords should not be responsible for their tenants behaviour
- Would not be effective or make a difference.
- Should do other things to improve the local area
- Standards can be enforced under existing law
- Licensing not needed in the area
- Would be bad for the area's reputation
- Short-term tenancies not necessarily a problem
- Council should do more to support landlords to raise standards
- Landlords would invest outside the area

1.4. Residents views of the choice of area and streets for selective licensing

47% of all respondents said they strongly agreed, or agreed with the area identified for Selective Licensing. 30% Disagreed or strongly disagreed with the area identified. Of those who agreed with licensing, 67% also agreed with the Rusholme and Moss Side area, 13% agreed with introducing licensing but not in the Rusholme and Moss Side area.



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

- Should be in a different area or across the whole city
- Problem is with social housing not private housing
- Community should take care of the area.
- Would not improve the area.

Suggested changes to the area:

Should include : Crofton and Acomb Street
 Ealing Avenue and St Ives Road
 Should cover all of Fallowfield and Withington
 Fleeson and Grandale Streets

Should Exclude Thornton, Horton and Brompton Street
 Aldwych Avenue and The Grange and properties fronting Moss Lane East

1.5. Would licensing improve things?

Around 56% of the respondents agreed that the scheme would improve property management, 60% said it would improve house condition and 51% thought it would improve the area in general. Respondents were less sure that the scheme would reduce anti-social behaviour – 29% of residents disagreed and 27% were unsure or didn't know whether it would improve ASB.

	Would improve property management	Would improve condition of houses	Would reduce ASB or nuisance	Would improve the area in general
Strongly agree	34.7%	38.8%	25.5%	33.7%
Agree	21.4%	21.4%	17.3%	17.3%
Neither agree or disagree	10.2%	13.3%	20.4%	16.3%
Disagree	7.1%	6.1%	8.2%	6.1%
Strongly disagree	20.4%	15.3%	20.4%	17.3%
Don't Know / No Answer	6.12%	5.10%	8.16%	9.18%

1.6. Other Comments

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments at the end of the questionnaire. The key issues raised are summarised as follows:

- Concern that cost of licence would be passed on to tenants in rent
- License fee is a form of tax
- Concern that licensing would be used to 'gentrify' the area
- Licensing would not make it better for tenants
- Unclear how licensing would tackle Anti-Social Behaviour
- Council should do more to tackle rubbish, highways, potholes etc
- Crime, drug dealing etc needs to be tackled
- License should be introduced but not be charged for
- Tenancy agreement should include agreement to use bins and have rubbish collected
- Landlords should not be responsible for tenants behaviour
- Licensing not proven to work elsewhere.
- Could increase risk of eviction/ impact on vulnerable people
- Not enough information about how the scheme would work and be enforced
- Unfair to charge good landlords for a licence.

Other comments raised included:

"If I was a landlord I would be happy to adhere to these rules as I understand the negative impact it has on people who are trying to stay in the area.."

"licensing will make a positive different but to be truly effective it will require enforcement action to be taken"

"fair rent scheme should be introduced"

"It is up to us all as individuals to respect our community"

"...fees from this licensing could help to provide more (alley) gates"

"Please ensure that landlords have an obligation to undertake regular maintenance to their properties, especially where this affects neighbours"

"Rogue landlords that currently act illegally will continue to do so regardless of any change in local regulations"

"We want to create a lovely community in our street, we need help from the council to stop fly tipping and anti-social behaviour"

“A properly resourced and implemented licensing scheme would help to deal with this and help the people who care about the area to ensure it is a nice place to live”