**Proposed introduction of Selective Licensing for all privately rented properties in designated areas of the borough**

**What is a Selective Licensing Designation?**

A Selective Licensing Designation gives Lewisham the power to introduce licensing for all privately rented properties in a given area. This excludes properties already covered by existing licensing designations, such as the Mandatory HMO (House with Multiple Occupancy) Licensing and the Additional HMO Licensing. Lewisham has in place a Mandatory HMO Licensing in place and is expanding its current Additional HMO Licensing borough-wide.

The licensing requirement will apply to single tenancy dwellings in Lewisham if they fall within a Selective Licensing Designation Area.

**What are the designation areas?**

Our assessment has shown areas in Lewisham suffer from high levels of deprivation, high and repeat anti-social behaviour and poor housing conditions linked to privately rented properties. We are grouping 16 of the 18 current wards in Lewisham into three areas to tackle antisocial behaviour (ASB), housing conditions and deprivation:

**Designation Area One** with a special focus on reducing ASB and improving housing conditions. Wards included are Brockley, Lewisham Central, New Cross, Rushey Green, Catford South and Perry Vale.

**Designation Area Two** with a special focus on improving housing conditions. Wards included are Evelyn, Ladywell, Lee Green, Sydenham and Crofton Park.

**Designation Area Three**with a special focus on raising the living conditions of the most deprived. Wards included are Bellingham, Downham, Forest Hill, Grove Park and Whitefoot.

**Note:** Blackheath and Telegraph Hill did not meet the necessary conditions to fall into any of the Selective Licensing Designations. For more details, please read the Selective Licensing Proposal in the documents folder.

**Note:** Ward boundaries in Lewisham will change in 2022. These ward changes will not affect the licensing status of properties within the currently laid out designated areas where we propose to introduce selective licensing.

**Why do we need Selective Licensing?**

By localising the introduction of private rental licensing, the Council can use its extended powers to focus on some of the issues that we know have a detrimental effect on the areas and the lives of people who live there, whether they are in private rental properties or not.

There is a significant cost to the Council, local businesses, landlords and tenants in managing these issues.

They cause a decline in the environment, impact community wellbeing and make these areas less attractive places to live, work and invest.

The introduction of a property licensing scheme will provide tenants with a greater choice of safe, good quality and well-managed accommodation.

**Selective Licensing means we can focus on tackling issues that affect local communities**

Improving the quality of privately rented accommodation will lead to better community and cross tenure relations, reduce anti-social behaviour and help to stabilise and improve local neighbourhoods.

That is why it is so important that we hear the views of as many local residents as we can.

**How much will Selective Licensing cost landlords?**

The proposed cost to landlords of privately rented property is £640  for each property, before applying any discounts.

The cost is made up of two parts.

Part one covers the administration costs and must be paid at the time of applying for a licence.

Part two covers enforcement costs of the licence and must be paid on being issued a draft licence.

This fee has been set to make the scheme cost neutral, taking into account the cost of inspections and compliance checks, and the discounts available to landlords.

The cost of the fees is a valid business expense for tax purposes. VAT is not applied to licence fees.

The fees being proposed have been benchmarked with those charged by other London boroughs that have Selective Licensing schemes.

**Didn't the Council consult on private rental licensing already?**

The Council did carry out a consultation on this issue in 2019.

However, the process of moving forward from that consultation was halted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Council has reviewed housing conditions post lockdown and this has led to a fundamental rethink on how best to operate a Selective Licensing Scheme in Lewisham. As we move forward with a revised scheme, we need to run the consultation again.

**How can I have my say?**

You can respond by going to the area sections on this site that covers your ward.

We want to hear the views of private renters, landlords and all other residents and business owners in the wards or neighbouring those wards.

**The consultation runs from 20 October 2021 to 10 May 2022**

**Please note:**Between 20 Oct 2021 and 3 Nov 2021, the website had information that suggested the licence cost is £640 per year for a property. The correct amount is £640 for a Selective licence. The licence will be valid for the duration of the Selective licensing scheme. If approved, the Selective licensing scheme will run for five years.

If you have any questions about this consultation, please email betterrenting@lewisham.gov.uk

**Terms & conditions of Prize Draw**

We appreciate the time you spend completing this survey. If you have supplied contact information, you will entered in our prize draw, where we are giving away £100 Love2Shop vouchers.

If you supplied contact information but do not wish to be entered you can let us know by emailing the address below.

1. Only one entry per person is allowed

2. Only residents of the borough of Lewisham may enter. We may ask proof of this

3. The prize will not be transferable to another person

4. All winners will be selected at random

5. The prize draw will close at midnight on 4 February 2022

6. We will notify the winners via the phone number or email address supplied shortly after the prize draw end date

Entry into the prize draw does not affect the protection of your privacy rights as laid out in our privacy policy (available on the front page of this website)

Please note: if you already completed this consultation – either online or via printed forms - and supplied your contact details you will be entered into the prize draw.

If you supply contact information but do not wish to be entered in our prize draw please email betterrenting@lewisham.gov.uk