
Request - FOI 7375

I am looking for information concerning the effectiveness of local authorities' enforcement activities in the private rented sector during the financial year 2011/12 and the current condition of private rented stock in your area. I am keen to understand what happens to complaints about private landlords once received by the local authority and if there are any issues taking action against landlords who do not comply with enforcement action.

The responses will be added to the information we requested and received in June 2011. If your data from the financial years 2006/7 to 2010/11 has altered in any way please indicate in your responses and provide the new figures alongside the responses for 2011/12.

We appreciate that local authorities are structured differently and will have various routes for the different information to be handled. The departments that may deal with these include: Housing Advice, Housing Options, Homeless Persons Unit, Environmental Health, Private Sector Housing, Trading Standards, Tenancy Relations, Customer Services, Legal.

We have therefore broken down complaints by type in questions 1 – 5, and if different departments in your authority follow through each of these types of complaint and hold other relevant information you may wish to send questions 7 – 14 to each of those departments to get their response.

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Question	2011/12 figures
1) How many complaints against private landlords concerning illegal eviction have you received in the financial year 2011/12?	84
2) How many complaints against private landlords concerning harassment have you received in the financial year 2011/12?	137
3) How many complaints against private landlords concerning category I or II hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) have you received in the financial year 2011/12?	104
4) How many complaints against private landlords concerning unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation have you received in the financial year 2011/12?	120
5) How many complaints concerning financial scams (such as unfair charges, withheld deposits), against private landlords have you received in the financial year 2011/12?	This information is not recorded at present

6) **Roughly, how many private landlords have you repeatedly dealt with that give you continued cause for concern?**

There are a number of landlords, due to the nature of their client group, whom we work with proactively to ensure standards are met and maintained.

7) **How many cases against private landlords in total have you taken pre-enforcement action (such as a letter or verbal warning to the landlord) and in how many cases were you able to resolve the issue in the financial year 2011/12?**

	2011/12
Number of cases where pre-enforcement action taken	1150
Number of cases where pre-enforcement action resolved the issue	1150

8) **On how many cases have you taken formal enforcement action (such as injunctions or court orders) against private landlords in the financial year 2011/12? and how many have been complied with?**

	2011/12
Number of enforcement actions initiated against private landlords	1
Number of enforcement actions complied with	1

9) **How many prosecutions have you brought against private landlords in the financial year 2011/12? and how many were successful?**

	2011/12
Number of prosecutions brought against private landlords	7
Number of successful prosecutions against private landlords	5

10) **i) What proportion and ii) how many of your local authority's private rented properties meet the Decent Homes Standard?**

The City Council has conducted a private sector housing condition survey from which the can be drawn the following estimates. In addition the City Council operates Private Sector Leasing and Access schemes which require properties to achieve the Decent Homes Standard as a minimum.

	Figure	Year data collected (if known)
Proportion of private rented homes which meet the Decent Homes Standard	58.46%	2010
Total number of private rented homes which meet the Decent Homes Standard	25,740	2010

11) **When dealing with private landlords in the financial year 2011/12 have you seen cases where their behaviour or neglect has required the involvement other public services?**

Records are not held in a format which identifies this information readily but we have a specific fire safety protocol with the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service and a working relationship with West Midlands Police under the Community Safety Partnership.

	Yes/No	If yes please can you estimate the number of cases
Fire (e.g. due to hazards in the property)	Yes	5
Health (e.g. hospitalisation of a tenant)	No	
Police (e.g. prosecuting a landlord)	Yes	2
Other (please specify)		
UKBA		1
Social Services		2

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- 12) **i) How many private landlords operating in your local authority are currently accredited (if you have an accreditation scheme); ii) what proportion is this of all private landlords and iii) what year did your accreditation scheme come into force?**

The City Council is a primary partner in Homestamp which supports the Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme which operates across the West Midlands area. A significant proportion of the 2,000 members of MLAS operate across authority boundaries of which 50% let in Birmingham.

Total number of accredited private landlords	1,000 landlords and 50 agents (approx)
Proportion of total private landlords	There is no reliable indicator of the exact number of landlords operating in the city
Year the accreditation scheme came into force	2007
Our local authority does not run an accreditation scheme	

- 14) **Is there anything else you would like to tell us about how you deal with problem landlords in your area?**

The City Council is keen to develop partnerships and synergies between the various agencies (Police, ASB Officer,s etc) to address problems arising from the impact of the PRS due to the actions of landlords, agents or tenants. Much of this work has been developed through the Community Safety Partnership.

Whilst we have undertaken a thorough search of the information held by Birmingham City Council, it may be that, due to the size and amount of information held by Birmingham City Council, some information may have been inadvertently missed.

If you have any information which may assist us in determining or locating any missed information, we would be grateful if you would contact us with details of this information, so that we can conduct a further search.