

Alternatives to licensing that have been considered

Alternative Measure	Strengths	Weaknesses
Use of Part 1 Housing Act 2004 enforcement powers [HHSRS] and Public Health powers	<p>Formal notices can be served that require improvements to be carried out.</p> <p>Councils can carry out work in default if a notice is not complied with.</p> <p>Landlords risk being prosecuted if they do not comply with the notice.</p>	<p>The powers do not place any obligation on landlords to be proactive in improving conditions. Formal action is generally slow, with appeal provisions against most types of notices served, which can significantly delay the time period for compliance. Work in default can be effective but it is expensive and time consuming to the Council, with the risk that not all costs are recovered.</p> <p>Successful prosecutions do not in themselves secure improvements in property conditions and the Council's prosecution costs are often not met in full.</p>
Voluntary Accreditation schemes facilitate improvement in management practices and standards	<p>For those landlords who take part, accreditation can improve the ability to effectively manage a property.</p>	<p>This requires voluntary landlord engagement and rogue operators are unlikely to attend/engage. In Southwark, there had been a poor take up of the voluntary accreditation schemes, despite continued support of these organisations by the council.</p>
Rely on prosecutions and civil penalties for housing offences	<p>Provides a disincentive to keep properties in poor conditions.</p>	<p>These powers do not place any obligation on landlords to be proactive in improving conditions. Successful prosecutions, or the imposition of civil penalties, do not in themselves secure improvements in property conditions. The absence of licensing significantly reduces the scope of the council to impose civil penalties in respect of identified housing breaches.</p>
Improvement grants to improve sub-standard properties	<p>Grants subsidise improvement works, improving standards and giving benefits for landlords and tenants.</p>	<p>Generally, there are few grants available and the council has very limited scope to offer grants through successful external funding bids. In the most part, grant awards would fund improvements that the landlord should be carrying out to meet their legal obligations. Any grant scheme would be discretionary and would rely on voluntary landlord engagement.</p>
ASB powers	<p>Formal notices can be served at addresses identified as having ASB issues. This can resolve ASB at the particular address.</p>	<p>Action would generally be taken against the tenant in occupation. The powers do not place any obligations on landlords to be</p>

		proactive in managing their properties to prevent or reduce the likelihood of ASB occurring.
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