

## **LANDLORD'S ASSOCIATION – ADDITIONAL LICENSING**

My name is Rosie Simcox and I am a landlord currently holding six HMO licences personally. All of these properties hold 2 star Accreditation certificates which as you are aware is the council's current standard for its' private housing stock under voluntary agreement with landlords. This scheme encourages landlord participation, and goodwill on both sides, to ensure properties meet stringent regulations with regard to certification of gas, electric, fire safety with an added requirement for security features. One of my properties was in the first batch to be accredited in 1995 and I have been a great supporter and advocator of this scheme since then.

My company, RCPM, also manages 250 student properties, all of which have 2 star Accreditation, as previously mentioned. Of these over 50 hold current HMO licences but under existing proposals another 170 would need licensing. Our landlords are conscientious, with regard to their duty of care, and a good relationship has been built up between the council and these landlords. We do not manage any property that falls below this standard hence our portfolio is of the highest calibre without the necessity of implementing further draconian legislation.

The proposed additional licensing measures are unnecessary and ill conceived. They are causing bad feeling amongst landlords, who have already put their hands in their pockets, to upgrade their properties voluntarily. Should you chose

to proceed the result will be further alienation of the private sector landlords whose properties are well above national average standard.

Furthermore landlords do not need or welcome the big stick approach from local government to tell them how to maintain their properties. It is in their own interests to, for example, keep gardens tidy. All our properties have their gardens maintained by our team of gardeners throughout the growing season.

Additionally with regard to waste management, more than 50% of our HMO licensed landlords provide wheelie bins at their own expense since these are not provided by the council which in my opinion is a very short sighted policy. The disposal of rubbish is however clearly the responsibility of the tenant not the landlord. We are finding that this problem has been further exacerbated this year due to the refuse centre demanding the production of a Residents card before allowing people to dispose of any rubbish. Unfortunately many students do not apply for these and so have been turned away. Ignorance of the requirements of the refuse centre is no excuse however the Council issued new leaflets this year without mentioning this fact. What a waste of our money! The result is more rubbish being left on the streets, split black bags spilling over pavements creating a hazard and health issue for everyone never mind the unsightly nature of such a consequence and angry residents.

What happened to our mass collection and rubbish amnesty which we used to have in areas such as Foxhill & Twerton? It seems very short sighted not to provide these in the three wards with most student population at the end of the academic year as a useful service and to appease residents rather than allowing our gull population to increase and get fatter.

Instead of rolling out this very expensive scheme for landlords one would have thought common sense would prevail amongst Councillors to promote and encourage the already eminently successful Accreditation scheme. Come on Councillors a little reason please,

IF IT AIN'T BROKE, DON'T FIX IT.