

Hi, thanks for having me here today to talk about HMOs in Oldfield.

So in Bath there are two sides of the HMO coin, they obviously affect students who live in them and also the rest of the community that live around them.

First of all I would like to say I find it deeply concerning that 87% of those properties being inspected were not up to the standard required. Living in substandard property can be worrying, detrimental to health and highlight insecurities within housing. We need to make sure that students have lines of communication that they can use to highlight substandard housing and they need to be able to do this without fear of having their tenancy terminated or rents increased. The council need to work with the University to make this happen. I would also argue that this raises concerns for the HMOs which are not currently covered by these inspections, we don't just want problem landlords do not move elsewhere in the city.

This brings me onto my second point. This scheme is limited to houses in the three wards of Oldfield, Westmoreland and Widcombe, but as student populations in other parts of the city increase we need to make sure that similar registration schemes are put in place. Often Oldfield residents will bring up student housing and if you ask them about article 4 they will say it was too late. There was plenty of warning that student housing was getting out of hand and yet this was only implemented when some streets were already full of as many students as they can hold. As student numbers increase we need to make sure that the same thing doesn't happen in other wards in Bath.

And that isn't to vilify students they bring new vibrancy to our city, trade to our shops and new visitors to the city in the form of their parents. But, if the university want to keep increasing the number of students year on year they need to build more halls on campus and house more of their students themselves rather than relying on Bath's slim brownfield availability. Surrounded by green belt Bath is a finite size. With 5000 people on the social housing waiting list we need to make sure we are providing the space for families to live in, not just students. And this will also ensure that those students who want to stay past the end of their studies also have space to live.