

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Case Studies from Council Officers.**

Case study evidence has been gathered to demonstrate work that is already being done by the various Council departments and agencies across the borough. This illustrates the destabilising impact that crime and environmental crime type ASB can have on residents and their community, and also the myriad of problems for the council in trying to remedy situations, due to a lack of knowledge of property ownership and a lack of correct management by owners and letting agents with responsibility for the properties.

#### **Case Study One**

In the first case study, residents of a residential street made complaints to the Council's Environmental Protection Team about a property that suffered excessive environmental crime issues; such as rubbish and furniture being dumped in the front garden, rodent infestation and general disrepair of the property. Residents also complained about excessive noise emanating from the property and the stream of callers attending the property at different times of the day and night. The Enfield Council Community Safety Unit within the anti-social Behaviour Team (CSU ASB team) took on the case and carried out several unannounced visits but was unable to gain access. Investigations to determine ownership of the property was long and arduous and involved several agencies to determine this. Results revealed the ownership was a consortium and further difficulties arose to trace the managing agents, who when identified would not cooperate with either the ASB Team or the police. In the meantime, residents become increasingly anxious and worried about the increased ASB levels coming from the property. Several residents were intimidated when they challenged the callers. Further visits to the property by the joint working of the ASB Team and the police revealed that the property had been used to accommodate numerous single adults of whom some of the rooms had been taken over by gang members for the purposes of dealing drugs from the front and rear of the property. The property condition had many Category 1 hazards<sup>1</sup> and was not compliant to the fire safety standards to which a HMO would be required to meet. The Council applied for a closure notice in conjunction with the police to close the property.

#### **Case Study Two**

In another case, multiple complaints were being received by the Council's Community Safety Unit about a property that was having significant activity and persons coming in and out resulting in continued late night disturbances, noise and intimidation. Joint working with the (CSU) ASB team and the police revealed the property was being used to accommodate single occupants and also used as a brothel. On occasions, visitors to the property knocked on

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<sup>1</sup> Part 1, section 2 Housing Act 2004

neighbour's doors assuming it was the brothel and on one occasion tried to force entry into a neighbour's property again assuming it was the brothel. Residents were living in fear. The ASB team with the police carried out extensive research in establishing ownership of the property. Eventually, through a lengthy and costly investigation, the owner of the property was traced and the police issued a warning due to the property being used as a brothel. This investigation also established that benefit fraud was occurring at the address.

**The table below refers to incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) occurring in HMOs that are not covered under current Mandatory Licensing legislation, and that have been ineffectively and inadequately managed by landlords.**

**A sample of Officer reports for the period February 2014 to October 2014**

<b>Postcode</b>	<b>HMOs – Identified Issues</b>
N9	Property raided by police and other enforcement agencies. Private Sector Housing Enforcement Officers investigating use of accommodation and housing conditions. PSH Officer unable to locate owner of property and has been unable to gain entry into the premises. Officer applied for power of entry and if necessary to apply for a warrant.
EN3	Officer visit with fire officer following suspected use of property for living accommodation. Property considered a HMO and an application for an HMO licence will be required. Necessary works required, including fire detection system; doors and alarms, rewire of electrics.
EN3	Illegal build – Planning Enforcement taking action.
N13	Housing Notice served on the owner to provide a suitable kitchen arrangement. There are several other rooms in the property which also require proper cooking facilities.
N18	An industrial factory that has been converted into units, some of which are used as bedrooms. Property converted with no planning application submitted.

	Raid carried out by the police and other enforcement agencies regarding possible illegal activities. PSH Enforcement carried out and established an HMO application required.
N9	Property found to have category 1 hazards and a bedroom converted from a garage with no external window. Council to serve notice /prohibit use of this room if owner does not deal with hazards and install window.
EN3	No fire precautions, unsatisfactory heating facilities and various disrepair issues. Property also used for illegal activity of which police involved.
N18	Drug dealing, rodent infestation, bagging out and dog fouling, numerous Category 1 hazards - suspended Prohibition notice served
N18	Category 1 hazards, dog fouling, rubbish in front garden, rodent infestation, rooms rented out & not considered habitable.
N9	Referral from Police and Council ASB Team – Property unfit for habitation. No fire detection system and numerous Category 1 hazards present
EN3	Referral from LFB and Council ASB Team - no working fire detection system
EN3	Referral from Police following incident at property – poor housing conditions & Category 1 hazards present
EN1	Entire property unfit for habitation – on electrics, no gas, property structure unsafe and rat infestation.
N18	No fire detection system, unsatisfactory heating system, and various disrepair issues/CAT 1 hazards
EN2	Drainage and fire safety problems identified at the property
N14	Contaminated wheeled bins and accumulation of waste in gardens
N14	Ongoing problems with over producing due to the amount of people in the property, resulting rubbish

	strewn across the floor and overflowing bins.
N11	Overcrowding and illegally converted outhouse / shed, rodent infestation, front garden full of rubbish, bins overflowing and rat infestation,
N11	Overcrowding. Improper disposal of waste
N14	Overcrowding. Property in poor condition and bins overflowing
EN3	Overcrowding. Property in poor condition, rubbish dumped in front and rear gardens. Neighbours experiencing rodent infestation.
N18	Housing Disrepair issues, bed bug infestation
N9	2 cases being investigated for Housing Benefit fraud revealed the accommodation they lived in as unlicensed HMOs. Further investigations identified that the properties were purchased for HMO use but then let as self-contained units to benefit from Housing Benefit rules.