



District of **easington.**



Selective Licensing

Designation approval for the

Wembley area of Easington Colliery

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Foreword



The District of Easington Council launched its new Housing Strategy 2008 - 2011 in April 2008, establishing a Vision that *'Every resident in the district is living in a decent home and quality environment'* in line with our overall Corporate aim of *'Making the District Great'*.

The Housing Strategy sets out 4 key aims:

- To improve the quality and standard of housing provision and the local environment
- To direct housing investment to locations that will produce the greatest benefit and support the economic, social and environmental well being of local residents
- To ensure that the type and mix of new and existing housing provides choice and meets needs and demands
- To address the supported housing needs of vulnerable groups

The use of selective licensing of private landlords in the Wembley area of Easington Colliery, applied alongside existing activity in the area on community engagement, environmental improvements, housing investment and enforcement will contribute to the achievement of all four of these Housing Strategy aims. More importantly, the outcome of these initiatives will make a real difference to the lives of local residents.

The Council intends to use the Wembley initiative as a pilot prior to rolling-out similar licensing schemes in other settlements across the District, and we are determined to make this work in close partnership with the local community, landlords and tenants, and our wider public, voluntary and private sector partners.

We believe that the information provided in this submission provides a comprehensive case for the introduction of licensing in Wembley.



Cllr Robin Todd MBE
Deputy Leader & Executive
Member for Housing



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Head of Housing

Introduction



Location

Easington District forms the Eastern boundary of County Durham and consists of two main towns of Peterlee and Seaham and a number of villages and colliery settlements. This mixed nature is of critical importance in understanding the dynamics of the Districts' housing markets and the direct correlation to poor housing conditions and crime levels.

Since the decline of the coal industry in the 1990's the District has responded positively to many challenges and regeneration continues to be the focus of the Council's work. Whilst significant progress has been made, the Council and its partners recognise that there are still many challenges facing the District in terms of the economy, housing, worklessness, education and health, as reflected in our current ranking of 7th most deprived area in the country as measured through the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Easington's population is around 94,000 (mid year estimate 2006) and following a small decline between 1982 and 2002, has now stabilised. We have a slightly older population than the national average, with 20.3% of our residents being of retirement age (18.5% nationally). Our population profile presents us with challenges of provision of housing for older people and the potential for an overall increase in demand for housing in the District particularly for young people. Key to attracting the younger generation and first time buyers is the availability of affordable, quality homes in pleasant, safe and sustainable communities.

Our understanding of the housing market in Easington has helped us to shape our priorities, assess our options and determine our plans and actions, both regionally and at a local level. Our Housing Strategy 2008 - 2011 sets out the vision, priorities, plans and actions for housing in the District.

In developing plans for managing our housing market we have set ourselves some principle objectives which include:

- Improving the quality and standard of housing and the environment to ensure sustainable mixed communities are created
- Raising property standards and environmental standards for housing to meet the decent homes targets and the Government's respect agenda

In order to achieve this we need to utilise a range of intervention tools and make full use of all the legislative powers available to us. This includes those introduced by the Housing Act 2004, specifically the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), management orders and selective licensing. These new powers represent an exciting and unique opportunity to make a genuine difference to the private rented sector and thereby contribute not only to locally determined aims and objectives but also to wider strategic objectives and national housing policy.

Private rented accommodation provides a growing and valuable source of housing in the District, making up approximately 9% of the private sector stock. However there are concentrations of privately rented properties within certain neighbourhoods, which account for more than 50% of the housing in that area. A high concentration of privately rented accommodation can have a detrimental effect on the sustainability of a community, such as a more transient population, which tend to increase levels of anti social behaviour, in itself, undermining the reputation of an area as a place where people want to live.



Selective Context



Tackling areas of low demand housing is key to many National, Regional and Local Strategies. The Governments approach to developing housing market renewal was highlighted in the Sustainable Communities Plan 2003. This commitment was further strengthened in the North of England through the development of the northern Way Growth Strategy in 2004. The Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional and Sub Regional Housing Strategies also recognise the need to address the Regions current housing market.

Creating desirable and sustainable communities is about more than just simply improving the condition of the housing stock. A holistic approach is needed; one that incorporates housing improvement, design, accessibility and management strategies incorporated with community and neighbourhood renewal strategies.

The Durham Coalfields Partnership was been established to progress a programme of interventions to address housing market and settlement failure in former priority coalfield communities. The Partnership is co-ordinated by English Partnerships and is made up of the local authorities responsible for the coalfield areas within County Durham. These interventions will primarily be housing market based but the Partnership also recognises that these approaches cannot exist in isolation, and should also address issues relating to employment, open space, the environment, transport and community services. This will be done through aligning housing based interventions with existing regeneration and planning strategies and programmes. The purpose of the 'Area Development Framework's' is to:

- Identify the need and Case for Change
- Identify and evaluate options for restructuring the housing market in these small settlement
- Show how the local community has been engaged in this process of review
- Make the case for the recommended strategy, including the case for support from the public authority partners
- Provide guidance on delivery of the recommended solutions

The Council shares in the East Durham community vision of “a great future for everyone in East Durham” and our mission remains clear “to make the district great”. The Council Plan is an established framework through which the challenges faced by the Council and community can be tackled collectively.

The Council Plan has nine priorities clearly linked to the Community Strategy:

- Quality services for all our people
- Striving for excellence in the workplace
- A sustainable job for everyone
- Decent homes for all
- Clean tidy communities
- Better transport
- Making the district great
- Building a healthy community
- and learning opportunities for all

The Council has its own outcomes, objectives and management style embodied in the action plan to deliver these priorities. Selective Licensing will be implemented alongside other initiatives as part of the delivery of the Corporate Plan and will significantly assist in delivering the key priorities.



The Housing Strategy 2008 – 2011 links directly to the Community Strategy and sets out how the Council and its partners aspire to achieve the vision of the Strategy: “every resident in the district is living in a decent home and quality environment” and contribute towards national and regional objectives. In order to achieve this vision we have four key strategic aims:

- To improve the quality and standard of housing and the environment to ensure sustainable mixed communities are created
- To direct housing investment to locations that will produce the greatest benefit for the District and supports the economic, social and environmental well being of the people of Easington
- To ensure the type and mix of new and existing housing provides choice and meets housing needs and demand
- To address the supported housing needs for vulnerable groups

Although it is not envisaged that the implementation of Selective Licensing will result in a significant increase in homelessness, it is important that we ensure adequate provision is in place to prevent homelessness occurring. The Council has recently reviewed its Homelessness Strategy, which focuses on preventative work, especially around young people and antisocial behaviour in all tenures. Our innovative approach to Homelessness prevention has won national accolades and has resulted in our current profile as ‘Regional Homelessness Champions’. There is a need to encourage improved management and reduce evictions in the private rented sector and the Housing Options Team have increased links with private landlords by working jointly with the Private Sector Housing Team to improve support services offered to landlords and tenants and by providing intensive support to families who are unable to manage their tenancies alone.

The Respect Agenda aims to ensure that authorities tackle unacceptable behaviour and its causes, to improve the quality of life for residents, particularly those living in the most disadvantaged communities. The Respect Agenda recognises that Selective Licensing can be an effective tool in managing the private rented sector. The Council aims to make full use of the appropriate tools to ensure that acceptable behaviour of tenants and Landlords is recognised.

Priority Areas



The settlements of Dawdon and Easington Colliery were declared as Renewal Areas in 1999 and 2001 respectively and some selective clearance and refurbishment has taken place. There is still much to achieve in these areas and the Council remains committed to their transformation through continuing intervention.

The general character of these settlements is that of an urban residential area, comprising early 20th century terraced housing. Beyond the fairly compact and high density built up areas is open country side that is used mainly for agricultural purposes.

The Durham Coalfields Partnership has highlighted Dawdon and Easington Colliery as two of the areas across the County where investment should be focused. The plans for these settlements include the following Housing Renewal Activity:

- Selective demolition
- New development to diversify the type and tenure of housing stock
- Targeting of long term empty properties to increase housing supply
- Block Improvement schemes to transform the external appearance of properties and enhance the street scape
- Tackling low demand housing and Anti Social Behaviour specifically linked to improved management of the private rented sector
- Partnership working and community engagement

Dawdon

Throughout the last seven years the Council has invested around £2m on group repair schemes within Dawdon which means we have carried out works to around half of the properties in the area. Due to the nature and volume of work already completed and the further initiatives proposed in Dawdon through the Coalfields Partnership, it is felt that the remaining problems will be largely addressed. Although Dawdon remains a priority area for investment we do not intend to include this settlement in our proposal for Selective Licensing at this time; however the area will be closely monitored.

Easington Colliery

Easington Colliery coal mining pit closed in 1993 with the loss of 1100 jobs, and this was the start of the accelerated decline of the housing market in the area, which led to a general decrease in the number of owner occupied homes and a disproportionately high number of rented property. Following the closure of the pit this area suffered loss of population low economic activity and deterioration in the physical environment resulting in market decline; many residents moved out and rented their properties, and we have seen a substantial influx of outside investors purchasing properties. At the same time the social and economic framework began to disintegrate, community cohesion was lost and the environmental quality became poor.

The overall decline has been characterised by a number of factors including:

- Declining property values
- Decreasing levels of owner occupation
- Surplus of low demand housing
- Disproportionate amounts of unregulated rented accommodation
- Large number of properties in need of investment to provide a decent home
- Increasing vacancy levels and abandonment
- Poor environmental quality
- Lack of investor confidence
- Decline of business activity in the Easington Colliery area
- A high turnover of residents
- Social and anti-social behaviour issues related to the above

There are four specific areas within the ward boundary, three areas of former colliery housing to the east of the ward have been refurbished through major group repair work and selective clearance has taken place. A significant amount of remaining housing is privately owned, a high proportion being owned by absentee landlords which are currently let.

The fourth area of Easington Colliery is an area known locally as Wembley, which is suffering from low demand housing and high levels of anti-social behaviour. It is this area that we are seeking approval to introduce Selective Licensing.

Wembley

The Wembley area comprises six streets (Hawthorn Street, Noble Street, James Street, John Street, Thomas Street and Thorpe Street) of 195 pre 1919 terraced properties laid out in a compact gridiron pattern. These terraces have an odd character with backs of houses facing the streets and the fronts accessed along footpaths. 103 of these properties are privately rented, licensable properties.

Housing in the area is showing key signs of vulnerability and instability such as high levels of private renting, empty homes and poor housing condition. This is a symptom and cause of low demand that damages the market appeal of the area to households on higher incomes looking for a range of market housing. The local housing market is not accommodating for the whole range of households lifestyle ranges, requirements in terms of house sizes and changing aspirations that must be provided to enhance its attractiveness as a place to live.



Property Tenure

The area is of mixed tenure with a high concentration of privately rented properties. Information held on Council databases shows 35 properties are owner occupied, 5 properties are owned by a social housing provider, 103 properties are privately rented and 52 properties are not registered.

Tenure of Properties in Wembley

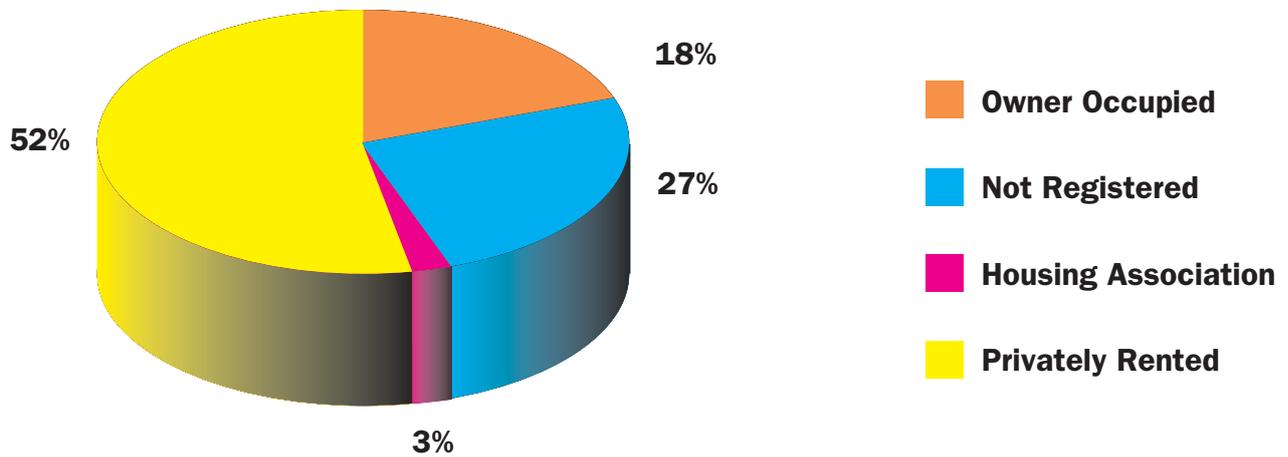
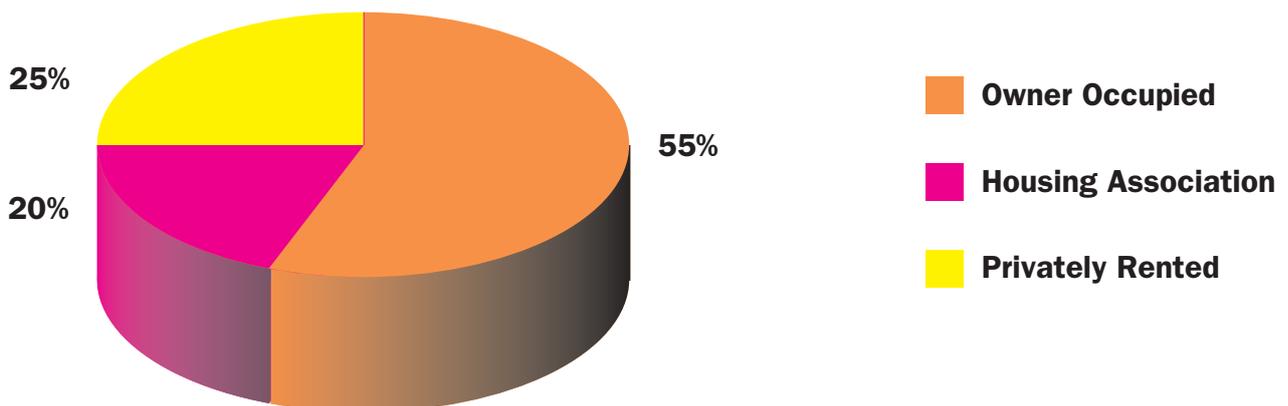


Figure 1 above, compared with the chart below, clearly demonstrates the high concentration of privately rented accommodation. Investigations are ongoing to ascertain the ownership details of the 27% of properties 'not registered'.

Tenure of Properties in Easington District



Retail Provision

The area is serviced by facilities on the main spine road of Easington Colliery. Provision includes: takeaways; dentist; post office; green grocers; newsagents; pharmacy; butchers; hair dresses and bookmakers. Although this area has been improved throughout the preceding years the problem of vacant premises still remains. The issue of retail provision will be addressed through the wider Area Development Framework.

Housing demand

A recent survey indicated there are 32 empty properties in the Wembley area representing 16% of the total dwellings; this includes 11 properties empty for up to six months; 21 properties empty for longer than six months and of these 5 properties have remained empty for longer than five years. 25 of the 32 empty properties are in the private rented sector indicating that 24% of the private rented stock is currently empty. This level remains consistent over the past 4 years despite increased levels of intervention in the area.

The empty terraced properties are spread throughout the six streets of Wembley, the properties are in poor condition and suffer from a number of problems including fly tipping, vandalism, and anti social behaviour, resulting in poor visual appearance which undermines the area.

Ownership of Empty Properties in Wembley

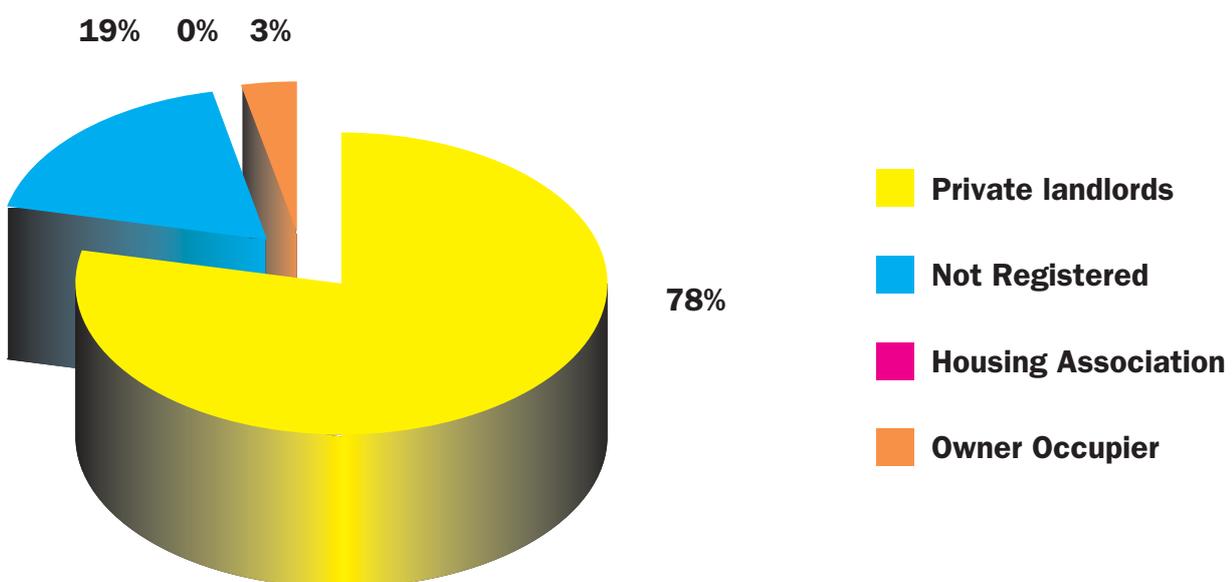


Figure 2 above identifies the ownership of the empty properties in Wembley. Private landlords own 78% of the properties, 19% are not registered, and owner-occupiers own 3%.

Changes in Ownership

There is a high degree of transience within the area particularly within the private rented sector. The liability for council tax changeover rate in particular reflects the instability in the housing market in the area when compared to the rest of Easington Colliery.

Area	Changes in council tax liability (%)
Wembley Area	9.7%
Easington Colliery Area	3%

The table above demonstrates the percentage of properties, which have had three or more changes in council tax liability from 1st January 2005 to 1st January 2006.

Figure 3 below demonstrates a comparison between the council tax changeover liability in the private rented sector of Wembley, and across all different tenures of Wembley from April 2002 to March 2007.

Changes to Council Tax Liability from April 2002 to April 2007

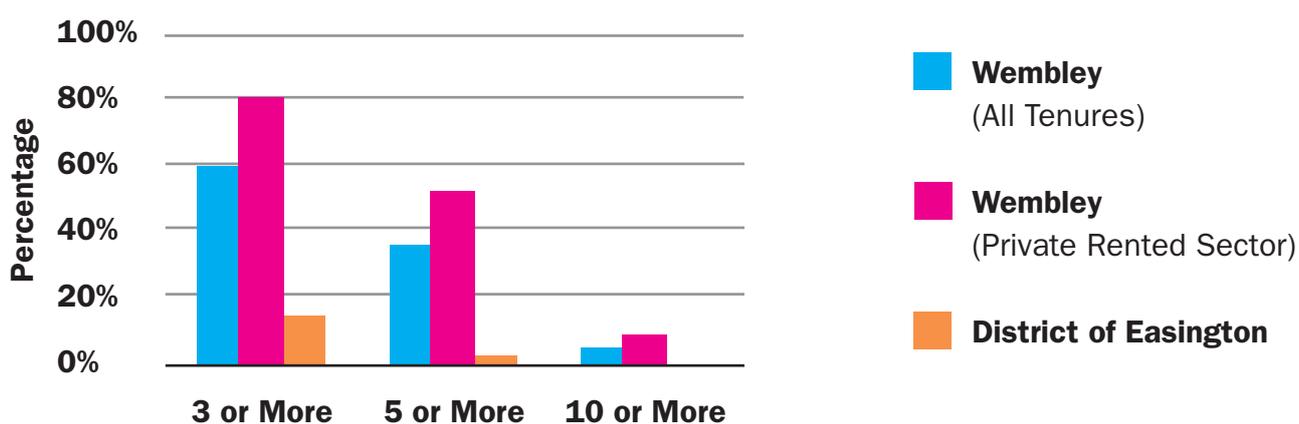


Figure 3 clearly shows that the private rented sector in Wembley has a significantly higher number of changes in council tax liability than Wembley as a whole, regardless of tenure. Within the private rented sector, 80.6% of properties have had three or more changes in council tax liability, compared to 60% of properties in the whole of Wembley. 52.4% of properties in the private rented sector have five or more changes, and 9.7% of privately rented properties have had ten or more changes.

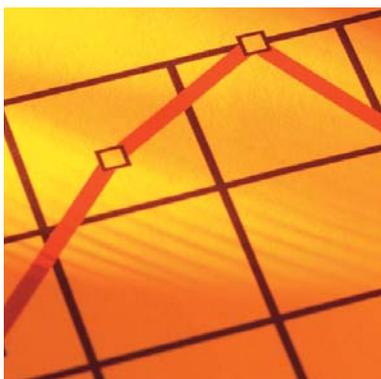
There are currently 78 tenanted properties, totaling up 379 changes in council tax liability which suggests there have been 4.9 changes to council tax within the above timescale.

The 25 empty properties in the private rented sector total 129 changes in liability from April 2002 – April 2007 which equates to 5.1 changes in council tax over the 5-year period.

The table below demonstrates the percentages of properties with three or more, five or more, and ten or more changes in council tax liability.

	Properties in the Private Rented Sector of Wembley	Wembley Area
Three or more changes	80.6%	60%
Five or more changes	52.4%	36.9%
Ten or more changes	9.7%	6.1%

To further demonstrate the suppressed housing market in Wembley, in total, across all six streets there were 593 changes to council tax liability from April 2002 to April 2007, 508 (85.6%) of these changes are in relation to privately rented properties.



Socio-Economic Status

The socio-economic analysis has highlighted that Easington Colliery, and in particular the Wembley area, provides housing for people within the intermediate and lower socio-economic classification and that the area has high rates of unemployment and high numbers of people on benefit which has contributed to pockets of low demand within the area.

The community is still feeling the impact of the coal mine's closure in relation to employment, however residents have expressed mixed views about how acute the current lack of work is. Some feel there is no work locally, while others believe that, although there are jobs, they are often poorly paid, temporary, and increasingly require people to incur extra costs to travel out of Easington Colliery.

There is a clear view that high unemployment, low wages, and a lack of decent housing contribute to a vicious cycle in the area; diminished incomes narrow housing options to poor quality rentals; poor accommodation drives many of the more skilled residents from the area, which discourages further business investment, which in turn restricts the range of jobs available and diminishes earning opportunities.

The unemployment count for Easington is now comparable to the national average at 2.5%; however, whilst improving, the employment rate for Easington is significantly lower at 67%, than that of the North East (70.5%) and nationally (74.3%). The rate of economic inactivity is 23.5% compared to 21.7% nationally. The number of incapacity benefit claimants is falling and stood at 9,910 in August 2006 down from 11,280 in August 2002. Employment figures show that the District retains a high reliance on the manufacturing sector (22%), compared with 12.3% in the North East and 11.1% nationally. The economy is diversifying with an increase in the service/business service sector, this has been mainly through public sector and call centre growth (the highest numbers of jobs are in the public administration, education and health sectors – 26%). The number of VAT registered business at 14.1 per 10,000 population (2006) is below the rate for the North East and England (20.8 and 39.3 respectively), which limits the prospects for economic growth. The self-employment rate at 5.6% is below the regional rate of 7.9%.

In conjunction with the high rates of unemployment in the District, the six streets of Wembley make up 14% of housing benefit claims within the whole of Easington Colliery. 47% of people living within Wembley are in the receipt of some form of income related benefit.

House Price Data

The average house prices in the Wembley area in 2004 were 69.3% less than the average house price in Easington Colliery and 86.5% less than the UK house price average.

House prices within the Wembley area have remained suppressed. We have compared the Wembley data to that of Blackhall Colliery, which is comparable to Wembley in terms of housing and socio-economic difficulties.

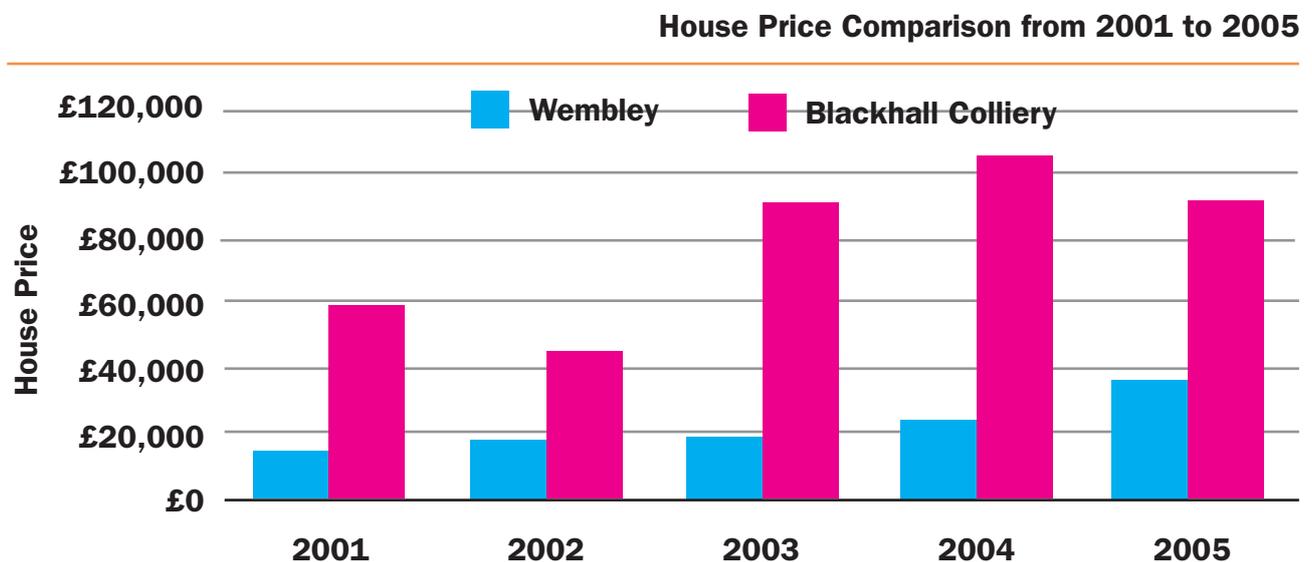


Figure 4 demonstrates the year on year differences between the average house prices in the Wembley area compared to the average house price in Blackhall Colliery. For example in 2004, the average house price in Wembley was only 17.6% of the average sale price of properties in the comparable area of Blackhall. Properties were sold for as little as £10,000 in Wembley.

Average House Prices from 2001 to 2005

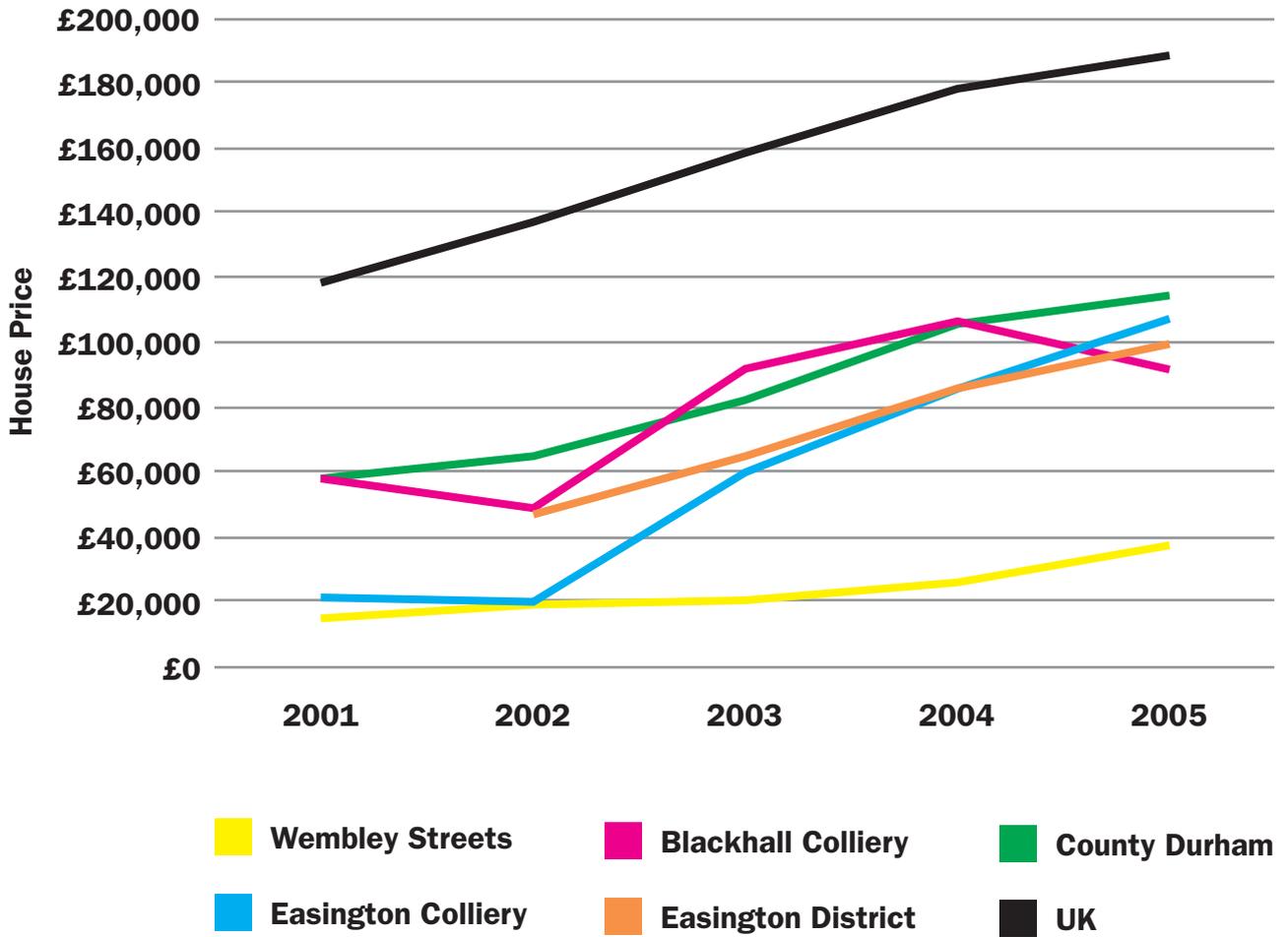
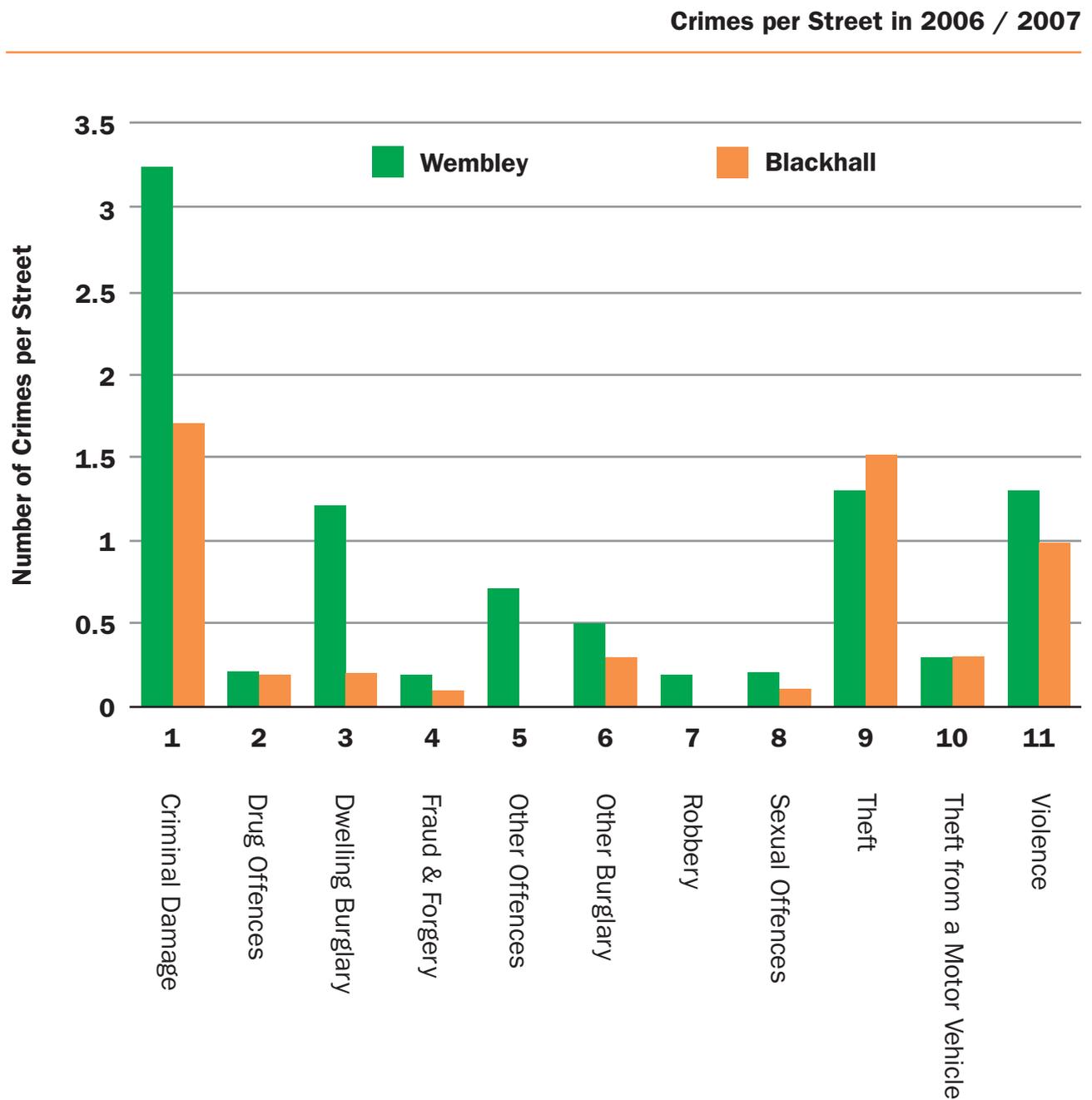


Figure 5 demonstrates the year on difference between the six streets in Wembley, Easington Colliery, Blackhall Colliery, the District of Easington, County Durham and the United Kingdom.

Levels of Crime

Figure 6 below shows figures obtained from Durham Constabulary regarding levels of crime within the Wembley area in comparison with the crime levels of Blackhall Colliery from 1st January 2006 to 1st January 2007. The figure clearly shows that there are significantly more crimes reported per street to Durham Constabulary in the Wembley area than in Blackhall Colliery.



Complaints to the Council

Additional evidence to support the incident of crime are evident in the statistics from the Neighbourhood Wardens and Anti-Social Behaviour Units. **Figure 7** below illustrates the number of complaints received by the Council within a twelve month period.

Type of Complaint	Number of Complaints
Noise	20
Vandalism / Trespassing	17
Empty Property	3
Nuisance Refuse Accumulation	33
Anti-Social Behaviour	45
Housing Complaint	22
Other Complaints	38

The excessive number of complaints within the proposed area demonstrates the severe problems that are having an increasingly detrimental affect on the area and on the local community.



District Wide Interventions



In order to tackle the problems associated with the private rented sector which is widespread throughout the District of Easington, Council and its partners have taken an increasingly proactive approach to engage with private landlords, managing agents, and tenants to provide professional advice, guidance and support in housing related issues. Mediation and enforcement action has been taken where the landlord or tenant have not resolved the issues when required to do so.

There are a number of interventions that are currently in place across the District which are contributing to a resolution to the issues associated with the private rented sector.

Accredited Private Landlord Scheme

A voluntary scheme, set up in 2002, designed to encourage effective management of properties by landlords, through providing advice, guidance, and support on housing related issues.

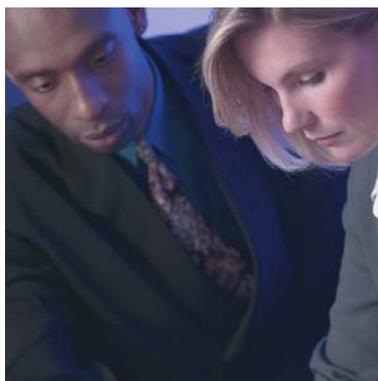
Private Landlord Forum

A Forum co-ordinated by the Council, which brings together private landlords to discuss all related issues and offers support to landlord to improve management standards.

A dedicated Empty Homes Officer

With in excess of 1600 long term empty homes, diversely spread across the District, the Officer co-ordinates a proactive multi agency approach to tackle the issues these properties cause.

District of Easington has recently introduces its first Empty Homes Strategy Statement which sets out its key objectives and actions in order to reduce the number of empty and abandoned properties.



Bond Scheme for private tenants

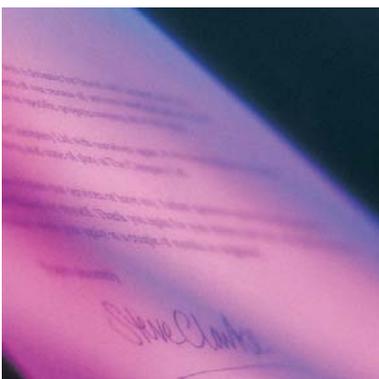
The Council offers a bond guarantee scheme for vulnerable tenants who meet the set criteria and require a home within the District.

High profile police presence

There are two Neighbourhood Police Teams within the District based in Peterlee and Seaham. The teams work closely with the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and Neighbourhood Street Wardens to deploy various methods to tackle the rising problem of anti-social behaviour, and to provide support and reassurance to the local community.

Street Safe Boards

Street Safe Boards are multi-agency forums which concentrate solely on the anti-social behaviour issues across the District. We have excellent links with external agencies including our key partners of Police, Fire & Rescue Service, and the local Primary Care Trust and work in conjunction with one another to provide a holistic approach to assisting the private rented sector.



Interventions in Wembley



It is essential that any initiatives reflect the needs and demands of the local community. As a result, a number of initiatives have been developed specifically in this area, which in addition to those specified above.

Enhanced Enforcement

A number of specific terraces within the area have had problems associated with refuse, general housing conditions, drug use and anti-social behaviour. The whole Wembley area has been subject to amplified environmental initiatives and enhanced enforcement procedures, which is ongoing for the foreseeable future.

For example in 2004, during the '3 day Wembley clean up blitz', 15.9 tonnes of rubbish was collected at a total cost of £9,000, the same initiative was run later in the year and 17.84 tonnes of rubbish was collected and 21 gardeners worked 22.5 hours each to clear the gardens and paths in the area. The cost of this initiative was in excess of £9000.

More recent initiatives in 2006 include 'Help make Wembley clean' campaign which included the residents getting involved in street cleaning activities, and accessing information and advice on anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol, crime prevention, selective licensing as well as other important issues that directly affect the area.

In August 2007, the latest phase, saw a 5-day blitz on bad behaviour and neighbourhood nuisances. Rubbish skips were made available to clear the streets and gardens of accumulations of rubbish; young people of Wembley who are members of the Easington Crime Busters, an initiative developed with the police, carried out litter picks and encouraged other local residents to follow their example. Various agencies such as the police, fire brigade, support organisations, youth workers and health trainers were also on hand to give advice and assistance on various other issues on the Council run Blitz bus.

The Environmental Services Department within the Council have also issued a number of notices in Wembley. Since September 2006 the Council have issued 76 notices for nuisance accumulation, 3 notices for nuisance premises, 19 notices for empty building open to access, 3 notices for housing disrepair, 29 notices in relation to gardens, 5 notices to steel shutter properties, 69 letters to clear gardens, and 21 instances of graffiti removal.

Neighbourhood Pathfinder activities

The Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (NMP), part of which operates in Easington Colliery has funded many initiatives through the Easington Regeneration Partnership, which includes the recent initiative of the ‘yard light project’ where residents, particularly the vulnerable residents of Wembley were provided with free rear yard lighting facilities.

The NMP has most recently approved funding for a boxing club in Easington Colliery which is accessible to all Wembley residents. It is intended that, in conjunction with other agencies the club will broker a ‘week in action’ initiative that brings the neighbourhood agenda to the service providers and encourages the two to work more closely together to resolve the issues Wembley currently faces.

High profile police presence

The Wembley area is locally renowned for high levels of crime and anti social behaviour, in an attempt to tackle the problems; there is a dedicated Neighbourhood Beat Officer and Police Community Support Officers who are familiar with the problems of the area and are able to effectively co-ordinate the police response. There have been number of operations carried out in partnership with the Council’s Street Wardens and Anti-Social Behaviour Team, and these have resulted in a number of arrests being made for crimes committed in area.

Promotion of the Accredited Private Landlord Scheme

All landlords who own properties within Wembley have been contacted and advised on the benefits of the scheme, however only 8 of the 35 landlords (22.8%) are accredited, and only 34.9% of the private rented properties in Wembley are part of the accreditation scheme.



Community engagement

Although the problems in the area are widely acknowledged, residents are often unwilling to come forward and seek a solution. A wide range of consultation has taken place in the area including leaflet drops, open day events and a quarterly newsletter. Residents are encouraged report incidents of crime, instances of anti-social behaviour and problems relating to properties and environmental conditions.

Steering Group

In order to co-ordinate and drive forward these initiatives a steering group is in operation which consists of Council Members and Officers, members of the residents group and the Police. The group proposes initiatives, reports on progress and evaluates the situation.

It is considered that Selective Licensing will complement the above initiatives and play a major part in enabling a more sustained approach to help improve living and environmental standards through an intensively managed approach.



Our Vision for Selective Licensing



The majority of landlords who own properties within the area do not take responsibility for the management of their properties or their tenancies. In many cases landlords live outside of the area and will not engage with the Council and are uninterested in the problems their properties or tenants pose to the local community.

It is considered that that the proposed area is one that is suffering from low housing demand and the Council is confident that Selective Licensing, combined with other intervention is key to the sustainability of the area. Although the area suffers high levels of anti-social behaviour it is understood that this is a symptom of low housing demand and the designation of Selective Licensing will assist in the reduction of such incidents.

Selective Licensing will not work in isolation and in addition to the existing interventions it is proposed to introduce: financial assistance for block improvement schemes; loans and grants for individual properties to reach a decent standard of condition; grant assistance to first time buyers of empty homes assisting them with access to the market; environmental improvements; and a proactive approach to bringing empty properties back into housing use, supporting and guiding landlords throughout the process to rent or sell. Financial resources have been made available in 2008/0 to support this commitment.

The introduction of Selective Licensing in the Wembley area will ensure that:

- Landlords are fit and proper persons
- Landlords have the ability to manage tenancies competently
- Properly regulated property management and housing standards
- Landlords are responsible for the tenants that reside in their properties
- Tenants are aware of their responsibilities in relation to managing their tenancy
- Tenants will be referenced checked prior to being accepted for a tenancy
- The Council will have more options to tackle problems within the area
- Rogue landlords will be forced to improve or to leave the area
- Their landlord
- The area is well regulated and together with other interventions the market will begin to stabilise
- Residents will regain confidence in the area

The Council is keen to help landlords operating within the area to meet the requirements of the Selective Licensing Scheme and through the landlords forum and other means training will be provided if its felt it is required. Landlords will be encouraged to engage with other appropriate agencies to deal with any situations or complaints which may arise.

It is proposed that the scheme will run for a maximum of five years and will be reviewed on an annual basis. The costs of implementing the scheme will be met from the Councils existing resources and licensing fees. License fees have been determined in line with the costs the Council will incur in relation to the development, implementation and delivery of the proposed scheme. Discounts will be available for members of the Accredited Private Landlord Scheme and non-accredited landlords will be encouraged to join the scheme.

Based on the number of licensable properties in the area (103) and the license fee of £350 an income of around £36,000 would be generated depending on the number of accredited landlords.



Consultation on Selective Licensing



The Council has undertaken extensive consultation relating to the implementation of Selective Licensing for the Wembley area through many channels.

Residents have been consulted through initial questionnaires, open day events, residents group meetings and through the press and local media.

The analysis of the results from the questionnaire show that 90.7% of the residents in Wembley who responded to the survey would like to see the private rented properties in the area licensed, and are very supportive of selective licensing being introduced alongside other ongoing interventions and initiatives.



Conclusion



This report highlights the reasons and justifications for making the Wembley area of Easington Colliery a Selective Licensing designation.

In District of Easington we are committed to providing support, assistance and guidance to well intentioned landlords to enable properties to be managed more effectively. The Councils aim of creating viable sustainable communities can be best served working alongside landlord, residents and other stakeholders to promote co-operation and raise the profile of the private rented sector. It will encourage absentee or unprofessional landlords to use the services of an agent or another person to manage their property effectively. In the long term, it is envisaged that the turnover of tenants in the area will be dramatically reduced through the Licensing scheme, and therefore create a more stable community.

Selective Licensing will not provide an immediate solution to all of the problems being experienced in the area, and will not solve the problems of low demand and anti-social behaviour alone, but the scheme will form part of an integrated approach in delivering range of initiatives to uplift the area, and create an attractive area where people want to live by helping raise the standards in the private rented sector and contribute towards the wider regeneration of the area.

