

# Housing Enforcement in Cardiff

## Challenges & Achievements

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**Team Manager – Cardiff Housing Enforcement**

**25 Sept 2024**

# What we do



- Complaints in Private Rented Sector
- Licensing of HMOs
- Additional Licensing:
  - Cathays
  - Plasnewydd
- Student Housing
- Problem Empty Homes
- Statutory Nuisances
- Filthy and Verminous Premises
- Rogue Landlords

# The scale of the problem

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41,000+ homes in PRS

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9,000 HMOs

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5,000 additional students per year

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1,800+ long term empty homes

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Cost of living crisis & housing emergency

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# Capital City Scale PRS Challenges

## Huge HMO Licensing challenge

- 9000+ HMOs in Cardiff
- Additional licensing schemes

## Pandemic legacy & Housing Emergency

- Rents unaffordable & housing shortage
- Delayed renewal of Cathays Scheme

## Impact on Performance

- 3500 licensed HMOs dropped to 1800
- Backlog of 850 cases requiring inspection

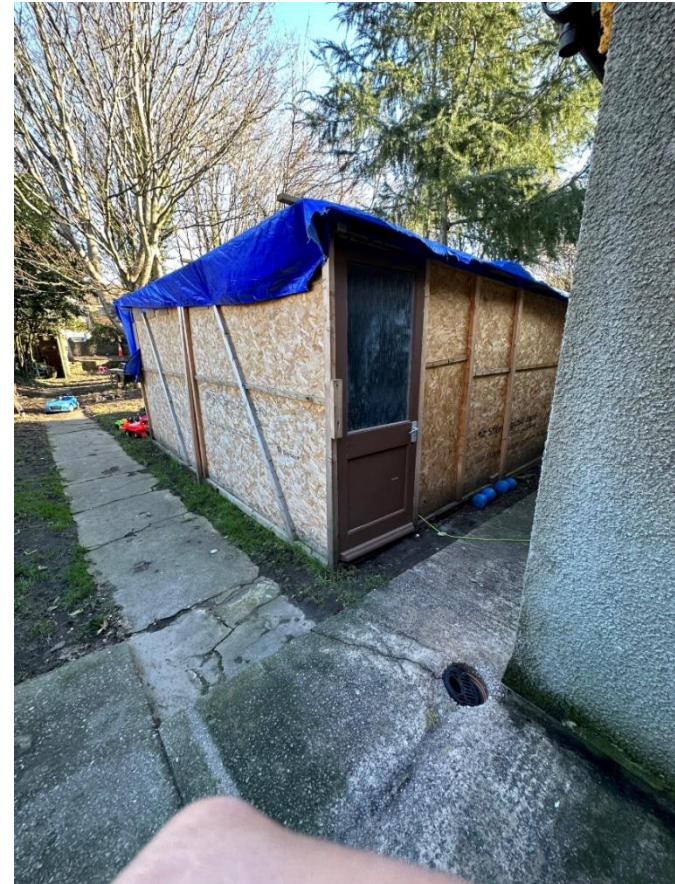


## Landlords exploiting vulnerable tenants

Living in an abandoned shop

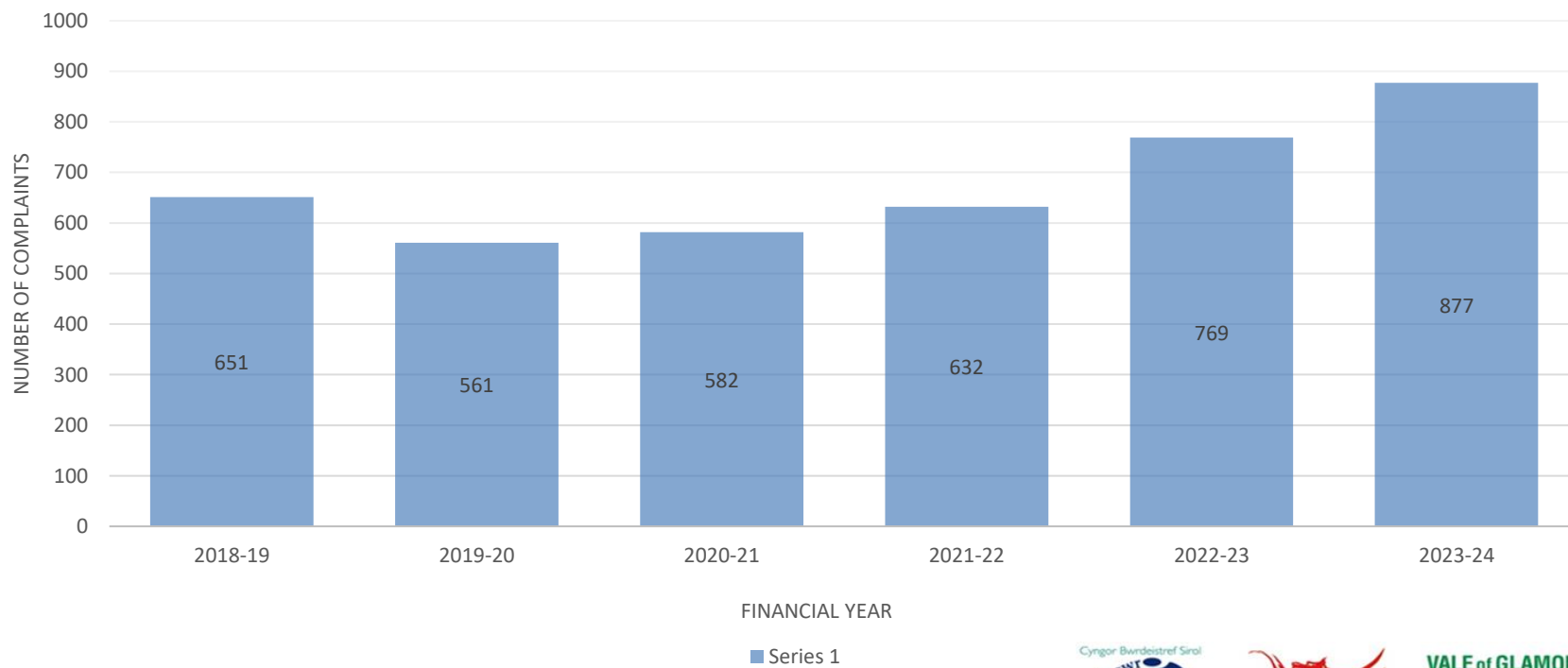


Living in a shed



Complaints requiring detailed investigation are on the rise

### SERVICE REQUESTS REQUIRING INSPECTION



# We aren't afraid to use our powers!

- We have shut 101 properties in last 6 years
- And served 1,160 Improvement Notices
- Taken 24 successful prosecutions in 5 years
  - Fines of £217k
  - Costs of £18k & Victim Surcharge of £17k
- Dealt with 9,540 service requests



# Tackling Rogue Landlords

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**Landlord ordered to pay £25,000 for problems at flats he rented out**

Sohail Baig was convicted of 18 offences including damaged work surfaces and an insecure toilet

By **Ffion Lewis** Senior reporter  
12:16, 31 Jan 2023

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**A landlord was ordered to pay £25,000 for over 18 offences** (Image: Cardiff Council)

A Cardiff landlord has been ordered to pay over £25,000 by a court after failing to repair several issues at four rented flats. Sohail Baig, 65, was convicted at Cardiff Magistrates Court for 18 offences relating to a rental property in Ferry Road, Grangetown.

The case came to light when Cardiff Council received complaints from tenants about the four-storey Victorian terraced property, which is made up of four maisonettes. Baig, 65, from Cyncoed Road in Cardiff did not attend court on October 27 2022 but was convicted in his absence for all 18 offences. Mr Baig was sentenced at Cardiff Magistrates' Court on Friday, January 27.

After the complaints a council inspection took place and a significant number of breaches were found, including a defective fire alarm system, damaged kitchen work surfaces, unsafe kitchen layouts, an insecure toilet and defective floor coverings.

**Read more: The huge 'bargain' home for sale on one of Cardiff's most exclusive roads**

**MOST READ**

**Man adopted at birth discovers he has been married to sister for six years**

**'Overcrowding' and patients sleeping on floor at Welsh A&E**

**I ran a Kia EV5**

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**Inside the dangerous rental property whose owner has just been fined £10k**

The four flats had poor fire safety, unprotected electricity meters and penetrating damp

By **Laura Clements** Senior Reporter  
20:14, 14 DEC 2022 • UPDATED: 10:25, 14 DEC 2022

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**A Cardiff landlady has been fined for a catalogue of failures** (Image: Cardiff Council)

A Cardiff landlord has been fined after her Victorian property was converted into flats and rented out with no fire alarm system, unprotected electricity meters, defective fire doors and penetrating damp.

Rowshanara Begum from Clive Street, Grangetown has been ordered to pay £10,000 because of the "unsafe and dangerous" conditions in the house she manages as a house of multiple occupation (HMO). The unscrupulous landlord did not attend the hearing at Cardiff Magistrates Court on December 1 and she was sentenced in her absence.

**Read more: Police officers investigate man found unconscious in Cardiff**

It was heard how there was a "catalogue of failures" at the four flats in the property in Blaendydach Street in Grangetown. They came to light after one of the tenants made a complaint and Cardiff Council investigated.

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**'Overcrowding' and patients sleeping on floor at Welsh A&E**

**I ran a Kia EV5**



# Some notable cases

## Blaenclydach Street

- Improvement notices served on 4 flats – fire safety
- Prosecution for non-compliance Dec 2022 – Guilty, fine £10k
- Further prosecution Feb 2024 – Guilty, fine £20k

## Arabella Street & Alfred Street

- Prosecution of same owner for failure to obtain HMO Licence
- Fine £68,295 + £500 costs + £4k victim surcharge + RRO\*

## Broadway

- Prosecution of repeat offender for management failings
- Fine £37,000 + £461 costs + £2k surcharge
- Emergency Prohibition of all flats

\* *Rent Repayment Orders*

# HMO Licensing

- During 2023-24
  - Inspected 1,102 HMOs
  - Issued 1,245 HMO licences
  - Earning £332,825 in fee income
- We have increased number licensed from 1,800 to 2,800 (Sept 2024)
- We have processed 1,048 Cathays Applications
- 200 more draft licences ready to issue
- Reduced backlog from 857 applications to 368

## Filthy & Verminous Premises – more prevalent



# Filthy & Verminous Premises

## Complaints on the rise

- More prevalent during & post pandemic
- 10 significant cases this year

## Legal / enforcement process

- Public Health Act
- Environmental Protection Act – Nuisance
- Pest Control powers

## Difficult and time consuming

- Safeguarding & multi-agency working
- Works in default - clearance, repair, debt
- Prohibition Orders & Rehousing



## Case Study

Complaint – odour in common parts  
on 8<sup>th</sup> floor of high-rise flats

Soiled carpets & fly infestation

Access refused. Occupier known to  
be large & violent

Warrant obtained. 2 officer  
inspection with Police

Male occupier with elderly mother.  
Both highly abusive and threatening.

Locksmith, 8 Police officers and  
RSPCA present. Animals seized.  
Inspection completed



## Case Study cont.....

Leak from plumbing render flats below  
uninhabitable

Flat full of rotting food, packaging and faeces.  
Smell is overwhelming

Notices served under Public Health act and  
Environmental Protection Act for clean and clear  
plus plumbing repairs

Male collapses and evacuated by Fire Service  
(200kg+) with sepsis and subsequently dies.

Mother in hospital. Assistance of Social Services

Consideration of works in default powers to clear

Works to be completed informally by building  
manager



# Any Questions?