

SELECTIVE LICENSING SUMMARY



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GLOSSARY

Term	Meaning
Private Rented Sector (PRS)	Housing rented from private landlords in the borough
Privately rented	Homes rented from a private landlord or letting agent
Selective Licensing	Council scheme requiring private landlords to obtain a licence to rent a property to a family or up to two unrelated sharers
Additional Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing	Council scheme requiring licences for HMOs with 3–4 unrelated people from 2+ households sharing amenities (not covered by mandatory HMO licensing)
Mandatory Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing	National scheme requiring licences for HMOs with 5+ unrelated people from 2+ households sharing amenities
Designation	Geographic area selected for licensing that meets legal criteria
Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS)	Government system assessing housing hazards based on risk to occupants
Category 1 hazard (Cat 1)	Most serious HHSRS hazards posing immediate risk to health or safety
Category 2 hazard (Cat 2)	Less serious HHSRS hazards that may still affect health or safety
Serious hazard	Category 1 and/or high-scoring Category 2 hazards under HHSRS
Housing Stock Condition & Stressors Report (HSCR)	Independent report assessing housing condition in Greenwich and related risk factors
Statutory notice	Legal notice from the council requiring action within a set timeframe
Anti-social behaviour (ASB)	Nuisance behaviour by occupants or visitors (e.g., noise, litter, waste)
Deprivation	Living on low income and not having the money to pay for basic requirements
Indices of Multiple Deprivation	Government dataset ranking relative deprivation of areas
Barriers to housing and services	Deprivation measure covering affordability, overcrowding and homelessness
Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)	Regulation requiring privately rented homes to have at least EPC rating E
Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)	Rating of a property’s energy efficiency from A (best) to G
Accreditation	Schemes providing landlord training and promoting good practice

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Like many London boroughs, the Royal Borough of Greenwich faces growing housing pressure, with more residents relying on the private rented sector due to high house prices and limited social housing. While many landlords provide good homes, some properties are poorly maintained or inadequately managed, leading to issues such as damp, overcrowding, fire risks, noise, waste problems, and anti-social behaviour.

Since 2022, the council has operated Selective Licensing in five former wards (covering parts of six current wards), alongside Mandatory and Additional HMO Licensing.

- These schemes have delivered measurable improvements, including:
- better compliance with safety and management standards
 - increased identification and resolution of serious hazards
 - improved landlord engagement and accountability
 - reductions in antisocial behaviour linked to poorly managed properties
 - more effective enforcement against non-compliant landlords.

However, the latest private rented sector review shows that poor housing conditions and high concentrations of privately rented homes extend beyond the current licensing areas. Without licensing, the council is largely reliant on tenant complaints and reactive enforcement, limiting its ability to identify and address issues proactively.

Although national reforms, including the Renters’ Rights Act 2025, strengthen enforcement powers, they do not replace the proactive oversight and landlord support provided through licensing.

Property licensing helps the council identify and address these issues. Landlords within the wards covered by the scheme would be required to obtain a licence and meet conditions to ensure their properties are safe and properly managed.

This enables the council to act against those who fail to meet standards, while supporting responsible landlords.

THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR IN ROYAL GREENWICH

To better understand the condition of the private rented sector (PRS) in Royal Greenwich, the council commissioned an independent review of the borough’s housing stock in November 2025.

The review examined:

The distribution of privately rented homes across the borough
The condition of these homes, including serious hazards that could affect the health and safety of tenants.
Housing-related stressors linked to PRS, including anti-social behaviour and demand on council services.

The report provides the council with a robust evidence base to support housing and service interventions and helps fulfil the council’s statutory duty to review its housing stock set out under Part 1, section 3 of the Housing Act 2004.

The review was carried out at ward level, using property level data to provide the most accurate picture of housing conditions across Royal Greenwich. As part of the project, predictive models were developed to estimate:

- 1. the extent and distribution of PRS properties
- 2. the number of properties with serious housing hazards (category 1 and/or high category 2 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System).

The full findings are set out in the Housing Stock Condition and Stressors Report (HSCR) in Appendix 1, with key findings summarised in this document.

LICENSING SCHEMES

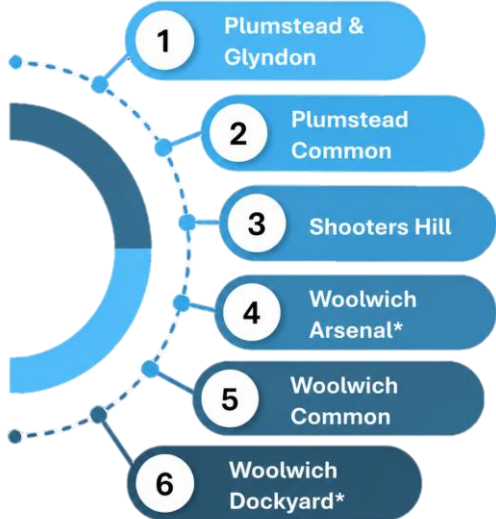
Currently the Royal Borough of Greenwich operates three separate licensing schemes:

		
Selective Licence Single family or 1-2 tenants	Additional HMO Licence 3-4 unrelated tenants	Mandatory HMO Licence 5 or more tenants from 2 or more households
Selective Licensing schemes extend licensing to all private rented homes occupied by a single household or two unrelated sharers within the designated area.	A local council requirement for smaller Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) not covered by national "mandatory" rules, typically for three or four unrelated tenants sharing facilities (kitchen/bath)	A Mandatory HMO Licence is a legal requirement for landlords in England if their property has five or more tenants from two or more households sharing facilities like kitchens/bathrooms.

SELECTIVE LICENSING

Selective Licensing is a statutory power under the Housing Act 2004 that allows local authorities to regulate privately rented homes to improve housing standards, address poor property conditions, and support well-managed neighbourhoods.

Schemes can be introduced where there is evidence of issues such as poor housing conditions, deprivation, anti-social behaviour, or a high concentration of privately rented properties.



The Royal Borough of Greenwich introduced Selective Licensing in parts of six wards (based on pre-2023 ward boundaries) on 1 October 2022, alongside Mandatory and Additional HMO Licensing.

- Since its introduction, the scheme has improved:
- safety and management standards
 - increased landlord engagement
 - reduced serious hazards
 - helped address antisocial behaviour linked to poorly managed properties.

(*previously part of the former Woolwich Riverside ward). The existing designation came into force in October 2022 and is due to run until September 2027.

However, the findings of the recent Housing Stock Condition and Stressors Review show that poor housing conditions and housing-related pressures are not limited to the current licensing areas.

The review identified high levels of privately rented homes, serious housing hazards, and deprivation across a wider area of the borough.

Without licensing coverage, the council is often reliant on tenant complaints and reactive enforcement, limiting its ability to identify and address issues proactively.

WHY WE ARE INTRODUCING THE SCHEME

The proposed aims of the scheme would be to improve housing standards, reduce risks linked to poor property conditions, and ensure privately rented homes are safe, well managed, and legally compliant.

Why the scheme is necessary

Selective licensing is allowed under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004. Councils can only introduce a scheme where legal tests are met and there is evidence of problems such as poor housing conditions, deprivation, anti-social behaviour, crime, migration or low housing demand. The council must also show that the scheme is necessary, proportionate and supported by consultation

Currently, enforcement is largely reactive and depends on tenant complaints, which can delay action and mean some problems go unreported, particularly by more vulnerable tenants.

Selective Licensing would allow the council to take a more proactive approach by identifying privately rented properties, setting and enforcing standards, targeting resources effectively, and taking action against non-compliant landlords.

Why the scheme is proportionate

The council considers the scheme proportionate because it is focused on areas where evidence shows the greatest need.

It builds on an existing scheme that is already delivering improvements and introduces a consistent approach across the borough. Licence conditions are reasonable, based on legal requirements, and the scheme would operate for a limited five-year period with ongoing review.

If the scheme is approved, private landlords in the proposed areas would need to apply for a licence and meet conditions about safety, property management and tenant information. The aim is to help the council identify problems earlier, improve housing conditions and take action where landlords do not meet their responsibilities.



WHERE THE SCHEME IS BEING PROPOSED

The Royal Borough of Greenwich is consulting on proposals to introduce selective licensing across 17.5 wards, including those already covered by the current scheme. If approved, the scheme would cover around 70% of the borough's private rented sector.

For consultation purposes, the proposed areas are grouped into three proposed licence areas:

- 1 Designation 1:** Abbey Wood, Charlton Village and Riverside, Plumstead and Glyndon, Thamesmead Moorings, Woolwich Common, Woolwich Dockyard, and the southern part of Woolwich Arsenal.

Evidence shows that these areas have:

- a higher proportion of privately rented homes than the national average (19%)
- significantly higher levels of serious hazards than the national benchmark (10%)
- higher levels of deprivation, with wards falling within the lowest IMD deciles.

- 2 Designation 2:** Blackheath Westcombe, Charlton Hornfair, East Greenwich, Eltham Town and Avery Hill, Greenwich Park, Kidbrooke Park, Plumstead Common, Shooters Hill and West Thamesmead.

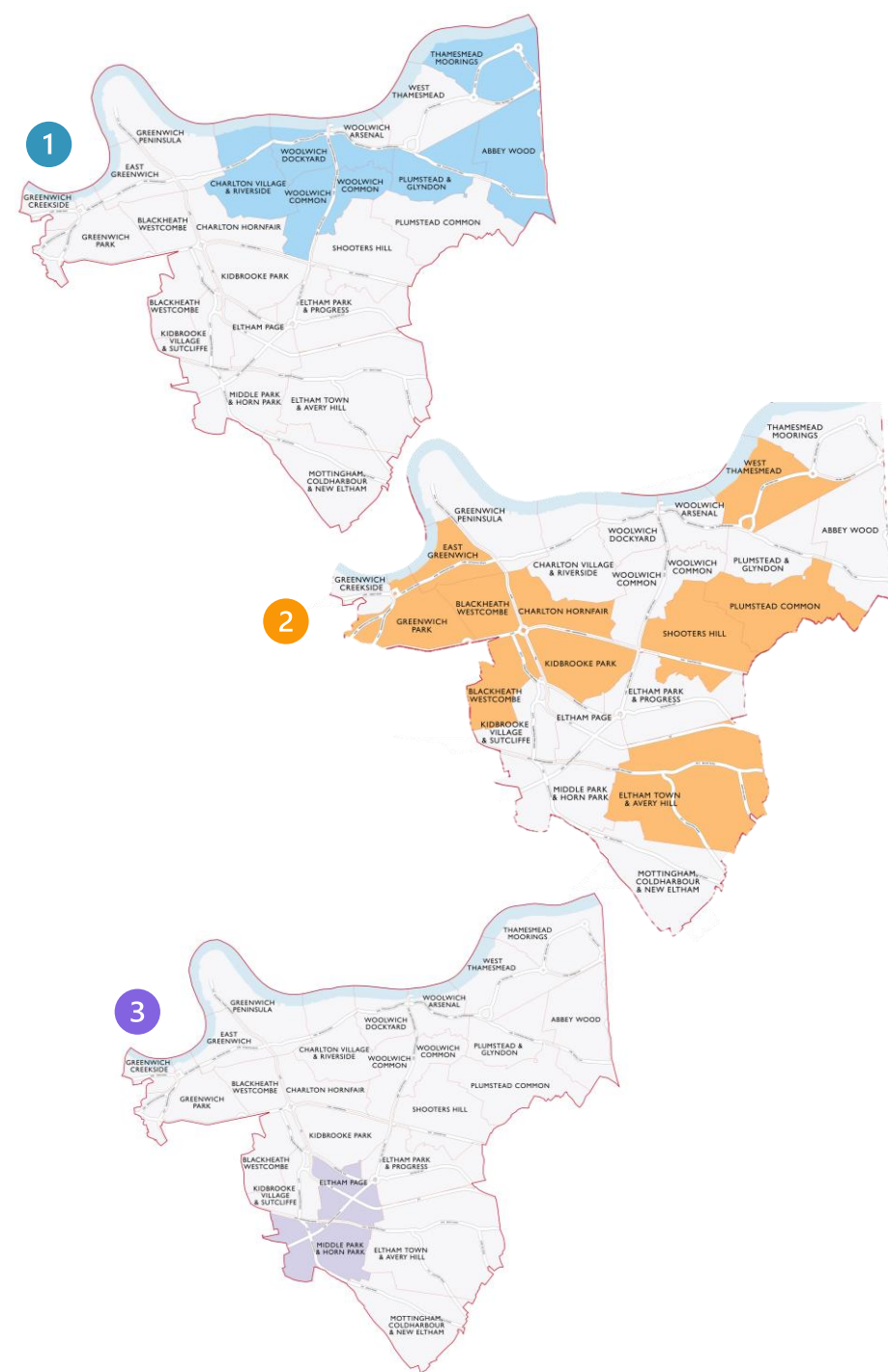
Evidence shows that these areas have:

- a higher proportion of privately rented homes than the national average (19%)
- higher levels of serious housing hazards than the national benchmark of 10% (excluding known HMOs).

- 3 Designation 3:** Eltham Page, Middle Park and Horn Park.

Evidence shows that these areas have:

- significantly elevated levels of serious housing hazards - two to three times the national benchmark of 10% (excluding known HMOs)
- deprivation with both wards indicating increased vulnerability of residents to the impacts of poor housing, including adverse health and financial outcomes.



PROPOSED LICENCE FEES

Proposed Selective Licensing Fees

The Royal Borough of Greenwich is proposing a **selective landlord licensing fee** designed to **recover costs only** (not to make a profit). The fee is based on the cost of running the scheme over five years, including administration, inspections, enforcement, and legal action where needed.

The council has also compared charges with other London boroughs to ensure the fee is **fair and in line with regional practice**. Costs will be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain accurate and proportionate.

The proposed fee for a Selective Licence is £974 per property. This would be paid in two stages:

- **Part A (£407)** – payable at the time of application, covering the cost of processing the application and making a decision on the licence.
- **Part B (£567)** – payable prior to the licence being issued, covering the cost of inspections, enforcement work, and ongoing monitoring of the scheme.

Discounts available

A **10% discount** is proposed for landlords who are members of accredited schemes. These include organisations such as the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA), London Landlords Accreditation Scheme (LLAS), Propertymark, and others.

PROPOSED LICENCE CONDITIONS

Landlords would need to meet conditions to make sure privately rented homes are safe and properly managed. These include requirements such as:

- gas and electrical safety
- smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
- waste management
- tenancy information
- property inspections
- pest control
- anti-social behaviour management
- cooperation with council inspections.

Full proposed conditions are set out in Appendix 2.

HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

Have your say on the proposals

Before making any decisions about the proposed scheme, the council wants to hear your views and understand:

- whether these issues are being experienced locally
- whether you think Selective Licensing would help address them
- what impact the scheme may have on you.

We strongly encourage as many people as possible to take part in this consultation and share their views. Your feedback will help shape a scheme that improves the quality, safety, and management of privately rented homes across the borough.

The council will actively promote the consultation and how to get involved to ensure broad participation and to hear from as many voices as possible.

The consultation runs from:

21 July 2026



12 October 2026

Who we want to hear from:

We want to hear from anyone interested in, or affected by, private renting in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

This includes:

- Tenants
- Landlords and their representatives
- Managing and estate agents
- Residents
- Businesses
- Community organisations
- Public services such as the Police and Fire and Rescue Service
- Voluntary and third sector groups

How to share your views:

You can take part in the consultation in the following ways:

- Complete the online survey
- Attend a consultation event (online or in person)
- To request a paper copy of the consultation or have any questions please contact us:

Email: PRPL2@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Call: 020 8921 8152

In writing: Private Housing & Environmental Health Standards,
Royal Borough of Greenwich
The Woolwich Centre,
35 Wellington Street,
London,
SE18 6HQ

Submitting your response online is the quickest and easiest way to share your views.

If you need support, please contact the community engagement team <https://communityconversations.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/help-and-support>

What happens next:

After the consultation closes, all responses will be reviewed and analysed alongside the council's evidence. The council may make changes to the proposal based on feedback before making a final decision.

If approved the scheme will be introduced and a full consultation report will be published on the council's website.

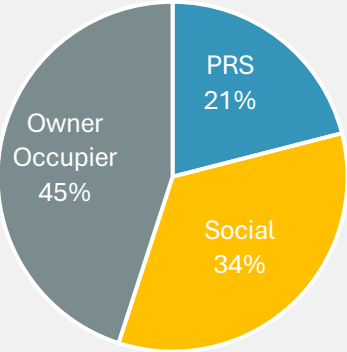
This is your opportunity to share your views on improving the safety and management of Royal Greenwich's private rented sector.

HOUSING TENURE IN ROYAL GREENWICH

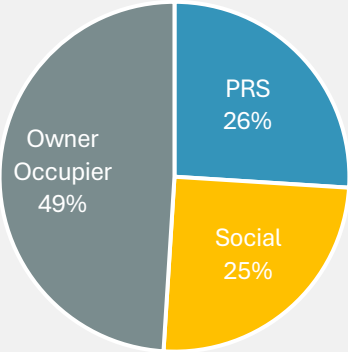
There are **126,184 residential properties** in Royal Greenwich (excluding shell properties¹) Of these, **26% (32,242) are PRS**.

Over the past decade Royal Greenwich has seen changes in tenure rates, with the **PRS increasing from 21% of housing stock in 2011 to 26% in 2025**.

Tenure Types 2011
(Source ONS)



Tenure Types 2025
(Source Ti 2026)

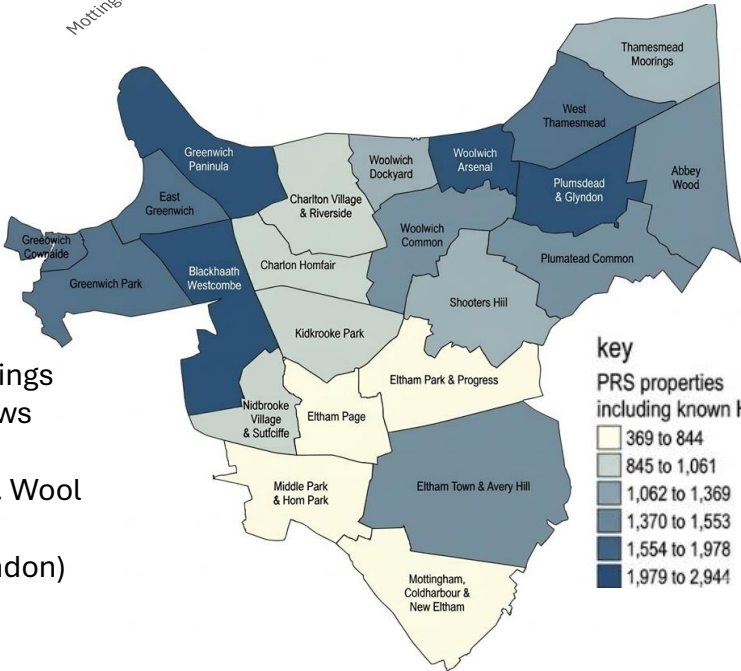
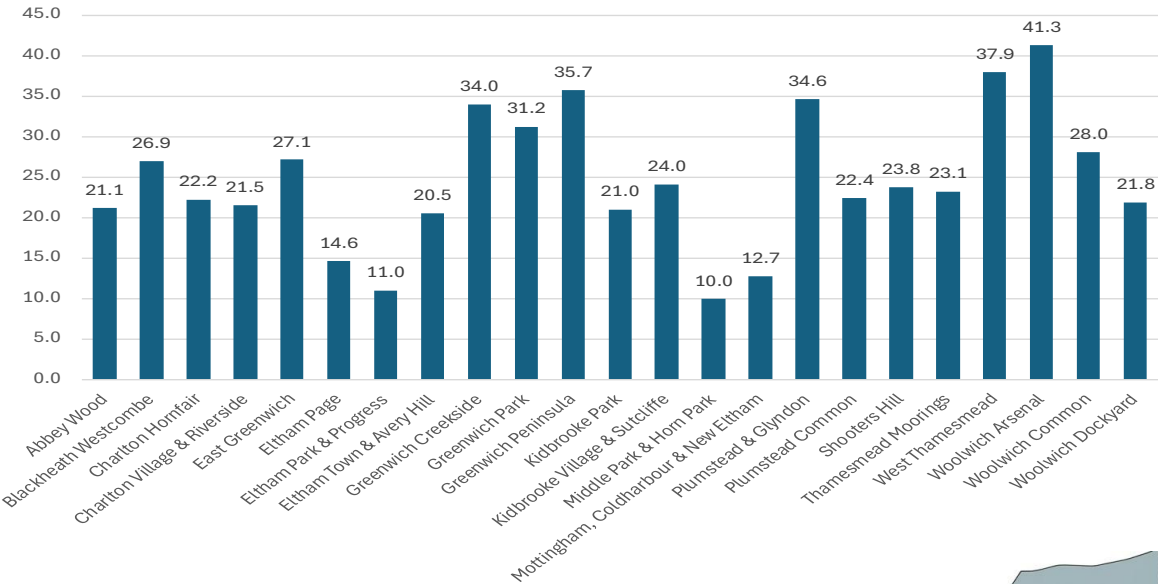


Since 2011, the private rented sector has grown, owner-occupied homes have increased, and the proportion of social housing has declined.

Tenure	2011 (households)	2021 (households)	2025 (dwellings)
Owner Occupied	44.8%	43.3%	49.1%
Social Housing	34.3%	31.0%	25.3%
PRS	20.9%	25.7%	25.6%
Total:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

¹Shell properties: Structure only, the exterior is finished, but interior incomplete

The **percentage of PRS** (including known HMO) properties in each ward ranges between **10.0%** (Middle Park & Horn Park) and **41.3%** (Woolwich Arsenal). Of the 23 Royal Borough of Greenwich wards, **19 have a higher percentage PRS than the national average (19%)** .



The distribution of PRS dwellings across Royal Greenwich shows concentrations in some northern wards (e.g. Woolwich Arsenal, Greenwich, Peninsula, Plumstead & Glyndon)

Distribution of PRS (incl. known HMO) dwellings in Royal Greenwich by ward (Source: Ti 2026, Map by Metastreet).

DEPRIVATION IN ROYAL

GREENWICH

The indices of **Multiple deprivation 2025 (IMD 2025)** provide relative measures of deprivation for small areas in England, known as **Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs)**. These measures are based on seven different aspects of deprivation such as **income, employment, health, education, barriers to housing and services, crime and living environment**.

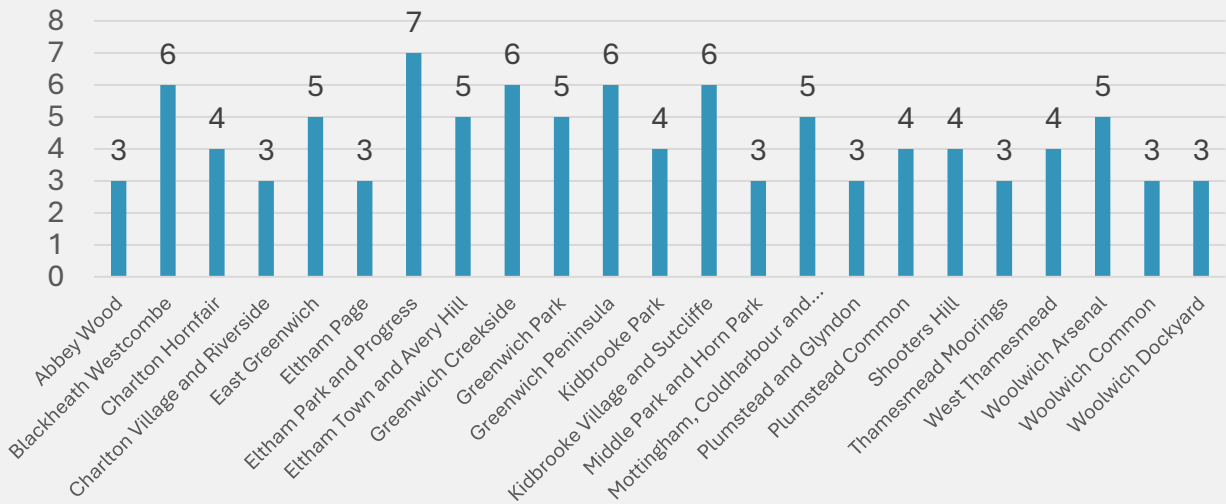


The weighted average IMD decile across Royal Greenwich wards ranges from 3 to 7.

- Lower decile values indicate higher levels of deprivation.
- Higher decile values indicate lower levels of deprivation.

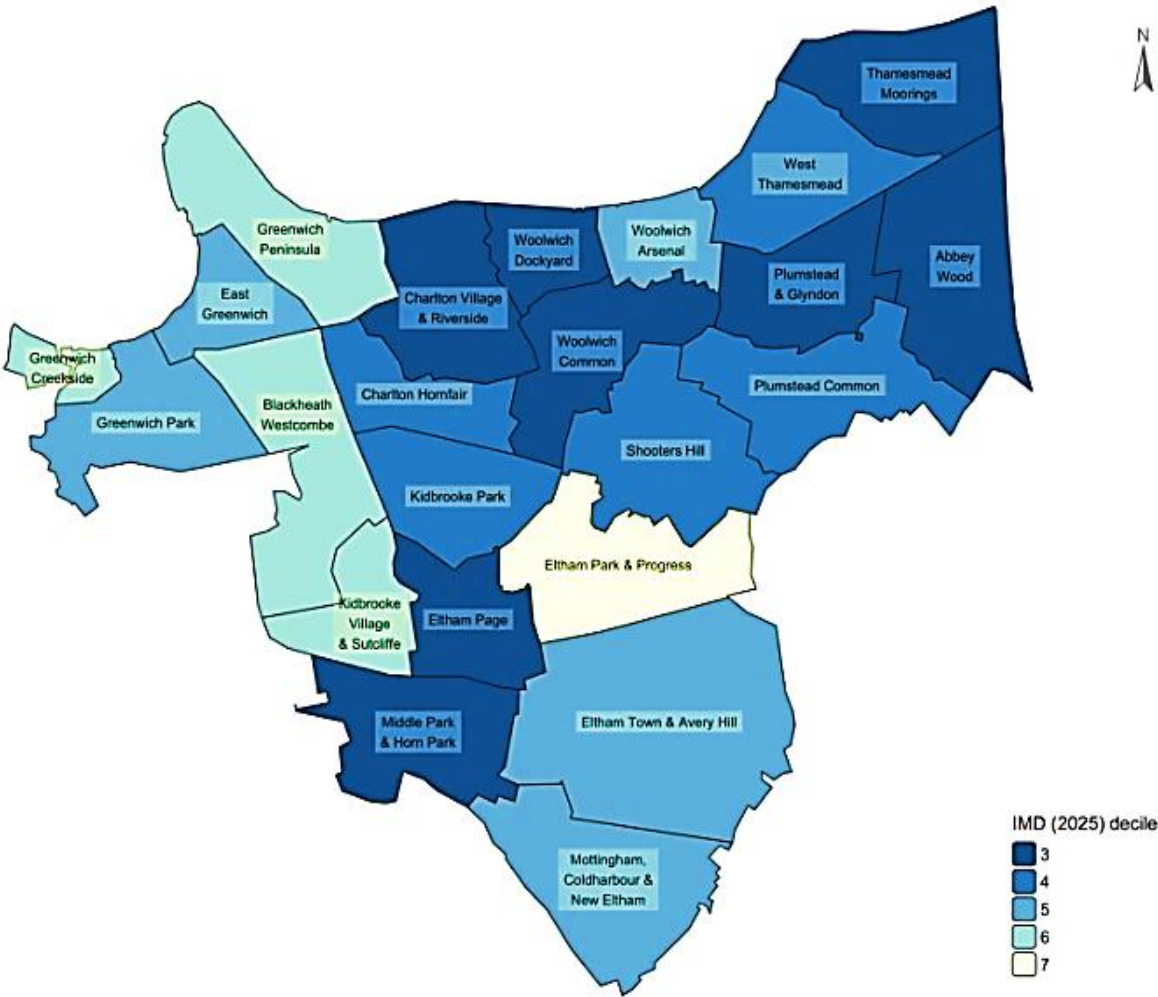
In Royal Greenwich, 13 out of 23 wards are below the national average. The least deprived ward is Eltham Park and Progress (7). There are eight wards that are most deprived (3).

Indices of Multiple Deprivation



■ Indices of Multiple Deprivation

The geographical pattern of deprivation shows the most deprived wards tending to be in the northern and eastern wards, although Eltham Page, and Middle Park and Horn Park are notable exceptions.



IMD decile: A ranking from 1 to 10 used to compare deprivation. Decile 1 means among the most deprived areas nationally, and decile 10 means among the least deprived.

Housing Conditions

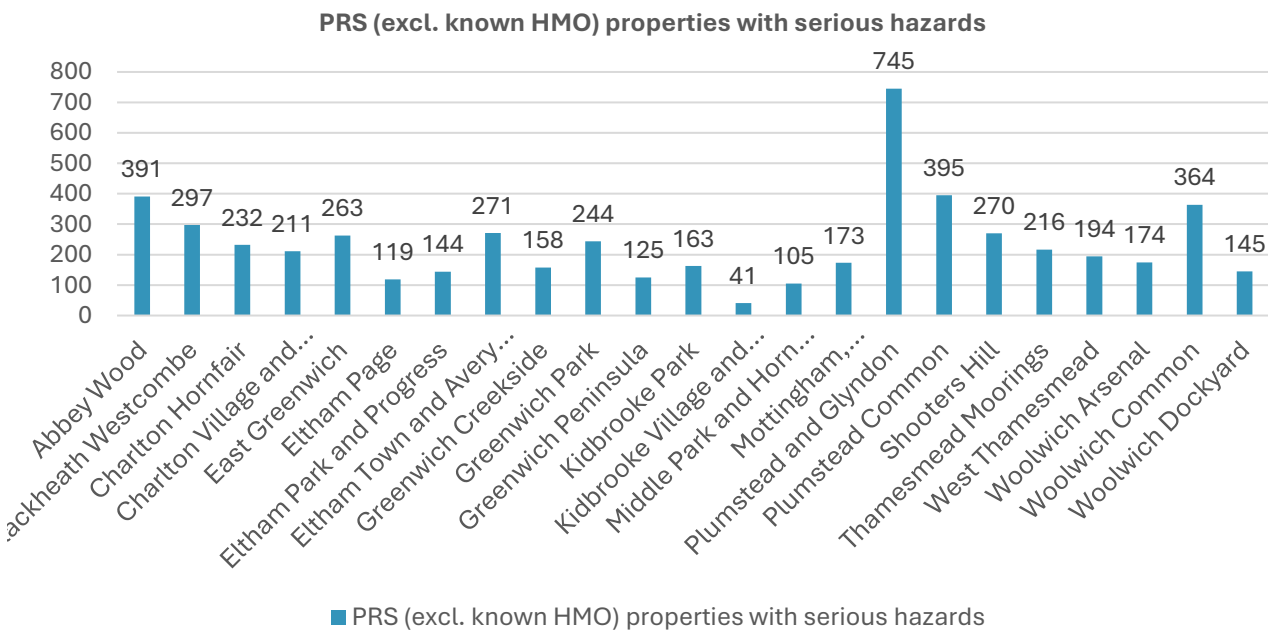
The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a national system used to assess housing conditions. A hazard is any problem in a home, building or the surrounding area that could harm the health or safety of people living there.



The HHSRS identifies 29 different types of housing hazards. These are grouped into four main public health areas:

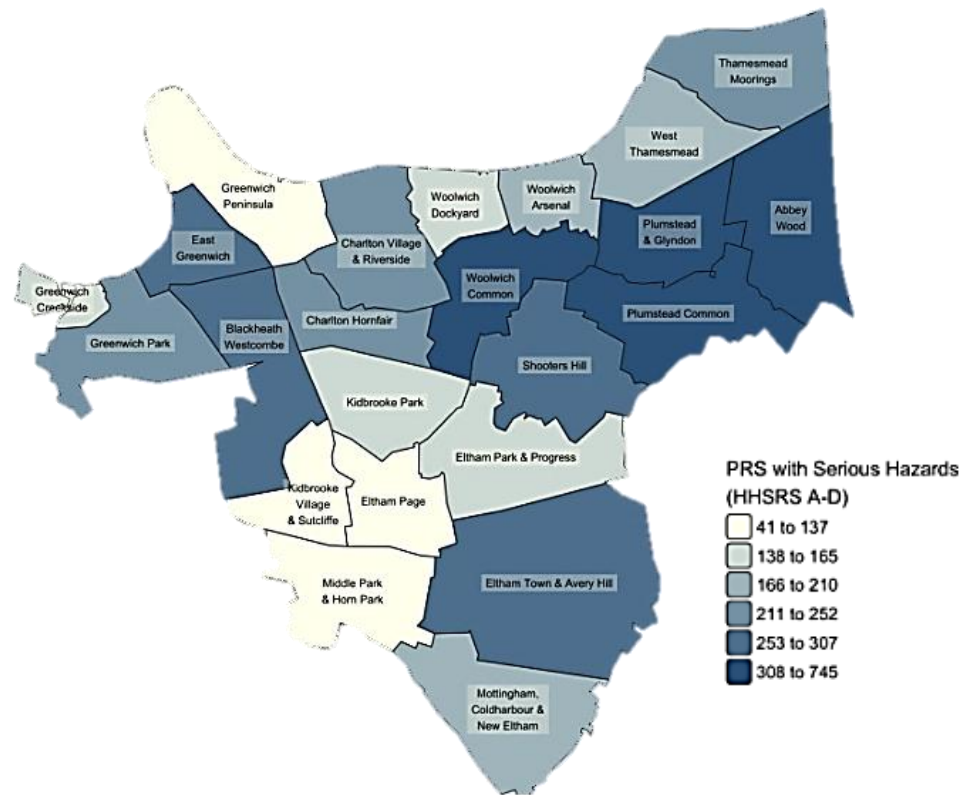
Physical health needs	Mental wellbeing	Protection from infection	Protection from accidents
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It is estimated that 5,360 privately rented homes in Royal Greenwich (excluding known HMOs) have at least one serious hazard. This represents 17.5% of the private rented sector, which is higher than the national figure for Category 1 hazards (10%). The highest number (745) of PRS properties with serious hazards are in Plumstead & Glyndon, whilst the lowest number (41) are in Kidbrooke Village and Sutcliffe.



PRS (excl. known HMO) properties with serious hazards (HHSRS A-D) across Royal Greenwich (Source: Ti 2026).

Northeastern wards generally have higher numbers of PRS with serious hazards (e.g. Woolwich Common, Plumstead and Glyndon, Abbey Wood, Plumstead Common).



Distribution of PRS (excl. known HMO) properties with serious hazards (HHSRS A-D) across Royal Greenwich (Source: Ti 2026, Map by Metastreet).

PROPERTY INSPECTIONS

Property inspections are carried out to check the conditions of homes and to understand any risks to health and safety of people living there. They provide clear evidence about housing standards in the private rented sector and help the council take appropriate action where needed.

Between 1 November 2020 and 1 November 2025, the council carried out 4,130 inspections of privately rented homes in Royal Greenwich (excluding known HMOs).

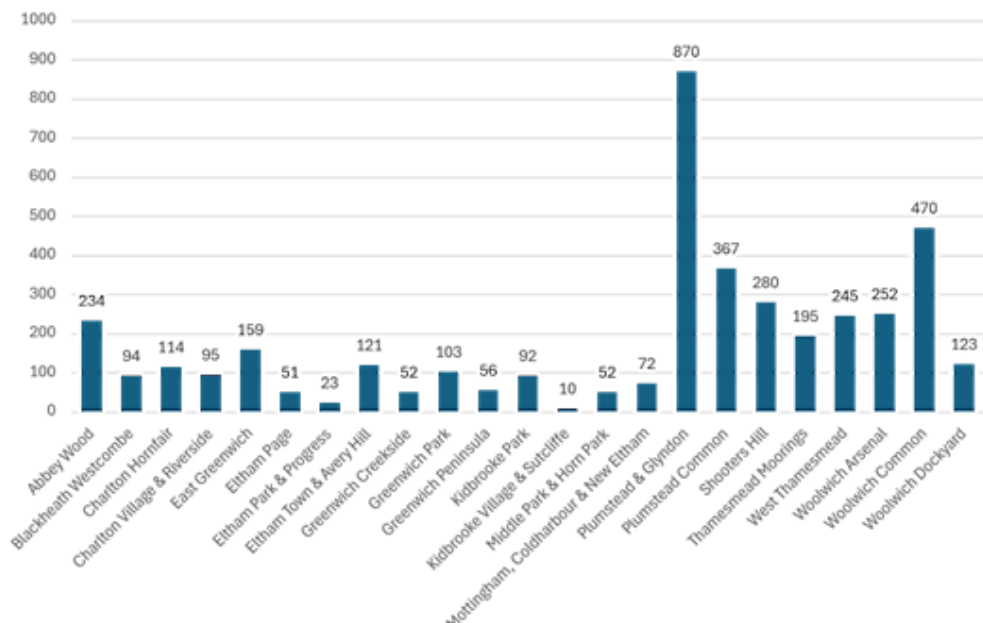
During these inspections:

4,762 housing hazards were identified

1,226 hazards (26%) were assessed as severe

27% of inspections (1,103 properties) found more than one hazard

The highest number of inspections was in Plumstead and Glyndon (870), with Woolwich Common (470) and Plumstead Common (367) having notably high values



Property inspections at PRS (excl. known HMO) across Royal Greenwich (Source: Ti 2026).

Property inspections, identified hazards, severe hazards, and dwellings with multiple hazards, for PRS (excl. known HMO) across Royal Greenwich 1 November 2020 – 1 November 2025 (Source: Ti 2026).

Ward	Inspection visits	All Hazards	Severe Hazards	Multiple Hazards
Abbey Wood	234	190	31	52
Blackheath Westcombe	94	80	19	27
Charlton Hornfair	114	91	11	27
Charlton Village & Riverside	95	71	22	34
East Greenwich	159	113	31	38
Eltham Page	51	49	4	10
Eltham Park & Progress	23	21	0	6
Eltham Town & Avery Hill	121	110	30	31
Greenwich Creekside	52	47	9	20
Greenwich Park	103	73	19	21
Greenwich Peninsula	56	46	15	15
Kidbrooke Park	92	65	16	21
Kidbrooke Village & Sutcliffe	10	7	2	4
Middle Park & Horn Park	52	44	4	9
Mottingham, Coldharbour & New Eltham	72	79	21	16
Plumstead & Glyndon	870	1,217	339	222
Plumstead Common	367	413	126	89
Shooters Hill	280	603	144	94
Thamesmead Moorings	195	159	38	41
West Thamesmead	245	180	52	51
Woolwich Arsenal	252	229	74	70
Woolwich Common	470	802	202	177
Woolwich Dockyard	123	73	17	28
Total	4,130	4,762	1,226	1,103

KEY FINDINGS

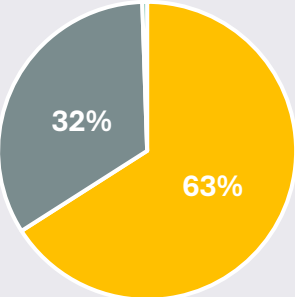


Population growth (Census)

289,100 (2021) → 299,528 (2024)
(+17.2%)



Property Types



Flats: 63%



Houses: 32%

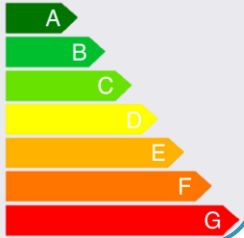


Bungalows: 0.5%

Energy efficiency

(92.1%)
PRS EPC ratings B, C & D

2,146 (7.6%)
PRS EPC ratings E, F, G



Complaints

Complaints (2020–2025): 6,104



Highest: Plumstead & Glyndon (923)
Lowest: Eltham Park & Progress (63)

Rent & possession claims

Average rent in Greenwich is
£1,927

Average for London
£2,268

Average for England
£1,424

Average possession claims:
24.9 per 10,000 households

Above London
average of
20.9



ASB incidents

4,213 (13.8 per 100 PRS dwellings)



Highest: Plumstead & Glyndon (485)
Woolwich Arsenal (384)

Lowest: Eltham Park & Progress (38)

Housing stock

Total residential properties:

126,184

32,242 (26%) are privately rented

Up from 21% in 2011



PRS per ward ranges:

369 – 2,944 properties

↑ Highest: Woolwich Arsenal (2,944)

↓ Lowest: Middle Park & Horn Park (369)

PRS proportion by ward:

10% – 41.3%

19 of 23 wards
exceed national average of 19%

Housing hazards

5,360 (17.5%) PRS properties have at least one serious hazard (HHSRS A–D)

↑ Highest: Plumstead & Glyndon 745

↓ Lowest: Kidbrooke Village & Sutcliffe 41

27% of properties have multiple hazards

Bedroom, kitchen and bathroom
hazards make up 66% of all hazards

The most common hazards are:



Damp & mould (18%)



Fire (12%)



ACHIEVEMENTS IN CURRENT SELECTIVE LICENSING SCHEME

Letters

To date information letters have been sent to a total of 2,554 properties in three wards ('former' Woolwich Riverside, Woolwich Common and Shooters Hill).



New applications

As of 23 January 2026, 379 new licence applications were generated totalling £330k income.



Enforcement

Number and value of CPNs issued by the Private Housing Team for s95 offences within selective licensing area.

Year	Number of CPN issued	Total Value of CPN issued
2023	0	£0
2024	18	£69,000
2025	40	£157,000
TOTAL	58	£226,000



Inspections

The Private Rented Property Licensing Team have undertaken 699 inspections of licensed properties within the selective licensing area since January 2025. These inspections have led to the identification of 2643 property hazards including 738 severe hazards.



Compliance

Currently (as of 26 January 2026), 2,974 properties have either been granted a licence or awaiting processing. This equates to a current compliance rate of approximately 54% (i.e. just over half of properties that should be licences have applied).



Hazards

Since January 2025, 2,103 property hazards have been satisfactorily resolved including 564 severe hazards.

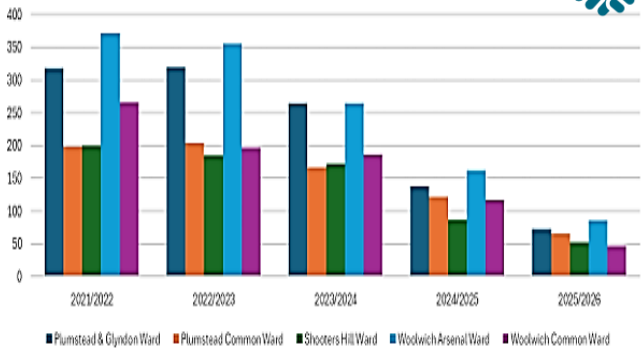


Anti-social behaviour

Following the introduction of the scheme in October 2022, there has been a year-on-year reduction in property associated ASB.



ASB Incidents in Selective Licensing Areas



Graph showing total ASB incidents per Selective Licensing Ward