# Hounslow’s crackdown on rogue landlords raises concerns over responsible housing



West London’s Hounslow Council has ramped up efforts to clamp down on the reckless practices of rogue landlords, levying a staggering £180,000 in fines over the past six months. This aggressive stance underscores a broader crackdown on unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) — a clear attempt to target those who exploit tenants and flout legal responsibilities. Yet, despite these strong-arm tactics, much of the housing stock remains in decent shape, with most landlords fulfilling their duties. Unfortunately, it’s the small minority that tarnishes the reputation of responsible property owners, and the council’s heavy-handed approach seems more about appeasing political pressure than serving the interests of tenants.

Councillor Tom Bruce, the council’s deputy leader, claims they stand “firmly with tenants and communities,” cracking down on any landlord who “fails in their duty of care.” However, this rhetoric often masks an overreach that risks harming legitimate landlords trying to keep housing affordable and secure. Extensive inspections and investigations have been carried out, with each violation resulting in hefty fines averaging around £14,000 — a punitive measure that might deter investment and discourage responsible landlords from staying in the market altogether.

The council’s crackdown comes amid a series of high-profile prosecutions, like the case involving landlord Shashibhushan Vyas from Isleworth, who was hit with fines exceeding £115,500 for illegal conversions and substandard conditions. Another landlord, Thillakarani Ratnam, faced over £70,000 in fines for renting out illegally subdivided properties. Such cases serve as dramatic examples of what the council labels “serious offenders,” but critics argue these cases are cherry-picked to justify escalating enforcement measures that could ultimately hurt tenants by reducing the availability of quality rental housing.

Furthermore, Hounslow’s plans to extend licensing schemes to smaller HMOs — including properties with only three or four tenants — appear driven more by a desire to control the rental market than genuine concerns over safety or anti-social behaviour. The proposed restrictions, currently open to consultation until May 2025, could entrench the council’s authority at the expense of landlords and tenants alike, turning what should be a simple matter of property management into a bureaucratic nightmare.

In truth, these relentless crackdowns risk swinging the pendulum too far, punishing the vast majority of responsible landlords while failing to address deeper issues such as housing shortages and affordability. As the council continues to elevate enforcement over engagement, the question remains: are they safeguarding tenants’ interests, or simply leveraging the issue to push a political agenda that ultimately diminishes the choices available to renters in Hounslow?

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.property118.com/council-hits-landlords-with-180000-in-fines/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/news/article/10113/-180-000-fines-issued-to-rogue-landlords-in-hounslow> - Hounslow Council has intensified its enforcement against rogue landlords, issuing over £180,000 in fines over the past six months. The focus is on unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), with an average fine of £14,000 per violation. Councillor Tom Bruce emphasised the council's commitment to tenant safety and the importance of holding landlords accountable for their responsibilities. Residents are encouraged to report any suspicious landlord activity or substandard housing conditions to the council to ensure safer rental experiences across Hounslow.
3. <https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/news/article/2835/rogue_landlord_from_isleworth_fined_115000> - Shashibhushan Vyas, a landlord from Isleworth, was fined over £115,500 at Isleworth Crown Court for illegally converting a side extension into a separate unit at his property on Mandeville Road. The tenant was found living in squalid conditions, with a toilet located less than one metre from the kitchen. The council's Planning Enforcement service initiated the investigation after a neighbour reported the illegal rental. Councillor Tom Bruce highlighted the council's commitment to ensuring all residents have access to safe and comfortable homes.
4. <https://hounslowherald.com/crackdown-on-rogue-landlords-sees-lbh-issue-k-in-fines-p29295-95.htm> - Hounslow Council has issued over £180,000 in fines to rogue landlords for poor property conditions and unlicensed HMOs as part of a crackdown aimed at protecting tenants across the borough. Council enforcement officers are conducting rigorous inspections to ensure landlords comply with health and safety regulations, licensing requirements, and correct tenancy agreements. The average fine for violations is £14,000. Councillor Tom Bruce stated that the council will not tolerate landlords who exploit renters or neglect their responsibilities.
5. <https://hounslowherald.com/council-proposes-tighter-controls-on-hmos-p27517-95.htm> - Hounslow Council is proposing to tighten controls on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) by renewing the additional licensing scheme. The council seeks feedback from residents on the proposed scheme, aiming to tackle anti-social behaviour often associated with HMOs. The new scheme will extend mandatory licensing requirements to include all smaller HMOs occupied by 3 or 4 persons and those poorly subdivided into self-contained flats or studios without appropriate building regulation approval. The consultation is open until 16 May 2025.
6. <https://hounslowherald.com/hounslow-woman-fined-over-k-over-illegal-rental-p27616-95.htm> - Hounslow Council successfully prosecuted Thillakarani Ratnam for illegally renting out an outbuilding, which was advertised online in 2017 for £1,300 per month. Ms. Ratnam was fined over £70,000 after failing to comply with an enforcement notice to cease use and remove all kitchen and bathroom facilities. Further investigations confirmed the outbuilding continued to be occupied. The court ordered Ms. Ratnam to pay a £15,000 fine, over £20,000 in court costs, and to repay £35,000 gained from the illegal rental.
7. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/landlords-fined-illegal-home-conversion-b1222076.html> - Amarjit Singh and Jasbinder Kaur, a husband and wife from Hounslow, were ordered to pay more than £270,000 after illegally converting a house in Yiewsley into four separate cramped flats and constructing an outbuilding for rent without planning permission. The couple appeared at Isleworth Crown Court, where they were ordered to pay a confiscation order of £250,055.80, representing the income generated from charging rent on five illegal units. Failure to comply with the confiscation order could result in a prison sentence of two years and nine months.