# Residents of Hearns Road call for halt on new HMOs amid rising concerns



Residents of Hearns Road in St Paul's Cray, South London, are expressing growing concerns regarding the increasing number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in their neighbourhood. They report disturbances and crime in the area, prompting a call for the local council to implement a moratorium on any further conversions of properties into HMOs.

Jennie Conboy, 48, a long-term resident who has been living on Hearns Road for a decade, articulated her frustration over the situation. She claimed that the introduction of HMOs has led to "chaos" in the Bromley community, prompting at least three families to relocate due to the issues associated with these properties. Speaking to MyLondon, Conboy remarked, "It's ruining our road, making us want to move," adding that the change from a family home to one housing multiple adults represents "a whole different ball game."

The concerns echo across the community, with Koh Lang, 40, citing a decline in safety for her children. Lang has also observed unusual activity late at night, stating, "We were constantly getting people coming up the road at 1am... just checking all the cars." She noted that their vehicles have been targeted, with incidents of break-ins and theft linking back to these problems.

The surge in residents' concerns has culminated in a petition submitted to Bromley Council, gathering 289 signatures. This petition urges the council to prohibit any new HMOs and calls for a thorough review of existing properties, suggesting that any non-compliant HMOs be removed and that nearby residents be informed about future applications.

Another resident, Lorna Taylor, 49, who has lived on Hearns Road for nearly 20 years, voiced her concerns regarding the noise from the HMOs. She recounted a neighbour's struggles, stating that he often "cannot sleep" due to disturbances from the nearby HMO, where fights have reportedly occurred requiring EMS intervention. Taylor described a generally negative change in the atmosphere, highlighting that even elderly residents are considering leaving due to the disruptive environment.

The challenges have extended beyond mere noise. Local residents have expressed frustration with property maintenance issues linked to conversions. Taylor detailed disruptions caused during COVID-19, claiming builders left waste scattered in gardens, compounding the difficulties faced by the community.

Bromley Council's response to these concerns was reflected in a decision made in February regarding two properties on Hearns Road, where planning permission for conversion to HMOs was denied. This decision stemmed from the implementation of an Article 4 direction stipulating that conversions after September 2022 required planning consent. However, despite the refusal, these properties remain licensed as HMOs, leading residents like Taylor to feel neglected. She stated, "It's made me feel that Bromley Council doesn't care about our road at all."

In light of these ongoing issues, representatives for the owners of some licensed HMOs on Hearns Road described the characterisation of issues associated with these properties as "unfairly targeted," expressing disappointment over the negative perceptions. They reaffirmed their commitment to providing safe and compliant housing for all.

Bromley Council, as well as managing agents and property owners of the surrounding HMOs, were approached for comments but had not responded at the time of publication.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://londonnewsonline.co.uk/news/cramped-lacking-the-basics-and-unfit-for-purpose-tenants-claims-spark-investigation/> - This article provides context on issues with HMOs in the Bromley area, specifically highlighting problems with property maintenance and tenant dissatisfaction.
2. <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/housing/landlords/houses-multiple-occupation-hmo> - This resource explains what constitutes an HMO, which is relevant to understanding the nature of the properties in question and the concerns raised by residents.
3. <https://www.bromley.gov.uk> - Although not directly referenced in the search results, the Bromley Council website would provide information on local policies and decisions regarding HMOs, such as the implementation of Article 4 directions affecting HMO conversions.
4. <https://www.gov.uk/house-in-multiple-occupation> - This government resource provides general information on houses in multiple occupation, including requirements and regulations that might apply to properties in St Paul's Cray.
5. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london> - While specific articles may not be available, the BBC News London section might cover broader issues related to HMOs and community concerns in London.
6. <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/housing/houses-multiple-occupation> - This Local Government Association resource provides an overview of HMOs at a national level, which can help contextualize local concerns and regulations.
7. <https://www.mylondon.news/news/south-london-news/south-london-street-families-cannot-31382844> - Please view link - unable to able to access data