

NOTTINGHAM ACTION GROUP ON HMOs
MAGAZINE SUPPLEMENT
Summer 2008

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

A GUIDE

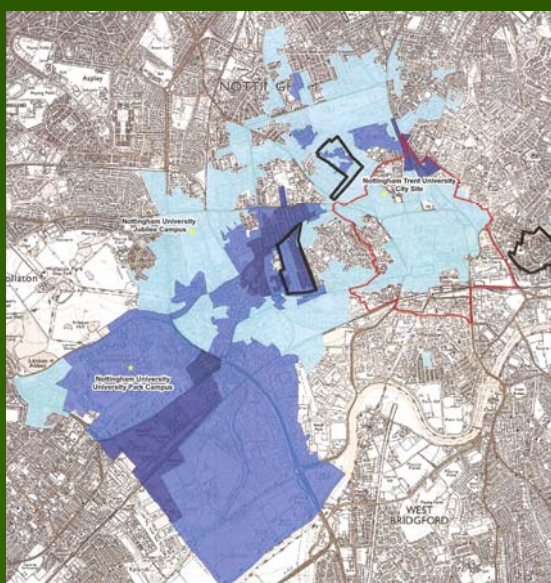
produced by

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL
& the
NOTTINGHAM ACTION GROUP ON HMOs

for the visit on 13 May 2008 of

IAIN WRIGHT MP

Under-Secretary of State
Department for Communities and Local Government

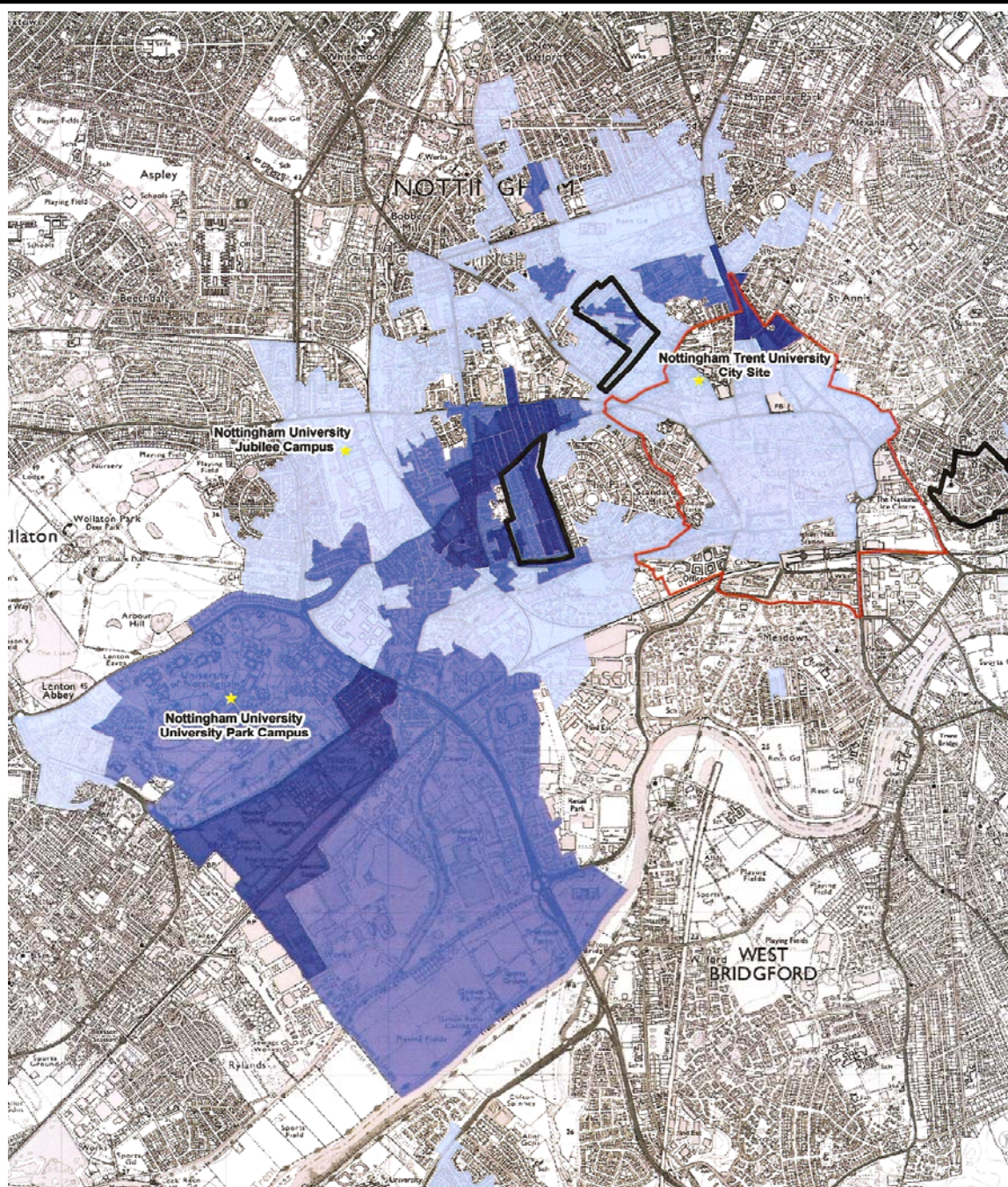


PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS
COUNCIL TAX DATA, OCTOBER 2007

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS BY OUTPUT AREA

COUNCIL TAX DATA, OCTOBER 2007



Title: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS BY OUTPUT AREA - COUNCIL TAX DATA, OCTOBER 2007



Map produced on:
08/05/08

Map produced by:
AB
GIS Team



**Nottingham
City Council**

Environment and Regeneration



0 250 500 1,000 Meters

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NOTE: Every reasonable attempt has been made to ensure that all the information presented in this guide is accurate

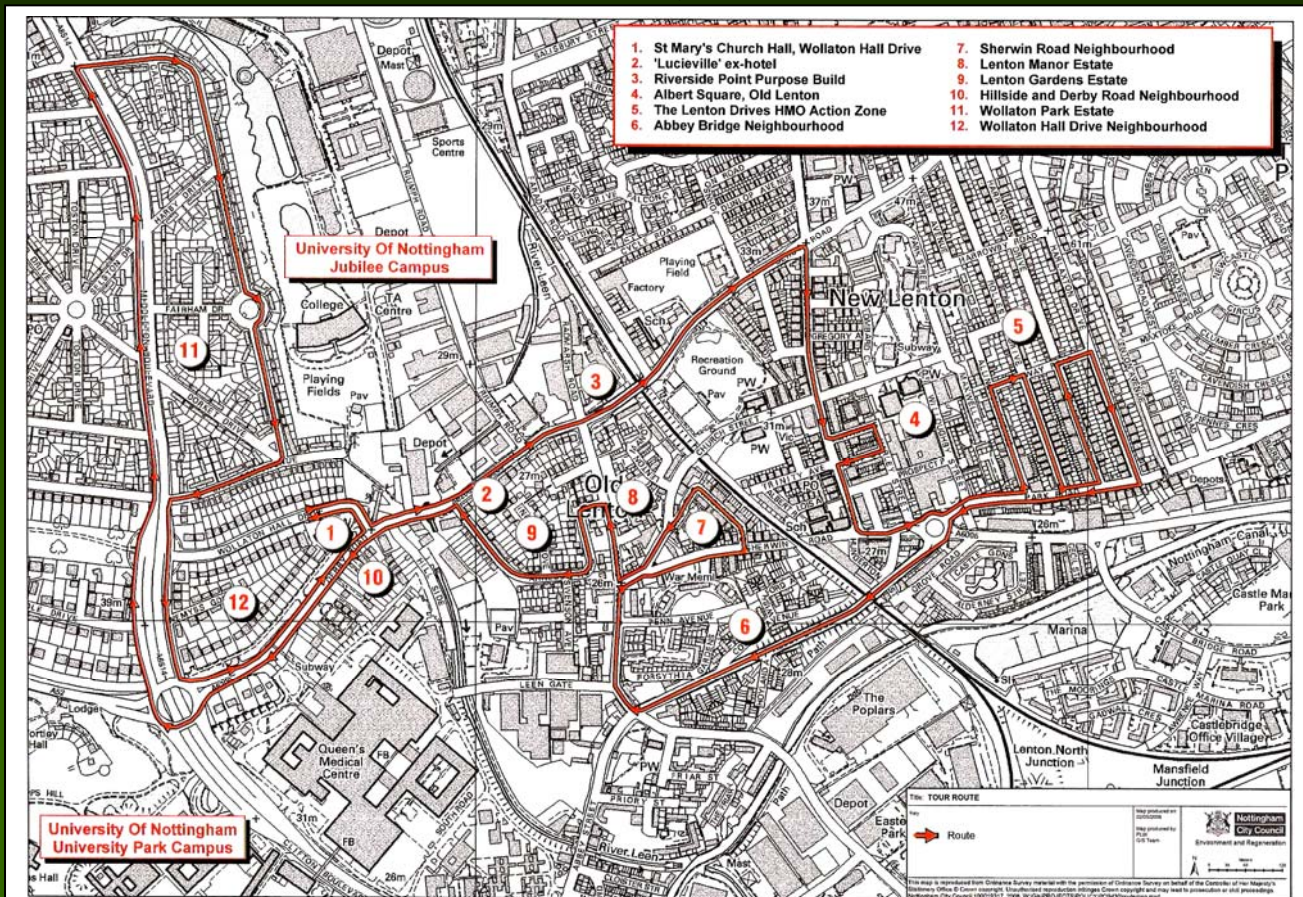
BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

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NOTE: The contents of this guide have been organized so as to follow (as far as possible) the route of the Minister's tour show on the map below.

NEIGHBOURHOOD TOUR ROUTE



BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING NOTES

The time available for Iain Wright's visit on the 13 May, less than two hours, simply meant it was not possible for him to be shown more than some of the neighbourhoods where HMOs, and especially student housing, are key issues.

Equally, it was not possible to arrange for him to meet more than some of the people whose homes are in those neighbourhoods.

However, photographs were used, along with the words of residents, maps, statistical information and reports, to produce a guide for the Minister to illustrate the different types of housing, and the diverse characters of the neighbourhoods he was due to visit, along with the problems HMOs are causing in those neighbourhoods, and what is being done to tackle those problems;

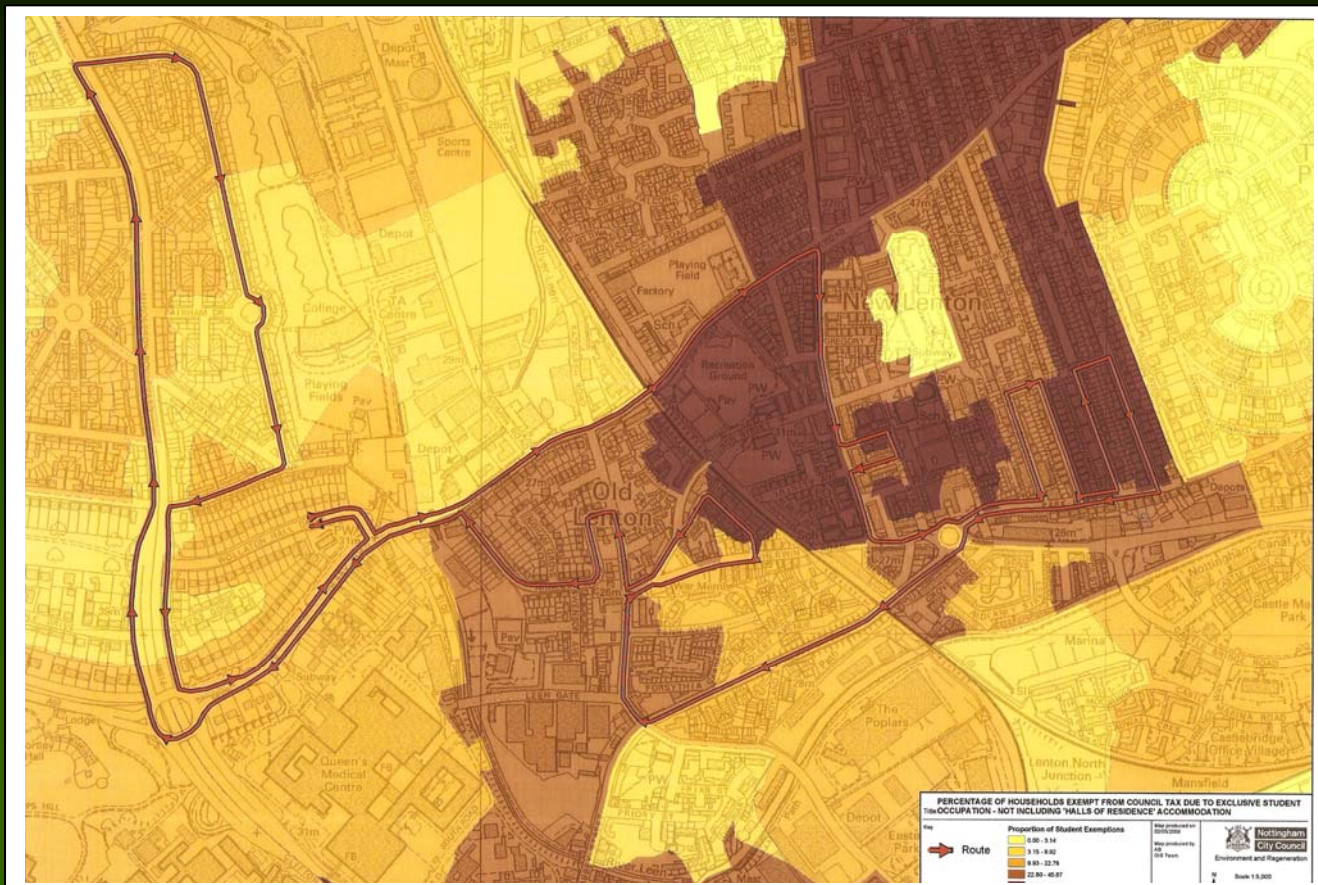
Please note that information about the HMOs highlighted in the guide was obtained largely from internet advertisements. The information, particularly that about rents, was presented in many different and somewhat confusing ways.

Therefore, in order to make comparisons between rents easier, all rents quoted in this guide have been calculated by working out the total weekly rent due for a property, multiplying it by 4 and calling the result the 'rent per month'.

Only a limited number of copies of the guide were produced at the time. However, the guide's contents, with some additions and omissions, have been used to produce this supplement to the Nottingham Action Group's magazine.

[Editor, Nottingham Action Group on HMOs' Magazine, August, 2008]

TOUR ROUTE: PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS EXEMPT FROM COUNCIL TAX DUE TO EXCLUSIVE STUDENT OCCUPATION (THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE 'HALLS OF RESIDENCE' ACCOMMODATION)



BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

AN INTRODUCTION

from

COUNCILLOR DAVE TRIMBLE

Portfolio Holder – Culture, Leisure and Communities

Ward Councillor – Dunkirk and Lenton Ward

Cllr Dave Trimble has represented Dunkirk and Lenton Ward for a number of years. At the 2001 Census his ward showed over 50% of the population to be students with a large number of them living in HMOs that were previously family homes. Since then there has been a constant increase in the transient student population and now some parts of his ward no longer contain any permanent residents.

This has not just had an effect on those residents wanting to remain in their neighbourhoods, but changes in the local infrastructure caused by the imbalance in the population will also affect any attempts by Nottingham City Council to address the issue and encourage families back into the area.

Over the last ten years he has seen a large increase in the number of students attending each of Nottingham's universities. In part this has come about as a result of government policy to increase the number of young people participating in, and gaining from, higher education. However, Nottingham's two universities' own success has also encouraged additional growth in the number of students choosing to study in Nottingham.

Together, these factors have exacerbated the widely experienced problems now facing those of Nottingham's neighbourhoods with large numbers of students living in temporary residence. In particular his local ward surgeries have to deal regularly with the issues and problems of noise, excessive waste and litter, parking, and anti-social behaviour, problems local residents feel plague those areas with high numbers of HMOs for nine months of the year.

During the summer months these problems are swapped for the noise, waste and parking problems caused by builders and landlords renovating their HMOs.

As a local councillor he also shares the concerns of the city council that the expansion of the number of HMOs in those areas close to the university campuses has contributed to the reduction of family homes in the city.

Nottingham already has a higher than national average of houses in council tax bands A to C and this removal of larger houses suitable for families has just exacerbated the situation. In addition the lack of suitable planning legislation to control and regulate

the expansion of HMOs has not assisted local government in what many consider to be a losing battle, with imbalanced communities and a loss of urgently needed family housing the result.

The Housing Act 2004, although a step in the right direction, excludes too many properties as well as allowing landlords to simply reduce the number of tenants to avoid the mandatory licensing introduced through that legislation. Cllr Trimble supports the Council's viewpoint that those properties that could be covered by additional licensing as defined in the Act should be included in the area of mandatory licensing if local government is to be able to fully use the Housing Act 2004 as a successful and useful tool.

This situation is not unique to Nottingham and the number of residents' groups from university towns and cities across the country involved with the National HMO Lobby confirm how widespread the problem is. Similarly, the number of local authorities that have passed motions requesting a change in the Use Classes Order as well as the number of MPs registered with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Balanced and Sustainable Communities is further proof, should it be needed.

Two years ago Cllr Trimble initiated the local government councillors' lobby and campaign group (the Councillors Campaign for Balanced Communities) and has already organised two successful conferences in Nottingham for councillors from other university towns and cities that discussed the various issues and challenges of studentification.

He was at the forefront of the campaign to bring Unipol Student Homes to Nottingham and has worked closely with the University of Nottingham and both universities' student unions on the development of a Nottingham based Unipol. The City Council has committed £250k to Unipol's development.

Nottingham has also introduced HMO Action Zones in three parts of the city and these, although requiring considerable extra resources from the city council, have had some success in at least containing some of the additional challenges caused by a large predominance of HMOs in those areas.

Finally, he and his colleagues in Nottingham would welcome both clarification and co-ordination of the definition of an HMO in both housing and planning legislation to avoid the current confusion.

Council House, May 2008

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING LENTON LODGE & ST. MARY'S CHURCH NEIGHBOURHOOD



Lenton Lodge: Former Gatehouse to Wollaton Hall



Lenton Lodge from Wollaton Hall Drive



St. Mary's Church Hall & Rectory, Wollaton Hall Drive, Wollaton Park

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING LENTON LODGE & ST. MARY'S CHURCH NEIGHBOURHOOD



NOTE: Until relatively recently Wollaton Hall Drive has been a residential neighbourhood which, because of its location and the size and quality of its properties, was occupied by professional families, often associated with the University of Nottingham and the Queen's Medical Centre.

There are now at least four HMOs on Wollaton Hall Drive, owned by absentee landlords and rented out to students. The above property has been advertised recently for rent to 6 student tenants at £1,608 pm. At least one other property is rented out to more than 6 tenants and problems with rubbish and waste disposal have been reported. The close proximity to the University of Nottingham's two local campuses, coupled with the size of rooms and the amount of off-road parking available, makes these and similar properties very attractive to an increasing number of students.

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]



Wollaton Hall Drive



WOLLATON HALL DRIVE
5 Tenants
Rent £1,260 pm
(advertised on internet)

WOLLATON HALL DRIVE
6 Tenants
Rent £1,728 pm
(advertised on internet)



Wollaton Hall Drive

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING LENTON LODGE & ST. MARY'S CHURCH NEIGHBOURHOOD HMOs: DERBY ROAD



Derby Road Wollaton Park
NOTE: 8 tenants



Derby Road Wollaton Park
NOTE: advertised on the internet for rent to 5 students at £1,120 pm



Derby Road Wollaton Park
NOTE: 6 tenants



Derby Road Wollaton Park
NOTE: 6 tenants, garage converted into communal living space

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

349 DERBY ROAD – 'LUCIEVILLE' & NEIGHBOURHOOD



349 Derby Road – formerly the hotel 'Lucieville'

349 Derby Road was formerly a small family-run hotel. The owners lived on the premises alongside their guests and were active members of their neighbourhood. After its sale, a planning application (03/01043/PFUL3) was made in May, 2003 by Dr. A.M. Choudhuri of Peterborough, seeking permission to convert it into two residential dwellings. Planning permission was granted subject to the condition that: *"...the premises shall not be used other than for the purpose defined in Class C3(a)'by a single person or*

by people living together as a family' ..." which was to ensure that the development did not prejudice the amenity of the adjacent properties.. During conversion of the property, Dr. Choudhuri appealed against the condition imposed by the City Council. Subsequently, and prior to a Planning Inspectorate hearing taking place, the premises were rented out to two sets of students (7 in one property and 8 in the other). The Inspector upheld the appeal.

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]

NOTE: At the time, established residents in the area made representations to the City's Planning Department opposing the application, and later in person to the Planning Inspector.

Since the Planning Inspectorate decision, two more family properties nearby have been sold and are now also HMOs let out to students.

There are now only three or four other houses in the immediate neighbourhood that continue to be family-occupied homes.

The remaining established residents feel pressurized, vulnerable and isolated and find it difficult to continue living in a neighbourhood with such a high concentration of HMOs, neighbours who change annually, and local facilities that are aimed at a mostly young as well as highly transient population.

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]



BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING 'LUCIEVILLE' NEIGHBOURHOOD



Derby Road

NOTE: Advertised on the internet for rent to 6 tenants, rental £1,824 pm. Garage door has been retained, but the garage is a study-bedroom.

[Nottingham Action Group]



BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

EXAMPLES OF PURPOSE BUILT STUDENT HOUSING

'... Neighbourhoods which have become 'studentified' experience a range of problems from the high density of shared properties and the transient nature of the population. These problems include: noisy environment; poor visual street scene; traffic congestion and parking problems; high crime levels – particularly burglary and robbery; inflated house prices, out of reach to aspiring owner occupiers; the gradual expansion of such multi-occupied housing into other neighbourhoods; increasing disaffection from the established community.

Four broad methods of tackling these problems have been identified:

1 Diverting students away from general family housing including supporting the development of appropriate purpose-built accommodation in certain parts of the city; ...'

[Taken from Nottingham's Student Housing Action Plan, 'Students & Balanced Communities']

NOTE: As has been illustrated by the Broadgate Park 'Student Village' on the outskirts of Beeston, unless developments are appropriately located and properly managed they can cause as many problems to neighbouring homes as concentrations of HMOs do, and may indeed exacerbate the imbalance of adjacent areas. Also, for this strategy to be successful, purpose built developments must be designed to appeal to the market they are aimed at – students.

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]



'The Glass House' – Huntingdon Street



Raleigh Park – Faraday Road



'Riverside Point' – Radmarsh Road/Derby Road



'Chatterley Court' – Faraday Road

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

NEW LENTON: THE LENTON 'DRIVES' HMO ACTION ZONE



HARRINGTON DRIVE
6 Tenants
Rent £1,560 pm



ROLLESTON DRIVE
6 Tenants
Rent £1,632 pm

HARLAXTON DRIVE
8 Tenants
Rent £2,304 pm

[advertised on internet]

IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICE

BACKGROUND

A decision was taken in March 2007 to create three Action Zones in the City which would be the focus of three implementation teams. The full justification for the creation of these areas is set out in a report submitted to Nottingham City Council's Executive Board on 20 March 2007, and it is not the purpose of this document to repeat that information. One of the areas is known as the 'Drives'.

CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The 'Drives' is an area of just under 650 dwellings, predominantly dating from the inter war period (1919-1939) with some more modern (post-1945) 'infill' development. The character of the area is predominantly 'suburban' in terms of its architectural style and layout, with designs reflecting styles characteristic of the period of construction, housing that would have been built for what might best be termed 'single unit family' accommodation.

The majority of properties were originally two storey, but there are some that are three storey, and a reasonable number have had basements and roof spaces converted to increase occupancy/bed spaces in recent years. It is important to recognise that the 'Drives' is **NOT** an area with the highest percentage of private rented dwellings in Nottingham. Neither is it the most 'studentified' neighbourhood in the City.

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING NEW LENTON: THE 'DRIVES' HMO ACTION ZONE

IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICE KEY FACTS

The HMO implementation team working in the area have carried out intensive action in the zone for about one year. It is possible therefore to provide data about the nature of the properties, their tenure and occupation, some of which is not available for other neighbourhoods included in this tour.

PROFILE OF THE LENTON 'DRIVES'

TENURE	NUMBER OF PROPERTIES	PERCENTAGE	NOTTINGHAM PERCENTAGE (2001 CENSUS)	ENGLISH PERCENTAGE (2001 CENSUS)
Private Rented	442	69%	13%	9%
Owner Occupied	178	28%	50%	69%
Social Housing	22	3%	33%	19%
Other	0	0%	4%	3%
Total	642	100%	100%	100%

- ❶ Of the **442** dwellings in the private rented sector almost all are rented as shared dwellings.
- ❷ Over **400** of those are rented by students, the majority of the remainder are rented by other young people sharing the accommodation with common facilities.
- ❸ **91** dwellings meet the requirements for an HMO Licence. 90 applications have been submitted by property owners. In the case of 1 property, enforcement action has commenced following the failure of the owner to apply for a licence.

Action Zone staff have inspected many of the properties. There is evidence that a reasonable number have had occupancy levels reduced to avoid the requirement to obtain an HMO Licence. Of the **146** dwellings assessed as being potentially 'licensable' due to their size, occupancy levels meant that **91** required licenses.



Note: Loft conversion & basement windows



Note: Extension and Velux roof lights



Rear loft conversion – Harrington Drive May 2008

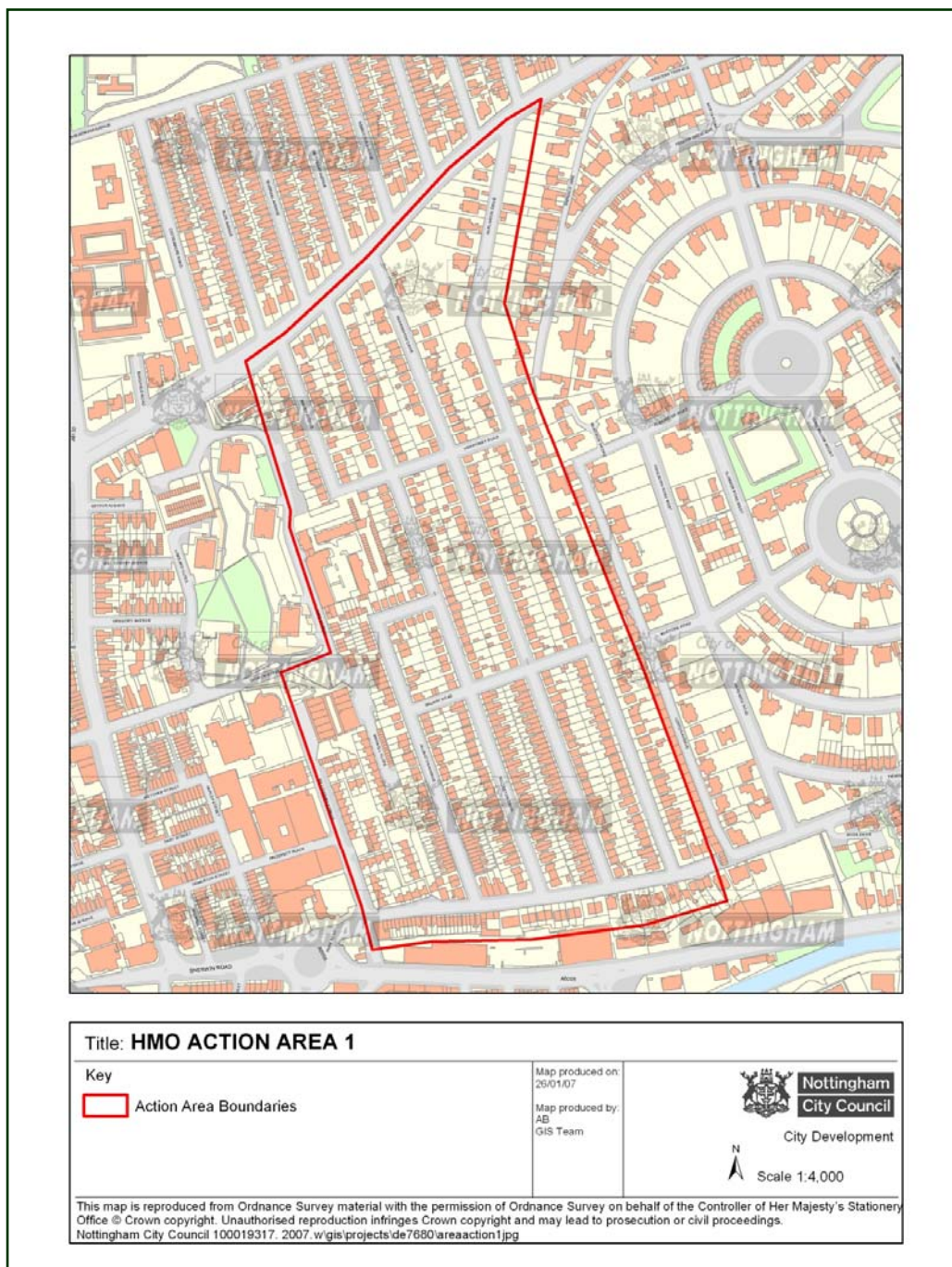
NOTE: The majority of these conversions do not appear to require planning permission. They increase the occupancy of the property and accelerate neighbourhood imbalance.

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

NEW LENTON: THE LENTON 'DRIVES' HMO ACTION ZONE

MAP OF THE 'DRIVES' HMO ACTION AREA



Report on the Lenton 'Drives' HMO Action Area prepared by
Dan Lucas
Research Officer
Nottingham City Council Housing Strategy Team.
May 2008

NOTE: '... The HMOs surrounding us have replaced once-pretty gardens with one- and two-storey extensions, stockade fencing, and we are overlooked by dormer windows and loft conversions. Parties in these back yards all night, most nights in better weather, cancel sleep. Dustbins, never moved, rubbish, discarded furniture, borrowed street signs are currently the view from my front window.' ...

'... Please, some-one out there, listen to all those distressed and miserable people in Nottingham, all suffering from these problems. Take control and sort out this mess — while we still have Nottingham as a city and not one huge campus.' ...

'... For a start — clear classification of HMOs and appropriate taxation of them is needed. Our elected leaders need to protect all our futures and prevent further loss and degradation of communities. ...'

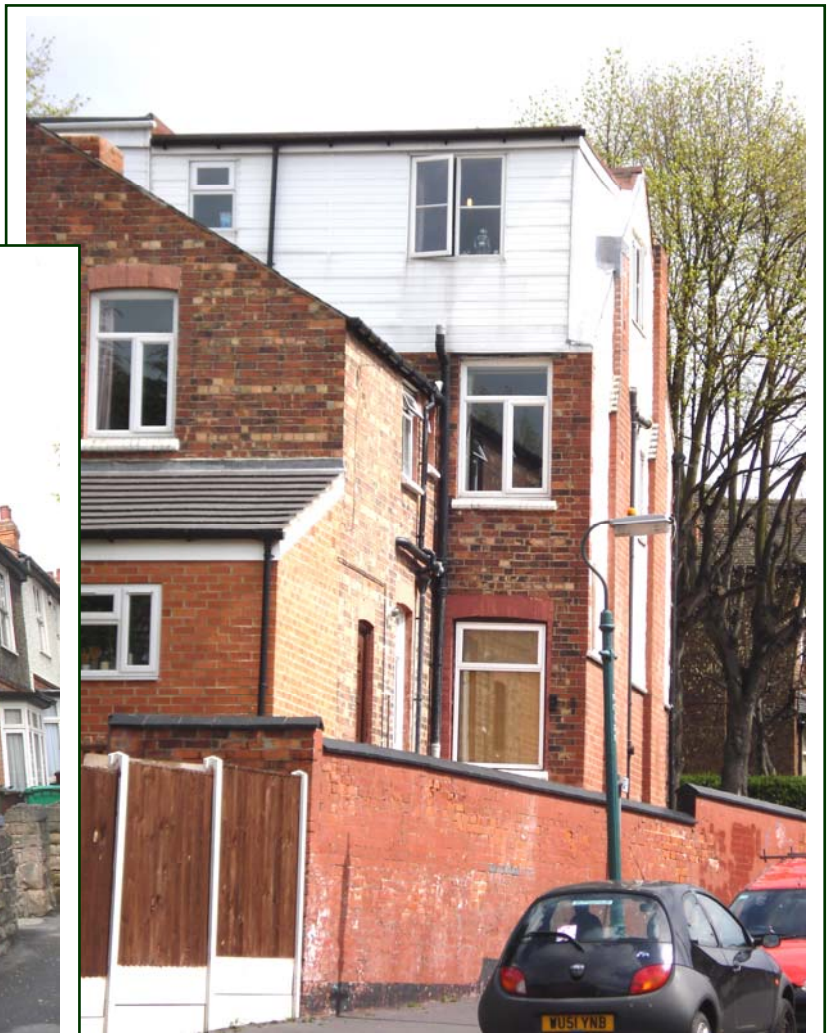
[Lenton 'Drives Resident: Nottingham Action Group Magazine, Summer 2005]

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING AROUND THE LENTON 'DRIVES' HMO ACTION ZONE



Harrington Drive

NOTE: Loft conversion in progress



Loft Conversion & Rear Extension

HARRINGTON DRIVE
5 Tenants
Rent £ 1,440 pm

ROLLESTON DRIVE
5 Tenants
Rent £1,340 pm

HARRINGTON DRIVE
5 Tenants
Rent £1,360 pm

(As advertised on the internet)



Harlaxton Drive

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING OLD LENTON



Old Lenton: War Memorial and Albert Ball Memorial Homes



Old Lenton: Sherwin Grove

NOTE: '... We've been exceedingly passionate about our cause over the years, but that has been interpreted, or misinterpreted, as anti student, and because we've been working away for such a long time resignation and depression have set in for many, and our family doctor could endorse that. Our area of Lenton is submerged, drowning in studentification.'

[BBC Radio Nottingham 'Groundswell' 2007]

'... Nothing normal happens in my area any more.'

[Comment by Old Lenton Resident, 2008]

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

OLD LENTON: SHERWIN ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD



Sherwin Road

Renovations at one of only a handful of non-HMOs in the neighbourhood

NOTE: The 1841 Census has details of two properties on 'Birch Lane' in Old Lenton which later became known as 'Sherwin Road'. It is likely that this is one of them.



'Cricket Practice' on Sherwin Road



Sherwin Grove



Sherwin Road & Sherwin Grove



Midland Avenue

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING ASPECTS OF OLD LENTON



Old Lenton: Bowling Green & Church



Old Lenton - Churchyard



Lenton Boulevard



Lenton Boulevard: July 2008



Old Lenton in Summer: Recreation Ground



**Old Lenton in Winter: Recreation Ground with
Lenton Flats in background**

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

LENTON GARDENS NEIGHBOURHOOD



Arnesby Road, Lenton Gardens

Arnesby Road, Ingham Grove, Swenson Avenue, Martinmass Close and Rathmines Close together form the Lenton Gardens Estate. The major part of the estate, built by Costain as an in-fill development, dates back to the early 1970's and was clearly designed to be a family estate with a mixture of three and four bedroom detached and semi-detached houses with garages and good-sized gardens. Parts of the estate are now dominated by HMOs.

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]



RATHMINES CLOSE

5 Tenants

Rent £1,400 pm

ARNESBY ROAD

7 Tenants

Rent £1,960 pm

SWENSON AVENUE

6 Tenants

Rent £1,344 pm

INGHAM GROVE

7 Tenants

Rent £1,960 pm

RATHMINES CLOSE

7 Tenants

Rent £2,100 pm

(as advertised on the internet)



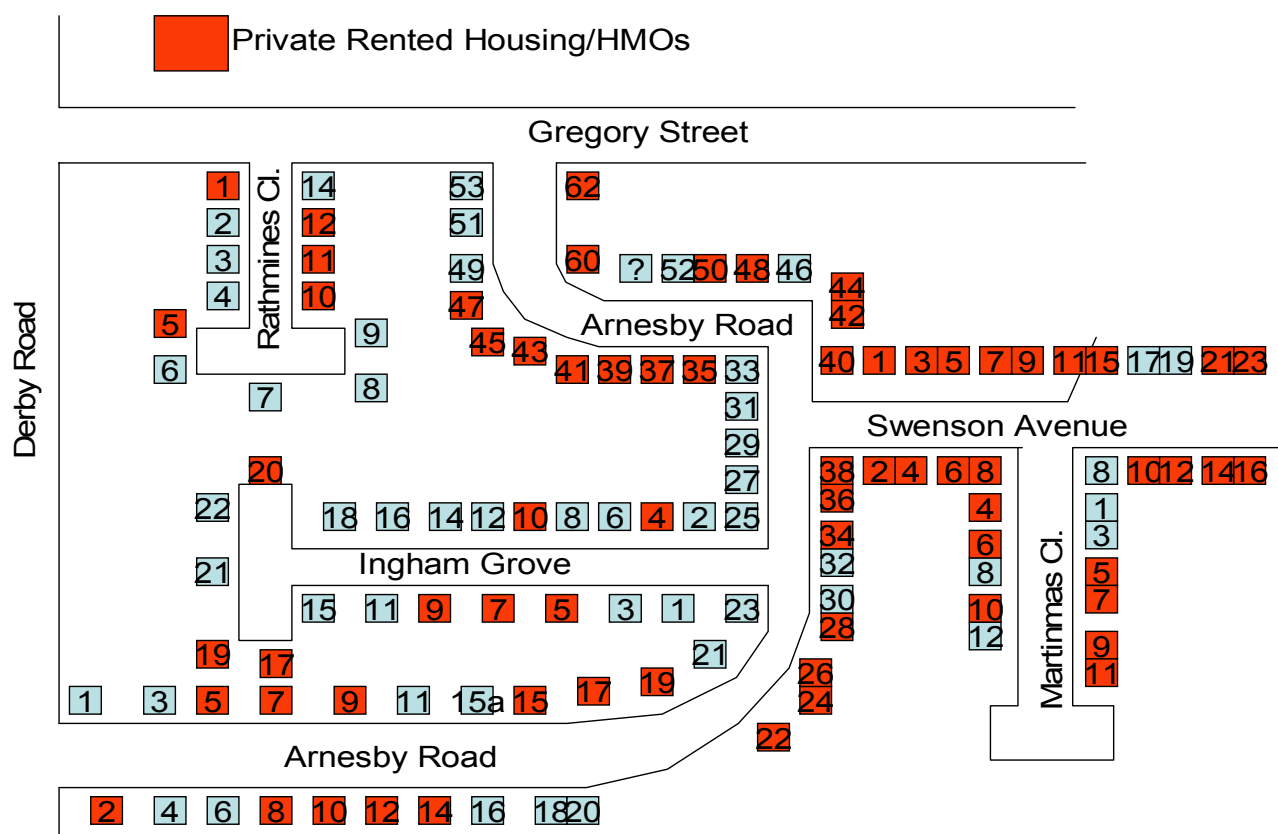
Arnesby Road, Lenton Gardens, May 2008

NOTE: Detached property advertised on the internet to rent to 7 student tenants, rent £1,876 pm

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

LENTON GARDENS NEIGHBOURHOOD



LENTON GARDENS ESTATE, MAY 2008

NOTE: The Nottingham Action Group on HMOs wishes to thank one of the residents of the Lenton Gardens Estate for producing the data for this map which, to the best of their – and our – knowledge, are accurate. However, if there are inaccuracies, please contact the Nottingham Action Group so that the data can be adjusted accordingly.

THE FEEL OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD HAS GONE

... There are 21 houses in our close, 8 of which are HMOs occupied by students.

We have a real fear of growing old in the neighbourhood as there are no younger families who can help out with little things like shopping. This does mean that residents will have to move out as they get older, making matters worse for those left.

It is difficult to establish any relationship with the students as they usually arrive in October and leave the following June to be replaced by new ones.

Having student neighbours means there is no-one to ask to look after the cat or water the plants when we are away.

There is only one family with children in the road, which is typical of the area. So local schools have closed and therefore it will be difficult for new families to ever re-populate the neighbourhood.

For long periods of the year the HMOs are empty and so the whole area is deserted, which is depressing for residents.

Some pubs and shops actually close when the students leave, which makes matters worse.

Maintenance on the HMOs is poor, which makes the area less attractive for those who live here permanently. This is particularly noticeable with front gardens. Many have cars parked on them.

As a known student area, crime increases and this makes residents feel more vulnerable themselves, especially when they see police cars frequently visiting properties.

The local pubs are now student venues. We've lost the community pub. It's a small thing, but it matters

There are approximately 40 students in our 8 HMOs. If only 20 have birthdays whilst they are resident, that's 20 parties. Late night music, drinking in the street, and early hours taxis to take them away.

If they celebrate in town, we get the taxis at 3.00 a.m. bringing them back.



Ingham Grove

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING LENTON GARDENS & NEIGHBOURHOOD

Disturbance during the night occurs two or three times a week. Often more as different houses go to town to the clubs on different nights

They tend to return in the early hours. When they do, no matter how considerate they are, they still laugh and shout, even for a few moments as they say their goodbyes. It wakes us up.

Student drinking is also intimidating. We cannot go for a walk later in the evening if there is student drinking in the area. Young drunks can be aggressive to passers by.

The feel of the neighbourhood has gone and the remaining residents dread another house coming up for sale. It invariably means another buy-to-let property.

REMAINING RESIDENTS WILL HAVE TO MOVE OUT!

[Thoughts of a Lenton Gardens Resident, reproduced from the Nottingham Action Group on HMOs magazine, Summer-Autumn 2006]



Arnesby Road



Arnesby Road



Arnesby Road



Lenton Manor



Priory Court

NOTE: Two town houses, each advertised on the internet to let to 4 student tenants, both at a rent of £1024 pm

ARNESBY ROAD
7 Tenants
Rent £1,960 pm

INGHAM GROVE
7 Tenants
Rent £1,960 pm

(advertised on internet)

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING LENTON GARDENS NEIGHBOURHOOD & HILLSIDE SHOPS



'Local Shops'

NOTE: These include 4 take-aways, a student letting agency and newsagent/off-licence which no longer delivers newspapers.



'Local Pub'

NOTE: This pub now caters for 'passing trade'. Extended opening hours and non-compliance with noise restrictions resulted in enforcement action by the City's Noise Pollution Unit which, for a short time, reduced nuisance caused to neighbours.



Arnesby Road

NOTE: Advertised on the internet to rent to 4 students at £992 pm



Arnesby Road

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING HILLSIDE & DERBY ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD



Derby Road & Lenton Lodge

The Hillside neighbourhood is characterized by traditional, well-built houses with large gardens and plenty of space. It lies alongside Derby Road, the boundary between Lenton and Wollaton Park. The oldest property, 'Lyndale House' (now an HMO), was converted into a single dwelling from two cottages used by the Wollaton Hall estate gamekeepers. However, the other houses all date from the 1920's. The University of Nottingham's award-winning University Park campus and its newer Jubilee Campus are less than ¼ mile away. In the last 10 or so years only 2 properties to have come up for sale have stayed in family use. The remainder are now HMOs. The rapidity of the change to 'student area' is reflected in the fact that, over a period of some 18 months, 2002-2004, the neighbourhood lost 5 of its houses to the buy-to-let student/HMO market.

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]



Hillside



Hillside



'Lyndale House', Hillside/Derby Road



Hillside

NOTE: Former River Leen & Nottingham Canal Basin



Hillside

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

HMOs: DERBY ROAD & HILLSIDE NEIGHBOURHOOD



Derby Road

NOTE: 7 tenants. Side dormer and rear velux loft extensions. Application submitted for HMO licence.



Derby Road

NOTE: 8 tenants. Two storey. No HMO licence needed. Rent £2,176 pm (advertised on internet)



Derby Road

NOTE: 6 tenants. Loft conversion. Application submitted for HMO licence



Derby Road

NOTE: 7 tenants, garage demolished & rebuilt as kitchen-living area. Former kitchen now 7th tenant bed-study. Part of porch converted to 2nd WC. Rent £1,820 pm (advertised on internet)



Derby Road

NOTE: 7 tenants garage extended & converted to 2 study-bedrooms. Lounge changed to kitchen/living area. Former kitchen now bed-study. Rent £2,128 pm (advertised on internet)



Derby Road

NOTE: Bought by student's parents. Now for sale (as an investment opportunity)

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING HILLSIDE & DERBY ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD



Family Home: Derby Road



Family Home: Derby Road



HMO: Derby Road



HMO: Derby Road

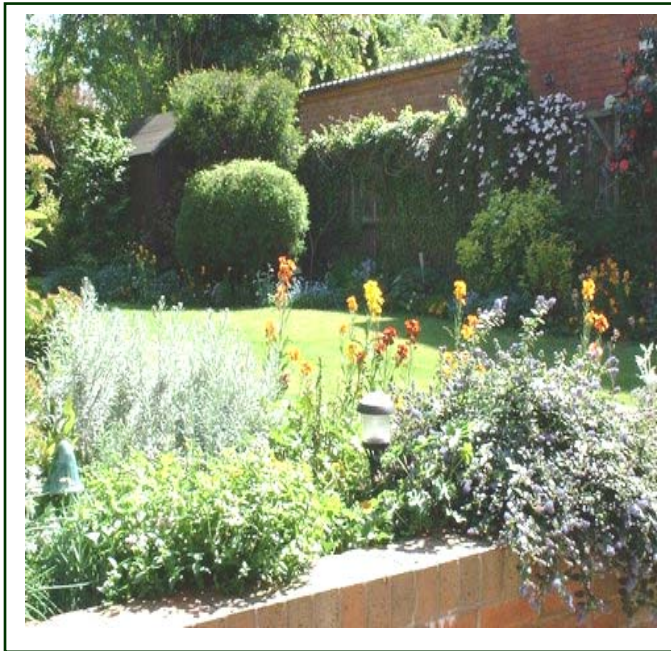


Family Home: Derby Road



HMO: Derby Road

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING HILLSIDE & DERBY ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD 'A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE'



In 1981 we moved into our present home on Derby Road.

For a good time beforehand we had been searching for a traditional, well-built family house. It was wonderful when we secured our property in what, then, was a residential oasis. A good place to live.

It was made even more wonderful because, as a boy, I had travelled past these beautiful, established houses, admired them and the area, and dreamt of one day, perhaps, owning one.

The surrounding properties were all family dwellings. Some of the families had children of much the same age as our own. Friendships formed very quickly and it was indeed very enjoyable to live here.

It was a time when we would frequently meet up with our neighbours and socialize. There was a strong feeling of community and the neighbourhood had a pleasant ambience.

Properties were well maintained, gardens well cared for and well stocked, and it felt good to be living here.

Changes began to happen when a house not far away from where we live was sold to a couple who implied that they had bought it for their own use.

How wrong!

It is now, and has been for six years or so, a student dwelling.

This was just the tip of the iceberg. Within the next two years another three houses, again within close proximity to our home, had been turned into student accommodation.

During the last five years, more residents have moved because of the ever increasing student population in the area, and the landlords have moved in.

What happens when they do move in is now routine.

Houses are converted to make space for the maximum number of occupants possible.

Ugly 'boxes' with windows have been put into roofs.

Garages have been converted into bed-sits.

Trees have been chopped down and gardens flattened to make space for cars. Sometimes that space has been hard-cored. More often it has been left to become a weed-infested, mud patch.

All of this is then made worse by the huge amounts of litter, rubbish and noise created by the landlords and their tenants.

What was not so long ago a nice place to live is degenerating rapidly into squalor.

Out of the original sixteen family-owned homes, there are only six that remain. The rest have been so butchered that they are almost beyond restoration as family homes.

When the government is looking to build thousands of new family homes because of the housing shortage, where is the logic in filling these homes with temporary, student residents?

Both universities are now responding by supporting the building of student apartments. Unfortunately, it is years too late.

The environmental and social damage have been done.

This was a superb gateway to the City, one that Nottingham should have been proud of.

It is now no more than a litter strewn, car infested, run down eye sore.

Is this the price we have to pay for education?

[A Hillside-Derby Road Speaking – reproduced from the Nottingham Action Group magazine, Summer 2006]



BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING WOLLATON PARK ESTATE NEIGHBOURHOOD THE 'CRANE' BUNGALOWS



Orston Drive, Wollaton Park Estate, Spring 2008

'There's one chap I'm talking about that's bought 3 houses. He's made a bungalow which was a beautiful little bungalow, into four bedrooms and he comes in every now and again and he buys another house on the estate and he's put that into four bedrooms – now law, no legislation, no government intervention, no council coming to see – and he's just ruined the neighbourhood.'

[Enoch Rollo, Resident of the Wollaton Park Estate, BBC Radio Nottingham 'Groundswell' Debate, May 2004]

NOTE: This property is advertised on the internet to rent to 6 student tenants at a rental of £1,872 pm

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]

In 1924 the City Council bought Wollaton Hall and its Deer Park for the sum of £200,000. By mid-1925 it had been decided that a portion of the parkland surrounding the Hall was going to be given over for housing. The City Council earmarked a site at the eastern edge of the Park for this purpose. The 'Crane' houses and bungalows (so called because the non-traditional construction method using a steel-based structure was devised by Cllr. William Crane) are part of that development. (See the Lenton Local History Society's website at: www.lentontimes.co.uk).

Today, the estate is a mix of council-owned, privately rented and owner-occupied properties. In 2001 there were about a dozen student households in the estate. By 2005 there were more than 50.

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]



Orston Drive, Wollaton Park Estate, Spring 2006

'... One of the bungalows has been having a total "re-make" ... roof tiles removed ... walls taken out. Days of noise and dirt. ... We've been told that at least 8 students will occupy it. This must be an exaggeration!'. '... It is a great pity as this area was once very pleasant and suitable for small families ... also good for disabled people.'

[Some comments from a resident of the Wollaton Park Estate, Nottingham Action Group Magazine, Summer 2005]

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING AROUND THE WOLLATON PARK ESTATE NEIGHBOURHOOD



HARBY DRIVE
5 Tenants
Rent £1,280 pm

HAWTON CRESCENT
5 Tenants
Rent £1,260 pm

TOSTON DRIVE
5 Tenants
Rent £1,300 pm

(As advertised on the internet)

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

WOLLATON PARK: CHARNOCK AVENUE

CHARNOCK AVENUE

6 Tenants

Rent £1,872 pm

(As advertised on the internet)



NOTE: There are 53 properties on Charnock Avenue. Of these 16 are either 'To Let' or have already been let.

[Information given to the Nottingham Action Group on HMOs by a resident, May, 2008]

BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & HMOs: A FUTURE?

In June, 2007 representatives from Nottingham City Council had a useful meeting at the Department for Communities & Local Government with senior Civil Servants. Following on from this, Graham Allen, MP for Nottingham North arranged for a delegation from Nottingham to meet with Iain Wright MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Planning on Tuesday, 5 February, 2008. Present at the meeting were: Graham Allen MP, Alan Simpson MP for Nottingham South, Councillor Dave Trimble, Shane Neville (Planning) Mike Cole (Student Strategy), Maya Fletcher (NAG) & Melanie Futer (University of Nottingham). Top of the agenda was the urgent need for Government to enact changes to planning legislation (specifically to the Use Classes Order) which will require people who want to change a family home into an HMO to apply for permission to do so. It was at this meeting that the Minister accepted invitations from Dave Trimble and Maya Fletcher to come to Nottingham and visit our neighbourhoods. The following are extracts from a presentation made to the Minister on that day.

[Nottingham Action Group on HMOs]

Nottingham City Council

Sustainable Communities & HMOs: A Future?

Tuesday 5th February 2008

Nottingham City Council



HMOs & Studentification:

"If the great majority of the population changes from one year to the next, the number of settled, long-term residents is too few to sustain, try as people will, the community organisations and sense of neighbourhood – the social capital, as it is called in the academic jargon – that makes our communities work."

John Denham MP, House of Commons, 5th June 2007



Growth in Student Numbers:

1991: 18,000
2006: 45,000

- Dunkirk & Lenton Ward
— More than 50% students
- Wollaton East & Lenton Abbey Ward
— More than 50% students
- Radford & Park Ward
— More than 30% students
- Arboretum Ward
— More than 30% students
- Some streets
— More than 90% students



Equals Unbalanced Communities



Adverse Impact on Local Communities:

- Transient populations
- Decline in local facilities
- Established residents left feeling
— isolated & alienated
- Environmental issues
- Some services over-whelmed
— Cleansing, Policing, Housing, Planning
- others under-whelmed
— Schools



"Ghettos and Ghost Towns" — A national as well as a Nottingham problem



Use Classes Order: Class C3, dwelling house

- Part (a) Family residence
- Part (b) Household, up to 6 residents living communally (including students)
- Class C3, structured in the 1980s to cater for "Care in the Community"



Nottingham's Response: Building Balanced Communities

- Key policy in Nottingham Local Plan
- Nottingham: Building Balanced Communities SPD
- Appointment of Student Strategy Manager
- Comprehensive Student Housing Action Plan
- Working with partners

But changes in legislation will help achieve more



Nottingham's SPD

Key Objectives:

- Provision of purpose designed student accommodation
— good progress
- Improve physical quality of student housing
— new licensing regime
- Restrict % of further student housing in areas of concentration
— limited planning powers through Use Classes Order.

A change in planning legislation will support these objectives



Possible Changes to Class C3:

- Alter Part (b) to:
 - Reduce number of residents
Community care problems
 - Exclude students
Human Rights issues
- New Part (c): HMOs have a distinct land use with different characteristics from other house types
Not discriminatory
Flexibility to deal with different housing needs & markets
Legislation already enacted in Northern Ireland

Need to update 1980's legislation



BALANCED COMMUNITIES: HMOs & STUDENT HOUSING

A LETTER TO THE MINISTER

from

THE NOTTINGHAM ACTION GROUP ON HMOs

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Nottingham Action Group on HMOs I am really happy to see you here today, to show you some of the areas we live in, and to make good the offer of sharing some hospitality with us I made in February.

In the Summer 2005 issue of the NAG magazine, we published a plea from Councillor Trimble: *Please, please Minister give local communities and their local representatives the tools to do the job ...!*

I can only echo those sentiments. The very first project the NAG became involved in was what became the Housing Act 2004. The Lenton 'Drives' Action Zone is an excellent example of 'good practice' that actually produces tangible results. It would not have been possible without the tools provided by the Act.

We now need new planning tools, principally a change to the Use Classes Order which recognizes that HMOs are indeed a different and distinct land use from other dwelling houses. This is vital if we are to have any chance at all of preventing further increases in concentrations of HMOs in neighbourhoods where imbalance is already a fact of life, and, even more so, preventing other neighbourhoods from becoming unbalanced.

I was invited to the recent DCLG Seminar on HMOs and I recognize the reluctance by DCLG to bring in a piece of legislation which may have, as it has been put, 'unintended consequences'. However, I do not think that means any of us can afford to do nothing.

Today, you have visited our neighbourhoods and met some of us. My neighbours and I are living with the unintended consequences of a policy that, by and large, we support – the expansion in Higher Education – and I hope you understand why we feel so passionate about the need to prevent further erosion of those of our neighbourhoods where imbalance is already a fact of life. And, over and above that, why we believe it is important to protect other neighbourhoods from going the same way.

Once there is a commitment to UCO change, then will be the time to explore the different ways of doing it and avoiding those unintended consequences.

No doubt 'the Devil will be in the detail', but we feel that leaving things as they are is not an option for us. We very much hope Government will agree with that sentiment.

Meanwhile, I would like to leave you with some thoughts from some-one who has become my friend over the last few years.

The DVD of the recent BBC East Midlands 'Inside Out' programme and the CD of the February 2007 BBC Radio Nottingham 'Groundswell' programme will, I hope, add a few more.

Nottingham Action Group on HMOs
May, 2008

DIARY OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN

24 JULY 2007

12.40 am: Smashing wood, glass, shouting, screaming, swearing and drinking. I cannot make myself heard either at the front door or the back garden. I have to go back home, get a torch and flash it before I am noticed. I told them I was telephoning the university, and I also have called the 915-2020 anti social behaviour hotline. The number I have for the landlord (mobile) is not being answered. This is what they were doing at the end of last term, plus a bonfire.

I have rung: the university, the university liaison officer, local councillors, 24-hour anti social behaviour hotline: 24-hour noise pollution number, police, landlord.

29 to 31 JULY 2007

11.30 p.m.: Very loud, very noisy ... so I asked if they would be a little quieter.

12.30 a.m.: I go round and tell them I have had two telephone calls from other neighbours about the noise ... children awake, early morning shift worker can't sleep ... neither can I.

12.45 a.m.: Bonfire in the back yard ... breaking up stuff (i.e. banging and bashing wood). It has got noisier as the night progresses ... and listening to them from my bedroom, they seem to think it is hilarious they are getting complaints and it is only 12.30 am.

I am only just reducing the strength of anti-depressants from last year ... I am not ready for this. [See note below]

1.55 a.m.: Smashing of stuff for the bonfire has started again.

2.35 a.m.: Smashing stuff again. I may as well get up. There is no point going round again as they only become more noisy and mocking.

3.10 a.m.: They must be putting paper on the bonfire as charred paper is coming through my window.

3.34 a.m.: I go downstairs and decide to stay down ... I haven't been to sleep yet.

4.06 a.m.: Quiet at last, but I am too stressed to sleep, so I will do things like my ironing.

NO SLEEP AT ALL – I AM SHATTERED

NOTE: Similar, intermittent low-level anti-social behaviour problems had been experienced over a prolonged period with another neighbouring HMOs whose tenants, after two years in the property, graduated a year ago.

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