

## **Renewal of Selective Licensing in the Edgware Ward**

Under the Housing Act 2004, Local Authorities were allowed to designate areas for Selective Licensing. This was brought into certain wards within Harrow with the intent that all private rented properties be brought up to a required standard within a specific area known for poor housing. When first introduced in Edgware, it has helped improve the management and property standards thus reducing antisocial behaviour.

In the previous 5 years we have encouraged private rented landlords to improve safety and management of their properties and to deal with antisocial behaviour, which has helped improve living standards and improve areas of low demand. We want to build on the good work the initial scheme has provided, to ensure that those properties that have been hidden previously become at the forefront and deemed safe to occupy.

We are currently working in partnership with the community and internal and external partners, but sometimes due to lack of information about ownership and tenure of properties, the problems raised are taking longer to resolve. We believe that with the renewal of selective licensing, we can build on our successes and continue to efficiently tackle the problems.

We want to continue the good work that the previous regime started, and wish to have a more enforcement led approach to those Landlords unwilling to engage with the Council, and also continue to place direct monitoring responsibility on landlords and managing agents, who are able in some respects to react swifter than enforcement agencies.

We will continue to monitor to ensure all the licensing conditions are being met. Offences of non-licensing or breaching conditions placed on a licence may result in Prosecution or a Civil Penalty of a maximum £30,000.

## **Criteria & justification to continue with Selective Licensing**

### **High Proportion of Property in the Rented Sector**

The 2018-19 English Housing Survey (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2018-to-2019-headline-report>) shows that nationally the sector remains at around 19.9% of the overall stock, with social housing being 16.8% and owner occupied at 63.3%. This is a slight increase in the private rented since the Government introduced the latest Selective Licensing in the Private Rented Guide for Local Authorities (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/selective-licensing-in-the-private-rented-sector-a-guide-for-local-authorities>)

In 2013 data, the rented sector in Edgware accounted for 24.3% of the Ward property sector. While no new census has been conducted since this time, it is a safe assumption that this figure will have decreased, especially as the population in the Ward has actually increased in this time meaning the likelihood of more rented accommodation / Houses in Multiple Occupation in existence.

Additionally, nationally the number of households in the private rented sector in the UK increased from 2.8 million in 2007 to 4.5 million in 2017, an increase of 1.7 million (63%) households. Therefore this would support the belief rented accommodation across the board has increased, especially in an area such as Edgware.

Therefore this criteria is met in terms of renewal of the scheme in this area

### **Low Housing Demand**

This is not applicable to the Edgware Ward

### **Significant and persistent problem caused by ASB**

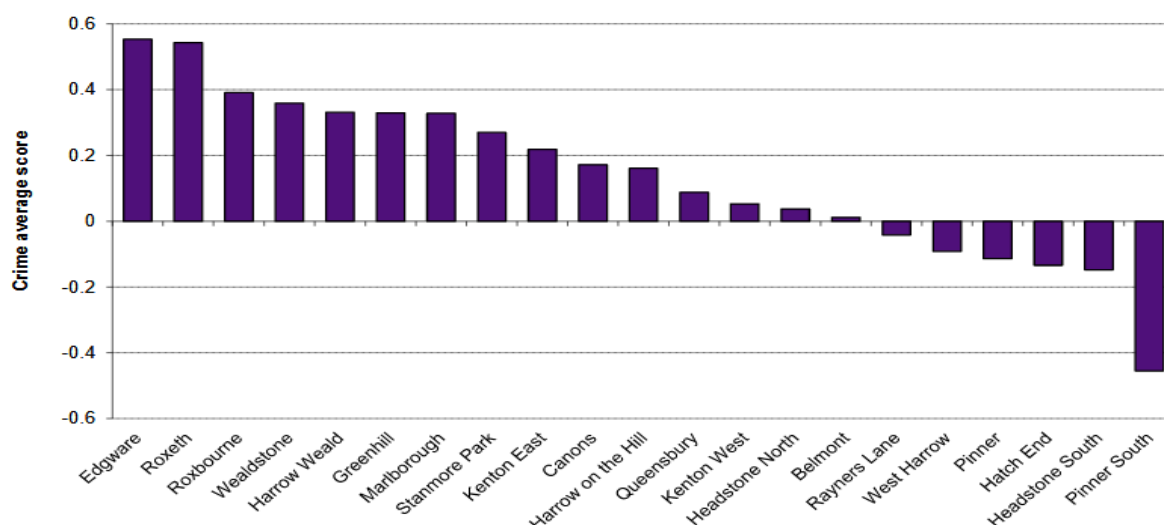
#### **High levels of crime**

In 2014/15, the crime rate for Edgware stood at 52.6 per 1000 population, compared to the Borough average of 50.3. In comparison, the neighbouring ward of Burnt Oak Ward (Barnet) was 68.5 per 1000 population. At this point, the crime by ward was measured at just under 0.6 for 2015:

### Crime by ward

Source: CLG, Indices of Deprivation 2015, Crown Copyright

Note: Ward level data has been calculated from LSOA average crime scores

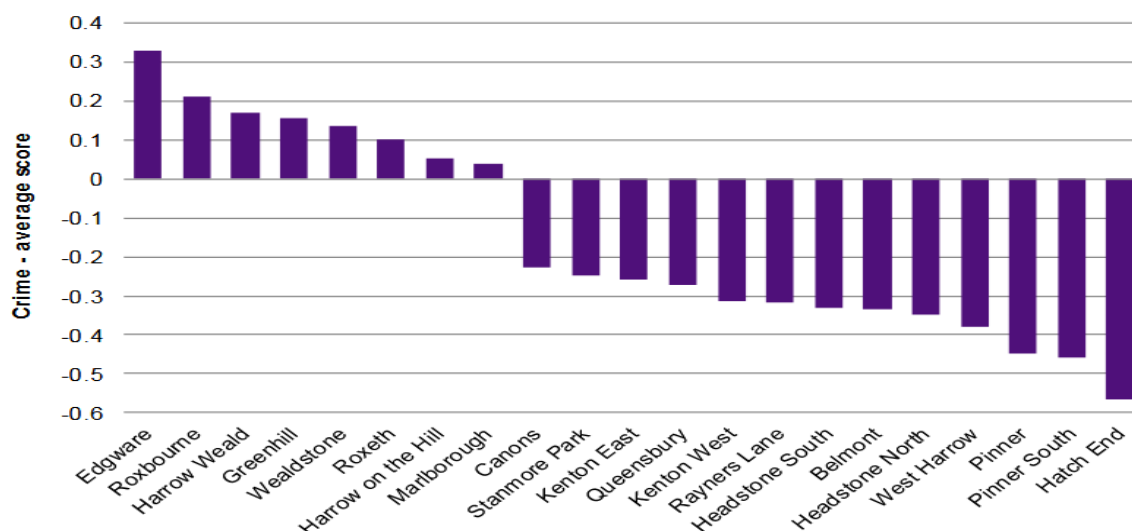


In 2019, this has reduced to just over 0.3 (see below) and, while still the worse ward, there is a clear improvement but needs to be on going to ensure it reduces further especially as ASB continues to be the main aspect and one that can be addressed under Selective Licensing

### Crime by ward

Source: MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation 2019

Note: Ward level data has been calculated from LSOA population-weighted average scores

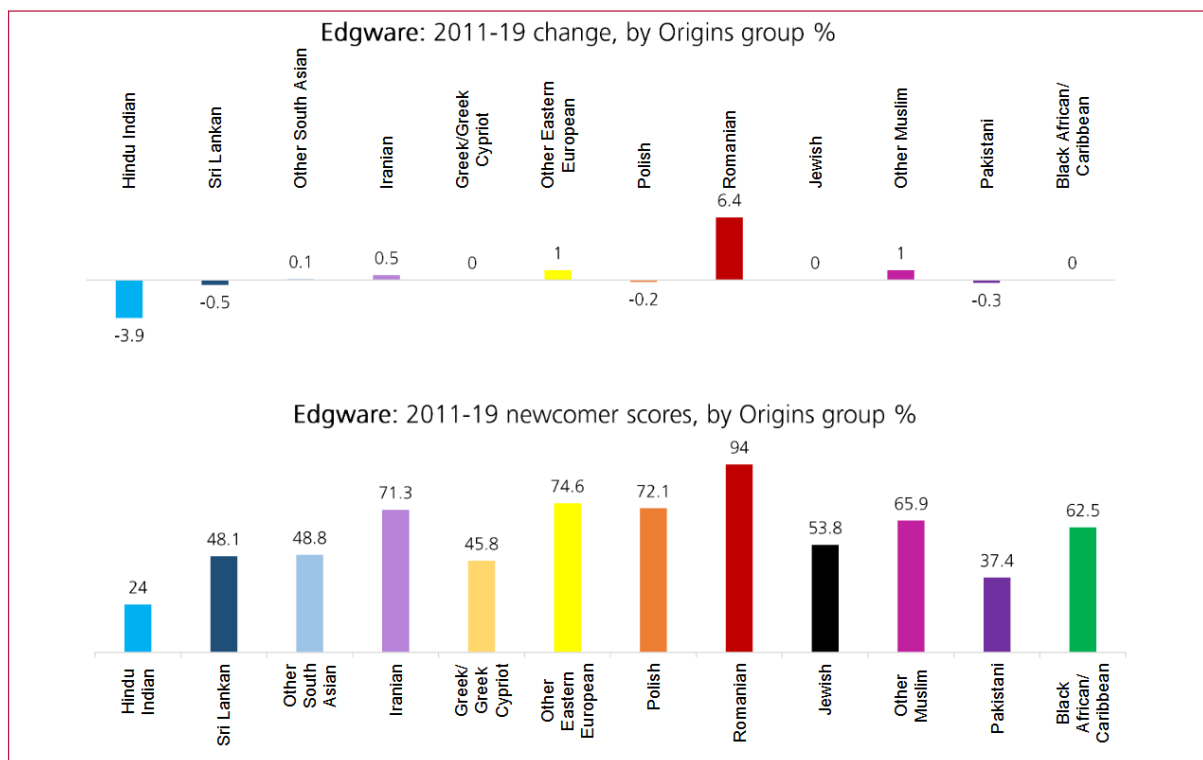


In terms of ASB, comparison of like for like results for the first quarter of each year (Edgware delegation came in December 2015), shows that levels increased but then as the scheme started to have effect, begin to lower. Using Burnt Oak, the neighbouring Borough with a similar make up to Edgware, Edgware saw a an average decrease of 5.4% in ASB since 2015 compared to an average increase 10.4% in Burnt Oak.

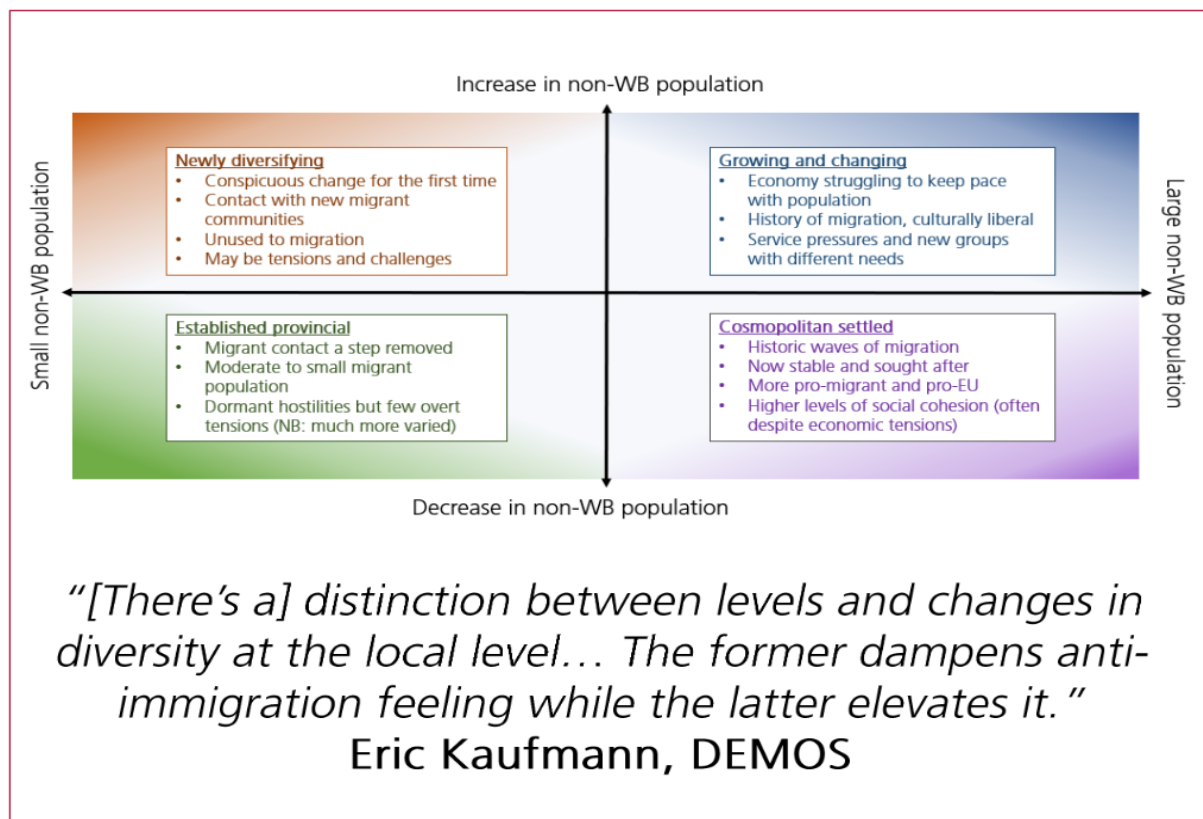
But, while this is a positive, ASB still remains the number one complaint to Police in the ward and shows high levels that need addressing.

## Transient Population

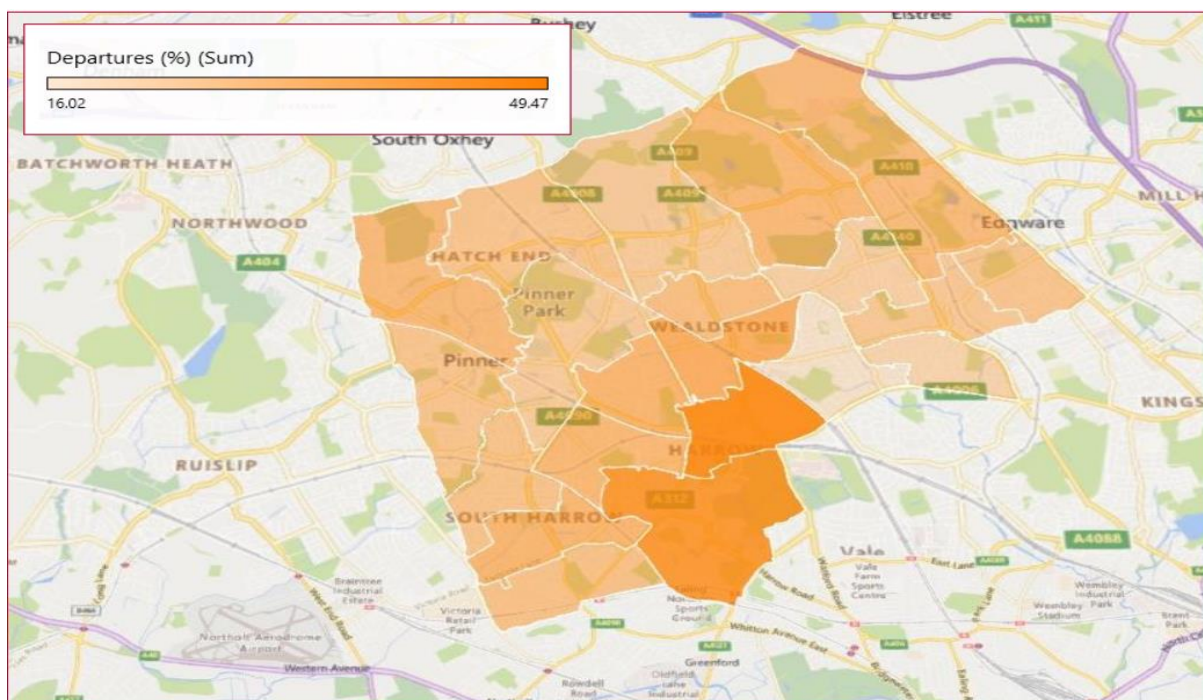
Since 2011 to 2019, the London Borough of Harrow has seen an 11% increase in the population, being the UK's 9<sup>th</sup> highest rise. Edgware Ward has seen a 2,149 person increase, of which 752 were Romanian (6.4% increase compared to the Borough average of 3.1%). This is compared to Queensbury (1246 increase, 660 Romanians, being a 6.4% increase) and Kenton East (1998 increase, 600 Romanians, 5.5% increase). All 3 Wards now have a non-white British population of over 75% (compared to Borough average of 63%). Therefore the movement into Edgware, especially by non-white British population, continues to be high and this can be seen in the table below:



Research has shown that where there is a large non-white British Population, and this population increases, certain conclusions can be reached:



But Edgware has also seen a low level of departure churn across the Ward, meaning names that were associated with addresses in the Ward in 2011 are still in the majority in place.

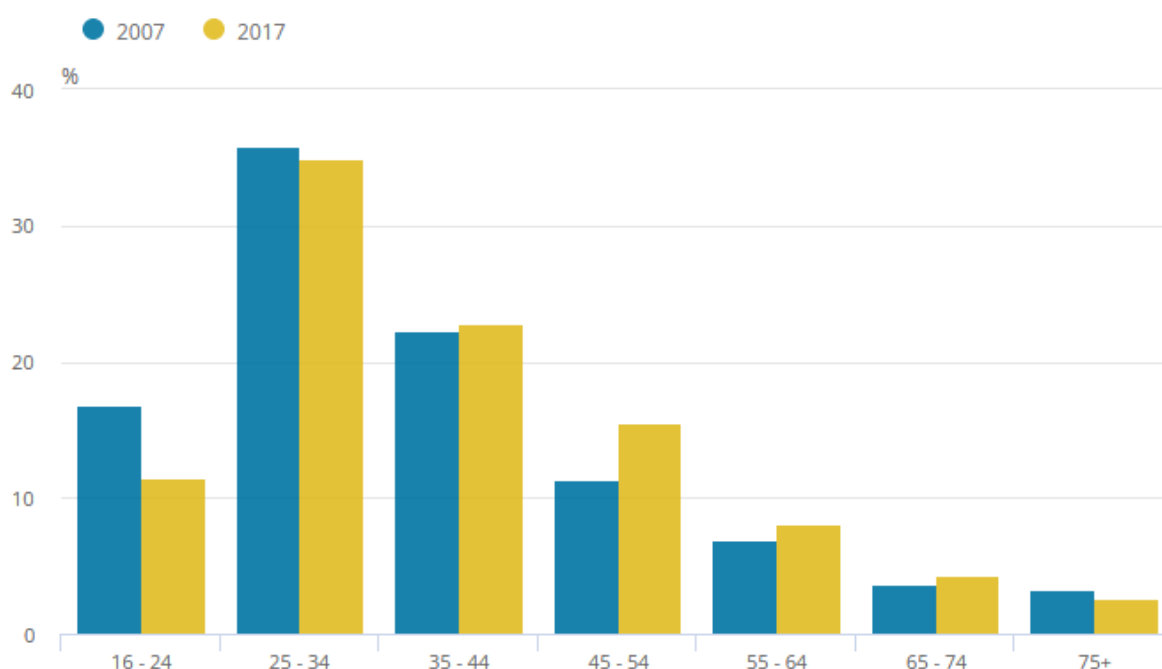


This would fall in line with the understanding that ownership of houses remains steady, but it is in fact the occupancy especially in the private rented market that is changing. This also ties in with the fact that In 2013 the population in Edgware was

11653, and in 2019 this had risen to 13,802, an increase of just over 18%, meaning increasing occupation in existing premises.

Additionally, the 2018 Ward Profile for Public Health (reference) shows that Edgware has a higher proportion of 0-34 year olds then the rest of the Borough, which tends to tie in with the national picture of those most likely to rent (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/articles/ukprivaterentedsector/2018>) :

### Private renting sector by age of household reference person, 2007 and 2017, UK



It is this population that Selective Licensing has aimed to address, being the rented sector, and the scheme to date has shown that Romanians (where the biggest population increase is) is a large proportion of the tenancy sector. Concern exists that while over 75% of potential selective premises are licensed, this increase in population increases the risk of sub letting, houses in multiple occupation, illegal conversions and beds in sheds scenarios. The last 5 years, by identifying the “compliant” premises, this allows any renewed scheme to concentrate on finding these premises and bringing them up to standard.

### Poor Property Conditions

Over 658 premises in Edgware have been licensed, each of them receiving a Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme inspection to assess against 29 risks. This ensures that the premises do not have any category 1 hazards, and are fit for standard. Additionally, all have been checked to ensure all fire precautions are in place including smoke detectors.

Overall this is estimated to be over 75% of private rented accommodation in the Ward as identified in the last census.

This means that any renewal will have the confidence that 75% of premises have the basic requirements in place, and action can be taken to work with them to improve areas such as ASB and waste. But also that resources can be targeted against the suspected premises to bring them up to standards, which current estimates show to be approximately 100 premises.

It should be noted that a lot of premises that were considered selective at the start have been found to be sub-let and fallen under the HMO licensing schemes. By having both selective and HMO licensing schemes running in parallel, it allows the Council to take a consistent approach with concerns the private rented market.