

**Questions from
the public
additional answer
for Q1
21/10/2025**

10 Gade Bank

I would like to provide an update to the above answer in response to several concerns escalated to me by residents regarding the HMO located at 10 Gade Bank, Croxley Green. Members will note several questions from the public regarding this matter on the agenda this evening as well as the motion from Cllrs Sian and Mitchell.

I believe it is important that we acknowledge the seriousness of these concerns and provide clarity to residents where possible. I hope my comments will offer reassurance to the residents about the action the council are taking.

Firstly, I would like to correct a typing error in a recent response to Ms. Angela Horan and would like this correction to be recorded in the minutes of this evening's meeting. The answer provided to Ms. Horan should state "six or less residents", rather than "less than six residents". On behalf of the Council, I apologise for any confusion that this may have caused.

The council acknowledge that a Full Closure Order, granted for a period of three months, was awarded by St Albans Magistrates' Court on Friday 17 October, following an application from Hertfordshire Constabulary. For clarity, the council's Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager has been working in partnership with the Police following the reports from residents of antisocial behaviour in the locality and provided a statement to the Police that was presented as part of the evidence package provided to the Court in support of the application for this Order. I thank the officers of the Council for their work.

The Council will continue to work closely with Hertfordshire Constabulary to monitor the property during and after the closure order period. The HMO licence application submitted to the council for this property is still pending consideration and no decision has been reached by Officers. For this reason, I am unable to provide any further comment on this, except to confirm that Officers will be considering the suitability of the management of the HMO as part of their decision on whether to grant a licence. Should any licence be granted Officers will consider the inclusion of robust conditions to ensure the proper management of the premises, with enforcement action taken swiftly if breached.

Residents and ward councillors will receive regular updates. A joint meeting between Council officers, the police, and ward councillors local representatives will be convened if possible, prior to the expiration of the existing or extended closure order, noting that the maximum time allowed for a closure order is six months.

I can confirm that the council commit to undertake the following actions which reflect the proposed motion on the agenda and thus commits this council as follows:

1. To explore the possible introduction an Additional Licensing Scheme for smaller HMOs (under six residents) under the Housing Act 2004, with a report and recommendations to the Policy and Resources committee by January 2026.

2. To review the introduction of an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights where appropriate, which if implemented would remove development rights in the whole or certain areas of the district. Also to investigate what other authorities do to regulate HMOs through the planning process ensuring HMOs are properly planned and managed.
3. Explore the options for a formal mechanism for resident input on HMO licence conditions, ensuring communities have a clear way to raise concerns and make representations, with a report and recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee by January 2026.
4. Improve transparency through a publicly accessible online register of all HMO licence applications and decisions, alongside clear communication channels for councillors, parish councils and residents. To ensure adherence to our data protection responsibilities, no personal details of the applicant can be published in addition to the address whilst the application is being considered.
5. The outcome of above assessments by the relevant Officers will be detailed within a report, containing their recommendation, that will be presented to a future Policy and Resources Committee as required under the Constitution to target January 2026.
6. Continue to strengthen partnership working with police, residents, and landlords to reduce antisocial behaviour and support effective enforcement.
7. While individual licence conditions are determined by officers acting in accordance with the Housing Act 2004, following the outcome of the reports presented to Policy and Resources Committee in January 2026, Officers will prepare a HMO Licencing Policy for consideration at a future committee for implementation by the council. This ensures transparency and democratic accountability while complying with legal obligations. Licence holders have a right of appeal to the First-tier Property Tribunal.

This therefore commits the Council as above and has been agreed with the movers of the motion at item 10 which it now supersedes.

