

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO CONSULATION ON VOLUNTARY CODE FOR THE DISPLAY OF TO LET BOARDS

The consultation ran between 12 June 2013 to 19 July 2013 and was carried out online and by sending questionnaires to estate agents known to operate within the City. A total of 20 responses were received. 15 of these were online and 5 sent completed questionnaires. Of the 15 online responses the majority of these were from local residents. The level of response is disappointing however the Council considers that the issue of to let boards on properties is something that requires further control and therefore intends to pursue the proposed voluntary code.

Code 1 To let boards to be removed within 14 days

Respondents were asked if they agreed to the proposal that boards should be removed within 14 days of a property being taken off the market. All 20 respondents agreed with the proposal as drafted and therefore no changes are proposed to it.

Code 2 All boards to be removed between September and January

Respondents were asked whether they agreed to the proposal of no boards being displayed between 1st September and 1st January the following year. 18 responses were received with 9 people agreeing to the suggestion and 9 disagreeing. One suggested an alternative of boards being removed between July and September; however the Council considers that this is too short a time for boards to not be displayed. At present it is understood that students begin to look for new properties in November however there would be nothing to stop the properties being advertised online or within the universities. It is more likely that students will look for properties on the Internet rather than walking around areas looking for to let boards and therefore the Council considers that the original proposal in the code should continue.

Code 3 Properties new to the market shall not have boards displayed until January of that year.

This was consulted upon in the same question as above. The concerns received relate to the displays of professional lettings which are covered by the next section of the code. No changes are therefore proposed.

Code 4 Signs can remain for unoccupied properties or properties available for professional lets.

This step is included to ensure that vacant properties can continue to be advertised until rented and that properties that are available to professional tenants can be advertised at anytime. No changes are proposed.

Code 5 Removal of let by signs

Respondents were asked if they agreed to the proposal that let by signs should not be displayed. 17 were in favour of this and 3 were not. This is already included in the advertisement regulations and therefore it will continue in the revised code.

Code 6 Boards to be mounted on buildings

Respondents were asked if they agreed with the proposal of installing boards flush to the front of the property. 10 were in favour and 8 did not agree with this. The Council considers that this proposal will improve the appearance of street scenes and considers that the objections to it are largely made by agents who wish to continue to advertise their business.

Code 7 Size of boards

Respondents were asked if they agreed to a restriction in the size of the boards that could be displayed. The suggested restriction was 50cm by 50 cm. 12 agreed with the proposal and 5 disagreed. Of the agents that responded the reasons given for disagreeing were costs associated with the redesign of boards to fit in with the proposal. The Council accepts that this may prove to be restrictive and that agents are unlikely to comply with it. Therefore the revised code restricts the size of boards to those currently allowed under the advertisement regulations.