

Appendix A

Empty Homes Strategy- Action Plan

Objective 1 – To collect and record relevant, accurate and current information about Empty Homes in the District						
Reference	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Start Date	Finish Date	Resource implications
1.1	Update and maintain an empty homes database containing information provided by Council Tax and collected through investigations, complaints and surveys.	Information provided by Council Tax, at least 4 times per year. Significant changes identified are reported back to Council Tax A managed list of all known long-term empty homes.	H	Information provided by Council Tax within 4 months of the strategy being adopted.	Database created within 12 months of the strategy being adopted, with ongoing updates.	Council Tax to provide info, Env Health to investigate and integrate database.
1.2	Council Tax Team, in partnership with an external company, will carry out an empty homes canvass on an annual basis. This is part of a county-wide procurement.	Reduction in recorded empty homes within the district and to maintain Council Tax records.	M	Canvass commences in June of each year	Canvass is completed by the end of September of each year, prior to setting the Tax Base.	Council Tax works with the external company to provide data in order to carry out the canvass process.

Objective 2 – To raise awareness of Empty Homes in the District and promote the Strategy						
Reference	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Start Date	Finish Date	Resource implications
2.1	Create a dedicated web page and electronic form, for empty homes information and reporting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategy and information provided on Council website 2. On-line form enables reporting of problematic empty homes 	L	Strategy published on website within 3 months of its adoption.	E-form and current information on website within 2 years of strategy adoption	Availability of Web team and Env Health to create and update, and needs ongoing resource to respond to reports
2.2	Promote the Strategy within the Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation/distribution of information to Councillors and managers. 2. Empty Homes Strategy implications considered when Council Tax charging policy is reviewed. 3. Corporate prioritisation/working group established and priority properties list agreed. 	M	Within 6 months of strategy adoption	Within Year 1 of strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Councillor consultation during adoption process. Staff Briefing session. 2. Consultation for any Council Tax charging review. 3. Corporate participation in working group.
2.3	Promote the Strategy within the community	One publicity event or local press article publicising action on empty homes each year (to coincide with the national Empty Homes Action Week)	L	Annual target	Annual target	Liaise with Communications Team

Objective 3 – Return empty homes back into use through a range of measures						
Reference	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Start Date	Finish Date	Resource implications
3.1	Design and produce an empty homes procedure with standard template letters	Properties identified on the list can be investigated and actioned	H	Within 6 months of strategy adoption	Created within Year 1.	Procedure to evolve as Env Health experience gained
3.2	Focused action based on annual prioritisation process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial contact and investigation into 95% of homes empty for more than six months 2. Further investigation into those empty for two or more years, or problematic – annual contact with 95% of known owners 	M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial contact within 6 months of becoming aware of long-term empty home 2. Annual 	Annual target	Target is dependent upon adoption of strategy and available resource
3.3	Implement this strategy to tackle individual empty homes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 1 empty home brought back into use each year as a result of Council intervention 2. In addition, from Year 3 of the strategy, at least 1 long term or 	M	Annual targets		Action and targets are dependent upon level of available resource

		problematic empty brought back into use				
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