EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY
2017 - 2022
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Anglesey, there are currently around 840 homes which have been empty for six months or more, with 61% empty over two years. These “long term” empty properties are the main focus of this strategy.

Over the past four years 389 empty homes have been returned to use, due in no small part to the work of the Empty Homes Service, however, the waste of good housing and blight associated with empty homes remains.

There are also around 380 applications on Isle of Anglesey County Council’s waiting list with a need for social housing, ably demonstrating the wasted resource that empty homes represent and the role they have in meeting need.

The introduction of the Houses into Homes loan scheme by the Welsh Government to support the renovation of existing empty properties or the conversion of redundant commercial buildings added a new dimension to Councils for dealing with empty properties. Continued investment in the scheme demonstrates the recognition and value placed by the Welsh Government in the role empty homes returned to use have in meeting housing need not only in the social and private rented sector but also affordable homes to buy.

In Anglesey alone 55 properties have undergone or are undergoing renovation/conversion through the Houses into Homes loan scheme. Through conversion of redundant commercial buildings, 29 additional units of accommodation have been created in the private rented sector. These provide additional revenue to the Council through the Council Tax collected. By working with the landlords and the Housing Options Team, many of these properties have been let at affordable rents to persons who have approached the Council for social housing.

With the aid of a renovation grant, 75 first time buyers in Anglesey have been able to get their foot on the first rung of the housing market by purchasing a low cost, long term empty property in need of renovation.

Working in partnership with Registered Social Landlords, 12 long term empty properties have been purchased through social housing grant subsidy, thus increasing the availability of social housing on the Island. More recently the Council has been purchasing long term empty ex council houses in order to return them to their social housing stock.

The Council is also piloting a new scheme involving the purchase of an empty property in need of renovation. The property is to be renovated by the Council and sold as an affordable home on a shared equity basis.

When dealing with empty property owners, a voluntary way forward through negotiation and persuasion is always preferred. Advice, assistance and incentives reduce demand on the Council’s resources and the need for enforcement action at a later date. In the vast majority of cases this is sufficient, but there are occasions
when owners cannot be traced or are unwilling to enter into a voluntary dialogue. In these circumstances, the use of enforcement action needs to be considered. Though used as a last resort, Isle of Anglesey County Council has nevertheless been very successful in the use of enforcement powers, particularly enforced sale.

With effect from 1st April, 2017, Isle of Anglesey County Council will charge a Council Tax premium of 25% of the standard rate of Council Tax on long-term empty homes on the Island. In February 2017 the Council approved a Policy for the implementation of two schemes to help first time buyers, funded from these additional premiums. The schemes are i) a grant to help first time buyers purchase and renovate an empty home and ii) equity loans to help first time buyers.

This strategy provides the framework to ensure that Isle of Anglesey County Council remains at the forefront of empty homes best practise and continues to be pro-active in its approach to returning empty homes back into use, thereby maximising the benefits for the people of Anglesey.

Its five strategic objectives are:-

1. Intelligence and Targeting - to maintain and improve the accuracy of empty homes data
2. Working Together - to strengthen existing and develop new partnerships to reduce the number of long term empty properties, adopting a whole council approach to tackling empty homes.
3. Publicity - To raise awareness of empty homes issues
4. Innovative Approaches - Increasing options in the “Toolkit” to encourage empty homes owners to return them back into use
5. Enforcement - To prioritise empty homes for enforcement action and promote and strengthen the existing whole council approach to tackling empty homes.
2 INTRODUCTION

Empty homes are a wasted housing resource, when many people and families need good quality housing. Empty homes brought back into use will provide safe, secure and affordable homes for the people of Anglesey.

Even a single empty home, which has been allowed to deteriorate, can blight a whole street or community, reducing the values of surrounding properties, causing nuisance to local residents and contributing to an area’s decline. A home that’s lived in enhances a community. It will be looked after and its residents will contribute both economically and socially to the community.

In addition, to attracting crime and anti-social behaviours such as arson, vandalism, squatting, trespass and theft, increasing the burden on the police and fire, empty homes can pose more serious problems by attracting vermin, fly tipping and damp. These hazards often require local authority intervention, which is a costly waste of resources, tackling only the short term effects of an empty property whereas the best long term solution would be the property’s return to use.

Isle of Anglesey County Council’s first Empty Homes Strategy was published in 2009 and was centred on understanding the impact of empty homes on communities and reasons why homes are left empty. This second strategy will:

- define and build on the progress already made;
- incorporate the key messages from the internal stakeholder workshop;
- set out how the Council will seek to work with owners of long-term empty properties in the future;
- focus on working together with both internal and external partners to define and deliver solutions for returning empty properties back into use;
- Inform empty home owners on the options available to them.

3 DEFINING AN EMPTY HOME

Empty homes can be divided into six categories:

Transactional empty properties - these are properties that are empty for a short period, largely between ownership or tenancies and are part of the normal cycle of people moving houses. Although less of a priority for the Council, they would be dealt with should they be causing a hazard or a nuisance.

Long term empty properties - these are properties that have been empty for six months or more and are the main focus of this strategy, as they are likely to remain empty without intervention by the Council to bring them back into use.

A true empty home - empty homes are perceived to be located in run down areas, semi-derelict, boarded up or causing problems but in reality empty properties can be divided into problematic, non-problematic but nevertheless empty when they could house someone and thereby a wasted resource.
Unused non-residential space - these can range from a whole building which is no longer feasible for its previous use or under-utilised upper floors of buildings above commercial accommodation that may be suitable for conversion into properties.

Second homes - properties that are defined in Council Tax terms as being second homes, holiday homes and annexes to other properties are excluded but it is not always easy to differentiate between those which are unoccupied and those which fall into the latter categories.

Dwellings removed from Council Tax listing - these are properties which it isn’t possible to live in, for example because they have been damaged by weather, rot or vandalism and would require major structural works to make them “wind and watertight” again.

4 EMPLOYING HOMES - THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

4.1 Long Term Empty Homes

According to the Dwelling Stock Estimates for Wales, produced by the Welsh Government, there were an estimated 1.4 million dwellings in Wales on 31 March 2016, was 1.4 million. On average over the last 5 years, around 26 thousand dwellings a year have been vacant for more than 6 months, representing just over 1.85% if the total housing stock.

The Welsh Government, in recognition of the contribution that the re-occupation of empty homes can make to meeting housing needs, has introduced a number of measures to support local authorities, resulting in 7,560 long-term empty homes back in use. This includes the “Houses into Homes” loan scheme which saw a total of £30 million investment so far.

An evaluation1 of the scheme undertaken by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam concluded that the scheme provided both impact and value for money, including:-

- levering in 83 pence of additional private sector and personal funding for every £1 of loan approved
- 144 empty properties (280 units of accommodation) returned to use by 31 March, 2015.
- £46.0 million in economic output provided directly and indirectly through the full cost of works.
- Providing rental and sales income to owners.
- Benefitted the local communities who resided within the immediate vicinity of problematic empty homes.

4.2 Key changes to Empty Homes Legislation

From 1 April, 2017, local authorities will be able to charge a premium of up to 100% of the standard rate of Council Tax on long-term empty homes in their areas. The legislative changes were made by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. The discretionary

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1 http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/houses-homes-final-eval-report.pdf
powers given to local authorities to charge a premium is intended to be a tool to help them to:

- bring long-term empty homes back into use to provide safe, secure and affordable homes; and
- increase the supply of affordable housing and enhancing the sustainability of local communities.

5 THE CORPORATE AND LOCAL CONTEXT

Understanding Anglesey’s specific empty homes situation and housing need is vital if we are to recognise the contribution returning empty homes can make towards regenerating communities and increasing housing options; two objectives identified in the Council’s five-year Corporate Plan (2013 - 2017).

5.1 Housing Need, and Political/Market Forces

Additional Homes - The Housing Strategy (2014 – 2019) has identified a need for around 240 additional homes on the Island each year. Returning empty homes back into use can contribute to meeting this need, is far less controversial than building new homes and takes fewer resources.

Affordability - As house prices are increasing faster than any rises in income, mortgages are difficult to access for low income first time buyers. Since it was established in 2012, 325 people from Anglesey, interested in home ownership but unable to afford market prices, have registered their wish to be considered for assisted home ownership, on the Tai Teg register. Empty properties in need of renovation can offer a low cost home purchase option, particularly if linked with a first time buyer renovation grant.

Homeless - As the Council makes use of the new power in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to discharge its duty to accommodate those who are homeless and in priority need into a private rented tenancy, a further need for privately rented properties is created. The conversion of redundant commercial buildings and rehabilitation of empty properties can help meet this demand.

Increased Demand - With major global energy companies working towards a significant investment in Anglesey, the associated influx of workers will also place greater pressures on demand for both market and private rented sector housing. The Council must ensure it works with developers to bring empty homes back into use. Areas that are likely to be impacted can be prioritised over the period of the development.

Public Service Delivery - The Council is now entering a period of unprecedented financial challenge and uncertainty in terms of the Welsh Government’s proposal for change in how public services are delivered. This strategy therefore focuses not only on maintaining the momentum already created but on finding new and innovative ways to tackle the return to use of empty residential and commercial properties. To do this effectively, best use must be made of all the resources available across the Council, funding opportunities maximised and partnership working increased.
5.2 What have we achieved so far in Anglesey?

Considerable progress has been made in implementing the delivery plan outlined in the first Empty Homes Strategy:

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<th>(i)</th>
<th>Creation of a database of empty properties</th>
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A database of empty properties has been created and is updated annually. The best statistical source available to Isle of Anglesey County Council for information about empty homes is held on the Council Tax database. Whilst this information is as up to date as possible, exceptions do exist, and these may cause the data to be incomplete in certain circumstances.

<table>
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<th>(ii)</th>
<th>Number of empty properties returned to use versus annual targets set</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**389 properties returned to use over the last four years**

The graph below shows the number of properties returned to use. Increased numbers returned to use on in 13 - 14 and 14 – 15 is a clear indicator of the impact and benefits gained from securing funding from various different streams to finance the First Time Buyer Empty Homes Renovation Grant and the Welsh Government Houses into Homes Loan Scheme.

![Long Term Empty Properties (LTE's) Returned to Use](image)

Each year the number of empty homes returned to use has exceeded the target set.

During the course of the next strategy, the Council intends to tackle the longer term empty properties which may be in need of extensive renovation or properties where there is no incentive for the owner to return them to use as they have been removed.
from the Council Tax system. Tackling these properties will be resource effective and may result in a lower number of properties returned to use.

(iii) Development of an Empty Homes “Toolkit of Options”

Behind every home, there lies a different story requiring a bespoke solution. By listening to owners, the Council has developed a “Toolkit”, enabling support and intervention to be individually tailored. The preferred course of action is to return properties to use through negotiation and agreement with an owner, avoiding the need for more time consuming and costly enforcement measures. However, where negotiation fails and an approach is refused or frustrated, the Council may, as a last resort, adopt enforcement action.

The success of this approach is evident in the chart below, which demonstrates the percentage of empty properties returned to use through different approaches.

(iv) Dissemination of Information – Advice and Guidance

The Council has a page dedicated to empty homes initiatives on its website. In additional all owners of empty properties on the Island have been offered written guidance, help advice and information to bring their homes back into use, having been contacted at least annually. Further information is available on the Council website by following the link below:-

http://www.anglesey.gov.uk/searchresults?qsearch=1&qkeyword=empty+homes
Financial Assistance and Incentive Schemes

The Council has a number of schemes offering financial support to owners of empty properties to return them to use.

- 58 first time buyers purchased an affordable property, supported by a First Time Buyer Empty Homes Renovation Grant funded by the Council and the Mon & Menai Partnership Fund.
- 17 first time buyers purchased an affordable property, supported by a First Time Buyer Empty Homes Renovation Grant funded through the Vibrant and Viable Places Regeneration Scheme. An evaluation of the scheme noted that each £1 of grant spent levered in private sector investment of £4.31.
- 55 properties to be returned to use/created through the Houses into Homes loan scheme.
- 12 empty homes purchased by a Housing Association using Social Housing Grant Subsidy
- 1 problematic, long term empty property purchased, renovated and sold on as affordable housing on a shared equity basis as part of the Compulsory Purchase Order/Purchase by Agreement Pilot. The proceeds of sale to be re-invested into the scheme.

Enforcement

Viewed as a last resort and used only where negotiations have failed or there is no other real prospect of an empty property being returned to use. An Enforced Sales Policy is in place and two properties have been sold in order to recover debts owed to the Council for works undertaken in default. One of these properties is under renovation, the other is occupied.

Empty Homes Surgery

Statutory powers and intelligence surrounding empty properties are shared across services. An Empty Homes Surgery has been set up in order to establish a coordinated approach across all services within the Council. This makes more effective use of limited resources both financially and in terms of manpower, focusing on a long term solution rather than reacting to specific complaints.

This approach was recognised as an example of Good Practice by Chartered Institute of Housing Wales and has been adopted by other Councils.

Property Matching Service

The aim of the property matching service is to put owners of empty properties wishing to sell in touch with prospective buyers.
Cross Boundary Working

The Council is represented by the Empty Homes Officer at Regional and National Empty Homes events and workgroups.

5.3 The Current Empty Homes Picture in Anglesey

On the 1st April, 2016, 842 properties were recorded on the empty homes database. These are properties that have remained empty for six months or more according to Council Tax records – the true number is likely to be significantly higher as many will not have been reported as empty.

Distribution of Empty Homes by Post-code

When plotted on a map, it is evident that empty homes are widely dispersed across the Island. Even one empty home returned to use in a community significantly helps meet the need for housing within that community, enabling people to remain in their locality, close to their family network and supporting the preservation and sustainability of the Welsh language. (Source: empty homes database 1.4.16).

Distribution of Empty Homes by Post-code

The significance of early intervention

Evidence suggests that the longer a property is empty, the more difficult it is to engage with the owner. In view of this, significant work has been undertaken to tackle properties empty up to two years and over five years. Despite this, the chart below demonstrates that 514 (or 61%) of long term empty properties on the Island
have been empty for more than 2 years, with 283 recorded as being empty over 4 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empty Properties by Length of Time Empty</th>
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<tr>
<td>Empty up to 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>283</td>
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</table>

**Bespoke Solutions** - Whilst some may consider Anglesey to be fortunate in that it does not have streets of derelict and boarded-up empty properties as can be found in other areas, tackling single properties widely dispersed throughout urban, semi-rural and rural locations can be just as challenging. Tailoring support for such properties requires an individual approach, involving persuasion and negotiation, as they fall outside large scale regeneration projects and their associated funding streams.

**Remote locations** - Empty properties located in very rural areas often lack basic facilities such as water or electric and are so remote that they are not noticeable and do not create a problem. These properties would currently only be dealt with should they become a source of complaint.

**Flats above shops** - Anglesey has a number of non-residential spaces above shops which are either used as storage (and may therefore be considered to be in use) or may have previously been used as living accommodation. Some are in disrepair but renovation or conversion becomes unattractive to owners because of the high cost involved. Regeneration of town centres is about a lot more than filling empty shops. It is about creating a vibrant town centre. By ensuring that any future funding bids across the Council include for bringing flats over shops back into use, we can bring added value to a scheme, increasing both housing supply and town centre footfall.

**Commercial Conversions** – Due to economic downturn, Anglesey has its fair share of redundant commercial buildings. These sites are candidates for re-development but such projects are resource intensive and require the input of both internal and external partners if such properties/sites are to be unlocked and viable alternative uses and funding streams identified and realised.

**Requiring Modernisation** - Some properties across the Island have benefitted from a combination of enveloping and group repair schemes. Visually many of these properties appear tidy but this often masks the need for internal modernisation. The sale of such properties may stall or fail at the survey stage, when the cost of remedial works becomes a barrier to accessing a mortgage.
Problematic and Removed from Council Tax - A proportion of the most problematic empty properties on the Island have been removed from the Council Tax list. In these instances, the absence of a Council Tax charge becomes a disincentive for owners to take positive action and because of their poor condition, they are the most likely source of complaint to the Council. Intervention can be resource intensive and requires a multi-departmental approach, but where successful, can provide additional Council Tax revenue not only to the County Council but also to the Police and Community/Town Councils, as demonstrated in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of properties returned to use when the Council has taken enforcement action</th>
<th>*Additional Council Tax Revenue</th>
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<td>4</td>
<td>£5,362</td>
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*Based on an average Council Tax for a Band D Property of £1340.57 in 2016/17, of which £1061.46 is levied by the Council/£240.12 set by the Police and Crime Commissioner North Wales and £38.99 average precept set by Community/Town Councils.

Council Tax Premium on Empty Properties - With effect from 1st April, 2017, Isle of Anglesey County Council will charge a Council Tax premium of 25% of the standard rate of Council Tax on long-term empty homes on the Island. This will apply to all long-term empty properties which have been empty for a continuous period since the 1st April, 2016. However, there will be a number of exception classes, which apply specifically to long term empty properties. Where an empty home falls into one of these classes, the Council will not be able to charge a Council Tax premium. A list of Exceptions is available in Appendix 1. As this does not come into force until 1st April 2017, it will be some years before the Council can assess the impact such an increase will have in reducing the number of empty properties.

The Council has been encouraged to invest a proportion of the additional revenue in schemes to support a reduction in the number of empty properties on the Island and to meet the affordable housing needs of its residents. In February 2017 the Council approved a Policy for the implementation of two schemes to help first time buyers. Both schemes will be funded from the Council Tax premium which will be raised on second and empty homes from April 2017. The schemes are:

1) Grant to help first time buyers purchase and renovate an empty home
2) Equity loans to help first time buyers

5.4 The reasons why homes remain empty in Anglesey

Some properties are empty due to the normal processes of buying, selling and letting properties. These are known as transactional empties and would only be targeted if they were causing a problem.

Other common reasons include:-

- Death of the occupant
- Occupant moving to hospital or institution
- Eviction or repossession
• **Need for repair and refurbishment** beyond budget of owner
• **Fears about renting the property** - the owner may have had a former bad experience though letting and not wish to risk repeating this. Others have unfounded perceptions of problems with renting. Owners lack the knowledge and have concerns about responsibilities of being a landlord.
• **Selling the property** - these properties can be in good condition but owners have been trying but have been unable to sell for various reasons. Other reasons include waiting for better market conditions or concerns about the tax implications.
• **Inherited properties** - the owner may lack the knowledge or the inclination to do anything with inherited properties. Some keep them in case their children choose to occupy them in future.
• **Their property/their business** - owners choose not to engage with the Council as they believe that as the property is privately owned, the Council do not have the right to require action to return it to use. They may be unaware or have no concern for the effect the property is having on the local area and surrounding properties. These are usually the properties which are likely to be left empty for many years and fall into disrepair. As they are deliberately kept empty by the owner, they are viewed as “intentional empties”.
• **Speculative purchases** - Properties bought as an investment by buyers who have no inclination to do anything with them.
• **Legal issues** - for example delays and/or disputes in the administration of the estate when an owner has died can lead to probate not being sought or granted. Ownership may be in dispute or there are multiple owners and thereby agreement on what to do with the property cannot be reached. In certain instances, debts are already owed to the Council, e.g. care home fees or the cost of works in default previously undertaken if a property has already been a source of complaint.
• **Absent/untraceable owners** - it may not be immediately evident who the owner of a property is or where they are, as they may have moved away with little information available to trace them. Whilst the Land Registry holds ownership details of all registered properties, a significant number of properties on the Island have not changed ownership since registration became compulsory and therefore information on their ownership is not readily available. Where information regarding the property is not available from this source, identifying the owner becomes difficult.

6 **THE EMPTY HOMES TOOLKIT**

Isle of Anglesey County Council will always seek to work with owners of empty properties in the first instance, offering advice, assistance and options designed to help empty property owners as outlined in the toolkit below. The Council expects owners of empty properties to fully engage with the process of returning them back to use and to co-operate with the Council.

If this advice and assistance is consistently refused, the Council may have no option but to take enforcement action to resolve the problems associated with the property and to ensure its return to use. Adding to the toolkit is an on-going feature which will remain a priority throughout the terms of the new strategy. By making owners aware of the tools which the Council has at its disposal, this Strategy is achieving its fourth
objective that of encouraging empty home owners to return their properties back into use.

6.1 Advice

The Council will do its utmost to resolve an empty homes issue by co-operation, finding a mutually beneficial solution which allows the owner to keep hold of the property.

In addition to offering bespoke advice to owners of long term empty properties the Council offers a number of schemes aimed at helping to incentivise owners of empty properties to make the most of their unused resource.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advice and information</th>
<th>To empty property owners and members of the public</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help owners to sell property</td>
<td>Help owners to rent property</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Advice on: selling privately, estate agents or auction.</td>
<td>• Referral of rental properties to Housing Solutions to help find a tenant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Property matching service – matching empty property sellers with prospecting empty property buyers.</td>
<td>• Providing information on becoming a landlord, private lettings agents and acceptable housing standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advertise low cost empty properties for sale on the “Tai Teg” Affordable Housing Website” and when opportunities exist offering financial support towards the cost of renovation, thereby linking people in need of affordable housing with opportunities to purchase.</td>
<td>• Advice regarding obligation to register with Rent Smart Wales.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Identifying and referring suitable properties for purchase as social rented housing.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Incentives (Discretionary)</th>
<th>Help owners wishing to renovate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Interest free loans available to landlords/owners of empty properties in need of renovation who intend either to let them or sell them on.</td>
<td>• Provide information on the services of Planning and Building Control Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Home improvement loans available to owners of empty properties in need of renovation to owner occupy.</td>
<td>• Provide project management options and signposting to available good practise guides and websites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• First time buyer empty homes renovation grant available to first time buyers purchasing an empty property requiring renovation to owner occupy.</td>
<td>• Provide information on the reduced VAT scheme available to owners renovating a property empty over two years.</td>
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</table>
### 6.2 Financial Incentives and Assistance

The Council offers a number of discretionary financial support schemes to support owners of empty properties to return them to use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Houses into Homes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Loan to let</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available to landlords/owners of empty properties requiring renovation to let.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan of up to £25,000 per unit of accommodation returned to use up to a maximum of £150,000.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest free, repayable at the end of 3 years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secured against the property, loan to value, including mortgage cannot exceed 80% of property’s current value. Property must meet Decent Homes Standard.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Houses into homes</strong></th>
<th><strong>loan to sell</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Available to landlords/owners of empty properties requiring renovation prior to selling.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loan of up to £25,000 per unit of accommodation returned to use up to a maximum of £150,000.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest free, repayable at the end of 2 years.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secured against the property, loan to value, including mortgage cannot exceed 80% of property’s current value. Property must meet Decent Homes Standard.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Home Improvement Loan</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An interest free loan of up to £25,000 available to owners of empty properties which require renovation prior to owner occupation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration fee of 15% of total loan can be added to the loan itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secured against the property, loan to value, including mortgage cannot exceed 70% of property’s current value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property must be made “Warm, Safe and Secure”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>First time buyer empty homes renovation grant</strong> (Restricted to Holyhead area funded via Vibrant and Viable Places Project)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A grant of up to £20,000 available to first time buyers purchasing an empty property requiring renovation to owner occupy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property must have been empty for six months or more prior to purchase and applicants are subject to an affordability assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant is secured against the property as a local land charge for a set period of time from completion of works.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Added Value** - Financial investment in the above scheme not only benefits the owners and improves the amenity of an area but also:

- The local economy – work is undertaken by local contractors therefore the money is invested in the local workforce and business supply chain.
- Homes are let to local people who can remain in their community.
- Increased footfall in town centres and villages supporting retail sustainability.
- The 27 additional units brought into use through conversion of redundant buildings or renovation of existing properties, provides additional revenue for the Council at a time when budgets are reducing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Units</th>
<th>Approximate additional Council Tax revenue per annum based on a band D property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>£36,195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.3 Enforcement

Where negotiations have failed and owners of a long term empty property refuse the assistance of the Council or fail to return their property back into use within a reasonable timescale, firmer measures may be pursued which would require the owner to engage or risk losing their property. When such action is required, the Council undertakes to adhere to its enforcement principles, which provide for fair and consistent enforcement.

The enforcement tools available to the Council are: Enforced Sales Procedure, Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO). Enforcement action can be halted at any time should the owner wish to engage with the Council to return their property back into use. There is a raft of legislation available to the Council to tackle problems associated with an empty property and the diagram below sets out some of the legislation available to the Council to use in order to help tackle long-term empty properties. (Appendix 2 provides further information on available legislation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enforcement Action</th>
<th>Planning Enforcement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improving condition of property</td>
<td>Environmental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 – pests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Protection Act S.80 – refuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Act 2004 – housing disrepair or dilapidation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Protection Act 1990 s.80 – nuisance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health Act s.79 – removal of noxious materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government (MP) Act 1982 s.29 – secure property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Act 1984 S78 Ruinous and Dilapidated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Act 1984 S77,78,79 – dangerous structures</td>
<td>Building Control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990 s215** – an adverse effect on the amenity of the area (appearance of property)
**Works in default** – securing the debt as local land charge under the above legal notices (excluding LG1979 s.29)

**Enforced Sale**
Where an unpaid debt to the council has been secured by a local land charge on a long term empty property (possibly through enforcement action outlined above) the Council can force the sale of the property to a third party.

**Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)**
The property must be in an area of housing need with no prospect of becoming occupied under the current owner. Council would facilitate works needed to allow the property to be used to accommodate people in housing need and resources would be required to meet the cost of updating the property to lettable standards.

**Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)**
Where the property is long term empty, in poor condition (and in an area of housing need), the ultimate sanction for those owners who fail to bring their property back into use, the threat and use of compulsory powers will be considered. Used only as the last resort.

(i) **Enforced sale**

The enforced sale procedure can be used when the owner of an empty property has outstanding debts with the Council. Where the Council undertakes “works in default” to ensure that an empty property is made safe or does not impact negatively on the locality, the costs incurred will be charged against the owner. Should the owner not pay these debts, the Council will sell the property in order to recover the costs.

An enforced sale can also be used to recover Council Tax arrears. This process can be halted at any point if the owner decides to engage and pay off their debts with the Council. Appendix 2 provides a list of legislation which allows the Council to carry out works in default.

Case Study
History: Property empty since 2002 and a source of repeated complaints to the Council including overgrown gardens, sightings of rodents and break-in. Attempts to trace the owner proved inconclusive. The Council served a notice under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1943 to clear the overgrowth. The work was subsequently undertaken in default by the Council and the property was sold via the enforced sale process to recover costs. New owner benefitted from a “Houses into Homes” loan and benefitted from paying reduced VAT on renovation costs prior to selling the property.

Community benefits: Neighbours were satisfied that action had been taken by the Council and the amenity of the area improved. Renovation work undertaken by a local Company providing work for local tradesmen.

Benefits to the Council: The benefits to the council were the resolution of the problems associated with the empty property, its ability to recover costs, the collection of Council Tax for the first time since 2002 and no further need to spend resources dealing with further complaints.

(ii) Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)

An EDMO involves the Council taking over the management of an empty property. The Council can take action against an empty property which has been unoccupied for over six months, bringing it up to the Decent Homes Standard before letting it at an affordable rate. Any costs incurred in renovation and management of the property are recovered from the property rental. A full EDMO may be granted for seven years, after which time responsibility can be handed back to the owner.

Whilst this is a course of action which has not yet been taken by the Council, it is an option which could be exercised during the course of the next Strategy subject to start-up funding being identified.

(iii) Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)

A CPO is the firmest measure available to the Council. It involves the Council acquiring an empty property but, unlike with the enforced sale, its use does not require debts to be initially owed to the Council by the Owner.

One advantage of compulsory purchase is that it offers the Council more flexibility in determining the future use of the property e.g. the option of returning the property to the social rented rather than the private rented sector.

As an alternative to a CPO, the Council would as a first step, try to acquire the property by agreement with the owner, without the need for a more formal CPO.

6.4 Prioritisation for Enforcement

Long-term empty properties whose owners prove uncooperative or are absent, will be prioritised for enforcement action.
To ensure a consistent and fair approach a prioritisation matrix will be developed as a tool for determining which problematic empty properties to target and prioritise for action when taking into account the limited resources available.

### 6.5 Resources for Enforcement

Although enforcement action is seen as a last resort, Isle of Anglesey County Council acknowledges that in some cases, enforcement action will be the only option available where owners fail to work with the Council.

Where enforcement action is taken and the owner fails to comply with the requirements of a Notice, funding is available to the Council to undertake the works in default through the Houses into Homes Loan Scheme and the debt may be recovered through the enforced sale process.

The decision to charge a Council Tax premium on properties which have been empty for more than one year, may present an opportunity for further investment to support the return of empty homes into use, for example by providing funding for EDMO’s or to develop a type of renovation/rental model which could increase the availability of rental properties.
7. WORKING TOGETHER

A great deal of officer time is spent on reacting to complaints and incidents at individual empty homes. Without a coherent approach, officers from different services may duplicate or even undermine efforts.

This strategy will include an action to work together across services as outlined below.

**Council Members**
- Strategic leadership
- Approval and cross-party support for empty homes enforcement policy.
- Refer empty properties for investigation.

**Legal Services**
- Undertake legal action to return empty properties back into use.
- Provide advice and assistance on legal aspects to other departments.

**Council Tax**
- Provide advice and assistance to owners of empty properties on Council Tax exemptions.
- Hold data on empty property owners and second homes owners.
- Provide information to Empty Homes Officer.

**Building Control**
- Advice and assistance to owners on building regulation applications.
- Enforcement action against dangerous structures that could endanger the public.

**Environmental Health**
- Enforcement action against properties detrimental to the area or environment.
- Undertake inspections of long-term empty properties under the Housing Act 2004.

**Planning Services**
- Advice and assistance to owners on potential redevelopment/renovation of a property.
- Advice on planning legislation.
- Enforcement action to protect amenity value of residential areas.

**Economic Development**
- Advice and assistance to the empty homes officer to identify funding streams when bespoke solutions are required.
- Ensure empty homes are considered for inclusion in any bids for regeneration or other housing schemes.

**Empty Homes Service**
- Overall responsibility for returning empty homes into use.
- Co-ordinate the Council’s approach to empty homes enforcement.
- Provide advice and assistance to owners.
- Prioritise properties for enforcement action.
- Deliver financial incentive schemes.
8. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES MOVING FORWARD

8.1 AIM

**AIM**

Working Together - To reduce the number of long term empty properties in Anglesey

Despite the proposals for change in how public services are delivered, the Council must be ambitious in its approach to finding new and innovative ways to tackle the problem of empty properties and this is reflected in its five objectives.

8.2 Strategic Objectives

**OBJECTIVE 1**

**Improved Intelligence - To maintain and improve the accuracy of empty homes data**

The basis of intelligence about empty homes is largely from the Council Tax exemptions list. There are limitations about how this data is used as the information changes on a daily basis and can quickly become out of date as it relies on home-owners updating the Council when changes are made to their properties.

Information for Council Tax use can only be shared in certain circumstances set out below:-

For general purposes section 85 of the Local Government Act 2003 is used in order to share Council Tax information with empty property officers. Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2003 allows information on property details, address, owners name and contact information obtained from Council Tax to be used to identify vacant properties and take steps to bring vacant dwellings back into use.

Where enforcement action is being considered, however, Section 237 of the Housing Act 2004: Council Tax & Housing Benefit, (Part 1 to 3 Act – Enforcement/EDMO etc.) allows for all information to be shared.

**OBJECTIVE 2**

**Working Together - to strengthen existing and develop new internal and external partnerships to reduce the number of long term empty properties, adopting a whole council approach to tackling empty homes.**
Empty properties affect the work of many parts of the Council, external organisations and residents. In implementing this Empty Homes Strategy, the Council will ensure that there is strategically led approach to tackling the issue so that efforts are co-ordinated and coherent. Members of the Empty Homes Surgery will all have a role in delivering the actions within this strategy and carry out periodic reviews of the action plan.

Different powers and duties are available to members of the Empty Homes Surgery and by taking action together, many hours of enforcement activity can be reduced. The potential savings to the Council, are significant in terms of complaint handling.

The Council shall also work with external partners – registered social landlords, the fire services, police, local landlords and other councils in order to ensure that advice is shared and continuity achieved.

**OBJECTIVE 3**

**Publicity- To raise awareness of empty homes issues**

The Council must ensure that it is publicising the issue of empty homes in the most effective way. A higher profile for the problem of empty homes may encourage both owners and concerned neighbours to engage with the Council in reporting long-term empty properties and returning them to use.

The public will be actively encouraged to report empty homes that they become aware of, rather than waiting for a complaint to be made.

Part of the awareness raising about the problems associated with empty homes will take place within the Empty Homes Surgery. Being aware of the impact on other services as well as the one that officers work in has already been quite a revelation.

Through extensive use of social media, the Council will highlight the problems associated with empty homes and the help available to owners to bring them back into use.

**OBJECTIVE 4**

**Innovative Approaches - Increasing options in the “Toolkit” to encourage empty homes owners to return them back into use**

Making owners aware of the potential benefits of renting or selling their empty home, as well as how the support the Council can offer may help to achieve this, is a huge step towards addressing the problem of empty long term empty properties.

It is recognised that many owners need some assistance in order to take action, they may have chosen to ignore the issue for some years and cannot see a way forward.
The Council must continue to be proactive in adding to the Toolkit over the terms of the strategy, finding new ways and developing new initiatives to persuade owners of long-term empty properties to take action and promote the unacceptability of homes left unused.

**OBJECTIVE 5**

**Enforcement** - To prioritise empty homes for enforcement action and promote and strengthen the existing whole council approach to tackling empty homes.

The Council will undertake a risk assessment of long-term empty properties in order to prioritise those properties where enforcement action will be undertaken. The prioritisation process will take into account factors such as:

- Property condition and whether it is causing harm to other properties;
- The length of time empty;
- The number of complaints received by the Council or other agencies;
- Whether the property is causing a detrimental environmental impact;
- Whether the property is already facing enforcement by the Council;
  - Whether the owner owes money to the Council;
- Whether the owner owns multiple empty properties.

An action plan, based on these five objectives is set out at the end of this Strategy.
9. CAN YOU HELP

Owners of Empty Properties

For further information on the content of this strategy and/or to seek assistance with bringing the property back into use, owners of empty properties are advised to contact the Empty Homes Officer.

Members of the Public

If members of the public are concerned about an empty property or consider that the owner may not be in a position to return it to use without some help, they are advised to contact the Empty Homes Officer.

Please contact the Empty Homes Officer on the number below or go to www.ynysmon.gov.uk and enter “empty homes” in the search box.

Empty Homes Officer Contact Details:-

Telephone: 01248 752283

Email: emptyhomesofficer@ynysmon.gov.uk

In writing: Empty Homes Officer  
Housing Services  
Isle of Anglesey County Council  
Llangefni  
Ynys Môn  
LL77 7TW
**ACTIONS PLAN**

The action plan brings together the Strategy’s five objectives, allocating each one key actions for future monitoring purposes. Its aim is to ensure that we continue “doing what we do” but that, as we move forward, we also develop new and innovative ways to accelerate the rate at which empty properties are returned to use.

### Objective 1: Intelligence and Targeting - To maintain and improve the accuracy of empty homes data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>WHAT WE WILL DO</th>
<th>BY WHOM</th>
<th>BY WHEN</th>
<th>MONITORING/MEASURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.1    | Encourage owners to inform the Council when there is a change in status of the property, i.e. when a property becomes unoccupied and occupied. This to be done through effective marketing and publicity. | I. Correspond with owners of new properties entered on the Empty Homes Database on 1st April each year.  
II. Review the status of historical empty properties database.  
III. Advise Council Tax Section when a property is reported back into use. | Empty homes Officer  
Empty Homes Officer  
Empty Homes Officer | Annually  
Annually | Reduction in the number of recorded empty homes. |
| 1.2    | Agree on the information to be collected on the empty homes database. | Establish a protocol for including properties which have been exempted from payment of Council Tax and remain empty for a long period. | Empty Homes Officer  
Council Tax Supervisor | December 2017 | Protocol in place |
| 1.3    | Explore the option to develop a SMART targeting plan. | Initial pilot working with internal stakeholders. | Empty Homes Officer/Council Tax | July 18 and ongoing | Evaluation report |
| 1.4    | Review Empty Homes Database to ensure resources are targeted on homes which will have the greatest impact. | Regular input of data on properties returned into use onto the Empty Homes Database. | Empty Homes Officer | Quarterly. | |
Objective 2: Working Together - To strengthen existing and develop new internal and external partnerships to reduce the number of long term empty properties, adopting a whole council approach to tackling empty homes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible Officer/Role</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Maintain clear strategic leadership</td>
<td>Support all stakeholders with a role to reduce the number of long-term empty homes</td>
<td>Housing Strategy Manager</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Report annually to the Anglesey Housing Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To reduce the number of long-term empty homes</td>
<td>Empty Homes Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Improve partnership working with fire service/police on long-term empty properties</td>
<td>Seek a long term solution for returning problematic long term empties back into use rather than deal with reported &quot;incidents&quot; by outside agencies.</td>
<td>Empty Homes Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>The number of properties returned to use where other agencies have had input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To improve partnership working with fire service/police on long-term empty properties</td>
<td>Environmental Health Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maintain and improve links with landlords, letting and property management agencies through improved information and attendance at Landlords Forum meetings.</td>
<td>Investigate new ways of improving links with the private rented sector</td>
<td>Empty Homes Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Attendance at landlord events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To investigate new ways of improving links with the private rented sector</td>
<td>Landlord Liaison Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To maintain and improve links with landlords, letting and property management agencies through improved information and attendance at Landlords Forum meetings.</td>
<td>Landlord Forum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Regular meetings between empty homes officers regionally.</td>
<td>To share advice in difficult cases, look at best practise solutions, ensure consistency in approach and for training purposes.</td>
<td>Empty Homes Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Number of meetings attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Empty Homes Officer/Environmental Health Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ensure that opportunities to identify solutions with Registered Social Landlords are maximised.</td>
<td>To explore opportunities for joint-working that will result in empty homes being returned to use.</td>
<td>Empty Homes Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Opportunities realised.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Objective 3: Publicity - To raise awareness of empty homes issues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>WHAT WE WILL DO</th>
<th>BY WHOM</th>
<th>BY WHEN</th>
<th>MONITORING/MEASURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.     | Review and improve publicity material in the Empty Homes Information Pack to highlight the issue of empty homes together with options available to owners of empty properties to return them to use. | I. Review and update existing literature to ensure it is accurate and current.  
II. Dedicated empty homes section on Council website – updated regularly.  
III. Regular use of social media (Twitter, Facebook) to highlight the empty homes initiative.  
IV. Develop an on line form for reporting empty homes. | Empty Homes Officer | 1 January 2018 and ongoing | Number of properties returned to use by type of intervention recorded |
| 2.     | Communicate with Community and Town Councils and Councillors to highlight the issue of empty homes. | I. Circulate information to all parties, encouraging the reporting of empty homes in their communities. | Empty Homes Officer | 1st January 2018 |
| 3.     | Contribute to regional and national consultations on empty homes policy and procedures | I. Attend regional and national empty homes events and meetings  
II. Respond to National Consultations on Policies affecting empty homes | Empty Homes Officer | As they occur | Number of meetings attended and contribution made. Percentage of responses against number of consultation documents received. |
Objective 4: Innovative Approaches - Increasing options within the “Toolkit” to encourage empty homes owners to return them back into use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>WHAT WE WILL DO</th>
<th>BY WHOM</th>
<th>BY WHEN</th>
<th>MONITORING/MEASURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1      | Inform and advice to all owners of possible options available to them to bring their empty homes back into use via frequent and regular communication. | I. Distribute the Empty Homes Information Pack.  
II. Contact owners to discuss their empty property to develop a bespoke solution.  
III. Analyse responses to the survey questionnaire and respond positively and swiftly to owners who have returned them. | Empty Homes Officer | I. Annually  
II. Ongoing on a case by case basis.  
III. Ongoing | Number of questionnaires distributed, returned and actioned.  
No. of properties returned to use by type of intervention. |
| 3      | Explore other funding opportunities with a view to developing further financial schemes to incentivise and support owners. | I. Establish what other sources of public, private or charitable funding may be available.  
II. Explore funding opportunities to undertake EDMO’s. | Housing Services/Empty Homes Officer | 1 May 2018 | |
| 4      | Seek innovative new ways to provide additional options for owners. | I. Explore good practise in other Councils across the UK.  
II. Develop our own creative new solutions. | Empty Homes Officer | Ongoing | |
### Objective 5: Enforcement - To prioritise empty homes for enforcement action and promote and strengthen the existing whole council approach to tackling empty homes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>WHAT WE WILL DO</th>
<th>BY WHOM</th>
<th>BY WHEN</th>
<th>OUTCOME/MEASURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Apply a risk based assessment process for prioritising problematic empty homes for action/implementation.</td>
<td>Review and implement the current risk based prioritisation matrix to identify those properties requiring intervention.</td>
<td>Empty Homes Officer and Empty Homes Surgery Members</td>
<td>1st January 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Establish protocols for determining and applying the most appropriate course of enforcement action likely to resolve a problematic empty property and lead to its return to use.</td>
<td>I. Review the terms of Reference of the Empty Homes Surgery to ensure effectiveness, accountability and clear objectives. II. Have an agreed and recorded plan of action for each property prioritised for enforcement action with designated officers to enforce where appropriate. III. Develop an escalation mechanism where higher level support is required.</td>
<td>Empty Homes Surgery/Housing Strategy Manager Empty Homes Surgery Members Empty Homes Officer</td>
<td>1st January 2018 Ongoing 1st April 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Proactively investigate all problematic long term empty properties reported using the prioritisation matrix where appropriate and investigate all reported empty homes.</td>
<td>Investigate all reported empty homes promptly, undertaking initial assessment as a priority. Maintain the current proactive and reactive approach to dealing with empty properties.</td>
<td>Empty Homes Officer/Environmental Health Officer</td>
<td>As required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Prioritise for action and recovery, empty properties where there is an existing debt owing to the Council for consideration of enforced sale process.</td>
<td>Develop a process to identify and assess empty properties where there is an existing debt owing to the Council. Agree and implement a plan for recovering the debt.</td>
<td>Empty Homes Officer/Head of Revenues and Finance/Section 151 Officer</td>
<td>1 December 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GLOSSARY

Affordable Housing – Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

Affordable rented housing – housing let by local authority or private registered provider of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing.

Decent Homes Standard – the governmental criterial necessary for a liveable property. The property must:

- Be in a reasonable state of repair.
- Meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing.
- Have reasonably modern facilities and services
- Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

Dwelling – since 2001 a dwelling is defined as a self-contained unit of accommodation, where all the rooms (including kitchen, bathroom and toilet) are behind a door that only the household can use.

Empty Homes Service – The service aims to reduce the number of homes and buildings standing empty or becoming empty and to preserve and improve the Island’s housing stock. Owners of empty, residential properties and, where appropriate commercial properties considered suitable for conversion into dwellings, are provided with guidance and assistance to develop a plan for returning them back into use.

Household – One person or a group of people who have the accommodation as their only or main residence AND

- Either share one meal a day or
- Share the living accommodation, that is, a living room or sitting room.

Houses into Homes Scheme – a loan scheme offered by the Council to owners of empty properties requiring renovation or conversion to let or to sell on.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HSSRS) – criteria by which councils evaluate potential risks to health and safety arising from property deficiencies and take appropriate enforcement action.

Long term empty property – A property left unoccupied for six months or more

Tai Tag – An independent register of people interested in home ownership but who cannot currently afford to buy outright on the open market with the aim of identifying and matching people to homes that are currently or known to be becoming available.

Transactional empty property – Properties which have become empty naturally through the operation of a normal property cycle. These may remain empty for a period of time, typically up to six months.
APPENDIX 1 –
COUNCIL TAX EXEMPTIONS

Class A  Vacant dwelling requiring or undergoing major repairs or alterations – maximum 12 months exemption.
Class B  Unoccupied dwelling owned by a charitable body
Class C  Vacant Dwelling – maximum period 6 months
Class D  Dwelling unoccupied because former resident in detention
Class E  Dwelling unoccupied because former resident in hospital or care home
Class F  Unoccupied dwelling in which someone has died
Class G  Dwelling in which occupation is prohibited by law
Class H  Unoccupied dwelling held for a minister of religion
Class I  Unoccupied dwelling because former resident receiving care elsewhere
Class J  Unoccupied dwelling because former resident providing care elsewhere
Class K  Dwelling left unoccupied by a student owner
Class L  Unoccupied dwelling where mortgagee in possession
Class M  Student – halls of residence
Class N  Dwelling wholly occupied by students
Class O  Armed forces accommodation
Class P  Visiting forces accommodation
Class Q  Unoccupied dwelling held by trustee in bankruptcy
Class R  Unoccupied Pitch or Mooring
Class S  Dwelling wholly occupied by people under 18
Class T  Unoccupied annexe which cannot be let separately
Class U  Dwelling occupied by a severely mentally impaired person
Class V  Dwelling occupied by people with diplomatic immunity
Class W  Dwelling occupied by a dependant relative (granny flat)

EXCEPTIONS – COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM ON EMPTY HOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes of Dwellings</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 1</td>
<td>Dwellings being marketed for sale – time limited for one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>Dwellings being marketed for let – time-limited for one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>Annexes forming part of, or being treated as part of, the main dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 4</td>
<td>Dwellings which would be someone’s sole or main residence if they were not residing in armed forces accommodation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX 2 – Legislation to support Councils to resolve problematic properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Power Granted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dangerous or dilapidated building structures</td>
<td>Building Act 1984, ss77 &amp; 78</td>
<td>Section 77 – requirement for owner to make property safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangerous or dilapidated building structures Unsecured properties (risk that it may be entered or suffer vandalism, arson etc.)</td>
<td>Housing Act 2004, Part 1</td>
<td>Section 78 – Enables Council to take emergency action to make building safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building Act 1984, s79</td>
<td>Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) enables councils to evaluate potential risks to health and safety arising from property deficiencies and take enforcement action. Requirement for owner to repair, restore or demolish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsecured properties (risk that it may be entered or suffer vandalism, arson etc.)</td>
<td>Building Act 1984, s78</td>
<td>To allow councils to fence off property. To allow councils to take steps to secure property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, s29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocked or defective drainage or private sewers</td>
<td>Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976), s35</td>
<td>To require owner to address obstructed private sewers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building Act 1984 s59</td>
<td>To require the owner to address blocked or defective drainage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Health Act, 1961, s17</td>
<td>To require the owner to address defective drainage or private sewers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermin (either present or there is a risk that they will be attracted)</td>
<td>Public Health Act 1961, s34</td>
<td>To require the owner to remove waste so that vermin is not attracted to the site, to destroy an infestation and to remove any accumulation prejudicial to health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, s4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Health Act 1936, s 83</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental Protection Act 1990, s.80</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building Act 1984, s76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsightly land and property affecting the amenity of an area</td>
<td>Public Health Act 1961, s34</td>
<td>To require the owner to remove waste from the property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Town and Country Planning Act 1990 s215</td>
<td>To require the owner to take steps to address a property adversely affecting the amenity of an area through its condition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>