



Hartlepool Borough Council Empty Homes Strategy Action Plan 2010-2015





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Section 1: Action Plan 2010 – 2015

Objective One: Pro-actively bring long-term empty homes back into use using flexible solutions / appropriate enforcement action

Desired Outcome: To improve neighbourhoods and the environment by targeting and helping to bring long-term empty homes back into use.

Key Action	Key Task / Actions Involved	Responsibility	Resources	Timescale
Recruit a dedicated Empty Homes Officer		Assistant Director (Community Safety)	9 months funding secured	April 10
Develop an Empty Homes Toolkit	Develop an Empty Homes Management Protocol for private owners and registered providers to use when they own empty properties	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	July 10
	Develop EDMO policy and procedures	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	July 10
	Develop CPO policy and procedures	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	July 10
	Develop Enforced Sale policy and procedures	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	July 10
Using enforcement proactively tackle long-term empty properties in areas of housing need.	Bring 10% of long-term empty properties back into use each year	Principal Environmental Health Officer	Est. average up to £50k per property	Ongoing
	Identify empty properties suitable for enforcement action	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	July 10
	Pilot and evaluate the use of EDMO in line with policy and procedures	Empty Homes Officer	Up to £25k (including refurbishment costs)	April 11
Explore opportunities for financial assistance to private owners	Evaluate the costs of bringing homes back into use	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	Oct 10
	Investigate sources of funding	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	Oct 10

Objective Two: Prevent homes from becoming long-term empty

Desired Outcome: Minimise the number of properties becoming empty for longer than 6 months

Key Action	Key Task / Actions Involved	Responsibility	Resources	Timescale
Develop a marketing and publicity approach to promote the Empty Homes Strategy	Develop empty homes publicity material	Empty Homes Officer	£5k	July 10
	Improve empty homes information on the internet	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	July 10
Provide a contact point within the Council for empty homes work	Develop and provide a range of methods of communication to enable people to make contact easily	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	July 10
Enhance liaison with private landlords	Offer advice to owners on becoming a landlord and assist in letting empty homes	Line Manager of Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	Ongoing
	Continue to promote and reward good landlords through the Landlords Accreditation Scheme by developing and promoting incentive schemes, such as discounts for municipal waste disposal	Landlord Registration Officer	Costs involved for rewards and incentives	Ongoing
Enhance partnership working across services	Co-ordination of all relevant agencies and services involved in empty homes work	Line Manager of Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	Ongoing

	Work with colleagues in Council Tax to ensure that the options available to bring empty homes back into use are made available to owners	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	July 10
Establish procedures for working with mortgage companies with clients at threat of repossession	Make links and set up early interventions with mortgage companies	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	April 11

Objective Three: Increase decent and affordable rented housing for those in housing need / maximise housing options in the town

Desired Outcome: Improved access to decent and affordable housing for people in housing need

Key Action	Key Task / Actions Involved	Responsibility	Resources	Timescale
Investigate and develop a range of re-use options for owners	Investigate and evaluate the feasibility of developing a leasing scheme with providers through council nominations	Line Manager of Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	April 12
Increase the use of affordable empty homes in meeting housing need	Use the marketing strategy to encourage landlords to let properties at an affordable rent	Line Manager of Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time	April 11
Work with registered providers to maximise housing options in the town	Monitor and evaluate the outcome from the pilot HH Managing Agent scheme	Housing Advice Manager	Officer Time	April 11

Objective Four: Continue to identify the reasons for the distribution and ownership of empty homes and establish trends and reasons

Desired Outcome: To have accurate information and mapped trends in order to effectively progress strategy development and enable informed decision making

Key Action	Key Task / Actions Involved	Responsibility	Resources	Timescale
Develop an Empty Homes Database	Work with colleagues in Council Tax section to identify the data held on all empty properties	Empty Homes Officer	Within existing IT	July 10
Establish an accurate baseline of empty homes information	Undertake a survey of empty home owners and establish why they are leaving their properties empty	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time / postage costs	April 11
	Consult owners on their views as to what the Council should be doing to help them return their property to use	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time / postage costs	April 11
	Consult local residents and other groups for their views on empty homes in Hartlepool	Empty Homes Officer	Officer Time / postage costs	April 11
Map areas of housing need	Use the information from the Compass CBL scheme to identify areas of housing need	Housing Advice Manager	Officer Time	Oct 10
Review and monitor empty homes performance	Join National Association of Empty Property Practitioners	Principal Environmental Health Officer	£75 per year	July 10

Objective Five: Support investment in Housing Market Renewal and its surrounding areas through the reduction of long-term empty homes

Desired Outcome: Achieve long-term sustainability of these areas

Key Action	Key Task / Actions Involved	Responsibility	Resources	Timescale
Ensure empty homes work complements the regeneration activity for the town	Use the Strategy in adjacent HMR areas	Principal Housing Regeneration Officer	Officer Time	Ongoing



Section 2: Priority Areas for Action

In producing this Strategy for 2010 – 2015 the Empty Homes Strategy Steering Group identified the following areas as having particularly high concentration of empty homes:

o Selective Licensing Areas:

- o Hurworth Street Area
- o Dent / Derwent Street Area
- o Belk / Cameron / Furness Area
- o Cornwall Street Area
- o Rodney Street Area
- o Patterdale / Borrowdale Street Area

o Belle Vue

o Oxford Road Area

o Stephen Street / Suggitt Street Area

o West View Road

o Individual Streets i.e.

- o Helmsley Street
- o Baden Street
- o Sheriff Street
- o Mapleton Road / St Oswalds Street
- o Parton Street¹

In addition the Strategy will also prioritise individual properties in streets that do not have high numbers of empties i.e.

- o Tankerville Street
- o St Pauls Road

These priority areas were identified in December 2009 and it is expected that during the lifetime of this Strategy that this list may change and it will therefore be monitored and analysed on a regular basis. Strict criteria will be introduced to remove any streets from the priority list and replace them.

¹ Please note that this list is not exhaustive

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