

THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

Name of Officer:	Bob Porter, Director of Housing and Planning
Directorate:	Housing and Planning
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Helen Whitehead, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Services
Date of Decision	03 December 2020
Subject of decision:	Empty Homes Plan 2020-23
Call-in Deadline:	N/A

Decision made:

To approve and publish an Empty Homes Plan 2020-23.

Reasons for the Decision:

Empty and derelict homes have an adverse effect on neighbourhoods. They are often unsightly and can attract crime and anti-social behaviour such as squatting, arson, graffiti and fly-tipping. They may also affect the value of neighbouring properties by creating an impression of neglect and decline within a community. Such properties are not only eyesores and a source of neighbourhood distress, they are most significantly a wasted resource in a time of ever growing housing demand. Many people cannot access good housing, yet many homes stand vacant.

Homes that have been empty for more than six months are of concern, and these are known as long term empty homes. The council's Empty Property Team is committed to taking action whenever possible to help bring them back into use. Council intervention helps increase overall housing supply and reduces the negative environmental and economic effects that empty properties have on neighbourhoods.

The Empty Homes Plan 2020-23 sets out the background to empty homes in Thanet, highlights the main ways in which the council can intervene, and explores the opportunities that could be employed to help reduce the number of long term empty homes in Thanet.

The reasons for approving and publishing the Empty Homes Plan 2020-23 are:

- To help guide the work of the Empty Property Team, and
- To be open and transparent about the council's intended interventions in respect of empty homes in Thanet.

The plan was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 27 August 2020 and amended following the recommendations given.

Alternative options considered and why they were rejected when the decision was made:

The Empty Homes Plan provides operational guidance to the Empty Property Team and sets

out the council's approach to tackling empty homes. Not having a plan is not considered to be an option.

Potential options for tackling empty homes, including the options for the use of enforcement powers are set out in the plan. These were considered at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 27 August 2020.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by any executive Member who has been consulted by the officer making the decision and of any dispensation granted to that executive Member by the Head of Paid Service:

None

Please attach any report considered when making the decision (if applicable):

Empty Homes Plan 2020-23