

(a) Access to good quality advice and assistance and promote bringing empty homes back into use			
OBJECTIVE	ACTION	DATE	COMMENTS
Officers available to collaborate and work with owners in bringing empty homes back into use and to make them safe in the intervening period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and review protocols with other council departments eg planning • Develop a joint working protocol with council tax department to work proactively together in the delivery and enforcement of empty homes work to maximise funding opportunities through NHB • Develop a system of making regular contact with owners through letters/questionnaires • Establish 'forums' where owners and prospective purchasers can meet. 	July 2014 July 2014 Sept 2014	A meeting has taken place with Council Tax and agreed
A webpage devoted to the provision of good quality relevant information to assist owners and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop DCC webpage to addressing empty homes and providing practical assistance to owners. This would include all services dedicated to bringing empty homes back into use. 	June 2014	
Promote the service via the DCC website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a marketing strategy for bringing empty homes back into use on the councils webpages • Make use of all aspects of internet and intranet as well as social media outlets. 	June 2014	
Identify other marketing opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek other means of publicising the service • Write to all empty property owners about the empty homes programme • Distribute publicity to all DCC customer access points 	June 2014	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute information to all estate/letting agents in towns across County• Circulate information via email to all letting/estate agents/landlords and empty property owners that we hold details on.• Send information over to DCCs media team to publicise via Twitter and Facebook• Submit an article to appear in the next available edition of Durham County News• Send information to be included in the next edition of Buzz Magazine• Send information to be uploaded on to the Intranet• Send information upload onto DCC website• Send information to the National Landlords Association for circulation amongst their members and upload onto their website• Contact and explore opportunity for advertising through Rightmove• Send information to Library coordinator for display in all Council Libraries• Send information onto AAP coordinators for circulation• Email information onto all County Councillors• Send information onto DKO team for upload onto DKO website• Circulate information internally amongst departments• Circulate information to community buildings, Town Halls etc• Explore opportunities to advertise on Radio		
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(b) A wide range of tools and policy mechanisms and take advantage of all funding opportunities

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	DATE	COMMENTS
<p>Develop Financial Assistance Products especially loans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a new interest free fixed period loan for private landlords (without a means test) as part of a revised Council financial assistance policy (FAP). • Launch a new interest free fixed period loan for owners/potential owner occupiers of long term empty properties • Develop a ‘white goods’ grant for landlords to furnish their properties after refurbishment 	<p>March 2014</p>	
<p>Assist first time buyers to purchase empty homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate homesteading schemes that can offer empty homes for sale at a discount in return for carrying out improvement works and retaining the homes in owner occupation. • Market DCC loans for purchasers to assist with repairs and improvements • Launch a ‘move-in’ grant incentive to owner occupiers buying a property to move into for a minimum period of three years 	<p>Oct 2013</p>	
<p>Utilising Enforcement Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to prepare for EDMOs the Council needs to develop a policy and identify a suitable managing agent to take over the management of empty homes and secure its occupancy. • A scoping study for the use of enforced sale needs to be prepared to allow this type of action to be progressed where appropriate. • Develop CPO options 	<p>October 2014</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research the potential opportunity to commission a consultant to carry out first enforcement cases 		
Utilising DCC funding from the Medium Term Financial Plan and other sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research the possibility of using a limited amount of New Homes Bonus (NHB) to fund additional staffing who can assist in returning empty homes back into use and so enhance the Council's NHB allocation (an 'Invest to Save' model). Incorporate an explicit commitment in Durham's new Local Plan to use s106 monies to bring empty homes back into use as a means of meeting housing need 	tba	
Accessing other public funding opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise the opportunities for landlords to access the pilot Empty Homes Loans Fund 	tba	
(c) Partnership working			
OBJECTIVE	ACTION	DATE	COMMENTS
Working with private owners and public sector landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore leaseback arrangements with private landlords and interested RPs Identify short life funding opportunities 	tba	
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