

APPENDIX 1 DRAFT EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2009-2014

					LEAD OFFICER	PROGRESS AS OF MAY 09
ACTION	TARGET	PRIORITY	RESOURCES			
STRATEGY						
1	Review the Empty Homes Strategy.	Annually	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Scrutiny committee on 2 June 2009 / further report to Members on September 2010
2	Create a suitable strap line for the Empty Homes Strategy.	Proactive line which encapsulates the aim of the strategy	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Under review
3	Empty Homes Action Plan.	Monthly	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Ongoing
PROGRAMME						
1	Return properties empty for more than six months to use.	40 per year	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	5 properties brought back into use in January 2009 and 10 more in the pipeline
2	Negotiate with the Homes and Communities Agency to secure funding for empty homes grants.	100 units before the end of 31 March 2014	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	9 units completed at Fountain House. 20 homes per year 2009-10 to 2013-14
3	Negotiate with internal council departments for renovation grant funding.	Subject to availability	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Under negotiation
4	Identify long term empty properties (over 2 years) which could be brought back into use using enforcement powers from the Housing Act 2004 (Empty Dwelling Management Orders).	6 per year	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	4 properties currently under investigation
5	Identify funding in the council's Affordable Housing Capital Programme for use on empty properties.	£200,000 to be spent on off-the-shelf purchases by 31 March 2010	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	10 properties being investigated
		£108,500 to be spent on purchase of move-on properties	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Enabling Officers	1 home purchased and 1 in the pipeline
		£18,000 on family housing conversion in Rifford Road	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	1 home purchased
		£249,000 on the rehab of the former Admiral Inn	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	7 homes completed
		£100,000 as a leasing pot to provide further private sector leased homes in Exeter	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	At least 10 homes to be brought back into use and brought up to the decent homes standard
		£30,000 for the leasing of an 'eyesore' property in Oxford Street	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	1 home in the pipeline
		£150,000 allocated on laings rehabilitation	High	Staff time / capital funding	Strategic Housing Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager	2 homes in the pipeline. Potential to do 25 more.
6	Identify funding for the EXtraLet scheme.	£80,000 to be spent by September 2009. Consider extra commuted sum money	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Housing Needs Manager	£50,937 spent on 40 properties since April 2008 (as of February 2009). Currently manage 80 properties.

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7	Maintain Empty Homes Partnership for the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Region.	Annually	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Maintained
8	Continue to promote downsizing to free up properties for families in the Exeter area and help prevent under-occupation.	Council target of at least 25 moves per year. Budget of £50,000	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Housing Enabling Officers	Promoted in Insight and by Estate Management. 81 moves so far total. Review 31 March 2010
		RSL target of at least 20 moves per year. Budget of £50,000 (2008-10)	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Housing Enabling Officers	Review December 2009
9	Promoting the creation of resident landlords within the city willing to take in lodgers.	20 lodgers in 2009-10	Medium	£5,000 spent on officer time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Becoming a Resident Landlord Booklet produced April 2009 (300 produced) / Accompanying leaflet for City services at design stage as of April 2009
10	Create a register of landlords and potential lodgers as a housing option.	Create list	Medium	Staff time	Housing Needs Manager	Ongoing
11	Promote and monitor the STEPs programme run by Exeter Community Initiative.	Work with STEPs to come up with funds and 2 properties for affordable housing	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Housing Enabling Officers	Revenue: £5,000 invested 2008 and £5,000 in 2009
						Conditional capital funding of £50,000 on the production of a viable scheme
12	Conversion of under-used or hard to let sheltered housing blocks.	10 possible guest room conversions	Medium	Staff time / capital funding	Head of Housing Services / Housing Enabling Manager	Investigation underway and nearly complete
13	Tackle restrictive lettings practises.	persuade some Housing Associations to change practises which restrict letting of flats to people with children	Medium	Staff time	Housing Needs Manager	Ongoing
INFORMATION & TRAINING						
1	Obtain and review council tax lists to identify empty properties.	February / June / October. (Every 4 months)	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	First list requested January 2009
2	Conduct street surveys to identify vacant units over shops and empty buildings.	Fore Street, Heavitree / Cowick Street, St Thomas to be thoroughly surveyed by 31 March 2011	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	First survey September 2009
3	Ensure the Empty Property database is kept up to date in order to establish the capacity for linking the data to broader regeneration.	Monthly	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	On going

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4	Remain abreast of changes in legislation and best practise as discussed by the Government, the Empty Homes Agency and the National Association of Empty Property Practitioners.	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	On going
5	Continue to build staff skills and knowledge.	Medium	Staff time	Housing Enabling Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	2007 - Affordable Housing Masterclass. 2008 - Negotiations skills courses and more planned. Housing Market Viability Event. 2009 - Continued mentoring of Housing Enablers and Empty Homes Officers and a certificate in Enabling being investigated.
6	Empty Homes Partnership Newsletter	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Second issue in production
7	Advertising	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager	Under review
ADMINISTRATION					
1	Aim to reply to all calls / emails relating to empty properties within 2 days.	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Negotiator	Jan 09: 239 calls Mar 09: 235 calls
2	Secure revenue funding for the administration of the Empty Homes Partnership beyond 2011 subject to Local Government reorganisation of Devon.	Low	Staff time / capital funding	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	Funding secure up to April 2011 except for Magna Housing who have been written to
3	Continue to host the Empty Homes Partnership meetings.	Medium	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	Next meeting April 2009
4	Continue to host the South West Empty Homes Forum.	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	Next forum June 2009
CONSULTATION					
1	Empty Homes Strategy 2009-2014 to be placed on the Council's website for public view and comment.	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	To be uploaded June 2009
2	Review and revise Empty Homes Strategy in light of comments from the public.	High	Staff time	Empty Homes Partnership Manager / Empty Homes Partnership Officer	Revision awaited