



Empty Homes Action Plan (2025-2030)

Bradford District

Introduction

This Action Plan is an appendix to the strategic document *Housing Strategy for Bradford 2020–2030: A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive*. It sets out how Bradford Council and its partners will address the challenges posed by empty homes, improve housing supply, and strengthen communities.

Purpose

- Respond to the growing need to make better use of the district's housing stock.
- Address issues caused by empty homes, including community blight.
- Outline objectives, actions, responsibilities, and partnerships.

Our four Key Objectives are;

1. **Prevent properties** from becoming empty
2. **Adopt a partnership approach** to tackling empty homes
3. **Implement practical solutions** to bring empty homes back into use

4. **Promote prosperity across the district**

Bradford Council's Empty Homes and Loans Team works closely with internal and external partners to reduce the number of empty homes by direct intervention and influencing property owners. This plan details actions to achieve the objectives and will be reviewed regularly to monitor progress and respond to emerging challenges.

Empty Homes Action Plan – Key Actions

Strategic Actions

Each action includes the approach, lead responsibility, and supporting partners.

1. **Enhance the outreach to Empty Property Owners**

We will look to engage empty property owners at the earliest opportunity to help reduce the length of time properties are empty and the numbers of empty properties. We will;

Approach:

- Understand the reason behind empty homes and the impact of empty homes on owners and communities.
- Promote, signpost and promote Council services, incentives and support available to empty homes owners.
- Communicate with empty property owners through numerous communication methods including; letters, emails, telephone and online digital campaigns.
- Use legislative powers, including Compulsory Purchase Orders, where necessary to enforce.
- Ensure the information provided is accessible to all and provide contact details online to encourage engagement

Key Objectives;

Adopt a **partnership approach** to tackling empty homes

Implement **practical solutions** to bring empty homes back into use

Promote prosperity across the district

Lead: Empty Homes & Loans Team

Partners: Council departments (Press Office, Revenues & Benefits, Environmental Enforcement, Building Control, Planning, Legal Services), Police, Fire Service

2. Continuous Service Improvement

Regularly assessing performance, gathering feedback, and adapting services to deliver better outcomes for property owners, communities, and partners.

Approach:

- Gather feedback from owners and service users to improve the service provided.
- Work with allied departments and partnerships to develop new initiatives to bring properties back into use.
- Benchmark and share best practice with other local authorities.
- Attend local and national meetings to discuss prominent issues and develop solutions.
- Provide ongoing training and development opportunities for staff.

Key Objectives;

Prevent properties from becoming empty

Adopt a **partnership approach** to tackling empty homes

Implement **practical solutions** to bring empty homes back into use

Promote prosperity across the district

Lead: Empty Homes & Loans Team

Partners: Registered Providers, Community Organisations, Sheffield Homes & Loans Service, Empty Homes Network

3. Data Driven Targeting

Using data and analytics to identify and prioritise interventions effectively.

Approach:

- Using data from Council Tax, Land Registry and mapping to identify and analyze trends in long term empties.
- Risk assess properties based on relevant factors such as location, condition and potential impact on the community to help prioritise which properties to target first.
- Share information where appropriate to target interventions successfully.

Key Objectives;

Prevent properties from becoming empty

Adopt a partnership approach to tackling empty homes

Implement practical solutions to bring empty homes back into use

Lead: Empty Homes & Loans Team

Partners: Council Tax, allied government departments

4. Support Neighborhood Regeneration

Supporting neighbourhood regeneration means tackling empty homes in a way that contributes to revitalizing communities, improving housing quality, and reducing social and economic decline. This approach ensures that interventions are not isolated but integrated with wider area-based initiatives.

Approach:

- Align with local regeneration initiatives.
- Work with large area based landlords to reduce numbers of empties
- Keep Council Wardens and elected members informed of projects or interventions.
- Review data on empties taking into account local knowledge and characteristics to improve intervention outcomes.

Key Objectives;

Prevent properties from becoming empty

Adopt a **partnership approach** to tackling empty homes

Implement **practical solutions** to bring empty homes back into use

Promote prosperity across the district

Lead: Empty Homes & Loans Team

Partners: Council Wardens, Environmental Enforcement, Ward Partnerships, Voluntary & Community Sector, Social Enterprises

5. Improve Health Outcomes

Ensure that properties brought back into use meet minimum health and safety standards.

Approach:

- Ensure properties meet minimum standards in compliance with the relevant legislative requirements
- Advise owners on compliance and how to meet this standard.
- Inform empty property owners about available grants and support schemes

Key Objectives;

Promote prosperity across the district

Lead: Empty Homes & Loans Team

Partners: Housing Standards Team, Building Control, Planning

6. Enhance Housing Access and Choice

Improve housing availability and affordability by bringing empty homes back into use.

Approach:

- Include housing need and affordability in prioritization to ensure interventions benefit those most in need.
- Contribute to reducing homelessness through increased supply.

Key Objectives;

Adopt a partnership approach to tackling empty homes

Implement practical solutions to bring empty homes back into use

Promote prosperity across the district

Lead: Empty Homes & Loans Team

Partners: Housing Options Team, Registered Providers, Private Sector Landlords

7. Maintain Accurate Records

Ensure the data, both our own and that provided by partners, about empty properties is reliable and up to date.

Approach:

- Verify empty homes data through inspections.
- Use up to date and relevant data to schedule action and progress cases.
- Encourage owners to update council tax and land registry details.

Key Objectives;

Adopt a partnership approach to tackling empty homes

Lead: Revenues & Benefits and Empty Homes & Loans Team

Partners: Legal Services, Estate Management, District Valuer, Council Tax

8. Deliver Sustainable Services

Focusing on long term, financially viable solutions for tackling empty homes.

Approach:

- Emphasise products that recycle funds (e.g. enforced sale, loans, purchase by agreement) allowing for reinvestment into future interventions rather than relying solely on new funding streams.
- Collaboration and partnerships with other council services to avoid duplication.

Key Objectives;

Prevent properties from becoming empty

Adopt a partnership approach to tackling empty homes

Implement practical solutions to bring empty homes back into use

Lead: Empty Homes & Loans Team

Partners: Finance, Legal Services, Estate Management, Sheffield Homes & Loans Service

Monitoring and Review

The Action Plan will be reviewed regularly to:

- Track progress against objectives.
- Respond to legislative changes and market conditions.
- Incorporate feedback from stakeholders.

Commitment: Bradford Council and its partners remain dedicated to reducing empty homes and improving housing opportunities for all residents.

Matrix of Approach, objectives and supporting partners.

Ref	Action & Approach	Objectives	Lead Team	Supporting Partners
1	Enhance the outreach to Empty Property Owners	Practical Solutions Promote prosperity Partnership Approach	Empty Homes & Loans Team	Council departments (Press Office, Revenues & Benefits, Environmental Enforcement, Building Control, Planning, Legal Services), Police, Fire Service
2	Continuous Service Improvement	Preventing Empty Homes Practical Solutions Promote prosperity Partnership Approach	Empty Homes & Loans Team	Council: Revenues & Benefits, Elected Members External: Registered Providers, Community Orgs, Sheffield Homes & Loans Service National: Empty Homes Network
3	Data Driven Targeting - Using data and analytics to prioritise interventions effectively.	Preventing Empty Homes Practical Solutions Partnership Approach	Empty Homes & Loans Team	Council: Revenues & Benefits, Legal, Press Office, Elected Members External: Media (e.g., Telegraph & Argus)
4	Support Neighbourhood Regeneration -Tackle empty homes in a way that contributes to revitalizing communities.	Preventing Empty Homes Practical Solutions Promote prosperity Partnership Approach	Empty Homes & Loans Team	Council: Wardens, Environmental Enforcement, Ward Partnerships External: Voluntary & Community Sector, Social Enterprises, Charities
5	Improve Health Outcomes -Ensure properties brought back into use meet minimum health and safety standards	Promote prosperity	Empty Homes & Loans Team	Council: Environmental Health, Planning, Building Control, Neighbourhood Services, Press Office External: Incommunities, Police, Fire

				Service, Valuation Office, Homes England, Social Enterprises
6	Enhance Housing Access and Choice Improve housing availability and affordability by bringing empty homes back into use.	Practical Solutions Promote prosperity Partnership Approach	Empty Homes & Loans Team	Council: Press Office, Housing Options, Revenues & Benefits
7	Maintain Accurate Records Ensure the data, both our own and that provided by partners, is reliable	Practical Solutions Partnership Approach	Empty Homes & Loans Team	Council: Legal Services, Estate Management, District Valuer, Council Tax
8	Deliver Sustainable Solutions Focusing on long term financially viable solutions for tackling empty homes	Preventing Empty Homes Practical Solutions Partnership Approach	Revenues & Benefits	Council: Finance, Legal Services, Estate Management, Sheffield Homes & Loans