

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Name of activity:	Empty Homes Strategy 2023 - 2028	Date Completed:	29 November 2022		
Directorate / Division responsible for activity:	Growth/Technical Services	Lead Officer:	Nat Slade		
Existing Activity	Y	New / Proposed Activity	N	Changing / Updated Activity	Y

What are the aims / main purposes of the activity?

- To reduce the number of homes on the district that are empty for more than 6 months
- To improve the existing built environment by bringing derelict land and buildings that are uninhabitable back into use
- To return un-occupied residential properties to use
- Improvement and re-occupation of “problem” long term empty properties
- To contribute towards the district’s stock of good quality affordable housing.

What are the main actions and processes involved?

Proactively and reactively investigating long term (6month or more) empty properties, to bring them back into use by informal means, offer of financial assistance or through enforcement action. A review of this activity is proposed to assist with bringing more empty properties back into use.

Who is intended to benefit & who are the main stakeholders?

Internal stakeholders – Private Sector Housing Team, Revenues & Benefits Team, Legal, Planning and Housing, to help identify empty homes, locate owners, provide support and assistance to owners, support enforcement action. The grants and loans also support owners to let their properties with the Council having nomination rights. Thereby assisting with homelessness prevention households from the housing register and or at risk from homelessness can be supported into a new home.

External Partners – Letting/estate agents, developers, local charitable housing organisations, helping to ensure empty homes are renovated and let or sold. Registered housing providers looking for property to return to use as affordable housing or buildings to acquire for specialist accommodation.

Empty Home Owners – The Strategy details the support available to assist with bringing homes back into use or the enforcement action that can be taken if owners do not take action.

Arun District Council Residents – The Strategy deals with tools and ways that the Council will tackle long term empty properties that could be affecting residents and also how they can repot empty homes.

Have you already consulted on / researched the activity?

The Council have had an Empty Homes Officer for a number of years therefore activity in this area is based upon experience as well as researching good practice from other local authorities and playing an active role in the National Empty Homes Network.

Impact on people with a protected characteristic (What is the potential impact of the activity? Are the impacts high, medium or low?)

Protected characteristics / groups	Is there an impact (Yes / No)	If Yes, what is it and identify whether it is positive or negative
Age (older / younger people, children)	Yes	Positive – The activity applies across all age groups, but young people may lack access to social housing and unable to afford to buy or rent in the private sector. Increasing supply and property types helps young people access the housing market. Older people may go into care without making adequate provision for their existing home, or relatives may find the situation difficult to deal with. The Strategy aims to raise awareness of options available.
Disability (people with physical / sensory impairment or mental disability)	Yes	Positive – Support can be offered to those with a disability or whose health has deteriorated to overcome difficulties in selling empty property in order to move forward.
Gender reassignment (the process of transitioning from one gender to another.)	No	No specific impacts, a person’s gender reassignment, will not affect support offered or enforcement programmes but returning empty homes to use offers housing choice to those living or wishing to live in Arun.
Marriage & civil partnership (Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Civil	Yes	Positive – Often properties can become left empty due to a marriage breakup, therefore the strategy offers support and assistance that is available to sell or bring the property back into

partnerships are legally recognized for same-sex couples)		use.
Pregnancy & maternity (Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant & maternity refers to the period after the birth)	No	No specific impacts, a person's pregnancy or maternity, will not affect support offered or enforcement programmes but returning empty homes to use offers housing choice to those living or wishing to live in Arun.
Race (ethnicity, colour, nationality or national origins & including gypsies, travellers, refugees & asylum seekers)	No	No specific impacts, a person's race, will not affect support offered or enforcement programmes but returning empty homes to use offers housing choice to those living or wishing to live in Arun.
Religion & belief (religious faith or other group with a recognised belief system)	No	No specific impacts, a person's religion or belief, will not affect support offered or enforcement programmes but returning empty homes to use offers housing choice to those living or wishing to live in Arun.
Sex (male / female)	No	No specific impacts, a person's sex, will not affect support offered or enforcement programmes but returning empty homes to use offers housing choice to those living or wishing to live in Arun.
Sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual)	No	No specific impacts, a person's sexual orientation, will not affect support offered or enforcement programmes but returning empty homes to use offers housing choice to those living or wishing to live in Arun.
Whilst Socio economic disadvantage that people may face is not a protected characteristic; the potential impact on this group should be also considered	No	No specific impacts, a person's socio economic status, will not affect support offered or enforcement programmes but returning empty homes to use offers housing choice to those living or wishing to live in Arun.

What evidence has been used to assess the likely impacts?
Experience of delivering this activity and researching good practise from other local authorities.

Decision following initial assessment			
Continue with existing or introduce new / planned activity	Y	Amend activity based on identified actions	N

Action Plan			
Impact identified	Action required	Lead Officer	Deadline

Monitoring & Review	
Date of last review or Impact Assessment:	
Date of next 12 month review:	
Date of next 3 year Impact Assessment (from the date of this EIA):	

Date EIA completed:	29/11/22
Signed by Person Completing:	Louise Crane