Appendix Four: Consultation responses – Long Term Empty properties

Yes to premium:

- A lot of properties are just left to go to ruin and I presume no council tax is payable as they are not occupied.
- A number of houses in our village have been empty for several years , and we are seeing young families who are brought up in the village yet can't stay in the village and forced out.
- A year isn't a 'long' time. Two years is. Renovating from derelict listed property certainly takes a lots of time, it also takes a lot of money, less money perhaps if you take more time and do it yourself…..
- Absolutely. There are a number of empty homes in Wyesham, which have been unoccupied for over 10 years. We have families desperate to stay in the area, but have limited options.
- Accommodation is in such short supply, empty homes should be discouraged
- All properties should be put to good use
- All properties should pay full council tax.
- All properties that are empty for more than 1 year should automatically be charged the Max rate that can be applied.
- An appropriate amount should be determined for each case.
- As well as a premium, owners should be made to keep properties to a minimum standard of repair and not allowed to let properties rot away.
- Class 3 should be exempt
- Clearly this will depend upon the circumstances and exceptions should be considered where significant refurbishments have been required or the property has been marketed and is just not being rented. If all efforts have been made the property should be exempt from a levy but if not then this would encourage sale or letting of empty properties.
- Council tax is based on property not persons and is for the provision of services to all households
- Definitely. The property owner should be doing everything in their power to bring that property back in to use. Too many properties on the high street, I know from experience look for extortionate rents and/or increase rents once they have a tenant, squeezing them out of business. Only by making a deterrent of the 3 X council tax for it being unoccupied, will make these landlords keen to look after their tenants, as opposed to seeing them as a easy way to generate money. I have run my own business, I am in favour of fair business. But not what I have seen with some of these property landlords.

- Do not think second homes should be allowed to be free of extra costs Do not think second homes should be allowed in the first place

- Empty houses should be in use to house people that need then. It's a waste to have an empty house and there is no reason for it.

- Empty properties bring no economic or social benefit to the community and the council tax premium can start to make up for that to benefit the residents. This is assuming the exemptions laid out are retained

- Empty properties should be brought into full time use. Protects communities and make more housing available.

- Given the need to achieve a greater number of homes, penalising owners of unoccupied properties seems an obvious course.

- Homes are in short supply for young people. We must do all we can that homes are available to ensure people can stay in their locality.

- Homes can be empty for many reasons. There should be incentive not to leave homes empty, however emptiness due to renovation should be exempt from excess charges for a maximum period of 18 months providing the renovation is clear and evident, work is in progress and a reasonable statement of the work scheduled and the time to be taken has been made.

- Housing is desperately needed in the county and it seems an outrage that there are so many long-term empty properties which could house those without a home (for whatever reason).

- I am aware of several long term empty properties in and around Abergavenny. There appears to be no incentive to move these properties into occupancy. All properties should pay Council Tax.

- I am concerned over the lack of data when it comes to quantifying 'extremely large numbers of homeless' and the associated cost. You have quantified the number of long term empty properties and second homes but if there are thousands of homeless say and only 400 long term empty homes, it is not going to solve the issue is it?

- I feel that this premium should also applied to properties above a retail premises where multiple floors stand empty and in a poor state of repair. There are many examples of this on Monmouth High Street.

- I have a property adjacent to mine that has been empty for over 10 years. The garden is not maintained and causes me issues as I am supposed to talk about the evergreens according to the policy on this but I can't.

- I have answered yes, but I am assuming this is only for residential property, not business premises?

- I know of several empty three bedroom family homes in Usk. On investigation we discovered an empty house on Priory Gardens, unoccupied for thirteen years, where the owner was registered with the doctor in Usk despite living in Newport. There are other buildings such as The Royal Hotel Usk which remains closed for ten years and cannot be sold because of a family dispute.

This is an ongoing problem and with the crisis in housing is totally unnecessary and both selfish and uncaring by the owners.

- I share the Council's concern over homelessness and see the force and value of this proposal.
- I think it is important that owners of empty properties should think very hard about maintaining that emptiness
- I think it's appropriate and measured to provide an encouragement for long-term empty property to be returned to use. This will help to encourage home owners to return the property to effective use and for occupants to contribute to the local economy.
- I would like to see a levy on second home owners when permanent housing stock is used as a holiday home or kept empty for months at a time. I would exclude caravans, one-bed cabins and such like, glamping pods, yurts etc - those building that do not have foundations or could be considered moveable.
- If a property has been empty for a year or more then one has to question why? Perhaps the Council should encourage the owner to work with them to restore the property to a habitable state so that the Council can use the housing stock for housing people in need. If this was agreed then the property owner could be refunded the premium taxation but, the incentive for cooperating with the Council must be that the housing stock is 'given' over to the Council to use for a period of time. A win, win.
- If a property is empty long term then it could fall into disrepair and benefit no one
- If long term is defined as 1 year that is a reasonable amount of time to refurbish the property. There would need to be exemptions for demonstrable specific circumstances e.g. legal, planning or building delays.
- If you are affluent to afford additional housing then yes,
- In these days of Housing shortages, it is nothing short of criminal neglect to have properties left empty on a long term basis, clearly the owners can afford to do so, therefore need some incentive to get this Housing stock back on the open market.
- It could help with housing for local people
- It is a concern that these properties haven't been targeted before. In the current economic climate and housing crisis, these properties are a disgrace to our county.
- It is important that we utilise such properties to support the vulnerable
- It is right to encourage occupancy of empty homes.
- It makes no sense, morally or economically, for homes to stand empty while there are people who, for whatever reason, find themselves homeless.
- It seems to me to be a "no-brainer" to try to reduce the number of empty properties when there are people without homes or forced to remain in the parental home.
- it would help the council with regard to the budget impact as a result of the cost of living crisis
- It's a disgrace that properties can be left empty and left to the elements until they basically are so run down they have to be demolished . When I lived in rogiet from 2012 a property in Crossway was empty and degrading as well as the rogiett Hotel in station Road...still to this day no one living or using the property so this tax would make profiteers think twice about keeping empty properties. It's a money making enterprise .it spoils communities and is an ugly eyesore
- Leaving homes empty long-term when young local families cannot find somewhere to live is unbelievably selfish
- Long term empty is an issue, but the council should explore why this is the case. For example, there could be an on going court case about sales or ownership. It could be that the occupant has had to move away to get a job and is struggling to sell.
- Long term empty properties should be charged a high premium to encourage selling on / letting to homeless charities.
- Long term empty properties should be discouraged.

- Long term empty properties that are not carrying out the business that they are designated for.
- Long term should apply to properties empty for six month or more.
- Mae anheddau gwag dim ond yn cronni gwerth tra'n cyfrannu dim i'r gymdeithas leol. (Empty dwellings only accrue value while contributing nothing to the local society).
- make it punitive to reduce the number of uninhabited dwellings and to reduce the proliferation of holiday homes
- Many people are waiting for a home, be what that may, a roof over their head!
- My children both at home still, because they cannot afford to buy in the town they were born in. If people can afford to own 2 homes they should be able to afford to pay council tax on them both.
- my neighbourhood has almost 30% 2nd homes to the detriment of the community
- My only concern is the reason for the property being empty and if charging more council tax will prevent owners from carrying out repairs. Conversely increases in council tax may encourage owners to carry out repairs and get property ready to rent out.
- On properties that are just left unoccupied due to dispute or disrepair. Not on occupied rentals, holiday lets and second homes.
- Once they have been empty for a year (or so), then it seems reasonable to charge a premium to encourage people to do something with them.
- Only if there is no valid reason for the property being empty.
- Our towns and villages would thrive with less empty properties within them
- Owners of second properties in Monmouthshire have driven up prices, so now youngsters are unable to purchase their first home in the county. I have two daughters, one now is forced to live at home due to the high rents and house prices. It just seems now the rich are getting poorer and the poor are getting poorer.
- People should not be able to hoard homes, they need people in them.
- Several of the empty buildings in the county are structurally unsound and pose a danger to the public. I live next to one such building which the owner refuses to make safe, despite the fact it overhangs the main high street, the garden is full of rats and completely overgrown and the electrics are exposed to the rain and are dangerous to the residents next door. There have previously been pigeons inside and there is moss growing inside. Letting these buildings fall into this level of disrepair is unacceptable, especially as the high street is currently declining to the point where most buildings are becoming too far gone to even consider repairing and becoming habitable or viable for commercial use. It is also unacceptable that the people who own some of these empty buildings that have been allowed to fall into such disrepair, and that the owners are allowed to maintain possession of these buildings.
- Suggested extension of exemption for homes that are for sale for over a year provided that evidence has been supplied that every effort is being made to sell the property (including reductions in price etc) and that where sales have fallen through it is of no fault of the seller. And that this is limited to a 2nd year extension.
- The council has a duty to its residents / citizens first - not to enable influx of second home buyers who then create a market in second homes and push up prices to make properties less affordable for people already living here
- The Council should use all and every power at its disposal to bring long term empty properties into use, including offering owners the opportunity to rent them through the Council
- The county is in desperate need of properties to house the homeless, if people cannot afford to make the property habitable they need to consider whether it would be better if they sold it.
- The housing crises can only be abated by making more homes available. There is as shortage of building land and increasing pressures caused by new housing on local

infrastructure. Under used property add the to problem and a premium on these would contribute to tackling the problem that they cause.

- The levels of homelessness in the County are high. Council funds are scarce and have to be shared out wisely. As a society, we have to all think differently about tackling the housing crisis. Many long term empty property owners may not realise that an empty house contributes to a housing problem. Introducing a premium could make then think and manage the property more appropriately.
- The need for local people to purchase to stay in their community
- The owners need to do up properties to rent out to families, the housing crisis will never get any better.
- The owners should be contacted by MCC to establish why the property is empty. Assistance could be provided to help advertise the property or help with repairs, if required. Owners unwilling to liaise with MCC should have the premium imposed on them.
- The potential loophole of substantially furnished needs to be closed so that it isn't possible for the owner to put crappy furniture in rooms in order to claim that it fits the criteria.

  Is it possible to investigate the option to compulsory purchase any long term empty property?
- There are exemptions for certain circumstances such as longer term hospital or residential care. As long as common sense is applied to the handful of cases where there is a genuine reason for the property being empty (such as owner missing but not declared dead) I see no reason for it.
- there are loads of empty homes just used for holidays which then effects money spent in local businesses, schools etc. there are young families, homeless, etc looking and desperate for homes that cant get homes as they are being bought up quickly for holidays homes. Monmouthshire is in need of a change i think its a brilliant idea.
- There are too many empty properties in the areas of Rogiet and Caldicot that could be used to ease homelessness.
- There are too many empty properties owned by people who seem in no rush to develop or sell. Need to ensure all buildings are used.
- There is a housing shortage in the county and we (society) should be taking every measure possible to address this.
- There is a shortage of homes for people, if people can leave properties empty they must be living somewhere else
- There is an urgent need of long term residential accommodation , particularly for young people wanting to work in Monmouthshire. As there are already, a considerable number of dwellings which are left vacant year after year. We are losing these dwellings to long term occupation. In an effort to address the problem we are also losing large swathes of green field sites for new build some of which could be reduced by full occupation of existing homes.
- There is no excuse to leave a property empty in the current climate. People are desperate for homes. An empty property deteriorates and attracts vandalism
- There is no reason why a property cannot be in use
- There needs to be a large incentive to ensure empty properties are occupied without delay, in view of the accommodation shortage.
- There needs to be this 'incentive' to make some people free up empty dwellings to help thy housing crisis. There's been one such empty property for over 10 years in our road!
- There's a housing shortage already. My husband and I both have good, well paid jobs in the local area (Caldicot), yet we can't afford to buy a home in Monmouthshire.
- these properties effectively reduce the available stock of housing and push up the price of what accommodation is available. At the very least, owners should contribute to the social welfare of Monmouthshire residents whom their selfishness is affecting

- They had this where i loved previously and it helped reduce empty homes
- They should be available for housing.
- This is an excellent idea. It wont be popular with some people but there are a number of properties in my local area that have been derelict/empty for years and this housing could be put to good use. As a county we have to do everything we can to tackle problems of homelessness and this is probably the only way left for the council to address it.
- This is an issue that may be appropriate in extreme cases in urban areas where there are the right services and facilities for people who need accommodation but the high levels proposed should be only in very exceptional cases, and not as a blanket penalty.

  In contrast to urban properties, Rural properties have little in the way of employment, no transport nor sufficient facilities, and as such they are completely unsuitable to solve home shortages and should be treated completely differently.

  Also the one year exemption for repairs to properties is completely unrealistic. Older properties need several years to bring them up to modern standards with proper utility services, heating and insulation etc.
- This is essential to protect local communities. We have visited West Wales for holidays twice last summer and have been shocked at how the places we once knew are dead with no local communities left
- This will be an incentive for owners to utilise the buildings to benefit the county
- This would force owners of empty properties to do them up and rent them out or sell them.
- This would help bring more, much-needed homes, back into use and raise (again, much-needed) revenue for the council.
- To make owners of empty properties make a fair contribution to the local community.
- too many long term empty properties that are an eyesore just being held onto by greedy landlords protecting their 'investments'
- We have a housing crisis and it needs to be addressed. Premium should maybe scale up if empty longer than a year.
- When accommodation is in such short supply, it's morally reprehensible to own a property which isn't being lived in full time
- While there is a significant amount of homelessness and while local authorities are starved of resources for providing enough affordable accommodation there must be a deterrent to keeping existing dwellings empty. A secondary benefit would be the increase in resources to help the homeless.
- With housing costs (building, buying and maintaining) and increased homelessness pressures, for property to sit empty seems so wasteful and to have more than one property a luxury. If owners choose to continue to do this then applying a higher charge to better support the challenges of homelessness, vulnerable people and communities where the property is feels fair.
- With so much homelessness and not enough social housing, please charge those who deliberately keep properties unused. However, there are two further exemptions I would like to add, or at least a right of appeal.
  1. I recently had a property on the market for four years while seven sales fell through. I was paying full rate Council Tax throughout and it nearly bankrupted me, through no fault of my own - offers fell through because of Brexit, Covid, inability to get a mortgage, etc etc - I really tried my utmost to sell this property and it was punitive enough to have to pay full rate Council Tax. Maybe there should be a right of appeal on a premium?
  2. Some friends have a property they are trying to convert to liveable accommodation but have been unable to proceed because they are held up by the MCC Planning

Department who, quite rightly, are being very fussy about the conversion of a very old barn. A right of appeal on a premium would seem appropriate.

- Yes as it should act as an incentive to occupy the property or sell it.
- Yes, as is relevant to second homes as a luxury to living standards of the owners. However, discretion is needed for a range of reasons for absence from property when it is a persons sole residence. Such persons might have very low financial resources. I am one such person who must retain ownership of my own home , but on a small pension, because in my case I am disabled and long term sick , and my carer resides in another nearby country , who can not yet leave his very elderly mother, who was in a care home there. . This arrangement is finite. Rather than list other examples of possible exemptions, I state that absolutely, there are many people who through force of circumstances, are unable to live in their primary property for unspecified periods of time. Limiting the exemption to one year .. can be unrealistic.
- Yes, providing that the money raised is used for suitable purposes.
- young families from Monmouthshire need to have fair playing field to purchase properties its all being given away to cash buyers who are rich from other places
- Empty properties don't contribute to the community or local businesses and can bring down the look of an area if not maintained.
- Talk to the owner of the property to find out why it is "long term empty"
- There is no incentive to sell or let empty properties and this may incentivise the sale or let by the owners.
- To encourage occupation, charging an empty property premium is an encouraging exercise, however, we understand that there is an array of varying factors that require consideration for extended timeframes where properties are left empty. There is a need for more flexibility for refurbishment to properties that are empty, especially with the cost-of-living crisis.
- You need to establish WHY the property is empty. if it is for no good reason, the owner should be given a limited time to do something about it, otherwise a penalty will be imposed. Good properties which someone could buy or live in should be occupied.
- definition of a long term empty property should relate to a dwelling that is completely separate from the land containing the main / first home
- Long term empty homes are of no benefit to the community or of any enjoyment to the owner. It would be however useful to determine the reason for these properties being long term empty. Disputed Wills etc should not be penalised.
- Only if that the property is not being maintained or is causing detriment to the local residents and/or environment
- Where possible, empty properties should be occupied

No to premium:

- A charge would reduce the availability of improved accommodation in the county
- Annex's which under the council's definition could be termed 2nd homes, or long term empty properties generally form part of the main house (with a single address for the whole) and therefore cannot be sold separately. This point is generally laid down and enforced by the council's own planning rules and therefore annex to a main house and used by the family should not be subject to the proposed premium.
- As full Council Tax is already being paid but no services are being provided (which must be the case if the properties are empty) then the owners are already contributing significantly more towards the provision of Council services than others. Also, if an additional charge is levied that is as likely to cause the owners to render them uninhabitable as it is to make them rent or sell the property. It is certainly what I would

do, which would mean the Council will receive less money not more.

In my case the property in question is a one bedroom flat above my garage. It was built because the previous owner had a daughter who required 24/7 care and the carers required somewhere to take their breaks. It was not intended to be for permanent occupation and is not suitable for it. It is on the same plot of land as my house and within 10 feet of it. In no sense is it a property I would consider letting to others or that I could ever sell. Accordingly, rather than pay even more Council Tax (which I wouldn't be able to afford) I would just remove the kitchen and bathroom and just use the building for its primary purpose, which is as a garage.

- Because you are already charging 100% council tax on the empty property, the owner is still paying the council tax fully so charging a premium especially up to 300% is very unfair.
- Being charged 100% of council tax currently is sufficient to discourage long-term vacancy without good reason (for residential properties).
- Could be empty due to flood, damage etc
- Council tax is meant to pay for services used, not for Political purposes. Empty buildings do not use services
- Council tax should not be used as a penalty in some kind of class war. There should be other measures available to deal with unoccupied properties.
- Each property, given that there are only 400, should be treated individually. I suspect many of these are uninhabitable/need considerable work to bring them up to acceptable living standards. Charging more Council Tax will potentially make this less likely. If a property is empty it is not using any services for which Council Tax is charged. More positive schemes should be used to encourage long term empty property's homeowners to bring properties back to use.
- Empty houses don't use services so they're already paying over the odds.
- Greedy Council. Thin end of the wedge.
- How about helping landlords instead of penalising them? Rent Smart Wales is a disaster and landlords in Wales are selling because of it. If you're not careful you'll have no rental properties, housing market crash and more homeless people.
- I do not believe it is fair to further tax individuals (who are likely already high tax payer) to make up for poor management of public finances by both successive governments and local councils. Effective long term strategies need to be developed rather than additional tax burdens.
- I think when a relative has passed away or is in a care home it would be unfair to charge the family as a result.
- If a property is empty then they aren't using any services provided by the council, as such it should be more likely that a re-bate should be provided not charging a premium, that would seem fairer. You should look at charging more for households with more people in the property, that would seem fairer.
- If any further council tax is added to a 2nd home owner, I fear it will deter people from buying properties, and those who already have a 2nd property selling up. And as much as people are upset about 2nd home owners, they provide extra revenue by letting out their properties. I understand local people are upset as they are no longer able to buy their own county. If the council decide to go ahead with their plans, I think the lowest amount should be charged.

  The other alternative is to say 2nd home owners can only rent out their properties to locals. I know 2nd home owners have 2nd properties so they can rent out in the summer to gain revenue for themselves.

  I fear if we keep bashing the English, we will drive anyone from buying in Wales, thus losing revenue from those visiting.

I absolutely love Wales and moved here in December 2019 as my mother in law was ill then, sadly passing away in 2020 leaving us her house. We sold our house in London, in order we could devote all our time at our home in Wales as we could not afford to run both properties. My mother in law was born in Raglan and father in law in Mertha Tydfil so we have connections in Wales.

- If the owner of an inherited property is undertaking repair and renovation of that property prior to occupancy and that work has to be done over a long period of time then I feel it inappropriate to charge a premium. Those persons are not depriving others of a home and should not be penalised for being fortunate enough to have had family that worked hard to provide for their families. An increase in premiums would possibly force an undesirable sale.
- If there is an extra charge ,the full exemption should remain in place for the whole time when the property is on the market as some properties are difficult to sell.
- If they don't use the full council services why should they pay more money
- If you already collect 100% charge from them (noting the owner may seldom use the local service) where is the justification to charge more - aside from an assumption that the owner can actually pay more
- If you want to resolve the availability of homes for rent, fix the tax system which punishes landlords (section 24, etc.)
- In breach of article 8 of the Human rights Act. A disproportionate interference with a right to property. Also article1 of part 2 of the first protocol is engaged.
- In my case the property shares a drive with my main house and is used as an annex. I have no problem with paying the normal tax although the property does not use a lot of the council services.
  It seems odd that if I moved in as a single occupant I would get a discount in spite of increased us e of council services.
- In this current economic climate a lot of long term empty properties just wouldn't sell.
- It is not as simple as this . There are many issues at play here. Listed building non compliance with modern standards (epc rated mainly). People needing long term hospitalisation and possibly suffering from mental health issues. After all 100% charge for an empty property is good value compared to its impact on resources . This seems to be bullying a minority. Far better to engage with the owners for a solution. Heritage officers charging for pre application advice is an example . In these days of top heavy on the beaurocracey means there is less money for fabric on the ground. Give money to tradesman to get the job done not on creating reams of fine reading material. That's the way to get things done.
- It is often not the fault of the building owner that the property is empty. For example, you may want to complete works to make the property habitable, but money issues means this cannot happen.
- It is unjust and as long as the council is receiving council tax owners should not pay a premium. It is not as if any council services are even being used.
- it is up to the owner of the property how long the property stays empty i had to pay full council tax and used no facilities
- It seems very unfair that an unoccupied property should incur a higher charge when the services council tax pay for aren't being used. Some of these properties might be in the process of a renovation before being sold or let. Having to pay a higher council tax will only delay the renovation as money that could be spent on building materials will have to be used to pay the higher council tax. This means that it will take longer before the people in need of a home are able to move into the property on a buy or let basis.
- It will decrease tourism

- It’s just a tax grab. It won’t make houses any cheaper or affordable. What you need is a long term housing strategy to build affordable homes.
- Long term empty properties are already charged council tax at 100%, whereas previously they had a discount. Council tax is supposed to be a tax to pay for services residents use. If a property is empty then no services are being used, so any tax on empty properties at whatever % is a penalty and not in the spirit of what council tax is supposed to be for. Most empty properties are uninhabitable anyway and by charging up to 300% premium the owner will have less money in which to renovate the property, so make it more unlikely for the property to be brought back to a liveable standard. If the council or Welsh Government want to bring properties back into habitable state then they should offer to buy those properties at full market value before charging a penalty via council tax
- Long term empty properties should be discouraged and should be charged at the full rate without any discounts in order to encourage some form of occupation, but there doesn't need to be a premium.
- Maybe the council should ask. The reason why the property is empty before charging any council tax. My property is empty for a reason which is beyond my control.

- No information has been provided on the scale of accommodation that is empty. The reasons for the uninhabited buildings can be very varied and challenging.
- Not all empty properties are empty due to someone not utilising that space, perhaps its something that they hope to let but financially are not able to do as the property has structural or maintenance work that needs to be completed to make it safe. Charging am individual on an empty property would only increase financial hardship.
- Not all empty properties are suitable to be used for rental
- Not for the first year
- People are already struggling to pay bills. If the property is not being used there are additional services required that are supplied by council so I do not see any reason to charge a premium.
- Planning law often slows down proposals to re-develop properties. If applied, the limit should be 3 years not 1
- Private ownership of property is none of the council's business. People are already paying council tax for these properties but are not using the services provided by the council so the council already has a net gain.
- Property not consuming council services
- Second properties already paying 100 % of Council Tax despite using only a tiny fraction of the services paid for. E.g. Refuse Collection !!
- Seems to be grossly unfair and I’ll thought out legislation. It doesn’t take account of peoples ability to pay or their personal circumstances and from what I understand could be applied to buildings which are little more than a hut. I don’t think people will object to you using a carrot to bring these properties online, but you seem to be using a stick and a big one at that. You need to re look at the proposal and come back with far more exemptions.
- The owners are already paying full rate and not using any local services.
- The property is empty for a reason this would add extra pressure to the owner.
- The wait to get builders to do any work at a reasonable price has stopped me from getting work done that I wanted. I don’t think I should be penalised for that
- There are many and complex reasons why a property would be classified as long term empty. It is unlikely that many are sitting empty as assets of overseas investors for long term gains. It is equally unlikely that these properties would provide suitable stock for communities in need.
- They are already paying full council tax without using any of the services. It is money grabbing and clearly based on an objection to people who have worked hard to be

able to afford a second home. I am rather disturbed that the council.is seriously considering this.

- They may be empty for a good reason not in your criteria, and if already paying 100% council tax I think that is fair.
- They should be reduced as unoccupied
- This should be considered on an individual basis. Asking the question of why the property is currently empty, would be a good start.....
- This would be too arbitrary an approach and there is no way of ensuring it could be applied fairly.
- Those more fortunate should not be penalised why not offer an incentive to those home owners to use the accommodation instead
- Unfair - especially as the properties probably aren't fully utilising the council services but are paying full council tax.
- Usually there are circumstances why the property is empty
- Very unfair to people trying to sell their property (e.g. after a bereavement). My late fathers house has been on the market for a year . We already have to pay 100% of the premium, and do not get a discount like single people
- We are currently renovating a property which we purchased in July 2021. As soon as it is complete (later this year) we will sell our current property and move in to the new home. We don't intend to own 2 homes and the property being renovated is currently not fit to live in - no windows, doors, heating, lighting, plumbing etc, so I don't think a higher tax should be charged in this instance.
- We don't need more more Taxes!
- Why is it appropriate for owners of long term empty properties to pay a premium when if the house is empty then the council taxes resources are minimal so why pay a premium when council tax rates are already high.
- You are not servicing the property by providing refuse collections or other services so what are they paying for exactly?
- Your question is ridiculous, it is a very broad question to reduce the answer to yes or no.
  My particular concern is that after someone dies and the family is left with the property, 6 months is far too short an amount of time, before the premium is charged. Has anyone had the simplest of estates resolved and a property sold in 6 months, two years would be more reasonable.
- For properties that are actively on the market to be sold there should be no charges made. It's simple to get confirmation from estate agents and or websites. The prospective purchasers of my home dropped out just weeks before the anticipated sale and so the property had to go back on the market.

- I have been going to Llandogo for over 40 years as a fisherman and spend several days a year there. As I'm now retired I wanted to spend more time in the area and consulted with the locals I know as to whether they thought it appropriate for me to buy a second home as I didn't want to deprive anybody locally. The response I got was that I contribute as much to the local community/economy as most locals and it was entirely appropriate. When I'm not at the property, I offer it for Airbnb which brings in additional revenue to the local area both for the cleaners and local tourist attractions. If I were to be charged a premium it wouldn't be a viable proposition as I already have to pay nearly £2000 insurance annually to cover Airbnb.

- I understand the reasoning for considering this but there are often a range of complex reasons why a property is empty in the short to medium term. My mother is in a care home and owns 50% of the house I live in at Risca. I am 64 this year and classed as vulnerable by Torfaen CBC where my mother has been in care for four years she is

93. As it is my main home Torfaen will not take it into account when considering mothers assets for care costs. By living here in Risca I protect her but means I have been unable to move to the property near Abergavenny which has remained empty being a former holiday let. So I cannot claim it as my main residence. I do not want to sell or rent out that property as I have done that in the past and find it stressful and increasingly complex. Every owner will have individual issues some may be in various ownership where they cannot agree what to do. I think increasing the CT is too simplistic a solution though understand the reasoning. My property used to sleep 16 as a holiday let and would not be appropriate for a homeless family as it is also very rural which is another complexity in the debate and creates a limited market for renting.

- It is clearly unfair on principle to charge people extra tax when they use less council services. Presumably most empty properties are not habitable. If the intent is to bring an empty property on to the market you should look to work with the property owner to do so rather than threaten them with further charges.

- OBJECTIONS TO MONMOUTHSHIRE PROPOSAL TO LEVY PUNITIVE RATES ON DWELLINGS VACANT FOR MORE THAN 12 MONTHS
  I wish to object to the public survey from Monmouthshire Council asking if they should levy punitive rates on Empty Dwellings. This type of survey simply begs an up vote from those that are sadly experiencing difficulty in finding domestic accommodation whilst at the same time providing no background information on the subject whatsoever.
  What they first need to answer before launching a survey like this is 'Why would any owner (including housing associations) of an empty dwelling that could bring thousands of pounds of income a year (and incidentally still has to pay full rates), deliberately leave them empty?'
  They should know that a certain background percentage of dwellings empty for more than a year has always existed and if you exclude those stuck in sales chains and legal or probate difficulties, the percentage is miniscule and tends to be fairly stable. Most of the rest are either derelict, awaiting or undergoing significant refurbishment or demolition, or cannot be occupied legally due to health and safety issues. Some are simply unviable to refurbish and others are in places that no one wants to live. Recent minimum thermal acoustic and fire liability requirements in older stocks particularly, add to the pile. It is stated that the objective of levying punitive rates is to provide an incentive for encouraging occupation but wielding a stick is most unlikely to change many of these situations in a significant way and could in fact make the issue worse. Such a levy also has the prospect of being easily avoided, so why even consider it. Monmouthshire Council (however justified) is refusing to let significant housing schemes go ahead until the drains are fixed and are therefore themselves directly responsible for a shortage of housing stock. Are they proposing to levy punitive rates on themselves for doing so and on anyone with planning permission but that is not getting on with building?
  I think the answer lies in first trying to understand why each property is empty, offering to fast track any regulation or planning issues and providing grants where it could be of help to get the most likely of these properties back into the market.

- Stop your ripping people off, the council tax charges are too high as it is

- The property is used to enable my disabled wife to get away from the pressures of "town" life, which helps her to cope with her illness. The property is well maintained

and promotes the beauty of the county. We are both old age pensioners and would find this financial increase very difficult to cope with.

- There are a variety of reasons why a property may be empty. It may only be temporary for instance. It is appalling to suggest taking extra money off people without any knowledge of each individual situation.
- There are usually good reasons why a property is empty. In our case, we spent three years refurbishing a grade 2 listed property that had run into disrepair while in council ownership. We feel we have done Monmouth a service in restoring this beautiful building and helped out with a lack of supply for this type of property. The costs involved with having an empty building for this length of time are already significant, and adding further costs would dissuade people like me from doing it again. Our project has provided much needed work for the area, and is helping to keep Monmouth a beautiful market town where people want to go.
- They should not do any thing .
- Your definition of "empty properties" omits a significant use case, that of holiday let. The threshold for a property to be considered a holiday let (in terms of days per year occupied) is unrealistically high in many cases, and the premiums being proposed threaten the tourism sector, which is a significant industry within Monmouthshire.

- The Monmouthshire Council public consultation over whether to levy punitive rates on dwellings empty for more than twelve months and second homes contains several issues that cause me great concern. This can hardly be described as a fair consultation either when there is nowhere on the survey form to vote for less than a 25% increase (and it won't let you finish the page until you select one), or for suggestions that a longer period of time should elapse.

  Apart from being unavailable for full time occupation, there is no similarity whatsoever between the two categories and it looks like many holiday cottages could also be dragged in as well and they are yet another category.

  The question as to why owners (including housing associations) might leave properties empty for more than a year when they could bring in thousands of pounds and provide essential accommodation is never addressed and owners of empty property pay full rates anyway.

  The fact is that a background percentage of empty dwellings always exists and is generally fairly stable. If you exclude those stuck in sales chains, legal, planning or probate difficulties (that would not get driven back into the market any faster), the percentage is miniscule. Most of the others are derelict, awaiting or undergoing refurbishment or waiting for a builder to start. Some properties are unviable and others are in locations where there is no demand. Twelve months is in any case a very short time to turn a wreck around but all of these problems are lumped into the statistics.

  Whilst certain well recognised problems come with empty properties, to consider introducing something so punitive on top of normal rates should only be done if there is absolute proof it will work in any significant way and I see no proof that it will anywhere at the moment. The stated objective behind the proposal is 'to provide an incentive for encouraging occupation'. Sorry, but punitive rates are a punishment, not

an incentive. It is a proposal that is not only unlikely to reduce the normal background level of empty dwellings but could actually make the situation worse.

Punitive rates that fail to address the stated objectives will result in major legal challenges and avoidance measures, so why even consider it when councils already have legal tools to take over empty properties that they consider essential? It would appear that they simply don't want anything to do with it themselves because they already know why this background percentage is there and how intractable some of the problems are.

To levy punitive rates when refurbishing or rebuilding work is already underway or is being held up due to planning and regulation delays would also be exceptionally unfair. Additionally, if selling a property that has been empty for more than a year, buyers will be deterred because they will immediately be paying punitive rates and those rates may be way out of proportion to the value of the property. So there would have to be exemptions and then it all gets messy.

Monmouthshire Council itself is refusing to let significant housing schemes go ahead due to perceived drainage issues and are therefore themselves directly responsible for a shortage of housing stock. Are they proposing to levy punitive rates on themselves for doing so and on anyone with planning permission that is not getting on with building?

Holiday homes and holiday lets are also completely different issues. In many cases both can be beneficial and holiday lets in particular are critical for many small farmers and local economies. Many people actually restore empty dwellings for their holiday home or build entirely new properties that will all go back into mainstream occupation in due course, so how could it be fair or even desirable to levy punitive rates in every case?

With empty dwellings, the obvious course to pursue is to first find out why the properties are individually vacant and then to have a fast track system through any planning, regulation, grants or loans issues that could assist getting them back faster into the market.

I did some time ago raise the possibility of an investment organisation that could use the council's powers if needed to take over empty property and filter expertise and grants into getting housing stock onto the market and am willing to expand on the idea if required.

- All dwellings must pay Council tax
- I do not think this would be fair to anyone already paying council tax
- I have answered no to this question because I do not believe that a one year exemption from the empty property surcharge is sufficient for work to be completed on most property in need of refurbishment. The County Council's time scale of a one year is at odds with the time scale set out in the higher rates of Land Transaction Tax Wales (LTT).

  An arbitrary one year exemption is too simplistic. A distinction needs to be made between houses having been empty for long periods and houses which have recently been purchased. Many newly purchased houses require considerable work to bring them up to modern standards. It is difficult to commission and instruct architects, obtain planning permission and seek builders to undertake modernisation work in less than one year. The likely timescale is recognised in the higher rate of LTT as a period

of 3 years grace is given to the buyer. Houses which require less work will automatically be returned to use sooner than a year because it is financially sensible to do so.

For recently purchased properties Monmouthshire County Council should align their time scale with those of the LTT which recognises that alterations can take up to 3 years. Following a 3 year period the County Council could consider introducing an empty property surcharge on a sliding scale which could increase every year, so encouraging work to be completed. This would remove any sudden cliff edge.

Also it must be remembered that empty properties do not use many of the County Council services like, refuse collection, education and social services, and therefore, the County Councils already benefit considerably from the present system.

- I have been contacted about this consultation in connections with my parents family home in the County which is currently unoccupied since my late Mother's death. The property was my parents sole home in their later years. Priory to that it was my grandparents sole home. It has been in the family since the 1940's.
  I am currently starting the process of renovating the property with the intention of eventually moving there from my present home in Blaenau Gwent.
  I am paying full Council Tax on the property whilst causing little or no drain on Council resources or services. My wife and I are retired with limited income and any increase in the already substantial Council Tax is unjustified and unaffordable, particularly in the present economic situation. It is our intention to relocate to the property and to dispose of out present home.
- I have received a letter from you saying that a house I own in Monmouthshire is regarded by Monmouthshire County Council as a second home. Whilst my house does fall within your definition of a second home, I did not purchase it, nor do I use it as a second home (I live in Powys). I inherited it when my father died. Initially I considered living there, but have recently decided it is a bit too remote. I am running a business which takes up most of my time, especially since the pandemic, and I have very little time to sort out the house which has a lot of things in it. I think it would be very unfair if you were to put a premium on the council tax I am already paying. I want to sell my business and retire, but the current economic climate makes this difficult. If you were to go ahead and add a premium to the council tax, this would push me to the brink in this economic crisis. I sincerely hope you do not go ahead with this.
- If the premiums are due to be paid from 1st April, it doesn't allow much lead in time for an owner to prepare for an increase in prices - in the very least it should be increased gradually over a number of years. A huge premium starting in April, in the current climate could send people into poverty.

  What about the current cost of living crisis? Council tax prices are increasing for everyone, so is this the right time to be doing this? Potentially this could have a significant impact on families lives and should be very carefully considered.

  Owning a second home or long term empty property doesn't mean the owners can afford to pay premiums, it could be that its been in a Welsh family for decades/generations. If the premiums are high, the owners could be forced into selling the property quickly, which may mean accepting a lower price for a quick sale, allowing for rich property developers to come in and renovate and make a profit. Is this something that the Council wants to support?
- The property has been long term empty as currently undergoing refurbishment. Taken a lot longer than anticipated due to the pandemic curtailing works. Getting labour to complete the works. Continuous problems with the boiler/heating system and getting the labour. External works with tree management and fencing still needing to be

done. Would prefer not to have to pay the full 100% Council Tax while the property cannot be lived in and certainly don't want this charge to be increased.

- The proposed premium is indiscriminate in its application. Properties are usually long term empty for a reason. They may not be in a suitable location or condition for someone else to wish to purchase or occupy.
- There are a multitude of reasons why a property deemed as long term empty may continue to be empty. In my particular case it is a lack of funding for many reasons that include personal ongoing expenditure on education 5 children through university, significant loss of self employment earnings due to the pandemic and a reluctance from banks to finance a complete renovation that is required to make the long term property habitable. To introduce a premium on property charges when there is absolutely no burden on the local authority is unfair and could almost be deemed as punitive for investing in the property market as opposed to investing in stocks and shares or gold etc.
- There are around 400 long term empty properties in Monmouthshire. This compares with a total of around 94,000 people (41,000 households) in Monmouthshire - so they constitute a very small proportion (less than 1%) of the total. These properties are already subject to the full 100% council tax charge in Monmouthshire - even though they do not fully benefit from council services. So they are already paying a higher rate of council tax (which is being used to subsidise council services for others). To demand that such a small number of owners should pay 2, 3 or 4 times the full council tax rate - with no regard to their available income, their financial situation, the nature of their property, or how it has come to be empty - would be punitive and disproportionate, and could potentially cause hardship.

Don’t know:

- For me this would depend on why the property was unoccupied.
- I am unsure whether it will provide much help towards the homeless problem or much towards the budget. having had experience in looking at this dilemma when i worked in the Council Tax section. It does provoke a lot of anger from homeowners who may have worked hard or inherited properties to be essentially told what they can or what they should do with their properties. A lot of these empty properties are not in a fit state to rent out especially due to new Welsh legislation. I know that there are schemes available to borrow money to bring them up to date but, in my experience a lot of empty properties are owned by older people. Also they may be owned or have been in the family of elderly people who just do not want the hassle of renting.
- I don’t know how many empty homes there are in the county.
- I just don't understand how it would help .
- I own a property in Pwllmeyric which is not my main residence. It is furnished. (so classed as a second home) My daughter locally depends on me for childcare to enable her to continue working for the Dept of Health. Her own health is now significantly compromised with uncertain prognosis.
  Hence I stay frequently to help her out.
  I cannot move here permanently yet as other daughter in Yorkshire has significant mental health issues following the death of my husband (her father) so I am needed there too.
- Numbers of such houses not quoted in information but imagine is low
- Only " it is " is "it's".
  So in this case you should refer to "use its" rather than "use it's"

- The question are, why are these properties empty, is it the cost of maintaining them to the standards of listings officers or merely an unwillingness to do something with them

Level of premium to apply

- 0%. You need them more than they need you.
- A modest increase of 50% I feel would be an incentive to owners to consider their moral duty.
- A premium on underused property should incentivise getting them back onto the market. the higher the premium, the more of an incentive
- A range would have been a better ºquestion. A range between 25% and 50% seems reasonable.
- Again this is political and just envy.
- Again, presume this is for long term empty residential properties, not business premises.
- All homes in the county are provided with the services of the Council e.g. refuse collection, road maintenance, street lighting, police, schools etc regardless of whether any particular home has a need for some of the Council services. Therefore ALL homes should contribute to the cost of these services. Sometimes the condition of these homes and gardens are badly neglected causing deterioration of the building and a problem for neighbours.
  Since the owners of these vacant or part vacant homes can afford to also have their own long term dwelling, they should be charged a supplement to the normal Council Tax for the second home. However, maybe a special exclusion could be given to those who, because of their employment, have to live as their main dwelling, in a 'tied' home which belongs to their employer,
- All properties should pay full council tax.
  There should be no additional premium.
- An empty property is using far less council services than an occupied one so the owners are already paying a premium.
- Any charge would reduce value of property and development of alternative accommodation
- Anything over 100% would be best.
- As above. Long term disuse of so called holiday homes reduces income not only to the council, but the wider community, and denies local people residency by inflating house prices.
- Because as I mentioned they leave them empty for decades and make a fortune on resale . Our communities need to be cherished and protected and not be beholden to property entrepreneurs!
- But how is the 'long term' defined? No penalties should apply if an owner is clearly not retaining the property for speculative purposes, and, for example there are exceptional circumstances preventing or delaying its sale or renovation.
- Charging the maximum amount will either prompt those holding on to empty properties to release them back to local communities or continue to pay and cover relevant costs for MCC
- Consider that premium should be at least or over 100pc
- Don't go ahead with this unfair tax
- Encourage a fast sale!
- For properties that have been empty long term 300%. Perhaps a sliding scale, over 1 year 100% over 2 years 200% anything in excess of 3 years 300%
- I believe a higher premium on these empty buildings would give the owners an incentive to make them safe, if not to live in then at least to walk past

- I consider this reasonable
- I do not agree with this but any premium should be small and sustainable, council tax is already too high relative to service provision and set to rise again this year.
- I don't think people should have to pay for having a 2nd home. As mentioned earlier, it will deter people from coming to Wales who do bring in revenue.
- I feel the premium should be steeply tapered with 300% for those empty for 3yrs and then go higher still for those empty longer.
- I have entered an average %. Perhaps there should be a sliding scale from 100-300%, rising with the increasing length of time a property has been empty.
- I suggest An escalating increase, from year one 25%, through two 50%, three 75 up to 150% etc will pick up those dragging their heels or with no intent to actually get on with it.
- I think premium should be introduced on a graduated basis.
- I think the premium has to be significant to prompt action.
- I think you could have a sliding scale tariff depending on the value of the property and the particular reasons why the property is empty e.g. someone has died intestate. It can longer than a few months to sort out ownership of a property.
- I think you would have to look at individual cases
- I would charge 500%
- I would impose a graduated increase after the first year .
- I would like to see a tariff that takes into consideration the length of time a property is left vacant rising on an annual basis unless good reason can be shown for why the property is empty.
- If a property is not empty for a reasonable reason (as provided by the exemptions), I don't see why the premium shouldn't be set as high as permitted.
- If people can afford to deliberately keep properties unoccupied, they can afford to pay a premium for doing so.
- If the owner agrees to my answer to question 1 then they would be refunded this premium amount. If they object and persist in keeping the empty property then each year increase the premium tax by 50% until they reach the 300% limit. This gives the Council 4 years to 'negotiate' with the Council to provide the property for them to use.
- If they can afford to leave a property empty, they have sufficient funds
- If they can afford two homes they can afford the maximum tax Plus lots of these homes fall into dis- repair making the area unpleasant for full-time residents.
- If this were the case then maybe they could receive a grant to do up, charge a fair rate and receive a grant to do them up.,
- If you can afford to own two (or more) homes, you can afford to pay a higher rate of council tax for that privilege
- If you really need to then a lower figure of 25% or less
- In principle if a house is long-term unoccupied then having a greater disincentive to keep it that way may assist in returning that home to housing stock
- Introducing a high premium on their Council Tax would make them think about the problem - they may sell the property and, if they don't, at least the higher Council Tax will mean they are making a financial contribution to the local area.
- It depends on the circumstances, it seems unfair, for example, if a property is up for sale by an estate but the purchase process is taking a long time so exceeds the 6 month time limit after probate, for a premium to be charged.
- It has to be a high amount otherwise second home owners who have left properties empty for a long time, will not be overly bothered by a small rise.
  The Rogiet hotel is a prime example of a large empty property going to ruin.
- it has to be as high as possible to reduce the impact on those who cannot afford their own council tax and to reduce the pressure on house pricing in the area

- It may force some people to sell their property and we can have neighbours to at least discuss issues with.
- It must be high enough to be punitive.
- It needs to be a high enough to be a penalty for doing nothing with an empty property.
- It needs to be a high rate to try and elicit some sort of change and bring properties back to the market. Where individuals/families cannot agree to sell properties then they have to pay towards the counties housing costs. I would go higher but I think this should do the trick.
- It needs to be enough for people to consider renting or selling their emptying houses.
- It would be good to encourage occupancy for currently open houses. However if a house is on the market and steps are being taken to change ownership - continuing additional charges seem unfair.
- It would be useful to have more information on the sums involved
- It would depend on the reason for the house being empty
- It's a scandal that there are empty properties and homeless people/families. Long term empty properties must be brought back into use to alleviate social ills
- Long-term empty properties should be released for use by local people
- Make people pay a premium for being greedy.
- Maximum deterrent to remaining empty.
- Must be high to force people to give up empty homes
- Narrow minded questions again
- No premium is acceptable. If anything as it is unoccupied it should attract the single occupancy discount
- No premium.
- One reservation would be over properties that need structural repairs. More than one year's exemption should be allowed if the need can be demonstrated. We purchased a property that was in very poor condition (water coming through the roof, major structural crack in external wall where a lintel had rotted, the gas boiler was condemned, etc.) We needed to get planning permission for repair work as it is in a conservation area (replacement windows needed to be approved, etc) - that took several months, including getting architect's drawings before being able to even submit the application. Then we found ourselves in a long waiting list for good builders. And when builders finally started work, it was the best part of a year before we could move in. All of this meant that we were already needing to pay rent. We have eco-retrofitted the house, which should be required of all property in poor condition. But paying extra council tax while all this went on might have been the final straw in making it unaffordable.
- Owners need to be discouraged from speculating on the housing market.
- People renting second homes or keeping them empty for their own use can afford these prices. It will also help to reduce the ridiculous hike in house prices in some areas
- People who don't know think this is a tax on the rich, but in the main its asset not cash rich who just happen to be custodians. Every situation is different. One size doesn't fit all.
- Perhaps a rising premium as the period of non-occupation increases?
- Perhaps the amount should increase, depending on how long the property is empty for and, if it is for sale, how well the owners are marketing it.
- the gains made by the owners of the properties in terms of an increase in market values is at the expense of people who are trying to find affordable homes. A 300% levy is not unreasonable, and may help persuade owners not to use their empty property as a source of unearned income
- Should not apply when properties are "accidentally" empty
- Strong financial disincentive needed to minimise long term empty homes. This value seems fair for the actual residents.

- Tax is already being paid on the property. Lowest option available.
- That maximum amount should be done to stop these houses being empty, which destroy communities and bring no income to the village
- The amount charged needs to be large enough to compel empty house owners to take some action (preferably to allow occupation of the house in some way).
- The empty building does not demand any council services and will pay full council tax plus a penalty
- The higher the premium the more likely to sell up
- The maximum lever possible.
- The maximum would ensure the property was brought back into good use. Once the premium had been charged for say 5years would it be possible to seize the property and bring it back into use or sell at auction.
- The option to fill property, rent or sell is there so high rate will persuade.
- The owner has to care and make them question why property is empty after 5/10/15 years.
- The owners can clearly afford to leave properties empty, for whatever reason, so unless the penalty is severe enough, they will not change their strategy in the future.
- The premium needs to be prohibitive.
- The premium needs to generate action from the owner/s
- The rate could rise by 25% each year it remains empty.
- The unoccupied rate needs to be an incentive to the landlord/property owner to get that property back contributing to the society. The current rates are not an incentive.
- There are sufficient and justified exemptions (e.g. for homes which are unoccupied while they are on the market); there is no justification for leaving a home empty in the long term and so removing it from the county's housing stock. Those who choose to do this should be expected to pay for the "privilege."
- There may be good reasons why a property is empty long term, so the premium should not be too onerous.
- There should, however, be provision for exempting owners from any penalties where: (a) It is evident that they are not retaining the property for speculative purposes AND (b) there are exceptional circumstances preventing or delaying its sale or repair (and in this context a fair and just definition of what is meant by ‘long-term’).
- There's a housing crisis, so empty buildings should be used to help.
- They need to consider how they can help others. If they can't afford the premium then they need to sell the property to allow others to occupy it.
- They should pay what they would if they occupied the house, home.
- This needs to be proportionate and it maybe that there needs to he a different approach to different types of property or the length of time it's been empty.
- This seems a measured response to what is actually seems a small problem in Monmouthshire. I strongly believe that any changes should be introduced slowly. Anything over a 100% surcharge would in my view me immoderate.
- This will incentivise repurposing of some of the properties, hopefully to help increase the supply of housing.
- To encourage people to resolve their dispute but nit make it so exorbitant that they get into debt.
- Too many properties just sitting empty, assuming many as investments, reducing potential stock especially for local families and youngsters wanting to stay in the area but struggling to afford to
- Typically, empty property owners already pay council tax whilst receiving no services. Adding to this is wholly disproportionate.
- Unless it affects them financially, they will just do nothing
- Use the most incentive to get the property in use

- We do not have knowledge about empty properties in Monmouthshire. Those in our area are being renovated for reoccupation.
- When a person is trying to sell or rent it is often due to changing circumstances which may cause financial hardship.
- When my mum died and the property was left empty we had to pay council tax. Although I would have sorted out her affairs more quickly if we had to pay tax straightaway.
- Why is an answer compulsory? The premise of the question is that the answer given was 'yes'. When it was 'no' the question simply doesn't apply.
- you do not know reasons why a property could be empty for a long time
- An appropriate Levi may push the owners into action to sell or rent the property

- CLA consider that a premium of 50% should be charged after 9 months of the property being empty. This would allow sufficient time for refurbishment. This rate should be reviewed on a 3 year basis to allow the rate to be altered to accommodate trend changes to advantage the area and its permanent residents and businesses.
- Dependent upon circumstances
- I believe a premium should be added but I am not clear what this might mean in practice and so do not feel able to give an opinion on how much it should be.
- Larger properties already pay a substantial CT charge as Band G or H
- The owners are not contributing to the local community, and are depriving somebody of a home.
- The premium should act as a deterrent to having empty homes so needs to be large
- Why is there no option to say zero - completely bent survey question
- Would find it hard to cope with financially

- You already charge a full council tax on empty properties that exert little or no cost to the council (road use, refuse collections and other services); it seems this additional charge is largely to punish.
- I think there needs to be context and different levels taken into account. Those who keep property empty at the detriment of their local community just for the sake of 1 holiday a year, is very different to someone who is unable to sell their property for some reason.
- if the Council do decide to introduce these premiums then it should be done gradually over time, with plenty of forewarning to allow property owners to work out an appropriate plan. A sudden increase could have a significant negative impact on already struggling families
- Owners of a long term empty property are already paying full council tax, but are unlikely to be using any council services for that address. Therefore they are paying for services they don't use, which is in effect a premium.
- If you charge 50% for single occupancy then I believe if a charge is to be made for long term empty 25% is sufficient.

-