



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Integrated Impact Assessment document (incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Duty)

Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Ian Bakewell Phone no: 01633 644479 E-mail: ianbakewell@monmouthshire.gov.uk	Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal Empty Homes – Approach to Reducing Empty Homes in Monmouthshire
Name of Service area Housing & Communities	Date 28 th March 2024

- 1. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	<p>The proposal will positively contribute to the local population needing accommodation across all tenures.</p> <p>Children and young people will be more likely to receive stable accommodation to ensure that they can enjoy a decent standard of living and reach their potential.</p>	<p>The owners of some empty homes are older people. For example they may have inherited the property following a family bereavement. There could be an emotional attachment. Being asked to bring back by the Council into use could create a detrimental impact on an elderly owner relating to their emotional attachment or could be 'overwhelmed' by the steps needed to perhaps sell or rent out a property.</p>	<p>The Council's approach to engaging with empty home owners is underpinned by a positive and supportive approach that seeks to provide good quality advice and assistance to owners if required.</p> <p>Any potential enforcement action that may be required, this would be an absolute last resort by the Council and would also need to be implemented sensitively.</p> <p>A blanket approach would not be applied in such scenarios and every case would be judged individually and would still be entitled to receive support and assistance.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Disability	<p>The proposal will contribute positively to the local population needing accommodation across all tenures.</p> <p>Bringing more properties into use has the potential to also add to the accessible and adapted stock in the County and, therefore, potentially benefiting disabled people.</p>	<p>It needs to be recognised that the owners of some empty homes could be disabled people who may have difficulty in bringing a property back into use, both from a physical capability and a mental capability.</p>	As above
Gender reassignment	Positive impact	N/A	N/A
Marriage or civil partnership	As above	As above	As above

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Pregnancy or maternity	<p>The proposal will contribute positively to the local population needing accommodation across all tenures.</p> <p>Bringing more properties into use is likely to increase the availability of family accommodation.</p>	<p>The owners of some empty homes could be pregnant. Being asked by the Council to bring their property back into use could have a negative impact on the individual whilst they are pregnant and shortly afterwards.</p>	<p>The Council's approach to engaging with empty home owners is underpinned by a positive and supportive approach that seeks to provide good quality advice and assistance to owners if required.</p> <p>The Council will be sensitive to anyone who is pregnant and will take this into account when negotiating a resolution to their empty property. For example, potentially agreeing a deferment to action for a reasonable period subject to the property not causing a problem to the local neighbourhood eg dangerous structure, vermin etc</p>
Race	Positive impact	N/A	N/A
Religion or Belief	As above	As above	As above
Sex	As above	As above	As above

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sexual Orientation	As above	As above	As above

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

<p>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</p>	<p>It is recognised that the local community can be disadvantaged in part, due to lack of accommodation.</p> <p>This can be detrimental to community inclusion including accessing (or retaining) employment/training opportunities and accessing financial services e.g. insurance.</p> <p>Good quality accommodation also supports wider priorities such education, particularly for children and young people, as well as health and well-being.</p>	<p>There are no negative impacts to the local community associated with seeking to bring empty homes back into use.</p> <p>There could be potential cost implications for owners if a property is in poor condition.</p>	<p>Owners who may need financial assistance to bring their property back into use can apply for financial assistance. Products available include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty Homes Grants • Interest free loans • Empty home grant through Leasing Scheme Wales <p>In addition there is also the possible option that the Council or a housing association could be interested in purchasing an empty property.</p>
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3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
Policy Making Effects on the use of the Welsh language, Promoting Welsh language Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably	The Council has empty homes information and it is appropriate to have available bi-lingual information.	None	Bi-lingual correspondence is used.
Operational Recruitment & Training of workforce	Neutral impact. This proposal does not involve the appointment of staff.	None	N/A
Service delivery Use of Welsh language in service delivery Promoting use of the language	This is an opportunity to promote the Welsh Language e.g. information for owners.	None	N/A

4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>There are no negative implications. Bringing empty homes back into use delivers positive benefits to the community. Empty homes should be regarded as an under-utilised community resource.</p> <p>Bringing empty homes back into use through addressing condition creates employment and supports the generation of wealth. A good quality home supports education.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g., climate change)</p>	<p>There may be implications that an owner would need to take into account relating to any possible maintenance or construction work.</p>	<p>Processes are already in place in this regard. For example, planning regulations.</p> <p>Owners would be supported and assisted to meet such requirements.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized, and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>There are no negative impacts associated with bringing empty homes back into use. A good quality home is conducive to good health benefits and helps to tackle health inequalities.</p> <p>It also supports households being able to access health services e.g. GP's, dentists, opticians etc.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>Bringing empty homes back into use both increases the available housing stock it also helps tackle properties that may be currently unviable and/or unsafe. Additional homes mitigates against people needing to move away from their home areas.</p> <p>Empty homes often physically impact detrimentally. Engagement with owners can improve the physical appearance of properties where necessary.</p>	<p>The Council's approach will mitigate against the negative impact of empty homes.</p>
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A.</p>
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>Providing advice and assistance on tackling empty homes presents an opportunity to promote the Welsh Language.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>A more equal Wales</p>	<p>Empty homes action directly supports equality and protected and or disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>As above</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances		

4. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p data-bbox="226 938 353 970">Long Term</p> <p data-bbox="203 983 293 1015">future</p> <p data-bbox="405 724 551 975">Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the</p>	<p data-bbox="591 655 1294 871">Reducing the number of empty homes has both short-term and long-term benefits. There are immediate housing needs. For example, daily demand from homeless applicants is high at present, with considerable numbers currently in temporary accommodation including B & B.</p> <p data-bbox="591 898 1294 1002">The Council has also identified and projected future housing needs for the County, which is reflected in the Local Housing Market Assessment.</p>	<p data-bbox="1337 655 2024 786">The Council's approach supports owners with the short-term liabilities associated with owning an empty property and may help them realise the benefits of their asset in the future.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>The Council's approach to empty homes potentially involves several teams within the Council. Housing & Communities, Council Tax, Building Control, Planning, Estates, the Regeneration Team, Environmental Health and Legal.</p> <p>The priority for the Council is to work proactively and positively with any empty home owners.</p> <p>The Council will work with any sections of the community eg neighbours, Community Council etc who may be experiencing an issue with an empty home.</p>	<p>The Council's approach to engaging with empty home owners is under-pinned by a positive and supportive approach that seeks to provide good quality advice and assistance to owners if required. The Council will be sensitive to the circumstances of empty home owners.</p>
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>Housing & Communities engages with the following internal stakeholders: Council Tax, Building Control, Planning, Estates, the Regeneration Team, Environmental Health and Legal.</p> <p>If applicable the Council will also engage with Welsh Government and housing associations. The Council utilises the availability of a specialist advisor and empty homes expert at Welsh Government</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The Council's approach to empty homes is arguably both reactive and preventative.</p> <p>Housing & Communities restructured in 2023 to increase the staffing resource available for empty homes. Whilst this is already delivering positive results in terms of the levels of engagement with owners, this needs time to become fully embedded.</p> <p>Also, it is anticipated that there will always be properties becoming empty for 12 months for various reasons eg probabte, difficulties selling etc albeit the aim is for this to be minimised over time.</p> <p>As the process becomes further embedded and awareness of the support available from the Council increases, the approach is anticipated to become more preventative.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p data-bbox="237 555 376 587">Integration</p> <p data-bbox="203 603 524 740">Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p data-bbox="591 309 1279 411">The proposal supports increased access to good quality accommodation that also supports all aspects of well-being e.g. physical health, medical health etc.</p>	<p data-bbox="1330 309 1928 411">Tackling empty homes will build upon existing services that support well-being which all households are able to access.</p>

5. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Increasing the availability of housing stock will have safeguarding benefits, but overall the impact is anticipated to be marginal but certainly not negative.	None.	N/A
Corporate Parenting	As above	None.	N/A

6. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Council Tax information identifying long-term empty homes.

Homeless statistics including numbers of homeless applications and numbers in B & B and temporary accommodation.

Housing Register statistics

Local Housing Market Assessment

7. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

.This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee report template

The main benefits of the proposal are:

- It will increase the availability of general housing across the County. The majority of properties coming back into use is anticipated to be in the owner occupied sector.
- It will help to tackle properties that are detrimental to the local environment eg properties in poor condition

8. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Continued engagement with owners	On-going	Helen Horton, Senior Accommodation Development Officer

9. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision-making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built-in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	N/A – this is a briefing report	28 th March 2024	