

## Strategic Housing Panel

### Empty Property Matrix

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Cllr George Clements

**Report Authors:** Debbie Cochrane, Housing Renewal Manager

**SUMMARY:** The Council needs to reduce the number of empty homes in the borough, and maximise the potential use of this resource to meet our strategic housing priorities.  
This report outlines the Empty Property Matrix which will be used by members of the Housing Renewal team to identify which empty properties are in the most dilapidated state.

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In the Private Sector Renewal Strategy approved by Executive earlier this year we said we would 'target empty properties that are dilapidated and a cause of concern for residents'.
- 1.2 There are many empty properties throughout the borough, some empty for a few weeks other for many months. The majority of owners of empty properties make sure the property is kept in good condition, does not become an eyesore or cause problems to adjacent properties.
- 1.3 Some owners however leave their properties to become dilapidated, this can cause problems for neighboring properties e.g. damp and also to the neighborhood in general for example, graffiti, fly tipping, smashed windows etc.
- 1.4 The attached matrix has been developed to assist members of the housing renewal team to 'score' empty properties. This makes the process fair and transparent. The team will concentrate on the 'top six' properties.

### 2.0 Monitoring

- 2.1 All properties that have been reported by residents as empty and dilapidated will be scored during the next two months and a report brought back to this panel in February 2011 which identifies those causing most concern.
- 2.2 Actions will be identified in the Empty Homes Strategy to bring back into use other properties that are standing empty.

- 2.3 Members of the Strategic Housing Panel are asked to approve the matrix and to monitor the progress in bringing empty properties back into use.

Empty Property Matrix

	Property	Answer	Variable	Score
Q1	Garden Overgrown	Yes/No	Slightly 5 pts Very 10 pts	
Q2	ASB at property	Yes/No	Minor 5 pts Major 10 pts	
Q3	Accumulated Refuse/litter	Yes/No	Minor 5 pts Action req 10 pts	
Q4	Boarded up	Yes/No	Boarded 5 pts Repeat Boarding 10 pts	
Q5	Property up for sale	Yes/No	Discount max -20 pts	
Q6	Next door is empty	Yes/No	Left Property + 5 Right Property + 5	
Q7	Property Type			
	<b>Location</b>			
Q8	In worst empty homes Ward	Yes/No	0 or 5	
Q9	Special Target area	Yes/No	0 or 10	
Q10	Other empty homes on street	Yes/No	0 or 5	
Q11	RTB causing problems	Yes/No	0 or 10	
Q12	Complaints	Yes/No	1 or 2 (5pts) 3+ (10 pts)	
Q13	Previous enforcement action	Yes/No	0 or 10	
Q14	Length of time empty		1-2 yrs = 2 pts	
			2-3 yrs = 4 pts	
			3-5 yrs = 8 pts	
			5-10 yrs = 10 pts	
			10 yrs + = 20 pts	
	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>			

10

Property Address

### **Guidance Notes – Empty Property Matrix**

- Q2 Evidence of smashed windows, graffiti, fly tipping. Severity will determine score.
- Q3 If the accumulated rubbish could result in enforcement action then apply 10 pts score.
- Q4 If house is boarded up. How many times boarded.
- Q5 If house for sale reduce discount to minus 10pts after 6 months of being advertised (reduce to minus 5 pts if deemed to be over priced).
- Q6 For each empty neighbouring property give 5 points (add further 10 points per neighbouring property if each property individually scores over 50. In calculating whether neighbouring properties exceed 50 points remove score from Q6 from each).
- Q7 Is property 2 bedroom, 3 bedroom house etc or 1 bed flat, 2 bed flat (or building containing such).
- Q8 Apply 5 points if empty home is located in one of the worst Wards for empty homes over 12 months vacant.
- Q9 Apply 10 points if located in a target area
- Q10 Apply 5 points if there are other empty homes on the street (do not apply score if this has been covered in Q8)
- Q11 Apply 10 points if the property is a Right to Buy
- Q12 Apply 5 points if complaints have been received. Apply a score of 10 points if there have been a total of three or more separate complaints.
- Q13 Apply 5 points if enforcement action has taken place and for each time it has taken place.
- Q14 Apply scores depending on length of time empty.