

APPENDIX B

Sevenoaks District Empty Homes Action Plan 2015/16 – 2016/17

	Objective	Timescale	Resources	Lead
1	Operate a database of long-term empty homes, visit properties to assess condition and priority for action	Ongoing	Existing	HPT
2	Maintain a list of potential purchasers and act as initial broker between potential purchasers and property owners	Ongoing	Existing	HPT
3	Develop innovative approaches to consultation and engagement with owners of empty properties to promote and enable their re-use	Ongoing	TBI	HPT/HSAT
4	Work with HAs to address any long term empty homes in their stock	Ongoing	HAs	HPT/HAs
5	Explore external funding opportunities to provide financial encouragement for owners of empty homes, including the continuous market engagement process of the HCA Empty Home Programme 2015-18	Ongoing	TBI	HPT
6	Consider potential 'purchase and repair' of particular long term empty properties and explore options for funding including S106 planning gains, HCA and KCC No Use Empty	As required	HCA/S106/ KCC	HPT
7	Consider a pilot homesteading scheme (loan for owner occupiers), subject to funding	2016/17	TBI	HPT/HSAT
8	Promote and administer the No Use Empty initiative, including the main loan scheme and also the HCA funded 'affordable homes loan scheme' (empty homes grant programme 2015-20)	HCA - 2015-2020 KCC – 2016/17	KCC (NUE)	HPT/KCC
9	Promote collaborative actions between Planning Enforcement, Building Control, Environmental Health, and Communities and Business to maximise the effectiveness of intervention work. Establish an empty property delivery group and hold complex case reviews as and when required	Ongoing	Existing	HPT
10	Promote and encourage the installation of energy efficiency measures in the retro-fit of empty homes undergoing renovation works. Advise and refer owners to relevant funding schemes	Ongoing	Existing – potential S106	HPT/ECIO
11	Undertake campaigns in tandem with Empty Homes Week and other topical events	As required	Existing	HPT/Comms
12	Publicise case studies/successes to encourage further take-up of assistance	Ongoing	Existing	HPT/Comms
13	Advise and refer empty property owners to the Sevenoaks Property Accreditation scheme and the Private Sector Lettings Scheme	Ongoing	Existing	HPT/HSAT

14	Ensure appropriate enforcement policies and actions are in place in respect of EDMOs, Environmental Health and Planning Enforcement	2015/16	Existing	HPT
15	Work with Council Tax to review live database and maximise annual returns under the New Homes Bonus	10/2015 and 10/2016	Existing	HPT/CT
16	Review and update all relevant information on the District Council's new website	Dec 2015	Existing	HPT
17	Review and update all promotional leaflets and associated documents	Dec 2015	Existing	HPT/Comms
18	Review HA management potential for empty homes in the private sector	As required	SDC/HAs	HPT
19	Assess non-residential properties for residential suitability, subject to planning conditions, e.g. above-shop accommodation and redundant shops; work with the Head of Economic Development & Property on potential joint actions	As required	TBI	HPT
20	Keep under review the full range of options to bring empty homes back into use	Ongoing	TBI	HPT
21	Promote empty homes initiatives at landlords' forums	Ongoing	Existing	HPT/HSAT
22	Promote the dedicated telephone line to report empty homes (No Use Empty)	Ongoing	KCC	HPT/Comms
23	Report action plan progress to the Housing LSP Sub-group annually providing outcomes, financial benefits and other successes	2015/2016		HPT

Abbreviations	
Comms	Communications Team
CT	Council Tax
ECIO	Energy Conservation and Initiatives Officer
EDMO	Empty Dwelling Management Order
HA	Housing Association
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency
HPT	Housing Policy Team
HSAT	Housing Standards and Advice Team
KCC	Kent County Council
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
SDC	Sevenoaks District Council
TBI	To be identified

Appendix A – 'Sevenoaks District Empty Homes Action Plan 2009 – review of progress'.