

Trafford Council

DRAFT Empty Homes Strategy

2019-2024



Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Vision	4
Strategic Context.....	5
National Context	5
Sub - Regional Context.....	7
Local Context.....	8
Strategic Priorities	11
Priority 1: Work with owners of long term empty properties to bring them back into use.	12
Priority 2: Improve our neighbourhoods by addressing long term empty homes that have become the focus of anti-social behaviour and neglect.....	14
Priority 3: Provide advice and information to help raise awareness around empty properties	17
Priority 4: Develop effective partnerships with key stakeholders.....	19
Delivery of the Strategy	21
Table of Figures	21
Glossary of Terms.....	22

Foreword



“Tackling empty homes is a challenge for all local authorities. Empty homes are a wasted resource when there is a shortage of housing across the country especially in Trafford. These properties also blight our neighbourhoods and can be a focus for anti-social behaviour.

Trafford Council is committed to bringing empty properties back into use as quickly as possible. The Council needs to work with owners of empty homes and our partners to take all available opportunities to help us tackle long term empty properties in

Trafford.

The Council’s Corporate Plan describes our vision and priorities for the borough and these are outlined below:

- Building Quality, Affordable and Social Housing
- Health and Wellbeing
- Successful and Thriving Places
- Children and Young People
- Pride in Our Area
- Green and Connected
- Targeted Support

Tackling long term empty properties in Trafford will contribute to a number of these priorities in particular “Building Quality, Affordable and Social Housing”, “Successful and Thriving Places and “Pride in our Area”.

This Strategy sets out the Council’s priorities to tackle empty properties in Trafford, which I hope you will support.”

Councillor James Wright

Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration

Trafford Council

Introduction

Empty homes are an issue across the country. A House of Commons briefing paper¹ estimates that the number of new homes needed in England in each year is between 240,000 and 340,000 and the total housing stock in England only increased by around 222,000 homes in 2017/18. The number of empty homes in England was 634,453 (October 2018) and of these 216,186 were classed as long term empty properties. A property which has been empty (unoccupied) for six months or more is considered to be a long term empty home.

In addition there is a shortage of affordable homes being built in England. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's (JRF) and the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust's (JRHT) briefing on the social housing Green Paper² shows that in England there are 30,000 fewer affordable homes being provided than are needed every year.

High levels of empty properties are recognised as having a serious impact on the viability of communities in terms of blight on neighbourhoods and potential for anti-social behaviour to occur³. Empty homes are also a wasted resource and when brought back into use contribute to an increase in the supply of housing. Dealing with empty properties can therefore have social, economic and regenerative benefits.

This Empty Property Strategy identifies how the Council, with support from partners, will reduce the number of empty properties within Trafford by bringing them back into use.

This Strategy complements the Trafford Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and plays a role in delivering the priorities set out in the GM Housing Strategy 2019-24.

Vision

“Work together to bring Trafford’s long term empty properties back into use to increase the supply of quality, affordable homes for our residents”

¹ <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7671/CBP-7671.pdf>

“Tackling the under-supply of housing in England” House of Commons briefing paper 12th December 2018

² <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/social-housing-green-paper-jrf-and-jrht-response>

“Social Housing Green Paper: JRF and JRHT response”

³ <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN03012/SN03012.pdf>

House of Commons briefing paper Number 3012 13th June 2018 “Empty Housing (England)”

Strategic Context

National Context

The Housing Act 2004 introduced Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) which are a legal device which enable local authorities to put an unoccupied property back into use as housing.

The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 allows local authorities to increase the percentage by which a billing authority in England may increase the council tax payable in respect of a long-term empty dwelling.

Fixing our Broken Housing Market (Housing White Paper, February 2017)⁴ sets out the government's plans to boost the supply of new homes in England. It includes a commitment from the government to:

- Plan for the right homes in the right places
- Build homes faster
- Diversify the housing market
- Help people now

Within the White Paper there is the commitment to improve neighbourhoods by continuing to crack down on long term empty homes and support areas most affected by second homes. The Government pledges to continue to support local authorities to encourage efficient use of its existing stock, making best use of homes that are long-term empty.

New Homes Bonus

The New Homes Bonus is a grant paid by central government to local authorities for increasing the net level of housing. This bonus is for every additional home and paid each year for six years. The bonus is based on the amount of extra Council Tax revenue raised for new build homes, conversions and long term empty homes brought back into use. There is an additional payment for providing affordable homes.

The scheme is an incentive for local authorities to have an effective Empty Homes Strategy. Grant will only be paid for a net increase in housing, meaning that local authorities could miss out on rewards for new homes built if empty property levels are allowed to increase. At a time when local government grant funding has been significantly reduced, this provides an added incentive to continue our work to bring empty properties back into use.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-our-broken-housing-market>

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF 2018 states that planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively. As part of this approach, plans and decisions should support efforts to identify and bring back into use long term empty homes and other buildings, supported by the use of compulsory purchase powers where appropriate.⁵

Homes England

Homes England is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and is responsible for:

- Increasing the number of new homes that are built in England, including affordable homes and homes for market, sale or rent.
- Improving existing affordable homes and bringing long term empty homes back into use as affordable housing.
- Increasing the supply of public land and speeding up the rate that it can be built on.
- Helping to stimulate local economic growth by using their land and investment, and attracting private sector investment in local areas.



Homes England provides a number of funding programmes, including funding to bring long term empty homes back into use as affordable housing. Trafford Council will work in partnership with Registered Providers (RPs) to access this funding to bring long term empty homes back into use as affordable housing.

5

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb_2019_web.pdf

“National Planning Policy Framework”

Sub - Regional Context

Long term empty homes across GM have reduced substantially since 2004 (Figure 1). In addition Trafford has the lowest number of empty properties in GM (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Long Term Empty Properties in Greater Manchester in 2004 compared to 2018

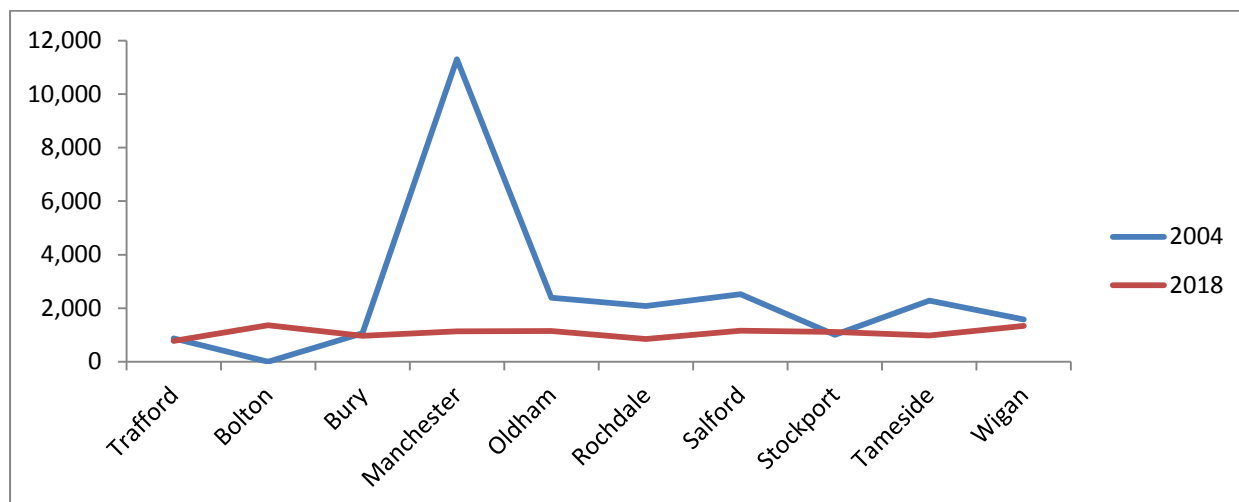
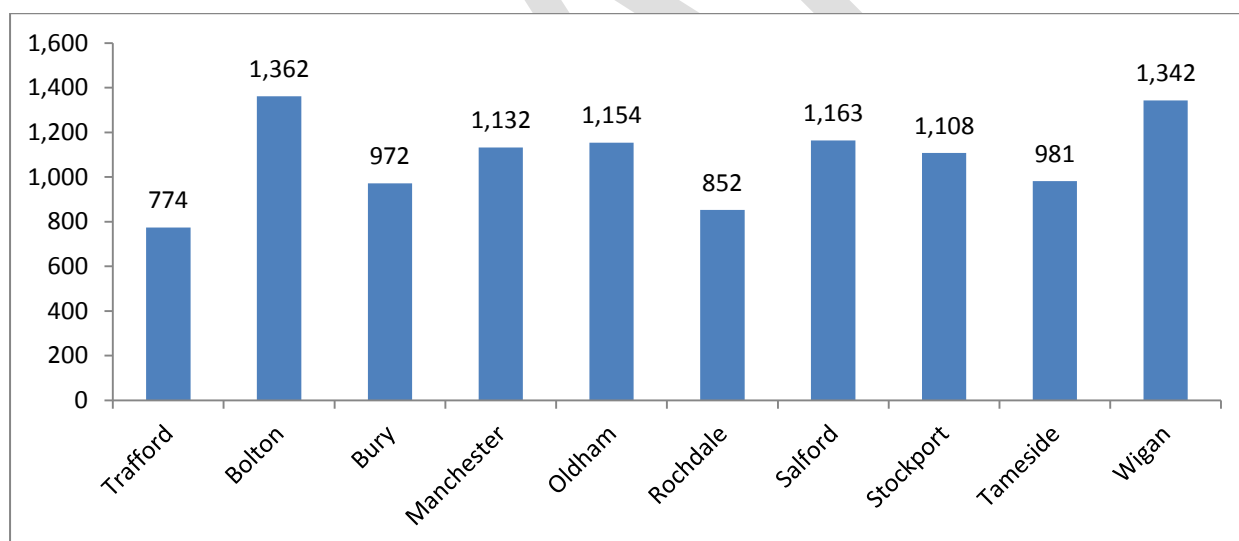


Figure 2: Long Term Empty Properties in Greater Manchester in 2018



Greater Manchester Housing Strategy 2019-2024

The Greater Manchester Strategy identifies decent and affordable housing as a priority. The GM Housing Strategy 2019-24 states that the Mayor of Greater Manchester, the Combined Authority and the ten Greater Manchester authorities will maximise the leverage of the resources available to them. This is illustrated by the GMCA's agreement to invest surpluses from the £300 million GM Housing Investment Loan Fund to help support the delivery of truly affordable housing, tackle empty homes, and issues in the private rented sector including rogue landlords.

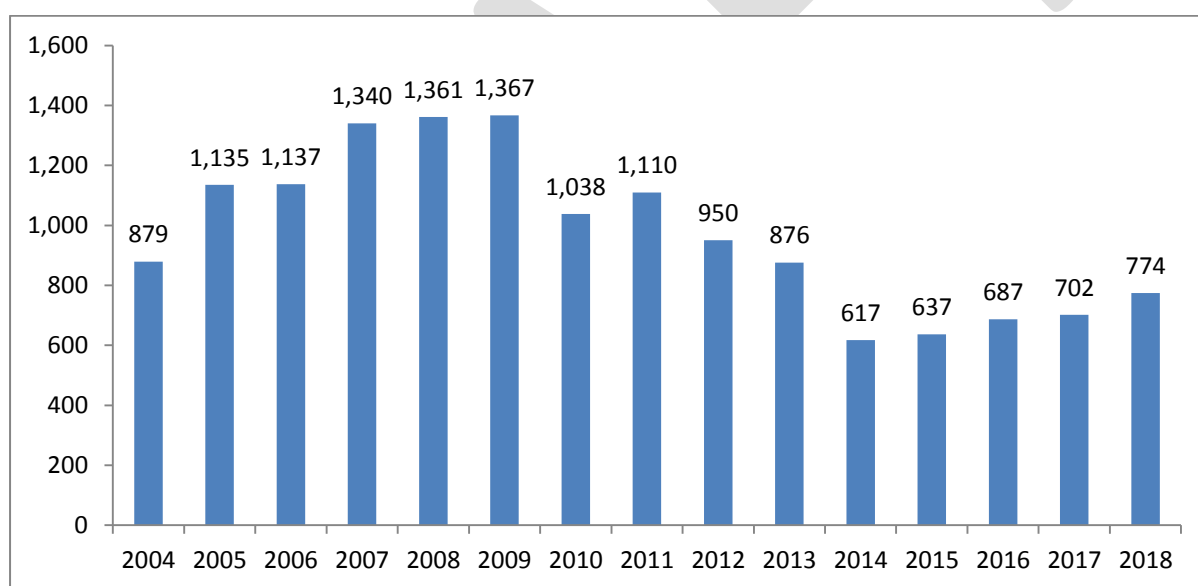
Local Context

There were 100,993 residential properties across Trafford in 2018⁶ and 774 of these had been empty for more than 6 months (Figure 3) which equates to less than 1% of the total stock. Compared to many local authorities across the country, Trafford has a low proportion of long term empty homes with the average for England being 2.5% of the dwelling stock⁷ however there is a shortage of affordable housing in Trafford. Therefore bringing empty homes back into use can play a key role in increasing the stock of affordable housing.

The charts below show the number of long term empty properties in Trafford since 2004. They also show the number of vacant properties owned by Registered Providers in Trafford since 2004 and the level of empty properties by sub area in Trafford since 2004.

Figure 3 shows the number of vacant properties in Trafford that have been empty for longer than 6 months. The number peaked in 2009 then reduced, but has been rising steadily since 2014.

Figure 3: Properties Empty for more than 6 months in Trafford 2014-2018



Source: Empty Homes figures Trafford Council July 2017

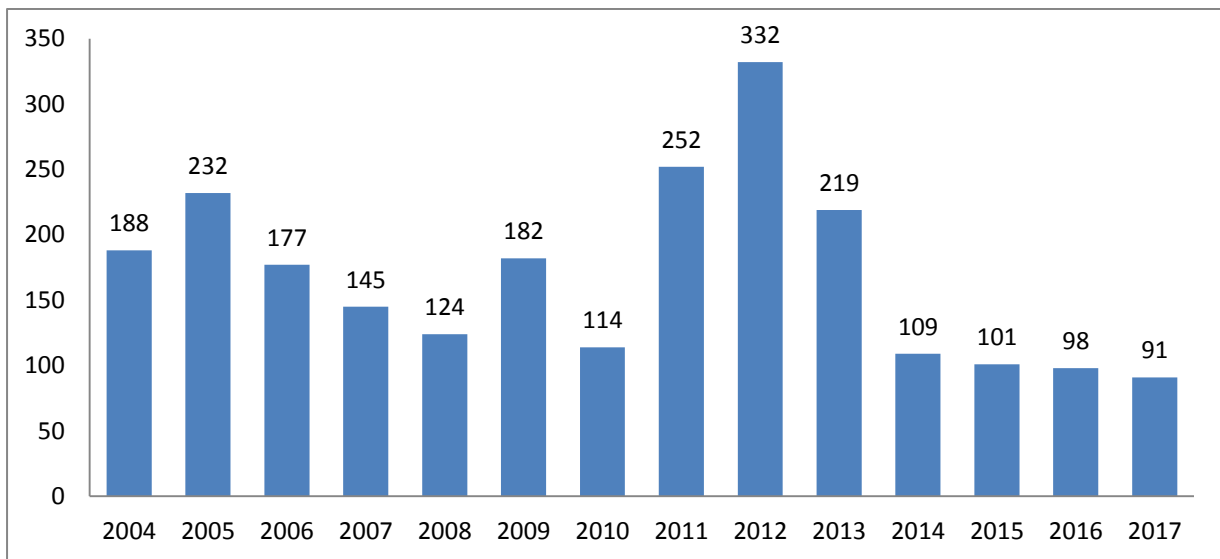
⁶ Trafford Council Tax March 2019

⁷ Dwelling stock estimates 2017 MHCLG

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/710382/Dwelling_Stock_Estimates_2017_England.pdf

Figure 4 shows that the number of empty homes owned by Registered Providers in Trafford peaked in 2012 at 332 but then reduced significantly due to increased demand

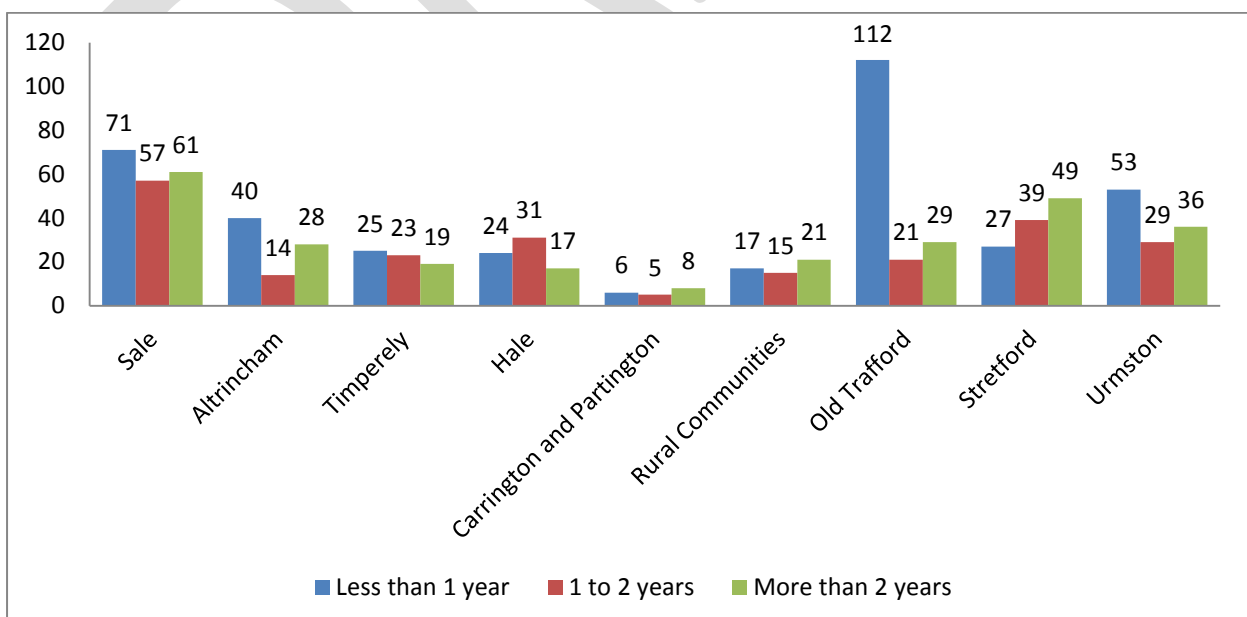
Figure 4: General Needs Vacant properties in Trafford 2004-2017



Source: Empty Homes figures Trafford Council July 2017

Figure 5 identifies how long properties have been empty by sub area in Trafford (a breakdown of these sub areas into wards can be found at Appendix 1). Sale and Old Trafford have the highest number of empty properties whilst Sale and Stretford have the highest number of properties empty for two years or more.

Figure 5: Level of Empty Properties by Sub Area in Trafford July 2018



Source: Empty Homes figures Trafford Council July 2018.

Council Tax Discount

Council Tax discount for empty homes and second homes changed in April 2013. Trafford's local approach is to:

- Provide a 100% discount which may be awarded for a maximum period of one month from the date a property first becomes unoccupied and unfurnished.
- A 50% premium (additional Council Tax) is payable on top of the normal full Council Tax for properties that have been empty for more than two years.
- The government has granted new powers to increase council tax on homes that have been empty for a long period of time. This empty homes premium will assist with properties that have been empty for two years or more. The amount of the increase in Council Tax depends on whether the property has been empty for two, five or 10 years.
- The Council aims to use any additional revenue to fund schemes which will help owners carry out work to bring properties back into use. This may include Council Tax breaks when renovation work is being carried out.

Trafford Housing Strategy 2018-23

The Housing Strategy has been developed to identify the key housing priorities for the borough and the measures required to deliver them, by the Council and other key public and private stakeholders.

Producing this Empty Property Strategy is a key action within the Housing Strategy along with a commitment to tackle long term empty properties with a new approach.

Funding

Trafford Council has funding available for the renovation of empty properties through the Vacant Homes Loan Scheme. This funding is administered in the form of an interest free loan up to a maximum amount of £10,000. Loans are made available to owners of empty properties or leaseholders with at least 50 years remaining on the lease. The Council will secure the loan against the property and in return the owner must agree to lease the property to a partner Registered Provider for the period necessary to repay the loan.

In order to qualify the property must have been empty for a minimum of 12 months and the owner must confirm in writing that the property will be rented for at least five years or until the cost of the renovation work has been paid back in full to the Council (if that is greater than five years). The property will be used to accommodate those on the housing waiting list at an Affordable Rent (80% of market rent) or sold as a shared ownership property.

In addition Homes England currently makes funding available to bring empty properties back into use through the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) 2016-2021. There hasn't been any schemes funded from this programme in Trafford therefore one of the aims of this Strategy is to work in partnership with Registered Providers to make successful applications to this fund.

Strategic Priorities

The following strategic priorities have been identified for this Strategy:

1. Work with owners of long term empty properties to bring them back into use.
2. Improve our neighbourhoods by addressing long term empty homes that have become the focus of anti-social behaviour and neglect.
3. Provide advice and information to help raise awareness around long term empty properties.
4. Develop effective partnerships with key stakeholders to address long term empty properties.

Each Strategic Priority has a number of key actions which the Council and partners will need to deliver, details of which are contained within the following sections of the Strategy.

Priority 1: Work with owners of long term empty properties to bring them back into use

Empty homes can make a valuable contribution to meeting housing need when the local authority or a Registered Provider are able to buy or lease the empty properties from the owner and refurbish them. These can then be rented at an affordable rent (80% of market rent) or sold as a shared ownership property to those who are priced out of the housing market in Trafford.

The examples below show how empty properties can be brought back into use for the benefit of the community in Trafford.

Identify areas with highest housing need across Trafford

There is a shortage of affordable housing in Trafford. The Council has commissioned a Housing Need Assessment and the results of this will help establish what type, tenure and size of accommodation is needed in different sub areas across Trafford. This evidence will help the Council establish targets for new affordable housing and provide additional information on which areas should be prioritised for bringing long term empty homes back into use as affordable housing.



Work with owners of long term empty homes to bring them back into use as affordable housing

The Council works with partners such as Registered Providers and Social Lettings Agents (SLA) to identify opportunities to bring long term empty properties back into use as affordable housing. SLAs are a form of Private Renting Access scheme, run on a commercial basis to help homeless and vulnerable people to access and sustain private rented tenancies, and they also generate income to cover associated costs. They can offer a range of housing management solutions to private landlords. The Registered Providers or the SLA is able to organise any improvement works that the property may need and lease the property from the owner for a specified period of time. The return to the owner and the length of the lease will be dictated by the amount of money that needs to be spent to bring the property up to a Decent Homes Standard.

Work with owners of homes to bring them back into use as temporary and/or emergency accommodation in the private rented sector

Private sector rents in Trafford are high compared to other local authorities in Greater Manchester. The average rent is £750pcm and less than 10% of rents are within the Local Housing Allowance cap (the level covered by Housing Benefit). Many of the existing homes available are out of reach of lower paid workers, vulnerable people and first time buyers. This means it is hard for people on low incomes and vulnerable people to access the private rented sector. Through working with partners such as SLAs, the Council identifies opportunities to bring empty properties back into use as private rented housing which can be used as temporary accommodation, and to house those people where the Council has a duty to rehouse them under homelessness legislation.

Identify reasons why properties have been empty for such a long period of time

There are currently over 774 properties which have been empty for more than 6 months in Trafford with limited information as to the reasons for this. One of the aims of this Strategy is to engage with the owners of these properties to identify the reasons, where possible, and then draw up an action plan with the owner for each property with the aim of bringing the property back into use. By identifying the areas in Trafford which have the highest number of vacant properties (Sale and Old Trafford), the Council will focus its resources on bringing these properties back into use in these areas initially.

ACTIONS:

- Identify areas of highest housing need from the results of the Trafford Housing Needs Assessment.
- Work with owners of long term empty homes to bring them back into use as affordable housing and emergency/temporary accommodation.
- Carry out a pilot initiative in Sale and Stretford, which have the highest number of long term empties for the longest periods of time, and draw up action plans with owners to bring them back into use.

Priority 2: Improve our neighbourhoods by addressing long term empty homes that have become the focus of anti-social behaviour and neglect

It is important that Council resources are focused on those areas where properties have been empty for the longest time and are causing the most problems to the people who live in the local area. As well as affecting the overall environment through their appearance, empty properties can become the target of anti-social and criminal behaviour.



To ensure that resources are allocated appropriately, the Council proposes to assess the impact an empty home has on the local environment using a “priority scoring matrix”. The scoring matrix contains a risk assessment on each empty home that is reported to the Council.

A summary of the factors to be used are listed below:

- **Environmental Factors** - such as boarded up windows, accumulated rubbish/fly tipping and overgrown gardens.
- **Social Factors** – such as is the property a source of crime, vandalism, graffiti and anti-social behaviour.
- **Health or Safety Factors** - such as disrepair or if the property is in a condition that affects the structure of neighbouring properties, hazards to the public and pest activity.
- **Period Vacant Factor** – how long has the property been empty.

Those empty properties with the highest score will be prioritised for investigation and action. The matrix will be linked to the Housing Propositions that are being established. The Propositions will provide information on the types, sizes, tenures of accommodation required to re-balance the housing market in each of the sub areas in Trafford. The Propositions will also now include those empty properties identified via the matrix that need to be targeted and brought back into use.

Legislative Powers

The Council has a number of legislative powers and tools at its disposal which it can use to bring empty properties back into use.

Enforced Sale

An Enforced Sale is a procedure to recover money owed to the Council. A statutory Notice is served on the owner of an empty property requiring them to carry out works. Examples of where a Notice can be served are if the property is open to anybody to access, if there is a leak which is affecting neighbouring properties or if there are pests in the property. If the owner ignores the Notice the Council can carry out the works and recharge the cost of the work to the owner of the property. In this example the Council will also ask for a legal charge on the property to be created. A legal charge is a type of mortgage by which lenders can repossess properties and these are registered with the Land Registry.

The legal charge equates to the sum of money which the Council has spent on works to the property. This means a restriction is imposed on the property either to secure the payment of the debt on re-sale, or to limit the use of the property. This charge is legally binding on subsequent owners and occupiers of the property and means the Council can force the sale of the property in order to recover the sum of money including legal and works costs. Any surplus is paid to the owner or mortgagee.

An Enforced Sale brings two main benefits:

- Money owed to the Council is recovered.
- The property is sold to a new owner with the expectation that the new owner will bring the property back into use.

Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)

EDMOs are a legal device (created by the Housing Act 2004) which enable Local Authorities to take action so that an empty property can be brought back into use. There are two types of EDMO – interim and final.

An interim EDMO lasts 12 months but a final EDMO can last up to seven, fourteen or twenty one years. An EDMO allows the Council to bring the property back into use without changing its ownership. The Council can take any costs of improving the property from the rents it receives when it lets the property.

The intention of EDMOs are to bridge the gap between voluntary measures such as the owner agreeing to refurbish or occupy the property, and compulsory purchase powers where a property has been left vacant for more than two years and is having a negative impact on the neighbourhood.

Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)

The Council has powers under section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 to acquire land, houses or property. One use of this power is to bring empty properties back into use to provide housing accommodation.

The decision to compulsorily purchase an empty property must be shown to be in the public interest and there must be a proven housing need, as instigating a

CPO is a costly and lengthy process. CPOs can be used where the owner is unable or unwilling to co-operate with voluntary measures offered by the Council, such as the owner agreeing to refurbish or occupy the property; or if the owner is untraceable.

When considering compulsory purchase the Council's costs should largely be met from selling the property. Also when the property is offered for sale at public auction, the terms of sale should include restrictions (known as covenants) that ensure the property will be improved to a Decent Homes Standard and occupied within a 12 month period from the date of disposal.



ACTIONS:

- Develop a matrix to be used to assess the priority for bringing empty properties back into use and draw up a marking scheme for priority scoring
- Identify priority properties to be targeted for action as a result of using priority scoring matrix.
- Make better use of the powers and legislation to bring long term empty properties back into use.

Priority 3: Provide advice and information to help raise awareness around empty properties

Owners of empty properties are often not aware of the support available to them to help them bring their empty property back into use. Initial advice is provided on the Council's website and owners can make further contact with the Council. The advice may be to sell, or improve and let their properties and this is done through provision of information on the cost and consequences of keeping a property empty.



To engage with property owners, the Council identifies empty properties from Council Tax data where the property has been registered as empty and from complaints received from members of the public. An online reporting form is available on the Council's webpage to encourage the public to report an empty property in their neighbourhood.

When an empty property has been identified the Council writes to the owner and where a reply is received, an officer will visit the owner to discuss their plans for the property. The Council will provide advice and assistance on how the property may be brought back into use. Where there are statutory nuisances associated with an empty property or the property is open to unauthorised access, the Council will also consider using its legislative powers and tools to rectify problems.

The Council can provide details of local letting agents, registered builders and information on the legal requirements for letting a dwelling and advise on the Vacant Homes Loan Scheme.

The Council's Vacant Homes Loan Scheme

The Vacant Homes Loan Scheme has been developed to assist owners to bring long term empty properties back into use. This is promoted through Trafford Council's webpages and when offering advice to owners of long term empty homes.

The Council can provide loans at 0% interest to owners of long term empty properties to assist with the repair and improvement in order to bring the property back into use. In order to qualify, the property must have been empty for a minimum of 12 months and the owner must confirm in writing that the property will be rented for at least five years or until the cost of the renovation work has been paid back in full to the Council (if that is greater than five years).

Unfortunately take up of Vacant Homes Loans is very low and the Council needs to carry out research to identify the reasons for this and review the Scheme if necessary. Therefore owners will be surveyed to try and establish reasons for the low take up of the Scheme.

Empty Property Matchmaker Scheme

To help tackle long term empty properties in Trafford, the Council introduced an 'Empty Property Matchmaker Scheme' in October 2018. The Scheme is free and simple-to-use and brings together the owners of empty properties in Trafford with private individuals, investors and developers, to enable homes that have been empty for more than six months to be brought back into use. The empty homes for sale are viewed on a secure council webpage and the scheme bypasses the need for an Estate Agent.

Where owners have agreed to join the Scheme potential purchasers of vacant dwellings contact the owner (in compliance with data protection requirements) or can be directed to the Land Registry's online service.

Currently there are three investors registered with the Council and no property owners. The Council therefore needs to investigate the reasons for this and take further actions to increase its effectiveness.

ACTIONS

- Continue to engage with owners of empty properties to ensure they are fully aware of their options.
- Promote the online reporting form on the Council's webpage more effectively through social media, to encourage the public to report an empty property in their neighbourhood.
- Research reasons for low take up of Council Vacant Home Loans through contact with all owners of properties that have been empty for more than 6 months.
- Research reasons why property owners are not making use of the Empty Property Matchmaker scheme.

Priority 4: Develop effective partnerships with key stakeholders

The Council needs to work with partners, such as Registered Providers and Homes England, to increase the number of empty properties brought back into use. There are examples of successes in this area of work across the country (such as the work in Rochdale) and the Council needs to investigate the reasons for the success and apply them in Trafford where possible.

Homes England currently makes funding available to bring empty properties back into use through the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) 2016-2021. The Council needs to encourage Registered Providers to bid for funding from this Programme to purchase and renovate empty properties in Trafford.

To help engage further with long term empty property owners, there should be a more concerted effort across a range of Council teams such as Revenues and Benefits, Council Tax, Planning Enforcement, Housing Standards, Environmental Health and Building Control to maximise and share information. A joint approach can help in encouraging homeowners to take a pro-active approach towards selling or improving their empty home for let or for sale



A report published by the Federation of Master Builders 'Homes on our Streets' in December 2017⁸ identified the potential for the creation of between 300,000 and 400,000 new homes by converting empty space above high street shops. The report recommended that local authorities should explicitly make reference to building homes above shops on the high street within their various planning documents.

The Council needs to work to identify empty properties above commercial premises where there is little proven demand, and work with owners, agents and Registered Providers to access funding to bring them back into use as residential properties.

Registered Providers have large asset bases and as part of their management of these assets they have strategies for disposal of empty properties which no longer meet the requirements of their business. The Council therefore needs to work in partnership with Registered Providers with housing stock in Trafford in order to ensure that all options are considered to retain their empty stock as affordable housing.

⁸ <https://www.fmb.org.uk/media/37062/fmb-homes-on-our-high-streets-low-res-final.pdf>

ACTIONS:

- Work with Registered Providers to identify opportunities to jointly bring empty homes back into use.
- Work with Homes England to identify funding to bring empty homes back into use.
- Work with colleagues across the Council to identify empty properties and agree the most appropriate action to bring them back into use.
- Work to identify suitable empty properties above commercial premises which could be brought back into use as residential properties.
- Work in partnership with Registered Providers with housing stock in Trafford in order to ensure that all options are considered when carrying out disposals of empty homes.

Delivery of the Strategy

The strategic priorities and related objectives will be delivered through an Empty Property Strategy Action Plan.

The Action Plan will be developed following consultation on the Strategy and in partnership with stakeholders, partners and agencies and agreed by the Strategic Housing Partnership (SHP). The SHP has set up Task and Finish Groups to deliver the Housing Strategy Action Plan. The Private Sector Housing and the Housing Propositions Task and Finish Groups will support the delivery of the Empty Properties Strategy and Action Plan and explore ways to bring empty properties back into use.

The Action Plan will provide detailed actions and targets to ensure that we achieve the priorities identified by 2024 and will be reviewed annually to ensure that all new changes in legislation and policies/strategies developed by the Council are reflected.

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Long Term Empty Properties in Greater Manchester in 2004 compared to 2018	7
Figure 2: Long Term Empty Properties in Greater Manchester in 2018	7
Figure 3: Properties Empty for more than 6 months in Trafford 2014-2018	8
Figure 4: General Needs Vacant properties in Trafford 2004-2017.....	9
Figure 5: Level of Empty Properties by Sub Area in Trafford July 2018.....	9

Glossary of Terms

A

Affordable housing: Affordable housing is social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Affordable Rent: Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households that are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable rent is no more than 80 per cent of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

C

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is a legal function in the United Kingdom and Ireland that allows certain bodies which need to obtain land or property to do so without the consent of the owner.

Council Tax is a tax levied on households by local authorities in Britain based on the estimated value of a property and the number of people living in it.

D

Decent Homes Standard is a technical standard for public housing introduced by the Government. It must meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing, be in a reasonable state of repair and have reasonably modern facilities and services.

E

Empty Homes is the national charity organisation that campaigns to bring long term empty homes back into use across England.

Empty Property is classed as

Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMOs) are a legal device used in England and Wales, which enable local authorities to put an unoccupied property back into use as housing. EDMOs were created by the Housing Act 2004 with the relevant legislation coming into effect in 2006.

Enforced Sale arises where the local authority exercises the power of sale conferred by a charge on a property. In most cases the local authority's charge has priority over other charges which mean that the local authority can sell the property without the consent of any other mortgage or charge holder.

G

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA): The GMCA is made up of the ten Greater Manchester councils and Mayor, who work with other local services, businesses, communities and other partners to improve the city-region. The GMCA is run jointly by the leaders of the ten councils and the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham

H

Homes England: Homes England is the non-departmental public body that funds new affordable housing in England. It was founded on 1 January 2018 to replace the Homes and Communities Agency.

Housing Demand: It is a market driven concept and relates to the type and number of houses that households will choose to occupy based on preference and affordability.

Housing Need: It is an indicator of existing deficit: the number of households that do not have access to accommodation that meet certain normative standards.

Housing Tenure: is the legal status under which someone has the right to live in a property. The two most common forms of tenure are home ownership and renting. Home-ownership is when a property is owned outright or bought with mortgage or loan. The second type of tenure is renting, and it has two forms, and they are social and private renting.

L

Landlord- It is an owner of a property, and the landlord leases their property to an individual or business, and they are called tenants.

Local Housing Allowance provides Housing Benefit entitlement for tenants renting private sector accommodation.

Long Term Empty Property is a property which has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least two years

Lease is a contract by which one party conveys land, property, services etc. to another for a specified time, usually in return for a periodic payment.

Leaseholder is a person who is allowed to use a property according to the terms of the lease.

N

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

P

Private Rented Sector (PRS): The PRS is a property that is owned and rented out by a private landlord.

Public Sector: It is controlled by the state, owned and operated by the government. The public sector provides services for citizens and does not seek to generate a profit.

R

Registered Provider (RP): It is a non-profit organisation, and they rent properties to low incomes households with particular needs. Their portfolio consists of social and affordable rented properties, and they provide options for low cost home ownership

S

Shared Ownership is a system by which the occupier of a dwelling buys a proportion of the property and pays rent on the remainder, typically to a registered provider or a local authority.

A Social Lettings Agency is a 'stand-alone' Council service which can offer a range of housing management solutions to private landlords. The aim of a Social Lettings Agency is to make accommodation affordable and accessible for local households that are struggling to secure housing in the private sector.

Social Rent: Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with Homes England.