

# **Overview And Scrutiny**

## **Private Sector Renters Rights Act and Empty Homes**

**Andrew Rowe - Assistant Director Housing  
Lynn Williams - Head of Service Housing Renewal**

**03 March 2026**



# Renters Rights Act

# Implementation timeline

## 1 May 2026 - statutory duty to enforce legislation

- Fixed-term ASTs abolished → Assured Periodic Tenancies
- Section 21 abolished
- Updated Section 8 possession grounds
- Rental bidding banned; adverts must show one rent
- Rent in advance restricted to one month
- Rent increases: once per 12 months (s13)
- Anti-discrimination rules (children, benefits)
- Written tenancy agreements become mandatory

## Late 2026 – National Infrastructure

- PRS Database begins
- Private Landlord Ombudsman registration starts

## Future (post-consultation)

- Decent Homes Standard (PRS)
- Updates to hazard responses & property standards

# Impact on NYC

Higher demand for tenancy relations advice and early homelessness prevention

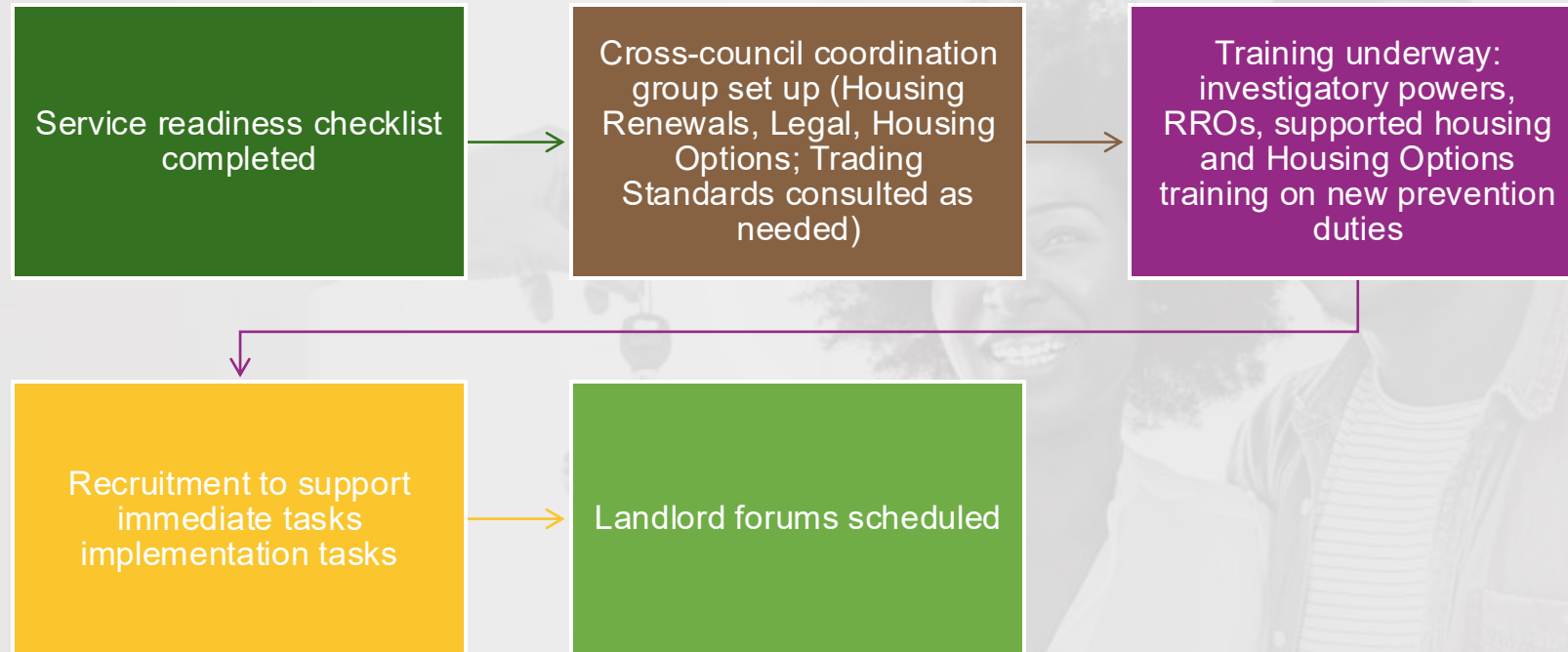
More formal enforcement casework under new powers

Increased involvement from Legal Services (grounds, notices, challenges)

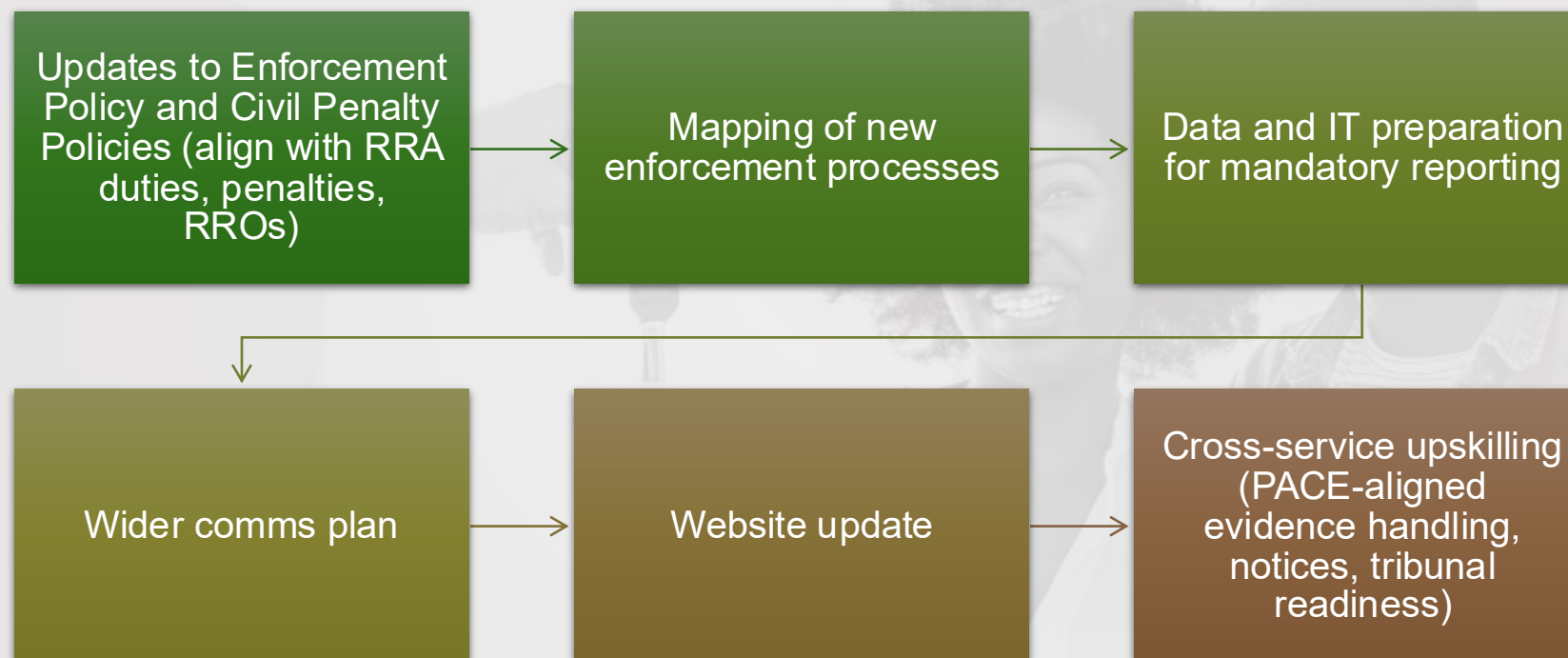
Strong dependency on IT/Data for Phase 2 (PRS Database integration)

Need for clear corporate comms for landlords, tenants and Members

# Progress so far..



# In Progress (Jan- Apr 2026)



# Resources

Resource implications

Staffing growth (circa 3 FTE)

Funding from Vacancies, Second Homes Council Tax (£100k), and Burdens Funding (£200k).

- Burdens funding is short term

It is anticipated by MCHLG that civil penalty income will fund enforcement activity in the future

Future resource needs remain uncertain and will depend on levels of activity.



# **Empty Homes – An Emerging Strategy**

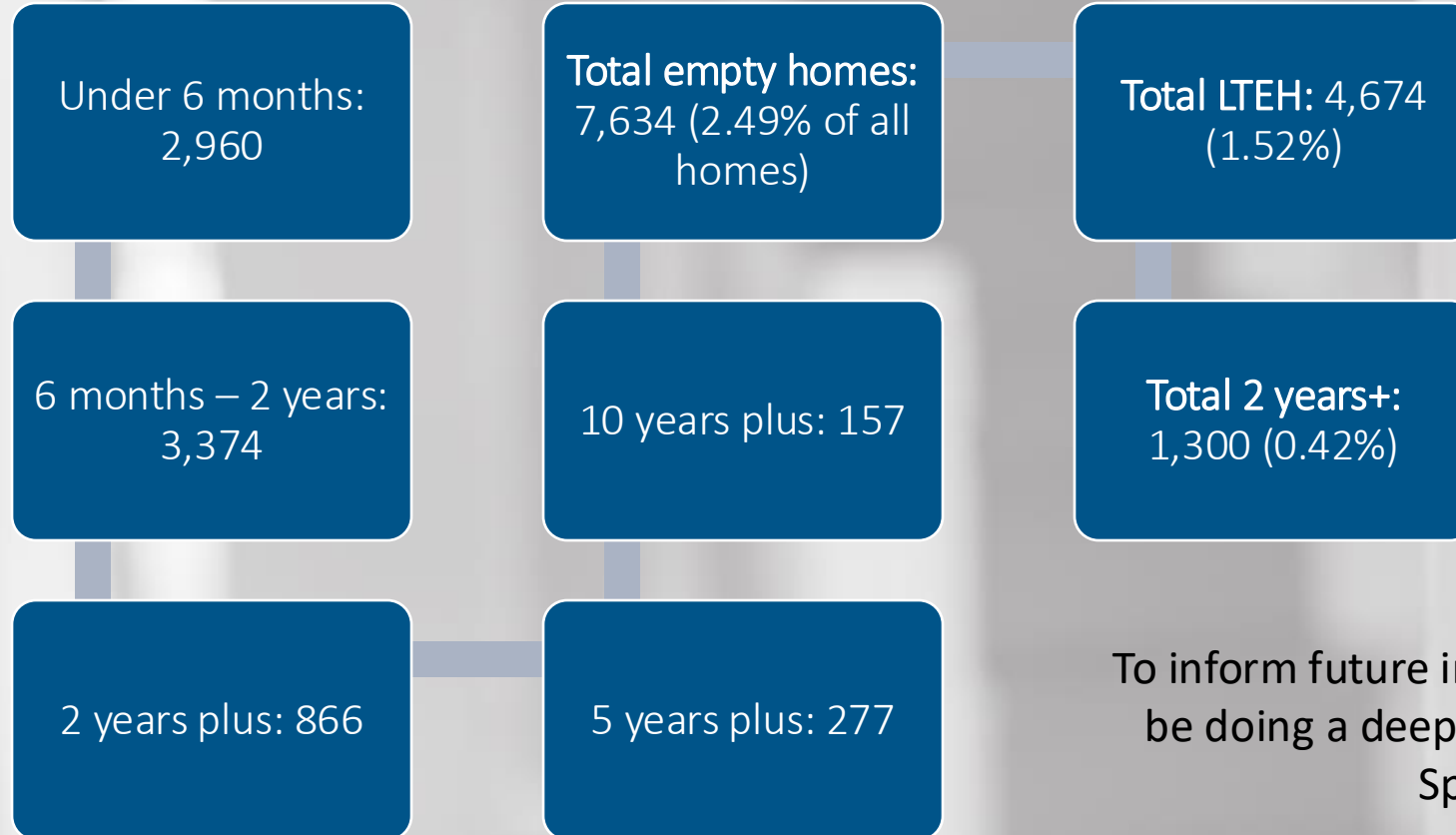
# The scale of the issue

Empty homes are a normal part of a healthy housing market, but high numbers -especially Long-Term Empty Homes (LTEH, unoccupied >6 months)-are a growing concern.

NYC has seen a 24% increase in LTEH from 2024 to 2025 (from 3,755 to 4,652), now representing 1.52% of total homes -higher than both the Yorkshire & Humber regional average (1.3%) and England (1.17%).

The yearly increase equates to 897 additional LTEH in North Yorkshire

# Empty homes breakdown (length of time empty)



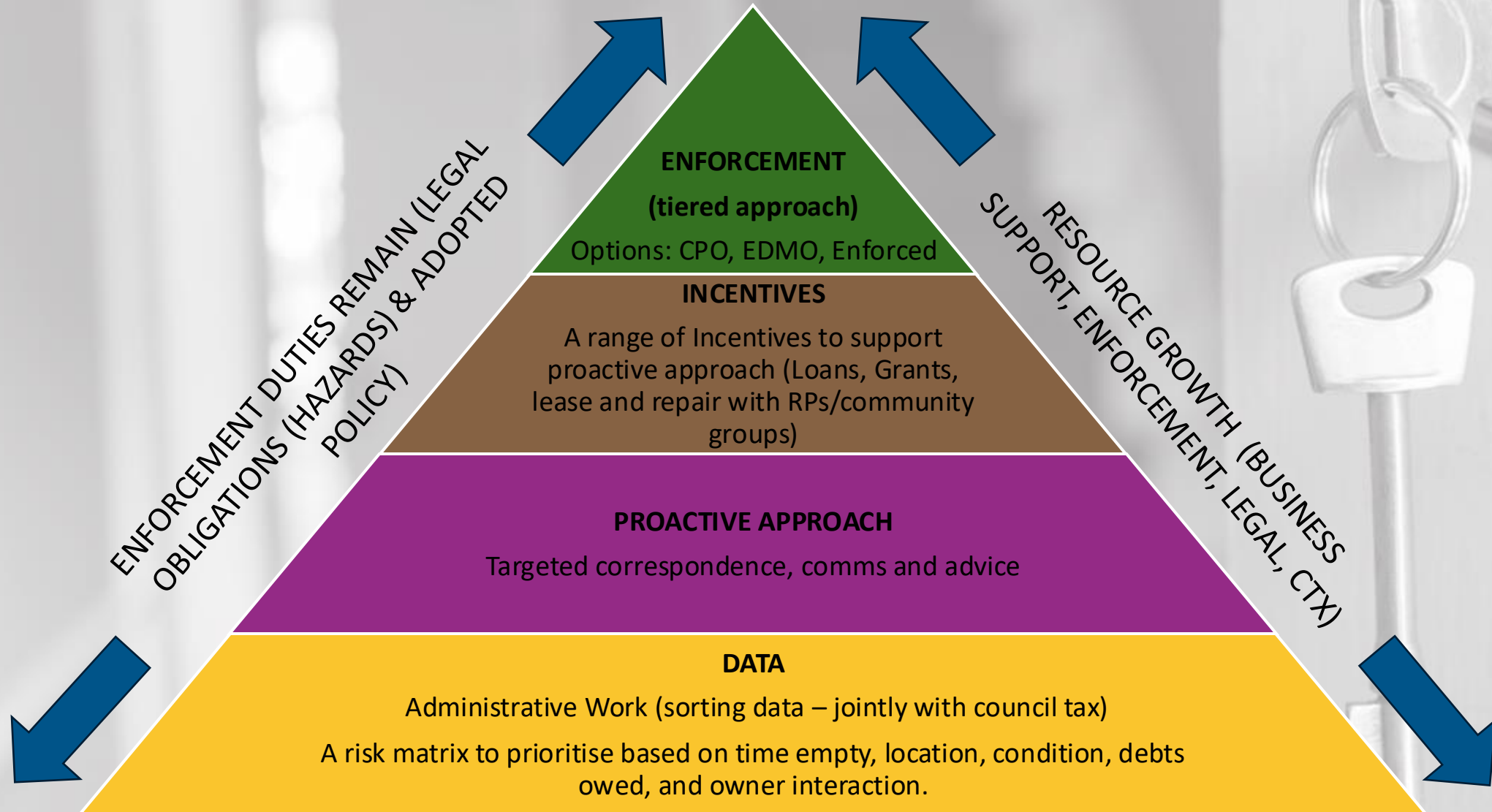
To inform future interventions we will be doing a deep dive with CTX this Spring



# Current position is reactive and focused on complaints

- No dedicated resource for proactive activity
- Inconsistent data
- A mix of legacy approaches (no policy in place, but a commitment to develop)
- No system for prioritisation
- Meeting our minimum legal requirements (reactive enforcement to deal with hazards/nuisance)
- No capital programme or incentives
- High expectations from members and public

# Targeted and focused approach (growth)



# Key enforcement options

## **Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)**

- Used where owners cannot be traced or refuse to engage
- Council buys the property, carries out works, and usually sells it back to market
- High cost, complex and time-consuming
- Council assumes ownership and ongoing maintenance risk
- Best suited to strategic regeneration, not routine empty homes cases

## **Enforced Sale**

- Used where a relevant debt is owed to the Council
- Property is sold to recover costs and typically returned to use
- Lower cost, lower risk than CPO
- Does not require the Council to own the property
- Only available where a qualifying debt exists

## **Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs)**

- Used where a property is habitable (or can be at reasonable cost)
- Council manages the property and recovers costs through rental income
- Can last up to 7 years
- Resource-intensive with financial recovery risks
- Only applicable where the property has been empty 2+ years



# Key incentive & assistance options

**Incentives remove barriers and encourage early engagement, reducing the need for enforcement and bringing homes back into use more quickly.**

## **Financial Support**

- **Loans** – interest-free or low-cost loans (including equity-based options) to fund essential works, repayable on sale or transfer
- **Grants** – targeted, conditional grants to bring long-term empty homes back into use
- **Energy Retrofit Funding** – link empty homes to energy efficiency and retrofit schemes to improve viability and reduce future costs

## **Partnership Approaches**

**Lease to Registered Provider** – RP refurbishes and manages the property; owner receives guaranteed rent and Council gains nomination rights

- **RP Purchase / Supported Acquisition** – RPs acquire and refurbish empty homes for affordable housing, with Council facilitation where needed
- **Community Led Housing** – community or voluntary sector led, typically requires revenue and capital funding from LA

## **Practical & Non-Financial Incentives**

- **Dedicated Officer Support** – hands-on advice, casework and brokerage to overcome owner barriers
- **Buyers / Lettings Support** – buyers lists, rent bond schemes and help with letting to encourage voluntary reuse



# Pros & Cons of a targeted approach

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prioritises long-term, high-risk and high-impact empty homes which are most likely to cause harm or blight</li><li>• Moves the Council from reactive to proactive</li><li>• Targeting allows early engagement with owners before issues escalate supporting proportionate and defensible enforcement</li><li>• Risk-based, targeted approach provides a clear audit trail</li><li>• Aligns incentives, support and enforcement</li><li>• Enables the Council to match the right tool to the right property</li><li>• Provides clearer outcomes for members and communities</li><li>• Targeting priority properties and areas helps demonstrate visible improvement and progress</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Resource-intensive setup requirements</li><li>• A targeted approach relies on accurate data, risk matrices, proactive engagement and partnership working, all of which require dedicated officer and business support capacity that is currently limited</li><li>• Significant existing capacity pressures from new legislation, with the new duty to enforce, resulting in more formal enforcement</li><li>• RRA will also increase dependency on Legal and corporate services, further reducing flexibility to support empty homes initiatives</li><li>• Focusing only on priority properties or areas may lead to perceptions of inconsistency or inaction elsewhere</li><li>• Even when targeted, outcomes remain dependent on owner cooperation; without sufficient incentives or capital funding, progress can still be slow, risking frustration and escalation to enforcement</li></ul>

# Members views?

- Given the financial implications (both revenue and capital) do Members have a view on the level of prioritisation on empty work compared to other areas of activity?
- Are there any of the incentives that members would like us to consider in more detail?
- Are there any of the enforcement options that Members would like us to consider in more detail?
- Is there anything else Members would like us to focus on as we develop the strategy?

