

Overview And Scrutiny

Empty Homes: An update

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10th June 2026

Current Position

The issue of empty homes was brought to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2026.

No strategy in place (7 legacy arrangements).
Enforcement issues are managed by our Private Sector Housing team.

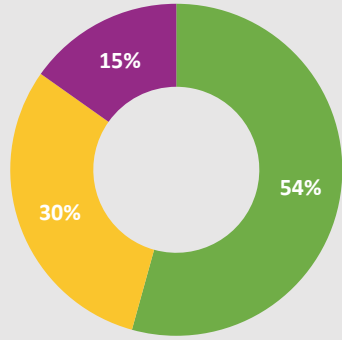
For NYC to better understand the issue of empty homes, it was agreed we would conduct a survey - using Council Tax data and targeting empty homeowners.

The results of this survey will assist in developing the Empty Homes Strategy, detailing how the Council will deal with empty homes going forward.



The figures (Council Tax data – April 2026)

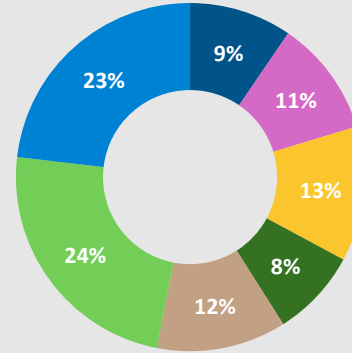
LONG-TERM EMPTY HOMES BY LENGTH OF TIME



■ 1-2 Y ■ 2-5Y ■ 5Y+

TOTAL LTEH		
1-2 Y	1658	54.30%
2-5Y	931	30.50%
5Y+	464	15.20%
	3053	100.00%

LOCALITY SPLITS - TOTAL LTEHS



■ Craven ■ Rich ■ Hamb ■ Ryedale ■ Selby ■ Scar ■ Harr

LOCALITY SPLIT				
	Total LTEH	Total %	Dwellings (2023 est)	Occurrence
Craven	291	9.50%	29,261	1.00%
Rich	329	10.80%	23,796	1.40%
Hamb	383	12.50%	44,676	0.90%
Ryedale	249	8.20%	27,982	0.90%
Selby	368	12.00%	42,083	0.90%
Scar	726	23.80%	60,309	1.20%
Harr	707	23%	77,718	0.90%
	3053	100.00%	305,825	

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RAISED TO NYC RE EMPTY HOMES 2024/25

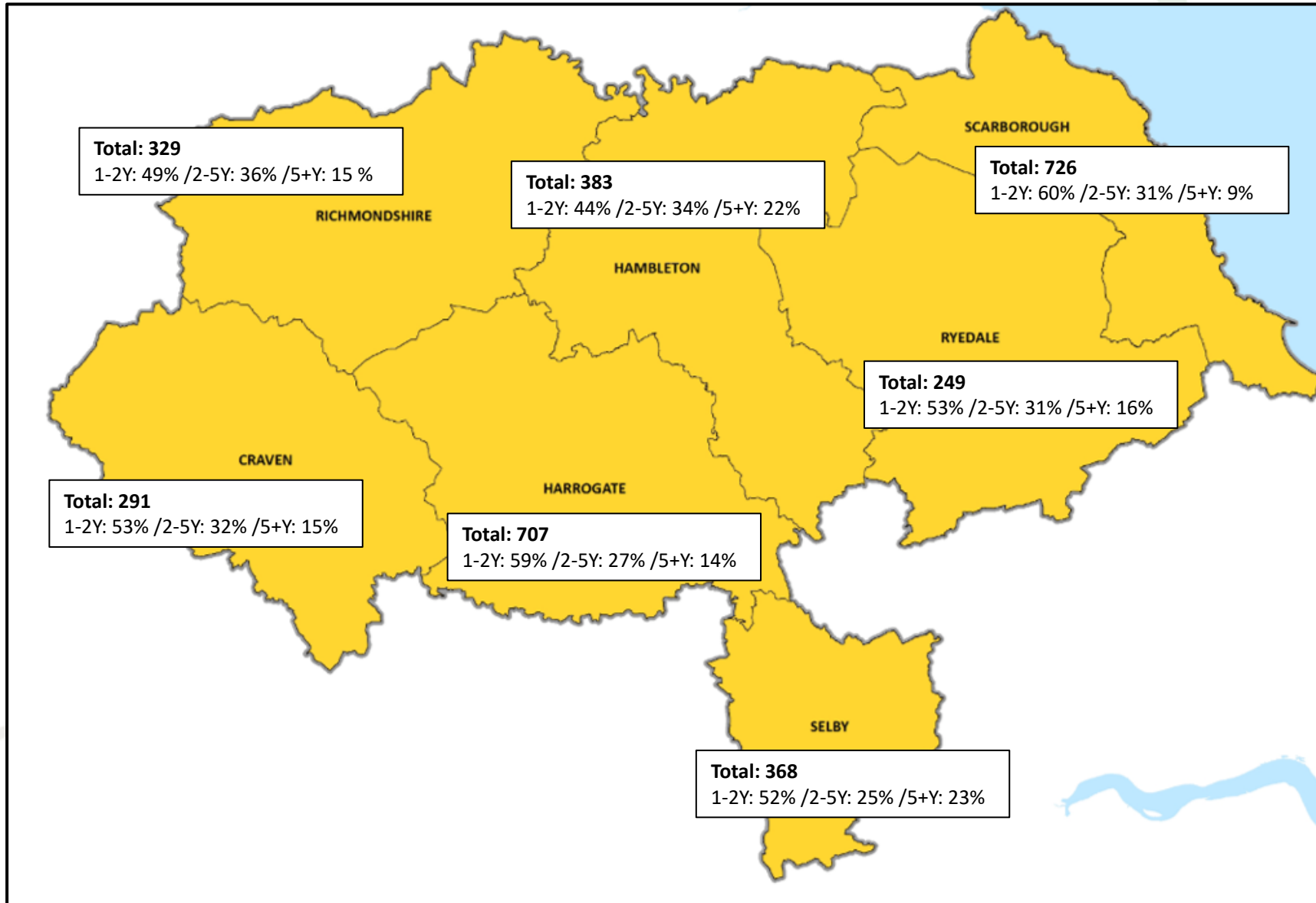
Scarborough	12
Richmond	11
Hambleton	7
Selby	11
Harrogate	23
Ryedale	5
Craven	6
Total	75

Council Tax - Exemptions

Reason for exemption	Number
Armed forces' accommodation.	3,323
Dwellings left empty by deceased persons.	1,707
A dwelling occupied only by a person, or persons, who is or are severely mentally impaired.	1,240
An unoccupied dwelling which was previously the sole or main residence of a person who has moved into a hospital or care home.	610
A dwelling where at least one person who would otherwise be liable has a relevant association with a Visiting Force.	472
A dwelling which forms part of a single property which includes another dwelling and may not be let separately from that dwelling, without a breach of planning control.	313
Unoccupied dwellings owned by a charity (up to six months).	310
A dwelling which is occupied only by students, the foreign spouses of students, or school and college leavers.	300
A dwelling which forms part of a single property including at least one other dwelling and which is the sole or main residence of a dependent relative of a person who is resident in the other dwelling.	232
Empty caravan pitches and boat moorings.	132

An unoccupied dwelling where the occupation is prohibited by law.	78
A dwelling occupied only by a person, or persons, aged under 18.	48
An unoccupied dwelling which was previously the sole or main residence of a person who is the owner or tenant and has moved to receive personal care.	47
An unoccupied dwelling which has been taken into possession by a mortgage lender.	39
A dwelling left unoccupied by people who are detained e.g. in prison.	27
Unoccupied clergy dwellings.	19
A hall of residence provided predominantly for the accommodation of students.	11
An unoccupied dwelling where the person who would otherwise be liable is a trustee in bankruptcy.	9
An unoccupied dwelling which was previously the sole or main residence of a person who is the owner or tenant and has moved to provide personal care to another person.	9
An unoccupied dwelling where the owner is a student who last lived in the dwelling as their main home.	1
TOTAL	8927

Mapping Empty Homes



What the data tells us

Over half of North Yorkshire's Long-Term Empty Homes (1+ years) have been empty between 1-2 years.

Only 15% have been empty for longer than 5 years.

Scarborough and Harrogate localities hold almost 50% of all LTEH – but this is proportionate to 2023's population estimates.

Scarborough and Richmondshire have the highest occurrence of empty homes, but all seven of the former districts share similar proportions in-line with population estimates, ranging from 0.9% of total stock to 1.4%.

Hambleton and Selby have the highest proportion of homes empty 5+ years (22% and 23%) in comparison to Scarborough at 9% - the average being 16%.

Empty Homes: Survey

Surveys were posted to 1077 addresses w/c 20th April. This represents 35% of all LTEH (1Y+).

The surveys were sent to a representative sample group to cover all localities and lengths of time empty.

We had received 193 responses by 15/05 - a mix of online and paper completions, and direct emails from recipients.

This represents an 18% return rate (so far), although some recipients contacted just to advise that the property is no longer empty.

Of the 193 responses we have received - 135 provided a more detailed response (12.5%).

The survey closes on 29th May – a full report will be collated then.

Survey responses in more detail

Most common reasons for properties being empty (respondents could cite multiple):

Reason	No. of respondents
Property needs significant work	63
Struggling to sell property	33
Owner deceased	11
Complications linked to business use	6
Planning waiting times	5
Legal complications	3
Contractor availability	2
Second home	2
Moved to care	1
TOTAL	120

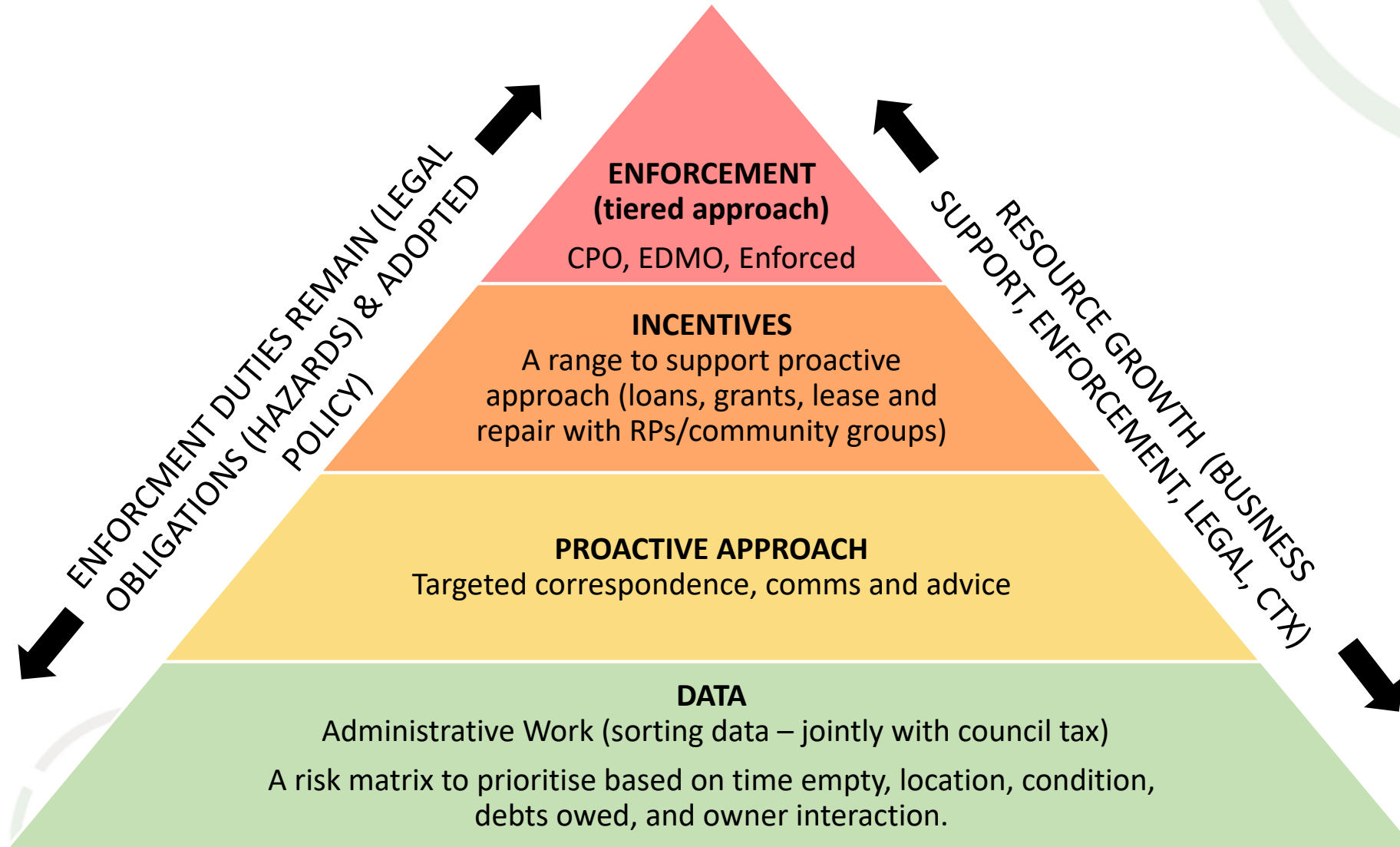
Restrictions on returning property to use:

Restriction	No. of respondents
Business use issues	10
Age of new owner	6
Conservation / Listed	5
Legal issue	2
Local connection	2
TOTAL	25

Only 62 respondents (46%) suggested ways in which the Council could help them return their empty properties back into use:

Option	No. of respondents
C/Tax relief whilst undergoing works	26
C/Tax relief whilst trying to sell	13
General guidance & assistance	9
Other (unique cases)	6
Grants towards cost of works	5
Purchase & Repair scheme	3

Next Steps - Options



Overview & Scrutiny - Task and Finish Group

- A member-led review of the options available to NYC on the issue of non-Council owned empty homes.
- To make recommendations to inform officer development of the Empty Homes Strategy.
- To help prioritise these recommendations into those most preferred.
- To provide recommendations that ensure the most effective and efficient use of Council resources.
- Suggesting a 6-month completion window, with work to commence on incorporating approved recommendations into a new strategy in early 2027.