



# News Release

## Empty Home Premium Proposed

Plans to ensure long term empty properties in Powys are brought into use and made available to people to either buy or rent are to be discussed by the both the cabinet and the council over the coming weeks.

Under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 local authorities have been given the power to charge owners of empty properties a premium on top of their council tax. A property would need to be empty for a continuous period of 12 months to be liable for the premium.

The council is proposing to set this premium at 50%. This will provide an additional income stream for the council as it looks to make savings of £29m over the next three financial years.

Councillor Graham Brown, Deputy Leader said: "We currently have just over a thousand properties in Powys that are empty. These could provide homes for families in housing need and we are convinced our strategy to charge a premium will encourage owners to make use of their assets, bringing empty homes back into use and increasing the supply of housing in the county."

Interest free loans of up to £25, 000 are available to owners of empty properties to help them carry out building works and then go on to rent or sell. Details are available on the council's website: [www.powys.gov.uk](http://www.powys.gov.uk) and search for 'empty property'

The council is also able to charge a premium on properties which are occupied periodically (second/holiday homes). These could be properties that people outside of Powys own and don't live in permanently but use to visit the county. The premium for these homes is also proposed at 50%. The premium would not apply to holiday let properties that are rated for the purposes of Business Rates, and as such are liable to pay business rates to the council.

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