**Media Release – [Insert Date] 2021**

ADD LOCAL ORGANISATION LOGO - IF RELEVANT Or Your name and address

**Campaigners call 17th April Day of Action on Empty Homes**

**The Day of Action aims to raise public awareness of the rising number of long-term empty homes. Government data shows over half a million homes without a permanent resident in England. Long-term empties alone rose nearly 20% last year to over 268,000 wasted homes in England**

**Government and market data show there are:**

* 270,000 long-term empty homes (268,385)
* 263,000 second-homes with no permanent resident
* 120,000 Airbnb type short-lets (London Councils estimate there are over 70,000 short-lets in London alone) all without residents

**[XXXXX ADD DATA FOR YOUR AREA – available here** <https://www.actiononemptyhomes.org/facts-and-figures> **]:**

* In XXXX [your area] over XXXX [number] homes are long-term empty
* With second homes this means XXXXX [number] [or ‘1 in every X’] homes in [your area] has no residents

**We are calling this Day of Action for three reasons:**

The pandemic has highlighted the health impacts of Temporary Accommodation and overcrowding - it has created a health emergency.

The wrong kind of housing is being built - too many empty homes and second homes are built and too few social and genuinely affordable homes.

Building the wrong kind of housing has created a crisis of affordability.

**What will happen on the Day of Action?**

Campaigners will be staging photoshoots using campaign banners and placards outside new developments that do not contain any social housing, decanted council homes, housing association empty homes and older large residential properties that are long term empty.

**What is happening in [XXXXX insert name of your town, city or area here]?**

**[insert event or protest activity with place and time]**

**The Day of Action is supported by:** Action on Empty Homes,Big Issue, Defend Council Housing, Disabled People Against Cuts, Homes For All, SHAC (Social Housing Action Campaign), People Before Profit, Street Storage, Streets Kitchen, Unite union (London and Eastern Region)

**What is happening nationally**

We will be livestreaming a rally with speakers including John Bird founder of The Big Issue on

multiple platforms from 11am to 12pm including https://www.facebook.com/emptyhomes/ YouTube Action on Empty Homes YouTube Homes 4 All https://www.facebook.com/Homes4AllUK - The online 'rally' will feature live streams from the local photoshoots as well as local and national speakers in the ‘studio’. We will gather all local photoshoots and put them on our websites to build a national picture of the problem.

**[ADD A QUOTE FROM A LOCAL SPOKESPERSON Here – Two examples below from Action on Empty Homes that you can leave in as well as your local quote, or delete one]**

**[XXXXX name of spokesperson locally** – your name**?] of [XXXX your organisation or area / address] said, [ADD a quote on why you think action is necessary – you can quote local data see our website Facts and Figures page for that here** [**www.actiononemptyhomes.org/facts-and-figures**](http://www.actiononemptyhomes.org/facts-and-figures) **]**

**Campaign Manager at Action on Empty Homes Chris Bailey, said,**

“With over half a million homes without residents revealed by Government data we believe it is time to act. Long-term empty homes and unused second homes in England are where we should start. These make up over 530,000 homes without residents.

Homes you can’t rent and can’t buy but which could offer vitally needed housing to the homeless. This is why we have called for a day of action alongside the Homes For All campaign on April 17th to highlight the need for action across the country.

It is time for Government to back local councils’ calls[[1]](#endnote-1) for new powers and investment to start bringing empty homes back into use for homeless families in desperate need of housing.”

***Director of Action on Empty Homes, Will McMahon, said,***

“It can’t be right that in the last four years we have seen an escalating housing crisis while the number of long-term empty homes keeps rising. Today there are nearly 100,000 families languishing in overcrowded and temporary accommodation at a time when we know that overcrowded housing has been linked to the spread of the corona virus and to higher mortality.

“During a national housing crisis we cannot afford to see over 268,000 homes stand empty across the country because of the lack of a government strategy to support councils to bring them back into use. **It will be impossible to ‘build back better’ if we keep letting our housing crisis get worse**.

“Action on Empty Homes calls on Government to introduce a new national empty homes programme to create additional housing supply for those in most housing need, utilising properties currently left vacant or in need of renovation.”

**Day of Action details:** [**https://www.actiononemptyhomes.org/day-of-action**](https://www.actiononemptyhomes.org/day-of-action)

**Enquiries: [insert local contact name: XXXXX XXXX, mobile number XXXXX XXX XXX, email XXXXXXXXXXXX]**

**National media contact: Chris Bailey 07979 647 237 email** [**chris.bailey@actiononemptyhomes.org**](mailto:chris.bailey@actiononemptyhomes.org)

**Note to editors, data references:**

1. Councils call for action was made through the Local Government Association: **Local Government Association Media Release Jan 13th 2021:**[**https://www.local.gov.uk/around-450-primary-schools-worth-children-stuck-temporary-accommodation-during-lockdown**](https://www.local.gov.uk/around-450-primary-schools-worth-children-stuck-temporary-accommodation-during-lockdown)

   All vacants and long-term vacants data ‘Table 615’ [all vacants = 665,628; all long-term empties 268,385]:

   **Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, Table 615, Live Tables on Dwelling Stock: Release 25th March 2021:** [**https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants**](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants)

   **2020 Council Taxbase data at local authority level - national rise in long-term empties is 18.84%:**

   [**https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/934180/Local\_Authorities\_Council\_Taxbase\_2020\_Drop\_down.xlsx**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/934180/Local_Authorities_Council_Taxbase_2020_Drop_down.xlsx)

   **2020 data compared with 2019 - Action on Empty Homes Analysis,** shows rate of rise for each council**:**[**CLICK HERE**](https://www.actiononemptyhomes.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=2215aedf-0a7b-4b9f-83ba-a079da93941e)

   **[the above Action on Empty Homes analysis also shows data for second homes in each council area]**

   **Inside Housing (22 Oct 2020)** ‘Temporary accommodation spend soars to £1.2bn majority paid to private companies’:

   [**https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/news/temporary-accommodation-spend-soars-to-12bn-with-majority-being-paid-to-private-companies-68305**](https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/news/temporary-accommodation-spend-soars-to-12bn-with-majority-being-paid-to-private-companies-68305)

   **Government Statistics: ‘Temporary Accommodation number: Government Statutory Homelessness Release Jul-Sep 2020 ‘**On 30 September 2020 the number of households in temporary accommodation was 93,490’ [**https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-july-to-september-2020**](%20https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-july-to-september-2020)

   **Inside Housing (May 2020) ‘Four graphs show the link between covid-19 deaths and the housing crisis’**: [**https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/insight/insight/the-housing-pandemic-four-graphs-showing-the-link-between-covid-19-deaths-and-the-housing-crisis-66562**](https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/insight/insight/the-housing-pandemic-four-graphs-showing-the-link-between-covid-19-deaths-and-the-housing-crisis-66562)  [↑](#endnote-ref-1)