



“We’ve transferred our stock and now we’re starting again”

BRINGING EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO USE AND REGENERATING AREAS  
IN HARTLEPOOL

Nigel Johnson – Head of Housing



# Tees Valley – Where?



# Tees Valley Housing Market – key features

- High proportion of older terraced dwellings – housing market renewal 2003-2010
- Some ‘hotspots’ and very buoyant areas
- But on average below national average prices £91,957 compared to £162,080 national figure.
- 5,000 long term empty (6 months or more) private sector dwellings across Tees Valley in 2012.
- Over 600 long term empty homes in Hartlepool (over 6 months or more)

# HARTLEPOOL









# Empty Homes Strategy

- Adopted in 2010
- Empty Homes Officer Appointed
- Objectives:
  - Proactively bring long-term empty homes back into use
  - Using flexible solutions / appropriate enforcement action
  - Prevent homes from becoming long-term empty
  - Increase decent and affordable rented housing
  - Support investment in Housing Market Renewal
  - A range of Incentive Schemes
  - Target 10% empty homes brought back into use a year
- Links to key objectives within the Housing Strategy
- Links to Housing Market Renewal



# Scheme Overview

- Target of 100 units to be acquired over 2 years
- Minimum of 6 months empty
- Average property cost (acquisition and refurbishment) £55,000
- DCLG Cluster Funding £2.6 million
- Council funding of £2.75 million
- Successful bids made to deliver second phase through HCA NAHP
- Commitment to employment and training
- High profile Member support
- Average refurbishment cost £25,000 per property
- Properties let at affordable rent (£55-82 a week)
- Aim to raise standards in the private rented sector

# In-House Delivery

- Bidding & Council Approval
- Financial Model
- Ongoing dialogue and communication with Members
- Property Purchase– attracting landlords, Surveying, Initial specification, negotiation and purchase
- Refurbishment – Internal Building Services to carry out works, programme, specification of works, snagging, final sign off (client contractor relationship)
- Letting and Management – new tenant repairs



# Staff Resource

- RICS qualified Surveyor
- Architectural Technician
- Building Services PM
- Housing Services Principal Officer
- Council Accountant
- Council Solicitor
- Managing Agent – Housing Hartlepool
- Internal Audit
- Newly employed dedicated team of 8 skilled workers (plumbers, decorators, electricians etc)
- Management Support

# Mapleton Road

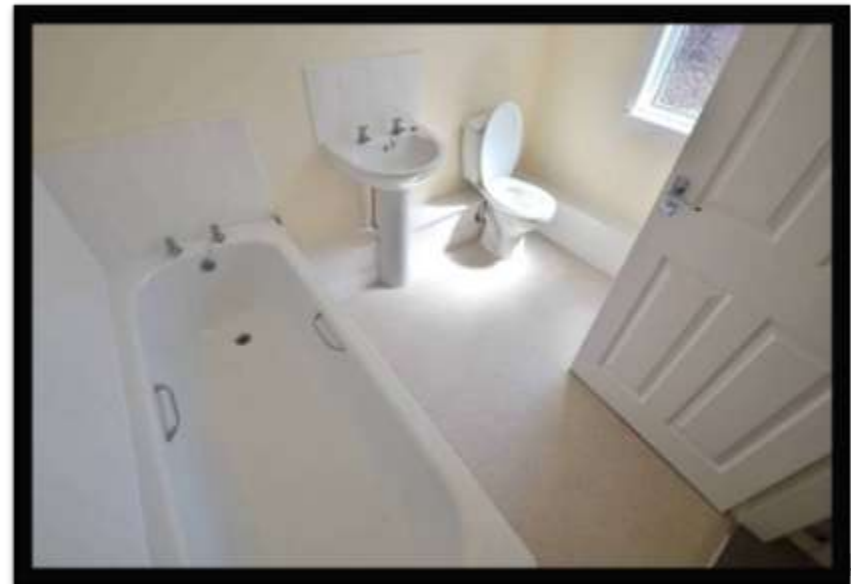
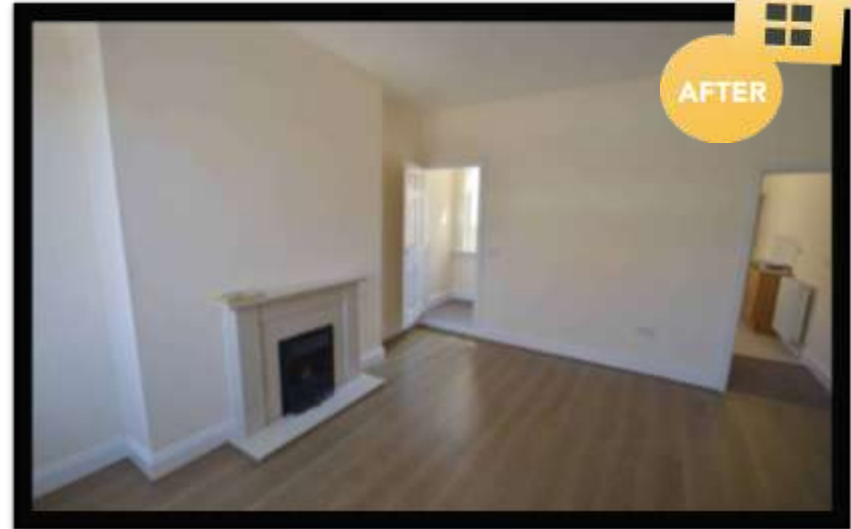


- Empty since Oct 2006
- Potential CPO case
- One of 6 properties tackled through Empty Homes Programme in this street
- Owner had large mortgage and couldn't afford to refurbish



# Mapleton Road

- Purchase and repair
- £27,500 refurbishment works
- 4 Month Refurbishment
- Re-let in Jan 13 at affordable rent
- £72 a week rent
- Owner since put other properties through the scheme



# Patterdale Street



- 5 long term empty properties – 2 on the top 20 list
- Empty since 2011
- 3 refurbished through the lease scheme
- 2 purchased by Council
- S215 & Enforcement Powers
- Tenants found for all 5 properties
- Adjacent to new build regeneration site



# Baden Street





# Baden Street



# Challenges

Expectation of owners of empty homes

Acquisition and refurbish 4 properties a month

Delivery in tight timescales

Responsive when acquiring properties

Moving Property Management in-house

Challenge of Utilities

No standard spec for refurbishment

Operating like a business

To date 95 of 100 properties purchased – in budget

Tackling long term empty and most problematic

Popular to local residents

# Achievements

Transforming areas through investment

Savings on other council resources

Average cost of £55,000 for purchase and repair being achieved

8 new full time jobs created

ANY  
QUESTIONS

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