

Questioner	Question	Answer
<p>Councillor Hilton</p>	<p>In the last year, both house prices and rents in Hastings have risen astronomically.</p> <p>There are now over 1500 empty homes including full time/commercial Air BnBs in Hastings and 1500 people on the housing waiting list. All Air BnB's rented out more than 140 days a year should be registered as business premises.</p> <p>Does the council know how many of these Air BnB's are operating legally, ie registered as business premises and also demonstrating that they have the correct building and public liability insurances in place?</p>	<p>Councillor Batsford:</p> <p>As of 5 October 2021, we have the following domestic rated Empty Properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 873 properties which have been empty for under 2 years. Council Tax charge is normal Band Rate • 189 properties empty between 2 and 5 years (charged equivalent of 200% of normal charge) • 33 properties empty between 5 and 10 years (charged equivalent of 300% of normal charge) • 23 properties empty over 10 years (charged equivalent of 400% of normal charge) <p>Air BnBs are not easily identifiable in our records. If a property is domestic rated we will not be aware if it is being used as a holiday let/AirBnB. If an owner has approached the Valuation Office (VO) requesting that the property is treated as a business premises, they will be required to provide evidence to support their claim. It is the VO that makes the decision not Hastings Borough Council.</p> <p>If business rated, the Rateable Value will be well below the threshold of £15,000. In most cases they will qualify for Small Business Rate Relief and therefore have no charge. Currently we have 101 properties on our Business Rates database which are classed as self-catering holiday lets. We have no way of telling how many of the 101 are advertising as Air BnB.</p> <p>In addition there are 763 second homes, with Council Tax charged at the normal Band Rate.</p>

		<p>The Housing Renewal Team are aware when inspecting properties, particularly HMO's (Houses of Multiple Occupation) that some of the self-contained units are sometimes claimed as being used as holiday lets / Air BnB.</p> <p>Unfortunately, unless we can prove this is not the case, the housing legislation we enforce does not apply to these dwellings, although it would to the common parts. There is no requirement for them to register the property use with us and therefore unless there is evidence it is being used to the contrary, the housing team have no further remit.</p>
--	--	---