

Consultation on Council Tax Premium on Second homes and Long Term Empty Dwellings

A public consultation was launched on 22nd December 2020 and was open until midnight on 1st February 2021. The questionnaire was placed on the Council's website with letters sent to all second home owners, and reminders placed on the Council's social media pages. Two press releases were issued – one on 23 December 2020 and one on 19 January 2021 – to raise awareness of the press and media exercise together with a series of messages on the Council's social website accounts.

6,227 responses were received to the questionnaire. There were 6,171 responses to the online questionnaire and 56 paper responses. This is the largest number of responses the Council has seen to any consultation in recent years.

Below is an analysis of the quantitative questions of the questionnaire with examples of the type of answers obtained for the qualitative questions.

Are you responsible for paying Council Tax to Gwynedd Council on any property?

The table below shows 91.2% (N=5,679) of respondents were responsible for paying Council Tax to Gwynedd Council for any property, while 8.5% (N=523) of them were not .

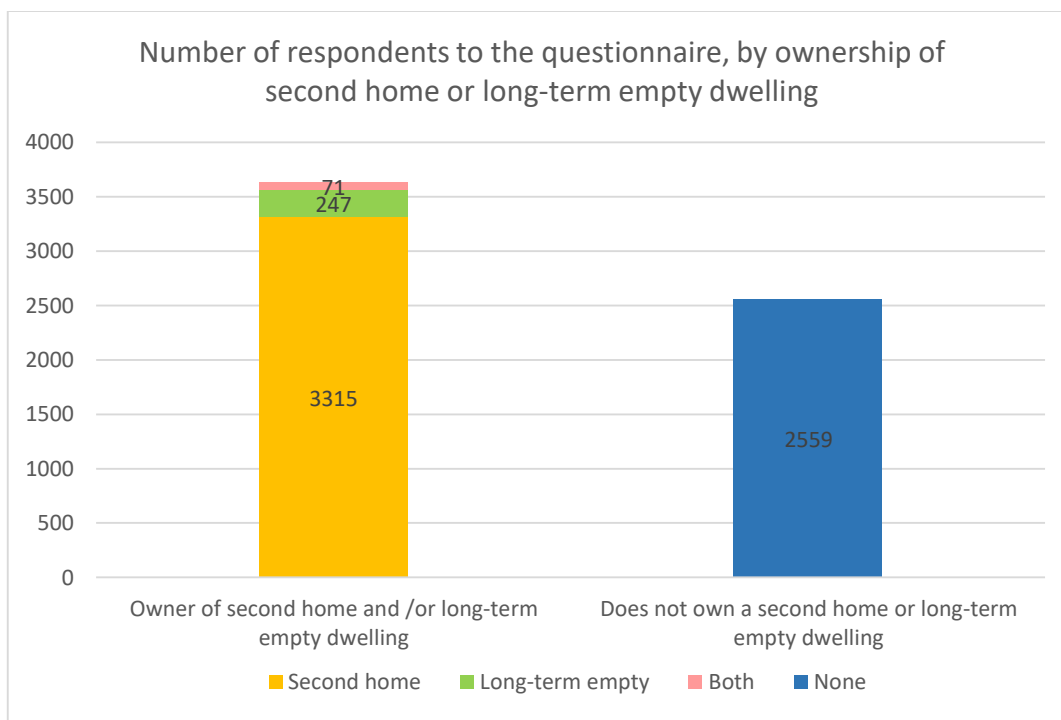
	Number	%age
Yes	5,679	91.2%
No	523	8.4%
No answer	25	0.4%
Total	6,227	100.0%

Do you own a long-term empty dwelling or second home in Gwynedd?

Over half of respondents (58.6%, N=3,650) owned either a second home or a long-term empty dwelling in Gwynedd (or both).

Within this figure 53.4% (N=3,326) owned a second home, 4.1% (N=253) owned a long-term empty dwelling, and 1.1% (N=71) owned both (i.e. a long-term empty dwelling and a second home in Gwynedd).

41.1% (N=2,559) of respondents did not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling in Gwynedd.



Of the 5,679 respondents who paid council tax, just over half (57.7%, N=3, 278) owned a second home, just over a third did not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling (36.4%, N=2,069), and 4.4% (N=247) owned a long-term empty dwelling.

	Are you responsible for paying Council Tax to Gwynedd Council on any property?							
	Yes		No		Did not answer		Total	
Do you own a long-term empty dwelling or second home in Gwynedd?	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
No	2,069	36.4%	484	92.5%	6	24.0%	2,559	41.1%
Yes – second home	3,278	57.7%	36	6.9%	12	48.0%	3,326	53.4%
Yes – a long-term empty dwelling	249	4.4%	3	0.6%	1	4.0%	253	4.1%
Yes – both a long-term empty home and a second home	71	1.3%		0.0%		0.0%	71	1.1%
No answer	12	0.2%		0.0%	6	24.0%	18	0.3%
Total	5,679	100%	523	100%	25	100%	6,227	100%

In your opinion, what impact do you believe second homes currently have on local communities?

In total just over half of respondents (55.1%, N=3,433) thought that second homes were currently having a positive impact on local communities, while 28.0% (N=1,746) thought they were having a negative impact, with 16.1% (N=1,002) thinking that the effect is neutral.

However by looking at differences between respondents who own second homes and those who do not, a significant difference in opinion is shown in the chart below .

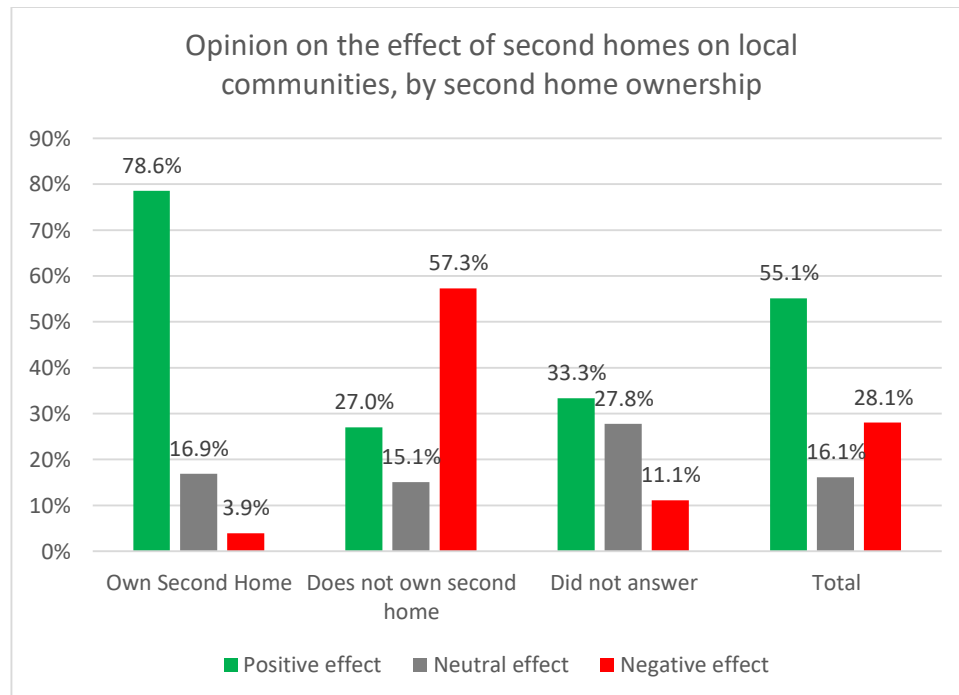


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

"Second home ownership" includes all respondents who owned a second home, whether or not they also owned a long-term empty dwelling

"Not owning a second home" included respondents who owned a long-term empty dwelling (but not a second home), as well as respondents who did not own either

The table below details the responses by category, and shows that 78.9% (N=2,624) of respondents who own a second home currently think that second homes have a positive impact on local communities, while only just over a quarter (26.7%, N=684) of respondents who do not own a second home or a long-term empty dwelling are of this opinion. 59.9% (N=1,533) of respondents who do not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling currently think that second homes have a negative impact on local communities, while only 3.8% (N=125) of the respondents who own a second home are of this opinion.

The responses of those who own a long-term empty dwelling are seen to be fairly equal, with slightly more of them (37.5%, N=95) feeling that second homes are currently having a neutral impact on local communities.

	Positive Effect		Neutral Effect		Negative Effect		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Do not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	684	26.7%	329	12.9%	1,533	59.9%	13	0.5%	2,559	100.0%
Second Home Owner	2,624	78.9%	554	16.7%	125	3.8%	23	0.7%	3,326	100.0%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	75	29.6%	95	37.5%	78	30.8%	5	2.0%	253	100.0%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	44	62.0%	19	26.8%	8	11.3%	0	0.0%	71	100.0%
No answer	6	33.3%	5	27.8%	2	11.1%	5	27.8%	18	100.0%
Total	3,433	55.1%	1,002	16.1%	1,746	28.0%	46	0.7%	6,227	100.0%

Here are examples of the additional comments that were noted :

Positive:

"It brings visitors into the community, gives a local resident a small income and does not effect the price of local houses. Less than 5% of houses in my village are second homes."

"Second home owners contribute to the economy - they put more in economically than they take out. We need to encourage business and tourism, not discourage particularly after this year".

"Positive particularly as many second home owners truly contribute to their communities locally. We shop locally, use local hairdressers, dog groomers, tourist attractions, activity centres Amd more. We do this all year around unlike tourists/visitors. We are committed to our homes, local area and community. Many second homes are also let as holiday accommodation which means those visitors are also spending money locally helping businesses and communities locally."

"Received a grandmother's house and kept it so that our children can stay in the area in the future ."

"Several have been renovated in the town. One or two were ruins. There are also not enough places to stay in the town. No big hotels. However, there are plenty of second homes now and and end should be put to them."

Neutral:

"It's a mixed bag. I understand the plight, but I don't think dissuading second home owners will ultimately bring the property prices down - especially in the short term. The only solution is increasing the housing stock to adjust prices, and make most of them priority for locals."

"They bring a lot of money and work to the area so good in that respect but there needs to be a ratio set to limit the number of second homes. Also they should not be allowed to register as a business and not pay any local tax. I do think 200% council tax is too excessive and will harm the area."

Negative:

"There is a housing crisis because of economic disparity between those who want to buy locally and those who wish to buy a second home or for Airbnb and the like. This is linked to a lack of permanent work and low wages which in particular is a problem in tourist areas. A tourist economy is not sustainable at all and the loss of young people weakens these areas further and means a permanent decline in the Welsh language"

"I appreciate that tourism benefits the local economy but we can attract tourism through hotels and camp sites etc we need to ensure first there are homes for people that want to live here on a full time basis and integrate into the local community. Some people don't have any homes- how can it therefore be acceptable to allow people to have second homes here- i believe even without people having their second homes here people will still want to come here on holidays so don't believe that tourism will be affected."

"It is difficult, if not impossible, for a great many young people or people with low incomes, to buy homes in their own communities in Gwynedd. They are priced out by second home owners. I know many young couples in Arfon and Llyn who cannot afford to buy their first house in the areas where they have been brought up and where they work. This is a growing problem. Raising the premium would generate income for the council to help these people and alleviate the problem."

In your opinion, what impact do you believe long-term empty dwellings currently have on local communities?

In total 65.0% (N=4,049) of respondents thought that long-term empty dwellings were currently having a Negative impact on local communities, while 28.2% (N=1,756) thought they were having a Neutral effect and 4.72% (N=295) thought they were having a Positive impact.

It is shown in the chart below that there is some difference in this view between respondents who own a long-term empty dwelling and the rest of the respondents.

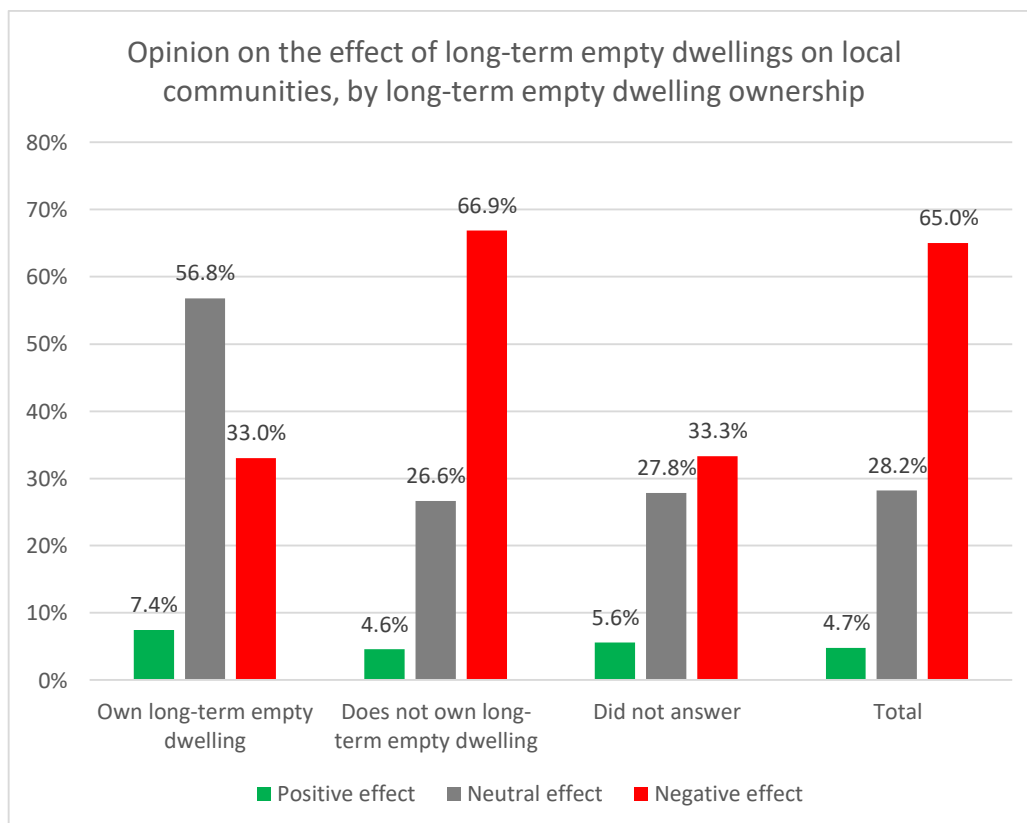


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

"Second home ownership" includes all respondents who owned a second home, whether or not they also owned a long-term empty dwelling

"Not owning a second home" included respondents who owned a long-term empty dwelling (but not a second home), as well as respondents who did not own either

The table below details the responses by category, and shows that just over half (56.4%, N= 144) of respondents who own a long-term empty dwelling feel that long-term empty dwellings have a Neutral impact on local communities, with just over a third of them (34.4%, N=87) thinking that they are having a Negative impact.

77.8% (N=1,992) of respondents who do not own a second home or a long-term empty dwelling feel that empty long-term empty dwellings have a Negative impact on local communities, while almost one in five of them (17.6%, N=451) think they are having a Neutral impact .

58.4% (N=1,944) of respondents who own a second home think that long-term empty dwellings have a Negative impact on local communities, with about a third of them (33.6%, N=1,116) thinking that they have a Neutral impact..

	Positive Effect		Neutral Effect		Negative Effect		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Does not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	87	3.4%	451	17.6%	1,992	77.8%	29	1.1%	2,559	100.0%
Second Home Owner	183	5.5%	1,116	33.6%	1,944	58.4%	83	2.5%	3,326	100.0%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	14	5.5%	144	56.9%	87	34.4%	8	3.2%	253	100.0%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	10	14.1%	40	56.3%	20	28.2%	1	1.4%	71	100.0%
No answer	1	5.6%	5	27.8%	6	33.3%	6	33.3%	18	100.0%
Total	295	4.7%	1,756	28.2%	4,049	65.0%	127	2.0%	6,227	100.0%

Here are examples of the additional comments that were being noted :

Positive:

“These are often renovation projects that take time and money to improve because the properties have been left to become dated or of poor repair. Covid 19 has hampered the progress of these projects

but also the lack of tradespeople who want to commit or are reliable also adds to the delays. Once completed they become second homes and holiday homes which bring benefits to locals...."

Neutral:

"I partly own a dwelling through inheritance. The property has been on sale for a year and a half at a price deemed reasonable by a local housing agency and the original price has been reduced twice in the hope that it would attract a local buyer, Council tax on the property is almost as much as the council tax we pay on our home in another county although we do not take advantage of any facilities offered by Gwynedd Council."

"They save the council money eg. waste removal & you're still getting an extra 50% in council tax"

"They are not damaging the local community. Freedom to buy and sell properties should be retained and home owners should not be unduly penalised."

Negative:

"Loss of sense of community "

"They make the villages look down trodden & uninviting. Neighbouring properties disadvantaged."

"Fewer children in our schools, less buzz in our communities, and young people being sent from the community."

"The availability of properties to rent is limited and the cost of properties is inflated due to second homes, holiday homes, air B&Bs and longterm empty properties - something needs to change or our communities will die."

"They can cause problems e.g. - attract anti-social behaviour, it could be a local home or business ."

"Empty homes do not contribute to a community, unless the alternative is that they remain empty and deteriorate as nobody has an interest in maintaining them. There would appear to be no positive balance with income being brought into the community as there is in the case of second home owners".

The Council is considering increasing the Council Tax Premium charged on second homes and long term empty dwellings (currently 50%). Is this appropriate in your opinion?

It is seen that 71.3% (N=4,440) of respondents indicated that it is not appropriate to increase the level of Council Tax Premium on second homes and long-term empty dwellings. Just over a quarter of respondents (27.4%, N=1,705) indicated that it was appropriate to increase the level of Council Tax Premium.

Differences in opinion were seen according to whether respondents owned a second home or long-term empty dwelling or not. 61.2% (N=1,566) of respondents who did not own a second home or a long-term empty dwelling felt it was appropriate to increase the level of council tax premium, while only 3.2% (N=107) of respondents owned a second home and 9.9% (N=25) of respondents owned a long-term empty dwelling.

Although they do not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling, just over a third (37.7%, N=965) of these respondents did not think it appropriate to increase the level of Council Tax Premium. 95.5% (N=3,176) of respondents who owned a second home and 87.8% (N=222) of respondents who own a long-term empty dwelling were also of this opinion.

	Yes		No		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Does not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	1,566	61.2%	965	37.7%	28	1.1%	2,559	100.0%
Second Home Owner	107	3.2%	3,176	95.5%	43	1.3%	3,326	100.0%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	25	9.9%	222	87.8%	6	2.4%	253	100.0%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	3	4.2%	67	94.4%	1	1.4%	71	100.0%
No answer	4	22.2%	10	55.6%	4	22.2%	18	100.0%
Total	1,705	27.4%	4,440	71.3%	82	1.3%	6,227	100.0%

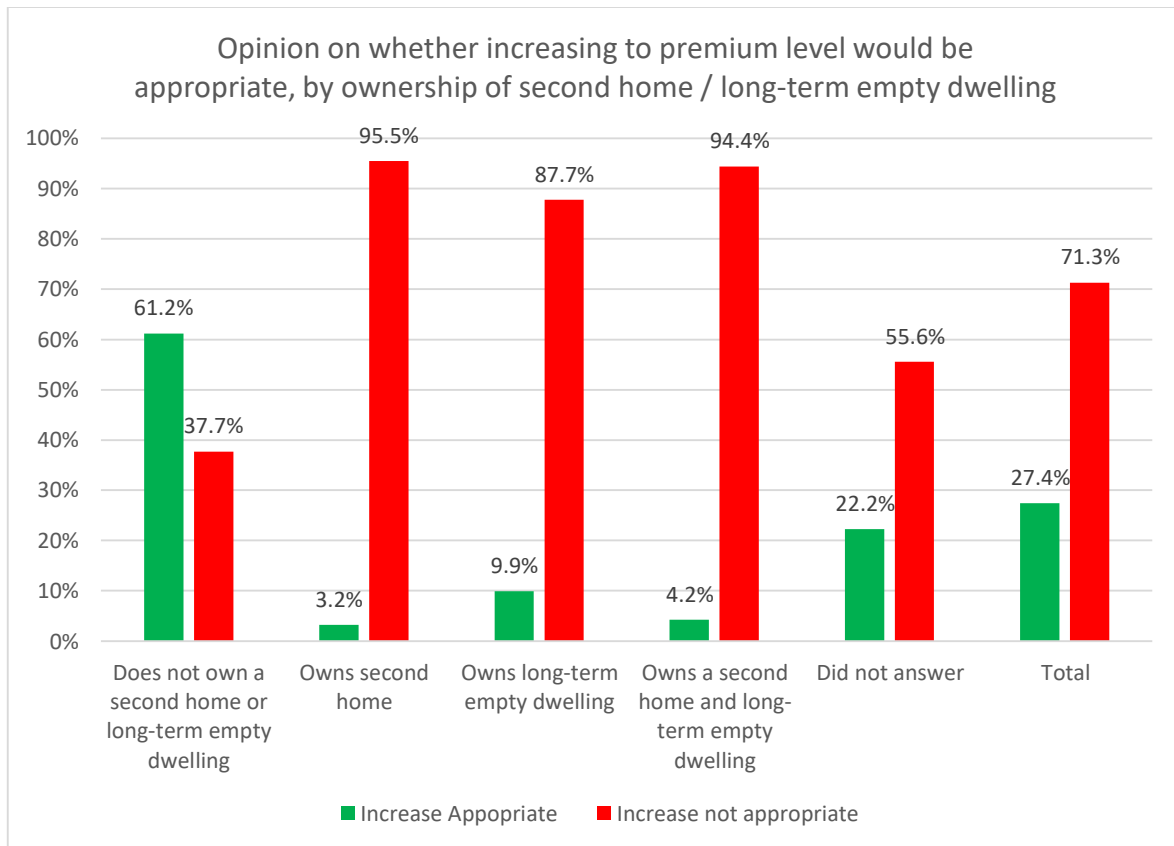


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

No additional comments question

In your opinion, would increasing the Council Tax Premium on long-term empty dwellings or second homes have an effect on the Welsh language?

It is seen that 71.9% (N=4,480) of respondents felt that increasing the level of Council Tax Premium on long-term empty dwellings or second homes in Gwynedd would not have an impact on the Welsh language, while just over a quarter (25.8%, N=1,605) thought it would.

Differences were seen among respondents who own a long-term empty dwelling or second home or not. The view of respondents who do not own a long-term empty dwelling or second home is split, with 51.9% (N=1,329) of them feeling that it would not have an impact on the Welsh language, and 46.4% (N=1,187) feeling that it would have an impact on the Welsh language while 87.5% (N=2,909) of respondents who own a second home felt that increasing the level of council tax premium on long-term empty dwellings and second homes would not have an impact on the Welsh language. Just over a quarter (27.3%, N=69) of respondents who own a long-term empty dwelling think it would have an impact on the Welsh language while 68.8% (N=174) of them do not.

	Yes		No		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Does not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	1,187	46.4%	1,329	51.9%	43	1.7%	2,559	100%
Second Home Owner	335	10.1%	2,909	87.5%	82	2.5%	3,326	100%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	69	27.3%	174	68.8%	10	4.0%	253	100%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	12	16.9%	57	80.3%	2	2.8%	71	100%
No answer	2	11.1%	11	61.1%	5	27.8%	18	100%
Total	1,605	25.8%	4,480	71.9%	142	2.3%	6,227	100%

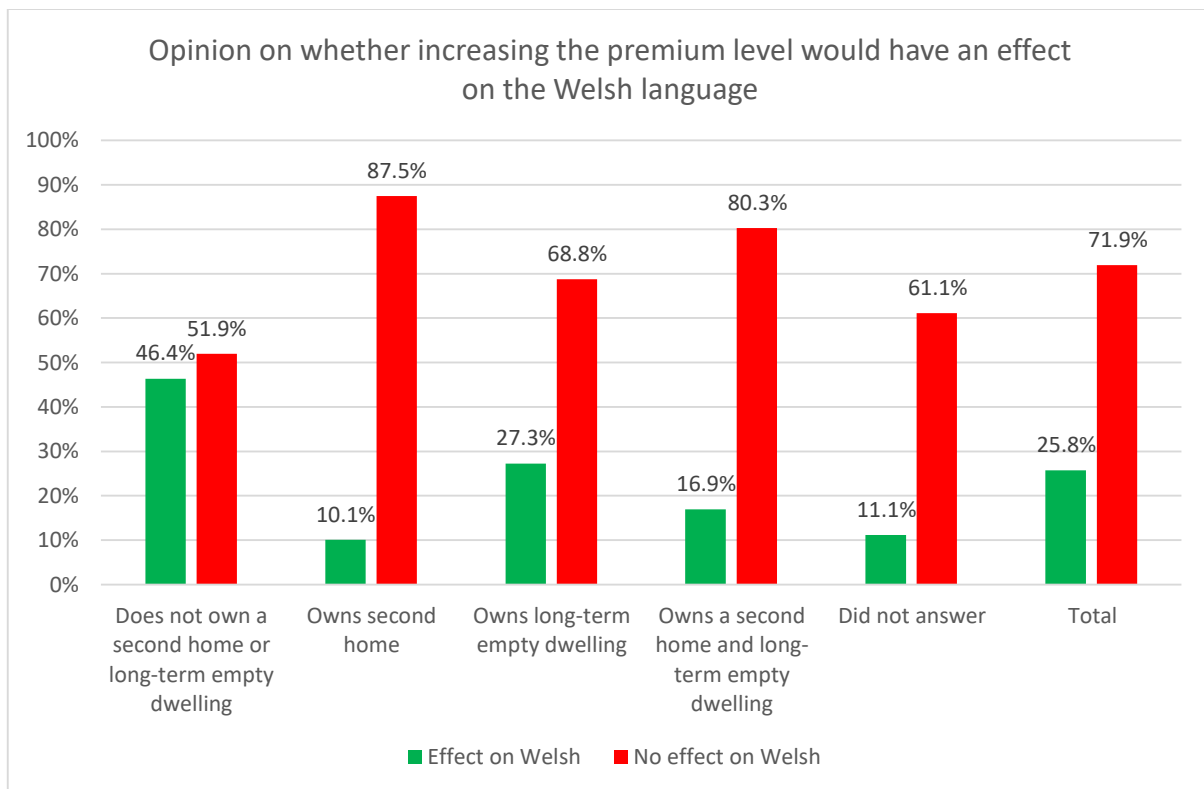


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

Here are examples of the additional comments that were being noted :

Yes:

“Yes I believe it would have a detrimental effect on the Welsh language, as we would have less jobs in tourism and our young will simply move away to where they can find better jobs. I have several friends and family members who were first language Welsh speakers who have already moved away and will not return because the partners they have now met do not speak Welsh and job opportunities for them are limited.”

“Negative impact on the language as raising the premium level will take the premium out of the reach of local people and more into the hands of the people you are trying to prevent to buy the property as it is. The cost is not an impact for some people.”

“It really would. As I have already indicated, this would keep Welsh speakers in the communities and an opportunity for them to raise families there in Welsh for the future. Also a boost to Welsh language activities and traditions such as YFC, Urdd or eisteddfodau - more people to participate and continue these activities.”

“I feel if local people or people who aren’t local but want to live here permanent and become part of the community this will keep the Welsh language going . People here in their “second homes” are not going to bother learning the language and of a community a has many second homes the language will go”

No:

“The damage has already been done by decades of lack of forward planning .”

“Why does this need to involve the Welsh language? There are many Welsh people who have second homes which either they rent out as a commercial holiday let to give them an income in a area of low paid employment and there are also Welsh people living throughout Wales who can afford and enjoy a second home in Wales. Again this question is irrelevant and biased”

“The growth in the use of the Welsh language over the most recent years demonstrates that second homes have no effect.”

“Absolutely not. We are currently learning Welsh.”

“Not sure. It depends on the level of premium – I suspect that a 100% increase will make little difference, as owners of second homes and holiday accommodation have sufficient income to afford this .”

If the level of the Council Tax Premium on long-term empty dwellings or second homes were to be increased, the number of second homes within Gwynedd would...

The responses to this question are split, with almost half (47.5%, N=2,959) thinking that the number of second homes will decrease, and almost half (46.5%, N= 2,895) thinking that the number of second homes would remain the same. The views of people who own second homes reflect the above, while slightly more people who do not own second homes or long-term empty dwellings think that the number of second homes will decrease (53.8%, N=1,377). A higher percentage of respondents who own a long-term empty dwelling think the number of second homes will remain the same (67.6%, N=171).

	Increase		Stay the same		Decrease		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Does not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	126	4.9%	1,027	40.1%	1,377	53.8%	29	1.1%	2,559	100%
Second Home Owner	110	3.3%	1,651	49.6%	1,497	45.0%	68	2.0%	3,326	100%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	24	9.5%	171	67.6%	51	20.2%	7	2.8%	253	100%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	3	4.2%	38	53.5%	29	40.8%	1	1.4%	71	100%
No answer	0	0.0%	8	44.4%	5	27.8%	5	27.8%	18	100%
Total	263	4.2%	2,895	46.5%	2,959	47.5%	110	1.8%	6,227	100%

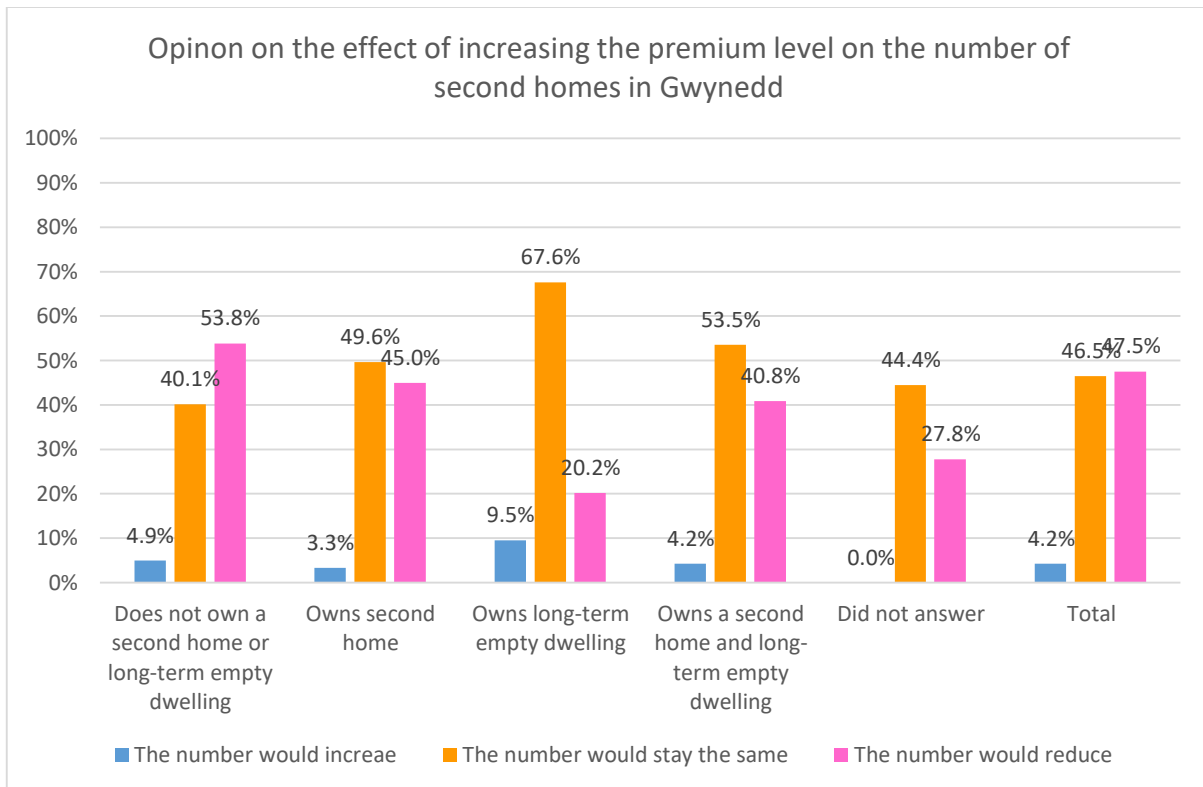


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

Here are examples of the additional comments that were noted :

Increase:

"I think there will still be more people willing to buy second homes, but they will be from a richer section of the general public, and not necessarily those who are sympathetic to the area of have historical links there. Having a second home will just be a more elite activity."

Stay the same:

"It will have no impact on second home ownership and and will certainly have zero positive impact on the Welsh Language. It will however just drive division between the permanent residents and the second home owners and ultimately lead to a more fragmented society."

"You have to accept that the vast majority of people who have second homes have them because they have been successful. Those people will protect their investments in any way possible. Whilst 50% uplift hurts financially 100% would tip the balance and many will seek to avoid paying it by fair means or foul, that is just the reality."

"If people can afford a second home they will pay council tax."

"You will end up with even more holiday lets!"

"This would result in some of these houses being sold to sole home owners. Perhaps for some locals but it is possible that new immigrants from England will take the vast majority! With the advent of Covid thousands have discovered that it is very easy to work from home, 'I suspect that some residents of English towns will find the idea of working from home in a rural area ideal. It will also result in those houses being converted into business premises with a large loss in council tax profits. I will do that or sell."

“Due to the negative attitude of Gwynedd council to long term second home owners in for example Fairbourne where they have positively ensured the houses have nil value with enabling any reduction in rateable value the owners even if they wanted to are unable to get out”

Decrease:

“People may sell and buy second home elsewhere, which doesn’t charge tourists a premium.”

“The councils will be sending a clear message to second home owners that they are not welcome in Wales and would be encouraging any such local feelings rather than attempting to move on to more appropriate 21st century agenda.”

“There would be far more incentive to treat the 2nd home as a holiday let, thereby reducing the council tax income. There is a tipping point at which the tax saved is sufficient to compensate for the added burden of letting the property.”

“Some second homeowners would sell, which would benefit local communities .”

“While the employment disparity between the cities of England and rural Gwynedd is going to continue then away homebuyers will continue to be able to pay a council tax premium in Gwynedd. But raising the tax on them would at least bring some financial advantage to the Council to help local people get housing.”

If the level of the Council Tax Premium on long-term empty dwellings or second homes were to be increased, the number of long-term empty dwellings within Gwynedd would ...

The responses were seen to be split here also, with a slightly higher percentage (43.9%, N=2,735) thinking that the number of empty dwellings in Gwynedd will fall, while 38.3%, (N=2,384) think that the number of long-term empty dwellings will remain the same. The views of respondents who own a long-term empty dwelling differ from other respondents, with 62.1% (N=157) of them feeling that if the level of Council Tax Premium increased, the number of empty dwellings in Gwynedd would remain the same. Slightly fewer people who do not own a second home than a long-term empty dwelling (31.1%, N=797) and those who own a second home (41.6%, N=1,385) are of this opinion. 57.8% (N=1,478) of respondents who do not own a second or long-term empty dwelling believe that the number of long-term empty dwellings would decrease, which is much higher than what respondents who own a long-term empty dwelling (22.1%, N=56) and respondents who own second homes (35.3%, N=1,175) think.

	Increase		Stay the same		Decrease		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Does not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	228	8.9%	797	31.1%	1,478	57.8%	56	2.2%	2,559	100%
Second Home Owner	610	18.3%	1,385	41.6%	1,175	35.3%	156	4.7%	3,326	100%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	33	13.0%	157	62.1%	56	22.1%	7	2.8%	253	100%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	9	12.7%	39	54.9%	21	29.6%	2	2.8%	71	100%
No answer	0	0.0%	6	33.3%	5	27.8%	7	38.9%	18	100%
Total	880	14.1%	2,384	38.3%	2,735	43.9%	228	3.7%	6,227	100%

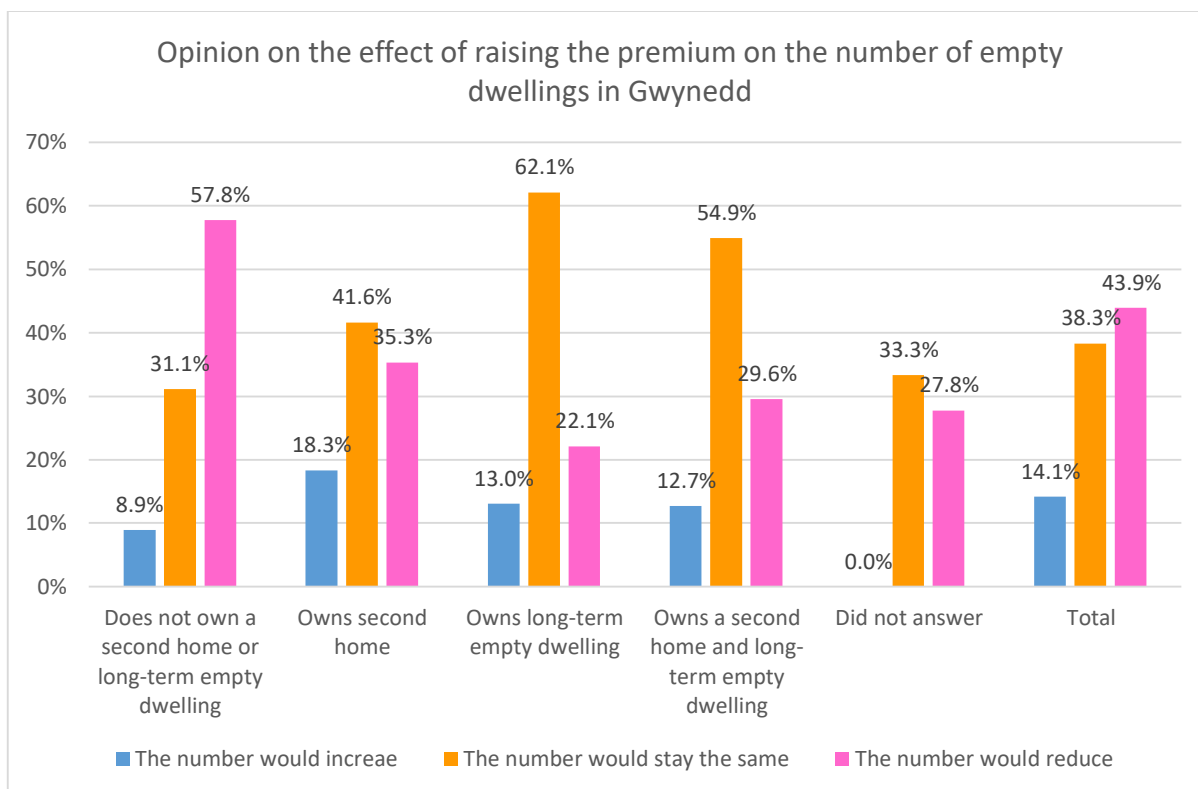


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

Here are examples of the additional comments that were noted :

Increase:

“Unfurnished properties will eventually become run-down and be an eye-sore for the council as well as local residents.”

“There seems to be insufficient local people to buy up the ones that would come onto the market.”

Stay the same:

“It seems unlikely that the reasons for a home being long term empty are affected by Council Tax.”

“Homes are empty for all sorts of reasons most people understand that a dwelling has intrinsic value for sale or rent and to leave long term empty is not a judicious use of the resource. The reality is that they are probably empty for a myriad of different often intractable and difficult to resolve reasons. I used to work for a housing association and this was looked at as away of trying to increase rental stock - it did not get far.”

“I believe that many of Gwynedd's empty Homes are in the hands of local people, and it is either waiting to be renovated or they have been inherited. If so this premium would only put pressure on the owners to sell or renovate.”

“Increasing the council tax premium might force people to sell empty properties and thus release them back into the local housing stock but they would still potentially be at an unaffordable level for the local communities who the council are indicating cannot afford to buy such properties at the present

time. So unless Gwynedd Council plan on buying such empty properties to augment their council housing stock there would not be any benefit."

Decrease:

"I think its obvious that people would sell up rather than pay double on an empty property that's making no money, and I think it's right that people should not be allowed to sit on empty properties that could be used by the local communities."

"Local people can hopefully buy local houses Local people can hopefully buy local houses."

"If there are houses that are not used at all, I hope that owners would sell them or let them to tenants."

"I think this increase would focus the attention of owners who leave a property empty. I have heard people admit they only bought it for their pension and may live here eventually. Meanwhile our shopworkers, bus drivers and nurses cant find a home to live in because someone from England thinks it's ok to use Gwynedd and Wales as a pension pot and to hell with the locals."

If the level of the Council Tax Premium were to be increased, the availability of affordable housing within Gwynedd will ...

64.5% (N=4,016) of respondents think that the availability of affordable housing would remain the same in Gwynedd if the level of Council Tax Premium increased, while 22.2% (N=1,384) thought that it would increase and 10.5% (N=655) thought that it would decrease.

There are significant differences of opinion in the type of respondents depending on whether they have a second house or a long-term empty dwelling or not. The views of respondents who do not have a second or long-term empty dwelling have split, with 46.5% (N=1,190) of them thinking that the availability of affordable housing will increase and 43.6% (N=1,117) thinking that it would remain the same. A much higher percentage of respondents who owned a second home thought that the availability of affordable housing would remain the same (80.3%, N=2,670) while 11.7% (N=388) of them thought it would decrease and 4.9% (N=163) of them thought it would increase. 68.8% (N=174) of respondents who owned a long-term empty dwelling thought that the availability of affordable housing would remain the same, while a higher percentage of them compared to the other respondents thought that the availability of affordable housing would decrease (19.4%, N=49).

	Increase		Stay the same		Decrease		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Does not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	1,190	46.5%	1,117	43.7%	201	7.9%	50	2.0%	2,558	100%
Second Home Owner	163	4.9%	2,670	80.4%	388	11.7%	100	3.0%	3,321	100%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	21	8.3%	174	68.8%	49	19.4%	9	3.6%	253	100%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	7	9.9%	47	66.2%	15	21.1%	2	2.8%	71	100%
No answer	3	12.5%	8	33.3%	2	8.3%	11	45.8%	24	100%
Total	1,384	22.2%	4,016	64.5%	655	10.5%	172	2.8%	6,227	100%

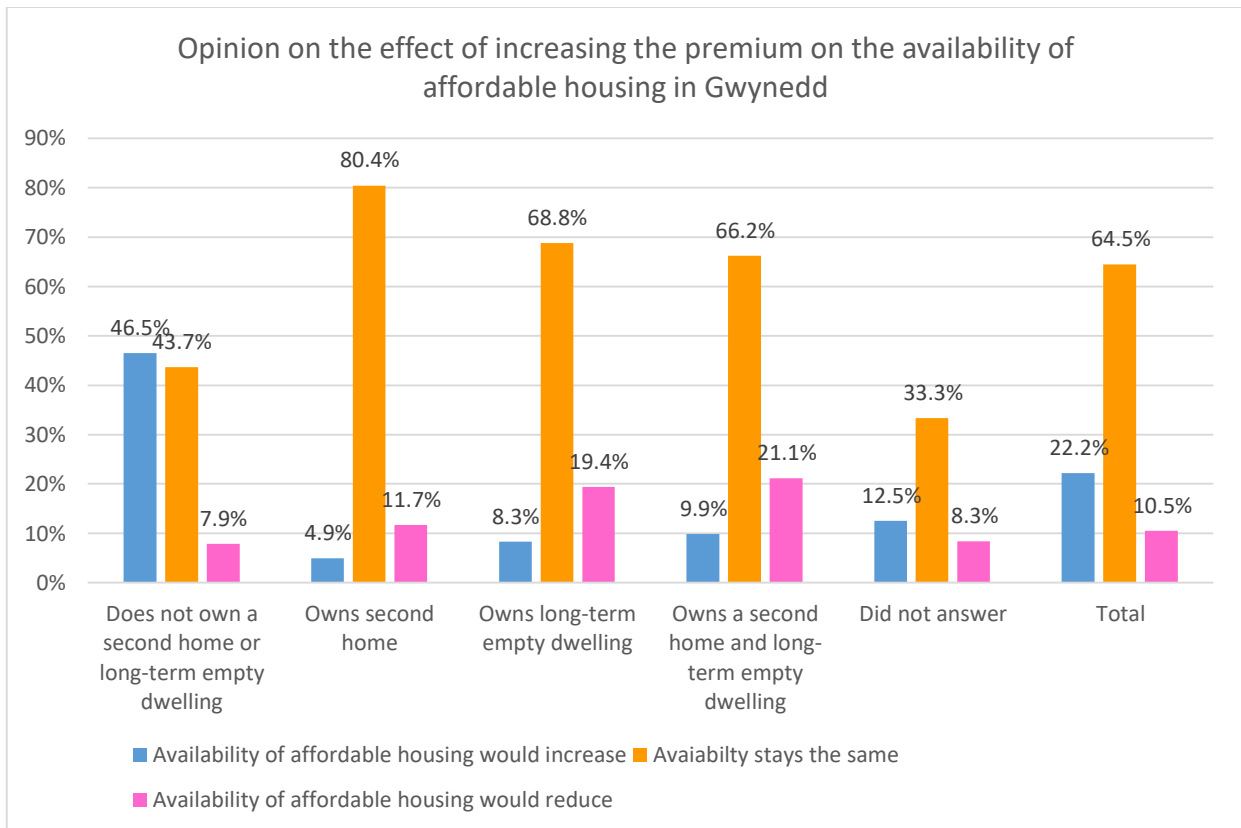


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

Here are examples of the additional comments that were noted :

Increase:

"If the extra council tax is pigeon holed and used specifically to increase the local supply of affordable housing for local people, I would see that as a good thing. It is very difficult for young people to get on the housing ladder because of house prices, but that doesn't just apply in Wales."

"Hoping that the increase will reduce the number of people living and buying second houses I would on an ansar reduce house prices in Gwynedd"

Stay the same:

"It depends on the area. The median property price for Abersoch is high. An increase in the Council tax premium will not drive property prices down. It will have the opposite effect: either owners will be forced to sell at the very high market rate, or will have to increase rentals in order to pay."

"I don't believe his would have much affect on affordable housing. Our second home would not fall into the category of affordable housing. The authority's strategy should be to build more affordable and efficient homes going forward. This has been lacking since the 70's."

"IF there are no local jobs, people will not buy in the area regardless of the availability of properties. If current second homer owners leave, the impact of lost trade on local businesses will exacerbate this."

“There is no guarantee that the availability of affordable housing in Gwynedd would improve because of raising the tax. It does not provide an assurance that they would not be bought by aliens because the financial ability to buy is higher beyond Wales – raising the tax would not be a barrier to them.”

“Penalising people who have done nothing wrong will not make more housing available. Policies to promote new building of affordable homes for local people and to restrict sales of existing homes to local people are acceptable: punishing innocent people is not.”

“Housing costs have already increased so it's too late! Prosperous jobs to keep young people in their areas who want and a better rural planning system .”

Decrease:

“I understand that the taxes in Gwynedd are relatively high anyway, and as wages locally are generally low, it is likely to have a Negative impact on the ability of local people to pay for a home. I can't see housing market prices falling to the extent that housing is more affordable for the local population.”

“Affordable housing is often provided as part of a larger development. Developers may be put off from Gwynedd if they would find it difficult to sell homes due to the Council Tax Premium. If the developments don't go ahead nor will the affordable housing.”

If the level of the Council Tax Premium were to be increased, the effect on the local community will be ...

Just over half (53.4%, N=3,327) of respondents think that increasing the level of council tax premium would have a Negative impact on the community. Just under a quarter (23.4%, N=1,455) thought it would have a Positive impact on the local community, and one in five respondents (20.9%, N=1,302) thought it would have a neutral effect.

Again, there are differences in the type of respondents whether or not they own a second or long-term empty dwelling. Just over half of respondents who do not own a second or long-term empty dwelling (52.8%, N=1,350) thought that raising the level of council tax premium would have a positive impact on the local community which is much higher compared to respondents of second home owners (2.3%, N=76) and long-term empty dwelling owners (8.3%, N=21). A much higher percentage of respondents who owned second homes (72.1%, N=2,398) thought that the impact on the local community would be negative compared to just over half of respondents who did not own a long-term empty dwelling (53.4%, N=135) and 29.0% (N=742) of respondents who did not own a second home or a long-term empty dwelling.

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Does not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	1,350	52.8%	424	16.6%	742	29.0%	43	1.7%	2,559	100%
Second Home Owner	76	2.3%	769	23.1%	2,398	72.1%	83	2.5%	3,326	100%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	21	8.3%	85	33.6%	135	53.4%	12	4.7%	253	100%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	5	7.0%	21	29.6%	44	62.0%	1	1.4%	71	100%
No answer	3	16.7%	3	16.7%	8	44.4%	4	22.2%	18	100%
Total	1,455	23.4%	1,302	20.9%	3,327	53.4%	143	2.3%	6,227	500%

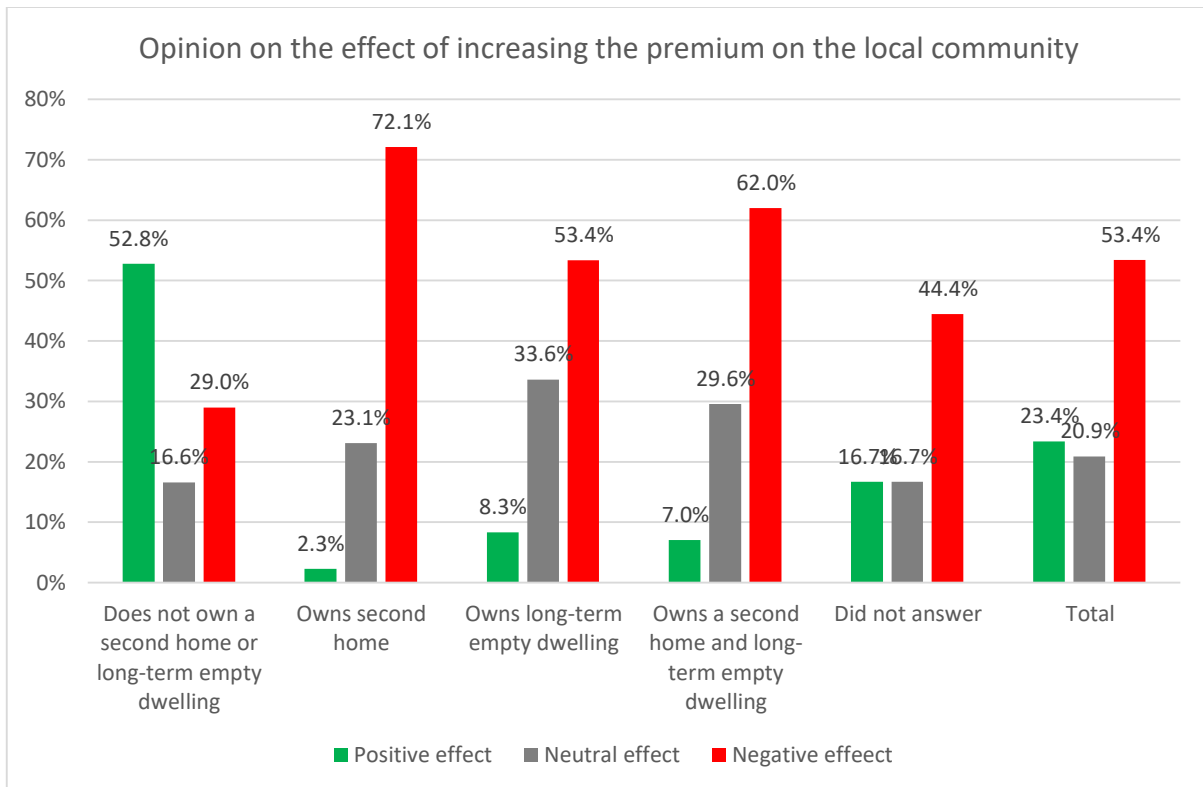


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

Here are examples of the additional comments that were noted :

Positive:

“Hopefully more properties for local people to buy or rent , towns and villages in southern Gwynedd would have more families living and using schools etc”

“People would at least feel that second home owners are contributing towards the local economy, offsetting costs to local people”

“Second homes are a serious problem in an increasing number of communities in Gwynedd. They contribute to undermining their social structure and fabric and weakening Welsh as a community language and creating a situation of social injustice. Second homes are reducing the housing stock and contributing to rising house prices, with local people unable to compete in the housing market because of relatively low wages that remain static. Raising the second home tax premium to 100% would increase the fund that the county council has to secure housing for local people.”

Neutral:

“I believe that each second house application needs to be considered individually as there are worthy cases to be needed if it is to be released into the rental market or renewed before living in it .”

“The situation will not change in my view, only the Council will benefit not the community ”

Negative:

“COVID has caused some resentment in communities over the economic divide that exists and this would only highlight this further. Providing more opportunities for second home owners to engage

with local charity work, support scholarship schemes, interact with annual community events would be a better use of effort, resource and time. I also believe this would bring more enjoyment for all, including the reinvigoration of a tourism industry post-COVID."

"Most of the second homes are a vehicle for many visitors to come to the area for holidays and spend extensively. Their loss would damage the economy of the area and would be a financial loss to the businesses of the area particularly restaurant and hotel shops"

"Most local communities thrive economically where second home owners are more prevalent. Second home owners are most likely to spend lots of money on their properties with renovations and they are also more likely to spend lots of money in the local economy. Second home owners help bring work, more jobs, and a desire to spend money in Wales."

"Retail spend and hospitality spend would almost certainly decrease, threatening jobs."

"I think it will be sad for communities to lose people who have shown real commitment to their neighbours and who have become their long-term friends. This is what will happen if you suddenly force people like us to move away, something that will also reduce community diversity. Those who are able to stay will have less disposable income to spend locally or to give more widely to Welsh tourism."

If the level of the Council Tax Premium were to be increased, the effect on tourism will be ...

Just over half of respondents (57.5%, N=3, 582) indicated that raising the level of council tax premium would have a Negative impact on tourism while a third of respondents (33.0%, N=2,056) indicated that it would have a Neutral effect and 7.4% (N=458) indicated that it would have a positive impact.

Again, there are differences in the views of the different types of respondents. Just over half of respondents who did not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling (51.8%, N=1,325) thought it would have a Neutral effect on tourism, with just under a third (31.7%, N=810) thinking it would have a Negative effect and 15.1% (N=387) thinking it would have a positive impact. Just over three-quarters of respondents who owned a second home (77.7%, N=2,585) thought it would have a Negative impact on tourism and almost one in five thought it would have a Neutral effect (18.5%, N=615).. Only 1.5% (N=50) of these respondents thought it would have a positive impact on tourism. Almost half (48.6%, N=123) of respondents who owned a long-term empty dwelling thought it would have a Negative impact on tourism while 39.5% (N=100) of them thought it would have a Neutral effect and 7.1% (N=18) of them thought it would have a positive impact..

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Does not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	387	15.1%	1,325	51.8%	810	31.7%	37	1.5%	2,559	100%
Second Home Owner	50	1.5%	615	18.5%	2,585	77.7%	76	2.3%	3,326	100%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	18	7.1%	100	39.5%	123	48.6%	12	4.7%	253	100%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	2	2.8%	13	18.3%	55	77.5%	1	1.4%	71	100%
No answer	1	5.6%	3	16.7%	9	50.0%	5	27.8%	18	100%
Total	458	7.4%	2,056	33.0%	3,582	57.5%	131	2.1%	6,227	100%

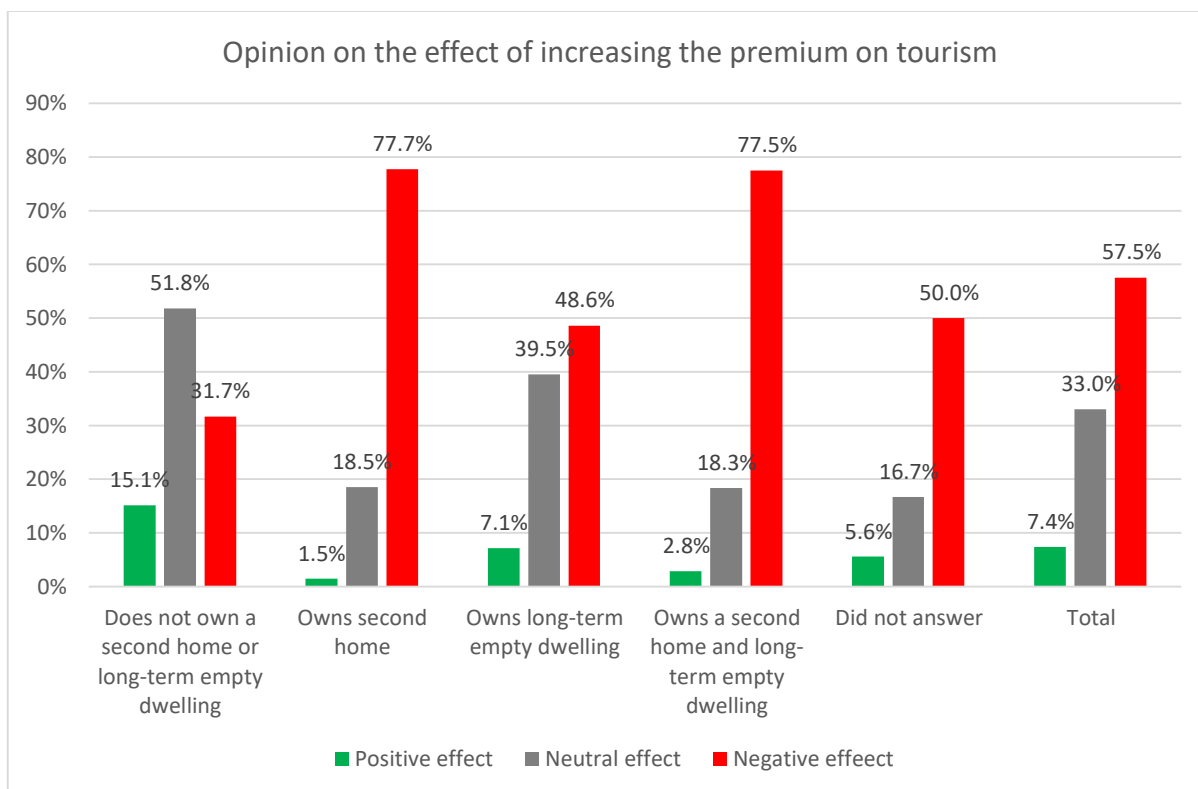


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

Here are examples of the additional comments that were noted

Positive:

“The lettings businesses draw customers away from hotels, camping areas etc which bring £££ into the economi, by buying food from local suppliers, paying wages etc this creates sustainable tourism. We value welcoming visitors who value this experience. NOT those who come here and pay nothing to the economy, create a bad feeling, and create a plethora of visitors that don't give anyone a good experience.”

“Villages and towns would be vibrant all year round and retail businesses would be available all year round rather just the tourist season, it would extend the tourist season rather than just the peak summer months”

Neutral:

“Possibly a short term increase during the 12 -16 week holiday season but overall probably balance out over the year to much the same. Many second home owners stay longer than the busy summer months and spend throughout the year. Thus business have income and can operate throughout the year rather than just for the holiday season.”

“Tourists won't be interested in levels of Council Tax being paid in the area unless it affects the prices they are charged for accommodation.”

“The beauty of the area attracts tourism. They stay wherever space is available. Tourism does not rely entirely on second homes .”

"May increase number of people who switch to categorise their property as self catering and therefore more tourists."

Negative:

"If the result of this will be fewer holiday homes and no change in the local tourism framework and there is no hotel in our community then the reduction of the number of people who will come here to stay on holiday and spend in the small shops and restaurants will be, but perhaps stay in another larger town and spend more in large towns in Gwynedd etc again creating favour and not cascading wealth sufficiently across the Authority. There is a need to understand the type of people who are staying in holiday houses rather than hotels or caravan parks for example. Is there a study into the tendency of holidaymakers to spend the pound locally? Will it be departments from Gwynedd that will benefit from tourism in this way? Is there a tendency for people staying in hotels to buy Food locally in the hotel rather than in other areas of Gwynedd?"

"As tourism is the main income of many people in rural Gwynedd it is difficult to understand how putting difficulties in this way is going to help."

"No one wants to visit a ghost area, people make Gwynedd the fantastic place it is. When I moved to Gwynedd some 11 years ago a lot of the local houses had been left to go to rack and ruin. My house in particular had been on the market for 6 years and needed a lot of money spending on it to bring it back to a living standard."

"Gwynedd is a lovely part of the Country which depends so much on welcoming and maintaining visitors. If Council Tax is increased by another 50% this would without doubt reduce the number of second home owners who would probably move to another part of the UK and therefore not spending money in Wales".

"This proposal wouldn't be attractive to holidaymakers and the worry is tourists would consider the sentiment to be hostile or at best, a bit unwelcoming. Though the vast majority of holidaymakers wouldn't be aware of the changes if they were implemented I'd imagine."

If the level of the Council Tax Premium were to be increased, the effect on local economy will be ...

59.9% (N=3,731) of respondents thought that increasing the level of council tax premium would have a Negative impact on the economy, while 20.6% (N=1,281) thought it would have a Neutral effect and 17.1% (N=1,063) thought it would have a positive impact .

Again, differences are seen in respondents' views dependent on whether or not they owned a second or long-term empty dwelling. There was a fairly equal opinion between the three options in respondents who did not own a second home or long-term empty property with 37.7% (N=966) of them thinking it would have a positive impact on the economy, 32.2% (N=824) thinking it would have a Negative impact and 28.3% (N=724) thinking it would have a Neutral effect. The opinions of respondents who owned a second home were much stronger with a higher percentage thinking it would have a Negative impact on the economy (81.1%, N=2,697). 13.9% (N=463) of these respondents thought it would have a Neutral effect on the economy, and 2.3% (N=77) thought it would have a positive impact. Just over half of respondents who owned a long-term empty dwelling (57.3%, N=145) thought it would have a Negative effect while 30.4% (N=76) of them thought it would have a Neutral effect and 6.7% (N=17) thought it would have a positive impact.

	Positive		Neutral		Negative		Did not answer		Total	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Does not own a second home or long-term empty dwelling	966	37.7%	724	28.3%	824	32.2%	45	1.8%	2,559	100%
Second Home Owner	77	2.3%	463	13.9%	2,697	81.1%	89	2.7%	3,326	100%
Long-term empty dwelling Owner	17	6.7%	78	30.8%	145	57.3%	13	5.1%	253	100%
Long-term empty home and Second home owner	2	2.8%	12	16.9%	56	78.9%	1	1.4%	71	100%
No answer	1	5.6%	4	22.2%	9	50.0%	4	22.2%	18	100%
Total	1,063	17.1%	1,281	20.6%	3,731	59.9%	152	2.4%	6,227	100%

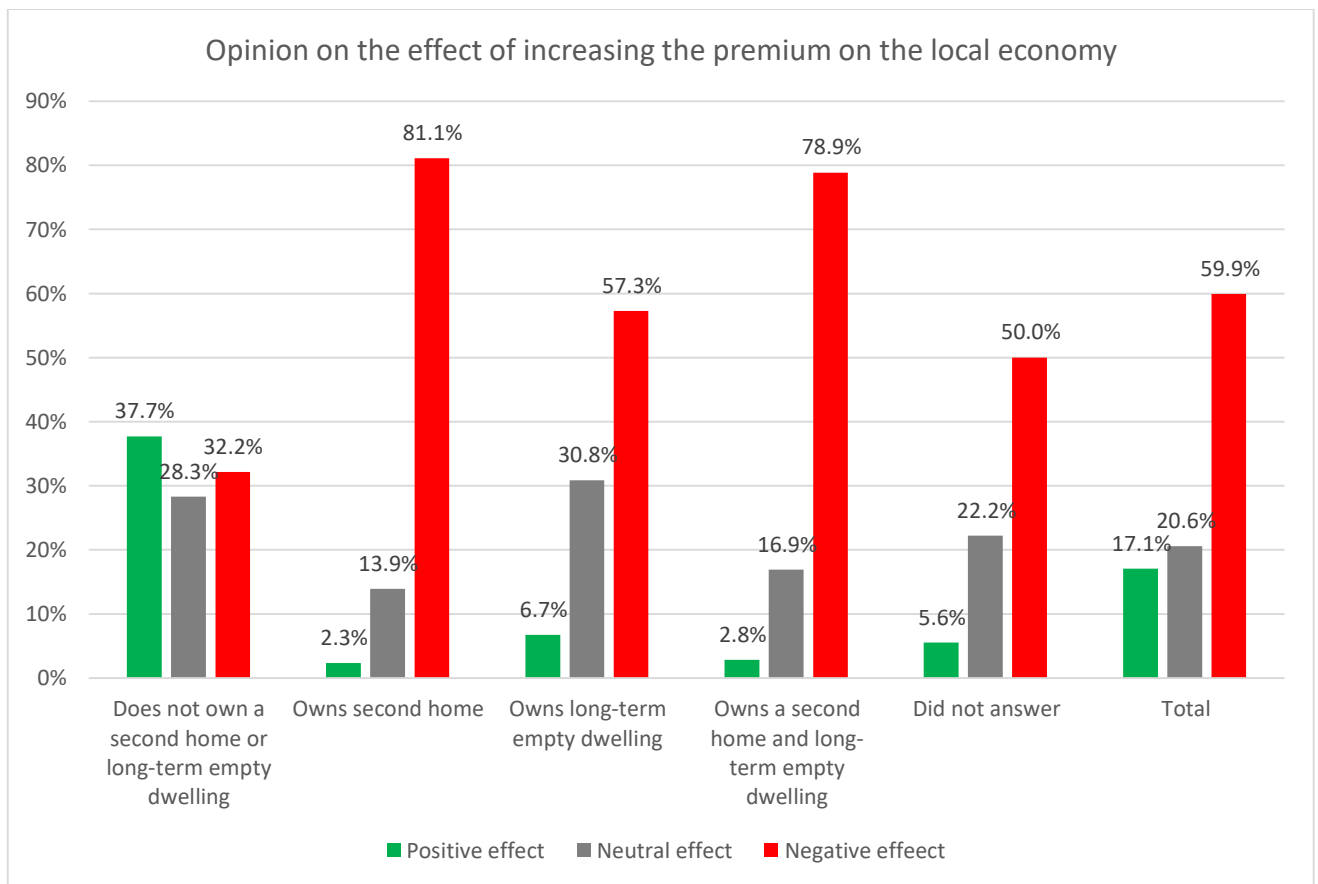


Chart not showing the small number of respondents who did not answer the question

Here are examples of the additional comments that were noted:

Positive:

“There would be more 'local' people in the communities and therefore greater use of local services and suppliers.”

“Fewer empty homes. More people living in the area more money for the local economy - rather than waiting for the tourist season.”

Neutral:

“Second homeowners bring funds into the community which they spend on local building services, restaurants, shops etc. They are both homeowners and tourists. If a Council Tax increase resulted in fewer second homes it is possible that the permanent residents would not spend as much.”

“If you wish to raise the tax to support the Housing Plan and will ring-fence the money, then this will benefit the local situation. There is no evidence that raising the tax will reduce the number roof holiday homes, or increase the amount of affordable housing available”.

Negative:

“As tourism is the main income of many people in rural Gwynedd it is difficult to understand how putting difficulties in this way is going to help.”

“Less money from people to contribute to local businesses.”

“I think many of the shops and restaurants rely on holiday makers especially the ones that make repeated visits because they have 2nd homes in Gwynedd.”

“Purely in terms of more spent on tax, less money spent in the local area, unless each council has a strict promise to increase local services using this additional tax. The worst case scenario is that second home become empty homes awaiting sale, which has the effect of making villages and towns look like areas in decline, rather than areas sought after.”

“Any impact on tourism is going to impact the local economy. Gwynedd is heavily dependent on the tourist industry and that is not going to change on the short to medium term. Any change to this is not going to be brought about by limiting tourism, but rather by encouraging economic diversification, and pro-actively building the appropriate infrastructure that will enable a greater range of jobs into the area. Including the provision of high speed broadband to enable people work remotely.”

We welcome any other comments you may have:

Here are examples of the comments received, set out up by categories whether or not they own a long-term empty dwelling or a second home in Gwynedd.

Not owning a long-term empty dwelling or second home in Gwynedd:

A cap needs to be put in place like places in Northumberland, Channel islands and many more that only allows something like 20% of an area to be second homes. Whether used for business or part time living.

I think the Council Tax should be increased, but I don't think it will be enough on it's own to solve the problem. As a resident in a village with about 75% second homes, I can't see it having much effect on how many second homes we have in the village, though that many homes would provide a sizeable income for Gwynedd Council to spend building affordable housing or buying back properties to be let to locals.

Planning permission is needed to turn a house into a business to make it impossible for people to avoid the additional payment.

I feel that Gwynedd Council should secure the future of our Welsh-speaking communities by using any possible powers to prevent this fragile situation escalating. If there is no major change in the near future the Welsh language will have been lost as the area's first language in a generation.

In my view, building housing estates for local families is not the answer. There are hundreds of second homes that are empty most of the year and are bought at prices out of the grasp of Gwynedd residents who work hard locally. These houses are registered as businesses so don't pay taxes at all, and the income from these houses goes out of the area. Grants to buy the houses from the market stock would be better than building estates of small houses that 'will do for the residents'. The council should re-buy council houses back rather than being bought as second homes, or create an affordable purchase plan for local people.

This is a cynical and unjust way of trying to raise tax which will have a negative effect on local business, the economy and the Welsh language. I feel it is just a political agenda to gain votes. It will also have a negative effect on local owner's house prices, so presumably there will be a council tax re valuation and the bands will decrease. I look forward to that.

As an individual... living in Pen Llŷn since I was born, it is becoming more clear every day that we will not be able to afford to buy a good quality and quantity house locally. Not enough jobs are paying enough, but more importantly, house prices are rising extremely sharply. I have accepted a job away from the local area that would pay better, with the hope of buying a house in a few years' time with the earned brass - this is not an option available to everyone. It is essential that Gwynedd Council, in conjunction with the Welsh Government deals with the second housing "crisis" in areas such as Llŷn in more robust ways than raising council tax of a small size. A permit or quota system is needed, to

enable local residents to live at home. Not just a terraced/estate housing, but houses of all kinds across the area.

If there were well-paid jobs in the countryside there would be more competition for housing. Everyone's wages have to more than double to compete with the immigrants

Please abolish the business rates relief on furnished holiday lets operated as a business. There are so many of these and they contribute nothing to the local council. There is no logic to allowing these businesses to avoid paying business rates.

A high percentage of second homes are owned and run as a business by local and on the whole Welsh people. Why can't this area and in particular the local councils realise that tourism and outdoor activities are two of the few viable industries in the area, unlike farming that only exists due to subsidies and grants. Stop trying to drive visitors away but welcome them and prosper from them.

Please don't do this. First, I fear for the relationships and the very nature of our communities. Second home owners have paid the extra this year but have not been able to visit as often they already feel they have been doubly penalised for buying a home and supporting our local economy. Secondly, what happens if you want to sell your property (first home or second) and you cannot. You leave to live somewhere in a flat, sheltered accommodation etc but the house remains on the market but empty. Will this result in double council tax being charged? Why should someone unable to sell their home have to pay double council tax? It makes no sense at all as they are not using council facilities

This is a political tax. Affordable housing should be created by other means. Second homes generally do not use council services as much as full time residents.

This is a move which, I presume is aimed at trying to make property available and cheaper for local people to buy. Why not tackle this issue from the other end. Encourage business and commerce to improve the pathetically low wage economy so that people can afford to buy a home. The house next to me took over a year to sell last year, I didn't see queues of local people trying to buy it and the price in comparison to other parts of the uk was very low. At best this move has the right intentions but will have the wrong effect. At worst it is petty and vindictive and will stir up more resentment on both sides of the argument. Don't do it

Please stop putting the Welsh language before every other important issue - economy; health; services; welfare. People can choose whether to speak Welsh or not, stop trying to say it is a bigger subject than the essential ones. You don't need affordable homes, there is no market whatsoever for them. You cannot get a mortgage on a Sec 106 affordable, so how do you buy it then? The housing crisis relates to those who are not professional or educated and are on low wages. Build them housing association or council houses. Problem solved. Let the housing market work as it always has, same everywhere. OR any new houses built can only be bought by locals, but leave existing housing stock alone. Again, problem solved.

I don't think GC can do anything about this problem without changes from the Welsh Government.

The main problem with dwellings used as second homes is that a large number of owners avoid the current premium by noting that the property is commercial, and therefore do not pay any tax on the basis of the discount/exemption for small businesses. If the premium is increased, I am sure that more second home owners will decide to do the same, which would lead to a reduction in public income, which will eventually have a Negative impact on spending on housing and local people's services. I am (very) supportive of the principle of charging a premium, but the problem of defining a dwelling must be tackled so that council tax on a second home is unavoidable. If evidence has to be submitted that a dwelling had been granted planning permission to be a holiday unit, not a dwelling, before it could be considered as a business property so that (i) the planning department could have an influence on the number of holiday units in areas where there is an excess; (ii) preventing the owners of second homes from avoiding council tax; and (iii) create a natural barrier for people to convert a dwelling into a holiday house as mortgage companies do not borrow against properties that are not entitled to be regarded as a dwelling. It would be wrong to charge a higher premium without coming to grips with this problem, which would raise resentment, and lead to a real reduction in the tax released by such dwellings.

Many second homes have belonged to families for generations. It seems unfair to penalise these people when properties bought as a business proposition or even 'supposed' businesses pay only business tax. Perhaps this is an area that should be looked at. Short term lets add little to local life and culture. I feel that this is all very political and has a feeling of discrimination.

I live in Dolgellau where the number of second-homes is substantial. In my experience, the majority are occupied on a regular basis, and the owners contribute to the local economy by shopping locally and frequently employing local trades people such as, for example, builders, window-cleaners, carpet-fitters etc. They also contribute a significant amount of money through tourist activities. I believe many of these second-home owners would seriously consider selling their properties and possibly look to buy a second-home in an area where there would not be penalised by higher council tax charges. Several of my near neighbours have already told me they would follow this course of action. I believe this would have a negative impact on the area. I don't see a shortage of affordable housing in the area at present and I believe this would simply lead to more empty properties and the loss of valuable income for the local economy.

I feel that cases should be looked at individually - yes there need to be restrictions in place to make people think twice before buying a second house, but we don't want to penalise local people who own houses either. I know of many cases where someone has lost a parent and inherited a house but is not in the position to move there/pay to do work on it so that it is suitable enough to let it at the moment. People shouldn't feel cornered and forced to let a house because they can't afford the premium. What about plans to help people who have inherited a house but don't want to live there to let it in the long term to local people? In that way a house will be owned by a local person and not sold to outsiders. A set of criteria is needed, so that local people who want to keep in touch with the area are supported rather than cornered.

Owns a second home in Gwynedd

i feel strongly that there shouldnt be a blanket rise of Council Tax across all 'second home' as there are so many different sorts eg caravan/mansion. The difference between owning a house which is rented out as a business compared to chalet/caravan the stayed by a family and their friends. Why

should someone who can not be somewhere all the time pay more service charge ie council tax than a permanent dweller. very unfair.. perhaps more legislation through planning is required

Gwynedd is an area of astounding natural beauty and a wealth of nature and unspoilt land this is a huge asset to the council and should be exploited in a way that continues to bring investment to the area and improves local economy without penalising people who have invested their pension and ultimately their end of life and retirement plans to live in such an area of beauty for short term taxation goals. I would employ the council to look at Cornwall and Devon and Yorkshire counterparts to understand how they have struck a balance with the tourism sector and that of second homes within these areas and work with second home owners who bring people into the area through high occupancy let's which provide commercial value to areas of low commercial value yet high natural beauty. I would ask to penalise or ask more from vacant home owners who do not bring commercial value to the area by not letting their property to pay more as these type of second home owners do not support the local economy in any way proportionally to those that run them as a business.

This proposal may have some honourable intentions but is ill-conceived. Has there been any study of the economic benefits (or otherwise) of outsiders investing in Gwynedd (eg through their use of local shops, services, tradespeople, etc)? Has there been any proper study of the cultural benefits of outsiders valuing Welsh language and local cultural aspects? I have looked for but not found any such research. There seems to be an assumption that the investment of outsiders in Gwynedd is, of itself, a bad thing. I believe this is a seriously under-nuanced position. The reasons why properties lie empty are complex; the reasons why Welsh language is showing both encouraging signs but also attracting survival worries are also complicated; and similarly complicated to fully evaluate are the economic and other benefits or otherwise of outsiders like ourselves who chose to live a significant part of our lives as contributing members of the local community. This seems to be a financial grab dressed up as socially-minded activism. I strongly recommend a more nuanced approach to these complicated issues.

My property is in regular use, by me and several of my friends, as accommodation whilst we are offering our services voluntarily on one of the Great Little Trains of Wales. We share the cost of running the house, and we regularly use local shops and hospitality outlets. We are therefore ensuring that our railway is able to continue to contribute significantly to the tourism economy of Gwynedd, and as individuals we are also spending money in local shops and hospitality outlets. A further Premium charge on Council Tax is in effect a kick in the teeth for Heritage Railways in Gwynedd - one of the major tourist attractions of the area, and a business which cannot operate sustainably without a large number of regular volunteers.

It is more important to get the Council Tax from the people who own second homes and are now not paying the tax because they say they are businesses just because they let them for a few weeks in the year. These second homes should be paying more rather than none.

We genuinely have a second home in Wales, not a holiday home nor a holiday let and live 50% of our time in Gwynedd. Although we love England we also love Wales and its people and ask you not to penalise us for being fortunate to just about being able to afford a home in Wales. HOME not house, dwelling or abode. We have a small house in England and a very small house in Wales whose sum value is less than many single properties both in England and Gwynedd please do not make it difficult for us to enjoy both countries. We do contribute to the local economy and community of Wales and enjoy trying to speak welsh and engage in the richness of both cultures.

As a welsh person that owns a second home in a village which my family originated from, I find it sad that there seems to be such a strong view that second home owners are an issue and are degrading the welsh culture and language. I understand there is an affordable housing issue in rural Wales, but this is the same in rural England and Scotland. However, I don't see any support by local government to address this issues by building communities and housing estates. I believe people with second home do provide a boost in the local economy and would be interested to see the change in local income as a result of the covid restrictions. No all second home owners are rich people from the south or Cheshire that take advantage as people seem to believe, most second home owners I know, try to embed them selves in the communities and support where possible

In my case personally the house is a family home although we have necessarily had to move to follow work. The family are very keen to keep the property within the family and are reluctant to sell it. To meet the tax increase the house had to be set short term to cover the additional cost. While fully sympathetic to the dire situation and respecting and appreciating the council's willingness to tackle the problem I fear we are caught in a rather vicious circle. There is no intention to sell the property, but it must be set to maintain the tax.

I understand the problem you are trying to solve here but I think you have to target the sale of local houses to people away more directly. Raising the tax premium alone would penalise people from the area who live away too much I think. In addition, you should also try to control the sale of local houses to people who do not intend to live in them.

Depopulation in rural areas is an old problem and of course applies to hundreds of areas around the world. We need to focus on a long-term strategy to make our areas places for small businesses to prosper, the modern technology make it even more attractive to live in such areas and in the middle of that strategy is people and young families. They are our future. This motion may be part of that strategy; all things must be looked at as a way of offering new opportunities to such peoples and perhaps less at preventing people from taking advantage of the situation as it is. It is gradual change that will bring the results we want.

I own a one-bedroom cottage that I inherited in an area in the area of my birth that I do not let to anyone and often used myself before the covid restrictions. If the Council Tax Premium increases, consideration will have to be given to putting it on the market, and because of its size, it is very likely that it would have to be sold to people from outside the area such as a second home. This may run

counter to the principles that the Council promotes in the first place. Would it be possible for the Council to consider not penalising owners who have their main home in Gwynedd.

I would be interested to see how the income generated from an increase in second home council tax is going to be used to help with building stock, reduce house prices. help with welsh culture. Has the council looked at where other places have used this approach and the effect it has had on housing stock etc and prices.

I am a Welsh speaking Welshman who has a second home in an area in which my family are from. I cannot live fulltime in Gwynedd as I am unable to perform my work in Gwynedd... I have seen the movement in Wales from an economy dependant on heavy industry to Tourism. I have witnessed the benefits to the local community and surrounds to tourism. Wales seems more "Welsh" now and I view tourism as having a positive impact on being Welsh, being proud to be Welsh, the quality of the local buildings/environment and also to the promotion of the Welsh language.

Owns a long-term empty dwelling in Gwynedd

Understand the need to raise the premium, but because of this, local families are also penalised. We have had to pay a premium as we have bought an empty house that required significant renovation (rewired, central heating, new floors, roof, etc.). As we can't live in the house with 2 small children, we get a huge tax bill until the work is complete. Covid, on top of this, has pushed the project back almost a year, and we are being penalised because of this. This doesn't make people want to take on renovations. The situation needs to be consoled before the premium is raised.

Raising taxes will not make a difference to the fact that affluent immigrants buy second houses in Gwynedd. These moneyed people have plenty of means to pay the tax without feeling a hole in their pockets! Their astute lawyers in England won't long find a way to avoid paying the tax in full either! We have a farmhouse, which has been an empty property for 3 years as it requires significant work. (We can't afford to make it up at the moment) The house has been part of our farm for decades and we hope to retain ownership of the house for the family. We already pay the extra 50% tax on the empty house. If council tax rises to 100% on empty homes/second homes we will have to consider selling the property – and the new owners will probably be immigrants. I am sure that many local people/countryside will be in the same situation if this proposed addition to the tax comes into force. I would like you to consider that a tax increase could prevent local people from taking risks and generating income for the local area. Tourism is not all bad. We must be vigilant as local Welsh people that we do not shoot ourselves in our feet! Will raising taxes solve the problem? Not in my opinion. Should not the rural planning department be more innovative in promoting sustainable development?

... we were hoping to get new tenants asap. But we have been unable to get trades in to do work. We would not have been able to afford higher tax. Any higher tax would be incorporated in rent for the next tenant.

As someone who grew up in the property, and my parents had lived there for over 50 years, I feel we are being punished for inheriting the house... we are paying the council tax but receiving none of the benefits e.g. rubbish collection etc. If I was deriving income from the house, I would have no issue with paying the premium, but I am now paying council tax on a property that I cannot empty due to the Covid restrictions. My late Mother ran a B & B business at the property... and so contributed hugely to the local economy during that time. It is certainly not a second home in my view.

...we are first time home buyers and can't be any more local. Our house is only empty because we are physically unable to live in it due to renovations. It's shameful that local young first time buyers will be penalised due to the county's attempt to cash in on holiday lets.

Not fair that long-term empty dwellings have to pay an additional premium, bought a house and farm four years ago and renovation work on the house, work is going ahead on waiting for a pre-lined right and so on

We need better paid jobs and more council houses or small bungalows suitable for older people which would lead to bigger family houses in need of renovation coming on the market.

The refurbishment has taken much longer than expected . Solving the problem of dampness is proving very frustrating. Raising the premium can force me to sell and is likely to be bought as a second home.

In my case & no doubt others, the six months grace for developing empty properties is not sufficient due to physical restrictions & cash flow. Any increase in tax would lengthen the time to bring the property to market. Even the 50% Premium has a slowing effect on renovation. A 100% Premium would not encourage renovation of properties, particularly older ones of historic value to the local community.

Owns a long-term empty dwelling and a second home in Gwynedd

Please don't lump all empty properties into a single category of long term empty... I have properties that are sometimes empty for more than a few months due to lack of demand not a lack of desire on my part to let it to a local person. Please think about the effect on affordable housing of over taxing the landlords, some of whom are trying to help the local community.

Some people seem to have the impression that all second home owners are rich. From my experience most of them have worked hard for many years to buy a second home. Some may have inherited from a family member where it has not been possible to live and find work within the community and they have had to move away but want to keep a contact with their heritage. Most of the second home owners I know have fond memories of holidays in Wales long before they became second home owners here and most of them want to contribute to their local community as best they can.

how can it possibly be fair to put the council tax up when we have not been able to come to our property, due to covid restrictions enforced by your government??? you should be reducing it not increasing it!!!!!!

If this is to take effect I think it should only be effective for new purchases so persons are aware before buying. This decision could have a devastating impact on existing owners who have pushed themselves to their limit to purchase the property they have. This could severely impact on so many peoples lives

Encouraging empty homes back into use would be a positive thing for everyone whereas increasing tax on second homes would not help the community and would give the impression of an anti English campaign!

This is not the time for this increase, people are tired and weary of the financial effect of the pandemic. Review it again later. Even business and 2nd home owners have to manage financial constraints.

I feel that the Authority should distinguish between houses purchased for long-term empty dwellings and houses inherited from Welsh-speaking Wales. In such situations we keep these houses in the hand of Wales and pass it on from one generation to the next. If I were to sell these dwellings then there would be a Negative impact on local communities.

By having a one cap fits all policy you will hurt financially people who have second properties as a means of income. People who want holiday homes in Wales will pay a premium but will spend less locally to compensate.