

# Title: Developing a geodemographic classification to understand the relationship between empty housing and health deprivation across the Liverpool City Region.

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## Background and Motivation

The liveable housing stock across the UK is under significant pressure exemplified by the surge in the usage of temporary accommodation and growing housing register lists. Therefore, further understanding the area profiles of neighbourhoods experiencing high levels of vacancies is salient. Areas of the LCRCA historically have experienced a disproportionately high incidence of empty homes relative to the UK. Moreover, the city region contains some of the most health deprived areas in the country. Therefore, this research investigates if these two phenomena are related to one another.

## Data and Methods

An empty home database was provided prior to the research by the LCRCA, representing the key data source. Whilst publicly available data was utilised from the Census, Fingertips and Sport England in producing the Geodemographic Classification.

The primary method used was a geodemographic classification comprised of ten variables which formulated four clusters of areas that discriminated based upon empty home rates and variables representing health deprivation. Supporting methods of detailed descriptive visualisations alongside regression and correlation analysis were utilised to further explore and explain the relationship between empty homes and health deprivation.

## Key Findings

There was an association found between health deprivation and empty home incidence across the Liverpool City Region, but with significant variation in the strength of this relationship between local authorities. The Geodemographic Classification produced two clusters characterised as having high empty home incidence. One named 'Deprived Vacant Property Heartlands' that was characterised by health deprivation and another named 'Downtown Vacancies' characterised by urbanisation and a large number of private rentals.

## Quantitative findings:

- The Classification found that over 50% of empty homes were found in just 27% of MSOAs.
- Liverpool contained the highest number of empty homes (10,054 properties).
- Continuity of persistent vacancies aligning with areas of the New Heartlands renewal programme in Liverpool, Sefton and the Wirral.

## Value of the research

Adding to the base of literature on empty houses and showing a continuity of their highly spatially concentrated manifestation. Large bodies of research into both empty homes and health deprivation in isolation exist but studies into their relationship remains limited. Therefore, this research fills a gap in this regard by investigating a region dealing with both issues. This research concluded with specific and implementable policy changes being recommended for both long and short-term strategies.

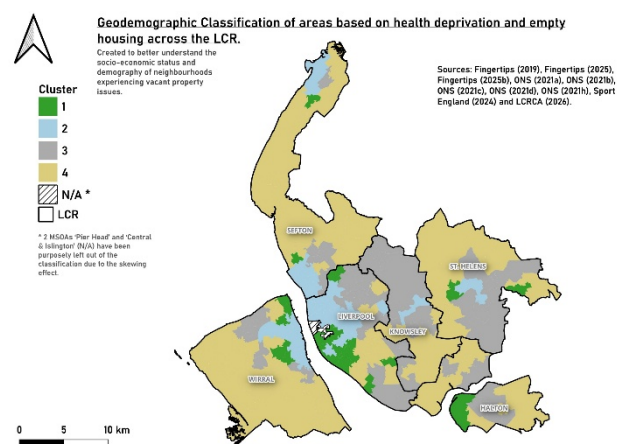


Figure 1- Geodemographic Classification.

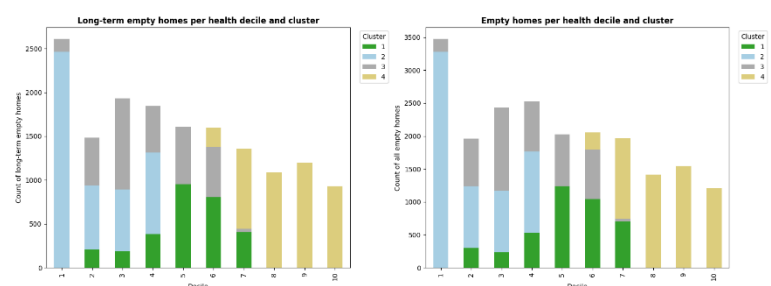


Figure 2- Empty and long-term empty homes per health decile and geodemographic classification cluster.