Council Tax Reduction Scheme - Question 3 - Other Comments

Any Other Comments

Whilst there is a sound case for applying a surcharge for second homes, the administrative burden would probably make this inappropriate at this time but should be considered in future.

The removal of the discounts will also reduce the cost of administrating the arrangement by SLDC.

Yes, we have a second "home", bought derelict and improved on a budget. It is not suitable for main housing? Abode?

But the main point is we do not enjoy (and cannot benefit from) the full council services in two places. We already pay for many services which cannot be used.

I spend all my spare time at my 2nd home & would argue I contribute greatly to the local economy, using shops and pubs frequently. Further increases may force me to sell up as my property is becoming increasingly unaffordable.

Council houses shouldn't be sold. Kept for people on low income.

I'm on benefits on the barest of substance levels. If the housing benefit goes down anymore we'll quite substantially and my rent increase again I will go hungry.

Second homes are being used as second incomes. They get bins emptied after they have been used as holiday lets. So should pay full amounts.

If someone can afford a second home in our district, then they can afford to pay full council tax. Just because it is a second home it is still bricks and mortar in our district.

If you can afford to have a second home and leave a property empty you can afford to pay tax for it or give it up for family's that need housing. Were dose the money go when they rent it to family & friends?

People buy second homes from out of district then don't use them & local people can't afford homes here.

*Q1) (d,e,c) Only if they are for sale*

If they can afford a second home. I think they can afford the council tax. I'm 75 now and it was only this year that I knew you could get council tax support.

Discounts on second & third homes should never have been granted.

What does all this matter, views won't be taken into account - you'll have already made your decision. -This is only window dressing.

People with property left in a will and on the housing market should continue to receive the same discounts as before.

There should be no discounts at all for second homes and empty properties unless the property is empty because someone is in long term care or is seriously ill. Landlords / 2nd home owners should not be entitled to discount.

(c) Should be 50%

(d) - The same as 'second home' discount

(e) As in (d) above

(f) Property - Occupancy of our second home is approx. 30% so that receive a small discount is surly fair.

*Maybe 'second homes' that are let commercially should pay the full amount.

The discount for "2nd home owners" has, in recent years, been significantly eroded

2nd home owners contribute greatly to the local community's economy yet invariably take little from local council services (e.g. schooling, health/care/social services, library etc.) with notable exceptions being e.g. environmental, highways etc.

2nd home owners are routinely denied the right to vote

Individual would attract a 25% council tax discount whereas an individual 2nd home owner would, perversely, have to pay 100%

Whereas some of us who have lived and worked in the lake district are now struggling to afford any home here on retirement.

People who have more than one properties has far more money to spend than me. (Higher disposable income)
I am earing fare more than I am. With more than one property, potentially will earn more than I can on properties rental alone.

The above questions are straightforward, and sensible, I wholeheartedly agree.

Rent a 'second home' to allow me to work in local area, returning home (North Staffs) at weekends. Your proposal may be the straw that breaks the camels back and force me to give up working.

I feel that one property is all you need to live in, houses and affordable homes are hard to find, this may help to reduce house prices & rent to more realistic prices why should we suffer because people are greedy.

Banding and discounts should be kept the same.

I think it is ridiculous that because we have an empty house we should pay more than normal council tax payer.

Anybody with second home should pay council tax the full amount. If they can afford second homes for holidays and such let them pay council tax on them.

Providing council tax benefit to those who really need it is essential. I assume care is taken that these are the only people who receive benefit. My husband & I worked hard all our working life to purchase a holiday home in the Lakes. Indeed I was surprised the holiday homes received a council tax discount.

As a second home owner, I see no justification for a discount - if I am lucky enough to have a second home, I should contribute as fully as possible to the local community & amenities.

?Re? Discounts for empty properties. The current situation seems good for locals but too generous for 2nd homes.

Great idea to hit affluent second home owners hard. Second home owners help to push up the price of housing for our children. Charge them five times the council tax fee.

Too many empty properties.

Too many young living on the streets.

My opinions on empty property charges are conditioned by our own difficulty in selling a property at this time. As pensioners we moved to a different property to enable us to be more self sufficient in our later years.

Since 2nd homes are only occupied for several weeks per year so the amount of rates are a lot already considering the majority of the time they are unoccupied - Producing no rubbish etc.

As above

I can see the moral argument for 2nd home owners paying extra, and 10% is not too onerous. But there must be many who maintain property empty for commercial gain. Although equally not using local services maintained by Ccl Tax, the share of the shortfall should be met by these groups who receive substantial subsidy. At last 2nd home owners support local commerce thus injecting finance into the local economy.

Given the choice, we would live full time in the Lake District. Family commitments & work makes this impossible. Has anyone ever calculated the additional cost to the council of extra services (like schools) if all second homes became first homes?

Second home owners struggle to keep two properties bills going and shouldn't be penalised.

I appreciate 2nd home owners are an easy target particularly as they usually vote elsewhere. However the local economy relies upon them and there should be fair treatment & not a rip off I _am not_ a second home owner.

No

Satterthwaite parish and High Furness area as in some cases up 60% holiday lets

People who own two properties for example pensioners are already paying full tax on a first home and have financial problems. To take away discounts would make it impossible to pay. Most people who own a second home pay for and use council services.

It is completely undemocratic to tax those who have no vote to subsidise those who do vote & determine such policies.

This change is long overdue, to discouraged owners of property from leaving them empty or under utilised.
I hope that static caravans and lodges are paying their fair share of council tax.

Owners of second homes contribute significantly to the local economy; firstly through their discretionary expenditure whilst in the area, supporting local retail businesses in all sectors from food to transport and clothing to furniture; secondly they invest in their properties using local craft and trades people for maintenance and improvements.

By contrast, whilst one recognises that there are genuine reasons for some properties remaining empty for a period of time, empty properties in general are a drain on the local economy. By definition no-one lives in them and therefore no-one is spending in the local economy, also the condition of many will deteriorate over time and detract from their neighbourhood. Most importantly, they represent a terrible waste of potential homes in a region that has plans to build a significant number of homes in future years.

Discouraging properties from remaining out of the housing stock by charging a premium on Council Tax rather than giving a discount must surely initiate a positive multiplier effect for a family now able to move into a home, regenerate it and be economically active in the area.

It is disappointing that SLDC is not using the changes in Council Tax Benefit as an opportunity to seek to accelerate the return of empty properties to the housing stock and rather is simply raising Council Tax rates for a small number of homeowners who choose to live a significant part of their life in the South Lakes and are active participants in their communities.

With regard to empty properties: These remain empty for many reasons which frequently are difficult to avoid. This may be due to personal or legal difficulties in settling estates; Planning difficulties for improvements. Availability of funding for improvements etc. While on the one hand the council may argue council tax is not being paid on the other there is no or little draw on services that the tax funds. It is therefore difficult to see the justification for charging a full rate. An enhanced rate as indicated at Q1f is neither justifiable or reasonable and legally highly questionable when no service is being provided.

Re Q b : I think it would be fair to cut the discount for second home owners who run them as a business, Letting them out commercially for profit. (Or maybe they don’t get it?)

Re Q e) + f) : I think owners should not get the discount if the house is lying empty and it is not being used - However, if they are trying to sell it but not being successful because of the economic downturn, Then in those circumstances I don't think they should be penalised or charged extra.

1/ The 10% (Once 50%) council tax discount for part time residents is a token recognition. That in return they enjoy limited social benefits, Are not entitled to financial assistance and have no representation or voting right.

2/ As pensioners must not be affected by the changes, I assume I am not affected.

The extra revenue needed should be raised from all members of society and not just from second home owners who are always regarded as " soft targets " Disabled pensioners should be given an extension to the exempt periods.

Second home owners do not use many of the council’s services, but do spend considerable amounts in the area using local tradesmen, shops, restaurants and hotels.

Properties empty for over 2 years should probably be sold and therefore the owner wouldn’t have to pay extra council tax.

Otherwise the more wealthy should perhaps subsidise the less fortunate if possible.

And what happens in the next financial year after discounts drop? Charge 110% on the cash cows? Or site the ???. A proper review of spending priorities? Of course those not affected will say reduce discounts. A survey of this type is not a valid methodology. It requires an assessment of which has least cost + greatest benefit

Should also include static caravans & chalets.

I see no reason not to raise funds from empty properties or reduce benefit to 90% to share the burden in a co pay system. All analysis shows to much spending on benefits and the proposal solution does nothing to address this. Too many people claiming on inadequate assessment.

As a single person find the 25% discount to low one person should only pay 50% as it is unfair

2nd home owners only get dustbin collection for high charges (currently over £100 a month!) (Do not receive education / social services / libraries / health etc.) Value for money is low, and already heavily
subsidises all the needy groups
No

These proposals would seem to my wife and I (joint owners of our second home) to be a fair and rational response to the actions for a government determined to make the poor suffer for the un-penalised sins of the rich.

*Q4 wanting to sell*

As a second home owner I support the change but expect full service and see no reason why second homes should be classified differently from 1st homes after the change. I live about 40; 60 in SLDC- second homes are not only weekenders!

Ref 1 c&d: As a landlord of 5 cottages I know that vacancies between tenancies up to 2 years (but usually much less) are sometimes necessary in order to carry out major repairs / improvements / redevelopment.

*Note next to postal address:-
"If you had printed these boxes the other way round, I could have used a window envelope."*

Surely if Council Tax is worked out at level for 2012/13 and council tax rises in 2013/14 I will receive less benefit.

Will payments be made to SLH or to me direct under the new system?

"For Sale"

Any one who can afford two homes should pay council tax on both

As a second home owner I agree that the 10% discount should be discontinued as long as the monies are not used to help immigrants etc. They should be made to work & pay taxes like everybody else.

The council DOES NOT meet its responsibility in providing sufficient waste bins (grey) or cutting back the trees on its land which are touching our building.

If you can afford a second home you should be able to pay Council Tax.

Second homes which are rented for holiday lets should be charged full rates.
Non rented second homes should still receive the 10% discount we pay for services we don’t receive.

Property empty for more than 2 years, Owners should be pressurised to sell to Council to house people who need council homes. I have second home what is used regularly by myself and my children. Grandchildren.
Homes left empty for long periods - not let or rented - should be looked at.

As an owner of 7 village houses, all let to full-time local residents at modest rents, I think the 100% discount for up to 6 months to allow one time to select a tenant should be kept.

As a second home owner in the area I viewed the 10% discount as a bonus. We try to visit often and support the "local economy" so no objections in principle to the removal of the discount for the reasons stated. I would not like to be penalised, however, for owning a second home. I imagine the vast majority of full time householder in the area who might benefit will support the proposal, so it’s a bit of a foregone conclusion.

All un-occupied / unused housing should be ?higher? Heavily taxed or taken into council use & used appropriately.

We regularly visit our house in Kendal and continually support the local shops to purchase our goods. We never use the rubbish recycle bins and always bring it back with us to Warrington. We have used this property for the last 10 years.

2nd Homes bring income into area - discount should continue - EMPTY HOMES DO NOT - WHERE HOMES ARE EMPTY IN AN AREA WHERE HOUSING IS A PREMIUM LANDLORDS should be encouraged to rent

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Your proposals are entirely (?) fair. I am very privileged to have a second home and with friends and family enjoy the Lake District so much.

Whatever people vote for, Council’s have a reputation for doing what they want. More so SLDC. So this is a paper exercise to be ignored by Councillors & Council Officers.
yes I agree if your house is empty of no furnishings there should be no tax
I happily paid my council tax until I had an accident and now not able to work

Continued.
As most second home owners pay substantial taxes they should not further subsidise people who don’t work
and already claim lots of benefits

As I am working in the Kendal area and rent a property, I also pay Council Tax on my family home and only
access services occasionally. The loss of the 10% will increase my living costs and reduce my willingness to
live in the area. I will therefore commute daily reducing my expenditure and investment in this areas
economy.

Since the reduction in 2nd home Council Tax Discount from 50% ? I have deliberately used the
shops/restaurants etc. much less than previously, instead bringing my consumables from my home area. If
this proposal goes through I will eliminate virtually all local purchases.

***Written over questions 5 to 9: What relevance has this to the consultation?!?!***

1.  I support additional changes for empty homes after 2 years.
2.  2nd home owners have already seen a reduction in discount from 50% to 10% in recent years. Due to the
limited use of council services, 2nd home owners should receive some discount. Whilst I would argue this
should be more than 10%, in the current climate 10% seems fair.

Thank you for seeking my views on this subject. While I agree wholeheartedly with the proposal to end
council tax discounts for second homes, I have reservations when it comes to inherited property. It can take
far longer than six months to clear a home. Not everyone wants to employ a house-clearance firm. There are
often many things to be sifted through and decisions for their disposal made carefully. It takes time. Not
everyone wants a holiday home or to be a landlord. But selling a house can take a very long time. No-one
wants to sell their house at a give-away price; but buyers are finding great difficulty obtaining a mortgage.
Perhaps if the owner, the inheritor, could prove he is making every reasonable attempt to sell the property
he could be excused from paying council tax on it until the housing market is greatly improved. By the way,
who are these developers who want to build houses no-one can get a mortgage for? And on green-belt land
too! Let them fill brownfield sites first!

Second home owners provide considerable income into the community and local businesses depend on this
They also introduce family and friends into the area with the same positive benefits to the community.

Increasing the council tax change on second homes who already receive a lower level of benefit to subsidise
excessive expenditure is manifestly unfair and potentially ??? Rights legislation.

Owners of properties empty for more than 6 months should have their discounts reduced by the same
proportion as 2nd home owners. Empty properties should be brought back into use.

Second homes generate employment for local people and bring tourists into area.

This is yet another attack on 2nd home owners. This consultation questionnaire will receive a majority in
favour of proposal from ’ ???’ residents it is a waste of money I spend a lot in the area do you want me to
leave? What about taxing more on holiday lets?

Many people who have second homes in the area currently use less facilities than residents who live in the
area. It therefore seems unfair for people who do not live in the area to pay the same amount as people
who do. Also some of the second homes are run as holiday homes which brings extra income to the area.

As a second home owner, I do not have a vote in the north west and am therefore subject to taxation
(council tax) without representation.

We pay Council tax as if our house is a second home. It actually _isn't_ as it is my residence, although I live
with my partner most of the time. The discount is small (10%). Alternatively, we could ask for x2 single
occupancy discounts - Then you get less money

I hope the results will be made public. Whilst this a is a consultation it looks, and press coverage seems to
confirm, that you have already decided.

Re removal of discount for property empty less than 6 myth’s - if the property is empty for improvements, I
would agree to removal but if the owner has to move to find work, they may need 6 months to sell or let.
Could the CT accrue and then be paid when the property is sold?
Removal of discounts may increase available housing?

Perhaps council tax discounts could be reduce to 5% on second homes and the additional charge of 50% on properties empty for more than 2years i.e.25% not 50% as proposed / suggested.

One day this attack on 2nd home owners whose money does a lot to employ & sustain local businesses, will backfire & be seen for what it is - A witch hunt

*Q4 Primary home is in France
The property is for sale at a v. reasonable price & no-one interested. It is no longer in use.*
*Also the value of the property has declined greatly and I feel the council tax should be reduced.*

*Q1 c) 50%?*
People who can afford 2nd homes should not benefit from council tax discounts, when there are many residents who are looking for houses in our area.

If income from 'second homes' was to be used _exclusively_ for affordable housing I would be in agreement with losing the discount. Second home owners bring a considerable amount of money to Cumbria - Don't exploit them.

1/ Extra checks should be made on persons receiving single person discount as it can easily be abused i.e. partner etc. living in property etc.
2/ Alternative means of raising additional revenue is to means test people in council properties where it is advisory that they have means to pay the rents and chase up more people who refuse to pay their share on rents.

What proportion of council tax is not collected each year?

If discounts for second homes are to be withdrawn, then these properties should have refuse collections restored

Second homes should get a 50% discount as they are funding services not used by them. i.e. Schools, police etc.

I am in a position of having inherited property and am actively trying to sell that property. In the meantime I do not believe I should be penalised by having to pay extra council tax as this is not being kept as a second home and I do not want the extra hassle of renting the property.

My wife & I (a native Cumbrian of over 40 generations) have owned a second home in South Lakeland for 14 years. We certainly did not make our purchase with any thought to a CT discount + reluctantly will accept its final loss, what we object to is the inference that people like us bring nothing to the area & should pay for others use of services. In 14 years we have spent £0.5m on building etc. on house refurbishment, furniture, a wedding for our daughter and all birthday + Christmas presents. A thank you rather than an insult? Would be appreciated!

Although we are second home owners we visit our home each week, only personal circumstances prevent us from moving to what will be our permanent home in the future. We are unable to use some facilities paid for e.g. refuse collection, as we are not in SLDC on most collection days, We deal with this by taking rubbish home. However we would be willing to pay the additional cost to enable local people to retain present levels of C.T benefit.

I presume that if you withdraw the 10% discount from second home owners then they will be entitled to a vote in local elections. Remember the Boston tea party no taxation without representation.

Why not spread the cost of the shortfall to all council tax payers? There are reasons why many homes are 2nd homes e.g. work away, but only able to stay in S.Lakes when not working. Also empty properties are not using services, so it's not right to reduce or remove discount . All council tax payers should share the cost.

*Added from Q1 a) Depends on the need.

Those lucky enough to have a second home in a place as beautiful as south Lakeland (me!) should NOT expect to be subsidised. Many services are provided when not there and are essential to the safety of local residents.

Second home owners use few resources - ?? Refuse collection, no ?schooling? And are ?unable? To use local
People buying 2nd homes wants stopping if not they should pay full council tax. Or more as ??? Said they are making loads of money. Anybody renting one of these homes. Have that rent to pay on top of council tax £ bill eater bill. Am against second homes.

As a second home owner I use little of your services. You are now asking me to subsidise further services. At the same time I am not allowed a vote on how these services are used or implemented. ‘No taxation without representation’

If homes are unoccupied, there is no need for refuse collection, and other council services, so for what would the council be charging?

This survey panders to the politics of envy. It is divisive and will inevitably give the council the result it is looking for. Why should council tax be paid on properties which receive _no_ services from the council?

Re (f) - How would you police this? It is totally impractical - a ?? Person would seem to occupy the house. Big expense to police for little return.

Please consider Q1f carefully. My wife is currently trying to sell her deceased mother’s retirement flat at a reasonable asking price with a desire to sell ASAP, and through current economic circumstances is struggling to sell. A potential 150% council tax bill would not be deemed reasonable.

I am so grateful for the help I got at Kendal office this year Thank you. My first help ever.

I am 76. only use the flat at weekend, use few if any council services, flat only used for giving relief to boarded grandson at Sedbergh

Whole CT system & efficiency needs radical overhaul.

Property’s can sometimes be empty for up to two years due to probate reasons, Some people may not be able to afford the extra burden of council tax in this period. I know somebody in this situation.

We are selling our home in Bolton to move up to kirkby lonsdale. Our claim for empty rate relief is totally legitimate. Some second home owners / ones ?? May abuse this. That is wrong. But! Do not turn off people from investing in the area, with ?appalling? Summers the Lake District needs all the investment/help it can get to survive!!! Thank you for the opportunity to comment!!

RE Q1 a) What is the level? How can I give an informed view when no information on benefits is provided. A 10% discount still leaves the Council with 90% for property not requiring or using all the services, all the year, all the time. S. Lakes Council tax is extremely high at the starting point on band A+B properties etc. Much more than last ?Cheshire? Council. Also I am a sole occupier and pensioner and feel some ?recognition? Might be given to the no. of people in the property.

If as a 2nd home owner, I pay full Council Tax ( which I don’t particularly object to, then we should _be given equal benefits as residents_ (even though we don’t use many of the services).

E.g. we should be allowed to use the Hawkshead resident’s car park.

P.S. As aged 66, should I get a pensioner’s discount?

People with second homes are in a better position to pay council tax than people on benefits the council should keep housing allowance at its current rates or increase it as this is not enough to pay for private rentals and hardly any social housing becomes available

*added Q1 f) These properties should be compulsorily purchased*

Homes should not be allowed to be empty for more than 6 months too many people looking for accommodation, would help utilising, existing properties rather than building more

Our answers to Q1 d,e,f, are on the assumption that the empty house owner is actively trying to sell the property (or let the property).

How do you propose to get income from 2nd homes? I think you would be better to commandeer the empty houses to rent to homeless or those in need of a roof over their heads.

Many people who have holiday homes to let in our area live outside SLDC

Holiday Homes + Second Home should _pay Full too many of them_
All _holiday_ properties and _second_ homes should pay full council tax, then it would make them think twice before Buying, then would let local young people have a chance to buy, as at the moment it is _impossible_.

Empty houses should be the ones targeted - for increase & Second homes in rental use at least provide employment & income for builder’s cleaners furnishing businesses! Don’t kill the goose!

A property may be empty for many reasons + each case assessed individually.

Mortgages should be provided for those looking for a first home (or replacement) not second home owners or landlords.

May I suggest that 2nd home owners pay double council tax? If you can afford 2 homes, You should pay for the privilege. Ignore the squeals of protest!

As a regular visitor to my second home a significant proportion of my disposable income is spent in South Lakeland.

"No taxation without representation". This was the slogan used by American colonists - ignoring it by the British Government eventually brought about war!!! Give me a vote and I will agree.

*Q4 None of the above other items*

South Lakes economy depends on the fact that people want to live here in second homes. Don’t bite the hand that feeds!

Question a) It should be reviewed.
Question c & f) Each situation is different and should be checked.
1) Someone unable to cope with bereavement.
2) Someone renovating a property for retirement into the area.

A 10% discount for 2nd homes is fair empty homes should be taxed after 6 months.

d) e) & f properties empty for long period should be investigated as to reason why?? Developers / council etc. May be able to acquire

Second homes do provide locals with more employment as without tourism there would be little employment

2nd home owners have a much reduced call on local facilities + none of education / health services.

We regard our home in the LD as a real home. We do not let it out and we spend as much time as we can in it. We support the local economy and are involved in the community. It would be fairer to take away the grant from second homers who use their properties as a business - for holiday lets or rentals (short + long term)

Due to family bereavement we have an empty property which we are trying to sell. We did not choose to be in this situation and are struggling to meet bills associated with the empty property. I am retired due to ill health, but as I receive incapacity benefit rather than disability allowance I do not get help with council tax where we live. The discount on the empty property has been a great help towards meeting bills we weren’t expecting and have no way of escaping until the house is sold. I imagine most people with an empty property are in a similar situation.

We have a small flat on WMV one of the originals, these get flooded at least a couple times a year (although better this year. the area in front of the property frequently floods so that parking is impossible during these times we use few council services and those that are provided are not serviced efficiently by the council.

See above Q2.
The reduced use of Council resources is the reason for the Council tax reduction for single occupancy exists. It is unacceptable not to acknowledge the same reasoning for 2nd home owners. Or is this simply political engineering?

The above education/social services accounts for about 50% of Council expenses. 2nd home owners bring in a lot of other income to the Lakes. They should be encouraged not penalized/victimised the 10% discount should be the minimum. However all 2nd homes should be put into band E or above.

*Q4 (empty) "When tenants change"*

Tax burdens such as this will prolong the recession. You are effectively removing "the spend" from the
circular flow of income. Rather than increase the burden why not increase efficiency. However, I suppose that there other factors to consider here.

2nd homes rented out bring visitors spending benefit ?to? their local area. Don’t use schools, social services etc.

Empty houses are often because the owner is in care. Extra costs to them are unjustified.

I cant understand why second home owners or people with empty properties should subsidise other tenants. Who use all the services provided such as schools, social services, etc. because they are not there to use them.

*Q1 Property on my road been empty 20 yrs. no. 34*

Second homes bring income to local Communities. Any Community needs a mix of people, income, etc. Penalising one group leads to a poorer society in general in financial terms and social reasons. I support protecting the vulnerable in society but too many ?receive? like ?this? hand-out money to undeserving folk who scrounge on society.

Second home owners contribute large money to SLDC for which they receive next to no benefit they also contribute to local economy - shops restaurants etc. - it is wholly unjust economic illiteracy to remove 105 discount

This questionnaire seems to be written as if the decisions have already been made.

If services are not used or made available then payments should not be made. Councils have a monopoly on charging and setting rates and also should do so in a moral way not charge for services not given or used. The users of services should pay.

Need to encourage 2nd homes, extra income for businesses, people on a break spend in local shops

In my opinion, people who are wealthy enough to own two or more properties should be penalised and have to pay the maximum council tax. It is disgraceful that people who have second homes in the Lakeland area or Cumbria as a whole have taken up local peoples properties. homes for locals, I say! Too many empty homes, should be heavily taxed or taken over by the local authorities. Young local people, some talented / gifted leaving area.

Empty properties - 6mths to ?sort? out ?usage? but then need a reason not to just hold property.

Note: Staveley will become our main / only house in 2013 (see below)

Just for the record I spend 40% of my time in my "second home".

*Q1(c) This encourages the disposal of properties that are empty due to the death of the property owner.

I am really struggling to pay for everyday basic living costs. Housing benefit and council tax benefit that I currently receive is a great help to me. But should be more in my opinion. I cannot abide with a reduction of those benefits. people with second homes should be heavily taxed especially in the Lake District.

As a young family struggling to find affordable housing in the South Lakes and appreciating that many other families are in the same situation, council tax benefit has been a life line to us in severe times of need. In an area where there is a serious short - fall in housing we find it a disgrace that not only are houses left empty but that they are allowed any discount on council tax.

Having worked for myself most of my working life you may want to consider privatising some peripheral services to reduce costs and reducing the over populated public sector liability, not withstanding the work done by public sector works.

People who have a second "Home" can well afford to pay : I struggle to afford one house never mind two ??

Very rarely use the bins, rarely need to be emptied. Second homes bring money - eating out at local restaurants / shopping etc.

I would like to see money spent here carefully i.e. River Bank behind Kirkland Hall in need of repair for 2+ yrs. but £300k + spent on Kirkland pavements + another £345k on Highgate I appreciate they may come from different "Budgets" but spend on keeping things ???? properly.

If people can afford to leave homes empty or afford a second home, then I think they can afford to pay a bit more council tax, so those other people who really need the help don’t suffer.
Second homes fund much of the Lake District, attracting high spending visitors. Taxing them is the easiest option - much easier than chasing those who leave properties empty and dilapidated.

I agree with the proposed option, but would it be a little less tough to reduce it to 95%? Maybe get a little more from homes empty for a long time.

Having been put out of two houses that I have rented from private landlords so they can be sold for second homes. It is so hard living alone trying to make ends meet if I didn't get your help I couldn't stay here. My son helps me by working for my landlord and paying half my rent.

It's not always easy or straightforward to sell a house these days and you could be causing hardship to people who have empty property which they can't sell and can't afford to maintain.

Why should people pay rates on empty house if it is not fit to live in owned by two people who can't agree. My husband bought our 2nd home in 2005 & he was diagnosed with terminal cancer 3mths later. We intended to retire in Cartmel. I can't sell main home & I'm widowed too _young for widows pension_! Each home owner should be looked at individually. Currently I'm struggling to maintain 2 homes. I'm part of Cartmels community & bring valuable income to village supporting local shops.

*Continued in letter*

I write to inform you that I strongly disagree with your decision to penalise 2nd home owners regarding 10% relief on Council Tax.

It is not my fault that I can't sell my main house, it's the economic climate induced by bad management of government! I am part of Cartmel community & buy from local businesses in Cartmel & Grange therefore bringing money into local community of Cumbria. My 2nd home is _not_ a holiday cottage! Its my home. I'm a widow & live alone. I _don't_ leave any grey bin refuse at all & do as much for the environment as possible. Surely _not_ having to empty my bins allows for some discount on council tax. If SLDc goes ahead with decision to penalise 2nd home owners I would complain at government level as I believe this would be a form of victimisation / or discrimination.

If the refuse collection arrangements are anything to go on, there is plenty of scope for the District and County Councils to improve efficiency.

Second home owners do _not_ use the majority of council services

Most second-home owners use far fewer Council services than single occupiers, who only pay 75%. We would consider selling our second home if the council tax discount is stopped.

Penalises visitors and owners of units that may not be capable of viable economic operation in a tough climate

I have responded to b) above as I do not have the benefit of the free services provided by the Council

Slightly painful but necessary adjustment.

Under the present climate houses are not selling even though prices have been reduced drastically. In my case, the main home which was put up for sale has not sold for 3yrs. This is not my fault. Under this circumstances would you consider that as second home. I certainly do not think so

very well thought through, clearly explained and a fair solution

To drive away second home owners and provide regular income (rather than the more transient tourist income) to local businesses and the community is, in my view economic suicide for the region, especially in these economic conditions.

Increasing Council tax on 2nd and Empty home is unfair - a punitive _tax_ on those whose use of services is low. Another tax on those who work hard. If this comes in I will stop spending locally on groceries, clothes and services to the value of the 10% and will stop supporting local business with my custom which I have made an effect to do.

*Q9 It will be a foregone conclusion I am sure.*

Just because I'm in receipt of housing and council tax benefits doesn't make me bias. I just think changes out of the blue???? make any individual to suddenly have to find a regular amount of cash to make up any shortfall that may of been caused. *Questions C,D and E added comment. Just reduced slightly*
you should not have to pay if you are on any benefits.

As with any such tax or tariff payers should contribute only in proportion to services received. We only use on benefit from a very small fraction of SLDC services. proposed scheme would take advantage of a vulnerable group having no representation on SLDC but who contribute substantially to SLD economies, including there on ?? incomes and council decision-makers. Be fair.

Than they receive back in services at 90% level. To ask for more is an easy option on a soft target! Put the necessary work into chasing those that do not pay at all in order to increase revenue.

My husband has vascular dementia, so under our 1st home regulations we get council tax cut in half. Does this apply to SLDC

We have become a part of our community and purchased the property because of our love of the lakes. We do not use as many of the council facilities as permanent residents so why should we pay the same

*I am sure you have made up your mind and are only doing this so you can tick the 'consultation' box.
The Lake District economy relies heavily on tourism. Many tourists rent 'second homes' and come to spend money in the Lakes. Where would that industry be without such second home owners as Beatrix Potter, Ruskin, etc.?*

Q1 I have answered but with reservations. If these empty properties are just left to rot definitely charge the owners but if the owner is trying to put it into a habitable state & progressing towards using the property then the charge should not be until house is habitable.

Second homes bring _much needed_ cash into Grange-over-Sands, with its aging population. _Do not drive us away._ We neither need nor use a lot of council services. 90% of Council Tax is excessive. The original 75% was about right

No Comments

Look after the vulnerable

Hopefully some people will be forced to sell "holiday" homes used twice a year and councils can buy back a stock of council houses for people who are in desperate need.

*Q2) Not sure that I understand Q2*

*Q4) Not sure how to answer Q4*

I receive 10% discount on a second home and spend approx. 52 nights there a year but neighbours living alone full time receive 25% discount - why? Perhaps increase second home tax when it is used for rental income only.

On ???, a property is often empty. It could take some time to sort everything out, and those responsible may not have funds.

In this time of recession and young people looking for somewhere to live, it would be good if some of the properties could help to house them.

To preserve communities people on low incomes need to be able to have help to help prevent the horrific outcome of an empty Disneyworld type of place consisting of only holiday homes and no community

* added to question 5 I live in Bolton by Bowland BB7 4NN.

Assuming empty houses are for sale it seems reasonable to give the seller a period of discount while looking for buyer 6mths seems reasonable.

In the current climate of financial hardship if people are trying to sell their properties because they can't afford to keep / maintain them then charging tax adds more hardship. I suggest that if properties are ACTIVELY ON THE MARKET (e.g. on Estate Agents books) you DO NOT charge tax???

n/a

I believe people should be encouraged to use properties - I do not like empty properties + therefore these should be charged to either encourage people to use them / sell them or rent them out. If second home owners have to pay full tax I assume they will also be allowed to vote in local elections - 'NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION'

Not fair I use my home to bring my Dad who is blind and has cancer. Its a retreat.
The S.L.D.C need to weigh up carefully the benefits that second home owners produce for the community, without their spending on local services. Shopkeepers, tradesmen, and tax payments to S.L.D.C itself would suffer. They need to be encouraged not a further target for revenue.

I don't understand the relationship between time a house being empty? Do not make this more complicated than it needs to be. Second home or empty house is the same thing. People who have a 'second home' may have moved away from the area and are simply trying to sell as is my situation.

My wife and I are in our 60's and make no call on ?? or social services in South Lakeland. This should be recognised with a reduced Council Tax. Also we are not allowed to register to vote in SL so can have no influence? at the ballot box.

Should consider reducing (not removing) tax benefits & make up gap with properties being left empty & making no contribution to local economy & community.

I own a flat whilst away in rented sheltered accommodation - this flat is used by family & is my security should anything affect my tenancy in sheltered accommodation e.g. financial failure etc. It is not a source of income.

It is regrettable that you continued to push old central govt. proposals for extra housing given that the acrimonious reactions were a direct result of policies to build too close to schools and on green fields, when 1) existing brown sites could be used, 2) existing houses for sale could be promoted 3) as could existing empty ones.

Whilst agreeing in principal with this proposal it is important to recognise the input into the local economy by second home folk. A balanced society is really what we all seek, protecting the most vulnerable.

We currently pay for refuse collecting (which never happens) street lights (there are some) police patrols, (never seen one, ?lawn? maintenance (none has happened in decades) etc. We do however shop, eat and otherwise contribute to the local economy.

Reason for holiday home ownership could be for personal / medical reasons.

I strongly agree with stopping the 10% discount on second homes. People with them should pay full rate council tax or rent them to struggling young family's like mine...

People that have holiday homes their is one next to me and is never empty all year round should pay a lot more tax

I have before been the victim of the government removal of business rates exemption on empty property. Only the very smallest proportion of property owners unwillingly leave a property empty and unfurnished. Some properties are difficult to rent - do not punish the poor owners of them by rubbing salt in the wound.

1) See answer to Q2 above
2) This is an easy option for the council and grossly unfair to second home owners who bring a considerable amount of revenue to the region
3) Any savings should be spread
4) Tighter restrictions on benefit seekers required and should only be available to the very vulnerable.

An unintended consequence may be second-home owners leaving their property "empty" thereby paying no council tax & the net gain to the council being zero or less. Tourism brings a lot to the local economy. Other areas of the country have a 50% reduction not 10%

We choose to buy a second home so pay council tax to 2 local government offices / areas. 10% saving we get at the moment could be put to better use, but we should not be penalised by having a second home and making an income from it. This will only lead to empty properties and people will not pay higher rent to stay in the area.

I realise there are real problems - so encourage people to let / sell houses of they are empty permanently - at the market price. We don't use half of the council services but regularly shop, use local firms for maintenance etc. and spend our money in the local area.

Why give 25% discount for single occupancy for a full year when 2nd homes might only be occupied for a few months? This seems a contradiction as 2nd home owners use far less resources than permanent resident thus saving the council money!

As a second home owner I benefit the local economy, but I make very limited use of SLDC services, and get
no vote. It’s already completely illogical that a house with one occupant gets a 25% discount, but a house with none gets only 10%.

There should not be any properties empty excluding where someone has passed away.
Second home should only be, statics, lodges etc. Others let for local occupancy.

Why should the people of South Lakeland ‘prop-up’ financially the folks that own these second homes, they don’t seem to bring much financial gain to shops & services.

You have not presented any options for cost reduction / scaling down of services - you stated reason that this would affect the ‘greatest number of people’ implies that you cannot contemplate efficiency improvements which are not the same as cuts. Options c,d+e above should have reduced discounts e.g. Down to 10% but not removed totally - because they are not consuming all services + associated costs.

re Q1 c-f depends entirely on reasons for property being empty. If “intentionally empty” by all means stop discounts & levy extra taxes but if desperately trying to sell & can’t find buyer then discounts seem appropriate.

Without 2nd home owners spending powers, local business would suffer especially out of season. Instead of taking easy option councillors should devise ways of raising money. A Lakeland lottery, make land available for building with ?proviso? for funding projects from builders + more rates. DO AS PRIVATE SECTOR DOES AND WORK AT IT!

As a long standing ‘second home’ owner I have seen council tax increased from a 50% discount to a proposed zero discount. I have to pay council tax elsewhere do not benefit from the full facilities in either.

We feel we are being penalised because we do not use 100% of the services provided by the council tax as it is not occupied all the time.
We think it is ?? unfair and is theft!

Letter attached passed to Councillor Evans

Be careful not to " Kill the goose that lays the golden egg ". As a " second " { used to be my main } home owner in South Lakeland - moved because of employment - I am aware that so called second homes can be owned in many beautiful places. Not all of these places are removing the discount. I live 2-3 days / week in Newby Bridge, shop in Ulverston, purchase cars - Lakeland etc. All could go elsewhere.

As someone living in close proximity to not only a second home but a third home. I am convinced that such people can afford to pay the full council, and have no hesitation in supporting the proposal to use this income to fund the reduced grant from central Government, so that it continues to assist those who have worked tremendously hard always, and find themselves in desperate circumstances.

I have put a lot into the community over the last 40 years. this was the home on which I paid my mortgage - I lived with my mother to work until her death, in my case I do not consider 10% unrealistic for single occupancy but have to agree to the general good.

We have owned our holiday home for 20yrs. we visit regularly & when we do we buy everything locally as a policy. This includes food, furniture, garden plants & equipment. we purchase milk from our milkman. we are currently refurbished the property with local companies even though we could source it elsewhere & save considerable sums. we suspect that many other second home owners will feel the same as we do & will feel much less committed to supporting local businesses. we shall recoup our loses.

You want tourism, And the money it brings into the local economy, But if you keep squeezing second home owners then they will stay away / sell up.

This does not take into account those properties which were subject to flooding two years ago; which have since remained unfurnished and consequently unoccupied and which are currently on the market for sale.

Don’t like it, but in government I would have to do what you propose - If you can afford a second home, then additional council tax of under £200pa will not materially affect you.

It is extremely unfair to penalise owners of empty properties, particularly the suggestion of a 150% charge
on those empty for over 2 years, as these properties are empty because of the current housing market and owners are already having to pay for accommodation + bills at an additional property as well as the empty one.

I feel that to penalise 2nd home owners who spend their income in the Lake District is short sighted and more effort should be made to control council overheads to meet the new Central Government support.

Making empty homes more expensive by increasing council tax is a good idea
We are second home owners and just want what is fair - This proposal will share the load.

There are lots of people that need homes and we are in a rural area and houses are used for holiday homes. And the poor cannot afford houses and have lived here all there lives
I receive State Pension ?credit?. I do not know how I might be affected under the National Assessment Scheme. The words "are likely to be very similar" are meaningless.

Second home owners pay 90% currently & this gives a substantial income to the council; we do not use several facilities, including education. We want our payments to help maintain the current standards.

The definition of a second home should be when it is finished and 'signed off ' by your building control. Ours is classed by you as a second home but is still under construction. * Added for Question 5 when building it and an arrow pointing to the postcode LA5 0ED *

If the holiday (second) Home is ?huge? and cant be justified by the size of the family, or it is _let_ as a Holiday Home, then yes charge but if only used as a Retreat; then you’d stop city folk having there hol’s here and let’s face it THEY DO SPEND MONEY HERE, good for Businesses

Empty homes should be put to use and by making owners pay the tax would encourage this, Having to put up with the hideous new building behind my property* should justify a further reduction not an increase

*55 kirkbarrow Kendal

3 new houses, a small holiday home, has belonged to 2 families since 1953. the family members are prepared to work hard to look after it pay the bills so the great grandchildren have a week or two per year to enjoy the Lake District. we’re happy to pay our council tax especially at present, not to say we haven’t appreciated our discounts in the past.

Properties unliveable but ?being? made ready to renovate so that they can be lived in should still be given maximum discount to allow the work to be done.

We do not object to the use of the currant 90% income from 2nd homes being used but strongly object to it being increased further.2nd home owners do not use many local facilities(schools etc.) but provide an important source of income to shops, restaurants etc.

Houses may be left empty for many reasons - e.g.
- Job moves with attendant difficulties in selling.
- Relocation but uncertain about whether it will work out.
- To house a future employee but not sure when.
- Waiting to be able to afford renovation.

It is grossly unfair to penalise people who may already be struggling financially.

It strikes me as a lazy cop out simply to take away the discount for 2nd homes when other councils are examining changes to C.T. support for ‘undeserving’ cases.

In your proposals c)d & e) you only suggest that discounts be _stopped_. This would be seen as ‘trigger happy’ when careful consideration is needed to make fair changes

I totally agree that 2nd home owners in Cumbria, should be the main target to alter council tax there are plenty of option to stop properties remaining empty.

Second home owners support local tax on a net basis to a higher proportion than others, they do not take from local government services such as health, schools, higher education or adult education. Second home owners are supportive of local industry,(builders, plumbers??? etc.) and hospitality business. And should not be seen as a easy target to solve funding problems.

I use a mobility scooter and find it increasingly difficult to use broken and badly maintained pavements, now spending more on taxis as I can’t use a bus. I used to go to Kendal on a scooter. Suffer from ??? ???? osteoarthritis.
In many cases second homes deprive young married couples from affording a home, many second homes remain empty for long periods of time and contribute very little towards the economy of the area. *added to question 8 Recent problem walking long distance*

If people are actively trying to sell empty properties, they should not be penalised. If properties are just standing empty and are not for sale, the owners should be penalised. This comment is made with regard to the Councils 'under consideration' and 'not under consideration' proposals.

If you can afford to have a second home you can afford to pay your whack.

*Added to question 1D maybe a cut to 20%*

I was very surprised when your staff, classed my Studio as a second home, because the power supply and water supply is attached to the main house of Rosthwaite. I did expect the council tax to increase, but not classed as separate. One of the conditions of planning was that it could not be sold as a separate entity. the main house and studio could only be sold together. it is not a second home.

*Q4 second home: "Or your staff said it was."*

Second home owners use less of the resources used by main residents and already pay full council tax elswere.2nd home owners use less of the facilities such as schools, libraries, roads etc.

Properties which are empty or second homes do not require the same amount of council services and should not pay the same amount as residents who do.

We do not have large houses, as second home owners are always assumed to have. We choose to live in a small flat near work, and have a cottage where we prefer to be, we look after the property and take an active part in the community, so it seems unfair for it just to be assumed that all second home owners are rich people who rarely visit their second homes, our council tax in London is huge - but because we are not always there, we are already paying for services that we often do not use - e.g. bin collections.

Owners of empty properties shouldn't be penalised for non occupancy up to a reasonable point.

Would suggest 50% levy _after_ 2 years. This would probably be a sufficient catalyst to encourage a decision on the property's future e.g. sell, rent, occupy by owner.

Your letter states that "the Government has also said that pensioners must not be affected by the changes". Given that we are second home owners (a v. small cottage) AND pensioners, it will be difficult to reconcile the above policy with increase in Council Tax.

These proposals are _excellent_ should have been introduced long before now, and should help to solve many long term issues prevalent in the Lake District!

As second home owners who rent our property to holiday makers for half of the year we feel that this brings huge amount of business to the restaurants and leisure/ tourist attractions, and we, and the people who rent off us, make good use of the local businesses. removing our discount would make us consider whether to keep a holiday home in Cumbria.

I think that people who have a second home. should pay full council tax on both properties irrespective of a property empty.

it isn't clear from your blurb whether pensioners get special treatment (i.e. retain second - home benefit), in line with your ' background ' Para 3, last sentence.

* added from question 4 a pensioner with a second home *

I have some concern about penalizing people who are genuinely trying to sell a property THAT THEY THEMSELVES HAVE LIVED IN because they have moved in the present property market. I have no such compunction about increasing charges for those trying to maximize or seek unrealistic prices for inherited or investment properties. I know from bitter experience the financial hardship involved in paying for power, water, insurance, mortgage on two properties without adding the additional burden of council tax.

If these measures result in the reduction in the number of second and empty homes would SLDC revise its, to my mind absurdly high, claims for the need for additional homes under the Local Plan ?

This is a sensible and fair move. I agree with you.

Tourism is the key industry in Lakeland. Second homes enable tourists to visit without having to pay the very high hotel rates.

In our case the property concerned was bought so our grandmother (who died this year aged 91) could be
cared for by our family rather than using "Care or Residential or Nursing Home" facilities. These costs were born by us. This flat is only available for +55 age groups and is NOT a second home for us why should we be penalized for caring for the aged. There are restrictions on who can occupy the properties.

10% reduction in Council Tax is a welcome but small saving for second home owners (it was formerly 50%) who upgrade local property using local expertise. The old argument of inflating property prices & therefore affecting local residents is not relevant now in the very poor market.

I understood that council tax was the means of financing local services not all of which are used by every householder, Nor in equal proportions. Inevitably some households benefit from a wide range of services, Whilst others use fewer of these services. The existing discount recognises this. Council Tax is not an alternative form of social security.

How about reviewing all your operating costs. Employment levels and all benefits. Just like we in the private sector have to do. Tax the financially secure people, Never ask how much they contribute to your local economy!! You take the easy route every time.

The Lake District has a large number of 2nd homes - which are used occasionally - Would it be possible to reduce the discount to 5% rather than the current 10%?

I am working with SLDC to try & renovate the house to bring it back into the community.

*Q4 empty home: Who is struggling to maintain the mortgage, renovate it and move to the area permanently. Any additional charge would cause me to default on the mortgage.*

Second home owners are frequently demonised in the press and by MPs such as Mr Fallon. SLDC should realise that if they all sold up, the economy of the South Lakes would be affected detrimentally. I agree with increasing costs to those who have properties and leave them vacant for prolonged periods, especially where those properties are not designated holiday homes and could be occupied full time by a local. I do not agree where the holiday home designation prevents the home from being occupied full time and where it is not rented out commercially.

You need people with holiday properties to enable people to visit + spend money in Cumbria or the economy will suffer.

* Can't read his Email address *

Second homes only have 10% reduction in charges ?alternatively? only used 30-40% of time. We are overpaying.

The majority of second homes have been purchased to provide retirement homes when people retire. Funding should be raised on empty properties were owners are leaving them empty until market prices improve.

My own 2nd home enables me to tend the needs of a disabled elderly mother whom is now requiring more care due to several illnesses rendering her virtually housebound. I take great exception to this proposal & feel that other savings from efficiency improvements should be sought to satisfy this shortfall, All the rhetoric in the press & in council assumes all 2nd home owners to be extremely wealthy - this is not always the case. Having been brought up in the area I like to maintain my association with the area friends & family whilst contributing to the local economy - this is a poorly thought out initiative.

* Added from question 4 has scribbled benefit out and put discount for second home *

Council should look for greater efficiency in delivery of services & more diligent scrutiny of those is receipt of benefits.

( Responding as married couple - Joint owners )

Many properties are empty for a reason e.g. Death, people having to go into care etc., I do not think it's fair to charge vulnerable people or their families under such circumstances.

Average working families and children, low income groups etc... should have some relief from the increasing amount empty homes, holiday lets and second home owners that presently gain discount.

All council services need funding all year round, villages survive because people live in them. I'm glad this issue is being addressed, kind regards, non home owner / nearly homeless working family, south Lakeland.

PS. Please can the banding values be addressed, the lower bands don't seem to apply to any properties for sale in any estate agents in the south Lakeland region.
The above is appropriate as long as its coupled with a reduction in council overheads before services which are required for those in real need get adjusted. Those who can afford a second home empty for more than 6 months should pay full tax.

We appreciate the councils efforts to keep council tax benefits in place. As disabled pensioners, on very low income, the benefit is of great help to us.

If people can afford a second home then they should pay full 100% council tax for it - as they are getting the same facilities as everyone else.

Reduce the amount of empty properties which are about. Encourage them to reduce the rent on empty properties so people can afford to rent them.

People with a second home should definitely not get any discount when many of us are struggling with one home!

1. SLDC should aim to increase efficiency annually and explain why it has failed to do so.
2. SLDC needs to provide annual AUDIT REPORTS outlining plans to increase efficiency and explaining any failures to do so.
3. A proper evaluation needs more information on the costs of the option outlined in this consultation.

If empty properties are up for sale at a reasonable market price but not selling because of the economic crisis, perhaps the charge (council tax) could be negotiated for a limited period - then the price dropped.

I am completely satisfied that, from what I have read, SLDC have their priorities straight over this matter.

Long overdue. 2nd homes should attract higher charges, encouraging their sale and so reducing need for new building

With family roots in the county one buys land, builds a property and encourages one’s family to visit, spend time & money in the district and maintain a connection with an area we love. We have not reduced the housing stock, we have increased it. We put more in Cumbria than we take out. Why should we be punished for doing that?

Most second property owners I know in my area also have their primary home in the area i.e. second homes used for tourism - therefore all these bring in money to the region due to tourism.

6 months is not very long for a private landlord to refurbish a property which has been mistreated by tenants. We have day jobs too!

No

We are concerned over the basic cost of living now which drains finances already

I am the owner of an empty house(inherited property)which I have been actively trying to sell for 15mths. This is suitable for a first time buyer the price is £120,000 realistic but until first time buyers can access mortgages I cannot sell the property I should not be charged extra tax for a situation I have no control over. It was previously up for sale for a year & with no buyers. I rented it out through an agent for 2yrs tenants left it in such disrepair I will never rent it out again. I am faced with a situation, not of my making, that I can do nothing about.

*I have no wish to be a second home or empty house owner. Owning this house is causing me expenditure I cannot afford. I WANT TO SELL IT ASAP. You need to be looking at ways to get first time buyers buying!

None

People who own second homes bring money into the area especially when friends & family also holiday in the house. Many second homes are in properties which might well otherwise be empty because of their location & the difficulty of finding work in the remoter areas.

Councils should stop demonising 2nd home owners we are investors in the local community. We can’t afford to pay for council services not used.
"incapacity"

Currently landlords are sitting on empty property awaiting market improvement to secure profits. This should be penalised.

The Central Government is endeavouring to eliminate wastage and past poor decisions on a permanent basis. You are not doing this! Why? Votes are local. Tourism is distant.

The discount used to be 50% or 25%, then it was cut to 10% which is probably fairer but 100% will prompt possible 2nd home owners to sell + in this economic climate houses could be empty for a long time - meaning no Council Tax income for Council!

Since we’d pay 100% (seems fair) then discontinue the term “second” home.

By charging owners of properties that have lain empty for > 2 years they might be more inclined to look at alternative use or sale to someone who needs it. Second home owners bring investment/cash into the county, maintaining tourist business. Increasing their council tax will impact on property prices & reduce interest and appeal in the area.

In future Lakeland Council will suffer due to paying TAX twice as five for years may receive here & have all benefits.

I have answered c & d as neither/nor because when my mother died - it was the last recession time - I was renting and in financial difficulties - couldn’t sell her bungalow easily - but I had no money to pay rates. In this type of case the discounts were a life saver for me.

The decision on Council Tax discounts on empty properties should take into account the reasons for them being empty. If someone is in care elsewhere due to health problems they should not be penalised. If they are 2nd homes they should not have large discounts if they are empty several months of the year or standing empty for any length of time.

Please bear in mind that second home owners:
- Already pay 100% Council Tax on another property
- Are ? tax payers
- Generally have a lower call on local authority facilities/amenities etc. than "only" home.

Our Parent have recently moved into care. As a result the property is currently on the market

* Depends on reason for it being empty*
* Unless good reason for being empty*
* Adding to my arrows above! - habitable houses should NOT stand empty but sometimes they are being renovated - this may take time as money becomes available & an additional financial burden may lengthen that time. One size does not fit all!

Invest + pursue false claimants. Far too many people are given the benefit due to fraud. That would save you far more in the long term.

See above

I am 85 years old if I live to 2013 we live on state pension

The old system of rates was maybe a better system, /everyone should be calculated on their earned income and circumstances and what they own or rent.

As above second home owners contribute a lot of money to areas particularly ?rural? which do not have the infrastructure or local economy to survive in the present economic climate?

We spend locally to our home in Arnside and in the South Cumbrian area generally - however we very rarely use local services i.e. refuse collection etc. most of which we take back to Manchester. We think we are contributing more than enough already.

those who are lucky enough to own a second home should also be prepared to support their upkeep without official government support.

Increased taxation of second homes will tend to reduce the value of most of the housing stock in the area to the detriment of most home owners

N/A
I already pay Council Tax on my home. This was my husbands own home. I could not afford to pay full tax on my pension.

Why not look at rates of pay for all council officials earning over 50K and value to the business. When were last job evaluations done? Look at mileage rates for owner drivers.

If a person owns 2 homes they can only use on lot of services in one place at any one time. Why should they have to pay 2 x council tax in 2 different places? There must be other ways of funding.

Why is the house sometimes empty? A family house should be willed to family members. If sold capital gains tax very near 40% of the capital value is charged then but on death 40% is charged again on what is left. So about 64% of the value is taken by tax. Meantime family extended family & friends can use it for holidays or peace & quiet to study. When I grew up in it baker, butcher, fruit groceries bakery van but no longer. | That is why getting old I no longer live in it.

Second homes should not have any priority over low income people living in their own homes.

Owners of second homes do not use services provided by the local authority to the same extent as residents. We place less demand on the police, fire education, refuse and other services. We generally pay Council Tax in two or more Local Authority areas. We are net contributors and we do not place a financial demand on the Local Authority.

Sometimes properties become empty through the death of a resident. Then the family have a great deal to sort out. Perhaps then 6 months grace can be allowed.

None

A property may be empty for a few months because he buyer has difficulty in selling his own property. That is not the fault of the present owner of the property. In times of difficulty we all have to share the burden and economise as we did in the war. Yet the "Daily Telegraph" for 29/8/2012 says the Boston (Lincs) Borough councillors are awarding themselves a 28% increase in allowances, and North Hertfordshire 18% increase.

What are you in South Lakeland District Council doing?

Some second homes - see above - are unable to be sold due to the economy + old people like me are paying for nothing. (There is no return for our money)

(Aged 84 years)

I don't have any strong views, although second homes are a continuous issue, they generally don't use all the services on a day to day basis and therefore the 10% discount seems acceptable.
Above all, a good, fair service is what is needed. Good luck.

Why not drive away all second home owners & tourists, as you did with the speed limit on Lake Windermere, I feel sure the local businesses are reaping the benefits now? - Ask them! hard working people with surplus income feed your area, it's called tourism!

It is for sure that people who have second homes for there own use have a lower demand on council services and expenditure than residents. For example education nil and very little demand for most of the other ?common? expenditure. This should be reflected in what the council charge but at 90% it does not - it should be more like 40%. The community gain from second homes as they bring funds into the area to shops, restaurants, pubs, garages, builders, property maintainers - they are customers of the community so you should treat them fairly.

& Thank you for giving me an opportunity to have my say. Regards

South Lakeland businesses earn a lot of money (and taxes) from people who holiday, bring friends who spend money etc. If the area wants to develop and attract more tourists who spend to help economy and provide jobs it needs to stop ‘threatening’ 2nd home owners, what about saving money at SLDC by eliminating waste?

At some point, as we try to begin to rebalance our economy it will have to be accepted that councils cannot continue to load charges onto those who do not use them indefinitely. SLDC should be looking, first, at it’s own costs. Most homeowners like us bring a considerable gain to the area economically as consumers yet use fewer services, it is easy for the majority to favour this but that will not be sustainable indefinitely.

I would like to rent out my property on long term rent. But the property requires some renovation /
improvements. These have all been blocked by the Planning Dept., to make it suitable to rent out. Now I'm at an impasse.

To further penalise second home owners is to threaten the very lifeblood of tourism in Cumbria. Which could result is owners selling up and investing in other areas.

Q1) a,b,c reduce the percentages.
I am happy to note in the section "background" paragraph 3, pensioners on pension credit should not be affected.

Ref to points:
C & D - Properties can easily be empty / up for sale for long periods through no fault of the owners / vender e.g. needing refurbishment or house market is very slow.
F - It's one thing to consider removing discounts but to have an additional charge is indefensible. This needs more thought.

For questions C,D,E & F I think that a lot depends on the circumstances as to why the property is empty e.g. is it up for sale?

If houses are empty the services provided by the council are not being used. Second home owners do not use facilities all the time - e.g. waste collection, If all the 2nd home owners decided to sell, the shops, tradesmen etc. would certainly suffer. It is not a shortage of houses for local people which is the problem - it is the lack of employment. If 100% council tax is charged to them, the single persons discount of 25% should be given where appropriate.

As a second home owner who uses the property 50 days per year I do not make a proportionate demand on the services provided by your authority.

We are a housing association in providing housing for needy, elderly people. We try to fill vacancies as quickly as possible but sometimes it is not easy. If we are penalised for empty flats then it affects our general finances and those that we are trying to help are the ones who eventually have to pay. Housing associations that are registered charities (as we are) should not be penalised. If anything they should be given better relief.

Apply savings at council offices. Funded meals and tea breaks should be reviewed.

At this time of fiscal restraint, the council has to be more aware of people who are having difficulties so the better off should contribute the same as a local person with one home.

People with second homes or any other persons who have their houses currently up for sale should be exempt from any council tax discount removal or discounts. Other alternatives should be sought such as families with children who at least have a choice not to have any more children than they can afford & who already receive child benefit.

Our second home is used less than 3 months each year, so we feel that we are already contributing enough at 90% per year.

Examples of possible reduced costs:-
1.) Mobile library is unnecessary given kindles and amazon.
2.) Free benefits for O.A.P who are well off is unfair e.g. computer use in the library.

Is there not a law that empty properties should be sold or rented
We do not use bin collection service our property our LA5 0DQ is on unmade, un-adopted road.
We occupy the property on about 40 days per year I am happy with the 10% reduction for second homes.
I live alone, work 3 days per week and only get a reduction of 25% for being single. After i have paid £79.00 per month i am on the breadline.

2nd home owners bring much income to local economy - traders - shops etc. yet few services offered by SLDC.
Motorists & 2nd home owners seem to view as cash cows to be milked. - SLDC should cut their staff within ?? 1990 levels.

*Q5 Permanent residence Chevychase Mid USA*

Item d) perhaps at tax of 10% should be imposed. there are many reasons for a property being temporarily
empty. Conversion, refurbish, etc. A 10% would encourage owners to complete.

Answers c) d) Maybe the property is 'For Sale'

Your proposals a very intelligent & equitable response to a very unreasonable set of requirements from central government.

*Q4 Receiving single person discount*

Attention should be paid to any difficult / special cases.

The way to get long term empty properties back into use is not to penalise the owners, many of whom have little free cash, but to grant aid to them with help to get the properties back into the housing stock.

In respect of (a)above, I think the council should also share in the pain rather than push the whole burden on to second home owners who, already, are paying the full cost of services seldom used.

Council tax is to fund the cost of maintaining the costs of the community. It is only equitable that second home owners, who spend less than 100% of their time in the community, should only pay less than 100% of the council tax liability.

Do hope I understood the questions

Support removing council tax for properties which are not used/empty.

Q1) It would be more useful to find other ways of increasing revenue, perhaps get owners of empty homes to sell them - charging extra tax on property which owners might like to get rid of doesn't seem helpful in current climate.

You will never get rid of 2nd homes - but it will be wrong for an area to have its budgets reduced (grants) any funds from 2nd homes are a subsidy to the area - they don't use local facilities & bring trade to tourism / business's - Perhaps it could be used to fund more local affordable housing of business schemes

Removing the second home discount is incompatible with the governments statement that pensioners should not be affected by changes. Many second home owners are pensioners on fixed income. Leaving them with less to spend means less will be spent on buying food, eating out and visiting attractions, which will be bad for local businesses.

I apologise for not being very helpful there seems to me that you have a difficult problem to solve. I do not own a second home but rent from 'Grilling' housing association.

Reducing the discount for empty properties would need to be made subject to some exemptions, where, for example, the householder is unable to reside in the property for a specific reason - illness etc.

I think it all depends on the real reason why the house is empty, but i suppose that's impractical.

It would be better to reduce discounts for empty properties, as this would be an incentive for owners to either sell, let or live in the property, + may help alleviate the problems with lack of affordable housing.

At the moment we are ?currently? paying heavily for services we do not use for a lot of the time. Another 10% could tip the balance - it would be just too much.

As we would be contributing 100% we would expect to be able to vote in _local_ elections (not parliamentary).

In the case of discount for properties that have been empty for less than six months, the discount should be removed with the caveat that discretionary relief can be applied for e.g. in the case of probate.

Perhaps property empty but being renovated should still get 50% discount.

Second home owners are not all rich. In our case we invested a small inheritance in a property to provide security for our grand children’s future. we are both pensioners with no other source of income and an increase in council Tax will be very difficult for us.

People who are healthy not disabled or elderly should be assessed - it is their life style choice that has put them on benefit that we have to pay? for example is someone is a single parent with x children & does not go to work should i be paying for them to be stay at home mothers? I think its disgusting to charge genuine none users full rate for services that you know they are not using.

Such a shame that homeowners will be asked to pay 100% twice, despite only being able to access services in one place at a time. If all discounts are removed the property market will stagnate as people will not be
able to afford to bridge a move.

The current market for residential property and poor loan availability from the banks is already affecting the district. Many vacant properties which will in time affect the costs of occupation and prices. These measures on vacant properties will be counter productive.

I have a second home which I inherited. I use it regularly, yet do not use many local services for which I am paying. I use it for holidays, and thereby support the local economy, and use it as a base to support family living in the area.

*Q4 SERVING soldier BASED in Germany with 1 home in Kendal*

We are grateful for the help in council tax benefit through a difficult time.

Second homers can not vote and have no current voice. We need to be represented at SLDC & local councils. We are not evil social pariahs. for most, like us ,this is a stepping stone to living in the Lake District. I would love to do it now but the nearest job like mine is Preston. We put a lot into the local community by spending on leisure activities and renovating our homes that generally are kept in a high standard. We have spent £30,000 in 150 local businesses in the last 18 months. Valuable local money & yet we own a small flat. Stop dissing us treat us as equals and i will be pleased to pay 100%.

Second home discount should be increased by up to 40%

2nd home owners are easy and fashionable targets for taxation. I would prefer to have more say in its redistribution particular since my own town of Sedburgh has local projects in desperate need of funds. (tourist information, car parking and community hall refurbishment.) But i have no voice.

This form has no new ideas to seek our opinion on or asks for any new ideas i therefore do not see the purpose as we are not having any say - on c/tax a single persons discount should be 50% not 25%.

Second home owners generally make less use of council services. I agree that the number of second homes needs to be monitored and kept under a certain level.

Those properties left empty for 6 months plus should have discounts stopped. this may free up properties for rent etc. for local people.

We use our second home quite regularly as do our family. We belong to a local sailing club and shop for our stay locally and frequent the cinema restaurants and purchase locally. We would seriously think about the additional cost.

Do you give relief for senior citizens? A lot of people with second homes are senior citizens + we are being squeezed the most from all sides, from the banks, from government, everybody. Our income is decreasing + our expenses are increasing all the time.

under d) Given the time taken to complete on a sale of a property 50% for between the 6 months & a year would be fair.

Council tax benefit, or council tax support should be reserved for people on a low income. People who have never worked should not receive it if they refuse to work.

Even though second home owners use less resources than primary home owners they should contribute.

See comment above.

I imagine the decision as already been made and that this is a paper exercise.

I think the modest discount of 10% fairly reflects that our use of SLDC services.

If people are rich enough to have a second home, they should be able to pay the cost of Council Tax..

The statements seem to penalise second home and empty property owners unfairly when a wider approach to sharing the pain might be more acceptable and less divisive. Other LAs seem to be making more efficiency savings, increasing charges, reducing staffing levels and down-sizing services but none of these are put forward for consideration. The pre-occupation with removing discounts from this small community does not explore the options and does not provide a serious attempt at consultation and leaves the question of justification for the various measures largely unanswered.

You should put a small tourism tax on all visitors in order to ensure fairness across all sectors of society who use the Lake District.
Local Government should have more income from local tax
Central " " reduce control of " "
council taxation of local buildings and people should be easy to understand. Be income / wealth related : no benefits / reduction red.

I lived for 48 yrs. in my previous home. For 26 yrs. the house next door was vacant, causing damage to my home. no one could help, if rates had been paid the owner would have got rid of the property.

the increase should be paid by all. This would make the extra council tax a very small amount to all home owners. To fund this extra council tax from second home owners would mean we and others would not be able to use our second home as often. Therefore not using restraints or spending in the area which will effect the economy. Shops are closing in Bowness and standing empty in other areas of the Lake District.

As a 2nd home owner I have no role in SLDC, It is a basic proposition in a democracy that taxation should have representation. This move is profoundly undemocratic and serves only to further undermine confidence in the political process.

I have a second home for personal use and not for renting out to create ?additional? income for myself. I'd be happy to pay the full council tax but should people who pay the full tax be able vote in local elections? As a single person household would I be eligible for discount?!!!

If a property is being renovated for re-let, more than 6 months grace is needed if planning permission for the work is needed.

Most second home owners can afford a 10% increase but it is not rational to continue to discount empty properties as generously as at present.

I feel that genuine second homes when used as such benefit the local economy. I should be extremely concerned should there even be a suggestion of an additional council tax charge on second homes.

Removal of 10% discount is illogical as second home owners use less than 90% of council’s services.

In Brayton in Furness last weekend one of the local shop keepers said it was only the second homers that are keeping his shop going. Many second homers are retired and council tax has become an increasing past of their outlay; they can choose under the proposals to reduce it by emptying the property and attempting to sell it. Whilst the property is empty they will not stay in it and contribute to the local economy. By deterring second homers the Lakes lose a very good deal - in my case 90% council tax (even though I am single 75% payable if I stay there full time, so I pay 20% more) - and no schools to pay for bins rarely need emptying, no hospital usage, less road usage. Thus is a very short-sighted policy, at a time when everyone wants value for money.

Council Tax should be reduced by cutting the high salaries of chief executives and other highly-paid individuals. There should be a much smaller gap between the salaries of the lowest and highest paid employees.

You can do what you like as long as I still get full benefit as a severely disabled person.

Even though I am a second home owner I feel the proposal to remove the 10% discount is the fairest when considering the entire population covered. I would not support any subsequent increase in the level of council tax for second home owners. If there should be a short fall in future this should be covered by one of the other options.

i think these are admirable proposals and i support them wholeheartedly.

Having requested the figure for income received from 2nd home owners I am aware that it just about fits the gap left by the withdraw funding. However I won't vote purely because it is Turkeys & Christmas but I’m also not against. Though over ‘multiple’ property owners should also not be eligible for discounts in whatever form as that may be.

By bringing back into use empty houses this has the benefits of
1. Raising CT & Revenue
2. Reducing demand for Revenue
3. Removes pressure on green site

look at Housing Act EMO's

Second home owners should not be penalised. To support others. They already spend money in the area
supporting local businesses.

If second home owners pay full council tax, They should be able to be registered to vote in local elections etc.

Don’t have an issue with paying the Council Tax - that’s only fair. What I do have a problem with though is the fact that I don’t have a SAY on HOW that tax is SPENT - IE no vote. It’s always easy to spend money, especially if it’s someone else’s & not your own! (Some people don’t pay any tax but still get a vote).

Why do single person households not receive a 50% reduction in council (rather than 25%)? After all, they are exactly 50% (Half) of a "Normal" Two - person household (Even less if children are taken into account) and "use" only half a " normal " households services.

Wouldn’t object to 100% tax if facilities of use to tourists were still in place e.g. public conveniences & street lightning in the area needs improving. Also consider many people with second home are pensioners.

The CAB service appreciates the efforts of SLDC to mitigate the effects of the economic downturn on the poorest in the community.

It is not a second home. I occupy it. I should get the single person’s discount for the upstairs as well as the downstairs. I am 78, a single parent (grandparent) may appear to be asset - rich but am income poor.

Why can’t you give free car parking passes / permits to SLDC council tax payers giving access to SLDC car parks?

The only regular service i consume is the rubbish collection service. Schools, libraries, leisure centres, day centres etc. are used from my main home.

If the second home is used as a business - No Discount should be made.
If the second home is only used by family & friends occasionally, Discount should be allowed.

As contained in 3 above

There is no proposal for checking that benefits being paid are in fact necessary. is there provision for this.

Define " EMPTY "

I would in theory agree with (f) but see enforcement being a costly minefield. Is a house with a chair and bed ‘empty’ or just a second home used very occasionally? We have seen how creative MPs have been with getting round housing rules and they aren’t the brightest bunch.

The proposals ignore the fact that people spend their disposable income in different ways and fails to acknowledge that ' second homes ' owners make little, if any demand on council services, especially the costly ones such as education and social services, whilst contributing financially to the local economy. It is arguable that the existing discount is totally inadequate and that at present ' second home ' owners on the incorrect presumption that they are all wealthy, is a crude stereotyping and factually incorrect.

As a pensioner and council tax payer on my own property - I cannot afford to pay a full council tax or more on a property that has been empty for over 2 years. I am also the personal Rep of my late brother and struggling to sell his property due to the state of the depressed housing market.

I agree that properties left for long periods of should not have such a large discount.

Councils need to put their own homes in order before hitting the second home owners again. Not all of us use our properties for financial gain but to enjoy the friendship of people that we have known for many years in the area we lived in permanently for many years. we give employment to our local tradespeople. As a pensioner any increase in council tax, along with increased fuel energy prices & reduced interest on savings is highly detrimental.

1) What about "second homes" let to tourists? 2) What about "second homes" owned by MPs? Blair has 5.
3) We have no doubt at all that "second homes" are anathema to the whole democratic party + have SLDC therefore this "consultation" is as much to do with political opinion than with logic.

*Added from question 8 What relationship has this question to the purpose of the consultation?*

Leave the system alone

The economy is not good enough for you to take more!
2nd homes may be sold with negative impact on local economy.
Cut council spending.
In my opinion this form is probably a waste of time and money, As a council you will do whatever is needed to raise the money you require, To balance your books (It would be interesting to know what this ex cost)
I feel i pay enough for the services i use. I also generate income for local businesses by bringing guests to my second home, Which i do on a regular basis.
I am in receipt of a state pension and am totally reliant on housing and council tax benefit. I have very little money in the bank, most of which goes on fuel bills, T.V licence and food. I live in a very small area of Ambleside which is littered with holiday lets and second homes, These properties push up buying and renting costs beyond the means of local people.
Second home owners should pay extra council tax because they are taking up housing stock which locals could use and they are reducing the amount of money collected and so leaving our council and community poorer.
You should consider how much you would need from empty homes as an alternative. Think of the long term impact of targeting second home owners who may buy elsewhere instead, Particular if other councils do not take this approach.
You are clearly looking for support in your plan to target 2nd home owners - As evidenced by your leading question (Q2).But this group do pay 90% of their council tax and spend in the local shops/cafe etc. Empty property owners on the other hand pay 50% or nothing and probably spend nothing either!
I feel it is impossible to know whether these "empty" properties are actually empty.
If you remove second home owners' reduction there is no need for you to change anything else! Leave the rest? the way they are at the moment!
Some people use their second home for holiday use, any time of the year. They should pay council tax, because they can afford it.
2nd home owners take care of their property and bring to their area business and support to local economy bringing support financially to South Lakeland economy.
I consider that council tax support should only be available to the most serious disadvantaged individuals. In my view it is made available too widely at the moment and should be reduced in scope.
Houses that have been empty for two or more years should be requisitioned by the council, handed over to a housing association who would make it suitable for habitation. The property could be let at current Housing Ass. rents. When the money spent (pays interest) has been re-coupled the property can be returned to the owner who must continue to let the property at housing association other council tax discounts should be reduced.
I do not use many resources that I pay for in council tax as I pay full price elsewhere. E.G. - education. However, I feel I should pay something to the council but not as much as everyone who lives permanently in Lakes.
I have been homeless twice - I am likely to loose my home again if housing benefit/C-T benefit reduced. Second homes currently let out as holiday lettings for more than 56 days should pay business rates + commercial refuse collection owners contribute nothing to the community, don't look after the locality. Visitors rarely recycle, throw away a lot of waste incl. food cause a parking nuisance.
Sooner or later the government will reduce grant support any contingency to provide alternative funding would be wise
As I understand the situation a 2nd home/holiday cottage used as a business pays commercial council tax. What about the privately owned ones whose owners take cash in hand from friends & associates! Why should we have to pay ostensibly full tax for the benefit of the "fat cats".
You assume all 2nd homes are a result of wealth - wrong! Mine was left on the recent death of my wonderful husband - we intended to live there BUT!!! To escape the dreadful loneliness that engulfed me I returned to my job in Herts - probably just for a few years - hence my 2nd home. _Not all situations are the same or obvious_ - I use my 2nd home for between 4-5 months a year, so it is _not_ empty.
People with second homes contribute only 10% less than others that use all SLDC services fully, second home owners do not take advantage of full council services. Buy doing this you will drive people away!!
I am grateful for the reduction in Council Tax I have received on my second home but realise that this cannot continue in the current economic climate.

Target the empty homes - some left purposefully without furniture to avoid paying council tax. Homes left empty - two years and more - trace owners - sell or rent out - part solution to the lack of affordable homes - avoiding town & village sprawl which is destroying what was a lovely part of the country.

As well as providing income, this measure may provide? help to discourage the further ????? of 2nd homes. Homes for sale are empty because of the state of the market

*Q5 Rented house*

As self employed, we have taken many cuts in income amounting to 20% over last 2 yrs. plus inflation. A 5% reduction in salary of local + national government salaries would more than compensate for the many services lost.

Stopping discounts for empty properties may help with the lack of housing in this area as owners of vacant properties may let them out instead of leaving them empty - This is a good thing for locals that are struggling to find housing

There is a major distinction to be made between second homes:

1) 'Second' homes that are let as holiday rentals to the public and bring much needed tourism revenues to the county.
2) Second homes that are solely for the use of the owner and their family and are empty for a large proportion of the year.

This should be reflected in their treatment for Council tax!

It is not acceptable that there is no crematorium facility in South Lakeland District and that residents need to travel to Barrow, Lancaster or Carlisle

Second home owners cannot be in two places at once and they pay Council tax on their main residence. They provide valuable tourism which helps to make South Lakeland the vibrant place it is. We also use local tradesmen for all maintenance & repairs.

As above - surely focussing on empty homes instead of second home owners will bring the required revenue to the council and bring un-used housing stock into valuable use, thus giving much needed value to local economy and local communities. Increased cost of running a second home will have to be passed on to routers, with increased costs deterring trade and thus tourists.

Please could there be put a pedestrian / zebra crossing on Lake Road, Bowness near the NatWest Bank to enable crossing with an elderly person in a wheelchair to be facilitated instead of the current impossible situation?

Generate income by other means, e.g. sponsorship of roundabouts, town signs.

Contribution by big corporations to sponsor services e.g. Rubbish Collection, road Sweeping, re-cycling etc. etc.

*Q1 Appalling theft if adopted*

*Q8 Apart from being taxed to death*

See above Q2

Please stop soaking those who've made the greatest contribution over time. Look within to cover the shortfall

No chance eh!

The council should review its practise for business rates. It is illogical to charge business rates on some properties which are not available for holiday letting but it is something that takes place

Obviously the council has other motives for raising more from 2nd home owners but have not been open about this. There are no costing’s provided for the other options considered so we can't tell if they are viable or not.

For reasons ?stipulated? in Qa, it seems to be that, because I'm hardly a user of local services, I shouldn't have to pay the full amount of council tax.

This proposal unfairly discriminates against occupied homes in South Lakeland. We use local craftsmen & service suppliers to maintain our home, spend our money in local shops when we visit & generally
contribute to the local economy. Empty homes do ?none? of these things.

Should look at properties on there own estate i.e. mansions and properties with 5+ bedrooms, over a certain acreage to increase council tax

I have lived all my life in my ?small? village, up until this year, it has been spoilt by all the 2nd homes, stood empty, spoils the village life, they put nothing into the community - just land ??up? weekends with all the things they need - and the locals suffer.

*Q4 I have 2 property’s I rent out to locals*

The proposals seem very sensible and fair.

Stop giving council tax benefit to the cheats that get it through claiming disability benefit charlatans.

Further to your recent threatening letters you the lousy council, You can also find yourself in court and i don’t mind taking action against you lousy ???? as i know wont send your letters to those that don’t pay council tax and lie about where they live as well as doing things which they shouldn’t do. You the council are the rep that should be proquestet when you low lifted as the same your relives.

We do not rent out our property, If is not a business venture. However people who do have second homes which are rented out should pay the full tax.

Our concern is that we have one home which has 2 council tax bands applied to it, So part of our home is treated as a second home, Although it is part of our only home. (the annexe was built to house an elderly grandparent who has now passed away)

People who are on benefits should take a little bit of the pain like everybody else. it would be good to see their profiles.

We work east and west of the country + have chosen to own two small properties rather than one large property. Have made huge personal sacrifices. We only own one car, do not drink or smoke and pay council tax twice. The councils attitude towards tourism + second home owners is appalling + paying 90% is quite enough. We might sell up - we do not like the idea of a nuclear depository underneath us in any case!!

*Added from Q10) 2 tax payers of 40 years!! + still paying large amounts!!*

Houses should not be left empty when local housing is needed for more than 6mths but holiday cottages provide tourists + bring in money for the economy.

Second homes are not always fully occupied so don’t use full facilities like a full time home does - Make those who get benefits pay some more.

I do feel that the present 10% discount should remain for second home owners, as a token gesture if nothing else. Second home owners do not utilize all the services available, such as education, but they do contribute to the local economy in many ways

Reliance on tourism is not a sustainable way to manage a local area. It is not allowing a wider economic development and support of other clean industries. Allow farmers to manage the land; people to live in houses in which communities they belong; and keep young educated people in the area with attractive business opportunities.

Trustig this has been filled in correctly. Questions seem fair.

*Q1 It should be 50% not 10%*
*Q6,7,8 Not clear why this is relevant*

A consultation process is flawed. The majority of council tax payers are single home owners. They are not likely to support a minority if it could result in higher charges. Our home in the Lake District is to enable us to support our aged parents. It is not a holiday home.

While there is a shortage of homes, property should not stand empty for more than a year, and if tax was is the paid in full, this would encourage the owners to make it available for use, and make a home for people.

Could you please send future correspondence in large print. Thank you.

*Q1 don’t know because I am not aware of reasons the individual application of these decisions*
*Q7 wife also over 80*
*Q8 one artificial hip & two artificial knee joints*

As the property has only been used by my wife and myself and therefore its income has never been derived therefore if family members resident abroad have visited they have found hotel accommodation.
Second homes, holiday lets are making the South lakes into an urban sprawl. people who come on holiday should use hotels and touring caravans, this government Compo, Cleggy, Foggy should take care of old people who have been in the wars, i.e. 2nd world war Falkland’s, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc., (I have not been in a war) Also national services should be brought back!!

Criteria for eligibility should also be critically examined - and amended if sensible.

What’s the point nothing is going to change is it. Rob peter to pay Paul.

I feel that council tax discounts for properties empty for less than six months, should be reduced to 50% from 100%

b)c)d)e) If habitable (i.e. furnished) - otherwise disagree
If properties are on the market in current climate f) is punitive.

Why pick on 2nd home owners, they take little from community, put more in. Don’t use refuse pickup as often, use local facilities less. If someone decides to keep their house empty, what’s it got to do with the council. If i had more protection, I would rent it out, but had fingers burnt by tenants who left property damaged and owing rent.

Why discriminate against people who _work_ (hard.) At 10% discount, there should not be an increase as the residents are not as dependant on services which are paid for by SLDC - in fact, should possibly be paid on pro rata system of when ?in? property for second homes

Second home owners give back to the community many jobs for letting agents, all trades in the building industry, shops & cafes, hotels and leisure.

The property is regularly used by the family my son does ALL his Christmas shopping here and has spent several hundred pounds in "?war?"

Empty homes do not contribute anything to the local economy of the local community so the burden of additional costs / making up the shortfall should be placed on those home owners.

You already completely destroyed the vibrancy of the Lakes area due to the speed limit, revenue must have halved in the area - now you’re wanting to make it less attractive for investors

Would like to see SLDC concentrate on improving facilities for _all_ at GoS Inc sufficient w.c’s, tourist info, sports+leisure e.g. swimming baths.

It doesn’t seem right, that if people choose second homes that others should suffer by cuts in our area. They should foot the bill of full council tax. more so, people who leave properties empty knowing people are desperate for decent homes.

I would suggest that for people like ourselves, the current economic climate is the reason for so many empty homes. We own a house we wish to sell but movement is slow. We are paying Council Tax on this property, which is unused, therefore raising Council Tax would be even more punitive.

Empty home owners, as myself, who can show genuine and realistic efforts to sell an empty property should not be penalised for the poor state of the housing market created by the recession or other forces beyond their control, as these properties receive no services it would be totally unjust to increase the present charges of what I feel is an unfair system at present
difficult to comment on the properties that have been empty over 2years and chargeable - depends on circumstances , maybe an element of discretion would be an option?

This is the response from Colton Parish Council. There seemed to be no opportunity in the survey to state this. Parish Council responses should be given more weight than individual resident responses, given that they represent the collective view of elected representatives of the Parish as a whole.

We have a 2nd home in Cumbria that is not rented out. The current 10% discount is appropriate and reflects or acknowledges our limited usage.
The 10% discount should remain for homeowners who choose not to rent out their 2nd home.

Houses should not be left empty for long periods of time, but if a property is empty because it needs renovation in order to re-let you should not have to pay council tax on this. 6 months is an adequate period for renovation to take place.
Second home owners should pay 50% more (or more) council tax as they take housing from folk who wish to live and work here. Income from this would go to providing homes (never to be sold) at affordable rent to locally born workers.

*Added from question 4.) Someone who owns a "second" property which is let at an affordable rent to a local working couple.*

Please realise that second home owners are a part of the community and are fed up with being treated as easy targets. We pay more than our fair share of the cost of providing services. Why not target those who are keeping housing away from local residents by leaving it unoccupied and contributing nothing to the local economy.

As a second home owner who spends money and supports local businesses in the Windermere area without being a drain on resources such as schools, hospitals etc., I feel that we contribute to the local economy whereas others with empty properties make no contribution. I would suspect that more savings could be made by initiating the secondary proposals i.e. remove the 100% discount on empty properties etc.

C. This should _not_ be changed as it would add to landlords costs for those letting houses to local people on long lets.

I have a second house which is let to local people and provides the bulk of my pension.

Why is it second home owners are always penalised for having a second home + why do people think they are rich + well off? I inherited my second home. I'm working class with a chronic disability + I struggle to keep the second home going. I work full time, have never taken time of because of my mobility problems + I've never claimed benefits, even though I could + I could choose not to work, but I do. I am not rich and I would like to try + keep my second home running. If my discount is removed + council tax keeps increasing I will eventually have to sell up or rent it. I hope you look at some other way to raise your money.

We are in a recession I imagine few people want property to be unoccupied.

I assume the council needs the tax payers to pay for immigrants housing benefits.

*Added from Q4 Not by choice*

Too many families on benefits (long term) are financially better off than other families who are working! Some houses are empty because they are not easy to sell / let in present financial climate.

I don't see why someone is blind + retired should pay.

Reduce the size of the councils inefficient bureaucracy.

Second home owners contribute significantly to the local economy and use considerably less services and resources.

If required to pay full council tax i must become entitled to vote in council elections.

Our empty home is due to circumstances not choice (i.e. redundancy or relocation) it is patently unfair to penalise a homeowner whose house is empty through necessity, while trying to rectify the situation during an economic downturn. It will take time, and while empty will not be using the services that other residents will. we have had to put our house up for sale due to job relocation, so are currently paying tax on two houses.

Second home owners generally bring income into the area through spending in local sales outlets. shops. restaurants, parking charge and local transport. They already contribute through there 90% council tax.

My property is a second home but i completely agree that i should pay full tax to help others.

I've been left an empty property which is unfit for human habitation & can't be sold in the current climate and, as an O.A.P, i certainly can't afford to pay 100% or 150% council tax on a property i am saddled with. This proposed change assumes that absentee owners are rich - they are not.!

Q1 (d) The reason needs to be taken into account! Difficult to judge - the reason is important. I would strongly agree that 12 months is the limit for concessions.

Full council tax on 2nd homes should be payable if - but only if - full services are provided e.g. our remote 2nd home does not have refuse collection, nor i the road maintained.

Near where i live there are chalets, Just modest ones, it would be unfair to count them as second homes as regards above. The people visit and use local facility's here.
The proposal seems particularly hard for people who have their property on the market. It was never intended to be a second home - just a stepping stone until I found my permanent residence. It just adds to the millstone of no sale.

Holiday homes should be rated higher than ordinary homes. They charge enough to rent them. It seems a fair and logical suggestion.

Just that the Council should do its best to be fair and to discourage homes from being left empty unnecessarily unless there are reasons like it is being sold for an deceased persons estate.

I worked hard to have a second home in Lake District. I use very little services compared to a full time resident. If money has to be saved further cuts in council spending are needed.

As a second home owners we do not receive Benefits for
1. Schools & Education
2. Libraries
4. We do not receive any Rent for lettings / own use only
5. No communication by post or email for S. Lakeland celebrations or facilities ?? for Rate Payers

No. contact by local councillors
*Q4 for sale*
*Q8 but my wife does*

If folk can afford 2nd homes or leave homes empty - then they should pay outgoings.

When you can pay for a second home you can afford to pay full council tax.

Second home owners are not all rich. We bought ours out of saved money + small inheritance. Make only one call on local services - rubbish collection I use local shops & local tradesmen thereby contributing to the local economy. I must already be someone who helps fund local services & people in need of council help.

*Q7 widow*

*Q1 My opinion will not make the slits bit of difference council and government do not no pain as we no it as ordinary people no it so why ask maybe it clear all your conscious as to what your about to do crucify us all again*

Because what ever anybody says you will not take a blind bit of notice and so it anyway

*Q8 old age*

Sometimes people must move home - empty property takes time to sell and should not carry an additional penalty through added council tax.

*Q1 a) Please see note below*

As long as disabled and low income families and sole parents aren't effected and don't have any extra expense & the elderly.

Properties used as holiday lets, should be classed as a business + charged business rate, they should apply for change of use to a business from domestic property

I do agree people with second homes should pay all bills and have no help at hall

I live on my own and I do not get enough money coming in to pay my way as I lost my husband 4yr ago. They never think about single people.

Already the housing benefit has been reduced adversely and older person living below the breadline find difficulty enough - especially as energy costs are increasing all the time.

As an 85 year old tenant I would not be able to stay in my current house if I had to pay council tax. I am currently receiving council tax benefit.

Reasons for houses being empty should be taken into consideration surely empty houses could be rented out thus generating council income.

If people can afford more than one house they should have to pay 100% council tax especially those who rent them out.
We have a second home & we participate fully in the local community and yet do not impose on the council's resources (in other words we don't use the schools, hospitals etc.) - proportionately we already therefore contribute more a take less.

Think council tax on empty properties should be dependant on reason for it being empty.

Properties that are empty do not require bins to be emptied, nor roads to be cleaned, nor roads swept etc., so why council tax should be paid on an empty property?

There may be valid reasons for "less than 6 months empty", so maybe still no Ctax, but no property should be empty for long periods and still get reductions - we're desperate for housing.

I bring friends & family regularly to South Lakes to use the cafes, restaurants & attend events/functions. My house is an equal house to the original family home in Preston, where I nursed my Mum. My house is therefore not abandoned, but as a single person & a pensioner I prefer to support both authorities, but to be made to pay in full in South Lakes is unfair when one considers the multi-occupancy of may? homes.

People with empty houses should be encouraged to let/sell them; not to wait for house prices to rise in order to reduce the costs of housing and rents in South Lakeland.

Now I have 2 hrs. to help on Mondays & Thursday & hope to be able to stay in my flat. Nearest son 32 miles away other family - Scotland, England, Wales, Denmark, USA & Canada - But this year not ?? to travel any distance I have wonderful neighbours & friends. Best view in England from my flat!

The house across the road from my flat has not been lived in for the last 8 years - used for storing old furniture for part of that time (in connection with a business)

It is a grade 2 listed building in a poor state of repair.

*Q9 Not me, wife does*

It seems absurd that empty homes will effectively be taxed. Empty homes should pay something. If you make them all pay 50% surely that would everything.

Government + councils always look outside for their income to make up government reductions. Try checking internally. Invariable you are overstaffed, underworked and overpaid with guaranteed pensions - Try the real world.

When one is a second home owner (non rental) one uses much less of the facilities offered by the council. I.e. All recycling is taken away by the second home owner as this cannot be left out on the street if the owner has left to return to the 1st home. Also the 2nd home owner uses very little of the public services. i.e. education & transport.

I have to fin another property near my work because I can't find work in the lake district.

We should not subsidise people on low income to live in properties that incur high council tax. Let them move to properties that incur less council tax. If the reason for low income is some disability then any subsidy should be associated with the disability.

People with a long term illness/disability and unable to work should get council tax benefit of 100% because they have a fixed income and cannot find extra money. It's stressful enough having health problems without having to worry about money all the time.

*Q7 Married couple*

Second home owners make use of a much lower number of the services provided by the local authority.

If 2nd home owners are paying council tax in full should they not also have the right to
1)Vote in council elections
2)Receive discounts provided to those paying full council tax i.e. reduction in monthly fees for boats on Windermere.

I have stated above my reasons, the main one being improve the way the Council is run. In private industry overcharging isn't an option, if they do this they lose customers. Due to your captured customers we don't have the option to seek our services elsewhere.

My second home is a necessity not a luxury. I find only 10% discount to be too low compared with previous arrangements!
I would receive 50% reduction if I lived here all the time!

Control your spending properly. Create jobs that are permanent not seasonal. Balance the budget live within your means.

As we do not use some of the services fully e.g., education, libraries, and roads etc., a 105 reduction in council tax to reflect this would seem very fair.

Long term empty properties may show neglect and blight the neighbourhood whereas 2nd homes are more likely to be kept in good order - and their owners already pay more council tax than single occupants and use SLDC services less.

Have homes under development yet remaining empty been considered i.e.: No services connected works requiring completion before habitable?

There are other ways that the council can make savings to make up the deficit. How much would you save if you reduced the councillors expenses?

Not easy to comprehend the questions 1,a)----f)

Terms:
Council tax support; Council tax benefit; Council tax discount; Council tax charge } Could have been more clearly defined.

Due to the current housing market selling an empty property is an extremely difficult - lengthy process & owners have very little control of over the length of time a property is left empty clearing sale.

Cont... They should not bear the brunt of the funding cut. It should be spread equally amongst all council tax payers. At present 2nd home owners pay 90% of the council tax but use hardly any council services. If they decided to leave the area SLDC would have to provide far more facilities for the permanent residents and would lose the income from the tourist trade.

The document blandly states that the money saved by removing 10% discount = what is required to maintain benefit at same level. It does not give the cost of the 10% discount in £. Are they really equal or is there a further revenue the council will gain ??

How much would the discount be if it were to be break even?!

Some villages in south lakes are full of 2nd home owners by there choice not ours. So why does the rest have to pay for them

I have used all local builders and tradesmen to upgrade my holiday home since my husband died. This provides employment & income locally. Also friends using my house always spend money locally & support local businesses. I will find ?charges? difficult if my council tax increases.

*Q1 If this means keeping the level of support for people of ?working? age receiving Council Tax Benefit*
Although there is logic in a reduced tax second home owners who do not use this home, as we do, except at weekend, it is also true that we have significantly more capacity to afford extra council tax than local people on tax benefits.

It is disgraceful preferentially to tax householders who are denied any vote for the Council.

I pay virtually the same council tax amount for a 3 bed semi detached house in Wigan as a one bed flat in Grange over Sands which I use occasionally the amount I pay to Lakeland Council is already above the national average.

As a second home owner aged 79 friends & family use the house a lot - free of charge. They spend far more than a resident on dining out - shopping - tourist activities & therefore I contribute a lot to the economy of the Lakes? which I love.

Please see Q.2 above

Second home owners work in areas that create wealth then holiday in the Lakes and spend money boosting the local economy. If they did not come this would impact on the area in an adverse way.

Local residents should not be distinguished from second home owners who do not leave their property empty for long periods and contribute, often significantly, to the local economy.

We have had a wooden chalet holiday home for 20 years. It is not let commercially, but is used by family and
friends. It is not designed for permanent living, so does not deprive any Cumbrians of a home. As with other visitors, the money we spend whilst there helps the local economy; long term empty properties contribute NOTHING, and should be the target for any Council tax increase. This year our property will be occupied for a total of 150 days, So we are making LESS demand on the Authorities services than others

A tax of 2 1/2% of capital value of second homes should be paid each year - SLDC should include ?clause? in before parliament L.A. bill

If a person is able to own a 2nd home and is leaving it empty for most of the year, they are selfishly denying others of a home in the area.

C D E F subject to circumstance

Should not be able to sell council houses.

In the present eco climate, people will be put off coming to the lakes to buy properties, and less income from tourism and local business will suffer as well.

Second home owners contribute considerably to the local economy so should have some form of benefit.

My second home was built in 1980 & is a valuable arts & crafts ?home? with period furniture. An increase in Council Tax would make it difficult to retain the house as it is now.

Second home owners contribute 90% of Council Tax annually in order to live in second homes only an average of 50% of the year. 90% of the tax is a _significant_ contribution to the council for residents who do not receive 90% of the services!!

*Q6 Over 21*

Second home owners under utilise council services thereby subsidising other residents. If you penalise a second home owner with increasing council tax you will have less second home owners and therefore be obliged to increase council tax for _all_ residents

Second home owner are being unfairly targeted by SLDC many are already trying to sell their second home with little success. ?Three? apartments in my complex have been on the market for at least 12 months.

Second homes prop up valuation of houses in the Lake District + the wealth of locals.

In the documentation there is a statement "pensioners must not be affected by the changes" does this apply to the pensioners who come under the second home proposal?

Allow people with second residence for work reasons to apply for single person discount.

There is a big plus for second home owners - they use many private services - builders, plumbers, decorators etc. & also are big users of the Local restaurants, retail outlets so boost the Lakes tourist economy. We have lived here for over twenty years!

People who have second homes do not have an opportunity to vote against the council as they are not entitled to vote.

It is easier for you to therefore penalise this group as they cant vote against your policies.

People with second homes use less of the services but will be paying full price, They also bring in valuable income to the area.

Our presence add significant sums of money to local economy by regular presence and maintenance using local trades.

Council tax should be the same regardless of the extent of occupation. The reductions under (b) to (e) are not justified but equally (f) would amount to a penalty.

Just to point out that owners of second homes do not receive any benefit for many of the councils main expenses i.e. education etc. and use other facilities on a much reduced basis i.e. waste disposal etc.

I believe people with second homes which are either vacant or used as holiday homes should pay full council tax as the Lake District suffers by having empty houses, which in turn reduces the amount of revenue for local amenities.

our shopping there. We put a lot into the economy there, Probably as much as some residents.my family also use the house, spending a lot of money there, stopping discounts could deter people from keeping houses at the lakes. some people may think it is wrong having a 2nd home but i know myself and friends
with properties there do put a lot into the economy therefore providing jobs.

- Second home owners that rent bring money into the economy but empty homes bring nothing.
- We are refurbishing a home to live in. It is a temporary second home. If we are penalised we will have to
  go to another district.
- In our street a house has been for sale for over 2 years + un-lived in. How do the proposals assist?

And do not rent it out when we are not there. We intend to move back to the U.K in about 5 years and the
flat in Grange-Over-Sands will be our only home.

These proposals would severely limit house exchange and are typical of an 'easy answer'

I bought my flat with a view to retirement when I return from abroad. I am currently renting so it is not a
second home for me. I am not using council facilities while the property is empty therefore it would be an
extra burden to pay full council tax.

50% tax on empty properties is high but acceptable. The owner is not getting anything for his previously
taxed money / Even the owner occupier receives little in this village for his council tax

The proposal to remove the current second home discount is an injustice because second home owners
already make a disproportionately large contribution to local and national government. It is also
undemocratic because they have no vote in the matter. The SLDC should focus it's attention on vacant
properties. This proposal is lazy, cynical and political manipulation of the lowest kind.

-Do not bite the hand that feeds you.

-Why has the property been empty for more than 2 years, assess situation, establish whether need to assist
  owner to bring it into dwelling / usable condition, etc.

-It is wrong to charge more than 100% council tax.

This arrangement will encourage people to state that the building in occupied by a single person thus giving
a 25% discount. I.e. encourage dishonesty.

If properties which are empty are charged council tax. It would encourage owners to either sell or rent out
freeing up more homes.

Council should be more efficient and look at other areas i.e. council benefits for those who can work or are
working but still claiming benefits

-Q4 We pay council tax & receive help for a portion of it*

Please confirm SLDC's intention about the council tax reduction scheme at cabinet full council (January?)
Pensioners, unemployment, disabled + small business people need help!

Overall it seems fair - property standing empty for long periods of time could / should be rented out to cover
full council tax payment by the owner.

I don't understand why those who have an empty property are treated differently. Surely if these properties
paid fairer level of Council Tax, second home owner wouldn't be the 'fall guys'. You could argue that if you
own a home, whether it be primary, secondary or empty the same council tax should apply across the
board.

Council Tax is for local services, it is therefore iniquitous to increase the tax for those who receive the fewest
services. Also second home owners have no representation as they are usually registered to vote in a
different constituency. It is contrary to democratic principles to impose disproportionate takes on those
without representation / voting rights.

The Council should be focussed upon encouraging better paid jobs, larger companies into the area,
increasing overall income. Second home's is a large part of this income in this unique area.
Assist traders by reducing car parking / trade tax / etc. in town's.

-Q6,7,8 Why does this matter?*

Because of the situation of my 2nd home I am unable to use the normally provided recycle & waste facilities
and have to buy commercial waste bags for removal of waste and to visit Ambleside tip with my recycle
goods and garden waste.

*Q4 and not a holiday let*

You are taxing (even more) those with no votes, who already pay for far more services than we use.
Please remember that people who have second homes (in our case used by ourselves, family and friends) contribute a lot to the local economy in terms of expenditure on goods & services, whilst requiring less in terms of council services. It seems wrong to apply excessive council tax charges.

The above question Q2 is vague, and does not give enough information on what the grants would be spent on

Please retain the discount for those who appear to have a second property but in fact live in tied accommodation. e.g. clergy who have to anticipate their needs when they retire.

I become a pensioner next year. I spend half my time at our home in the Lakes - I need to be in London for 2 weeks / month for my work. We use virtually no local council services and therefore being charged 100% council tax seems grossly unfair. We make an effort to buy goods and services locally - this benefits the local economy and employment. You should also be verifying that ?? is a recipient of council tax support are in genuine need before handing my hard earned money to them ?? ?? clocks and balances.

2nd home owners don't use 100% of the facilities provided by the council. _But_ we additionally contribute to _local economy_ i.e. use of local people, local tradesmen, shops, restaurants, garages and services, etc.

* The Government’s austerity measures are intended to cut costs. The council should comply and not simply meet the shortfall in income by increasing taxes, particularly amongst second home owners who get precious little from the council for the current 90% tax.
* In the event that 100% is introduced, All rate payers must be given a vote at council elections

Many councillors and candidates try to "win votes" by attacking 2nd home owners. If i pay full council tax i should by fairness be given a vote. this would allow me to challenge some of their misplaced claims.

I was born in Sedbergh + was educated there. My family have worked + lived there until they died. I wish to keep the family home + I am resident for 1/3 of each year. I love Sedbergh (originally Yorkshire) + feel it is my home.

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION A JOKE TITLE.
Penal considering the present lack of services, there are other councils faced with the same problems. but few have the same number of second home, and will be forced to other solutions. People who have second homes in the Lakes often use them to keep in closer contact with relatives (who live in Scotland) saves them five hundred miles or so) There is a green aspect to this.

I was a member of SLDC 1988 - 1996

As a second home owner, I do not use the Education services covered by the council tax, Therefore i do not see the need of second home owners to pay 100% Council Tax. As it is we pay 90%.

If they can afford a second home they have the money to pay there council tax.

We have a cottage which is uninhabited but has some contents we do not earn anything from it and it does not cost SLDC anything so why should we pay any council tax at all on it? I / We would like the tax of 90% on it explained to us.. We nursed my parents in their own house & were never told that we could have had our council tax exempted & I wrote to SLDC about it & never to this day have we had a reply. 8 years council tax back please!!! no-one helped us.

*Added from Q4) But contains contents (some) never ever earned from it ever. & pay 90% Tax?!!! Why?
*Added at the end of the survey All these unmarried girls with babies etc. should pay their way we have always had to. It is time some one spoke up about all the money people don't pay and should do.

How does your commitment to raise up council tax by the minimum amount possible comply with your proposal for those with second homes? Surely you would be applying a maximum amount in their case. Your commitment statement cannot be used without some qualification.

Reductions on 2nd homes should remain in place for at least 1yr for people like me who inherit a 2nd home after the death of their parents & struggle to sell it & sort out estate etc. There should be a short term exception.

The council are, quite rightly, looking at their income streams.
However, the other side of the coin is council expenditure; a very large part of which is wages/salaries, and I have yet to see any serious action on this issue.
I have concern that the questionnaire sent disproportionally to benefit recipients (if that is the case) will be answered from an emotional basis related to only their own situation that does not clearly analyse the effects of their answers on the wider community. For example I can imagine in question 1 that such people might answer "Strongly Agree" to all questions. In reality it could be that a house is empty because it is up for sale but the owner is already in another house in a different area because of work requirements and so might end up paying two Council Taxes. It requires care in decision making to avoid unintended consequences such as preventing mobility of the work force.

On the other hand people of the opposite position are likely to take a very different approach to their answers and I wonder what real information is likely to come out of this survey that could not have been equivalent to a reasonable guess by a few councillors looking at it. Most answers will be very much in line with peoples’ own situation.

There should be no reason why any house should stand empty, they could be rented, people need homes. If people can afford a second home, they can afford to pay 100% council tax.

*Q8 But my partner is disabled*

Ensure that holiday let houses are charged a commercial rate higher than domestic council tax

*Q10 Please do not assume universal ownership of a computer - A failing of modern society*

Council tax benefit should remain for the most vulnerable such as myself who is over 90 years old and only have a pension from the government.

Thank you.

Why should properties be empty for longer than 6 months? People who have a second home should pay full amount of C.T. People on JSA or ESA to continue with full discounts. Properties that are left empty must be investigated and if possible have other tenants installed ASAP.

I would find it hard if I did not get the help I have been getting. I am not a sponger as I have worked full time till I was 65 and paid for a private pension which was not very good after paying for years.

If people can afford second homes they should pay full tax

Many second homes are used in support of business activities which benefit the local community. Most second home owners purchase goods & services locally.

What a powerful suggestion. I hope there is not too much opposition from 2nd home owners. This also will encourage those who own empty properties to rent them out - if they cant or don’t want to sell. Great stuff!!

Unfair to increase second homes as they do not use services in same proportion as other residents.

Many second home owners are pensioners and the government has said pensioners must not be affected by the changes. Will adversely affect local economy.

*Q1 (b) But can’t argue I suppose!* I own a 2nd home in Bowness on Windermere and full support charging the full rate.

Changing the full rate on empty properties should encourage people to let or sell so homeless people have somewhere to live.

Council tax support and benefit has made seaside towns, slums.

Don’t do down that route.

And further reduce the population.

Second homers are not owned just by the rich. A second home costs a lot in insurance, repairs and maintenance, so a second home owner is less able to pay additional tax than owners of only one home.

Second homes = tourism from wealthy households = economic boost to local economy.

Our second home is a rental property & we bought it with money that would otherwise be my partners pension. We don’t have excess money, we've saved & advised the way we live so we could afford to make this investment for our future. Our second home is maintained & used. I object to properties that are not used when we're short of housing & they could be sold or rented out. If people can afford to leave houses empty then they can afford to pay council tax!

In my area of Cark-In-Cartmel there are 60 properties. About 25 are second homes which are now being
rented or used as holiday lets. Second home users don't put as much demand on the services, only live there 20% of the year. Second home owners deprive local people (particularly who work locally) to find homes. I think it is immoral. The income you should be chasing is through unoccupied property...why is it un-occupied and why is it not providing housing for local people? We bought our second home in the Lake District in able to look after my wife's parents. We are living on our pensions & do not have the ample income that your proposal would assume. Please ensure pensioners on low incomes who currently receive 100% support do not lose out. Not all pensioners on low incomes can claim or want to claim pension credit - they can be left worst off - this should not happen particularly for the over 75s. The council tax collected from second homes or empty houses could do a lot towards keeping a number of the services which have had their budget cut or removed because of Government cuts to the councils budget. Those who want the scheme to continue are those probably who need it most. Each case should be looked at separately. 2nd homes which create a revenue for people should be more heavily penalised. especially if they are HOLIDAY HOMES & not housing local people. This form should be easier to fill in as it is unfair that those who don't understand exactly what the point is don't get a fair say. The procedure for claimants who genuinely need council tax benefit needs to be simplified. Many people including myself cant afford a property so people who can should pay the council tax to the appropriate Band choice. I don't think i can afford to eat if you cut my council tax benefit. I would rather you cut services i think. *Added to Q8 Dyslexia* What happened to " we are all in this together "? Second home owners bring a significant financial input to the local community, it is wrong to victimise the few who do not have a voting voice. I say spread the load across everybody. I feel very strongly that there should be no concession for homes not occupied permanently. We are all struggling to pay and they use facilities paid for by the council tax when they are here. *Q1 c,d,e,f) Depends on why empty* I use to be a council tax payer but was laid off with another 30 people from same company. There should be more than a 25% discount for people living on own. I feel very strongly about people with second homes should pay 100% - they live in the property - why not!! Support should be funded by all in same proportions as now, not heaped on 2nd home owners who bring spending benefits to the area when they are in the area. There is a distinction between 2nd home owners who let, & those who use the 2nd home themselves. Target the former and the cash they earn. Empty properties may take time to sell, but after 2 years there is no reason for any benefit, Any increase i council tax should be spread across everyone who pays the tax. People who have a second home already pay disproportionately i.e., they pay 90% and use very few services. It would not be good to discourage 2nd home owners it would reduce tourism visits and depress property prices, Leaving properties empty & thereby reducing taxing revenue. Second Homes should pay more C. Tax than a normal home You can only do your best for the future. I have worked all my life from aged fifteen to when I took early retirement in Nov 2009 to look after wife. She sadly died 04-06-2011. After an 11yr battle with breast cancer. I have served in the army & paid tax & N.I. all my life what I am receiving benefit wise I personally have paid for. Following the recent reduction in housing benefit and with an increase in my rent, I have been unable to pay Council Tax on my property. The shortfall is the amount of my contribution. Paying council tax at 90% level must already subsidise greatly council services (e.g. waste collection) since those services are only used sporadically by second home owners. Hence demand is reduced. Better to
target owners of empty homes to do more to encourage full occupation of their properties.

Please consider people who are trying to sell their property. I have had mine on the market for 2 years & have reduced the asking price. I can no longer afford the property so extra charges in 2013 is worrying.

Not because we receive Council Tax Benefit and are grateful for this, but we feel that local and full time residents should benefit before second home owners and the vast majority of empty homes in this area. These people contribute very little to the community and can afford to pay the full amount.

People that can afford more than one home should pay for those who can only rent in low income employment.

There should be a sliding scale to encourage owners to get property back into use. 6 months is a reasonable time to allow over a period of changing ownership or repairs; There should be significant penalties for owners where properties are deliberately left unoccupied for significant periods.

As the owner of another property - not my second home, I rent it out to members of local community, when vacant after refurbishment it’s advertised to let. Why should I pay money when I am not using any facilities litter collection etc. we have no street lights or anything else from council. It can take considerable time for the estate agents to find suitable tenant, I pay tax all my life unlike a lot of these “Vulnerable” people.

p.s property owners are not cash cows!

Second homes are bought as an investment, allowing these people cheap holidays. On average they spend very little in the local communities, Starving the market of affordable homes for first time buyers.

Paying 100% council tax should entitle me to vote in local elections and receive all benefits that other full tax home owners receive, This would enable me to have a say in how my tax is spent by the council.

The fact that I pay tax to another council should not debar me from having this right.

Second home owners make less demands on all council services and should not be penalised.

Second homes which are let during the main tourism season should benefit from reduced council tax for 2 reasons:

* Visitors renting the property boost the local economy.
* When the property is not occupied, the services for which council tax are paid, are not being used.

Why should persons who have saved all their lives & put their savings into a 2nd property then be victimised?

Others choose expensive cars + high style of living frequently beyond their means + then draw maximum benefit.!!

My second home is used for 7 - 8 months of the year to enable my wife and I undertake “charity work” in the community for which you wish to remove the council tax discount. "This penalty" is very unfair in my case. It would be difficult to fund the extra 10%.

Just as above second home owners and their visitors probably generate quite a lot of income via tourist activities and this should be encouraged. I feel the decision on council tax lies with the people who live in South Lakeland but try not to penalise those who don’t but still contribute to it’s economy.

Either you tax property to pay for local services or you tax people on the services they use. To exempt empty properties is illogical (or serves ????)? how many councillors etc. etc. no objection to subsidies for the vulnerable but object to subsidies ???? ????, attendance allowance etc. for councillors.

Q1 c,d,e and f: Depends on why the property has remained empty. If for example it has been for sale and has no takers, it is not fair to charge tax on empty property.

I have worked hard and saved hard all my life to purchase a home in the Lakes which I hope at sometime will be my retirement home. I find it unfair that someone who leaves a property empty gets a large discount on their council tax. The removal of the 2nd home allowance is unfair when compared to empty houses.

You should really reduce the amount of tax on second home owners, not increase it. There is nothing just about 90% tax when we use 5% amenity.

We have supported the Lake District for the past 30 years. Going nowhere else, and second home owners bring money into the shops etc., and employ local tradesmen. Many people will not be able to afford these extra rates, and the Lake District will have even less people visiting. When houses are empty and up for sale, due to finances etc. people won’t be able to afford to pay the rates, whilst they are for sale. There is no logic
10% second home discount should be increased rather than scrapped. When resident we are spending in the local economy. We are resident for no more than 50 nights per year and our use of council services is negligible. It is unfair to offer only a 10% discount when empty properties receive 50 to 100% discount.

Homes should not stand empty when so many people need accommodation, If they can not be sold they should not stand empty for years they have the option of renting them out. if people chose to have a second home they should be prepared to pay the tax for it it’s their choice.

Concern in some 'special' cases e.g. property in the estate of a deceased which is on the market for sale.

I think a 10% discount - should be allowed on a property left ?? ?? ??????

It is hard enough to pay bills at present. If you work your pay hasn’t gone up but fuel, bills, car, transport all has. some need more help but i know there are lazy people as well.

In this time of austerity the council need to be looking at cost savings and efficiencies, not penalising home owners

I’m more ambivalent about the proposal to charge more for empty homes, since I am aware homes can be empty for a range of reasons which may not be the owners choice, e.g. unable to sell / unable to find a tenant.

Second home people spend a lot of money up here. The Government wastes enough of our tax payers money! Local councillors appear to be highly paid these days.

There may be good reasons why a home might be empty for a short time (e.g. owner has died and executors have not yet been able to make arrangements for the re-occupation of the property) and punishing people for this seems unreasonable but people who leave homes empty for long periods should be charged full Council tax. People with second homes should be charged full council tax and the money used to help remedy the problems they are contributing too by pushing local house prices up. I think some thought should be given to single occupancy discount e.g. it might be fairer if it could be based on the number of people the property could house not the number of people that actually lives in the house as a single person still has to have all the same services e.g. their rubbish collected as they would if they lived with others and single people often choose to live in houses bigger than they need that could be used to house a family or even several families if it were converted.

I have concerns regarding the 50% on the homes empty for 2 years as people may be trying to sell these homes, they could rent them out however it would depend on their circumstances. I presume this would be looked into at the time.

I feel it important to keep council tax discount for the first six months of being empty as many of these cases are involving a death or probate issues on the properties.

SLDC’s proposed course of action seems very sensible and it seems right to protect the right to residence in the area of people on benefits and low income, perhaps even to the extent of not charging any household with a gross income of less than £20k per annum.

Why is there any reduction for second home owners? They kill communities by ensuring that houses are sold for premium rates forcing local poorly paid, often young residents to move out of the area. This area is becoming a theme park for those who have money. We need a cross section of ages and skills to maintain vibrancy and services.

You are going to be seen as penalising a small group of people who actually feel that this district is a part of the country where they like to spend some time, and money..

Consideration should be given to applying an additional Council Tax charge for second homes if necessary to fund any shortfall in funding Council Tax reduction.

In relation to empty properties there could be many justifiable reasons why a property remains empty. However, I would find it difficult to understand why a property should remain empty for more than 2 years. It is difficult to draw a line but the longer a property remains empty the less I can understand it.

Houses can be left empty for a number of reasons, mortgage arrears, moved house for work and unable to sell, owner in residential care, uninhabitable through no fault of the owner and unable to sell. Simply to apply an across the board ruling does not allow for cases of hardship or financial difficulty of the owner.
Why should only those on benefits be considered for payment relief? Yes if there is no good reason for the occupancy then charge, but not only those on benefit can be suffering financial hardship.

The Council should be encouraging more 2nd home owners rather than penalise them further. Has it been forgotten the 2nd home owners had a dramatic rate increase a while ago from 50% reduction? Isn’t it better to have these owners who don’t cost the Council anything by providing all the ancillary benefits mentioned above?

Why not look for efficiencies in the spending of the SLDC first or develop joint services with other councils in HR, Finance, ICT, waste collection etc. millions of pounds could be saved and this is just not developed enough. rather than just charging more in TAX that is just an easy option.

The local parish council has just refurbished its cottage. It took just over 2 years, partly as a result of the type & difficulty of the work. Part of the delay in starting was caused by the 6month + delay in getting approval of the grant from SLDC which prevented work starting. The new proposals would have increased spending on the property.

I agree with proposals to use Council Tax liability to reduce the number of empty houses in the district.

Trade union members should pay the full cost of union officials and the council should no longer pay them from moneys taken from the rates.

I would also be in favour of a 10% surcharge on council tax for second homes to help compensate for their reduced contribution to the local economy. I do not agree with the argument that second homes do not require the same services from the council as full time residents. That may be so when the homes are unoccupied, but the council has to take a long term view and provide services on the assumption that second homes will need them part of the year.

Empty properties should not only qualify for discount if they are on the market for sale.

Properties may be empty in the current climate because people have ran out of money to improve them to a standard where they can be inhabited by charging the council tax you delay occupation further.

Adjust the policy so that a degree of ‘means testing’ is used: i) those in work but on a low wage receive maximum housing benefit ii) provide housing benefit for single mothers living with parents in family home iii) reduce housing benefit support for long term unemployed where gross family income is >£14000 per year

You could charge second home owners double council tax.

I have worked in a lot of second homes and find that painful knowing some of my colleges are looking for a roof over their heads.

My wife and I have owned our ‘second home’ for thirty years. Initially we bought it as a surety as my job required us to live in a tied house. We intended to sell the cottage to fund a place to retire to. We and our family very soon fell in love with the cottage and surroundings, and when retirement arrived we settled on buying a much more modest property locally so that we were able to retain our second home. Over the years we have maintained and improved the property, using local trade's people, spending thousands of pounds. We paid our share to improve and maintain the private water supply to the property. We and family and guests have used the local shops for provisions. We have attended local tourist attractions, have worshipped and donated to a local church, we are members (friends) of the Settle- Carlisle railway.

WE HAVE NO OBJECTION TO PAYING THE FULL COUNCIL TAX, BUT WE ALSO URGE YOU TO PURSUE THE OWNERS OF EMPTY PROPERTIES WHO ARE CONTRIBUTING NOTHING, INFACT MUST BE A DRAIN ON LOCAL SERVICES. SURELY SUCH PEOPLE, UNLESS THEY HAVE A VERY GOOD REASON SHOULD PAY A PREMIUM ON THE COUNCIL RATES.

This unfairly targets 2nd homes that generate significant value to local industry & Cumbria. If this was lost the impact to SLDC so called local residents would reduce employment, local funds & opportunities.

I know we are based as owners of a "second home" but at least we bring money into South Lakeland. Owners of empty properties are doing nothing for their area: Just hoping the value of their asset increases with time

Second home owners are a draw on the local community & take up homes vacant for locals
Your proposals / considerations seem very reasonable. One cannot sometimes avoid property being empty in the short term. Long term however, vacancy should be penalised.

The discounted options should all be operated - with a 5% discount for 2nd homes. Remember - we’re all in this together according to the coalition. Council spending should be curtailed also.

Councils should be able to purchase empty properties that have not been ‘used’ for a number of years and be allowed to add those properties to there own asset stock and develop them where need be, thus reducing the need for green ‘new’ belt building. (i.e. property recycling!)

In return for agreeing to abandon the second home discount I should be able to vote in local elections - the principle “no taxation without representation” applies here.

Second home owners use less resources but contribute disproportionately more to the local economy.

Where people are waiting for probate, someone has gone into residential care or people are trying to sell empty houses and they are not able to sell them even though the price is reasonable it seems very harsh to create an extra financial burden by increasing the Council Tax. If properties are empty & being held as a long term investment full Council Tax should be paid.

There needs to be continuous support for low income family + single _working_ parents (I myself am a single parent) and I work to support my son like many parents out there. The proposals by SLDC are suffice + adequate - we live in a rich country; 2nd homes can pay for the 10%(at least) shortfall to avoid starving family’s.

*The Council do a great job as do our Public services in our area and I trust the elderly/low income parent/family’s will not have to pay something they cant afford*

What tax do owners of elderly homes / residential care pay? They have patients paying way over the odds for care per week is this reflected in the tax paid??

Properties over certain bedrooms pay higher tax

Properties with say 5 adults to pay more tax

The questions are framed to achieve a pre determined outcome. My priority would be to cut expenditure, cut council tax benefit (it is not true that this benefit is targeted - compare your proposals with those of other councils in this.

The councils focus on second homes is too narrow and fails to address other issues.

I am an OAP & do find it very difficult as it is to make ends meet

Through no fault of his, my husband has had hip problems since 2005 till now. We applied for tax benefit because we were accepted for guaranteed pension credit. At a time when we are watching out money each week it helps us a lot. A bit of peace of mind if you will.

At 90% the council already receives a substantial subsidy if 100% demanded and taxation without representation policy should follow

Extracting money from the voiceless is unethical

In support of my statements given in Q1 c,d,e,f we believe that properties/homes and currently empty and for sale should be treated differently to those which could be deliberately being kept empty and not being marketed.

There should be a council tax discount for second homes that are holiday lets (as above). An increase in council tax (i.e. loss of discount) could mean fewer holiday cottages and therefore less accommodation for tourists. This is on top of changes to rules on income tax making holiday lets largely unviable.

My second home is not let. It is used extensively by relatives and friends who bring trade & money for bad businesses.

Q1(C) to (F) Do not require council services if empty ( Schools, rubbish removal etc.) But should prove they are advertising for sale or let locally and on the net. Power & water services do not charge if not used.

Facilities at area of 2nd home should be taken into account.

Haswick has no shop, no post office, no bus service, no speeding control, no voting rights for local Parish council.
For people who have second homes which they either use or rent out it is fair that they pay more than they currently are, but empty homes which are not rented out or used are providing NO income and therefore should NOT be charged more council tax.

If you can afford a second home you do not need a 10% discount.

Q1 c)100% discount should not be automatic but there are occasions when a home is empty for 6 months e.g. moving? home for a new job. Not sold.

I rent a flat (2nd home) and use it frequently for work / leisure. I understand the argument made by SLDC but i object to an increase in my bill because I don't benefit much from the charge as things stand. More importantly I feel that the collection of recyclable domestic waste is very much below par. If that were improved and included all recyclables then i would be far happier to pay more. My message, improve this service before you raise my charge. Thank you.

As a second home owner (a) my wife and I are both pensioners, so at the very least your drafting needs scrutinising and (b) the main service we actually receive directly namely refuse collection, needs to be improved. When the service changed to the emptying of bins (rather than bag collection) we constructed a storage area for non-recycling bins and placed the recycling bins behind those. Unless the recycling bins are placed on the pavement - and it is rare for our flat to be occupied on collection day - they are not emptied. Recycled waste is therefore taken by car to Ambleside or dumped in the other bins. Please can the 'bin men' collect from just behind the storage area - a distance of 3 yards from the pavement.

(c) The proposal exploits second home owners.

We provide a service with our second home flats, the holiday makers use the hotels, shops + cafes + bring money into the area. We object to people buying properties + leaving empty to sell after for profit.

A second home owner we only use facilities for a fraction of the year and some we do not use at all i.e. we generally take our rubbish home with us because we would not be present on bin collection days. However, we bring extra income to the area using shops, restaurants etc. on each visit i.e. we are regular tourists so to speak and they do not pay any council tax!!

It would prove a great hardship to charge council tax on properties where there has been a death. It is a traumatic time in any case.

I'm trying to renovate and ??? ??? into use a home in S.Lakeland. The cost of materials / building work is bad enough without an additional burden being placed upon me. I am nearly 68 years old and am determined to finish the work in my life time but swinging additional costs will not help me to do this!

Being a 2nd home owner is due to working hard, saving money and not being a financial drain on the economy. the 10% discount on 2nd home owners does not make up for fact 90% is paid for services irregularly used.

There is an opportunity here to encourage the occupation or use of currently empty properties for the benefit of the region and all who live here.

Have homes under development yet remaining empty been considered IE - no services connected, works requiring completion before habitable.

If you can afford to have a second home in the Lake District you can afford to pay council tax.

Many second home owners contribute regularly to the local community but are not a burden on local services. Perhaps we should all start to demand the 90% that we are already paying for. Why not start with the empty properties?

Empty properties: As a current recipient of an exemption for Council Tax, I think your proposals to make additional charges for empty properties may be draconian since there may be perfectly reasonable circumstances as to why a property is empty. Ours was purchased from Cumbria County Council (Holehird Trust) who had left the property empty for 8 years after the last tenant died. The property was in a poor and deteriorating state. We have this last year, been working hard to bring it back into a habitable state and make it a comfortable rental property for, hopefully, a local person. To be faced with not just Council Tax, but an amount over and above the standard rate would be simply wrong. Empty property being worked on to bring it up to standard should always be exempt. The current rules only allow exemptions that meet a fairly tight criteria. I hope any changes don't put owners off upgrading their property. If we are to aspire to a raising of standards of (rental) housing stock, then further obstacles should not be put in the way. Before
you make blanket assumptions about empty properties and subsequent blanket charges, owners should be given the opportunity to give their side of the story before you extract money from them.

Empty & intermittently occupied properties make a substantially reduced demand on council services. You proposals;
  a) represents a punitive demand on light users of your services.
  b) burden people with charges for situations beyond their control (whether a property is empty
  c) bring democracy into disrepute with their consultation process in which empty property and second
  property owners will inevitably be a small minority.

* Added from Q1,B *

Holiday homes should be encouraged as they bring fresh money on to the area providing not only income
but also jobs - service personnel, booking agents, gardeners, shopkeepers.

* Added from Q1,C *

Sometimes properties can be empty for 6 months or more due to a death or house move and it would be
unfair to penalise in these situations.

Perhaps before you reduce any discounts on unsold properties look at the reasons. - Can they sell the house
in this bad economics climate? Are they in a nursing home etc.? Will they receive a heavy tax bill for selling
& Perhaps they intend to retire in their 2nd home or a family member use it.

Many 2nd homes are v. small (mine is 15 feet x 30 feet) not a mansion. We have it due to our poor health
and age. I am 86 years & my wife 80 years and ?unwell? due to a brain injury. Plus people should be
encouraged to have 2nd holiday homes to keep ?venturing? & spending cash in the area. Had flat for over
30 years.

* Regarding Questions 1 c) d) e) and f)
  : Whilst it is V.I.P. that no privilege should attach to empty properties/ 2nd homes (quite the reverse; SLDC
  should impose a financial penalty over & above standard c. Tax rate), it is equally V.I.P that :-
  : Properties for sale, most particularly in the current stagnant state of the property market, should not be
  penalised if they are empty & should attract a discount that reflects the minimal of council services.

Reduction of discounts for c,d and e is perhaps a better way forward.

Holiday homes and empty houses must be charged at 100% or even 110% to put people of second homes
and free up cottages for locals.

I always thought it unfair that second homes ever had a reduction in council tax. Presumably that difference
was met by resident tax payers.

Taking advantages of property owners who have no say in the instigation of tax, and inevitably use the
Council's services less than full time residents and tax payers is unprincipled and smacks of greed

None.

William does not understand the questions so I hope we have been fair in our answers
Thank you
(Mother of Mr Morris)

Reasonable, sensible cuts must be made, otherwise we will have to pay for ever.

SLDC will become a branch of HM treasury if you allow it to become a de facto tax raising arm. this is a
sneaky and opaque tax raising measure.

For many years govt have left long term unemployed people to claim various benefits - but now country
cannot afford this to continue - Therefore savings must be made by everyone. ?? this sector must work to
pay their way like the rest of society.

We are second home owners and live up a private road.
We have no street lighting, no snow ploughing or gritting, we pay to resurface our own road + struggle to
get our bins emptied therefore often forgotten or there is some excuse not to empty them therefore we do
not get as many services as residents & should not pay as much.

Some way should be found of taxing the day visitors, In this area they bring packed lunches use the free
amenities & frequently walk in groups not keeping strictly to footpaths and damage hay meadows
riverbanks which have to be repaired by local residents - what about a ??? coach park tax? what about a B+B
tax?
*Added to Q4 which i desperately want to sell to support myself *

There is a shortage of 3 bed properties for rent so if there are a lot of second homes empty it might make people rent them out if their discounts were stopped.

If they can afford to buy a 2nd property - they can afford the council tax! The holiday homes or 2nd homes stand empty in Cumbria throughout the winter - like ghost towns - no revenue to shops etc. - then they close.

A lot of local houses need refurbishment landlords will not do this if they have to pay council tax as well They will not refurbish these homes but will let on in inferior condition.

I have been a strong believer for many years that if a person can afford a second home then they can afford to pay more in council tax

No problems in principle in using discount to fund Council Tax support BUT why take all 10% away? Why not reduce it to 5% and make up difference from empty home charges/discounts?

Second home owners are a soft target, making people pay for something they are not getting / using just because they own two homes. If the Council ?? to review its redundancy policy / payments and any subsequent re-hiring of staff it might easily find the money

I think there is a misconception that second home owners are rich. The government warned that pensions will not be worth much and now want us to work longer. I have tried to help myself in later life and feel i am being punished for it! Those that pay in life are having to pay more + more and those that don’t work are giving everything free!

I feel it is vital that a flexible system is introduced which would allow for extenuating circumstances i.e. current factors are subject to change and what is right now may not always be so!

Personal preference:- Empty property :-
First 6mnths 100%
6-12mnths - 50%
12mnths+ - 75%

Classic 'new speak' whereby a tax increase is announced as a tax reduction!
Beware! - many owners of second homes may sell leading to a glint of properties and falling property values.

As the owner of a second home I am discouraged by the proposal to remove the discount of 10% as I and my family use very few of the services provided by SLDC. And I should like to know what has happened to the monies since the discount was diminished from 50% to 10%

Owners of empty buildings contribute nothing to the local economy so why should they receive a discount?

As a second home owner I do not put bins out as I take my rubbish home. I do not get other services of council as I do not live 100% of time in the county.
Which I know is my choice however how about the council making savings through inefficient running costs & wastage already occurring? - Inflated council pensions!

I have a second home + believe i should pay more (with a heavy heart) Because i want to help people on low incomes or benefit to receive subsidies.

I am responding as someone with an empty home and I have concerns about actually having to pay increased council tax with no discounts and not being able to do this. I.e. I'm against considerations (c) to (f)

NOTE - SITUATION through family bereavement

It would be more equitable to meet the shortfall by abolishing the discount on empty properties and this in turn would result in making more properties available for habitation.

The proposal is the easy way out for the council. Charge those who use minimal services and who do not get a vote. why not do what other councils, who don’t have a 'second home cushion' are doing.

I think Polish family’s occupy a home usually there are 2 family’s in the house both should be made to pay Council Tax instead of dodging payments

Ambleside is now overrun with second homes and nearly most are really businesses in disguise.
I think council tax should be charged between 25 - 50% for single parents living alone with one or more children - and who are employed.

Given my comment above why has this subsidy not been identified and used separately from the ?Gen-bral? budget in a creative manner e.g. in building affordable housing.

I think that it should be fair for all.

I am a Pensioner, Second Home owner. Your letter & HMG say pensioners should not suffer. We already contribute significantly to the SLDC economy and should not be singled out to pay more.

As a single person whose " Second home " is actually the only property i own but i am unable to live there, I find the rate of council tax in Kendal very high. I don't quite understand why that should be, I imagine that for most second home owners the extra 10% won't make much difference. It is more important to support those in need.

* Added from Q1 d) But exceptions would have to be made in particular circumstances.

Q1 e) In the current financial climate when people can't sell properties + Yet have to move some concessions would have to be made.

Second homes are sometimes summer lets privately and then winter lets.

Why should you pay more for a house that is empty just because it won't sell, and your not using and council services either. I wish i could sell then i wouldn't be paying two council taxes.

As a second home owner we already put in much more than we take out. You should be much more aggressive in collecting ALL council tax.

Discounts on 2nd home should be more than 10%

People with second homes bring much needed funds into the lake district.

As second home owners we are paying for services over which we have no vote. If council tax is to be 100% we want a vote in local elections.

* Added to Q4 Undergoing full renovation*

Second home owners make significantly less demand on council services. And not all occupy potential first homes.

This proposal is unfair & unreasonable

See over.

*SLDC is already screwing visitors who contribute significantly to the local economy.*

Realise we may have to pay full council tax. However, no doubt there are people who may benefit from this who do not deserve to do so. E.g. certain types of landlords & agencies who 'milk the system'. Action needs to be taken / included to ensure 'system' does benefit those who really deserve it. Those who can pay, should pay.

The argument that if you can afford a second home you can afford to pay full council tax takes no account of fairness in that second home owners place little burden on / derive little benefit from council services - i.e. schools, housing, libraries etc. Indeed, the one service we did use - home refuse collection was curtailed in recent cut backs and we now have to empty our own bins.

I think all second homes should pay full tax as it is there choice to only use second homes at odd times and not live in them. this affects local people.

Moving revenue from one source (government) to another (second home owners) will solve the shortfall, however it shows little imagination. Taxing empty property would either ?motivate? people to sell or reduce rents thus helping the local economy, jobs etc.

People with second homes generate local income whereas people with empty properties do not & are simply a drain on resources and prevent local ownership and/or second property ownership local income.

We use our home about 3 days per week + hols although we have a 2nd home we will move on retirement, we shop local, use local tradesmen + businesses. An increase in the charge would be difficult there are many ?properties? for sale in our area

Family visit Ambleside several times a year. (wife’s family been in Lake District + Yorkshire / since 1880s.)
Second home owners place lower demands on Council services (e.g. less waste disposal) which justifies the current discount.
Second home owners benefit the local economy by the use of local tradesmen and leisure facilities especially.

Are you trying to make people sell their holiday homes? You need to provide more jobs for people to come off any benefits, so you don’t have to reduce their payments so much.
Second home owners make little use of council tax funded services - They should therefore be eligible for a council tax discount.
Second home owners only use a fraction of council services and are thus unfairly taxed.
It makes me mad to see very well off families with a holiday home to have it standing empty for most of the year when local people have to move away because they can’t afford to stay around because there is no where cheap enough to rent or buy. The well off should be made to pay.
As above although our home is a second home we spend 4/5 days a week there and ?everyone? continually add to the local economy. We are now retired.

You should be complimented on handling this problem in the caring and practised way that you have done.
2nd home owners stopping local occupation therefore should pay a premium.
My main concern is that empty properties are dead and contribute nothing to the local economy. Our young people have little choice but to move away because of lack of affordable housing to buy or to let.
Pensioners have to manage to pay Council Tax.
With small incomes waste off Tax Payers monies to change headings etc. Also High Rents should be stopped then the County Council would be better off.
Use of my second is currently far less than I would wish, as I have to visit my mother (104) at least 3 times each week; she lives in _Sussex_. I have recently had to clear and sell her flat, and I manage all her financial affairs which has recently obliged me to spend more time in the south. When at my second home in Cumbria I contribute a lot to the local economy!
*Q6 Not relevant!* 
If people can afford second homes etc., they are more likely to be able to afford council tax
Re (d) and (e) above, aren’t these properties someone’s second home and liable for 90% CT anyway - if not they should be taxed like any other property owned but not lived in by the owner.
People who can’t sell a home are under great pressure, and ought to be left with the old rate. Enough is enough.
*Q4 Widow*
I am a widow. Lost my husband 2007. I have no idea about your papers my husband was the one who did papers sorry I live on my own no family
Property that has been empty for more than 5 years could have to pay 100% extra, and property that has been empty for more than 10years, or left to be derelict could be confiscated. Some form of land value taxation could be implemented to put empty property into active use, before building new homes on Greenfields.
If they have two homes they should pay full council tax on both
I object to scrapping the 10% discount for a 2nd home as I & my family occupy it almost 50% of the year, also that 90% I pay you (without help) is considerably more than I pay for my 1st home (albeit to a different Council). I do _not_ rent it out as many do. We have it for enjoyment of the Lake District and should not be penalised. Your thinking, may I suggest should be to find out who uses their 2nd homes for commercial purposes & charge accordingly.
The problem of empty homes should be addressed as these are houses that could be used by the local population. Empty homes do nothing for the area. Thank you to the Council for keeping us informed.
People who can afford to purchase second/holiday homes and those who can afford to leave their properties vacant should pay full council tax. Often large incomes are raised by the former and the latter often owners waiting for the market to improve. These properties could be let to local people at affordable
rents

If empty house is subject to probate agree to 6 months waiver. Second home owners should pay far more. if second home for personal use ???. If as holiday lets should be business rates + no minimum no of weeks let.

The house is a terrace and not in good condition and in my opinion is in to high a band.

I work at the CAB and am aware first hand of the vital importance to many people of getting council tax benefit.

When we visit our cottage in Field Broughton we use local shops and services and so put much into the economy. I grew up in Barrow - in - Furness and love south Lakeland. However i have now retired and am a widow so any increase in council tax will be a strain.

No issue with removing discount for empty property / second homes, but don't agree with penalising those with an empty property. This could cause hardship following a bereavement for example, while the estate is being dealt with.

All property owners should be liable to pay council tax short - term dispersions should only be given for unoccupiable property, and also in circumstances of death of the owner.

People with second homes do bring in money to the area and should not be discouraged unduly. Surely the money brought into the area by second home owners helps to fund council benefit receivers.

Second home owners use the council services less than the full time residents.

We have 2 empty homes which we would like to rent out, but despite being with an agent for a long time, no-one has come forward to occupy them. People seem to prefer being in town. I have tried to speak to the Councils Empty Homes Officer on several occasions but have never even had a reply. If people need accommodation then the Council ?house? a scheme such as the one in Reading where needy people are matched with landlords and helped with deposits etc.

1) How can you do this when there is no demand for rental property and no possibility of mortgages for young people. 2)This proposal will damage rather than improve the housing stock. 3) The proposal assumes that 2nd home owners have a choice in the matter. 4) You should follow the example of other towns in setting schemes to help those needing homes.

Many second homes are rented out when the owner is not using it. Therefore the properties are usually in use for the majority of the year and using same services as the rest of us.

1. Make the system as transparent + simple to understand and administrate as possible
2. Standard rates without exceptions incentivises use of property resources.
3. Withdrawal / reduction of central funding of discounts will disadvantage poorer / socially deprived areas and reduce redistribution effects.

* added from Q1 c) Depends on the circumstances*

2nd home owners use far less than 90% of local facilities yet are already paying 90% council tax - 100% council tax would discourage 2nd home purchases in area - these contribute considerably to local economy e.g. supporting local shops & tradesmen / women

I think that properties which have been empty for 2 or more years should be compulsory purchased and used for affordable housing or letting.

* Added from Q1 f) None except if a property is empty for 2yrs, or more, and is for sale - then in todays property market. the property for sale, still, should not be taxed.

If you have a job which means you need somewhere to live in as well as a family home it should not be classed as a holiday

People with a second home in south Lakeland bring in a lot of income into the local community via shops and other businesses, in other words they are beneficial to the area. However they do not consume their ??? have of the services provided by the local authority you are claiming that we are an easy, local political target.

- Council should also look to it's costs ( In particular staff, Like all small businesses) to help cover funding gaps from government.
- Removal of discounts on empty properties should help free up a rather stagnant property market.
Second home owners do not use many Local Services provided for by the Council Tax. They use these services at their main Home where they pay full Council Tax. They therefore pay twice. It is only fair that the Council Tax be reduced for use of less Services.

*Q1 f) But not at 50%*
S/L District Council possibly has a greater number of properties registered as second homes than any other area within the U/K. And therefore benefits from the income these households bring. The suggested withdrawal of the remaining 10% discount tend to assume these households can well afford the consolidation of the final discount which at one time was as much as 50% if it is to be removed, it should be phased over 2 years.

Second homes (or a percentage at least) should be bought by local authority to rent or re - sell to local resident.

Some people trying to sell houses will be penalised for having them empty.

As a second home owner we already pay full council tax on our main home. The cottage we keep so that we can visit elderly relatives. We also pay £70.00 per annum for parking.

As a result of your intention to charge full council tax we will be selling our property and you will then not benefit from the income generated by us + the many friends and family who have stayed our house + spent money in the area

* Added from Q8 Heart condition*
Second home owners do not use the services provided by council tax 100% of the time.

f above seem somewhat high but I can understand the reasoning behind this additional charge

Semi derelict in effect rebuilt it. The owner had offered it to everyone else in the valley before accepting our offer. at that time we got 50% tax relief which has now been reduced to 10%, and you are considering stopping that. We don't use the councils facilities which we would if we lived there full time, and yet spend money in the local area. On a financial basis we loose out already.

Second home owners already support _all_ other Council Tax payers. They receive a discount of 10%, whereas their use of council services is well less from 90%. They contribute to the local economy and to remove their discount could result in an adverse impact on the economy. To spread the load equally around all Council Tax payers would be fairer and show South Lakeland residents the ?? community, rather than a jealous and punitive one.

I object to having the 10% discount removed from my second home. I do not benefit from local services which I help fund i.e. refuse collection, education care of older people etc. We take all our refuse home to our main home and no local services are used. We have no income from 2nd home just a place to enjoy in retirement

The cost of the encroachment for tax the jetty has gone up nearly three times. We are council tax payers but have no vote and are disenfranchised. The council rediscovering visitors to the area and many are subject to the law of diminished returns.

As above.

( F ) I agree only if this refers to a property which is a second home.

No comment

Any such income should be ring-fenced as was promised before the last council tax increase from 50% to 90% on second homes to provide homes for low paid workers.

Due to the dire house maker, Local home owners should be supported in their efforts to sell for at least 3 years and not penalised through no fault of their own.

I do not feel sufficiently qualified to complete Q1 more fully. Also i have a damaged spine and unable to leave my home.

Our home in Cumbria belonged to my mother and we're unable to sell due to the credit crunch. We would not have a " second home " by choice and perhaps the council could be discretionary on assessing rates on this property type in the future.
I own a second home in South Lakeland, presently rented out as a holiday-let, which therefore contributes to the local economy by encouraging tourism, without placing demands on local services such as schools and libraries. In common with other holiday lets, it contributes to local employment. Local builders, electricians, plumbers, painter / decorators, and cleaners take care of the maintenance, for example, and there is also the impact on local restaurants, tea-rooms, public houses, cafes and local attractions of all kinds, quite apart from spending in local shops.

Increasing rates will force holiday-let owners to increase their weekly letting rates, which could, in turn, result in reducing tourism to South Lakeland (because visitors will not pay more!), thereby affecting the local economy.

Holiday-lets should be considered separately from second homes, which remain empty for all but a few weeks in the year.

*Added from Q1, d) e) and f) Depends on whether the property is for sale - or just left empty*

My response is perhaps as you would expect but it seems to me unfair that 50% or 100% relief is given for empty properties, but only 10% for 2nd homes. we use very few of the council services but always "buy local" to support the local economy.

As a second home owner I am not using South Lakeland facilities on anything like a similar rate to that of permanent residents therefore a small reduction is completely justified. Second home owners have value in that they bring extra revenue to the area in general spending in Lakeland commercial businesses so should not be overly discouraged when commitment to the area has been clearly demonstrated.

I am concerned about holiday home owners being allowed to escape the council tax scheme and elect to pay business rates instead. Any steps that SLDC could take to prevent this from happening would be very much welcome and the revenue raised could be used to further assist the many vulnerable people living in South Lakeland.

Second home owners get little for their money. ?? still do not even have street lightning I don't think in the last 25 years used the facilities except the road while all ?? ?? state of the loo's while i ?????

We have NO refuse collection there is no access for ambulance, fire services, a reduction in council tax would seem to be indicated.

Second home owners do not utilise the facilities e.g. Health / Law Enforcement / Refuse collection / Education services.

Second home owners contribute council tax payments on their primary residence, what about single person occupancy and reduction of council tax.

Q c) Could be discounted for 3 months not 6
Q f) 50% seems a lot. Perhaps 10% rising.

It is clearly unfair for second home owners who have very little demand on the council services to pay full rates. The existing 10% reduction is already a mean amount. To reduce it totally would mean paying excess rates for the services actually used. Not reasonable!! Second homes provide benefit to the area in other ways in the form of tourism and income brought into the area which would not otherwise be generated.

Although I strongly disagree with increasing Council Tax for second homes as we use fewer services, schools, hospitals etc... and bring revenue to shops, pubs + restaurants - if we gained by eligibility for over 60 bus pass etc... then I might think again!

We bring income into Cumbria. We buy locally, Employ local workmen and support local events. The proposal is purely political and not equalised.

Just because we have a second home which we have saved for + work hard to afford we are being penalised yet again by more taxes. We can only be at one place at a time so why not reduce our council tax on our first home for times that we are in our second home?

Restaurants, Shops, Pubs etc. would be severely adversely affected if the second home owners were not here.

As a second home owner who does not let his property and, therefore makes no profit I feel the proposal to be unreasonable. Spending less than 20% of my time there I feel I still contribute relatively more than full-time residents. I feel a general rise in council tax to be fairer, with, perhaps, a greater increase for individuals profiting from holiday lets.
We were not aware that at present we received a 10% discount! I am not sure we have been given the 10% please check your records.

ref d) e) & f)
If the houses have been left empty for no apparent reason then I believe C.T. discount should be stopped but if the owner is _actively_ trying to sell the house at a realistic price then it should be maintained. If the house is overpriced or being allowed to deteriorate, then discount should be stopped

SLDC should not penalise 2nd home owners - who take up less resources than permanent residents and who bring net income into the area rather than soak up resources. Our house in Haverthwaite is our pension provision for when we move back to the area.

Considerable amount spent in the lakes benefiting local businesses.
Introduce many friends + family to the area who also introduce money to local businesses

As owner of a second home we take nothing from SLDC we and all of our family only give to South Lakeland by using restaurants, and leisure facilities, not only during summer, but at quiet times in Winter, we feel we give rather than take from S.L.D.C.

Once again people who have more than one property penalised. What about people who have a second home only because of inheritance and are trying to sell it and are unable after 6mnths? Are there any exemptions?

SLDC should put in place a scheme for collecting a "visitor tax". We have just had a holiday in France at one of their National Parks, we paid €1.50 per day, per person.

I strongly agree too all the ?s above, also consider compelling 2nd home whose properties are vacant most of the owners year or all year to sell their property at a reduced price to SLDH to reduce the short fall in housing

The propertyied FLAT we have empty for more than 2 years was left to us by my sister we have try to sell for 2 years reducing by more than £2000 and still unable to sell and because of regulation on the property finding it difficult to let.

If people had to pay full council tax on empty properties it might encourage them to do something with them rather than look an eyesore.

I strongly believe that those currently in receipt of council tax should have their current level of benefit protected, and that those who can afford 2nd homes/to leave homes empty should pay full council tax.

I am not in favour of any discounts of any size (%) on second homes or empty homes

If i am to pay 100% council tax on my second home, I demand a vote in local elections. As in the Boston tea party, There should be no tax without representation.

Our second home is leased to us by my deceased cousins son who is a Priest in the Jesuit Society We live in Sweden and visit our second home when we can, several times a year, as pensioners, the air fares depict when we can travel!

Second homes, Holiday lets, Have ruined the area holiday homes etc. should have been taxed more. Years ago.
* Added to question 4 Single parent *

I think that any proposal to increase the burden on second home owners should be considered very carefully. Tourism is of paramount importance to the area and this could produce an adverse impact.

The Private sector is having to absorb extra costs and is having to cut its cloth accordingly. Councils must be seen to do the same.

1) There should be no differentiation between a second home and an empty home - to do so is unfair.
2) People with second homes cost the council a significant less amount in services. Even the 10% discount does not fully reflect this!

This is long overdue. ?l added? I think 2nd homes should incur a surcharge

People with 2nd homes paying 90% of local council tax are a huge bonus to the local authority in that we pay 90% yet consume almost nothing in local services. Schools, healthcare etc., plus we contribute to the local economy via tourism. To hit these people harder is not fair.
I have a 'second home' in Kendal currently charged at 90%. In fact it is my only property but just not my main residence. I already pay more council tax than if I lived there permanently, yet I use very few council services. I spend money when visiting which helps local businesses stay afloat. I do not think it is fair to expect me to pay an additional 10% council tax to fund those on benefit.

Second home owners make very much less use of most council services than average - bin collections, education, roads, libraries, policing, law and order etc. etc. Nobody can be in two places at the same time. We are already paying full council tax in the area where we live, so 10% discount is not an unreasonable concession. And because of the distance I am no longer able to visit the Lake District as much as I used to visit.

*These comments also apply to my wife*

This proposal has a hint of 'Lets tax the incomers ' as such it is rather divisive. The selection and highlighting of 'The other' is generally regarded as a rather bad action whether the other is an incomer, black or Jew. A small council tax for all would be more egalitarian.

As a second home owner for over 20 years we spent most of our leisure time in the lakes. Surely the 10% discount is low enough to ensure we continue to do so. There is ample evidence that their is little local demand for flats in Campbell House Coniston

For the reduction in council tax discount proposed there are also additional costs ?? to holiday homes surely that they are barely profitable now.

* Added from question a1 - Depends on reason for leaving property empty.

Appreciate that council need to raise extra funding following government changes. When I bought my flat it was registered as a commercial letting property and let out most of the year - but the cost went up when I informed council it was now only used for personal use - which is surprising.

My second home purchase was required as I was moved by my employers into Cumbria district (I commuted home for weekends and resided in Cumbria for mon - thurs.) have since retired and retained my property on basis of 2 weekly visits. I contribute to local economy by way of groceries, general shopping etc. and eating out at various restaurants in Cumbria. I feel that local council wants all the benefits from tourism yet is not prepared to invest in it. should 2nd home discount be scrapped then I will adjust my behaviour by taking my provisions from home and not giving custom to the various tourism venues I presently frequent. I may also look to sell property & buy elsewhere where this benefit is not out.

I fully support any changes which continue to support the elderly and vulnerable in our area. I do not believe that owners of second homes should receive any reduction in their tax as they do not constitute 'local' nor 'vulnerable'. Also, homes which are left empty could be used to house young people who have no means of getting a property in this area, or the elderly/disabled who may need independent accommodation. Any reduction in tax on empty houses encourages owners to take no action.

second homes should be charged at a higher rate - especially those used as informal holiday lets

Re: Question 2
In the explanatory text earlier you talk of discounts, etc. being stopped or REDUCED
Question 2 only gives the option of agreeing or disagreeing with STOPPING. Therefore not a representative answer.

Thank you for the very clear information about the issues and options. Your solutions seem very sensible and will perhaps have the added benefit of releasing more houses for occupation and fewer properties left in an increasingly derelict condition. I.e. Kendal bowman property on Highgate, Kendal

Empty properties left unattended for months are a blot on the landscape, gardens overgrown and properties dilapidated Second home owners do not maintain the shared areas of their properties overgrown trees upswept and dangerous pedestrian areas owners

I should be happy to see second homes being taxed at double or even treble the standard rate. Perhaps this would then discourage the purchase of second homes, reduce the general price of homes in the South Lakes, and give local people a better chance of being able to buy in the area.

You should have removed the second home discount as soon as the national rules allowed
Thanks for the opportunity to comment etc. via the web - democracy in action - well done!

Second home ownership often impacts negatively on an area - local shops are less viable, local people are priced out of the housing market, and communities are weakened. There is no reason for second home owners to pay less council tax. They may use local services less, but second home ownership as a whole has a negative impact on South Lakeland, and people in this privileged position should not be financially advantaged when it comes to Council Tax.

Empty homes have an even greater negative impact on an area. Abolishing reductions in Council Tax may lead owners of empty homes to consider selling or renting the property to people in housing need, and SLDC should consider working with such owners to bring properties back into use. With a need for social housing in South Lakeland (and the huge local opposition to the LDF with its unpopular targets for open market new builds) SLDC should be doing everything in its power to discourage owners from leaving their properties empty.

I feel that some provision should be allowed for premises that are unoccupied due to, say, someone dying intestate and difficulties being encountered in probate being granted and also for reasons that are without the power of the owner or his agent.

It seems unfair to penalise the owners of empty homes who often are unable to sell because of the current market situation though they would want to, but are forced to pay council tax bills. e.g. the property may have been inherited from a deceased relative and could become a financial burden on the one to whom it has been left. (this has been my experience)

Second homes and empty are a bad thing in a time of high house prices and too few affordable houses. Anything that encourages these homes to be used for people who actually want to live in the area is a good thing.

2nd homes are owned by people who by definition can afford one home they do not need, to have for just a few weeks a year. This is a huge privilege and damages communities, so they should not also gain by having lowered council tax, meaning local services are damaged due to lowered income.

It would be good if some/any extra income was put into encouraging people who own empty homes to get them rented or sold to people who need housing. Maybe with improvement grants etc.

My initial reaction is that we should be discouraging empty homes. I question whether the discount for empty homes is any longer appropriate.

I would seek to raise Council revenue to enable us to better promote the area for tourism and industry, to lower pollution levels and improve car parking in Kendal.

The current discount of 10% is not sufficient as in my case we don't have a dustbin collection, we don't use public services (schools etc., public transport) & only use the highways etc. a max of 4 months per year.

I am a male 85 years of age, Started work at 14,+ working until 65 years of age. Always paying all my varies taxes as + when due. It does upset one to see the present state we are in, with people avoiding these obligations.

Whilst the number of second homes in the council is an issue, They use fewer services than these occupied 100%, therefore some reduction in council tax seems appropriate.

Why should C. Tax tenants have to pay full CT. Whilst owners of 2nd have discounts and can afford to not live in these properties and can afford the paid second homes. Thus stopping locals to buy a property. ESPECIALY 1ST TIME BUYERS

Although the scheme would be unpopular with second home owners, it seems fair to make shortfall from funds in this manner. It would encourage the occupation of empty properties.

I have had a cottage in Coniston for forty years and use it whenever I can. I have never had the benefit of mains water, sewage or easy rubbish removal. The council benefits of ?schooling? locally, and other advantages which second home owners do not. However, I have used local shops, gardeners, house improvement done by local workers. So there are some advantages which second home owners provide in the local community.

Second home owners add much to the local economy.

I for one have this year spent many tens of thousands of pounds with local tradesmen.

Second home owners bring welcome business to local area - I should know, I do. Services, local shops etc.
I was left an empty property in Kendal following the death of my father. As executor of his will I have been actively trying to sell the property since January 2011. Because of the terrible state of the housing market I have been unable to sell the property up to now, despite reducing the price quite considerably. Through no fault of my own I do not think I should be penalised further in these circumstances.

The council should place greater emphasis on utilising unoccupied properties for the purpose of social housing, forcing the owner to pay council tax.

as an elderly pensioner, the loss of the discount will have a disproportionate adverse effect on my life.

Hitting middle England again for 100% local tax I would expect a vote in local elections

There is no justifiable reason why a property should be vacant for more than 2 years and so full council tax at that time may give an incentive for the owner to provide accommodation for someone.

We spend 2 weeks out of every 3 in our cottage in the lakes, We spend all our cash in and around the district, As do many others like ourselves. We support the local businesses probably more than the so called "Locals" we do not benefit from such things as schools, libraries. Our only real call on services is the refuse, and that is quite sporadic at times.

If a change is made to 2nd homes then it would be viewed as being ‘fair’ if the issue of empty properties is also addressed.

In this difficult sales market, it is totally unfair to penalise vendors wishing to sell but cannot in less than 6 months.

I am a pensioner on a low income i have several disabilities for which i receive DLA including a care allowance, i have to pay for care, gardening + cleaning as i can only undertake light work. I also receive pension credit - I manage but any reduction in support would affect my standard of living, especially as all utilities keep rising by a considerable amount.

I have been doing up a house - not living here and still having to pay council tax. I have never claimed and benefits and think its ?ridiculous? that it goes on property + not owner! I feel let down with SLDC system.

Too many empty houses left for too long

Would suggest _all_ authorities run more on a private business guide lines not as inefficiently as they already do now.

Is there any point?

Even the 10% reduction is not enough. My property is used less than 30% of the year.

second home owners contribute significantly to the local economy. They do not benefit from many of the services provided by the council. They are already putting in more than they take out by paying 90%. If anything the rate should be reduced further. The council should seek efficiency savings to fund the tax reduction scheme.

1. We have already been penalised with out previous 50% discount being ?diminished? to 10%
2. we suffer from serious noise pollution. The flat we use is opposite the Bedega Bar in central Bowness - shouting & swearing in street until 3am at weekends. The flat next door we try to rent out is over the Lakeland Charcoal Grill & has long periods empty because of street noise until 3am.

Isn't fair to ??? to continue to penalise second home owners.

Try and cut actual costs rather than increase taxation on a minority

Council tax is already expensive. Any additional cost may mean we sell our home + therefore withdraw all the tax given. The council would loose out.

Why should pensioners with a second home be exempt from the discount?

I expect that soon as a ‘second homeowner I will be paying 100% council tax. This being so then I feel that I should have the right to vote in the local elections in order to have a say in how my tax is spent and to benefit from any concessions that other home owners paying full tax receive. The fact that I pay tax to another authority should not affect these rights.

Robbing Peter to pay Paul will not work you could lose the 90% you receive from 2nd home owners you should encourage 2nd home owners they don’t put council resources under pressure since they do not use
them.

As a widowed 75yr disabled pensioner full council tax on my second home for occasional visits would be grossly excessive, since i receive benefits at home!

We are in the position of having to have a small second home in Yorkshire as accommodation for my husband to stay week days as his factory closed in Cumbria & moved to Hull. + an empty flat being sold due to my Mother in law death. So we are paying 3x Council Tax’s due to no fault of our own.

People who can afford 2 houses should surely be able to pay full Council Tax. They are also taking housing stock from local people.

I do have a cottage next door to let. Between tenants it is useful not to have to pay the council tax. Particularly as now when it is being redecorated. If you remove it completely you may find the admin of tax over say a couple of weeks a tad inefficient.

Sometimes when people move house, there can be an overlap in tenancies (or other situations) and I do think discount should be allowed in these cases for second home, especially where it’s people who are renting. Moving house is expensive and having to manage it, as well as overlap in bills is a nightmare. I believe making this process easier would be of great help to the housing market, and local people who genuinely are not possessing a second home, but merely moving either up or down the market, or into better accommodation. I think this is something that has not been looked into properly.

There is a strong argument for second homes being taxed at 150% in areas of housing stress to discourage second home ownership - ideally such receipts should be directed towards affordable housing initiatives.

Second home owners bring wealth into the area with no real usage of services - seems that they are being used as cash cows. Makes no sense that a single occupant who can use all the council services pays less than someone who many possibly use them for a few days a year.

Empty houses should be bought by the council as so many young people can't buy a house but could rent a council property.

I accept you need money and I hope it is put to good use and will help the residents of South Lakes & Cumbria I know it will please my 50 relatives who like me are true Kendalians unlike me they stayed at home. (Hope it goes well) good luck.

People will economise further at local shops and restaurants etc.

Second homes being empty in Southlake Land makes prices soar to high for normal young people in the area to afford to settle in the area they were brought up in.

*Q8 Under medication for ex heart-by-pass since 2000*

*Q1 Fairly well off people should pay all council tax. But please note in my view people who are old and vulnerable and poor and others who are poor and fairly severely handicapped through a mental or physical disability should be exempt from council tax.*

If people are not living in there homes because they are sick and are in hospital & especially those who are poor should not have to pay the same as a healthy well-to do person on humanitarian grounds.

Anyone who can afford 2nd homes should pay full council tax.

People who have 2nd homes should have no discount whatsoever, I can't afford my own home so why people have 2 homes get discount. People who have 2 or more homes should not get no discount of any kind.

Which means house owners and welfare claimants will suffer as a result. It and also the council will have to make difficult decisions in where to make the cuts in spending thus taking the pressure of the government and onto local council.

I do not agree with these changes its likely to put up the council tax

I would like my council tax benefit to stay the same.
In making your decision regarding the existing 10% discount on second homes, perhaps you would be good enough to take the following points into consideration.

We have owned our property in Ambleside for well over 10 years during which time we have contributed substantially to the local economy. Over this period we have spent many thousands of pounds in supporting local business including builders, decorators, electricians, restaurants and many other local firms and shops. At the same time we make very little use of the services the council provides (limited to waste removal and when we are in Ambleside). Our road is a private road and therefore not subject to maintenance by the council and there are no street lights (no electricity costs).

On a cost/benefit basis the benefit to SLDC and the local economy is fair in excess of the modest 10% discount we currently receive therefore we do not support your proposal to remove the 10% discount and feel that such a step is totally unjustified.

I need to find another property to live where I work. If I could find work in the lake district I would live there.

* Q4 Stables to main property*
  c) This should be given for renovation of ?? properties.

Registered almshome charity. Need discount for refurbishment & occasional are when can't find new resident which meets entrance criteria

* Q4 Only renting whilst I sell my house & until I buy another home to occupy full time*
  * Q5 This house is currently in the process of a sale I am renting at LA22 9NQ until I am in a position to purchase a house*

Otherwise:
I agree to any discounts for property that is not occupied on a regular basis } (c)(d)(e)(f)

Extended discounts essential for letting market.

If you tax 2nd home owners 100% then give them all the same rights. If voting rights in any area where people pay 100% tax. 2nd owners do not use public facilities/amenities/rubbish removal etc. You risk alienating much needed revenue.

For questions C.D.E.F is difficult to answer as it is down to circumstances as why the home is left empty. If it is to sell due to death. It can take anything up to 2 years or more to sell.

As a lone pensioner I appreciate the help I get with my council tax. I hope pensioners don’t lose out. This should have been done ages ago.

If people can afford a second home then they can afford to pay more.

Second homeowners bring income and help the local economy. The whole system of council tax should be reviewed. This tax is a second mortgage.

Anyone who can afford two or more homes should pay full council tax on all. Whether they are occupied, empty or let out to holiday makers.

Too complex a matter for simple surveys / " opinion gathering " such as this.

* Added from Q1, F This a very complex issue unsigned to such simplistic "Policy"

Properties which are empty & receive 100% & 50% should have to pay C.T unless there are exceptional circumstances i.e. illness, or have the house for sale & are unable to do so.

I live in Essex but have a second home in South Lakeland. The property is used one week in 4 on average and hence the community services used are not comparable to someone with 100% occupancy. It would be unfair to remove the 10% discount, in fact it would be fairer to increase it.

The council should be resisting central government attempts to reduce it’s grant to south Lakeland

No recycle arrangements for grass/hard-core/wood etc. in Windermere. Ambleside. Amenity tip in Kendal very poor.
Weekly normal grey bin collections?
Too many yellow line restrictions, where parking could be possible.

Clearly your second home proposal will be adopted as we are in the minority. However this is purely a "wealth tax" as I’m sure if you did the maths the average 2nd home owner would
cost the council far less than the current 90% charge.

I fully support the council suggestions. To be able to maintain a full council tax benefit service as a family on basic state pensions - no works on private pension x very small capital to be expected to pay for something else would be a disaster. We worry about gas & electric.

Second homes used to enjoy a 50% discount and it was widely accepted that this reflected a low cost to the council.

If a property is empty and advertised for sale it should not be subject to council tax. It is already a substantial drain on the owners finances.

I have concerns about c) d) e) f) in circumstances where owners are trying to sell a house and are unable to do so or problems with a will.

In affect when a person has a second home, for holidays in this area some empty for long periods, young ones wanting to get on the property ladder are unable to afford the prices!

As a second home owner we pay 90% rates and use no Local Authority Services. Payment should be proportionate to use.

I believe if someone has a second home then they should pay council tax on it. as most people rent them out as holiday lets. And there are too many empty houses which should be used.

Second homes kill local communities. I live in a row of eight houses & i am the only permanent resident. No real neighbours nothing is contributed to the local economy.

c) might have a knock on effect in rent paid to private landlords - especially affecting low income families?

d/e) There might be circumstances where maybe if a property has recently been sold that needs a lot of work that maybe a time limited exemption/reduction could be passed onto the new owner?

f) possibly - a good idea if no work is being done to re-occupy the property.

We clearly are privileged, however we cost the authority very little in our use of services e.g. we take all our rubbish home. We deliberately chose not to buy a property that would be considered affordable. We spend a substantial amount in the area. We have no problem in helping the categories of people you choose to mention, notably you don't mention the idle. Why does no one in national government have the courage to carry out a revaluation exercise so that we all pay an appropriate amount.

It would be more honest to call this a wealth tax and the consultation exercise is meaningless as clearly you will go ahead. The money saved could surely be put to better use.

Those who have an empty property should pay more as they are not adding any value to the community. These properties could be sold or let to permanent residents who would not only pay the council tax but also add income and prosperity to the local area.

Why should the burden fall solely on 2nd home owners when we generate tourist income to the area by renting out the properties to tourists? Also, presumably those with empty properties live somewhere else so the empty properties could be classed as 2nd homes - the discount should be the same.

Why do you want to target second home owners? you should alternative proposals to raise extra cash which we should be able to consider this is a one sided questionnaire.

My home is for sale (has been for a year +). I have a small house i have bought and to which i will move when my present home sells. Will i now have to pay 150% on my new home which is empty, awaiting my arrival after selling my present home.

Houses that are empty for six mths are more it should be looked into for the reason they might be trying to sell because of a move for job relocation, but longer it should be stopped.

If you can afford a second home! You can afford to pay full council tax many people can hardly afford ~ ~ for one house. I think Cameron & Cleg want to wake up & live in the real world!

2nd home owners are major employers of local craftsmen our 2nd home is our passion (I am 69, and my wife is 65). We are Equitable Life victims - and converted our savings into a house at KL to escape from the effects of the EL incompetence. We have employed plasterers, plumbers, roofers, tillers, kitchen fitters, carpenters, carpet fitters etc. All local! We shop and use KL facilities. Our intention to spend more time at KL is unchanged. We object to paying more tax for services we do not use.
It's fair to make some changes but don't kill the golden goose!
We are currently trying to sell our house, and it is currently standing empty.
Council tax benefits should be primeraly be used to help low income people not to benefit people who can afford 2 homes.
My additional properties are rented to local occupants. if they are empty it's because i am improving them.
I have a second home for personal use and not for renting out to create added income for myself.
I'd be happy to pay the full council tax but should people who pay the full tax be able to vote in local elections?
As a single person household would I be eligable for discounts?!!!
No other possibilities seem to be considered! - efficiency savings??SLDC appear content to take the easy (or lazy!) way out! Is this a consultation document?? - it would appear that SLDC minds are already made up!!

*Q1 d,e,f) Not if they can't sell*
I was unable to sell my house until recently and had to move out because of a bad neighbor - I needed property discount as I have a low income.
We must encourage the rental market, as the demand is so great at the moment.
There are far too many individuals claiming benefits they are probably not actually entitled to. A campaign to identify these people should be a priority. You’re in danger of driving 2nd home owners out of the area.
We contribute towards the local community.
Avoid at all costs turning second home owners into the bogey people of villages. So often tourists are the life blood of small villages.
E.g we as 2nd home owners do not/cannot use refuse collection services available to us. Yet we still contribute, Thus is only one example.
I hope that SLDC do not simply take the easy option. All areas need to be considered and second home owners, who bring much wealth into the community,should not be made scapegoats.
Surley - we have to be careful not to drive people away?
The current proposals will in time have a positive affect on housing in cumbria and I prefer to see communities evolve rather than dissolve as we have so many holiday 2nd homes in the area. Those who can pay _should_ pay.

I would like to point out our second home is empty for about 6 months of the year, so no bins to empty.
I myself have no property let out on rental but my wife does have one. On some occasions ?it could well take? 6 months or more between tenancies.
I appreciate we are a second home owner and we feel priviledged to be able to afford this luxury, but this is how we spend our holidays, bringing income to the local economy, we have invested in this house for future by saving our hard earned money. We pay full Council Tax at our 'home' address and have never refused or failed to pay. We would appreciate this considreation of 10% to continue.
Second home owners use hardly any of our schools, hospitals, police, fire, ambulance etc but do spend in our shops, pubs + restaurants.
Empty houses are only a drain on £ - bringing nothing, and often looking unsightly!
I am 80yrs old and widowed. My late husband and I bought our chalet 1987. We had not a lot of money. But love the Lakes. If you keep putting cost up. For people like myself, it will be impossible to be able to home there. I think it is very unfair when people our on fixed income
No, Because this ' consultation ' is a charade that will make no difference.
All the proposals seem fair and reasonable, even though by adopting (b) above will adversely affect me!
As second home owners we feel that in fairness it should be recognised that we make very limited demands on local council services while contributing considerably to the local economy.
As A second home owner i don't actually think we have received a discount (although may be wrong !!) and it seems fair not to receive one.
Second home owners spend large sums of money each year in Cumbria. If you drive second home owners away, Cumbria will be financially poorer. Release land for affordable housing in villages.

As a second home owner, we do not use as many services i.e. much less waste to be collected so feel there should be a discount.

There should be scope to charge an additional levy on the owners of second homes. If people can afford to buy second homes in South Lakeland (and probably make money from letting out to friends for holidays etc.) then a Council Tax of 125% or 150% should be affordable for them also.

With the very slow housing market it is not always possible to sell a house within 6 months. An empty property is not always a choice. Forcing payments may lead to repossessions. The choice to move may not be optional but down to the lack of local employment forcing a move from the area. However 2 years should be enough time to either make a rental choice or to have sold so I would support an increase at that time.

I attend my cardiologist every six months but he is pleased with me.

My wife will be 100 in Feb 2013 but she suffers from Dementia for the last 5 years and is in receipt of an attendance allowance. My two sons who use the flat are also OAPs. Already the council is paid for services rarely used. The flat is used for family only and haven’t hired out.

(c) (d) + (e)

If properties are 2nd homes, discounts be stopped. If properties belong to someone ill or in a home, continue maybe lesser rate.

I disagree with cutting the discount for properties which have been empty for less than 6 months as this could effect families where a person has died. People need time to sort out family member’s estates and might not be in a position to pay this tax.

We own a second home and spend more money in shops and for entertainment in the SLDC area than we do at our 'first address'.

In our block is an empty property that could be occupied by someone needing housing. The flat has been empty for over 3 years now it has been deemed unfit for human habitation. However it is in better condition than our flat was when we bought it and we used that for 12 months before doing any work on it, (we used a local builder).

We have also noted that many rental properties are renovated by builders from outside the area, contributing again little to the local economy but clogging up our roads at peak times.

Do not just tax people who work hard and have bought a second home they use on a regular basis because they have no vote.

We have also noted that many rental properties are renovated by builders from outside the area, contributing again little to the local economy but clogging up our roads at peak times.

Do not just tax people who work hard and have bought a second home they use on a regular basis because they have no vote.

You should set up a scheme through Tax where each tenant gets something back. A rainy day scheme it could mean a lot to people who need it most.

Of course concessions should be made if the home is empty because homeowner is in residential care or prison or unable to sell for legal reasons. I receive some council tax benefit for which I am eternally grateful but I don’t begrudge paying what I do despite only earning a small wage everyone has to pay 4 services. However I do begrudge paying for second homeowners.

Holiday homes/2nd homes provide a large income for the whole of Ambleside retailers with low costs to the council i.e. rubbish collection etc.

It is difficult to sell property at present & has been for the last 5 years, therefore a deceased person’s home or a repossession etc. can remain empty for many years (nearly 6 in my case) despite reducing the price in a desperate effort to sell. Taking away the 50% discount or heaven forbid, actually increasing cncl tax to 150% would be the last straw! **someone with an empty home in a deceased’s estate which I am executor of****

I am nearly 80 yrs. old and my husband is 70 yrs., this is one of the remaining pleasures that we are able to enjoy without long distance travel. I have had one hip replaced and suffer from a failing second hip. We bring business into the area by using local shops and tradesmen, but use very few Council Services in our eyes. Those services that we do use are poorly provided, such as waste disposal. The property is on WMV and is not really suited to permanent main family residence, so we do not feel we are depriving any local inhabitants.

As a pensioner alone I am most grateful to the help I get for my council tax. If people are lucky enough to
own a second home, they can and should pay full council tax. They are well off people who do leave their homes empty for most of the year. They just sit on their assess which isn't fair to the local people.

It's about time. However reducing help from the government is not wise and typically conservative action stop subsidising idle youngsters who cannot be bothered to get a job and laugh at everyone else who has to go to work - no housing /tax benefit for anyone under 25

When will councils realise that there is no money left, the last government made such a mess by overspending and borrowing too much. Councils need to encourage the private sector, that in turn will provide the funding it needs.

sorting out probate on inherited properties can be very time consuming. People should not be penalised further for the inevitable delays beyond their control

the idea of charging council tax on empty homes will hit people who for no fault of their own cannot sell their property! **someone who had an empty home****

second home owners who rent out these homes should pay at business tax rates, after all they are a business.

You could of sent this to us via email, you have our email address, When you send out the council tax bills you could ask people for there email address so all letters/info the council sends out can go via email. this would not only save paper but council costs as well.

see above - you need to consider cutting costs and creating greater efficiencies rather than turning to raising income which is what public authorities have done for the past 10 years without realising that constantly turning to hard working people for yet more cash is totally unfair - bring back poll tax - i don’t even have a vote to choose my counsellor - at least when you force this upon us - which it looks is your first choice people will have no further excuse to abuse holiday homers who in a village such as Ambleside actually add to the life rather than detract (as in some smaller communities)

Empty properties as a result of Probate complications should be taken into account

I am 67 years old, a second home owner and have supported local shops and tradespeople for over 11 years, but have rarely used any SLDC-funded services & facilities.

Since my wife's death in June this year, I am now a single person resident. If my property were to be my main residence I would now be benefiting from a 25% discount. So, why not charge a higher council tax for main residences where there are a greater number of occupants (3 or more) who, by definition, will be a greater drain on SLDC resources.

In Q1 c) i have agreed but I think this should only be applied to properties that are not ‘for sale’ i.e. if it was a rented property prior to being empty or if the property is available for rent.

The consultation makes no reference to the rationale behind the current discount arrangements and does not justify the changes. If reference is not made to this in reports considered by Members and valid reasons are not given then I would suggest that the decision may well be open to challenge
I find it odd that I have to pay 90% of the set rate for the property when as stated above we are there for perhaps 10 weeks of the year. If one of my family were to reside there, we would enjoy a 25% reduction whilst making use of the amenities that are available. Conversely, if I declared the property to be vacant, we would get a 50% reduction.

Bar the property having a bed and sofa, this is in the main a vacant property. If I were to recommend an adjustment, properties that have the following circumstances should have these changes made:

- More that 1 person at the property = 100% charge
- 1 person at the property = 90% charge
- Property used for less that 6 months of a year = 50% charge
- Property vacant for more than 6 months but less than a year = 40% charge
- Property vacant for 1 year of more = 25% charge

This way, the people that make use of the facilities would pay their way, those that are not there contribute but not to the same effect.

Fair and even.

We have purchased empty properties in the South Lakeland area and invested heavily in refurbishment to get them back into use. Six months can be a challenge to get a property finished as planning consents and building quotes can take this long. Paying Council tax during the period of refurbishment adds a 4 figure sum to the cost of refurbishment and will be an additional factor when considering projects. As a result, offers on properties will be lower or we will buy in other areas of the country. This means less properties brought back into service, higher rents on finished properties, a downward pressure on house prices and potentially less work for local trades.

The costs should be applied to long term empty properties that are empty for over two years. Anything that helps to get these properties back into use has got to be of benefit to the community at large and does not have additional adverse effects. The up side is the additional income is used to fund support.

My council tax benefit is low, and I find it difficult to understand why the benefits agency do not pursue people who have not worked _or_ contributed to society for many years, yet can afford to drive a car.

People should not be allowed second homes especially in villages where young people have to move out to a cheaper area.

*Q4 For second adult*

Just that i hope it isn't the poor that suffer as history as shown - while the few prosper.

I have suggested reduction of discount on empty properties (over 2 years) to encourage owners to bring them back into use.

As a second home owner we have little impact upon local services - we do not use social services, Libraries, etc. But bring substantial cash to the area. The burden upon second home owners would therefore be disproportionate.

We are in our eighties. We have our own home 28 The Meadows, Arnside, and a second cottage No6. It is not used commercially just so grandchildren and our children can quickly come from the South when we need them, and have somewhere to go as we are getting frail. It is not used commercially. We remarried 18yrs ago after our spouses died and as we had 2 properties to sell and two families.

If the discounts are amended as outlined then the costs to the council will be lower than those homes permanently occupied and therefore the costs levied become a tax rather than a recovery of costs incurred.

RE Q2: It seems illogical to remove the discount for second homes whilst retaining discounts for empty properties. If the discounts were removed from empty properties this would encourage occupation of such properties and increase revenues.

It's hard to know whether empty homes should be given council tax discounts as sometimes when someone dies it is hard to sell the property in this economic climate.
Another stealth tax. Why should those of us who have worked hard to be successful fund the dropouts of society?

Why can’t the council cut costs by making more aggressive savings in its administration.

You do already subsidise the tax payers of Lakeland in a way second home owners already use services for only a fraction of the year. In particular council workers refuse to collect our rubbish unless we wheel the bins into the road and have no way (once we depart) of recovery them. Hence we never use them + dispose of our own rubbish. penalise permanently empty homes, of course, but do not kill the golden geese. Discourage tourism from them who have been longest to the lakes for (???) 50 years makes of ??? resentment. Property speculation deserve it. we do not this is counter productive.

You run danger of being accused of being undemocratic. I am registered to vote in Surrey for local and national elections. With a discount I can accept position but once paying same as everyone else would expect to be able to vote on local ?? - Further, able to access full service of CCC!!

Any change to council tax support would mean I would have to sell my house, I could not find any change from my pension.

Due to nature of district, apart from residential there must be lots of holiday lets (SLDC gets business rates) & second homes (people supporting two communities) we bought second home as daughter boarded at Windermere ST Anne’s - Guest houses generally fully booked invested in area as frequent visitor (local shops/restaurants etc.) 10% is a nice recognition by council.

I am a second home owner who generates no income from it. It is my U.K home from where I make contacts with my grandchildren, nieces nephews & friends. From time to time they live in it for long periods.

I receive attendant allowance & pension credit & do not pay council tax now for 2 years age 83yrs.

As pensioners we would definitely be affected - your notes say the government have said we would not be.

I think landlords, who rent out properties privately should have to pay % towards properties they let out because they charge crippling rent!

*Full comments see attached letter
Object strongly to removing discount for second homes - significantly reduced usage of services. Also bringing income & employment. We note that you say government has also said that pensioners must not be affected by the changes - we are pensioners!
Other concerns are empty homes where the occupier has recently died.

We don’t think it is right that we are expected to pay for services that we don’t use 90% of the year. A 10% reduction would be acceptable.

I feel that removing the discount for second homes is preferable to removing the discount on empty properties. Owners may be obliged to ??? on work or other valid reasons and have difficulty in selling them

Second home owners contribute to the local economy - Use local tradesmen, Spend in shops & Restaurants, Many act as volunteers in the national park.

I put a lot of money into the local economy. This includes new bathroom, electrical and plumbing works, local shops and entertainment.

Do you look at similar taxation for caravans, mobile homes, residential boats, holiday ‘lets’ also - mostly people visiting contribute little to the community. There should be differentiation between people who possess a second home & those like myself who live half in the second home. / If full taxation then should have voting rights.

*Added to Q3 - I volunteer much in South Cumbria *

Pensioners are not to be affected. We are pensioners with a second home, I strongly object to paying full council tax as we do not benefit from many council services. Our bins are never emptied the road outside our home is falling apart and the house shakes every time a lorry goes past. We do not have enforcement for the 30mph limit outside our house. We are not getting full use of council services.

In the current climate, Where the housing market is virtually static, Many if not most houses may be empty for more then six months while owners either have to make it into rented accommodation when waiting for their house to sell, or it may take longer then six months to refurbish a property that needs modernising. Stopping the 50% discount only exacerbates the financial situation of such property owners.
Please remove speed limit on the lake with area only in front of Lowood Hotel.

I suppose it’s a foregone conclusion that second home owners will forfeit to 10% reduction. Why I feel it’s unfair is that where my second home is in Finsthwaite, N. Bridge, we never see street cleaners, police, fire service, and bins only emptied every 2 wks. The council tax is higher than where I live in L’pool which is a large 4 bed house compared to a small bungalow with 2 beds in Lakes. L’pool has a weekly bin service and far more outlay on services perhaps the S.L.Dist Council would do well to follow their example on how to save money.

Why should the workers suffer when the wages aren’t increasing

I have had to live next door to an empty home for over 11 years and I am well aware of the problems their situation causes to your home.

Second homes for commercial rent should pay a premium council tax as the inflow of visitors places an increased burden on council amenities.

Second homes not used for commercial rent should pay existing reduced council tax

Obviously stopping discounts for people with second homes is to my disadvantage, but I accept that it is the most sensible of the options available to SLDC, to deal with the current situation.

As you know the 2nd home discount was reduced from 50% - 10% some years ago. The logic for the discount was the reduced level of services for most 2nd home owners. This logic still applies and it seems very unfair to use the easy option of penalising 2nd home owners. Spreading the cost across other viable options would be more equitable.

Second home owners pay 90% of the tax but only use a very limited services provision, already providing a substantial subsidy to other residents.

I’m very grateful to receive the help I get.

By reducing council tax discount on empty properties will only put up rents (once they are rented). To keep a property in good condition and up to standards costs a lot of money these days, my experience is that when a property is vacated lots of work needs to be carried out to bring it back to standards + this takes time so if a landlord has to pay council tax during this period puts a further cost. SLDC will end up with less properties on the market to rent in the private sector. Putting pressure on the public sector.

No landlord wants a property empty.

My empty property has been on the market for one year, I have had to reduce the price in the hope of a sale. I would like to think it will be sold within the next 12 months.

Is there any chance of back-dating the stopping of the discount for second home owners?

Any one who can afford second homes should have to pay full price and people with Empty house should be made to let them or Pay for having them

I have ticked "Don't know" because I have no contact with people in these situations and never have had in my lifetime.

*See supporting letter for full comments*

Empty Property - are these habitable but empty or not habitable? Long time to renovate property, in the circumstances 150% charge would make renovation more difficult.

Habitable but empty - 50% for two years vacancy is excessive and I suggest should be reduced to cover the second six months only.

Second homes - strongly agree discounts for second homes should be stopped and suggest that the 50% surcharge be applied

Furnished Holiday Lettings

I feel targeting these is the best way to raise the required finance.

I feel it is unfair to penalise properties that are empty due to death of owner when the housing market is so quiet. If you want to sell a property ?freehold?, you cannot have tenants. I am lucky that I have found a purchaser for my late Mother’s property and will be very lucky for the sale to be completed within six months.

Why not introduce an additional 50% C.T. charge on _all_ second homes? - Would be increased income for council and/or might free up more housing stock for local people.
What is the point of this exercise?? You are going to increase the charge on second home owners, whatever my views. Second home owners are a soft touch. We have no vote and no democratic voice in how our council tax is spent.

On the subject of "Empty Homes" I am a builder and often have homes empty once complete and waiting to sell. If we have to start paying more tax then i will think twice about building on the red. Another option for builders may be to leave properties un-furnished until a buyer comes, they however would not be very nice for people living nearby.

It is unfair to deprive second home owners of their modest discount while owners of empty properties continue to enjoy much bigger ones. Second home owners make a substantial contribution to the local community but make minimal demands on the council's services - they are more likely to use services in the area of their main residence. Empty property owners may include speculators whose main interest is financial benefit.

People on a low income should be protected.

People who can afford 2 homes for their own use or to let out as holiday lets can afford the council tax.

You are proposing to milk second home owners but you deny them a vote in local council elections. This seems dictatorial and hypocritical

Any empty property's should be let to local people, we don't have enough houses.

In some cases these second homes are rented out for holiday use.

The property is isolated & receives no police cover/patrol. there is no drainage or sewage and no water supply. The property is inaccessible after heavy rain (several times a ?month? during rainy season) due to flooding.

The single track road needs little attention from the council. 90% would seem to be a fair contribution having been ?decreased? from 50%

What will you do next time around - put a 10% surcharge on holiday homes that do not incur the same council costs as permanent home??

2nd home owners generally very low users of services - charge should reflect this.

I feel other savings could be made to support this suggestion rather than always painting the picture of 2nd home owners not paying their way - in my view an incorrect assumption.

Second home owners bring business to area

Second home owners use less of the local services

It seems you have already decided what to do

The wording of your covering letter is biased.

Due to current housing market and shortage of affordable homes long-time empty properties should be leased, rented or sold.

Second home owners by receiving only a 10% reduction are in effect already providing a subsidy, whilst being the least burden on the current services. get your own costs under control first.

We also need to do whatever we can to stop houses standing empty. If you did this you could build more affordable housing.

All second homes for letting should be classed as businesses

We (wife and self) occupy this house every month for about 10-14 days. We support local organisations such as A.O.N.B and FLAG. We understand that the Council Tax Benefit has to be paid by someone! (If we are paying 100% Tax - Should we have a local vote?)

My property is worth less than £100,000 and with my Manchester house total value is approx. £230,000. I suggest you tax people with property worth more than e.g. £450,000.

It would be fairer if the discount was 50%

As a property developer I take rundown property and turn it into a new home and sell it on + everyone benefits planning, building control, neighbours and the new home owner who will now pay full council tax, so why should i as a business pay council tax on this property. You should reduce the number of councillors
which would help with the shortfall in grant

*Q4 I am on state pension credits*
Continuing from "Q2", paying extra taxes for owning more than one property, is quite correct, one house in enough for most people.

Empty unused properties create a much greater strain on services provided by the council. They reduce available housing for lake landers resulting in increased rents and greater demand for emergency housing. Tourism makes considerable demand on the services provided by the council. A small local tax on tourism would more effectively pay for the reduction in grant for Council Tax.

Concern over those with elderly relatives in nursing homes whose homes are empty & used as collateral for costs or empty homes of above that are proving difficult to sell. One would hope they would continue to be exempt.

And have no right to vote locally (we can only vote at our permanent residence) why should we pay 100% but still have no right to vote?

Owners of empty homes should pay more, Especially long term empty - to encourage them to bring their properties back into occupation.

Second homes are an easy target but reducing the attractiveness of holding second homes also reduces their value and hence the value of all houses in the area. Also we are a holiday rental not a second home. This might reduce our income no visitors and hence our economic contribution to SLDC. Also if we pay 100% council tax we should have a vote.

This looks an easy way to pay for the short fall, Administratively cheap but we use far less than 90% of your services so we are already supporting others.

C - strongly disagree because owners of rented property need time between tenants for repairs and finding new tenant.
C - Families need at least 6 months + to clear home.
D - Repair and paint + and make ready for sale + then for the sale to go through often up to 2 yrs.

* With regard to Q1 b,c,d why does the change have to be all or nothing, Maybe a ??? is possible. Most often ??? finding 'back office' savings so that council tax is frozen foe all.

None

You are taking a popular decision in taxing people who you think can afford and who have no say in electing councillors or determining the level of council services. Why not take a hard decision and reduce services according to means.

As someone who has the privilege of a second home I completely agree with the proposal to remove the council tax discount for second homes. I never really understood why it was offered.

The proposal is unfair. As a second home owner, we already contribute more than our fair share towards many local authority services, which we receive no benefit from. These notably include rubbish collection. SLDC do not collect our rubbish as bins cannot be left on the road all week and SLDC have refused to collect from bins in back passageway.

There are too many state and local Council hand-outs in this country. I pay my way and it is _very generous_ of me to offer 90% of the regular Council Tax on a property that is un-occupied for 20% of the time. I worked hard to afford it and should not be penalised.

I have a concern re removing the Council Tax discount for properties that have been empty for less than 6 months in that the reason for it not being occupied could be that it is being renovated to make it fit for occupation.

I find it hard to believe that by removing the second home discount the council will in future be able to make up the shortfall.

I feel that additional council tax homes empty for more than 2 years may not be appropriate in all circumstances and therefore assessment / information should be requested from the owners so financial hardship would not be incurred.
SLDC already receives a subsidy from 2nd home owners vis-a-vis the SLDC services they consume. Using removal of long term empty properties & incentivising owners to dispose serves as ?? receive greater & encourages movement in property market.

This may read rather selfish, but at the age of 77, and using my apartment twice, thrice max per year, I feel i contribute adequately to the council for the few, if any, facilities i receive.

1. If second home owners no longer receive a council tax discount they should enjoy the same facilities as permanent residents :- e.g. voting rights; bus passes.
2. Spreading the increase across all council tax payers would be preferable - a small increase for all instead of a large increase in some.
3. " The council is committed to only raise council tax by the minimum amount possible " - this is clearly untrue for second home owners, many of whom are pensioners. perhaps if we had the vote, you would think twice before adopting this measure.

I am a Cumbria by birth - Carlisle- and all my adult life i have wanted to return. I have, with a large mortgage bought a property - but until i can clear this mortgage - i have to keep working at my job. I do not let my property - as i live in it in school holiday time. So i find myself an unwilling 2nd home owner + am sad to pay more. Other 2nd home owners are not in this category; say up - individuals have v different circumstances. As the market recovers i will be able to sell in the south.

Having a property only used for 2-4 weeks in the year is not good for anyone in the community or relying on tourism. Properties that are holiday let are a different animal and are needed for tourism and should not be hit just because they are the easiest to target administratively.

If second home owners are to pay the same as other residents then they should have an equal say in how their money is spent. i.e. A vote in local elections.

Why change a good system that seems to work well?

Instead of leaving them to rot. I also think all people should pay when working. There is lots of people living in the community who use all the facilities the councils provide and don't pay a penny. Being a pensioner myself it is very difficult paying Council Tax on £145.91 a week pension!

*Q4 small amount £35 approx. which i am grateful for*

*Q8 but my partner does*

SLDC should accommodate reduced grant by economies in staff and service not by increased taxation which will damage further the local economy

Please increase the council tax discounts for second homes.

My comment is that South Lakeland Dis Council should encourage second homes in the aria, it helps to generate lots of money - being spent in shops restaurants & with local business's & tradesmen, it's good for the aria. Kirkby is lucky it doesn't have loads of empty retail premises some or a lot of this must be due to second home ownership.

Second home owners contribute a disproportionate return to local income. Family & friends always spend time on shopping expeditions but place a small annual burden on council facilities.

We spend a _lot_ of money in restaurants and local businesses - plumbers, garden centres, skilled tradesmen, retailers but use barely any of your services - A refuse collection collecting diddly squat every 2 wks!! Your proposal is out of order.

*Q10 There is little point!! turkeys and Christmas spring to mind!!*

Distinction should be made between homes used as a business and let to make money, and those like mine, used solely & privately by family & close friends. I am widowed and retired and appreciate the concession and think it fair. Any concession for a deliberately empty property, on the other hand is a scandal with national housing shortage existing.

*Q5 privately used*

2nd homes are chosen by those with income to spare both savings accounts and pensions provide appalling returns. Penalise us and the council will have to fork out a lot more in the future for ?? elderly residents.

When homes are empty due to death if owner council tax should be subsidised at low rate because difficulty for relatives in tying up loose ends and selling property.
We still need benefit for council tax to help those that need it

The major industry & income for Cumbria is from 2nd home owners and holiday makers we _must_ _not_ jeopardise or upset this important source of income

In this current climate, with the housing market not moving - it is wrong to charge 100% council tax for an empty property. Facilities are not being used, and I even don’t have ‘Street Lighting’! Thanks.

We live on Aynam Rd and I’m sure the council tax should be less living on such a busy road we get no peace from the traffic I think Aynam Rd should be made a special case for a reduction.

If, as in our case, a property becomes vacant and is in need of renovation before it can be sold or let allowances should be made, say six months for necessary work to be carried out. It would be unjust to tax a dwelling which is in such a state that it cannot be sold or let therefore there should be no income.

This is a biased comment found (and probably intended) to influence those jealous of 2nd home owners. As I am of Lakeland stock (from Lowick) I take exception being treated as if I were an outsider! This confirms your bias against 2nd home owners.

Letter attached addressed to Councillor Evans.

*Added from Q5 LA9 7AJ is the property unoccupied subject to probate*

Your ‘under consideration’ proposals are much fairer than your main proposal. We all know empty houses are a major problem and perhaps removal of some of their discount should be considered now. This would encourage sales and return empty homes into use.

A true second home uses less council services. Holiday let homes use more services but play a vital role in the local economy. Local people and businesses own many such properties.

This is not the correct place to rise extra funding.

Council Tax discount for properties that have been empty for less than six months should be reduced from 100% to 50%.

Do not labour under the delusion that all second home owners are loaded with money. My home is the only place I now go to for my annual holidays.

It all depends why homes are empty.

I am in the military and required to serve over seas by HM Govt. I choose to keep my primary residence in the UK, but am forced to pay council tax!!

If the removal of second home discount was the only way to pay for the reduction in grant I would reluctantly support it, But as a born and bred Cumbrian who spends much time living in the county, though my main home is in S.E. England, I believe the 10% discount is justified. Your other proposals seem reasonable and I would hope would be a viable alternative.

2nd homes can be small "bolt - holes" used 50% or more of the time: Provided their number is kept 'in' proportion they can benefit the area, paying 90% now, for a 50% usage of services.

Contingency planning for potential further reductions in Central Government grant should be considered - presumably with consideration of increasing council tax.

South lake taxes are already exorbitant. I own a flat in a block purpose built for holiday use I am not taking a home from locals & I own and rent out.

BAND C £1263 for one room with kitchen area, 1 small bedroom 10’ 3"x5’5" and a communal garage(long & ???)

At home Sefton BAND D £1,113 Semi detached house, 3 beds 2 reception, separate kitchen, gardens front and back.

I feel I am already subsidising the locals for schools, councillors wages, refuse etc. I use local shops, traders if you drive out ??? ?? you will have more unemployment and more needing benefits.

My parents lived here till they died and left it to me.

I was born and brought up in Grange and our 2nd home has been our family home for over 60 years. And still is. My husband & I do not holiday abroad(pensioners), our children & grandchildren visit us while were here. I feel we are paying council tax for nothing when we’re not here so deserve the discount. When we are here, we have bins emptied but not much else. The pavements are mostly done by volunteers (not like when I was a child - all done by the council workers) Police are non-existent in Grange. So what do Grange council
tax payers get for their money?

Second home owners do not place twice the demand on local authorities and are already, therefore, contributing much more than their fair share.

I pay 90% of council tax on the empty (furnished) granny flat, which I cannot let since it’s entrance is thro my house + at 81 i would find this too worrying. I have been to SLDC offices to discuss amalgamating house + flat but was told this is impossible since the flat has a kitchen. Any addition to the financial burden of paying 2 lots of tax would probably mean I would have to move.

The cut in grant is intended to fall upon people of working age who have the option to work for a living - the cut in grant should be passed on to this group.

Council Tax aims to collect taxes to support people who live in South Lakeland. Empty properties do not impose costs on the Council. It is illogical to tax owners - who in many cases are not ‘rich’. Why tax properties where no one lives - this is the politics of envy.

Re statement c) above - (remove discount where home has been empty for less than 6 months): this proposal could be a deterrent for someone who has just purchased a property and is having major repairs (which may well improve the property) completed before moving in.

Unfortunately this questionnaire is largely irrelevant as you appear to have already made up your mind + assumed that all taxpayers will vote against second homes owners. You should be looking at making savings ??? SLDC in it's entirety rather than penalise an easy target.

Loss of valuable income / tourism to the area. Ultimately local jobs would be lost. 2nd home owners should not be penalised.

I think it is immoral to charge second home owners the full amount. we use hardly any services as it is & we pay more @ 90% than i do for my main residence in Manchester.

There needs to be some flexibility for empty properties up to 6 months ( to allow for probate problems, time to put property on the market , renovation etc.)

2c - possibly reduce level of exemption

Not everyone who owns a second home is rich.

After being made redundant my husband started his own business. But he could never take time away to have a holiday. Hence we bought a small flat in Grange from which we could work and holiday at the same time.

Sadly he died 11 years ago and is buried in Grange cemetery. I can easily travel there by rail and would be very sad if i had to give it up.

The term " Second Home " is typically used to cover all properties not fully occupied. I use very limited services in either of my home locations but am penalised. I may elect that main residence is in Cumbria and have second home in Manchester.

Will this affect people on benefit as we cant afford council tax especially as i am unfit for work.

If properties are empty for length of time e.g. houses. why can't they be rented out for short stay or long term, to help cover costs of rent etc. extra charge in council tax may force more people to do something with the empty buildings rather than leave empty.

Those second home owners who presently pay 90% Council Tax do support the local economy by spending money on food, other household items, carpets, capital goods, etc. in local shops, transport, water, electricity, gas, petrol and diesel, and local tradesmen for maintenance of their properties, both inside and outside, etc. Although they pay 90% of the Council Tax, they are likely to make demands on substantially less than 90% of the facilities that are provided through the Council Tax.

Conversely, anyone who owns an empty property is not supporting the local economy to the same extent. When no one lives in an empty property there is no associated spend on supporting local shops, buses, taxis, tradesmen, etc. Yet the Council Tax discounts given to empty properties range between 100% to 50%. Surely it makes better sense that the Council Tax on a property that has been empty for more than 6 months should receive no Council Tax discount so as to encourage arrangements to be made by the owner to get the
property rented, sold or kept so that it has to pay either 100% or 90% Council Tax. If it is rented or sold it will no longer be empty; it will be inhabited by people who will support the local economy, shops, transport, etc., and the SLDC would receive either 100% or 90% Council Tax instead of giving either a 100% or 50% discount.

We suggest that second home owners continue to pay 90%, whilst empty properties that do not help support the local economy should be charged the full Council Tax (or more if they have been empty for more than 2 years).

Exorbitant ferry fares for residents (+ tax-paying 2nd home owners - on fixed incomes/pensions)- In Claife Parish make it increasingly difficult to maintain our homes. Indifferent garbage collection & lack of public transport make South Lakes expensive place to visit.

Second home owners fund services for local resident whilst they access these services for a limited time. In this way income from 2nd home owners sustains these services they rarely use. If they were to sell their homes these would then be occupied by many more service assets _all_ the time. Can these services then survive?

In principle, users who use fewer services should not be penalised / discriminated against - Applies to all of b), c), d), e) & f). It is acceptable that second home owners pay a little more than they use, but paying 90% for ~ 50% services is enough.

In current economic situation trying to sell houses is difficult and therefore properties often on market in excess of 6 months. Relief on council tax should be temporarily extended until situation improves. As an executor it is very difficult at present time.

My opinions are based on the housing situation only. I can not understand why people who can afford 2 houses should not pay full price when those who struggle to find a house have to pay in full

If you can afford two homes you can pay 100% on them both. if you have two cars you have to pay full road tax and that is a government thing

Those second home owners who presently pay 90% Council Tax do support the local economy by spending money on food, other household items, carpets, capital goods, etc. in local shops, transport, water, electricity, gas, petrol and diesel, and local tradesmen for maintenance of their properties, both inside and outside, etc. Although they pay 90% of the Council Tax, they are likely to make demands on substantially less than 90% of the facilities that are provided through the Council Tax.

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We suggest that second home owners continue to pay 90%, whilst empty properties that do not help support the local economy should be charged the full Council Tax (or more if they have been empty for more than 2 years).

When I bought my house in Ulverston, I had no idea that SLDC classified it as two separate dwellings because the top floor had at some point been used as a separate flat.

At the moment I can just about afford to pay double council tax because of the discounts. Now it seems SLDC are planning to treat me as if I own an empty property somewhere and financially penalise me!

If pensioners can’t suffer because of Council Tax changes, how is it fair that I shall be suffering because of changes to the discount rules?

If second home owners are now required to pay full council tax, shouldn’t the same rights be given in return i.e. the democratic right to have full representation in return for the taxation? At the present time, a second home owner has no representation in the location of the property. In addition I fail to see why second home owners should be the target of this scheme when holiday property businesses and empty property owners...
continue to benefit from council tax reduction or exemption.

Since the housing market is so depressed it is unfair to expect homeowners who have had to move for work to have the added burden of council tax on their empty home.

As a second home owner I do not have a vote in the local elections. Whilst I have not bothered in the past because of the discount recd. I feel that in the future - if paying full council tax I ought to have a "SAY" by being able to vote for who makes decisions that affect these & other local issues in the future.

If one is unable to move because of the static "chain" in house sales, one needs assistance in many cases, or because of age & or infirmity one has to move & cannot sell the original property.

I pay full council tax at my home of residence I use my property in Bowness for a small percentage of the year + do not require any services so I feel I should not pay 100% council tax. I feel 10% is not enough reduction.

As a second home owner, I contribute to the economy of the area through shops, Restaurants, Maintenance firms i.e. local businesses. I should not be penalised in the way you are suggesting.

Second home owners are an easy target but they undoubtedly contribute to the local economy without fully utilising local services.

As a Landlord of 2 flats it is sometimes difficult to fill vacant properties in less than 6 months therefore the removal of discounts in council tax would have to be compensated by an increase in rent.

Council tax should be paid for in, Percentage tenant, by the user of the facilities provided by the council.

It seem unfair to penalise people trying to sell properties which have been left empty when they move, and who use less services.

Housing is a big issue especially in Rural Cumbria second homes and holiday homes that stand empty for most of the year are killing communities in villages and are annoying for residents who's children can not afford to move towards independence.

There should be no council tax incentive to leave houses empty while at the same time there are locals on a housing waiting list.

Increasing local taxation against second home property is a secondary layer of tax given central government are also proposing further property taxation. It is also likely to be (although not always) an attach on those with the wealth to afford a second home. Ultimately such tax initiatives risk doing away those who facilitate bringing revenue into the area. It is ????? the local authorities to drive in efficiencies and deliver more services for less cost; Not simply demanding more money.

I have worked away from my family due to circumstances which are beyond my (our) control. I occupy a "second" home due to necessity. If it becomes un-economic to continue this arrangement I will move my job back to my family & sell this house.

Why do you not increase council tax on static caravans in S.L.D.C. or increase council tax on caravan parks?

Why not consider individual requests for council tax benefit to check that the claim is valid and if so grant on a sliding scale in proportion to their income.

In Stockport as I am a midwife in Manchester I am regularly at the afore said address - it was my parent's house where I grew up. I already have to pay two TV licences, council taxes etc. etc. This is not a holiday home.

I do not understand the logic of second home owners (who contribute in time & effort to the area) being given a significantly smaller discount (at 10%) than developers etc. who have empty properties for extended periods. I think their discount should be less & the discount for second home owners more.

If you abolish any distinction in taxation of second homes, I will add myself to the electoral register - no taxation without representation.

Whilst agreeing to c) d) e) f) I suggest that all areas take the pain and are reduced across the board for fairness.

Item c) should remain for properties sold after bereavement / exceptional hardship ?cash?.

In an area dependant on tourism with substantial 2nd home ownership there is a benefit in terms of a subsidy provided by these owners. It is unfair to penalise them further.
Kendal as a town is dying, just look at the pubs, shops & restaurants that are empty or closing - they are an eyesore. We should be encouraging people to come & live in Kendal, people who will spend money on the high street & support the local economy. We want more for Kendal than charity shops. By charging the full rate you run the risk of 2nd home owners continuing up to A591 & by passing Kendal all together it is shameful that properties are stood empty for long periods of time depriving some people of a home. Empty / Unused homes over 6 months are an outrage when there is pressure to build such a large number of new homes.

I feel that it is much more appropriate to remove the discount on properties that are EMPTY. Those which are used on a regular basis help to bring much needed revenue into the local community by funding local businesses / builders / plumbers / etc.

isn’t the empty disc of 100% for props empty less than 6 months often claimed by landlords for periods prop empty between tenants. If they lose this wont they just put up rents to cover this? I don’t want my rent to go up more than it has too
*Added to Q10 for Email address - Sorry i cant afford it*

Second home owners do not make demands on services paid for by council tax. We consider ourselves part of the provision for visitors + tourists on an informal basis as our accommodation is also used by friends and family throughout the year.

I feel your main concern should be recent properties which could be used to house people, especially over 6mths - loss of council tax benefit should focus attention on those who leave properties vacant. 2nd homes bring additional resources to the ?area? i.e. shops restaurants etc.

The country needs to sort itself out.
Equality for all.
Chances to ???

Not all second-home owners are wealthy (our family bought our property in the 1960's when it cost little compared with current prices) also not all second-home owners make money from renting out the property 2nd home owners have a minimal impact on SLDC services. (refuse collection only) a lot of properties are let and holiday maker expenditure supports local business' local's do not spend similar amounts yet use all the services - 2nd home owner are therefore underpinning SLDC income

It is grossly unfair to tax 2nd home owners.

Could this proposal not be taken further? If someone has enough disposable income to afford a second home in this area, surely they could afford to pay 50% or even 100% MORE council tax, never mind simply removing the 10% discount!

On that note, what about a property purchase tax, rather like stamp duty, to be paid by any non-local buyer of any property? The proceeds of which could be used to fund support for low-cost housing for local people, of which there is a desperate shortage!

Removing the 10% discount for second homes is the easy option and I have no fundamental objection to it. However removing the discount on empty properties would have the added benefit of helping the housing market particularly those who are homeless.

The Government have made may changes to benefits during this parliament. One of their aims being to ensure that working is always preferable to inactivity. Your leaflet makes much mention of 'the most vulnerable'. These are people who tend to need most support from local authority services. By choosing not to ask for 10% contribution to council tax actually disenfranchises these people. Everyone should contribute something however small so that they have a vested interest and subsequent respect for personal and procedures. Our property in South Lakeland is quite modest and is used by ourselves, family and friends on an occasional basis. This brings tourism into the area, benefitting the local economy. We also engage two people to assist with the house and garden. Finally if 100% contribution is taken for council tax purposes is there not a case for us to be entitled to voting rights?
*see attached letter for full however summarised as*

1. Inequity of Full Council Tax charge on second home owners

2. Other options are not even being considered

3. Penalizing second home owners to the exclusion of all other classes of owner

4. Second home owners are an integral part of the community

5. Economic burden should be shared by all

Holiday homes should pay full council tax and not be treated as businesses paying Business Rates (the amount paid is much lower). The additional monies raised could be used to lower the council tax liability for all households that live permanently in South Lakeland.

No further comments thank you.

As a pensioner with a disabled partner we would find life even more difficult if we had to try and find the council tax money. It is all very worrying indeed.

As a second home owner who does not rent out but puts a lot back into the local economy i.e. local tradesmen, eating out and local shopping, I feel that I would be paying for services I hardly use.

I suspect that I feel you should look at reducing some services (e.g. hedge cutting) to the more remote valleys but that may be very difficult.

Properties should sell to South Lakeland District Council for families with young children, if some properties are flats for single adults.

Reduce government payrolls!

Having been the owner of a rental property, I feel 6-12 months is long enough for a property to be renovated ready for re-habitation. Such is the demand for housing in our area. If it cost more to keep an empty property or 2nd home it may help reduce some of the lack of housing problems and the need desecrate the countryside by building more houses.

The discounts for empty properties should be stopped for non-residential properties i.e. all commercial properties.

There are many reasons for having second homes. I do not accept that the present concessions should be stopped. Also, please note that three properties in the building where my flat is based have been on sale for several years.

Second home owners and their rental customers are a significant proportion of the tourists coming to SLDC’s area. They therefore represent an important input to the economy this was clearly demonstrated during the foot and mouth epidemic when movements were restricted - businesses lost much money.

I don’t understand the formula for this consultation. Obviously tenants will tick boxes that are best suited to not costing them.

It is very nice to be part of your survey. I am 69 years of age and it’s lovely to think my opinions count. Thank you.

With regard to empty properties; the current climate is not good for selling - my house has been on the market since 2009 and is proving a great burden.