

Recycling Houses; The Scottish Empty Homes Partnership

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Scottish Empty
Homes Partnership

Who is the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership?

- Came about as a result of the Scottish Government's 2009 review of the private rented sector
- Started work in 2010 with the appointment of Empty Homes Co-ordinator
- Funded by Scottish Government and hosted by Shelter Scotland
- Advisory Group consists of Scotland's Towns Partnership, COSLA, Community Land Scotland, Scottish Land and Estates, and Scottish Housing Network



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What are the challenges facing us?



- Currently estimated at around 34,000 long term private sector empty homes in Scotland; likely to be more
- Not a statutory obligation
- Lack of funding



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What problems do empty homes cause?



- Anti-social behaviour; fly-tipping, arson, vandalism and theft
- 18% reduction in neighbouring property value
- Drop in community pride
- Lack of spend in the community
- Could endanger local facilities and even ultimately put the sustainability of settlement at risk



What do the public think?

- 75% concerned about anti-social behaviour as a result of empty homes
- 60% worried about reduction in the amount of housing available
- 54% said decreased sense of safety for people living nearby
- 49% thought empty homes lowered local property values
- Only 3% of respondents thought that empty homes don't cause any problems at all

*Source: YouGov survey 12th July 2016



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So what do we do?

- Capacity building organisation
- Training seminars
- Tools and guides for practitioners
- Lobbying local authorities and government
- Hosting best practice meetings
- Annual Scottish Empty Homes Conference
- Empty Homes Advice Service
- Local Projects Service



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What have we achieved so far?



- Over 1800 empty properties back into use since 2010
- 697 last year alone
- 18 local authorities now have a proactive empty homes service
- 21 empty homes officers now employed



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What other benefits does empty homes work provide, besides housing?

- Greater employment opportunities in the community
- Work for local builders and suppliers
- More environmentally friendly way of increasing housing supply than building new homes
- Increased community spend...



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On The Community Spend...

- Average h/hold spend per week £257.90 (not including housing costs, energy bills etc.)
- That's £13,410.80 per year
- So each empty home costs the area over £13k per home!
- For 100 homes, that £1.3m



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Your ideas

- Would you use the service?
- How do you think the service could help you?
- What do you think is preventing you from tackling empty homes in your area?
- Could we get our message across to a wider audience?
- All suggestions welcome! Even if they seem radical, we're happy to hear them and see if we can make them work.



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What is the process for getting in touch?

- Referrals via Empty Homes Advice Service
 - emptyhomes@shelter.org.uk
 - 0344 515 1941
- Email direct: gavin_leask@shelter.org.uk
- Phone direct: 0344 515 2237



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