



**Raising standards,
creating opportunities**

Empty Property Information Leaflet

The Empty Property Campaign

The Isle of Wight Council would like to identify empty properties. Once they have been identified the owner can then be helped to decide on the best option for the property to be brought back into use.

This ensures the best use of valuable resources on the Island. It will also have positive benefits for the community. The obvious advantage is that we have additional housing stock available for Island residents and it reduces pressure for greenfield development. The more housing that can be provided from existing resources, the less need to develop greenfield sites.

The Association of Chief Police Officers describe empty properties as “a honeypot for crime”.

In some cases neighbouring properties lose value as a result of nearby empty homes, and in the worst cases empty homes can turn residential and commercial areas into No-Go zones.

Bringing empty homes back into use is crucial to the long term prosperity of run down areas, whether residential or town centre.

THE EMPTY PROPERTY OFFICER

The Empty Property Officer plays a vital role, providing a first point of contact for property owners (and for members of the public wishing to report the existence of an empty property).

Many empty property owners are reluctant to undertake necessary work to bring the property back into use. There may be many different reasons for this. However, the Empty Property Officer can offer advice and support property owners in identifying the most suitable way of gaining an income from their empty property.

HOW DOES THE CAMPAIGN OPERATE?

Most importantly, the foremost aspect of the campaign is to identify empty properties.

Once identified, the Empty Property Officer will contact the owner to determine the reason why their property is empty. Where appropriate, a range of options to secure re-occupation will be discussed, and advice offered as to the most suitable.

The Empty Property Officer will assist in bringing the agreed option to completion.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS

Our objective is always to work with owners of empty properties to help the situation. There are many options which may assist the owner which include:

- Letting the property independently
- Letting via an Accredited Letting Agent
- Developing the site
- Selling the site
- Housing Association purchase

If these options do not work then the Isle of Wight Council may use various powers to enforce the improvement of empty properties following negotiations with the owner, such as;

- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- The Housing Act 2004 including Empty Dwellings Management Orders
- The Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Building Act 1984
- The Housing Act 1985 Compulsory Purchase Orders

WHO BENEFITS

Everyone benefits, but the greatest benefit is to the owner of the empty property. By improving its condition, and bringing it back into economic use, it ceases to be a worry, and becomes a valuable productive asset. The area is improved and additional housing is available to those who need it.

Other benefits include:

- New Housing supply.
- Regeneration.
- Financial gains.
- Tackling disrepair
- Response to public concern
- Stopping further greenfield development

HOW DO YOU GET INVOLVED?

If you are the owner of an empty property, you should contact the Empty Property Officer to find out more. If you live next door to an empty property, or pass one on your way to work we would like to hear from you. If you know somebody who owns an empty property – perhaps a relative or a friend, or someone who lives abroad - we would like to know about it.

Please contact us and help us bring empty properties back into use.



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