

Inverclyde Council's Local Housing strategy identifies a key action to increase the number of long-term empty homes brought back into use. A long-term empty home is one that has been vacant for 12 months or more. There are estimated **560** long-term empty private sector residential properties in Inverclyde. This is a significant proportion of housing stock that is not effective in meeting local need and demand.

If your property has been unoccupied for 12 months or more from 1st April 2018 the council tax charge will be 150%.



Empty homes can be a magnet for anti-social behavior, crime, vandalism, arson and fly-tipping. Houses left unoccupied can fall into disrepair quite quickly, becoming a blight on the neighbourhood and has an adverse effect on the value and sale ability of surrounding properties

*Shelter Scotland estimate "an empty house can cost an owner over £7,000 per annum.
That includes the cost of council tax, minimal security and lost potential rental"*

There are significant benefits to owners and local communities by bringing empty homes back into use:

- ❖ Cost benefits to the owner if they rent or sell;
- ❖ Condition of a property won't deteriorate as quickly if occupied;
- ❖ The outlook of the neighbourhood can improve reflecting on local house prices;
- ❖ The local economy benefits;
- ❖ Social, education and transport amenities are utilized minimizing the risk of losing services, particularly in rural areas;
- ❖ The property will be providing accommodation for someone in housing need.

Reasons for leaving properties empty may include; financial constraints; personal matters; lack of knowledge/skills or owners do not reside in the Inverclyde area. Depending on the property type and condition it can be a challenging task for owners to bring properties back into use.

How can we support owners to bring an empty property back into use?

Inverclyde Council's Empty Homes Officer, can provide a range of information, advice and assistance to owners.

Property Condition

- Information and advice on renovations
- Guidance on statutory duties
- Energy efficiency resources available

Financial Assistance

- Details of VAT discount and exemption rates
- Builder merchant discounts

Renting out your property and generating income

- Landlord Registration information
- Rent deposit guarantee scheme
- Advice on finding a tenant
- Repairing Standard
- Sweat Equity Model – possible option for owners who wish to retain their property but are unable to afford the refurbishment and can find a tenant willing to undertake works

Selling your property

- Valuation
- Marketing
- Matchmaking Service – sellers and buyers can register their interest

If you require any further information or would like to report an empty property, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Contact Information

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