

What will happen if my property remains empty?

Although the Council has various statutory powers to deal with poor condition properties it is keen to work with, and encourage owners of empty properties to re-let, re-occupy or sell them without having to use enforcement action.

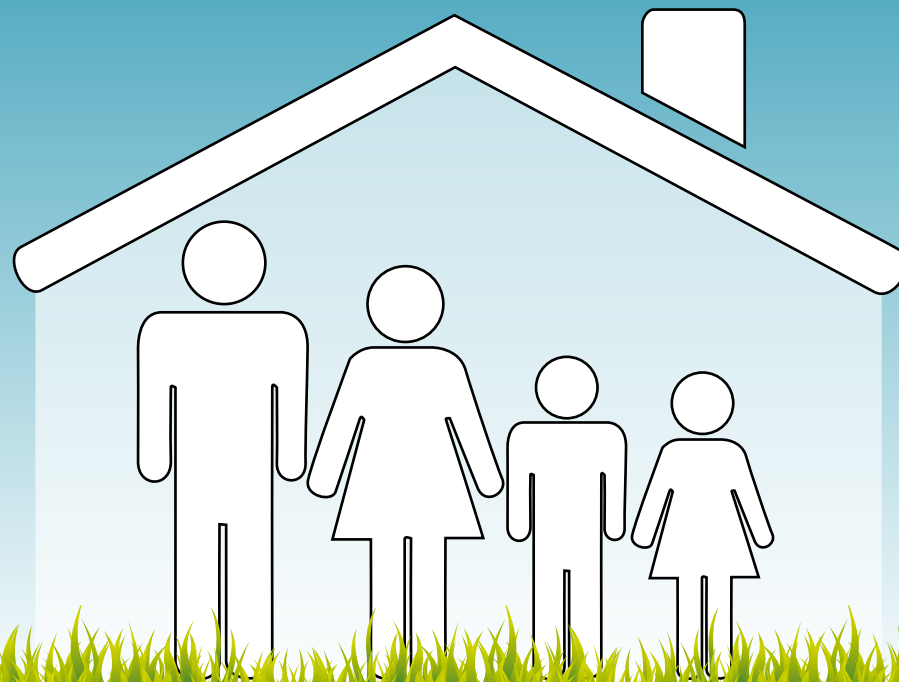
However, if all offers of voluntary assistance have failed or been rejected, and the Council considers the property to be an exceptional case, a range of enforcement action may be used in order to ensure that empty properties are brought back into use.

And finally...

If you are the owner of an empty property, please think about the options suggested in this leaflet. Receiving some advice from the Housing Solutions Service could save or even make you money and provide a family with a home.



Empty Properties



Useful advice and information

On renting out or selling your property can be found at:

www.direct.gov.uk

For help in finding a letting estate agent please go to:

- Association of Residential Letting Agents (www.arla.co.uk)
- National Association of Estate Agents (www.naea.co.uk)

To get free advice and support on bringing Empty Homes back into use contact the Housing Solutions Service on 01484 221350 or email housing.solutions@kirklees.gov.uk

A Waste of Homes and Money

Information for owners of empty properties

There are 3500 empty homes in Kirklees. Kirklees Council is offering advice and support to owners of empty properties to bring them back into use.

Bringing empty properties back into use will:-

- Reduce the number of empty properties in the private sector
- Improve the environmental impact of empty properties on an area

Empty Properties:-

- Attract crime, arson & vandalism
- Can cause damage to neighbouring properties
- Reduce neighbouring (and your) property prices
- Make communities seem untidy and uncared for
- Discourage people from moving into the area
- Be a source of worry and hassle for owners and neighbours

Cost to Owners:-

- Expensive repair and maintenance bills
- 100% council tax to pay, rising to 150% if empty for 2 or more years
- Security problems and vandalism
- Neighbour disputes
- Reduced property value
- Loss of potential income
- Possible enforcement action by the local authority

Advantages of bringing a property back into use.

- Can provide a rental income
- Reduce the risk of vandalism or damage
- Increase the value of the property
- Provides more housing to help meet housing needs
- Make the property more appealing to buyers
- Reduce the risk of squatters
- No longer costing money (fewer repairs or council Tax to pay)
- Has a positive impact on the local environment

Are you aware you may be losing money by leaving your property empty?

The cost of leaving a property empty in Kirklees could be over £6,000 a year in lost rent, taxes, insurance and other charges.

Who benefits from an empty property coming back into use?

Everyone does. The greatest benefit is that re-occupation reduces the financial burden on the owner and makes it possible for the property to become a home and valuable asset once more.

What are the benefits of working with Kirklees Council to bring empty homes back into use?

We have dedicated Officers who can provide FREE expert advice and support to owners of empty homes to help bring them back into use.

If an owner of an empty property wants to become a landlord we can -

- Provide assistance through our property accreditation scheme and private lettings team
- Provide information on housing benefits
- Inspect properties to ensure that they meet 'lettable standards' which could include a fire safety risk assessment
- Provide ongoing impartial advice to landlords and tenants

Other benefits of working with the council include-

- Possible FREE loft & cavity wall insulation if your property does not already have these insulation measures (conditions apply).
- Possible access to other grants or funds that can help to improve properties (subject to availability).
- Introductions to other organisations that may be able to provide their expertise to help bring the property back into use.
- A dedicated contact point at the council for information & advice on property and tenancy matters.

