

The Denbighshire Empty Homes Project



- ◆ **Bringing long term empty homes back into use**
- ◆ **Providing affordable housing**
- ◆ **Improving the built environment**



Denbighshire County Council and North Wales Housing Association have formed an innovative partnership to bring empty homes back into use.

Which empty homes are we working with?

We're focusing on long term empty homes which have been unoccupied for more than 6 months. We will work with properties with no viable plan to bring them back into use.

Why are we doing this?

Tackling Denbighshire's empty homes is a positive project for all:

- ◆ **For those in housing need**
empty homes could be used to provide much needed affordable housing in the County.
- ◆ **For those living nearby**
empty homes can blight a street and undermine the community's confidence in an area
- ◆ **For the owner**
it costs a lot to leave a home empty. Council tax, upkeep, lost rent etc. all add up to around £8,000 per year.
- ◆ **For the Council & Emergency Services**
dealing with complaints and being called out to empty homes costs thousands of pounds each year.
- ◆ **For the environment**
it's far more sustainable to use up what we've got before building new

The Denbighshire Empty Homes Strategy

We've developed an Empty Homes Strategy for Denbighshire which sets out our plans for bringing empty homes back into use and outlines our proactive, co-ordinated approach.

Our objectives are to:

- ◆ **return as many empty homes as possible back into use**
- ◆ **improve the existing built environment**
- ◆ **utilise empty homes for affordable housing**
- ◆ **recover debts owed to the Council by empty home owners**

To see a copy of our Strategy please visit www.denbighshire.gov.uk or contact the Denbighshire Empty Homes Officer.

Working with owners

We want to work with rather than against owners and have developed services to help them overcome the hurdles they face.

- ◆ **Advice & Information**
Appropriate guidance for those looking to sell, rent or renovate their empty home.
- ◆ **Management & Leasing Schemes**
Opportunities for owners to have their property managed or leased by a Registered Social Landlord. Lettings will be made from Denbighshire County Council's Housing Waiting List.
- ◆ **Empty Homes Grants**
A grant of £10,000 maximum (or 50% of works) for empty homes. The refurbished property must be part of a management or leasing scheme for 5 years. Other conditions apply.



Enforcement

We are not afraid of getting serious and, where necessary, will use our enforcement powers to make things happen. We will prioritise empty home and, where the owner is not willing to work with use, will consider appropriate action. Our powers include:

- ◆ **Enforcement action to improve the condition of a property**
- ◆ **Enforced sale to recover land charges placed on the property by the Council.**
- ◆ **Compulsory purchase by the Council**
- ◆ **Empty Dwelling Management Orders to take over the management of the property**

How can you help?

If you own an empty home in Denbighshire we would like to hear from you and to work with you.

If you know of an empty home in the County which is causing a nuisance please tell us about it. We'll trace the owner and offer them our help to bring the property back into use.

For further information:

Please contact: -

The Empty Homes Officer

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*Drawings by Denbighshire children attending
Summer Holiday Clubs in 2008*