



## Conditions

- If the owner does not intend to occupy the property, they must be willing to advertise the property for rental on Home Choice Plus for a period of 6-8 weeks to enable customers to register an interest in the property. If after this time no suitable applicant is identified, the owner can market the property for rental themselves.
- Completion of the works must be carried out within 6 months of approval.
- Occupation of the property must be carried out within 6 months of completion of works, otherwise the financial assistance will be repaid in full.
- Assistance repayable in full if the property is disposed of.
- Assistance amount secured as a local land charge against the property.
- Common parts – The reasonable sum or proportion relating the applicant's liability.

*Maximum assistance*  
**£15,000**



If you have any further housing enquiries please contact us  
[privatesectorhousing@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorhousing@wychavon.gov.uk)  
01386 565020

## Housing Service

Malvern Hills and  
Wychavon District Councils  
Civic Centre  
Queen Elizabeth Drive  
Persnore  
Worcestershire  
WR10 1PT  
[www.wychavon.gov.uk](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk)  
[www.malvern hills.gov.uk](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk)

# Empty homes

## A guide for owners and residents



## What is an empty home?



Over a thousand properties will become empty in both Malvern Hills and Wychavon during the year as part of the normal operation of the housing market. It is only when properties stay empty longer than six months without any obvious signs of renovation, rental or sale that they become 'true' empty homes.

## Why are homes left empty?



The most common reasons for homes to be empty are the previous occupant:

- **Passing away**
- **Moving to a care home or institution**
- **Being evicted or repossessed**
- **Being unable to rent the property or sell due to maintenance issues and costs.**

## Why are empty homes a problem?



Empty homes cost their owners Council Tax, insurance costs, repairs, maintenance, security and loss of a rental income.

Empty properties also lead to:

- **Faster deterioration than an occupied property**
- **Targets for vandalism, arsonists, urban explorers, squatters and fly-tipping**
- **Attraction for vermin**
- **Reduction in the value of neighbouring properties**
- **Time and resources spent by public services such as the police, fire service and local authorities**



## What can you do?



If you are an owner of an empty property please contact us for advice and assistance to help you to bring your property back into use.

- **We are able to visit the property and assess what works are required to bring it back into use.**
- **We are able to advertise the property on our Choice Based Letting Scheme free of charge to people who are on our housing register.**
- **The property may qualify for Empty Homes Assistance of up to £15,000 for essential works as deemed appropriate by the council to enable the property to be made habitable.**

If you spot an empty home please report it to the Private Sector Housing Team on 01386 565610 or [privatesectorhousing@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorhousing@wychavon.gov.uk).

We are unable to provide any addresses of empty homes or contact details for owners. However we are willing to pass through the contact details of any interested purchasers to the owner if we have their contact details.

## Empty Homes Assistance



Empty Homes Assistance will be provided to assist the council in encouraging the re-occupation of empty properties. This will enable us to make the best use of the existing housing stock by returning empty homes back into much needed homes and therefore reduce the burden on the statutory housing waiting list.

## Eligible applicants



Owners and landlords who can demonstrate that alternative funding options are not financially viable.

## Qualifying criteria



- The property is a permanent and legal residence.
- The applicant must prove that the property has been empty for over 6 months.
- Assistance will only be available for essential works as deemed appropriate by the council, to enable the property to become habitable.
- The council will not consider an application for assistance in respect of premises built or converted less than 10 years from the date of application.