

Resource 2: Empty Property Inspection Form

Overview

The resource provides an exemplar empty property inspection checklist for reviewing empty properties.

This can be used to support the investigative work that forms part of the 'intelligence' element of empty properties work.

Empty Property Inspection Form

Date of inspection

Inspecting officer

Address of empty property

Owner's name and address

.....

Property type

House Bungalow Flat HMO End Terrace
Mid-Terrace Detached Semi-Detached

.....

Construction

Brick Stone Concrete Metal Timber
Other (if non-traditional, please specify type of construction)

.....

Date of construction

Pre 1919 1920 – 1945 1946 – 1979 Post 1980

.....

Property condition: (please specify construction material)

Score: Satisfactory 0 Minor Repairs 5 Major Repairs 10 Renew 15

| | Front Elevation | Left Elevation | Right Elevation | Rear Elevation |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Main Roof | | | | |
| Addition Roof | | | | |
| Lean to Roof | | | | |
| Bay Roof | | | | |
| Walls | | | | |
| Addition Walls | | | | |
| Lean to Walls | | | | |
| Doors | | | | |
| Windows (specify number) | | | | |
| RWG | | | | |
| Fascia/Barge | | | | |
| Boundary Wall/Path | | | | |
| Retaining Wall/Yard | | | | |

Total Score

Conditions of outbuildings (if any)

| Garden condition | Score |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Satisfactory | |
| Some overgrowth | |
| Very overgrown | |

| Rubbish present | Score |
|------------------------|--------------|
| No | |
| Yes | |

| Length of time vacant | Score |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Less than 1 year | |
| 1-3 years | |
| 3-6 years | |
| Over 6 years | |

| Structural conditions | Score |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Good | |
| Average with minor defects | |
| Poor with several defects | |
| Very poor with major defects | |
| Dangerous and potentially unstable | |

| Property appearance/visual impact on area | Score |
|--|--------------|
| Good, no impact | |
| Average, no major impact | |
| Poor, some impact | |
| Very poor, detrimental to area | |
| Extremely poor, eyesore and blight on area | |

| Security and anti-social impact | Score |
|--|--------------|
| Secure, no anti-social behaviour | |
| Secure with evidence of some anti-social behaviour | |
| Insecure, no anti-social behaviour | |
| Insecure with evidence of some anti-social behaviour | |
| Evidence of criminal and serious anti-social behaviour | |

| Enforcement history | Score |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| None | |
| Complaints received | |
| Numerous complaints received | |
| LA action but no WID | |
| LA action and WID/prosecution | |

| Property type | Score |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Detached | |
| Semi-detached | |
| End terrace | |
| Mid terrace | |
| Flat | |

Total Score

(Low 0-50, Medium 55-75, High 80+)

Resource 3: Exemplar Letter to Send to Empty Property Owners

Overview

Below is an exemplar letter that is used to contact empty property owners to encourage engagement with the local authority.

The letter outlines specific schemes that are running within the local authority – amend to include the schemes that are running within your relevant local authority.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Empty Homes Project
«addr1», «addr2», «addr3», «addr4», «postcode»

We'd like to take the opportunity to introduce the empty homes team. Our role is to co-ordinate the empty homes project in the local area and help the owners of long term empty homes to bring them back into use.

We are writing to you as records held by XX County Council suggest that you are either the owner or the person responsible for the above empty property and we would like to understand why this property is empty and how we can assist you in bringing it back into use. To this end, please find enclosed a booklet which briefly outlines the assistance XX County Council can offer, what could happen if this property remains empty and what to do if the information we hold about your property is incorrect.

You may be interested to know that XX, in conjunction with the Welsh Government, have a private sector leasing scheme, whereby, along with grant funding to get the property up to standard, the council will enter into a lease with you, guaranteeing a monthly rent and undertaking all management and most of the repairs during this period.

If you just want to dispose of your empty home then the local authority has also set up an empty homes matching service whereby owners seeking to dispose of their empty home can be matched with a potential buyer.

If you are interested in bringing your empty property back into use, please get in touch with us via phone, email or the short survey contained in the attached booklet. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,
Empty Homes Team

Resource 4: Tracing Owner Checklist

Overview

This resource is a template document to support the process of tracing the owner of an empty property.

Not all of the actions will be relevant to each empty property. Different actions or combinations of actions can be used for different scenarios.

| Action | Completed? | Notes |
|---|---|--|
| Not all of the actions will be relevant to each empty property. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes/no• If no, why not?• Include date of action | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What happened following the action?• What needs to happen next?• Is there another action that needs to be added to the list? |
| Undertake a land registry search | | |
| Request current and previous council tax/ business rates records and uploaded documents (if GDPR requirements are met within the local authority) | | |
| Make enquiries with neighbours or business networks | | |
| Search for probate records on the .gov website and purchase wills/ Grant of Probate / letters of administration | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Purchase or enquire about death certificates from registrar's office | | |
| Serve requisition for information notices under Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act (1976) | | |
| Undertake local land charge searches | | |
| Examine previous council involvement | | |
| Conduct internet searches including business and local history and news | | |
| Affix a poster to the door of the property requesting contact | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Take out an advert in the newspaper requesting contact | | |
| Write to charge holders and establish contact (e.g. ask if the property is subject to repossession) | | |
| Enquire with genealogist/ heir hunters e.g. ask if they have involvement with a deceased estate | | |
| Check register of public health funerals for same names | | |
| Consider entry to the property via warrant if justified | | |
| Search electoral roll | | |
| Search Rent Smart Wales website to see if the property was ever rented | | |

Resource 5: Template Letter For Contacting Mortgage Providers

Overview

This resource provides a template letter for contacting banks/building societies requesting information on owners of properties that are empty.

Eich Cyf/Your Ref:
Ein Cyf/Our Ref:
Cyslltwch/Contact:
Ffon/Telephone:
E Bost/E Mail:
Dyddiad/Date:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: xxx *[insert address]*

XXX Council *[insert name of local authority]* are investigating complaints regarding the property mentioned above and are considering legal action to address the problems this property is causing. The property has been empty for a number of years and is falling into disrepair with an overgrown garden. We note that you have an interest in the property by reason of a registered charge.

Please can you share with the council any contact details you may have for the owner please as we are struggling to establish contact. Additionally, if relevant, please can you disclose if the property is subject to any repossession or bankruptcy action or under stewardship.

Please respond within the next 14 days should you have any information to help this authority.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate in contacting me at the details above.

Yours faithfully,

XX

District Environmental Health Officer *[or other responsible officer]*

Resource 6: The Process for Tackling Empty Residential Properties

Overview

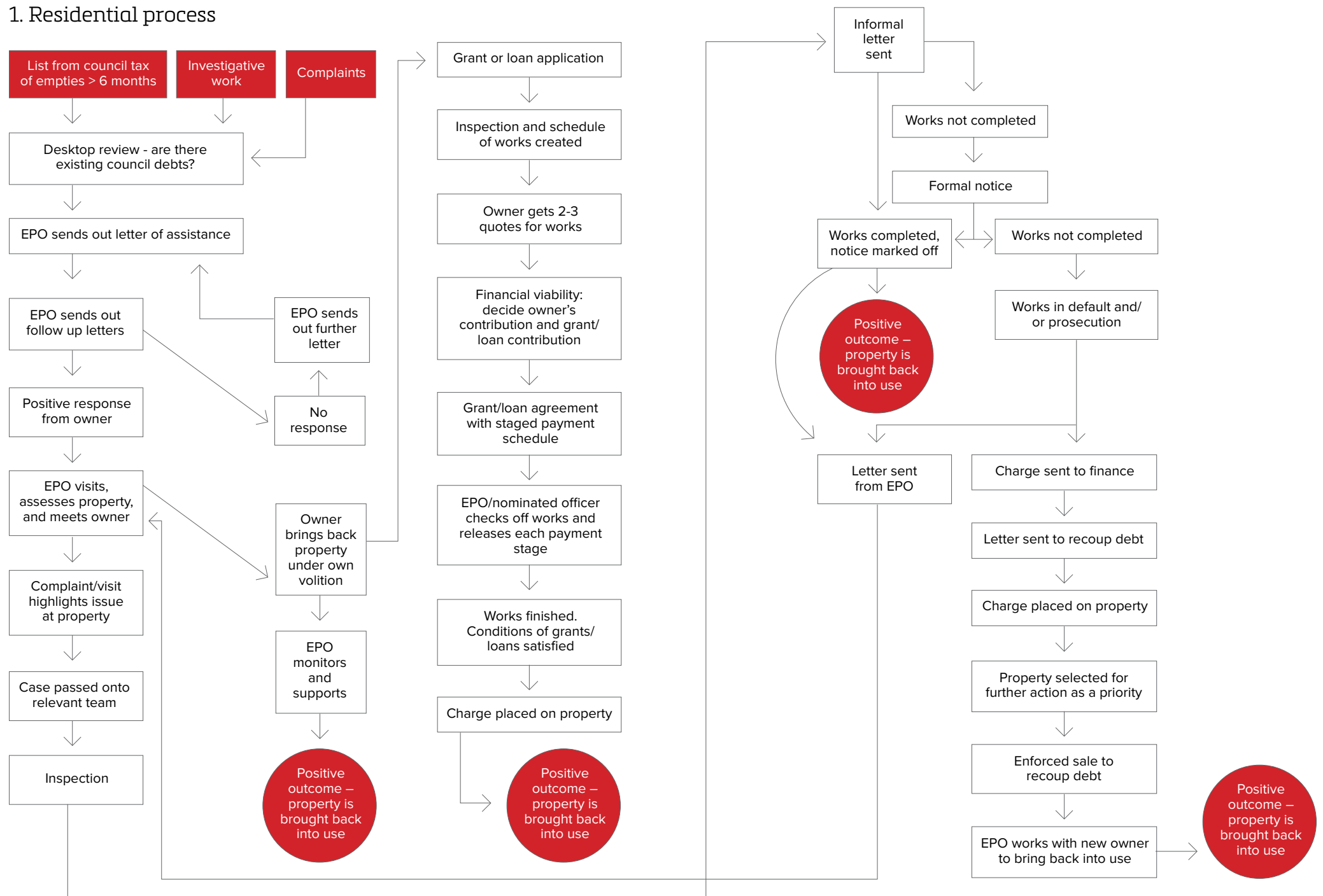
This resource provides a more detailed process outlining how empty residential properties are tackled.

It is important to note that the process provided is an exemplar – empty property work is very complex and each case is different, therefore the processes of tackling different properties will vary significantly depending on the context.

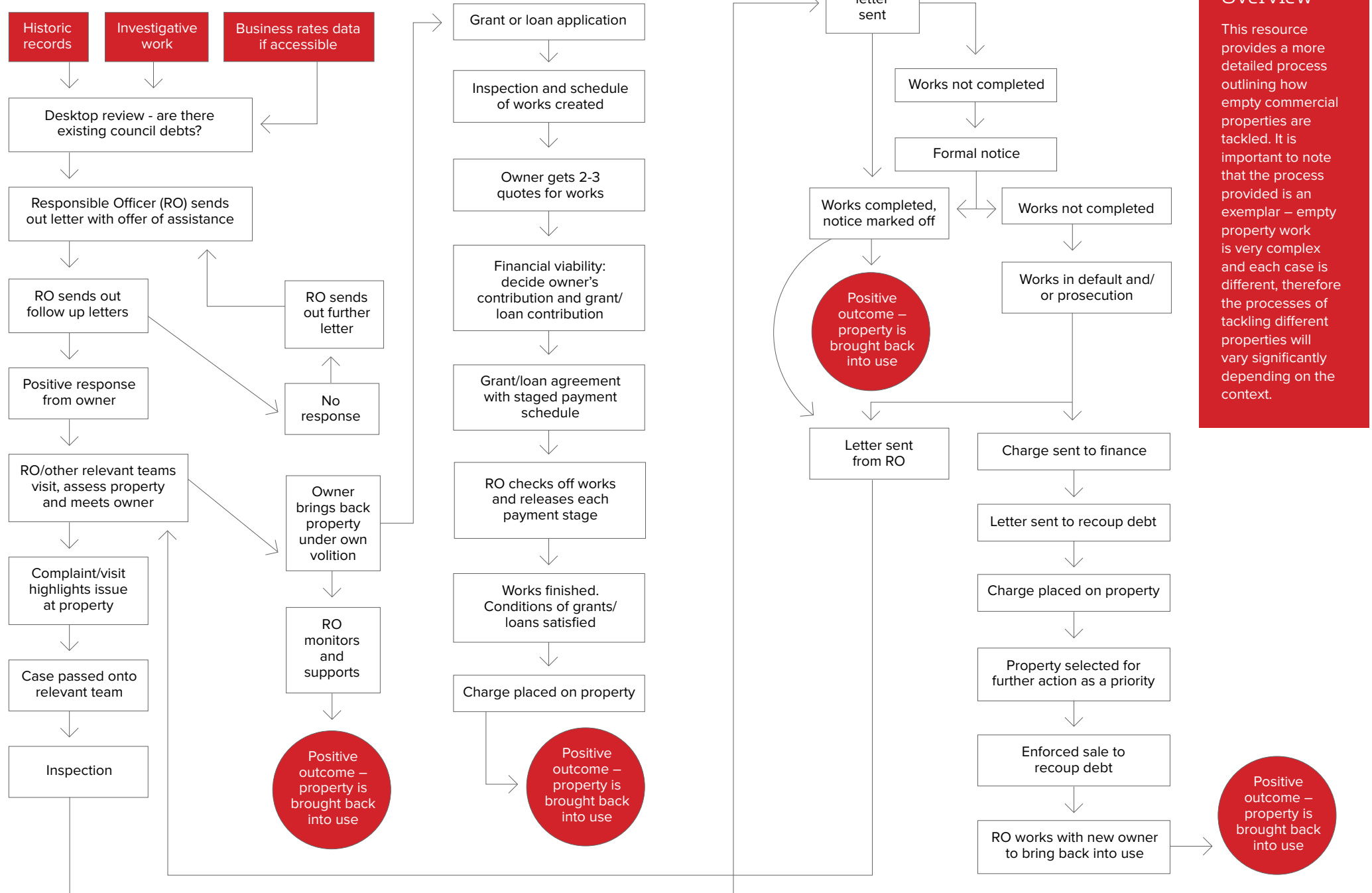
If an Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO – where the local authority can enter the property to complete works to make it habitable again) or a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO – where the local authority acquires the property with or without the consent of the owner) were being pursued the processes around these could start at different stages, depending on the context.

More information on the processes for EDMOs and CPOs can be found in the legislative handbook which is [Resource 11](#).

1. Residential process



Resource 7: The Process for Tackling Empty Commercial Properties



Overview

This resource provides a more detailed process outlining how empty commercial properties are tackled. It is important to note that the process provided is an exemplar – empty property work is very complex and each case is different, therefore the processes of tackling different properties will vary significantly depending on the context.

Resource 8: Checklist for Good Practice Notice Serving

Overview

This resource provides a checklist to be used to ensure good practice in serving notices as part of empty property work.

Serving Notices - Peer Review Checklist

Property Address: xxx

| No. | Action | Yes/No/N/A | Comment |
|-----|--|------------|---------|
| 1. | Is the case officer properly authorised under the relevant legislation | | |
| 2. | Was the required amount of notice given of intended entry | | |
| 3. | Were the powers of entry properly observed in all respects | | |
| 4. | Is the legislation quoted the correct one including the correct section | | |
| 5. | Is the notice being served on the correct person | | |
| 6. | Is the notice being served on all relevant persons/entities | | |
| 7. | Do the details of the notice match those on the local government miscellaneous provisions 1976 | | |
| 8. | Do the details of the notice match those on the land registry title | | |
| 9. | Is the notice clear, reasonable [including remedy/timescale], necessary | | |

| | | | |
|-----|--|--|--|
| 10. | Does the notice give all the information required for compliance | | |
| 11. | Are the appeal provisions enclosed with the notice | | |
| 12. | Is the notice properly signed and dated | | |
| 13. | Is the notice to be served by legally recognised method | | |
| 14. | Is the full name of the person or entity shown on the notice | | |
| 15. | Is the notice in the required format | | |
| 16. | Have the irrelevant parts of notice format been struck out | | |
| 17. | Have arrangements been made for proving service | | |
| 18. | Has a copy of the notice been certified and placed in the register/file | | |
| 19. | Has relevant Land Charges action been taken | | |
| 20. | If complied with, will the notice solve the problem | | |
| 21. | Has the correct action been taken to suspend or not suspend the notice, pending appeal | | |

Resource 9: Template Letters

Overview

This resource contains a set of template letters that can be used in the process of empty property work. There are five templates included in the resource that can be used to contact owners, and these follow a particular order leading up to enforcement action.

Depending on the response from the owner, some of the letters might not need to be used. The purpose of the letters is outlined below.

| Resource | Purpose |
|---|--|
| Letter 1 Intention to complete Works in Default (WID) | This letter outlines the intention of the local authority to complete WID following a lack of response from the owner to a notice served. |
| Letter 2 WID completed | <p>This letter outlines that WID have been completed at the property following a notice being served.</p> <p>The local authority issues the first invoice for the cost of the WID.</p> |
| Letter 3 Invoice for WID | <p>The local authority reissues the invoice alongside a record of the notice that was served.</p> <p>The local authority note that legal action will be pursued if the debt is not settled.</p> |
| Letter 4 Outline of consideration of enforcement action | <p>The local authority reissues the invoice alongside the record of the notice.</p> <p>The local authority informs the owner that they have visited the property and it appears to still remain empty.</p> <p>They outline that the local authority is considering enforcement action.</p> |
| Letter 5 Intention of pursuing enforcement action | Following no response from the owner, the local authority notifies the owner that they are starting to pursue enforcement action. |

Letter 1

This letter outlines the intention of the local authority to complete Works in Default (WID) following a lack of response from the owner to a notice served.

Eich Cyf/Your Ref:
Ein Cyf/Our Ref:
Cyslltwch/Contact:
Ffon/Telephone:
E Bost/E Mail:
Dyddiad/Date:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: xxx *[insert address]*

I refer to the above property and the Notice which was served in XX XX *[insert month and year]*.

A recent site visit has confirmed that the works detailed within the notice remain outstanding.

Therefore, the work specified within the notice will now be arranged in default of the notice and the cost of work charged against the estate/recovered from the owner responsible.

Please contact me urgently if you want to discuss the proposed works. I presume you have no objections to the works.

Yours sincerely,

XX

District Environmental Health Officer *[or other responsible officer]*

Letter 2

This letter outlines that WID have been completed at a property following a notice being served.

The local authority issues the first invoice for the cost of the WID.

Eich Cyf/Your Ref:
Ein Cyf/Our Ref:
Cyslltwch/Contact:
Ffon/Telephone:
E Bost/E Mail:
Dyddiad/Date:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: xxx *[insert address]*

The council have recently undertaken clearance works in the garden of the above property. This was taken as works in default of the legal notice that was served upon you previously.

As a result of this, a debt of xxx is now due to the council.

Please find the attached invoice and terms for payment, which is required immediately.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

XX

District Environmental Health Officer *[or other responsible officer]*

Letter 3

The local authority reissues the invoice alongside a record of the notice that was served.

The local authority note that legal action will be pursued if the debt is not settled.

Eich Cyf/Your Ref:
Ein Cyf/Our Ref:
Cyslltwch/Contact:
Ffon/Telephone:
E Bost/E Mail:
Dyddiad/Date:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: xxx *[insert address]*

Please find attached to this letter a copy of the notice which has been served upon you previously in relation to the overgrown garden. This notice was not complied with resulting in the council conducting the works ourselves. A cost was incurred for this which has been requested from you previously. This debt still remains outstanding as per the attached invoice.

Please can this invoice be paid as soon as possible. If this invoice remains unpaid the council will seek to take legal action to recover the costs.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on the details provided.

Yours faithfully

XX

District Environmental Health Officer *[or other responsible officer]*

Letter 4

The local authority reissues the invoice alongside the record of the notice. They inform the owner that the team have visited the property and it appears to still remain empty. They outline that the local authority is considering enforcement action.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: xxx *[insert address]*

Eich Cyf/Your Ref:
Ein Cyf/Our Ref:
Cyslltwch/Contact:
Ffon/Telephone:
E Bost/E Mail:
Dyddiad/Date:

XX Council *[insert name of local authority]* have now undertaken works to your property on your behalf following the expiry of the legal notice that was served, and your failure to comply with the terms therein.

As a result of this you have now incurred a debt to the authority of xxx for the works we have undertaken in default.

Please find attached an invoice for these works containing terms for payment.

In addition, after visiting the premises it appears that the property is still empty, and no regular upkeep has taken place to maintain it to an acceptable condition.

In addition to this I advise you that due to lack of maintenance this Authority is now considering utilising one of the following enforcement actions to bring the property back into use within a reasonable timeframe:

- a) Enforced sale of the property. This will allow the Authority to sell the property and re-coup any outstanding costs owed to this Council as a result of works carried out in default.
- b) Applying for an Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO). This will allow the house to be rented out by the local authority.

Please contact me within the next 10 days to confirm what action you intend taking to maintain the property and bring it back into occupation in the near future.

I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours faithfully,

XX

District Environmental Health Officer *[or other responsible officer]*

Letter 5

Following no response from the owner, the local authority notify the owner that they are starting to pursue enforcement action.

Eich Cyf/Your Ref:
Ein Cyf/Our Ref:
Cyslltwch/Contact:
Ffon/Telephone:
E Bost/E Mail:
Dyddiad/Date:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: xxx *[insert address]*

I refer to my letter to you dated [insert date], which asked you to contact the finance department to arrange payment of the outstanding invoice relating to the empty property above.

I also requested that you contact me to discuss your plans for the future of the property. However, no contact has been made with me or any other officer in the Private Housing team [change to appropriate responsible team] and the Resources Department confirm that the invoice remains outstanding.

As a result, it is my intention to pursue the enforce sale of this property to actively recoup these outstanding costs and secure the improvement and re-occupation of the property. I am in the process of putting together the paperwork to initiate this process. Therefore, you must contact the authority on [insert date] to pay the invoice reference XX immediately and contact me to confirm your plans for the property and its maintenance.

I fully appreciate that the contents of this letter may be alarming to you. However, I need to make it clear that this Authority has the powers of Enforced Sale under the Law of Property Act 1925 and it fully intends to use these powers. It is therefore imperative that you act on this letter. I look forward to hearing from you shortly within the next 5 days.

Yours faithfully

XX

District Environmental Health Officer *[or other responsible officer]*

Resource 10: Enforced Sale Checklist

Overview

This resource provides a checklist and associated timescales to support the process of enforced sale.

The responsible team for each stage of the process is listed – this might differ depending on how empty properties work is distributed within a local authority.

Acronyms:

- EHO-----Empty Homes Officer
- L2-----Letter 2
- EPA/EPA90-----Environmental Protection Act (1990)
- JT-----Journal Transfers
- ESP-----Enforced Sale Procedure

Address: xxx
Notice Type: xxxx
Preliminaries: Private Sector Housing Teaming

| Date | Check |
|---------------------|--|
| | Check debt is older than 1 month and has not been paid with Revenue Amendments. |
| | Prepare a summary of enforcement action and copy all relevant notices. |
| | Confirm date and service method of notices including proof of service. |
| | Obtain copy of all invoices from Revenue Amendments and confirm method sent to debtor. |
| | Obtain record of debts registered with local land charges and confirm date registered (>28 days from invoice). |
| | Confirm searches undertaken to trace owner (s16, Land registry, C Tax, electoral register). |
| | Prepare statement of reasons report for Head of Housing to get authorisation to proceed. |
| | Send ESP/L1 to owner and interested parties. |
| WAIT 10 DAYS | |
| | Check debt has still not been paid. |
| | Send ESP/L2 to owner and interest parties. |
| | Check debt has still not been paid. |

| Date | Check |
|----------------------|---|
| | <p>Prepare legal file to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary sheet listing file contents. • Statement of reasons. • Location plan. • Summary of enforcement action - and s16, land reg searches, council tax searches, other attempts to engage owner. • Summary of outstanding debts (excluding interest) – copies of invoices, Works In Default sheets, tender documents, contractor quotes. • Email confirming any outstanding council tax debt. • Notices relating to the debt including record of service. • All letters relating to the primary notice. • Draft section 103 notice. |
| | Send photocopies of all notices to owner and all interested parties – 1st class post and to be served on property and photos taken to confirm service. Complete record of service. |
| | If EPA90 is used then serve section 81A notice on owner and interested parties. |
| WAIT 28 DAYS | |
| | Authorisation to proceed from Head of Housing and Environmental Health. |
| | Serve section 103 notice on owner and all interested parties by first class post. (IF EPA applies use specific EPA section 103 notice) Notice also served on property and photos taken to prove service. Complete record of service notice. |
| | Email Revenue Amendments to check the debt is still outstanding. |
| WAIT 3 MONTHS | |

Selling the property**Estates Team**

| Date | Check |
|------|---|
| | Obtain energy performance certificate. |
| | Enter into Auction. |
| | Prepare information pack for sale including plans, photos, land registry documents for legal. |

Selling the property**Legal Division**

| Date | Check |
|------|--|
| | Prepare contract for sale and prepare letter containing certification by the Council that it has all the necessary rights and powers to dispose of the property in accordance with the relevant statute. |
| | Letter sent to owner asking for deeds and advising owner to remove any furniture etc. |
| | Check with Revenue Amendments that debts are still outstanding. |

After Sale**Private Sector Housing and Finance Team**

| Date | Check |
|------|--|
| | Sale deposit to be paid into Property Specific Code. |
| | Legal to email estate and EHO confirming sale completed and request details of all up-to-date outstanding expenditures/cost. |
| | EHO to double check with council tax and land register and Revenue Amendments of all outstanding debts. Email legal with details. |
| | EHO to email a cancellation request in relation to the original invoices (include specific property cost centre code. |
| | Legal to complete a completion statement detailing expenditure codes and cost for all service. |
| | Legal to notify services of change of ownership including Environmental Health and Council Tax. |
| | Legal to request that Land Charges remove all local land charges from the property. |
| | EHO to complete spread sheet confirming JT details and cost code from detailed completion statement. Ensure all debt and cost are accounted. |
| | EHO to email Finance the completed spread sheet and request the JT to be made. |
| | Finance to arrange the balance of proceeds of sale to be placed in an interest-bearing bank account for 12 years. |

Resource 13: Empty Property Strategy Evaluation Checklist

Overview

This evaluation checklist is a guide to help evaluate the effectiveness of an empty property strategy. This checklist has been designed with generic principles in mind, and so there may be some items that do not relate to the specific local authority's strategy. Local authorities should adapt the checklist as required.

Evaluation checklist

Defining Objectives and Standards

1. Have you established what you want to achieve with the strategy?
2. Have you defined how success will be measured?
3. Have you identified key performance indicators (KPIs) that can track progress towards success?
4. Have you collected baseline data to determine the current position?
5. Have you aligned the strategy to other related strategies and to broader local authority plans?

Collect and Analyse data

6. Have you designed a way to collect relevant data on various aspects of the strategy's performance? (financial metrics, commercial repurposes, residential acquisitions etc)
7. Have you considered external factors that might impact the strategy? (e.g. Government changes in policy). A PEST analysis can aid this (see appendix A for a template)

Compare performance and adjust

8. Have you evaluated how the strategy is performing against relevant performance indicators?
9. Can you identify where the strategy is both under and over performing?
10. Have you conducted regular SWOT analyses (see Appendix B for a template) to ensure the strategy remains current and effective?
11. Do you meet regularly as a team to review the strategy?
12. Do you involve stakeholders in the review process? (e.g. registered social landlords, residents, landlords).
13. Can you evidence continuous learning and adapt the strategy to changing circumstances?

Appendix A: PEST analysis Template

| Political | Economic |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welsh Government funding• UK Government funding• Taxation• Legislation• Public perception• Housing need | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welsh Government funding• UK Government funding• Investment in housing• Inflation• Cost of living• Cost of labour and materials |

| Social | Technological |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demographic variables• Lifestyle patterns• Cultural sensitivities• Housing need | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access and infrastructure• Research and innovation• Technology trends• Developments in the built environment |

Appendix B: SWOT Analysis Template

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Things you are doing well• Internal resources (skilled and knowledgeable staff).• Tangible assets (property ownership and acquisition) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Things you can improve on• Things other local authorities are doing better than you• Resource limitations |

| Opportunities | Threats |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stronger collaborative working• Greater need for services• Funding opportunities• Growth in supply | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emerging competitors• Changing regulatory environment• Negative media coverage• Changing public perception |

Resource 14: Examples of Communications Plan and Activities for Empty Property Officers

Overview

This resource provides an example communications plan for an Empty Property Officer. It includes ideas for communication activities as well as a template to be used to create an empty properties communications plan in other local authorities.

This relates to [section 3.5.1](#) of the Guide as well as [Resource 15](#) (examples of Empty Property Officer communications).

Example communications plan - Empty residential properties

Background: Across the city, there are privately-owned properties that have been empty for many years with little, or no, action taken by owners to return them to use. This can have a detrimental effect on neighbourhoods while returning them to use could provide much needed housing for those in need.

Campaign objectives:

- To raise awareness that the council has a team and strategy dedicated to tackling this issue
- To make owners and landlords aware of the various schemes available to help with renovation costs
- Raise awareness of incentives as the council would rather work with owners but there are also measures that can be taken if necessary

Budget: TBA

Target audience:

- Owners of empty properties
- Landlords

Strategy/Idea:

- Develop a design concept to be used for assets etc
- Paid for advertising (to be discussed with team, possible options below)
- Paid for social media (to be discussed with team, possible options below)
- Social media
- Article/advertorial in local newsletter and residents' newsletter
- Ad on digital library screen
- Flyers for events

| Activity | Target Audience | Details | Timescale (if appropriate) | Status | Comments |
|----------|-----------------|---------|----------------------------|--------|----------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Options for paid advertising

[illegible]

Monitoring/evaluation

To evaluate the success of the campaign, it is important to put established performance indicators to be reviewed mid-way through the campaign - so that adjustments to the activity can be made if required - and at the end of the campaign. The following indicators are suggested:

- An increase in enquiries about the schemes
- An increase in the take-up of assistance
- If possible, if people contact the team, perhaps they could be asked what had prompted them to get in touch.

Resource 16: Empty Properties Officer recruitment documents

Overview

This resource provides a template for:

- A. An Empty Properties Officer job description
- B. An Empty Properties Officer person specification

These can be used in drafting recruitment documentation for local authority empty property roles.

A. Empty Properties Officer Job Description

This job description is provided as an indicative template. It should be considered and adapted in the context of the organisation and specific role – taking into account relevant wider context, grading, team structures, reporting lines, etc.

Job title

Empty Properties Officer – Private Sector Housing

Department

Private Sector Housing

Grade**Salary**

£ - £ FTE

Manager

Private Sector Housing Manager

Job summary

To play an active role in the investigation of empty and other problematic properties, assisting with bringing empty properties back into use, identifying support and/or enforcement actions available, and taking appropriate enforcement action when necessary.

Main responsibilities and activities**1. Identification and Assessment of Empty Properties**

- Investigate reports of empty properties affecting the area. Identify problem properties and prioritise cases for intervention.

2. Advice, Support, and Grants for Property Owners

- Provide guidance on regulations, loans, grants, and other initiatives to bring properties back

into use.

- Administer empty property grants/loans, including inspections and contractor assessments.

3. Enforcement and Legal Actions

- Determine appropriate enforcement actions, including statutory notices, compulsory purchase, and prosecutions.
- Prepare and present evidence for legal cases, court proceedings, tribunals, and public inquiries.
- Maintain compliance with legislation, codes of practice, and corporate policies.

4. Collaboration and Public Engagement

- Develop working relationships with internal and external partners to bring empty properties back into use. Promote and publicise initiatives, participate in training, and engage with landlords and residents.

5. Operational Management and Performance Monitoring

- Meet service delivery targets, maintain accurate records, and provide reports to management.
- Source funding opportunities and manage budgets for empty homes work.
- Ensure health and safety compliance, including risk assessments.

General requirements

1. Excellent communications and investigatory skills.
2. GCSE Maths and English grade C or above, or equivalent qualifications.
3. All employees have a responsibility to ensure they take a vigilant approach at all times to safeguard members of the public, colleagues, and themselves and that they follow adopted procedures and good practice to aid in the identification and effective reporting of any safeguarding concerns.
4. The successful candidate must be able to travel to various locations, including areas not accessible by public transport.
5. Work flexibly, including working outside normal office hours where necessary. Work from home or the local authority's office premises as required.
6. Display a good level of IT skills and the ability to understand and develop the use of IT to achieve objectives including competence with Microsoft Office products or equivalent software.
7. Good time management skills, able to work efficiently to maximise output and proactively seek to improve the use of resources.

B. Empty Properties Officer Person Specification

This is intended as a comprehensive list of requirements which can be altered to suit a particular role. In places items are repeated as knowledge, skills, or experience.

Job title: Empty Properties Officer – Local Authority

| Post Title: Empty Properties Officer | | Director/Service/Sector: | |
|---|--|--|--|
| Essential | | Desirable | |
| Knowledge and Qualifications | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GCSE Maths and English grade C or above, or equivalent qualifications• Good standard of education to degree level or equivalent.• Working knowledge of legislation, policy, and guidance relating to empty properties.• Understanding of the diverse functions of a large complex public organisation.• An active appreciation of the procedural and practical issues facing the service.• Understanding of the relationship between costs, quality, customer care and performance.• A sound knowledge of the private rented sector, legislation and topical issues.• Strong IT skills including competence with Microsoft Office products or equivalent software.• Ability to travel for work.• Understanding of health and safety risk assessment. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing related qualification.• Qualified Environmental Health Officer with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health or a qualified housing surveyor with a recognised relevant qualification in that field.• Certified as competent to conduct Housing, Health and Safety Rating System assessments.• Knowledge of grant and loan processes associated with empty properties.• Knowledge of legislation, policy, and guidance relating to empty properties required to conduct investigations including the use of PACE, assembly of prosecution files and the court process.• Understanding of the principles and application of safeguarding processes.• Understanding of current UK data protection requirements.• Understanding of the court process. | |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a sound understanding of equal opportunities and diversity issues in relation to employment and service delivery. • Commitment to professional and personal development. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of writing reports, letters, briefings and handling data using Microsoft Office products or their equivalents. • Experience of property inspections. • Experience of delivering private sector housing interventions. • Experience of implementing empty home policies. • Ability to effectively plan and manage a high-volume workload, working effectively under pressure and to deadlines. • Experience of providing consistently effective customer centred services. • Experience of undertaking health and safety risk assessments. • Experience working with complex cases, partnership working and problem solving. • Experience of working in a local authority or large organisation, forming effective working relationships, co-ordinating and collaborating with other departments and entities. • Recent experience in working with empty properties in practice or as part of a relevant qualification. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing enforcement/environmental health experience. • Experience undertaking inspections, surveys and other investigations of properties under the Housing Act 2004 or other related legislation associated with managing the condition of empty properties and bringing them back into use. • Knowledge of completing schedules of work. • Knowledge of building costs, estimating and invoicing (repairs and improvements). • Experience of compulsory purchase, empty dwelling management orders, enforced sale, or prosecution activity. • A track record of dealing with cases, taking appropriate enforcement action with the skills to be able to advise and support less experienced officers. • Experience of applying for funding to support organisational activities relevant to the public sector. • Experience of working with grant/loan based interventions. |

- Effective IT skills and ability to understand and develop the use of IT to achieve work objectives and carry out work with due regard to cyber security requirements.
- Numerate and skilled at analysing/ reasoning with business-related statistics.
- Confident and competent in expressing own views and an active participant in internal and external meetings.
- Effective negotiation skills.
- Able to carry out investigations.
- A high level of both written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to organise own workload.
- Ability to work creatively and independently to achieve better outcomes.
- Ability to work as part of a multi-agency team and promote partnership working.
- Customer focused and able to deliver within set timescales.
- Models and encourages high standards of honesty, integrity, openness and respect for others.
- Proactive and achievement oriented.
- Adopts a collaborative approach to work.
- Can evaluate risk and adjust remedial actions based on the level of risk and impact on the public.

- Ability to train others.
- Helps managers create a positive work culture in which diverse, individual contributions and perspectives are valued.

- Dealing with complex clients and their needs, whilst working to bring empty properties back into use
- Working from an office/home.
- Working outdoors across the district inspecting private rented properties, problematic empty homes. Travel is an essential part of this job.
- Meeting with residents, community groups, or councillors where they are based.
- Regular contact with public/clients.
- Be able to work under pressure.
- Models and encourages high standards of honesty, integrity, openness and respect for others.

- Able to deal with conflict and stressful situations.
- Ability to travel for work purposes.