

# Empty Homes

## Get New Focus in Scotland

The Scottish Empty Homes Partnership is now up and running. The project is aimed at helping local authorities and their partners to pursue work to bring private sector empty homes back into use. Kristen Miller has been seconded from COSLA to fill the role of Empty Homes Coordinator which is being funded by the Scottish Government for two years. The post is being hosted by Shelter Scotland.

There are approximately 50,000 private sector empty homes in Scotland. These assets represent lost income to owners, lost local revenue to communities, and lost safety and security to neighbours. The knock on effects of an empty home within a community can be far reaching and can hamper efforts towards regeneration. At a time when housing supply is stretched across the country, leaving properties empty seems a terrible waste.

There are many reasons why properties can become empty and in some cases owners may have concerns about becoming a landlord or be unaware of the

potential income they could achieve through filling their property or selling it on. Experience from elsewhere in Britain shows that, with the right offer of advice and the right relationship building, councils and owners can work together to overcome some of the barriers that may be keeping a house unused. This project hopes to give councils the tools and ideas to help them to work with partners and owners to achieve the best outcome for all.

Homes Officer Network will be set up in Scotland to give an electronic meeting place for officers from a range of backgrounds to share their experiences. Seminars and



workshops are expected to follow to address particular issues of concern to members of the network. The project is nationwide and the Empty Homes Coordinator is looking to engage with interested

parties from both urban and rural settings and from the public and private sector.

The partnership is supported by an Advisory Group that includes a range of stakeholders including, COSLA, Scottish Government, Shelter Scotland, the Scottish Housing Best Value Network, Historic Scotland, Rural Housing Service and the Scottish Rural Property and Business Association. In the coming months an Empty

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For more information about the project or the officers network please get in touch with Kristen Miller, Empty Homes Coordinator, 0344 515 2461, [kristen\\_miller@shelter.org.uk](mailto:kristen_miller@shelter.org.uk)