



# Commercial & Residential Property – The City Centre Approach?

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**PERTH &  
KINROSS  
COUNCIL**

Securing the future... • *Improving services*  
• *Enhancing quality of life* • *Making the best use of public resources*

# Project Objective

To secure the re-use and adaption of empty and under-used residential and commercial properties across Perth & Kinross with an initial focus on Perth city centre, through collaborative working between the public and private sector and the use of statutory powers under the Housing, Planning and Building Acts where necessary



# Programme

## Year 1 - Research and Development

- Identification of scale of the opportunity
- Identification of measures and incentives open to the Council – funding streams, tax incentives
- Promotion of project – seminar, publicity
- Engagement with owners

## Years 2 & 3 Implementation and Delivery

- Work on a prioritised case load
- Target 5 or 6 concluded projects per annum
- Roll out project across Perth & Kinross



# Approach

- Focussed, pro-active approach
- Identifying opportunities
- Engaging with owners
- Offering advice on options to bring property back into use
  - *Renovation/Conversion Opportunities*
  - *Disposal – Selling, letting, occupying*
  - *Appropriate Funding*
  - *Tax incentives*
- Joined-up service delivery

# So far.....

- Populating database of empty properties in Perth city centre

*Residential* 113

*Commercial* 96

- Inspection of all empty properties
- Questionnaire sent out with annual rates and council tax returns to empty property
- Priority properties identified
- Available funding streams mapped
  - *City Heritage Fund*
  - *Funding Missing Shares*

# So far.....continued

- *Empty Homes Project*
  - *Vacant Property Feasibility Funding*
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- Central focus of information to assist owners with re-use of property
  - Empty shops and upper floors are challenging





# Case Study 1

## 224 High Street, Perth

- Three 2 bedroom flats
- Empty for over 8 years
- Secondary end of High Street
- Potentially homes for 6 people
- Poor state of repair
- Unauthorised occupants
- Distant owner



# Case Study 2

## 18/20 York Place, Perth

- Prominent property on gateway to Perth
- Listed building
- Historical connection
- Owner would like to convert
- City Heritage funding a possibility
- Local architect appointed





# Case Study 3

## 1 West Bridge Street

- Prominent property on gateway to Perth
- Empty for 17 years
- Conversion potential
- Listed building & BARR
- Local architect appointed
- City Heritage Fund potential



# Case Study 4

## 173 High Street, Perth

- Block of 6 flats in city centre in good repair – all empty
- Included in commercial lease of ground floor phone shop
- Lease expires in 2 years
- Owned by Pension Fund
- Residential part seen as an inconvenience





# Case Study 5

## 1 Watergate, Perth

- Listed Building
- Office to Let
- No car parking
- City centre location
- Empty over 2 years
- Value - office v flat





# Repair and Re-use of Property Seminar

## 30<sup>th</sup> November



- Aimed at property owners
- Re-use of empty properties
- Regeneration of city centre
- Advice on importance of regular property maintenance
- How to organise common repairs
- Available funding through P&KHT
- Presentations on Scheme of Assistance and Empty Homes Initiative



# The Results

- Reduced number of empty properties
- Improved building maintenance
- Increased population in city centre
- Increased footfall and spend in city centre
- Range of tenures
  - *Affordable*
  - *Mid-market*
  - *Upper-end*
- Encourage more private sector investment
- Aid regeneration of the city centre