

Empty Property Newsletter

Advice, funding and support for owners of empty properties across Carmarthenshire.

Owning an empty property can present a range of challenges, from rising costs and maintenance issues to uncertainty about the next steps.

Whether you're considering renovating, renting, selling or moving back into your property, support may be available.

This newsletter highlights the advice, funding opportunities and practical assistance available to help you bring your property back into use and make the most of its potential.



Have your say

We're keen to understand the challenges faced by empty property owners and how we can improve the support we provide.

Complete our short questionnaire and request a free advisory visit from our Empty Property Team.



- ✓ Share your experience
- ✓ Tell us what support would help
- ✓ Request a free property visit
- ✓ Help shape future services



Scan the QR code, return by post to the Empty Property Team, Private Sector Housing, Tŷ Elwyn, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA15 3AP or email a scanned copy to: privatesector@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

We're Here to Help

Whether you're a homeowner, landlord, executor, beneficiary or family member dealing with an empty property, our team can provide free, impartial advice tailored to your circumstances.

We can help you explore available options, identify funding opportunities and connect you with services that may assist you in bringing the property back into use.



Free Advisory Visits

Every empty property is different. Our experienced officers can arrange a free advisory visit to discuss the options available to you and help identify the most appropriate route forward.



What Can We Help With?

Our advisers can provide guidance on:

- Renovation and repair options
- Available grants and loans
- Renting through the Council or private sector
- Selling your property
- VAT reduction schemes
- Energy efficiency improvements

A Supportive and Understanding Approach

We recognise that the reasons properties become empty are often complex and can arise from difficult life circumstances such as bereavement, ill health, financial pressures, or family matters. Our approach is always supportive, confidential, and non-judgemental.

Bringing an empty property back into use can benefit both you and your local community – and we're here to support you every step of the way.

Why Bring an Empty Property Back into Use?

Bringing an empty property back into use can:

- ✓ Reduce Council Tax and other ongoing costs
- ✓ Protect and increase the value of your property
- ✓ Prevent deterioration and costly repairs
- ✓ Reduce the risk of vandalism, theft, arson and anti-social behaviour
- ✓ Generate rental income or support a future sale
- ✓ Improve the appearance of your property and neighbourhood
- ✓ Help provide much-needed housing within local communities
- ✓ Reduce the likelihood of formal enforcement action becoming necessary

Financial Assistance Options

Houses into Homes Scheme

The Houses into Homes Loan Scheme can help unlock the potential of your empty property by providing funding for renovation works. The scheme is designed for owners who plan to sell, rent, or otherwise bring their property back into productive use following refurbishment.

- Available for homes empty six+ months or commercial-to-residential conversions
- The maximum loan amount you can now apply for has **increased from £25,000 to £35,000 per property or unit**, up to a maximum of £350,000 per application (ten units)
- 0% interest – repay only what you borrow (administration fee does apply)
Option to secure loan against another property
- No monthly repayments during the loan term
- Repayment terms:
 - Up to two years for properties to be sold
 - Three to seven years for properties to be rented



Use the QR code for more information and to apply for the **Houses into Homes Loan**

National Empty Homes Grant Scheme (NEHG)

The Welsh Government's National Empty Homes Grant Scheme provides grants of up to £25,000 to help owners renovate long-term empty properties and bring them back into use. Funding can be used to improve a property's condition, energy efficiency, and safety, helping to create a comfortable home that is ready for the owner's occupation.

Who can apply?

To be eligible, the property must:

- ✓ Have been empty and unfurnished for at least 12 months
- ✓ Be listed as a domestic dwelling for Council Tax purposes
- ✓ Be owned by, or in the process of being purchased by, the applicant

Successful applicants must occupy the property as their main residence for a minimum of five years following completion of the grant-funded works.

Important deadlines

- ✓ Applications close on **31 March 2027** (or earlier if funding is fully allocated).
- ✓ All approved works must be completed by **30 September 2028**.

NEHG Scheme - How to apply

Carmarthenshire County Council is participating in the scheme; however, applications must be submitted directly through the Welsh Government's online application portal, which is administered on its behalf by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

Don't miss this opportunity to access funding and transform an empty property into a home.

Use the following QR code for further information and to apply for an Empty Homes Grant or click:

gov.wales/apply-empty-homes-grant



Renting Your Property

If you are not ready to sell, renting can provide a steady income while ensuring the property is occupied and maintained.



Simple Lettings

simplelettings@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Our free property management service offers:

- No management or admin fees
- Guaranteed rental payments
- Full property management
- Repairs managed on your behalf
- Reduced landlord responsibilities

Alternatively, you may choose to use a licensed private letting agent or manage the property yourself. If you decide to manage the property yourself, all landlords in Wales must comply with Rent Smart Wales requirements. This includes completing landlord training, obtaining a licence (where required), and registering the property. Further information is available from rentsmart.gov.wales/en/home

Thinking of Selling?

Selling an empty property can release equity, eliminate ongoing costs and remove the responsibility of maintaining a vacant home.

You can choose to sell through:

- A local estate agent
- A property auction
- Private sale arrangements

Auction sales can be particularly attractive for properties requiring refurbishment, as they can often be sold in their current condition.

We work with a couple of auction houses that may offer reduced commission charges to property owners who are introduced through our Empty Property Team.



Save Money and Reduce Ongoing Costs

If you are renovating or improving your empty home, you may wish to contact the Council Tax team directly, to find out what reliefs may be available in your circumstances.

The Council Tax team will be able to advise on whether any exemptions have already been applied to your property and what options might be open to you.

Avoid Council Tax premiums

From 1st April 2025

- 50% Premium: Empty one – two years
- 100% Premium: Empty over two years
- 200% Premium: Empty over five years
- All second homes: 100% Premium

Bringing your property back into use may reduce or remove Council Tax premiums that apply to long-term empty properties.



VAT Relief on Renovation Works

If you're planning to renovate an empty property, you may qualify for a reduced VAT rate of 5% on eligible works where the property has been unoccupied for two years or more.

We can provide an official letter confirming the length of vacancy, which can be used as supporting evidence for your contractor and HMRC. Please note that this VAT relief is administered by HMRC and is not a Carmarthenshire County Council scheme.

Helpful resources



House Clearance assistance

bhf.org.uk

The British Heart Foundation offers a household clearance service starting from £400, with optional packing and boxes at selected stores. Saleable items can reduce the cost, while unsellable ones are recycled or responsibly disposed of.

Help with probate fees -

gov.uk/get-help-with-court-fees

If you have a low income or receive certain benefits, you may qualify for government funding to help cover probate and other court fees.



Warm Wales -

warmwales.org.uk

Warm Wales is a charity in Wales that works to tackle fuel poverty by offering free advice, referrals, support and access to grants to ensure people across Wales have warm and safe homes.



Bereavement support -

nhs.uk/mental-health/

[feelings-symptoms-behaviours/](http://nhs.uk/mental-health/feelings-symptoms-behaviours/)

[feelings-and-symptoms/grief-bereavement-loss](http://nhs.uk/mental-health/feelings-and-symptoms/grief-bereavement-loss)

Grief is a natural response to losing someone or something important. If it's impacting your daily life, the NHS provides guidance and support to help you cope.



Mind Hoarding support -

mind.org.uk/

[information-support/](http://mind.org.uk/information-support/)

[types-of-mentalhealth-problems/hoarding/](http://mind.org.uk/types-of-mentalhealth-problems/hoarding/)
[useful-contacts-for-hoarding/](http://mind.org.uk/useful-contacts-for-hoarding/)

If you're experiencing problems with hoarding, the charity Mind may be able to help.

Ready to Take the Next Step?

Whether you're considering renting, renovating, selling or moving back into your property, our team is here to help.

Take the first step towards bringing your property back into use – complete our short questionnaire and request a free advisory visit, expert advice and practical guidance.

- QR Code for questionnaire
- Email scanned copy to: privatesector@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
- Return by post to : **Empty Property Team**, Private Sector Housing, Tŷ Elwyn, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA15 3AP



Together, we can bring more empty properties back into use and create homes for the future.

Visit our Empty Properties webpage for access to advice, support, available assistance, and access to the latest Empty Property Policy.

carmarthenshire.gov.wales/council-services/housing/empty-properties

