

# Scottish Empty Homes Partnership

## Developing a Strategic Empty Homes Framework

**Presented to:**  
Scottish Empty Homes Conference

**Presented by:**  
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# Advisory Guidance & Template



Arneil Johnston was commissioned by the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership to develop advisory guidance for local authorities on producing a Strategic Empty Homes Framework

**The purpose of the advisory guidance and template is to...**

Raise awareness of empty homes activity and its impact on communities, neighbourhoods, residents and the local economy

Set out the business case for investment and elevate the status of empty homes on the housing and community planning policy agenda

Develop a robust evidence base that can be used to make the case for partnership and investment

Nurture opportunities for engagement and collaboration with partners, stakeholders and local residents

Deliver a clear, concise and easy to read strategic document that sets out priorities for tackling empty homes

Set clear outcomes that demonstrate resource capacity and delivery responsibility

# Advisory Guidance & Template

SEHP had identified the need for a framework that local authorities can use to help to mainstream empty homes work and link it more fully with delivery of all parts of their Local Housing Strategy.

## The Groundwork to the framework:

- Test the appetite for a framework, what a framework should look like, and what support is needed
- Surveys sent out
- Workshops set up

## Workshop 1:

- Empty homes objectives and LHS priorities
- Challenges and threats to delivery of LHS priorities
- Strengths and opportunities in using empty homes to support LHS delivery
- What works/doesn't work in empty homes strategies

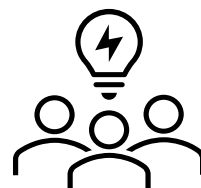
## Workshop 2:

- Structuring the framework
- Identifying key stakeholders
- Linking to LHS
- Building your evidence base
- Using case studies
- Developing action plans
- Matching delivery to resource requirements

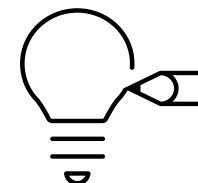
# Advisory Guidance & Template

The guidance is intended to assist local authorities to develop and improve their approach to empty homes by achieving a more strategic focus in terms of policy, partnership, intervention and investment

It is for each local authority to decide on its approach to empty homes. As this guidance is advisory, local authorities should consider applying approaches that would work well in a local context



A template document is provided that local authorities can use as the basis of developing an effective written strategy



The guidance and template have been structured to provide a step by step process which details how Empty Home Officers can develop a Strategic Empty Homes Framework

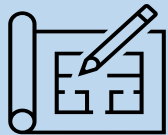


# Advisory Guidance & Template

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## Step 1:

Set out the policy agenda for Empty Homes



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## Step 2:

Build the Empty Homes evidence base



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## Step 3:

Map existing Empty Homes activity and key challenges



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## Step 4:

Set strategic aims and objectives



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## Step 5:

Stakeholder consultation and engagement



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## Step 6:

Develop an Empty Homes Action Plan



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## Step 7:

Map implementation and delivery resources



8

## Step 8:

Monitor and evaluate empty homes impact



Local authorities should set out the policy context (both nationally and locally) that either supports or benefits from tackling Empty Homes.

This is instrumental in defining where shared policy agendas could be used to develop partnerships or mainstream empty homes activity

### Activities in achieving Step 1 include:

Developing a Strategic Empty Homes Framework

# Step 1: Set out the Policy Agenda for Empty Homes



Mapping legislation and statutory requirements on empty homes



Sample text in Strategic Empty Homes Template



Presenting the national policy context for empty homes



Sample text in Strategic Empty Homes Template



Presenting the local policy context for empty homes, including:

- Community planning priorities
- Local Housing Strategy priorities



Insert local context & analysis to template text

Developing a Strategic Empty Homes Framework

# Step 2: Build the Empty Homes Evidence Base

Local authorities should build an evidence base which sets out the scale of empty homes to be tackled as well as the extent and nature of opportunities and challenges to be faced.

This evidence is crucial to identifying where empty homes activity could be targeted to achieve greatest impact

## Activities in achieving Step 2 include:



### Gathering information and presenting analysis on:

- Extent and nature of long term empty homes and other unoccupied property
- Unmet housing need & demand
- Homelessness
- Unmet need for specialist housing
- Private rented sector operation



Insert local context & analysis to template text & sample tables

The Strategic Empty Framework template provides sample text for completion, as well as practical suggestions on how to present analysis e.g. Table templates

The Strategic Empty Framework guidance offers practical detail on how and where local authorities can source the suggested data including a 'useful links' directory that can be used to access national data-sets.

# Step 3: Map Existing Activity & Key Challenges

Local authorities should further develop the empty homes evidence base by mapping local projects, initiatives, achievements and potential innovation, as well as local barriers and challenges to tackling empty homes

## Activities in achieving Step 3 include:



### Detailing local projects, initiatives and achievements, plus

- Best practice case studies or innovation from Scotland, the UK or wider afield that could work locally



Insert local context & case studies to template text



### Assessing key local challenges which result from empty homes including

- Ownership, financial, repair, community safety issues



Insert local context & analysis to template text & sample tables



### Detailing local barriers to tackling empty homes, including:

- Resource constraints, staff capacity, legal complexity, data protection, poor policy focus



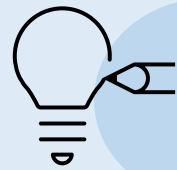
Sample text in Strategic Empty Homes Template



Local authorities should set and agree a strategic aim and objectives for empty homes informed by policy priorities and evidence of the need for intervention at a local level.

Setting this framework is essential in building partnership and resource commitments to support the development and delivery of the Empty Homes Action Plan.

**Activities in achieving Step 4 include:**



**Drafting and presenting a strategic aim that provides an overall vision for empty homes including:**

- The number of empty homes that will be brought back into use each year



Sample text in Strategic Empty Homes Template



**Presenting empty homes objectives which breakdown the strategic aim and offer more detail on what will be delivered, by whom and when**



Insert local strategy framework to sample text

The Strategic Empty Framework template provides sample text for completion

The Strategic Empty Framework guidance offers practical detail and examples on drafting a strategic aim and SMART objectives

Developing a Strategic Empty Homes Framework

# Step 4: Set Strategic Aim & Objectives

# Step 5: Stakeholder Consultation & Engagement

Whilst the extent and nature of consultation will depend on the appetite for stakeholder engagement, local authorities should carry out informed discussions with partners on local priorities for action, partnership and investment

Using the empty homes evidence base will be crucial in engaging partners and informing this debate

**Activities in achieving Step 5 include:**



**Developing and detailing the activities carried out in consultation programmes including:**

- Approaches e.g. surveys, focus groups, public or targeted forums
- Channels including social media, online surveys, interviews etc



Sample text in  
Strategic Empty  
Homes Template



**Presenting the feedback of residents, partners and stakeholders including**

- Priorities for partnership, action or investment in tackling empty homes

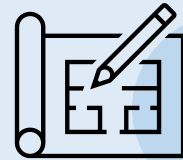


Insert local  
context & analysis  
to template text

# Step 6: Develop an Empty Homes Action Plan

Local authorities should develop an Empty Homes Action Plan that schedules the activity, partnership and interventions to be delivered across partners to achieve the aim and objectives of the strategy

## Activities in achieving Step 6 include:



### Developing a SMART Action Plan which details how:

- Local authorities and partners intend to plan, deliver, monitor and evaluate the impact of empty homes activity over the life of the Strategic Framework.



Insert local context  
& case studies to  
template text

The Strategic Empty Framework template provides a sample action plan for completion including details of

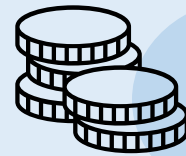
- Action points
- Milestones and timescales
- Delivery responsibility and resources

The Strategic Empty Framework guidance offers practical detail on how to develop the Action Plan and a worked example Action Plan framework for reference

# Step 7: Map Delivery Resources

Local authorities should set out a clear understanding of resources available, and resources required, to deliver the Action Plan, enabling investment to be prioritised to tackle key challenges and to meet local targets

## Activities in achieving Step 7 include:



**Assessing and presenting the key resource pressures facing public bodies which impact on empty homes work locally**



Sample text in  
Strategic Empty  
Homes Template



**Mapping the income and expenditure associated with empty homes activity over the last 3 years, including:**

- Number of empty homes brought back into use and wider economic benefits



Insert local context &  
analysis to template  
text & sample tables



**Identifying gaps in funding or resources and potential funding opportunities**



Insert local context &  
analysis to template  
text & sample tables

Developing a Strategic  
Empty Homes Framework

# Step 8: Monitor & Evaluate Empty Homes Impact

Local authorities should design a framework that will allow progress in tackling empty homes to be monitored and the impact on households and communities to be evaluated

**Activities in achieving Step 8 include:**



**Detailing the monitoring arrangements to track progress including ongoing reviews of milestones and targets including**

- Developing a Steering or Scrutiny Group



Sample text in  
Strategic Empty  
Homes Template



**Presenting the evaluation arrangements that will be put in place to measure the impact of the Strategic Empty Homes Action Plan over the life of the strategy**

- Developing outcome measures and targets



Insert local  
context &  
arrangements to  
template text

# Advisory Guidance & Template

The step-by-step guide to developing a Strategic Empty Homes Framework provides practical advice, support and examples which enable local authorities to

Showcase the contribution of tackling empty homes to LHS and community planning outcomes



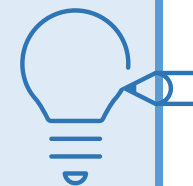
Define the main issues that need action, intervention and resource commitment



Consider the ideas, options and innovation that should guide action, investment & partnership



Prioritise action and intervention across a network of engaged partners



# Question & Answer Session



# Advisory Guidance & Template – Next Steps

The Advisory Guidance and Template are now available on the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership website.

You can download these and send comments to the Partnership throughout March.

We will run a small workshop to road test the template in April.

The final guidance and template will be published in May.



# Download the Advisory Guidance and Template



Guidance



Template

Send comments to [andrew\\_moseley@shelter.org.uk](mailto:andrew_moseley@shelter.org.uk)