Scottish Empty Homes Partnership

Strategic Empty Homes Framework Template

Arneil Johnston

scottish
empty homes
partnership

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Donna Milton (MCIH)
Managing Director

Elaine Byrne (CPFA)
Director of Housing Consultancy

Arneil Johnston

scottish empty homes partnership

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How to use the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Template

The Strategic Empty Homes Framework template has been produced by Arneil Johnson in partnership with SEHP.

The template and Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance have been developed to assist local authorities who wish to adopt a more strategic approach to empty homes work in terms of policy, partnership, intervention and investment.

They provide a step-by-step process which detail the sequence of activities that Empty Home Officers can take to develop a Strategic Empty Homes Framework, and set out options for consultation on the framework and how to reflect these in the final framework document. The 8 steps are set out below:

Step 1 Set out the policy agenda for Empty Homes	**Step 2** Building the Empty Homes evidence base	**Step 3** Map existing Empty Homes activity and key challenges	**Step 4** Set strategic aims and objectives
Step 5 Develop an Empty Homes Action Plan	**Step 6** Map implementation and delivery resources	**Step 7** Monitor and evaluate Empty Homes impact	**Step 8** Stakeholder consultation and engagement

This template offers a structure, sample text and presentational ideas to support local authorities and should be used in parallel with the advisory guidance as the basis for developing an effective written strategy.

To use the template document effectively, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. Text shaded in pale green should be used as the basis to provide local detail, evidence and context i.e. this text provides a useful starting point to add local narrative and analysis. In some instances, a prompt on what information to include is provided by hovering over the relevant text box.

2. Outlined boxes require local authority name, statistics or supporting details to be inserted. This should be done prior to any public consultation on the Framework, or publication (where no prior consultation takes place).

3. Text shaded in dark green is provided as information and advice on how to complete the template and should be deleted by local authorities prior to publishing a draft or final Framework document.

4. Other text is sample text which can be used by local authorities as required or reframing for local context or evidence. Local authorities may choose to omit sections (at least in part) if they feel that it will not be necessary for their audience. Text may also be edited and reframed as required for local context.

1 - Introduction

is pleased to present this Strategic Empty Homes Framework covering the period   .

> **This Strategic Empty Homes Framework seeks to:**
> - Set a clear target for reducing the number of empty homes in
>   over the next
> - Support homeowners to bring empty homes back into use, increasing local housing options and meeting housing need
> - Enable housing regeneration, placemaking and neighbourhood improvement activity which improves community safety, environmental quality, and housing condition
> - Make a positive contribution to the building reuse and repurposing agenda aligned to the Council's wider ambitions for tackling climate change
> - Raise the profile of empty homes across the community planning and housing market partnership to maximise investment, partnership commitment and innovation in tackling empty homes

1.1 - What is meant by Empty Homes?

In this Strategic Empty Homes Framework, empty homes have been classified using the following definitions:

- **Long term empty properties**. These are dwellings that have been empty for 6 months or more and are liable for council tax. The most recent figures published by the Scottish Government show that there were   long term empty properties in
  .

- **Unoccupied exemptions**. These are properties which are empty and exempt from paying council tax. The most recent figures published by the Scottish Government show that there were   unoccupied exemptions in   in   . There is no requirement for a property to have been empty for more than 6 months before it can be included in this category.

For owners, empty homes can have considerable financial impacts in terms of lost rental income, mortgage payments, council tax, insurance, maintenance and security. Empty Homes can therefore pose the potential for significant financial loss.

From a wider community perspective, empty homes can cause a negative appearance in terms of place, undermine regeneration efforts, prevent common works from taking place and lower the value of nearby properties. Furthermore, properties which are inactive within the housing market do not contribute to economic activity within communities and do not help with homelessness prevention or meeting housing need.

This Strategic Empty Homes Framework focuses on long term empty properties, setting out the approaches that the Council and partners will take to bring homes back into use. Having said this, it should be noted that unoccupied exemptions may include properties where the previous owner has died and/or properties that have been repossessed. The Strategic Empty Homes Framework also sets out approaches for bringing these properties back to use.

This Strategic Empty Homes Partnership Framework can deliver significant economic and financial benefits to _____, communities, local businesses, owners, landlords and residents by contributing to:

- Enhancing housing supply to meet housing need
- Reducing homelessness by increasing housing options
- Achieving Net Zero Targets and carbon savings through the retrofitting of existing properties as an alternative to new supply
- Reducing neighbourhood complaints and the avoidable deployment of public resources
- Reducing requirements for Police and Fire Services to attend empty homes
- Financial returns for owners by realising asset value or generating rental income
- Improving aesthetic appearance and sense of place within a community
- Progressing common works to improve housing standards across other homes
- Inclusive economic growth and place resilience, particularly where properties are located in a town centre.

2 – The Legislative and Policy Context for Empty Homes

There is a rich and diverse policy context for tackling empty homes in Scotland, which supports the delivery of empty homes activity and influences the contribution that empty homes can make to national, local and community objectives.

It is important that this Strategic Empty Homes Framework supports and helps deliver national housing outcomes and targets, whilst also reflecting the local needs and priorities set out by community planning and housing market partnerships.

This Strategic Empty Homes Partnership Framework is set within the wider Community Planning and housing strategy framework for the council and its partners. The Framework defines the contribution that empty homes can make to delivering local strategic priorities and meeting the targets set out in Scotland's national Housing Strategy: 'Housing to 2040'.

2.1 – Statutory Requirements

There are a number of statutory requirements placed on   , with those that relate directly or indirectly to bringing empty homes back into use, as follows:

- Local Government Finance (Unoccupied properties etc.) (Scotland) Act 2012. This allows local authorities to charge increased Council Tax on certain homes that have been empty over a year
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2011 which places a duty on local authorities to develop a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) which set out the local authority's and local partners' vision for the supply of housing across all tenures and types of housing provision
- Local authorities' duties to homeless people including a statutory responsibility to anyone threatened with, or experiencing, homelessness
- House Condition (Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, Section 10) creates duties to have in place a Below Tolerable Standard Strategy, Housing Renewal Area Policy and Scheme of Assistance Strategy
- Tackling the effects of Climate Change – Section 44 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009
- Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 introduces a new statutory target for reducing fuel poverty. The target is that by 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household, in any Local Authority area, in Scotland is in fuel poverty; and, in any event, no more than 5% of households, in any local authority area in Scotland are in fuel poverty. No more than 1% of households in Scotland should be in extreme fuel poverty.

This legislative framework not only places powers and duties on but offers mechanisms which can drive empty homes activity and intervention including enforcement action, advice, assistance and investment.

2.2 – The National Policy Context for Empty Homes

Whilst there are currently no statutory requirements for local authorities regarding empty homes, the Scottish Government is keen to encourage empty homeowners and local authorities to bring properties back into use and in particular, to increase affordable housing supply in Scotland to tackle shortages in this sector. Empty homes work also sits within a wider framework of strategic ambitions around housing, place, community, net zero and the Scottish economy.

There are currently eleven National Outcomes describing what the Scottish Government wants to achieve. Proactively tackling empty homes and bringing them back into use can contribute to delivery of several of these as shown below.

National Outcome	Empty Homes Contribution
Communities: We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe	Tackling empty homes improves community safety, encouraging greater levels of resident occupation to reduce security risks and enhance neighbourhood quality.
Fair work and business: We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone	Empty homes can contribute to fair work and local business agendas through job creation, spend on materials and resources, learning and development of a skilled workforce and increasing the number of households accessing services, amenities.
Economy: We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy	Assisting and enabling empty homeowners to bring their properties back into use, provides greater housing choice, improves the aesthetic appearance of communities, and can contribute to making communities more robust and resilient through investment, job creation and greater local spend.
Environment: We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment	Refurbishment and retrofitting of empty homes has significantly less impact on the environment than new build housing activity because of the levels of embodied carbon involved in demolition and rebuilding. Bringing empty homes back into use safeguards properties at risk by allowing works to be carried out on them and adjoining properties.
Poverty: We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally	Empty homes that are brought back into use can contribute to increasing the supply of affordable housing and therefore assist in tackling the poverty agenda. Where properties are located in a town centre, or within walkable distance, such development will reduce non-housing costs and support the affordable living agenda.
Health: We are healthy and active	The mental and physical wellbeing of people who live in the same street as an empty home can be adversely affected particularly if it becomes the focus of anti-social behaviour. People living in areas with high levels of long-term empty homes may be more prone to depression due to the decline of their neighbourhood. Bringing empty homes back to use can help people to rediscover a sense of place and remove the negative stresses and risks to physical health that living next door to an empty home can cause.

Table 5.1: Empty Homes impact on achieving National Outcomes

Empty homes have an important role to play in helping to deliver the right homes, in the right places for people across Scotland. The Scottish Government's Housing to 2040 strategy sets an ambitious vision of what housing should look like over the next two decades and a plan on how to achieve this vision.

Bringing empty homes back into use will help deliver all priorities set out in the Housing to 2040 strategy as follows:

Affordable warmth and zero emissions homes:
- Help to drive down carbon emissions caused by housing and housing construction
- Assist with reduced heating and operational carbon emissions through retrofitting for improved energy performance

More homes at the heart of great places:
- Help to meet demand for affordable housing in areas of most need
- Contribute to the regeneration and revitalising of town centres, villages and rural communities

Affordability and choice:
- Contribute to delivering 110,000 affordable homes of which 77,000 should be social housing between 2021/22 and 2031/32
- Ensure as wide a range as possible of property types and tenures across Scotland

Improving the quality of all homes:
- Supporting the renovation of existing homes and returning them back to use
- Improving the quality of housing stock and the aesthetic appearance of neighbourhoods

Furthermore, the new National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Policy 9 'Quality Homes', encourages the delivery of homes across different tenures and by a range of providers. In doing so, it places an emphasis on sustainability and opportunities for tackling climate change, as well as adopting the approach of building reuse. NPF4 therefore promotes the sustainable reuse of buildings such as empty homes.

Repurposing vacant commercial office and retail premises is an opportunity to secure active uses in buildings that are no longer in demand for their original purpose and may be in danger of becoming obsolete. This also supports the climate agenda by using the embedded carbon within existing buildings.

Within NPF4 Policy 9 'Quality Homes' there is recognition and encouragement for a significant contribution to housing targets to be made by existing empty homes, or buildings not currently used for residential purposes, being returned or converted to use as homes. This provides an opportunity to consider how bringing housing back into effective use through remodeling and rehabilitation of existing properties could be promoted through the LHS and Local Development Plan.

2.3 – The Local Policy Context for Empty Homes

The   LHS is at the heart of the arrangements for housing and planning through its links with the Local Development Plan and its strategic role in directing investment in housing and housing related services.

The   LHS sets out a strategic vision for the delivery of housing and housing services and the outcomes that partners are seeking to achieve to meet housing need. The LHS sets out the approach to increasing housing supply, meeting housing need and demand, preventing and alleviating homelessness, delivering specialist housing, improving private sector housing condition and energy efficiency, addressing fuel poverty and delivering the housing contribution to meeting net zero targets. More specifically, the LHS defines tackling empty homes as a key area for action, partnership and investment.

> Insert overview of LHS priorities, objectives and outcomes and links to empty homes activity for the six subject headers listed below. Section 6.1 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance provides a framework for this.

Increasing Housing Supply and Meeting Housing Need

Placemaking and Regeneration

Preventing and Addressing Homelessness

Specialist Housing Provision

Fuel Poverty, Energy Efficiency and Climate Change

Stock Condition

All Community Planning Partnerships (CPP) are required to prepare and publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP). This may include outcomes that will be assisted by empty homes work. If known, and where appropriate, details of LOIP priorities should be included in the Strategic Empty Homes Framework. Sample text for this is included below.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (CE Act) introduced a requirement for all local Community Planning Partnerships (CPP) to prepare and publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) which: sets out the local outcomes which the CPP will prioritise for improvement to reduce inequalities and add maximum value to each community, and; identifies smaller areas within the local authority area which experience the poorest outcomes, leading to Locality Plans to improve outcomes on agreed priorities for these communities being prepared and produced.

The vision for the   Local Outcomes Improvement Plan
(LOIP) is to: .

The LOIP has the following strategic priorities:

Town Centre Living
'More Homes at the heart of great places' a recent report[1] by Scottish Futures Trust on Town Centre Living notes that the development of housing that brings more people to live within our town centres can have a major role in creating strong and sustainable places. Bringing empty homes back into use and repurposing commercial premises in town centres will deliver additional benefits for   by aligning housing activity with wider policy aims including affordable and independent living, inclusive economic growth, place resilience, local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods, and improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

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[1] *www.scottishfuturestrust.org.uk/publications/documents/town-centre-living-report*

3 – Evidencing the Need to Tackle Empty Homes in

This Strategic Empty Homes Framework has been informed by a clear understanding of the extent and nature of empty homes across   and their impact on neighbourhoods, communities, homeowners and local residents. To achieve this, a robust evidence base has been developed by the Council and partners detailing the number and types of empty homes across   , as well as important contextual information on tenure estimates, unmet housing need, the incidence of homelessness, the role of the private rented sector and housing condition and quality issues.

This evidence base provides us with a strong understanding of the scale of empty homes as well as the challenges faced in bringing them back into use. This analysis is crucial to informing our decisions on how partnerships, investment and innovation should guide empty homes activity and interventions. Our analysis of empty homes arising from this evidence, is detailed below:

3.1 – Profiling Empty Homes

Table 3.1 details the scale of ineffective housing stock in   providing a helpful measure of the number of homes which are not in use and are not contributing to meeting housing need on a permanent basis.

Ineffective Housing Stock	Number of Dwellings
Total Dwellings	
Long-term Empty Dwellings	
Dwellings with Unoccupied Exemptions	

Table 3.1: In-effective Housing Stock Scotland (NRS Household Estimates published June 2022)

Table 3.1 shows that empty homes, both 'long-term empty dwellings' and 'dwellings with unoccupied exemptions', account for   % of all dwellings in   .

Insert further analysis and local context around Table 4.1 using Section 7.1 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance as a framework.

3.2 – Long Term Empty Homes

Table 3.2, sets out how levels of long term empty and unoccupied dwellings in compare with levels in Scotland as a whole.

Geography	% of dwellings long term empty (all)	% of dwellings long term empty (12 months+)	% of dwellings unoccupied exempt	% of Scottish Housing Stock	% of Scottish vacant housing stock
Local Authority					
Scotland					

Table 3.2: Long term empty properties and unoccupied dwellings in and Scotland (NRS Households and Dwellings in Scotland published June 2023)

Insert further analysis and local context around Table 3.2 using Section 7.1 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance as a framework, including:

- Housing market operation and impact on empty homes e.g., scale/quality of local PRS/owner-occupied sector
- Extent/nature of mixed tenure housing challenges that could influence the empty homes agenda
- Second homes where these are known or thought to be a significant factor limiting housing availability

Table 3.2 shows that the levels of long term empty dwellings and dwellings with unoccupied exemptions in the local authority are…

Table 3.3 illustrates the number of long-term empty dwellings in   ,
and the areas within the local authority with the highest concentration of long term empty
dwellings.

Geography	Long Term Empty homes	Total stock	% of homes that are long-term empty homes	% of housing stock in local authority	% of long-term empty homes in local authority
Local Authority					
Area 1					
Area 2					
Area 3					

Table 3.3: Long-term Empty Homes

Insert further analysis and local context around Table 3.3 using Section 7.2 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance.

Further develop this analysis, as required, by detailing sub-area localities that have a higher proportion of long term empty homes than the % of the total housing stock in the area, showing other categories of unoccupied homes (unoccupied exemptions and second homes) as detailed before in Table 3.4:

Table 3.3 shows that the scale of long term empty homes in the local authority are...

Geography	Long Term Empty Homes	Unoccupied Exemptions	Second Homes	Total Stock	% occupied dwellings (total dwellings – LTE, Unoccupied exemptions and second homes)
Local Authority					
Area 1					
Area 2					
Area 3					

Table 3.4: Long term empty, unoccupied exemptions and second homes

Geography	Long Term Empty Homes Year 1	Long Term Empty Homes Year 2	Long Term Empty Homes Year 3	% Increase/ decrease Year 2	% Increase/ decrease Year 3
Local Authority					
Area 1					
Area 2					
Area 3					
Scotland					

Table 3.5: Number and % of Long-term Empty Homes by Local Authority and area

Table 3.6 details the estimated cost per empty home per year in   ,
This includes; council tax revenue where empty properties are currently exempt from council tax or in arrears with no realistic prospect of collection unless home returned to use; call out costs for services such as environmental health, and emergency services resulting from anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and public order offences; subsequent work to secure properties, and; resources required for handling complaints involving long term empty homes where these are not dealt with by an empty homes officer.

Cost area	Cost per Empty Homes	Estimated total cost
Lost council tax revenue (average per empty home)		
Responding to anti-social behaviour (include costs for local authority and emergency services)		
Other non-urgent long-term empty homes complaints		
Total		

Table 3.6: Cost of long-term empty homes

Each home brought back into use saves the equivalent amount of money fo
. It also generates additional revenue for
where money is spent by the new owners in the local economy.

Insert further analysis and local context around Table 3.7 using Section 7.2 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance below.

Additional analysis may include type of homes and number of rooms. This information was last published by NRS in 2018, but may be included in 2022 Census results when published.

The 2022 Census may also include a breakdown of properties by tenure (i.e owner occupied, local authority, RSL, PRS). This information may provide further context, indicating areas where empty homes may not be privately owned, or where housing stock is predominantly RSL or other social housing, and whether privately owned empty stock is likely to be former rental property, or owner occupied.

Further develop this analysis by detailing the length of time properties have been empty as set out below in Table 3.8, aligned to analysis of the complexities associated with property deterioration and tracing owners.

Please note, this information should be for all empty properties in the relevant areas (and not limited to properties that are part of an EHOs active caseload). The information is not included in published statistics but should be obtainable from council tax teams.

Table 3.7 provides a suggestion of the property sizes and/or types that are dominant in areas with high levels of long term empty homes, and therefore the demand for, and potential costs and feasibility of, bringing homes back into use. It reveals that...

Length of time empty	Local Authority		Area 1		Area 2		Area 3	
	No. of Empty Homes	% of Empty Homes	No. of Empty Homes	% of Empty Homes	No. of Empty Homes	% of Empty Homes	No. of Empty Homes	% of Empty Homes
6–12 months								
1–2 Years								
2–3 Years								
3–4 Years								
4–5 Years								
5–10 Years								
10+ Years								

Table 3.8: Empty Property Timescales

While unoccupied exemptions include properties which are empty and unfurnished for less than 6 months, local authority dwellings awaiting demolition, and some other homes empty for less than six months; the term also covers privately owned properties that are empty due to the property being repossessed, the death of a previous owner, the owner being in long term care or detention, dwellings last occupied by charitable bodies, dwellings empty under statute and some other privately owned homes that have been empty for six months or longer.

If brought back to use, these properties may contribute towards delivery of national policy outcomes and LHS priorities. However, there is a high likelihood of them remaining empty without EHO intervention. Table 3.9 provides an indication of the number and percentage of unoccupied exemptions in   that may fall into these categories.

Property Description	No. of Empty Properties
All unoccupied exemptions; of which	
Privately owned properties empty for six months or longer	

Table 3.9: Exemption Classifications

Insert further analysis and local context around Table 3.9 using Section 7.2 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance as a framework. This may include a breakdown of dwellings falling into each of the relevant categories set out in The Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) (Scotland) Order 1997 and subsequent amendments.

Table 3.9 reveals that…

3.3 – Housing Need and Demand

Empty homes activity contributes to increasing housing supply to meet the demand for affordable and market housing in   . Bringing empty homes back to use can also support   to; meet its statutory duty to the prevent homelessness wherever possible and to mitigate the impact of homelessness where it cannot be prevented; increase provision of specialist housing units across categories such as wheelchair, amenity and sheltered. Where the private rented sector plays a large part in market housing provision, long term empty homes may be of interest to private investors. Equally where supply has outstripped demand for privately rented properties, former rental properties may be of interest for buyback or acquisition schemes.

                                        data in each of these categories demonstrates levels of housing demand that empty homes can contribute to increasing the supply of.

> Insert overview of LHS priorities, objectives and outcomes creating links to empty homes activity using Section 6.1 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance as a framework.

Housing Need and Demand

Affordable Housing Pressures

Homelessness

Specialist Social Housing

Private Rented Sector

Insert further analysis and local context around above information to consider how a targeted approach to bring empty homes back into use could support the delivery of additional housing to meet demand.

4 – Local Action, Challenges & Barriers in Tackling Empty Homes

As well as evidencing the need to tackle empty homes in   , the Strategic Empty Homes Framework builds upon the activity and interventions which have succeeded in bringing empty homes back into use; as well as specific local challenges and barriers to tackling empty homes.

The Strategic Framework therefore builds on successes that have been achieved by projects and initiatives within   , as well as innovation in empty homes activity across Scotland, other parts of the UK and elsewhere as the basis of piloting or programming future activity.

4.1 – Empty Homes Projects and Initiatives in

> Begin with details of specific empty homes services, initiatives and local projects which have been successful in tackling empty homes within your LA using Chapter 8 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance to detail activity. Then extend to include similar details for initiatives and projects elsewhere that you consider are worth exploring/adopting in your LA.
>
> Be forward thinking – provide further detail of empty homes innovation and best practice under consideration as a result of specific local context and/or circumstances, and also provide details of other initiatives within your local authority where you have identified a clear potential contribution that empty homes can make, setting out what that contribution would look like.

4.2 - Challenges and Barriers to Tackling Empty Homes

There are a number of key challenges and barriers to tackling empty homes in which require to be proactively addressed by the development and delivery of this Strategic Empty Homes Framework.

> Insert details of specific challenges to tackling empty homes, using Chapter 9 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance to detail difficulties including the examples provided in Section 9.1.

These challenges have been identified through the development of the empty homes evidence base and by engaging with local partners and stakeholders involved in empty homes activity.

Some of the key local barriers to developing and implementing a strategic approach to empty homes includes:

> Insert details of specific local barriers to tackling empty homes, tailoring the examples provided below to local analysis and context. Remember not to overstate, or understate, any of the barriers and to consider whether they are barriers to the work as a whole or to specific categories of empty homes.
>
> - **EHO Capacity:** Competing priorities for action and intervention alongside operational responsibilities
> - **Resources:** Lack of/limited grant assistance and loan schemes to support investment in empty homes.
> - **Competing priorities:** Balancing operational workload issues with new projects, initiatives and reporting requirements
> - **Legal complexities:** Challenging cases where owners can't be traced, or ownership is in dispute can be extremely time consuming.
> - **Legal or financial constraints:** Reluctance or inability to use Compulsory Purchase Orders due to costs involved in purchase or legal resource not available to pursue cases.
> - **Other legal or administrative processes:** Including de-crofting, establishing status of properties subject to repossession proceedings, or obtaining grants of confirmation where owners and next-generation heirs are deceased.
> - **Access to data:** Data sharing agreements are not in place and/or there is lack of appetite to resolve data barriers and/or collection of data within council is insufficient to support a strategic approach to empty homes work.

- **Rigid application of empty homes council tax surcharge:** Limited or no discretion to delay imposition of empty homes surcharge where it may enable owner to complete work required to bring property up to habitable standard.
- **Resource intensive activities for limited outcomes:** Small number of empty homes brought back into use annually compared to costs/time involved in doing so.
- **Wider understanding and appreciation of contribution empty homes makes to corporate and community objectives:** Lack of knowledge and understanding of how empty homes links to LHS and wider local authority plans and priorities.
- **Lack of awareness of empty homes work and the opportunities for advice and assistance:** Empty homes agenda is not understood or brought into by partners, stakeholders and wider public with greater marketing and communication required to raise awareness and encourage engagement.
- **Shortage of tradespeople or materials:** Limited availability of building trade professionals or materials leading to delay in completing projects and increased average cost for building and renovation work.
- **Socio-economic factors:** Large number of systemic vacancies as a result of economic decline/depopulation/limited employment opportunities e.t.c

5 – The Strategic Framework for Tackling Empty Homes in

This Strategic Empty Homes Framework sets out how the Council and partners will work together over the next   years to proactively tackle the impact of empty homes on communities, neighbourhoods, homeowners and residents across   .

To achieve this, the following aim has been set for the Strategic Empty Homes Framework:

This aim provides the overarching vision for empty homes in   .
It sets out what the Council and partners want to achieve in tackling empty homes and reflects the level of ambition agreed with delivery partners. It also reflects the strategic aim of the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership to 'bring as many privately-owned empty homes back into use as possible'.

> Insert local context on the development of the strategy aim including how it reflects local policy priorities, capacity to deliver and the partnership network available to ensure successful delivery.
>
> Where possible, also provide details of any targets set locally on the number of empty homes to be brought back into use each year.

To guide, coordinate and target empty homes activity, a number of main issues have been identified informed by local evidence and aligned to local policy priorities. These main issues also reflect the local initiatives and innovation which provide a strong foundation for future empty homes activity, as well as the specific local challenges and barriers that partners and stakeholders seek to overcome.

Insert local context on the development of strategic objectives including how they reflect the main issues arising as a result of analysis, policy alignment and stakeholder feedback.

These main issues have been used as a basis to define the following strategic objectives, which are set out in the boxes below.

In order to deliver this aim and strategic objectives, a schedule of activities, projects and initiatives have been developed into an Action Plan, enabling partners to bring empty homes back into use over the next   years. This Action Plan has been developed in collaboration with local partners and stakeholders who will support implementation, monitoring and evaluation of empty homes activity.

6 – Empty Homes SMART Action Plan

The following Action Plan has been developed to enable the Council and partners to plan, deliver, monitor and evaluate the impact of empty homes activity over the next   years. It sets a framework for partnership working and investment that reflects strategic objectives and creates a route map for delivering the aim of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework.

The Action Plan sets out a range of milestones detailing the activity associated with implementation, setting target timescales and details of the lead agency for implementation. The Action Plan, activities and targets will be reviewed annually to ensure partners are able to respond flexibly to changes in need across   .

> The Strategic Empty Homes Framework Action Plan should set out the actions required to achieve the overall aim and strategic objectives below. Where applicable, it should also set out current performance against the objective.
>
> The Action Plan should clarify the resources required, timescales and responsibilities of all those involved in delivery.
>
> Complete the tables below for each Strategic Objective using Section 12 of the Strategic Empty Homes Framework Guidance.

Strategic Objective 1:

Baseline/Current position:

Action	Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources
1.1				
1.2				
1.3				
1.4				
1.5				

Strategic Objective 2:

Baseline/Current position:

Action	Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources
1.1				
1.2				
1.3				
1.4				
1.5				

Strategic Objective 3:

Baseline/Current position:

Action	Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources
1.1				
1.2				
1.3				
1.4				
1.5				

Strategic Objective 4:

Baseline/Current position:

Action	Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources
1.1				
1.2				
1.3				
1.4				
1.5				

Strategic Objective 5:

Baseline/Current position:

Action	Milestones	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources
1.1				
1.2				
1.3				
1.4				
1.5				

7 – Resourcing Empty Homes Activity in

As a council, we place a high level of strategic importance in addressing long term empty homes and see empty homes work as an important element in meeting the aims, objectives and targets set out in our LHS, LOIP and our contribution to the delivery of several National Outcomes as set out in Section 2 of this Framework.

This is reflected in the capital resources that we have allocated for this area.

The proposed allocated funding for the next four years is illustrated below in Table 7.1:

Strategic Empty Homes Framework Budget 2023/24 – 2026/27 COSTS				
Resource	**Current financial year 23/24**	**24/25**	**25/26**	**26/27**
Direct salary costs (Empty Homes Officer)				
Indirect salary costs (including finance and legal staff)				
Empty Homes Loans				
Empty Homes Grants				
Empty Homes Buy Back/ Acquisition				
Compulsory Purchase Order (costs of purchase)				
Other				

Table 7.1: Average 4 Year Expenditure on Empty Homes

Insert further information including where funding has already been agreed outwith the framework, what funding is conditional on framework approval, linked objectives and local housing strategy priorities for each element of new funding, and deliverables for this funding below.

Table 7.2 indicates revenue income that it is anticipated will be generated as a result of delivery of this framework or through revenue raised from the application of powers to increase council tax for long term empty homes under The Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.

Additionally, the table includes details of other funding sources that will be used specifically for delivery of the framework, including funding allocated under the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, other Scottish Government initiatives, and third party funding where elements of the framework are pursued in partnership with other organisations.

The table also includes preventative spending savings. These are savings for the local authority and emergency services from reduction in complaints and incidents attributable to deterioration of empty properties, and anti-social behaviour associated with empty properties.

Insert table below, and/or link back to figures on costs per empty home in section 3 of template (if used) together with aggregated estimate of total income from total estimated homes to be brought back to use through objectives. Delete or add rows to the table to reflect information that is available and/or required for approval of proposed budget and supporting activities. Adjust text above this box accordingly.

Strategic Empty Homes Framework Budget 2023/24 – 2026/27 REVENUE				
Resource	Current financial year 23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27
Income generated from homes returned to use				
Council tax (where property returned to use was exempt from council tax or in long term arrears)				
Affordable Housing Supply Programme funding				
Income generated through long term empty home surcharge (money received on long term empty homes)				
Other Scottish Government funding allocated to empty homes work.				
Other grants and funding				
Preventative spending savings				

Table 7.2: Average 4 Year Income from and for returning Empty Homes to use

8 – Monitoring Progress and Evaluating Impact

The actions scheduled under each strategic objective, have been developed into the detailed Action Plan in Chapter 8, which sets out specific timescales, resources and partner responsibilities to guide implementation and delivery. This Action Plan provides a strong basis for monitoring progress in implementing the Strategic Empty Homes Framework on a regular basis.

A range of milestones have been developed to measure impact over time aligned to delivery timescales. The Action Plan therefore provides a basis for evaluating the longer term impact of activity, partnership and investment in tackling empty homes.

Insert details of the monitoring arrangements that will be put in place to track the progress of the Strategic Empty Homes Action Plan below.

Arrangements could include ongoing reviews to monitor progress made on milestones, targets and use of resources within the timescales outlined in the Action Plan.

If relevant, provide further detail to the Empty Homes Steering Group established to oversee this work including partner composition and remit.

In order to monitor progress and achievements the following monitoring arrangements will be adopted:

- Establish an Empty Homes Steering Group
- Six monthly and annual updates of Action Plan
- Steering Group review of actions not progressed or slow to commence

8.1 – Evaluation

This regular programme of evaluation will provide the Council and partners with an opportunity to understand:

- The progress that has been achieved
- Current position
- Delivery improvements required

This approach will provide an assessment of the successes and challenges associated with tackling empty homes and provides a transparent approach to improvement planning and scrutiny.

Progress reports will be made available and be published on the Council's website with any supporting documents.

9 – Consultation & Engagement.

Consultation has been central to the development of this strategy and sought the views of staff, empty home owners, partners and residents. A formal consultation process for the draft strategy was carried out over a period of   weeks from   to   . The consultation draft and questions are available to view at   .

9.1 – Feedback from the consultation

The questions and feedback results from the consultation were as follows:

Set out question 2 in the first box and feedback results in the second box below

Set out question 3 in the first box and feedback results in the second box below

Set out question 4 in the first box and feedback results in the second box below

Set out question 5 in the first box and feedback results in the second box below

As a result, the Strategic Empty Homes Framework reflects the local needs and experiences of residents and communities, as well as the views of partners and stakeholders on the development of priorities and actions.