



Good Practice

Objective

<p>Empty Properties Activities</p>	<p>Housing Development Officer dedicated to bringing Empty Properties back into use in rural areas to maximise the delivery of affordable housing, making best use of housing stock and to promote sustainable communities.</p>
---	---

Detail

Housing Development Officer (Empty Properties) has responsibility for bringing empty properties back into use. A number of partnership arrangements and schemes have been set up to assist in achieving set targets with Housing Associations, private owners and agents.

Funding for the schemes is provided through the Local Authority’s own capital reserves and Housing Association private finance.

The activities around empty properties are prioritised according to a number of factors including location, current level of housing need, property size and condition. Empty properties are identified in rural areas through council tax records, through housing needs survey questionnaire and local information events. Individual reports are also received from local residents. The Housing Development Officer assists rural empty property owners to claim the lower rate VAT on renovations to bring empty properties in poor condition back into use and is advised about tenant referral options from our Housing Advice Team.

Outcomes

2 bed property, Birtley, Herefordshire

Grant assistance (from allocated capital budget) was provided to enable the owner to renovate the property to meet the decent homes standard, with the management being handed over to a Housing Association for a minimum of 6 years, for households in housing need. Work in partnership initially with the owner and a housing association to identify and agree the best use for the property. The Housing Association oversaw the works to the property undertaken by the owner, from start on site to completion. Following completion the owner entered into a lease agreement with the Housing Association, where it was let in direct partnership with the choice based lettings partner.

Update - 2012 text updated

Author: Herefordshire Council

Contact: Housing Development Officer

housingdevelopment@herefordshire.gov.uk



Rural Affordable Housing
Project

ruralhousing@hca.gsx.gov.uk

www.ruralaffordablehousing.org.uk

The above example of good practice may be shared with local authorities, rural stakeholders and partners. The author/good practice example provider has full ownership of the example and can remove it from the website at any time.

The author/good practice provider, by providing the example, gives permission for replication and use of ideas. Any individual or organisation that does so should notify the author/good practice provider, as well as the Rural and Communities team at the HCA.