

Private Sector Housing

Empty Homes Assistance Factsheet

Introduction

Empty homes assistance, through discretionary grants and loans is available to owners of empty homes to undertake essential repairs to bring properties back into use.

Assistance is available for properties that have been empty for over 6 months to pay for works that will help bring them back into use to be either rented or occupied by the owner.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the **Safe and Healthy Homes Policy**, available online at www.mendip.gov.uk/housingpolicies which provides full details on the financial assistance.

Eligibility

Empty Home Grant

Three tiers of grants are available.

Empty home grant: Up to £3,000 is available to bring an empty home back into use.

Empty home (Private rented) grant: Up to £5,000 is available to bring an empty home back into use if let on a minimum 12 month Assure Shorthold Tenancy agreement.

In both the above cases, unless there are exceptional circumstances, the grant will not be paid until the property is occupied.

Empty home (homelessness prevention) grant: Up to £15,000 is available to bring an empty home back into use to help prevent homelessness, subject to local demand and the owner signing up to a nomination rights agreement, which includes:

- Mendip District Council being given tenancy nomination rights for a minimum period of 5 years;
- Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreements being granted for a minimum initial period of 12 months;

- Agreeing to take tenants who are in receipt of Universal Credit, housing and/or other benefits and to only ask for a maximum of one month's rent in advance as a deposit;
- The property being let at Local Housing Allowance rates.

All applicants for a grant will be assessed by the Council to determine eligibility.

Empty Home Loan

- Loans of up to £25,000 are available from [Lendology CIC](#) to bring an empty home back into use.
- Loans can be used to top up the grant, or as an alternative.

Applicants for a loan will be assessed by Lendology CIC to determine eligibility and affordability.

Conditions

- The applicant will be expected to get a minimum of two quotes for the work.
- Assistance is available for properties that have been empty for over 6 months and the Council may require evidence of this prior to accepting an application for a grant or loan.
- Applicants may be required to demonstrate that they have sufficient funds to complete the works before being accepted for a loan and/or grant and demonstrate that the work required to the property to bring it back into use is equal or in excess of the grant/loan amount being applied for.
- Only one empty Home Grant can be applied for per empty property. If a property becomes empty again after 5 years then a further application may be considered.
- The Council reserves the right to refuse to issue or approve a grant or loan where it does not feel it is an appropriate use of funds or in the public interest, subject to its statutory obligations and criteria laid down in this policy.
- Where a loan is provided, title restrictions will be applied by the lender.

Types of work eligible for assistance

Financial assistance is available to owners of empty homes to undertake essential repairs to bring the property back into use.

Cosmetic changes/improvements will not qualify for grant or loan assistance.

Further information

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact:

Private Sector Housing
Mendip District Council
Cannards Grave Road
Shepton Mallet
Somerset
BA4 5BT

Tel: 0300 303 8588

Direct tel: 01749 341 490

Email: privatesectorhousing@mendip.gov.uk

www.mendip.gov.uk/emptyhomes