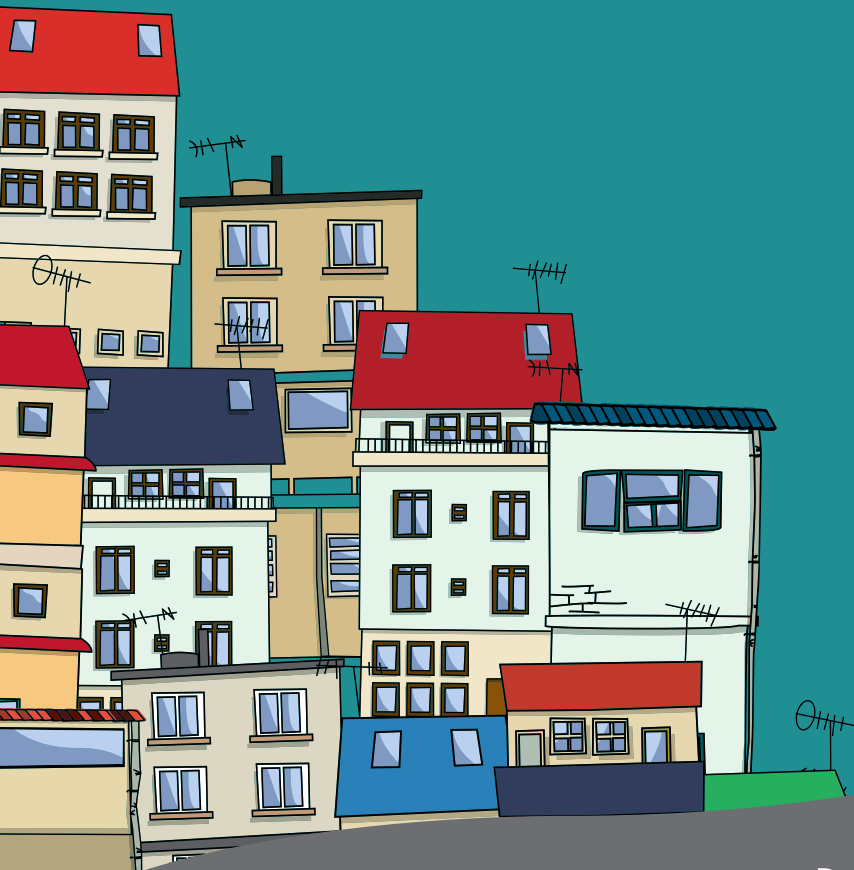


ADVICE AND  
INFORMATION FOR

# Empty Homes Owners



Empty homes can be a magnet for anti-social behaviour, crime, vandalism, arson and fly-tipping. Houses left unoccupied can quickly fall into disrepair, becoming a blight on the neighbourhood and having an adverse effect on the value and saleability of surrounding properties.

An empty home costs money to the owner and to the community. It is estimated that an empty property can cost the owner on average £7,000 a year in lost rent and council tax.

For the community the costs can be much higher depending on the state of the property and can include:

- The cost of fire and police attendance to an incident at the property
- The cost of refuse services to remove fly-tipped materials
- Cost of removal of graffiti and other vandalism
- Cost of attendance by Community Safety Officers / Environmental Health Officers
- Lost spend in the local community
- Lowering of adjacent property values by up to 18%

## Council Tax

Vacant homes in Dumfries & Galloway qualify for a council tax discount of 100 percent for the first 6 months and 50 percent discount for a further 6 months from the date that the property was last occupied for 3 months or more. However, council tax will be doubled if a property is unoccupied for 12 months or more. This is called the Long Term Empty Property Tariff and applies even if a property is derelict or in very poor condition.

You may get relief from the tariff if:

- you are actively working to bring the property back into occupation
- the property is being actively marketed for let or sale
- the property is in disrepair and has recently been sold or changed hands
- you receive housing benefit or a council tax reduction

- you inherited the property
- you've applied for (or been granted) planning permission

You may be exempt if your property is a:

- second home
- purpose built holiday home
- job related home

For further information or to apply for a discount or exemption please call 030 33 33 3005

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15274/Relief-from-the-Long-Term-Empty-Property-Tariffon](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15274/Relief-from-the-Long-Term-Empty-Property-Tariffon)

The following pages provide information that should be helpful if you own an empty property and would like to learn about your options for bringing it back into use.

## Thinking about Renting?

Do you want to access a rental income from your property but you are unsure about becoming a landlord?

### Landlord Training

Landlord training is available from the Scottish Association of Landlords. For more information, contact 0131 564 0100, info@scottishlandlords.com or on the following link: [www.scottishlandlords.com](http://www.scottishlandlords.com)

### Landlord Registration

Private Landlords in Scotland are now required to register with the council to ensure that they are meeting the necessary standards. For more information on how to register see:

[www.landlordregistrationscotland.gov.uk](http://www.landlordregistrationscotland.gov.uk)

<https://rentingscotland.org/>

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15282/Registering-as-a-private-landlord](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15282/Registering-as-a-private-landlord)

### Repairing Standards

Landlords have a legal responsibility to ensure that a rented house meets a legal standard of repair called the Repairing Standard: <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15281/Maintaining-standards-of-repair-for-private-rented-properties>

### Landlord Accreditation

For information on the voluntary Landlord Accreditation Scheme and associated standards and training opportunities see: [www.landlordaccreditationscotland.com](http://www.landlordaccreditationscotland.com)

### Renting Scotland

The website for Renting Scotland is an industry-wide information hub for both tenants and landlords in the private rented sector in Scotland. <https://rentingscotland.org/>. For more information and advice about being a landlords in Scotland see; [www.mygov.scot/housing-local-services/being-a-landlord/](http://www.mygov.scot/housing-local-services/being-a-landlord/)

## Tenancy Deposit Scheme

A landlord may ask a tenant to pay a sum of money at the start of their tenancy which will be held as security. Deposits must now be lodged with an approved tenancy deposit scheme within 30 days of the tenancy starting. There are three tenancy deposit schemes operating in Scotland which have been approved by the Scottish Government.

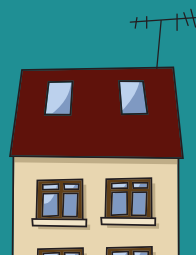
[www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15284/Tenancy-deposit-schemes](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15284/Tenancy-deposit-schemes)

### Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme

The Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme helps people on low income to secure private rented accommodation by offering landlords a written guarantee in place of a cash deposit. The scheme is delivered by The Hub Dumfries and Galloway with funding Dumfries & Galloway Council. The Hub is located at 24-26 Friars Vennel, Dumfries DG1 2RL. Phone 01387 269161. E-mail: [info@thehubdg.org.uk](mailto:info@thehubdg.org.uk). Link to the website is [www.thehubdg.org](http://www.thehubdg.org)

### Dumfries & Galloway Private Sector Available Tenancies

The Hub has a weekly private sector information service gathering information on available private sector tenancies in Dumfries and Galloway. The information is updated weekly and distributed to over 100 public access points across the region. To advertise your property contact The Hub at 24-26 Friars Vennel, Dumfries DG1 2RL. Phone 01387 269161. E-mail: [info@thehubdg.org](mailto:info@thehubdg.org). Link to the website is [www.thehubdg.org](http://www.thehubdg.org). There are also a number of Letting Agents in operation in the area listed who will manage the letting of your property for a fee.



# Need work done to your property so it can be occupied?

There are a number of contacts that may be able to assist:

## Trusted Traders Scheme

Dumfries & Galloway Councils Trusted Trader scheme helps you to choose a reputable trader from customer feedback. The scheme is currently aimed mainly at home improvement traders. The traders are reviewed by customers as well as checked and monitored to make sure they're trading legally:

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/trustedtrader](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/trustedtrader)

## Trustmark

TrustMark is the only Government endorsed scheme for trades in and around the home. They award registered firms with our accreditation after thorough vetting and on-site inspections to ensure the firm is raising industry standards.

[www.trustmark.org.uk](http://www.trustmark.org.uk)

## Gas Safety Register

Gas Safe Register is the official registration body for the UK, appointed by the local Health & Safety Authority. By law all gas engineers must be on the Gas Safe Register. [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)

## Building Standards

Building regulations are in place to make sure that buildings are safe. Building Standards are responsible for checking that buildings in the region meet Scottish standards.

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/building](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/building)



## Planning Controls

Planning deal with applications for planning permission in Dumfries and Galloway. This process is also known as development management.

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/planning](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/planning)

## Care & Repair

Care and Repair services operate throughout Scotland to offer independent advice and assistance to help home-owners repair, improve or adapt their homes so that they can live in comfort and safety in their own community. The service is available to owner-occupiers, private tenants and crofters who are aged over 60 or who have a disability.

<http://loreburn.org.uk/care-repair>

## Help with Social Care

Support is available from social work if you're an older person, have a disability or are ill and having problems with day-to-day life but want to remain independent. [www.dumgal.gov.uk](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk)

## Under One Roof

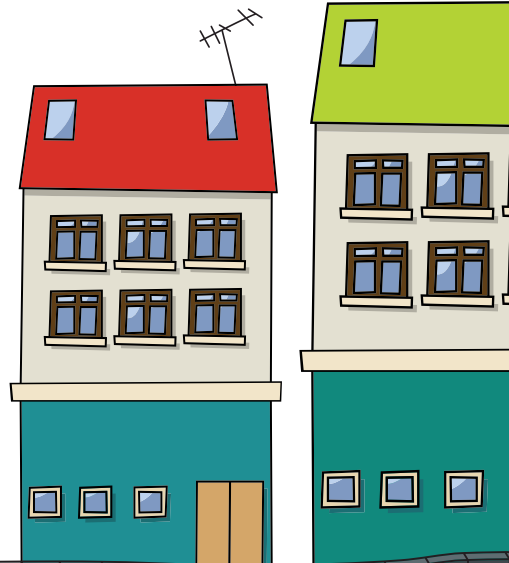
Impartial advice on repairs and maintenance for flat owners in Scotland.

<http://newtenementhandbook.scot/>

## Energy Savings Trust

Energy Savings Trust are a network of local advice centres covering all of Scotland. They offer free, impartial advice on energy saving, renewable energy, sustainable transport, waste prevention, loans, support and more.

[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/)



## Money Advice Service

Are a national umbrella organisation which promotes the development of free, independent, impartial and confidential debt advice and financial inclusion.

[www.moneyadvicescotland.org.uk](http://www.moneyadvicescotland.org.uk)

## Credit Unions

Solway Credit Union (SCU) was set up in 1999 by a group of local people interested in promoting thrift, namely encouraging better 'financial health' through regular saving and low cost loans. They are able to provide a range of practical, affordable and straightforward financial services to everyone living or working in their Common Bond area of Annandale & Eskdale, Nithsdale and the Stewartry.

[www.solwaycreditunion.co.uk](http://www.solwaycreditunion.co.uk)

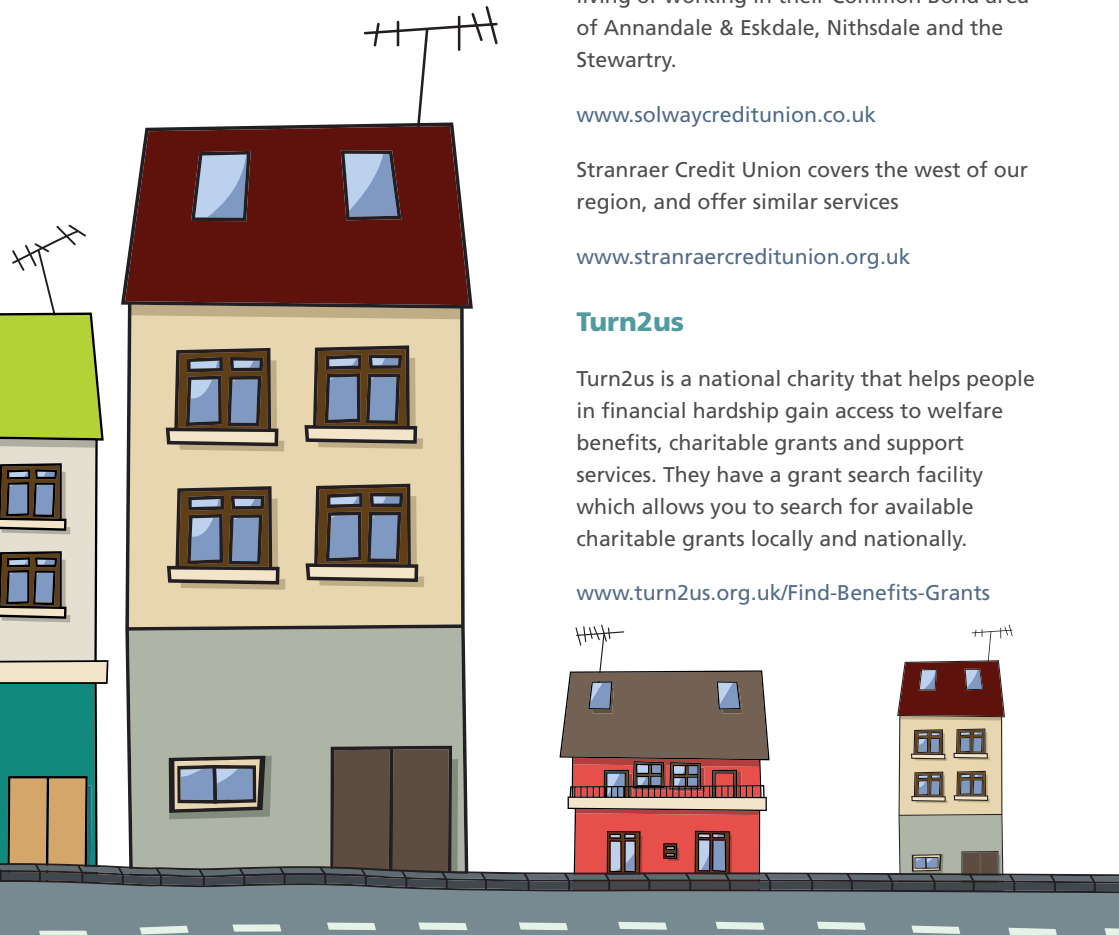
Stranraer Credit Union covers the west of our region, and offer similar services

[www.stranraercreditunion.org.uk](http://www.stranraercreditunion.org.uk)

## Turn2us

Turn2us is a national charity that helps people in financial hardship gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and support services. They have a grant search facility which allows you to search for available charitable grants locally and nationally.

[www.turn2us.org.uk/Find-Benefits-Grants](http://www.turn2us.org.uk/Find-Benefits-Grants)



## Thinking about Selling?

If you are thinking about selling your property, there are several options open to you. There are number of companies operating in the area who can assist. For an up to date list please contact The Hub at 24-26 Friars Vennel, Dumfries DG1 2RL. Phone 01387 269161. E-mail: [info@thehubdg.org.uk](mailto:info@thehubdg.org.uk). Link to the website is [www.thehubdg.org](http://www.thehubdg.org)

## Auction Houses

The following links will connect you to local auction houses that deal with property lots. Selling at auction can provide a quick way of selling your home but there will be auctioneers fees to pay.

[www.auctionhousescotland.com](http://www.auctionhousescotland.com)

[www.countrywidepropertyauctions.co.uk](http://www.countrywidepropertyauctions.co.uk)

[www.futurepropertyauctions.co.uk](http://www.futurepropertyauctions.co.uk)

<http://quicksalepropertyauctions.com/>

[www.sva-auctions.co.uk](http://www.sva-auctions.co.uk)

[www.wilsonsauctions.com/land-property](http://www.wilsonsauctions.com/land-property)

[www.0131auction.co.uk](http://www.0131auction.co.uk)

## Not sure where to start?

Dumfries & Galloway Council:  
[www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15279/Empty-homes](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15279/Empty-homes)

John Ringrose, Team Leader Empty Homes & Private Sector Housing

Phone: 01387 273 151 E-mail:  
[privatesectorhousing@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorhousing@dumgal.gov.uk)

## Contact Us

We have a range of leaflets on different topics available on request. If you would like further information on the types of assistance available to homeowners please contact:

Dumfries & Galloway Council

Communities

Strategic Housing

Municipal Chambers

Buccleuch Street

Dumfries

DG1 2AD

Tel: 030 33 33 3000

Email: [strategichousing@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:strategichousing@dumgal.gov.uk)

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15101/Housing](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15101/Housing)

