

# Empty Homes Advice Service - EHAS

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# Webinar Content

- What is an empty home?
- Introduction to the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (SEHP)
- What is EHAS? Who do we help?
- Supporting neighbours of empty homes
- Neighbour Toolkits
- Case Studies
- Q+A



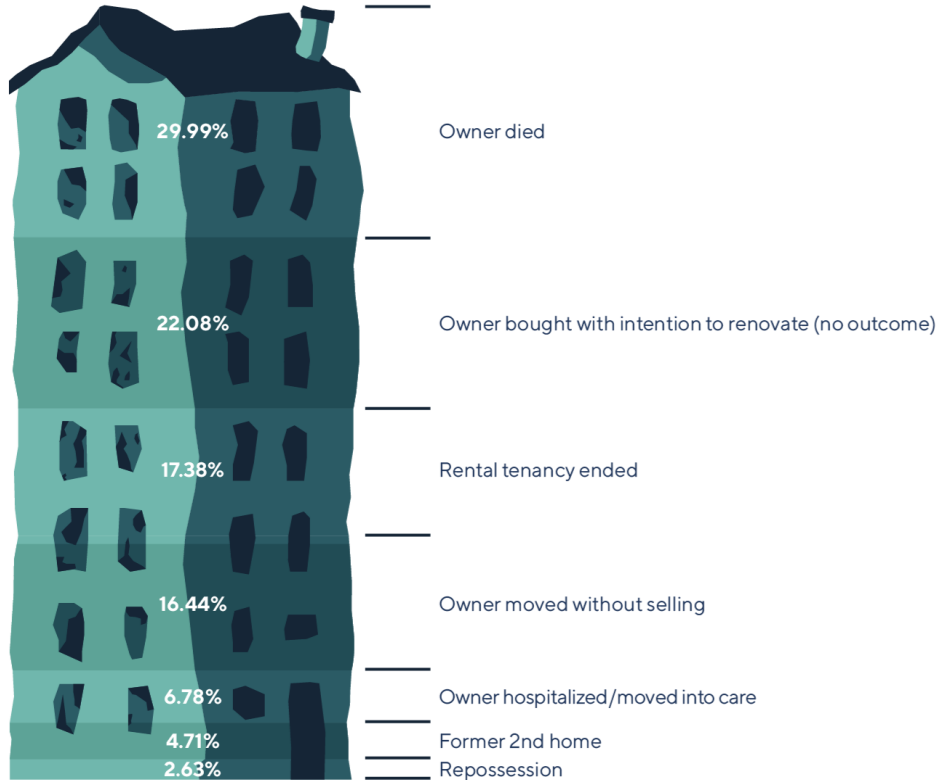
# What is an empty home?

- A home that has been empty for 6 months or more and is liable for council tax
- In 2023 there were around 46000 empty homes across Scotland

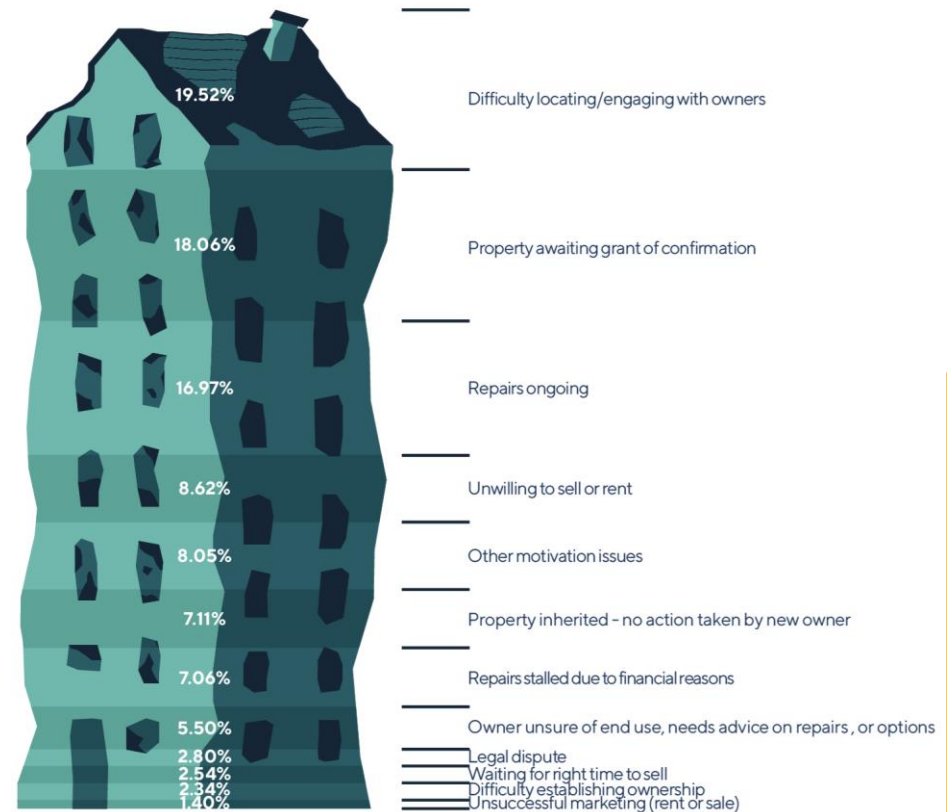


# Why do homes become and remain empty?

## Why do homes *become* empty?



## Why do homes *remain* empty?





# Scottish Empty Homes Partnership - SEHP

- Funded by the Scottish Government hosted by Shelter Scotland
- Launched in 2010
- Goal is to bring long-term private sector empty homes back into use
- Work with a wide range of organisations and individuals to enable over 9000 empty homes to be brought back into use over the life of the partnership



# Empty Homes Advice Service – what it is

- Public face of the Partnership
- Provide free advice via phone and email, 10am-3.30pm, Monday to Friday
- Advice on our website, including blogs, interactive tools, and Neighbour Toolkit





# Empty Homes Advice Service – what we do

- Provide advice to empty home owners, neighbours/community members, investors, and practitioners/empty home professionals
- Currently our largest cohort of contacts is neighbours/community members
- These contacts make up 40% of all that we receive



# Impact of empty homes on neighbours/ communities

- Disrepair affecting neighbouring properties
- Communal repair issues in flats
- Long terms empties causing a blight on the area – overgrown gardens, boarded up windows, littering and other forms of antisocial behaviour (fire raising/ break ins)
- Worst case scenario can create vicious cycle whereby neighbours also move away and area becomes less attractive to renters/ buyers creating more empties







# What's the law on empty homes?

There is no law in Scotland to stop a home being left unoccupied

But there are some things that can be done:

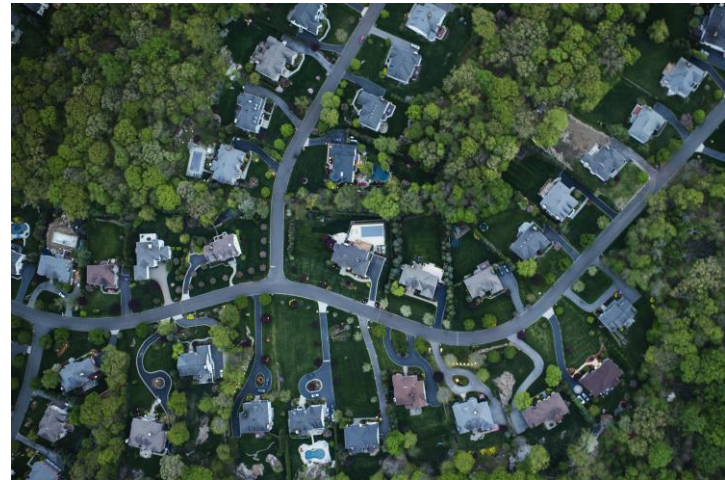
- **Environmental Protection legislation**
  - Statutory nuisance
  - Prevention of Damage by Pests Act (PDPA)
- **200% Council Tax**





# How can we help neighbours

- Listen to the neighbours
- Offer advice
- Signpost
- Send Neighbour Toolkit
- Refer to EHO for area specific advice
- Refer to local council





# Neighbour Toolkits

Help! The house next door is empty

Empty Homes and Disrepair

Empty Homes and Environmental Health

Empty Homes and Anti Social Behaviour

Sharing your story of living next to an empty home

[Neighbour | Scottish Empty Homes Partnership](#)



# Case Study



Neighbour called about squirrels in the next door's loft

Property had been empty for 6 months

Owner lived in different city

Neighbour called us at EHAS

Referred to EHO

Neighbour was able to get contact details

Issue was resolved, squirrels found new home





# Case study

Neighbour called about damp from next door empty property

In an area that did not have an EHO

Talked through options and advised to report to environmental health

EH assessed damp and issued a warrant





# Empty Homes Officers

- 27 out of 32 Local Authorities have a dedicated EHO
- Can search council tax records
- Attempt to visit empty home
- Engage with owner
- Work to bring the home back into use



When there is no EHO – Advice Service can help



[Empty Homes Officer Contacts | Scottish Empty Homes Partnership](#)

[www.emptyhomespartnership.scot](http://www.emptyhomespartnership.scot)

# Thanks for listening

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# Q+A