

FURTHER INFO

My Responsibilities as a Property Owner

The Derelict Sites Act, 1990, establishes that it is the duty of every property owner to take all reasonable steps to ensure that their land does not become derelict, i.e. containing land or structures that are in a neglected/unsightly/dangerous/or ruinous condition, or have litter, rubbish, debris or waste present on the land. This leaflet aims to bring together information on schemes and initiatives that are available to owners of vacant properties, to bring homes back into use, and to ensure they do not fall into dereliction.

Vacant Homes Tax (VHT)

A new "Vacant Homes Tax" (VHT) was introduced by the government in 2023. VHT is an annual tax to be paid by property owners, levied at 5 times the basic rate of Local Property Tax. It applies to residential properties that can be lived in, but which have only been in use as a dwelling for less than 30 days in a 12-month chargeable period (i.e. between 1 November and 31 October the following year). See www.revenue.ie/en/property/vacant-homes-tax

Bringing Back Homes Manual

The Bringing Back Homes manual was developed to support the reuse of older/vacant buildings in our towns and cities for residential use. The manual provides clarity on the application of the current regulatory requirements to common existing building types and guidance on how best to facilitate their reuse. The manual can be located at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/68a5b-bringing-back-homes-manual-for-the-reuse-of-existing-buildings/>

Exempted Development

New planning regulations have been introduced recently which allow change of use, and related works, of certain vacant commercial premises, including "over the shop" type spaces, and pubs, into residential use without the need to obtain planning permission. If you would like to know more, please contact planning@corkcity.ie.

Derelict Sites Compulsory Acquisition

Local authorities would prefer to work with owners to bring derelict properties back into use. However, powers are also available to local authorities through Compulsory Acquisition. Local authorities can take action through this process where all other options have been exhausted and where the local authority consider action is required in the common good.

VACANCY

When you own a vacant property, it can be difficult to work out the options that are open to you to bring it back into use. This leaflet aims to bring together information on government schemes and initiatives that are available to owners of vacant properties.

Cork City Council also has a Vacant Homes Officer who is there to give you advice and assistance, and can work with you every step of the way to bring your property back into use.

This summary of schemes and incentives is by no means exhaustive and other more specific grants and schemes may be available to you depending on the type and location of your vacant property. If you wish to see more details, please see our website: www.corkcity.ie



If you would like to let us know about a vacant property in your area, please fill in the form at www.VacantHomes.ie

CONTACT US:

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www.corkcity.ie



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council



We are Cork.

Vacant Homes

Realising the potential



GRANTS & SCHEMES

There are a number of support schemes in place which can help bring a vacant home back into use. Cork City Council is keen to fully utilise housing stock in the city. Here are some of the available grants and schemes.

Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant (Croí Cónaithe)

This grant provides funding to refurbish a property that has been vacant for 2 years or more at the time of application, either as your principal private residence or to rent out the property. A grant of up to €50,000 to renovate a vacant property, with a top-up of up to €20,000 if the property is derelict, is available for properties that were built before and including 2007. Please visit our website and search for “Croí Cónaithe”.

Repair and Lease Scheme

This scheme has been developed to bring vacant properties into social housing use, and is aimed at owners of vacant properties who cannot afford the repairs needed to bring the property up a rental standard. The local authority will make funding available to carry out repairs, and in return the property must be made available for social housing for a minimum term under a direct lease or Rental Availability Agreement. For further information, please contact housingcapital@corkcity.ie.

Buy and Renew Scheme

This scheme provides the option for suitable properties to be purchased, rather than leased, by a local authority. A particular focus of the scheme is on older vacant homes to help tackle the problem of dereliction and improve the appearance of the community. If you are the owner of a vacant property, contact housingcapital@corkcity.ie for further information.

Long-Term Leasing

This initiative may be an option for you if you own a house or apartment that is vacant and in good condition. Leasing your property under this scheme takes the uncertainty out of being a landlord for terms of 10-20 years. It is also financially viable with a guaranteed rental income each month. For further information, contact housingcapital@corkcity.ie.

Living City Tax Initiative (LCI)

LCI is a tax incentive scheme to assist and encourage people to live in the historic areas of Cork City. Applicants can claim tax relief for the amount they spend on refurbishment/conversion of a residential property. Properties must be located within the Special Regeneration Areas of Cork City. There is also a scheme for owners of commercial premises; this is applied for directly through Revenue. The scheme is set to run until 31/12/2027. Please visit our website and search for “Incentives and Grants”.

Individual Energy Upgrade Grants (SEAI)

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) provides grants to help homeowners and landlords improve their energy costs and emissions. Grants are available for Attic Insulation, Wall Insulation, Heating Controls, Heat Pumps, Solar Thermal, and Solar Panels. Please see: www.seai.ie/grants



Fully Funded Energy Upgrades (SEAI)

The SEAI's Fully Funded Energy Upgrades aim to improve the energy efficiency and warmth of homes owned by people who receive certain welfare payments, for example Jobseekers Allowance, Working Family Payment. You can check the eligibility requirements on www.seai.ie.

One Stop Shop Service (SEAI)

The SEAI's One Stop Shop Service offers homeowners grants towards the cost of a complete home energy upgrade. You must be looking to make substantial energy upgrades to your home and achieve a Building Energy Rating of at least a 'B2'. A technical surveyor will advise on the best upgrades to bring your home to a B2 energy rating or higher. They will apply and accept all SEAI grants for your project and deduct the grant upfront from the total cost of your works. Visit www.seai.ie.

Built Heritage Investment Scheme

Financial assistance is provided to assist with the conservation and restoration of privately-owned historic properties such as Protected Structures and properties in Architectural Conservation Areas. Search for “Conservation Grants” on our website.

Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) Grant

Grants of up to €15,000 are available to assist owners of buildings in the forty-two Architectural Conservation Areas across Cork City to undertake works necessary to secure their conservation e.g. repairs of windows, doors, roofs, chimneys, gutters, railings and shopfronts. Please visit our website and search for “Conservation Grants”.

Housing Aid for Older People Grant

This means-tested grant is for people aged 66 and over, to make essential repairs to improve the condition of the property, which would enable them to live in their own home. Essential repairs can include, for example, roof repairs; repair/replace windows and doors; upgrading electrical wiring. The maximum grant available is €8,000. Visit www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/services/housing

Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability

This means-tested scheme provides grant aid to applicants to assist in carrying out works that are necessary to make a house more suitable for the accommodation needs of a person with a disability. The maximum grant under the scheme is €30,000, which may cover up to 95% of the approved cost of works such as a ramp, grab rails, accessible bathroom, stair lift, space for wheelchair access, an extension (typically for a bedroom or bathroom to accommodate a person with a disability). Visit www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/services/housing.

Mobility Aids Grant

This grant is for older people and/or people with a disability who find it hard to move around their home due to mobility issues. The maximum grant under the scheme is €6,000, for works such as ramps, grab rails, accessible shower, stair lift. Please visit our website and search for “Housing Grants” or email housinggrants@corkcity.ie for further information.

The Home Energy Upgrade Loan Scheme

Government-backed, low-interest, home energy upgrade loans have been announced, where homeowners will be able to borrow from €5,000 to €75,000 at lower interest rates for up to 10 years. Loans can be used for comprehensive energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades where those works are also being grant-aided by the SEAI. Homeowners will be able to apply for the loans through participating retail lenders.