



REQUEST 19756

I am writing to enquire whether the council has any current schemes, disposal processes, or partnership routes relating to long-term empty residential properties, surplus residential stock, or other opportunities to help bring vacant homes back into use within the borough.

By way of background, we are actively seeking residential refurbishment opportunities and are particularly interested in properties that may be suitable for renovation and reoccupation. We are keen to understand whether there are any legitimate routes to engage with the council in relation to vacant or underused residential properties, including any opportunities that may not be advertised through the usual mainstream portals.

I would be grateful if you could advise on the following:

1. whether the council operates any empty homes initiatives, leasing schemes, buy-back schemes, renovation schemes, or acquisition programmes;
2. whether the council disposes of surplus residential properties or other vacant housing stock, and if so, how such opportunities are marketed or made available;
3. whether there are any approved routes for private buyers, investors, or developers to work with the council to purchase, refurbish, lease, or otherwise bring empty homes back into use;
4. whether the council maintains any mailing list, register, or contact point for parties interested in relevant property opportunities;
5. which department or officer would be the most appropriate point of contact for acquisitions, disposals, empty homes, or related housing initiatives.

If there is a formal application, tender, approved-buyer, or expressions-of-interest process for such opportunities, I would be grateful if you could please provide details.

RESPONSE

1. The Council operate empty homes and leasing initiatives through our in-house Ethical Lettings Agency (ELA). This includes a pilot Empty Homes Investment Scheme whereby upfront financial investment is provided to bring long-term empty homes back into use. Refurbished homes are taken onto a lease with the Council's ELA, and the Council's investment recouped through the rental income. For further information see: [Empty Homes Investment Scheme](#).

The Council are also taking part in a Greater-Manchester wide Empty Homes and Leasing Programme in 2026-27, with funds available for the repair and lease of empty homes. Homes will be used to provide temporary or settled accommodation to local homeless families.

The Council do not operate an acquisition programme, but consider Right to Buy Buyback requests on a case-by-case basis, in line with the Right of First Refusal.

2. The Council markets the disposal of surplus residential properties through local agents.
<https://www.parkinsonre.com/>
3. Private investors and developers who are interested in working with the Council in relation to empty homes are able to register for the Landlord Hub ([Landlord Hub](#)) and select 'Empty properties available for purchase and/or renovation opportunities' when choosing their marketing preferences. In doing so, the Landlord Hub user will receive communications in relation to local empty homes that are available to purchase, and will have the opportunity to contact the vendor, view the property and submit an offer. The successful buyer will have the opportunity to then lease the property to the Council's ELA.
4. The Council maintains a mailing list of landlords and developers who are interested in empty home opportunities through our Landlord Hub users (as detailed above).
5. Empty Homes: EmptyHomes@wigan.gov.uk

Acquisitions/Buybacks: HousingStrategy@wigan.gov.uk

Disposals: [Property Division](#)