

# Securing Empty Homes



## How to secure and prevent damage to your empty home

Empty homes can become a target for acts of anti social behaviour and are likely to have maintenance problems such as water damage.

It is the responsibility of the owner to maintain and secure an empty home so that it is not causing nuisance to others.

It is recommended that you:

- Insure your property with the appropriate level of cover;
- If the property is to be empty for an unknown period of time, consider turning off the water at the stop cock and draining the radiators. Check first to see if you have a shared water supply!
- Fit timer switches to lights so they come on in the evening, as they would if someone was living there;
- Fit a security light to dimly lit areas;
- Fit good quality locks to the windows and doors;

- Hang net curtains or blinds in the windows so that it is not as easy to see inside;
- Keep the garden tidy and make sure the bins are emptied and put away;
- If you are on good terms with your neighbours, let them know that the property is empty. Perhaps give them your telephone number so that they can contact you if they see or hear anything unusual at the property;
- Make sure that the property has a working burglar alarm and doors and windows are locked;
- Consider keeping the heating on a timer at a low level in the winter to prevent burst pipes;

In extreme circumstances, where a property has been broken into, there are more permanent solutions such as boarding up the property or steel shuttering the property to prevent unauthorised access. There are various security companies who are able to assist with security solutions for long term empty properties, including interlinked alarms.

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