

If you own a home that has been empty for a long time, you might face problems like high repair costs, keeping it safe, higher council tax, or maybe not knowing what to do next. This tool kit explains your main choices; it could be renovated, rent or sell your property.

Renovating your property

Why renovate?

Renovating can increase the value of your empty property or make it ready to rent or sell.

Steps to take

- **Check the condition:** Hire a surveyor to find any big or safety problems
- **Plan your budget:** Add an extra 10–20% for unexpected costs
- **Get quotes:** Ask at least 3 trusted contractors for written quotes
- **Check permissions:** You may need planning permission or building control approval

Best areas to focus on

- Kitchens and bathrooms
- Energy efficiency: insulation, windows, and heating
- Kerb appeal: garden, outside paint, and roof

Renting your property

Why rent?

If your empty property is in good condition, renting can give you a steady income and keep the property occupied and looked after.

Steps to take

- **Make it safe:** The home must meet safety rules (gas, electrical checks, smoke alarms and more)
- **Set a fair rent:** Check what similar homes in your area charge
- **Check tenants:** Use references, credit checks, and right-to-rent checks
- **Use a tenancy agreement:** In England this is usually an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST)

Find a good letting agent

- Choose agents accredited by **ARLA Propertymark**
- Ask how they check tenants, their management fees, and how they deal with repairs
- You may also want to consider letting your property through the Council

Money to think about

- Letting agent fees: usually 8–15% of the monthly rent
- Landlord insurance
- Income tax on rental income
- Maintenance and repair costs

Selling the property

Why sell?

Selling can be the best choice if you don't want the responsibility anymore or if your empty property is in a good location.

Steps to take

- **Get the home ready:** Clean it well, clear out clutter, and do small repairs to make it look better
- **Get a valuation:** Ask 2 or 3 local estate agents for a price estimate
- **Sort the legal papers:** You will need title deeds, an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), and any planning or building certificates
- **Advertise the home:** Use websites like Rightmove and Zoopla, and local ads. Good photos or home staging can help

Find a good estate agent

- Choose agents who are members of **NAEA Propertymark**
- Check reviews on Google, Trustpilot, or AllAgents.co.uk
- Ask about their experience with similar homes and how they plan to market yours

Money to think about

- Estate agent fees: usually 1–2% + VAT of the sale price
- Legal fees for the conveyancing (legal work to sell a home)
- Capital Gains Tax may apply if this is not your main home

Selling at auction

- Auctions can suit homes that need major work or are hard to value
- Use auctioneers who are members of **NAVA Propertymark**
- Auctions are often faster, but the sale price may be lower