

New VacantHomes.ie Website Aims to Log All Vacant Homes in Kilkenny

Kilkenny County Council attended the recent Vacant Homes Network event in Dublin, where there was also a presentation of VacantHomes.ie, an online platform initiated by Mayo County Council with the support of Rebuilding Ireland.

VacantHomes.ie, the online platform for logging all vacant homes in Ireland with a view to bring them back into use presented its new, enhanced digital offering before an audience made up of vacant homes officers from across the country.

The platform allows members of the public to log any vacant homes - or suspected vacant homes - in their areas. 3,000 vacant properties have been registered on the platform to date. Of these, almost 300 unused properties have already been brought back into use or are currently in the process of being renovated for immediate occupation.

Census 2016 data identified 183,312 vacant homes, not including 62,148 vacant holiday homes in Ireland, and a more recent GeoDirectory reported an estimated vacant stock of 96,243. Significantly, more than 90% of the properties registered on the VacantHomes.ie platform are houses. In County Kilkenny it is estimated that there are **250** vacant properties. Unoccupied homes are not a welcome sight for any community and, given the current housing crisis, we need these homes for families and individuals with a housing need.

VacantHomes.ie is a nationwide initiative and each of the 31 local authorities across Ireland has appointed a *Vacant Home Officer* to deal with vacant homes registered and/or identified in their respective local areas. The VacantHomes.ie team works with the VHOs in advising members of the local community on the range of options to bring properties back to the market and provide much-needed housing.

VacantHomes.ie is continuously driving innovation across our housing sector and will further enhance its digital offering to reach more people and register more vacant homes over the coming year. VHOs were invited to learn more about the platform and to ask questions about how they can use it for their local authority.

VacantHomes.ie has a vision to help Ireland significantly reduce its quantity of empty homes. The information obtained from people using this site will allow for the creation of new homes from existing vacant and/or derelict houses and apartments. This will also help towards meeting Ireland's housing needs in an environmentally sustainable manner. The VacantHomes.ie team is thankful for the public efforts towards solving the housing crisis and seeks the public's ongoing help in identifying empty homes in their local areas.

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