



Max Williams

4,000 Local Empty Homes Could Help Meet Housing Need

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Bringing empty homes into occupancy would not only help meet local housing need, it would also help protect the countryside from unnecessary development.

New data reveals there are 4,000 long-term empty, unused houses across Hertfordshire.

The charity [Action on Empty Homes](#) has analysed Government data released by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 9 November 2022.

And the figures on empty homes in our county are higher than we expected. Total housing stock across all ten districts in Hertfordshire stands at 508,957. The district with the most long term empty homes is Hertsmere. With 772 vacant homes, that's 1.7% of the total housing stock of 45,565 in Hertsmere Borough.

Our recently published [brownfield research](#) shows there is space for 20,436 dwellings on previously developed land in Hertfordshire. Add the empty homes data to this, and it appears

that more than 24,000 dwellings could be redeveloped or otherwise occupied before needing to build any new development on greenfield sites in the precious Hertfordshire countryside.

Here at CPRE Hertfordshire we have long been calling on our local authorities for ‘brownfield first’ policies in order to save the countryside from inappropriate development. *This should include bringing empty homes into occupancy as soon as possible.*

The empty homes data by district is shown below.

Local authority	Total homes	Long Term Empty (LTE)	% LTE
Broxbourne	41,581	184	0.4 %
Dacorum	66,652	659	1.0 %
East Herts	65,506	453	0.7 %
Hertsmere	45,565	772	1.7 %
North Hertfordshire	59,185	466	0.8 %
St Albans City & District	62,519	432	0.7 %
Stevenage	38,051	245	0.6 %
Three Rivers	38,526	248	0.6 %
Watford	41,418	254	0.6 %
Welwyn Hatfield	49,954	283	0.6 %
Total	508,957	3,996	0.8 %

Source: Action on empty homes; ‘long term empty’ is defined as 6 months or greater, and excludes second homes and holiday lets