Fingal County Council has established a dedicated Vacant Housing Unit to ensure that numbers of empty houses around the county are kept to a minimum.

As part of this, a specific Vacant Homes Officer has been detailed to manage the pressing need in bringing these properties back into use as demand for housing continues to grow.
Director of Housing Margaret Geraghty said that although the amount of vacant housing stock in Fingal is one of the lowest nationally, there is an urgency to bring vacant stock back into use and this has been recognised by Fingal County Council through its establishment of a Vacant Housing Unit.

She accepted that it could be a slow process to identify the owners of these properties as there could be whole range of reasons why a property had fallen vacant.

She said: “It is seldom the case that a property is vacant simply because somebody has decided not to live there. There are a range of reasons why a property might not be in use, so we try to open direct engagement with the property owner, the receiver, the bank or whoever it happens to be, to get the houses back into use.”

In terms of its own stock, the local authority has continued to maintain a void rate of less than one per cent during 2018.

“We have about 5,500 properties in our stock, which is an increase of 60 per cent over last 10 years. There has been a very substantial increase in social housing across the county, and we manage to maintain a very low vacant property level within our own stock.

“This is something that we continue to put a lot of focus on in terms of how we go about our business, and we ensure that we have contractors on panels that we can quickly get them into refurbish properties.”

She advised members of the public if they are aware of vacant homes to visit the Fingal County Council website, www.fingal.ie, or to email vacant.homes@fingal.ie, and they would follow up the information.

Meanwhile, Fingal County Council also recognises that there is under occupancy some of its housing stock and is looking at ways at balancing the needs of existing tenants and those in need of housing support.
“Sometimes there is an under occupancy because families have grown up and moved on leaving an older person or older couple in their home that may be too big for the needs.

“We need to look for opportunities to build new accommodation that people may be interested in moving into.”

Caption:
Fingal County Council has established a Vacant Housing Unit to ensure that numbers of empty houses around the county are kept to a minimum.

ENDS

For further information contact press@fingal.ie.