

# Dealing with Vacancy and Dereliction

30 May 2025

## A Guide to the Elected Members Training Webinar

You can find the recording at this link: <https://www.opr.ie/elected-members-training/webinar-may-2025/>

### Webinar Overview

To help address the increasing demand for housing across the country, it is critical that existing buildings are used more effectively, and the issues of vacancy and dereliction are addressed. In addition to being a cost-effective way of providing more homes, bringing vacant and derelict properties back into use can also help to transform urban centres and rural locations into more attractive environments where local communities can thrive.

To highlight relevant government policy and the supports available and to detail the work and initiatives being undertaken by local authorities, this webinar on “Dealing with Vacancy & Dereliction” features presentations by:

**Ann Marie O’Connor – from 00:00**

[Principal Officer with the Vacant Homes Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage](#)

Ann Marie’s presentation sets out the policy context and supports available while also detailing aspects of some key initiatives being progressed by the Department, including Vacant Homes Officers, Vacant Property Refurbishment Grants, CPO Activation Programmes, the Derelict Sites Act and the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.

**Ivan Grimes – from 28:30**

[Director of Services for Planning & formerly for Housing at Waterford City and County Council](#)

Ivan’s presentation details the various schemes being used by Waterford City and County Council to return vacant property to residential use with a particular focus on the Repair and Lease Scheme.

**Audrey Crowe – from 42:40**

[Administrative Officer, Property Management Services, Limerick City and County Council](#)

Audrey’s presentation details Limerick City and County Council’s progress with tackling derelict sites, the use of compulsory acquisition and the vesting, managing and disposing of property. The key role of councillors is also outlined together with an impressive selection of before and after images followed by a useful insight into the challenges that lie ahead.

A timeline to help you navigate the webinar recording is set out in the table hereunder.

Time	Topic
00:00	<b>Ann Marie O'Connor – Principal Officer, Vacant Homes Unit, DHLGH</b> Introduction & Vacancy Context
02:45	Policy Context & Measuring Vacancy
07:02	Progress to Date
13:30	Vacant Homes Officers
15:24	Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant
18:10	CPO Activation Programme and the Derelict Sites Act
23:32	Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)
25:50	Key Messages and Useful Links
28:28	<b>Ivan Grimes – Director of Services, Waterford City and County Council</b> Introduction, Vacancy and Social Housing Needs
31:05	Schemes for Returning Vacant Property to Residential Use
33:38	The Repair and Lease Scheme
36:32	The Repair and Lease Scheme – St Joseph's House, Manor Hill
40:50	Waterford City and County Council's Experiences
42:40	<b>Audrey Crowe, Administrative Officer, Property Management Services, Limerick City and County Council</b> Introduction, Key Policy & Initiatives
46:10	Derelict Sites – Identification and Activation
49:40	Derelict Sites Register and Levy
50:30	Compulsory Acquisition, Vesting, Managing and Disposing of Property
53:25	Role of the Councillor
55:10	Limerick – Key Statistics 2019 - 2025
56:00	Selection of Before and After Images
60:46	Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant
62:15	Challenges and Achievements