



Newham London

# Renovating an empty property

[www.newham.gov.uk](http://www.newham.gov.uk)  
020 8430 2000

## Renovating an empty property

### Renovate or sell?

Where a vacant property is in a poor state of repair, particularly if it is so dilapidated it cannot be lived in a decision needs to be made. Is it best to arrange to renovate the property yourself so that it can be lived in or sold, or sell it on to someone who is in a position to carry out the works?

Before making a decision the following points need to be considered:

- Can you afford to pay for the works?
- Could you raise a loan or mortgage to pay for the works?
- Do you actually want to arrange the works?
- Would you recover the costs incurred if you plan to sell the property?

### Expert advice

If you are not experienced in this field a chartered surveyor would be able to advise you on the likely cost of works and how these would affect the value of the property. When it comes to planning, arranging and supervising the work it may be advisable to employ a chartered surveyor or architect if you're not confident about doing this yourself.

### Building control

Most building works require building control approval. This is to ensure that the building is safe, energy-efficient and not likely to affect the health of the occupants. It is best to check beforehand whether any works will need approval. Details can be obtained from the building control page on the council's website. It can be an expensive mistake to carry out works without permission.

## Planning permission

Many minor works, alterations and extensions do not require planning permission. However it is again advisable to check on the council's website to see if the works are likely to need approval.

Enforcement notices can require the demolition of unauthorised works. You should not assume that because a nearby house has had similar alterations carried out that you will get permission; the rules sometimes change over time.

## Reduced VAT for renovating empty residential properties

There is a reduced VAT rate of 5% for renovation works to certain residential premises which have been vacant for more than two years. Further information regarding VAT and tax advantages relating to the renovation of empty properties should be obtained by contacting HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

## Grants

The council does not provide grants to renovate vacant properties.

## Finding a builder

The council does not recommend any particular builders or tradesmen. However, please visit the empty properties page on the council's website for links to a range of sites offering help and assistance in choosing one. You will also find links to numerous websites of use when considering renovating a property.

For more information please visit [www.newham.gov.uk/housing/privatesectorhousing/emptyproperties](http://www.newham.gov.uk/housing/privatesectorhousing/emptyproperties)



For more information about empty properties please call the Private Sector Housing Team on 020 3373 1950 or email [envprivate.sectorhousing@newham.gov.uk](mailto:envprivate.sectorhousing@newham.gov.uk)

Alternatively you can visit any of our local service centres at the locations listed below:

**Beckton** 1 Kingsford Way,  
Beckton, E6 5JQ

**Canning Town** 3 Beckton Road,  
Canning Town,  
E16 4DT

**Docklands** 4 Pier Parade, Pier  
Road, North  
Woolwich, E16 2LJ

**East Ham** Town Hall Annexe,  
330-354 Barking  
Road, East Ham,  
E6 2RT

**Forest Gate** 4-20 Woodgrange  
Road, Forest Gate,  
E7 0QH

**Green Street** 403-405 Green  
Street, Upton Park,  
E13 9AU

**Manor Park** 685-689 Romford  
Road, Manor Park,  
E12 5AD

**Stratford** 112-118 The Grove,  
Stratford, E15 1NS