

# Empty home brought back into use from...Ayr



**Address: Blackfriars Walk, Ayr**

**Total length of time empty: 3 years 2 months**

The Empty Homes Officer (EHO) first got in touch in June 2014 after being contacted by the previous owner's executors regarding the potential buyback of this property. The previous owner passed away in February 2014 after having been in care since June 2012.

The executor of the previous owner's estate got in touch with the EHO looking for assistance. The property had a charging order against it and the owner wished to enquire if the local authority would wish to purchase this. As it didn't meet with our strategic priorities this was rejected, but advice was provided about selling and renovation options, particularly highlighting the Empty Homes Loan and the reduced rate of VAT on long-term empty properties. The property was subsequently placed on the open market for sale.

In November 2014 the EHO was contacted by a prospective purchaser looking to find out more about common repairs responsibilities, likely future maintenance and assistance with this, as she was considering buying the property. I provided information around this, as well as answering queries around the reduced rate of VAT for long-term empty properties.

I was contacted again by this purchaser in January 2015, and was able to provide HMRC with a letter of comfort stating that the property has been empty for more than 2 years.

**Outcome:** As a result, the property was bought as a buy-to-let investment, renovated and then rented out privately in April 2015.

Case study details supplied by Ross Morris, Empty Homes Officer, South Ayrshire Council.