

## APPENDIX E: Empty Homes Case Studies

### Background

Empty homes represent a wasted resource, financial expense and in many cases a missed opportunity to provide much needed affordable housing for people in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Not only are they a waste of a valuable housing resource, but they can cause blight to communities and distress to residents affected by their unsightly appearance they may attract crime, vandals and anti-social behaviour. In addition to this, living next door to an empty home can devalue a home and deter investment in an area.

The property in question is a 3-bedroom property located in Ynysybwl which had been empty for almost two years. It was purchased by a young family who had 2 children, who without the assistance of an Empty Homes grant would have been unable to purchase an affordable property to meet their family needs. Their application was formally approved in September 2018.

### Support

The Empty Homes grant provides assistance to tackle properties that may have been deemed undesirable and difficult to sell, that would remain unoccupied and fall further into disrepair. In addition, it also contributes towards the local economy market with local contractors undertaking the work and local suppliers providing the materials.

The family were awarded a maximum grant of £20,000, the total cost of work was just short of £45,000, making their contribution £24,000 towards the work. An RCT Grants Officer and Building Control Officer were involved during the execution of work on site, giving advice and guidance to ensure compliance with the Financial Regulations of the Grant Award and Building Regulations.

### Impact

The work entailed a total house gut, including re-plastering, new partitions, concrete floors, full house re-wire, boiler replacement and new bathroom and kitchen facilities, providing a warm, safe and secure home for the owners to occupy. The Grant was completed in June 2019, taking 9 months in total

This is a good example of where Grant assistance has been used in-conjunction with private investment from the home owner and where the work carried out is to a high standard.