

# EMPTY HOMES: INDEPENDENT LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ADVICE

## Summary

**This guide for officers outlines some of the sources of independent financial and legal advice for owners and potential purchasers of empty homes. This leaflet aims to advise on where information can be found.**

### Law Society of Scotland

Information on finding a solicitor who can help with property matters can be found at The Law Society of Scotland. The society's website states "You don't need to find yourself in a court case to be involved with the law. It's something that we all need to navigate from time to time, whether we're buying or selling a home, setting up a new business or making a will. Fortunately there are expert guides on hand to put you in the picture". The link to the website is:

<http://www.lawscot.org.uk/forthepublic>

### Citizens Advice Bureau

The Citizens Advice Bureau help people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice. Whilst they cannot provide extensive legal advice on property matters, they can signpost people on to providers who can assist. For general information, or to find out where the local office is, look online at:

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

### Scottish Legal Aid Board

Many property matters are not eligible for Legal Aid, however, if there are civil matters involved they may qualify for Legal Aid. The website is:

<http://www.slab.org.uk/>

## Inherited property

If an owner has acquired a property through inheritance, and they are the executor of the estate, they may need to apply for Confirmation of the Estate by applying to the Sheriff Court. There is information online about the process at:

<http://www.bereavementadvice.org/probate-and-other-legal-procedures/scotland-intro.php>

## Money Advice Scotland

Money Advice Scotland is the national umbrella organisation which promotes the development of free, independent, impartial and confidential debt advice. To find an advisor go online at:

<http://www.moneyadvicescotland.org.uk/>

## Credit Unions

The Scottish League of Credit Unions website details the contact details of the various Unions throughout Scotland. The link is:

<http://www.scottishcu.org/index.asp>

Other areas have Credit Unions and you will need to search the web for the relevant organisation. However, it could be that your council has links to the Credit Union and that information is available in house for you to pass onto owners and buyers.

## Legal terms

A Glossary and definition of Scottish Land Law Terms is available on the Knowledge Hub or online at:

<http://www.scottishlaw.org.uk/lawscotland/abscotslawland.html>