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Private landlords and empty homes owners can now get hassle-free, guaranteed rent from Peterborough City Council.

The authority is starting a leasing scheme giving landlords of private properties the option to lease them to the authority for five years.

The council will then take on responsibility for maintaining the home and look to move tenants in from its housing register.

The scheme will provide landlords and empty home owners with a number of benefits. It will also help the council with its long-term aim to reduce the number of empty properties in the city, as well as getting people who are most in need into accommodation.

Councillor Peter Hiller, Peterborough City Council's Cabinet Member for Housing, said: "Empty homes are a national problem and locally we are making great progress. I am proud of the work we have already done, but we are always looking to do more.

"This latest initiative will provide landlords with a guaranteed rental income for the lease period and a professional property management service. So in short, we take care of several of the hassles associated with being a landlord.

"There are several reasons why homes become empty and stay that way. What is certain is that they can become eyesores, are susceptible to vandalism, and if brought back into use can provide additional temporary homes for households in need. This is why we are fully committed to tackling the issues associated with long-term empty homes."

The council has already made substantial progress in bringing empty homes back into use. Of the 574 privately-owned properties in the city that have been empty for more than six months, 31 per cent (179 empty homes) were brought back into use last year.

This mirrors progress over the last five years, in which the council has helped to bring 663 empty homes back into use, generating over £3 million for the authority from the government's New Homes Bonus scheme.

For more information about the scheme or for any advice on dealing with empty properties contact the council's Empty Homes Service on 01733 452544 or visit [the council's Empty Homes webpage](#).