

Vacant dwellings by reason

Reason for vacancy	Number of dwellings
Unknown	2,123
Property being built or renovated	1,062
Second / holiday home	235
Between tenants	177
Resident deceased	90
Resident in care home	80
Empty staff accommodation	84
For sale	66
Owner away long term	51
Other reason	59
All vacant dwellings	4,027

Vacant dwellings by reason, 2021 and 2011 (percent)

Reason for vacancy	2021 percent	2011 percent
Unknown	53	50
Property being built or renovated	26	9
Second / holiday home	6	11
Between tenants	4	14
Resident deceased	2	3
Resident in care home	2	3
For sale	2	5
Owner away long term	1	2
Other reason*	4	3
All vacant dwellings	100	100

*The "Empty staff accommodation" category has been combined with "Other reasons" for comparison with 2011

Notes:

There was no requirement for householders to provide reasons for properties being vacant. However, information was provided for around half (47%) of dwellings listed as vacant at the time of the 2021 Census.

Vacant private dwellings were identified in several ways, for example:

- householders phoning or emailing the census helpline to notify that a dwelling was vacant on Census Day
- paper census forms posted back to the Census Office indicating a vacant property
- census field staff visiting addresses that had not returned a census form. Field staff would have assessed whether a dwelling was vacant based on visual inspection or, sometimes, from information provided by neighbours, landlords etc.

Due to the various means in which vacant dwellings were reported or identified, the reason for vacancy and the internal state of the accommodation (whether habitable or inhabitable) was not always known. Reasons that could be ascertained purely by external inspection, and therefore more likely to be identified, may be proportionately over-represented in the figures presented (for example properties undergoing renovation or being built).

Vacant accommodation included:

- existing accommodation, with or without furniture, which was not occupied on census day
- accommodation that was being converted, improved or renovated and not occupied at the time of the census
- new accommodation, ready for occupation but not yet occupied

Vacant accommodation did not include:

- Accommodation where the residents were temporarily out of the Island (for less than 12 months)
- Derelict buildings (see definition below)

A building was considered derelict if there were no signs that it was undergoing renovation or conversion work and the roof was partly or completely missing or the floors, staircases or entrance doors were missing. Derelict buildings were not included in the census.

In the 2021 census improvements were implemented in the recording of properties being built or undergoing renovation. This may be a contributing factor in the increase in the number of such dwellings recorded compared with the 2011 Census.

The 2021 Census was run during the Covid-19 pandemic, when a number of restrictions were in place relating to travel, commerce, and social events. Information on vacant dwellings should therefore be considered within this context.