

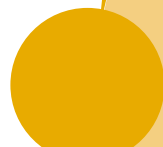


Respond!

Housing Association

Tenant Handbook

Information for Respond! Tenants





Respond! Privacy Notice:

Respond! may collect personal information from you during general interaction, submission of forms or the undertaking of research over the course of your tenancy. This information will be stored in a secure management and filing system to assist us in the provision of services to you. We will not share any information about you to any third party without your consent or unless explicitly stated by another piece of legislation.

Respond! Housing Association is a company limited by guarantee and registered in Dublin, Ireland. Registration No. 90576.
Registered Charity No CHY6629

Registered Office: Airmount, Dominick Place, Waterford.

Directors: Michael O' Doherty, Brian Hennebry, Tom Dilleen, Patrick Cogan, ofm.

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Welcome

We are pleased to present you with this Tenant Handbook. Respond! provides housing of the highest build quality tailored to the needs of our Tenants.

The purpose of this book is to provide you with important information regarding your house, estate and tenancy in a readable and straightforward format. We hope we have been successful in doing this.

If you think there is anything we have left out, or if you have any comments or suggestions on how the information could be better presented, we would be happy to hear from you.

Every good wish,

Pat Cogan, ofm
Chief Executive Officer, Respond! Housing Association.



About Respond!

We seek to create a positive future for people by creating vibrant, socially integrated communities. We do this through providing access to education, childcare, community development programmes, housing and other supports.

Respond! was founded in Waterford in 1982 and was approved by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government as a Housing Association in 1984. Respond! is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

Respond! believes in creating integrated communities, rather than simply providing housing and accommodation. To achieve this we conduct pre-tenancy courses, as well as other education and training courses for our residents. These include child-care, committee skills, book-keeping, conflict resolution, parenting skills, information technology etc. As well as this, many estates include a Communal Facility where child-care and other Community Development programmes are available.

Your Tenancy Agreement

Every Tenant is required to sign a Tenancy Agreement when allocated a Respond! home. There are a number of conditions contained in this agreement, all of which are explained to the Tenant before signing. Each Tenant receives a copy of their Tenancy Agreement and should be kept for reference purposes.

The tenancy of a Respond! home brings with it certain obligations and responsibilities on both the part of Respond! and the Tenant. By signing this agreement, you are agreeing to becoming a Respond! Tenant and be bound by the conditions of the agreement. This is to safeguard both the Tenants and Respond!'s rights in relation to the property.

You are entering into a legal contract with us. If there is anything in the agreement which you do not understand, please contact a member of the Respond! Allocations team who will help you with your query.

Your neighbours will have exactly the same rights and responsibilities as you. Your responsibilities apply to you, your friends and relatives, and any other person living in or visiting your home, including your children.



Housing and Estate Management

Respond! has produced a comprehensive Estate Management Strategy (available on our website, www.respond.ie) which details our commitment to best practice estate management. The ultimate estate management objective is to ensure that Tenants receive a level of service which is timely and professional and that as Landlord, Respond! delivers on the ethos of the organisation and the duty of care to our Tenants. The purpose of the Estate Management Strategy for both Respond! staff and Tenants is to ensure that the role of the Estate Management Officer and that of the Tenant is clearly set out.

Respond! is committed as a charitable organisation to offer support services beyond those mandated by the Legal Tenant / Landlord relationship; this is the required basis on which our Community Development objectives are based.

Some of the areas included in our Estate Management Strategy are:

- Allocations Policy and Plan
- Management
- Maintenance
- Financial Management
- Customer Satisfaction
- Ensuring Compliance and Accountability for both Staff and Tenants
- Administrative, IT and Support Systems

Respond! places customer satisfaction at the heart of our Estate Management Strategy. Regular feedback and participation in the review of our Estate Management services will ensure we are delivering both efficient and effective estate management services.



About the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme (CLSS)

This capital funding scheme, which was introduced in 1991, has been used by housing associations primarily for housing families who are eligible for social housing. Like the Capital Assistance Scheme, CLSS is also a mortgage loan where the capital repayments and interest charges are waived so long as the housing association complies with the terms of the scheme. It provides 100% capital funding for a housing project and has mainly been used to house low income families. A management and maintenance allowance is paid to the housing association on a yearly basis under this scheme.

Allocations under the CLSS:

Under this funding scheme 100% of the allocations are made to approved applicants for local authority housing. While no income limit will apply, all households must be eligible for local authority housing.

What Rents Apply?

Rents are based on the income of the household. The rent structure is similar to the Local Authority Differential Rent System.



The Rental of Respond! Homes

Respond!’s personnel are occasionally asked why Respond! doesn’t allow the “option to buy” on our social rented houses for families under the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme (CLSS). The short answer is that we don’t disallow it – **it is simply Government Policy which formed part of the regulations of the scheme from the beginning.** Under the CLSS, housing associations have no right to sell to Tenants, just as much as the Tenants have no right to buy. This has been the situation since the scheme was introduced in 1991.

However, Respond! agrees with this Government policy. As an anti-poverty organisation, we provide housing for people and families unable to do so through their own means. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to preserve a national social housing rental stock.

Repairs Service



Respond! Housing Repairs Service

As a Tenant of a Respond! house or apartment you are responsible for maintaining and carrying out some repairs to your home (both internally AND externally).

Over the following pages, we set out the division of responsibility between you as the Tenant and Respond!'s Housing Repairs Service.

As a general rule, you as Tenant are responsible for internal repairs and garden maintenance.

Respond! is responsible for structural repairs.

We provide a set of commonly asked questions with answers, and also set out the procedure for reporting a valid repair to the Respond! Housing Repairs team.

Finally, we provide general advice on maintaining your home.

Please contact the Respond! Repairs Team on the following numbers:

Waterford

T: 0818-357901

F: 051-304007

Galway

T: 0818-357901

F: 091-794411

Dublin

T: 0818-357901

F: 01-8572066

Limerick

T: 0818-357901

F: 061-326191

Tullamore

T: 0818-357901

F: 057-9360007

Navan

T: 0818-357901

F: 046-9075374

Blackpool

T: 0818-357901

F: 021-4220311

TENANT

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External

- Maintenance of your garden - grass and hedge cutting
- Repairs to or replacement of fences, gates and garden boundary walls erected by Respond! or you as the Tenant

- Maintenance of Communal areas
- Lighting in communal stairs/balconies
- Repair and maintenance of gutters and down pipes
- Roof repairs
- External painting

Internal

- Minor plaster cracks
- Repairs to or replacement of cupboards, wardrobes and their doors, hinges, handles, locks, catches and drawers
- All internal decoration, such as painting of walls, ceilings and internal woodwork
- Chimney sweeping every 6 months
- Damage caused by you as the Tenants, members of the household, or visitors to your household

- Structural repairs to walls, ceilings, tiling, skirting boards, down pipes and drains except where damage has been caused by tenants
- Damage caused by fire

NB: If a chimney fire results from failure of the Tenant to sweep chimney on a regular basis, or as a result of negligence, the cost of repairing the damage will be borne by the Tenant

Electrical

- Replacement of light bulbs
- Repair and replacement of electric showers (*if no other means of heating water exists, Respond! will remove/make safe the electric shower and ensure that an alternative source of hot water in the bathroom is provided for*)

- Repairs to Electrical wirings and electrical fittings provided by Respond!
- Repairs to sockets
- Repairs to light switches
- Repair/replacement of smoke alarms

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NB: The Tenant must ensure that electrical repairs are carried out by a **qualified** and **competent electrical contractor**

Doors, windows & floors

- Damage to windows and doors NOT due to fair wear and tear
- Replacement of broken window glass
- Repair/replacement of window stays and catches
- Damage to front, side and rear entrance gates NOT due to fair wear and tear
- Draught proofing to external doors
- Repairs and replacement of letterboxes
- Cleaning and repairs to floor coverings
- Cleaning and repair to floor and wall tiles
- Damage due to break in (house alarm advised)

- Repairs to doors and windows which are defective due to normal wear and tear
- Replacement of front and rear door locking mechanisms which are defective due to normal wear and tear

NB: Floor coverings should not be removed without prior written consent of Respond!

Plumbing & Heating

- Clearing of rainwater and surface water gullies
- Clearing of blockages from waste pipes from bath and sink
- Maintenance of toilet bowls, baths, sinks and wash hand basins (EXCEPT where defective through fair wear and tear)
- Repair/replacement of seats,

- Repair or replacement of toilet cisterns defective through fair wear and tear
- Repair of water storage tank & repair of stopcock
- Repairs to boilers and hot water cylinder
- Maintenance of external waste pipes and drains.

TENANT

- chains, handle washers and stoppers for toilets and sinks
- Replacement or repair/ replacement of toilet cistern NOT caused by fair wear and tear
- Clearing a blocked house drain
- Clearing air locks in radiators
- Clearing air locks between your oil tanks and boiler as a result of letting a tank run empty

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- Tap repairs (but NOT tap washers)
- Burst pipe repairs

Cooking & Heating Appliances

- Maintenance of all appliances installed by you as tenant
- Fire grate and front frets
- All damage caused to heating units NOT caused by fair wear and tear, including glass fronts on room heating appliances such as stoves
- Servicing of gas & oil central heating
- Repair of heating units defective due to fair wear and tear
- Replacement of defective fire backs (fire place)



Questions and Answers

Q: Am I responsible for the garden or just the dwelling itself?

A: You are responsible for any laneway/walkway adjoining your house. Laneways should be kept in a clean condition and must **not be used for dumping**. You are responsible for the upkeep of walls, gardens, gates, and fences. Gardens should be maintained in a neat and tidy condition.

- Under litter by-laws, each householder is obliged to keep the footpath and road gulley-adjoining their property free from litter.

- Refuse must be left in a manner which ensures that it does not become litter.

- Where communal rubbish bins are available, refuse must be placed in the bins provided.

Q: What works are carried out by Respond! when moving into a new dwelling?

A: In the case of a new Tenant, every effort will be made to put the dwelling into a fully habitable condition. Where a dwelling is old, it must be appreciated that it cannot be renovated to "as new" state.

Q: What about maintenance in the case of a transfer from one Respond! dwelling to another?

A: Where internal transfers take place, the Tenant involved must sign forms accepting their new dwelling in its existing condition. **Only urgent repairs** will be carried out for the first 6 months after the date of the transfer.

NB : In the case of a transfer application, each dwelling will be inspected prior to the tenant moving. In the event of the dwelling being damaged, the application for transfer will be refused.

Q: Must I insure my dwelling?

A: As a Tenant, you are **strongly advised** to insure the **contents** of your dwelling. Only the **structure** of the home, apartment is insured by Respond! The contents of your home are **NOT covered by Respond!'s insurance policy**.

Q: Can I make alterations to my dwelling?

A: You must get, in writing, the agreement of Respond! **BEFORE** starting any improvements, alterations, or additions to your home, including garden sheds. We are usually happy to agree to alterations, but we must assess them first. You may also need planning permission for certain works.

All such fixed additions and alterations become the property of Respond!.

They cannot be removed when the Tenant is leaving, nor is compensation paid.

In the case of unacceptable alterations carried out to the dwelling, Respond! may require full reinstatement to the original condition.

Please also note that you are not permitted to paint the exterior of your home.

Q: Will my dwelling ever be inspected?

A: Yes, inspections are carried out on an ad-hoc basis and at least annually. High levels of repair requests may result in more frequent inspections. The Tenant must provide access to the premises for the purpose of inspection and works to be carried out by duly Authorised Agents (Gas, Water, Electricity Supply, and Telephone Authorities). Valid ID must be requested of authorised agents and Respond! staff at all times.

Respond! reserves the right to inspect dwellings periodically as part of its Stock Assessment Procedures.

Reporting a Valid Repair

Please refer to the list overleaf before reporting a repair to ensure its validity

Q: How do I report a repair?

A: You should report a repair by phone to 0818 357901. You will be asked to provide your name, address, contact number, Tenant ID number and detail of the repair required. Alternatively, you can report a repair by logging onto <http://www.respond.ie/Maintenance.aspx>

Q: What happens next?

A: If it is a valid repair, you will be contacted by a Respond! staff member to arrange access to your dwelling (during business hours) either to inspect the problem or to carry out the repair.

You must make provision for the repair contractor to be able to enter your dwelling.

Failure to keep this appointment may result in you being charged for the cost of the contractor's call-out charge.

Please be aware that a priority shall be assigned to your repair and fixed accordingly.

You shall be provided with an estimated time for the completion of the repair.

Q: In what circumstances do I have to pay for maintenance repairs?

A: Where damage is caused by the Tenant and repairs are carried out by Respond!, you must pay the cost.

Q: Will Respond! make an exception?

A: Respond! considers requests to carry out repairs, which are the Tenant's responsibility only in exceptional circumstances such as old age where it is impossible for the Tenant to do so. If you are an old age pensioner, and you are unable to look after your house, you should contact your local Respond! office for more information and assistance.

In addition, if a contractor is called out and discovers that the repair is a Tenant responsibility, the repair will not be carried out and you will be charged for the cost of the contractor's call-out charge.



Protecting Your Home

There are some very simple steps you can take to help improve the security of your home:

- Always lock doors when you go out, even if it is only for a few minutes.
- Always close windows when going out, especially windows that are easily reached.
- Don't forget to close & lock any side doors or gates
- Never leave valuables lying around.
- Don't leave tools, ladders, bicycles etc. lying about in the garden of your home.
- Never leave keys on a string behind the letterbox, hidden under the doormat or in other "hiding" places.
- Pull curtains at night.
- Make sure you lock your shed.
- Photograph and mark all valuable property.
- Turn off the emersion heater if you are away for any extended period of time.
- Check smoke alarms regularly
- If you have an alarm fitted, use it! You should consider the following precautions:
 - Fit a good quality door chain and use it when strangers call
 - Don't leave strangers by an open door
 - Don't let anyone in until you are satisfied you know who they are and what they want
 - If you let anyone in, stay with them all the time
 - Telephone An Garda Síochána if you are suspicious.

Given the increasing levels of identity theft, when you are disposing of documents which contain your personal details, ensure that you shred or tear them up so your details cannot be read.

**For information on Neighbourhood Watch
contact your local Garda Station.**

General Maintenance Advice

You are expected as a Respond! Tenant to maintain your property to **the highest possible standard**. There are precautions you can take to minimise problems and make sure your home is well-maintained, safe and secure.

Blocked Waste Pipes

Blocked waste pipes occur most commonly in kitchens and bathrooms when either food particles or hair builds up in the U-bend. To avoid this, remove food or hair from around the plug hole after using sinks or baths. If you are unable to remove the blockage with a plunger, carefully unscrew the lower part of the U-bend, remove blockage and screw pipework back into place.

Household Pests

Tenants are responsible for dealing with minor household pests such as ants, slugs, wasps, bees, mice etc.

NB: More serious pest or vermin problems should be referred to the Environmental Health Department or your Local Authority.

Gas Safety

If you think you can smell Gas:

- DO NOT use mobile phones
- DO NOT turn electrical switches on or off
- DO NOT smoke
- DO NOT use naked flames
- DO turn off the gas supply at the meter
- DO open doors and windows to get rid of the gas

If you suspect a gas leak, phone Bórd Gais immediately on 1850 205050

Useful Numbers:

Bórd Gais
1850 205050

ESB
1850 372999 (24 hour service)

Emergency Services
999 or 112

FIRE

In the event of fire in your home, Tenants are responsible for calling and reimbursing the Fire Brigade.

To avoid fire:

- Have a fire blanket and fire extinguisher in your home.
- Never leave a fire unattended and always use a fire guard.
- Never leave a chip pan unattended.
- Do not have excessive clutter in your home.
- Follow the electricity guidelines below.
- If living in a block of Respond! Housing follow the fire evacuation procedures provided by Estate Management.

It is good practice to have an evacuation plan in the event of having to leave your home due to uncontrollable fire.

In the event of fire, leave the premises and dial 999 or 112 immediately.

Electricity

To avoid any incidents with electrical sockets or appliances:

- Ensure appliances are wired correctly.
- Do not overload any plug sockets.
- Remove plugs from sockets when you go to bed and also if you leave your dwelling.

We trust this information has been useful.



Good Neighbour Charter



What is the Good Neighbour Charter?

Everyone has the right to enjoy home in their own way providing they do not intrude on their neighbours living near them. The Good Neighbour Charter supports your Tenancy Agreement. It aims to prevent and stop behaviour and activities which could lead to serious estate management intervention.

The Charter acts as an agreement between you and your neighbours setting out what behaviour is not acceptable. A good neighbour will try to understand the different lifestyles of others. Please be considerate of others.

This charter will assist you to understand your responsibilities as a Respond! Tenant. Tenants do have responsibilities like keeping their Tenancy Agreement and making their estate a better place to live.

We all want to live a peaceful and pleasant lifestyle in the surroundings of our home so we have put together a few guidelines to help us all do just that.

As a Respond! Tenant, you have key responsibilities. These include:

- Keeping the interior of your home in a good condition in both decoration and repair.
- Maintaining your gardens, where applicable and helping to keep communal areas clean and litter free.
- Not to be a nuisance to your neighbours.



As your landlord, Respond! undertakes to:

- Endeavour to facilitate you in the peaceful enjoyment of your home.
- Offer support to victims of nuisance.
- Facilitate (sometimes with other agencies) you in resolving disputes.
- Address nuisance and anti-social behaviour and take action against anyone who persists in engaging in anti-social behaviour.

As a Tenant you should understand and accept that:

- All reasonable steps should be taken to foster an environment which enables your family to live peacefully in your home.
- You are responsible for the behaviour of visitors in your home.

Nuisance and annoying behaviour would include any of the following:

- Playing loud music.
- Arguing and door slamming.
- Dog barking and uncontrolled fouling.
- Offensive drunkenness.
- Selling drugs.
- Dumping rubbish.
- Playing ball games close to someone else's home.
- Vacuuming, using washing machines and drilling at unsocial hours.
- You and/or any member of your household should not harass others.

Harassment includes:

- Racist or sexist behaviour or language.
- Using, or threatening to use, violence.
- Using abusive or insulting words or behaviour.
- Damaging, or threatening to damage, another person's home or possessions.
- Writing threatening, abusive or insulting letters or graffiti.
- Doing anything that interferes with the peace and comfort or convenience of other people on your estate or in your neighbourhood.
- You or members of your household should not use your home for illegal activities.

Examples of this would be:

- Selling or using drugs.
- Prostitution.
- Selling and/or receiving stolen goods.

Remember, if you are convicted of an offence, in or around your home, Respond! can ask the court to evict you. Respond! will seek to take action where drugs, violence, intimidation or prostitution are involved.

Your Home

- Your home should be kept in a good state of decoration and repair at all times.
- You must seek prior permission, in writing, from Respond! Housing Association for any alterations or improvements to your home.
- You cannot erect a shed or any outbuilding, additional fencing or TV aerial without prior permission from Respond! Housing Association.
- Any exterior painting must be done only with prior consent and in keeping with the agreed colour scheme for your estate.

Keeping your estate clean and litter free

- Your household rubbish should be placed in the bins provided and please try to keep the area around the bins tidy also.
- Your Council Waste Management Department will inform you regarding bin collections. There is a charge for this service, unless you are entitled to a waiver. Please ask for details.
- There is a need to maintain cleanliness of communal areas, such as walkways, check with your neighbours and perhaps work out a rota between yourselves.

Pets

- Please consult your letting agreement as pets are not permitted in some developments.
- It is your responsibility to ensure dogs are kept under control and secure within the garden of the property and any fouling is cleared up.
- It is your responsibility to keep dogs under control in public parts of the community and to clean up after them. Try not to let them become a nuisance by being noisy, especially late at night or early in the morning.

Gardens

- If you have a garden, front or rear, it is your responsibility to keep it neat and tidy.

- This may be just by removing litter or by keeping the grass and hedges cut – an untidy garden is not only unsightly but reflects on the area in which you live.
- Tree planting or removal must have the approval of Respond! Estate Management.

General Environment

- Replacing trees and shrubs in common areas is costly so please encourage children not to cause deliberate damage. Trees and shrubs look attractive and are there to enhance the estate.
- Please report damage, dumped rubbish or other problems which you see in communal areas, including graffiti to the Estate Management Office.
- Effective street lighting reduces the opportunity for crime and reduces the fear of crime. Street lights which are not working, either from damage or maintenance reasons, should be reported by calling 0818 357901 and stating the street light identification number which is on the pole.

Parking

- Everybody wants to park near their home but this is not always possible. Please consider others when parking your vehicle. Remember not to block access for emergency services and do not park on grass verges or footways – it is unsightly, causes damage and is dangerous for young children or people who are partially sighted.
- Do not park in front of driveways or areas where you will cause problems for people trying to get in and out of their homes.
- Parking bays are important to all Tenants, especially those with visitors. Do not carry out large scale car repairs in these areas, park illegal or unroadworthy vehicles in them, or abandon cars in a dangerous condition.



- Your local Council will remove any vehicle for a small fee if asked to do so by the owner.
- Caravans and large trailers parked in small parking areas are a problem to car owners wishing to park their vehicles in these areas. Please try to avoid this where possible and consider others.

Crime

- Please take responsibility for reporting crime in the community, i.e. anti-social behaviour on estate, drug dealing, car crime, joy riding and damage to property.
- Reports can be made to the local Garda Síochána or your Estate Officer.
- You can also support Community Alert or Neighbourhood Watch. More information can be obtained from your local Garda Station, or the Community Development Officer.

Going Away

- If you plan to leave your home empty at any time, even for a short period, inform your Estate Management Officer. Tenants cannot be absent from their homes for more than 6 weeks in a 52 week period.
- Also contact your local Garda Station – they can advise you of any security arrangements which may help you.

Business

You cannot operate any kind of business from your home, including a shop, workshop or factory.

Warning

If your behaviour as a Tenant is less than that expected from you, you will be in breach of your Tenancy Agreement.

Remember, this may lead to you being taken to Court and could even lead to eviction.

It is your responsibility to fulfil your Tenancy Conditions.

If you do not pay your rent, you are at risk of losing your home.

Community Development



Community Development on Respond! Estates

The ethos of Respond! is about developing inclusive, safe communities where Tenants feel happy and proud to live. As well as “being a good neighbour” and abiding by the terms of the Tenancy Agreement, Respond! also actively encourages all Tenants to get involved in the development of their community. Respond! does this through Community Development.

What is Community Development?

Community Development is about getting involved and having a say in what goes on on your estate. It is about Tenants coming together and working with a Respond! staff member to meet their own particular needs for the estate. For example, if there are groups of parents on the estate who would like to see their teenage children getting involved in sports or youth activities, Respond! would work with parents to help them to get a youth group or club up and running, help would be given in how to plan it, organise it and find funding to run the club.

Similarly, if there is a group of adults on the estate who would like to have adult education classes running in their Community Building e.g. yoga, computer training or health & relaxation courses, again Respond! staff would work with these Tenants to get these courses up and running in the local centres.

Respond! Community Development Staff will assist Tenants who wish to become involved in local Community Development activities. The Community Development Officer will work

with Tenants towards meeting the needs of an integrated community. Tenants and Community Development Staff will work alongside each other for the good of all those living in the community.

Why should you get involved in your local community?

When you move onto a Respond! estate, you are becoming a member of a community. The degree to which your community or your estate becomes a positive and safe place to live is up to you. If Tenants decide that they want a positive place for themselves and their families to live, then this can be achieved through co-operation with your neighbours and the wider community.

The more Tenants that come together to plan and agree how the estate should be, the greater the possibility that the estate will be a safe and enjoyable place to live.

Getting involved in your local community has the following benefits:

- Meeting new people helps you to get to know your neighbours and make new friends. It can be good to know that there is someone near to help if it is ever needed.
- Establishment of a childcare service if necessary for children. This can free up parents to get involved in other employment or education.
- Enables children to make friends and have friends to play with.



- Organised activities for your children, teenagers and yourself that can be educational, for fun or relaxation.

Getting involved in your estate can help:

- Ensure that children have a safe estate to play in.
- To keep the estate clean and free from litter, allows pride in estate to be developed.
- Reduce the risk of problems of anti-social behaviour on estate in relation to disputes between neighbours or other such issues.
- Improve your skills as training will offered to all those getting involved in a variety of different areas e.g. computer skills, first aid etc.
- When applying for a job or work experience as being involved in your local community can be viewed very favourably.
- People feel good about themselves when they give of their own time to get involved in community activities.
- Enable you to be heard in relation to what you have say about what you think and feel about the place you live in and participate in trying to make that happen.

These are some of the advantages of “getting involved” in the development of your community. There are many others.

After you have moved into your home, the Community Development Officer will be in contact with you to give you more information on the community activities on your estate and how you can get involved.

Community Education

Respond! routinely conducts pre-tenancy and continuing adult education courses with Tenants. These have included topics such as childcare courses in association with the Irish Pre-School Play Group Association, training in committee skills, book-keeping, conflict resolution, parenting skills, computer skills and arts and crafts.

This policy of supporting and encouraging continuing education is aimed at developing the Tenant's capacity and skills to manage their estates.

Anti-Social Behaviour and You, the Respond! Tenant

Dealing with anti-social behaviour in your estate

We would all like to live beside good neighbours. Therefore, we ourselves should behave as good neighbours to other people in our community. Unfortunately, the behaviour of one individual, let alone a group of people, can make life difficult for other people living and working alongside them.

The nuisance or anti-social behaviour may include littering, dogs barking, loud music, verbal abuse, threats and drug dealing. Often, such behaviour is in breach of Respond!'s Tenancy Agreement and also in breach of the Law.

Respond! believes that Tenants have a right to enjoy the peace and security of their homes, without disruption from those involved in anti-social behaviour, other Tenants or their families and friends.

Respond! is serious about preventing and reducing nuisance and anti-social behaviour in the community.

Respond! takes the following action to prevent and reduce this behaviour:

- Receives and investigates complaints.
- Interviews, challenges and cautions individuals, including Tenants, whose behaviour is the cause of complaint.
- Takes action to prevent the continuance of nuisance and anti-social behaviour by issuing formal warnings to Tenants including those whose household or visitors are involved in such behaviour.
- Respond! works with agencies, such as An Garda Síochána, the Local Authority and other support bodies in addressing anti-social behaviour and its causes.
- Respond will take legal action, including where necessary seeking Court Orders to exclude or evict those Tenants who are involved in anti-social behaviour.

Keeping anti-social behaviour out of your Estate

What can *you* do?

As a Tenant, you have agreed to abide by the terms of your Tenancy Agreement. This signed agreement is a legal document setting out the requirements for living within the Respond! community, including the behaviour of a Tenant and members of their household.

Tenants who break this agreement are subject to a range of sanctions, including an Official Warning or a Notice to Quit their Tenancy.

If you are the victim of nuisance or anti-social behaviour, including threats and intimidation, by a Tenant or a member of their family or household, and this behaviour puts you in fear or danger, or causes you injury or damage,

- You should make your complaint, in writing to your local Estate Management Officer
- You should also contact An Garda Síochána, especially if personal assault/injury and damage to property are involved

What happens next?

The relevant Estate Management Officer will take a detailed record of your complaint and explain to you what further steps may be taken in regard to your complaint.

If your complaint would be likely to identify you as the person who made it, you will be consulted and asked if you would like the investigation to continue.

The party(ies) against whom you have made a complaint will be invited to attend an interview with the Estate Management Officer. The Estate Management Officer will then decide on the appropriate course of action to take, and you will be informed accordingly.

Where the complaint relates to a neighbour dispute, it is common for both parties to be offered the option of availing of Mediation Services, before the matter is progressed under Estate Management procedures.

Where the alleged perpetrator is a Tenant of a neighbouring Council Estate, Respond! will alert the Council's Estate Management Service immediately and an official will make contact with the alleged perpetrator.

Vexatious or malicious complaints will be dealt with in the appropriate manner.

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Respond! Housing Association
Airmount, Dominick Place, Waterford.

Tel: 0818 357901 **Web:** www.respond.ie