



National Strategy for Older People

About Respond!

Respond! is Ireland's largest not for profit Housing Association. We seek to create a positive future for people by alleviating poverty and creating vibrant, socially integrated communities. We do this through providing access to education, childcare, community development programmes, housing and other supports.

Respond! was established in 1982 as a Company limited by guarantee, with charitable status. In 1984 we were approved by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government as a Housing Association. We have built almost 5200 homes nationwide with a further 350 under construction. Respond! has provided homes for families, older persons, the homeless and disabled people.

Our Aims:

Respond! aims to:

- Establish and maintain vibrant, socially integrated communities rather than simply provide just shelter or accommodation
- Advance education among residents of our estates
- Promote other charitable purposes beneficial to the community
- Prevent and relieve hardship and distress amongst those who are homeless and amongst those in need who are living in adverse housing conditions

Respond! believes in providing housing for social investment rather than financial profit. Therefore, we provide housing for some of the most vulnerable groups in society including those who have lived for long periods in hostels, temporary and insecure accommodation.

© Respond! Housing Association 2010

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise except as permitted by the Irish Copyright, Designs and Patents legislation, without the prior permission of the publisher.

First published in 2010 by:

Respond! Housing Association,

Airmount,

Dominick Place,

Waterford.

Tel: 0818 357901

Email: info@respond.ie

Web: www.respond.ie

Facebook: www.facebook.com

Twitter: www.twitter.com/respondhousing

Table of Contents

	Page No
Foreword	1
Definitions	2
Glossary of Acronyms	3
Introduction	4
Outline of Aims	5
Aims 1-13	6 - 35
Bibliography	36
Appendices I-VII	38-48
Notes	49



Foreword

In 2008 Respond! Housing Association completed an internal survey of residents living in units built using the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS). This scheme generally provides housing for people with special needs, including older people and people with disabilities. This survey highlighted gaps in service provision experienced among our residents in CAS units and, specifically older people. It was with the findings in mind that we completed a National Strategy for Older People. Our aim is to contribute to improving the quality of life for older residents living on our estates.

The publication of this strategy is an illustration of the recognition Respond! has made that older residents are a distinct group to be valued and supported. We aim to ensure that residents' skills, as well as their needs, are identified and utilised appropriately to enable people to see their worth and encourage them to contribute both to life on the estates, and to society more generally.

As noted throughout the document, this strategy is in keeping with both national and international frameworks which promote healthy ageing. Our focus remains with

the foundations of our organisation, being to alleviate poverty and create vibrant, socially integrated communities. However, as a result of the 2008 CAS Survey, this strategy sets out clear aims and objectives to assist staff in enabling older residents to achieve a good quality of life. We will facilitate our residents in achieving this by encouraging and enabling increased access to community supports, including health care. We aim to facilitate older residents to live independently in their own home for as long as possible.

This strategy seeks to act as a guide to all regional managers and their respective staff. It will be adapted to regional needs and requirements, in consultation with the Senior Managers and the National Co-ordinator for Services for Older People. The strategy is both outcomes orientated and nationally representative, and should therefore make regional adaptation and implementation efficient and effective.

Lyndsey Anderson, Research and Development Unit

Andrea Lloyd, National Co-ordinator of Services for Older People

Tom Power, Southern Regional Manager



Acknowledgements:

Many thanks go to Respond! Housing Association's Chief Executive Officer Pat Cogan ofm, who initiated, and directed this strategy throughout the consultation process. We are grateful to Philip O'Reilly, Community Development Officer, who took part in framing the strategic aims and provided a fresh opinion on old words. Thanks to John Hannigan, Company Treasurer, and Ned Brennan, Chief Operations Officer, who took part in framing the document, and identified potential human and financial resource options, without which the strategy could not be implemented. We are very grateful to Aoife Walsh, National Communications Officer, who designed this document. Many thanks also go to our Production and Design teams who located potential estate photographs for use in the strategy. And finally, many thanks go to all of our residents, staff and management in Respond! Housing Association who imputed throughout the process, provided useful insights and facilitated the work by others involved directly in the development of this strategy.

Definitions

For the purpose of the strategy, the following definitions are used:

Older Persons Dwelling

Dwellings which are designed and purpose built for older people. Respond! recognises that as people age, homes which may have been designed and purpose built for general housing, will become an older persons dwelling.

Target Audience

Our target audience is people living in accommodation designed and purpose built for older people.

Independent living

Independent living is having the ability, desire and capacity to live in one's own home with control and choice over decisions affecting their lives. Respond! acknowledges that independent living can also be sustained by providing a safe, secure and accessible built environment and by enabling and facilitating access to supports and services.

A Vulnerable Adult

A vulnerable adult is someone who:

- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Is physically frail or has a chronic illness



- Has a mental illness or dementia
- Has a learning disability
- Is old and frail
- Misuses drugs and/or alcohol
- Has social or emotional problems
- Exhibits challenging behaviour
- Experiences a reduction in mental capacity
- Is socially isolated

Increased Dependency

Increased dependency will be defined as a decline in the activities of daily living (ADL), disability or loss of functional status to such an extent that the residents' needs cannot be met or supported, within an independent living environment.

Support Networks

These are personal supports for individuals, including but not limited to family and friends.

Advocacy

We will take action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain services they need (Age Action Ireland's definition).

Glossary of Acronyms:

CAS	Capital Assistance Scheme
CD	Community Development Staff
CLSS	Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme
DT	Design Team
EM	Estate Management Staff
HSE	Health Service Executive
NCSOP	National Co-ordinator of Services for Older People
OECD	Organisation for Economic and Co-operation Development
OPD	Older Persons' Dwelling
OPSW	Older Person Support Worker
PCCCs	Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services (a HSE coined term)
R&D	Research and Development Staff
RM	Regional Managers
SMT	Senior Management Team

Introduction:

In 1982, Respond! took action to counter the number of older people in Waterford City that were living in poverty and poor conditions. Over the past 28 years, Respond! has been achieving and expanding its goal of ensuring that older people can access good quality, affordable homes throughout Ireland.

Respond! provides housing for older people in sustainable communities. We encourage an environment which is informed by a positive ageing ethos. We aim to facilitate independent living by enabling and empowering older residents to develop and maintain participation and activation within their families, communities and wider society. The target population for purpose built older persons' dwellings provided by Respond! is also the target population for this strategy.

Respond!'s work is predicated on the understanding that our drive towards anti-poverty and community development initiatives is to be delivered through the response of housing provision mainly in supported communities and, where possible, in integrated estates. Our National Strategy for Older People is informed by this approach, and adheres to the principles

of community development. We support the OECD finding that older people wish to remain in their home as long as possible to maintain their independence. To this end, Respond! works to provide supports for healthy ageing.

This strategy incorporates the principles of the lifecycle approach, in accordance with Towards 2016. In harmony with the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2012 and the UN Principles for Older Persons, we seek to enable, empower and support all our residents. We acknowledge the diversity among our residents and we appreciate that extra support may be necessary for some older people living on our estates.

Mission Statement:

For this National Strategy for Older People, Respond! seeks to improve the lives of older people by:

- Providing housing in supportive communities for those in need, now and in the future
- Targeting the needs of older residents
- Developing special purpose project issues, including day centres



Outline of the National Strategy for Older People:

The Respond! National Strategy for Older People is structured into thirteen aims, and includes two sub-aims:

- Aim 1:** To provide housing for older persons in supportive communities; now and in the future
- Aim 1a:** To provide best practice estate management services
- Aim 2:** To compile and maintain a resident profile
- Aim 3:** Information for residents in older persons' dwellings
- Aim 4:** Provision of activation, socialisation and education for older resident
- Aim 5:** Support for residents in OPDs to access primary, community and continuing care services
- Aim 6:** To facilitate the development of Fora for residents in OPDs
- Aim 7:** To monitor and evaluate support for older residents
- Aim 8:** To inform national policy on housing for older people
- Aim 9:** Identify appropriate human resources to implement The National Strategy for Older People
- Aim 9a:** Train staff proficiently in all areas affecting older residents
- Aim 10:** Develop links with community, voluntary and statutory agencies
- Aim 11:** Develop comprehensive responses to the needs of older residents living in Respond! family dwellings
- Aim 12:** To encourage and enable older residents' usage of day centres, both Respond! and non-Respond!
- Aim 13:** Develop appropriate responses to increased dependency among older residents, within an independent living framework



Aim 1: To provide housing for older persons in supportive communities: now and in the future

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
The provision of good quality Older Persons' Dwellings (OPDs) to enable independent living	In accordance with the production programme	Production team in consultation with SMT, RM & NCSOP	Ongoing	To alleviate housing need among older people

Respond! acknowledges the importance of home for older people and sets out to accommodate their express desire to remain in the home for as long as possible. If older people are to live independently in their home for as long as possible, the design type and condition of housing will need to match the requirement of an ageing population. Respond! aims to provide quality housing for older people's needs, now and in the future, in an appropriate location and at a reasonable price. Our estates are built in close proximity to services and amenities in the community, so as to mitigate any incidence of isolation or segregation occurring directly from the location of estates. Respond! also believes that older people should be facilitated to maintain the level of activity suitable to their abilities. For this to occur, it is advisable to locate estates in areas with services and amenities nearby.

In 2008, 'A study of the support needs of the older person in Respond! independent living accommodation'¹ was completed. This survey illustrated the high levels of satisfaction among Respond! residents surveyed². Quality standards within our units have been continually improving, as evidenced by positive feedback and comments from the 2008 survey respondents. Respond! properties are built strictly in line with regulations in place at the time of build.



Regulations are set out in Local Authority building guidelines, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DOEHLG) Building Guidelines 1999, *Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities*, and the DOEHLG framework *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities*.

The 2008 national housing needs analysis showed that people registered as ‘older persons’ increased by 841 to 2,499 since 2005. Respond! will continue to develop and acquire OPDs in response to the demographic trends of older people.

“Good quality housing is important to supporting the independence of older people.”

Government of Ireland (2006)
Towards 2016

“Of the 7,000 or so units for older people, between 800 and 1,200 are estimated to be provided by the Society of St Vincent de Paul, the largest single provider for older people. The next largest provider is Respond! (established in 1981), which provides 3,000 units, of which about 670 are for older people.”

Nicholas Acheson and Brian Harvey
(2008) *Social Policy, Ageing and Voluntary Action*

1. This will be referred to as the “CAS Survey” throughout this strategy document

2. Respondents were asked to rate a list of items, reflecting aspects of living in Respond! accommodation. Aspects which were rated as ‘Excellent’, ‘Very Good’ and ‘Good’ included ‘design of property’ (80.3%), ‘Comfort’ (88.7%), ‘Privacy’ (91.3%) and ‘Location’ (86.1%)



Aim 1a: To provide best practice estate management services

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Provision of well managed and maintained dwellings and estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with the letting agreement • Work closely with residents to ensure peaceful enjoyment of dwellings and environs 	EM Staff reporting to the RM and in consultation with NCSOP	Weekly visitation programme to be implemented within one month of the strategy being agreed	Enhance quality of life for older residents

In Respond!, best practice estate management (EM) underpins our community development (CD) approach. The National Strategy for Older People will remain consistent with that approach. EM in Respond! estates aims to cover allocations policy and plans, management, maintenance, financial management and customer satisfaction. EM also aims to ensure compliance and accountability for both staff and tenants as well as administrative, IT and support systems.

The letting agreements are contracts between Respond! and the tenant which set out the obligations of both parties. Best practice EM has resident satisfaction at its core. To ensure this, EM staff work closely with residents to provide for the peaceful enjoyment of dwellings and environment, through weekly home visits. Again, the 2008 CAS Survey illustrates high levels of positivity among respondents when asked about aspects of living on Respond! estates.

Regional EM teams cover all types of housing developments which means their duties extend to all residents. This aspect enables EM teams to identify early ageing characteristics which may impact on a resident’s ability to live independently, which subsequently leads to possible early intervention by other Respond! staff. It is our express desire to accommodate people’s wishes to remain in their home for as long as possible. The consultation between



EM staff, Regional Managers (RMs) and the National Co-ordinator of Services for Older People (NCSOP) will identify appropriate supports to mitigate further development of ageing characteristics which impact on a persons ability to live independently.

“The general interaction between housing providers and tenants should seek to discourage dependency and promote individual choice and autonomy. Achieving this will require management changes to focus on allocation policy, quality of service and maximising as far as possible individual choice and tenant responsibility across a number of inter-related areas.”

Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2007)
Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities



Aim 2: To compile and maintain a resident profile

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
<p>The profiling of individuals in older persons dwellings with specific regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support networks • Skills • Needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For new residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application - Assessment interview • For current residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment interview - Residents' profile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EM (assessments) • OPSW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Residents: Completion of initial profile within 4 weeks • Current Residents: Completion of initial profile within 3 months • Ongoing residents' review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify support networks, skills and needs • Develop and maintain positive relationships with residents • Inform programme development

The purpose of compiling and maintaining a resident profile is to gain knowledge and understanding of the resident in order to ascertain the type, level and frequency of interventions that may be required during their tenancy. It will also provide information which can be used to identify the support networks already available to the resident (see Appendix I for a sample resident profile).

In considering the process of the analysis of need, it is essential not to overstate certain aspects. The application and assessment information will, for example, only provide limited information on the applicant. This information, while not to be ignored, must be added to if it is to be used successfully to identify support networks, skills and needs, and inform programme development. The resident's profile will provide this extended and ongoing information.

Through the identification of needs and skills, Respond! staff can ascertain the level of support a resident may require, and identify how a resident and their families could



contribute to the development of the community and specific programmes. The development of a profile will require positive relationships between the Older Person Support Worker (OPSW), the resident and their support networks. In working with older people, Respond! has found that this is not only essential prior to the delivery of any activation programmes, but will facilitate attendance at organised activities. All of this should result in the delivery of a person centred programme which is specific to an individual's needs and skills.

“A person-centred approach to care provision can contribute towards social well-being. This should be based on comprehensive personal profiles developed in collaboration with tenants, their relatives and referrers.”

Simon Evans and Sarah Vallely (2007)
Promoting Social Well-Being in Extra Care Housing, Joseph Rowntree Foundation



Aim 3: Information for residents in older persons’ dwellings

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - housing - activation - socialisation • External; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social - financial - health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information pack • One-to-one discussions • Workshops / information evenings • Written / visual aids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production Team • EM Team • CD • OPSW • External Community, Voluntary & State Agencies • NCSOP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-tenancy • Ongoing • Bi-monthly information sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness & access to services • Increased community, participation • Facilitating independent living

It is the overall aim of Respond! to enable the resident, and their family members, to seek relevant information to help themselves. To this end, information on external services will be provided. As Respond! provides housing and support staff, it is important that our role is explained to all residents at move-in stage. Our primary role is to provide housing which enables residents to live independently.

It is recognised that many of our residents need supports, outside of accommodation, to assist them in availing of a good quality of life. It is our role to ensure older residents have access to information and to develop activation and socialisation programmes.

From the 2008 CAS Survey, we can conclude that some older people on our estates do not have the necessary information they require. The ‘results point clearly to the need for sourcing and developing age appropriate, disability friendly materials in order that information is taken up and understood by the older person’ (Respond!, 2008; p12). We recognise the different mediums of communication which exist and the necessity to ensure a variation of methods are used. Certain mediums will be preferred by some,



while others will favour an alternative. We therefore aim to provide a wide spectrum of information sources.

This is particularly important to older residents in Respond! estates to ensure that they are versed in rights and entitlements. Most of our older residents are dependent on social welfare payments for income. Consequently, Respond! is committed to ensuring that residents have the necessary information to access their full entitlements as this has a direct impact on a person's ability to remain living independently.

“Every older person would be encouraged and supported to participate to the greatest extent possible in social and civic life.”

***The Office for Social Inclusion (2006)
The National Action Plan for Social
Inclusion, 2007-2016***



Aim 4: Provision of activation, socialisation and education for older residents

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide activation and socialisation programmes for older residents • Provide lifelong learning programmes for older residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop planned programmes based on residents' profiles and ongoing consultation • Link with external relevant agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSOP • OPSW • Older residents • Families • Volunteers • Relevant external agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-tenancy • Ongoing • Bi-monthly information sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combat social isolation • Increase levels of activation • Residents' self fulfillment

Activation, socialisation and education programmes have a proven positive effect on the older persons' physical, mental and emotional well-being. This is in concurrence with Older and Bolder who found that 'it was strongly put that participating in physical, social and cultural activities is required to ensure that older people remain healthy and active members of society, capable of making an ongoing contribution to the life of communities'³. It is also in accordance with the United Nations Principles for Older Persons that 'older persons should have access to the educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society'⁴. Therefore, specifically designed activation and socialisation programmes will be informed by the residents' profiles and best practice within the area of working with older persons. These programmes will encourage participation and increased take-up levels, and promote healthy ageing.

Lifelong learning programmes will be accessed to support older residents in achieving self-fulfilment. Recognising and valuing the contribution of older residents as active citizens informs this strategy. To this end, support staff will seek to identify areas of education interest to residents and facilitate access to these.



It must also be noted that gender specific programmes may need to be developed to encourage participation among older men. Older and Bolder found ‘that many older men are less likely to join groups and that specific attention and proactive efforts need to be made to promote their engagement’⁵. The 2008 CAS Survey found that majority of older residents in Respond! are male. Respond! also acknowledges that many residents will not require this formal type of activation as their needs are met by the wider community, and strong family and support networks. However, all residents will receive information on activities within their community. On-going resident reviews and consultation on the programmes being offered will be used to inform further programme development.

“(Encouraging More Healthy Lifestyles; Maintaining Physical Activity) Policies should focus on opportunities for affordable, accessible and attractive exercise of moderate intensity in areas that are pleasant and safe with professional support in both home and community settings.”

OECD (2009) *Policies for Healthy Ageing: An Overview*, OECD Health Working Papers No. 42

“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young”.

Henry Ford

3. ‘What Does Positive Ageing Mean to Older People?’ Oct 2009
4. United Nations (1991)
5. ‘What Does Positive Ageing Mean to Older People?’ Oct 2009



Aim 5: Support for residents in OPDs to access Primary, Community and Continuing Care Services (PCCCs)

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Encourage and enable older residents to take up PCCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link with residents' support networks • Provide information and increase awareness on the services available • Develop and maintain links with PCCCs • Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPSW • Older Residents' support networks • Community care • Volunteers • Day Centre Staff • NCSOP 	On completion of residents profile and throughout the lifetime of the tenancy, as per identified need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase and enable older residents to live in our estates for as long as possible • Enhance relationships between residents and their support networks • Improve ease of access to services

We aim to encourage residents to access services in the community. These services are essential in meeting people’s healthcare needs. Better healthcare is likely to lead to better health, and subsequently increase a person’s ability to remain in the home for as long as is practicably possible. The role of Respond! staff will be to create links with agencies so that subsequent contact by staff and residents is easier. Linkage with these services is essential if older people are to age successfully. In some cases where support networks are absent, Respond! will act as an advocate on behalf of the older resident or directly refer to a service provider if necessary.

It is our primary role to ensure that residents and their support networks are aware of the services available within the community and wider area. Increasing awareness around certain services and supports will undoubtedly go some way to ensuring residents receive the services they require in order to live independently, as well as easing access to services. It has been noted in numerous research reports that one difficulty which older people found was in dealing with multiple agencies.



Providing this support for residents in OPDs means early intervention will be possible. The resident profile will also be used to identify support needs. If ill health can be prevented or managed at an early stage, costly treatment and services may be required less at a later stage.

“Elderly citizens, like other age groups, are entitled to services from the health and social service sectors which are delivered in a fashion which respects their dignity and autonomy, which value the contributions which they have made to society and which reflect their own views and choices.”

The Irish Medical Organisation (2009)
Submission to the Department of Health and Children on the new National Positive Ageing Strategy



Aim 6: To facilitate the development of Fora for residents in OPDs

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Creating opportunities for residents in OPDs to discuss issues at local, regional and national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link residents with the lead agencies as identified by the relevant County Development Board Respond! will link with the lead agencies as identified by the relevant County Development Board to ensure residents in OPDs are included in local Fora 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External agencies OPSW CD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New estates: initiated at pre-tenancy Existing estates: Within 6 months from adoption of this strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents better informed Generation of ideas Gives residents a voice at all three levels

The objective of this aim is to keep residents informed, generate ideas and give residents a voice at local, regional and national levels. The involvement of our residents in Fora will be in co-operation with other agencies as there are Fora already in place in many counties. Respond! staff will seek to identify these and create links in pursuit of older residents joining these groups. We do not wish to duplicate an already existing group and, recognise the experience and learning that can be gained when wider communities come together. National campaigns have the benefit of creating a joined-up approach and will encourage older residents to learn about and discuss issues which are broader than estate level.

This aim supports the UN Principles for Older Persons, which state ‘older people should remain integrated in society, [and] participate actively in the formulation and implementation of policies that directly affect their well-being’. The inclusion of Respond! residents on Fora will mean that those who wish to do so, can be actively involved in issues which affect their lives, and the lives of other older people.

As stated in our CAS Survey 2008, Respond! acknowledges that older people can be a powerful source of change with regard to service development and national policy. This



survey did, however, demonstrate that participation among residents in clubs, groups and societies is lower for younger older people. Facilitating access to local, regional and national Fora, by creating links, will broaden the scope of issues and is likely to attract a wider range of interest.

Low levels of involvement have been recorded in the past. However, involvement in Fora will now be suggested at pre-tenancy for new residents and within 6 months from adoption of the strategy for existing residents.

“There was a real sense that being part of community activities away from the schemes [housing] made life more interesting and stimulating.”

**Simon Evans and Sarah Vallyelly (2007)
Promoting Social Well-Being in Extra Care Housing, Joseph Rowntree Foundation**



Aim 7: To monitor and evaluate support for older residents

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Ensure supports are achieving the declared outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Residents’ Satisfaction Survey, taking a random sample, and analysis to inform best practice Monthly reviews between NCSOP and Older Persons’ staff Monthly reviews between EM and RM Monthly reviews between RM and NCSOP Review between CD and RM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RM NCSOP Older Persons’ Staff EM Older Residents CD Volunteers R & D 	Review process within 3 months of the strategy being agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve best practice in support provision To achieve optimum efficiency in the use of resources

The purpose of this aim is to ensure that all supports offered to residents of OPDs are responsive to changing needs and that delivery of any programme and support is continually reviewed to ensure aims and objectives with regard to older persons are achieved. The Annual Residents’ Satisfaction Survey is essential in the provision of supports and successful implementation of the person centred programmes. These surveys will identify any shortfalls or gaps in service provision. Service provision will mainly pertain to external agencies within the wider locality but may also refer to Respond! specific services, including those provided by the older persons’ support staff.

Staff consultation is another essential element in the success of supports for residents in OPDs. Various staff, including the older persons’ support staff, EM and CD teams, and volunteers, will work with residents in OPDs. It is important that good relationships are developed and maintained between different staff teams, as well as between staff and residents. This will encourage better communication between all involved and should lead to consistent reporting to the RMs and / or the NCSOP.



In achieving optimum efficiency in the use of resources, early intervention and preventative approaches are required to enable independent living for longer. It is in this regard that communication between residents and staff, and between staff, is particularly important. All staff working with older residents on all our estates are likely to identify ageing characteristics which may have an impact on peoples' ability to live independently. Appropriate staff training will improve the speed at which issues are identified and the appropriate responses are delivered.

"A stronger 'evaluation culture' is needed to determine how well services are working and that policies are put in place that "get to the heart of a problem."

National Economic and Social Forum
(2006) *Improving the Delivery of Quality Public Services*



Aim 8: To inform national policy on housing for older people

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the specific housing needs of older people • Contribute to national debate on positive ageing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making submissions to the relevant government departments • Facilitating debate through hosting and attending housing conferences • Linking with older persons organisations, joining with national campaigns and advocating on behalf of older persons on key issues • Regular press releases • Making presentations to relevant Oireachtas Committees • Lobbying elected officials on behalf of older people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMT • RM • R&D • Communications and PR • NCSOP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual pre-budget submissions and post-budget analysis • Annual Respond! conference • Ongoing 	<p>Impact on national policies for older people, in line with our own experience and from a joined-up approach with other local, regional and national agencies</p>

Respond! has 28 years experience of providing housing for older people. We wish to maximise this experience and knowledge of working with older people by influencing housing policy at a national level. We do, however, recognise that our experience has mainly been with regard to providing housing for this group. We therefore wish to highlight other issues pertaining to older people by contributing to national debate and informing older persons’ policies in consultation with other organisations working specifically in the field of ageing.



Respond! aims to build communities, not just houses, therefore we will also add to debates on fuel poverty and healthcare. These are issues which affect older residents as the majority are in receipt of some social welfare benefit. Limited incomes constrain older residents in particular, as paid employment for this group is often more difficult to obtain. In 2008, only 12.6% of our residents in OPDs were in paid employment⁶.

In the past, Respond! has advocated on behalf of older people in relation to fuel poverty, pension levels and access to community based services. We have also facilitated our residents in becoming actively involved in national campaign issues directly, namely the medical card issue in 2009.

“The state acknowledges the role of the voluntary sector in contributing to policy making and the pursuit of common objectives. The state will ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to give effect to this.”

The White Paper (2000)
Supporting Voluntary Activity

6. CAS Survey, 2008: Pg. 29



Aim 9: Identify appropriate human resources to implement the National Strategy for Older People

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Deployment	Identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The staffing ratio required in each of the five regions What staff may be redeployed What recruitment is necessary Design job specifications Recruit volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RM in consultation with the Company Treasurer and Chief Operations Officer NCSOP County Volunteer Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within one month of strategy being agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve a sufficient staff and volunteer complement in each of the five regions Ensure older person support staff are proficient in housing and older persons' issues

Based on the Southern region, which currently employs older person support staff, a simple ratio has been devised (see Appendix IV). This ratio is proposed to act as a basis for discussion between SMT, RM, and NCSOP regarding the deployment and / or recruitment of older person staff.

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

Winston Churchill





Aim 9a: Train staff proficiently in all areas affecting older residents

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Train older persons support staff in housing and older persons issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver general training programmes for Older Persons’ Support Staff and Volunteers (See Appendix III for Details) • Specific Training for Older Persons’ Support Staff, Volunteers and Day Centre Staff (See Appendix III for Details) • Develop interface training to enhance and ensure consultation between all staff concerned with older persons issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSOP • Education Department • External agencies • County Volunteer Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A training programme for all relevant staff will be drawn up within one month of the strategy being agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To achieve a proficient staffing and volunteer complement in each region capable of implementing the National Strategy for Older People • Achieve best practice management of older residents’ issues, older persons support staff and Respond! estates with OPDs

In view of the findings of CAS Survey 2008, a growing awareness of the support needs of older people emerged. It is, therefore, necessary that we equip staff with the necessary training in order to address these support needs.

The benefits of trained staff to any profession are numerous. Increased skills will result in more efficient use of resources. Training will ensure that staff are confident and have the necessary knowledge and skills to support older people. Training will also enable early identification of older persons’ issues and aid appropriate and timely responses to needs.



Specialised training programmes will be delivered to the older persons' support staff. Some training will also be provided more generally to EM and CD teams and volunteers, including housing and accommodation issues, befriending and elder abuse. It is crucial that interface training is provided to all staff members and volunteers to ensure that the communication of issues and concerns is comprehensible to all involved.

Specialised training will also be necessary for staff in day centres, particularly in the area of activation.

Staff training is detailed further in Appendix III entitled 'Training Flowchart'.

"Training is everything. The peach was once a bitter almond; cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education."

Mark Twain



Aim 10: Develop links with community, voluntary and statutory agencies

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Establish and maintain linkages with relevant external agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant external agencies / services from the completed resident profile Create and maintain linkages with external agencies Facilitate self-referrals by older residents and referrals by their support networks Direct referral by Respond! staff in the absence of self-referral and/or support networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCSOP OPSW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On completion of resident profile 	Facilitate access by older residents to services provided by external agencies

Establishing and maintaining links with external agencies will enable Respond! to facilitate programmes that otherwise may be out of the scope of a housing association. A quality support service makes knowledge of, and communication with, other agencies necessary. The identification of relevant agencies will stem directly from the issues recognised in the residents’ profile. From this point, staff will develop links with relevant agencies.

As stated previously, many older people encounter problems when accessing external agencies. It is our aim to ensure ease of access for older residents. In this regard, we will break down initial barriers by putting organisational relationships in place with the relevant identified agencies.



It is our aim to facilitate access, rather than provide access to services. However, we appreciate that some people may be unable to self refer and that support networks may be absent. In these cases, Respond! will act on behalf of an individual resident in referral.

“...a single ‘lead agency’ in each sector (i.e. older people living alone, early school leavers etc) could be given responsibility for the overall design and coordination of services. Other service providers in the same sector should be required to collaborate with the ‘lead agency’ to provide the ‘joined –up’ services on the ground that people need.”

National Economic and Social Forum
(2006) *Improving the Delivery of
Quality Public Services*



Aim 11: Develop comprehensive responses to the needs of older residents living in Respond! family dwellings

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Develop an appropriate and timely response to issues arising among older residents in Respond! family dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff to identify changes in general well-being among older residents as a result of ageing conditions • Encourage and enable use by older residents in family dwellings, of support programmes delivered by both Respond! and external agencies • Facilitate access to external services providing home adaptation options • Provide alternative accommodation options to 'empty nest' and other scenarios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM • DT • NCSOP • EM • CD • OPSW • Volunteers • Support networks • External agencies 	On agreement of strategy and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff trained in issues affecting all older residents in Respond! estates • Provide age appropriate accommodation for ageing residents wishing to move out of the family dwelling • Remove stigma associated with older persons programmes and encourage greater and earlier uptake among younger older residents • Improve quality of life • Enable independent living for longer

Appropriately trained staff will be able to identify any deterioration, challenges or changes associated with ageing. As a person ages, or their circumstances change, alternative housing options may well be needed.

For example, it may be the case that an older resident, residing in their family home in a Respond! estate, require adaptations to the accommodation to sustain independent living. In this instance we will offer information on home adaptation grants provided by the State.



It is the responsibility of trained Respond! staff to ensure these offers are made in a timely and appropriate manner, in consultation with the resident, their support networks and external agencies as necessary. Offers may include downsizing so that heating costs are reduced or moving to a ground floor dwelling so that accessibility is maintained. Residents are encouraged and enabled to access support services which will aid them in their day-to-day lives or during times of additional need, for example bereavement.

We appreciate that it may not be the wish of residents to avail of these services but information will be provided so that a resident can make informed choices. Flexibility in our approach is key so that if a resident chooses not to receive any internal support that too is respected.

However, first and foremost Respond! views social rented housing as a lifetime tenure, respecting that accommodation not only provides shelter, but also a home. In this regard, respect is upheld for the individuals' right to remain in their own home, for as long as they wish or is possible.

“In some instances, housing and care services delivered in an integrated manner are essential to allowing older people to live at home for as long as possible. In other cases, older people may need to move to alternative accommodation, including sheltered housing with varying levels of support.”

Government of Ireland (2006)
Towards 2016



Aim 12: To encourage and enable older residents’ usage of day centres, both Respond! and non-Respond!

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Encourage and enable usage of both Respond! and non-Respond! day centres by older residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a quality service in accordance with best practice • Day centre eligibility shall have regard to our resident profile • Allocate day centre time and space to activation and socialisation programmes informed through the resident profiles • Provide clear information on activities taking place in the centres • Provide information and linkages with non-Respond! day centres • Review the operations of the current Respond! day centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day centre staff • NCSOP • OPSW • Volunteers • RM • CD • External providers • HSE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At renewal stage of the Service Level Agreements • Conduct operational review within three months of this strategy being agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase use of Respond! facilities by Respond! residents • Remove stigma associated with day centre facilities • Provide social and recreational outlet for older residents

The development of day centres by Respond! is in response to the needs of older residents and older people in the wider community. Primarily, the focus of day centres is socialisation and activation.



Our aim is to continue to work in partnership with the Health Service Executive (HSE) to ensure our day centres play a central role in maintaining independent living.

“Day centres provide a safe and secure environment in which an individual’s needs are recognised and delivered in a caring, flexible and sensitive manner.”

Respond! Housing Association (2008)
Blackpool Day Centre Service Review



Aim 13: Develop appropriate responses to increased dependency among older residents, within an independent living framework

What	How	Who	When	Outcome
Develop a consistent response to increasing dependency among older residents and their support networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with multidisciplinary teams and support networks with regard to the residents' ability to continue to live independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSOP • OPSW • Volunteers • CD • EO/EM • External agencies • Support networks • Older residents 	On agreement of strategy and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that residents have access to accommodation that is most suitable to their needs

Increased dependency, as defined in this strategy, is likely to occur as people age. It is our aim to maintain residents in OPDs for as long as is practicably possible. People's ability to live independently may be diminished if issues such as dementia and physical or sensory disabilities develop. However, as specified consistently throughout this strategy, we aim to facilitate independent living by conducting an ongoing person centred resident profile, and training staff appropriately to identify any problems early so that these can be alleviated. Respond! staff will consult with the resident, their support networks and multi-disciplinary teams as appropriate, in responding to increased dependency.



This approach is consistent with two of the UN Principles for Older Persons. These state:

- Older persons should be able to live in environments that are safe and adaptable to personal preferences and changing capacities.
- Older persons should be able to reside at home for as long as possible.

“In order to meet the preferences of most older people to remain living in their own home for as long as possible, the full range of home care and housing services (repairs, adaptations and assistive technologies) must be available.”

National Council on Ageing and Older People (2007) *The Role and Future Development of Supportive Housing for Older People in Ireland*



Bibliography

- Acheson, A. and Harvey, B. (2008), *Social Policy, Ageing and Voluntary Action*, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009), *'Minister Finneran Announces Housing Provision Contained in Budget 2010'*, Dublin: unpublished press release 10/12/09.
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009), *Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 2008*, Dublin: Stationary Office.
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2007), *Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities*, Dublin: Stationary Office.
- Department of Health and Children Cross Departmental Group (2009), *'National Positive Ageing Aims'*, Dublin: unpublished.
- Department of Rural, Community and Gaeltacht Affairs (2000), *The White Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity*, Dublin: Stationary Office.
- Evans, S. and Valleley, S. (2007), *Promoting Social Well-being in Extra Care Housing*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Government of Ireland (2006), *Towards 2016*, Dublin: Stationary Office.
- National Council on Ageing and Older People (2007), *The Role and Future Development of Supportive Housing for Older People in Ireland*, Dublin: National Council on Ageing and Older People.
- National Economic and Social Forum (2006), *Improving the Delivery of Quality Public Services*, Dublin: Stationary Office.



- National Economic and Social Forum (2009), *Implementation of the Home Care Package Scheme*, Dublin: Stationary Office.
- Older and Bolder (2009), *What Does Positive Ageing Mean to Older People: A Summary of Feedback from Older and Bolder's Consultation Meetings with Older People*, Dublin: Older and Bolder.
- Organisation for Economic and Co-operation Development (2005), *March Policy Briefing, "Ensuring Quality Long-term Care for Older People"*, Paris: OECD.
- Organisation for Economic and Co-operation Development (2009) *Policies for Healthy Ageing: An Overview*, Paris: OECD.
- Respond! Housing Association (2007), *A Study of the Support Needs of the Older Person in Respond! Independent Living Accommodation*, Waterford: Unpublished Study.
- Respond! Housing Association (2008) *Blackpool Day Centre Service Review*, Cork: Unpublished Review.
- The Irish Medical Organisation (2009), *Submission to the Department of Health and Children on the New National Positive Ageing Strategy*, Dublin: IMO.
- The Office for Social Inclusion (2007), *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion, 2007-2016*, Dublin: Stationary Office.
- United Nations (1991), *UN Principles for Older Persons*, [online] available from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/un_principles.html, [accessed 20 January 2010].

Appendix I: Sample Resident Profile.

<u>Resident Information</u>				
Name: <i>John Smith</i>	DOB: <i>28/3/28</i>	Age: <i>72</i>		
Address: <i>Integrated estate</i>				
Ethnic or cultural background <i>Irish</i>		Marital status: <i>Separated</i>		
Next of Kin: <i>Jane Smith (Step-daughter in Law)</i>		Tel: <i>087 2595750</i>		
Additional Contact Person: _____		Tel: _____		
R				
<u>esident</u>				
GP: <i>Dr. Green</i>	Tel: <i>052 856320</i>			
Out of Hours GP: <i>Caredas</i>	Tel: <i>1800 200300</i>			
PHN: <i>Liz Feneasy</i>	Tel: <i>052 961721</i>			
In general would you say your health is..?				
Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Do you have any of the following?				
Sensory Impairment	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> Details (e.g visual impairment, deafness) <i>Has a slight hearing impairment in left ear</i> </div>				
Difficulties with mobility	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <i>Uses a walking stick to aid mobility, but appears unsteady at times</i> </div>				
Medical conditions:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <i>Arthritis in the hip, Heart Condition, Blood clot ten years ago</i> </div>				

Mental Health Difficulties:

(Psychological or emotional conditions) *NO*

Medication:

Aspirin

A learning or intellectual disability: Yes* No

*If yes give details: _____

Affect on Activities of Daily Living

- ÷ *Conversation is sometimes difficult due to hearing loss*
- ÷ *Cannot walk a long way due to heart condition and fear of falling due to unsteady gait*

Does the Resident receive any help with any of the following tasks?

<u>Activity</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>Who Provides</u>
Taking medication		
Getting dressed		
Bathing/taking a shower		
Eating or drinking		
Housekeeping (cooking, cleaning)	x	<i>Home Help</i>
Disposing of refuse	x	<i>Home Help</i>
Gardening	x	<i>Son-in-Law</i>
Shopping	x	<i>Home Help</i>
Paying rent		
Paying bills		

Will resident require any new adaptations to their unit (e.g. grab rails, special taps) *OT opinion required*

Social Profile

How do you like to be addressed (e.g. first name, nickname)? *John*

Where were you born? *Wexford*

Where did you go to school? *Local primary*

Did you like school? *No*

Do you have any brothers/sisters? *Yes* What are their names? *Jack, (deceased), Annie, Liz*

What is your spouse's name? *Mary* Do you have any children? *1 boy 1 girl* Names? *David and Joan*

What do/did you do for a living? *Railway Worker until retired*

What are or were your hobbies and interests? *Football, going to games. Used to like gardening*

What do you enjoy doing now? *Watching TV, reading, watching the football. Can't do much gardening now, but can help my son-in-law.*

Any likes or dislikes? *Not really*

What type of things would you like to see going on in your estate? *Would like to make more of the garden outside, grow some veg. Would be interested in anything going on.*

What would be the best times to run these activities? *In the evening, as it gets a bit lonely.*

Would you be prepared to support these activities? *I'd give a hand if I could, I'd need to know a bit more about it first.*

Any other information: *NO*

SERVICE PLAN

General Comment:

*Family contact is mostly via the phone, although the family do give some assistance with the garden if required.
Is supported by community based services i.e. Linked into day centre and in receipt of home help, PHN.*

Areas of vulnerability identified:

Is at risk of falling due to unsteady gait

Additional Assistance identified:

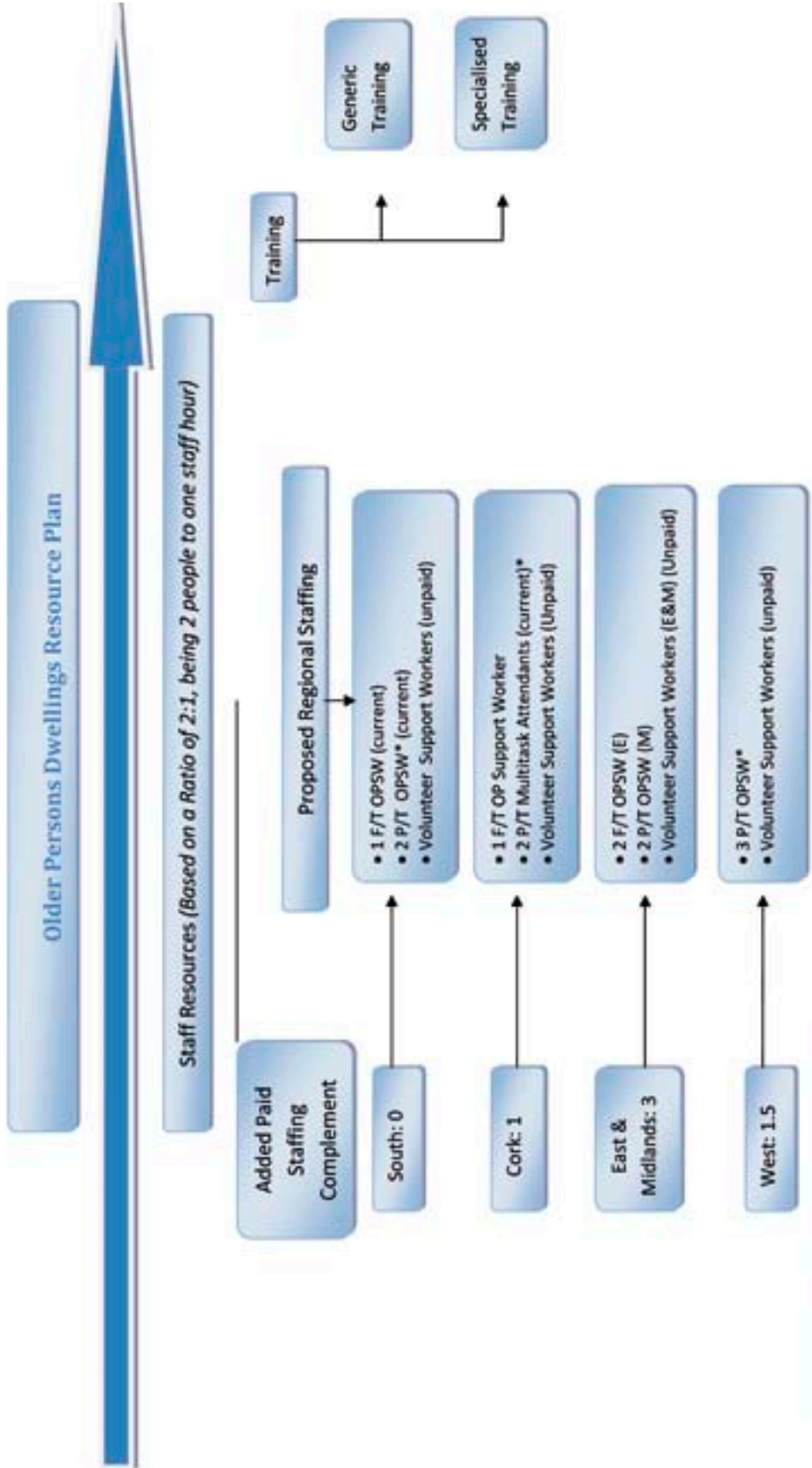
*Encourage to avail of Personal alarm as is at risk of falling
Regular weekly contact by Respond! support staff to maintain relationship
Link into local befriending organisations to visit on days when there is no home help or day care
Request PHN to organise an OT assessment of John and home environment ~ liaison with family re same
Improve mobility with activity program*

Types of Activation required:

*Small manageable gardening projects i.e. a container gardening
Would benefit from Go for Life which would be aimed at this age group and level of ability. This would also
hopefully improve lower body strength and give more stability.
Provide information on local sporting events to attend
Explore possibility of evening social events.*

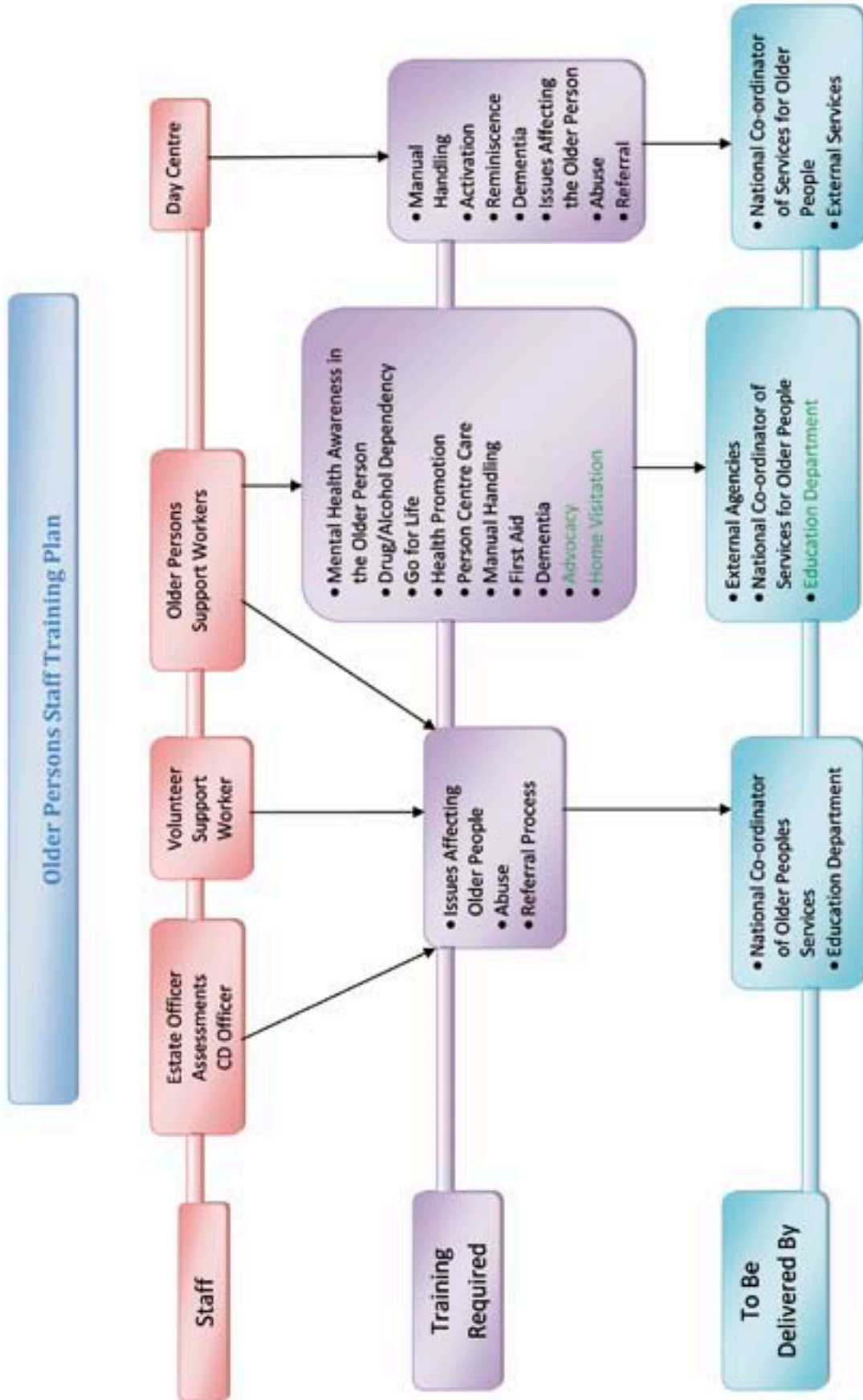
Completed by _____ Date: 9th Jan 2010

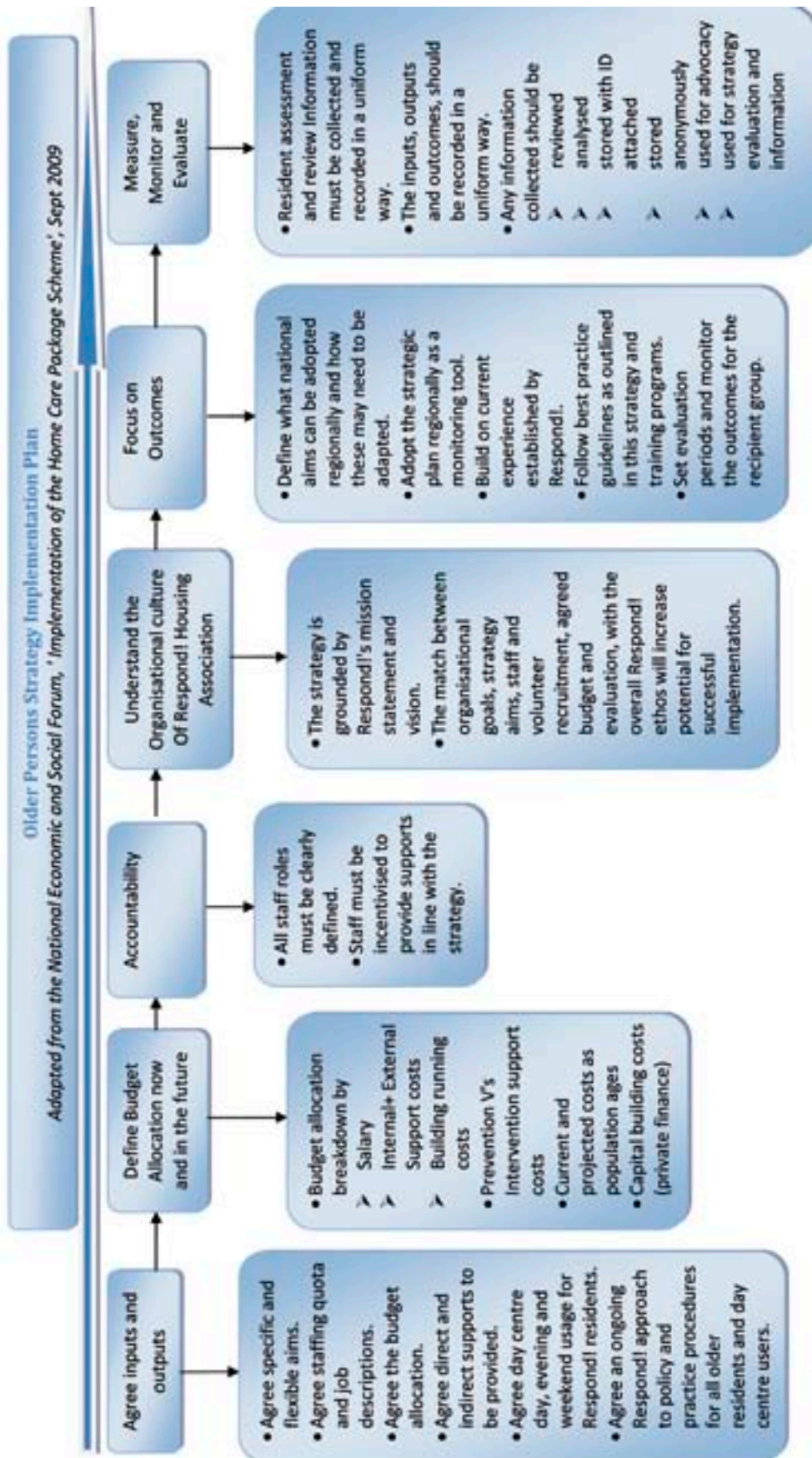
Date of next review: March 2010



* Due to the estate locations within the regions.

Appendix III:





Appendix V:

Linkages with local external organisations:

- Public Health Nurse
- Community Psychiatric Services
- Rehabilitation Unit
- Mental Health Social Worker
- Community Psychiatric Nurse
- Department of Psychiatry of Old Age
- Age Related Clinic
- Consultant in Medicine for the Older Person
- Occupational Therapy Services (via PHN)
- Health Promotion Unit
- Physiotherapy Services (via PHN)
- Meals on Wheels
- Assisi House (Day Centre)
- Alzheimer Society of Ireland (Day Care and Home Care)
- Carers Association
- Focus Ireland
- Men's Hostel
- Sports Partnership
- Kingfisher Sports Club
- Waterford Leader Partnership
- St. Brigids FRC
- Community Welfare Officer
- Waterford Rapid Co-ordinator

Linkages with National Organisations:

- Age and Opportunity
- Age Action
- Older and Bolder
- Alzheimer Society of Ireland

Appendix VI: Job Description for an Older Person Support Worker

Job Title:	Older Persons Supports Worker
Reference No:	EO/WT/TE/0206
Location:	Waterford
Department:	Older Persons Services
Responsible to:	National Co-ordinator of Supports for the Older Person
Job Purpose:	To ensure the continued well being of residents, primarily but not exclusively in our CAS developments, by Co-ordinating and developing support programmes which improve their quality of life.
Core Duties & Responsibilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a positive relationship with tenants and act as a Respond! ambassador on estates • Participate in the compilation and review of residents service plans • Develop and facilitate activation programme for the older person • Develop and co-ordinate projects which improve the level of support to Older Persons • Establish Support Structures for Older Persons in new Developments throughout the region • Participate at Team meetings and Estate Conferences • Supervision of Befriending Volunteers • Any other duties that may be assigned from time to time
Person Specification:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant experience within similar position • A relevant third level qualification is desirable • Demonstrate confidence and sympathy in dealing on a one-to-one and group basis with residents • Be outgoing, relaxed and enthusiastic • Ability to demonstrate leadership and organisational skills • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills • A full driver's licence and full use of a car is essential

Respond! is an equal opportunities employer

Appendix VII:

Sample of Community Based Services:

- Tenancy Support Services (i.e. Focus Ireland)
- Community Welfare Officers
- Homeless Services
- Age and Opportunity
- Alzheimer Society of Ireland Home Care and Day Care
- Carer's Association
- St. Vincent DePaul
- Peter Bradley Foundation
- Services for People with Intellectual Disability
- Meals on Wheels
- Local Day Centre/Social Centres
- Mental Health Services
 - o Community Psychiatric Nurse
 - o Psychiatric Social Worker
 - o Mental Health Rehabilitation Units
 - o Voluntary Mental Health organisations i.e. AWARE, Schizophrenia Ireland and GROW
- Chiropody Services
- VEC
- Arts Organisations
- Citizens Information Centre
- Comhairle
- Health Service Executive
 - o Co-ordinator of Services for the Older Person
 - o Director of Public Health Nursing
 - o Home Helps
 - o Home Care Attendants
 - o Occupational Therapy
 - o Physiotherapy
 - o Social Worker for the Older Person
 - o Senior Case Worker for Elder Abuse
 - o Department in Psychiatry of Old Age
 - o Consultant Physician in Medicine for the Older Person
- Active Retirement Groups

Notes:



Respond! Housing Association,
Airmount,
Dominick Place,
Waterford.

Tel: 0818 357901
Email: info@respond.ie
Web: www.respond.ie

Respond! Housing Association is a company limited by guarantee and registered in Dublin, Ireland.

Registration Number: 90576

Registered Charity Number: CHY6629

Registered office: Airmount, Dominick Place, Waterford.

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