



Celebrating 30 years
1982 – 2012



Respond! Housing Association

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Corporate Information:

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

Registration Number: 90576

Charity Number: CHY6629

Registered Office: Airmount, Dominick Place, Waterford, Ireland.

Directors: Patrick Cogan, ofm, Tom Dilleen, Brian Hennebry, Joe Horan, Deirdre Keogh and Michael O' Doherty.

Auditors: Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Ballycar House, Newtown, Waterford, Ireland.

Solicitors: Bowe O' Brien Solicitors, 1 Adelphi Quay, Waterford, Ireland.

Bankers: Ulster Bank, 97/98 Custom House Quay, Waterford, Ireland.

Respond (Support) is a company limited by guarantee and registered in Dublin, Ireland.

Registration Number: 206013

Charity Number: CHY10864

The Respond Group consists of:

- Respond! Housing Association Ltd
- Respond (Support) Ltd
- The Respond! Trust

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Patrick Cogan, ofm

Foreword:

Respond! commenced work in the early 1980's in Waterford City in response to the very poor living conditions which people were experiencing. Our first programme was very modest and was based on a volunteer model to advance the goal of alleviating poverty and providing better living conditions for people living in Waterford City. From these humble beginnings the growth of Respond! has surprised all of us, and today it stands as the largest housing association in Ireland, with over 5500 dwellings provided.

That early seedling was well planted within a Franciscan and Christian service ethos of the time; an ethos which defined that our response to the housing needs of people required us to be pro-active and imaginative and inclusive of all, no matter their gender, creed, colour, age or ancestry.

Our effort needed to be dynamic and imaginative at a time when there was little government finance available for voluntary housing. However, the support of the community of Waterford was called upon and, working together in partnership, Respond! managed both to and, working together, Respond! managed to provide houses for those in need and gain valuable experience.

If Respond! were just building houses we could be forgiven perhaps for simply standing back and admiring the work of the past. However, our task is greater than that; it is to provide supportive, resourced and integrated family communities, in the main, as well as sheltered housing complexes for older persons and persons with special needs. There are longer-term undertakings and we are just at the beginning. Our Community Development Strategy, Family Support Strategy, Estate Management Strategy, Education Strategy and Better Being Strategy set out the details of how we intend to accomplish this task in five year phases. These are tasks we are setting ourselves from now on.

My fellow directors and I acknowledge with gratitude the work of our staff over the last 30 years, the support of many of our volunteers, particularly those who soldiered with us at the beginning, the professional and caring assistance of our consultants, and the continuing positive response we receive from our Local Authorities partners across the country.

In our Jubilee year we acknowledge the considerable contribution of our deceased colleagues, founder director James Wallace who was a tower of strength and wisdom. Architect Anne Byrne who was our first in-house designer and architect for our pioneering Blackpool Redevelopment. Volunteer Maureen Coade, an early volunteer, worker and supporter of Respond! IT and Security Manager Roderick Young, who passed away last March after a long illness, bravely bourne. We pray that they now enjoy the rewards of their generosity in their heavenly home.

We would also encourage all our supporters, volunteers, staff, consultants and statutory partners to continue with your support, without which Respond! cannot continue to grow for the benefit of those in need.

Patrick Cogan

Patrick Cogan, ofm
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

Our Mission:

Respond! sets itself to:

“prevent and relieve hardship and distress amongst those who are homeless and those in need who are living in adverse housing conditions. To empower individuals and develop their skills for the benefit of the community as a whole. We are concerned to advance education, relieve poverty and to further other charitable purposes beneficial to the community.”

We do this through the provision of housing in supported communities and, where possible, in integrated estates. We see the advancement of community development, education and training opportunities as a core vehicle in our aim to relieve poverty.

Respond! is Christian in origin and motivation and non-denominational in operation. We see the provision of housing in resourced communities not as an act of “charity” but as one of “justity”; a right which should be available to all. This stance influences all of the services we provide to our residents. Respond! Housing Association has a Franciscan rooting whose founder-directors were all Franciscans in Waterford.

Core Values:

The core values that underpin the organisation are:

Equality / human rights:

Central to the rights-based approach of Respond! Housing Association

Common good:

A constant goal in our policy development

Customer focus:

Putting our residents and communities at the heart of all we do

Respect & dignity:

Treating all with fairness and embracing diversity

Integrity:

Acting openly, honestly and with probity at all times; being accountable and transparent in all our actions and activities

Sustainability:

Being effective, efficient and offering best value in respect of all we do; respecting and protecting the environment by working and developing without prejudicing future needs

Continued learning:

Fostering continuous improvement and understanding of our role and mission within society and the manner and means by which we can best act to develop and sustain excellence in these endeavours

Volunteerism:

Core to the Respond! philosophy and work ethic for the betterment of whole communities and regions



The first Respond! housing development in Francis Court, Waterford.

The Early Years:

Respond! was founded in Waterford in the early 1980s from Franciscan roots and membership. At the time there was a need for housing for both young families and older persons in the city. The legal incorporation of Respond! as a company limited by guarantee took place in 1982, and as an approved housing association by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in 1984.

Respond!'s first ever housing scheme was in Larchville, Waterford on a piece of land kindly set aside by Waterford City Council. This development contained 15 houses for older persons, along with a community room. Named Francis Court, it was officially opened on October 4th 1983. It was jointly funded by Waterford City Council and Respond! Housing Association who depended on the very kind generosity of the people of Waterford at that time and throughout the 1980s, through all sorts of community collections and fundraising. The South Eastern Health Board also kindly donated money in order to furnish the houses.



The original Board of Directors of Respond! Housing Association in 1984 (l-r) Michael O' Doherty, James Irish, Patrick Cogan, ofm and James Wallace.



Friends of Respond! Youghal

Several housing schemes were developed for young families by Respond! Housing Association over the next few years using a financial model initiated by the organisation itself, namely the Agency Agreement Model whereby young couples transferred their mortgages to Respond! Housing Association which undertook to provide design and project management for fixed-price new houses for them. This was in advance of any model of state-financed housing for families through housing associations and was very successful.

Respond! Housing Association was then invited by the respective Ministers for the Environment to pioneer the development of the Capital Assistance Scheme from 1984 and the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme (then known as the Rental Subsidy Scheme) from 1991.

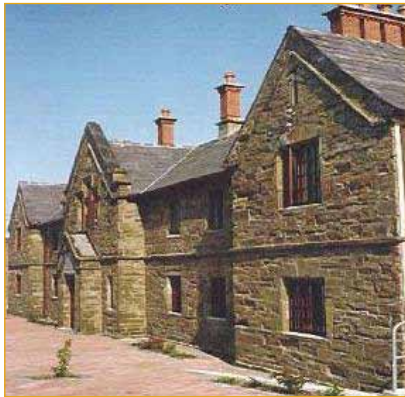
From the very early days, the mission of Respond! Housing Association was not building houses but building and empowering communities. Some of our early schemes in towns such as Youghal and Ennis were developed in collaboration with local voluntary committees who named themselves Friends of Respond! Youghal and Friends of Respond! Ennis. The development of Shalom House and later St Francis Court in Youghal are excellent examples of the synergies that can be achieved through partnership between local volunteers who wish to support their own older citizens and a professional housing association. Similar community empowerment was achieved in Ennis through a partnership of local volunteers in the development of Cooper's Place, homes for older people.



Friends of Respond! Ennis.

Significant Housing Schemes:

Some significant housing schemes built by Respond! Housing Association around this time include the following:



Shalom House, Youghal, Co Cork.



Francis Court, Youghal, Co Cork.



Cooper's Place, Ennis, Co Clare.



Westlands, Wexford.



Lady Lane, Waterford.

Staffing:

During the early years in the 1980s, Respond! Housing Association was simply a small room in the Franciscan Friary in Waterford from which three people worked; Maureen Coade, Frank Roche and Pat Cogan. Peg Collins and Angela Aspel soon joined the organisation as matrons for some of the older residents.

In later years, through the kindness of Tina and Geoff Fitzpatrick who provided a room above their shop, the organisation moved to Michael Street. The final move was to our current premises in Airmount, Dominick Place to a property formerly occupied by the Medical Missionaries of Mary until the early 1990s. The number of people employed and volunteering with Respond! has increased dramatically over the years with more than 300 people now working on a full or part time basis in our offices and estates throughout the country.

The organisation has grown due to the hard work of our board members, staff and volunteers. Their commitment and dedication over the years has enabled the organisation to become one of Ireland's largest housing associations.

Our team work in a variety of different areas including:

- Architecture and design
- Finance
- Regional Management
- Education
- Research
- Legal and Administration
- Information technology
- Human Resources
- Childcare
- Estate management and maintenance
- Resident Support Work
 - Family Support
 - Older Persons
 - Community Development

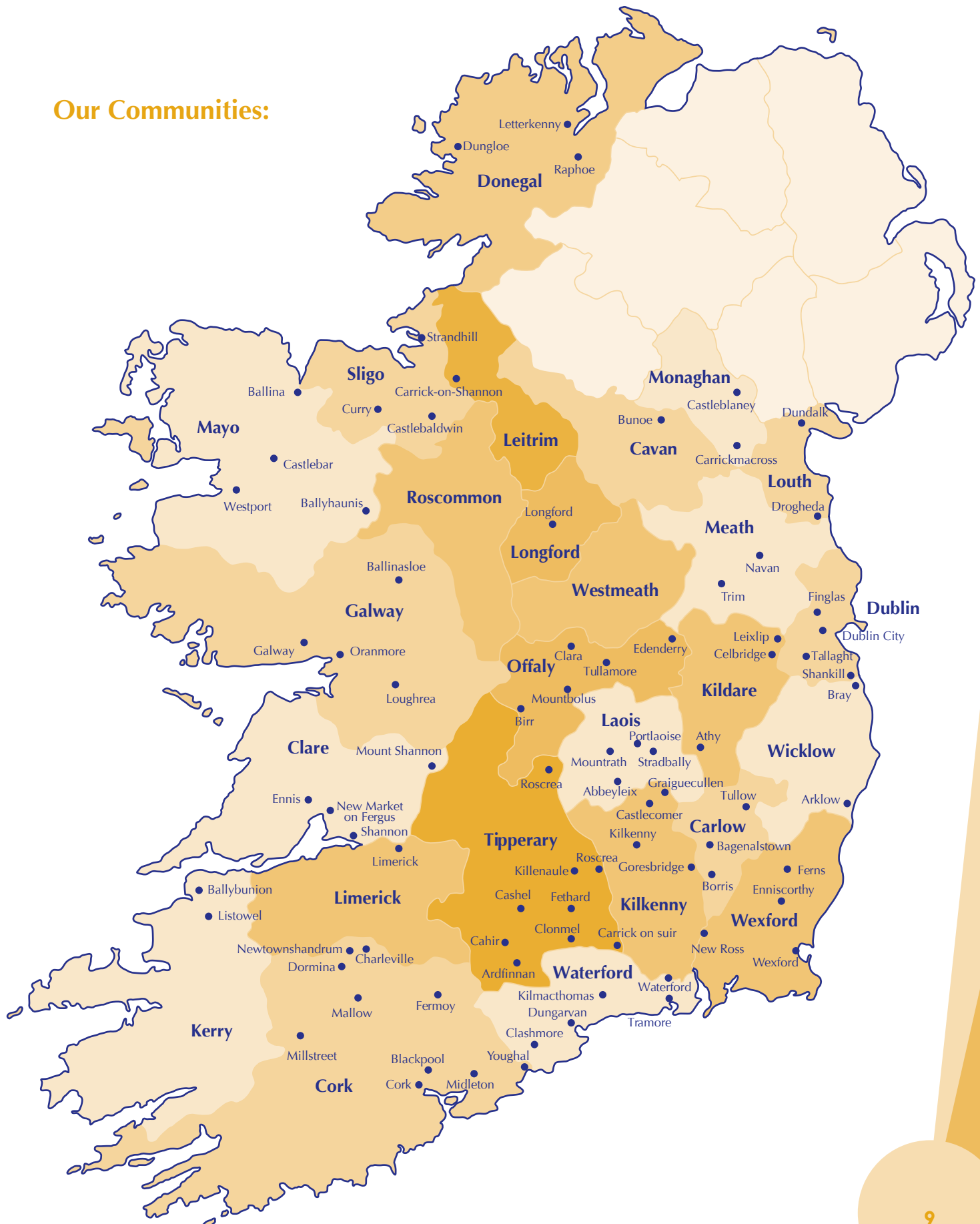


Early Respond! staff (l-r) Michael Kiely, Frank Roche, the late Maureen Coade and the late Anne Byrne.



Some of our volunteers in the early years (l-r) Peg Collins, Maureen Coade and Angela Aspel.

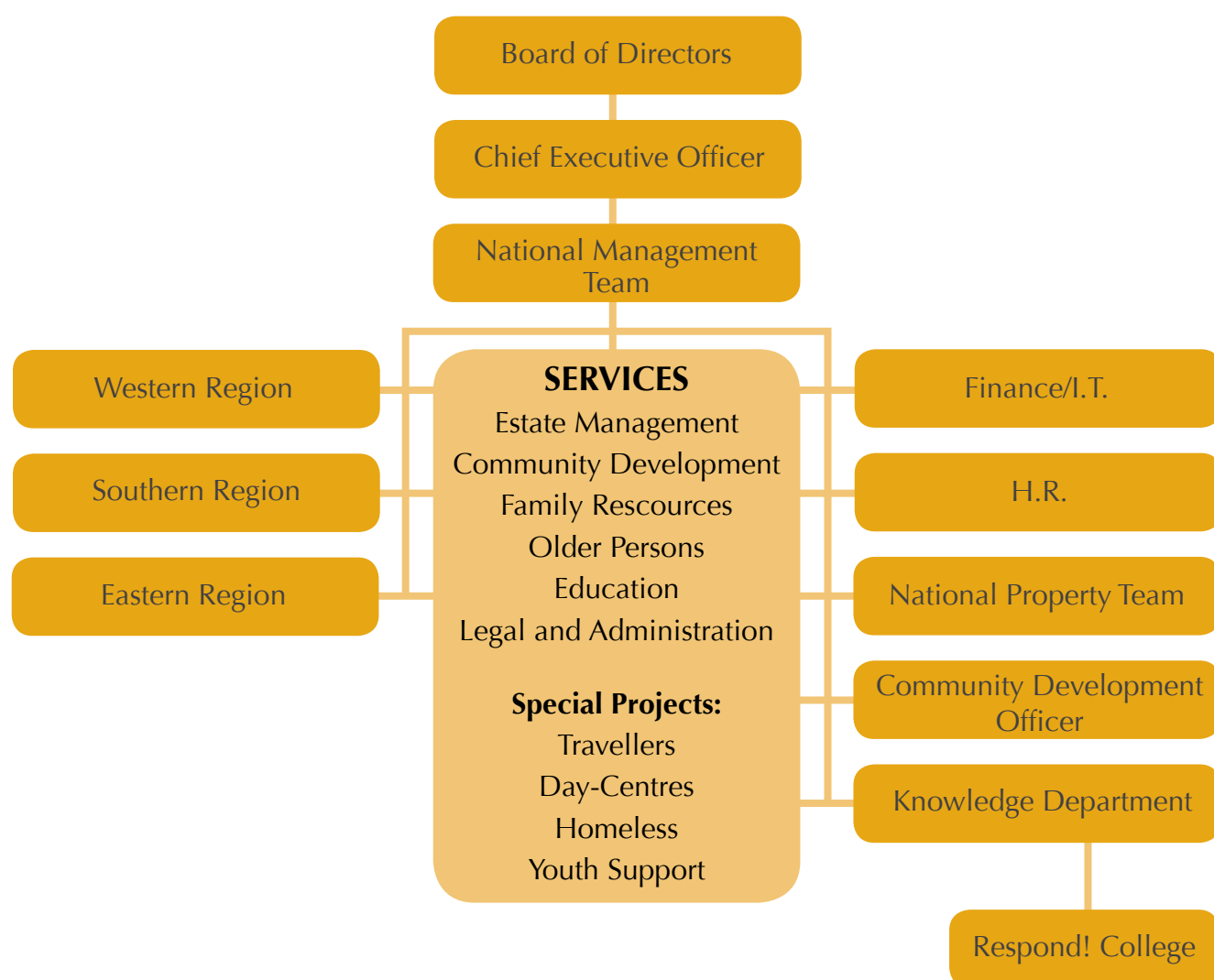
Our Communities:



Respond! Corporate Governance:

Respond! Housing Association is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Respond! operates under a set of Memorandum and Articles of Association which are registered with the Registrar of Companies. These Memorandum and Articles of Association govern the way in which Respond! carries out its duties and functions. Respond! does not have shareholders but instead has a number of members. As a result of this structure and the memorandum and articles of association, Respond! does not distribute any surpluses to its members and does not pay its directors.

Our Governance framework is set out in the diagram below:



The Board of Directors:

The Board of Directors ensure that the company complies with the full requirements of Company Law, the legal responsibilities that all Company Directors are subject to and that best practice systems of control and accountability are maintained. The current Board of Directors includes:



Patrick Cogan, ofm (Chairman and Chief Executive Officer)

Patrick a Franciscan, is a founder-director of Respond! Housing Association since 1982. He is also a director of Sivile, a housing association which Respond! Housing Association set up in Kokstad, South Africa. He served for three terms, as a Ministerial appointee, on the benchmarking Quality Action and Performance Verification Groups of the Local Authority sector and has just completed his fourth term as a member of the Board of Directors of the Housing Finance Agency.

Brian Hennebry (Company Secretary)

Brian is a Chartered Accountant and founder of Brian Hennebry & Associates Tax Consultants based in Waterford, with nearly 30 years experience in the financial sector. Brian joined Respond! Housing Association as a Board member in the 1980s when he was asked to assist the development of the organisation. His experience is invaluable to the Board of Directors and he continues to play a pivotal role in the organisation. He is also a director of Sivile.



Michael O' Doherty

Michael is one of the founding members of the organisation and has helped develop and progress the organisation since 1982. A retired builder, Michael has more than 40 years experience in the housing and construction sector and played an important role in the development of the organisation over the past 30 years. He is also a director of Sivile.

Tom Dilleen

Tom was formerly District Inspector of Taxes with the Revenue Commissioners for more than two decades in Waterford up to his retirement in 2002. Tom was the longest ever serving District Inspector of Taxes in Waterford and has more than 40 years experience in the financial sector. Tom joined the Board of Respond! Housing Association in 2006. He is also a director of Sivile.

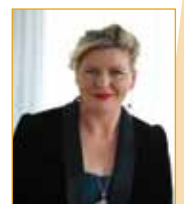


Joe Horan

Joe was appointed a director in May 2012. He has huge experience in the public service, especially in the Local Authority sector where he has led a distinguished career. He recently retired as County Manager of South Dublin County Council where during his ten-year tenure he pioneered extensive reform of the Local Authority services, especially at the point of delivery. He also instigated overseas twinning between his Council and a district in Ehtiopia where significant support services were delivered. He continues to assist the travelling community.

Deirdre Keogh

Deirdre was appointed a director in May 2012. She is the Assistant General Secretary of the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) with whom she has been working since 1998. The IVEA is the national representative body for Ireland's 33 VECs. Deirdre is also qualified as a second level teacher and has experience in HR and strategic planning. She has a strong belief in the importance of education in helping to break down social barriers and enhance life chances for individuals, their families and communities.



Senior Management Team:

Patrick Cogan, ofm:

Patrick a Franciscan, is a founder-director of Respond! Housing Association since 1982. He is also a director of Sivile, a Housing Association which Respond! Housing Association set up in Kokstad, South Africa. He served for three terms, as a Ministerial appointee, on the benchmarking Quality Action and Performance Verification Groups of the Local Authority sector and has just completed his fourth term as a member of the Board of Directors of the Housing Finance Agency.

Ned Brennan:

Ned is Chief Operations Officer of Respond! Housing Association with responsibility for human resources, production, special projects, customer care, education and estate management. Ned previously worked as Town Clerk with Youghal Town Council and as a Staff Officer with Kilkenny County Council. Ned was educated in Presentation College, Bray, University College Dublin, the Honourable Society of King's Inns and holds a Masters Degree from University College Cork. Ned was a member of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Working Group for the Co-operative & Voluntary Sector from 2002 to 2009. He is also a member of the Board of the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH).

Ray Fanning:

Ray is Company Treasurer of Respond! Housing Association since May 2010. Prior to joining Respond! Ray had been employed in the private commercial sector for over 25 years and held a number of senior finance positions. He previously worked as Financial Controller for ACEC Ireland Ltd / ABB Transformers. He was Group Financial Controller for Fyffes Produce UK, Management Consultant with Kromberg & Schubert (Ireland) Ltd and Group Financial Controller of Avglade Limited. Originally from Waterford, Ray also represents Respond! on the Finance Sub Committee of the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH). He is also a director of Sivile.

Jill Jackman:

Jill is Legal Manager of Respond! Housing Association and has been with the organisation since 1999. Jill is responsible for legal and administration matters within the organisation including the acquisition of properties and development sites, litigation and the insurance portfolio. With more than 35 years experience in the legal profession, Jill previously worked with Nolan, Farrell & Goff Solicitors (1976 to 1983) and with Kinsella Heffernan & Foskin Solicitors (1983 to 1999).

Parag Joglekar:

Parag is Head of Property and Design with Respond! Housing Association. He is a Chartered Architect in Ireland and the UK and holds a Masters degree in Urban Settlements. Parag has worked in both the private and semi-private sector in Ireland, UK and India with extensive experience in Urban Design, Housing, Regeneration, Commercial, Health Care and Civic Buildings. He heads the Property & Design and Overseas Development Aid arm of Respond! Housing Association. Parag is a member of the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI) and the Architects Registration Board (ARB) in the UK.

Dr Deborah Butler:

Dr. Deborah is Registrar and National Quality Assurance Manager with responsibility for academic standards within Respond! Education. Her professional Doctorate was completed in 2010 and focused on understanding “professionalism” in social housing provision and the role of academic qualifications in terms of career progression, experiences and recognition of housing professionals. Prior to joining Respond!, Deborah lectured in Economics/Finance and was involved in the accreditation of diploma, degree and MBA programmes.

Tom Power:

Tom is Regional Manager of the Southern Region and has worked with Respond! Housing Association since 1997. He previously worked in London with the Charity Commission for ten years. He holds a Bachelor of Social Studies degree in Housing and Community Studies.

Paul Hargaden:

Paul is Regional Manager of the Western Region and has worked with Respond! Housing Association since 2005. He has worked in the voluntary sector for over 25 years and has extensive experience in the area of community work and in the social housing sector at regional, national and international level. Paul's current role with Respond! involves overall operational control for all estate management, community development and design/production activities and projects in the west of Ireland.

Pádraic Brennan:

Pádraic is Regional Manager for the East and Midlands. He graduated from Sligo Institute of Technology and Galway Mayo Institute of Technology and is a qualified Contracts Manager in Civil Engineering and Construction Management. Pádraic worked within engineering consultancy practice (Thomas Garland Partners Dublin) before entering the construction industry contracting discipline. He has spent over 25 years working within the construction and development industries in Dublin, New York and London, including 16 years with McCabe Builders (Dublin) Ltd as a Contracts Director.

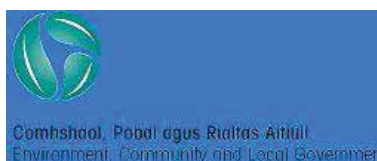
Seán Regan:

Seán is Community Development Manager with Respond! Housing Association with responsibility for community development and community education services. Prior to joining Respond! in 2007 Seán worked as National Co-ordinator with the Community Worker's Co-operative. He has also worked on a number of EU programmes throughout Ireland and as Community Development Co-ordinator with the Connamara Gaeltacht Area Partnership. Seán has a B.E. in Industrial Engineering from University College Galway and Masters Degrees in Computer Aided Manufacturing (M.Eng.Sc), Hydology (M.Sc) and Rural Development Planning (M.A.).

Partnerships:

Respond! Housing Association does not work in isolation. We partner and collaborate with many key stakeholders including the following:

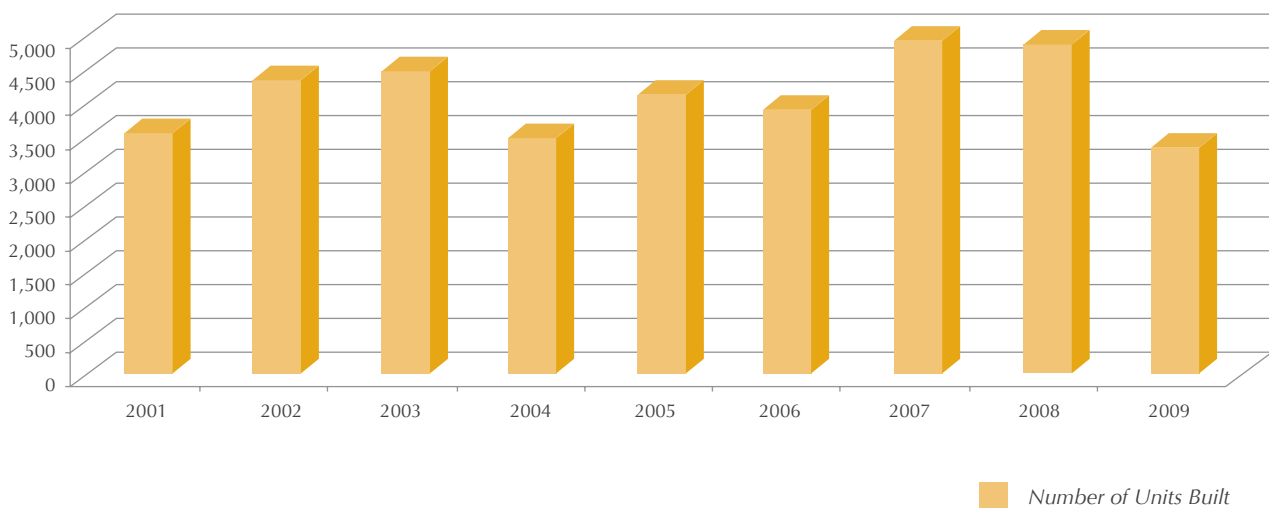
- Residents and communities
- Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
- Local Authorities
- Health Service Executive
- Department of Health
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- National Government and Government Departments
- Elected officials at a local and national level
- Policy makers at a local and national level
- Other voluntary bodies and community organisations
- Private sector partners and funders
- Service providers
- Further Educational Institutions including HETAC, FETAC (and the QQAI)
- Higher Educational Institutions (e.g. University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, WIT) and the HETAC and the QQAI



Production:

In the thirty years that Respond! Housing Association has been in existence, the landscape of social housing could not have changed more, with dramatic changes happening in the past three years since the beginning of the economic downturn. The introduction of the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) in 1984 and the Rental Subsidy Scheme (later to become the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme (CLSS)) in the 1990s meant that the production of social housing for nearly two decades was almost entirely State funded. However, at the beginning of 2009, the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme was replaced by the Social Housing Leasing Initiative whereby housing associations lease housing dwellings from private developers or raise private finance in order to purchase them. This has placed significant financial risks on housing associations and while the introduction of the Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF) has reduced the risk somewhat, it is still a precarious time for housing associations. The amount of money allocated to the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) which funds housing for older persons and persons with special needs has also reduced dramatically in the past number of years.

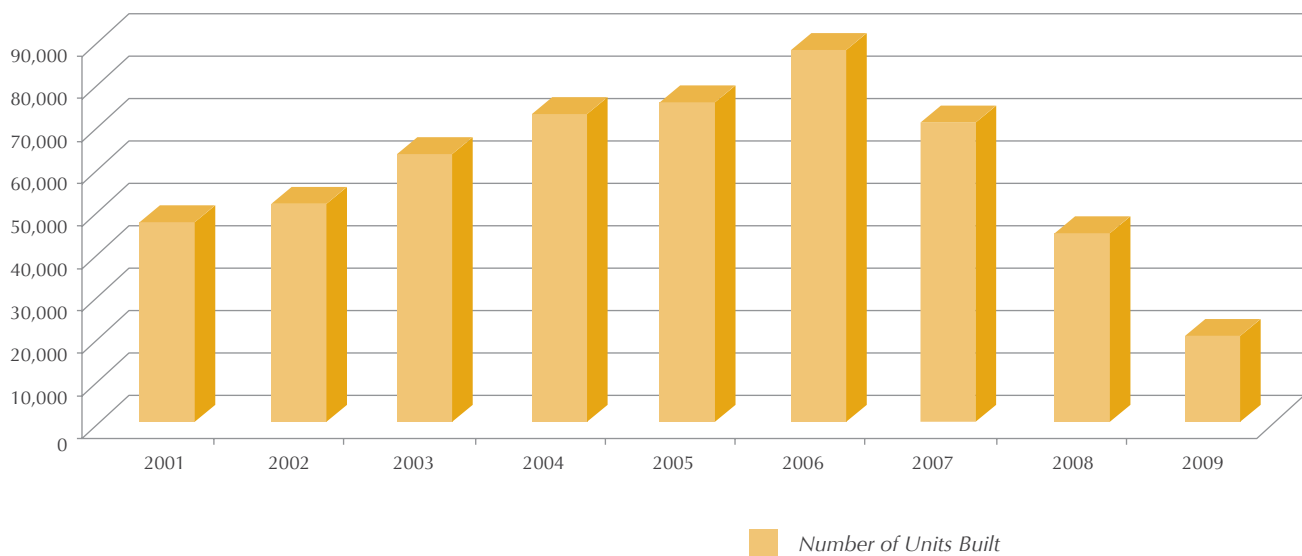
Number of units built by Local Authorities (2001 - 2009)



House Completions by Respond! as a total of the voluntary & Co-operative sector (2001 - 2009)



Number of units built by the Private Sector (2001 - 2009)



Design:

Since the early 1990s, Respond! Housing Association has recruited its own in-house design and project management teams. We have a cohort of design architects and technicians in each of our three main offices; Waterford, Dublin and Galway. All our design is carried out in-house and we offer this facility as well to Local Authorities and other housing associations. We have been engaged by several Local Authorities to deliver master plans to them and we subsequently bring these plans to site and carry them through to completion as agents of these Local Authorities.

Housing stock under Social Management:

Housing under Social Management	Dwelling Units	%
By Local Authorities	120,000	47.5%
By Respond! Housing Association	3,700	1.5%
By all other Housing Associations	20,000	7.9%
Rental Accommodation Scheme	14,000	5.5%
Rent Supplement	95,000	37.6%
Total	252,700	

Partnership with Local Authorities:

Respond! Housing Association has worked in partnership with Local Authorities since our foundation in 1982. The benefits of housing associations and Local Authorities working together include the following:

- Quality of construction
- Value per unit to the Exchequer
- Continuing best practice management / maintenance
- Continuing community development enhancement on estates
- Specialist care and after care programmes
- Social responsiveness for particular housing needs in some communities
- A realistic rental alternative to home ownership or Local Authority housing



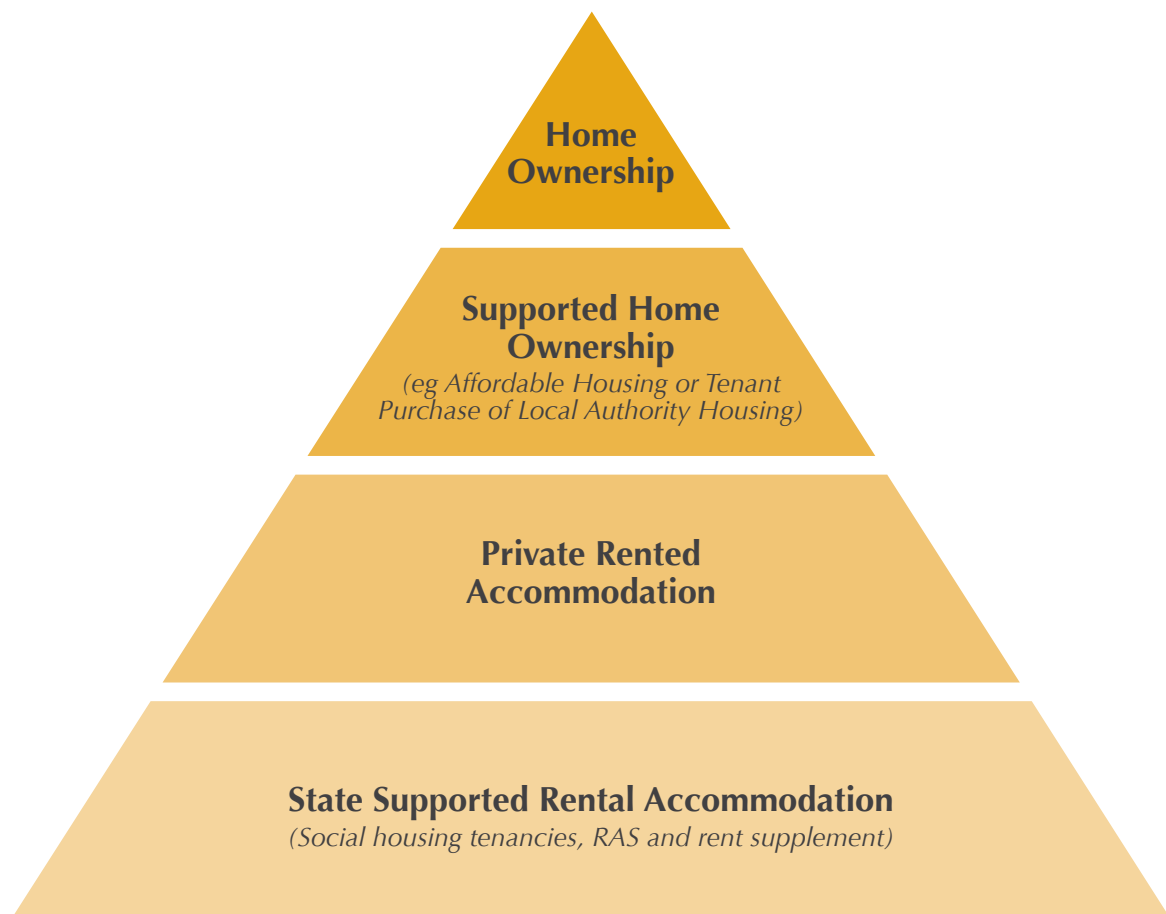
Gleann na Bearú in Bagenalstown, Co Carlow is an integrated development designed and built in partnership with Carlow County Council and kindly funded by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. The estate contains 131 units of accommodation including 34 homes under Respond! management, 62 homes under the management of Carlow County Council, 19 affordable homes, two 8-bed group homes (managed by Beam Services) and a community building.



Lady's Well in Mulhuddart, Co Dublin was designed by Respond! Housing Association and built in partnership with Fingal County Council and kindly funded by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. This integrated estate contains 270 homes as well as a group home and communal facilities for residents.

Integrated Housing :

For many years the various type of housing tenures in Ireland were treated separately with home ownership at the top of the housing paradigm and social housing at the bottom (as demonstrated in the chart below).



While the Planning and Development Act 2000 sought to secure the integration of social, affordable and private housing, its success was greatly reduced due to an amendment to the Act in 2002 and the subsequent economic crisis in 2008. However, the aspiration of integrated estates throughout Ireland is still key to the future of housing in Ireland as we must seek to leave behind the segregated, mono tenure estates of the past. It is important that social and human integration is achieved, along with the integration of housing types, as can be seen in many other European countries.

Examples of Respond! Integrated estates include the following:



Bridgefield Close in Curraheen, Cork was built by Brideview Developments Ltd and completed in 2009. Respond! Housing Association, with the support of Cork County Council and with funding from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, acquired 24 houses and apartments under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2002. The estate contains a mix of social, affordable and private accommodation, along with communal facilities for residents.

Beechview House in Stillorgan, Co Dublin was constructed by Jackson Homes Ltd and completed in 2010. It was purchased by Respond! Housing Association with the support of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and with funding from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. The development contains 23 apartments for older people and 2 group homes containing 13 beds and 18 beds respectively. The centre also contains a healthcare facility that is currently managed by Cluain Mhuire.



Easton Meadows in Leixlip, Co Kildare is an integrated estate designed by Respond! Housing Association and built by MDY Construction. Completed in 2005, the estate was built with the support of Kildare County Council and with funding from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. Easton Meadows contains 116 family homes, 12 homes for older persons, a 13-bed group home and communal facilities. This mixed tenure estate contains affordable and social housing units managed by Kildare County Council and Respond! Housing Association.

Castlegreen Crescent in Cashel, Co Tipperary was acquired by Respond! Housing Association from Bank Place Developments in 2007 with the support of North Tipperary County Council. The purchase of this estate was kindly funded by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. Castlegreen Crescent contains 56 family homes and residents on the estate are involved in a wide range of activities including estate enhancement programmes, VEC classes and more.



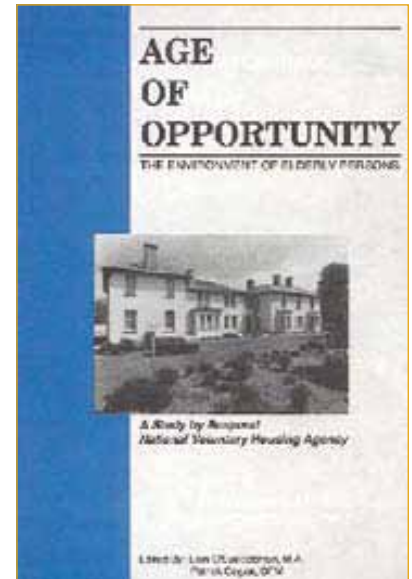
Housing for Persons with Special Needs:

Over the past 30 years, Respond! Housing Association has dedicated about one third of its social housing programme to the provision of housing for the following persons:

- Older Persons
- Disabled Persons
- Travellers
- Homeless Persons
- Those requiring emergency housing

Respond! has always been conscious of the needs of older people and the very first scheme the organisation provided in Waterford in 1983 was for older persons in Larchville. In the 1980s we also conducted a study of older persons in Waterford in order to ascertain their housing, community and social needs. The results were published in the 1991 report 'Age of Opportunity'.

Since the 1980s, Respond! has gone on to provide many more units of accommodation for older persons and those with special needs. We provide day care centres in some of our estates including St Francis Gardens in Blackpool, Cork, Nethercross in Tolka Valley, Dublin and La Verna in Baldoyle, Dublin.



St Francis Gardens, Blackpool is an integrated development in Blackpool, Cork with family housing, housing for older people, a day care centre for older people, communal facilities for people with intellectual disabilities (managed by the Cope Foundation), first floor terraced garden, underground parking and communal facilities for residents.



Gleann na hEorna in Springfield, Tallaght, Dublin 24 is an integrated development with family housing, housing for older people, affordable housing, communal facilities, an 8-bed group home and 2 health care / communal facilities managed by St John of God Trust.

Our policy has been to integrate housing for older persons and those with special needs within estates and complexes also designed for families. Accordingly, most of our family estates have specialist housing included. One of our most recent developments in Springfield, Tallaght, Dublin 24 is an integrated development with 204 units of accommodation, a health facility operated by St John of God Trust, a centre for victims of domestic violence and a community building with pre-school facilities that will be managed by Respond! Housing Association. Gleann na hEorna contains 127 homes for older people, 63 family homes and 14 affordable homes and was built with the support of South Dublin County Council and kindly funded by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

In 2010 Respond! Housing Association launched a “National Survey of Older People” living in social housing estates. Conducted by Respond! personnel throughout the country, the aim of the national survey was to establish the needs and requirements of older residents in order to plan services and supports more effectively. The survey highlighted the importance of helping older people to remain in their own home for as long as possible. Family, friends and neighbours can play a vital role in ensuring this as the survey points to care by family being the preferred option of older people as they age.



Respond! National Strategy for Older People.

As a result of this extensive national survey, Respond! Housing Association produced a “National Strategy for Older People”. The strategy is an illustration of the recognition Respond! has made that older residents are a distinct group to be valued and supported. Respond! Housing Association aims to ensure that older residents’ skills and experience, as well as their needs are identified and utilised appropriately. We encourage all residents to contribute not only to life on the estate, but to society more generally.

Respond!’s “National Strategy for Older People” 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



La Verna in Baldoyle contains housing for older people, as well as communal facilities and a day care service funded by the Health Service Executive.



Deputy Mayor of Waterford Pat Hayes with the former Minister for Older Persons Áine Brady at the launch of the Respond! Housing Association National Strategy for Older People.



In 2011, Respond! Housing Association received an Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH) Award for the Traveller Accommodation in Ardrew Meadows, Athy, Co Kildare.

Housing for Travellers:

In early 2007 Respond! Housing Association launched our Traveller Accommodation and Support Policy. The aim of this policy is to provide a holistic approach to the provision of Traveller housing, encompassing all Traveller needs and issues. We have identified the following as the main areas of focus for the provision of housing to Travellers at this time:

- Integrated Traveller accommodation and support
- Management of current Traveller accommodation schemes
- Training and education
- Creation of integrated communities
- Care and support
- Formation of good relations
- Creation of employment opportunities

Our Traveller Accommodation and Support Policy demonstrates our experience working with Travellers and our clear understanding of Traveller issues and cultures.



Former Olympic boxer Francis Barrett and sports broadcaster Jimmy Magee at the launch of the Respond! Traveller Accommodation and Support Policy.

Case Study: Ardrew Meadows:

Ardrew Meadows in Athy, Co Kildare is an integrated estate containing social and affordable housing, communal facilities and Traveller specific accommodation that was designed by Respond! Housing Association following extensive consultations with Athy Town Council, Kildare County Council and Traveller representative organisations. Consultation with Traveller families commenced at the early stages of the project with the families being asked for their input at the design stage. This meant that the appropriate housing type was provided for the proposed new tenants. Our Traveller Accommodation Officer worked with the families in a pre-tenancy role for 12 months prior to moving in and developed links with the families. This led to a strong working relationship based on trust and a strong knowledge base of Traveller culture and issues. This also provided the Traveller families with a sense of ownership and responsibility for the project at an early stage and a forum for their inputs and concerns to be heard. Integration of all families on the estate has been very successful to date and there are a variety of community development activities on the estate that are open to all residents. These include:

- After school homework clubs
- Arts projects
- Christmas parties
- Environmental workshops
- The design and development of St Patrick's Day parade floats
- Parent's and children's groups

In 2011, Ardrew Meadows in Athy received an award from the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH) for recognised excellence in design, management, community development and sustainability.



Ardrew Meadows, an integrated estate in Athy, Co Kildare contains family housing, housing for older persons and those with special needs, Traveller specific housing and communal facilities.

Homeless Services:

Respond! Housing Association has a number of projects that provide assistance to homeless women and children in an environment that is safe, welcoming, family centred and homely. We offer support, information and resources which respect individual needs and enable families to move progressively towards re-housing. Our two current projects in this area are:

- (i) Cuan Áileann
- (ii) Suaimhneas

Cuan Áileann:

Cuan Áileann was recently opened as part of our new integrated development in Springfield, Tallaght, Dublin 24. The centre provides temporary accommodation for women and children. The aim of the centre is to:

- provide second stage temporary refuge on a referral basis only, for women and their children who have suffered mental or physical violence and / or harassment, rape or sexual abuse
- encourage these women to determine their own futures and to help them achieve this whether this means starting a new life elsewhere or returning home
- provide onsite support and care
- recognise and care for the emotional and educational needs of the children living in the refuge
- offer support and aftercare to any women who have left the refuge

Cuan Áileann can provide refuge for 9 families or individual clients at any one time. This allows for 5 families in the main refuge and 4 families in the adjacent apartments. The use of the apartments allows for more suitable self contained accommodation for families. Due to the design of the accommodation, the support offered to families could be low as most of the accommodation is self contained with its own kitchens and bathrooms. This is of paramount importance to the development as it enables clients to live in an independent manner. There is also a play area for the children staying at the refuge, providing them with a safe place to play and interact with each other.

Cuan Áileann is managed and currently funded by Respond! Housing Association.

Suaimhneas:

Suaimhneas in Limerick also aims to provide emergency accommodation to homeless women with their children in an environment that is safe, welcoming, family centred and homely. The centre offers support, information and resources which respect individual needs and enable families to move progressively towards re-housing. The centre was opened in 2002 to combat the growing number of homeless women and their children who were left with no other alternative than staying in a bed and breakfast. Suaimhneas is managed by Respond! Housing Association and funded by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and Limerick City Council.

Services:

Our focus at Suaimhneas is to assist families with their re-housing, while providing families with support, information and resources. Each family is assigned a keyworker and a Care Plan is established, based on their individual needs with the primary focus being the family's re-housing. Several in-house programmes are offered to families, including health and hygiene, cookery classes and personal development. Suaimhneas assists families in accessing external supports including:

- Homeless Persons Centre (Resettlement Officer, Sustainment Officer, Community Welfare Officers, Homeless Public Health Nurse)
- Health and medical services
- Social workers
- Money Advice and Budgeting Services (MABS)
- Barnardos
- Parent Support Programme / Community Mothers
- Counselling services
- Drug and alcohol treatment

Suaimhneas offers families an Outreach Support Service for a period of 1 – 3 months when they move on from Suaimhneas. This can be extended if required based on the needs of each individual family. Suaimhneas recognises that the transition from hostel accommodation to independent housing can be challenging and the Outreach Support Service aims to ease this transition.

Accommodation and facilities:

Suaimhneas provides families with communal living environment with shared facilities including:

- Full kitchen and dining area
- Laundry facilities
- Playroom
- Parent's lounge
- Payphone

Regeneration:

Respond! has worked with a number of Local Authorities in the past assisting with the regeneration of estates and areas. Respond! believes not only in the physical regeneration of houses and buildings, but also in the social regeneration of people and communities. We believe this is crucial in order to ensure regeneration is a success and delivers what is promised to communities. Examples of some of our most successful regeneration projects to date are Blackpool in Cork and Ballygrennan Close in Limerick.

(i) Blackpool, Cork

Respond! Housing Association was invited by Cork City Council to submit proposals for the redevelopment of the Glen flat complex at Thomas Davis Street, Blackpool in the late 1990s. The complex which was built in the 1960s was in need of major regeneration. The 3 blocks had no lifts, a poor heating system and required major repairs to make them habitable.

The area which is within 15 minutes walk of the city centre, had undergone extensive rejuvenation over the previous decade with a new shopping centre, revitalised town centre and entertainment facilities. The brief given to Respond! was to create an integrated development with good quality accommodation in a safe environment with all the necessary ancillary services and supports.

The regeneration of the flat complex delivered 12 homes for families, 39 apartments for older persons, a day care centre for older persons managed by Respond! Housing Association and a 14 person group home for the COPE Foundation who provide services for clients with physical and intellectual disability.

The day care centre which operates from the 5th floor provides a range of services to residents of St Francis Gardens, as well as members of the wider Blackpool community including:

- Activation programmes for older people
- Community development programmes for families and older people
- Physiotherapy unit
- Podiatry suite
- Restaurant facilities
- Assisted bathing



Before



After

(ii) Ballygrennan Close, Limerick

Ballygrennan Close in Moyross, Limerick was regenerated by Respond! Housing Association in 2000 at a cost of €4.8 million and is an excellent example of advanced social and community regeneration. It is composed of 34 family residences, a Community Building serving the needs of adults and children and a successful emergency accommodation unit for women and children (Suaimhneas). Respond! developed the plans for the regeneration of the estate through its own in-house design team in co-operation with external consultants.

Respond! has an ethos of combating disadvantage through the provision of integrated housing and community development initiatives. We have vast experience working with vulnerable individuals and families in disadvantaged areas and our commitment to the people living on our estates is unrelenting.

Ballygrennan Close consists of the following:

- 34 family homes
- Community building and local Respond! offices
- Purpose built childcare facilities
- Communal facilities for residents
- Suaimhneas Emergency Accommodation Project



Before



After



Respond!'s Advocacy Role:

Respond! is committed to advocating on behalf of our residents and the communities we represent. We believe in advocating for the following:

(i) A Comprehensive National Housing Policy

Respond! believes it is critical for Government and their departments to develop a National Housing Plan that will provide a holistic vision for housing policy and provision in Ireland. Currently, no such plan exists. While welcoming the *Housing Policy Statement* released in June 2011 by the current Government that outlined a vision for a housing sector based on choice, fairness, equity across tenures and delivering quality outcomes for resources invested, Respond! believes the Government needs to outline how these aims can be achieved. We strongly consider that real choice, fairness and equity cannot be achieved unless social housing becomes a tenure of first choice rather than its current residual role. The statement outlines how more choice will be available to people while also acknowledging that the current circumstances we find ourselves in dictate that State provided housing supports must be prioritised towards meeting the most acute housing needs, i.e. further and continued residualisation of the social housing sector.

While the *Housing Policy Statement* outlined the damage caused the overall economy by the private housing sector, Respond! believes it does not provide sufficient detail on how the current crisis in private and social housing in Ireland can be resolved. This is why Respond! has continuously and will continuously, call on the Government to research, publish and implement a comprehensive National Housing Plan. Respond! believes this new National Housing Plan should be wide-ranging, all-inclusive, complete and bring together the many different elements required for any housing policy. These include:

- Private housing (rental and purchase, as well as unfinished housing developments)
- Social housing (rental and purchase)
- Affordable housing (rental and purchase)
- Planning, zoning and public policy
- The National Development Plan
- The National Spatial Strategy
- The Four Year Plan
- Housing related fiscal policies

Respond! strongly believes that the lack of a National Housing Plan by previous Governments has clearly contributed to the crisis we are now in. Previous Governments failed to control the property market through fiscal and planning measures leading to an overheated property market and over stretched banking sector. There was never a joined-up policy that brought together the many different areas that contribute to the provision of housing in Ireland. Any National Housing Plan should cater to a wide range of income groups, be equitable, fair, sustainable and should be for the common good.



The Housing Policy Statement released by former Minister for Housing and Planning Willie Penrose outlines the Government's vision for housing in Ireland.

(ii) The Creation of Integrated Housing

Respond! also believes the State must promote integrated housing in order to prevent the creation of segregated estates or “ghettos”, as has happened in the past. Respond! maintains that social housing should be promoted as housing of first choice, rather than an option of last resort. Like mixed tenure housing estates, social housing as housing of first choice would avoid a concentration of low-income households in social housing estates. The negative impact associated with such concentrations as a result may be avoided, for example, the negative consequences for the local economy and the stigma sometimes associated with social housing. Respond! believes that communities should be created that are balanced in terms of social need and household structure and therefore excess demands on local and community services would be reduced. Social housing should be a viable, long-term securely managed and well-resourced source of accommodation. This can be achieved through a variety of different measures including:

- An amendment to the scheme of letting priorities and practices so that social housing estates do not become inhabited by a mainly low income or a single-class cohort of residents
- Financing of community development programmes for the first five years of an estate’s occupation as part of the initial capital funding
- A requirement that all managers of integrated housing estates produce an agreed plan of social community care and management
- Housing specific education and clear progression routes for housing professionals

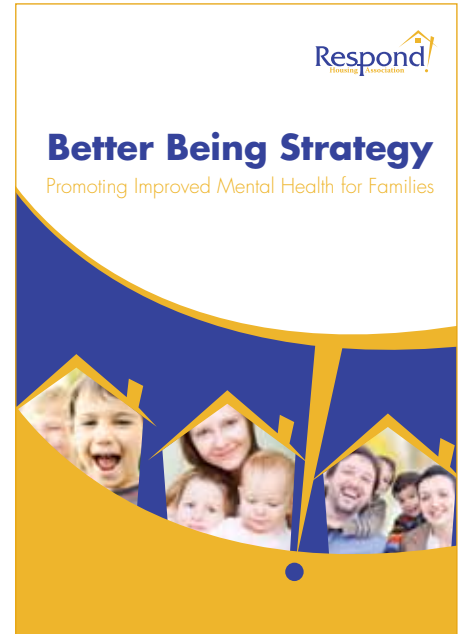


Carraig Liath in Midleton, Co Cork is an integrated estate containing social and affordable housing for families and those with special needs. The estate contains 41 3-bed houses, 19 1-bed apartments and communal facilities for residents. The estate contains 65 houses and apartments and communal facilities for residents. This estate was built with the support of Cork County Council and kindly funded by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

(iii) Promoting support programmes for vulnerable people and communities

In 2008 Respond! conducted a national survey of a representative sample of Respond! households to determine the level of well-being among mothers and children on our estates. *'The Well Being of Parents, Children & Neighbourhoods; A National Study of Families in Respond! Housing Estates'* revealed that there were mental health difficulties amongst mothers and children above the national average on Respond! housing estates. As a result an in-depth assessment of a number of pilot housing estates in the South East was carried out by a clinical psychologist, in association with Respond! staff, in order to identify exactly the number of households where there was clear evidence that mothers and/or children are experiencing mental health difficulties. Following this extensive research, the Respond! Better Being Strategy was drafted in order to support an identifiable minority of parents and children who, from time to time, may experience mental health difficulties. This strategy was prepared as part of Respond!'s vision to support families in recognition of the fact that the need for social housing usually co-exists with many other needs. The implementation plan is currently being rolled out on a pilot basis over a 3-year period in a number of estates of South and South East.

Respond! believes that research similar to that carried out on our own estates should be carried out more widely, for example, across a number of Local Authority estates. We feel that a programme, similar to that which Respond! is currently rolling out in the South East, may be required across a large number of social housing estates in order to meet the mental health needs of social housing tenants. If the programme received the support of the HSE and other stakeholders, Respond! is confident that the Better Being Programme could be used as a model for the development of a mainstream programme. The Better Being Programme is in keeping with *A Vision for Change*, the guiding document for the development of mental health services in Ireland.



The Respond! Better Being Strategy aims to support an identifiable minority of parents and children on our estates who, from time to time, may experience mental health difficulties. Respond! is calling on the Government to consider introducing similar programmes on Local Authority estates throughout the country.

Community Development:

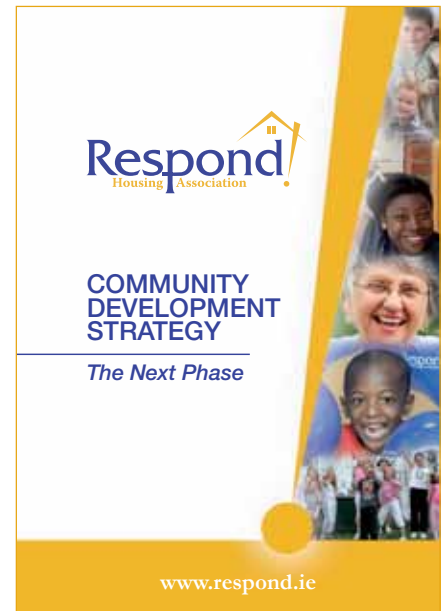
Since our foundation 30 years ago, we have always been clear that our role is not just to build houses, but to build communities. Therefore Community Development is at the heart of our work. We share the understanding of Community Development as set out by the (then) National Community Development Programme (1995).

‘Community development is about promoting positive change in society in favour of those who benefit least. It is about involving people, most especially the disadvantaged, in making changes which they identify as important and which use and develop their own skills, knowledge and experience. Community Development seeks to challenge the causes of poverty/disadvantage and to offer new opportunities for those lacking choice, power and resources’

To this end, Respond! Resident Support staff work with residents to build the capacity of their estates to become vibrant, active and safe places to live and raise families. We aim to work with the residents of our estates so that they move from being strangers moving into a new estate to becoming a community that cares for its neighbours and is able to engage as equal partners with other groups and agencies in the broader community.

This includes working with other sections of Respond! and other local and national agencies to draw in resources and programmes into our estates. A significant part of this includes working with Respond! Education Department, national universities such as the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, University College Dublin, regional Vocational Education Committees and other local agencies on their own behalf.

The Respond! Community Chest provides part funding for many of these projects. The aim of the Community Chest is to support our communities and help them to plan and implement projects and activities on their estates that will help build the capacity of volunteers and residents. These projects range from estate family events to training programmes, youth programmes and community gardens.



Respond! National Community Development Strategy.



The Go Green Go Initiative project in Drogheda, Co Louth.

Childcare Services:

Respond! has always been committed to the delivery of child and family support services on our estates. Many Respond! estates provide services for children and families in our community buildings including:

- Childcare
- Youth Services
- Training Programmes
- Social Events
- Day Care
- Parent and Toddler Groups
- Homework Clubs



Respond! Housing Association is committed to promoting the highest standards of child protection in line with "Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children" (2011). To achieve this we have recently developed our child protection policy "Making our Communities Safe for Children". This policy is now being implemented within the organisation and being promoted on all of our family estates.

In nearly 30 childcare centres throughout Ireland, Respond! provides childcare services to almost 1,000 children. These services range from full day childcare to morning, afternoon, pre-school and after school services and are available to Respond! residents and members of the wider community. Respond! has almost 200 staff members nationwide who manage and provide these services. If you would like information on childcare services in your community, please contact your local resident support worker or visit your local Community Building.



The launch of our Childcare Policies and Procedures Manual in our Childcare Centre in Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan.



Respond! arranges a range of community initiatives that bring residents of all ages together.

Youth Services:

Respond! Housing Association, in partnership with other agencies, aims to develop youth activities and youth work programmes on our estates. For our younger residents we try to provide a range of activities and services that will interest them and involve them in their community. Through our staff and volunteers, our goal is to improve the quality of life of young people on our estates through community based youth services.

The wide range of activities taking place on our estates includes the following:

- Youth Clubs
- Youth Cafés
- Drugs Awareness & Youth Wellbeing Programmes
- Angling Programmes (sponsored by the Des Smith Drogheda Youth Foundation)
- Film making (in collaboration with the Dundalk Institute of Technology)
- After school supports



One of our residents taking part in the Angling Programme sponsored by the Des Smith Drogheda Youth Foundation.

Education:

Since Respond! appointed its first Education Officer in 1992, when it pioneered family housing and Pre- and Post-Tenancy Training programmes, Respond! Education has continued to work with a host of stakeholders across the housing and community sectors, offering estate-level, area-based training and a range of third-level programmes. The Education Department of Respond! Housing Association continues to play a central and vibrant role in the life of the organisation.



A group of residents who completed the Respond! Certificate in Community Work (Level 6) which was accredited by NUI Maynooth.

We are committed to the development of education that strengthens the community and housing sectors. We aim to develop and deliver creative, innovative and unique educational programmes for the Irish housing and community sector that support vocational, personal and transformational learning. To this end, we provide a range of courses across a continuum of learning opportunities, working in partnership with other organisations from the housing, community and educational sectors.

Respond! Education also seeks to create a career pathway in housing and community work for those in local government, public service, community and voluntary sectors. To this end, Respond! obtained FETAC and HETAC accreditation and works collaboratively with other educational institutions such as University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Chartered Institute of Housing, Waterford Institute of Technology and others, to deliver a variety of courses from Certificate and Diploma to full Degree levels.

Respond! Education delivers services to three main groups:

- (i) **Respond! residents:** To inform them of their rights as tenants as well as assisting them to gain access to opportunities for on-going personal and community development if they choose to avail of same.
- (ii) **Outreach groups:** To engage with those who have a role in the development of public and private housing policy, local authority staff, public servants, other NGOs and the wider community. Respond! Education aims to provide a range of accredited and non accredited training and education in housing and community development which adheres to best practice and is governed by rigorous quality assurance procedures.
- (iii) **Respond! staff:** To ensure that all Respond! staff are equipped to deliver best practice models of estate management, community development and education in our programmes. Respond! Education aims to support and encourage all staff to undertake training and education in areas which are directly relevant to their job within Respond! fostering competence, and professionalism.

The Education Department comprises seven full-time staff dedicated to the design, delivery and quality assurance of a range of education and community development courses. In addition, a pool of some 30 further staff with graduate and post graduate qualifications and experience across a range of disciplines can be drawn upon as guest lecturers for subject specialisms. A practitioner housing association as well as an education provider, Respond! Housing Association is uniquely placed to marry academic and professional learning in housing and community sectors, grounded in current practice and analysis.

Respond! College:

An exciting new development for Respond! Housing Association is the formal establishment of Respond! College in January 2011. This step formalises the long commitment by Respond! Housing Association to education and training, and consolidates its pioneering work as both a housing association and education provider.

Respond! College is located in High Park, Grace Park Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9 and has outreach centres in Waterford, Galway, Cork and Laois. A number of the programmes are offered through a blended learning method which allows for learners to engage in learning at their own pace in their own location as well having the opportunity to network with class colleagues on a regular basis.



Respond! College is located in High Park, Drumcondra, Dublin.

Respond! College offers a range of academic programmes on the National Framework of Qualifications and also provides professional training courses. These programmes are accredited by FETAC, HETAC and the Chartered Institute of Housing. Respond! College continues to work in partnership with University College Dublin (UCD) and the National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM) and will endeavour to create new partnerships with other programme providers as the need arises.

There are also a number of new degrees currently being developed that have been submitted to HETAC and awaiting formal / final validation and these new HETAC programmes include a BA in Housing & Community Studies and a BA in Housing & Professional Social Care. These new degrees are expected to be available in early 2013.

Respond! has and can offer the following courses either in one of our regional locations, or onsite if requested:

- Bachelor of Social Studies in Housing and Community Studies (Level 8) accredited by University College Dublin (UCD)
- Bachelor of Arts in Housing and Community Studies (Level 7) accredited by HETAC (under construction)
- Bachelor of Arts in Housing and Community Studies (Level 8) accredited by HETAC (under construction)
- Certificate in Family Studies (Level 5 Minor Award) accredited by FETAC
- Certificate in Understanding Mental Health (Level 5 Minor Award) accredited by FETAC
- Certificate in Recovery in Mental Health (Level 5 Minor Award) accredited by FETAC
- Certificate in Community Studies (Level 6) accredited by HETAC
- Certificate in Housing (Level 2 – NFQ Level 4 equivalent) accredited by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH)
- Certificate in Estate Management (Level 5 Minor Award) accredited by FETAC
- Returning to formal education and third level access programmes
- One and two day training seminars (Community Development, Trends and Issues in Irish Housing)



Students who completed the Respond! Housing Association / UCD Bachelor of Social Studies in University College Dublin.

Alumni Association:

The alumni of past students was launched in September 2008 by the then Minister for Housing and Local Services, Michael Finneran, T.D. The Alumni Association provides a network and opportunities for graduates to maintain relationships with each other, staff and peers, and offers scope for a mentoring system and linkage for on-going professional and academic professional development



Former Minister for Housing and Local Services Michael Finneran with Joanne Richards, BSS Degree Programme Leader at the launch of the BSS Alumni Association in Dublin.

Accrediting Bodies:

Our Education Department has developed strong working partnerships with a number of Higher Education Institutions including the following which accredit various Respond! programmes:

- University College Dublin (UCD is the awarding body for the jointly developed and delivered BSS in Housing & Community Studies)
- National University of Ireland, Maynooth
- Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH Northern Ireland and CIH UK)
- Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC)
- Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC)

Respond! and South Africa:



Some of the local residents who have taken part in some of the educational programmes in our Training Centre in Shayamoya.

In 2005, Respond! Housing Association was invited to South Africa by the Diocese of Kokstad (KwaZulu Natal Province) to assist them in developing supports and services for those in need in its area. Following extensive research and consultation, Respond! Housing Association identified key facilities and supports that needed to be provided, including:

- Housing
- Training and educational facilities
- Recreational and sporting facilities
- Crèches
- Day Care Centres
- Medical Facilities

Working with the provincial Government, the local community, specialist consultants and Respond! Housing Association staff based in South Africa, we have focused our building, training and development work on delivering much needed services in the communities we are involved in. Central to all of our work in South Africa is the objective of sustainability.

To assist with these projects, Respond! works in partnership with Yondlabantu, Amawele, Friends in Ireland, the Diocese of Kokstad, the Greater Kokstad Municipality (GKM) and other local groups. To help us carry out our work in South Africa we established





The Respond! Training Centre in Shayamoya.

Sivile as a local housing association that carries out many of our projects. Established in December 2008, Sivile! is the South African branch of Respond! Housing Association that works with the local community on our behalf.

One of the main projects we have undertaken in South Africa is the creation of the iThembalabantu Centre in Shayamoya. The Centre was designed and built by Respond! Housing Association and houses many services and organisations including the Tender Loving Care (TLC) Hospice, Sakhisizwe Pre-school, the Respond! Training Centre and the St Nardini Church amongst others.

Respond! has also developed a Community Centre in nearby Hardenburg which aims to restore dignity and hope to marginalized and sick people in situations of desperate need in rural communities.

The Hardenburg Community Centre comprises of:

- A Respite Centre
- Consulting Rooms
- A Dispensary
- Ablution offices
- Catering facilities
- Waiting areas

The Respite Centre accommodates up to 40 children in two dormitories and has full ablution facilities, catering facilities, classrooms, indoor and outdoor activity areas. The centre when fully commissioned will house centre management and administration, permanent consulting space for resident professional nurse and social worker, consulting space for visiting doctors and specialists and a basic dispensary.

The Centre also plays home to a Community Health Support Programme that helps the sick, dying, destitute and poor people of Hardenburg, as well as orphans and vulnerable children in isolated rural communities in the Eastern Cape. The Centre is located in the Alfred Nzo district which covers the north east of the Eastern Cape Province, bordering Lesotho and KwaZulu-Natal.



The Hardenburg Community Centre.



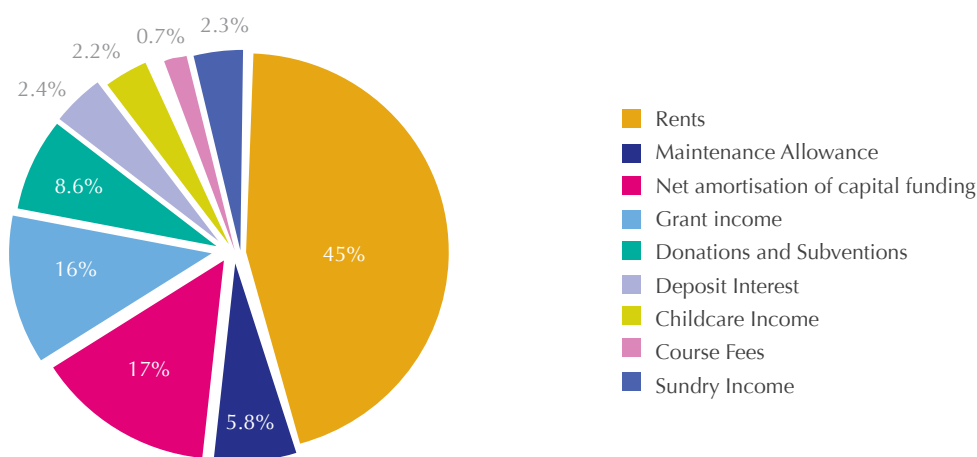
Some members of the local community who are benefitting from the new Community Centre in Hardenburg.

Financial Review:

Over the 30 years since 1982 Respond! has demonstrated significant growth in terms of housing units, employee numbers and delivery of services to residents, likewise it has developed significant financial strength and stability. From very modest beginnings when income was primarily derived from fundraising efforts and donations, our accounts recorded an income in 1982 of just over IR£10,000, this has grown to over €19 million in the twelve months to June 2011.

The chart below outlines the source of revenue for the year to June 2011:

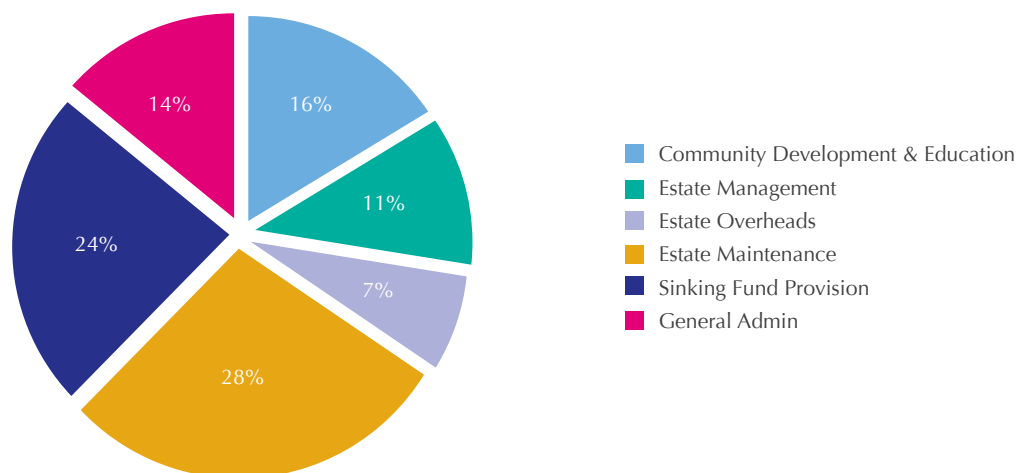
Respond! Income 2011



Our income has grown as we have developed the level of services we provide to our residents and other organisations. The organisation's total income in 2011 amounted to €19.5 million, which was an increase of 9.7% on the previous year. Rental Income performed well with an increase of €0.5 million or 6% on the previous year, this was achieved due to the increase in housing units provided, as like for like, rents were down slightly due to the reduction in incomes of our residents.

The chart below indicates in percentage terms how our Rental Income was spent in 2011:

How €1 of Rent was spent in 2011



In terms of our operating expenses these increased by 1% on 2010, however we did see a significant rise in our current maintenance expenditure. Last year we spent €2.2 million on responsive, void and cyclical maintenance, an effective increase of 12.5% on 2010. This expenditure demonstrates our commitment to maintain our properties to the highest standard for the benefit of our residents.

Overall the performance of the Association for 2011 has been robust and despite the economic downturn a surplus of €3.2 million was generated. The bulk of this surplus (€2.1 million) has been transferred to our long-term planned maintenance fund. This designated reserve fund is reviewed annually to ensure that sufficient funds are in place to meet the future lifecycle costs of maintaining our properties and thus ensure that we can continue to provide quality accommodation.

A key focus for the organisation is how we can deliver value for money and we continually strive to ensure that our costs are kept down allowing us to keep the level of increases in rents and other charges down. Historically we have managed to keep all increases at or below inflations levels. Effective financial management has been crucial to the attainment of our goals.

Our investment in social housing is significant and over the last 30 years we have managed, through Government funding and prudent financial management, to create a strong balance sheet. Our fixed assets relating to properties in June 2011 were stated prior to depreciation at €442million, and our accounts reflect an investment of €23 million in additional properties for the year to June 2011. Notwithstanding that we have mortgage liabilities and capital grants of €349 million on our balance sheet, specific to the Government capital assisted funding of these properties, Respond! is well placed to deliver growth in the future in a controlled manner. Prudence and management control in how we spend our resources will continue to be a critical factor in our financial strength.

3 Year Plan 2012-2015:

The company recently produced a Corporate Strategic Profile (2012 - 2015) and underpinning this three year profile, our finance plan anticipates at a minimum:

- Investing €53m in new build and acquisitions over the period
- Raising €34m in private finance, matched by a significant contribution from Respond!'s own resources
- Investing €20m in upgrading existing stock, €10m of which will be accessed in energy efficient grant funding to retrofit and upgrade stock
- Increasing our annual rental income by €3m
- Supplementing our sinking fund by a further €6m, to a total of €17m by 2015

In spite of financial and economic challenges there is potential to expand the quality and scope of housing services we provide, in line with the finance plan. The company currently has a sinking fund of €11 million for long-term refurbishment of housing stock. In addition, there is €8 million provided for ongoing outreach services. Cash flow is carefully monitored to ensure investment levels are maintained and risk is managed.

To develop this process further, internal staff are developing financial planning processes and modeling, treasury management functions and a complete upgrade of our bespoke housing management system into a fully integrated model incorporating mobile working, asset management and document management.

The key technologies that will be employed over the coming months to deliver these services are:

- Agile working
- Housing Management Systems
- Customer Relationship Management
- Document Management
- Business Intelligence
- Performance Management
- Unified Communications
- Cloud Computing / Virtualisation
- Web Enabled Services for staff and residents
- Energy Efficient Computing

Notes:

Respond! Housing Association is delighted to be celebrating 30 years of building communities in Ireland. We would like to thank you all for your kind support and assistance over the past 30 years. Go raibh míle maith agat.

Respond! Housing Association

making the **difference**

Independence, experience and expertise: the building blocks to your success

Proud to congratulate Respond! Housing Association
on 30 years in business.

project management | cost management | health and safety

For further details contact us on:

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e: mail@hktt.ie

www.hktt.ie



Healy Kelly
Turner & Townsend



Spanish Point Technologies

would like to congratulate Respond! on
30 years of dedication to creating safe
and vibrant communities across Ireland.



Spanish Point has proudly worked with Respond! to build systems that help enable the great work they do all over Ireland, using Microsoft Technologies such as SharePoint, SQL Server and our own LookupPoint.

SPANISH POINT TECHNOLOGIES IS A GOLD MICROSOFT PARTNER, A WORLDWIDE MICROSOFT PARTNER OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER AND IRISH INFORMATION WORKER SOLUTIONS MICROSOFT PARTNER OF THE YEAR 2012

If you would like to learn more about our system for **Respond!** or our other Solutions please contact us on **+35316522000** or **info@spanishpoint.ie**
www.spanishpoint.ie





Malone O'Regan wishes to congratulate Respond! Housing Association on their 30th anniversary and are proud to have collaborated on numerous projects with Respond! over many years.

Founded in 1978 **Malone O'Regan** offers civil, structural mechanical, electrical engineering and environmental services. We are **Client** rather than project centered. Our owner directors are dedicated to ensuring that all your projects (big and small) are successful.

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