

Respond

Tenant Newsletter

Introduction

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Respond tenant newsletter.

As I write this I find it hard to believe that we have been living with Covid for almost a year now. This has not been an easy time for anyone and it looks like restrictions will be part of our lives for the foreseeable future. Whilst we are being told to keep our distance it is now more than ever that we need each other. With the brighter days coming and the vaccination being rolled out hopefully things will start to get easier.

It is great to see that many of you are still finding ways to keep your community spirit alive and continue to watch out for and support each other. We will continue to share your good news stories so please keep them coming.

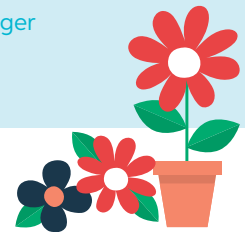
It is important to celebrate when we can to lift our mood. Here in Respond we are celebrating that our four entries into this Year's Chartered Institution of Housing (CIH) All Ireland housing awards have been shortlisted in their various categories. Fingers crossed we will have even

more good news to celebrate when the winners are announced in the near future. We will keep you posted.

As always if we can do anything to help you please do not hesitate to ask and speak with your Tenant Relations Officer.

Stay safe,

Dolores Grady
Tenant Relations Manager



Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions."

Dalai Lama

Respond in Action, Phase 1 Dungloe, Co. Donegal

Respond are delighted to announce that we will be piloting a new initiative born out of our responses from you as our tenants.

A number of tenants identified that the lack of connectivity to technology to keep in touch with family, friends and Respond was an issue for them. Some of our older tenants asked if we could assist with this. This was particularly evident in more rural parts of the country where technologies such as broadband are not as widely available. You asked us for help, we listened. We made an application for funding from the RTE Comic Relief Fund for a project, Respond in Action; connecting with tenants and service users during Covid-19, starting in Donegal. This Pilot will enable our front line staff to provide a more personal and engaged outreach experience for our tenants and services users as we continue to live with the

restrictions of Covid-19. The aim of this pilot programme is to break the cycle for those who feel isolated and disconnected. This will enable person to person connection through the use of technology in a user friendly way.



Our People

Respond is delighted to announce the appointment of Ciaran Andrews as Deputy Head of Housing (Asset Management).

Ciaran joins our leadership team to help deliver on our ambitious goal of building and managing 3,500 additional new homes by 2023 as part of our Strategic Plan. In this newly created role, Ciaran will deliver on our Asset Management Strategy and manage a national Asset Management team that covers every county in Ireland, taking responsibility for all asset management services. This includes future investment planning and delivery, repairs, compliance, cyclical and planned maintenance.

Ciaran is a Chartered Building Surveyor, Assigned Certifier, Chartered Architectural

Technologist and a RICS Accredited Building Conservation Surveyor. He has a keen interest in asset management within social housing. As a private sector Building Surveyor and Head of Asset Management in Choice Housing Ireland, he has successfully brought a commercial mind-set to asset management whilst retaining his focus on the social purpose of the sector.



Christmas in Youghal



Christmas in Youghal was a very different one this year but we did our best to bring the spirit of Christmas to our tenants in Shalom House and St. Francis Court. The decorations went up in both places in the second week in December. Tea, coffee and the first of the mince pies were had.

As we could not go for the usual Christmas Lunch, we had our own party. We were lucky to get an anonymous donation of €500. With this, we were able to purchase a small present for each tenant. Santy and his two helpers came along. In St. Francis Court we had our party in the morning. Some of the tenants joined us in the conservatory and others in the adjoining Day room. Because it was a nice day some stayed in the garden. Santy gave out the presents while his helpers did the food, following rules of social distancing as best we could. It was just great to see the tenants having a laugh and a bit of fun.

In Shalom House we had our Party in the evening. Santy went around ringing his bell and calling all to come out. We lit up the garden and set Santy up outside where he gave out the presents. One of our tenants made Mulled Wine which went down very well!



Because of Covid no one could go to the local HSE facility for respite over Christmas as they would usually do. Others who would have had family home for Christmas now had to have it on their own. Some tenants wanted to stay in for Christmas even though they had family locally. Fear of Covid made many very anxious. So with this in mind our Tenant Relations team (Marian Murphy, Suzanne Murphy and Martin O'Shea) approached a local Restaurant/Pub to see what could be done. They were glad to help and provided us with plenty of food. We were able to cater Christmas dinner for those who wanted it. The dinners were plated up and with the help of a friend, the local Tenant Relations Officer delivered them on Christmas Eve.





Westlands Art Exhibition

Westlands is a Respond estate in Wexford. Covid has brought a lot of changes to the estate and to people's lives, as it has across the country. One of the big things that people missed out on was their weekly Art classes. This is not just an outlet for art work, it also brings the community together.

Members of the Art classes decided to exhibit their art and craft work. The event was held on the 15th December in the communal space which some of the tenants had decorated with a Christmas tree and lights. All acknowledged that, despite Covid, their community spirit was still very much alive and gave them an opportunity to catch up in a safe way with their neighbours.

Although we could not all meet at the same time the day was a great success. Everyone enjoyed the event and said that it assured them that there was always people they could talk to and laugh with.

One of the works is a beaded picture with 67,000 beads placed one at a time what an achievement for them all.



Older Person of the Year Award



Respond tenant nominated for Clare Older Person of the Year award.

Respond tenant and very generous volunteer, Assumpta Sheehan from Coopers Place whom was nominated for the Clare Older Person of the Year. Assumpta received a certificate and a letter of congratulations from President, Michael D. Higgins. Huge congratulations to Assumpta – a most deserving nominee.



Keeping children safe

In Respond we believe that all children and young people have a right to a childhood that is nurturing and safe. Our mission is to build homes but more importantly to improve lives and making our communities safe for children and families is central in all the work we do. While parents and guardians have the primary role of caring for and keeping their children safe, society also has a duty to promote the welfare and safety of children.

As an organisation that provides services to children and families we have a duty to play our part in keeping children safe. We seek to achieve this by promoting best practice principles of child safeguarding across our whole organisation and training all our staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to respond to concerns.

Our commitment to keeping children safe is further strengthened by the appointment of key staff members, whom hold the role of Designated Liaison Persons who are responsible for promoting child safeguarding and supporting families should a child welfare concern be raised.

If you wish to view a copy of our full Child Safeguarding Policy please visit our website

www.respond.ie

and should you wish to speak to one of our Designated Liaison Persons please phone our contact centre on

01 8087700

