



Respond

Tenant Newsletter

Introduction

As we start another year, I firstly want to wish each and every one of you, together with your families, a very Happy and Healthy 2022.

2021 was a very challenging time for all and despite the continuing limitations from the pandemic, the year flew by. The housing team were busy right up to Christmas week ensuring new tenants were getting keys and settling into their new homes. We allocated over 725 houses and apartments during the year providing 2,454 tenants with a new home. Comments from new tenants on how we are doing are always welcome and we have been delighted to receive positive feedback from you.

Our maintenance team and contractors were also kept busy carrying out in excess of 9,000 reactive repairs in 2021 and completed over 92% of all repairs on time during this period.

Comments like these from new tenants remind us all of the importance of having a secure lifetime home.

“ This is the best news for us. We’ve been looking forward to this day for 12 years now. Thank you so much”

“ Thank you so much. You have no idea how much this will mean to my family”



One of my personal projects of interest this year is the co-development of our Tenant Engagement Strategy. Working with a small group of tenants and being supported by an expert organisation, Supporting Communities, we will look at how we can improve our engagement with you and better hear and

implement your ideas. The group will be involved in a number of intensive workshops over the coming months and will be reaching out to you for your input. I will keep you updated on this as the work progresses.

The group are currently working on developing a survey that they expect to be able to issue to you in February. This will be the first survey for tenants by tenants and we hope you can take time to complete it. The findings from this will better assist in the development of our Tenant Engagement Strategy.

The death of a tenant is always a sadness that impacts the Housing Team and none more so than the Tenant Relations Officer who knows the tenant better than most others in the organisation. We have lost many tenants over the last year and we, together with their family and neighbours, remember them all., In particular (Tammy Griffin) who was a young mother and very active in her local area, has impacted the whole community in one of our Limerick estates. To honour her memory and the work she did over the years, the local team visited every house on the estate and left a small present for each child. If Tammy were alive she would have been doing exactly this for others.



In conclusion, I would welcome any feedback on the content of the newsletter. This newsletter is about you and your communities, so please let us know about any local stories you want to share with us by contacting: info@respond.ie or phone (01) 808 7700.

We have another busy year ahead and look forward to continuing to work and learn from you all.

Stay Safe

Dolores Grady
Tenant Relations Manager

Mountjoy Square

Tenants have contributed to the transformation and upgrading of the common area with support from the Tenant Engagement Fund.

A previously grey neglected outdoor space dominated by concrete has been brightened up with painting, planting and replacing concrete with grass. This project has been a partnership between the tenants who continue to take responsibility for maintaining the area and Respond who provided financial support to enable the more substantial works.



Pride of Place

It was a great year for the residents in Andrew Meadows, Athy when they became the winners of the Pride of Place Category 5 (85+ houses) in Kildare County Council Community Awards in November 2021.

The residents have had continued success over the years winning prizes on an annual basis. The

success of this estate is due to the ongoing commitment of the residents who take great pride in the upkeep of their estate and in running of community events in non-Covid times.

Congratulations also to the residents in Killeglend, Ashbourne who won first prize in Meath County Councils Pride of Place awards in the Apartment Complex category. This was their first time to enter.

Mairead, one of the tenants involved, tells their story:



KILLEGLAND WALK BALCONY PROJECT

“It started with a lockdown. It resulted in a community. We, the residents of Killeglend Walk, came together to manage a precious resource – our outdoor balcony area. We weeded the entire area. We built and painted flower boxes. We planted trees and flowers. We made hanging flower baskets. Trellises were erected. Seats and tables were built. Fences and railings were painted. Bird feeders and bird houses were built.

In those uncertain times of the pandemic many of our residents were unable to leave their apartments or have any visitors. So we joined together to create a safe yet pleasant area that all our residents could and still can enjoy. A place where everyone and in particular our most vulnerable residents could enjoy social interaction without a sense of fear. We were able to maintain social distancing and all guidelines while on our balcony. We came together in unprecedented and very challenging times as a group of residents and we have developed a shared sense of togetherness and pride in our small community.

Our lockdown project has given us a sense of purpose, pride of place, passion and organisation. We came together in a time of crisis and discovered a bond. We shared challenges, happiness and enjoyment as we built ourselves into a community. We worked alongside each other to share and learn old and new skills.

We want our balcony to be a place of sanctuary for many years to come. A place of peace and safety for our elderly and vulnerable residents to enjoy the outdoors, to grow as a community and engage with their neighbours. Our balcony has become a place of inclusiveness, community and pride where our families can visit in the future.

Earlier this year we were encouraged to enter our project in the Meath Pride of Place. We were amazed and delighted to be placed first in the Apartment Complex category. Our award is hanging with pride in our communal hallway so all our community can enjoy a sense of worth in what we have all achieved.

Our project is far from over! Over the next few months we are going to investigate environmental best practice on our balcony. We have many plans and ideas for our balcony. Plans which will encourage our small community to grow and flourish.”



Restoration of Eco-systems in Respond Communities

Over the last number of months members of the Respond Team have been considering how we could begin to restore the eco-systems in Respond's communities.

We have agreed on a pilot basis to explore the concept of re-purposing some communal outdoor spaces on two developments to enhance biodiversity and to foster ecosystems for animals and insects. The estates we propose to roll out this initiative on are:

- **Riverwell Close, Dundalk** (estate with open space)
- **Mountjoy Square, Dublin** (apartment development)

Why do we want to do this? Disenfranchised and disconnected communities, biodiversity loss, climate change are all major issues that we face as a local and global community. We need to tackle these at local, national and global levels as well as domestically and institutionally.

Respond wants to step up to this challenge. We want to set standards for what housing estates, both social and private, can and should

look like. For 40 years Respond have provided housing for people, now we want to create the systems that house all elements of nature.

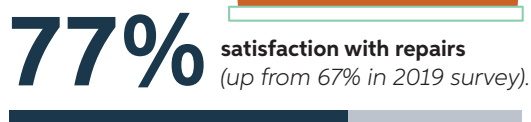
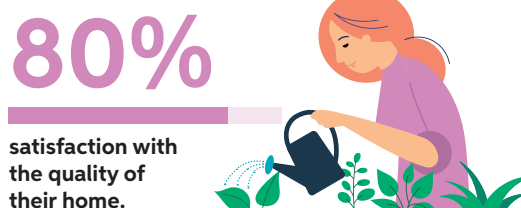
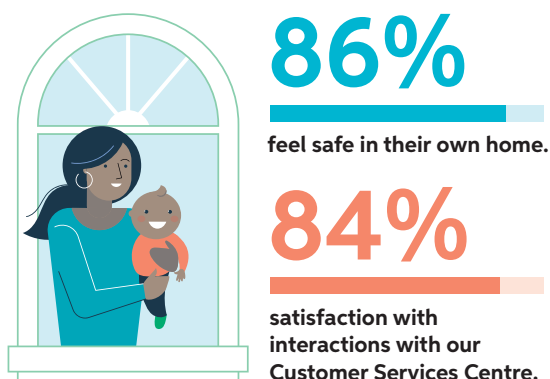
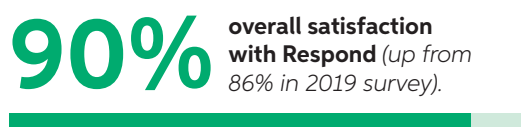
We humans are part of the wider ecosystem of life. When we think of ourselves as separate from nature it creates and amplifies that web of connected problems: climate change, biodiversity loss; poorer well-being both physically and mentally, as well as social issues including addiction and the loss of the sense of meaning in life.

Tenants from each estate will be invited to take part in this project. Those that are interested will attend a four day workshop that will be fun and engaging where they will learn the skills to design and implement an ecosystem design for their estate. There will then be another two days where the community will focus on preparing the ground, planting trees and any other design elements that the group decides to implement. We will be starting to develop this initiative in the coming months and will be looking for volunteers to participate. Some of the outcomes of this project could be provision of bug hotels, bird boxes, urban compost systems, allotments, and fruit trees. We will keep you posted.



Tenant Survey 2021

Behaviour & Attitudes (B&A) completed a survey of over 400 tenants in September 2021. Below are the headline results.



We are of course thrilled with the fact that tenant satisfaction now stands at 90%, especially given some of the service delivery challenges we faced with the pandemic. As ever, we can't rest on our laurels as there are still areas for us to improve on. We have now got lots of good information to help us plan and deliver our response to the results.

Satisfaction levels with the work of our Tenant Relations Officers remains high at 75%, showing only a slight drop against pre-pandemic levels despite the curtailment of their work and restricted estate presence. There are slightly lower levels of satisfaction from people with disabilities and those tenants who have been with us for over 10 years. Our dealings with Anti-Social Behaviour complaints has shown a 4% improvement but at 48%, remains an area where we have more work to do.

We are also seeing an increase in tenants who feel they are being listened to, and who want to get involved; this lines up nicely with the development of our first tenant engagement strategy which we are co-creating with some of our tenants using external support from a group called Supporting Communities.

Many thanks to those of you who took the time to participate in this survey. Your feedback is invaluable to Respond and helps us to learn and improve on the services we deliver.

**Family Support
Service
Jan-April 2022
Online Provision**

Open to all
Tenant and
Service Users
Nationally

Month	Initiative	Date and Time	Contact
	Online activity group for parents and children 3 and under	Every Thursday @ 10.30-11am Resuming Thursday 13th	Niamh.flavin@respond.ie 087 9161369
JAN	Parenting info session: Building Positive Relationships with Teenagers	Tuesday 18 th @ 10.30-11.30am	Margaret.fenton@respond.ie 087 7762977
	Monthly coffee morning for parents - Peer support	Last Wednesday of every month @ 10.30-11.15am	Jillian.gillick@respond.ie 087 2671634
	5 week Parents Plus Parenting Programme: Adolescents (11-17 years)	Starting Tuesday 1 st @ 10-12pm	Margaret.fenton@respond.ie 087 7762977
FEB	8 week Personal Development Programme: Seasons for Growth; Living with Grief, Loss & Change in Life	Starting Wednesday 2 nd @ 10.00-12.30 pm	Margaret.fenton@respond.ie 087 7762977
	Online activity group for parents and children 3 and under	Every Thursday @ 10.30-11am	Niamh.flavin@respond.ie 087 9161369
	Monthly coffee morning for parents - Peer support	Last Wednesday of every month @ 10.30-11.15am	Jillian.gillick@respond.ie 087 2671634
	World Book Day fun session on reading with your children	3 rd March @ 4-5pm	Niamh.flavin@respond.ie 087 9161369
	Online Safety Webinar for Parents on Managing Screentime	Tuesday 8 th @ 10.30-11.30 am	Niamh.flavin@respond.ie 087 9161369
MAR	Parenting info session Transitioning to secondary school	Tuesday 22 nd @ 10.30-11.30am	Jillian.gillick@respond.ie 087 2671634
	Online activity group for parents and children 3 and under	Every Thursday @ 10.30-11am	Niamh.flavin@respond.ie 087 9161369
	Monthly coffee morning for parents - Peer support	Last Wednesday of every month @ 10.30-11.15am	Jillian.gillick@respond.ie 087 2671634
	Parenting info session Transitioning to Primary school	Tuesday 5 th @ 10.30-11.30am	Jillian.gillick@respond.ie 087 2671634
APR	4 week Introduction to Mindfulness Programme	Starting Tuesday 26 th @ 10.30 -11.30 am	Margaret.fenton@respond.ie 087 7762977
	Online activity group for parents and children 3 and under	Every Thursday @ 10.30-11am	Niamh.flavin@respond.ie 087 9161369
	Monthly coffee morning for parents - Peer support	Last Wednesday of every month @ 10.30-11.15am	Jillian.gillick@respond.ie 087 2671634