



The Respond Round Up



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the latest edition of **The Respond Round Up**

Everyone at Respond would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you who have joined us this year, while also thanking the many tenants who have been part of Respond communities for years and have made them positive and welcoming places to live. Whether you are new to Respond or have been with us a long time, we are delighted to have you as part of the Respond community.

In this edition, we share stories from tenants Tom Cunningham and Dermot Power, while also celebrating community events and initiatives across Respond including World Book Day and the incredible Couch to 5k programme.

We also want to highlight some important organisational milestones and visits that tenants may have missed, including visits from An Taoiseach and Government Ministers. A number of tenants had the opportunity to meet with them directly and share their experience of living in Respond communities.

Respond also reached a significant milestone this year, with more than 20,000 tenants now living in Respond homes and communities across the country. This reflects the continued growth of

the organisation and the strength of the communities we are building together.

As Respond continues to grow, our focus remains on ensuring that every tenant feels welcome, supported, and at home in their community. Creating strong, connected communities remains at the heart of what we do. Whether through local events, shared spaces, support services or simply getting to know your neighbours, we encourage everyone to stay connected and involved.

We hope you enjoy this edition of **The Respond Round Up** and thank you for being such an important part of the Respond community.

Darren Hudson
National Tenant Engagement Manager



P.S. Don't forget to follow us on social media for the latest updates and announcements!

 @respondhousing  respond housing

TENANT SPOTLIGHT

Dermot Power: Preserving the Social History of Waterford

Dermot Power from John's College, Waterford has recently published a new book, *The Street Where You Live*, which explores the stories behind the streets, people and communities of his hometown. Having grown up in Waterford, Dermot wanted to combine his admiration of the town with his passion for social history and storytelling.

"History is not just about dates, buildings or famous names," Dermot said. "It's about ordinary people - how they lived, worked, struggled and supported one another."

Spanning more than 500 pages, the book uncovers the origins of place names while also bringing to life the experiences of the people who lived in Waterford across generations. From forgotten lanes and vanished street names to the lives of workers, families, women and children in the 1800s and early 1900s, the book paints a vivid picture of a city and its communities.

Dermot left school at 15 and describes himself as having been "terrified" of school at the time. However, a lifelong love of reading, music, storytelling and local history inspired him to continue learning independently and eventually publish six books.

"My interest in social history began while working in the local history section of Waterford Library, where people would regularly ask questions about old streets, lanes and local places" he explained. "Those conversations sparked a fascination with how communities were shaped and remembered."

"I became captivated by the idea: why are the streets called what they're called? And what were the lives of the people like who lived there?"

Through years of research, conversations with older tenants and studying old maps and records, Dermot uncovered stories that many people in Waterford had never heard before. Tenants regularly tell him they never knew the history behind the streets they grew up on or the communities they belong to.

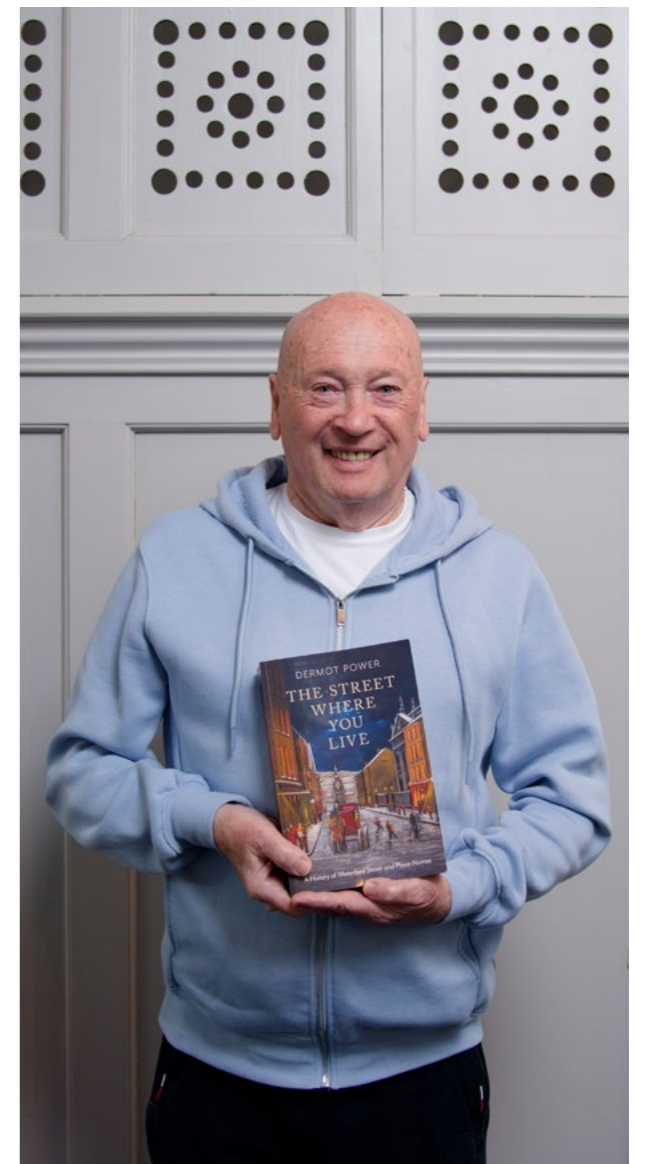
Passionate about social issues in 19th-century Ireland - including overcrowded housing, poverty, difficult working conditions, and the struggles faced by women and families with little support - Dermot's latest book explores everything from education and workhouses to Magdalene institutions and the hiring fairs where young girls sought employment.

"We've come a long way. When people talk about disadvantage today, I think about how hard life really was for people in the 1880s and early 1900s. That's the history I want to preserve."

Despite the scale of the project, Dermot encourages others not to feel intimidated by writing or creative work.

"Just start," he said. "Don't worry about spelling or mistakes in the beginning. Keep writing and don't be afraid to ask for help."

The book's cover artwork was created by Dermot's cousin, artist Ken O'Neill. Dermot is already working on his next project, *The Annals of Waterford*, continuing his work documenting the stories, voices and experiences that connect people to place and community.



League of Ireland collaboration

Respond has been delighted to work with a number of League of Ireland clubs and community partners to create memorable experiences for children and families living in our communities.

Through a collaboration between Drogheda United and the Free Kicks Foundation, 12-year-old Rihard Kandis from Respond's Newtown View estate was selected to attend the club's May 1 fixture against Sligo Rovers. As part of the initiative, Rihard had the special opportunity to take part as an official matchday mascot.

The Community Mascot Experience aims to deliver unforgettable matchday experiences for children in the local area at home games in Sullivan and Lambe Park. Drogheda United is the first League of Ireland club to partner with Free Kicks Foundation.

As part of the World Book Day celebrations, Shamrock Rovers kindly gifted club jerseys to children to take home. The club has also donated four season tickets for 2026 for families living in Dublin who support Shamrock Rovers.

Additionally, St Patrick's Athletic have also provided 15-20 tickets per home game dependant on demand. These tickets provide opportunities for young individuals and families across our communities to attend matches and enjoy positive shared experiences.

In Galway, Galway United has generously provided a family match ticket for each home game this season for tenants living in the area.

If you would like to avail of Shamrock Rovers or Galway United tickets, please contact your Tenant Relations Officer. As ticket numbers are limited, they will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.



TENANT SPOTLIGHT

Tom's Story: Breaking down barriers through technology

Tom Connaughton, who lives in The Archway Lisduggan estate in Waterford, has faced challenges throughout his life due to hearing difficulties. However, over the past two years, technology has helped him participate more actively in tenant groups, meetings and wider community events.

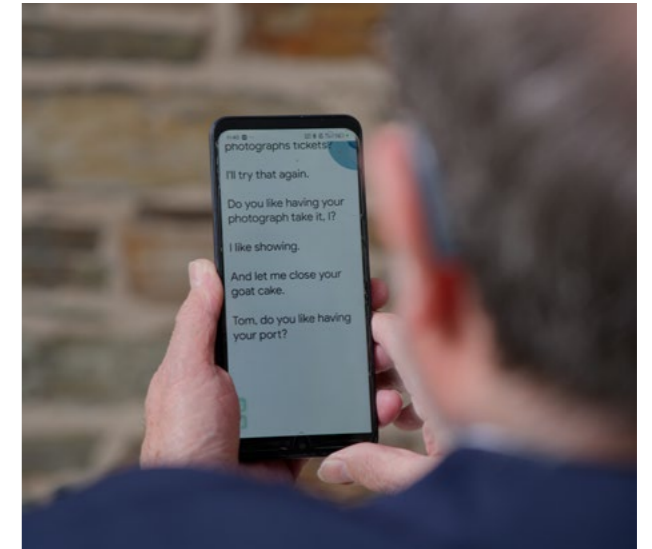
Like many people living with disabilities, communication in group settings could sometimes feel difficult and isolating for Tom, particularly in environments where discussion and participation are central.

However, Tom discovered an app that has made a significant difference

"I was introduced to an app called Live Transcribe by a gentleman from the Netherlands," Tom explained. "The app provides real-time speech to text transcription, allowing spoken conversations to instantly appear as text on a mobile phone or tablet screen."

The life changing app has allowed Tom to participate more confidently in meetings, tenant engagement sessions and community discussions.

"It has helped remove barriers that previously made participation difficult and has allowed me to engage more equally in conversations, share my opinions and



contribute my lived experience to discussions that impact communities and services," he said.

Tom spoke openly about the importance of not feeling excluded from spaces where decisions are made and where community voices matter. For him, technology has not only improved communication, but also strengthened inclusion, confidence and connection.

Tom's experience highlights how practical and accessible tools can make a meaningful difference in helping people feel heard, valued and included within their communities. His story has also provided useful insight for Housing and Family Support teams across Respond with useful insight into how inclusive supports can help tenants participate fully in community life.



Delivering Homes

Respond has continued to make significant progress across a number of large-scale developments nationwide, delivering much needed social and Cost Rental homes for individuals and families. These developments are helping to increase housing supply while also creating strong, sustainable communities.

Creamfields, Cork

We welcomed An Taoiseach Micheal Martin to mark the start of construction at one of Respond's largest developments to date. The Creamfields scheme will deliver 606 new homes (225 social and 381 Cost Rental), representing a major step forward in increasing housing supply at scale in Cork City.

Rathbourne Wharf, Ashtown, Dublin

James Browne TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, visited Rathbourne Wharf to mark the next phase of construction at this 725-home development. The scheme will also include a childcare facility and dedicated tenant amenity spaces, with phase one is on track for delivery later this year.

Kingswood, Offaly

James Browne TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, officially opened this development of 77 social homes, now providing secure homes for 159 tenants in the area.

Albert Place, Bray, Wicklow

We were delighted to welcome An Tánaiste Simon Harris TD to open 32 new homes (29 Cost Rental and 3 social) at Albert Place, including 29 Cost Rental and three social. The development now provides homes for 51 tenants in a high-quality, well-located community.

Nenagh, Tipperary

James Browne TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, visited Respond's Tyone Road development in Nenagh, marking progress on this 67-home scheme, which is due for completion shortly.



New Homes, New Beginnings

Welcoming tenants into their homes is always a significant milestone for both Respond teams and the communities we serve. So far this year, Respond has welcomed tenants into homes and communities across the country including:

Lisieux Park, Dublin

181 homes (120 social, 61 Cost Rental), providing homes for 247 tenants

Griffin Point, Dublin

Tenants moved into 144 social homes and 60 Cost Rental homes

A la Touche Park, Kilcullen

15 social homes, providing homes for 35 tenants

Albert Avenue, Bray

Providing homes for 32 new tenants

Airton Road, Tallaght, Dublin

242 tenants welcomed to 117 homes

Piper's Square, Finglas, Dublin

Tenants moved into 105 homes

De Barra Court, Cork

23 homes, providing homes for 67 tenants

Waterfall Heights, Cork

60 homes, with 145 tenants

Channel Manor, Dublin

43 apartments, providing homes for 104 new tenants

Coopers Lot, Tipperary

16 homes, providing homes for 58 new tenants

Millers Glen, Dublin

11 social homes, providing homes for 25 tenants

Seven Mills, Dublin

81 homes, (73 social, 8 cost rental), providing homes for 130 tenants

Merville, Dublin

200 social homes with tenants expected to move in shortly.

Each move-in represents more than the completion of a development. It marks a new beginning and the opportunity for people and families to put down roots, feel secure and become part of a growing community.

DID YOU KNOW?

Pay Rent Online

You can now pay your rent online at a time that suits you using Respond's secure system. The service has been designed to make managing your rent payments easier, whether you are at home or on the go.

All you need to get started is your Respond rent account number, email and mobile number, along with your address and card details. Paying your rent online is a quick, safe and convenient way to stay on top of your tenancy payments.

You can find out more on the Respond website.

Pet Policy

At Respond, we know your pets are an important part of family life. If you are thinking about bringing a pet into your home, please contact your Tenant Relations Officer first to request a pet application form. This applies to all pets, including animals you may be caring for temporarily.

Each request is considered on a case-by-case basis, as not all homes or developments are suitable for pets. Once approved, you are responsible for ensuring your pet is properly cared for and does not cause damage, nuisance or disturbance to neighbours or the wider community.

Tenants who require assistance or guide dogs will always be accommodated.

Further information is available in Respond's Pet Policy on the Respond website.

AROUND THE DISTRICTS

Couch to 5k

Congratulations to all of the tenants who took part in the eight-week Couch to 5k programme at Seven Mills in Clonburris, Dublin.

Around 60 tenants participated in the programme, getting active outdoors, building confidence and connecting with neighbours along the way.

It was fantastic to see tenants encouraging one another, celebrating their progress and enjoying a shared sense of achievement as they crossed the finish line together.

The initiative was delivered in partnership with South Dublin County Council and Sport Ireland.



Women's Group

As part of Respond's Family Support work, members of the Women's Group at Ballygrennan Close in Limerick enjoyed a day trip to Ballymorris Pottery as part of a Life Skills Programme delivered with Limerick and Clare Educational Training Board.

From creating their own pottery pieces to trying something completely new, the workshop gave participants the chance to build confidence, develop practical skills and enjoy time together in a supportive environment.

St Francis Gardens Minibus

Respond's St Francis Gardens Daycare for Older People service, in Blackpool, Cork, will soon welcome a new 14-seat minibus for service users.

The wheelchair adapted vehicle will provide transport to and from the service, helping ensure easier access for service users. It will also support day trips, and community outings creating more opportunities for service users to stay active, connected and engaged in their local community.

A special thank you to the Smurfit Westrock Foundation, HSE and Cork County Council for contributing towards the financing of the bus.

Rathcoran, Baltinglass

Tenants at Rathcoran took part in a National Spring Clean, by organising an estate clean-up followed by a container planting activity.

The event, organised by Respond alongside members of Rathcoran's garden group, brought neighbours together to help brighten shared spaces and take pride in their community.

Share your stories!



We want to hear from you! Share your stories and achievements with us for future editions of the newsletter. Showcase your community successes by contacting your local TRO or by emailing tenantnewsletter@respond.ie

Thank you for being part of our community. We look forward to hearing from you!

AROUND THE DISTRICTS

Seven Mills Family Fun Day

Housing estates around the country are kicking off their family fun days, with the first at Seven Mills, Dublin. Tenants worked alongside the Tenant Engagement Team to help organise on the day, with many families' bringing food and refreshments to share with neighbours around.

South Dublin County Council and Active Cities also supported the event by hosting sport games and activities for children and families during the day.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Jack O'Neill, Cost Rental Tenant Relations Officer

Jack O'Neill is Respond's first dedicated Cost Rental Tenant Relations Officer, supporting cost rental tenants across Respond communities nationwide. As a familiar face and key point of contact for tenants, Jack plays an important role in helping people settle into their new homes and communities.

Cost Rental homes are available at rents below the average market rate in the area. The rent covers the cost of building, managing and maintaining the homes, while offering tenants a secure, long-term and more affordable rental option on a not-for-profit basis.

"What Respond is delivering through Cost Rental is something that's been missing from the Irish housing market for a long time: quality homes, built to last, that people can actually plan a life around," Jack said.

"My job is to make sure tenants are supported from the day they sign their lease onwards. That includes organising move-ins, walking people through their new homes, helping with day-to-day queries and working closely with colleagues across maintenance, housing and finance to make sure issues are resolved as quickly as possible."

One of the most rewarding parts of Jack's role is seeing people receive the keys to their new homes.

"You're meeting people on what is often one of the biggest days of their lives," he explained. "There's a real mix of relief, excitement and sometimes a few tears. It's a privilege to be part of that moment."

Jack says the variety of the role is something he particularly enjoys.

"No two days are the same. One day I might be launching a new scheme, the next I'm supporting a tenant with a concern, and the day after that I'm out meeting families as they settle into their new community. It's a genuinely rewarding role."

Tenants can contact Jack directly by email or through Respond's Customer Service Centre on 1800 808 700

At the same time, Jack sees first-hand some of the pressures many people are facing as they try to secure stable housing.

"Being the person on the other end of those conversations means listening properly, leading with empathy and doing what you can within the systems available," he said. "That's not always easy, but it's where trust is built and where I think Respond is at its best."

As Cost Rental continues to grow across Ireland, Jack hopes to continue improving the experience for tenants.

"Quicker responses, smoother move-ins and communities that feel genuinely well looked after," he said. "Respond's commitment to building long-term homes and strong communities is what drew me to the role in the first place. Cost Rental is a real opportunity to provide security and stability for people who have often felt underserved by the wider housing market."

Jack also encourages tenants to reach out early if they need support or assistance.

"Most things are easier to resolve when we hear about them sooner, so please don't hesitate to get in touch."



A NEW WELLBEING INITIATIVE

Right Support, Right Time – a mental health initiative

Respond recently launched Right Support, Right Time, a new wellbeing and mental health initiative developed in partnership with organisations including Mencap, Depaul and the British Red Cross.

The service provides clear information and personalised support, to people experiencing anxiety, distress or other life challenges, helping ensure support is available when it is needed most.



World Book Day

Across our services, children and older people came together to celebrate World Book Day through shared reading, storytelling and creative activities.

At Millennium Court, children performed The Three Little Pigs and spent time reading with service users from the Kilkenny Alzheimer's Day Care Centre, creating real moments of joy and intergenerational connection for everyone involved.

These activities reflect the wider impact of Respond's services in bringing people together, strengthening communities and creating opportunities for connection across generations.



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improving lives