



Chartered
Institute of
Housing
Northern Ireland



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Housing
Ireland

Best Practice in Housing 2018





Introduction to best practice in housing 2018

As the independent voice for housing and the home of professional standards, the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) has a very important role to play in supporting those working within the housing sector to learn, improve and, of course, influence.

As an organisation, our mission is to “support housing professionals to create a future in which everyone has a place to call home”; in other words, all our activities are focused on promoting good practice to make housing better, fairer, and more accessible for everyone.

This ‘best practice in housing’ document examines the housing industry across the island of Ireland, North and South; as a result, it demonstrates best practice by featuring both the 2018 CIH Housing Award winners and all highly commended recipients, as chosen by our esteemed judging panel.

The reason for us creating this extensive ‘best practice’ document is to reinforce the importance of innovation in housing, to showcase the great work that’s being done by so many different housing organisations, and to acknowledge the many great housing success stories by bringing them into the public consciousness.

Finally, if there is any way that we can help you or your organisation, please get in touch; as a membership organisation, we’re here to support our members in any way we can – after all, you’re the reason we’re here.

Thanks a lot and here’s to another great year.

Nicola McCrudden CIHCM
Director CIH NI & ROI



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Best housing development

APEX Housing Association and Newington Housing Association

Project: North Queen Street, Belfast

Background

North Queen Street is a recently completed regeneration scheme – comprising 26 homes – developed in partnership by Apex and Newington housing associations. Built on a former PSNI station, the new homes are located on a busy arterial route in an area of chronic housing need, with an acute shortage of social housing.



Project inspiration

In housing terms, north Belfast has long been an area of high housing need with a social housing shortage. The problems associated with a lack of social housing and poor housing standards have been further compounded by segregation which has led to a distorted housing market and a lack of supply of developable land in the areas of most need. The re-development of this site to provide state-of-the-art social housing has been instrumental in regenerating this area and improving the prospects of those that now live there.



Project concept

The site was acquired by the RUC in 1933 and used as a police station thereafter. However, after closing its doors in 2012 it sat abandoned, surrounded by highly fortified security fencing. This left a distorted and fractured streetscape, prohibiting the emergence of a livable and safe neighbourhood and community while providing a daily reminder of our troubled past.

The site was acquired by Apex Housing Association and, via the group structure, developed for transfer into Newington's ownership and management.

Project delivery

This area has been completely revitalised by the construction of 26 social houses at North Queen Street. The old fortified base and security fencing has been bulldozed to make way for the new homes, breathing new life into this inner city area. The scheme adds liveliness and bustle to the area and notably is also two minutes' walk from the newly developed Ulster University campus and Belfast city centre.

In addition to the 26 new homes built, a major emphasis was placed on fostering a collaborative relationship with the local community in North Queen Street and the wider New Lodge area. This was achieved through consultation during the design process and throughout the project to ensure that the needs of all local residents and business owners in the area were catered for.

Working in partnership with the Housing Executive during the allocation process enabled the demolition of sub-standard homes at the nearby Long Streets redevelopment, which will lead to a further 89 high-quality new homes in north Belfast.



Project results

A concerted effort by Apex, Newington and the local community has injected new energy into the community. North Queen Street is now a place where people want to live – there has been a significant and positive impact on community confidence in the area now that it is a fully sustainable neighbourhood with environmental improvements.

This development has delivered deep-rooted, community-led regeneration that is economically sustainable. It has triggered wider physical and social regeneration in the area, providing a focus for other initiatives concerning environmental improvements, health and welfare, community development, community cohesion and safety.

This project perfectly demonstrates what can be achieved by ingenuity, creative thinking and bold leadership when it comes to housing-led regeneration, transforming a former security forces base into a home for so many families.

Finally, North Queen Street integrates with further development in the area, including:

- New Lodge Longs Street housing redevelopment
- Belfast: Streets ahead phase three
- Ulster University campus
- Royal Exchange development
- Proposed York Street interchange



Best large development

APEX Housing Association

Project: Clon Elagh, Derry

Background

Apex is delivering Clon Elagh, a new development in Derry of 757 homes. The first phase of 197 homes, the largest social housing delivery in Northern Ireland for the previous ten years, has already been completed while other phases of the project are now underway.

The delivery of this project is underpinned by technical expertise and established community initiatives in the area; a high level of design quality is ensured as design competitions have been used to award contracts to design teams.

Project inspiration

There is a crisis in social housing need on the west bank of Derry - Apex stated that it could fill this development many times over.

However, the fact is that in any community, tenants need more than a roof over their heads to lead fulfilling lives. That's exactly the reason why Apex Housing Association's housing department works with existing Apex communities to ascertain the true needs of the tenants living in the community - all 197 families were invited to participate in existing and new community initiatives.

Project concept

The original masterplan was well planned by a good architect - natural boundaries were retained between land parcels, significant trees were retained and new play parks were designed to enhance each phase of development.



Apex also worked with local planners to ensure that these new houses would provide a powerful backdrop to a busy new arterial route on the periphery of the city, while still maintaining the health and wellbeing of tenants by way of good acoustic design, substantial tree planting and secure railings to the road side.

Finally, the design competitions challenged the architects to review the masterplan and refine each phase to ensure it had a unique quality.

Project delivery

- The overall delivery of 757 units in five phases amounted to £90 million of investment, keeping many professional people in employment.
- The first phase of 197 units had over 250 construction workers on site, with many new apprentices being given starts via the social clause initiative. The current on-site phases are consolidating this commercial bonus for the local economy.
- Two of the five phases of development are being delivered by the former owners of the relevant sites via design and build contracts. This is important as it helps Apex to consolidate the potential of future development sites for design and build delivery.

Project results

By providing a diverse range of innovative community initiatives that new tenants can 'plug into', Apex has kick-started community life. The saying that new housing developments take at least two years to bed down may be true. However by having ready-made initiatives, new developments become vibrant communities quickly. This minimises the initial difficult years, which is exactly what is happening at Clon Elagh.



Best Housing Story

Dublin City Council in partnership with Túath Housing

Project: Ffrenchmullen House, Charlemont street, Dublin

Background

Ffrenchmullen House on Charlemont Street is one of Dublin's oldest housing developments. The residents of the flats on Charlemont Street finally moved into their new homes in 2017, more than 20 years after the regeneration of the complex was first proposed. The Charlemont Street scheme is a public private partnership initiative completed by Dublin City Council and once complete, will contain over 500 apartments, shops, restaurants, a sports centre and over 20,000 square feet of office space.



Project inspiration

This project was a unique opportunity to create a high-quality mixed use and mixed tenure development, in the heart of the Dublin City Centre. It was about enhancing the vibrant community by providing a full range of state of the art community facilities, not just providing quality homes that people could be proud of.



Project delivery

The first phase of this development included 79 new homes for residents living in the old Charlemont flats complex, as well as the aforementioned accompanying state of the art community facilities.

The community centre includes an indoor five-a-side pitch, basketball court, stage facilities, computer room, meeting rooms, office space with kitchen area for staff, toilets/showers and a reception area. In addition, there is a wonderful outdoor play area.

Project results

This is the beginning of a new era for what is one of Dublin's longest-standing and most culturally important communities. Because residents were consulted at every stage of the project, their buy-in was secured. This was critical to the short term – as well as the long term – success of the project.

This project is a great example of how agencies – public, private and community – work together to make an impact. Recognising the difficulties of keeping all residents on board with the long term project vision, Dublin City Council worked very closely with the Charlemont Resource Centre and even employed a community development officer. The officer liaised with residents to keep residents informed and engaged at every stage of the project process.

Finally, Túath Housing worked with (and continues to work with) Dublin City Council and the Resource Centre, ensuring that everyone is kept informed and engaged at every stage of the project, right through to completion.



Excellence in customer service

Connswater Homes

Background

Excellence in customer service underpins everything at Connswater Homes. It provides services that are delivered efficiently, in a timely manner and with professionalism throughout. Connswater's staff are committed to understanding their customers' needs and expectations, consistently exceeding service standards and making sure that their customers are happy and satisfied.

Customer service ethos

At Connswater Homes customers are at the centre of everything the organisation does. Its four strategic themes are:

- Think customer
- Think community
- Think smart
- Think people

"We will deliver an excellent service" is one of the core objectives and values of Connswater Homes. This theme was adopted at a time of planning for a period of sustained growth throughout the period 2015 - 2018. At the end of this particular cycle staff are satisfied that they 'deliver excellent services'.

In summary, they believe that excellent customer service is much more than simply being polite and efficient when someone contacts a member of the team or the organisation: to them, good customer service is about understanding the issues that really matter to their customers, and identifying how they can meet customers' precise needs and exceed expectations.

Because no two customers are ever the same, good customer service is about being perceptive, intuitive, and empathetic. For some customers it might be about providing housing plus activities such as allotments and community gardens, community clean ups, yoga, first aid training etc. For others, it's simply about ensuring they have a good home with manageable rent.

Evidence of good customer service in action

In order to fully understand the needs, expectations and experiences of customers, Connswater engages with clients on a regular basis. For example:

(i) 100 per cent of tenants are surveyed over the course of a two-year period to monitor tenant satisfaction with Connswater services and staff, while gaining feedback for improvement.

(ii) Mindful of the incoming reforms to the welfare system, Connswater recruited a dedicated welfare advisor who, within a period of five months, engaged

with 265 tenants. Among the advisor's achievements, he set up realistic financial plans to help 18 tenants in rent arrears and made representation to the Housing Executive on behalf of 65 tenants, helping them to recover housing benefit back payments.

(iii) The following projects have been established:

- an oil club for tenants at a new scheme in Portaferry
- tenant signposting to Dunmurry and Dundonald foodbanks where required
- exploring a pilot savings scheme in partnership with the credit union in Seymour Hill.

(iv) The appointment of a new 'communities officer' has enabled the association to focus on housing plus activities, with some very positive stories of tenant participation to report from the officer's short time in the role:

- An estate walkabout programme was introduced during the year (involving tenants and inter-departmental staff from Connswater Homes).
- A tenant participation register was introduced with all tenants encouraged to participate, giving them an extra forum to contact the association. This tenant engagement ensures that decisions are aligned to expectations and leads to improved housing services.

Project results

The statistics from Connswater's annual customer survey speak volumes:

- 100 per cent of tenants were satisfied with how staff dealt with their problems
- 98 per cent of tenants were satisfied with the service provided by Connswater Homes
- 95 per cent of tenants were satisfied with the repairs service
- 95 per cent of tenants were satisfied with the condition of their home.

When Connswater's customers were asked to choose a word that best described the services they received the following were the most frequently used:

- Efficient
- Professional
- Friendly
- Good
- Great
- Excellent
- Polite
- Helpful
- Caring



Water Homes



Excellence in health and wellbeing

East Belfast Mission

Project: Hosford Health and Wellbeing projects

Background

Hosford, the homelessness service of East Belfast Mission, provides accommodation and support to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Hosford's health and wellbeing program provides a range of projects to help clients improve their physical and mental health. The program includes: a community garden, a learn-to-cook project, health awareness workshops, a football project, an art project and a mental health support group.

Project inspiration

Health problems are one of the main areas of need for clients of Hosford. The needs include mental and physical health conditions, unhealthy lifestyle and inactivity, isolation, addictions and lack of information about health matters. These issues are compounded by poor levels of engagement with services in the community. Furthermore health related issues, as well as causing great suffering for those affected, also have an impact on a person's ability to break out of homelessness and maintain their own tenancy.

Activities and benefits

Hosford health and wellbeing projects have successfully developed a program of activities which tackle a range of physical and mental needs for clients from all backgrounds.

Every day of the week there are a choice of activities for clients to engage in - all designed to have positive health benefits. These activities are tailored to the individual needs of clients with between 20-50 people participating in diverse activities each week.



Participants benefit in a number of different ways:

- Healthy physical activity
- Knowledge about health matters and addictions
- Cooking skills
- Mental health support group
- Social connections
- Regular structured activity to look forward to
- Engagement in their community
- Signposting to other services, and provision of peer support.

Project delivery

The projects involve successful partnership-working between Hosford and a number of different partners from the health and social care sectors.

Hosford is funded by Supporting People to provide housing related support so it was necessary for the service to look to partnerships - as well as other sources of funding - to get new projects up and running.

For example, the cooking and health awareness project was funded for five years by 'Building the Community Pharmacy Partnership' which covered food, a pharmacist present for advice, workshops, staff time etc. 'Going Green' has developed a partnership with Belfast City Council which has funded the creation of the community garden and its ongoing development.

Finally, Belfast Trust has funded one of the football projects (in partnership with Street Soccer NI), giving people with learning disabilities access to sport.



Excellence in residential lettings

Best practice firm: Pinpoint Property

Company background

Pinpoint Property is a multi-discipline estate agency. Residential lettings and property management services have been a core part of the business from its very establishment back in 1997.

The company is constantly striving to provide clients with the best possible advice and guidance to exceed stakeholder expectations for the residential property letting industry, for both tenants and landlords.

In 2017 the rental department managed over 700 properties and Pinpoint carried out around 4,000 viewings.



Customer service approach

From full management to tenant find only, Pinpoint Property offers a friendly, flexible and bespoke service to landlords that allows them to choose the level of service that best fits their needs.

At every level Pinpoint services are designed to incorporate all elements of best practice to protect both tenants and landlords: this includes tenancy deposits and credit referencing, arranging inventories, regular property inspections and the provision of a 24-hour maintenance hotline for any property related emergency a tenant may face.

Pinpoint invests heavily in staff training in an effort to keep up to date with legislation and professional standards. 15 members of Pinpoint's lettings teams have recently been awarded the CIH Level 2 award in letting and managing residential property. Such training adds value to the service, giving everyone confidence and peace of mind that there are experienced and knowledgeable team members there to support them. Furthermore, it allows Pinpoint to assess procedures regularly and change as required.

Pinpoint has also invested in technology to be more accessible for clients. For example, the website has been made mobile and tablet friendly with easy-to-find contact information and one-click direct dial links to Pinpoint offices.

Results

Investment in the training and knowledge bank of the residential lettings team has greatly improved the service offered to clients, giving them greater security and peace of mind that their properties are in safe hands and confidence that any problems that do arise are dealt with swiftly.

As a result landlords see their financial outlay reduced, as are void periods between tenancies. Rental yield is maximised, tenant retention is stronger and the property retains its long-term asset value better.

Testimonials

(i) Michael McCloskey – tenant

"I would like to express my unconditional gratitude and praise regarding one of your agents Nikolai. We secured a tenancy and have moved into [ADDRESS] ... Nikolai was extremely professional and remained in constant contact throughout the process taking away all of the stress that can be associated with moving into a new house. He was personable and was on top of any issues we had. I would recommend Pinpoint and Nikolai to any friends or family seeking to rent or buy a property." (May 2018)

(ii) Mr R Baxter – tenant

"I would like to highlight the ownership, speed and commitment I experienced while dealing with Lisa over the last week or so, her contribution, input and general manner has made what is a fairly big issue so easy and manageable to deal with... Lisa made the whole process of dealing with contractors, the landlord and communications with herself so easy... I wanted to highlight the service I have experienced over the last week or so which far exceeded my expectations." (January 2018)

(iii) Mr and Mrs Murphy – landlords

"Our sincere thanks to your letting department for the great work they have done over the past five years in consistently having the unit occupied and managing it exceptionally well. We would have no hesitation in recommending Pinpoint in the future." (Sept 2017)

(iv) Jill McGrath – landlord and vendor

"I have recently used Pinpoint Property to both rent and sell a property for me. I found them extremely professional from beginning to end and I could not fault them in any way. The people in the office are great and so easy to deal with, making everything very understandable and keeping communication open at all times. I will definitely be using them again." (April 2017)

Housing team of the year

The new business team, Túath Housing

Background

Túath Housing is the fastest growing approved housing body in the Republic of Ireland with over 3,600 properties in management since its inception in 2001. The association started to develop in 2006 with housing for the docklanders in Dublin and has since grown to become a national organisation. Túath Housing now delivers, on average, 330 houses per annum – an impressive figure given the economic bust which resulted in zero housing being built for the best part of seven years.

Business team growth

Túath's new business team is small, with only three full-time members who together cover the entire country, working with 31 local authorities to deliver social housing through a variety of means:

- Via management contracts
- Mortgage to rent properties
- Vacant homes initiatives
- Private leasing
- Turnkey acquisitions
- Site acquisitions via expressions of interest
- NAMA/long terms arrangements with National Asset Residential Property Services (NARPS)

Achievements and results

This small team of three people delivered almost 800 houses in 2017 alone. In addition, they provided homes to almost 200 homeless applicants and families being threatened with homelessness. This was achieved by purchasing or leasing from receivers, investors or distressed landlords.

The team has also secured over €242 million in finance, via a combination of state funding and private finance, to purchase approximately 1,300 homes.

As a result of this small team's hard work, resilience and a can-do attitude that comes from focusing on the solution rather than the problem, Túath now manages in excess of 3,600 properties, providing homes to tenants from every local authority waiting list in the country.



More than bricks and mortar

Circle Voluntary Housing Association

Project: Peadar Kearney House

Background

Peadar Kearney House (PKH) is a development of 56 apartments and townhouses located in the heart of Dublin's north inner city. It is a powerful example of urban regeneration at its best.

Circle VHA has worked closely in partnership with the tenants, association to develop a safe scheme with full community buy-in, helping the tenants of the development to overcome social problems that had traditionally blighted the area.

Project inspiration

The development was built following a long and successful campaign by local people to renovate their old estate, which had become dilapidated and suffered from severe social problems. The project aimed to improve living conditions and life chances in the area. The tenants' committee had been actively involved in the planning process for the new development and they worked hard to ensure that the design and build of the new scheme was fit for purpose. One important example of this was the inclusion of old style balconies in the new scheme so that older tenants could talk to neighbours – a small but critically important development that helped to ensure a sense of community and prevent isolation.

Project delivery

The tenants' committee was actively engaged in negotiations with Dublin City Council on the design and build of the new development, right from the outset. Through this approach, they engaged the support of local elected representatives and remained embedded in their community for the duration of a process which ended up taking 12 years.



Circle VHA has worked closely and very responsively with the tenants to ensure that the high standards of the development were maintained throughout the entire process. For example:

- Circle VHA meets consistently with tenants and responds quickly to issues as they arise
- Circle has a caretaker on site for a large part of the week who is on hand to deal with maintenance issues quickly
- The housing officer visits the scheme weekly to see tenants and work with them to resolve any issues.

Actions and achievements

Peadar Kearney House has had a profound impact on the lives of its residents in many ways.

(i) The development of Peadar Kearney House has made an enormous difference to the lives of the tenants who now live in a safe and secure environment which is free from drugs abuse despite the overwhelming presence of drugs outside.

(ii) When tenants complained that drug dealers were gaining access through communal doors, Circle VHA won the agreement of Dublin City Council to close off those doors so that access was only through two communal gates which the tenants could monitor and control.

(iii) The tenants' committee has organised two-week summer camps for children of the area for the past three years – undertaking fundraising to make this possible. Circle tenants and staff also participate in local forums to develop community initiatives.

(iv) The summer play camps and other social activities run by the tenants provide a great outlet for the young people living there, enabling them to link into local youth groups and educational facilities and giving them a better chance of avoiding the drugs and anti-social behavior in the area as they get older.



Promoting equality

ARK Housing Association – intergenerational project

Background

Conor House is a sheltered scheme in west Belfast and is owned by Ark Housing Association. The scheme, which consists of 35 one-bedroom self-contained apartments, offers secure accommodation to those aged over 55 who wish to live independently. A scheme supervisor provides a full support service to all tenants.

The partnership for an intergenerational project between Ark Housing and St Genevieve's school in Andersonstown was established at Conor House in 2004. The fact that it is still going strong almost 15 years later demonstrates the power of partnership. It is a measure of the dedication shown by both parties.

Project aims

This project is an intergenerational project whose aims are as follows:

- Promote integration and engagement between older people and young people
- Create age friendly communities
- Tackle issues around stereotyping and ageism
- Make new friends and combat social isolation
- Sustain relationships between the young and old
- Have fun

Project concept

This intergenerational project was established to break down barriers for both parties. It promotes equality and respect, with tangible benefits for the young and older persons involved – the project has allowed two diverse groups to come together and has helped to dispel inaccurate and negative stereotypes.

Project delivery

The project has opened the doors of Conor House and St Genevieve's – two spaces the young and old would never previously have shared. The project has given the young people an insight into what getting older means. It has given them an appreciation for how the older generation has shaped the world in which they are growing up and helped them to realise how much the older generation has to offer their community.

Similarly, for the tenants of Conor House, the project has given them an invaluable insight into school life today and a first-hand view of the positive contribution young people are making to the community.

Project initiatives

The project has consisted of many different activities, including the following:

- Creation of a memory quilt
- Silver surfers – young people assist tenants with modern technology
- Reminiscence project – items from the past are discussed. This assists tenants with memories and is a history lesson for young people.
- Arts and crafts
- Tea dances
- Gardening project learning/planting together.

Project results

By interacting with each other over time, both the younger and older generations have benefitted hugely from each other. The young people have improved their communication skills and problem solving abilities. They have progressed social networks and developed positive attitudes to ageing. The older generation have felt more involved, more confident and not so alone and isolated.



Working in partnership

Focus Ireland

Project: Dublin Housing First

Background

'Dublin housing first' supports chronic rough sleepers to move out of homelessness into their own homes, with intensive support. It is an innovative partnership between Peter McVerry Trust, Focus Ireland and the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE). Established in 2014, it has supported 136 people into sustained tenancies, exceeding its target of 100.

Project inspiration

This was one of the first projects to deliver 'housing first' in a European city, on a substantial scale.

The project has more than delivered on its ambitious targets, despite huge obstacles created by a housing crisis. Its success derives from the interaction and shared objectives of the three organisations involved – two NGOs and one statutory authority.

Each partner brings different experiences and perspectives, combining the flexibility and innovation of the voluntary sector with the capability and resources of the statutory sector.

The partnership works at a number of levels:

- (i) At a policy level, where all three partners share a commitment to delivering on the innovative principles of housing first.
- (ii) At project management level, the three partners meet regularly to overcome the many challenges. It also works in a wider context in collaboration with health and other public services.
- (iii) Finally, the partnership works at a ground level, with staff from each of the NGOs working together in front line teams, delivering on common objectives while maintaining the distinct ethos of the partners.

Project delivery

Housing first is an innovative practice in the Irish context, and Dublin housing first further develops the model through a unique structure:

- (i) a street 'intake team' creates a pathway for chronic rough sleepers, who are often isolated from services, into housing
- (ii) where they are supported by an 'intensive case management' team, and
- (iii) a 'clinical' team.

Housing is delivered in partnership with DRHE, either through allocations to social housing or rent subsidies in the private rented sector. The success of



the partnership required all partners to adapt their traditional practices to deliver the collective goals.

The partnership approach is broader than the three core organisations, with a deep commitment to partnership-working characterising relationships with volunteer organisations on the street, medical and mental health services (such as SafetyNet), approved housing bodies and the Gardaí.

The partnership has a shared commitment to best practice and fidelity to housing first principles. It has participated in an independent assessment of its practice through an international evaluation of fidelity in housing first projects, as well as in other independent evaluation and research.

Results

- The impact of the scheme can be seen in terms of numbers – delivering 136 tenancies for people who had been chronically homeless, against a target of 100. More importantly it can be seen in the 136 individual human lives that were transformed. Many of the people supported out of homelessness had been living on the street for up to 20 years, rejecting conventional service supports and seen as 'unreachable'. The partnership's success rate of almost 90 per cent compares well with housing first projects internationally.
- The human impact can be seen in the stories of the man who, after years of living on the street, was able to invite his parents to Christmas dinner in his own apartment; the parents who were able to renew relationships with their children; and the people who returned to work or education or creative activity. Housing first has a proven positive impact on physical and mental health.
- The project also had an impact at national policy level, contributing to the government extending housing first policies nationwide and establishing a new target (of 300) in Rebuilding Ireland. The two NGOs have also developed other housing first initiatives across their services, both individually and in partnership. Dublin housing first has also had an impact internationally, serving as a model for a Crisis UK feasibility study in Liverpool and featuring in promotional material developed by the European housing first hub.



CIH Homes and Communities Conference 2018

The Crowne Plaza, Dundalk

Thursday 20 & Friday 21 September

The CIH Homes & Communities Conference 2018 expands on our previous theme of health & housing, to encompass the issues and challenges impacting on our sector across the island of Ireland.

This conference will be of interest to a broad range of people working in housing and related disciplines covering the latest thinking on 21st housing including: building resilience, community regeneration, digital transformation, regulation, Brexit and the economy and homelessness.

Our conference gives you the chance to come together with fellow housing professionals from Ireland, Northern Ireland and the UK.

Confirmed speakers include:

- Jim Strang, incoming president, CIH & CEO Parkhead Housing Association
- Michael Carey, chair, The Housing Agency
- Grainia Long, commissioner for resilience, Belfast City Council
- Dr Dáithí Downey, head of housing policy, research & development, Dublin City Council
- Hugh Brennan, CEO Ó Cualann Cohousing Alliance CLG
- Anita Conway, director of development, Radius Housing
- Kelly Andrews, CEO Women's Aid Belfast & Lisburn
- Clíodhna O'Neill, director of policy and communications, ISPCC
- Seán Moynihan, CEO, Alone
- Stan Burridge, EbE lead, Pathway
- Kathleen McKillion, consultant, Campbell Tickell
- Shane Clements, Department for Communities (NI)
- Joe Frey, CaCHE
- Brian O'Kane, NIHE

Plenaries:

- Building great places that work
- Reducing homelessness through partnerships and collaboration
- The economy in focus, followed by a panel discussion
- What does a 21st century provider look like?

Breakouts:

- Re-classification
- Building places that work
- Understanding housing aspirations: expectations and choice
- Working with people in need or at risk
- Domestic abuse: it's your business
- Tenant participation – getting the balance right
- Securing your systems
- Diversification

Conference dinner

The conference dinner is a great opportunity to network with people in the sector in a relaxed atmosphere at the Crowne Plaza Faranheit Grill

How to book

1. UK and Northern Ireland attendees:

Book online by clicking [here](#)

Email ruth.cullen@cih.org

2. Republic of Ireland attendees:

Please email ruth.cullen@cih.org

Special early bird rate – available until August 17 2018!

Contact ruth.cullen@cih.org for full details and for early bird bookings.



**Book your
place now**

Summing up - and looking forward to the future with confidence

The list of winners and highly commended recipients highlighted in this best practice compendium prove that quality, innovation, and excellence can be seen across the housing sector both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

As always, all winners and highly commended recipients (the full list of which can be seen overleaf) were selected solely by our panel of independent housing experts – all based on the robust and evidence-based application process.

All of our 2018 award winners were honoured at our glitzy awards event at Titanic Belfast. However, as always, the evening was not solely about the winners on the night; it was about bringing our sector together as one to acknowledge the incredible efforts being made by so many people in pursuit of a better, fairer society.

Though we said the same last year (and probably every year before that too!), we were inundated with record numbers of nominations in each category this year, which corresponded with a record number of attendees on awards night.

We hope that this year's edition of our 'best practice in housing' compendium will help you to appreciate the outstanding work that's being done by so many housing organisations, across all areas of our sector.

But more than that, we hope it will inspire you to keep on innovating, whether through physical building structures or community housing supports, to make sure that, together, we keep progressing in our goal to make our communities better for everyone.

Oh and one last thing: if your organisation is leading the way with a ground-breaking housing initiative that you believe is award-worthy, please make sure to get in touch with Edel Hughes at edel.hughes@cih.org for details of the 2019 awards application process!

Nicola McCrudden CIHCM
Director, CIH NI & ROI



Full list of awards winners and highly commended recipients

1. Best housing development

For small development

Highly commended

Ballygall: FOLD Housing Association Ireland

Winner

North Queen Street Belfast: Apex Housing Association and Newington Housing Association



For large development

Highly commended

Abbot Court: Túath Housing

Winner

Clon Elagh, Derry: Apex Housing Association



2. Best housing story

Highly commended

MACS Newry: MACS supporting children and young people

Winner

Ffrenchmullen House, Charlemont Street: Dublin City Council in partnership with Túath Housing



3. Excellence in customer service

Highly commended

Service excellence, satisfied customers: Ark Housing Association

Winner

Connswater Homes



4. Excellence in health and wellbeing

Highly commended

Slán abhaile: HAIL (Housing association for integrated living)

Winner

Hosford health and wellbeing projects:
East Belfast Mission



5. Excellence in residential lettings

Highly commended

McGuinness Fleck

Winner

Pinpoint Property



6. Housing team of the year

Highly commended

Choice energy management: Choice Housing

Winner

The new business team: Túath housing



7. More than bricks and mortar

Highly commended

Body, mind and soil: Connswater Homes/Groundwork NI

Winner

Peadar Kearney House: Circle Voluntary Housing Association



8. Promoting equality

Highly commended

Diversity day: Radius Housing

Winner

Intergenerational project: Ark Housing Association



9. Working in partnership

Highly commended

'Get connected': Choice Housing

Winner

Dublin housing first: Focus Ireland





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