Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness was published by the government on 19th July. It has received a largely positive reception from all sectors, including Clúid. The new plan is not expected to impact existing social housing residents significantly.

This is an extremely ambitious plan which focuses primarily on increasing housing provision across the board. This is understandable since many of the housing problems we currently experience (e.g. rising homelessness, rising private rents, ever longer waiting lists) are direct consequences of a housing shortage. Writing a plan is in many ways the easy bit; implementing the promises is the real challenge!

These are the key elements of the Action Plan

1. Address Homelessness
   • By 2017 hotels and B&Bs will only be used in limited circumstances
   • Provide 1,500 units of rapid-build housing by end 2018
   • Review the Mortgage-to-Rent scheme

2. Accelerate Social Housing
   • Provide 47,000 units of social housing between now and 2021. Of these, 26,000 will be newly built, 11,000 acquired, and 10,000 built or acquired

3. Build More Homes
   • Local authorities to develop mixed estates on their land. About 50% private; 20/30% social rented; 20/30% affordable rental.

4. Improve the Rental Sector
   • Develop a strategy for the private rental sector for publication in the autumn
   • Introduce affordable rental housing and build-to-rent schemes

5. Utilise Existing Stock
   • Better management of social housing stock
   • Choice-based letting
   • Review of tenant purchase scheme
   • Establish €70m fund for Housing Agency to buy vacant properties from banks and investors

Clúid head office is moving on 16th December from Amiens Street to new offices at 159-161 Sheriff St. Upper, Dublin 1.
Family Matters - Depression

Family matters is a new regular feature that looks at issues that affect family life in Ireland.

Recognising depression

(Guest Columnist Brian Murphy gives us a clear and informative description of the signs and symptoms of depression and lists some sources of confidential support for all age groups.)

Research shows that 70% of people will suffer from long or short term depression at some point in life. This illness has no regard for age, social class or gender. Depression is about being in a dark lonely place, about being in despair. Paradoxically Christmas is a very difficult time of year for some people. As others celebrate, the depressed person may feel the pain of their own isolation more acutely. The availability of web technology and social media has increased our access to information while reducing face-to-face communication.

Many famous and highly gifted people have suffered from depression. Winston Churchill referred to it as a ‘black dog’ that followed him. Celebrities who have overcome depression include Marlon Brando, Beyoncé, Angelina Jolie, Christian Bale, Johnny Depp and Bob Dylan. Wealth, fame, ability and the praise of others are no antidote to this great leveller.

Depression is accompanied by a growing sense of loss and of hopelessness in many directions – self-esteem, values, goals and ambitions. An inability to communicate with friends and family often comes along with depression. It is not that they have nothing to say but the depressed person chooses not to speak about things which are hard to put into words, sensitive and easily misunderstood.

From a physical stand-point the depressed person may sit motionless for long periods, staring into space and lost in their inner world. Going to bed early and rising early is a common sign. Everyday tasks and responsibilities become a burden and thoughts of worthlessness and hopelessness may be accompanied by bouts of crying, sadness and silent withdrawal.

Other common symptoms are loss of appetite, energy and motivation. Rational thinking is impaired and is replaced by unfounded fears about the future. Personal and work relationships suffer as isolation becomes the norm. Family life comes under pressure as communication breaks down.

There are many fantastic organisations tackling depression at national and local level. Spunout.ie is an open and accessible youth information website which attracts 80,000 hits per month. It deals with all the issues pertinent to mental health in a calm and helpful manner. Walkinmyshoes.com is an excellent all age mental health resource.

Prevention is better than cure. It is critical to spot the early signs in yourself or in a loved one. The GP is often the best first point of contact and has the best knowledge of local resources. Medication may help in the short term. Simply sharing the problem with another person, in confidence, is often the first step on the road to recovery. The following organisations offer non-judgmental telephone support.

THE SAMARITANS
116123 (from any phone, anywhere in Ireland)

AWARE
free phone 1800 80 48 48

CHILDLINE
free phone 1800 666666

SPUNOUT
01 6753554

www.walkinmyshoes.ie
Safety in the Home; DIY Safety Check

(by John Boyle, Clúid Health and Safety Officer)

The two high-risk groups for suffering injuries in the home are children under five and people over 65. Under-fives are likely to suffer injuries due to their inquisitive nature while preventable accidents to those over 65 may seriously impact their health and independence.

It is a good idea to walk around your home, both inside and out, and look out for any hazards that can cause an injury. Try and look at things with fresh eyes bearing in mind the list below. Prevention is always better than cure!

Falls
The most common cause of injuries in the home are slips, trips and falls. Keep an eye out for lifting carpet, rugs that slide, trailing cables.

Poisons
All detergents, cleaning products and medicines should be kept out of reach and out of sight of children. Keep all detergents and cleaning products in their original packaging; do not pour detergents into drinks bottles as this can lead to accidental poisoning.

If liquid is swallowed, rinse as much of the detergent as possible from the child’s mouth.

• Do not induce vomiting.

• If eyes or hands are exposed, rinse them carefully.

• If chemical goes into the eye, wash out for 10 to 15 minutes and go to your nearest hospital.

• Call the National Poison Information Centre on 01-809 2166.

Choking
Plastic bags can suffocate children. Blinds with long chords can cause very serious injuries if children manage to become entangled. Button batteries can cause an obstruction of the airway and serious damage to the digestive tract.

Burns and Scalds
Hot drinks cause most burns and scalds to children under the age of five. Children should be kept a safe distance away from open fires, cookers, irons, hair straighteners, candles etc. Any burn should be held under cold running water for ten minutes and then reassessed. Do not burst the blister, this is nature’s way of protecting against infection.

Electric Shocks
• Do not carry out any repairs on electrical equipment; improper repairs can lead to electric shocks.

• Replace any broken or damaged electrical equipment and do not overload sockets and extension cables.

Cuts
Knives, broken glass and falls can all cause cuts. First aid for cuts involves applying pressure to the wound to stop bleeding. In many instances, further medical assistance is not required. Certain medical conditions and medications can impede blood clotting and medical assistance will be required.

If in doubt seek medical assistance from your GP, Pharmacist or a local A&E.
Stories from around the country
Thanks to all residents who organised and took part in the following events.

**Ennis**

Mill Place in Pound Lane, Ennis had a touch of the Mediterranean about it this summer thanks to our wonderful green-fingered tenant Alan Houlihan. Alan created a little piece of paradise for all the residents to enjoy with a magnificent hanging basket project which has uplifted the entire estate. Well done Alan!

**Nenagh**

Nenagh Men’s Shed recently got together to build an amazing Wendy House for Clúid resident Maya Gillick. This substantial project is a terrific example of the ingenuity and generosity of many Clúid communities. Maya is thrilled with her new house and is very busy hosting tea parties!

**Killarney**

Residents from Sheltered Housing Schemes in Killarney, Carrigtwohill, Kemmare, Newcastlewest and Newmarket gathered at the Top of Coom – Ireland’s Highest Pub - for an afternoon of music and dancing in September.
Nenagh

Residents from Ormond Drive in Nenagh enjoyed a spectacular day trip to Tayto Park, organised by resident Geraldine Toohey. Residents had a hair-raising, fun-filled rollercoaster of a day at the Park!

Killarney

Five Sheltered Housing Schemes came together to enjoy a day out at the fabulous grounds of Muckross House, Killarney - Holy Cross Gardens and Oakwood (Killarney), Liosan Court (Newcastlewest), Taobh Linn (Kenmare) and Ard Carrig (Carrigtwohill).

Newcastlewest

Kevin Stack of Newcastlewest, Co. Limerick was awarded with a certificate of achievement for completing a two year ‘Latch On’ programme under the auspices of the University of Queensland. This programme supports the literacy and technological functioning of adults with Down Syndrome.
Newcastlewest

On 5th August residents organised a fundraiser for a wall project to illustrate the quality of life in Liosan Court and also to combat stigma in relation to social housing. A whopping €855 was raised for this project.

Cork

Welcome to one of Clúid’s newest tenants, Ms. Sinead Ni Lachtnain, along with her new rescue dog ‘Captain’. Sinead has now started a 2 year full time course in UCC in Community Development.

Macroom

The first residents meeting for our new scheme in The Granary, Macroom, was held in the Castle Hotel. Residents are looking forward to creating a vibrant and welcoming new community.
Leading the way home

Longford

A bit of healthy competition in St Michael’s Estate, Longford as residents get their homes ready for Halloween night. The Dead of Night Festival involves local schools, youth groups, Gardaí and Longford County Council.

Mornington

Community Fun Day on 26th August for one of Clúid’s newest estates, Seabury Lawns, Mornington, County Meath. It was a great success with visiting animals from Wooly Ward’s Farm, face painters and bouncy castles, candy floss and slushies for well over 100 children. Seabury Lawns is a mixed estate and the fun day enabled residents to mingle and get involved in the community.

Portarlington

The Annual street party at Cathair na gCapall, Portarlington provided lots of fun for the kids and food for all. We even had personal dance performances for our youngest and most talented occupants. The favourable weather added to the well-organised fun day. Here’s to 2017!!

Mountmellick

Big congratulations to Eileen Coogan and Joseph Laffan of Cullenbeg Park, Mountmellick, Co. Laois for winning Best Front Garden in the Mountmellick Tidy Towns for 2016. Hard work and a keen eye for colour has transformed their homes. Well done!
Tuam

St. Jarlath’s Court in Tuam participated in Culture Night 2016 for the first time by organising a night of traditional music & craic in Reapy’s Bar. Musicians Rory Donnellan, Denis Collins and Áine McHugh provided a night of fantastic traditional music.

Tuam

St Jarlath’s Court Summer Party - local musician Paul Keating plays guitar accompaniment to singer Robbie Fahy.

Clifden

This year the Culture Night event at St Joseph’s Court was called ‘Cultural Tastes from Around the World’. We chose 6 countries of significance to our residents and dressed a table for each country with its flag and other emblems. A tenant hosted each table and a buffet with the national dish was served. The evening was informative, inclusive and great fun.

Cavan

Residents in Oriel Lodge had a fun filled day visiting Co Antrim in July. They took a tour of Bushmills Whiskey Distillery visiting the famous pot stills, bottling plant and, of course, got to taste some in the bar.
Dublin

James Reihill of Fleming Medical, Daniel O’Halloran, Scheme Manager and residents Nuala King, Pat Blaney, Sam Webster, Kevin Holden. Fleming Medical in Limerick kindly agreed to donate this Defibrillator to Marewood Court Sheltered Housing. The tenants are very appreciative of this generosity.

Stepaside

On Thursday the 8th of September Clúid communities at The Belfry and Bellarmine Hall benefited from Deloitte Volunteers Impact Day, a celebration of Deloitte’s year round commitment to local communities. This year they painted the communal entrance halls in Bellarmine Hall and the bike and bin sheds in The Belfry.

Killarney

Residents from Holy Cross Gardens & Oakwood, Killarney enjoying an afternoon out. There was plenty of “ceol, craic agus caint” over lunch!!!

Killarney

Residents of Holy Cross Gardens & Oakwood, Killarney enjoying their weekly art & craft class. Betty, a resident of Holy Cross Gardens, very kindly shares her amazing artistic talents with fellow residents. Pictured left to right, Gracie Hopkins, Maria Malone, Betty Cutting, Noreen Reidy, Maureen O’Mahony.
Great Place To Live – The Winners’ Enclosure

Over the summer the Great Places to Live competition took place nationwide. This year we received many great nominations for the competition. With three categories of award there is plenty of opportunity to recognise and celebrate the efforts that communities put into their neighbourhoods.

We would like to thank everyone who took part, either by nominating a neighbour, hosting a judging panel or working hard in and for their community. The winners demonstrated exceptional pride and creativity in their communities and local environment. As the name of this Newsletter indicates – while Clúid provides the house, it is the residents who make that house a home.

National Winners
Best Community:
Ballygraigue Court, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
Best Appearance and Environment:
Mill Court, Bandon, Co. Cork

Runners Up
Best Community:
St Joseph’s Court, Clifden Co. Galway
Best Appearance and Environment:
Castle Court, Newmarket, Co. Cork

Regional Winners: North
Community:
Marewood Court, Ballymun, Dublin
Community:
Clontygora Court, Dundalk, Co. Louth
Appearance and Environment:
Laburnum Square, Pelletstown, Dublin

Regional Winners: South
Community:
Bowling Green, White Street, Co. Cork
Community:
Holy Cross Gardens, Killarney, Co. Kerry
Appearance and Environment:
Esmonde Gardens, Gorey, Co. Wexford
Appearance and Environment:
Pound Lane, Ennis, Co. Clare
Appearance and Environment:
Lilac Close, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick

We would also like to congratulate the ten winners of the good neighbour award, who showed outstanding commitment to their local communities.

Christmas is a time when giving presents is foremost on our minds. Consider this: It was mother’s birthday and 12-year old Mary gave her several small boxes tied up with coloured ribbons. Inside each box were slips of paper on which were written such messages as “Good for flower bed weeding on two occasions… Good for hoovering the whole house… Good for two cups of tea.”

Pause for thought…

One does not have to wait for the special occasions of birthdays or Christmas to practice the art of giving. Every day brings opportunities to give part of yourself to someone who needs it. It need only be a kind word or a thoughtful act. The most important thing about any gift is the amount of yourself you put into it.

By Brian Murphy

Giving requires no special talent, nor large amounts of money. It is love sharpened by imagination. Mary put a large part of her small self into her gift.
Sometimes you get discouraged
Because I am so small
And always leave my fingerprints
On furniture and wall.

But every day I am growing
I’ll be grown up some day
And all those tiny fingerprints
Will surely fade away.

So here is a final handprint
Just so you can recall
Exactly how my fingers looked
When I was very small…

Claire Rooney from Belmayne in Dublin sent us this lovely poem and suggests new parents and grandparents use the space beside it to outline the child’s hand.
Clúid is delighted to award the following twenty residents with Stepping Stones bursaries to help progress their educational and vocational ambitions. Keep an eye out in the summer issue of this Newsletter for information on how to apply. Well done everybody!

Here is a list of this year’s awardees:

Mobalaji Braimoh, Cúirt an Ri, Clonmel
Oyindamola Dipelu, Coneyboro, Athy
Megan Farrell, Glendallon, Ballytivnan, Sligo
Ryan Harris, Clarion Quay, Dublin
Wiktoria Kacmarek, Windmill Close, Cashel
Sharon Kelly, Belmayne, Dublin
Elizabeth Kehoe, Killarney Court, Dublin
Aoife Kilkelly, The Glebe, Tuam
Gillian Lynch, The Maples, Blackrock, Cork
Jamie McCarthy, Belmayne, Dublin
Niall MacCarthaigh, Clontygora Court, Dundalk
Shauna Manly, Clarion Quay, Dublin
Agnieszka Mazur, Windmill Close, Cashel
Cezary Mazur, Windmill Close, Cashel
Terri O’Sullivan, Priory Park, Athlone
Luke Owens, Rockview Court, Wexford
Charlotte Reidy, Brindle Hill, Charleville
Micaela Twomey, Bridgetown Close, Castlemartyr
Weronika Winnicka, Cois na Féile, Abbeyfeale
Jakub Ziemianski, Colliers View, Portlaoise

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