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# COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL
# FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Email: corporate.services@fingal.ie

County Hall
Swords
Co Dublin

Wednesday 2nd September 2026

**To Each Member of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee**

Dear Member

A meeting of the **Housing Strategic Policy Committee** will be held **Hybrid** in the **Council Chambers, Grove Road, Blanchardstown/ MS Teams** at **4.00 pm** on **Tuesday, 22nd September, 2026** to consider the following Agenda.

Yours faithfully

**Aoife Sheridan**
**Meetings Administrator**
**Corporate Services**

# A G E N D A

**1 Confirmation and Re-Affirmation of Minutes of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 22nd June 2026**

**2 Annual SPC Policy Programme 2026/2027**

**3 Presentation by Safe Home Ireland**

**4 Update on Housing Needs Assessment 2026**

## MOTIONS

**5 Councillor J. Burtchaell - Rent Arrears Figures - AI109550**

"That the Chief Executive provide details on any changes in the Council's aggregate rent arrears figures since the differential rents were increased earlier this year."

**********

**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL**
**FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Housing Strategic Policy Committee**

**Monday 22nd June 2026 in the Civic Offices, Grove Road, Blanchardstown/MS Teams at 4.00pm**

**PRESENT**

| **Councillors** | **Members** |
|---|---|
| Boland, Mark | Doran, Jimmy |
| Burtchaell, John | Fulham, Jo |
| Haughey, Cathal | |
| Ryan, Brendan | |
| Sheehan, Gerard | |
| Tormey, Aoibhinn | |
| Hanaphy, Breda | |

Absent: Mr. David Branagan.

Apologies received from Cllr. Ted Leddy.

The Chairperson, Councillor B. Ryan presided.

**OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Paul Carroll (Director of Services, Housing), Fiona Glynn (Administrative Officer, Housing), Mark McGinty (Senior Executive Officer, Housing), Helen O' Donnell (Administrative Officer, Housing), Emer Burke (Administrative Officer, Housing), Liam Burke (Senior Executive Officer, Housing), Linda McDonald (Administrative Officer, Housing), Joan Kernan (Administrative Officer, Housing), Matthew Farrelly (Administrative Officer, Housing), Pauline Burke (Administrative Officer, Housing), Ciara Kenny (Senior Staff Officer, Housing), Carmel Brennan (Architects Department), Suzanne Matthews (Senior Staff Officer, Housing), Patricia O' Keefe (Senior Staff Officer, Housing), Shauna Hughes (Senior Staff Officer, Housing), Ciara Donovan (Assistant Staff Officer, Housing).

**SPCH/05/26 (**Agenda Item No 1)

**Confirmation and Re-Affirmation of Minutes of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on Monday 23rd March 2026**

The minutes of the Housing SPC meeting held on the 23rd March 2026 which were circulated were considered.

It was PROPOSED by Councillor J. Burtchaell and seconded by Councillor B. Hanaphy and **AGREED**: "That the minutes of the meeting of 23rd March 2026 be **ADOPTED** and **APPROVED**."

**SPCH/06/26 (**Agenda Item No 2)

**Anti-social Behaviour Strategy**

An update on the Anti-social behaviour Strategy was presented by Joan Kernan, Administrative Officer, Housing Department.

Following discussion the presentation was **NOTED**.

*"Councillors are invited to provide feedback on the draft strategy by Friday the 26th June directly to Liam Burke (Senior Executive Officer, Housing) or Joan Kernan (Administrative Officer, Housing)"*

**SPCH/07/26 (**Agenda Item No 3)

**Right-sizing Strategy**

An update on Right-sizing Strategy was presented by Matthew Farrelly, Administrative Officer, Housing Department.

Following discussion the presentation was **NOTED**.

**SPCH/08/26** (Agenda Item No 4)
Councillor C. Haughey - Communication about Housing Offers

The motion in the name of Councillor C. Haughey was proposed by Councillor C. Haughey and seconded by Councillor G. Sheehan.

Following discussion, the Report was **ACCEPTED**.

**SPCH/09/26** (Agenda Item No **5**)
Councillor M. Boland - Medical Priority Presentation

The motion in the name of Councillor M. Boland was proposed by Councillor M. Boland and seconded by Councillor G. Sheehan.

A presentation on Medical/Welfare Process was presented by Linda McDonald, Administrative Officer, Housing Department.

Following discussion, the Report was **Accepted**.

The meeting concluded at 17.47 pm.

_____ _____

**CHAIRPERSON** **DATED**

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**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL**
**FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**HOUSING STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

## STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2027

| Theme/Policy Issue |
|---|
| Social & Affordable Housing delivery and supports including Cost Rental scheme |
| Traveller Accommodation Programme Update |
| Allocations Scheme for Social Housing Support |
| Housing Architecture & Design |
| Refurbishment & Retrofit Programme |
| Estate Management/Tenancy Manual |
| Homeless Strategy/Action Plan |
| Disability Strategy Update |
| Housing Delivery Action Plan |

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# Safe Home Ireland

## Fingal County Council
## Housing Strategic Policy Committee Meeting

**Tuesday 22 September 2026**







SAFE HOME IRELAND
DIASPORA SUPPORT SERVICE

Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

# OUTLINE / WHAT I WILL COVER

- SAFE HOME IRELAND – WHO WE ARE / WHAT WE DO
- HOUSING VIA SAFE HOME - HOW THIS WORKS
- HOUSING APPLICANTS FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL
- QUESTIONS CONTACT DETAILS



SAFE HOME IRELAND
DIASPORA SUPPORT SERVICE

# About Safe Home Ireland

**Established** in 2000
Registered Irish Charity with a Global Remit
**Registered Charity Number:** 20049119

**Patron** - PRESIDENT OF IRELAND - Catherine Connolly
**Ambassador** - Seán Keane (Singer
**Life President** - Jerry Cowley (Founder)

**FUNDED**: Core funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade 'Emigrant Support Programme', private donations, planned giving and other smaller project-based funding

Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



## Vision, Mission & Values

### OUR VISION

Our vision is that any Irish person living abroad who wishes to live In Ireland can do so with dignity and respect.

### OUR MISSION

Our mission is to support Irish people abroad, particularly those who are in crisis and challenging circumstances, to transition and settle into community life in Ireland.

### OUR VALUES

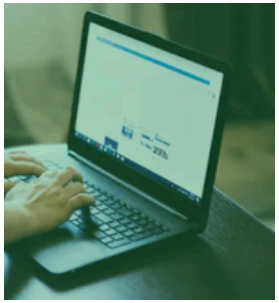
**Compassion** - We commit to acting with empathy to provide practical and professional support to people and organisations.
**Inclusivity** - We strive to ensure that our service is non-judgemental and is underpinned by equality and human rights.
**Partnership** - We are committed to working in partnership with stakeholders in Ireland and abroad.
**Accountability** - We uphold and promote the principles of good governance and integrity through transparency, effectiveness and strong leadership.

**Registered Address: St. Brendan's Village. Mulranny, Westport, Co. Mayo, F28 A386**

# What We Do

**We offer information, guidance, and person-centred support, ensuring that people have access to the help they need, when they need it most.**

**Our core pillars of work are: Information, Housing, Outreach, Connect and Projects.**



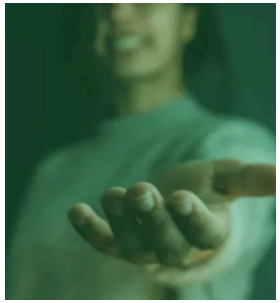
### Information

We offer comprehensive free and trusted information and guidance on all aspects of moving and returning to Ireland



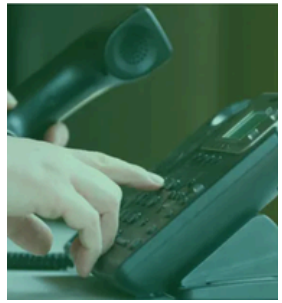
### Housing

We assist qualifying Irish born emigrants, living abroad, to explore secure housing options in Ireland



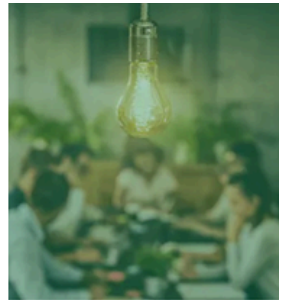
### Outreach

We carry out home visits and in-person appointments abroad (primarily UK & US) and outreach support visits to returnees in Ireland



### Connect

We act as a link to home for diaspora and agencies that support them globally via social media & monthly Newsletter



### Projects

We work on initiatives and campaigns to help address emerging issues affecting diaspora and returnees

## SEE OUR WEBSITE:

## www.safehomeireland.com

# Housing

## Housing Assistance Criteria

- Irish-born living abroad
- Aged 57 years and over
- Capable of Independent living
- Living in rented accommodation abroad & unable to provide accommodation from own income/savings on return to Ireland
- Applicants need to be approved on relevant Council housing waiting list
- Income means-testing applies with income limits varying in each Council area



# Outreach

- Home Visits and i**n-person appointments** to our Housing Applicants **abroad**, primarily in UK & US
- Moving/Returning to Ireland **Information Clinics,** virtually and in-person in UK and the US
- Home Visits to **Returnees -** to assist with re-integration and resettlement

Following successful lobbying by Safe Home, a key housing policy change in November 2001 allowed older Irish emigrants, still living overseas to be considered for social housing in Ireland for the first time.

# The Process – How it works

- Person contacts Safe Home **or** Fingal County Council; check caller meet eligibility criteria (previous slide); If so refer to Safe Home Ireland



- Application will be completed by applicant/Safe Home Ireland and we will then submit with all supporting documentation to Fingal County Council

- Once person is approved on the Fingal County Council housing waiting list the Council can make an offer directly via its own stock or via an AHB



- If/when the person returns home and we then assist with all matters of resettlement/reintegration into the community again.



**NOTE**: If a person has returned home '**independently**' and requires support, we can offer 'outreach support'. They then might be or might not be eligible to apply for social housing and if so, we can then assist with an application if appropriate

# Snapshot of Impact and Current Housing Position

**(as of 1st September 2026)**

**Since our inception in 2000, Safe Home Ireland has directly supported 2,379 older Irish born people return 'home' to live and countless others (of all ages) via our information, outreach and advisory service.**

**Our applicants have come from all parts of the world and to all 26 counties.**

**For the majority, their return was a positive lifelong dream and could not have been fulfilled without the intervention and support of Local Authorities and VHA bodies throughout the Country.**

# Snapshot of our work and impact in 2025

**Total Interventions**
**5,528**

Total of
**5,296**
client interventions

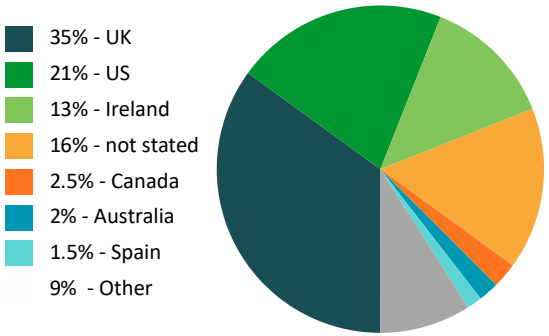
Total of
**232**
organisation interventions

## Information

We support people while still abroad, to make informed choices about moving or returning to Ireland. This includes home visits to housing applicants (UK & US mostly); Information Clinics on Moving/Returning to Ireland as well as peer-support sessions with Irish and other welfare agencies abroad.

**New contacts increased by 51% in 2025, rising from 424 in 2024 to 640 in 2025. Of these, 21% were from US-based clients, compared to 14% in 2024.**

### Location of New Contacts




**NEW Contacts/ Information Requests** **640**

## Connect

We offer a connection to home for those who remain abroad, primarily through our monthly e-bulletin, social media channels and Returning to Ireland Information Clinics.

People in contact **940**

E-Bulletin circulation **2,102**

Social Media **7,657**

www.safehomeireland.com
info@safehomeireland.com

## Outreach

We assist returning citizens in feeling socially included during their transition back to Ireland by providing person-centred, holistic outreach support, helping them access essential services and their rights.

Outreach support visits Ireland **78**

Outreach UK **64**

Outreach US **26**

Returning to Ireland Information Clinics **1**

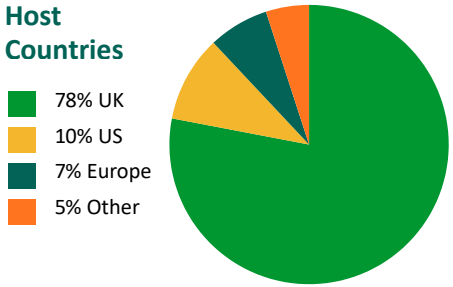
1-to-1 online appointments (worldwide) **120**

## Housing

We explore housing options throughout Ireland, for qualifying Irish -born emigrants abroad. This is done primarily in partnership with Local Authorities and Housing Associations throughout Ireland.

Active Housing Applicants **300**

**Host Countries**




Accommodation Secured **35**

New Housing Applicants **55**

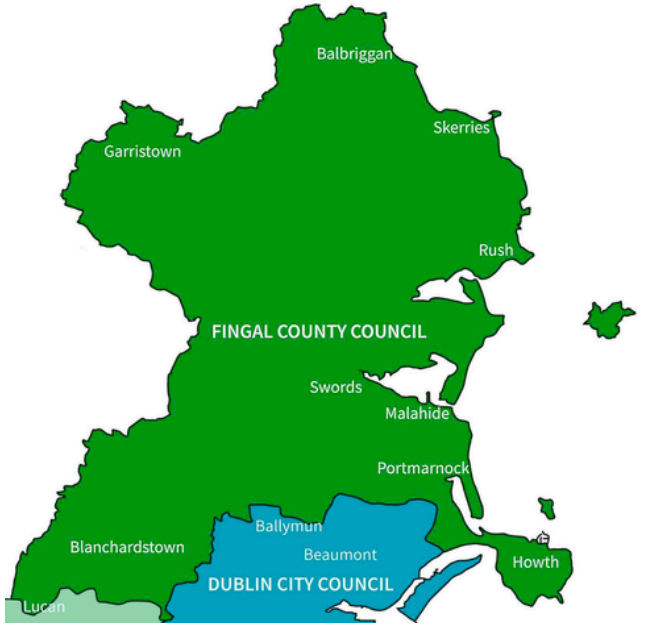
**Accommodation Secured**
Since inception, accommodation has now been secured for
**2,363 people**

# Fingal County Council Approved Housing Applicants:

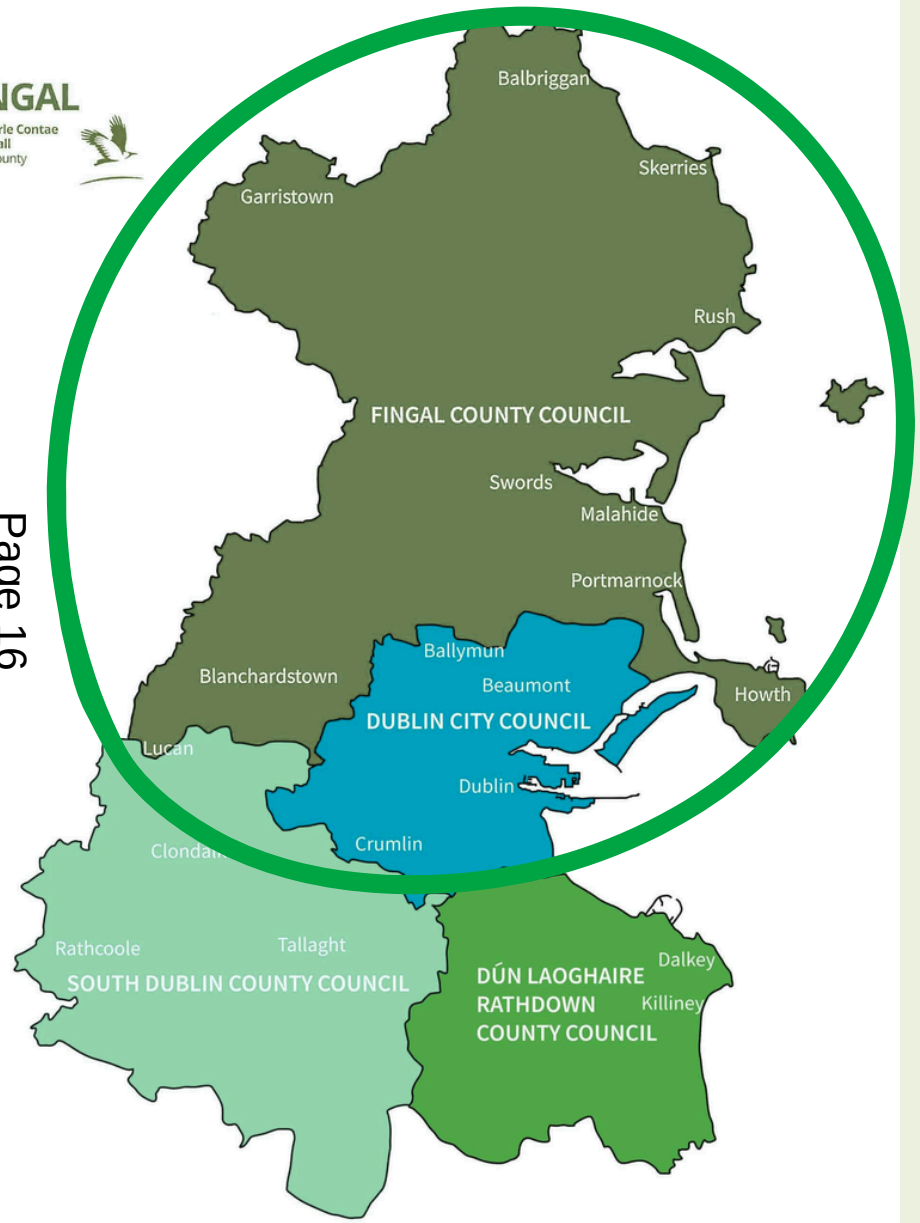
**7 applicants approved**
Since 2016

**1 currently being assessed**

**5 housed since 2019**




**Safe Home Ireland Total Housing Applicants - Ireland (26 counties): 253 applicants (covering 279 Individuals)**






# OUR ASK

**(1) Consider allocation of one housing unit/year to a Safe Home Ireland Housing Applicant who have been approved on the Fingal County Council housing waiting List**

**and/or**

**(2) Add 'Older Irish born Emigrants' (approved via Safe Home Ireland) in the Council Housing Allocations Policy**

## GALWAY CO. COUNCIL

**JULY 2025**

Irish Independent

Galway County Council housing amendment receives high praise



Irish emigrants now considered in Housing Allocation Scheme.

Emma F. Smith
Mon 28 Jul 2025 at 13:37

CONNACHT TRIBUNE

**Ex-pats to get break on social housing access**

County Council vote levels playing field for emigrants returning to home

BY DARA BRADLEY



Cllr Evelyn Parsons.

10

"Galway Co. Council acknowledges the unique vulnerabilities and contributions of returning emigrants and aims to ensure equitable access to social housing supports … to formally recognise and support the housing needs of Irish-born emigrants returning to Ireland,"

Galway Co Council amended its Housing Allocation Scheme which now formally recognises older Irish born emigrants living abroad, who meet specific qualifying criteria as a distinct group within the housing allocations policy

**Approved at July 2025 Council Meeting**

## SOUTH DUBLIN CO. COUNCIL

**SINCE 2023**

The Council Housing Dept currently allocate one housing unit/year to a Safe Home Ireland Housing Applicant who is approved on the Council Housing List. The Council is committed to supporting its emigrants to return home once more

**NOTE**: All applicants must be approved by Safe Home and South Dublin Co. Council. T**his arrangement is in place since 2023**

## SLIGO CO. COUNCIL

**APRIL 2024**

Call for elderly Sligo emigrants to be helped return home



Clr. Dara Mulvey.

Paul Deering
Sligo Champion
Mon 22 Apr 2024 at 14:00

At the April 2024 Housing SPC meeting of Sligo County Council, Cllr. Mulvey **proposed** that where need has been identified and a qualifying applicant has been approved by Safe Home Ireland that Sligo County Council Housing SPC a**llocate one age-friendly property per year in each of the council's electoral areas to a returning Irish emigrant**" **Approved at April 2024 Housing SPC Meeting and now awaiting FULL Council Approval**

# Contact Details – Safe Home Ireland

| | |
|---|---|
| **Address** | Safe Home Ireland, St. Brendan's Village, Mulranny, Co. Mayo, F28 A386 |
| **Tel** | + 353 98 36036 (**office**); + 353 86 059 4538 (**mobile WhatsApp/texts**) |
| **Email** | info@safehomeireland.com |
| **Website** | www.safehomeireland.com |
| **Facebook** | https://www.facebook.com/safehomeprogramme |
| **Bluesky** | @safehomeireland.bsky.social |
| **Twitter** | https://twitter.com/Safehomeireland |
| **Instagram** | https://www.instagram.com/safehomeireland/ |

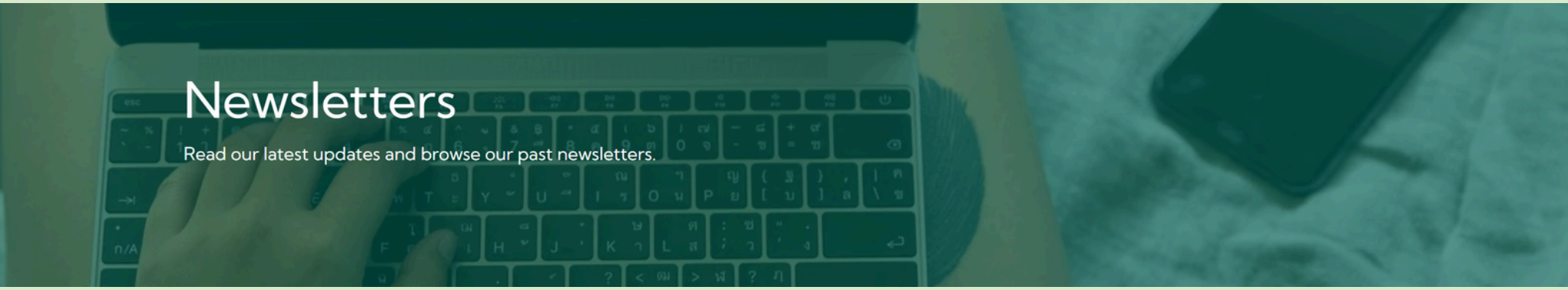
**Newsletter/ E-bulletin** https://safehomeireland.com/newsletter-2/



SAFE HOME IRELAND
DIASPORA SUPPORT SERVICE

Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

# SIGN UP TO OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER














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# Statutory Social Housing Assessment 2026

# Statutory Social Housing Assessment 2026 - Background

- The Housing Department is currently preparing the Statutory Social Housing Assessment (SSHA) Summary in accordance with Section 21 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009.

- The 2026 Summary continues the process of annual assessments of national social housing need commenced in 2016. The summaries help identify the level of social housing support need nationwide and are an important tool for informing national housing policy, including future approaches to local authority social housing delivery targets and the profile of property types required.

- The key output of the Summary is the net need figure i.e. the number of qualified households on local authority lists whose housing needs have not been met.

- In Fingal County Council **6,604** applicants have been identified to be assessed in accordance with the Circular Housing 32/2026.

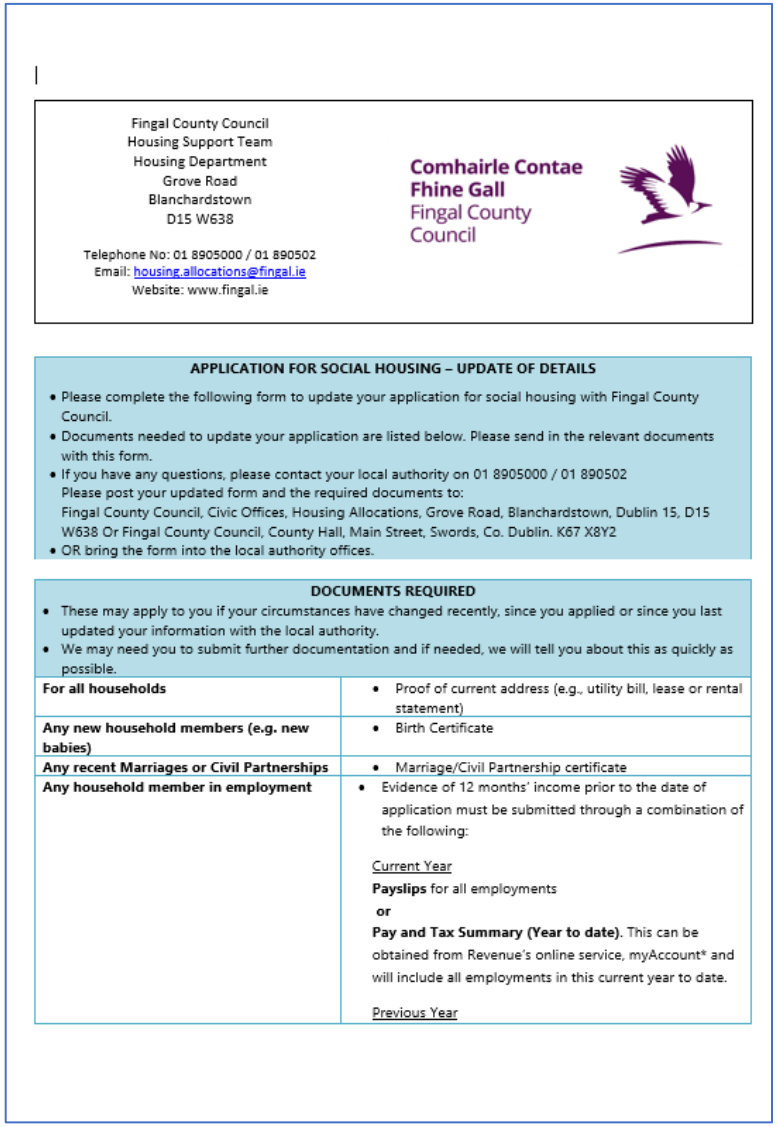
# Statutory Social Housing Assessment 2026 – Who is impacted?

- The Council has contacted certain applicants in accordance with the department's guidelines. Those in scope are applicants who have applied for social housing support and have not yet been assessed, or those who have not been reviewed since 31st July 2025.
- Each applicant included in the 2026 assessment must confirm their requirement to the Council by completing and returning a submission via the online portal or by physical application form.

***Please Note: Transfer Applicants, HAP and RAS tenants are NOT included in this assessment***

# Statutory Social Housing Assessment 2026 – Key dates for applicants

- The selected applicants were contacted by letter on **4th September 2026**.
- The online portal went live on **7th September 2026**.
- The closing date for completed online and paper returns is **19th October 2026**.



Fingal County Council
Housing Support Team
Housing Department
Grove Road
Blanchardstown
D15 W638

Telephone No: 01 8905000 / 01 890502
Email: housing.allocations@fingal.ie
Website: www.fingal.ie

Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall
Fingal County Council

**APPLICATION FOR SOCIAL HOUSING – UPDATE OF DETAILS**

- Please complete the following form to update your application for social housing with Fingal County Council.
- Documents needed to update your application are listed below. Please send in the relevant documents with this form.
- If you have any questions, please contact your local authority on 01 8905000 / 01 890502
  Please post your updated form and the required documents to:
  Fingal County Council, Civic Offices, Housing Allocations, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, D15 W638 Or Fingal County Council, County Hall, Main Street, Swords, Co. Dublin. K67 X8Y2
- OR bring the form into the local authority offices.

**DOCUMENTS REQUIRED**

- These may apply to you if your circumstances have changed recently, since you applied or since you last updated your information with the local authority.
- We may need you to submit further documentation and if needed, we will tell you about this as quickly as possible.

| | |
|---|---|
| **For all households** | • Proof of current address (e.g., utility bill, lease or rental statement) |
| **Any new household members (e.g. new babies)** | • Birth Certificate |
| **Any recent Marriages or Civil Partnerships** | • Marriage/Civil Partnership certificate |
| **Any household member in employment** | • Evidence of 12 months' income prior to the date of application must be submitted through a combination of the following:<br><br>Current Year<br>**Payslips** for all employments<br>**or**<br>**Pay and Tax Summary (Year to date).** This can be obtained from Revenue's online service, myAccount* and will include all employments in this current year to date.<br><br>Previous Year |

# Statutory Social Housing Assessment 2026 – Process Completion

- Applicants have a total of 6 weeks to submit their assessment documentation.
- A reminder letter will be issued on the **28th September** to those who have not yet submitted their application, 3 weeks in advance of the closing date of **19th October**.
- Housing Staff will engage with applicants via email or telephone call who have not replied to the HNA by the above date, however if no contact can be established the application for social housing support will be closed**.** The responsibility to return the assessment with any supporting documentation is with the applicants.
- The summary date of the information gathered will be **2nd November 2026** and then statutory return of information to the Local Government Management Agency on this assessment is to be completed on or before **30th November 2026**.

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**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL**
**FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**HOUSING STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 22nd SEPTEMBER 2026**

**ITEM NO. 05**

# RENT ARREARS FIGURES - AI109550

## Motion: Councillor J. Burtchaell

"That the Chief Executive provide details on any changes in the Council's aggregate rent arrears figures since the differential rents were increased earlier this year."

**Report:**

The Council operates a fair and transparent tiered escalation process to engage and support tenants who fall into arrears, including early engagement, sustainable arrears arrangement plans, referrals to MABS and sign up to the Household Budgeting scheme if applicable.

Rent arrears reached a peak of just over €10m in early 2023, just after the Covid epidemic. Since then, significant work has been undertaken through sustained engagement with our tenants, with arrears falling consistently to €8.3m at the start of 2026. Immediately following the introduction of the new differential rent scheme the overall arrears figure increased over the immediate period to €8.7m, which following investigation, was found to include a number of rent accounts that had not adapted to the new rent charge due to issues like Standing Orders not being updated. Accordingly, the Housing Dept contacted those tenants to offer further guidance and support on the transition with the result that, in the past 9 weeks rent arrears have stabilised and are not materially increasing.

**Source of Report:**
Paul Carroll, Director of Services, Housing Department.

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