Oaklee

Spring Newsletter

May 2026

Homes to build *futures in.*

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Oaklee Resident Newsletter.

As we move through May and into the brighter days of late spring, we're delighted to share the latest updates, stories, and opportunities from across Oaklee communities.

This newsletter is all about keeping you informed, connected, and supported in your home and neighbourhood. Whether it's hearing about what's happening locally, finding ways to get involved, or accessing useful tips and information, we hope you find something of interest in every edition.

Spring is a time of renewal and activity, and that is reflected across our communities. In recent months, residents and staff have come together for events, activities, and initiatives that strengthen connections and make our neighbourhoods positive places to live.

We are also continuing to develop new ways for residents to have a voice in shaping services at Oaklee. A key focus in this edition is the introduction of **Oaklee Together**, our new resident engagement working group, alongside a range of ways you can get involved in your community if you wish to do so.

Alongside this, you'll find practical advice and seasonal tips, including gardening ideas for spring and summer, wellbeing supports, and important information about services available to residents. We are also sharing updates on new communities, recent developments, and recognising the contributions of residents and staff.

This is your newsletter, and we want it to reflect the voices, experiences, and ideas of our residents.

If you would like to contribute to a future edition, we would be very glad to hear from you.

Inside this edition:

- Introducing Oaklee Together – our new resident engagement working group
- Ways to get involved in your community
- Spring activities across Oaklee communities
- New developments and communities
- Gardening tips for spring and summer
- Wellbeing advice and support services
- Resident and staff spotlight

Getting Involved in Your Community

At Oaklee, we are always seeking ways to engage more effectively with our residents and to provide opportunities for you to become more involved with us, helping to deliver the best possible services to our neighbourhoods.

In reviewing and co-producing a new Resident Engagement Strategy, we are currently reviewing our menu of involvement to ensure that this is aligned with the future of Resident Engagement in Oaklee.

Resident Engagement Strategy Working Group, now called "Oaklee Together"

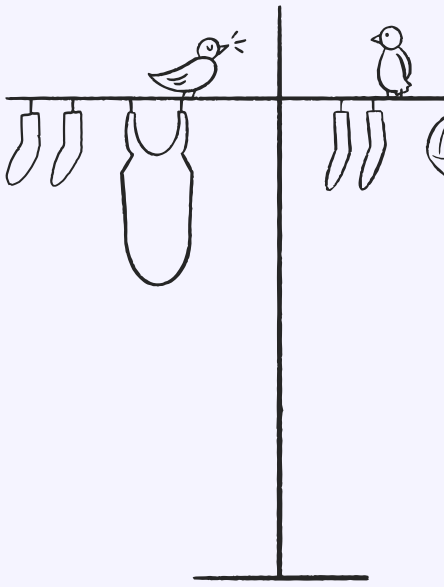
Following the disbanding of the Tenant Forum in late 2025, Oaklee established this new working group, which held its first meeting on 19 March and has met weekly since then.

Together, residents are reviewing the previous strategy and co-producing Oaklee's new Resident Engagement Strategy for 2026 to 2029. This work will help shape the new Oaklee Resident Forum, and we continue to work closely with Supporting Communities, whose expertise and guidance are helping to ensure the strategy reflects the needs and aspirations of residents across Oaklee.

We are always keen to welcome new members, so if you would like to get involved, please contact Sarah Louise Grey at tenantengagement@oaklee.ie.

Housing Services Committee Member Update

We recognise that in our last edition, we advertised a vacancy on our Housing Services Committee. However, we want to assure tenants that this recruitment is just paused for the moment, and we have not forgotten about it. Our main focus is currently on developing the new Resident Engagement Strategy and establishing a new Resident Forum.



Once this work is complete, we will revisit the process for recruiting a suitable member for the Housing Services Committee, as the new strategy will inform our approach.

Interviews will be arranged for interested parties, and once the relevant tenant has been selected, they will be provided with the necessary training and support to ensure they feel confident and comfortable in being involved with such a group.

Getting Involved in Your Community

Join The Oaklee Residents Editorial Panel

The Editorial Panel consists of Oaklee residents, the Oaklee Communications and Policy Manager **Kevin Deegan**, and Senior Tenant Engagement Officer **Sarah Louise Grey**. The panel works together to produce Oaklee newsletters and contributes to other publications throughout the year.

If you are interested in writing articles, photography, design, or editing, then this is the opportunity for you. The panel meets six times per year, either in person or virtually, to discuss content.

Sign up for One of Our Community Groups

You may want to get involved in making your community a great place to live, and a good place to start is by joining a community group.

The Oaklee Tenant Engagement Officer can support you by linking you with an existing group or helping you and others from your community start one up. The community voice is always stronger when we work together. There are many benefits for your neighbourhood, including better engagement with Oaklee staff, assistance with organising local events, reducing anti-social behaviour, community clean-ups, and much more.

Would you like to be more involved in any of these opportunities?

If so, contact **tenantengagement@oaklee.ie** and Sarah Louise will follow up with you directly with more details.

Neighbours Day – 29th of May 2026

Neighbours Day will be celebrated this year on the 29th of May. This annual event originated in France in 1999 as “La Fête des Voisins” and has since spread across Europe and beyond, encouraging residents to connect, foster a sense of community, and strengthen neighbourly bonds.

If you or your community would like to get involved, please contact Sarah Louise Grey (SeniorTenant Engagement Officer) at tenantengagement@oaklee.ie, or reach out to our Services Centre on 01 400 2650 and request a call-back.

Christmas Colouring Competition

Oaklee brought festive fun to residents through the Christmas colouring competition, which was shared across a number of schemes in the lead-up to the holiday period. The competition created a simple but enjoyable way for residents of all ages to take part in something creative and seasonal.

Across our communities, children and families took the opportunity to get involved, with entries showcasing a wide range of ideas, colours, and imagination. Activities like this play an important role in bringing neighbours together, encouraging participation, and creating moments of connection within our communities.

These types of initiatives are about more than just the competition itself. They help to create a sense of community, allow families to spend time together, and add a bit of fun and colour to the festive season. It is always great to see the enthusiasm and creativity that comes through in the entries each year.

We would like to thank everyone who took part and contributed to making the competition such a success. The standard of entries was excellent, and it was clear how much thought and effort went into each piece.

A selection of winning entries is featured on the following pages.

Christmas Colouring Competition

Neveah Akajemeli (Age 4)

Christmas Colouring Competition

Alex Nosa (Age 10)

Christmas Colouring Competition

Alessia Gabrielle Williams (Age 13)

Spring has Sprung

At last, we're in Spring, with a return to light and growth.

It is a season full of hope and renewal. Our ancestors celebrated this time with festivals and practised 'Spring Cleaning'. They decorated with all things yellow to welcome growth.

The Spring Equinox on March 20th to 23rd marks the balance of day and night, and gradually nature flourishes.

We hope for healthy crops and new life, planting seeds and tending our gardens.

Lastly, we remember Easter, a holy time, a reflective time, but always filled with great expectation for the season to come.

The Editorial Panel hopes that each and every one of you had a wonderful Easter and enjoyed far too much chocolate.

Written by Deirdre Wareham (Resident and member of the Editorial Panel and Resident Strategy Working Group) otherwise known as Oaklee Together

Oaklee Spring Activities

Over the spring months, residents across Oaklee communities took part in a wide range of activities, from family outings and day trips to seasonal celebrations and local events.

These moments help bring neighbours together, strengthen connections, and create a positive and welcoming atmosphere in our communities.

Here's a snapshot of some of the activities and initiatives that took place:

Pairc na Gréine
With support from the Housing Agency's Social Investment Fund, residents received tickets to Dublin Zoo and the cinema during the Easter mid-term break.

This initiative provided a great opportunity for families to spend time together, while also helping to bring the community closer through shared experiences in a relaxed and enjoyable setting.

Abbey Village
Housing Officer Fearghal Burke and Property Services Officer David Carvill visited each household to wish residents a Happy Easter and distribute Easter treats.

This provided a great opportunity for Fearghal, as the local Housing Officer, to reconnect with residents and spend time engaging with the community. Residents in sheltered housing at Abbey Village also received cinema tickets, thanks to support from the Housing Agency's Social Investment Fund, offering residents the chance to enjoy a day out over the Easter period.

Weston
Housing Officer Aisling Cork visited all residents with a special delivery of Easter eggs for children.

As the new Housing Officer for the scheme, this visit provided a valuable opportunity for residents to meet Aisling in person and begin building local connections.

Baltrasna Park, Kearneys Drive and Droughill Lane
Housing Officer Michael Russell visited residents across these schemes with Easter eggs for children.

As Michael is new to these communities, the visit also served as an opportunity for him to introduce himself and get to know residents.

Oaklee Spring Activities

Cluainin
Housing Officer Lauren McNulty visited residents with Easter eggs for children, creating a welcoming opportunity for residents to meet their new Housing Officer and connect informally.

Maple Close
Residents received cinema tickets over the Easter break, providing a simple but enjoyable way to support families and encourage shared experiences within the community.

Rowantree Court
Residents at Rowantree Court marked Easter together, creating a simple but meaningful opportunity to connect and celebrate as a community.

Hawthorn Court
Hawthorn Court enjoyed a busy and social spring, with a range of activities taking place throughout the season. A cooked breakfast was held to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, while residents also came together for a fundraising coffee morning in support of the Irish Cancer Society's Let's Go All in Against Cancer campaign for Daffodil Day.

A new term of Chair Yoga began in the communal spaces, supporting health and wellbeing, and residents also enjoyed outings including a day trip to the Roscommon Famine Museum and a performance of Blood Brothers at the Bord Gáis Theatre.

Support from the Housing Agency's Social Investment Fund helped make the cooked breakfast and themed coffee morning possible.

Thank you to all residents, colleagues, and community partners who contributed to making spring a positive and memorable season across Oaklee communities.

Spring Cake Recipe from Betty Joyce, Hawthorn Court

We’re delighted to share this traditional Simnel Cake recipe from Betty Joyce of Hawthorn Court.

A classic fruit cake often enjoyed around Easter, it’s rich, full of flavour, and perfect for sharing with family and neighbours.

Ingredients

4 ounces glacé cherries
250 grams softened butter
250 grams dark brown soft sugar
4 large eggs
8 ounces sultanas
8 ounces self-raising flour
4 ounces currants
2 ounces chopped candied peel
½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon mixed spice
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
50 grams flaked almonds
50 grams ground almonds
50 grams mixed chopped nuts
Zest of 1 orange
Zest of 1 lemon
4 tablespoons black treacle

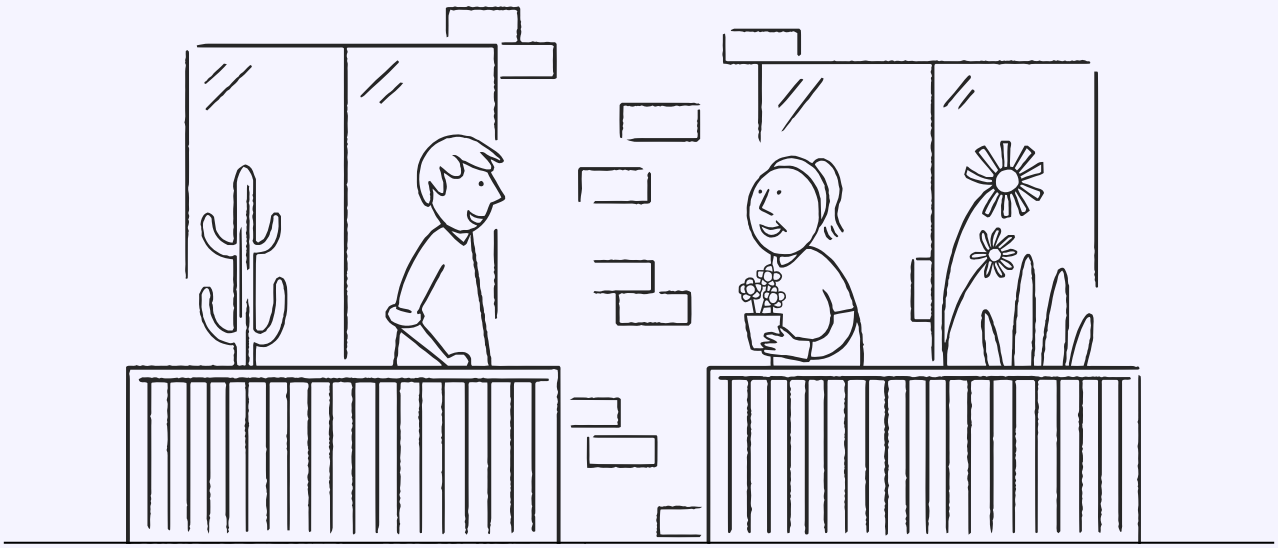
Cake tin:
Use a deep 20cm round tin or 18cm square tin, lined with greaseproof paper on the base and sides, with the paper extending approximately 1 inch above the top.

Spring Cake Recipe from Betty Joyce, Hawthorn Court

Method

1. Place all the fruit into an ovenproof bowl, pour over the brandy, and mix well. Place in the oven at 60°C for 2 hours, then remove and set aside.
2. Increase the oven temperature to 140°C.
3. Sift the flour and spices into a large bowl, then stir in the almonds, mixed nuts, and the orange and lemon zest.
4. In a separate bowl, beat the butter and sugar until soft and fluffy (approximately 8 minutes). Add the eggs one at a time, then mix in the treacle.
5. Fold the flour mixture and fruit into the butter mixture in 3–4 batches, mixing well each time.
6. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and smooth the top.
7. Loosely cover with a double layer of greaseproof paper and bake at 140°C for 1 hour.
8. Reduce the temperature to 120°C and bake for a further 2½–3 hours.
9. Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin for 15 minutes. Then pierce small holes in the top and pour over 2 tablespoons of brandy. Leave to cool fully in the tin.
10. Once cooled, remove from the tin and peel away the lining paper. Wrap in greaseproof paper and foil, and store in a cool, dark place.
11. Every 3 weeks, pour 2 tablespoons of brandy, rum, or whiskey over the cake to keep it moist.
12. Stop feeding the cake 2 weeks before icing to allow a crust to form.

Have a recipe you'd like to share in a future edition? We'd love to hear from you – please contact tenantengagement@oaklee.ie.



A message from Kevin Deegan

Communications and Policy Manager

As you read through this edition, I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself.

I joined Oaklee in December 2025 as Communications and Policy Manager, and I've really enjoyed getting to know the organisation and the work that's happening across our communities.

Since joining, I've been working with colleagues to strengthen the resident voice, support engagement, and shine a light on the activities and experiences that make each Oaklee community unique.

My background is in communications and policy, with experience across the not-for-profit sector, older persons' healthcare, and the approved housing body sector. What's been most important to me in every role is making sure people feel informed, listened to, and included.

That's a big part of what this newsletter is about, sharing what's happening across Oaklee, highlighting your communities, and making sure residents feel connected and supported.

I'm really looking forward to learning more about you and hearing your views over the coming months. If you have ideas, feedback, or would like to get involved, I'd be very glad to hear from you.

📧 communications@oaklee.ie

Oaklee News

New Communities

Over recent months, Oaklee has welcomed residents into a number of new communities, including **St. Laurence House** in Ballyfermot, **Bentley Villas Apartments** in Dún Laoghaire, **Loreto Gate** in Rathfarnham, **Keepers Lock** in South Dublin, and **Stonepark Hall** in Nutgrove.

Each of these developments reflects Oaklee's ongoing commitment to providing safe, comfortable, and welcoming homes for residents across our communities.

As part of this process, Pre-Tenancy Workshops have helped new residents settle into their homes, offering guidance, answering questions, and supporting a smooth transition. Handing over keys and welcoming residents into their new homes remains one of the most positive and rewarding moments for our teams.

One new resident recently shared their experience:

"I'm absolutely thrilled, I'm still pinching myself here! It is a fantastic development from Oaklee, and the finish is immaculate. Please extend my sincere thanks to Caroline, Helen and Gheorghe for a thorough induction into the property, and for the gifts on arrival."

This feedback reflects the experience shared by many residents as they move into their new homes.

As our communities continue to grow, we look forward to supporting all residents and helping new neighbours settle in.

We encourage you to stay connected through future newsletters and community activities, and to reach out if you have any questions or need support.

View some of the new developments on the next pages.

39 new homes delivered

Bentley Villas

New community in Clonburris

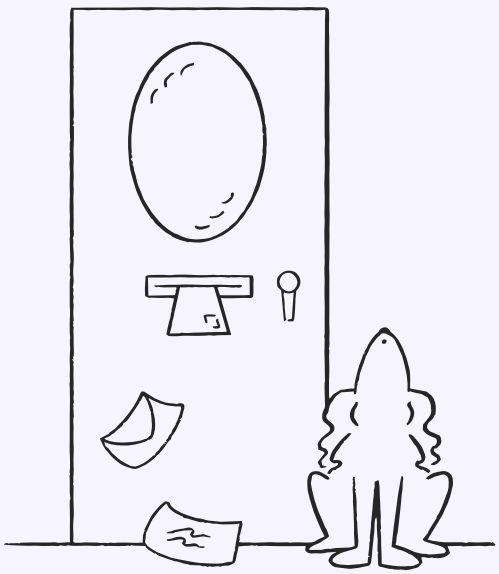
Keepers Lock

Modern apartments in Ballyfermot

St Laurence House

Oaklee News

Chartered Institute of Housing Awards 2026



Oaklee was proud to be shortlisted in two categories at the CIH All-Ireland Housing Awards 2026.

These nominations recognise the quality of our developments, the impact of our work in communities, and the strength of our partnerships with residents, local authorities and wider agencies.

Each shortlisted entry reflects Oaklee's commitment to delivering more homes, better services, and stronger, more inclusive communities across Ireland.

Best Housing Development – The Sidings, Adamstown

The Sidings delivers 154 cost rental homes alongside 30 social homes, designed to support modern, sustainable living. All homes are A-rated and incorporate high-performance insulation, triple glazing, solar panels, and energy-efficient systems to help reduce running costs for residents.

Located in the heart of Adamstown's growing urban village, The Sidings is close to shops, green spaces, services, and strong public transport links, creating a well-connected and vibrant community.

This nomination reflects Oaklee's focus on quality, affordability, and long-term sustainability.

Community Champions – The Harbour, Athy

The Harbour has experienced significant positive change through a strong multi-agency partnership involving Oaklee, Kildare County Council, An Garda Síochána, youth services, health and wellbeing initiatives, and local community groups.

Improvements in safety, resident engagement, and shared spaces, supported by tenant-led activities and collaboration, have helped strengthen connection, confidence, and a renewed sense of pride within the community.

This shortlist highlights the impact of partnership working and the central role of residents in shaping lasting change.

Oaklee News

A shared achievement

These shortlists reflect the dedication of Oaklee residents, colleagues, and partners working together to build communities that are safe, supportive, and inclusive.

While Oaklee did not take home an award on this occasion, being shortlisted is a significant achievement and recognises the effort, collaboration, and progress being made across our communities.

Oaklee colleagues representing the organisation at the CIH All-Ireland Housing Awards 2026.

Oaklee Gardening Tips:
Get Growing This Spring and Summer

Easy Ways to Start Gardening and Support Your Wellbeing

Spring is a wonderful time to begin gardening, and you don't need a large outdoor space or lots of experience to get started. Whether you have a garden, balcony, patio, or even a sunny windowsill, a few simple steps can help you grow plants that will flourish through spring and into summer.

Gardening is a great way to spend time outdoors, stay active, and support your overall wellbeing, while also bringing colour and life to your home or shared spaces.

Simple, Low-Cost Tips for Every Space

- Start small
- If you're new to gardening, begin with a few pots or containers. These are easy to move, care for, and manage.
- Choose beginner-friendly plants
- Try plants that are easy to grow and maintain:
  - Herbs: basil, mint, parsley, rosemary
  - Flowers: pansies, petunias, geraniums
  - Easy vegetables: lettuce, spinach, cherry tomatoes
- Use what you have
- Reuse containers such as tubs, buckets, or window boxes, just make sure they have good drainage.
- Keep it simple
- Regular watering, a sunny spot, and good-quality soil will go a long way.

These options thrive in pots and require very little maintenance, making them ideal for getting started.

Oaklee Gardening Tips

Follow the Sun

Most plants love light, so position pots where they will get a few hours of sunshine each day. If your space is more shaded, don't worry, herbs like parsley, as well as plants such as begonias and pansies, can still thrive with less sun.

Balconies and windowsills can be just as effective as gardens.

Water Little and Often

- In warmer weather, pots dry out more quickly than garden soil
- Check the soil with your finger; if it feels dry, it's time to water
- Water early in the morning or later in the evening
- Make sure pots have drainage holes to prevent roots from becoming waterlogged

Feed Little and Often

- Plants grown in containers need nutrients replaced regularly
- Add compost when planting
- Use a small amount of general plant feed every few weeks to support healthy growth and longer flowering

No Garden? No Problem

- Herbs grow well on a windowsill
- Flowers thrive in hanging baskets
- Tomatoes or strawberries can flourish in pots on a balcony or patio

Container gardening is ideal for residents, as pots can be easily moved and taken with you if you move home.

Oaklee Gardening Tips

Support Bees and Wildlife
Flowers such as lavender, marigolds, and wildflowers help attract bees and butterflies, supporting local biodiversity while adding colour and life to your space.

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Additional Tips

- Get involved
- Consider joining or starting a community gardening group in your area. It's a great way to meet neighbours, share ideas, and swap seeds or plants.
- Grow your own salad
- Try planting cut-and-come-again salad leaves in shallow trays for a continuous supply of fresh greens.
- Reuse and recycle
- Repurpose old containers, buckets, or even food packaging as plant pots, just make sure they have drainage holes.
- Enjoy the outdoors
- Spending time in nature can boost your mood and wellbeing. Gardening is a relaxing way to reduce stress and bring colour and life to your home.
- Share the experience
- Involve children, friends, or family in planting and caring for your garden. It's a fun and rewarding way to spend time together.

Oaklee Gardening Tips

Looking After Our Green Spaces
Oaklee appoints contractors to maintain communal lawns, plants, and trees across most schemes (unless otherwise notified, or where areas are managed by an Owner Management Company). These shared spaces are cared for on a planned schedule.

Some households also have private grass or garden areas, which remain the responsibility of the residents living there.

We kindly ask everyone to be mindful of these arrangements and to help keep shared spaces safe, tidy, and enjoyable for all.

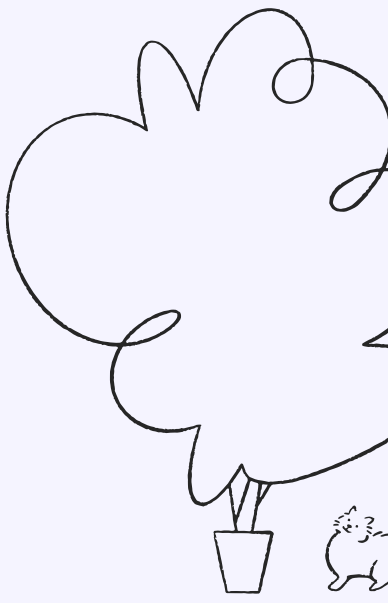
Green areas, lawns, and planted spaces are an important part of our communities. With a little care, and by knowing what to look out for, we can all help keep them in good condition.

Grass and Lawns
Grass grows well in our mild, damp climate, but it can also be affected by waterlogging, moss, and wear if not cared for properly.

Simple good practice includes:

- Avoid walking on grass when it is very wet or frosty, as this can damage roots
- Keep lawns free from litter
- Do not park or place heavy items on grassed areas
- Allow grass to grow slightly longer in summer to help it stay healthy during dry spells
- Regular cutting at the right height helps grass grow thicker and reduces moss

Communal Plants, Shrubs and Trees
Trees, hedges, and planted beds in communal areas are usually maintained as part of the grounds maintenance programme.



In some cases, specific planted areas may be the responsibility of individual households, and residents will have been informed of this when signing their tenancy.

To help plants thrive:

- Do not cut, prune, or remove plants in communal areas
- Do not plant new trees or shrubs in shared spaces without permission
- Keep planted areas clear of litter and dog fouling
- Report any damage or vandalism as soon as possible
- Trees and larger shrubs require professional care to remain safe and healthy

Oaklee: In the Spotlight

Oaklee is introducing a new feature in our quarterly Resident Newsletter - “In the Spotlight.”

This section will highlight people across our communities, including residents and colleagues, giving them an opportunity to share their stories, experiences, and insights.

Future features may include short written pieces or interviews facilitated by the Tenant Engagement team.

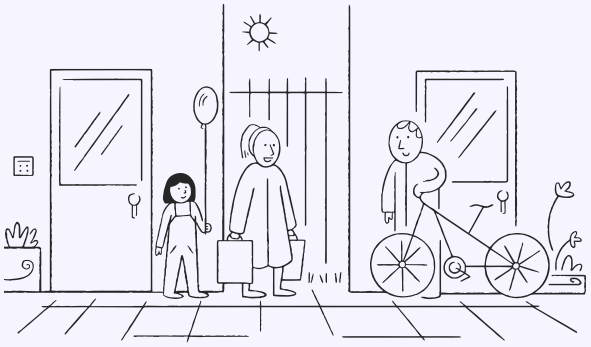
First Feature: Kerri Moore, Tenancy Sustainment Officer

We’re delighted to introduce **Kerri Moore, Tenancy Sustainment Officer**, who is here to support residents in maintaining a secure and comfortable home.

Kerri’s role focuses on helping residents sustain their tenancies and providing support when challenges arise, ensuring people feel supported, informed, and able to remain in their homes.

Kerri can support you by:

- Providing early assistance if you are experiencing difficulties that may affect your tenancy
- Explaining your tenancy, including your rights and responsibilities
- Offering financial guidance, including support with budgeting or managing rent
- Assisting with forms and applications, such as social welfare or grant supports
- Supporting you through challenging situations, including financial pressure, family concerns, or other personal difficulties
- Connecting you with additional services, such as MABS, SVP, social workers, or health and wellbeing supports
- Encouraging participation in training, employment, or community programmes



Need support?
If you feel you would benefit from support, please contact your Housing Officer or reach out directly through the Service Centre on 01 400 2650.

Simple Health & Wellbeing Tips

Looking after your wellbeing doesn’t have to be complicated. Small, everyday habits can make a real difference.

- Get some fresh air
- A short walk or time outdoors can help boost your mood and energy levels.
- Stay connected
- A chat with a neighbour, friend, or family member can make a positive difference to your day.
- Keep moving, your way
- Gentle movement such as walking, stretching, or gardening all counts.
- Take breaks
- Rest is important, give yourself permission to slow down when you need to.
- Eat and drink regularly
- Try to drink plenty of water and enjoy regular meals where possible.
- Look after your space
- A tidy, comfortable home can help reduce stress and support wellbeing.
- Ask for help if you need it
- If you’re feeling overwhelmed or struggling, support is available, you don’t have to manage alone.

See the list of helpful contacts on the next page.

Helpful Contacts and Supports

If you need support, the following services are available. Most are free, confidential, and easy to access.

Mental Health & Emotional Support

Pieta House
Support for people in distress, including suicidal thoughts or self-harm
📞 1800 247 247 | Text HELP to 51444
🌐 www.pieta.ie

Samaritans
24-hour emotional support if you are feeling distressed or overwhelmed
📞 116 123 (freephone)
🌐 www.samaritans.org

50808 Text Service
Free, anonymous 24/7 text support for any mental health difficulty
📱 Text HELLO to 50808
🌐 www.text50808.ie

Money & Financial Advice

MABS (Money Advice & Budgeting Service)
Free support with budgeting, debt, and financial difficulties
📞 0818 07 2000
📱 WhatsApp: 086 035 3141
🌐 www.mabs.ie

Domestic Violence Support

Women's Aid
Support for women affected by domestic violence
📞 1800 341 900 (24-hour helpline)

Men's Aid Ireland
Support service for men experiencing domestic violence
📞 01 554 3811
📧 hello@mensaid.ie

Helpful Contacts and Supports

If you need support, the following services are available. Most are free, confidential, and easy to access.

Community & Family Support

Family Resource Centres
Local support services for families and communities
🌐 www.tusla.ie (find your local centre)

SAGE Advocacy
Support and advocacy for older people and vulnerable adults
📞 1850 71 9400
🌐 www.sageadvocacy.ie

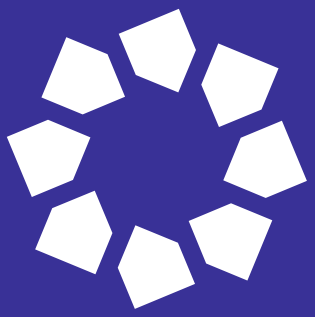
ALONE
Support for older people, including loneliness and housing challenges
📞 0818 222 024
🌐 www.alone.ie

Friends of the Elderly
Friendly call service and social support
📞 01 873 1855
🌐 www.friendsoftheelderly.ie

Disability & Children's Support

Enable Ireland
Services and support for children and adults with disabilities
📞 01 872 7155
🌐 www.enableireland.ie

Childline (ISPCC)
24/7 support for children and young people
📞 1800 66 66 66
💬 Live chat available at www.childline.ie



Oaklee

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