

Clanmil Communiqué



A STITCH IN TIME

A lady with a lifelong passion for fashion is 90-year-old Sadie Marshall

Sadie, who lives at Clanmil's Cedar Court independent living scheme in Whiteabbey, worked in the textile industry most of her life, starting work at 14 and only retiring when she was 75.

Recently Sadie spent a day reminiscing about her time as a machinist, working with clothing, when she visited the Ulster Museum's fashion exhibition along with some

of her fellow residents.

"The frocks and the style were amazing," said the spritely 90-year-old.

"We had a great day out and I really enjoyed looking at all the clothing and even trying some of it on," she laughs.

Sadie recalls how she spent most of her working life making hospital uniforms at Ewarts but had a spell during the war making garments

for the Government.

"We had some great times," she explained, "life is very different now to what it was then but I have a lot to be thankful for. The staff at Cedar Court make sure there is always something going on and something to bring all the residents together. We have a lot of fun and friendship."

The visit to the fashion exhibition was part of Clanmil's five-year Treasure

House project which aims to help older people lead active lives. Clanmil has been awarded a grant of £499,126 by the Big Lottery Fund for the project which we are running in partnership with National Museums Northern Ireland.

ABOVE: Mrs Marshall reminisces about her days as a textile factory machinist with National Museums Northern Ireland's Live and Learn Outreach Officer Sue Cathcart.



A community focused future

At Clanmil, community insight has always been important to us in any new housing development. This has included establishing meaningful engagement with community and elected representatives in order to shape our developments to meet particular needs identified at a very local level. This close interaction has, on numerous occasions, totally redefined the nature of accommodation that we ended up building.

Over the years we have also engaged with local schools in various ways, including work opportunities for school leavers. Recently, at Caffrey Hill on Glen Road, Belfast, following consultation with pupils at nearby schools, we included a playground as a central feature in our development to give children a space for play.

The more we talk to people

who live in Clanmil homes the more we want to do to support them within their communities, and within their own lives, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

For Clanmil, this means continuing to develop partnerships around children and play; sure start; teenager unemployment and long term worklessness. It also means revisiting our fuel poverty

strategy and finding what works best to help make our homes really energy efficient but without too many 'gadgets' that people do not like to use. It also means working much more closely with Credit Unions and others to tackle the financial exclusion experienced by many of our tenants.

All of this – and more – is captured in our Strategic Plan 2014-17, which will set out ambitious targets

for future growth hand in hand with community development initiatives, and a genuine commitment to find innovative responses to poverty amongst our tenants.

We can only achieve this with the support and guidance of the communities in which we work and we are currently gearing up to face this challenge head on.

Do you Know of a Development Opportunity?

With housing waiting lists still growing, Clanmil continues to provide more social homes throughout Northern Ireland for those who need them.

In the year ending 31 March 2013, we continued construction on 123 new homes and commenced construction on a further 354.

In order to provide more great homes, particularly in the current economic climate and difficult property market, Clanmil has established a team dedicated to actively sourcing development opportunities in areas of high housing need throughout Northern Ireland.

We are seeking new opportunities to provide

both social and affordable homes that will create viable, vibrant communities.

If you are aware of available development opportunities in your area that could help us meet housing need, or can put us in touch with site owners, developers, etc., we would be delighted to hear from you.

We have reviewed and streamlined our processes so that we can respond promptly to all opportunities and will keep vendors and agents up to date as we consider sites.



Please contact Siobhan Kennedy or James Wright at Clanmil on 028 90 876018

or at siobhan.kennedy@clanmil.org.uk and james.wright@clanmil.org.uk

Practical help for Clanmil tenants struggling to manage money and debt

Many of Clanmil's tenants struggle to live on low incomes, often resulting in high levels of debt.

We are therefore investing in providing help and advice for our tenants and have recently recruited a Money Advisor, Eddie Smith to roll out our Financial Inclusion strategy. Formerly employed by Citizens Advice, Eddie is available to provide our tenants with essential advice in relation to money and benefits, assisting them in dealing with debt, making new benefit claims and helping with problems

relating to existing claims. The Northern Ireland Executive, in its Programme for Government 2011-15, committed to develop and implement a Financial Capability Strategy for consumers. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) has charged The Consumer Council for Northern Ireland with rolling out the Strategy which calls for a joined-up approach across all sectors to target help towards those

with the greatest need. Clanmil is eager to play a full role in helping those tenants who are struggling to make ends meet and already Eddie's work has resulted in lump sum benefit payments for some tenants and increased weekly benefit entitlement for others.



It's good to talk

At Clanmil we're passionate about providing great homes and services that matter and we are always happy to discuss our work, new opportunities and ideas for housing led initiatives with anyone with an interest in what we do.

Please get in touch if you have a query on behalf of a tenant or about a specific development, or if you would like to discuss a housing or community development related issue that we can help with.

We will continue to provide regular briefs regarding homes available to rent to your constituency offices and to

update you on our activities through this newsletter. As always, we would welcome your feedback on the Communique newsletter and the stories covered.

A key piece of work for us at the moment is the review of the Association's Strategic Plan for the next three years. As part of this process, we are seeking the

views of key stakeholders.

The views of our political representatives are, of course, key to this. The Housing Spokesperson for each political party has been invited to take part in the survey and we look forward to their input.

In addition, Clanmil has just signed up to Twitter, tweeting about all things housing. Follow us @ClanmilHousing

Proposed planning changes are welcome

Clanmil is pleased to note Environment Minister, Mark H Durkan's proposed changes to Northern Ireland's planning system designed to speed up planning decisions.

We particularly welcome the emphasis being placed on providing a "shorter and simplified" process as these changes are central to the effective and efficient delivery of our development programme.

The proposed introduction of one Strategic Planning Policy Statement represents the single largest change in planning policy direction in more than 20 years.

We support the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations in offering to work with Minister Durkan to ensure that the final proposals support the building of new homes, especially new social and affordable homes urgently required by those in greatest need.

We look forward to engaging positively in the consultation process which follows the publication of the draft policy statement. We welcome the opportunity to shape policies that protect our core values and that help us deliver interesting, sustainable and affordable places for our tenants to live.



CLEAN SWEEP FOR CAFFREY HILL

In recent months Clanmil's Caffrey Hill family housing scheme in Belfast, which provides homes for 165 families, has been recognised in a number of prestigious awards.

In October, Caffrey Hill took first place in the medium sized housing area category in the SuperValu Best Kept Town, Village and Housing Area Awards which showcase the great work carried out across Northern Ireland to brighten up our communities.

In December, Clanmil was highly commended in the Child Friendly Spaces category of the inaugural Healthy

Belfast Awards for the green space and play facilities that have been provided as part of the Caffrey Hill scheme. The commendation recognised Clanmil's commitment to ensuring that, as well as meeting housing need, our homes and services also help develop and sustain communities.

Clanmil worked with Playboard and Groundwork NI in designing the community

space at Caffrey Hill and the views of pupils from nearby schools and of local residents and community groups were incorporated into the final design.

In February, Caffrey Hill was runner-up in the Councillor Jim Speers Special award for Northern Ireland's best housing association scheme at the annual Northern Ireland Housing Council awards.

In addition, T&A Kernoghan

and Collen Construction, Clanmil's contractors at Caffrey Hill, recently won the social housing category of the Construction Employers Federation annual Construction Excellence Awards for the Caffrey Hill development. This award recognises the high build quality of the homes at the scheme.

ABOVE: Community space at Caffrey Hill