

# Clanmil Communiqué

## Keep on Supporting People!



Clanmil has joined a coalition of charities and voluntary organisations to call on the Northern Ireland Executive to strengthen the Supporting People programme which provides vital support each year to help more than 26,000 people in Northern Ireland live as independently as possible.

The programme, which provides some 882 housing related support services across Northern Ireland, equips vulnerable people to live independently and helps prevent problems that can result in hospitalisation, institutional care or homelessness.

Introduced in 2003 across the UK, the programme has dramatically improved the services available to a range of groups including older people, people with learning disabilities, and homeless people. Research has demonstrated that it is an 'invest to save' programme delivering net financial benefits by reducing demand on health, criminal justice and other public services.

Funding for Supporting People schemes has been

frozen for seven years, a 'real terms' cut of over 20% and there is concern about the potential impact of NI Executive spending cuts on the Programme which is currently the subject of a government review.

The future of services relied on by thousands of people requires Supporting People to be strengthened as a dedicated programme of housing support, and properly funded by the NI Executive.

Cameron Watt, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations said;

"Supporting People has been an immense success, enabling thousands of people to sustain their accommodation and live with as much independence as possible. Service providers are committed to

working with government in its review, but uncertainty on the programme's future and a prolonged funding squeeze threatens the quality and viability of Supporting People services.

"Supporting People must be properly resourced to remain effective and continue delivering strongly for Northern Ireland.

Inflationary uplifts are vital in the short-term, and we call on the NI Executive to recognise Supporting

People's value and commit to strengthening it as a dedicated programme of housing support."

**Support the campaign on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/SupportingPeopleNI](http://www.facebook.com/SupportingPeopleNI) and use the hashtag #SupportingPeople on twitter.**

ABOVE: Service users, including Pat who lives at our Cedar Court independent living scheme (3rd left), help NIFHA take the Supporting People campaign to Parliament Buildings.

### Welcome to Minister Storey

Congratulations to Mervyn Storey MLA on his appointment as Social Development Minister. We are looking forward to working with him to deliver more great homes in thriving communities. We would also like to thank Nelson McCausland for his support during his time as Minister.



# Do you know of a development site?

At Clanmil Housing we believe that everyone should have a great home and our mission is to provide homes that strengthen communities with services that matter.

To this end we are working on implementing our most ambitious growth strategy ever which aims to deliver some 2,000 new homes over the next three years.

We have successfully secured loan finance from Barclays and Danske Bank to help us make this happen and we are working to identify and acquire development opportunities that will allow us to provide more great homes where they are needed most.

Our dedicated team are actively sourcing development opportunities in areas of high housing need throughout Northern Ireland where we can provide social and affordable homes that will help create viable, vibrant communities.

If you are aware of available development sites 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.



Clanmil's development team.

**Please contact a member of our Growth Team on 028 9087 6000:**

Siobhan Kennedy [siobhan.kennedy@clanmil.org.uk](mailto:siobhan.kennedy@clanmil.org.uk) James Wright [james.wright@clanmil.org.uk](mailto:james.wright@clanmil.org.uk)  
Ross Linter [ross.linter@clanmil.org.uk](mailto:ross.linter@clanmil.org.uk) Denise Kelly [denise.kelly@clanmil.org.uk](mailto:denise.kelly@clanmil.org.uk)

## Tenant Satisfaction on the Up

A key objective of our Business Plan is to gain a better understanding of our customers so that everything we do focuses on optimising our service to them.



Satisfaction surveys help us understand our tenants' priorities and we are delighted that the latest surveys at our family housing schemes show tenant satisfaction levels have improved in 9 out of 12 key indicators.

When asked how satisfied people are with the overall services we provide, 85% of people said they were very or fairly satisfied – an increase of 3% compared to last year. In addition, 83% of people are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live which is 8% higher than last year.

These results were gathered independently and, while we are delighted with the upward trend, we will continue to review our services to ensure we provide the very best for people living in Clanmil homes.

## SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN ACTION

# Museum Project Helps Clanmil's Older People Stay Connected

**A**lmost 600 older people living at Clanmil's sheltered housing schemes throughout Northern Ireland have participated in the first year of a five year Big Lottery funded project designed to improve the quality of life, health and self esteem of isolated older people.

Research shows that loneliness is a major issue for many older people, with more than 66 million hours spent alone by people aged over 65 in Britain each day - equivalent to each person over 65 spending more than 100 days alone each year.

The "Treasure House" project, which Clanmil runs

in partnership with National Museums Northern Ireland, gives people living at its sheltered housing schemes the chance to enjoy regular workshops at museum sites throughout Northern Ireland. People take part in activities, including arts and crafts, local history, music and dance, that prompt memories, start conversations and help build friendships.

Colette Moore, Group Director of Housing at Clanmil said;

"This project encourages our older tenants to get out and enjoy social activities and make new friends. By taking part they have opportunities to reminisce

about the past and also to enjoy new experiences."

She continued: "Activities like this can have such a positive impact on older people's quality of life by helping to keep body and mind active and bringing them together to enjoy each other's company. People's enthusiasm and excitement has been overwhelming and in the first year of the project more than 70% of those who've attended one project session have signed up for more."

Mrs Pat Charlton, who lives at Clanmil's Cedar Court sheltered housing scheme in Whiteabbey has been taking part in project sessions for the

past year. She says;

"I really look forward to the Treasure House days out. There's always something different to see or do and I particularly enjoy the sessions that look back to how things were when I was younger.

"It's lovely to be able to talk about days gone by, to share my memories and hear other people's stories. It's given us all something new to think about and we're certainly never short of something to talk about now."

ABOVE: Isobel, Meta and Anne enjoy a trip to the draper's shop at the Ulster Folk Museum.



## A Warm Welcome

**O**ver the past few months we have welcomed families moving into new housing developments at Ballydonagh Road in Crumlin, Dobson's Way in Bessbrook, Brucevale Park and Lower Oldpark in Belfast, Mountview and Brokerstown Meadow in Lisburn and Dunville Park and Link in Holywood.

All 189 new homes have been built to the Code for

Sustainable Homes high energy efficiency standard and to the Lifetime Homes and Secured by Design standards, which ensure added security for people and flexibility of adaptation if required at a later date.

Lorna Brown recently moved into Dobson's Way in Bessbrook with her sons Conor and Dane. Lorna said:

"We are absolutely delighted with our lovely

new home. It's really bright and modern and is just perfect for us, particularly for Conor with his wheelchair.

"I've had a chance to meet most of my new neighbours and we're all really excited about our new homes. We just can't wait to get settled in."

LEFT: Housing Officer Carrie Fegan welcomes Lorna and Conor to their new home at Dobson's Way in Bessbrook

## SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN ACTION

# New Supported Housing for Young Care Leavers

A new supported housing scheme for young people has opened in Downpatrick.

The scheme in English Street is owned by Clanmil and managed by MACS, working in partnership with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and Northern Ireland Housing Executive. It provides self contained accommodation for young people aged 16 to 21 years who are leaving care or experiencing homelessness.

The Grade B1 listed building has been extensively refurbished by Clanmil to provide two bedsits and six 1 bed apartments along with office and meeting space and overnight facilities for staff. The refurbishment project was part funded by

the Department for Social Development through the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the accommodation is available to young people referred to MACS by the Health Trust and by NIHE.

The support provided by MACS helps prepare young people for life in a home of their own in the future. On site staff support them to learn the skills needed to run a home and to be a good neighbour along with employability skills. Each young person is supported to move on to a more permanent home of their own within two years.

Terri, who moved into the new scheme in April said:



Learning important new skills at English Street, Downpatrick

“Living in English Street is good for me. It’s taught me how living on my own is hard but if I need extra help I’ve always got the support of MACS staff. It has helped me

so much and I’m thankful for my project worker.”

The support services provided are funded by Supporting People and South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust.

## Keeping Our Homes Up to Date

Clanmil is currently implementing a major five year maintenance programme which will see over £8 million invested in our existing homes.

Having surveyed a large proportion of our housing stock over the last year, investment in windows, doors and kitchens was identified as a priority.

So, over the next two years we will be investing over £3.8m in new kitchens in more

than 1000 of our homes. People will be given a choice of cabinet doors, worktops, tiles and flooring, and works will also be undertaken to bring the kitchens up to modern standards in relation to electrical switches and sockets.

We have appointed a dedicated tenant liaison officer to help our residents through what we recognise may be a difficult time with the potential for some disruption.

Clanmil will also be investing over £1m in new

windows and external doors which will help make our homes warmer and more secure.

This substantial investment demonstrates our on-going commitment to providing people with high quality homes they can be proud of.

If you would like further information on any of the articles featured, or if you would like to discuss any other aspect of Clanmil’s work, please contact us at –  
 Clanmil Housing Association, Northern Whig House, 3 Waring Street, Belfast, BT1 2DX  
 Tel: 028 9087 6000 Fax: 028 9087 6001 e-mail: [housing@clanmil.org.uk](mailto:housing@clanmil.org.uk)  
 web: [www.clanmil.org](http://www.clanmil.org) Follow us on Twitter @ClanmilHousing