



## Welcome

Spring is in the air and summer is only a couple of months away and if we have a summer like 2018, we will all be very happy. As the first newsletter of 2019, I would like to highlight the work through 2018, as it was a busy and successful year for the Housing Association. With 406 units of accommodation and new staff on board, it gives the Housing Association a strong position in 2019 as we plan to increase our housing for specific needs within the community, as well as improving our service to you. In the coming weeks, you will be receiving a Tenant Satisfaction Survey from ourselves, in order for you to give us feedback on our services.

Details are also in this newsletter about our new bursary in 2019, the Assistive Technology Bursary, which is an added bonus for being a tenant of the Housing Association! You can apply for this bursary to assist you in living independently within the community with Assistive Technology; see details later in the newsletter.

Major refurbishment works were carried out in some of our properties aiding our current and future tenants to live in comfortable surroundings.

We also saw our planned maintenance program being rolled out after a stock condition surveys was completed in 2017. In 2019, we continue our planned maintenance program throughout our current housing stock, which will help us future proof our housing.

In 2018, we also had our first rent review in 10 years, a €5 increase in rent per week was introduced as well as our annual Management Fee calculations. Also, thank you to the tenants who completed our Income Statement Form in order for us to calculate new annual rent amounts. This process will be sensitively conducted at the end of every year. Lastly, I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and we look forward to helping our tenants with their housing needs in 2019.

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**Remember:** If you would like anything showcased in our newsletter, or have a question please email your Housing Officer on...

**housing@sjog.ie**

**or call**

**Eimear on**

**01-468 6452.**



## *Assistive Technology Bursary...*

Saint John of God Housing Association understands that some of our tenants may require Assistive Technology in order to live independently within the community. This could be as simple as an emergency pendant or could be as big as a SMART home which aids the opening of doors, etc...

We want our tenants to live comfortably, therefore this bursary will aid some tenants or likewise may aid a number of tenants if they wish to submit a group application.

Your application form will have to be submitted to the Housing Association by the end of September in 2019, in order for us to assess your application and to announce the winners by December each year. Remember, if you apply for the bursary, please submit any supporting documentation that may aid your application. This may be an occupational therapist's report, an architect's report or likewise it may even be a story from you as to why you would like the bursary.

Please find enclosed an Application Form should you wish to apply for our Assistive Technology Bursary.

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## *Alterations...*

I would like to remind all residents that you must not carry out any alterations to your homes without consent. This includes alterations such as garden sheds, satellite dishes, or any structural change to the property. If you are planning any alterations or have carried out any work please let your Housing Officer know by calling 01-468 6452 to request an alteration form so that your alteration can be authorised before the work is carried out.

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## *Contents Insurance...*

I would like to remind all residents that it is your responsibility to insure the contents of your home. Saint John of God Housing Association insures the building, however this does not extend to all your home's contents. Contents insurance is not very expensive and can even be purchased at your local Credit Union or post office. So, please insure your contents as it is extremely important should anything happen.

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## *Rent Assessments & MABS*

As you are all aware, there was a rent review in late 2018 and by now your rent has either increased or been reassessed. Your new rent has been applied to your rent account from the 1st January 2019. Can I take this opportunity to thank all the tenants in Saint John of God Housing Association for their co-operation. Likewise, if you are receiving a rent supplement either personally or through the Rental Accommodation Scheme, please note that you could apply for an increase in your rent supplement amount, through your Community Welfare Officer. Please just complete the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Rent Supplement Form and take it to your local Community Welfare Officer in order for them to reassess the amount you receive from the Department of Social Protection.

If you're worried about paying your rent, it is important that you speak to your Housing Officer as soon as possible. Don't ignore rent arrears or any other debts you may have – the earlier you deal with debts the better. You can contact your local Money Advice & Budgeting Service (MABS), who offer free and confidential advice.

**MABS also has a website ([www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie)) and a Helpline 076 07 2000.**



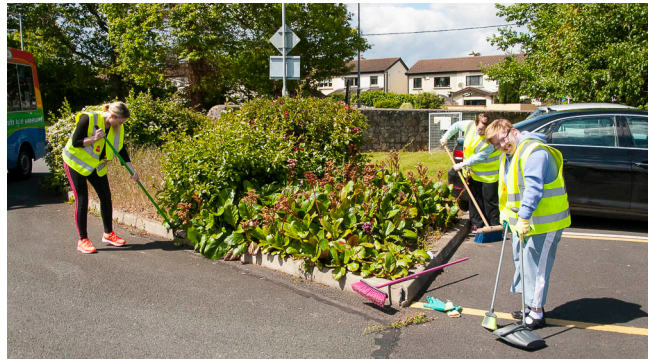
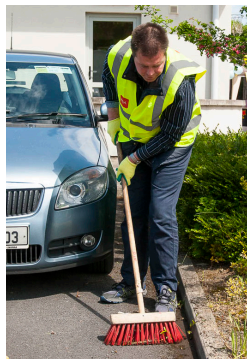
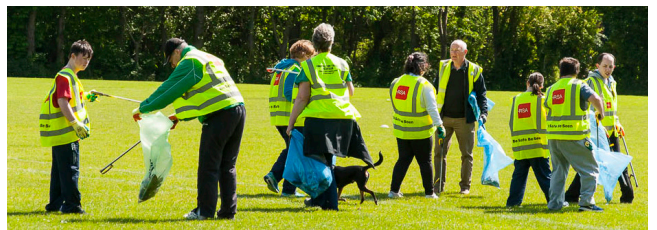
***Hospitality - Compassion - Respect - Justice - Excellence***



## *National Spring Clean...*

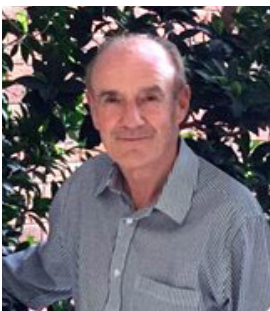
Just to shout out to all tenants, that April is the National Spring Clean month throughout the country. You can get involved with your local community in order to complete a Spring Clean of your estate and your own home. In Tallaght we completed this as a community combined with celebrating Easter. If you want some ideas on how to complete a Spring Clean, please just call your Housing Officer on....

**01-468 6452** for some help in organising your event.



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## *Our Volunteer...*



**John Galloway**, has been volunteering his time, mainly in Tessa House Gleann na hEorna, in Tallaght for over a year now. He is instrumental to the activities within the scheme as well as being the schemes champion for SAGE advocacy service. A big thank you to John for giving up so much of his time in order to give our tenants in Tallaght the highest level of personal service.

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## *New Staff...*

**Niall O'Shea**, has joined Saint John of God Housing Association as the new Commercial Accountant, Niall has joined our Senior Management Team and will be working with Donna Coulahan in our finance department.





## *Christmas Cheer...*

See some photographs from our Christmas Parties in Kildare and Tallaght where nearly 200 of our tenants were invited to attend. In Kildare, the tenants enjoyed a disco and karaoke in Leixlip, whereas in Tallaght our tenants enjoyed a lovely Carol Service from two voluntary choirs as well as a 4 course Christmas Dinner, donated by **KC Peaches Group**.



## *Summing up...*

2018 was a very busy year in Saint John of God Housing Association, as we completed:

- 32 new units of accommodation
- 11 units of accommodation were let for a second time
- 6.21 weeks the time taken to re-let properties
- Rent Arrears amounted to 0.99% of rent roll at the end of the year
- See below some new tenants in the last quarter of 2018:

