

MINISTER LAUNCHES 'CALL FOR HOUSING 2020'

As Ireland continues to face the COVID-19 challenge, additional measures must be taken in order to provide safe and secure homes for all our communities. 'Call for Housing 2020' is one such measure that was recently launched by the new Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD.



A new national call – 'Call for Housing 2020' – has been issued by Darragh O'Brien TD, the new Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, to property owners and developers with vacant properties to make them available for use as social housing.

"Local authorities across the country are urgently seeking vacant residential properties to provide for those who do not have access to housing. We are looking for a range of properties including one bed properties, larger family homes and homes that are or can be adapted for those with a disability or accommodation suitable for older people such as a bungalow or an apartment," Minister O'Brien explained.

The Minister pointed out that property owners can also enter into a secure letting arrangement while retaining ownership of their asset through the Long-Term Social Housing Leasing Scheme. "This will provide them with a stable return on their investment during what is admittedly an uncertain time in terms of the property market. A range of other options are also available to property owners to assist in providing social housing supports.

"I remain firmly of the view that new builds are the appropriate approach to a long-term housing strategy, however I am keenly aware of the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of new builds and my priority is providing sustainable and safe accommodation for those most in need of it," he said.

TWO VACANT PROPERTY SCHEMES

If you have a vacant property, you may be able to provide a home for those most at risk as a result of COVID-19. To help you do this, there are two schemes that you may be able to avail of. These schemes offer you a stable income for your property and provide vulnerable households with a secure home when they need it most:

Property Purchase: If a member of the public owns a vacant property, local authorities may be interested in buying it as part of the 'Call for Housing'. Houses of particular interest to local

authorities include one-bed properties, larger family homes, and those that are or can be adapted for disability or older persons' accommodation, such as a bungalow or an apartment.

Social Housing Leasing Scheme: A property owner can lease their property to a local authority for a fixed term, for an agreed amount which is based on a discounted market rent. Under this scheme, local authorities manage all aspects of the tenancy, including the day-to-day maintenance of the home. The property owner has no relationship with the subtenant.

ENHANCED LEASING SCHEME

Local authorities will pay up to 80-85% of the open market rent over the term of the lease. A higher proportion of market rent may be available for landlords willing to carry out management and maintenance responsibilities through the Enhanced Leasing Scheme (for proposals of more than 20 units only. The properties can be on multiple sites within the same local authority area).

'Call for Housing 2020' is administered by The Housing Agency and local authorities and is an initiative of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

For further information on the available schemes and details on how property owners can contact their local authority visit www.callforhousing.ie, phone 1800 200 934 (8am-6pm Mon-Fri) or email callforhousing@housingagency.ie.

CALL FOR HOUSING 2020
A national call to property owners and developers