

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Older People Are The Forgotten Homeless

The budget must address the issue of homelessness amongst older people

Dublin, 10th October ALONE, the charity that cares for older people in need is advocating the need for strong measures in the coming budget to tackle the growing homelessness problem amongst older people

CEO of ALONE, Sean Moynihan says, "Concrete, comprehensive and ambitious plans are crucial to tackle Ireland's growing homeless problem among vulnerable older people. There are currently almost 5000 older people waiting on social housing but in reality the figures are much higher."

ALONE believe that the stimulus package that is due to be announced for housing is a unique opportunity for this government to put in place a long-term sustainable infrastructure of housing that will serve the country's ageing population for many years to come. ALONE are adamant that the money invested in housing needs to match the scale of the crisis. Last year Government expenditure on rent allowance came to €503 million, this rent is 'lost' to the private sector and provides no long-term social benefit.

Moynihan continued, "The private sector cannot resolve the issue alone, as they are not capable of addressing the housing need for vulnerable older people. Incentives should be provided for Social Housing providers who are committed to providing housing with supports to our most vulnerable members of society. These properties would remain an asset to the state and the Irish people for years to come and provide a low cost, high value solution to the housing crisis for older people in need."

If the Government were to put investment into supporting social housing providers, it would create the same level of jobs and represent the same stimulus into the economy. The difference being that the money would be invested into supporting our most vulnerable citizens. Many of the homeless older people who come to ALONE for help have worked hard all their lives but were never in a position to afford their own home.

ALONE provide 100 houses for older people in need but for every new house they make available, they have to turn away 24 applicants. Since 2009, the number of older people at risk of poverty and deprivation has drastically risen from one in ten, to one in five. (Source, CSO 2012)

ALONE can be contacted on (01) 679 1032 for those who have concerns about their own wellbeing, or the wellbeing of a vulnerable older person in the community or visit www.alone.ie

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Established in 1977, ALONE is an independent charity that works with the 1 in 5 older people who are homeless, socially isolated, living in deprivation or in crisis. We provide Supportive Housing, Befriending, Community Response and Campaigning services to hundreds of older people every week. We receive no Government funding for our day-to-day activities so we rely solely on the generosity of the public to continue our work. ALONE's services are quality approved and are delivered 365 days a year.

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