ALONE corroborate McVerry's remarks about homelessness
Charity claims that announcement of €50 million investment into social housing is a smokescreen

Dublin, 19ᵗʰ May 2014 ALONE, the charity that cares for older people in need, has today echoed remarks from Father Peter McVerry that we could soon be facing a "tsunami of homelessness in Ireland" for older people.

CEO of ALONE, Sean Moynihan claims that Minister Jan O'Sullivan's announcement of €50 million in funding for social housing is concealing the real story, "Funding for the provision of homes for the most vulnerable in society has been cut by €104 million since 2010. This once off payment of €50 million means that we are still €54 million worse off than we were four years ago. Whilst we welcome this funding, we are acutely aware that it is not enough and they are only giving back a fraction of what they have taken away".

There is a huge shortage of housing for single older people in Dublin and ALONE are seeing a dramatic increase in the number of older people coming to them with housing needs. According to TILDA the number of people over the age of 65 will double over the next 30 years. Older people are the fastest growing demographic, yet there is no dedicated plan in place to address their complex housing needs.

CEO of ALONE, Sean Moynihan said of the issue, "We in ALONE are doing everything we can to prevent older people living in poor housing conditions or becoming homeless but the government keep making decisions that are adversely affecting the most vulnerable in society. We are unable to meet demand and despite our best efforts, we know that there are older people living in unsuitable and unsafe conditions, the government must address the housing needs of our older people."

Moynihan continued, "We are calling on the government to partner with social housing providers such as ALONE who have the skills, experience and proven track record in providing low cost, high value supportive housing for the most vulnerable people in our communities. By supporting us with capital grants, we can combine this with our own money and borrow the remainder to provide long term, sustainable housing for vulnerable older people, with the correct supports. The government can make their funds go further by working in partnership with the community and voluntary sector instead of developers".

Some older people who are homeless simply have a housing need, but many also have complex support needs. They may have found themselves in this situation because of poor mental health, physical problems, isolation or addition problems. For these most vulnerable older people, there is no point in simply throwing money at the issue. Long term supports need to be put in place to ensure they can remain in the community.

ALONE recently launched a housing campaign calling on local Government candidates to promise that; if elected they will work to resolve the housing crisis facing older people and release boarded up houses to be utilised by charities like ALONE. Over 100 local election candidates have pledged their support so far: http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/release-boarded-up-homes-for-older-people-in-need

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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About ALONE:
Established in 1977, ALONE provides vital supports to the one in ten older people who are in need. The charity provides a volunteer befriending service, campaigning services, a community response service and provides 100 age-friendly homes to older people in need. ALONE receives no state funding for their day to day activities, it is through the donations from members of the public that the organisation can carry out its essential activities.

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