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ALONE condemns recent Castleknock eviction of elderly couple

ALONE, the charity that cares for older people in need has today condemned the move by receivers to evict a pensioner couple who have rented the same house in Castleknock, Dublin, for 15 years.

CEO of ALONE Sean Moynihan said, "This is far from an isolated incident, ALONE are currently working with a number of older people in similar situations. Older people in Dublin City are being pushed to the wayside in an increasingly competitive housing market that they can't afford to compete in. It is reprehensible that older people who have worked hard all their lives and consistently paid their rent are being put into situations of stress, anxiety and fear."

ALONE have revealed that for every older person they are able to house, they are turning another 29 away. The charity claims that the waiting list for houses is growing by the day, yet despite the vital services they are providing ALONE receive no support as a social housing developer.

One such gentleman on the waiting list is 63 year old Paul* who was reared in an institution and has no family. He suffers from high blood pressure and stress caused by his unsafe living conditions – for the last 35 years he has been living in a small, one-room apartment that has no fire exit. Paul said of his current living situation, "At present I could be dead in the house and no one would know. A small, secure home would mean the world to me."

Another older person on ALONE's housing list is 63 year old Alicel* who has physical health issues. She was previously living in private rented accommodation but when the house was repossessed by the bank she became homeless. Alice is currently living in short term (12 week) emergency accommodation as she can't get private rented accommodation. Alice said of her housing situation, "I feel I can't live a proper life moving from place to place. I would like to live the rest of my life with some dignity."

Alice and Paul are just two of the many older people in Dublin who are living in housing crisis. For them, every day is filled with worry and stress about their future living situations and with the numbers on the waiting lists increasing every day ALONE will struggle to house every older person in need without government support.

Moynihan continued, "We're doing everything we can, our resources are stretched the limit and the situation is only getting worse. We want to be able to help every older person in need, but without the support of the government the task is too big for us and other independent housing providers. Older people must be included in the housing strategy with special housing supports for older people."