



# NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2023

## Hello from our Chairperson

As Chairperson of the Oaklee Housing Tenant Forum I feel it is particularly important to ensure that all Oaklee Housing tenants are effectively communicated with by the organisation and we are kept informed of key relevant issues impacting on our homes and communities.

I also think that the promotion of positive good news stories involving Oaklee Housing tenants across the country is so important as well, helping us all get a better understanding of the great voluntary work undertaken by tenants helping to make their neighbourhoods better places to live. In this context I welcome the production of this tenant newsletter as another key communication tool for the sharing of information and tenant stories.

These are exciting times for everyone associated with Oaklee Housing, tenants and staff alike. The launch of the Oaklee Housing Tenant Engagement Strategy on the 6th July 2023 is another important milestone for us all. The strategy will help give tenants a stronger input into how Oaklee Housing is run and sets out how we can continue to develop tenant participation in decision making and improve the housing services we receive.

One of the key actions within this strategy relates to a review of the tenant newsletter. We would love to hear your thoughts and opinions on this newsletter to help us with the review process. Please send all comments through to [tenantengagement@oakleehousing.ie](mailto:tenantengagement@oakleehousing.ie)

We hope you enjoy reading this publication.

**Oaklee Housing**  
132 James's Street  
Dublin D08 PK25  
[enquiries@oakleehousing.ie](mailto:enquiries@oakleehousing.ie)

T: 01 400 2650  
[oaklee.ie](http://oaklee.ie)



**Dr Robbie Sinnott,**  
Chairperson  
Oaklee  
Housing  
Tenant Forum



# Meet the newest member of our Housing Team

Hello everyone, my name is *Caroline Stewart*, I live in the South-East. And I have just joined the Oaklee Housing team as your new Housing Officer. I have previously worked with Respond Housing and have gained vast experience in estate management, community development and tenant engagement over the past 14 years. I am delighted now to take up this position as the newest housing officer for Oaklee Housing in the South-East.

I am looking forward to working with my new team here in Oaklee Housing and engaging with you, the residents, from my office base here in Kilkenny.



## Your Housing Officers and their regions

**Housing Officer:**  
**Angela Lynch**

CAVAN  
DONEGAL  
LEITRIM  
LOUTH  
MONAGHAN  
SLIGO



**Housing Officer:**  
**Bobby Aherne**  
DUBLIN (SOUTH)  
MEATH



**Housing Officer:**  
**Sandra White**

FINGAL  
DUBLIN (NORTH)



**Housing Officer:**  
**Robert Bermingham**  
SOUTH DUBLIN  
WICKLOW  
KILDARE (SOUTH)  
DLRD



**Housing Officer:**  
**Sarah Louise Grey**

OFFALY  
WESTMEATH  
KILDARE (NORTH)



**Housing Officer:**  
**Caroline Stewart**  
CARLOW  
KILKENNY  
LAOIS  
TIPPERARY  
WATERFORD  
WEXFORD



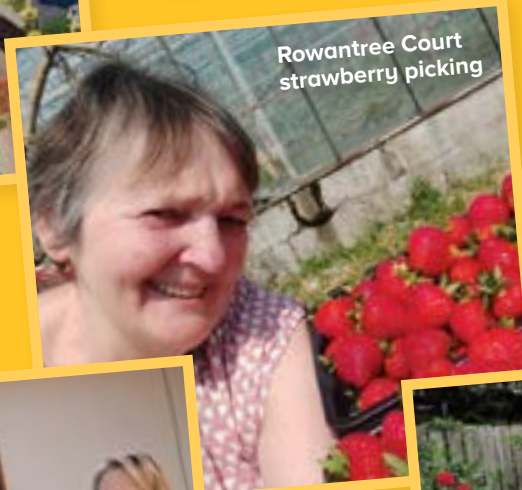
# Oaklee Out and About



Walkinslough Court planting workshop



Walkinslough Clean up



Rowantree Court strawberry picking

## Strawberry Picking in Co. Louth

Tenants from Rowantree Ct. took a day trip on Tuesday 13th to the picturesque Cooley Peninsula in County Louth.

Looking for something different to do, they went to O' Neill's Flowers and Garden Centre where they were able to pick their very own strawberries. An enjoyable day out for Regina, Zita and Lydumyla.



Presentation to Sharon and Anne



Hawthorn clean up

## Token of Appreciation

Oaklee Housing Tenant Engagement Officer Richard Mealey presents a small token of appreciation on behalf of the Oaklee Housing Tenant Forum to Choice Development team members Sharon Leslie and Anne McAllister for all the support provided to Oaklee Housing Tenant Forum members over the years. In addition to flowers and chocolates Sharon was also gifted a beautiful Galway crystal glass plaque.



# Hello from our new Tenant Engagement Officer

I am delighted to introduce myself as your Tenant Engagement Officer. I commenced employment with Oaklee Housing on the 27th February 2023 and am looking forward to getting to know you all better in the months ahead and getting to know the communities in which you live.

In creating the position of Tenant Engagement Officer, Oaklee Housing has made a significant strategic commitment to resourcing tenant engagement opportunities for you all and helping to strengthen the tenant voice within the organisation.

One of my key actions is to implement and deliver Oaklee Housing's Tenant Engagement Strategy and action plan in collaboration with the Tenant Forum and Oaklee Housing Colleagues. One of the key challenges for me will be to grow the membership of the Oaklee Housing tenant forum. This forum is an important vehicle for tenants helping to shape and influence how we are doing things as an organization. However, we need the input of our tenants to make this work and if this is something that you think you may be interested in, please get in touch with me and I will be happy to meet you to discuss further.

I will also be exploring how to develop new and innovative ways of engaging with tenants and enable the opportunity for valuable feedback into the organisation.

This could be through the delivery of:

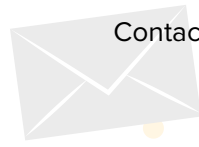
- more community events in your area,
- structured tenant meetings and housing clinics
- thematic focus groups may be more relevant to discuss specific issues for tenants,
- online surveys and so on.



**Richard Mealey**  
Tenant Engagement Officer

I have already visited a significant number of our housing developments throughout 19 counties across the country in my short time with Oaklee Housing, meeting as many tenants as I can, but there is still much more to do. If you would like me to visit your scheme, or you would like a chat about getting involved in Oaklee Housing tenant engagement activities please get in touch. I would love to hear from you.

Contact: [tenantengagement@oakleehousing.ie](mailto:tenantengagement@oakleehousing.ie)



# Paying your rent made easy



## Standing Order

We all lead busy lives, why not take the hassle out of paying your rent by setting up a standing order with your bank?

A standing order is an instruction from you to your bank to make regular payments of a fixed amount to a beneficiary, in this case, Oaklee Housing.

You can set up a standing order on your phone or computer or in-branch and have payments made to suit you and your income.

- Weekly
- Fortnightly
- Monthly

### The benefits include:

- ✓ **Your rent is always paid on time**
- ✓ **You're always in control**  
You decide when and how much
- ✓ **Saves you time**  
No more queuing to pay
- ✓ **Safe way to pay**  
No need to carry cash
- ✓ **Hassle Free**

Why not download a standing order form [HERE](#) today

## Household Budget Scheme

The Household Budget Scheme is a scheme that allows people to use certain social welfare payments to pay regular amounts towards their rent and household utility bills.

Under the scheme, a fixed amount is deducted from your social welfare payment each week.

To qualify, you must be in receipt of specific social welfare payments and your payment must be made through your local post office.

The scheme is operated by An Post and is completely free of any charge.

All you need to do is complete the enclosed Household Budget Scheme form and return it to the team in Oaklee Housing who will then set it up on your behalf with An Post.

### The benefits include:

- ✓ **Your rent is always paid on time**
- ✓ **Saves you time**  
No more queuing at the post office
- ✓ **Safe way to pay**
- ✓ **Hassle Free**  
No more looking for that payment swipe card

For more information on the An Post Household budget scheme [CLICK HERE](#)

You will  
always pay  
rent on time!



# Oaklee Tenant Forum

**At Oaklee Housing, we are committed to involving our tenants in the shaping and improving of our services with the ultimate aim of delivering positive outcomes for our tenants and their communities.**

The appointment of Richard Mealey is a demonstration of that commitment.

But this is a two-way commitment: To credibly deliver a meaningful tenant engagement programme of activities and initiatives we need the involvement of our tenants. In other words, we need you!

Only by working together can we truly and credibly begin to improve our services, build stronger communities and drive tenant centric change.

**Some of the benefits of effective tenant engagement are as follows:**

- Improved services
- Providing services that reflect tenants' needs
- Increased tenant satisfaction
- Better relations between Oaklee Housing and tenants, each being more aware of each other's position and perspective
- Improved efficiencies and better value for money
- Meet new people
- Increased knowledge and understanding
- Sharing ideas and finding solutions
- Building mutual respect and trust
- Increased communication between tenants and staff
- Creating a sense of community where tenants feel valued

## Opportunity: **TENANT FORUM** 1

### What is it?

The Tenant Forum is a group of Oaklee Housing tenants from various housing schemes around the country. Its purpose is to work in partnership with Oaklee Housing to improve service delivery by:

- Providing feedback on plans, policies, and strategies
- Overseeing all tenant related procedures & publications and
- Keeping tenants informed

#### TIME COMMITMENT

The Tenant Forum meets at least 4 times per year. Meetings last no longer than 2 hours and can be held in person at an agreed location, online or a mix of both.

## Opportunity: **HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE** 2

### What is it?

The Housing Services Committee is a committee of the Oaklee Housing Board. At committee meetings, Board members and members of the Senior Management team meet with two nominated Tenant Forum members to present policies and performance related information.

#### TIME COMMITMENT

At least 4 meetings per year.

## Opportunity: **RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS** 3

### What is it?

Tenants in particular housing schemes come together to address locally based issues. Oaklee Housing recognises the importance of resident associations and can assist groups to get started. If you are interested in setting up a Resident Association for your area, please contact your Housing Officer.

#### TIME COMMITMENT

This is very much dependent on the residents themselves.



## Opportunity: **ESTATE WALKABOUT** 4

### What is it?

This is an opportunity for the Oaklee Housing team and tenants to conduct a joint walkabout in their estate / area to help identify issues that are having an impact on their neighbourhood.

#### TIME COMMITMENT

1 estate walkabout per annum.



## Opportunity: **EDITORIAL PANEL** 5

### What is it?

The Editorial Panel is a small group of tenants whose role is to assist the Oaklee Housing communications department to collate and produce regular newsletters per year as well as the annual calendar.

#### TIME COMMITMENT

There will be a maximum of 4 newsletters produced per annum.

## Opportunity: **SURVEYS** 6

### What is it?

This involves tenants' completing surveys to provide feedback on specific issues and responding to the Oaklee Housing annual tenant satisfaction survey.

#### TIME COMMITMENT

At your own discretion.



## Opportunity: **FOCUS GROUP** 7

### What is it?

From time-to-time Oaklee Housing may wish to seek your views and opinions on a specific service area to assess how it is being delivered and more importantly how it can be improved.

#### TIME COMMITMENT

Focus groups can be held in person, online or a mix of both and should last no longer than 2 hours maximum.

## Opportunity: **ARMCHAIR PANEL** 8

### What is it?

Would you like to provide your feedback on Oaklee Housing policies, procedures and consultations without the need to attend a meeting? Then this opportunity allows you to do so from the comfort of your own home.

#### TIME COMMITMENT

At your own discretion.



## Get Involved!

There are plenty of ways to get involved.

## Interested?

If you're interesting in being part of something great, then email Richard with your name, contact telephone number and the area you'd like to get involved in to:

[tenantengagement@oakleehousing.ie](mailto:tenantengagement@oakleehousing.ie)