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Tenancy Handbook

Comhairle Chontae Fhine Gall/Fingal County Council

Introduction

Fingal County Council is pleased to give you a copy of its Tenant Handbook. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to all the basic information you need as a tenant.

This Handbook is an important document giving factual information about the conditions of your tenancy - what you may expect the Council to do, and what the Council expects you to do. The Handbook is an important element in the flow of information between Fingal County Council and its Tenants. It allows us to give you more and better information about Fingal County Council and the way it operates.

There is information about the Tenancy Agreement, what elements of repair and maintenance are your responsibility and what are the Council's. The Handbook tells you about how your rent is calculated and the ways in which it can be paid. We also tell you something about how you can become involved in the care of your estate and what you and the Council together can do about anti-social behaviour. There is helpful information about how to protect your home and about the danger of fire which, of course, we all want to prevent and avoid. We include information as to what choices you have about the kind of housing that will suit your own particular circumstances, that is, whether to buy out your rented house, to hand back your house and buy / build privately, or to have an extension, or other changes made to your house.





For your convenience, a list of contact telephone numbers including the emergency and freephone numbers are included at the back of this Handbook. This

information will help give easy, speedy and direct access to those who provide the service you need.

We hope this Handbook will be of help to you and your family, in your house and your estate. We hope that you will be encouraged to take an active part in the running of your estate. We welcome any ideas or suggestions you may have to make your estate a better place in which you and your family may live.

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General Information

- Fingal County Council is comprised of Balbriggan/Swords, Malahide/Howth and Castleknock/Mulhuddart electoral areas. The population of Fingal County Council is approximately 197,000.
- The Housing Department manages the Council's Housing stock of approximately 3,500 houses.
- Maintenance Section respond to approximately 4,500 calls per annum.
- The Council has embarked on a major new initiative in the area of Estate Management. THE FUNCTIONS OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT SECTION ARE:
 - Establishing, promoting and developing resident participation in Estate Management.
 - Dealing with anti social behaviour in Council estates throughout the County.
 - Providing Tenant Induction Training Courses for all of our new tenants.

What have you rented?

It is important that you know precisely what it is you have rented. Many people think it is only the house they have rented. In fact you have rented the house and the front and back gardens. They are provided for your use and enjoyment. You are responsible for your house and gardens. It is part of your agreement with Fingal County Council that you will keep your house and gardens in good condition and not allow them to become an eyesore to your neighbours.

This means that you may not use your house or gardens for any business purpose, and you may not allow anybody else to do so either.

You are obliged to keep your garden in a clean and tidy condition, so as not to be offensive to neighbours, or to degrade your estate. Apart from these legal requirements you are expected to take good care of your garden, and to keep it in a pleasant condition. You are also obliged by law to keep the footpath outside your house free from litter and you should not under any circumstances use it, or allow it to be used, for dumping. Apart from the unsightliness and unpleasant conditions, any dumping is likely to attract various kinds of vermin and animals, which could be a danger to your family's health.

Tenancy Conditions

The formal Tenancy Agreement that you signed when you were allocated the house contains a good deal of information about your tenancy conditions. The conditions of your Tenancy are explained in your Tenancy Agreement. These are summarised below in a question and answer format.

How does my Tenancy operate?

- You must live in the house as your main home and nowhere else.
- You must not use the house, garden or shed for business purposes.
- You may not pass the occupancy of your home to anyone without the Council's permission.
- You must give the Council four weeks notice if you wish to surrender your house.

What are my responsibilities in relation to rent?

- You must pay your rent and any other charges when they are due.
- You must give the Council full details of all household income.
- You must return your rent assessment form annually and any other time there is a change of income,
- Arrangement for clearance of arrears must not be broken once entered into.

Can I take in Lodgers or Sub-tenants?

No, not without written permission from the Council.

Am I responsible for the garden or just the house itself?

- You are responsible for both. You must make sure that you, other people living with you including children, and any visitors to your home, look after your home and your garden in a reasonable manner. This also includes maintenance of walls, gates or fences.

- Under the Litter Byelaws, each householder is obliged to keep free of litter the footpath or pavement adjoining their property and also any road gutter on or at the side of such pavement. Refuse should be left for collection in a manner which ensures that it does not become litter or become a likely health hazard.
- Any laneway/walkway adjoining your house should be kept in a clean condition and should not be used for dumping.

Can I make alterations to my house?

- You must get our agreement before starting any improvements, alterations or additions to your home.
- We are usually happy to agree, but we must check for safety and other structural reasons.
- You may also need planning permission for certain works.
- You must be prepared to provide a certificate from a qualified architect/ engineer on completion of the work certifying that the work has been carried out in accordance with proper building practice and Building Regulations.

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What happens if I disturb my neighbours?

- You must make sure that you, other people living with you including children, and any visitors to your home do not become a nuisance to your neighbours.

In Particular, THIS MEANS:

- No Drugs
- No Criminal activity
- No Violence or Threats of Violence
- No Harassment or Abuse
- No Loud Noise
- No Vandalism

If you, or anyone in your home, is involved in any of these activities you run the risk of losing your home.



Can I Keep Pets in the House

- You may keep domestic pets, such as cats or dogs, as long as they don't become a nuisance to your neighbours.
- Horses, poultry, pigs and birds are not domestic animals. Keeping any of these is a serious breach of your tenancy agreement.
- Under the Control of Dogs Act, 1986, every dog should be licensed. A licence costs €12.70 and is available from any Post Office or directly from the Council.
- Failure to have a dog licensed or to keep it under proper control, will result in an on-the-spot fine of €30.00.



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Is my house insured by the Council?

The Council insures the structure of all rented houses against fire, flood and storm damage. As a tenant you are advised to insure the contents of your house. Should you decide to buy your house or your house is a "vested cottage", you then become responsible for both structural and contents insurance.

Where any wilful, or malicious damage occurs in your house or gardens, you, as tenant are responsible for the repair. If the Council carries out the work, the cost of repair will be charged to you. Should any damage be caused to your house by destruction, burglary, house-breaking, larceny or theft, you, as tenant are responsible for repairs to doors, windows, fixtures and fittings.

The County Council has a policy on the repair and maintenance of its houses, and also on how it treats various kinds of requests for attention. Any major work likely to affect the structural condition of a rented house will be carried out

by the Council. The Council also carries out environmental work to estates: dealing with laneways, graffiti, litter, public lighting etc. In the event of a fire occurring in your house, it is Council policy to install standard fixtures and fittings where required.

The Council considers requests to execute “tenant responsibility repairs” where exceptional circumstances such as old age, infirmity or disability make it impossible for the tenant to do so. If you are an old age pensioner, or disabled, and you are unable to look after your house, you should contact the Housing Maintenance Section for further information and assistance. (Telephone 8905413)

N.B. You should note that the Council may decide not to carry out non-essential repairs to your house if your rent account is in arrears.

The Council is not responsible for the control of rodents or pests. The Northern Area Health Board has a pest control section which provides the necessary service. They may be contacted on telephone 01 8098360.



HOW CAN I CONTACT THE COUNCIL'S HOUSING DEPARTMENT

You may write or call into us at:

Fingal County Council
County Hall
Swords
Fingal
Co. Dublin
Telephone: 890 5000
Web: www.fingalcoco.ie

Fingal County Council
Grove Road
Blanchardstown
Dublin 15
Telephone: 890 5390

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Fingal County Council
Town Hall
Balbriggan
Co. Dublin
Telephone: 870 4413
Fax: 841 2044



Your Housing Options

Fingal County Council aims to provide suitable accommodation to qualified applicants in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Priorities for Letting Housing Accommodation. However, your circumstances may change: for example your family size may increase, or it may decrease, you may get a job elsewhere and want to live nearer to your new workplace; you may wish to live near an ageing parent or an ailing member of the family. Housing Allocations considers applications from Council tenants seeking transfers to alternative accommodation and mutual interchange of tenancies with other local authority tenants. The following are some of the options available to you with regard to changes in circumstances and transferring :

Transfer to another Council house: The following are some of the matters taken into account when considering your application: why you need the transfer, whether there are any vacancies in the area requested, the physical condition of your dwelling, how many applicants are on the housing list, are there priority applicants, your rent payment record, whether there has been any incidence of anti-social behaviour associated with your house.

Mutual transfer of tenancy with another Council tenant: We look at reasons for intertransfer, clear rent records, good tenancy record, profile of dwellings and absence of anti-social behaviour.

Mutual transfer of tenancy with a tenant of another Local Authority: This is possible, assuming consideration is also being given by the second Local Authority. Your track record and that of the other applicant must be in good standing i.e no rent arrears, complaints of an anti-social nature etc.

Change the name of the tenancy: You should apply for a change in the tenancy by way of a "Transfer of Tenancy Form" which you can get from any of our offices. There are certain

things required by the Council so that we can consider your application: for example, if one of the named tenants has died we require a Death Certificate; if there is a marriage breakdown we need the relevant legal document (for Separation or Divorce or whatever is appropriate); if you marry or want to add someone to the tenancy, we need a Marriage Certificate or sufficient information about the other person.

Buy your rented house from the Council:

This depends on your income, the length of time you have been living in your house, your family circumstances and the absence of anti-social behaviour. The Council however do not sell one-bedroom dwelling units which are generally provided for Senior Citizens. The Council's Sales Scheme Section operates the tenant purchase schemes for Local Authority dwellings, which are announced by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government from time to time. Details of the most recent scheme are available from the Sales Scheme Section, (Telephone 890 5421).

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Necessary Alterations:

For medical or over-crowding reasons the Council will consider your request. The Council's Disabled Person's Grants (D.P.G.) Section will assist you with this. (Telephone 890 6204).

Further Information

There are many sources of information and advice on all aspects of housing. The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government produces several leaflets providing information on many matters that might be of interest to you. These leaflets may be obtained at Fingal County Council, Fingal County Hall, Main Street, Swords, Co Dublin, or at our Fingal County Council Civic Offices, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, or at Fingal County Council, Town Hall, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin. You may also request these leaflets from your local library.

How soon after I become a tenant can I apply for a transfer?

Normally applicants will only be considered for transfer if they have resided in their current house for at least two years.

Can the Council refuse to make a Transfer offer?

Yes. The Council will refuse to make a transfer offer in the following cases :

- Rent Arrears – If there are rent arrears or outstanding service charges
- Non-Compliance with Letting Agreements – (Compliance with the Council’s Letting Conditions must be satisfactory and the dwelling being surrendered must be in a good condition.)
- Anti-Social Behaviour – Tenants or members of their household who engage in anti-social behaviour will not be considered for transfers and may in fact be evicted by the Council.
- Non-Disclosure of Information – The Council may also refuse to offer a transfer where a transfer applicant has refused to disclose any information that is requested either for the purpose of assessing the application or for estate management purposes.



When I am applying for a transfer can I choose the area?

The Council is divided into four general housing areas. They are, Balbriggan, Swords, Malahide/Howth and Blanchardstown. Transfer applicants may select any/all of the four areas for which they wish to be considered for housing. They will then be placed on the Transfer Lists for the areas they selected.

How long will a transfer application take?

This depends on the area sought and the availability of houses in that area.

How does the Council decide whom to allocate large dwellings to?

The Council allocates houses in accordance with its Scheme of Letting Priorities. Larger dwellings are generally allocated to larger households and smaller dwellings to smaller households. This is to ensure the best possible use of the available dwellings.

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If my house is over-crowded, is there anything I can do?

- (a) apply for a transfer to more suitable accommodation or
- (b) in exceptional circumstances the Council may consider carrying out extensions/alterations to your existing house.

Links to Voluntary Housing Groups

The Council is working with a number of voluntary bodies to provide housing accommodation. These include :

- Sophia Housing Association – Transitional Housing Project
- Fold Housing Association – Sheltered Housing Project
- Iveagh Trust – Social Housing
- NABCO – Social Housing
- Sonas Housing Association – Womens Refuge
- NABCO/Hail – Integrated Housing Project
- Respond – Integrated Housing Project

Rent

The Housing Revenue Section will assess your rent and deal with any queries that you may have about your account, methods of payment etc. Some general questions are answered below but you can call the Housing Revenue Section at any time to make more specific queries in relation to your account. It is important that you know your account number before calling us. It will be on your payment card and on any rent statement sent to you.

How can I pay my rent?

It is the Council's policy to provide its tenants with as broad a range of payment methods as possible. Payments can currently be made by the following methods :

- Household Budget Scheme (details from the Council's Rent Section)
- Bill pay (through the Post Office) with your rent card
- On-line at www.billpay.ie
- At the County Hall, Swords, Co Dublin, between the hours 9.30am - 3.30pm (Mon – Fri) or in person at the Council's CASH OFFICES, Fingal County Council Civic Offices, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.
- Standing Order
- Through an arrangement with M.A.B.S. (Money Advice & Budgeting Service)



If you wish to post your payment into the Council you should do so by way of Postal Order or Cheque. In the interest of security we would advise that you register the letter. **DO NOT SEND CASH.**

All postal payments should be addressed to :
Fingal County Council
P.O. Box 174
Main Street
Swords, Fingal
Co Dublin

Remember: all methods of payment should include your Name, address and rent account number.

How is my rent calculated?

Your rent is calculated based on the Council's Differential Rent Scheme. Rents are based on household income in a manner which ensures that the amount of your income charged as rent is reasonable and does not lead to undue financial difficulties. The Council reviews this Scheme each year. It is important that you complete a rent assessment form each year when requested by the Council.

What if I don't return my Rent Assessment Form each year?

Failure to return your rent assessment form each year will mean you will incur a penal rent. A further non-refundable penalty will also be added to this penal amount.

What if my circumstances change?

If circumstances change in your house you should, in your own interests, inform the Council's Revenue Section. For example, you should let us know when :

- A person in your household gets a job
- A person with an income joins the household
- A person leaves the household
- A person in the household starts claiming Social Welfare
- There is a death in the household
- There is a birth in the household
- A person in the household leaves or loses their job
- A person in the household turns 18 years of age

What if I don't notify the Council when my circumstances change?

It is important that you inform the Revenue Section of any such change. Your rent will be re-calculated from the date the changes happen. This could mean a saving for you. Even if it means an increase in your rent, it is better for you to avoid arrears by informing the Council promptly of the changes. Otherwise this could result in a serious arrears situation.

What if my rent falls into arrears?

If you are in arrears, the sooner you talk to us and tackle the problem, the better. If you have missed payments, you should contact us immediately before the situation gets out of hand. You can clear your arrears bit by bit provided you make an arrangement and keep to it. In the majority of cases such arrangements take the form of the weekly payment plus an agreed contribution towards the arrears. You will be required to commit yourself to such agreements by signing undertakings to meet the agreed payments. M.A.B.S. (Money Advice and Budgeting Service) is available to advise on budgeting/management of arrears; please refer to the telephone list at the back of this Handbook for contact numbers.

Above all, do not be afraid to talk to us if you know you are going to fall into arrears. We all know that people can fall on hard times. You can make an arrangement with the Council to meet your changed circumstances.

Will the Council take me to Court/Evict me?

Yes. The Council will pursue arrears and will evict you if you persistently refuse to pay your rent.

So Remember : if you are in arrears the sooner you talk to us about it the better. Contact no.: 890 5433



Maintenance

The Housing Maintenance Section is responsible for the management and control of the Council's rented housing stock.

The administration of the maintenance function is conducted from the Housing Department in O'Connell Street. Maintenance and repair work is carried out by work units operating from Swords and Blanchardstown. If you have any queries about maintenance, you should contact the Maintenance Section, Fingal County Council Civic Offices, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15. Telephone 01 8905417/5385.

How long will it take for repairs to be carried out?

The Council categorises maintenance complaints under four headings:

- Emergency** this is the kind of problem where there could be a danger to life.
- Urgent** this is the kind of problem which could cause serious damage to the house
- Routine** this is the kind of problem which needs attention but is not a danger to life or property and which can wait until emergency and urgent problems have been dealt with.
- Cyclical** other works are carried out during the cyclical maintenance programme every 5-7 years.



It is the Council's objective to respond to maintenance requests in the first three categories within the time scale listed below:

CATEGORY TIMESCALE

Emergency 1-3 Working Days.

Urgent 10 Working Days

Routine 12 Weeks.

The following are broad examples of the types of repair in each category depending on the circumstances.

Emergency:

- Electrical problem with fuseboard
- Sockets Sparking
- Loose tiles on roof (where a danger might exist).
- Burst pipe (in attic or 1st floor)

Routine:

- Repairs to fire bricks/back
- Broken/cracked toilet cistern

Urgent:

- Leaks to bath or sink or shower
- Water cylinder/Water tank empty
- Repair to Heating System

Cyclical:

- External Painting
- Leaking gutters
- Rotten fascia boards



What should I do if the repair team call to my house while I'm not there?

If the repair team calls to your house and cannot gain access, they will leave a card with a contact number for the Depot. You should telephone the Depot and leave details of the most appropriate day/time to call again.

Will the Council carry out any repair I want?

No. A clear division of repair responsibility between the Council and its tenants has been defined. Your Tenancy Agreement will provide further information.

What type of repairs am I responsible for?

The following are examples of the types of repairs for which you are responsible:

Repairs/Maintenance inside the House.

- Plaster cracks
- Repairs to, or replacement of cupboards, wardrobes, kitchen units and their doors, hinges, handles, locks, catches, and drawers
- Curtain rails, and window boards
- Hat and coat hooks, and boards
- Chimney sweeping
- Wall and floor tiles
- Woodwork such as floors, doors, and skirting boards
- Ventilator covers

Doors and Windows

- External and internal door locks and handles
- Window stays, catches and restrictors;
- Draught-proofing of doors and windows
- Replacement of broken glass
- Permavents – where fitted
- Internal tiles on window cills and window boards
- Letter – boxes
- Timberwork on windows, internally, should be painted by the tenant on a regular basis (maximum interval of five years).

N.B. You should also note that you are responsible for repairs arising from condensation damage.



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Condensation

- WHY? Warm moist air in contact with a cold surface
- WHEN? Usually during winter months
- WHERE? For short periods in bathrooms and kitchens; for long periods in unheated bedrooms and other unventilated areas such as wardrobes, cupboards or corners.

Cure/Prevention:

(a) Prevent spread of moist air

- After a bath keep the bathroom window open and the bathroom door shut.
- Do likewise with kitchen when cooking, or after laundering.
- Moveable gas or electric heaters – apart from being careful when using these, make sure there is good ventilation.

(b) Provide proper ventilation

- Especially when cooking or washing clothes
- Don't use unventilated cupboards for drying clothes
- Make sure windows and/or ventilators are kept open for reasonable periods – always, of course, being mindful of security

(c) Provide some level of heating

- Try to have all rooms at least partially heated. If rooms are unheated, leave a window slightly open and the door closed
- It is better to provide a small but continuous amount of heating than intense heating over a short period
- If condensation has occurred, wipe the moisture with a cloth, open the window and close the door.

External Repairs

- Gardens and hedges: maintain and keep in a tidy condition;
- Fences and garden boundary walls: repair or replace where necessary (this applies whether they are erected by the Council or by you)
- Front gates, side gates, or doors leading to garden: repair, re-erect, or replace (this includes their supports and frames);
- Fuel sheds or outhouses: repair roof, repair, or replace doors, locks, door-handles or catches;
- Cleaning of silt, leaves or other deposits from gutters and rainwater gullies.



Electrical Repairs

- Ceiling roses, lamp holders and plugs
- Fuses - except mains fuses.
- Elements for electric fires. All repairs to electric appliances, fires and heaters not installed by the Council.
- Replacement of light bulbs and any bulbs that may be required for pilot lights.
- The repair of light switches.
- Responsibility to inform Council of faulty switches, sockets etc. No changes to electric circuit (extra sockets etc) without written permission from the Council.

N.B. Where it is the tenants responsibility to repair an electrical fitting or installation (incl. electric showers), other than the replacement of bulbs and fuses, the work should be carried out by a qualified and competent Electrical Contractor. Where such a Contractor carries out electrical work in a Council dwelling, the name and address of the contractor must be given to the Council's Housing Department together with a brief description of the work carried out.

You should also note, that if the Council has to rectify any work that arises from your interference with electrical installation, the cost of repairs by the Council will be charged to you.

Plumbing and Drainage Repairs.

- Cleaning of gully traps and replacement of gully grid covers.
- Repair or replacement of waste pipes inside the dwelling;
- Clearing air-locks in pipes;
- Repair, or replacement of taps on sink unit and wash-hand basins including leaking and dripping taps.
- Repair or replacement of stoppers and chains for baths, sinks and basins;

- Repair or replacement of toilet bowl, cistern, bath and wash hand basin, except if it is cracked and leaking through fair wear and tear;
 - Repair or replacement of ball-cock or other water flotation control unit within the cistern;
 - Repair or replacement of toilet seat, chain and handles.
- Sanitary ware should not be abused – that is, wash-hand basins, showers, toilet bowls and cisterns.
 - Do not interfere with pipe work services unless you know what you are doing
 - For any major work call a qualified plumber
 - Above all do not interfere with the water tank in the attic : Your house and belongings could be destroyed, the electric's could be damaged and this could result in a fire starting in your house
 - Ensure that the toilet is not blocked with nappies, towels, toilet rolls etc.
 - If you are not familiar with how to rod the drains call someone who is; if you should try to and leave rods in the drain the blockage will be worse than ever and will cost you more to have the drain cleared.
 - Ensure that you do not cover over drains, manhole covers, armstrong junctions, shores, gullies, etc



Cooking and Heating Appliances.

- Repair or replacement of solid fuel, and/or electric heating installation or cooking appliances installed by the tenant;
- Replacement of fret basket and or grate in all fireplaces, and the replacement of glass panels in doors of room heaters and their bars;
- Repair of damage caused to room heater by improper use;
- Repair, or replacement of tiles on fireplace/hearth/tiled surround.

N.B.The Council will maintain and service all heating systems installed by them and will provide a call out service. The cost of this service will be included in your weekly rent.



Resident Participation in Estate Management Together we can make it better

When you were allocated your house by the Council you became more than just a tenant, you became a member of the community in which you live. As such, the Council encourages you to become actively involved in your estate and is eager to hear your views and suggestions on how it can be improved.

As part of its Estate Management Programme the Council is working hand in hand with residents to give them a greater say in how their estates are run. We organise regular meetings, estate walkabouts and identify priorities and agreed solutions. We are listening to what you have to say. It is your estate and it is hoped that through your involvement both the Council and the residents can gain by making it a better place in which to live.



How can I become involved?

If you and your neighbours are interested in having a real say in improving your local community and being directly involved in issues affecting your estate, one way is to become involved in your Residents Association or if there is none in your estate, the Council will assist you in forming one. The Community Department will provide expertise and advice when forming Resident Associations. To register you can contact our Community Department by telephoning 01 890 5100 or 890 5093 or by writing to Community Recreation & Amenities Department, Fingal County Council, County Hall, Swords, Fingal, Co Dublin. Grants are available for community activities, and the Community Officer will provide information to assist groups who participate in Estate Management activities.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The Council is committed to taking action to avoid, prevent and abate anti-social behaviour and to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that conditions for the peaceful occupation of its tenancy dwellings will prevail. Strenuous efforts are being made in co-operation with the Gardaí and other agencies to reduce and eliminate this type of behaviour. Fingal County Council has adopted a very strong position where acts of anti-social behaviour are proven and offending tenants and their families have had their homes re-possessed. The Council's Estate Management Section deals with all matters relating to anti-social behaviour. In doing so, they maintain very close liaison with the Gardaí and other relevant bodies to eliminate this behaviour from all its estates.

If you are the subject of a complaint the matter will be fully investigated and if there is substance to the complaint, immediate action will be taken. Where a problem persists legal proceedings are instituted. Fingal County Council is committed to investigating all complaints of anti-social behaviour; to interview alleged perpetrators; to challenge and caution those responsible for anti-social behaviour; taking preventative measures and where necessary to pursue legal remedies, including court orders for evictions.

What is anti-social behaviour?

The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1997 defines anti-social behaviour and the Tenancy Agreement includes a number of actions that constitute breach of the Agreements. Broadly speaking, without entering into legal definitions, the following are examples of the type of activity which are regarded as anti-social behaviour:

- Drug dealing and other matters relating to drugs
- Harassment/Intimidation
- Excessive noise (either time or intensity)
- Assault

- Verbal Abuse
- Joyriding
- Vandalism/Criminal Damage
- General disturbance in estate
- Illegal dumping/littering
- Drinking alcohol in public
- Unreasonable holding of parties

If you or anyone in your home is involved in any of these activities you run the risk of losing your home. There is an obligation on all tenants to ensure that neither they nor any member of their household engage in anti-social behaviour of any kind. Anti-social behaviour can seriously affect you and your tenancy.

Fingal County Council adopts a very strict approach to eliminating anti-social behaviour in its estates. All complaints of anti-social behaviour will be investigated. Where serious complaints are made and it appears that the complaints are well founded, the tenants, or persons against whom such complaints are made, may face eviction, or exclusion from the dwelling, as the case may be. The Council takes a strong, proactive stance, including eviction where necessary, against the minority of tenants involved in anti-social behaviour.



Littering

All residents must ensure that their house and garden are kept in a tidy condition. Littering of your garden, alleyway or laneway is considered anti-social and will not be tolerated by the Council. It is the responsibility of those residents served by a gated laneway to ensure that it is kept clean and free of rubbish, etc. If you commit an offence under the Litter Pollution Act 1997 you could face an on-the-spot fine of €150 or a maximum fine of €3,000 plus costs.



What can I do about anti-social neighbours?

If your neighbours are causing problems for you and other neighbours, and they are tenants of the Council, don't assume that we already know about it! If you cannot resolve the issue yourself, put your complaint in writing, or telephone the Estate Management Section. Give full details of the nature of the complaint, the location, when it happened (times and dates) and the names of those involved. The Estate Management Staff will investigate your complaint and if appropriate, refer it to the Gardaí, Social Welfare or relevant agency. Together we can make your neighbourhood a better place for you and your family to live in.

You can be assured that your complaint will always be treated with the utmost confidentiality and that your name will not be mentioned in following up on your complaint.

Contact no.: 890 5592

Vacant Houses

Vacant houses in an estate can become a target for anti-social behaviour and/or squatters. If you intend surrendering your house, you must give us four weeks notice in writing. We can then make arrangements to have it re-let to ensure it does not remain vacant for any length of time. If there is a vacant house in your estate, don't assume that we know about it. Tell us! The sooner you do, the sooner we can arrange to have it re-let.

Anti-social behaviour is a very serious matter and should not be allowed to develop in YOUR estate.

Protecting your home

There are some simple steps you can take, which will help improve the physical security of your home.

WHEN GOING OUT OR AWAY

- Close and lock windows and doors, even if you are only going out for a few minutes
- Do not forget to secure any side doors/gates as they allow entry to the back of your house which is more vulnerable to a break-in.
- Make sure you do not leave tools or ladders lying about in your back garden
- Never leave cash or keys on the hall table and limit the amount of cash kept in the home
- Ensure all electrical items have been unplugged
- Consider leaving a light on at night time in appropriate places throughout the house
- Cancel any daily/weekly deliveries, e.g. newspapers, milk, etc.
- Check and note the serial numbers of valuable equipment, and take photographs of valuables where appropriate
- Ask somebody trustworthy, known to you, to keep an eye on your house for you
- Ensure pets are adequately cared for

Advice on home security is available from your local Crime Prevention Officer. This service is well worth availing of and is absolutely free. Contact your local Garda Station and you will be put in touch with the Crime Prevention Officer for your locality.

SMOKE ALARMS

- Ensure you have at least two
- Do not disconnect
- Replace battery (standby) on a regular basis
- Keep a fire blanket in the kitchen area
- Keep a small fire extinguisher in the kitchen area

GAS CYLINDERS

- Stand upright
- Switch off regulator when not in use
- Never seal/cover up vents when using gas heater
- Regularly check hoses and couplings for wear and tear
- Keep away from furniture and especially curtains
- If you smell gas in or around your home turn off gas and ring Bord Gais IMMEDIATELY
(Do not assume that someone else will do it!)

FIREPLACES

- Use a fire guard
- Never carry hot coals from one fireplace to another
- Avoid banking fires too high
- Be careful with 'sparking' sticks when lighting
- In the case of a chimney fire :
Close doors, Close windows – this reduces draught, Call the fire brigade



DANGEROUS LIQUIDS/PRODUCTS

- Do not store flammable liquids (e.g. petrol) in the house or garage
- Do not leave poisonous liquids or substances in places within easy reach of children
- Do not hold on to old medicines; take them to your nearest chemists shop for disposal.

ELECTRICAL

NEVER INTERFERE WITH ELECTRICAL WIRING OR FUSE BOARDS; OR ELECTRICALLY POWERED HOUSEHOLD GOODS AS THE CONSEQUENCES CAN BE FATAL

GET A REGISTERED ELECTRICIAN



In the event of a fire in your home

CLOSE THE DOOR OF THE ROOM ON FIRE

ALERT THE HOUSEHOLD AND GET EVERYONE OUT TO A SAFE PLACE

CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE BY DIALLING 999 AND ASK THE OPERATOR FOR DUBLIN FIRE BRIGADE

WHEN THE FIRE BRIGADE ANSWERS, STATE CLEARLY THE ADDRESS OF THE PREMISES WHERE HELP IS NEEDED

DO NOT RE-ENTER THE HOUSE FOR PERSONAL BELONGINGS ETC



General Information

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- We advise you not to take the law into your own hands
- Where there is trouble with neighbours or people in your Estate :

REPORT IT TO THE COUNCIL'S ESTATE MANAGEMENT SECTION OF THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT GIVING FULL DETAILS OF THE –

Nature of complaint

Date and time

Where event occurred

Names and addresses of those concerned

Information regarding the presence of the Gardaí

- Where there are acts of vandalism : Report it to the relevant body or Department of the Council e.g., if a public light is damaged you should report it with full details to the Council's Public Lighting Department. If a green area in your Estate has been damaged report it to the Council's Parks Department.
- Keep an eye out for harassment or annoyance to old people, persons living alone, people who are unwell, children, non-nationals or visitors reporting any such incident to the Gardaí. Be vigilant about drug pushing and drug using. In particular do not hesitate to contact the Gardaí if you become aware that drugs are being offered to children or young people or anyone in your area.

REMEMBER ULTIMATELY IT IS YOUR HOME, YOUR COMFORT AND YOUR SAFETY THAT IS BEING ATTACKED

- Generally: CHECK IDENTITY CARDS of strange callers – THIS IS IMPORTANT
- Abuse of your public open space should not be tolerated and all incidents should be reported to our Parks Department or our Estate Management Section
- Residents are not permitted to drive or park on grass margins
- Carrying out unauthorised activities e.g. car repairs and such like activities in or around your house, or garden, or roadway is not permitted
- Ensure you do not over fill your attic with old things, too much weight can damage your ceiling
- Covering heaters with clothing of any kind is not permitted
- Refuse should be left out on the morning of collection as birds or stray dogs may displace refuse left out the night before. Use the Proper Wheelie Bins.

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SMOKE ALARMS CAN SAVE LIVES. CHECK YOU HAVE A MINIMUM OF TWO AND THAT THEY ARE IN CORRECT WORKING ORDER.

PROVIDING A FIRE EXTINGUISHER OR FIRE BLANKET FOR YOUR KITCHEN AREA COULD ALSO SAVE YOUR LIFE OR THAT OF YOUR FAMILY/FRIENDS

IF YOU SMELL GAS IN OR AROUND YOUR HOME TURN OFF GAS AND RING BORD GAIS IMMEDIATELY (DO NOT ASSUME THAT SOMEONE ELSE WILL DO IT)

Main Postal Address/Opening hours & Useful Telephone Numbers

Fingal County Council
PO Box 174
Fingal County Hall
Main Street
Swords, Fingal, Co Dublin
Telephone: 890 5000 Fax: 890 5809



Fingal County Council
Blanchardstown Town Centre
Blanchardstown
Dublin 15
Telephone: 890 5390 Fax: 890 5389

Hours of Business

Monday – Friday, 9am – 12.45pm & 2.00pm – 5.00pm
(4.30pm on Friday)

Payments Office & Planning Department

Monday – Friday, 9.30am – 3.30pm (open through lunch)

Area Office Blanchardstown Telephone : 890 5000

Housing Fax: 890 5389

Libraries Fax: 890 5571

Building Control,

Blanchardstown Office: Tel: 890 5876 Fax: 890 5878

Departments Located at Blanchardstown:

	Tel:	Fax:
Housing	890 5592	890 5489
Law	890 5490	890 5519
Transportation	890 5818	890 5841
Water Services	890 6215	890 6229
Libraries	890 5560	890 5574

Departments Located at County Hall Swords:

	Tel:	Fax:
Housing	890 5380	890 5489
Community, Recreation & Amenities	890 5080	890 6259
Corporate Affairs	890 5000	890 5809
Customer Services Division	890 5162	890 5169
Environment	890 6280	890 6243
Finance	890 5300	890 5379
Architects	890 5050	890 5079
Human Resources	890 5669	890 5669
Information Technology	890 5110	890 5149
Law	890 5490	890 5519
Libraries	890 5524	890 5599
Parks	890 5600	890 5649
Planning	890 5670	890 5789
Property & Economic Development	890 5170	890 6209
Transportation	890 5818	890 5841
Water Services	890 6215	890 6229

Emergency Services – Water & Sewerage 873 415
After 5.00 p.m. and weekends (DO NOT CALL UNLESS IT IS
A REAL EMERGENCY.)

Useful Telephone Numbers

GARDA, FIRE BRIGADE, AMBULANCE
EMERGENCY NUMBER 999

HOSPITALS

BEAUMONT	809 3000
MATER	830 1122
CONNOLLY HOSPITAL	821 3844
ROTUNDA	873 0700
HOLLES STREET	661 0277
OUR LADY OF LOURDES (DROGHEDA)	(041) 983 7601

GARDA SIOCHANA

Balbriggan	8020510	Malahide	666 4600
Blanchardstown	6667000	Raheny	666 4300
Coolock	6664200	Skerries	849 1211
Howth	6664900	Swords	666 4700
Garda freephone Confidential Line			1800 666 111

E.S.B. EMERGENCY NUMBER	1850 372 999
E.S.B. Accounts & General Enquiries	1850 372 372
GAS EMERGENCY (LEAKS ONLY)	1850 205 050
Bord Gais General Enquiries	602 1212

Alcoholics Anonymous	453 8998
Citizens Information Service	840 6877
Crime Stoppers	1800 250 025
Cura (Pregnancy Counselling)	671 0598
Drugs Advice	677 1122
Eircom, Head Office, St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2	671 4444
FAS (Foras Áiseanna Saothair)	
Training & Employment Authority	607 0500
Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)	
– Swords	890 1102
– Blanchardstown	820 6324
National Safety Council	496 3422
Pest Control	809 8360
Rape Crisis Centre	661 4911

Social Welfare Information Service	704 3000
Women's Refuge	
Lower Rathmines Road, Dublin 6	496 1002
HSE Northern Area	813 1800
Homeless Unit Women & Families	
16-19 Wellington Quay, Dublin 2	881 5180
Single Homeless Men,	
149 James Street, Dublin 8	881 5200
Adults Homeless Persons Unit	1800 724 724
(Freephone)	
Community Welfare Officer	
Bridge Street, Swords, Co Dublin	890 2200
Community Welfare Officer	
Roselawn Health Centre,	
Blanchardstown, Dublin 15	821 2666
H.A.I.L.	
(Housing Association Integrated Living)	
Shamrock Chambers, 59-61 Dame St,	
Dublin 2	671 8444
Immigration Citizens Division,	
Dept of Justice	
13-14 Burgh Quay, Dublin 2	616 7700
Irish Refugee Council	
88 Capel Street, Dublin 1	873 0042
N.A.B.C.O.	
(National Association of Building Co-operatives)	
50 Merrion Square, Dublin 2	661 2877

Refugee Information Service 27 Annamoe Terrace, Dublin 7	838 2740
Respond Housing Association High Park, Grace Park Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9	857 2020
Rural Resettlement Ireland Ltd Liffey House, Tara Street, Dublin 2	672 7054
Samaritans 112 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1	872 7700
Sonas Housing Association 148 Phibsboro Road, Dublin 7	830 9088
St Vincent De Paul 8 New Cabra Road, Phibsboro, Dublin 7	838 4164
Threshold Limited Housing Advice and Research Centre, 21 Stoneybatter, Dublin 7	872 6311

