



Maynooth Social Justice Week 2020

Annual Public Housing Conference 2020



11 March 2020

**Housing and Home after #GE2020:
What ways forward to solve the
housing & homeless crises?**

Welcome

Dr Rory Hearne, Conference Chair

Department of Applied Social Studies & MUSSI

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Emergency housing measures required to respond to COVID-19

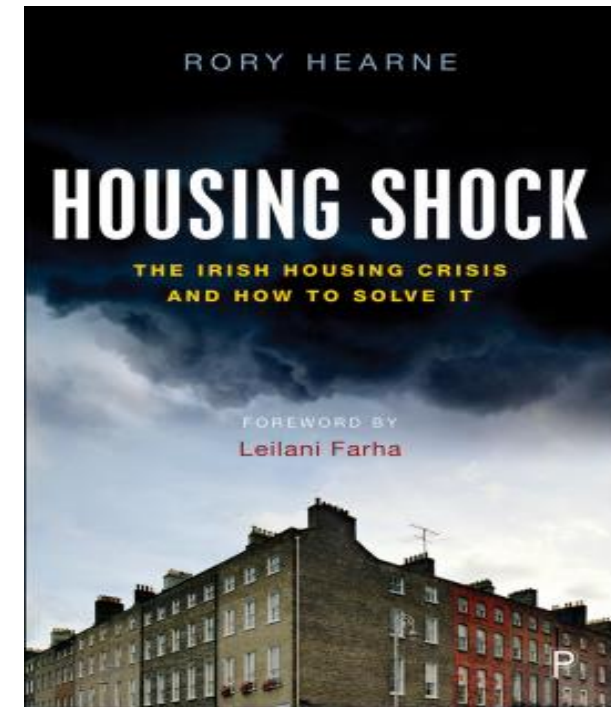
- **Most vulnerable most at risk** - homeless (rough sleepers & emerg accom), substandard housing, overcrowded, sofa surfing
- **In interest of wider public health, immediate process of moving all individuals and families out of emergency accommodation into homes** - Banks & NAMA vacant properties, LA Voids, private vacant buildings - Article 43 provides for right to private property to be regulated by social justice and the common good.
- **Stop flow of individuals and families into homelessness and thus increased vulnerability to virus** - immediate suspension of evictions in the private rental sector -ban on evictions into homelessness.
- **Ensure no family or elderly person is cutting back on heating their home** - fuel allowance increased and extended in eligibility
- **Important lesson - if everyone has a decent standard secure home, we are in a much better place to prevent the spread of viruses**
- **Do not repeat mistakes of 2008-2015 austerity** - when cuts meant 40,000 social homes were not built
- **Social and affordable house building budget should be expanded in response to the COVID19 shock** - to ensure housing system provides the positive protective factor of a warm, dry, secure and spacious home for individuals and families - to withstand health and economic shocks

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Vision & principles for a new housing plan for Ireland

- **Rebuilding Ireland has failed and is fundamentally flawed** – *a new plan is needed* to ensure affordable, secure, decent standard, homes & communities for everyone
- Housing policy has failed because of the commodification & market dominance of housing – the **diminution of the vital role of housing as a home** – as a place that contributes to our fundamental wellbeing, physical, and mental health - COVID19 highlights this
- Core vision of new plan should be the human right to housing - **Referendum to insert the Right to Housing into the Constitution and law.**
- **A roadmap to end homelessness in Ireland within 5 years**, following the Finland Housing First approach of homes and support services – close all Family Hubs within 12 months
- **Making private rental sector a home** - Legislation providing long-term tenant security through removing these eviction clauses and providing for 25-year leases is needed

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Vision & principles for a new housing plan for Ireland

- **New public housing should be social housing in a new way - for a mix of incomes**, excellently designed, life time secure 'cost' rental homes and affordable purchase – New State Homes Building Agency
- **Build 20/30,000 new permanent public social and affordable housing per annum** – with COVID & financial crisis must not repeat austerity mistakes
- **Green New Deal for Housing** – energy efficient new build & retrofit
- **Halt the speculative financialisation of our housing system** – tax REITs and Cuckoo Funds
- **A new social consensus** exists for a radical shift in housing policy and government.
- **Government must bring all stakeholders together** to partake in developing new housing plan
- **Social pressure (protest & campaigns) required to continue** to ensure substantive policy change not spin and empty promises



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