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March 2022

Local Authority
Housing Innovation
Case Studies

LGMA
Local Government
Management Agency

CCMA
Cumann Lucht Bainistíochta Contae agus Cathrach
County and City Management Association

Rialtas Áitiúil Éireann
Local Government Ireland

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This document should be cited as:

Keane, R. and O'Donoghue Hynes, B., (2022)

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Dublin: Local Government Management
Agency/IPA

Acknowledgment

Contents

Executive Summary

The LGMA, on behalf of the CCMA Housing, Building and Land Use Committee, has undertaken a survey of local authority housing departments. The aim of the survey and of this report is to identify examples of innovation in housing and share these examples and key learnings with the sector. For the purposes of the survey and report, innovation is defined broadly, and includes changes of any size that are designed to improve local authority housing delivery. This research is being carried out in conjunction with the Institute of Public Administration (IPA). The IPA will be publishing some in- depth descriptions of select innovation examples, in parallel to this report.

The survey process resulted in 27 examples of innovation being submitted from 17 different local authorities. Most local authorities submitted one example, with four of the respondent local authorities submitting three examples each. Five categories of innovation were included in the survey, and respondents selected the category that most closely related to their example. Nine examples were submitted for Service Innovation and Process Innovation. Seven examples related to Technology Innovation, and two related to Regulatory Innovation. The final category was Policy/Culture Innovation and there were no examples submitted under this heading.

The LGMA Research Team conducted a qualitative thematic analysis of the survey results. This analysis resulted in the innovations being grouped into five thematic areas. For the larger thematic areas, sub-themes were also identified. The largest of the thematic areas is (i) Digitizing Services (11 innovation examples), followed by (ii) Process Change (nine innovation examples). There are three examples of innovation under the theme of (iii) Homeless Services, two under the theme of (iv) Right Sizing and two under the theme of (v) Energy Efficiency.

The Process Change theme related broadly to any changes in ways of working or delivering services, that were not primarily based around digital automation. There are three sub-themes in this thematic area: Tenancies, Internal Processes, and Interagency Working. Under the Tenancies sub-theme, case studies include examples of changing the way local authorities communicate with their tenants, such as Reimagining of the Tenant Handbook which took place in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. There were also two examples of local authorities introducing Choice Based Letting. The Internal Processes sub-theme includes examples where ways of working have been changed in local authorities with the aim of improving efficiency and delivery in housing. The Interagency working sub-theme relates to innovations that involve cooperation between local authorities and community partners to deliver on housing priorities.

The Energy Efficiency theme includes examples of projects designed to improve the energy performance of housing provided by local authorities. Specific examples within this theme include projects to increase the insulation performance of local authority houses in Sligo and in Cork County.

The Homeless Services theme includes three examples of innovation regarding the provision of local authority housing services to members of the homeless community. This theme includes examples from Dublin City and Galway City, including one example that was a response to the immediate needs of this community during the Covid-19 pandemic.

There are two innovation examples under the Right Sizing sub-theme. The concept of Right Sizing ralates to using the social housing stocks more efficiently by encouraging tenants to occupy units that meet their specific needs. Meath County Council submitted both examples, including a study on people's awareness and perception of Right Sizing.

The Digitizing Services theme was split out into two sub-themes: Internal digitization and Customer Facing digitization. All examples under this theme relate to using digital technology in local authority housing services. Under the Internal sub-theme, the examples relate to using software to improve work processes within housing departments. Several examples relate to software that has allowed data to be collected and stored centrally and has therefore made task management more efficient. The Customer Facing sub-theme relates to examples of digitization of services offered to local authority residents. Several of these innovations relate to responses to the Covid-19 pandemic. As office-based functions became difficult, many local authorities responded by offering housing services online.

Introduction

The LGMA, on behalf of the CCMA Housing, Building and Land Use Committee, undertook a survey of local authorities in June and July 2021 to identify examples of innovation and to share learnings across the sector. For the purposes of this research, innovation was defined as doing things differently to produce positive results or learnings in the workplace.

The survey aimed to capture innovation in its many different forms. These included changes to administrative processes, new approaches to the provision of services, advice or guidance, and the adoption of new technologies. As will be illustrated, an innovation can produce small or incremental improvements, or it can have a more significant impact. Learnings were also extracted from innovations that did not realise their initial objectives. Examples with unintended consequences (either positive or negative) or a failure or inability to complete a project can provide useful insights for others in the sector.

This report begins by providing an overview of the methodology used in the data collection process and in the analysis of the survey responses. The overall findings are then presented before a summary case study for each of the innovation examples are detailed.

Methodology

Research Advisory Group

The LGMA was asked to explore the development of a report that gathered examples of innovation across the housing function on behalf of the CCMA Housing and Building Committee. It was agreed to work jointly with the IPA to develop a project in which two distinct outputs would be developed.

The first, which was led by the LGMA, was a general survey of sector that sought to gather together a wide range of examples of innovation in the housing area. The objective was to maximise the number of local authorities submitting examples and to elicit examples across as wide a range of services area as possible. To achieve this, a cursory description of the projects was requested so that the demands on staff time were limited. The second element, led by the IPA, was to carry out a more in-depth review of key exemplars that would be identified from within the examples submitted in phase one.

A Research Advisory Group (RAG) was established in April 2021 to oversee the work. Members represented the Housing, Building and Land Use Committee, the Housing Delivery Coordination Office, the LGMA Programme Management and Innovation Unit, LGMA Research Unit and the IPA.

Survey Design

Once the high-level scope of the survey was decided by the RAG, the LGMA research team created an initial draft of the survey. This was then brought to the RAG for a workshopping session where the final details of the survey were agreed upon.

The survey sought examples of innovations from local authorities and there was no limit to the number of examples a local authority could submit. The survey asked about housing innovations from the previous 24 months (see Appendix 1: Survey Case-study Template).

For each of the housing innovation examples, the questionnaire requested the following information:
· Innovation category (select from a list of categories provided)
· Housing service area
· Innovation title and details
· Objectives of the innovation
· Success in achieving objectives
· Outcomes of the innovation and key learnings
· Key contact details for the innovation within the local authority

Innovation category

The innovation categories were selected to aid further analysis and provide insights into relevant points of focus and pressure points in the area of housing. Five types of innovation were identified: Service, Process, Regulatory, Policy/Culture and Technology.

Table 1: Survey Innovation categories

Innovation Type
Service Innovation: a different approach that positively affects a customer service.
Process Innovation: a different approach that positively affects efficiency and/or productivity in relation to a process.
Regulatory Innovation: a different approach that positively affects the regulatory environment.
Policy/Culture Innovation: a different approach to policy making or policy implementation with positive results or a change that impacted on the culture within the organisation positively.
Technology Innovation: a different approach to technology with positive results or learnings.

While many examples could be classified under more than one heading, respondents were asked to choose the innovation category that was most relevant. Similarly, respondents were asked to select the *Housing Service Group* (as identified in service catalogue) that the innovation most closely related to.

Table 2: Housing Service Group options provided

- Providing Social Housing [Building / Acquiring / Leasing]
- Social Housing Support [HAP / RAS]
- Management and Maintenance of [housing] Properties
- Needs Assessment and Allocations
- Tenant Management [including needs assessment, allocation, rent management, tenancy agreements]
- Housing [Adaptation] Grants
- Homeless Services
- Affordable Housing [including loan management]
- Community Engagement
- Regulatory Activities [e.g., inspections of rented accommodation]
- Other [please specify]

Respondents were then asked to provide a short title for the innovation, and to describe the innovation that was implemented in free text write in boxes. There were further free text boxes for objectives of the innovation, outcomes (anticipated and unanticipated) and key learnings. Respondents were asked if the original objectives had been met. Finally key contact details for the innovation were requested to facilitate further research and future information sharing.

Data collection and analysis

Microsoft Forms was used for the survey to allow respondents to fill the survey in online. A link to the survey was sent out via email to Directors of Service in Housing and to Senior Executive Officers in housing in all 31 local authorities. The survey was open for responses from June 21st 2021 for an initial period of two weeks (to July 5th, 2021). This period was extended by a further two weeks, with a reminder email sent on the 8th of July 2021. The survey was also promoted through specific housing working groups.

Once the survey was closed to new respondents a review of the submissions commenced followed by a thematic analysis. The thematic analysis grouped the innovations into thematic areas, which form the basis of the structure of this report. The thematic analysis was presented to the Research Advisory Group for agreement.

The innovations were split into five broad thematic areas, with subcategories for the two largest thematic areas:
• Process Change
 • Interagency working
 • Tenancies
 • Internal

• Energy efficiency

• Homeless services

• Right sizing

• Digitising services
 • External
 • Internal

Process change refers to an innovation that changes a way of working. Some of the innovations also involve the use of a new system or technology, but the main part of the innovation is a change to processes. There are three subcategories in this theme, as referenced above. Interagency Working are examples where there has been a change or new way of working between local authorities and other organisations. The Tenancies sub theme includes innovations where there has been a change to the process of delivering local authority accommodation to tenants. The Internal sub theme involves changes to ways of working within the local authority itself.

The Energy Efficiency theme includes examples of changes local authorities have made which aim to upgrade existing housing stock to higher energy efficiency standards and examples of new housing stock that has been built to high energy efficiency standards, such as Nearly Zero Energy Buildings.

The Homeless Services theme includes innovations local authorities have made in their provision of homeless services, including areas like the provision of emergency accommodation. The Right sizing theme includes examples where local authorities have made steps to try to utilise their housing stock more effectively by allocating housing to new and existing tenants based on household size.

Digitising Services as a theme has been particularly prominent during the Covid-19 pandemic period where technology was used to facilitate the delivery of services remotely that were previously available in-person and on-site. This theme is split into two sub themes – Internal and External. Internal refers to examples of using technology to improve work practices inside local authorities. External refers to the digitising of outward facing work, such as customer services.

Findings

The survey collected 27 examples of innovation from 17 local authorities. In some cases, one section of a local authority may have provided multiple innovation examples, and in other cases there were several innovation examples from different sections of the same local authorities. Most local authorities submitted a single example, with four of the respondent local authorities submitting three examples each. Examples were provided of innovations across four of the five innovation categories: Technology Innovation, Process Innovation, Service Innovation and Regulatory Innovation.

As can be seen in figure 1, the most popular innovation categories were service and process innovations (both with 9 innovation examples), each accounting for one-third of the innovations submitted. Technology innovations were the next greatest number submitted, with 7 examples (26% of innovations submitted). There were 2 examples of regulatory innovations submitted, accounting for 8% of the total number of innovations. There were no examples provided under the Policy/Culture Innovation.

Figure 2: Case Studies by Theme

Figure 2 displays the percentage of innovation examples in each of the high-level thematic categories. The largest thematic category is Digitizing Services, with 11 innovation examples. This category is further broken down into Internal Digitization and Customer Facing Digitization, with five and six examples respectively. The next largest thematic category is Process Change, with nine examples. Like the previous category, Process Change is broken into subcategories; Tenancies (five examples), Internal Processes (three examples), and Interagency Working (one example). The theme of Homeless Services includes three innovations. The Themes of Right Sizing and Energy Efficiency have two cases studies each.

Table 3 presents a further summary of the thematic analysis carried out providing details about the title, relevant local authority, and innovation category for each innovation within the thematic areas. Each of the case studies are further expanded upon in the next chapter, with details on the innovations and details on the outcomes.

Figure 1: Innovation examples by Innovation Category.

Table 3: Thematic analysis summary

Theme	Innovation title	Local Authority	Innovation Category
Process Change: Tenancies	Introduction of Choice Based Letting	Galway City Council	Service Innovation
	Graduated Deposit Approach for House Letting	Monaghan County Council	Process Innovation
	Introduction of Choice Based Letting	Leitrim County Council	Service Innovation
	Reimagining the Tenant Handbook	Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	Service Innovation
	Tenancy Enforcement Team	Clare County Council	Process Innovation
Process Change: Internal Processes	Referrals and Caseloads management system for Social Work cases	Galway County Council	Process Innovation
	Use of Competitive Dialogue procurement for social and affordable housing	Cork City Council	Process Innovation
	Long Term Leasing Lease Pack	Fingal County Council	Process Innovation
Process Change: Interagency Working	Vacancy and Town Enhancement Taskforce	Mayo County Council	Regulatory Innovation
Energy Efficiency	nZEB Pilot Project	Sligo County Council	Technology innovation
	Future proofing Housing Adaptions of Social Housing Stock	Cork County Council	Service Innovation
Homeless Services	The Westside Modular Hub (Temporary Accommodation for Families)	Galway City Council	Service Innovation
	COVID -19 Multi-Agency Response	Dublin City Council	Service Innovation
	Housing Support Officer Project	Dublin City Council	Service Innovation
Right Sizing	A study on the awareness, perceptions and experiences, of older people right sizing	Meath County Council	Process Innovation
	Provide Legal Basis for Rightsizing	Meath County Council	Regulatory Innovation
Digitizing Services: Internal	Centralised Repair System linked with Laserfiche Document/Process Management System	Monaghan County Council	Process Innovation
	Housing stock Asset Management System	Clare County Council	Process Innovation
	Development of an online application for Private Rented Inspections	Wexford County Council	Technology innovation
	Improving (housing) Standards (housing inspection app)	Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	Technology innovation
	Capturing Part V Planning Updates	Fingal County Council	Process Innovation
Digitizing Services: Customer Facing	Online HAP application	Limerick City and County Council	Technology innovation
	DocuSign documents	Cork City Council	Technology innovation
	Anti-Social online form	Kildare County Council	Service Innovation
	Use of 360 Camera in House Section Operation	Monaghan County Council	Technology innovation
	Payment of Rent via App	Roscommon County Council	Service Innovation
	Affordable Housing Application Portal	Fingal County Council	Technology innovation

Case Studies

The following section presents the 27 innovation examples submitted in response to the survey. The innovations are grouped under the headings that emerged from the thematic analysis conducted.

Theme One:
Process Change

Theme One: Process Change
Sub Theme: Tenancies

Local Authority	Galway City Council
Innovation Title	Introduction of Choice Based Letting
Innovation Category	Service Innovation
Service Group	Needs Assessment and Allocations
Brief description of innovation	Choice Based Letting is a system that allows applicants on the housing waiting list to express an interest in available homes rather than waiting for a local authority to make an offer. Under the system, perspective tenants no longer only have the option to accept or reject properties. The system utilises an online portal for housing offers.
Anticipated Outcomes	Anticipated outcomes include enhanced choice for tenants, lower property refusal rates and faster turnaround times for property reletting. The innovation was deemed to have successfully achieved these outcomes.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	Some housing applicants had raised expectations about the level of choice available which could not be met.
	Some initial teething issues with access to the online system for Choice Based Letting (CBL).
	There were lower numbers of representations from councillors advocating for constituents to be placed in certain properties after the introduction of CBL.

Local Authority	Monaghan County Council
Innovation Title	Graduated Deposit Approach for House Letting
Innovation Category	Process Innovation
Service Group	Management and Maintenance of [housing] Properties
Brief description of innovation	Changing from a uniform deposit for all properties, to a graduated deposit based on property size to provide added incentive for renters to maintain properties in good condition.
Anticipated Outcomes	Somewhat achieved the goal of incentivising properties to be returned in better condition than previously.
	Evidence anecdotal at this stage.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	None provided at this stage.

Local Authority	**Leitrim County Council**
Innovation Title	Introduction of Choice Based Letting
Innovation Category	Service Innovation
Service Group	Providing Social Housing
Brief description of innovation	Choice Based Letting (CBL) is a system that allows applicants on the housing waiting list to express an interest in available homes, rather than waiting for a local authority to make an offer. Under the system, perspective tenants no longer only have the option to accept or reject properties. The system utilises an online portal for housing offers.
Anticipated Outcomes	Objectives were to improve efficiency and transparency of the allocation process, to reduce length of time houses remained vacant and to provide a mechanism whereby harder to let properties would be open to anybody on the housing waiting list to submit an expression of interest. The objectives were deemed to be met.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	Since the introduction of CBL, there has been a 100% acceptance rate of offers made whereas before Leitrim had a 22% refusal rate. Time and administration efficiencies were achieved due to lower refusals, therefore fewer offers having to be made for the one tenancy. Greater openness and transparency for all clients.

Local Authority	**Clare County Council**
Innovation Title	Tenancy Enforcement Team
Innovation Category	Process Innovation
Service Group	Tenant Management
Brief description of innovation	The appointment of a Tenancy Enforcement Team to help proactively contain and enforce issues of anti-social behaviour in social housing.
Anticipated Outcomes	The programme achieved its goals to receive and investigate fully in a proactive manner any complaints relating to alleged failure of tenants to abide by the conditions of their letting agreements and to try to contain these issues before they escalated by having a strong visible presence on the ground that actively engaged and worked in partnership with the Gardaí.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	The engagement and communication with the Gardaí hugely improved with the appointment of the Tenant Enforcement team. Monthly formal meetings are held between the Gardaí and Clare County Council staff where cases are discussed relating to anti-social behaviour. An approach is agreed at these meetings as to whether the Gardaí or the Tenancy Enforcement team are best placed to deal with this issue. Informal communication also takes place on a continued basis which aids both the Tenancy Enforcement team and the Gardaí in trying to contain and control anti-social behaviour issues.

Local Authority	Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
Innovation Title	Reimagining the Tenant Handbook
Innovation Category	Service Innovation
Service Group	Unallocated
Brief description of innovation	The tenant handbook was updated to make it more user friendly, including splitting out the larger handbook into smaller topic areas. The tenant handbooks were written to achieve ethical tailored communication, which meant writing the handbook in a way that took account of differences in tenancy types, including taking into account the differences between standard local authority provided housing and Traveller-specific accommodation.
Anticipated Outcomes	The tenant handbook was rewritten in plain English style, making it more accessible for tenants. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council can show evidence of a 15% reduction in maintenance requests logged within the first six months of using the handbook documents in their plain English format. This reduction is clear evidence of the benefits of staff and tenants being given clear guidance on what is the tenants' and Council's responsibility.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	Tenants were also more aware of the council's responsibilities, one outcome of this was increased requests for exterior house painting.
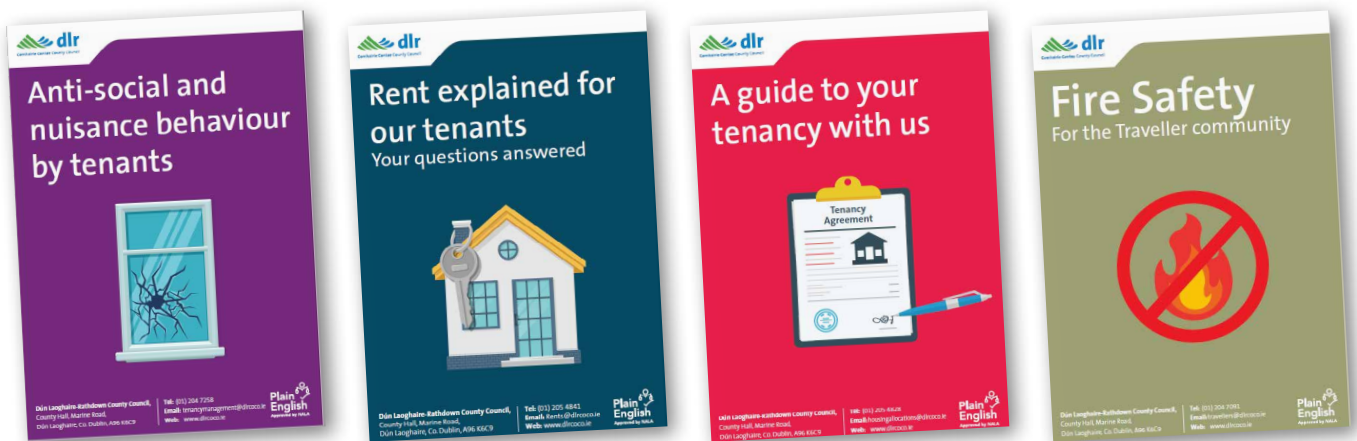
Theme One: Process Change
Sub Theme: Internal Processes

Local Authority	**Galway County Council**
Innovation Title	Referral and Caseload Management System for Social Work Cases
Innovation Category	Process Innovation
Service Group	Social Work Service (Housing)
Brief description of innovation	A formal codification of ways of working for the social work service. This included mapping of cases and determining when intervention is required and when cases should be closed in addition to case prioritisation.
Anticipated Outcomes	The project was deemed to have achieved its aims of: • Referrals are accepted based on need (e.g. Vulnerable persons, risk, support needs, crisis) - not on category (e.g., Traveller, disability, homeless, elderly). Cases are allocated to a Social Worker based on that need (vulnerability, urgency etc.). Allocated cases are reviewed regularly and closed following review via clinical supervision and once intervention is completed. • Appropriate referrals to social work are reviewed and placed on the social work referrals list. Urgent referrals will be responded to as timely as possible. The referrals list is reviewed regularly by the Senior Social Worker and social work staff. The development of a standardised and transparent process provides accountability and throughput on cases in line with national standards and good practice as outlined by CORU.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	Key Learnings: • The need to embed a new process and work with colleagues within housing and the wider local authority to refer cases as per process. • The need to provide information and support to external colleagues. • To support colleagues to use the referrals process, improve communication on cases and follow up on referrals. • The role of the Social Work team needs to be outlined in an internal process document. Social Work services to be delivered by Social Workers and clinically supervised by a Senior Social Worker who also has oversight and management of all social work referrals and open cases. Outcomes: - Greater role clarity for social workers.

Local Authority	Cork City Council
Innovation Title	Use of Competitive Dialogue Procurement for Social and Affordable Housing.
Innovation Category	Process Innovation
Service Group	Providing Social Housing
Brief description of innovation	Cork City Council integrated the EU Competitive Dialogue procurement procedure into its procurement for social and affordable housing. The process brings innovative and new solutions to housing delivery in the City area, with housing solutions delivered through facilitated dialogue with developers, landowners and key stakeholders.
Anticipated Outcomes	Significant delivery has been achieved to date, and a pipeline developed for social and affordable housing delivery with each new competition run. The process has also regenerated formerly derelict sites and been award winning for its process and for delivery of innovations such as Rightsizing Schemes.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	The importance of stakeholder engagement, and the resource-heavy nature of the process.

Local Authority	Fingal County Council
Innovation Title	Long Term Leasing Lease Pack
Innovation Category	Process Innovation
Service Group	Providing Social Housing [Building / Acquiring / Leasing]
Brief description of innovation	A Long-Term Lease pack was created to provide details of the Long-Term Lease Scheme for the purpose of leasing an individual property or multiple individual properties under the Long-Term Lease Scheme in Fingal. The Long-Term Lease Pack was created based on guidance documents from the Housing Agency, the Department of Housing, liaising with industry professionals and other Local Authorities. The Lease Pack aimed to increase transparency in Fingal County Council's Long Term Lease application process and the Terms and Conditions associated with the scheme.
Anticipated Outcomes	The key objective - which was deemed to be achieved - was the creation of the Long-Term Lease Pack to streamline the processing of Long-Term Leasing applications and increase delivery of high-quality Long-Term Lease properties. The lease pack was also deemed successful as it improved transparency and communication with external stakeholder and informed potential lessors of their obligations before the process began.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	An unanticipated positive outcome of this project was a reduction in work volumes answering calls and emails about long-term leasing. Prior to the introduction of the Lease Pack, phone lines and email were busy with enquires of the same nature. Those frequently asked question are answered in the Lease Pack allowing staff to focus on the processing of live applications as opposed to answering similar questions on an ongoing basis.

Theme One: Process Change
Sub Theme: Interagency Working

Local Authority	**Mayo County Council**
Innovation Title	Vacancy and Town Enhancement Taskforce
Innovation Category	Regulatory Innovation
Service Group	Community Engagement
Brief description of innovation	Led by the council, the taskforce worked with multiple local agencies and community groups to identify derelict buildings including properties that could be rejuvenated and brought back into use. The group meets monthly and discusses and agrees a programme of work. This includes areas involving climate change and biodiversity.
Anticipated Outcomes	The Taskforce brought together senior representatives from the local authority, community clean up groups, chamber of commerce and other voluntary bodies. Each member of the Taskforce brought with them valuable insight, learnings, and experience which is proving invaluable in getting key projects completed for the benefit of the local community.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	• Making better use of data to make more informed decision making. • Embed a community and socially responsible approach to building reuse to improve the town and street landscape. • Help to embed a more joined up approach in prioritising areas for improvement including potentially better-quality housing.

Theme Two: Energy Efficiency

Local Authority	Sligo County Council
Innovation Title	nZEB Pilot Project
Innovation Category	Technology Innovation
Service Group	Providing Social Housing [Building / Acquiring / Leasing]
Brief description of innovation	A pilot of an alternative method of construction intended as a building fabric response to the Nearly Zero Energy Building (nZEB) Standard. The approach is designed to achieve the new standards while ensuring the method of construction is appropriate to the local coastal climate and the construction skillset available in the region.
Anticipated Outcomes	• Full compliance with nZEB Standard / Part L of the Technical Guidance Documents (A2 BER Rating) • Appropriate to local climate in North-West: rapid build solution to achieve completed watertight shell creating a controlled environment in which to carry out critical airtightness and insulation work. • Construction skillset and materials already available in the region to execute this simple method of construction – no specialist contractors required. • Less crossover of trades on site resulting in higher quality finish. • Provision of service cavity allows for ease of services installations and for future changes if required. • Key elements of the construction are readily accessible for inspection during the course of construction. • Readily adaptable to respond to future building standard changes.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	A post-occupancy energy and carbon analysis of the dwelling was carried out which compared the same families previous similar sized dwelling with a C2 BER Rating. The new nZEB Standard dwelling emitted approximately 70% less CO2 for heating and domestic hot water by using an Air Source Heat Pump Vs Oil Heating and a solid fuel open fire. The overall cost to the household for heating and domestic hot water reduced was also reduce significantly by 40%. The success of this project and the learning outcomes in terms of buildability led to the approach being used on a multi-unit housing scheme in West Sligo which is currently nearing completion.

Local Authority	**Cork County Council**
Innovation Title	Future Proofing Housing Adaptions of Social Housing Stock
Innovation Category	Service Innovation
Service Group	Housing [Adaptation] Grants
Brief description of innovation	During the delivery of the major Disabled Persons Grant schemeworks programme which includes wet-room and bedroom extensions, a number of measures are incorporated including upgrading the energy performance of the overall property in line with Part L requirements to achieve a minimum BER rating of B2.
Anticipated Outcomes	To bring the overall energy performance of the property in line with Part L for buildings undergoing renovations and to design extensions that are capable of easy future adaptions to meet the changing needs of the residents.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	The additional measures create a more comfortable and cost-efficient dwelling for the tenant. Project costs are higher than for a traditional build, but with long term benefits.

Theme Three:
Homeless Services

Play your part.
Alert us to
Rough Sleepers

Help a Rough Sleeper

A Service provider by

Feidhmeannacht um Dhaoine ar Easpa
Dídine Réigiún Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin Region Homeless Executive

Local Authority	**Galway City Council**
Innovation Title	The Westside Modular Hub (Temporary Accommodation for Families)
Innovation Category	Service Innovation
Service Group	Homeless Services
Brief description of innovation	Pilot modular hub which provides 15 Housing Units for Temporary Emergency Accommodation.
Anticipated Outcomes	The key objectives were: • To reduce the reliance on hotels and bed and breakfasts accommodation in the provision of emergency accommodation for families and assist in reducing the costs of private emergency accommodation costs. • To work intensively with families in seeking a long-term housing solution to their homelessness. The objectives were deemed to be somewhat achieved.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	Those families placed in modular facilities had access to more domestic facilities than in alternative arrangements such as hotels and B&Bs. These facilities allowed those placed in modular accommodation to be more self-sufficient in areas such as food preparation and laundry, compared to in hotels and B&Bs. This self-sufficiency was deemed useful in developing life skills for those in emergency accommodation. There are intensive housing supports which leads to better outcomes for families moving on. There is a short period of tenancy support once a family moves on. To date, there is no evidence that any of the participants have re-presented for homeless services.

Local Authority	Dublin City Council
Innovation Title	COVID-19 Multi-Agency Response
Innovation Category	Service Innovation
Service Group	Homeless Services
Brief description of innovation	Accelerated integrated working between Statutory Partners, i.e., Community Healthcare Organisation for HSE Area 9 on behalf of the HSE and Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE) on behalf of the four Dublin Local Authorities, supported by DEASP and NGO sector. This work arrangement was designed to help prioritise accommodation for people without homes during the Covid 19 pandemic. The work also involved the assessment of, and changes being made to, accommodation on offer to ensure it met the requirements of social distancing to minimise Covid-19 spread. Rapid access to treatment and health interventions were provided as part of the project.
Anticipated Outcomes	The interventions described above were designed to minimise risk of infection in the homeless population as well as for vulnerable families in congregated settings. The actions were deemed to have been a success in this regard.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	Key Learning was the ability to mobilise quickly and effectively and how agile services can be when the situation demands it.

Local Authority	Dublin City Council
Innovation Title	Housing Support Officer Project
Innovation Category	Service Innovation
Service Group	Homeless Services
Brief description of innovation	In 2019 the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE) directly employed 15 Housing Support Officers. Their role was to work directly with people experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless.
Anticipated Outcomes	The work since the Housing Support Officers began has resulted in a much higher take up of Homeless HAP rather than entering emergency accommodation. It has greatly enhanced the number of families who are HAP ready i.e., references in place and paperwork complete. The overall number of families in emergency accommodation has fallen greatly since the Housing Support Officers were put in place and although the team is not entirely responsible for this decrease, they have played a significant role.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	While the focus of the project was on divergence from emergency accommodation and exits from homeless services as well as offering enhanced housing supports, the Housing Support Officers have extended this role and through their work have linked families with other services such as Tulsa, Social Workers and helped support families work with the Departments of Social Protection and Justice.

Theme Four:
Right Sizing

Local Authority	**Meath County Council** (working with Age Friendly Ireland)
Innovation Title	A Study on The Awareness, Perceptions and Experiences, of Older People Right Sizing
Innovation Category	Process Innovation
Service Group	Needs Assessment and Allocations
Brief description of innovation	A study on the awareness, perceptions and experiences of older people of right sizing, based on data collected in 2020. The goal was to gain an understanding of how older people feel about the process of right sizing and to reveal what incentives, if any, might encourage and support them to undertake the process.
Anticipated Outcomes	Recommendations have been put forward based on the results: · Designation of County Development Plan objectives, specifically for accommodation suitable for the housing needs of older people · The promotion of a greater awareness of right sizing options · The development of right sizing incentives; A front-loaded finance scheme, The roll out of Older Person's Integrated Services Manager, A financial contribution towards relocation costs · The publication of right sizing guidelines · The reconsideration of a Social Housing Passport Scheme · The undertaking of post Covid-19 housing research The detailed results from this study can be obtained by contacting AFI (Age Friendly Ireland).
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	It is important to note the considerable impact that Covid-19 had on this research study. Three of the four focus group sessions had to be suspended until alternative arrangements could be made. Furthermore, the questionnaire which initially was to be available both online and in hardcopy format was subsequently available mainly in an online capacity, with hard copies being made available on request. This was because most of the older people assisting with the roll out of the questionnaire country-wide were cocooning, in accordance with national government instructions and could therefore only consult with other older people online.

Local Authority	**Meath County Council**
Innovation Title	Provide Legal Basis for Right Sizing
Innovation Category	Regulatory Innovation
Service Group	Tenant Management
Brief description of innovation	The project looked at rightsizing a number of existing tenants who had been living in family dwellings but for one reason or another were struggling to maintain the dwelling.
Anticipated Outcomes	Once complete the council were able to right size 4 existing tenants and free up much needed family dwellings which were re-allocated to the general housing list.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	No primary legislation on right sizing led to difficulties with some tenants who refused to engage.

Theme Five:
Digitizing Services

Theme Five: Digitizing Services
Sub Theme: Internal

Local Authority	**Monaghan County Council**
Innovation Title	Centralised Repair System Linked with Laserfiche Document/Process Management System
Innovation Category	Process Innovation
Service Group	Management and Maintenance of [housing] Properties
Brief description of innovation	The council Introduced a document management system to remove paper-based operation within the housing section. In conjunction with this the system "Laserfiche" incorporated embedded processes within the system including management of repair requests/maintenance/Disabled Person Grant applications.
Anticipated Outcomes	At the start of the process the local authority repairs were dealt with by a number of individuals and individual offices. This led to different assessment processes and differing cost levels in each area. Through the introduction of a centralised office plus development of a single tenant handbook that set out in detail tenant/local authority responsibilities, a consistency in the assessment of repairs was established. In conjunction with this the Laserfiche process linking the centralised repair line to the workers carrying out the repairs enabled there to be an easier process to issue repairs, review progress and close and report on repairs.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	N/A.

Local Authority	Clare County Council
Innovation Title	Housing stock Asset Management System
Innovation Category	Process Innovation
Service Group	Management and Maintenance of [housing] Properties
Brief description of innovation	A full housing stock audit was carried out, which will allow for a full digital housing Asset Management System.
Anticipated Outcomes	The development of a system which keeps housing stock data up-to-date and accurate.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	N/A.

Local Authority	Wexford County Council
Innovation Title	Development of an Online Application for Private Rented Inspections
Innovation Category	Technology innovation
Service Group	Regulatory Activities [e.g., inspections of rented accommodation]
Brief description of innovation	An online application for rental inspections (not yet fully deployed). Allows geographic distribution of work to inspectors, automates workflow and acts as central data repository for inspections.

Anticipated Outcomes	• Improved timelines in the following areas:
	  • Corresponding with Landlords
	  • Departmental/NOAC Returns
	  • Management Reports
	• Consistency for both landlords and tenants, county wide.
	• Proactive with the re-inspection process - automatic reminders when a re-inspection is due
	• Enable the council to achieve annual targets without increased administrative staff.
	• Reduction of paper files.

Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	None at present.

Local Authority	**Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown**
Innovation Title	Improving (housing) Standards (housing inspection app)
Innovation Category	Technology innovation
Service Group	Regulatory Activities [e.g., inspections of rented accommodation]
Brief description of innovation	Application developed for rental inspectors that allows for digital centralised data storage, real time inspections data and automatic quarterly inspection reports.
Anticipated Outcomes	Successfully allowed for real time inspection data and photographs to be collected and increased accuracy in reporting to the DHLGH. The inspection process was streamlined for both inspectors and administrative staff.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	N/A

Local Authority	**Fingal County Council**
Innovation Title	Capturing Part V Planning Updates
Innovation Category	Process Innovation
Service Group	Providing Social Housing [Building / Acquiring / Leasing]
Brief description of innovation	To ensure potential Part V obligations are not missed, Microsoft Dynamics CRM is utilised. CRM capabilities enable the Housing Department to capture and manage the planning progression where Part V applies.
Anticipated Outcomes	• Utilising CRM/APAS connection, allowing early capture of potential Part V and ensures engagement with developers as soon as possible after grant of planning permission to commence Part V negotiations. • All information in relation to the development is available in one place • Effective reporting • Query reduction between Planning and Housing.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	The introduction of this CRM system enabled a better understanding of the planning process for non-planning staff.

Theme Five: Digitizing Services
Sub Theme: Customer Facing

Local Authority	**Limerick City and County Council**
Innovation Title	Online HAP Application
Innovation Category	Technology innovation
Service Group	Social Housing Support
Brief description of innovation	Introduction of a pilot to allow for online HAP applications and paperless operating in response to COVID-19.
Anticipated Outcomes	More efficient and less time-consuming HAP applications. Project still in pilot phase, further outcomes assessment is pending.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	None at present.

Local Authority	**Cork City Council**
Innovation Title	DocuSign Documents
Innovation Category	Technology innovation
Service Group	Social Housing Support
Brief description of innovation	In response to COVID-19, DocuSign was introduced for HAP applications to allow for digital processing of applications.
Anticipated Outcomes	· Reduced processing times for HAP applications · Less emphasis on post · Reduce paper usage · More efficient use of time
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	N/A

Local Authority	**Kildare County Council**
Innovation Title	Anti-Social Online Form
Innovation Category	Service Innovation
Service Group	Estate Management - Anti Social Behaviour, etc.
Brief description of innovation	An online complaint form was designed for the council website so that people could report anti-social behaviour in council estates/properties and other issues.
Anticipated Outcomes	One of the objectives was that this process would cut down on the amount phone calls to the Tenant Liaison Officers (TLOs) with complaints, which it has done. It has given the TLOs more time to concentrate on the cases, as the form has all the details the TLO requires. It has also reduced the number of false or minor complaints being made. The system sends emails straight to a designated email account for the TLOs. This allows for complaints to remain confidential. Additionally, the email system allows another TLO to pick up a case when a TLO is absent as they are not in a personal email account.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	Anecdotally, the online form has led to some complainants increasing the frequency with which they complain. Some complaints were not relevant to TLOs but could still be forwarded on internally.

Local Authority	**Monaghan County Council**
Innovation Title	Use of 360 Camera in House Section Operation
Innovation Category	Technology innovation
Service Group	Tenant Management
Brief description of innovation	Use of 360 Camera in house inspections by technical staff member. Use of camera footage to show to prospective tenants of local authority properties.
Anticipated Outcomes	Allows housing applicants to experience an immersive tour of a house using the latest virtual reality technology before deciding to accept an offer of a tenancy. Provides an easy-to-use inspection tool for local authority staff to assist in housing inspections and maintenance. It has helped to standardise and order the housing inspection process.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	N/A

Local Authority Customer Portal

Local Authority	**Roscommon County Council**
Innovation Title	Payment of Rent via App
Innovation Category	Service Innovation
Service Group	Tenant Management
Brief description of innovation	Use of an off-the-shelf app by Acendas to allow tenants to check their balances and pay their rent.
Anticipated Outcomes	• Tenants provided with access to real time account information • Payments made easier • Increased rent collection
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	The pace of uptake of the app was faster than expected, with rental income also increasing month on month.

Local Authority	**Fingal County Council**
Innovation Title	Affordable Housing Application Portal
Innovation Category	Technology Innovation
Service Group	Affordable Housing [including loan management]
Brief description of innovation	This project saw the creation of online portal to accept applications for pilot Affordable Home Purchase Scheme. The portal allows applicants to set up an account, upload their application details and upload supplementary documentation to back up their application. Communication with applicants could be done through the portal.
Anticipated Outcomes	The portal provides a robust, easy to use alternative to a paper-based application system for eligible applicants to upload their details and documents.
Unanticipated outcomes and key learnings	The success of the system and its application led the council to mirror its use in deploying the portal for the receipt and processing of HAP applications. It is also intended to use this system to receive and process applications under the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan scheme.

Appendix 1:
Survey Template for Case Studies

Section 1:
Contact Details for survey respondent

1. Local Authority

2. Department

3. Job Title

4. Contact name

5. Contact email address

Section 2:
Innovation Categories

1. Please select an Innovation Category from the dropdown menu for the innovation you are nominating:

Please select the category that you feel best describes your innovation.

	Please select the most relevant
a) **Service Innovation:** a different approach that positively affects a customer service.	
b) **Process Innovation:** a different approach that positively affects efficiency and/or productivity in relation to a process.	
c) **Regulatory innovation:** a different approach that positively affects the regulatory environment.	
d) **Policy/Culture innovation:** a different approach to policy making or policy implementation with positive results or a change that impacted on the culture within the organisation positively.	
e) **Technology innovation:** a different approach to technology with positive results or learnings.	

2. Please select the Housing Service Group (as identified in service catalogue) from the following menu that the innovation most closely relates to:

	Please select most relevant
Providing Social Housing [Building / Acquiring / Leasing]	
Social Housing Support [HAP / RAS]	
Management and Maintenance of [housing] Properties	
Needs Assessment and Allocations	
Tenant Management [including needs assessment, allocation, rent management, tenancy agreements]	
Housing [Adaptation] Grants	
Homeless Services	
Affordable Housing [including loan management]	
Community Engagement	
Regulatory Activities [e.g. inspections of rented accommodation]	
Other [please specify] (will add free text box for this option)	

Section 3:
Description of Innovation

1. Please provide a short title for the innovation:

2. Please describe the innovation that was implemented: (approx. 150 words)

3. What were the key objectives of the innovation that was implemented: (approx. 50 words)

Section 4:
Innovation Outcomes

4. Did this innovation achieve its objectives: Yes/ No/ Somewhat

5. Please describe the anticipated impacts/outcomes, including objectives that were met, from this project. (approx. 100 words)

6. Please describe any unanticipated impacts/outcomes from this project, both positive or negative, including any key learnings. (approx. 100 words)

7. If there are any internet links to further information on the project you have outlined here, please provide below:

Contact details for innovation

Please provide us with the name and contact details of the most suitable staff member to contact regarding this innovation example if further information is needed. These contact details may be included in a published report (If you are the most suitable point of contact, please provide your own details):

Name: ....

Email: ....

Phone number: ....