

PRESS RELEASE

The Dublin Housing Observatory is launched to improve housing market transparency

Dublin City Council launch new business unit to make Dublin an affordable and sustainable place to live

Dublin, 9th July 2018 The Dublin Housing Observatory (DHO), a new business unit under Dublin City Council's (DCC) Housing and Community Services Department, was launched today in a move to address the Dublin Housing Crisis. Led by Dr Dáithí Downey, Head of Housing Policy Research and Development at DCC and Principal Investigator with the DHO, the unit will operate as an authoritative voice on housing issues.

With a mission statement to help make Dublin an affordable and sustainable place to live, the Dublin Housing Observatory (DHO) will work to ensure that all Dublin city's housing strategies, policies and practices are underpinned by robust evidence. Staffed by Dr Dáithí Downey, two researchers and a research data analyst, the unit will report to Brendan Kenny, Deputy Chief Executive of the Housing and Community Services Department. Designed to focus on all aspects of housing, the DHO will collaborate with housing, planning, economic development and inclusion and integration sections within DCC.

To offer objective and verifiable housing data, the DHO has developed a new online *Data Navigator* tool with data analysis provided from DCC, the All Ireland Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth University and Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi). With a public interface, an interactive mapping tool will allow people to source up to date and verified information on the housing market supplied from the Central Statistics Office, Private Rented Tenancies Board (PRTB), Property Register and local authorities.

Dr Dáithí Downey, Head of Housing Policy Research and Development with Dublin City Council, said, "Our new *Data Navigator* tool integrates and visualises publicly sourced data on housing for the first time. It will greatly improve the transparency of the housing market, allowing house-hunters to see registered RTB rents across Dublin, information on house sale prices and other concerns such as housing tenure patterns and the spatial distribution of the age, condition and type of Dublin's housing stock. Building on this, we hope that future releases will help Dubliners choose where to live based on empirical data."

Justin Gleeson, Director of AIRO at Maynooth University, said: "Good policy making needs to be driven by reliable and authoritative facts, and as Dublin faces increasing pressure on its housing supply, we will work closely with Dublin City Council to make sure the future of housing policy in the capital is informed by reliable data".

Professor Ray O'Neill, Vice President for Research and Innovation, Maynooth University commented: "The role of the modern university is to inform and educate wider society as much as its own students, and to play a role in the country's long term sustainable development. The All-Ireland Research Observatory is just one of many Maynooth University initiatives that aims to do this by providing the hard data to inform robust policy-making."

“Its work with the Dublin Housing Observatory is going to be hugely important in the future of Dublin’s housing, and will no doubt inform similar schemes and strategies in urban centres across Ireland.”

CEO of Ordnance Survey Ireland, Colin Bray said: “The Dublin Housing Observatory Mapping Viewer has made a level of data on Dublin city housing available that has never been seen before. This makes it an absolutely essential tool to support housing policy design and implementation in the capital. OSI are delighted to support this initiative by powering the mapping viewer on our GeoHive platform in conjunction with the data insights team at AIRO.”

The *Data Navigator’s* additional role will be in assisting registered users, primarily local authority housing, planning and development professionals as they work to provide high quality social and affordable homes in sustainable Dublin areas.

It can be viewed here (from Monday 9th July 2018): <http://airomaps.geohive.ie/DHO>

Taking place over two days in Dublin’s Wood Quay Venue, the DHO launch will see the release of the DHO’s ‘Home at Last’ report tomorrow, Tuesday. The Observatory’s first contribution to the housing debate, this report will focus on the role and experience of Rapid Build housing. Highlighting quality issues of housing rather than metrics, ‘Home at Last’ is informed by the testimony of Rapid Build residents in Ballymun and Finglas.

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