A Platform for Action on Housing

General Election 2020
Threshold is a national housing charity that provides frontline advice and support services to people with housing problems across Ireland.

Last year, Threshold advisors carried out over 80,000 actions supporting vulnerable households and preventing homelessness.

Our platform for the 2020 General Election is based on the lived experience of the clients we support every day.
Our Key Asks

Improve the Viability of the Private Rented Sector

Threshold has campaigned for and contributed to making the private rented sector a viable tenure of choice. Many positive changes have been made but there are some areas that still require improvement.

We are asking for:

- The introduction of indefinite tenancies. ‘No reason’ evictions at the end of every six-year tenancy cycle should not be part of a modern rental sector;

- The incentivisation and promotion of long term lease agreements;

- The introduction of a property-specific Rent Register;

- A review of Rent Pressure Zone measures to establish whether further rent certainty measures are necessary;

- The establishment of a custodial Deposit Protection Scheme and the definition of a deposit as the equivalent of one month’s rent;

- An amendment of the legal definition of landlord to include banks and receivers;

- An overhaul of the current standards inspection system and the appropriate resourcing of an effective and efficient inspection system;

- Consideration to be given to abolishing the category of licensee and replacing it with a set of circumscribed tenancy rights.

- The provision of the necessary resources to Local Authorities to enforce the regulation of short-term lets.
Our Key asks

Prevent Homelessness

Threshold is asking for increased investment in evidence based homeless prevention initiatives.

The majority of people become homeless on foot of a notice of termination (NoT) from their private rented home. Homeless prevention strategies have traditionally focused on personal and social challenges such as addiction or mental health or on specific vulnerable groups e.g care leavers. The evidence indicates that, in addition to such measures, more is required in terms of tenancy protection in the Private Rented Sector prior to homelessness occurring.

In 2018, only 5% of expenditure on homeless services was spent on homeless prevention - €9 million - while emergency accommodation cost the State €147 million.

Work must be carried out to identify those living in hidden homelessness so that they may be provided with the appropriate social and housing supports.

Increase the Supply of Homes

Threshold is asking for a commitment to increase all housing stock owned and managed by the Local Authorities and A.H.B.s to 20% by 2033 and 25% by 2040. This figure currently rests at 9%.

This measure will bring stability and certainty to the housing market. As approximately one third of the population require assistance to meet their housing need on an ongoing basis, it will also ensure that the housing need of this group of people is met.

State supported housing must expand beyond traditional social housing to a public housing model including, for example, cost-rental and affordable purchase style schemes. In addition, more intermediate tenures should be developed and delivered upon, such as shared ownership and affordable rental. There is also a need for greater access to home ownership for lower income households.
Our Key asks

20 year Housing Strategy

Threshold is seeking a twenty-year Housing Strategy to stretch beyond the lifetime of any one Government.

This will require the establishment of a Commission on the Future of Housing in Ireland, to consist of elected representatives and members of civil society.

We need a housing system that works for all people. This requires time, commitment and a consistent and integrated approach. Housing strategies that only last the lifetime of one government are insufficient and keep us in a highly problematic boom-bust cycle of housing provision.

Right to a Home

Threshold believe that everyone has a right to a home. This needs to be enshrined in our Constitution.
The Scheme to Support National Organisations is funded by the Government of Ireland through the Department of Rural and Community Development