

# Major buildings planned by voluntary agencies in city

By **DYMPHNA BRACKEN**

THE new Tenant Purchase Scheme and the number of voluntary housing agencies currently expressing an interest in building in the city will mean big changes in the Corporation's housing development in the next few years.

The scheme was disclosed to City Councillors at their meeting last evening.

A number of voluntary housing agencies have completed developments in and around the city including Thomondgate and the Good Shepherd Convent and others are currently examining site locations.

The Sue Ryder Foundation, which principally caters for elderly people is currently examining the possibilities of renovating the old married quarters at Sarsfield Barracks, which has been unused for a number of years.

The Downs Syndrome Association is currently carrying out a site selection survey in the city.

Cura who provide accommodation for lone parents are at the planning application stage in respect of a site in Thomondgate.

And GARA, who provide for the housing needs of

homeless people are also looking at sites in and around the city.

Its chairman, Gearoid Maher, a Limerickman, will give a presentation, at the June meeting of the City Council's housing committee.

"This is a whole new phenomenon" according to Alderman Sean Griffin, chairman of the housing committee.

"I very much welcome this development. It is a new and broader concept which will provide more good quality housing in the city," he said.

A positive aspect of the new developments, according to Alderman Griffin, is that the houses will be integrated into already stable communities.

In respect of the new Tenant Purchase Scheme, the Alderman pointed out that there are "huge differences" in it and the previous scheme.

Tenants applying to buy their houses, under the new scheme, no longer have to apply to banks or buildings societies for the necessary finance.

It will be provided by the Corporation through the Housing Finance Association.

There are also opportunities for tenants on low wages or on social welfare to apply.

Opportunities also exist under the shared ownership scheme which enables a tenant to purchase half his

house first on a shared ownership basis with the Corporation.

The new scheme commenced on May 1 last.

Tenants who applied to purchase their houses under the 1993 scheme but who only completed the purchase since May 1 will be entitled to the benefits of the new scheme.

The allowance under the new scheme is three per cent for every year of tenancy up to a maximum of 30

per cent plus £3,000.

The new allowances mean that a house valued at £15,000 with full benefits would be purchased for £7,500.

The Corporation meets the costs of transfer and the purchaser meets the costs of the mortgages if that arises.

A very welcome aspect of the new scheme, according to Alderman Griffin is that tenants will be allowed for improvements they carried out to their house.

These allowances will have to be identified by the Corporation prior to purchase.

No warranties are required under the new scheme.

There will be an obligation on the Corporation to obtain valuations. Tenants can also obtain valuations. Disputes will be settled at the valuations office in Dublin.

Allowances will also be made in respect of house sites purchased at nominal

fees at the time by the Corporation.

Former tenant purchasers who for whatever reason had to surrender their houses can re-apply under the new scheme.

Any person doing will have the amount of capital paid under the former scheme taken into account.

In the event of tenant dying or leaving a house, a sub-tenant under the new scheme will now avail of the discounts.



At the Pike Inn to meet the Manchester United players were Joe O'Mahony, Fr Joe Young, Jim Moynihan and Tony Meaney. (LL)