Media Release

RTB Rent Index shows 2.7% annual increase in national standardised average rent for Q4 2020

- *Rents grew nationally by 2.7% in Q4 2020 in comparison to 6.4% in Q4 2019.*
- *The national standardised average rent stood at €1,256 in Q4 2020, equal to its level in Q3 2020.*
- *In Dublin, in Q4 2020, the standardised average rent stood at €1,745 per month, a 2.1% increase year-on-year. This is down 0.8% quarter on quarter when compared to the rent level in Q3 2020.*
- *The lowest rent for houses across the regions was for a one-bed house outside the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) for which the standardised average rent was €722 per month in Q4 2020, while the highest rent across the regions was for four-bed+ houses in Dublin for which the standardised average rent was €2,320.*
- *The lowest rent for apartments across the regions was for a one-bed apartment outside the GDA for which the standardised average rent was €751 per month in Q4 2020, while the highest rent across the regions was for three-bed+ apartment in Dublin for which the standardised average rent was €2,219.*
- *The Q4 2020 Rent Index release coincides with the launch of the interactive RTB Research and Data Hub.*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24th: The Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) has published the quarterly Rent Index for the October to December period (Q4) of 2020. The annual national standardised average rent stayed the same at €1,256 for both Q3 and Q4 of 2020.

The county with the highest standardised average rent in Q4 2020 was Dublin (€1,745 per month) and the counties with the lowest monthly rents were Donegal and Leitrim (€626 per month). At the Local Electoral Area (LEA) level, the LEA with the highest standardised average rent was Stillorgan, County Dublin (€2,385 per month) and the lowest was Carndonagh, County Donegal (€521 per month). New tenancies continued to account for approximately four-fifths of all registrations at 82.8%, with 17.2% of registrations representing tenancy renewals.

Padraig McGoldrick, Interim Director of the RTB, commented on the latest Rent Index findings: *"The impact of Covid-19 on the rental sector continued into the fourth quarter of 2020. The national standardised average rent remained static in the quarter and, overall, in the year there had been a significant trend of moderation in rental inflation relative to previous years.*

While there has been a definite trend in moderation in rent levels, it is clear affordability issues and related risks remain. We understand that Covid-19 presents many challenges and adjustments for those operating and living in the rental sector. We continue to encourage those who are experiencing issues in their tenancies to keep lines of communication open and if they still cannot resolve their dispute to contact the RTB for support and information on how to resolve these matters.

We also want to highlight that further measures and the extension of temporary protections for those impacted by the pandemic were introduced by Government towards the end of last year. The Planning and Development, and Residential Tenancies, Act 2020, enacted in

December 2020 provides protections for tenants who are financially impacted by Covid-19, in rent arrears and at risk of losing their tenancy. It also introduced protections for landlords who have been financially impacted by Covid-19 as well as their tenant's ability to pay rent.

The Residential Tenancies Act 2020 introduced temporary protections for tenants where they cannot be made to leave their rental accommodation, except for limited circumstances, any time there are restrictions on travel outside a 5-kilometre radius of a person's home. Currently, this protection will remain in place until at least 15th April 2021.

For more information on these protections or supports available from the RTB, visit www.rtb.ie."

The RTB Rent Index, which is compiled in conjunction with the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), is the authoritative report on the Irish rental market. It is based on actual rents paid on 19,287 private tenancies registered with the RTB in the quarter, which is made up of homes new to the rental sector, new tenancies in existing housing stock and renewals of existing tenancies.

In Q4 2020, eight counties had standardised average rents above €1,000 per month: Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kildare, Limerick, Louth, Meath, and Wicklow. Year-on-year the fastest growing rent in the fourth quarter of 2020, by county, was seen in County Longford (8.3%) and the county with the largest year-on-year decline in rents was Waterford (-13%).

The release of the Q4 2020 Rent Index also coincides with the **launch of the RTB's Research and Data Hub**. A key element in supporting and developing a well-functioning rental sector is the provision of data and research and a core strategic priority for the RTB is to use evidence and data to foster a better understanding of the rental sector. The RTB Research and Data Hub is the home for important rental data and statistics and will grow over time. The Hub is interactive and will enable the public to access and download information on the rental sector easily and efficiently via the RTB website. You can access the Research and Data Hub here.

For anyone experiencing issues in their tenancies please visit www.rtb.ie for information on how to resolve issues and, if necessary, use the RTB's free telephone mediation service on 0818 30 30 37. This is available to help both landlords and tenants resolve a dispute in a mutually beneficial manner and does not require people to leave their home.

The full Q4 2020 RTB Rent Index Report and supporting infographics can be downloaded below:

- Rent Index Q4 2020
- Rent Index Q4 2020 Infographics
- Rent Index Q4 2020 Regional Data

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Appendix 1: Q4 2020 RTB Rent Index Summary Results

National
- The national standardised average rent stood at €1,256 in Q4 2020.
- Year-on-year rents grew by 2.7% in the fourth quarter of 2020. This growth rate is higher than that of Q3 2020.
- Nationally, in terms of property type, 55% of the tenancies registered in Q4 2020 were apartments or flats.
- In Q4 2020, 4.6% of tenancies registered in the quarter had a monthly rent level of less than or equal to €500; 34.7% had a monthly rent level of €501-€1,000; 29.1% had a monthly rent level of €1,001-€1,500; and 31.6% had a monthly rent level in excess of €1,500.
- There has been a decline in the number of tenancies registered with the RTB in Q4 2020 compared to the previous quarter. Traditional seasonal patterns are often evident between the third and the fourth quarter of every year in line with changing market activity.

The Dublin Market
- Dublin accounted for 45.2% of tenancies in Q4 2020.
- Year-on-year price inflation stood at 2.1% in the Dublin area.
- In Dublin, 72.5% of tenancies in Q4 2020 were for apartments while it was 39.7% and 45.4% in the Rest of the Country and the GDA respectively.
- In Q4 2020 in Dublin, 60.8% of rental agreements registered with the RTB had rents over €1,500 as compared to only 7.5% in the Rest of the Country.
- As of Q4 2020, standardised average rent in Dublin was substantially higher than those outside Dublin (Non-Dublin) at €1,745 per month as compared to €955 per month.
- In comparison to Q3 2020 (€1,759), the standardised average rent in Dublin was €14 cheaper in Q4 2020 (1,745)

Outside Dublin
- The standardised average rent is considerably less outside Dublin standing at €955 in Q4 2020.
- Year-on-year price inflation stood at 3.7% outside Dublin.
- Taking a typical two-bedroom house, the standardised average rent in Dublin stood at €1,684 per month in Q4 2020. This is nearly twice the level for a two-bedroom house outside Dublin for which the most recent standardised average rent was €878 per month.
- The lowest rent for houses across the regions was for a one bed house outside the GDA for which the standardised average rent was €722 per month in Q4 2020.
- On an annualised basis, two counties registered lower standardised average rent in Q4 2020 than in Q4 2019: Waterford and Laois. The county with largest year-on-year decline in rents was Waterford at -8.3 per cent.

Greater Dublin Area (Meath, Kildare, Wicklow)
- The standardised average rent in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) excluding Dublin stood at €1,307 as of Q4 2020 while it was €904 outside the GDA.
- Dublin and the GDA accounted for over half (53.1 per cent) of all tenancy agreements registered in Q4 2020. County Dublin accounted for 45.2 per cent of tenancies in Q4 2020, the GDA accounted for a further 7.9 per cent.

- Annual rental price inflation was strongest in the GDA where houses grew at 4.2 per cent year-on-year.
- In Q4 2020, apartment rental prices in the GDA experienced the strongest annual growth with an increase of 7.5 per cent year-on-year.

Cities
- While rents in Dublin City were 1.1 per cent lower in Q4 2020 compared to Q3 2020, they increased marginally year-on-year by 0.1 per cent.
- Rent levels in Dublin City averaged €1,675 per month in Q4 2020.
- Cork city had the second highest standardised average rent level in Q4 2020 at €1,252. The standardised average rent in Galway city stood at €1,166 per month in Q4 2020 and was €997 in Limerick City.
- The only city with standardised average rent lower than €900 per month was Waterford City where it was €714 per month in Q4 2020.
- The year-on-year growth rates in Cork City and Galway City were 4.5%and 2.0% respectively.
- Rents in Waterford City declined significantly in Q4 2020 compared to the Q4 2019, with a fall of 11%. On the other hand, rent levels increased by 7.4% year-on-year in Limerick.

Trend in House Rent Prices
- Taking a typical two-bedroom house, the standardised average rent in Dublin stood at €1,684 per month in Q4 2020. In comparison, the rent for a two-bedroom house outside Dublin was €878 per month. The standardised average rent for a two-bedroom house in the GDA was €1,223 in Q4 2020.
- The lowest rent for houses across the regions was for a one-bed house outside the GDA for which the standardised average rent was €722 per month in Q4 2020.
- Two-bedroom houses in the GDA grew at a considerable rate of 8.3 per cent per annum. This was the highest inflation rate of all house types considered across regions.

Trend in Apartment Rent Prices
- Taking a typical two-bedroom apartment, the standardised average rent in Dublin stood at €1,808 per month in Q4 2020. This twice the level for a two-bedroom apartment outside Dublin for which stood at €955 per month.
- The standardised average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the Greater Dublin Area was €1,272 in Q4 2020 while the equivalent apartment outside the GDA carried an average rent of approximately €904 per month.
- The contrast in the level of rents between Dublin and elsewhere is again noticeable as the rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Dublin (€1,429 per month) costs nearly €450 per month more than an apartment with three or more bedrooms outside Dublin (€979 per month).

More information on House and Apartment Rent Prices can be found on pages 18/20 of the Q4 2020 Rent Index Report.

Due to a large concentration of jobs and amenities within urban areas, the majority of the population is concentrated in cities and housing demand is highest in these areas. To provide more insight into rental developments across cities in Ireland, we present standardised average rents for each of the cities. The data is presented in Table 1. (See pages 21 of the Q4 2020 RTB Rent Index for more information).

Rental Developments Across Counties
- Eight counties had standardised average rents above €1,000 euros per month: Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kildare, Limerick, Louth, Meath, and Wicklow.
- The county with the highest growth rate in standardised average rent in Q4 2020 was Longford (8.3% per annum) and the county with the largest decline in rents was Waterford (-13 % per annum).
- A full county by county breakdown is available on pages 24 of the Q4 2020 RTB Rent Index Report.

Local Electoral Area (LEA) Trends
- In Q4 2020, the LEA with the highest standardised average rent was Stillorgan, Co. Dublin at €2,385.
- The LEA with the lowest standardised average rent in Q4 2020 was Carndonagh, Co. Donegal at €521.

New versus Renewal Tenancies
- In Q4 2020, 82.8 per cent of registered tenancies were new registrations with 17.2 per cent being renewals.
- Nationally, for new tenancies both the standardised average rent, €1,304, and the rent index, 168, continue to be higher than those for renewal tenancies of €1,069 and 138 respectively.
- Annual growth in the standardised average rent for new tenancies was 2.8 per cent while it was 3.0 per cent for further part IV renewals.
- On a quarterly basis, standardised average rent for new tenancies decreased by 0.2 per cent while it increased by 1.7 per cent for renewals.

For information on the breakdown of rent levels for both houses and apartments based on the number of bedrooms and where they are located, please see pages 18-20 of the Report.

Investigations and Sanctions
On 1 July 2019, the RTB was given new powers to directly investigate and sanction breaches of rental law. The RTB can start an investigation into the following matters:
- Failure to comply with the Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) requirements or falsely relying on an RPZ exemption;
- Failing to register a tenancy;
- Failing to offer a tenant their tenancy back where it has been terminated; and
- Citing a false or misleading reason to end a tenancy.

If you are aware of a potential breach of rental law as outlined above, you can bring it to the attention of the Investigations and Sanctions unit in three ways, by:
- Calling us on 0818 776297 or 01 6753724.
- Emailing us at investigations@rtb.ie.
- Making a formal complaint by filling out and returning the RTB Sanctions and Alleged Breach Complaint form found on www.rtb.ie.

To learn more about the RTB's Investigations and Sanctions Unit, please visit the RTB website here.