

# The Question of Feeling At Home

08 – 23 February 2019

Home is more than bricks and mortar. It is a complex, multi-faceted (Annison, 2000) concept the meaning of which is continually negotiated, oscillating between physical, social and cultural dimensions (Wiles et al, 2012).

The experience of home in addition to access to a home of one's own choosing, has traditionally been very different for people with an intellectual disability compared with the general population. This nowhere more evident than in the historical segregation of people with intellectual disability (ID) into large institutional living spaces. The populist term of 'being put into a home' resonates in this context, and is similarly used for people in the general population as they age and present with challenges to cognition and capacity.

In order to ensure the person with ID has choice and control over living in a home of their own choosing and making, the issue of housing and home, needs to divert from one of pure bricks and mortar. The financial, social and cultural resources required to enable people with ID to have their own home needs addressing in tandem with the physical and built environment issues of housing, place and space.

Recent analysis of the general older population in Ireland shows three dominant household types – living alone, living with a spouse only, and living with children and grandchildren (Barrett and Kelly, 2015). This highlights how extended family networks provide a range of alternative home formation alternatives for the general older population. Access to independent housing options and mortgage options, are further compounded by non-traditional familial and social networks, with a relative absence of partners, children and grandchildren for the majority of people with ID.

Text by Dr. Mary-Ann O'Donovan

Opening hours: Tues - Sat 12-4pm

Contact: [pssquared@btconnect.com](mailto:pssquared@btconnect.com) or 07733457772.

For more information about the current and upcoming projects see [www.pssquared.org](http://www.pssquared.org)

**PS<sup>2</sup> is supported by the National Lottery through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.**