

Clare County Council

Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability

1. Purpose and Goal

The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011 - 2016, published in 2011, and the associated National Implementation Framework, which are joint publications by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government and the Department of Health were developed as a part of a coherent framework, in conjunction with the A Vision for Change (the Government's mental health policy) and a Time to Move on from Congregated Settings (the Report of the Working Group on Congregated Settings) to support people with disabilities in community based living with maximum independence and choice.

The vision of the Strategy is to facilitate access, for people with disabilities, to the appropriate range of housing and related support services, delivered in an integrated and sustainable manner, which promotes equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living.

The Strategy expects while acknowledging the challenges that this should be achieved within the mainstream housing environment. The core goal of the Strategy is to meet the identified housing needs of people with disabilities locally whether they are currently living in the community and or in a congregated setting.

The four categories of disability referred to in the Strategy are:

- (a) sensory disability
- (b) mental health disability
- (c) physical disability and
- (d) intellectual disability/autism

The National Implementation Framework includes the following strategic aims

Housing authorities will develop specific strategies to meet the identified housing needs of people with physical, intellectual, mental health and sensory disabilities locally. These strategies will be informed by the assessments of housing need and broader formalised consultation with relevant statutory agencies, service users groups and disability organisations. These strategies will form an integral part of local authority Housing Services

Plans and will promote and support the delivery of accommodation for people with disabilities using all appropriate housing supply mechanisms.

In line with the development of specific disability housing strategies, housing authorities will consider reserving certain proportions of units to meet specific identified need within each disability strategy.

It is intended that the strategy will form an integral part of the Housing Services Plans and will promote and support the delivery of accommodation for people with disabilities using all appropriate housing supply mechanisms. This strategy will also support longer term strategic planning.

This document that has been prepared by the Housing and Disability Steering Group aims to fulfil the requirements of the Strategy and provide the local authority and other housing providers with information that will help to inform and guide housing provision for people with a disability over the next number of years.

2. Housing Need

Housing need has been defined as the extent to which the quantity and quality of existing accommodation falls short of that required to provide each household or person in the population, irrespective of ability to pay or of particular personal preferences, with accommodation of a specified minimum standard and above. This definition applies equally to all people with a disability.

The assessment of an individual need for Social Housing Support is based on the individual's lack of ability to provide housing from their own means. The housing need is the type of housing size etc. that is required to allow them to live appropriately.

In relation to people with a disability living in congregated settings, deinstitutionalisation refers to the move away from housing people with disabilities in residential institutions, where all services were generally provided on site, to community based settings. Large residential institutions, while maximising the pooling of support services, segregate residents from the community and from normal social life. Research has demonstrated that such institutions are not able to deliver the same quality of life for their residents as community based alternatives.

3. Roles and Responsibilities within the Disability Sector

3.1 Housing Authorities

Local Authorities acting as Housing Authorities have a key role in the provision of social housing supports for all eligible persons with a disability, including people currently living independently, or with families or in other arrangements. In many cases the solution for the individual will also require the support of the Health Service Executive (HSE).

3.2 Health Service Executive (HSE)

In some cases the HSE is the direct service provider to an individual. In addition, the HSE is the current funding agency of support services by third parties. The HSE is also one of the main drivers of the deinstitutionalisation of residents from congregated settings.

In addition, the HSE must also identify individual support costs and continue to provide funding for residents in their new housing environments. The HSE has the overall statutory responsibility for the management and delivery of healthcare and personal social services. In respect of disability services, the HSE's responsibility is fulfilled by the provision of services directly by the organisation and also, to a very significant extent by the funding of non-statutory organisations to provide such services on its behalf. The HSE aims to support each individual with a disability in living as normal a life as possible, in an environment that provides opportunities for choice, personal development, fulfilling relationships and protection from exploitation and abuse. With regard to individuals currently residing in a congregated type setting, the HSE strongly supports their transition to more socially inclusive community integrated services and is fully committed to ensuring that people with disabilities will be actively and effectively supported to live full inclusive lives at the heart of their family, community and society.

3.3 Service Providers

This would include HSE (direct service provision) service providers and the non-statutory service providers. Responsibilities will include the development of an overall project plan to include person centred plan , provision of information with regard to housing options, supporting the individual with regard to application for assessment of housing needs, access to external advocate, support around tenancy arrangements, care support needs identified , assistance with the development of circle of supports etc. Service providers must also participate in the local implementation teams, identify any obstacles / challenges to transition etc.

3.4 Approved Housing Bodies

The Approved Housing Bodies will be the main housing providers under the initiatives set out in the Housing Strategy for People with a Disability, whether it is through Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS), leasing or purchase models. *Collaboration between AHB's, The HSE, Service Providers and the Housing Authority will be essential to ensure efficient delivery of accommodation solutions.*

4. Demand and Supply

The lead in time to any housing procurement can be significant and it is critical that all procurement plans can take account of both current and projected housing demand. The approach taken to providing suitable and appropriate housing to people with disabilities will ensure that agreed disability specific general requirements and known individual requirements are met in all design and procurement briefs to meet both current and projected need of present and anticipated applicants. *A proportion of any projected housing procurement will be forward planned and reserved to meet the general needs of people with disabilities on the Housing List. In specific instances an accessibility brief will be agreed and set out to inform the requirements that should be part of any brief from the outset i.e. what is this project brief required to deliver in terms of accessibility for people with disabilities, general design, numbers of units, design of units, and how will this be achieved (Section 27 Disability Act).*

4.1 Current demand

The current demand will be determined from various sources from which a comprehensive breakdown of need can be compiled. The breakdown of demand/need will include details on unit size, location, design and any other specific requirements. An element of estimation and forecast is also required to address emerging need which probably can be quantified based on previous annual averages but not specific to location. The relevant information from which the detail can be extracted is held as follows and then is consolidated for the county at Paragraph 4.1.5:

4.1.1 Housing Waiting List (@ 23/09/2016)

Total	194
Physical	74
Sensory	5
Mental Health	77
Intellectual / Autism	33
Unspecified	5

4.1.2 Approved Housing Bodies

Total	25
Physical	
Sensory	
Mental Health	
Intellectual / Autism	25

4.1.3 Emerging Disability Need

The Local Authorities can only deal with Housing Applicants and households already identified to them through the Social Housing Support Application Process. However, it is accepted that there will always be an emerging need in this area. This is forecast based on past evidenced presentations and projections from those currently in receipt of care and under 18. The needs of individuals will vary and as a result the housing needs will vary.

Source	Description	Likely Disability	Forecast of Presenting Numbers
HSE	Various	Various	45

4.1.4 Owner Occupied Stock

Requirements for adaption or alternative accommodation due to disability arise in Owner Occupier properties. From a housing authority perspective, this can be gauged by the number of applications made annually for either Housing Adaption Grants or Mobility Aids Grants. The table below outlines the number of applications made annually under these schemes for the last three years from which the assumptions for the number of predicted applications over the coming years contained in the second table.

	2012	2013	2014
Housing Adaption Grants	80	48	74
Small Works	50	28	40
Major Works	30	20	34
Mobility Aids Grants	79	89	110
Total	159	137	184

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Housing Adaption Grants	80	85	90	90	90
Small Works	50	40	50	50	50
Major Works	30	45	40	40	40
Mobility Aids Grants	90	100	110	120	130
Total	170	185	200	210	220

4.1.5 Total Disability Need

Arising from Paragraph 4.1.1 to 4.1.3, it is evident that there is significant disability housing need in the county. The type of properties that are required will be difficult to determine as a forensic assessment of the individuals or their specific needs have not been carried out. However the table below summarises the basic disability needs within the county.

	Total 264
Physical	74
Sensory	5
Mental Health	77
Intellectual	58
Unspecified	50

4.1.6 Assumptions

The data gathering exercise that has been completed to complete this Plan has not been to the level of a Housing Needs Assessment. In compiling this total disability need in the county a number of assumptions have been made. These include:

- There is no provision under the heading of Congregated Setting, as there is none in County Clare.
- Urgent cases will present through service providers without notice.

5. Delivery and Supply Mechanisms

5.1.1 Local Authority Stock

Clare County Council are the largest landlord in the county with approximately 3,000 housing units. An individual must apply to the Local Authority for Social Housing Support in order to be considered for housing and there are a number of criteria that need to be met, including income limits, being unable to provide housing from their own means and being considered as being inadequately housed in their current accommodation. A tenant of a Local Authority will pay an income related differential rent.

5.1.2 Approved Housing Body Stock

Approved Housing Bodies have become a major player in the provision of Social Housing Support to people from all sections of the community. There are over 700 Approved Housing Bodies in the country of varying types and sizes. The housing provision of these also differ with some approved housing bodies deal primarily with general housing provision while others have a more specialised role. In Clare there are approximately 20 Approved Housing Bodies providing housing, including the following type of accommodation:

- General housing
- Older person accommodation
- Housing for people with disabilities
- Homeless accommodation

To avail of such accommodation an individual/household must in most cases apply and qualify for Social Housing Support with the Local Authority.

Approved Housing Bodies provide accommodation through

- New build
- Purchases
- Leasing

While Approved Housing Bodies access private finance to fund some of their development/purchases, they also receive the following funding from the State through the Local Authorities:

- Capital Assistance Scheme
- Capital Advance Leasing Facility
- Payment and Availability Agreements

5.1.3 Social Leasing Initiative

Local authorities and approved housing bodies can provide accommodation through long term leasing arrangements of privately owned housing where suitable properties are identified. With landlord consent some adaptation works can be carried out to such properties.

5.1.4 Rental Accommodation Scheme

RAS will continue to provide suitable accommodation until subsumed into HAP.

5.1.5 Private Rented/ Rent Supplement

Approved housing applicants able to source their own accommodation in the private market can qualify for Rent Supplement.

5.1.6 Housing Assistance Payment

It is expected that the Housing Assistance Payment will be introduced in Clare in late 2016 enabling rent supplement recipients to transfer to this form of support.

5.2 Potential Supply

Each of the supply mechanism listed above will be examined to provide housing in the coming years in accordance with the Social Housing Strategy 2020. It is important that we are realistic in any policy that is put in place to try to meet the need of people with disability under each scheme.

6. Challenges

There are a number of challenges that will have to be addressed in order to achieve the vision of the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability but we must approach the task in a positive manner and without giving false expectations to individuals we must give hope of a real choice in how they live their lives.

The supply of housing is a common challenge that is faced by all individuals, young and old, trying to source appropriate accommodation whether it is through social housing support, the private rental market or private home ownership. However, for some people with a disability where their income is limited or there is a requirement to have the property adapted, the challenge is even bigger.

It must also be noted that in a number of cases even if the most appropriate property was identified they would not be able to avail of the opportunity due to the lack of support to live independently.

For consideration also is the impact HIQA will have on people with disabilities seeking housing. If an individual receiving care support comes under HIQA, their home will be deemed to be a designated centre, and any proposed purchase of property will be ineligible for CAS funding. This will have a major impact in Clare for people with disabilities as Approved Housing Bodies will have to look at alternative funding mechanisms. It seems that such ineligibility applying under CAS does not apply to housing provided under CALF or Leasing. Whether such persons can be housed through the social housing system requires further examination.

The Voluntary Regulation Code for Approved Housing Bodies will be a challenge for bodies especially those who have no full time staff. There are approximately 20 Approved Housing Bodies currently compliant however whether these have future development goals that can be met and sustained is not clear. This will be important in delivering the future supply of housing identified in this strategy.

Target for delivery:

	<i>Acquisitions</i>	<i>New Builds</i>	<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Part V</i>	<i>RAS/HAP/Leasing</i>	<i>AHB</i>
	Governed by suitability & need	20% subject to DECLG funding and approval	Priority for adapted properties will be to people with disability on Housing List	Use negotiations to ascertain if this is an appropriate mechanism		
2016	2	0	4	0	6	2
2017	2	0	4	0	8	6
2018	2	4	4	0	8	6
2019	2	4	4	0	8	6

7. Review Mechanism

This plan will be reviewed at the end of the first quarter of each year in order to report on the deliverable for the previous year and to examine the appropriateness of the information and proposed outputs for the coming year.