



An Ghníomhaireacht
Tithíochta
The Housing Agency



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 - 2027

Housing Local Strategic Plan – Carlow



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INTRODUCTION

The National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 – 2027 (NHSDP) sets out the vision for the cooperation and collaboration of Government departments, state agencies and others in delivering housing and the related supports for disabled people over the next five years. The National Strategy aims to facilitate access and provide a framework for people with a disability to the appropriate range of housing and related support services delivered in an integrated manner, which promotes equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living with the user of the services at the centre of policies and plans.

The vision of the National Strategy is: -

- To facilitate disabled people to live independently with the appropriate choices and control over where, how and with whom they live, promoting their inclusion in the community.
- To further enable equal access for disabled people to housing with integrated support services

The Local Strategy will align with the strategic aims and outcomes of the National Strategy and will ensure that there is effective local collaboration between the Local Authority, housing bodies, Health Services, approved housing bodies (AHBs), disability groups, traveller groups and community disability representatives. The overarching vision of the Strategy is to facilitate disabled people to live independently and be included in their communities.

This Strategy will use the term “disability” in reference to four categories of disability, i.e., sensory disability, mental health difficulties, physical disability and intellectual disability. Psychosocial disabilities are also included when referring to mental health difficulties as this is in line with the social model of language.

IRISH HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY COMMISSION ACT 2014

The strategy is committed to embedding the Public Sector Duty into the delivery of aims, including the administration and operation of Disability Programmes in Carlow. This involves the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (‘the Duty’) which is a statutory obligation for public bodies in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

Section 42(1) requires public bodies, in the performance of their functions, to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and

treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides service and protect human rights of staff and people availing of their services. Section 42(2) requires public bodies to assess, address and report on progress in relation to equality and human rights in their strategic plan and annual reports in a manner that is accessible to the public.

This plan commits to publishing the aims and objectives of the strategy and report on progress that is being achieved in County Carlow. In meeting the requirements of the National Disability Plan, the Local Plan must also conform with higher level county plans which will feed into the delivery of the this local plan.

OVERVIEW OF THEMES

Following an extensive consultation period the areas that needed to be addressed to deliver the vision of the Strategy were identified. These areas were grouped into themes that will contribute to the delivery of the strategy.

THEME 1 – ACCESSIBLE HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

This theme focuses on the provision of accessible housing for disabled people, the promotion of accessible communities and universally designed homes

THEME 2 – INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION AND THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTS

Improvement of effective collaboration between local authorities and the HSE, better inter-departmental cooperation, aligning housing and support services and the sharing of relevant information between agencies.

THEME 3 – AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING

Enabling access to affordable housing for disabled people. In keeping with Housing for All it is important that disabled people are included in the provision of affordable housing.

THEME 4 – COMMUNICATION AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

This theme focuses on communication and access to information. The Strategy will aim to ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged in communicating their needs and in the communication they receive.

THEME 5 - KNOWLEDGE, CAPACITY, AND EXPERTISE

This theme puts forward measures to increase awareness and understanding of disability and housing within the relevant organisations. It also places an emphasis

on increasing awareness regarding disabled people's effective participation and inclusion in their communities.

THEME 6 – STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

A focus on ensuring that all Government strategies and policies from a housing perspective promote the rights of disabled people.

NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY 2011 TO 2016 (EXTENDED TO 2021)

The 1st National Strategy was produced as a joint Strategy between the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and the Department of Health (DoH). A review of this strategy and extensive consultation concluded that overall, the delivery on the Priority Actions under the NHSPWD made good progress, but there is still more to do and some of the actions from the NHSPWD remain relevant and will be carried forward into this 2022 to 2027 Strategy, these include:

1. The Housing and Disability Steering Group structure to be maintained and strengthened over the lifetime of the new national Strategy.
2. Review and embed the National Guidelines for Assessment and Allocation Guidelines Process for Housing Provision in the practices of the local authorities through their Housing Allocation Policies/ Schemes of Letting Priorities.
3. The Local Strategic Plans should be reviewed in 2022 to take account of the aims and objectives of the new Strategy and any related actions.
4. The reporting on allocations and pipeline delivery should be done in line with the requirements of Housing for All and annual returns should continue to be made to The Housing Agency to ensure the focus on delivery is maintained.
5. The Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes have allowed many individuals and families remain in their homes. It is important that these grants are continuously reviewed to ensure that they remain fit for purpose, including the examination of the inclusion of grants for assistive technology to take advantage of the improvements in technology.
6. The Early Interventions Process training should be mainstreamed as part of the training programme and made available to local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies through The Housing Agency.
7. The Accessible Information Initiative should be continued and expanded to examine the most up to date and efficient means of communication.
8. The Mental Health Property Transfer Project should be included to ensure that the project is completed. A timeline to the middle of 2022 should be set for completion.

9. All appropriate agencies will continue to work towards completion of the de congregation programme.
10. Reflect and promote the housing recommendations in Sharing the Vision¹⁰

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Much of the consultation around the development of the New Strategy was carried out at National level over an eight-month period. The first round of consultation involved an online questionnaire, examined Local Strategic Plans, invited organisational submission and carried out research. The second round involved disability participation and consultation network, focus groups, Local authorities, Approved Housing Bodies, the Irish Council for Social Housing, HSE focus group and The National Federation of Voluntary Service Providers. The extensive feedback gathered framed the development of the new strategy.

It is important over the lifetime of this strategy to continue to engage local in particular with people with lived experience of disability. Many often go about their lives without becoming involved in disability services or support organisations. Many learn to live with chronic conditions and self-manage, engaging with services as and when they need to do so. Reaching out to these stakeholders requires a range of approaches which will form part of the ongoing strategy. Partnership arrangements with stakeholder organisations will be a critical function in ensuring that appropriate information on housing supports is circulated in a targeted manner. Disseminating information to the wider community on the strategy and inviting the engagement of the public in the strategy requires a community effort, joined up thinking, and a sharing of the responsibility across all stakeholders both public and voluntary. Engaging the support of community and public organisations who frequently meet the public is a starting point such as The HSE, Carers Ireland, Carlow PPN, The Disability and Inclusion Steering Committee, Carlow Sports Partnership, Family Resource Centres, Traveller Interagency Group and any other organisations providing a range of intellectual, physical and sensory services, including mental health services.

Partners at a national level also influence the content of the strategy and the delivery of the objectives. This includes: -

- a) *Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)* – their mission is to support the sustainable and efficient delivery of well-planned homes and effective local government.

The following policy documents set out its aims and how it intends to achieve these goals which include their priorities in relation to housing people with disabilities:

- National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 - 2027
- Housing for All: A New housing Plan for Ireland 2021
- Building Regulations
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities: Design Guidelines

These policies and strategies were adopted and provide a policy framework to support people with disabilities to access community-based mainstream living with maximum independence and choice. Building on the commitment given in the Programme for Government to meet the housing needs of people with disabilities, the delivery of homes for those with a disability was re-affirmed in the government's policy document "*Housing for All: A New Housing Plan for Ireland*"2021.

b) Health Service Executive (HSE)

The HSE provides and funds a range of services for people with disabilities and their carers. These services include basic health services as well as assessment, rehabilitation, income maintenance, community care and residential care respite, home care and day care. Some services are provided directly by the HSE. Community, residential and rehabilitative training services are provided by voluntary organisations with grant aid from the HSE. Persons with a disability should be provided with dispersed housing in the community, where they may:

- Choose to live on their own (with support)
- Share with others who do not have a disability
- Share their home with other people with a disability (to a maximum of four people with a disability)
- have access to services and supports to people with disabilities in the County.

This plan & the HSDG body will utilise all supports available to it from the HSE.

HOUSING AND DISABILITY STEERING GROUP

The Terms of Reference for the Housing and Disability Steering Group, state that all representatives should be at a senior level and should be competent at representing the needs of the various disability groups. The group is chaired by the Director of Services for Housing to highlight the importance of its work and to provide the

necessary supports to achieve the aims of the group and the strategy. This has also been replicated by the other agencies whose nominations to the group reflect their senior status within their own organisations.

The County Carlow Housing and Disability Steering Group consists of local representatives from key statutory agencies and relevant disability stakeholders. The membership of the Steering Group consists of Local Authority Senior Executive Officer, Housing Directorate (Chair), HSE representatives, representative from the disability sectors operational in the local area, Traveller representative and representatives from approved housing bodies at Manager Level. In addition, Local authority representatives from relevant sections of the housing department such as Housing Allocations, Tenant Liaison, Social Work etc. will also attend meetings, where appropriate. The group also receives support and guidance from the Housing Agency.

The HDSG role is to consult with and advise the Local Authority on the local implementation of the National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities, including the housing of persons with disabilities transitioning from institutional care and or congregated settings.

The Steering group will periodically monitor the plan for delivery of social housing for persons with disabilities against the targets set at each meeting and this will include the ongoing review of the Local Authority and Approved Housing Body pipelines for delivery to allow for input into the appropriateness of developments for specific housing types to accommodate social housing for people with disabilities.

The Steering group is responsible for developing, monitoring, and reviewing local interagency protocols, as appropriate and will work with all housing delivery agencies particularly AHB'S to promote the provision of housing to people with disabilities. In addition, they will provide feedback and constructive challenge as necessary to the Department of Housing regarding barriers that exist to meeting the housing requirements of people with disabilities.

In order to improve internal and external stakeholder engagement with the Local Authority departments, disability service providers, HSE, Approved Housing Bodies and appropriate advocacy groups, the Steering group will endeavour to engage with the Local Authority on its implementation of the National Guidelines for Housing Assessment and Allocation for People with Disabilities including those transitioning from institutional settings to identify any obstacles or barriers in the implementation of the Guidelines.

The Steering group will collaborate as a group to gather and disseminate information in relation to housing for persons with a disability. Where appropriate the Steering group will provide information on need etc. to the Local Authority regarding area of representation and if possible plan for an emerging need. Members will identify key barriers or challenges to people with a disability accessing housing and if possible, addressing these issues at local level. If it is not a local issue, then the issue will be escalated to the national level for discussion and actioning if appropriate. In summary the role and responsibilities of the group include:

- The HSDG will define the roles and responsibilities of each group member of the HSDG.
- The HSDG will identify and agree the key contact within the Council and other key agencies in the area of housing supports for those with a disability.
- The HSDG will adhere to the Terms of reference including reviewing membership, meeting frequency, attendance, input from people with lived experience, engagement and reporting to wider disability networks
- The HSDG will continue to identify all appropriate stakeholders and maintain an open channel of communication with same. Below is a list of Stakeholders which is not exhaustive:
 - HSE, including the HSE Disabilities Community Development Worker
 - Irish Wheel Chair Association
 - Kilkenny Voluntary Housing Association (START, Transfer Project, Tenancy Sustainment)
 - Focus Ireland (Housing First, Tenancy Sustainment, Own Front Door Transitional Property)
 - Respond!
 - Cluid (Clann)
 - Tintean
 - St Catherine Community Centre (Traveller Interagency Group nominee)
 - Delta Centre
 - Acquired Brain Injury (A.B.I)
 - Holy Angels Carlow
 - Carlow Sport Partnership (Disability Inclusion Officer)
 - Cheshire Ireland
 - Sue Ryder Home
 - Carlow PPN
 - Bagenalstown Family Resource Centre
 - Forward Steps Resource Centre

The Plan will seek to communicate and be informed by the experiences of the above groups and it will also consult with identified Stakeholders through surveys, focus groups, etc as and when appropriate to do so.

REVIEW OF HOUSING DISABILITY SERVICES

PROGRESS IN THE SERVICE

A review of housing disability services was undertaken in preparing this strategy. Development over the years preceding the strategy includes: -

- Development of an interagency group to ensure that disabilities are coordinated to ensure better outcomes.
- Introduction of a revised Scheme of Letting Policy to ensure that medical grounds were included in the scheme.
- Ground floor units/bungalows/accessible are designated for persons with a disability.
- Increased training and awareness among staff.
- Collaborative interaction with the HSE, Department and AHB to deliver the transfer project in Carlow.
- Allocation of increased staffing in Housing Grants to ensure that P1, P2 and P3 applications are processed in a timely manner.
- Funding provided under the IWILs programme to enable private individuals to remain in their homes
- Increase in allocations of social housing units to persons with a disability
- Targeted acquisition programme under both Local Authority and AHB acquisitions to ensure suitable properties are acquired for those with a disability.
- Collaboration with developers of Part V units suitable for persons with a disability.
- Use of the Capital Assistance Scheme to support AHB's in the provision of units for persons with a disability.
- Tenancy Sustainment Workers recruited through Focus Ireland who work with vulnerable clients including those with disabilities
- HAP Place-finder Service to help the most vulnerable housing applicants' source private rented accommodation with the aid of a specific financial package

- Introduction of Housing First Service to provide accommodation for 12 clients which also identifies clients with specific accommodation needs.
- Introduction of the START (Support for Tenancy And Recovery Targets) programme providing accommodation and support to up to 12 people (Increasing to 18 in 2023/24) with enduring Mental Health conditions. Support was funded primarily by the SRF (Service reform fund) for the Mental Health Services.
- Support through the Tenant Liaison Officer service, OT Service and the Capital team to provide housing adaptations to existing tenants who have received a disability medical diagnosis to remain in their tenancy.
- Targeted approach to providing suitable accommodation for persons with a disability under the Traveller Accommodation Programme.
- Introduction of a Homeless Prevention Officer whose role in part to prevent individuals from entering the cycle of homelessness, including those with disabilities
- Continued operation of Homeless Action Team (HAT) on a fortnightly basis to ensure that the key service providers are sitting at the table that address disability issues
- Care and Case Management among support services for those with a disability who are at risk of homelessness or who are homeless.
- Collaboration with HSE and support services to increase awareness and provide appropriate accommodations for those diagnosed with a sensory disability.

SPECIFIC TARGETED MEASURES IN CARLOW

Together with allocations of properties discussed later in this strategy, specific targeted measures have been identified and delivered in the County. Examples of some of the measures are: -

- Sue Ryder Home, Dublin Road Carlow – Supported living for older people and people with disabilities
- Cheshire Ireland, Tullow – Residential supported living for people with disabilities receiving a HSE homecare package
- Delta Centre and BEAM Services providing supports for independent living in the Community
- The transfer project – Court Place, Carlow. HSE/Carlow County County/Kilkenny Voluntary Housing Association

- Teach Tinteán, Tinteán Eala, Tinteán Rua, Tinteán Carraig and Tinteán Dara – Individual adapted housing units providing support living for adults in the Community
- Pound Lane, Borris – 9 unit new development with 2 units designated
- Part V Brownhill Wood – Collaboration with Private Developer to provide 6 no. Bungalow Units as Part of Part V Planning Obligations
- Repair and Lease, Mill Street, Tullow – Conversion of derelict sites, 1 bedroom ground floor accessible units provided
- LA/AHB Acquisition – targeted acquisition of ground floor units in 2022. Examples include Sandhill, The Paddocks, The Downs, Hanover where units were purchased for specific needs
- Kelvin Court, St Dymphna's, Carlow – Developed by the HSE to meet the needs of service user with intellectual disabilities with fully supported care

LIMITATIONS, RISKS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In line with the revised National Strategy it is recognised locally that a lot of progress has been made but significant challenges and risks remain. Once identified they can be addressed by the steering group to find solutions. Some of the challenges and risks are: -

- Funding for sensory intervention comes from different providers - It is more cost effective and quicker to include adaptations initially rather than retrofitting.
- Need for specific funding to provided increase private rental inspection for those with a disability to ensure the property is to standard.
- There has been little progress in grant funding measures for technological assistive services
- The lack of available contractors to carry out adaptation works in a timely manner
- The cost of extensions has exceeded value for money - more than doubled since the 1st strategy running well ahead of inflation – certain adaptations are starting to become out of reach
- Collaboration between the HSE, County Council and the disability services may help to bring the timelines for housing and support service funding into closer alignment. Timely access to support service funding from the HSE can lead to improved outcomes for people being able to live in their new home.
- Cost of housing acquisition in certain categories and locations far exceeding cost acquisition guidelines and limitations in housing supply in certain categories, in particular larger single storey properties.

- Challenges in recruitment of staff in support programmes
- Clustered housing/apartment model gives people independence within their own space, while also allowing for easy access to support staff and the opportunity to socialise with peers.
- Lack of private rental, decreasing housing supply, increasing demand for social housing all putting pressure on the availability of property. This is particularly evident in housing people with a disability with HAP supports.
- Demand for home help and home support services is increasing.
- Complex cases may not be suitable for independent supported living
- The availability of data has become increasingly complex due to privacy and GDPR regulations.
- Resource allocation to ensure clients are supported in assisted decision making and advocacy support
- Lack of legal safeguards for tenants of private landlords, with no fault eviction orders and rent increases creating high anxiety for mental health services users
- Challenges linking clients with GP services
- Census data is now several years old
- Difficulties and cost in being able to transfer from one property to another if required.
- Challenges in supporting non-national applicants – getting medical data, language barriers, accessing services
- Medical housing assessment process – HMD1. Requirements together medical data, quality of reports submitted and assessment requirements.
- Dissemination of information in a clear and understandable manner in line with Theme 4 of the Strategy
- Continued risk of homelessness for those with mental health difficulties.
- Risks of delayed discharges and inappropriate placements {e.g. young people in nursing homes}
- People with addiction issues with secondary mental health difficulties excluded from programmes like START and where independent placement will be challenging.

The lessons learnt and the challenges faced will inform the new strategy to 2027

ASSESSING THE NEED AND DEMAND

In order to identify the future need, it is important to have access to appropriate data and to identify any changing patterns or any changes in policy that affect housing delivery.

Existing and future needs is quantified by utilising the following sources:

- Council housing waiting list/Applications for Housing
- C.S.O statistics data (current using 2016 data)
- H.S.E. statistics
- Service providers statistics.

The data derived from the above sources facilitate the Council & the AHBs to design a housing delivery programme in line with the identified needs and ensure the developments are appropriate to the specific disability needs. In line with the Social Housing Assessment Regulation 2011 the four categories of disability referred to in the plan are: -

- Physical Disability
- Mental Health Disability
- Sensory Disability
- Intellectual Disability
-

CENSUS/SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

In 2011 and 2016 the census added a series of new question to collect additional data. The 2022 census completed last year only has preliminary results and detailed results are not yet available. In 2019 a detailed analysis of the data under the disability heading was carried out in the Socio Demographic Profile carried out in 2019. A summary of finding includes: -

- 86.4% of respondents would consider themselves in good health
- 1.6% would consider their health to be bad or very bad
- 14.5% say that they have a disability – 8th highest in the Country
- Borris, Myshall and Tinryland have rates above 20%
- Ballinabranna, Palatine and Rathoe report the lowest rates (Large new developments)
- The main reported disabilities are: -
 - Blindness or visual impairment – 2.7%
 - Deafness or hearing impairment – 5.4%
 - A condition that limits one of more physical activity – 14.6%
 - Intellectual Disability – 3.6%
 - Difficulty, learning or concentrating – 9%
 - Psychological or emotional condition – 6.6%

- Other disability including chronic illness – 16.7%
- Difficulty dressing, bathing or getting around the home – 7.5%
- Difficulty in leaving the home alone – 9.8%
- Difficulty attending work, school or college – 11.9%
- Difficulty in participating on other activities – 12.4%
- Over 60% of carers are over 50
- Less than 5% of 0-4 year olds have a disability while nearly 70% of 85 year olds have a disability

HOUSING WAITING LIST

The housing waiting list is a list of all approved housing applicants that are awaiting allocation of a social house. A house may be allocated from the Council's own stock or a client on the waiting list may be nominated for a house under an Approved Housing Body. The gross list is the total number of people on the list including those accommodated in private properties that receive financial housing supports. The nett need list is the list excluding those housed in private housing that receive financial housing supports or those already accommodated in Local Authority or AHB properties but are on a transfer list. The allocation of properties is carried in accordance with the scheme of letting priorities as follows: -

- 1) displaced from dwellings deemed to be dangerous in accordance with Section 3 of the Sanitary Services Act, 1964
- 2) displaced by operation of Carlow County Council
- 3) applicants who are homeless as defined in the Housing Act, 1988
- 4) applicants living in unfit and overcrowded conditions as defined in Sections 66 and 63 respectively of the Housing Act 1966
- 5) applicants in need of housing on disability, medical, compassionate or similar grounds
- 6) applicants who share accommodation with another person or persons and who, in the opinion of the housing authority, have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation
- 7) approved applicants not included in any of the categories above who have been assessed and approved for social housing support

Where priority is claimed on grounds consisting of or including medical or disability grounds, the Council shall obtain and have regard to the HMD-Form1/report from a consultant. Where a priority is awarded, this priority may cover a particular type of accommodation and/or accommodation in a particular area. Where priority is claimed

on compassionate grounds, assessment will be carried out on the supporting documentation submitted.

The Council may, at its discretion and in accordance with the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, and the Social Housing Guidance Regulations 2011, let a dwelling to any applicant having regard to the length of time the applicant has been included in the Council’s housing needs assessment within the specific household category. In Carlow the following shows the breakdown of the current housing : -

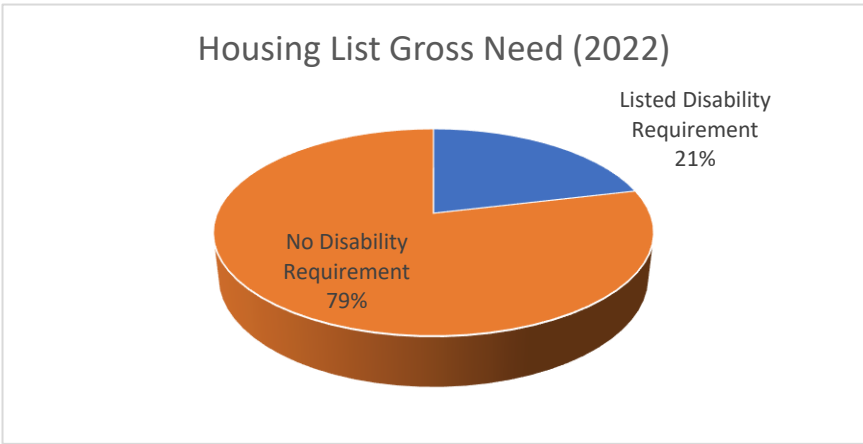


Figure 1 – Housing List Gross Need (Disability v No Disability Requirement)

The figures from the housing waiting list reveal that the numbers that have medical information in support of a disability is 21% which is above the County average census data of 14.5%. This would support the data that those with a disability would find it difficult to leave the home or have difficulty attending work, leading to a lack of ability to earn a greater salary. The breakdown of disability types are: -

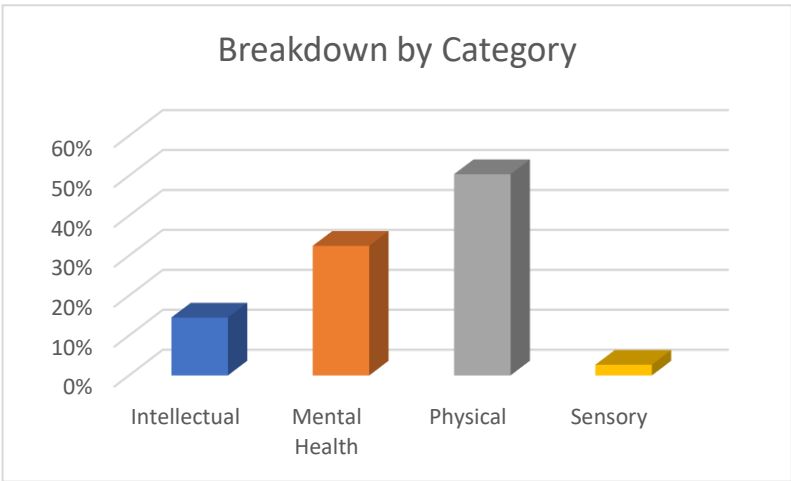


Figure 2: - Breakdown by Disability Type

ALLOCATIONS

Housing is allocated under a number of different heading in the Housing Department as follows: -

- Council Purchase – New properties acquired on second hand market
- Council Build – New house construction or turnkey development
- Casual Vacancy – Existing Council property that has become vacant
- Long Term Lease (LTL) – Properties leased from private owners for periods of 10 – 25 years
- Repair & Lease (RLS) – Private properties that are derelict regenerated with Department grant and leased back for a period of 10 – 25 years
- Part V – Properties acquired from private developers in accordance with their obligations under the Planning and Development Act
- Voluntary (AHB) CAS/CALF acquisition – targeted acquisition of second hand properties with consent of LA for specified purposes
- Voluntary (AHB) CAS/CALF Construction – Development of new build housing units
- Mortgage to Rent (MTR) – Scheme to take on properties to for owners at risk of losing their homes

Within these categories, the Council considers allocations under the scheme of letting priorities and seeks to achieve a minimum under specific categories i.e. Disability, Traveller and obligations under programmes like START, Housing First. The statistics for 2021 and 2022 are contained on the tables below.

	Casual	Purchase	Constructed	LTL	RLS	Pt V	AHB	RAS	MTR	Totals
Total Allocations	43	24	16	19	0	1	107	15	0	225
Allocations under Disability										
Physical	8	1	4	0	0	0	4	1	0	18
Mental	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	0	7
Sensory	0	2	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	7
Intellectual	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Totals	10	3	8	0	2	0	7	4	0	34

Table 1: - Allocation 2021

	Casual	Purchase	Constructed	LTL	RLS	Pt V	AHB	RAS	MTR	Totals
Total Allocations	35	20	11	14	8	0	127	14	7	236
Allocations under Disability										
Physical	3	0	0	3	1	0	13	0	0	20
Mental	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	5
Sensory	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	4
Intellectual	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Totals	4	1	1	6	1	0	18	0	0	31

Table 2: - Allocations 2022

The tables over the past 2 years reveal that 65 allocations were made for people under the category of disability out of 461 total allocation giving a percentage of 14.1% of total allocations combined. The total minimum percentage that it is aimed to achieve is 10% per annum, so the allocations are currently exceeding this. As Government funding around the AHB and Local Authority acquisition programme continues, targeted acquisition is allowing the allocations team target individuals that are in critical need or have been waiting a considerable length. The figures also reveal that over 50% of the disability allocations are for persons with a disability which is in line with the waiting list. The impact of the AHB sector and their important role in the allocation of properties for people with a disability must also be highlighted. 20% of the properties allocated for disability in 2021 and 60% in 2022 were provided by the AHB sector.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

It is recognised in the provision of housing the importance that services and facilities in communities, including housing, are available in an accessible and adaptable way, and in line with universal design principles. According to the UNCRPD, "Universal design" means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design." Universal Design Homes work well for everyone and look good. They are mainstream in aesthetics, not separate or distinct for special needs. They are designed to four key principles, these are: -

1. Integrated into the neighbourhood.
2. Easy to approach, enter and move about in.
3. Easy to understand, use and manage.
4. Flexible, safe, cost effective and adaptable over time.

Staff in the Housing Department have undertaken training in universal design principles and have vast experience in providing new build units or adapted homes to these principles.

EMERGING NEEDS

It is recognised that there are continual emerging needs in the community around medical priority and disability. Some of the emerging need identified in Carlow are: -

- o People under 65 years old who are placed into nursing homes due to a lack of rehabilitation supports and / or adequate personal and social support packages.
- o People who remain in a congregated setting.
- o People with disabilities on the Social Housing list waiting to be homed
- o Private individuals who are finding it more difficult to afford to adapt their homes to their changing medical circumstances
- o The requirement for individuals to relocate due to services becoming more centralised
- o People with disabilities presenting as homeless.
- o The numbers of carers in the older age brackets looking after younger people with disabilities – succession of care
- o Younger disabled adults wishing to gain independence but are not financially able.
- o Those with dementia that don't fit that disability categories but require housing adaptation and services to meet care needs
- o Children and adults with autism-specific housing needs.
- o People with disabling conditions from stroke, acquired brain or spinal cord injury and, more recently, the long-term disabling effects of COVID-19.
- o People with disabilities accommodated as refugees/asylum seekers that are outside the Housing Regulations

HOUSING FOR ALL

The new Housing for All – Nation Housing Plan, recognises the importance of housing provision for people with disabilities under Pathway 2 - Pathway to Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery Inclusion. Housing Policy Objective

7 – Increase and improve housing options and supports for people with a disability set out a new of targets to be achieved early in the plan as follows: -

Objective	Delivery Date	Agency Responsible
7.1 Deliver a new National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability (2022 – 2027) following stakeholder and public consultation and with a range of actions which will detail co-ordination and alignment of co-ordination and alignment of housing, health and housing, health and community	Q4 2021	DHLGH, DoH
7.2 Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans will set out how dedicated social housing provision appropriate to the needs of people with a disability will be delivered matching the scale and extent of housing with a disability need identified for people	Q4 2021	LAs
7.3 Local Authorities will consider the housing needs of people with a disability through the Housing Need and Demand Assessment Framework and feed that into their Housing Strategies as part of their Development Plan process	Ongoing	LAs
7.4 Review the range of housing grants available to assist with meeting specific housing needs, including the Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, and implement relevant changes	Q4 2021	DHLGH
7.5 Nominate Disability Friendly Housing Technical Advisors in each Local Authority	Q4 2021	LAs
7.6 Housing and Disability Steering Groups will report quarterly	Q1 2022	DHLGH, LAs

Table 3: - Housing policy objective 7

At the commencement of the Plan, new build targets were set out for Carlow to be delivered between 2022 and 2026 are as follows: -

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Build	80	90	92	99	101	462

Table 4 – New build targets – 2022 - 2026

The commitment in the delivery action plan for Carlow is that a minimum of 10% of all new build units are reserved for people with a disability. This would equate to a minimum of 46 units being delivered from new build stock over the lifetime of the plan. There is also a commitment to working with private developers delivering housing units to ensure that appropriate housing is delivered in the private market and under Part V.

This will require early engagement in the planning process and a commitment to deliver. Up to 2022 Local Authorities also used long term leasing as an option to help meet the housing demand but this option is being phased out as an unsustainable long term option.

SUPPORTS FOR THOSE WITH A DISABILITY IN PRIVATE HOUSEHOLDS:

One of the main intervention that the council has is grants available for adaptation of existing properties through Housing Adaptations for People with a Disability (HGD); Mobility Aid Grants (MAGs); Housing Aid for Older People (HOP) and Local Authority Disabled Grants. These grants are available for those who live in private households and who do not have access to social housing supports. The grants are funded through central Government Grants and matched funding from the Local Authority. The purpose of these grants is to upgrade existing housing to enable tenants to continue to live safely in their home where they have been diagnosed with a disability. This can apply to persons who live in privately owned or council owned accommodation. Grants are prioritised based on medical need and a person's need will be assessed by an Occupational Therapist prior to the assignment of a priority level of P1, P2 or P3 where P1 is the highest level of need. Table 5 below sets out the number of grants paid out from 2019 – 2022.

Grant Type	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mobility Aids	43	47	67	31
Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability	84	66	70	70
Housing Aid for Older People	167	171	214	202

Table 5: - Number of Grants Paid 2019 - 2022

This level of grant funding represents an expenditure of almost €1.75 million annually. The figures for 2021 and 2022 were slightly distorted due to backlogs created by the Covid 19 pandemic. In accordance with the objectives of the Government it is anticipated that the level of funding for grants will continue and Carlow County Council has committed to continue match funding the scheme.

In 2021 and 2022 the Department met with all the Local Authorities to get some feedback in the scheme to see what changes or enhancements could be introduced. The scheme is under continuous review and feedback given by Local Authorities's is welcomed by the Department.

In order to continuing meeting the key objectives of this strategy in the context of new housing delivery for those with a disability and to provide an efficient grant support system for the same cohort, the following actions need to be progressed to facilitate a more responsive and appropriate level of activity

- The iHouse system for recording housing applicants needs a full time dedicated data analyst to cleanse existing data, ensure that data is up to date and accurate and that data provide can support the steering group and housing Department to deliver housing to those most in need
- Enhancement of the OT service to ensure that a full service is available to support the grants system and provide reports to ensure that the technical teams can design universally accessible and appropriate housing for housing clients.
- Continue with innovative community solutions for support living in the community for individuals and families
- Investigate the use of recent innovations in Smart and Assistive Technology in the home, which would offer more opportunities for independence for people with a disability.
- Introduction of choice base letting to reduce delays in the allocation process
- Seek enhanced opportunities for development of accessible units in Town Centre locations though buy and renew, repair and lease or new build schemes.
- Seek to maximise relet opportunities through Government funding to ensure that retrofits are accessible, energy efficient and universal homes that can easily cater for changing circumstances
- Continue to engage actively with the HSE Disability Services to ensure that those in in the community that require housing supports are fully support and that the delivery pipeline is appropriate to meet their specific needs
- Continue to build and enhance programmes like START to ensure that housing is available in the community with full supports to allow independent living
- Engage with Community Development Partnerships, SICAP programme, TUS etc to ensure that all members of the community are fully included and that opportunities for community training and employment are fully available
- Where a need is established for specialist supported Accommodation, the Steering Group will work collaboratively around delivery of a staffed community group homes and High support mental residences

- Addition supports by employing a Homeless Coordinator for those with disabilities using Emergency Supported Accommodation and identifying exit strategies at the earliest possible stage.
- Where there is an established need identified by the Steering Group, the delivery of small clusters of individual houses that would enable the delivery of supported services in a more efficient manner.

OVER ARCHING APPROACH

The overarching vision of the Strategy, driven by the feedback to the consultation is to facilitate independent living. To ensure that there is consistent delivery of the strategy a commitment has been given that:-

- Each local authority will nominate Disability-Friendly Housing Technical Advisors.
- Each local authority will nominate a representative from their Housing Departments to lead on the interagency collaboration.
- The HSE will nominate a housing coordinator in each Community Health Organisation (CHO) area for both Mental Health Services and Disability Services to lead on the interagency collaboration.
- The Housing Agency's role will be expanded to take a more proactive role in ensuring the delivery of the actions under the Strategy and to coordinate the interagency collaboration at regional and national level.
- The Housing Agency will be tasked with ensuring the smooth implementation of the Assisted Decision-Making Act54 for the housing departments of local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies, including the preparation of guides and provision of training

ACTIONS TO DELIVER ON THE SOCIAL CARE SUPPORTS REQUIRED TO SUSTAIN SOCIAL HOUSING NEED FOR THOSE WITH A DISABILITY

In addition to the provision of social housing units and housing adaptation improvements, there is also a very strong requirement to provide appropriate social care and mental health supports so that an individual can live with dignity and sustain their tenancy irrespective of their particular disability. On this basis, the following social care areas will be developed and delivered for the duration of this plan

- The Primary Mental Health Care Service will support the Local Authority to produce information as required by the strategy to assist in planning to meet the housing needs. For example, numbers of need in each location, household size,

specific eligibility for some schemes e.g. over 55s or for the START Programme etc.

- The mental health service will estimate the average number of social housing units required annually to facilitate appropriate flow-through / discharge from mental health rehabilitation residences, delayed discharges from Approved Centres or Crisis Houses, or out of area placements.
- The mental health service will seek to identify emerging need among service users who are not on the local authority housing waiting list, for example those trapped at home due to their disability who may be eligible for other supports.

If /when further details are required by the local authority, these can, with the individual's consent, be provided through the identified named people. For example

- any adaptations required
- The support/ care plan

The mental health service/service providers will encourage and support residents in HSE residences to be registered for social housing if appropriate.

REVIEW OF SUPPORT NEEDS

- In order to create awareness of the support needs of those approved for housing on the basis of disability it is intended to review their application and undertake a survey to ascertain the housing needs of the applicants in question.
- The HSE will continue to progress the completion of the Transfer Project with the tenants becoming residents of Kilkenny Voluntary Housing association, instead of residents of HSE accommodation and the provision of ongoing necessary supports to these tenants.
- A review of the START will be initiated to see if the programme can be expanded in Carlow to meet the emerging need. Almost 20 persons have been assisted through the project. It is anticipated that the project will continue to be supported by the HSE and where possible and necessary extended to address the needs of the cohort the targets of these programmes.
- Carlow County Council and Kilkenny Voluntary Housing Association have committed to looking at an enhanced homecare support service to provide addition assistance to people who don't qualify for any of the programmes but would require assistance.

- The HSE will work with their LA colleagues to increase capacity to identify and address challenges as they arise in a positive and constructive manner.

LOCAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Theme	Local Strategic Aim(s) – Outcomes	Timeline	Lead Agency	Support Agency	Reporting
<p>Theme 1 – Accessible Housing and Communities</p> <p>This theme focuses on the provision of accessible housing for disabled people, the promotion of accessible communities and universally designed homes</p>	1(a) Increase the number of units to be delivered annually and agree targets	2022 – 2027	LA		Quarterly
	1(b) Coordination between the LA and HSE under the services action plan 2022 -25 to deliver housing for people with disabilities (Including congregated settings)	2022 – 2027	HSE, LA	AHBs, HA	Annually
	1(c) Alignment of targets with Pathway 2 (Eradicating Homelessness) and Pathway 3 (Increasing Supply)	Ongoing	LA	AHBs	Annually
	1(d) Examine the possibility of providing a place finder service to source accommodation	2023	LA, HSE		Annually
	1(e) Continue to maximise the provision of grants for private households that need adaptations	2022 – 2027	LA	HSE, AHBs	Annually
	1(f) Examine whether grants systems need to be adaptation for price inflation or emerging technologies.	Ongoing	LA, Dept	Other Stakeholder	As required
	1(g) Maximise programmes like START to ensure that independent supported accommodation is available in the Community	2022 – 2027	HSE, LA, AHB		Quarterly
	1(h) Active early engagement with developers, AHBs, builders to ensure that	2022 – 2027	LA, AHB		Annually

	<p>accessible housing is provided and that units are universally accessible</p> <p>1(I) Clustered units/supported will be considered as required</p> <p>1(J) Continue to source and identify suitable acquisitions through LA or AHB to meet specific requirements</p> <p>1(K) Continue to provide supports to those at risk of and in homeless services with a disability to ensure appropriate care and case management.</p>	<p>2022 – 2027</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>LA, AHB, HSE</p> <p>LA, AHB</p> <p>LA, AHB, HSE</p>		<p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p>
<p>Theme 2 – Interagency Collaboration and the Provision of Supports</p> <p>Improvement of effective collaboration between local authorities and the HSE, better inter-departmental cooperation, aligning housing and support services and the sharing of relevant information between agencies.</p>	<p>2(a) LA to nominate representative to work closely with the HSE housing coordinators in each CHO area for mental health and disability services</p> <p>2(b) Extend TSS role through the AHB network to work with LAs and AHBs to support people with psychosocial and mental health difficulties</p> <p>2(c) Establish a number of pilot projects to determine the best way housing supports can be provided to people with disabilities</p> <p>2(d) Examine the interaction of regulatory frameworks to ensure they are not a barrier for delivery of housing</p> <p>2(e) Examine peer support models nationally and internationally to help develop community support models</p>	<p>2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2022 – 2027</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>LA</p> <p>LA, AHB</p> <p>LA, HSE, AHB</p> <p>LA, HSE, AHB</p> <p>LA, HSE, HA, Dept</p>	<p>HSE</p> <p>HSE</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>AHBs</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p>

	2(f) Greater cooperation between Departments when supports cross several different Department and that a lead is nominated to delivery of best outcomes	Ongoing	LA, HSE, HA, Dept, AHBs		Annually
	2(g) Participation of appropriate personnel at inter departmental meetings like HAT, Disability Steering Group and multi-disciplinary team meetings	Ongoing	LA, HSE	All other relevant stakeholders identified.	None
<p>Theme 3 – Affordability of Housing</p> <p>Enabling access to affordable housing for disabled people. In keeping with Housing for All it is important that disabled people are included in the provision of affordable housing.</p>	3(a) Examine the role out of cost rental and the setting of targets for delivery of accessible units subject to the scheme being viable	Ongoing	LA, AHB, LDA		Annually
	3(b) Commence an affordable housing scheme and examine the designation of a certain number of dwelling as units for people with disability (subject to demand)	2022 – 2026	LA	AHB, Private Developers	Annually
	3(c) Provide information to the community regarding initiative like the First Home Scheme and the Help to Buy Scheme	2022 – 2026	Revenue, First Home Scheme		As per Government requirements
	3(d) Review the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) to ensure that it is being operated to its full potential to deliver housing for disabled people	2022 – 2027	LA	Dept	Annually
	3(e) Examine the findings from the Cost of Disability research and ways to support additional cost for people with disabilities	Ongoing	LA, HSE	Dept	None
Theme 4 – Communication and Access to Information	4(a) Prepare and publish an Awareness Strategy to promote the Strategy	2023	HA, LA	HSE, AHBs, Dept	None

<p>This theme focuses on communication and access to information. The Strategy will aim to ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged in communicating their needs and in the communication they receive.</p>	<p>4(b) Prepare and publish an Information and Communication Strategy. This will set out how communication will be conducted at national and local level during the lifetime of the NHSDP.</p>	2023	HA, LA	HSE, AHBs, Dept	None
	<p>4(c) Build on housingdesignforall.ie by providing information on housing and related matters which will be managed and updated on an ongoing basis.</p>	Ongoing	Dept, HA, LA		None
	<p>4(d) Expand the provision of accessible documentation to all accessible formats.</p>	Ongoing	All		Annually
	<p>4(e) Include other agreed local actions in the implementation Plan to address delivery of the outcomes under this theme.</p>	Ongoing	All		None
	<p>4(f) Having people with lived experience involved at meetings to enhance staff's knowledge and understanding</p>	Ongoing	All		None
	<p>4(g) Utilise the communications networks within the County to disseminate information and gather data – PPN, HSE etc</p>	Ongoing	All		None
	<p>4(h) Meeting of the steering group to take place 4 times per annum</p>	Ongoing	Members of steering group		Quarterly
	<p>4(l) Report back to stakeholders management/board/policy committees</p>	As required	All		As required
<p>Theme 5 - Knowledge, Capacity, and Expertise</p> <p>This theme puts forward measures to increase awareness and</p>	<p>5(a) Design and deliver training sessions for stakeholders around all roles and responsibilities, creating a shared understanding of the role and responsibilities of each department and stakeholders.</p>	Ongoing	All		None

<p>understanding of disability and housing within the relevant organisations. It also places an emphasis on increasing awareness regarding disabled people's effective participation and inclusion in their communities.</p>	<p>5(b) Prepare and deliver a training programme to local authority housing staff and staff from Approved Housing Bodies on process and procedural changes required to implement the Assisted Decision-Making Act 2015</p>	Ongoing	All		None
	<p>5(c) Include other agreed local actions in the Implementation Plan to address delivery of the outcomes under this theme.</p>	Ongoing	All		None
	<p>5(d) Ensure the right stakeholders are in place locally to ensure the best possible outcomes</p>	Ongoing	All		None
	<p>5(e) Having the training and realise what would be suitable for disabled people - not just the house but also the right location – close to services, close to transport etc</p>	Ongoing	All		None
<p>Theme 6 – Strategy Alignment</p> <p>A focus on ensuring that all Government strategies and policies from a housing perspective promote the rights of disabled people.</p>	<p>6(a) The Strategy is underpinned by Housing for All and this Local Delivery Action Plan</p>	2022 – 2027	All		None
	<p>6(b) The Government strategies such as Sharing the Vision, A Time to Move on from Congregated Settings complement and feed into the new National Housing Strategy for Disabled People and the Implementation Plan and must be considered in the Local context.</p>	2023	All		None
	<p>6(c) The Implementation Plan for this Strategy will take cognisance of the Disability Capacity Review to 2032, and Wasted Lives.</p>	Ongoing	All		None

	6(d) Ensure that there is an alignment of strategies promoting the rights of disabled people so housing provision is not considered in a silo.	Ongoing	All		None
	6(e) A mapping of the relevant policies to be considered and coordinated with this Strategy, to develop further actions for this theme on an ongoing basis	Ongoing – Commence 2023	All		None
	6(f) Include actions in the Implementation Plan to address delivery of the outcomes under this theme	To be reviewed	All		None

AWARENESS AND PROMOTION OF THE LOCAL STRATEGIC PLAN\NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

The members of the steering group are committed to engaging in a collaborative development of a strategy which promotes the rights of service users to equal access to public housing and inclusion in their own communities. It is important to the success of the strategy that the public and service users are aware that there is a strategy in place. It will necessary to publicise it to make it as accessible to as many as people as possible and ensure that the policy is an active document.

It would be anticipated that all member organisations of the disability steering group would use their own networks, social media, websites and approval committees to ensure that this strategy becomes embedded in their own operational plans.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The review of the Local Strategic Plan for People with a Disability will be a standing item on all quarterly Steering Group agendas. The National Implementation Plan will also form an important part of the steering groups focus to ensure that the best available outcomes for people with a disability are achieved within County Carlow. The steering group members should also ensure that they would address blockages and create opportunities to ensure that all of the stated actions are delivered.

It is also intended that annual updates on the implementation of the Local Strategic Plan will be made to the Strategic Policy Committee on Housing Community and Wellbeing, the LCDC, PPN and Annual Reports of the policy committees' membership. The steering group will also be required to report back to the Housing Agency and Department so as National progress can be monitored.