



HOUSING STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY



Tipperary County Council
Civic Offices
Emmet Street
Clonmel
Co. Tipperary

www.tipperarycoco.ie

Tipperary County Council
Civic Offices
Limerick Road
Nenagh
Co. Tipperary

Tipperary County Council

Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with Disabilities

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

While not explicitly mentioned in the Housing Strategy for the purpose of this plan, Category (d) will be intellectual and/or 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.

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 may be forward planned and reserved to meet the demand from people with disabilities on local Housing Lists. 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 4.1.8:

4.1.1 Housing Waiting Lists

People with a disability currently on social housing supply lists, are tabled below:

	Total - 365
Physical	179
Sensory	21
Mental Health	126
Intellectual	39

4.1.2 Housing Transfer Lists

Tipperary County Council has an existing housing stock of over 6,000 units available to its tenants through various supply mechanisms including RAS and Social Leasing. Annually, a number of tenants, through new disability or injury, require alternative accommodation due to the inadequate nature of their existing living accommodation. This can be addressed through a transfer arrangement if appropriate accommodation is available. The decision to transfer may be made as a less costly alternative to adaption works or where necessary adaption works are not feasible due to the nature of the property. The aforementioned transfer applicants have been included in the Housing Waiting list at Section 4.1.1 above.

4.1.3 Homeless Persons

A number of individuals that are engaged with Homeless Services have a disability. This is particularly the case with Mental Health. Clients with a disability currently engaged with Homeless Services have been included in the Housing Waiting list at Section 4.1.1 above.

4.1.4 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	Forecast of Presenting Numbers
People in Care (Foster or other under 18)	10
Emergency presentations Physical	40
Early intervention services	5
People in services with a future need	80
Residential Care waiting lists	110
Unsuitable existing homes due to nature of Disability (Group homes)	25
Individuals placed in Nursing Homes inappropriately	22
Individuals living in Mental Health Hostels }	Included below
Mental Health Acute Wards or Residential Units }	100
Mental Health residential waiting lists }	Included above
Unspecified	-
Total	392

4.1.5 Owner Occupied Stock

Requirements for adaption or alternative accommodation due to disability arise in Owner Occupied 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 are contained in the second table:

	2013	2014	2015
Housing Adaption Grants (Grants Paid)			
Small Works	16	33	51
Major Works	68	57	61
Mobility Aids Grants	72	58	50
Total	156	148	162

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Housing Adaption Grants					
Small Works	60	60	60	60	60
Major Works	80	80	80	80	80
Mobility Aids Grants	80	80	80	80	80
Total	220	220	220	220	220

4.1.6 Congregated Settings

There is one Congregated Setting in the county with 29 people currently residing in the facility. 4 houses are to be acquired in 2016 with 16 residents due to be accommodated in those properties. The remainder (13 residents) will be de-congregated within the following 2 years. Funding has been secured from the HSE Capital Fund to progress this project.

County	Service Provider	No. of Individuals currently in Congregated Setting	No. of Individuals to Transition by 2019	On Housing List
Tipperary	Daughters of Charity	29	29	<i>Service Provider to Confirm</i>
TOTAL		29	29	

4.1.7 Mental Health

The Housing Strategy for People with a Disability recognises that "there are limitations in existing data in relation to the living arrangements of people with a mental health disability." The lack of data on housing need among people with a mental health disability has arisen due to a number of factors which include lack of knowledge among mental health service users and their family members about how to apply for social housing and hesitancy about disclosing a mental health disability to local authority officials.

In addition, the housing strategy recognises that "there has been some concern that some housing authorities might not always consider people with a mental health disability currently residing in HSE community residences, family homes or hospitals as a priority for housing as they might be perceived as being appropriately housed." These factors, among others, have led to a traditional under-reporting of housing need among people with a mental health disability which now needs to be rectified for the purposes of the 5-year Strategic Plans. The aforementioned group has been catered for in the Emerging Need section 4.1.4 above.

4.1.8 Total Disability Need

Arising from Paragraph 4.1.1 to 4.1.7, 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 basis of disability needs within the county.

	Total
Physical	179
Sensory	21
Mental Health	126
Intellectual	39
Unspecified	-
Congregated Settings	29
Mental Health Property Transfer	17
Emerging Need	392
Total	803

4.1.9 Assumptions

A data gathering exercise has been completed for this Plan and has been cross referenced with the recent Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) 2016; the current need is to the level of the HNA.

5. Delivery and Supply Mechanisms

5.1.1 Local Authority Stock

The Local Authority is the largest landlord in the county with approximately 5,000 housing units in its own stock. 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 approximately 520 Approved Housing Bodies in the country of varying types and sizes. The sector provides over 30,000 homes across the country. The housing provision of these also differs. Some approved housing bodies deal primarily with general housing provision while others have a more specialised role. This includes the following type of accommodation:

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

To avail of Approved Housing Body owned accommodation an individual/household must 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 from:

- Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)
- Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF)
- Payment and Availability Agreements (Leased units)

A.H.B Units

Collation of these figures is ongoing

<i>County</i>	<i>Total Units Owned</i>	<i>Total Units Leased</i>
Tipperary		

5.1.3 Private Rented / Rent Supplement / Housing Assistance Payment

Many individuals or families will meet their housing need in the private rented sector with the assistance of rent supplement, funded by the Department of Social Protection.

Rent supplement is paid to people living in private rented accommodation who cannot provide for the cost of their accommodation from their own resources. The amount of rent supplement provided is calculated to ensure that income after paying rent does not fall below a minimum level.

5.1.4 Housing Assistance Payment

A new Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) has been introduced for people who have a long-term housing need and who qualify for social housing support. It will be administered by housing authorities and will eventually replace long-term Rent Supplement.

This payment has been piloted in a number of local authorities and national rollout is continuing. As part of the Action Plan to tackle emergency and short-term homelessness announced in December 2014, HAP was extended on a pilot basis to homeless households in the Dublin region. HAP is being introduced under the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014, together with a series of Statutory Instruments.

The Housing Assistance Payment was commenced in Tipperary County Council on 29th June, 2015 and to date almost 900 households have availed of this assistance.

5.1.5 Social Leasing/Housing Assistance Payment/Rental Accommodation Scheme

These options are available to all people who qualify for social housing supports, including those moving from congregated settings and those residing in the community requiring housing on disability / medical grounds.

It is likely that there will be an increased capital investment in the provision of standard local units over the coming years as provided for in the Social Housing Strategy 2020. The social housing support options through Social Leasing Models and Housing Assistance Payments will continue to be significant delivery mechanisms.

Long-term social leasing (10 years) and Short-term leasing (4 years) eligibility is based on a long-term housing need assessment with length of time on housing list taken into account.

Security of tenure is a major issue for people with mental health issues, and lack of this can exacerbate their condition.

5.1.6 Owner Occupied

This category of households is the largest in the county and their only recourse in the case of disability is through the Housing Grants Scheme.

5.2. Potential Supply

Each of the supply mechanisms listed above have been analysed by the Housing and Disability Steering Groups to examine the potential of each to provide housing in the coming years. It is important that we are realistic with any policy that is put in place and in forecasting that is done to try to meet the needs of people with disability under each scheme. The following are measures identified as ways to increase the potential supply and ensure that appropriate provision is made available.

5.2.1 Local Authority Stock

Housing Authorities maintain a stock of units including Disability specific accommodation. The Council will aim to allocate 10% of new builds and acquisitions to deal with disability housing needs. If this target is not reached, then overall allocations of suitable housing should be made to meet needs. Where specific new builds are required, the delivery mechanism for social stock may be through the Part V process. This process requires developers to commit to providing social units within any developments being constructed. The Housing Authority will maintain a list of applicants in this category, including completed Occupational Therapist Reports outlining their specific needs.

In every Part V discussion with developers the Housing Authority will require an element of disability specific accommodation. Such accommodation will also be designated as units that will always be retained in the stock of the housing authority for future use for similar applicants.

In order to minimise future adaption works, the Housing Authority in other new build cases will utilise Universal Design models where feasible.

5.2.2. Local Authority Stock Policy

- a) Where a vacancy arises in an adapted or disability designed dwelling, the subsequent allocation will be taken from the current housing disability list;

- b) Part V Agreements will address an element of identified Disability Need where appropriate;
- c) The principal of Universal Design will be incorporated into all new builds.
- d) Any new allocation to a Disability Unit which has specific Disability Adaption's will not be made available for acquisition by tenant, in order to preserve a future use.
- e) The Housing Authority will always consider in conjunction with the tenant a transfer option to a more suitable property before committing to adapting the existing property.
- f) Where any significant adaption is made to a tenant's dwelling, that dwelling will again be designated as a unit not available for acquisition by a tenant, in order to preserve for future use.
- g) 10% of new builds and acquisitions will be allocated to meet disability needs - if this target is not reached, then overall allocations of suitable housing should be made to meet needs.

5.2.3 Approved Housing Body Stock

Approved Housing Bodies maintain a stock of units including disability specific accommodation. Allocation of these units is subject to nominations from the Local Authority where the unit is located.

5.2.4 Approved Housing Body Stock Policy

- a) Where a vacancy arises in a Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) funded project for people with a disability, the subsequent allocation will be taken from the current housing list for someone with a disability.
- b) Approved Housing Bodies will continue to develop Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) proposals in conjunction with Local Authorities who will have identified the need.
- c) The principal of Universal Design will be incorporated into all new builds; such accommodation will also be designated as units that will always be retained in the stock of the AHB for future use for similar applicants.
- d) The AHB will always consider a transfer option to a more suitable property before committing to adapting the existing property.
- e) Approved Housing Bodies will be required to allocate 10% of new builds and acquisitions to meet disability needs.

5.2.5 Private Rented Sector

The Housing and Disability Steering Groups urge engagement with the private rented sector to include information sessions to raise awareness of the benefits of people with a disability as tenants.

5.2.6 Housing Assistance Payment

HAP is being introduced to replace Rent Supplement for people with a long-term housing need, though Rent Supplement will continue to be available for people who need short-term support to pay their rent.

As Rent Supplement is generally not payable to people in full-time employment, it can be a disincentive to taking up work. However, people on HAP will be able to take up full-time employment and retain their housing support.

5.2.7 Social Leasing/Rental Accommodation Scheme

In terms of the provision of disabled accommodation through social leasing and rental accommodation schemes, unless there are financial incentives towards adaptations and subsequent re-instatement, it is unlikely they will be a viable option, however suitable properties will be prioritised accordingly. In any Multiple Leasing Model being considered, a disability element shall be requested to be included. It will be recognised that this model may be best suited to those in the Mental Health or Sensory cohort.

5.2.8 Owner Occupied. Owner/Occupier Policy

- a) It is recommended that Universal Design should be encouraged in all future design and builds.
- b) It is recommended that the existing housing grant schemes continue.

5.3 Housing Support Initiatives

5.3.1 Personal Assistance

Personal Assistance Services provides people with the opportunity to exercise control and choice in their lives. In so doing it enables people with disabilities to be active participants within their families, communities and society. Personal assistance supports the disabled person by the provision of direct individual one to one support.

The provision of personal assistance is based on needs assessment and approval for funding by the supporting voluntary agency or the HSE. Applications for personal assistance can be made through the supporting disability organisation or directly to the local HSE.

5.3.2 Home Support

The Home Support scheme is a direct support scheme, operated by the HSE. It aims to help people who need medium to high caring support to continue to live at home independently. Home support works by the provision of a number of hours of direct care per day to help the disabled person in their daily living tasks.

The provision of home support is based on a care needs assessment. This is resource dependent and approval for funding is required from HSE prior to any support being put in place. This service is based on a care needs assessment carried out by a number of

disciplines in the community. Generally, the service is carried out by non HSE providers. Applications for home support can be made through the public health nursing service.

Each Home Support package aims to meet the needs of the individual within the available resources as far as is reasonably practicable, by providing personal care hours to the person in their own home. This support compliments the Primary Care Team (PCT) Services available in the Community such as public health nurses; home care attendants, home helps, day care, respite care, and various PCT therapies including physiotherapy and occupational therapy and social work services if indicated.

5.3.3 Day Services

Day Services provide a range of social and rehabilitative services for disabled people by offering an opportunity to have a meaningful day, develop personal, work and independent living skills and offering occasions to interact with the local community. Day Services include centres that provide day activation, such as recreational, sport and leisure facilities, supported work placements and specialised clinic facilities that provide a combination of medical and rehabilitation services.

The provision of day services are based on an individual needs assessment and approval for funding by the supporting voluntary agency or the HSE. Applications for day services can be made through the supporting disability organisation or directly to the local HSE.

5.3.4 Respite Services

Respite services offers support to disabled people by providing temporary supervised accommodation. This supervised accommodation offers support to families and to the disabled person. Such support helps to maintain the independence for a person with a disability by encouraging interaction with their peers and offering a transition to independent living.

The provision of respite services is based on a needs assessment and approval for funding by the supporting voluntary agency or the HSE. Applications for respite services can be made through the supporting disability organisation or directly to the local HSE.

5.3.5 Residential Services

Residential Services, both full and part time are provided by direct provision of the HSE or through non HSE agencies in the area of disability. The provision of residential services is based on a needs assessment and approval for funding by the supporting voluntary agency or the HSE. Applications for residential services can be made through the supporting disability organisation or directly to the local HSE.

5.4 Local Initiatives/Projects

Tipperary County Council will endeavour to develop local initiatives and will support initiatives/projects developed by Approved Housing Bodies, Service Providers and Voluntary Groups. An example of a local initiative is the provision of assistance to older and disabled persons through programmes such as 'Care & Repair'. The Care & Repair Programme was established by Age Action to carry out minor repairs for older and vulnerable people free of charge, to give them access to reliable tradesmen for larger jobs and to provide a befriending service. The vision of the programme is to enable older and vulnerable people to remain in their own homes, in their own communities, living as independently as possible, through the improvement of their housing conditions and their level of comfort, security and well-being.

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.

7. Opportunities

7.1 Use of Technology

There have been major advances in assisted living technologies that allow people to stay in their homes longer and to live more independent lives while having the security of the assistance of the technology.

Some of the technologies that could be considered for use are:

- Remote monitoring Systems
- Fall Prevention/Detection Systems

- Person Alarm Systems
- Living Environment Controls including access, lighting, heat

7.2 Universal Design

'Universal design refers to the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.'¹

Universal design places human diversity at the heart of the design process so that buildings and environments can be designed to meet the needs of all users.

It therefore covers all persons regardless of their age or size and those who have any particular physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual ability or disability.

It is about achieving good design so that people can access, use, and understand the environment to the greatest extent and in the most independent and natural manner possible, without the need for adaptations or specialised solutions'.²

The adoption of Universal Design as an approach will result in long-term cost savings through the avoidance of retrofit and adaptation costs. Issues for consideration will include minimum size of housing units, the appropriate percentage of units to be universally designed, and requirements for appropriate design of other buildings, services and external spaces.

8. Conclusion

This Housing Strategy for People with a Disability will be reviewed on an annual basis in accordance with the Housing Needs Assessment. This will allow for the monitoring of emerging need, as well as targets.

The work of the Housing Disability Steering Group in preparing this draft plan for Tipperary is acknowledged and appreciated.

¹ Synopsis of the Disability Act, 2005, cited in Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach, Planning and Policy (9), 2013, NDA: Dublin

² Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach, Planning and Policy (9), 2013, NDA: Dublin