



**Comhairle Contae
an Chabháin**
Cavan
County Council

**STRATEGIC PLAN FOR HOUSING
PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY
2022 – 2027**

MEMBERSHIP OF THE HOUSING AND DISABILITY STEERING GROUP

Eoin Doyle (Chairperson)	Director of Services, Housing, Libraries & Cultural Services, Human Resources & Corporate Services
Jean Coleman	Irish Wheelchair Association
Bridget J. Boyle	Cavan Disability Network
Rep to be selected	Independent Living Movement Ireland
Helena McDonald	National Council for Blind Ireland
Rachel Moynagh	Holy Family School
Miffy Hoad	Development Officer, Mental Health Ireland
Bernadette Donaghy	Service Manager (Adults), Cavan/Monaghan Disability Service, HSE
Briege Byrne	Disability Service Manager (Children), Cavan/Monaghan Disability Service, HSE
Cathy O'Hanlon	Clinical Nurse Specialist, Cavan/Monaghan Disability Service, HSE
Marion McCormack	Disability Services, Cavan/Monaghan Disability Service, HSE
Bridgette Argue	Child Development Team, HSE
Jeanette Cummins	Principal Social Worker, Cavan/Monaghan Mental Health Service
Denise Downey	Social Worker, Cavan/Monaghan Mental Health Service
Collette Ferguson	Social Worker, Cavan/Monaghan Mental Health Service
Rosie McCarthy	Social Worker, Cavan/Monaghan Mental Health Service
Sarah Donohue	Cavan Residential Services, Rehab Care
Bernard McVeigh	Cavan Residential Services, Rehab Care
Yvonne Grellier	Bailiboro Resource Centre, Rehab Care
Aileen Gallagher	Tuath Housing
Denise Doorly	Clanmil Housing Association
To be selected	North and East Housing Association
Leslie Foxe	St. Killian's Housing Association, Mullagh
Claire Feeney	Project Manager, Housing Agency
Bridie McBrearty	SEO, Cavan County Council
John Wilson	SE, Cavan County Council

CONTENTS

Glossary of Terms	4
CHAPTER 1 - Context	5 – 6
CHAPTER 2 - Awareness and Promotion of the Local Strategic Plan for People with a Disability	7 – 8
CHAPTER 3 - Stakeholder Engagement and Housing and	9 – 10
CHAPTER 4 - Local Aims and Objectives	11 – 12
CHAPTER 5 - Need	13 – 14
CHAPTER 6 - Housing Delivery Pipeline and Housing for Disabilities	15 – 17
CHAPTER 7 - Supports Social and Care	18 – 20
CHAPTER 8 - Challenges, Risks and Opportunities	21 – 24
CHAPTER 9 - Targets and Deliverables	25
CHAPTER 10 - Reporting	26
Appendix 1 - Think Ahead, Think Housing	27 - 29

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AHB	Approved Housing Body
CDN	Cavan Disability Network
DHPLG	Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government
DOH	Department of Health
HDSG	Housing and Disability Steering Group
HSE	Health Services Executive
IHREC	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
ILMI	Independent Living Movement Ireland
IWA	Irish Wheelchair Association
NCBI	National Council for the Blind Ireland
UNCRPD	UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted in 2006. Ireland signed the Convention in 2007, ratified it in March 2018 and it came into force on 19 April 2018

Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities addresses the right of people with disabilities to live in the community with a choice equal to others of where and with whom to live.

The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011 – 2016 was published jointly by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (now DHPLG) and the Department of Health (DoH) in 2011. The Strategy sets out the Government's broad framework for the delivery of housing for people with disabilities through mainstream housing options. The Strategy and Implementation Framework (published in 2012) were developed as part of a coherent framework, in conjunction with the Government's mental health policy A Vision for Change. All of these were adopted as the policy framework to support people with disabilities to access community-based 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 National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability was re-affirmed in Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness in July 2016 and extended to 2020 to continue to deliver on its aims to

- Provide for the needs of older people or people with a disability living in social housing
- Provide targeted support to private houses, via the Housing Adaptation Grant, Housing Aid for Older People and Mobility Aids Grant
- Enable older people and people with disabilities to remain living independently in their own homes for longer and, also to facilitate early return from hospital stays
- Continue to support the transitioning of people with disabilities from congregated settings to community-based living, through ring-fenced housing capital provision

In addition to this the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021 was published by the Minister of State for Disability in July 2017. It again reaffirmed previous policies and set out a whole of Government approach to improving the lives of people with disabilities both in a practical sense, and also in creating the best possible opportunities for people focusing on eight specific themes: equality of choice; joined up policies and public services; education; employment; health and wellbeing; person centred disability services; living in the community and transport and access to places.

A new National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2022 - 2027 is now being developed. It will focus on facilitating the provision of housing options and related services to persons with a disability to allow individual choice and support independent living. An extensive consultation process has commenced nationally to ensure that all people with disabilities are heard and their needs are considered in the formulation of the new Strategy.

LOCAL STRATEGIC PLAN

The development of the Plan will strengthen the local capacity of the Housing and Disability Steering Group to advance collectively appropriate housing solutions for persons with a disability residing in County Cavan with related services to allow individual choice and support independent living.

In line with the National Implementation Framework adopted for the preparation of the previous Plan the vision 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 aim is to develop specific strategies to meet the identified needs for persons in each of the four categories of disability i.e., sensory; mental health; physical and intellectual and outline the plans for meeting this need over the 5 year period. The development of the strategies in the Local Plan will be informed by the work of the Disability Steering Group members, be that the persons representing 'lived experience', the Sectoral Group representatives, the representatives of the different HSE Divisions and the housing delivery providers - the Approved Housing Bodies and Cavan County Council.

To ensure that multi-faceted solutions can be provided to people with a disability whose need of social housing services are often multi-dimensional the roles and responsibilities of all Members will be defined to ensure that effective interagency co-operation is agreed as part of the strategy to meet the challenges presenting locally.

The Plan will be reviewed and amended as necessary at the end of the year following the adoption of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021 to ensure that it includes the aims and objectives of the new national strategy and thereafter annually.

CHAPTER 2

AWARENESS AND PROMOTION OF THE LOCAL STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

PROMOTION OF STRATEGY AT LOCAL LEVEL

The Members of the Housing and Disability Steering Group will act as the conduit in each of their representative groups/organisations/agencies to promote the strategy as follows:

Cavan Disability Network

Working through the membership the Cavan Disability Network will engage with people with disabilities in relation to housing issues and promote the strategy through various media such as social media, local press, community bulletins, local radio and information sessions.

Irish Wheelchair Association

Under the umbrella of the national campaign, ***Think Ahead, Think Housing***, to be run in Quarter 2 of 2021 the IWA will encourage people with disabilities across all sectors to think ahead about their housing requirements and to apply for social housing support if they require housing now or in the future. As well as sharing the campaign with people with disabilities and their families, the campaign will bring the Local Strategic Plan to the attention of both existing and future social housing applicants who have a disability.

In addition, the IWA will promote the Plan amongst its 20,000-membership base of people with physical disabilities by having it on its website and social media, amongst its local staff teams and services users through its internal communication and engagement pathways and its Senior Management Team and Board of Directors. Information sessions will be organised for staff and members informing them of the key elements of the strategy.

National Council for the Blind Ireland

The NCBI will communicate effectively and in the appropriate format with people who are living with sight loss and who have housing needs. They will confirm the preferred method of communication of the relevant interested party and ensure information is available or can be sourced in the required accessible format be that large print, audio, or braille. Together with this they will promote the strategic plan with staff and service-users of local disability service providers and link in with advocacy departments of said organisations if possible and link in with local disability peer support groups

Together with this they will consider and develop mechanisms to raise awareness of the strategy and promote the inclusion of the strategic aims of the Plan within the operation of the stakeholder organisations, such as the Council, the Strategic Policy Committee and the HSE and set out how this may be achieved through information sessions for all levels in each organisation.

HSE

The representatives of the different divisions will promote the Plan at every appropriate forum where they are represented. In addition, they will identify other areas in the organisation who need to be familiar with the Plan and develop mechanisms for the sharing of the Plan with management across all the different service delivery areas. At the

monthly governance meeting and within Children's services operation meeting the Plan will be listed as an item on the Agenda so that updates can be shared. The Plan will also be promoted by the different service delivery staff to families and using the different community networks when issuing any communication.

Information sessions will be held with the Area Management and Clinical Teams (Cavan/Monaghan Mental Health Service) facilitated by HSE (Mental Health) and Cavan County Council. In addition, as part of the awareness and promotion of the strategy plan with service users, it is envisaged that information sessions will be held in a group format on the acute psychiatric unit facilitated by Adult Mental Health Social Worker.

Information will be shared in HSE waiting room notice boards and the plan will be promoted at the local ARI (Advanced Recovery Ireland) meeting or via email.

To ensure the wider community is aware - some ideas maybe the use of local radio, local newspaper, social media, mass leaflet, Community Welfare Clinics, G.A.A. - through the Health and Well Being Committees, local resource centres and Tulsa.

Ensuring documentation is available in an easy read format and maybe in different languages

Promote the inclusion of the strategic aims of the NHSPWD within the operations of the Local Authority and its overall Development plan, are there other departments within the LA that will be required to assist in delivery, how will this be communicated. Are there other sections within the other members organisations that will be required to assist with delivery of the aims and objectives, if so, how will this be addressed?

Cavan County Council

The Council will raise awareness and promote the Plan and reach the community through its networks in the Local Community Development Committee, the Public Participation Network, Cavan Disability Network, and its Libraries. The possibility for opportunities to develop awareness within the Social Inclusion Activation Programme will be examined. The Council will promote the inclusion of the strategic aims within the operations of the different service departments and the Development Plan particularly those that will be required to assist in delivery of the programme. The Plan will be promoted through the various media channels i.e., local press, social media, community bulletins, information sessions etc.

Together with this the Council will work with the Approved Housing Bodies to develop an awareness of the Plan and to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are included in any developments being considered.

CHAPTER 3

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND HOUSING DISABILITY STEERING GROUP FUNCTIONALITY

Many of the challenge facing people with a disability in need of social housing supports are multi-dimensional. Therefore, in order to continue to reside in their own homes or reside in the community they require multi-faceted solutions tailored to meet their individual needs with engagement from all the relevant Agencies. The Housing Disability Steering Group for Cavan has been established and its purpose is to assist in the delivery of the Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities.

Membership

The Cavan Housing Disability Steering Group includes local representatives at senior level from the key statutory agencies and relevant disability stakeholders as required in the Terms of Reference which have been set at national level. The term of membership of the Group is 24 months and will be reviewed at the end of this period to ensure that fair representations across the sector.

Role

The role of the Group is as documented in the Terms of Reference (Appendix 1). Specifically, the local group members are committed to the following:

Cavan Disability Network

The CDN will actively engage with their networks of people with disabilities to ensure that the 'lived experience' of people with a disability is central when planning, reviewing, developing interagency protocols, targeting solutions, and agreeing strategies of the group. It will feedback through its network and promote the strategy.

Irish Wheelchair Association

The IWA will encourage the participation of a wheelchair user with the lived experience in the HDSG. Using the experience gained over the past 60 years working with and on behalf of people with disabilities they will actively engage in the Group, proactively participating in agreed work streams to further implementation of the Housing and Disability Strategic Plan. It will share its resources of (i) IWA Best Practice Access Guidelines Edition 4 and (ii) Great Outdoors with the Group. It will ensure the lived experience is represented in the membership and be open to representation from each of the different sector.

National Council for the Blind Ireland

The NCBI will strive to ensure each member of the Group has a clear understanding of the overall function and purpose of the group and their role within the group. It will ensure in as far as possible that the membership of the Group equally promotes the needs of all people with disabilities including physical, sensory, intellectual disability and mental health while acknowledging that multiple disabilities may be present. It will continue to engage with the local disability network representative(s) who will in-turn report to their fellow group members on issues of importance and seek guidance where necessary.

Feedback will be sought from people with disabilities who have been through/are going through the housing application process to determine what their experiences were, both

positive and negative. It will promote/encourage communication channels between the local authority housing department and disability services staff providing supports to people with disabilities in the community. It will seek to have people who have lived experience of disability including vision impairment included in the membership of the group.

Health Service Executive

The HSE will ensure attendance at meetings and ensure that any information that is passed via members is shared with the wider community and will promote the new national strategy in all divisions. Specifically, the mental health division will link with already established forums and groups, with representatives from relevant agencies / stakeholders and people with lived experience, including family members/carer/supporters to capture people's experiences and stories to inform policy and practice. It will liaise with Mr Patrick Nwaokorie - Service User Engagement, CHO Area 1, Adult Mental Health to seek further engagement in the strategy.

Cavan County Council

The Housing Section as social housing support processor/ provider will engage proactively in the Group to ensure that the appropriate consideration is given to the 'lived experience' of people with disabilities, in so far as practicable, in the day-to-day operations of the housing section. It will ensure that all staff are fully familiar with the aims and objectives of the Local Strategic Plan and identify any training required to assist in dealing with people with disabilities.

As well as being providers in its own right, it will act as a catalyst for social housing provision using all mechanisms available including Approved Housing Bodies, through the Rental Accommodation Scheme, the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme, Part V housing from developers. For those wishing to remain living in their own homes the use of the Housing and Disability Grants Schemes will be promoted so as to provide financial assistance to people requiring adaptations.

In addition to the above the Group may carry out actions as determined by the Housing Subgroup established under the Implementation Framework of the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability if required from time to time.

Meetings

The Group will meet four times a year as scheduled by agreement every quarter. The approved minutes of the meetings will be published on the Council's website to fulfil the requirements under the Regulation of the Lobbying Act, 2015.

CHAPTER 4

LOCAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The vision of the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability and the key aims of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities particularly Article 19 as outlined in Chapter 1 underpin the working strategies for the Group for the next 5 years. The objectives of the Cavan Housing and Disability Steering Group in the development of its Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability are summarised below under key headings:

- To establish the current and emerging housing needs of people within the four categories of disability identified: sensory, mental health, physical and intellectual disability
- To provide appropriately designed and future proofed housing (in so far as possible given the current limitations) in locations of peoples choosing, close to services, public transport etc.
- To ensure that the housing needs of people with disability are identified in the planning stages of new housing developments
- To facilitate the use of all mechanisms available to deliver a broad range of housing initiatives to meet the demand
- To ensure that personal supports are in place for people transitioning from residential or congregated type settings into the community
- To ensure that adequate support services are available for people who need them
- To ensure that all four categories of disability are given equal importance and to support people to live independently in their own homes and communities
- To consider the objectives of the Cavan Age Friendly Strategy and recognise and provide for the housing needs of older people in cases where they develop age related conditions that affect their housing support needs
- To actively advocate for the need to introduce national standards and practices to ensure a rights-based approach to housing people with disabilities, to adopt innovative design models, the concept of Lifetime Adaptable Housing, review the Building Regulations to promote wheelchair accessible housing and to finance the use of PA services, assisted technology and specific equipment as appropriate to achieve maximum independence for people to live independently.
- To implement the Assisted Decision-Making Capacity legislation.

Actions

The actions required to achieve the objectives include Actions to achieve the objectives include the following:

- People with a disability to be encouraged and supported to apply for social housing support in order to meet their house need – all group members have a role in this.
- The Council and the HSE to work together to identify the numbers in each of the four categories to ensure that the housing requirements of people with a disability are included in the planning stages of proposed housing developments
- Each design or procurement brief for new housing (new build or acquired) by The Council or by an AHB will include a section on Universal Design. The Best Practice Access Guidelines (4th Edition) issued by the Irish Wheelchair Association will be considered to assess if they can be incorporated in new building designs (dependent on national guidelines)
- Any housing initiatives for people with a disability must be located in integrated setting in order to promote an inclusive and sustainable community in areas close to services, public transport etc.
- Working in conjunction with the HSE the Council will introduce an ‘Offer Zone’ into its Allocation process during which period persons approved can access the appropriate supports they require to live independently.
- The HDSG will advocate nationally for funding to be ‘ring fenced’ to ensure that the appropriate personal supports are available to enable people with a disability live independently in a home of their choice.
- The HDSG will call for a review of income criteria and the maximum amount grant payable under the existing Housing Adaption Grant Scheme.
- The HSE to examine existing Service Level Agreements or Memorandums of Understanding that may assist in developing such to inform the Strategy
- Specific awareness training in each of the four categories will be made available to all staff in the county council to enable them to support people with a disability who wish to explore housing options, who have applied for a grant etc.
- Each group member will review its documentation for people with disabilities with a view to having it in easy-to-read format and in so far as practicable in different languages.
- A leaflet that gives the background and aim of the Strategy for use as a communications tool will be developed by the HSE to share with service users and their families to promote the importance of sharing their disability. This will facilitate future planning for emerging need.
- The Council will report annually to the Group on allocation made in previous calendar year to people with disabilities in each of the four categories.
- Mechanisms will be in place to oversee the delivery, monitoring and review of the strategic actions annually.

CHAPTER 5 NEED

People with a Disability - Social Housing Need

It is widely accepted by the Council, sectoral groups and the HSE that the housing needs of people with a disability, including people who are inappropriately living in nursing homes or who remain in hospital past the point where they need admission are significantly under-represented and under recorded in official documentation. The numbers of persons with a disability approved for social housing support in County Cavan are outlined below:

Category	No.
Physical	30
Sensory	2
Mental Health	15
Intellectual	12
Total	59
Exceptional Medical Needs	66
Overall Total	135

People with disabilities currently represent 12% of the total waiting list. However, it is unclear if the persons in the Exceptional Medical Needs category have a disability, however it is the intention that if documentation is missing from files in relation to the disabilities that the applicants will be asked to have the Form HDM1 completed and returned. This will enable the Council to ensure that future building programmes meet the specific needs of the approved applicants.

There is need to compile a comprehensive list (while respecting the requirements of Data Protection Legislation) of both current and emerging need in the County. The HSE will provide information to the Council from the data sets of service users available to them in each of the service areas to quantify the numbers in each of the four categories of need.

Emerging Need

On average approximately 2% of housing applications received annually are from people with a disability. However, this is likely to increase in the 5-year period as the Strategic Plan is implemented and awareness is increased through the different networks and organisations. To ascertain the actual current need and forecast future the Group will undertake a data gathering exercise to bring together a comprehensive list of need in each of the specific categories in the county. This will be determined by the following:

- Examining trends of housing applications from people with disabilities
- The census and other disability specific, national, and local research data
- The information available to the HSE professionals in the four disability sectors in relation to current and emerging accommodation needs of people with disabilities including both adult and children's need

- Information available to disability organisations and representative groups
- Collaboration with national and local AHBs

Register of Adapted Properties

There is need to establish a baseline of information of the numbers of suitable units that are available in the currently housing stock to address the identified needs of persons with disabilities. The Council as part of its stock condition survey will establish a register of adapted properties.

CHAPTER 6

HOUSING DELIVERY PIPELINE AND HOUSING FOR DISABILITIES

Cavan County Council “New Build” Programme - 2021 to 2024

The current Cavan County Council “New Build” Programme 2021 to 2024 is shown in the table below:

Project	Total	House No. Ambulant Accessible	House No. Wheelchair Accessible
St Brigids Terrace, Cavan	12	2	
Site at Eastboro, Bailieborough	47		19
Fairymount Close, Kingscourt	3		3
Elm Grove, Cavan Town	13		13
Cavan Road, Ballinagh	15	1	6
Main Street, Butlersbridge	6	1	1
Cluain Dara, Kingscourt	3		1
Main Street, Mullagh	19	6	3
Corstruce, Ballinagh	4		
Ashgrove, Ballyjamesduff	4		
Woodlands, Ballyjamesduff	32		
Mullaghduff, Ballyconnell	43	28	1
	201	38	49

A total of 19% of the “new build” houses will be suitable for people with a disability who are ambulant and 24% will be fully wheelchair accessible on the ground floor. Wheelchair accessible houses will also have a fully accessible, ground floor toilet and shower room.

In the early planning process for all new Local Authority social housing developments and in discussions with the Department for Housing, the Council will continue to ensure that housing specifically designed for people with a disability is incorporated into social housing projects. It is noted that the IWA recommends that all social housing developments include 7% of wheelchair accessible units creating mixed tenure sustainable communities. The Council will endeavour to achieve this in all “new build” schemes. Where possible, the Council will promote innovative housing design models and in so far as possible, the Council will adhere to the IWA Best Practice Access Guidelines (4th Edition) as a standard of choice in all new building designs.

Approved Housing Body “New Build” Programme - 2021 to 2024

The current “New Build” Programme by Approved Housing Bodies in the County 2021 to 2024 is outlined in the table over:

Project	Total	House No. Ambulant Accessible	House No. Wheelchair Accessible
St Killians Court, Mullagh	4		4
Ramparts, Virginia	11		
Drumalee Manor - Phase 2	25		
Fairgreen, Mullagh	16		
The Gallops, Cavan	24		
	80	0	4

Most of these AHB schemes are turnkey schemes with previously granted planning permissions which were designed with the private house market as the original target rather social housing. Consequently, these schemes were not designed for people with disability but rather to comply with the minimum Building Regulation requirements and so none of these houses are suitable for people with a disability who are ambulant and just 4% will be fully wheelchair accessible on the ground floor.

Land Development Agency

Currently, the Land Development Agency (LDA) do not have any sites in the County. However, should the situation change, the Council will engage with the LDA regarding the house types they are proposing to deliver to ensure that it is suitable to meet the needs of people with a disability.

Part V Housing

Currently, there are no private housing estates under construction in the County with Part V agreements in place and it is unlikely that this situation will change in the short term. However, should the situation does change then the possibility of providing Part V houses for people will be examined.

Private Developments

There is no legal requirement for private developers to provide houses for people with a disability. The principles of universal design are supported in the County Development Plan which is currently under review in relation to the design of one-off single units to ensure houses are future proofed and suitable for changing needs of occupants.

However, during discussions with Developers in relation to Part V agreements, the Council will encourage developers to provide houses for people with a disability to consider this as a unique selling point, given the fact there is an increasing need for houses to be 'future proofed' to take account of changing needs of people.

Leasing and Acquisitions

The Council has had limited success in securing any houses by lease agreement. However, the Council is regularly promoting and advertising this option on its website, on social media and in local newspaper. The acquisition programme provides additional opportunities for the council to meet the accommodation needs of specific households with disability requirements. The Council has been successful in purchasing several such houses and whilst the Departments commitment to funding house acquisitions generally is uncertain, it is anticipated that during the life of this plan, the programme will be

continued. The Council will therefore be in position to meet the needs of people with a disability using this delivery mechanism.

Approved Housing Bodies

Approved Housing Bodies are a major player in the provision of social housing support to people from all sections of the community. The housing provision of these also differ with some approved housing bodies dealing primarily with general housing provisions while others have a more specialised role. In County Cavan there are 12 approved housing bodies currently providing 354 units of accommodation which include the following

- Standard social housing
- Older person accommodation
- Housing for people with disabilities

Accommodation which is supplied can be either new build, purchases, or lease of houses. They access private finance in conjunction with applying for funding from the state through

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

To avail of housing supplied by an AHB in the majority of cases the applicant first of all must be approved by the Council for social housing support.

CHAPTER 7

SUPPORTS SOCIAL AND CARE

Cavan County Council acting as the Housing Authority has a key role in the provision of social housing supports for all eligible persons with a disability, including people currently living independently, or in families or in other arrangements. In many cases the provision of accommodation in itself is insufficient without the provision of personal care supports. The HSE has direct responsibility for the management and provision of such supports.

The submissions received from group members in respect of this aspect of the plan are detailed below.

Cavan Disability Network

- HSE should commit to “ring fence” funding for personal supports such as Personal Assistance and Home Help service to enable people with a disability to live independently.
- Housing initiatives for people with a disability should be in an integrated setting to promote and inclusive and sustainable community. Housing for PWD should be within mainstream environments and across all tenures and housing types.
- Housing for people with a disability should be in an of the persons choice, close to services and an accessible transport network.

National Council for the Blind Ireland

- Review of the Housing Adaptation Grant scheme – national
- Ancillary support services such as Personal Assistance and Home Support services are essential for many availing of housing schemes enabling them to live independently for as long as possible and prolong the need (if ever) for residential care. The value of these services cannot be underestimated
- Principles of universal design must be always adhered to in relation to housing – requires national policy change
- Interagency co-operation and communication are essential
- Technology in its many forms has assisted people to live independently in the community and this area will continue to strive into the future
- Acknowledgment of additional housing/costs of living for people with vision impairment such as transport, dietary needs, heating, and medication
- Housing for people with sight loss and other disabilities must be within mainstream housing in-order to prevent isolation and promote inclusivity.

Irish Wheelchair Association

Article 19 of the UNCRPD states that persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home support services including personal assistants. This is imperative if people with disabilities are to be able to live independently.

- The local authority promotes innovative housing design models e.g. (a) those that incorporate the provision of a shared overnight ensuite bed/living room for shared personal assistants internally accessible from 2 or more houses and (b) a common

room internally accessible from a number of houses where people with disabilities can gather socially for informal supports – national policy issue

- IWA recommend that the council engages with the HSE who have responsibility for PA services to come up creative solutions to the PA funding crisis and escalate the deficit in availability of personal assistant support hours to the Housing Agency.

Health Service Executive Mental Health Services

During the period of the previous Plan and through the work of the HDSG the Council has built a solid working relationship with the Community Mental Health Social Work Team over the past couple of years. An informal case by case management approach has been adopted to the management of common customers who are needing accommodation together with community support. This would include people who are living in poor accommodation, persons needing to move out of home, who are due to be discharged from the Psychiatric Unit or persons at risk of homelessness. It is envisaged that this will develop into a more formalised regular pattern of meetings of key workers so that future planning can be coordinated effectively to address the accommodation needs of this disability sector in the County. It will also provide the backdrop for the introduction of the 'offer zone' and will be extended into the other disability groupings.

Health Service Executive Disability Services

As the HSE has direct responsibility for the management and provision of such supports it will ensure that the person with disability is linked in with services such as the Adult Physical and Sensory Disability Service Team (APSDT) or the Community Intellectual Disability Team /Family supports/not for profit organisations; each person has a link person and encourages referral to National Advocacy Service (NAS). The NAS has a particular remit to work with people with disabilities who are in vulnerable situations, such as people who are isolated from their community of choice or mainstream society, who may communicate differently and who have limited formal or natural supports

In the term of the previous plan the Disability Services worked closely with the County Council, Not Profit organisations and other organisations to trial a new approach to independent living for two adults with very complex needs as a result of traumatic brain injury. Brief description of one scenario is as follows:

Mr A: Following a number of years residing in a 24hr Nursing Setting, further to a discharge from a specialist hospital, the individual had rehabilitated physically and was able to mobilise with a walking aid. The individual had received full rehabilitative supports of the APSDT, and voluntary partner organisations (from both Physical and sensory service providers and Acquired Brain Injury services) however required further supports in terms of supervisory assistance. All parties worked alongside the individual's express wishes, supported by family members, to move to an independent accommodation provided in conjunction with the Council and an AHB in his community, availing of a comprehensive support package to enable him to manage his home and care needs. He is successfully living in his home community and can now self-direct his life.

With the acknowledgement that there are increasing numbers of young people with life changing injuries living in our area HSE Disabilities locally have submitted a national

business case to explore the potential of building a bespoke service for young people with complex physical needs/Acquired Brain Injury as an alternative to nursing home accommodation. The Council will work in conjunction with the HSE if and when is secured for this cohort and this will enable a move towards more independent self-directed living with supports of an appropriately skilled staff group in the background. HSE Disability Services are awaiting the outcome of the national decision-making process.

For every potential development from a health, social and housing perspective the service delivery needs to be 'needs based' not simply where an individual sits on a waiting list. The HSE will endeavour to see the 'person first' in addition to their disability requirements. Together with this it will endeavour to examine the potential future needs so that a forward thinking and progressive plan is developed moving away from having to make retrospective property adaptations and towards future-proofed accommodation. All of this will require the appropriate budgetary support and an integrated approach in planning for future needs arising.

In respect of planning Community Group Homes in the future, sites will be sought within the towns and villages of our communities and in collaboration with the HSE and County Council. With greater understanding of the level of need for such accommodation the national offices for both Social Care and Housing should work together to ensure that funding streams are aligned to deliver on community living for all persons with a Disability, whether Physical and Sensory Disability or Intellectual Disability.

Funding is key.

Cavan County Council

The Council will introduce the 'Offer Zone' into the allocation process. This will mean that the person with the disability will be in a position to apply for housing supports. Together will recognising and accepting each other's role protocols will be developed and agreed between the Council and the HSE to ensure that suitable accommodation is allocated/provided to people with a disability who are approved for social housing support and whose needs have been identified i.e., both accommodation and care support.

In conjunction with the HSE and the AHBs the Council will seek to provide:

- Individual accommodation solutions as needs are identified and supports are available (either build/purchase)
- Community Group Homes (maximum 5 bedroom, 1 of which is reserved for Caretaker/Carer) under the Capital Assistance Scheme as part of the any larger new build developments on its landbank. This will mean that people are integrated into the wider community, that the HSE can provide its support services in one location. Together with this as the needs are identified the Council will include housing solutions as part of any new build developments
- Will work with the AHBs to provide housing solutions for identified need

CHAPTER 8

CHALLENGES, RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

There are many challenges in delivering homes for people with a disability. The main lesson learned from the implementation of the last plan are that accommodating people with disabilities is not solely a matter for the Council – although it needs to provide accommodation for those who are approved for social housing support, the people more often than not need care support to enable them to live independently and maintain a tenancy. There is an opportunity with the new Plan to reinvigorate the work of the Housing and Disability Steering Group and commit to working together to make a real difference for people with a disability in the County over the term of the Plan.

Each of the members of the Group view the challenges from different perspectives, and the ‘lived experience’ of people with a disability has to be central to considerations by the local authority/agencies when preparing and implementing their work programmes. The real challenge is to acknowledge and accept each other’s’ role and agree locally how issues presenting can be overcome working within existing constraints.

The following are some of the challenges which need to be addressed in order to achieve the vision and goals of the Strategic Plan.

1. Standard housing design which is currently compliant with Building Regulations Part 2010 is not wheelchair accessible housing, the existing Building Regulations only require housing to be ‘visitable’ but not ‘liveable’.
Action: *Feedback to Housing Sub-Group and the Department.*
Timescale: Q2 2021
2. Lack of engagement of engagement and monitoring of previous Plans.
Action: *Members to commit to attending meetings, working collaboratively, and developing protocols as necessary to provide housing solutions. Updates to be provided by each Agency at the meeting and Plan to be reviewed each year and findings reported to the Group.*
Timescale: Ongoing and review of Plan – December each year
3. The lack of supply of suitable affordable housing and a lack of understanding of the level of accessible stock available within the social housing stock both local authority and AHB units
Action: *When the necessary are available from the Department (both technology and financial) for the stock condition survey this will be included and maintained in a register of such properties. The AHBs will be asked to survey their stock and submit this detail for their units to be included in the Register. The Council will use best practice guidelines in new buildings including, where relevant, the Irish Wheelchair Association Best Practice Guidelines (4th Editions) as a standard of choice in all new building designs*
Timescale: Information to be requested from the approved bodies by end Q2 2021

4. Under representation of people with a disability on the social housing waiting list which leads to an incomplete understanding of the levels of demand for appropriate housing solutions for them
Action: *All members of the Group to encourage their members/service users to consider their housing needs both current and emerging and have them apply for social housing support if required.*
To learn from the IWAs national campaign ‘Think Ahead, Think Housing and to develop local initiatives based on this – to encourage people with disabilities to apply for social housing support. Further information contained in Appendix 1.
Timescale: The findings of the campaign to be presented to the Group in Q3 and local campaign to be launched Q1 2022

5. Lack of supported accommodation options for older persons with vision impairment and other acquired disabilities and limited options for all ages of such.
Action: *When needs have been identified, working in conjunction with the HSE and the Approved Housing Bodies the council will assist in supporting the development of such accommodation*
Timescale: Ongoing over lifespan of plan

6. Uncertainty/feeling of ‘not knowing where or how to start the process’ to apply for social housing support. Feeling overwhelmed and possibly unsupported with required paperwork and bureaucratic procedures.
Action: *The Council will go through the application process with the members of the Group so that they are informed when meeting/dealing with people with a disability. Together with the Council will talk to the Citizens Information Centers (as information providers) and Disability Advocates to see how they can assist. All staff in Housing Section and Customer Services who deal with applications to be trained in disability awareness.*
Timescale: Q2 2021

7. Limited/no emergency accommodation options for people with a disability in the county
Action: *The Council in conjunction with the Approved Housing Bodies and the Group will examine and quantify need and explore options for resolving this issue under Homeless Services*
Timescale: Ongoing over lifespan of plan

8. Aftercare support is very limited and is dependent on HSE and voluntary supports available
Action: *That the HSE establish a funding stream that will prioritise funding for personal supports required to move to independent living when applicant is moved to ‘offer zone’*
Timescale: Ongoing over lifespan of plan

9. Fear and anxiety from family members that independent living will not be a success.
Action: *HSE staff will incorporate this as part of its transitional planning process*
Timescale: Ongoing over lifespan of plan

10. Specialist Disability experienced Occupational Therapists to be involved at the commencement of the housing application process as required
Action: *HSE staff to identify the individual's need for such and arrange with their colleagues*
Timescale: To commence by Q3 2021

11. Environment pathways; amenities are accessible; transport in rural areas has improved
Action: *To invite the Accessibility Officer of Cavan County Council as a stakeholder to the Group*
Timescale: Q2 2021

12. Housing Assistance Payments – delay in processing, current market rents and capped limits lead to difficulties for people seeking accommodation in the private rented market
Action: *The Council to identify and address delays as necessary with current resources and will examine the benefits of using Homeless HAP. In addition, the Council will examine with Department of Social Protection Rent Unit models of practice for people with disabilities who are discharging from hospital or are homeless and agree protocols. The Group to feedback to the Department that a review of the capping level be undertaken for each county and that consideration be given to allow an increase in capped limits for people with additional disability needs.*
Timescale: Q4 2021

13. Under use of assisted technologies
Action: *The Group promotes the use of Assistive Technology to allow people to stay in their homes longer and to live more independent lives and enabling them to perform tasks they would otherwise have difficulty in completing. The Group to feedback to the Department to provide for such in accommodation which is being provided specifically for people with disabilities. A funding stream to be identified by the HSE for this purpose.*
Timescale: Ongoing over lifespan of plan

14. Limited budgets and long waiting periods for Housing Adaptation, Mobility Aids and Housing for Older Persons grant schemes.
Action: *Over €1.5m is available in 2021 for this purpose and every effort will be made by the Council to have all monies allocated. A review of the process will be undertaken to identify where the delays occur, and a report presented to the Group to ascertain if there are any issues which could be address by members in their day to day work. In addition, the HDSG will call for a review of income criteria and the maximum amount grant payable under the existing Housing Adaption Grant Scheme.*

Timescale: End of 2021

Opportunities

There are opportunities presenting for each member of the HDSG to consider and adopt in their day-to-day work some of which are outlined as follows:

- The HSE will regularly review need and work with service users to identify accommodation solutions at an early stage. Packages of care support for individuals and families will be reviewed as needed, persons will be supported and helped make applications for grants to the Council, will provide IT support for social/health and education forum and will provide lock systems in individual property to encourage a sense of safety and security together with alarms to alert for seizures/activity and incident notification.
- Quarterly meetings will be organised between the disability service divisions in the HSE and the council to gather and collate information on housing solutions required which will allow for planning ahead.
- The Mental Health team to include the action of sending out information on housing in their Standard Operating Procedures and prepare communication leaflets on housing service in their leaflets
- The new social housing form and the changes being made to iHouse together with a review of the existing list will facilitate accurate reporting on the numbers of approved social housing applicants requiring wheelchair accessible housing by location, number who require supports to live independently, number in offer zone and length of time.
- The Council to utilise universal design model going forward in all redesigns and builds
- Together with adopting the principles of Universal Design models for all Government funded social housing, the Government to be encouraged to make a provision that 7% new social housing development are wheelchair accessible units.
- The Housing First Model or a similar initiative to be funded by the Department for people with disabilities who require intensive supports to live in the community
- That funding is provided to develop tenancy sustainment projects in the county along the lines of the North Tipperary Intensive Tenancy Sustainable Service (TSS) in conjunction with the AHBs

The risk of not working together to address the issues/challenges means that the sense of sense of always responding in crisis mode will continue. This is not the desired way forward for stakeholders and locally as Housing and Disability Group members we need to drive this agenda in our day-to-day work continually striving to adopt a collaborative approach to meeting the housing needs of people with a disability in the County. Otherwise, there is a danger of marginalising people with disabilities in the County. The working relationship between Mental Health and the Council to be progressed and adopted into all disability areas.

CHAPTER 9

TARGETS AND DELIVERABLES

Think Ahead, Think Housing is a national campaign, which the IWA will run in Q.2 2021, to encourage and support people with disabilities across all sectors to complete the social housing application form and submit it to their local authority. (*Appendix 1*)

Objectives of the Campaign

- Provide information to people with disabilities on how to apply to their local authority for social housing.
- Provide one-to-one support to people with disabilities to consider their housing requirements and to complete the application form for social housing.
- Increase the number of people with disabilities on the housing list so they are more accurately represented.
- Build relationships with local authorities, Approved Housing Bodies, Housing Agency, Irish Council for Social Housing, HSE, Citizen's Information, Disability Umbrella Bodies, and others to improve access to suitable and accessible housing for people with disabilities.

The *Think Ahead, Think Housing* campaign will assist local authorities to identify current and emerging housing requirements which will enable them to plan for appropriate design and development of accessible housing for people with disabilities in sustainable and integrated communities nationally.

Alongside this the Council will review the approved social housing applicants who are listed as having a disability to identify their specific accommodation requirements and correlate the detail with the HSE information.

The HSE will work its way through the information systems available to it to provide comprehensive numbers of accommodation need by type in each of the categories of disability including short medium and long-term need. The HDSG will review and identify solution

The work programme on the actions agreed in Chapter 8 will be commenced within the agreed timeframes.

CHAPTER 10

REPORTING

As agreed, meetings of the HDSG will be held quarterly on the third Wednesday of the month at 10a.m.

The Council will undertake the role of secretariate to the Group and will circulate an Agenda at least one week before the appointed date.

Members from each of the Stakeholder Groups will report to the meeting on activities/actions for people with disabilities in their group.

The Council will provide an update at each meeting on the following:

in respect of approved waiting list

- Number of people by household size/basis of need/length of time together with age profile
- Number of approved applicants who require wheelchair accessible housing (note this is dependent on the upgrade to housing system being finalized)

in respect of allocations

- Number of allocations by basis of need
- Number of allocations to wheelchair users

in respect of housing delivery programme

- Number of wheelchair accessible houses in pipeline by location

in respect of Housing Adaptation grants

- Annual allocation – v – amount spent
- Number of applications received by grant type and status
- Number of refusals and rationale

Members from each of the Stakeholder Groups will provide annual reports on progress of each action of the Strategy.

The HDSG will provide reports as required to the Housing Subgroup established under the Implementation Framework of the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability.

APPENDIX 1

Think Ahead, Think Housing



Think Ahead, Think Housing is a campaign run by Irish Wheelchair Association to encourage and support people with disabilities who wish to live in their own homes, but who cannot afford to do so, to apply for social housing through their local city or county council/ local authority.

Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) includes the State's responsibility to recognise the right of people with disabilities to live in the community and to have the opportunity to choose their place of residence. Furthermore, Article 28 includes the right of people with disabilities to access public housing programmes.

One of the core values promoted by IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION is independence; the aspiration and belief that people with physical disabilities in Ireland can achieve their right to live with independence and equal access to opportunities, services and supports within their communities. Consequently, people should have the right to a home of their own.

According to a recent report by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC), 'Discrimination and Inequality in Housing in Ireland, June 2018', people with disabilities are:

- More than twice as likely to report discrimination relating to housing
- Over 1.6 times more likely to live in poor conditions, such as living in damp housing, lacking central heating, or living in an area with neighbourhood problems
- More than one in four homeless people have a disability

The lack of wheelchair accessible housing is a significant issue for the membership of IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION and wheelchair users in general. Data on social housing needs for wheelchair users does not currently exist as it has not to date been captured by the Government. Wheelchair users have specific adaptation needs in their homes, which require funding and planning. Not capturing this data forms a significant barrier to people who use wheelchairs and need homes now and in the future. IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION welcomes the new application form for social housing where, for the first time, people will be able to indicate that they require wheelchair accessible accommodation.

By assisting people with disabilities who need a house to register their need on the housing list, we are helping to ensure that plans for future social housing developments cater for people with disabilities and wheelchair users.

Many people with disabilities live with their elderly parents in houses that do not suit their needs. When people with disabilities do not have a home of their own, they are placed in inappropriate settings such as nursing homes, where vibrant young people live side by side with older people some of whom have dementia and others who die. This situation is not only draconian but morally and ethically wrong.

IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION is launching Think Ahead, Think Housing to support and encourage people with disabilities, who would like to live in their own home, to apply to their local authority for housing to secure their future. It follows on from previous 'Operation Sign Up' campaigns in 2011 and 2016, which saw uplifts in people with disabilities applying to their local authorities for housing.

This campaign will inform people with disabilities, who require social housing now or in the future, to complete the application form for social housing with their local authority. It will assist local authorities as identified housing need will enable them to plan for appropriate design and development of housing for people with disabilities and specifically for wheelchair accessible housing.

Objectives of Think Ahead, Think Housing:

Provide information to people with disabilities on how to register their need for social housing with their local authority.

Increase the number of people with disabilities on the housing list so they are more accurately represented.

Build relationships with local authorities, Housing Agency, Irish Council for Social Housing, HSE, Citizen's Information, Disability Federation of Ireland, and others to improve access to suitable and accessible housing for people with disabilities.

Key Messages:

People with disabilities are underrepresented on the social housing list and struggle to access social housing as a result. This is leaving them vulnerable to homelessness, being forced into residential care or dependency on family for accommodation.

Think Ahead, Think Housing is a campaign run by IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION to support and encourage people with disabilities to sign up to their local authority housing list, to secure their future housing needs.

People can visit www.iwa.ie/think housing for details on how to register on your local authority housing list.

Campaign in Brief:

Local Authorities are the main providers of accommodation for people who need housing. The housing need of people with a disability is under-represented on the local authority approved housing lists.

It is the responsibility of each person with a disability to make a housing application to the local authority so that the Local Authority can plan for their current and future housing needs. Having an affordable home of your own can make a difference increasing independence, sense of security, choice, and control over your life.

People who need housing now or within the next 5 – 10 years need to plan now, and apply to their Local Authority now, as it can take years to secure housing due to lack of availability. IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION and Citizen's Information can support people with disabilities with information or practical support completing the social housing application form.

Call to Action

Share the campaign with people with disabilities.

Encourage people with disabilities across all sectors (physical, sensory, mental health and intellectual disability / autism) to start thinking about their housing needs and to apply to their local authority if they require housing now or in the future.

Campaign Timeline

Launch Campaign when the new form for social housing is released.

IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION will run the campaign for a three-month period in 2021 and in March annually thereafter?

