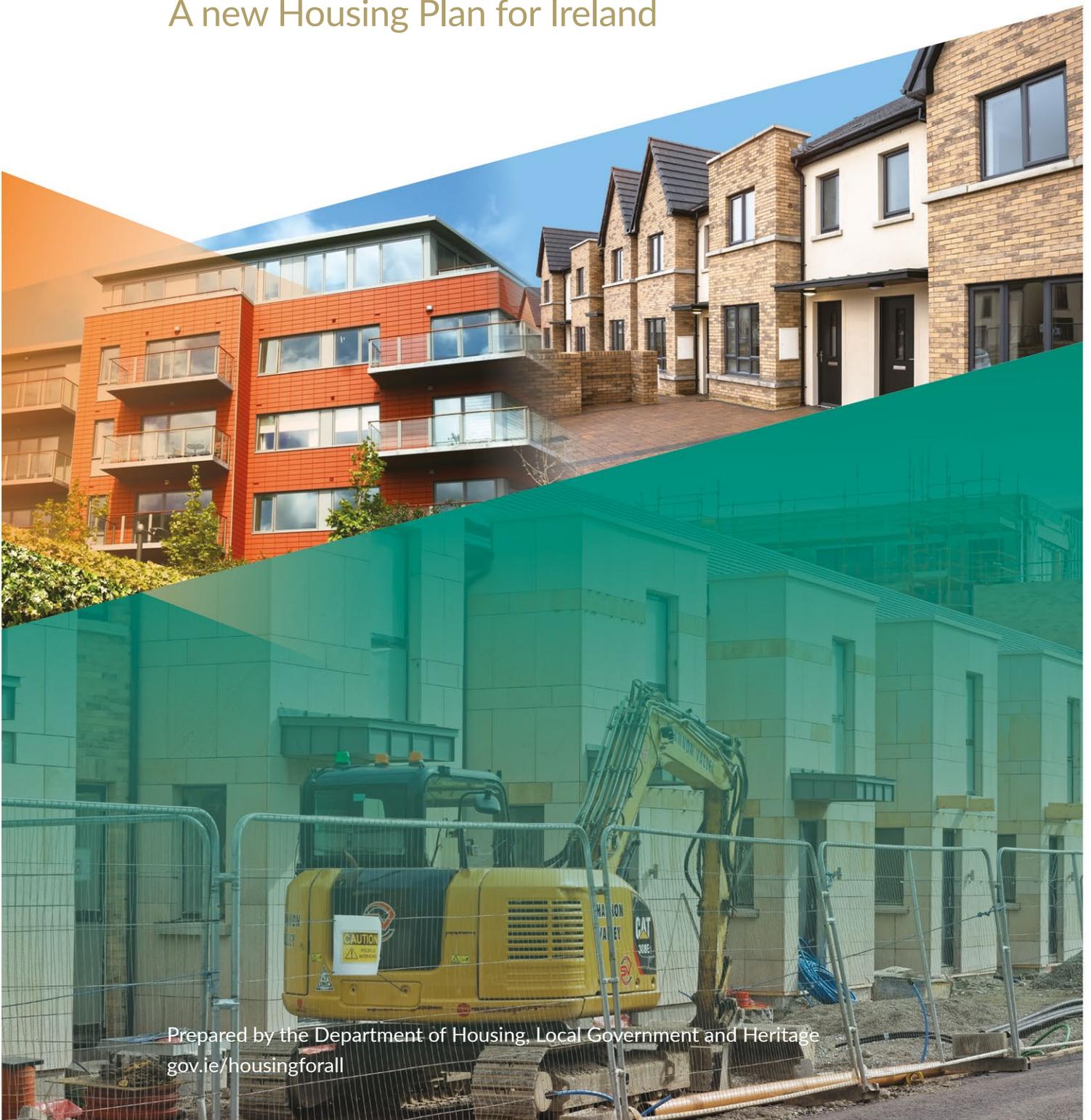




Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# Housing for All

A new Housing Plan for Ireland



Prepared by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage  
[gov.ie/housingforall](http://gov.ie/housingforall)



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## Forewords

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### Foreword by Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Minister Ryan

The Programme for Government – **Our Shared Future** – sets out the Government’s mission to tackle the Housing crisis. Our objective is that everybody should have access to sustainable, good quality housing to purchase or rent at an affordable price, built to a high standard, and located close to essential services, offering a high quality of life.

Since this Government took office, Covid-19 has hindered progress. It has hampered the building of new houses and caused major disruption to the construction sector. As a result, in the short-term we are facing a wider gap between supply and demand. But as we emerge from this unprecedented global pandemic, we will focus on the housing challenge with a concerted whole-of-Government effort.

We know that we must provide many more homes for our growing population over the next decade at prices and rents people can afford. We will spend unprecedented levels of Exchequer money to provide social and affordable housing; introduce new incentives to encourage home building in suitable locations; bring in taxes to galvanize the greater use of zoned land and vacant properties; and release State-owned land for residential construction.

This Plan will increase new housing supply to an average of at least 33,000 new units per year over the next decade. This will include over 10,000 social homes each year over the next five years, with 9,500 of these being new-builds, and an average of 6,000 affordable homes for purchase or rent.

In this time of crisis, we must also ensure that the houses we already have are fully utilised. That is why **Housing for All** introduces incentives and measures to bring vacant and derelict properties back into residential use. This policy has the potential to rejuvenate our towns and cities and breathe new life into once loved buildings. These and other measures will support the ambition of the forthcoming Climate Action Plan.

Looking after the most vulnerable in our society remains a top priority for this Government. Preventing homelessness, protecting tenants and supporting social inclusion are all areas which take precedence in this Plan. We will continue to support vulnerable households while we increase the levels of new housing stock with the goal of ending homelessness by 2030.

This Plan will ensure that we achieve a more sustainable housing system with a planning system that is fit for purpose and that will create long-term vibrant communities with the necessary supporting infrastructure.

Delivering this integrated set of policies will require a deep level of collaboration across Government. We need to increase the capacity and efficiency of delivery in both public and private sectors. We will also rely on continued collaborative engagement with the construction sector and other important stakeholders, who are pivotal to its success.

There will be a strong focus on implementation of the Plan, overseen by the Cabinet Committee on Housing. Actions will be continually monitored and updated annually to account for the latest analysis, performance against our targets, and any new or corrective actions that may be necessary in order to stay on track towards our targets.

By working together to implement this Plan, the Government will make every effort to accelerate the delivery of **Housing for All** and work towards a long-term sustainable housing system for this and future generations.



**Micheál Martin TD**

*Taoiseach*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Martin".



**Leo Varadkar TD**

*Tánaiste and Minister  
for Enterprise, Trade  
and Employment*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leo Varadkar".



**Eamonn Ryan TD**

*Minister for the  
Environment, Climate  
and Communications*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eamonn Ryan".

## Minister's Foreword

I know that the impact of the housing crisis is felt in every family across our country. It reaches from hard pressed tenants stuck in a rent trap to worried parents, wondering if their children will enjoy the same type of security they did at the same age. It touches grandparents saddened to see their loved ones move away for cheaper accommodation. They are the squeezed middle: people who work hard and play by the rules but seem to have nothing to show for it at the end of the day.

At the sharpest edges of the crisis are people experiencing homelessness, moving from one emergency accommodation to another or at worst rough sleeping on our city streets. Their plight is a scar on our national conscience.

This Plan recognises the scale and depth of the crisis and the need for urgent action. It's a Plan for the squeezed middle, to give them the opportunity to buy their own home while ensuring we have the kind of society that helps those who need it. The breadth of ambition in the Plan will help to stop and reverse the decline in homeownership and break the rent trap that so many people are caught in. It will ramp up State building of social homes to help eliminate homelessness and address waiting lists.

“It's a plan for the squeezed middle to give them the opportunity to buy their own home.”

*Housing for All* is the most ambitious housing plan in the history of our State. It sets out, over four Pathways, a series of bold actions that rise to the challenge of

the crisis, backed up by an unprecedented financial commitment of in excess of €4bn per annum. It puts forward a new vision that places homeownership back in the hands of ordinary working people while living up to our best values of always looking after those unable to secure a roof over their heads.

At the heart of the document is a massive expansion in the role of the State in providing affordable homes for purchase and rent, while building historic levels of new social housing. It involves the public and private sector working in tandem to meet our housing requirements of an average of 33,000 new homes every year. We need all hands on deck to get to grips with the crisis; refusing to fully mobilise the private sector of small and medium sized builders would be fighting with one hand tied behind our back. At its simplest, the Plan will expand direct State building of affordable and social homes, remove barriers and give support to allow the private sector to grow, and intervene where it fails to build.

“The State is stepping up to the mark to build more homes so that more people can buy their own home.”

The scale is enormous. We effectively need to double output in the next five years compared to the last five. Achieving the aims of this 2030 Plan can only happen with a whole-of-Government approach, delivered in partnership and collaboration with other State bodies, the private sector and the community and voluntary sector. *Housing for All* is about Pathways to a better future that draws this comprehensive approach together:

- supporting homeownership and increasing affordability;
- eradicating homelessness, increasing social housing delivery and supporting inclusion;
- increasing new housing supply; and
- addressing vacancy and efficient use of existing stock.

The range and depth of actions stretch from historic levels of direct State intervention to removing barriers to the private sector delivering at the scale that is needed. Over 300,000 new homes will be built by 2030, including a projected 54,000 affordable homes for purchase or rent and over 90,000 social homes. It's the largest State led building programme in our history and is financed by the biggest State funding commitment ever.

It includes modern *Kenny Report* style powers to ensure the State gets a fairer share of the increase in the value of land resulting from re-zoning decisions and the community benefits as a result. Major planning decisions will be returned to Local Authorities and will be subject to strict time frames, while judicial reviews will be overhauled to unblock obstacles to development. Rural communities will be given greater certainty over building homes in rural areas. The measures are targeted, radical and necessary to respond to the scale of the housing crisis.

This Plan is not just about delivering the necessary homes for private, social and affordable housing. It's also about setting out a pathway to economic, societal and environmental sustainability in the delivery of housing. The core objectives have been developed to support the goals of the forthcoming Climate Action Plan. Our

measures relating to the construction sector, including costs, will help make the delivery of housing more economically sustainable in the long-term.

Over a century since independence, our State has a strong record of meeting the challenges of the times from global wars to pandemics. The housing crisis may seem more intractable than the challenges of the past but it can and will be solved. ***Housing for All*** represents the State responding with ambition and commitment to the challenges of our time.

“**The State will move ambitiously in order to break the rent trap and prevent homeownership becoming a relic of the past and the preserve of the few.**”

Providing pathways of opportunity to help hard-working people and families to enjoy the benefits of a prosperous economy is vital to the long-term health of our democracy. The State will move ambitiously in order to break the rent trap and prevent homeownership becoming a relic of the past and the preserve of the few. It will give the squeezed middle a real chance to realise their dreams of homeownership.

I believe that investing in the future now, by broadening homeownership to a wider circle of citizens, while eradicating homelessness and addressing social housing needs, will deepen the roots of our democracy, improve the lives of those families and the long-term health of our communities. It encompasses our best traditions of a strong and compassionate State by supporting homeownership and assisting the vulnerable.

This Plan will work. It will give the squeezed middle starting out in life a real chance to buy their own home. It will give a helping hand to those struggling to make ends meet. It will work towards ending homelessness by 2030. It will help ensure vibrant cities and breathe fresh life into our towns, villages and rural communities. Most importantly, it will get the country back building homes. This Plan sets out the pathways towards achieving this vision. Our journey will require focus, determination and resolve. It will require the efforts of many. That journey moves forward today.



**Darragh O'Brien TD**  
*Minister for Housing,  
Local Government  
and Heritage*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. O'Brien', written in a cursive style.

# What *Housing for All* means:

*Housing for All* has the largest ever housing budget in the history of the State to transform our housing system, with in excess of €20bn in funding through the Exchequer, the Land Development Agency (LDA) and the Housing Finance Agency over the next five years and this funding will support the following:

## For First-Time Buyers

- Supporting an unprecedented 4,000 Affordable Purchase homes on average every year for families, couples and single people.
- A new Local Authority-led Affordable Purchase Scheme, targeting average prices of €250,000.
- A new *First Home* Shared Equity Scheme for private developments.
- A reformed Local Authority Home Loan.
- An '*Owner-Occupier Guarantee*' in housing developments to secure homes exclusively for first-time buyers and other owner-occupiers.
- 20% of all developments set aside for affordable and social housing.

## For Renters

- An average of 2,000 new Cost Rental homes every year with rents targeted at least 25% below market level.
- Extended Rent Pressure Zones to 2024 and rents linked to the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices.
- New short-term lettings regulation through a Fáilte Ireland registration system.
- Indefinite tenancies to strengthen security for renters.
- Minimum Building Energy Rating standards for private rental dwellings.
- Upfront deposit and rent payments capped at two months value.

## For Low-Income Households

- Provide over 90,000 social homes by 2030, including an average annual new-build component of over 9,500 social housing homes to 2026, the highest number in the history of the State.
- End long-term leasing by Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies through phasing out new entrants and focus on new-build to provide social housing homes.
- Strengthened *Mortgage to Rent Scheme*, to ensure that it meets the needs of those in long-term mortgage arrears.
- Reformed *Tenant Purchase Scheme*.
- Revision and reform of income eligibility for social housing.

## For People Experiencing Homelessness

- Work towards eradicating homelessness by 2030.
- Increased *Housing First* targets to 1,200 tenancies over five years for homeless people.
- Establish a new National Homeless Action Committee.
- Expand Street Outreach Teams for rough sleepers nationwide.
- Individual Healthcare Plans.

## For those Trading Up and Rightsizing

- Over 300,000 new homes by 2030.
- A new national policy on rightsizing to highlight the potential of rightsizing for households that no longer fully occupy their current privately owned accommodation and exploration of options to support and incentivise rightsizing on a voluntary basis.

## For People Starting Again

- A *Fresh Start* principle for applications to State affordable housing and loan schemes. People who are divorced and have no interest in the family home or who have undergone insolvency proceedings will be eligible to apply to those schemes.

## For Communities

- Radical new modern *Kenny Report* style powers to ensure sharing of the increase in land values from re-zoning decisions and greater community gain.
- Ending Strategic Housing Developments, returning planning decisions to Local Authorities and reforming the judicial review process.
- A new Tax to activate Vacant Land for residential purposes.
- Collection of data on vacancy levels with a view to introducing a new Vacant Property Tax to ensure empty properties are used.
- An amended Fair Deal Scheme to remove disincentives for sale and rental of vacant properties.

## For Towns and Cities

- A new *Croí Cónaithe (Cities)* Fund to increase owner-occupier apartment development in city centres.
- Increased funding capacity for the LDA for strategic development of public lands for affordable and social housing in city and town centres.
- Targeted funding via the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) to support the Town Centre First approach, as part of the wider objectives for the regeneration of cities, towns and rural areas.
- Planning exemptions for 'above shop' conversions and guidance relating to protected structures.
- A nationwide, Local Authority led, Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Scheme to purchase vacant homes.

## For Rural Communities

- New County Development Plan guidance to ensure appropriate zoning and density levels.
- A new *Croí Cónaithe* Fund to service sites and refurbish vacant properties in regional towns and villages
- A new Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Programme to tackle vacancy in towns and villages.
- New rural housing guidelines to give certainty for development of one-off homes.

## For Construction Workers

- 27,500 new construction jobs to meet required annual output levels.
- Stability and certainty in the building sector through a long-term funding pipeline.
- New apprenticeship opportunities and a targeted campaign at school leavers to build up capacity in the sector.
- A new Construction Technology Centre to drive innovation and productivity in the sector.

## Executive Summary

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Right now, Ireland's housing system is not meeting the needs of enough of our people.

- There are not enough houses to buy or rent in the private sector.
- There are not enough houses being built by the State for those who need social housing.
- Housing has become increasingly unaffordable for the 'squeezed middle' who would once have expected to be able to purchase their own home.
- Too many people are experiencing homelessness or are unable to access appropriate housing.
- The cost of building housing is too high.
- Too much vacant housing stock remains unused.
- Our housing stock needs to be more environmentally friendly.

Underpinned by commitments in the Programme for Government, over the last year the Government has taken ambitious action to address these issues while developing the **Housing for All** Plan. These measures have ranged from new affordability measures to enhancing social housing delivery.

This year saw the largest housing budget on record. To increase affordability, the Government passed the first ever comprehensive Affordable Housing Act and reformed the LDA's remit whilst placing it on a statutory footing. The Help to Buy incentive was extended and increased to €30,000. Ireland's first ever Cost Rental homes were opened.

We are focused on protecting society's most vulnerable. We signed the Lisbon Declaration on ending Homelessness by 2030. To assist older people and people with a disability, we have increased funding for Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability. We have also increased funding under the Disabled Person Grant Scheme and Improvement Works in Lieu of Local Authority Housing Scheme.

For renters, the Government extended Rent Pressure Zones and limited rent increases to general inflation. It also limited deposits and extended protections for student renters. Co-living has been banned and five separate pieces of legislation have strengthened tenant protections. We also legislated to protect traditional family homes from bulk purchases. To combat vacancy, we have brought back over 3,600 vacant social homes into use; streamlined the Buy and Renew scheme; and extended the Repair and Lease Scheme to €60,000.

To stimulate more housing, we invested in an Irish Water Stimulus package and slashed red tape on developing new social housing by extending the single stage approval process to €6m. The regeneration of our cities and towns is being underlined by an additional €1.3 billion in Urban Regeneration and Development Fund investment.

These actions over the past year have signalled the Government's commitment to fixing our housing system. **Housing for All** takes that commitment a step further on the pathway to a sustainable housing system, by clearly setting out how we plan to address the serious short, medium and long-term challenges ahead.

The overall aim of our new housing plan for Ireland is that:

**Everyone in the State should have access to a home to purchase or rent at an affordable price, built to a high standard and in the right place, offering a high quality of life.**

To meet this objective, Ireland needs a long-term plan that addresses the fundamentals of our housing system. The Government has a key role to play in enabling the delivery of new housing, ensuring that best use is made of existing stock and delivering strong, sustainable communities. Through **Housing for All** there is an unprecedented level of collaboration across government and with key stakeholders, backed up by historic levels of funding. Working with and enabling the private sector to deliver on housing is also central to this Plan.

Ireland needs an average of 33,000 homes constructed per annum until 2030 to meet targets set out for additional households, as outlined in the National Planning Framework. These homes need to be

affordable, built in the right place, to the right standard and in support of climate action. They need to satisfy demand for housing across four tenures – affordable, social, private rental and private ownership. They need to be advanced through the planning process and be built within the context of specific development targets for the five cities and major towns, and the complementary objectives of the Town Centre First policy and rural housing.

**Housing for All** provides four pathways to achieving four overarching objectives:

- Supporting Homeownership and Increasing Affordability;
- Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion;
- Increasing New Housing Supply; and
- Addressing Vacancy and Efficient Use of Existing Stock.

Each of the pathways contains a comprehensive suite of actions to achieve these Housing Policy Objectives. **Housing for All** has the largest ever housing budget in the history of the State to support these pathways, with in excess of €20bn in funding through the Exchequer, the Land Development Agency (LDA) and the Housing Finance Agency over the next five years. This will also support the creation of an enabling framework of a more sustainable housing system that will meet the housing needs of a generation.

The implementation of each action until 2030 will be led by a named Government department, State Agency or other body. An overarching governance structure will be established in the Department of the Taoiseach to oversee implementation. Government departments, State agencies, Local Authorities, Approved Housing Bodies

(AHBs), the Land Development Agency (LDA) and other delivery partners will work with the delivery office. Updates will be published on [www.gov.ie/housing](http://www.gov.ie/housing).

A summary of each pathway, its main challenges and immediate actions is set out below.



Figure 1:  
Four Pathways  
to *Housing for All*

# 1 | Pathway to Supporting Home Ownership and Increasing Affordability

Affordability and the chance to own a home is at the heart of the Government's housing policy. Currently, Ireland has insufficient housing supply and too narrow a range of options for those who are experiencing difficulty in buying or renting a home. This impacts many people, particularly those at important life stages such as moving out of the family home, starting a new job, making plans to settle down or have children, or considering right-sizing at a later stage in life.

A step change is required in the supports available so that more people can own their own homes.

The Government believes that homeownership is good for individuals, families and communities. This pathway in *Housing for All* has a number of significant measures aimed at people who are currently unable to meet their housing needs but who, with help, could purchase their own home. It also looks at measures to address affordability for those who are renting a home.

## First Steps: Supporting Homeownership and Increasing Affordability

- Increased supply of new housing, up to an average of at least 33,000 per year to 2030
- An average of 6,000 affordable homes to be made available every year for purchase or for rent by Local Authorities, AHBs, the LDA and via a strategic partnership between the State and retail banks.
- A new Local Authority-led Affordable Purchase Scheme.
- A new, nationally available, affordable purchase shared-equity *First Home* scheme until 2025 for buyers of new-build homes in private developments.
- The LDA will be a new and important source of affordable housing on public lands, and will advance a new initiative, Project Tosaigh, to enhance the early delivery of new affordable homes.
- The LDA will deliver a significant number of homes on State lands, and in association with Local Authorities in major mixed tenure developments.
- Increased contribution by developers under Part V, up from 10% to 20%, to include affordable housing and cost rental housing.
- Launch of a newly expanded Local Authority Home Loan.
- Extended Rent Pressure Zone Protections to 2024 and rents linked to the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices.
- Introduction of indefinite tenures for rent leases.
- Introduction of a new form of rental tenure called 'Cost Rental' homes.

**Housing for All** provides a number of schemes to help first-time buyers purchase their own home. These schemes will support an average of 4,000 households (annually). The schemes are:

- A new Local Authority led Affordable Purchase scheme will see our Local Authorities play a central role in the planning and provision of affordable homes on public lands. This will see new homes delivered, many built by Local Authorities in key areas facing the most acute affordability constraints. Depending on the type, size and location of the homes, which varies from project to project, Local Authorities have indicated, in Serviced Site Fund submissions, that they will aim to make homes available at average purchase prices of approximately €250,000.
- A new *First Home* affordable purchase shared-equity scheme. This scheme, which will be delivered via a partnership between the State and participating banks, is aimed at first-time buyers needing support to purchase new-build homes in private developments.

Both of these schemes will be targeted at households constrained by the maximum mortgage and deposit available to them. The gap between market value and what the household can afford (including with the assistance of the 'Help to Buy' incentive) will be bridged via the provision of equity support.

The requirement on developers in Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide 10% of zoned residential land to the State will be increased to a mandatory 20% and will now include provision for affordable and cost rental housing, as well as social housing.

The Local Authority Home Loan will be expanded so that single applicants with gross income of up to €65,000 in the Greater Dublin Area as well as Cork and Galway will be eligible for the loan, and the interest rate will be reduced.

**Housing for All** must also address affordability for tenants caught in a rent trap. Rents are too high in many areas. In recent years, short-term letting has increasingly taken the form of tourism letting. This has resulted in some professional landlords withdrawing houses and apartments that would normally be rented on a long-term basis. The Government will bring forward revised regulatory controls in this area with a view to ensuring the availability of residential accommodation, balanced with the needs of the tourism sector, as appropriate.

To ensure renters have greater certainty about their accommodation circumstances, the Government has limited rent increases in Rent Pressure Zones to increases in the cost of living by linking increases to the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) until the end of 2024. The Government will also introduce tenancies of indefinite duration and a minimum BER rating requirement for private rental properties where feasible.

**Housing for All** introduces 'Cost Rental', a new form of public housing in Ireland. This is targeted at people who are above the social housing income limits, and who wish to rent or are unable to buy their own home. Under this tenure rents charged only cover the cost of developing, financing, managing and maintaining the homes. It also offers long-term security of tenure. Cost Rental will be targeted to achieve rents that are at least 25% below what they would be on the private market. The Government plans to provide an average of 2,000 Cost Rental homes per year during the lifetime of **Housing for All**.

## 2 | Pathway to Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion

Housing policy must address the needs of our society's more vulnerable members. The prevalence of homelessness, increasing rents and the restricted options for older people or people with a disability are among the most pressing issues. This *Housing for All* pathway commits to comprehensive measures to support these and other vulnerable groups.

Despite homelessness figures being reduced by over 2,300 people in the past two years, the level of homelessness remains unacceptably high. Inter-agency supports are critical to alleviating homelessness and addressing the housing, social, health and economic needs of both the homeless and those in the private rented sector at risk of becoming homeless. We are committed to the Lisbon Declaration<sup>1</sup> signed in 2021 to work towards ending homelessness by 2030.

Social housing performs a key function in society, ensuring that households who do not have sufficient resources to meet their housing needs, either on the open market or with State affordability supports, are provided with social housing. Despite the welcome 10% reduction over the past year, over 60,000 households are on social housing waiting lists. Increased provision of social housing must involve more emphasis on new-build by Local Authorities and an ending of long-term leasing of private accommodation by Local Authorities through phasing out new entrants and focussing on new-build to provide social homes.

For those with a disability, the co-ordination of housing provision with the delivery of key health and social care supports is paramount. The Government recognises the need for greater coordination among State service providers. Providing more and improved Traveller-specific accommodation is also a priority.

Earlier this year, the Government launched its White Paper on Ending Direct Provision, representing a step-change in the way that we provide housing and other services for international protection applicants. This Plan supports the implementation of the White Paper and continues the support for the Irish Refugee Protection Programme.

### First Steps: Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion

- Provide more than 10,000 social homes each year, with an average 9,500 new-build Social Housing Homes to 2026.
- Through an updated 'Housing First National Implementation Plan', provide 1,200 tenancies over the next five years for people with a history of rough sleeping, or long-term use of emergency accommodation and who have complex needs.

<sup>1</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_21\\_3044](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_3044)

- End long-term leasing of social housing by Local Authorities and AHBs through phasing out new entrants and focussing on new-build to provide social homes.
- Strengthen the *Mortgage to Rent* scheme to ensure it meets the needs of those in long-term mortgage arrears.
- Make improvements in the quality and quantity of Traveller-specific accommodation.
- Provide continued capital funding for housing for specific vulnerable cohorts, such as housing for older people and people with a disability, through the Capital Assistance Scheme and other social housing schemes.

The Government will work with Local Authorities to increase the social housing programme so that an average of 9,500 new-build social homes are provided each year under **Housing for All**. In addition, 36,500 Local Authority properties will be retrofitted to B2 Building Energy Rating (BER) or Cost Optimal equivalent by 2030. Stock condition surveys will be completed for all Local Authority social housing to plan for their ongoing maintenance. The Government

will also reform the system of Differential Rents to ensure tenants pay an equivalent amount of rent regardless of their location. This reform will be supported by the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS).

Building on the work the homelessness services sector did in protecting the vulnerable during the pandemic, a new National Homeless Action Committee will examine the complex individual health and family circumstances that contribute to homelessness. A Youth Homelessness Strategy will also be developed. Both of these will provide a coordinated response to ensure homelessness continues to decline with a focus on prevention and permanent housing solutions.

To increase and improve the output of Traveller-specific accommodation, the Government will work with Local Authorities and AHBs. Implementation of recommendations from the Expert Group Report on Traveller Accommodation will support these objectives. We will also publish a new National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability and build on the work done under the Housing Options for our Ageing Population Policy Statement.



### 3 | Pathway to Increasing New Housing Supply

The challenges caused by Covid-19 to every sector of our economy, including the construction sector, have been enormous. Necessary restrictions significantly hampered the momentum the State had gained in increasing housing outputs in all areas. A pathway to increasing new housing supply, with the public and private sector working together, is critical.

The State must act decisively to increase supply of both private and public housing. An average of 33,000 homes must be provided every year between now and 2030. Increased housing output is needed in all sectors - private, affordable and social – to meet the needs of people in a wide variety of circumstances.

To build housing, we need land. This land needs to be serviced with transport, utilities and other infrastructure. Recent reports by the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) highlighted dysfunctional aspects of our system of urban development, land management and housing. The report called for a ‘whole of system’ approach to bridge the gap between supply and demand. *Housing for All* provides this approach.

The steps outlined in this Pathway will create the environment needed to enable supply of over 300,000 new homes by 2030, meaning an annual average of at least 33,000 homes per year to come from both the public and private sector. To achieve this, supply will need to increase quickly and this Plan responds to that challenge through both new measures and necessary reforms.

#### First Steps: Increasing New Housing Supply

- An annual average investment of in excess of €4bn in housing, through an overall combination of €12bn in direct Exchequer funding, €3.5bn in funding through the Land Development Agency (LDA) and €5bn funding through the Housing Finance Agency (HFA).
- Over 10,000 social homes and 6,000 affordable homes for purchase or rent per annum.
- State land bank to provide more land to the LDA to bring forward up to 15,000 homes and State to fund Local Authorities for land acquisition.
- In accordance with the National Planning Framework, focus on adequate supply of serviced zoned lands to meet housing need, at required density.
- Introduce updated *Kenny Report* style powers to ensure sharing of the increase in land values resulting from zoning decisions and more community gain.
- Introduce a new planning process for Large-Scale Residential Developments, to replace the Strategic Housing Development process.
- Establish Urban Development Zones, which will provide a coordinated, plan-led approach to the delivery of residential and urban development.
- Overhaul and simplify planning legislation to ensure certainty and stability.

- Bring forward reform of the Judicial Review process and introduce a new division of High Court for Planning and Environmental cases to reduce planning delays.
- Introduce a new tax to activate vacant lands for residential purposes, to replace the Vacant Site Levy.
- Provide a New Fund, *Croí Cónaithe (Cities)* to address acute viability challenges in urban areas that are curtailing home ownership.
- Increase skills and capacity to deliver an average of 33,000 homes per year.

The revised National Development Plan will allocate €12bn of funding to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) over the next 5 years for social and affordable housing measures. This reflects the Government's prioritisation of addressing people's housing needs. The overall investment required to build an average of 33,000 homes per year is estimated at €12bn. The domestic banking sector, international capital and State financial agencies will provide the essential finance to meet this requirement.

To ensure there is sufficient supply across the country, each Local Authority has been given Housing Supply Targets. These, together with updated planning guidance, will ensure sufficient land is zoned for housing. The Government will support this by providing additional State lands to the LDA, capable of generating up to 15,000 homes. It will also fund Local Authorities to acquire additional land.

Land Value Sharing (LVS) is a fundamental transformation to the planning and land value system in Ireland that has been identified

since the 1973 *Kenny Report*. It will address basic systemic issues in the land market that have slowed or hampered development and site assembly. Currently the value of land increases significantly when it is zoned for residential or mixed-use (including residential) development or where an area is designated for development. The increased value goes to landowners, who get higher prices if they sell to a developer.

The Government's LVS measures will ensure that this additional value is shared in a fairer way with the State and that the community will benefit as a result. This will be complemented by the immediate increase from 10 to 20% in the value uplift going to the provision of social and affordable housing. Initially, land value sharing will apply when land is newly zoned for residential development. The uplift will be used to secure land or financial contributions for the provision of infrastructure and social/affordable housing (subject to need). These measures will also provide more certainty and stability while reducing the 'hope value' that currently drives the price of land and housing upwards and dis-incentivises development.

Urban Development Zones will be established to deliver a coordinated, plan-led approach to the delivery of residential and urban development. Public participation at an early stage will lead to a shared understanding of what development is planned for an area. Urban Development Zones will ensure that the costs of the required supporting infrastructure will be known well in advance of developers submitting planning applications for individual sites.

This combination of Land Value Sharing and Urban Development Zones will lead to a

better understanding at an earlier stage of development costs and how they will be met. It is expected that this should be reflected in prices that are subsequently paid for land. New sanctions for inactivity on currently zoned land which is identified as suitable for residential development will also be introduced to stimulate supply, including a tax to activate vacant lands for residential purposes and enhanced complementary measures to ensure the appropriate level of contributions from sites which do come forward for development.

The planning system must be reformed to ensure that there is certainty and stability for those providing housing in Ireland. The Strategic Housing Development Process will be replaced with new planning arrangements for large-scale residential developments. Reform will make decision-making on such developments efficient whilst returning primary decision-making to the local level.

The judicial review process will also be reformed and planning legislation will be reviewed to ensure the planning system is plan-led, has greater public acceptance and reflects the needs of existing and new populations. The planning system needs to be balanced in terms of land use, value-sharing, and community gain to deliver sustainable levels of housing output in the right places.

In the shorter term, there are 70,000 to 80,000 non-activated planning permissions across the country. Forty thousand of these are in the Dublin area. Some non-activation is due to viability issues, where the cost of building makes it uneconomical to build.

A *Croí Cónaithe (Cities)* Fund will be established to encourage greater activation of existing permissions. The Fund will stimulate activation of existing planning permissions for apartment developments of four floors or more, above certain density thresholds and these apartments will be for sale to owner occupiers.

**The pathway to more houses requires more people to build them. An estimated 40,000 workers are involved in delivering 20,000 homes per annum. This will need to increase by a further 27,500 workers to hit the target of 33,000 homes per annum.**

It will need to rise further again to eliminate the existing housing stock deficit. This will happen through the attraction and retention of those with the necessary pre-existing skills and the provision of new training opportunities for those interested in a career in the construction sector. The industry will be supported in returning existing workers to full employment and proactive engagement with international labour where supply is unavailable locally. We will also further ramp-up education and training opportunities, including commitments regarding programmes and apprenticeships and delivery of new courses.

## 4 | Pathway to Addressing Vacancy and Efficient Use of Existing Stock

Maximising the use of our existing housing stock, especially in our towns and cities, is a critical element of a sustainable housing policy. At a time when we face a housing supply shortage, many homes around the country lie vacant. In addition to building new supply, it is imperative that existing vacant houses and apartments are used.

The reasons for vacancy are often complex. Some properties are left vacant for long periods because the investment required to refurbish them to the requisite standard is either not available to the owner or the costs involved would not be justified.

Vacancy not only affects housing supply but also the ability of people to live in and give greater vibrancy to our cities, towns and villages. Certain types of vacant properties could be converted to residential use. There is potential to use existing stock more efficiently. Making use of our existing stock also makes clear environmental sense.

### First Steps: Addressing Vacancy and Efficient Use of Existing Stock

- Energy retrofit supports to refurbish older vacant stock.
  - Support for Local Authorities to purchase and resell up to 2,500 of the identified vacant properties in their areas. Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers will be used where necessary. Local Authorities will be supported by Housing Finance Agency funding.
  - Reform the 'Fair Deal' Scheme (the scheme that provides financial support to those in long-term nursing home care) to incentivise people in long-term care to rent or sell their property.
  - Establish new controls on short-term lettings.
  - Collect data on vacancy with a view to introducing a new Vacant Property Tax.
  - Planned management and maintenance of Local Authority housing stock.
  - Incentivise the refurbishment and extension of vacant properties in towns or villages, for example, through energy retrofit supports and the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF) / Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) and other mechanisms.
- A new *Croí Cónaithe (Towns)* Fund for servicing sites for new homes in regional towns and villages and to support refurbishment of vacant houses. Public infrastructure agencies, such as Irish Water, and local communities will work to provide serviced sites for housing. This will help attract people to build their own homes and live in small towns and villages.

The Government is firmly committed to a Town Centre First approach. This seeks to deliver the best outcomes for town centres by aligning policies and targeting available resources. In this regard, the URDF and the RRDF are game-changers for our cities, towns and villages.

The Town Centre First approach will build upon the ambition set out in Our Rural Future, to support the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns and villages. This will include a Local Authority-led Town Serviced Sites Initiative through which public infrastructure agencies, such as Irish Water, will work to provide serviced sites for housing to attract people to build their own homes and live in small towns and villages. Local Authorities can make such sites available to prospective homeowners with the assistance of the *Croí Cónaithe* Fund. These initiatives will be complemented by energy retrofit supports and stimulated by a Local Authority programme of compulsory purchase of vacant sites and houses for resale.

The Government will therefore ensure there is support across a range of funding and financial initiatives to support living in cities, towns and villages. This will help address vacancy and dereliction.

The Government will also reform the Fair Deal scheme to enable applicants to sell or rent their principal private residence without additional sanction. Contributions to the scheme relating to sale have been capped at 7.5% of the value of the house per annum for a three-year period. Rental income will also be exempted from the calculation of an applicant's income. A national policy on rightsizing will also be developed. In combination with these actions, the Government will implement a tax to activate vacant lands for residential purposes and collect data on vacancy in residential property with a view to introducing a Vacant Property Tax. It will also legislate to enable Local Authorities to remove the refund of commercial rates for vacant properties.

Planned maintenance and management of existing Local Authority housing stock will also be key to addressing vacancy in social housing and improving re-let times.



# Supporting the Four Pathways:

## Enabling a Sustainable Housing System

The pathways in *Housing for All* address challenges in our housing system. However, these do not exist in isolation but sit in a wider context.

Action against climate change is a Government priority. The future environmental sustainability of our housing stock, including low-carbon housing, is imperative. Sustainable communities are a key focus: people of all incomes living side-by-side, with the right community infrastructure in place to help our cities, towns and villages thrive.

A properly functioning housing sector is dependent on the capacity of key State actors in the housing system and the wider construction sector. It is also dependent on critical infrastructure, including transport, utility supplies and communication services to accompany housing.

The actions in *Housing for All* have been developed to support the targets and objectives of the National Planning Framework and the Climate Action Plan.

### First steps: Enabling a Sustainable Housing System

- Invest €4.5bn in water infrastructure, including to help facilitate new home building.
- Reduce the cost of construction through a coordinated Government approach to productivity in residential construction.
- Embed compliance in the construction sector through Building Regulations and Building Control Regulations and assessment of building control structures. This will include establishing registers of competent builders by placing the Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI) on a statutory footing.
- Strengthen delivery teams, including project management, for Local Authorities to drive housing delivery.
- Establish a Commission on Housing and hold a referendum on housing.

Investment in our water infrastructure is vital to reaching our target of 300,000 new homes by 2030. We will fully implement our strategic water plans, with an emphasis on prioritising housing development. Over €4.5bn will be spent on vital infrastructure up to 2025, including on projects focused on supporting growth and future development, with particular focus on those supporting future housing delivery.

Reducing construction costs is critical to increasing supply. Recent analysis by the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI) indicates that construction build costs account for c.47% of total apartment development costs. These have risen considerably over recent years through a combination of the increased cost of regulatory compliance and general increases in labour and materials costs. As a result, new-builds, especially apartments, are beyond the reach of many first-time buyers. Productivity in construction needs to improve to address this imbalance.

The Government will enhance the role of the Construction Sector Group and the Construction Technology Centre (currently being developed) to increase focus on residential construction for the period to 2024. The State will play a more central role in leading and funding these structures to ensure that levels of productivity and innovation actually materialise. The State will increase funding for residential construction-related innovation and productivity. It will work with industry to strengthen the residential construction supply chain and to introduce modern methods of construction. Enterprise development agencies, including inter alia Enterprise Ireland, will support these initiatives, which will be coordinated through the Department of the Taoiseach.

The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) will introduce an End of Waste derogation to reduce construction waste and associated costs. The DHLGH will review the system of building control in Ireland and examine the case for an independent building regulator. It will also introduce a registration system for the construction sector. This will ensure that

operators have the required competence when performing works covered by building regulations.

Delivery of housing will be supported by an expansion in Local Authorities' capacity. New Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans will underpin housing delivery, as will further streamlining of social housing approval processes. Other key Agencies will also be assisted in expanding their capacity in order to support the objectives of **Housing for All**.

To improve the quality of existing Local Authority owned housing stock, Local Authorities will retrofit 36,500 Local Authority homes to a B2/cost optimal Building Energy Rating (BER) by 2030. A minimum BER for private rental property will be introduced, where feasible, from 2025.

The Programme for Government commits to establishing a Commission on Housing to examine issues such as tenure, standards, sustainability, and quality-of-life issues in the provision of housing. It will also have a role in relation to the commitment to hold a referendum on housing and advise Government on various policy issues as determined by its Terms of Reference, which will be decided on prior to its establishment later in 2021.

## Conclusion

By implementing *Housing for All*, the Government believes it can embed environmental, economic and social sustainability in our housing system for future generations. Recovery from Covid-19 is underway and this will boost the economy in general and may have distinctive effects on housing, which is already showing signs of a strong rebound in the number of new dwelling completions.

The Government's Summer Economic Statement projects modified domestic demand to grow by 2.5% in 2021 and 7.5% in 2022, although these projections are contingent on how quickly people normalise their saving-spending patterns. It has been estimated that savings in excess of €12bn euros have been accumulated during the pandemic and some of this is likely to be channelled into home purchases or improvements. Furthermore, the Government has set overall capital ceilings for the period 2021-25, with gross voted capital investment increasing to €13.6bn, almost 5 per cent of GNI\*, by 2025, with a significant portion of this being allocated to housing.

The Government recognises that there are a number of risks with increasing funding so significantly. The construction sector may not currently have the capacity to realise spending demands efficiently. The numbers employed in the construction sector fell by 7.2% in the year to Q42020 to stand at 136,400 and for the sector to reach the EU average of 6.8% of total employment would require an additional 20,000 workers. There are indications that materials for house building are becoming more costly and supplier lead times are getting longer. The CSO's price index for construction materials

showed an annual increase of 7.8% up to June 2021. In addition, there are capacity constraints with public sector bodies in terms of progressing projects as well as constraints associated with planning bodies and courts which may lengthen the duration and add to the costs of projects.

Taking account of these trends, there is an obvious danger that the effects of significantly increased Government funding for housing may be diminished by rising construction and house price inflation. However, the answer is not to cut back spending but to aggressively tackle constraints on the supply of homes as well as keeping overall levels of spending under careful review to ensure value for money.

This means that the *Housing for All* Plan not only addresses the components that make up the final cost of homes but also focuses on the various input costs and expands supply by all relevant means. This entails actions such as significantly increasing numbers employed in residential construction and raising productivity in the sector; streamlining procurement and planning procedures; reviving vacant and derelict homes.

The *Housing for All* Plan encompasses actions such as these and many more, through a series of Housing Policy Objectives and associated Actions set out throughout this document. Specific responsibility has been assigned for each action with timelines for implementation.

The Plan represents, not just a landmark step in terms of State funding of housing, but also the most ambitious attempt to ensure that the entire sector is reshaped to meet the needs of people.

# Housing for All Projected Output Profile

## Housing Need and Demand Assessment

The need for greater housing supply is well understood. Projections regarding the extent of housing need tend to differ based on the underlying assumptions used. In terms of methodologies for assessing housing need and demand, the Scottish Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HDNA) model is the recognised leader.

The DHLGH has collaborated with the Scottish Centre for Housing Market Analysis to produce an Irish version of the Scottish HNDA and its associated HNDA Tool. This was published in April 2021, together with a repository of housing-related data<sup>2</sup>.

The HNDA Tool, which was developed as part of the HNDA Framework, can project the future need for housing by tenure type. These projections are based on incomes, house prices and rents, structural demand for housing, existing need and projections for how these indicators will evolve over the coming years.

Using the HNDA methodology, and incorporating the ESRI's research on *Regional Demographics and Structural Housing Demand at a County Level*<sup>3</sup>, the DHLGH has produced an estimate of housing need to 2030. It underpins the target of an average of 33,000 homes per year in **Housing for All**. By using the HNDA Tool, that total can be broken down by tenure type as follows:

HNDA Projection 33,000 Annually to 2030 Breakdown by Tenure Type	
New private ownership homes	11,800
New private rental homes	6,500
New affordable homes	4,100
New Social Housing homes	10,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,700</b>

Figure 2:  
HNDA Projection 33,000  
Annually to 2030

Based on the above projections, the Government aims to reach and exceed supply of 33,000 homes per year by 2024, as outlined in the table below. It will do this by increasing supply across all tenure types to ensure that the needs of all sectors of society are met.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ea999-housing-need-and-demand-assessment-hnda/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.esri.ie/publications/regional-demographics-and-structural-housing-demand-at-a-county-level>

## Projected Housing Output

Housing output projections to 2030 are set out below. NDP funding to 2025 has been confirmed. The NDP will also detail the overall capital investment envelope for the 2021 to 2030 period, from which the additional ceilings will be agreed at a sectoral level on a rolling 5-year basis. Land Development Agency and Housing Finance Agency funding to 2026 are also incorporated into projections.

Projections will be heavily influenced by Covid-19 related uncertainties in the earlier

years of the Plan. These uncertainties will reduce over time as the impact of the pandemic on the housing backlog is fully established, and associated construction-related constraints diminish. However, ongoing uncertainties associated with raw material costs and availability, and the sector's capacity to recover, may also impact totals. The social and affordable targets will be agreed with individual Local Authorities by the end of 2021. The affordable figures include 8,000 homes for private homeownership, which have been enabled by the *First Home* Shared Equity Scheme.

Projected Housing Output (New Build) 2022 – 2030									
Tenure	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Social homes	9,000	9,100	9,300	10,000	10,200	10,200	10,200	10,200	10,200
Affordable & Cost Rental homes	4,100	5,500	6,400	6,400	6,100	6,300	6,400	6,300	6,300
Private Rental and Private Ownership homes	11,500	14,400	17,750	18,200	19,800	20,400	21,500	23,000	24,000
<b>Total Homes</b>	<b>24,600</b>	<b>29,000</b>	<b>33,450</b>	<b>34,600</b>	<b>36,100</b>	<b>36,900</b>	<b>38,100</b>	<b>39,500</b>	<b>40,500</b>

Figure 3:  
Projected Housing Output (New Build) 2022 – 2030

Figure 4:  
*Housing for All*  
Overall Target



1

Pathway to  
Supporting  
Home Ownership  
and Increasing  
Affordability





Figure 5:  
Pathway to Homeownership  
and Increasing Affordability

# 1 Pathway to Supporting Home Ownership and Increasing Affordability

- Delivery of 54,000 affordable homes between now and 2030.
- An average of 6,000 affordable homes to be made available every year for purchase or for rent by Local Authorities, AHBs, the LDA and through a strategic partnership between the State and retail banks.
- A new, nationally available, affordable purchase shared-equity *First Home* scheme, until 2025, for new-build homes in private developments.
- A new Local Authority-led Affordable Purchase Scheme.
- The Land Development Agency (LDA) will be a new and important source of affordable housing on public land and will advance a new initiative, Project Tosaigh, to enable the early delivery of new affordable homes.
- The introduction of a new form of rental tenure and delivery of 'Cost Rental' homes.
- Expanded Part V requirements to increase the percentage contribution from 10% to 20% and applied to affordable as well as social housing.
- Launch of a newly expanded Local Authority Home Loan.
- A 'Fresh Start' principle for applications to affordable housing and loan schemes.
- Extended Rent Pressure Zone Protections to 2024 and rents linked to the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices.
- Introduction of indefinite tenures for rent leases.



Putting Homeownership back within reach of the 'squeezed middle' and breaking the rent trap are core goals of **Housing for All**. The Government is acting decisively to expand the options for those currently facing affordability constraints in buying or renting a home with an unprecedented level of financial commitment and delivery ambition. This requires a step change in the interventions that must be put in place to support homeownership. It will also see the introduction of a new form of tenure in 'Cost Rental', which will deliver long-term security of tenure at affordable and predictable prices. These measures have been put on a statutory basis through the prioritisation of the Affordable Housing Act 2021. Taken together, these affordable measures will make homeownership achievable for tens of thousands of individuals and families in the near-term and will reduce the rental pressures on thousands of hard-pressed middle income earners. Short-term measures will support people immediately, allowing for longer-term measures to take hold.

The State is significantly increasing its investment in affordable housing and the State will manage its commitment so that people are helped when they need it most. It will recoup and recycle its investment so more people can be helped. This will move us away from an over-reliance on annual Exchequer funding in an economically counter cyclical manner. Our affordable housing measures will contribute to a more developed, responsive and appropriate housing system that offers people real choice at affordable levels when they need it.

Affordability and the chance to own a home are being placed at the very heart of our housing policy. People should be able

to access suitable affordable housing that meets their needs as they move through life. That means that we need a mixture of affordable rental options in urban areas near concentrations of employment, the option to buy in vibrant communities with reasonable commutes to work and education, and more options to live and work in our towns and villages in rural areas.

When these options are not sufficiently available, it upsets the balance of our housing system and can have a very negative impact on people's lives. This is true at all stages of life, but particularly at key life events, for example, when people are deciding to leave the family home, take up a new job, settle into a community or perhaps start a family.

In response to the demand for more affordable housing, the State will deliver 54,000 affordable homes to either purchase or rent between now and end 2030, with 29,000 delivered by end 2026. The majority of homes will be targeted at Affordable Purchase with an overall average delivery ratio of approximately 2:1 Affordable Purchase to Cost Rental. These new-build homes will be targeted primarily at first time buyers and those facing demonstrable affordability constraints.

First-time buyers, on low to moderate incomes, will now be able to buy a new home with State support through an equity stake. A new tenure of more affordable 'Cost Rental' will be introduced that will be based on the cost of provision rather than profit maximisation.

A 'Fresh start' principle will apply to applications to State-run affordable housing and loan schemes. This means that people who are divorced/separated and no longer have a financial interest in the family home, or

who have undergone insolvency proceedings, will be eligible to apply for State schemes.

To give people improved choice and opportunities to purchase as quickly as possible, the Government is simultaneously introducing two new affordable purchase schemes. The first will involve Local Authorities delivering, or facilitating the delivery of, new homes in areas where affordability challenges have been identified. The second, which will be nationally available, will see the State partnering with the banking sector to establish a new affordable purchase shared-equity *First Home* scheme.

Affordable Purchase and 'Cost Rental' homes will be delivered by our Local Authorities, AHBs and by the Land Development Agency (LDA). The LDA will be a new and important source of affordable housing on public lands. The Government will increase the funding available to the LDA to bring forward affordable housing developments at scale.

We will also revise and expand the Local Authority Home Loan scheme. Single people earning up to €65,000 will be eligible to apply in areas where the scheme's house price limit is €320,000 (i.e. Greater Dublin Area, Cork, Galway).

The Help to Buy Incentive is due to end on 31 December 2021 and the Minister for Finance will consider an extension to the timeline in the context of Budget 2022. The role of the Help to Buy incentive will also be reviewed using the Tax Strategy Group mechanism with the aim of ensuring that it is appropriately calibrated in the context of other measures contained in ***Housing for All***.

## 1.1 Implement the Affordable Housing Act 2021

Under the new Affordable Housing Act 2021, we are giving people a choice of affordable housing options. Firstly, we are going to invest to support people on low to moderate incomes to buy their *First Home*. Secondly, the State is introducing a completely new form of more affordable 'Cost Rental' homes, where the rent will be based on the cost of provision rather than on profit maximisation. This complex legislation is the most comprehensive piece of affordable housing legislation that has ever been brought forward and has been a top priority for the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

## 1.2 Launch a new Local Authority Affordable Purchase Scheme

Local Authorities, working with delivery partners, will play a central role in the planning and provision of affordable homes through a new Affordable Purchase Scheme. The provisions of this scheme have been placed on a statutory basis in the Affordable Housing Act 2021. The homes will be available at a reduced price with the Local Authority taking an equity stake equivalent to the reduction from the prevailing market price for the property. The purchaser can redeem or 'buy out' this equity stake at a time of their choosing, but there will be no requirement to do so. If the purchaser chooses not to redeem the equity stake while living in the home, the State can do so when the property is sold, or transferred, or after the death of the owner.

These schemes will be primarily targeted at first-time buyers in those Local Authority areas with the greatest housing requirement and affordability challenges. Other categories will also be eligible, including people who have experienced relationship breakdowns or personal insolvency. Where demand exceeds supply, homes will be made available by Local Authorities using a 'Scheme of Priority', which will see applicant prioritisation based on a range of factors, including the size of the household applying and the length of time a household has been living in the local area.

Funding will continue to be made available to pay for land servicing, which will facilitate the delivery of new-build Local Authority affordable housing at a more competitive price. This funding is now being significantly increased and enhanced to support key Local Authorities in areas where affordability challenges are greatest. The Government will support, and work with, Local Authorities to deliver housing in targeted areas. This will include situations in which a Local Authority does not have suitable land to deliver the level of housing required.

This funding will be made available through the new Affordable Housing Fund (which will incorporate the existing Serviced Sites Fund) and will be effectively deployed to achieve the delivery of thousands of homes for

affordable purchase or rent. Depending on the type, size and location of the homes, which varies from project to project, Local Authorities have indicated in Serviced Site Fund submissions that they will aim to make homes available at average purchase prices of approximately €250,000.

Importantly, as the equity stake will return to the State over time, it can be recycled to help others facing affordability constraints. This will provide funding for counter-cyclical economic housing interventions, moving away from an over-reliance on the availability of annual Exchequer funding.



Figure 6:  
Local Authority Affordable Purchase Scheme

### 1.3 Establish a *First Home* Scheme

The Government, working in partnership with the banking sector, will establish a new national shared-equity *First Home* Scheme. Under this scheme, the State and participating banks will jointly support first-time buyers on moderate incomes to buy a new home. The support will take the form of an equity stake in the home equivalent to the level of funding provided. Unlike the Local Authority-led Affordable Purchase scheme, the First Home Scheme will be available nationally, and purchasers can themselves determine where they choose to buy. No service charge will be applied to the equity stake for the first five years, with a modest annual charge beginning to apply from year six. As is also the case with the Local Authority-led Affordable Purchase scheme, the purchaser will be enabled to redeem or 'buy out' this equity stake at a time of their choosing, but there will be no compulsion to do so.

The *First Home* Scheme will be available to eligible purchasers for the acquisition of new homes in private developments throughout the country. Homes made available will be subject to area-based price ceilings for houses and apartments. It is anticipated that these ceilings will be based on open market prices and will range from about €225,000 for homes in the most competitively priced areas of the country to approximately €450,000 in the most expensive areas. In exceptional cases, specific ceilings may be applied to stimulate the supply of apartments in urban areas. Up to 20% equity support

will be available to purchase these homes (or max 30% if the Help to Buy is not utilised). Utilising the support of the banking sector to match Exchequer funds in delivering this scheme, will enable the State to double the benefit of its investment for purchasers and support twice as many families and individuals to buy their first homes. This market based scheme will be established immediately, allowing time for the Local Authority new-build delivery to ramp up.



Figure 7: First Home Scheme

## 1.4 Roll-out Cost Rental at Scale

Cost Rental is the most radical reform of the Irish rental system in the history of the State. The private rental sector has traditionally provided homes based on prevailing market rents and profit maximisation. As a result, and notwithstanding the introduction of Rent Pressure Zones, prevailing rents can fluctuate significantly and can be excessively high in the areas of greatest demand, with some households paying significantly more in rent than would be the required mortgage repayment on an equivalent property.

A new statutory basis is being established for Cost Rental under the Affordable Housing Act 2021, which sets out how this new sector will operate. Under Cost Rental, homes will be provided at rents that are set to cover only the cost of financing, building, managing and maintaining the homes, calculated over a minimum period of 40 years. Tenants will have significantly increased security of tenure, making Cost Rental a long-term rental option. Rents for these homes will be linked to annual inflation, providing greater cost certainty and meaning that the initial cost rents may become even more affordable over time. This measure is being targeted at middle-income households, with incomes above the social housing limits. The aim is to maximise effectiveness for those who do not already receive support from the State.

Over the period to 2026, it is intended that approximately 10,000 Cost Rental homes will be delivered in our urban centres by Local Authorities, Approved Housing Bodies and the Land Development Agency. In building to this scale, the State will provide certain focused funding supports to help delivery partners provide rental homes that target affordable rents at levels in the order of 25% below market rents. Increasing the scale of Cost Rental is a key objective and the Land Development Agency will have a key delivery role. Delivery of Cost Rental at scale will also have a stabilising effect on the wider rental market. Furthermore, Cost Rental investment by private-sector vehicles has been facilitated through legislation in the Affordable Housing Act 2021. Returns on such investment would be limited, but would be secure and consistent. Such investment under the environmental, social and governance (ESG) remit of institutional and pension funds, can provide for increased capacity in the delivery of Cost Rental homes.

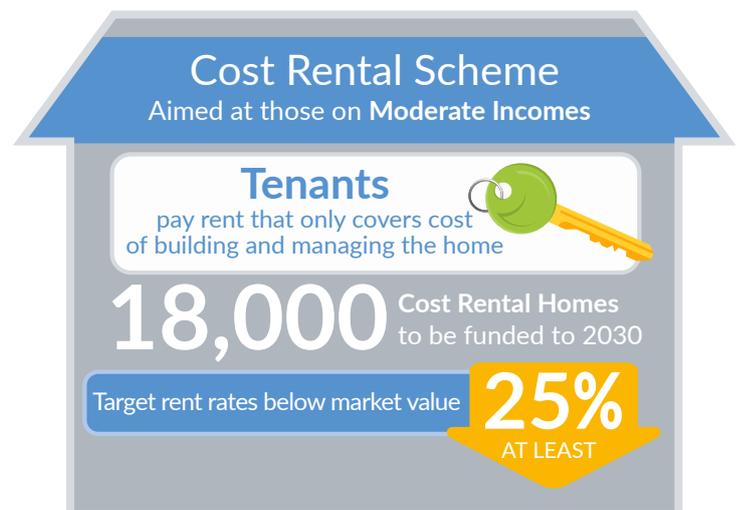


Figure 8: Cost Rental Scheme

## 1.5 Launch ‘Project Tosaigh’ to Deliver more Affordable Homes through the Land Development Agency

The Government recognises that, for a multitude of reasons, many non-State sites where homes could be delivered, even those that have planning consents, are not being built out quickly enough, or at all. The LDA has specific statutory responsibility to deliver affordable housing, primarily on State land, but also to enable more affordable homes through engagement with other actors. As the Government’s key institutional intervention in the housing market, the LDA will be tasked with intervening in these slow or stalled developments, through an open and transparent process, designed to ascertain the potential for it to enter into strategic partnerships with landowners in order to unlock and accelerate delivery. This will be known as ‘*Project Tosaigh*’ as it will get development started at scale.

If value for money for the State and affordability can be ascertained following this process, the LDA will be funded by an additional €1bn above current levels to enable the delivery of up to 5,000 new affordable homes on such lands that otherwise would not have been delivered, or would be delivered much more slowly. It will do this by entering into strategic partnerships with suitable parties that have a proven ability to deliver homes. These homes will be delivered in the near term from next year. This significant and immediate delivery initiative will be supplemented by further large-scale affordable delivery from the LDA’s growing State land bank.

## 1.6 Expand the Part V Requirement to 20% to include Affordable Homes

The requirement in Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide 10% of the uplift in value of zoned residential land for social housing, has been increased to a mandatory 20% for social, affordable and cost rental housing requirements, of which at least half must be applied to social housing provision<sup>4</sup>. The link to a specified percentage need in the Housing Strategy reflected in the Development Plan objectives has been removed, so the focus will be on capturing the full share of the planning gain for the State on every applicable site, in every Local Authority area. The 20% will apply to all land transacted after the new legislation comes in to force, or bought before 2015, where planning permission has not been granted.

Current planning permissions will be unaffected, and land purchased between 2015 and 2021 will also continue at 10%. Near term supply will not be affected by these changes. However, this will change in 2026 when the 20% will apply to all land regardless of when purchased. Developers, therefore, must act now to bring forward housing or they will face the new higher obligation at that time. This is a balanced and fair way to allow supply to come forward at pace, while also ensuring that the State is getting as much benefit as possible for social and affordable purposes. The Housing Agency will support local authorities to ensure the revised requirements are applied consistently.

<sup>4</sup>Per Part 6 of the Affordable Housing Act 2021

## 1.7 Reform the Local Authority Home Loan scheme

Changes will be made to the current Local Authority mortgage product which enables first-time buyers, on low to moderate incomes, to access sustainable mortgages to purchase new or second-hand properties, or to self-build. The loan, in its current form, has had over 2,200 mortgage drawdowns in just over 3 years of operation. The product will be changed by lowering the interest rate for new borrowers by 0.25% and raising the maximum income ceiling for single persons to €65,000 in areas where the house price limit under the scheme is €320,000 (Greater Dublin Area<sup>5</sup>, Cork, Galway). These improvements will extend the reach and impact of the scheme, particularly for single people, whilst ensuring that the Home Loan's features remain appropriately positioned compared to commercial mortgages.



Figure 9:  
Local Authority Home Loan Scheme

## 1.8 Set Out a new Owner-Occupier Guarantee

The Government has introduced new, higher-rate stamp duty measures and planning permission restrictions to minimise the bulk buying of traditional family homes. We will also introduce a new form of 'owner-occupier guarantee' which will enable Local Authorities, following on from the introduction of the Housing Need & Demand Assessment Framework, to specify a minimum proportion of the houses and duplexes in a new development as being restricted to first occupation by individual purchasers or 'owner occupiers'.

<sup>5</sup>Greater Dublin Area refers to Dublin, Louth, Wicklow, Meath, Kildare

## Housing Policy Objective 1: Enable Homeownership and Increase Affordability

No.		Timeline	Lead
1.1	Provide an average of 6,000 affordable homes each year under the provisions of a new Affordable Housing Act	Ongoing	DHLGH
1.2	Place affordable housing measures, including a Local Authority Affordable Purchase Scheme and Cost Rental, on a statutory footing via the Affordable Housing Act	Q3 2021	DHLGH
1.3	Establish a new Affordable Housing Fund, incorporating existing affordable housing funds, to support Local Authority and Approved Housing Body delivery of affordable housing	Q3 2021	DHLGH
1.4	Provide a <i>First Home</i> market based Shared-Equity Scheme	Q1 2022	DHLGH
1.5	Introduce a new form of tenure in Cost Rental and deliver Cost Rental homes at scale with delivery partners, including AHBs, LDA and Local Authorities	Q3 2021	DHLGH, LAs, AHBs, LDA
1.6	Reform the operation and deployment of the current Serviced Sites Fund, incorporating same under the new Affordable Housing Fund, in order to provide more flexible support to Local Authorities in delivering affordable housing for sale or rent	Q4 2021	DHLGH
1.7	Increase funding available to the LDA to provide affordable homes at scale	Q1 2024	DFIN, DHLGH
1.8	Expand Part V requirements to increase the percentage contribution from 10% to 20% and apply to affordable as well as social housing	Q3 2021	DHLGH
1.9	Ensure consistency in the application of the new arrangements under Part V by Local Authorities	Ongoing	Housing Agency
1.10	Introduce a form of 'owner-occupier guarantee', which will enable Local Authorities to specify the proportion of houses and duplexes in a development for owner-occupiers	Q4 2021	DHLGH
1.11	Revise and expand the Local Authority Home Loan	Q4 2021	DHLGH
1.12	Consider an extension to the timeline of the Help to Buy Incentive in the context of Budget 2022	Q4 2021	DFIN
1.13	Review the Help to Buy Incentive to ensure it is appropriately calibrated	Q4 2021	DFIN

HPO = Housing Policy Objective

## 1.9 Protect Tenants in Private Rental Accommodation

Too many people have been caught in an unaffordable, insecure rent trap. In order to support those who wish to buy their home and facilitate people who want to rent, we need to protect tenants. Changes in society such as longer stays in education, starting families later, immigration and difficulties in accessing mortgage finance have driven demand for rental accommodation. As an open economy, a steady supply of good quality accommodation, including rental accommodation, is also a necessary precursor for Ireland's targeted levels of foreign direct investment and related employment.

While supply of private and social housing has increased, with Cost Rental and affordable housing due to come on stream, it is not yet at a scale that will significantly impact the overall private rental market. Rent increases are unsustainable and are causing affordability issues, particularly for those with low incomes and the more vulnerable of our citizens.

According to the 2011 Census, the numbers relying on the private rental sector nearly doubled from the 2006 Census level of 9.9% to 18.5%. In the 2016 Census figures, the private rental sector accounted for nearly 18.2% of all tenures. This underlines the importance of the private rental sector to our housing system.

The Government has introduced measures to protect renters with affordability challenges by extending Rent Pressure Zone controls to the end of 2024 and linking rent increase limits to the cost of living (through the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP)). In addition,

short-term protections for tenants experiencing Covid-19 related arrears have been extended to January 2022. Security of tenure will be strengthened for tenants, subject to legal advice, by legislating for tenancies of indefinite duration. Oversight of tenancies will also be strengthened by the introduction of an annual registration process.

The Government will also facilitate increased enforcement of registration of tenancy requirements. Enforcement will be generally enhanced through measures such as the expansion of data-sharing arrangements between the Revenue Commissioners and the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) to assist in enforcement of residential tenancy obligations.

The Government recognises that it is in the interest of both the tenant and landlord to resolve any disputes as early as possible without recourse to lengthy adjudication and tribunal processes. The DHLGH will provide additional resources to the RTB to ensure that it can continue to play its part, including to facilitate early engagement to prevent disputes escalating to formal RTB dispute resolution, particularly in cases of rent arrears and where a legal tenancy termination or illegal eviction is in prospect. Mediation and conciliation help to resolve disputes at an early stage. In recognition of this, the Government intends to amend the Residential Tenancies Acts to provide for default conciliation as part of the dispute resolution process.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government introduced the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) and adjusted the Rent Supplement income threshold to reflect PUP payment rates.

Under the National Economic Recovery Plan, the Government has extended the PUP for existing recipients and set out how the PUP rates will be reduced in stages. The Rent Supplement income threshold will remain aligned with the top PUP rate for this extended period and will be adjusted in line with changes in the top PUP rate. The Department of Social Protection will also continue to show flexibility in respect of rent limits.

Targets for inspection of rental properties will be set at 25% of all private residential tenancies as soon as Covid-19 public health restrictions permit. This process will be supported by the full implementation of virtual inspections to complement the traditional inspection process, and by examining the potential extension of the role of estate agents to support compliance of rental properties with the required standards before placing them on the market.

The continued supply of new properties to the rental market is critical. Therefore the initial rent setting for new properties will continue to be at market level for the duration of any RPZ or successor restrictions. RPZ restrictions will apply for rent increases that follow the initial rent setting (either within or between tenancies).

The Government will support the continued participation of small scale landlords in the rental market. The DFIN will review the recommendations of the Working Group on the Tax and Fiscal Treatment of Landlords and other taxation measures.

The holding of deposits can create difficulties for both the tenant and the landlord. In 2020 there were 1,410 deposit-related disputes accounting for 27% of all disputes. It was the second most common reason for disputes.

This is a complex area that includes obligations on both tenants and landlords. Deposit retention can cause serious hardship for tenants, as many will require the return of their deposit in order to access alternative rental accommodation. The Government is committed to examining the creation of a system of deposit retention based on best international practice.

In support of the Government's Climate Action Plan objectives and targets, energy efficiency in private rental housing needs to increase. The Government will develop a roadmap to implement minimum Building Energy Rating (BER) standards, or 'Cost Optimal' equivalent, for the private rental sector. This will increase energy efficiency, help to alleviate fuel poverty, help to protect tenant's health and improve comfort levels in rental homes.

On-campus purpose-built student accommodation can alleviate pressure on the private rental market. Universities have developed significant numbers of student accommodation units in recent years, through borrowing from the European Investment Bank via the Housing Finance Agency. Section 21 of the Technological Universities Act 2018 provides for borrowing by Technological Universities subject to borrowing approval. The Technological University Dublin – the largest higher education institution in the State – has identified a student accommodation requirement and proposal and there is similar potential to do so amongst other technological universities. The Government will support technological universities to develop purpose-built student accommodation where such a requirement exists, through access to appropriate financing (see section 3.6.3).

## Housing Policy Objective 2:

### Increase protections for Tenants in Private Rental Accommodation

No.		Timeline	Lead
2.1	Bring forward legislation with provisions to address long-term security of tenure	Q4 2021	DHLGH
2.2	Increase enforcement of registration of tenancies by Residential Tenancies Board (RTB)	Ongoing	DHLGH, RTB
2.3	Extend changes in the Rent Supplement income threshold in line with the adjustment of PUP rates under the National Economic Recovery Plan	Per timeline in the National Economic Recovery Plan	DSP
2.4	Retain the rent limit flexibilities in the Rent Supplement Scheme	Ongoing	DSP
2.5	Expand data-sharing arrangements between RTB and Revenue	Q1 2023	DHLGH, DFIN
2.6	Provide additional resources to the RTB in order to make available trained RTB facilitators to intervene at an early stage to prevent disputes escalating between parties	Q2 2022	DHLGH
2.7	Extend Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) protections to end 2024 and link rent increases to Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices	Q3 2021	DHLGH
2.8	Review the recommendations of the Working Group on the Tax and Fiscal Treatment of Landlords	Q3 2022	DFIN
2.9	Retain market based settings for first rent of new properties to the market for the duration of RPZ protections or any successor restrictions	Ongoing	DHLGH
2.10	Examine the potential extension of the role of estate agents to include an initial inspection of rental property to the extent possible	Q4 2022	DoJ
2.11	Support diversification of housing stock and increase availability of rental stock by supporting the development of Purpose Built Student Accommodation by Technological Universities	Ongoing	DFHERIS, DFIN, DHLGH
2.12	Examine the creation of a system of holding rental deposits, informed by international experience	Q2 2023	DHLGH
2.13	Legislate through the Residential Tenancies Acts for default conciliation as part of the dispute resolution process within the RTB	Q1 2022	DHLGH
2.14	Implement Minimum BER standards, where feasible, for private rental properties, commencing in 2025	Q1 2025	DHLGH

# 2

Pathway to  
Eradicating  
Homelessness,  
Increasing Social  
Housing Delivery  
and Supporting  
Social Inclusion





Figure 10:  
Pathway to Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion

# 2 Pathway to Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion

- Work towards eradicating Homelessness by 2030.
- Increased *Housing First* Targets to 1,200 tenancies over the next five years.
- Deliver 90,000 social homes by 2030. This includes over 10,000 social housing homes each year over the next five years, with an average of 9,500 of those being new-build social homes.
- End long-term leasing through phasing out new entrants to the current leasing arrangements and focussing on new-build to provide social homes.
- Continued funding for Local Authorities to acquire additional land for new-build public housing.
- Enhanced role for Approved Housing Bodies in social housing provision.
- Strengthened *Mortgage to Rent* scheme to ensure that it meets the needs of those in long-term mortgage arrears.
- Improvements in the quality and quantity of Traveller-Specific Accommodation.
- Increasing the housing options available to older people to facilitate ageing in place, with dignity and independence.
- Deliver an appropriate range of housing and related support services, in an integrated and sustainable manner, which promote equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living for people with a disability.
- Continued support for social inclusion through the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) and other social housing support programmes.



Housing policy must address the needs of socially excluded members of society. The prevalence of homelessness and the restricted options for older persons or people with a disability are among the most pressing issues of our time and we are committing in this policy to taking further action to address needs in these areas. We will increase the protections available across all tenures to ensure that those with the most pressing housing needs are supported, whilst providing the right temporary and long-term supports to ensure that people have a secure home. We will support continued implementation of the current *National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021*, and actions to be identified in the successor to that strategy.

The actions in this Pathway will also contribute towards State efforts to meet Sustainable Development Goals relating to ending poverty, including Target 1.5<sup>6</sup>: “By 2030 build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters”, as well as other Goals where housing has a role.

## 2.1 Eradicate Homelessness

Reducing and preventing homelessness remains a top priority for the Government. Recognising the particular challenges of homelessness, for families and for individuals, the Government will focus its efforts on reducing the number of homeless families and individuals and work with Local Authorities, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) and

the HSE, to support people experiencing homelessness into long-term sustainable accommodation. Underpinning all elements is the criticality of inter-agency supports to address the complex combination of social, health and economic needs of homeless persons and those at risk of homelessness, in addition to their specific housing need.

**Housing for All** recognises that many households experiencing homelessness have additional support needs and includes specific measures to address these needs. These include measures to engage with and support rough sleepers into sustainable accommodation, the continued expansion of the *Housing First* model, a focus on the construction and acquisition of one-bed homes, and, importantly, ensuring provision of the necessary health and mental health supports required to assist homeless people with complex needs.

The Government will establish a new National Homeless Action Committee. This will be a cross-governmental and inter-agency oversight group to ensure better coherence and coordination of homeless related services in delivering policy measures and actions. The work of the group will be informed by **Housing for All** and will oversee the implementation of the interagency elements.

The Government is committed to a housing-led approach as the primary response to all forms of homelessness. It includes the prevention of loss of existing housing. It also incorporates the provision of adequate support to

<sup>6</sup><https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/ff4201-17-sustainable-development-goals/>

people in their homes according to their needs and the provision of high levels of additional social housing.

There will be an emphasis on the development of emergency accommodation through Local Authority or AHB owned facilities for those who are homeless. Such developments will include the acquisition of existing properties for conversion, and land or sites to develop purpose-built facilities, using the capital funding streams available to Local Authorities and AHBs. Looking to the future, such facilities in the ownership of Local Authorities and AHBs have the scope in time to be repurposed to support social housing delivery.

People who are rough sleeping are at the sharp end of homelessness. Street Outreach Services, which will persistently engage with people who are rough sleeping, will be expanded nationwide into urban areas where rough sleeping is a concern.

The availability of social housing is one of the key factors in addressing homelessness and the availability of one-bed homes for individuals that are homeless needs to be addressed. Local Authorities will set out delivery targets, including targets for one-bed homes, in their new Housing Delivery Action Plans (see section 2.2.2) which **Housing for All** mandates them to prepare and which will be available by December 2021.

### 2.1.1 Support the Lisbon Declaration on Combatting Homelessness

On 21 June 2021, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, with the support of the Government, signed the 'Lisbon Declaration on the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness'. The Declaration commits all signatories, Ireland included, to working towards the ending of homelessness by 2030. This will now be an important national strategic goal. In **Housing for All** we are reaffirming the commitments made through the Declaration.

In signing the Declaration, Ireland has agreed to promote the prevention of homelessness, access to permanent housing and the provision of enabling support services to those who are homeless. We have confirmed that we will welcome the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of policy measures. We are committed to supporting our policy measures with adequate funding and to sharing our good practices in combatting homelessness. A new European Platform on Combatting Homelessness has been established. Ireland will actively participate in this structure. We will collaborate with other EU Member States, the European institutions as well as international organisations that support homeless persons, in working towards a shared goal of eradicating homelessness.

### 2.1.2 Expand *Housing First*

*Housing First* is a housing-led approach that enables people with a history of rough sleeping or long-term use of emergency accommodation, and with complex needs, to obtain permanent secure accommodation, with the provision of intensive supports to help them to maintain their tenancies. The *Housing First* National Implementation Plan 2018-2021 was designed to provide this response, and contains tenancy targets for each Local Authority, with an overall national target of 663 tenancies to be delivered by the end of 2021. Local Authorities are on schedule to achieve this target.

An updated National Implementation Plan will be published by year end. It will extend the programme and expand *Housing First* targets, with an aim to achieve 1,200 new *Housing First* tenancies over the next five years. This will involve an average of 240 tenancies per annum, with the specific targets for each region to be set out in the new national plan, based on analysis currently underway involving all key stakeholders. The implementation of these plans is a joint initiative of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), the Department of Health, the HSE and Local Authorities, in conjunction with NGO partners.

*Housing for All* recognises that prisoners and other persons convicted before the courts frequently present as homeless with high and complex support needs and that homelessness poses a significant risk for many post release. The updated National Implementation Plan will build upon the existing Dublin-based pilot scheme aimed at those from the criminal justice system by expanding the scheme nationally.

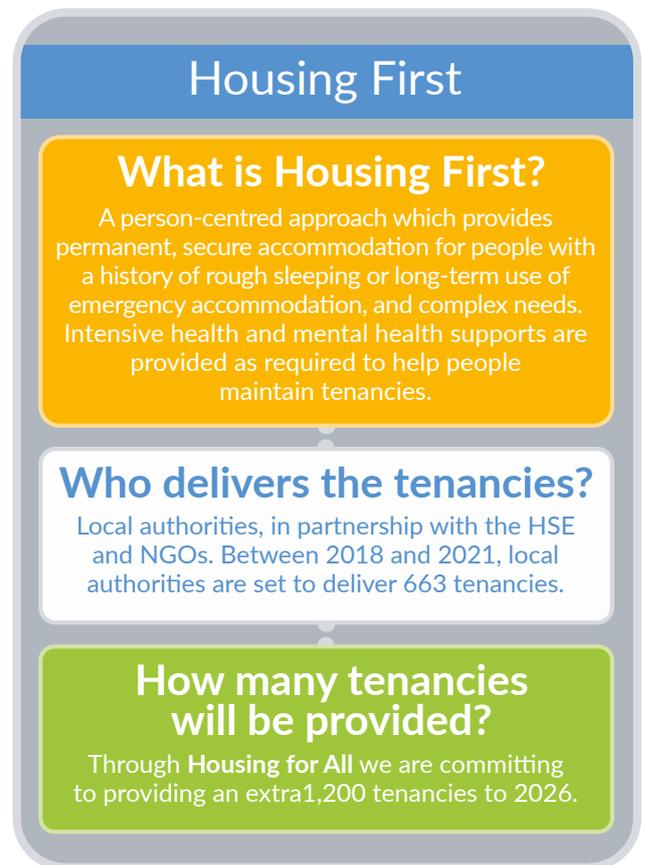


Figure 11:  
*Housing First*

### 2.1.3 Support the health needs of people who are homeless

Suitable housing conditions are a key social determinant of health. Collaborative delivery of housing and health supports will ensure that no person is excluded from either housing or health support and that health support will be an integral component of settlement and a person's return to independent living.

The Government is committed to maintaining and consolidating the enhanced health service supports for homeless persons which were put in place in 2020 and 2021 in response to the pandemic. As part of the public health response to Covid-19, access to health services for people who are homeless was significantly enhanced, initially in the HSE Winter Plan and subsequently extended to cover all of 2021, with additional expenditure of €11m.

Under *Housing for All*, we will build on the co-operation and co-ordination and actions already in place and developed in minimising the impact of Covid-19 on homeless persons. These include:

- individual health care plans;
- tailored drug and alcohol treatment services; and
- mental health supports, especially for rough sleepers.

In addition, long-term funding of €4m is being provided in 2021 to provide further improvements in health services, including mental health, integrated care plans and *Housing First*.

The *Inclusion Health Model* is central to meeting the complex health needs of homeless persons. It provides a model of care that delivers integrated care for people who are homeless in primary and acute settings, in line with Sláintecare.

It is recognised that Traveller and Roma communities are represented amongst the homeless population. We will support continued implementation of the current *National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021*, and actions to be identified in the successor to that strategy.

The Programme for Government details a number of commitments to improve health outcomes for people who are homeless. The National Drugs Strategy identifies people who are homeless as at high-risk of drug and alcohol addiction. Consistent with these, a key commitment is for the Department of Health and the HSE to work with the DHLGH to assess and commit dedicated multi-annual funding and resources to deliver the required health and mental health supports.

The Government is also committed to working collaboratively to provide enhanced and improved supports to those who require access to healthcare and addiction treatment services. An example of this is the commitment by the DHLGH to provide capital funding to Dublin Simon Community to construct a new 100 bed Medical Treatment and Recovery Facility at Ushers Island. Once constructed, a suite of core and complementary services will be delivered to respond to the need for healthcare, treatment and recovery services for homeless individuals. The Department of Health and HSE have committed to provide funding towards the ongoing operational costs of the facility.

This new facility will help to meet the Programme for Government commitment to increase the number of residential treatment beds for those stabilising, detoxing, and/or seeking drug-free services.

#### 2.1.4 Prevent and address Family, Child and Youth Homelessness

Family homelessness has seen an appreciable reduction since 2019, but still remains a key challenge. The overriding objective is to provide homes to those households at risk of or experiencing homelessness through the various social housing supports available. In the first instance, it is critical that targeted prevention and early intervention services are provided to families and children who are at risk of homelessness. For those families and children in emergency accommodation it is critical that appropriate supports are provided in order to secure pathways out of homelessness. One notable issue that is evident concerns the length of time that some families (many with support needs requiring a multi-agency approach) spend in emergency accommodation. We will

work with Local Authorities and NGOs to identify families experiencing long-term homelessness that have complex support needs. Those that do will be provided with enhanced tenancy sustainment supports to help them exit homelessness and maintain their homes.

These further interventions will work in tandem with the continued provision of Homeless HAP. We will also build on the child and family supports and co-ordination provided through Tusla, and Children and Young People’s Services Committees (CYPSC) and through targeted initiatives, such as that provided through the National Childcare Scheme which supports homeless households with children to access childcare services. The DHLGH will work on a cross-departmental and agency basis and with Local Authorities and NGOs.

Supporting young people at risk of becoming homeless through strategic interventions can help avoid a cycle of longer-term homelessness. A Youth Homelessness Strategy is being prepared to be launched in early 2022.

### Housing Policy Objective 3: Work towards Ending Homelessness by 2030

No.	Timeline	Lead	
3.1	Actively participate through the newly established European Platform on Combatting Homelessness to advance the Lisbon Declaration on Combatting Homelessness signed in June 2021	Ongoing	DHLGH
3.2	Establish the National Homeless Action Committee	Q4 2021	DHLGH, DoH, DCEDIY, DSP, DoJ, DoE, LAs, HSE, Tusla
3.3	Publish a new <i>Housing First</i> National Implementation Plan	Q4 2021	DHLGH, DoH, HSE, LAs
3.4	Target 1,200 new <i>Housing First</i> tenancies from 2022 to 2026	2022 to 2026	DHLGH, DoH, HSE, LAs

3.5	<i>Housing First</i> will be underpinned by the delivery of additional one-bed social housing homes	Q4 2021 and ongoing	DHLGH
3.6	Provide capital funding to develop further supported emergency accommodation for families and individuals experiencing homelessness	Q4 2021 and ongoing	DHLGH
3.7	Prepare and publish guidelines with standards for the development and refurbishment of emergency accommodation	Q2 2022	DHLGH
3.8	Issue guidance to Local Authorities on their Homeless Action Plans prepared under section 37 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009; this guidance will link directly with, and be informed by, <b>Housing for All</b> and reflect current policy and actions	Q4 2021	DHLGH
3.9	Support the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE) to pilot a scheme to convert Local Authority and AHB owned emergency accommodation facilities to own-door permanent social housing tenancies	Q2 2022	DHLGH
3.10	Maintain Covid-19 public health measures for people who are homeless and consolidate improvements in health care delivery	Ongoing	DoH, HSE
3.11	Continue to increase access to health supports and protections for homeless individuals, with an individual health care plan to be provided for all homeless individuals that need one and improved access to mental health services	Ongoing	DoH, HSE
3.12	Finalise a model of health care for people experiencing homelessness, including a health / vulnerability assessment tool to assist in determining suitability for <i>Housing First</i> and level of support needed	Q2 2022	DoH, HSE
3.13	Strengthen integrated care pathways for people who are homeless with chronic health needs based on an inclusion health model, to achieve better health outcomes and to reduce the incidence of premature death	Ongoing	DoH, HSE
3.14	Expand the case management approach for homeless people living with drug or alcohol addiction and enhance treatment options	Q2 2022	DoH, HSE
3.15	Develop a Youth Homelessness Strategy	Q1 2022	DHLGH, DCEDIY, Tusla, LAs
3.16	Enhance family support and prevention and early intervention services for children and their families through a multiagency and coordinated response, and disseminate innovative practice	Ongoing	DCEDIY, Tusla, DHLGH, LAs
3.17	Expand Street Outreach Services to engage with rough sleepers in other key urban areas outside Dublin	Q4 2021 and ongoing	DHLGH, LAs
3.18	Identify and provide enhanced tenancy sustainment supports to families experiencing long-term homelessness to help them exit from homelessness and maintain their homes	Ongoing	DHLGH, LAs, DCEDIY, Tusla

## 2.2 Increase Social Housing Delivery

The Government is committed to increasing social housing delivery and will work with our delivery partners to ensure that housing is available to the most vulnerable in society. Local Authorities have a key role in the delivery of homes and targets will be set for delivery by them with new Local Authority Housing Delivery Actions Plans, setting out how they plan to deliver on the objectives of *Housing for All*.

**We will roll out the largest house building programme in the history of the State by getting Local Authorities and AHBs back building at scale. Long-term leasing will be ended through phasing out new entrants with a renewed emphasis on building, not buying, social houses.**

### 2.2.1 Deliver More Social Homes

Social housing is provided to meet the needs of low-income families across the country and is a key enabler of people moving out of homelessness. While immediate supports are available through the HAP, the Government plans to rapidly increase the numbers of houses owned by Local Authorities and Approved Housing bodies so that the most vulnerable in society will have access to a home.

The Government plans to deliver more than 90,000 social homes to 2030, with a range of delivery mechanisms being employed to get families and individuals housed as quickly as possible.

The focus of the social housing programme will be to increase the number of new-build homes, with a target to reach delivery of more than 9,500 new-build homes on average each year for the next five years to 2026.

The Government plans to deliver this through greater investment than ever before. Through the National Development Plan, the Government will fund new social homes, which will be delivered over the next five years to meet the needs of thousands of households across Ireland.

Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) have been significant partners in social housing delivery and have played a key role in increasing the level of new social housing in recent years. Under *Housing for All*, AHBs will have a central role, with a multi-annual focus for AHBs set out in new Local Authority Delivery Action Plans (see 2.2.2 below). Increased funding will be made available to AHBs through increases in the budget available for the Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF), the DHLGH will review the structure and operation of CALF to assess whether any refinements to the facility are required to support delivery of social housing by the AHB sector across a wider range of Local Authority areas. Recognising the track record of AHBs in Estate Management, we will support increased strategic partnerships between Local Authorities and AHBs to

increase the role of AHBs in providing housing management services, including through Public Private Partnership (PPP) housing developments.

Building on the successful model of social housing PPPs introduced in recent years, which is delivering in the region of 1,500 social homes across three bundles nationally between 2020 and 2024, we will increase their use to deliver social housing. The PPP model provides a delivery structure whereby social housing homes remain in State ownership throughout. The PPPs will be focussed in cities, in particular Dublin, to support the acceleration of delivery from current levels to the levels required under **Housing for All**. The PPPs will be delivered in partnership with the National Development Finance Agency and experienced tenancy management service providers such as the Approved Housing Bodies, who will provide the required management services for the PPP developments over the operating period.

In addition to the existing acquisitions under the Housing Agency Acquisitions Fund, the Government will fund Local Authorities and AHBs to acquire 200 existing properties each year to provide Local Authorities with the flexibility to provide specific housing solutions aligned with local need, which are otherwise challenging to deliver for location specific, cost, timing or design reasons.

The Government will phase out the use of current leasing models by 2025 through phasing out new entrants to the current leasing arrangements for long-

term delivery and enhanced leasing, in favour of delivery models which ensure long-term ownership of social housing homes. This will be achieved by a shift towards new-build social homes on an unprecedented scale financed by an historic capital commitment. The DHLGH will retain flexibility for Local Authorities to use short term rental availability agreements (RAS-Type) in order to accommodate people on the waiting list in the most appropriate way possible, an annual projection of 200 homes over the course of the Plan is envisaged.

The LDA will assume responsibility for the National Asset Residential Property Services DAC (NARPS) from NAMA, to provide a certain and secure base for the associated social housing which is leased to Local Authorities.

The Government will support Local Authorities to acquire additional land to deliver a housing programme, adding to their existing land banks, in line with the level of social housing to be delivered under **Housing for All** and Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans.

The *Mortgage to Rent* (MTR) scheme assists those in mortgage arrears and who are at risk of losing their homes. It is targeted at supporting households in mortgage arrears who have had their mortgage position deemed unsustainable by their lender under the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP), and who agree to the voluntary surrender of their home and qualify for social housing support. The property in question must also meet certain eligibility criteria. AHBs are an integral

part of the MTR scheme and their participation in the scheme has enabled and continues to enable a significant number of borrowers to remain in their homes as social housing tenants.

The Government will also strengthen the MTR Scheme to ensure that it is helping those that need it, with delivery of an average of 1,000 solutions every year. The principal improvements to the scheme are:

- An increase in the positive equity limit to better align the limits with the range of house prices across the regions;
- Updated purchase price thresholds for properties under the MTR scheme to align them with the Department's acquisition thresholds for social housing generally;
- Additional flexibility in terms of bedroom numbers for borrowers aged 65 and over or where the borrower or one of the joint borrowers or dependents has a disability and the property has had to be adapted to their needs, or the property is specifically suitable to their need without adaptations; and
- Continued oversight to ensure that properties meet private rental standards.

Given the current supply challenges, it will be necessary to continue to provide social housing in parallel via the private rental market for now to ensure that those who are most vulnerable in society can access support immediately. As new-build supply of social housing ramps up, there will be a reducing reliance on the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS).

The State will continue to support the over 60,000 households currently in Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) supported tenancies and to provide funding to support households on social housing waiting lists to secure a HAP supported tenancy, while we increase the levels of housing stock managed by Local Authorities and AHBs.

In addition to the provision of continued support, and in order to safeguard the ability of Local Authorities to assist households source and retain accommodation in the private rented sector under the HAP scheme, the Department will analyse the need to amend the level of discretion available to Local Authorities under the scheme. This analysis will take into account the upward rent pressure seen in recent years in the rental market and the increased use of discretionary powers by Local Authorities to exceed HAP limits, with a view to ensuring adequate levels of support continue to be provided in specific areas and for specific household types. The State will also continue to support existing and new tenancies under the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS).

## Housing Policy Objective 4: Increase Social Housing Delivery

No.		Timeline	Lead
4.1	Deliver over 10,000 social housing homes each year to 2030 and increase the stock of available social housing	Ongoing	DHLGH, LAs, AHBs
4.2	Enhance Local Authorities and AHBs to reach delivery of over 9,500 new build homes on average each year	Ongoing	DHLGH, LAs, AHBs
4.3	Increase the use of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to deliver social housing	From 2024	DHLGH, LAs, AHBs, NDFA
4.4	End long-term leasing of social housing by Local Authorities and AHBs through phasing out new entrants and focussing on new-build to provide social homes	End 2025	DHLGH
4.5	Support Local Authorities to acquire suitable land to deliver a housing programme, based on existing land banks, the level of social housing to be delivered under <i>Housing for All</i> and Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans	Ongoing	DHLGH
4.6	Continue to support households through the HAP and RAS Schemes while levels of social housing stock are increased	Ongoing	DHLGH
4.7	Strengthen the Mortgage to Rent (MTR) Scheme to ensure it supports those who need it	Q4 2021	DHLGH
4.8	Undertake an analytical exercise to examine whether an increase in the level of discretion available to Local Authorities under HAP is required, in order to maintain adequate levels of HAP support	Q4 2021	DHLGH
4.9	Carry out a review of the Rental Accommodation Scheme to consider the role of the Scheme in the private market, taking account of the impact of HAP and AHB participation by end 2022	Q4 2022	DHLGH
4.10	Carry out a review of the structure and operation of CALF to assess whether any refinements to the facility are required to support delivery of social housing by the AHB sector across a wider range of Local Authority areas	Q4 2022	DHLGH
4.11	Review the operation of the Housing Agency Acquisitions Fund	Q1 2022	DHLGH

## 2.2.2 New Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans

The Government will ensure that the ambition of *Housing for All* is translated into clear, target driven Local Authority delivery action plans. Local Authorities will be provided with multi-annual targets for social housing delivery over the lifetime of the Plan.

*Housing for All* outlines the enhanced level of resources that will be made available by the Government to deliver social housing. Based on all of the information available, including the resources made available under the Plan, information available from the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) Tool and the annual Summary of Social Housing Assessments (SSHA), housing targets will be prepared and issued to Local Authorities following the publication of *Housing for All*.

No later than December 2021, Local Authorities will develop and submit to the Minister their Housing Delivery Action Plans covering the next five years. The HNDA Framework and associated tools and data repository are available to inform this work. These Action Plans will be consistent with the relevant adopted Development Plan for that area and any associated environmental assessments. The Plans will set out details on how and when Local Authorities will deliver their housing targets, including the delivery of affordable homes, in the following areas:

- The alignment of the Housing Delivery Action Plan with the National Planning Framework, in particular compact growth objectives;
  - An outline of locations where housing will be delivered (e.g. towns, villages, urban areas, rural areas, etc.) and the planned numbers of homes to be delivered in each area and by year;
  - Details of existing land holdings and land acquisition required to deliver the targets in the Plan;
  - An outline of planned delivery streams used to meet the targets, including the role of the Approved Housing Bodies / LDA or other partners with a focus on delivery through new build;
  - An assessment of housing types and sizes, in accordance with local need, including
    - the adequate proportion of 1-, 2-, 3- and 4- bedroom homes aligned with those needs
    - the provision of housing for people with a disability and
    - the provision of Age Friendly Housing
- and;
- Targets for the use of vacant properties as social housing through Buy and Renew, Construction and Repair and Leasing schemes.

In recognition of the proportion of new housing required across all tenures in the Dublin region, the Dublin Housing Delivery Group (DHDG) has been set up to coordinate and drive delivery of social and affordable housing in the region. The DHDG is led by the four Dublin Local Authority Chief Executives,

who will prepare the Housing Delivery Action Plans for the four Dublin Local Authorities, with support from the DHLGH and Housing Delivery Coordination Office (HDCO). The DHDG will furnish quarterly reports to the Minister setting out progress against the Action Plans.

### Housing Policy Objective 4: Increase Social Housing Delivery

No.		Timeline	Lead
4.12	Local Authorities will prepare Housing Delivery Action Plans to include social and affordable housing delivery	December 2021	LAs

## 2.3 Reform the Social Housing System

Social housing performs a key function in society, ensuring that households, who do not have sufficient resources to meet their housing needs, are provided with social housing supports. The DHLGH is tasked with ensuring that there is a framework for providing housing supports that are flexible and responsive to people’s current and future needs. It is a priority to ensure that the system efficiently delivers social housing supports that are fair, sustainable, and prioritise those most in need.

The social housing waiting list stood at 89,872 households in 2013, rising to 91,600 in 2016 but declining to 61,880 in 2020. The Government plans to reach delivery of an average of over 10,000 social housing homes every year for the next five years and we will continue to

build social housing right out to 2030. Given the current supply challenges, it will be necessary to continue to provide social housing via the private rental market for now to ensure that those who are most vulnerable in society can access support immediately. As new-build supply of social housing ramps up, there will be a reducing reliance on the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS).

Given the waiting lists for social housing, it is appropriate that ongoing review and reform takes place to ensure that social housing supports are targeted appropriately and managed efficiently. There is also a need to ensure that the interests of current tenants in social housing are protected and that a fair and equitable system is in place to respond to their needs.

### 2.3.1 Reform Differential Rents

Local Authority tenants pay a differential rent, which is set by reference to household income. There are 32 differential rent schemes in operation across 31 Local Authorities, which means that Local Authority tenants in different areas on similar incomes do not pay the same rents. This can lead to unfairness. For example, in 2018, the median rent paid by tenants in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown was 63% higher than their counterparts in nearby South Dublin, and the median rent paid by tenants in Carlow was 13% higher than tenants in the neighbouring county of Laois. We will reform the differential rents system and will introduce a national scheme that will standardise differential rents across the country to ensure fairness. Proposals are currently in development regarding the type of model to be adopted. Support will be provided by the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) where necessary.

### 2.3.2 Reform Tenant Purchase Scheme

Local Authority tenants can seek to purchase the property they live in if they meet the criteria set out in the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016. The Government will maintain the right of social housing tenants to purchase their own home and change income eligibility to allow older tenants to buy their homes if they have the means. It will also be required that tenants have been in situ for 10 years. The maximum discount will be reduced to a maximum of 25%. This will

ensure that we strike a balance between enabling tenants to purchase their homes and replenishment of the social housing stock to make homes available for those on the waiting list.

### 2.3.3 Roll Out of Choice Based Letting for Social Housing

Choice Based Letting (CBL) is a method whereby available social housing stock is let by being openly advertised by Local Authorities to persons on the social housing waiting list. This allows qualified applicants to 'register an interest' in available homes. While many housing authorities have adopted CBL, it is not yet in operation in all Local Authorities. The DHLGH is working with the Local Authority sector, through the Local Government Management Association (LGMA) and the County and City Managers Association (CCMA) to progress this and funding has been made available in 2021 to encourage Local Authorities to adopt this method of letting. The Department will continue to work with Local Authorities who do not yet have CBL to progress the standardisation of the CBL systems in place across Local Authorities.

### 2.3.4 Review & Reform Income Eligibility for Social Housing

The Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011 prescribe maximum net income limits for eligibility for social housing supports in each Local Authority area. Different income bands exist in different areas, with income being defined and assessed according to a standard Household Means Policy (HMP). The thresholds for the three bands are currently set at €35,000 (Band 1), €30,000 (Band 2) and €25,000 (Band 3).

As part of the review, the efficiency of the banding model and its application to Local Authorities will be considered. Equivalisation as between singles and families will also be considered. The review will also have regard to new initiatives being brought forward in terms of affordability and Cost Rental detailed in Pathway 1 and will be completed when the impacts of these parallel initiatives have been considered.

### 2.3.5 Examine Regulation of Social Housing

Current social housing tenants have existing rights under the Housing Acts 1966-2019 and the provisions of the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019 apply to all Local Authority dwellings. While social housing is regulated under the above Acts, private rental tenancies are regulated under Residential Tenancies legislation and the private sector benefits from a Rental Sector Regulator, which is the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB). It is intended to establish a Commission on Housing later this year and the Commission will be tasked with examining whether the social housing sector requires independent regulation and to make recommendations to the Minister.

#### Housing Policy Objective 5:

#### Reform the Social Housing System and support Social Housing Tenants

No.		Timeline	Lead
5.1	Reform the differential rents system and introduce a national scheme, which will standardise differential rents across the country to ensure fairness	Q1 2022	DHLGH
5.2	Review the Tenant Purchase Scheme and bring forward changes through legislation	Q4 2021	DHLGH
5.3	Roll out Choice Based Letting (CBL) across all Local Authorities	Ongoing	DHLGH
5.4	Review income eligibility for social housing	Q4 2021	DHLGH
5.5	Task the Commission on Housing to examine the potential for independent regulation of the social housing sector	Q4 2021	DHLGH

## 2.4 Support Social Inclusion

The core aims of our social inclusion policy are to:

- Increase the housing options available to older people to facilitate ageing in place with dignity and independence;
- Deliver an appropriate range of housing and related support services, in an integrated and sustainable manner, which promote equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living for people with a disability;
- Provide high quality Traveller-specific accommodation solutions;
- Provide accommodation for and integration into the community of Programme Refugees and those granted status under the International Protection Process; and
- Support inclusion through the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) and other housing supports.

### 2.4.1 Expand the Housing Options for Older Persons

Under *Housing for All*, we will increase the housing options available to older people to facilitate ageing in place with dignity and independence, including policies and operational supports for older people considering right-sizing to smaller housing homes. We will be informed in this regard by the work of the national *Implementation Group on the Housing Options for our Ageing Population Policy Statement*<sup>7</sup> and its reports.

With the assistance and co-operation of the Department of Health and HSE, the Government will work to ensure that older people are supported to stay in their homes and communities for as long as possible, fulfilling the Programme for Government vision of an age friendly Ireland in which older people can live long and healthy lives, participate in their communities and have a range of housing options and health supports to make this possible.

It is imperative that we plan for our ageing population. Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans (see section 2.2.2) will set out how dedicated social housing provision appropriate to the needs of older people will be delivered, matching the scale and extent of housing need for older people identified. This will focus specifically on delivery of housing appropriately sized and located for older people (drawing on a GIS mapping tool being designed) and working with the existing network of Age Friendly Technical Advisors.

Local Authorities must also consider the needs of older people in the wider planning process. In this regard, the new HNDA Framework, published in April 2021, specifically requires consideration of the housing needs of older people. The evidence considered in the HNDA is then used when making Local Authority Housing Strategies as part of the Development Plan process, thereby ensuring that the planning process fully considers how to provide for the housing needs of the ageing population.

<sup>7</sup><https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ea33c1-housing-options-for-our-ageing-population-policy-statement/>

We must also work to deliver housing for older people in line with Age Friendly and Universal Design principles. The Age Friendly Homes website<sup>8</sup>, a joint initiative of the DHLGH, DoH, the Housing Agency and Age Friendly Ireland, provides a central hub for resources, guidance and information on the provision of homes for older people – from Local Authorities and AHBs to architects, other construction professionals and the wider public. This website will be further developed to encourage those involved in the provision of homes for older people to think more closely about the needs of our citizens as we grow older.

We will review the existing grant programmes to assist older people to live independently. Among the options older people may wish to consider, are possibilities of adapting homes in

versatile ways to suit future needs, while also supporting efficient use of existing stock across the State. These innovative forms of housing redesign and re-organisation not only provide financial benefits but can also provide a sense of security and community for the older homeowners. We will support pilot schemes in this regard.

As the work of the Implementation Group on Housing Options for Our Ageing Population Policy statement reaches its conclusion, we will work with all of the stakeholders, and particularly the Department of Health and the Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service, to develop a new co-operation and co-ordination framework, nationally and locally, and implement Housing Options for Our Ageing Population actions and the new actions set out here.



<sup>8</sup>[www.agefriendlyhomes.ie](http://www.agefriendlyhomes.ie)

### Housing Policy Objective 6:

## Increase and improve housing options for Older People

No.		Timeline	Lead
6.1	Continue to support the development of the Age Friendly Homes portal and website, which promotes awareness of age friendly housing	Ongoing	DHLGH, DoH, Age Friendly Ireland, Housing Agency
6.2	Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans will set out how dedicated social housing provision appropriate to the needs of older people will be delivered matching the scale and extent of housing need for older people identified	Q4 2021	LAs
6.3	Local Authorities will consider the housing needs of older people through the Housing Need and Demand Assessment Framework and feed that into their Housing Strategies as part of their Development Plan process	Ongoing	LAs
6.4	Review the range of housing grants for the suitable adaptation of existing housing	Q4 2021	DHLGH
6.5	Continue delivery of the Age Friendly housing and public realm training modules to cross sectoral stakeholders to promote greater awareness and foster knowledge transfer across the sector	Ongoing	DHLGH, DoH, Age Friendly Ireland
6.6	Support pilots of innovative forms of housing redesign/ reorganisation to deliver additional rental accommodation supply along with support for older homeowners	Ongoing	DHLGH
6.7	Implement the actions under the Housing Options for our Ageing Population Policy Statement, having regard to the Reports of the National Implementation Group	Ongoing	DHLGH, DoH

## 2.4.2 Increase Housing Supports for People with a Disability

### The 2016 Census tells us that 643,131 people or one in seven of the population in Ireland has a disability.

Delivering an appropriate range of housing types and related support services, in an integrated and sustainable manner, is critically important in order to promote equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living for people with a disability.

The current National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability will come to an end in 2021 and work is already advanced on a new strategy, building on the progress made to date. The strategy and implementation plan will represent a roadmap to facilitate access, for people with a disability, to a range of housing and related support services, delivered in an integrated and sustainable manner, and promoting equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living.

Under the guiding principle of **Housing for All** and underpinned by the new Strategy, we must work to deliver appropriately designed and specified housing for people with a disability, in line with the vision and principles of universal design.

Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans will set out how dedicated social housing provision for people with a disability will be delivered by themselves and social housing delivery partners, matching the scale and extent of housing

need identified, and having regard to forecasts in the Department of Health's July 2021 Disability Capacity Review.

Local Authorities must also consider the needs of people with a disability in the wider planning process. In this regard, the new HNDA Framework, referenced above, also specifically requires consideration of the housing needs of people with a disability. The evidence garnered through the HNDA process on disability can then be used when making Local Authority Housing Strategies as part of the Development Plan process, thereby ensuring that the planning process fully considers how to provide for the housing needs of people with a disability.

Together with the Department of Health, the DHLGH will continue to support the transition of people with a disability from congregated settings to community-based living, in particular by providing continued funding through the Capital Assistance Scheme (see section 2.4.5).

For those living with a disability, the co-ordination of appropriately adapted housing provision with the delivery of key health and social care supports is particularly important. Strengthening and supporting such co-ordination frameworks will be a particular focus of the new national housing strategy for people with a disability.

Housing and Disability Steering Groups (HDSGs) have been established in each local authority area. Chaired by the Director of Service for Housing, they consist of representation from the HSE

(both Mental Health and Disability), Approved Housing Bodies operating in the area, and representatives from organisations dealing with different types of disability, including physical, mental health, sensory and intellectual disabilities. In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability, emphasis has been placed on the key need to include Disabled Persons’ organisations. The HDSGs are responsible for the implementation of national policy on

disability and housing at local level and the development and implementation of Local Strategic Plans.

To strengthen their mandate and further develop inter-agency implementation partnership, we will require HDSGs to report quarterly, both to the Chief Executive of the Local Authority and to the Housing Strategic Policy Committees, regarding progress on implementing their local strategic plans and the applicable elements of Local Authority Housing Delivery Plans.

### Housing Policy Objective 7: Increase and improve housing options and supports for people with a disability

No.		Timeline	Lead
7.1	Deliver a new National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability (2022 – 2027) following stakeholder and public consultation and with a range of actions which will detail co-ordination and alignment of housing, health and community supports	Q4 2021	DHLGH, DoH
7.2	Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans will set out how dedicated social housing provision appropriate to the needs of people with a disability will be delivered matching the scale and extent of housing need identified for people with a disability	Q4 2021	LAs
7.3	Local Authorities will consider the housing needs of people with a disability through the Housing Need and Demand Assessment Framework and feed that into their Housing Strategies as part of their Development Plan process	Ongoing	LAs
7.4	Review the range of housing grants available to assist with meeting specific housing needs, including the Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, and implement relevant changes	Q4 2021	DHLGH
7.5	Nominate Disability Friendly Housing Technical Advisors in each Local Authority	Q4 2021	LAs
7.6	Housing and Disability Steering Groups will report quarterly on the implementation of their local strategic plans regarding housing for people with a disability to the Chief Executive and the Strategic Policy Committee	Q1 2022	DHLGH, LAs

### 2.4.3 Support Traveller Accommodation

Addressing Traveller accommodation needs is a priority. In accordance with the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998, Local Authorities have statutory responsibility for the assessment of the accommodation needs of Travellers and the preparation, adoption and implementation of multi-annual Traveller Accommodation Programmes (TAPs) in their areas. The TAPs currently in place across all 31 Local Authority areas cover the period 2019-2024.

The Department's role is to ensure that there are adequate structures and supports in place to assist Local Authorities in providing such accommodation, including a national framework of policy, legislation and funding. A Traveller specific new-build accommodation pipeline is being developed by Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies. The Local Authorities will continue to support the travelling community through dedicated Traveller Accommodation Liaison Officers and Social Worker posts, and the management and maintenance of existing halting sites and group housing scheme accommodation, the financial support for which increased by 50% in 2021.

An annual count/estimate of Traveller households is carried out by Local Authorities. The most recent audited count (2019) indicates that there were just under 11,000 Traveller households in the State, 78% of whom live in standard accommodation. This includes:

- 53 % in Local Authority or approved housing body tenancies;
- 18% in supported tenancies in the private rental sector ;
- 7% in accommodation provided by Travellers from their own resources; and
- 22% of Travellers live in Traveller specific accommodation, broken down as follows:
  - 8% within group housing schemes
  - 9% on authorised halting sites and
  - 5% on unauthorised halting sites

In response to the global pandemic the Department made funding available to Local Authorities to implement measures in relation to Traveller-specific accommodation to help alleviate, where possible, the risk from and spread of Covid-19. This allowed for the purchase of additional mobile homes, touring caravans and demountable dwellings and the development of temporary sites to alleviate overcrowding and facilitate isolation, as required. We will work with Local Authorities to retain and build on the improvements made during the pandemic.

The DHLGH has established a Programme Board to oversee implementation of recommendations of the Expert Group Report on Traveller Accommodation. The Programme Board has already met and agreed a work programme for 2021.

The DHLGH will develop a new and improved preferential caravan loan scheme, initially on a pilot basis in four Local Authorities in 2021, with a view to a full national rollout in 2022. This has the potential to significantly increase the quality and comfort levels of the accommodation available to Travellers living on halting sites.

### Housing Policy Objective 8:

## Increase and Improve accommodation for the Traveller Community

No.		Timeline	Lead
8.1	Work with Local Authorities and AHBs to improve the quality and quantity of delivery of Traveller-specific accommodation	Ongoing	DHLGH, LAs, AHBs
8.2	Introduce a new preferential Caravan Loan Scheme on a pilot basis in four Local Authorities in 2021 with a view to a full national rollout in 2022	Q4 2021	DHLGH, LAs
8.3	Prioritise the implementation of recommendations contained within the Traveller Accommodation Expert Group Report	Ongoing	DHLGH
8.4	Prioritise implementation of the recommendations of the 'Independent Review of the Role of Social Workers and Personnel Employed by Local Authorities Specifically to Assist Travellers with their Accommodation Needs'	Ongoing	DHLGH
8.5	Explore with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) the feasibility of an all island approach to the provision of a network of Transient Sites across the island of Ireland	Q1 2022	DHLGH, NIHE

### 2.4.4 Support International Protection and Refugee Accommodation

Local Authorities played a central role in the successful first round of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme, with 2,871 persons (571 families) accommodated across 23 counties. Local Authorities will agree national spatial distributions for the accommodation of the 2,900 refugees under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme 2020-2023 and will source and provide accommodation, as well as supporting integration of refugees and their families into local communities.

Local Authorities, the DHLGH, and agencies under its remit, will also support the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) in its implementation of the *White Paper to End Direct Provision and to Establish a New International Protection*

*Support Service* policy proposals and the IRRP Programme 2020-2023.

In relation to the White Paper, The Housing Agency will provide expert advice on sourcing, delivery and management of accommodation. Local Authorities will work to agree a national spatial distribution key for accommodation and will also play an important role in community and service access integration. Applicants for International Protection who are granted status may become eligible for social housing and will be assisted by Local Authorities in this regard.

Local Authorities and The Housing Agency will be supported by DCEDIY with the resources required to carry out the work arising from implementation of the provisions of the White Paper and the IRPP 2020-2023.

### Housing Policy Objective 9: Provide housing and supports to facilitate community integration for Refugees

No.		Timeline	Lead
9.1	Local Authorities will agree a national spatial distribution key with DCEDIY for the accommodation of the 2,900 refugees under IRPP 2020-2023. They will also source and provide accommodation and support integration of the new arrivals under the IRPP through the ongoing work of the existing county wide interagency working groups	Q4 2021	LAs, DCEDIY
9.2	Local Authorities, DHLGH, and its agencies, including The Housing Agency, will support DCEDIY as appropriate in implementation of the provisions of the White Paper and IRPP 2020-2023	Ongoing	DHLGH, Housing Agency, DCEDIY

### 2.4.5 Continue the Capital Assistance Scheme

The housing and accommodation needs of a range of vulnerable individuals and families, whether permanent housing or temporary/emergency needs, are also supported through funding provided under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS), as well as through other social housing delivery programmes. CAS brings together the local strategic leadership of the Local Authorities with the skills and commitment of AHBs and other NGOs. The supports for such individuals and families are also coordinated with a range of Departments and Agencies such as HSE and Tusla.

Funding under CAS has grown in recent years and in 2021 stands at €96m. This funding supports priority areas such as age-friendly housing, accommodation for individuals and families who are homeless and housing for people with a disability. The work of Local Authorities, AHBs and NGOs in these important areas is coordinated with Age Friendly Ireland’s Technical Advisors, with Joint Consultative Homeless Fora and with

Housing and Disability Steering Groups (HDSGs) working across all 31 Local Authority areas.

In the last few years, the Department has also used CAS to support other important and emerging areas of housing need delivered by AHBs, involving coordination on the ground with the HSE, Tusla and others. This has included the development of new refuges for victims of Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, housing for care leavers (people exiting State care at the age of 18), de-congregation (people with a disability are being enabled to move from large institutions (congregated settings) to their own homes in the community with the support they need, thereby enabling people to ‘live ordinary lives in ordinary places’) and returning emigrants (assisting qualifying emigrants to help them explore secure housing options and to assist in their return home, primarily to social housing schemes back in their native areas). As such, this scheme performs a very important function in directly funding housing for the most vulnerable of sectors of society.

#### Housing Policy Objective 10:

#### Provide Capital Assistance Scheme funding to improve social inclusion

No.		Timeline	Lead
10.1	Provide capital funding for further development of housing for the specific vulnerable cohorts eligible for CAS funding, in alignment with support services provided through State agencies and NGOs	Ongoing	DHLGH

# 3

## Pathway to Increasing New Housing Supply





Figure 12:  
Pathway to Increasing New Housing Supply

# 3 Pathway to Increasing New Housing Supply

- Over 300,000 new homes by 2030 to address pressure on the housing market.
- 33,000 new homes per annum on average to 2030, including over 9,500 new-build social and 6,000 affordable homes per annum.
- An annual average in excess of €4bn annual funding for housing, through an overall combination of €12bn in direct Exchequer funding, €3.5bn in funding through the Land Development Agency (LDA) and €5bn funding through the Housing Finance Agency.
- Updated, *Kenny Report* style, active land management powers with fairer sharing of the increase in land values resulting from zoning decisions and more gain for the community.
- Overhaul and simplification of planning legislation to ensure certainty and stability.
- Judicial Review process reforms, and introduction of new division of High Court for Planning and Environmental cases to reduce planning delays.
- State land bank to provide up to 15,000 homes and State to fund Local Authorities for land acquisition.
- Introduction of a new tax to activate Vacant Lands for Residential Purposes, to replace the Vacant Site Levy.
- New Fund *Croí Cónaithe (Cities)* to address Acute Viability Challenges in Urban areas that are curtailing homeownership.
- Focus on providing an adequate supply of available serviced zoned land, within required densities.
- Increased skills and capacity requirement, including additional employment requirement of 27,500 new construction jobs to meet annual required output levels.



Housing supply is a key focus for the Government. While many housing issues are complex to tackle, a simple lack of supply to meet demand is a significant part of the problem. Research has shown that the State needs an average of 33,000 houses to be built every year to 2030. Therefore, this Pathway is focused on how to move from building approximately 20,000 homes a year to an average of 33,000 homes per annum between now and 2030.

Increased supply will need to come from all quarters, both in terms of significantly increased Government investment in social and affordable housing and from private housing supply. The State will mobilise its own land and will activate as much supply as possible from those lands.

The State will also support private supply by direct activation measures and new active land management powers detailed in this Pathway and through the broader enabling measures detailed in Chapter five, by tackling viability issues and cost reductions, as well as fostering innovation in the construction sector. In tandem, broad reforms of planning and regulatory frameworks, as well as strengthening the capacity of delivery partners, will enable supply to reach the levels required.

The first building block of supply is land. Each Local Authority has been given targets to inform the amount of zoned land required based on the need for an annual average of 33,000 homes. The Government will ensure adequate supply of available and serviced zoned land, including provision of additional State lands to the LDA, capable of accommodating up to 15,000 homes.

The Government will change the system of urban development and will obtain an increased share of value uplift that occurs when land is zoned for housing, or designated for development including housing, with a significant proportion of the increase in value going to public bodies through a combination of new land value sharing measures and Part V. Where current suitable residential development zoning has not been acted on, a new tax to activate vacant lands for residential purposes will apply to encourage landowners to bring forward proposals with enhanced complementary measures to secure an appropriate amount of contributions when planning permission is granted.

Regeneration and development will be integrated into the planning process through the introduction of new Urban Development Zones. This will enable public authority-led master-planning of an area that has been identified as having significant capacity for growth well in advance of individual site planning applications. This will ensure that the scale of development and level of investment required is clearly understood and provided for at the outset, while also ensuring more effective public participation in housing proposals at the earliest possible stage.

There are enough existing planning permissions already in the system to produce the required level of supply required in the next few years. However, due to problems with viability and costs, particularly in urban areas, developers are not building. A new Fund, *Croí Cónaithe (Cities)*, will be focused on activating housing supply through enhanced viability measures targeted at developing properties for individual household purchasers, including first-time buyers and right-sizers. It is intended to complement

other measures that focus on affordability and homeownership. The measure will stimulate activation of existing planning permissions for build-to-sell apartment developments of four floors or more, above a certain density threshold, and this will be complemented by the sanction of a tax to activate vacant lands for residential purposes.

The labour requirements to deliver 33,000 homes, on average, per annum will be set out clearly and any gaps will be addressed through training and development and also through international labour markets where necessary. Capital requirements for public housing will be provided through NDP funding. Private sector housing will be funded through the domestic banking sector and State financial agencies. Recourse to international capital investment will be supported through proactive engagement with international institutional investors and others.

An annual average of 9,500 new-build social housing homes, together with an average of 6,000 affordable and Cost Rental homes, will be provided over the lifetime of **Housing for All**, enabled by multi-annual planning by Local Authorities, an expansion in the capacity of Local Authorities and streamlining social housing approval processes.

### 3.1 Increase Land Availability for Residential Development

By 2040, an additional one million people will be living in Ireland. The State is acting decisively to activate supply across both public and private lands. This is critical to ensuring that the new homes to be built over the next decade are located where housing demand is greatest and where there is good accessibility to employment, education, public transport, and other services and amenities.

The Government is informed in its approach to land availability by the NESC reports on housing in 2018<sup>9</sup>, 2020<sup>10</sup> and 2021<sup>11</sup> Recognising that aspects of the housing system are dysfunctional, the NESC reports have emphasised the need to change the system of urban development, land management and housing provision. The Government is therefore bringing forward a suite of measures to address the changes required, including the introduction of a significant new measure to achieve Land Value Sharing and a strong Land Development Agency.

The Government will make public land available for residential housing purposes. It will increase the sites available to the LDA to build housing and continue to fund Local Authorities to purchase land for social housing. It will make the necessary reforms to the planning system to make the development process as streamlined as possible.

<sup>9</sup> *National Economic and Social Council Report 145: Urban Development Land, Housing and Infrastructure: Fixing Ireland's Broken System, April 2018*

<sup>10</sup> *National Economic & Social Council Report 150: Housing Policy: Actions to Deliver Change, November 2020*

<sup>11</sup> *National Economic & Social Council Secretariat Paper No 24.: Housing and Urban Development Policy Priorities, April 2021*

A steady supply of suitable and serviced zoned land is needed, while also considering and factoring in a proportion of projected housing need to be met on unzoned land in rural areas. The NPF and the NDP align national spatial and investment plans. Both the NPF and NDP reflect a balanced approach to regional development, including the growth of regional cities and policies intended to secure the sustainable growth of more compact urban and rural settlements. As part of the ‘Review to Renew’, the review of the NDP, a particular emphasis is placed on the alignment between NDP investment and the NPF.

Local Authorities and elected members play a key role in zoning enough land to meet residential housing requirements, while also respecting the requirements for balanced regional development and the need to prevent urban sprawl. Housing Supply Targets (HSTs) have been issued to each Local Authority to inform their contribution to the average of 33,000 new homes required per annum. These targets also enable more detailed local analysis of housing need and demand through the new HNDA<sup>12</sup>

Framework which will inform each Local Authority Housing Strategy and Development Plan.

It may be necessary for a Local Authority to zone more serviced land in a development plan than would equate to meeting precisely the projected housing demand for that settlement, to provide choice in sites locally and to avoid restricting the supply of new housing development through inactivity on a particular landholding. These additional provisions are detailed in updated Development Plan Guidelines (DPGs) for Planning Authorities, which issued for public consultation under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act. Updated guidance will also issue on sustainable urban development, including density and rural housing. To improve residential quality and support the objectives of the National Planning Framework, namely promoting compact, sustainable and liveable settlements, the DHLGH will develop Section 28 guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable and Compact Settlement Guidance (SCSG), which will consolidate existing guidance in this area.

### Housing Policy Objective 11:

## Provide Planning Guidance for delivery of housing on zoned lands

No.		Timeline	Lead
11.1	Finalise section 28 Guidelines on the making of Development Plans	Q4 2021	DHLGH
11.2	Develop section 28 Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable and Compact Settlement Guidance (SCSG), including guidance on housing typologies to facilitate innovative approaches to medium and higher densities	Q4 2021	DHLGH

<sup>12</sup><https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ea99-housing-need-and-demand-assessment-hnda/>

## 3.2 Update Urban Development powers to address the *Kenny Report*

Land zoning and investment in services and infrastructure add significant value to land and sites. NESC is of the view that *“Ireland must bring about a fundamental change in its system of urban development, land management and housing provision”*. This must include *“bridging the supply gap by actively managing land and locational value for public good”*. NESC strongly advocate a ‘whole of system’ approach, which can address housing and planning, land and infrastructure.

Taking into account the *Kenny Report*<sup>13</sup> and more recent publications by NESC and others, the State needs an up-to-date mechanism that can be applied in a fair, equitable and proportionate manner to achieve national housing and urban development objectives. This includes securing a share of land value gain arising from public policy decisions and investment, for wider public benefit and community gain.

It is difficult for Local Authorities to secure direct community gain from zoning, investment or granting planning permission for development, even though the State is responsible for facilitating zoning and the provision of services and infrastructure. Benefits are currently restricted to ‘Part V’<sup>14</sup> social and affordable housing requirements and ‘Section 48’ / ‘Section 49’ development contributions, which may be applied at the latter stages of the planning process.

Such requirements generally take effect after the majority of the uplift in value arising from zoning or investment has accrued, often to those other than the site developer.

Part V obligations and development contributions do not generate sufficient revenue to address the cost of providing land, infrastructure and housing to meet the needs of sustainable communities, particularly for development at scale on an area-wide basis. Given continued population growth, changing demographics and an urgent need for climate action, enhanced measures that obtain a greater share of the uplift in the value of land or sites arising from public policy decisions in respect of zoning and investment, will be put in place.

### 3.2.1 Introduce Land Value Sharing

A new system of Land Value Sharing (LVS) is being developed on the basis of current/existing land-use value. The concept involves securing a proportion of the value uplift of a development site, tracked from a point of zoning or designation, to a point of planning permission. These proposals reflect the very significant increase in market value derived from re-zoning and State investment and will ensure that the community benefits as a result.

There are a number of inter-connected areas which LVS measures can operate to deliver these benefits. In the first instance, an LVS measure is intended to apply to all new residential (or mixed-use

<sup>13</sup> *The ‘Kenny Report’ refers to the Report of the Committee on the Price of Building Land (1973)*

<sup>14</sup> *Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended, currently provides for a share in the uplift to be provided to the State to be used for social housing. An additional obligation to provide for affordable & cost rental homes was introduced under the Affordable Housing Act 2021*

development that includes residential) zoning. This will be accompanied by a new register of zoned residential development land, which will be developed with appropriate regard to the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

In addition, where land or areas are designated for development,

in particular areas which have been identified as having significant potential for development including housing such as Urban Development Zones (as set out at Section 3.2.2 below), LVS measures will apply and may include specific mechanisms to facilitate land assembly for the provision of communal infrastructure.

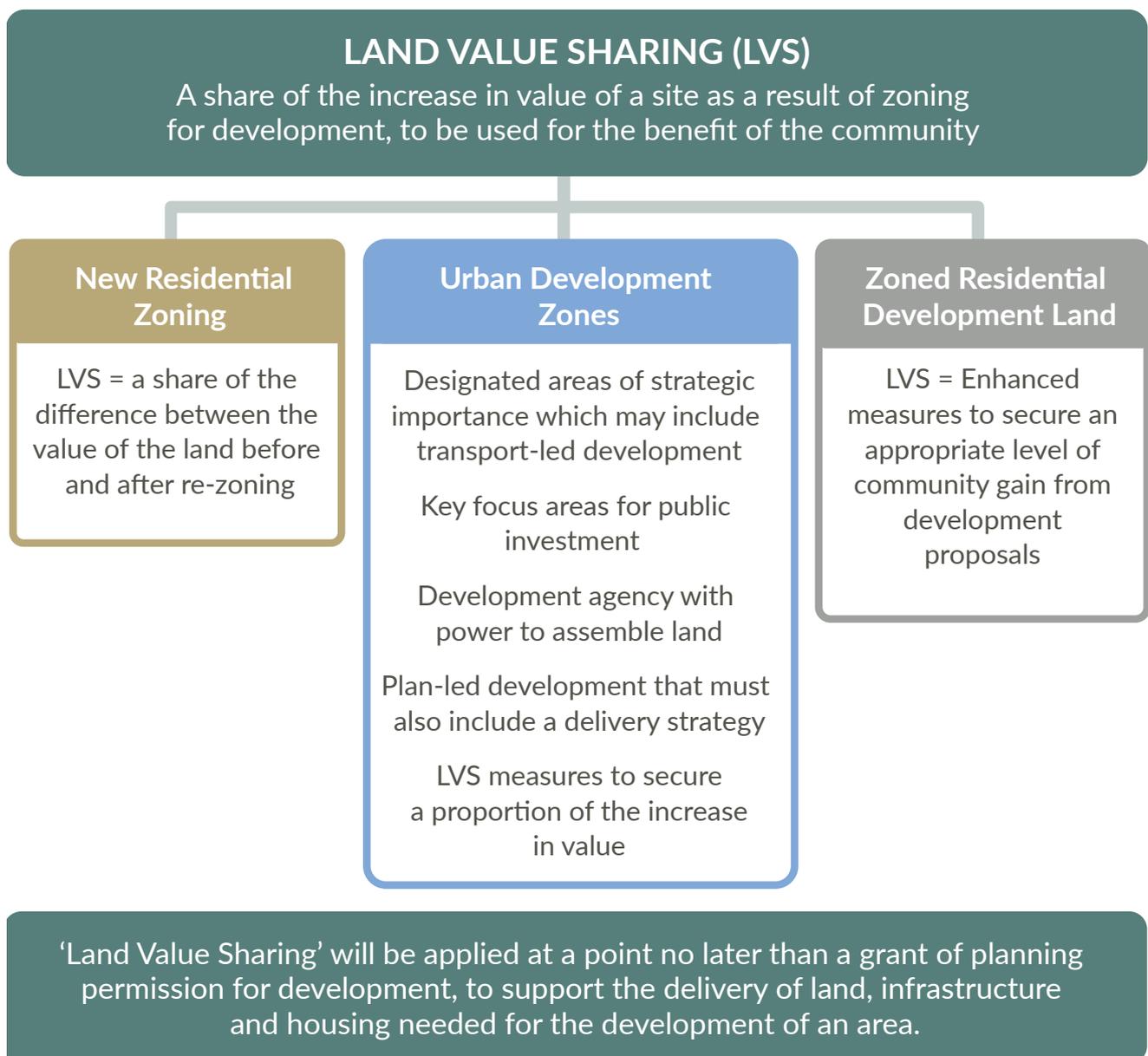


Figure 13:  
Land Value Sharing (LVS)

There is also a need to encourage activity on land which is currently zoned and is suitable for residential development by means of a tax to activate vacant lands for residential purposes (as set out at Section 3.4.2 below).

Finally, there will ultimately be enhanced complementary measures to secure the appropriate level of contributions from development on zoned land as it comes forward, beyond the levels currently provided for by Section 48/49 development contributions. This will be after a period of at least six years and is to ensure an equitable approach that provides both market signalling and sufficient scope for the timely development of currently zoned lands. This is in effect, a 'use it or lose it' type mechanism for zoned development land.

The Land Value Sharing (LVS) measure will operate in addition to any Part V obligations and will secure financial contributions and/or land for the provision of public infrastructure and facilities and subject to need, may also be used to provide further social and/or affordable housing. The current system of Section 48 and 49 development contributions will remain in place to be gradually replaced by the Land Value Sharing (LVS) measures, as and where

they become applicable. These proposals will provide a more comprehensive and effective means of ensuring that an appropriate share of the increase in value of a development site is secured which will benefit the community.

The introduction of these measures will act as a clear signal to landowners and purchasers of development land as to the obligations that will result from public decisions relating to the zoning and designation of land for residential development.

These measures will thereby address fundamental and systemic issues in the land market by providing more certainty and stability from the outset. This will work to reduce the 'hope value' which currently leads to speculation in the land market at too early a stage in the development process, which affects the viability of development and inflates the cost of housing. As a result, these measures will also provide a wider benefit through increasing the supply and reducing the cost of housing over the longer term. Legislative proposals are being developed to give effect to this concept, which will contain appropriate measures to reflect a fair and proportionate approach, with a focus on ensuring that measures improve the viability of housing delivery.

### 3.2.2 Introduce new Urban Development Zones

The Urban Development Zone (UDZ) mechanism takes the planning focused Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) concept and expands it to address development and regeneration of urban areas with significant potential for housing. UDZ designation will be applicable to large-scale areas in single or multiple land ownerships that could include public and/or private lands and sites and transport-led development areas.

The introduction of UDZ's will address situations where speculation by early mover landowners in the planning process leads to an increased price expectation on the part of neighbouring landowners. This makes site assembly and the provision of necessary community infrastructure difficult and costly. A combination of elevated land prices and infrastructure hurdles can ultimately render development unviable.

The UDZ concept will include:

- A development agency role for Local Authorities and/or the LDA;
- An appraisal stage, prior to designation to identify the broad development potential of the relevant area and the extent of physical and community infrastructure likely to be required to support development, including public transport infrastructure;

- Oversight of the LVS mechanism applicable to the area, backed up with CPO powers;
- A plan-led process that includes a key decision making role for the local planning authority and provides up-front certainty for both communities and the development sector;
- Post-designation fast-track planning arrangements where development proposals are submitted in accordance with an approved scheme; and
- Prioritisation of UDZs for complementary State investment to ensure housing delivery at scale, including up-front enabling of strategic infrastructure and services, including public transport.

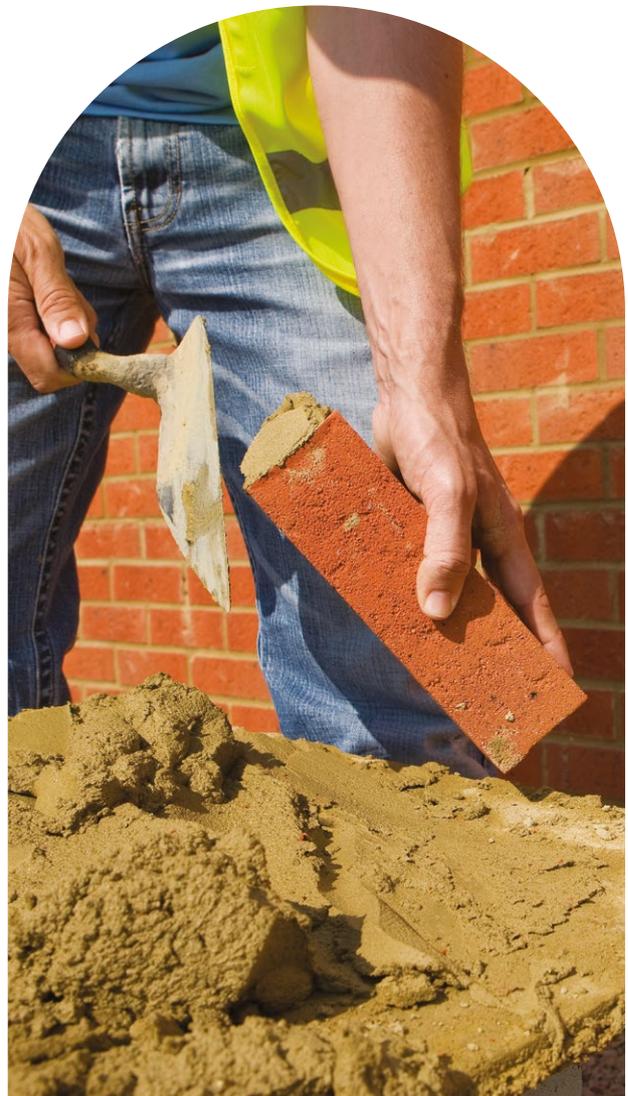
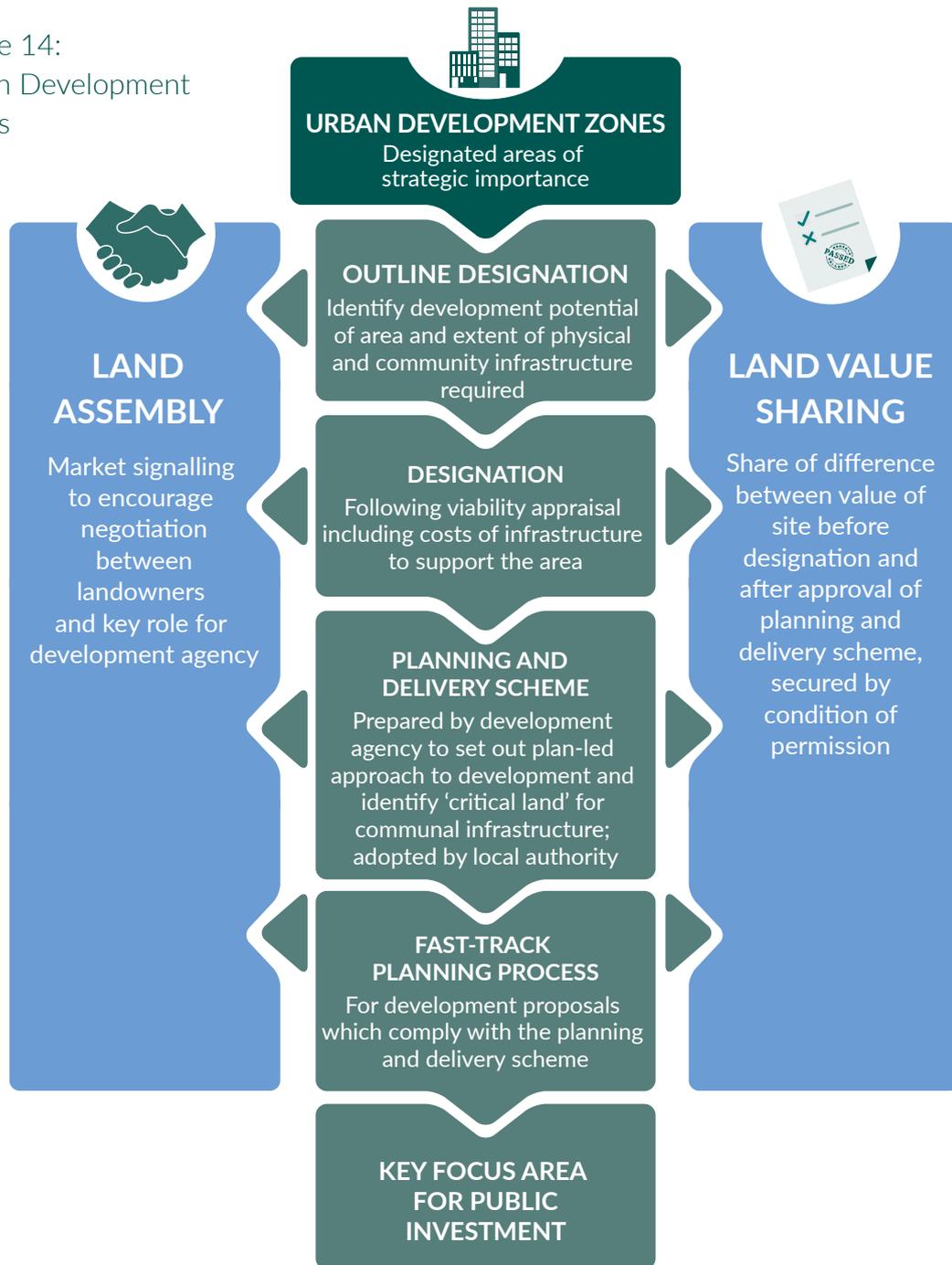


Figure 14:  
Urban Development  
Zones



The UDZ mechanism facilitates a development agency co-ordinating role for viability appraised masterplanning. It will be supported by land value sharing, an equalisation mechanism and State investment in strategic infrastructure, to achieve sustainable housing delivery at scale. Where the LDA is the development agency, they will have capacity to enable the strategic assembly

of land and/or the provision of necessary infrastructure.

In support of this, future calls for funding under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund, which is funding major urban regeneration in cities and larger towns, will have the acceleration of residential development as one of its key criteria.

### 3.2.3 Introduce New Planning Arrangements for Large-Scale Residential Developments

New arrangements will be introduced for Large-Scale Residential Developments (LSRD). Following stakeholder engagement, and aligned with commitments in the programme for Government, these new arrangements will replace the current Strategic Housing Development (SHD) arrangements and will comprise three stages:

- **Pre-application consultation stage –** planning authorities will be required to complete the final consultation meeting aspect of the pre-application consultation stage - including the provision of an opinion as to whether the proposals constitute a reasonable basis for moving to the next phase and submitting a planning application - within 8 weeks of receipt of such meeting request from the developer/project promoter.
- **Planning application stage–** planning authorities to determine LSRD planning applications within eight weeks of receipt, with limited scope for ‘further information requests’ in the light of the pre-application consultation phase.
- **Appeal stage –** An Bord Pleanála will be required to determine LSRD appeals within a certain timeframe (which may be generally 16 weeks from receipt), again with similar limited scope for ‘further information requests’.

These streamlined LSRD arrangements, involving mandatory timelines, have the potential to be almost as time-efficient as the SHD arrangements they are replacing, while also returning the primary decision-making function to the local level, with the associated gains in terms of public participation. These arrangements will apply to applications for 100 homes or more, or student accommodation bed spaces of 200 bed spaces or more. Up to 30% of the gross floor space of the proposed development will be allowed for commercial use, acknowledging that these developments are most prevalent in brownfield urban areas.



### Housing Policy Objective 12:

## Deliver a new approach to active land management

No.		Timeline	Lead
12.1	Develop land value sharing mechanisms to replace current development levy arrangements with arrangements, which reflect the uplift in value arising from the zoning of lands	Q4 2021	DHLGH
12.2	Develop proposals for new Urban Development Zones, to deliver a coordinated and transparent approach to the delivery of residential and urban development, particularly on brownfield sites, meeting the compact growth objectives of the National Planning Framework	Q4 2021	DHLGH
12.3	Introduce a new planning process for Large Scale Residential Developments to replace the Strategic Housing Development (SHD) process	Q4 2021	DHLGH
12.4	Incorporate acceleration of residential development as key criteria for the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)	Ongoing	DHLGH

### 3.2.4 Improve the Functioning of the Planning Process

New arrangements will be introduced for An effectively performing planning system is a critical foundation of a sustainable housing sector. The key objective over the coming years is to ensure that the planning system is well resourced and is plan led, with greater public acceptance for more predictable planning outcomes reflecting needs of both the existing and new populations, and a system which reflects the transformational changes in land use and activation measures outlined above.

Ireland is fortunate to have a planning system that enables considerable public participation. We need to build on this

for the modern era by streamlining, reforming and reviewing our planning legislation. To this end, a review of the planning code will be conducted with the Office of the Attorney General which will be completed by December 2022. It will not impinge on the advancement of legislative proposals already being progressed in relation to large scale residential development or the land use and activation measures set out in this Plan.

In addition, work is advancing on the reform of the judicial review process pertaining to the planning system, primarily to ensure that appellants access the administrative system fully in advance of court processes, and that matters of substance are referred

to the courts. The new processes, which will be fully compliant with the State's obligations under the Aarhus Convention, will come into effect on the establishment of a new Division of the High Court to deal with planning and environmental matters.

In this context, the purpose of the review of the planning legislative code will be to ensure that, from a policy perspective:

- The major debate, particularly on scale of housing requirements to meet needs, in line with objectives of compact urban growth and environmental sustainability, is focused on the plan-making rather than the application stage, to facilitate greater clarity and long-term visibility in planning outcomes;
- Adequate account is taken of the needs of the future population of new and expanded communities, as well as the needs of existing communities; and
- Appropriate account is taken of the nature of planning decisions, which require careful balancing of public policy, public participation and environmental issues.

The review will also include a fitness check and upgrade of relevant provisions of planning law to ensure that it is more accessible and streamlined from a legal perspective.

There are a range of areas where updated planning guidance is required to support the operation of the system. It is intended to publish updated guidelines for planning authorities on strategic environmental assessment, updated

rural housing guidelines to address the role of rural housing in a broader rural development and settlement context, and updated guidelines on the development management process. From a housing perspective, it is important to ensure that there is stability and certainty in the development sector and therefore, it is not proposed to review planning guidance on apartment development and building heights until 2025.

In tandem, work is advancing to introduce e-planning (see also section 5.4.3) in all Local Authorities by mid-2022 and the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) is also rolling out a programme of learning and development for the planning service.

As part of this extensive reform agenda, a Planning Advisory Forum will be established, with wide stakeholder membership, to input to the evolving policy and legal agenda.

## Housing Policy Objective 13: Improve the functioning of the planning system

No.		Timeline	Lead
13.1	Introduce new legislation to reform the judicial review process, in compliance with EU legal requirements, so that reforms come into effect on the establishment of a new Division of the High Court dealing with planning and environmental issues	Q2 2022	DHLGH
13.2	Establish a new Division of the High Court dealing with planning and environmental issues	2022	DoJ
13.3	Carry out a comprehensive review and consolidation of planning legislation	Q1 2022 and ongoing	DHLGH, AGO
13.4	Issue updated guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment	Q4 2021	DHLGH
13.5	Issue updated guidance on rural housing	Q4 2021	DHLGH
13.6	Issue updated guidance on the development management process	2022	DHLGH
13.7	Establish a Planning Advisory Forum, with wide stakeholder membership, to input to the evolving policy and legal agenda	Q4 2021	DHLGH
13.8	Introduce e-planning in all Local Authorities (see also Action 24.11)	Q2 2022	DHLGH, OPR
13.9	Roll out a programme of learning and development for the planning service with Local Authorities and An Bord Pleanála	Q2 2022	OPR



### 3.3 Increase Supply through the Land Development Agency

The enactment of the Land Development Agency Act, 2021, establishing the LDA as a commercial State Agency, marks an historic move to use all lands available to the State to provide for housing supply and affordability needs. The Land Development Agency is a step change in the Government's involvement in the housing market and represents a crucial lever in terms of reaching a sustainable housing market.

In broad terms, the LDA has two main functions:

- Coordinating appropriate State lands for regeneration and development, opening up key sites which are not being used effectively for housing delivery; and
- Driving strategic land assembly, working with both public and private sector landowners to smooth out peaks and troughs of land supply, stabilising land values and delivering increased affordability.

By assembling land packages ahead of the planning and infrastructure stages, the LDA can lower development land costs and tackle upward pressure on house prices. The LDA will enable Government to address traditional volatility in land prices as a result of land speculation, as well as delays in delivering housing and strategic urban redevelopment generally, as a result of delays in delivery due to disparate land ownership and cost allocation for infrastructure.

Establishing the LDA creates a powerful new driver of urban regeneration with the lands, skillsets and capital needed that will assure housing delivery, including the social, affordable and market housing so badly needed for our citizens.

The LDA will work with Local Authorities, State agencies and the private sector to deliver housing and to identify public and private land for development purposes. The DHLGH will ensure that the funding and resourcing required to enable the LDA to procure large scale supply is available.

#### 3.3.1 Make more State land available to the LDA

The LDA already has access to an initial tranche of State lands and is actively developing these sites, but we will now provide access to a further tranche of lands, which are appropriate for housing, that have been drawn from across State bodies who all understand that we must prioritise housing. In the case of many of the lands, the relevant State bodies are already actively engaged with the LDA, including considering the wider urban development of areas, and the potential for synergies with the future development of public transport and ports services for example.

## List of State lands planned for transfer to the Land Development Agency

Parent Department	Organisation	Lands
Department of Transport	CIE  Ports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inchicore Works, Dublin</li> <li>• Broadstone garage, Dublin</li> <li>• Conyngham Road garage, Dublin</li> <li>• Colbert Station environs, Limerick</li> <li>• Lands in Dublin Port</li> <li>• Lands in Cork Port</li> <li>• Lands in Limerick Docklands</li> </ul>
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Digital Hub Development Agency (DHDA)  ESB  Bord na Mona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All DHDA land and property assets, Dublin 8</li> <li>• Inchicore, Dublin</li> <li>• Cork Docklands</li> <li>• Wilton, Cork</li> <li>• Sean Mulvoy Road Galway</li> <li>• Cork Docklands</li> </ul>
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Teagasc Horse Racing Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lands at Kinsealy, Dublin</li> <li>• Lands at Carrickmines, Dublin</li> </ul>
Department of Defence	Defence Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Bricin's Hospital, Dublin</li> </ul>
Department of Health	HSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colbert Station area, Limerick</li> </ul>
Department of Enterprise	IDA Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kilbarry, Cork.</li> </ul>
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	OPW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inchicore, Dublin</li> </ul>
Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage	Ervia (Gas Networks Ireland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limerick Docks</li> </ul>

The process of due diligence on these lands, led by the LDA in consultation with the relevant department, will determine the appropriate residential yield and other issues arising such as relocation of services. In this context, and having regard to the provisions of the LDA Act, the lands will transfer to LDA ownership as soon as practicable. The LDA will advance projects through the normal planning process, which will include public participation in compliance with the Aarhus Convention.

These lands have the potential to deliver up to 15,000 homes and in many cases form part of a major revitalisation of urban centres, with benefits to the wider community from the scale of associated social and community infrastructure which will be planned and delivered in tandem with the residential units. Government departments will work closely together to identify further appropriate lands that could be developed for housing.

In line with the provisions of the LDA Act 2021, the LDA will report regularly to Government on the use of State lands, and this will afford the opportunity to consider whether further lands are more appropriate for residential development and should be transferred to the LDA. There is also a requirement on all State

bodies to offer lands that they propose to sell to the LDA in the first instance. The LDA will also be required under the Act to publish a Register of Relevant Public Land and an embryonic prototype has been developed and is available on the LDA's website.

### Housing Policy Objective 14: Bring forward additional State lands for activation

No.		Timeline	Lead
14.1	New tranche of State lands to be provided to the LDA with potential to deliver up to 15,000 homes	From 2021	All
14.2	LDA to develop a public lands database and regularly report to Government on the potential reuse of such lands for housing	Ongoing	LDA



### 3.4 Activate Planning Permissions

#### 3.4.1 Provide a new *Croí Cónaithe* (Cities) Fund

Over the last three years to 2020, there has been an appreciable increase in planning permissions that have been

granted but have not commenced building, particularly for apartments. It is estimated that there are approximately 70,000 -80,000 residential units with planning permission granted nationwide, that have not yet commenced. The un-commenced figure is around 40,000 in Dublin, which is about four years of housing supply in the capital.



#### Planning Permissions 2020



Figure 15: Planning Permissions 2020

Source: CSO 2020

A key focus of this plan is to ensure that these permissions are activated as quickly as possible, and this requires tackling both affordability and viability barriers to development.

Lack of viability is constraining the development of apartments for the purpose of sale rather than rent in the built-up areas of cities that are more suited to higher-density residential development.

The twin NPF objectives of tackling climate change and delivering more compact growth require action to ensure that we see developments at scale in our cities, particularly close

to public transport nodes and existing infrastructure. There is therefore a strong public policy imperative to develop housing in our cities. In addition, there is a strong demand for urban living, with people wanting to live close to work and urban amenities but, despite the policy support and the evident demand, the supply of apartments for sale at a price people can afford is not forthcoming.

In order to ensure that new apartments will be developed for sale to individual households at a lower cost, a new fund is being established called the *Croí Cónaithe* (Cities) Fund. This Fund will

have the objective of addressing the viability challenge and activate housing supply at density, mainly in city areas.

It will apply to developments over a certain height/density threshold and, through a competitive bid process, will ensure that these developments can be built at lower cost for sale to owner occupiers.

The level of Exchequer investment per home will be a maximum of 20% of the total cost of the eligible unit of residential accommodation and there will be an overall limit on the level of support. Effectively, the home will be delivered to purchasers at a lower cost with the reduction broadly equivalent to the level of VAT and development levies. This achieves the aim of stimulating development and ensuring that apartments are made available for sale in our cities at lower prices.

The fund will be managed by The Housing Agency on behalf of the Department and open book accounting will be required, to ensure that the financial support provided feeds through in reduced costs to the home-buyers and the leveraging of homes which would not otherwise be provided.

This type of upfront stimulus will accelerate supply in the right places at a more affordable price in the immediate future and, coupled with the longer term measures addressed in this Pathway, will provide the right environment for housing supply to come forward more quickly than it would otherwise have done.

### 3.4.2 Implement a new Tax to Activate Vacant Land for Residential Purposes

The overarching objective of Government is to ensure that where land is zoned for residential purposes, and permissions granted, that these proposals come to fruition as quickly as possible to meet housing need. Therefore, in tandem with the reforms to incentivise the bringing forward of supply, there is a need to balance this with penalties for non-activation of sites. This will include a new tax to activate vacant land for residential purposes (to replace the current vacant site levy).

This measure forms an essential and effective part of the Government's commitment to the 'use it or lose it' principle in planning. Under this concept, the zoning for residential purposes or granting of permission, must be activated within a reasonable period, or the benefits accruing, will be diminished through this taxation measure, changes in land value sharing and if planning permission expires, any new grant of permission will be subject to the new and additional Part V obligations.

## Housing Policy Objective 15: Activate existing planning permissions

No.		Timeline	Lead
15.1	Introduce the <i>Croí Cónaithe (Cities)</i> Fund to ensure that planning permissions for apartments in high density areas already secured by 2021 are activated by the end of 2025 for build to sell	Q4 2021	DHLGH
15.2	Introduce a new tax to activate vacant land for residential purposes (to replace the current Vacant Site Levy)	Q4 2021	DFIN

### 3.5 Increase Labour and Sectoral Capacity

Delivering on the ambition set out in *Housing for All* will require a vibrant and innovative construction sector that supports the development of its existing workforce, including through lifelong learning, and presents an attractive and sustainable career for those preparing to enter the labour force.

The *Building Innovation Report*<sup>15</sup> undertaken by the Construction Sector Group identifies a series of high impact actions to be undertaken to increase innovation and output in the sector in order to deliver the economic and social infrastructure that this country needs. More than ever, Ireland needs a competitive, dynamic, and sustainable construction sector that can deliver high quality physical infrastructure for all our citizens.

Following the major reversals associated with the financial crisis, the industry experienced a steady and determined improvement between 2014 and 2019. Construction sector employment and investment picked up over this period, with employment growing from just

over 100,000 whole time equivalent workers in 2014, to almost 150,000 at the end of 2019. The Covid pandemic has since intervened and caused major disruption to the sector. A critical issue for the sector is to seek to re-establish the workforce gains made pre-pandemic to the greatest extent possible, as there are significant time-lags in providing the necessary skills to prospective employees new to the sector. For example, training of a craft apprentice can take up to four years, while architecture courses are five years' duration, followed by two years in professional practice to achieve professional registration.

To deliver an average of 33,000 houses and apartments (and beyond) will require an expansion of the current workforce. This will happen through the attraction and retention of those with the necessary pre-existing skills and the provision of new training opportunities for those interested in a career in the construction sector. This will require a plan to support the industry in returning existing workers to full

<sup>15</sup><https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/827c7-construction-sector-group-building-innovation/>

employment and proactive engagement with international labour where supply is unavailable locally. It will also require further ramp-up in education and training opportunities, including commitment regarding programmes and apprenticeships and delivery of new courses.

The Action Plan on Apprenticeship 2021-25 contains an ambitious commitment to increase apprenticeship registrations to 10,000 per annum, almost double the 2020 intake. There are now 60 different apprenticeship types (with a further 18 in development) and they extend well beyond the construction sector or traditional craft trades. Working with employers in the construction sector to expand their employment of apprentices will be critical to a medium term, sustainable approach to the future availability of necessary skills.

The 2020 *Building Future Skills Report*<sup>16</sup> sets out Ireland's built environment skills demand until 2030; 50 percent of the key roles are mapped to apprentice trades. However, it is intended that the forecasts in this report will be revised to take account of two forthcoming studies commissioned by the *Expert Group on Future Skills Needs*;

- Labour Demand Estimates for Ireland's National Housing Targets, 2021-2030, and
- Skills to Enable the Low Carbon Economy to 2030.

The forthcoming *Labour Demand Estimates for Ireland's National Housing Targets, 2021-2030* Report estimates that total labour demand from housing construction will need to rise from approximately 40,000 full-time equivalent workers at present, to 67,500 workers by the middle of the decade, to achieve an annual average of 33,000 homes over the decade. As the backlog of housing output has built up, a further increase, possibly up to 80,000 workers may be necessary. The Report also estimates the labour demand across the key occupations for the Built Environment, from architects to construction operatives. For example, it is suggested that approximately 2,500 additional carpenters will need to be recruited or trained in total in order to reach the target of 33,000 homes per annum.

The forthcoming report on the *Skills to Enable the Low Carbon Economy to 2030* will also identify further workforce requirements in relation to the Climate Action Plan's retrofit targets and the construction of renewable energy projects.

*Building Future Skills* forecasts will be revised to take account of the subsequent forecasts to achieve housing targets and the transition to a low carbon economy. Meanwhile education and training output will be aligned with these requirements.

<sup>16</sup><https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/Publications/Building-Future-Skills.html>

The DFHERIS and its agency, Solas, will deliver an integrated education and training sector response to these skills forecasts, in particular through the forthcoming Solas 'Strategy for Construction Services'. The DETE will also make any necessary changes in the employment permit system in order to increase the number of construction skilled workers required to expand the supply of housing.

In addition to the scale of labour across the range of activities associated with delivering housing, support services for professionals including insurance, etc., will need to be considered to ensure adequate capacity.

All of the above initiatives to address the supply of skills are predicated on employers and the construction industry generally continuing to review the attractiveness of its career offering to current and prospective employees, promoting careers in the construction sector and partnering with education and training providers to provide upskilling and reskilling through professional bodies, Skillnet Ireland, apprenticeships and further and higher education and training providers.

The above will be complemented by the actions to be delivered to drive economic sustainability and reduce construction costs over the longer term, detailed in Chapter Five, section 5.3.1.

### Housing Policy Objective 16: Improve Sector Innovation and Attractiveness

No.		Timeline	Lead
16.1	Implement the actions set out in the Building Innovation Report to increase innovation and output in the sector	2021	Construction Sector Group
16.2	Industry to review and promote the attractiveness of careers in the construction sector through a coordinated marketing campaign targeted at school leavers and career changers as recommended in the Building Innovation Report	Ongoing	Industry Representative Organisations, Construction Sector Group
16.3	Support quality of construction and enhance safety within the construction sector through a licensing system for certain specified construction activities to replace the existing qualification system	Q4 2022	DFHERIS
16.4	Ensure that the construction sector is supported to innovate in terms of construction methodology and technology through the establishment of the Construction Technology Centre by Enterprise Ireland with a priority focus on residential construction	Q4 2022	DETE, Enterprise Ireland

**Housing Policy Objective 17:**  
**Deliver the labour force required to build an average of 33,000 homes per year**

No.		Timeline	Lead
17.1	Formulate an up-to-date overall skills forecast for the construction sector taking account of the forthcoming 'Labour Demand Estimates for Ireland's National Housing Targets' and 'Skills to Enable the Low Carbon Economy to 2030' and prioritised policy objectives for the sector	Q4 2021	DETE
17.2	Deliver an integrated education and training sector response to align education and training provision for new and existing workers with the <i>Labour Demand Estimates for Ireland's National Housing Targets, 2021-2030</i> and forthcoming Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) forecasts	Ongoing	DFHERIS
17.3	Implement recommendations from the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) 'Building Future Skills' report and construction related recommendations from forthcoming EGFSN 'Skills to Enable the Low Carbon Economy to 2030' report	Q4 2021	DFHERIS, All
17.4	Reduce COVID-19 related backlogs on practical education and training programmes, including apprenticeships	Q4 2022	DFHERIS
17.5	Implement the Action Plan on Apprenticeship 2021-25	Q4 2025	DFHERIS
17.6	Modify employment permit schemes as necessary to attract the required numbers of construction employees, participate in recruitment fairs internationally to attract workers to Ireland	Ongoing	DETE

## 3.6 Make Capital available for Housing

The capital requirement to provide an average of 33,000 new homes per annum to 2030 is estimated to be at least €12bn every year, through a mix of public and private investment. Ensuring a sustainable source of financing across the four tenure types requires an unprecedented mobilisation and a coordinated effort across all forms of financing. Non-State sources of funding will be crucial to the long term success of *Housing for All*. International capital markets and private investment, both domestic and international, will play a key role.

The interaction of the various funding streams, and the specific actions as set out below, will ensure the financing will be in place to deliver an average of 33,000 homes a year over the lifetime of this plan. The DFIN will assess, on a biannual basis, the adequacy of funding available from sources, including the domestic and international banking sector, capital markets and international capital, to complement public investment to meet the demand for 33,000 homes across the various tenures. In addition, the funding expertise of the National Treasury Management Agency can be drawn upon when considering financing options.

### 3.6.1 Expand Exchequer Funding for Social and Affordable Housing Delivery

Ireland's social housing sector has traditionally been financed by Exchequer funding and this will continue under *Housing for All*. Significant additional Capital investment for social and affordable housing has been secured under the NDP. Within the 'Compact Growth' Strategic Investment Priority, the NDP will provide up to €12bn between 2021 and 2025 for the broad range of social and affordable measures contained in this plan. State capital investment in housing will grow from over €1bn in 2018 to historic levels and continue to increase year-on-year as social and affordable pipelines grow. Coupled with this, the necessary investment in Infrastructure will be provided, including for URDF and Water services. This level of funding is unparalleled and demonstrates the commitment on behalf of Government to delivering on the policies in *Housing for All*.

**On a per capita basis, Ireland is one of the largest providers of social housing in the OECD and we intend to expand our social housing footprint further to play our part in increasing social housing supply.**

We will provide the appropriate mix of funding and delivery streams to ensure that our housing delivery programme delivers the maximum number of homes, while maximising value for money for the Exchequer.

### 3.6.2 Provide additional funding for the Land Development Agency

Following from the enactment of the Land Development Agency Act 2021, the LDA will be capitalised with €1.25bn in equity from ISIF (Ireland Strategic Investment Fund), and will have the capacity to borrow a further €1.25bn, thereby giving it total funding capacity of €2.5 bn. The Government recognises that a further increase in LDA funding will be required in future years in light of increased levels of activity envisaged under this Plan for the LDA. This is likely to be in the form of an increased borrowing capacity of approximately €1bn in 2024 and the Government is committed to working with the LDA to assist it obtain this funding. This additional funding will allow the LDA to:

- Deliver on its pipeline of housing, including on additional State lands;
- Deliver accelerated affordable housing through *Project Tosaigh*, as detailed in Pathway 1; and
- Assume responsibility for the National Asset Residential Property Services D.A.C (NARPS) from NAMA. This will provide a certain and secure base for the associated social housing that is leased to Local Authorities.

### 3.6.3 Facilitate lending for Social and Affordable housing

Indirect financing for the purposes of constructing or acquiring social and affordable housing is a key enabler, with the Housing Finance Agency (HFA) being the primary lender. The HFA with its long

experience in the sector, is well placed to play a lead role in continuing to finance Local Authorities, AHBs and the education sector to deliver housing. We will provide the HFA with the necessary resources to match the demand for financing over the lifetime of **Housing for All**. This will support local government sector delivery, by facilitating further land acquisition and utilising new delivery mechanisms.

The Government will bring forward legislation to increase the HFA borrowing capacity from €10bn to €12bn, with a review in two years, to support the local government sector in land acquisition and delivery of social and affordable homes. The HFA will strengthen relationships with international funding partners (such as the European Investment Bank/Council of Europe Development Bank) to access targeted funding.

The HFA can play a further role to enhance supply of student accommodation. Borrowing for student accommodation by traditional universities is off-balance sheet, but such borrowing by Technological Universities and Institutes of Technology is on-balance sheet and subject to Government approval. Section 21 of the Technological Universities Act 2018 provides for borrowing by Technological Universities. The Government will legislate to allow for Technological Universities to borrow from the Housing Finance Agency.

### 3.6.4 Expand State-facilitated Development Finance

Home Building Finance Ireland (HBFI) was established in order to increase the availability of senior debt funding for residential development in response to an acute shortage of housing supply. HBFI has received extensive interest from the residential development sector and has approved over €500m in funding since its launch in January 2019, supporting the potential delivery of over 2,400 new homes across a range of development sizes. HBFI has €730m of funding available for residential development, with an ability to raise a further €750m if required. HBFI will continue to remain agile and will respond to on-going disruption in the market, as it did in response to the initial shock triggered by Covid-19 through its introduction of their Momentum Fund product. HBFI will continue to closely monitor developments across the wider market to respond where possible to ensure that the supply of new homes is not disrupted due to a lack of funding.

### 3.6.5 Secure Non-State Financing

External sources of finance will be needed to bridge the gap between the overall funding requirement to build an average of 33,000 homes each year, and that provided via direct Exchequer funding, State borrowing, HBFI and the domestic banking sector. Institutional investment in the residential sector will reduce reliance on bank funding for development; this is important in building broader capital markets for housing development. There is an increasing recognition of the importance attributed by investors to achieving positive environmental and social impacts on a sustainable basis; housing is well placed to attract sustainable and ethical financing from investors with strong environmental, social and governance standards. The Department of Finance will lead communication and engagement with institutional investors, including through tradeshow events, to communicate policies and encourage appropriate investment in residential accommodation in Ireland.

Approved Housing Bodies will also have a key role to play as agents for attracting sustainable investment into social and affordable housing. This avenue will continue to be explored, including the potential accounting classification of AHB proposals. The Department of Finance's Statistical Unit will assist the DHLGH in assessing investment proposals, in particular from the AHB sector, to assess the likelihood of attaining an off balance sheet statistical classification.

**Housing Policy Objective 18:**

**Ensure sufficient capital is available to provide for an average of 33,000 homes per year**

No.		Timeline	Lead
18.1	Quantify the adequacy of funding available to meet the demand for 33,000 homes across the various tenures	Q4 2021	DFIN
18.2	Allocate €12bn in direct Exchequer funding for social and affordable housing between 2022 and 2025	Q3 2021	DPER
18.3	Agree the process which will allow for the transfer of 'NARPS' from NAMA to the LDA	Q4 2021	DHLGH, DFIN
18.4	Legislate for increased borrowing for the LDA to facilitate expanded early delivery	Q1 2024	DHLGH
18.5	Legislate to increase the borrowing capacity of the Housing Finance Agency (HFA) to €12bn, with a review in 2 years, to support the local government sector in land acquisition and delivery of social and affordable homes	Q2 2022	DHLGH
18.6	Strengthen relationships with international funding partners (such as the European Investment Bank/Council of Europe Development Bank) to access targeted funding	Ongoing	DFIN, Housing Finance Agency
18.7	HBFI will continue to deploy capital in line with demand to fund the delivery of new homes, including through accessing its additional borrowing capacity of €750m as required. HBFI will also continue to review product offerings in line with demand to ensure that the supply of new homes is not disrupted due to a lack of funding	Ongoing	DFIN, HBFI
18.8	Lead communication and engagement with institutional investors, including tradeshow events, to communicate policies and encourage sustainable investment in residential accommodation	Ongoing	DFIN
18.9	Assess investment proposals, in particular from the AHB sector, as to the likelihood in attaining an off balance sheet statistical classification	Ongoing	DFIN, DHLGH
18.10	Bring forward legislation to allow Technological Universities to borrow from the Housing Finance Agency	Q2 2022	DHLGH, DFIN

# 4

Pathway to  
Addressing  
Vacancy and  
Efficient Use  
of Existing  
Stock





Figure 16:  
Pathway to Addressing Vacancy  
and Efficient Use of Existing Stock

# 4 Pathway to Addressing Vacancy and Efficient Use of Existing Stock

- Targeted approach to vacant stock combining Local Authority leadership, URDF / RRDF funding, Retrofit and Heritage funding.
- A new *Croí Cónaithe (Towns)* Fund to provide serviced sites for new homes and to support refurbishment of vacant homes in regional towns and villages.
- Introduce incentives for rental and sale of vacant properties owned by participants in the Fair Deal scheme.
- Implement new regulations requiring Short Term and Holiday Lets to register with Fáilte Ireland.
- Use CPOs to target up to 2,500 vacant properties for onward sale.
- Collect data on vacancy levels in residential property with a view to introducing a Vacant Property Tax.
- Introduce a Planned Maintenance approach for Local Authority stock management and maintenance.
- Activate State owned vacant properties.
- Tackle Unfinished estates.



At a time of such high housing need, we have to ensure that the houses we already have are being fully used. While the reasons for vacancy are often complex, we do not want to see habitable properties lying idle while people are homeless or living in unsuitable accommodation. There are also other types of vacant properties that could be converted to residential use, while there is potential to use existing stock more efficiently.

Many areas of cities and towns and villages of all sizes face the blight of vacant properties, which, if brought back into use, could add real vibrancy to towns of all sizes around the country, and new accommodation in both urban and rural areas. This is a clear ambition of the Government's *Our Rural Future* policy and will be supported by a range of broader enabling actions envisaged as part of the development of the Town Centre First approach. In the *National Economic Recovery Plan 2021* the Government committed to recovering differently, through a balanced, sustainable and inclusive approach for our people and our regions, with actions to ensure a balanced and inclusive recovery. Acknowledging the work of Local Authorities in the response to Covid-19, **Housing for All** recognises the opportunity to reimagine and transform our cities and towns, noting the potential positive impact, for example of remote working, and the National Broadband Plan. In particular, there is a real opportunity to increase residential development in cities and town centres, with a consequent emphasis on amenities and quality of life.

Addressing vacancy and dereliction has to form a key part of this response. The URDF and the RRDF are transformative funds that can provide the financial support to re-imagine the broad functioning of our cities, towns and villages.

Within this context, the Government is focused on ensuring that existing housing stock is utilised to its fullest extent possible.

## 4.1 Establish and Fund a Town Centres First policy

To make our towns and villages better places in which to meet, live and work, the Government is committed to the development of a Town Centre First approach which seeks to align policies and to target available resources to deliver the best outcomes for town centres. The DHLGH and the DRCD are currently progressing the commitment and associated actions in relation to the Town Centre First approach, and this will be published shortly. The overall approach will align with the objectives of the NPF. While the overall policy envisages the implementation of a strategic approach to town centre regeneration, promoting residential occupancy in our rural towns and villages will be at the heart of the plan. Implementing the Town Centre First approach will require a broader 'area enabling strategy' providing both advisory and financial supports for property owners and those seeking homes in towns.

While programmes such as the URDF and the RRDF are primarily intended to support wider town regeneration, these programmes also facilitate optimal use and reuse of existing properties and contribute to the creation of conditions conducive to housing developments in towns.

Therefore, under the umbrella of these two funds, Local Authorities will be encouraged to use the range of legislative and financial tools to deliver on the vision for their area. The URDF and RRDF offer substantial funding for the regeneration of cities and towns. To date, some €1,277m has been allocated from the URDF to the metropolitan areas and key driver towns, while €323m in URDF funding, in addition to €249m in RRDF funding, has been earmarked

for projects in other towns. Combined, this investment will make a substantial difference to the liveability of these areas.

Further calls for funding under the URDF will separately address the needs of cities and towns, and, aligned with the approach under the RRDF which deals with towns below 10,000 population, specific criteria will be included to encourage the activation of vacant properties within the overall vision for towns, and to bring stock back into productive use.

This funding will be integrated with proposals on retrofitting and existing supports, such as the Better Energy Homes Grant, to ensure the architectural heritage of towns is preserved.

### Housing Policy Objective 19: Address Vacancy in housing

No.		Timeline	Lead
19.1	Publish the new Town Centre First policy, which will include approaches to utilising existing and new financial incentive mechanisms	Q4 2021	DHLGH, DRCD
19.2	Use the Better Energy Homes Grant to support retrofit for vacant properties	Ongoing to to 2030	DECC
19.3	Incorporate activation of vacant properties as key criteria in the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)	Ongoing	DHLGH, DRCD

## 4.2 Harness European Regional Development Funding to tackle vacancy

Regional Assemblies, as the managing authorities of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in Ireland, are currently developing the 2021-2027 Programme for the next round of

Structural Funds, of which some 8% of the total provision must be dedicated to urban areas. It is envisaged that the tackling of vacancy and dereliction in towns, in support of the Town Centre First approach, will be a particular emphasis for this future round of this element of funding, which is to be agreed by early 2022.

### Housing Policy Objective 19: Address Vacancy in housing

No.		Timeline	Lead
19.4	Harness European Regional Development Funding to tackle vacancy and dereliction in towns	Q2 2022	Regional Assemblies

## 4.3 Launch a CPO Programme for Vacant Properties

Many Local Authorities are involved in the compulsory purchase of vacant properties, some as part of their URDF projects or in combination with existing schemes. This activity can be further accelerated in line with the recommendation of the Indecon Report on the Taxation of Vacant Residential Property<sup>17</sup> that a major programme of compulsory purchase orders should be activated by Local Authorities to purchase vacant properties via their compulsory purchase powers, even when these dwellings are not suitable for social housing.

Local Authorities will combine these CPO acquisitions with their engagement in existing buy and Renew and Repair and Leasing schemes, and a broader programme of affordable housing for sale

in order to maximise opportunities to return vacant properties to productive use. This programme will be supported by a bridging finance facility from the Housing Finance Agency for property acquisitions.

A central advisory service will be established in The Housing Agency to assist Local Authorities with the process. Vacant Homes Officers are already in situ in each Local Authority and are currently funded through the DHLGH. We will ensure that this is a full time position. They will be responsible for driving this programme forward.

The objective will be for Local Authorities to acquire at least 2,500 vacant units by 2026 and present them to the market for sale.

<sup>17</sup>Indecon Report on the Taxation of Residential Properties, September 2018

## 4.4 Reform the Fair Deal Scheme

The Government has introduced amendments to the Nursing Homes Support Scheme to cap the payment on sale of an applicant's principal private residence to three years. Up to now the sale of a principal private residence by a Fair Deal applicant could have led to uncapped contributions to the scheme. The amendments brought forward will cap this contribution to three years at 7.5% of the value of the property per annum, as is the case where the property remains unsold.

Further amendments to the Nursing Homes Support Scheme will be made later in 2021 in order to exempt rental income from a principal private residence when calculating the income of an applicant. Local Property Tax returns for 2020 indicate up to 7,800 vacancy exemptions were processed due to illness. While the conditions of the exemption do not specifically refer to the Fair Deal Scheme, it might be assumed that a significant portion of these relate to the Scheme and the changes proposed to both the sale and rental of property outlined here could release a significant number of homes to the sale and rental markets.

## 4.5 Activate State owned Vacant Properties

The State, its Departments and Agencies are the owners of large amounts of property. It has already been agreed that State entities that own vacant or underutilised land, which may be suitable for housing, will offer that land to the Land Development Agency. It is now also agreed that all Government departments will examine their existing portfolio of properties and, subject to any obligations under the Public Spending Code, the LDA Act 2021 or the State Property Act 1954, will place them on the market if they are not required and may be suitable for residential housing. This will allow for more efficient use of those buildings and provide opportunities for individuals and families to convert suitable buildings into homes.



**Housing Policy Objective 19:  
Address Vacancy in housing**

No.		Timeline	Lead
19.5	Introduce a new programme for the CPO of vacant properties for resale on the open market	Q4 2021	DHLGH, LAs, Housing Agency, Housing Finance Agency
19.6	Ensure Vacant Homes Officer position is full-time	Q4 2021	DHLGH, LAs
19.7	Implement the amendment to the Nursing Home Support Scheme (Amendment) Act 2021 to extend the three-year cap on Fair Deal contributions from the principal residence to the proceeds of sale of the principal residence, removing the disincentive to bringing vacant homes back onto the property market. Modify operation of the Fair Deal Scheme accordingly	Q3 2021	DoH
19.8	Amend the Nursing Home Support Scheme Act 2009 to remove disincentives against the rental of vacant properties by participants in the Fair Deal scheme in a way that is targeted, equitable, evidence-based and provides appropriate safeguards for vulnerable older people	Q4 2021	DoH, DHLGH
19.9	All Government Departments will examine their existing portfolio of properties and, subject to any obligations under the PSC, the LDA Act 2021 or the State Property Act 1954, will place them on the market if they are not required and may be suitable for conversion to residential accommodation	Q4 2021	All

**4.6 Tackle Unfinished Estates**

Local Authorities are responsible for the management and administration of unfinished housing developments. The latest data from a 2020 survey shows that 123 developments remain on the ‘unfinished’ list. Within the remaining cohort of 123 developments, 58 developments are unoccupied. These developments mainly contain partial

shells and units at foundation level, are securely fenced off and are located in low demand areas. The remaining 65 developments containing residents will be the focus for Local Authorities to work towards a satisfactory resolution. In total, at the time of survey, there were 326 houses vacant and 13 apartments. Local Authorities will work towards minimising that vacancy level.

**Housing Policy Objective 19:  
Address Vacancy in housing**

No.		Timeline	Lead
19.10	Local Authorities will work with the appropriate stakeholders to resolve issues within estates still categorised as ‘unfinished’ with a view to minimising any vacancy levels	Ongoing	DHLGH, LAs

## 4.7 Introduce a new *Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund*

The Government will introduce a specific programme, to be delivered by Local Authorities, for the provision of serviced sites for housing to attract people to build their own homes and to support the refurbishment of vacant properties, enabling people to live in small towns and villages in a sustainable way.

This fund will be part of the wider *Croí Cónaithe* Fund referenced in Pathway 3, but specifically focussed on towns and villages. There is significant potential for Local Authorities to support homeownership in these areas by making available serviced sites at a reduced cost or providing a grant to support the refurbishment of vacant properties where the level of vacancy / dereliction is high. A pathfinder programme will be initiated as part of this fund, to facilitate the making available of some 2,000 sites for

homes by 2025, depending on demand. The programme will be reviewed at that point. This will be complemented by investment by Irish Water in servicing of small towns and villages, from a water and waste water perspective.

Such development, further to NPF *National Policy Objective 18b*, will be incremental, small scale, walkable (including to and from the town/village centre) and will occur on sites that have access to adequate water supply and provision for disposal of domestic effluent. Such developments should also be guided by responsive design principles so that they are integrated into the town/village with a close visual relationship to the prevailing vernacular. The DHLGH is addressing this in the context of the development of 'sustainable settlement guidance', the terms of reference and timelines for which will be developed alongside the Town Centre First approach.

### Housing Policy Objective 19: Address Vacancy in housing

No.		Timeline	Lead
19.11	Establish a <i>Croí Cónaithe (Towns)</i> Initiative focused on towns and villages	Q4 2021	DHLGH

## 4.8 Collect Data on Vacancy with a view to introducing a Vacant Property Tax

The Government has set out above a suite of incentives available to encourage re-use of properties. However, in addition, options are being examined to introduce sanctions for non-use of residential property so that there is some penalty for leaving a property vacant while so many are in need of homes.

The Local Property Tax returns in November 2021 will provide data on vacancy levels in residential property which will be used to assess the merits and impact of introducing a vacant property tax.

In addition, once supports are in place for tackling vacancy, the Government will empower Local Authorities to remove the rates vacancy refund to stimulate use of vacant properties, if they choose to do so.

### Housing Policy Objective 19: Address Vacancy in housing

No.

Timeline

Lead

19.12	Collect data on vacancy levels in residential property with a view to introducing a vacant property tax	Q2 2022	DFIN
19.13	Commence section 9 of the Local Government Rates and other Matters Act 2019 with a view to empowering Local Authorities to offer rates based incentives for the conversion of suitable vacant commercial properties to residential use	Q1 2022	DHLGH

## 4.9 Unlock the Potential to Utilise Heritage Building Stock

The Government recognises that in order to resolve the housing crisis we need to give consideration to every viable and sustainable option at our disposal.

We recognise that our built heritage and in particular the tens of thousands of older houses and properties in our cities, towns and villages, can contribute to **Housing for All**.

**Housing for All** will dovetail with Government's 'Town Centres First' policy to leverage housing capital finance, other funding sources and mechanisms to bring families and people back into the heart of our urban centres and settlements.

Providing housing solutions to families and individuals that are close to services, that maintain vibrancy in town centres, that reduce car dependency, that do not use up edge of town greenfield sites and address isolation through integrated communities, will be core to our approach.

Such policy is also in keeping with our climate sectoral targets for the built environment through adaptive reuse and repurposing; accounting for the locked up carbon in the materials of older buildings.

Concentrating efforts in our urban centres is in keeping with a compact growth agenda, where housing is located close to public transport routes and where walking and cycling will become the dominant form of mobility within our town centres.

The Historic Towns Initiative is a capital grant scheme, operated in conjunction with the Heritage Council, for the heritage-led regeneration of our historic towns. In future the initiative will be adjusted to encourage private owners and/or occupiers to bring vacant floor area in historic buildings back into use and projects that address dereliction and vacancy will be particularly focussed on, subject to going through the planning process as necessary. This will be built upon and more strongly incentivised, with a dedicated stream and an additional €2m in funding in the 2022 scheme.

The heritage-led regeneration of our old urban centres will drive growth in traditional skills and apprenticeships, multiplying the impact of capital housing spend.

Under the new strategy for our built vernacular heritage, to be published shortly, we will promote the rehabilitation of vernacular buildings, large numbers of which are lying derelict in both rural and urban areas. It will provide information, advice and supports to property owners, prospective owners and building practitioners on how to approach such buildings. There will be actions to assess environmental performance and careful retrofitting, to enhance training of craftspeople and builders, and to present models for successful rehabilitation.

In practical terms, the National Policy on Architecture, to be published later in 2021, aims to “*Design places for climate neutrality, climate resilience, circularity and sustainability*” and includes actions to “*provide appropriate guidelines on the energy upgrading, repair and adaptation of the existing building stock of traditional and historic construction*”. With appropriate

funding and resourcing, this can be progressed in the short-term and will be critical to the repurposing of our historic structures and reuse for residential purposes.

The Department will also publish guidance later this year for the appropriate energy upgrading of traditional buildings that will inform the reuse of those buildings.

Much housing demand within Local Authorities is for smaller homes for single people. Our town centres, above shops and older building stock can provide solutions through adaptive reuse, backfilling plots in towns, converting former retail units to full occupancy and infilling derelict sites within town, city and village settings.

We will provide additional guidance, including planning guidance, relating to protected structures and create an enhanced residential component next year under our existing heritage capital grant programme - the Historic Structures Fund. The core aim of this fund is to “*encourage the regeneration and reuse of heritage properties and to help to secure the preservation of protected structures and/or historic-culturally significant assets*”. A dedicated stream under this fund will offer a small number of grants from €50,000 up to €200,000 for larger enhancement, refurbishment or reuse projects involving heritage structures, where a clear residential benefit has been demonstrated. Such projects must be advanced through the planning process as necessary. There is obvious scope here to grow this stream, with a suggested allocation of €2m per annum growing to €5m per annum over the plan period.

**Housing Policy Objective 20:  
Make more efficient use of existing housing stock**

No.		Timeline	Lead
20.1	Work in a partnership approach with Local Authorities, AHBs, heritage NGOs, the Heritage Council and the Heritage Division within DHLGH to unlock the potential in our villages, towns and cities to utilise heritage building stock (pre 1940) to help tackle the housing crisis, recognising in particular Sustainable Development Goal 11; Sustainable cities and communities	Ongoing	DHLGH, LAs, AHBs, Heritage NGOs, Heritage Council
20.2	Develop guidance relating to protected structures to encourage the use of such properties for repurposing and/or refurbishment as residential accommodation	Q2 2022	DHLGH

**4.10 Extend Planning Exemptions to 2025 to complement Town Centre First objectives**

We will review and extend the regulations that exempt certain vacant commercial premises, such as ‘over the shop’ type spaces, from requiring planning permission for change of use for residential purposes to 2025.

**Housing Policy Objective 20:  
Make more efficient use of existing housing stock**

No.		Timeline	Lead
20.3	Review and extend planning regulations that exempt certain vacant commercial premises from requiring planning permission to change of use for residential purposes to 2025	Q4 2021	DHLGH

### 4.11 Introduce new regulations for Short Term Lettings

During the period of the pandemic, we saw much-needed accommodation, typically used for short-term letting purposes, returning to the long-term private rental sector, thereby increasing supply in the long-term rental market with positive impacts on rental prices. The Government will bring forward

revised regulatory controls requiring the registration of Short-Term and Holiday Lets with Fáilte Ireland. This will be based on best international practice and with a view to ensuring the availability of long-term residential accommodation, balanced with the needs of the tourism sector, as appropriate. The Residential Tenancies Board will be tasked with an enforcement role as part of this process.

#### Housing Policy Objective 20:

#### Make more efficient use of existing housing stock

No.		Timeline	Lead
20.4	Develop new regulatory controls requiring Short-Term and Holiday Lets to register with Fáilte Ireland with a view to ensuring that homes are used to best effect in areas of housing need	Q2 2022	DTCAGSM, DHLGH

### 4.12 Drive Efficient Use of Private and Social Housing Stock

Making more efficient use of both private and social housing stock is important for long-term sustainability. Addressing vacancy is one element of this but under-occupation of existing housing is another element that can be considered, alongside new supply.

The Government will develop a national policy on rightsizing to highlight the potential of rightsizing for households that no longer fully occupy their current privately owned accommodation and will explore options to support and incentivise rightsizing on a voluntary basis.

The DHLGH and Local Authorities will ensure that Local Authority accommodation is used in the most efficient manner possible and the DHLGH will develop a national rightsizing policy to apply to social housing accommodation.

Local Authority social housing properties are a key State asset built up over time and provide housing for those in our society who must rely on the State to meet their housing needs. Local Authorities and central Government must ensure the optimum management and maintenance of their stock, including quality and compliance with letting standards. They must also ensure minimum vacancy and re-let times for all Local Authority stock.

Local Authorities are statutorily responsible for social housing stock management and maintenance. They are supported in this regard by the DHLGH in terms of strategy and funding. The Exchequer has funded the refurbishment of 16,102 voids between 2014 and 2020. A record number of 3,607 voids were funded by the DHLGH in 2020. This has continued in 2021 with funding being made available to Local Authorities to bring approximately 3,000 voids back into use.

This very significant investment has had a hugely positive impact on the level of long-term and legacy vacancy within the Local Authority housing stock and has positioned the Local Authority sector well to transition from a response-based approach to a strategic and informed planned maintenance approach based on stock condition surveys.

The required sectoral shared ICT solution is being put in place by the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) and stock condition surveys will be carried out on all Local Authority homes over the next five years. Initially, the Exchequer will continue to financially support the management and maintenance of the Local Authority housing stock but, over time, Local Authorities will be required to ensure that rental income is ring fenced for this purpose.

**Housing Policy Objective 20:  
Make more efficient use of existing housing stock**

No.		Timeline	Lead
20.5	Develop a national policy on rightsizing and explore options to support and incentivise rightsizing on a voluntary basis	Q1 2022	DHLGH
20.6	Move to a planned management and maintenance model for Local Authority stock supported by the LGMA's work on developing an asset based ICT system	Q1 2024	LAs, LGMA
20.7	Work with relevant Departments and Local Authorities to move to a position where housing revenue at Local Authority level is ring-fenced to ensure its retention for housing management and maintenance	Q3 2024	LAs , CCMA , DHLGH

## 4.13 Expand Existing Schemes to tackle Vacancy

### 4.13.1 Improve the Buy and Renew element of the Social Housing Programme

The Department will work with Local Authorities and AHBs to use social housing build programmes, such as Buy and Renew, where appropriate, to tackle more town centre dereliction and deliver new social homes. The success being achieved by Monaghan County Council in Clones, is a good example of what is possible through using social housing capital programmes to bring more residential accommodation to the town centre, while tackling longstanding and costly dereliction.

Tackling complex and challenging town centre renewal projects to deliver new social homes is a challenge for Local Authorities when the priority is to deliver new homes at scale to meet the need of those on waiting lists. But as Local Authority capacity is further built up to cater for increased output levels and complexities of the development process, there will be increased capacity to deliver more residential

accommodation in town centres utilising existing vacant and derelict properties and using the CPO process where needed. We will ensure Local Authority flexibility and discretion in identifying and purchasing eligible properties.

### 4.13.2 Enhance the Repair and Leasing Scheme

The Repair and Leasing Scheme (RLS) is targeted at owners of vacant properties who cannot afford or who do not have access to the funding required to bring those properties up to the standard for rental property. The Local Authority (or AHB) pays for the repairs upfront and the home is taken into social housing stock by way of lease for at least 5 years. The cost of the repairs carried out is offset against future rent. RLS tackles vacancy as well as having additional benefits in terms of regeneration, employment and investment in local areas. RLS delivers across a range of dwelling types, including over the shop properties, former bedsits, city centre terraced houses, and one off rural dwellings. We will place a renewed focus on Repair and Leasing (RLS), with funding already increased from €40,000 to €60,000 per unit.

### Housing Policy Objective 20: Make more efficient use of existing housing stock

No.		Timeline	Lead
20.8	Support Local Authorities to engage in targeted acquisitions of vacant and under-utilised properties under the Buy and Renew element of the social housing programme to support town and village renewal	Ongoing	DHLGH
20.9	Support Local Authorities to drive expanded take-up of the enhanced Repair and Leasing Scheme	Ongoing	DHLGH





5

Supporting the  
Four Pathways:  
Enabling a  
Sustainable  
Housing  
System

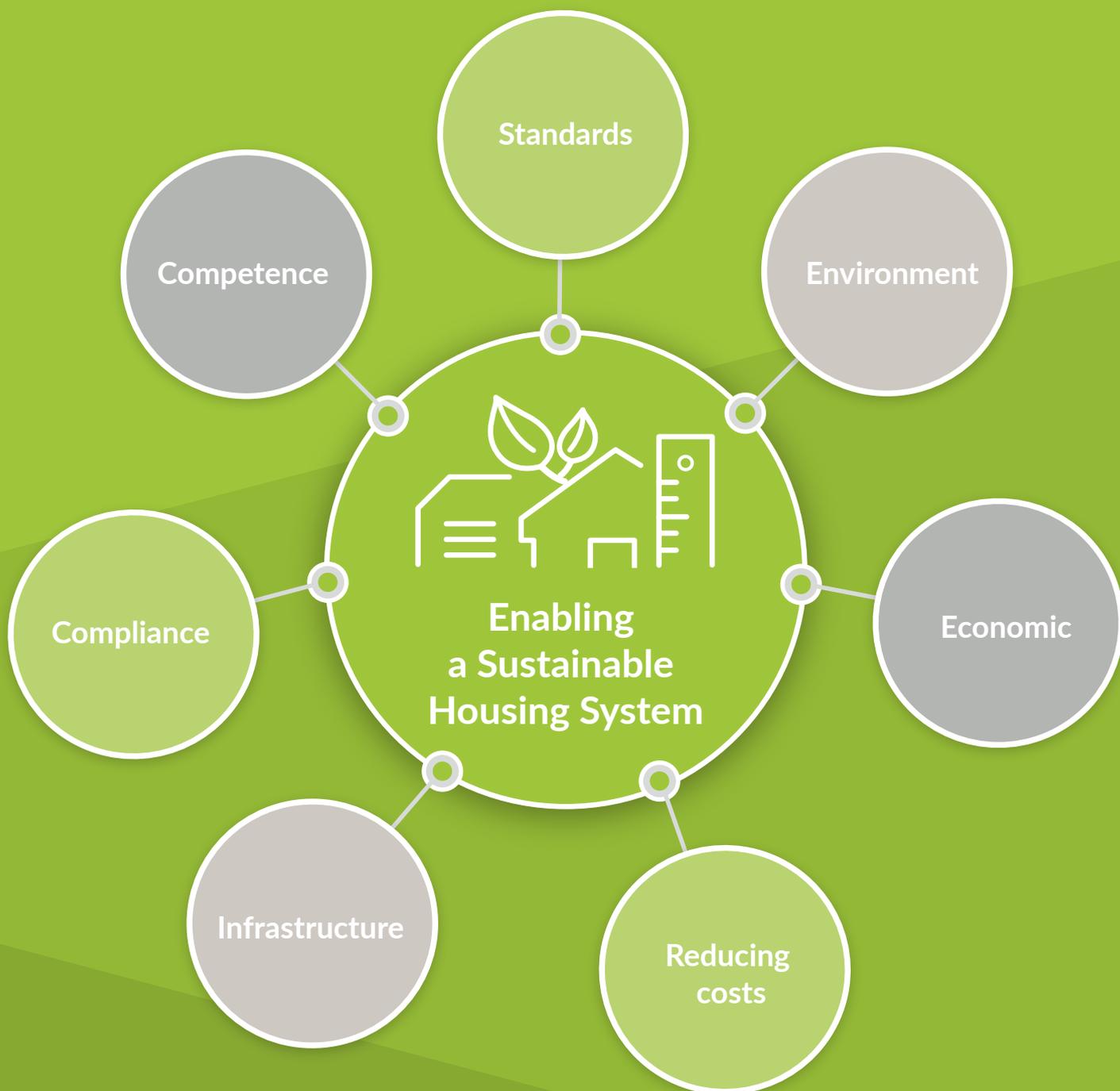


Figure 17:  
Supporting the Four Pathways:  
Enabling a Sustainable Housing System

# 5 Supporting the Four Pathways: Enabling a Sustainable Housing System

- New measures supporting Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability.
- Improved operational capacity across Local Authorities and agencies.
- Coordinated Government review of residential construction costs.
- A residential focus and whole-of-Government co-ordination for the Construction Sector Group and the Construction Technology Centre to drive innovation and productivity and to reduce residential construction costs.
- Improved building compliance.
- Attract large-scale firms and support small and medium-sized builders.
- Invest €4.5bn in water infrastructure to 2025, including projects to support new housing development



Sustainability is an underlying and enabling seam across the four pathways in **Housing for All**. Our vision for Ireland's housing system over the longer term is to have a pipeline of housing supply, built in the right locations, with economic, social and environmental sustainability built into the system. Regulatory reforms will be introduced to ensure that our planning system is plan-led and fit for purpose, delivering on the objectives of the NPF and supporting the pathways to **Housing for All**. We will drive compliance across the construction and housing sectors to ensure confidence in these sectors. The cost of residential construction will be a specific focus, with a view to identifying and implementing cost reducing innovations and productivity measures. We will build capacity across all of the State delivery bodies connected with housing delivery, including Local Authorities and State agencies. Housing cannot be delivered without sufficient investment in water infrastructure. In addition, other critical supporting infrastructure, including transport, utility supplies and communication networks, must be in place. Development and expansion of these go hand-in-hand with housing delivery. All of these areas must function together effectively to provide a sustainable system that meets the housing needs of all.

## 5.1 Ensure Environmental Sustainability

The actions in **Housing for All** have been developed in support of the objectives and targets of the NPF and the Climate Action Plan. In line with established sustainability and compact urban growth policies, a greater proportion of residential and mixed-use development needs to be delivered within the existing

built-up areas of our cities and towns.

Compact growth contributes to a low-carbon climate resilient society. It also means targeting a greater proportion of development to take place in settlements of all sizes, through urban infill and the re-use of brownfield lands. Higher densities and shorter travel distances will minimise transport demand, and therefore lower energy demand.

A plan-led approach to housing delivery will ensure greater public participation at the earliest possible stage and this is a key principle of environmental sustainability and in the assessment of the environmental implications of development. This approach will result in increasing the long-term visibility and certainty for housing development proposals that deliver compact urban growth firmly grounded in established planning policy, legislation and guidance.

Ireland's homes are responsible for one quarter of our overall energy use and 10% of our overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Reducing the amount of energy and fossil fuels we use in our homes is an important part of the government's Climate Action Plan.

All of the new homes built during the lifetime of this Plan will be built to Nearly Zero Energy Building (nZEB) standards. In addition, **Housing for All** will also assist the DECC to deliver the retrofit of 500,000 homes by 2030 to a B2 BER or Cost Optimal equivalent, through the direct retrofit of 36,500 Local Authority-owned homes by 2030 (including 2,400 in 2021, of which 750 form part of the Midlands Retrofit Programme). The DECC will introduce a targeted retrofit scheme for AHBs and will enable Local

Authorities to provide low-cost retrofit loans to individual homeowners. A roadmap to implement minimum BER standards for private rented dwellings will also be introduced for rental properties commencing in 2025, subject to feasibility assessments.

The LDA has a specific commitment to sustainable communities and best environmental practice and is leading the

implementation of several pilot projects related to the re-use of existing buildings, sustainable use of construction materials and district heating, which will feature in the Climate Action Plan 2021.

The Heritage Division of the DHLGH is also developing a guide for the Energy Efficiency Retrofit of Traditional Buildings, which will support the re-use of existing buildings.

### Housing Policy Objective 21: Drive environmental sustainability in our housing stock

No.		Timeline	Lead
21.1	Continue a joint approach in respect of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), to ensure more widespread and consistent implementation	Ongoing	DHLGH, DTransport
21.2	Retrofit 2,400 social homes in 2021, 750 of which relate to the Midlands Retrofit Pilot	Q4 2021	DHLGH, LAs
21.3	Increase funding to Local Authorities in order to retrofit 36,500 Local Authority-owned homes to B2 BER / Cost Optimal equivalent by 2030 per NDP	Q4 2021	DHLGH
21.4	Implement Built Environment Actions in Climate Action Plan 2021	Q4 2022	DHLGH
21.5	Construct an average of 33,000 nZEB homes each year to 2030	Ongoing	DHLGH
21.6	Retrofit 500,000 homes by 2030 to a B2 or Cost Optimal BER standard	Ongoing to 2030	DECC
21.7	Introduce a targeted energy efficiency retrofit scheme for AHBs	Q1 2022	DECC, SEAI
21.8	Develop a new Local Authority Energy Efficiency Retrofit Loan proposal for homeowners, supported by the Housing Finance Agency	Q4 2021	DECC, LAs, Housing Finance Agency

## 5.2 Support Sustainable Communities

The creation of sustainable communities has been an enduring goal of housing policy in recent decades. Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all. Various guidelines issued by the DHLGH support this policy (*Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007): Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities; and Planning Section 28 Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*).

The NPF sets out a high-level policy priority of building resilience in terms of re-use, adaptability and accessibility in our housing stock, ensuring integration to deliver vibrant sustainable communities. National Policy Objective 28 of the NPF mandates planning for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.

In this context, the Government commits to continuing the policy of having mixed-tenure communities, including through the mechanism of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, to ensure that social and affordable housing are part of the mix across housing developments.

Reforms to Part V, referred to in Pathway 1, will effectively double the current obligations and will provide for social, affordable and cost rental homes alongside private housing.

To improve residential quality and support the objectives of the NPF, namely promoting compact, sustainable and liveable settlements, the DHLGH will develop Section 28 Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable and Compact Settlement Guidance, which will consolidate existing guidance in this area.

To support the delivery of sustainable communities, the DHLGH and the DRCD will develop new guidance on achieving the most appropriate tenure mix within communities, including guidance on engagement with communities. In addition, guidelines for Local and Economic Community Plans (LECPs) will require Local Authorities to consider housing needs when formulating both the economic and community elements of their LECP.

The housing needs of island communities will be fully considered in the development of the forthcoming National Policy for the Islands.

### Housing Policy Objective 21:

## Drive social sustainability and foster sustainable communities

No.		Timeline	Lead
22.1	Reform Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to ensure that the tenure mix is a minimum of 10% for social housing and provide for a further 10% for affordable housing and Cost Rental	Q3 2021	DHLGH
22.2	Develop new guidance on achieving the most appropriate tenure mix within communities, including guidance on engagement with communities	Q2 2022	DHLGH, DRCD
22.3	Develop new guidelines for Local and Economic Community Plans that will require Local Authorities to consider housing needs when formulating both the economic and community elements of their LECP	Q2 2022	DRCD, DHLGH
22.4	The housing needs of island communities will be fully considered in the development of the forthcoming National Policy for the Islands	2022	DRCD, DHLGH



## 5.3 Achieve Economic Sustainability

The housing system needs to be placed on a long-term economically sustainable footing. The identification of a national housing need for an average of 33,000 homes per annum to 2030 through the NPF and the HNDA Framework will help in this regard, as will the introduction of Land Value Sharing and Urban Development Zones. However, costs associated with residential construction remain high and need to be tackled to enable a functioning housing market, particularly for apartment construction.

### 5.3.1 Reduce Residential Construction Costs

The Government and relevant State agencies will advance methods to reduce residential construction costs, particularly the cost of apartment construction, by increasing the focus of existing and planned construction-related initiatives on the residential construction sector, and by ensuring a coordinated, whole-of-government, approach to residential construction.

In this regard, the Government will enhance the intended role of the new Construction Technology Centre (CTC)<sup>18</sup>, which is under development, beyond the standard remit of Technology Centres in general for its first three years of operation in order to prioritise

residential construction, in particular by incorporating:

- structures and funding to enable innovation in residential construction prior to the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) compliance processes, including demonstration, certification, standardisation and commercialisation as well as research and development;
- a proactive role in strengthening the residential construction value chain;
- promotion, development and support for innovation / modern methods of construction (MMCs) using digital and manufacturing technology;
- support for SMEs to develop scale and to adopt MMCs and Building Information Modelling (BIM) techniques for residential construction; and
- support for digitisation in the manufacturing sector for residential construction e.g. digitally controlled manufacturing equipment.

This will be complemented by an increased focus for the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform-led Construction Sector Group (CSG)<sup>19</sup> on the residential construction sector. This will include the introduction and full implementation of a pipeline of cost reducing innovations and productivity measures, in line with its established remit to improve productivity and efficiency, and to control price inflation. The CSG is made up of representatives

<sup>18</sup> *The Technology Centre programme is a joint EI / IDA initiative, funded by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment through Enterprise Ireland. Enterprise Ireland is in the process of establishing a Construction Technology Centre, in consultation with stakeholders.*

<sup>19</sup> [www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/cae030-construction-sector-group/](http://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/cae030-construction-sector-group/)

of key industry bodies, as well as senior representatives of relevant Government departments and agencies with responsibility for policy and for the delivery of infrastructure and is chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The group reports to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

The work by the CSG will incorporate an analysis and value engineering exercise for each component of cost of construction (including cost of compliance) of house and apartment development, with a view to reducing cost (including cost of compliance) and increasing standardisation. It will be informed by conducting construction cost comparisons with comparable EU economies such as Denmark, Austria and the Netherlands. It will also identify opportunities for cost reduction for consideration by relevant Government departments and industry. The study will be a shared Construction Sector Group and Government initiative with agreed terms of reference, which the DHLGH will then facilitate.

The work of both the CTC and the CSG will be led and funded centrally by the State. Industry partners will also contribute funding and be involved at all stages of the process, but it is clear that the leadership of the State is needed to address the shortfall in construction sector productivity and innovation that has been manifest for several years.

### 5.3.2 Support Construction Innovation through Enterprise Agencies

The role of enterprise agencies will be expanded to include the provision of funding and supports for innovation and productivity-related projects in the domestic residential construction sector, in compliance with State Aid rules. Funding for research and innovation will be increased to a level commensurate with the scale of construction in the domestic economy by 2024. Existing construction product assessment processes will be enhanced to deliver a holistic construction product assessment for the residential sector, expanding the successful NSAI Agrément approach, and construction research programmes across third-level institutes will be coordinated to ensure synergies are leveraged and overlaps avoided.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) will engage with international construction firms. This will be done through IDA Ireland or otherwise via trade shows / events and through leveraging diplomatic networks, with the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs, to encourage participation in the Irish market. The DETE will also work in conjunction with the DHLGH to strengthen the supply chain by securing EU-level Strategic Value Chain priority status for nZEB construction.

The DETE, supported by the DHLGH, will promote a culture of innovation in residential construction. This will be achieved through, *inter alia*:

- development of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC);
- establishment of a Centre of Excellence Demonstration Park for MMC;
- publication of exemplar case studies of MMC developments;
- development of design for manufacture guidance for industry so that dwellings are suitable for MMC; and
- creation of a Government construction website to promote initiatives in construction.

This work will be underpinned by the development of Key Performance Indicators for MMC and Cost of Construction, which will be reported on quarterly. The public sector will continue to provide exemplar projects to help with the capacity building process through public tenders for innovations such as rapid delivery housing and design and development of low-carbon buildings and will support enterprises to reduce cost of materials in construction. Initiatives such as standardised design to better facilitate MMC at scale and lean construction management education will be rolled out.

### 5.3.3 Improve Governance of Construction Initiatives

The response to challenges in the construction sector is currently spread across multiple Government departments, State agencies and industry bodies. The need for a unifying structure that has oversight and

governance of the full breadth of issues and desired outcomes, as well as the executive and institutional supports to influence their achievement, has become critical to addressing the housing crisis.

The interdependencies within and between the various groupings addressing construction challenges is not always clear. As a result, opportunities to advance the productivity and innovation agenda in residential construction are being jeopardised. In addition, further issues, such as the weakness in the construction sector supply chain, are not being specifically addressed by any one body. It is clear that an end-to-end oversight of the full residential construction sector supply chain is needed, from initial concept-level innovation to implemented compliance and further use, and that any conflicting objectives must be addressed.

A new **Housing for All** Delivery Group, comprised of relevant Secretaries General, will include a dedicated sub-group focussed on enhancing capabilities and capacities within the residential construction sector, with the aim of raising productivity and lowering costs. This sub-group will ensure that initiatives associated with innovation and productivity, skills and capacity, enterprise support, standards and compliance and sectoral engagement, are fully aligned with the objective of reducing the cost of construction of apartments and houses, leading to demonstrable change in these costs. This sub-group will be comprised of Secretary Generals from relevant departments and will be overseen by the Department of the Taoiseach [see further Chapter 7].

## Housing Policy Objective 23:

### Drive economic sustainability and reduce Construction Costs

No.		Timeline	Lead
23.1	Enhance the remit of the Construction Technology Centre and the Construction Sector Group for the next three years to include a focus on residential construction	Q4 2021	DETE, DPER, DHLGH, D/Taoiseach
23.2	Conduct an analysis and value engineering exercise for each component of cost of construction (including cost of compliance) of house and apartment development, informed by cost comparisons with comparable EU countries	Q2 2022	DHLGH, CSG
23.3	Establish a sub-group of the <b>Housing for All</b> Delivery Group to ensure that initiatives associated with innovation and productivity, skills and capacity, enterprise support, standards and compliance and sectoral engagement, including the CTC and CSG, are fully aligned with the objective of reducing the cost of construction of apartments, leading to demonstrable change in these costs	Q4 2021	D/Taoiseach
23.4	Expand the role of enterprise agencies to include funding and supports for innovation and productivity related projects in the domestic residential construction sector, with funding for research, innovation and productivity to be provided, commensurate with the scale of construction in the domestic economy and in compliance with State Aid rules	Q4 2021	DETE
23.5	Enhance holistic construction product assessment processes for the residential sector to facilitate certification of modern methods of construction and the introduction of sustainable construction products and oversight of onsite installation, including through expanding the successful National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) Agrément approach	Q4 2021	DETE, DHLGH
23.6	Engage with international construction firms through IDA Ireland or otherwise via trade shows / events and through leveraging diplomatic networks, with the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs, to encourage participation in the Irish market	Ongoing	DETE, DHLGH
23.7	Build residential construction pipeline to attract international builders	Ongoing	LDA, DHLGH
23.8	Strengthen the construction products supply chain by securing priority status for apartment construction within the EU-level Strategic Value Chain for nearly zero energy building construction and renovation (identified for the next group of value chains to be prioritised)	Ongoing	DETE, DHLGH
23.9	Promote a culture of compliant, good quality sustainable innovation in residential construction through development of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), including establishment of a demonstration park for MMCs	Q2 2022	DETE, DHLGH

### 5.3.4 Reduce Construction and Demolition Waste Costs

Construction and demolition (C&D) waste is waste from any building works, demolition and development (including transport infrastructure). Excavated soil and stone is the largest element of construction and demolition waste at approximately 80%<sup>20</sup>. The remainder includes concrete, brick, tiles, metal, glass, wood, plastic and metal. This represents a huge cost and loss of value to the construction sector as well as resulting in significant volumes of avoidable waste. C&D waste is the largest waste stream in the EU, representing approximately one-third of all waste produced.

Management of C&D waste therefore poses a major challenge to both the construction and waste industries. However, improvements in C&D waste management practices can also offer

many opportunities in terms of reduced environmental and financial costs to the industry and to society.

The Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy (DECC, 2020) commits to the introduction of a recovery levy (applicable on a €5 per tonne basis to recovery activity such as incineration, whether that activity takes place at facilities in Ireland or elsewhere in the EU). At present, the bulk of construction waste is exempt from the landfill levy because, although it goes to landfill facilities, it is used for landfill engineering, which is classed as a recovery activity. However, in parallel with this work, the DECC will ensure that C&D material currently going to facilities as recovery/ landfill engineering is also exempt from the recovery levy when introduced from 1 January 2022 so that there will be no cost impact on the construction sector arising from the introduction of / increase in levies.

#### Housing Policy Objective 23:

#### Drive economic sustainability and reduce Construction Costs

No.	Timeline	Lead	
23.10	Provide exemption for Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste from proposed waste recovery levy	Q1 2022	DECC, EPA
23.11	Reduce C&D waste and associated costs by working with the construction industry on demonstration projects to show how best practice (specifically in relation to urban high-rise apartment developments) waste segregation and other waste management measures, can reduce overall C&D disposal costs	Q1 2022 onwards	DECC, EPA, CIF, PII
23.12	Reduce demand for virgin raw materials and support re-use and cost reduction by keeping material out of waste streams through streamlined End-of-Waste and By-Product decision-making processes and national end-of-waste decisions for specific C&D waste streams	Q4 2021	DECC, EPA

<sup>20</sup> DECC, (2020) - A Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy | Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020-2025, page 38

## 5.4 Build Institutional Capacity

The State will build Local Authority and State Agency capacity to cater for increased output levels and complexities of development and delivery process. In parallel, the resourcing of the DHLGH, An Bord Pleanála, the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB), the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) and The Housing Agency needs to reflect the ambition required, both in terms of the scale of delivery and the timeliness of public service actions.

Local Authorities are key enablers of housing within the State, through their planning and economic functions, and their direct responsibility for the delivery of social and affordable housing. They also play a key role in urban and rural regeneration and leading the Town Centre First approach, so that the focus is not only on new supply, but also on tackling vacancy and ensuring the sustainability of communities and the vibrancy of all our cities, towns and villages. Local elected members also have a key role to play in ensuring that the ambition within **Housing for All** is translated into visions for their local areas that are viable and deliverable and meet the needs of both the current and future populations.

The role of AHBs in the delivery of social housing has been enhanced over the past decade. This will continue under **Housing for All**, and has been expanded to include the delivery of Cost Rental homes. As the sector meets the challenges of statutory regulation, it is an opportune time to consider the opportunities that may present. As AHBs continue to provide

a range of housing and broader care and supports for a wide range of our citizens, the DHLGH will support the sector as it innovates to implement new models of organisation, collaboration and management.

The LDA is a step change in the Government's involvement in the housing market. The LDA will work with Local Authorities, State agencies and the private sector and will provide a Centre of Excellence for the delivery of major developments on public land. The DHLGH will ensure that the LDA has access to appropriate levels of funding and resourcing to enable the LDA to act as an active agent of Government.

As part of the extensive range of planning reforms outlined in this plan and reflecting the demands of increased housing output, the resources of An Bord Pleanála will be increased significantly which, allied with its digital agenda, will ensure that the planning system is responsive to growing housing needs.

In order to support the commitments to protect tenants in Pathway 1, additional resources need to be committed to the RTB to ensure that it can continue to play its part, including to facilitate early engagement to prevent disputes escalating to formal RTB dispute resolution, particularly in cases of rent arrears and where a legal tenancy termination/illegal eviction is in prospect. Data-sharing arrangements between the Revenue Commissioners and the Residential Tenancies Board will also be expanded to assist in enforcement of the Residential Tenancies Acts.

The development of capacity and capability relates not only to staff resourcing but also to the appropriate planning of delivery and the digital agenda. Every opportunity will be explored for the use of centres of excellence and shared services to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery.

#### 5.4.1 Support Local Authority Delivery

We will strengthen the capacity of Local Authorities to initiate, design, plan, develop and manage housing projects and to engage in the range of activities to promote living cities and towns, by tackling vacancy and dereliction and supporting regeneration. This requires the resourcing of both the housing and planning services of Local Authorities.

Key supports are being provided through the Housing Delivery Co-Ordination Office (HDCO), which has been established within the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), to provide co-ordination of Local Authority housing activities. The Housing Agency provides technical support and shared services to the sector.

The HDCO, in partnership with The Housing Agency and the DHLGH, is working with Local Authorities to ensure that they are resourced and supported to deliver both social and affordable homes at scale, both at Local Authority and sectoral level. Additional resources are being made available to Local Authorities to further build focussed housing delivery teams equipped to deliver on the scale of ambition in this Plan for both social and affordable

housing on foot of the HDCO analysis of the additional skillsets and resources required across Local Authorities, including project management skillsets.

In addition, increased funding will be available for a dedicated project management resource for complex large-scale projects (often mixed-tenure) above 250 units. There may be scope for the smaller Local Authorities to share specialist resources where the scale of activity warrants such an approach. Before the end of 2021, we will complete a further structured review of the resources, skillsets and training required to ensure that all necessary resources are in place to design, deliver and implement social and affordable housing projects, in line with the needs outlined in this Plan.

Local Authorities will also need to be sufficiently resourced to meet the increasing demands of the planning system to deliver both the forward planning requirements and consider the applications to deliver some 33,000 homes per annum.

Through the Town Centre First initiative, the necessary supports and enablers required for Local Authorities to lead the development of appropriate visions for towns and to ensure that actions are being taken, are being developed. Supports are being provided to deal with regeneration and vacancy, and these will be integrated into the holistic view of Local Authority capacity and capability requirements to deliver on ***Housing for All***.

To deliver on the new affordable housing targets, The Housing Agency has put in place a dedicated Affordable Housing Unit. Additional resources have also been put in place in the HDCO. The Housing Agency will play a key role supporting the DHLGH in the roll out and progressive development of the Affordable Purchase and Cost Rental schemes, which will be delivered under the Affordable Housing Act 2021.

A new high-level Affordable Housing Delivery Group has been established with representatives from the DHLGH, Local Authorities, the LDA, AHBs, The Housing Agency and the Housing Finance Agency. The role of this group is to agree ambitious and achievable delivery targets and to coordinate and oversee the strategic implementation of the affordable housing programme.

In parallel, the resourcing of the DHLGH, An Bord Pleanála, the OPR and The Housing Agency needs to also reflect the ambition required both in terms of the scale of delivery and the timelines of public service actions.

Finally, there is a clear need to ensure that the appropriate skills are in place and attuned to the evolving agenda. The DHLGH will work with the City and County Management Association (CCMA) and partner agencies to ensure that a tailored programme of capability development is in place to meet the needs of a digitally transformed service delivery.

#### 5.4.2 Support Effective Procurement and Streamline Approval Processes

A renewed focus will be placed on ensuring that the public procurement process supports the efficient delivery of social housing. Additional resources will be provided. The Housing Agency's Procurement and Delivery Unit will provide technical services and supports to Local Authorities. In addition, the HDCO will be further resourced to coordinate Procurement Frameworks.

The DHLGH will review and streamline all approval and other pre-contract processes to accelerate the delivery of Local Authority, AHB and LDA social housing proposals and projects and issue revised sectoral guidance where required, on foot of agreement with the DPER.

The DHLGH will work collaboratively with all delivery partners to ensure that the standard layouts<sup>21</sup>, Employer's Requirements specification<sup>22</sup> and standard cost guidelines for social<sup>23</sup> housing are implemented and applied consistently in developing social housing proposals to drive efficient, cost effective design and to assist in further shortening the pre-construction process.

<sup>21</sup> See *Design Manual for Quality Housing, issued to Local Authorities for consultation in advance of formal publication Q4 2021*

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/49a4c-employers-requirements-for-detail-design-of-quality-housing/>

<sup>23</sup> DHLGH periodically issues Unit Cost Ceilings (UCCs) for each local authority area, for use as a key benchmark for the development and costing of social housing construction scheme designs.

The DHLGH will liaise with the DPER with on the process underpinning the approval of mixed-tenure housing programmes, in recognition of the established need for housing and Government approval of social and affordable housing targets.

The Housing Agency Procurement and Delivery Unit will be expanded and will provide technical services and supports to Local Authorities. The HDCO will support project and programme management by Local Authorities, co-ordinate Procurement Frameworks, support retrofit initiatives and provide support for affordable housing.

### 5.4.3 Implement the Digital Agenda

The digital transformation agenda for housing and planning forms part of the over-arching commitment of Government to harness technology and innovation so that the Civil Service is more agile in terms of its use of digital technologies and process reengineering and delivers more customer-driven innovative services. This applies equally across the local government sector and other public bodies impacting on housing delivery.

A key element of this will involve the implementation of an integrated solution for the management of the DHLGH housing programmes (Project Díon) within the Department, linking Local Authorities and other key stakeholders. Project Díon will facilitate more streamlined application, approval, funding and

reporting mechanisms through process improvement. It will do this by taking full advantage of digital technologies, standardised data and processes. The implementation phase of project Díon is due to commence in mid-2022.

The DHLGH will also work with the local government sector to examine options for further process improvement, standardisation and digitisation of housing services at local level. This will include housing applications, assessment, allocation, maintenance and refurbishment.

A new e-Planning platform is in development (see also section 3.2.4). In Phase one, the e-Planning platform will provide a single place for online submission of planning applications, which is envisaged to be implemented for all Local Authorities by end of 2022, while the ICT infrastructure and systems for An Bord Pleanála will be upgraded in tandem. Work will continue to standardise the Geographical Information Systems used for planning and zoning across all Local Authorities. Phase 2 will involve automation and standardisation of back-end planning services following on from the updating of planning legislation.

#### 5.4.4 Resource the Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority

The successful role of voluntary regulation of the AHB sector is now transitioning towards statutory regulation, as legislated for in the Housing (Regulation of Approved Housing Bodies) Act 2019, which will provide assurances to tenants, the Government, investors and to the AHB sector itself, that these bodies operate in a well-regulated and stable environment. The Government will ensure that the newly established Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority (AHBRA) is adequately resourced to carry out its functions.

#### Housing Policy Objective 24:

### Build Institutional Capacity across the DHLGH, Local Authority, State Agency and AHB Sectors in order to support *Housing for All*

No.		Timeline	Lead
24.1	Ensure resourcing is available to meet the scale of ambition, while every opportunity will be explored for the use of centres of excellence and shared services to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery	Ongoing	DHLGH
24.2	Promote the digitalisation of housing and planning services, to improve the efficiency of delivery and customer services	Ongoing	DHLGH, LAs, LGMA
24.3	Review and streamline all approval and other pre-contract processes to accelerate the delivery of Local Authority, AHB and LDA social housing proposals and projects and to agree with DPER, a revised sectoral guidance where required	Ongoing	DHLGH
24.4	DHLGH to liaise with the DPER on the process underpinning the approval of mixed-tenure housing programmes, in recognition of the established need for housing and Government approval of social and affordable housing targets	Q4 2021	DPER, DHLGH

**Housing Policy Objective 24:**

**Build Institutional Capacity across the DHLGH, Local Authority, State Agency and AHB Sectors in order to support *Housing for All***

No.		Timeline	Lead
24.5	Work collaboratively with all delivery partners to ensure that guidelines relating to standard layouts, standard specifications and standard cost guidelines for social housing are applied consistently in developing social housing proposals to drive efficient and cost effective public housing design and to assist in further shortening the approvals process	Q4 2021	DHLGH, Local Authorities
24.6	Work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that the AHB sector is positioned to best contribute to the Government's objectives for public housing supply and management	Ongoing	DHLGH, AHBs
24.7	The Housing Agency Procurement and Delivery Unit will be expanded and will provide technical services and supports to Local Authorities, including in procurement, design and modern construction methods	Q4 2021	Housing Agency
24.8	DHLGH will research application of EU procurement rules across Members States in relation to procuring the development of public housing, including any relevant case law and will engage with the OGP to consider options for more flexible approaches to procurement to help expedite social housing delivery	Ongoing	DHLGH, OGP
24.9	The Housing Delivery Coordination Office will be further resourced to support programme and project management by Local Authorities, co-ordinate Procurement Frameworks, support retrofit initiatives and provide support for affordable housing	Ongoing	DHLGH, HDCO
24.10	Implement an integrated housing delivery tracking solution (Project Díon)	2022-2024	DHLGH
24.11	Introduce the new e-Planning Platform (see also Action 13.8)	Q4 2022	DHLGH
24.12	Ensure that the newly-established Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority is adequately resourced to carry out its functions	Ongoing	DHLGH

## 5.5 Drive High Standards and Quality in Construction

Standards and quality are critically important to people in terms of the building of homes. Everyone should be able to trust that homes are built to the highest standards and that there is an effective oversight process in place to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not repeated.

Our housing system can be improved over the longer term through regulatory reform, particularly in the areas of construction compliance, competence and standards.

### 5.5.1 Drive Compliance, Competence and Standards

Ireland needs a competitive, innovative, dynamic, safe and sustainable construction sector - one that is based on best practice, capable of delivering the required economic and social infrastructure and contributes fully to the economy and to job creation.

It is particularly important that we ensure that the construction sector operates to the highest standard and that we have confidence in construction practices and materials, the necessary skilled workforce and the housing they build. Strong standards are already in place.

While steps have already been taken to ensure enhanced accountability, the Government will continue to build on these through appropriate regulation, with consistent application and

enforcement by relevant Government departments, their agencies and Local Authorities.

The Government is dealing with the issue of defects in housing as a result of poor construction design, workmanship and materials, at a substantial cost; by driving regulation in the construction sector and more sustainable methods of construction, the State will ensure the mistakes of the past are not repeated.

Statutory registration has the potential to contribute significantly to the quality of the built environment, while providing public contracting authorities with an objective means of assessing compliance with legal obligations. Professionals, such as architects, building surveyors and chartered engineers, must be registered to provide services for building work. The Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI) has been operational since early March 2014 on a voluntary basis, and will be placed on a statutory footing.

Prior to the establishment of the Construction Industry Register there was no way for consumers to distinguish construction companies, sole traders and builders who met the required obligations from those who did not. The addition of registers of competent builders and construction professionals will provide consumers with an assurance that all listed builders, contractors and tradespersons have met all registration requirements. Consumers have every right to expect that the buildings they buy - or the professional services they pay for - will comply with statutory requirements.

Potential forms of redress for consumers, including the potential for latent defects insurance, also need to be considered.

Under the Building Control Acts 1990 to 2020, Building Control Authorities have strong powers of inspection, enforcement and prosecution. The National Building Control Office (NBCO) within Dublin City Council provides oversight, direction and support for the development, standardisation and implementation of Building Control as an effective shared service in the 31 Building Control Authorities. To further support and strengthen the system of building control, the benefits of an independent regulatory body need to be examined.

A Building Regulations Advisory Body (BRAB), consisting of key construction industry stakeholders across private and the public sectors, will be re-established<sup>24</sup> to advise the Minister on matters relating to the Building Regulations.

### 5.5.2 Review the Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme

The cracking of external walls of dwellings in Donegal and Mayo came to light in 2013. An Expert Panel established in 2016 concluded that the disintegration of the concrete blocks was primarily due to excessive amounts of deleterious materials in the aggregate used to manufacture the concrete blocks (primarily muscovite mica in Donegal and reactive pyrite in Mayo).

On 31 January 2020, regulations to provide for a grant scheme to support

affected homeowners in Donegal and Mayo were signed into law. The grant scheme targets a restricted group of homeowners who have no other practicable options to remediate their homes.

In response to concerns expressed by homeowners regarding the adequacy of the scheme, the Government approved the establishment of a representative and time-bound working group to quickly review and address any outstanding issues in relation to the Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme. The working group will report to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage by the end of September 2021. Following receipt of the report of the working group and following consultation with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Attorney General, proposals in regard to changes to the scheme will be considered by the Government.

### 5.5.3 Continue the Pyrite Remediation Scheme

The Pyrite Resolution Act 2013 provides the statutory framework for the establishment of the Pyrite Resolution Board and for the making of a pyrite remediation scheme to be implemented by the Board, with support from The Housing Agency.

The provisions of the Act apply to dwellings affected by significant damage attributable to pyritic heave consequent on the presence of reactive pyrite in the subfloor hard-core material. The

<sup>24</sup> The previous BRAB was abolished in 2012

provisions do not apply to damage arising in any other circumstance, e.g. such as pyrite in concrete blocks.

The pyrite remediation scheme is a scheme of 'last resort' for affected homeowners who have no other practical option to obtain redress and is limited in its application and scope. The full conditions for eligibility under the scheme are set out in the scheme, which is available on the Board's website, [www.pyriteboard.ie](http://www.pyriteboard.ie).

Currently, the owners of dwellings located within the counties of Kildare, Meath or Offaly, the administrative areas of Fingal County Council, Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council and Limerick City and County Council, are eligible to apply for remediation works under the scheme.

The latest figures available indicate that this scheme has received 2,949 applications. So far, 2,460 dwellings have been included. Of these, the works in respect of 2,193 are complete with the rest at various stages of progress. The Board will ensure that the remediation fund is fully drawn down and property owners are appropriately supported.

#### 5.5.4 Progress Examination of Defects in Housing

The Programme for Government sets out a range of commitments in respect of the policy area of building defects. Among these are two related commitments to:

- examine the issue of defective housing in the first twelve months, having regard to the recommendations of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing report, 'Safe as Houses?'; and
- assist owners of latent defect properties by identifying options for those impacted by defects to access low-cost, long-term finance.

A working group has been established with the appropriate expertise to examine the issue of defects in housing and address these two commitments. The plenary working group has been meeting monthly since March 2021, in addition to subgroup meetings. The terms of reference were adopted by the group in May 2021. The working group's focus is on significant, widespread fire safety, structural safety and water ingress defects in purpose-built apartment buildings, including duplexes, constructed between 1991 and 2013. Following its deliberations, the working group will report to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

**Housing Policy Objective 25:**

**Drive compliance and standards through regulatory reform**

No.		Timeline	Lead
25.1	Embed compliance in the construction sector through Building Regulations and Building Control Regulations, including establishing registers of competent builders by placing the Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI) on a statutory footing	Q1 2022	DHLGH, DETE
25.2	Examine the creation of an independent Building Standards Regulator to oversee building control nationwide and to act as custodian of the Building Control Management System (BCMS)	Q4 2022	DHLGH
25.3	Re-establish the Building Regulatory Advisory Body	2022	DHLGH
25.4	Ensure adequate and appropriate market surveillance of construction products in the context of Brexit and EU Regulations	Ongoing	DHLGH, NBCO, LAs
25.5	Examine the regulatory framework for construction products outside the Construction Products Regulation	Q4 2021	DETE, DHLGH, NBCO, LAs
25.6	Review of Building Regulations	Ongoing	DHLGH
25.7	Address issues in relation to the Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme	Ongoing	DHLGH
25.8	Ensure that the remediation fund for pyrite is fully drawn down	Ongoing	Pyrite Resolution Board
25.9	Examine the issue of defects in housing through the independent working group, to identify the nature and scale of the problem, having regard to the recommendations of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing report, 'Safe as Houses?' (2017)	2022	DHLGH

### 5.5.5 Reform Owners' Management Companies

Well-functioning Owners' Management Companies (OMCs) are key to maintaining and sustaining higher-density residential developments, such as apartments.

**Housing for All** will support effective management and oversight of multi-unit developments by legislating for necessary changes. This work will be led by the Department of Justice, supported by the DHLGH.

To ensure that OMCs are financially sustainable, the Department of Justice, in collaboration with the DHLGH, will make regulations under subsection 17 of section 18 of the Multi-Unit Developments Act 2011 (MUD Act), prescribing the class or classes of items of expenditure which may be the subject of annual service charges; the

procedures to be followed in setting such charges; matters to be taken into account in the setting of such charges; and arrangements for the levying and payment of such charges.

Regulations will also be made under subsection 9 of section 19 of the MUD Act to ensure that OMCs provide for expenditure of a non-recurring nature (i.e. sinking fund expenditure) and it will also examine the introduction of a non-statutory dispute resolution process. This process would determine disputes in relation to provisions of the MUD Act and in relation to covenants of head/main leases to which OMCs are party.

The Department of Justice will also examine measures to accelerate conveyancing as part of the sale and land transfer process.

#### Housing Policy Objective 25:

#### Drive compliance and standards through regulatory reform

No.		Timeline	Lead
25.10	Regulate under subsection 17 of section 18 of the Multi-Unit Developments Act 2011 ('MUD Act') to ensure that OMCs are financially sustainable	Q4 2022	DoJ
25.11	Regulate under subsection 9 of section 19 of the MUD Act to ensure that OMCs provide for expenditure of a non-recurring nature (i.e. sinking fund expenditure)	Q4 2022	DoJ
25.12	Examine the introduction of a non-statutory dispute resolution process	Q4 2022	DoJ
25.13	Examine measures to accelerate conveyancing as part of the sale and land transfer process	Q4 2022	DoJ

## 5.6 Support Critical Infrastructure Development

Housing cannot be delivered unless we have the supporting critical infrastructure, including transport, communication services and utility connections. A sustainable housing system requires strong integration between housing developments and the surrounding infrastructure and the move to plan-led development in this Plan will support this integrated system.

### 5.6.1 Ensure strong Transport infrastructure

Transport infrastructure and access to public transport services are a critical enabler of new housing supply. Future strategic development areas that may comprise unzoned, unserviced and/

or underutilised areas should generally be transport accessible in order to not only facilitate new housing supply but to also ensure that our citizens can participate in the workforce or education, access healthcare and take part in social activities. A well-functioning housing system should be supported by transport routes.

Road space in our urban areas is restricted, and if the long-term trend of growth in demand for housing and transport is to be met, we must improve land-use and transport planning to meet the NPF objective of ‘compact growth’. Together, the DHLGH and the Department of Transport (D/Transport), along with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and the LDA, aim to bring public transport to as many people as possible through better land-use and transport planning.

### Housing Policy Objective 26: Support Critical Infrastructure Development

No.		Timeline	Lead
26.1	Establish a working group of the DHLGH, the D/Transport, NTA and LDA to consider opportunities for transport-led development in major urban centres	Q4 2021	DHLGH, D/Transport, NTA, LDA

### 5.6.2 Improve Communications Infrastructure

The National Broadband Plan (NBP) is the Government’s initiative to deliver high-speed broadband services to all premises in Ireland. This service is a critical element of improving the viability of rural areas as places to live and work. In order to

support balanced housing delivery and underpin the viability and desirability of rural areas as places to live and work, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) will work with National Broadband Ireland (NBI) to accelerate the rollout time of the NBP.

### Housing Policy Objective 26: Support Critical Infrastructure Development

No.		Timeline	Lead
26.2	Accelerate the delivery of the National Broadband Plan	Ongoing	DECC

#### 5.6.3 Roll Out Timely Electricity Network Connections

The infrastructure of wires and cables around the country is divided into the transmission network and the distribution network. EirGrid is responsible for operating and planning the development of the transmission system and ESB

Networks is responsible for the operation, maintenance and development of the electricity distribution network in Ireland. It is also responsible for maintaining and developing the transmission network. ESB Networks will support the delivery of housing schemes through cost-effective, expedited connections.

### Housing Policy Objective 26: Support Critical Infrastructure Development

No.		Timeline	Lead
26.3	Ensure electricity connections to housing schemes are delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner	Ongoing	ESB Networks, LAs

#### 5.6.4 Expand our Water Network

Housing cannot be delivered without the supporting services infrastructure. Government investment in water services, primarily through Irish Water, will support the delivery of *Housing for All*. In turn, the objectives of *Housing for All* will inform future water investment planning.

Irish Water’s investment planning is informed by key policy documents including the Water Services Policy Statement 2018-2025, the Water Services Strategic Plan 2015-2040, the NPF and the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021.

We know significant investment is required in public water and waste water infrastructure over many investment cycles to meet demands and we will invest €4.5bn between 2021 and 2025 in domestic water services, including projects focused on supporting growth and future development, with particular emphasis on those supporting future housing delivery.

Under the agreed funding model for Irish Water, the Exchequer provides almost 80% of Irish Water's funding, with the remainder coming from non-domestic customers and new connections. Irish Water expenditure, including its investment plans, are agreed by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities. Irish Water will continue its dynamic approach to aligning the investment - as approved by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) - with the NPF, by reviewing and amending its growth projections as the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, County Development Plans and Local Area Plans progress, ensuring alignment with growth projections.

### **Aligning Irish Water structures in support of housing development**

At an operational level, Irish Water has established a Networks portfolio delivery stream specifically to manage growth and development projects. This restructured approach aims to support the delivery of housing. The Networks portfolio delivery stream sits along complementary delivery portfolios streams that manage the delivery of Irish Water capital works. The Network portfolio delivery stream is also responsible for delivery of Strategic Network Reinforcement/Connection and Developer Services and other works with investment supporting these specific growth initiatives.

### **Providing efficient connections for housing to the national water services network**

Irish Water's Connections and Developer Services team is responsible for the end-to-end customer management of all connections to the Irish Water network. The team partners with industry and supports Government housing and planning policies to provide an efficient national connection service to all those developing property. Early engagement with the Irish Water Pre-Connection Enquiry service by those seeking connection to the Irish Water network is critical to ascertaining the capacity of the public water services to facilitate the proposed network connection.

### **Improving standards of water services infrastructure in housing developments**

Irish Water has worked with the CRU to improve national standards in providing water services network infrastructure. This is to ensure that water infrastructure is installed to the required standards in public roads, avoiding legacy issues and impacts on customers, while facilitating the timely delivery of development, including housing. This has seen significant improvements in this area, to the benefit of citizens, by guaranteeing a high standard of workmanship.

### **Providing greater flexibility while not compromising standards**

Having successfully established these standards, Irish Water, in consultation with industry and the CRU, is advancing an accreditation scheme and pilot project for self-lay of water services infrastructure in public roads by developers to connect to Irish Water's networks. This will provide greater flexibility in infrastructure provision, while not compromising on consumer protection or exposing the taxpayer to future liabilities.

This forms part of Irish Water's commitment to enable development, partner with industry and support the Government's housing policy. Irish Water has already supported self-lay on several housing projects, which are now progressing across the country.

### **Equitable cost sharing for providing infrastructure**

Irish Water is also engaging with the CRU regarding areas of new development, where the first developer may often trigger new investment and incur the costs associated with connecting the new area to existing networks, while providing assets that have wider network benefits in the future. In this scenario, subsequent developments that later seek connection in the new area may benefit by connecting into these new water mains or sewer networks and obtain the benefit of these assets without incurring the additional costs that the first developer incurred. Irish Water is working with the CRU to develop proposals that

will seek to address the issues faced by developers in relation to this first-mover disadvantage.

### **Irish Water's Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme**

Irish Water has an approved allocation of almost €100m for a Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme, as part of its Capital Investment Plan to 2024, as approved by the CRU. Projects under the Programme are now commencing design, with investment due to begin to deliver in the coming years. Irish Water is working with Local Authorities across the country in ensuring the investment supports the growth of identified settlements where these are prioritised in line with the Local Authority Development Plans<sup>25</sup>.

### **Policy Initiative to Support Town and Villages and Similar Settlements without Public Waste Water Services Infrastructure**

Complementary to Irish Water's Programme, the DHLGH is currently examining waste water requirements in the context of villages and similar settlements that do not have access to public waste water infrastructure. The DHLGH is preparing a report on this topic at national level. This report will include the analysis of a baseline survey of all rural Local Authorities to quantify and qualify the number of villages and settlements concerned. The outcomes, as identified in the final report, will feed into relevant future policy considerations.

<sup>25</sup> Further details are available on the Irish Water website at <https://www.water.ie/news/small-towns-and-villages/index.xml>.

### Providing greater certainty to Local Authorities and developers in facilitating housing development

Local Authorities and developers need to be aware of where water services infrastructure can best support housing development or where constraints exist. To bring this clarity, Irish Water prepared waste water treatment capacity registers on a national basis for the first time in 2020. These were issued to each Local Authority to support their preparation of city and county Development Plans.

The waste water treatment capacity registers provide information on available capacity for growth, treatment capability and upgrade projects to be delivered in the current investment plan for all Irish Water treatment plants. Irish Water has recently finalised a water supply capacity register for the top 48 settlements nationally, as identified in the NPF and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies. This will be followed later in 2021 by water supply capacity registers on a county-by-county basis. This will help all those involved in the provision of housing to ensure that housing can be developed as quickly as possible, in line with established planning policy, legislation and guidance, where the water services capacity exists to facilitate that development.

### Growth Synergies of wider Investment by Irish Water

Where Irish Water is investing in drivers other than growth, it still provides additional capacity for housing development. In the case of investment in treatment plants driven by compliance, these are designed so that when complete, as well as ensuring the plant meets necessary environmental obligations, typically 10% to 15% headroom is also provided.

Every mega litre of treated water saved under the leakage reduction programme is also made available for new development. For example, in the case of Cork City, daily production at both water treatment plants serving the city has reduced down from 61 mega litres per day to 49 mega litres per day, a reduction of 13 mega litres. That spare capacity is now available for future housing and other development.

## Housing Policy Objective 27: Expand the water network to support housing delivery

No.		Timeline	Lead
27.1	The Government will continue to deliver a high level investment in water infrastructure to support housing delivery nationwide	Ongoing	DHLGH, Irish Water
27.2	Irish Water will ensure that its network delivery stream supports timely delivery of housing connections	Ongoing	DHLGH, Irish Water
27.3	An accreditation scheme will be advanced to facilitate developers in providing water services infrastructure, provided agreed standards are met.	Q4 2023	DHLGH, Irish Water
27.4	Irish Water and the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities will review the water connection policy to address any issues with first mover disadvantage	2022	DHLGH, Irish Water
27.5	Irish Water will roll out a national water supply capacity register, to complement the waste water capacity register, to bring greater clarity to planning for housing by identifying where capacity facilitates early housing provision or where constraints may exist	Q1 2022	DHLGH, Irish Water
27.6	Irish Water will report to the Minister on policy initiatives to support villages and similar settlements without public waste water infrastructure	End 2021	Irish Water



## 5.7 Measure and Monitor Performance of Housing Development and Construction

The DHLGH is committed to evidenced-based policy development and will continue to improve data availability and analysis. This includes working with the Local Government sector to ensure that planning and housing data is captured in a nationally consistent structure, to enable monitoring of national housing development and construction.

The DHLGH, working with the Ordinance Survey of Ireland (OSI), will develop national housing development monitoring digital infrastructure, to include annual housing delivery benchmarked against national, regional, and development plan and settlement targets. It will also include a significant housing developments tracker for city/urban/town areas produced in conjunction with Local Authorities.

The supply of housing is inextricably linked to the supply of land and its capacity for development. Again, working with the OSI, the DHLGH will develop a national zoned housing land register based on Local Authority Development Plans, including the potential housing yield/capacity, which can also form the basis for the associated calculation of land use values required for Land Value Sharing measures.

As supply accelerates toward an average of 33,000 homes per year, it is important that the effects of these measures are monitored to demonstrate what is being delivered on the ground and to inform future policy development. The DHLGH will continue to work to better understand the supply capacity of the residential development and construction sector, the factors that may constrain supply and the role of the sector in the wider economy.

### Housing Policy Objective 28:

### Measure and monitor the performance of national housing development and construction

No.		Timeline	Lead
28.1	Develop a national housing development monitoring digital infrastructure, to include annual housing delivery, benchmarked against national, regional and development plan and settlement targets, and also a significant housing developments tracker for city/urban/town areas in conjunction with Local Authorities	2022	DHLGH, OSI, LAs
28.2	Develop a national zoned housing land register based on Local Authority Development Plans, including the potential housing yield/capacity, which can also form the basis for the associated calculation of land use values required for Land Value Sharing measures	2022	DHLGH, OSI, LAS
28.3	Continue to work to better understand the supply capacity of the residential development and construction sector, the factors which may constrain supply and the role of the sector in the wider economy	Ongoing	DHLGH, DETE, DFHERIS



6

# Establish a Commission on Housing



# 6 Establish a Commission on Housing

The Programme for Government commits to establishing a Commission on Housing to examine issues such as tenure, standards, sustainability and quality-of-life issues in the provision of housing, all of which have long-term impacts on communities. The establishment of the Commission presents an opportunity to take a long-term strategic view on these aspects of housing, over an extended time horizon, as well as the other issues identified as being suitable for in-depth examination, as set out below.

## 6.1 Policy areas for review

Subject to final approval by the Government of the Commission's Terms of Reference (in due course), it is envisaged that the Commission will, inter alia, address various housing issues, examining how to build on the policy changes outlined in *Housing for All* in those areas. Its work will include examining areas such as:

- Providing balance and choice of tenures;
- The future of rent controls, rental and income supports;
- The merits of an independent social housing regulator; and
- The optimum role of Approved Housing Bodies in housing provision.

It is envisaged that a Commission on Housing will bring together experts from various housing-related sectors and will take a trans-governmental and enduring approach to our current housing crisis, and will play a role in the State achieving good quality, affordable homes for all.

## 6.2 Referendum on Housing

It is planned that the Commission on Housing will work to bring forward proposals on the referendum on housing referred to in the Programme for Government. The Commission will establish a sub-committee with appropriate expertise to examine the complex constitutional questions arising and examine the various proposals that have been made around potential wording for an amendment to the Constitution. It will advise the Government in an independent and objective manner regarding the critical factors for consideration and will make recommendations as to the appropriate wording to be put to the people.

### 6.3 Establishment of the Commission

The Commission on Housing will be formally established later in 2021, once the Terms of Reference and Membership of the Commission have been finalised. The Terms of Reference will be drafted in consultation with the Chair designate, having regard to the Programme for Government and the priorities set out in *Housing for All*.

The Commission will be time bound with a reporting requirement, which will help it to achieve its objectives. The final Terms of Reference will be published before the Commission’s establishment later in 2021.

#### Housing Policy Objective 29: Establish a Commission on Housing

No.		Timeline	Lead
29.1	Establish a Commission on Housing to examine issues including standards, sustainability and quality-of-life issues in the provision of housing	Q4 2021	DHLGH





# 7

## Governance and Reporting on the *Housing for All* Plan



# 7 Governance and Reporting on the *Housing for All* Plan

**Housing for All** is a whole-of-Government Plan, encompassing numerous policy areas across the four pathways to a sustainable housing system. It will require a deep level of collaboration across Government with a strong focus on implementation.

The Plan includes a detailed set of actions, setting out the measures required to make progress towards the headline targets of the Plan, across each of the four pathways. Each action has an agreed delivery timeframe and is assigned a lead actor with responsibility for implementation.

Oversight of the **Housing for All** Strategy is informed by the experience of the governance approach of the successful Action Plan for Jobs. This ensured a concerted whole-of-government policy implementation with political buy-in, oversight and direction at the highest level accompanied by a rigorous monitoring system to enable delivery.

The implementation process for the **Housing for All** Plan will include:

- Political oversight provided by the Cabinet Committee on Housing, chaired by the Taoiseach.
- A Delivery Group of Secretaries General, chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach, which will be responsible for delivery of all aspects of the Plan and ensuring genuine whole-of-government engagement.
- This Secretary General Delivery Group will include dedicated workstreams, led by the relevant Secretaries General, on:
  - (i) Investment;
  - (ii) Industry capability; and
  - (iii) Public service delivery.
- Quarterly Progress Reports will be submitted to the Cabinet Committee on Housing and to Government, and will be published, setting out performance against the targets and actions set out in the Plan in a clear and comprehensible way. This will be prepared by a dedicated unit within the Department of the Taoiseach. These progress updates will include dashboard statistics that will provide a transparent overview of performance metrics, covering all major aspects of the Plan .
- A Programme Delivery Office located within the DHLGH will support implementation of the Plan across the department, and across other departments and agencies, as well as Local Authorities and AHBs.
- There will be strong ongoing engagement and consultation with stakeholders as the Plan is implemented, through existing and, where necessary, new structures.

- There will also be an ongoing communications effort, with a specific team assigned to work on it, including from the Government Information Service, to ensure continued co-ordination across all levels of Government.
- An implementation fund of €7m annually is being established to ensure that sufficient targeted resources and expertise are in place across departments to expedite delivery of the Plan.
- The actions in the Plan will be updated on an annual basis, including timelines, and responsibilities, to sustain momentum on delivery during the lifetime of the Plan.

### Housing Policy Objective 30:

### Monitor and Report on the implementation of *Housing for All*

No.		Timeline	Lead
30.1	Establish a unit in the Department of the Taoiseach with responsibility for ongoing monitoring and oversight of the implementation of the Plan	Q3 2021	DoT
30.2	Establish a Programme Delivery Office in the DHLGH to support implementation of the Plan across the department, Local Authorities and AHBs	Q3 2021	DHLGH
30.3	Establish dedicated workstreams under the <i>Housing for All</i> Delivery Group on (i) investment (ii) industry capability and (iii) public service delivery and develop Terms of Reference for each workstream	Q3 2021	DoT, DHLGH, DFin, DETE, DPER
30.4	Establish an implementation fund to ensure that sufficient targeted resources and expertise are in place across Departments to expedite delivery of the Plan	Q4 2021	DoT, DPER
30.5	Ensure ongoing consultation and engagement with stakeholders as the Plan is implemented	Ongoing	All
30.6	Produce quarterly progress reports setting out performance against the targets and actions set out in the Plan in a clear and comprehensible way	Ongoing	DoT
30.7	Update the HfA Action Plan, including timelines and responsibilities, to sustain momentum on delivery and implementation	Q4 2022	DHLGH, DoT

# Appendix 1 | Developing *Housing for All*



## Appendix 2 | Glossary of Terms

### **ABP**

An Bord Pleanála

### **AGO**

Attorney Generals Office

### **AHB**

Approved Housing Body

### **AHBRA**

Approved Housing Bodies  
Regulatory Authority

### **BCMS**

Building Control Management System

### **BER**

Building Energy Rating

### **BIM**

Building Information Modelling

### **BRAB**

Building Regulations Advisory Board

### **C&D**

Construction and Demolition

### **CAS**

Capital Assistance Scheme

### **CALF**

Capital Advance Leasing Facility

### **CBL**

Choice Based Letting

### **CCMA**

County and City Management Association

### **CIF**

Construction Industry Federation

### **CIRI**

Construction Industry Registry Ireland

### **Cost Optimal**

Cost Optimal is the energy performance of a building, which will lead to the lowest cost over the lifetime of the building taking into account energy related capital costs, maintenance and operating costs (which include energy costs and savings and carbon emissions costs)

### **CPO**

Compulsory Purchase Order

### **CRU**

Commission for Regulation of Utilities

### **CTC**

Construction Technology Centre

### **DCEDIY**

Department of Children, Equality, Disability,  
Integration and Youth

### **DFIN**

Department of Finance

### **DFHERIS**

Department of Further and Higher Education,  
Research, Innovation and Science

### **DHDG**

Dublin Housing Delivery Group

### **DHLGH**

Department of Housing, Local Government and  
Heritage

### **DoE**

Department of Education

**DoH**

Department of Health

**DoJ**

Department of Justice

**DoT**

Department of the Taoiseach

**DTransport**

Department of Transport

**DPER**

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

**DRCD**

Department of Rural and Community Development

**DSP**

Department of Social Protection

**DTCAGSM**

Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

**DMURS**

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets

**DPGs**

Development Plan Guidelines

**DRHE**

Dublin Region Homeless Executive

**EGFSN**

Expert Group on Future Skills Needs

**ESB**

Electricity Supply Board

**ESRI**

Economic and Social Research Institute

**GIS**

Geographical Information System

**HA**

Housing Agency

**HAP**

Housing Assistance Payment

**HBFI**

Home Building Finance Ireland

**HDCO**

Housing Delivery Co-ordination Office

**HFA**

Housing Finance Agency

**HICP**

Harmonised Index of Consumer Products

**HMP**

Household Means Policy

**HNDA**

Housing Needs Demand Assessment

**HPO**

Housing Policy Objective

**HSE**

Health Service Executive

**HSTs**

Housing Supply Targets

**IRPP**

Irish Refugee Protection Programme

**KPIs**

Key Performance Indicators

**LAs**

Local Authorities

**LADP**

Local Authority Development Plan

**LDA**

Land Development Agency

**LECP**

Local and Economic Community Plan

**LGMA**

Local Government Management Agency

**LVS**

Land Value Sharing

**MABS**

Money Advice and Budgeting Service

**MMC**

Modern Methods of Construction

**NAMA**

National Asset Management Agency

**NARPS**

National Asset Residential Property Service

**NBCO**

National Building Control Office

**NBP**

National Broadband Plan

**NDP**

National Development Plan

**NESC**

National Economic and Social Council

**NGO**

Non-Governmental Organisation

**NIHE**

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

**NPF**

National Planning Framework

**NSAI**

National Standards Authority of Ireland

**NTA**

National Transport Authority

**NZEB**

Nearly Zero Emissions Building

**OGP**

Office of Government Procurement

**OMCs**

Owner Management Companies

**OPR**

Office of the Planning Regulator

**OPW**

Office of Public Works

**OSI**

Ordnance Survey Ireland

**Part V**

Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

**PII**

Property Industry Ireland

**PPP**

Public Private Partnership

**PSC**

The Public Spending Code

**PUP**

Pandemic Unemployment Payment

**RAS**

Rental Accommodation Scheme

**RPZ**

Rent Pressure Zone

**RRDF**

Rural and Regeneration Development Fund

**RTB**

Residential Tenancies Board

**SCSG**

Sustainable and Compact Settlement Guidance

**SDZ**

Strategic Development Zone

**SEAI**

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland

**SHD**

Strategic Housing Development

**SME**

Small Medium Enterprise

**UDZ**

Urban Development Zone

**URDF**

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund



[gov.ie/housingforall](http://gov.ie/housingforall)

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland