



Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe
Galway City Council

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To the Chair and Each Member of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee

RE: Item on the agenda for the Housing SPC – 28th February 2019
Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024

A Chara,

Please see attached Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024 setting out progress achieved over TAP 2014 – 2018 and targets for delivery over the period 2019 – 2024 as required under Circular 35/2018 and in line with the Traveller Accommodation Act 1998 and Guidelines for the Preparation, Adoption and Implementation of Local Authority Traveller Accommodation Programmes 2019 – 2024.

Under Section 10 of the 1998 Act the Minister has directed that the next accommodation programme should be for a period of 5 years for the period from 1st July, 2019 to 30th June, 2024. The current programme will continue to operate until 1st July 2019. Commencement of the next TAP in July will serve to align the TAPs to run concurrently with the term of office of elected Councils. The Minister has specified 30th September 2019, as the latest date by which accommodation programmes must be adopted. Key dates for the preparation and adoption of TAP are attached.

Following the presentation of the Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 at the Housing SPC, it is intended to present it to a meeting of the LTACC to be scheduled for March 2019 and to be issued for public consultation in April 2019 in line with timeframes attached.

Mise le meas,

Dermot Mahon,
A/Director of Services,
Housing, Environment & Climate Change,
Recreation & Amenity.

Date: 14th February, 2019



Galway City Council

Traveller

Accommodation

Programme

2019- 2024

DRAFT

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Section 1 – Preparation and Consultation

Galway City Council is required under the provisions of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 to prepare and adopt a five year Traveller Accommodation Programme to meet the existing and projected needs of Travellers in its administrative area. Under S. 10 of the Act the Minister has directed that the current programme shall expire on the 30th June 2019 and the new Programme will cover the 5 year period from the 1st July 2019 to 30th June 2024.

The deferral of the commencement of the new Plan follows the outcome of an independent review of capital and current funding of Traveller-specific accommodation undertaken by the Department of Housing in 2017. Commencement of the next TAP in July 2019 also serves to align the TAP's to run concurrently with the term of office of the elected Council. The latest date for adoption of the TAP 2019 – 2024 is the 30th September 2019.

It is essential that Traveller Accommodation Programmes are prepared in a consultative manner. The Act requires that housing authorities consult with adjoining housing authorities, the HSE, Approved Housing Bodies, the Local Traveller Consultative Committee, other local Traveller representative groups, community and interest groups and the public in general. The purpose of broad consultation ensures that the interests of all concerned with or affected by proposals for Traveller accommodation are considered and to facilitate a planned and comprehensive response by housing authorities to the accommodation needs of Travellers.

Sections 5 to 18 of the Act provide for the detailed procedures leading to the adoption and implementation of Traveller Accommodation Programmes. Section 8 of the Act requires authorities, before preparing a draft of an accommodation programme, to give notice in writing of their intention to do so. Notice was issued on the 1st August 2018 and submissions received from COPE Galway, Traveller Health Unit HSE, Public Health HSE, Galway City Partnership, Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre, Minceirs Whiden (Cant for Travellers talking) Ireland and Galway Traveller Movement. These submissions were considered in the preparation of the first Draft.

Consultation Process

(Section to be completed after consultation process and in advance of adoption of TAP)

Content of Traveller Accommodation Programme

Section 10(2) of the Act requires that Accommodation Programmes contain at least the matters specified in that section in the interests of ensuring a high standard of quality and consistency of programmes. Under section 10(2)(b) of the Act, the Minister has directed that the information in

relation to the needs to be met by the Programmes shall be in summary form, but in sufficient detail to show the needs for all categories of Traveller accommodation and the general area in which the accommodation is required.

Section 2 - Policy Statement

Section 10(2)(c) requires that a Statement of Policy in relation to meeting accommodation needs be included in the Programme. This Statement of Policy should address general issues such as consultation with the interests concerned and specify goals and the timeframe within which needs are to be met. The policy statement sets out Galway City Councils policy in relation to:

- The provision of permanent, emergency, temporary or transient accommodation, including traditional halting sites and visitor facilities at permanent accommodation,
- The provision of support for those waiting for accommodation,
- The position in relating to meeting the distinct needs and family circumstances of Travellers, and unauthorised encampments.

Policy Statement

- Galway City Council will continue to consult with Travellers, Traveller organisations and the Local Traveller Consultative Committee on issues relating to Traveller Accommodation
- Galway City Council is committed to the provision of high quality Traveller Accommodation, where possible in accordance with the wishes of the majority of Traveller households identified in the Assessment of Need
- Applications for accommodation to Galway City Council will be considered in line with the Housing Regulations of 2011 and more recently the 2013 Guidelines and 2014 Housing Act
- When allocating accommodation, Galway City Council will have regard to the provisions of its adopted Scheme of Letting Priorities 2018, Estate Management Strategy 2019 and estate management issues, an appropriate social mix within areas, compatibility of families, anti-social behaviour and house size requirements
- Galway City Council will only provide Traveller Specific accommodation for the City Council's indigenous Traveller households. For this purpose, the City Council will only regard a Traveller household as indigenous where they have been resident in the administrative area for at least three years immediately prior to the adoption of the City Council's Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019- 2024 or any continuous five year period in which an accommodation applicant was previously a tenant of, or resident, in the City Council's administrative area
- Galway City Council will assist and encourage the Approved Housing Bodies in the provision of accommodation to Traveller households, most notably in the area of Traveller specific accommodation
- The Council will work closely with CENA Traveller AHB in the delivery of a number of Traveller specific and culturally appropriate accommodation schemes
- Where Galway City Council considers a person has been engaged in anti-social behaviour, or that a letting to that person will not be in the interests of good estate management, accommodation will not be offered in the first instance, and in the case of existing tenants, the Anti- Social Behaviour Policy of Galway City Council will apply

- In the event of accommodation being repossessed following abandonment or anti-social behaviour, Galway City Council, save in exceptional circumstances, will have no obligation to meet future housing requirements of that family
- Where families – consistent with Traveller culture – wish to leave their accommodation for short periods (not exceeding 6 weeks) they must obtain prior written approval. Otherwise the property will be deemed to be abandoned
- The Council will not tolerate unauthorised encampments on its lands and will serve notice to families, as appropriate, to ensure unauthorised encampments are not permitted
- The Council will work closely with Homeless Service Providers/LTACC with Travellers who are experiencing homelessness to address their accommodation needs through appropriate social housing supports

Estate Management

The Galway City Council Estate Management Strategy 2019-2023 sets out how Galway City Council manages its tenancies and estates, including halting sites. However, it is recognised that there are additional factors to be considered in the management of halting sites and these will be explored in more detail in a separate Halting Site Estate Management Strategy, to be developed in line with this Traveller Accommodation Programme. During the preparation of this strategy, the use of a third party service provider for the management of halting sites will be explored.

Section 3 – Strategy Statement

Section 10(2)(d) requires that an Accommodation Programme should specify a strategy for securing the implementation of the Programme. The strategy should:

- Indicate the means of providing accommodation e.g. direct provision by authorities concerned, approved housing bodies, private individuals;
- Detail information/awareness and consultative exercises between and with Travellers and the general public;
- Detail the structures for the development of accommodation proposals;
- Set out arrangements for management and maintenance of the accommodation;
- Give details of procedures for dealing with problems arising; and
- Specify the mechanisms for monitoring progress in implementing the programme.

As a Housing Authority, Galway City Council's strategy is to identify those Traveller families who have an identified housing need which cannot be met from their own resources, and to use all options and resources available to it in order to meet this need to the greatest extent practicable. Means of delivery will include traditional local authority halting sites, standard group and local authority housing, culturally appropriate group housing, housing provided by AHB's including CENA and accommodation sourced in the private rental market under RAS and HAP. The Council will consult with Traveller representatives and individual Traveller families where direct build accommodation proposals are being considered, at design stage, and at each stage of development from planning to delivery. This will ensure that the needs of the Traveller families are taken into consideration throughout the process.

The Council will manage Traveller accommodation in line with its Estate Management Strategy 2019. A specific Halting Site Management Strategy will be developed in 2019 to set out the management and maintenance objectives of the Council at its range of Traveller specific accommodation locations. Annual Targets will be set and reviewed on an ongoing basis with a report prepared for each quarterly LTACC meeting to ensure that progress is being maintained and any blockages noted and examined. This will provide the main mechanism for monitoring progress in implementing the Programme alongside Section 17(1)(a) of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, which provides that a relevant Housing Authority shall review its accommodation programme at least once in each three-year period.

Measures for Implementation

Section 10(2)(e) requires that the Programme must also include specific measures or proposals for each implementing authority or other party concerned. It is considered that such measures should cover:

- The provision of the range of accommodation required,
- Assistance to Travellers to provide accommodation for their own use,
- Assistance to approved housing bodies in respect of the provision or management of accommodation for Travellers, and
- Arrangements for the proper management, including assistance towards the management, of the above accommodation.

Section 10(2) of the 1998 Act, sets out that annual targets shall be included in the Programme, in respect of implementation of the Programme. The targets should include details of the numbers of units of accommodation proposed to be delivered for each of the five years of the programme for Traveller specific accommodation (including group housing, bays on halting sites, including transient sites) both new and refurbished and for standard housing.

Section 4 - Current Traveller Accommodation Provision and Review of Programme 2014 - 2018

Current Figure by Tenure Type: (Traveller Families Annual Census November 2018)

Accommodation Type	No of Households
Standard Lettings	243
Group Houses	22
Families living in houses acquired or improved with the assistance of LA	13
Families living in houses acquired by Travellers without LA assistance (estimate):	3
Private Rented accommodation (incl HAP, rent supplement, RAS, LTL)	142
Voluntary Housing	22
Supported Projects	12
Sharing in Standard Lettings	37
Sharing in Group Houses	6

Sharing in Private Rented Accommodation	10
Sharing in Voluntary Housing	1
Permanent Halting Sites	23
Temporary Halting Site	13
Transient Sites	20
Sharing on Permanent Halting Sites	13
Families on Unauthorised Sites	8
Total number of Traveller families in the LA area on date of the count:	588

Standard Housing: As evidenced in the above table this tenure type remains the accommodation of choice for the majority of Traveller households and the number of allocations into standard housing since 2014 has been **82**. The current housing capital programme under Rebuilding Ireland will see the delivery of over 1,000 new standard local authority and AHB homes up to 2021, and it is envisaged that a similar number of Traveller families will be accommodated in standard local authority and Approved Housing Body housing that meets their needs over the period of TAP 2019 – 2024.

Group Housing Schemes: Galway City Council manages five Group Housing Schemes in the city totalling 27 units. However, only **22** of those units are currently occupied. Vacancies in Fana Glas, Ballybane remain and the scheme will be subject to refurbishment over the lifetime of TAP 2019 – 2024 to bring all the units back to full occupancy.

A design process has commenced to consider overall density and layout of a refurbished scheme and an application for funding will issue to the DHPLG in 2019. Consultation with Traveller representatives will take place in relation to emerging proposals. Existing units will be included in Phase 2 energy efficiency programme to include replacement windows and doors and in the boiler replacement programme to commence in 2019.

There is demand for additional Group Housing in the city and proposals will be brought forward to Part 8 planning to incorporate GHS within and adjacent to proposed standard local authority schemes where such demand exists. It is envisaged that an additional 15 group homes will be added to stock over the lifetime of the TAP, bringing the number of occupied GHS homes to 42.

Approved Housing Body Housing: **22** families are accommodated in properties provided by Approved Housing Bodies. This has increased from 2014 when only 4 families were accommodated by AHB's. The number of families accommodated by AHB's will increase over the lifetime of TAP 2019 – 2024 as new standard housing is developed and acquired by AHB's.

Home Ownership: Currently one Traveller household owns a Shared Ownership property. It is estimated that **13** Traveller families have availed of the Tenant Purchase Scheme and that a further **3** households have acquired property without Local Authority assistance.

Permanent Residential Caravan Parks – Halting Sites: Galway City Council operates 4 permanent halting sites. The last constructed permanent halting site was Cul Tra, Salthill in 1996.

Site	No of Bays	Occupancy Rates	Conditions
Cul Tra, Salthill	6	Full and up to 10 additional young families sharing facilities.	Severely overcrowded. Routine maintenance ongoing. New family formations to be housed off-site in new scheme.
Circular Road, Rahoon	5	5 valid tenancies.	Service units are very basic. Refurbishment plan being progressed to develop the site into culturally appropriate accommodation in partnership with CENA.
Tuam Road, Cuil Sheoige	7	Full occupancy. Very diverse site – 3 Bays have adult children sharing with parents. 4 Bays have very young children, 2 of which have 5 plus children. 4 families on this site want standard accommodation	Site in good condition. Allocations to site to be considered line with SLP and estate management policies. No refurbishment plans.
St. Nicholas Park, Doughiska	5	5 occupied	Site in moderate condition and to be considered for refurbishment into culturally appropriate accommodation.

'Transient' Halting Site Carrowbrowne, Headford Road

Refurbishment of the Transient Halting Site was completed in early 2009 and 23 families initially moved on site. 20 families currently have tenancies at this location. Thus, in effect families who are residing on this site have a permanent need for accommodation and their need is not for transient accommodation. The preference for permanent accommodation for the majority of the families remains Traveller Specific, most notably Halting Site accommodation. A number of families have also indicated a preference for Group Housing at alternative locations.

It is proposed that the 'Transient' site at Carrowbrowne be re-designated as a Permanent Halting Site / Residential Caravan Park under the management of Galway City Council. Ongoing refurbishment plans will then be considered in line with the permanent tenancies in place, rather than a transient management approach. The number of bays in a permanent site should ideally be reduced to no more than 15 over the lifetime of this TAP. The Council will work with families on site who wish to relocate to other forms of accommodation, including Group Housing, and to manage any new tenancy allocations on site in the best interests of all families seeking halting site accommodation.

'Temporary' Halting Site Carrowbrowne, Headford Road

Up to 13 families currently reside on the 'Temporary' Halting Site in Carrowbrowne and all 13 have expressed preference for Halting Site accommodation, preferably in the County area. A number of families may consider accommodation in the County in standard local authority accommodation. Galway City Council has not been able to meet this need to date and previously applied for an extension of the planning permission for this site. In December 2013, An Bord Pleanála granted an extension of the planning permission by one year to December 2014. The site currently operates without the benefit of planning and is in extremely poor condition.

It is intended to close this site over the lifetime of this TAP and provide alternative accommodation for all families. Sites are being considered for a number of families in both the 'Transient' and 'Temporary' sites that will free up halting site accommodation. In addition, a site for the development of culturally specific traveller accommodation is being considered. Proposals for same will be brought forward for part 8 planning in 2019.

Rental Accommodation Scheme/Long Term Leasing: During the lifetime of TAP 2009 – 2013 there were 9 allocations to the Rental Accommodation Scheme and a further 5 to the Long Term Leasing Scheme. During TAP 2014 – 2018 a further 9 allocations were made into RAS and 3 into Long-term Leasing.

Some Traveller households have expressed reservations about this form of social housing, preferring to be allocated local authority owned property, particularly since 2011 when RAS/Long Term Leasing were considered as forms of Social Housing. RAS and Leasing will continue to be offered to Traveller families in TAP 2019 – 2024 where such accommodation meets the family need.

Housing Assistance Payment: HAP became a housing option for GCC housing applicants in 2016 and to date over 1,500 households have had their accommodation requirements met under this form of provision. It is estimated that 72 Traveller families are accommodated under HAP and a further 4 have been accommodated under the HAP Homeless option. It is anticipated that HAP will continue to be provided as an appropriate accommodation option for Traveller households under TAP 2019 – 2024.

Homeless Services: Emergency homeless services are provided on an ongoing basis to Traveller men, women and families. Once services have been sanctioned, further to assessment, men access services in the Fairgreen Hostel, single women and women with children access Osterley Lodge. The Social Work service manages and reviews all households accessing emergency services working with an inter-agency focus to progress the household back out into the community with supports.

There was a notable increase in Traveller families presenting as homeless and at risk of homelessness during the period of TAP 2014 – 2018 and many of those families accessed preventative services through the COPE Family Support Service who assisted them to secure and maintain accommodation. COPE Galway and Galway SIMON manage and operate a range of resettlement projects in the city and provide a range of transitional housing projects from medium to low support projects to high support. Additional homeless supports are being planned by Galway City Council from 2019 including the development of family hub and temporary modular accommodation to house homeless families.

Mid-Term Review TAP 2014-2018

Section 17(1)(a) of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, requires that a Mid-term review be completed and adopted by elected representatives. The Mid-Term Review of TAP 2014 – 2018 was presented to elected representatives in February 2017 and finally adopted in September 2017. Revised targets for 2017 and 2018 were agreed. The Review was adopted following a period of consultation with Travellers, facilitated by CENA, on the requirements for culturally specific Traveller accommodation in the City. The CENA review and subsequent report found that the overwhelming requirement from families who were listed as requiring halting site accommodation was for a different model of culturally appropriate accommodation.

This model resembles a traditional group housing scheme with provision of a bay to accommodate a caravan or trailer. When TAP 2014 – 2018 was initially adopted, provision for 3 halting sites was included in the Plan. The Mid-term review agreed that 3 facilities were required, but elected members provided that 3 culturally specific accommodation schemes would replace the previous inclusion of halting sites.

Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018-Annual Targets									
	Social housing Allocations			Group housing schemes		Permanent halting sites		Extensions to dwellings	
	Target	Y	N	Targets	Achieved	Targets	Achieved	Targets	Achieved
2014	10	4	4					1	0
2015	10	5	8					2	0
2016	10	5	3	0	2	1 6-8 Bay	0	2	0
2017	10			1	0	1 6-8 Bay	0	2	
2018	10					1 6-8 Bay	0	1	1
Total		14			0	0		0	
Housing Assistant Payment (HAP)					16 Allocations in 2016				

2014 – 2018 - Provision of Accommodation

The table below details the number of allocations to Traveller families, each year from 2014 under the various categories of support. In total **194** families were provided with accommodation supports over the 5 year period from 2014 to 2018.

Accommodation Type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Standard Local Authority (incl Transfers)	18	14	16	19	15	82
Extensions to Standard Local Authority	0	0	1	1	3	5

Approved Housing Body	0	0	0	1	5	6
Group Housing Scheme	0	0	1	0	1	2
Permanent Residential Halting Site	0	0	0	0	3	3
Temporary Residential Halting Site	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transient Residential Halting Site	1	3	0	2	2	8
Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)	2	1	3	3	0	9
Long-Term Leasing Scheme	0	2	1	0	0	3
Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	0	0	13	35	24	72
HAP Homeless Scheme	0	0	0	0	4	4
Total	21	20	35	60	57	194

During the lifetime of the TAP 2009- 2014, 15 families surrendered/abandoned accommodation provided by Galway City Council. The figure for the period 2014 – 2018 was substantially less at 7.

The following is a summary of constraints experienced in the delivery of targets during the lifetime of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018:

Capital Building Programme – the capacity and funding to deliver units of standard and Traveller specific housing was negatively impacted by the suspension of the Housing Construction Programme nationally from 2008. Rebuilding Ireland was launched in 2016 and with it a programme to deliver over 1,200 homes in Galway city has been agreed. Supply of accommodation coming onto the Rental Accommodation Scheme severely diminished and difficulties existed in sourcing same given that the market rents remain quite high in Galway city. Planning issues relating to the precise location of the planned Galway City Ring Road inhibited the progression of 2 independent Group Housing Schemes proposed. The road alignment has now been agreed and plans for these schemes can progress.

Lack of suitable lands for the provision of additional Halting Sites – 9 sites were initially surveyed. The elected members adopted the TAP review in 2017 without reference to new halting sites. Lack of funding through the Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme for families requiring extensions on medical grounds – limited funding meant small adaptations were prioritised such as stair lifts. 3 significant extensions for Traveller families commenced in 2018 and will be complete in 2019. House acquisitions have also progressed in 2018 with a number being considered for families in lieu of extensions.

Section 5 – Assessment of Need

Section 6 (as amended in the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act) 2009 requires housing authorities, for the purposes of preparing a programme, in respect of their functional area, to make an assessment of the accommodation needs of Travellers who are assessed under Section 20 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 as being qualified for social housing support, including the need for sites. In making an assessment, a housing authority is required to have regard to:

- The estimate of the number of Travellers for whom accommodation will be required during the course of the programme,
- The summary of social housing assessments prepared under section 21 (c) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 as it relates to Traveller,
- The need for transient sites,
- Consideration by the housing authority of the views of the LTACC.

In order to ensure a thorough assessment of need was completed, Galway City Council based their Assessment of Need Process on the following:

- Annual Count of Traveller Families 30th November 2018
- Updated data on ihouse further to the Housing Needs Assessment of the 11th June 2018
- A letter was issued to all Traveller households (September 2018) currently open and requiring accommodation to advise them of the preparation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme and to request their preference for accommodation in writing, as it was agreed that same could not be changed during the lifetime of the Programme.
- Meetings were held with a number of individual Traveller households, as and if required to further clarify need and to ensure that the family were registered as having a housing need.
- Consultation with the Galway Traveller Movement to ensure all need was captured.

Housing authorities are required to identify the accommodation needs of Traveller families to be met under the new programme. This must relate to the existing accommodation needs and the projected need that will arise during the period of the programmes across a range of accommodation options including standard and group housing, permanent residential sites for caravans and transient sites provided directly by the housing authority or by Approved Housing Bodies or individuals, with or without the assistance of the Housing Authority. The assessment of need for sites must include an assessment of the need for transient sites.

Under S.21 of the 2009 Act, housing authorities are required to prepare a summary of the social housing assessments carried out in their administrative areas as at 11th June 2018. Galway City Council had regard to the information and the need for housing accommodation contained in that data, in addition to other supplementary information on the accommodation needs available to the Council. Additional inquiries were undertaken including consultation with Traveller families and relevant Traveller support groups to ascertain a comprehensive picture of the existing and projected need for housing accommodation of Traveller families the period 2019 to 2024.

Results of the Assessment of Need

265 Traveller families were assessed as being in need of housing in Galway City Council's administrative area. This figure captures all Traveller households assessed as having a social housing need and incorporates all households that have been approved for a transfer. Approved transfers, such as from a halting site to a standard house, are all now registered on ihouse as being open applications.

The figure includes all the families residing on the Transient Halting Site in Carrowbrowne including families requiring larger or smaller properties. This highlights the differing levels of need – those without any local authority provision and reliant on private rented accommodation, those whose need is being temporarily met such as those in Carrowbrowne Temporary Site and those whose need had been met by Galway City Council but has changed over time, either due to change in family size or accommodation preference.

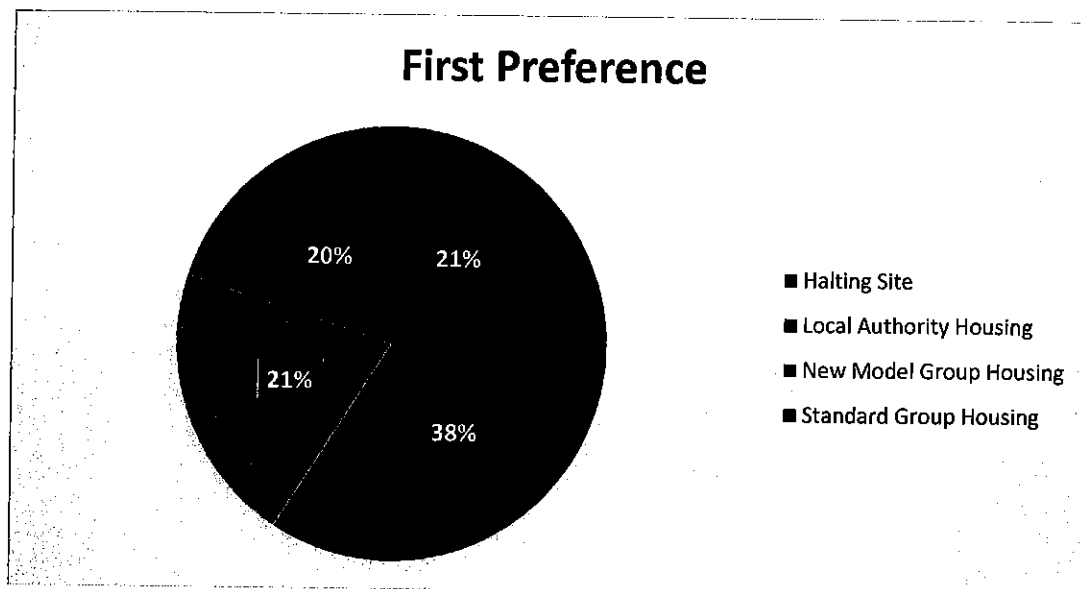
The limitations of the Housing Need Assessment 2018 became evident in the context of analysis of data for the purposes of this Plan. In the Assessment form, a Traveller household just had to tick if they were requiring Traveller Specific, however, it did not give a facility for families to elaborate if that was for Halting Site or Group Scheme. The housing application was amended in 2016 removing the option of applicants to identify as travellers. Thus, the rationale for sending out a letter to all open applicants advising them of the preparation of the Traveller Accommodation Plan and requesting their preferences was to bridge that information deficit. Thus, the results of the assessment of need process undertaken from September to December 2018 form the most accurate information currently available.

265 letters were issued requesting all families to indicate their accommodation choice in preference order for halting site accommodation, new model of group housing, standard group housing or standard local authority/voluntary housing. The Council is currently following up on the 75 families who did not respond, in order to establish their current circumstances. A number of families responded but did not complete the assessment of need. Consultation with Galway Traveller Movement on the accommodation preferences of some families who did not respond is taken into account.

Housing Preference

The housing preference of those who responded is noted below, as follows:

Accommodation Type	Halting Site	Local Authority Housing	New Model Group Housing	Standard Group Housing
First Preference	36	65	36	34
Second Preference	16	15	38	28
Third Preference	8	8	13	16
Fourth Preference	10	11	2	3



Transfers

- There are currently 26 families with a standard housing tenancy that require a transfer due to overcrowding, downsizing, medical reasons and Traveller conflict.
- There are 5 families residing on Permanent Residential sites requesting standard housing
- There are 2 families in Group Schemes requesting standard housing
- 20 families residing on the Carrowbrowne Transient Halting Site are also acknowledged as transfers. All of these families have requested halting site accommodation.

Extension Requests

There are currently 5 households in standard local authority accommodation that require extensions based on medical grounds. The medical grounds primarily relate to children with a disability and the feasibility of ground floor bedrooms and sanitary facilities appropriate to the needs of the families will be explored.

In the lifetime of TAP 2014 - 2018 some progress was made in this area and it is the intention going forward that resources will be provided to explore the feasibility of extensions with funding requests being made on a case by case basis. 5 extensions were completed or commenced under TAP 2014 – 2018 to accommodate medical and disability requirements of Traveller families.

As Galway City Council does not provide many 4-5 bed ground floor units, a transfer may not always meet the families' needs and all families interviewed spoke of the importance of the support structures they have built up in their area and how they value being accepted within the community. The latter point was a huge factor when families were assisted to explore all options regarding their need for accommodation suitable for someone with a disability. Case discussions with the HSE and parties involved are vital to ensuring clarity of need.

Common Application Area between Galway City and Galway County Council

Since the introduction of the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011, a housing applicant has a right to choose 3 areas of preferences. For example a person on the Housing Waiting List having a first preference for the Westside of the City can now select an area of preference for accommodation in the County Council area. Reports are generated, and sent by the City Council to the County Council, of applicants who have expressed an area of preference in their functional area.

Galway City Council has 27 Traveller families with an original housing need being assessed by the County Council currently on the waiting list. The majority of these families have expressed a preference for standard housing.

Galway City Council has forwarded 33 Traveller household details to the County Council as those families have requested an area of preference in the County Council. The most notable figure in this regard relates to the 13 families on the Temporary Halting Site in Carrowbrowne, who have all requested up to 2 areas of preference in the County area. Since the 2005 – 2008 Traveller Accommodation Plan this family grouping has re-iterated their wish to be approximately 5 miles outside the City.

Many Traveller families who have been interviewed welcome their right to select a preference location in the County area, many of whom discuss the difficulties that arise in high density areas heavily populated by Traveller families.

Projected need

Galway City Council is obliged to make an assessment of the number of Traveller households who will require accommodation within the lifetime of the 2019-2024 Programme. The Annual Count of Traveller Families from 2004 to present highlights the continued increase in Traveller households within the City region. In 2004, there were 278 Traveller families in the Galway City Council local authority area on the date of the count, in 2018 this figure increased to 588.

By using the 4% increase estimate as suggested in the Government Task Force Report on the Traveller Community in 1995, and having regard to the All- Ireland Traveller Health Study 2010, it is estimated that there will be 23-25 additional new family formations per annum during the lifetime of this Plan. It is proposed that newly-formed Traveller households can make suitable arrangements for securing private rented accommodation; however, Galway City Council will be cognisant of each households need and particular circumstances, as they arise on an individual basis.

Homelessness

Emergency homeless services are provided on an ongoing basis to Traveller men, women and families. There is a notable increase in Travellers experiencing homeless. Figures at February 2019 show there are approximately 68 traveller adults and 104 traveller children in homeless services. This figure includes 34 family units in homeless services. All individuals and families within homeless services have a key worker who assists them with move on options. Galway City Council are cognisant of the rising numbers of those assessing homeless services due to lack of properties within the rental market.

Section 6 – Proposals to Meet Needs and Annual Targets

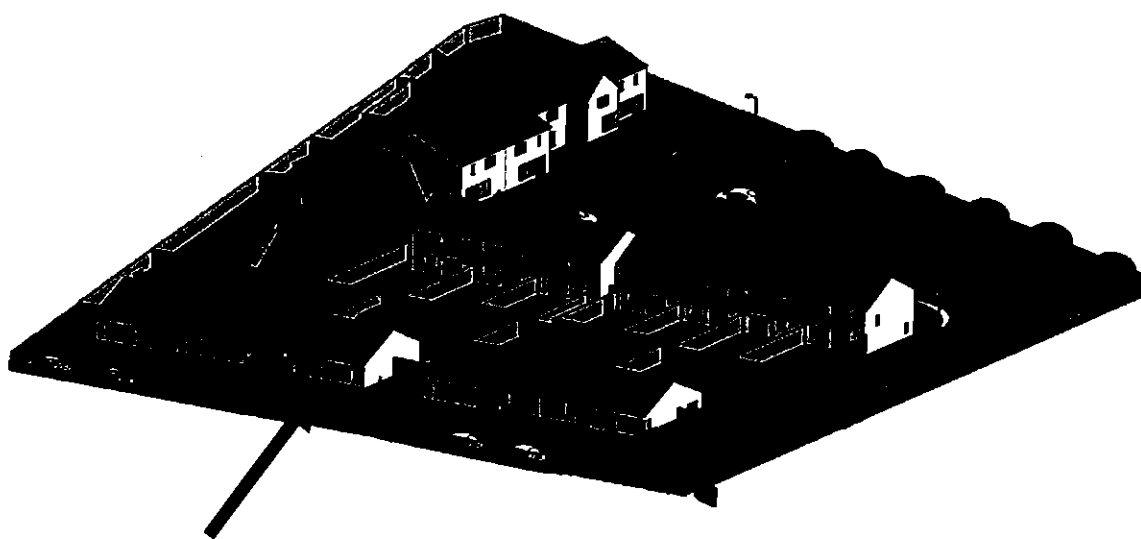
It is intended to meet the accommodation needs through the following methods:

Social Housing Allocations (local authority standard social housing, RAS & LTL) – approximately **60** over the five year period to 2024. These allocations will be sourced from casual vacancies, new built units, purchases, leased units, as appropriate.

Housing Assistance Payment will assist in meeting a person’s long term need for accommodation, whereby the responsibility for recipients of rent supplement with a long term housing need is transferred from the Department of Social Protection to Housing Authorities. It is envisaged that an additional **100** families will be accommodated under HAP up to 2024.

Group Housing Schemes – the need for 2 additional GHS to accommodate 10 families was identified in this Traveller Programme, although there may be scope for one additional scheme. Casual vacancies to be filled in line with Traveller compatibility and individual requests. Proposals for schemes at local authority owned sites are being progressed, adjacent and within standard local authority housing schemes to be developed up to 2021. The redevelopment of the Fana Glas scheme may contribute a further 5 GHS units to an overall planned stock of 42 GHS homes. Anticipated additional GHS allocations over the lifetime of the TAP is **20**.

Culturally Appropriate Traveller Accommodation - Galway City Council will progress the construction of 2 new culturally appropriate traveller accommodation sites during the lifetime of the Plan to accommodate approx. 18 families. The Council will develop and implement measures to address, to the greatest extent practicable, the accommodation needs of the families who are currently residing in the Carrowbrowne Temporary Halting site and at Cul Tra Salthill. In addition, the existing halting site on the Circular Rd will be refurbished and will no longer be classified as a halting site. It is proposed that this site be transferred to CENA upon completion of refurbishment works. 5 families will be accommodated on site. In total, it is proposed to provide **21** culturally appropriate homes across 3 locations.



(Example of culturally appropriate accommodation – purpose built traveller specific homes with provision for bay to accommodation caravan/ trailer)

Permanent Residential Halting Sites - 4 Permanent halting sites are currently managed by Galway City Council. Over the lifetime of the TAP this figure will remain. The current 'Transient' site at Carrowbrowne will be designated as a permanent site and the existing site at Circular Rd will be redeveloped into culturally appropriate traveller accommodation. No new halting sites are proposed in the City. Requests for halting site accommodation will be considered as vacancies arise at Tuam Road, St. Nicholas Park, Doughiska, Carrowbrowne and Cul Tra, Salthill. The Council will seek to maintain halting site facilities at Cul Tra, Salthill for as long as possible in consultation with the land owner. 7 casual allocations are anticipated up to 2024.

Approved Housing Body - Galway City Council will assist and encourage AHB's in the provision of accommodation to Traveller households, most notably in the area of Traveller specific accommodation. It is estimated that 30 families will be housed in standard AHB accommodation over the lifetime of this Plan.

Extensions – prioritisation of families requiring extensions on medical grounds to be continually reviewed. Feasibility studies to be carried out on all properties within a 6 month period and funding requests made to the Traveller Accommodation Unit of the Department of the Housing as appropriate. Extensions will be provided where feasible. 5 extensions are anticipated up to 2024.

Communication will continue between Galway City and Galway County Council to progress plans for meeting the needs of Traveller families with common applications in the City and the County. In the interests of securing the sustainability of accommodation, the City Council will seek to ensure that all tenancy agreements are complied with in full.

Transfer applications will be continue to be considered in line with Galway City Council policy and a bi-monthly review to be undertaken of all approved applications bearing in mind the urgency.

The continual provision of emergency homeless accommodation to those assessed as having a genuine need. Care and Case Management approach to continue to progress households through the continuum of service provision into independent tenancies as appropriate.

Galway City Council will use all appropriate powers and measures as provided for in legislation to address and manage unauthorised encampments.

Collaborative work with the GTM to deliver a programme to support for families moving into Local Authority accommodation, to facilitate timely delivery of the actions contained in this Programme and to address any other issues which impact on the successful provision and management of accommodation provided to Travellers.

In the interests of securing implementation of the objectives and targets in the Programme, the measures will be incorporated into an annual work programme, and progress on implementing the annual work programme will be monitored in conjunction with the LTACC. The Council will explore all options, including collaboration with Approved Housing Bodies, in its endeavours to implement the agreed measures.

Accommodation Targets - Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 - 2024

Accommodation Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Standard Local Authority (incl Transfers)	10	10	10	10	10	50
AHB standard housing	10	10	5	5	0	30
Extensions to Standard Local Authority	1	1	1	1	1	5
Group Housing Scheme (LA and AHB)	4	11	0	0	5	20
Culturally Specific Traveller Accommodation	13	8	0	0	0	21
Permanent Residential Halting Site	2	1	1	1	2	7
Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)	1	1	1	1	1	5
Long-Term Leasing Scheme	1	1	1	1	1	5
Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	20	20	20	20	20	100
Total	62	63	39	39	40	243

Section 7 - Review of Accommodation Programme

Section 17(1)(a) of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, provides that a relevant housing authority shall review its Accommodation Programme at least once in each three-year period, or at such time as directed by the Minister. Any amendment to the Accommodation Programme proposed following any such review must be made within seven months and is subject to the same procedures and requirements, including public consultation.

The Minister has, under section 17(1) of the 1998 Act, directed that a review of the Accommodation Programme should be carried out no later than 31st December 2021.