

Social Housing Output in 2015



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government

January 2016



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government



Published by:
**Department of Environment, Community and
Local Government and the Housing Agency.**

Publication date:
January 2016

Contact Details

Department of Environment,
Community and Local Government,
Custom House, Dublin, D01 W6X0.

Housing Agency,
53 Mount Street Upper,
Dublin, D02 KT73.

1890 20 20 21
info@environ.ie

01 656 4100
info@housing.ie

For further information
please visit
www.environ.ie

For further information
please visit
www.housing.ie

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Ministerial Foreword

2015 was the first full year of implementation of the Government's social housing strategy. The growing economy has put significant pressures on both our public and private system of housing. Economic growth creates demand for housing and the response is never an overnight one, but we have moved from sprawling, empty unfinished estates to where housing accommodation demand is increasing and is not being met by adequate supply.

The challenge we face is immense. It is rooted in decisions and neglect of previous administrations, where local authorities had their expertise in housing development systematically removed during the construction boom, where local authorities became enablers as opposed to providers of social housing. With the economy so dependent on construction when it collapsed, the local authority housing system had no capacity to respond. However, 2015 represented a good start with 13,000 keys handed out to those on housing waiting lists, approximately 2,000 people leaving homelessness and 400 new housing posts sanctioned for our local authorities. By no means is the work done, but what can be said is that the public housing recovery is happening at a quicker pace than the private housing recovery. A strong start has been made: a strong start in breaking that vicious circle of diminished supply and increased

demand by restoring a central role in the provision of social housing to local authorities, voluntary housing bodies and the State. We did this by putting in place a five-year Social Housing Strategy 2015-2020 involving an investment of €4 billion out to 2020 with funding now approved and sites selected for the construction of 5,000 new social homes, which will rise to 10,000 per year in the medium term.

Using a flexible mix of housing provision programmes, the Strategy will deliver the required 90,000 accommodation solutions and will have headroom to provide for future growth in demand. We need to focus less on the sources of housing funding (for example, Capital versus Current, or Local Authority versus Approved Housing Body) and concentrate more on the housing outcomes that the funding helps to deliver: on the number of keys to accommodation that are put in

the hands of people seeking housing. By that measure, we have got off to a strong start in 2015.

Last year, we made a very good start on our Strategy by increasing the Exchequer funding for social housing by more than a quarter over the previous year, to €800 million. As a result of our new, focused approach that started in 2015 we also:

- Achieved a marked fall in the numbers of vacant social houses, down as low as 1% vacancy in Dublin City;
- We have introduced housing legislation giving local authorities enhanced powers to counter anti-social behaviour in their estates which will help to create stronger communities;
- We have championed home ownership for the social housing tenant;
- The roll out of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme to all categories of households in eighteen local authority areas continued apace, with approximately 6,700 households having been supported by HAP since commencement of the scheme in September 2014;
- We are actively managing local authority land that is suitable for social housing and will play a vital role in meeting the need for new homes; and
- New Part V provisions have been introduced that will guarantee a delivery of social housing from developments of nine units or more.

Homelessness

Homelessness is the most acute symptom of the dysfunction in the housing market that developed under the previous administration. Restoration of a properly functioning housing market is vital to eliminating the scourge of homelessness. That is why we have put a comprehensive Strategy in place that will revolutionise the provision of social housing over the next five years. Our Construction 2020 Strategy complements the Social Housing Strategy with a range of measures intended to achieve a significant resumption in private sector house building.

In addition, we have put in place substantial measures to reduce the burdens on tenants in the private rental sector with a view to eliminating the numbers of people being pushed into homelessness by the economic force of spiraling rents, thus easing pressure on the demand side. The Government has reformed the private rental sector to give greater protection to tenants and landlords ensuring that, this year, most

tenants will not face a rent increase. The Department of Social Protection's Tenancy Sustainment Framework and Tenancy Sustainment Protocol enabled 4,500 households to remain in their own home in 2015. The Government also secured a 24% increase in the number of secured tenancies from homelessness in Dublin and reduced rough sleeping by approximately 46%.

However, homeless people cannot be required to wait until all these measures come to full fruition over the next few years. We are still faced with the issue and we must be vigorous and innovative in our responses to it. Our approach to tackling homelessness has been handled in a holistic manner with a focus on preventing homelessness wherever possible. In 2015 our policies were designed to increase local authority flexibility, test innovative new approaches and provide strategic support to frontline staff to deliver effective services for those people in need. We have increased funding for homeless services to €70 million in 2016, which will ensure continued progress towards the target of ending involuntary long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough. We put in place a Ministerial Direction requiring key housing authorities to prioritise homeless households in the allocation of tenancies. It is important to note that in 2015, rough sleeping in Dublin was reduced by 46%.

For 2016, we have mandated and endorsed further key priorities.

Key Priorities for 2016

- The delivery of a further 17,000 units across all schemes
- To utilise private sector investment in the construction of new social housing
- To have a pilot Affordable Rental Scheme in place for those on low incomes
- To utilise rapid housing delivery techniques as a way of significantly improving emergency accommodation and decreasing the reliance on hotel accommodation with 500 new units
- To develop a scheme to capture private sector investor interest in social housing.
- To continue to roll out the Housing Assistance Programme to more local authority areas
- To oversee the introduction of a new free mediation service for tenants and landlords
- To build the capacity of local authority construction to be able to build 10,000 homes per year by 2020

- To continue to implement the measures set out in the Social Housing Strategy and Construction 2020
- Choice Based Letting allocations to be introduced in all local authorities to improve the service offering and deal with the high refusal rate in some local authority areas.

Until the full benefit of the decisions we have implemented is seen, there are still too many people on the housing list and too many struggling in homelessness or in danger of falling into it. We are committed to maintaining the momentum we achieved in 2015 and to building on the progress made so far, into the future. It is a difficult challenge to tackle, but we have made a good start in delivering 13,000 new units this year.

Alan Kelly, TD
Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government

Paudie Coffey TD
Minister of State at the Department of the Environment with Special Responsibility for Housing, Planning and Coordination of the Construction 2020 Strategy

02

Housing Agency Preface

Housing plays a central role in people's quality of life. This is particularly so for those who cannot afford to provide their own accommodation. The Housing Agency works with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, local authorities, approved housing bodies and the private sector to deliver housing and housing services to people and their families.

Everyone should be able to live in good quality, affordable homes in a place where they want to live. This is what we are all working towards. The Agency is actively supporting the rejuvenation of social housing in Ireland. As this report outlines, we are now seeing the signs of recovery. A lot has been achieved in practical ways - buying much needed properties, bringing vacant social housing back into use and the rollout of the Housing Assistance Payment, for instance. The other big achievement from this year is in relation to securing substantial additional funding to build and buy social housing in the next two years.

We also see from this report that social housing is now being provided by a range of providers and in a diverse way. Local authorities now provide social housing directly but also through approved housing bodies and the private rented sector. This results in more diverse delivery of homes and provides greater choice for households who need help with their housing requirements. Looking ahead, the Agency has identified the issue of affordability of accommodation as a key requirement. We are committed to monitor this closely. Housing is

interconnected, and so it is important to appreciate that affordability in one sector may have far reaching implications.

It is crucial that we have solid data on which decisions can be made about what works well and what is most effective and efficient. This report is the first of its kind, and should be welcomed in recognising what was achieved in 2015 and to inform planning and discussion for the years ahead.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous work carried out by our colleagues in the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, local authorities, approved housing bodies and the wide range of other stakeholders. In particular I would like to acknowledge the work of front-line housing staff in local authorities and other housing bodies in dealing with a very challenging environment.

Conor Skehan
Chair, Housing Agency

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Executive Summary

In 2015, the Government implemented a suite of policies to increase supply of all forms of housing. The 2015 Exchequer funding for social housing increased by €210m to €800m, an increase of 26%.

Investment in housing infrastructure will increase again in 2016 with over 50% (€821m) of the Department's 2016 budget going directly to support a range of housing programmes and the continued delivery of the Social Housing Strategy 2020. In addition, approximately €112m in funding will be provided directly by local authorities to meet housing needs, bringing the total housing budget for 2016 to €933 million.

The latest data indicates that over 13,000 units have been delivered across all social housing programmes in 2015. This represents an 86% increase on the 7,000 units delivered in 2014. This output was achieved in a very difficult operating environment with limited supply in the very competitive private accommodation sector and against background of multi-annual re-trenchment in social housing expenditure and local authority staff numbers. To this end, 420 local authority housing posts were sanctioned in 2015. While this represents tangible progress, in order to deal with the housing list, further ambitious targets have been set starting with 2016 where the target is to deliver over 17,000 units.

Headline 2015 Housing Figures

- Over 13,000 social housing units were delivered in 2015, an 86% increase in unit delivery above 2014
- Exchequer Funding for Social Housing in 2015 was €800 million, an increase of €210 million on 2014
- 420 staff were recruited by local authorities to deliver more social housing units as quickly as possible
- 2,700 vacant social housing units were brought back into use through an intensive programme of works funded by the Exchequer. Vacancy rates have fallen significantly and are now down as low as 1% in Dublin City
- Funding has been approved and sites selected for the construction of over 5,000 new social housing units
- Over 1,000 properties were acquired by local authorities for social housing use in 2015
- A new streamlined process for delivering social housing units of under €2 million or 15 units in size has been approved, significantly cutting down on project times

- Approval of the first 500 units of a new PPP programme which will deliver over 1500 units was announced in 2015
- 8,953 social housing units were delivered through social housing leasing, the RAS scheme and the HAP scheme. The HAP scheme is now operational in 18 local authorities
- NAMA has delivered 2,000 units by end 2015 for social housing through the special purpose vehicle called NARPS (National Asset Residential Property Services Ltd)
- NAMA has invested €150m to date in acquiring these units - in addition to investing around €70m remediating and completing properties, many of which were unfinished housing developments
- In 2015, over €4 million capital funding was provided to local authorities for Traveller specific accommodation, which will rise to €5.5 million in 2016
- In 2015 Exchequer funding for homeless services was €64.77 million, a 32% increase on the amount provided in 2014
- At end November 2015, 3,615 adult individuals utilised emergency accommodation administered by housing authorities nationally. This is a 26% increase from the end of 2014
- At the end of Quarter 3 a total of 1,645 homeless individuals had transitioned to independent tenancies nationally. This compares with 1,491 for the same period in 2014 - a 10% increase in exits from homelessness
- The numbers sleeping rough in Dublin at end November 2015 had fallen by 46% since the year previous
- The rent threshold limits of the Homeless HAP Pilot Scheme in Dublin were increased to 50% above rent supplement limits in 2015. This means a homeless family in Dublin in need of a 3-bed can now access privately rented housing at rates up to €1500 per month
- Under a Ministerial direction, Dublin Region authorities must allocate at least 50% of tenancies to homeless and other vulnerable households. The authorities in counties Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford have been directed to allocate 30%. Details collated in relation to the operation of the Direction over a nine-month period (February to October) confirm that a total of 612 local authority units had been allocated specifically to homeless households in the relevant local authorities.

Capital Programmes

Part V

Changes to Part V now mean **10% of units** in developments of **more than 9 units** are to be reserved for the provision of social housing

€50m

REGENERATION: €50 million was invested in regeneration projects and remedial works across the country during 2015, which included delivery of over 100 new social housing units.

ACQUISITIONS

Over **1,000** units were acquired by local authorities in **2015**



RETURN TO USE/ REFURBISHMENT

2,700 vacant and boarded-up social housing units back into productive use

CONSTRUCTION

€4bn

investment in the Social Housing Strategy 2015 - 2020

HOMELESS SERVICES

€70m

allocated to housing authorities for homeless services

CAPITAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME (CAS)

350

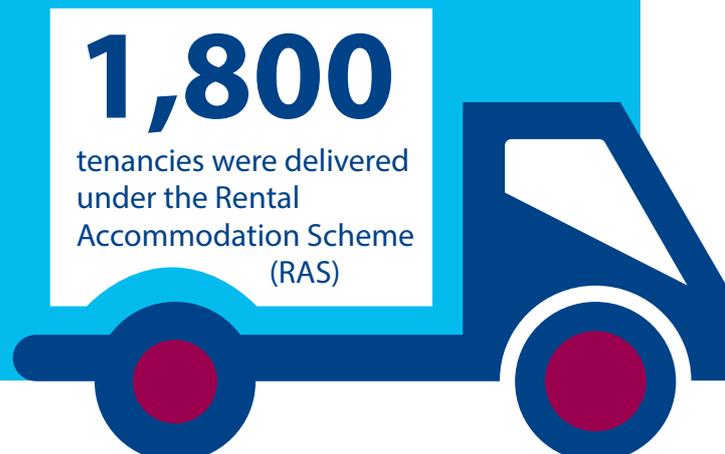
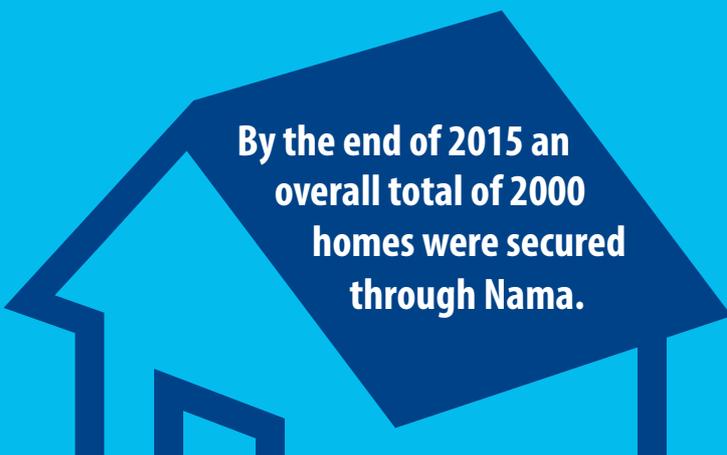
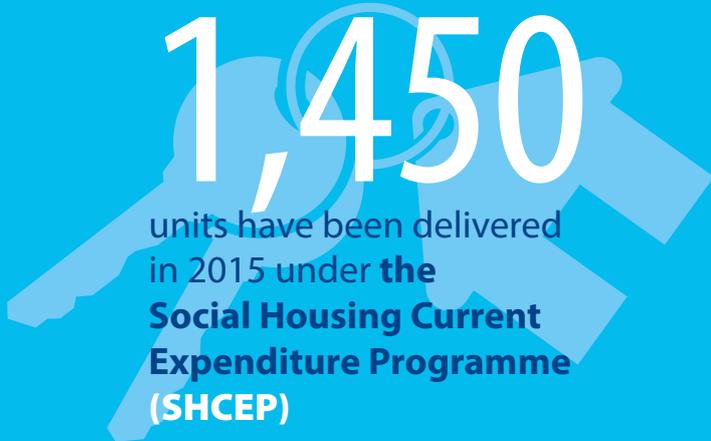
Approximately 350 social housing units delivered through CAS



Progress in Social Housing Delivery 2015



Social Housing Current Expenditure Programmes



04

Capital Programmes

The total housing provision for 2015 had an investment of almost €800 million across a range of housing programmes. Overall, social housing funding for 2015 was increased by in excess of €200 million, with capital funding increasing by €180 million, which allowed for significant expansion in social housing provision.

Table 1: Summary of Delivery under Capital Programmes

Programme		Output 2015
A.3	Local Authority Acquisition & Construction	1,030
A.4	Capital Assistance Scheme (Approved Housing Bodies)	350
A.6	Local Authority Regeneration/Remedial Works	112
A.6	Local Authority Voids	2,696
TOTAL		4,188

Acquisitions

The acquisitions programme is an important component of Social Housing supply and given the time-lag in construction projects, it was particularly significant in the delivery of units in 2015. It provided for a parallel stream of supply as the construction programme was building momentum. In 2015, all housing authorities were given approval to explore options for supplementing

construction supply with carefully targeted acquisitions. Acquisitions represented good value particularly as they are available as homes for families on the social housing list almost immediately upon purchase. Over 1,000 such homes were acquired by local authorities in 2015.

Return to Use / Refurbishments (Voids)

While delivery of new social housing units is being increased, it is crucial to optimise the existing local authority stock. Building on the delivery of 2014 in which 2,300 vacant social houses were returned to productive use through the Department's Exchequer funded programme, there was unprecedented support in 2015 with €33m funding allocated to bring 2,758 vacant and boarded-up social housing units back into productive use. This is a notable example of the Social Housing Strategy's focused and realistic approach to delivering units in a cost effective and timely manner.

Construction

2015 was the first year since the down-turn that funding was approved for significant new construction of direct-build local authority and approved housing body housing. Funding has been approved for 200 projects that will deliver 5,350 units. This is made up of 3,250 local authority direct build; 1,500 PPP and 600 to be built by AHBs under the Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme. Local authorities are recruiting the required architects, planners, quantity surveyors and project staff to support this long-term construction plan. In addition to the 2015 approvals, local authorities now have a strong pipeline of new social housing construction projects in place. Given the two to three year time lag between approval and delivery in terms of construction projects, local authorities will be well-placed to have annual pipelines of thousands of new units in the coming years. Acquisition, leasing and refurbishing are key quick deliverables and resources were targeted at them in 2015. Nevertheless, real progress on the delivery of new constructed units is expected in 2016 and 2017¹.

In order to provide for the required multi-annual social housing construction programme a very significant amount of work was put into preparing construction projects for approval in 2015 at local authority and AHB level.

The planned delivery of 3,250 units by local authorities is part of the overall target of over 12,100 units to be delivered under the Capital programme by the end of 2020. Taking the 1,000 units already acquired by local authorities during 2015 and progress in tackling vacant units, progress towards achievement of the overall capital targets for the period is well advanced.

Capital Assistance Scheme

Through the local authorities, the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) provided support, for the approved

costs of housing bodies in providing accommodation for persons with specific categories of housing need. In 2014 funding of €46 million was made available to approved housing bodies to provide 416 social housing units for people with special housing needs. Further approvals were also given during 2015 under both a construction programme and a targeted acquisitions programme by the approved housing bodies. This involved approval of over €150 million for the delivery of over 1,000 units, around 500 through construction and a similar number of acquisitions. While it was unrealistic for the construction programme to deliver in 2015, a number of the acquisitions were delivered in 2015 and it is expected that the remainder will be finalised in 2016. In total, approximately 350 CAS units were delivered in 2015.

Building Capacity and Increasing Efficiency:

The time-lag in social housing construction projects is an issue and a number of measures in this area were implemented in 2015. These were designed to increase the capacity of local authorities and to reduce the administrative time-line in delivering capital projects.

These include:

- 420 housing posts were sanctioned in local authorities to help build capacity as the construction programme moves forward²
- A new national procurement framework for professional services was put in place so local authorities can source architects, engineers, quantity surveyors etc. quicker
- A streamlined approval process for projects up to €2m in value and up to 15 new housing units
- New arrangements for recoupment of professional and administrative staffing costs for local authorities managing their own and AHB projects.

These measures will help to get the construction programme going again. By their nature, however, construction projects carry the risk of time overruns at planning and other stages. In this regard, local support for social housing projects is required at all stages.

Approved Housing Bodies

Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) have a key role to play in the provision of social housing and this is recognised under Pillar 1 of the Social Housing Strategy. An enhanced role for AHBs in the provision of new

¹ The full list of approvals on a local authority basis is attached at Appendix 2

² A full list of posts approved, by local authority, is attached at Appendix 3

supply is central to the Government's vision for the provision of social housing supports, in recognition of the record of steady achievement by AHBs over the past 20 years, in providing approximately 28,000 units of quality accommodation and the constraints on large-scale capital building programmes funded by the Exchequer.

Throughout 2015, the Department and Housing Agency has worked closely with the representative bodies for the sector, the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH) and Co-operative Housing Ireland (formerly NABCO). Both of these bodies, in their capacity as members of the various groups under the Strategy's governance arrangements, have contributed to workable solutions to any perceived impediments to progress within the sector.

The Strategy includes a number of changes and actions that will help to promote the optimal configuration of what is a very diverse sector, if it is to fulfil an enhanced role in social housing supply.

The changes include:

- the introduction of a multi-annual housing expenditure programme;
- prioritisation of funding to incentivise scale;
- innovative financing mechanisms;
- significant increases in finance provided by the Housing Finance Agency to AHBs by way of a range of new HFA products;
- promotion of collaboration at local and regional level between local authorities and AHBs; and
- enhanced regulation of the sector.

To this end, a set of recommendations related to streamlining the existing current funding scheme (CALF) for immediate / short-term implementation were approved in 2015.

These measures include:

- A 2-Year Multi-Annual Programme 2016-2017. The first phase of the 2-year allocations to larger AHBs will be in 2016, with a portion of funding set aside for other AHBs
- Maximum of 1.5% start-up funding being made available
- Funding being made available for drawdown at an accelerated rate, in addition to being available for drawdown prior to projects commencing on-site, to assist with costs of professional fees

The Department will shortly be inviting submissions from AHBs for potential inclusion in phase 1 of the Multi Annual programme. It is intended that as an initial phase, two-year allocations will be made to up to five of the larger AHBs in 2016. CALF funding will continue to be available to other AHBs in the normal manner.

Public Private Partnership:

Overall, the PPP Programme will deliver 1,500 units. A significant amount of preparatory work was carried out in 2015 with the sites for the first bundle of PPP projects identified, appraised and selected. The first bundle of sites was announced on Budget day (13 October 2015)³. The €100 million project comprises six sites which will deliver over 500 units in the Greater Dublin Area. Funding for the second bundle of PPP sites located outside of the Greater Dublin Area has been approved by the Minister. These sites which are to deliver a further 500 units are currently being identified and are due to be announced in the first quarter of 2016. A further 500 units will be delivered in a third bundle of PPP sites to be announced later in 2016, bringing the total number of units to 1,500 with a combined capital value of €300 million.

In addition, work will continue on further new innovative projects, including an affordable rental pilot scheme, which is to be rolled out in 2016.

Regeneration

The Regeneration Programme targets the country's most disadvantaged communities: those affected by the most extreme social exclusion, unemployment and anti-social behaviour. The projects supported by the Regeneration Programme take a broad focus, beyond the remediation of the physical environment, delivering social and economic regeneration of the areas concerned. It is a holistic, multi-faceted approach which requires rigorous analysis in order to ensure that the right solution is selected and that strategic planning is led by the respective local authority involving relevant State Agencies and stakeholders. Under the Regeneration Programme, funding of €50 million was invested in projects across the country during 2015, which included delivery of over 100 new social housing units.

Energy Efficiency

In 2015 local authorities continued to undertake an ambitious programme of insulation retrofitting on the

³The full list of sites approved under PPP Bundle 1 – Appendix 4

least energy efficient social houses with €77 million of funding support being provided by the Department over the period 2013-2015. In 2015, €25m was provided for insulation upgrades. This covered all 31 local authority areas, resulting in improved comfort levels and Building Energy Ratings (BER) in approximately 15,000 local authority homes. To date a total of over 45,000 homes have been upgraded under this programme, benefitting those at risk of fuel poverty and making a significant contribution to Ireland's carbon emissions reduction targets and energy reduction targets for 2020.

Part V

Part V is the provision of social housing in new private housing developments. This has now been set at 10% for developments of more than 9 units. While the delivery by local authority social housing construction projects is a key objective, changes made to the Part V regime will also deliver much needed social housing in a sustainable integrated community setting.

In 2015 the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act made changes to the Part V regime in order to:

- Increase the level of social housing provided as an integral part of new housing developments, and,
- Improve the transparency of the process by "frontloading" the Part V process at planning application stage and prior to the commencement of development.

Unlike the previous Part V regime, the emphasis is now clearly on the provision of new social housing units within new developments with the option of a cash payment in lieu of providing units removed.

Traveller Accommodation

The 2014 Annual Count of Traveller Families shows that, of the 10,226 families recorded, just over 20% were in Traveller-specific accommodation. The vast majority are accommodated in either standard social housing or in private rented accommodation. The Count also showed that 445 families (4.35%) were living on unauthorised sites, a considerable reduction on the 25% recorded on such sites when the first count was held in 1999. This reduction is testament to the significant investment (circa €400 million) in the provision and support of Traveller-specific accommodation over the last 15 years.

All of the capital cost of Traveller-specific accommodation is provided by DECLG. In 2015, over €4 million capital funding was provided to local authorities. In addition, over €4.7m current funding was recouped to local authorities towards ancillary costs such as salaries

of social workers and caretakers, and maintenance and management of halting sites and group housing schemes nationally. Capital funding €5.5 million will be provided in 2016 for the provision of Traveller specific accommodation, representing an increase of €1.2 million (28%) on the 2015 capital provision, with a further €4.3m being provided for current funding. In 2014, the first year of the new round of Traveller Accommodation Programmes (2014-2018), 44 units were delivered and a further 66 units were developed in 2015.

Commentary

Increased funding for social housing was made available and key administrative, policy and legislative responses were implemented in 2015. As the local authority housing construction programme progresses, 420 local authority posts have been sanctioned in order to increase capacity. Local authorities can now avail of a national procurement framework for the procurement of professional construction services. In addition, a new procedure for a single stage approval of social housing capital construction projects, below €2m in value, has been established. These measures will facilitate local authorities to deliver on the pipeline of construction projects already approved with funding assigned.

In 2015 there was significant progress with 13,000 homes being delivered and an extensive social housing construction programme sanctioned and underway. Given the capacity and market challenges faced increasing output by 86% year on year from approximately 7,000 in 2014 was a significant achievement while building the capacity for the future in local authorities.

This level of increased delivery required all the key actors in local authorities, DECLG, approved housing bodies and The Housing Agency to work together in a co-ordinated and co-operative way. Building on this year's achievement an ambitious output target of over 17,000 units has been set from within the overall funding provided of €933 million.

A firm foundation has been laid, however, it is important to continue to sustain and build on the progress delivered in 2015. Building on the strong performance in acquisitions and returning vacant units to productive use in year 1 of the implementation of the Social Housing Strategy will continue to be a top priority as we move to an increasing construction programme.

05

Social Housing Current Expenditure Programmes

Introduction

Under the Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme (SHCEP) approximately 1,450 units have been delivered in 2015. This is in addition to the 1,062 that became fully operational in 2014. These units were delivered in a variety of ways and local authorities were encouraged to explore and use all methods available to them.

While the main activity under this programme to date has been through purchase and leasing already completed

units, the programme also supports approved housing bodies in constructing units which are then made available for social using under leased arrangements. In the same way that local authorities are developing a pipeline of units for construction, approved housing bodies are similarly actively progressing construction projects. Approval has been given for almost 600 further units to be constructed by approved housing bodies with financial support from the Programme.

Table 2: Summary of Delivery under Current Programmes

Programme		Output 2015 Units
A.3	Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme	1,450
A.3	Rental Accommodation Scheme	1,823
A.3	Housing Assistance Payment	5,680
TOTAL		8,953

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

2015 marked the first full year operation of the HAP Scheme. Despite the challenging market conditions some 5,680 households were supported by the HAP Scheme during the year. Approximately 6,700 households have been supported by HAP since commencement of the scheme in September 2014.

The Scheme also provides a wider array of benefits by:

- removing a barrier to employment by allowing recipients to remain in the Scheme if they gain full-time employment;
- improving the inspection regime and regulation of the rented accommodation;

- greater security of tenure for tenants, in that payments are made directly to landlords; and
- providing certainty for landlords as regards rental income.

Rental Accommodation Scheme

A total of 1,800 tenancies were delivered in 2015 under the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) a social housing support introduced to cater for the accommodation needs of persons who are in receipt of long term rent supplement.

NAMA Delivery

NAMA continued to play an important part in the delivery of social housing in 2015. An additional 932 units provided during the year, including 615 units

delivered and 317 units contracted for delivery at a later date. This brings the overall total secured to 2,000 at the end of 2015. In many instances, these units were made available through a special purpose vehicle National Asset Residential Property Services Ltd. (NARPS) established to purchase properties from debtors and receivers and lease them directly to local authorities and approved housing bodies under the Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme (SHCEP). NAMA has invested €150m to date in acquiring these units - in addition to investing around €70m remediating and completing properties many of which were unfinished housing developments. In some instances, approved housing bodies and local authorities have purchased properties directly from debtors and receivers using both capital and current funding made available by the Department. The table below shows a breakdown by local authority for the 2,000 units committed or contracted to the end of 2015.

Table 3: Summary of NAMA Related Delivery - All Programmes

Local Authority	Delivered/Contracted
Carlow County Council	138
Clare County Council	32
Cork City Council	132
Cork County Council	280
Donegal County Council	5
Dublin City Council	377
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Co. Co.	93
Fingal County Council	105
Galway City Council	196
Galway County Council	24
Kerry County Council	42
Kildare County Council	113
Kilkenny County Council	55
Limerick City & County Council	16
Louth County Council	27
Meath County Council	38
Offaly County Council	30
Sligo County Council	4
South Dublin County Council	123
Waterford City & County Council	51
Westmeath County Council	20
Wexford County Council	92
Wicklow County Council	7
TOTAL	2,000

06

Action on Homelessness

Over the last two years funding for homelessness services has grown by 55%. In 2015 the Department recouped €64.77m to housing authorities for homeless services, a 32% increase on the amount provided in 2014. In 2016 €70m is allocated for services, a 32% increase on 2015 provision.

In addition, the HSE will be expending €30m towards medical and other support services for the homeless while the Department of Social Protection project they will spend €15 million above the rent supplement caps to allow people stay in their homes.

Emergency accommodation

During a week in November 2015, 3,615 adult individuals utilised emergency accommodation administered by housing authorities nationally. This is a 26% increase from end of 2014. This total includes 813 families with an additional 1,709 associated dependants. December saw a reduction in the number of people presenting to emergency accommodation services in Dublin.

At the end of Quarter 3 (September) a total of 3,145 emergency bed-spaces were available nationally through housing authorities (with an occupancy rate of 98%) this compares to 3,079 at the same time in 2014. More than 200 bed-spaces were added by the end of 2015.

Rough sleeping

A count of rough sleepers in the Dublin Region took place on the night of 30 November. A total of 91 individuals were recorded sleeping rough – this is a 46% decrease on the 168 recorded in November 2014 and a 14% decrease on the 106 recorded in April 2015.

Exits from homelessness

At the end of Quarter 3 a total of 1,645 homeless individuals had been allocated to independent permanent tenancies nationally. This compares with 1,491 for the same period in 2014 - a 10% increase in exits from homelessness. So, while homelessness has increased with now just over 5,000 in emergency accommodation, more individuals have exited homelessness than ever before, with almost 1,050 of these in the Dublin Region alone, which is an increase of 24% on the number who exited homelessness in 2014. While end of year totals are awaited from Local Authorities it is clear that there will have been more than 2,000 exits in 2015.

Homeless prioritisation in the allocation of local authority tenancies

A Ministerial Direction, which requires key local authorities to prioritise homeless and other vulnerable households in the allocation of tenancies under their control, was put in place at the end of January 2015, and will apply until 31 January 2016. Under this Direction, the Dublin Region authorities must allocate at least 50% of tenancies to homeless and other vulnerable households. The authorities in counties Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford have been directed to allocate 30%.

Details collated in relation to the operation of the Direction over a nine-month period (February to October) confirm that a total of 612 local authority units had been allocated specifically to homeless households in the relevant local authorities, with a further 599 allocated to vulnerable households.

Protection of Rent Supplement tenancies

The Department of Social Protection exercises discretion on a case-by-case basis for Rent Supplement clients that are at risk of homelessness as a result of demands for increased rents from landlords. During the course of 2015 approximately 4,500 tenancies were protected under its tenancy sustainment initiatives and over 6,000 since its inception in 2014.

Public awareness

Increasing public awareness of tenants' rights is key in preventing homelessness:

- A specific Dublin Region homeless prevention campaign was implemented with advertising on Dublin Bus and public hoarding
- The Department of Social Protection highlighted availability of supports through direct correspondence with Rent Supplement clients and distribution of information to other public offices, etc.
- Private Residential Tenancies Board ran a €300,000 public awareness campaign across print, online and broadcast media, to make tenants and landlords aware of their rights and obligations.

Initiation of Programme for Rapid Housing Delivery

Accommodating families in hotels should only be short term because they are inappropriate for family living and unsuitable for children. In September 2015, Government specifically approved the initiation of a programme for the delivery of 500 units of rapid housing for homeless families across Dublin. The initial 150 units will be delivered in 2016 in the Dublin City Council administrative area. A further 350 units will be provided across the four Dublin authorities through a national procurement framework overseen by the Office for Government Procurement (OGP). The OGP's Modular Housing Procurement Framework will be available to all local authorities nationally should they wish to procure modular housing for pressing accommodation needs.

This programme of rapid housing delivery is being implemented to mitigate the issues associated with an increasing volume of homeless families accommodated

in inappropriate commercial hotel arrangements. These units will provide emergency accommodation in the first instance, with each unit providing accommodation for a single household at a given time. While the placement of households in these units will be on a temporary basis, such placements will offer a greater level of stability than possible in hotel accommodation, while move-on options to long-term independent living are identified and secured. Furthermore, such arrangements will facilitate more coordinated needs assessment and support planning for access to all required services, including welfare, health and housing services.

To summarise:

- 22 Units will be available in Ballymun shortly
- Another 131 Units in Dublin City in Q2
- A further 350 Units across the 4 Dublin Local Authorities starting this summer.

Dublin Region Homelessness Pilot of Housing Assistance Payment

This pilot scheme, which became operational during 2015, sees accommodation sourced from the private rented sector under the new Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme. At the end of December 2015, a total of 81 new tenancies were secured with Housing Assistance Payments being made and a further 30 tenancies were being finalised. A very significant portion of the finalised HAP tenancies were established following enhancements that were made to the terms of the pilot scheme following the Budget 2016 announcement. Prior to that increase only 60 tenancies had been secured.

Commentary

While homelessness may only affect 0.2% of the population, it represents a traumatic experience for those affected. 2016 will continue to see resources targeted at both the prevention of homelessness and the rapid delivery of housing for those in emergency accommodation. Addressing the imbalances on the housing market overall will be a key dimension to tackling homelessness. Overall spending on homelessness services across Government is well in excess of €150 million. Furthermore, the department will also undertake a more in-depth review into how that funding is being spent. Mazars estimate that there are 75 organisations engaged in homeless services of different types, all of which are supported by State funding.

Appendix 1

Social Housing Output 2014 & 2015

Programme		Output 2014	Provisional Output 2015
A.3	Local Authority Acquisition & Construction	285	1,030
A.4	Capital Assistance Scheme	357	350
A.6	Regeneration/Remedial Works	247	112
A.6	Voids	2,333	2,696
	TOTAL CAPITAL UNITS	3,222	4,188
A.3	Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme	1,062	1,450
A.3	Rental Accommodation Scheme	2,173	1,823
A.3	Housing Assistance Payment	485	5,680
	TOTAL CURRENT UNITS	3,720	8,953
	TOTAL CAPITAL & CURRENT UNITS	6,942	13,141

Appendix 2

Capital Approvals 2015 (LA and AHB)

Local Authority	Units	Delivery Method	Estimated Cost
Carlow County Council	16	Acquisition	€2,980,000
Carlow County Council	68	Construction	€9,530,000
Cavan County Council	14	Acquisition	€930,000
Cavan County Council	14	Construction	€1,780,000
Clare County Council	12	Acquisition	€550,000
Clare County Council	44	Construction	€6,620,000
Cork City Council	13	Acquisition	€1,740,000
Cork City Council	81	Construction	€13,980,000
Cork County Council	7	Acquisition	€640,000
Cork County Council	121	Construction	€22,290,000
DLR County Council	42	Acquisition	€7,440,000
DLR County Council	134	Construction	€32,300,000
Donegal County Council	5	Acquisition	€150,000
Donegal County Council	58	Construction	€8,040,000
Dublin City Council	56	Acquisition	€8,480,000
Dublin City Council	252	Construction	€52,170,000
Fingal County Council	28	Acquisition	€4,880,000
Fingal County Council	148	Construction	€27,040,000
Galway City Council	22	Acquisition	€3,290,000
Galway City Council	38	Construction	€6,730,000
Galway County Council	24	Acquisition	€3,180,000
Galway County Council	71	Construction	€11,630,000
Kerry County Council	7	Acquisition	€740,000
Kerry County Council	59	Construction	€9,520,000
Kildare County Council	46	Acquisition	€3,690,000
Kildare County Council	61	Construction	€10,220,000

Appendix 2 Capital Approvals 2015 (LA and AHB) continued

Local Authority	Units	Delivery Method	Estimated Cost
Kilkenny County Council	36	Acquisition	€3,740,000
Kilkenny County Council	142	Construction	€20,440,000
Laois County Council	16	Acquisition	€2,170,000
Laois County Council	73	Construction	€10,190,000
Leitrim County Council	7	Construction	€970,000
Limerick City & County Council	53	Acquisition	€2,350,000
Limerick City & County Council	167	Construction	€30,470,000
Longford County Council	16	Construction	€2,500,000
Louth County Council	3	Acquisition	€480,000
Louth County Council	75	Construction	€13,700,000
Mayo County Council	2	Acquisition	€310,000
Mayo County Council	36	Construction	€6,840,000
Meath County Council	2	Acquisition	€410,000
Meath County Council	83	Construction	€17,100,000
Monaghan County Council	28	Construction	€3,600,000
Offaly County Council	17	Acquisition	€2,430,000
Offaly County Council	41	Construction	€6,960,000
Roscommon County Council	10	Construction	€1,600,000
Sligo County Council	7	Acquisition	€910,000
Sligo County Council	21	Construction	€3,250,000
South Dublin County Council	35	Acquisition	€3,670,000
South Dublin County Council	215	Construction	€42,760,000
Tipperary County Council	7	Acquisition	€610,000
Tipperary County Council	65	Construction	€9,930,000
Waterford City & County	24	Acquisition	€2,640,000
Waterford City & County	18	Construction	€2,720,000
Waterford City & County Council	8	Construction	€1,000,000
Waterford City & County Council	46	Construction	€6,130,000
Westmeath County Council	5	Acquisition	€840,000
Westmeath County Council	38	Construction	€6,100,000
Wexford County Council	5	Acquisition	€650,000
Wexford County Council	49	Construction	€6,630,000
Wicklow County Council	32	Acquisition	€7,310,000
Wicklow County Council	92	Construction	€22,900,000
	2,915		€494,850,000

Appendix 3

Housing posts approved in 2015 by local authority

Local Authority	Posts Approved
Carlow	9
Cavan Co	4
Clare Co	18
Cork City	10
Cork Co	21
DLR Co	13
Donegal Co	11
Dublin City	45
Fingal Co	44
Galway City	9
Galway Co	16
Kerry Co	20
Kildare Co	39
Kilkenny Co	2
Laois Co	5
Leitrim Co	1
Limerick City & Co	68
Longford Co	1
Louth Co	10
Mayo Co	5
Meath Co	11
Monaghan Co	1
Offaly Co	4
Roscommon Co	3
South Dublin Co	23
Tipperary Co	8
Waterford City & Co	1
Westmeath Co	8
Wexford Co	6
Wicklow Co	4
TOTAL	420

Appendix 4

Sites approved under PPP Bundle 1

Local Authority	Site	Number of Units
Dublin City Council	Ayrfield, Malahide Road	100
South Dublin County Council	Corkage Grange	100
Dublin City Council	Scribblestown	100
Louth County Council	Dunleer	70-95
Wicklow County Council	Convent Lands, Wicklow	60-70
Kildare County Council	Craddockstown, Naas	75
TOTAL		505-540



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government



**housing
agency**

Department of Environment,
Community and Local Government,
Custom House, Dublin, D01 W6X0.

1890 20 20 21
info@environ.ie

For further information
please visit
www.environ.ie

Housing Agency,
53 Mount Street Upper,
Dublin, D02 KT73.

01 656 4100
info@housing.ie

For further information
please visit
www.housing.ie