

# Strategic Plan for Housing Disabled People 2021 to 2025

Leitrim County Council

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# 1 Introduction

This plan was prepared by the Leitrim Housing and Disability Steering Group and has regard for the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability (published in 2011) and its associated National Implementation Framework as well as the new National Housing Strategy for People Disabled People 2022-2027. It is also aligned with the Government's mental health policy 'A Vision for Change' and the report of the Working Group on Congregated settings 'Time to Move from Congregated Settings.' The HDSG recognise The National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021 provides for a Government approach to improving the lives of people with disabilities, creating the best possible opportunities to fulfill their potential including community living and The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities UNCRPD Article 19 the equal rights of all disabled people to live in the community, with supported and effective choices equal to others.

The objective of the plan is to facilitate access for disabled people to the available range of housing supports and related services in a manner that promotes dignity, equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living. The plan is evidence-based and its preparation included consultation with the relevant stakeholders including, housing providers, statutory agencies, service-user groups and disability organisations.

The plan will inform the provision of accommodation for disabled people in county Leitrim over its lifetime and applies to all viable housing supply mechanisms. In the interest of clarity, the provision of social and private housing supports and services are addressed separately.

In preparing the Strategic Plan for Housing Disabled People 2021-2025, the Housing Disability Steering Group considered the following Acts, policy documents and guidelines,

- The Disability Act 2005
- National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 -2027
- National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016
- Rebuilding Ireland 2017-2021
- Housing for All Programme: A new Housing Plan for Ireland
- National Implementation Framework for the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016
- A Vision for Change
- Time to Move from Congregated Settings
- The National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021
- UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities UNCRPD
- IWA Think Ahead, Think Housing
- ILMI Housing Strategy Policy document

## 2 Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Leitrim HDSG Strategic Plan is to recognise that Independent Living is the right of all persons regardless of age or impairment label to live in their community. The aim of this strategic plan is to support Independent Living by creating effective access and supports to the same responsibilities and range of choices as everybody else in terms of housing.

Through Independent Living this strategy aims to encourage disabled citizens to engage in lifecourse choices such as having a family, realising their own potential and have the freedom to live the lives they wish to in an inclusive society.

The new National Housing Strategy for Disabled People (2022 – 2027) developed under the auspices of the Housing Agency has recently been launched. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has requested that Housing & Disability Strategy Steering Groups (H&DSG) within each Local Authority administrative area prepare a new Housing Strategy for Disabled People for the period 2021 – 2026. The new national strategic plan has been considered in the preparation of this strategy.

Central to the development of the Leitrim HDSG housing strategy for disabled people will be the development of principles, practices and values which will promote the inclusion of disabled people in the County's communities. It is therefore essential that this strategic plan is based on the need to change society and reflects the disabling effect of barriers preventing inclusion.

The four categories of disability impairment label categories referred to as part of this Strategic Plan include:

- Sensory Disability
- Mental Health Disability
- Physical Disability
- Intellectual Disability

The Leitrim Strategic Plan will focus on effective social model informed inclusion and what needs to change in housing provision to enable disabled people to achieve a barrier free pathway to the County's housing provision. This Plan's language is fundamentally grounded in the social model of disability and the new strategy also reflects the human rights and equality language of the term "disabled people". Leitrim HDSG feels the term 'disabled people' has to become positive and empowering, as it denotes the recognition of oppression and affiliation to a collective movement, such as Leitrim's Disabled Peoples Org. (DPO). Significantly, the term's usage in this HDSG Leitrim Local Strategic Plan also acknowledges something that can be changed and transformed by collective actions between HDSG partners and the County Council.

### **3 Awareness and promotion of the Local Strategic Plan for Disabled People**

In order for this strategy to make an impact, it is critical that it is promoted in a manner that informs and encourages all relevant stakeholders to avail of the opportunities presented in the strategy. Preliminary results of a recent survey by DFI indicate that disabled people and/or their carers are largely unaware that their Local Authority has a Strategic Plan for Housing disabled people and are not sufficiently informed that their Local Authority can provide social housing to those who qualify.

The Housing and Disability Steering Group is the most important forum in this regard; however, promotion of the strategy to the wider Council, including the relevant SPC and the Planning Unit, and to the wider public via Leitrim County Council's website and other social platforms page is also important.

Leitrim HDSG has proofed the language of this Plan with the Group's disabled delegate from Independent Living Movement of Ireland (ILMI). ILMI is a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) and recognises that language is a very powerful and evocative tool. Therefore, throughout this document and our housing discourse the Plan will always use the term “disabled people” to reflect the values of equality and empowerment. The term ‘disabled people’ comes from a specific view of disability developed by disabled activists called “the social model” of disability.

It is the intention of the Housing Disability Steering Group and its constituent members to raise awareness and promote this strategic plan both as a collective and as individual organisations.

### **Introduction to Independent Living Movement Ireland**

Independent Living Movement Ireland (ILMI) is a campaigning, national Disabled Person’s Organisation (DPO) that promotes the philosophy of independent living and seeks to build an inclusive society. ILMI works with disabled people on a cross-impairment basis. Central to the way we work is to ensure that policy and legislative discourse and decisions that impact on the lives of disabled people have to be directly influenced by those whose lives are directly affected.

Our philosophy can be summed up as: ‘Nothing about us without us!’ and ‘Rights Not Charity’. Our vision is an Ireland where disabled persons have freedom, choice and control over all aspects of their lives and can fully participate in an inclusive society as equals. ILMI is committed to realising its 2018 to 2022 Strategic Plan in Leitrim by supporting the establishment of United Nations Convention for Disabled People (UNCRPD) county and local Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs).

### **Leitrim Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO)**

On International Day of Disabled People on 3rd December 2020, ILMI launched Leitrim's very own Disabled Peoples Organisation (DPO). The theme of Leitrim's DPO International Day of Disabled People looked at what unites disabled people across the County, the nation and the world being "Disabled Adults Fighting for Rights in a Post COVID era".

Leitrim's DPO is a social model led collective for the county's disabled activists to seek out solutions to the physical, social, political, cultural and attitudinal created Society barriers. While the Leitrim DPO has only been in existence since 2020, county based activists have already started to make real Ireland's 2018 ratification of the United Nations Convention for Disabled People. Leitrim's DPO championing of the UNCRPD is based on disabled people and the County's statutory and voluntary platforms and systems working towards altering the environmental and disabling systems in-situ throughout Leitrim. DPO members and activists are you using their on-line presence and in-person meetings to listen and truly hear the social model informed collective lived experience and narrative of disabled people throughout the County.

Joining a local DPO means that Disabled people are in a collective space where we can share our lived experience and use our authentic voices to dismantle oppressive systems together. This is evident through the success of lived experience now being represented through the Housing Disability Steering Groups (HDSG) and other local decision-making structures. Leitrim DPO members feel it is vitally important to have a local and county based DPO as Ireland reports access and environmental barriers to the United Nations Convention Committees on state and local authority performance with implementing the United Nations Convention (UNCRPD). Leitrim DPO looks forward to working with sister organisation such as LAPWD to further social model and UNCRPD proofing of the County's HDSG Plan all the way to 2028.

### **Irish Wheelchair Association**

The Irish Wheelchair Association will promote the NHSPWD amongst its 20,000-membership base of people with physical impairments by having it on its website and social media.

The Irish Wheelchair Association will promote the Local Strategic Plan amongst its local staff teams and service users through its internal communication and engagement pathways.

The Irish Wheelchair Association will hold information sessions for staff and members informing them of the key elements of the strategy.

The Irish Wheelchair Association will actively participate in each of the 30 no. LA HDSG's nationally, as either a specialist housing body, or service provider for the physical disability sector. The Irish Wheelchair Association will appoint a national lead and establish an internal framework to support its HDSG representatives to share learning across local authority HDSG's, share expertise, and share key information and messaging across the various LA HDSG's. The Irish Wheelchair Association will promote the Local Housing Strategy with its Senior Management Team and Board of Directors.

### **The Leitrim Association of People With Disabilities (LAPWD)**

The Leitrim Association of People With Disabilities (LAPWD) will promote the Local Strategic Plan amongst its members through its website and social media.

LAPWD will hold a series of HDSG information sessions for our 100 members, 55 staff and its 45- 'Leaders' (disabled people) informing them of the key elements of the strategy. LAPWD will promote the Local Housing Strategy with its own Board of Directors and subsequent relative Board policies and actions. LAPWD will also promote the Strategy with the other agencies, organisations and representative groups that they work in conjunction with namely:

- Health Service Executive
- Leitrim Development Company
- ETB
- RSS Scheme
- Cairde Liatroma
- Leitrim Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO)
- Independent Living Movement of Ireland (ILMI)

### **Leitrim County Council**

Leitrim County Council will promote and create awareness through the Councils website and its various social media platforms whilst also making the Strategic plan available at all public libraries and significant public buildings.

## **4. Stakeholder Engagement and HDSG Functionality**

The following stakeholders are the key players in the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan.

### **1. Central Government**

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Health have a key role in the provision of housing for disabled people as they are responsible for both the financial budgets and the development of housing policy to support disabled people to live in the community.

2. **Leitrim County Council**  
Leitrim County Council as the Housing Authority has a key role in the provision of social housing for disabled people through the purchase, construction and refurbishment and allocation of properties under the various delivery streams.
3. **Health Service Executive**  
The HSE is the current funding agency of support services by third parties and in some cases, the HSE is the direct service provider to an individual. It is the responsibility of the HSE to identify individual support costs and continue to provide funding for residents in their new housing environments. The HSE has the overall statutory responsibility for the management and delivery of healthcare and personal social services.
4. **Approved Housing Bodies**  
The Approved Housing Bodies are one of the main housing providers under the initiatives set out in the Housing Strategy for Disabled People, whether it is through Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS), leasing or purchase models.
5. **Families**  
In addition to a significant advocacy role, families are often the first assistance and support in the provision of appropriate accommodation for persons living with a disability. The challenges facing families must be recognised and in many instances the support of key partner agencies is required. This support may be in the form of physical adaptations to their home, moving home, respite care or personal assistant services.
6. **Advocacy Groups**  
The groups that are directly connected with informed by the lived experience of disabled people are uniquely placed to represent the collective views of disabled people and not just representatives of agencies or service providers. The County's disabled adults collective and county based DPO platforms must have their voices heard in the broader county, local and national discussions around housing and homelessness.

To ensure that the operation of the Housing Disability Steering Group delivers on its key objectives the following stakeholders have offered to engage with HDSG to improve its functionality.

- The LAPWD wish to discuss adaptation applications that have been submitted by our Leaders to the Local Authority at meetings.
- The LAPWD & ILMI have offered to facilitate Disability Equality Training (DET) to all people engaged in housing for disabled people, including Local Authority and approved housing body design teams, allocation teams and management. The training will be offered at the training room in our Action Ability Centre in Mohill which is a fully assessable building.
- The Irish Wheelchair Association will encourage the participation of a wheelchair user with the lived experience on the HDSG.
- The Irish Wheelchair Association will also actively engage in the HDSG, proactively participating in agreed work streams to support further implementation of the Housing Disability Strategic Plan and share its 60 years' experience of working with and on behalf of people with physical impairments with the HDSG.
- Irish Wheelchair Association is committed to sharing its resources of (i) Irish Wheelchair Association Best Practice Access Guidelines Edition 4 and (ii) Great Outdoors with the HDSG and its stakeholders
- The HDSG must ensure the lived experience is represented in the membership with an openness to representation from different disabilities and impairments lived experiences as each sector will bring different information and opportunities for learning.

- The goals and achievements of the HDSG must be shared and on an annual basis.
- The HDSG must adhere to the original Term of Reference with respect to the review of membership, meeting frequency, attendance, input from disabled people with lived experience, engagement and reporting to wider disability networks.

## 5. Social Housing for Disabled People

### 5.1 Qualification of Social Housing Need

Housing requirements and supports for disabled people is known to include people from the following sources. It is important to note that on occasion medical support may also be required to facilitate independent living.

- a) LA housing waiting list non-transfer applicant: These are social housing applicants that are not currently renting social housing (LA or AHB housing) or private housing via HAP or RAS. This group mainly consists of people living in congregated care or community settings and people sharing in private residence, typically the family home. Reliable data is available to quantify this group.
- b) LA housing waiting list transfer applicant: This group are currently renting social housing (LA or AHB housing) or private housing via HAP or RAS but are also on the housing transfer list. Reliable data is available to quantify this group; however, the number of genuine HAP transfers is difficult to estimate as most HAP tenants elect to remain on the transfer list regardless of their satisfaction with their HAP living arrangements.
- c) Mental health congregated settings (HSE): This group consists of individuals that may be residing in managed congregated settings where no application for social housing has been made. Assessment of suitability for independent living and will & preference led autonomy may be ongoing. The HSE can estimate the number likely to be suited to independent living.
- d) Community care facilities (HSE): This is a collection of people that may be in care facilities not suited to their needs where no application for social housing has been made. Reliable data is not available for this group but estimates could be determined with ongoing consultation with the various care providers.
- e) Living at home: This group consists of individuals who living in private residence and may be cared for by family or relatives. Reliable data is not available for this group but estimates could be determined with ongoing consultation with the various medical support service providers.

It is recognised that there is a degree of fluidity in demand figures at any given time and this may result in a change in the accommodation supports and Personal Assistance and Carer requirements over the lifespan of Leitrim's disabled people.

### 5.2 Quantification of Social Housing Need

The most recent Housing Need Assessment undertaken for County Leitrim broken down by geographical area is shown in Table 1 below and indicates a total of 177 households on the Leitrim Housing List excluding those households in receipt of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) or on the LA transfer list. When these households are included the total number on the Leitrim Housing List is 502.

<b>Leitrim Housing Waiting List</b>			
<b>AREA</b>	<b>Excluding Transfers</b>	<b>LA Transfer List</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>North 1</b> Kinlough / Tullaghan	17	44	<b>61</b>
<b>North 2</b> Manorhamilton / Rossinver / Kiltyclogher / Glenfarne / Lurganboy / Glencar	31	50	<b>81</b>
<b>Mid 1</b> Dromahaire / Killargue / Drumkeerin / Dowra / Ballinaglera	11	15	<b>26</b>
<b>South 1</b> Drumshanbo / Drumcong / Keshcarrigan	30	49	<b>79</b>
<b>South 2</b> Leitrim Village / Carrick on Shannon / Jamestown / Drumsna / Annaduff	58	99	<b>157</b>
<b>South 3</b> Mohill / Dromod / Rooskey / Bornacoola	9	25	<b>34</b>
<b>South 4</b> Cloone / Aughavas / Carrigallen / Corrawallen / Newtowngore	6	19	<b>25</b>
<b>South 5</b> Ballinamore / Aughnasheelin / Fenagh	13	26	<b>39</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>502</b>

**Table 1**

The breakdown of the various impairment label categories from the most recent Assessment of Housing Need is included in Table 2 below.

<b>Household Category</b>	<b>Housing List</b>	<b>Transfer List</b>	<b>Combined List</b>	<b>% of Total List</b>
Disability Requirement- Intellectual	13	1	14	2.7
Disability Requirement- Mental Health	14	10	24	4.7
Disability Requirement- Physical	6	3	9	1.8
Disability Requirement-	2	1	3	0.5

Sensory				
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>9.7</b>

**Table 2**

### 5.3 Emerging Need of Housing for Disabled People

The above sections detail the number of disabled people currently on the Leitrim Housing List however there is also a cohort of individuals that fit into the emerging need category. Whilst Co. Leitrim does not have any institutional residential setting there are at last count 18 people currently residing in Cloonamahon, Co. Sligo some of whom may require social housing in Co. Leitrim in the future.

Projecting the future demand of housing for Disabled People will involve collecting and analysing data from the following sources

- Leitrim County Council Social Housing Needs Assessment
- Census 2016 and Census 2022 Data specific to Disability (when information available)
- Patterns in Population Change
- Local Disability Organisations and Representative groups

### 5.4 Review of Social Housing Delivery

Social housing consists of owned/leased housing tenanted by local authorities or Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs). Depending on public finances, current housing policy and market conditions, local authorities and AHBs can secure new housing stock to varying degrees via a number of delivery mechanisms, including acquisition, leasing, turn-key construction and direct-build construction. The rate of delivery in any given year is linked to location-specific demand and national housing delivery targets.

The majority of allocations made in any given year are from casual vacancies (existing social housing units that are surrendered, refurbished and reallocated) which typically range between 30-50 properties per year in County Leitrim. Provision of new social housing stock (including builds, acquisitions and leasing) in County Leitrim averaged between 25-40 properties per year between 2016-2021 with the future supply being an average of 30 per year as per the Housing for All delivery targets.

For reasons outlined, provision and allocation of social housing to disabled people is reviewed in the context of all allocations of social housing, regardless of the supply mechanism. In this context, allocations of social housing to disabled people has fluctuated but has been approximately in the order of 10 percent over the life of the previous strategy. The CSO Census of Population 2016 figures recorded 13.5 percent of the population stating they had an impairment. A new census of population will take place in 2022.

<b>Allocation Description</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
All LA Allocations (includes leased properties)	174	138
All AHB Allocations	1	1
Combined SH Allocations	175	139

LA Allocations to PWD (includes leased properties)	20	20
AHB Allocations to PWD	0	0
Combined SH Allocations to PWD	20	20
<b>Percentage Allocation of SH to Disabled People</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>

**Table 3**

Although not considered to be social housing, private rented housing support options such as RAS and HAP have been a viable accommodation option for many social housing applicants during the life of the previous strategy.

The table below shows that private rented tenancies allocated to disabled people has been proportionately lower than among social housing applicants in general.

<b>Allocation Description</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
All HAP Allocations	100	47
All RAS Allocations	1	3
Combined Private Rented Allocations	101	50
HAP & RAS Allocations to disabled people	12	5
<b>Percentage Allocation of Private Rented to Disabled People</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Table 4**

## 5.5 Future Social Housing Supply

The annual Housing delivery targets for Leitrim County Council are set by the DHLGH based on the Leitrim Housing Waiting List and the overall national Housing Waiting List. This Strategic Plan for Housing Disabled People will cover the final year of the Rebuilding Ireland Programme and the first four years of the Housing for All programme which was launched in the summer of 2021.

The Targets for the final year of the Rebuilding Ireland programme in Co. Leitrim are included below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Direct Build/Turnkey</b>	<b>Acquisitions</b>	<b>Leasing</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>65</b>

**Table 5 2021 Rebuilding Ireland Delivery Target**

Under Housing for All the National Overall Delivery Figure is expected to be 10,000 Housing Units per Annum. The social housing targets for Leitrim County Council under Housing for All are set out in Table 6 below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Total Build</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>139</b>

**Table 6 Housing for All Delivery Targets**

Leitrim County Council have been developing a pipeline of projects through the various delivery mechanisms in order to achieve the specified delivery targets and the 2021-2025 pipelines is shown in Table 7 below.

Year	Direct Build/Turnkey	Acquisitions	Leasing	Total
2021-2025	134	22	24	132

**Table 7 Leitrim County Council Delivered Projects & Pipeline 2021 -2025**

Table 8 illustrates by project the current housing delivery pipeline and the number of Universal Design, Wheelchair-Accessible and Age Friendly Homes. It is expected that Leitrim County Council will acquire additional land and other schemes will emerge and be delivered in the latter years of the strategy.

Funding Stream	Project	Units	UD Wheelchair Accessible Units/Age Friendly Homes	Units/	Anticipated Delivery Date
<b>2021</b>					
SHIP Turnkey	Lough Meen, Drumkeerin	2	0		April 2021
SHIP Direct Build	Pairceanna an Baile, Townparks, Carrick on Shannon	27	8 AF Homes		Sep. 2021
SHIP Turnkey	Chapel Lane, Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim	9	0		Sep. 2021
SHIP Turnkey	Druminshingore, Newtowngore, Co. Leitrim	2	0		Nov. 2021
SHIP Turnkey	Ard na Drise, Mohill, Co. Leitrim	2	0		April 2021
SHIP Turnkey	Liscara, Carrick on Shannon	2	0		April 2021
SHIP Turnkey	Carrigallen & Manorhamilton	2	0		Sep. 2021
<b>2022</b>					
SHIP Direct Build	St. Patricks Park, Carrick on Shannon	2	2 UD		Dec. 2022
SHIP Turnkey	Commons Lane, Manorhamilton	4	2 AF Homes		Apr. 2022
SHIP Direct Build	Taobh Tire, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim	5	5AF Homes		Dec. 2022
SHIP Direct Build	Townparks, Carrick on Shannon	12	0		Dec. 2022
SHIP Turnkey	Druminshingore, Newtowngore, Co. Leitrim	3	0		June 2022
SHIP Turnkey	Carraig Breac, Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim	5	0		Sep. 2022
<b>2023</b>					
SHIP Direct Build	Lahard, Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim	10	2 AF Homes		Apr. 2023
SHIP Direct Build	Main St., Dromahair	4	4 AF Homes		Sep. 2023
SHIP Direct Build	Main St., Drumsna	4	2 UD		Dec. 2023

SHIP Turnkey	Lisnagot, Carrick on Shannon	3	0	Mar. 2023
SHIP Turnkey	Oakfield Manor, Kinlough	6	3 AF Homes	June 2023
<b>2024</b>				
SHIP Direct Build	Kilboderry Td, Carrick on Shannon	18	2 WAU, 4 UD, 12 AF Homes	Dec. 2024
CAS Construction	Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim	4	4 AF	Dec. 2024
SHIP (B&R) Construction	Sean McDermott St., Manorhamilton	4	0	Dec. 2024
SHIP (B&R) Construction	Main St., Ballinamore	4	1 WAU, 1 UD	Dec. 2024
<b>2021-2024</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>16 WAU &amp; UD</b>	

**Table 8**

The 2022-2026 Housing Delivery Action Plan for Co. Leitrim will seek to target the delivery of the new National Housing Strategy for Disabled People (2022 – 2027) through the following housing delivery streams.

Delivery Stream	Type	No of Units	% of Total Housing List
LA Direct Build	Physical	8	2
LA Direct Build	Mental Health	10	2
AHB CAS	Intellectual	8	2
AHB CAS	Sensory	3	1
AHB CAS	Physical	4	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>

**Table 9**

### Acquisitions

Each year LCC seeks to increase the level of its overall housing stock through targeted acquisitions in areas of greatest need.

The SHIP and CALF acquisitions in 2022 and going forward must be focussed on the following priority areas:

- One-bedroom units to deliver on Housing First and meet the short supply in this category
- Other properties that allow persons/families to exit homelessness; and
- Specific housing required for/suitable for individuals with an impairment(s) or other particular priority needs;

Leitrim County Council anticipate the delivery of 3 Acquisitions per annum over the life of this Strategic Plan. Within this overall annual number Leitrim County Council will seek each year to acquire appropriate units with the view of upgrading the units to meet the lifecourse requirements of disabled people.

### Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) Project

Leitrim County Council is committed to maximizing the number of homes for disabled people that can be delivered under the Capital Assistance Scheme. It is the intention of Leitrim County Council to seek Expressions of Interest from the AHB sector in Q2 2022 to deliver homes for Disabled People with under the Capital Assistance Scheme.

Leitrim County Council is engaging with the parents of the young adults with the impairment label of Intellectual Disability from the Manorhamilton area and with Newgrove Housing Association regarding the provision of appropriate housing in Manorhamilton. The HSE have approved the funding for the required support services thereby allowing the project to advance and ultimately provide the desired accommodation alongside the necessary support services.

### Potential CAS Projects

Project	AHB	Units	Current Status	Potential Delivery Date
Refurbishment of 5 Bedroom House in Manorhamilton for individuals with intellectual disabilities	Newgrove	5	HSE budget for support package has received approval. Suitable property being identified.	2024
Total		5		

**Table 10**

### Leasing

In line with national policy Leitrim County Council seeks to Lease properties through Short Term Availability arrangements and through the Mortgage To Rent (MTR) Scheme. As stated above the anticipated delivery target is 4 Leasing Units per annum over the life of this Strategic Plan. The potential to secure suitable properties for disabled people through this mechanism is limited as the upfront cost of upgrading properties to the required standard may render projects financially unsustainable for landlords however LCC will engage with proposed lessors to secure properties where possible.

### Social Housing Adaptations

Leitrim County Council carries out adaptation works to its housing stock and provides adapted housing units. Typical works would include ground floor bedrooms and bathroom extensions, door ramps, hand-rails, accessible shower rooms and stair lifts. During 2020 21 adaptation works were completed and 26 units were adapted in 2020 and 21 in 2021 at an average grant value of €5,245 per grant. This level of funding is indicative of future funding of approximately € 125,00 per annum for minor adaptations. Leitrim County Council will aim to deliver two extensions per annum on its existing stock over the life of the strategy to accommodate tenants with significant access requirements. The expected cost of these works is €200,000 per annum.

## 5.6 Other Development Streams

### County Development Plan & Housing Strategy

The Leitrim County Development Plan for 2022-2028 is currently being developed by the planning Section of Leitrim County Council and this represents an opportune time to include specific objectives within the County Development Plan to ensure that there are an adequate number of suitable property types for disabled people within the County:

- Objective 1: To increase Housing for Disabled People over the duration of the County development Plan

- Objective 2: Ensure the 10% of new houses are in full compliance with the provisions of Part M of the Building Regulations (Access for People with Disabilities).

### **Engagement with Land Development Agency (LDA)**

Leitrim County Council has not had any engagement with the Land Development Agency to date as the LDA currently have no sites in County Leitrim. The LDA is initially focused on public lands in towns of over 10,000 people of which County Leitrim has none so there is currently no scope to advance housing units for disabled people through the Land Development Agency.

### **Age Friendly Housing**

The new Programme for Government pledged a mission and vision of an Age Friendly Ireland. The approach is to support older people to live in their own homes and communities with dignity, autonomy and independence, for as long as possible by developing a range of housing options that are suited to their access needs and social inclusion requirements.

Age Friendly Ireland has supported the development and implementation of the policy document and in response to *Action 4.13: 'Local Authorities will identify and assign an individual on their housing teams to work with older people in terms of sourcing appropriate accommodation'*, Leitrim County Council have assigned a staff member to undertake this role.

The role of Age Friendly Housing Technical Expert and the delivery of Age Friendly Homes should be complimentary to the current Housing for disabled people strategy and engagement on project development will allow for future proofing with additional properties for disabled people coming online through subsequent minor modifications.

## **6. Private Housing for Disabled People**

Private housing refers to privately owner housing and generally includes all housing other than social housing (publicly owned or leased housing).

### **6.1 Assessment of Private Housing Need**

The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, requires that Planning Authorities adopt a Core Strategy that is consistent with the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) targets and settlement hierarchy. The Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework (NPF) published in July 2018 sets the population target for Leitrim to 2031, which formed the basis of the population targets included in the RSES. These targets were revised in December 2020 with the publication of Section 28 Guidelines 'Housing Supply Demand at County Level'. To assist Planning Authorities, the recent Section 28 guidelines have translated the projected population for each county into projected housing demand over the development plan period to ensure a standardized approach across the country.

The targets outlined in current Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028 which encompasses the Housing Strategy indicates an average of 201 no. housing units being per annum over the period from 2022 - 2028 inclusive. This would result in a total of 1,208 no. housing units to be provided for period of 2022 – 2028.

These housing targets for Co. Leitrim will require a significant increase in the pace and number of units delivered over the Plan period.

## 6.2 Assessment of Private Housing Delivery

The provision of private housing is determined by market conditions and levels of private development activity. Private development in County Leitrim has been suppressed since the 2008 economic downturn and has not recovered to date. A small number of viable ‘unfinished’ developments were completed since the economic downturn however, except for ‘one off’ developments, no new private developments has commenced in the County in the last decade and only a handful of planning applications for larger development (developments subject to Part V requirements) have been lodged in the same period. While this reflects a national problem the specific issues in Co. Leitrim are increased construction costs, developer land hoarding, increasing affordability issues and stringent mortgage requirements. The direct consequences of the private market constraints are

- Little or no provision of Part V social housing units
- Delayed impact and benefit from newer building regulations (energy efficiency most notably)
- Delayed impact and benefit from improved planning regulations
- Delayed impact and benefit from updated accessibility requirements (Universal Design)

## 6.3 Private Housing Adaptations

In the absence of additional universally designed new build properties coming to the market the need for adaptation due to disabling-barriers and impairment support requirements continues to rise in privately owned properties. From a housing authority perspective, this can be estimated by the number of applications made annually under the Housing grant schemes. The current schemes available are the Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme (HAG), Mobility Aid Grant Scheme (MAG) and the Housing for Older People Scheme (HOP).

The table below outlines the number of grants awarded by Leitrim County Council during 2020 & 2021.

Grant Type	2020 Grants Awarded	2020 Total	2021 Grants Awarded	2021 Total	Total Funding	Total Grant Number
Housing Adaptation Grant	31	€352,302.85	64	€541,112.28	€893,415.13	95
Mobility Aid Grants	36	€134,845.00	37	€156,793.28	€291,638.28	73
Housing Aid for Older People	78	€394,253.08	110	€557,523.44	€951,776.52	188
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>€881,400.93</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>€1,255,429.00</b>	<b>€2,136,829.93</b>	<b>356</b>

**Table 11**

Based on the above figures we can estimate 50 applications per year for housing adaptation grants and 40 applications per year for mobility aid grants.

## **7. Support -Social & Care**

While provision of housing for disabled people is the primary concern of this document, in some cases medical and/or non-medical supports are necessary to support a disabled people to live independently. Financial supports are also needed to adapt both social housing and private properties accommodating a disabled people in order to cater for evolving or changing needs.

### **7.1 Medical Support Services (HSE)**

The HSE has overall statutory responsibility for the management and delivery of health care and personal social services and provides medical support services directly or via third party, non-statutory organisations. The HSE is also one of the main drivers of the deinstitutionalisation of residents from congregated settings and strongly supports their transition to independent living. It is also committed to the provision of long term supports, as required, to ensure a disabled people can lead a full and inclusive life within the community. Individual medical support services are identified in a person-centred plan. The plan also includes appropriate personal social services.

### **7.2 Personal Social Services (HSE)**

The initial focus of these services is on the transition to independent living. This is especially relevant to people transitioning from congregated settings. These services are usually provided via non-statutory organisations and may be funded via programmes such as Sláintecare. Service providers assist individuals through the social housing application, assessment, allocation and tenant appointment processes and continue to support individuals as they transition to independent living. Normal tenancy support and sustainment services are also provided by local authority staff.

### **7.3 Financial Supports**

Disabled People are entitled to financial support in relation to their general health. The range of financial supports include medical cards, prescribed drugs and medicines, medical and surgical aids and appliances, hospital services, dental, optical and aural services.

Housing Grants for disabled people are available to adapt private houses. The allocation is part of a general housing grant allocation. Indicative levels of future funding based on previous allocations across all grant schemes is likely to be approximately €1,200,000 per annum.

## 8. Objectives of the Strategic Plan

The Objectives of the Leitrim Strategic Plan for Housing Disabled People are set out to be consistent with the six key themes established under the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2027

1	Accessible Housing & Communities		
	Objectives	Lead Partner	Timescale
1.1	That all social housing projects in receipt of exchequer funding includes 7% of wheelchair accessible units to ensure the creation of mixed tenure sustainable communities.	Leitrim County Council	2022-2026
1.2	That a register of local authority and AHB wheelchair accessible housing stock be created.	Leitrim County Council & Approved Housing Bodies	Q3 2023
1.3	The promotion of innovative housing design models around e.g. (a) those that incorporate the provision of a shared overnight ensuite bed/living room for personal assistants accessible from 2 or more houses and (b) a common room internally accessible from a number of houses where disabled people can gather socially for informal supports.	Leitrim County Council, Approved Housing Bodies & DHLGH	2022-2026
1.4	Promotion with design teams the use of Assistive Technology to support independence and efficiencies in terms of the requirements for personal assistants and informal supports.	Leitrim County Council	2022
1.5	That Leitrim County Council adopts Irish Wheelchair Association Best Practice Access Guidelines (4 <sup>th</sup> Edition) as a standard of choice for all new building designs.	Leitrim County Council	2022
1.6	That the number of disabled people accessing housing via the AHB sector be made available.	Approved Housing Bodies	2022
1.7	That a target of 20% of all future social housing units under the Housing Delivery Action Plan meet Universal Design Standards.	Leitrim County Council	Each year 2022-2026
1.8	That the ongoing support services are made available by the HSE in order to help sustain social and private housing tenancies.	HSE	Each year 2022-2026
1.9	Leitrim DPO and LAPWD are recognised as the direct consultation and dialogue platforms for and	Leitrim County Council & LAPWD and ILMI	2022

	with disabled people in the County	Leitrim DPO	
1.10	Leitrim DPO and LAPWD are recognised as the direct consultation and dialogue platforms for the local authority to enable implementation of the Housing, Participation and Consultation Articles of UN CRPD for & with disabled people in the County	Leitrim County Council & LAPWD and ILMI Leitrim DPO	2022
1.11	Changing Places Ireland spring 2022 policy papers by both LAPWD and the national cross-impairment DPO ILMI are supported by the Leitrim HDSG in their submissions to the Department.	Leitrim County Council & LAPWD and ILMI Leitrim DPO	2022

<b>2</b>	<b>Interagency Collaboration and the Provision of Supports</b>		
	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Lead Partner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
2.1	That the HSE will confirm the availability of support services prior to Housing offers being made to allow housing applicants to accept offers of Housing.	HSE	2023
2.2	The HSE to commit to the provision of Personal Assistance supports to remove major barrier to disabled people accessing housing in order to live independently.	HSE	2023
2.3	The role of Disability Friendly Housing Technical Advisor to be created.	Leitrim County Council	Q1 2022
2.4	A representative from LCC Housing Department to be nominated to lead on interagency collaboration.	Leitrim County Council	Q2 2022
2.5	The role of Housing Co-Ordinator to be created in CHO1 for both mental health services and disability services with membership from Leitrim DPO.	HSE and Leitrim DPO	Q2 2022
2.6	The DHLGH must collate and effectively include Leitrim HDSG findings and suggestions and report back to the National Disability Inclusion Strategy Steering Group and the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing.	DHLGH	2023
2.7	That central government establish a distinct budget for the delivery of Housing for Disabled People to encompass capital costs and support service costs.	DHLGH	2026
2.8	The North West Housing First project securing Housing Units in Co. Leitrim appropriate for disabled people as currently one in four homeless is a disabled person.	Leitrim County Council	2022-2026

<b>3</b>	<b>Affordability of Housing</b>		
	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Lead Partner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
3.1	The HDSG will adhere to Articles 19 of the UNCRPD which recognizes the equal rights of all disabled	All Members of HDSG	2022

	persons to live in the community with choices equal to others.		
3.2	The HDSG will call for a review of the household income criteria for housing grants which currently includes all persons residing in the home as opposed to the person to whom the grant applies and benefits.	All Members of HDSG	2022
3.3	The HDSG will formally request a review of the Housing Adaptation Grant upper limit of €30,000 which is not reflective of current build costs.	All Members of HDSG	2022
3.4	That any future scheme in Co. Leitrim arising from the Affordable Housing Act 2021 shall make express provisions for disabled people.	Leitrim County Council	2022 -2026

<b>4</b>	<b>Communication and Access to Information</b>		
	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Lead Partner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
4.1	Recommendation that the Local Authority includes Irish Wheelchair Association's <i>national Think Ahead, Think Housing</i> campaign in their local housing strategy and supports its implementation.	IWA & Leitrim County Council	
4.2	HDSG supports Irish Wheelchair Association's national campaign for a review of Part M of the Building Regulations (2010) to provide for regulations for liveable wheelchair accessible housing.	All Members of HDSG	2022-2026
4.3	Leitrim HDSG to request data from Leitrim County Council on how the implementation of Part M is monitored.	All Members of HDSG & Leitrim County Council	Ongoing
4.4	Review of the local strategy will be on an annual basis.	All Members of HDSG	2022-2026 Annually
4.5	Leitrim HDSG is committed to the involvement of disabled people and Leitrim DPO/LAPWD in monitoring the effectiveness of the plan on an annual basis as per section 42 of the Irish human rights and equality commission act (2014)	All Members of HDSG	2022-2026 Annually
4.6	That a communication strategy be developed to ensure that disabled people on the housing waiting list are informed of HDSG actions and progress over the life of the strategic plan.	All Members of HDSG & Leitrim County Council	Q4 2022

<b>5</b>	<b>Knowledge, Capacity &amp; Expertise</b>			
	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Lead Partner</b>	<b>Support Partners</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
5.1	The Housing Disability Steering Groups should receive disability equality training and develop a clear, collective understanding of the social model of disability as per the UNCRPD.	LAPWD, ILMI and Leitrim DPO	All Members of HDSG	Q4 2022
5.2	That each of the stakeholders provide specific requested information to ensure clarity around the exact role of each HDSG member in the delivery of homes for disabled people .	All Members of HDSG		Q4 2022
5.3	Leitrim DPO and LAPWD to lead-out on and deliver Disability Equality Training (DET) to Leitrim HDSG members and related Council management and staff. All new HDSG members to have DET Induction workshops.	Leitrim County Council & LAPWD and ILMI Leitrim DPO	All other Members of HDSG	Q2 2023
5.4	Leitrim DPO and LAPWD to lead-out on UNCRPD proofing of related housing policies and actions by Leitrim HDSG members and related Council management Depts.	Leitrim County Council & LAPWD and ILMI Leitrim DPO	All other Members of HDSG	Q2 2023

<b>6</b>	<b>Strategy Alignment</b>			
	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Lead Partner</b>	<b>Support Partners</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
6.1	HDSG to recognise and reinforce in all policy development and implementation locally and nationally that independent living requires on more than just buildings.	All Members of HDSG	All Members of HDSG	2022-2026
6.2	Deliver upon the key actions and recommendations of the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 -2027.	Leitrim County Council	All Members of HDSG	2022-2026
6.3	Carry out the actions as determined by the National Implementation Subgroup.	Leitrim County Council	All Members of HDSG	2022-2026

**Table 12**

## 9. Challenges Risks and Opportunities

The delivery of the objectives as outlined in this strategy present a combination of Challenges, Risks and Opportunities

### Opportunities

#### *Asset Register:*

Leitrim County Council is to undertake a condition survey of all its housing stock, recording asset information which will include identifying all properties adapted for disabled people including the recording of the individual and type of adaptations made. A full record of adapted properties will enable more effective direct allocations and so better meeting the needs of those with exceptional housing needs. Notwithstanding the above, many applicants with a disability do not have exceptional housing needs; and adapted properties should not be seen as the only units available to social housing applicants of disabled people. Applicants with a disability can determine whether properties in the general housing stock advertised through choice based letting meet their specific needs, giving the applicant greater freedom of choice.

#### *Housing Requirement:*

Leitrim County Council has piloted a medical assessment questionnaire at the point of application which has proven helpful in better identifying if specific housing requirements are needed as a result of a clinical condition. This information ensures allocation of adapted properties is prioritised for those most in need. A focus on 'housing requirements' rather than 'clinical condition/diagnosis' is likely to be reflected in the next National Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability which is welcomed. Leitrim County Council will continue the use of the medical questionnaire and a standardised part of the application process.

#### *Universal Design:*

Adopting the principles of Universal Design should ensure that the housing needs of many social housing applicants of disabled people would be met. Leitrim County Council is strongly in favour of Universal Design as it improves the resilience and robustness of the housing stock for all tenants and Leitrim County Council is committed to delivering universal design as part of the Housing Capital build programme going forward.

#### *Shared Delivery:*

The provision of housing is sometimes only part of the solution to support people to live independently. The role of HDSG is ensure that where needed wrap around supports are in place and easily accessible by those who need them. Such examples might include:

- Ensuring supports are in place for people transitioning from residential or congregated settings into the community.
- Supporting older people to continue to live in their homes by ensuring provision of home supports, including grant support and at home social care supports as and when age related conditions affect mobility and independent capacity.
- Delivering a joint, case management approach to managing high dependency cases where high levels of adaptation/build and home supports are needed.

#### *Creative Housing Design:*

The use of Creative housing design will mitigate against the lack of availability PA services which are necessary for people with disabilities to live independently. The lived experience must be included in housing design.

#### *Organisational Campaigns:*

The Irish Wheelchair Association's Think Ahead Think Housing campaign will mitigate against the risks of people with disabilities becoming homeless.

### **Challenges**

#### *Personal Assistant Support:*

The lack of Personal Assistance supports is a major barrier to people with disabilities accessing housing in order to live independently. An agreement needs to be reached with the HSE stating that a person will be offered the necessary PA / social care supports once they are in receipt of a housing offer.

#### *Respite Services:*

Leitrim has a distinct lack of respite services, working in collaboration with all agencies. A review of local services should be undertaken and the HDSG are well positioned to establish the needs of these adults and plan for their future needs.

#### *Transition to Independent Living:*

There is a serious lack of personal assistant hours for people with disabilities to enable them to live independently. The transition to independent living may be unsuccessful in the absence of the appropriate supports.

#### *Older Disabled People:*

There is a national issue that any person over 65 years with a disability does not come under disability services. If you are over 65 and have a disability you come under Older Persons Service/ Home Help, which has limitations around resources and does not allow for a personal assistant.

### **Risks**

#### *Escalate Resource Deficit*

That the Strategic Plan encourages People on the approved housing list to apply to the HSE for the personal supports to meet their needs to live independently and escalate the deficit in availability of personal assistant support hours to the Housing Agency

## **10 Key Points, Targets and Deliverables**

### **10.1 Key points**

- Central to the delivery of targets and deliverables in this plan is the development of principles, practices and values which promote the inclusion of disabled people in the County's communities. The recognition of society barriers which prevent disabled people from being included in their communities, such as the provision of accessible and affordable housing, is predicated on the social model of disability. It is therefore essential HDSG work collaboratively throughout the life of this plan to change society and to remove barriers preventing inclusion.

- Provision and allocation of social housing to disabled people is reviewed in the context of all allocations of social housing, regardless of the supply mechanism. In this context, allocations of social housing to disabled people have consistently been in the order of 5% percent over the life of the previous strategy.
- In the 2016 Census, 10% percent of the County's population of 32,044 were disabled people, this would suggest that there is a significant need to facilitate disabled people living in privately owned accommodation and this is likely to increase in the 2022 census figures.
- Disabled Persons Grants are available to adapt existing Council houses. 26 units were adapted in 2020 and 21 in 2021 at an average grant value of €5,245 per grant. This level of funding is indicative of future funding of approximately € 125,00 per annum for minor adaptations. Leitrim County Council will aim to deliver two extensions per annum on its existing stock over the life of the strategy to accommodate tenants with significant disabilities. The expected cost of these works is €200,000 per annum.
- Housing Grants are available to adapt private owned houses. 145 units were adapted in 2020 and 211 in 2021 at an average grant value of €6,002 per grant. This level of funding is indicative of future funding of € 1,200,00 per annum.

## 10.2 Targets

The following are the key targets that should be achieved under this Strategy.

- Allocation percentage should be in the order of 10 percent (at a minimum) if proportional representation is to be achieved.
- The Housing for all targets will be provided to the Housing and Disability Steering Group annually.
- 10 percent of Housing for All capital build programme for Leitrim will be of universal design.
- HDSG to take a case specific approach to delivering the housing and care needs of high dependency cases. Details of such cases will be circulated to the steering group in advance with a view to identifying, agreeing, and implementing holistic housing and care support to the person with high dependency needs. Accordingly, this process will only be considered where significant adaptations and high dependency supports are a necessity.
- A full review of all existing people on the current approved housing list to establish the people who require wheelchair accessible housing.

## 10.3 Deliverables

The following are the key deliverables that should be achieved under this Strategy.

- Improve access to information on housing supports for disabled people, ensuring they have better access appropriate advice and information in respect of their housing needs.
- Improved outcomes for those people affected by age related conditions and reduced mobility through easy access to and provision of grants support, including services in relation to Disabled Person Grants scheme to adapt existing Council houses and Housing Grants for People with a Disability to adapt private houses. This will include a call for a review nationally of the current €30,000 maximum grant threshold for private housing grants.
- Ensure good practice in the design, coordination, and delivery of housing and related supports. The local authority to incorporate innovative housing design models and the use of Assistive Technology in order to support independence and efficiencies in terms of requirements for personal assistants and informal supports where required.
- The HSE to agree a plan and actions to improve availability of and access to adequate respite services throughout the county.
- Improve the collection and use of data/information regarding the nature and extent of the housing requirements and proportional representation.
- Promote the Strategic Plan for Housing PWD 2021-2025 through the Housing and Disability Steering Group, Leitrim County Council Website and other social media platforms.
- Disability Equality Training (DET) will be offered to all people engaged in housing for disabled people, including Local Authority and approved housing body design teams, allocation teams and management.

## **11. Monitoring and Reporting**

This plan will be reviewed at the end of the first quarter of each year in order to report on the deliverables for the previous year and to examine the appropriateness of the information and proposed outputs for the coming year.

This document will also be reviewed and updated, as required, on foot of the rollout of the Implementation Plan for National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 – 2027.

Allocations of social housing to social housing applicants of disabled people will be recorded by Leitrim County Council and compared with all allocations made each year to ensure targets and proportional representation is being achieved.

Other Local Authority generated reports such as the annual Implementation Return and housing related NOAC return will also be made available to the Housing and Disability Steering Group.

The Agenda for HDSG Meeting and reporting information will be circulated at least one week before meetings whilst minutes of meetings are to be circulated immediately following the HDSG meeting. Leitrim County Council will prepare a report in advance of each HDSG meeting which shall include the following information

### **Housing Need and Delivery**

- Number of people on the housing list by Main Need / Basis of need
- Number of people on the housing list who require wheelchair accessible housing
- Number of people on the housing list by length of time on record
- Number of people on the housing list by household size
- Number of people on the housing list by age profile
- Number of allocations by Main Need / Basis of need
- Number of allocations to people who use wheelchairs
- Number of wheelchair accessible houses in the pipeline by location

### **Housing Adaption Grants**

- Overall financial allocation by grant type FYE
- Financial balance by grant type YTD
- Number of grant applications received by grant type
- Number of successful grant applications by grant type
- Number of grant applications refused and rationale
- Number of maximum grants allocated, and shortfall amounts on project costs

Leitrim County Council is to explore the option of having a dashboard on their website facilitating access to housing need information similar to the Galway County Council initiative utilizing Microsoft Power BI.