



HE Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

North East Homelessness Action Plan 2014-17

Chairperson's Message

As Chairperson of the Management Group and the Regional Consultative Forum on Homelessness, I am delighted to present the second Regional Action Plan on Homelessness. The Plan builds on the National Plans and Strategies and presents an ambitious action plan which will deliver a better service for all Clients who present as Homeless or indeed are in risk of falling into this category.

I would like to thank all Members of the Consultative Forum for their contributions to date and look forward to working with them in delivering all actions.

Joe Mc Guinness

Chairperson of North East Homelessness Consultative Forum

Introduction

Chapter 6 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009 provides for the management of Homelessness matters. It designates Housing Authorities as the lead statutory provider of Housing Services while also acknowledging the role of the Health Service Executive (HSE) in its statutory role of providing social and care services.

This is the second plan made by the region and replaces the 2011-2013 Plan.

Section 37 below outlines the requirement on the preparation, adaptation and implementation of Homelessness Action Plans.

Section 37

Homelessness

Action Plan

Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009

1

A Housing Authority shall, in respect of its administrative area, not later than 8 months after the coming into operation of this Chapter, adopt a plan (in this Act referred to as a “homelessness action plan”) to address homelessness.

2

A homelessness action plan shall specify the measures proposed to be undertaken to address homelessness in the administrative area or administrative areas concerned by the Housing Authority or Housing Authorities, as the case may be, the Health Service Executive, specified bodies, or approved bodies or other bodies providing services to address homelessness or the performance of whose functions may affect or relate to the provision of such services, including but not necessarily limited to measures to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) the prevention of homelessness,
- (b) the reduction of homelessness in its extent or duration,
- (c) the provision of services, including accommodation, to address the needs of homeless households,
- (d) the provision of assistance under *section 10 (b) (i)*, as necessary, to persons who were formerly homeless, and
- (e) the promotion of effective co-ordination of activities proposed to be undertaken by the bodies referred to in this subsection for the purposes of addressing homelessness in the administrative area or areas concerned.

3

A homelessness action plan shall be in writing and shall take account of:

- (a) any available information regarding the extent of the need for services to address homelessness, including, in the case of housing supports, any summary of social housing assessments prepared under *section 21* in respect of homeless households,
- (b) the costs of the proposed measures referred to in *subsection (2)* and the financial resources that are available or are likely to be available for the period of the Homelessness Action Plan to the Housing Authority or Housing Authorities concerned, the Health Service Executive or any specified body, as the case may be, for the purposes of undertaking those measures and the need to ensure the most beneficial, effective and efficient use of such resources,
- (c) such policies and objectives for the time being of the Government or the Minister in so far as they may affect or relate to the provision of services to homeless persons, and
- (d) such other matters as the Minister may specify in a direction given to the Housing Authority under *subsection (4)*, including (except in the case of the first Homelessness Action Plan) a review of progress made in the implementation of the Homelessness Action Plan during the period of the previous plan.

4

- (a) The Minister may, from time to time, give directions in writing to a Housing Authority for the purpose of either or both of the following:
 - (i) providing guidance as to the form and content of a Homelessness Action Plan, and
 - (ii) specifying the period for which such a plan is to remain in force, which period shall not in any case be less than 3 years.
- (b) The Housing Authority shall comply with any directions given under *paragraph (a)*.

Designation of Responsible Housing Authority

Louth County Council by way of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009 Sections 38 and 39 (Homelessness Consultative Forum and Management Group) Directions, 2010, were designated as the responsible authority for the preparation of the Regional Homelessness Action Plan for the Counties of Louth, Cavan and Monaghan. In May 2010 an initial Plan was adopted by the three authorities following a statutory consultation phase.

Policy Context

In the preparation of this Homelessness Action Plan the following Policy directions were observed.

- Homeless Policy Statement – (DoECLG February 2013)
- The Way Home (2008-13) - A Strategy to Address Adult Homelessness in Ireland 2008-2013 (DoEHLG August 2008)
- Homeless Strategy - National Implementation Plan (DoEHLG 2009).
- National Health Strategy - Quality and Fairness - A Health System for You (2001)
- Primary Care Strategy - A New Direction (2001)
- National Drugs Strategy (Interim) - (2009-2016)
- Vision for Change (2006) – A Strategy to Address Mental Health and Homelessness
- Youth Homeless Preventative Strategy (2001)
- National Intercultural Health Strategy (2007-2012)

Background to Services in the North East

A general review of homeless service provision in the region was concluded in July 2010 and it highlighted the extent of services available in the region. The findings of that review assisted in the preparation of the previous Plan.

Historically Emergency Accommodation and Tenancy Sustainment was provided by Voluntary Service Providers with funding assistance from the Housing Authorities and HSE through the Department of Environment and Department of Health respectfully.

During the period of the last plan, Service Level Agreements have been put in place to govern this process. Likewise the matter of Tenancy Sustainment has been further developed through the Procurement Process with a Service Level Agreement underlining the service provided. A Regional Framework is now in place to manage the sourcing of this activity.

In the case of the Housing Authorities funding is supported on a 90% basis by the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government. Funding from both Housing Authorities and the HSE is subject to annual budget allocations. The National Policy on Homelessness 'The Way Home,' assigns specific cost areas to Housing and Health Authorities across the spectrum of Accommodation and Care.

The PASS System database was introduced in the North East Region in January 2013 and is being used by Statutory and Voluntary Bodies involved with homeless services. Tenancy Sustainment is being extended to include Cavan and Monaghan.

Providers operating in the Region and their Emergency Accommodation capacities are listed opposite. Not all of these facilities are specifically funded by both HSE or Housing Authorities.

Facility	County	Capacity Utilised by Housing Authorities	Overall Bed Night Capacity
Dundalk Simon Community	Louth	19	26
Drogheda Homeless Aid Association Ltd	Louth	14	21
Womens Aid (Dundalk) Ltd	Louth	5 Rooms <i>Domestic Violence</i>	23
Drogheda Women's & Children Refuge Centre Ltd	Louth	3 Rooms <i>Homeless</i> 6 Units <i>Domestic Violence</i> 2 Rooms <i>Domestic Violence</i>	35
The Society of St Vincent De Paul, Cavan Town	Cavan	-	6
Castleblaney Trust for the Homeless, Needy & Unemployed	Castleblaney		3

During the period of the last plan, the following number of Adults presented as homeless to the Housing Authorities in the Region.

County	2011	2012	2013
Louth	591	418	757
Cavan	Unknown	16	5
Monaghan	36	74	55

Analysis of Homeless Presentations

The period from January 2013 to December 2013 gave an opportunity to analyse the reason for Homeless Presentations.

Reason for presenting as Homeless	Louth	%	Monaghan	%	Cavan	%
Domestic Violence	96	13	1	2	2	40
Addictive Behaviour	542	71	0			
Family & Relationship Breakdown	43	6	14	26	1	20
Mental Health	47	6	1	2		
Prison Release	4	1	5	9		
Other (<i>includes HRC, asked to leave accommodation, eviction, no income source, no longer able to pay rent</i>)	25	3	32	58	1	20
Release from hospital			2	3	1	20
Total	757	100%	55	100%	5	100%

It is intended that for future reports and plans, evidence will be gathered to ascertain what grounds were given when Aid under this legislation was refused.

During the period of the last Plan the Regional Homelessness Consultative Forum met on 8 occasions and discussed matters including:

- Establishment and monitoring of Homeless Action Teams
- Development of Service Level Agreements
- Rough Sleeper Counts
- Presentations of Homelessness Persons arising from outside the state
- Youth Homeless Strategy
- Personal Action Plan Formats
- Barring Policy in Emergency Accommodation

- Rent Contribution Policy in Emergency Accommodation
- Development and Rollout of the PASS IT system
- Tenancy Sustainment Definition and subsequent procurement
- Discharge Policy from Hospitals and Prisons
- Review of Presentation Statistics
- Achievements and Review of Plan

Statutory Consultation

As provided in the Act the following bodies were consulted in the preparation of this Action Plan

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| • North East Homelessness Consultative Forum. | Appendix A lists Membership. |
| • Town Council Housing Authorities in the North East Region. | Appendix B lists dates consulted. |
| • Meath County Council as an adjoining Housing Authority. | ditto |
| • Housing Strategic Policy Committee (Louth) | ditto |
| • Housing Strategic Policy Committee (Monaghan) | ditto |
| • Housing Strategic Policy Committee (Cavan) | ditto |

Revocation and Period of Plan

On adoption of this Plan, the previous plan adopted in March 2011, now stands revoked and this Plan shall remain in force until 31st December 2017.

Adoption

This action Plan listed was adopted by the following Authorities on the following dates

Louth County Council	21 th October 2013
Monaghan County Council	1 st November 2013
Cavan County Council	14 th October 2013

National Homelessness Action Plan – The Way Home 2008-13	National Implementation Plan 2009	North East Implementation Plan Actions	Responsible Body
ACT - Prevention of Homelessness Section 37 (2) (a)			
<p>1 Reduce number of households who become homeless through the development of enhanced preventative measures</p>	<p>a) Education, training and work. (Department of Education & Skills/ SOLAS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy Sustainment to be utilised as an intervention to prevent homeless presentations. Such support to be managed in bundles in North/Mid/South Louth, Cavan and Monaghan. • Tenancy Sustainment to be utilised where necessary in the case of households. • Tenancy Sustainment interventions to be through a planned referral process with targeted outcomes. • Homeless people will continue to be a target group, with which engagement takes place in both, a structured managed format and on a one to one basis (as appropriate). This will be facilitated via a number of Adult and Further Education Programmes. • Appropriate Welfare Payments to be made to avoid regression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities & Service Providers • Housing Authorities & Service Providers • LMETB • Department of Social Protection
	<p>b) Addiction, Mental Health (HSE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interagency approach to be utilised through the Homeless Action Teams. • Development of Community Detox Programme to mitigate against presentations of homelessness. • Provision of Residential Detox Programme for the region to mitigate homelessness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authority • HSE & Regional Drugs Task Force (RDTF)
	<p>c) Discharge Planning Health Services (HSE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharge Polices for homeless and potential homeless persons from acute hospitals and mental health facilities to be rolled out, implemented, adhered to and monitored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE & Management Group

National Homelessness Action Plan – The Way Home 2008-13	National Implementation Plan 2009	North East Implementation Plan Actions	Responsible Body
ACT - Prevention of Homelessness Section 37 (2) (a)			
d) Discharge Planning Prisons (Prison Service, Probation Service)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison to continue in relation to planned discharges where the person is identified as Homeless or likely to be Homeless. • Continuance of Pilot Prison Protocol in early identification of vulnerable persons with regards to homelessness and extend the mentoring service currently in place in Castlereagh & Cork Prisons. • Homeless Person's Unit (HPU) to co-ordinate with local Department Social Protection to ensure provision of adequate funding to source accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation Service, Irish Prison Service, Department of Social Protection, Housing Authorities, HSE. 	
e) Domestic Violence (Department of Children & Family Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities to liaise with the Department of Children and Family Support on the monitoring of presentations. • This cohort of presentations to be included in any data collations made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities and Department of Children & Family Support 	
f) Preventative action for other target groups (CDT, Department of Social Protection, Probation Service, Multi-Agency Group on Sex Offenders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of Anti-Social Behaviour by the Local Authority to minimise homelessness due to this matter. • Timely intervention by Local Authorities to prevent social rent arrears building up and causing homelessness through eviction • Work with agencies with regard to Domestic Violence to minimise the risk of homelessness from this sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authority • Housing Authority • Women's Refuge/ Women's Aid/ Tearmann Domestic Violence Service & Interagency 	

National Homelessness Action Plan – The Way Home 2008-13	National Implementation Plan 2009	North East Implementation Actions	Responsible Body
ACT - Prevention of Homelessness Section 37 (2) (a)			
	<p>f) Preventative action for other target groups (CDT, Department of Social Protection, Probation Service, Multi-Agency Group on Sex Offenders)</p> <p>g) Identification of functions in relation to prevention (CDT)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those leaving care at 18, Aftercare Steering Committee to be established by Department of Child & Family Support in Louth Health Area & Cavan/Monaghan Health Area to manage and co-ordinate all potential presentations from this cohort and to ensure that aftercare plans are in place. • Information to be made available to potential homeless persons on all relevant entitlements and benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE, Department of Child & Family Support (HSE) and Management Group • HSE, Department of Social Protection & Housing Authorities
<p>2 Eliminate the need for people to sleep rough</p>	<p>a) Monitoring of rough sleeping (DECLG and Local Authorities)</p> <p>b) Accommodation management system (Local Authorities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough Sleeper Count to be undertaken seasonally using agreed format • Ensure a cold weather response plan in place • Housing Authority to manage and monitor all admissions, if Section 10 funding to be claimed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authority • Housing Authority • Housing Authority

National Homelessness Action Plan – The Way Home 2008-13	National Implementation Plan 2009	North East Implementation Plan Actions	Responsible Body
ACT - Reduction in Homelessness in its extent and duration Section 37 (2) (b)			
3 Eliminate long term homelessness and reduce the length of time people spend homeless	a) Identification of long term homelessness (DECLG and Housing Authorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless Action Teams to be maintained in Louth, Monaghan and Cavan. Teams to be made up jointly of key staff from Statutory Bodies and Service Providers. • Housing Authorities to co-ordinate the Homeless Action Team and ensure that all persons presenting as Homeless go through a uniform assessment process. • A key worker to be assigned to each person and a Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA) and Care Plan to be prepared within two weeks of admission (Case Management). • Care Plans to be reviewed at appropriate intervals by Homeless Action Team. • Housing need assessment to be prioritised by all Local Authorities for Homeless Persons to enable them to avail of Social Housing Support • Ensure an availability of bed spaces in emergency accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities, HSE, Department of Social Protection, Probation Service, Service Providers • Housing Authority • Service Provider • Housing Authority • Housing Authority • Management Group
	b) Re-designation (DECLG and Local Authorities)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities and Service Providers
	c) Follow up on Homelessness Agency Reports (DECLG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any National Reports or directions to be mainstreamed into Local Homeless Management Policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities and Service Providers

National Homelessness Action Plan – The Way Home 2008-13	National Implementation Plan 2009	North East Implementation Plan Actions	Responsible Body
ACT - Provision of services, including accommodation Section 37 (2) (c)			
4 Meet the long term housing needs through an increase in housing options	a) Access to Social Housing (CDT, DECLG and Housing Authorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities and Voluntary Housing Bodies to recognise Homeless Persons in Emergency Accommodation as a specific target group for allocation of social units and Allocations Schemes to be amended to reflect this goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH), Voluntary Housing Bodies
Social Leasing	b) (DECLG and Housing Authorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Leasing accommodation to be considered as an option for all who exit Emergency Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authority & Service Provider
Private Rented	c) (DECLG, Housing Authorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy Sustainment to be put in place to support these allocations. • Transitional Housing to be made available where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities Voluntary Housing Bodies, Service Providers
	d) Long term support in residential accommodation (DECLG, Housing Authorities and HSE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-settled residents to have a Care Plan (post re-settlement) and to be tracked for 5 years. • Identify accommodation needs for ageing people who are no longer suitable for supported accommodation or independent living. • Housing Authorities and HSE to identify residents of Emergency Accommodation who will need long term supported accommodation and plan for those needs. • Consider adaption of existing emergency accommodation to long term supported accommodation. • Development of appropriate Capital Housing Schemes under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities through PASS • HSE, Housing Authorities & Service Providers • Housing Authorities HSE, Service Providers • Housing Authorities, Service Providers • Housing Authorities & Voluntary Housing Bodies

National Homelessness Action Plan – The Way Home 2008-13	National Implementation Plan 2009	North East Implementation Plan Actions	Responsible Body
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ACT - Provision of assistance under Section 10 (b) (i) as necessary to persons who were formerly homeless Section 37 (2) (d)

<p>5 To ensure effective services for homeless people</p>	<p>a) National quality standards and good practice (DECLG, Homeless Agency, HSE)</p> <p>b) Operational definition of homelessness (DECLG, Homeless Agency)</p> <p>c) Re-structuring, rationalisation and co-operation (Homeless Agency, DECLG and Local Authorities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Best Practise in all dealings with all Homeless Persons. • Upskill all staff working with Homeless persons in relation to Mental Health, Drug Addiction, Counselling, Motivational Interviewing, Suicide Prevention and Mediation Skills within the Family Setting thus achieving the positive engagement of people in services • Ensure the availability of an afterhours service • Homeless persons to have access to medical cards • All Accommodation Providers and Service Suppliers to have the necessary Child Safeguarding Policies in place. • Transparent Exclusion Policies to be part of all Service Level Agreements for provision of Emergency Accommodation • Apply any refinements adopted. • Emphasis to be placed on the supporting of tenancies to minimise presentations of Homelessness and to minimize the need for temporary emergency accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Homeless Forum • Housing Authorities, Service Provider & H.S.E. • Housing Authority • HSE • Service Providers • Service Providers & Housing Authority • Management Group
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National Homelessness
Action Plan – The Way
Home 2008-13

National
Implementation
Plan 2009

North East Implementation Plan Actions

Responsible
Body

ACT - Promotion of effective coordination of activities Section 37 (2) (e)

<p>6 Better co-ordinated funding arrangements and diversion of funding from emergency response to provision of long term housing and support services</p>	<p>a) Funding for long term accommodation and related supports (DECLG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate Long Term Homelessness within Emergency Accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Authority, HSE, Service Provider
	<p>b) Develop more effective funding system (DECLG and Housing Authorities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North East Homeless Funding for accommodation to be devolved from the DECLG to Louth County Council Housing Authorities and HSE to co-ordinate annually on revenue budget allocations. Funding to be managed on basis of Annual Service Level Agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Authority & Management Group Housing Authorities, HSE, Service Providers Housing Authorities, HSE, Service Providers
	<p>c) New procedures on approval and appraisal of funding applications for existing and new services (DECLG and Local Authorities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Group of Regional Homelessness Consultative Forum to review and evaluate any new service to be provided before any application is made for funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Group, Service Providers
	<p>d) Co-ordination of homeless funding (DECLG and HSE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Authority and HSE to co-ordinate available funding through Service Level Agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Authority & HSE

National Homelessness Action Plan – The Way Home 2008-13	National Implementation Plan 2009	North East Implementation Plan Actions	Responsible Body
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ACT - Promotion of effective coordination of activities Section 37 (2) (e)

	e) Efficiency and value for money (DECLG and Homeless Agency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authority and HSE to monitor all expenditure to ensure maximum effectiveness and value for money. • Housing Authority and HSE to ensure optimal configuration of services to ensure effectiveness and value for money. • Service Level Agreements to contain data reporting requirements to ascertain whether targets are being achieved and tenancies are being sustained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authority & HSE • Housing Authority & HSE • Housing Authority & HSE
7 Data and Information Strategy	a) National data system (DECLG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All presenting homeless must have their details collated using the PASS System. • The PASS system to be used as the Case Management System for all interactions with Service Users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities & Service Providers • Housing Authority & Service Providers
	b) Homeless counts (DECLG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Annual Regional Rough Sleeper Count will be undertaken and published. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Group

National Homelessness
Action Plan – The Way
Home 2008-13

National
Implementation
Plan 2009

North East Implementation Plan Actions

Responsible
Body

ACT - Promotion of effective coordination of activities Section 37 (2) (e)

8 Arrangements for monitoring and implementation	a) Local Homeless Action Plan (DECLG and Local Authorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half yearly report to Regional Homelessness Consultative Forum on progress on implementation of this Plan across the 8 themes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Group
	b) National support and monitoring system (DECLG and CDT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lead Authority will co-ordinate and respond to any request for assistance or monitoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Group
	c) Arrangements in relation to service providers (DECLG, HSE and Housing Authorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Level Agreements Templates to continue to be utilised which will manage all Services provided, both Emergency Accommodation and Tenancy Sustainment. • Service providers to have regard to the directions of the Management Group of the Consultative Forum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities, HSE, Service Providers • Service Providers

Appendix A

Sector	Agency
North East Local Authorities	Louth County Council - <i>Responsible Authority</i> Monaghan County Council Cavan County Council
Mandatory Representation	HSE North East <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prison Service • Probation Service • LMETB • SOLAS
Other Representation	Member of Louth County Council Department of Social & Family Affairs Regional Drugs Task Force
Approved Bodies & Other Bodies	Simon Community, Dundalk Dundalk Womens Aid Drogheda Homeless Aid Drogheda Womens Refuge Cuan Mhuire, Ballybay Tearmann Castleblayney Saint Vincent de Paul, Cavan Focus Ireland Castleblayney Trust

Appendix B

Town Housing Authorities Consulted

Dundalk Town Council
Drogheda Borough Council
Cavan Town Council
Monaghan Town Council
Castleblayney Town Council
Clones Town Council
Carrickmacross Town Council

Date

24th September 2013
2nd September 2013
9th September 2013
16th September 2013
26th November 2013
30th September 2013
9th September 2013

Adjoining Housing Authorities Advised

Meath County Council

25th July 2013

Housing Strategic Policy Committees

Louth County Council
Cavan County Council
Monaghan County Council

16th September 2013
2nd October 2013
10th October 2013

Notes

Louth County Council
County Hall
Millennium Centre
Dundalk
County Louth

t 042 9335457
e info@louthcoco.ie

element design t 042 9323430 e info@elementdesign.ie