

## **Monaghan County Council**

### **Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with Disabilities**

#### **1. Purpose and Goal**

The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011 - 2016, published in 2011, and the associated National Implementation Framework, which are joint publications by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government and the Department of Health were developed as a part of a coherent framework, in conjunction with the A Vision for Change (the Government's mental health policy) and a Time to Move on from Congregated Settings (the Report of the Working Group on Congregated Settings) to support people with disabilities in community based living with maximum independence and choice.

The vision of the Strategy is to facilitate access for people with disabilities to the appropriate range of housing and related support services, delivered in an integrated and sustainable manner, which promotes equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living.

This can only be achieved by the inclusion of personal supports such as Personal Assistant services that are tailored to suit the individual.

The strategy expects, while acknowledging the challenges, that any new housing initiatives for people with disabilities must be integrated in the mainstream housing environment and in suitable locations to prevent isolation and to promote an inclusive and sustainable community.

The core goal of the Strategy is to meet the identified housing needs of people with disabilities locally whether they are making an application from within the community or transitioning from a congregated setting.

The four categories of disability referred to in the Strategy are:

- (a) Sensory disability
- (b) Mental health disability
- (c) Physical disability and
- (d) Intellectual disability

While not explicitly mentioned in the Housing Strategy for the purpose of this plan Category (d) will be intellectual and/or Autism.

The National Implementation Framework includes the following strategic aims

*Housing authorities will develop specific strategies to meet the identified housing needs of people with physical, intellectual, mental health and sensory disabilities locally. These strategies will be informed by the assessments of housing need and broader formalised consultation with relevant statutory agencies, service users groups and disability organisations. These strategies will form an integral part of local authority Housing Services Plans and will promote and support the delivery of accommodation for people with disabilities using all appropriate housing supply mechanisms.*

*In line with the development of specific disability housing strategies, housing authorities will consider reserving certain proportions of units to meet specific identified need within each disability strategy.*

It is intended that the strategy will form an integral part of the Housing Services Plans of Monaghan County Council and will promote and support the delivery of accommodation for people with disabilities using all appropriate housing supply mechanisms. This strategy will also support longer term strategic planning.

This document that has been prepared by the Housing and Disability Steering Group aims to fulfil the requirements of the Strategy and provide the local authority and other housing providers with information that will help to inform and guide housing provision for people with a disability over the next number of years.

## **2. Housing Need**

Housing need has been defined as the extent to which the quantity and quality of existing accommodation falls short of that required to provide each household or person in the population, irrespective of ability to pay or of particular personal preferences, with accommodation of a specified minimum standard and above. This definition applies equally to all people with a disability. People with a disability making a housing application to Monaghan County Council come from a variety of backgrounds including people who are already living in the community and people transitioning from congregated settings.

The assessment of an individual's need for Social Housing Support is based on the individual's lack of ability to provide housing from their own means. The housing need is the type of housing size, location etc. that is required to allow them to live appropriately and independently. When a person with a disability is accepted onto the Housing list their particular housing need should be registered

and information relating to their medical condition including any specific items that affect their housing need including wheelchair accessibility, preference for shared living in a group situation is outlined.

In relation to people with a disability living in congregated settings, deinstitutionalisation refers to the move away from housing people with disabilities in residential institutions, where all services were generally provided on site, to community based settings. Large residential institutions, while maximising the pooling of support services, segregate residents from the community and from normal social life. Research has demonstrated that such institutions are not able to deliver the same quality of life for their residents as community based alternatives.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities within the Disability Sector**

#### **3.1 Future Tenant**

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states *“People with Disabilities should have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others.”*

People with disabilities, who qualify for housing support, should be encouraged and supported to place their names on the Local Authority Housing list in order to have their housing needs identified. Designated staff in Local Authority Housing Departments should manage housing applications from people with disabilities and be available to advise and support and as a point of contact.

Involvement of the future tenant in the design of their proposed housing, along with their advising OT should be encouraged. This can be achieved by pre identifying future tenants prior to a new build and/or while a new build is in hand and changes can still be effected to meet individual’s requirements.

#### **3.2 Housing Authorities**

Local Authorities acting as Housing Authorities have a key strategic role in the provision of social housing supports for all eligible persons with a disability, including people currently living independently, or those living with families or in other arrangements. As well as being providers of social housing in their own right, Local Authorities also act as a catalyst for social housing provision by other means including being an enabler for Approved Housing Bodies to provide specialised housing; through the Rental Accommodation Scheme, the Housing Assistance Payment and Part V housing from developers etc.

In many cases the solution for the individual will also require the support of the Health Service Executive in funding the personal supports that are required to sustain independent living,

### **3.3 Health Service Executive (HSE)**

In some cases the HSE is the direct service provider to an individual. In addition, the HSE is the current funding agency of support services by third parties. The HSE is also one of the main drivers of the deinstitutionalisation of residents from congregated settings.

In addition, the HSE must also identify individual support costs for people who are transitioning from congregated settings and continue to provide all necessary 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. In respect of disability services, the HSE's responsibility is fulfilled by the provision of services directly by the organisation and also, to a very significant extent by the funding of non-statutory organisations to provide such services on its behalf. The HSE aims to support each individual with a disability in living as normal a life as possible, in an environment that provides opportunities for choice, personal development, fulfilling relationships and protection from exploitation and abuse.

With regard to individuals currently residing in a congregated type setting, the HSE strongly supports their transition to more socially inclusive community integrated services and is fully committed to ensuring that people with disabilities will be actively and effectively supported to live full inclusive lives at the heart of their family, community and society. (Seek confirmation from HSE in their agreement that this is their position)

### **3.4 Service Providers**

This would include HSE (direct service provision) service providers and the non-statutory service providers, for example:

Camphill Communities of Ireland  
Castleblayney Care Housing Association  
Castleblayney Trust for Homeless, Needy & Unemployed  
Clones Branch of the Mentally Handicapped Association  
Clúid Housing Association  
Monaghan Branch of Mentally Handicapped Association  
Newgrove Housing Association  
Oaklee Housing Trust  
Respond! Housing Association  
St. John of God Trust (Ireland)

Responsibilities will include the development of an overall project plan to include person centred plan, provision of information with regard to housing options, supporting the individual with regard to application for assessment of housing needs, access to external advocate, support around tenancy arrangements, care support needs identified, assistance with the development of circle of supports etc. Service providers must also participate in the local implementation teams, identify any obstacles / challenges to transition etc.

### **3.5 Community Supports**

Services such as Resource and Outreach centres supports people with disabilities integrate into their local community. Having access to these support services can reduce isolation and create a social hub where people can avail of educational and training programmes ensuring people with disabilities can lead full, active and independent lives in their own communities.

### **3.6 Department of Health**

The Department's role in relation to service for people with disabilities is to provide the policy and legislative framework to enable the ongoing strategic development, monitoring and evaluation of the performance of health and social services to support people with a disability to live in the community. This includes working with other Government Departments, the HSE and relevant agencies to enhance people's health and well-being.

### **3.7 Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government**

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government has overall responsibility for developing and implementing housing policy for people with disabilities, both for those living in the community and those who will be transitioning from institutional care in the coming years.

The Department's role is to provide the policy framework to enable the delivery of a range of housing options and solutions and to work with other Government Departments, housing authorities, HSE and relevant agencies in supporting people with disabilities to access and maintain appropriate housing suited to their changing needs within sustainable communities.

### **3.8 Families**

In many instances, Family are the main support for people with disabilities with regard to housing and the provision of care needs. For some, the family may have an advocacy role and assist with decision making on behalf of the individual. Additional supports may be required to enable a person with a disability remain within the family unit such as home adaptations and/or personal support services.

Families should be supported when a person with a disability chooses to move from the family home to independent living.

### **3.9 Approved Housing Bodies**

The Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) will be the main housing providers for people transitioning from congregated settings under the initiatives set out in the Housing Strategy for People with a Disability. For people who are already living in the community there will be housing opportunities across the full range of housing supply options whether it is through AHB'S under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS), leasing or purchase models.

#### **4. Demand and Supply**

The lead in time to any housing procurement can be significant and it is critical that all procurement plans can take account of both current and projected housing demand. The approach taken to providing suitable and appropriate housing to people with disabilities will ensure that agreed disability specific general requirements and known individual requirements are met in all design and procurement briefs to meet both current and projected need of present and anticipated applicants. Each design or procurement brief for new housing (new builds or acquired) by the Council or by an Approved Housing Body will include a section on Universal Design that sets out what the project will deliver, i.e. number of adaptable and fully wheelchair accessible units. A proportion of any projected housing procurement may be forward planned and reserved to meet the demand from people with disabilities on local Housing Lists. An accessibility brief will be agreed and set out to inform the requirements that should be part of any brief from the outset i.e. what is this project brief required to deliver in terms of accessibility for people with disabilities, general design, numbers of units, design of units, and how will this be achieved (Section 27 Disability Act).

##### **4.1 Current demand**

The current demand will be determined from various sources from which a comprehensive breakdown of need can be compiled. The breakdown of demand/need will include details on unit size, location, design and any other specific requirements such as care supports required. An element of estimation and forecast is also required to address emerging need which probably can be quantified based on previous annual averages but not specific to location. The relevant information from which the detail can be extracted is held as follows and then is consolidated for the county at Paragraph 4.1.7:

#### 4.1.1 Housing Waiting Lists

Following the Housing Needs Assessment carried out in 2016 in which all persons who are seeking housing support from Monaghan County Council were contacted a total of 1011 households remain on the waiting list. The numbers of persons, who state medical conditions that affect their housing requirements, are tabled below:

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Physical</b>	2
<b>Sensory</b>	1
<b>Mental Health</b>	
<b>Intellectual</b>	4

#### 4.1.2 Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs)

AHBs operating in Monaghan have an existing housing stock of 291 units. An additional 33 units are pending completions. The normal allocation path for housing with AHBs is through the Local Authority Housing Waiting List; however there may be occasions where an Approved Housing Body has their own waiting list of people.

The new units as outlined above are identified for the following grouping of households.

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Physical</b>	18 + 5
<b>Sensory</b>	7
<b>Mental Health</b>	
<b>Intellectual</b>	3

#### 4.1.3 Housing Transfer Lists

Monaghan County Council has an existing housing stock of 1444 units. Annually a number of tenants, through new disability or injury, require alternative accommodation due to the inadequate nature of their existing living accommodation. This can be addressed through a transfer arrangement if appropriate accommodation is available. The decision to transfer may be made as a

less costly alternative to adaption works or were necessary adaption works are not feasible due to the nature of the property.

*In 2016 there were 16 transfers granted on the grounds of medical need. There are an additional 10 tenants in social housing support units who are seeking transfers on medical grounds*

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Physical</b>	9
<b>Sensory</b>	1
<b>Mental Health</b>	
<b>Intellectual</b>	

#### **4.1.4 Homeless Persons (Mary)**

A number of individuals that are engaged with Homeless Services have a disability. This is particularly the case with Mental Health although all services provided to people coming from a homeless background must be accessible to clients regardless of their personal access requirements whether that requirement is for physical accessibility or any other personal access requirement. Clients with a disability currently engaged with Homeless Services are tabled below.

It should be noted that individuals who present themselves may have a multiplicity of disabilities which may span across the categories set out below. In these instances the primary disability which has been included in their documentation, and affects their housing need has been noted in the figures below.

The following are the individuals who are engaging with the services in 2016

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Physical</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Sensory</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Mental Health</b>	27
<b>Intellectual</b>	2

The service deals with persons who are in stressful situations, have difficulty managing their lives, and have multiple issues arising. The members of the section are not medical professionals however it is merited to note that 19 other presentations related to persons with addiction issues and these



have been included as persons with mental health problems, but may be masking other medical problems.

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#### **4.1.5 Emerging Disability Need**

The Local Authorities can only deal with Housing Applicants and households already identified to them through the Social Housing Support Application Process. However, it is accepted that there will always be an emerging need in this area. In order to ensure people with disabilities have equal choice on where and with whom they live, support and information must be readily available to assist with the process. Disability Awareness training should be made available to front of house Local Authority staff and accessible design training to all involved in the commissioning and design of new housing projects and in the maintenance of existing housing stock, ie architects, engineers and maintenance crew.

This forecast is based on past evidenced presentations and projections from those currently in receipt of care and under 18. The needs of individuals will vary and as a result the housing needs will vary.

<b>Source</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Likely Disability</b>	<b>Annual Forecast of Presenting Numbers</b>
Enable Ireland	Early Intervention (0-6 years)	Physical	9 children with potential need for housing adaptation on the future

#### **4.1.6 Owner Occupied Stock**

Requirements for adaption or alternative accommodation due to disability arise in Owner Occupier properties. From a housing authority perspective, this can be gauged by the number of applications made annually for either Housing Adaption Grants or Mobility Aids Grants. The table below outlines the number of applications made annually under these schemes for the last three years from which the assumptions for the number of predicted applications over the coming years contained in the second table.

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Housing Adaption Grants</b>	54	44	70
Small Works	30	14	23
Major Works	24	30	47
<b>Mobility Aids Grants</b>	69	52	64
<b>Total</b>	123	96	134

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Housing Adaption Grants</b>	48	45	70	70	70
Small Works	19	22	23	23	23
Major Works	29	23	47	47	47
<b>Mobility Aids Grants</b>	53	41	64	64	64
<b>Total</b>	101	86	134	134	134

#### **4.1.7 Total Disability Need**

Arising from Paragraph 4.1.1 to 4.1.7, it is evident that there is significant disability housing need in the county. The type of properties that are required will be difficult to determine as a forensic assessment of the individuals or their specific needs have not been carried out. However the table below summarises the basis disability needs within the county.

*These tables may be expanded where there is a geographical divide on the list*

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Physical</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Sensory</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Intellectual</b>	<b>9</b>

The table below illustrates the difference between individuals that may be able to remain in their home if adaptations were to be carried out and those whose accommodation is deemed totally unsuitable

Category	Total			
Persons Requiring New Accommodation	88			
Persons Requiring their existing accommodation to be adapted	488			

#### 4.1.9 Assumptions

The data gathering exercise that has been carried out to complete this Strategic Plan has not been to the level of a Housing Needs Assessment. The use of the knowledge of the people that are party to the completion of the plan and their wider networks has been sought.

In compiling the total disability need in the county a number of assumptions have been made. These include:

- All people with disabilities who are in need of housing are on the Local Authority Housing list
- People with disabilities are aware of their right to live where and with whom they choose.
- The level of grant repairs will remain at a consistent level for the plan period
- Aging population (adults with a disability living in family home with elderly relatives who are now, or into the future, are unable to meet their personal supports needs)
- Emergency presentations

It is considered that given the ongoing changing nature of demand, and the deficiencies of the information available at the time of drafting this plan a further review of this section of the plan will be required in Q2 2019.

## 5. Delivery and Supply Mechanisms

### 5.1.1 Local Authority Stock

Local Authorities are the largest landlord in the county with approximately 1389 housing units. An individual must apply to the Local Authority for Social Housing Support in order to be considered for housing and there are a number of criteria that needs to be met including income limits, being unable to provide housing from their own means and being considered as being inadequately housed in their current accommodation. A tenant of a Local Authority will pay an income related differential rent.

Local Authorities to operate a “clearing House” system whereby individuals on the Housing Lists are matched with suitable units that will meet their requirements, either by handing back units or units planned into building projects that are in the pipeline including Part V units coming from private developers and across relevant Council Departments by liaising with key Council staff in each department.

In every Part V discussion with developers the Housing Authority will require an element of disability specific accommodation. Such accommodation will also be designated as units that will always be retained in the stock of the housing authorities for future use for similar applicants.

Where a vacancy arises in an adapted or disability designed dwelling, the subsequent allocation will be taken from the current housing disability list. Every Part V Agreement must address an element of identified Disability Need. The principal of Universal Design will be incorporated into all new builds.

#### **5.1.2 Approved Housing Body Stock**

Approved Housing Bodies have become a major player in the provision of Social Housing Support to people from all sections of the community. There are over 700 Approved Housing Bodies in the country of varying types and sizes. The housing provision of these also differ with some approved housing bodies deal primarily with general housing provision while others have a more specialised role. In Monaghan County there are approximately 17 Approved Housing Bodies providing housing. This includes the following type of accommodation:

- General housing
- Older person accommodation
- Housing for people with disabilities

To avail of Approved Housing Body owned accommodation an individual/household must in most cases apply and qualify for Social Housing Support with the Local Authority.

Approved Housing Bodies provide accommodation through

- New build
- Purchases
- Leasing

While Approved Housing Bodies access private finance to fund some of their development/purchases, they also receive the following funding from the State through the Local Authorities:

- Capital Assistance Scheme
- Capital Advance Leasing Facility
- Payment and Availability Agreements

- Where a vacancy arises in a CAS funded project for people with a disability, the subsequent allocation will be taken from the current housing list for someone with a disability
- AHBs will continue to develop CAS proposals in conjunction with Local Authorities who will have identified the need
- The principal of Universal Design will be incorporated into all new builds, such accommodation will also be designated as units that will always be retained in the stock of the AHB for future use for similar applicants

### **5.1.3 Social Leasing Initiative**

This involves housing authorities leasing properties from private property owners for the purposes of providing accommodation to households on social housing waiting lists.

#### **Social Housing Leasing Options:**

Access to housing stock will be achieved through:

1. Local authorities leasing properties from private property owners for periods of 10-20 years.
2. Approved Housing Bodies leasing from property owners, purchasing on the market or constructing properties and making them available for social housing provision through direct agreements with the DECLG.
3. Local authorities temporarily utilising unsold affordable housing stock.

### **5.1.4 Rental Accommodation Scheme**

RAS involves the local authority entering into a three way agreement with a landlord where

- The local authority enters into a contractual arrangement with the property owner to make the property available to the RAS for an agreed term, usually less than 10 years
- The eligible RAS tenant, nominated by the housing authority, signs a residential tenancy agreement with the landlord. The key private rented landlord/tenant relationship continues under the RAS. The local authority will act as broker or agent on behalf of the tenant.
- The RAS tenant pays a differential rent to the local authority and the local authority will make payments to the landlord on the recipient's behalf. When the tenant takes up a RAS tenancy they are deemed to be in receipt of social housing support and their housing need is met.

There are currently 89 tenants in voluntary housing units in RAS at end of fourth quarter, Oct - Dec 2016. In addition there are **143** tenants in private rented accommodation which totals **232** households accommodated under this scheme

#### **5.1.5 Private Rented/ Rent Supplement**

Rent Supplement is paid to people living in private rented accommodation who cannot provide for the cost of their accommodation from their own resources. In general, households will only qualify for a Rent Supplement, if the income is below a certain level and you satisfy the other conditions.

The amount of Rent Supplement is calculated to ensure that your income after paying rent does not fall below a minimum level.

As of April 2015 there are approximately 350 individuals who are in receipt of Rent Supplement in the County of Monaghan.

The Housing and Disability Steering Group urge engagement with the private rented sector to include information sessions to raise awareness of the benefits of people with a disability as tenants.

#### **5.1.6 Housing Assistance Payment**

It is a new form of Social Housing Support whereby the Housing Authority is responsible for all households where housing need is determined

The main elements of the scheme are that:-

- The household sources their own accommodation in the private rented market
- HAP Rent limits apply: The amount of rent payable for a household varies in each local authority area depending on the size of the household applying and the rental market in the area. Currently the HAP rent limits correspond with the local rent supplement limits.
- The landlord is paid directly by housing authority
- Once in HAP accommodation housing needs are met
- HAP replaces Rent Supplement for households with long term need
- Households with short term needs can still access Rent Supplement.

There are 294 households in HAP in Monaghan currently (November 2016)

## **5.2 Potential Supply**

Each of the supply mechanism listed above have been analysed to examine the potential of each to provide housing in the coming years. It is important that we are realistic in any policy that is put in

place of forecasting that is done to try to meet the need of people with disability under each scheme.

#### 5.2.1. Local Authority

It is anticipated that the future supply of housing provision by local authority direct provision will be limited.

In the 2016-19 period direct funding for housing construction has been identified as follows:

Bree, Castleblayney – 8 units to be provided and part 8 application submitted. 4 of the units are being designed for older persons and the other 4 are being adaptable dwelling units.

Funding has been provided for the acquisition of turnkey developments in Monaghan Town and Smithborough which will provide 55 general purpose units in 2017/2018

Phase 3 of the regeneration scheme in Mullaghmat that will result in an additional 6 units being made available.

Aside from these construction projects, one off house acquisitions will occur as and when opportunity/finance allows. In 2016 finance has been made available to acquire 39 units throughout the county. Further acquisitions will be made, where resources allow and where they are deemed to satisfy housing demands including addressing the needs of specific households with disabilities.

#### 5.2.2. Approved Housing Bodies

To the end of 2016 the following proposals were completed and progressed

Thorndale, Castleblayney – the acquisition and completion of 9 units by Cluid Housing Association

Drumillard, Castleblayney – progression and completion of care home and independent living units by Castleblayney Care Association. The independent living units (9) are occupied and the care home is anticipated to be occupied with the individuals occupying these units with HSE support in Q1 2017

Lisseggerton, Clones – the construction of general occupancy units (6) and anticipated future provision of 16 units by Oaklee Housing Association

Convent lands, Carrickmacross – Progression of care home for persons with sensory and physical disabilities by Respond housing with anticipated allocation and occupation Q1/2 2017

### 5.3 Ancillary Support Initiatives

#### 5.3.1 Personal Assistance

Personal Assistance Services provides people with the opportunity to exercise control and choice in their lives. In so doing, it enables people to be active participants within their families, communities and society. Provision of PA service is based on a needs assessment and delivered by either the HSE directly or through a voluntary organisation such as Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA)

### 5.3.2 Home Support

The Home Help Service supports the assessed needs of vulnerable people in the community who through illness or disability are in need of help with day to day tasks. Home help services are provided in order to assist people to remain in their own home and to avoid going in to long-term care. In practice, the Health Service Executive (HSE) either provides the home help service directly or make arrangements with voluntary organisations to provide them.

The particular supports provided to each person will depend on the needs that are identified during the assessment which is undertaken by a HSE health professional, generally a public health nurse.

Each application for home help services is considered on its own merits. The Local Health Office may take a number of factors into account, including income, other family support available, remoteness from services and availability of suitable people to provide the service.

If you are given a service, you may be asked to contribute to the costs involved, even if you hold a medical card.

### 5.3.3 Day Services

Day Centres support people with disabilities in their day-to-day lives by offering locally-based recreational and educational programmes. Programmes are designed to facilitate personal development and interaction with the local community.

Applications for day services can be made to the HSE Primary Care Team or by direct referral to a relevant voluntary organisation.

### 5.3.4 Respite Services

Respite is defined as a “Break” and is unique as it serves both the person and their caregiver. It is usually for a period of 1 to 2 weeks, this period of time can be altered in response to the dynamics of the home situation and the demands upon the service.

All referrals for Respite Care are processed by the local Public Health Nurse following requests from the person, family or local GP.

The provision of respite services is based on a needs assessment and approval for funding by HSE or a supporting voluntary agency.

## 5.4 Local Initiatives/Projects

Currently within the local authority area there are a number of initiatives being run, as follows:

### **Operation Sign - Up**



Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) offers an innovative national housing initiative to inform and educate people with disabilities about the benefits of applying for social housing. **Operation Sign-Up** aims to encourage and support individuals who wish to live in their own homes, but cannot do so from their own resources, to apply for social housing through their local City and County Councils.

**Operation Sign-Up** provides people with disabilities with the relevant and necessary information required to apply for social housing. The housing website, [www.iwa.ie/house](http://www.iwa.ie/house) is an accessible and easy to follow microsite, which includes a step-by-step guide to applying for social housing in the area in which the individual wishes to live. IWA has broken down the ten steps involved in the application process and has also listed all other relevant information an individual will require during the application process, such as contact details for local councils, information links to local health centres and tax offices, and also details of all local IWA centres.

All information and details about Operation Sign-Up and social housing can be found on [www.iwa.ie/house](http://www.iwa.ie/house). The housing microsite also provides information and details regarding many other housing issues including: the direct provision of housing; housing information; advice on housing tenures; and related services and supports.

This housing initiative has been developed by IWA to support its members to live as independently as possible. People with disabilities often have very specific housing and accommodation requirements. There are a variety of options available to meet each individual's circumstances and the IWA housing microsite is designed to provide as much information as possible about the many different housing options available.

This initiative should be endorsed by Local Authorities as a model to promote housing supports for people with a disability.

## **6. Challenges**

There are a number of challenges that will have to be addressed in order to achieve the vision of the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability but we must approach the task in a positive manner and without giving false expectations to individuals we must give hope of a real choice in how they live their lives.

The supply of housing is a common challenge that is faced by all individuals, young and old, trying to source appropriate accommodation whether it is through social housing support, the private rental market or private home ownership. However, for some people with a disability where their income is limited or there is a requirement to have the property adapted, the challenge is even bigger.

It must also be noted that in a number of cases even if the most appropriate property was identified they would not be able to avail of the opportunity due to the lack of support to live independently.

Another point to note, limited income for people with a disability often means they cannot carry out required adaptation works to their home even with grant assistance.

The following action points need to be developed to allow this to progress:-

Additional funding needs to be ring fenced to provide for personal supports to ensure the transition from home/residential care is adequate to meet the needs of the individual availing of independent living.

Funding for home adaptations such as the Housing Adaptations grant and the Mobility Aids grant should be readily available.

Maintain an integrated approach between the Local Authority and other service providers, in particular the HSE, to achieve the goals set out in the strategic plan

Training in independent living skills should be made available in order to support anyone who wishes to avail of social housing.

## **7. Opportunities**

### **7.1 Use of Technology**

There have been major advances on assisted living technologies that allow people to stay in their homes longer and to live more independent lives while having the security of the assistance of the technology.

Use of assisted technology can enhance a person's life by giving them the ability to live more independently. These devices provide easy, independent means of operating various appliances located in the person's home, classroom or workplace.

Some of the technologies that could be considered for use are:

- Remote monitoring Systems
- Fall Prevention/Detection Systems
- Person Alarm Systems
- Living Environment Controls including access, lighting, heat
- Tablets and smart phones

### **7.2 Universal Design**

A Universal Design Approach should be considered in all refurbishment programmes of older Local Authority housing stock so that they can accommodate the widest possible range of situations without the need for further modification

With regard to all new housing stock, Monaghan County Council will commit to a Universal Design Approach that includes both Lifetime Adaptable Housing and fully wheelchair accessible design for specific people who are registered or will register on the Local Authority Housing lists.

Accessible design training for Council design and procurement staff would be beneficial in ensuring Universal Design in all future and refurbished housing stock.

**8. Actions required to meet the aims and objectives of the Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with Disabilities include the following:**

- a. People with disabilities to be encouraged and supported to place their names on Local Authority housing lists in order to apply for social housing.
- b. HSE to commit to “ring fence” funding for appropriate personal supports to enable people with disabilities live independently in a home of their choice.
- c. Training in independent living skills should be made available in order to support anyone who wishes to avail of social housing
- d. Each design or procurement brief for new housing (new build or acquired) by Monaghan County Council or by an Approved Housing Body will include a section on Universal Design.
- e. Disability Awareness training to be made available to front of house Local Authority staff in order to support people with disabilities who wish to explore housing options.
- f. New housing initiatives for people with disabilities must be in an integrated setting in order to promote an inclusive and sustainable community.
- g. Persons with disabilities should be made aware of the availability of funding through Housing Adaptations Grants and Mobility Aids Grants
- h. Consideration should be given to setting aside a percentage of social housing to be allocated to persons with disabilities
- i. The housing application form should be amended to enable retrieval of relevant information to plan for the needs of persons with disabilities in new developments/layout/designs

**9. Time Lines**

9.1 There is a significant amount of work to be undertaken following the drafting of the strategy.

Following section 8 individual actions needs to be addressed in accordance with a specific timeframe

<b>Aim</b>	<b>How to achieve this</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>
Aim (A) People with disabilities to be encouraged and supported to place their names on LA housing lists	Explore with steering group method of contacting people with disabilities Promote and encourage the use of the IWA "Operation Sign- Up" microsite	Steering Group	Q2 2017	
Aim (B) HSE to commit to ring fence funding for appropriate personal supports to enable people with disabilities live independently in a home of their choice	Steering group to contact HSE			
Aim (C) Training in independent living skills should be made available in order to support anyone who wishes to avail of social housing				
Aim (D) Each design or procurement brief for new housing (new build or acquired) by Monaghan County Council or by an AHB will include a section on Universal Design	Seek adoption of policy by MCC and AHB to adopt this criteria	Housing Section	Q1 2017	
Aim (E) Disability Awareness training to be made available to front of house LA staff in order to support people with disabilities who wish to explore housing options	MCC to seek trainer to provide direct training for front line staff Provide direct contact person for this work type	Housing Section	Q2 2017	
Aim (F) New housing initiatives for people with disabilities must be in an integrated setting in order to promote an inclusive and sustainable community	Liaise with HSE/Housing providers			
Aim (G) Persons with disabilities should be made aware of the availability of funding through Housing Adaptations Grants and Mobility Aids Grants)	LA to work through PPN networks and other groups to provide information/assistance	Housing Section	Q1 2017	
Aim (H) Consideration should be given to setting aside a percentage of social housing to be allocated to	To be reviewed as part of the Scheme of letting priorities	Housing Section	Q2 2017	

persons with disabilities				
Aim (I) The housing application form should be amended to enable retrieval of relevant information to plan for the needs of persons with disabilities in new developments/layout/designs	Seek DoEHLG to review the document	Housing Section	Q1 2017	

#### **10. Annual Budget (including all funding opportunities)**

Achieving the Plan's provisions requires investment decisions to be taken at a variety of levels and sustained over several years by a number of agencies and individuals, all with different, and in some cases competing priorities and levels of resources.

Full account has been taken of the likely level of resource provision in terms of finance, land, buildings, and manpower and the Council is confident that the Plan's action points will be achieved within the Strategic period.

Local government expenditure has been reduced by central government since the late 2007 and whilst there has been an increase in available capital spending as set out in the governments housing Strategy there will not be any major increase in capital spending in the short term. On the other hand, other housing bodies have seen increases in capital resources and opportunities for resource funding. It is expected that private investment and in particular Approved Housing Bodies will play the major role in the County's future development.

Although many of the resources needed for the implementation of the Plan's policies lie outside the Council's direct control, the Strategy Plan will be able to assist in making decisions based on the basis of improved information particularly in relation to housing for persons with disabilities when capital investment becomes available.

**10.1** The success, or otherwise, of the Plan's strategy will be monitored, in association with other the Steering group through the use of measurable indicators. Significant issues, for example, numbers of people with disabilities on the housing waiting list, and numbers housed will be evaluated annually.

#### **11. Annual Targets**

**11.1** *Having regard to the figures of housing need identified in paragraph 4.17 it is considered that the following targets should be addressed in the provisions of housing supports for disabled persons in County Monaghan*

- 1) Where acquisitions are being made the allocations of the units should be governed by the suitability of the units acquired and consideration given to persons with disabilities in the allocations of those units*
- 2) Where new builds by the local authority are being constructed no less than 5% of the dwellings shall be allocated to persons with a disability that are qualified for Social Housing Supports*
- 3) Where adapted properties become vacant, those units to be allocated to people with a disability on the Housing List. Consideration will be given to the adaptation of existing units for disabled persons where properties become vacant where finances allow and specific need is identified on the housing waiting list*
- 4) In Part V arrangements a detailed review of the site will be carried out to ascertain the appropriate of the location of the site for persons with disabilities and thereafter negotiations will be used to secure the provision of housing for persons with disability on the site*
- 5) Where RAS/Leased properties become available that are adequate for the needs of disabled persons they should be prioritised for incorporation into the housing support provisions of the Council subject to demand requirement at that time*
- 6) Other social housing supports including Housing Assistance Payments shall be utilised, where appropriate, to address the identified housing needs of persons with disabilities as identified in paragraph 4.17.*

## **12. Review Mechanisms**

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

There should be an agreement on systems to ensure the ongoing monitoring and reviewing the Housing Plan and means to identify any barriers that may exist to full achievement of the goals of the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability.