

Galway Social Housing Taskforce
Galway County Council 2019 End Year Review
15th December 2019

Galway County Council with the support of the Galway Social Housing Taskforce, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, State Agencies, Voluntary Housing Bodies and Cooperatives remains committed to responding to the housing need in Galway County and to meeting the targets under Rebuilding Ireland.

Building on the momentum from 2018, further progress was achieved in 2019, ensuring that Galway County Council is well placed to meet the 2018 – 2021 minimum target for Build, Acquisition and Leasing of **926** new homes. The Council is also continuing to work towards meeting the overall ratio of Build, Acquisition and Leasing of **67%**, **13%** and **20%** over the period 2016 – 2021.

The 2019 delivery target for Galway County Council of **259** new homes represents an increase of **119%** on the 2018 target. This compares to an increase of **27%** in the national delivery target. The minimum Build, Acquisition and Leasing target and the current estimated delivery for Galway County Council for **2019** is detailed hereunder.

2019	Build	Acquisition	Leasing	Total
Target	191	28	40	259
Projected Delivery	146	52	58	256
%	76%	186%	145%	99%

The Council availed of all opportunities to maximise output across all delivery streams to meet the housing need and target for 2019.

BUILD

The national target for build in 2019 represents a **32%** increase on the 2018 target. The corresponding increase for build for Galway County Council in 2019 is **198%** with a minimum delivery target of **191** homes.

The projected outturn for 2019 is currently as follows:

BUILD		
Delivery Stream	2019	Notes
SHIP Construction	87	DB: Gilmartin Road [43] Garbally Drive [10] Esker Fields [2] Na Clocha Rua [4] SRD [1] TK: Arvough [4] Cois na hAbhainn [2] Tullahill, Loughrea [21]
CAS Construction [AHB]	18	Claregalway [14] & Aggard, Craughwell [4]
CALF Construction [AHB]	9	Dunloe Street, Ballinasloe [9]
LA Part V	27	
Voids	5	Voids [5] Capped

Projected Delivery	146	
Target	191	
Projected Shortfall/Over	-45	

The target for 2019 required the Council to deliver a significant number of build units in excess of the estimated build pipeline for the year. It was anticipated in early 2019, that the potential may exist to deliver the additional units required via turnkey. The Council worked throughout 2019 to secure additional units by way of turnkey and secured a number of projects. However, difficulties in accessing appropriate levels of finance and meeting cash-flow requirements, that persisted for a period following the execution of contracts, resulted in a number of the additional units not being substantially completed in 2019. These units will be delivered in 2020.

ACQUISITION

The Council, being satisfied that local market conditions continued to support value for money on acquisitions, availed of the acquisition stream to deliver targeted solutions to enable families to exit emergency accommodation and to acquire RAS/HAP properties to prevent families becoming homeless. The acquisition programme also enabled the Council to achieve an appropriate social mix in larger towns, meet targets under the Disability Strategy and facilitate the decanting required to allow certain capital projects progress to construction.

ACQUISITION		
Delivery Stream	2019	Notes
LA Acquisitions	31	
CAS Acquisitions (AHB)	10	2 Eden Park, L'rea [2] 'Duchas' Aughrim [4] & 15 Fairgreen Heights, Tuam {4}
CALF Acquisitions (AHB)	4	8 Eden Park, L'rea [3], 42 Cuirt na hAbhainn [1]
HA Acquisition	7	
Projected Delivery	52	
Target	28	
Projected Shortfall/Over	+24	

LEASING

The achievement of targets for leasing has been challenging given the housing market in County Galway. The Council however identified a number of projects that offered the potential to meet and exceed the leasing target of **40** units in 2019. These projects include an Enhanced Lease that was progressed with the support of the Housing Agency and NDFIA.

LEASING		
Delivery Stream	2019	Notes
Long Term Leasing	13	Cuirt na hAbhainn [8], Bruach na hAbhainn [4] Gort [1]
Enhanced Leasing	37	Millrace, Ballinasloe [37]
MTR Lease	4	
Rental Availability Agreement/RAS Type	4	
Projected Delivery	58	
Rebuilding Ireland Leasing Target	40	
Shortfall/Over	+18	

It is projected that a total of **58** properties will be delivered under the leasing stream in 2019, exceeding the target by **18**.

HAP & RAS

HAP and RAS continue to make a significant contribution in providing housing supports for those in need of housing. A combined total of **380** new tenancies were established during 2019, exceeding the target by **48**.

HAP & RAS			
2019	RAS	HAP	Total HAP & RAS
HAP/RAS Target	10	322	332
Projected Delivery	5	375	380
Shortfall/Over	-5	+53	+48
%	50%	117%	115%

A total of **375** HAP tenancies were established in 2019 which includes the transfer of **73** households on long term rent supplement to HAP. Since the introduction of HAP in Galway County **1,519** households have been accommodated, with a total of **1,218** active tenancies as of December 2019.

A total of **314** properties are currently under the Rental Accommodation Scheme, a reduction of **12** from January 2019. This reduction reflects a trend in properties exiting RAS. A total of **5** new RAS tenancies were established in 2019.

REBUILDING IRELAND 2020 – 2021

The Council is well placed to deliver a minimum of **926** new homes under Rebuilding Ireland. The shortfall in the build element as of December 2019 is approximately **45** units, however, new project proposals for **57** units currently with the Department offer the potential to eliminate this shortfall. In addition, there are proposals for further additional units currently under consideration by Galway County Council.

TACKLING HOMELESSNESS

Tackling homelessness is a key priority and focus for Galway County Council. The Council continues to make progress with preventative measures to prevent individuals and families entering homelessness and supports to enable individuals and families experiencing homelessness to exit emergency accommodation.

The homeless category is afforded the highest priority in the Galway County Council Housing Allocation Scheme. A total of **29** households in the homeless category were offered a permanent tenancy by Galway County Council during 2019. Since the introduction of the HAP Place Finder Service a further **60** households secured accommodation with the benefit of the additional supports provided by the service.

The Council also continues to work with COPE Galway and Galway Simon to make Council properties available as an own-door alternative to private emergency accommodation. This has allowed the Council to reduce the number of long-term homeless in private emergency accommodation and to identify pathways for those continuing to avail of emergency accommodation.

By year-end alternative accommodation options will have been identified for all singles in private emergency accommodation. In relation to families, the number of Traveller households experiencing homelessness is significant, with **11** of the **13** families currently in emergency accommodation members of the Traveller community. Family size and extremely limited options in the private rented sector continue to present challenges in transitioning families from emergency accommodation. At present **3** of the families require 5-bed properties with additional specific disability related requirements.

TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

The Council has a positive record in the provision of accommodation and integration of Traveller families. During the period of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 – 2018, Galway County Council exceeded targets, meeting the accommodation needs of **262** households. The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024 was adopted on the 26th September 2019 and the Council is committed to meeting the accommodation needs of a further **111** households over the period of the Programme.

HOUSING LANDS

The requirement to acquire additional lands to support a direct build programme post 2021 is a significant priority for Galway County Council as **78%** of the primary housing lands are under construction or currently in the approval process. The development potential of the remaining holdings is constrained by sustainable communities' criteria, housing need and availability of services.

At the November meeting the members approved a loan in the amount of €10 million to fund the acquisition of lands for social and affordable housing. The Council is actively pursuing the acquisition of suitable lands in high demand areas.

RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS

In the context of the challenging financial position of the Council and the delivery achieved by the to date, the Council has submitted a request to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for approval and specific funding for a number of additional posts required by the Housing Unit to maintain and build on the progress to date in delivering social housing solutions in Galway County.

SUMMARY

The projected delivery by Galway County Council in 2019 demonstrates the commitment of the local authority to increase capacity and further accelerate our delivery.

2019	Build	Acquisition	Leasing	HAP / RAS	Total
Target	191	28	40	332	591
Projected Delivery	146	52	58	380	636
%	76%	186%	145%	114%	108%

In the context of an increase of **119%** on the overall build, acquisition and leasing target and an increase of **198%** for the build target for 2019, the Council delivered **256** new homes through build, acquisition and leasing. In addition, Galway County Council supported **380** households through HAP and RAS during 2019. This represents **45** more housing supports than had been targeted.

The pipeline of projects developed by the Council for 2020 and 2021 will allow for a continuation of year-on-year increases in the build programme, delivering a minimum of **620** new build homes by 2021. Homes that are well-planned, built to last, of high-quality, and situated within communities and with nearby services.

In addition, the Council will continue to deliver new homes via acquisitions and leasing and will work in partnership with AHB's to deliver housing solutions.

This will enable the Council to continue to make significant progress for the individuals and families we support.