



## Housing SPC Meeting – Homeless Update May 2023



### Homeless Services and Supports

The most recent homelessness report from March 2023 indicates that **211** individual adults were accessing emergency accommodation in Galway City. This compares to 216 individual adults reported for January 2023. Overall, the west region has experienced an increase in homelessness of 325 adults in March 2023 from 321 in January 2023.

70 families (with 140 dependants) accessed emergency accommodation in Galway City in March 2023. This shows a decrease since January of approximately 3 families (73 with 150 dependants). Total of 88 families homeless in the West Region in March 2023 (10 Galway County, 8 in Mayo and 0 in Roscommon). Securing Private Emergency Accommodation options is becoming a serious challenge in the City and wider region in recent times and this situation is adding to the stresses on service users and providers.

**Temporary Emergency Accommodation:** Fairgreen Hostel and Abbey House provide emergency accommodation to 40 men and Osterley Lodge provides emergency accommodation to 12 women. Services are managed by COPE Galway and Galway Simon Community and remain at full capacity.

**Housing First:** Housing First supports are provided by Galway Simon and Cope Galway to West Region. The Implementation Plan for Housing First 2022 – 2026 was launched in December 2021. This new plan from January 2022 for a three-year period contains a target set at 30 new Housing first tenancies over the 5 year period. The City Council are working with Galway Simon and Cope Galway to source and purchase one bed units under CAS. A number of tenancies have been sourced from Council Stock and AHBs. However, it remains challenging to find good quality one bedroom accommodation in the city. At present there is currently 36 active tenancies in the City. A total of 57 active tenancies in the Region at present.

**Rough Sleepers Outreach Service:** Cope Galway staff with the support of a GP and nurse provide an outreach service a number of times per week to those who are not availing of the homeless accommodation services. Supports and information are offered to this group including medical services. There a number of non-nationals sleeping out in this cohort and work is ongoing to achieve a long-term outcome to their homelessness.

**Cold Weather Response 2022/2023:** The Cold Weather Response (CWR) service for the winter of 2022-23 ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023. The target cohort for the CWR core service are people who sleep rough. A blended approach to the Cold Weather Response was put in place for winter 2022/2023 operated by COPE Galway on behalf of Galway City Council. It became operational on 1<sup>st</sup> November and provided additional emergency beds for single homeless people who otherwise would sleep rough. The blended approach was necessary for last winter in light of it not being possible to identify and secure a suitable unit for the response. This change in approach saw a number of three and four bedroom houses (20 bedrooms in total) in various locations across Galway City being brought use at the beginning of November 2022 as shared accommodation for single person households. The

Department of Housing provides funding each winter to Galway City Council, specifically for the Winter Over a 100 individuals were accommodated through the Cold Weather Response beds in the two hostels during the period between November 2022 and March 2023. There were 2 periods where necessitated in activating Severe Weather Contingency in Westside Community Centre when there were sub-zero temperatures on successive nights in December. The operating hours of the Day Centre were extended to as late as 9pm during this period also to facilitate people out of the cold weather as much as possible. During a further short period of extreme temperatures in January 2023 communal and meeting room spaces in the two COPE Galway hostels were used for night time sleeping purposes as this was sufficient to meet the level of presenting. This approach to CWR provision proved successful and a similar model will be considered for Winter 2023/2024.

**Private Emergency Accommodation:** Emergency Accommodation, including private emergency accommodation currently being provided to:

- 49 families in Private Emergency Accommodation (24 Traveller Families)
- 11 families are housed in transitional accommodation with 7 of the transitional units directly provided by Galway City Council
- 13 families are housed in the Westside modular housing project (capacity for 15)
- 8 families in Corrib Haven Family Hub
- 15 single people are also in Private Emergency Accommodation.

Service Providers continue to actively source properties under HAP/CAS/Leasing in order to progress families into tenancies from Corrib Haven and the Modular Units.

**Homeless Travellers:** The Council, with the support of Homeless Service Providers, assists with the provision of emergency accommodation, support and transition services to Travellers. Traveller families account for 80% of the cohort seeking emergency accommodation. The Homeless HAP Placefinder Officer continues to work with Travellers to secure a HAP supported tenancy. Allocation of units (LA/AHB) continue to be made to the families in homeless services having regard to Scheme of Letting Priorities and Estate Management Strategy. Traveller families continue to be challenged in finding private rented accommodation.

- 4 Traveller families have been accommodated through the HAP Homeless Placefinder Service since January 2021.
- 24 Traveller families are availing of private emergency accommodation
- 7 Traveller families are in transitional units
- 7 Traveller families are accommodated in PMVT Modular Hub
- 2 Traveller families in Corrib Haven family hub

Three Traveller families from Homeless Services/NTQs have accepted an offer of social housing to date in 2023.

**HAP  
Placefinder  
Service**

**Tenancy  
Sustainment  
Service**

**HAP Homeless Place Finder:** Since the commencement of the Homeless Placefinder Service in 2018, 427 tenancies have been established. 17 tenancies were set up in Q1 2023. 8 of these households are families previously accommodated in Emergency Accommodation or who were given a valid Notice of Termination in their privately rented tenancies. The remaining 9 are singles in the same circumstances. The HAP discretion rate has now been increased, from the current 20%, to a maximum of 35% for all local authority areas. As this will apply to both new and existing tenancies, it will secure more tenancies and prevent new entries to homelessness. Additional flexibility has also been provided in HAP by allowing local authorities to apply a couple rate to a single person household, where required, in recognition of the shared one-bed need and the particular challenges faced by single persons in securing accommodation, this applies to new tenancies only.

**Tenancy Sustainment Service:** The Galway City Council Tenancy Sustainment service has been operating for over two years since it was launched in November 2020.

There are currently **100** current Valid Notice of terminations on file with a further **17** pending validation. **65** NTQ's are from landlords who have indicated they are selling their properties and exiting the private rented market. The remainder are for variety of other reasons in the main for their use.

	Dec 2021	April 2022	Sept 2022	Nov 2022	Dec 2022	Feb 2023	Mar 2023
Outcomes	Running totals						
Housed by LA or AHB	43	75	94	103	115	128	134
HAP	39	54	69	72	77	83	84
LTL/RAS	8	9	11	11	11	11	11
Private rented	2	4	5	7	8	9	9
Property acquisition	0	2	2	2	4	4	3
Emergency accommodation	15	29	43	46	48	44	44
Family & Friends	8	12	15	15	15	16	16

<p><b>New Schemes / Proposals</b></p>	<p><b>SQ Road Day Centre proposal:</b> Stage 2 approval received with a recommended budget of <b>€4,215,073</b> on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022. The proposal for Seamus Quirke Road includes for 6 apartments on the first floor (4 x one bed and 2 x two bed) and a further 4 apartments on the second floor (4 x one bed). A total of 10 apartments. All 8 of the one bed studio apartments are designed so that they can be adapted to make a 4 bed emergency accommodation dormitory to serve as a Cold Weather Response option if required. The units are not envisaged as permanent accommodation. They are transitional units for a homeless person on a path to permanent accommodation. Site investigations and design development to facilitate the Stage 2 application completed with Part 8 planning published in Q4, 2022. Chief Executive’s report with recommendation was approved by Council at their meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p><b>Newcastle Rd:</b> Stage 4 application was approved (<b>€2,718,376</b>) issued on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 to Galway Simon Community who are proposing to construct 10 single bedroomed housing units for older people and for those who have compromised mobility or who are wheelchair users. This housing development will be well managed and offer security to older people including older homeless service users. It will have a very significant social value and location is excellent in terms of proximity to public transport, amenities and services.</p> <p><b>CAS (Capital Acquisition Scheme):</b> CAS project proposals are being received from several Approved Housing Bodies for the housing needs of applicants under the specific categories (homeless, older people and people with disability). Single unit acquisition applications are being progressed with Approved Housing Bodies Galway Simon, COPE, Peter McVerry Trust, Carraig Dubh and Newgrove/Rehab HA. 4 CAS acquisitions are currently in progress with delivery projected at end of quarter 2 and 3 submissions recently received approval from Department.</p> <p><b>Other developments:</b> Discussions are ongoing with Galway SIMON and COPE Galway in relation to a number of possible schemes to provide additional supports including refurbishment of a number of properties around the city for homeless services.</p>
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