



Rebuilding Ireland

Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness



Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness

Second Quarterly Progress Report

February 2017

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FOREWORD

Simon Coveney, TD, Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government

I'm pleased to publish this second quarterly implementation report under our Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, *Rebuilding Ireland*. Developments in the rental sector and in tackling homelessness have been very much to the fore since our first implementation report under the Plan in November 2016.

In terms of the rental sector, the Government has clearly recognised the sector is broken and is not working for either tenants or landlords. Within 100 days of taking up my role as Minister for Housing I published *Rebuilding Ireland*, in which I identified the rental sector as one of the key pillars of the housing system. I committed to the publication of a comprehensive strategy for the rental sector before the end of 2016 and delivered on that, publishing the strategy on 13 December 2016.

The strategy and the recommendations it contains are structured around 4 key areas: security, supply, standards and services. What the strategy aims to do is set out a vision for the role we want the sector to play over the short, medium and long term through a range of ambitious measures we will pursue in partnership with stakeholders and agencies in the housing arena. The new system of rent pressure zones has attracted significant attention. As a measure to specifically tackle rising rents, this is a rent predictability initiative intended to moderate the rise in rents in the parts of the country where rents are highest and rising fastest - where households have greatest difficulties in finding accommodation they can afford. In these areas, called Rent Pressure Zones, rents will only be able to rise by a maximum of 4% annually.

Implementation of the strategy got underway immediately with Dublin and Cork City being designated as Rent Pressure Zones before Christmas. Since then, rents in those areas are now tied to the 4% rule. I recently made further designations in local electoral areas in Galway City, Wicklow, Kildare, Meath and Cork County. As of the end of January, approximately 55% of all tenancies are covered by the rent predictability measure, providing much needed certainty for tenants and landlords over the coming years. The challenge now is to address the supply deficit that clearly exists in these areas through the comprehensive suite of supply side measures set out in *Rebuilding Ireland*.



We also continued to ramp up efforts to tackle homelessness in the last quarter of 2016. This remains the top priority for me and will be one of the core measures of the success of *Rebuilding Ireland* as a national plan of action.

Three new and one upgraded homelessness facilities at a total cost of €6.1 million were opened in Dublin in December. These provided over 200 additional emergency beds, bringing the overall total of emergency beds available in Dublin to more than 1,800. We have seen some positive trends in homelessness statistics of late with the number of homeless families appearing to stabilise and the numbers of children in emergency accommodation decreasing. The early phase of the Housing Agency programme for the acquisition of vacant properties using €70m in Exchequer funding, which will deliver close to 200 additional homes in the coming months, and the continuing creation of homeless HAP tenancies, which proved particularly successful in 2016, are hugely important interventions that will continue to be central features in tackling homelessness in 2017.

The positive trends that these actions have facilitated are welcome and I expect that rent moderation in Rent Pressure Zones will help continue this progress by reducing the number of households and individuals becoming homeless in the first place. However, the numbers in emergency accommodation underline the scale of the challenge and the need for vigilance in pursuing the objectives set out in *Rebuilding Ireland*.

We must harness the 40% increase in homeless funding from €70 million in 2016 to €98 million in 2017 to ensure that the increased demand for emergency homeless services is effectively addressed and delivers solutions for the maximum number of homeless households.

Looking beyond these 2 priority areas, there are further positive signs. For example:

- In excess of 18,000 households/individuals had their social housing needs met in 2016, ahead of the target of just over 17,000.
- As part of this overall delivery, we built, purchased or refurbished some 5,300 homes in 2016 - around 1,000 over the target for the year.
- 12,000 HAP tenancies were created last year.
- 1,100 families were accommodated under RAS.
- Planning permission was granted for over 16,000 new homes in the year to end September 2016 (an increase of 45% on the preceding 12 months).
- 14,932 new homes completed during 2016, an increase of 18% on 2015 (12,666).

The Action Plan is only 6 months old but already important signs of progress are emerging. I expect these trends to continue and accelerate over the course of 2017 - the first full year of implementation of the Plan - but that can only happen if we continue to collectively put our shoulders to the wheel in tackling the greatest challenge our country faces.

Simon Coveney, TD
Minister for Housing, Planning,
Community and Local Government



PROGRESS OVERVIEW

Introduction

This is the Second Quarterly Progress Report under the Government's *Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness*, published on 19 July 2016, covering developments and implementation progress across a range of actions across the 5 Pillars in the last Quarter of 2016, while also looking forward to key priorities and outputs scheduled for delivery between now and the end of March 2017.

The initial Plan comprised 84 actions, for implementation by DHPCLG, local authorities, other Departments and State Agencies and other stakeholders, across five key pillar areas: Addressing Homelessness, Accelerating Social Housing, Building More Homes, Improving the Rental Sector and Utilising Existing Housing.

The recent publication of the Government's Strategy for the Rental Sector on 13 December 2016 adds a further 29 actions to the original 84 actions and all 113 actions will now be reported on under these quarterly progress reports.

Overview of Progress to Date

Pillar Area & Key Objective	Key Responses now in place
Pillar 1: Address Homelessness Provide early solutions to address the unacceptable level of families in emergency accommodation; deliver inter-agency supports for people who are currently homeless, with a particular emphasis on minimising the incidence of rough-sleeping; and enhance State supports to keep people in their own homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Approximately 2,700 sustainable exits from homelessness during 2016 (up from 2,322 in 2015).■ Homeless funding of €98m in place in 2017 to meet increased demand for homeless services and solutions.■ 206 additional beds in supported temporary accommodation now available in Dublin across 4 facilities.■ 810 tenancies were created for homeless household tenancies under the Dublin Region Homeless HAP pilot.■ Rapid delivery homes<ul style="list-style-type: none">- At end 2016, a total of 350 rapid build homes were advancing through various stages of delivery, including construction, with 22 rapid build homes having been delivered and occupied in 2016.- Office of Government Procurement Framework Agreement in place to facilitate accelerated delivery during 2017 and 2018.

Pillar Area & Key Objective	Key Responses now in place
(Pillar 1 continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Abhaile – the national Mortgage Arrears Resolution Service – and the associated scheme of Aid and Advice for borrowers in mortgage arrears in place. ■ Enhanced targeted supports available in response to specific needs, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - family and child welfare supports for those living in emergency accommodation; - people with mental health and addiction issues; - prisoners prior to release; - Tenancy Protection Service now available nationwide.
Pillar 2: Accelerate Social Housing Increase the level and speed of delivery of social housing and other State-supported housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 18,300 households had their social housing needs met in 2016 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5,280 homes built, refurbished, or acquired; - 12,000 HAP tenancies; - 1,100 families accommodated under RAS. ■ Capital and current funding of €1.2 billion in place to meet social housing needs of up to 21,000 households in 2017. ■ Housing Delivery Office, Housing Procurement Unit and AHB Support Units established to advise and support LAs, AHBs and stakeholders in increasing and accelerating social housing provision. ■ Streamlined approval process in place to accelerate the delivery of social housing projects. ■ Choice-based letting rolled out nationally to streamline letting of social housing units.
Pillar 3: Build More Houses Increase the output of private housing to meet demand at affordable prices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 14,932 new homes completed during 2016, an increase of 18% on national housing output for 2015 (12,666). ■ 23 Major Urban Delivery Sites identified with the capacity to deliver 30,000 new homes in the medium term in the Greater Dublin Area, Cork, Limerick and Galway, to be prioritised for progressing by the Housing Delivery Office and Local Authorities. ■ Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 enacted on 23 December, 2016. ■ Large-scale housing development proposals (100+ homes) to be submitted directly to An Bord Pleanála. ■ Help to Buy Scheme for first-time buyers who take up a mortgage to purchase or self-build a new home and who can avail of a refund of income tax and DIRT paid over the previous four tax years up to a maximum amount of €20,000.

Pillar Area & Key Objective	Key Responses now in place
<p>Pillar 4: Improve the Rental sector</p> <p>Address the obstacles to greater private rented sector delivery, to improve the supply of units at affordable rents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strategy for the Rental Sector published in December 2016 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rent Pressure Zones designated capping rent increases at 4% per annum for up to 3 years, covering 55% of tenancies; - Protections to ensure that the sale of ten or more units in a single development is conditional on tenants remaining in situ; - Working group on taxation of rental providers established. ■ Revised Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2017 in place to enhance the quality of rental accommodation. ■ Residential Tenancies Board given stronger role and powers in service of tenants and landlords. ■ Funding in place for a dedicated Student Housing Officer to work with USI, LAs and stakeholders in identifying additional rental capacity for students. ■ Budget 2017 measures to support the rental sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mortgage Interest Relief restored from 75% to 80% (to be restored to 100% over a five year period); - Living City Initiative extended to landlords; - Rent a Room ceiling increased from €12,000 to €14,000.
<p>Pillar 5: Utilise Existing Housing</p> <p>Ensure that existing housing stock is used to the maximum degree possible - focusing on measures to use vacant stock to renew urban and rural areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Repair and Leasing Scheme launched with funding of €140m over 5 years to allow LAs and AHBs to bring up to 3,500 vacant private houses into social housing use by 2021. ■ Buy and Renew Scheme (€25m for 2017) to support LAs and AHBs to purchase and remediate private housing units for social housing use. ■ Better management of social housing through rapid re-letting of vacant units (Voids) and introduction of Choice-Based Letting. ■ €9m allocated in 2016 under the National Taking-in-Charge Initiative to assist in the process of taking 356 housing developments in charge.

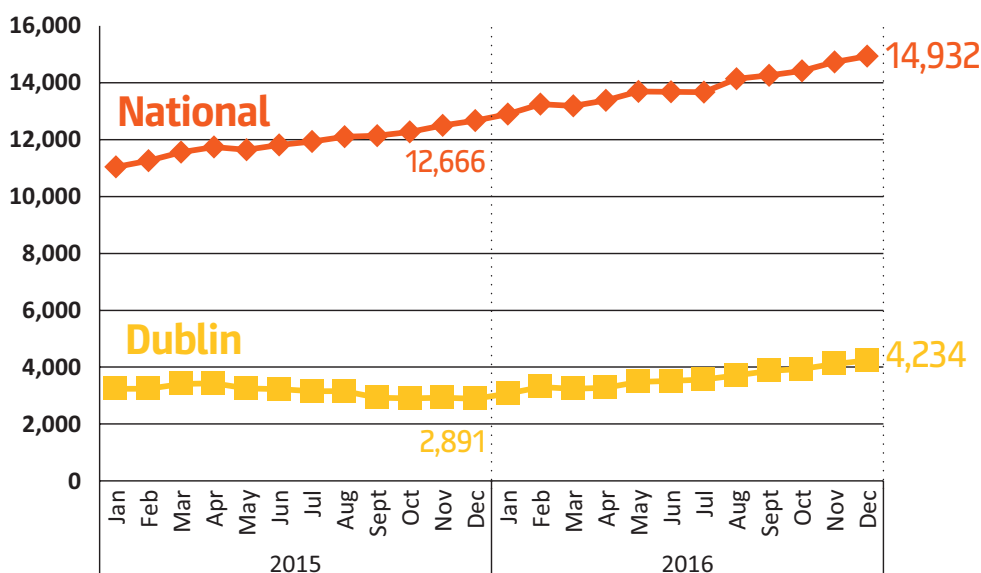
HOUSING MARKET – CURRENT OUTLOOK

As committed to under *Rebuilding Ireland*, DHPCLG has developed a Monthly Housing Activity Report which charts current activity levels across a number of key indicators, including planning permissions, housing commencements and housing completions.

The first edition of this report is now available on www.rebuildingireland.ie. All of the key indicators confirm that the upward trend in housing activity evident in recent times is gaining momentum and, having regard to wider economic growth projections and the increasing level of planning permissions in particular, should continue to gather pace and result in higher levels of output in 2017 and beyond.

The key overarching objective under *Rebuilding Ireland* is to ensure that the overall supply of new housing increases to some 25,000 homes annually by 2020. In that regard, the graph at Figure 1 below shows the rolling annual total for housing completions by month during 2015 and 2016. Connections to the ESB grid have long been used as a proxy for housing completions and there were 14,932 homes given such connections during 2016, compared to 12,666 in 2015. Of the 14,932 homes completed in 2016, 6,289 are in the Greater Dublin Area and 8,643 across the rest of the country. While the graph shows an encouraging trend it also underlines the continuing challenge that faces the State, housing providers, funding institutions and all other relevant stakeholders in terms of adding to the momentum now in evidence so that housing delivery reaches the target level of 25,000 homes per annum in the shortest possible timeframe. Increasing the rate of housing delivery across the social, private and rental tenures in order to ensure that current and emerging needs are met, and in particular in our cities and large towns, where the demand for new homes is greatest, remains the key to the overall success of the programme.

Figure 1: Housing Completions by month 2015 & 2016



Key Developments

Throughout the Fourth Quarter of 2016, DHPCLG and other Departments and Agencies have continued to maintain and build upon the strong early implementation momentum and have secured the following key achievements which will have a significant ongoing impact on our capacity to meet current and emerging housing needs:

- A total of 18,380 social housing supports were provided to people on the housing waiting list in 2016, with expenditure of €935 million on housing during the year. This exceeded the target of 17,240 for 2016, giving a very positive start to the challenge of meeting the ambitious targets in Rebuilding Ireland. By the end of the year, some 1,500 new social units had been completed or were on site under construction, again marking clearly the progress that is being made in the pipeline of new social housing construction and delivery.
- The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Homeless pilot in Dublin has seen the creation of 810 stable and supported housing tenancies for long-term homeless individuals by Q4 of 2016 (significantly exceeding the target of 550 tenancies). HAP for Homelessness represents a new way forward in providing a timely and flexible way of breaking the cycle of homelessness for families and individuals and reducing long-term reliance on emergency accommodation.
- The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) was introduced to nine further local authorities with effect from 1 December 2016: Cavan, Kerry, Laois, Leitrim, Longford, Roscommon, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow and 12,075 HAP tenancies were set-up in 2016, meeting the scheme's target for the year. At the end of 2016, 16,493 households were being supported by HAP.
- Rapid Delivery Social Housing is another key tool in ending the reliance on emergency accommodation for homeless families. At the end of 2016, a total of 350 rapid build homes were advancing through various stages of delivery, including construction, with 22 rapid build homes being delivered and occupied in 2016. The Office of Government Procurement's Rapid Delivery Procurement Framework Agreement is now in place. This paves the way for the provision of 1,500 homes during 2017 and 2018 suitable for families presenting as homeless, the early phase of which will support the ending of the reliance on commercial hotels for such families by mid-2017.
- A review of the Mortgage to Rent scheme was completed and new improved and streamlined arrangements will facilitate more households in long-term mortgage arrears to remain in their homes.
- Three new and one upgraded Emergency Accommodation facilities were delivered in December 2016, which provide an additional 206 bed spaces for those who need them.

- In terms of increasing housing supply, 23 Major Urban Housing Development Sites (MUHDS) with the capacity to deliver 30,000 new homes in the medium term in the Greater Dublin Area, Cork, Limerick and Galway have been identified by DHPCLG, in close collaboration with local authorities and the Department's new Housing Delivery Office. Progress on these development sites is being proactively monitored by the Housing Delivery Office, with a view to ensuring these sites become exemplars for the coordination and accelerated delivery of plan-led housing development and active land management.
- There was keen interest in the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Funding (LIHAF) with applications from 21 local authorities, covering 74 separate infrastructure projects. While assessment and approval decisions have taken a little longer than anticipated, given the scale and complexity of some of the proposals which require financial appraisals (e.g. multi-criteria analysis and cost benefit analysis), there will be an announcement of grants under LIHAF by March 2017. Significant enabling infrastructure works on key strategic sites around our major urban areas will commence in earnest as the year progresses, with procurement and other preparatory works being managed effectively to avoid any delay on project timescales.
- The *Strategy for the Rental Sector*, published on 13 December 2016, is a major milestone in providing a vision and coordinated plan for the development of a stable, strong and viable rental sector, offering clarity, security, true choice for households, investment opportunities for providers and reflecting the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.
- The Help to Buy Incentive Scheme, announced by the Minister for Finance in Budget 2017, will encourage an increasing supply of new homes between now and the end of December 2019. The scheme allows first-time buyers, who take out a mortgage to purchase or self-build their own home, a refund of income tax and DIRT paid over the previous four tax years, up to a maximum amount of €20,000, thereby assisting with the deposit. This will create realisable demand and will encourage developers to increase new housing supply.
- The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016, which was enacted on 23 December 2016, provides for large-scale housing development proposals to be submitted directly to An Bord Pleanála, while also enabling other important streamlining of the planning processes and new rent predictability measures under the Rental Strategy, such as the establishment of Rent Pressure Zones, and measures to protect tenants when the owner wishes to sell multiple units in a single development and extending the duration of tenancies.
- All six actions recorded as incomplete during the previous Quarterly Progress Report have since been fully implemented and are now complete.

GOVERNANCE, CONSULTATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Governance

The Governance Arrangements in place to drive and oversee the implementation of the plan, including the Cabinet Committee, chaired by An Taoiseach, and the Rebuilding Ireland Implementation Group of senior Departmental officials, chaired by the Secretary General, have been further strengthened in Quarter 4 of 2016.

A key addition has been the development of project working group structures overseen by a Rebuilding Ireland Oversight Group, chaired by Minister Coveney, which convened in November 2016, and a Project Board, convened in December 2016. The Oversight Group and Project Board formations will continue to meet quarterly to ensure that all key stakeholders are actively involved in drawing together the project work being undertaken across the five pillars.

Consultation, communications and engagement

The main aim of the Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy is to ensure that the momentum for implementation is maintained throughout the life of the Action Plan.

The successful implementation of Rebuilding Ireland relies on the engagement and active participation of a wide range of stakeholders and it is vital that stakeholders and the wider public are fully aware of the commitments, understand the range of initiatives and actions being rolled out and can access relevant and up-to-date information on progress. Key elements of the Consultation, Communications and Engagement Strategy include the following:

■ Rebuilding Ireland Website and Social Media

The dedicated website www.rebuildingireland.ie continues to provide regular updates on the implementation of *Rebuilding Ireland* and to keep the public informed of key developments in relation to the five pillars. In addition to the standard provision of text and graphic information to view and download, the website facilitates engagement with the general public through the use of video presentations. Social media platforms are in use to disseminate implementation and progress updates quickly to key target audiences and to extend the reach of the overall programme.

■ Stakeholder Consultation

A stakeholder consultation event to inform the development of the *Strategy for the Rental Sector* took place on 20 October 2016 attracting over 100 attendees. In addition, a public consultation process, with an open call for submissions, attracted 498 responses from a wide range of stakeholders resulting in a valuable, comprehensive and informative overall contribution to the formulation of policy for the rental sector.

A series of similar events will take place in the coming months in the context of the preparation of *Ireland 2040 - A National Planning Framework*.

More broadly-based Stakeholder Forums on Housing and Homelessness are planned for 2017, and will provide a valuable means of feedback on the practical experience of implementation and of engagement in relation to future policy formulation.

■ Pillars Specific launches

Focussed launches on Build More Homes (Pillar 3) and Improve the Rental Sector (Pillar 4) have taken place on 10 November 2016 and 13 December 2016, respectively.

The Build More Homes Pillar 3 launch aimed to set out how Government and Industry will work collaboratively to kick-start badly needed additional supply, through a concerted series of actions involving prioritising progress, assisted by the Housing Delivery Office, on 23 identified Major Urban Housing Development Sites, targeting the provision of strategic enabling infrastructure, and streamlining and reforming the planning process. The direct involvement of housing providers at this launch made for a very compelling event that has helped to galvanise and strengthen the new found momentum that is now beginning to emerge in the house-building sector. Their informative presentations are available under Pillar 3 on www.rebuildingireland.ie.

The launch of Pillar 4 - A Strategy for the Rental Sector on 13 December 2016 provided an opportunity to set out a vision for the development of a stable, strong and viable rental sector offering true choice for households, investment opportunities for providers and reflecting the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords. The Strategy is underpinned by an action plan centred around the four critical areas of security, supply, standards and services.

The fifth and final pillar launch (Utilise Existing Housing) will take place during Q1 of 2017.

■ Local/Regional Stakeholder Events

Recognising that the delivery of new homes and improved supports and services ultimately relies on local stakeholders, Minister Coveney and the Minister of State for Housing and Urban Renewal, Damien English, TD, have embarked on a further series of local authority hosted regional events. Recent visits have included Leitrim/Roscommon and Kerry. These events, which will continue to be organised, stimulate and encourage active involvement by key stakeholders – LAs, AHBs, house builders, interest and advocacy groups – at local and regional level with a view to ensuring effective collaborative working to secure the best housing outcomes, grasping the opportunities now available under the Rebuilding Ireland programme. Ministers also continue to meet with local authority members and Chief Executives with recent meetings having included the Cavan, Kerry, Laois, Louth, Longford, Mayo, Meath and Monaghan local authority areas.

DELIVERY ON ACTIONS DUE DURING QUARTER 4 2016

This section reports on progress on a total of 56 actions across the five Pillars which includes 46 actions for which an outcome or substantial progress was required in Quarter 4 of 2016, a further four new actions included in the recently published Strategy for the Rental Sector and six actions reported as incomplete during Quarter 3 of 2016.

The summary status of each action is given as:

- Complete** where delivery is on-time and complete
- On Schedule** where delivery during Quarter 4 of 2016 is complete and the ongoing implementation remains on schedule
- Incomplete** where delivery is behind schedule but will be completed in the near future.



A brief summary of the progress achieved under each action is also given.

All six actions reported as incomplete in the First Quarterly Progress Report have been completed during Quarter 4 of 2016.

Overall, of the 50 actions targeted for delivery during the fourth quarter of 2016, 41 have been completed or progressed significantly, in line with commitments and timelines outlined in *Rebuilding Ireland*.

While 9 actions due for delivery in Quarter 4 remain incomplete or are behind schedule, in each case significant progress has been made and it is now anticipated that 5 of these actions will be completed or be on schedule in the First Quarter of 2017 and all will be completed during 2017.





PILLAR ONE

Address Homelessness

Current Context

Early solutions to homelessness, through increasing the supply of homes and preventing future homelessness by supporting persons to stay in their existing homes, are a key and urgent priority under Rebuilding Ireland. This is demonstrated by the frontloading of actions under Pillar 1, 14 of which were set for delivery in Quarter 4 of 2016.

The numbers of people in State funded emergency accommodation overseen by housing authorities in December are as follows:

- 4,643 adult individuals;
- 1,205 families are included in this total;
- 2,505 dependents are associated with these families;
- 7,148 people in total (adults and dependents).

While there have been ongoing increases in overall levels of homelessness, it is important to recognise the significant work being done by housing authorities and their delivery partners in the approved housing body sector in providing solutions.

In this regard, during the course of 2016 housing authorities assisted in delivering approximately 2,700 sustainable exits from homelessness into independent tenancies (e.g. into social housing, supported rental accommodation or AHB tenancy). This is a record level of exits from homelessness in a single year. By way of comparison, 2,322 sustainable exits were achieved in 2015, while the 2014 figure was 2,161. This work has contributed to the stabilisation of the numbers of homeless families.

Nevertheless, the increase in the overall numbers experiencing homelessness since the launch of *Rebuilding Ireland* is an on-going reminder of the imperative for action. It is critical that this record level of exits is again surpassed in 2017 and that comprehensive, well-resourced actions are in place to achieve this.

Rebuilding Ireland has set a very clear target on homelessness which is that, by mid-2017, commercial hotels will only be used for emergency accommodation in very limited or exceptional circumstances. Accommodating family units in hotel arrangements is inappropriate for anything other than a short period of time. The use of hotels for emergency accommodation is a much more significant issue in the Dublin Region than it is in the rest of the country – almost 90% of homeless families are in the Dublin Region. It is intended to move the existing group of families out of these hotel arrangements as quickly as possible, and to limit the extent to which such accommodation has to be used for new presentations.

The increases in Rent Supplement and Housing Assistance Payment levels from 1 July 2016 is playing an important role in the achievement of this overall objective, in terms of supporting families to remain in rented accommodation. However, where families do find themselves in homelessness situations, their needs will be met through the enhanced Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme, the Dublin Region homeless pilot of HAP, through general social housing allocations, as well as by tapping into wider housing supply under the various initiatives in Rebuilding Ireland

Homeless - Rough Sleeping

The official Dublin Region rough sleeper count is conducted twice yearly (April and November) capturing the number of persons sleeping rough on a given night. The Dublin Regional Homeless Executive (DRHE) has confirmed that a minimum of 142 persons slept rough across the Dublin Region on the night of 22 November 2016, the date of the last official count.

Since the rough sleeper count, Dublin City Council has delivered 206 additional beds in four supported temporary accommodation facilities for homeless individuals, with some €6.1m in capital funding provided by DHPCLG. These beds are in the following locations:

- Ellis Quay (70 beds, managed by Peter McVerry Trust);
- Little Britain Street (65 beds, managed by De Paul Trust);
- Carman Hall, Francis Street (51 beds, jointly managed by Dublin Simon and Salvation Army);
and
- Wolfe Tone Quay (20 beds, managed by Civil Defence).

These additional beds ensure that there is now sufficient bed-space for those recorded as sleeping rough, with some additional capacity to deal with short-term spikes in demand. Furthermore Dublin City Council has committed to bring forward two further facilities, by end March, with capacity for approximately 100 beds, to meet potential future increased demand; these facilities will cater for both individuals and couples.

Delivery Status of Q4 2016 Actions

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.1 (Part)	We will accelerate and expand the Rapid-Build Housing Programme to provide, in the first instance and as a priority, more suitable accommodation for families that are currently residing in commercial hotels, while more permanent tenancies are secured. Units delivered over and above the number needed for families in hotels will be used as standard social housing.	To provide 1,500 new units under this programme to move the existing group of families out of emergency accommodation in hotels as quickly as possible, and to limit the extent to which such accommodation has to be used for new presentations.	Q4 2016 – 200 units DRHE DHPCLG

Status: Incomplete

At the end of 2016, a total of 350 rapid build homes were advancing through various stages of delivery, including construction, with 22 rapid build homes being delivered and occupied in 2016. A further 650 rapid build homes will be advanced in 2017, with another 500 units to be delivered in 2018.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.2	We will transition homeless households and individuals from emergency accommodation through the Dublin Region HAP Homeless Pilot.	To provide permanent, stable and supported housing to our long-term homeless individuals, and thus reduce the reliance on emergency accommodation over time.	Q4 2016 – 550 tenancies created DRHE

Status: On schedule

810 additional Homeless households were supported by the DRHE operated scheme in 2016, exceeding the target of 550 tenancies to be created by Q4 2016, by 260 households.

The target for 2017 is 1,200 tenancies. DRHE has confirmed that it is on track to achieve 300 tenancies by the end of Q1 2017.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.3	We will put in place 'one-stop-shop' assessment centres with multi-agency participation, making the best use of modern technology, for families presenting as homeless. This will include local authorities, Tenancy Protection Services, Tusla, Family Mediation Services, DSP and expert NGOs.	To assess and support families with children presenting as homeless to ensure every effort is made to keep them in their current homes or to ensure appropriate homeless and other support services are provided.	Q4 2016 DRHE, LAs, TUSLA, Family Mediation Services, DSP, NGOs

Status: Complete

In order to remove the need for homeless families in the Dublin region to present to the Central Placement Service for their needs to be assessed, the four Dublin local authorities are providing the appropriate facilities and supports within their main and area offices. This includes private meeting rooms, with linkages to, and supports from, other State agencies and service providers so that every effort is made to keep prevent homelessness and to ensure that all necessary supports and services are provided to them.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.4	We will continue to operate the Dublin Region protocol in relation to appropriate responses to child protection and welfare concerns among families in emergency accommodation and review its operation in December 2016, refining it as appropriate. The protocol arrangements will be extended nationally in 2017.	To support homeless families with child dependents and ensure that a robust referral procedure is in place.	Q4 2016 DRHE Tusla

Status: On schedule

The joint protocol between Tusla and the DRHE has been fully operational since approval in June 2016. The protocol was reviewed and revised in December 2016 having regard to the experience of both agencies and feedback from homeless services. Arrangements for extending the protocol to other regions, including Galway, Cork and Limerick in particular, are already under consideration and this work will proceed on a phased basis across the country throughout 2017. The Tusla Homelessness Liaison Officer has already visited some of the leads in the homeless services across the country and will tailor the protocol to take account of local variations in terms of challenges and organisational arrangements.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.5	<p>We will further strengthen supports and initiatives for families in emergency accommodation to mitigate the challenges that such parents and children face, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enhanced liaison on family support, child welfare and child protection, including Family Resource Centres; ■ Access to early-years services; ■ School Completion Programmes; ■ Enhanced locally available practical supports for daily family life; ■ Access to free public transport for family travel and for school journeys; and ■ Practical supports and advice for good nutrition for those without access to cooking facilities. 	To support homeless families with child dependents.	<p>2016-2017</p> <p>Tusla, DYCA HSE, DRHE, DHPCLG</p>

Status: On schedule

Detailed progress under this action was reported in the First Quarterly Progress Report published on 1 November 2016. Further progress achieved during Q4 of 2016 includes the following:

- **Enhanced family supports and local services:** Mapping of local supports and resources available to families from each homeless service is progressing with a view to improving awareness and access to supports. Family Homeless Action Teams are being provided with this information resource as it develops, in order to inform service delivery, under the coordination of DRHE and Tusla.
- **Access to early years services:** DCYA and DRHE have been liaising to identify the resources to develop a workable initiative aimed at all homeless families accessing emergency accommodation. Simultaneously, a project involving Focus Ireland was launched in December, 2016 by the Minister for Children which aims to provide up to 25 hours of childcare over a five day week for children under 5 years old in a number of homeless service centres who are not currently accessing childcare.
- **School Completion Programmes:** Tusla has developed support materials for School Completion Programme staff working with homeless families.

Status continued

- **Practical supports & nutritional needs:** DCYA and the Department of Health are providing funding to Focus Ireland to commission a study on food access and nutritional health among families residing in hotel accommodation in the Dublin Region. The study is expected to be completed shortly. DRHE is liaising with a range of service providers, with a view to improving access to nutritional meals, community kitchens and meals on wheels, etc. DRHE met with service providers in December and is developing a programme of work for implementation in Q1 2017.
 - **Access to free public transport for family travel and school journeys:** DRHE is overseeing arrangements for those homeless families in the Dublin region residing in hotel accommodation to allow access to free public transport, where required, for both family travel and for school journeys. Five separate 24-hour family Leap cards were made available to all homeless families in hotel accommodation in the Dublin region in 2016. Over 500 families availed of this support. The DRHE is finalising arrangements with the National Transport Authority for Leap cards specifically tailored for school journeys for those families in hotel accommodation that require them, and these will be made available in February.
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Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.6	We will put in place a safety guidance/voluntary code for child safety in emergency accommodation.	To address child safety & protection in emergency accommodation.	Q4 2016 DCYA, Tusla, DRHE, NGOs

Status: Complete

DRHE & Tusla have developed a specific course on child protection, tailored to the needs of private emergency accommodation operators and their staff, in the Dublin region. This course clarifies roles and responsibilities in line with 'Children First'. It has been run twice in December 2016 and will be provided again in Q1 2017. An e-learning module has also been developed and will be available in Q1 2017.

Child protection guidance forms part of the 'Information & Guidelines for Service Users and Service Providers' booklet, clarifying roles and responsibilities. This booklet has been printed and disseminated to operators of private emergency accommodation.

The 'National Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services' which includes standards focussing on child protection roles and responsibilities, has been piloted in four of the nine homeless regions and will be fully implemented early in 2017.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.7	We will work to ensure that young people leaving State care and at risk of homelessness are identified and catered for through appropriate housing and other supports for their needs.	To minimise homelessness among young people leaving State care.	2016 – 2017 DHPCLG, DCYA, Tusla, HSE

Status: On schedule

Funding is in place under the Capital Assistance Scheme enabling AHBs to acquire residential units to accommodate young people exiting State care. Tusla and the DCYA are collaborating on the development of principles and criteria relating to funding proposals. Where accommodation is provided under CAS, Tusla will provide additional independent living supports, in particular for the most vulnerable Care Leavers, in accordance with the individual's pre-agreed aftercare plan.

Tusla has also redistributed its protocol on young people leaving State care to Housing Authorities. The aim of this protocol is to ensure that the necessary measures are in place to prevent homelessness for young people leaving State care. This will be applied and considered within aftercare steering groups.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.8	We will provide additional emergency refuge accommodation spaces for victims of domestic violence and we will provide policy and procedural guidance to housing authorities with regard to the role they can play to assist victims of domestic violence in securing new independent tenancies.	To reduce the number of victims becoming homeless and the length of time spent in emergency accommodation arrangements.	2016 – 2017 Tusla, DCYA, Cosc, DHPCLG

Status: On schedule

Additional emergency accommodation units for victims of domestic violence, funded by Tusla, were brought into operation in Sligo, Dún Laoghaire and Kildare during 2016. Service providers in Clare and Galway are currently engaged in capital projects. Upon completion of these projects Tusla will liaise with providers regarding the commissioning of services. Tusla is currently reviewing its commissioning role in relation to all services.

DHPCLG issued policy and procedural guidance to local authorities in relation to assisting victims of domestic violence with emergency and long-term accommodation requirements. The guidance sets out a summary of best practice for local authorities in relation to their housing remit to ensure an effective and consistent housing response for victims of domestic violence.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.10	We will enhance inter-agency arrangements to ensure that accommodation, welfare and health supports for prisoners are in place prior to their release.	To reduce the likelihood of released prisoners presenting as homeless.	Q3 2016 Irish Prison Service, Probation service, LGMA, DHPCLG, DSP, HSE

Status: Complete

This action was originally scheduled for delivery in Q3 2016 but was incomplete at that time. The action has since been completed in Q4 2016.

An inter-agency protocol developed by the Irish Prison Service, in consultation with the HSE, DSP and the CCMA, is now in place.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.13	We will strengthen the existing housing-led approach in Dublin and extend it to other urban areas, focusing on persistent rough sleepers and long-term homeless households.	To secure accommodation and supports based on the needs of the individual.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG, LAs, HSE

Status: Complete

To date, the Focus Ireland – Peter McVerry Trust consortium, which secured the contract for delivering the Dublin Region Housing First Programme, has achieved 62 tenancies. The consortium will be dedicating additional staff in 2017 to deliver on the revised target of delivering 300 tenancies by the end of 2017.

The HSE provided additional funding in Q4 2016 to commission additional Intensive Case Managers (ICM) as part of Dublin's Housing First service and staff team. These ICMs will support clients to maintain their tenancy and to achieve an optimum quality of life through developing plans, enhancing life skills, addressing health and mental health needs, engaging in meaningful activities and building recovery capital.

Budget 2017 confirmed additional funding for homeless services through the DHPCLG Vote, a portion of which will be utilised to support housing-led approaches nationally.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.14	We will examine and analyse the reasons why offers of accommodation are not taken up by households in emergency accommodation in hotels.	To limit the period of time spent by households in inappropriate accommodation arrangements.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG, LAs

Status: Complete

The Dublin housing authorities have completed their examination and analysis, and have confirmed that there is a relatively low number of refusals of offers of accommodation by households in emergency accommodation. Among the reasons given for refusals are issues of concern about housing lists, preferred location and security of future tenure. Such concerns are addressed on a case-by-case basis between the households and the housing authorities.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.15	We will improve mental health and primary care services for homeless persons using the existing allocation of €2m, and we will increase the allocation to €6m in Budget 2017.	To provide the most appropriate primary care and mental health services to those in homeless services and improve their ability to sustain a normal tenancy.	Q4 2016 DoH, HSE

Status: Incomplete

The €2m in funding available in 2016 allowed for the provision of additional care and case management assessment and intensive addiction and mental health programmes across the Dublin Region for homeless people. These additional programmes will continue into 2017. In addition the HSE has identified a further €1.5m in 2017 to be used to meet the health needs of homeless persons. The €1.5m will have a full year cost of €4m which will bring the total additional funding being provided to €6m in 2018.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.17 (Part)	The Threshold Tenancy Protection Service will be extended nationwide.	To maximise awareness of the services and supports available.	Q4 2016 DSP, LAs, Threshold

Status: Complete

Arrangements, including State funding, have been agreed between DHPCLG and Threshold to extend Threshold's freephone Tenancy Protection Service nationwide from 2017 and this is now in place.

DSP, in conjunction with Threshold, operates the Tenancy Protection Service in the areas where supply issues are most acute covering Dublin, Cork, Meath, Kildare and Wicklow and Galway City. Over 2,500 rent supplement customers have received increased rental payments since 2014. In addition, 8,000 rent supplement households have been supported with increased rental payments made directly by DSP.

Increased maximum rent limits were introduced under the Rent Supplement and Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) schemes with effect from 1st July 2016. The number of increased rental payments for rent supplement customers has slowed considerably in the period following the introduction of the increased rent limits.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.20	We will request the Central Bank to conduct an assessment of existing sustainable restructuring solutions across all lenders and non-bank entities operating in Ireland.	To ensure that there are sustainable restructuring solutions available to distressed borrowers.	Q4 2016 DoF, Central Bank

Status: Complete

The Central Bank has completed its assessment which was published on the website of the Department of Finance on 16 December 2016. The assessment finds a comprehensive range of available restructuring solutions being offered and delivered by both bank and non-bank entities and notes considerable progress in addressing mortgage arrears since the 2013 peak.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
1.21	We will examine how the Mortgage to Rent scheme can be improved to facilitate more households, and explore alternative models for the purchase of units, including long-term leasing arrangements.	To support households in long-term mortgage arrears to remain in their homes.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG, DoF

Status: Complete

Following a consultation process held with key stakeholders, DHPCLG has undertaken a review of the MTR scheme. The Review puts forward a number of key actions. The Department will drive the implementation of these actions which are the responsibility of a range of bodies across Government, AHBs, local authorities and also across a range of lending institutions including both bank and non-bank entities.

In addition to the actions proposed in the Review, DHPCLG will undertake a financial appraisal of the structure of the MTR scheme in advance of the budgetary process for 2018. The MTR review will be published on the Rebuilding Ireland website.



PILLAR TWO

Accelerate Social Housing

Current Context

Pillar 2 is focussed in particular on the delivery of an additional 47,000 social housing homes through build, refurbishment and acquisition over the lifetime of Rebuilding Ireland – for which a budget of €5.35 billion for the period to 2021 is in place – and more generally on accelerating the delivery of social housing and other State-supported housing to the broad base of people who require housing supports.

The overall current and capital funding for housing in 2017 will be €1.3 billion, a 39% increase on the €933m provided for 2016. These homes are being delivered by local authorities and AHBs through a number of different mechanisms - construction, repair and renewal of existing housing (both public and private), regeneration of certain areas, acquisitions, as well as various leasing arrangements.

During 2016, over 18,300 households have had their social housing needs met under the range of social housing schemes, including the Housing Assistance Payment and Rental Accommodation Scheme, ahead of the target of just over 17,000 households set for the year. In 2017, it is planned to deliver social housing supports to at least 21,000 households.

The following is the breakdown of the delivery in 2016:

Preliminary Outputs for 2016

Delivery Method	Units
Build	640
Voids	2,300
Acquisition	1,552
Leasing	788
RAS	1,100
HAP	12,000
TOTAL	18,380

In terms of social housing construction, in particular, the pipeline is very positive. There is a significant construction programme of social housing underway, with approximately 1,500 new homes either completed or under construction at the end of 2016.

In 2017 this construction programme will further ramp up with over 2,000 new local authority homes to be under construction this year, with further delivery happening under the Rapid Build Programme and via AHBs and turnkey construction projects. A schedule of projects in the construction pipeline is being published in conjunction with this Progress Report.

Delivery Status of Q4 2016 Actions

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.1	We will substantially increase the delivery of social housing to 47,000 homes by 2021, with funding of €5.35 billion, particularly focusing on new direct-build projects by local authorities and AHBs.	To meet the social housing needs more quickly across the range of programmes and supports.	Ongoing to 2021 DHPCLG, LAs, AHBs

Status: On schedule

The 2016 target of 4,240 homes was exceeded by 1,040, following the intensive ramping up of the social housing delivery programme which saw a total of 5,280 new social housing units delivered through build, refurbishment and acquisition programmes.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.2	We will review existing current and capital programmes on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are relevant and are meeting the needs of citizens.	To accelerate the delivery of housing and ensure that projects are advanced efficiently and effectively.	Ongoing to 2021

Status: On schedule

Comprehensive and focussed current and capital programmes are now in place for 2017, with strong governance arrangements in place to drive and accelerate the delivery of social housing projects. The recently completed review of the Mortgage to Rent Scheme (see action 1.21) is a good example of such reviews.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.3	<p>We will accelerate the roll-out of the Housing Assistance Payments Scheme on a national basis to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Counties Cavan, Kerry, Laois, Leitrim, Longford, Roscommon, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow by end-2016, and ■ The Dublin Region, commencing from Q1 2017. 	To ensure that HAP, and the support it provides towards employment, will be available to all households who can benefit from it.	<p>Q4 2016 & Q1 2017</p> <p>DHPCLG, DSP, LAs</p>

Status: On schedule

The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) was introduced to nine further local authorities with effect from 1 December 2016: Cavan, Kerry, Laois, Leitrim, Longford, Roscommon, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow.

The HAP scheme is now available in 28 local authority areas and to eligible homeless households in the Dublin local authorities under the HAP pilot scheme managed by the DRHE. 12,075 HAP tenancies were set-up in 2016 meeting the scheme's target for the year. At the end of 2016, 16,493 households were being supported by HAP.

Preparations for the introduction of HAP to the remaining three Dublin authorities from 1 March 2017 are on schedule and will complete the full national roll-out of the scheme.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.10	The Housing Agency will establish a Housing Procurement Unit.	To provide a procurement centre of excellence and advice in support of local authorities and AHBs in the accelerated delivery of their social housing programmes.	Q3 2016

Status: Complete

This action was originally scheduled for delivery in Q3 2016 but was incomplete at that time. The Procurement Unit has since been established and has commenced operations. Where an LA is conducting its own procurement procedure the Procurement Unit is available to review and quality assure arrangements; it can also project manage procurement processes on behalf of LAs.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.11	We will review our processes and procedures for approving and advancing housing construction projects.	To streamline and accelerate the delivery of housing.	Q3 2016

Status: Complete

This action was originally scheduled for delivery in Q3 2016 but was incomplete at that time. The review of the processes and procedures for approving and advancing housing construction projects is now complete.

A report on the review has identified a number of key recommendations that will result in improved timeframes for advancing construction projects including encouraging wider use of the one stage approval process, design efficiency, early engagement by AHBs and LAs with DHPCLG, and adoption of reasonable time-frames for entire process (project phases and approval stages).

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.14	We will establish a dedicated one-stop-shop within the Housing Agency to support AHBs, which will allow for better coordinated delivery under various mechanisms across all local authority areas.	To provide for better coordinated and strategic delivery by AHBs under various funding streams across all LA areas, and enhanced cooperation between AHBs and local authorities to maximise potential yield from LA lands.	Q3 2016 HA, AHBs, DHPCLG and LAs

Status: Complete

This action was originally scheduled for delivery in Q3 2016 but was incomplete at that time. The one-stop shop for AHBs has now been established and has commenced operations as source of advice and expertise in support of AHBs in relation to delivery mechanisms, procurement, and the provision of additional homes.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.16	We will bring forward pilot projects, beginning with Dublin City Council, based on best practice and cost effectiveness taking a cross Departmental / inter-agency approach to housing initiatives for older people.	To examine the potential for mainstreaming best practice projects, which bring together the HSE and local authorities with designers and academic groups. Such models would cater for those who, while not requiring full nursing home care, have been assessed as having healthcare needs that can be met in the community.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG, DoH, LAs, HSE

Status: Complete

A pilot project located in the Inchicore area has been identified by Dublin City Council. An outline accommodation brief has been developed and the evaluation of the preliminary capital appraisal is being finalised. The draft "expression of interest" documentation to identify the most suitable Approved Housing Body to undertake responsibility for the design, construction and operation of this facility has been completed by Dublin City Council and is currently under review by the project Steering Committee.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.18	DHPCLG, in conjunction with DoH, is developing policy options for supported housing/housing with care so that older people have a wider range of residential care choices available to them.	To incentivise new supported living /assisted living arrangements which will meet the housing needs of certain older people.	From Q3 2016 to 2018 DHPCLG, DoH

Status: On schedule

A policy statement on housing needs for older persons is being prepared for publication during Quarter 3 2017. This policy statement will be the first step in the broader process of seeking to ensure that older people are provided with appropriate accommodation options suited to their needs.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.19	<p>We will create pilot competitions, focusing on three distinct areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ smart technologies in housing for older people; ■ adaptation of existing houses to meet the needs of older people; and ■ life-time communities. 	To stimulate and encourage the design and construction industries to be innovative in designing and delivering housing solutions for older people.	<p>Q4 2016</p> <p>DHPCLG, CEUD, RIAI, CIF</p>

Status: On schedule

A competition brief entitled '*Homes for Smart Ageing: A Universal Design Challenge*' has been developed and signed off by a Steering Group representing all project owners. The competition was opened to applicants at the end of January 2017 with a deadline for submissions of 13th March. It is intended the winners will be announced in June 2017. The competition invites entries from those with a novel and inventive idea that is feasible, cost effective and has the potential for mainstreaming, into the future, in support of smart ageing solutions in the three distinct areas mentioned above.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.20	We will work with the HSE and local authorities on all issues, including funding supports, for housing people who are transitioning from HSE accommodation and for clients of the mental health services living in community-based accommodation.	To support community-based living for people with disabilities.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>DHPCLG, HSE, LAs</p>

Status: On schedule

In the context of continuing engagement with relevant stakeholders, DHPCLG has secured funding of €1m again in 2017 which will maintain support for the HSE-led de-institutionalisation programme and will also help fund the cost of necessary tenancy sustainment supports in order to progress the transition of clients from HSE mental health services to community-based living.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.21	We will continue to support the DoH and HSE in the programme of transitioning people from congregated settings to community-based living through ring-fenced housing capital funding.	To provide €10m in 2016 to support community-based living for people with disabilities in congregated settings, with further funding for 2017 and 2018.	Continued out to 2020 DoH, HSE, DHPCLG

Status: On schedule

DHPCLG ring-fenced funding of €10 million in 2016, under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS), to support the HSE to accelerate its deinstitutionalisation programme. The scale of the 2016 proposals made under this arrangement, against the €10m ring-fenced, is now being assessed by DHPCLG before the scale of funding to be allocated for 2017 is determined. DHPCLG will liaise with DoH and HSE regarding future funding requirements having regard to projects ready to progress.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.22	We will extend the <i>National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities (2011-2016)</i> beyond its timeframe of 2016 to continue delivery on its aims.	To support community-based living for people with disabilities.	Continued out to 2020 DHPCLG

Status: On schedule

Implementation of the *National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities*, as reaffirmed in the Action Plan and extended to 2020, is continuing. Under the associated Implementation Framework, a dedicated Sub Group, chaired by the Housing Agency, and overseen by an Implementation Monitoring Group (IMG), is driving implementation in association with DHPCLG, DoH, HSE and disability sector stakeholders. The IMG published its Second Progress Report on Implementation in December 2016 – available on the DHPCLG website www.housing.gov.ie – and will continue to monitor and report on progress in 2017 and beyond.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
2.24	We will establish an operational sub-group under the auspices of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme Taskforce, composed of representatives from relevant Govt. Departments, local authorities and other bodies, to support and coordinate the process of housing refugees.	To provide a range of supports at local level, including the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme (HAP) and a range of other supports made available at local level to ensure the integration of individuals into their new communities.	Q4 2016 DJE, DHPCLG, LAs, DSP

Status: Complete

An operational sub-group under the auspices of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) Taskforce, with representation from relevant Departments and Agencies, has been established to support the process of housing refugees and has met on a number of occasions.

PILLAR THREE

Build More Homes

Current Context

While the supply of housing is increasing as is the level of sites with planning permission, Pillar 3 seeks to accelerate that increase to make up the shortfall in supply, particularly of more affordable homes, as quickly as possible, to get to the national supply level of 25,000 new homes by 2021 or earlier, if possible.

There are 12 actions under Pillar 3, dealing with funding/financing infrastructure provision; active land management, planning reforms; construction design innovation and the construction sectors skills and capacity to deliver. The skills issue, in particular, becomes increasingly important as overall planning and construction activity increases and with this in mind DES and Solas are working to ramp up the delivery of skills training across a range of key areas.

The identification and prioritisation of 23 Major Urban Development Sites with the capacity to deliver 30,000 new homes in the medium term in the Greater Dublin Area, Cork, Limerick and Galway will see a significant scaling-up of new homes on key sites in main urban areas. Progress on these development sites is now being proactively overseen by the Department's Housing Delivery Office with a view to ensuring these sites become exemplars for the coordination and accelerated delivery of plan-led housing development and active land management.

On the infrastructure front, 21 local authorities have applied for funding under the €200m Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF), seeking to open up more of the 17,434 hectares of land for development that the planning process has identified nationally for housing, 2,654 hectares of which are in Dublin. These applications which have identified 74 separate projects, where enabling infrastructure works are required, for consideration for funding are being assessed with a view to making funding decisions in March, 2017.

On the land supply side, relevant Government Departments, State bodies and local authorities have been contacted regarding lands in their ownership and/or control that may be suitable and available for housing development, in connection with the development of a national web-based database of State lands. To make progress quickly, the survey of State development lands is focussing on Dublin and the main cities and urban areas with a view to having the details mapped later in this Quarter, after which the approach will be extended to other regions.

The above actions, in tandem with the planning reforms provided for in the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016, will help to ensure a steady supply of development land and planning permissions to build on that land, so that housing providers can plan ahead effectively in response to current and emerging demands.

Delivery Status of Q4 2016 Actions

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.1	We will establish a €200m Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund, seeking bids from local authorities in conjunction with housing providers in respect of enabling infrastructure for social, affordable rental and private housing delivery on large-scale strategic sites, with the potential to open up lands and deliver housing of the order of 15,000 to 20,000 units by 2019.	<p>To relieve critical infrastructural blockages to enable the delivery of housing on key development sites.</p> <p>To improve the economic viability and purchaser affordability of new housing projects.</p>	<p>Q4 2016 – Evaluation and finalisation of approved projects.</p> <p>DHPCLG</p>

Status: Incomplete

74 proposals were received from 21 Local Authorities by the closing date in October, 2016, with the total cost of proposals submitted at some €800m, far exceeding the amount of funding available. Assessment of the proposals is progressing well but, given the level of detail and associated issues, final evaluations are taking a little longer than originally targeted. At this stage, all proposals have undergone an initial detailed analysis and assessment. Projects valued over €5m require further detailed financial appraisal which is currently being undertaken by local authorities and which, following submission to the Department in January, 2017, will be completed by March 2017. The entire list of approved projects will be announced at that stage.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.2	We will provide capacity through increased borrowing and access to HFA financing for participating local authorities to provide matching funding for the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund.	<p>To relieve critical infrastructural blockages to enable the delivery of housing on key development sites.</p> <p>To improve the economic viability and purchaser affordability of new housing projects.</p>	<p>From Q4 2016</p> <p>DPER, DoF, HFA, LAs, DHPCLG</p>

Status: Complete

The HFA has advised local authorities that access is available to loan finance options through the HFA subject to the normal approval process (i.e. Council resolution and Department sanction). The HFA further advised that they would be able to tailor the matching funding as required to support local authority applications for the LIHAF, with offers ranging from short-term variable rate finance up to long-term fixed rate, at very competitive interest rates.

Status continued

In addition, effective from 1 October 2016, the HFA has reduced the interest rates charged on existing offerings and approved a range of new fixed rate lending products to support the funding of new social housing and infrastructure projects by AHBs and local authorities. The new range of products provides fixed interest rates, ranging from 5 to 30 years. LAs will be able to borrow fixed rate funding for 25 years at 1.5% or lower. The interest rate reduction will result in saving of €6m per annum on interest rate payments by LAs.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.3	The National Treasury Management Agency, through ISIF, will develop proposals to offer competitive financing on a commercial basis, to developers or consortia of developers, to meet on-site and other infrastructure requirements on large development sites.	To facilitate the delivery of on-site infrastructure releasing the delivery of housing on key development sites, thereby improving the economic viability of such developments.	Q3/4 2016 DoF, NTMA

Status: Complete

Through its engagement with both local authorities and private developers, ISIF has developed proposals to provide access to a new competitive infrastructure financing stream for housing developments.

Based on its proposals, ISIF is in advanced engagement in respect of specific infrastructure financing requirements. These initial projects would see ISIF investment of approximately €100m unlock residential development sites that could, in the medium term, support the construction of over 15,000 new residential units.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.4	We will identify and prioritise the 15-20 key pathfinder sites with a proven capability to quickly deliver a significant scaling-up of new homes, in conjunction with local authorities and other stakeholders. Many of these sites will be opened up through LIHAF funds, and other funding and coordination mechanisms.	To deliver significant scale of new homes on key sites in the main urban areas, through coordinated efforts of the DHPCLG's new Housing Delivery Office.	Q4 2016 – initiation of programme for driving delivery of housing. DHPCLG, LAs, AHBs

Status: Complete

23 Major Urban Delivery Sites have been identified and announced at the Pillar 3 launch in November 2016. They are spread around the Country but focused on Dublin and Cork, as these are locations with the capability to deliver significant scaling up of new homes. Locations identified include Adamstown in West Dublin; Poolbeg SDZ in Dublin City, Cork Docklands and Midleton. It is estimated that the identified Major Urban Delivery Sites can deliver approximately 30,000 new homes over the medium term with a potential total of 60,000 new homes in the longer term.

Arrangements are in place, overseen by the Department's Housing Delivery Office, to ensure these sites deliver significant housing as soon as possible and become exemplars for the coordination and accelerated delivery of plan-led housing development and active land management.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.5	<p>Within the context of the new National Planning Framework, we will prepare a national Land Supply Management Strategy, through which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sites in LA and public ownership will be identified and mapped by a State Lands Management Group, with appropriate lands to be master-planned to deliver increased mixed-tenure housing, including social and more affordable housing, 	<p>To give a national framework to support the appropriate location of housing across the country.</p> <p>To ensure an active and healthy supply and market for development land, to identify scope to use State lands for housing and to support co-ordinated mixed-tenure development on publicly owned lands.</p>	<p>Q4 2016 – Draft of NPF</p> <p>DHPCLG, LAs, OPW, various Departments and Agencies</p>

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.5 (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authorities will be supported in acquiring housing lands in key developable areas, and Strategic opportunities for urban renewal and regeneration will be identified for coordinated action across relevant public sector bodies. 		

Status: Incomplete

Work is on-going, led by DHPCLG working closely with local authorities, other Government Departments and State bodies, in developing a comprehensive database of publicly owned lands in key areas with a view to identifying additional lands suitable for housing. Detailed mapping of cities will be completed in Q1 2017. This mapping will inform the Development Land Supply Management Strategy elements of the NPF.

Building on the extensive preparatory research and engagement over the past 12 months to inform the NPF, a multi-stranded initial public consultation process to kick off discussions around key issues and policy choices to inform the NPF opened in early February 2017. These contributions and stakeholder submissions will inform both the structure, content and principles of the NPF and the publication of the formal draft NPF and supporting analysis and environmental report during the second quarter of the year.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.6	We will legislate to enable larger housing development applications (100+ units) to be made directly to An Bord Pleanála and to extend certain planning permissions that have already benefited from one extension for a further period	To fast-track large-scale residential development planning applications	Q3/Q4 2016 DHPCLG, ABP

Status: Complete

Provision for the fast-tracking of planning applications for large-scale housing developments (100+ units) and the submission of planning applications for same directly to An Bord Pleanála was incorporated in the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 which was enacted on 23 December 2016.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.8	We will develop and publish an Implementation Plan to prioritise implementation of key recommendations within the An Bord Pleanála review.	To minimise delays to the consideration and determination of large housing developments. To enable An Bord Pleanála to more effectively carry out its mandate.	Q3 2016 DHPCLG ABP

Status: Complete

This action was originally scheduled for delivery in Q3 2016 but was incomplete at that time.

A joint DHPCLG – ABP Implementation Group has been established to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the Organisational Review. The Terms of Reference and Plan for Implementation is available at the following weblink on the DHPCLG's website http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/organisational_review_of_abp_implementation_group_-_terms_of_reference_plan_for_implementation_-_final.pdf and sets out the approach to overseeing the implementation of the key recommendations across the five thematic areas of Legislation, Communications, Governance, Organisation Capacity and Operational Capacity.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.9	We will support the development of on-line planning services for the local authority sector and An Bord Pleanála.	To give legislative underpinning as part of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Bill 2016 and to actively support the roll-out of e-planning in the local authority sector and An Bord Pleanála.	Q4 2016 – enact Planning and Dev (Amdt) Bill 2016. DHPCLG, LAs, ABP

Status: Incomplete

Enabling provision for the introduction of e-planning (online submission of planning applications and appeals) was incorporated in the Planning and Development (Amendment) Bill 2016, published in January 2016. The Bill was not progressed as intended in 2016 - due to priority being given to the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Bill 2016 – to give effect to certain urgent planning and housing related measures contained in Rebuilding Ireland.

It is now intended that the Planning and Development (Amendment) Bill 2016 will be enacted by Summer 2017. Notwithstanding this delay, in parallel with advancing the primary legislation, we will progress the preparation of planning regulations to give full effect to the introduction of e-planning by Q4 2017, as originally scheduled.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.11	We will establish a competition to champion best practice, efficient and cost effective design and new approaches to both affordable and quality residential delivery.	To develop innovative systems for the delivery of affordable high quality residential development.	Q3/Q4 2016 – issue call for proposals and evaluate applications DHPCLG

Status: Incomplete

It has been necessary to identify a suitable site as an initial step in the competition process. This is now being done in collaboration with local authorities. The format of the competition has been approved, with a press statement issuing on the competition. The evaluation of proposed sites is currently underway. Following the identification of one or more suitable sites, a design brief will be developed by the relevant Local Authority and DHPCLG. It is intended that the competition will be managed by the RIAI and will be advertised for prospective design bids in Q2 2017.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
3.12	SOLAS will update skills forecasts and work with stakeholders to ensure that mainstream and targeted education and training initiatives support the supply of skills required to deliver the Action Plan.	To ensure that a supply of construction workers is available as the residential construction sector expands.	From Q4 2016 DES

Status: On schedule

The current apprentice forecasts for the annual intake requirement in the construction related trades were completed in October 2016 and cover the period 2016-2020. The forecast for 2020 is for a total apprentice intake of 3,840 in these trades, compared to an intake of 1,713 in 2015 and an intake for the first 11 months of 2016 of 2,115 apprentices (equivalent 11-month figure for 2015 is 1,554).

In response to a number of priority areas for training identified by the CIF in discussion with SOLAS, arrangements are now in place for:

- Formwork courses that will produce 100 formworkers per year,
- Steel-fixing courses to begin in January 2017 which, subject to funding arrangements, will produce circa 100 steel-fixers per year, and
- Curtain-walling training to commence in Q2 2017 that will produce circa 50 curtain-wallers per year.

PILLAR FOUR

Improve the Rental Sector

Current Context

Significant progress has been achieved in Pillar 4 during Quarter 4 with the major development being the publication of the *Strategy for the Rental Sector*. Informed by a comprehensive public consultation process, involving a stakeholder consultation workshop and written submissions, the Strategy contains a balanced mix of actions across the areas of security, supply, standards and services. The actions in the Strategy are now being incorporated into the overall Rebuilding Ireland governance and reporting structures.

The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 was signed into law on 23 December 2016. The Act allowed the Rent Predictability measures contained in the Strategy to be brought into immediate effect, capping rent rises in Dublin and Cork City to a maximum of 4% per annum and allowing for the expansion of the measure to other areas. Since then, a further 12 areas have been designated as RPZs, which now cover 54% of tenancies.

The Act contains a number of other measures to increase tenure security, including extending the duration of tenancies and protecting tenants in large developments from eviction when the owner wishes to sell multiple units at the same time. The Act also strengthens the RTB's enforcement and dispute resolution powers and includes measures to increase its ability to provide services to landlords and tenants.

The review of the standards and regulations for rental accommodation has been completed and revised Housing (Standards of Rented Houses) Regulations 2017 have been made, coming into force on 1 July 2017.

An assessment of the potential for increasing student accommodation has been undertaken and has identified opportunities to deliver a further 8,105 bed spaces by 2019 and an additional 3,500 by 2024. A process for step-by-step monitoring of delivery has also been put in place. Work is ongoing between DES and DPER to identify financing mechanisms to facilitate investments by Institutes of Technology in on-campus student accommodation.

DHPCLG continues to advance the development of a comprehensive database of publicly-owned lands in key developable areas with a view to identifying land suitable for housing development as per Action 3.5 and to assess its potential for utilisation for housing and to support co-ordinated mixed-tenure development. This will also allow a clear assessment of what State lands can be earmarked for student accommodation.

It has been decided not to proceed with the Affordable Rental Scheme as originally conceived and outlined in the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan. The development of the Strategy for the Rental Sector allowed for further consideration of this matter, in consultation with local authorities and stakeholders, and it has been decided that Affordable Rental is to be taken forward on a project-by-project basis on local authority lands, where feasible. Lands held by local authorities in Rent Pressure Zones will be brought to the market on a competitive tendering basis, with a view to leveraging the value of the land to deliver the maximum number of units for rental, targeting middle income private rental households. In Quarter 1 2017, a number of sites will be identified and calls for proposals, incorporating the provision of Affordable Rental units, will be issued by the relevant Local Authorities.

Delivery Status of Q4 2016 Actions

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.1	We will develop a comprehensive strategy for the rental sector.	To increase supply and support the development of a stable, strong and viable rental sector offering true choice for households, investment opportunities for providers and reflect rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG, RTB

Status: Complete

On 13 December 2016, Government approved the publication of the *Strategy for the Rental Sector*. The strategy is structured around 4 key areas: security, standards, supply and services. The measures under these four headings will be implemented through the 29 actions contained in the strategy.

The overarching objective of the Strategy is to increase supply and support the development of a stable, strong and viable rental sector offering true choice for households, investment opportunities for providers and reflecting the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.2	We will legislate (through amendments to the Residential Tenancies Acts) to deal with circumstances where there are sales of property with tenants in situ and to address the RTB's enforcement and dispute resolution powers.	To provide a balanced approach and arrangements in relation to tenancy termination, enhancing and clarifying legal protections and dispute resolution mechanisms for both tenants and landlords.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG, RTB

Status: Complete

The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2017 was signed by the President on 23rd December 2016. The Act includes measures to prevent a future recurrence of situations where large numbers of residents in a single development are simultaneously served with termination notices to facilitate vacant possession and sale of the property. In this regard, the Act provides that, where a landlord proposes to sell 10 or more units in a development at the same time (i.e. classified as being within a 6-month period), the sales will be conditional on the existing tenants remaining in situ, other than in exceptional circumstances. In addition, the Act also provides for the abolition of a landlord's right, during the first 6 months of a further Part 4 tenancy, to terminate that tenancy for no stated ground. These provisions of the act were commenced on 17 January 2017.

Status continued

These measures are accompanied by a number of other early actions to enhance the Residential Tenancies Board's (RTB) enforcement and dispute resolution powers. These include faster processing of determination orders, the reduction in period for appeal to Tribunals, and the use of one-person Tribunals. All of these measures will mean that the RTB can handle more disputes and finalise them more quickly. Tenants and landlords alike will therefore see a number of improvements as a result of these legislative changes, which will be subject to Commencement Orders to be made in Q3 of 2017.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.3	We will complete the review of the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2008, as amended, and make any new regulations required.	To ensure that the current minimum standards for rental accommodation reflect the requirements of a modern rental market.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG, RTB

Status: Complete

The review, which included a comprehensive stakeholder consultation process on the amendments proposed, is now complete. The amended Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2017 were signed by the Minister on 26 January 2017 and will come into effect on 1 July 2017. Revised guidance to assist landlords to comply with their statutory obligations is being prepared in consultation with relevant stakeholders for publication in advance of the regulations coming into effect.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.6	We will introduce a new affordable rental scheme to enhance the capacity of the private rented sector to provide quality and affordable accommodation for households currently paying a disproportionate amount of disposable income on rent.	To provide long-term affordable residential accommodation for low to moderate income key-worker households in urban areas of high demand and provide an economic incentive to increase supply of rental accommodation.	Q3 2016 DHPCLG, DoF, DPER, AHBs

Status: Complete (Alternative approach in place)

This action was originally scheduled for delivery in Q3 2016 but was incomplete at that time.

As set out in the recently published *Strategy for the Rental Sector*, this commitment is to be progressed through kick-starting supply in Rent Pressure Zones using publicly-owned land to leverage land value for the delivery of the maximum number of rental units targeting middle income households. Lands held by local authorities in RPZs will be brought to market on a competitive tendering basis with a view to this.

Status continued

The cost of providing rental units will be permanently reduced by lowering the initial investment and development costs for providers - AHB or private - allowing the rental units to be made available at prices below current market prices without the need for ongoing rental subsidies.

Local authorities concerned will identify a number of sites in Q1 2017 with the potential for up to 1,000 units of accommodation and will move forward, as soon as possible, to issue calls for proposals from parties interested in developing rental accommodation for middle income households. As speed of delivery will be critically important, appropriate licence arrangements, incorporating clear timescales for delivery, will be a key feature of the process.

This programme will be co-ordinated with the dedicated measures in *Rebuilding Ireland* to accelerate housing output from the Major Urban Housing Delivery Sites, including support from the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) where necessary. Possible project locations include O'Devaney Gardens and Oscar Traynor Road in Dublin. In tandem, new-build rental accommodation will also be provided in the major build-to-rent projects planned for strategic development zones and other large sites in Dublin and other locations, such as Cherrywood in Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council area.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.8	We will work with stakeholders to prioritise and progress viable projects to provide additional student accommodation in key urban areas.	To bring on stream proposals capable of delivering an additional 7,000 student accommodation places by end 2019, on or off campus, in addition to projects already committed to.	Q4 2016 – initial assessment DES, HEIs

Status: On schedule

An initial assessment, progressed in conjunction with the Higher Education Authority, Universities, Institutes of Technology, Local Authorities, DHPCLG, DES and other relevant stakeholders, has identified proposals capable of delivering an additional 8,105 student accommodation places to come on stream by 2019. This is additional to projects already committed to before the publication of *Rebuilding Ireland*. Further proposals have been identified which demonstrate the potential for the delivery of at least an additional 3,500 student accommodation places in the period to 2024.

Arrangements are in place for the identification of Student Accommodation construction projects which are now being monitored closely as they progress through the four key development stages from pre-planning, to planning application, planning permission and construction.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.11	We will establish funding mechanisms for Institutes of Technology to support the development of their student accommodation capacity.	To facilitate the Institute of Technology sector in developing their potential for on-campus student accommodation through addressing current borrowing capacity and funding constraints.	Q4 2016 DES, DPER

Status: Complete

Legal provision for new funding arrangements has been included in the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 as signed into law on 23 December 2016.

DES is further investigating the provision of a borrowing framework for the IOT sector. While this will necessarily require case-by-case approval set within an overall agreed framework, DES and DPER are working together to develop the approach to Institutes of Technology borrowing to develop on-campus student accommodation, through addressing both borrowing capacity and funding constraints.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.12	We will carry out an assessment of scope for provision of additional student accommodation on local authority or other publicly-owned lands.	To maximise the potential for student accommodation provision on suitable sites as part of mixed developments.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG, DES, LAs

Status: Incomplete

Work is on-going by DHPCLG on developing a comprehensive database of publicly owned lands in key development areas with a view to identifying lands that are suitable for housing development (as per Action 3.5 specifically in relation to the State Land Management Group). The database of publicly-owned lands will also inform the scope for provision of additional student accommodation and an assessment of lands for such purposes will be made with relevant stakeholders once the database is assembled during the first quarter of 2017.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.13	We will enable student accommodation projects for 100 units or more to go straight to An Bord Pleanála, as well as maximise the opportunities for joint venture projects on local authority sites to proceed through the Part 8 process and prepare guidance on planning policies around student accommodation developments.	To enhance certainty and reduce delivery timescales and costs associated with bringing student accommodation proposals forward.	Q3/4 2016 DHPCLG

Status: Complete

Provision for the fast-tracking of planning applications for student accommodation developments (200+ bed spaces) and the submission of planning applications for same directly to An Bord Pleanála was incorporated in the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 which was enacted on 23 December 2016.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.14	We will introduce a Rent Predictability measure to stabilise rent levels in areas of high demand <i>Action 1 of Strategy for the Rental Sector (December, 2016)</i>	To increase security of tenure in the current period of market imbalance, while also ensuring that new supply is not adversely affected	Immediate DHPCLG

Status: Complete

The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 makes provision for a new rent predictability measure, based on the concept of Rent Pressure Zones (RPZs). An area where annual rent increases have been at 7% or more in four of the last six quarters and where the rent levels are already above the national average may be designated as an RPZ.

Rent increases in an RPZ will be capped at 4% per annum for a period of 3 years by which time it is anticipated that new supply will have come on stream and pressures will have eased somewhat in these areas. The four Dublin Local Authority areas and Cork city were designated as RPZs with immediate effect on 23 December 2016. Ministerial orders designating 12 further local electoral areas in counties Cork, Kildare, Meath, Wicklow and in Galway city as RPZs were made on 26 January 2017. This means that Cork, Dublin and Galway cities and a further 23 towns are now designated as RPZs.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.16	<p>We will introduce tenancy in-situ requirements in cases of multiple units in a single development being sold at the same time</p> <p><i>Action 3 of Strategy for the Rental Sector (December, 2016)</i></p>	To provide security of tenure for tenants during sales of multiple units in single developments and avoid recurrence of the Tyrrelstown case	<p>Immediate</p> <p>DHPCLG</p>

Status: Complete

The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 makes provision for the protection of tenancies where a landlord or investor wishes to sell more than 10 properties in a single development. The provision came into effect on 17 January 2017.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.21	<p>We will amend the Residential Tenancies Act to provide for 6 year tenancies as part of a transition to tenancies of indefinite duration</p> <p><i>Action 8 of Strategy for the Rental Sector (December, 2016)</i></p>	To end the concept of "Part 4" (4-year) tenancies and commence transition to tenancies of indefinite duration, subject to the landlord's rights under section 34 of the RTA	<p>Immediate</p> <p>DHPCLG</p>

Status: Complete

This amendment is provided for in the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
4.31	<p>We will provide clarity in relation to the appropriate regulatory approach, from a planning perspective, for short-term tourism-related lettings</p> <p><i>Action 18 of Strategy for the Rental Sector (December, 2016)</i></p>	<p>Initial guidance to LAs – immediate</p> <p>Working Group Report Q2 2017</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>DHPCLG / LAs</p>

Status: On schedule

An Bord Pleanála in a recent case determined that the exclusive use of a residential apartment for short-term holiday lettings represented a material change of use requiring planning permission. The Department has, by way of Circular letter PL12/2016 of 22 December 2016, brought this determination to the attention of all planning authorities who are now aware of the grounds on which the ABP reached its decision, the planning requirements relevant to the commercial use of residential units and the importance of a proactive approach to planning enforcement generally in this regard. The Circular letter is available on the Department's website at the following weblink: http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/pl_12-16_apl_6-16_recent_an_bord_pleanala_decision_on_short_term_lettings.pdf

With a view to providing full legal clarity regarding the appropriate regulatory approach to be adopted by relevant statutory authorities in relation to short-term tourism-related lettings, and as provided in the Rental Strategy published in December 2017 under Rebuilding Ireland, the Department intends to establish a working group comprising representatives of relevant stakeholders including local authorities, relevant Departments, public bodies and other interests in the area to consider the disparate issues involved and to report by summer 2017.

PILLAR FIVE

Utilise Existing Housing

Current Context

A certain level of vacant properties is normal in a healthy housing market with houses often being temporarily vacant between tenancies (in both the private and public sectors) and when being renovated. However, long-term vacant housing can have negative impacts on local areas and communities and represents an inefficient use of valuable economic resources.

Preliminary results from Census 2016 indicate that there are just under 200,000 dwellings nationwide (excluding holiday homes and derelict houses) which were recorded as vacant. This represents 9.8% of the overall national housing stock. By way of comparison, the Netherlands (which has 4 times the population of Ireland) has a similar number of vacant homes, representing 2.5% of the national housing stock.

Pillar 5 of *Rebuilding Ireland* is focussed on *Utilising Existing Housing Stock* with a key objective of ensuring that the existing vacant housing stock is used to the maximum degree possible. The disproportionately large volume of vacant houses currently in Ireland represents a source of accommodation supply which, if refurbished and reutilised, has the potential to make a significant contribution to resolving the housing supply shortage situation while simultaneously breathing new life into the cities, towns and villages in which they are located. Furthermore, compared to new build, increased utilisation of vacant housing stock can be a significantly more cost-effective means of increasing housing supply across all forms of tenure – social, private and private rental – while also typically having the further advantage of being served by existing infrastructure.

Two significant measures have already been announced under Pillar 5 to incentivise increased use of vacant housing – (i) the **Repair and Leasing Initiative**, with funding of €140m over the next 5 years and which is being initially piloted in Carlow and Waterford with a view to subsequent national roll-out, has been launched to assist private property owners and local authorities or Approved Housing Bodies to bring vacant houses into social housing use for families or individuals on local authority waiting lists, and (ii) the **Buy and Renew Initiative**, with dedicated funding of €25m in 2017, to support local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies in purchasing private housing units in need of repair, in having them refurbished, and ultimately in making them available for social housing use.

A central element of Pillar 5 will be the development of a National Vacant Housing Reuse Strategy to provide a targeted, effective and co-ordinated approach to tackle the problem of vacant homes in Ireland and to help achieve the optimum occupancy of the existing housing stock. Work on the development of the strategy is progressing well. This will be supplemented by a range of other measures including the development of new urban renewal measures to complement the existing regeneration programme and projects under the Social Housing Capital Programme, as well as the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. It is envisaged that Pillar 5 will be launched in March 2017 with the launch also being used to publish the National Vacant Houses Reuse Strategy and to announce the new Urban Renewal Scheme.

Delivery Status of Q4 2016 Actions

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
5.3	<p>We will work with LAs to speed up the refurbishment and, where possible, the re-letting of vacant social housing units, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ adopting a common national re-letting performance standard across all local authorities; ■ a preventative maintenance approach to housing stock management; ■ a greater focus on tenants' role and responsibilities; and ■ funding mechanisms to incentivise swift turn-around, consistent standards and pro-active approaches. 	To minimise any delays, or indeed perception of delays, in refurbishing and re-letting social houses at a time of considerable need.	<p>Q4 2016</p> <p>LAs, DHPCLG</p>

Status: Complete

The approach to the refurbishment and re-letting of vacant social housing units (voids) has been reviewed to ensure a consistent national approach to the management of these units to ensure a swift turnaround. The rental standards were reviewed in late 2016 and the revised standards now provide the context for common national re-letting performance standards across all local authorities. A circular has issued to all Housing Authorities setting out the revised arrangements.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
5.7	We will establish a Repair and Leasing Initiative (RLI) for local authorities to identify appropriate vacant privately-owned properties and provide grant support to prospective landlords to bring properties up to standard in return for entering into long-term lease arrangements.	To immediately increase the supply of social housing options through long-term rental leases.	Q4 2016 – launch of pilot project DHPCLG, LAs

Status: Complete

Under this initiative, owners of suitable properties are assisted with the financial costs of necessary repairs which are then offset against the lease income on the property over a defined period of between 10 and 20 years.

The pilot Repair and Leasing Scheme (RLS) was launched in Waterford and Carlow on October 6th 2016. The pilot is progressing well at a local level. Waterford and Carlow have been advertising the scheme with local media and have made good progress in engagements with property owners. Inspections of potential units have also commenced and both LAs are ready to commence signing agreements with a number of property owners.

It is intended that the scheme will be expanded to all Local Authorities in early 2017. Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) will play a key role in the implementation of the scheme, working directly with local authorities around the country.

3,500 houses have been targeted for social housing using the scheme over the period 2017-2021. A budget of €140m has been provided to support this activity. While the current target for 2017 is 150 units, the interest expressed by property owners so far indicates that the 2017 target will be achieved and most likely exceeded. Depending on the capacity of local authorities and AHBs to deliver under the scheme, as well as the necessary agreement on the financial considerations arising, a revised delivery profile which will see earlier delivery of a higher number of properties is possible.

In parallel, the Department is working with other local authorities to prepare for the rollout of the new scheme in their areas. This includes assisting with access to public sources of data relating to vacant property, as well as facilitating local cooperation between AHBs and LAs on how the scheme will operate on the ground for interested property owners. A schedule for the rollout of the scheme across all local authorities is being prepared on that basis and will be made available shortly.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
5.9	We will review planning legislation to allow the change of use of vacant commercial units in urban areas, including vacant or under-utilised areas over ground floor premises, into residential units without having to go through the planning process.	To facilitate the speedy delivery of homes in urban and rural settings.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG

Status: Incomplete

The review of planning legislation to allow the change of use of vacant commercial premises into residential use without having to go through the planning process – effectively classifying it as exempted development for planning permission purposes – has not been progressed as intended, due to the priority attached to the enactment of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 in Q4 2016. The revised timeline for delivery of this action is now Q2 2017.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
5.10	The Living City Initiative will be reviewed with a view to further enhancing the attractiveness and effectiveness of the Scheme.	To better incentivise private landlords and property owners to bring forward currently vacant residential (including part-commercial) properties for sale and/or private rental.	Q4 2016 DoF

Status: Complete

A review of the Living City Initiative (LCI) was completed and published as part of Budget 2017. The LCI has been amended to further enhance its attractiveness and effectiveness, in line with its policy aims by extending eligibility to landlords in respect of rented residential property, removing the restriction on the maximum floor area for owner-occupiers, and removing the requirement for a pre-1915 building to have been originally used as a dwelling in order to qualify for the residential element of the initiative.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
5.11	A Ministerial-led Urban Renewal Working Group will bring forward proposals for new urban regeneration measures which will complement the existing regeneration programme and projects under the Social Housing Capital Programme, and strengthen alignment with Social Inclusion and RAPID programmes across local authorities.	To support existing initiatives and explore potential synergies around the revitalisation and improvement of city, town and village centres, including addressing the problem of dereliction in many urban centres.	Q4 2016 DHPCLG, LAs

Status: Incomplete

A Working Group, chaired by the Minister of State for Housing and Urban Renewal, Mr Damien English TD, has been established and aims to bring forward proposals for renewal/regeneration of cities, towns and villages across Ireland. It has met three times, and aims to bring forward its proposals for funding in the first Quarter of 2017.

A revamped RAPID programme is being designed at present and is due to be rolled out early in 2017. The programme will provide small-scale seed financing for capital and small-scale infrastructure projects of a regenerative nature in disadvantaged areas, including in provincial towns.

It is intended that the measures proposed by the Urban Renewal Working Group will be complementary to, and integrated with, relevant actions in the Action Plan on Rural Development as launched in January 2017 by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Ms Heather Humphreys TD.

Action No	Description of action	Objective	Timeline & Owner
5.12	DHPCLG and DAHRRGA will work together to provide funding for a range of demonstration projects across the country as part of the €30 million Town and Village Renewal Initiative to support local authorities.	To further support the revitalisation of towns and villages, and increase their attractiveness and sustainability as places to live and work.	Q4 2016 DAHRRGA, DHPCLG

Status: Complete

The Town & Village Renewal Scheme was launched by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs on 9th August 2016, with funding of €10 million for 2016. Local Authorities were invited to submit up to 8 funding proposals in respect of each county by the end of September, 2016.

Following an assessment of the applications received, 172 towns and villages throughout the country were approved for funding in November 2016.

An increased allocation of €12 million has been provided for the Town and Village Renewal Scheme for 2017. The Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has announced her intention to run a pilot under the scheme in 2017 to encourage increased residential occupancy in town and village centres. DAHRRGA and DHPCLG will work together on advancing this proposal in 2017.

LOOKING FORWARD – THE NEXT QUARTER

The following are some of the key actions across the five Pillars that will progress significantly in the first quarter of 2017.

Pillar 1: Address Homelessness

Housing Provision and Homelessness Prevention

The main areas of activity here will be the continued roll out of the Homeless HAP scheme in Dublin, the operational advancement of the Housing Agency initiative to acquire 1,600 vacant housing units, tenancy protection measures and the planned provision of two additional temporary emergency accommodation facilities.

Abhaile Media Campaign

Mortgage arrears, personal insolvency and the risk of losing their home continues to be a pressing reality for many households. Supports, such as the Abhaile – Free Mortgage Arrears Support Service are available to help with independent expert legal and financial advice. Abhaile will begin a National awareness campaign on radio, print and digital media later this month with a view to targeting and supporting families and individuals at risk of losing their home.

Pillar 2: Accelerate Social Housing

HAP roll out to Dublin region

The introduction of HAP is transforming the delivery of social housing services by bringing together the social housing services provided by the State under the single umbrella of the local government system while removing barriers to employment by allowing households to continue to receive HAP support even if their income rises or they gain full-time employment. Preparations are underway to introduce HAP to the remaining three Dublin authorities from 1 March 2017. This will complete the full roll-out of the scheme and significantly increase the numbers of households who benefit from this key housing support.

Housing Agency Acquisitions

Dedicated exchequer funding of €70 million in 2017 is now in place to allow the Housing Agency expand its acquisitions programme with the aim of acquiring 1,600 vacant housing units in total by end 2020. The Housing Agency has been actively and positively engaged with banks and investment funds in relation to this acquisitions programme in recent months and is in a position to acquire a significant number of properties during the first quarter of 2017, thus providing further impetus to the delivery of additional social housing.

Pillar 3: Build More Homes

Consultation on National Planning Framework

On 2 February 2017 a comprehensive consultation process was launched on the development of the new National Planning Framework, which will culminate in a 20 year strategy for the spatial development of Ireland. The development of a Land Supply Management Strategy, is a critical component of the NPF, and will be central to ensuring that housing development is properly aligned with current and emerging social and economic needs and will be supported by an effective planning system and by appropriate investment in infrastructure over time. The strategic importance of this work cannot be overstated as it represents a necessary and vital first step to charting the critical pathway towards effective and sustainable housing delivery over the next two decades.

Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund

Funding decisions on projects approved for LIHAF funding will be announced in March 2017, paving the way for significant enabling infrastructure works on key strategic sites around our major urban areas, involving privately owned and mixed tenure developments to begin as planned in 2017.

Pillar 4: Improve the Rental Sector

Broader role of RTB

The Strategy for the Rental Sector will see the Residential Tenancies Board take on a broader role in delivering day-to-day services that meet the needs of both tenants and landlords. Improved enforcement of Determination Orders which will reduce losses to compliant landlords and tenants, and one-stop-shop information services for tenants and landlords will provide early practical demonstrations of its emerging role during Q1 2017.

Pillar 5: Utilise Existing Housing

National Vacant Housing Re-use Strategy

The Housing Agency is preparing a draft National Vacant Housing Re-Use Strategy, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and taking account of international good practice and experience. The strategy will provide clarity on the extent of vacant units and help inform policy measures to incentivise bringing available vacant stock into use for social and private housing.

Unfinished Housing Development Survey

A new survey of unfinished housing developments has been undertaken and the results are currently being finalised. The survey will be published during Q1 2017 and will support efforts to align social housing investment towards strategic acquisition opportunities.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ABP	An Bord Pleanála
AHB	Approved Housing Body
CAS	Capital Assistance Scheme
CCMA	County and City Management Association
CEUD	Centre for Excellence in Universal Design
CIF	Construction Industry Federation
COSC	National Office for the prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based violence
DAHRRGA	Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DoF	Department of Finance
DHPCLG	Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government
DoH	Department of Health
DJE	Department of Justice and Equality
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
DRHE	Dublin Region Homeless Executive
DSP	Department of Social Protection
HA	Housing Agency
HAP	Housing Assistance Payment
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HFA	Housing Finance Agency
HSE	Health Service Executive
ISIF	Ireland Strategic Investment Fund
LAs	Local Authorities
LGMA	Local Government Management Agency
LIHAF	Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund
NAMA	National Asset Management Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPF	National Planning Framework
NTMA	National Treasury Management Agency
OPW	Office of Public Works
Part 8	Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001- 2015
RAS	Rental Accommodation Scheme
RAPID	Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development
RIAI	Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland
RPZ	Rental Pressure Zone
RTA	Residential Tenancies Act
RTB	Residential Tenancies Board
SDZ	Strategic Development Zones
Solas	Further Education and Training Authority
TIC	Taking in Charge
TUSLA	The Child & Family Agency
USI	Union of Students of Ireland

