

KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

REVIEW OF TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME

2014-2018

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

A review of each Local Authority's Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018 was directed by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government in Circular 28/2016 dated 16th June 2016.

This report outlines the methodology used, outcomes and recommendations in reviewing Kilkenny Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018.

The review will also include:

- Implementation measures based on the assessment of current and projected need for TAP 2014-2018
- Progress Report on outcomes achieved to date
- Overview of the Annual Count of Travellers and their accommodation status each year from 201-2016, and
- Ongoing challenges identified in meeting some of the targets set out in TAP 2014-2018

2.1 METHODOLOGY

In carrying out this review it was recommended in Circular 28/2016 that the local authority (i) involve its Local Traveller Consultative Committee (LTACC); (ii) invite submissions from those groups it gave notice to prior to the preparation of TAP, and (iii) consult with local Traveller groups.

It was also recommended that the local authority inform the review by utilising existing information such as the Annual Traveller Count, Housing Needs Assessment and Progress Reports on the implementation of TAP.

As part of the consultative process the following actions were undertaken in carrying out this review:

1. Letters sent to agencies and individuals who contributed to preparation of TAP*
2. Schedule of office appointments made available to meet responders in person if requested/required*
3. Notification to neighbouring local authorities
4. Participated in consultation meeting with Kilkenny Traveller Health Workers and by invitation with members of Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement
5. Direct consultation with Travellers in Kilkenny City & County
6. Special meeting of LTACC scheduled to discuss review, in addition to inclusion on agenda of regular meetings.
7. Report presented at meeting of Housing SPC (See Appendix (i))

**[No submissions were received and no one availed of an office appointment]*

This review has also been informed by the Annual Traveller Count for the three year period from 2014-2016 incl., and the Housing Needs Assessment undertaken in 2016.

3.1 IMPLEMENTATION

Section 6 Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 requires each local authority, for the purposes of preparing their Traveller Accommodation Programme, in respect of their functional area, to make an assessment of the accommodation needs of Travellers. In the memorandum on the Preparation Adoption and Implementation of TAP 2014-2018 the Minister directed that 'Relevant housing authorities are required to identify the accommodation needs of Traveller families to be met under the programme. This must relate to ***the existing accommodation needs and the projected need that will arise during the period of the programme....***'

The following table outlines the implementation measures for the Traveller Accommodation Programme based on the assessment of current and projected needs undertaken in its preparation.

TABLE 3.2

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		
	Current	Proj	Current	Proj	Current	Proj	Current	Proj	Current	Proj	Total
Standard Housing	8	2	7	2	8	3	7	3	8	3	51
Group Housing			2		2		1				5
Residential Caravan Park							3	2			5
Single Instance Housing	1		1		1						3
Rural Cottage			1								1
Total	9	2	11	2	11	3	11	5	8	3	65

In light of the implementation measures outlined, the target by end of 2016 was **38 units of accommodation**, subdivided into the following categories:

- Standard Housing: 30 (23 Current & 8 Projected Need)
- Group Housing: 4
- Residential Caravan Park: 0
- Single Instance Houses: 3
- Rural Cottage: 1

Despite ongoing challenges, progress in meeting these targets has been significant as **the total number of families accommodated in their category of choice at end of Dec. 2016 stood at 46**, as outlined in Table 3.3

TABLE 3.3

	2014		2015		2016		Total
	Current	Projected	Current	Projected	Current	Projected	
Standard Housing	2	2	11	4	12	2	33
Group Housing			1		2		3
Residential Caravan Park	1		1			1	3

Single Instance Housing			1		2		3
Rural Cottage	1	1			2		4
Total	4	3	14	4	18	3	46

Summarised as follows:

- Standard Housing: 33 (25 Current & 8 Projected Need)
- Group Housing: 3
- Residential Caravan Park: 3 (2 Current & 1 Projected Need)
- Single Instance Houses: 3
- Rural Cottage: 4 (2 Current & 1 Projected Need)

TABLE 3.4

	Accommodation Required	Accommodation Delivered
2014	11	7
2015	13	18
2016	14	21
Total	38	46

A further interrogation of efforts to meet targets set out in TAP 2014-2016 will reveal that the total number of allocations included 9 Transfers and that 6 offers of accommodation were refused.

The most significant achievement of TAP has been the progress made in the redevelopment of St. Catherine's, Wetlands. Phase 1 has been completed with two houses already allocated, while Phase 2 has commenced, which will see the construction of four houses. Phase 3 will see the completion of the redevelopment with the construction of a minimum of two houses and a community facility.

Another significant milestone has been the purchase and allocation of a house to meet the needs of an elderly couple whose accommodation needs have been included in all four Kilkenny Traveller Accommodation Programmes since 2000. Progress in this regard was hindered by the particular needs of the family concerned, the difficulty in identifying and securing suitable accommodation and refusal by the family of housing offers made.

4.1 ANNUAL COUNT OF TRAVELLERS AND THEIR ACCOMMODATION STATUS

The Annual Count of Traveller Families and their Accommodation Status was carried out on November 24th 2016 as directed in Circular Letter 47/2016. The total number of Traveller families resident in the County on November 24th was **196**, indicating a 20% increase from 2015 and a 13% increase since 2013.

The table below gives an overview of the six key accommodation categories over 13 Annual Counts and highlights the changing trends in accommodation preferences during that period. ***(Please note***

the total number of families each year , denotes the total from all accommodation categories included in Department returns and not the total number of families in the accommodation categories listed below – See Appendix 2 for Full Report)

Table 4.2

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	170	170	157	196
Standard Lettings	50	52	58	67
RAS	10	10	11	13
HAP (PRA)	35	32	16	16
Halting Sites	10	10	10	4 +5*
Group Housing	8	8	8	10
Sharing	18	9	15	32
Roadside	3	0	2	7~

**Refers to 5 families residing at St. Catherine’s, whose bays have been demolished and who have been provided with temporary facilities during construction of Group Houses.*

~ Of the 7 roadside families identified on date of count, 2 were parked at Castletown, Rathdowney (not indigenous to Kilkenny) and 5 were parked at the Port Road, Ferrybank, 3 of whom have since secured PRA.

Of particular note are the following comparisons which demonstrate a year on year % increase in the number of families both sharing and on the roadside, and a significant % decrease in the number of families accessing PRA, with no improvement noted in 2016.

Table 4.3

	2013-2016	2015-2016
	% in	%
Families Sharing	43	53
Roadside Families	57	71
Families in receipt of HAP	-118	0

These trends reflect the overall housing crisis and lack of available private rented accommodation in Kilkenny City and County, the spike in new family formations at a younger age and the ongoing difficulty in sourcing suitable houses for purchase.

5.1 CHALLENGES

In spite of progress made, KCC still faces a number of key challenges in addressing the accommodation needs of Traveller families living in its functional area. These challenges can be summarized as follows:

1. Provision of appropriate Traveller Specific Accommodation to meet the needs of newly formed young families at St. Mary’s, Hebron. Addressing this need is hugely challenging given

- (i) the tradition of Travellers getting married at a young age, (ii) their dependence on extended family, (iii) need for ongoing supports and, (iv) inability to access alternative accommodation
- 2. Meeting the accommodation needs of roadside families in Ferrybank.
- 3. Growing demand for housing in Rosbercon, compounded by (i) scarcity of available housing, (ii) difficulties experienced by the local authority in completing house purchases and, (iii) the area's proximity to Co. Wexford.
- 4. Identifying and securing standard houses throughout the City and County for those families who have chosen this option as their accommodation of choice.

6.1 STRATEGY

Proposals to address these issues are largely in line with those outlined in Appendix 1 of TAP 2014-2014, and the housing authority will endeavour, for the remaining timeframe of TAP 2014-2018 to –

Hebron: The provision of a five bay halting site is still considered necessary to meet the needs of newly formed family units at Hebron. Ongoing consultation with the families concerned supports its use as transitional accommodation for young couples in preparation for transfer to standard /Traveller specific accommodation as required. Efforts are ongoing to identify a suitable site in the area, including locations in close proximity to the current Halting Site/Group Housing Scheme.

Ferrybank: Identify and acquire individual houses to meet the needs of families residing in Ferrybank. In the meantime to offer families supports, in partnership with our TSS providers, to access PRA. If these efforts prove unsuccessful, the housing authority may need to consider the provision of an authorised parking area with basic facilities.

Rosbercon: Continue to explore all available options to provide houses to meet the needs of families residing in Rosbercon. These efforts to include, (i) identifying and acquiring individual houses, (ii) construction of houses on privately owned sites, and (iii) consider allocation of any new LA houses constructed in the areahousing development of a green field site in the local authority's ownership.

City & County: Continue to identify and acquire individual houses to meet the needs of families throughout the City and County with particular attention required in the Callan Electoral Area. Ongoing consideration will also to be given to allocating vacant houses from social housing stock.

6.1 LOCAL TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Section 21 Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 directs each local authority to appoint a local traveller accommodation consultative committee (LTACC) to advise on the provision and management of accommodation for travellers.

The membership of Kilkenny LTACC, chaired by Cllr. Joe Malone comprises of three members and three officials of the local authority, five representatives the local Traveller and Traveller bodies and one official from the HSE.

The committee met on five occasions in 2016.

The committee enjoyed almost full attendance at each meeting, with the exception of a Traveller Representative from St. Mary's, Hebron. There is ongoing difficulty in engaging a participant from St. Mary's, despite the best efforts of all concerned.

The main topics for discussion throughout the year related to (i) The redevelopment of St. Catherine's, (ii) Increase in number of young families parked at St. Mary's, (iii) Difficulties in securing accommodation to meet the needs of families in South Kilkenny, (iv) Roadside parking in Ferrybank, (v) Acquisition of houses to meet the needs in Kilkenny City & County, (vi) Kilkenny Traveller Horse Project and (vi) Review of TAP 2014-2016.

Feedback from Traveller Representatives on the committee reflect a high level of regard for KCC, the positive engagement between staff and Travellers, and the willingness of all parties to sit around the table in an effort to resolve presenting difficulties. The quality of the relationship between Travellers, their support agencies and the Council has to be commended and reflects the ongoing efforts by all concerned to maintain this communication.

7.1 TRANSIENT SITES

Feedback from consultation with Traveller families and Traveller support groups indicate that they are steadfast in their view that the Council should not consider the provision of Transient Halting Sites anywhere in Kilkenny City and County.

8.1 CONCLUSION

Kilkenny County Council is well on target to meeting targets set out in TAP 2014-2018, and has exceeded targets to review date of December 31st 2016.

While success to date is to be commended, efforts will need to be sustained over the remaining two years of the programme to deliver accommodation for those families in greatest need, namely young families requiring ongoing supports who cannot access alternative accommodation and those families living without basic facilities parked on the roadside and in yards to rear of family homes.

It is important to note, that the increase in number of families living in Kilkenny is a direct result of new family formations within the existing population, and not an influx of families moving to Kilkenny from other counties.

The review of TAP 2014 -2018 has been duly completed under Section 17 (1) (a) of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998. Following this review, **no** amendment to the accommodation programme is proposed.

APPENDIX 1

Review of Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018 -Report for SPC 4 on Thursday November 10th 2016.

Kilkenny Traveller Accommodation Programme was adopted by Kilkenny County Council on March 18th 2014.

A review of the programme is currently in progress, as directed by the Minister under Section 17 (1) (a) of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. This review should be carried out no later than December 31st 2016.

The methodology used to carry out this review is outlined as follows:

- Reporting to and monitoring by members of LTACC (Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee). A special meeting of LTACC has been convened for November 24th 2016 to review the draft report and submit for adoption by The Council.
- Submissions will be invited from those groups who were given notice prior to the preparation of the TAP and to local Traveller Groups.
- Direct consultation with Travellers and Traveller Support Groups.
- Reappraisal of the assessment of accommodation need carried out in the preparation of the TAP, utilising information gained from the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) 2016, results of the Annual Traveller Count 2015 and Progress Reports on the Implementation of the TAP.

The Implementation Measures for the TAP based on the assessment of current and projected needs undertaken in the preparation of the TAP 2014-2018 are outlined in the following table.

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		
	Current	Proj	Current	Proj	Current	Proj	Current	Proj	Current	Proj	Total
Standard Housing	8	2	7	2	8	3	7	3	8	3	51
Group Housing			2		2		1				5
Residential Caravan Park							3	2			5
Single Instance Housing	1		1		1						3
Rural Cottage			1								1
Total	9	2	11	2	11	3	11	5	8	3	65

Progress in meeting the targets set out in the TAP has been significant - In 2014, 9 offers of accommodation were made (2 refusals), in 2015, 20 offers of accommodation were made (1 refusal) while in 2016, 17 offers of accommodation have been made to date (including 2 transfers, 2 refusals).

Probably the most significant achievement of the TAP has been the progress made in the redevelopment of St. Catherine's, Wetlands. Phase 1 has been completed with two houses already allocated, while Phase 2 has commenced, which will see the construction of four houses. Phase 3 will see the completion of the redevelopment with the construction of two houses and a community facility.

In spite of progress made, KCC still faces a number of key challenges in addressing the accommodation needs of Traveller families living in its functional area. These challenges can be summarised as follows:

5. Provision of appropriate Traveller Specific Accommodation to meet the needs of newly formed young families at St. Mary's, Hebron.

6. Meeting the accommodation needs of roadside families in Ferrybank. Challenges are exacerbated by the particular profile of the families concerned and ongoing difficulty in securing and allocating suitable houses in the area.
7. Growing demand for housing in Rosbercon, compounded by scarcity of available housing, estate agents reluctance to deal with the local authority and proximity to Co. Wexford.


The review of the TAP will outline proposals to meet these particular challenges.

If, following the review, these proposals necessitate an amendment to the TAP, KCC will be obliged to follow the same procedures and requirements, including public consultation and newspaper advertisements, as were required when the TAP was first adopted. The amended programme must be adopted within seven month of the publication of a notice that the local authority proposes to amend its TAP, in accordance with Section 17(3) of the 1998 Act.


Signed: _____

Margaret Newport

Senior Social Worker



LGCSB eReturns
Local Government Computer Services Board - An Bord Seirbhísí Ríomhaire Rialtais Áitiúil



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Review Topic:

Topic Title	Status
ANNUAL COUNT OF TRAVELLER FAMILIES AND THEIR ACCOMMODATION POSITION (27th November)	Complete

Q.1. Total number of Traveller families in the local authority area on date of the count:

TOTAL:	196
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Q.2. Number of families living as Tenants/Owners in:

(a) Standard Lettings	
(a) - (i.e. in local authority estates/social housing)	67
(b) Local Authority Traveller Group Houses	
(b)	10
----- (i) ----- Number of unoccupied Group Houses	
	0
----- (ii) ----- Number of unoccupied Group Houses which can be brought back into productive use (Please add a comment if less than number of vacancies)	
	0
(c) Houses acquired or improved with the assistance of local authority	
(c) - TOTAL (i)+(ii)+(iii) --- of which:	14
----- (i) ----- Shared Ownership Scheme	
	6
----- (ii) ----- New House/Special Traveller Grant	
	1
----- (iii) ----- Tenant Purchase Scheme	
	7
(d) Houses acquired by Travellers without Local Authority assistance	
(d) - (Estimate)	15
(e) Private Rented Accommodation (Estimate)	
(e) - TOTAL (i)+(ii)+(iii) --- of which:	29
----- (i) ----- Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)	
	13
----- (ii) ----- Rent Supplement	
	16
----- (iii) ----- Own Resources	
	0
(f) Voluntary Housing	
(f) - Total (i1)+(i2)+(ii1)+(ii2)+(iii1)+(iii2) --- of which:	8
----- (i1) ----- Standard Housing - Capital Assistance	
	8
----- (i2) ----- Standard Housing - Load and Subsidy Scheme	
	0
----- (ii1) ----- Group Housing - Capital Assistance	
	0

----- (ii2) ----- Group Housing - Loan and Subsidy Scheme	0
----- (iii1) ----- Halting Site Bays - Capital Assistance	0
----- (iii2) ----- Halting Site Bays - Loan and Subsidy Scheme	0
(g) Other	
(g) - (please specify by adding a comment below)	0
TOTAL:	
(a)+(b)+(c)+(d)+(e)+(f)+(g)	143
Q.2.1. Number of other families SHARING with Tenants/Owners in:	
(a) Standard Lettings	
(a) - (i.e. in local authority estates)	11
(b) Local Authority Traveller Group Houses	
(b)	7
(c) Houses acquired or improved with the assistance of the local authority	
(c) - TOTAL (i)+(ii)+(iii) --- of which:	6
----- (i) ----- Shared Ownership Scheme	6
----- (ii) ----- New House/Special Traveller Grant	0
----- (iii) ----- Tenant Purchase Scheme	0
(d) Houses acquired by Travellers without Local Authority assistance	
(d) - (Estimate)	8
(e) Private Rented Accommodation	
(e) - (Estimate)	0
(f) Voluntary Housing	
(f)	0
(g) Other	
(g) - (please specify by adding a comment below)	0
TOTAL:	
(a)+(b)+(c)+(d)+(e)+(f)+(g)	32
Q.3. Number of families living as tenants on serviced halting sites	
TOTAL	
(a)+(b)+(c) --- of which:	9
(a) Permanent (provided by local authority)	
(a)	4
(b) Permanent (provided by Voluntary Organisation)	
(b)	0
(c) Basic Service Bays:	
(c) - Total (i)+(ii)+(iii)	5

----- (i) ----- Pending the provision of permanent accommodation	0
----- (ii) ----- During construction periods	5
----- (iii) ----- In other circumstances (Please specify on comment line below)	0
(d) Number of Tenants in occupation of Basic Service Bays	
----- (i) ----- For over 2 years	0
----- (ii) ----- For under 2 years	5
----- (iii) ----- Number of unoccupied Basic Service Bays	0
----- (iv) ----- Number of unoccupied Basic Service Bays which can be brought back into productive use (Please add a comment if less than number of vacancies)	0

Q.3.1. Number of other families SHARING with tenant families on serviced halting sites

TOTAL	
(a)+(b)+(c) --- of which:	0
(a) Permanent (provided by local authority)	
(a)	0
(b) Permanent (provided by Voluntary Organisation)	
(b)	0
(c) Basic Service Bays:	
(c) - Total (i)+(ii)+(iii)	0
----- (i) ----- Pending the provision of permanent accommodation	0
----- (ii) ----- During construction periods	0
----- (iii) ----- In other circumstances (Please specify on comment line below)	0
(d) Number of Tenants in occupation of Basic Service Bays	
----- (i) ----- For over 2 years	0
----- (ii) ----- For under 2 years	0

Q.4. Number of families on Transient Sites

TOTAL:	0
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Q.5. Number of families on Unauthorised sites

TOTAL	
(a(i1+i2+ii1+ii2))+(b(i1+i2+ii1+ii2))+(c(i1+i2+ii1+ii2)) --- of which:	12
(a) On the roadside	
----- (i1) ----- Applied for accommodation With Basic Services (water and toilets and skip)	0
----- (i2) ----- Applied for accommodation Without Basic Services (water and toilets and skip)	4
----- (ii1) ----- Not applied for accommodation With Basic Services (water and toilets and skip)	0
----- (ii2) ----- Not applied for accommodation Without Basic Services (water and toilets and skip)	3

(b) In private gardens/yards/fields

----- (i1) ----- Applied for accommodation With Basic Services (water and toilets and skip) 2

----- (i2) ----- Applied for accommodation Without Basic Services (water and toilets and skip) 0

----- (ii1) ----- Not applied for accommodation With Basic Services (water and toilets and skip) 3

----- (ii2) ----- Not applied for accommodation Without Basic Services (water and toilets and skip) 0

(c) On other sites

----- (i1) ----- Applied for accommodation With Basic Services (water and toilets and skip) 0

----- (i2) ----- Applied for accommodation Without Basic Services (water and toilets and skip) 0

----- (ii1) ----- Not applied for accommodation With Basic Services (water and toilets and skip) 0

----- (ii2) ----- Not applied for accommodation Without Basic Services (water and toilets and skip) 0

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