

SUSTAINING THE PATHWAY TO HOME

(working title)

Homeless Action Plan Framework for the Dublin Region,
2014 to 2016.

Proposed for adoption by the Dublin Local Authorities

NOTE TO MEMBERS OF THE HOUSING SPC:

This draft plan is issued to the members of the Housing SPC as part of the consultation process to develop a Statutory Homeless Action Plan for the Dublin Region.

Feedback from the members of the SPC will be considered in the final draft version of the plan for consideration by the elected members of each of the Dublin Local Authorities.

Please note that this draft is subject to final editing and change as part of the consultation process.

Foreword (DRAFT and subject to amendment & revision)

These are very challenging times. Ireland's post-crash economic downward spiral seems to be abating and stabilising, however, we are not as yet in a period of sustained recovery and job creation. Unemployment remains stubbornly high (13.7 percent nationally (292,000 Persons) Q1. 2013) and Long-term unemployment is now more common among households without paid work and accounts for 62 percent of total unemployment. For the same period in the Dublin region more than one in ten persons is unemployed (11.3 percent or 70,000 persons)^[1]

With this harsh reality comes income inadequacy and erosion of the economic resilience of households and a reduction in their ability to withstand the challenges of rising costs of living. Weakened economic resilience creates the climatic conditions necessary for increased risk of homelessness for over-indebted households. The reality of homelessness and indeed the prospect homelessness is more severe for households who experience it today. Anxiety and stress related ill-health can also be accompanied by mental ill-health, substance misuse and by increased morbidity across a range of illnesses that reduce wellbeing.

Against this backdrop, Dublin continues to deliver on the national policy objectives of ending long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough. In 2012, we had 4,837 individuals who used our emergency accommodation services for at least one night. Of these, 2,486 individuals were new to our services. Many of these households were able to resolve their accommodation crisis with assistance, information and advice from our services. For some households who are experiencing crisis, their homelessness is enduring and they continue to use our temporary accommodation and the wrap-around assessment and support services. .

Our temporary accommodation capacity has increased to meet rising demand but at the same time we continue to work hard on advancing "Housing- Led" solutions that effectively end the experience of homelessness. In 2012 we ensured 879 individuals successfully moved away from homelessness into independent living, some with support as required. This achievement must be built on and must be surpassed in the future.

The *Pathway to Home* model, our housing-led model of service provision, is working. It is achieving person-centred outcomes with greater autonomy and independence for households who we support into independent living. Despite its many successes *Pathway to Home* needs further refinement and development together with consolidation of the suite of services it delivers across the different emergency accommodation types. We must be continuously vigilant and questioning with regard to its operation in order to ensure its relevance and fitness to support and sustain vulnerable households out of the homelessness.

Our collective goals of ending rough sleeping and long-term homelessness in Dublin requires that recalibrate our collective performance to achieve better outcomes for

our service users. In the current economic climate, this requires us to do more with less but also to work in smart, effective and sustainable ways.

This Homeless Action Plan Framework sets out the strategic aims and the thematic areas for core actions that are required to realise regional and national objectives. Detailed Annual Business Plans with targets will be developed 2014, 2015 and 2016. Progress will be closely monitored and reported on for examination by all stakeholders. In addition a new model of programme evaluation focussed on the experience of our service users will support review of the merit, worth and value of our services.

This Homeless Action Plan Framework will ensure the principle of “funding follows the service user” as we move from place-centred to person-centred support within the context of the housing-led approach. It will also continue the principle of evidence based decision making.

NB: Paragraph here on 2013 S10 funding allocation for Dublin – currently being finalised and agreed with DECLG @ 11/9/13 – and protecting the integrity of the Pathway to Home model.

I recommend the adoption of Homeless Action Plan Framework for the Dublin region for the three year period 2014 to 2016 as presented. This plan will build on the considerable progress that has been made to date in responding to long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough in the Dublin Region.

Mr Dick Brady

Chair of the Dublin Region Homeless Consultative Forum

Assistant City Manager, Dublin City Council

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1. Setting the scene for Dublin

1.1 Homelessness, housing and austerity

- Evidence informed narrative that connects the Irish crisis (financial, banking, economic, social and reputational (NESC, 2009)) with changes in housing market activity, its impact at the level of the household and on the overall housing system.
 - Challenges of an unstable housing market
 - Accessing to housing and the provision of housing to homeless households
 - Unmet housing need
 - The risk of housing exclusion and the prevention imperative
 - Pathways into homelessness in 2013
 - Households in housing insecurity (mortgage/ rent default and arrears)
 - Housing Plus: recognising the role of support and an integrated services model that delivers ‘housing plus’
 - Access to public services and the impact of austerity: having to do more with less

1.2 The revised national *Homeless Policy Statement*, 2013

- Narrative connecting the adoption of a housing-led approach to homelessness under revised policy at the national level to the reconfiguration of homeless services in Dublin under the *Pathway to Home* model of service delivery.
 - Understanding the housing-led approach to homelessness
 - The benefits of policy coherence between national and local levels
 - Infrastructure for policy development, consultation and information exchange
 - The challenge of building greater policy coherence across and within national and local levels
 - Attaining national policy objectives locally
 - Understanding what long-term homelessness is
 - Understanding what rough sleeping is

1.3 Making it work: delivering national policy on homelessness

- Narrative setting out the decision-making and delivery mechanisms required to implement national policy within the context of the Dublin region’s approach to partnership based service delivery. Emphasis placed on innovation and

problem-solving to end long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough in Dublin.

- The DECLG protocol for the delegation of Section 10 homeless funding in Dublin
 - Services performance and national KPIs
 - Financial reporting on expenditure
 - National lead for key service provision:
 - PASS
 - National Quality Standards
- The HSE funding and its Service Level Agreement with DRHE
- Dublin's governance structures and partnership working,
- Funding and service level agreements with service providers:
 - Prioritising cost-effectiveness and value for money
 - Service standards and costs
 - Accountability

1.4 Making it happen: leadership and a problem-solving approach

- Narrative on how Dublin's Homelessness Consultative Forum, Regional Implementation Advisory Group and Statutory Management Group will continue to take a leadership approach across the region in implementing government policy based on innovative and problem-solving approaches:
 - Obtaining the NAMA social dividend
 - Delivering Dublin's pilot Housing Assistance Payment for homeless households
 - Developing Dublin's Housing First project to end habitual and long-lasting homelessness
 - Strengthening Dublin's Homeless Action Teams and their activation of service users towards independent living
 - Underpinning Independent living: from place-centred to person-centred housing support

2. **The *Pathway to Home* model of service provision in Dublin**

- Narrative emphasising the key features of *Pathway to Home* model of service provision in Dublin, setting out key achievements to date and challenges for the future consolidation of services.
 - Key milestones in the development and delivery of *Pathway to Home*
 - *Pathway to Home*: a work in progress and lesson learned
 - HABITACT Peer Review 2013

- Service configuration going forward:
 - Consolidating the portfolio of *Pathway to Home* services during a period of austerity
 - Shared service approaches to reduce back-office costs
 - Other approaches/ options?
- Service performance monitoring
- Evaluating person-centred outcomes for service users

3. Homelessness in Dublin

- Narrative here will draw on all available and relevant evidence to give a detailed account of the extent, nature and experience of homelessness in Dublin. Using the ETHOS typology as its framework of reference for identifying relevant living situations that can be considered as constituting the experience of homelessness, the narrative will combine available quantitative and qualitative data. The source and methodology for data will be specified and explained.
 - The extent of the known population of homeless service users in 2013
 - Homeless service users in Dublin in 2013: identifying homeless population cohorts
 - Rough sleeping in Dublin
 - Destitute migrants experiencing homelessness
 - Families with children
 - Single adult males
 - Women
 - Characteristics of the known population of homeless service users
 - Trends and changes in the dynamic experience of homelessness in Dublin
 - Profiling the needs of homeless households
 - Hidden homelessness

4. Monitoring, evaluation and research

- The *Pathway to Home* data strategy
- The role of data in Pathway to Home service planning and operational decision-making
- Data and target setting on homelessness
- Monitoring and reporting to demonstrate effectiveness
- The evaluation model for Pathway to Home
- Research and research management

5. Vision and mission for homelessness in Dublin

5.1 Vision

The vision of the Homeless Agency Partnership set out in its 2007 – 2010 action plan, *A Key to the Door*, was as follows:

Long term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough will be eliminated in Dublin. The risk of a person or family becoming homeless will be minimal due to effective preventative policies and services. Where it does occur, homelessness will be short term and all people who are homeless will be assisted into appropriate housing and the realisation of their full potential and rights.

This vision has been virtually unchanged since its first appearance in the Homeless Agency Partnership's first action plan covering the period 2001 – 2003, *Shaping the Future* and is aligned with the vision and strategic aims of Ireland's national adult homeless strategy, *The Way Home* (2008 – 2013).

Over the period since its adoption, this vision has become the organising principle for both the development and delivery of homeless services in the Dublin region under consecutive action plans.

On this basis, it is proposed that this vision is maintained throughout the course of this homeless action plan 2013 to 2016 and furthermore that the following mission is adopted for the period to 2016.

5.2 Mission

In accordance with the aims and objectives of national policy on homelessness as revised in 2013, it is the mission of the Dublin Joint Homelessness Consultative Forum and its Statutory Management Group to achieve the following:

'An end to long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough in Dublin by 2016'¹

¹ Long-term homelessness is defined as 6 months or more in emergency accommodation and or sleeping rough.

6. Strategic aims on homelessness for Dublin, 2014 to 2016.

The vision and mission of this homeless action plan framework is underpinned by the following five strategic aims. These strategic aims are informed by the experience of Dublin Joint Homeless Consultative Forum service providers and service users and also seek to reflect submissions made to the Dublin Region Homeless Executive on the content and orientation of this homeless action plan framework.

These strategic aims are congruent with national policy objectives and remain consistent with both Dublin's *Pathway to Home* model of service provision and with the strategic direction and aims of the original statutory homeless action plan for Dublin, 2010 to 2013.

These aims maintain our overall focus on the need to prevent people from becoming homeless, to provide supports to people when they are homeless and to provide exits from homelessness to independent living *via* housing provision with support as required. This ensures continuity with previous action plans is maintained.

Aim 1:	Address the unmet housing need of people experiencing homelessness through a substantial increase in the provision of housing units alongside improved access to a wider range of affordable and secure housing options with support as required.
Aim 2:	Stop the occurrence of an episode of homelessness by delivering comprehensive preventative support services in housing, health and welfare alongside relevant, accurate and timely housing information and advice.
Aim 3:	Ensure the delivery of effective services for homeless people that meet their identified housing, health and welfare needs and produce the sought-after, person-centred outcomes set out in <i>Pathway to Home</i>
Aim 4:	Simplify and speed up an appropriate exit from emergency accommodation and rough sleeping in order to reduce the length of time people experience homeless to less than 6 consecutive months in any one episode prior to a departure to independent living.
Aim 5:	Eliminate the need for people to sleep rough through an expansion of the Housing First approach to address all aspects of habitual and long-standing rough sleeping and homelessness, including episodic and prolonged use of temporary emergency accommodation.

7. Action areas on homelessness for Dublin, 2014 to 2016.

A number of areas for action on homelessness in Dublin have been identified and are set out below. The specific details of each action area will be agreed, reviewed and reported on under the annual business plan on homelessness.

7.1 Annual Business Plan

In order to advance the delivery of the five strategic aims over the period to 2016, the Dublin Joint Homeless Consultative Forum and its Statutory Management Group will develop and publish an annual business plan for 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively.

The annual business plan will specify key tasks to be undertaken, their timelines and the stakeholder responsible for their delivery. Tasks will be identified and set out under core actions agreed against the core integrated actions areas of prevention, housing and support.

Action areas: high level details

Strategic Aim 1	Housing 1	<p>Increase the provision of adequate, affordable and secure housing units from the social and private rental sectors sufficient to meet the housing need of all homeless households. This will require the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) To meet immediate demand in the short-term, investigate the development of a dedicated and region-wide lettings service capable of securing access to rental housing options <i>via</i> the established social housing schemes including, <i>inter alia</i>, RAS, SHIP, social housing regeneration, SWA rent supplement and the forthcoming Local Authority Housing Assistance Payment, and;(b) The setting of actual numeric targets for housing provision for homeless households at the regional and local levels and their annual revision and alteration based on an annual assessment of housing need for homeless household conducted using PASS.
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In the short to medium-term, the active pursuit of housing procurement options within the open market, of stock transfer options to boost social housing regeneration and of priority work to secure the NAMA social dividend are also required.

Housing 2

- (a) Continue the Rent Supplement Pilot delivered in 2013 and work to improve the outcomes obtained for households exiting homelessness as well as ensuring the mainstreaming of the Pilot over the period to 2016.

This will also require that the enhanced role established for Community Welfare Officers is maintained and that their discretion and flexibility in accordance with SWA Circular 04/08 in assisting with emergency payments for rent deposits and the payment of rent supplement above the rent caps and limits is also maintained in order to speed up and smooth the path from homelessness into private rented sector housing. Adequate monitoring and reporting of discretionary payments made under Circular 04/08 is required to ensure the cost effectiveness of the Rent Supplement Pilot can be demonstrated.

- (b) Develop, implement and monitor a pilot Housing Assistance Payment scheme for a target group of homeless households and ensure its outcomes are evaluated at the level of the household and are reported to relevant policy decision-makers.

Strategic Aim 2

Further develop current protocols on institutional discharge from both acute hospital and prison settings that ensure the adoption of case management approach to discharge planning and that seek to eliminate discharges into homelessness. Ensure the effectiveness of protocols through an agreed monitoring mechanism.

Strategic Aim 1 and 2

Prevention and Support 1

(a) Develop a region-wide, integrated model of housing support that is pro-active in delivering early intervention to identify and resolve known risks of homelessness and that is reactive and capable of delivering housing and related support for households exiting homelessness to independent living.

This will require a review of the extent of current housing support against the original model set out in *Pathway to Home* and consideration of how to work towards integrating SLI and related housing supports with other local authority tenancy sustainment and housing welfare supports targeted at all tenant households (whether formerly homeless or not) whose tenancy is considered at risk of failure.

Measures to ensure flexibility and effectiveness in the development of an integrated model of housing support will also be required.

In addition, the development and delivery of relevant, accurate and timely housing information and advice on all aspects of housing will be required, including information and advice on the following:

- Good estate management practices
- Good neighbour practices
- Reducing allegations and/ or incidences of

		<p>anti-social behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent payments, housing allowances and arrears management • Mortgage arrears forbearance and foreclosure; • Housing welfare and tenancy sustainment <p>Work initiatives and partnerships with existing agencies will also be required and especially in relation to debt advice (utilities/ consumer debt/ hire purchase/ store cards/ legal moneylenders).</p>
<p>Strategic Aim 1 and 2</p>	<p>Prevention and Support 2</p>	<p>In collaboration with the relevant state agencies, maintain an aftercare service for young adults aged 18 to 26 years of age who are departing both institutional state care and substitute care (fostering) and are at risk of entering into adult homelessness.</p> <p>This will require the development of more fluid models of service provision between the HSE and Dublin local authorities and should take into account the recommendations arising from the 2013 Review of the Implementation of the Youth Homelessness Strategy.</p>
<p>Strategic Aim 4 and 5</p>	<p>Housing and Support 1</p>	<p>Build on the success of the Dublin Housing First Demonstration project and invest in developing a more comprehensive service with greater capacity to address all aspects of habitual and long-standing rough sleeping and homelessness, including episodic and prolonged use of temporary emergency accommodation.</p> <p>This will require the formal adoption of the following eight principles of Housing First under Dublin’s <i>Pathway to Home</i> model. Notably, many of these principles are already apparent in <i>Pathway to Home</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing as a basic human right

- Respect, warmth and compassion for all clients
- A commitment to working with clients for as long as they need
- Scattered-site housing complexes with independent apartments
- Separation of housing and services
- Consumer choice and self-determination
- A recovery orientation
- Harm reduction
- Interagency working based on the agreed care and case management approach of the Dublin Region

Under the principle of recognising the distinction between the provision of housing and services, work on a partnership basis to develop and install:

- (a) A unitary, region-wide social lettings, allocations and housing options mechanism among the four Dublin local authorities for households departing temporary emergency accommodation to independent living
- (b) A unitary, region-wide outreach service that works in conjunction with drug, addiction and mental health outreach services and that is better integrated with portfolio of emergency accommodation services established and in place under *Pathway to Home*.

Strategic Aim 3

Prevention, Housing and Support 1

While recognising the need to continue to provide adequate day services in Dublin city and county that deliver a range of services including respite, food, association, information and advice, continue to invest in the localisation and distribution of the full portfolio of *Pathway to Home* services across the Dublin region in order to maintain the on-going decentralisation of services out of Dublin city centre.

This will require;

- (a) The development of a network of regional service hubs of varying scale and scope modelled on the establishment in 2013 of the Dublin City homeless service hub in Parkgate Hall.
- (b) The support of all state agencies that are central to delivering the following suite of services: Welfare, Housing, Health and Social Services, Education and Labour Market programmes.
- (c) A continued focus on the integration of services through multi-agency and inter-disciplinary team working under the overall case management approach established as a constituent element of service delivery and as an accredited competence for staff working in *Pathway to Home* services.

Strategic Aim 3

Prevention, Housing and Support 2

Subject to the forthcoming National Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services, the development and adoption of a revised quality standards framework for the portfolio of services established under *Pathway to Home* remains an imperative.

This will require particular cognisance is taken to other relevant standards frameworks such as that developed in the health area (e.g. QUADS, Rehabilitation Framework, etc).

The range of service provision areas where standards are required includes all current and envisioned aspects of *Pathway to Home* services and includes organisational standards in relation to governance and accountability.

- In addition the development and adoption of a dedicated evaluation model is required

that reports on the achievement of person-centred outcomes for *Pathway to Home* service users.

- Alongside this is the need to maintain good understanding and public awareness of the issue of homelessness and what works to prevent it and effectively resolve it. This requires ongoing data collation, analysis and research is undertaken to develop knowledge and understanding and that supports information dissemination.

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