



Comhairle Contae Chiarraí
Kerry County Council

Dréachtchlár Lóistín don Lucht Siúil 2019 – 2024

Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, requires Housing Authorities, in consultation with the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC), representative organisations and with the general public, to prepare and adopt a five-year Traveller Accommodation Programme or for a shorter period as the Minister may direct, to meet the existing and projected needs of travellers in their area. The Act requires, also, that the programme be reviewed periodically and that the Local Authority take reasonable steps to ensure the programme is implemented. Under Section 10 of the 1998 Act the Minister has directed that this accommodation programme should be for a period of 5 years for the period from 1st July 2019 to 30th June 2024 and should be adopted by 30th September 2019. The current programme (2014 to 2018) will continue to operate until 1st July 2019.

The purpose of the 1998 Act and the Accommodation Programme is to put into place the necessary procedures, measures, resources and facilities which are required to successfully accommodate Travellers in a manner that will address all concerns relating to the provision of accommodation. Under the Act, responsibility for implementing the Traveller Accommodation Programme falls to Kerry County Council. The adoption, amendment or replacement of the proposed Accommodation Programme is a reserved function of the Elected Council.

In the preparation of this Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme, the Housing Authority has had regard to Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights Equality Commission Act 2014 which places a positive duty on public sector bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and protect human rights. The development of this programme has been informed by the provisions of the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017, specifically as it relates to the provision of accommodation for the Traveller and Roma communities.

The Council recognises Travellers' identity as a distinct ethnic group with their own customs, traditions and culture. Kerry County Council will, within the remit of the Traveller Accommodation Programme, support Travellers and their representatives in their endeavours to maintain and strengthen Traveller culture. There are many issues, such as education, training and employment, health and equality, which must be tackled in conjunction with the provision of Traveller Accommodation. This will require changes in attitudes and acceptance of different lifestyles from all parties involved, from both those providing and requiring accommodation, to the members of local communities in areas close to the accommodation.

During the term of the last Traveller Accommodation Programme, covering the period 2014 – 2018, 89 families (identified as travellers) were accommodated in Local Authority housing, on halting sites or through other housing supports.

Under Rebuilding Ireland, the Government has made available significant funding to Local Authorities to accelerate the delivery of social housing units. This has allowed the Council to embark on an ambitious building programme under its Housing

Delivery Programme 2018-2021. Kerry County Council's Housing Delivery target for the period 2018-2021 is to deliver 1,544 units under the broad headings of Build, Acquisition & Leasing. The Council also has additional annual targets for the provision of social supports such as HAP and RAS.

The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) provides a new framework for the provision of rental assistance and replaces rent supplement for those with a long-term housing need. Under this scheme, applicants will source their own accommodation within the private rented market and the tenancy will be between the HAP recipients and the private landlord. There are just over 1,000 active HAP tenancies in Kerry since launch date in December 2016. The demand in the client base continues to be high with 170 new tenancies set up in the first four months of 2019 in Kerry. Since its commencement in December 2016, 85 households in Kerry have used HAP as a path from Homelessness to a private tenancy.

The Department of Housing, Planning, & Local Government provide grants for Traveller Specific Accommodation, such as Group Housing and Halting Sites for Traveller Families, and also for refurbishment and remediation works. Kerry County Council has secured funding in 2019 for improvement works to St. Michael's Halting Site and Gortroe Halting Site. The Council has advised the Department that any new projects identified as part of the Traveller Accommodation Programme Process 2019 -2024 will be submitted on a case by case basis to the Department.

The Mitchel's/Boherbee Community Regeneration has been a truly transformative Project developed over a 15 year period. The project has resulted in the physical redevelopment of the area, with new housing developments both sheltered and traditional, major refurbishment schemes, energy efficiency upgrades, district heating scheme, the development of an Integrated Services Building serving the entire county, a 600 pupil Gael Choláiste (under construction), environmental improvement works, district allotments and a range of minor physical improvements including painting schemes and planting. Beyond the physical transformations that are so immediately apparent in the landscape, the project has driven change on a number of other levels. Through the participative process, the once-marginalised community is now at the centre of shaping its own future in collaboration with a range of State Agencies. In the process, through significant learning over a lengthy period of time, the approach by the Local Authority and State Agencies to the engagement of communities has been radically altered. The multi-agency targeted response to dealing with issues in the area has resulted in successfully overcoming many major physical, social, behavioural and environmental challenges that had impacted negatively on the community for many years. The recent completion of the 15 new housing units has further consolidated the improvements in the area and has provided both the settled and traveller community with high quality accommodation.

Kerry County Council, pursuant to the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 gave notice of its intention to prepare a Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2019 -2024. Fifty-three organisations were notified. In response to this notice, six submissions were received. All submissions have been considered in the preparation of this plan. When the Draft Plan goes on public display, the Housing

Authority will undertake additional direct consultation with the Kerry Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

Under Section 21 and 22 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees (LTACC) were established to facilitate consultation between Housing Authorities and Travellers and to advise on any aspect of accommodation for Travellers, and on the preparation and implementation of any accommodation programme. The Kerry LTACC plays an active and pivotal role in both the preparation and implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme in the County. The Committee meets four times a year. At these meetings the Housing Authority updates the Committee on the progress being made on the Traveller Accommodation Programme.

All housing allocations are made under Kerry County Councils Scheme of Allocations and various supporting policies – Strategic Plan for Housing Persons with Disability, Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy etc

SECTION 2: ASSESSMENT OF TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION NEEDS

2.1 Accommodation Need

Section 6 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 – as amended by Section 21 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 - requires Housing Authorities to carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of Traveller households for whom accommodation will be required during the period of the Programme.

Kerry County Council is committed to providing quality services to all citizens of the county. The provision of Traveller Accommodation and associated support services is a central part of the programme for Housing and Social support.

The housing needs assessment is based on the Housing Needs Assessment carried out in June 2018, and pre-draft submissions on the proposed Traveller Accommodation Programme.

The Central Statistics Office, utilising information collected as part of the 2016 census, indicates that there were 147,707 people residing in Kerry at the time of the census and 968 of these (0.6% of the population of County Kerry) identified themselves as Travellers.

The majority of Traveller households, who are living in Kerry and are applicants for social housing, are accommodated:

- On serviced halting sites.
- In private rented accommodation and in receipt of social supports
- Living with family members.
- Living in caravans.
- Availing of emergency accommodation.

2.2 Identified Housing Need

A Summary Social Housing Assessment (SSHA) was undertaken in June 2018 in accordance with the 2009 Housing Act and regulations made under it. The purpose of this statutory SSHA is to determine the number of households requiring a social housing option in the county. It also determines the basis and classification of the need. The result of this assessment was that, in June 2018, 2,917 households were identified with a social housing need in Kerry. This included 97 traveller households which represents 3.3% approx. of the overall demand.

2.3 Location of Housing Need

Applicants can express a preference for up to three areas in which they would like to live. The 97 Traveller families who are applicants within the county made a total of 130 selections based on Area of Choice (AOC). The overall demand breaks down as follows:

Town	Total
Tralee	67
Killarney	25
Listowel	9
Abbeydorney	3
Ardfert	4
Castleisland	3
Abbeydorney	3
Milltown	2
Killorglin	2
Kilcummin	2
Farranfore	2
Annauscaul	1
Ballybunion	1
Ballyheigue	1
Ballymacelligott	1
Barraduff	1
Castlegregory	1
Fossa	1
Kenmare	1
Lixnaw	1
Total	130

2.4 Accommodation Options

The experience of Kerry County Council is that traveller families by and large wish to be accommodated in standard housing and halting sites are seen as a temporary accommodation measure while awaiting standard housing. Only three households approved for social housing have requested traveller specific accommodation.

Kerry County Council will inform Travellers, Traveller Support Groups and other voluntary organisations concerned with Traveller accommodation, of the range of options available to Traveller households, seeking accommodation. The Council will encourage Travellers to avail of the following options:

- Rented Local Authority Housing
- Rented Voluntary Housing
- Private Rented Accommodation
- Private Rented Accommodation (with social supports e.g. HAP)
- Traveller Specific Accommodation
- Leased Accommodation

- Home modifications necessitated by disability requirements

There are 24 fully serviced demountable/modular units on halting site bays in Kerry. Eighteen households accommodated on halting site bays have an open application for standard group housing. Kerry County Council will review and continue to assess the need for additional halting sites, both transient and permanent in Kerry during the term of the plan

There is no traveller specific group housing available in Kerry at present. Kerry County Council recognises that it is desirable to provide culturally appropriate accommodation where there is a demand. The Council intends to explore options for the provision of traveller specific group housing in 2019. In addition the Council will explore options for the provision of Traveller specific accommodation with CENA (the Traveller Led Voluntary Accommodation Housing Association)

The Council also recognises that some Traveller families are in a position to provide accommodation from their own resources. There are currently 57 homes in the County, of which we are aware, in the private ownership of Travellers (2016 Census). The Council has a number of schemes that may facilitate a path to home ownership or enable the adaptation of privately owned property to better address housing need e.g. Tenant Purchase Scheme, Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans, Reconstruction Loans, First Time Buyer Grants for Travellers and Housing Adaptation Grants for people with a Disability/Older People

2.5 Housing Need of People with a Disability

The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability sets out the framework for the delivery of housing for people with a disability through mainstream social housing. The Kerry Strategic Plan for Housing persons with Disabilities sets out the objectives and implementation mechanisms for the assessment and delivery of housing for people with a disability in the County. Eight traveller households have been approved for inclusion on the SSHA on the basis of disability. One of these households has been approved for a specially adapted unit on the grounds of physical disability and the Housing Authority will work to resolve their housing need during the course of the new programme.

2.6 Emerging Housing Need

In accordance with the provisions of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998, and the Minister's direction an assessment of the projected accommodation needs of Traveller families arising during the duration of the programme has been undertaken. Projected need has been calculated based on the following:

- The number of Traveller children who will reach the age of 18 during the period 2019-2024 living in social housing or in families qualified for social housing.

- The preliminary results of the Kerry Travellers Health and Community Development Project Housing Needs Assessment (further consultation will take place on this assessment as the results are finalised)
- The number of social housing applications being made annually.

An analysis of the number of housing applications over the lifetime of the last two Traveller Accommodation Programmes has indicated that there is a significant downward trend in the number of travellers presenting with a housing need. In the period 2009-2013, 107 traveller households made an application for housing supports. In the period 2014-2018, only 79 such applications were made. While past activity is not, in itself, an indicator of future demand, it is a factor which needs to be considered in predicting future housing need. However, the number of children living with their parents or who will reach the age of 18 during the lifetime of this programme, as discussed below, suggests that the level of housing need may rise.

National Statistics indicate that members of the Travelling community tend to marry and form new households at an earlier age than people in the wider community. However, only 10 of the main applicants in the 98 traveller families currently qualified for social housing are under the age of 25. It is evident that a substantial number of young adult travellers do not apply for social housing. The reason for this is not clear. The Housing Authority cannot accurately estimate the number of housing units that will be required in circumstances where housing applications are not being made.

However, it is recognised that there will be an emerging demand for housing from younger travellers which must be met. The number of Traveller children who will reach the age of 18 during the period 2019-2024 living in social housing or in households qualified for social housing supports is 120 approximately.

While difficult to estimate accurately, Kerry County Council has considered the age profile of existing Travellers and the rate of new family formation within the county in determining the number of new Traveller families likely to present with a housing need over the period of the programme. It is estimated that there could be an additional 65 new families who will require accommodation during the period 2019-2024.

2.6 Summary of Accommodation Needs

There are 97 housing units required to meet the needs of traveller households approved for social housing supports. These households, in addition to the estimated emerging need of 65, bring the total estimated number of traveller households that require accommodation during the term of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 to 162.

It is expected that newly formed Traveller households will make suitable arrangements for their accommodation pending the provision of accommodation by Kerry County Council through income supports such as the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Scheme. Their long term needs can be best addressed through the

provision of long term housing solutions – standard social housing, voluntary housing, halting site bays and leased accommodation.

2.7 Transient Sites

The 1998 Act respects the culture of nomadism and puts in place an integrated approach to traveller accommodation issues. The Act specifies that in addition to the need for permanent accommodation, local authorities must also assess the need for transient facilities.

Having carried out this assessment, the position in Kerry remains unchanged from the previous plan. It is considered that Travellers who would fall into this category in County Kerry comprise:

- a) Mobile/Commercial Traders who periodically trade in the County for short periods
- b) Travellers visiting major annual festivals in the County

We remain of the view that commercial traders should secure their own accommodation on commercial sites. Where such traders park illegally on public property, the provisions of Roads, Planning and other relevant legislation will be used to secure their removal together with seizure of goods placed or stored on public property.

In relation to the second category, it remains Council policy that responsibility for providing accommodation for all campers and caravan owners including Travellers visiting festivals will rest with the festival organisers/promoters.

Kerry County Council will, where possible, co-operate with organisers/promoters to help them meet their obligations in this regard. If necessary, the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee will examine ways in which difficulties experienced by Traveller families seeking to access commercial camping sites and the concerns of operators of these sites can be overcome.

It continues to be the case that no significant demand for the provision of transient sites has been established. The Council will continue to engage with representative organisations on this matter. It shall be the policy of Kerry County Council that any consideration to be given to the provision of sustainable Transient Sites will be done in full consultation with other Local Authorities on a regional basis. This position will be reviewed during the term of this programme

Section 3: POLICY STATEMENT

The Council recognises Travellers' identity as a distinct group with their own customs, traditions and culture. It is the policy of Kerry County Council to provide suitable accommodation for Traveller households in its administrative area, in accordance with the Assessment of Need carried out under The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998

3.1 Ongoing Consultation

It is the Council's policy to consult on an ongoing basis with Travellers and their representatives, in particular, the Local Traveller Consultative Committee, based on Department of the Housing, Planning & Local Government Guidelines, about their accommodation needs, and to provide, based on demand, where appropriate, Traveller specific accommodation.

3.2 Accommodation Targets Under the Programme

Total demand, both current and projected, amounts to 160 households approximately. It is proposed to accommodate these households over the five years of the programme in the following accommodation options: - halting site bays, casual vacancies, rented accommodation with social supports, leased accommodation and local authority / voluntary housing allocation as set out in the table below.

Accommodation	2019 <i>From 1/7/19</i>	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 <i>To 30/6/24</i>	Total
Filling Halting Site vacancies	1	3	3	3	3	2	15
Private rented accommodation with Social Supports	9	19	19	19	19	10	95
Leased Accommodation	1	3	3	3	3	2	15
Direct Local Authority and Voluntary Housing Provision	3	7	7	7	7	4	35
Total Accommodation	14	32	32	32	32	18	160

The provision of accommodation for Travellers will also involve:

- i. An assessment of means of families requesting accommodation.
- ii. An assessment of accommodation requirements of families.
- iii. Management and maintenance arrangements for the accommodation.

iv. Compliance with various regulatory requirements.

3.3 Policy Statement

3.3.1 Kerry County Council recognises Travellers identity as a minority ethnic group and it is the policy of the Council to provide appropriate accommodation for qualified Traveller families who request it and who, pursuant to generic housing legislation and the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998, are considered to have a long term need for accommodation.

3.3.2 Applications must be made by means of the standard application form for accommodation and all applications will be considered. Advice and assistance will be provided to applicants and/or their representatives if requested by the applicant to address any difficulties that may arise in completing the application process.

3.3.3 In accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy, Garda reports are sought on all prospective tenants, in accordance with the provisions of Section 15 Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1997.

3.3.4 All applicants for social housing will be assessed in accordance with the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011, as amended by regulation, and any future regulations that may be made during the life of the programme. All properties are allocated in accordance with the Kerry County Council's adopted Social Housing Allocation Scheme which is made in accordance with Social Housing Allocation Regulations 2011.

3.3.5 It is the Council's policy that, where feasible, the preferred option in terms of accommodation type requested will be considered. If this is not possible other accommodation options may be offered to individual households. In circumstances where two offers of accommodation have been refused without good reason, applicants may be removed from the waiting list in accordance with the Council's adopted allocation scheme.

3.3.6 Kerry County Council will implement this programme based on consultation with members of the public, community based voluntary organisations, where appropriate, other statutory agencies, the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee, the Voluntary sector, and other relevant bodies.

3.3.7 In circumstances where families vacate Local Authority accommodation and re-apply for accommodation all factors will be taken into consideration when assessing the new application. Kerry County Council must be satisfied that the reasons given for vacating the previous accommodation are reasonable and not for the sole purpose of securing alternative accommodation.

3.3.8 The Council take into consideration the behaviour of applicants, during a previous tenancy, including the reason for the surrender of previous tenancy, payment of rent, the condition of the property when handed back, and the proper disposal of rubbish, as well as any issues of anti-social or nuisance behaviour.

3.3.9 Persons who own horses are obliged to comply with the requirements of the Control of Horses Act, 1996 and Local Government Bye-Laws 1998 and 2013.

3.3.10 Kerry County Council supports an interagency approach in the delivery of Traveller services.

3.3.11 Tralee Community Horse Project is seen as a best practice model of partnership involving different agencies and the Traveller community. This project has been successful in enabling Travellers access to land for grazing and stables for horses.

3.3.12 Kerry County Council provides specialist staff to assist in the provision of appropriate Traveller accommodation in the County.

3.3.13 Kerry County Council will assist families prior to and after the allocation of accommodation and training will be provided in conjunction with Kerry County Council's pre-tenancy training programme.

3.3.14 Kerry County Council will encourage Traveller families to take part in Tenant Participation Programmes and Residents Associations.

3.3.15 Accommodation will be provided to a high standard, and maintenance of this accommodation will be provided in accordance with the Council's policy in relation to the general housing / accommodation stock.

3.3.16 Kerry County Council will have regard to the requirements of the National Guidelines for Traveller Accommodation (Nov 1998) & the Consultation Guidelines for Traveller Specific Accommodation (Aug '08) in the construction, maintenance and management of Traveller accommodation.

3.3.17 All Council housing stock, including Traveller specific accommodation, is managed in accordance with the Council's policy for the Management and Maintenance of rented housing stock. Together with this all tenants are required to sign a tenancy agreement which outlines the terms and conditions of the tenancy including tenant responsibilities for maintenance, anti-social behaviour etc. A pre-tenancy course is provided to ensure that the rights and responsibilities of tenants and those of the Housing Authority are understood. Kerry County Council will encourage Traveller families to take part in Tenant Participation Programmes and Residents Associations.

3.3.18 Each tenant has a responsibility to ensure that the terms of the tenancy are met in full and the Council will ensure that the terms are enforced. Estate management unit promotes the interest of tenants and the avoidance, prevention and abatement of anti-social behaviour in Council housing estates in accordance with Kerry County Council's Anti-social Behaviour Strategy. Therefore, Kerry County Council shall, in the interests of good estate management, use all legislative powers at their disposal to control anti-social behaviour on the part of all of its tenants and applicants approved for social housing support.

3.3.19 Travellers who are assessed as homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless can avail of the Homeless services provided by Kerry County Council Homeless Information Centre. The Traveller Liaison Officer will also assist Travellers in homeless situations. Where it is deemed that families require homeless emergency accommodation, appropriate family type accommodation will be provided (subject to availability). The primary solution for dealing with homeless persons in emergency accommodation is to transition to private rented accommodation with the support of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

3.3.20 The Council will implement its procedures to ensure a co-ordinated response, when temporary dwellings are identified, in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.

A temporary dwelling means any tent, caravan, mobile home, vehicle, other structure or thing (whether on wheels or not) which is capable of being moved from one place to another, and is or was used for human habitation, either permanently or from time to time or was designed, constructed or adapted for such use. Public place means any street, road or other place to which the public have access whether as of right or by express or implied permission and whether the subject to or free of charge and any property or other land owned or occupied by or leased to a public authority. A Council Official will investigate the circumstances of the household in the temporary dwelling and take appropriate action.

3.3.21 Under Section 10 39(C) of the Housing Act 1998, a relevant housing authority in preparing an accommodation programme, must take into account the needs of transient Traveller families. Given the numbers and pattern of movement of Traveller families in Kerry the provision of a transient site within the County is not considered a necessity at this point in time but will be kept under review during the term of the programme. That said, the provision of transient accommodation must be pursued on a national/regional basis with transient accommodation provided as part of a co-ordinated network of sites throughout the country.

3.3.22 The responsibility for providing accommodation for all campers and caravan owners including Travellers visiting festivals will rest with the festival organisers/promoters. Kerry County Council will, where possible, co-operate with organisers/promoters to help them meet their obligations in this regard.

Section 4 - Strategy

4.0 STRATEGY FOR SECURING IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Implementing Authority

Kerry County Council is the implementing authority for the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024 and has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Programme in its functional area. Specific responsibility for the provision of suitable, cost effective, good quality accommodation and the implementation of the programme lies with the Housing Department.

4.2 Provision of Accommodation

4.2.1 It is the aim of Kerry County Council to provide accommodation, in so far as is possible, that responds to the different needs of Travellers using the full range of social housing supports and various forms of social housing delivery including; standard local authority housing provided under the Social Housing Investment Programme (SHIP); leased units provided by either the Council or an Approved Housing Body under the Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme (SHCEP); Traveller specific accommodation or private rented accommodation supported through the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme. Loans under the “Rebuilding Ireland” Loan Scheme are available to Travellers who wish to provide their own accommodation.

4.2.2 Kerry County Council continues to work with the various Approved Housing Bodies operating in the county for the delivery of the various social housing options funded under the Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme (SHCEP), the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) and the Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF). Kerry County Council intends to explore options for the provision of traveller specific group housing with CENA, (the Traveller Led Voluntary Accommodation Housing Association).

4.3 Public Relations and Consultation

The good working relationship between the Council and Kerry Travellers Health & Community Development Project will continue to be developed, and open channels of communication and regular interaction, will help support the operation of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. The continued effective working of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee is important to ensure confidence in the delivery of the targets set out in the Traveller Accommodation Programme. Kerry County Council will continue to operate the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee having regard to any recommendations from National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

4.4 County Development Plan

The Kerry County Development Plan 2015-2021 sets out planning policy and objectives for the provision of social housing in a sustainable and inclusive manner. In the preparation of the plan, the Planning Authority had regard to the policies and accommodation targets set out in the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018. It noted that in the majority of cases Travellers had indicated a preference for standard group housing. Preparation of the next County Development Plan will commence at the end of 2019 and it will be an objective of the plan to facilitate the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024.

4.5 Management and Maintenance Arrangements for Traveller Accommodation

It is essential that adequate arrangements are made for the management and maintenance of Traveller accommodation in order to ensure that the accommodation and surrounding areas are maintained in good condition and that the families are successfully located there. A Caretaker will continue to be provided for existing permanent Halting Sites. The Caretaker must receive full support and co-operation from all residents in order for standards to be maintained. Members of local communities can be assured that the Halting Site accommodation in their areas will be adequately maintained and managed.

Regulatory powers are available to ensure that Traveller accommodation is successfully managed in accordance with the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998, Litter Pollution Act 1997 and other relevant legislation.

The maintenance and management of the accommodation will also be dealt with in conjunction with the Letting Agreements.

A sense of responsibility and ownership of Bays or houses must be encouraged among residents of the accommodation in order to reduce the level of management and maintenance required for the various sites and schemes.

Support will be required from the Caretaker of the accommodation, Council staff involved with Traveller accommodation, Travellers support representatives and any other interested parties to ensure Travellers adequately maintain their Bays, Halting Sites or houses. All new tenants will be advised fully of their responsibilities as part of the Council's Pre Tenancy Course.

4.6 Procedures for Resolving Difficulties

The Council's Traveller Liaison Officer along with Staff involved in the provision of Traveller accommodation will be available to provide assistance in the event of any difficulties arising with regard to the accommodation. Problems in relation to the maintenance of the accommodation must be raised initially with the Caretaker or immediate Council Staff involved in the maintenance of the accommodation. Inspections will be carried out, and repairs completed as necessary, in accordance with the letting agreements, as is the case for Local Authority standard housing repairs.

Traveller families will be visited regularly by the Traveller Liaison Officer or other Council Support Staff involved in Traveller accommodation in order to help resolve difficulties which may arise from the accommodation.

Where required, discussions and meetings will be held by Council staff with members of the local Community regarding any related problems which may arise following the provision of accommodation in their locality.

Appropriate action will be taken to resolve the problems, as soon as possible, following an assessment of the particular situation by the Council.

4.7 Programme Progress Review

Ongoing monitoring of progress will be undertaken by the Council in relation to the implementation of the Accommodation Programme and updates provided to the LTACC as required. A review of the programme will be carried out after three years, in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

Section 5 - IMPLEMENTATION

5.0 Measures For Implementation

Pursuant to the 1998 Act, Kerry County Council will have responsibility for the implementation of the five-year accommodation programme. The Council will take all reasonable steps required to secure its implementation. Kerry County Council recognises that it is through respect, acceptance of mutual responsibility and actions that the Traveller Accommodation Programme can be advanced

5.1 Provision of a Range of Accommodation to Meet Needs

An Administrative Officer has been assigned by the Council to assist with the preparation, development and implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme. This will continue to be the case.

5.2 Assistance for Travellers to Provide Own Accommodation

Travellers who may be in a position to provide their own accommodation will be encouraged to acquire their own dwellings either from their own resources or with the assistance of loans or other Social Housing options, subject to meeting the qualifying criteria to avail of these options.

Council support staff for Travellers will advise families seeking accommodation to consider all the options in relation to the provision of their own accommodation.

5.3 Assistance to Approved Housing Bodies

The Council will consider providing land to Approved Housing Bodies in respect of the provision of housing for Traveller families as outlined in the Traveller Accommodation Programme.

5.4. Arrangements for the Proper Management of Traveller Accommodation

Experience to date has shown that close and regular contact is required with families in Traveller accommodation if progress is to be achieved towards the proper management of sites. It was to that end that a Halting Site Sub-Committee was set up and this committee meets with the Council on a quarterly basis to ensure the effective management, maintenance and review any issues in relation to the sites.

Appropriate action will be taken by the Council in the event of any breach of agreements by residents in Traveller accommodation to ensure that the accommodation is managed successfully for everyone involved and that high maintenance standards are kept in these areas.

Section 6 - Conclusion

Substantial progress was made during the terms of previous Traveller Accommodation Programmes. It is expected that the provisions of this Traveller Accommodation Programme will serve to meet the accommodation needs of Travellers over the period 2019 – 2024. However, implementation is dependent on the level of resources available, conditions in the private housing market and full co-operation by all stakeholders. In order that the Programme continues to reflect the accommodation needs, a review will be undertaken in 2021.

Local Authorities have responsibility to ensure that accommodation is provided for the Traveller community. The Traveller community in turn has responsibilities in relation to the community at large. It is expected that the Council, the settled community and the Traveller community will mutually recognise these responsibilities and will work together to achieve the objectives of this Programme. Other statutory bodies and semi-state agencies have responsibilities in relation to the Traveller community also. The Council expects that these will participate in the implementation of this Programme in a co-ordinated way to build on the benefits that accommodation delivered under this programme will bring.

The Council acknowledges the significant contribution of all relevant stakeholders in the successful implementation of the Traveller Accommodation programme together with the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee and the Members of Kerry County Council who have a pivotal role to play in its implementation.