

MID-WEST REGION HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN 2022-2025



Limerick | Clare



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**
Limerick City
& County Council



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DSP	Department of Social Protection
Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	HAP is a national scheme and a form of social housing support provided by all local authorities. Under HAP, local authorities can provide housing assistance to households with a long-term housing need, including many long-term Rent Supplement recipients.
HHAP (Homeless HAP Assistance Payment)	The Homeless HAP scheme provides additional financial and related supports to tenants and landlords, along with all of the benefits of the national HAP scheme. The local authority must have determined that the household is homeless and has no alternative accommodation options prior to approval of a HHAP payment.
HF - Housing First	Housing First, is a person-centred approach which provides permanent, secure accommodation for people with a history of rough sleeping or long-term use of emergency accommodation, and complex needs. Intensive health and mental health supports are provided as required to help people maintain tenancies.
HSE Health Service Executive	Health Service Executive is responsible for the provision of healthcare and social supports for homeless persons managing a significant annual budget for direct homeless services.
NTQ Notice to Quit	If a landlord or tenant wants to terminate the tenancy of a house let for rent or other valuable consideration, a valid written notice of termination must be served.
PASS (Pathway Accommodation and Support System)	PASS is the shared client support and bed management system for homeless services. PASS is the shared system in operation across statutory and voluntary homeless services. It is coordinated by the National PASS Office in the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE).
PEA - Private Emergency Accommodation	This may include hotels, B&B's and other residential facilities that are used on an emergency basis.
RAS Rental Accommodation Scheme	This is a form of social housing support provided by local authorities.
RPZ - Rent Pressure Zones	A Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) is a designated area where rents cannot exceed general inflation, as recorded by Harmonised Index of the Consumer Price (HICP), or 2% per year pro rata, where HICP inflation is higher. This applies to new and existing tenancies (unless an exemption is being applied).
STA	Supported Temporary Accommodation, including hostels, with onsite professional support.
TEA	Temporary Emergency Accommodation: emergency accommodation with no (or minimal) support.
TUSLA	Child and Family Agency. Dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mid West Region Homelessness Action Plan 2022-2025 was prepared by the local authorities of Limerick and Clare and the Health Services Executive (HSE), having regard to the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 as it relates to Homelessness. During the lifetime of the previous Action Plan, 2013-2018, significant challenges were faced across the region in dealing with the increasing numbers of individuals and families presenting as homeless to the local authorities. The development of relationships between the local authorities and homeless service providers in the region has been critical in dealing with the many and complex issues that have arisen, not least of which is access to accommodation, either through local authorities, approved housing bodies or the private rental market.

Unfortunately, the backdrop to the development of the new Action Plan 2022-2025 remains the persistent high level of homelessness in the region, despite the significant interventions undertaken to prevent homelessness in the first instance. The causes of homelessness are complex and diverse and the significant numbers presenting to Homeless Services, and the increase in placements in emergency accommodation, have continued throughout the duration of the last Action Plan.

The cycle of presentations, placements to and exits from emergency accommodation continues and the priority areas listed below will remain for the foreseeable future:



Prevention



Tenancy
Sustainment



Emergency
Accommodation



Models of
Provision



Quality
Provision



Exit
Strategies



Health and
Welfare
Supports



Multi Agency
Approach

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MID-WEST REGION HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN 2022-2025



INTRODUCTION:
MID-WEST REGION
HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN
2022-2025

INTRODUCTION: MID WEST REGION HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN 2022-2025

The local authorities of Limerick and Clare form the Mid-West Region Homelessness Forum, together with the Health Service Executive (HSE) and relevant statutory and voluntary agencies. Limerick City and County Council has been designated as lead authority for the Mid-West region.

The Mid-West Region Homelessness Action Plan was prepared having regard to the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 as it relates to Homelessness and sets out the priorities for the region for the next three years.

In accordance with Section 37 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 each Housing Authority must prepare an Action Plan to address homelessness. The Plan must specify the measures proposed to be undertaken to address homelessness in the administrative area(s) concerned by the Housing Authorities, HSE and other bodies providing services to address homelessness.

The Plan must include, but is not limited to, the following objectives:

- The prevention of homelessness
- The reduction of homelessness in its extent or duration
- The provision of services, including accommodation, to address the needs of homeless households
- The provision of assistance under Section 10(1)(b), as necessary, to persons who were formerly homeless
- The promotion of effective co-ordination of activities proposed to be undertaken by the bodies referred to in this subsection for the purposes of addressing homelessness in the administrative area or areas concerned.

Housing supply is critical to dealing with homelessness. A key priority of the 2016 Rebuilding Ireland: An Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness was to accelerate and expand the delivery across all tenures, including social housing. This is a continuing priority in the 2020 Programme for Government - Housing for All which launched in September 2021.

Each of the Local Authorities in the Mid-West Region are advancing their respective housing capital programmes under the various delivery mechanisms (direct construction, vacant units, acquisition, leasing, Part V, and affordable housing), which are subject to ongoing liaison with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Furthermore, Approved Housing Bodies have also intensified their delivery of new social units in collaboration with the two local authorities concerned. The delivery of social units is progressing in parallel with the activities set out in this action plan.

STATUTORY PROVISION OF THE HOUSING ACT 1988

The relevant statutory provisions regarding homelessness are provided under Section 2 and Section 10 of the Housing Act 1988, as outlined below:

SECTION 2 OF THE HOUSING ACT 1988 PROVIDES:

A person shall be regarded by a housing authority as being homeless for the purposes of this Act if:

- (a) there is no accommodation available which, in the opinion of the authority, he, together with any other person who normally resides with him or who might reasonably be expected to reside with him, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of or,
- (b) he is living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution, and is so living because he has no accommodation of the kind referred to in paragraph (a), and he is, in the opinion of the authority, unable to provide accommodation from his own resources.

SECTION 10 OF THE ACT OF 1988 PROVIDES:

- (1) A housing authority may, subject to such regulations as may be made by the Minister under this section:
 - (a) make arrangements, including financial arrangements, with a body approved of by the Minister for the purposes of section 5 for the provisions by that body of accommodation for a homeless person,
 - (b) provide a homeless person with such assistance, including financial assistance, as the authority consider appropriate, or
 - (c) rent accommodation, arrange lodgings or contribute to the cost of such accommodation or lodgings for a homeless person
- (10) A housing authority may, while making enquiries to enable them to determine if a person is homeless, exercise the powers provided for in subsection (1).

It is the Housing Authority that must form the requisite opinion, following an assessment of need, on whether the criterion as set out in Section 2 is fulfilled. The decision to provide emergency accommodation supports rests within the competence and expertise of the Housing Authority and is made within the context of available resources and competing demands on those resources.



KEY PROGRESS
OUTCOMES OF THE
MID-WEST REGION
HOMELESSNESS
ACTION PLAN 2013-2018

KEY PROGRESS OUTCOMES OF THE MID-WEST REGION HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN 2013-2018

Key outcomes at regional level include:

Limerick	Clare
Family Hubs in operation	Clare Homeless Action Team commenced on 1st February 2019
Tenancy Sustainment service established	At that time, Laurel Lodge Hostel was supported by Section 10 funding and run by St Vincent de Paul. Laurel Lodge is a 13 Bed, Single Adult Male Hostel.
Homeless HAP Placefinder in operation	
STA facilities in operation	
Cold Weather Initiative in operation with all STA providers	
Exits from Emergency Accommodation ongoing	
10 COVID-19 Isolation Units provided	
2,398 active HAP tenancies in place	
246 Homeless HAP tenancies in place	

COVID-19 PANDEMIC – IMPACT ON HOMELESS/VULNERABLE PERSONS

This Plan was reviewed during the COVID-19 public health emergency that required the urgent implementation of solutions to protect the most vulnerable in the community. Guidelines were issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and the Health Service Executive (HSE) Guidance for Vulnerable Groups (including, in particular, homeless people) and Prisoner Releases during the crisis.

The Guidance document focussed on preventing the spread of COVID-19 and dealing with cases of COVID-19 in homeless settings and also for Travellers, Roma, international protection applicants (IPAS), refugees and other vulnerable groups.

New emergency measures were introduced into law to protect tenants during the COVID-19 emergency period to August 2020, directing that a notice of termination could not be served on tenants during the COVID-19 emergency period. All notices of terminations, which were served prior to the emergency period were paused, and tenants in general could not be required to leave their rented accommodation during this time. Furthermore, landlords were not permitted to increase the amount of rent payable during this period.

Local Authorities were also prohibited from issuing notices of termination or instigating legal action to evict unauthorised Traveller encampments.

SUMMARY OF COVID-19 CHALLENGES

- Significant increase in presentations of homeless individuals, many with complex needs
- Management of Cold Weather Initiatives to ensure compliance with COVID-19 health and safety requirements
- The identification of COVID-19 isolation units, fit out and furnishing, logistics and management of units, placed additional demands on staff and incurred additional unforeseen costs

Based on the above challenges, demand for funding will continue to increase to meet the level of required services and, consequently, applications for increased funding for homeless services will continue over the duration of the next Plan.

UKRAINIAN CHALLENGES

In March 2022 the State responded to those fleeing the war in Ukraine by providing emergency accommodation to Ukrainians displaced by the war. This response while the right thing to do has put significant pressure on the supply of private emergency accommodation and consequentially is impacting homeless service delivery in Limerick and Clare.



POLICY CONTEXT



POLICY CONTEXT

In drawing up this Action Plan, the management group of the Mid-West Region Homelessness Forum had regard to homeless and housing policies, both current and past, and has been particularly informed by the following policy documents.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HERITAGE



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland, 2021 (September 2021)

The Government launched a new Housing Plan for Ireland – Housing for All on the 2nd September 2021. The document sets out a multiannual funding programme for 2022 – 2030 to deliver over 300,000 new homes including 90,000 social and 54,000 affordable house with an anticipated spend of in excess of €4bn per annum. There is also a firm commitment to ending Homelessness by 2030.

The overall aim of the new housing plan for Ireland is that:

“Everyone in the State should have access to a home to purchase or rent at an affordable price, built to a high standard and in the right place, offering a high quality of life.”

Housing for All provides four pathways to achieving four overarching objectives:

- Supporting Homeownership and Increasing Affordability
- Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion
- Increasing New Housing Supply
- Addressing Vacancy and Efficient Use of Existing Stock



PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT – OUR SHARED FUTURE (JUNE 2020) MISSION: HOUSING FOR ALL

Reducing and preventing homelessness is a major focus of the Government with priority given to reduce the number of homeless families and individuals and support them into long term sustainable accommodation. Funding for homeless services will be increased, including funding for drug-free hostels.

The expansion of the Housing First programme and prioritising funding streams within the HSE to deliver the necessary health and mental health supports, together with a focus on construction and acquisition of 1 bed units, will be significant in continuing to tackle homelessness for individuals with complex needs. This alignment of housing and health again reinforces the objectives of the current Housing First National Implementation Plan 2022 - 2026.

Youth homelessness is prioritised with the development of a National Youth Homelessness Strategy. The long term plan is to move away from dormitory-style accommodation and to provide suitable tenancies and ensure that aftercare and transition plans and protocols are developed for vulnerable homeless people leaving hospital, state care, foster care, prison or other state settings.

HOUSING FIRST NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS 2018 – 2021 & 2022 - 2026

It is widely recognised that many people who sleep rough, and who are frequent users of emergency hostels and shelters, have complex needs around mental health and addiction and require individualised supports to successfully move from homelessness to a sustainable tenancy. The Housing First approach has been Government policy for a number of years. With Housing First, the priority is to support a person who has experienced homelessness into permanent housing as quickly as possible, without any preconditions around sobriety or mental health treatment and to continue working intensively with them on these issues once they are housed. Housing First recognises that a stable home provides the basis for recovery in other areas.

The alignment of housing and health supports means that Housing First is very much a joint initiative of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Department of Health, the Health Service Executive, the criminal justice sector (the Probation Service and Irish Prison Service), Local Authorities and NGO providers.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES BOARD LEGISLATION (JANUARY 2017)

Brought into effect in 2017, revisions to the Residential Tenancies Act (2004) established Rent Pressure Zones (RPZ) in a variety of areas across Ireland. These RPZ operate as a means of controlling the evident increase in costs in private rented accommodation and capping such increases to a maximum of 4% per annum. To date, in the Mid-West Region, there have been a number of RPZ identified. These include: Limerick City – Limerick City East, Limerick City North, Limerick City West. This legislation aims to provide greater security for tenants and provides the capacity to penalise those operating counter to the RPZ rent levels. This legislation is revised and updated periodically, the Mid-West Region Homelessness Action Plan (2022 – 2025) aims to engage with any such changes during the course of the Action Plan.

REBUILDING IRELAND: ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS (JULY 2016)

The overarching aim of Rebuilding Ireland is to ramp up delivery of housing from its current under supply across all tenures to help individuals and families meet their housing needs, and to help those who are currently housed to remain in their homes or be provided with appropriate options of alternative accommodation, especially those families in emergency accommodation.

The Action Plan contains 5 pillars as follows:

- Pillar 1: Address Homelessness
- Pillar 2: Accelerate Social Housing
- Pillar 3: Build More Homes
- Pillar 4: Improve the Rental Sector
- Pillar 5: Utilise Existing Stock

Under Pillar 1: Address Homelessness, the key objective is:

To 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.

ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS (DECEMBER 2014)

In December 2014, a special summit was hosted by the then Minister on homelessness, in order to reaffirm the Government's commitment to end involuntary long-term homelessness by the end of 2016. The plan focussed on actions which constituted an immediate response to the issue of rough sleeping in Dublin, and secondly, actions which tackle the more systemic issues, classified under the three categories of the housing led approach, namely Prevention, Accommodation and Supports.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ON THE STATE'S RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS (MAY 2014)

The 2014 Implementation Plan sets out the actions/recommendations to be applied in implementing the findings of the Homeless Oversight Group, which reported in December 2013.

This is a structured and practical plan, transitioning from a shelter-led to a sustainable housing-led response to homelessness. The plan emphasises a housing led approach as set out in the Government's Homelessness Policy Statement (February 2013).

GUIDANCE FOR ASSISTING VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WITH EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION NEEDS

Circular Housing 2/17 dated 17th January 2017 outlined guidance for Housing Authorities to ensure effectiveness and consistency in responses to assist victims of domestic violence. The guidelines provide a summary of best practice in this area and the procedural pathways within which Local Authorities operate. Organisational responsibility is outlined between the key stakeholders in terms of crisis response to domestic violence, emergency accommodation and long term accommodation needs. Partnership working between statutory agencies and organisations involved locally in the delivery of domestic violence services is emphasised.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS FRAMEWORK (NQSF)

The Mid West Region commenced the implementation of the new and comprehensive national standards for homeless services. The objectives of the standards are to:

- Promote safe and effective service provision to people experiencing homelessness
- Support the objectives of the National Homeless Policy, i.e. enabling people to move into and sustain housing with appropriate levels of support
- Establish consistency in how persons experiencing homelessness are responded to across different regions and models of service delivery

The NQSF will be applicable to all homeless service provision in receipt of funding, whether the service is statutory, voluntary or private. It applies to homeless services for single adults, adult couples and for adults with dependent children.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

It is recognised in the **Programme for Government – Our Shared Future** that promoting positive mental health and reducing the burden of mental illness can have benefits for everyone and this is particularly notable in the area of homelessness.

- **Sharing the Vision – a Mental Health Policy for Everyone (June 2020)**
The vision embodied in this policy is to create a mental health system that addresses the needs of the population through a focus on the requirements of the individual.
- **Sharing the Vision** recognises that many vulnerable groups, including those who are homeless, have specific needs, which the mental health services should be equipped to meet.

There is a recognised need to ensure that those with complex mental health difficulties are in receipt of multi-disciplinary supports from health professionals to improve their quality of life. Service users also require assistance to sustain tenancies and live independently. As a result, there must be effective liaison between mental health services and local authorities in the provision of supported, social housing.

Sustainable resourcing based on identified need for tenancy-related/independent living supports for patients with complex mental health difficulties must be considered for service users moving from HSE supported accommodation to independent living and for individuals in hospital or homeless services identified as having a housing need.

Sharing the Vision includes an implementation roadmap, with outcome indicators, and allocates ownership of the recommendations to lead agencies, with time-bound implementation targets against each action. To deliver on this vision, it is essential that the close connection between healthcare supports and housing options is recognised.

NATIONAL DRUGS STRATEGY: REDUCING HARM, SUPPORTING RECOVERY 2017- 2025

Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery sets out the Government's strategy to address the harm caused by substance misuse in Ireland up to 2025.

It identifies a set of key actions to be delivered between 2017 and 2020, and provides an opportunity for the development of further actions from 2021 to 2025 to address needs that may emerge later on in the lifetime of the strategy. The following goals are detailed in the document:

- Goal 1 -** Promote and protect health and wellbeing
- Goal 2 -** Minimise the harms caused by the use and misuse of substances and promote rehabilitation and recovery
- Goal 3 -** Address the harms of drug markets and reduce access to drugs for harmful use
- Goal 4 -** Support participation of individuals, families and communities
- Goal 5 -** Develop sound and comprehensive evidence informed policies and actions

Regarding homelessness, the importance of homelessness services and substance misuse services working together in a collaborative way is highlighted under Goal 2, as is the need to improve the range of problem substance use services and rehabilitation supports for people with high support needs who are homeless, together with the availability of drug and alcohol, mental health and community integration services.

TUSLA

TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency is the dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. The Agency operates under the Child and Family Agency Act 2013, a progressive piece of legislation with children at its heart and families viewed as the foundation of a strong healthy community where children can flourish. Partnership and co-operation in the delivery of seamless services to children and families are also central to the Act. Under the Child and Family Act 2013 the Child and Family Agency is charged with:

- Supporting and promoting the development, welfare and protection of children, and the effective functioning of families;
- Offering care and protection for children in circumstances where their parents have not been able to, or are unlikely to, provide the care that a child needs. In order to discharge these responsibilities, the Agency is required to maintain and develop the services needed in order to deliver these supports to children and families and provide certain services for the psychological welfare of children and their families;
- Responsibility for ensuring that every child in the State attends school or otherwise receives an education, and for providing educational welfare services to support and monitor children's attendance, participation and retention in education;
- Ensuring that the best interests of the child guide all decisions affecting individual children;
- Consulting children and families so that they help to shape the agency's policies and services;
- Strengthening interagency co-operation to ensure seamless services responsive to needs;
- Undertaking research relating to its functions and providing information and advice to the Minister regarding those functions; and
- Commissioning services relating to the provision of child and family services.



PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY

There is a requirement on public bodies to promote equality, protect human rights and prevent discrimination in accordance with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014. The Local Authorities of the Mid West Region are committed to addressing equality and human rights concerns for all in the delivery of housing, including Traveller accommodation, by the promotion of the values of dignity, inclusion, social justice, democracy, and autonomy. The Mid West region will endeavour to develop a human rights focus into the work of the Regional Action Plan, in accordance with our Public Sector Duty as set out in Section 42(1), Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014.

The Mid West Region is committed to eliminating discrimination, achieving equality, and fulfilling human rights for all service users and in doing so recognises the diversity of people across the identified groups for the Duty. The identified groups are those covered by the nine grounds under the equality legislation, including gender (including gender identity); civil status; family status (including lone parents and carers); age (young and older people); disability; sexual orientation; race (Black and minority ethnic people); religion and belief; and membership of the Traveller community. In addition, groups encompassed on the grounds of socio-economic status and who are at risk of or experiencing poverty and exclusion are also included under the Public Sector Duty.

It is accepted that people may hold more than one identity and be part of more than one of the identified groups. Accordingly, the Mid West Region will keep a focus on intersectionality in its implementation.

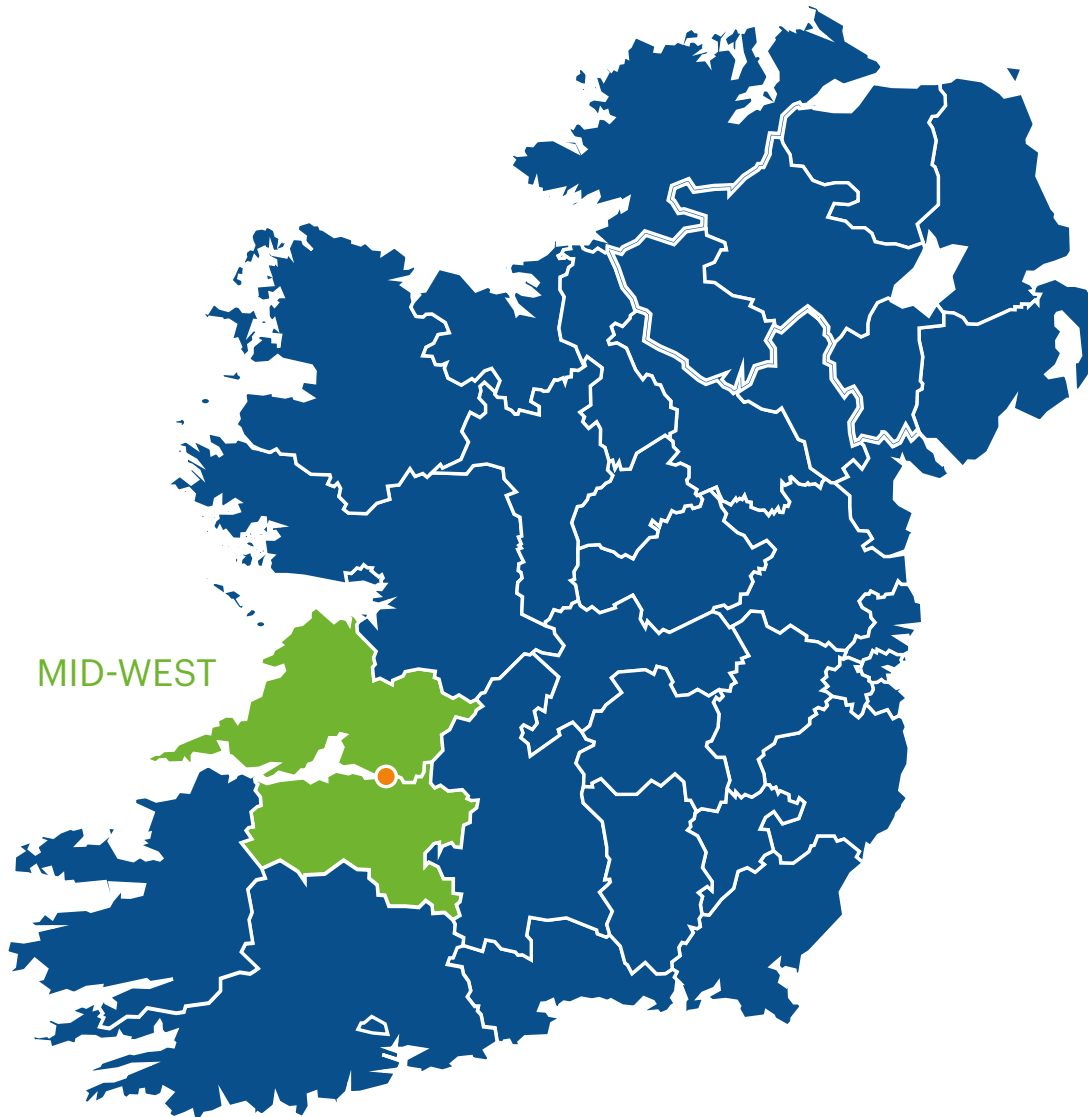
The Mid West Region will continue to monitor and assess the Plan under the Duty enabling the tracking of its current responses to the issues and to further develop and expand these responses as found to be necessary, thereby advancing equality and human rights. The Duty monitoring process as outlined will form part of the review of the Action Plan by the Mid-West Region, which will be conducted on an annual basis.

In fulfilment of our Public Sector Duty, a specific objective on the Duty has been included in the Table of Actions.



REGIONAL STRUCTURE

REGIONAL STRUCTURE



Limerick City and County Council, under a shared service arrangement, is the lead housing authority for the Mid-West Region with regard to homelessness. This role includes overseeing the regional Joint Homelessness Consultative Forum and Management Group as provided for in Sections 38 and 39 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009. Limerick City and County Council is also responsible for managing the region's administrative relationship with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

The coordinating role of the lead housing authority does not impinge on any of the statutory functions of the other housing authorities in the region, including those with regard to arrangements for the provision of accommodation for persons considered homeless.

MID-WEST REGION MANAGEMENT GROUP

A Management Group of the Mid West Homelessness Consultative Forum was established in accordance with legislation, with the primary responsibility being the preparation of this statutory Mid-West Homelessness Action Plan. The management group make recommendations to relevant statutory bodies in relation to the services required to address homelessness in the region, on funding for such services and on the ongoing operation of this Homelessness Action Plan and subsequent plans for Homeless Services.

The Regional Homelessness Management Group for the Mid-West is chaired by the Director of Housing, Limerick City and County Council. Other members include:

- Director of Service - Clare County Council
- Senior Executive Officer - Clare County Council
- Senior Executive Officer - Limerick City and County Council
- Coordinator of Homeless Services (Administrative Officer) - Limerick City and County Council
- Coordinator of Homeless & Ethnic minorities - HSE Mid-West Social Inclusion
- Department of Social Protection
- Other statutory agencies at various times including An Garda Síochána, TUSLA representative

Specifically, the Management Group:

- Assesses and makes decisions in principle on all funding applications for homeless services.
- Submits proposed budget for services to the budgetary authorities within the relevant statutory funding agencies.
- Is responsible for developing effective, efficient and integrated responses to homelessness, including the approval of three-year local homeless action plans and the commitment to seek adequate and appropriate resources for their implementation.
- Has links with similar groups in neighbouring counties to develop a high level regional focus on homelessness.

MID-WEST JOINT HOMELESSNESS CONSULTATIVE FORUM

The Mid West Joint Homelessness Consultative Forum was first established in April 2010 arising from Ministerial directions issued by the then Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in Circular HU 1/2010 in accordance with the provisions of sections 38, 39 and 41 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009.

The role of this Forum is to provide a consultative mechanism in relation to homelessness in the context of the preparation of this statutory Mid West Homelessness Action Plan 2022-2025.

The aim of the Mid West Region Homelessness Consultative Forum is to provide information, views, advice or reports in relation to homelessness and to encourage and assess implementation of objectives to address homelessness in both national and regional policies.

The Forum places an emphasis on strengthening preventative policies, building relationships, reviewing procedures and improving services to reduce instances of homelessness across the region.

During the period of the last plan the Mid-West Region Consultative Forum met on a quarterly basis and discussed matters including:

- Preparation and monitoring of Homelessness Action Plan
- Review of homeless presentations across the region
- Housing Assistance Payment Scheme
- Discharge policy from hospitals and prisons
- Impact of homelessness on Travellers
- National Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services in Ireland
- Regional and Agency updates
- Covid-19 and impacts on homelessness and provision of services

The membership of the Mid-West Homelessness Forum is drawn from sectors as outlined in Circular HU 1/2010. Further information with regard to the membership of both the Management Group and Forum is included at Appendix 1.

HOMELESS ACTION TEAM

The Homeless Action Team (HAT) provides a multidisciplinary approach to solving the needs of homeless persons or homeless families and facilitates the proactive interagency case management of homeless households. The service is provided with the close partnership of the HSE, Department of Social Protection and Voluntary Housing Bodies.

HATs comprise the local decision-making expertise available to people who are homeless in the specific locality and includes health, housing and Approved Housing Bodies who provide emergency, transitional or long term residential accommodation. The purpose of the HAT is:

- To respond to the needs of clients in emergency accommodation holistically
- To reduce duration of stay in emergency accommodation
- To reduce the cyclical nature of homelessness
- To ensure co-operation amongst agencies
- To identify at an early stage if a client has relapsed and put in place appropriate supports

Each of the two local authorities operates a HAT, which meets on a frequent basis. A shared care and case management ethos is central to the success of the HAT process to ensure the completion of thorough assessments and the implementation of appropriate interventions for the clients concerned.

PASS SYSTEM

The Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) is the online shared system used by every homeless service provider and all Local Authorities in Ireland. The system provides real-time information on homeless presentations and bed occupancy across the regions in Ireland. All of the information recorded on PASS produces the most recent statistics for the number of persons that are considered homeless and are in emergency and/or other homeless accommodation. The system assists in collating key information in terms of presentations to homeless services and service occupancy. The system generates information on the number of people presenting as homeless, in addition to managing access to accommodation.

The information recorded on the PASS system is also used to:

- Improve service delivery
- Monitor the delivery of services
- Coordinate services
- Planning and development of services

Appendix 2 outlines in summary the range of services that are provided to those who present as homeless, or are considered to be at risk of homelessness, in the Mid-West Region. However, it should also be acknowledged that there are services in the Region, relating to mental health, estate management, tenancy sustainment, and youth supports (among many others) that make an important contribution to the prevention of homelessness in the Region. In the context of achieving the objectives in this Plan, it is important that these proven successful services remain in place.



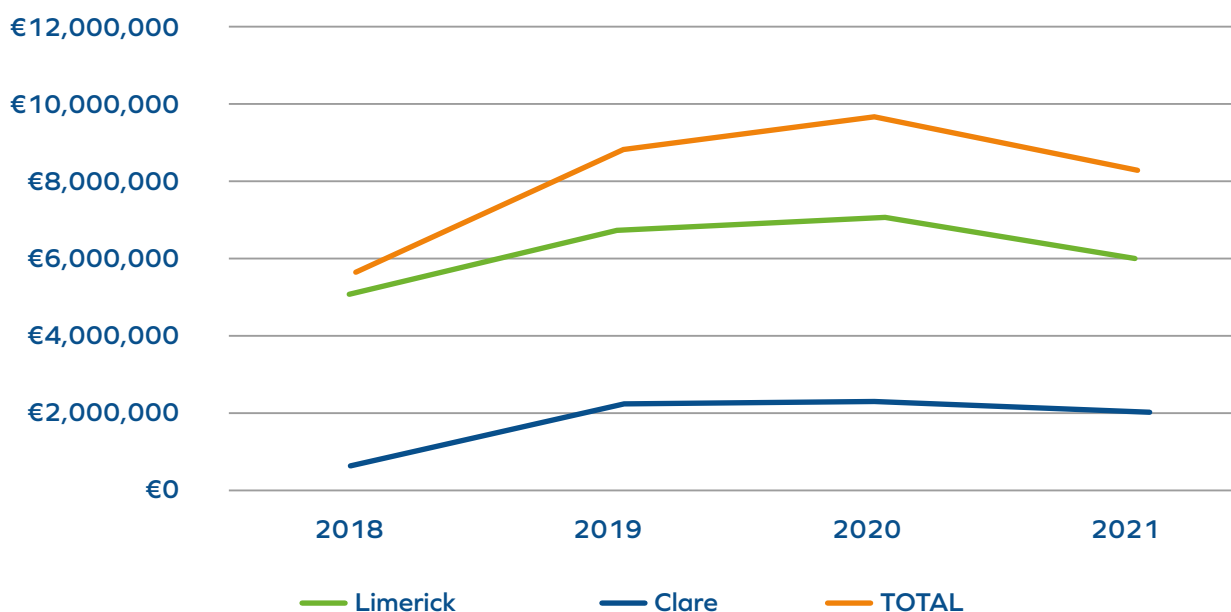
HOMELESS SERVICES EXPENDITURE



HOMELESS SERVICES EXPENDITURE

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage supports Housing Authorities by providing funding up to a maximum of 90% for homeless services, subject to annual budget review. As the lead authority in the Management Group, Limerick City and County Council has ultimate responsibility for the finalisation of the region's expenditure programme, which it develops in cooperation with the other housing authority. The regional allocation is delegated to Limerick City and County Council and this funding is disbursed appropriately across both housing authorities in the region. Figure 1 shows the total expenditure on homeless services across the region for the period 2018-2021 including provision of emergency accommodation, together with support services such as homeless prevention and tenancy sustainment. As demand for services continues to increase, expenditure is also projected to increase over the lifetime of the Plan.

Figure 1: Homeless Expenditure 2018-2021



The breakdown of expenditure across both local authorities is set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Homeless Expenditure 2018-2021

	Limerick	Clare	Total
2018	€5,143,377	€561,032	€5,704,409
2019	€6,732,678	€2,192,976	€8,925,654
2020	€7,252,539	€2,395,671	€9,648,210
2021	€6,096,893	€2,223,434	€8,320,327

Each Local Authority in the Mid-West Region contributes 10%, from its annual budget, towards the costs of homeless services, with the remaining 90% being funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Increases in homeless expenditure has led to corresponding significant increases in the 10% contribution from both Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council, in particular towards the cost of Private Emergency Accommodation.



CURRENT SERVICES IN THE MID-WEST REGION



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL

In response to the number of families and individuals seeking assistance in relation to homelessness, Limerick City and County Council has developed a partnership approach with key homeless agencies to improve coordination and increase supports available to those at risk of homelessness. The Housing Department works closely with a number of organisations who provide services to homeless people, in particular Novas, Mid West Simon Community, Focus Ireland, Associated Charities Trust, Respond, Peter McVerry Trust, St. Vincent de Paul, Sophia and Cuan Mhuire in an effort to secure emergency accommodation and transition units throughout the county.

Limerick City and County Council employs a Homeless Team comprising of four Assessment and Placement Officers, two Resettlement Officers, one Youth Homeless Resettlement Officer, one Prison Resettlement Officer, one Street Outreach Worker, and two Homeless HAP Placefinders, together with administrative staff, to aid and assist the families and individuals presenting as homeless.

TENANCY SUPPORT SERVICES

While the focus will remain on providing assistance to people presenting as homeless in the first instance, it is also recognised that assistance is needed in helping people to find and retain tenancies into the future. Tenancy Support is provided by a number of organisations Focus Ireland, Sophia, Novas, Peter McVerry Trust, Mid West Simon. A resettlement service is also run by Focus Ireland. A Youth Housing project operates in Limerick run by Focus Ireland in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council and Tusla, which uses a Housing Led approach to meet the particular needs of young people experiencing homelessness. Using both Housing Led and HF4Y (Housing First for Youth) principles, this project provides young people with housing as quickly as possible to help them to exit from homelessness. The young person is then provided with intensive and targeted, person-centred supports including healthcare, counselling, education, training, financial advice and more.

OUT OF HOURS FREEPHONE SERVICE

In addition to the Homeless Action Team (HAT) which opens business hours Monday – Friday. Limerick City and County Council operates an out of hours Freephone homeless service through Novas. The Freephone service, which is 1800 606 060 operates 24/7. The out of hour's service is available from 5pm to 9am Monday to Thursday, from 4pm on Friday, all day on Saturday and Sunday.

SUPPORTED EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION FOR FAMILIES

During the lifetime of the previous Plan, a number of units were identified from the council's housing stock to be used as transition accommodation and further such units will be developed over the course of the next Plan, as the need continues.

Operated over two sites, the council stock transitional units referred to above comprise of 39 units for families which is run by Focus Ireland. In addition, there is a 10 unit family hub Dublin Road Family Initiative operated by Mid West Simon. Suaimehnas is a 6 unit service for homeless women and children at Ballygrennan Close which is ran by Respond.

SUPPORTED EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION FOR SINGLE ADULTS

There are a number of supported emergency accommodation for single adults in Limerick city. Oak Lodge is a 60 bed hostel for men and women and is operated by Mid West Simon. McGarry House has 30 bed service for men and women run by Novas, funded through section 10 funding. Thomond House has 24 beds for women only operated by Associated Charities Trust. There is a 30 bed temporary emergency accommodation for both men and women which is run by Novas. A number of beds (52 beds) are funded through Section 10 funding for persons experiencing homelessness with addiction issues at Cuan Mhuire, Bruree, who run a 12 or 20 weeks treatment programme. In addition, Cuan Mhuire operate two transitional houses in Limerick to accommodate homeless persons for 3 to 6 months to prepare for independent living and secure their own accommodation.

COLD WEATHER INITIATIVE

A Cold Weather Initiative for rough sleepers runs over the winter months with the objective of minimising the risk of harm, due to the cold and inclement weather conditions over the winter period. The Cold Weather Initiative also works to identify progression routes out of rough sleeping and homelessness. The service operates with the support and assistance of voluntary agencies across Limerick city.

PRIVATE EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

While bed and breakfast and hotel accommodation is provided in cases where the other alternatives are either not available or not suitable, every effort is being made to reduce the use of this type of accommodation and this will continue to be a focus during the life of the new Plan.

HOMELESSNESS AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Funded by The Family Support Agency, Adapt House in Limerick city consists of 14 self-contained apartments which provide emergency accommodation both day and night, 7 days a week to women affected by domestic violence.

AFTERCARE ACCOMMODATION

Dial House is a 6 unit residential service which accommodates care leavers with learning disabilities and/or mental health issues, at risk of falling into the cycle of homelessness, run by Novas. Dial offers a two year programme to residents, to equip this younger cohort of residents with life skills for independent living. To complement in-house training, all residents are actively encouraged to participate in further education. Dial also offers an out-reach programme. Limerick City and County Council through Section 10 fund a number of beds in the facility.

Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council are active participants on Tusla's Aftercare Steering Committees. Aftercare facilities were established in 2017 by the Focus Ireland in partnership with Tusla. This includes over 25 units (one and two beds) in Limerick and Clare. Focus Ireland have established, in partnership with Limerick City and County Council, Clare County Council and the Aftercare Steering Committee, several CAS units for care leavers. All young people in Focus Ireland's Youth Housing aftercare accommodation have an individual care plan which includes supports around their independent living skills and their education, training and employment.

DAY SERVICES

The Drop In Centre day service run by St. Vincent de Paul (Mid West) at Hartstonge Street, Limerick city provides services such as food, laundry services, personal hygiene (showers etc.), tenancy sustainment, and advocacy. The average number of presentations per quarter in 2021 was 350 persons. Of these, approximately 50 presentations each quarter were from rough sleepers. It is proposed that this service will be expanded over the course of the new plan to better cater for this group of persons availing of these services.

LONG-TERM ACCOMMODATION

Brother Russell House provides long term supported accommodation for both men and women who have a complexity of issues at Mulgrave Street, Limerick. Section 10 funding supports 26 units for homeless persons. It is a low threshold service, operating a harm reduction policy, operated by Novas.

Altamira provides long term supported housing for women at Thomondgate, which is run by Associated Charities Trust. This model of housing provides secure supported housing in 10 one bedroomed apartments.

Clann Nua is a new initiative developed by Mid West Simon in 2020 in response to the shortage of single unit property for single adults. Clann Nua provides the opportunity for two or more previously homeless persons to share one permanent rental housing unit. Clann Nua tenants are provided with a 24/7 on-call care support service based on clients individual needs. In Quarter 1 2022, 21 persons were being accommodated in Clann Nua.

HOUSING FIRST

Limerick City and County Council is committed to implementing the Housing First model, as set out in the new Programme for Government Housing for All strategy. Housing First is a housing-led approach that enables people with a history of rough sleeping or long-term use of emergency accommodation and with complex needs, to obtain permanent secure accommodation, with the provision of intensive supports to help them to maintain their tenancies. At the end of June 2022, 30 Housing First tenancies had commenced in Limerick. The target for Housing First in Limerick under the Housing First National Implementation Plan 2022-2026 is 31 tenancies.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS (HAP)

The total number of active Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) tenancies in Limerick in June 2022 is 2,347.

HOMELESS HAP PLACEFINDER

Both local authorities employ Homeless HAP Placefinders to provide support to homeless households and those at risk of homelessness by way of assisting the sourcing of HAP properties and providing financial assistance. In 2021, 59 individuals were prevented from entering homeless services, through HAP tenancies. In addition, 46 families at risk of homelessness, secured HAP tenancies, which prevented their entry into homeless services.

SUMMARY OF SERVICE PROVISION FOR LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HOMELESS SERVICES

SERVICE PROVISION 2021		2021 SECTION 10 EXPENDITURE
PREVENTION, TENANCY SUSTAINMENT AND RESETTLEMENT SUPPORTS	<p>Homeless HAP Placefinder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 105 Homeless HAP tenancies in 2021 <p>Housing Assistance Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,426 active HAP tenancies in place at 31/12/2021 <p>Tenancy Support and Resettlement Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided by various service providers including Focus Ireland, Mid West Simon, Sophia, Novas, Peter McVerry Trust 	<p>€91,516</p> <p>€654,963</p>
EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION	<p>Supported Emergency Accommodation for Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Irelands Family Hub: 39 units • Mid-West Simon Family Hub: 10 units • Suaimhneas, Ballygrennan: 6 units <p>Supported Emergency Accommodation for Singles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oak Lodge: 57 beds • McGarry House: 30 beds • Thomond House: 24 beds • DIAL Aftercare services: 5 beds • Cuan Mhuire, Bruree: 52 beds • Teach Mhuire and Sancta Maria: 12 beds <p>Temporary Emergency Accommodation for Singles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edward Street: 30 beds <p>Private Emergency Accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to bed places on a rolling basis • Ad hoc placements as need requires <p>Day Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to on a rolling basis <p>Severe Weather Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity for 16 individuals across several STAs <p>Housing First</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 tenancies commenced by 31/12/2021 	<p>€4,594,656</p>
MULTI AGENCY, PERSONNEL and SUPPORT COSTS	<p>4 Assessment & Placement Officers</p> <p>4 Resettlement Officers including Youth and Prison</p> <p>1 Homeless Outreach Worker</p> <p>2 Homeless HAP Placefinder Officers</p> <p>4 Administrative Staff</p>	<p>€755,758</p>
TOTAL 2021 EXPENDITURE		€6,096,893

CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Clare Homeless Action Team (HAT) office opened on 1st February, 2019. The service provides an interagency, integrated approach to homelessness. This includes Assessment and Placement, Tenancy Support Services, HAP Place Finder, Housing First, Youth Accommodation Resettlement. In addition during 2019 Clare County Council opened their first family hub, Cusack Lodge, to provide accommodation and support to homeless families. Westbrook House provides accommodation to single persons (in the main). These facilities provide security to those who experience homelessness and reduce the dependency on private emergency accommodation.

The HSE supports and complements the team's operations in terms of providing a full time Mental Health and part time Public Health Nurse Service dedicated to persons who are currently in emergency accommodation or at risk of homelessness.

Clare HAT Service provides an appointment led service that are managed in order of priority to ensure those most in need are supported with the most appropriate accommodation placement or information.

Clare Homeless Action Team co-ordinate Homeless Accommodation Providers who specialise in the delivery of homeless accommodation. These organisations provide a wide range of accommodation to meet the needs of the Council including, single male hostel, mixed supported accommodation, family hub, women only with children and various tenancy support and information services.

While COVID has brought significant extra complexities to a service that engages with Clare's most vulnerable, the team has continued to work towards building a service that can appropriately meet the needs of homeless clients in Clare. At the end of Quarter 1 2022, there were 59 adults in emergency accommodation of which included 12 families (4 couples with dependent children and 8 individuals with dependent children). The total number of dependents was 23.

During 2021, there were 1,959 presentations (626 new and 1,333 repeat), and 29 new households were placed in accommodation in homeless services.

New presentations	626
Repeat presentations	1,333
TOTAL Presentations	1,959

During 2021, 76 households exited homelessness, 26 exiting to new tenancies (Local Authority (LA) -5, Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) -12, Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)-5, Private Rented (PR) – 2, Own Front Door (OFD) -1 and Housing First - 1). These figures represent a significant amount of prevention work and this will continue to be the focus of the service going forward.

Exits		76
Housed	LA = 5 AHB = 12 HAP = 5 PR = 2 OFD = 1 HF = 1	26
Self-discharged		20
Discharged		28
Deceased		2

Within these figures a significant amount of work continues to support clients to address presenting issues. Consequently, the team is continuing to foster strong working relationships with our partners in the HSE (Primary Care, Disability, Social Inclusion, Mental Health, Safeguarding and Addiction), Gardai, Tusla (Child Protection, Domestic Violence and Aftercare) Probation and Community Partners to address the ever-increasing complex needs which were compounded by the COVID pandemic.

During 2021 the following new projects came on stream:

- Clare HAT commenced Clann Nua (Own Front Door) Project in May 2021. 11 individuals successfully transitioned from private emergency accommodation to this supported shared living accommodation.
- In August 2021, Clare HAT commenced Housing First with 3 households successfully transitioning to this new supported model (1 from private emergency accommodation, 1 from street homelessness and 1 from state facility). This project is the primary policy response to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to address street homelessness and those with complex needs that inhibit their ability to live independently. Consequently, an innovative implementation group led out by Clare HAT in partnership with the HSE Social Inclusion Unit will look to better meet the needs of this cohort going forward through this project.

Clare County Council continues to work on homeless prevention in supporting the prevention of persons from entering homelessness. This includes the acquisition of properties for sale (subject to funding approval) where the tenants are in receipt of housing support and have received a notice of termination. This has prevented a number of families entering emergency accommodation. The Homeless Housing Assistance Payment (HHAP) Placefinder works closely with people who have received

a notice of termination to prevent them from becoming homeless by securing HAP supported tenancies in the private rental market. Since the commencement of the Homeless HAP Placefinder service in 2018, 52 households have secured a HAP tenancy, which prevented these households from entering homelessness.

Clare County Council under the Allocations Scheme affords priority to the homeless in the allocation of Local Authority or AHB units.

COLD WEATHER INITIATIVE

Clare County Council in conjunction with Mid West Simon operate a Cold Weather/ Winter Initiative for rough sleepers runs over the winter months. The primary goal of this initiative is to help minimise the risk of harm to individuals, due to the cold and inclement weather conditions over the winter period. The Cold Weather Initiative also aims to help with the potential routes for individuals out of homelessness and rough sleeping. Support and advice is offered to individuals who engage with this initiative by dedicated social care staff within Mid-West Simon. Daily contact and updates regarding each individual takes place between Clare Homeless Action Team and Mid-West Simon.

PRIVATE EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

In specific cases where alternative accommodation is either unavailable or unsuitable, Clare County Council has provided bed and breakfast and hotel accommodation is provided. There are also a number of privately owned properties being used at this time as emergency accommodation within the region. Having said this every effort is being made to reduce the use of this type of accommodation and this will continue to be a focus during the life of the new Plan.

HOUSING FIRST

Clare County Council is committed to implementing the Housing First model, as set out in the new Programme for Government Housing for All strategy. Housing First is a housing-led approach that enables people with a history of rough sleeping or long-term use of emergency accommodation and with complex needs, to obtain permanent secure accommodation, with the provision of intensive supports to help them to maintain their tenancies. There are currently 4 Housing First Tenancies in place in Clare, with a further two expected to be put in place in the near future. A dedicated Housing First Project Worker has been employed in conjunction with Focus Ireland since July 2021.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS (HAP)

The total number of active Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) tenancies in Clare in June 2022 is 1,297.

HOMELESS HAP PLACEFINDER

Clare County Council employs one staff member as the Homeless HAP Place finder. The Homeless HAP Place finder service provides support to homeless households and those at risk of homelessness by way of assisting the sourcing of HAP properties and providing financial assistance. In 2021, 233 new HAP Tenancies were set up, of these 14 were Homeless HAP.

SUMMARY OF SERVICE PROVISION FOR CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL HOMELESS SERVICES

SERVICE PROVISION 2021		2021 SECTION 10 EXPENDITURE
PREVENTION, TENANCY SUSTAINMENT AND RESETTLEMENT SUPPORTS	Homeless HAP Placefinder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2021, 233 new HAP Tenancies were set up, of these 14 were Homeless HAP 	€50,000
	Housing Assistance Payment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,359 active HAP tenancies at 31/12/2021 Tenancy Support and Resettlement Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided by various service providers including Focus Ireland, Mid West Simon, Novas 	€440,520
EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION	Supported Emergency Accommodation for Families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cusack Lodge: 5 units Supported Emergency Accommodation for Singles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laurel Lodge: 13 beds Westbrook House: 13 beds Clann Nua Private Emergency Accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to bed places on a rolling basis Ad hoc placements as need requires Severe Weather Unit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity for 5 individuals in Laurel Lodge Housing First <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 tenancies commenced by 31/12/2021 	€1,637,799
MULTI AGENCY, PERSONNEL and SUPPORT COSTS	3 Assessment & Placement Officers 1 Youth Housing Project Worker 1 Housing First Project Worker 2 Tenancy Sustainment Workers 1 HAP Place Finder Officer Administrative Staff 1 Co-Ordinator	€95,115
TOTAL 2021 EXPENDITURE		€2,223,434

HSE MID-WEST - HOMELESS & ETHNIC MINORITIES SERVICE - SOCIAL INCLUSION

The HSE Homeless & Ethnic Minorities service was established by the then Mid-Western Health Board. The HSE, together with the Local Authorities, has joint responsibility to provide a co-ordinated and integrated response to delivering homeless services in the Mid-West. The Homeless & Ethnic Minorities services are presently developing a regional plan that will be informed by the latest 'Housing for All' strategy, in collaboration with the relevant Local Authorities in the region.

The service works with:

- Homeless people and caters for the most disadvantaged and socially excluded members of society who often present with a complex range of health and support needs. These include such factors as substance misuse and mental health related issues
- Persons who are homeless, including those who are residing in emergency and supported accommodation along with supporting those sleeping rough and those in Housing First/Housing Led projects, as well as Family Hubs in the Mid-West.
- Concerned persons

HSE HOMELESS ACTION TEAM (HAT) SERVICE:

- Homeless Action Teams (previously known as Homeless Persons Centres) are in place in each Local Authority area and operating as a central referral point for all homeless activity. The Homeless Action Team in the Mid-West is based in Limerick where it works in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council Homeless Action Teams. The HSE HAT also works very closely on a satellite basis with Clare County Council and Tipperary County Council (North Tipperary area) HAT services.
- The establishment of this specialist multi-disciplinary team approach is the most effective and efficient model in providing a co-ordinated, integrated and holistic approach in meeting the complex and diverse needs of persons who are homeless.
- The HSE HAT service is made up of a Team Leader, Community Mental Health Nurses and Public Mental Health Nurses and a newly appointed Senior Clinical Psychologist. The HSE is in the process of appointing a Housing First Health Co-ordinator and a Senior Occupational Therapist.

REGIONAL UNIT – CO-ORDINATION OF SERVICES

The Regional Coordination Unit is responsible for the implementation of national, regional and local strategies and action plans and the coordination of homeless services across the region.

The main responsibilities of the Unit are:

- Strategy, policy, planning and co-ordination of homeless services across the region.
- Ensuring that the Homeless Action Team (Formerly Homeless Persons Centres) in each Local Authority area is supported and operating at optimal level, particularly in terms of meeting the health needs of homeless people.
- Line management of the HSE multi-disciplinary team in the Limerick Homeless Action Team (HAT) which provides outreach specialist services to homeless people and close collaboration with the HAT in Clare and North Tipperary.
- Management and control of Homeless Services budget, including the provision of Section 39 funding to the Voluntary Agencies and associated service arrangements.
- Development and monitoring of service level agreements/ grant aid agreements with the Voluntary Agencies.

DETAILS OF RESPONSE IN RELATION TO COVID-19

Since late March 2020, the HSE has maintained delivery of all aspects of the HAT service. The HAT service continued to operate with some aspects of the work moving online e.g. Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings.

In conjunction with relevant Local Authorities, a range of isolation units were provided for homeless clients who were infected by COVID-19, as well for those who were at risk of same. This included health checks, delivery of medicines and social care supports. Utilised the HSE Drug & Alcohol clinical space to vaccinate social inclusion homeless and addiction clients.

New developments:

- 27 individuals in Limerick and 4 individuals in Clare are currently availing of housing support through the Housing First Initiative in the Mid-West.
- A new Co-ordinator has been appointed in ABC Startright with regard to a new Children in Homelessness initiative. The first two years of funding is primarily coming from HSE Homeless services with additional funding from Tusla.

- Upgrade and refurbishment of a number of medical rooms in homeless hostels based in Limerick.
- Temporary emergency provision continues to be supported by HSE homeless services to ensure a 24/7 service which replaced the 9am – 9pm service. This was in light of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020.



EXTENT OF HOMELESSNESS IN THE MID-WEST REGION



EXTENT OF HOMELESSNESS IN THE MID WEST REGION

The Mid West Region has used statistical data from the national Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) which provides an evidence-based approach, thereby informing the strategic development of homeless services in the Region for the period 2022 – 2025.

A summary of the key data pertaining to presentations, emergency accommodation placements and exits from emergency accommodation is outlined below in respect of 2018 – June 2022.

Tables 2, 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d outline the number of homeless presentations across the region between 2018 and June 2022, for the number of new and repeat presentations and their household composition.

Table 2: Number of Homeless Presentations per County 2018

2018	No. of individual adults (singles)	No. of Families Total	No. of individual adults (families)	No. of children (families)
Limerick New	339	128	187	262
Limerick Repeat	428	57	78	90
Limerick Total	767	185	265	352
Clare New	64	31	40	61
Clare Repeat	63	10	16	23
Clare Total	127	41	56	84
Region Total	894	226	321	436

Table 2a: Number of Homeless Presentations per County 2019

2019	No. of individual adults (singles)	No. of Families Total	No. of individual adults (families)	No. of children (families)
Limerick New	330	97	149	209
Limerick Repeat	468	92	132	173
Limerick Total	798	189	281	382
Clare New	24	28	39	59
Clare Repeat	46	20	28	40
Clare Total	70	48	67	99
Region Total	868	237	348	481

Table 2b: Number of Homeless Presentations per County 2020

2020	No. of individual adults (singles)	No. of Families Total	No. of individual adults (families)	No. of children (families)
Limerick New	199	50	68	117
Limerick Repeat	414	104	158	223
Limerick Total	613	154	226	340
Clare New	19	13	17	23
Clare Repeat	50	21	29	42
Clare Total	69	34	46	65
Region Total	682	188	272	405

Table 2c: Number of Homeless Presentations per County 2021

2021	No. of individual adults (singles)	No. of Families Total	No. of individual adults (families)	No. of children (families)
Limerick New	243	69	105	181
Limerick Repeat	367	66	99	139
Limerick Total	610	135	204	320
Clare New	29	12	18	28
Clare Repeat	71	17	21	31
Clare Total	100	29	39	59
Region Total	710	164	243	379

Table 2d: Number of Homeless Presentations per County Jan – June 2022

Jan - June 2022	No. of individual adults (singles)	No. of Families Total	No. of individual adults (families)	No. of children (families)
Limerick New	115	67	114	167
Limerick Repeat	301	75	112	160
Limerick Total	416	142	226	327
Clare New	18	10	10	19
Clare Repeat	76	22	30	46
Clare Total	94	32	40	65
Region Total	510	174	266	392

The rising trend of presentations in the region is displayed in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Mid-West Regional Presentations 2018 to June 2022

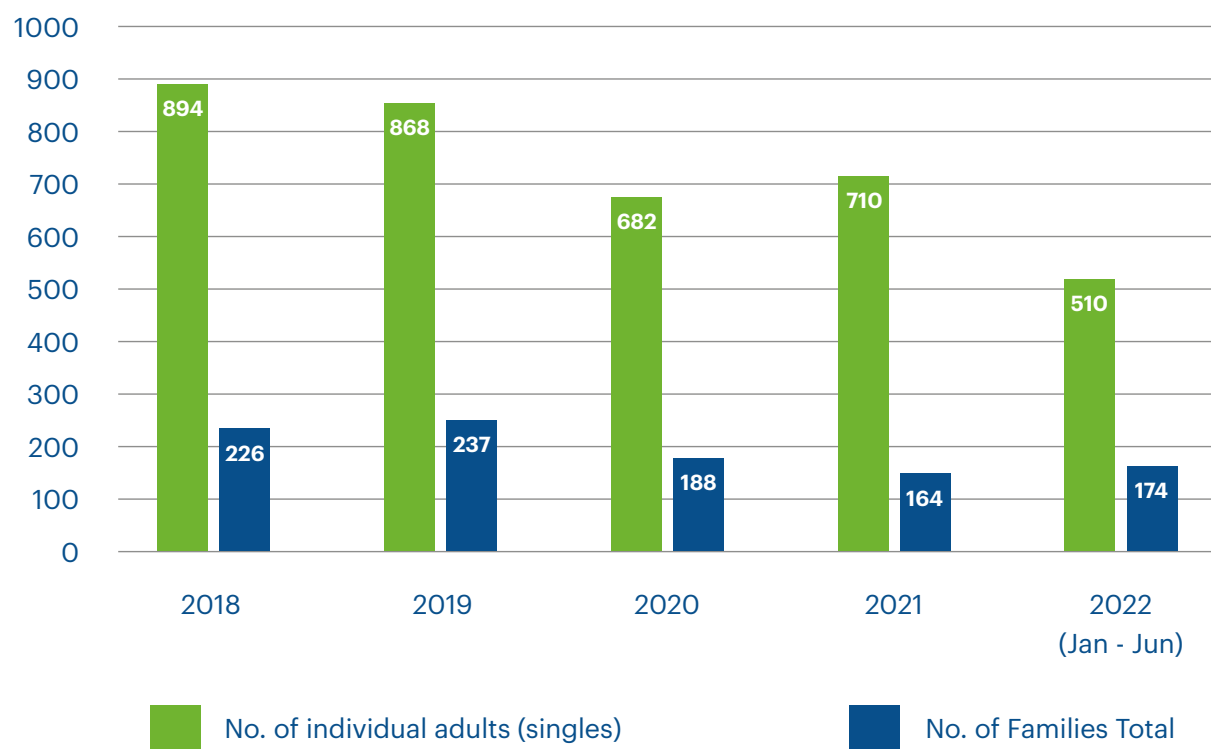
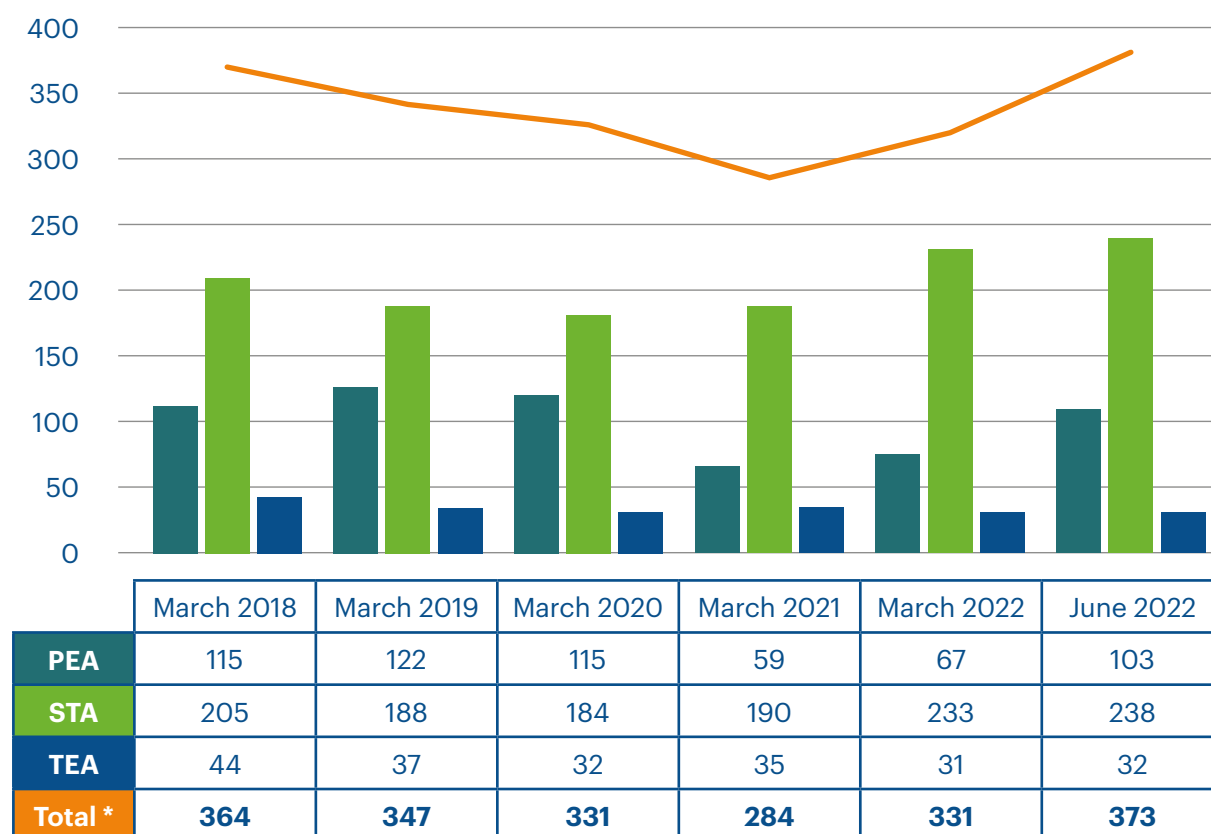


Table 3 shows the number of placements in emergency accommodation during the week of March from March 2018 to March 2022 in both counties:

Table 3: Number of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements for Adults (2018-2022)

Year	March 2018	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022	June 2022
Limerick	294	272	259	215	269	313
Clare	67	75	72	69	61	60
Total	361	347	331	284	330	373

Figure 3: No. of placements in emergency accommodation during the month of March from March 2018 to June 2022 by accommodation type

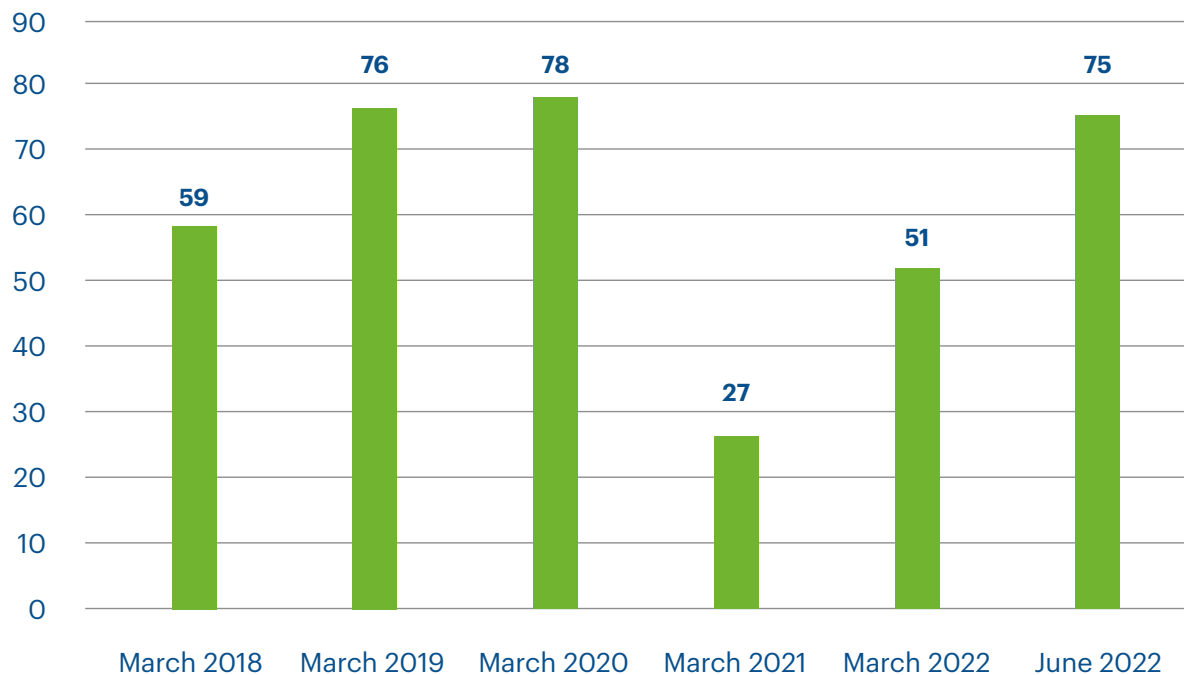


* Note: Clients may have accessed multiple accommodation types during the week

Similar to other regions in Ireland, there has also been a significant rise in the number of families accessing homeless services since the moratorium on evictions was lifted on 2nd August 2021 as shown in Table 3a and Figure 4.

Table 3a: Number of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements for Families in the Mid-West (2018-2022)

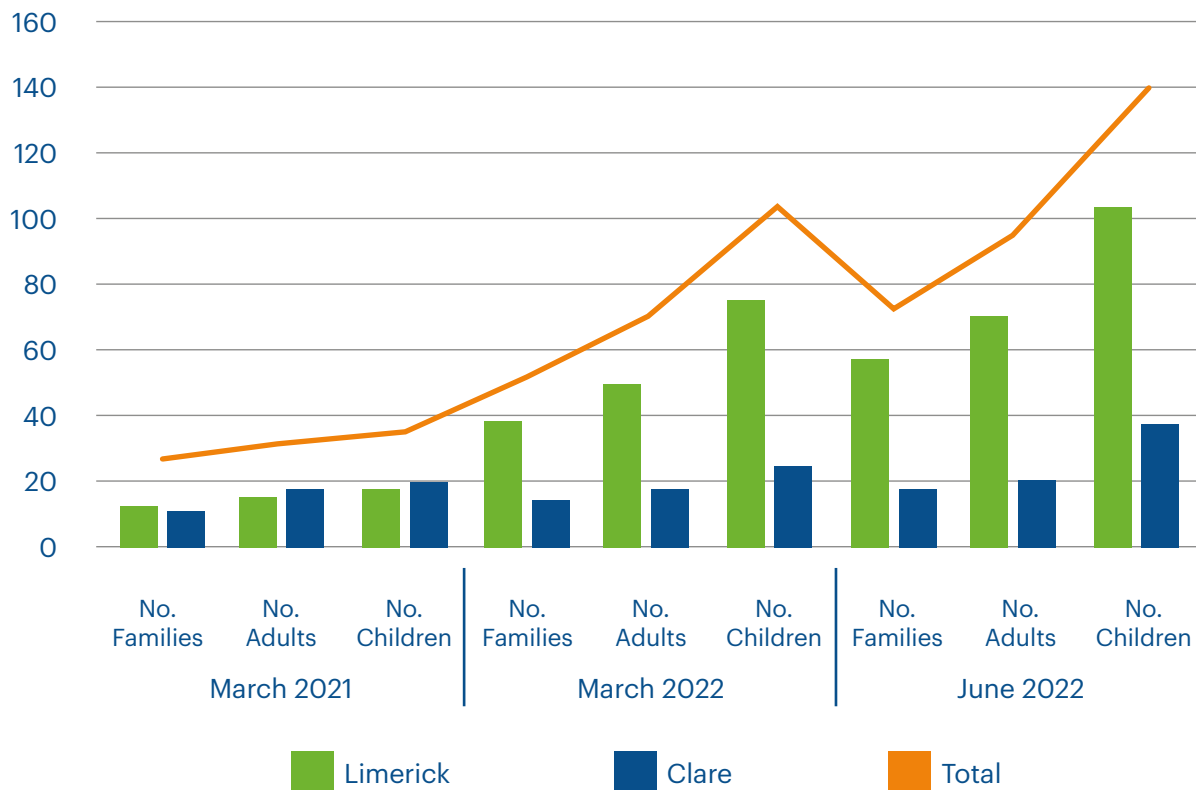
	Total Families	(of which) single parent families	Total Adults	Total child dependents
March 2018	59	33	85	108
March 2019	76	50	102	146
March 2020	78	61	95	133
March 2021	27	22	32	38
March 2022	51	36	91	102
June 2022	75	59	103	140

Figure 4: Families Accessing Emergency Accommodation March 2018 to June 2022

In March 2021, 27 families were in emergency accommodation. This increased to 75 families in June 2022.

Table 3b: Number of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements for Families giving household composition for March 2021, March 2022 and June 2022

	Mar-2021			Mar-2022			Jun-2022		
	No. of families	No. of adults	No. of children	No. of families	No. of adults	No. of children	No. of families	No. of adults	No. of children
Limerick	14	15	18	38	49	76	58	71	105
Clare	13	17	20	13	17	26	17	20	35
Total	27	32	38	51	66	102	75	91	140

Figure 5: Household Composition for Families

This represents a considerable shift in the Mid-West Region, where in the past homeless services were predominantly accessed by the single individuals. This rise continues to be a residual effect of recession and the subsequent housing crisis. It reflects a stagnant housing supply, coupled with a market where rental costs continue to increase significantly despite Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) legislation. Data from the Residential Tenancies Board for Q1 2022 shows a year-on-year growth rate in standardised average rent for new tenancies for Limerick city at 8.4%. The increasing numbers of families accessing homeless services through emergency accommodation is presented above in Table 3a and 3b.

Tables 4, 4a and 4b detail the number of family households placed in emergency accommodation across the region between 2018 and 2022, with an analysis of the duration those households remained in emergency accommodation.

Table 4: Number of Emergency Accommodation Family Placements & Duration (%) on 31/12/2018

2018	No. Families	No. Adults in Families	No. Children	< 6 mths	3-6 mths	12-18 mths	18-24 mths	24+ mths
Limerick	51	75	93	65%	33%	2%	0%	0%
Clare	16	22	32	44%	12%	19%	19%	6%
Region Total	67	97	125	55% (avg)	23% (avg)	11% (avg)	10% (avg)	3% (avg)

Table 4a: Number of Emergency Accommodation Family Placements & Duration (%) on 31/12/2019

2019	No. Families	No. Adults in Families	No. Children	< 6 mths	3-6 mths	12-18 mths	18-24 mths	24+ mths
Limerick	55	73	87	65%	24%	9%	2%	0%
Clare	16	22	30	50%	31%	6%	13%	0%
Region Total	71	95	117	58% (avg)	28% (avg)	8% (avg)	8% (avg)	0%

Table 4b: Number of Emergency Accommodation Family Placements & Duration (%) on 31/12/2020

2020	No. Families	No. Adults in Families	No. Children	< 6 mths	3-6 mths	12-18 mths	18-24 mths	24+ mths
Limerick	14	18	23	50%	36%	7%	7%	0%
Clare	12	15	19	33%	25%	17%	17%	8%
Region Total	26	33	42	42% (avg)	31% (avg)	12% (avg)	12% (avg)	4% (avg)

Table 4c: Number of Emergency Accommodation Family Placements & Duration (%) on 31/12/2021

2021	No. Families	No. Adults in Families	No. Children	< 6 mths	3-6 mths	12-18 mths	18-24 mths	24+ mths
Limerick	28	34	40	75%	21%	0%	4%	0%
Clare	13	19	24	46%	23%	0%	8%	23%
Region Total	41	53	64	61% (avg)	22% (avg)	0%	6% (avg)	12% (avg)

Table 4d: Number of Emergency Accommodation Family Placements & Duration (%) on 30/06/2022

2022 (June)	No. Families	No. Adults in Families	No. Children	< 6 mths	3-6 mths	12-18 mths	18-24 mths	24+ mths
Limerick	57	82	103	81%	14%	5%	0%	0%
Clare	17	20	33	59%	17%	12%	0%	12%
Region Total	74	102	136	70% (avg)	16% (avg)	9% (avg)	0%	6% (avg)

An analysis of households placed in emergency accommodation in 2021 / 2022 highlighted the following primary contributing factors to homelessness in the region:



Failure to obtain accommodation following Notice to Quit (Private Rented)



Substance misuse issues



Mental Health



Family Breakdown



Release from Prison



Domestic Violence

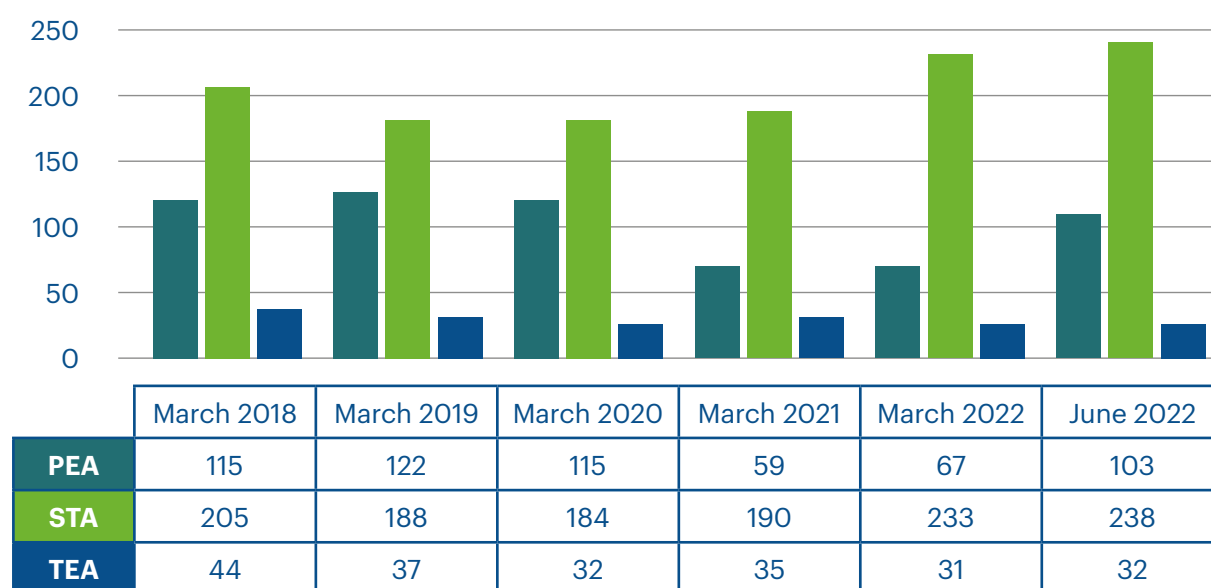


Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

TYPES OF EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION ACCESSED

Figures relating to the types of emergency accommodation accessed by service users are presented in figure 6. Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) continues to be the main form of emergency accommodation, displayed in figure 6.

Figure 6: Adults Accessing Emergency Accommodation by Type 2018 - 2022



The demand for Private Emergency Accommodation (PEA) reduced during Covid, however as presentations continue to increase, the demand for Private Emergency Accommodation has significantly increased from January 2022. In March 2021, 59 adults were accessing Private Emergency Accommodation and in June 2022, this increased to 103 adults.

TRAVELLER HOMELESSNESS

Table 5 outlines the number of traveller families accessing homeless accommodation, for 2020, 2021 and Jan – June 2022. On a regional basis there is a higher proportion of traveller families in Clare that are living in homeless accommodation, compared to Limerick.

Table 5: Traveller Families in Homeless Accommodation

2020	No. of families placed	No. of individual adults	No. of children
Limerick	7	10	25
Clare	13	20	28
Total	20	30	53
2021	No. of families placed	No. of individual adults	No. of children
Limerick	10	15	37
Clare	9	15	17
Total	19	30	54
Jan - June 2022	No. of families placed	No. of individual adults	No. of children
Limerick	4	5	9
Clare	5	9	9
Total	9	14	18

All individuals and families within homeless services have a key worker who assists with move on options.

Complimentary to actions to address Traveller homelessness in the Mid-West Region Homelessness Action Plan, is the Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) being implemented in each Local Authority to meet the existing and projected accommodation needs of Travellers in their administrative areas. Each Local Authority in the region has adopted a five-year Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2019 – 2024.

HOMELESSNESS BY GENDER

Traditionally, homelessness in Ireland has been associated with the single and often adult male. Given the diversity of experiences, it is clear that this is certainly not the case in contemporary Ireland. In particular, there has been a marked increase in the number of individual adult women accessing homeless services in the Mid-West Region. A gender breakdown is outlined in Table 6 below.

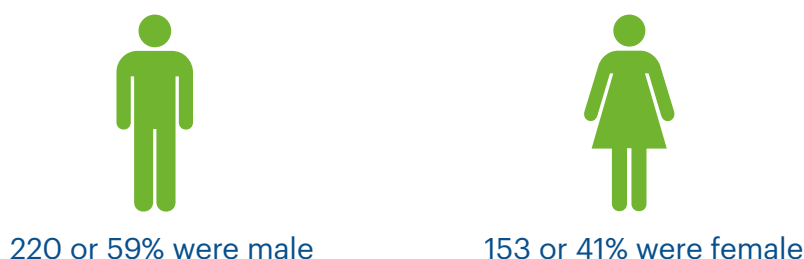
Table 6: Percentage Increase in Adults Accessing Homeless Services by Gender

	Male	Female	% Female of Total Adults	Total
March 2018	221	140	39%	361
March 2019	228	119	34%	347
March 2020	199	132	40%	331
March 2021	197	87	31%	284
March 2022	207	123	37%	330
June 2022	220	153	41%	373

Source: <https://www.housing.gov.ie/housing/homelessness/other/homelessness-data>

In June 2022, approximately 41% of adults accessing emergency accommodation were female, 153 females of total adults of 373, displayed in figure 7 below.

Figure 7: Adults Accessing Homeless Services by Gender in June 2022



HOMELESSNESS BY AGE COHORT

In June 2022 in the Mid-West region, the largest age group accessing emergency are in the 25 – 44 age range (56%), followed by 29% in the 45 – 64 age group, 12% in the 18 – 24 age group and 3% for persons aged over 65 years, displayed in figure 8 and table 7 below. This necessitates an Action Plan that is sensitive to the diverse needs of the community which it serves.

Figure 8: Adults Accessing Homelessness Services by Age Cohort - June 2022

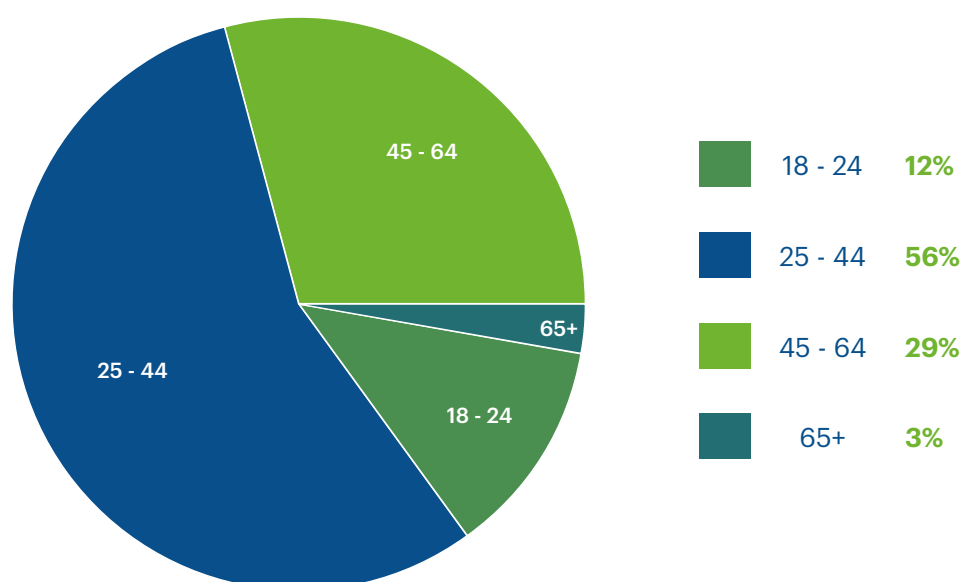


Table 7: Adults Accessing Homelessness Services by Age Cohort

	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+	Total
March 2018	50	215	87	9	361
March 2019	57	186	97	7	347
March 2020	51	178	95	7	331
March 2021	34	174	71	5	284
March 2022	41	175	104	10	330
June 2022	45	210	107	11	373

Source: <https://www.housing.gov.ie/housing/homelessness/other/homelessness-data>

HOMELESSNESS BY NATIONALITY

In June 2022, 373 adults were living in emergency accommodation in the Mid-West region, 79% of which were born in Ireland (294 persons). Among the non-Irish born homeless population, the largest groups were Polish nationals (12 persons), UK nationals (10 persons), followed by Afghan nationals (7 persons) and Syrian nationals (7 persons). Overall there were 32 persons from Eastern Europe representing 9% of the non-Irish homeless; Poland (12), Latvia (4), Lithuania (4), Croatia (4), Russian Federation (3), Czechia (2), Belarus (1), Romania (1) and Slovakia (1).

There were 12 African nationals, accounting for 3% of the non-Irish in homeless accommodation; Nigeria (2), Algeria (2), South Africa (2), Sudan (2), Kenya (1), Liberia (1), Sierra Leone (1) and Tanzania (1).

Table 8: Adults Accessing Homelessness Services by Nationality

Country of Birth	Limerick	Clare	Mid West
IRELAND	247	47	294
POLAND	11	1	12
UNITED KINGDOM	7	3	10
AFGHANISTAN	7	0	7
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC	7	0	7
CROATIA	3	1	4
LATVIA	4	0	4
LITHUANIA	4	0	4
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	3	0	3
ALGERIA	2	0	2
CZECHIA	0	2	2
GERMANY	1	1	2
NIGERIA	2	0	2
SOUTH AFRICA	2	0	2
SUDAN	2	0	2
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	2	0	2
UNKNOWN	0	2	2
BELARUS	0	1	1
CONGO	1	0	1

ITALY	1	0	1
KENYA	1	0	1
LIBERIA	1	0	1
PAKISTAN	1	0	1
ROMANIA	1	0	1
SIERRA LEONE	1	0	1
SLOVAKIA	0	1	1
SPAIN	0	1	1
TANZANIA	1	0	1
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	1	0	1
JUNE 2022	313	60	373

ROUGH SLEEPING

Rough sleeping predominantly occurs in Limerick city, Ennis and Kilrush. At the last rough sleeper count on the 25/11/2021, 17 individuals were found to be rough sleeping. Table 9 below shows the increase in persons found to be sleeping rough from 2018 to 2021.

Table 9: Adults found rough sleeping at annual count 2018 - 2021

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
Date of Rough Sleepers Count	19/12/2018	18/12/2019	17/12/2020	25/11/2021
Limerick	0	2	5	10
Clare	0	0	5	7
Total number of persons sleeping rough in Mid-West region	0	2	10	17

During the winter of 2021, the Winter Initiative projects in Limerick and Clare catered for the needs of 10 rough sleepers, 6 in Limerick and 4 in Clare.



6 male rough sleepers in Limerick
3 male rough sleepers in Clare

1 female rough sleeper in Clare



The numbers of adults who are rough sleepers continues to increase during quarter 1 and quarter 2 2022 as presented in table 10 below.

Table 10: Number of persons recorded as rough sleepers engaging in contact with Outreach Team

Persons recorded as rough sleepers engaging in contact with Outreach Team	During the Q1 2022	During the Q2 2022
Number of persons in contact with Outreach Team Bedded Down	34	43
Number of Persons in contact with Outreach team Not Bedded Down	2	10
Total Individuals in contact with Outreach Team	17	20
Number of persons who also used Emergency Accommodation	16	17

A shortage of available emergency bed spaces, as a result of many remaining in emergency accommodation for extended periods of time (due to a shortage of move-on housing and accommodation and/or the unsuitability of hostel or shared living spaces), are among the contributing factors to the growth in numbers of people sleeping rough in Limerick city and towns in Clare. Other factors include migrants travelling to the Mid-West, destitute as a result of being without an income source and/or being ineligible for social welfare supports. Also there is a cohort of rough sleepers living with addiction and/or subsistence misuse and/or poor mental health.

Table 11, 11a and 11b report on the number of single adults and families that exited emergency accommodation in 2019, 2020 and 2021, household composition and reasons for exit. **Note:** includes all discharges during the year, some clients will have multiple discharges throughout the year.

Table 11: Number of Households Exiting Emergency Accommodation & Reasons 2019

2019	No. of Single Adults	Local Authority/ AHB/ HAP/ Long-term Accommodation / Private Rented	Breach of Conditions	Return to Family/ Friends	Prison (on remand)	Residential Treatment / Admitted to Hospital	Relocation to another country
Limerick	347	76	51	192	9	15	4
Clare	76	18	15	24	8	10	1
Region Total	423	94	66	216	17	25	5

2019	No. of Families	Local Authority/ AHB/ HAP/ Long-term Accommodation / Private Rented	Breach of Conditions	Return to Family/ Friends	Relocation to another country
Limerick	62	45	6	9	0
Clare	38	27	0	9	2
Region Total	100	72	6	18	2

Table 11a: Number of Households Exiting Emergency Accommodation & Reasons 2020

2020	No. of Single Adults	Local Authority/ AHB/ HAP/ Long-term Accommodation / Private Rented	Breach of Conditions	Return to Family/ Friends	Prison (on remand)	Residential Treatment / Admitted to Hospital	Relocation to another country
Limerick	291	51	50	171	5	12	2
Clare	42	18	11	8	2	3	0
Region Total	333	69	61	179	7	15	2

2020	No. of Families	Local Authority/ AHB/ HAP/ Long-term Accommodation / Private Rented	Breach of Conditions	Return to Family/ Friends	Relocation to another country
Limerick	57	42	4	9	2
Clare	18	13	2	2	0
Region Total	75	55	6	11	2

Table 11b: Number of Households Exiting Emergency Accommodation & Reasons 2021

2021	No. of Single Adults	Local Authority/ AHB/ HAP/ Long-term Accommodation / Private Rented	Breach of Conditions	Return to Family/ Friends	Prison (on remand)	Residential Treatment / Admitted to Hospital	Relocation to another country
Limerick	296	45	61	160	17	12	1
Clare	38	24	7	2	3	0	2
Region Total	334	69	68	162	20	12	3

2021	No. of Families	Local Authority/ AHB/ HAP/ Long-term Accommodation / Private Rented	Breach of Conditions	Return to Family/ Friends	Relocation to another country
Limerick	30	21	3	3	1
Clare	7	3	0	3	0
Region Total	37	24	3	6	1

ANALYSIS AND EMERGING TRENDS

Unfortunately, the backdrop to the development of this new Action Plan remains the persistent high level of homelessness in the region, despite the significant interventions undertaken to prevent homelessness in the first instance. The significant numbers presenting to Homeless Services, and placements in emergency accommodation, have continued throughout the duration of the last Action Plan.

Presentations:

In terms of presentations, each local authority reported considerable numbers of presentations, a high portion of which are *repeat presentations*.

The main reasons for homeless presentations continue to be Notice to Quit from landlords and family circumstances including addiction, mental health and domestic violence.

Emergency Accommodation Placements:

Similar to the trend in presentations, the number of households placed in emergency accommodation has also increased. However, when compared to the extent of presentations, the number of actual placements in emergency accommodation highlights the extent and importance of the preventative work that is carried out by the respective Homeless Services in avoiding the need to resort to emergency accommodation provision.

Exits from Emergency Accommodation:

The trends in each county reveal a high number of exits from emergency accommodation in 2019, 2020 and 2021, with securing private rented accommodation, local authority and AHB-provided accommodation being the primary exit strategies. The continued increasing supply of new social housing delivery across the region is anticipated to continue over the duration of the 2022-2025 Plan.

The significant number securing private rented accommodation is indicative of the success of the Homeless HAP Placefinder services that are in operation in both Counties.

The number of family households with dependent children exiting emergency accommodation continues to increase and demonstrates the focus by each authority in assisting families. The challenge of securing one bed properties for single adult households will continue for the foreseeable future pending the increase in the construction and availability of such property. The need for 4 bed plus accommodation for larger families remains a challenge.

The varying degrees of prominence of homelessness experiences in the Mid-West Region provides a challenging context for the development of the current Action Plan. As a result, the plan is, and subsequent actions are, sensitive to local contexts and mindful to the fact that some actions will be more relevant to certain Local Authorities than others. Furthermore, the plan also considers the current (and changing) policy context. Taken together these elements have informed the development of key themes and actions for the Mid-West Region Homelessness Action Plan 2022 – 2025.

Central to the Action Plan is a commitment to homelessness prevention in the Mid-West Region. Despite significant increases in the numbers of people experiencing homelessness, work continues to prevent emergency accommodation placements in the first instance. This has involved the development and consolidation of systems, protocols and good working relationships with a range of stakeholders, and is particularly important in the prevention of homelessness among priority groups (e.g. youth (18-25), those over 65; those living with disability; Travellers and/or those exiting Direct Provision to mention but a few examples).

Regardless of the work undertaken to date, the percentage increase in the number of adults accessing homeless services through emergency accommodation, clearly demonstrates that it has not been possible to prevent homelessness in the Mid-West Region. The provision of emergency accommodation has become a necessary intervention and there is a clear need to ensure sufficient availability of quality emergency accommodation across the various models of provision. This includes provision for general supply, to interventions tailored specifically for the diverse homeless communities and experiences, sensitive to case needs. This guiding principle is in-keeping with the National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for Homeless Services in Ireland.



PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Current national performance indicators require each local authority to provide annual data with regard to the number of adult individuals in long term emergency accommodation (i.e. 6 months or more) as follows:

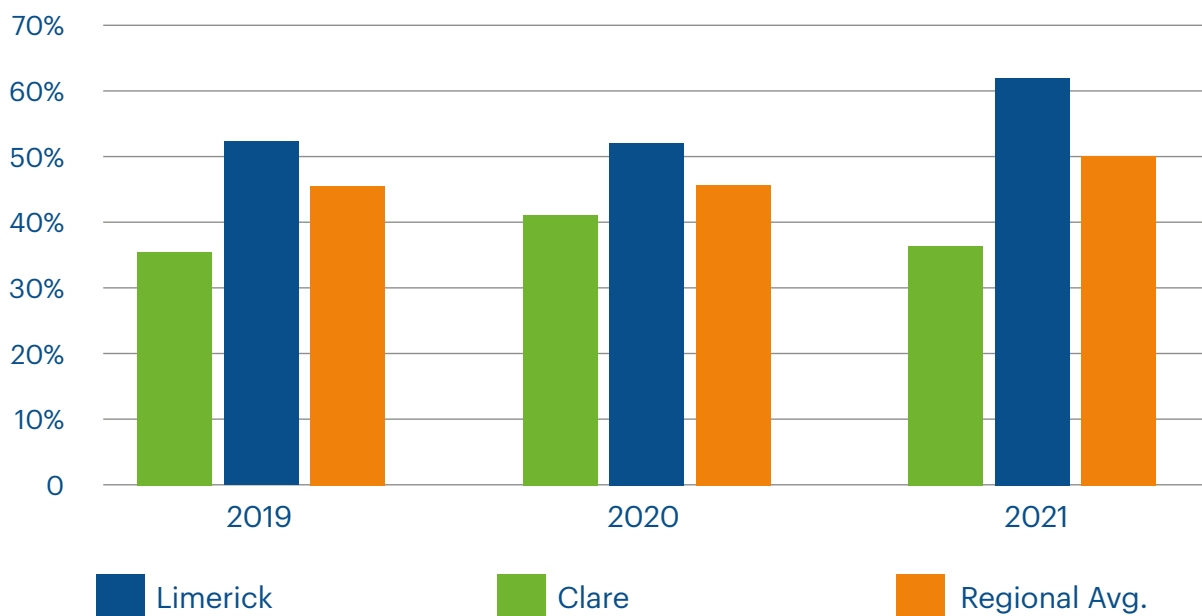
Number of adult individuals in emergency accommodation that are long term (i.e. 6 months or more within the previous year) homeless as a % of the total number of homeless adult individuals in emergency accommodation at 31st December.

Table 12: Emergency Accommodation Placements >6 Months (2019-2021)

	2019	2020	2021
Limerick	35%	41%	36%
Clare	52%	52%	63%
Regional Average	44%	47%	50%

Figure 9 graphically displays the percentage of adult individuals in emergency accommodation for more than 6 months for the period 2019-2021. The regional average is 47% over the three year period. These statistics further demonstrate the increase in numbers presenting as homeless and the challenge of sourcing long term suitable accommodation for those placed in emergency accommodation.

Figure 9: Percent of Adult Individuals in Emergency Accommodation (> 6 months)





KEY FINDINGS AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

KEY FINDINGS AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

The experience of homelessness in the Mid West Region over the period of the previous plan, in tandem with due consideration of the current policy context, has informed the identification of the key objectives and actions.

Focus on prevention remains core to the operation of homeless services in the Mid West Region. Significant work is undertaken to prevent an emergency accommodation placement in the first instance. This has involved the development of systems, protocols and good working relationship with a range of stakeholders. This is particularly fundamental in the prevention of homelessness among key target groups most at risk, including victims of domestic violence, sex offenders, prisoners being released from prison and youths leaving State care.

KEY FINDING 1:

As is evident in the statistics provided for the previous Plan period, it has not been possible to prevent homelessness in all cases, and the provision of emergency accommodation remains a necessary intervention.

The need to ensure sufficient provision of quality emergency accommodation across the various models of provision is apparent, from general supply to provision that is tailored specifically for the spectrum of homeless cohorts and their respective needs.

KEY FINDING 2:

The implementation of Housing First in the region during 2019, 2020 and 2021 represents a significant intervention in addressing the needs of high support need clients, and will be a key focus for 2022-2025. The need for tenancy sustainment supports has been recognised as critically important for certain clients in order to maintain their tenancies and break the cycle of homelessness that can often exist. A housing-led approach has been to the fore in successfully exiting households from emergency accommodation during the period of the last Action Plan.

Furthermore, interagency wrap around health and welfare supports is a prerequisite for any successful long-term exit from homelessness for particular homeless cohorts, most notably those suffering from mental health and substance misuse issues. Across the Mid West Region these two issues have represented the key contributing factors in a large proportion of homeless cases.

KEY FINDING 3:

2021 witnessed a significant increase in the number of single adult presentations, and a resultant increase in emergency accommodation placements for this cohort. This has placed pressures on services in relation to maintaining a sufficient supply of emergency accommodation. Furthermore, exit strategies for this cohort have proven challenging, with barriers identified both in terms of one bed availability and the respective Housing Assistance Payment rate that is currently applicable in each County.

KEY FINDING 4:

Family homelessness has persisted, with notice of terminations remaining the main contributing factor into homelessness for families in the region. The provision of family hubs across the region has greatly assisted, both in terms of providing high quality, suitable emergency accommodation, as well as the necessary supports on site to facilitate move on strategies. This is particularly important for families that have high support needs, and where interventions are required, beyond what is available through mainstream support services. The requirement for enhanced services to facilitate both exits from emergency accommodation and tenancy sustainment thereafter has been identified as part of the review process.

KEY FINDING 5:

Rough sleeping by individuals is present throughout the region. Various initiatives have been instigated targeting rough sleepers, including Cold Weather Initiatives and Housing First. Notwithstanding such interventions, the actual extent of rough sleeping has not to date been verified on an ongoing basis, with outreach strategies required to further address the issue.

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

The identified priority areas listed below have been informed by the experience in the Mid West Region over the period of the previous plan, statistical review, and due consideration of the current policy context:



- Prevention



- Quality Provision



- Tenancy Sustainment



- Exit Strategies



- Emergency Accommodation



- Health & Welfare Supports



- Models of Provision



- Multi-Agency Approach

In addition to the above, an objective has been included in fulfillment of our Public Sector Duty obligation.

MID WEST REGION ACTIONS 2022-2025

The following actions reflect the prioritised objectives of key Housing/Homeless policies as set out in the Policy Context section of this document.

Objective	Continuing Key Actions	Key Added Value Actions	Responsible Bodies	Timeframe
Prevention of Homelessness	1. To provide on-going support and advice through Homeless Services Teams	1. Extension of tenancy sustainment services	LAs, AHBs, HSE	2022
	2. Operation of Homeless HAP Placefinder Service	2. Specific preventative initiatives targeted at single homeless adults, and those with disability issues where affordability is the key issue, for example the HAP rate	ALL	Ongoing
	3. Provision of tenancy sustainment services	3. Consider pilot initiatives specifically targeting prevention of homelessness	LA & HSE	Ongoing
	4. Provision of Interagency services			
	5. Prevention Strategy to be devised by Quarter 3 2023			Q3 2023
Outcomes: Homelessness is avoided in the first instance. Tenancies are sustained, thus reducing cyclical homelessness				
Provision of Emergency Accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Models of provision Quality Provision Exit Strategies *Families with dependent children, young person's exiting state care, victims of domestic violence, prisoners, single males/ females, couples/ sex offenders, rough sleepers, health (mental health & addiction)	1. Ensure a sufficient supply of suitable emergency and/or supported temporary accommodation in order to meet need as it arises for all homeless cohorts*	1. Rough sleeper counts to be undertaken or alternative measures to capture the actual extent and verify the numbers of individuals rough sleeping	LAs, AHBs, HSE	Yearly
	2. Continued operation of Severe/Cold Weather Initiatives	2. Accelerate the creation of Housing First tenancies, endeavour to exceed the targets as set out in National Plan, and to examine the feasibility of the provision of Housing First tenancies for at-risk prisoners on release		Ongoing
	3. Continued implementation of Housing First	3. Further models of supported emergency accommodation to be developed in lieu of private provision		
	4. Ensure best practices in all dealings with homeless persons in line with implementation of National Quality Homeless Standards.	4. Specific Initiatives targeted at exiting single homeless adults, where affordability is the key issue, for example House Share Arrangements provided by Local Authority	NGOs/Mental Health	Ongoing
	5. Operation of Homeless HAP Placefinder Service	5. To review operation of Family Hubs with a specific focus on identifying additionally in respect of high support families where exiting emergency accommodation is a challenge		Ongoing
	6. Adopt an interagency approach through the Homeless Action Teams			
	7. Collaborate with approved housing bodies and other relevant support services to identify housing solutions			ongoing
Outcomes: The number of people rough sleeping is reduced. Enhanced experiences for clients who avail of emergency accommodation. Quicker exit strategies for all homeless cohorts from emergency accommodation				

Objective	Continuing Key Actions	Key Added Value Actions	Responsible Bodies	Timeframe
Health & Welfare Supports	1. Provide the most appropriate primary care and mental health services to those in homeless services and improve their ability to sustain a normal tenancy 2. Ensure each Homeless Action Team (HAT) has access to and is being supported by a member of the Community Mental Health Team, the priority being an integrated service delivered through HAT. 3. Provide the most appropriate drug rehabilitation service to those in homeless services to improve their ability to sustain a tenancy	1. Identify proposals relevant to mental health and homelessness for implementation in the region, both in the context of prevention and exit strategies 2. Strengthen and further develop Housing First links with Addiction and Mental Health Services. 3. Identify proposals relevant to drug rehabilitation and homelessness for implementation in the region, both in the context of prevention and exit strategies.	LAs, AHBs, HSE, Regional Drugs Task Force	
Outcomes: Enhanced health & welfare services for those clients with substance misuse and/or mental health issues, leading to more successful outcomes regarding accommodation				
COVID-19 Actions	1. Maintain self- isolation facilities in the Region	1. Ensure timely testing facilities are available to clients 2. Ensure adequate cocooning/shielding facilities are retained throughout the pandemic 3. Advocate for and ensure vaccination programmes prioritise frontline staff and service users	HSE, LAs	Monthly review
Outcomes: The number of people rough sleeping is reduced. Enhanced experiences for clients who avail of emergency accommodation. Quicker exit strategies for all homeless cohorts from emergency accommodation				
Multi-Agency Approach	1. Effective operation of Homeless Action Teams 2. Ensure that discharge protocols/policies are in place and working effectively for people being discharged from health services and those released from prisons 3. Engage with SORUM [Sex Offenders Risk Assessment and Management] in relation to planned discharges where the person is identified as homeless or likely to be homeless. 4. Engagement with TUSLA Aftercare Steering Committees	1. Review discharge protocols/policies and amend where necessary 2. Review of inter-agency collaboration and gap analysis through the HATs on an annual basis 3. Develop formal structures at County level to facilitate a coordinated approach between services for victims of domestic violence in respect of homelessness, including data capture 4. Ensure best practice in all engagement with homeless persons in line with the implementation of the National Quality Homeless Standards.	LAs, AHBs, HSE, TUSLA, IPS, DV Refuges	Annual Review of Protocols Annual review of HAT 2023 Ongoing
Outcomes: Enhanced streamlined services across all relevant agencies, with a client centric focus, resulting in improved outcomes for shared clients				

Objective	Continuing Key Actions	Key Added Value Actions	Responsible Bodies	Timeframe
Public Sector Duty		1. To complete an annual assessment of Equality & Human Rights issues, through the gathering of relevant data regarding the different identified groups concerning their situation in respect of homelessness	SMG	Annual
Outcome: Identify and give substance to Equality & Human Rights issues				
Youth Homelessness	1. Youth Homeless Strategy to be developed in line with Housing for All Plan 2. Collaborate with approved housing bodies and other relevant support services to identify housing solutions 3. Continuation of Youth Resettlement Officer coordinating a shared care model of support from LCCC/HAT	1. Identify proposals relevant to drug rehabilitation and homelessness for implementation in the region, both in the context of prevention and exit strategies. 2. Accelerate the creation of tenancies targeted at Youth i.e. youth CAS, and to examine the feasibility of the provision of Housing First for Youth tenancies for young people aging out of care. 3. Consider pilot initiatives specifically targeting prevention of homelessness for young people.	LAs, AHBs, HSE, TUSLA	Ongoing
Outcomes: Enhanced streamlined services across all relevant agencies, with specific projects targeting youth, resulting in improved outcomes and prevention of homeless pathways for young clients				
Street Outreach	1. Coordinated Street Outreach support to be continued in line with Housing for All Plan 2. Collaborate with approved housing bodies and other relevant support services to identify housing solutions and exceed Housing First Target set out for 2022-2026	1. Partner with AHBs and Drug Services to continue street outreach in Limerick. 2. Accelerate the creation of tenancies targeted at Housing First clients, and to examine the feasibility of the provision of Housing First. 3. Continue to work in partnership with HSE, Limerick Drug and Alcohol Service, AHBs and other partners.	LAs, AHBs, HSE, Drug Services, TUSLA, LA, HSE, Drug and Alcohol Service	Ongoing
Outcomes: Enhanced streamlined services across all relevant agencies, targeting and engaging with rough sleepers, resulting in improved outcomes for clients experiencing homelessness.				



STATUTORY CONSULTATION

STATUTORY CONSULTATION

As provided in the Act the following bodies were consulted in the preparation of this Action Plan:

- Mid West Region Homelessness Consultative Forum
- Housing Strategic Policy Committee (Limerick)
- Housing Strategic Policy Committee (Clare)

REVOCATION AND PERIOD OF PLAN

On adoption of this Plan, the previous Plan 2013 - 2018 stands revoked and this Plan shall remain in force until 31 December 2025.

ADOPTION

This Action Plan was adopted by the two Local Authorities as follows:

Limerick City and County Council November 2022

Clare County Council December 2022



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

APPENDIX 1

MEMBERSHIP OF MID WEST REGION HOMELESSNESS MANAGEMENT GROUP

Director of Services, Limerick City and County Council (Chair)
 Director of Services, Clare County Council
 Senior Executive Officer, Limerick City and County Council
 Senior Executive Officer, Clare County Council
 Administrative Officer, Limerick City and County Council
 Coordinator Homeless and Ethnic Minorities, Health Service Executive
 Divisional Manager, Department of Social Protection

MEMBERSHIP OF MID WEST REGION HOMELESSNESS FORUM

Mid West Local Authorities:	Limerick City and County Council – Lead Authority Clare County Council
Mandatory Representation:	Health Service Executive (HSE) Prison Service Probation Service Education and Training Board
Other Representation:	Member of County Council (Lead Authority) Department of Social Protection Regional Drugs Task Force TUSLA
Approved and Other Bodies:	ADAPT Associated Charities Trust Clare Haven Cuan Mhuire Focus Ireland Mid West Simon Community Novas Peter McVerry Trust Respond Sophia Housing St. Vincent de Paul

APPENDIX 2

HOMELESS SERVICES IN THE MID-WEST REGION

Limerick			
Emergency Accommodation	Service Provider	Target Group	Capacity
Temporary Emergency Accommodation	Novas	Single Adults (Males and Females)	30
Private Emergency Accommodation Placements	Limerick City and County Council	Single Adults (Males and Females), Couples and Families	Demand Led
Supported Accommodation	Service Provider	Target Group	Capacity
Childers Road Family Initiative	Focus Ireland	Families	39 units
Dublin Road Family Initiative (Twin Oaks)	Mid West Simon	Families	10 units
Suaimhneas	Respond	Families (Females)	6 units
Oak Lodge	Mid West Simon	Single Adults (Males and Females)	60 beds
McGarry House (Emergency)	Novas	Single Adults (Males and Females)	30 beds
Thomond House	Associated Charities Trust	Single Women	24 beds
St. Joseph Street	Mid West Simon	Single Women	6 beds
Cuan Mhuire, Bruree	Cuan Mhuire	Single Adults (Males and Females)	52 beds
Teach Mhuire and Sancta Maria	Cuan Mhuire	Single Adults (Males and Females)	12 beds

Resettlement Services	Service Provider	Target Group	Capacity
Resettlement Service	Focus Ireland	Adults (male and female), couples and families	Up to 60 individuals, will depend on intensity of need
Youth Housing	Focus Ireland	Young persons (male and female)	18 beds
Long-term Accommodation	Service Provider	Target Group	Capacity
Brother Russell House	Novas	Adults (male and female)	26 individuals
Altamira	Associated Charities Trust	Adults (female)	10 individuals
Clann Nua	Mid West Simon	Adults (male and female)	30 individuals
Specialist Services	Service Provider	Target Group	Capacity
Tenancy Sustainment	Sophia	Adults (male and female), couples and families	Demand led and depends on intensity of need
Tenancy Sustainment	Focus Ireland	Adults (male and female), couples and families	Demand led and depends on intensity of need
Housing Led	Novas	Adults (male and female), couples and families	Demand led and depends on intensity of need
Housing Led	Mid West Simon	Adults (male and female), couples and families	Demand led and depends on intensity of need
Tenancy Sustainment	Peter McVerry Trust	Adults (male and female), couples and families	Demand led and depends on intensity of need

Dial House	Novas	Young persons (male and female)	6
Day Service	St. Vincent de Paul	Adults (male and female)	Demand Led
Severe Weather Initiative	Various service providers	Rough sleepers	Demand Led
Out of Hours service	Novas	Adults (male and female), couples and families	Demand Led
Housing First	Focus Ireland	Adults (male and female)	31
Homeless HAP Placefinder	Limerick City and County Council	Adults (male and female), couples and families	Demand Led

CLARE			
Emergency Accommodation	Service Provider	Target Group	Capacity
Temporary Emergency Accommodation	Mid West Simon Community	Families	12 Rooms
Private Emergency Accommodation Placements	Clare County Council	Single Adults (Male & Female) Couples & Families	Demand Led
Supported Accommodation	Service Provider	Target Group	Capacity
Laurel Lodge (Emergency)	Mid West Simon Community	Single Males	13 Rooms
Westbrook House (Emergency)	Mid West Simon Community	Single Adults (Male & Female)s Couples with No Deps	15 Rooms
Cusack Lodge Family Hub	Novas	Families	5 Rooms
Clann Nua	Mid West Simon Community	Single Adults (Male & Female) Couples with No Deps	14 Rooms
Laurel Lodge Apts – Transitional	Mid West Simon Community	Single Female Adults	4 Rooms

Resettlement Services	Service Provider	Target Group	Capacity
Youth Housing	Focus Ireland	Single Adults (Male & Female)	13 Beds
Specialist Services	Service Provider	Target Group	Capacity
Tenancy Sustainment (Shannon)	Novas	Single Adults (Males & Female)	9 Beds
Housing First	Focus Ireland	Adults (Male & Female) Couples and Families	Demand Led
Tenancy Sustainment	Focus Ireland	Adults (Male & Female) Couples & Families	Demand Led
Homeless HAP Placefinder	Clare County Council	Single Adults (Male & Female) Couples & Families	Demand Led
Severe Weather Initiative	Mid West Simon	Rough Sleepers	5 Beds

Housing Support Services
Limerick City and County Council
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St. Johns Square
Limerick V94 DP48

Housing Department
Clare County Council
New Road
Ennis
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