



## Co Wicklow PPN

### **Let's Talk About Housing & Accommodation Issues!**

*A Co Wicklow PPN Information Seminar to find out about the Housing & Accommodation needs of People Living in Wicklow*



**20<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

# **Seminar Report**

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## **Introducing County Wicklow Public Participation Network**

County Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN) was established in July 2014 under the directive of the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government and in accordance with legislation in the Local Government Reform Act 2014 (Section 46). Public Participation Networks were established to be an independent structure that would become the main link through which local authorities connect with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in a process to facilitate communities to articulate a diverse range of views and interests within the local government system.

Co Wicklow PPN has 290 diverse member groups, some of these groups are networks in their own right. PPN representatives serve as a voice for the community on structures including: the Local Community Development Committee; all of the Wicklow County Council Strategic Policy Committees; Wicklow County Childcare Committee; Co Wicklow Children & Young People's Services Committee; Co Wicklow Local Sports Partnership; Wicklow County Tourism Board; Co Wicklow Volunteer Centre, County Wicklow Partnership, and Co Wicklow Joint Policing Committee. PPN Representatives strive to ensure that the needs of the community sector are prioritised within local policy processes.

### **Background and Context**

On 8th April 2019 the Social Inclusion Network of Co Wicklow PPN met in Newcastle Community Centre to study the Co Wicklow Visions for Community Wellbeing and to identify the priority issues that arose from the Wellbeing Consultation Workshops from a social inclusion and equality perspective. It was agreed that Housing and Accommodation Issues were having negative impacts on Wicklow's diverse population and communities. It was decided to hold a seminar on the topic and a sub-group was set up to develop it. The sub-group included

- Aoibhinn McCloy – Wicklow Travellers Group, PPN Housing SPC Rep
- Ann-Marie McMorrow – Bray Women's Refuge
- Simon Blankensee – St Killians Scout Group, Trans Greystones, PPN Housing SPC Rep
- Pierce Richardson/Laura O' Callaghan – Disability Federation Ireland
- Niamh Wogan – Little Bray Family Resource & Development Centre
- Helen Howes – PPN Resource Worker

## **Aims and Objectives**

The sub-group agreed the following aim and objectives :

**Aim:** To hold a Co Wicklow PPN Information Seminar on the Housing & Accommodation Experiences and Needs of People Living in Wicklow

### **Objectives:**

- To hear the voices and stories of Wicklow People;
- To inform Co Wicklow PPN Representatives;
- To inform Local Government Representatives

## **Seminar Agenda**

1. Welcome – Helen Howes, Co Wicklow PPN
2. Linking the National to the Local – Colette Bennett, Social Justice Ireland
3. Traveller Experiences – Kathleen O’ Connor, Wicklow Travellers Group
4. The Social Effects of Overcrowding – Denise Cahill, Little Bray Family Resource & Development Centre
5. Experiences for People with Mental Health Challenges – Ronan Mulhern, and Emmet MvAvoy, Cardeas Clubhouse
6. Experience for People with Disabilities – Patty O’ Malley and Ruth McCullagh, National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities
7. Issues Presenting to the Citizen’s Information Service – Martina Cronin, Co Wicklow Citizen’s Information Service
8. BREAK
9. Round Table Discussions
  - What do you think about what you’ve heard today, have you anything you’d like to add?
  - What are the 3 things that you would like PPN Reps to take to the committees they sit on?
10. Group Feedback
11. Closing Remarks

## **Summary**

Colette Bennet from Social Justice Ireland opened the seminar with a history of housing practices. Beginning with the prevalence of social housing in the early 1900s through the 1950s when tenant purchase schemes became popular and up to the current concept of the property market. The policy landscape was highlighted along with the current challenges at national and local level.

Kathleen O' Connor is a Traveller woman and the assistant co-ordinator of the Co Wicklow Travellers Primary Healthcare Team. Kathleen highlighted the issues that Traveller families face in relation to housing and how they have a serious impact on Traveller health, contributing to their higher than usual mortality rate in comparison to the general population.

Denise Cahill provided an insight into hidden homelessness in its various forms and the impact it can have on individuals, their families, and communities, highlighting in particular a poverty continuum for low to middle income families.

Cairdeas Clubhouse is a community of people with mental health difficulties who work together towards the common goal of recovery using a peer support model. Ronan Mulhern and ???? highlighted accommodation issues faced by their members and spoke of how these issues exacerbate anxiety and poor mental health

The National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities is a representative advocacy service that works exclusively to safeguard the rights, and implement the will and choices of those using their service. Patty O' Malley and Ruth McCullagh highlighted that 50% of their case load has a housing element to it. Various issues were listed including people having to stay in nursing homes (often at a young age) and hospitals, for long periods due to the lack of suitable supports and accommodation.

Martina Cronin stated that housing is now the second main area that people seek support for from the Citizens Information Service, while providing statistical information for the supports sought. Clear examples of why housing is unaffordable and social housing is unobtainable for so many families were provided along with real life case load examples of the issues and impacts experienced by CIS clients.

The full presentations made by the speakers can be read further on in the report and the workshop discussions are detailed in Appendix 1. A personal submission from a participant is included in Appendix 2.

Co Wicklow PPN Representatives will use this information to inform their work on the committees they sit on with the aim of advocating for community wellbeing. The particular priority elements that participants wanted to be advocated for are as follows :

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### **Priorities for PPN Representatives and Local Elected Representatives**

- Develop a definition of affordable housing based on people's income
- National and Local Government must adopt a human rights based approach to housing
- Improve communications between statutory bodies and their clients as well as between statutory bodies themselves
- Establish homeless outreach services in local areas
- Cold weather initiative – need for a wrap-around service from 8am
- Develop supports for people to integrate into established areas
- Implement a HAP information campaign for landlords
- Facilitate data gathering for “affordable housing” need
- Improve communications about Traveller specific accommodation – the budgets and actual expenditure as well as loans for caravans
- Increase the income limits for qualification for social housing
- Mainstream tenant sustainment supports
- Develop modular homes as a temporary solution and locate them in communities surrounded by necessary supports

### **Other**

- Develop more high-rise properties, but with facilities
- Just build homes!!
- Vacant & voids to be brought back in to use

## Presentations and Stories

### 1. Housing in Ireland – An Overview

**Colette Bennett, Research and Policy Analyst, *Social Justice Ireland***



#### Housing as Welfare – late 1800s, early 1900s

- 1900s or thereabouts – social housing primarily delivered through charities
- Increasing State funding for social housing with Independence
- Rural social housing development – separate (and faster) than urban social housing development. 1914 – 82% of all social housing was in rural areas.
- 1932 – Housing Act introduced to address urban land issues “slum clearance” – still separate policy to rural social housing.
- Between 1930s and 1950s social housing accounted for one third to a half of all housing output – it took until the 1970s for private building to take off
- Main players during this time – (mainly Protestant) charities, local authorities, rural/urban power disparity, British government

#### Tenant purchase and the transfer of wealth

- 1936 Labourers Act introduced the right to buy for **rural** farm labourers.
- By the mid-1960s, 80% of homes built under the Labourers Act were owner-occupied.
- Shape of house finance changed – more grants to build social housing on the supply side, and a differential rent system on the demand side
- 1966 Housing Act – unified rural and urban policies and gave universal right to tenant purchase

#### Housing as an Asset – 1990s to early 2000s (and beyond)

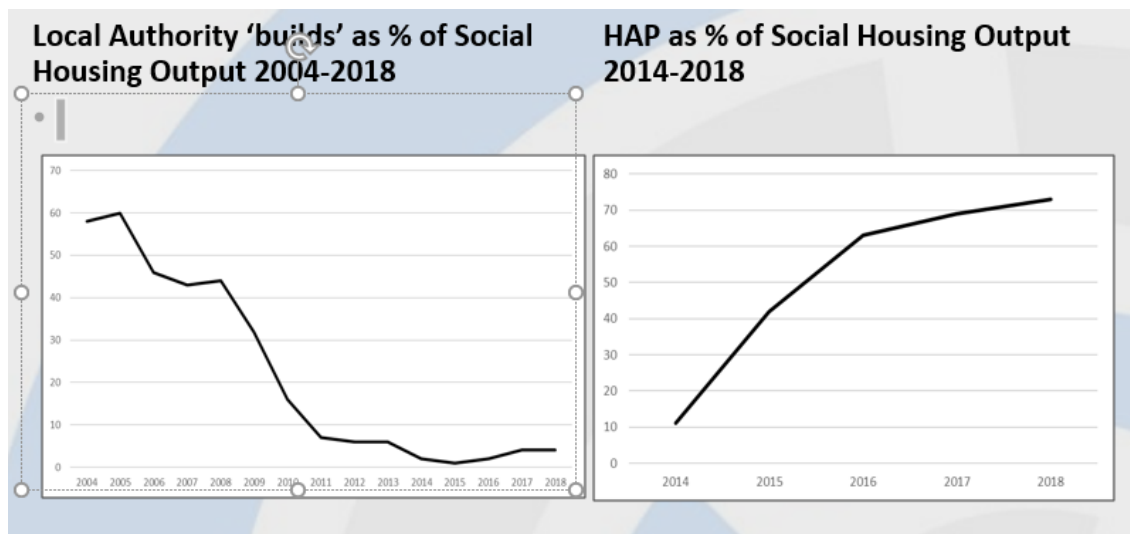
- The property “market”
- Peak mortgage lending growth (28.1%)
- Construction accounted for 12.4% of the labour force – two-thirds in residential construction
- “Light touch” regulation
- 100% mortgages and extended terms, subprime lenders

## Bubbles, Booms and Busts 2005-2013



## From Social Housing to Social Housing Solutions

- 71,858 households on social housing list
- Capital to social housing projects tapered off
- Increased reliance on the private rented market through Rent Supplement and Rental Accommodation Scheme
- 2014 – the introduction of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)
- Enter 'social housing solutions'





## Housing Tenure 1946-2016

	1946	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011	2016
Owner Occupied	52.6%	59.8%	68.8%	74.4%	79.3%	77.4%	69.7%	67.6%
Social Housing	42.7%	18.4%	15.5%	12.5%	9.7%	7.9%	8.7%	9.4%
Private Rent		17.2%	13.3%	10.1%	8.0%	11.0%	18.5%	18.2%
Total No. of Dwellings (,000s)	662.6	676.4	726.4	896.1	1019.7	1279.6	1649.4	1697.6

### The Challenges – A National Picture

- 71,858 *households* on the social housing waiting lists
- 10,397 homeless, including 1,756 families with 3,873 children (September 2019)
- €147 million for emergency accommodation in 2018, an increase of 311% since 2014
- Rising house prices – average €257k, up 57% from 2013 low
- Rent inflation – average asking rent now €1,403/month
- 18.5% of funding for Traveller Accommodation drawn down as of July 2019

### The Challenges – A Picture of Wicklow

- 2,477 *households* on the social housing waiting list
  - 235 aged 60+
  - 1,408 unemployed
  - 831 single-parent households and 633 couples with children = 1,464 families
  - 847 waiting for more than 7 years
- 20 homeless adults (September 2019)
- €616,236 on emergency accommodation in 2018, an increase of 283% since 2014
- Rising house prices – average €332,561, increased by 68.4% on lowest point
- Rent inflation – average asking rent €1,422 (above national average)
- 0% funding for Traveller Specific Accommodation drawn down as of July 2019

## International Commentary

- “Our chief concern lies with those laws and policies which have **allowed unprecedented amounts of global capital to be invested in housing as security for financial instruments** that are traded on global markets, and as a means of accumulating wealth. This expanding role and unprecedented dominance of unregulated financial markets and corporations in the housing sector is now generally referred to as the “financialization of housing” and it is having **devastating consequences for tenants.**”

Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, 2019

- The **rapidly rising number of homeless people as a result of rent increases and insufficient social housing merits urgent action.** Insufficient levels of investment and construction over the last decade, including social housing, have led to a huge shortage of adequate accommodation **for those most at risk.**

European Commission Country Report Ireland 2019



### A Vision for Housing

- Start with our values - what do we want housing for?
- System Design
- Deliberative, and Deliberate, Democracy

## 2. Traveller Experiences

**Kathleen O' Connor, Primary Health Care Team, Wicklow Travellers Group**

Issues for Travellers include:

- Halting sites are not suitable and need upgrades
- Poor fire safety
- Travellers being put into houses with no family near them.
- Caravan loans not sufficient for year-round mobiles/caravans
- Lack of suitable accommodation for children with specific illnesses within the Traveller community
- High refuse charges; high costs to halting sites - €40 per bay

How does living in substandard accommodation (no basic facilities) contribute to the lower mortality rate in Travellers?

The living conditions of some of these bays and mobiles are not up to the standard for basic living, some do not have heating within them. The solution to this is by getting small oil heaters. These have to be lit outside because of the fumes that are let out of them. They then have to be carried into the house. Some of the mobiles do not have running water. Big drums of water have to be carried out to these mobiles. In order to have showers, many people in these mobiles use basins or travel to other families houses to use their water. While some improvement works have been carried out on some sites it needs to be done across the board

The mobile grant is not sufficient to buy a year – round mobile. There's no insulation in the mobile so again this adds to medical problems

Looking at statistics, according to the All-Ireland Traveller Health Study, the life expectancy of a male Traveller is currently 62 years, which is 15 years less than men in the general population. The life expectancy of a female Traveller is currently 70 years, which is 11 years less than women in the general population.

### Case Study

I'm just giving a case study on one particular Traveller family that lives on a site in Co Wicklow, where they have bays with only the kitchen in them with a bathroom so therefore they have to have a caravan in their yard for their bedroom. They have to get up at four in the morning and carry their children across the yard from their caravan to their bay in order for their two young children to use the toilets. This affects the children when they go to school as they are suffering from getting up in the middle of the night to go across their yard to use their bathroom. It affects the mental health and physical health of both the parents and the children. Kidney infections and other illnesses have been present in this family due to this. A lot of Travellers want to be in social housing but not all of them

### 3. The Social Effects of Overcrowding

#### Denise Cahill, Little Bray Family Resource & Development Centre

There are many different forms of homelessness which all affect people in different ways including: hidden homeless; multi occupancy; emergency homeless system (recorded figures); rough sleeping

What I want you to understand is the social effects that homelessness has on those affected:

- Hidden homelessness & multi-occupancy – can cause mental illness depression and anxiety among the family unit. Grandmothers become mothers to a new generation. Mothers can become detached from the responsibility of parenting their children. Privacy becomes an issue. Poverty becomes prevalent as the bills get higher, the cost of living goes up and more mouths need to be fed. Children who are now adults don't want to be told how to live their lives, but can't escape their parents. Life revolves around the younger ones in the house again. The feeling that you home is no longer your own causing arguments and stress
- Emergency homeless system – contrary to popular belief this is not free. For the families in this system who manage to get a permanent room, they must pay a rent to the local authority. Add to this the fact that where you stay may not be near the area your kids go to school and you are now paying extra costs for public transport. There are no cooking facilities in hotel rooms so take away is usually the food of necessity. All these things keep you in a never ending poverty trap
- Rough Sleeping – this can come with complete chaos. Criminality can increase as a person steals the things they need to survive. Addiction can become an issue, but not always. The lack of support to help you access payments. The need to be able to ring the emergency beds line and even if you get a hostel bed it can be that they are dangerous places for those accessing them.
- The definition of homelessness is “the state of having no home.” Official figures state that there are 3,873 homeless children accessing emergency accommodation in Sept. 2019. That is the equivalent to every school going child in Bray
- What we rarely see is the social impact homelessness has on those affected by the current situation. Families living in grossly overcrowded situations, children with families of their own now in multi occupancy situations and expected by our local authorities to be grateful for the roof they have over their head. People who fall into that grey area of not being able to afford to rent or buy but earning too much to access social housing lists. These are all hidden homeless who show up in no published figures therefore keeping the homeless figures actually lower than they truly are.
- Social effects of homelessness include: stigma; shame; criminality; bullying; hunger; poverty; poor mental health; and addiction

- Children nowhere to do homework, nowhere to play, nowhere to bring their friends to. Relationships affected by distance. Worrying about adult problems at a young age. Having to be quiet for fear of upsetting the people around them

#### Community Response

- Support
- Advocacy
- TMS

#### Government Response Required

- Encourage councils to establish social recognition to avoid evictions
- To run a TV add encouraging landlords to accept HAP and make landlords aware of HAP can benefit them.
- A change to how a decision is made on the need for housing. ie. Currently the entire floor space of a residence is measured and divided per person to square footage where traditionally it was only the room in which you slept. If you cannot qualify on a need you may have to prove a social problem such as addiction within the home.

#### 4. Experiences for People with Mental Health Challenges



CAIRDEAS CLUBHOUSE Supporting you in your recovery

##### Ronan Mulhern, and emmet McAvoy, Cardeas Clubhouse

#### Housing and Mental Health in Ireland

- \* 15% of those with a disability (incl. Mental Health difficulty) living in social housing compared with 10% general population.
- \* More MH service users living with parent or in supported accommodation as % of general population.
- \* Individuals with greater need for housing support:
  1. Long stay in-patients
  2. Discharged long-stay service users
  3. New long-stay service user
  4. Severe and complex MH problems
  5. New service users with less severe symptoms living at home

#### Housing and the Clubhouse Model

- \* Standard # 29. The Clubhouse is committed to securing a range of choices of safe, decent and affordable housing including independent living opportunities for all members.
- \* The Clubhouse has access to opportunities that meet these criteria, or if unavailable, the Clubhouse develops its own housing program.
- \* Clubhouse housing programs meet the following basic criteria.
  - a. Members and staff manage the program together.
  - b. Members who live there do so by choice.
  - c. Members choose the location of their housing and their roommates.
  - d. Policies and procedures are developed in a manner consistent with the rest of the Clubhouse culture.
  - e. The level of support increases or decreases in response to the changing needs of the member.

- f. Members and staff actively reach out to help members keep their housing, especially during periods of hospitalisation.

### Mental Health & Housing - Relevant Strategies & Documents

- \* A Vision For Change (2006)
- \* National Housing Strategy for People With Disabilities (2011)
- \* Addressing the Housing Needs of People With Mental Health Difficulties (HSE 2012)
- \* Social Housing and People With Mental Health Difficulties (NDA 2013)
- \* Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness (2016)

### Common Themes

- \* Location
- \* Safety and security
- \* Size and sharing
- \* Facilities available
- \* Special Needs

### Common Supports Required

- \* Resettlement
- \* Household maintenance
- \* Managing finances
- \* Advocacy and advice
- \* Personal safety and security support
- \* Emotional support
- \* Peer support
- \* Training/ education/ employment support

### Supports Available

- \* Community Mental Health Teams incl. Social Worker.
- \* Housing Bodies incl. Housing Agency
- \* Local Authorities
- \* Disability Advocates incl. IAN and Citizen's Info
- \* Housing Co-ordinator for Mental Health

## 5. Experience for People with Disabilities

**Patty O' Malley, Ruth McCullagh**  
**National Advocacy Service for**  
**People with Disabilities**



The National Advocacy Service (NAS) is an organisation which works exclusively with adults with disabilities. NAS provides a free and confidential advocacy service to adults with a disability, aged 18 years and over. NAS has a particular remit to work with people with disabilities who are in vulnerable situations, such as people who are isolated from their community of choice or mainstream society, may communicate differently and who have limited formal or natural supports.

50% of our caseload has a Housing element to it (Approx 500 cases figures from our Annual Report 2018)

Housing is a complex issue for our client group, ie People with Disabilities

### **Categories:**

Delay Discharge from Hospitals – due to lack of appropriate housing and care packages

Inappropriate placements in Nursing homes (young age) - due to lack of appropriate housing and care packages – Ombudsman investigation – based on number of complaints to Ombudsman

Delays with Decongregation – due to lack of appropriate housing and care packages

Decongregation to Community Living

The need of Accessible Accommodation – to meet the needs of our clients

Acquired Disability - later in life – never had a need for disability services or housing support

Long waiting time of Housing Lists

People with a disability can be invisible from figure and minds of decision-makers

Housing complicated in that support via the HSE and housing must come together.

Being housed by an Approved Housing Body, via the Capital Assistance Scheme with HSE funding support.

People with a disability seeking access to the same small pool everyone else is.

If crises occurs for some people with more significant needs, hospital or nursing homes are often the only option.



Local research carried out in 2012 in Bray/ North Wicklow when the National Advocacy Service found several younger people in nursing homes. The report was published in 2013 as the **Old Too Soon** Report, commissioned by Bray Area Partnership and funded by the Citizen's Information Board and found 42 people less than 65 years in 9 nursing homes in Bray/North Wicklow. No review of or exit plans for any of the 42. The Disability Federation of Ireland is continuing with similar research Ireland-wide.

**Case: John** (Man 35 years, undiagnosed physical condition and mild intellectual disability)

Was in care most of his young life, in and out of homeless services in Dublin and Wicklow as an adult, early incidents of falling down not recognised as a progressive neurological condition, no local accommodation available, ended up in hospital, moved to a nursing home, angry/stressed and distressed, assessed as being able to live in the community with support but none made available, discharged himself, ended back into an acute hospital for several years.

## 6. Issues Presenting to the Citizen's Information Service

**Martina Cronin, Co Wicklow Citizen's Information Service**



South Leinster Citizens Information Service/Co Wicklow Area is a free independent and confidential service which operates a three pronged approach

1. Face to Face : 260 locations (nationwide),
2. Web Base : log on to [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)
3. Telephone : a call service on 0761 07 4000 Monday to Friday from 9am to 8pm

Your local centre can provide you with: Information, Assistance & Advocacy which is free, impartial & confidential

Other CIB supported services include :

MABS (Money Advice & Budgeting Service) – Helpline No 0761 07 2000

NAS (National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities) – Helpline No 0761 07 3000

SLIS (Sign Language Interpreting Service)

CitiZens Information Service provides information on :

- SOCIAL WELFARE
  - EMPLOYMENT LAW
  - HOUSING
  - FAMILY MATTERS
  - MIGRANT RIGHTS
  - HEALTH SERVICES
  - EDUCATION
  - DISABILITY
- And many other issues

### Wicklow Centres

**Bray:** 2 The Boulevard, Quinsboro Road

**Arklow:** 73 Lower Main Street, Arklow

**Wicklow:** 9/10 Lower Mall, Wicklow Town

**Blessington:** Blessington Library

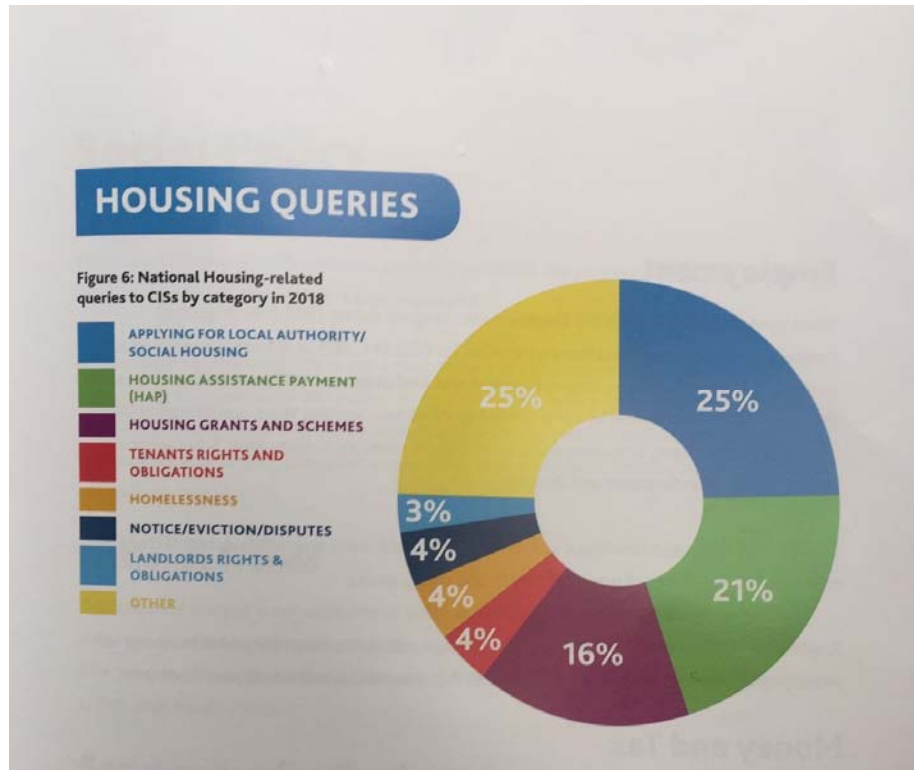
**\*Baltinglass:** Edward Street  
(beside Borza takeaway)

**Glendalough:** Brockagh Resource Centre

\*Under auspices of Carlow CIS

## CIS Housing Query Statistics

- Approx. 96,500 queries on housing in CICs across the country
- Almost 6,400 queries on Rent Supplement
- Over 18,600 inquires on Housing Assistance Payment
- Over 46,700 queries in relation to Local Authority and Social Housing
- Over 3,400 in relation to homelessness
- Housing is now the second main area that people seek support from CICS



## Lack of affordable housing

The combination of lack of affordable houses, the Central Bank mortgage lending rates and high rents have led to the situation where families can no longer afford to buy a house

- The average salary in Ireland is currently being reported as being €39K.
- A couple, each earning the average wage, would have combined income of €78K per year.
- Current lending rules only allows for people to borrow 3 times their yearly salary meaning this couple could only borrow €236K as a mortgage.
- Under current Central Bank rules they would also need a 10% deposit which means they could only look at houses below €260K.

Solicitor's fees and stamp duty would also need to be paid on top of the deposit.

- There are currently only three, 3 bedroomed houses available to buy in Bray below €260K.
- All of which are old and would need a lot of work done and a lot of money spent on them.
- With a combined income of €78K these people will not qualify for a Local Authority house but they cannot buy privately so they are caught in a trap which will see them renting for the rest of their lives.
- The non-availability of houses for people who are working, even if they could afford to save the deposit, means that there is an entire generation of people who will never own their own homes.
- More affordable houses need to be built to meet the growing population.
- Other European countries have had the same problem and have managed to meet the challenge

### Social Housing Income Limits

- To qualify for social housing in Wicklow the maximum annual net income thresholds are €35,000 for a single person and €42,000 for a family with children.
- As we see from our previous example regarding qualifying for a mortgage, this group of people are in no man's land. They cannot obtain a mortgage but are over the limit for social housing which automatically disqualifies them for Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).
- This means that this group of people are forced to remain in private rented accommodation which can cost approx. €1,400 per month.
- These people now face another barrier as they cannot afford to save for a deposit on a property due to paying rent. Social housing income limits need to be increased to allow this group of people access housing support.

### Accessing Emergency Accommodation

- Lack of adequate emergency accommodation in Arklow/Bray area
- This leads to overcrowding in households as people “**sofa surfing**”

### Examples of real life cases presented to CIC

#### Homelessness. *Anomalies in Policy*

Client received notice to quit from their rental property due to sale of same. Presented to the Local Authority as they were at risk of becoming homeless and were having difficulty finding a property to rent within their budget. They filled out Housing Needs Assessment form but were slightly over the Income Threshold as both work but were on minimum wage so were not eligible to go on the Housing List and therefore HAP. They were not entitled to Rent Supplement as both work over 30 hours per week. The rental on property that is available to rent in the area is so high

they cannot afford to pay it from their combined wages yet are not eligible for any support. The income limits with the Local Authority have not changed much over the years but the lack of availability of properties for rent and the high rents in the area are causing huge problems for families. This family now find themselves in a poverty trap.

*Gaps and Inconsistencies in Provision*

- Client approved for social housing. No social housing available. Client advised HAP is only social housing option available from Wicklow County Council. Client unable to find landlords willing to take HAP. Client at risk of homelessness.
- Client is due to be released from prison. No accommodation available. Client advised by prison services he can avail of a halfway house in the city but this is not a safe option for client. Post release suitable accommodation services need to be made available.

*Housing Assistance Payment (HAP): Access and Administrative Barriers*

- The CIC made a telephone call to Wicklow County Council regarding a delay in processing HAP for a client. The council then advised the CIC that there was information missing which concerned clarification between two Local Authorities (one of which was WCC).
- Client was not notified of delay. This has resulted in rent arrears accumulating, placing client in a vulnerable position with landlord.
- There needs to be on-going correspondence between WCC and clients if there are any delays.

## The Sustainable Development Goals

The Global Goals, also known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are a **universal plan of action for people and planet** to be achieved by the year 2030. These 17 goals aim to end poverty, combat climate change and ensure that we leave peaceful, just and equal societies for future generations.

These goals are **universal** in nature, applying to developed and developing countries alike, and place sustainable development at their core.

They are backed up by 169 specific targets which address challenges in areas as diverse as **poverty, education, human rights, food security, clean energy, climate, peace, sustainable consumption and urbanisation**. They provide clear guidelines for all countries to adopt in accordance with their own priorities and circumstances.

The SDGs work in the spirit of partnership, encouraging all people across the globe to **make the right choices now** to improve life, in a sustainable way, for our children and for generations to come.

Find Out More on the Sustainable Development Goals at this address:

[www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment)

In addressing the priorities for the PPN and elected representatives, statutory and community organisations can work collaboratively towards achieving the following six goals.



## Appendix 1

### Workshop Discussions Group 1

#### Q1

- Very useful Learning
- Who has the power? What can we change locally? Reps on the SPC feedback to council
- Lack of communication with WCC housing
- Inconsistency
- Questionnaires/study done on hidden homeless – Case studies – clients speaking
- Accurate numbers of homelessness – homeless count

#### Q2

- End the reliance on the private market – more social housing
- Traveller budget to be spent. Traveller Reps to be informed at LTACC of budget spends in more detail
- Upgrading sites/facilitating sites with sewage & heating
- Carvan loans need to be increased
- Look at income limits for social housing
- Measuring space
- Outer Wicklow town/MDS residents accessing WCC homeless line. Homeless outreach service in Bray & other areas
- More information given to landlords on HAP
- Tenancy sustainment service for WCC including tenancy course
- Developers separating housing for social housing
- No plan for affordable housing
- Modular homes
- End reliance on private market
- Traveller budget to be spent – funds should be discussed with Traveller groups

### Workshop Discussion Group 2

- Coming together as a social inclusion group? – is that any good if the decision makers are not at the table?
- Can we do analysis of all the data we spoke about? How useful will that be? – lots of policies BUT they are not enacted
- How do we turn the energy & knowing the issues into real change – stop things getting worse and turn the tide
- Wickow Co Co need to be talking to HSE & other decision makers
- Could we come together as a unified voice? Just on housing – highlight it as a crisis

- We don't have the knowledge we need if they say they don't have money we can't argue because we don't know what the budget is – it's more than the money, it's a value system – we have to be really clear about what we're fighting for
- If you're on an SPC you need to be clear that you're coming from a human rights based approach
- Landlord greed – HAP is supposed to be an improvement, but its not, landlords are being topped up
- WCC do have to adhere to govt. policy– Cllrs are in a difficult situation because they feel like they have to toe the line – there is bravery required to go against the grain and try to meet local need if the strategies to do that are against govt. policy
- Is there an arrears problem? Yes €32m in arrears in Dublin – some Cllrs> would say challenge those people in arrears and not acknowledge why they can't pay – social issues
- Challenge “house for nothing” perception – you're still paying rent – rent goes up not down with overcrowding
- Childcare scheme – changes in the scheme only available to working parents – values issue, if you're unemployed your kids mean less
- Trauma for kids in homeless accommodation/hotels – whole generation fo people being failed
- Surprised there wasn't more about the quality of the houses today – single mum in a duplex with a buggy shopping & 2 small kids – houses are damp
- Is the council holding themselves to the same standard as the hold Hap landlords to – in terms of the quality of housing
- Influence is limited for Cllrs – FF FG majority – wont disagree with central govt.
- Communication needs to go back strongly to basic customer service
- How do we use tools better – like public sector duty/rights
- The need to go to Wicklow – irregularity unreliability of buses etc
- Housing staff – who are the staff- what are their values – them and us
- Housing Homeless Outreach in Bray & Baltinglass currently not
- Council staff – feel they have no control, are doing their best – no resources from central government

### Workshop Discussion Group 3

- Overcrowding research
- Mobility grants facilitate
- Data gathering – affordable 71-81 K
- High rise
- Sell HAP – TV ad campaign, guarantee payment in to account, tac relief, 100%, tenant pays council, differences & benefits
- Sense of safe tenant – like old health board – secure & guaranteed
- Incentive for long-term leasing – unintentional landlords with 1 property – target small scale – sell once out of negative equity – HAP no references



- House as an investment – not a home – commodity. Effected by Dublin – obsession with “house” rather than high rise, need to accept high rise. Fire brigade need to buy bigger ladders 4 storey – not used to high rise apartment blocks
- “Wild to me that 1 storey in city”!
- 100% social housing community centre – concentrating issue
- Boston – percentage of 40% mixture social & affordable 20-30% at least
- Within estates put in bollards to stop drive through (deer park to southern cross)
- No spending on Traveller accommodation – 50K out of 100K when? Over 2 years? LTAC – ask families? Look for standard housings. Anecotally they are more likely to ask for a house. SDCC/WCC substandard – maintenance – include community planning – silverbridge – public lighting – 185 safety
- Affordable – no programme – big gap – social housing, percentage 10% social & affordable gap between HAP – can’t afford to buy – risk of homelessness – Council engage in research on need for affordable housing numbers. 8 houses in Oldcourt 32 houses in Wolfe Tone
- Funding stream for boarded up/abandoned – too much to do up – damp & rot
- Coordinate 5 loaves & homeless – cold weather initiative 8.30pm-8am – 5 loaves can’t always open – nowhere to go for heat – 7 days- using mermaid – sat/sun/- supervised space that is worm – drop in centre – some users others not – Army – parpchial Hall
- Services needed to support integration into established housing estates particularly by supporting the use of local assets eg community centre

## Appendix 2

The department of housing, planning and local government, the local authorities and the national government may be able to find a solution to this problem

If the councils were to set up an agency type list of unemployed, registered and qualified tradespeople, as there seems to be a lacking of people to “turnover” the housing stock, they could be utilised to get boarded up houses ready for those on the list and help to clear it more quickly.

If the tradespeople were willing to work in their area, then any necessary repairs to local authority houses can be done in a speedy and efficient manner thus saving money in the long term.

If an inspection of the properties found them to be structurally sound, give them out to people. Offer them incentives to accept them “as is” such as: supplying them with paint and other cosmetic materials to decorate their new homes themselves. Basic psychology suggest that people take more pride in something that they’ve had to work for than things that have been handed to them.

Allow them a fixed term rent-free, between 6 months to 1 year because they are personally doing the work of the houses. There are houses that have been boarded up for that length of time anyway with no rental income. No structural repairs, merely cosmetic. I understand the fear of liability, however, a lot of people would be willing to waive the Council liability in order to have the security that being housed affords.

The “Housing Passport Scheme” was meant to be rolled out last year. Send questionnaires around to those in emergency accommodation and on the homeless lists to ask people if they would be willing to move to a different county. Not only would this free up spaces on the housing lists in the larger cities and towns, but it would also benefit the smaller villages. More families relocating would mean that schools could remain open and more investment into these smaller towns. If there are people willing to move, then there would be a reason to improve the infrastructure. This will, in turn, make rural areas attractive to investment.

If the RAS scheme is to be phased out by 2023, replace by the HAP scheme, then why not give people the opportunity to change from one to the other now, without being punished for “voluntary” leaving the RAS scheme and losing their years.

Children shouldn’t be used as an excuse to not move away as they are quite resilient and will possibly thrive away from the influences of big cities and towns.

There are solutions out there. Some may not gain the popular vote, but the culture of “entitlement” needs to be curtailed.

I understand that a lot of things I have put in here may go against “policy” but honestly, policy doesn’t seem to be working when it comes to this issue”

I am on the list in Wicklow for 14 years so far. I cannot change from RAS to HAP because I will lose my years. I am happy where I am but would still like my own home

There also needs to be personal responsibility