



Limerick City Council

Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 – 2013

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Adopted by Council 30/01/09

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1 SECTION I

1.1 Introduction

Under section 10 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, Limerick City Council is required to prepare, adopt and implement a 5 year Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 1st January 2009 to 31st December 2013. The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government issued a set of guidelines and a schedule for the adoption of the Accommodation Programme during August 2008. This schedule requires all local authorities to adopt a Traveller Accommodation Programme no later than the 30th April 2009.

The 2009-2013 Traveller Accommodation Programme is the third Traveller Accommodation Programme since the enactment of the 1998 Housing Act and replaces the existing Traveller Accommodation Programme adopted by Limerick City Council in 2005 and due to expire 31st December 2008. The new Accommodation Programme is viewed as complementary to and an extension of the previous plans and sets out to meet the existing and projected accommodation needs for Travellers during this period.

1.2 Structure of Accommodation Plan

Section 1 of this Accommodation Programme deals with the legislative framework which governs the requirements for all Housing Authorities in developing a Traveller Accommodation Programme.

Section 2 outlines the consultation structures adopted by Limerick City Council to facilitate meaningful engagement with Travellers, local and neighbouring agencies and the general public.

Section 3 sets out Limerick City Council's Policy in relation to meeting the accommodation needs of Travellers.

Section 4 sets out a Strategy Statement which details Limerick City Council's approach for securing the implementation of the programme.

Section 5 deals with the assessment of existing and projected need for Traveller accommodation during the lifetime of the programme.

Section 6 details the progress under the previous programme and the proposals for the forthcoming 5 years.

1.3 Background to Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998

The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 provides a legislative framework to support the Government's commitment to Traveller accommodation. The Act amended the Housing Acts, 1996-1997 and the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 1963 to 1998. The purpose of the Act and subsequently the Accommodation Programme is to put in place the necessary procedures, resources and facilities to ensure the accommodation requirements of Travellers are strategically addressed by Housing Authorities.

A Summary of the main provisions of the Traveller Accommodation Act:

- Each housing authority is required to prepare a 5 year programme of Traveller Accommodation for their area.
- The adoption of the Traveller Accommodation Programme is a reserved function, however, in the event that the Council fails to adopt the Programme within the timeframe specified by the Minister, the City Manager, by way of a Managers Order can adopt the programme.
- The Housing Authority is required to provide appropriate notification to and consultation with the general public in respect of the preparation and adoption of the programme.
- The Housing Authority is required to take reasonable steps to secure the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme.
- The Planning Authority is required to include objectives concerning Traveller Accommodation Plans in Development Plans.
- The establishment of the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee on a statutory basis to advise the Minister on aspects of Traveller accommodation.
- The establishment of the Local Accommodation Consultative Committee on which Local Authority Members, Officials and Travellers are represented.
- The Act extends statutory backing for the provision of financial support available to Housing Authorities and the Voluntary Sector for provision of management of Traveller Accommodation.
- To apply relevant provisions of Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1997 in particular relating to anti social behaviour to halting sites provided by local authority or by voluntary bodies with the assistance of the Local Authority.
- The Act improves the powers of Local Authorities to deal with unauthorized temporary dwellings where alternative serviced accommodation is available, or within one mile of existing accommodation regardless of whether alternative accommodation is available.

1.4 Progress under previous Accommodation Plan (2005-2009)

Limerick City Council adopted its second Traveller Accommodation Programme in January 2005. During the lifetime of this programme Limerick City Council undertook significant refurbishment and demolition works to address Travellers accommodation needs across the city. In summary these improvements involved:

- **Long Pavement Halting Site:** In 2007, Limerick City Council undertook a programme a work to install 17 new bays, a resource room and an industrial craft area at a cost of €3.4million.
- **Clonlong Halting Site:** In 2007 Limerick City Council undertook a programme of works which involved the construction of 16 new bays; the refurbishment of 3 houses and the installation of a resource room and play area at a cost of €4million.
- **Childers Road Halting Site:** Limerick City Council undertook a programme of work to refurbish the serviced bays on the Childers Road Site as well as installing 2 temporary serviced bays and 2 anti vandal units at a cost of €400,000.

1.5 New Halting Site

From March 1st 2008, the Limerick City administrative boundary was extended by a Boundary Alteration Order. One of the impacts of this extension has been the acquisition of a 14 bay Residential Caravan Park and community centre at Clondrinagh from Limerick County Council. The site contains 4 houses of which 3 are currently vacant and 10 bays of which 5 are vacant. At present there are 6 households residing on the site from one extended family.

1.6 Other Developments

Since the adoption of the previous Traveller Accommodation Programme, Circular LG 12/06 was issued from the Office for the Taoiseach requesting all cities and counties to prepare an Interagency Action Plan for Travellers. The objective of the Interagency Action Plan is to encourage agencies to deliver services in an integrated manner. One of the actions from the Limerick City Plan has been to convene on site meetings between Travellers and local agencies to foster links and identify and progress issues on sites for the Travelling community.

2 SECTION II

2.1 Consultation Structures

2.1.1 General

The Traveller Accommodation Act promotes the importance of meaningful consultation between and amongst all parties involved in the provision of services to Travellers. Limerick City Council has taken cognisance of this in framing its draft Accommodation Programme for 2009-2013 by consulting with a wide range of participants.

Section 19 and 21 of the Act provides for the establishment of both National and Local Traveller Consultation Committees to advise on general matters in relation to accommodation for Travellers.

2.1.2 National Consultation Structures

In 2007, the Minister for Environment Heritage and Local Government appointed the third National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Minister in relation to matters concerning accommodation for Travellers. The committee has 12 members, who are appointed by the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government. It includes local authority members and officials, representatives of Traveller organisations and officials from Government departments. Following the Review of the Operation of the 1998 Housing (Traveller Accommodation Act), carried out by NTACC in 2004/5, two subcommittees were established on Transient Provision and consultation mechanisms at local level. There is also a joint sub committee with the Department of Health.

2.1.3 Local Consultation Structures

The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) was established under Sections 21 and 22 of the Housing Act. Local Housing Authorities appoint these committees to advise on the provision and management of accommodation for Travellers, including the preparation and implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programmes. The membership of the committees comprises elected representatives, officials and Traveller representatives.

In brief the main functions of the LTACC are as follows:

- Advise in relation to the preparation and implementation of any accommodation programme;
- Advise on the management of accommodation for Travellers;
- Informing when requested neighboring authorities on the provision and management of accommodation for Travellers;
- Consider policy issues relevant to the accommodation needs of Travellers and where appropriate present their considerations to the Housing Strategic Policy Committee (SPC).

The members of the Limerick City LTACC are:

- Josephine Doyle, Bawneys Bridge Halting Site.
- Alice Doyle, Bawneys Bridge Halting Site.
- Connie Faulkner, Long Pavement Halting Site.
- Martin Casey, Toppins Field Halting Site.
- Terry Casey, Clonlong Halting Site.
- Elizabeth O'Donoghue, Rhebogue, Group Housing Scheme.
- Martin O'Reilly, Childers Road Halting Site.
- David Healy, Senior Executive Engineer, Limerick City Council
- Deirdre Crowe, Administrative Officer, Limerick City Council
- Dermot O'Connell, Traveller Services Coordinator, Limerick City Council.
- Mary Kennedy, Traveller Health Coordinator, HSE
- Cllr Michael Hourigan (Chair)
- Cllr Jim Long
- Cllr Kieran Walsh
- Cllr James Houlihan

2.2 Local approach to consultation

Our approach to developing this Accommodation Programme has been guided by the statutory requirement for consultation as directed by the Housing Act, 1998 (Traveller Accommodation) and as subsequently stated in Circular TAU 7/08 and the Department "Memorandum on Preparing, Adopting and Implementing a Traveller Accommodation Programme" which places a strong emphasis on consultation with other public authorities, community bodies, Travellers, the local Traveller Consultative Committee and the public in general.

Section 8 of the Act requires local authorities, before preparing a draft accommodation programme, to give notice in writing of their intention to do so.

During July 2008, Limerick City Council notified all neighbouring local authorities, the Mid West Health Service Executive, the local Traveller Consultative Committee, the Interagency Committee for Travellers and other relevant agencies via letter of its intention to prepare a draft Programme for Traveller Accommodation and to seek input from all parties.

In drafting this document, regard was had to submissions from the following agencies:

- Limerick County Council, Housing Department;
- Irish Traveller Movement;
- Health Service Executive;
- Limerick Regeneration Agency.

Section 9(2) requires local authorities to publish a notice in not less than one newspaper circulating within the functional area of that relevant housing authority stating its proposal to adopt, amend or replace the accommodation programme with regard for submissions received in writing.

Notification of our intention to develop a Traveller Accommodation Programme was advertised in the local press on the weekend of the 08th of August 2008 to allow for public input in the preparation and amendment of the programme.

The consultation process has enabled us to identify the issues for all groups concerned or affected by the provision of accommodation to Travellers and to facilitate a planned and comprehensive response by Limerick City Council to the accommodation needs of Travellers. The active engagement with a wide range of stakeholders has ensured the concerns of all parties were recognised in drafting the programme.

3 SECTION III

3.1 Statement of Policy

In meeting the accommodation needs of Travellers, Limerick City Council has formulated policy to enable the effective delivery of services to the Travelling community. In addition to local policy, this Plan will have regard to the relevant national policy taking into consideration any requirements as set out by legislation, Department Guidelines and Circulars.

Section 10 (2) (c) requires that a statement of policy in relation to meeting accommodation needs be included in the programme.

3.2 Consultation:

- Limerick City Council will continue to assess the accommodation needs of Travellers periodically during the period of the 2009-2013 programme through consultation with Travellers, Traveller representatives and members of the local community.
- Limerick City Council will consult with Traveller families in relation to the proposed design of Traveller accommodation and the specific needs of individual families when providing accommodation. The construction and refurbishment of accommodation shall be in accordance with the Department of Environment Guidelines on Halting Site and Group Housing Scheme Accommodation and the relevant Building and Planning Regulations.
- Limerick City Council will consult and encourage partnership arrangements with Travellers and other statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure the effective management of sites.
- Limerick City Council will coordinate the onsite meetings at **Long Pavement and Bawneys Bridge Halting Sites** as part of its commitment to the Interagency Action Plan for Traveller Services.
- Limerick City Council will attend all on site meetings organised by the Gardai and HSE or other relevant authorities to facilitate communication with Travellers and its interagency partners.
- Limerick City Council will continue to provide secretarial support to the Interagency Meetings for Travellers as part of its commitment to interagency work.

3.3 Estate Management

- Limerick City Council employs a Traveller Services Coordinator to work directly with the Travellers and to provide support to them in the improved management of their accommodation.
- Limerick City Council recognises that the proper management and maintenance of Traveller accommodation is a significant challenge. Limerick City Council will continue to look more closely to estate management principles and tenant participation in relation to management of Traveller specific accommodation.
- Limerick City Council will seek to develop and implement a comprehensive management and maintenance programme for all sites within its boundary.

3.4 Accommodation Provision

- Limerick City Council recognises that it is through acceptance of mutual responsibility and actions that the Traveller Accommodation Programme can be advanced.
- Limerick City Council is dedicated to enabling Traveller households to have a dwelling suited to their needs in an acceptable environment and at a price of rent they can afford. The Council realises that those Traveller Families who can afford to do so should provide their own accommodation. The term Traveller refers to a “person who traditionally pursue or have pursued a nomadic way of life”
- Limerick City Council will ensure all families currently without a Tenancy Agreement sign a Tenancy Agreement during the lifetime of the existing programme.
- Limerick City Council will continue to offer accommodation to Traveller families indigenous to Limerick City who present themselves to the Housing Department and are assessed as being in need of and actively seeking housing. The accommodation offered will be:
 - Permanent Halting Sites
 - Standard Housing
 - Group Housing
- Limerick City Council will continue to offer standard housing to any Traveller family presenting to the Housing Department for standard

- housing and who is assessed by the Housing Authority in need of and actively seeking housing.
- Limerick City Council will not offer accommodation to Traveller families provided with accommodation in the functional area of another local authority. It is the opinion of the Council that Traveller families cannot expect duplicate provision to be made by the Council.
 - Limerick City Council will consider all applications for accommodation by Traveller families in accordance with the Scheme of Letting Priorities (Appendix 1), the Statement of Policy on Anti-Social Behaviour (Appendix 2), the Housing Acts 1996 to 2002 and the Traveller Accommodation Programme.
 - The construction and refurbishment of accommodation shall be in accordance with the Department of Environment's Guidelines on Halting Site and Group Housing Scheme Accommodation and the relevant Building and Planning Regulations.
 - Limerick City Council is committed to the promotion of Voluntary Housing within its functional area. Reflecting the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 the Council will offer assistance to Traveller and Voluntary Groups interested in developing and managing housing for Travellers.
 - Limerick City Council does not consider that there is a need for a transient site within its limited administrative boundary.

3.5 Anti Social Behaviour

Limerick City Council will fully implement the provisions of Section 10 of the Housing Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1992 as amended by Section 32 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 in relation to unauthorised encampments. The Council will support the Garda Siochana when dealing with trespass under the 2002 amendment to the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 1994 and take account of any further legislation regarding same. The Council recognises that the enforcement of this legislation will protect both residents in existing Traveller Accommodation and other residents in the vicinity of the Traveller Accommodation.

Limerick City Council will fully implement the provisions of the Housing Acts, 1966 to 1998 as they refer to anti-social behaviour in conjunction with the Council's Statement of Policy on Anti-Social Behaviour.

3.6 Horses

Limerick City Council will not include provision of accommodation for horses in any proposals regarding Traveller Accommodation. It is the opinion of the Council that horses are the responsibility of the owner and as such it is for the owner to arrange suitable accommodation. Limerick City Council will implement the provisions of the Control of Horses Act, 1996.

4 SECTION IV

4.1 Strategy for Securing Implementation

Section 10 (2) (d) requires that an accommodation programme should specify a strategy for securing the implementation of the programme.

4.1.1 Implementing Authority

The implementing authority for rolling out the Accommodation Programme in Limerick City will be Limerick City Council. Limerick City Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure the effective implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme including engaging in regular consultation with the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee, Councillors, Travellers and other appropriate bodies to ensure a coordinated approach to accommodation. Furthermore, Limerick City Council will endeavour to work with its neighbouring local authorities to facilitate the delivery of the Programme.

4.1.2 Accommodation Options

Limerick City Council will promote and encourage Travellers to avail of the range of accommodation options provided by the local authority, whilst recognizing that Travellers are a distinct minority group some of whom maintain a nomadic lifestyle. The options available to Travellers through Limerick City Council include:

- Rented Social Housing
- Private Ownership
- Private Rented
- Tenant Purchase
- Shared Ownership
- Improvement works for disabled persons
- Traveller Specific Accommodation
- Sale of Sites

The key principles in achieving the range of accommodation for Traveller families will be consultation, co-operation and co-ordination. Limerick City Council will continue to consult, co-operate and co-ordinate with any other body concerned with the accommodation of Travellers to secure the implementation of the programme. The LTACC will remain the main focus of the consultation, co-operation and co-ordination.

Where Travellers wish to be housed in a standard Local Authority House, Limerick City Council will allocate houses in accordance with the Scheme of Letting Priorities, with due regard for the principles of estate management.

4.1.3 Financing the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013

The delivery of the Accommodation Programme will be subject to the provision of appropriate levels of capital funding to **a)** provide for improvements to existing accommodation and **b)** to maintain the facilities and services to a high standard. In this regard Limerick City Council will engage with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and other appropriate agencies to source funding to progress the accommodation programme.

4.1.4 Tenant Support and Community Sustainment

A Social Worker for Travellers in cooperation with the Traveller Services Coordinator and Senior Housing Staff will provide the necessary support and assistance to facilitate the accommodation needs for Travellers during the lifetime of the programme. Limerick City Council requires all tenants to sign a tenancy agreement, which will clearly outline the responsibilities of the respective tenant in the City Council area.

4.1.5 Maintenance and Management of Accommodation

Limerick City Council recognizes the importance of the effective management and maintenance of its sites, in this regard appropriate arrangements for the management and maintenance of Traveller accommodation will be delivered by Limerick City Council in accordance with the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 and the Litter Act 1997.

Limerick City Council is committed to promoting a safe and secure environment so that its residents are able to live peacefully in their own communities. Limerick City Council will encourage a sense of responsibility amongst Travellers to reduce the level of management and maintenance required. Limerick City Council will deal with all incidents of Anti Social Behaviour in accordance with the provisions set out in Section 35 of Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998.

4.1.6 Procedures for resolving difficulties

Limerick City Council's Traveller Services Staff will provide appropriate assistance to address any difficulties in relation to Traveller accommodation.

4.1.7 Monitoring and Review

The Traveller Accommodation Programme will be reviewed periodically and a progress report submitted to Council on an annual basis. Continuous liaison will take place with the local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee meeting on a quarterly basis, reporting on progress and identifying issues in relation to Traveller accommodation as they arise to the Housing Strategic Policy Committee and Council.

5 SECTION V

5.1 Assessment of Accommodation

The Minister has, under section 6(1) of the 1998 Act, directed that relevant Housing Authorities make an assessment of the needs for sites in the functional area concerned. The Minister has given a direction under section 6(5) of the 1998 Act, specifying that relevant housing authorities shall make an estimate of the projected accommodation needs of Traveller families arising during the duration of the programme (1st January, 2009 to 31st December, 2013).

In March 2008, the Limerick City assessment of Housing Need for Traveller Accommodation was conducted by the Traveller Services Coordinator. The assessment was supplemented by the Annual Count for Travellers and regular one to one consultations with Traveller families and on site caretakers where appropriate. The assessment identified **72** Traveller families residing within the Limerick city boundary. The living arrangements of these families are as follows:

- Group Housing
- Permanent Halting Sites
- Temporary Halting Site

Table 1: Accommodation Status of Traveller Families in Limerick City.

Site Name	No. of Families	No. of Individuals	No. of Bays	No. of Houses
Toppins Field	5	39	5	0
Bawney's Bridge	9	37	8	0
Childers Road	10	48	10	0
Clonlong	19	83	16	3
Lansdowne	6	26	10	4
Long Pavement	17	81	17	0
Rhebogue	6	17	0	6
Total	72	331	66	13

Table 2: Annual Targets for Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013

Type	Number of Units				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Group Housing	3	3	6	7	8
House Purchases	0	2	2	2	2
Total	3	5	8	9	10

Target: 35 Units

5.2 Future Accommodation Needs 2009-2013

Under section 6(5) of the 1998 Act, the Minister has directed that all housing authorities shall make an estimate of the projected accommodation needs of Traveller families arising over the five year period of the programme.

5.2.1 Age Profile

The assessment of need identified 51 Traveller children who are between the ages of 13 and 17 and will have reached or exceeded the age of 18 years by 2013 and consequently may be of marriageable age during the lifetime of the Programme. At present all those identified are currently residing with their parents in Traveller specific accommodation or along the roadside.

Table 3: Age Profile of Children on Site

Site	No. of Children 0- 18	No. of Children 13 - 18
Toppins Field	25	7
Bawney's Bridge	9	5
Childers Road	23	7
Clonlong	24	8
Lansdowne	16	5
Long Pavement	39	14
Rhebogoue	7	5
Total	143	51

5.2.2 Projected Accommodation Need 2009-2013

Target: 25

Limerick City Council will work on the assumption that approximately 50% of this number will be seeking accommodation during the lifetime of the programme requiring the provision of **25** household units.

5.2.3 Future Accommodation Preferences

Limerick City Council understands that not all the individuals who are due to reach the age of 18 during the lifetime of the programme will seek accommodation from City Council. This may be due to reasons such as emigration, migration or because they choose to remain in their present household.

Limerick City Council is not in a position to accurately predict the location or type of accommodation couples will require and neither can it ascertain when a family will be created or in addition which two partners will form a marriage. However, Limerick City Council will review progress periodically during the lifetime of the Programme to take account of changing circumstances and work on a case by case basis to identify and assist Travellers accommodation need.

Limerick City Council recognises that best practice on the provision of Traveller accommodation is that family groupings are not mixed. Limerick City Council will continue to assess the accommodation needs for future family formations in the city and will seek to provide appropriate accommodation to meet their needs. Having regard to the possible future need as outlined, the Council will not be in a position to provide fully for this need. Given the current Traveller population and geographical distribution in the City any further expansion and or/additional provision of large scale Traveller specific accommodation can only take place within the greater Limerick City area and its environs.

6 SECTION VI

6.1 Action Plan Proposals

Table 4 Breakdown of the proposed number of units on 2009-2013

Year	No. of Units
Year 1	8
Year 2	7
Year 3	6
Year 4	8
Year 5	6
Total	35

6.1.1 Clonlong Group Housing Scheme

Actions During 2005-2009

Limerick City Council began refurbishing Clonlong Halting Site in January 2007. Prior to refurbishment the halting site contained three bungalows and 2 bays with three family groupings (comprising 13 households) living on the site.

The refurbishment process involved the construction of 16 bays, refurbishment of 3 houses and the installation of a resource room and play area. Each bay was provided with a new 3 bedroom chalet. The chalets contain a gas boiler, central heating; double glazing windows and sanitary facilities. Each bay was also provided with a shed for laundry services. A new sewerage, water and electrical system were also provided for the site. The existing road was resurfaced and street lighting installed. This project was completed in August 2008. In refurbishing the site LCC ensured adequate provision was allowed for the future accommodation needs.

Actions Proposed 2009–2013

- 1 As the site is located within a regeneration area, the future for the site will be considered in conjunction with the Regeneration proposals. All proposals for future site formation will take future family formation into account.
- 2 Limerick City Council will not be providing accommodation for horses as part of any accommodation proposals.

6.1.2 Rhebogue Group Housing Scheme

Actions During 2005-2009

The families in the Rhebogue Halting Site entered into discussions with City Hall representatives and Ward Councillors during the lifetime of the existing programme. The purpose of this consultation was to identify alternative housing on an individual basis in an area of their choice.

Actions Proposed 2009–2013

Proposed No. of Units: 6

1. Limerick City Council will continue to engage with all parties to identify suitable units of accommodation. Limerick City Council will take cognisance of future family formations in the identification of suitable accommodation.

6.1.3 Ennis Road Permanent Halting Site

Actions During 2005-2009

The Ennis Road Halting Site came under the control of Limerick City Council following the agreement for a boundary extension in 2008. The site contains 10 bays and 4 houses. At present 8 of the bays are vacant. The site is in very good condition and contains a community centre and security cameras.

Actions Proposed 2009–2013

1. The layout of the site and the presence of vacant bays allow Limerick City Council adequately meet the future accommodation needs of the residents within the existing site.

6.1.4 Childers Road Permanent Halting Site

Actions During 2005-2009

During the lifetime of the previous programme Limerick City Council negotiated with the families on site in relation to providing them with a Group Housing Scheme, this was refused by the residents and an agreement was reached that their bays would be refurbished. The refurbishment process involved the replacement and upgrading of each bay. Each of the bays received new

electrical, plumbing and water facilities. Two temporary bays were built and provided with new service pods. These pods contain toilets, shower and laundry facilities. A community centre and a car park were also provided. The existing sewerage, storm drains and water facilities on the site were also upgraded.

Actions Proposed 2009–2013

Proposed No. of Units: 12

1. It is the intention of Limerick City Council to provide a Group Housing Scheme to address the accommodation needs on site. The development of this site will be subject to an agreement being reached with residents of the site and the parties to the 1991 agreement made with residents of the area.
2. The alterations to the site will ensure future family formations are considered as part of any accommodation proposals.
3. Limerick City Council will not provide accommodation for horses as part of its accommodation proposals for Childers Road.

6.1.5 Toppins Park Permanent Halting Site

Actions During 2005-2009

There are five households currently residing in Toppins Park and a sixth family residing along the roadside near the site. In the past the residents have refused 2 offers from Limerick City Council for Group Housing on site. The residents of Toppins Park have expressed their desire to find alternative accommodation on an individual basis.

Actions Proposed 2009–2013

Proposed No. of Units: 8

1. As the site is located within a regeneration area, the future for the site will be considered in conjunction with Regeneration proposals. Limerick City Council will work with the local agencies to address the short term needs of the families on site. All proposals will take future family formations into account.
2. Limerick City Council will not provide accommodation for horses as part of its accommodation proposals for Toppins Park.

6.1.6 Bawney's Bridge Permanent Halting Site

Actions During 2005-2009

Bawney's Bridge Halting Site contains 8 bays, with 9 families currently residing there. Limerick City Council has considered proposals to build a new 9 house Group Housing Scheme adjacent to the existing halting site.

Actions Proposed 2009–2013

1. Limerick City Council will work to progress proposals for Bawney's Bridge during the life time of the new Accommodation Programme. All future family formations will be considered as part of the new proposals.

Proposed No. of Units: 9

6.1.7 Long Pavement Temporary Halting Site

Actions During 2005-2009

In 2005, Limerick City Council commissioned White, Young, Greene to undertake an environmental assessment of the Long Pavement Halting Site. At the time of the assessment there were 9 families on site residing in 6 bays. The findings from their report indicated that the present site was unsuitable for the provision of a Traveller specific group housing scheme.

In July 2007, under Health and Safety legislation Limerick City Council demolished the existing site and installed 17 new bays, a resource room and an industrial craft area. Each bay was provided with a new 3 bedroom chalet. The chalets contain a gas boiler; central heating; double glazing windows and sanitary facilities. Each bay was also provided with a shed for laundry services. A new sewerage, water and electrical system were provided for the site. A camera system was also installed to monitor incidences of anti social behaviour and illegal dumping. Refurbishment work was completed in July 2008.

Actions Proposed 2009–2013

1. On the basis of the White, Young, Green report, Limerick City Council will attempt to identify a permanent site for the residents of Long Pavement for a Traveller specific Group Housing Scheme during the life time of the programme.

7 Appendix 1 – Scheme of Letting Priorities

7.1 Housing Allocations - General

1. The purpose of this scheme of letting priorities is to provide a means for determining the order of priority to be afforded in the letting of the Corporation's dwellings to persons whose need for accommodation has already been established through their inclusion in the most recent housing assessment or their acceptance afterwards for inclusion in the next assessment.
2. The Corporation may, from time to time, determine to set aside a particular number or proportion of dwellings becoming available for letting to particular categories of person. Where such a number or proportion is set aside, priority shall be afforded to the specified categories in the letting of those dwellings.
3. Where the need for accommodation arises from an emergency, the Corporation may make a letting to that person as it considers necessary to meet this need, notwithstanding the order of priorities for lettings as set out in this scheme.
4. In applying the terms of this scheme to a person, the Corporation may disregard the accommodation that person is occupying where they have reason to believe that he has deliberately or without good and sufficient reason done or failed to do anything (other than an action or omission in good faith) in consequence of which the accommodation he is so occupying is less suitable for his adequate housing than other accommodation which it would have been, or would be, reasonable for him to occupy.
5. Dwellings shall be let in accordance with the following priorities. First priority shall be accorded to 'Section 1', second priority to 'Section 2', third priority to 'Section 3', fourth priority to 'Section 4', and fifth priority to 'Section 5'.

7.2 Section 1 – Priority Cases

The following categories will be considered as priority cases for re-housing. Two reasonable offers to be made; if these are refused, applicants may be transferred to the General Housing List.

The order of priority shall be:

- a) Persons being displaced from dangerous buildings under the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1964, or rendered homeless by fire, flood, etc.
- b) Persons being displaced by operations of the Corporation from dwellings required for redevelopment.
- c) Persons being displaced from potentially dangerous buildings under the Fire Services Act, 1981, as amended.
- d) Homeless persons (as defined in Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988) and including Travellers and other persons in need of accommodation arising from an emergency.
- e) Persons in exceptional hardship circumstances as a result of
 - I. being evicted on foot of a Court Order;
 - II. required to vacate tied accommodation through no fault of their own;
 - III. required to vacate Corporation accommodation occupied by reason of their employment.

7.3 Section II - Elderly or disabled persons

One and two bedroomed bungalows in modern schemes and in some schemes of flats are ordinarily reserved for elderly and/or disabled persons. Elderly persons are ordinarily persons of 50 years of age or more.

The general order of priority for this category will be:

- a) rehousing from unfit or redevelopment accommodation;
- b) overcrowding;
- c) medical hardship;
- d) other hardship grounds.

7.4 Section III - General Housing List

Persons eligible for housing and unable to provide same from their own resources and who are not deemed to be included in Sections 1 and 2, will be considered for housing under the Corporation's General Housing List.

The general order of priority for this category will be:

- a) rehousing from unfit or redevelopment accommodation;
- b) overcrowding;
- c) are sharing accommodation with another person or persons and who in the opinion of the Housing Authority, have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation;
- d) are young persons leaving institutional care or without family accommodation;
- e) where the cost of private rented accommodation is causing financial hardship.

7.5 Section IV - Transfer of existing Corporation Tenants

Tenants of Corporation dwellings will not normally be considered for transfer to other Corporation dwellings except under the following circumstances:

1. where tenants wish to return to areas from which they were unwillingly rehoused for development purposes;
2. overcrowding;
3. medical/compassionate reasons.

The Corporation may refuse to grant a transfer if in its opinion the accommodation is deemed not appropriate to the present and prospective needs of a tenant or if the house being surrendered is not readily re-lettable.

To qualify for a transfer under the above circumstances, an applicant will have to meet the following requirements to the satisfaction of the Corporation:

1. a clear rent account for at least 12 months;
2. all service and other charges due paid up to date;
3. have kept their dwelling in a satisfactory condition;
4. have complied with all the conditions of their letting agreement.

In the case of an emergency, the Corporation may forego any or all of the above conditions, in granting a transfer of tenancy.

These same conditions and criteria shall apply to persons seeking to transfer into the Corporation area from other Local Authorities.

7.6 Section V - Succession Tenancy

1. Succession tenancy in the event of death will normally be allowed to the surviving spouse.
2. Where both spouses have died or left the house, tenancy will normally be granted to an appropriate member of the family provided that:
 - a) the person has continued to reside in the house throughout his/her lifetime and has been assessed for rent purposes;
 - or**
 - b) the person, having left the house for a period, has been living in the house as a recognised sub-tenant for a period of at least two years prior to the death or departure of the tenant;
 - c) where there are two or more surviving members of the family who meet the criteria at (a) or (b) above, a joint tenancy shall be granted by the Corporation.

8 Appendix 2 - Statement of Policy on Anti-Social Behaviour

8.1 Aim

Limerick City Council (the Council) is committed to promoting a safe and secure environment so that its residents are able to live peacefully in their own communities. The Council aims to achieve this as landlord by ensuring that tenants abide by their tenancy agreements and by exercising its statutory powers under the Housing Acts 1966-2002, in appropriate circumstances, to deal with Anti-social Behaviour.

8.2 Objectives

- To act decisively and objectively in eliminating anti-social behaviour from its estates.
- To designate an Official with specific responsibility for preventing and combating anti-social behaviour.
- To facilitate and encourage tenant participation in preventing and combating anti-social behaviour.
- To deal with complaints of anti-social behaviour in a proactive, efficient, effective and equitable manner when they arise.
- To pursue legal remedies, including Court Orders for eviction, where necessary.
- To co-ordinate the Local Authorities response to anti-social behaviour with those of other relevant bodies that could play a role in preventing and combating problems of this nature in order to provide a comprehensive service to tenants.
- To maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the staff working in this area, protect their health and safety, provide appropriate opportunities for staff training and development and facilitate and encourage staff participation in decision making regarding the management of the service.

8.3 Definition of Anti Social Behaviour:

Anti-social behaviour is defined in the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1997 as follows:

- a) *The manufacture, production, preparation, importation, sale, supply, possession for the purpose of sale and supply, or distribution of a controlled drug (within the meaning of the Misuse of Drugs Acts, 1977 and 1984).*
- b) *Any behaviour which causes or is likely to cause any significant or persistent danger, injury, damage, loss or fear to any person living, working or otherwise lawfully in or in the vicinity of a house provided by a housing authority under the Housing Acts, 1966 to 1997, or a housing estate in which a house is situate and , without prejudice to the foregoing, includes violence, threats, intimidation, coercion, harassment or serious obstruction of any person.*

8.4 Strategies for Preventing and Combating Anti Social Behaviour

It is important for the anti-social behaviour unit to have a clearly defined strategy to comply with the Councils mission statement:

To provide democratic leadership and support for our community by the development of policy and delivery of quality services which enhance quality of life and provide for the future sustainable development of our City.

8.5 The strategy of the Council in complying with this policy includes

1. Facilitating and encouraging tenant participation in preventing and combating anti-social behaviour.
2. Putting the complainant at ease in reporting problems.
3. Treating complaints in a strictly confidential manner.
4. All complaints shall be screened to decide whether they come under the said definition of anti-social behaviour, and, if necessary, shall be investigated.

5. Where it is deemed appropriate, issuing a warning, or series of warnings, to tenants where a complaint is, or complaints are, found to be justified.
6. Whether a Tenancy Agreement will be terminated by the Council will be determined at Case Conference.
7. Where the Council evicts a tenant, the Council reserves the right to communicate that fact to the relevant Health Board to enable the Health Board determine the entitlement of that person to a payment in respect of Rent Supplement pursuant to Section 16 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1997.
8. The Council takes a very serious view of anti-social behaviour by any tenant, and, in all appropriate cases shall (in addition to any other appropriate sanctions) refuse, or defer, a letting or sale of a dwelling to any such person.
9. Where the Council is satisfied that a justified complaint has been made involving serious anti-social behaviour, including, inter alia, drug dealing, violence, criminal behaviour, intimidation, damage to property or harassment, the warning process may be dispensed with.

8.6 Provision of Information:

As part of the policy implementation process, Limerick City Council will provide:

- a) Clear information about expected standards of behaviour to new Tenants at the commencement of their tenancy;
- b) Leaflets will be drawn up detailing the Council's Code of Practice on anti-social behaviour and distributed to existing tenants, be available in Council offices, Doctors surgeries, libraries, etc.