



19 July 2018

Circular 35/2018

Traveller Accommodation Programmes 2019-2024

Dear Director,

I am directed by Damien English, T.D., Minister for Housing and Urban Development, to refer to the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 which requires housing authorities to prepare and adopt 5-year Traveller Accommodation Programmes (TAPs).

The attached “*Guidelines on the Preparation and Implementation of Traveller Accommodation Programmes 2019-2024*” are to provide housing authorities with advice and guidance on the preparation, adoption and implementation of the next TAP.

1. Duration of the Programme

Under Section 10 of the 1998 Act the Minister has directed that the next accommodation programme should be for a period of 5 years for the period from **1st July, 2019 to 30th June, 2024.**

Housing authorities should note that the current programme will continue to operate until 1st July 2019. The deferral of the commencement of the fifth round of TAPs follows the outcome of an independent review of capital and current funding of Traveller-specific accommodation for the period 2000 to date (The TAP Review) which was undertaken in 2017. Following consideration of that review the Minister, on the advice of the National Traveller Accommodation Committee (NTACC), is establishing an Expert Group to examine and make recommendations on issues regarding Traveller accommodation policy, strategy and implementation going forward. Commencement of the next TAP in July will also serve to align the TAPs to run concurrently with the term of office of elected Councils.

2. Date for adoption of new programme

The Minister has specified **30th September, 2019**, as the latest date by which accommodation programmes must be adopted. Housing authorities are therefore directed to commence arrangements for the preparation of the new programmes. The table on Page 5 of the Guidelines attached gives indicative timescales for the various stages of the preparation and adoption process.

3. Consultation

It is essential that Traveller Accommodation Programmes are prepared in a consultative manner. The Act requires that housing authorities consult with adjoining housing authorities, the HSE, approved housing bodies, the Local Traveller



Consultative Committee, other local Traveller representative groups, community and interest groups and the public in general.

The purpose of broad consultation ensures that the interests of all concerned with or affected by proposals for Traveller accommodation are considered and to facilitate a planned and comprehensive response by housing authorities to the accommodation needs of Travellers.

4. Assessment of need

Housing authorities following consultation must make an estimate of the current and projected accommodation needs of Traveller families arising over the five-year programme. The housing authorities must identify:

- the estimate of the number of Travellers families for whom accommodation will be required during the duration of the programme;
- the existing and projected accommodation needs of Travellers over the five-year period of the programme; and
- Accommodation options required including standard and group housing, permanent residential sites for caravans and transient sites.

In conducting the assessment of need for Travellers, housing authorities should have regard to data gathered in the summary of social housing assessments as of 11 June 2018. Housing authorities should also have regard to submissions made during the consultative stages and any other supplementary information available to the authority.

5. Preparation of new programme and targets

The form and content of the Traveller Accommodation Programmes is set out under Section 10 of the 1998 Act and the Guidelines attached will assist in the preparation of the Programme.

To facilitate monitoring of progress on the implementation of the programme annual targets should be included in programmes. The targets should include details of the numbers of units of accommodation proposed to be delivered for each of the five years of the programme for Traveller specific accommodation (group housing, bays on halting sites, including transient sites) both new and refurbished and for standard housing.

6. Review

A review of the next Traveller Accommodation Programme should be carried out not later than 31st December, 2021. Following a review, any amendment to the proposed accommodation programme must be made within seven months. More frequent reviews should be carried out, if required.

Enquiries

Any enquiries in relation to this circular may be addressed to Alan Ryan (01 888 2101) or Deborah O'Sullivan (01 888 2606).

Yours sincerely,



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