

**CORPORATION OF
DROGHEDA**

**TRAVELLER
ACCOMMODATION
PROGRAMME**

2000 - 2004

CORPORATION OF DROGHEDA

Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000 – 2004

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1. **Introduction**

This accommodation programme is prepared under the provisions of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. It covers the 5 year period 1 January 2000 – 31 December 2004 and relates to the administrative area of Drogheda Corporation. It has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the above mentioned Act and the directions given thereunder by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government.

2. Policy Statement

It is the policy of Drogheda Corporation, within the resources available to it, to provide adequate accommodation for all Traveller families for whom it is deemed to have responsibility (see Paragraph 5). In implementing this policy the Corporation will endeavour to ensure that:

- (I) All Traveller families secure accommodation of a type, standard & location acceptable to them in as far as possible, and in doing so the Corporation will consider all available options in this regard including serviced caravan parks (temporary and permanent), group housing schemes, conventional local authority housing and any other form of accommodation considered suitable, including emergency accommodation.
- (II) There is full and meaningful consultation with Travellers themselves, Traveller representative groups, statutory and voluntary agencies, the appropriate local Traveller accommodation consultative committee, elected members, the public generally and any other interested persons or bodies.
- (III) There is effective liaison with the various statutory and voluntary bodies, in order to provide an adequate range of back-up services and facilities for Travellers, particularly in the areas of health, education, training, social development, employment opportunities, both for Travellers who have already been provided with accommodation and those awaiting such accommodation.

- (IV) In providing accommodation the distinctive needs of individual Traveller families and the cultural background of the Traveller population generally are taken into account.

- (V) Unauthorised encampments are eliminated within the Corporation area using the various statutory provisions available to the Corporation and described in more detail later in this plan.

- (VI) In carrying out this programme accommodation will be provided on a priority basis.

3. **Strategy Statement**

Responsibility for implementing this programme will rest with Drogheda Corporation, and in doing so the Corporation will liaise with and seek the assistance of the appropriate statutory and voluntary bodies.

In accordance with the provision of the Traveller Accommodation Act there will be ongoing consultation with the Traveller Community.

Progress on the implementation of this programme will be kept under review by the Corporation in consultation with the Local Traveller Accomodation Consultative Committee.

The provision of accommodation for Travellers such as caravan parks, group housing and conventional housing will in the first instance be carried out directly by the Corporation using the normal practice of design, tendering, construction etc or by its own direct labour if appropriate in certain circumstances.

Where a voluntary body is willing and able to undertake the provision of accommodation in appropriate circumstances the Corporation will assist and encourage such body in whatever way possible including availing of the various capital assistance and other grant schemes available for this purpose.

Where individual Traveller families are willing to undertake the provision of their own accommodation the Corporation will seek to encourage and assist them in this regard.

The Corporation will seek to keep both the Traveller community and the public generally fully informed at all times as to its various operations under this programme and will seek to achieve wider understanding and acceptance by both communities of the respective needs, rights and legitimate concerns of the other.

In undertaking the provision of accommodation under this programme the Corporation recognises the need to put in place effective strategies for the future management and maintenance of such accommodation and appropriate measures will be implemented in this regard including the application to such accommodation of the Corporation's policies and practices for good estate management and tenant participation.

4. Assessment of Need

A statutory assessment of housing need under Section 9 of the Housing Act 1998 was carried out by Drogheda Corporation in March 1999.

16 Traveller families were identified as needing accommodation. They are currently living in the Halting Site and Roadside, (see Table 1)

7- Halting Site

9- Roadside

The majority of Travellers on the housing list have requested accommodation in Group Housing.

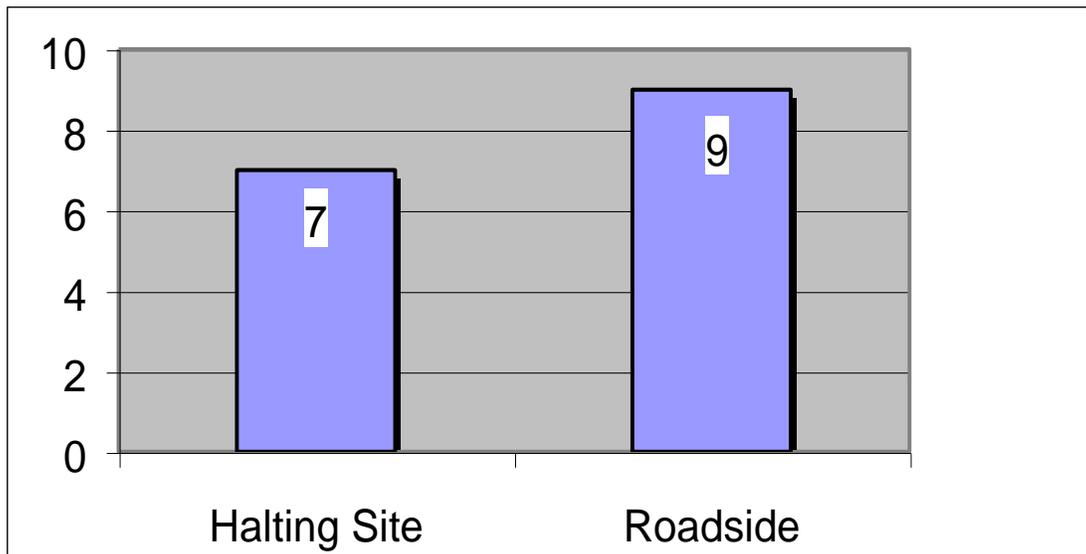


Table 1

5. **Responsibility for Providing Accommodation**

Drogheda Corporation will accept responsibility for the provision of accommodation for the following categories of Travellers:

- (a) Travellers identified in the Assessment of Needs carried out in March 1999 as being in need of accommodation or in any future assessment of needs carried out during the lifetime of this programme.
- (b) New family units or households formed during the lifetime of this plan comprising family members of these households at (a) above.
- (c) New Traveller families who move into the area of the Corporation during the lifetime of this plan and who satisfy the Corporation that they have a genuine need to be accommodated in the area and who do not have accommodation available to them in the area of any other local authority.

The Corporation will not accept responsibility for providing accommodation for Traveller families (including Traders) who from time to time move into the area and whom the Corporation are satisfied have adequate accommodation available to them in other areas or who would appear to the Corporation to possess the means to provide such accommodation.

6. Measures For Implementation

There are 24 Traveller families living in the area of Drogheda Corporation. They are accommodated in:

Standard Local Authority Housing	- 3
Group Housing	- 4
Halting Site	- 7
Roadside	- 9
Privately owned (assisted by Special Traveller Group)	-1

(See Table 2a & 2b)

The assessment of need at 31.03.99 showed a requirement for 16 units of accommodation. Based on a projection of 4% per annum of the Total Traveller Population (24 Families) it is envisaged that 21 units of accommodation will be required during this Programme 2000 - 2004.

The provision of accommodation will include:

- Group Housing
- Standard Local Authority Housing
- Serviced Halting Site
- Special Traveller Grant

and the ongoing development of existing facilities and the entire range of housing options outlined in the Government's policy document **Social Housing - The Way Ahead.**

Breakdown of Traveller Accommodation in Drogheda Corporation

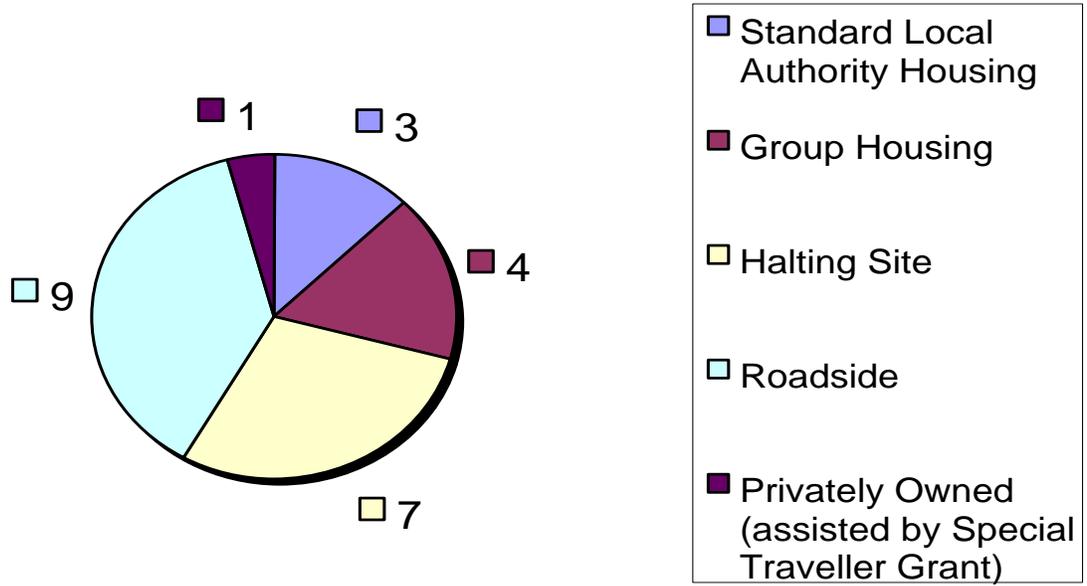
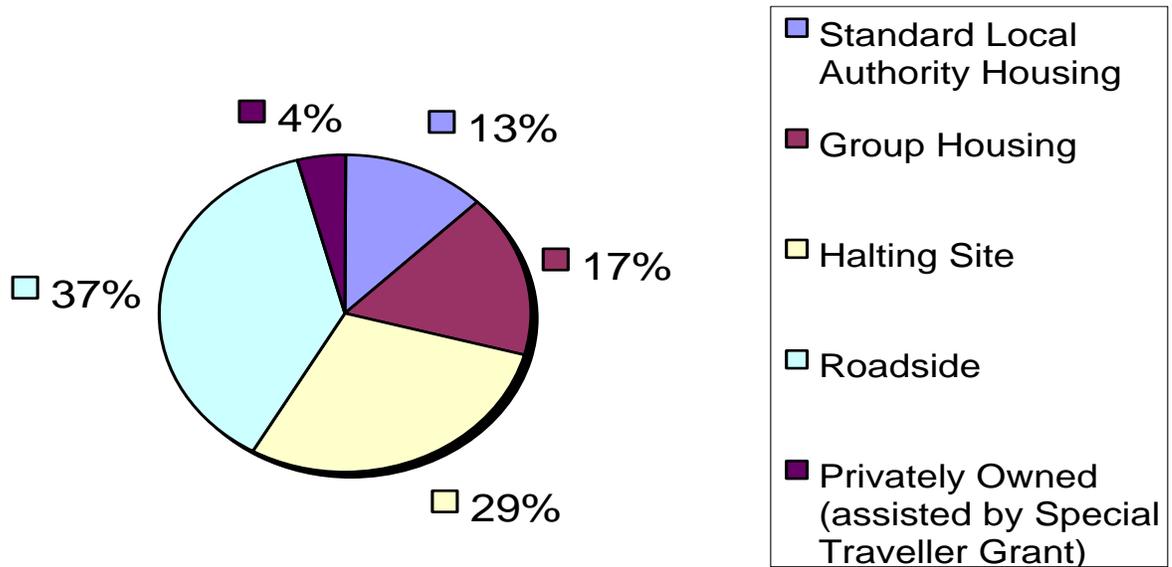


TABLE 2A

TABLE 2B

Breakdown (Percentage) of Traveller Accommodation in Drogheda Corporation



(i) Standard Local Authority Housing .

Drogheda Corporation intends to provide accommodation for families on our housing list in its standard housing stock including Group Housing and also by encouraging Voluntary Bodies, to allocate tenancies to a number of Traveller families.

Drogheda Corporation has housed in the past six years 3 families in standard Local Authority accommodation and will continue to consider making allocations on merit in accordance with our scheme of letting priorities where Travellers express an interest in this type of accommodation.

(ii) Group Housing:

Drogheda Corporation has provided a Group Housing Scheme for 4 families .

1. In consultation with Travellers, Drogheda Corporation has prepared plans for a Group Housing Scheme to cater for 10 families who are presently on the roadside.
2. Consultations are ongoing with a group of families currently living on the Halting Site with a view to developing a small Group Housing Scheme for these families.
3. Two sites exist on the Group Housing Scheme at Cement Road and should a need arise Drogheda Corporation will consider the provision of an additional 2 houses in consultation with the existing families.

(iii) Serviced Halting Site:

Drogheda Corporation has provided a 10 Bay Halting Site at Cement Road . A Community building has also been provided and is used as a pre-school and a homework club and is also used by the North Eastern Health Board. It is proposed to extensively renovate the facilities in each bay on the site. The standard of accommodation will undergo a major improvement with the provision of kitchen and bathroom facilities. These have been developed in close consultation with the residents living on the site. Tenders have been invited and it is hoped to proceed with the work in the near future.

(iv) Special Traveller Grant:

The Department of Environment operates a scheme whereby Travellers can avail of a grant to purchase their own house as a first-time buyer. To date one Traveller family has availed of this grant. Drogheda Corporation will continue to encourage and process further applications as requested.

(v) Transient Sites:

The provision of a transient site for Drogheda Corporation is not seen as a priority. It is envisaged that transient families will use the existing facility at Cement Road. However should the ongoing assessment of accommodation needs in Drogheda indicate that there is an increased demand for short-term accommodation then the option of providing a transient site will be reviewed. Consultation will take place with Dundalk Urban District Council and Louth County Council to explore the possibility of a joint initiative in this regard.

(vi) Assistance to Travellers:

Where appropriate full encouragement and assistance will be offered to Travellers who might be in a position and willing to provide accommodation for themselves by availing of the range of initiatives contained in the Government's policy document Social Housing – The Way Ahead. Likewise where any voluntary organisation is willing to undertake the provision of accommodation full assistance and encouragement will be given.

(vii) New Family Formation and Families moving into the area

The needs arising from new family formation referred to in this section and from new families moving into the area referred to at Section 5(C) will be assessed as and when they arise and until then it will not be possible to be specific about the type of accommodation required. When such needs are identified and established the Corporation will proceed to provide the necessary accommodation from the range of options referred to at Section 2(I).

(viii) Management of Accommodation:

The management and maintenance of Traveller specific accommodation will be the sole responsibility of Drogheda Corporation. In conjunction with the provision of accommodation under this programme the Corporation will put in place adequate systems for the proper management of same including in particular arrangements for:

- Caretaking
- Maintenance
- Consultation with Residents

In this context the policy document 'Louth Local Authorities - Estate Management in Housing Area - Tenant Participation December 1997' will be applied to such accommodation.

Under the Department of Environment Traveller Pilot Initiative, Drogheda Corporation in conjunction with Louth County Council and Dundalk Urban District Council intends to develop and run a specific Traveller Estate Management Course to promote Traveller participation in management and community development on it's serviced site and Group Housing Scheme and to establish a system of consultation on matters relating to the day to day management and new initiatives on the site.

(ix) Unauthorised Encampments:

In conjunction with the provision of a range of good quality and properly managed accommodation the Corporation will take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that unauthorised encampments are eliminated as far as possible. To achieve this the Corporation will avail of the statutory powers available to it, particularly under Section 10 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1992 as amended by Section 32 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998, and also where appropriate, the following:-

- Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts 1963 – 1998
- Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1948
- The Roads Act 1993

7. Conclusion

The proposals outlined in this programme are subject to available funding and the persistence of need outlined as the basis for the programme. It is our intention to review the progress of the implementation of the programme on an annual basis. It would also be our intention to engage in ongoing consultation with the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee, Travellers and Traveller Representatives to monitor the ongoing accommodation needs of Travellers in Drogheda.