

**DUNDALK URBAN DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION  
PROGRAMME**

**2000 – 2004**

# **DUNDALK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **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 Dundalk Urban District Council. 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 Dundalk Urban District Council, 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 council will endeavour to ensure that:

- (i) All Traveller families secure accommodation of a type standard and location acceptable to them in as far as possible and in doing so the Council 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 Agencies, in order to provide an adequate range of back-up services and facilities for Travellers.
- (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 Urban Area using the various statutory provisions available to the Council 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 Dundalk Urban District Council and in doing so the Council will liaise with and seek the assistance of the appropriate statutory and voluntary bodies.

In accordance with the provisions of the 1998 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 council in consultation with the Local Traveller Consulting 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 Council 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 Council 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 Council will seek to encourage and assist them in this regard.

The Council 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 Council 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 Council's policies and practices for good estate management and tenant participation.

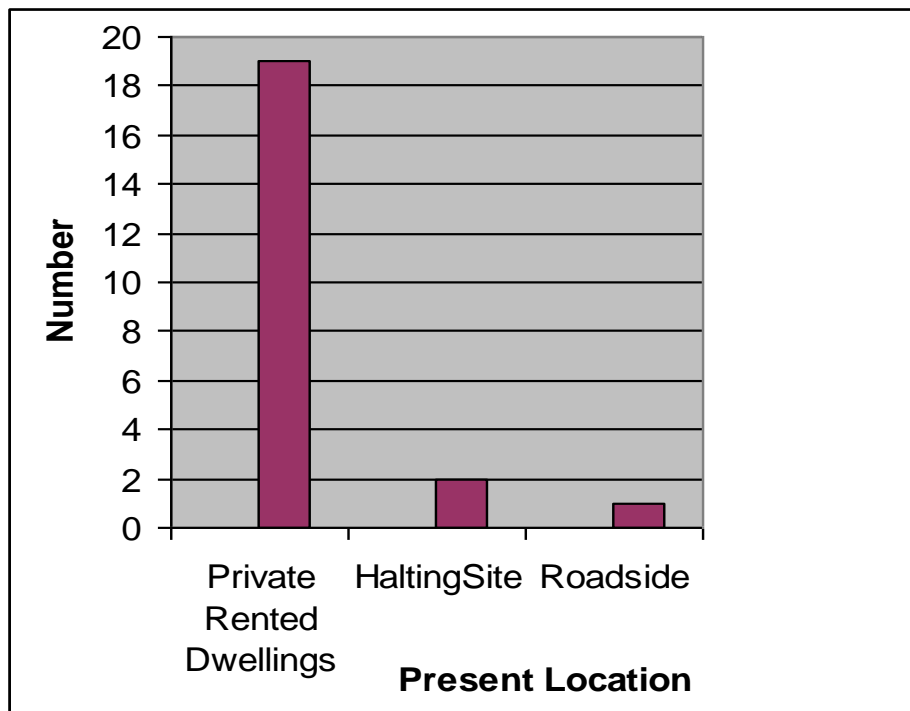
#### 4. Assessment of Need

A statutory assessment of housing need under Section 9 of the Housing Act 1998 was carried out by Dundalk Urban District Council in March 1999.

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

All 22 families have expressed a preference for Standard Local Authority Accommodation.

**Table 1**



## **5. Responsibility for Providing Accommodation**

Dundalk Urban District Council 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 Council during the lifetime of this plan, and who satisfy the Council 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 Council will not accept responsibility for providing accommodation for Traveller families (including Traders) who from time to time move into the area and whom the Council are satisfied have adequate accommodation available to them in other areas, or who would appear to the Council to possess the means to provide such accommodation.

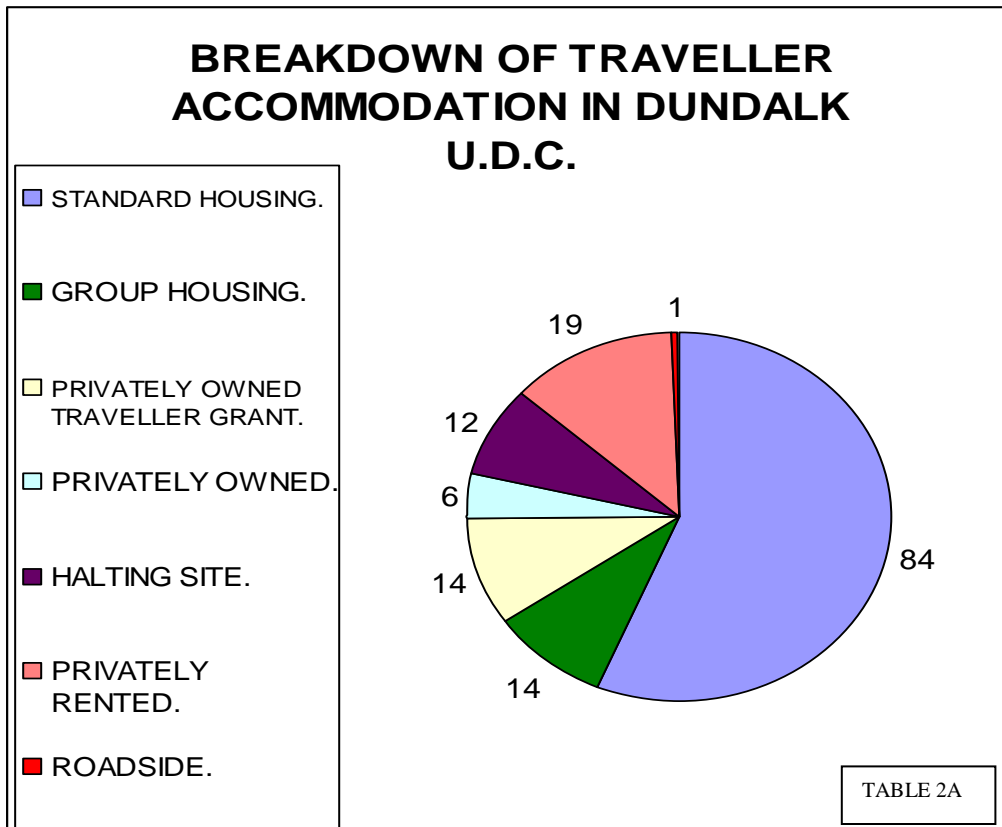


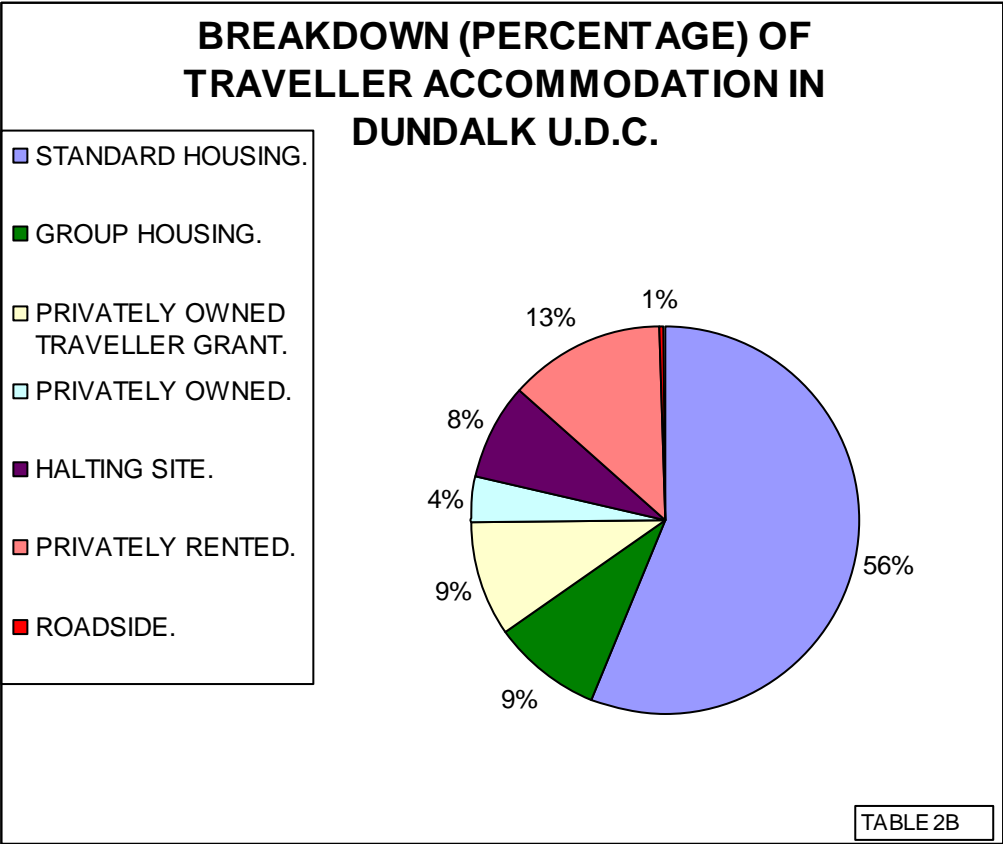
## 6. Measures for Implementation

There are 150 Traveller families living in Dundalk Urban District Council area. They are accommodated in:

- Standard Local Authority Housing	84
- Group Housing	14
- Halting Site	12
- Privately Owned/Assisted by Special Traveller Grant	14
- Privately Owned	6
- Privately Rented	19
- Roadside	1

(See Table 2a + 2b)





The assessment of needs 31.03.99 showed a requirement for 22 units of accommodation (Standard Local Authority Housing). Based on a projection of 4% per annum of the Total Traveller Population (150 Families) it is envisaged that 52 units of accommodation will be required during this Programme 2000 – 2004.

The provision of accommodation will include:

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

and the ongoing development of existing facilities and the entire range of housing options outlined in the Plan for Social Housing.

(i) Standard Local Authority Housing:

There are 84 Traveller Families living in Standard Local Authority Housing in Dundalk. Dundalk Urban District Council has housed an average of 8 Traveller Families per annum during the past 7 years.

The assessment of need identifies 22 applicants currently on the Housing List requesting Standard Local Authority Housing. It is proposed to continue to house 8 – 10 Traveller families per annum during the period of this Programme 2000 – 2004.

(ii) Group Housing:

Dundalk Urban District Council has provided 2 Group Housing Schemes:

Naughton Close (10 Houses)

Barton Park (4 Houses)

In the assessment of needs of 31.03.99 there are no requests for additional Group Housing Schemes. This will be kept under review. Consideration will be given to providing additional Group Housing should the need arise during the period of this Programme.

(iii) Halting Site:

Dundalk Urban District Council has provided a 15 Bay Halting Site, Woodland Park.

At the assessment of needs 31.03.99 there were 12 Families living on the Halting Site.

2 Families have indicated a preference for Standard Local Authority

Housing and are currently on the Housing List.  
8 Families wish to remain on the Halting Site.

It is proposed to extensively renovate this site. The standard of accommodation on the site will undergo a major improvement with the provision of kitchen and bathroom facilities.

A community building has recently been provided and is currently being used by Travellers for Home Work Clubs, organised by Travellers through Dundalk Travellers Community Employment Scheme (FAS). It is also intended to develop a Laundry Co-operative through Dundalk Travellers Community Employment Scheme on the site.

(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 14 Traveller Families have availed of this grant.

Dundalk Urban District Council will continue to encourage and process further applications as requested.

(v) New Family Formation and Families moving in the area

The needs arising from new family formation referred to in Section 4, and from new families moving into the area referred to at Section 5© 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 Council will provide the necessary accommodation from the range of options referred to at Section 2(1).

(vi) Transient Sites:

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

(vii) 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.

(viii) Management of Accommodation:

The management and maintenance of Traveller specific accommodation will be the sole responsibility of Dundalk Urban District Council. In conjunction with the provision of accommodation under this programme the Council 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, Dundalk Urban District Council in conjunction with Louth County Council and Drogheda Corporation intends to develop and run a Specific Traveller Estate Management Course to promote Traveller participation in management and community development on its serviced sites and Group Housing Schemes 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 Council will take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that unauthorised encampments are eliminated as far as possible. To achieve this the Council 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

## **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 Dundalk.