



# **Cork City Traveller Accommodation Programme – Executive Summary 2025-2029**

**DRAFT for Public Consultation**



This document was prepared on behalf of Cork City Council by HW Planning, in partnership with the Traveller Accommodation Unit (TAU), the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) and the Traveller Community through their participation in the assessment of need process and members of the Traveller Advocacy Groups.

Cork City Council wish to extend our sincere thanks to all involved, in particular to the many children who participated in the consultation workshops, whose artwork is included throughout this document.

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# What and Why?

## What is a Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP)?

A Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) is a plan developed by local authorities to address the specific housing needs of the Traveller community. These plans, or programmes, are created in accordance with national legislation and guidelines to ensure that the right types of housing are made available to the Traveller community.

## Why do we need one?

The goal of a TAP is to improve the quality of life for Travellers by providing safe, adequate, and culturally appropriate housing options. Cork City Council (“the Council”) have made a new TAP for 2025-2029 which aims to address the accommodation needs of Travellers who live in Cork City. This document, the sixth TAP made by the Council, has been prepared in accordance with the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, and the Guidelines issued by the Minister in December 2023.



# Travellers of Ireland and Cork City

## Travellers of Ireland

The Traveller community is one in transition. There were almost 38,000 Travellers living in Ireland in 2022, accounting for 0.7% of the national population. This means that the Traveller community in Ireland has grown by 12% since 2011, faster than the national population growth rate of 8%. There was also a 22% increase in the number of Traveller households over the same period.

There were an average of 4 people living within every Traveller home in Ireland in 2022. This is almost 1.5 times higher than the number of people living in homes amongst the general population, where there was an average of 2.7 people living in each home.

The Traveller community in Ireland is also a very young one. The average age of a Traveller in Ireland was 27 in 2022. In the wider population, the average age was 39. The Census also revealed that 15% of Travellers had a significant, long-lasting medical condition in 2022. This is nearly twice the proportion seen in the wider population.

Historically, Travellers were a rural based population that lived a nomadic life. In the Census 2022, it was clear that most Travellers now lived in standard, permanent housing. Understanding this change in lifestyle and way of living at both national and local scales have been an essential part of the making of this new TAP.

## Travellers Living in Cork City

In 2022, there were 1,442 Travellers living in 381 private households in Cork City. There was an average 3.8 people living in each home, which was slightly smaller than the national Traveller average household size of 4 people.

In 2022, almost three quarters (74%) of Travellers living in Council supported or assisted accommodation were living in standard housing. This reflects the national trend of Travellers living in permanent forms of accommodation. Travellers in Cork City generally were also much younger on average than the wider population. This aligns with national trends.

Having studied the Traveller population for Ireland and Cork City, we have found that:

- The **Traveller population is increasing** both locally and nationally, and faster than that of the wider population.
- More people live together in Traveller homes than in homes generally.
- The **Traveller community is younger than the general population**, with much fewer people over the age of 50.
- In Cork City, **Travellers are mostly living in standard, permanent housing** – not at halting or transient sites.
- Travellers **experience almost twice as much significant and long-lasting health conditions** than members of the general population.

## CENSUS 2022



**38,000**

Travellers living in Ireland in 2022.



**92%**

of Travellers lived in standard housing.



**12%**

more Travellers living in Ireland since 2011.



**27**

average age of a Traveller in Ireland.

# A New Housing Programme for Travellers in Cork City

## How Did the Last Programme Go?

The TAP 2019-2024 aimed to improve the lives of the Travelling community across Cork City. Current provision includes various housing options such as standard social housing, private rented housing and Traveller-specific housing. The review indicates that Cork City Council has delivered on a significant number of the actions identified in the previous TAP, despite challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic, national housing shortage.

## How will the New Housing Programme be Made?

The TAP 2025-2029 was developed through an extensive consultation process, data collection, and analysis to assess the needs and demands of the Traveller community in Cork City. The methodology also included a gap analysis to identify deficits in current and planned accommodation provision. These findings directly informed the housing targets set out within the new TAP.

The recommendations of both the Council's Equality Review of the TAP 2019 - 2024, and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission's (IHREC) assessment of same have also directly informed the approach taken.

## Who Helped Make the New Programme?

At the outset, stakeholders such as Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) and the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee were consulted. A TAP survey was also carried out to determine Cork City Traveller accommodation needs and preferences. The Traveller Accommodation Unit (TAU) invited 158 Traveller families to participate. These were made up of families with open housing applications (including HAP/RAS tenants), families involved with Homeless Services, or who the TAU identified as likely to have an accommodation need<sup>1</sup>. 104 Traveller families participated in the TAP Survey, equating to a 66% response rate – the highest ever engagement for Cork City Council to-date during the preparation of a TAP.

**TAP  
2025  
SURVEY**

**158**

Traveller families contacted.

**104**

Traveller families participated.

**66%**

of contacted Traveller families participated in the survey

<sup>1</sup> The families whose housing needs are to be addressed by the recently permitted Spring Lane and Ellis's Yard Redevelopment were not canvassed as they have just

completed a 2-year consultation with the Council. However, residents in Spring Lane and Ellis's Yard with open housing applications were included.

# TAP 2025 - 2029

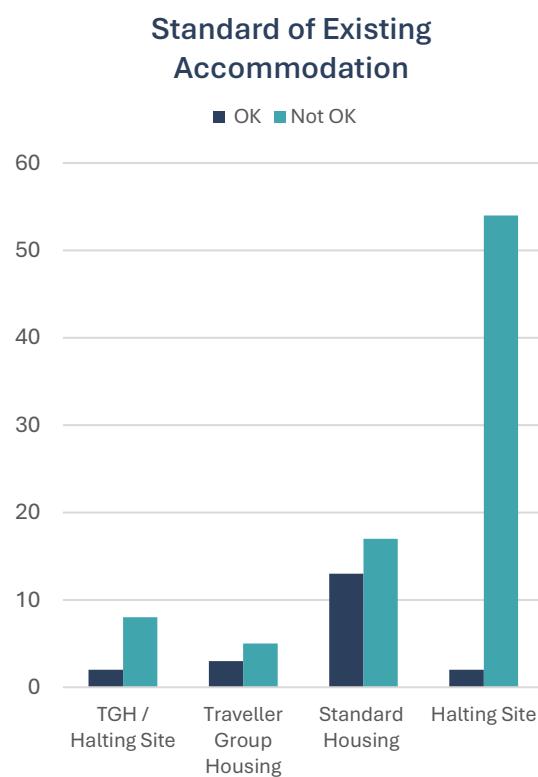
## Determining Housing Need

As part of the making of this TAP, an assessment of housing need was carried out. This assessment considered both existing and future accommodation requirements of Travellers. The TAP Survey indicated that 67% of respondents considered that their current accommodation was not suitable for their current needs.

61% of the respondents reported having an accommodation need. The majority of these are those families currently living in halting sites. A significant number are Travellers who are living in standard housing, including adult Travellers with their own families living with their parents, Travellers living in homeless services and those living in HAP and RAS (private rented) accommodation that they consider unsuitable. Overall, it is estimated that 110 families within

the target population<sup>2</sup> have an existing accommodation need.

Using Census 2022 information, an estimate was made of the number of Traveller children in Cork City who will reach 18 years of age within the TAP period. This gives an indication of the number of new households that are likely to form during the next TAP period. When this is compared with the rate of growth in the number of Traveller families during the last TAP period, it is estimated that there will be between 70 and 86 new Traveller families in Cork City by 2029. Using the existing Local Authority Traveller accommodation support rate of 79%, this indicates there may be an accommodation need for up to a further 61 new households formed in the TAP period between 2025-2029. When existing and projected household needs are combined, a total accommodation need figure of 171 new homes is reached.



**67%**

of Travellers considered their current accommodation was not suitable for their needs

**70 - 86**  
**New Families By 2029**

<sup>2</sup> The Target Population (182) is the total number of Traveller families in the 2023 Count (510), excluding those living by

their own resources, in private rental or private shared housing (108) and those already in Standard Council Housing (220).

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## Where do Travellers Want to Live?

Results from the TAP survey revealed a range of location preferences amongst respondents. One third of respondents chose one of Cork City's urban towns, such as Blarney and Ballincollig, as their first preference. 4% of respondents indicated that they would prefer to live in one of the City's hinterland settlements like Killeens. Less than 1% identified an inner-city neighbourhood as their first preference.

### CITY AREA PREFERENCES

- 1      Urban Town**
- 2      South West City Suburb**
- 3      South East City Suburb**
- 4      North West City Suburb**
- 5      North East City Suburb**



## What Type of Houses Do Travellers Want to Live In?

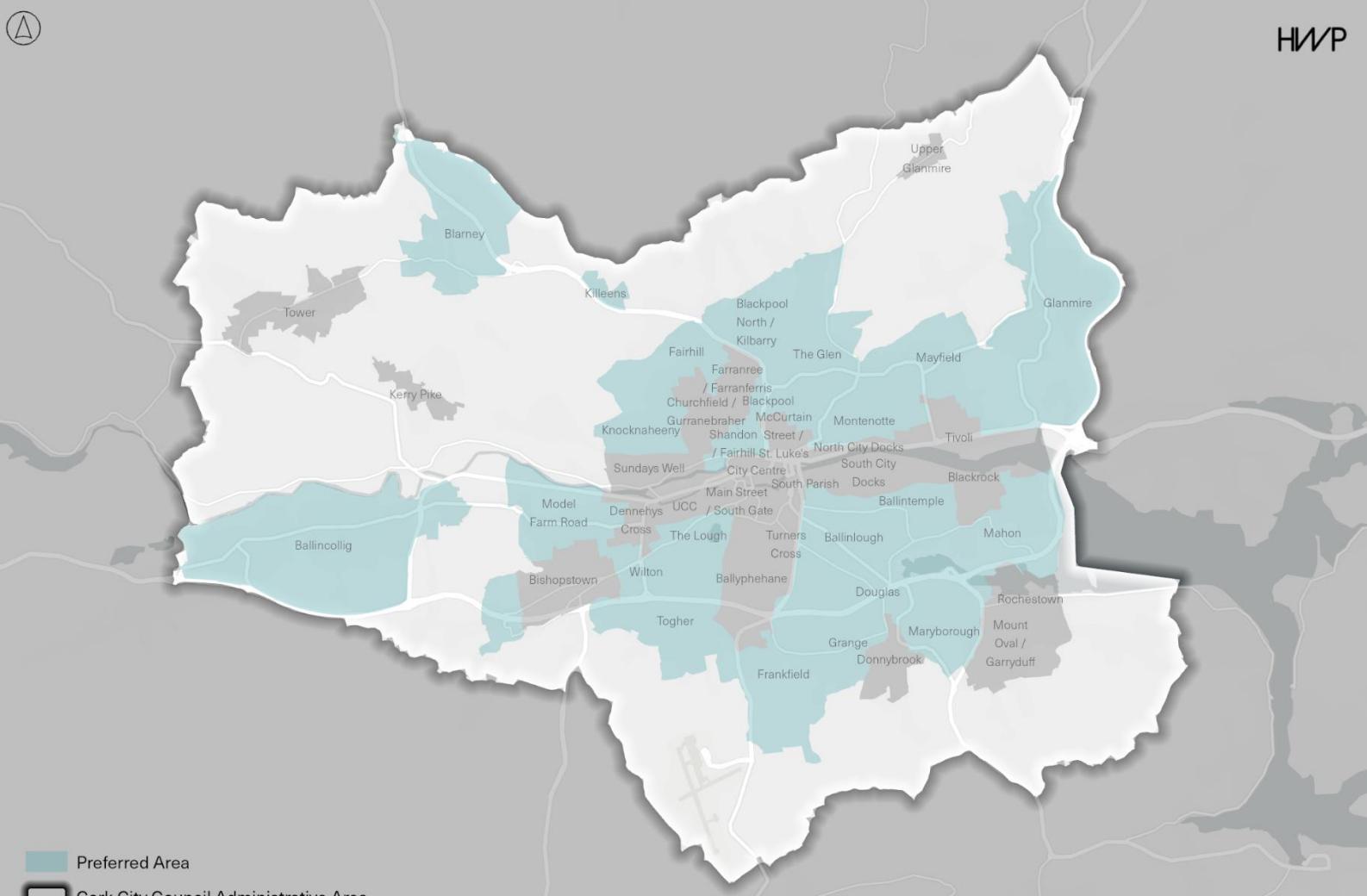
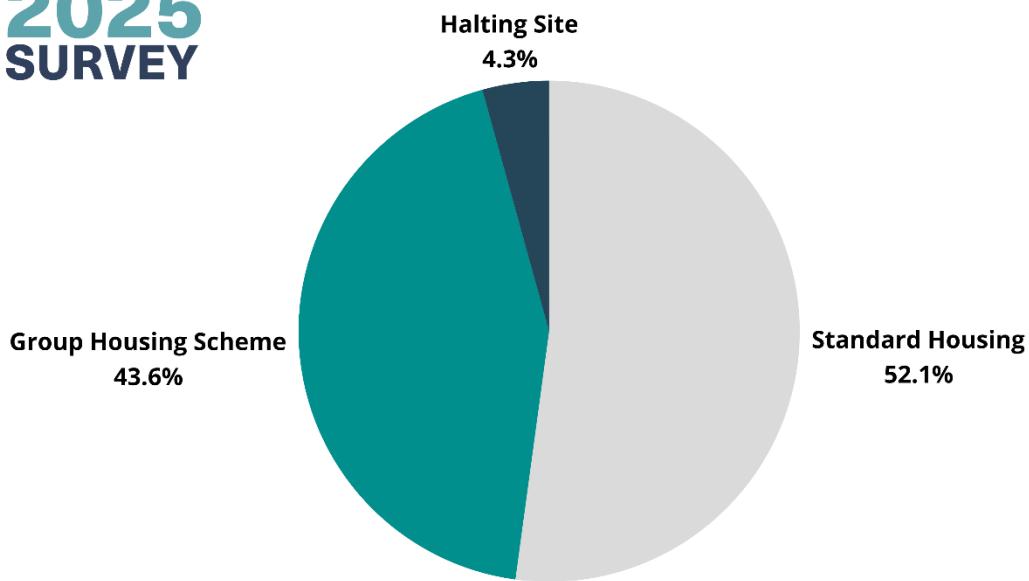
As part of the TAP Survey, Travellers were asked what type of housing they would consider moving to. Respondents showed a strong preference for Local Authority Housing (52%) and Group Housing Schemes (44%). Only 4% were open to moving to a halting site. This reflects a broader trend of more Travellers choosing permanent housing over halting sites or temporary accommodation. 75% of respondents considered that there was no need for a transient site.

**75%**  
**Considered Transients Sites  
were not Needed**



# TAP 2025 SURVEY

## What Type of House Do You Want to Live In?



## The New Programme for Traveller Housing - TAP 2025-2029:

The projected need for 171 units will be provided for across several types of accommodation. The TAP Survey explored housing tenure type preferences, and a distinct preference was expressed for Local Authority Housing and Group Housing Schemes.

In terms of housing size, the majority of respondents reported a requirement for 2- or 3-bedroom accommodation. This reflects the smaller Traveller family sizes, though there was also a need identified for some 1- and 4-bedroom accommodation.

A series of images of different accommodation types were shown to the respondents as part of the TAP Survey to rank in order of preference. The results highlight the diversity within the Traveller population. While the importance of living in close proximity to extended family is crucial to many Travellers, a significant number of respondents wanted to move away from other Travellers altogether.

Similarly, while the majority of respondents living in Halting Sites ranked Group Housing Schemes as their highest preference, those living in Group Housing Schemes mainly ranked standard

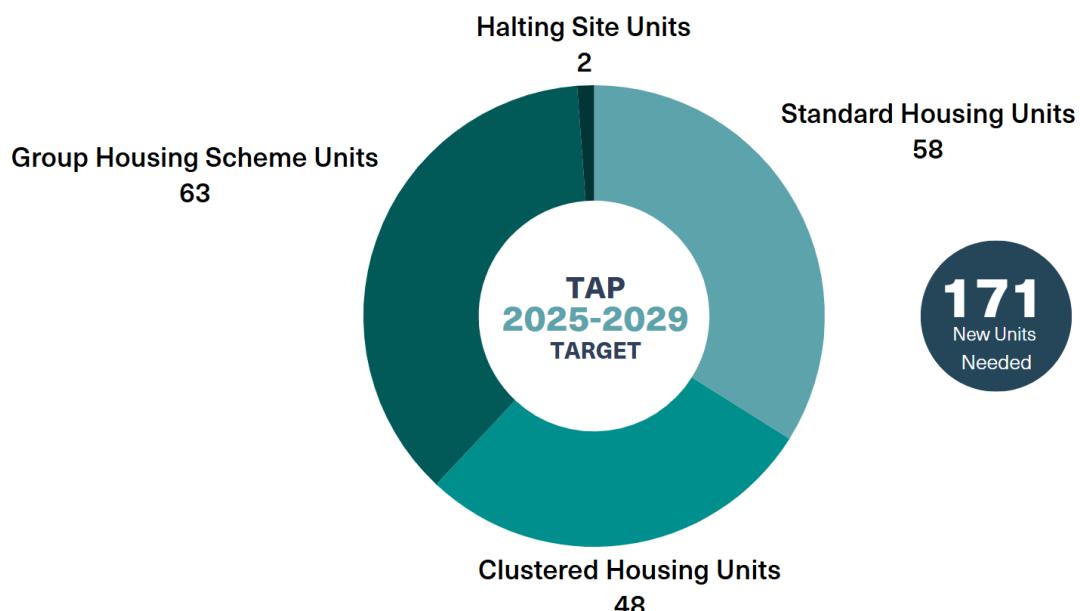
housing as their highest preference. There is generally an aspiration to move towards more standard permanent housing within each group.

While a preference for single-storey housing was widely stated, end-of-terrace, semi-detached 2 storey houses were also considered attractive. There was a recurring reference to a desire to live in a bungalow, away from everyone in the countryside. There was limited interest shown in living in a halting site.

## Traveller Housing Targets 2025-2029

Having considered the needs, preferences and projected future housing demand for Traveller accommodation in Cork City, the TAP has identified specific housing targets for each year of the new programme.

These targets reflect the extensive consultation and research stages involved during the preparation of the TAP.



# What are the Key Recommendations of the TAP 2025-2029?

## Recommendations

A number of recommendations are made in the TAP. These are summarised below:

- **Greater involvement of the Approved Housing Body (AHB) Sector** is needed in the provision of Traveller accommodation in Cork City. In Cork, AHB provide 3% of Traveller accommodation. This is notably less than the national figure of 10%. There is scope for CENA-led or other Traveller focused AHB partnerships in the future delivery of Traveller specific accommodation.
- A preference was noted for **smaller Traveller housing schemes** of fewer than 6 units, housing related families only. There may be an opportunity to deliver small (1 – 6 units) clusters of Traveller homes co-located with standard housing developments.
- The TAU recognises the unique and significant **challenges faced by young Traveller families in accessing accommodation**. The Traveller-Specific Transitional Housing Initiative is being proposed to offer support to these young Traveller families to move from homelessness or excessively overcrowded accommodation to stable housing.
- With decreasing Traveller family sizes, **2- and 3-bedroom accommodation is now the preferred housing size** for the majority of Traveller families.
- Nevertheless, a **mix of housing sizes should be provided** within Traveller

- Housing to allow families to upsize and downsize across different family stages.
- Traveller accommodation should incorporate **a mix of house typologies** including one and two storey buildings.
- Regardless of house type, a uniform requirement exists amongst almost all respondents for **a side entrance and drive to cater for a tourer, with enclosed garden area for children to play in**.
- The importance of **flexibility in the programme** is highlighted to address unforeseen changes or challenges, such as demographic shifts or funding adjustments.
- Blarney, Ballincollig, Ballyvolane and Glanmire are all earmarked for significant population growth in the 2022 Cork City Development Plan. In line with the locational preferences expressed in the TAP Survey, there may be opportunities to **integrate new standard Council Housing with small Traveller Group Housing Schemes** as these strategic areas develop.
- Many Traveller concerns about standard housing may be a factor of inexperience having lived in a bungalow or caravan all their lives. The **role of the Traveller Liaison Officer and Traveller Advocacy Groups are critical** in supporting this transition.
- **Continued collaboration** is required between the CSO and Local Authorities to improve how data relating to the Traveller Community is collected.
- Census age profile data is required for calculating projected household numbers. In the Census 2022 this data appears to be only provided as a combined figure for Cork City and Cork County (CSO Table F5092). For future TAP reviews this **Traveller population data should be disaggregated by Local Authority area**.

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- The Council undertakes to carry out a **Mid-Term Review of this Traveller Accommodation Programme.**

## Conclusion

The Cork City Council TAP 2025-2029 builds upon previous plans to provide for the specific needs of the Traveller community. By promoting equality and inclusion, and providing tailored accommodation options, Cork City Council is committed to improving the lives of the Traveller community in Cork City.

