

West Regional Homeless Action Plan 2025-27



**Comhairle Cathrach
na Gaillimhe**
Galway City Council



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



February 2025

Contents

Eradicating homelessness by 2030 – the Lisbon Declaration	3
Introduction – Helena Martyn, Galway City Council (Lead Authority)	4
Abbreviations and Glossary	5
Policy Framework Summary	6
The Plan in Context	7
Vision, Mission, Values.....	9
Key Objectives.....	10
Objective 1: Housing Delivery – to enable Homelessness Prevention and Pathways out of Homelessness	12
Objective 2: Homelessness Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment	16
Objective 3: Pathways out of Homelessness	19
Objective 4: Protection of rough sleepers and people who are particularly vulnerable.....	29
Objective 5: Addressing Youth Homelessness	36
Objective 6: Governance and Interagency Working	41
Appendix A: Policy Framework: References	45
Appendix B: Outline of Current Services.....	46
Galway City	46
Galway City Council.....	46
Interagency work in Galway City	46
Homeless Services in Galway City Council area	47
Galway County	55
Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	56
Homeless Services in Galway County Council area.....	56
Proposals for future development of Services for homeless people by Galway County Council.....	58
County Mayo.....	59
Homeless Services in County Mayo	61
Linking in with Community Supports	61
Future developments in County Mayo	61
County Roscommon.....	63
Homeless HAP / HAP Placefinder.....	63
Homeless Services in County Roscommon	64
Targets in Housing for All.....	65
Future Developments for Roscommon.....	65
Appendix C: Consultations with Key Stakeholders	67

Eradicating homelessness by 2030 – the Lisbon Declaration

The West Regional Homeless Action Plan 2025-27 is committed to working to ending homelessness in the Region by 2030, in line with national policy.

In June 2021, Minister for Housing Daragh O'Brien signed the Lisbon Declaration on Combatting Homelessness on behalf of Ireland.

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=24120&langId=en>

Key points acknowledged by the signatories to the Declaration include:

- that homelessness is one of the most extreme forms of social exclusion, negatively affecting people's physical and mental health, well-being, and quality of life, as well as their access to employment and access to other economic and social services.
- that addressing homelessness requires an understanding of how different groups in communities are impacted, including children, youth, women, single parents and large families, older persons, migrants, ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups.
- the complex root causes of homelessness, which include rising housing costs, insufficient supply of social housing stock or housing assistance, low income and precarious jobs, job loss, ageing and family breakdown, discrimination, long-term health problems and insufficiently prepared release from institutional settings.
- the growing evidence about effective interventions to prevent and solve homelessness, such as housing-led approach.
- the importance of housing affordability for vulnerable groups and of social protection policies to guaranteeing a decent life. the role of the social economy and social services providers to address and prevent homelessness.

Signatories agreed to work towards the ending of homelessness by 2030, so that:

- no one sleeps rough for lack of accessible, safe and appropriate emergency accommodation;
- no one lives in emergency or transitional accommodation longer than is required for successful move-on to a permanent housing solution;
- no one is discharged from any institution (e.g. prison, hospital, care facility) without an offer of appropriate housing;
- evictions should be prevented whenever possible and no one is evicted without assistance for an appropriate housing solution, when needed;
- no one is discriminated against due to their homelessness status.

Given the relatively low numbers of people rough sleeping in the West, Sam Tsemberis challenged us to prepare a plan to achieve the goal of ending rough sleeping by 2030, to identify the resources we need to end rough sleeping in the West in the next four years, and make the West the Pilot for other Regions. With approximately 24 people sleeping rough in the City, and a further 19 in the CWR, and lower numbers in the other Local Authority areas, he sees achieving this aim as very achievable.

Introduction – Galway City Council (Lead Authority)

Introduction:

Homelessness is a pressing social issue that affects individuals and families across Ireland, including in the West Region. In response to this growing crisis, this action plan aims to provide a comprehensive, collaborative, and sustainable approach to reducing homelessness, ensuring that all individuals and families have access to secure, safe, and affordable housing. The West Region, encompasses counties including Galway City and County, Mayo and Roscommon local authorities. The West Region has witnessed a concerning rise in homelessness in recent years. Galway City Council has been designated as lead authority for the West region. The West Region Homeless Action Plan was prepared having regard to the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 as it relates to Homelessness and sets out the priorities for the region for the next three years. In accordance with Section 37 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009. While many commendable efforts have been made to address this issue, it is clear that a more coordinated and strategic approach is needed to effectively tackle the root causes of homelessness and provide lasting solutions for those affected.

This action plan seeks to build on existing initiatives and enhance cooperation between local authorities, HSE, Mental Health Services, homeless service providers, housing agencies, social services, and other stakeholders. Through a combination of prevention, intervention, and long-term support strategies, we aim to significantly reduce homelessness, alleviate its impact on individuals, and foster stronger, more resilient communities.

Acknowledgements:

This action plan could not have been developed without the valuable contributions of numerous individuals and organisations. We extend our gratitude to the Local Authorities, HSE, frontline workers, and service providers who shared their insights, expertise, and experiences to shape this plan. Your commitment to tackling homelessness in the West Region is inspiring and deeply appreciated.

We wish to acknowledge the voices of those who have experienced homelessness and have contributed to this plan in which we are trying to address their housing needs. Their courage in braving homelessness has been integral to the development of this plan and serves as a powerful reminder of the human cost of homelessness.

We extend our gratitude to our government partners and policy makers for their ongoing support in creating the framework that allows for such initiatives to take place and lastly to Ms. Anne Mallaghan for bringing this plan together and working closely with all stakeholders in an effort to put actions in place to address homelessness.

Abbreviations and Glossary

AHB	Approved Housing Body
API	Application Programming Interface
CBH	Community Based Housing
CCMA	City and County Managers Association
CHW	Community Healthcare West
CMHTs	Community Mental Healthcare Teams
CVS	Community and Voluntary Sector
CWR	Cold Weather Response
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DSP	Department of Social Protection
FEANTSA	European Observatory on Homelessness
HAP	Housing Assistance Payment
HAT	Homeless Action Team
HF	Housing First
HHAP	Homeless Housing Assistance Payment
HSE	Health Service Executive
LA	Local Authority
LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Team
MHS	Mental Health Services
NQSF	National Quality Standards Framework
NTQ	Notice to Quit
PASS	Pathway Accommodation and Support System
PEA	Private Emergency Accommodation
RAS	Rental Assistance Scheme
RPZ	Rent Pressure Zone
RTB	Residential Tenancies Board
SOLO	Sex Offender Liaison Officer
STA	Supported Temporary Accommodation
SVP	St Vincent de Paul
TEA	Temporary Emergency Accommodation
VCS	Voluntary and Community Services
WRDTF	Western Region Drugs Task Force
WRHAP	West Region Homelessness Action Plan

Policy Framework Summary

National Policies and Reports which inform the West Regional Homeless Action Plan 2025-27 include:

Housing for All 2021 (principally Pathway 2: Pathway to Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion)

Second National Housing First Implementation Plan 2022-2026

National Youth Homeless Strategy 2023-25

Assertive Street Outreach, A Good Practice Guide for Local Authorities in Ireland 2024

National Quality Standards Framework (NQSf)

Report of the Housing Commission 2024

National Strategic Plan To Improve the Health of People Experiencing Homelessness in Ireland (2024-2027)

Sharing the Vision: A Mental Health Policy for Everyone

Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery: A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025

National Community Detoxification – Benzodiazepine Guidelines

See References in Appendix A.

The Plan in Context

Background

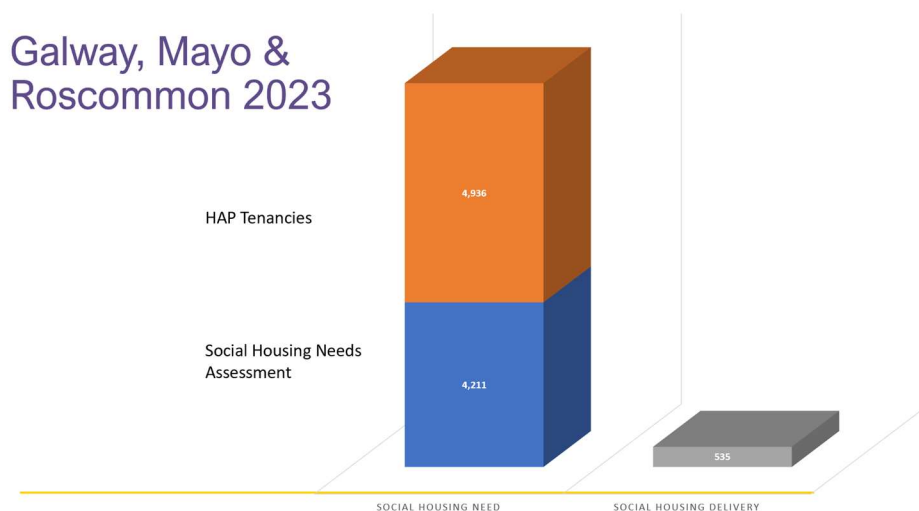
Over recent decades, the majority of people experiencing homelessness in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon came from or migrated to the largest urban centre in the Region, Galway City. Galway City Council, the HSE and NGOs took a proactive approach to addressing homelessness in Galway City and since the late 1970s have developed (and continue to develop) a range of targeted Services to support vulnerable individuals and adults facing homelessness.

As the housing and homelessness crises have continued to deepen nationally in recent years, increasing numbers of people are facing homelessness across the West. More people are presenting as homeless to all four Local Authorities in the Region, including the Local Authorities that would have traditionally seen very little homelessness in their area. In response, the Local Authorities, HSE and NGOs are developing and expanding Services in the County Galway, County Mayo and County Roscommon areas.

All agencies working in the Region are committed to preventing homelessness and, when it does occur, working to ensure it is for the shortest possible time period and not repeated. There is a very strong ethos of collaboration in addressing homelessness in the Region and the agencies involved have worked together to develop this plan, with the assistance of Ann Mallaghan.

Housing Delivery

More people across the country are experiencing and at risk of homelessness due to the shortage of secure, affordable housing. Work is underway to increase social housing delivery in the West and in 2023, 535 new social homes were delivered in the Region, with 4,211 households on the social housing waiting list and a further 4,936 households supported in HAP tenancies. In order to address homelessness and housing need, more social and affordable homes must be delivered over the period of this plan.

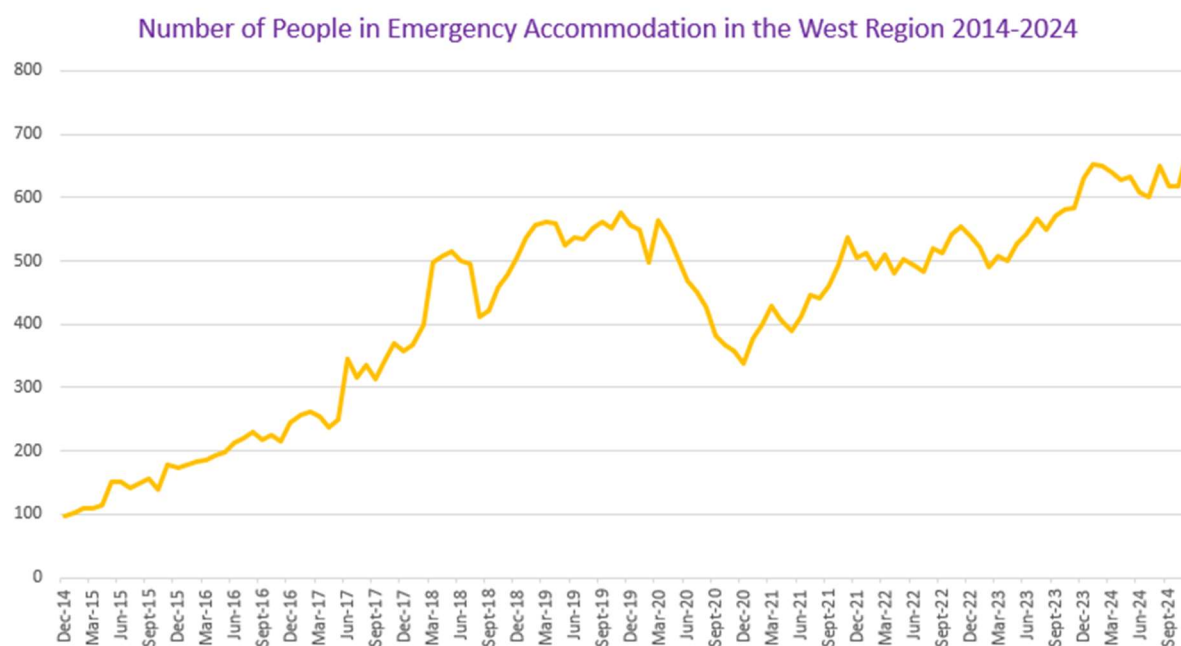


Source:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/parliamentaryBudgetOffice/2024/2024-08-16_social-housing-ongoing-need-2023_en.pdf
<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/6060e-overall-social-housing-provision/#social-housing-delivery-progress-against-targets>

Increasing homelessness in the West Region

Homelessness data collated and published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage shows a more than sixfold growth in the numbers of people provided with emergency accommodation in the West region since 2014 when this data was first produced and published. The rate of increase in more recent years is 22% since the beginning of 2020 before reaching a record high of 671 in November 2024, the most recent figures available before this plan was finalised. These figures do not include rough sleepers (the quarter 4, 2024 number of unique individuals rough sleeping in Galway City was 21), people staying in their cars or squats, the hidden homeless, women and children in domestic refuge, people staying in Direct Provision Centres.



Source: <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/80ea8-homelessness-data/>

Complexity of Need and Vulnerable Cohorts

In addition to the increasing numbers experiencing and at risk of homelessness due to housing need, agencies in the Region are seeing increasing complexity of support needs among people presenting for Services, including physical and mental health issues, addiction issues, undiagnosed disabilities and neurodivergence.

This plan also identifies a number of cohorts who are particularly vulnerable including rough sleepers, young people leaving care, survivors of domestic and sexual abuse, prison discharges, hospital discharges, people exiting Direct Provision Centres, people experiencing mental health challenges, people who are neurodivergent, LGBTQI+ and older people who are renting.

Key Objectives

This Homeless Action Plan sets out objectives and actions for the period 2025-2027 under six headings as outlined in the Key Objectives Section.

Vision, Mission, Values

Strategic Vision of the West Region Homelessness Action Plan

To work towards the eradication of homelessness in the West through:

- the provision of sufficient appropriate affordable housing
- a focus on preventing homelessness
- supporting those who are most vulnerable to empower them to access and sustain appropriate accommodation which meets their needs with a holistic, compassionate and proactive approach.

Mission

Our mission is to provide comprehensive support, resources and advocacy to individuals and families at risk of and experiencing homelessness;

through collaborative effort working to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, and to provide a coordinated response to the needs of households (families and individuals) experiencing homelessness.

Values

Social Inclusion

Holistic Support

Trauma Informed Care

Compassion

Collaboration

Key Objectives

1. Housing Delivery

- Proactively plan and delivery new social housing that is aligned to need, in terms of quantity and profile
- Including for specific cohorts
 - Homeless
 - Travellers
 - People with Disabilities
 - Older People
- Address dereliction, voids and vacancy
- HAP and RAS Tenancies
- Monitor Short Term Lettings
- Cost Rental and Affordable Housing

2. Homelessness Prevention

- Early Intervention, Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment Services
- Social Integration and Community Development
- Data Collection and Reporting

3. Pathways out of homelessness, supporting people with complex needs

- Support transition from rough sleeping, emergency or other homeless accommodation into long term tenancies including
 - Allocations to long term homeless individuals and families
 - Housing First/Housing Led approaches,
 - The provision of transitional Community Based Housing (CBH), and tenancy supports
 - High Support Services
- Design and develop specific accommodation responses to meet the needs of those who require Housing with Support, including High Support Services and sheltered housing for people with social care support needs.
- Marginalised and vulnerable cohorts
- Integrated care and case management for vulnerable cohorts

4. Protection of those who are rough sleeping and people who are particularly vulnerable

- Rough Sleepers
- Street Outreach, Day Centres, Emergency, CWR, SWR, Health and Wellbeing

5. Addressing Youth Homelessness

- Homelessness Prevention, Age Appropriate Housing and Tenancy Sustainment through dedicated Youth Service
- Drop in and Day Support Service
- Early intervention to support young people leaving care
- Researching the impact on young people of dedicated youth homelessness and housing provision

6. Strong Collaboration and Governance

- Nurture and develop strong interagency collaboration, high quality and effective Services, health and safety of staff and volunteers in the delivery of the goals of Housing for All and the West Region Homeless Action Plan and to increase participation, consistency in communication and co-operation at all levels of delivery of Homelessness Services.
- Structures and Governance Standards
- Data Collection and Reporting

Objective 1: Housing Delivery – to enable Homelessness Prevention and Pathways out of Homelessness

- Proactively plan and delivery new social housing that is aligned to need, in terms of quantity and profile
- Including for specific cohorts
 - Homeless
 - Travellers
 - People with Disabilities
 - Older People
- Address dereliction, voids and vacancy
- Tenant in Situ
- CBL
- HAP and RAS Tenancies
- Monitor Short Term Lettings
- Cost Rental and Affordable Housing

Objective Action	Housing Delivery	Targets	Responsible Bodies	Timeframe
1.1	<p>The increased delivery of social housing is fundamental to creating Preventing Homeless and Exiting People from Homelessness</p> <p>Increase social housing delivery to prevent people from becoming homeless and to provide sustainable tenancies</p>	<p>Targets to be considered in the context of this plan</p> <p>Number of social housing units to be delivered</p> <p>Profile of social housing units to be delivered, one beds, larger homes etc</p>	LAs	Ongoing

1.2	Deliver Traveller Accommodation in line with Traveller Accommodation Programmes	<p>Number of Traveller households housed</p> <p>Reduction in number of Traveller households in Emergency Accommodation</p>	LAs/AHBs	Ongoing
1.3	Consider targeted actions to support Traveller Families, prevent families entering Emergency Homelessness and to support them in exiting Emergency Homelessness	Convene meeting of relevant agencies to explore positive steps to address challenges	LAs, NGOs, Traveller Mediation Service, LTACC, GTM	Q2 2025 and ongoing
1.4	<p>The Local Authorities have Strategic Plans for Housing People with a Disability, which is aligned to the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2026.</p> <p>Keep targets under review to ensure they remain aligned with Social Housing Needs Assessments (SHNA).</p> <p>Meet delivery targets outlined in the Plan, and as may be revised in line with SHNA.</p> <p>(See Table A1.5: Main need for social housing support by Local Authority, p46 of 2023 Social Housing Needs Assessment – most recent available at time of writing this plan)</p>	<p>Number of homes for people with a disability delivered/retrofitted.</p> <p>Reduction in number of people with a disability facing homelessness, and on the Social Housing Waiting List.</p>	LAs/AHBs	

1.5	<p>Liaise with AHBs re construction/ acquisition of appropriate properties to meet homeless priority needs, particularly in respect of 1 beds and larger properties – 4 bed plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless households Travellers People with Disabilities Older people Other vulnerable cohorts 	<p>Number of units delivered and households housed</p> <p>Nos of 1 bed and 4+ bed properties developed/ acquired including through Part Vs.</p>	LAs/ AHBS	Ongoing
1.6	<p>Focus on voids and vacancy programmes to ensure that LA properties are reallocated as quickly as possible</p> <p>Advocate with Department of Housing as necessary for sufficient funding for voids and vacancy programmes</p> <p>Address dereliction and make concerted efforts to bring derelict properties/sites back into active use</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of properties void</p> <p>Reduction in the period properties are void</p> <p>Number of derelict properties/sites brought back into active use</p>		
1.7	Continue Tenant in Situ scheme including Transboundary Schemes as a measure to prevent homelessness in the context of valid NTQs.	Number of NTQs dealt with under Tenant-in-situ Scheme.	LAs – Galway City/ Galway County/ Mayo/ Roscommon	Ongoing
1.8	Encourage households at risk of homelessness to engage with Choice Based Letting (CBL) systems.	<p>Local authorities to provide training on CBL.</p> <p>Support staff in NGOs to be familiar with CBL process in each local authority.</p>	NGOs/ LAs.	Q1 2024

1.9	Rollout continuing information campaign/ promotion to increase no of landlords / estate agents offering RAS and HAP tenancies.	Annual information / communication campaign(s) by each local authority in the Region.	LA Homeless Units lead / all members of Homelessness Consultative Group	Ongoing
1.10	Continued operation of Homeless Placefinder Service across Region.	Number of households securing RAS and HAP supported tenancies.	LA Homeless Units	2025-2027
1.11	<p>Each LA to review the rents payable under the HAP scheme.</p> <p>Engage with Department Housing Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) regarding HAP rates and top ups to landlords.</p> <p>Seek to have discretionary rate of up to 50% similar to Dublin LA.</p> <p>Apply discretion to reduce rent payable by tenants to affordable level in context of prevailing rents in each LA.</p>	<p>HAP tenancies secured and sustained.</p> <p>Additional discretion applied to targeted cases on HAP.</p>	Consultative Forum DHLGH / LA Housing Departments	Annual review
1.12	Enforce short term letting regulations	Reduction in number of non-compliant short term lets and potential increase in number of properties available as home	LAs	
1.13	Pursue opportunities for households not eligible for Social Housing to access Cost Rental and Affordable Housing Schemes	Nos of households accessing Cost Rental and Affordable Housing Schemes	LAs / AHBs	Ongoing

Objective 2: Homelessness Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment

- Provide early and focused intervention that can prevent tenancy loss, resettle people when at risk of homelessness, and provide the necessary supports to people to ensure that tenancies are sustained and people do not have a cyclical experience of homelessness
- Social Integration
- Improve data collection and reporting

Objective Action	Prevention of Homelessness	Targets	Responsible Bodies	Timeframe
Homelessness Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment Services				
2.1	Continue and enhance effective collaborative interagency Homelessness Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment working models developed to prevent homelessness in the Region during the period of the last Plan	Number of households diverted from emergency homelessness	LAs, Galway Simon Community, COPE Galway	Ongoing
2.2	Carry out a review of Homelessness Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment Services in the Region with a view to ascertaining best practice model, enhancing Services and capturing and reporting on relevant practice and outcomes. Following review implement any recommendations.	Continued development and enhancement of Homelessness Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment Services in the Region	LAs /NGOs/DHLGH	2026/7
2.3	LAs to work in collaboration with early intervention Rapid Prevention and Homeless Prevention Teams in NGOs to minimize number of households accessing Emergency Accommodation	Number of households diverted from Emergency Accommodation	LAs/Galway Simon Community/COPE Galway	Ongoing

	Increase capacity to provide legal and advisory support to deal with Notices to Quit.	Timely advice and support	LAs, NGOs, Threshold	
2.4	<p>Research to be conducted in relation to at risk of homelessness groups in the region to inform preventative interventions and housing and accommodation responses and supports including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older private renters • Children of families who experienced long-term homelessness in the region over the period since March 2015 (intergenerational homelessness) 	Planned preventative and housing and accommodation responses to at risk cohorts	LA's, NGOs	2025
Social Integration and Community Development				
2.5	<p>Support people to thrive in their tenancies, actively participate in and feel a sense of belonging to their Communities. Socially valued roles support sustainable tenancies.</p> <p>Support inclusive participation in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Events Training Education Employment 	<p>Galway Simon Community Social Integration Service</p> <p>Workability – Pathways to Employment</p> <p>Finbarr's Terrace Learning Studio</p> <p>COPE Galway Community Supports for older people in Galway City</p>	<p>Galway City Council/ Galway Simon Community</p> <p>Galway City Council/ COPE Galway</p>	

Data Collection and Reporting				
2.6	<p>Ensure that better quality data reflecting work done on prevention of homelessness is collected and is represented on the PASS system.</p> <p>In order to deliver this, it is proposed that work be reinstated to create an appropriate Application Programming Interface (API) to link other platforms with the national PASS system.</p>	<p>PASS training to be rolled out to all local authorities for data collection and reporting purposes.</p> <p>API developed to reflect tenancy prevention work on PASS system</p> <p>Recording and monitoring of outcomes for people accessing prevention services.</p>	DHLGH/ LAs / NGOs/ VCS partners/ DRHE	2025

Objective 3: Pathways out of Homelessness

- **Support transition** from rough sleeping, emergency or other homeless accommodation into long term tenancies including
 - Allocations to long term homeless individuals and families
 - Housing First/Housing Led approaches,
 - The provision of transitional Community Based Housing (CBH), and tenancy supports
 - High Support Services
- Design and develop **specific accommodation responses** to meet the needs of those who require Housing with Support, including High Support Services and sheltered housing for people with social care support needs.
- **Marginalised and vulnerable cohorts**
- **Integrated care and case management**

Objective	Pathways out of Homelessness	Targets	Responsible Bodies	Timeframe
Supporting People Out of Homelessness – Allocations				
3.1	<p>Continue to advocate for homeless households</p> <p>Continue to allocate homes to homeless households in line with the Local Authority strategy (ie Schemes of Letting Priorities) and prioritise as appropriate.</p>	<p>Allocate appropriate social housing to homeless households in emergency accommodation.</p> <p>Provide specific supports to individuals and families who are long term homeless to access appropriate social housing and exit homelessness.</p> <p>Reduction in numbers of individuals spending > 6 months in PEA and STA.</p> <p>Reduction in number of families spending > 6 months in PEA, STA</p>	Local Authorities	Ongoing

		and transitional own door accommodation.		
Supporting People Out of Homelessness – Housing First and Housing Led				
3.2	Continued roll out of Housing First (HF) Implementation Plan 2022-2026 in all Local Authority areas, through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular meetings of HATs in each area, proactive sourcing of appropriate accommodation for eligible Housing First clients, particularly single bedroom accommodation, effective, holistic, assertive outreach, wraparound supports. 	At a minimum achieve, but aim to exceed, target number of HF Tenancies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Galway City 30 Galway County 18 County Mayo 10 County Roscommon 7 	Local Authorities / HSE CHW/ HSE Community Mental Health /HATs / Housing Agency / National Housing First Office/ Galway Simon Community /COPE Galway	Ongoing
3.2	Procurement of a suitable service provider for the Housing First	New Service Level Agreement for Housing First Project in Region	Housing First Office/LAs/HSE	Qtr 1 2025
3.3	Participation as Local Authority Representative on National Housing First Implementation Group by Galway City Council nominee.	Quarterly reporting on targets achieved. Participation at quarterly meetings.	Galway City Council	Ongoing

3.4	Continue to participate in research and fora relevant to developing the Housing First Programme in line with evolving best practice nationally and internationally	Continued development of HF Programme in the Region	LAs, HSE, NGOs and all relevant partners	Ongoing
3.5	<p>Explore alternative solution needed for the 10-15% of Housing First clients who need higher levels of support and/or a different model.</p> <p>When Sam Tsemberis visited Housing First West in November 2024, the interagency teams explored a number of case studies with him. There was a general sense emerging from these discussions, that for perhaps 10-15% of our Housing First client group, own door independent living is not the ideal solution.</p> <p>There may be room within the Service to also have a staffed block, with perhaps 6 apartments where the front door would be managed and there would be some on-site support.</p> <p>This option is part of the overall Service elsewhere, for example in Finland.</p> <p>If we were to develop this kind of solution as part of the Service, we might like to look at doing it on a Regional basis as part of a pilot ie if the building were located in one Local Authority area in the Region, and there was a client in another Local Authority area with particularly high and complex needs, then the Local Authority boundaries would not be a barrier to accessing the Service within the Region.</p>	Group established to explore alternative solution, and recommendations made	LAs/ HSE/ National Housing First Office/ Galway Simon Community/ COPE Galway	To commence 2025

3.6	<p>Develop education materials with positive human stories of the Housing First programme and highlighting the overall success of the programme through statistics such as tenancy sustainment rates</p> <p>This recommendation is in response to discussions during Sam Tsemberis's visit. Some of the more complex cases, where there might be significant levels of complaints, receive disproportionate levels of attention within some agencies and this can be very negative to people's impression of the Service.</p>	<p>Materials prepared</p> <p>More positive attitudes to programme promoted and developed</p>	<p>LAs / HSE/ Slí Nua/ National Housing First Office / Galway Simon Community / COPE Galway</p>	
3.7	<p>Continue to work with Homeless Service Providers and AHBs to create and support Housing Led tenancies in parallel with Housing First programme, for individuals and families with complex needs who do not meet criteria of Housing First Programme</p>	<p>Number of Housing Led tenancies created</p> <p>Appropriate impactful support provided</p> <p>Tenancies sustained</p>	<p>LAs/Galway Simon Community/ COPE Galway</p>	Ongoing
3.8	<p>Implementation of a Housing Led Supported Housing for Families Pilot programme. comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four homes licenced to an NGO to provide supported housing; • Túsla and HSE providing care supports to the families; • Oversight group and implementation group supporting pilot and reporting on outcomes. 	<p>Terms of reference developed for implementation group.</p> <p>Establishment of implementation group for pilot.</p> <p>Families identified and properties secured.</p> <p>4 families housed with supports (2 in Galway City, 2 in Galway County).</p>	<p>LAs/NGOs/ TUSLA/HSE /DHLHG</p>	Ongoing

		Oversight and reporting on pilot		
3.9	<p>Address complex needs of families in emergency/long term homelessness</p> <p>Prevent compounding of the challenges families with complex needs face as a result of being in emergency homelessness. Early intervention is critical to ensuring that crisis homelessness does not deepen and exacerbate issues.</p> <p>Establish Family HATs that can identify families with complex needs and ensure that needs assessments are carried out and appropriate wraparound support is provided to minimize the impact of homelessness on children.</p>	<p>For LAs with more families in emergency homelessness, develop specific Family HATs to support families, based on HATs already operational</p> <p>For LAs with fewer families in emergency homelessness, expand TOR of HATs to include Families</p> <p>Early comprehensive assessments carried out</p> <p>Reduction in time spent in Emergency Accommodation</p> <p>Mitigation of risk of compounding trauma of emergency homelessness</p>	LAs/ Túsla/ HSE/ Probation/ Homeless Service Providers and other agencies/ invitees as appropriate to particular cases	2025

Supporting People Out of Homelessness – Community Based Housing (CHB) and Resettlement				
3.10	Continue to source housing for use as Community Based Housing (CBH) to provide supported licenced housing as an alternative to Emergency Accommodation and supported pathway to long term tenancy for individuals and families with specific needs throughout the Region.	Nos of homeless accommodated in CBH in each County / LA.	Local Authorities/ NGOs	Ongoing
3.11	Expansion of CBH in Galway County for single homeless sharing and appropriate support services.	7 properties secured, a further 4 identified which are undergoing refurbishment with a balance of 3 further to be identified and secured in 2025. Existing support service to be expanded.	Galway County Council/ NGO	2025/2026
3.12	Creation of CBH programme in Mayo by County Council in collaboration with Galway Simon Community as an alternative to PEA/congregated Emergency Accommodation. Properties to be sourced by Council and provided on licence to Galway Simon Community who will provide appropriate keyworking, case management and resettlement support services.	Properties sourced by Council. Support. Services provided by Galway Simon Community. Establish Service in Mayo with 10 beds	Galway County Council/ Galway Simon Community	2025 Ongoing
3.13	Creation of a CBH and Resettlement Service in Roscommon with support services provided. Properties to be sourced by Council and provided on licence to Galway Simon Community who will provide appropriate keyworking, case management and resettlement support services.	Establish Service in Roscommon with 8 beds	Roscommon County Council/ Galway Simon Community	2025 Ongoing

Supporting People Out of Homelessness – High Support and Specific Accommodation Responses				
3.14	Continue interagency collaboration to delivery Long Term Supported Accommodation/High Support Services for Men and Women in Galway City, who cannot live independently.	Interagency collaboration delivering appropriate accommodation and quality care for people with complex needs who have a history of entrenched or cyclical homelessness	LAs/ HSE/ Galway Simon Community	
3.15	Current services need to be redeveloped to offer more appropriate accommodation that is accessible. There needs to be a clear partnership between the HSE and the Local Authority in the delivery and development of Capital Projects that will provide bespoke High Support accommodation to those with the most complex needs	Set targets to increase the number of High Support Units in Galway City, that have long term sustainability for older men in Homeless Services.	LAs/ HSE/ Galway Simon Community/ DHPGH/Dept of Health	
3.16	Galway City needs to be able to offer more Long Term Accommodation with High Support to Women who have the most complex needs, and who are most vulnerable to violence and exploitation.	Increased capacity for High Support Service for Women (from current 4 beds) in Service designed to meet specific needs of very vulnerable women	LAs/ HSE/ Galway Simon Community/ DHPGH/Dept of Health	
3.17	Progress the provision of step down/transitional accommodation for women (and their children) leaving domestic abuse refuge in Galway City who are without accommodation and who require support in relation to the domestic abuse experience but who no longer require safe refuge.	Step down/ transitional accommodation for women (and children) leaving refuge.	Galway City Council, COPE Galway, Cuan	Ongoing

3.18	Development of Domestic Violence (DV) Refuge and associated medium term housing solution for families exiting situations of domestic violence.	12/14 bed facility to be developed. Identify suitable location, negotiating with relevant bodies, sourcing funding, and develop accordingly	Galway County Council/ DHLGH/ Túsla/ Cuan / NGOs	Ongoing
3.19	Allocation of properties for transitional units on licence for households exiting DV Refuge.	3 units to be identified in the County.	Galway County Council	2026
3.20	Creation of 24/7 medium term supported shared housing property in a County Town in County Galway for complex vulnerable homeless individuals.	Property secured. 24/7 support service to be developed and provided.	Galway County Council/ NGO	2025-2027
Marginalised and Vulnerable Cohorts				
3.21	<p>Implement national policies and processes to anticipate the needs of those vulnerable groups who are assessed as homeless, including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people exiting care • Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) survivors (in line with national policy) • Prison discharges (including sex offenders) • Hospital discharges • People exiting Direct Provision Centres • People experiencing mental health challenges • People who are neurodivergent • LGBTQI+ 	<p>Effective Youth Homeless Services</p> <p>Effective DV and Women's Services</p> <p>Prison Inreach</p> <p>Prisoners to have an active housing application on discharge</p> <p>Protocols with hospitals to ensure no one is discharged from hospital to homelessness</p> <p>Working with Depaul to secure accommodation for people exiting Direct Provision</p> <p>Continuously developing mental health support services in response</p>	LAs/Túsla/Department of Health/ HSE/ Prison Service/ Probation Service/ NGOs	Ongoing

		to increased volume of clients and complexity of needs		
3.22	Develop an LGBTQI+ strategy to include an examination on the establishment of LGBTQI+ friendly accommodation.	Strategy to be finalised by end of 2025. Number of placements into appropriate accommodation.	DHLGH/LAs/ AHBs/ HSE/ Túsla	Qtr 4 2025
Care and Case Management				
3.23	Care and case management for vulnerable individuals including vulnerable cohorts identified above Expansion of support services in NGOs to provide key worker/ project worker supports to vulnerable clients with low, medium and high support needs	Enhanced key working, care & case management between NGOs and LA Social Worker/Housing Teams. Co-ordination of interagency supports for those in crisis or dealing with unpredictable emergency events; assessment and key worker support for vulnerable individuals; support provided to access health and wellbeing supports, mental health and psychological services; social and welfare and other entitlements. Support to progress people effectively to long terms housing and accommodation supports, that are durable and sustainable for those with ongoing complex support needs	NGOs and relevant LAs, HSE, Túsla Aftercare, Probation, Irish Prison Service, Cuan	2025 and Ongoing

Objective 4: Protection of rough sleepers and people who are particularly vulnerable

Overarching Aim: to eliminate rough sleeping in the Region

Measures to support rough sleepers and reduce the occurrence of rough sleeping

Street Outreach, Day Centres, Cold Weather Response, Severe Weather Response, Emergency Services, and Health and Wellbeing Supports

Objective Action	Protection of homeless people	Targets / Outputs	Responsible Bodies	Timeframe
Rough Sleepers – Outreach Supports				
4.1	Continue outreach supports for rough sleepers in Galway City.	<p>No one sleeps rough for lack of accessible, safe and appropriate accommodation</p> <p>Number of rough sleepers engaged with Services</p> <p>Number of rough sleepers brought in to Emergency, Housing First or other accommodation/Services; or repatriated/no longer rough sleeping</p>	Galway City Council/ COPE Galway	Ongoing
4.2	Seek to have Galway City included in national/international Rough Sleeper Counts	Enhanced recognition of needs of rough sleepers in Galway through national/international statistics/reports	LAs/NGOs	

4.3	Provision of structured street outreach service seven days per week in Galway City utilising best practice protocols.	No. of hours of street outreach provided.	COPE Galway	Ongoing
4.4	<p>Assess number of people rough sleeping in Galway County, Mayo and Roscommon.</p> <p>Review and consider expansion of supports to address needs of rough sleepers in Galway County/ Mayo and Roscommon.</p> <p>Examine the possibility of rolling out an outreach service outside of the city to the region.</p>	<p>No of Rough Sleepers observed / counted in each of the LA areas.</p> <p>No one sleeps rough for lack of accessible, safe and appropriate accommodation</p> <p>Number of rough sleepers brought in to Emergency, Housing First or other accommodation/Services; or repatriated/no longer rough sleeping</p> <p>Number of rough sleepers engaging with outreach teams.</p>	<p>HATs/ LAs/ NGOs</p> <p>HATs/ LAs/ NGOs</p> <p>LAs/Service Provider</p> <p>LA Homeless Units – Galway Co/Mayo/ Roscommon</p>	<p>2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q2 2025</p>
4.5	<p>People without a center of interest in Galway City and who are sleeping rough – an early and assertive intervention approach to be adopted to facilitate and support return to where their center of interest is.</p> <p>Provision of humanitarian response to identified health needs</p>	Timely turnaround of the housing assessment process; interagency approach agreed and implemented; engagement with Local Authorities and Embassies etc. to support individuals; reduction in numbers presenting who don't have a center of interest in Galway City/ Humanitarian response where necessary.	Galway City Council, HSE, COPE Galway	Ongoing

Day Centres				
4.6	Identify appropriate premises and repurpose for use as temporary day centre for rough sleepers and people who are Homeless in Galway City during redevelopment of Teach Corribe Day Centre.	Temporary Day Centre identified. Temporary Day Centre opened. No. of users of Temp. Day Centre.	Galway City Council/ COPE Galway	2024/2025
4.7	Redevelopment of Day Centre in Galway City to provide holistic services to meet the needs of homeless households.	Re-opening of redeveloped Day Centre. Additional capacity created for day-time services to homeless in Galway City. No. service users of Day Centre. No. services meeting clients in Day Centre.	Galway City Council/ / COPE Galway	Qtr 4 2026
4.8	Continue to support people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness in East and South Galway from the Bridge Resource Centre in Ballinasloe	Delivery of Day Services, Advice and Information, Care and Case Management	Galway County Council/ Galway Simon Community	Ongoing

Rough Sleepers – Cold Weather Response (CWR) and Severe Weather Response				
4.9	Continue the provision of Cold Weather Response (CWR) Service in Galway City for Rough Sleepers. CWR facility to have sufficient capacity to meet the level of expected need	Availability of CWR facility secured for future winters. There are sufficient beds available so that no one has to sleep rough in Galway City during the winter period.	Galway Local Authorities / COPE Galway / Galway Simon Community	Winter 2025-2027
4.10	Cold Weather Response for Galway; that a single facility (ideally single bedroom provision) and service with sufficient capacity for both Galway City and Galway County and with an agreed approach is put in place. This includes; Consistent assessment approach and processes Social worker led and coordinated case management approach Post CWR planning focused on prevention of return to rough sleeping	Single CWR for Galway	Galway Local Authorities DHLGH / HSE/ COPE Galway / Galway Simon Community and other NGOs	Winter 2026/27
4.11	Galway County to identify appropriate premises for a Cold Weather Response facility in the County for Rough Sleepers.	Availability of a CWR facility identified and developed for service within Galway County.	Galway County Council/ DHLGH	Winter 2026/27
4.12	Continue Severe Weather Response provision of additional bed capacity for rough sleepers in Galway City to ensure everyone can come in from severe weather events on humanitarian grounds	Bed available for everyone who will come in during severe weather events	Galway City Council/ COPE Galway / Galway Simon Community	Ongoing

4.13	Consider identifying emergency provision in each area in cases of severe weather/ weather warnings.	Facility identified for local use for CWR and/or extreme weather event response in severe weather/ as need arises.		
Emergency Accommodation				
4.14	Continue delivery of Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) in Galway City Fairgreen Hostel – Men’s/26 Beds Abbey House – Men’s/15 Beds Osterley – Women’s/13 Beds Corrib Haven Family Hub – Families/10 families (up to 30 beds)	Number of clients accommodated in supported Emergency Accommodation in Galway City Outcomes on leaving STA	Galway City Council/ COPE Galway/ Galway Simon Community	Ongoing
4.15	Increase 24/7 staffed STA provision for single person households in order to have sufficient capacity for a fixed period to time to respond to the level of referrals and growth in rough sleeping in Galway and to diversify the range of options available to respond to complex cases.	Sufficient capacity to meet the needs of single person households requiring STA. Increased ability to respond to complexity and client dynamics.	LAs/ NGOs	2025/6
4.16	Review and continue to improve quality of services available in Private Emergency Accommodation (PEA) to households.	Number of PEA properties that meet national quality standards.	LAs/NGOs	Ongoing, continuous monitoring
4.17	Continued review of provision of PEA in Galway City and County, Mayo and Roscommon with a goal of long term reduction and phasing out of use of PEA. In the short term securing additional properties in Galway City and County to meet current demand.	Number of people accessing PEA. Duration of stay in PEA. Number of exits to tenancies.	COPE Galway for Galway City Council and Galway County Council	2025-2027

		Sufficient additional PEA to respond to level of presenting need		
4.18	Continue to use CBH model of supported housing to single people as an alternative to congregated Emergency Settings	See CBH section above	Galway City Council/ Galway Simon Community/ COPE Galway	Ongoing
4.19	Extension of CBH model of accommodation as alternative to PEA, with key working, case management and resettlement supports in Mayo and Roscommon	See CBH section above	Galway, Mayo and Roscommon County Councils/ Galway Simon Community	2025
4.20	Securing new facilities for short term temporary accommodation in Mayo County for homeless households.	Facility secured for large scale emergency accommodation provision. Occupancy of new facility in Mayo. Phase 1 - 19 rooms Phase 2 - 13 rooms Duration of stay in facility/ exits to tenancies.	Mayo County Council/ DHLGH	2025-2027

4.21	Identification and procurement of an 8 to 10 bed unit for provision of emergency accommodation for single homeless persons in Roscommon County with supports to be provided by an NGO. Service to make provision for Rough Sleepers and potentially Cold Weather Response.	8-10 bed unit secured NGO support service secured Nos of homeless accommodated. Duration of stay in unit.	Roscommon County Council/ NGO /DHLGH	Qtr 1 2025 Ongoing
Rough Sleepers – Health and Wellbeing Supports				
4.22	Provision of Health and Wellbeing supports to Rough Sleepers in conjunction with Street Outreach and in Day Centre provision, linking up across voluntary homeless Services.	Engagement of Rough Sleepers with Health and Wellbeing Team. Nos of Rough Sleepers availing of other health services.	HSE / CHW / Slí Nua/ Galway Simon Community/ NGOs.	Ongoing

Objective 5: Addressing Youth Homelessness

Homelessness Prevention, Age Appropriate Housing and Tenancy Sustainment through dedicated Youth Service

Drop in and Day Support Service

Early intervention to support young people leaving care

Researching the impact on young people of dedicated youth homelessness and housing provision, and providing appropriate accommodation

Objective Action	Tackling Youth Homelessness	Targets	Responsible Bodies	Timeframe
Prevention, Housing and Tenancy Sustainment				
5.1	Continue and build on successful dedicated Youth Service model developed around the specific needs of young adults facing homelessness since 2016 by Galway City and County Councils, Galway Simon Community and Túsla to provide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> homeless prevention supports, shared transitional housing with keyworking supports and support to move into and sustain long term tenancies (Túsla CAS, LA allocations, HAP) with the aim of preventing vulnerable young people from falling into a cycle of homelessness in the Region.	Sustain and develop established Youth Service Model.	LAs/ Túsla/ Galway Simon Community	Ongoing
5.2	Expansion of Youth Homelessness programme provided by Galway Simon Community in Galway City including additional transitional housing accommodation.	More young people supported More young people diverted from homelessness and Emergency Accommodation	Galway Simon Community/ Galway City Council/ DHLGH	Ongoing

		<p>More young people sustained in long term tenancies</p> <p>Additional properties secured for transitional housing provided on licence</p>		
5.3	Extend Túsla CAS scheme to source housing for young homeless people	No of young people provided with youth specific solutions for housing need in Túsla CAS tenancies	DHLGH/LAs/Túsla/Galway Simon Community	Ongoing
5.4	Expansion of Youth Homelessness programme provided by Galway Simon in various towns in Galway County.	Additional properties secured, supported accommodation places created	Galway Simon Community/ Galway County Council	2025/2026
5.5	<p>New programme to support dedicated Youth Service from Galway Simon Community in Mayo County, with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • homelessness prevention supports • shared transitional housing with keyworking supports, and • support to move into and sustain long term tenancies (Túsla CAS, LA allocations, HAP) 	<p>6 apartments secured for shared Youth accommodation.</p> <p>2 Housing Support Officers (HSOs) & 2 Housing Support Assistants (HSAs) workers employed to establish Service</p>	Mayo County Council/ Galway Simon Community	2025/2026

5.6	Pilot a Housing First type approach for youth with specifically targeted supports provided by appropriate agencies.	Examine feasibility of pilot	DHLGH/ Local partners	By end 2026
5.7	Work with LTACCS to consider and put in place any additional supports at a local level to assist young Travellers who are at risk of experiencing homelessness.	Include in Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 – 2029	LAs/ LTACC/ GTM/ Bru-Bhride	2025 / 2026
5.8	Review of provision to ensure that needs of pregnant young people, transgender young people and young couples can be addressed while needing to access emergency accommodation.	No of targeted supports provided for young pregnant mothers Access to Homeless HAP with discretionary payments and targeted allocations	LAs/ HAP Placefinders/ Homeless support organisations/ Túsla	By end 2025
Drop in and Day Support Service				
5.9	Continued drop in and day support service for vulnerable young people, including those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness at No4 Youth Services.	No of young homeless people accessing service / supports. Identification of vulnerable cohorts/ no of targeted supports.	No 4 / NGOs/ Túsla / GRETB	Ongoing

		No of young people accessing career guidance / employment supports.		
Early Intervention to Support Young People Leaving Care				
5.10	Improve collaboration and early intervention to prepare young people leaving care to find appropriate accommodation and to access supports in the community post care.	Preparation of After-care support plan for every 17year-old in year prior to leaving care.	Túsla	Ongoing
5.11	Early liaison with Housing Authorities re housing needs of Young Care Leavers to avoid mainstream homeless services.	No of interagency after care meetings held.	Túsla/ LAs, Social Work/ Social Care support	Ongoing
5.12	Continue after care working groups with Túsla/ Local Authority and other agencies to support young people who have entered homelessness or are presenting as potentially homeless. Ensure good quality liaison between Aftercare Steering Committee and Housing Section in LAs, to ensure young people most at risk of homelessness are identified.	Case management plan for each young person.	Túsla/ LAs/ Relevant youth and community services in LA area.	2025
Research and Housing				

5.13	Research best practice models in other EU countries for youth homeless housing project.	Pilot models/ approaches identified.	LAs/ Túsla/ Galway Simon/ No 4/ DHLGH All partners	Timescale to be confirmed
	Develop and pilot of models/ approaches to address difficulties young people face in competing for social housing because of their age.	Number of youth homeless housed as proportion of overall homeless.	All partners	Ongoing
	Identification of long-term housing solutions for young homeless, to ensure that they do not enter a cycle of homelessness.	Number of Social Housing Supports.		Ongoing

Objective 6: Governance and Interagency Working

Nurture and develop strong interagency collaboration, high quality and effective Services, health and safety of staff and volunteers in the delivery of the goals of Housing for All and the West Region Homeless Action Plan and to increase participation, consistency in communication and co-operation at all levels of delivery of Homelessness Services.

Structures and Governance Standards

Data Collection and Reporting

Objective Action	Governance and Interagency Working	Targets	Responsible Bodies	Timeframe
6.1	<p>Continue to foster strong interagency collaboration among all agencies in the West Region addressing homelessness.</p> <p>Promote the delivery of high quality and effective Services</p> <p>Promote the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and volunteers working to support people experiencing and at risk of homelessness in the Region</p>			
Structures and Governance Standards				
6.2	<p>Ensure clarity over governance processes and structures and adherence to governance best practice.</p> <p>Continue to convene West Region Homeless Management Group.</p>	<p>Number of meetings held – at minimum twice yearly and report on PASS.</p>	<p>Homeless Management Group Galway City Co Region Lead / LAs</p>	<p>Qtr 1 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

	Continue to convene the Regional Homelessness Consultative Forum.	Number of meetings held minimum twice yearly and report on PASS. Upload meetings data as part of reporting from LAs and providers.		
6.3	Review of participation of representatives of vulnerable groups / representatives of specific target groups in consultative fora and on HATs	No. HAT meetings held HAT reviews completed/ No of consultations with target groups. Implement results of review.		By end 2025
6.4	Ensure a quality and value for money approach for all Services being provided, with all expenditure and recoupments made in line with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform circular and Department of Housing protocols.	Full compliance delivery with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds • National Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services. • General Data Protection Regulations • Freedom of Information • Service Level Agreements • Licence Agreements • All regulatory requirements. 	WRHMG/DHLGH	Ongoing
6.5	Charities and Homeless Service Providers providing Housing, Services and Supports under this Plan to meet all relevant compliance and governance standards including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charities Regulator Governance code • CRO and CRA Returns • National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for Homeless Services 	Strong charity and Homeless Service governance	NGOs	

6.6	Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) to meet governance standards of the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority (AHBRA) 	Strong AHB governance	AHBs	
6.7	Staffing of homeless services – recruitment and retention – in the West Region. Continue to support efforts towards achieving pay parity for Section 10 and 39 organisations.	Adequate and robust staffing of homeless services with minimal turnover and timely filling of positions. Responsiveness to service requirements	LA's, HSE, NGO's	
6.8	Trauma Informed Practice – all agencies and services involved in addressing and responding to homelessness work in a trauma informed way with staff at all levels being trained in trauma informed practice and processes and approaches developed and implemented through a trauma informed lens.	Improved service user/client experience in interactions with agencies and usage of services for people who are homeless.	All stakeholders	
Data Collection and Reporting				
6.9	Continue to use PASS system appropriately and ensure information is kept up to date and relevant. Training needs identified and PASS recording to be standardised across Region.	Training needs reviewed. Training programme delivered. PASS recording standardised across Region	Galway City Lead/ DHRE/ All Stakeholders	Ongoing Annual review Ongoing

6.10	<p>Compile and submit annual estimate of expenditure for homeless service provision within the timeframes specified by the DHLGH. Ensure the following steps are followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders to submit all business proposals within the requested timeframe to the lead authority. • The estimate and new business proposals must be assessed and agreed with WRHMG prior to submission. • All NGOs to be met in advance of submission prior to agreeing their priorities for the coming financial year. • All recoupments to be submitted by lead authority within the appropriate timeframes. • . 	Timeframes set out by DHLGH adhered to.	<p>Galway City Co</p> <p>LA's/NGOs</p> <p>Galway City Council LA's/NGOs.</p> <p>Galway City Council</p> <p>LA's</p>	<p>Qtr 1 each year</p> <p>Qtr 1 each year</p> <p>Qtr 1 each year</p> <p>Qtr 1 each year</p> <p>Quarterly</p>
6.11	Participate in all reviews of homeless services as requested including value for money reviews.	Number of reviews undertaken and completed.	DHLGH / LA's/ NGOs.	Ongoing
6.12	Future planning for the provision of homeless services to be supported by undertaking or commissioning research into homelessness trends and factors affecting homelessness for specific target groups eg older people facing NTQs, young people leaving care, Travellers and ethnic minorities.	Research commissioned/ undertaken	Homeless Management Group/ Regional Consultative Forum/ DHLGH	Ongoing

Appendix A: Policy Framework: References

National Policies and Reports which inform the West Regional Homeless Action Plan 2025-27 include:

Housing for All 2021 (principally Pathway 2: Pathway to Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion)

<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/197237/29edec3e-6664-4e62-86b2-af2e77f2f609.pdf#page=null>

Second National Housing First Implementation Plan 2022-2026

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c49d0-housing-first-national-implementation-plan-2022-2026/>

National Youth Homeless Strategy 2023-25

<https://assets.gov.ie/239255/99c987df-4439-4bc2-8730-be614eae1e2e.pdf>

Assertive Street Outreach, A Good Practice Guide for Local Authorities in Ireland 2024

National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF)

<https://www.homelessdublin.ie/content/files/NQSF-Standards.pdf>

Report of the Housing Commission 2024

<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/294018/e1aae1ed-07c4-473d-811e-3426756321ee.pdf#page=null>

National Strategic Plan To Improve the Health of People Experiencing Homelessness in Ireland (2024-2027)

https://about.hse.ie/api/v2/download-file/file_based_publications/National_Strategic_Plan_Health_of_People_Experiencing_Homelessne_KHI4PUN.pdf/

Sharing the Vision: A Mental Health Policy for Everyone

<https://assets.gov.ie/76770/b142b216-f2ca-48e6-a551-79c208f1a247.pdf>

Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery: A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/4e5630-reducing-harm-supporting-recovery-2017-2025/>

National Community Detoxification – Benzodiazepine Guidelines

<https://www.drugs.ie/downloadDocs/2017/Community-Detox-Guidelines-Benzodiazepines-2017.pdf>

Appendix B: Outline of Current Services

Galway City

The vast majority of support services for those facing homelessness are located in Galway City, the largest urban centre in the West Region. With a population of over 86,000, and a student population of almost 30,000, Galway City is also a popular year-round tourist destination, as well as a centre for pharmaceutical and biomedical industries. These factors combine to explain why rents in the Region are highest in the City, and in areas close to the City within the County area. High levels of demand for housing from all these factors, coupled with a lack of supply of new housing has led to upward pressure on prices and rents, making affordability of housing a key issue contributing to increased levels of homelessness.

Galway City Council

Staffing comprises an Administrative Officer, Senior Staff Officer and an Assistant Staff Officer. All of the staff in the unit are wholly or partly funded under Section 10. A Tenancy Sustainment Officer and a Social care worker have been recruited due to the complex nature of many homeless presentations in recent years. These roles are critical in the current climate and in attempting to limit the numbers entering homelessness.

The Homeless HAP Placefinder operates the Homeless HAP Service and focuses on securing accommodation under this scheme, and identifies available private rented accommodation in the City and County areas for homeless households.

The Homeless Unit is supported by a team of three Social Workers, led by a Senior Social Worker, who each take on specific areas of responsibility within the homelessness field, and are particularly active in relation to collaborative working, and supporting clients with additional social or health needs in addition to their housing need. The Senior Social Worker chairs the Homeless Action Team which is an integral part of the Housing First Initiative in Galway, as well as being the designated Sex Offenders Liaison Officer, (SOLO) while the other two members of the Social Work team works with individuals and families availing of homeless emergency accommodation.

Galway City Council is the lead local authority for the West region. The City Council is responsible for managing funding and PASS reporting arrangements on behalf of the Region and works closely with state agencies and homeless service providers in the provision of services.

Interagency work in Galway City

There is a strong history of interagency work within the City Council area within the field of tackling homelessness. The Council has had a working relationship with two major NGOs with specific expertise and experience in homelessness.

The two main NGOs which have provided homeless services are COPE Galway, and Galway Simon Community. Increasingly they are also supporting projects in conjunction with the other Local Authorities including a number of services across the County, and more recently in the wider Region.

Homeless Services in Galway City Council area

Homelessness Prevention

Homelessness Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment

The Homelessness Prevention and Tenancy Sustainment Service run by Galway Simon Community works with men, women and families to prevent them from becoming homeless. The Community Support Teams help people to remain in their own home or to find a new home, and to continue to live as part of their local community. The Service is available to clients who have been resettled from Homeless Services, and it works with individuals and families deemed to be at risk of homelessness either by the Local Authority or other AHBs, or Social Workers. Those with NTQs, or living in overcrowded or unsuitable situations, can access the Service for support to find alternative accommodation in order to avoid presenting to Emergency Homelessness.

Advice and Information Service

Threshold provides an advice and information service, including legal advice, supporting those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Threshold can be contacted by anyone whose landlord informs them of a notice to evict them or serve them with a notice of termination of tenancy due to an intention to sell the property, renovate or hand it to a family member. Threshold will check to see whether this is a legal and valid notice to quit, and also negotiate with a landlord on a tenant's behalf and see if it can prevent the termination or find an alternative tenancy. It can also help with liaising with the relevant local authority, and provides a service to Tenancy Sustainment staff within the Homeless Units, by following up for them if they are querying whether a notice to quit is a valid one.

Rough Sleeper Services and Supports

Street Outreach

The focus of the Street Outreach Service in Galway City is to identify and engage with people who are homeless and sleeping rough with the aim of signposting them to and facilitating and supporting them to access services and supports including accommodation and health and welfare supports.

There are scheduled outreaches eight times per week in both early morning and late evening with increased and more targeted outreach efforts as necessary where there are welfare concerns and in relation to severe weather events. Hot and cold beverages and light food items, sleeping bags, clothing items and other items to help contribute to the protection of people's welfare are distributed by the outreach team. The GP and RGN from the MDT for people who are homeless accompany the outreach team one morning per week.

Cold Weather Response

The Cold Weather Response (CWR) is a low threshold night-time only accommodation, short term winter response in Galway City with the primary aim of reducing the risks of harm associated with rough sleeping in cold weather, including risk of death due to hypothermia. The overall objectives are to minimise the risk of harm to people without shelter, particularly those who are rough sleeping, due to the cold and inclement weather conditions over the winter period, work with people in identifying and progressing routes out of rough sleeping and homelessness and act as a referral point to accommodation, housing, health and recovery services. The service is put in place each winter by Galway City Council, funded by the DHLGH and is operated by COPE Galway. The 2024/25 CWR comprises of 19 beds in shared bedrooms in a property on the east side of Galway City.

Severe Weather Response

The Severe Weather Response is a low threshold, emergency night-time response in Galway City with the primary aim of reducing the risk to safety and health risks associated with rough sleeping during severe weather events which are categorised as Red Weather Warnings or freezing temperatures over a prolonged period of time. The Service is operated by COPE Galway on behalf of Galway City Council. The Service is deployed at short notice with a local community centre used for nighttime accommodation provision with hot meals and drinks provided. Extended evening operating hours at the Day Centre and targeted street outreach are other elements of this response also.

Teach Corrib Day Centre, Seamus Quirke Road

Teach Corrib Day Centre offers a range of services for individual men and women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness including interventions to prevent someone becoming homeless, referral to emergency accommodation and other support agencies, assistance in securing welfare payments and other entitlements, assistance with the housing application process, with searching and applying for jobs, help with accessing training and skill development opportunities and practical life skills and budget support.

The Service operates seven days a week. A range of practical supports including access to food, laundry and showering facilities are also available. The Multi-disciplinary health and welfare team for people who are homeless can be accessed at Teach Corrib Day Centre by way of a weekly GP and nursing clinic, a monthly chiropodist clinic, a weekly substance misuse counsellor clinic and access to a member of the mental health team as required. The centre is also a social space for users of the

Service to meet other people and grab a coffee, tea, soup or sandwich. Nutritionally balanced hot meals are also provided.

The placement and support of couple and single person households in Private Emergency Accommodation (PEA) is also provided through this Service. The Service works directly with a caseload of clients, both on site at the Day Centre and on an in-reach basis in the various PEA settings including B&Bs. This support offers one-to-one key-working support in relation to a range of identified needs with a particular focus and emphasis on completion and submission of Housing Needs Applications and searching for and sourcing move on accommodation. Assistance is also provided in relation to accessing housing, welfare and health related supports.

New Build Day Centre

Plans are progressing for the building of a new Day Centre on site of the existing Day Centre. This will involve temporarily relocating the existing Service while building work goes on. Plans developed by Galway City Council are for a new three storey building which will have a better standard of all of the facilities currently available within the footprint of the building, as well as some bedrooms in the upper storey which can be used for future Cold Weather Response or other temporary emergency accommodation in the future.

Emergency Accommodation

Abbey House

Galway Simon Community 24/7 STA Emergency Accommodation Service for 15 men.

Fairgreen Hostel

Fairgreen Hostel is a 24/7 Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) Emergency Accommodation Service for men, run by COPE Galway, catering for up to 26 men in single bedroom accommodation.

Osterley Lodge Women's Hostel

Osterley Lodge is a 24/7 Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) Emergency Accommodation service for single adult women run by COPE Galway. It caters for up to 12 women in single bedroom accommodation.

Corrib Haven Family Hub

Corrib Haven Family Hub is a 24/7 Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) Emergency Accommodation Service for families, run by COPE Galway with capacity to accommodate 10 lone

parent families. All bedrooms have ensuite bathrooms, with shared kitchen facilities. and communal rooms, an education room, laundry facilities and an outdoor play area for children.

Private Emergency Accommodation (PEA)

PEA is relied on to meet the emergency accommodation needs of some family, couple and single person homeless households on behalf of Galway City Council. COPE Galway Family Services facilitate the placement and support of family households referred by City Council and key work these families. COPE Galway's Teach Corrib Day Centre Service similarly facilitates and supports the placement of single and couple households and provides key working support. COPE Galway act as the contact with PEA providers, administering invoicing and payments and liaising with providers on a day to day basis.

Pathways out of Homelessness

Housing First

The Housing First Service in Galway City was established in 2019 as a collaboration between Galway City Council, the HSE, Galway Simon Community and COPE Galway. In 2021 the Housing First collaboration extended to Galway County Council, Mayo County Council, Roscommon County Council and their administrative areas.

Housing Led

Galway Simon Community runs a Housing Led Programme for clients who do not qualify for Housing First, to provide support and pathways out of homelessness for clients with histories of homelessness and a spectrum of support needs. The organisation has a number of apartments and houses which provide clients with security of tenure along with tenancy sustainment supports.

High Support Services

Galway Simon Community's supported housing is for men who have multiple needs, have a history of regular contact with Homeless Services and/or require long term support. The Service is made up of 3 houses which cater for single men and each house is staffed on a 24 hour basis. Addiction, mental and physical health supports are provided by social care staff and specialist Services. The Service accommodates 21 men.

Women's and Families Services

Galway Simon Community's Women and Family Service provides three different levels of support, depending on the level of need.

- Four women at any one time are accommodated in the High Support Residential Service which is staffed 24/7. The women have a history of long term homelessness and multiple needs. Some have experienced significant physical and/or sexual abuse. Staff teams focus on supporting clients to manage the issues that caused them to become homeless and to work towards moving on to independent living
- A further six women are supported at any one time in CBH and receive intensive visiting support.
- In addition, Galway Simon Community provides comprehensive support services on an outreach basis to single women and families at risk of homelessness. Clients may receive brief interventions to resolve difficulties or more intensive case management where a number of Services will be needed to resolve a housing difficulty and/or ensure a tenancy can be sustained.

Community Based Housing Services

Given the shortage of housing in Galway, and as an alternative to Emergency Accommodation, Community Based Housing (transitional shared housing options) are provided as an interim solution while waiting on an appropriate permanent accommodation offer. In Galway City COPE Galway currently operates 79 bedspaces across 23 properties, a mix of Galway City Council and COPE Galway owned and privately leased apartments and houses, with a mix of some onsite and in reach staffing support to those in this community-based housing. Galway Simon Community provides 39 beds for singles with visiting support in Community Based Housing in the City. These properties are usually provided on a licence basis and there is significant property management and maintenance inputs required on an ongoing basis on the part of both COPE Galway and Galway Simon Community

My Home

The My Home Project is delivered through a collaboration between the HSE Mental Health Services in the CHO2 Region across Galway, Mayo and Roscommon and Galway Simon Community. The Service provides social care support for mental health service users transitioning from mental health settings to independent living.

Resettlement and Tenancy Support Team Supports

Both Galway Simon Community and COPE Galway have Resettlement and Tenancy Support Teams which offer supports to those moving from various types of temporary accommodation, including Private Emergency Accommodation (PEA), Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) and Community Based Housing (CBH), into tenancies.

Family Services

Homeless Families placed and accommodated in PEA and in a number of own door self-contained accommodation units under licence are case managed and key worked and supported by the COPE Galway Families Service team. This team provides resettlement support to families moving to

independent living and ongoing tenancy support to formerly homeless families. Typically there is a case load of between 100 and 120 at any given time.

Homeless Health and Wellbeing Services

Within Galway Simon Community, a multidisciplinary team (MDT) health and wellbeing team, funded by the Health Service Executive (HSE) provides access to health supports to rough sleepers and to clients of homeless services in the Region.

The team provides General Practitioner (GP) (one day per week), nursing, psychology, occupational therapy and addiction supports. Galway Simon Community also provides a Community Detox Programme. With the exception of the GP, who is part time and has his own practice on other days, staff can visit clients or facilities at times arranged with support staff. Nurses will also call in to check whether clients are taking medication, and following up with post hospital routines if concerns are raised about their ability to do so independently. The team provides specific support to the Housing First initiative.

Once a week, members of the team participate in a street outreach visit to rough sleepers accompanied by outreach or day centre staff from COPE Galway. The GP attends and engages with rough sleepers to see if they are at any specific health risk, need to attend hospital or visit their own GP or register with one if they do not have one. Once the team has visited rough sleepers in the City Centre and other sites, they relocate to the Day Centre and carry out medical clinics there. There is huge demand for these clinics as many clients are not registered with GPs and have health issues.

In addition to specialist health and wellbeing supports provided by Galway Simon Community's MDT, the team also coordinates other support services for clients including dental and chiropody services.

The Slí Nua community mental health team (CMHT) for homelessness in Galway City is co-located with Galway Simon Community's Health and Wellbeing Team at premises provided through Galway Simon Community. This facilitates greater interagency collaboration, and referral supports directly to homeless clients throughout the City.

Social Integration Service

A Social Integration Service has been developed by Galway Simon Community in recognition of the impact that homelessness has on severing networks and isolating clients who may have been estranged from family or moved out of their community. For those who have experienced other traumas such as having been in addiction or faced mental health difficulties, there may be additional barriers to reintegrating into society, and to making connections in the community even when their immediate housing situation is apparently resolved. It is now recognised that providing support in tenancies to people with complex needs to sustain them in those tenancies is a critical aspect of reducing the likelihood of re-entering homelessness. Further, enabling people to access opportunities for social contact, uptake of formal or informal education or work, and to engage in sports, leisure or other social activities enables people to reintegrate into their community and to live more connected and fulfilled lives.

In 2022, Galway Simon invested in developing their Social Integration Service to provide such support. This Service co-ordinates the delivery of a wide range of social and creative activities as well as pathways to training, further education and training. It also provides a “Learning Studio” giving clients access to online training courses and other supports. Galway Simon Community also provides access to an allotment space for clients to enjoy access to outdoor growing which has proven therapeutic benefits as well as offering opportunities to grow some of their own food.

Galway Simon Community Social Integration Service Adults accessing services in 2022

156 people engaged with the allotment
130 people engaged with the Galway Simon Choir
41 people engaged with one-to-one coaching sessions
26 people participated in work experience sessions
5 people secured part-time employment
2 people secured Community Employment Scheme employment
3 people secured a QQI Level 3/4/5 qualification

Source: Galway Simon Community Annual Impact Report 2022

Youth Homelessness Services

A number of Services specifically dedicated to the provision of supports for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness have been in operation in Galway over a number of years. Many young people leaving care lack the support that most young people leaving home can avail of from family, to assist them with the transition into adulthood and independence. Becoming a tenant, with all the responsibilities that involves, and managing independently is a further challenge.

Túsla, the Child and Family Agency, is now the responsible body for children in care and offers an Aftercare Service to support these young people when they “age out” of the system. Prior to a young person in care turning 18, a key worker is appointed by Túsla to provide support to them in identifying their options on leaving care. They also have access to an aftercare support package which the young person can spend themselves, or it can be used to provide specific supports, such as counselling if needed. Túsla also works with other agencies who may be supporting these young people as they turn 18.

In addition to young people leaving care, an increasing number of young people from all walks of life and situations are now becoming homeless and looking for support from service providers, as well as from Local Authorities. COPE Galway has noted increasing numbers in this age group availing of services in its Teach Corribe day centre. The Galway Simon Community has increased its capacity, in terms of both staffing and management of properties in its dedicated Youth Homelessness Service, to meet increasing demand. Staff from Galway Simon Community and No4 Youth Organisation have noted that there seem to be more young people sleeping in cars as they arrive in Galway City to work or study but fail to find affordable accommodation. A difficulty they may encounter in registering for support with Homeless Services is that they are not identified as having a “centre of interest” within the City, as they may not have established a strong enough connection, either through work, family or previous residence to qualify as homeless in the City area, and may have a stronger connection with a previous place of residence. There are also increasing numbers of young

people from the Traveller Community who have formed new families at a young age and are registering as homeless, some of whom may not yet be 18 years of age and therefore not able to go on the housing list.

Galway Simon Community Youth Service

Galway Simon Youth Homelessness Service was established in 2016 in partnership with Galway City Council and Túsla to support young adults experiencing, and at risk of, homelessness, many of whom are care leavers. The Service works with young adults, aged 18-25, to prevent them from falling into a cycle of homelessness. A team of specialist workers supports these young adults to develop their life skills so that they can live independently. Galway Simon Community has also developed dedicated residential accommodation to provide transitional housing for young adults. In addition, Galway Simon Community partners with Galway City Council and Túsla to acquire properties under the Túsla Capital Acquisition Scheme (CAS) to provide tenancies which are ringfenced for young adults leaving care. All young adults supported by the Galway Simon Youth Service Team have access to regular key worker staff support as well as access to the multidisciplinary team (MDT) which provides health, mental health, psychological and addiction supports, in addition to social integration supports. The Youth Service team also supports young people to move from transitional housing to live independently and continues to provide outreach and tenancy sustainment supports as needed. Young people from Galway Simon Community's Youth Service participated in the research leading to the preparation of the National Youth Homelessness Strategy, and a small number of young people living in transitional housing also took part in a consultation for the preparation of this new West Region Homeless Action plan. The Galway Simon Community Youth Service team is now providing a Service in Galway County and new Services are planned for both Mayo and Roscommon under the new plan.

No 4 Youth Service

No4 Youth Service is a long-established youth service based in Galway City Centre, which was previously the Galway Diocesan Youth Service. It operates from a base on Augustine Street, from where it offers a five day per week drop-in service for young adults, with a particular focus on those with vulnerabilities, including young homeless, or those at risk of homelessness. The project is core funded through the Education and Training Board, and a team of youth workers provide supports such as life skills, supports for accessing education and training, provision of tents and hygiene products, access to showers and to meals and a kitchen in which to develop cooking and nutrition skills. The team also includes a careers guidance specialist who assists young people with all aspect of returning to education, or identifying appropriate options for accessing education, training or job opportunities. Young adults who are rough sleeping, or who are the Day Centre service run by COPE Galway, are often referred to No4, to access supports more appropriate to meeting the needs of young adult homeless, and to enable them opportunities to mix with their peers, while still accessing homelessness supports.

Galway County

Galway County Council covers an area which is extensive in its geography, being rural towards the periphery of the County, with denser population in towns and suburbs close to Galway City. The County area is bisected by the City with Lough Corrib providing a natural barrier, dividing the east and west of the County. It serves a population of 179,048 (Census 2016) many of whom work in the City, and the price and availability of housing in the County area is strongly influenced by its proximity to the strong urban economy.

The staffing in Homeless Services in Galway County Council comprises an Administrative Officer, a Tenancy Sustainment Officer, a HAP Placefinder, a Homeless Support Officer and a Homeless Support Worker, supported by a Clerical Officer. The posts of Tenancy Sustainment Officer, HAP Placefinder and Homeless Support Officer are 90% funded under Section 10. The Homeless team work with the Social Work team, consisting of a Senior Social Worker and two Social Workers. Social Work roles are funded through the Traveller Accommodation Unit.

Referrals for homeless services relevant to Galway County Council are received via telephone or via presentation at the Housing Section public counter. Referrals are also received through the Homelessness Non-Governmental Organisations – COPE Galway and Galway Simon Community. On completion of a homeless assessment, those deemed homeless are referred and progressed to the appropriate Service. It is not a requirement to be an eligible housing applicant to access Homeless Services, however on assessment a person is requested to submit a completed housing application with supporting documentation to establish a local connection and their most appropriate housing solution.

There has been a significant increase in the presentation of people requesting access to the Council's Homeless Services. There are an increasing number of presentations of individuals and families with complex needs who require additional and multi-agency supports. For example, in one month a total of 25 presentations were made (September 2023) of which 19 were singles, 1 was a couple, and 6 were families.

The range of issues identified across the 25 homeless presentations were:

- 8 with mental health issues
- 4 with Notices to Quit (NTQ)
- 3 with alcohol issues
- 2 involuntary sharing
- 1 with drug issues
- 1 with mental and physical health issues
- 1 released from prison with high level mental/physical/ other issues
- 1 referred to City Council
- 1 with no right to reside
- 1 with no local connection (linked in to Dublin homeless services)
- 1 refused to finish assessment
- 1 unknown – withheld information

This profile of presentations illustrates the complexity of the presentations, and highlights some of the challenges in sourcing emergency accommodation and supports, as well as the challenges many will face in accessing longer term sustainable tenancies.

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

Similar to Galway City, it is increasingly difficult to source affordable properties within the HAP limits. The additional top-up in HAP supports for those who are deemed homeless, including a deposit and a month's advance rent has offered some opportunities for affordable private rented properties in the County.

Figures for Referrals to Homeless HAP in Galway County

Year	No of Referrals to Homeless HAP
2023 (10 month figure)	141
2022	104
2021	122
2020	113
2019	133

Source: HAP Placefinder, Galway County Council, 12th October 2023

Homeless Services in Galway County Council area

Private Emergency Accommodation (PEA) in County Galway

PEA is relied on to meet the emergency accommodation needs homeless households by Galway County Council. COPE Galway Family Services facilitate the placement and support of family households referred by the County Council and key work these families. COPE Galway's Teach Corrib Day Centre service similarly facilitates and supports the placement of single and couple households and provides key working support. COPE Galway act as the contact with PEA providers, administering invoicing and payments and liaising with providers in relation to standards etc.

Community Based Housing in County Galway

Galway County Council has provided five Community Based Houses (CBH) in the County in which 11 homeless clients with varying support needs are housed in a shared environment in the short to medium term. It is intended to expand this Service to meet the needs of an additional 14 individuals in seven houses, located in larger towns throughout the County. This will reduce the demand for Private Emergency and Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA). Through their Regional Support Team Galway Simon Community provides key worker and project worker supports to the tenants housed in the CBH to support them in becoming ready for long term tenancies when such housing becomes available.

Community Based Housing for Families

Galway County Council has allocated seven houses to Peter McVerry Trust (PMVT) for the provision of supported housing for families in Tuam. The families in question had a long history of failed tenancies, chronic homelessness, poor mental health and have ongoing extensive support needs. The properties are licenced to Peter McVerry Trust (PMVT). There is regular interaction with the families and it is anticipated that these supports will continue in the longer term. There has been a noticeable reduction of anti-social behaviour within the local community following these housing allocations.

Cuan Mhuire

Cuan Mhuire is a specialist residential addiction service which offers detoxification programmes lasting twelve or more weeks. Clients who are referred or apply for such services must be committed to abstain from their addiction and to fully engage with the supports available and take active part in the programme. Funding is provided annually from Section 10 homeless funding for places for homeless persons with serious addiction problems who are prepared to engage in a residential detox programme and can be referred by the Council or other agencies working with them.

Galway Simon Community Bridge Resource Centre and Regional Outreach Service

Since 2011, Galway Simon has supported a Resource Centre in Ballinasloe which sought to support rough sleepers, many with addiction and mental health problems, and over the years have been successful in supporting many clients of the Centre into tenancies. This formed the basis of an expansion to a Regional Support Service, which now provides supports to a range of Services in the Counties in the Region, including Youth Services, Community Based Housing, Tenancy Support Service, Support to Rough Sleepers and Housing First.

Youth Services in County Galway

Galway County Council has allocated four houses for the provision of supported shared housing for young people between the ages of 18 and 25. Intensive supports are provided by Galway Simon Community who liaises with external agencies to ensure support needs of the young people are met. All occupants are licencees of Galway Simon Community and are required to engage with an allocated key worker who supports them in the meaningful use of time, such as education, training, employment, sourcing longer term housing options etc. The houses are located in Loughrea, Tuam and Athenry. Three of the houses accommodate 2 males with the other property allocated to 2 females. It is intended to provide additional houses in the coming years in other areas of the County, as needs are identified in the Community.

Some of the occupants may have left care and may still be involved with the TUSLA after-care team. It is not a pre-requisite for a person to avail of after-care services to access the Youth Based Housing Scheme.

This housing initiative is proving to be very successful, preventing young people from entering mainstream homeless services and minimising the impact of homelessness on them.

Proposals for future development of Services for homeless people by Galway County Council

- Expansion of Community Based Housing Scheme - twelve properties in total allocated to the scheme
- Expansion of Youth Housing Scheme – six properties in total allocated to the scheme
- Expansion of Community Based Housing for Families – ten properties in total allocated to the scheme
- Expansion of Housing Led - Family Support Scheme, on successful review of pilot programme
- Development of site in County town to provide co-located Cold Weather Response facility and supported medium term shared accommodation. This accommodation can be converted to own door apartments if deemed appropriate.
- Develop a family hub in a County town to provide supported temporary accommodation to families with complex needs. This facility will prevent families from entering emergency accommodation. It will be developed with particular consideration for accommodating larger families who face additional challenges in accessing rented accommodation.
- Development of Domestic Abuse (DA) refuge and associated medium term housing solution for families exiting Domestic Abuse.

County Mayo

Mayo is a large county located along the Atlantic Coast with a population at the time of the last census (CSO, 2022) of 137,970. Mayo County Council Housing Services are operated in seven area offices across four Municipal Districts (MDs). Applicants for housing services apply to their local office. A Central Housing Office is located in Swinford, which has responsibility for housing policy and is the location of the HAP and RAS units. Any household who is homeless, or at risk of homelessness, can present to their local office for Assessment for Homeless Services.

Where a household presents with a Notice of Termination this is sent to the Tenancy Sustainment Officer (TSO) for validation. Where a notice is deemed to be invalid the TSO engages with the landlord and provides a template copy of the correct notice required. Where appropriate, the household is advised to engage with Threshold. Every effort is made to prevent households entering Emergency Accommodation. utilising measures such as Tenant in Situ, Homeless HAP Placefinder support, AHB nomination or LA allocation. To ensure a consistent approach to the operation of homeless services an internal policy document is in place which is currently under review.

The Homeless Support Team which comprises the Tenancy Sustainment Officer, Homeless HAP Placefinder Officer, two Social Workers, Traveller Accommodation Officer and Traveller Accommodation Liaison Officer meet once a month to review all households in Emergency Accommodation and to identify exit routes to a secure tenancy.

A Homeless Action Team (HAT) was established in 2021. Core members are a Tenancy Sustainment Officer (TSO), Homeless HAP Placefinder Officer, two Mayo County Council Social Workers, Traveller Accommodation Officer, HSE Mental Health Social Worker, Galway Simon Housing First Manager, Galway Simon Support Worker and Sophia Housing TSO. An invitation to attend is extended to relevant agencies and Mayo County Council Housing personnel depending on the cases scheduled for consideration. The HAT meets monthly to discuss both referrals and active Housing First cases, referrals to the recently introduced (Q4 2023) Sophia Housing Tenancy Support Service and any possible solutions for referrals which do not fall within the criteria for either Service.

Mayo has seen its homeless numbers increase consistently during the period of the last Action Plan. In common with many more rural counties there is a hidden homeless problem where people may be living in inappropriate dwellings such as unfit cottages or mobile homes having never applied to go on the housing list or registering their housing need. However, as is the pattern nationwide, increasing levels of rent and lack of housing supply, have meant that more people are approaching the Council for help, so that numbers presenting as homeless have increased over the years, particularly since 2021.

Mayo County Council Homeless Presentations

Year	Number of Homeless Presentations
2020	100
2021	95
2022	134
2023	187

Source: Mayo County Council Homeless Unit, December 2023

Mayo County Council utilises a number of own stock properties for short term Emergency Accommodation. This mechanism prevents several households from going into Private Emergency Accommodation and allows them to have their own front door accommodation, short term, on a Temporary Emergency Accommodation Agreement. This has worked well, although as demand for places has risen, households have sometimes ended up in these “short life” properties for longer periods than intended. The Council had thirteen temporary emergency accommodation houses in use at the end of 2023.

In December 2023 Mayo County Council entered a five-year agreement with Charlestown Lodge for the provision of emergency accommodation. Charlestown Lodge has capacity for up to 100 bedspaces with shared cooking, laundry and living accommodation, initially taking up 15 bedspaces with a view to fully utilising during 2024.

Mayo County Council utilises 7 x 1 bed apartments in Castlebar for the provision of Private Emergency Accommodation. For vulnerable presentations boarding out accommodation is utilised in Castlebar town. If deemed necessary B&B/Hotel accommodation is provided. This can be in the form of the provision of an accommodation voucher whereby the household self-sources accommodation or the Assessing Officer secures a reservation. This is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Mayo Women’s Support Service provides support to women and children who have been victims of domestic violence and works closely with Mayo County Council in respect of accommodation needs – on an emergency and/or long-term basis.

There was a steady growth in the number of families entering private emergency accommodation (PEA) during 2023. A similar upward trend was also seen in respect of individuals in PEA.

Number of Single Adults and Families using PEA in Mayo in 2023

Month	Number of families	Number of individuals	Total number of adults
January	10 (15 adults and 31 children)	38	53
February	7 (11 adults and 19 children)	35	46
March	8 (13 adults and 24 children)	44	57
April	9 (13 adults and 25 children)	47	60
May	9 (12 adults and 25 children)	45	57
June	10 (13 adults and 27 children)	50	63
July	13 (17 adults and 32 children)	57	74
August	13 (19 adults and 36 children)	56	75
September	14 (22 adults and 39 children)	55	77
October	16 (26 adults and 41 children)	61	87
November	15 (23 adults and 37 children)	64	87
December	15 (25 adults and 41 children)	67	92

Source: Mayo County Council Homeless Unit, December 2023

Homeless Services in County Mayo

Housing First

Galway Simon Community and COPE Galway are delivery Housing First in County Mayo, in collaboration with the Local Authority, Municipal Districts and AHBs.

The “My Home” Project

Work has commenced on a rollout of the My Home project, aimed at moving people from Congregated Settings within Mental Health Services to independent living. This Service was piloted and then mainstreamed previously in Galway County and Roscommon. The initial targets are to House 6 people in Mayo.

Focus Ireland

Focus Ireland provides tenancies in Mayo for young people who have left care, as part of their aftercare programme, as well as other supports. Túsla also employs two after care workers who work with young people, once they have aged out of the care system.

Linking in with Community Supports

Mayo County Council hosts the Mayo Homeless Forum on a quarterly basis. The forum is made up of representatives from the HSE, Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS), Mayo Women’s Support Service, IASIO Resettlement Service, SVP, Galway Simon, An Garda Síochána, Department of Social Protection, Threshold and Mayo Mental Health Association. This forum provides an opportunity to further strengthen the links with agencies who can extend information, advice and support to households experiencing a housing crisis. There are eight Family Resource Centres in Mayo and five Citizens Information Offices with whom strong links have been established.

Future developments in County Mayo

Mayo County Council is exploring two new projects for 2025. A Business Plan has been submitted for consideration in respect of the introduction of Community Based Housing Service and a Youth Homeless Service. This would enable Mayo County Council to reduce it’s reliance on PEA for Homeless Placements and ensure that those presenting to Homeless Services have access to focused support. There are increasing numbers who need supportive interventions but do not have the support needs of the Housing First Thresholds. To bridge this gap the provision of Community Based Housing is being explored.

During 2023 there was also a sharp increase in the number of Youth Homeless Presentations as highlighted in Table 18.

Number of Youth Homeless Aged 18–25 supported in PEA in Mayo in 2023

Month	Number
January	6
February	6
March	11
April	13
May	13
June	12
July	13
August	12
September	11
October	13
November	14
December	15

Source: Mayo County Council Homeless Unit, December 2023

Mayo County Council Homeless Support Team visited Galway City to look at the operation of both Community Based Housing (CBH) and Galway Simon Community's Youth Homeless Service and is proposing similar initiatives for Mayo for the period of the new plan.

Using the PASS system

All presentations and emergency accommodation bookings are recorded on PASS. Staff have availed of all training provided to date and will welcome any additional training made available.

County Roscommon

County Roscommon has the smallest population within the West Region, with a population of 69,995 according to the 2022 census.

The Homelessness team within Roscommon County Council comprises a Housing Officer, a HAP Placefinder, and a part-time Assistant Staff Officer. The HAP Placefinder plays a crucial role but due to rent fluctuations and the nationally set cap on levels for Roscommon, certain areas within the County are not feasible for HAP, even with supplemental support from the 35% discretion and the Homeless HAP.

Unlike Galway City, Roscommon lacks hostels and other dedicated Services for the homeless. The incidence of homeless presentations in County Roscommon has seen a substantial increase, posing a threat to the emergency accommodation resources utilised by the Council, mainly consisting of hotels and B&Bs. Recently, some providers who previously offered accommodation have withdrawn, creating even more acute pressure.

In 2019 there were only 62 homeless presentations in the entire year. In 2022, there were 66 presentations, of which 44 were deemed to be homeless, and 39 of these were accommodated in Emergency Accommodation – in PEA. Up to November 2023, there were 132 presentations as homeless in Roscommon of which 106 were individuals and 26 were families.

Support services for homeless individuals within the Roscommon community are limited. Sometimes, the Homeless Unit staff will refer families who are at risk of homelessness, or who are in precarious situations to the Family Resource Centre.

Many of those in entrenched homelessness have been discharged from the Mental Health Services, particularly from Roscommon Psychiatric Services. Despite efforts to emphasise the importance of advance notice and the preparation of a discharge plan, these do not consistently occur. Sometimes notification can come the same day as discharge. Instances have occurred where the Homelessness Unit was approached by hospital staff wishing to discharge four potentially homeless patients in a single day.

In terms of other resources, the Council has one Traveller/ Housing Liaison Officer who is currently dealing with tenants and Travellers and has little or no available capacity to deal with the homeless as well. The Council lacks the support of a Social Worker or Tenancy Sustainment Officer which places further strain on the Services needed to address homelessness. The combination of these factors highlights the pressing need for comprehensive and sustained efforts and adequately funded supports to address the growing homelessness crisis in Roscommon.

Homeless HAP / HAP Placefinder

The HAP Placefinder plays an important role in trying to prevent people entering homelessness, or in assisting people stuck in PEA, but only so long as appropriate properties can be identified, even with the important support of an officer working on behalf of a client. Roscommon has used some of the Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS) type lease allocations for those exiting homelessness. A total of 15 RAS type leases were provided in 2022 and 21 in 2023.

Limitations to HAP support arise from the amount of subsidy provided and the income levels of eligible clients when compared with growing rental prices in the County and the prevailing HAP limits for the County. Under HAP rules, the maximum HAP ceiling for properties within the Roscommon County area is 550 for a family with 3 children. If the house was in County Galway, the HAP ceiling would be up to 900 for the same size family. The Council works with landlords who have properties on both sides of the border and this has highlighted the influence of proximity to Galway and Westmeath on rental prices.

The discretionary additional payment of up to 35% available through HAP and HHAP creates a significant disparity in affordability between areas. For a single person in Roscommon, the HAP is €360 euros while it is much higher in Galway at €575 euros. While the possibility of using shared HAP can be an option, there are currently no appropriate properties available. As a result, there is an urgent need to increase the HAP rate for Roscommon. The DHLGH is reviewing the level of discretionary additional payment, which presently stands at a max of 35% outside of Dublin. However, concerns persist about potential unintended consequences, such as further rent increases and the remaining disparity across county boundaries. RAS is used for prevention solutions particularly for those at risk of, or already experiencing, homelessness.

By the end of November 2023, the breakdown in homelessness figures for Roscommon was: 18 households in Hotels and B&Bs of whom 14 were singles and 4 were families.

Homeless Services in County Roscommon

Youth Homelessness

An after care Social Worker from Túsla contacts the Council when a young person in care is approaching the age of 18, in need of support and at risk of homelessness. There is no other specific youth homelessness support, or dedicated youth homeless provision in the County.

My Home

The My Home pilot programme supported by Galway Simon and Community Healthcare West (CHW) with assistance from Mental Health Services (MHS) was also successfully implemented in Roscommon.

Housing Led Services

A successful example of an outcome is of a single tenant in a housing led service is currently receiving support from psychiatric services while residing in the community. Overall, there is a recognised need to enhance relationships with the psychiatric hospital, specifically with the psychiatrist and staff. The issue of not receiving a discharge protocol has been raised, and there is a growing concern about strained relationships with the psychiatric team due to the hospital's internal pressure to discharge individuals with very short notice given to the homeless unit. This lack of pre-

planning often results in the absence of support arrangements for the client being discharged into the community.

Housing staff perceive that the absence of a dedicated “professional” Social Worker function within the LA or supporting the Homeless Team diminishes effective negotiations with other services, especially concerning clients with mental health or behavioural issues. This weakness hinders the Council’s ability to advocate for, and address, the unique needs of clients in these situations.

Private Emergency Accommodation (PEA)

The increasing challenge of securing bed spaces for PEA has led to more adults being presented with no option but to go into shared rooms, which is less than ideal. The escalating pressures on PEA provision in the County indicates a growing need for alternatives, potentially promoting the establishment of a hostel or a comparable solution to reduce reliance solely on PEA. Some individuals utilising homeless services face personal challenges affecting their tenancy retention, making them potential candidates for support as they transition out of homelessness and run the risk of entering a cycle of recurrent homelessness.

Going into the next plan stage, there is a need to explore the options to reduce the dependence on PEA, and to secure options for accommodation which allow for greater levels of tailored wrap around supports for those who need them.

Targets in Housing for All

As part of Housing for All, the Council has a target to complete 250 new Social Housing units over 5 years. The primary obstacle concerning tenancy sustainment has been the overall shortage of properties, particularly those with one or two bedrooms. Additionally, families face challenges due to the insufficient availability of larger houses appropriate for families with more children. Consequently, families with greater numbers of children are experiencing prolonged stays in emergency homeless accommodation as a result of this housing shortage. The Council’s capital team are mindful of these figures and tenancy requirements when developing new housing schemes and mixed types.

Additional Challenges in Addressing Homelessness in Roscommon

One challenge is the uncertainty surrounding the uncertainty in obtaining timely and accessible support from some aspects of Health Services, particularly in the area of community mental health services. While HAT convenes monthly, regular collaboration is essential to ensure the participation of all relevant areas of the HSE to ensure HAT tenancies are successful.

Future Developments for Roscommon

Moving away from PEA accommodation, Roscommon will place an emphasis on the development of emergency accommodation through Local Authority or AHB owned facilities. Roscommon County Council has been actively exploring options for developing a hostel facility to provide supported

homeless services within the county. As part of this effort, a suitable property has been identified that could accommodate 10–12 individuals. This facility would be designed to meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, ensuring that appropriate supports are in place to promote stability and pathways toward permanent housing.

The proposed facility would also serve as a Cold Weather Response Unit for Roscommon, offering vital shelter and support during periods of severe weather. Recognising the complexity of such an initiative the development of this hostel provision would involve a comprehensive appraisal process, ensuring that the facility is designed with an appropriate level of wrap-around supports, including health, mental health, and social services. This integrated approach aims to address the multifaceted challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness. Should the project prove feasible, it would represent a significant step toward providing essential services and support for vulnerable members of the community.

In the meantime, Roscommon Co. Council in consultation with Galway Simon Community have submitted a Business Case to develop a Community Based Housing (CBH) Service which could be rolled out in the initial period of the upcoming plan, to relieve pressure on private emergency provision and provide pathways out of emergency accommodation for clients who are in need of supports.

In relation to Staff Training Needs, the Homeless Unit staff in Roscommon have explored an Induction Training model available in Longford for new tenants, delivered in two two-hour sessions. The team is considering implementing a similar initiative to run concurrently with future tenancies for homeless clients.

Appendix C: Consultations with Key Stakeholders

Ann Mallaghan consulted with the following Key Stakeholders in the research that informed the preparation of this plan:

Galway City Council

Elizabeth Fanning	Director of Housing
Helena Martyn	A/Senior Executive Officer
Derek Healy	A/Administrative Officer
Cliona Clancy	Homelessness Officer/ Disability & Social Inclusion Officer
Catherine Fahy	Senior Social Worker
Louise Conneally	Social Worker
Peter Barnett	Social Worker
Alan Woods	HAP Placefinder
Kay Monaghan	Homeless Assessment Officer
Carmel Manfredi	Tenancy Sustainment Officer

Galway County Council

Michael Owens	Director of Housing
Nuala Heffernan	Administrative Officer
Deirdre O Connor	Tenancy Sustainment Officer
Mary Hughes	HAP Placefinder

Mayo County Council

Julie Ryan	Tenancy Sustainment Officer
Eileen Corcoran	A/Traveller Accommodation Officer
Derek Walsh	A/Traveller Accommodation Officer
Mary Bergin	A/HAP Placefinder
Orla Hughes	Social Worker
Bernie Rowland	Social Worker

Roscommon County Council

Fiona Ni Chuinn	Director of Housing
-----------------	---------------------

Ann McHugh	Senior Executive Officer
Patricia Cassidy	Administrative Officer
Carla Lennon	HAP Placefinder
Jackie Devine	Homelessness Support Officer
Siobhan Mullen	Homeless Assessment Officer

Housing Agency

Rob Lowth	Housing First National Co-ordinator
-----------	-------------------------------------

Health Service Executive

Michael Keady	Social Inclusion Manager CHO2
Thelma Birrane	Regional Traveller Health Co-ordinator
Gillian Crowe	Senior Social Worker, Team Co-ordinator Slí Nua Mental Health Team

Galway Simon Community

Karen Golden	Chief Executive Officer
Karen Feeney	Head of Client Services
Andrea Fitzgerald	Services Manager for Housing First, West Region and My Home
Aisling O'Hara	Service Manager for Youth Services and CBH
Dr Kieran Coleman	GP Homeless Health and Wellbeing Team
Sarah McDonagh	Nurse Homeless Health and Wellbeing Team
5 clients of Galway Simon Community's Youth Service	

COPE Galway

Martin O'Connor	Assistant Chief Executive Officer
Sinead Carey	Head of Homeless Services
Paul Walsh	Day Centre Manager
Sandra Lyngmo	Support Worker
Leah Ryan	Outreach and Day Centre Project Worker
Ruth Morvan	PEA Project Worker
Colette Mangan	Resettlement and Tenancy Support Service Manager

No4 Youth Services Galway

Natalie Coen	Youth Work Coordinator
Joan O'Mahoney	Youth Worker
Delia	Careers Guidance p/time
Ellen	Youth Worker
Emma	Youth and Family Studies Student on placement

Túsla

Morgan Mee	Children and Youth Services Committee Coordinator, Galway
Deirdre McHugh	Aftercare Manager, Galway

Threshold Galway

Graham Higgins	Regional Manager
Emma Keane	Advice Services

Department of Social Protection

Vincent Gormley

Traveller Organisations

Margaret O'Riada	Galway Traveller Support Group
David Collins	Western Traveller and Intercultural Development