



Uimhir Thagarta Uathúil: WFD-C2-71

Údar: Waterford Older People's Council

Stádas: Submitted

Submission: Waterford Older People's Council

Comhairliúchán:

Draft Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022 - 2028

Chapter 7: Housing and Sustainable Communities

Caibidil: Volume 1 » Part 3: City and County Policy Objectives » Chapter 7: Housing and Sustainable Communities

Housing

We acknowledge and welcome the several measures in the Draft that deal with the housing needs of a growing older cohort of the population. The concept of the 10 minute urban area, revitalization of town centres including the provision of suitable housing, the consideration of universal design are among the recommendations made in our earlier submission and these are indeed welcomed. However, regarding some of our earlier recommendations we would like to see an appropriate level of detail added to the Plan. All of this is outlined in greater detail in what follows in this submission.

1. A housing strategy is more than ensuring a supply of suitable houses and apartments, it has to be an integrated plan ensuring that our older people will have the certainty of affordable, health inducing, secure, environmentally sustainable housing options anchored in 'an integration of supports especially between the housing and health sectors'
2. 'A housing policy for older people is broader and more complex than the mere provision of houses.'
3. The Age Friendly Strategy adopted by Waterford City and County Council and the Age Friendly Alliance in 2017 highlights the very significant growth in the older population relative to total population for example in Waterford City and County the percentage of people in the over 60 year age group increased from 13.7% of total population in 2002 to 20.3% in 2016.
4. It is essential that the requirements of the population in the 60 plus age group are taken into account in each of the programme groups of the new County Development Plan, requirements which will in effect benefit the whole population.
5. We believe that the option of independent living should be central to our housing strategy: Therefore, adapting and retrofitting houses to make them secure, environmentally safe and less costly to run needs to be prioritised in keeping with the principle of Universal Design.
6. We recommend that 50% of apartment construction exceed the current minimum space and design requirements e.g. width of doors, larger rooms, larger bathroom, etc making mobility considerations paramount.
7. Furthermore, we recommend that 30% of all new housing should incorporate Universal Design principles. A dedicated pilot project along the lines of the Inchicore Housing with Support Demonstration Prototype Project ought to be considered as part of the Council's housing policy to be implemented during the lifetime of its next Development Plan.

8. The new Waterford Development Plan should promote **Age Friendly Neighbourhoods** which provide a range of services including transportation links. This could be facilitated by zoning, by public acquisition of greenfield and especially brown field sites near clusters of services such as the Ardkeen Village Complex in Waterford city and the construction of innovative retirement campuses to facilitate the development of Age Friendly Neighbourhoods.
9. We also recommend the provision by the Council and or Voluntary Housing Associations of suitable accommodation to meet the needs of an Ageing Population adjacent to appropriate services.
10. In granting Planning for new Residential Development the Council should ensure that Private Developers provide an appropriate mix of house sizes a percentage of which should be suitable for older people.
11. The promotion by the Council of the concept of Universal Housing Design, facilitating lifelong living especially for older people in their own homes.
12. Where the need arises the Council should provide or support voluntary/community groups to provide small groups of sheltered housing for the older people on the lines of scheme provided by the Community in Ballymacarbry or the various schemes across the country, notably the Ava Housing, the Great Northern Haven in Dundalk which features two bedroom units plus a 'research' apartment.
13. Waterford Council has an opportunity in this matter to lead the way by including in the Plan provision for a pilot scheme of housing for older people where innovative concepts such as universal design, co-management, community provision, appropriate percentage of two bedroom units would be incorporated and serve as a model for private developers. Different design and operational models accessible in Ireland and abroad could be examined during the planning stage of such an innovative model for Waterford.