

CHAPTER 5

Social Issues and Housing

Aim: To facilitate provision of access to a range of social and community facilities for citizens, in particular access to housing to suit different household and tenure needs.

Introduction	52
Social Inclusion	52
Housing Policy	55
Special Needs Housing	63
Provision of Community Facilities (including Childcare and Healthcare)	66

Introduction

- 5.1** The following chapter firstly outlines the main measures that have been put in place to deal with issues of social exclusion in the City and then focuses on the housing policies for the City and the requirements of those with special needs.

Objectives

The objectives for housing and social issues are as follows:

- To integrate social inclusion in all main policy areas.
- To provide for a diverse range of housing needs.
- To promote balanced communities.
- To promote sustainable development.
- To promote high quality living environments.
- To ensure provision of support services and community facilities.

Social Inclusion

National Anti-Poverty Strategy

- 5.2** The *National Anti Poverty Strategy 1997–2007* (NAPS) provides a framework for anti-poverty initiatives within local authorities and its implementation enhances the work that local authorities already carry out. The main objective of NAPS is “to reduce substantially, and, ideally, eliminate poverty in Ireland and to build a socially inclusive society.” Tackling this objective will involve a multi-policy approach. The overall policy approach is to:

- Sustain economic growth and employment.
- Provide levels of income support to those relying on social welfare sufficient to sustain dignity and avoid poverty, while facilitating participation in employment and escape from welfare.
- Address the needs of groups at high risk of poverty with specific needs.
- Provide high-quality public services to all.
- Tackle the causes of inter-generational transmission of poverty.
- Support disadvantaged communities.



The City Development Plan with its range of strategies including balanced economic development, access to housing, social and community facilities, infrastructural and specific area based policies has an important role in achieving some of the main objectives of NAPS for disadvantaged communities in Cork City. **5.3**

The problems facing disadvantaged areas in the City have been well documented particularly in the *Northside Study* (1990) and the *Cork Urban Action Plan* (1997) and most recently in *Comhar Chathair Chorcaí Teo/Cork City Partnership Local Development Social Inclusion Plan 2001–2006*. In a study carried out for Cork City Partnership, variables extracted from the 1996 Census were used to allocate a deprivation index in the range 1–10 (10 being most deprived) to each electoral ward in the City. The variables measured unemployment, population of lone parents, school leaving age, tenure and age dependency rates. The distribution of this deprivation index across the City showed concentrations of deprivation in parts of the Northside, Mahon and Togher and in parts of the central area. In 1996, 39,039 people (almost one third of the Partnership area population) lived in wards with rank factor scores of 9 or 10. **5.4**

While it is recognised that over recent years, the economic boom has tended to improve economic circumstances for the vast majority of the population, including those living in disadvantaged areas, the following trends have emerged from a 'Profile of Cork City/Consultation Process' carried out by Cork City Partnership as part of their *Local Development Social Inclusion Plan 2001–2006*: **5.5**

- Almost one third of the City's population live at the highest levels of deprivation (rank factor score 9 or 10).
- Extreme educational disadvantage in specific wards.
- A significant number of long term unemployed people (predominantly male) who have not benefited from recent economic development.
- Low educational attainment among unemployed people, demonstrates continuing correlation between employment and education.
- High proportions of semi-skilled and unskilled workers in specific wards.
- High numbers of older people (particularly female) living alone.
- Unexpected rise in Non-EU National immigration within a previously almost homogenous community.
- High proportion of one parent families, particularly in some north City wards.

The *Employment and Land Use Survey* carried out by the City Council in 2001 indicates that while employment in the City has grown by over 49%, reflecting the strength of the economy over the past couple of years, employment grew by only 5% in the North West sector. In addition a total of 19% of the City's employment is located in the North West and North East sectors of the City, while over 40% is located in the southern sectors of the City. It is clear that an imbalance exists in terms of relative economic activity on the northside of the City and that policies are needed to encourage enterprise and employment to locate there. See Chapter 10 for specific policies on the development of the northern suburbs. **5.6**

Findings from the *Cork Recreational Facilities Needs Survey* (2003) indicate that recreation and amenity needs of the population on the northside of the City are not adequately provided for in terms of playing pitches, parks and indoor recreational facilities. With over 63% of the City's social housing stock located on the northside of the City, policies are required to provide housing choice, better tenure balance and improved residential environments. Access to third level education is not available and the provision of a third level facility is considered to be crucial in terms of attracting enterprise to locate on this side of the City (see Chapter 10: Policy S6 which refers to the provision of a third level institution in the northern suburbs). The completion of the Blackpool Shopping Centre has provided much improved retail, business and employment opportunities on the northside, however much additional work needs to be done in expanding employment opportunities. **5.7**

POLICY H1

Achieving Better Social Inclusion

Policy for the achievement of better Social Inclusion during the plan period will include a range of measures incorporating the following:

Balanced Economic Development

- *Promotion of industrial development, including office-based industry in Blackpool and Kilbarry.*
- *Facilitation of the provision of starter enterprise units.*
- *Promotion of Blackpool and Shandon through the proposals contained in the Integrated Area Plan, including development of commercial, residential and mixed use development and associated upgrading of the public realm.*
- *Extend and develop the approaches used in the Integrated Area Plan for other areas in need of regeneration, through enhanced community participation and focus on social inclusion in preparing Local Area Plans for the City.*
- *Provision of substantial commercial development in the City Centre, Docklands, Blackpool and Mahon areas, with an emphasis on accessibility.*

Improved Access to Education

- *The promotion of a third level educational facility on the northside of the City.*

Better Housing Choice

- *Provision of Social and Affordable Housing under the provisions of the Joint Housing Strategy and through City Council provision.*
- *Housing re-generation programmes in Knocknaheeny, the Glen and Deanrock.*

Improved Public Transport and Accessibility

- *Upgrading of the rail service and in particular the opening of Kilbarry Rail Station.*
- *Provision and promotion of green routes through disadvantaged areas (e.g. from the northside to the City Centre and Mahon to the City Centre).*

Provision of Support Services and Community Facilities

- *Provision of creches as an integral part of new housing developments.*
- *The provision of community facilities as an integral part of new developments and the increased use of Local Area Plans as a tool for the planning of such facilities.*

Improvements to Recreational Amenities

- *Provision of a regional park in the North West of the City.*
- *Additional recreation facilities in Mahon.*

Provision for Special Needs Groups

- *To facilitate access to all public buildings for disabled people.*
- *To devise a plan of action for the implementation of the Barcelona Declaration.*
- *Provision of a range of accommodation types for the travelling community.*

Social Inclusion Checklist

- *Development of a social inclusion checklist to assist in identifying key social inclusion issues in developing City Council policy, preparing local plans and assessing planning applications..*

- 5.8** Cork City Council has put in place a number of measures to support the mainstreaming of social inclusion, in order to ensure that social inclusion is reflected as a core value in the plans and policies of the organisation and in service delivery.

Corporate Plan

- 5.9** One of the six core goals in the City Council's *Corporate Plan (2001–2004)* is social inclusion. This is stated as follows: 'To ensure that an improved quality of life impacts on all citizens with equity in relation to allocation of resources and participation in decision-making'. Attaining this goal is a major task for all departments of the City Council. The public consultation in the preparation of the City Development Plan explicitly referred to social inclusion. The City Council is committed to ensuring that the development of all new policies will contribute positively to social inclusion and meeting NAPS objectives locally.

Social Inclusion Unit

Since February 2003, a Social Inclusion Unit has been introduced in Cork City Council. The Unit is working with all of the departments of the City Council to ensure that their services contribute to social inclusion. Cork City Council is one of nine local authorities in the country that have a Social Inclusion Unit. A Social Inclusion Committee has been established to facilitate the identification and implementation of measures to enhance the social inclusion focus of the City Council. Membership of the Committee is drawn from all departments.

5.10

The Cork City Development Board

The Cork City Development Board (CDB) has recently launched its ten year Integrated Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development for Cork City entitled *Imagine our Future*. The CDB Strategy has identified social inclusion as a core value and progress indicator. The strategy sets actions, objectives and targets for all public service providers in the City. The City Council is playing a lead role in the implementation of the strategy.

5.11

RAPID (Revitalising Areas by Planning Investment and Development)

Problems in geographic concentrations of social disadvantage are being tackled through the RAPID Programme. Cork City has four RAPID areas, three are located on the northside of the City while the fourth is located in Togher/Mahon (the areas are detailed in Chapter 10). In each RAPID area, local communities and public service providers have prepared local development plans. The Area Implementation teams are now working to deliver upon the actions outlined in these plans. In addition, they are attempting to design new and innovative ways of delivering currently available services.

5.12



Housing Policy

Housing policy for the City seeks to achieve mixed, balanced and self-sustaining communities. This requires living areas that are capable of accommodating the requirements and aspirations of a wide range of household types, sizes and tenure. The main housing issues for the City are:

5.13

- The need to provide an adequate supply to meet the growing demand for housing
- The need to protect existing established housing in City Centre, inner urban and suburban areas.
- The need to allow for mixed housing areas in new developments and where appropriate to seek a greater housing mix in established housing areas.
- The need to provide adequate social and affordable housing and to provide for those with special needs

The City has an important role in providing for housing needs in the Metropolitan Cork Area. Increased residential development in the City will have significant benefits, including reducing the amount of

5.14

residential land needed in suburban locations, allowing for development close to existing facilities, services and public transport and encouraging urban regeneration in established inner urban and City Centre areas. Significant potential exists to provide a variety of housing in different locations including:

- Infill and brownfield site development in City Centre and inner urban areas.
- Conversion and re-use of existing buildings in the City Centre and inner urban areas.
- Development of institutional and suburban sites.

Housing Strategy

5.15 The *Joint Housing Strategy* (2001–2011) developed between the Cork Planning Authorities, including Cork County Council, Cork City Council and the Town Councils sets the context for housing policy in the City. The Strategy is based on a shared vision which sees having a suitable place to live at an affordable price as a basic right. The provision of social and affordable housing by various providers is an important objective of the strategy and will be central to tackling social exclusion and achieving a better housing mix throughout the City. As the detailed projections in the *Joint Housing Strategy* extend only until 2006, it has been necessary to undertake a partial review of the Strategy (as it relates to the City area). This review relates mainly to housing demand and supply, availability of housing land, and issues relating to affordability and social housing need and concludes that at this point the main policies in the *Joint Housing Strategy* continue to remain valid.

POLICY H2

Joint Housing Strategy

To implement the Joint Housing Strategy in partnership with Cork County Council.

Provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 under Part V

5.16 Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 requires each Planning Authority to:

- Draw up a Housing Strategy and integrate it into their Development Plan.
- Ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned in the Development Plan for residential use, to meet the requirements of the housing strategy and to ensure that a scarcity of such land does not occur at any time during the period of the Development Plan.

POLICY H3

Zoned Development Land

To ensure in co-operation with Cork County Council, that sufficient land is zoned to meet the housing requirements for the City during the lifetime of the Development Plan.

5.17 In addition Part V requires Development Plans to include objectives to secure implementation of the Housing Strategy taking into account the following:

- **Affordability**
Ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income. Development Plan objectives shall require a specified percentage of land zoned for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses, to be reserved for social and affordable housing.
- **Mix of House Types**
Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of different categories of households, including those with special needs such as the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- **Counteract Social Segregation**
Counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

Housing Demand and Supply

5.18 Given that the population projections in CASP were reasonably accurate when compared to actual population in the 2002 Census and given that there is a lack of detail available from the census to undertake detailed population projections at this stage, it is proposed to use the analysis and projections from CASP in arriving at projections for both household formation and actual dwelling requirements up to 2011. Population projections for CASP estimate the population of Cork City in 2001 at 123,810 (note: The census results for 2002 indicate the total population for the City at 123,062). Based on the projections for the five year period up to 2006, approximately 5,690 dwellings are expected to be completed within the City (approx. 948 dwellings per annum). For the period 2006–2011 an additional 2,253 dwellings are expected to be completed (approx. 450 dwelling per annum).

Projected Population 2001 (CASP)	Projected Households 2001 (CASP)	Additional Dwelling Units Required to 2006	Additional Dwelling Units Required to 2011
123,810	42,330	5,690	2,250

TABLE 5.1

Number of dwelling units required within the City to 2011 (based on CASP figures)



For the period 2001–2020, CASP estimated that 9,130 households are expected to form and that dwelling completions would need to be in the order of 12,090 dwellings to cater for such demand, representing an average of 600 dwellings per annum. The disparity in growth rate averages per annum represents a higher growth rate for the period 2001–2006 and a projected levelling off of growth from 2006 to 2020.

5.19

Household sizes are getting smaller in the City, in line with the national trend of decreasing household size. Average household size is now estimated to be 2.4 persons. With these trends, there is a growing recognition that there is a need for the type of housing being provided at all levels to be more appropriate to the actual size of households.

5.20

From 1997 to 2000, there was a general upward trend in the number of private house completions, apart from a drop in 1999. House completions for the City have dropped significantly since the year 2000. These low levels are attributed to firstly, the fact that considerable development activity is occurring in the suburbs and the larger metropolitan area rather than in the City Centre and secondly to a certain level of uncertainty over the past two years regarding implementation of the Housing Strategy.

5.21

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No. of Completions	1,079	1,198	804	1,081	646	570
% Change	+26%	+11%	-33%	+34%	-40%	-12%

TABLE 5.2

Private House Completions for Cork City and Environs (1996–2002)

A total of 222 hectares of undeveloped land suitable for housing has been identified in the most recent *Housing Land Availability Study* (Sept. 2003). The area available has increased from previous surveys due to the identification of sites in the *Docklands Strategy* and the emergence of 'windfall' re-development sites in the City Centre. The total number of dwelling units for these lands has been projected at approx. 6,000 (average density projected is currently quite low on these lands and is likely to be higher when new and revised development proposals are factored in). These figures make allowance for development of only one site in Docklands, a site within the North Docks area. In projecting land availability to 2011, a number of additional sites have been earmarked in Docklands, the westernmost section of the South Docks and additional lands east of the North Docks, these lands have a total area of 14 hectares and should have the capacity for over 2,000 dwelling units. Given that the projection for total dwelling units required up to 2011 is 7,943 dwelling units it is considered that there is ample provision within the lands identified to provide for the level of units required in the City up to 2011.

5.22

Opportunities for the Provision of Housing

In the City the demand for new housing can be met through a variety of measures including:

5.23

- Development of vacant sites throughout the City, especially in the City Centre and Docklands.
- Infill development in both City Centre and suburban locations.
- Development of brownfield land in the City, e.g. Docklands and the Blackpool Valley.

- Refurbishment and more intensive re-use of under-utilised older buildings, e.g. re-use of industrial buildings and warehouses, 'Living Over the Shop' Scheme.
- Regeneration of older housing areas, e.g. Shandon, Blackpool, South Parish.

The four main locations identified for significant residential development are:

- The City Centre
- Docklands
- Blackpool Valley
- Mahon.

Additional infill and 'windfall' sites in other locations will also be identified over the period of the Development Plan.

POLICY H4

Measures to Provide Housing

To encourage and facilitate the provision of housing in the main locations identified above through a range of measures including the formulation of local plans, SDZ's, design briefs and the promotion of financial incentives where appropriate.

Housing Density

5.24

The Department of the Environment and Local Government issued Guidelines for Planning Authorities to promote higher residential densities in September 1999 and Cork City Council are currently preparing *Residential Design Guidelines* for Cork City. From a planning perspective the benefits of increasing densities in residential areas include:

- More economic use of existing infrastructure and serviced land.
- A reduced need for the development of 'greenfield' sites, urban sprawl and ribbon development.
- Reduced need for investment in new infrastructure.
- Better access to existing services and facilities.
- More sustainable commuting patterns.

POLICY H5

Residential Density

To promote increased residential density where appropriate to do so, including:

- *In the City Centre and Docklands.*
- *On brownfield sites, especially close to existing or future public transport corridors.*
- *On infill suburban sites, where close to existing or planned public transport corridors.*

5.25

Higher residential densities will not be appropriate in every circumstance. Higher densities must not be achieved at an unacceptable amenity cost to surrounding dwellings and the residents of the proposed development. Refer to Chapter 6: Policy BE 27 and Chapter 11: paras.11.7–11.9 for further policies relating to residential density.

Balanced Communities – Providing for a Mix of House Types, Sizes and Tenure

5.26

The provision of a range of housing types and sizes in the City will increase in importance as trends show a decline in family housing and an increase in elderly and single person households. Many of the new households forming in the City during the period of this Development Plan will be below the current average size and will often consist of one or two persons. The overall aim is to have a good balance of housing types and tenure in the City, which reflects the changing household composition and is responsive to local context. Achieving dwelling mix will be particularly important in the following areas:

- **The City Centre and Docklands:** where it will be important to provide housing for longer term residents and families that are currently are not well represented in new housing schemes through provision of large quality apartments and townhouses and through policies to protect the existing family type housing stock in inner city residential neighbourhoods (policies detailed in Chapter 9).
- **Suburban Areas:** where a mix of dwelling types will be required to accommodate smaller households such as single persons or the elderly and where general policy will be to protect residential amenity and a presumption against changes of use from residential use, except in relation to limited home-based economic activities (policies detailed in Chapter 3 and 10).

5.27

In order to counteract undue social segregation and achieve the objective of having balanced communities,

a reasonable tenure mix will need to be provided. A proportion of the accommodation in the City Centre should be owner occupied and policies in relation to the provision and protection of larger units and family type housing will assist in this regard. Under the provisions of Part V, social and affordable housing shall be provided in all new residential developments (see Policy H7 which details exceptions to this provision). Policy H8 regarding the distribution of social and affordable housing will be central to this aim.

Housing Mix

To encourage the establishment of sustainable residential communities within the City by ensuring that a mix of both housing and apartment types and sizes is provided (as per the indicative targets detailed in Table 5.3 which are based on the provisions of CASP).

POLICY H6

Existing Household Mix		House Size Distribution Targets	
1 person	27%	1 bed	15%
2 person	34%	2 bed	35%
3 person	16%	3 bed	35%
4 person	16%	4 bed	10%
5+ person	8%	5 bed+	5%
TOTAL	100%	TOTAL	100%

TABLE 5.3

Indicative Targets for Housing Size and Distribution



Affordable Housing

The *Joint Housing Strategy* considered the issue of housing affordability in the context of the significant increases in house prices throughout the country in recent years. A detailed survey of house prices was undertaken and research was commissioned to determine the level and distribution of household incomes. The assessment made for Cork City indicated that approximately 40% of households in Cork City will fall below the affordability threshold (as defined in the in the Planning and Development Act 2000) and as such will experience difficulties in buying a house on the open market. In certain City wards where there is already a high concentration of social housing it was considered appropriate to provide for affordable housing only under Part V in order to address the imbalance in tenure mix and lack of affordable private housing opportunities in these wards (see Figure 5.1 for the location of these wards). As part of a preliminary review of the *Joint Housing Strategy*, a review of interest rates and house prices in the City was undertaken, two of the main variables affecting affordability of housing.

5.28

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Price (€)	112,133	141,007	166,557	174,550	184,369
% Increase on Previous Year	+17%	+26%	+18%	+5%	+6%

TABLE 5.4

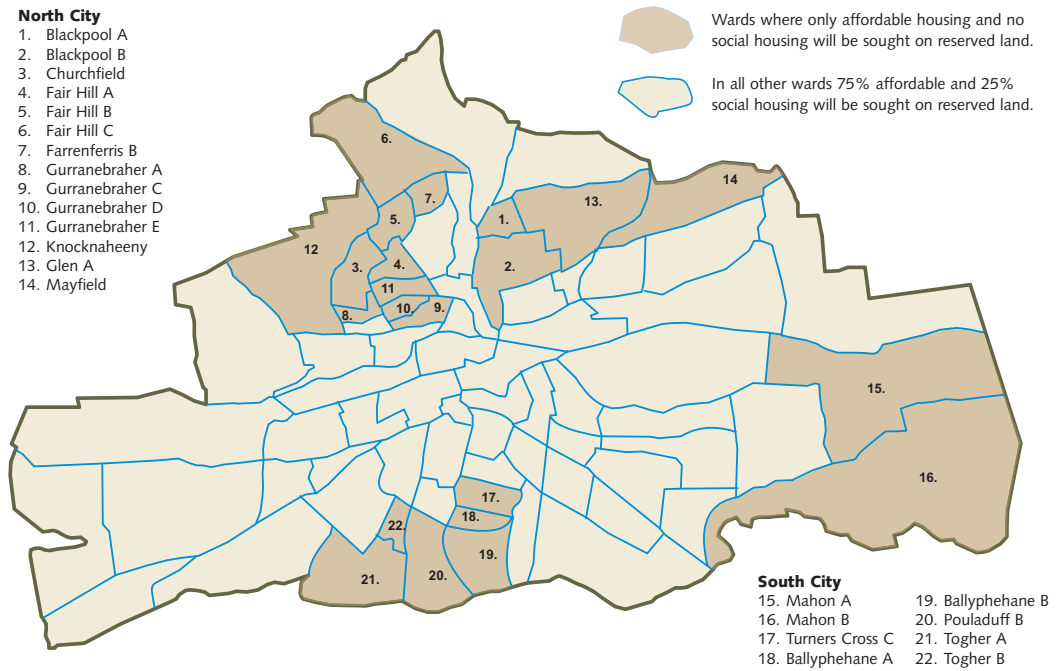
Average Price of New Houses in Cork

House prices in the City have increased over the past two years, however the rate of price increase was much lower than previous years and has been off-set to some extent by a decrease in mortgage interest rates. Interest rates have fallen by almost 2%, which has resulted in significantly lower borrowing costs for home owners. It is unlikely given the above, that the problem of affordability has decreased in the Cork City area. Even if there has been a marginal decrease in the affordability problem as a result of decreasing interest rates, it is unlikely to significantly reduce the figure in the *Joint Housing Strategy* of

5.29

40% of households in the Cork City area experiencing affordability problems. As such the need for a minimum of 20% of residentially zoned land (subject to certain exemptions) to be reserved for social and affordable housing (as set out in the *Joint Housing Strategy*) remains a valid objective.

FIGURE 5.1
Special Requirements for Social Housing in Certain City Wards



POLICY H7

Reserved Land for Social and Affordable Housing

In order to ensure adequate provision for households experiencing affordability problems and to accord with the provisions of the Joint Housing Strategy, Cork City Council will require that 20% of land zoned for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses, subject to certain exemptions, shall be reserved for the purpose of the provision of social and affordable housing.

Applicants will be required to enter into an agreement under the above provisions, regarding

- (a) the transfer of land, houses or sites on the lands of the subject application, or*
- (b) the transfer of land, houses or sites on any other land within the functional area of Cork City Council, or*
- (c) to pay a specified amount as set out in the agreement, or*
- (d) a combination of any of the above*

The detail of any such agreement shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002.

POLICY H8

Distribution of Social and Affordable Housing

There will be a requirement that one quarter of the reserved land be for social housing and the remaining three quarters be for affordable housing, subject to the exceptions set out below:

- *In wards where there is a high concentration of social housing there will be no requirement for social housing on reserved lands. Affordable housing only will be required. (see figure 5.1 for location of wards)*
- *The policy does not apply in respect of proposed developments that are specifically exempt from this requirement under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002) or in respect of proposed developments of student housing that is in accordance with the location and design criteria set out in the Finance Act Guidelines on Residential Developments for Third Level Students.*

(In the interests of clarity the definitions of 'social housing' and 'affordable housing' are those contained in the Joint Housing Strategy.)

Provision of Social Housing

Government policy is to ensure that each household has accommodation appropriate to its needs at a price or rent it can afford and to provide for persons unable to provide accommodation from their own resources. Local Authorities provide accommodation directly through their housing programme. Analysis carried out for the *Joint Housing Strategy* indicates that of a total social housing stock of 12,200 units located within Cork City and County, approximately 7,600 or 62% is provided within Cork City Council's administrative area, while 74% is located within the Cork Metropolitan area. Land available for housing within the City boundaries is limited and the *Joint Housing Strategy* acknowledges that in the future, shortage of suitable and available land within the City will result in the requirement that some of the social housing demand generated from within the City will have to be accommodated in the County area. In this regard it is proposed to create a joint working arrangement between Cork City Council and Cork County Council to effectively provide for social housing across administrative boundaries.

5.30

Joint Working

To develop joint working arrangements with Cork County Council to provide for social housing across administrative boundaries.

POLICY H9

Social Housing Demand

The number of people on the City Council Housing Waiting List has increased since the *Joint Housing Strategy* was published in 2001. Figures estimate the total number of applicants on the City Council Housing Waiting List as at Dec 2000 at 3,008 while the estimate in the 2002 *Housing Needs Assessment* was 3,905. In terms of social housing demand, the predictions in the *Joint Housing Strategy* are correct, demand for social and affordable housing is increasing at a much greater pace than supply.

5.31

Housing Mix - Local Authority Housing

Future local authority housing developments will provide a mix of house types and sizes with potential to meet varying housing needs in order to meet the requirements of people in need of social housing, while taking cognisance of estate management considerations and the Scheme of Letting Priorities.

POLICY H10

Better Utilisation of Stock

To promote better utilisation of both its existing stock and private stock through promotion of downsizing of accommodation by senior citizens.

POLICY H11

Programme of Local Authority Provision

The City Council rented housing stock currently amounts to 7,572 units. There is a four year multi-annual housing provision plan, for the period 2000–2003 in place. Social housing is provided through the following measures:

5.32

- New build on existing City Council owned land.
- Purchase of second hand houses.
- Turnkey Schemes.
- Infill schemes in existing estates.
- Development of derelict sites.
- Development of brownfield sites.
- Development in partnership with the County Council.

The multi-annual programme for 2001–2003 has provided for 1,000 housing starts. In addition there are a range of schemes in the course of planning throughout the City. Progress to date on the multi annual programme is as follows, approximately 350 units have been either purchased or built, 320 are under construction and 350 units are at planning stage.

5.33

The Affordable Housing Scheme has been expanded in the last number of years and is proving to be a very popular tenure choice. The scheme is likely to be a useful tool in the future in providing for better

5.34

integration in mixed tenure housing schemes. Under the scheme the City Council are providing 150 units of accommodation up to 2004. To date 130 units have been provided and 43 are in planning.

5.35 The scale of future multi-annual programmes post 2003 will be determined by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and it will be the policy of Cork City Council to effectively provide housing in line with such programmes. It is envisaged that future housing programmes will afford the opportunity for a mix of tenure within all larger schemes, including the provision of social housing, affordable housing and shared ownership.

5.36 Certain areas of the City have existing high concentrations of social housing, these have been highlighted earlier under the section on Balanced Communities (see Figure 5.1). In order to meet the objective of providing for Balanced Communities, it is considered desirable that the City Council should seek through its own housing programme to balance housing tenure through providing integrated and mixed tenure housing schemes across the City, which provide for a mix of housing tenure options.

POLICY H12

Social Housing Integration

To provide integrated and mixed housing schemes, including provision for affordable and social housing, throughout the City, having regard to counteracting social segregation and to improving social and economic balance.

Re-development Priorities

5.37 There are a number of housing areas and flat complexes within the City in need of re-generation. Funding has been secured for a number of schemes and the City Council will continue to promote and seek funding for those areas and complexes in need of regeneration. All plans and programmes will be prepared in consultation with residents and local communities

- **The Glen Regeneration:** Funding has been allocated for Phase 1 of the Glen Flats Regeneration and the works are due to be completed in 2004. In addition, funding has been put in place for the design and consultation phase of the remaining part of the project, with works scheduled to proceed following completion of phase 1.
- **Knocknaheeny Master Plan:** A major re-generation plan has been prepared for Knocknaheeny, under which there are proposals for housing upgrades, housing density, provision of amenities and services, childcare and education infrastructure, road/footpath and public lighting upgrades. The plan has been submitted to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for consideration. The City Council is separately continuing with the phased programme of dwelling refurbishment.
- **Deanrock Regeneration:** A number of options are currently being considered for the regeneration of the Deanrock flats in Togher.

POLICY H13

Regeneration of Social Housing

- *To upgrade housing areas and flat complexes which are in need of regeneration, through consultation with residents,*
- *To develop detailed proposals for such regeneration schemes in consultation with residents.*

Provision by the Voluntary Sector

5.38 Provision of social housing by the various voluntary sector agencies has become a key element of social housing provision, especially for special needs housing. The voluntary housing agencies have shown considerable skill in managing for the needs of those with special needs, through the design and provision of purpose built accommodation, often with community support facilities such as communal dining facilities, health facilities and childcare facilities. The *Housing Department Strategic Plan (2000–2004)* has an objective to provide over 300 units by 2003, 225 of these are either completed or under construction while the remainder are at planning stage. The role of the voluntary sector in providing social housing will continue to be facilitated and encouraged.

POLICY H14

Voluntary Sector Provision

To facilitate the voluntary sector in the provision of social housing, especially for those with special needs.

Housing/Estate Management

The City Council has begun a programme of de-centralising services to area based offices across the City, with the intention that the management of housing stock and the delivery of housing services will be carried out on an area basis. Three housing areas have been defined. A pilot project for the North West of the City became operational in 2002 with the opening of a temporary facility in Knocknaheeny. The functions to be managed locally include, rent assessment and arrears control, housing allocations, response maintenance, tenancy breaches, area budget control and tenant participation. Funding for a mediation service has recently been secured, which will provide additional resources and support for the City Council's housing and estate management activities.

5.39

Estate Management

To develop a system of area-based housing/estate management across the City.

POLICY H15

Private Rented Sector

The City Council has a programme in place to inspect all private rented dwellings, so as to enforce the statutory requirements in relation to private rented dwellings.

5.40

Private Rented Sector

To continue to implement a programme for inspection of all privately rented dwellings and to enforce the statutory requirements in relation to such accommodation so as to ensure the development of a well managed private rented sector.

POLICY H16

Special Needs Housing

Homeless Persons

Cork City Council has adopted a strategy titled *Homelessness: An Integrated Strategy for Cork* to cover the period 2001–2003. The strategy was formulated under the stewardship of Cork's Homeless Forum, a group comprising of representatives from Cork City Council, Cork County Council, the Southern Health Board and the various voluntary bodies involved in providing homeless accommodation and services. The purpose of the strategy is to deal in a planned and integrated manner with all the issues related to homelessness, including housing needs, health, education and training. The strategy identifies the keys to successful delivery of homeless services in Cork as integration of services, sound preventative strategies and partnership amongst stakeholders. The City Council is committed through its involvement with the Homeless Forum and in partnership with the other stakeholders to working towards achieving the goals and objectives of the strategy and developing a further strategy post 2003.

5.41

Accommodation for the Homeless

- *To work with the Homeless Forum (and in partnership with other stakeholders) in implementing both Homelessness: An Integrated Strategy for Cork and future strategies.*
- *To provide financial resources to the voluntary sector for the effective management of homeless accommodation.*
- *To promote targeted provision of accommodation for homeless persons.*

POLICY H17

Accommodation for Travellers

The City Council recognises the distinct requirements of the travelling community in relation to the provision of accommodation and other facilities. The *Traveller Accommodation Plan 2000–2004* was adopted under the *Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998*. The City Council's objectives in relation to this Plan were firstly, to execute an assessment of traveller accommodation needs, secondly to develop a policy statement based on the assessment findings and thirdly to formulate strategic initiatives to address the accommodation needs of travellers. The findings from the assessment of traveller-specific accommodation needs indicate that varied preferences exist among traveller families in Cork City for the various housing options, including standard and group housing schemes and that halting sites continue to be required to meet the needs of those families who chose this traveller specific accommodation and also nomadic families. The *Traveller Accommodation Plan* is currently undergoing a mid-term review and a re-assessment of need will be undertaken as part of the review. Recent experience to date indicates that a degree of flexibility may be needed in designing schemes so that provision for different types of accommodation

5.42

needs can be met on individual sites and adapted over time. Traveller accommodation at Hollyhill, Carrigrohane Road, Spring Lane and Mahon will be improved in consultation with the travelling community. Future traveller specific accommodation will generally be considered on lands zoned for Residential, Community and Local Services Uses and any other zone where housing is an acceptable use.

- 5.43** In addressing traveller accommodation needs, the City Council will endeavour to provide traveller specific accommodation with maximum integration between the travelling and settled communities, incorporated in an estate management model. In relation to health and education, the practice is to support and assist the work of key service providers and to establish a platform for consultation and collaboration. It is recognised that this process will help secure the optimum outcome relating to issues of design and management of accommodation ventures. Finally, policy relating to social inclusion concentrates on supporting equality legislation and practice.

POLICY H18

Accommodation for Travellers

- *To provide for appropriate accommodation for travellers having regard to the provisions of the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2000–2004 and subsequent plans.*
- *To provide housing options which ensure provision of diverse types of accommodation to meet the identified needs of travellers, to include the following:*
 - **Standard Housing:** *Many travelling families in Cork City have identified standard housing as their accommodation choice. As far as possible Cork City Council will accommodate travellers in their area of choice and meet their particular needs, recognising family and community links and having regard to the Scheme of Letting Priorities.*
 - **Group Housing:** *Cork City Council will address the needs of family groupings seeking group housing.*
 - **Halting Sites:** *The accommodation and facilities at halting sites will be improved.*
 - **Transient Halting Sites:** *Acknowledging the nomadic lifestyle of travellers, Cork City Council will work towards the provision of a transient halting site with Cork County Council.*
 - **Assistance in Providing Accommodation:** *Cork City Council will encourage approved bodies under S.6 of the Housing Act, 1992 in respect of the provision and management of accommodation for travellers. Cork City Council will encourage travellers to avail of measures such as shared ownership, annuity loans and other vehicles to provide accommodation.*



Estate Management for Traveller Accommodation

To facilitate a consultative approach between the City Council, the travelling and settled communities and to work towards the incorporation of the practice of estate management in traveller accommodation ventures.

POLICY H19**The Elderly**

Cork City Council has been active over the years in the provision and upgrading of accommodation for the elderly within its housing stock. The voluntary sector has also become active in providing for this sector in recent years. With an aging population and increasing demand, the City Council are conscious of the need to continue to increase provision. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on the provision of lifetime adaptable housing, the provision of easily accessible units within all centrally located social housing developments and the provision of sheltered housing schemes. Older people have specific needs that relate to access, medical care, security and personal safety among other issues. The location of accommodation for the elderly in central, convenient and easily accessible locations is therefore an important issue. Reference has been made previously to the down-sizing policy in place to encourage elderly people to downsize their family type accommodation to smaller and more manageable units.

5.44**Accommodation for the Elderly**

To provide and facilitate the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of the elderly and to encourage the location of elderly persons housing in central, convenient and easily accessible locations and to integrate such housing with mainstream housing where possible.

POLICY H20**People with Disabilities**

The voluntary housing sector is active in Cork City in terms of identifying and meeting the needs of those with disabilities. The City Council is working in partnership with the various voluntary sector groups and associations to facilitate further identification of needs and provision of housing for those with disabilities. The housing needs of those on the waiting list and existing tenants with disabilities are generally being met through the use of the *Disabled Persons Grants Scheme* which provides financial assistance for the adaptation of accommodation. The concept of Lifetime Adaptable Housing will be applied to all new housing, so that those with disabilities need not necessarily have to adapt and extend their accommodation and that if adaptations are necessary, they can be easily incorporated without undue expense and works to the original house design.

5.45

The City Council have adopted the *Barcelona Declaration* which aims to encourage local government to make provision for the inclusion of people with disabilities. The Declaration advocates the rights of disabled people to equal opportunities and recognises their contribution to the society and the environment they live in. Under the terms of the Declaration, local authorities undertake to consult people with disabilities and their advocates. Furthermore, each local authority agrees to devise a plan of action for the implementation of the Barcelona Declaration.

5.46**Housing for People with Disabilities**

- *To provide for the housing needs of those with disabilities through the provision and/or adaptation of appropriate accommodation*
- *To work with the voluntary sector in the identification and provision of special needs housing for those with disabilities.*

POLICY H21**Barcelona Declaration**

To develop a process for the implementation of the Barcelona Declaration so as to ensure its effective implementation across the City in both existing services and in new developments.

POLICY H22**Student Housing**

With two principal third level colleges in Cork City, UCC and CIT, along with a number of VECs and privately operated colleges, the demand for student accommodation is significant. In the academic year 2000/2001 there were at least 23,285 full time students attending colleges in Cork City, it is estimated

5.47

that over 50% of these students live in privately rented accommodation. Figures from the *Joint Housing Strategy* indicate that there are only 1,470 bed spaces available in student apartment complexes in the City and that the majority of students live in privately rented accommodation. Managed student apartment complexes on or adjacent to campuses or which have convenient access to the third level colleges are a preferable form of student housing. It is noted that research carried out by UCC indicates that there is a serious shortage of suitable accommodation for students with disabilities. This issue needs to be considered in assessing all student accommodation proposals in a manner compatible with surrounding residential amenities.

POLICY H23

Provision of Student Accommodation

To facilitate student accommodation on campuses or in locations which have convenient access to the Third Level Colleges (particularly by foot, bicycle and high quality and convenient public transport such as 'Green Routes'), in a manner compatible with surrounding residential amenities.

POLICY H24

Change of Use of Student Accommodation

To attach a condition to all permissions for student accommodation, which requires that change of use from student accommodation to any other type of accommodation shall require planning permission. In general such applications for change of use shall be resisted unless it can be adequately shown that an over provision of student accommodation exists in the City.

POLICY H25

Guidelines for Student Accommodation

To apply the 'Guidelines on Residential Developments for Third Level Students' particularly as they relate to location and design to all planning applications for student accommodation.

POLICY H26

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

To promote the provision of adequate accommodation for students with disabilities.

Provision of Community Facilities including Childcare and Healthcare

Childcare Facilities

5.48 National policy with regard to childcare is to increase the number of places available and to improve the quality of childcare services for the community. The provision of childcare facilities is now seen as being of the utmost necessity for economic and social well being. In addition the *National Anti Poverty Strategy* identifies childcare provision as a means of alleviating poverty and social exclusion. *The Childcare Facility Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2001) emphasise the role of planning in the promotion of increased childcare provision.

5.49 Policies will encourage the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations, including residential areas, City Centre, district and neighbourhood centres and in areas of employment. New residential areas have been identified as an important location for the provision of childcare facilities and it is considered that provision should be made for purpose built, easily accessible facilities in new developments of 75 dwellings or more. In existing housing developments, the establishment of small crèches will be considered, but the premises must remain primarily residential and traffic and access arrangements must not interfere with general residential amenity. Development control standards in relation to childcare facilities are outlined in Chapter 11: paras.11.65 to 11.66.

POLICY H27

Childcare Facilities

To encourage the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations, including residential areas, City Centre, district and neighbourhood centres and in areas of employment, in consultation with the Cork City Childcare Company. Such facilities will normally provide open space play areas, good accessibility and off-street parking and will be subject to the normal proper planning and development considerations.

Childcare Provisions in New Residential Developments

To require the provision of appropriate purpose built childcare facilities as an integral part of proposals for new residential development of more than 75 dwelling units.

POLICY H28**Community Facilities**

There is a need to provide a range of community facilities across the City, including community facilities such as halls and resource centres which are flexible enough to accommodate the different groups of users and uses ranging from the arts, youth work, recreation and sport. The City Council is responsible for the implementation of the Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund and is the conduit for providing grant aid for new community facilities and extensions to existing facilities. Findings from the *Recreation Facilities Needs Study* indicate that there is a need to look more closely at the dual use and management of existing facilities which tend to remain closed during the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays.

5.50

The City Council currently operate six library facilities across the City. Plans are at an advanced stage for the provision of a new library building at Tory Top Road, Ballyphehane and there are proposals for additional library facilities in Bishopstown, Mahon, Blackpool and in the Docklands area.

5.51

The provision of community facilities forms an essential part of the infrastructure for the development of the City and it is considered that the provision of such facilities should form part of the *Development Contributions Scheme*. The City Council will continue to co-operate with both Cork City Partnership and individual community associations in making such facilities available.

5.52**Community Facilities**

- *To encourage the provision and further development of community facilities which are flexible and capable of being managed for a number of different users and to encourage the further use of existing facilities.*
- *To develop a system for inclusion of community facilities and libraries in the Development Contribution Scheme.*

POLICY H29**New Library Facilities**

To provide for local library services in the following locations, Ballyphehane, Bishopstown, Mahon, Docklands and Blackpool.

POLICY H30**Healthcare Facilities**

There are a number of public, voluntary and private agencies responsible for the provision of health-care facilities in the City, with the Southern Health Board being the primary agency responsible for delivering health and personal social services. The main hospitals for the Southern Health Board Region are located in Cork City and most of the institutions are expected to undergo some degree of development, change of focus and possibly complete redevelopment over the Development Plan period. The voluntary and private hospitals operating within the City are experiencing similar development pressures. Cork University Hospital in particular is expected to expand rapidly, with services expected to double over the period of the Plan. The main environmental impacts of any redevelopment proposals are increased traffic, the requirement for additional car parking and public transport facilities. The City Council will work with all the health care providers in providing solutions to accessibility problems through a range of measures, including provision of Park and Ride facilities, improved public transport e.g. provision of additional green routes and a requirement that a mobility plan is submitted with all redevelopment proposals.

5.53

5.54 Healthcare policy is shifting from traditional hospital-based care towards community based care with an increased emphasis on meeting peoples' needs at a primary care level by local sector teams. Community services such as health centres, day care centres, sheltered housing, family resource centres, youth work programmes, residential care centres for children and those with mental handicaps and other disabilities all require locations which are integrated with new and existing communities and which are easily accessible.

POLICY H31

Healthcare Facilities

To facilitate the provision of healthcare facilities which will develop the system of healthcare and to also facilitate provision of appropriate community based care facilities, subject to proper planning considerations..

POLICY H32

Mobility Management Plans for Hospitals

That a transport mobility management plan be submitted with any major redevelopment proposals for hospitals within the City.

POLICY H33

Community-based Care Facilities

To provide for the integration of community based care facilities in both existing and new communities and to ensure that they are accessible to those with special needs such as the elderly and the disabled.