

Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 Housing Disability Steering Sub Group submission

The subgroup of the housing disability steering group are delighted that the group has been actively encouraged to share their views on the county development plan. The group is focused on housing under the framework of the national housing strategy for people with disabilities.

The entire document is inclusive in language and principles to all parts of society although could be seen as being nonspecific to the diverse needs of people with disabilities.

When looking at the section most pertinent to disabilities the title is 'specialist accommodation' in Section 3.9 Housing. Making the section more accessible could be labelling it as 'specialist housing/accommodation for people with disabilities'. Disability is mentioned under the communities section with reference to the Disability Plan. The amount of reading material involved is beyond by visual ability.

Being inclusive in terms of disabilities, there are wide ranging requirements and a suite of different options needed and acknowledged within the document, to meet the evolving housing needs of this diverse group of citizens living in Louth. Among these requirements we felt it important to note the need for lower level access accommodation, and wet rooms to be included as part of the universal design guidelines for all accommodation in any planning applications granted.

It is noted and welcomed in the document the part V accommodation will encompass bungalow accommodation where there are over 100 dwellings. The group submit that any part V accommodation would be able to have bungalow accommodation not just those over 100 dwellings. Where planning focuses on compact growth, to disregard the need for bungalow dwellings in our urban and rural areas could lead to situations where people cannot age in place nor be connected to their communities in the urban areas.

Accessibility and disability is not covered in each of the town, villages, and small village areas sections. A question posed by a member of the group was in the age of UNCRPD should present and intended accessibility and inclusion for persons with disability be included and detailed in each development section of each town village and small village?

We look forward to continuing to work with Louth County Council in supporting the housing needs of people with disabilities.

The views of the group have been captured by Sinead Gorman, Project Manager Housing Coordination HSE Mental Health CHO Midlands Louth Meath and do not include those of staff members of the council nor the housing agency.