

# Annual Report of the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government 2016



An Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála,  
Pobail agus Rialtais Áitiúil  
Department of Housing, Planning,  
Community and Local Government

## CONTENTS

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Secretary General's Statement .....	3
Who We Are .....	5
Us and our agencies .....	6
2016 Spending .....	7
The Department by numbers .....	10
Summary of Key Areas of Progress in 2016 .....	11
Our Strategic Goals .....	21
Corporate Information .....	47
APPENDICES .....	54
APPENDIX 1: Legislative Activity in 2016 .....	54
APPENDIX 2: Publications in 2016 .....	59
APPENDIX 3: Public Consultations undertaken in 2016 .....	62

An Irish version and an English version of the Annual Report (2016) are available on [www.housing.gov.ie](http://www.housing.gov.ie)

**Front Cover** – President Michael D Higgins laying a wreath at the statue of James Connolly outside the Department's Headquarters, the Custom House, during the year marking the centenary of 1916.

## SECRETARY GENERAL'S STATEMENT

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A General Election took place in February 2016 and a new Government was appointed in May. Changes were made to the configuration of some Departments of State, including this Department. We became the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government with certain functions in relation to the environment and rural affairs transferring to the Departments of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, and Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, respectively.



Following on from these changes and in accordance with the Public Service Management legislation, we published a new Statement of Strategy in November, setting out a new mission statement and clear high-level goals for each of our seven Divisions.

The reconfiguration of the Department was driven primarily by the Government's identification of housing as a top priority. Within little over two months of the formation of the new Government and well within the 100 day target set out in the Programme for Government, the *Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness: Rebuilding Ireland* was published, aiming to more than double housing output to reach at least 25,000 new homes per annum by 2021 and deliver 47,000 social housing units by 2021, supported by a budget of €5.35 billion.



Over the course of the year there was major progress in implementing the plan. Just over 19,000 social housing supports were provided in 2016, in excess of the target of 17,240. In December, a new *Strategy for the Rental Sector* was published and the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 was enacted. This legislation provides for large-scale housing development proposals to be submitted directly to An Bord Pleanála and also provided a legislative basis for new rent predictability measures outlined in the Rental Strategy. Measures to address homelessness were also the subject of concerted attention, in line with the priority outlined in Rebuilding Ireland.

An Bord Pleanála itself was the subject of an independent review which culminated in the publication of the *Organisational Review of An Bord Pleanála* in March. Meanwhile work continued during the year on the development of a new National Planning Framework, *Ireland 2040 – Our Plan*, a successor to the National Spatial Strategy.

On the Community front, a major public forum was held in November as part of the development of an implementation plan for the *Our Communities: A Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland* which was finalised in 2015. Local Economic and Community Plans were adopted in all 31 local authorities.

2016 was a Census year and a Constituency Commission was set up in July to review constituency boundaries for Dáil and European Parliament elections in light of the resulting new population data.

Met Éireann was successful in its bid, as part of an open tender competition, in retaining the contract to provide weather services to RTÉ and work also began during the year on the establishment of a National Flood Forecasting Service at Met.



Following on from a successful debut in 2015, when the Department won two awards, we were successful again at the Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards in December 2016, picking up one of only ten awards on the night with an ‘Excellence in Innovation’ award for the “Catchments.ie – Water from Source to Sea” project.

The work put into this project reflects the strong work ethic and commitment to public service that is found right across the Department. The project also reflects the way in which we work to implement our mission, not as a standalone entity but as a Department that works hand in glove across Government and with our other partners and stakeholders, particularly in the local government and community sectors. This will continue to be the hallmark of our work as we strive, in the context of the overall Civil Service Renewal Plan, to deliver the highest standards of service to the Government and the people of Ireland.



**John McCarthy**  
**Secretary General**

## **WHO WE ARE**

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### **OUR MISSION**

The Department's mission is to support the sustainable and efficient delivery of well-planned homes, effective local government and vibrant inclusive communities.

### **OUR STRATEGIC GOALS**

- A. To ensure that planning and building in our regions and communities contributes to sustainable and balanced development;
- B. To provide for a stable, sustainable supply of good quality housing;
- C. To provide a framework for the sustainable management of water resources from source to sea;
- D. To support and enable democratic, responsive and effective local government, effective electoral management and high quality fire services and emergency management;
- E. To promote and support the development of vibrant, inclusive communities and the community and voluntary sector;
- F. To serve society through the production and communication of reliable weather and climate information to protect life and property and to further enhance Met Éireann's role as the authoritative voice for high impact weather in Ireland.

### **OUR VALUES**

Our values sit within the wider values and standards frameworks set out in the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour, the Code of Ethics, the Dignity at Work Policy and the Civil Service Renewal Plan. They inform everything that we do in the Department in delivering for the public:

- Integrity and professionalism;
- Consistent high quality performance;
- Openness and transparency;
- Flexibility, responsiveness, innovation and learning;
- Consultation and partnership;
- Commitment to society and citizens; and,
- Pursuit of effectiveness, efficiency and value for money.



## US AND OUR AGENCIES



An Bord Pleanála - [www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie)

Ervia - [www.ervia.ie](http://www.ervia.ie)

Housing Sustainable Communities Agency - [www.housingagency.ie](http://www.housingagency.ie)

Housing Finance Agency - [www.hfa.ie](http://www.hfa.ie)

Irish Water - [www.water.ie](http://www.water.ie)

Irish Water Safety - [www.iws.ie](http://www.iws.ie)

Local Government Management Agency - [www.lgma.ie](http://www.lgma.ie)

Pobal - [www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie)

Residential Tenancies Board - [www.rtb.ie](http://www.rtb.ie)

The number of staff serving in the Department at the end of December 2016 equated to approximately 650 full-time equivalent posts.

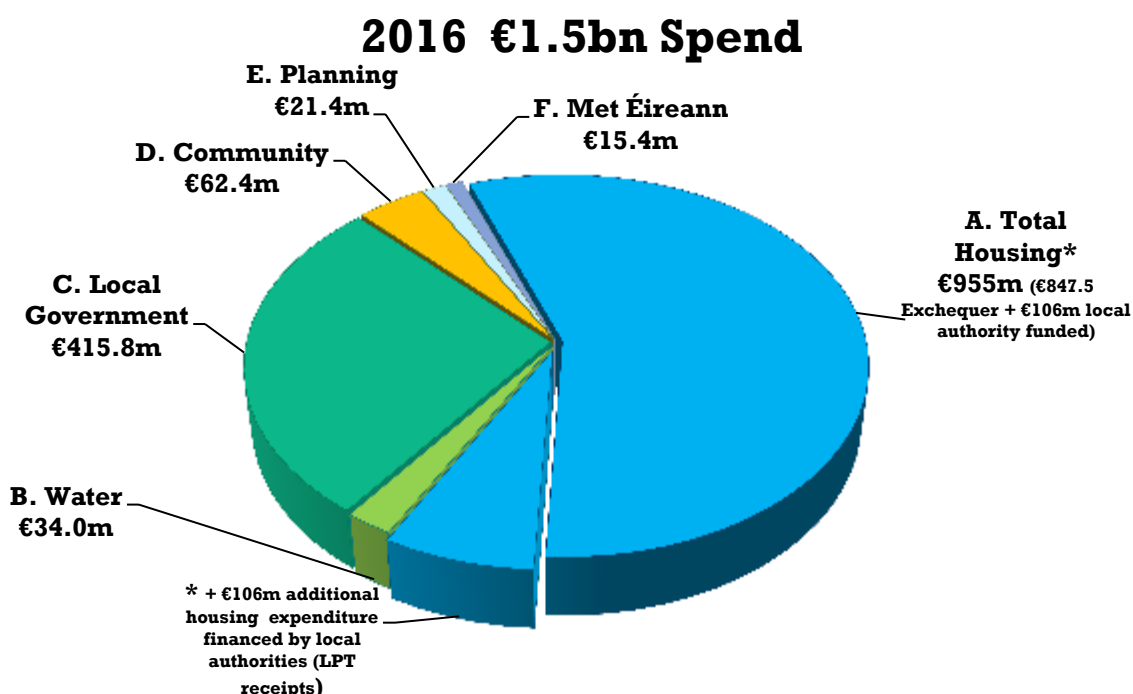
The work of the Department is carried out through seven Divisions – Planning, Housing Market Policy and Land Management; Social Housing Policy and Rental Policy; Housing Programme Delivery; Water; Local Government and Community; Corporate and Business Support; and Met Éireann. The Local Government Audit Service is also based in the Department.

### Locations

The Department is based in 4 main locations,

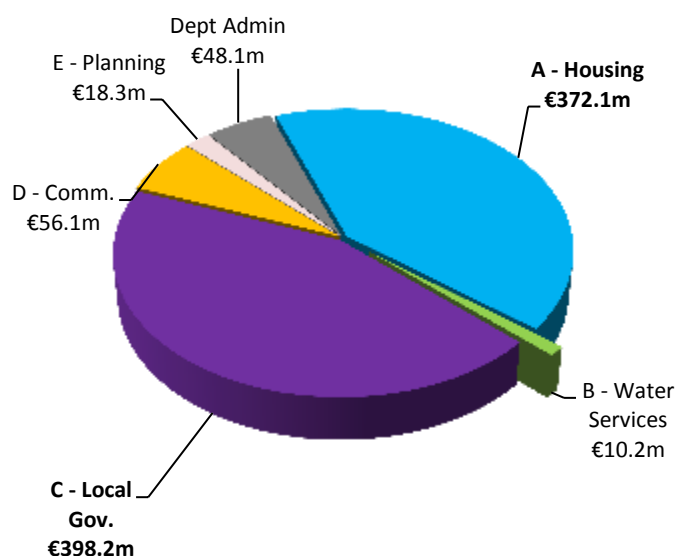
- Custom House, Dublin D01 W6X0
- Newtown Road, Wexford Y35 AP90
- Government Offices, Ballina Co. Mayo F26 E8N6
- Met Éireann Headquarters, Glasnevin Hill, Dublin 9 D09 Y921

## 2016 SPENDING

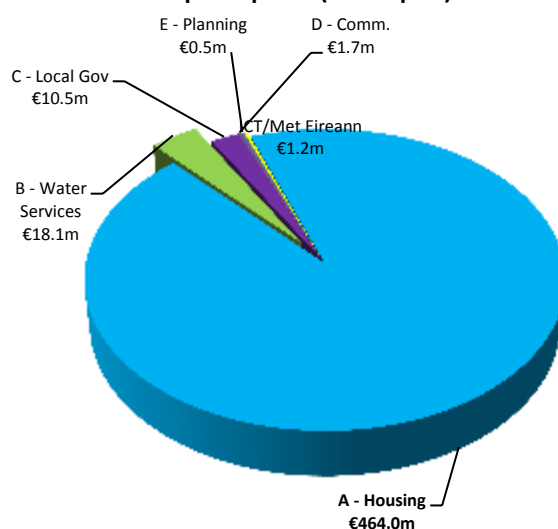


Overall gross expenditure on the Department's six strategic programmes totalled some €1.5bn in 2016. Departmental (exchequer) funding of €1.4 billion was supplemented by €0.106 billion expenditure by local authorities on a range of housing programmes; financed by surplus local property tax receipts.

**2016 Current spend (exchequer) €903m**



**2016 Capital spend (exchequer) €496m**



The exchequer funding element (€1.4 billion) comprised €903 million in current expenditure and €496 million in capital expenditure.



### **Civil Service Financial Management Shared Services (FMSS)**

Preparatory work as part of the Department's planned transition to the Civil Service Financial Management Shared Services (FMSS) in early 2019 continued throughout the year. This included participation in a number of expert working groups established by the FMSS project to set out clear business requirements and process design parameters in the context of the establishment of FMSS.

### **Internal Audit**

The Department's Internal Audit Unit completed seven internal audits and five audit reviews/follow-ups during 2016. The Department's Audit Committee held three meetings during the year.

### **Risk Management**

The Department's Risk Committee oversees, on behalf of the Management Board, the implementation of risk management in the Department, including by reviewing risk management policy and methodology, monitoring the management of risk across the Department and ensuring consistency in the classification of risk. In 2016, the Committee held seven meetings.

## THE DEPARTMENT BY NUMBERS

<b>€1.5bn</b>	Overall gross expenditure on the Department's six strategic programmes in 2016
<b>647.22</b>	The number of WTE posts within the Department
<b>4</b>	Main Department offices – Custom House; Glasnevin; Ballina and Wexford
<b>3</b>	Acts of the Oireachtas were enacted
<b>53</b>	Statutory Instruments were made
<b>3,170</b>	Representations were received
<b>2,674</b>	Parliamentary Questions were answered
<b>393</b>	FOI requests were processed
<b>19,055</b>	Total Social Housing Supports Provided
<b>12,075</b>	HAP tenancies set up in 2016
<b>3,000</b>	Sustainable Exits from Homelessness
<b>11,303</b>	Units Upgraded under Retrofitting Programme
<b>2,308</b>	Vacant Social Housing Units Brought Back to Productive Use
<b>248</b>	Unfinished developments resolved in 2016
<b>56</b>	Traveller specific housing units delivered
<b>8,010</b>	Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with Disabilities
<b>7,301</b>	People approved for alarms under the Senior Alert Scheme
<b>3,076</b>	Number of Local Community Groups assisted under the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)
<b>47,511</b>	Total number of disadvantaged individuals (15 years upwards) engaged under SICAP on a one-to-one basis.
<b>199</b>	Summer Water Safety Weeks
<b>17.4m</b>	Library Visits
<b>48.5m</b>	Sessions across all the Met Éireann publicly-available online platforms.

## SUMMARY OF KEY AREAS OF PROGRESS IN 2016

### Statement of Strategy

Following the change of Government in 2016, a new [Statement of Strategy 2016 – 2019](#) was published, which sets out the mission and the strategies we will pursue in order to support the sustainable and efficient delivery of well-planned homes, effective local government and vibrant inclusive communities.

### Housing Actions



[Rebuilding Ireland – Ireland's Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness](#), published in July 2016, seeks to address the many interacting structural constraints affecting housing supply in Ireland, through 113 actionable and time-bound measures across the five key pillars of:

- Addressing Homelessness
- Accelerating Social Housing
- Building More Homes
- Improving the Rental Sector and
- Utilising Existing Housing.

The overall aim of the Action Plan is to more than double current levels of housing output to at least 25,000 new homes per annum by 2021.

The Department has developed a Monthly Housing Activity Report charting activity levels across a number of key indicators of housing market activity, including planning permissions, housing commencements and housing completions. The first report is available at: <http://rebuildingireland.ie/news/january-housing-activity-report> and shows that, by end 2016 in particular, all key indicators were pointing to a new momentum in house-building activity.

Figure 1 below shows the rolling 12 month total of houses connected to the ESB Grid, a longstanding proxy for housing completions. During 2016 there were 14,932 house connections (compared to 12,666 in 2015). While the graph shows an encouraging trend, it also underlines the continuing challenge that faces the State, housing providers, funding institutions and all other relevant stakeholders in terms of adding to the momentum now in

evidence so that housing delivery reaches the target level of 25,000 homes per annum in the shortest possible timeframe.

**Figure 1: ESB Connections by month 2015 & 2016**

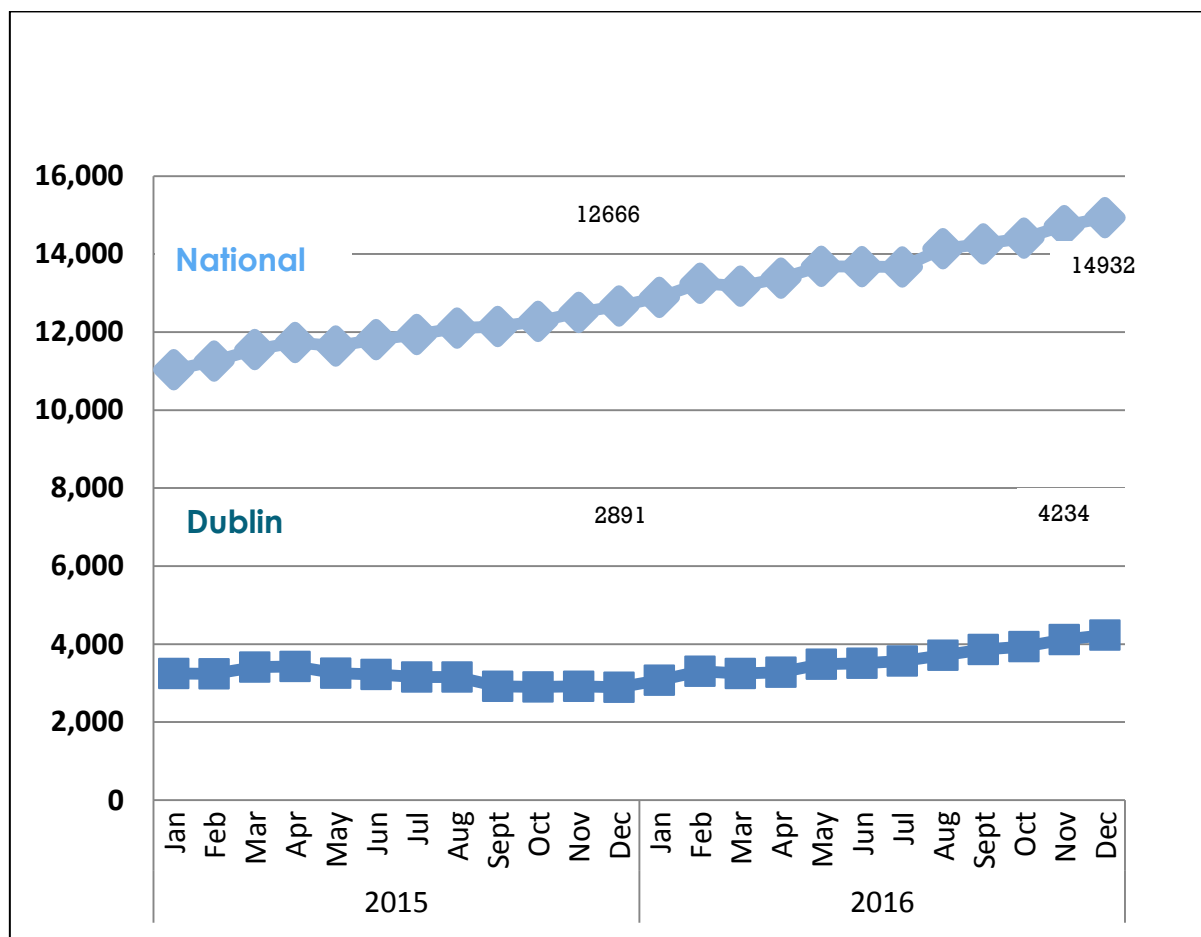


Figure 2 summarises some of the key housing outputs for 2016.

**Figure 2: Housing Outputs 2016**

<b>19,055</b>	Total Social Housing Supports Provided in 2016	<b>20,090</b>	Total Households supported by Rental Accommodation Scheme at 31 December 2016 <sup>1</sup>	<b>16,493</b>	Total Households supported by Housing Assistance Payments at 31 December 2016
<b>5,724</b>	Homes built, refurbished, leased or acquired	<b>1,256</b>	Additional Households supported by Rental Accommodation Scheme in 2016	<b>12,075</b>	Additional Households supported by Housing Assistance Payments in 2016
<b>665</b>	Units Constructed (Social Housing)	<b>11,303</b>	Units Upgraded under Retrofitting Programme	<b>1,078</b>	Units delivered by Approved Housing Bodies
<b>56</b>	Traveller Specific Units Delivered	<b>91,600</b>	Number of Households qualified for Social Housing Support <sup>2</sup>	<b>3,000</b>	Sustainable Exits from Homelessness
<b>8,010</b>	Grants Awarded to Assist People to Live at Home for Longer	<b>2,308</b>	Vacant Social Housing Units Brought Back to Productive Use		

### Housing Assistance Payment



The HAP scheme was rolled out to a further 10 local authorities in 2016; at the end of the year some 16,500 households (including homeless households) were having their housing needs met through the HAP scheme, of which 12,075 were supported within 2016 itself, meeting the scheme's Rebuilding Ireland target for the year. The maximum rent limits for the HAP scheme were reviewed and increased and additional flexibility to exceed the HAP rent limits was made available to all HAP local

<sup>1</sup> Provisional figure

<sup>2</sup> Housing Needs Assessment, September 2016

authorities. At year end, eligible households in 28 local authority areas could avail of the immediate and flexible social housing support which the HAP scheme provides.

### Unfinished Housing Developments



Before



After

In 2016 some 248 unfinished housing developments were resolved and a key finding from the [2016 Annual Progress Report on Actions to Address Unfinished Housing Developments](#) showed that the

number of developments still considered 'unfinished' from the 2016 survey has fallen dramatically to 420 developments nationally, which is an 85% reduction from the initial number of unfinished developments surveyed in 2010.

### Planning

Important work in the area of planning included the provision of training and guidance for planning authorities on the implementation of the Vacant Site Levy; the establishment of a Ministerial Working Group on Urban Renewal to deliver proposals for urban regeneration; the launch of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) co-funded designated urban centres grant scheme for 2014-2020, and the publication of the report of the independent organisational review of An Bord Pleanála.

In addition, the enactment of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016, gave effect to priority legislative measures contained in *Rebuilding Ireland*, including

- the introduction of temporary streamlined planning procedures to allow direct application to An Bord Pleanála in respect of large scale residential developments,
- the introduction of a time-bound system of rent predictability based on the concept of rent pressure zones,
- the enhancement of the operations of the Residential Tenancies Board in the handling of disputes between landlords and tenants,
- preventing landlords proposing to sell 10 or more rental units within a single multi-unit development at the same time from evicting the tenants except in exceptional circumstances;

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Bill was also published in 2016, and will provide for the establishment of a new independent Office of the Planning Regulator, the statutory



underpinning of the proposed new National Planning Framework as a successor to the 2002 National Spatial Strategy, and the introduction of ePlanning (online submission of planning applications and appeals) across the local government sector and An Bord Pleanála.

### Local and Community Development

The [Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland](#) was published in early 2016 following public consultation in 2015 and extensive work by the Inter-Departmental Group on Local and Community Development. The Framework Policy will be implemented on a cross-government basis and will seek to secure a joined-up, collaborative and participative approach to local and community development at local level. The development and implementation of policies, programmes and other interventions will be carried out by central and local government in line with the Framework Policy's five core objectives.

In November 2016, key local development and community development stakeholders met at the **'Our Communities – National Forum'** at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham to have their say on the development of an implementation plan for the Framework Policy. The event was hosted by the Department and attended by over 230 participants.

### Local Economic and Community Plans



DCC LECP launch at NPC 2016

Each local authority has developed a 6-year Local Economic and Community Plan to promote and support the economic and community development of the relevant area. In September 2016 at the National Ploughing Championships, Minister Coveney officially launched the Plans.

### Social Inclusion and Communities

Overall funding of €42.5m was disbursed to organisations with a focus on social inclusion and disadvantage.

### Libraries



In January 2016, the Department launched the Libraries Capital Investment Programme 2016-2021. Over the lifetime of the programme, the Department will invest approximately €23m in 17 capital projects and the roll out

of the My Open Library service. This will be matched by some €35m of local authority own funds.

The 'My Open Library' initiative was launched in June 2016, extending public library opening hours during unstaffed hours, while continuing to provide regular staffed times for ongoing delivery of service, supporting customers, developing community engagement and hosting events. Funding of €1.1m has issued to participating Local Authorities to extend an initial pilot phase which will shape the future development and implementation of the service across the broader library network.

In 2016, there were 17.4 million library visits and 3.8 library book issues per capita.

### **Seniors Alert Scheme**

While administration of the Seniors Alert Scheme was transferred to Pobal in 2015, the Department retains overall management of the Scheme. In 2016, 7,301 individuals were approved under the scheme and 7,219 alarms were installed, with the balance awaiting installation. At the end of 2016, 568 organisations had been approved to support vulnerable older people under this scheme. A review of the Scheme was commissioned by Pobal in 2016, with a view to facilitating input into the design of the next iteration of the Seniors Alert Scheme.

### **Public Participation Networks (PPNs)**

Public Participation Networks are now established in all local authority areas. During 2016, the Department advanced a number of important initiatives to promote the development of PPNs including the production of a PPN User Guide, the roll-out of a new data base system, the establishment of a National PPN Advisory Group and the provision of funding to underpin the overall process.

### **Scheme to Support National Organisations**

A new Scheme commenced on 1 July 2016, for a period of 3 years, with €16.7 million allocated to 71 organisations. The full list of allocations is published on the Department's website at:

<http://www.housing.gov.ie/community/community-and-voluntary-supports/scheme-support-national-organisations/2016-2019-allocations>

### **Electoral Management**

Legislative and operational support was provided for the holding of the Dáil General Election and the Seanad General Election in 2016.

A Constituency Commission was established on 14 July 2016 to review the constituencies for the election of members of Dáil Éireann and of the European Parliament having regard to the results of Census 2016. The Commission is due to report by early July 2017.

The Electoral (Amendment) Act 2016 was enacted to provide for the use of the register of electors for the purpose of selecting members of the Citizens' Assembly.

### **Local Authority Waters and Communities Office**



In February 2016, the Local Authority Waters and Communities Office (LAWCO) was established to promote better management of our streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater. LAWCO operates as a shared service on behalf of all local authorities, with two key objectives:

- to co-ordinate the water quality work of local authorities through agreed regional structures, thereby providing a collaborative approach to river catchment management; and
- to engage local communities and promote public participation in the management of our water environment.

### **Expert Commission on Domestic Public Water Services**

The Expert Commission on Domestic Public Water Services was established on 29 June 2016 to assess and make recommendations on the funding of domestic public water services in Ireland and improvements in water quality. The Expert Commission published its report in November 2016 which was then submitted for consideration to a specially established Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Funding of Domestic Public Water Services.

### **Marine Planning and Foreshore**

In 2016, the Government assigned lead responsibility to the Department for the implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and Regulations transposing the MSP Directive into national law were enacted.

The Minister also approved Ireland's Programme of Measures (PoMs) required by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive with the aim of achieving good environmental status in our maritime area by 2020. The PoMs were formally lodged with the EU Commission on approval.

### Marine Litter Initiative



As part of the formal programme of measures for the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the Department supported the development of a pilot project in 2016 relating to marine litter with the aim of heightening awareness of the issue and influencing changes in behaviour which will eventually lead to a reduction of litter which ends up in the marine environment. In November, the Minister launched the Global Citizen Marine Environment Module of An Taisce's Green Schools Programme. Other An Taisce Initiatives supported by the Department include The Blue Flag Scheme, relating to water quality and amenity standards at bathing waters and marinas throughout Ireland; the Green Coast Awards for less populated bathing waters; The #2Minute Beach Clean Station campaign, and The Photographic Awards which heighten awareness of our marine environment.

### Met Éireann



In 2016, Met Éireann successfully tendered for the RTÉ contract to provide weather services to the national public service broadcaster. It also retained accreditation to the ISO 9001:2008 quality management standard and achieved a Certificate of Compliance with the Single European Skies Common Requirements Regulation (EC 1035/2011).

An important step forward in our flood forecasting capability was also recorded in 2016 with the establishment, by Met Eireann, of a Steering Group for the National Flood Forecast and Warnings Services and the assignment of the first staff resources to the Flood Forecast Centre.

Other important progress from Met Éireann included a successful tender for the Climate Modernisation Project as well as maintenance of the quality assured meteorological and climatological monitoring network. Furthermore a new prototype geolocation forecast system was put in place. The Met Éireann road-ice prediction system was also upgraded to enhance understanding of forecasting certainty.

### Co-ordinated Response to Extended Flooding



On the emergency management front, the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) co-ordinated and led the Government response, over 42 days, to the extensive flooding in December 2015 and Jan 2016. €18m in funding was distributed to local authorities for clean-up operations.

### Fire Safety



National Fire Safety Week was held from 3rd to 10th October. Run jointly with the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, the aim of the initiative was to enhance fire safety, particularly in the home. The theme for the 2016 National Fire Safety Week theme was “*STOP Fire – Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives*” with the campaign targeting households who do not have smoke alarms fitted and encouraging everyone to ensure that all smoke alarms are in good working order.

2016 saw a welcome reduction in fatalities resulting from fires, which reached the lowest recorded level in more than 50 years. However, each of the 16 deaths in 2016 was a death too many and there will therefore be no let-up in our continued focus on fire safety awareness and prevention. In response to the Carrickmines tragedy of October 2015, which resulted in 10 deaths, we published the [Report on the Programme to Review and Enhance Fire Safety in Local Authority Provided Traveller Accommodation](#) during 2016.

### Irish Water Safety



In 2016, the Department funded the delivery of ‘special projects’ by Irish Water Safety which sought to raise the awareness of water safety best practices among the public and further influence the public’s skills, attitudes and behaviours in aquatic environments. A total of 199 Summer Water Safety Weeks were held throughout the country in 2016.

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<sup>3</sup> Photo courtesy of OPW



### Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards



The Department was successful at the Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards in December 2016, where ‘*Catchments.ie - water from source to sea*’ won the award in the category of Excellence in Innovation. Catchments.ie is a new website publicly presenting, in a unified way, water quality data previously held internally by various different state bodies (e.g. EPA, DECLG, Local Authorities). The project has delivered a world class website as an inter-agency collaboration between three tiers of water governance in Ireland – the Department, the EPA, and the new Local Authorities Waters and Communities Office - aiming to enable community participation in the development of River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) and engagement in implementation actions.

### ICT Developments

The Department commenced roll-out of the *Build-to-Share* initiative on an incremental basis in 2016. *Build-to-Share* is a key strategic objective in the Public Service ICT Strategy. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has built a series of applications specific to the needs of Government Departments including for managing and processing internal submissions (eSubmissions), Parliamentary Questions (ePQs) and document management (eDocs). The eSubmissions system went live in the Department on 8th December 2016, with other applications planned to follow in 2017.

### Custom House Visitor Centre



As part of the Easter 1916 Commemorative programme, the doors of the Custom House Visitor Centre were opened to the public for a special exhibition outlining the history of the Custom House with a focus on the “Decade of Centenaries”.<sup>4</sup> The exhibition described events in the building during Easter Week 1916 and considered the history of the Custom House and its occupants from then until 1921, when the building was completely destroyed by fire during the War of Independence. Over 30,000 people visited the Custom House Visitor Centre in 2016.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.decadeofcentenaries.com/>



## **GOAL A- TO ENSURE THAT PLANNING AND BUILDING IN OUR REGIONS AND COMMUNITIES CONTRIBUTES TO SUSTAINABLE AND BALANCED DEVELOPMENT**

### **National Planning Framework (NPF); Ireland 2040 – Our Plan**



Work on the development of a new *National Planning Framework* (NPF) to succeed the *National Spatial Strategy* continued in 2016 including developing and managing an inclusive consultation process to get input from key stakeholders and the general public. The NPF will set the strategic agenda for planning in Ireland, taking account of our wider island, European and global contexts and will coordinate policies and investment decisions in areas such as regional competitiveness, urban and rural development, transport, energy and communications, natural resource development, well-being, climate change and environmental quality. It will represent the Government's policy on how nationally significant planning matters should be addressed by relevant Government Departments and Agencies.

The *National Planning Framework* will be published in 2017 following further consultation and engagement with stakeholders and the general public.

### **Supporting sustainable national and regional development**

The planning process continued to play a proactive and facilitative role in 2016 in supporting and guiding the process of economic recovery and sustainable national and regional development. The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 (enacted on 23 December 2016) incorporates a number of legislative commitments contained in *Rebuilding Ireland* aimed at enhancing housing supply and the functioning of the private rented sector including:

- the introduction of temporary streamlined planning procedures to allow direct application to An Bord Pleanála in respect of large scale residential developments (100+ housing units and student accommodation developments with 200+ bed spaces), the introduction of maximum time-limits for the determination of local authority own development proposals, including social housing and infrastructure servicing both public and private development;
- providing for further limited extensions of planning permission for specified housing proposals;
- the introduction of new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening arrangements to streamline the process of determining planning consent for, and the subsequent undertaking of works, including emergency flood relief works;

- the introduction of a time-bound system of rent predictability based on the concept of rent pressure zones;
- the enhancement of the operations of the Residential Tenancies Board in the handling of disputes between landlords and tenants;
- preventing landlords proposing to sell 10 or more rental units within a single multi-unit development at the same time from evicting the tenants except in exceptional circumstances, and
- facilitating Higher Education Institutes to borrow monies from the Housing Finance Agency for the purposes of financing student accommodation provision.

Planning permissions were granted for a total of 16,375 new homes in 2016, an increase of 26% on permissions granted during 2015. Commencement Notices for 13,234 new homes were submitted in the year up to end December 2016, an increase of 51% year on year, and 14,932 new homes were completed during 2016, an increase of 18% on 2015 (12,666).

The Department continues to develop and support initiatives to promote urban renewal and regeneration. A Ministerial Working Group on Urban Regeneration was established in 2016 to deliver proposals for urban regeneration measures, complementing the existing regeneration programme under the Department's Social Housing Capital Programme, as well as other social regeneration initiatives already under way.



Before



After

In 2016 some 248 unfinished housing developments were resolved and a key finding from the [2016 Annual Progress Report on Actions to Address Unfinished Housing Developments](#) showed that the number of developments still considered 'unfinished' has fallen dramatically to 420, which is an 85% reduction from the initial number of unfinished developments surveyed in 2010. Just over €6 million was obtained by local authorities from bonds during 2016 to carry out essential works to the public areas of developments, such as the roads, footpaths, lighting, open spaces and water services, with 60 previously 'unfinished' developments completed to 'Taking in Charge' standard.

A new *Rebuilding Ireland* [Housing Land Map](#) developed by the Department in 2016 has been published online, with details of over 700 local authority-owned sites; 73 sites owned by the

Housing Agency; and 30 sites owned by Government Departments or semi-State agencies who have earmarked lands suitable for housing. These sites total c.2,000 hectares, with the potential to deliver 50,000 homes. The map will be updated regularly to record the development and use of these lands to ensure that the best possible information is publicly available.

In addition, work continued on upgrading the public viewer to facilitate additional online planning services through Myplan.ie for use by State and private actors.

### National Taking in Charge Initiative

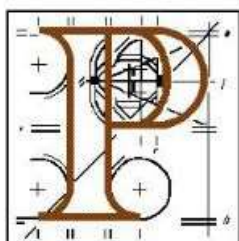
The National Taking in Charge Initiative (NTICI) was launched by the Department in 2016 to support and accelerate overall national and local action on the taking in charge process of housing estates.

A specific focus of the initiative was to expedite progress by local authorities and relevant stakeholders in addressing a build-up of pending cases of housing developments not yet taken in charge. Under the terms of the NTICI, developments subject to valid taking in charge applications were eligible for inclusion in the call for funding proposals. Of the funding allocated, €7.7 million was paid out to Local Authorities in respect of almost 330 developments containing 13,400 units.

A report on the key lessons learned from the valuable knowledge and experience gained under the NTICI, which will help to inform and progress future taking in charge plans, will be published in 2017.

### Review of An Bord Pleanála

#### **An Bord Pleanála**



The [\*Report on the Organisational Review of An Bord Pleanála\*](#) by an independent expert review group was published on 14 March 2016. The report, which made a total of 101 recommendations, was commissioned with the objective of ensuring that the Board was appropriately positioned and fit for purpose from an organisational perspective to effectively carry out its legislative mandate. Some of the key findings and recommendations of the review included –

- the simplification of certain aspects of the planning legislation,
- improvements to the processes, systems and practices of An Bord Pleanála,

- the provision of greater access to environmental and other specialist advice,
- the holding of mandatory pre-application discussions for all potential Strategic Infrastructure Development proposals,
- revised arrangements for the appointment of Board members etc.

A High-Level Implementation Group was established to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the Review Group Report, with the Terms of Reference and Plan for Implementation published in November 2016.

### **Student Accommodation**

In addition to the measures contained in the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 to facilitate the delivery of student accommodation projects, a system was established between the Department, the Higher Education Authority and the Department of Education and Skills to monitor the progress of new student accommodation projects from initial project formulation through the planning process to construction and completion. To the end of Q4 2016, an additional 1,117 bed spaces of purpose built student accommodation were completed subsequent to the publication of *Rebuilding Ireland*.

### **Statutory Plans**

The Department has a role in the review of statutory Development Plans and Local Area Plans, taking account of planning policy and legislation including the National Spatial Strategy, Regional Planning Guidelines and other statutory and non-statutory guidance. In 2016, over 58 plans were reviewed and the Minister had occasion to use his powers under Section 31 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 in two cases.

### **Planning and Development (Amendment) Bill 2016**

A new Planning and Development (Amendment) Bill 2016 was published in January 2016 primarily to give legislative effect to planning-related recommendations of the Final Report of the Tribunal of Inquiry into Certain Planning Matters (otherwise known as the Mahon Tribunal), including the establishment of a new independent Office of the Planning Regulator. The Department drafted an implementation plan with regard to setting up the Office in anticipation of the enactment of the Bill. The Bill also provides statutory underpinning to the proposed new National Planning framework as a successor to the 2002 National Spatial Strategy.

### **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Urban Centres Grant Scheme 2014-2020**

The ERDF co-funded designated urban centres grant scheme covering the period 2014-2020 was launched in January 2016, supported by €40 million in ERDF funding with at least matching funding on the selected projects being provided by local authorities. The combined investment on the selected projects will result in an overall investment of €128m on urban revitalisation and sustainable urban transport projects in the period to 2020.

## GOAL B - TO PROVIDE FOR A STABLE, SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY OF GOOD QUALITY HOUSING.

### Housing Delivery



A major development in the housing sector during 2016 saw the publication of *Rebuilding Ireland, an Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness*. Launched on 19 July 2016, it sets out 84 actions under five pillars designed to increase housing supply to 25,000 new homes every year by 2021, as well as delivering 47,000 new social housing units, through an investment of €5.35 billion. A further €200 million is provided for the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund for investment in key enabling infrastructure, to open up lands for early development. In terms of progress, detailed *Rebuilding Ireland* quarterly reports are published on the dedicated website [www.rebuildingireland.ie](http://www.rebuildingireland.ie),

outlining specific progress on implementation of each action.

During 2016, overall housing activity, as measured by connections to the ESB Network, increased to almost 15,000 units, compared to some 12,500 units in 2015. In terms of social housing, 19,055 households had their needs met, ahead of the target of just over 17,000 households set for the year, supported by expenditure of over €935 million. As part of the overall social housing delivery, 5,724 homes were built, refurbished, leased or acquired, exceeding the target of 4,240 homes.

**Figure 3: Social Housing Build/Refurb/Acquire/Lease 2016**

Delivery Method	2016 No. of Homes Delivered
<b>Build</b>	665
<b>Voids</b>	2,308
<b>Acquisitions</b>	1,959
<b>Leasing</b>	792
<b>Total:</b>	<b>5,724</b>

Two new schemes were announced in 2016 to support local authorities and AHBs in the provision of social housing. The Repair and Leasing Scheme, targeted at owners of vacant houses, aims to fund the repair of vacant properties and make them available as new homes for families on local authority waiting lists. Under the Buy and Renew Scheme, €25m will be



made available in 2017 to support Councils and Approved Housing Bodies purchase and renew housing units in need of remediation, and make them available for social housing use.

In July, eight sites located in Cork, Galway, Waterford, Clare, Kildare and Roscommon, were announced for development of social housing through Public Private Partnerships, with a capital value of approximately €100m.

### Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)

The Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) is a key element of Pillar 3 of *Rebuilding Ireland*. This addresses a range of key issues in the housing policy and supply area, which indicates that targeted investment in enabling infrastructure to activate large housing development areas is one of the ways in which Government considers that additional supply of social and private housing for sale or rent can be brought forward.



Pillar 3 of *Rebuilding Ireland* focuses on increasing overall housing supply and seeks to address the severe housing shortage in urban areas. As part of the announcement in July 2016, in line with the commitment in the Programme for Government, the original commitment was doubled from €100 million to €200 million, with €150 million of funding from the Exchequer and matching funding of €50 million to come from Local Authorities.

In August 2016, local authorities were invited to submit proposals for investment in public infrastructure such as roads, bridges and amenity spaces, with the objective of relieving critical infrastructural blockages, which would in turn enable the accelerated delivery of housing on key development sites and improve the viability of new housing projects in urban areas of high demand for housing. The closing date for proposals was 14 October 2016 with a total of 74 proposals received from 21 local authorities, working in conjunction with housing providers, including private developers, home builders and Approved Housing Bodies.

A LIHAF Advisory Group was established to undertake an evaluation and assessment of LIHAF bid proposals following the approach set out in the Call for Proposals. This Advisory Group was drawn from a number of areas of the Department to take advantage of the breadth of expertise available, including planning, quantity surveying and housing delivery experts. In December 2016, the Advisory Group submitted a report to the LIHAF Management Committee

on progress to date in evaluating the proposals. The evaluation of proposals will be completed in early 2017.

## **Rental Sector**



The [Strategy for the Rental Sector](#) was published by the Department in December 2016 setting out a range of measures under the headings of Security, Supply, Standards and Services which will address both immediate and long term issues affecting the supply, cost and accessibility of rental accommodation. The commitment to develop an affordable rental model contained in the *Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan* is to be progressed through kick-starting supply in Rent Pressure Zones. Lands held by local authorities in such zones are to be brought to market on a competitive tendering basis, with a view to leveraging the value of the land to deliver the optimum number of units for rent, targeting middle income households, in mixed tenure developments.



A rent predictability measure also came into effect in December in the four Dublin Local Authority areas and in Cork city. In these Rent Pressure Zones, rent increases will be capped at 4% per annum for the next 3 years.

Legislation was introduced extending the duration of tenancies from 4 to 6 years and increasing the protection of tenancies where termination is sought on grounds of sale of large numbers of properties in a single development.

The Department also completed a review of the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations to bring them into line with modern requirements, focussing on tenant safety and including new measures covering heating appliances, carbon monoxide and window safety.

## **Social Housing Construction**

Working with local Authorities and AHBs, significant progress has been made in advancing a suite of social housing projects, through a range of delivery mechanisms and programmes. By the end of 2016 a rich construction pipeline was in place, which will see over 8,430 new social houses being built over the coming years.

### Acquisition Fund

Actions 2.5 and 5.6 of *Rebuilding Ireland* commit to providing the Housing Agency with €70m in 2017 for a Housing Agency Acquisition Fund with the specific focus of engaging with banks and investment companies to establish a revolving fund to acquire some 1,600 units over the period to 2020 for social housing use. The Fund will be replenished by the Agency through the sale of units primarily to the Approved Housing Body (AHB) sector.

The importance of facilitating the Housing Agency to acquire units from bank and investor portfolios during 2016 and in advance of the establishment of the Acquisition Fund in 2017 was also recognised and €6,741,000 was provided to the Agency in the latter part of 2016 to commence the acquisition process on available units. 17 units were fully acquired during this period, and the acquisition process was commenced on many more units where the acquisition would be completed in early 2017.

A governance arrangement for the €70 million Acquisition Fund was also developed and put in place during Q4 2016 to ensure that the Fund would be fully operational by January 2017.

### National Voids Programme

The Department has placed high priority on the provision of support to local authorities in returning vacant units to productive use. In 2016, funding of almost €35 million was provided which enabled local authorities to return 2,308 vacant units back into use.

### Housing Assistance Payment Scheme



The rent limits under the Rent Supplement and the Housing Assistance Payment schemes were increased across the county with effect from 1 July 2016. Furthermore, additional flexibility above the existing HAP rent limits was made available to all HAP local authorities from the same date. This

means that each local authority has statutory discretion to agree to a HAP payment up to 20% above the prescribed maximum rent limit in circumstances where it is necessary, because of local rental market conditions, to secure appropriate accommodation for a household that requires it.

An additional 12,075 households were supported by the Housing Assistance Payment scheme in 2016, meeting the Rebuilding Ireland Target. 3,568 of those additional households

transferred from the Rent Supplement scheme (approx. 30%). A total of 16,493 households were being supported by Housing Assistance Payments at 31 December 2016.

In 2016 the Department also commenced work on reviewing the disparate systems of differential rents for social housing across local authorities to ensure that housing supports, including the HAP, are fair and sustainable and prioritise those on the lowest incomes.

### Homelessness



In September, details were published of the progress made in the Homelessness Pillar in *Rebuilding Ireland*, including an expansion of the Rapid Build programme to deliver 1,500 units by the end of 2018 and the expansion of HAP Homeless Tenancies, as well as measures to increase social housing. At the end of 2016, a total of 350 rapid build homes were advancing through various stages of delivery, including construction. An Office of Government Procurement Framework Agreement was put in place by end-2016 to facilitate accelerated delivery of rapid build homes during 2017 and 2018.

In 2016, over 3,000 households exited homelessness, a record level of activity in a single year, reflecting the significant on-going work being done to help households and individuals transition from homelessness to more permanent housing solutions.

810 new tenancies were set up under the HAP Homeless pilot in 2016, significantly exceeding the 550 tenancy target set.

Three new homeless facilities were put in place in Dublin ahead of the Christmas period, as well as a further upgraded facility, providing an additional 206 beds for those who were sleeping rough and providing for additional capacity to ensure that all those seeking accommodation could be catered for.

### Regeneration

The Department continued in 2016 to support local authorities in delivering an ambitious programme of regeneration projects, including large scale projects in Dublin, Cork and Limerick. In December, the Minister launched the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan Review which outlines the good progress being made.



In Dublin the regeneration programme in Dolphin House commenced in 2016 and great progress is being made with 100 new units being delivered. Work also continues in other regeneration projects in Cork, Dundalk, Sligo and Tralee.

Over €48 million was expended under the National Regeneration Programme in 2016.

### **Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme**

In 2016 local authorities continued with Phase 1 works which are targeted at cavity wall insulation as well as attic insulation and completed 10,403 units. Phase 2, which involves more extensive and costly external insulation, continued on a pilot basis in a number of local authorities with 900 units completed. Total expenditure under the scheme in 2016 amounted to almost €23 million.

### **Traveller Accommodation**

An expert, independent review of capital and current funding for traveller-specific accommodation, in the context of the local authority Traveller Accommodation Programmes, began in September 2016. The National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (NTACC) has agreed a sub-group to examine and analyse the findings of the review, with a view to preparing a report for the Minister as soon as possible after its receipt.

Fifty-six Traveller specific units of accommodation were delivered in 2016.

### **Public Private Partnership**

The Social Housing PPP Programme became operational in 2016. Work commenced on the design and delivery of the first bundle of six sites, with a capital value of €100m. These are located in Dublin City, South Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow and Louth and are to deliver over 500 social housing units. Eight sites located in Cork, Galway, Waterford, Clare, Kildare and Roscommon were announced for development under the second PPP bundle in July 2016. These also have a combined capital value of €100m, and are to deliver over 450 units.

### **Incentivising private finance to deliver additional social housing**

Existing leasing mechanisms utilised under the Social Housing Current Expenditure Programme provide that rental payments are made by the State over an agreed long-term time

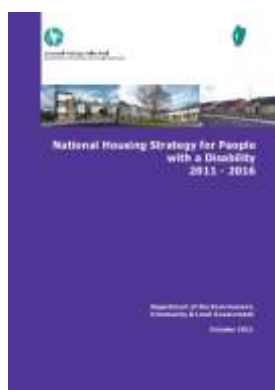
period, typically 20 years. In return, the housing unit is made available for social housing purposes.

A revised lease was significantly developed in 2016. This is to facilitate larger institutional private investors to become involved in the financing of social housing. Market engagement in the development of the revised scheme was undertaken. The new arrangements arising from this process are being tested to ensure that there is no negative impact arising from how they are viewed and treated in respect of the State's General Government Balance. Work on the scheme is well advanced, with details to be announced in mid-2017.

### **NTMA Private Sector Housing Fund**

Action 2.4 of *Rebuilding Ireland* provides that the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) and the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund will work with the private sector to establish a funding vehicle capable of facilitating off-balance sheet investment in delivering social and private housing. Work on developing the new funding vehicle within the NTMA commenced in 2016.

### **Housing Inclusion Supports**



The [\*National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability\*](#) (2011-2016) has been extended to 2020 to continue to deliver on its aims and to guide and progress policy in the coming years. [\*The Second Progress Report on the implementation of the Strategy\*](#) was published in December.

Ring-fenced funding of €10 million was made available by the Department in 2016 under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) to support the HSE to accelerate its deinstitutionalisation programme. €2 million was approved in 2016 towards accommodation for people who had moved out of congregated settings. More proposals will be invited under the Capital Assistance Scheme to support the provision of community-based accommodation for people transitioning from congregated settings in 2017 and beyond.

There is continuing investment in supporting adaptations for existing social housing where required in relation to meeting the needs of people with disabilities. Funding for the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with Disabilities was increased by 10% in 2016 and 8,010 households benefitted through funding of almost €40m. The value and social



benefits of the scheme have been recognised in *Rebuilding Ireland*, specifically the importance of supporting the continued independent occupancy of their own homes by older people and people with a disability and also to facilitate early return from hospital stays. Greater liaison between hospitals and the local authorities in relation to hospital discharges has been implemented in 2016 and this, as well as the Department's proactive approach to reallocating funds where there is a strong take up at local authority level, is leading to positive outcomes.

### Voluntary and Cooperative Housing

The transition to statutory regulation of the AHB sector continued, in the form of the Voluntary Regulation Code, administered by the interim Regulation Office. A total of 244 AHBs have now signed up to the Code, meaning more than 90% of the 30,000 total estimated housing stock in the sector, and their tenants, are now protected.

### Innovation Fund

Action 2.13 of *Rebuilding Ireland* undertook to introduce an Innovation Fund by Q1 2017 to support the development by 'Tier 3' or larger AHBs of innovative financial models to further enhance the contribution of the sector to the delivery of additional social housing and maximise the opportunity to leverage off-balance sheet funding opportunities.

The fund was established during 2016, and applications for funding were sought from 'Tier 3' AHB's.

### Lending by the Housing Finance Agency



Section 51 of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 (No. 17 of 2016) amended the Housing Finance Agency Act 1981 to provide that the Housing Finance Agency (HFA) may lend finance to Institutes of Higher Education for the provision of student accommodation. It also provides that the HFA may lend to the Housing Agency for the purchase of vacant properties for onward sale to local authorities and approved housing bodies for social housing purposes subject to the approval of the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

In 2016, a new €200 million long term loan facility was agreed between the European Investment Bank and the Housing Finance Agency.

### **Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016**

The Department is committed to supporting the practical implementation of the concept of sustainable communities. In January 2016 a new scheme for the purchase of existing local authority houses came into effect. The Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016, provided for in the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014, is designed to promote sustainable communities and enable the State to share in profits made from house re-sales in a reasonable period after purchase by tenants at a discount.

## GOAL C – TO PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES FROM SOURCE TO SEA

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### Irish Water



Detailed information regarding Irish Water's progress in delivering water services will be set out in its Annual Report for 2016.

Irish Water was financed by domestic charges (up to the suspension of Domestic Water Charges in July 2016) and non-domestic charges, Government subvention and third-party borrowing. During 2016, the Department oversaw the provision of an operational subvention to Irish Water of €652.1m. Following the suspension of domestic water charges it became necessary to seek an increase in subvention. The originally agreed Government subvention for Irish Water in 2016 of €479m reflected ongoing costs associated with the establishment of the new utility together with meeting the objectives of Irish Water's Business Plan 2014-2021. Following the suspension of domestic water charges, replacement revenue of some €173m was paid to Irish Water.

Irish Water was granted consent to enter into revolving credit facilities in the amount of €810 million with various commercial banks. Further consent was provided to allow Irish Water to enter into loan facilities of €450 million with the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund on terms broadly similar to its commercial borrowing.

Irish Water continued to provide a new approach to delivering public water services in 2016. Across a range of areas it implemented measures to improve the public water and wastewater systems. Among key measures were:

- Continued prioritisation of eliminating boil water notices and reducing the number of people on schemes on the EPA's Remedial Action List, a list of drinking water supplies needing corrective action.
- Greater focus on water conservation and reducing the high leakage rate within the public water system. Throughout 2016 it continued to deliver the 'First Fix Free' repair scheme to repair domestic customer leaks.
- Combined with associated customer repairs, the scheme had saved 77 million litres per day by the end of Quarter 3 2016. This equates to the daily needs of 210,000 homes. The

domestic metering programme was also central to identifying leakage (and lead pipes) and by the end of 2016 Irish Water had installed approximately 881,000 meters.

- Direct communication to households at risk of exposure to lead in drinking water. In 2016, it issued 8,267 letters to households with probable lead piping. Exposure to lead in drinking water can pose a health risk to certain population categories.
- Infrastructural investment - €401 million was invested in core infrastructure in 2016, an increase of 78% on 2013, the final year in which local authorities were responsible for capital investment. Part of Irish Water's investment focus in 2016 was addressing the deficit in wastewater treatment in approximately 40 urban areas where raw sewage is pumped directly into water bodies due to inadequate wastewater treatment.
- The utility also advanced plans on major capital projects required to facilitate economic and social growth in future decades. These included the Cork Lower Harbour Main Drainage Scheme, the Greater Dublin Drainage Project and the Eastern and Midlands Region Water Supply Project.
- In 2016, Irish Water began the processes of transferring non-domestic customer billing systems from local authorities to Irish Water. By the end of 2016, twenty four of twenty seven billing systems had successfully migrated to Irish Water.

### Expert Commission on Domestic Public Water Services

The Expert Commission on Domestic Public Water Services in Ireland was established on 29 June 2016 to assess and make recommendation on the funding of domestic public water services in Ireland and improvements in water quality, taking into account, *inter alia*, :

- The maintenance and investment needs of the public water and waste water system on a short, medium and long-term basis;
- Proposals on how the national utility in State ownership would be able to borrow to invest in water infrastructure;
- The need to encourage water conservation, including through reviewing information campaigns on water conservation in other countries;
- Ireland's domestic and international environmental standards and obligations; and
- The role of the Regulator;

The members of the Expert Commission had professional expertise in environmental matters, law, economics, the customer perspective, the water sector and the regulatory system. The Expert Commission published its report in November 2016 which was then referred to a special Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Funding of Domestic Public Water Services. The

Committee's work was just getting underway at year-end and was schedule to be completed in Q1 2017.

### Reform of the Rural Water Sector

To improve drinking water quality in group water schemes and to support longer term planning, the Department introduced a new, multi-annual capital funding framework for the Rural Water Programme in January 2016. The new structure provides greater funding certainty for priority investment needs and supports proper planning and sustainable development in rural areas. The new, multi-annual funding framework also supports a more professional approach to the management of assets as well as rationalisation and amalgamation of schemes. It will also help Ireland fulfil its commitments under the Water Framework Directive.

Through the local authorities, the Rural Water Programme now provides funding across six measures:

1. Environmental and health compliance (drinking water quality in existing group water schemes).
2. Enhancement of existing schemes (water conservation and network improvement in existing group water schemes).
3. Rural development (new group water schemes).
4. Transition of schemes to public water and waste water sector (facilitates takeover by Irish Water of group water and group sewerage schemes).
5. Innovation and research.
6. Individual wells (more commonly called private wells) and on-site wastewater treatment systems (more commonly called septic tanks).



In 2016, the Department recouped just over €15.3 million to local authorities for the Rural Water Programme. In addition, just over €15.76 million was recouped to local authorities for subsidy payments to group water schemes as a contribution to the domestic element of the schemes' operational costs.

As part of rural water sector reform, the Department has also produced a remedial action list of group water schemes (RAL\_GWS) requiring infrastructural works to improve their water quality. In 2016, the list contained schemes with requirements to address the problem of exceedances of total trihalomethanes (THMs), a by-product of the water chlorination process that may pose a risk to human health.

From 2017 onwards, the RAL\_GWS will address the full range of water quality issues in private group water schemes.

For some smaller group water schemes, their future as a group scheme is not sustainable in the long-term. For such scenarios, both the Department and the sector recognise the importance of having a uniform process in place for Irish Water, where appropriate, to take over such schemes (subject to the consent of two-thirds of members giving their consent).

A working group comprising the Department, the National Federation of Group Water Schemes and local authorities agreed a standardised takeover process and, during 2016, Irish Water took over thirteen group water schemes, benefiting approximately 640 households.

### River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021



In order to inform preparation of the draft second-cycle River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021, the Department considered the submissions received arising from a public consultation exercise in 2015 in respect of Significant Water Management Issues (SWMI), including by convening a post-SWMI workshop on 20 May 2016 in Farmleigh House, Phoenix Park, Dublin. Work continued on drafting the Plan over the second half of the year and a draft for consultation was at an advanced stage by year-end.

### Environmental Status of our Maritime Area

In July 2016, the Minister approved a national programme of measures (PoMs) so that good environmental status may be achieved in Ireland's maritime area by 2020, as required by Article 13 of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). Ireland's PoMs was then formally submitted to the EU Commission.

The PoMs consist of a range of measures across a set of defined criteria, or descriptors, specified in the MSFD (e.g. biodiversity, contaminants, marine litter, noise etc.). Development of PoMs was undertaken multilaterally in consultation with other Government Departments and State Agencies, EU Member States, national and international experts, and other key stakeholders. A detailed public consultation was undertaken, informing the process.

### **Maritime Spatial Planning**

In January 2016, the Government designated the Department as the lead Department with responsibility for the implementation of MSP, including the development of the necessary legal and policy framework, with support in terms of technical and scientific analysis from the Marine Institute. The European Union (Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning) Regulations 2016 (S.I. No. 352/2016) were signed into law on 29th June 2016. The European Union (Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning) Regulations 2016 (S.I. No. 352/2016) were signed into law on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

### **Foreshore**

Consenting under the Foreshore Acts in respect of developments and activities on the foreshore continued. Thirty-nine new consent applications were received in 2016 for a range of projects and activities on the foreshore including applications for waste water outfalls, various one day events, an offshore renewable energy test facility, dredging and a jet-fuel pipeline.

Work also continued on drafting of the Maritime Area and Foreshore (Amendment) Bill.

An important aspect of water sector reform is increasing public awareness of water as a resource. Ongoing public and stakeholder engagement is central to this. The Water Services Act 2014 provided for a public water forum, a forum for Irish Water customers to debate and analyse the utility's performance, to provide the CER or Irish Water with comments and suggestions in relation to Irish Water's performance; to comment on any Irish Water policy document (when requested to do so by Irish Water) or any consultation document produced by the CER in relation to domestic water services.

In 2016, the Public Water Forum, chaired by Dr Tom Collins, produced a number of position papers such as a response to Irish Water's emerging investment plan for 2017-2021 and the CER's draft framework for assessing the performance of Irish Water.



## **GOAL D – TO SUPPORT AND ENABLE DEMOCRATIC, RESPONSIVE AND EFFECTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EFFECTIVE ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT AND HIGH QUALITY FIRE SERVICES AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.**

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### **Supporting and Developing Local Government**



Work continued in 2016 on the preparation of a report on local government reform, as outlined in the *Programme for a Partnership Government*, which is to be presented to Government and the Oireachtas in 2017. It is envisaged that the report, which will be presented as a series of modules, will cover a wide range of issues on the local government reform agenda, including the issue of town councils, devolution of new powers to local authorities, local government funding and the issue of directly elected mayors in cities.

Independent statutory committees were established in June 2015 to review local authority boundaries in the town environs of Athlone, Carlow, Drogheda and Waterford. The main rationale for considering possible boundary alterations in these towns was to bring the administrative jurisdiction into line with the current settlement and development position. Bringing all of a town within a single local authority area eliminates anomalies and distortions of divided administration, service provision, regulatory/enforcement responsibility and electoral representation, including problems such as competitive policies and practices between authorities in relation to planning, rating and charges, which can impact negatively on town centres.

The committees finalised their reports in late 2016 and these have been published. The recommendations will be considered in the context of ongoing work in relation to the future of local government in Ireland and also, over the coming months, in the development of the new National Planning Framework, *Ireland 2040 – Our Plan*.

### **Local Government Finance**

The Department has given full effect to the Government commitment in their statement of priorities by confirming the implementation of local retention of Local Property Tax (LPT) for 2016. 80% of LPT is retained locally to fund services. The remaining 20% is re-distributed to provide equalisation funding to local authority areas with lower property tax bases due to the variance in property values across the State. Local authorities received LPT allocations of €453.3m for 2016.

The Department continued its monitoring and oversight of the financial performance of local authorities throughout 2016. This included reviewing key financial indicators and working with local authorities to address issues impacting on their finances.

### **Commercial Rates**

During 2016, the Department worked closely with the local authorities to improve collection levels of commercial rates. The Department and the Sector participated on the Debt Management Project Board, established by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, and worked on the preparation of a business case for stronger enforcement powers to be made available to the local authorities to facilitate higher levels of collections of rates, which were at 80% in 2015. The Business Case was endorsed by the Project Board and the introduction of new legislation in this area was recommended in the Board's final report.

Extensive work was carried out by the Department to develop legislative proposals in this area during 2016. These proposals included the recommended additional enforcement measures as well as more wide-ranging proposals to modernise the body of commercial rates legislation, which is currently spread over more than 20 separate enactments dating back to 1838. Work on these legislative proposals was at an advanced stage by end-year, paving the way for submission to Government in Q1 2017.

### **Local Authority Staffing**

There were some 26,800 full-time equivalent posts in Local Authorities at 31 December 2016.

The workforce planning process for local authorities was concluded in 2016. All local authorities now have an agreed workforce plan in place. By the end of 2016, limited sanction had been delegated to the majority of Chief Executives to fill any vacancies that arose, within the limits of their agreed workforce plan, up to senior management level, without seeking sanction from the Department.

### **Shared Services Payroll - MyPay**

26 Local Authorities and two Local Government bodies had transitioned to the Shared Services Payroll, MyPay, by end of year 2016. The MyPay Shared Services centre, based in Portlaoise, employs 67 people and in 2016 paid €585 million in payroll payments in respect of just over 33,000 payees.

### National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management

The key role of the NDFEM is the development and oversight of local authority provided fire services. The Directorate is acknowledged also to have played a key role in devising and developing all aspects of emergency management arrangements in Ireland since it was established in 2009.



DFB at the O'Brien Institute, Marino

One of the key achievements of the National Directorate is the development and adoption of national standards for fire services in Ireland. The standards adopted have provided a coherence and standard approach which has enabled individual fire authorities to compare their service provision with national benchmarks for the first time.

2016 saw the publication by the National Directorate of the first 'External Validation Group' report which is a comprehensive snap-shot of fire services in Ireland. The local benchmarking exercise termed the 'Area Risk Categorisation' process was undertaken and documented by all fire services in 2014 on foot of the adoption of Keeping Communities Safe Policy document in 2013. In 2014/15, the NDFEM Management Board mandated visits to all fire services to validate the processes undertaken locally. The outcome of this process is documented in the report "Local Delivery – National Consistency – Fire Services in Ireland" published in April 2016.

The other main area of significant focus in 2016 from a fire safety perspective was the work leading up to the publication, in September 2016, of the [Report on Programme to Review and Enhance Fire Safety in Local Authority Provided Traveller Accommodation](#), arising from the Carrickmines tragedy of 10 Oct 2015 which resulted in ten deaths.

### Electoral Management

A Constituency Commission was established on 14 July 2016 to review the constituencies for the election of members of Dáil Éireann and of the European Parliament having regard to the results of Census 2016.

In addition, the Electoral (Amendment) Act 2016 was enacted to provide for the use of the register of electors for the purpose of selecting members of the Citizens' Assembly.

## GOAL E – TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIBRANT, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES AND OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

### Supporting the Community and Voluntary Sector



Minister Coveney opens the Forum

A local development and community development policy forum was held in November 2016 as a first step in progressing implementation of *Our Communities: A Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland*. A forum report captured the views of participants and set out the actions proposed for the implementation plan. A Cross-Sectoral Working Group is planned to assist in the development of the implementation plan.

71 community and voluntary organisations were approved for funding in 2016 under the 2016-2019 Scheme to Support National Organisations. The total funding of over €16.5m will be paid out over the 3-year lifetime of the scheme from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019. The distribution of funds commenced to organisations in July 2016.

### Scheme to Support National Organisations

The Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO) provides multi-annual funding to national organisations towards core costs associated with the provision of services.

The Department, through Pobal, invited applications from eligible national organisations for funding under the new Scheme (2016-2019) in January 2016. The new Scheme commenced on 1 July 2016, and the Minister approved 71 applications for funding totalling €16.7million for the three-year period to 30 June 2019.

### Social Inclusion



The State's main social inclusion programme, SICAP (Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme), which rolled out in April 2015 and will run until 31 December 2017, had a funding allocation of some €42 million in 2016. It delivered some 47,500 one to one interventions as well as supporting over 3,000 community groups. The aim of SICAP is to tackle poverty, social exclusion and long-term unemployment through local engagement and partnership between

disadvantaged individuals, community organisations, public sector agencies and other stakeholders.

SICAP is the first programme to be managed and overseen by the Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) in each Local Authority area. The LCDCs are the contracting authorities for SICAP, a key step in embedding the process of alignment of local development and local government. In Budget 2017 funding was provided for a new Communities Facilities Scheme (CFS) and for a revamped RAPID programme, both of which will be managed and overseen by the LCDCs in each area.

Preparations for the next iteration of SICAP for the period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2022 commenced in 2016. A consultation process is being undertaken in 2017.

### Local/Regional Development Supports

The Social Inclusion and Communities Unit of the Department played a leading role in supporting a number of important initiatives in 2016. In response to the Carrickmines tragedy it participated on the Steering Group and provided funding supports for the bereaved families. The Unit also provided funding for the Taoiseach's initiative for social regeneration of the North East Inner City of Dublin, for a Restorative Practice project for the Cherry Orchard area of Dublin, for an Action Research Project in Achill and Erris, Co Mayo, and to Saint Vincent de Paul and Protestant Aid to continue their work with the poor.

Continued supports were also provided under the Local Community and Development Programme for Galway County during the deliberative process. The Irish Local Development Network (ILDN) was part-funded until it transitioned to the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SNNO), and funding was transferred to other subheads to fund LCDC support and to provide small funding to dog welfare groups.

Co-funding for SICAP under the European Social Fund (ESF) and Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) was focused on 'NEETs', those aged 15-24 and Not in Employment, Education or Training. Since the inception of the programme in April 2015, SICAP has successfully met its targets in relation to NEETs, with 5,372 young people supported during 2016, of which 4,189 were new participants during the year.

The Department commissioned Pobal to undertake a series of inspections in respect of both financial and non-financial transactions for SICAP and, in late 2015 and early 2016, Pobal

conducted 13 initial inspection visits at the premises of programme implementing bodies. In 2017, the Local Government Audit Service will conduct on-site audits.



In late 2016, Pobal commissioned a research study dedicated to drawing out good practice recommendations for engagement with NEETs and for the purpose of developing a good practice quality toolkit of benefit to implementing bodies. This research study and the ESRI evaluation of SICAP, which will be conducted during 2017, will feed into ongoing quality improvement efforts and the planning processes for SICAP, re-contracting in 2018.

### **Local and Community Development Committees**



#### *Local Economic and Community Plans*

During 2016 the Local Economic and Community Plans were adopted in all 31 local authority areas and work is now underway on their implementation.

#### *Support for Local Community Development Committees*

During 2016 regional Chief Officer Networks and LCDCC Chairs Networks were established. The purpose of these Networks is to provide members with a platform for information sharing and engagement with the Department. Plans are underway to develop a Quality and Capacity Building Programme for all LCDCCs members which will be rolled out during 2017-2019.

### **Public Participation Networks**

Public Participation Networks (PPNs) have been established in all local authority areas. PPNs are the main link through which the local authority connects with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors. It is now a requirement that where community representation is to be provided on appropriate committees of the local authority, such as SPCS or LCDCCs, it must be sourced through the PPN.

In 2016, the Department advanced a number of important initiatives to promote the development of PPNs, including a new PPN User Guide, the roll-out of a new database, the establishment of a National PPN Advisory Group and the provision of funding to support the overall process.

### **Seniors Alert Scheme**

The current Programme for Government provides for significant investment in the Seniors Alert Scheme to provide additional safety and peace of mind for those living at home. A Review of the Scheme was commissioned by Pobal in 2016, with a view to facilitating input into the design of the next iteration of the Seniors Alert Scheme.

### **Programme for Peace and Reconciliation 2014 – 2020 (PEACE IV)**

The Department has policy responsibility for, and provides funding under, two themes under the PEACE IV Programme - Shared Spaces and Services and Building Positive Relations at Local Level. All of the funding calls for the PEACE IV programme are completed.

### **Review of the Public Library Strategy**

A working group was established in late 2016 to review the current public library strategy, '*Opportunities for All 2013-2017*', with a view to the development of a new strategy for the period 2018-2022.

### **Public Consultation on the review of the Dog Breeding Establishment Guidelines**

The Department is responsible for reviewing the current Dog Breeding Establishment Guidelines, in collaboration with the County and City Management Association's, Dogs Working Group. Following the production of a first draft revision of the Guidelines, it was considered important to broaden the review of the Guidelines to a more formal public consultation, both for quality assurance and to address the need for openness and inclusiveness. A wide-scale, formal public consultative process commenced on 1 December 2016.



## **GOAL F – TO SERVE SOCIETY THROUGH THE PRODUCTION AND COMMUNICATION OF RELIABLE WEATHER AND CLIMATE INFORMATION TO PROTECT LIFE AND PROPERTY AND TO FURTHER ENHANCE MET ÉIREANN’S ROLE AS THE AUTHORITATIVE VOICE FOR HIGH IMPACT WEATHER IN IRELAND.**

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### Weather and Climate Services



During 2016, Met Éireann retained the contract to provide weather services to RTÉ following an open tender competition. This success maintains and builds a key strategic partnership with the State broadcaster, extending a relationship that has evolved and strengthened over almost six decades. Met Éireann will provide weather data, meteorological services and presentation services to RTÉ under this new contract.

Growth in the use of METweb continues with another 6 agencies added as users during 2016. There are over 700 individuals with login access, from more than 30 Government Departments, Agencies and Local Authorities.

Monthly, seasonal and annual weather bulletins and summaries were produced on a regular basis and publication of these moved to an online format.

A tendering process to modernise and automate the climatological monitoring network was carried out and a preferred contractor identified.

### Aviation Services

Met Éireann's Aviation Services Division continued to provide high quality regulated meteorological services to support air traffic management and airport operations throughout 2016. These services were maintained on a 24/7 basis without a single interruption throughout the entire year. In addition, bespoke weather services, specifically tailored to meet customer needs, were provided to support airport development works and related projects. Meteorological services were provided to the Air Corps, the Garda Air Support Unit and to Search and Rescue services to support the critical operations of these stakeholders.

A technical project to upgrade aviation meteorological observing infrastructure at the State airports also made significant progress with the commencement of the procurement phase.

### **Open Data**

Met Éireann adopted an open data policy in 2016 and a large amount of observational data was made available for download from its website. This facility currently delivers approximately eight thousand downloads a month.

### **National Flood Forecasting**

Planning for the establishment of a new National Flood Forecast and Warnings Service commenced with the establishment of a Steering Group with representation from Met Éireann, the OPW, The National Directorate of Fire and Emergency Management and the City and County Management Association.

## CORPORATE INFORMATION

### Staff Numbers

The number of staff serving in the Department at year end 2016 equated to 647.22 Whole Time Equivalent posts. A number of staff were recruited and promoted through a variety of different routes in 2016, including internal promotion and open competition.

Staff also continued to avail of a range of work/life balance schemes, as set out below:

<b>Work-sharing</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Parental Leave</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Career Breaks</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Study Leave</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Shorter Working Year</b>	<b>71</b>

### Human Resources, PMDS, Learning and Development

Following the general election in February 2016 a new Departmental structure was announced which saw the Environment Division move to the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) and elements of the Community Division move to the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DAHRRGA). The Department was renamed the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government.

In May 2015 the Department of Public Sector and Reform issued a delegated sanction which allows the Department, subject to meeting certain conditions, to manage its own staffing numbers. A payroll ceiling has been set and the Department is obliged to operate within that allocated funding. The Department will continue to monitor staffing numbers to ensure the most effective and efficient deployment of our staffing resources to meet our priority commitments, while still ensuring compliance with our pay allocation.

### Training and Development

Building capability/capacity through the provision of relevant and appropriate training across all grades and Departmental locations is a priority. Support is provided to staff undertaking formal education in subjects relevant to their work through the Refund of Fees Scheme. In 2016, staff members undertook studies in areas such as law, corporate governance and economics which have been identified as areas the Department needs to enhance its skill levels. Training Unit

also supports the Continuous Professional Development of Professional/Technical Staff and pays for membership of relevant professional bodies

Short targeted training courses were provided in areas such as, business writing, line manager development programmes, Freedom of Information, Project Management, Presentation Skills, Time Management, Policy Development and Legislative Drafting, Regulatory Impact Assessment, Procurement, an extensive programme of health and safety training and Irish language training. Also, following an application process a number of senior managers benefited from a focussed leadership training programs, such as the PO Executive Leadership Programme and the IPA's Leadership Challenge.

The Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) continued to be used as a key tool in support of improved organisational performance, with a 92.2 % implementation rate achieved.

### Supporting the Parliamentary Process

	2015	2016
<b>Parliamentary Questions</b>		
Questions Received	3,988	2,966
Questions Answered <sup>5</sup>	3,594	2,674
Question type:		
Oral	329	243
Written	3,265	2,431
<b>Adjournment Debates</b>		
	53	-
<b>Topical Issues Debates</b>		
	300	174 <sup>6</sup>
<b>Commencement Matters</b>		
	68	48
<b>Representations and Invitations</b>		
Representations <sup>7</sup>	4,530	3,170
Invitations <sup>8</sup>	891	440

### Prompt Payment

In 2016, the Department paid 83.6% of all invoices within 15 calendar days, and 99% of all invoices within 30 calendar days.

In respect of the year overall, the Department incurred late payment interest charges of €11,573.52. The value of all late payments as a percentage of all invoiced payments in 2016 was 0.066%. In addition to the late payment interest, compensation costs amounting to €2,210 were paid in 2016.

<sup>5</sup> The remainder of questions were disallowed, withdrawn or transferred.

<sup>6</sup> 'Topical Issues' debates include Adjournment Debates from 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Represents totals from Minister's and Ministers of State's Offices.

<sup>8</sup> Represents totals from Minister's and Ministers of State's Offices.

### **Corporate Governance**

The Department's first Corporate Governance Framework was published in April, in accordance with the Civil Service Renewal Programme.

### **Quality Customer Service**

The Department published a new *Customer Service Action Plan 2016-2018* in March. The document sets out the Department's commitments to providing high quality, courteous and timely services to all its customers in accordance with the 12 Guiding Principles for Quality Customer Service. The Department dealt with a total of 1,102 customer queries in 2016, 1,095 of which were resolved within 15 days.

### **Irish Language Commitments**

The Department remained committed in 2016 to providing quality services in Irish and/or bilingually to its customers as set out in our *Irish Language Scheme 2013 - 2016*, and to the statutory obligations arising on foot of the Official Languages Act. The Department commenced reviewing its Irish Language Scheme at the end of 2016 with a view to introducing a new scheme in 2017 to cover the period up to 2020.

### **Public Sector Duty**

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 places a responsibility on all public bodies to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of its staff and customers alike. This responsibility is known as the Public Sector Duty and is a legal obligation. In 2016, work commenced on formally identifying aspects of our business to which human rights and equality considerations apply. The responsibilities under the Act were incorporated into the new Statement of Strategy published in November. This will be followed in 2017 by a more detailed assessment of the human rights and equality issues relevant to the Department internally (employees) externally (functions and services) in order to put in place policies and practices to address these issues.

### **Freedom of Information (FOI) and Access to Information on the Environment (AIE)**

In 2016 we received 393 Freedom of Information requests, a decrease of 2 on 2015. In addition, we received 33 requests under the Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) regulations.

### Energy Efficiency

An energy performance indicator (EnPI) is a way of measuring an organisation's energy performance. The indicator adopted here is energy, expressed in kilowatt hours, per square metre of office space. Over the period 2009 to 2016, energy consumption fell by 47.65 kWh per square metre, a gain of 17.4%.

Energy Performance Indicator (EnPI)	
	kWh/Floor Area (m2)
2009 EnPI (Baseline Year)	274.47
2016 EnPI	226.82
Energy Efficiency Gain	47.65
Percentage Energy Efficiency Gain	17.4%



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY IN 2016

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#### RELEVANT ACTS OF THE OIREACHTAS IN 2016

- [Electoral \(Amendment\) Act 2016 \(Number 5 of 2016\)](#)
- [Water Services \(Amendment\) Act 2016 \(Number 7 of 2016\)](#)
- [Planning and Development \(Housing\) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 \(Number 17 of 2016\)](#)

## STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS PUBLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN 2016

### Department of Environment, Community and Local Government

- S.I. No. 4/2016 - Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2015 (Commencement of sections 30 and 42 and Part 4) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 20/2016 - Electoral Act 1997 (Section 78 (a) and (b)) (Commencement) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 21/2016 - Seanad Electoral (Panel Members) (Prescribed Forms) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 24/2016 - Waste Management (Collection Permit) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 25/2016 - Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 (Establishment Day) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 30/2016 - Planning and Development Act 2000 (Designation of Strategic Development Zone: North Quays, Waterford City) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 38/2016 - Housing Assistance Payment (Section 50) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 40/2016 - Housing Assistance Payment (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 41/2016 - Water Services (No. 2) Act 2013 (Commencement) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 42/2016 - European Union (Restriction of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 55/2016 - Electoral Act 1992 (Special Difficulty) (Assent to Nomination of Candidate at Dáil Election) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 56/2016 - Domestic Lead Remediation (Financial Assistance) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 57/2016 - Irish Water (Previous Service) Superannuation Scheme 2016.
- S.I. No. 113/2016 - Dublin Docklands Development Authority (Dissolution) Act 2015 (Commencement) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 114/2016 - Dublin Docklands Development Authority (Dissolution) Act 2015 (Dissolution Day) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 119/2016 - Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2015 (Commencement of Certain Provisions) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 128/2016 - Air Pollution Act (Marketing, Sale, Distribution and Burning of Specified Fuels) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 129/2016 - European Union (Stage II Petrol Vapour Recovery During Refuelling of Motor Vehicles at Service Stations) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 135/2016 - Derelict Sites (Urban Areas) Regulations, 2016.

- S.I. No. 150/2016 - Residential Tenancies Act 2004 (Prescribed Form) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 151/2016 - Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2015 (Commencement of Certain Provisions) (No. 2) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 160/2016 - European Union (Radioactive Substances in Drinking Water) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 163/2016 - Bathing Water Quality (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 216/2016 - Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2015 (Commencement of Certain Provisions) (No. 3) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 217/2016 - Residential Tenancies Act 2004 (Prescribed Form) (No. 2) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 277/2016 - European Union Environmental Objectives (Standards for Monitoring of Quality Elements) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 279/2016 - Planning and Development Act 2000 (Designation of Strategic Development Zone: Poolbeg West, Dublin City) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 287/2016 - Social Housing Assessments (Summary) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 288/2016 - Social Housing Assessment (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 315/2016 - European Union (Waste Directive) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 335/2016 - Water Services (No. 2) Act 2013 (Property Vesting Day) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 338/2016 - Housing Assistance Payment (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 346/2016 - Waste Management (Collection Permit) (Amendment)(No.2) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 347/2016 - Air Pollution Act (Fixed Payment Notice) (Solvents) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 348/2016 - Air Pollution Act (Fixed Payment Notice) (Paints) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 352/2016 - European Union (Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 354/2016 - Housing Assistance Payment (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 366/2016 - European Union Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 372/2016 - European Union (Waste Directive) (Recovery Operations) Regulations 2016.

- S.I. No. 373/2016 - Waste Management (Fixed Payment Notice) (Producer Responsibility) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 374/2016 - Constituency Commission (Establishment) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 392/2016 - Appointment of Special Advisers (Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 393/2016 - Climate Action and Environment (Transfer of Departmental Administration and Ministerial Functions) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 394/2016 - Environment, Community and Local Government (Alteration of Name of Department and Title of Minister) Order 2016.

#### **Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government**

- S.I. No. 503/2016 - Social Housing Allocation (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 505/2016 - Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2015 (Part 9) (Commencement) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 536/2016 - National Oversight and Audit Commission (Number of Members) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 537/2016 - Electoral Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 564/2016 - Derelict Sites (Urban Areas) (No. 2) Regulations, 2016.
- S.I. No. 565/2016 - Dublin Docklands Development Authority (Dissolution) Act, 2015 (Docklands Oversight and Consultative Forum - Prescribed Bodies) Order 2016.
- S.I. No. 574/2016 - Housing Assistance Payment (Section 50) (No. 2) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 575/2016 - Housing Assistance Payment (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 2016.
- S.I. No. 652/2016 - Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2016.

## **ORDERS PUBLISHED IN 2016**

[Dáil Éireann \(General Election\) Order 2016](#)

[Seanad \(Panel Members\) General Election Order 2016](#)

[Seanad \(University Members\) General Election Order 2016](#)

## APPENDIX 2: PUBLICATIONS IN 2016

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The main publications produced by the Department during 2016 are detailed and hyperlinked below.

[Customer Service Action Plan 2016-2018](#)

[Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland](#)

[Local Delivery – National Consistency – Fire Services in Ireland](#)

[Local Election Results 2014 - Results, Transfer of Votes and Statistics](#)

[Marine Strategy Framework Directive Ireland: Programme of Measures Summary Report](#)

[Rebuilding Ireland - Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness](#)

[Rebuilding Ireland - First Quarterly Progress Report](#)

[Rebuilding Ireland - Strategy for the Rental Sector](#)

[Report on Programme to Review and Enhance Fire Safety in Local Authority Provided Traveller Accommodation](#)

[Report on the Organisational Review of An Bord Pleanála](#)

[Statement of Strategy 2016-2019](#)

[The Second Progress Report on the implementation of the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011–2016](#)

### **SICAP reports and Requirements**

*SICAP 2015 End of Year Financial and Monitoring report*

*SICAP 2015 End of Year Report*

## Additional Publications from Met Éireann

Clancy, Colm, John O'Sullivan, Conor Sweeney, Frédéric Dias, and Andrew C. Parnell. "Spatial Bayesian Hierarchical Modelling of Extreme Sea States." *Ocean Modelling* 107 (2016): 1–13. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ocemod.2016.09.015>. (Full Text)

Gallagher, S., E. Gleeson, R. Tiron, R. McGrath, and F. Dias. "Twenty-First Century Wave Climate Projections for Ireland and Surface Winds in the North Atlantic Ocean." *Advances in Science and Research* 13 (2016): 75–80. doi:10.5194/asr-13-75-2016. (Full Text)

Gallagher, S., E. Gleeson, R. Tiron, R. McGrath, and F. Dias. "Wave Climate Projections for Ireland for the End of the 21st Century Including Analysis of EC-Earth Winds over the North Atlantic Ocean." *International Journal of Climatology* Early View (2016). doi:10.1002/joc.4656.

Gallagher, S., R. Tiron, E. Whelan, E. Gleeson, F. Dias, and R. McGrath. "The Nearshore Wind and Wave Energy Potential of Ireland: A High Resolution Assessment of Availability and Accessibility." *Renewable Energy* 88 (2016): 494–516. doi:10.1016/j.renene.2015.11.010. (Full Text)

Gleeson, E., V. Toll, K.P. Nielsen, L. Rontu, and J. Masek. "Effects of Aerosols on Clear-Sky Solar Radiation in the ALADIN-HIRLAM NWP System." *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics* 16 (2016): 5933–5948. doi:10.5194/acp-16-5933-2016. (Full Text)

Lynch, P., and C. Clancy. "Improving the Laplace Transform Integration Method." *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society* 142, no. 695 (2016): 1196–1200. doi:10.1002/qj.2670.

McCarthy, Mark, S. Spillane, S. Walsh, and M. Kendon. "The Meteorology of the Exceptional Winter of 2015/2016 across the UK and Ireland." *Weather* 71, no. 12 (2016): 305–313. doi:10.1002/wea.2823. (Full Text)

Nuissier, O., C. Marsigli, D. Vincendon, A. Hally, F. Bouttier, A. Montani, and T. Paccagnella. "Evaluation of Two Convection-Permitting Ensemble Systems in the HyMeX Special Observation Period (SOP1) Framework." *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society* (2016). doi:10.1002/qj.2885.



Toll, V., E. Gleeson, K.P. Nielsen, A. Männik, J. Mašek, L. Rontu, and P. Post. "Impacts of the Direct Radiative Effect of Aerosols in Numerical Weather Prediction over Europe Using the ALADIN-HIRLAM NWP System." *Atmospheric Research* 172–173 (2016): 163–173.

doi:[10.1016/j.atmosres.2016.01.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.atmosres.2016.01.003). ([Full Text](#))

Climatological Note No. 15 Long-term rainfall averages for Ireland, 1981-2010, Walsh, Séamus, 2016

Rontu, L., E. Gleeson, K.P. Nielsen, V. Toll, and J. Masek. "HARMONIE-AROME Radiation Studies 2011-2016." *ALADIN-HIRLAM Newsletter* 7 (2016): 73–80. ([Full Text](#))

Whelan, Eoin, and Emily Gleeson. "Met Éireann High Resolution Reanalysis for Ireland." In *Proceedings of National Hydrology Conference*, 2016. Athlone: Office of Public Works, 2016. ([Full Text](#))

Whelan, E., and E. Gleeson. "A Mesoscale Regional Reanalysis for Ireland." *ALADIN-HIRLAM Newsletter* 7 (2016): 93–99. ([Full Text](#))

Whelan, E., E. Gleeson, S. Gallagher, and R. McGrath. "Met Éireann NWP Highlights 2015." *ALADIN-HIRLAM Newsletter* 6 (2016): 76–78. ([Full Text](#))

## **APPENDIX 3: PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN IN 2016**

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[Public consultation on a draft Code of Practice for Fire Safety in New and Existing Community Dwelling Houses](#)

[Public Consultation on the Review of Part B \(Fire Safety\) of the Building Regulations 2016](#)

[Public Consultation - Marine Strategy Framework Directive – Programme of Measures Phase \(Article 13\)](#)

[Public Consultation on Irish Language Scheme 2017-2019](#)

[Public Consultation on the Review of Dog Breeding Establishment Guidelines](#)

[Public Consultation – A Strategy for the Rented Sector](#)

[Call for Submissions: Statement of Strategy 2016 – 2019](#)

[Draft Guidelines on Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000](#)

[Consultation on draft Regulations to transpose the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive into Irish law](#)

[Public Consultation - Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland](#)

[Call for nominees to an expert commission on domestic public water services](#)

Two stakeholder workshops and consultation events were arranged in Cork (4 July 2016) and Dublin (7 July 2016) to inform finalisation of Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan.