



## Quarter 3 2018 Progress Report on the National Student Accommodation Strategy

*Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness* was published in July 2016 and laid out an action oriented approach to addressing the national accommodation crisis. Pillar four of Rebuilding Ireland focussed on the supply of rented accommodation.

Actions included the implementation of affordable renting initiatives as well as encouraging build-to-rent developments to enhance the supply of student accommodation (among others). The inclusion of student accommodation was designed to both supply housing to students and to free up space in the traditional rental sector.

The National Student Accommodation Strategy was launched in July 2017 by Minister of State for Higher Education Mary Mitchell O'Connor T.D. and Minister of State for Housing and Urban Development Damien English T.D., as part of the Government's overall strategy to accelerate the supply of accommodation in the student rental sector.

A target of 7,000 additional purpose built student accommodation bed spaces to be delivered by end 2019 was set. At the launch of the *National Student Accommodation Strategy* a total of 1,117 bed spaces had been delivered since *Rebuilding Ireland* with an additional 5,000 under construction.

This report represents an update as of end Q3, 2018.

### Progress on delivery of Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)

The year-end 2017 figures showed a total of 15,902 bed spaces either completed or in the development process. The number of planning applications, applications granted and work on site all continue to increase. An additional 1,903 beds were delivered in time for the 2018/2019 academic year.

As of the end of Q3, 2018, a total of 5,531 bed spaces have been completed. Further to this, there are 4,825 bed spaces on site and plans have been approved for an additional 7,901 bed spaces. This represents a total of 18,729 bed spaces either complete or in the planning process at the end of Q3 2018.

| Actual Developments (bed-spaces)                                       |              |              |               |               |
|--|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
|  | End Q4, 2017 | End Q1, 2018 | End Q2, 2018  | End Q3, 2018  |
| Completions since the launch of <i>Rebuilding Ireland</i> in July 2016 | 2,606        | 2,687        | 2,990         | 5,531         |
| Developments on site   | 4,553        | 5,842        | 7,257         | 4,825         |
|  | <b>7,159</b> | <b>8,529</b> | <b>10,247</b> | <b>10,356</b> |
| Potential Developments (bed-spaces)                                    |              |              |               |               |
| Planning Permission Granted  | 6,927        | 8,636        | 7,154         | 7,901         |
| Planning Permission Applied  | 1,816        | 917          | 1,209         | 472           |
|  | <b>8,743</b> | <b>9,553</b> | <b>8,363</b>  | <b>18,729</b> |

## **#HomesforStudy partnership with USI**

The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) launched their 2018 #HomesforStudy campaign on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> of June, to coincide with the end of the Leaving Certificate exams. This year's earlier launch date aims to reach incoming first years who have not yet become registered third level students. Students can visit [www.homes.usi.ie](http://www.homes.usi.ie) to browse the rooms available and find suitable 'digs'.

Homeowners are also encouraged to consider renting out any spare rooms during the college year, with the potential to earn up to €14,000 tax free under the rent-a-room scheme. Homeowners can visit [www.homes.usi.ie](http://www.homes.usi.ie) to easily access information and register a room to rent.

The *USI Student Housing Report National Student Housing Survey* (Sept 2017) reported that 7% of students surveyed were living in digs accommodation – indicating that in the region of 15,000 students may be availing of digs style housing. USI will also carry out a second national student accommodation survey which is due to go live in November of this year as part of the National Student Accommodation Strategy. This survey is being designed to assess student requirements from accommodation.

The 2018 #HomesforStudy campaign ran from July until the end of September this year and further to the distribution of leaflets in all major urban centres and targeted social media posts, internal advertisements were displayed on seven Dublin Bus routes. A report outlining the impacts of this year's campaign is currently being produced.

## **Planning and development**

Circular PL 8/2016 APH 2/2016 issued from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government on 28 July 2016 and provided clarity to local authorities and An Bord Pleanála that the use of student accommodation complexes outside of the academic year for short term rental purposes is a permitted activity.

Amendments to planning regulations under the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 were commenced in July 2017. Intended to underpin the Government's housing strategy, the Act introduced a new fast-track planning procedure for strategic housing developments which includes student accommodation projects containing 200 or more bed spaces.

This Act also provides for Higher Education Institutes to borrow from the Housing Finance Agency for the purposes of the development of PBSA.

## **Students as integrated members of a local community**

Developers and managers of Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) have been encouraged to communicate and interact with local communities. USI promote their 'Campus Engage' programme in a number of HEIs with the objective of increasing awareness of being a good neighbour through student volunteering and outreach activities.

InterDepartmental Working Group on Student Accommodation

November 2018