



## KEY POINT BRIEFING

# Equality in Housing and Communities Policy Recommendations

## Priority areas for intervention

The Commission considers, following engagement with stakeholders and wider analysis, that there are immediate priorities and / or a particular pressing need to secure change in relation to:

- **advancing sharing in housing** while ensuring objectively assessed need is met;
- addressing the longer **social housing waiting list for Catholic households**;
- improving the provision of **disability related accommodation**; and
- tackling the **under-reporting of hate incidents and crimes and increase outcome rates**.

## Overarching areas for action

While the Commission will work to encourage prompt action to address the above, we also recommend action by government, officials and key stakeholders in the following overarching areas:

### **Develop shared, safe communities based on equality, dignity and respect**

- advance sharing in housing, while ensuring that objectively assessed housing need is met.
- implement specific long-term measures to eliminate discrimination and intimidation, tackle prejudicial attitudes and promote values of acceptance and respect for difference.
- further tackle the under-reporting of hate incidents and crimes (against persons and dwellings), and increase outcome rates.
- address the fear of crime among older people.

### **Ensure that everyone has access to a sustainable home and enjoys the right to independent living**

- ensure application of accessible housing standards to all new builds.
- provide information regarding the availability of accessible accommodation.
- ensure the provision of easy to access and affordable adaptation services across all tenures – including by streamlining existing processes and reducing waiting times.

- extend the Disability Discrimination Act to include reasonable adjustments to communal areas in residential properties.
- ensure access to adequate, sustainable and long-term independent living provision, for all people with disabilities for whom it is a viable housing option.
- further advance energy efficiency and expand oil buying clubs across tenures.
- ensure the availability of suitable accommodation and services for homeless single males; younger and older people; and refugees and unsuccessful asylum seekers.

### **Address the specific housing needs of particular equality groups**

- address the longer waiting-list times for social housing experienced by households with a Catholic religion household reference person.
- ensure that the accommodation needs of Travellers are met, in consultation with the Traveller community.
- ensure greater awareness of the rights, responsibilities and housing options relevant to minority ethnic groups.
- ensure that older people of differing sexual orientations and transgender people have their domiciliary, residential or nursing care needs fully met.
- Trusts should ensure there is sufficient capacity to care for permanent care home residents (where they wish it), and provide for all older residents requiring care and support.
- understand the accommodation needs, preferences and expectations of older people.

### **Mitigate the long-term negative impacts of Welfare Reform**

- ensure that the mitigation of negative impacts of Welfare Reform continues on a long-term basis.
- address the needs of single tenants / prospective tenants aged 35 years and under when renting in the private rented sector.
- tackle the barriers which the 'digital by default' and telephone advice system of benefits may present to those within some Section 75 categories.

### **Improve equality data collection and analysis**

- address key equality data gaps across a number of areas of public policy.
- ensure data is sufficiently disaggregated to allow for meaningful equality analysis, to better inform public policy intervention.

