



Dublin City Councils strategy in responding to the Covid 19 virus crisis is laid out below. The strategy is based on the premise that preventative measures are most important and to that end the Traveller Accommodation Unit has focussed on a four tier set of actions:

- Education through information and signage.
- Eradication through cleansing, disinfecting and removal of accumulated refuse.
- Accommodation through prioritising avenues for multiple accommodation choices.
- Isolations where necessary to prevent any spread of Covid 19.

There are currently 18 Traveller sites (authorised and unauthorised) within the remit of Dublin City Council. There are 906 Traveller families residing on these sites.

#### **Information /Education:**

Dublin City Council believes that a sustained level of information over a prolonged period of time will increase the level of importance given to said information by the Traveller Community. Various HSE and Traveller Specific information is being delivered to all accommodation whether authorised or unauthorised on a twice weekly basis. This is further enhanced by placing large COVID 19 signs at the entrance to each site and by communicating with all Traveller residents by telephone twice weekly. Regular visits to all sites provide some reassurance to the Traveller community that they remain a high priority.

While all Traveller Accommodation Unit phone numbers remain active and monitored, a special Community helpline has been established by the City Council for all vulnerable members of the public. All calls are directed to the relevant staff for actioning. In summary the following continues:

- Dedicated Community Response Line available to Travellers – 01 222 5290 - Ongoing.
- Traveller specific email [traveller.accommodation@dublincity.ie](mailto:traveller.accommodation@dublincity.ie) monitored - Ongoing.
- All Traveller Accommodation phone lines are manned - Ongoing.
- Phoning all residents regularly to ascertain their status and to offer support where necessary - Ongoing.
- Awareness/information material being distributed to Traveller accommodation sites on a regular basis - Ongoing.
- Large information signs erected on all sites.
- Social distance ground signs on all sites.
- Provision of fridge magnets with contact information on a range of services for Travellers including mental health contacts.

#### **Maintenance:**

Dublin City Council believes that maintaining a physical presence on sites provides a modicum of comfort to the Traveller Community.

To that end, the Traveller Accommodation Unit staff and contractors have maintained an ongoing daily presence on sites providing support caretaking and maintenance services, information, disinfecting, distributing help pack etc.

- A full maintenance service continues to be provided- Ongoing.

- Biofogging/disinfecting exteriors of homes and mobiles monthly.
- Distribution of individual hygiene packs to Traveller families. Pack includes disinfectant, antibacterial cloths, masks and gloves.
- Additional waste collection on-site as required.
- Sites being monitored for vermin and pest and appropriate actions taken.
- Clerk of Works/Caretakers/Management continually monitoring sites - Ongoing.

### **Accommodation:**

Dublin City Council has given an increased priority to the Traveller community in terms of access to all types of accommodation.

- Traveller families whose preference is for standard social housing being prioritised for offers of accommodation.
- Re-let/ essential repairs on vacant Traveller accommodation units being prioritised to assist with isolation/social distancing.
- Additional portable toilet facilities are being provided to specific families with overcrowding and/or medical needs.
- Families can be placed in temporary accommodation through the DRHE.
- Supports provided for mobile home acquisitions to deal with overcrowded or other conditions.

### **Isolation Strategy:**

Dublin City Council continues to follow Health Service Executive guidelines for isolation.

- If someone on a site is confirmed with the Corona virus- they go into total isolation in their home and all members of the household, as they are assumed to have the virus, must be tested and also isolated having been in constant contact.
- They should not be moved in order to prevent a spreading of the virus.
- Arrangement are made locally with community/representative groups to provide shopping facilities and other supports for those in isolation.
- Any person/persons deemed unable to be isolated for any reason should be moved offsite to the nearest isolation unit under the guidance of the HSE.
- Transport can be provided in cases where no viable transport is available.

It is the considered opinion of the HSE that moving suspected Covid 19 cases into other accommodation on sites where overcrowding is an issue would be unwise and should not be considered.

- Procurement of additional accommodation units to assist in offsite isolation where necessary. Mobiles are currently on standby for leasing as isolation units.
- Hard standing areas have been prepared to assist in isolating offsite if required for the North and South sides of the city. These can be ready with 24 hours' notice. Running water, portaloos and power supply will be provided. The sites will be overseen by the Traveller Accommodation Unit, the Health Service Executive with the local Traveller representative organisations.
- Gates have been placed on some sites in order to limit the amount of outside traffic into the site at the request of the residents.