



# Housing Assistance Payment

Presentation to Housing SPC 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2017



# Introduction to HAP



# What is HAP?

New form of **Social Housing Support**

Replaces Rent Supplement for **households with long-term need**

Housing authority **responsible for all households** where housing need determined

Short term cases stay as Rent Supplement

# What is HAP?

Household **sources their own accommodation** on the basis of the HAP rent limits

HAP Payment is **paid directly to landlord** by Dublin City Council on behalf of the tenant . DCC is not a party to the tenancy

Once housed through HAP- housing needs are met but HAP recipients **qualify for social housing support via Transfer List**

Household can **work full-time**

# What is HAP? (cont.)

## Tenants

- Over 17,000 households currently being supported by HAP nationally (34% are RS Transfers)

## Landlords

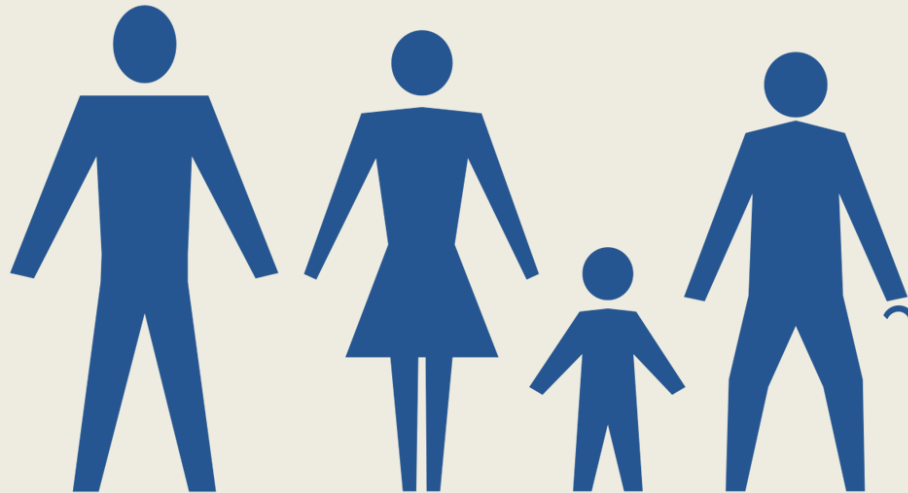
- More than 10,000 different landlords
- Including 100's of letting agents

## Local Authorities

- HAP is available in all local authorities
- Homeless HAP scheme in Dublin Region - DRHE
- One central transactional shared service - Limerick

# HAP- Eligibility?

- Any household that is **qualified for social housing support** is eligible for HAP



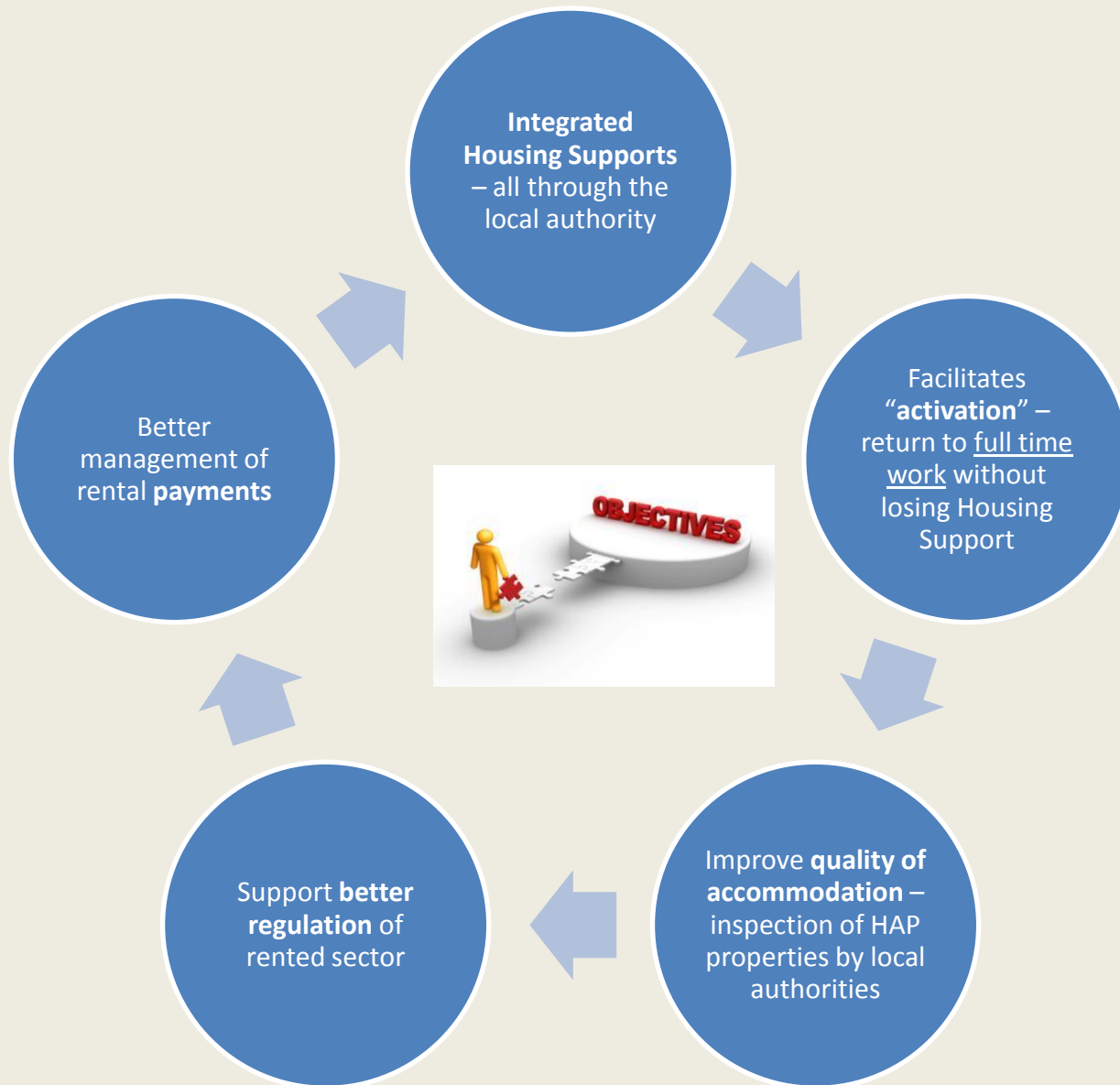
# HAP- Eligibility? Who's on first?

Four main groups:

- **New Social Housing Applicants** who need housing support
- **Existing households on housing list** who may present to the local authority seeking HAP
- **Rent Supplement recipients changing tenancies.** DSP have agreed to approve a new RS tenancy for these households for an interim period
- **Long-Term Rent Supplement recipients** – referred from DSP and to be transferred to HAP on phased and agreed basis



# Key Policy Objectives





# HAP as a flexible policy response

provides **greater housing support** compared to Rent Supplement

other LA accommodation is an option through **transfer list**

social housing support but with the flexibility of the private rental market

**expands choice** to areas where little/ no social housing

expands delivery for **single person households** and other groups not well served by Social Housing Stock

allows **sharing** of accommodation (within reason)

# HAP Government Commitments

The Programme for a Partnership Government and *Rebuilding Ireland (under Pillar 1 – Address Homelessness and Pillar 2 – Accelerate Social Housing)* made the following commitments in relation to the future operation of HAP:

- Increasing Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) (and Rent Supplement limits)
- Extending the roll out by local authorities of HAP
- Extending the capacity to make discretionary enhanced payments

## Accelerated Delivery HAP delivery target under Rebuilding Ireland:

Year	SHS Target	APlan Target	% increase in target
2015	8,400	-	5,680 Actual - 68%
2016	10,000	12,000	120%
2017	10,000	15,000	150%
2018	15,000	17,000	113%
2019	15,000	16,760	112%
2020	11,040	13,000*	
2021	n/a	10,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,440</b>	<b>89,440</b>	

\*The aim is to complete the transfer of rent supplement to HAP by 2020

# Challenges for HAP

First social housing support to be **demand led**

**Local market rents** still a challenge for some

Tension between **achieving higher rental standards** and rent levels

Increased **private rental inspections** for LAs

Managing **Transfer list & Allocations**

**Inter LA Movement**

**Increasing RS transfers**



# HAP Prescribed Periods

## Inspections

- not required where inspected in previous 12 months
- where required must be arranged within 8 months

## Sourcing alternative accommodation

- where this is required the local authority can continue to provide HAP for 13 weeks

## Offers of other social housing accommodation

- the prescribed number of offers is **2**
- where a prescribed number of offers are made by the local authority and refused the household is **suspended from the transfer list for 12 months- but they still receive HAP**

# HAP – ASB Implications

HAP tenant must not engage in **anti-social behaviour**

**Tenancy agreement** between landlord and tenant is covered by the RTA 2004 (as amended) – accordingly landlord can end tenancy

A local authority **may** - refuse to provide, or to continue providing, housing assistance to a qualified household where - the authority considers that any member of the household is or has been engaged in anti-social behaviour

It is **ultimately** a matter for the authority to decide

# HAP Scheme Details



# HAP Basics

To be eligible for HAP – a person must be qualified for social housing support

Tenant **sources own accommodation** suitable to their needs and within HAP rent limits, and once housed their housing need is met

LA **does not** pay deposit

HAP payments commence once the HAP Application Form is validated and processed

HAP payment made on behalf of tenant to landlord on a **monthly basis**, subject to rent limits and conditions

Tenant pays **differential rent** and can work **full-time** – does not lose HAP support but must inform LA of changes in income

If tenant gets social welfare payment through post office, they must pay their HAP rent contribution through the **Household Budget Scheme (HBS)**

# HAP Rent Limits

**Maximum rent limits** are provided for in Regulations. Revised on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2017

**7** household classes (as per RS) – atypical households (s.43 determinations)

Evidence of **top-ups** (declared)

**Additional flexibility** to exceed max. rent limits on a case by case basis

**Prudent application of additional flexibility**



# HAP Maximum Rent Limits from 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2017 for four Dublin Local Authorities



1 adult in shared accommodation	Couple in shared accommodation	1 Adult	Couple	Couple or 1 adult with 1 child	Couple or 1 adult with 2 children	Couple or 1 adult with 3 children
€430	€500	€660	€900	€1,250	€1,275	€1,300

# Terms & Conditions - Tenant

Source suitable property **within HAP rent limits** (generally equivalent to Rent Supplement limits, but not always)

**Must pay rent contribution** to the local authority - where recipient is in receipt of social welfare payments through the post office, differential rent is paid via Household Budget scheme

**Expected to remain in the property for a period of 2 years** (*certain exceptional circumstances provided for moving*) - there is no limitation placed on the length of tenancy that can be supported by the HAP scheme

**Must not engage in anti-social behaviour**

# Terms & Conditions - Landlord

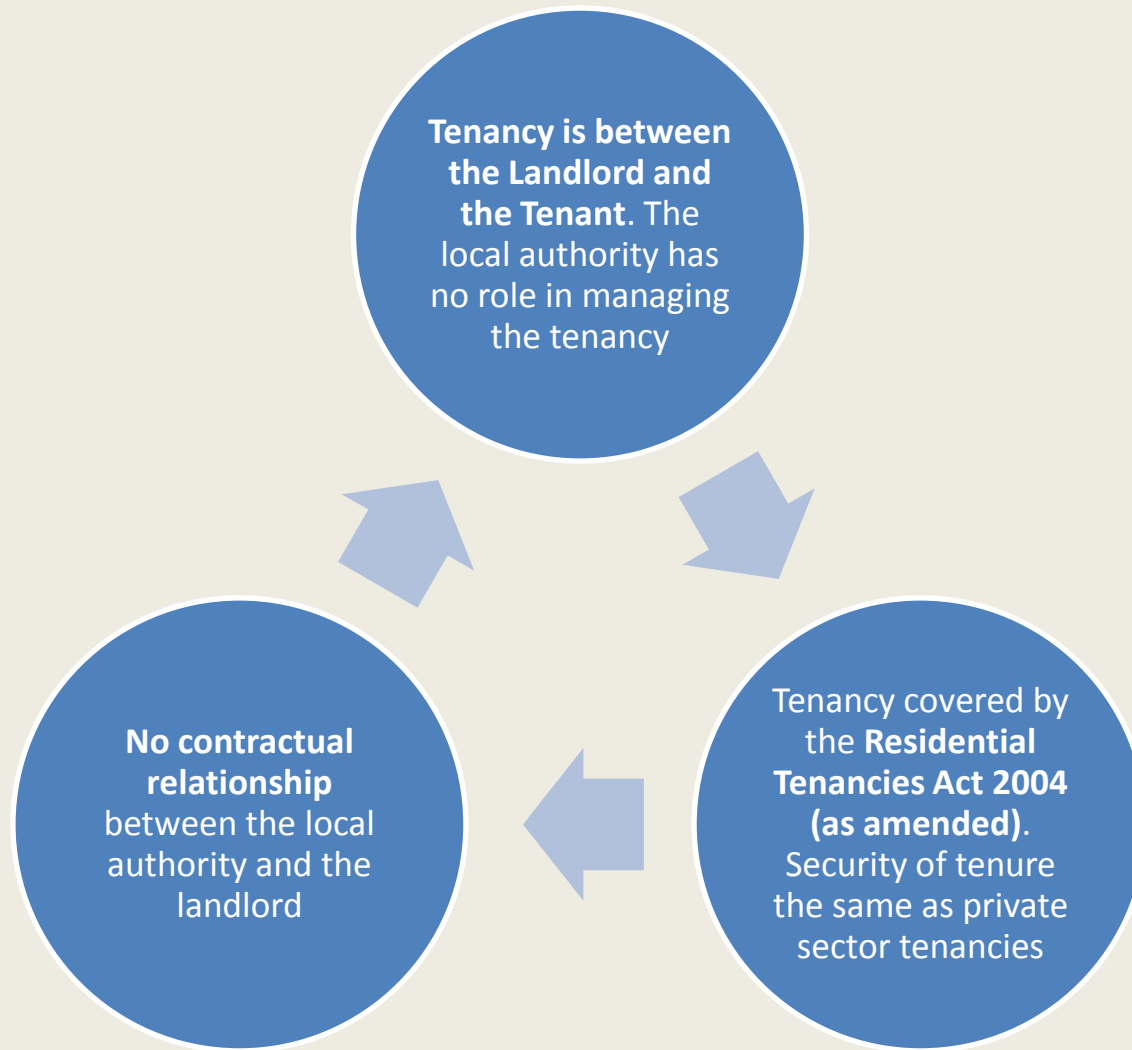
Tenancy must be a **tenancy “in good faith”** (Section 39(2)(e) of the 2014 Act)

Property must **comply with the standards for rental accommodation** - under HAP the local authority is obliged to arrange to inspect properties within 8 months of the first payment to the landlord

**Landlord must be tax compliant** – the **HAP SSC** will seek tax clearance immediately. Revenue restrictions on payments to landlord that exceed €10,000 in 12 month period without tax clearance

**Landlords responsibilities** are as covered by the Residential Tenancies Act 2004 (as amended)

# Tenant - Landlord Relationship



# Comparison between Rent Supplement and HAP

## RS

- Tenant sources own accommodation
- DSP considers assistance with deposit (means tested)
- Tenant pays landlord
- Maximum of 30 working hours
- On the Housing List

## HAP

- Tenant sources own accommodation
- Local authority does not pay deposit
- HAP SSC pays landlord
- Tenant pays differential rent (income based rent contribution)
- Can work full-time
- Housing need is met

**Thank You...**

**Any  
Questions?**