

24th November, 2025

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**To: The Mayor, Príomh Chomhairleoir and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council
Policy Changes to Limerick City and County Council Rightsizing Scheme.**

A Príomh Chomhairleoir, A Chara,

In October 2025, the following Notice of Motion was submitted to The Home and Development SPC by Councillors J. Pond and C. Slattery:

“We will move at the next meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that should a downsizing property becomes available that the property is used for downsizing again and not put back into the social housing stock.”

This motion was brought to the Home and Social Development SPC on the 9th October 2025 and endorsed by the members at this meeting.

Under Section 22 (5a) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 a housing authority shall make provision in its allocation scheme for the proportion of dwellings in any part of its administrative areas which may be reserved for

- a. Allocation to particular classes of household.
- b. Particular forms of tenure.

On review of the legislation, the Council can designate specific dwellings for elderly use by way of an Order, retaining their designation for future rightsizing purposes – both local authority rightsizing transfers and private rightsizing.

There is no requirement to change the current adopted Allocations Scheme.

The Council is now requested to consider this policy change and allow rightsizing in perpetuity on Local Authority owned stock that are designated by way of Order for rightsizing purposes.

The attached Appendix 1 outlines the proposal for Rightsizing in perpetuity in more detail.



Sarah Newell
A/Director of Service
Housing Development Directorate

Limerick City and County Council Rightsizing Scheme Policy Change



- 24th November, 2025

Notice of Motion

- Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors C. Slattery and J. Pond, at the September Meeting of the Council held on 22nd September, 2025:

“We will move at the next Meeting of the Council that, should a downsizing property become available, the property is used for downsizing again and not put back into the social housing stock.”

Solution can be found if delivered on LA own stock and not AHB owned stock

The Context

- It is recognised that compassionate and exceptional cases may require flexibility in allocating rightsizing units to meet specific housing needs.
- There are practical challenges in reserving rightsizing properties solely for future private rightsizers.
- **Prompt allocation is essential:** Vacancies in social housing often arise unexpectedly, and the Council must be able to allocate properties quickly to address urgent housing needs.
- Currently, **4,926 individuals** on the Social Housing Waiting List require one- or two-bedroom accommodation. We have a significant demand for older persons accommodation from our list.
- There is an insufficient supply of one- and two-bedroom properties in the current housing pipeline to meet this demand.
- Rightsizing units typically consist of one or two bedrooms.
- Under the current scheme, private homeowners must sell their property on the open market. The process—including advertising the scheme and conveyancing—can take **six to nine months**.

The Pros

Cost Savings

- More efficient use of budget and staff resources if we are not re-advertising campaigns for rightsizing units. Just keep a Community List updated and move to next household should vacancy arise.

Quicker allocation of properties

- Re-allocation may become faster if new rightsizer is able to sell their house quickly.

Benefit to the homeowner.

- Provides an additional opportunity for potential rightsizers to secure a suitable property, particularly in cases where they may have previously missed out.

Compassionate Cases

- We are aware of particular hardship cases where the household would rightsize if an opportunity arose through a vacancy

The Cons

AHBs are our main provider of rightsizing opportunities currently (e.g., Cluid through Clann specialist elderly model)

- We have engaged with AHBs involved in delivering recent rightsizing schemes. AHBs have expressed concerns about the potential reallocation of their units exclusively to rightsizers.

Delays and Funding Issues

AHBs rely on **specific funding arrangements** that require:

- **Prompt occupancy** of units.
- **Efficient turnover** to maintain operational and financial viability.
- The **Payment and Availability Agreement** (i.e., the legal contract) between the AHB and the Local Authority includes:
 - A requirement for the AHB to notify the Council as soon as a vacancy arises.
 - A nomination for the vacant unit **must be made within one month** of notification.

Financial Risks for AHBs

- Delays caused by the need to run a rightsizing campaign may result in:
 - **Loss of availability payments** from the State due to prolonged void periods.
 - **Financial strain** on AHBs, which are obligated to service debt from rental income.

Proposal – Future Rightsizing Schemes

Proposed Pilot Initiative – Future Elderly Scheme

- Consideration could be given to a **pilot initiative** within a future Local Authority-built scheme (not AHB owned scheme) for older persons, subject to agreement from relevant stakeholders.
- Under Section 22 (5a) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 a housing authority shall make provision in its allocation scheme for the proportion of dwellings in any part of its administrative areas which may be reserved for:
 - Allocation to particular classes of household.
 - Particular forms of tenure.
- With approval from the **Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)**, the Council could designate specific dwellings for elderly use by way of an **Order**, retaining their designation for rightsizing purposes.

Purpose and Benefits of the Pilot

- This pilot would allow the **reallocation process to be tested in practice**, balancing:
 - The goal of creating additional rightsizing opportunities.
 - The need to maintain **void efficiency**.
 - The importance of safeguarding **income and funding streams**.

Operational Setup and Allocation Process

- The Council will work with the **Allocations Team** to ensure:
 - Units in the pilot scheme are correctly set up on **iHouse**.
 - When a property becomes vacant, it is **flagged for reallocation to a rightsizer from the Community List**

Proposal – Future Rightsizing Schemes

- **Rightsizing Register and Reallocation Strategy**
- The Council currently maintains a **register of over 250 homeowners** who have expressed interest in rightsizing.
- When a rightsizing unit becomes available:
 - The Council will **contact next individual on first logged first served principle on the register** to assess interest.
 - This approach supports **prompt and efficient reallocation** of the unit rather than doing a lengthy register campaign

Rightsizing Register and Reallocation Strategy

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Rightsizing options in the pipeline 2025-2026 with 1 and 2 bed mix

Project Name	Projected Substantial Delivery
Clare Street, Limerick City	31/10/2025
Radharc Cillin, Kilfinane	30/11/2025
Ballyanrahan East, Patrickswell	30/11/2025
Radharc Fhlannain, Mungret	01/07/2026
Newtown, Monaleen, Castletroy	31/07/2026
Cluain Dara, Broadford	01/09/2026
Ballyanrahan East, Patrickswell	01/09/2026
Ballygrennnan, Bruff	01/10/2026
Church Glen, Ballylanders	15/10/2026
O' Connor Park, Ardagh	20/10/2026
Mulcair Drive, Annacotty	01/12/2026
Coolbawn Meadows, Castleconnell	31/10/2026
Ballyvelogue, Patrickswell	31/10/2026

Balancing Rightsizing Benefits with Operational Realities

- While reserving downsizing properties for ongoing rightsizing use could offer clear benefits to older residents and those seeking to move to more suitable accommodation, it is important to weigh these benefits against the **operational, funding, and allocation challenges** such a policy may present.
- **Flexibility and prompt allocation** remain essential to meeting the diverse and urgent housing needs across Limerick.
- LCCC built schemes offer this opportunity for prompt allocation without constraint.

National Policy Context and Departmental Engagement

- Earlier this year, **Minister James Browne**, now serving as **Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage**, announced a **review and standardisation of the Older Persons Housing Financial Contribution Scheme**.
- This initiative forms part of the **Programme for Government: Securing Ireland's Future**, which includes commitments to deliver **practical housing options for positive ageing** and to support older people in living independently within their communities.
- The Council has contacted the **Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage** to request an update on the progress of this review.

Recommendation

- The Council is now requested to consider this policy change and allow rightsizing in perpetuity on Local Authority owned stock that are designated by way of Order for rightsizing purposes.