

Report for the Galway Housing Task Force
On the Housing Delivery Forum



Held in the Galmont Hotel on 12.11.25

Hosted by:

Galway City Council

Galway County Council

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

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Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

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Executive Summary

The Housing Delivery Forum brought together a broad range of stakeholders from across Galway's housing ecosystem to examine, in a practical and solutions-focused way, how the region can accelerate and scale delivery over the coming years. Guided by a problem statement, participants engaged in three structured rounds of dialogue that explored untapped potential, identified systemic friction points and agreed the collaborative actions required to transform the delivery system for Galway.

Across all discussions, a clear picture emerged: Galway has significant capacity to increase housing delivery, but this capacity remains largely unrealised because the delivery system itself is fragmented. Participants consistently emphasised that the region's challenge is not a deficit of land, policy ambition or organisational commitment, but the absence of a unified system capable of activating land, sequencing infrastructure, coordinating approvals and managing a shared pipeline of homes. This diagnosis was reinforced by the consistency of themes raised across the ten mixed-sector tables and by the strong alignment with the Government's *Delivering Homes, Building Communities Action Plan 2025–2030*, published the day after the Forum.

The Forum identified six cross-cutting themes that shape Galway's current delivery landscape: land activation as the core constraint; insufficient whole-system collaboration; infrastructure and utilities acting as the most binding bottleneck; a need for integrated masterplans and a long-term vision; underuse of land assembly and delivery mechanisms; and limited structured engagement with landowners. Participants then mapped the friction points that most frequently delay projects, namely, planning and zoning, utilities and infrastructure, funding and finance, governance and culture, and community engagement – describing these not as isolated problems but as symptoms of deeper system fragmentation.

When participants were asked to consider the collaborative actions required to 'speed up and scale up' housing delivery in Galway, strong convergence emerged. The most important actions centred on three pillars: developing a single shared vision and set of masterplans for Galway's key growth areas; establishing unified governance through a Joint Galway Housing Office and a multi-agency Infrastructure Forum; and front-loading enabling works and land activation through a dedicated Active Land Management Team. These pillars are underpinned by three enabling capabilities: predictable, multi-annual funding and risk-sharing models; a modern digital and data-driven planning ecosystem including BIM, digital twins and open data; and early, visual, community-centred engagement.



Bridge Court Ahascragh (photo VHA Architects)

Taken together, these actions form a coherent '*Galway Housing Delivery System*' – one capable of moving the region from fragmented, sequential processes to an integrated, multi-agency delivery model. To translate this system into practice, the Forum outlined a roadmap: building foundational structures; preparing a unified blueprint; activating land and infrastructure; and scaling delivery across all tenures.

This draft report presents the insights and recommended actions arising from the Forum. They represent a strong and shared call from all sides for a coordinated, sustained and implementation-focused approach that can unlock Galway's capacity and accelerate the delivery of homes for its growing communities.

Introduction and context

The Housing Delivery Forum, held at the Galmont Hotel on 12 November 2025, took place at a pivotal time for Galway City and County. Initiated by the Galway Housing Delivery Task Force in collaboration with the Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG), the event sought to build on the stakeholder engagement developed to date and to intensify cooperation around the practical solutions required to accelerate housing delivery. Drawing on the AHWG's success in fostering constructive engagement, the Task Force recognised that Galway's challenges require a more ambitious, system-wide approach rooted in co-creation, shared analysis and collective problem-solving.

Galway City Council, Galway County Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage jointly hosted the event, signalling a unified commitment to working together in new ways and acknowledging that housing challenges in Galway are urgent and acute. While national pressures remain significant, the situation in Galway is particularly pronounced: median house prices continue to rise more quickly than national averages, housing completions are falling well short of demand and the region's strong labour market and population growth are intensifying pressure on an already constrained pipeline of housing supply. As the Minister for Housing noted in his opening remarks, housing is "the defining challenge we face today," and Galway's economic and social progress will depend on scaling delivery across all tenures in the years ahead.



L-R – Leonard Cleary, Chief Executive GCC; Cllr. Mike Cubbard; Laura Behan, Assistant Secretary DHLGH; John McCarthy, Task Force Chair; Cllr. David Collins Cathaoirleach; Liam Conneally, Chief Executive GCoCo.

The Forum brought together representatives from a broad cross-section of organisations and individuals from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors – local authorities, utilities, AHBs, the LDA, developers, planners, financial institutions, State agencies, elected members and community stakeholders. This diversity of participation reflected a shared understanding that no single organisation can resolve Galway's housing challenges alone, and that progress will only be achieved through coordinated, multi-agency effort.



Leonard Cleary, Chief Executive Galway City Council addressing the Forum.

Recognising the complexity and interdependence of these issues an approach grounded in open dialogue and collaborative thinking was proposed to the Task Force. The structure of the day was designed to allow participants to engage directly with one another, challenge established assumptions and explore new ways of working that could underpin a unified, multi-agency delivery system for Galway. The Forum centred on three pivotal questions, each building on the last: unlocking latent capacity, diagnosing friction points and identifying the most important collaborative actions needed to deliver a transformed housing system.

This report synthesises the insights and draft recommendations emerging from the Forum and provides a guide to the next phase of work by the Galway Housing Delivery Task Force.



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The issues addressed throughout the Forum closely align with the priorities set out in the Government's *Delivering Homes, Building Communities Action Plan 2025–2030*, published on 13 November, the day after the event. The national focus on activating supply through land readiness, enabling infrastructure, addressing viability, modernising construction and tackling vacancy, reflects the same system-wide challenges identified by stakeholders in Galway.

Likewise, the Forum's emphasis on coordinated governance, shared master planning and infrastructure-led delivery directly mirrors the approach outlined in the national plan, confirming strong alignment between Galway's local priorities and national policy direction.

Forum Process

The structure of the Housing Delivery Forum was shaped by the urgency of the housing challenge in Galway and by the direction set in the opening remarks of the Minister, Mayor, Cathaoirleach and Chief Executives. Each emphasised the need for partnership, pace and practical solutions, highlighting that Galway's housing system will only succeed through coordinated action across all organisations involved in delivery. The Minister underscored the national significance of Galway's response and the Government's commitment to supporting it; and, as the Task Force Chair emphasised in his closing remarks, participants were encouraged to look beyond organisational boundaries and focus on their collective capacity to deliver for the people of Galway. In this spirit, the Forum was designed as a working session where participants could think together, challenge assumptions and contribute directly to shaping a more integrated delivery model for the region.

To support this objective, the Forum adopted a World Café methodology, facilitated by Genesis, a consulting firm, whose role was to guide the overall process, set the structure for the day, and enable open, constructive dialogue across all participants.



World Café participants in dialogue at their tables

The World Café method was chosen for its ability to break down silos, support open conversation and generate practical ideas quickly. Unlike conventional meetings or presentations, the World Café creates a structured but informal environment where participants can think together, explore challenges honestly and build relationships across organisational boundaries. This approach was especially suited to housing delivery, where no single organisation can succeed without the active involvement of others.

Attention was given to the invitation list to ensure that all relevant parts of the delivery system were represented, including the local authorities, utilities, AHBs, developers, planners, financiers, State agencies, and elected representatives. Participants were allocated to cross-disciplinary tables so that each group included a balanced mix of expertise. In

advance of the Forum, all invitees received the pre-developed problem statement, ensuring a shared understanding of the issues to be addressed.

Problem statement:

Galway's housing crisis is defined not by a lack of vision or individual effort, but by the systemic fragmentation of its delivery ecosystem.

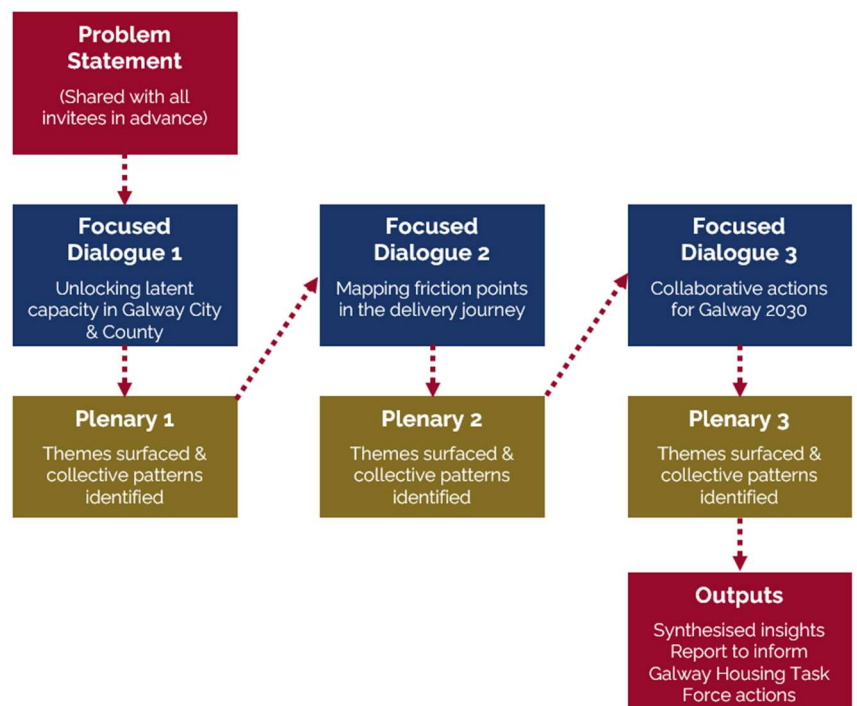
Despite ambitious plans, an abundance of underutilised urban lands and clear mandates for compact growth, the absence of a unified, multi-agency implementation framework results in chronic delays, cost challenges and a failure to meet the scale and pace of housing delivery required.

The challenge is to overcome traditional siloed approaches and co-create an integrated system where public bodies, housing associations and private developers can collectively unlock latent capacity, streamline processes and build a resilient, sustainable and shared pipeline of housing for Galway's future.

Each table was supported by a facilitator whose role was to guide the discussion, ensure balanced contribution and capture insights objectively. The agenda centred on three focused dialogues aligned to key stages of the delivery system: latent capacity (Dialogue 1), friction points (Dialogue 2) and collaborative actions (Dialogue 3). Each dialogue was followed by a plenary session at which table facilitators shared emerging themes and collective patterns began to surface across the room. Following Plenary 2, participants rotated to a new table to encourage cross-pollination of ideas while maintaining continuity through the presence of table hosts.

Process flow

The process followed a clear sequence providing both structure and openness. It enabled participants to develop a shared understanding of Galway's delivery challenges and to co-identify the collaborative actions and system reforms needed to accelerate housing delivery in Galway.



Reporting and Analysis

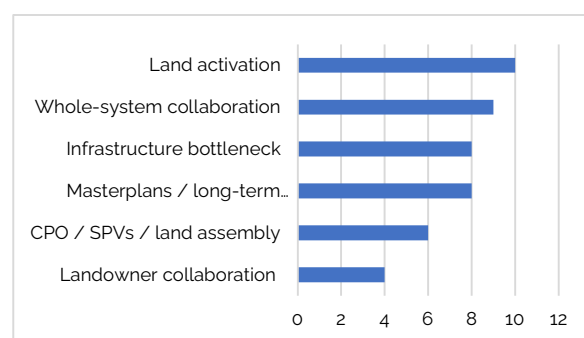
Dialogue 1: Unlocking Galway's latent capacity

Looking across Galway's public, private and voluntary sectors, where do we see the greatest untapped potential – in **land**, **process** or **partnerships** – that could accelerate housing delivery if we worked together differently?

Across all tables, participants overwhelmingly identified that Galway possesses substantial latent capacity in land, process and partnership. However, this capacity remains unrealised due to fragmentation, inconsistent implementation and an absence of a single integrated delivery system. Six cross-cutting themes emerged from the dialogue:

1: Land activation, not land availability, is the core issue

There was unanimous agreement that Galway's housing challenge is not rooted in land scarcity but in the inability to activate the land already available. The absence of detailed masterplans, the lack of early infrastructure delivery, insufficient use of CPOs and land assembly tools, and zoning decisions that are not grounded in infrastructure capacity was pointed to. These gaps prevent strategic landbanks such as Ardaun, Garraun-Oranmore, Briarhill and Tuam Road corridor from progressing and also make it difficult for landowners to participate with confidence.



Frequency of theme mentions across the 10 tables

2: Early, whole-system collaboration is missing

The system is fragmented, with stakeholders working in silos across planning, infrastructure, utilities, housing delivery and government approvals. This structural separation leads to inconsistent timelines, duplicated processes and chronic uncertainty, as developers, AHBs and utilities are rarely aligned from the outset. The absence of whole-system collaboration was repeatedly identified as a fundamental barrier to consistent delivery.

3: Critical infrastructure (water, wastewater, energy and transport) is the key bottleneck

Critical infrastructure delays, in particular water, wastewater, ESB connections and transport acts as the most significant bottleneck. Delays in utility approvals and the misalignment between transport planning and zoning decisions were seen as more constraining than land availability or development ambition.

4: Need for masterplans and a long-term strategic vision

A related theme was the need for a single, long-term strategic vision for Galway's growth, underpinned by area-based masterplans for key areas such as Ardaun, Garraun-Oranmore, Briarhill and Tuam Road corridor. Stakeholders stressed that these masterplans must integrate transport, utilities, housing, amenities and phasing, supported by modern 3D or UDZ-style planning tools and a 10–20-year roadmap.

5: Use of CPO, SPVs, land assembly and new delivery vehicles

The discussions also underscored the importance of using new delivery mechanisms, such as CPOs, SPVs, joint ventures, land assembly approaches and LDA-led activation, to move complex and fragmented land parcels into the delivery pipeline more quickly. These mechanisms were seen as essential for unlocking strategic sites that cannot progress through conventional processes.

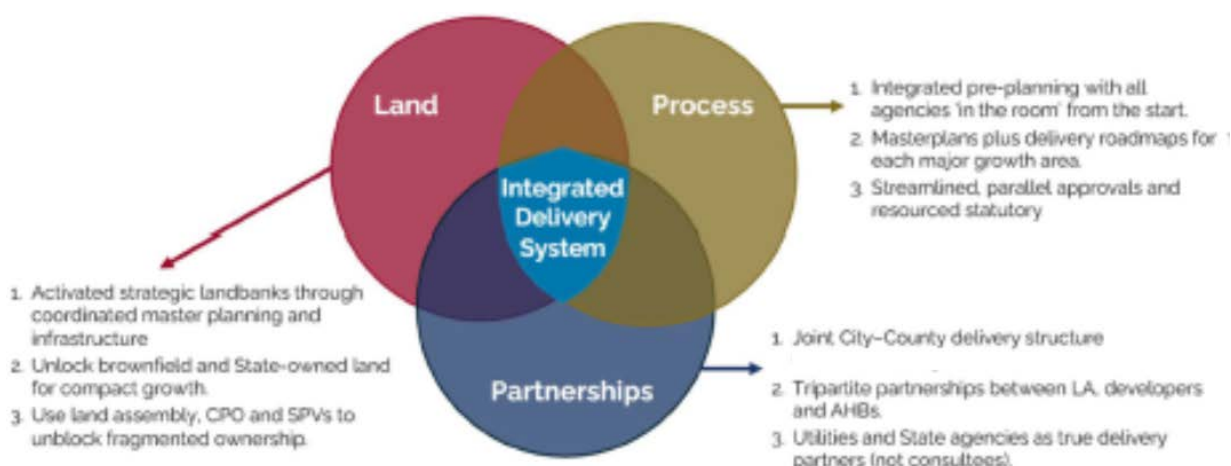
6: Collaboration with landowners is essential but underdeveloped

It was also noted that effective collaboration with landowners remains underdeveloped. Landowners need clearer incentives, greater certainty and practical mechanisms such as value-sharing or participation through SPVs or DACs. Without structured engagement and the right tools, much of Galway's apparent land capacity will remain latent rather than deliverable.

Where the greatest untapped potential lies

Land	Process	Partnership
Strategic landbanks Ardaun, Garraun-Oranmore, Briarhill and Tuam Road corridor	Integrated pre-planning <i>'everyone in the room'</i>	Joint City-Council delivery model via a Joint Galway City & County Housing Office.
Brownfield and infill State lands, schools, Nuns Island	Area-based masterplans with delivery roadmaps	Tripartite delivery model, e.g. LA-developer-AHB
Land assembly/CPO/SPVs	Streamlined approvals (UE, ESB, DHLGH, Part V)	Early landowner engagement
Zoning tied to infrastructure	Infrastructure-first sequencing	Utility alignment (UE, ESB, NTA/TII)
Vacancy and dereliction	Evidence-based zoning and forward planning	State bodies co-design (LDA, DHLGH, NPWS, etc.)

Ranked opportunities across all 10 tables



The assessment of participants is that Galway has ample land and ambition, its housing challenge stems from the fragmentation of the delivery ecosystem rather than from a lack of assets or intent.

The greatest untapped potential lies in bringing land, processes and partnerships together into a single, coordinated system; one capable of aligning infrastructure, planning, funding and collaboration.

Dialogue 2: Friction points in Galway's housing delivery system

If we were to map the journey of a new housing project in Galway, what are the two or three *most* significant **friction points** between our respective **mandates and processes**, and how might we reimagine them from the ground up?

Across the tables, stakeholders mapped the journey of a typical housing project in Galway and identified where progress most frequently stalls. Although individual experiences varied by mandate and role, clear systemic patterns emerged.

The five friction points identified are not isolated issues; they reflect a delivery system that is fragmented, sequential and insufficiently integrated to meet the pace and scale of housing need. Five system-wide friction categories emerged and are ranked below based on frequency of mention. For each, participants were invited to reimagine how they might be resolved.



1: Planning and zoning – the most frequent and deeply felt friction

Friction point: Stakeholders consistently described planning and zoning as the most persistent and frustrating points of friction in Galway's City and County's housing delivery journey. They highlighted how planning decisions can vary significantly depending on the individual planner, leading to different interpretations between pre-planning and planning stages. This inconsistency, combined with excessive objections and judicial reviews, creates multi-year delays that undermine confidence and erode viability.

Participants also noted that zoning decisions are often disconnected from infrastructure realities, resulting in land that is technically zoned but effectively undevelopable. Development plans, while comprehensive on paper, were described as difficult for the public to understand and lacking practical guidance for developers. Duplication across Local Area Plans, Development Plans and planning applications '*looking at the same thing twice*' adds further delay, while overly rigid density requirements can render otherwise viable schemes unworkable.

As participants put it, Galway needs '*practicality, not just a yellow box on a map*', and plans that '*reflect reality, not just policy ambition*'.

How might the friction points be reimaged? Stakeholders advocated for the use of SDZ/UDZ designations and 3D master planning tools that front-load infrastructure constraints and provide certainty. They called for viability to become a formal planning consideration, for overlapping processes to be rationalised, for clear timebound planning pathways and for a shift away from sequential working towards collaborative pre-planning where utilities, landowners, local authorities, AHBs, developers and national agencies engage together from the outset.

2: Infrastructure and utilities – considered the most binding constraint

Friction point: Participants repeatedly emphasised that deficiencies in water, wastewater, ESB connections and transport constitute the most binding constraints on Galway's ability to deliver homes. Water and wastewater upgrades often take years, delaying projects that are

otherwise ready to proceed. Utility engagement, whether from Uisce Éireann or ESB Networks, typically occurs too late in the process, long after key site layout plans or development proposals have been shaped.

Administrative delays, including estate naming procedures required for ESB energisation, can stall schemes by months. Transport planning, meanwhile, is frequently out of step with zoning decisions, leading to areas that are zoned for growth but not supported by infrastructure. The current system involves multiple statutory consultees whose processes overlap and slow progress, prompting remarks such as *'Utilities are not delivery partners, they're obstacles we must navigate'*, and *'We cannot deliver housing faster than the slowest utility'*.

How might the friction points be reimagined? Stakeholders proposed a reimagined model built on structured utility–local authority coordination, with formal quarterly meetings, shared pipelines and aligned timelines. They called for utility zoning and infrastructure planning to be hardwired into masterplans from the outset, supported by regional or national CPO and infrastructure-delivery expertise. Practical process fixes were also emphasised, including early decisions on estate naming, technical measures such as rainwater separation to unlock wastewater capacity and the use of parallel rather than sequential approvals.

3: Funding and finance – fragmented, duplicative and slow

Friction point: Funding and finance emerged as a major point of friction, with stakeholders noting that funding applications must pass through multiple State bodies, often resulting in six- to twelve-month delays. Annual budget cycles are misaligned with the multi-year nature of housing delivery, creating uncertainty that directly affects viability.

Upfront costs, especially for infrastructure, impose significant risks on developers and AHBs, while smaller developers in particular struggle to secure forward funding or commit to projects without guaranteed exits. Affordable housing projects, while essential, are often financially unattractive due to structures involving equity shares or second mortgages. As one table stated, *'One arm of the State supports us; another blocks us'*, underscoring the wider point that all stakeholders are mandated to deliver, but the system itself is not.

How might the friction points be reimagined? Participants called for a funding model that provides multi-annual certainty, milestone-based payments and forward-funding mechanisms for SME developers. They proposed shifting tax incentives to purchasers rather than developers, and giving local authorities access to rolling finance, enabling them to acquire or activate land without relying solely on turnkey delivery. These measures were seen as foundational for unlocking stalled sites and supporting a more diverse development ecosystem.

4: Governance, culture and mandates – fragmentation at the heart of the system

Friction point Stakeholders described governance as an area marked by fragmented mandates, overlapping responsibilities and a culture of caution. Each agency operates within its own mandate, with no single organisation responsible for whole-system delivery. Local authorities and other government and state agencies – facing FOI requests, procurement scrutiny and political pressure – were described as risk-averse, leading to conservative approaches and delayed decisions.

Conflicting expectations from national agencies around climate targets, transport priorities, density standards, community expectations and financial viability, further complicate matters. Decisions frequently escalate because frontline staff lack the mandate or confidence to make judgement calls, and it is often unclear who is responsible for solving specific problems. Contributions such as *'Everyone works in silos; housing requires joined-up thinking.'* and *'We don't have a safe space to innovate.'* illustrate a system where committed organisations are limited by structures that restrict collaboration and discourage innovation.



How might the friction points be reimagined? Participants emphasised the need for structures that create shared accountability and foster cross-agency collaboration. Suggestions included Housing Delivery Boards or a Joint Galway City & County Housing Office to bring all actors together; cross-functional local authority teams combining planning, engineering, procurement, legal and housing expertise, and mandate flexibility that allows departments to innovate without fear of penalty. Competitive dialogue was also highlighted as a tool for aligning perspectives between developers, AHBs and local authorities early in the process.

5: Community engagement and objections – legitimate voice vs. systemic blockage

Friction point Community engagement and objections represent another major source of friction. Third-party objections often lead to significant delays or even the halting of housing and infrastructure projects. Stakeholders noted that development plans are not easily accessible or understandable to the public, limiting meaningful engagement and fostering mistrust. Local concerns around density, tenure mix or the presence of social and affordable housing frequently slow progress, and planning becomes adversarial when communities feel excluded or inadequately informed. As participants noted, *'Everyone can object, but not everyone is impacted'*, and without clear communication, *'planning becomes adversarial.'*

Stakeholders also acknowledged that objections can be legitimate, particularly where developments raise genuine issues of design, amenity, infrastructure or environmental impact. The challenge, they noted, is not the presence of objections, but the absence of a structured, proportionate system that distinguishes between valid concerns and objections that arise *'from uncertainty or lack of information.'*

How might the friction points be reimagined?

Stakeholders proposed restricting objections to vested or directly affected parties; modernising engagement through digital twins, 3D models and other visual tools; and providing clear, timebound pathways for planning consents and appeals. Roadshows, proactive communication and early engagement within master planning processes were seen as essential for rebuilding trust and creating a constructive dialogue with communities.



World Café participants in dialogue at their tables

A reimagined Housing Delivery process

From: a Fragmented delivery system	➔	To: an Integrated delivery system
Sequential steps		Parallel, integrated workflow
Multiple approvals		Single front-door pre-planning
Late utility input		Utilities embedded from the start
Siloed agency decision		Joint Galway Housing Office with shared mandate
Annual budgets		Multi-year delivery programmes
Reactive community engagement		Digital-first, visual engagement

Dialogue 3: Collaborative actions for a unified housing delivery system in Galway.

Imagine Galway in 2030, having successfully addressed its housing needs. What are the two or three most important, **collaborative actions** we must start taking today to bring that vision to life, and what **unique contribution** can each of us make?

In this final round, stakeholders were asked to imagine Galway in 2030, having successfully addressed its housing needs and identify the most important collaborative actions needed today to make that vision possible. Across all ten tables, there was striking convergence around a single message:

Galway can only meet its future housing needs by establishing a unified delivery system – built on shared masterplans, joint governance, front-loaded infrastructure and coordinated funding.

The discussions revealed three overarching themes, each representing a core pillar of that future system:

1. Shared vision and master planning
2. Unified governance and coordination
3. Infrastructure, funding and enabling works

These are supported by three enabling themes:

1. Funding and risk sharing
2. Data, digital and innovation
3. Community engagement.

Core pillars of a future system:

1: Shared vision and master planning

The strongest message concerned the need for a single, shared, evidence-based masterplan for Galway's growth. Stakeholders repeatedly stressed that without a unified strategic vision, Galway will continue to operate as a collection of disconnected initiatives rather than a coordinated system. Masterplans were called for the four strategic growth areas – Ardaun, Garraun-Oranmore, Briarhill and Tuam Road corridor – that integrate land use, transport, water and wastewater, energy, amenities and schools into a coherent whole.

These masterplans must be accessible and visual, moving beyond text-heavy development plans to 3D digital models, VR tools and other forms of visualisation that clearly set out the 'what, where, when and how much' of housing delivery. Such plans would provide certainty for utilities, developers, AHBs, funders, State agencies and local communities, shifting the system from aspiration to an actionable, sequenced delivery programme.

2: Unified governance and coordination

A second, equally strong theme was the need for a unified governance model: a single Galway delivery system capable of coordinating the public, private and voluntary sectors. Stakeholders proposed the creation of a Joint Galway Housing Office, spanning Galway City and County and incorporating the LDA, AHBs, developers and utility providers

This structure would be complemented by an Infrastructure Forum bringing together Uisce Éireann, ESB Networks, TII, the NTA and local authorities to jointly plan and sequence

enabling works. Many also advocated for an Active Land Management Team with emergency powers, including CPO, to assemble land, resolve title issues and activate priority sites.

This system would replace fragmented mandates and siloed responsibilities with clear roles, shared accountability, unified decision-making and consistent delivery pipelines; transforming Galway from a set of separate organisations into a single, coordinated delivery ecosystem.

3: Infrastructure, funding and enabling works

Participants were clear that infrastructure must lead, not follow, housing. They emphasised the need to front-load enabling works across the major growth corridors, guaranteeing certainty of funding for AHBs and mixed-tenure schemes, accelerating wastewater upgrades, ESB connections, road improvements and transport infrastructure, and ensuring all utilities are involved at the master planning stage rather than after planning consent. Legislative reform, such as allowing local handling of certain Environmental Impact Assessments or introducing streamlined consent pathways for specific scales of development, was seen as essential to increasing speed and predictability. Participants also stressed that the pace of infrastructure delivery, not land availability or development capacity, will ultimately determine Galway's ability to deliver at scale.

Key enablers to support a future system:

1: Funding and risk sharing

Financial certainty is a key enabler. Across the conversations, stakeholders highlighted that Galway cannot succeed without shared financial responsibility and new funding models. Multi-annual funding streams for infrastructure and affordable housing were seen as essential, alongside risk-sharing frameworks between the State and private sector, forward-funding mechanisms for small-to-medium sized developers and greater involvement from financial institutions with increased risk appetite and more flexible macroprudential rules. Participants also called for procurement reforms and tax incentives that support mixed-tenure delivery, noting that financial uncertainty and cashflow risk are major contributors to stalled land and delayed projects.

2: Data, digital and innovation

Digital transformation and innovation were viewed as cross-cutting enablers that would modernise Galway's planning and delivery system. Stakeholders advocated for an open-data ecosystem that allows organisations to share and reuse ecological and planning data; wider adoption of building information modelling (BIM) and modern methods of construction (MMC); structured training programmes to address workforce capacity; and the use of 3D modelling, digital twins and VR tools to support planning and community engagement. Digital transformation was repeatedly described as a high-impact, low-cost accelerator of both certainty and trust.

3: Community engagement

Participants emphasised that Galway must move from an objection-driven model of community interaction to one rooted in early, visual and collaborative engagement. Tools such as VR models and visual masterplans would help demystify development and reduce resistance, while masterplan events, roadshows and proactive communications would create a clearer, more consistent public narrative about Galway's 2030 vision. Stakeholders noted that better engagement leads to fewer objections, more informed design outcomes, stronger public trust and faster delivery overall.

Recommendations

The Housing Delivery Forum demonstrated a strong and unusual degree of alignment across the public, private and voluntary sectors regarding the steps required to transform Galway's housing system. Stakeholders agreed that Galway's housing challenge is not caused by a lack of land or ambition, but by the absence of a unified delivery system capable of activating land, sequencing infrastructure, coordinating funding and managing a shared pipeline of homes.

The recommendations that follow are system-shaping actions: they define the governance, planning, infrastructure, funding and digital architecture Galway needs to deliver housing at scale and pace.

Forum recommended Housing Delivery system



The Forum's work converged on a clear system architecture for delivering housing in Galway. At the top of this model is a single **Shared Vision and set of Masterplans** for the four strategic growth areas. These masterplans provide the unified blueprint that aligns land use, transport, utilities, amenities and phasing across City and County.

Beneath this shared vision sits a **Joint Galway City & County Housing Office**, the central coordinating structure responsible for bringing all delivery partners together (local authorities, utilities, AHBs, developers and the LDA) around one pipeline, one process and one set of decisions. In parallel, an **Infrastructure and Land Activation Programme**, incorporating an Active Land Management Team (ALMT) and the use of CPO where necessary, ensures that enabling works and land readiness progress in tandem with planning.

Together, these pillars create the conditions for **delivery at scale**, supporting mixed-tenure schemes and a strong role for AHBs and developers of large and smaller scale..

The entire system is supported by three essential enablers. **Funding and Risk Sharing** provides financial certainty through multi-annual funding, rolling loans and forward funding.



Data, Digital and Innovation modernised planning and delivery through an Open Data Hub, BIM, VR/3D tools and capacity-building. **Community Engagement**, grounded in visual and early co-creation approaches, builds trust and reduces objections.

In combination, these pillars and enablers form a coherent, integrated delivery system capable of turning Galway's latent capacity into homes.

Roadmap – from Fragmentation to Integration

The Forum's recommendations translate naturally into a roadmap with key actions that builds Galway's future housing delivery system. The sequencing proposed aligns closely with the system architecture outlined above: establishing foundations, creating a shared vision and masterplans, activating land and infrastructure, and delivering homes at scale. Participants believe that by implementing these actions, Galway can shift from a fragmented ecosystem to a coordinated and confident delivery model capable of delivering its housing ambitions.



Immediate Actions

Goal: Build the foundations for a unified, coordinated delivery system.

The emphasis is on putting the core structures, governance mechanisms and tools in place. This is where Galway City and County and key actors move from siloed working to shared ownership of a single delivery pipeline.

Key actions

- Establish the **Joint Galway City & County Housing Office** to create one coordinated governance and delivery structure across City and County.
- Set up the **Infrastructure Forum** to align utility partners and transport agencies around shared timelines and pinch-point resolution.
- Launch **open data sharing protocols**, enabling reuse of ecological, planning and infrastructure data across all actors.
- Secure **multi-annual funding** and a **rolling loan fund** to underpin early planning and land activation.

Planning & Design Actions

Goal: Produce the shared blueprint that will guide Galway's growth.

As the foundations are put in place, Galway must also define where and how it will deliver homes. These actions are about producing the core masterplans and strategic vision required to align all actors behind a single blueprint.

Key actions

- Develop a strategic vision and master plan for Galway integrating City–County perspectives.
- Prepare integrated masterplans for the strategic delivery areas: Ardaun, Garraun-Oranmore, Briarhill and Tuam Road corridor, each incorporating transport, utilities, amenities, tenure mix and phasing.
- Deploy 3D planning, VR tools and digital twins to make plans visual, accessible and easier for the public to understand.

Infrastructure & Activation Actions

Goal: Unlock development-ready sites through coordinated enabling works and land activation.

Actions to prepare strategic sites so they can support construction at scale. The focus is on the pace-setting components of the system: utilities, enabling works and land assembly.

Key actions

- Complete enabling works for all priority sites, including wastewater upgrades, ESB energisation and junction/transport improvements.
- Activate land through the Active Land Management Team (ALMT) equipped with emergency powers, including CPO, title resolution and land assembly.
- Implement legislative reforms that streamline planning and create more proportionate approval pathways.

Delivery & Scaling Actions

Goal: Deliver homes at scale, supported by modern methods, risk-sharing models and sustained community engagement.

With land enabled and infrastructure in place, Galway can move into a sustained delivery phase. This is where mixed-tenure, affordable, AHB-led and developer-supported schemes come to market, and where Galway shifts from planning to construction at scale.

Key actions

- Roll out viable, affordable purchase schemes and shared-risk frameworks, ensuring these initiatives are available across the city and county to broaden access homeownership while reducing developer risk.
- Expand adoption of MMC and BIM, improving speed, cost control and environmental efficiency.
- Deliver ongoing community engagement, ensuring transparency, trust and continued support for development.

Forum Attendance

List of organisations that attended the Forum

Forum Hosts

Galway City Council

Galway County Council

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

The Mayor and Cathaoirleach

Housing SPC Chair and elected representatives

Galway Housing Task Force Chair

The Housing Agency

Housing Delivery Coordination Office (HDCO)

Land Development Agency (LDA)

Land Activation Fund (LAF)

Housing Activation Office (HAO)

Housing Infrastructure Services Co. (HISCo)

Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR)

Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH)

Clúid Housing

Tuath Housing

Respond

Co-operative Housing Ireland

Cope Galway

Galway Simon

Threshold

Peter Triest Housing Association

Private housing developers and builders active in Galway

Construction Industry Federation (CIF)

Architects and Urban Planners

Irish House Builders Association (IHBA)

Housing Finance Agency (HFA)

Home Building Finance Ireland (HBFI)

Banking sector

Galway Chamber

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