2017

Mulhuddart Strategic Development and Implementation Plan
A Plan for Mulhuddart

To:
Mulhuddart Priority Task Group

Draft Report
17/11/2017

NEXUS
Nexus Research Cooperative

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FOREWARD

The publication of this Strategic Development and Implementation Plan is a major step forward for the development of a collaborative and prioritised approach to Service Provision and Community Development work in the Mulhuddart area. Twenty two Service Providers covering twenty seven services took part in the research. It is our hope and expectation that this Strategy will be a platform for action with service providers committing to prioritising Mulhuddart in their future plans and strategies.

When the Mulhuddart Priority Task Group first decided to commission research to develop a Strategy and Implementation Plan for Mulhuddart, the involvement of the local community and in particular the 'unheard voices' was seen as paramount to ensure that the Plan was meaningful and could be 'owned' by the community it concerned. Local people were trained and supported to carry out research in their own community, talking to their neighbours, carrying out interviews, filling in questionnaires with local residents and generally listening to the views of people in their own community, views and opinions that can be clearly heard in the many comments/quotes found in the report.

I would like to thank all those who took part in the research, the local researchers, the Service Providers who responded to the survey; and a special word of thanks to the local community who agreed to be interviewed and have their opinions/views documented.

Thank you to the members of the MPTG Research Sub Group who have tirelessly overseen the process from start to finish.

Finally a huge thank you to Seán Ó Siochrú and Paul Butler from NEXUS Research Co-operative who carried out the research, for their patience and commitment to getting it right.

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Pat Queenan

Chairperson Mulhuddart Priority Task Group

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

This draft Strategy and Implementation Plan was developed by the **Mulhuddart Priority Task Group**, in collaboration with numerous service providers and community organisations and individuals and with the support of Nexus Research Cooperative. A core feature in the development of the strategy is that it has been developed in a highly collaborative manner. The service provision and needs analysis research involved highly active participation on the ground of community members specifically trained for the purpose, and of community based organisations.

Community involvement in this process has, from the outset, been regarded as critical. Opportunities for effective and sustainable involvement of citizens and in particular unheard voices, in determining priorities, solutions and decision making at a local level were central to the process and to the output. This collaborative and bottom-up approach, it was felt, would produce a strategy for which there would be a higher level of 'buy-in' and commitment, that would have a better chance of being fully implemented and indeed that would evolve with the needs of the community itself.

PHASES OF STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The research stages involved the production of a demographic and community service profile, using Census and other data. A consultation with statutory bodies and service providers was held to determine their views on service needs, on bottlenecks and on the extent and potential for interagency cooperation. An extensive participatory community need assessment and consultation was then undertaken to determine service needs throughout the different parts of Mulhuddart. Section 4.2 describes the approach in greater detail. As this data was being collected and analysed, the initial strategy development work was undertaken, leading to the establishment of working groups. This report represents the collation and presentation of the results from each data collection and analysis phase.

MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE PROFILE

The 2016 Census data shows that the population of Mulhuddart has grown rapidly over recent years. It now has a large population of young people and community members, who were born outside of Ireland. There are large cohorts of people with limited educational qualifications and people who are unemployed. Mulhuddart also has large groups of people living in rental accommodation, with housing associations playing an important role in the provision of this accommodation.

There are now 7,380 people living in Mulhuddart. Overall the population grew by 23.5% or 1,402 people between 2011 and 2016. This represents a population growth of almost three times higher than that witnessed in Fingal (8.1%).

Almost half of the population of Mulhuddart is aged under 25 (45.5%), with the area continuing to be generally much younger than the Fingal and state average. In contrast there are very small numbers of older people. In 2016 there were 835 family units with children under the age of fifteen.

Over one third (35.6%) of families in Mulhuddart with children under the age of 15 are one parent families. Over one third of the population of Mulhuddart were born outside of Ireland (36.5%), over twice the national levels of 17%. Of this group, half were from Poland, Lithuania or the other EU 28 and the other half was made up of nationals from the rest of the world.

There are 894 people (25%) in Mulhuddart with no formal, primary or lower secondary education. This is significantly higher than the Fingal levels of 19.3%. The unemployment rate in 2016 for Mulhuddart is 23.4%, over double that of Fingal of 10.3% and almost treble the national rate of 7.9%.

Some 61.1% of households living in Mulhuddart rent their accommodation. Almost one third rent from the local authority and almost a fifth from private landlords. In contrast 28% of households in Fingal are renting and a similar proportion nationally. One in ten households in Mulhuddart is renting from a co-operative or voluntary housing body. This compares to less than 1% of the population of Fingal and Ireland.

Some 861 people in Mulhuddart have a disability. This represents 11.7% of the Mulhuddart population, in line with the 2011 figure of 11.3%. The levels of disability in Fingal are similar at 10.8%, but lower than national levels of 13.5%.

FINDINGS FROM CONSULTATION WITH STATUTORY BODIES & SERVICE PROVIDERS

Interagency cooperation is seen by the great majority of service providers as a very important factor in improving services, and that there is the potential for further development. The majority feel that there has been significant improvement in the past five years.

The overall experience of referrals between service providers is quite positive. However some had negative experiences when it came to follow-up, as well as the extent to which people had unrealistic expectations. Communication during the referral process was not always positive.

Interagency cooperation could be improved especially by improved communication between service providers; better understanding among services providers; and better communication with the public concerning services.

In terms of service gaps, there is a remarkably high degree of consensus on the most serious issue: the lack of services and activities for the 5 to 10 year old cohort and their parents. Limited services locally for disability, for those with special needs and for mental health also feature.

Among reasons given among local organisations for the gaps in service were: lack of available space and facilities; lack of volunteers and funding for staff; insufficient interagency cooperation; inadequate training; and lack of funding.

MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PHASE

There is a vibrant mix of active groups, working with many target groups across the area, with many people across Mulhuddart actively involved in volunteering activities, within residents' groups, local schools, the Men's Shed and Church groups. There is not always a good awareness of this work amongst community members. Information deficits were raised, where to access the right

information was often problematic. If a person did not have a trusted source of information or a community group, they were often unaware of what was going on in the community.

Many interviewees had lived in Mulhuddart for over 20 years (35%), with almost one quarter living in the area for 3-4 years. These timelines are linked to the development phases of Mulhuddart, with some newer estates having been completed in recent years. Reflecting the fact that Mulhuddart is one of the most diverse communities in Ireland, some 28% of interviewees were from outside Ireland, coming from a total of 16 different countries.

Where people felt connected, it was a more often a connection to their local area or estate, rather than to Mulhuddart itself. While a majority considered that there was a good community spirit, and felt connected to their neighbours, only a minority felt that their families were well supported and that their voice was listened to when decisions were being made about Mulhuddart. People pointed to the absence of a Mulhuddart community identity.

There were for the majority positive experience and outcomes from engaging with services, critically when they had managed to access them. The most accessed services were in the area of healthcare and the least accessed were in the area of justice and policing. People generally felt safe and secure in the area during the day, but not so at night time. Feelings of insecurity were expressed by all age groups and community members from all areas, in part linked to perceived lack of Garda presence. Many people felt that more should be done for young people, the migrant or new communities, and for teenagers.

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The results from both the service provider and community consultation phases point to important conclusions and priorities for future service provision. The Census data backs these priorities in terms of bringing a focus to the needs of a young community, with very high levels of children and young people, with low levels of educational attainment and a high level of unemployment. Other factors include larger households and higher numbers of one parent families with young children.

The key thematic areas and associated priorities emerging are concerned with:

Build and Strengthen Community Voices: There is a need to work with community groups and residents' associations across all areas of Mulhuddart through ongoing work on community development and capacity building

> **Priority 1**: That residents in each of their local estates would be supported to have a stronger voice
>
> **Priority 2**: That a Mulhuddart community identity would be fostered
>
> **Priority 3**: That information provision channels and flows regarding community level actions within Mulhuddart would be addressed

Address Gaps in Community Services: Where specific needs are identified service providers must come together to develop a response.

> **Priority 4**: That greater access to community based services would be made available and accessible for children and young people, **especially the under 10 age group**.

Priority 5: That specific support would be targeted at the establishment of new groups and activities

Priority 6: That Service providers would work in a cohesive manner to ensure that new resources and opportunities can be leveraged from local, national and international funding strands

Community Spaces: Increased access to space for the whole community needs to be facilitated and supported through innovation, collaboration and renewal

Priority 7: That increased levels of dedicated community space would be made available

Priority 8: That the environmental concerns would be addressed and public spaces within the community be maintained and developed

Improve the Physical Environment: There must be a long term commitment to the Mulhuddart environment by responding to local housing and infrastructural demands

Priority 9: That the housing needs of the community would be addressed

Priority 10: That issues regarding security would be addressed

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The **Mulhuddart Priority Task Group** (MPTG), which was established in 2011, has a membership of 28 key stakeholders, working and living in the Mulhuddart area. Similar to its forerunners – Mulhuddart Planning and Development Group and the RAPID Area Implementation Team, the groups primary aim is to be the vehicle for interagency/stakeholder collaboration in Mulhuddart by; sharing information; developing a culture of co-operation and transparency; identifying and responding to challenges/issues that have an impact on Mulhuddart; providing opportunities for effective and sustainable involvement by the community in Mulhuddart in determining priorities, solutions and decision making at a local level – all against the backdrop of Mulhuddart being one of the youngest and most diverse areas not only in Fingal but at a national level.

In order to progress these aims and provide a collaborative and prioritised approach to their work, the MPTG commissioned Nexus Research Cooperative to carry out a comprehensive and representative research in Mulhuddart. The research aims to identify the needs of local residents, particularly those who don't engage easily, identify gaps in service provision, the key outcome of which would be the development of a **Five Year Strategic/Implementation Plan for Mulhuddart**.

1.2 APPROACH

The approach to the research was based on ensuring that the voices of local residents and community based organisations were central to the process. The Task Group from the outset articulated the importance of bringing those "unheard voices" from the community directly into the design and implementation of the research, especially the community consultation phase. The resulting strategy document represents a workable set of actions based on a comprehensive and collaborative inter-agency approach. The Task Group and Nexus took a specific approach to the development of the Strategy.

A core feature is that it has been developed in a highly collaborative manner. NEXUS undertook the service provision and needs analysis research under the guidance of the Research Working Group, and with highly active participation on the ground of community members specifically trained for the purpose, and of community based organisations. Nexus providing ongoing facilitation and technical assistance to the formation of the Strategy Sub-Groups – which included a range of service providers and community representatives – that were to develop the concrete ideas and plans to be implemented.

This was chosen over an approach that would have seen the NEXUS team undertaken the research at one remove from the community, and developing a Strategy based on consultation with those involved. The core difference relates to' ownership': This collaborative and bottom-up approach, it was felt, would produce a strategy for which there would be a higher level of 'buy-in' and commitment, that would have a better chance of being fully implemented and indeed that would evolve with the needs of the community itself.

1.3 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT STAGES, AND REPORT CONTENTS

A phased approach was taken to the process. All stages were supplemented through extensive documentary analysis and numerous additional meetings with stakeholders.

1. **A demographic and community service profile,** presenting the main demographic features of Mulhuddart. The 2016 National Census small area statistics became available in July 2017, to enabling the inclusion here of up to date, accurate and comprehensive figures.

2. An initial **consultation with statutory bodies and service providers** determined their views on service needs, bottlenecks and the extent and potential for interagency cooperation. This was completed through a series of interviews with selected service providers and the implementation of an online survey. The results are presented in **Section 3** below.

3. An extensive **participatory community needs analysis and consultation** was undertaken to determine service needs throughout the different parts of Mulhuddart. The approach involved the creation of a team of local researchers from among the community; the provision of training in survey techniques; the collective development of a questionnaire; the structuring of a sample; the implementation of the survey itself through one to one interviews, totalling 179 people; and the compilation and analysis of results. The final results are in **Section 4** below.

4. A **Participative Strategy Development** approach was pursued. The emerging research results and consultation identified the potential for key sub strategies, connected to four thematic areas. Research Sub Group members chaired each sub group as they began to examine these emerging results. This approach was considered as an important first step in the development of a comprehensive Strategic Plan that would respond to each of the priorities in an integrated manner. These priorities for future planning are presented below in **Section 5**. It important to stress that further sub-strategies may be added later, based on further reflection on community needs.

5. Final **Draft Strategy Development** was undertaken by the Nexus research team, compiling the results of all of the above, working closely with the Research Working Group. This report represents the basis for moving forward with this final phase.

2. SUMMARY PROFILE OF MULHUDDART

This section looks at the area of Mulhuddart using the Census data to gain some insights into the overall make up of the community, the trends in population, age and household profiles, the nationalities, education and employment levels. A more detailed version of this section can be found in this report's appendix with tables and charts. This section presents a summary of this data. The information presented as Mulhuddart is based on the combination of data from Tyrrelstown and Mulhuddart Electoral Districts.

These two electoral districts are part of the wider Blanchardstown and Dublin 15 community. The population of these two districts makes up 2.5% of the overall population of Fingal.

Figure 1: Tyrellstown and Mulhuddart EDs
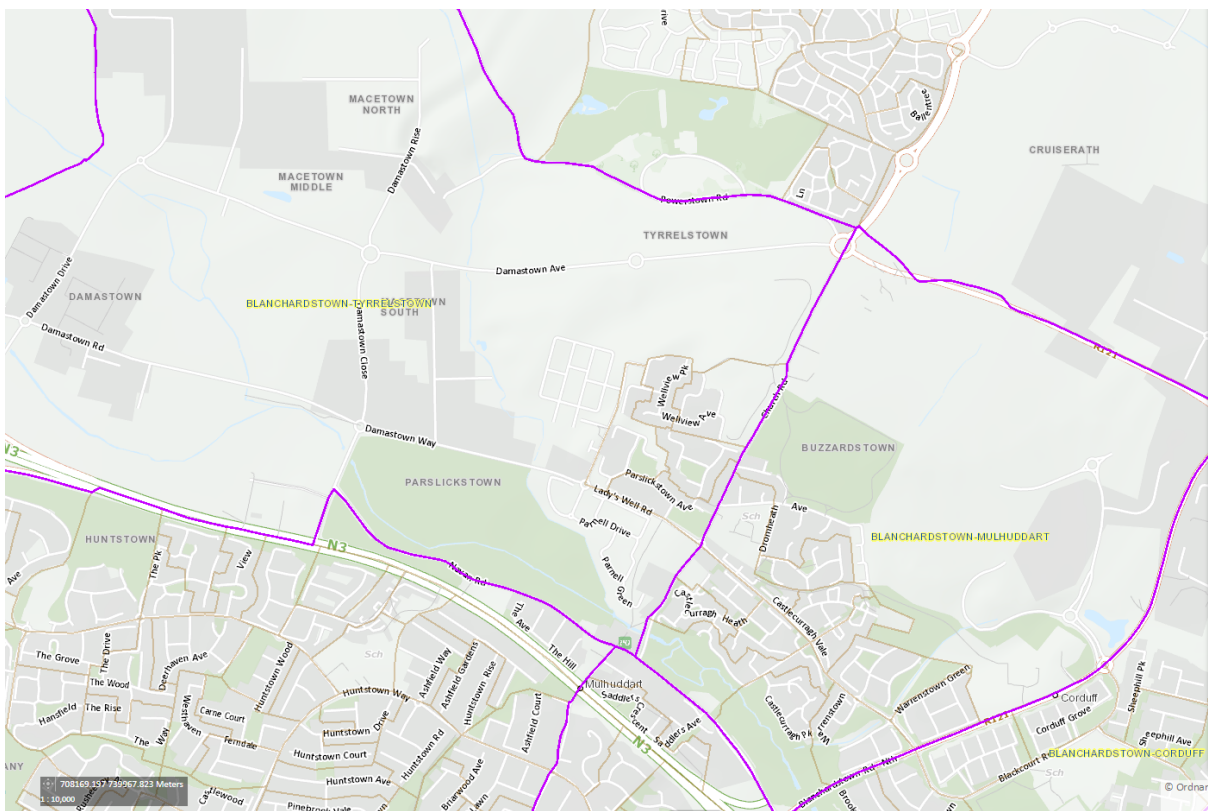
A key measure of how each small area within the electoral district is developing relative to other local and national areas is the Pobal HP Deprivation Index (Haase and Pratschke, 2016). This index provides a method of measuring the relative affluence or disadvantage of a particular geographical area using data compiled from various censuses. When this data is aggregated together, both of the electoral divisions are considered to be marginally below average[1]

However, within the electoral divisions some of the small areas have higher deprivation scores. According to this index, six of the nine Tyrrelstown small areas are considered to be

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[1] The overall relative score for Tyrrelstown ED is -6.7 compared to -13.7 in 2011. The score for Mulhuddart is -3.5 down from -3.7 in 2011

'disadvantaged'[2]. These are the most populated areas of the electoral district. The other three areas are considered to be 'marginally above average', having been 'marginally below average' in the 2011 Census. Three of the thirteen Mulhuddart small areas remain 'disadvantaged'[3]. Three areas are now marginally below average and the remaining seven areas are considered to be marginally above average.

Using this analysis, there are 2,778 persons in the catchment area of the MPTG who are living in these 'disadvantaged areas'. Over time, there are now no longer any 'extremely disadvantaged' or 'very disadvantaged' areas in the MPTG area. The new housing that has been built in Tyrrelstown ED is raising the 'moving average' closer to zero.

The following map highlights the breakdown of relative disadvantage within both electoral districts.

Figure 2: Small Areas by Pobal Deprivation Index
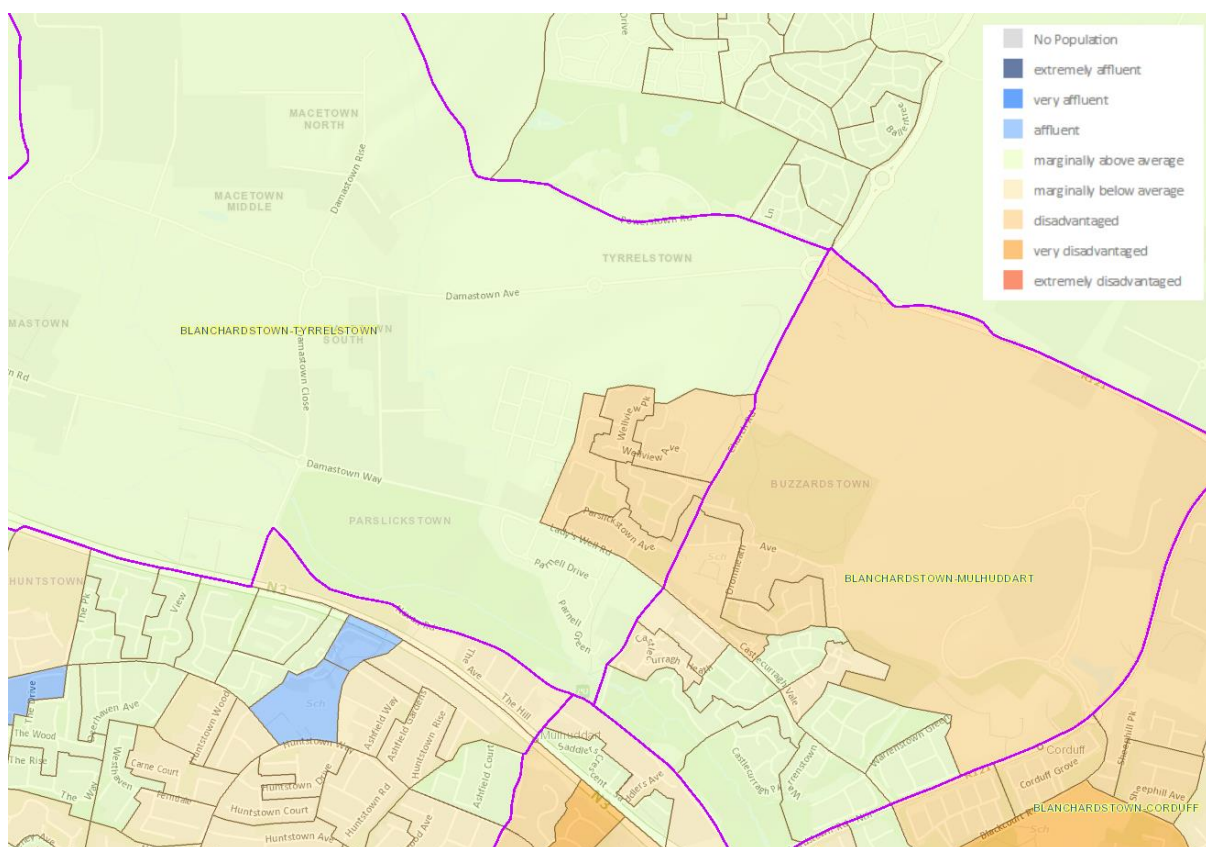
It is worth noting that in order to create this index, the measurement examines such local factors as population change, age dependency ratio, single parent ratio, primary education only, third level education, unemployment rate (male and female) and the proportion living in Local Authority rented housing. When a small area is considered to be 'disadvantaged', a combination of many of these factors that may indicate disadvantage are to be discovered in these communities.

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[2] Tyrrelstown ED Small Areas: Parslickstown Avenue, Parslickstown Court, Wellview Avenue/Park/Green, Wellview Grove, Parslickstown Green/Drive

[3] Mulhuddart ED Small Areas: Castlecurragh Vale, Dromheath Park/Drive/Grove, Dromheath Avenue

This section now examines the level and extent to which these small areas are facing demographic and social change. The key features of the area relate to its very high youth population and low proportion of persons aged 65 and over. There is also a higher percentage of unemployment and one parent families, lower education attainment along with higher concentrations of local authority housing compared to the rest of Fingal.

From an **overall population** perspective, there are 7,380 people living in Mulhuddart. The overall area accounts for 2.5% of the Fingal population. The population of Mulhuddart grew rapidly between 2011 and 2016, primarily in the Tyrrelstown ED. Overall the population grew by 23.5% or 1,402 people in this period. This rapid growth in population since the 2011 Census has been evidently connected to the new residential developments that have been built in the area in the intervening years. The population growth in some of the small areas represents some of the largest in the state over the last 5 years.

In terms of the **age profile**, almost half of the population of Mulhuddart is aged under 25 (45.5%), significantly higher than the proportion of young people in Fingal (35.8%) and nationally (33.2%). In a county that has had a younger population base than the state since the 2011 Census, Mulhuddart displays even greater than county and national average numbers of children and young people. In contrast there are very low numbers of older people.

There are 2,212 **households** in Mulhuddart, an increase of 325 since 2011. The dominant type of private household in the combined area is husband, wife and children 30.1%. However, mother and children is the second highest at 21.1%.

There are now 1,814 **families** in Mulhuddart. The family cycle is similar to Fingal levels at pre-family, pre-school and early school cycles with 32.5% of families in Mulhuddart at this stage compared to Fingal levels of 37.2%. There has been a decrease in the proportion of these family cycles in Mulhuddart since Census 2011. This may suggest that new families who had come to live in the area already had older children.

The Census asks families to indicate the ages of their children and some 39.7% of families in Mulhuddart had per-adolescent and adolescent children. This is much higher than within Fingal where the corresponding figure is 24.5%. When these types of family cycles are analysed together, almost three quarters (72.2%) of the families in Mulhuddart are at stages where they are either pre-family, have younger children or have adolescents.

The main implication from this data about families and households in Mulhuddart is that there are very high numbers with younger children and adolescent children, especially relative to other parts of Fingal. In contrast there are very low levels of retired and 'empty nest' families 1.3% and 4% respectively.

In 2016 there were 835 family units with children under the age of fifteen. Over one third (35.6%) of families in Mulhuddart with children under the age of 15 are **one parent families**. This represents a much higher figure than that of Fingal 21.8%.

In terms of **education levels**, 28.2% of people aged 15 or older had no formal, primary or lower secondary education, significantly higher than the Fingal level of 20.7%. This continues the trend from the previous Census data pointing to a young, relatively poorly educated population base.

The total labour force participation rate in Mulhuddart at 68.1% was slightly higher than that of Fingal at 66.9% and the state at 61.4%. The unemployment rate in 2016 for Mulhuddart is 15.9%, much higher than that of Fingal of 6.9% and nationally at 7.9%.

Over one third of the population of Mulhuddart was **born outside Ireland** (36.5%), more than twice the national levels of 17%. Of these, some 16.8% (1,164) from Poland, Lithuania or the other EU 28; with 18.4% (1,348) from the rest of the world. The ethnic diversity across all parts of the community is substantially higher in Mulhuddart than overall levels in Fingal. Just under half of the population of Mulhuddart (3,278) 47.6% are categorised as White Irish. This compares to 74% in Fingal and 84% in Ireland. Almost 1,600 people are Other White and over 1200 are Black or Black Irish. The proportion of Black Irish is substantially higher than the overall Fingal levels- 17.8% compared to 4% and higher than the figure of 1.4% nationally. Some 80 Travellers live in Mulhuddart, representing 6% of Travellers living in Fingal (1,315). Some 20% of community members who speak foreign languages as their first language indicated that they do not speak English well, or at all.

Some 61.1% of households living in Mulhuddart rent their **accommodation**. Almost one third rent from the local authority and almost a fifth from private landlord and co operative bodies. In contrast some 28% of households in Fingal are renting and a similar proportion nationally. Some 6% of households are renting from the Local Authority across Fingal and 8% nationally. Some 67% of households are owner occupiers either with or without mortgages across Fingal and nationally, compared to 29.3% in Mulhuddart. 10% of Mulhuddart households rents from a co-operative or voluntary housing body in comparison to less than 1% of the population of Fingal and Ireland. In fact, while Mulhuddart represents only 2% of the number of households in Fingal, households renting from a co-operative housing body represent 30% of all such renting arrangements in the county.

Some 861 people in Mulhuddart had a **disability**. This represents 11.7% of the Mulhuddart population, in line with the 2011 figure of 11.3%. This is higher than the Fingal level of 10.8%, but lower than national figure of 13.5.

There is widespread broadband **Internet** access in Mulhuddart, at 81% of households.

In summary, the key features affecting the community in Mulhuddart are the following:

- Young population, majority of families with young and adolescent children
- Lower levels of education relative to Fingal and State
- Higher levels of unemployment
- Larger proportions of people living in rented accommodation
- Large numbers of community have been born outside Ireland
- Housing co-operatives and associations playing an important role in provision of housing

The following sections will interrogate the impact of these community features in relation to service provision and in terms of understanding levels of civic engagement, as well as seeking to ensure that there is a strong community involvement in building solutions to any local challenges.

3. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION AND SERVICE CHALLENGES: THE SERVICE PROVIDER PERSPECTIVE

Two aspects relating to the strategic plan were identified as critical to progress:

- The need to maximise the opportunities for interagency cooperation and service integration;
- The need to identify gaps and address challenges to service delivery.

This section explores these issues from the perspective of organisations that provide services to, and in, Mulhuddart. The research involved an initial set of interviews followed by an online Survey that reached 22 organisations covering 27 services. These represented a good mix across different services provider types, target groups and issues. A notable feature was the large number providing services to the 10 to 18 year age.

The highlights are summarised first below in bullet form—and the pages following present detailed views on interagency cooperation, followed by a consideration of the barriers to interagency cooperation and suggestions for improved co-operation.

Key Points

- Interagency cooperation is seen by a large majority of service providers as a very important factor in improving services, and to have the potential to improve them at least significantly.

- About 60% feel that interagency cooperation has **improved in the past five years**, though not significantly. The rest feel that it is about the same, and a few that it has **got worse**.

- No **specific barrier to interagency cooperation** stood out **as a whole.** However, there was some **polarisation of views**. A significant number felt that policies, procedures and red tape; the amount of time they consumed; and a bad prior experience act as disincentives to cooperation.

- A number felt that **larger organisations do not always value**, respect or understand the work of smaller ones.

- **Overall experience of referrals** between service providers is **quite positive**. However, views were divergent and some had **negative experience** of follow-up, the realism of expectations and communication during referrals.

- Interagency cooperation could be improved especially by: **improved communication between service providers** – an overwhelming concern; **better understanding** among services providers; and **better communication with the public** concerning services.

- In terms of service gaps, there is a remarkably high degree of consensus on the most serious issue: the **lack of services and activities for the 5 to 10 year old cohort** and their parents. Limited services locally for disability, for those with special needs and for mental health also feature.

- Among the **reasons given** among local organisations for the gaps in service were: lack of available space and facilities; lack of volunteers and funding for staff; insufficient interagency cooperation; inadequate training; and lack of funding.

3.1   VIEWS ON INTERAGENCY COOPERATION.

The survey explored the views of service providers about trends in and the potential of interagency cooperation, barriers and ways to improve.

Responses demonstrate strong and widespread belief that improving interagency cooperation is overall very important, including for their own services.

(Please note that in the following *italics* are used where the words are precisely those of the survey.)

Some 88% of respondents believe that better inter-agency cooperation is a *very important* factor in improving services. About one third feel that interagency cooperation and collaboration could *hugely improve overall services in Mulhuddart* while 60% feel they would *significantly improve.*

When they were asked how important this is to improving their own service, responses were even more pronounced: 52% felt it is *very important* and a further 40% feel it is *important*.

There is thus little doubt that service providers themselves **believe that better cooperation amongst each other has the potential to make a big difference to the quality of service provision**; the corollary being that the current situation can be significantly improved. This is reinforced by comments:

- "There already exist a good level of inter-agency working but this could be improved"
- "Better communication amongst agencies is vital."
- "A lot of agencies do not communicate with one another and are providing similar services to the same families."

The nature of current interagency interaction is also explored:

- Three quarters engage in *general ongoing sharing of information';* 60% in *sharing information at specific times* (many do both); about half (13 of 25) refer *specific cases inwards and/or outwards* to other agencies; and almost a third (9 of 25) follow *agreed protocols for interaction*.

- The focus of the interagency work is on *specific families* for 28% of agencies; on *target groups* (e.g. Travellers, youth, drug users.) for 32%; on *geographic areas* for 16%; and on *topics* (e.g. drug addiction, depression) for 8%.

   About half interact on more than one of these.

A total of 60% feel that interagency cooperation has, in the past five years, *improved*, although only a couple feel the level of improvement has been *significant*. A third feel it is *about the same*.

Improvements emerge through both more structured cooperation and better relationships between individual staff across agencies. Benefits include reduced duplication, and greater community confidence in the service providers:

- "[there is] better sharing of information, more structured inter agency co-operation. harnessing the idea of collaboration to deliver improved outcomes / results"
- "think that there is less duplication of certain practices because agencies/organisations are sharing more information and identifying who is best placed to deal with that issue."
- "Inter-agency working is essential in building confidence within the community which has improved and increased over the last 5 years"

- "We still engage with the same agencies. The strength of the interagency work between agencies has been down to the individual staff involved in the process. Where that relationship has been strong, the interagency work and referral process has been strong and vice versa."

Less positive perceptions of the past five years were: that inter-agency cooperation happens only when a specific need arises and not on a routine basis; that larger organisations tend to ignore smaller ones, or 'poach' their ideas, and that lack of resources makes it very challenging

- "I am working in my position 2 years, I feel that when inter-agency work is needed it happens but it would work a lot better if it was to be on a more ongoing frequent basis."
- "There was no room for co-operation really, we were often viewed as a small [...] group despite the fact that we brought in big ideas. Unfortunately, our ideas were often poached when we sought collaboration with bigger organisations. We don't feel valued or recognised but rather used to tick the boxes to get funding approval"
- "There has been no notable improvement. Cooperation is good when the resources are available; however lack of resources often make inter-agency work very challenging..."

Service providers were also asked specifically about their experience of referrals, rating them from *extremely satisfactory* to *extremely unsatisfactory*. The weighted average result is shown in Table 1, where, the maximum possible is 5 and the minimum 1.

Table 1: Service providers experience of referrals

General experience of referral satisfaction	Score
Clarity on reasons for referrals	3.5
Clarity of information on other services	3.3
Outcomes of the referral for the client	3.3
Communicating during the referral process	3.2
Other agencies' understanding of your service	3.1
Follow-up between agencies post-referral	3.1
Realism of expectation in the referral process	2.9

Although service providers were most satisfied with the *clarity of the reasons for referrals*, and least satisfied with the *realism of expectations,* it is striking how narrow the range of scores is overall, ranging from just 2.9 to 3.5.

A closer examination of the figures reveals that variations in the *spread* of views was quite high. A large group was dissatisfied with the *follow-up between agencies*, *the realism of expectations*, and *communicating during referrals*, but these were cancelled out by an equally large who were very satisfied.

On the other hand, views on *clarity on reasons for referrals* and the *other agencies understanding of your service* tended to cluster around the middle i.e. there was widespread, though not extreme, satisfaction. This suggests **divergent views** among service providers regarding specific aspects of the experience of referrals. For some it was very positive, for others, quite the opposite.

3.2 BARRIERS TO INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

Lack of resources was mentioned above as a barrier to effective inter-agency cooperation, but a range of other obstacles are possible. Table 2 summarises how significant service providers regarding different barriers to interagency cooperation. A score of 5 would indicate that an issue is not a barrier at all; and 1 that it was the single largest barrier.

Table 2: Barriers to interagency cooperation

Barriers & disincentives	Score
Poor communication/ understanding of our own remit and/or role	3.7
Would need co-location of services	3.6
Bad prior experience of inter-agency working	3.6
Our poor understanding/confusion of the remit and/or role of other agencies	3.5
Absence of commitment to follow-up	3.5
Takes up a lot of time	3.3
Lack of openness to interagency working in general	3.2
Unrealistic expectations can limit willingness	3.2
Policies & procedures make it difficult, red tape etc.	3.0

Overall, no issue stood out as a major barrier for a majority of service providers, the average weighted scores all falling between 3.0 and 3.7. However, significant polarisation of views between service providers is concealed in averages. Overall, the relevant perceptions of barriers were:

- 40% felt that *policies & procedures, red tape etc.* was *at least* a significant barrier, two believing it to be the single largest barriers
- 40% feel that a significant barrier to interagency cooperation was that *takes up a lot of time;*
- One third believe that *lack of openness* and *unrealistic expectations* were at least a significant barrier;
- Nearly half felt that *bad prior experience* was an obstacle, and a third of these believed it was the most serious barrier.

3.3 IMPROVING INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

A number of themes emerged from suggestions by service providers on problems with and ways to improve interagency cooperation. Most frequently cited, agreed by most service providers, was the **need to improve communication between agencies.** Goals would include a deeper understanding of the role of each agency and the services available; evaluating feedback on services; monitoring developments with clients; gaining deeper insight into client family issues and solutions; and reduced duplication.

Additional protocols, approved at the highest management levels, were among suggestions for improvement, along with clearer lines of communication, regular meetings to discuss families and clients, and annual or six-monthly meeting of multiple agencies to discuss plans.

Improved communications would also, over time, **generate mutual understanding among service providers**, something specifically sought by many organisations. This would help to manage expectations through a clearer appreciation of limitations, for instance regarding possible response times and the types of issues that can be addressed. Mutual comprehension of professional language and protocols could also both deepen and streamline interactions.

Several spoke of a desire to "**achieve shared vision and purpose** among partners" and of "promoting an inclusive ethos and culture and valuing the contributions of other agencies, and **especially smaller organisations**" and locally based groups. The Mulhuddart Priority Task Group came in for some praise for having already improved communication and cooperation.

Communication with the public was also a concern. Several believe that public awareness of services is often poor and varies between groups and areas. Personal introductions were suggested, to "put a face to the service", and additional options to communicate such as school notice boards.

3.4   SERVICE PROVISION GAPS & CHALLENGES

There is virtual unanimity that challenges exist for service delivery in Mulhuddart as a whole. The following were cited several times:

- Lack of information concerning services;
- Limitations of space suitable for service delivery.
- An absence sporting and community facilities

Estates judged to be the most challenging for service delivery were: Avondale, Dromheath, Parnell and Mulhuddart Wood (six agencies reported specific obstacles here), though variations between all estates were not huge. Lack of awareness and lack of engagement were reasons most often cited; and the fact that Village Heights, Mulhuddart Woods and Coolmine Cottages are more distant than the others for some services.

One single issue dominated, and was referenced by almost two thirds of respondents: **the lack of services and activities for 5 to 10 year olds** (a few extending that to 12 year olds) and their parents. Comments specified the lack of youth services, afterschool groups, and clubs and organisations. The issue relates not just to vulnerable children, but to all children in the age groups , and services needed are both targeted and generic.

The impact over time is clear. The absence of services for the younger age group means that they present in later years to services with a range of needs, and it becomes "a greater challenge to change their life trajectory than it may have been when they were younger". More and better services at an earlier age would mean "that they may then be less likely to fall into the 'at risk' category in relation to crime involvement when they are older." The limited availability of locally based services or within easy access for those with disability, autism, special needs and for mental health issues is the second most commonly mentioned.

Certain challenges were highlighted as to why some community organisations and NGOs *could* not provide, including a lack of available space and facilities, lack of volunteers and funding for staff, training and funding deficits.

4.   COMMUNITY CONSULTATION: AN ANALYSIS

This section of the report presents the results of a comprehensive community consultation process, undertaken to complement the service provider survey, as presented in Section 3, and to inform the development of the strategy for the Mulhuddart Priority Task Group.

The aim of this exercise was to develop an understanding of how the community currently engages with mainstream services and civil society generally (including education, health, social welfare, employment services etc.). By engaging in a meaningful exchange with community members, the consultation would allow for an understanding of:

- Facilitating factors that assisted and promoted effective engagement
- Perceived barriers to engagement with such services and the broader community
- Needs identified in relation to strengthening involvement within civic life
- Future support needs of community members

A key strength of the MPTG work to date has been its commitment to developing and implementing an interagency approach to its ongoing work, and to ensure that there is strong community representation. These values regarding collaboration and community participation were explicit in terms as to how the consultation process was framed.

The community research process represented an opportunity for people living in Mulhuddart to outline their priorities with regard to future service provision and to community development directions. The Task Group determined from the outset that "unheard voices" from within the community would be engaged and listened to and this focus was made central to all work within the community consultation process. A participatory action research (PAR) methodology was selected as the appropriate approach to allow this community voice to be exposed.

As with Section 3, the following begins with a summary of the highlights, with the main results presented in bullet point form. The pages following provide the detail, illustrating with direct quotes from community members as well as charts and tables. First is an overview of the research rationale, the steps taken to collect and analyse the data and the manner in which the community research team successfully implemented the PAR approach. There is then a focus on the key results, with a description of the profile of community interviewees, their engagement with services and the civic life of Mulhuddart. A final section presents an outline of future support needs as expressed by the community

4.1   HIGHLIGHTS

- The consultation exercise was grounded within the MPTG's vision of allowing for "unheard voices" and "harder to reach groups" to be targeted and given an opportunity to contribute to shaping the priorities for future service development.

The research process was designed and implemented to ensure that these aims were met successfully.

- Through the outreach process for engaging a community research team and then working to access interviewees from

across Mulhuddart, it is clear that there is a vibrant mix of active groups, working with many target groups across the area. There is not always a good awareness of this range of ongoing work amongst community members.

- A cohort of interviewees were actively involved themselves in volunteering activities, within residents' groups, local schools, the Men's Shed and Church groups.
- While many younger people within the households where interviews took place were involved in further education, training or employment support schemes (61% of those aged 19-25), there is little engagement within further education for older cohorts. Levels of economic inactivity connected to personal and family responsibilities are high for those aged in their 40s (51%).
- Many interviewees had lived in Mulhuddart for over 20 years (35%), with almost one quarter living in the area for 3-4 years. These timelines are linked to the development phases of Mulhuddart, with some newer estates having been completed in recent years.
- Reflecting the fact that Mulhuddart is one of the most diverse communities in Ireland, some 28% of interviewees were from outside Ireland, coming from a total of 16 different countries. Feelings of connectedness to the community are linked to these factors, in that many interviewees considered that they had been placed in Mulhuddart by the local authority.
- Interviewees felt more connected to their local area or estate, rather than to
- Mulhuddart itself. A majority considered that there was a good community spirit, and felt connected to their neighbours.
- However, a minority felt that their families were well supported and that

their voice was listened to when decisions were being made about Mulhuddart.

- People generally felt safe and secure in the area during the day, but not so at night time. Interviewees also regarded that there should be more resources put into leisure space and facilities for younger and older people.
- The most accessed services were in the area of healthcare and the least accessed were in the area of justice and policing.
- There were for the majority positive experience and outcomes from engaging with services, critically when they had managed to access them.
- Interviewees noted a lack of dedicated services for young people, the migrant or new communities, and limited spaces for teenagers.
- Feelings of insecurity were expressed by all age groups and community members from all areas, in part linked to perceived lack of Garda presence.
- Again, from across all age groups and areas, people pointed to a lack of a Mulhuddart community identity, to which they could ascribe to.
- Information deficits were raised, where to access the right information was often problematic. If a person did not have a trusted source of information or a community group, they were often unaware of what was going on in the community.

4.2   DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTATION PROCESS

Nexus Research worked closely with the MPTG Research Group to establish a set of research steps, based on the principles of a participative action research model. The methodology is explained in detail in Appendix 4. This section presents a summary of these research steps:

Research Steps	Description
Outreach, Recruitment and Definitional Work	A team of peer researchers was recruited through the dedicated support of the MPTG member organisations and groups. Each of the recruited team was from the Mulhuddart community or was living in Dublin 15 with close family or service user connections to Mulhuddart.
Mapping the Area	The map below in Figure 4 presents an overview of the areas and estates were defined as the core focus for the study, including Avondale; CastleCurragh; Saddlers/ Coolmine Cottages; Dromheath; Parnell; Parslickstown; Warrenstown and Wellview
Training on Research Design and Techniques	The research team received training on survey design and questionnaire implementation as well as interviewing techniques. The pilot of the survey allowed for all team members to become familiar with the research instruments.
Implementation of Main Research Phase	The team interviewed a total of 179 people from the community. The sample was reviewed over the course of this interview phase to ensure that all indicators and profile requirements were being met.
Data Analysis and Reporting	As the interviews were completed and questionnaires filled in, the dataset was reviewed and cleaned where necessary as the research was finalised. Reports and updates were produced on a regular basis
Feedback to Community Members	The research team prepared an initial overview of the findings that will in turn be presented through a planned focus group, with the discussion to be focused on next steps with regard to the community level engagement opportunities within the MPTG strategy

The community engagement and outreach work that took place through the research and highlighted the following key features regarding Mulhuddart:

- There are a number of active groups meeting on a regular basis with support from agencies.
- The Mulhuddart Community Centre, Parslickstown House and the BASE Enterprise Centre act as important hubs for many service providers and community based groups

- There are a number of residents groups who are of varying degrees of active engagement within their areas.

Through the research process, the team has worked through all of these organisations, hubs, centres and groups to interview the beneficiaries and group members and other identified key local contact people. Of the 179 interviews completed, some 53 were carried out through referrals from community based groups. The remaining 126 interviews used the research team's own connections in Mulhuddart, door to door contact, and by basing themselves in community centres.

In the following analysis, attention is drawn to points at which some bias may have affected specific results.

The potential for any bias must be considered in any research work. The following considerations should be borne in mind with regard to this process:

Firstly, the Mulhuddart community centre provided a focal point for much of the research activity, between meeting there for training sessions and connecting with the many community organisations based there. Many users of the centre were interviewed as part of the consultation. The impact of this concentration of activities in the centre means that there is a probable bias in the results, connected to questions about the services and spaces with which interviewees had connected in the 6 months previously.

Secondly, in order to access "harder to reach" or those with "unheard voices", the research team made connections with local resident groups and associations. A potential bias within the results may be found as a stronger connection with residents associations and groups.

Thirdly, the research team worked to ensure a representative sample by engaging not only within their own local areas and estates, but also within their ethnic and national groups. A potential bias in this regard may be associated with local connections of the research team within their community, i.e. their own age, gender and nationality.

4.3   PROFILE OF INTERVIEWEES

This section presents a breakdown of the 179 interviewees according to gender, age, area of Mulhuddart (or surrounding area), length of time living in the community, nationality and employment status. Some further information is presented on the households, in which the interviewee was living. Some 38% (67) of interviewees were male, while 62% (112) were female. The youngest interviewees were aged 14 and were involved in a homework club, run by Foróige in the Mulhuddart Community Centre. The eldest of the interviewees were in their late 70s, some of whom were active participants in the Seniors Group, again based weekly in the Community Centre.

Table 3 *Age Profile of Interviewees (percentage breakdown, n=179)*

Age Profile	%
Under 20	8.4
20- 29 years	12.8
30- 39 years	20.7
40- 49 years	30.2
50- 59 years	14.5
60- 65 years	5.0
Over 65 years	8.4

The interviewees were living across all areas of Mulhuddart, with some 12 interviewees living outside the mapped parameters. However, these interviewees were either service users of groups and activities in Mulhuddart or had moved from Mulhuddart to an area proximate to the area. They were all living in either Dublin 15 (e.g. Clonsilla, Corduff, Huntstown or Whitestown) or in Dublin 11 (e.g. Finglas).

Figure 3 Areas where interviewees were living (n=179):

Legend:
- Avondale
- CastleCurragh
- Saddlers/ Coolmine Cottages
- Dromheath
- Parnell
- Parslickstown
- Warrenstown
- Wellview
- Other
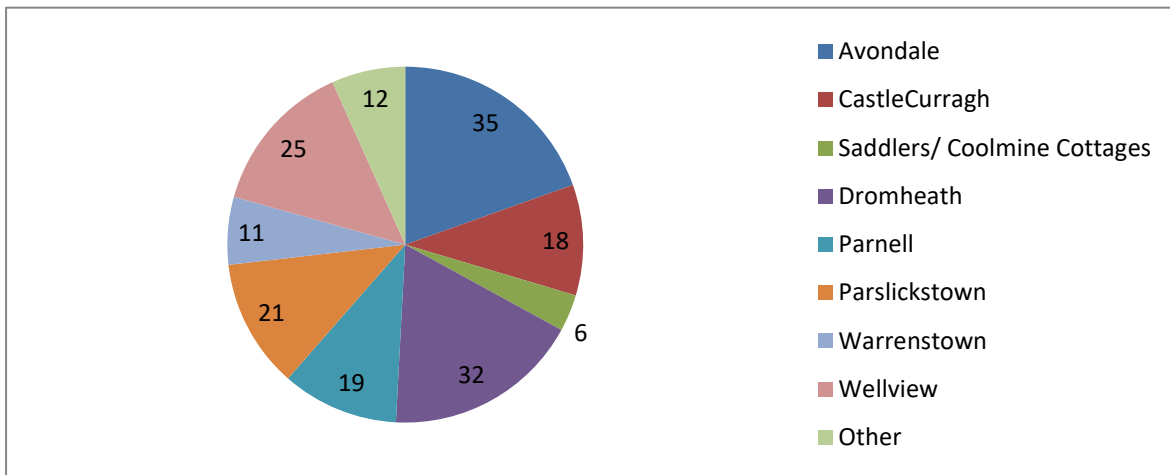
There was a wide spread of length of time living in Mulhuddart across the interviewed cohort. Some 60 people had lived in the area for over 20 years, with a further 15 people had lived in the area for under 3 years. The fact that a cluster of some 49 interviewees were living in Mulhuddart between 3 to 6 years is connected to the completion of new builds in Avondale, Parslickstown and Parnell estates.

Figure 4: Duration living in Mulhuddart Area (*n=173*)
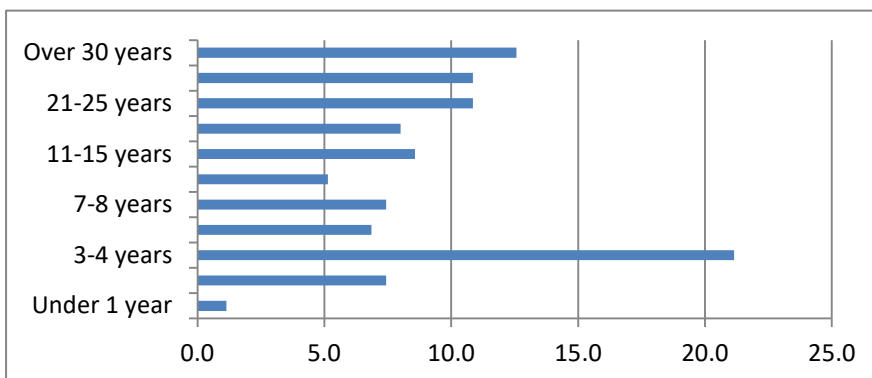
Interviewees were asked to indicate the ownership of their home. Some 133 people (74%) were renting their home from Fingal County Council, one of the voluntary housing bodies or from a private landlord. This was less than the 61% of Mulhuddart households that were renting their accommodation according to the 2016 Census data.

Figure 5: Map of Mulhuddart Research Area
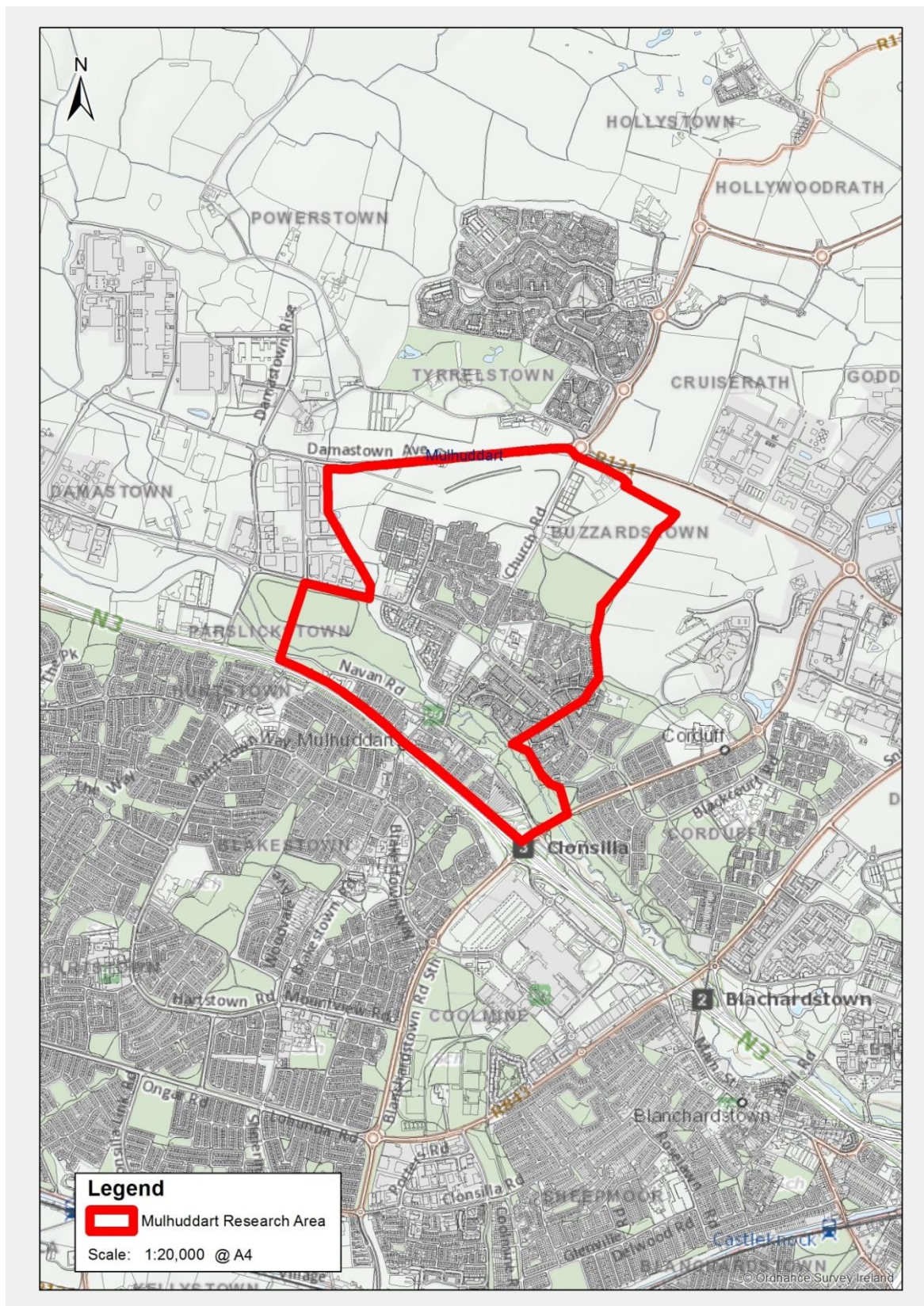
Figure 6: Ownership status of home (n=179)
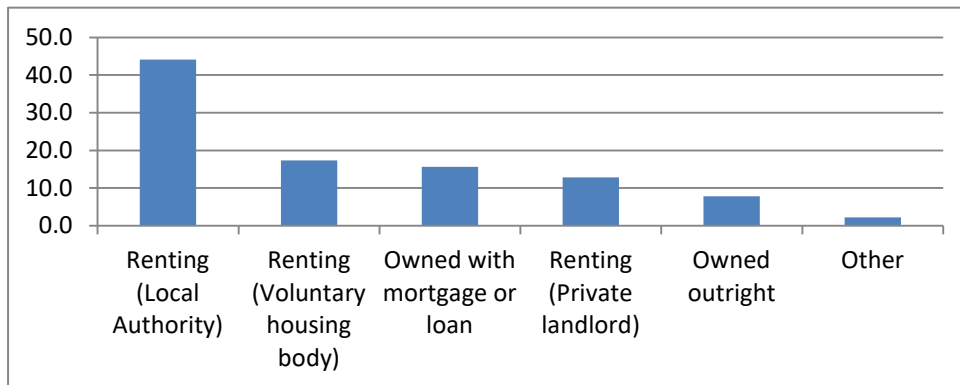
In terms of the housing stock itself, some 60% of interviewees were living in traditional corporation or council housing estates; a further 19% were living in more recently developed purpose- built apartment blocks. Others were living in privately built housing estates.

The interview allowed for people to provide more detail about the circumstances of their household, in relation to the number of people resident there, their age and status in relation to education and labour market. Some of the main results include:

- Some 674 people were living in the households of all interviewees

- On average four people were living in each household
- There were 17 single person households
- There were six households with between seven and ten persons living together.
- There were 22 homes with two separate family units living together, typically involving a second generation family with grandchildren sharing the home.
- In four instances, there were three separate family units living together in one household
- Some 35% of all household members were aged less than 15 years.

When this data on the make-up of the households is reviewed, the following age profile of the households can be witnessed.

Figure 7: Age profile of interviewee households (% breakdown, n=663)
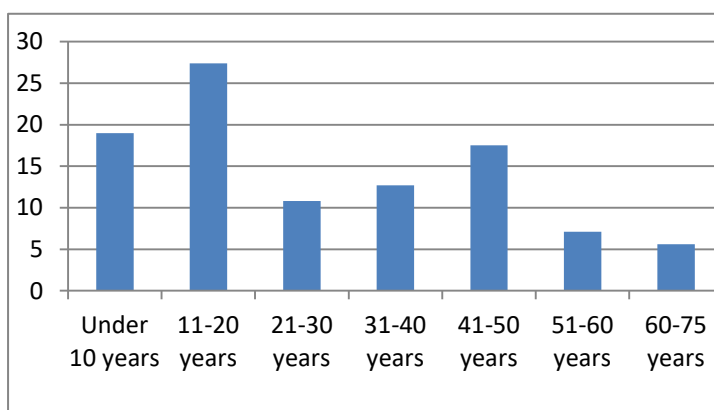
Interviewees presented feedback on their engagement within the education system and the labour market. Some results of this feedback include:

- Some 61% of all household members aged 19-25 years were involved in further education or were participating on an employment scheme, with 25% in employment and 14% not in education, training, employment or training.

- Some 62% of household members aged 26-40 were in employment, with 10.3% in further education or employment scheme, with 28% not in education, training, employment or training.
- Just over half (51%) of all those aged in their 40s were not in employment, education or training, with 10% in further education or employment schemes and 39% in employment. The main reason for these high levels of economic inactivity

rates were linked to personal and family responsibilities.

The interviewees then discussed their own personal employment status. Almost one half (48%) of the 179 interviewees were either in employment or on a training scheme. This figure increased to 54% of male interviewees and decreased slightly to 46% of female interviewees.

Table 4: Employment status of interviewees (percentage breakdown)

Employment Status	All (n=179)	Male (n=67)	Female (n=112)
At work (including full-time/part-time/self-employed)	30.7	35.8	27.9
Unemployed (looking for first regular job)	3.4	1.5	4.5
Unemployed (having lost or given up previous job)	12.3	7.5	15.3
On Scheme (TUS, JI, CE, Internship, Enterprise Support)	17.3	16.4	18.0
Student	11.7	11.9	11.7
Looking after home/family (incl. carer, receiving lone parent payment)	8.9	4.5	11.7
Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	4.5	9.0	0.9
Retired	11.2	13.4	9.9

Among the professions named by those in employment included receptionists, hairdressers, factory workers, taxi drivers, building workers, bankers, shop workers, kitchen staff, a healthcare assistant and a special needs assistant.

Volunteering Levels

Interviewees were also asked about their involvement in voluntary work in their community. Almost one quarter of all interviewees (44) were involved to some degree in volunteering. Some 35 of these volunteers were female and nine were male. The range of groups and activities supported by these volunteers included afterschool clubs, homework clubs, women's groups, men's shed and residents' groups. Interviewees were also active members of Church groups.

Interviewees described these connections to their immediate and the wider community as important factors in their lives. Some had indicated that they were had been more active locally when they were younger, connecting the initial reason for the engagement to their children's involvement in different activities. Others were motivated to get involved in the residents' association in order to help their estate to cope with challenges.

The nationality of each interviewee was asked. While the majority of interviewees were Irish (129), some 50 people were from a total of 16 other countries, reflecting the multi-cultural mix within the Mulhuddart community.

Figure 8: Nationality of interviewees (percentage breakdown)
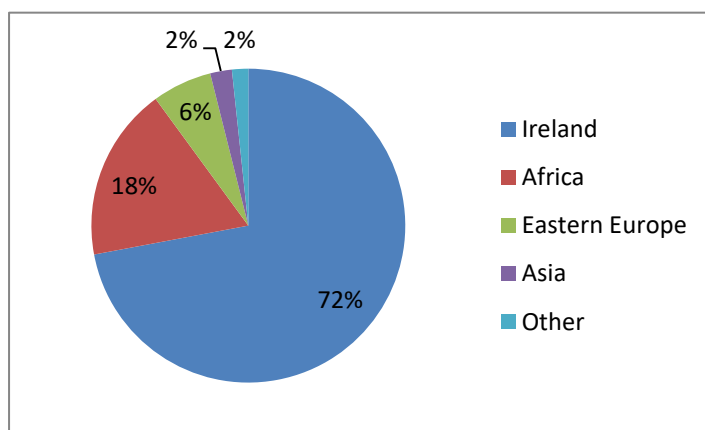
The other country that was most represented within the sample is Nigeria, with some 24 interviewees. The majority of the new Irish interviewees from Africa and Eastern Europe were living in the newer housing estates, including Avondale, Parnell and parts of Parslickstown.

4.4 LEVELS OF COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS

The interviews allowed for a discussion about people felt about Mulhuddart, their levels of connectedness and sense of a community spirit. Initially, interviewees described their reasons for choosing to live in Mulhuddart.

Table 5: Reasons for choosing to live in Mulhuddart (n=172)

Why choose to live in Mulhuddart?	Primary Reason %
I was placed here by Local Authority	44.2
I was born here	20.9
Family connections with Mulhuddart	12.8
Cheaper housing	10.5
Handy for commute to work	4.1
Connections to other migrant community members	4.1
Good community spirit	2.9
Good schools and local services	0.6

A large number of interviewees felt that they had not had a choice about living in Mulhuddart due to having been placed there by the Local Authority. This was named as the primary reason by some 90% of those interviewees living in rented accommodation. Some 28 of the 35 interviewees (80%) from the Avondale estate named this as the primary reason for choosing to live there.

Family connections and having grown up in the community were the other main factors as to people living in the area. A further rationale for some 18 interviewees (10.5%) was the cost of housing and rent in the area.

Interviewees indicated their feelings about community spirit and sense of identity within Mulhuddart, shown in the table below.

Table 6: Summary feelings regarding sense of community spirit (n=179)

Community Spirit and Sense of Identity	Agree %	No opinion %	Disagree %

I identify closely with my estate	62	9	29
I am aware of the activities of local groups	60	9	31
I feel connected to my neighbours	54	7	39
I am involved in local groups	52	9	39
I feel a part of the community	47	12	41
There is a strong community spirit in Mulhuddart	46	14	40
I feel that I have a voice to express my needs	44	11	45
There is a strong community spirit in my estate	40	19	41
I identify closely with Mulhuddart	37	13	50
I feel informed about what goes on in the community	37	7	55
My identity is connected to the migrant community	30	27	43
My family is well supported within my community	29	16	55
I feel that my voice is listened to	18	13	69

- People indicated that they had a good awareness of activities of groups, where they had a level of involvement in those groups. Outside of this connection, some 63% felt that they were either not informed about activities in the community, or they had no opinion.
- Some 75% of men (47) and 54% of female interviewees (60) felt that there was a strong community spirit or had no opinion.
- Over 90% of the interviewees who felt that their identity was more connected to the migrant community were non-Irish.

- Some 70% did not feel that their voice was listened to.
- Some 62% of interviewees felt that their identity was more closely aligned to the estate or area (e.g. Wellview, Dromheath or Avondale) than to that of Mulhuddart

The interviewees were also asked to consider some statements regarding the physical environment with a specific focus on accommodation and public spaces. Table 7 below summarises their views.

Table 7: Summary feelings regarding accommodation and environment (n=179)

Accommodation and Environment	Agree %	No opinion %	Disagree %
I feel safe and secure walking in Mulhuddart in the daytime	66	6	28
My current accommodation meets my family's needs	65	5	30
Mulhuddart is a nice place for walking	40	10	50
There is adequate leisure space in Mulhuddart for children	28	15	56
The physical environment in Mulhuddart is clean and tidy	28	10	62
There is adequate leisure space for young people	19	14	68
I feel safe and secure walking in Mulhuddart at night	16	4	79
There is adequate leisure space for older people	10	28	62

Noteworthy aspects of this discussion related to a consensus regarding the lack of adequate leisure space for children, young people and for older people. The overall physical environment was regarded by a majority as not being clean and tidy.

While people (66%) generally felt safe and secure walking in Mulhuddart during the day, almost 8 in ten people (79%) did not feel safe and secure at night time.

Interviewees were encouraged to discuss these factors in more detail, specifically with

regard to how greater levels of community connectedness could be fostered. They were also asked to present ideas and supports that would allow for them at an individual level to become more involved and connected.

A number of key themes emerged from these discussions regarding the enhancement of the community. These themes are picked up below with individual quotes providing an illustration of community feelings.

- Organisation of occasions for the community coming together

Interviewees focused on dealing with challenges associated with isolation. The need to be proactive and generate opportunities to bring people together was highlighted, as was the desire for greater engagement between migrant and host communities:

> "More ways for young people to come together. I used to see people through local sports, but if you're not involved in these teams, you might not have a way of staying connected to other people your own age in the area."

> "Just some places to be able to meet other people."

The Physical Environment and Community Connectedness

A recent OECD report raised the issue of the physical environment prominently, and its effect on community.[4] Referring to Blanchardstown as a whole but including Mulhuddart, the report found:

"Blanchardstown is now formed as a patchwork of disconnected neighbourhoods divided by a dominant traffic-oriented infrastructure, which is not easily accessible to pedestrians... The principal roads ... are designed as fast urban motorways, often without any pedestrian infrastructure. Another example ... are the roundabouts that lack pedestrian crossings. The traffic-oriented infrastructure also separates, rather than joins, the different housing estates... (pp: 67-68)

The report goes in some depth into the links between urban layouts, crime and anti-social behaviour:

"...crime and anti-social behaviour are inversely related to two things: the co-presence of pedestrians on the street, and the "constitutedness" of a street, i.e. whether a street is "protected" through the natural surveillance provided by numerous residential entrances and windows."

It concludes: "In some areas, the design of the spaces can make criminal activity difficult to detect, resulting in an unsafe environment for local residents." (p. 69)

Issues around the physical environment also came up during interviews with community organisations, undertaken as part of the research. One suggested: "Stop putting up railings – they only serve to separate us – We Are Mulhuddart (not a number of estates). Railings look bad when damaged and only serve to make an area look derelict as they constantly need maintenance."

Another said: "The railings everywhere: in another area, they took down the railings and just put in high kerbs to stop the joy riders and people crossing the green in cars."

The wide roads running through the area are also recognised as problematic:

"Look at Parnell. To get across the road at a pedestrian light you used to have to go all the way to the village. Took us four years to get one there."

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[4] OECD 2016 *Weaving Together Policies for Social Inclusion in Ireland.* Paris

> Another recommended: "Fix up the green areas; get rid of graffiti; stop building railings and walls."
>
> "A proper road from Mulhuddart past graveyard with proper path and cycle ways..."
>
> "An extension to the existing Community Centre to cater for all groups from all estates thus cutting out the idea that everyone stays in their own estate - that means from birth to grave (baby and parent clubs, crèches and pre school, breakfast clubs and after school clubs, teenage and young adult clubs, parent groups, resident associations, and older groups etc etc"
>
> "A supervised playground where ALL children have access and can play together in safety."
>
> "We need different architects with differing concepts and differing ideas on what a modern village should look like."

> "People tend to keep to themselves. There should be activities that will engage migrants and host communities."

> "The integration group is my only connection to the community. My wife also is involved in these groups and that is how we hear about anything happening in the community. We have no relationship with our neighbours, just hello sometimes."

- Greater resources to be made available across Mulhuddart for children and young people

The importance of increased levels of and access to general activities, clubs and services for young people was explained by interviewees. Affordability was stated as another important concern.

> "More investment in activities for young people, need to intervene at early stages. Kids are growing up seeing drugs and dealing and it's too late to get them when they're teenagers. Need to break them away much earlier. If I didn't move when I was younger, my son would be in the middle of all that now."

> "Need more youth club type places to go, where young people can chill, with places for activities"

> "Make a difference by tackling anti-social behaviour, involving young people in decision making"

> "Better facilities for young people, especially at weekends. Better access to crèches and cheaper rates. We can't afford childcare- way too expensive; there would be no point in me working."

> "More opportunities for arts classes and for dance and crafts, for younger people and for older people. It would allow for Travellers to come out of their site or their isolated lives and get involved."

- More dedicated community spaces , tidier and safer public spaces

Other improvements for the community were linked to physical infrastructure, housing and public spaces, especially with regard to a need for increased community centre space.

> "It's great that the village of Mulhuddart has some life in it, could be more going on. There are lots of improvements since I was growing up here. The housing issue needs tackling. There are 7 boarded up houses in Wellview at the minute. People should be housed here. The housing list needs to be worked on, so that people will not be moved into bad situations, with neighbours who won't give them a chance."

> "I don't know how I am supposed to cope, how can I get more connected when I am living in such crowded circumstances? My only hope is to go on the homeless register, and then end up in some hotel somewhere like Balbriggan. I will have to put up with this for a few years, but at least at the end, I will get a house. Otherwise, I will have to wait for 14 years."

- Foster a more positive image and identity for Mulhuddart

While work should be done regarding cleaner and greener public spaces, a negative impression of Mulhuddart should be countered, according to some interviewees.

> "There is always a bad spin put on Mulhuddart. There is never a focus on the positives, such as winning the Pride of Place,

"the new primary school and secondary school. These are not mentioned, but are great positives."

Interviewees highlighted the need for increased supports for those involved in community activities, especially with regard to their own experiences.

"More supports for groups, especially those working hard in the community."

"More groups supported like this, so we can meet and talk and the kids can get some help"

4.5   ENGAGING WITH SERVICES AND CIVIC SOCIETY OF MULHUDDART

Interviewees were asked about the nature and extent of their engagement with a very wide range of services across Mulhuddart and in some cases further afield in Blanchardstown and Dublin 15. The service areas covered included the following listed below. These are listed in order of those most accessed by the interviewees in the last six months. For instance, some 87 interviewees had made use of one of the local authority services in this period.

1. Healthcare Services (134 Interviewees)
2. Community Centres (117 Interviewees)
3. Fingal County Council Services (87 Interviewees)
4. Sport and Leisure Services (75 Interviewees)
5. Community Organisations (74 Interviewees)
6. Education, Training and Employment Supports (55 Interviewees)
7. Early Childhood and Young People's Services (48 Interviewees)
8. Specialised Supports (42 Interviewees)
9. Youth Services (37 Interviewees)
10. Justice and Policing Services (20 Interviewees)

This section now examines the manner in which interviewees had accessed and engaged with this wide variety of local groups, organisations and services. During each interview, a discussion was focused on this aspect of their lives. For some interviewees,

they had not engaged with any local services other than their GP in the last six months. For others, some level of engagement was part of their daily lives, whether caring for an elderly parent or young child, or as a volunteer in a local group, working to advocate on behalf of a neighbour or family member.

The discussion with interviewees focused on the level and extent of engagement with some 55 specific services and providers. The following tables indicate the extent to which people had engaged with the service type in the previous six months. Where relevant, some insights from interviewees are also provided to illustrate the experience of accessing these services. Interviewees also highlighted where challenges may have existed.

In general, the experiences were considered positive, leading to the desired outcomes. However, as is clear from the comments and feedback, many interviewees did not always get to access the service as needed. Their requirements also may have not have been adequately met due to a lack of service provision in the local area.

The 10 service areas (making up 55 separate types) are now presented in order of those most accessed by interviewees, from healthcare services, accessed by 134 people, through to justice and policing services, accessed by 20 people.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

The table below highlights that a total of 134 interviewees engaged with the health services in the previous six months, of whom 129 had been in contact with their G.P.

Table 8: Engagement with Healthcare Services (n=134)

Healthcare Services	
G.P.	129
Public Health Nurse	36
Specialist health care	14
Mental Health Support Services- Adults	10
Addiction Treatment Services	9
Assessment Services	7
Mental Health Support Services- Children	2

Of all the 55 different types of local services discussed, connections with the GP were the most frequent. These experiences were also very positive.

"The experience of visiting GP, the Community Centre, library, Church and Community Welfare Officer have been extremely rewarding and with complete satisfaction."

"My GP has been helpful, referring me when I needed."

Where problems were identified with accessing general and specialist healthcare services, they often concerned waiting lists and waiting times.

"The waiting list is too long for GP in Mulhuddart village. It's way too long."

"Waiting lists are the big problem."

"There are always waiting lists and delays in accessing services."

"I am waiting for a long time for speech therapy and occupational therapy for my child. I am afraid my child is really missing out while waiting. "

COMMUNITY CENTRES

A range of community spaces exist across the Mulhuddart area. The most widely known is the Mulhuddart Community Centre. Some of the other spaces were less well known outside of their local estates. The table below again highlights the extent to which interviewees had accessed these centres in the previous six months.

Table 9: Engagement with Community Centres (n=117)

Community Centres	
Mulhuddart Community Centre	104
Avondale Community Rooms	28
Parslickstown House	24
Parnell Community Centre	7
Parish Rooms/ Centre	7
Wellview Family Resource Centre (Tusla)	4

The Mulhuddart Community Centre was the second most used service in the community (after local GPs). For many, they cited it as a hub for many activities. They accessed information here as well as many of the groups and programmes being run from here. However, many people pointed to the

challenges of space in the centre, due to its popularity and the fact it felt "overstretched".

> "We love coming into the community centre, the kids have been coming in here for ages and they love it too."

> "Mulhuddart Community Centre is overflowing, it's too small. It's a pity at the time; we never got it to be built much bigger. It's so important to be able to have a mix of young and old people there from all the estates; this can have people better connected."

> "The community centre needs to be made bigger, a bigger playground too, when the kids from the crèche are in it, it's too full for anyone else."

As well as increasing the size, some interviewees suggested that the café might offer a wider range of options for the different sections of the community.

> "I think the CC needs a bigger hall, maybe also a wider variety of food for all the different cultures that come here."

> play."

> "I'd love to walk into Mulhuddart Centre and see an African snack on sale or among their menu."

The other centres tended to be primarily accessed by those living in the immediate area. Some interviewees were unaware of these community spaces.

> "I didn't know that there were all these centres, where exactly are they and what goes on there?"

Interviewees also made suggestions as to how extra services and programmes could be offered through these centres.

> "Language exchange classes in the schools or community centre, families from other countries coming to Ireland and to our community are learning English/Irish from us, we should also avail of this fantastic opportunity for us and especially our children to learn their language from them as this could greatly increase chances of obtaining job opportunities in the future. Children learn so quickly when conversing with other children at

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES

Some 87 interviewees had engaged with their local authority range of services in the previous six months.

Figure 9: Engagement with Fingal County Council Services (n=87)
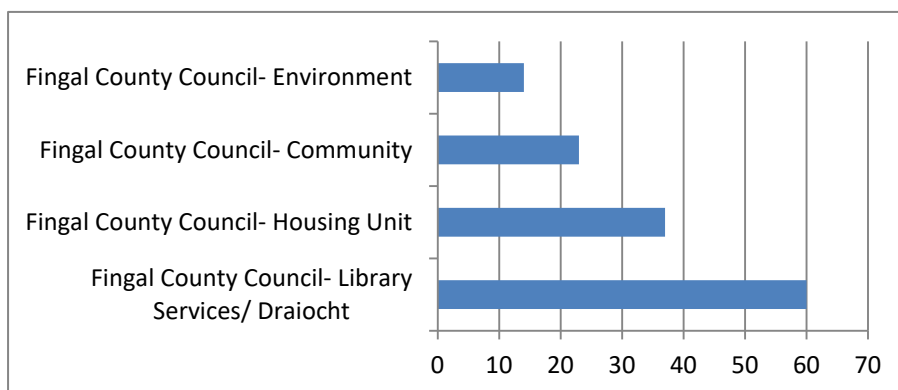
Some 60 people had accessed the local library and arts centre, and some 37 engaged with the housing unit

Interviewees were very supportive of the library services and the arts programmes from the council. These were some of the most

accessed services by all interviewees. As with the specialised support services, where interviewees were experiencing challenges associated with housing, they were often reluctant to describe their experiences in

greater detail. Some felt that they were not adequately listened to by the housing unit.

Some interviewees noted that there were boarded up houses visible in their estates, while their children and grandchildren were living with them in overcrowded situations. While there was not always a clear link between these two scenarios, some interviewees were particularly exercised by the housing issue.

SPORTS AND LEISURE SERVICES

Some 75 interviewees had participated within sports clubs, accessed local parks and playgrounds or attended swimming pools.

Table 10: Engagement with Sport and Leisure Services (n=75)

Sport and Leisure Services	
Community playgrounds/ Football pitches/ Parks	65
Swimming pool (Coolmine, NAC)	37
Sports Clubs (outside of school)	20

Many interviewees indicated that as parents, the main local resources that they used with their children were the playgrounds and parks. This was also an opportunity to meet other parents.

> "I like getting to know people there, making connections through the children, sometimes in the playgrounds."

For those interviewees with older children and teenagers, some indicated that they did not feel safe allowing their children to go to the local parks without supervision. For others, the cost of swimming lessons was a barrier and again waiting lists prevented greater levels of engagement.

> "I cannot afford the fees for swimming lessons."

> "The waiting list for my child to join the youth club is too long."

Improved public facilities in the parks would be welcomed, as well as leisure and sports facilities.

> "Another family park around Wellview and Avondale would make use of all that nice open space, especially with installation of sports equipment around the park."

> "More sports and recreational activities are needed for kids. Basketball hoops are only at the Millennium Park, it would be nice to have one at the Mulhuddart Community Centre too. Not all kids play football."

> "More leisure activities in Mulhuddart would promote a better community spirit and individual connections."

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Interviewees have accessed a wide range of community-based supports. These groups tend to be volunteer led, with varying levels of support from local agencies and services.

Figure 10: Engagement with Community Organisations (n=74)

Organisation	Value
Community Gardens/ Allotments	~4
Traveller Support Projects	~5
Integration Projects (Failte Isteach)	~9
Active Retirement Groups	~11
Men's Shed	~11
Information Services (FLAC, CIC)	~18
Residents and Tenants Organisations	~18
Women's Groups	~21
Church Groups	~22
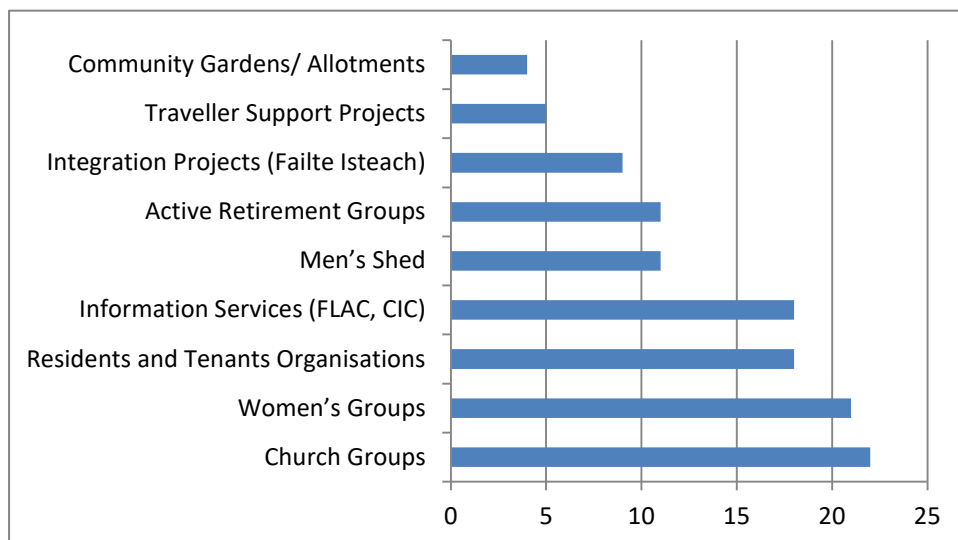
A key concern for these groups related to building and promoting social and civic engagement. Their activities consisted of weekly meetings to bring their members together or less regular activities that may have been more focused on running an event.

"The Integration group is great for social contact. Without the group, I wouldn't see to many people during the week."

"A lot of people that I meet in our group want to see real opportunities for women who are struggling with confidence and low self-esteem."

"I only became involved in any community activity through the breastfeeding group, before I had kids, I was not so interested. But once I have become involved in this Lifestart group, it is a great way of meeting people and becoming connected. So if there were more opportunities for people to access groups and more groups, it would help people to become involved in the community."

These groups were critical for allowing a voice to their members and wider community, as well as providing personal and community development opportunities. Many community members had begun in one group and progressed into training or employment.

"Certain pockets of our community are in different worlds. There is a need for some people power in these areas to deal with the anti-social behaviour and issues. We want to encourage people to stay in the area."

"We need more things going on and more active groups, especially in some of the estates, there are some areas that you wouldn't walk through either."

"There are good things going on in Mulhuddart, pride of place award was great, but needs to be more going on, especially for the young people and especially in the pockets where there are real problems."

The Traveller Development Group worked closely with local schools to support young people in education.

"Having the homework club for the kids is excellent. They get to see us as like their teachers and see us as Travellers as well.

"We can do more outreach work for Travellers. Once people are given some information or opportunities, they can then get involved."

Interviewees highlighted the importance of getting involved in a group and helping out in the community.

"We had younger families and we wanted to see the area do well, so we had to get involved. Sometimes you might be afraid of raising the voice too much, but we needed to keep an eye. Now we need for new people to get involved."

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Some 55 interviewees had accessed a wide range of education, training and employment supports, including initiatives such as Community Employment or one-to-one mentoring and supports available through the Blanchardstown Area Partnership.

Table 11: Engagement with Education, Training and Employment Services (n=55)

Education, Training and Employment Supports	
Employment Support Schemes (including CE, JI)	31
ETB Services	30
BAP Local Employment Service	15
BAPTEC/ BASE Enterprise Centre Services	13
Community Education Courses	8
Language Support Services	3

Interviewees highlighted very positive experiences associated with their participation in employment and training schemes.

> "Through my CE position, I have met some nice people and It has helped me a lot to progress."

> "As a CE participant, I can do different modules of training, I am doing a train the trainer module and hope to do an IT technician module too. It is very positive."

> "This area (enterprise support in Mulhuddart) is no bother at all, things have really improved over the last 20 years."

In terms of accessing back to work training and enterprise development supports, interviewees were interested in developing their skills.

> "I'd love training on understanding the Irish business system, training on how to access resources and materials for starting and staying in a business."

> "Teaching young people skills which they can turn to business."

> "I would like to see trainers and youth officers working in these areas to help young people to find right path in life."

> "We really need more employment and training opportunities for young people, including and especially my sons."

Specific supports for migrant communities were sought.

> "Supporting businesses especially those run by migrants. They cannot compete equally with their peers and other businesses if they don't know how to expand, diversity and brand themselves."

> "Extra English class supports, subsidised or free linked to activities for young families on a low income."

Some interviewees expressed a desire to start their own business.

> "I would like the chance to work for myself. It would give me greater flexibility with my child and my life."

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Some 48 interviewees had engaged with one strand of services for the under 10 year olds in the previous six months.

Figure 11: Engagement with Child and Young People's Services (n=48)
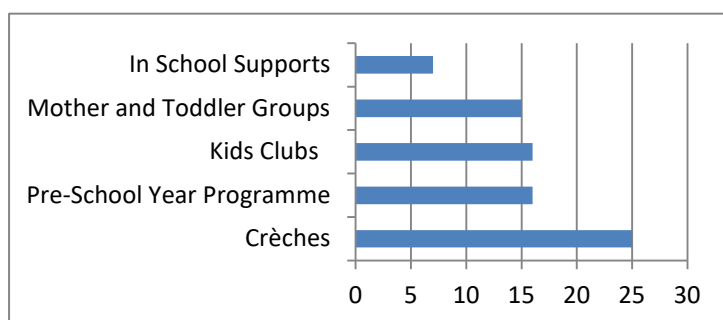
Interviewees who had engaged with the early childhood services on offer in the community indicated that they had been very helpful in supporting their efforts to meet new people and finding ways of integrating in the community. These contacts then also led to accessing information about other services.

> "The Lifestart group is a great space and time during the week to have some adult company and we all get along great. The kids really enjoy it too. The staff in the Centre are great. It would be great if there were more places like this."

> "My wife attended the mother and baby group and heard about this one. It is good to get out of the apartment and meet new people. Otherwise, I don't get to talk to anyone."

> "A friend told me about the parent and toddler group run by Barnardos in Corduff- they are a great team."

Accessing information was the key first step for new mothers, especially those new to the area.

> "Information leaflets got me into the breastfeeding group and then once I had some contact, I could keep going along."

> "I would like more groups, playgroups that I could take my child to. These groups are my only access to people during the week."

For those with children of school going age, the in school supports were greatly valued.

> "I think that the breakfast clubs in school is a great idea and teachers and SNAs are doing a great job."

> "I am actively involved in the breakfast club in the local school."

However many interviewees found that there was a lack of activities and opportunities for their primary school-going children (aged under 10) to access services outside of school hours in their communities. There was a lack of awareness regarding where parents can bring their children or send them.

> "It's hard to know what's going on or available for our children and young people, if anything."

The lack of services targeted at the under 10 age group was also mentioned by some of the teenagers who were interviewed.

> "There should be youth clubs for the younger ones. My young brother and sister have nothing to do, when I am coming here to the Centre."

> "We really need homework clubs for kids aged under 10."

> "Why is so hard to get more activities for kids aged between 5-10 years?"

SPECIALISED SUPPORT SERVICES

Some 42 interviewees had accessed specialised supports in the previous six months, including access to social work teams.

Table 12: Engagement with Specialised Support Services (n=42)

Specialised Supports	
Social Welfare Office	29
Community Welfare Officer	28
Social Worker Team/ Family Support Workers	12
Specialised Supports (Women's Refuge, Domestic Violence Services)	1
Suicide Support Services (D15 phoneline)	1

While interviewees indicated that they had accessed the range of specialised supports, not all chose to discuss the details regarding their engagement and experiences, other than to indicate that there were generally positive outcomes. Where there were more difficult circumstances involved, some challenges were noted with the lack of continuity in service delivery and referrals, i.e. often the interviewee had to deal with a different social worker or emergency contact person and then had to retell their story once again.

YOUTH SERVICES

Some 37 interviewees had engaged with local youth services in the previous six months, the majority accessing local activities through Foróige's wide range of targeted and drop in services in the area.

Table 13: Engagement with Youth Services (n=37)

Youth Services	
Community Youth Projects	29
WEB Project (Youth Justice Project)	6
Youthreach/ Community Training Centre	5
Juvenile Liaison Officer (JLO)	1
Cubs/Scouts/Girl Guides	0

There are no cubs or scouts or girl guides in the Mulhuddart area and no interviewees were sending their children to another area to attend. Foróige was considered to provide a wide range of well attended programmes and services in the Mulhuddart Community Centre and in the Avondale Centre. These programmes were well regarded by attendees.

"The homework club is great, the only thing that is going on for us after school."

"Once we found out about the group from a friend, it is great to come every week. Pity there is not more like this."

"The project is good, we get to do a Leadership course and get away on trips every now and again. We have some sessions we have to come to and then a drop in every week."

"Great support from community centre and Foróige- we always feel welcome here"

Parents complemented the local summer camp as being accessible.

"The summer project was easy to attend for my son because it was based in my estate and cheap. I received flyers through the door, so it helped me to know about the project."

Some young people highlighted that the only options for them at the weekend to meet

their peers in a social setting was to travel to the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre.

> "There is not much going on around Mulhuddart for young people. I hate the shopping centre, it's so boring. I like playing football, but have to get 2 buses to get to training and matches.

> "There is not enough going on. We end up being bored. Only the shopping centre at the weekends."

> "There is very little available at weekend other than going to the shopping centre to hang out. Costs money and would be good to have some social options in Mulhuddart."

> "Apart from the shopping centre, there is not much close by. It means going in the car and socialising there."

> "It's mostly sports that are available for young people and if you're not interested, there is not much else."

These young people felt very restricted in terms of being able to access a space that was young person-centred that would allow them to "chill out" and express themselves. They felt that such a safe space would allow for less boredom and less isolation.

> "It's not so easy to make friends when you can't go out much without being brought everywhere by parents."

> "There can be some tensions around, but you know to keep to yourself. You know most of the young people around."

> "There are many young people affected by drugs, there's nowhere for them to hang out apart from the street corners and they end up mixing with the wrong crowd."

People would welcome increased resources to be made available for more activities for young people in the area. Any such resources would allow for increased levels of services for any vulnerable young people.

> "Our community here in Mulhuddart needs more youth workers who go out and get involved and get to know the children in our area, making them feel part of the community."

> "We need opportunities for song, dance, drama classes for our children. This helps to build children's confidence. The classes would need to be subsidised as many families with three or four young children may not be able to afford to pay on a continuous basis and talented children could miss out on this valuable opportunity. The children could put on a show to raise funds."

JUSTICE AND POLICING SERVICES

Some 20 interviewees had accessed or engaged with local Gardaí over the previous six months.

Table 14: Engagement with Justice and Policing Services (n=20)

Justice and Policing Services	
Gardaí/ Community Gardaí	20
Probation Officer	0

A lack of a Garda presence was cited by a large number of community members. Interviewees felt that different estates were treated differently.

> "If I call them, they don't come. It wouldn't happen in Castleknock."

> "If there more police on the street in our area would make it safer, there would be less dealing."

While the community Gardaí were involved in supporting some of the local youth programmes, many young people were not aware of the name of the community representatives and what their role was. Many of the older people indicated that increased visibility of a Garda presence was very important for them in terms of feeling safer in their homes and walking on the street.

4.6   ACCESSING INFORMATION AND SERVICES

Clearly, the most important primary source of information for people regarding what is going on in Mulhuddart was through word of mouth. Community organisations and information leaflets were other important drivers of news and alerts regarding activities and events in the locality.

Figure 12: Primary source for information (n=176)
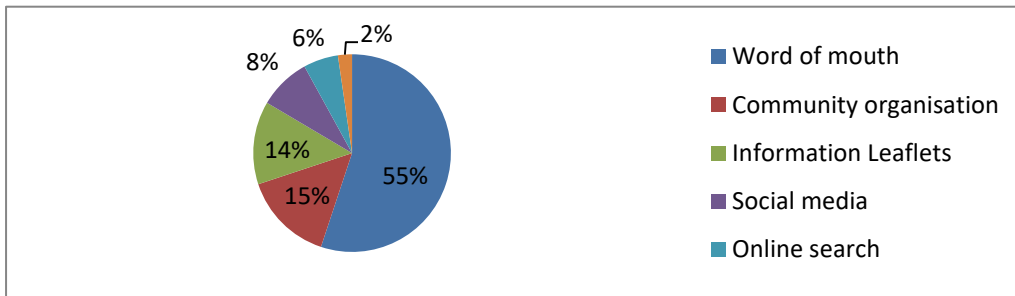
Many noted the challenges of being dependent on a car within the community for getting around and accessing services. Over half of the interviewees were reliant on motor transport. Almost one third would walk as their main source of getting to the service or group activity. This can be a challenge

> "I have no means of transport other than walking and often have to bring kids in the rain and cold."

Figure 13: Accessing physical services and getting around (n=176)
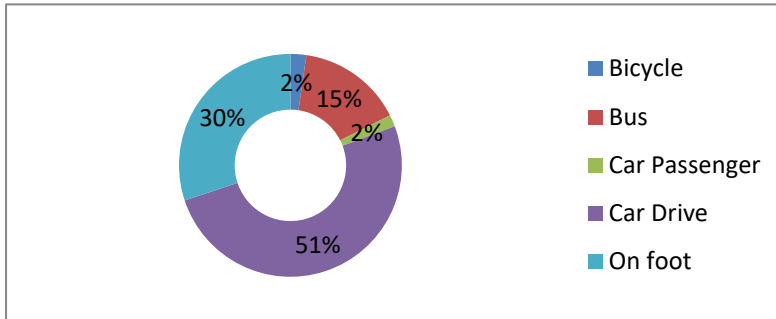
Experiences of Feeling Discriminated

Interviewees were asked whether they felt that they had experienced any discrimination in accessing any services. Some 29 felt that they had, of whom 19 were from countries outside Ireland. Not everyone had followed up and reported this experience. Some indicated that "this would not have led anywhere." Others were inclined to ignore it.

"Racism is always there, but I think with time, it will all go."

"Indirectly it happens but don't really get bothered by it."

A need for better education and integration programmes was noted.

"Sometimes you get comments and remarks like "go back to your own country" or things like verbal abuse of the young people. Most parents need to be educated and better informed about the new community."

Many interviewees pointed to the need for some dedicated supports that would assist the new communities who had come to Mulhuddart in recent years, particularly those who had been placed

there by the local authority. Some of these interviewees discussed feelings of isolation and described poor mental health experiences, as they tried to make a life for themselves in the new community. In these descriptions of this period in their lives, they had not been aware of local groups or organisations that could provide any supports, especially for those who had language difficulties.

Examples were given of members of these new communities taking some initiative to find out information about rights and entitlements. While much of this experience was related to settling in a new community and having to make a new start, interviewees highlighted that targeted supports would have eased this transition, also where they also had children.

As interviewees gave feedback on their overall experiences of dealing with the disparate range of services, the main challenges were summarised as having to deal with waiting lists or the lack of services or local responses.

Figure 14: Challenges in Gaining Access to Services (n=135)
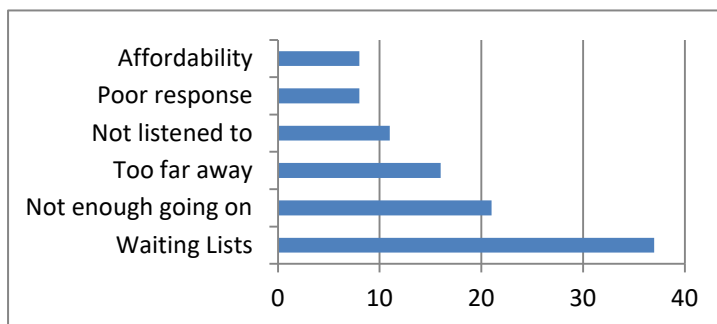
4.7 SERVICE ACCESS AND ENGAGEMENT

Interviewees were very focused on how they could access and engage with services locally and how any barriers to engagement affected the ability of themselves and their families to participate in the life of the community.

The main conclusions associated with the interviewee experiences and analysis of their access to services and a broader level of engagement within the life of Mulhuddart can be linked to the following

- There were for the majority positive experience and outcomes from engaging with services, *but only when* they had managed to actually access them.
- Interviewees noted a lack of dedicated services for young people, the migrant or new communities, and limited spaces for teenagers.

- Feelings of insecurity were expressed by all age groups and community members from all areas, in part linked to perceived lack of Garda presence.
- Again, from across all age groups and areas, people pointed to a lack of a Mulhuddart community identity, to which they could ascribe to.
- Information deficits were raised, where to access the right information was often problematic. If a person did not have a trusted source of information or a community group, they were often unaware of what was going on in the community.

The following section takes these and other key conclusions from the consultation phase and then draws them together under a number of key thematic areas and priorities that need to be addressed by MPTG and its partners.

5. RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the research process, the community and service providers had many opportunities to engage in discussions about what were considered to be key priorities for Mulhuddart as a community. The results and conclusions from both the service provider and community consultation phases (presented above in detail in Sections 3 and 4) can now be structured around four broad thematic areas and concerns for the future.

1. There is a need to **Build and Strengthen Community Voices** across all areas of Mulhuddart through ongoing work on community development and capacity building
2. Where specific needs are identified (e.g. in relation to those of children and young people) service providers must come together to **Address Gaps in Community Services.**
3. **Community Spaces** need to be facilitated and supported through innovation, collaboration and renewal

4. There must be a long-term commitment to **Improve the Physical Environment** by responding to local housing and infrastructural demands.

This section sets out the priorities for future service provision and structures them under responses to these key demands emerging from the research work. The aim of this section is that through the elaboration of these priorities, the rationale for a series of recommendations for actions and next steps (Section 6) becomes apparent under these thematic areas.

As all service provision priorities are based on the analysis of the results and feedback from the research phases, this section will also highlight some of these main findings with regard to each named priority.

The following presents a summary of the service provision priorities connected to each relevant thematic area.

5.1 BUILDING COMMUNITY VOICES

The consultation processes brought forward key priorities for service provision that fall within the remit of building a strong and sustainable community voice, namely:

Priority 1: That residents in each of their local estates are supported to have a stronger voice

The community consultation underlined the importance of having a local connection to decision-making, where residents could hear about the plans that affect their lives through local structures. They highlighted the importance of having groups working with them and on their behalf, sharing information and advocating for their children and families. These types of actions would ensure that a

community voice would be empowered and heard:

- Groups and associations representing communities to be supported
- Potential volunteers to be involved and supported
- Voice of new communities and the Traveller community to be specifically assisted and included in a collaborative approach to community-building
- Groups to be brought together to share experiences and work collaboratively
- Residents and their groups to have a role in shaping new Mulhuddart identity
- Supporting groups to create and become part of to a Mulhuddart Community

Council in the long term, where these local groups can work in unison for Mulhuddart, as well as represent and advocate on behalf of their individual areas.

Priority 2: That a Mulhuddart community identity is fostered

Both service providers and interviewees pointed to the importance of making Mulhuddart a community with a civic centre and a sense of identity. People spoke of the need for an inclusive vision for how Mulhuddart will grow. As one of the most diverse areas in Dublin and nationally, all members of the community need to contribute to creating such an identity. These actions can contribute to this end:

- Community based events to be organised regularly, in dedicated central community space, but also in each local area, building engagement from the estate back to the Mulhuddart level.
- Positive vision for community to be championed, highlighting local success stories, for example:
    - Successive achievements in pride of place awards (most recently in December 2016 the Mulhuddart Motocross Track winning special award)
    - Ireland's first ever European Champion and junior World Masters darts player living and studying in the community (Robyn Byrne in Wellview)
- Innovative, creative and artistic means of engaging to be employed with community members, creating dialogue and

discussion regarding what it means to live in Mulhuddart and allowing for a critical discourse to emerge regarding questions of identity and community. The presence of the Artist Residency programme is a specific opportunity to further this visioning work.

Priority 3: That the channels for information provision regarding community level actions within Mulhuddart are addressed

Service providers highlighted the key role that shared information plays in promoting better working relationships. Through improving communication between services and bringing these information flows back to community members, people feel more connected and aware. These actions can assist in this regard:

- A reliable and trusted information source to be developed for Mulhuddart (e.g. an online portal) where local newsletters can be shared (e.g. from churches and groups in the community), and it can act as a notice board for activities by residents' groups, other local community groups and service providers. This would be a sharing point for all groups. Such a website and online portal will also cover social media.
- Local community radio such as Phoenix FM to be used as a means of promoting work within the community
- Those trusted channels of information sharing to be developed further, given that research has pointed to word-of-mouth as most valued and used means of accessing information.

5.2   DELIVERING ON GAPS IN COMMUNITY SERVICES

The importance of being able to consistently identify and then address gaps in community services was highlighted by both service providers and community as very important. Community members wanted to see action to follow on from plans. A challenge was to ensure that services are sufficiently resourced to meet the demands of different groups in the community. These priorities were identified:

Priority 4: That there is greater availability of and access to for children and young people, especially aged five to ten years.

Key priorities associated with the service gaps were primarily focused on the needs of children and young people in the area. The limited access to universal services for the 5 year to 10 year old group is of particular concern. The census data backs these concerns. As one of the areas in Fingal with the largest proportions of children and teenagers, addressing both current and future needs of Mulhuddart's youth will meet major challenges. Interviewees were generally appreciative of the range of youth services being offered, but many parents wanted to see more options available for children and young people, taking the following into account:

- Work with all young people, including those harder to reach and more vulnerable
- Make affordability a key issue, excluding no one through lack of ability to pay
- Make every effort to remove any waiting lists for involvement in activities, where this is currently an issue.

Priority 5: That specific support would be targeted at the establishment of new groups and activities

Young people and older people discussed new groups that they would like to see in their own local community. Some mentioned more classes in areas such as arts, drama or music; others focused on activities such as walking groups, youth-focused physical activities, and women and men's groups. All possibilities to be explored in the use of community buildings in each area

- Operational and staffing supports to be in place for the delivery of such activities
- Integration of new communities to be prioritised in all such groups and activities
- New people to be encouraged and supported to get involved, through outreach and volunteer programmes
- Improved information channels to be provided for community members in accessing support groups

Priority 6: That interagency collaboration develops and deepens, and services work in a cohesive manner to secure new resources and opportunities from local, national and international funding strands

Service providers highlighted the improved outcomes that can be achieved from greater collaboration at an inter-agency level. New funding streams can often be found for new ways of working together.

- Examine local networking opportunities and means of engaging where local community based groups can provide feedback on their experiences
- Look to new opportunities for accessing funding in ways in which new partnerships can be formed
- Ensure a commitment to ongoing open review and evaluation of local services, enabling sharing of learning between services and community.

5.3 CREATING COMMUNITY SPACES

All community based groups and services face a common challenge with regard to a need for more and different types of appropriate community space for new activities. Expanding current spaces and developing new spaces should be considered of mutual benefit to the community. Public spaces should also be considered as places where civic engagement can happen.

Priority 7: That increased levels of dedicated community space is made available

Many of the most accessed services across Mulhuddart were linked to their roles as community hubs and centres, where people can come together, access information and socialise. Where such spaces are limited, community members are restricted in becoming involved in the life of the community. The following actions were highlighted:

- An increase in community space dedicated to meetings, community education and training support, provision of regular community events, including family fun days, neighbourhood activities
- Programmes to be provided in all community spaces where neighbours can meet, integration opportunities are available for people from different cultures and backgrounds to meet up
- A focus to be made on creating new learning spaces, where language training and other such courses can be provided, where people can learn about business planning and explore their own strengths in an informal educational setting.

Priority 8: That the community is supported to engage in improving public spaces and addressing environmental concerns

Many interviewees linked a lack of civic pride to the lack of a strong identity in the street, estate or wider Mulhuddart area. Service providers and communities, working together to focus on shared public spaces such as playgrounds, pitches, parks and greens, can ensure that people feel safe and included, and in the process encourage community members to be more active and more likely to become volunteers.

- Greater community effort to be encouraged and supported to engage in environmental projects
- Local community groups and schools to be supported in projects that create pride in the local street, area and wider community of Mulhuddart

5.4 IMPROVING THE PHYSICAL LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Building an effective community alliance will enable residents to see that change and progress can result from this joint cooperation with service providers. This can lead to developing a shared understanding and vision of bigger challenges:

Priority 9: That local housing issues and needs, and what is required to address them, **are explored; and information shared; and options for action examined.**

Many interviewees highlighted housing concerns in relation to both overcrowded households and "boarded up" houses in certain housing estates.

- Housing concerns- voids and boarded up homes in areas to be constantly monitored with the residents groups and community organisations given a structured role in providing input.
- Interviewees highlighted instances of households where more than two generations were living together. Further research into and analysis of overcrowding within homes in Mulhuddart is required to inform service providers about the extent of this problem.
- Service providers to work more closely with the residents' groups, enabling them to become more active in supporting community need.

Priority 10: That issues in the physical environment that affect well-being and safety are explored and options developed

The physical environment of Mulhuddart was considered by many to have been neglected over time. People feel that public places are not cared for and are unwelcoming – even unsafe- for adults including older people and for children. More broadly, Mulhuddart is seen as designed for cars rather than people which also affect people's perception of their identity.

- Improved lighting in public spaces and parks to address fear and anxiety about walking at night
- Increased Garda presence to challenge visibility of drug and alcohol use
- Community engagement with the local planning process to make it more people friendly
- Increased community Garda presence to allow for building of relationships with local community groups and individuals
- Greater engagement with older people to address stated fears about leaving houses
- Direct work with new communities regarding dealing with experience of racism, supporting local community to report any crimes and assist in collecting data (linking with ENAR)

These 10 priorities within the four thematic areas will form the basis for the subsequent elaboration of a strategy for the Mulhuddart Priority Task Group, enabling the articulation of a future mission and vision.

The strategy will draw on the service provision priorities as identified here by service providers themselves and the feedback of the community. Governance and oversight structures will be drawn up as will the manner in which stakeholder participation, including that of community members, will be achieved. The inter-agency underpinning of the overall Mulhuddart Priority Task Group will also be renewed as each partner makes specific commitments regarding their future actions, based on their own organisation or agency level strategic plans.

This section highlights proposed actions and next steps to address each thematic area and associated priority[5].

The actions specified in this section in relation to the 4 thematic areas will require a collaborative response. As the MPTG brings all the key stakeholders together, the translation of these recommendations into action plans represents a critical opportunity for each stakeholder to adopt a practical and effective inter-agency approach. A list of relevant stakeholders is presented in terms of each priority. These should become partners in an inter-agency response to the delivery of the named actions.

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[5]Where relevant work has been carried out to date within MPTG subgroups, references are made to their draft action plans.

6.1 BUILDING COMMUNITY VOICES

The research shows that Mulhuddart is made up of many different communities, estates and identities. While some estates may have originally been relatively homogenous in terms of their demographics, over time Mulhuddart has become one of the most diverse urban communities in Ireland. In this light, Mulhuddart can be seen less as a single community, rather as a collection of estates, contiguous but only loosely connected and engaged in limited meaningful interaction. In the absence of a connected community in this sense, it is difficult for service providers to interact and collaborate with residents, and plan and deliver coherent services that address real needs, including especially those with the greatest need.

A core focus for the new strategy must be to work directly with community members in each estate and area, to examine the level of self-organisation through the local community groups and residents associations, and to develop specific responses accordingly. The medium to longer term vision is to bring each local area together in a Mulhuddart level Community Council. Once established, this Community Council of Mulhuddart (CCM) can act as a forum for all service providers and community actors to come together, share information and work collaboratively. Furthermore, such a council becomes an umbrella organisation for Mulhuddart, enabling a more cohesive and inclusive identity.

However, to begin with, service providers and those working directly within all local groups recognise that each area has pressing needs for support. These needs, as identified by the groups, may be linked to how best to establish more structured associations, communicate with community members, engage with service providers etc. In order to develop locally representative groups that can

work at a Mulhuddart level within the CCM, clear supports must be put in place. (Priority 1)

Working towards the development of a community identity represents a further level of work that can be addressed by stronger connections between service providers and community groups. As practical supports are being put in place for residents associations and groups, new community based initiatives can reach greater numbers of people, leading to more engagement and potential for strengthening a local identity. (Priority 2)

The importance of information sharing is another key conclusion. Where community members feel informed about local activities and services, a greater degree of trust and engagement can follow. Furthermore, with more structured channels of information (e.g. through targeted subgroups of the CCM), service providers can efficiently and effectively collaborate with local groups. (Priority 3)

Priority 1: Confident community voices being listened to

Key Stakeholders:

FCC, BAP, Residents Associations, Housing Bodies, Drugs Task Force, Foróige, PPN, Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group, Gardai.

The following steps have been examined through a series of meetings between residents associations and community development workers.

Action 1.1: Work with each local group to examine their current capacity and develop a targeted workplan for each area group. This Short-Term Action Plan will focus on incorporating practical actions for local residents, such as events or concrete

improvements to the estate/area that can act as visible incentives for more residents to participate in the wider process. The Short-Term Action Plan will also allow them to work toward the Mulhuddart Community Council model, where supports and resources are identified to build capacity to collaborate with other area groups.

Action 1.2: Develop an agreement as to how each area will work together, share information and resources. Each area Residents Group will come together to review their individual Action Plans and resource requirements. Where there are opportunities for sharing of resources and ideas, these will be identified and added to the plan.

Action 1.3: Develop structures and agendas for the Community Council of Mulhuddart (CCM). Each area group will work on promoting greater engagement with their residents, as well as putting in place effective communication systems. Funding can also be accessed if required. As their workplan is progressing, the agenda and structure for the CCM can be worked out. The following elements will be addressed

- The area groups to facilitate this session, with active support from other stakeholders.
- Agenda to include deliverable actions so that positive feedback to community can follow (as well as long term commitments to bigger picture issues such as housing, etc.)
- Local media (including Phoenix FM) to be included in planning for session (investigate possibility of live broadcast)
- Actions to be agreed with clear roles, responsibilities and timelines
- Possible election of Officeholders.

Action 1.4: Ongoing follow up with local residents and between the Residents Associations and Area Groups will focus on following up on commitments emerging from

CCM Sessions, as well as their own area workplan actions. The groups and community members will review the effectiveness of new communication systems and levels of engagement.

Action 1.5: Ensure that "unheard voices" are being represented within the CCM structures. This may involve the establishment of subgroups with a focus on Traveller engagement, Drugs Task Force, youth participation, policing forum etc.

Priority 2: Mulhuddart community identity is fostered and valued

> **Key Stakeholders:**
>
> FCC, Mulhuddart Community Centre, BAP, Draiocht, Residents Associations, Housing Bodies, Parslickstown House, Foroige

The community currently have access to an artist in residency in Draiocht. Some actions in this regard will take account of his resources.

Action 2.1: Support new and existing initiatives, events and activities that can enhance or build on the feeling of "belonging in Mulhuddart". The Mulhuddart Community Centre can be a base for any new initiatives and the Community Council of Mulhuddart can promote such events once it is developed.

Action 2.2: Examine the options regarding the branding of a Mulhuddart identity. Local links will be explored with ITB Media Department to examine ways to build community identify

Action 2.3: Highlight and support the work of the Artist in Residence with Draoicht (Michael McLoughlin) through connecting him with local groups. As community members engage and participate within art projects, they will highlight the important lived experiences of being resident and involved in the civic life of Mulhuddart.

Priority 3: Information is flowing between community and services

Key Stakeholders:

CIC, BASE, Mulhuddart Community Centre, Draiocht, Local Businesses, FCC, PPN, Fingal Sports Office, CYPSC

It is clear that better communication channels between services themselves and back then to community members lead to community members feeling more connected and aware.

Action 3.1: Develop an information hub within new BASE space, where community members can access information about local services and activities, using technology and also through one to one support when required

Action 3.2: Develop Mulhuddart website/app (liaising with ITB Media Department via Action

2.2). This online resource would enable sharing of local newsletters, posting of information on a notice board for activities, highlighting events planned by residents' groups, other local community groups and service providers. This online portal will also cover social media channels and make use of local community media channels to promote local information, as well as positive news stories.

Action 3.3: Ensure that information channels and community notice boards are updated and managed. The Community Council of Mulhuddart and all local service providers will work together so that the information channels are relevant and being used by the community.

6.2   DELIVERING ON GAPS IN COMMUNITY SERVICES

The research findings as well as the feedback gathered through interviews with service providers and community actors all stressed the importance of being able to address gaps in community services. This feedback has informed the identification of these particular priorities:

Priority 4: Greater availability and access to services for the under 10 age group and for young people aged 10 to 25 years

Key Stakeholders:

Mulhuddart Community Centre, Volunteer Centre, LDTF, Schools, FCC (Sports Department) CYPSC, TUSLA, Foróige, Barnardos

Action 4.1: Identify gaps in services through use of CYPSC report to map availability of services for under 10s (not completed yet). Also examine means of documenting local services for the 10-25 age group through directory (link to 3.3 once developed)

Action 4.2: Examine models in which services for under 10s can be brought to Mulhuddart (e.g. NYP in Blakestown; sports development programmes by NGBs such as FAI) and funding sources (e.g. LCDC)

Action 4.3: increase range of afterschool activities that are being provided (arts and crafts, late night soccer, multi-sports programmes)

Action 4.4: Explore options for use of community space

Action 4.5: Liaise with residents associations and community groups to seek volunteers

Priority 5: Support for new groups and activities

Key Stakeholders:

FCC, BAP, Residents Associations, Drugs Task Force, Foróige, PPN, Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group, Gardaí.

Action 5.1: Examine county level structures and see how a Mulhuddart response can be

developed, e.g. Fingal Older People's Network, Meals for Wheels (HSE), Fingal Ethnic Network, Drugs Task Force on Drug User forums, Traveller engagement, youth participation

Action 5.2: Make use of Community Council to strengthen local responses

Priority 6: Interagency collaboration develops and deepens

Key Stakeholders:

All participants within MPTG (community, voluntary and statutory sectors)

Action 6.1: Enhance MPTG as a network/forum through the following

   a. Identify the value of MPTG in terms of information sharing, forum for

identifying needs, building relationships, facilitating further collaboration

   b. Demonstrating successful results from the MPTG model (Foroige+MCC+MPTG; FCC+BAP+SICAP)

Action 6.2: Examine how MPTG will work into the future-Refine terms of reference, is there need for protocols, is a community charter worth exploring? Look to funding opportunities- how will the strategy be resourced?

Action 6.3: Identify new opportunities for inter-agency working

Action 6.4: Develop clarity about review and oversight mechanisms, who is managing process (need for independent chair)

6.3   CREATING COMMUNITY SPACES

Community space is at a premium in Mulhuddart, with the main focal point of the Community Centre already operating at capacity. Through the research process, a number of stakeholders came together to explore the option of developing a new type of community space in the area, involving a different model and with a focus on supporting social entrepreneurship and community enterprise. This group has drafted an action plan and will be developed further as action 7.1. Further work will also be carried out in looking to develop a plan to expand the current community centre.

Priority 7: More dedicated community space

Key Stakeholders:

Mulhuddart Community Centre, BASE, ITB, BAP, CYPSC, FCC, Foroige

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Action 7.1: Review, update and prepare specific workplan on basis of draft action plan developed during the research process

Action 7.2: Expand space of Mulhuddart Community Centre

Priority 8: Community engaging with public spaces

Key Stakeholders:

Mulhuddart Community Centre, BASE, Men's Shed, FCC, Residents Associations, Powerstown Allotments, ITB Horticulture Section, BAP

Action 8.1: Supporting local groups and residents associations to look at how they can use public spaces- using Community Council as forum where they can build new relationships and explore options as to how community can have increased stake in the public and communal living areas.

Action 8.2: Document examples of successful use of public spaces (dedication of tree in Mick Walsh Park, Motocross, Fishing Club in Tolka Valley Linear Park)

Action 8.3: Work with local agencies to develop new initiatives (e.g. allotments, horticulture projects)

6.4 IMPROVING THE PHYSICAL LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Many community members raised concerns regarding the physical infrastructure of Mulhuddart, specifically discussing housing lists, overcrowding, feelings of insecurity and community neglect. The development of a stronger community voice that can be structured and channelled through local community groups and residents' associations was considered a vital first step so that community members could feel more involved and aware about decision-making that affects their community.

Priority 9: That local housing issues and needs, and what is required to address them, are explored; and information shared; and options for action examined.

Key Stakeholders:

Residents' Associations, Community Council of Mulhuddart (once established), FCC, BAP, Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group

Action 9.1: Facilitate information flows between agencies and residents associations regarding housing concerns.

Action 9.2: Ensure that community members are informed about local housing matters, as well as the correct means of reporting anti-social behaviour

Priority 10: That issues in the physical environment that affect well-being and safety are explored and options developed

Key Stakeholders:

Local Authority Planning Department, Residents' Associations, Community Council of Mulhuddart (once established), FCC, BAP, Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group

Action 10.1: Promote new initiatives with focus on community safety, e.g. Neighbourhood Watch, Alert schemes, safe paths, improved lighting

Action 10.2: Promote community participation in medium and long term planning to make Mulhuddart a more people and community friendly environment, reducing the impact of roads and vehicles

Action 10.3: Ensure that local forums are being attended by residents associations and information is fed back to community members, e.g. Joint Policing Committees (make use of online resources, ensure information is maintained and updated- Action 3.3)

7. MPTG STRATEGY OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE

A new structure is proposed that would provide oversight to the Strategy implementation. An overall Strategy workplan will be prepared that deals with roles and responsibilities with regard to oversight and monitoring. Each of the Subgroups (e.g. Community Space, Community Voice) will work to its own agreed Subgroup plan and timeline, reporting back within its own Subgroup structures.

A number of new layers would be established, acknowledging the actual workload and commitments that will be necessary to deliver the strategy.

7.1 ESTABLISH A MPTG EXECUTIVE

The MPTG Executive would become the de facto management committee for the MPTG, taking on the role of oversight and management of the MPTG. Membership could include a representative from FCC, BAP, Foróige, LDTF, Tusla and at least one community representative. Terms of reference would be drawn up to cover the specific oversight roles for this group. A chairperson, secretary and treasurer would be appointed. The possibility of seeking an independent chairperson from the local business community could be explored.

A funding strategy would be the initial priority for this executive body. The aim would be to secure the employment or secondment of a dedicated worker who could support the MPTG executive and its other layers.

7.2 ESTABLISH A STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

The Strategy Implementation Team would comprise the Executive, as well as one representative from each of the Subgroups. This Team would meet quarterly and would hear presentations and updates from representatives of each working group. These presentations would focus on the successes and stories associated with the ongoing work of the Subgroups, e.g. representative of residents' association with regard to specific actions on Community Council developments, artist in residence regarding update on identity work, input from local CSR representative from local company regarding engagement within Subgroup actions.

This Team would also be responsible for the review of the work of each Subgroup with regard to the overall strategy Workplan. It would be tasked with dealing with challenges associated with lack of progress in the overall Workplan. Each Subgroup would be assisted to develop and review performance indicators according to realistic measures.

7.3 FORMALISE MEMBERSHIP AND CONVENOR FOR EACH SUBGROUP

Each Strategy Subgroup (some initial work has been carried out to date in relation to 3 subgroups) will agree to have a Convenor who may be based in an appropriate agency, group or organisation. The rationale for the Convenor to be based in a specific organisation is on the premise that the organisation will allocate the appropriate amount of time to enable the Convenor to carry out the tasks associated with organising Subgroup activities, between meetings.

The Subgroup will meet regularly, according to its agreed workplan, with meetings of

Subgroup members organised by the Convenor. The agenda for each meeting will focus on the implementation framework and schedule agreed by the Strategy Implementation Team. Each member of the Subgroup will have clear responsibilities for actions to be undertaken and the convenor of the Subgroup will prepare an update in advance of each meeting.

7.4   ROLE OF MULHUDDART COMMUNITY FORUM

The current wide group of local organisations (over 40 at last count) who are members of the MPTG would continue to be part of the overall structure, but would now become members of a Mulhuddart Community Forum, meeting twice per year. The purpose of this Forum would be to act as part of the feedback loop for organisations within the community who are interested in engaging in information sharing and networking opportunities, but who either do not have the resources available or are not specifically active in one of the sub groups.

The Forum would be provided with updates on the progress of the Strategy and could provide feedback and suggestions, but would not have a decision-making role. As work progresses towards the development of a Mulhuddart Community Council, this Forum would be incorporated into that structure with explicit roles.

The diagram below illustrates the idea.

FIGURE 15: STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES
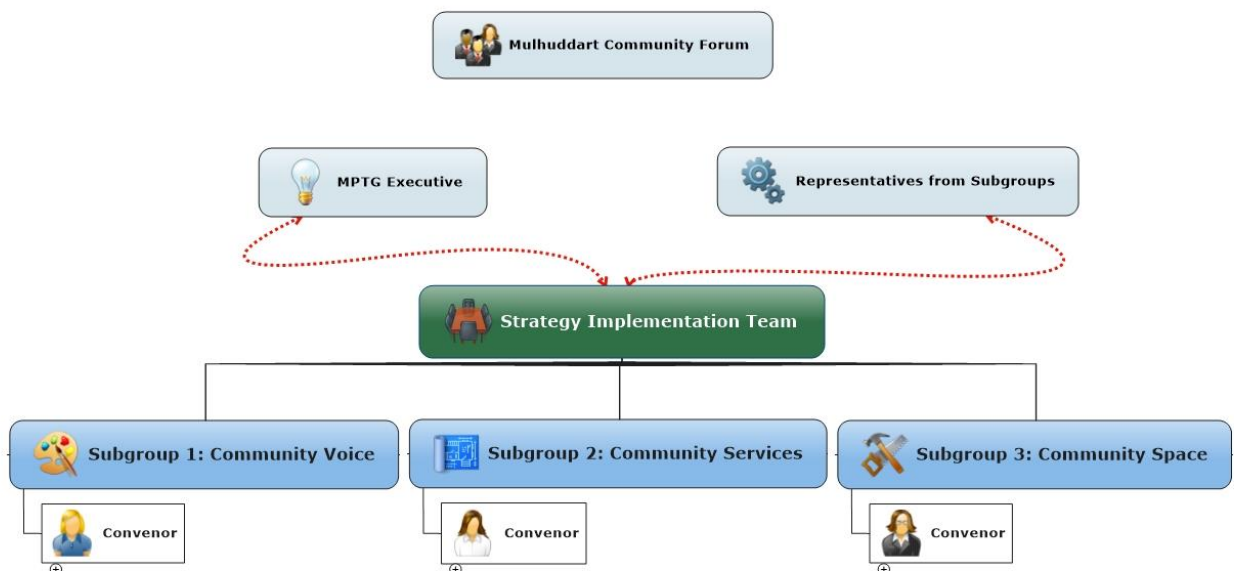
ANNEXES:

ANNEX 1: SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND RESPONDENTS

SERVICE PROVIDERS SURVEY

A total of 22 organisations responded to the survey, covering 27 services. A good mix was present: Half (11) were NGOs or voluntary bodies; six were statutory organisations; four were local community organisations and one was a private entity.

Table 15: Service Providers Survey Responses by Target & issue

Target groups/issue	No.
10 year – 18 year (or sub-groups)	9
Child & family	4
Vocational /adult education	3
Migrants	3
Community safety & security	3
Employment/unemployment	3
Preschool	2
Schools (primary/secondary)	2
Housing	2
Travellers	1
Mental health	1
People with disabilities	1
Residents association	1
Venue provision, CBO support	1

A complete listing of services provided by the organisations covered in the survey is difficult to provide, given the overlapping scope and multiple services provided by some, but Table 15 gives an indication of the spread of target groups and issues covered. The large number targeting the 10 to 18 years groups (or sub-group of them) is the most striking feature.

Overall the survey respondents represent a good spread across service provider type, target group and issues. While it does not comprise a comprehensive list, it is adequate to ensure that the survey results are valid. A few other features include:

The following responded to the survey.

An Gárda Siochána	Jigsaw Dublin 15
BASE Enterprise Centre	Kidz Zone
Bláhanna Beaga Teoranta t/a Mulhuddart Lifestart (2)	Ladyswell National School
Blanchardstown Area Partnership	Mulhuddart Community Centre CLG
Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group	Mulhuddart Community Youth Project, Foróige
Children4WorldChildren	Respond Housing Association (2)
Co-operative Housing Dublin West	Riversdale Community College
Dromheath Residents Association	Safer Blanchardstown (Local Policing Forum)
Fingal County Council Community Office	Tusla (2)
Foróige (3)	WEB Project Family Support
i-Smile International	Wellview Family Resource Centre

INTERVIEWS WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS, COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS & OTHERS

The following were interviewed by the research Team.

Nicola Brady, Gardaí.

Nuala Kane. BAP.

Siobhán Noctor, Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group.

Hugh Murphy, Helen Canning, Key Workers. Mulhuddart Drug and Alcohol Project.

Deirdre Costello, Mulhuddart Community Centre.

Niamh Quinn. Foróige

Pat Queenan, Linda Ennis, Janey Ivers FCC

Sinead Barry, Wellview

Conor Ryan BAP:

Mary McCamley, Councillor

Seamus HughesAnn Mc Donald ETB

Philip Jennings, Safer Blanchardstown.

Paul Murgatroyd, BAP

Paul Donnelly, Councillor.

Tania Doyle, Councillor

 Adaku Ezeudo, Sandra Ajuonoma. I Smile and Avondale Community Group

 Finbarr Hennessy. Cooperative Housing Ireland

Rachel Traynor, Parnell Residents Association,

Ruth Coppinger, TD

Rose Emmett. Drumheath Residents Association

Pat Queenan	Task Group Chair	Fingal County Council
Paul Murgatroyd	Research Working Group	BASE Enterprise Centre
Conor Ryan	Research Working Group	Blanchardstown Area Partnership
Nuala Kane	Research Working Group	Blanchardstown Area Partnership
Janet Ivers	Service provider member	Fingal County Council
Miriam Ryan	Research Working Group	Foróige
Deirdre Costello	Research Working Group	Mulhuddart Community Centre
Sinead Barry	Research Working Group	TUSLA
Ann Losty	Service provider member	Blanch Local Drugs Task Force
Niamh Quinn	Service provider member	Foróige
Marion O Hara	Service provider member	Life Start
Darren Hudson	Service provider member	Respond
Dolores Grady	Service provider member	Respond
Cathal Mc Daniel	Service provider member	Riversdale Community College
Philip Jennings	Service provider member	Safer Blanchardstown
Cathriona Sheehan	Service provider member	TUSLA
Una Caffrey	Service provider member	TUSLA
Justine O'Brien	Service provider member	Foróige, Web Project
Caitrin McGrath	Service provider member	Foróige
Evelyn Murphy	Service provider member	HSE
Karen Kavanagh	Service provider member	TUSLA
Siobhan Carr	Service provider member	HSE
Olive Beatty	Service provider member	HSE
Particia Murphy	Service provider member	Barnardos
Nicola Brady	Service provider member	An Garda Siochana
Jean Martin	Service provider member	Crosscare
Finbarr Hennessy	Service provider member	NABCO
Seamus Hughes	Service provider member	DDL Educational Training Board
Jeanne Forde	Service provider member	Jigsaw
Sandra Pokrant	Service provider member	An Taisce
Adaku Ezeudo	Community Rep	I Smile International
Mary McCamley	Community Rep	MCC
John Harmon	Community Rep	
Olivia Hughes	Community Rep	Ladyswell National School
Rose Emmett	Community Rep	Drumheath Res. Ass
Siobhan Noctor	Community Rep	Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group
Wunmi Ategie	Community Rep	
Marie McKay	Community Rep	MDAP

This section of the Report represents an update of the Burtenshaw Kenny Report to analyse any changes in the Mulhuddart area since the 2011 Census.

1 POPULATION OVERVIEW

There are 7,380 people living in Mulhuddart, an increase of 23.5% since 2011. Between the two electoral divisions of Blanchardstown-Tyrrelstown and Blanchardstown-Mulhuddart, there are 22 small areas covering the many housing estates and residential roads. Since the 2011 Census, the wider area of Parnell and Avondale has been subdivided into four smaller areas to cover the new housing developments here. At the time of the 2011 Census, there were 554 people living in this small area. By the time of the Census 2016, there were 1,649 people living here. This specific increase in population accounts for 78.1% of the overall population growth in Mulhuddart.

48.4% of the population were men and 51.6% women. The overall area accounts for 2.5% of the population of Fingal (population 296,020).

The population of Mulhuddart has grown rapidly over the last two Census periods. Between 2006 and 2016, the population has grown by 3,036 people (1,634 between 2006-2011 and 1,402 between 2011-2016).

Table 16 Population of Mulhuddart (2011-2016)

Population	2011	2016	Pop. change 2011-2016
Mulhuddart ED	3,866	4,123	257
Tyrrelstown ED	2,112	3,257	1,145
Overall Mulhuddart population	5,978	7,380	1,402

Table 17: Age breakdown of Mulhuddart (by No. of Population)

Area	0 - 4 Years	5 - 9 Years	10 - 15 years	16 - 18 years	19 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 Years	65 Years +	Total
Mulhuddart	662	779	1042	364	512	2599	1251	171	7380

Table 18: Age breakdown of Mulhuddart, Fingal and State (by Proportion of Population)

Area	0 - 4 Years	5 - 9 Years	10 - 15 years	16 - 18 years	19 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 Years	65 Years +	Total
Mulhuddart	9.0	10.6	14.1	4.9	6.9	35.2	17.0	2.3	100
Fingal	8.4	8.9	8.5	3.6	6.4	33.6	21.4	9.1	100
State	7	7.5	8.0	3.9	7.0	29.5	23.8	13.4	100

Some 26.5% of the population (or 1958 children) are under the age of 13.

Almost half of the population of Mulhuddart is aged under 25 (45.5%), significantly higher than the proportion of young people in Fingal (35.8%) and nationally (33.2%). This trend continues since the 2011 Census, meaning that the area continues to be generally much younger than the Fingal and state levels. In contrast there are very low levels of older people.

Figure 16: Age breakdown of Mulhuddart, Fingal and State (by proportion of population)
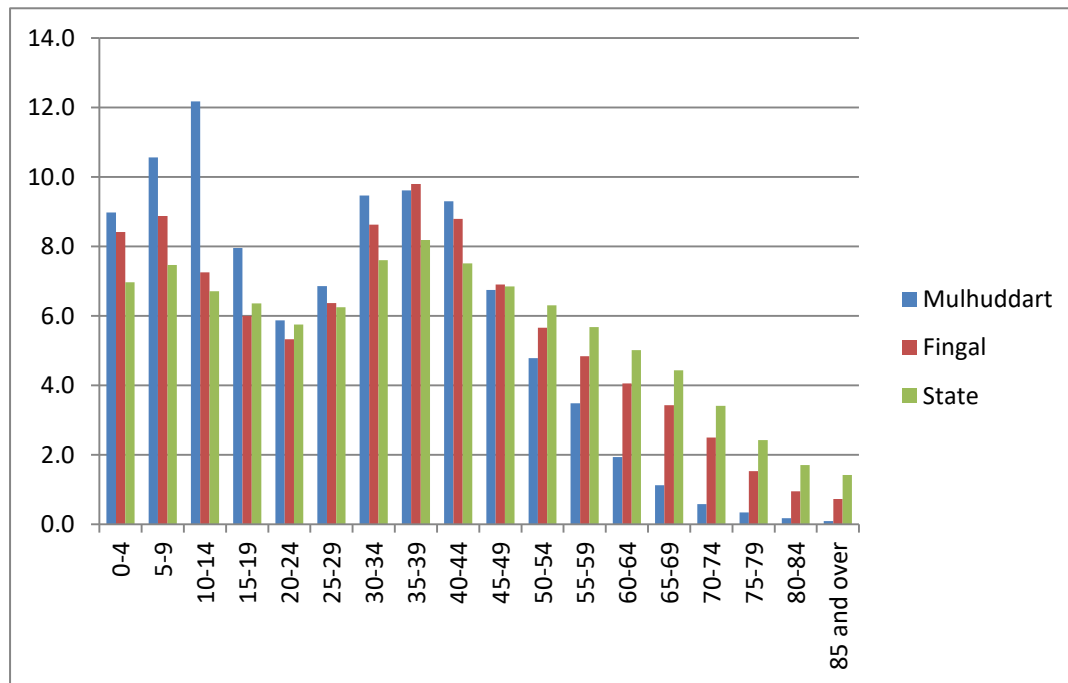
Figure 17: Proportion of Population aged under 25 (Mulhuddart, Fingal and State)
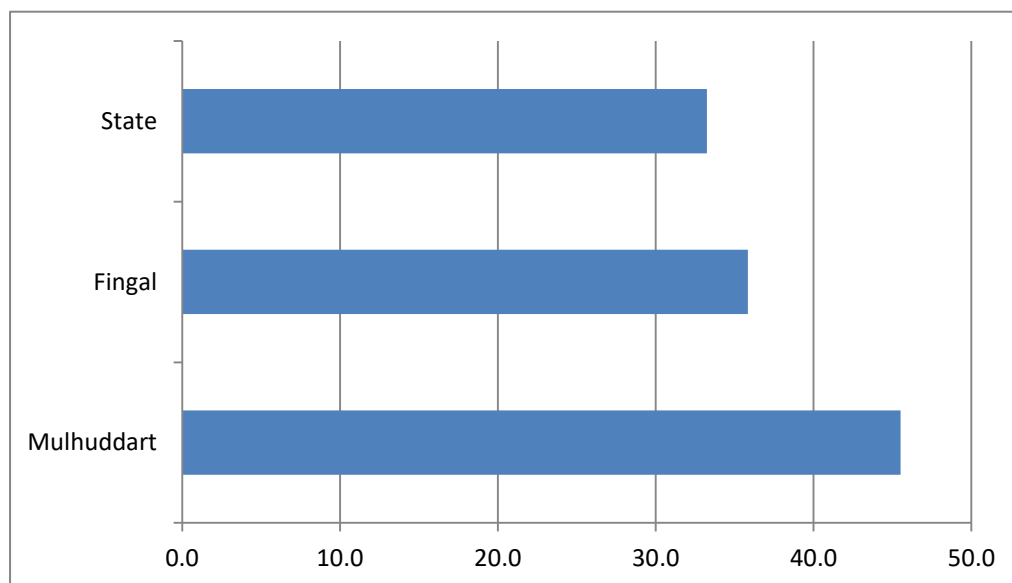
2   FAMILY CYCLE AND STRUCTURE

The following section presents information on private households, family cycle and structure in Mulhuddart.

2.1   PRIVATE HOUSEHOLDS

The following presents a breakdown of the type of private households in Mulhuddart.

Table 19: Type of Private Household Census 2011-2016 (by number and proportion of population)

Type of Household	Census 2011		Census 2016	
	Number of Households	Proportion of Households	Number of Households	Proportion of Households
One Person	306	16.2	285	12.9
Husband and Wife	126	6.7	126	5.7
Cohabiting Couple	69	3.7	37	1.7
Husband, wife and children	503	26.7	666	30.1
Cohabiting couple and children	118	6.3	150	6.8
Father and children	38	2	37	1.7
Mother and children	453	24	467	21.1
Couple and others	36	1.9	38	1.7
Couple children and others	71	3.8	106	4.8
Father, children and others	7	0.4	7	0.3
Mother, children and others	39	2.1	59	2.7
Two or more families	41	2.2	59	2.7
Non family household and relations	21	1.1	47	2.1
Two or more non related persons	59	3.1	128	5.8
Total	1887	100	2212	100.0

There are 2,212 households in Mulhuddart, an increase of 325 since 2011.

The dominant type of private household in the combined area is husband, wife and children 30.1%.

However, mother and children is the second highest at 21.1%.

Table 20: Family Cycle Census 2011-2016 (by number and proportion of population)

|	Census 2011		Census 2016	
	No. of families	Proportion of families	No. of families	Proportion of families
Pre Family	162	10.5	130	7.2
Empty Nest	67	4.3	73	4.0
Retired	18	1.2	23	1.3
Pre-School	242	15.7	203	11.2
Early School	261	16.9	256	14.1
Pre-Adolescence	288	18.7	376	20.7
Adolescent	216	14	344	19.0
Adult	290	18.8	409	22.5
Total	**1544**	**100**	**1814**	**100.0**

There are now 1,814 families in Mulhuddart.

The family cycle is relatively similar to Fingal levels at pre-family, pre-school and early school cycles with 32.5% of families in Mulhuddart at this stage compared to Fingal levels of 37.2%. The decrease in the proportion of these family cycles in Mulhuddart since Census 2011 would suggest that many of the new families living in the area have children at an older stage.

Table 21: Family Cycle Census 2011-2016 (by number and proportion of population)

	Mulhuddart	**Fingal**
	Proportion of families	Proportion of families
Pre Family	**7.2**	**10.4**
Empty Nest	4.0	8.0
Retired	**1.3**	**7.6**
Pre-School	11.2	12.2
Early School	**14.1**	**14.6**
Pre-Adolescence	20.7	12.8
Adolescent	**19.0**	**11.7**
Adult	22.5	22.7
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**

Figure 18: Proportion of Families with Adolescent Children (Mulhuddart and Fingal)
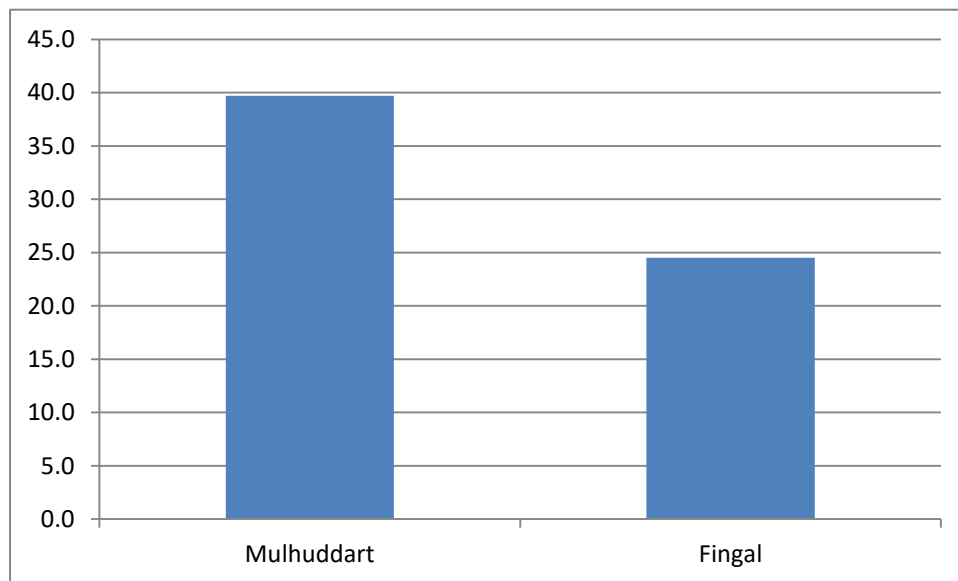
This is borne out by the levels of pre-adolescents and adolescents, which are much higher than Fingal levels with 39.7% of families in Mulhuddart at this stage in comparison to 24.5% in Fingal.

Therefore, almost three quarters (72.2%) of the families in Mulhuddart are at prefamily, have children or adolescences.

In contrast there are very low levels of retired and empty nest families 1.3% and 4% respectively.
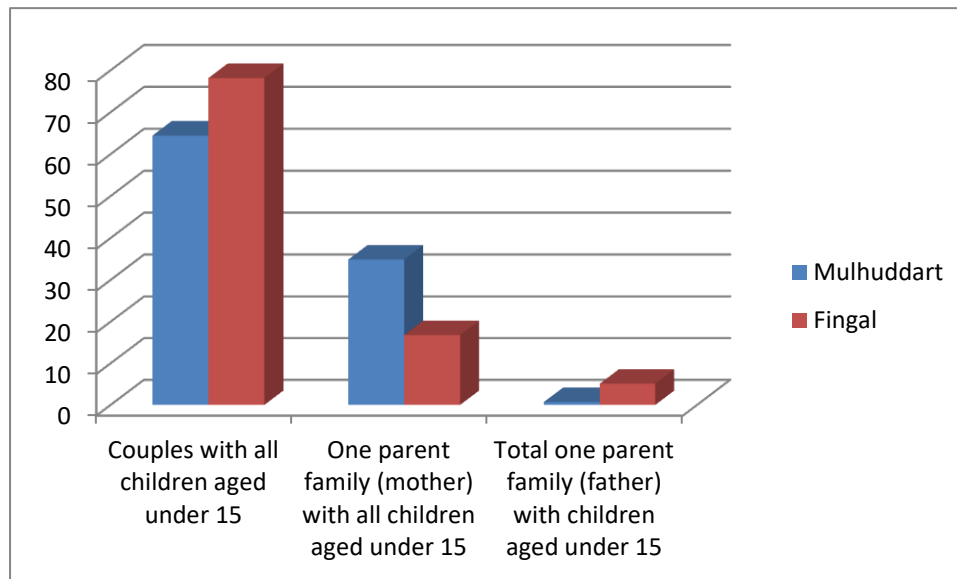
2.2 FAMILY UNITS WITH CHILDREN UNDER FIFTEEN

In 2016 there were 835 family units with children under the age of fifteen. The following presents a breakdown on the types of family units with children in this category area:

Table 22 Family Units in Mulhuddart with Children Under 15 (by number and proportion)

	No. of families	Proportion
Couples with all children aged under 15 ()	538	64.4
One parent family (mother) with all children aged under 15	291	34.9
Total one parent family (father) with children	6	0.7
Total	**835**	**100**

Figure 19: Proportion of Families with Children Under 15 (Mulhuddart and Fingal)

Over one third (35.6%) of families in Mulhuddart with children under the age of 15 are lone parent families. This represents a much higher figure than the levels of Fingal 21.8%.

2.2.3 FAMILY UNITS WITH CHILDREN UNDER FIFTEEN BY SIZE

Of the 835 family units with children under the age of fifteen in Mulhuddart the numbers of children per family is broken down as follows:

Table 23: Family Units with Children Under 15 (by number and proportion)

	Number	Proportion
Families without children	0	0
Families with 1 child	315	37.7
Families with 2 children	307	36.8
Families with 3 children	148	17.7
Families with 4 children	49	5.9
Families with 5 or more children	16	1.9
Total families	**835**	**100**

Over three quarters of the family units with children under fifteen had one or two children (74.5%). However 213 families with children under fifteen have three or more children with 16 families having five or more children.

3   NATIONALITY AND ETHNICITY

This section outlines the nationality and ethnicity of people living in Mulhuddart. It also outlines the foreign languages spoken and the level of English of people for whom English is not their first language.

3.1   PLACE OF BIRTH AND NATIONALITY

Over one third of the population of Mulhuddart were born outside of Ireland (36.5%). This is twice the national levels of 17%. Some18.4% (1,332) of the population are nationals from the rest of the world, with 15.9% (1,164) from Poland, Lithuania or the other EU 28. The following table highlights the numbers of people who were resident on the date of the Census, by their nationality.

Table 24: Usually Resident Population by Nationality

Nationality	Number	Proportion
Ireland	5431	76.1
UK	63	0.9
Poland	479	6.7
Lithuania	201	2.8
Other EU28	550	7.7
Rest of world	410	5.7
Total	7,134	100.0

3.2   ETHNICITY

Just under half of the population of Mulhuddart (3,278) 47.6% are white Irish. This compares to 74% in Fingal. 80 Travellers live in Mulhuddart, representing 6% of Travellers living in Fingal (1,315).

Almost 1,600 people are Other White and almost over 1200 are Black or Black Irish. The proportion of Black Irish is substantially higher than the overall Fingal levels- 17.8% compared to 4% and higher than the figure of 1.4% nationally. The ethnic diversity across all elements is substantially higher than the Fingal levels- Other White, Black/Black Irish, Asian/Asian Irish, Other.

Table 25: Ethnic or Cultural Background

Ethnic or cultural background	Number	Percentage
White Irish	3278	47.6
White Irish Traveller	80	1.2
Other White	1593	23.1
Black or Black Irish	1226	17.8
Asian or Asian Irish	423	6.1
Other	285	4.1
Total	6,885	100.0

Figure 20: Ethnic or Cultural Background (Mulhuddart, Fingal and State)
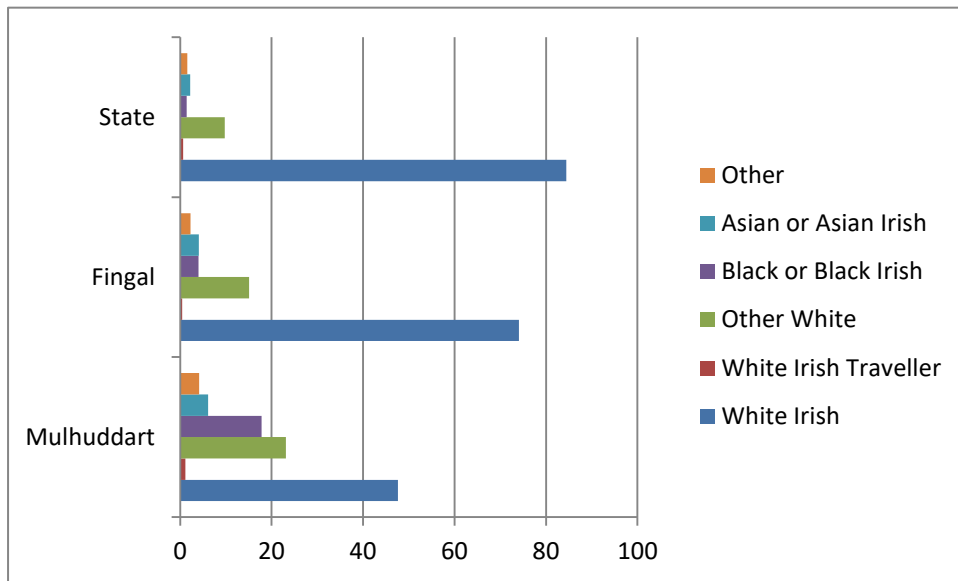
3.3   ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The following information highlights the speakers of foreign languages by language spoken and their ability to speak English.

Table 26: Languages Spoken

	Number of People	Proportion
Polish	557	17.7
French	194	6.2
Lithuanian	211	6.7
Other	2192	69.5
	3154	100.0

High proportions of speakers of foreign languages indicated that they spoke other languages than the options offered in the Census (69.5%).The ability of speakers of foreign languages to speak English is indicated in the following.

Table 27: Ability to Speak English

English language ability	Number	Proportion
Very well	1692	55.1
Well	924	30.1
Not well	381	12.4
Not at all	75	2.4
Total	3072	100.0

Over 80% of respondents outlined that they spoke English very well or well. However, 456 indicated that they did not speak English well, or at all.

4　　EDUCATION AND INTERNET ACCESS

This section outlines the education levels of people living in Mulhuddart. There is a clear link between education attainment and unemployment. The following presents the population aged 15 and over in the combined area by the highest level of education completed:

Table 28: People aged 15 and over who have ceased education in Mulhuddart

Education Levels	Number	Proportion
No formal education	59	1.9
Primary education	306	9.6
Lower secondary	529	16.7
Upper secondary	755	23.8
Technical or vocational qualification	465	14.7
Advanced certificate/Completed apprenticeship	190	6.0
Higher certificate	162	5.1
Ordinary bachelor degree or national diploma	246	7.8
Honours bachelor degree, professional qualification or both	239	7.5
Postgraduate diploma or degree	205	6.5
Doctorate(Ph.D) or higher	15	0.5
Total	3,171	100.0

There are 894 people (28.3%) in Mulhuddart who have no formal, primary or lower secondary education. This is significantly higher than the Fingal levels of 20.7%.

705 people (22.2%) living in Mulhuddart, who ceased education have an ordinary level Bachelor Degree or higher level qualification. This is significantly lower than Fingal (36.4%) and state levels of 30.4%. This continues the trend from the previous Census data pointing to a young, relatively poorly educated population base.

The following highlights the numbers of households with internet access in Mulhuddart in 2016:

Table 29: Number of households with internet

Access Type	Number	Proportion
Broadband	1790	86.6
Other	84	4.1
No	192	9.3
Total	2066	100.0

There is widespread access to internet in Mulhuddart with 86.6% of households having access through broadband services. However almost 200 households do not have access to the Internet in Mulhuddart.
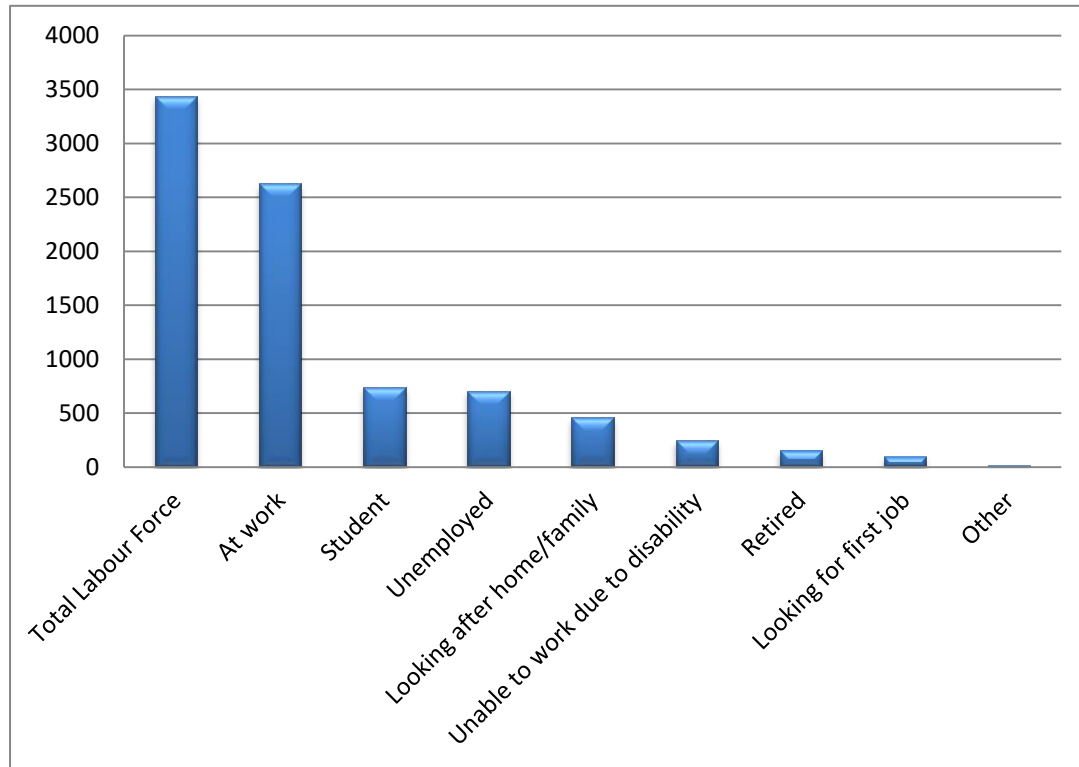
5　　AT WORK AND UNEMPLOYMENT

This section outlines has data in relation to labour force and unemployment in Mulhuddart in 2016.

5.1   POPULATION AGED 15 AND OVER BY PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC STATUS

The following outlines the data available for those aged over 15 by principal economic status.

Figure 21: Total labour force constituents Mulhuddart

The total labour force participation rate in Mulhuddart at 68.1% was slightly higher than that of Fingal at 66.9% and the state at 61.4%. The unemployment rate in 2016 for Mulhuddart is 23.4%, much higher than that of Fingal of 10.3% and nationally at 7.9%.

6   HOUSING

This section highlights how housing is occupied, the size of housing units and the size of households.

6.1   PERMANENT PRIVATE HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE OF OCCUPANCY

Some 67.3% of households living in Mulhuddart rent their accommodation. Over one third rent from the local authority and over one fifth from a private landlord. In contrast some 28% of households in Fingal are renting and a similar proportion nationally. Some 6% of households are renting from the Local Authority across Fingal and 8% nationally.

Some 67% of households are owner occupiers either with or without mortgages across Fingal and nationally, compared to 32.1% in Mulhuddart. Over 10% of households in Mulhuddart are renting from a co-operative or voluntary housing body. This compares to less than 1% of the population of Fingal and Ireland. In fact, while Mulhuddart represents only 2% of the number of households in Fingal, households renting from a co-operative housing body represent 30% of all such renting arrangements in the county.

Table 30: Permanent private households by type of occupancy

	No. of households	Proportion
Owner occupier with mortgage	563	28.0
Owner occupier without mortgage	83	4.1
Rented- Private landlord	423	21.1
Rented- Local Authority	703	35.0
Rented - Co-operative/ Voluntary body	225	11.2
Occupied free of rent	11	0.5
Total	2008	100

6.2 TYPE OF HOUSING UNITS

The following presents the type of accommodation that private households are living in.

Table 31: Types of accommodation

	No. HHs	Proportion
House/Bungalow	1679	78.9
Flat/Apartment	445	20.9
Bed-Sit	3	0.1
Caravan/Mobile home	1	0.0
Total	2128	100

The vast majority of people, 78.9% in Mulhuddart live in houses/bungalows. This is in line with Fingal levels of 80.7%. However, some 445 households live in flats/apartments in Mulhuddart. This represents one in five households, slightly higher than the 17% across Fingal.

6.3   PERMANENT HOUSEHOLD NUMBER OF ROOMS

The number of rooms per household of people living in the area is as follows

Table 32: Number of rooms per household

Number of rooms	No. of households	Proportion
1 room	40	2.0
2 rooms	222	11.0
3 rooms	587	29.0
4 rooms	227	11.2
5 rooms	786	38.9
6 rooms	136	6.7
7 rooms	16	0.8
8 or more rooms	8	0.4
Total	2022	100

More households in Mulhuddart live in households with less than five rooms. Some 849 households (42%) households live in accommodation with three rooms or less. This represents an increase of 233 households since the 2011 Census.

7	DISABILITY

Some 861 people in Mulhuddart had a disability. This represents 11.7% of the Mulhuddart population, in line with the 2011 figure of 11.3%.

There are 218 carers in Mulhuddart, some 62.8% of who are female.

ANNEX 4: CONSULTATION PROCESS DESCRIPTION

Nexus Research worked closely with the MPTG Research Group to establish a tailored set of research steps, based on the principles of a participative action research model. With extensive experience in shaping research exercises using this model, Nexus prepared a series of methodological steps involving outreach, recruitment, mapping, training, piloting and fieldwork phases. Coding of data, analysis, reporting and feedback phases completed the process.

This section presents an insight into the practical experience of implementing this approach within the community, the learning outcomes achieved, as well as the challenges associated within the process. During the consultation phase, 169 local residents were interviewed and staff and volunteers involved with local community- based organisations were consulted, including residents' associations, community centres, NGOs, Traveller group.

OUTREACH, RECRUITMENT AND DEFINITIONAL WORK

A team of peer researchers was recruited through the dedicated support of the MPTG member organisations and groups. The Mulhuddart Community Centre acted as the centre for the outreach process, during which the research aims were presented to community members. The scope of the research was outlined, including the extent of training, the nature of the fieldwork and the level of commitment required from the community research team.

Key in this outreach process was the explanation that there would be a follow up strategy emerging from the research and that the participants in the research work would be expected to play a role in the follow up work. This factor was critical in achieving the necessary "buy in" from the community members who had been approached. This also ensured that the people who came forward were committed to the "participatory action research" process from the outset. A further opportunity was allowed for MPTG groups to make recommendations regarding

other potential participants based on this outreach work and on the basis of their prior contacts within the community.

Each of the recruited team was from the Mulhuddart community or was living in Dublin 15 with close family or service user connections to Mulhuddart. The team was committed from the outset to becoming centrally involved in all phases of the research, from design, implementation, analysis and follow up.

Once the team was engaged in the project, a series of sessions were held to clearly define the parameters of the research to be undertaken and to contextualise the research aims within the policy framework of community development locally and nationally. This allowed for all research team members to be very clear on the rationale for the research, the model that was being followed and the potential for influencing potential for greater civic engagement by the team in their own community.

MAPPING THE AREA

A Fingal County Council map of the area was obtained and allowed the research team to refer to the parameters of the Mulhuddart area for the purposes of the research.

Historically and from a service provision perspective, different areas and estates have been either included or excluded from the wider Mulhuddart area. Working with the Research group of the MPTG, the following

areas and estates were defined as the core focus for the study:

- Avondale
- CastleCurragh
- Saddlers/ Coolmine Cottages
- Dromheath
- Parnell
- Parslickstown
- Warrenstown
- Wellview
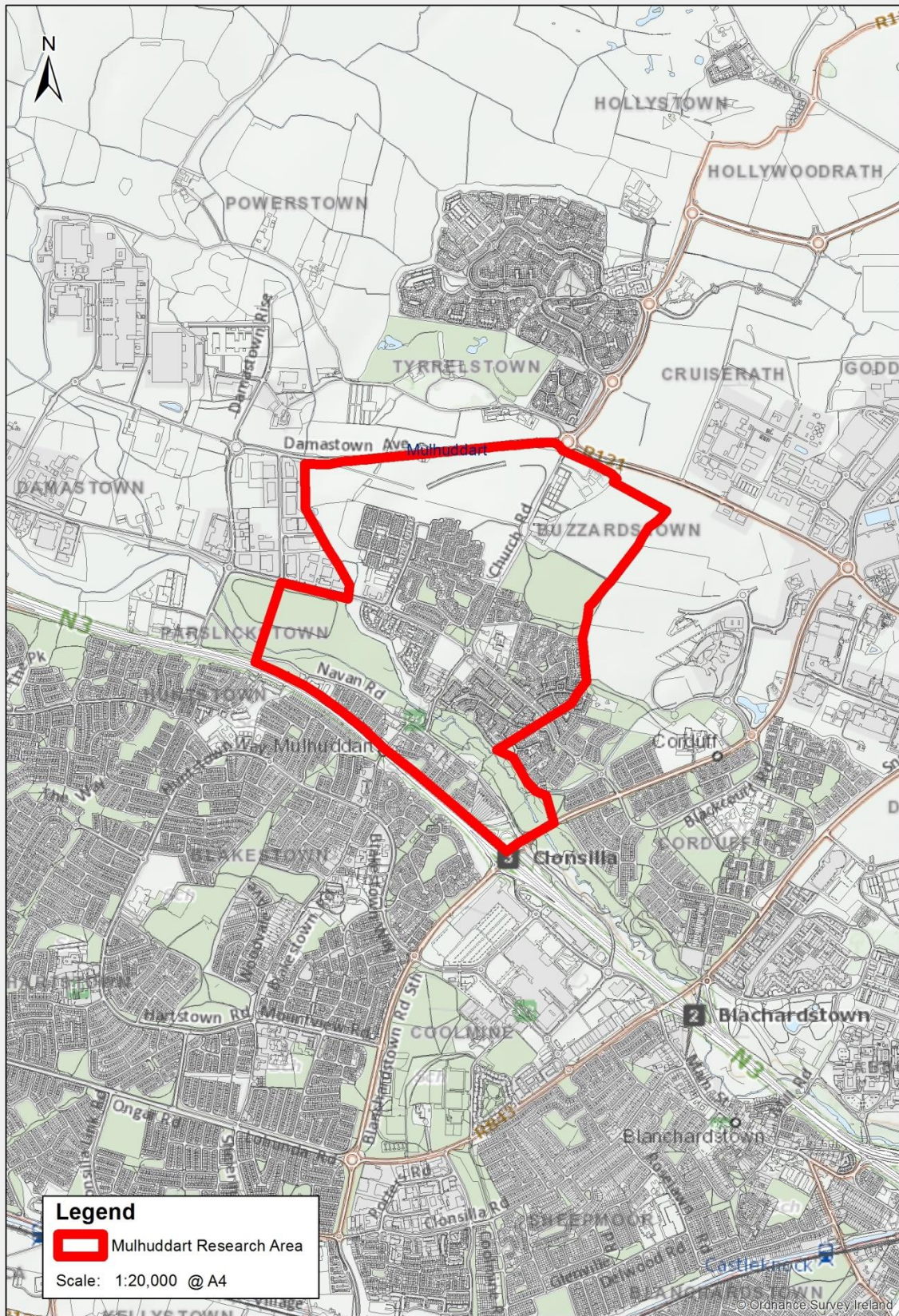
This map was used as a reference point for the duration of the research process.

TRAINING ON RESEARCH DESIGN AND TECHNIQUES

Having defined and clarified the research and geographic scope, a further series of training sessions were held with the team. These sessions were carried out over a timeline from June to July 2016 and they served:

- To elaborate a detailed community profile of the area;
- To translate this community profile into a sampling frame for the research;
- To develop an outline of a questionnaire that would be used in the interviews;
- To prepare an appropriate means of conducting interviews;
- To test the research instrument and practice interviewing techniques;
- To put in place the software tool that would allow for data input and analysis;
- To plan for any support needs that may arise during the research work, for the research team members and potentially for any interviewees.

PILOTING AND REVIEW OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The research team carried out a pilot test of the final questionnaire through a series of interviews with their immediate communities. On the basis of the learning from the pilot, an additional tool was prepared to assist the team in collating and collecting all feedback from interviewees.

This tool allowed for the team to be more flexible with regard to the interview process.

The questionnaire could be completed in summary form following completion of the interview and the full version completed at a later stage, using these compiled notes. The team found that this approach ensured for a more relaxed atmosphere during the interview and allowed the respondents to speak more freely and openly.

IMPLEMENTATION OF MAIN RESEARCH PHASE

Using this extra research instrument, the team interviewed a total of 179 people from the community. The research team members had extensive personal knowledge of their communities and enjoyed a high degree of respect and engagement from the community as they carried out the fieldwork.

The sample was reviewed over the course of this interview phase to ensure that all indicators and profile requirements were being met.

Ongoing support was provided to the research team as the interviews were completed with the sample population. Many difficult personal and family issues were raised during the interviews and it was important that the research team were provided with this space to debrief each other and Nexus with regard to the manner in which these issues may have affected the team members.

Supports were also in place for any interviewee, who may have been affected by the issues within the interview. No external support was requested during the research.

DATA INPUT AND ANALYSIS

As the interviews were completed and questionnaires filled in, Nexus took responsibility for the data input work. The dataset was reviewed and cleaned where necessary as the research was finalised.

An analysis session was then facilitated, whereby the raw data was presented and the team could probe and query the implications for reporting and for the follow up steps. The key findings were drawn from these sessions on this basis. Update reports were provided to the research group.

FOCUS GROUP WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The research team prepared an initial overview of the findings that will in turn be presented through a planned focus group. The research team will be responsible for the delivery of the presentation. A questions and answer session will be held as part of this focus group with members of local community organisations to be invited to attend this session.

This focus group will be representative of the community areas that were involved in the research, as well as organisations working with community members. The discussion will also focus on next steps with regard to the community level engagement opportunities within the MPTG strategy (See Sections 5 and 6 below, Sub-Strategy 1). A set of proposals may be developed and responsibility will be taken by the research team regarding the co-ordination of the next steps.

It will be important to offer a space for these interested parties and community members to find an appropriate role within the actions that are being outlined for the Subgroups of the plan.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROCESS

The Nexus community research process relies on the support and active participation of all elements of a local community infrastructure. This allows an active and committed research team from different parts of the community, who can grow to see the research as part of a wider more long term and action-focused piece of work. It also allows the team to work through the range of groups active or not so active within the community, whether these groups are organised through the voluntary, community or statutory stakeholders.

This summary presents some insight into the experience of the implementation of the research process. In usual circumstances, the PAR process involves a two-way collaboration with a specific community-based project, with staff members engaged in the research from the outset. In this instance, without that dedicated contact point, the research team and Nexus were involved in carrying out much scoping work on the activity base of the community in order to be able to carry out an outreach phase for the fieldwork. This extra element of the research was embraced by the community team and led to a scoping and auditing of all services and activities in Mulhuddart, in order to create a stepping off point and framework for our fieldwork.

This outreach work, carried out through the research process, resulted in the following synopsis:

- There are a number of active groups meeting on a regular basis with support from agencies. These include drop in groups for certain target group, including the Integration Group, Lifestart Group, Seniors Group and Horizon group. Many of these are based in the Community Centre as are the many Foróige programmes and groups (including Young Mothers Group, Homework Club). Other groups specifically targeting parents are run through some of the schools, with agency support.
- The Mulhuddart Community Centre acts as a hub for these service providers to organise and run their groups and for Foróige to deliver some of its many programmes.
- Parslickstown House is another important hub of community activity, where other community based groups including the Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group are based.
- The BASE Enterprise Centre represents another key focal point for community members from across Mulhuddart, where training and enterprise supports are available.

- The Men's Shed is another important project that is active within the community, although there are few men from the immediate Mulhuddart area currently engaged.
- There are a number of residents groups who are of varying degrees of active engagement within their areas. These include groups in Dromheath, Avondale, Parnell and Wellview-Parslickstown.

Through the research process, the team has worked through all of these organisations, hubs, centres and groups to interview the beneficiaries and group members and other identified key local contact people. The group has also linked with their fellow community members, specifically targeting and accessing people who may not be currently engaging with any services or those whose voice would not usually be heard. Where specific support groups were not active in the area, e.g. no dedicated LGBT group in Mulhuddart, the research team made extra efforts to access potential interviewees from a range of target groups.

Of the 179 interviews completed, some 53 were carried out through referrals from community based groups. The remaining 126 interviews used the research team's own connections in Mulhuddart, door to door contact, and by basing themselves in community centres.

CHALLENGES IN MEETING RESEARCH AIMS

A challenge for the research process was connected to some drop off in the number of research team members, especially some specifically skilled members. In three cases, an offer of paid employment understandably took people away from the team. Time and family pressures prevented two other team members from fully engaging. This resulted in a core group of five researchers, assisted by Nexus in some of the group sessions. There

were no further volunteers to come into the team and as the training had been completed, it was overly challenging to begin from scratch. The team worked extremely hard and had admirably completed 179 interviews (usually consisting of a one to one chat taking from 25-35 minutes on average) by January 2017.

The workplan was reviewed on an iterative basis to allow for targeted interviews to be

conducted with a focus on specific areas and community groups and on ensuring a representative sample size, given the depth and quality of the data being recorded.

POTENTIAL FOR BIAS WITHIN THE SAMPLE

In the following analysis, attention is drawn to points at which some bias may have affected specific results. The following considerations should be borne in mind with regard to any such qualifications.

1. The Mulhuddart area has one main community centre. This centre is staffed by a dedicated team of community employment participants, who primarily live in the area, their supervisor, as well as an overall centre manager. This centre acts as a base for many service providers to deliver their activities and groups, Foróige being the main anchor tenant. The centre does not have access to or the resources to employ dedicated community development workers, who could design or implement a specific community development work plan in response to emerging local needs. The centre's meeting room and other spaces are heavily oversubscribed between use by external service providers (e.g. Lifestart Programme activities) and the centre's childcare and after schools programmes.

   The research team was fortunate to access space in the centre for meetings, training and more importantly to access members of the local community, as they engaged within groups and programmes. This allowed for an initial group outreach phase, where interviewees were accessed through those groups and services operating "on the ground" within the community. The impact of this concentration of activities in the centre and our reliance on these participants to begin the fieldwork phase has meant that there is a probable bias in the results, connected to questions about the services and spaces with which interviewees had

connected in the 6 months previously. The Mulhuddart Community Centre becomes the most accessed local service in the research findings. The overall profile of interviewees also shows a larger than usual number of Community Employment participants.

2. A core element of the community consultation work was to access people from Mulhuddart who may not have been consulted before, people who were considered "harder to reach" or had "unheard voices". In order to ensure that certain groups in the community were interviewed, the research team made connections within their own areas with local resident groups and associations. Through meeting with these groups, the team sought to identify community members who may have been considered more isolated or who may have felt that they were not represented by or connected to local groups or services

   Therefore, a second potential bias within the results, associated with people's response to questions regarding engagement with local groups and services, may be found as a stronger connection with residents associations and groups. Furthermore, the relatively high rates of voluntarism within the community may be also related to this access point to some interviewees.

   Specific efforts were made within the fieldwork phase to access other groups or people in the community who may have been "unheard" in the past. Examples include efforts to reach out to members of the LGBTQ community, which was more challenging in that there is no local group currently active. Efforts were made

to ensure that a Traveller voice was included in the findings, through engagement with the local Traveller Development Group and specific interviewees being accessed in this manner.

3. Through this chosen purposive sampling process, the research team worked to ensure a representative sample by engaging not only within their own local areas and estates, but also within their ethnic and national groups.

A further indirect effect of this approach may be a slight bias with regard to the local connections of the research team within their community, i.e. their own age, gender and nationality. The research team were continually reviewing the profile of respondents and interviewees through the fieldwork phase in order to ensure that any potential biases in these areas would be acknowledged and addressed. Through this interactive process, the team ensured that voices from all parts of the community were heard.