



Responding To Needs, Driving Change

How Is Our Neighbourhood?

**A Study of Community Engagement, Connectivity and
Provision in Tallaght West.**

CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

2017

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Foreword

It is a great honour for me to have been asked to write this Foreword to the “How is our Neighbourhood?” report by the Childhood Development Initiative in Tallaght West. I was already aware of the excellent work carried out by the CDI from its Centre in Fettercairn and this report - which is the third of its kind - will hopefully inform the future work of not just the CDI and local agencies, but also decision makers further afield, whose policy and resourcing choices have a very real impact on communities struggling with deprivation and years of relative neglect.

This report is based on extensive research and interviews with a variety of groups and individuals throughout West Tallaght. It follows on from two previous reports looking at children and families and focuses outside the home on the local neighbourhood. It paints a picture of a generally happy community, but one that simultaneously feels very unsafe much of the time; of residents feeling pressure from all sides and yet also maintaining a sense of resilience. It describes how people are well connected in many ways, especially to their individual neighbourhood groups and age cohorts, but also how at the same time there is a relative disconnect to the wider community.

“How is our Neighbourhood?” highlights many genuine concerns about drugs, antisocial behaviour and the state of the local environment that people want addressed. Yet it also shows that many residents are not as engaged as they could be either because they don’t know how or where to get involved, or else believe that it won’t make much of a difference. At the same time, those already working in the front line of the community either as service providers or as volunteers constantly highlight the struggle for funding and a general lack of adequate resources.

The findings paint a mixed picture overall of a relatively happy group of people dealing as best they can with the numerous challenges of living in a historically disadvantaged neighbourhood. But within this there is an alarmingly high minority who are totally disengaged, who find life a daily struggle, who need direct engagement and intervention, as well as an approach that ensures they are not just being listened to, but feel like they are being listened to.

This is a realistic and detailed survey that shows the good and bad aspects of life in Tallaght West, highlighting the many difficulties but also pointing out the existing positives and the potential opportunities. It is a report that cannot be ignored on the ground because of its localised nature, but at the same time it could equally apply to other communities nationwide. It is a report that the various agencies, our own South Dublin County Council, local and national elected representatives and the relevant Government Ministers should digest carefully and act on its many recommendations.

“How is our Neighbourhood?” is the authentic voice of local residents, researched and presented by a credible community organisation with a consistent track record. Its findings should not end up on a shelf or in somebody’s inbox; they deserve to be analysed and acted upon, preferably with urgency.

I would like to congratulate all those involved in the CDI for the considerable time and effort they put into this work, and especially for the value it adds.

Paul Gogarty

Mayor of South Dublin

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CDI is very grateful to the many people whose views and perspectives have informed this report, including those living and working in the community; young people in the area and the schools and services which facilitated our engagement with them; the fieldworkers who pounded the streets collecting household surveys, and the many individuals who attended Focus Group discussions.

Our thanks also to our funders, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and The Atlantic Philanthropies, and their support agencies: Pobal and the Centre for Effective Services. Our Research Advisory Committee who gave their time and expertise with their usual generosity, and whose insights were so important in shaping this report. The members are Dr. Suzanne Guerin; Dr. Mary Corcoran; Dr. Helen Johnston and Anita Nolan.

Finally we are hugely grateful to Dr. Bernadette Rock, CDI's Research Officer until the end of 2016, who undertook the oversight, management and analysis of this study. Her hard work and diligence have brought us a document with a wealth of information which we will draw on to inform our plans and priorities.

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Glossary

BRS	Brief Resilience Scale
CDI	Childhood Development Initiative
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSS	Community Safety Survey
GUI	Growing up in Ireland
HAOF	How Are Our Families?
HAOK	How Are Our Kids?
HION	How is our Neighbourhood?
HSE	Health Services Executive
TW	Tallaght West

Executive Summary

This study is based on consultation with three core stakeholder groups: residents in Tallaght West; young people in the area, and those working (paid and unpaid) in the community. Mixed methods were undertaken including surveys and Focus Groups, with the former being undertaken by local residents.

Overall, feedback about living and working in Tallaght West is positive, with community spirit, sense of belonging and strong local connections all being cited as area strengths. There is also a small but consistent proportion of respondents who do not share these experiences, and for whom the neighbourhood is not a safe or welcoming place. There are no clear factors influencing these very different responses. Finally, there are similar dynamics amongst service providers and residents in terms of capacity to impact on decisions. The latter report limited involvement in their communities and do not feel they have the opportunity to change the environment; whilst the former express dissatisfaction with management approaches and suggest a disconnect between front line experience and high level decision making.

Key Findings from Residents

- Residents have broadly positive experiences and views of their neighbourhood, including neighbours, family and friends, and a significant sense of belonging. Strong informal support structures are noteworthy, both in terms of receiving and giving care and support. Connections with family and friends emerge as an important source of support and interaction.
- Strong connections and attachments are highlighted in terms of residents' interactions with neighbours, and shared views and value systems. Local residents tend to feel integrated and a part of the neighbourhood.
- Safety is a significant concern for local residents, with a considerable percentage reporting that they do not feel safe in their neighbourhood.
- Residents believe anti-social behaviour is increasing. Vandalism, crime and anti-social behaviour, including drug-taking and alcohol consumption, are perceived as significant neighbourhood problems that need to be addressed. Environmental issues such as rubbish and littering are also widely perceived as problematic.
- There is very limited participation by local residents in terms of volunteering and taking part in community activities, with many residents feeling they do not have the opportunity to contribute in the way they would like and believing they have little or no influence over what their neighbourhood is like.
- Residents demonstrate significant resilience in the face of personal and life stressors, such as difficulties with neighbours, family members or bereavement.

Key Findings from Young People

- The research demonstrates that young people have largely positive views of their neighbourhood and have a significant sense of belonging. Young respondents perceive it as a friendly place comprising supportive friends and neighbours.
- While most young people feel at home in their neighbourhood and perceive it as a good place to live, a significant minority do not share these views, and perceive that people generally do not get along together.
- Respondents broadly believe they do not have influence over what their neighbourhood is like,

and often perceive they are stigmatised because of where they live. Feeling a sense of pride in their neighbourhood is challenging in light of a stigmatised identity.

- Young people have concerns about the local environment, safety and anti-social behaviour, including problems with littering, rubbish, crime and local gangs. Easy access to drugs and alcohol are perceived as significant challenges for young people.
- Connections with friends and family are a highly important source of support for young people, and most interaction with friends outside of school takes place in an informal setting.
- Social media is a highly significant part of young people's lives and an important means of staying in touch with peers. Engagement on social media accounts for a large part of young people's daily activities.
- In terms of education good classmates are crucial to a positive school experience. Respondents have notably high expectations for their educational attainment and perceive teachers and parents as sharing these.
- While there is significant awareness of local facilities, there are mixed opinions of these. There is a need to improve the maintenance and development of facilities in neighbourhoods in order to meet the needs of young people living there.
- While young people view themselves as being in good health, feeling under pressure and stressed is a frequent challenge.
- In spite of perceived neighbourhood challenges, the young people demonstrate resilience, hope and aspiration for their futures, particularly in terms of maintaining relationships, connections and securing employments.

Key Findings from Service Providers and Community Leaders

- Service providers are broadly satisfied with their role, with a strong sense of commitment, motivation and passion, and interagency cooperation provides good opportunities to collaborate and respond to needs.
- A strong and established community and a vibrant community spirit are identified as key assets of Tallaght West.
- Improved educational attainment among young people and improved accessibility of vulnerable groups to medical services are identified as significant achievements by service providers.
- There is an acute disconnect between senior management and those service providers engaged with local communities, and deep frustration concerning the impact of this which is perceived as the disempowerment and hindering of community engagement and efficient service delivery.
- There is a need for a community development model that embraces a community voice and promotes engagement. Developing strong relationships with residents and communities is a notable challenge as residents are reluctant to engage with service providers.
- Barriers to community engagement could be addressed by service providers having greater awareness and understanding of residents' perceptions of their own needs, and encouraging greater personal responsibility and motivation.
- There exists a challenge in developing a sense of connectedness and attachment among young people within their communities, which needs to be addressed, in part, by early intervention.
- A lack of resources for service providers is presented as a chronic and persistent challenge which has a detrimental impact on local communities.

- Homelessness and the housing crisis are major concerns among service providers for children and families.
- Deep concerns are raised around the issue of safety in Tallaght West, as service providers present it as a volatile and intensely unsafe environment in which aggression and violence has escalated in recent years. This can impact on service providers' abilities to carry out their duties in local communities.
- Social vulnerability, drugs and crime, and the exposure of children to such an unsafe environment create further challenges for service providers.

In summary, a strong sense of community support and spirit exist in Tallaght West (TW), with residents generally feeling positive about their neighbourhood and having a sense of belonging to it. Responses from adults and young people were very similar, and key concerns were also echoed by service providers. These focus largely on safety, resources and effective engagement at multiple levels.

Whilst overall, there is positive feedback on the dynamics, connections and engagement in TW, there is a small but consistent cohort of respondents who appear to struggle more, connect less, and experience greater levels of difficulty. Understanding and being able to identify this cohort is a key recommendation arising from this study.

Chapter 1. Contextualising the 'How is our Neighbourhood?' Study

1.1 Background to Current Study

In 2004, CDI conducted a community survey called 'How Are Our Kids?' (HAOK) to explore the needs of children and families living in Tallaght West (TW). This study identified key concerns for families, relating to living circumstances, education, employment, quality of life for parents and children, and service utilisation. The findings of HAOK were utilised in the development of CDI's 10-year strategy aimed at improving outcomes for children and their families in TW.

In 2009, CDI published the report of its Community Safety Survey (CSS) (CDI, 2009), in which the results from questionnaires completed by residents, and Focus Groups with children and young people, are discussed. Key themes in the CSS relate to safety, sense of belonging, local engagement in responding to issues, and opportunities to make a difference. Many of these issues recur across CDI's research, with clear patterns emerging.

Subsequently in 2012, CDI conducted another study, 'How Are Our Families?' (HAOF), which examined extensive child and family demographic information and well-being indicators in order to provide a holistic picture of children's, young people's and families lives. The HAOF study included a youth survey to explore the general health and psychosocial wellbeing of young people living in Tallaght West.

Briefly, research findings from HAOF reported on participants' sense of community, and two-thirds of adult respondents reported feeling a sense of community with other people living in the area. Over half of young people reported enjoying living in TW and not wanting to move, which may have been related to a variety of peer, familial and community factors.

A number of challenges for the community were highlighted, including crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues. In relation to participants' physical health, three quarters of adults believed that their own health was 'fairly good' or 'very good'. Among young people, two-thirds believed that their health was 'very good' or 'excellent'. Notable proportions of the adult sample reported difficulties with depression or anxiety. Among young people, participants were slightly more satisfied with life and had noticeably more positive self-perceptions compared to their peers nationally, (CDI, 2012).

HAOF highlighted the financial strains that many families are exposed to, with one-third reporting that they have financial worries 'almost all of the time' over the last six months. A significant minority of adults reported experiencing difficulties with drugs or alcohol; parents reported that they or their children felt unsafe, and one out of three young people reported that they had been bullied at least once or more.

Recognising the challenges that these communities encounter, HAOF also considered the role of supports and services. Family and friends emerged as a significant source of support for young people in terms of listening, understanding and being available to them. Almost two-thirds of adult participants stated that they could talk to someone when upset. The most frequently reported services accessed by respondents were the GP/doctor, school staff and the St Vincent de Paul.

'How is our Neighbourhood?' (HioN) builds on these previous studies, providing additional perspectives whilst

furthering the insights and data gained. It is particularly valuable to consider the current views and experiences of people living and working in Tallaght West in light of the recent economic recession. Whereas previously the lives of children have been captured at an individual level and within the family context, this study will capture children's lives in the context of their neighbourhood.

HAOF included youth surveys and household surveys, with an overall 141 families with 313 children taking part as well as 208 young people aged 12-17 years, while HAOK involved 81 household surveys.

This study extended this focus by incorporating surveys completed by 245 residents and 126 young people; Focus Groups with young people aged 15-17, Focus Groups with service providers who work in Tallaght West, and Focus Groups with community leaders and volunteers.

Chapter 2. Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

This study explores the lived experiences of people who reside and work within the physical and social environment of Tallaght West which incorporate Fettercairn, Brookfield, Killinarden and Jobstown, all of which have been designated as socially disadvantaged.

Healey (1998) argues that the neighbourhood as a 'living space', comprising both social and spatial dimensions, provides a useful scale for studying the social relations of 'everyday life-worlds'. Davies and Herbert differentiate between 'neighbourhood' and 'community':

"Community is ... related to the term 'neighbourhood' for which it is sometimes used as a synonym. However, usually neighbourhood is much more restricted in spatial dimensions. It relates to the area around a residence within which people engage in neighbouring, which is usually viewed as a set of informal, face-to-face interactions based on residential proximity," (Davies and Herbert, 1993: p1).

According to Corcoran et al., (2009), the social neighbourhood, defined as "the face-to-face community of neighbours" can be understood as "a micro-structure, which emerges among small clusters of neighbouring dwellings and which is likely to arise in a number of different forms even within relatively small areas" (p.41-42). Blokland understands neighbourhood as "a geographically circumscribed, built environment that people use practically and symbolically", (2003:213).

A body of research indicates that neighbourhoods have meaningful effects on residents (Cattell, 2004; Cattell et al., 2008; Day, 2008; Dyb et al, 2004). This current study strives to explore the views and experiences of people who reside and work in Tallaght West neighbourhoods, in particular their sense of attachment to place, their participation in community life and their views of the needs of young people.

2.2 Place and Neighbourhood Attachment

A sense of neighbourliness and the need to connect with people around us are part of a fundamental human need to bond. As Buonfino and Hilder explain, "[I]ndividuals tend to socialise, and despite the changing family structures and work-life balances, people will always be drawn to other people," (2006: 4).

Ties between neighbours may produce continuity and security, on the basis of routine action and interaction, recognition between people during occasional encounters, having a coffee in the local cafe, or shopping in the local supermarket. This can help develop social networks, recognition and identification, and social capital, and may often occur in local spots, if not in the wider neighbourhood (Tjora and Scambler, 2013).

While deprived neighbourhoods may lack some kinds of social capital (notably 'bridging' capital), such as sharing of information, ideas and innovation, they are often seen as having the forms of social capital ('bonding' capital), believed to facilitate the development of attachment (Forrest and Kearns, 1999).

The physical arena of a neighbourhood may afford a location for 'gatherings' and 'unfocused interaction' (Goffman, 1963) between neighbours: people who live close to each other may just happen to spend time in each other's proximity, glance at each other and offer occasional greetings. Corcoran et al., (2009) observe that

"[T]he more facilities there are in a neighbourhood, the greater the chance people will become affiliated with others in the process generating a sense of communality."

Attachment to place facilitates involvement in local affairs and contributes to civic activity (Guardia and Pol, 2002; Pol, 2002; Uzzell, Pol, and Badenas, 2002). It encourages and motivates persons to be more involved in civic actions through local social capital, i.e. neighbourhood ties (Lewicka, 2003; Payton, 2003). As such, place attachment serves both the individual and the larger community.

As Low and Altman explain:

"...place attachment may contribute to the formation, maintenance, and preservation of the identity of a person, group, or culture. And, it may also be that place attachment plays a role in fostering individual, group, and cultural self-esteem, self-worth, and self-pride" (1992:10).

Indeed, this study is concerned not only with exploring neighbourhood ties and attachment, but also with examining what participants enjoy or dislike about living in their neighbourhood, and whether or not they feel a sense of pride in their physical and social environments.

Those living in disadvantaged areas may have a greater reliance on the neighbourhood as a setting for social activity (Livingston et al, 2010). However, the reduced quality of such neighbourhoods may make attachment in such places less likely. Other factors, such as high turnover of residents and social mix, may also act to reduce an individual's attachment to these neighbourhoods.

Sampson (1988) found that community attachment was negatively affected by urbanisation, fear of crime, and the local victimisation rate for serious crime, all factors associated with deprivation. Therefore, poor neighbourhood quality may lower attachment levels in deprived neighbourhoods, and yet restrictions on mobility and communication may make place attachment more important for the accomplishment of routine daily activities and for quality of life.

2.3 Community Participation and Empowerment

Empowerment involving communities may be defined for the sake of this study, as the process by which socially excluded or marginalised groups are given a greater voice in matters that affect their lives. In public health literature empowerment is most commonly defined as the instrument through which individuals, groups, organisations, and communities gain mastery over their lives (Rappaport, 1984). Research on community participation and empowerment stresses how integrated community participation and empowerment benefits the development of communities. According to Heritage and Dooris (2009), community participation is an essential part of the process of good local governance. To be meaningful, these processes must be seen as fundamental values and so must be developed as an integral part of long-term strategic development.

'Formal' participation refers to people taking part in the decision-making processes that influence their neighbourhood positively (Verba and Nie, 1972). Formal participation can encompass activities such as being a member of the neighbourhood council, or having a say in decision making. The extent to which communities can influence these processes depends on the degree of openness of local services and the way in which decisions are taken.

'Informal' participation can involve a resident offering to tidy a neighbour's garden, and these activities may

strengthen residents' abilities to participate in formal processes (see, for example, Verba and Nie, 1972). This study is concerned with participants' views of neighbourhood participation, and whether they actively engage in community life in a formal or informal capacity.

Feeling part of a neighbourhood differs from being actively involved in the neighbourhood. While residents can feel attached to their neighbourhood, they may not be interested in participating in neighbourhood-related activities. This study seeks to elicit an understanding of the factors that promote or hinder participation.

Zakus and Lysack (1998) argue that, although there is still little rigorous evidence of the effectiveness of community participation in relation to health outcomes, community participation is nonetheless widely accepted to have many important benefits for individuals, communities, organisations and society as a whole (Smithies and Webster, 1998), a theme that is explored in this study. Key benefits can include increasing democracy, mobilising resources and energy, developing more holistic and integrated approaches, achieving better decisions and more effective services, actively empowering residents, and ensuring the ownership and sustainability of programmes.

2.4 Young People in Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods with children tend to be more neighbourly than others (Buonfino and Hilder 2006), leading to stronger forms of neighbourhood micro-communities. Corcoran et al, (2009) observe that children themselves, acting as agents in their own right, typically provide an important focus of social interaction locally. This is both because of their own interactions with other children living in close proximity and because they actively prompt their parents into contact with other children's parents.

Growing up in a deprived neighbourhood has been shown to have a negative influence on several social outcomes such as education, behavioural problems, aspirations and job opportunities, (Andersson, 2004; Kauppinen, 2007; Sykes and Musterd, 2011; Kintrea, St Clair and Houston; 2011; White and Green, 2011; Nieuwenhuis et al, 2013). Several explanations for these neighbourhood effects have been put forward: young people in deprived neighbourhoods do worse than their peers in 'better' neighbourhoods because of factors such as high levels of crime, negative role models, peer influences, the presence of negative social norms and values, and the lack of institutional resources (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Sampson, 2008).

However, most of these studies focus on presumed deficits and pathologies, and overlook the strengths that might also be present in these neighbourhoods (Bauder, 2002; Lupton and Tunstall, 2008; Sykes, 2011). To shed light on these issues, HION explores the views of young people as well as adults in terms of neighbourhood problems, their perceptions and experiences of resources and their sense of place attachment.

2.5 Young People and Quality of Life

A myriad of studies have identified lack of neighbourhood safety as a potential barrier to children's physical activity (Carver, Timperio and Crawford, 2008). In 2012 Comiskey et al, published an evaluation of a Healthy Schools Programme which indicated that children aged 4 to 12 in Ireland attending urban disadvantaged schools do not, in general, differ significantly in terms of their physical and psychological well-being from international norms. However, the authors noted some preliminary evidence that young male disadvantaged children may be performing less well than their female school mates in terms of psychological health. Further analysis revealed that the school environment, social support and peer relations followed by age were significant predictors of increased childhood depression scores. This study seeks to explore in detail young people's perceptions and

experiences of their school environment, perceived expectations in relation to school outcomes, relationships with peers and family as well as perceptions of health and quality of life.

Numerous Irish studies on young people's quality of life have been carried out over the last number of years and the emerging themes will be considered in HioN.¹ The following findings have emerged from these studies:

- Boys and young people from more socially advantaged backgrounds were more likely to exercise. Boys aged 13 years were likely to exercise more frequently than 13 year old girls; 47% of boys exercised on 9 or more days out of fourteen, (ESRI, 2012);
- 74% of 13-year-olds were non-overweight, 20% were overweight, and 6% were obese (ESRI, 2012);
- A total of 48% of participants aged 12 -19 years reported that they coped well with problems, 46% that they sometimes coped well, and 5% that they did not cope well (Doody and Fitzgerald, 2012);
- Approximately 12% of adolescents reported having at least one parent who has had a mental health problem. Females (14%) were more likely to report this than males (10%) (Doody and Fitzgerald, 2012);
- Three-quarters reported that they would be likely to use their friends as a source of support and information on well-being. Parents came next (69%), followed by the internet (49%) and relatives (47%) (Doody and Fitzgerald, 2012);
- Almost a quarter (23%) of 9-16 year olds surveyed experienced some form of bullying, online or offline (O'Neill and Dinh, 2013);
- For children who reported that they had been bullied on the internet, just 29% of parents were aware of this. 68% of parents did not know that their child had been bullied online (O'Neill & Dinh, 2013).

2.6 Services and Facilities

Taking account of population changes, both locally and nationally, should be central to service planning processes.

The 2011 Census indicated that the population of pre-school children aged 0-4 has increased by 17.9 per cent in the previous five years, a finding that highlights the need for increasing research for this age group, (CSO, 2011). Whilst this age cohort has subsequently reduced by 7% since 2011 (CSO, 2016) the earlier growth remains significant as these children are now aged 6-11 years, and will have attendant needs.

This study addresses participants' views and perception of facilities and services available for residents and young people in Tallaght West neighbourhoods, how they use these facilities and the factors that prevent them from doing so.

¹ The National Longitudinal Study (Growing Up in Ireland, GUI), which commenced in 2009; My World Survey: National Study of Youth Mental Health in Ireland (2012); Cyber Bullying Among 16-19 Year Olds in Ireland (2013), and more recently What Young People Say About Physical Activity (2015).

Chapter 3. Methodological and Analytical Approaches

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study 'How is Our Neighbourhood?' (HION), is to examine the views, perceptions and experiences of people living and working in Tallaght West (TW). Specifically, it seeks to understand views of the neighbourhood, people's sense of connection to the areas they live in, and their views on key issues for children living in the area.

In achieving the research aims, data were collected from the following research cohorts in TW, specifically Brookfield, Fettercairn, Jobstown and Killinarden:

- Local residents over the age of 18 living in TW;
- Young people age 15-17 who go to school and/or live in TW;
- Service providers who work in TW;
- Local leaders and activists, defined as those who have identified a need in the community and are working to address it on a voluntary basis.

3.2 Methodology for the Local Residents

3.2.1 Design and Instruments

A cross-sectional research design is taken, reflecting the sampling approach utilised in 'How Are Our Families?' (HAOF) by using geographic cluster sampling of select units within neighbourhoods of TW. An adult in each residence in the cluster was requested to complete a survey that was designed based on the aims of this study. However, unlike HAOF, this study included residences with no children as these are members of the wider neighbourhood in which children and their families live, and so are relevant to the wider focus of this research.

The survey included questions from the survey used in 'How Are Our Families?', and also in the original survey 'How Are Our Kids?' (HAOK). These pertained to questions about what residents like about living in Tallaght West, and how they would rate their neighbourhood as a place to bring up a family, and about informal support networks.

Areas for exploration were also drawn from CDI's Community Safety Survey (2008), which focused on safety issues in the neighbourhood, sense of connectedness to neighbours and family, perceptions of anti-social behaviour and environmental issues, and challenges as well as positive experiences of living in TW.

Also incorporated was a set of questions on coping and resilience, measured by the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) (Smith, et al, 2008), a 6-item scale that assesses the ability to 'bounce back' or recover from stress. The BRS is simple, easy to understand and apply, and was easily incorporated into the residents' survey. A set of questions on participants' coping abilities were also drawn from HAOF, and assessed how participants coped with challenging life circumstances over the past year.

Questions pertaining to health were adopted from EuroQol 5 Dimensions (EQ-5D) (EuroQol Group, 1990), a standardised tool designed to provide a simple, descriptive measure of health. It comprises five descriptive dimensions: mobility, self-care, usual activities, pain/discomfort and anxiety/depression.

The following items were included following consultation with CDI's Research Advisory Committee:

- What people and/or places do you think of when you think about the word 'neighbourhood'?
- In your own words, how would you describe your own neighbourhood?
- Who do you turn to for help or support?
- Do people come to you for help or support?

A set of questions also pertained to residents' volunteering practices in the neighbourhood:

- Have you been involved in any groups or organisations over the last 12 months?
- In what kinds of activities do you engage on behalf of these organisations?
- Do you feel you have the opportunity to contribute to the neighbourhood in the way you would like?

Also included were a set of questions on residents' use of facilities; their knowledge of facilities available for young people and senior citizens, and their use of social media.

The full questionnaire is available in **Appendix 6**.

3.2.2 Sample

A quota sampling method was used in HAOK and HAOF to identify an approximate proportionally representative sample of households. In this study the same sampling method ensured that the sample is reasonably representative of households in the neighbourhood. A sample size of 250 households enabled a meaningful analysis of the data and the generalisation of findings to the neighbourhood. Local residents were sampled from four areas in TW, which included Jobstown (n=73), Brookfield (n=48), Killinarden (n=59), and Fettercairn (n=65), totalling 245 households.

Areas were selected at random from the four communities in Tallaght West, with a structured sampling framework used to guide fieldworkers in the selection of houses within specified areas. As in previous surveys the data was collected by trained fieldworkers drawn from local resident Street names were identified and assigned to fieldworkers who were familiar with those areas.

Further detail on the research approach, including ethical approval, is included in **Appendix I**.

3.3 Methodology for Young People

3.3.1 Design and Instruments

Both CDI's Community Safety Survey (CSS) and HAOF extended the work of HAOK by including the views of children and young people in Tallaght West. HION builds on this practice through the use of Focus Groups and anonymous self-completion surveys.

3.3.2 Surveys

The surveys for young people contained similar questions to those included in the resident surveys as well as the CSS and HAOF. These focused on young people's sense of connectedness and belonging to their neighbourhood and wider community; perceptions of safety in relation to their neighbourhood; problems with crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues; positive experiences of growing up in the neighbourhoods of Tallaght

West, and what they like about and/or would like to change about their neighbourhoods. Questions relating to ability to cope with challenging life circumstances also mirrored those in the resident surveys.

A section on participation in and views of extracurricular activities was also included along with questions on the nature of their participation in neighbourhood activities, and facilities for young people. Another set of other questions was concerned with understanding young people's interaction with friends:

- How often do you get together with your friends outside of school?
- How old are the friends that you usually hang around with?
- Where do you go when you socialise with friends?

Distinction was made between formal and informal interaction: how much of this interaction is formal, such as in a sports club? How much of this interaction is hanging out informally with friends?

Family relationship and informal support networks were also explored, such as who do you turn to when you need advice? Is there someone in your neighbourhood that you look up to?

Young people's interaction on social media was questioned, including how much time they spend on social media daily, the types of apps and social media tools they use, and their habits around technology and social media.

Views of education and training were also explored including likes and dislikes about school or training; expectations regarding education and training and perceived expectations of parents/guardians. Finally, the survey included questions on respondents' abilities to cope with challenging life circumstances, identical to those in the residents' survey. These were drawn from the Quality of Life Tool 'KIDSCREEN-52', which is recommended by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs as the framework for assessing children's and young people's wellbeing. The full questionnaire is available in **Appendix 7**.

3.3.3 Focus Groups

A total of three Focus Groups examined young people's perceptions of their neighbourhood and their 'lived' experiences relating to their sense of community, perceived neighbourhood problems, perceptions of how safety can be better fostered, their feelings about living in TW, and their views of and need for services.

3.4 Methodology for Service Providers and Community Volunteers

3.4.1 Service Providers

Recognising that the people who work in communities in TW form a significant part of children's neighbourhoods, HION explored the views of these individuals who work in Tallaght West through Focus Groups. A range of service providers in the area were invited to take part, including educational, health and social.

A total of three Focus Groups with service providers addressed key issues faced by frontline staff in their work, including:

- How young people, families and residents engage with their services;
- Perceptions of the key issues encountered by young people, families and other residents;
- Perceptions of their role in promoting a safe neighbourhood;

- Views of young peoples' experiences and challenges growing up in TW, and services' perceived respective roles in meeting young people's challenges;
- Understandings of what is working well in TW;
- Views of recent changes in the neighbourhood.

3.4.2 Community Leaders

Community champions have played a key role in TW (Canavan et al., 2014), and the final element of this study included a cross case analysis of community leaders central to the daily lives of people in the area. These individuals were invited to a Focus Group to explore their own history within the community of TW; their perceptions of neighbourhood issues and the needs of children and families; how they perceive needs have changed over time, and the impact of a challenging economic environment.

3.5 Conclusions

Insights from the above four social groups will be key to identifying overarching and significant issues that can inform planning and development of children's services in the future.

Focus Groups have offered a method of triangulation along with survey interviews. The inclusion of Focus Groups and youth surveys provides a voice for young people and a source of validation by comparing the views of adults, service providers, community leaders and young people on the key issues that affect their lives and neighbourhoods.

Finally, some sections of the surveys had large numbers of missing responses. Where relevant, these are noted in the commentary, but for the purposes of concise data, all missing values have been omitted from the tables and figures below.

Chapter 4. Discussion

The objective of '*How is our Neighbourhood?*' is to update and develop our understanding of the neighbourhoods in Tallaght West. The preceding chapter outlines the rich data that emerged during the research process. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the key findings from this and the implications for Tallaght West and beyond.

Overall 416 people participated in this study, comprising local residents (n=245), young people (n=138), service providers (n=22) and community volunteers (n=11). In the surveys, residents were sampled from all four areas within Tallaght West, (i.e. Jobstown, Fettercairn, Brookfield and Killinarden), while the young people who took part in surveys live in and/or attend school in these areas.

4.1 Strength of Community and Connections

A feeling of belonging is important to local residents and many perceive a sense of connectedness to their neighbourhoods, with local residents broadly agreeing that their neighbours look out for one another. Knowing neighbours, such as their names and taking the time to talk to neighbours at least every once in a while is important for residents. This leads residents to agree that they want the same things for their neighbourhood and share the same care for their properties. Respondents agreed that good neighbours, family and friends are all vital in creating a sense of belonging and attachment.

This sentiment of neighbourhood connection is shared by young people who feel their neighbours are supportive and look out for one another. They both perceive and experience a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood and allude to a strong community spirit.

A shared community spirit is also observed by service providers and local volunteers, with both groups in agreement that Tallaght West is an established community, with a strong and vibrant community spirit. Goodwill, ambition, positive energy and shared pride for the local area have prevailed in spite of the economic challenges of recent years. This is noted as a significantly beneficial factor that serves, in part, to balance the social disadvantage and challenges within this community.

However, service providers highlight that young men in particular, may lack a sense of belonging and attachment, instead experiencing a disconnect from the area. It is of note that over one-third of the young people surveyed do not believe their neighbourhood is a good place to live.

Service providers share a highly positive view of their roles within communities, demonstrating an in-depth understanding of their responsibility for supporting vulnerable families and promoting personal responsibility. Their role is characterised by enthusiasm, passion and satisfaction, whilst motivation and commitment to serve Tallaght West communities remains strong. Many service providers have worked in these neighbourhoods for numerous years, and their role satisfaction is enhanced by positive interagency cooperation.

Similarly, local volunteers reflect a sense of passion and enthusiasm for their role in giving to their communities. Motivated by a sense of altruism and concern to meet local needs, such as addressing loneliness and isolation, and a desire to instil a sense of belonging and empowerment, volunteers play an active role in attempting to bring about social change in the community.

In a similar vein, residents highlight an array of positive and supportive elements when asked to describe what they enjoy about their neighbourhood, with people close to them, such as neighbours, family, and friends emerging as key to their enjoyment of their neighbourhoods. Not surprisingly, friendships are highlighted as a source of immense support and value for the young people.

4.2 Stigma

There was a high degree of consensus across the Focus Groups that anti-social activity in Tallaght West communities had received significant negative media coverage and that, as a result, these communities are stigmatised and perceived as distinct and separate from the rest of Tallaght and Dublin. Volunteers and young people strongly resisted these stereotypes, perceiving them as unfair and inaccurate generalisations that have a deeply negative impact on young people, including their sense of pride in their area; self-confidence; motivation, and ambition to do well, and willingness to continue living in the area. Respondents reported that even revealing one's address evokes negative responses from those outside of Tallaght West. This stereotype frequently characterises their interactions with outsiders, whose reactions are regarded as irrational and unjust.

4.3 School and Education

The service providers point to increased educational attainment as a major achievement among young people in Tallaght West. They perceive that literacy levels have improved significantly and that more young people are likely to complete formal education and obtain qualifications.

These views are supported by the survey findings among young people who highlight high educational expectations for themselves, with 93% of young people expecting to complete secondary school, and 82% state they would like to enrol in further education or training. A similar proportion believe that their parents and teachers also share these expectations of them. Recognising the challenges that these young people encounter, these findings indicate a strong measure of resilience and are highly encouraging.

4.4 Informal Support

The residents in this study describe having a strong and reliable network of supportive family and friends, and this connectivity and interaction forms a crucial part of their support network within their neighbourhood. Awareness that they can access various types of informal support if needed, such as talking to a friend or family member when feeling upset, being able to borrow money, or get a lift to an important appointment is valued by residents. It may well be that this informal support structure combined with neighbourhood attachment and belonging contribute to residents' strong sense of resilience and ability to bounce back from challenges.

The young people also describe a strong network of close friends, which they identify as a source of emotional support and as the most favourable aspect of school and training. They describe a network of friends who are accepting, understanding and caring. A total of 75% reported having a least one friend of a different ethnic background. It is noteworthy that 56% of young people report that their friends are a year or two older than themselves and at least one-quarter of young people surveyed spend time with friends who are more than two years older. It may be that friends of an older age play an important part as role models in their lives and young people may well take advice from older peers. A considerable amount of time spent interacting with friends on a face-to-face basis takes place in informal environments outside of school hours, including at their own or a friend's home; shopping centre; in parks or estates.

Social media plays a very important part in young people's lives, with 64% of the young people spending between two and five hours per day interacting with their friends on social media. While the young people recognise that social media is a key part of how they communicate, they also point to the challenge posed by cyber bullying. Interestingly, local residents report that contact with neighbours through social media tends to be relatively limited, with most family and friends contact being at home.

4.5 Health and Well-Being

In relation to physical health, less than 25% of residents report difficulties in a range of categories such as pain and mobility with just 4% reporting problems with self-care. Young people generally describe being in a good mood, feeling cheerful and having had fun during the last week. A similar proportion report having been physically active, feeling full of energy and feeling satisfied with life.

It is noteworthy that 19% of young people feel 'not at all' or only 'slightly' fit. Furthermore, feeling under pressure and stressed appear to be problematic for almost half of young people, while over one-quarter feel sad and fed-up. Despite this, 67% of young people feel they are coping well or do not have any problems at the moment.

This sense of resilience is mirrored among local residents, with 84% agreeing that are coping well with life challenges or not currently having any such challenges, despite a third reporting anxiety or depression. Indeed, service providers highlight resilience as a significant strength of community life in Tallaght West.

4.6 Local Facilities

While residents have only limited awareness of neighbourhood facilities available for young people and the elderly, they are keenly aware of facilities that they themselves utilise, such as the supermarket, post office and sports facilities.

Both the service providers and volunteers shared mixed views on the availability and quality of neighbourhood facilities. Both groups recognise a well-developed public transport system, good shopping centre, swimming pool and extra-curricular activities for young people. However, some respondents observe that access to facilities in local areas is a challenge for young people who may, for reasons such as safety or travel costs, be unable or unwilling to travel to other areas to access them. This is also raised as a concern and frustration among the young people in this study, who report having to travel outside of their areas in order to access facilities. The important role of youth centres in supporting young people is acknowledged by the young people who, like the adults in the study, express mixed views of neighbourhood facilities.

Less than one third of young people take part in organised activities outside of school, such as sports teams, afterschool clubs, and dance and drama, with a lack of time being reported as a key reason for not participating in further activities.

4.7 Anti-Social and Environmental Challenges

Unpleasant environmental features such as littering is noted as a challenge residents and young people alike, as is deliberate damage to property and vandalism, drug-taking and alcohol consumption in public spaces. Young people identify easy access to drugs and alcohol as posing significant challenges. This view is supported by service providers who express deep concern about an "open and accessible" drug culture that deliberately targets young people and children.

To a lesser but nonetheless significant extent, homes and gardens in poor condition are also perceived as neighbourhood problems. Many residents share the belief that the local County Council does not do enough to look after neighbourhood areas.

Residents suggest that there has been an increase in anti-social behaviours and crime in recent years, whilst service providers' similarly note an increase in aggression and violence, which is perceived as coinciding with the downturn in the economy and an increase in unemployment. Anti-social behaviour is identified by residents as the most unpleasant aspect of their neighbourhood, as are problems relating to litter and crime. In relation to neighbourhood safety, crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour emerge as the societal problems that residents would most like to change.

Residents are most likely to talk to neighbours, family and friends about problems in their area, and these attachments appear to play an important social and emotional role in coping with neighbourhood challenges. The respondents, overall, were unable to identify community leaders who play an important and active role. However, it is interesting that the young people believe that community and neighbours should be involved in making the neighbourhood a better place.

4.8 Neighbourhood Safety

With a high concentration of incivilities, comes concern and fear for personal safety among residents, many of whom see feeling "*unsafe*" as synonymous with their neighbourhood. It is noteworthy that young people were significantly less likely to directly associate feeling unsafe with their neighbourhood, but nonetheless safety concerns were highlighted in all the Focus Groups, particularly in relation to gang intimidation. For example, some young people talked about experiencing verbal abuse as they walked past gang members, while another described witnessing people openly buying drugs as he walked home from school.

Among residents, safety is often defined in terms of an absence of fear, such as "*not being harassed*" or "*being able to walk along in an area*". Many residents also feel that children in their neighbourhood experience safety challenges, while one young person explained that his young sister cannot play in their garden for fear of coming into contact with used needles.

Service providers referred to the social vulnerability of specific groups, such as the elderly, parents with undiagnosed learning difficulties and single mothers, who they perceive are '*soft*' targets for gangs. Fear of and intimidation by gangs contributes to loneliness and isolation, as residents become fearful of leaving their homes. Both service providers and local volunteers are highly critical and concerned about the lack of Garda resources in tackling local crime and anti-social behaviour. Indeed, service providers report that some estates have become "*no-go areas*" as families and residents are terrorised and specific neighbourhoods are controlled by gangs, rendering whole communities powerless.

Such social vulnerability and problems with crime and safety create further challenges for service providers, not least concern for their own safety as they carry out their roles and responsibilities.

4.9 Community Resources

Service providers articulated a lack of resources in carrying out their work and perceive this as having a detrimental impact on local communities, families and children. Many believe there has been little or no improvement in resourcing of services since the economic recession ended. The challenge posed by a lack of resources means that responses often do not match need within communities. While the service providers cooperate and work

together in an effort to coordinate resources, they often feel they are unable to address the needs of children and families, and that amidst chronic waiting lists and reduced service provision, they are unable to plan and meet the needs of the most vulnerable within communities.

Homelessness and the housing crisis are identified by service providers as the most urgent issues facing families. While service providers are aware of the importance of early intervention in childhood they believe that limited resources mean they are instead dealing with individuals and families only once they have reached a point of crisis. The consistent lack of resources coupled with strong demand and workload has resulted in feelings of frustration and anxiety for many services.

4.10 Community Disconnect

Both service providers and volunteers express acute frustration and dissatisfaction with what they perceive as a hierarchical, top-down management model. They perceived a disconnect between management and decision-making, and those grass roots service providers and communities. Service providers named this as problematic because it encourages a focus on productivity and outcomes and statistics, instead of addressing individual and community needs. The absence of direct engagement between management and local communities has disenfranchised and disempowered the latter. This perception is also shared by local volunteers and leaders who emphasise the need for a model of community development that actively promotes engagement and involvement by people living in Tallaght West and emphasises the voice of the community.

Service providers report that the current top-down model is a hindrance to efficient service delivery as it overlooks and pays little attention to the needs of families and children, and leads to poor long-term outcomes for individuals and communities. Nonetheless, the local volunteers highlighted several local voluntary agencies that actively empower and support local communities, such as Foroige, An Cosan and Obair.

4.11 Overcoming Barriers to Engagement

The residents and young people in this study display very limited engagement and participation in community and volunteering activities. Furthermore, both groups **largely report feeling that they have little or no influence over what their neighbourhood is like.** Service providers describe local communities as being withdrawn and disengaged, while local volunteers allude to a sense of disempowerment, lack of confidence and no interest on the part of young people in developing their communities.

Service providers feel immensely challenged by a perceived lack of engagement on the part of individuals and families, and suggest that. Despite offering hugely valuable services, engagement by local communities can be limited. Some service providers observed that stigmatisation of certain community-based services may shape residents' uptake of services, and referred to Jigsaw as a good example of a community-based service that has reduced stigma around mental illness and engages well with residents.

Service providers called for greater reflection and awareness in order to better understand the needs of individuals and families, and suggest that engagement could be improved by offering community services in more innovative and creative ways that take account of the needs of the end-user. **Service providers highlight the importance of early intervention in creating connection, empathy and awareness in young people.**

Interestingly, service providers also emphasise the need for greater personal responsibility, and note that parental

engagement needs to come from parents and individuals themselves. Notwithstanding this, service providers point to a generation of motivated parents who are ambitious for their children but whose engagement is hampered by external challenges related to housing, finance and local provision.

Chapter 5. Limitations of the Research

This study built on HAOK and HAOF, both of which gathered the views of families and young people using survey methods. HION gathered the views and perceptions of residents, young people, service providers and volunteers who live and/or work in Tallaght West. In addition to surveys, HION included Focus Groups to capture the views of young people, service providers and volunteers. Surveys carried out with residents were not confined to those households with children, as in the previous two studies, and included single people and elderly. The inclusion of a wide range of subgroups and methods is a considerable strength of the research as it provides a voice to various groups. It also offers a means of validation by comparing the views and perceptions of residents, young people, service providers and volunteers on key issues and challenges that affect daily life in Tallaght West.

While the sample reflects a relatively small number of people living and working in Tallaght West, the combination of subgroups and the sampling process helps ensure that the study captures a largely representative view of Tallaght West. Local residents were trained in field work skills to support people living in the area to complete the surveys. While developing skills instilled a sense of confidence in the trained residents, it also meant that the fieldworkers were not viewed as outsiders by the respondents. However, it is possible that respondents may have felt uneasy revealing personal details to other neighbourhood members. In addition, in the Focus Groups with young people which were facilitated by the researcher, participants' responses may have been influenced by the presence of their peers. It should also be recognised that the young people who participated in the Focus Group discussion are likely to be those who are most motivated to contribute, and most engaged in local services. By definition therefore, their views may not be representative of other young people in the neighbourhoods of TW.

In developing the survey questions, the researcher was aware that some residents may have low literacy levels or encounter a language barrier. It was important that the survey was accessible for residents, and so by conducting the survey with residents on a one-to-one basis, field workers could support respondents in completing the survey.

In carrying out surveys with residents, a process of stratified sampling helped ensure that the views of a representative sample were gathered. In this case stratified sampling involved randomly selecting residents from the four areas comprising Tallaght West. Service providers and volunteers participated from a broad variety of community roles and activities in Tallaght West.

The fieldworkers observed that respondents engaged well in the resident surveys. However, it was noted that for young people the length of the survey was, at times, a challenge as there were higher rates of non-responses in the later parts of the survey, which indicates possible tedium or tiredness.

Nonetheless and despite these issues, the researchers are confident that this study has addressed its objectives and have offered significant insight into the experiences and views of people living and working in Tallaght West.

Chapter 6. Implications, Recommendations and Conclusion

'How Is Our Neighbourhood?' documents the lives of people living and working in Tallaght West and provides an in-depth description of their views and experiences of their neighbourhoods. Overall, the research findings from this study indicate that there is a strong sense of neighbourhood support, belonging and community spirit. Young people and local residents appear to be coping well, enjoy a good informal support network and demonstrate strong resilience.

Young people have high expectations in terms of educational achievement. For example, in excess of 90% expect to finish secondary school and over 80% expect to undertake further education and training. These high expectations are shared by their teachers and parents alike. Progress in terms of educational attainment is also recognised by service providers and community volunteers. Close to half of the young people report participating in formal organised activities outside of school, and many report feeling cheerful, being in a good mood and having fun during the week. Almost half of respondents report being happy to continue living in their neighbourhood, and this may be related to positive peer, familial and neighbourhood factors, which were very clearly indicated.

However, the research also highlights a number of concerns and makes some recommendations regarding possible responses:

- Safety is recognised as a crucial concern, reflected in particular by residents and service providers who report that Tallaght West has become notably less safe in recent years. A need is identified for increased Garda resources in the area and more action to tackle anti-social behaviour and local environmental issues such as littering;
- According to service providers, homelessness and the housing crisis are also significant problems that need to be addressed urgently. They also report being under-resourced to meet the needs of vulnerable families and children, and suggest an approach which places a greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention;
- The research findings draw attention to the challenges that young people encounter in relation to the accessibility of drugs and alcohol. A notable percentage of young people feel under pressure and under stress. They experience a "spoiled identity" reporting that Tallaght West has a negative stigma, which can impact on motivation and their sense of pride. Earlier intervention is highlighted by service providers and local volunteers as crucial to instilling a greater sense of personal responsibility and confidence in young people;
- There is a need to encourage and promote increased engagement in community services among local residents, through greater awareness and understanding of the specific needs of parents and families, and increased flexibility in meeting their needs whilst encouraging personal responsibility;
- The research highlights a need to develop a model of community development whereby community members are actively engaged in planning and development, and empowered to take collective action to build stronger and more resilient neighbourhoods. Understanding the factors impacting on the limited engagement to date, and addressing these, needs to be central to any strategy to improve community participation;
- A move away from traditional, 'top down' management styles to ones which more closely engage with, and reflect the experiences of residents and front-line staff, is clearly sought by service providers;
- Throughout the report, it has been apparent that a significant cohort of up to 20% of residents have

poor connections with their neighbourhood, experience multiple stressors and have limited support systems. Better understanding and identifying of this group is critical to ensuring targeted interventions engage with the most vulnerable families.

This report has highlighted the key findings from research carried out in Tallaght West, and will be of importance to people living and working in Tallaght West, and other similar communities. It will inform our understanding of the needs of residents, young people and service providers and hopefully shape the planning and nature of services. While several challenges have been highlighted, it is also clear that families and young people are coping well and demonstrate a good measure of resilience. Supporting families and children requires an in-depth understanding of the challenges they encounter, recognition of the resources and capacities within neighbourhoods, and an understanding of how gaps and discrepancies between challenges and resources can be addressed and developed.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodological Issues and Considerations

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was sought for the research with residents and subsequently with the young people. This study received ethical approval to carry out research with local residents from the Human Research Ethics Committee: Humanities Subcommittee (University College Dublin) in February 2016. The following issues present a potential risk to participants in this study:

1. It was possible that some residents might find parts of the survey sensitive, for example, questions relating to feelings of safety in the neighbourhood or the quality of family relationships and friendships;
2. It is possible that research participants might provide information to the interviewer concerning themselves or someone else which would be a cause of concern. In this case the researcher has a duty of care to respond to any such information in line with the Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2009);
3. There was a possibility that some research participants might have low literacy levels and /or language difficulties. In such cases, the survey would be administered by the fieldworker verbally, or support would be offered to participants whilst trying to avoid any influencing of responses.

Participants were given an information sheet which detailed why the study was being carried out and how the research data would be used. Hard copies of the survey would be stored in a locked filing cabinet in an office in CDI and electronic information was stored on SPSS on a password-protected computer. All participants received a list of details of relevant community services.

Parental consent was requested for all participants prior to participating in the Focus Groups and youth surveys. Potential participants were provided with an information sheet detailing the nature of the study, length of the surveys and Focus Group, possible risks associated with participation and an explanation of how the data would be stored and issues of anonymity.

Method

A pilot study of the questionnaire was conducted with a three resident participants prior to the main study. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the suitability of the instruments and to establish how it would take to complete. The survey took approximately 25 minutes to complete. Surveyors recorded the participants' responses. The 250 surveys were completed over a period of 4 weeks in April 2016.

The youth surveys were piloted with three participants prior to the main study. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the suitability of the instruments and to establish how long it took to complete. The surveys were self-administered, and took approximately 20 minutes to complete. The 150 surveys were completed over a period of two weeks in September. The three Focus Groups were carried out in July over two weeks. Each Focus Group lasted approximately 60 minutes.

This study used a purposive sample of secondary schools and youth organisations. Participants for the Focus Groups were drawn from two local schools and two youth organisations in Tallaght West. A total of 150 surveys were carried out with young people in the presence of either the principal research or a class teacher,

while the three Focus Groups were facilitated by the researcher

Fieldwork

Fieldworkers were recruited on the basis that they lived or worked in Tallaght West. Several fieldworkers had been involved in carrying out surveys as part of the HAOF study and all participated in training for this study. Fieldworkers were paid a gratuity for attending the training and carrying out door-to-door surveys. They were assigned streets with which they were familiar and worked in pairs to implement the fieldwork in Killinarden, Jobstown, Fettercairn and Brookfield. An article was published in the local newspaper (Tallaght Echo) explaining the research initiative and that fieldworkers would be calling to homes in the Tallaght West area.

Appendix 2: Key Findings from Resident Surveys

2.1 Overview of Key Findings

- Residents have broadly positive experiences and views of their neighbourhood, including neighbours, family and friends, and a significant sense of belonging. Strong informal support structures are noteworthy, both in terms of receiving and giving care and support. Connections with family and friends emerge as an important source of support and interaction;
- Strong connections and attachments are highlighted in terms of residents' interactions with neighbours, and shared views and value systems. Local residents tend to feel integrated and a part of the neighbourhood;
- Safety is a significant concern for local residents, with a considerable percentage reporting they do not feel safe in their neighbourhood;
- Residents believe anti-social behaviour is increasing. Vandalism, crime and anti-social behaviour, including drug-taking and alcohol consumption, are perceived as significant neighbourhood problems that need to be addressed. Environmental issues such as rubbish and littering are also widely perceived as problematic;
- There is very limited participation by local residents in terms of volunteering and taking part in community activities, with many residents feeling they do not have the opportunity to contribute and believing they have no influence over what their neighbourhood is like;
- Residents demonstrate significant resilience in the face of personal and life stressors, such as difficulties with neighbours, family members or bereavement;
- Whilst overall, residents articulate positive feelings about and connections with their neighbourhood, a consistent cohort of up to 20% do not share these attitudes, and appear to severely struggle, with limited or no support, and very poor sense of belonging.

2.2 Location and Employment Status

Almost one-third of respondents were unemployed, 19% described themselves as working part-time and 13% in full-time employment:

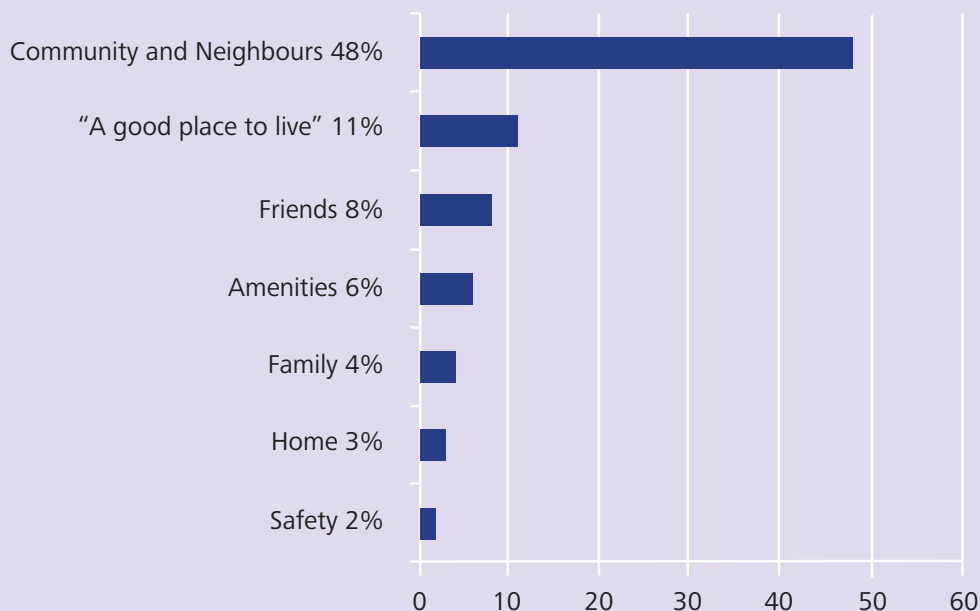
Table 1: Residents Employment Status

Employment Status	%
Unemployed	29%
Working part-time	19%
Working full-time	13%
Looking after family home	13%
Retired	11%
Permanent sickness or disability	4%
Government programme	3%
Full-time education/training course	2%

2.3 Understanding of Neighbourhood

Respondents indicate an established community in TW, with 75% stating that they have lived in their neighbourhood for more than five years. When asked what comes to mind when they think of the word 'neighbourhood', participants offered a variety of positive responses, with half referring to community and neighbours, while one in ten responded with "a good place to live":

Figure 1: Residents' Perceptions of Neighbourhood



Respondents were asked to describe their neighbourhood and offered the following views, with 60% of respondents describing their neighbourhood in a positive light while one-quarter portrayed their neighbourhood as unsafe:

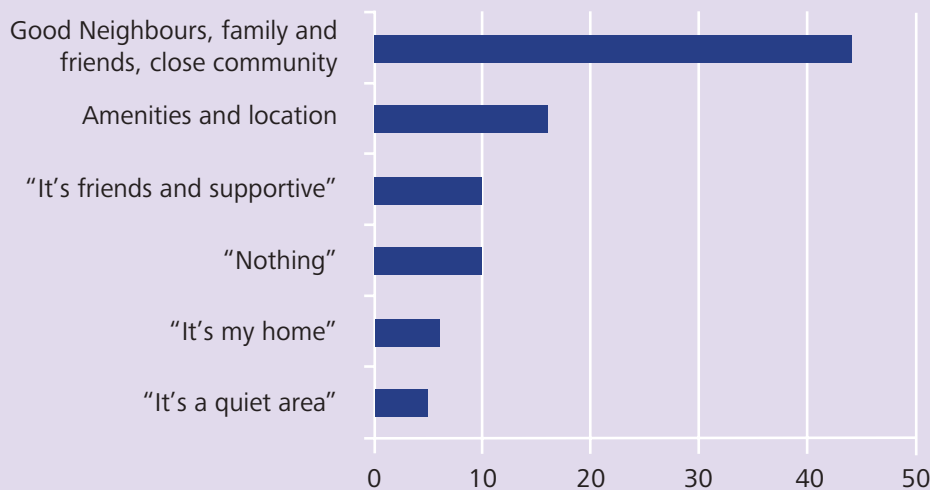
Table 2: Description of Neighbourhood

	%
Friendly	33%
Unsafe	23%
Quiet	16%
Lively	9%
Safe	2%
Good and bad points	4%

Respondents also took the opportunity to include positive statements, such as "I love where I live" and "It has a great community spirit."

When asked what they enjoy most about their neighbourhoods, 81% of respondents offered positive views, with 44% referring to good neighbours, family and friends, and close community. For 16% of respondents, local amenities and location were highlighted as positive features, whilst 10% were unable to identify anything they enjoy:

Figure 2: What you enjoy about your Neighbourhood

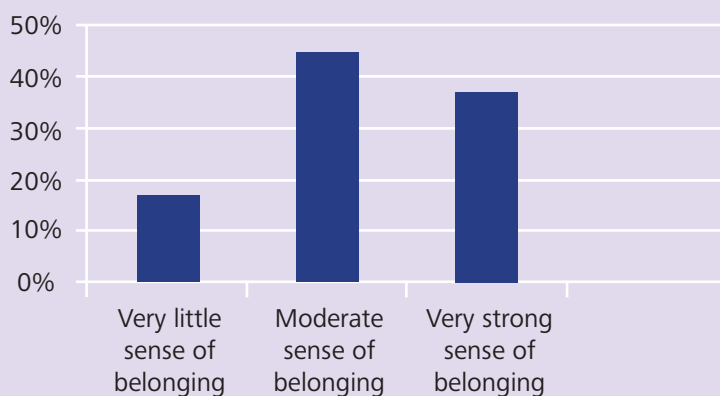


Respondents were asked about their sense of belonging to the neighbourhood, specifically how important it is for them to feel this, and whether or not they feel a sense of belonging with other people living nearby.

Half of respondents (49%) indicated it is very important to feel a sense of belonging, while 38% of respondents feel it is somewhat important. 13% of respondents feel that it is not important to feel a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood.

A considerable proportion of respondents (37%) feel a very strong sense of belonging in their neighbourhood, while almost half (46%) experience a moderate sense of belonging. A total of 17% of respondents feel very little sense of belonging in their neighbourhood.

Figure 3: Sense of Belonging



2.4 Neighbours: Interactions and Perceptions

Respondents were asked about their interactions with and perceptions of their neighbours. Specifically, respondents were asked if they know any of their neighbours personally i.e., their names and if they stop to talk to them at least every once in a while. 59% stated that they know a lot of neighbours, whilst 32% said they know just one or two neighbours.

When asked how often they talk to their neighbours, respondents indicated frequent interaction with 70% of respondents talking to their neighbours either daily or several times a week. A further 22% of respondents talk to their neighbour only between once a week and once a month.

The study also questioned respondents' perceptions of neighbourhood connection by asking if people in their neighbourhood look out for each other and help out, or do their own thing:

- 26% - Do their own thing
- 50% - A little of both
- 22% - Look out for others

Respondents were asked a series of questions in relation to shared values and views, with a significant majority or half of respondents agreeing that they and their neighbours want the same things for the area and also share the same values. A total of 79% of respondents believe their neighbours look after their properties, while 20% feel this is completely or mostly untrue:

Table 3: Shared Values

	Completely or mostly true	Completely or mostly untrue
My neighbours and I want the same things for our area	77%	20%
My neighbours look after their properties	79%	20%
People living in my area do not share the same values	49%	48%

Respondents were asked about the role of social media in their interactions with their neighbours, specifically if they communicate with their neighbours using social media, and how often. Interestingly, half of respondents stated that they never interact with neighbours through social media, with a quarter doing so only occasionally, and 10% doing so several times a week.

2.5 Ethnicity and Belonging

In terms of ethnicity, the vast majority of respondents (94%), describe themselves as White Irish. Respondents were asked if people in their network, such as family and friends, are part or not part of their own ethnic group. A total of 68% of respondents reported that they are part of their own ethnic group, while 4% stated people in their network are not part of their ethnic group. 23% noted that their network is mixed in terms of ethnicity.

Respondents were asked if people from different ethnic groups in their neighbourhoods mix together, and offered the following responses:

- 30% - Yes, they do mix together;
- 32% - Sometimes;
- 15% - No, they do not mix together;
- 18% - "I don't know."

Further detail was elicited when respondents were asked about where different ethnicities have the opportunity to mix together. Half of respondents cited schools and crèches, while one-third and one-quarter of respondents respectively reported that sports clubs and local community projects provide opportunities for various ethnicities to mix.

Respondents were asked about how well integrated they feel in their neighbourhood, with 74% agreeing they are either somewhat or very well integrated in their neighbourhood.

2.6 Children and Neighbourhood

When asked whether or not children live with them, 64% of respondents stated their children reside with them while 31% stated that children visit their home. Only 5% reported that no children live with or visit them.

A majority of 91% of respondents stated that they have a private garden where children can be left safely on their own. When asked if there is an outside space nearby where children can be left safely on their own, 53% noted this to be the case, while 43% reported there being no such space.

Respondents were asked how they would rate their neighbourhood as a place to raise children:

- 52% - a good place to bring up children;
- 23% - average place to bring up children;
- 22% - poor place to bring up children.

2.7 Connections and Interaction

Respondents were questioned about informal support networks, including family and friends. Over half of respondents (58%) stated they have family living nearby; 42% indicated they have no family living in the neighbourhood, whilst a higher proportion stated that they have friends living in their neighbourhood.

Respondents were asked how often they have contact with family. The results are reported below:

Table 4: Frequency of Family Contact

Daily	33%
Several times a week	21%
Once a week	3%
Between once a week and once a month	4%
Several times a year	2%

*Due to the large number of missing cases these results should be interpreted with caution.

Respondents were asked how often they “*get together*” with friends, with daily and weekly interaction emerging as most frequent:

Table 5: Frequency of Family “Get Togethers”

Daily	21%
Several times a week	27%
Once a week	14%
Between once a week and once a month	15%
Several times a year	3%

In terms of where they socialise with friends and family, respondents offered the following responses. Home emerges as the most popular place to socialise, followed by pubs/cafes or restaurants:

Table 6: Settings for Family Contact

At home	76%
Cafes/pubs/restaurants	52%
Community centres	15%
Shopping centres	37%
Parks	24%
Clubs	13%

2.8 Informal Support Networks

Informal support was explored in detail and respondents were asked if they had received various types of informal support or help over the past month, and if they could obtain specific types of support or help if needed. Not surprisingly, family and friends were cited as significant sources of support. For example, 78% of respondents talk to family or friends when they feel upset or depressed; 75% can borrow money from friends or family if needed, while 59% would leave their child(ren) with family or friends over night if they needed to do so:

Table 7: Informal Supports

	Have you accessed this?	Could you access it if needed?	Who provided/could provide it?
Have you been lent a sum of money?	Yes 28% No 65%	Yes 75% No 16%	72% - Family & Friends
Have you got a lift to an important appointment?	Yes 39% No 53%	Yes 78% No 11%	73% - Family & Friends
Have you had help with chores/maintenance?	Yes 29% No 63%	Yes 71% No 20%	67% - Family & Friends
Have you talked to someone because you felt depressed?	Yes 36% No 58%	Yes 78% No 13%	72% - Family & Friends
Have you received care at home while you felt ill?	Yes 18% No 75%	Yes 69% No 19%	67% - Family & Friends
Have you left your children with someone over night?	Yes 26% No 56%	Yes 59% No 17%	60% - Family & Friends

Respondents were asked about who they support or help in their everyday lives and the type of support they offer. A total of 60% of respondents stated that people come to them for help or support; 20% reported this happens sometimes, while 17% reported that no-one comes to them for help or support. Of those who offer informal help or support, family, friends and neighbours emerge as those who receive most informal help or support from respondents:

- 65% - Family come for help/support;
- 56% - Friends come for help/support;
- 38% - Neighbours come for help/support.

Respondents were asked about the type of support and help they provide to others in their neighbourhoods:

Table 8: Types of Support Offered

To borrow something	58%
To talk about a concern	53%
I babysit or help with childcare	53%
I provide transport/lift	26%
I help with household chores/maintenance	24%
I mind a pet	15%

2.9 Facilities and Activities

Respondents were asked about their views on and use of a variety of facilities in the neighbourhood. There was significant awareness and agreement about the availability of local facilities although their utilisation varies considerably:

Table 9: Awareness and Utilisation of Local Facilities

	Is it available?	How often?
Supermarket	Yes 93%	Daily = 16% Few times a week = 14% Weekly = 53% Monthly = 3%
Shop	Yes 95%	Daily = 40% Few times a week = 14% Weekly = 12% Monthly = 1%
Post Office	Yes 96%	Daily = 2% Few times a week = 4% Weekly = 57% Monthly = 13%
Library	Yes 81%	Daily = 0.4% Few times a week = 0.4% Weekly = 6% Monthly = 12%

ATM/Bank/Credit Union	Yes 94%	Daily = 7% Few times a week = 15% Weekly = 62% Monthly = 10%
Church/Place of Worship	Yes 93%	Weekly = 39% Every 2 weeks = 0% Monthly = 16% On occasion = 43%
School	Yes 95%	Daily = 52%
Doctors' surgery/primary care centre	Yes 93%	Daily = 4% Few times a week = 1% Weekly = 7% Every 2 weeks = 3% Monthly = 24% On occasion = 34%
Community Centre	Yes 93%	Daily = 9% Few times a week = 5% Weekly = 39% Monthly = 17% On occasion 22%
Sports facility	Yes 83%	Daily = 3% Few times a week = 2% Weekly = 11% Monthly = 5%
Pub	Yes 95%	Daily = 4% Few times a week = 1% Weekly = 11% Every 2 weeks = 1% Monthly = 13% On occasion = 11%
Restaurant/Cafe	Yes 81%	Daily = 1% Few times a week = 1% Weekly = 16% Monthly = 16%
Public transport	Yes 96%	Daily = 28% Few times a week = 6% Weekly = 23% Monthly = 8%
Adult & Further Education Classes	Yes 77%	Daily = 2% Few times a week = 2% Weekly = 7% On occasion = 6%

Respondents were specifically questioned about their awareness of facilities and activities for young people in the neighbourhood. 50% of respondents reported they were aware of such facilities and activities, while 35% were not. Respondents demonstrated awareness of the following activities and amenities for young people:

Table 10: Activities for Young People

Activities	%
Youth clubs	28%
Community centres	18%
Football	7%
Dancing/Drama	7%
Angling/fishing	4%
Karate/boxing	4%

Similarly, respondents were asked about facilities for senior citizens, and a greater proportion of respondents (55%) reported not being aware of such facilities and activities, while 25% were aware, and cited clubs for 'old folks' (15%) and bingo (10%). When asked about their general opinion of facilities in their neighbourhoods, the majority of respondents offered a positive response:

- 7% - Excellent
- 57% - Good/ Very Good
- 33% - Not Good

2.10 Understanding Neighbourhood Safety

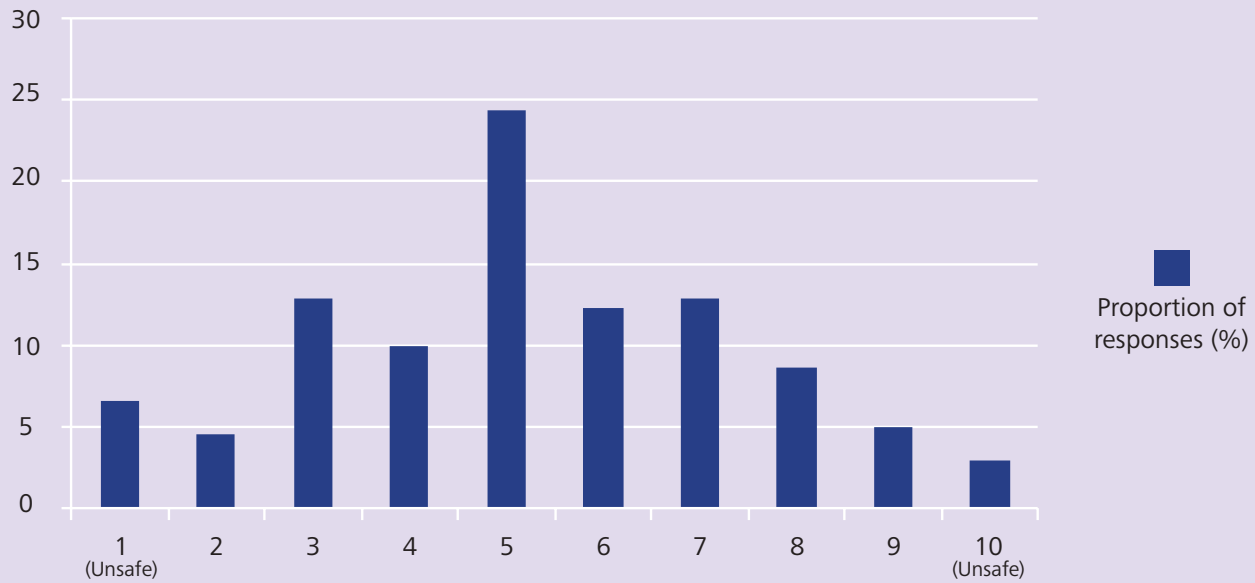
Residents' perceptions of safety were explored, asking them to define a 'safe' neighbourhood:

Table 11: Definitions of Safety

"Being able to walk in an area on your own"	34%
"Looking after one another and the neighbourhood"	24%
"Not being harassed"	23%
"Getting along with people"	20%
"No crime"	19%
"Safe place for children"	18%
"Feeling safe in your own home"	9%
"A place that is well maintained"	4%
"Having family close by"	2%

When asked if they feel safe in their neighbourhood, half of respondents reported feeling safe in their neighbourhoods, while 31% stated feeling unsafe. They were also asked to rate on a scale of 1-10 how safe they perceive children are in their neighbourhood, with 1 being unsafe and 10 being safe.

Figure 4: Perceptions of Child Safety



A total of 34% of respondents rated children’s safety as a concern, placing it at four or less on the scale. One-quarter of respondents felt children are fairly safe, rating their safety at five, while 42% perceive that they are adequately safe, rating safety between six and 10.

Respondents were asked to identify two specific problems in relation to neighbourhood safety they would like to change. While 96% of participants could identify one problem, only 57% identified a second problem in relation to neighbourhood safety that they would like to change and highlighted the following:

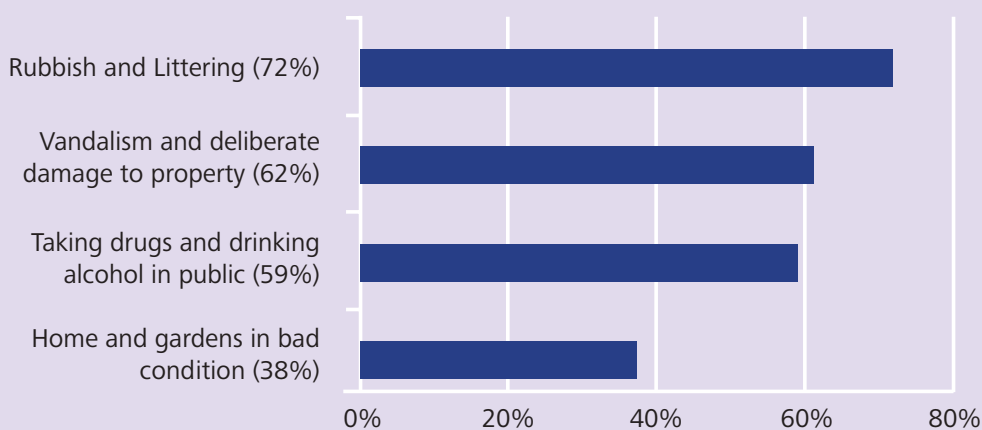
Table 12: Prioritising of Neighbourhood Problems

	1st Priority: %	2nd Priority: %
Vandalism, crime, anti-social behaviour	41%	23%
Traffic problems	14%	10%
Drug problem	10%	6%
Lack of facilities for young people	8%	4%
Litter	8%	7%
Lack of Garda presence	5%	6%
Lack of action on part of council/community alert	5%	n/a
Improved street lights	2%	n/a
Stray horses	1%	n/a
Lack of shopping facilities	n/a	2%

2.11 Problems in the Neighbourhood

A series of questions related to respondents' views of neighbourhood problems, and respondents were asked to report on some of the perceived problems in their area. A total of 82% of respondents believe there are problems in their neighbourhood, with 72% identifying rubbish/littering and 62% pointing to vandalism and damage to public property. Drug-taking and consumption of alcohol in public (59%) and unkempt homes and gardens (38%) were identified as further problems:

Figure 5: Problems in the Neighbourhood



When asked what they like least about living in their neighbourhood, 34% of respondents cited anti-social behaviour, 26% cited litter, while 11% noted crime:

Table 13: What you least like about your Neighbourhood

Anti-social behaviour	34%
Litter	26%
Crime	11%
Traffic	2%
Neighbours	2%
Drugs	2%

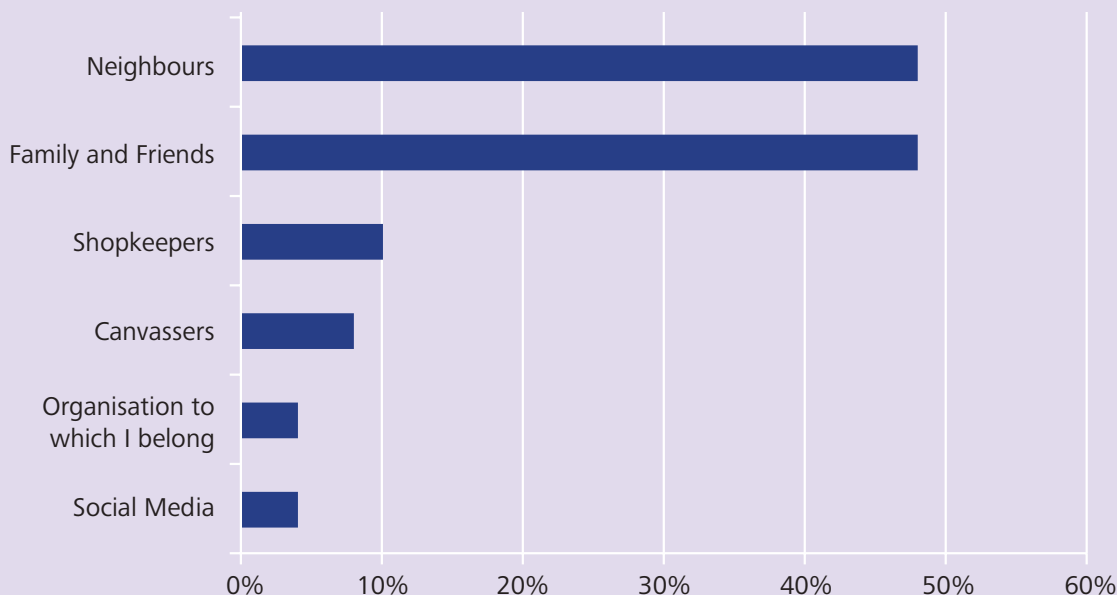
Respondents were asked if they had noticed any changes over time. 74% agreed they have noticed changes divided fairly evenly between positive and negative developments:

Table 14: Changes noticed over time

What changes have you noticed over time?	%
Increased anti-social behaviour and crime	31%
Area is nicer, more pleasant	14%
Improved facilities	10%
Area is quieter	10%

Respondents were asked if they talk about neighbourhood problems with people in their area. Over half (55%) stated that they do with 48% of respondents referencing both neighbours and family and friends (48%). 10% discuss neighbourhood problems with shopkeepers and 8% with canvassers, whilst 39% of respondents do not discuss neighbourhood problems. This significant minority raises questions regarding apathy to local issues, and/or no concerns about the community.

Figure 6: Discussing Neighbourhood Problems



2.12 Community Participation and Volunteering

A number of questions were asked relating to actions taken to address neighbourhood problems. Participants were asked if action had been taken by residents in the neighbourhood to address the problems with 37% stating that residents did not take action, whilst 24% responded in the affirmative. Specifically, respondents observed that the following actions had been undertaken by local residents, and also noted their own levels of participation in these actions:

Table 15: Residents' Actions

	% Awareness of Local Actions	Participation in Action
Approached local politician	13%	9%
Held a meeting	13%	
I don't know	6%	
Sent petition to relevant authorities	4%	
Held a demonstration	3%	
Organised a social media campaign	2%	
Signed a petition		6%
Joined a group/organisation		4%
Participated in a demonstration		5%

	% Awareness of Local Actions	Participation in Action
Mobilised/involved people I know		4%
Held a demonstration		2%
Engaged in online mobilisation activity		2%

With 32% reporting participation in at least one form of local activism, there are questions regarding the motivation, structures, access and capacity of residents to shape and engage in community decisions, a theme which emerges elsewhere in the report.

Respondents were questioned about their awareness of leaders or champions in their area. 45% of respondents were unable to identify local leaders or champions, while one-quarter of respondents identified a variety of people as leaders.

Respondents were asked if they believe they have influence over what their neighbourhood is like. A majority of 68% of respondents stated that they believe they have almost no influence, while 32% suggested that they have some influence. However, 46% of residents stated that if there is a problem in the neighbourhood, the residents themselves can address and manage it.

Respondents were asked if they feel they have the opportunity to contribute to their community in the way they would like, with one-quarter agreeing that this opportunity is available, almost a half (49%) of respondents disagreeing, and 15% not knowing.

An exploration of residents' involvement in local neighbourhood activities revealed that only 11% of respondents are involved in a charity or volunteer group, while less than 1% participate in a political group. Of this percentage, 9% spend a few hours every month engaging in activities with a volunteer group/organisation, while 5% spend some time most days on volunteer-related activity.

2.13 Current Problems and Resilience

When asked about difficulties and challenges they encounter, 30% of respondents stated that they do not really have any problems at the moment; a majority of 54% felt that while they have some problems, they are managing to cope, and 6% stated that they are not coping well with difficulties. A further exploration of respondents' ability to cope revealed significant resilience:

Table 16: Resilience

	Agree / strongly agree	Disagree / strongly disagree
I tend to bounce back after hard times	78%	20%
I have a hard time making it through stressful events	38%	59%
It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event	66%	31%
I usually come through difficult times with little struggle	65%	32%

Respondents were asked about events or problems that have happened over the past year. The most frequently cited problems were related to the death of a close relative or friend. Other problems included difficulties with neighbours, their own children, experiencing a crime and sudden health problems. Respondents cited the following challenges and difficulties as arising over the past year in their personal lives:

Table 17: Personal Challenges

	%
Difficulties with neighbours	15%
Difficulties with children	15%
Difficulties with close relatives or family	10%
Death of a close relative or friend	30%
Victim of crime	14%
Sudden health problem	14%
Birth of a baby in one's family	13%
Loss of money	9%
Accident or injury	7%
Child changing school	6%
Change of job	6%
Problems at work	4%

Respondents were asked to provide details about how they coped with a challenging event, and offered the following responses:

Table 18: Strategies for Coping

	%
Talked to a family member or friend	14%
<i>"Just got on with it"</i> .	14%
Visited a GP or a counsellor	10%
Went to the Gardai	10%
<i>"Kept to myself"</i> .	4%

Seeking help either informally from a friend or family member or formally from a health professional or Garda emerged as a common theme whilst 18% did not seek external support.

2.14 Physical Health

Respondents were asked a series of health related questions. Most respondents reported having no difficulty in the areas cited, with the most frequently reported difficulty being anxiety/depression, while pain was the second most commonly reported.

Table 19: Health

	%
Mobility	16%
Self-care	4%
Performing usual activities	18%
Pain	26%
Anxiety/ Depression	33%

2.15 Barriers to Work

As reported above (see table 1), 29% of respondents reported that they were unemployed. Participants were also asked whether they would be able to work if they wanted to. Excluding those already employed (full-time or part-time), those in full-time education, retirees and those on maternity leave (leaving n=124), 52% reported that they could take up work if they wished, 35% would be unable, and 7% didn't know. These respondents were also asked to indicate what might prevent them from taking up work. The main barriers to employment reported were as follows: 38% reported that childcare (or the lack thereof) was the main barrier, 19% reported health issues as the main barrier, 9% indicated that they had 'no reason' (suggesting apathy or disinterest in employment), and 7% reported lack of employment as the main barrier. Other barriers to employment reported include location, age, child's health, education, personal issues, and disability (Other = 8%).

Appendix 3: Key Findings from Youth Surveys and Focus Groups

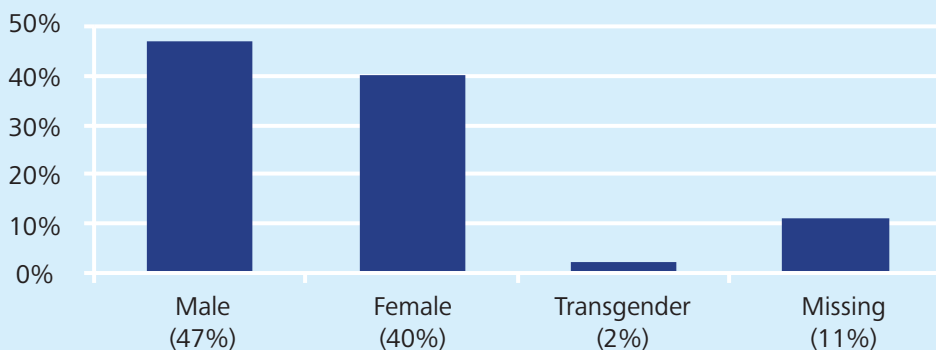
3.1 Overview of Key Findings

- The research demonstrates that young people have largely positive views of their neighbourhood and have a significant sense of belonging. They perceive it as a friendly place comprising supportive friends and neighbours, and that there is a strong sense of community support and spirit in Tallaght West;
- While most young people feel at home in their neighbourhood and perceive it as a good place to live, a significant minority do not share these views, and perceive that people generally do not get along together;
- Respondents broadly believe they do not have influence over what their neighbourhood is like, and often perceive they are stigmatised because of the area in which they live. Feeling a sense of pride in their neighbourhood is challenging in light of a stigmatised identity;
- The research highlights young people's concerns in relation to local environment, safety and anti-social behaviour, including problems with littering, rubbish, crime and local gangs. Easy access to drugs and alcohol are perceived as significant challenges for young people;
- Connections with friends and family are a highly important source of support for young people, and most interaction with friends outside of school takes place in an informal setting;
- Social media is a highly significant part of young people's lives and an important means of staying in touch with peers. Engagement on social media accounts for a large part of young people's daily activities;
- In terms of education good classmates are crucial to a positive school experience. Respondents have notably high expectations for their educational attainment and perceive teachers and parents as sharing these expectations;
- While there is significant awareness of local facilities, there are mixed opinions of these with a view that there is a need to improve their maintenance and development in order to meet the needs of young people living there;
- While young people view themselves as being in good health, feeling under pressure and stressed is a frequent challenge;
- In spite of perceived neighbourhood challenges, the young people demonstrate resilience, hope and aspiration for their futures, particularly in terms of maintaining relationships, connections and securing employment;
- Overall, responses from young people are largely in line with those of adult residents, with similar proportions experiencing a lack of support or connectedness, and the majority feeling positively about their neighbourhood.

3.2 Demographic Details

In all, 126 young people aged 15-17 completed surveys while a total of 12 young people participated in three Focus Groups. The gender break-down of respondents is as follows:

Figure 7: Gender of Respondents



Most respondents were aged either 15 or 16 years:

- 45% - 15 years old
- 42% - 16 years old
- 2% - 17 years old

All young respondents live and/or go to school in Tallaght West, with the specific locations being as follows:

Table 20: School and Home Location

	Live	School
Fettercairn	36%	45%
Brookfield	24%	23%
Jobstown	14%	4%
Killinarden	14%	13%
Other	12%	15%

Whilst the majority of respondents (82%) were born in Ireland, 2% were born in Nigeria and Poland respectively, and a further 1% in both Romania and China.

3.3 Understanding of Neighbourhood and Connections

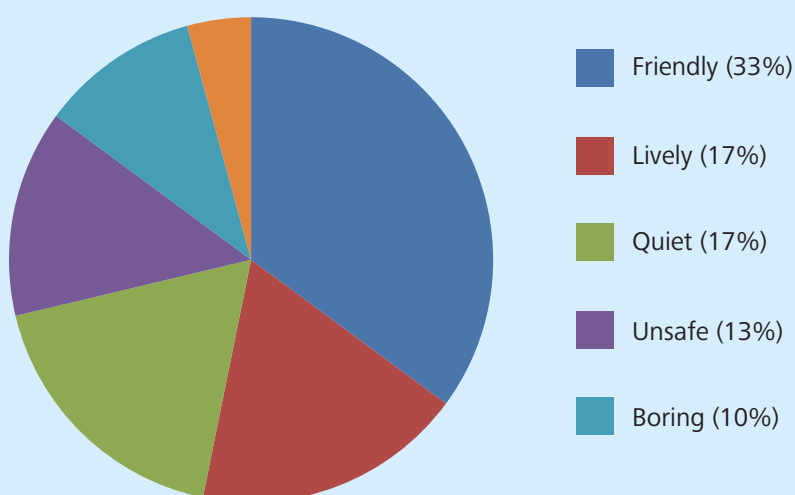
Respondents were asked to choose from a selection of definitions relating to 'neighbourhood'. The most frequently cited definition is 'community, good neighbours and people':

Table 21: Defining Neighbourhood

	%
Community, good neighbours, people	41%
Family and friends	16%
Amenities	9%
A place where people live	8%
Friendly	7%
Estate	7%
School	2%

A total of 72% of respondents felt their neighbourhood fits the above descriptions, while 18% were unsure. Respondents were then asked to describe their neighbourhood in their own words:

Figure 8: Describing Neighbourhood

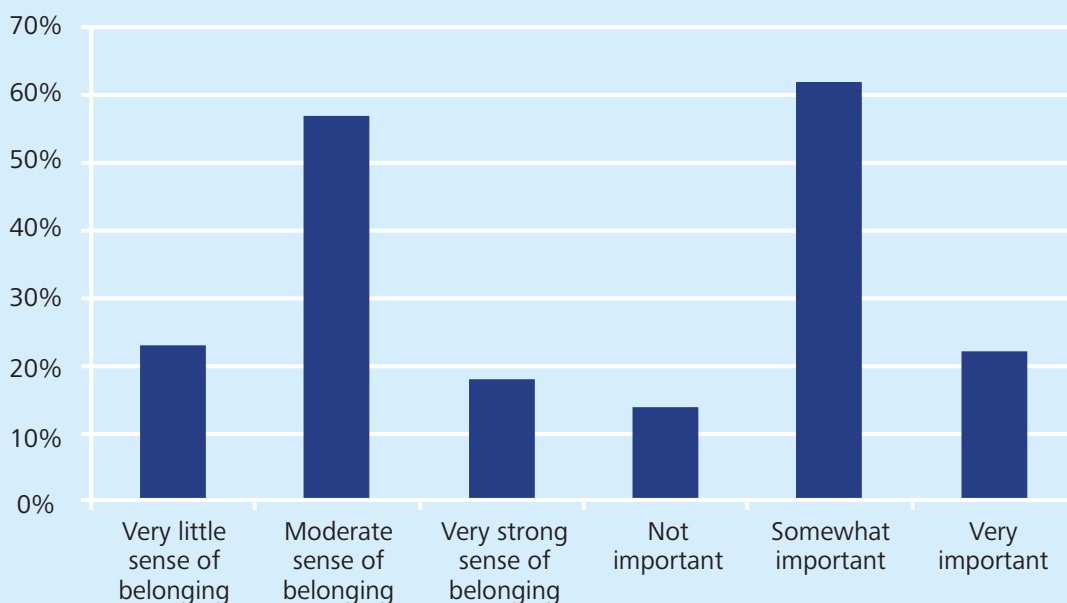


One-third of respondents described their neighbourhood as 'friendly', while 13% described it as 'unsafe'. In the Focus Groups participants pointed more strongly to neighbourhood challenges in response to this question, using terms such as "trouble", "drugs", "violence", "robberies" and "vandalism" to describe their neighbourhood.

A total of 14% of respondents perceive that people in their neighbourhood look out for each other and help out; a quarter felt their neighbours tend to "do their own thing," while a total of 62% perceive a combination of both.

Respondents were asked about their sense of belonging in their neighbourhood, specifically how important it is for them to feel a sense of belonging, and whether or not they feel a sense of belonging with other people living nearby:

Figure 9: Importance and Sense of Belonging



One-quarter of respondents (21%) stated that it is very important to feel a sense of belonging, while 62% of respondents suggested it is somewhat important. A total of 14% of respondents reported that it is not important to feel a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood.

When asked whether or not they experienced this sense of belonging, 18% reported a very strong sense, while a significant 57% experience a moderate sense of belonging. One-quarter (23%) of respondents feel very little sense of belonging in their neighbourhood.

While one-quarter (25%) of respondents stated that they would like to move out of where they live almost one-third (29%) were unsure. Nevertheless, almost half of respondents (46%) reported being happy to continue living in their neighbourhood.

Table 22: Most Enjoyable Factors in the Neighbourhood

	%
Friends	49%
Friends and school	14%
Different activities and amenities	12%
Parks and green spaces	7%
Community and good neighbours	4%
Having family nearby	4%

Friendships were cited as the most enjoyable aspect of the neighbourhood, with good friends being frequently mentioned as being highly important to the young people. Participants also described a variety of positive aspects to neighbourhood life, including a strong sense of community support and spirit. This positive sense of community entails “everyone helping each other out”, “people who stick up for you or ask if you’re ok”, “good neighbours” and a sense of “generosity”. Focus Group participants offered examples of such generosity

and support, such as, *“a man living in my estate goes around every day picking up litter”, “I went to my neighbours’ for grinds and it really helped me”*.

Over half of respondents said that their neighbourhood is a good place to live (66%). It is noteworthy that half of respondents (54%) believe that if there is a problem in the neighbourhood, people who live in the area can adequately address it. However, a total of 69% of respondents believe they have little or no influence over what their neighbourhood is like. Likewise, those who do and do not feel a sense of pride in their neighbourhood are divided almost exactly equally. These apparent contradictions are very much in line with responses from adult residents.

Table 23: Sense of Belonging

	Completely True	Mostly True	Mostly Untrue	Completely Untrue
I think my neighbourhood is a good place to live.	20%	46%	25%	9%
I can recognise most of the people who live in my neighbourhood.	48%	35%	11%	6%
I feel at home in my neighbourhood.	34%	41%	20%	5%
I have some influence over what my neighbourhood is like.	5%	26%	39%	30%
If there is a problem in my neighbourhood people who live here can get it sorted.	14%	40%	32%	14%
People in my neighbourhood generally get along with one another.	13%	61%	19%	7%
I expect to live in my neighbourhood a long time.	20%	36%	30%	14%
I feel a sense of pride in my neighbourhood.	16%	31%	39%	14%

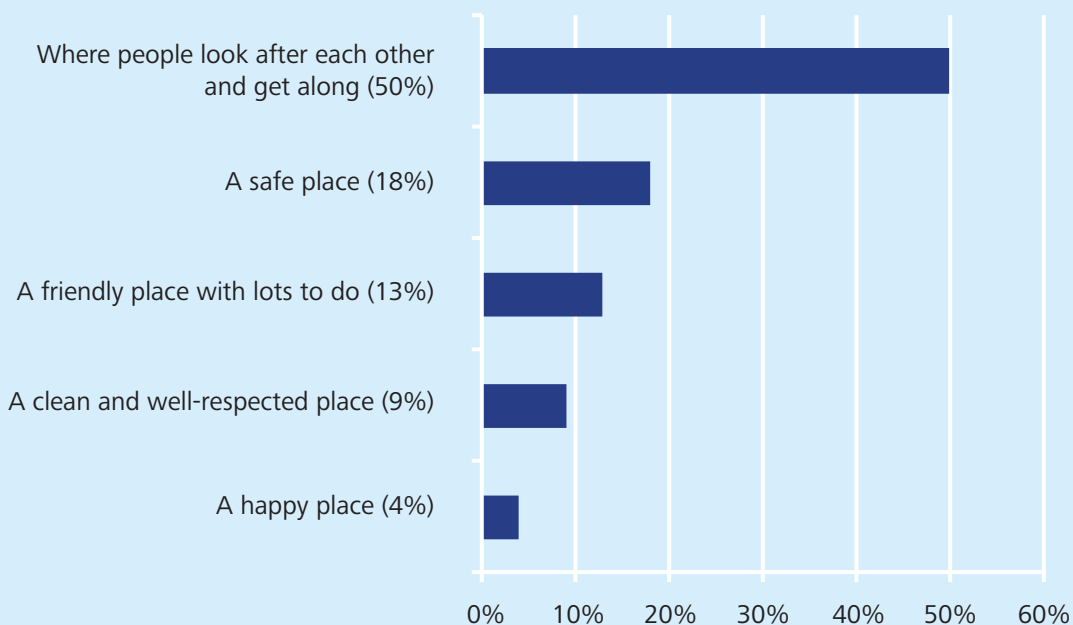
Overall participants in the Focus Groups depicted their neighbours in a positive light: *“Friendly and willing to help you out”* and trustworthy people who *“keep an eye on stuff and tell you if anything is going on”*. Having supportive neighbours is perceived as important, *“if you need a hand they’ll help and talk”*, with one respondent explaining, *“a neighbour brought our shopping home in a taxi for us”*. The findings of the youth surveys reflect this sense of support, as 66% of young people believe they and their neighbours want the same things for the area, while over half of respondents agree that people living in their neighbourhood share the same values:

Table 24: Neighbourhood Values

	Completely True	Mostly True	Mostly Untrue	Completely Untrue
People living in my neighbourhood share the same values.	8%	47%	32%	10%
My neighbours and I want the same things for our area.	19%	47%	19%	10%

The young people in this study were asked to define a ‘good’ neighbourhood. For half of respondents this meant a cohesive neighbourhood where people look after one another, followed by a ‘safe place’:

Figure 10: A Good Neighbourhood



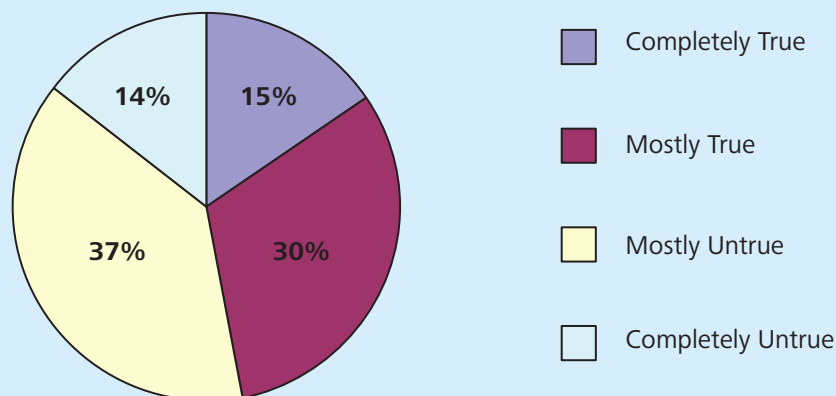
When asked how this definition of a ‘good’ neighbourhood relates to their own area, 51% of respondents described their neighbourhood as ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ good, while 15% described it as ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ poor:

- 9% - very good;
- 42% - fairly good;
- 32% - neither good nor poor;
- 10% - fairly poor;
- 5% - very poor.

3.4 Pride and Self-Perception

The research findings reveal that respondents have mixed feelings in relation to their neighbourhood, with 45% indicating a sense of pride in their neighbourhood, and 51% not sharing this:

Figure 11: Sense of Pride in the Neighbourhood



In the Focus Groups, however, numerous participants suggested that because they are from Tallaght West they are stigmatised and perceived as “outcasts” or “lower class” by outsiders who “look down on us” and “think we’re trouble”. Others felt they have to “prove” or “justify” themselves and demonstrate their good behaviour to “outsiders”.

Several respondents explained that this negative stigma makes them want to move out of Tallaght, suggesting that in order to “do well” one has to “get out of Tallaght” and “you feel like you have to move out to achieve something”. Respondents suggested that negative stereotypes of Tallaght in the media contribute to this spoiled identity: “often the broadcasts of Tallaght are the gangs and trouble makers”.

The young people described this negative stereotype as being potentially self-fulfilling as it may encourage young people to act out a negative role: “It becomes who they are”. As one respondent explains, “people strive to achieve their goals but then they think ‘I’m just from Tallaght’”. Participants explained that negative stereotypes associated with living in Tallaght West can hamper young people’s expectations for themselves and lead to a sense of apathy and lack of motivation.

Nonetheless several respondents in the Focus Groups reported feeling a sense of pride in their neighbourhood, and not feeling affected or concerned by negative stereotypes: “I wouldn’t be afraid of what they’re going to think of you. They’re going to judge you anyway”.

3.5 Neighbourhood Problems and Challenges

The young people were asked what they like least about their neighbourhood. A total of 42% of respondents cited rubbish; 27% cited gangs and crime, while 14% pointed to noisy neighbours:

Table 25: Least Liked Aspects of the Neighbourhood

	%
Rubbish	42%
Crime and gangs	27%
Noisy neighbours	14%
Kids fighting	2%
Too quiet and boring	2%
Drugs	2%

Similarly, Focus Group participants described their physical environment as “dirty” and “scruffy”, and highlighted litter and rubbish such as broken bottles, discarded needles and burnt cars as ongoing problems.

3.6 Safety Concerns

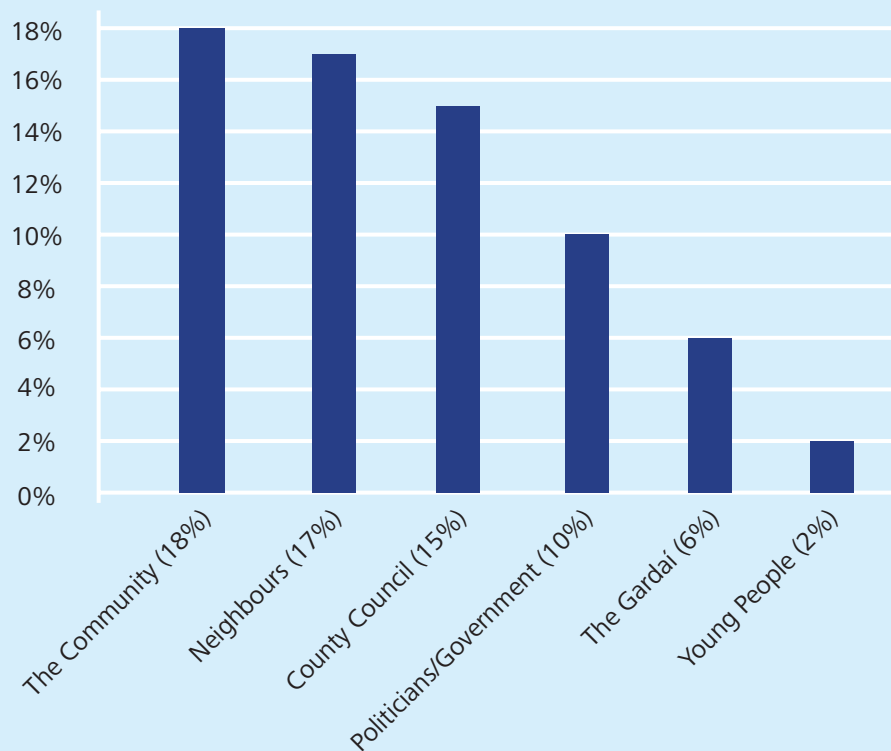
Concerns around safety emerged as a key issue in Focus Groups with young people. Respondents described feeling intimidated by gang members such as, experiencing verbal abuse when they walk past groups of people. Respondents reported that drugs are openly available and accessible and several respondents reported observing drug deals taking place as they walked home from school.

Young people expressed concern for the safety of family members and children: “I find needles in my garden so my little sister isn’t allowed play in our own garden in case she falls on a needle...we found one a while ago”.

When asked to describe what their ideal neighbourhood would look like, respondents mentioned improved safety, such as being able to walk alone in the evening without feeling “fearful” or “uncomfortable”. Another respondent explained, “less drugs and a cleaner place so kids can play on the road without hurting themselves”. Respondents expressed the need “to see community Guards walking down streets”.

Survey respondents were asked to reflect on who they feel should be involved in making the neighbourhood a better place. Interestingly, community and neighbours were cited more frequently than public or official bodies, although young people were rarely referenced as having a role.

Figure 12: Involvement in Neighbourhood Improvements



3.7 Friendships

In the Focus Groups the young people reported having a wide and close circle of female and male friends. This is reflected in the survey findings wherein respondents were asked a series of questions about friendships. Respondents were asked how many friends they normally hang around with, and how many of their friends they consider to be close:

Table 26: Friendship

	How many friends do you normally hang around with?	How many friends would you describe as close?
None	5%	3%
1 or 2	15%	43%
Between 3 and 5	42%	40%
Between 6 and 10	27%	7%
More than 10	11%	0%

It is of note that 44% of respondents have between one and two friends who are from a different ethnic background, while almost one-quarter have no friends of a different ethnicity:

Table 27: Friends and Ethnicity

How many friends are from a different ethnic background to you?	%
None	21%
1 or 2	44%
Between 3 and 5	22%
Between 6 and 10	6%
More than 10	6%

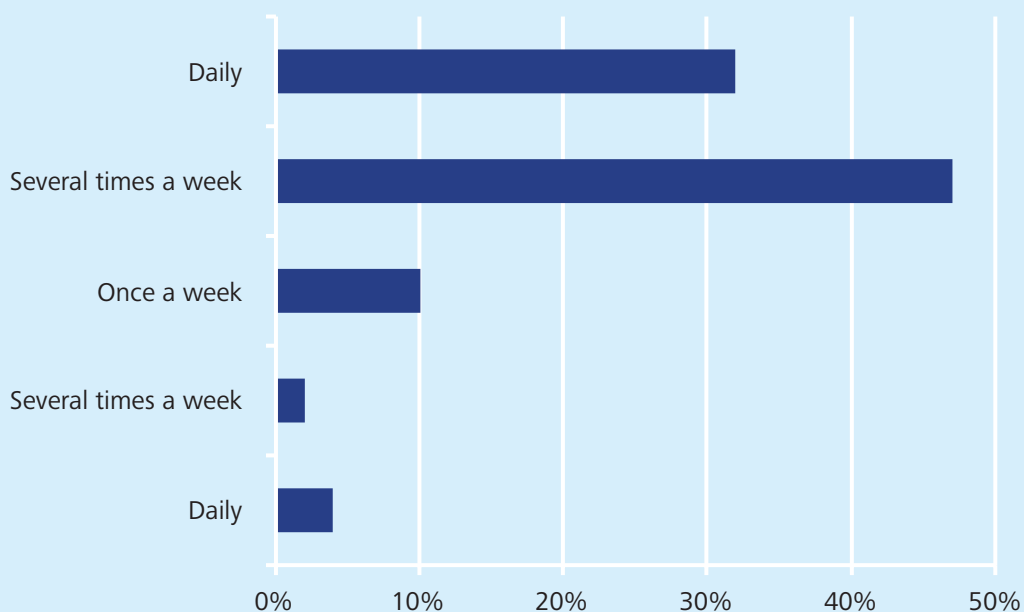
Respondents were asked to reflect on the ages of the friends with whom they spend time. One-quarter of those surveyed report that some of the friends they spend time with are more than two years older than themselves, while for 50% of respondents their friends are a year or two older:

Table 28: Friends and Ages

	A year or more younger than me	About the same age as me	A year or two older than me	More than two years older than me
None	16%	2%	13%	32%
Some	44%	38%	50%	23%
Most or all	8%	50%	6%	3%
Missing	32%	11%	31%	41%

In terms of interaction with their peers, 32% of respondents reported that they get together on a daily basis, while for 47% this occurs several times a week:

Figure 13: Frequency of Friendship Contact



Respondents were asked a number of questions about the nature of their interaction with their friends. These questions sought to explore interaction outside of school hours, and how much of this interaction is formal or organised such as sports activities, and how much is informal, i.e., time spent hanging out together. For almost half of respondents, (44%), none of this interaction is formal, while for 38% of respondents 3-4 hours is spent in informal interaction. In terms of amounts of time spent with friends, 3% of respondents report no time 'face-to-face'; 44% report no time spent in formal interaction with friends, and 6% report no time spent in formal interaction with friends:

Table 29: Nature of Interaction with Friends

	Time spent with friends face-to-face?	How much of this interaction is formal?	How much of this interaction is informal?
No time*	3%	45%	6%
Less than 1 hour	12%	21%	16%
1-2 hours	15%	22%	20%
2-3 hours	23%	8%	20%
3-4 hours	24%	3%	38%
>4 hours	22%	1%	-

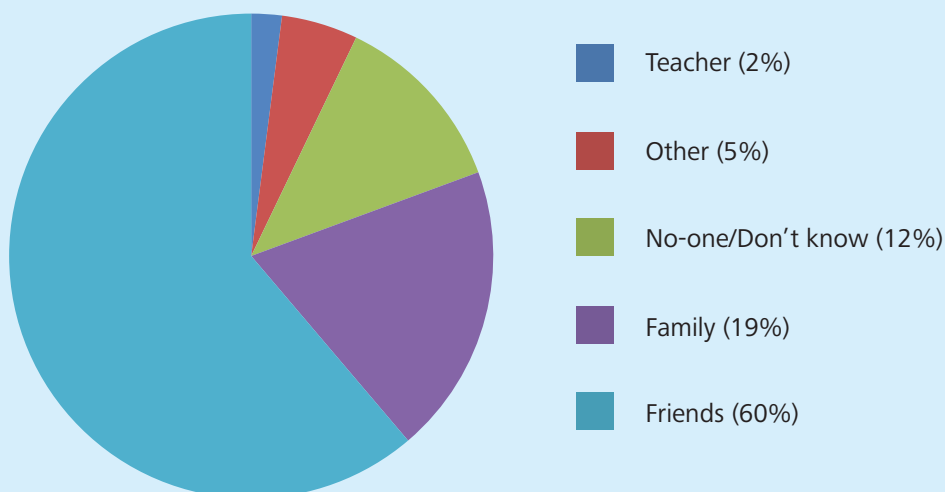
In the Focus Groups, respondents noted that friends played a very important role in terms of who they turn to when they need advice. When asked what makes a good friend, respondents offered a variety of responses: *"someone you can trust"*, *"tell things in confidence"* and *"they will give the best advice"*. Similarly, those surveyed were asked in-depth questions about the emotional support they receive from their friends, with responses indicating a very strong and significant support network:

Table 30: Friendship Supports

	Never or not very often	Sometimes or often	Almost always or always
I feel my friends are good friends	4%	40%	52%
When we talk my friends care about my point of view	6%	58%	32%
I wish I had different friends	73%	20%	2%
My friends understand me	4%	65%	27%
My friends accept me as I am	3%	38%	54%
I feel I am alone or apart when I am with my friends	74%	21%	1%
My friends listen to what I have to say	2%	64%	30%
My friends are fairly easy to talk to	4%	49%	44%
I can count on my friends when I need to get something off my chest	8%	47%	40%
I trust my friends	4%	49%	45%
I get upset a lot more than my friends know about	42%	40%	14%
I can tell my friends about my problems and troubles	10%	58%	29%
If my friends know something is bothering me they ask me about it	9%	54%	34%
My friends come to me or help or to talk about problems	4%	54%	38%

For the young people in this study, friends are a valuable source of help and advice, as identified by 60% of respondents. A further 19% of respondents turn to family for advice, while 2% turn to a teacher:

Figure 14: Sources of Support



Respondents were asked an open-ended question about what they identify as the biggest challenges and difficulties for young people in their neighbourhood:

Table 31: Challenges and Difficulties for Young People

Not giving into drugs or alcohol/Easy access to drugs or alcohol	21%
Fitting in/Peer pressure	10%
Bullying/Cyber-bullying	9%
Staying out of trouble	8%
Negative views of young people in Tallaght West	7%
Lack of facilities	7%
Staying safe	6%
Money and education	2%
School	2%
Other* (e.g. social media, crime, being gay, gangs, mental health, etc.)	14%

*Challenges and difficulties that were reported by <2 respondents are included in this figure.

For almost one-quarter of respondents, easy accessibility to drugs and alcohol poses a significant challenge. According to Focus Group participants, the normalisation of drugs and alcohol can hinder young people's motivations.

In considering issues beyond the neighbourhood, bullying was raised and respondents were asked if they have been afraid of other boys and girls in the last six months. 61% reported being not at all being afraid, 31% slightly or moderately afraid, and 6% stated they have felt very or extremely afraid.

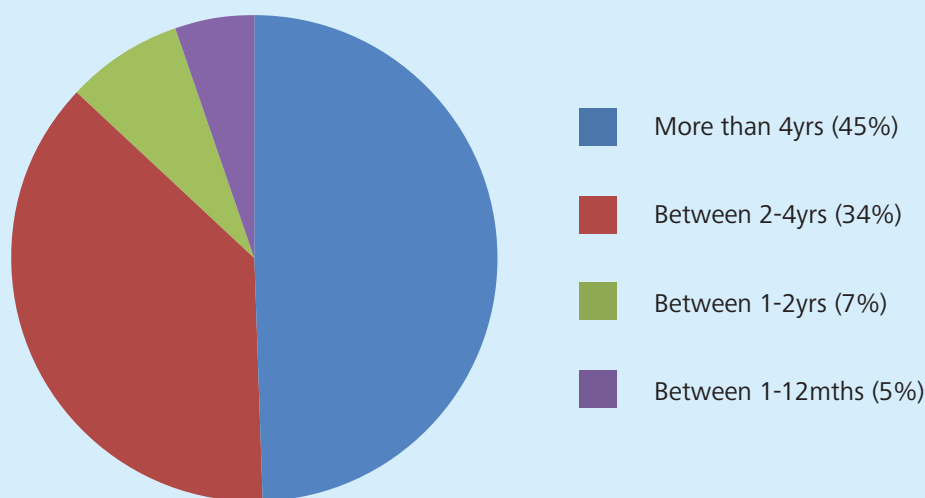
In a similar vein, respondents were asked if they felt bullied by other boys or girls in the last six months. 86% reported feeling slightly or not at all feeling bullied; 6% felt moderately bullied, and 6% felt very bullied. This bullying occurred on a daily or weekly basis for 8% of respondents, on a monthly basis for 12%, and rarely or never for 41% (37% missing).

In the Focus Group, respondents' highlighted cyber bullying as a significant challenge among young people. As one respondent explained, *"people get brave behind the screen. They wouldn't say it to your face"*. However respondents also noted that their peers will defend them from being bullied: *"there's the nice people that are standing up for those that are getting bullied"*.

3.8 Social Media Habits

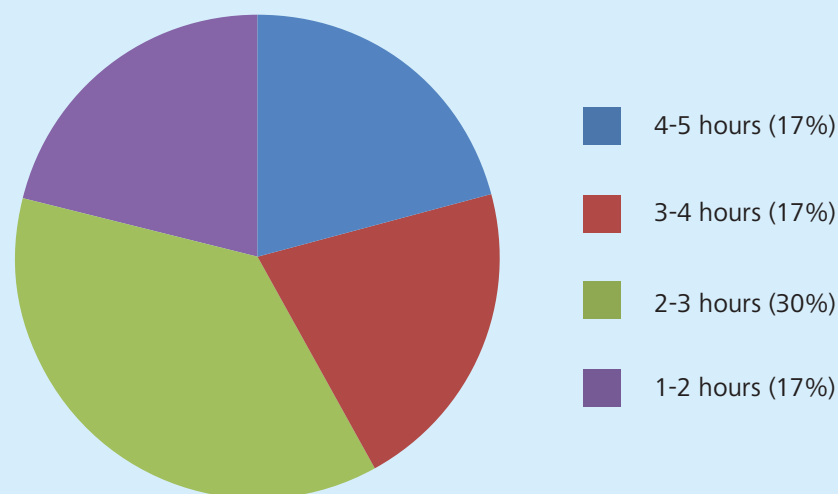
A majority of 92% of respondents own a smart phone, with just 4% stating they do not own a smart phone. Respondents were asked how long they have been using social media:

Figure 15: How long Respondents have been on Social Media



Only 3% stated that they do not use social media. Respondents were questioned about how much time they spend interacting with their friends on social media:

Figure 16: Time Spent on Social Media Interacting with Friends

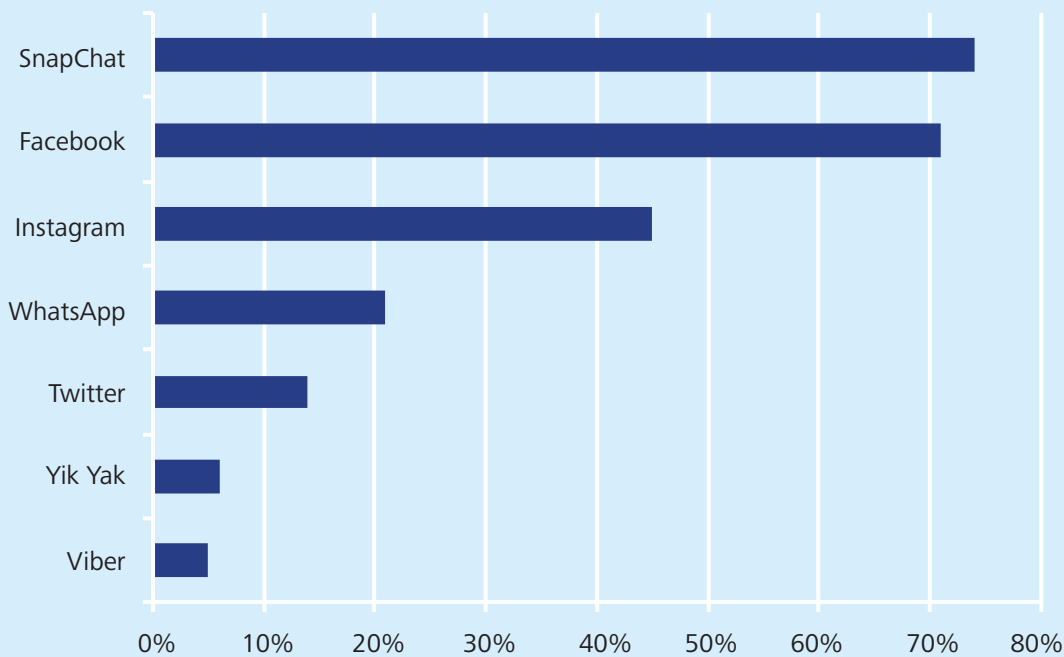


One-third of respondents reported spending 2-3 hours a day interacting with friends on social media, with 17% reporting spending 4-5 hours daily. Focus Group participants described how habits around social media are deeply engrained: *"It's addictive. You try and get off it and you can't"*.

For participants, social media plays an important role in maintaining contact with friends. One respondent described her phone as a “*safety blanket*” stating she feels she is “*missing something without it*”. Respondents also noted that having a phone is important for safety reasons: “*If I get into trouble I can use my phone.*”

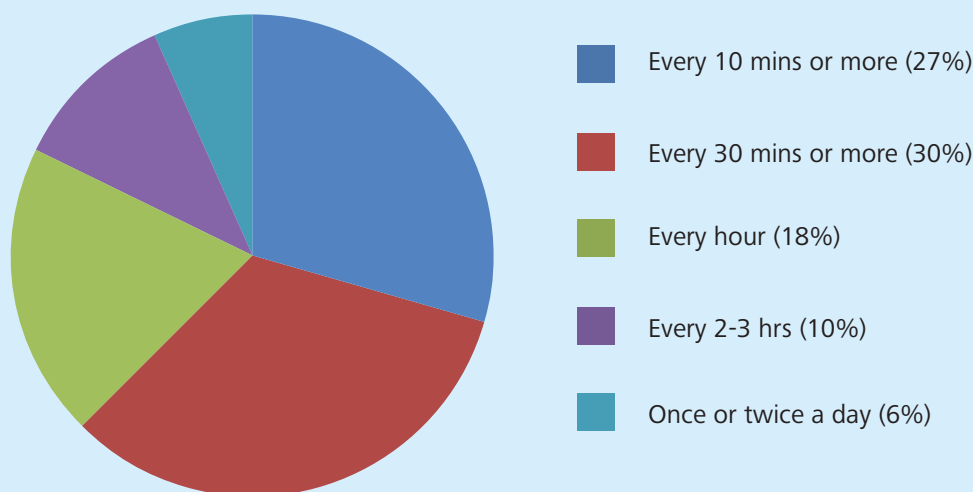
The most popular forms of social media that respondents engage with are SnapChat (74%) and Facebook (71%), followed by Instagram (45%) and WhatsApp (22%):

Figure 17: Social Media Used to Stay in Touch with Friends



When asked if there is any time of the day when they do not have their phone on them, 46% state there is not, while 51% report there are times when they do not carry their phone. The young people indicated that they check their phone frequently:

Figure 18: Relationships with Parents



3.9 Relationship with Parents

Participants in the Focus Groups reported positive relationships with their parents, and identified family members, especially parents, as an important source of support when they need to talk. This finding is mirrored in the surveys, with a significant percentage indicating a healthy relationship with parents/guardians, with 86% feeling loved by their parents, and 81% reporting that their parents have enough time for them:

Table 32: Relationship with Parents

	Not at all or Slightly	Moderately	Very or Extremely
Do your parents understand you?	7%	23%	69%
Have you felt loved by your parents?	1%	12%	86%
Have you felt happy at home?	1%	25%	74%
Have your parents had enough time for you?	6%	12%	81%
Have your parents treated you fairly?	6%	14%	77%
Have you been able to talk to your parents when you wanted to?	9%	14%	74%

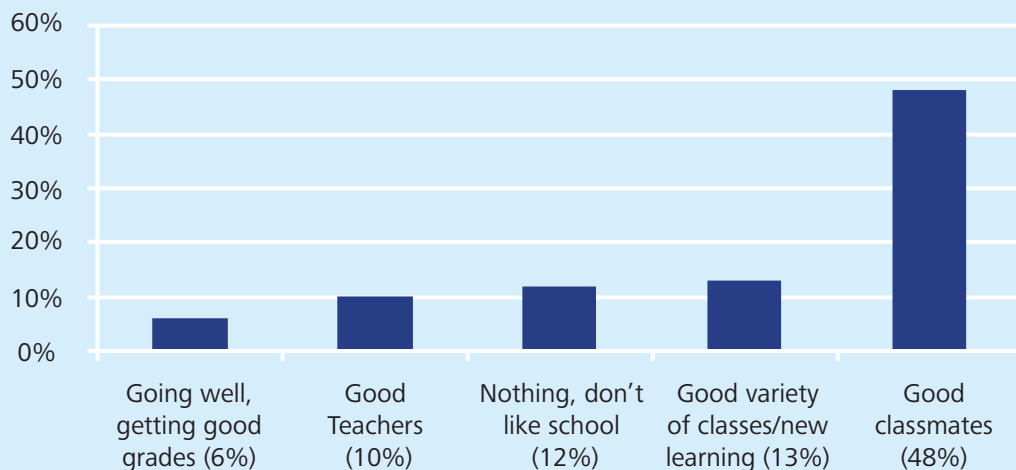
Respondents were asked if there is someone in their neighbourhood that they admire or look up to, with 26% (n=32) stating that they do, while 66% disagreed. Of those who indicated that there was someone they admired or looked up to, 62% identified a family member as being the person they admire, 16% identified a sports coach, 9% pointed to a teacher, 6% reported this person is someone older who they spend time with; while 6% reported an alternative.

When the same participants were asked why they look up to this person, 22% reported this person is a “good role model”, 9% stated that the person is “good to me”, the same proportion stated that “they are very strong”.

3.10 Education and Training

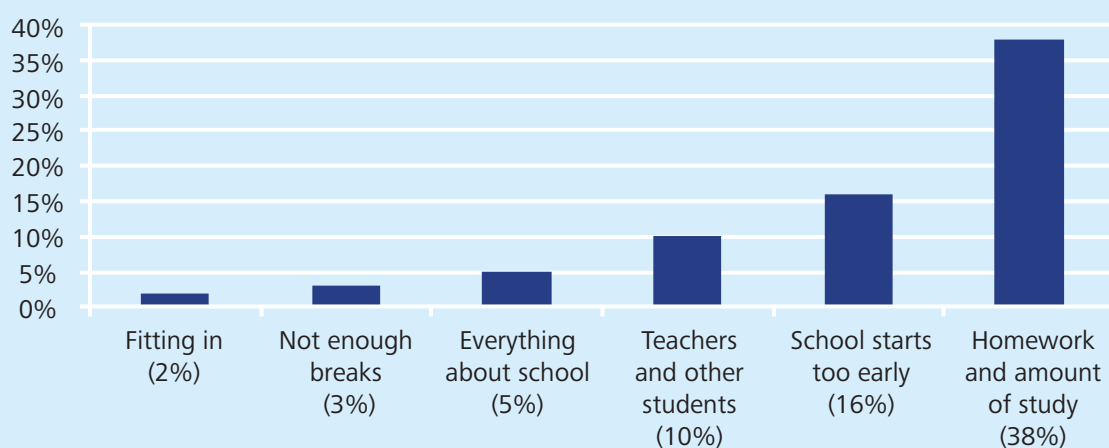
95% of respondents attend secondary school. When asked what they like about school, respondents offered the following responses, with “good classmates” being the most frequently cited response:

Figure 19: Favourite things about school



Homework and the amount of study were identified as the most challenging aspects of school (38%), with early school hours in second place (16%):

Figure 20: Challenges in School



In spite of these challenges and difficulties, 92% of respondents insist that they intend to finish secondary school. 70% could not foresee any reasons why they might not complete secondary school, while 6% identified boredom or lack of interest as possible barriers to completion. A quarter of respondents did not offer any reason as to why they might not complete school. Those surveyed were asked about their expectations in relation to their education and further training, as well as those of their parents/guardian and teachers:

Table 33: Education and Training Expectations

	Yes	No	Don't know
Would you like to do further education or training?	82%	3%	14%
Do your parents expect you to finish school?	93%	0%	4%
Do your parents expect you to do further education or go to college?	85%	7%	10%
Do your parents/guardian expect you to do further education?	80%	1%	18%

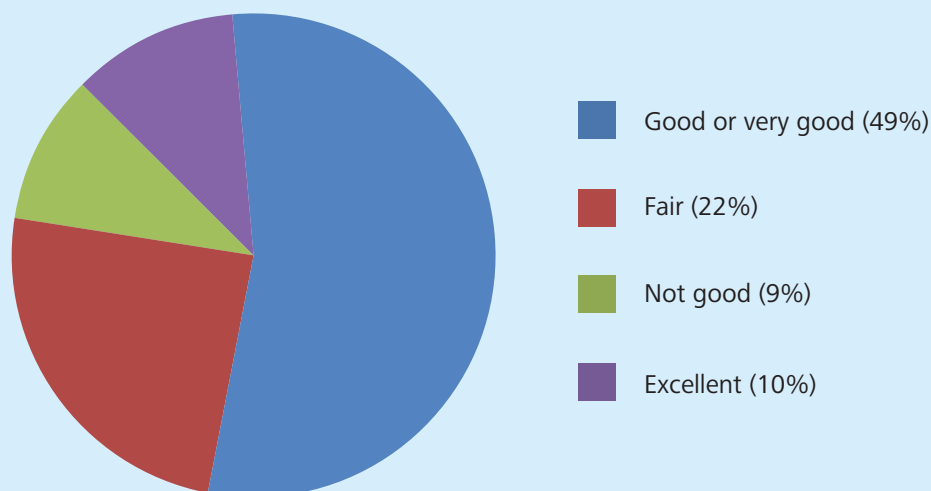
A significant percentage of young people would like to undertake further education and training, and broadly reported that parents and teachers expect them to complete secondary school. Of note, 95% of respondents believe their parents/guardian expect them to finish school, while 80% state that their parents expect them to go onto further education.

In the Focus Group participants generally described supportive and kind parents:

"Mine are happy once I'm happy". Others described parents as having high expectations for them: *"They want you to strive to do the best that you can do"*. Participants shared mixed views on what they perceive as teachers' expectations for them: *"Some don't care"*, and *"others are really good at going out of their way to help you"*. One participant explained her positive experience with her teacher: *"The day before our Junior Cert the teacher came in to school and made sure we were OK and said 'you could come into me any day and I'll be here'"*.

The young people were asked if their school provides guidance in terms of training and further education. Of those surveyed 80% acknowledged receiving this advice and support, while 18% stated they do not receive or do not know if they received this support. Respondents were asked about their opinion of this guidance:

Figure 21: How Respondents rated Career Guidance



Further questions sought to explore respondents' relationships with teachers and their views and perceptions of school and education. Interestingly, 86% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that it is important to do your best in school/training, while 83% disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that school is a waste of time. It is noteworthy that 40% agree or strongly agree that it is difficult to concentrate in school:

Table 34: Perceptions of School/Training

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I get on well with my teachers/trainers.	30%	62%	7%	0%
It is important to do your best in school/training.	50%	36%	11%	1%
My teachers'/trainers' opinion of me is important.	18%	42%	32%	5%
I find it difficult to concentrate in school/training.	10%	30%	44%	10%
School/training is a waste of time for me.	2%	9%	35%	48%
Most of the rules in school/training are stupid or petty.	6%	20%	46%	24%

3.11 Facilities and Activities

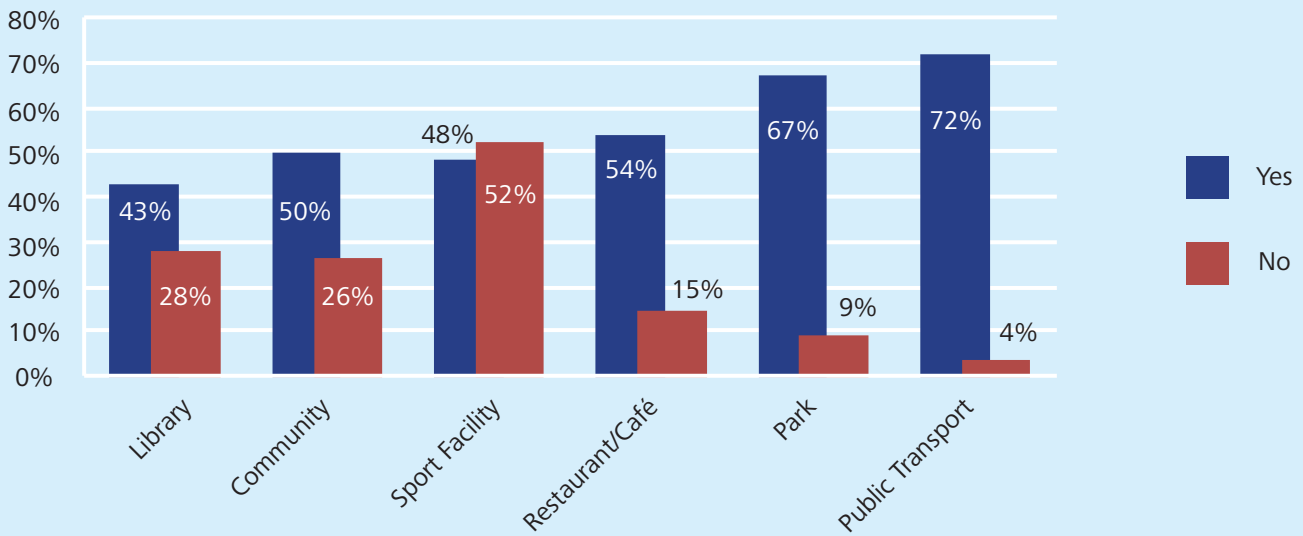
Respondents were asked about their views and use of a variety of facilities in the neighbourhood. There was significant awareness of local facilities, and respondents indicated strong usage of facilities:

Table 35: Access to and use of Local Facilities

Type of Facility	Is it available?	Do you use this facility?	How often?
Library (outside school)	Yes 77%	Yes 43% No 28%	Daily = 6% Few times a week = 2% Weekly = 6% Every 2 weeks/monthly = 7% On occasion = 26% Missing = 54%
Community Centre	Yes 86%	Yes 50% No 26%	Daily = 7% Few times a week = 3% Weekly = 17% Monthly = 2% On occasion = 15% Missing = 55%
Sport Facility	Yes 83%	Yes 48% No 52%	Daily = 7% Few times a week = 3% Weekly = 17% Monthly = 2% On occasion = 15% Missing = 55%
Restaurant/Cafe	Yes 75%	Yes 54% No 15%	Daily = 4% Few times a week = 3% Weekly = 20% Every 2 weeks/monthly = 5% On occasion = 22% Missing = 46%

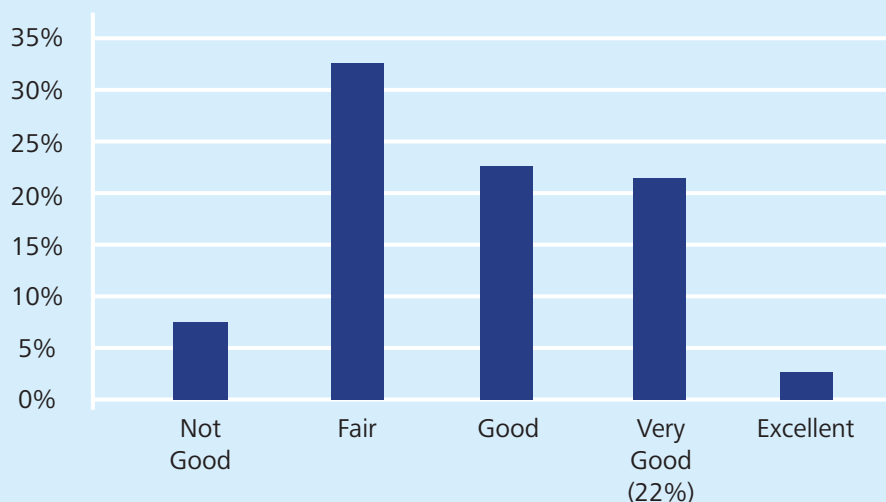
Type of Facility	Is it available?	Do you use this facility?	How often?
Park	Yes 83%	Yes 67% No 9%	Daily = 15% Few times a week = 6% Weekly = 15% Monthly = 5% On occasion = 19% Missing = 39%
Public Transport	Yes 87%	Yes 72% No 4%	Weekly = 22% Few times a week = 7% Weekly = 20% Every 2 weeks/monthly = 3% On occasion = 16% Missing = 33%

Figure 22: Respondents who use facilities in the Neighbourhood



Respondents' opinions of neighbourhood facilities vary:

Figure 23: Opinion on Quality of Facilities



A total of 35% of respondents view facilities as 'fair', 25% as 'good', and 17% as 'very good'. Further, 5% of respondents believe neighbourhood facilities are 'excellent', while 10% feel they are 'not good'.

The participants in Focus Groups shared mixed views of the facilities available for them with some respondents describing the lack of parks and their poor maintenance as "disgraceful" and "frustrating". Some respondents observed that local gangs have vandalised parks and the Council are reluctant to replace broken fixtures.

Several respondents pointed out that the lack of activities locally means that young people have no choice but to travel outside of their own communities to access other facilities. Others report that a lack of facilities encourages young people to join gangs and engage in drug-use. However, several respondents pointed out that there is always something to do and referred to youth clubs and youth centres as an important source of support.

Respondents were asked about their involvement in activities that take place outside of school hours. Participation in a sports team, after-school club and swimming emerge as the most popular activities with one-third of respondents, taking part in these. A total of 9% report that they are involved in a charity or volunteer group:

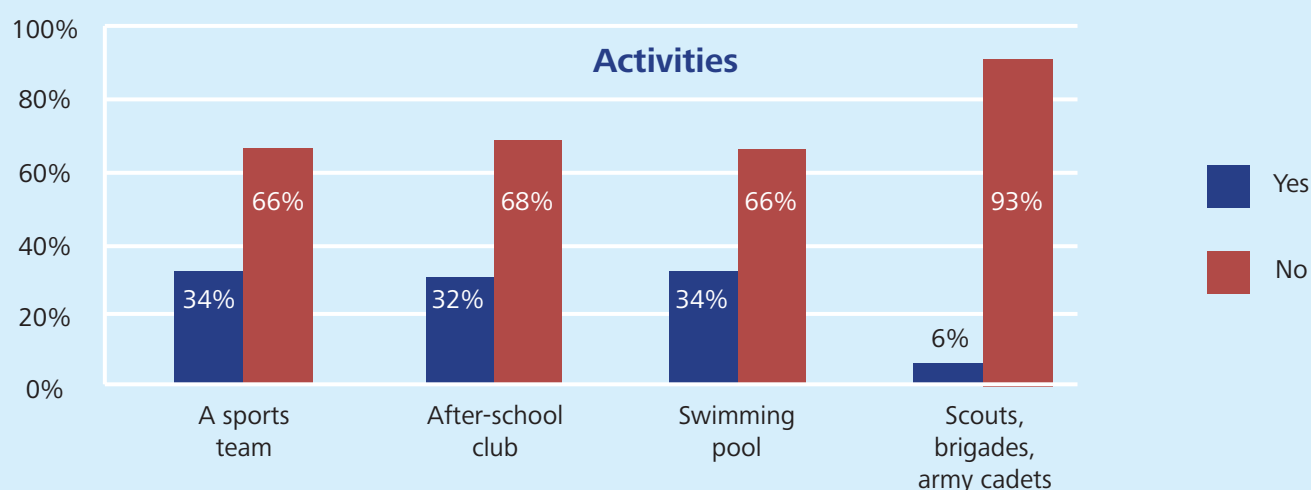
Table 36: Respondents involved in activities outside school hours

Are you involved in activities that take place outside of school hours?	HION (2016)	HAOF (2010)	HAOK (2004)	GUI* (2012)
A sports team	Yes = 34% No = 38% Missing = 28%	Yes= 26% No= 27% Missing= 47%	Yes= 26%	Regular: 69% Sporadic:12% Never: 20%
After-school club	Yes = 32% No = 38% Missing = 30%	Yes= 14% No= 39% Missing= 47%	Yes= 13%	-

Are you involved in activities that take place outside of school hours?	HION (2016)	HAOF (2010)	HAOK (2004)	GUI* (2012)
Swimming Pool	Yes = 34% No = 38% Missing = 28%	Yes= 20% No= 33% Missing= 47%	-	-
Scouts, brigades, army cadets	Yes = 6% No = 52% Missing = 41%	Yes= 2% No= 51% Missing= 47%	Yes= 2%	Regular: 22% Sporadic:12% Never: 65%
Music, dance, drama	Yes = 15% No = 45% Missing = 40%	Yes= 30% No= 23% Missing= 47%	Yes= 11%	Regular: 28% Sporadic: 9% Never: 62%
Homework club or language class	Yes = 10% No = 52% Missing = 37%	-	Yes= 13%	Regular: 7% Sporadic: 2% Never: 90%
Charity/Volunteer group	Yes = 9% No = 47% Missing = 44%	-	-	-
Other activity	Yes = 8% No = 7% Missing = 84%	Yes= 6% No= 47% Missing= 47%	-	-

*Comparable figures from the child cohort (aged 13 years) in the 'Growing up in Ireland' data (2013).

Figure 24: Engagement in Activities



Respondents were asked if they would like to take part in more afterschool activities. Approximately one third (30%) replied that they would like to, while the same amount stated they would not. 28% of respondents stated that they didn't know, whilst 12% of respondents did not offer an answer to this question. Respondents were asked what stops or prevents them from taking part in more neighbourhood activities:

Table 37: Reasons for not Participating

	%
<i>"Lack of time"</i>	22%
<i>"Cost/not enough money"</i>	3%
<i>"Too scared to join"</i>	3%
<i>"Activities not available"</i>	2%
<i>"Laziness"</i>	2%
<i>"Not enough information"/ "friends not interested"</i>	2%

3.12 Well-Being and Resilience

The young people in this study were asked a set of questions about their physical activity in terms of energy and fitness, feelings and satisfaction with life. In all, 64% of respondents rate their overall physical health as either very good (34%) or excellent (30%). For 14% of respondents, their health is 'good', 'fair' for another 10% and 'poor' for 2%:

Figure 25: General Health



In terms of feeling fit and energetic during the previous week, one-third of respondents felt moderately fit, while 44% felt either 'very' or 'extremely' fit. Regarding feeling satisfied with life during the last week, 39% of respondents reported feeling 'moderately' satisfied, and a further 47% reported feeling 'very' or 'extremely' satisfied with life. Responses to statements about mood, feeling cheerful and having fun are in line with responses related to physical fitness. While negative emotions were also reported, these were at much lower levels, with 41% feeling under pressure or stressed either often or quite often, and a further one-third having 'often' or 'quite often' felt fed up. One-third of respondents have 'often' or 'quite often' felt sad.

Table 38: Mood and Physical Activity

In the previous week:	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Have you felt fit?	10%	9%	31%	33%	11%
Have you been physically active (e.g., running, cycling)?	6%	14%	26%	29%	19%
Have you felt full of energy?	8%	7%	29%	30%	18%
Have you felt satisfied with your life?	3%	4%	39%	27%	22%
Have you been in a good mood?	2%	7%	38%	32%	16%
Have you felt cheerful?	2%	3%	38%	33%	15%
Have you had fun?	1%	6%	30%	33%	24%
	Never	Seldom	Often	Quite Often	Always
Have you felt sad?	17%	46%	11%	14%	5%
Have you felt fed up?	14%	44%	10%	22%	3%
Have you felt under pressure or stressed?	23%	24%	10%	31%	4%

Respondents were asked about challenges they have experienced over the past year. Difficulties in relationships with family members and friends as well as death of a friend or close relative emerged as the most frequent challenge for young people in this study. Having to move into temporary or emergency accommodation such as a hotel or refuge was experienced by 3% of respondents:

Table 39: Challenges Experienced

Living Situation	Moved house	15%
	Moved country	2%
	Difficulties with neighbours	13%
	Moved into temporary/emergency accommodation such as hotel or refuge	3%
	Homelessness	0%
Relationships	Difficulties with parents or family member	30%
	Difficulties with friends	30%
	Death of friend or close relative	30%

Antisocial behaviour	In trouble with the Gardaí	3%
School	Change of school	8%
	Problems at school	11%
Health	Injury/illness of family member	21%
	Sudden personal health problem yourself	10%
	Accident / injury yourself	9%

Respondents were asked how they coped with life challenges. While half of respondents did not provide an answer to this question, 22% cited talking to a family member or friend, or visiting a GP:

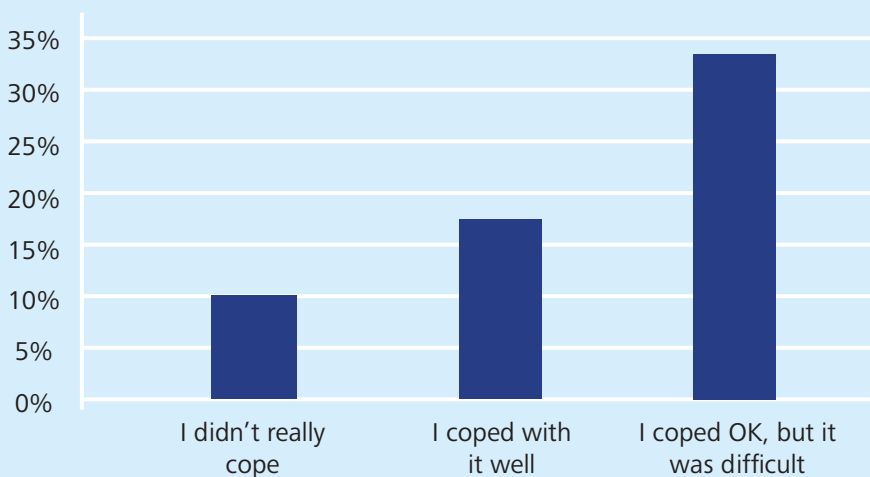
Table 40: Managing Challenges

<i>"Talked to family/friend"</i>	12% (n=15)
<i>"Visited a GP"</i>	10% (n=12)
<i>"I just got on with it"</i>	10% (n=12)
<i>"Talked to a teacher/coach"</i>	5% (n=6)
<i>"I didn't (deal/cope with event)"</i>	4% (n=4)
<i>"Talked to a counsellor"</i>	2% (n=3)
<i>*Other</i>	4% (n=2)

* Strategies that were reported by <2 respondents are included in this figure.

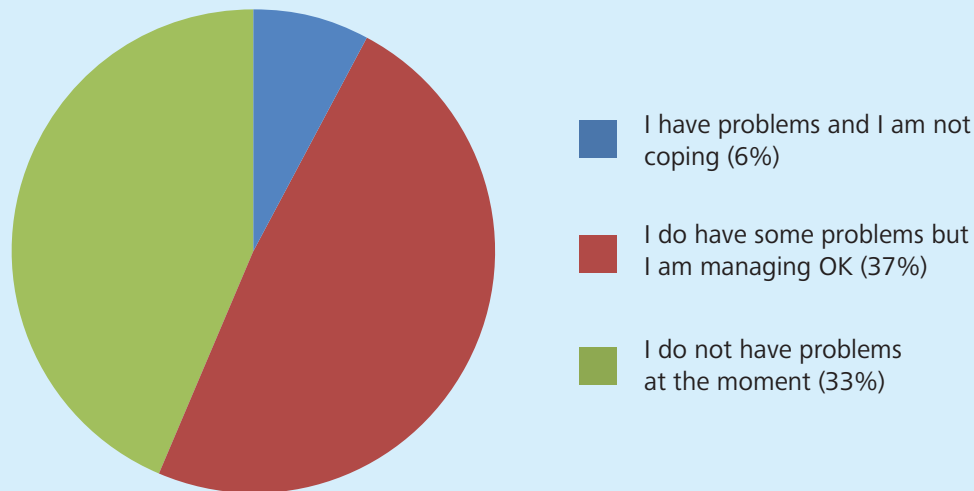
Asked how they coped with challenging life events, over one third of respondents did not reply; 34% of participants stated that they coped well, while 17% reported that they coped with it, in spite of it being difficult. A total of 10% stated they didn't really cope:

Figure 26: Coping with Challenges



Respondents were asked how they currently feel about life challenges. It is encouraging that one-third of respondents display a strong measure of resilience, while a further one-third feel they currently do not have any problems:

Figure 27: Self Perceived Coping Skills



Respondents reflected on their views of and hopes for their future, in particular to name the most important two things in relation to their future. In the first instance, getting a job and family and friends are highlighted as most important for the young people:

- 36% - Getting a job;
- 20% - Staying in contact with friends/family;
- 9% - Going to college/university;
- 6% - Being happy/reaching my goals.

In the second instance, respondents offered, the following responses, largely reflecting the above initial response:

- 22% - Staying in contact with friends/family;
- 9% - Getting a job;
- 8% - Going to college/university;
- 5% - Being happy/reaching my goals;
- 4% - Earning my own money;
- 6% - Staying healthy.

Participants in the Focus Groups outlined plans to study social care or *"work in Tallaght and open a stage school"*. Hopes for the future included *"being happy in whatever I do"*; *"supporting myself..... being independent"*; *"reaching the goals you set for yourself"*.

Appendix 4: Key Findings from the Service Providers

A total of 22 service providers participated in three Focus Groups, and included a Community Dietician; Social Worker; Community Development Officer; School Completion Coordinator; Local Development Manager; Childcare Manager; Manager of a Community Centre; manager of youth services and youth groups; and representatives from a range of sectors including education, employment, health, mental health and drug services, and local authority personnel involved with housing, traveller groups, youth and sports clubs.

4.1 Overview of Key Findings

- There is broad role satisfaction among service providers, with a strong sense of commitment, motivation and passion;
- A strong and established community and a vibrant community spirit are identified as key assets of Tallaght West;
- Research shows that interagency cooperation provides good opportunities to collaborate and respond to needs;
- Improved educational attainment among young people and improved accessibility of vulnerable groups to medical services are identified as significant achievements;
- There is an acute disconnect and detachment between senior management and service providers engaged with local communities, and deep frustration concerning the impact of this disconnect on local communities, which is perceived as disempowering and hindering community engagement and efficient service delivery;
- The consultation identified a need for a community development model that embraces a community voice and promotes engagement;
- Developing strong relationships with residents and communities is a notable challenge as residents are reluctant to engage with service providers;
- Barriers to community engagement could be addressed on the part of service providers by having greater awareness and understanding of residents' perceptions of their own needs, and encouraging greater personal responsibility and motivation;
- There exists a challenge in developing a sense of connectedness and attachment among young people within their communities, which needs to be addressed, in part, by early intervention;
- A lack of resources for service providers is presented as a chronic and persistent challenge which has a detrimental impact on local communities;
- Homelessness and the housing crisis are major concerns among service providers for children and families;
- Deep concerns are raised around the issue of safety in Tallaght West, as service providers present it as a volatile and intensely unsafe environment in which aggression and violence has escalated in recent years;
- Social vulnerability, drugs and crime, and the exposure of children to such an unsafe environment create further challenges for service providers;
- Safety concerns and fears can impact on service providers' abilities to carry out their duties in local communities;
- A lack of financial support presents a significant barrier to both service providers and volunteers in their efforts to develop the community and facilities for young people.

4.2 Perceptions of Role

When asked how they perceive their role within Tallaght West, service providers defined it largely in terms of providing ongoing support and maintaining relationships with individuals and families through various life stages. Promoting personal responsibility and empowerment among residents was also highlighted, with one participant explaining, their role as being *“Supporting and empowering (young people), whilst helping them understand personal role and responsibility”*.

Service providers describe their role as promoting and initiating early intervention with children and young people, viewing it as *“the best way of building a relationship. So that when they get to a teen stage you have a relationship and maybe more commitment from them”*. Engaging parents in this process is perceived as crucial: *“It’s easier to get the young person’s support once you have the parents involved”*.

4.3 Role Enjoyment and Satisfaction

When asked what they enjoy about their roles as service providers in TW, participants offered a variety of positive responses.

- **Satisfaction**

A strong sense of work satisfaction emerged:

“You feel that you can help the parents on a personal level and try and put them on courses and different things to educate them, and they’re very appreciative. I feel we’re making a bit of difference from parents to kids”.

Service providers also pointed to the impact of their work on individuals living in the community as a source of satisfaction: *“Working with parents and seeing their confidence raise, the way they manage their children, their self-esteem, their confidence.”*

- **Success**

For others, everyday achievements with families and young people are meaningful and important to them: *“Successes are the small things. If we can get a group of young people to show up to a 6-week programme, to get that commitment”*.

Several participants define success in terms of improvements in literacy and education:

“I like when we have success... we have far more people going to college, in third level education than five years ago. That’s a break in the cycle, something nice to reflect on. You need those successes”.

- **Motivation and Commitment**

Participants expressed strong motivation and ambition for their roles, with one participant stating that after almost 20 years of working in Tallaght West, she remains highly motivated and driven. *“I have never lost the passion and love of the area and never lost the need to do something to make a difference”*.

Other service providers described having a sense of:

“huge respect for families. They come to our service..... and they trust us and believe that we can do something. That is positive, that’s engagement. The trust and the belief that our services will help them”.

- **Passion**

In describing what they enjoy about their role, several service providers described a sense of passion and belief: *“Watching people improve their own quality of life, becoming more empowered. That’s the beauty in what we work with”.*

Participants also described the enjoyment and passion they experience in working with children:

“Introducing young people to things they’ve never done before. Opening their eyes to things, things I did in my childhood that they would never have done. Even making buns..... simple things”.

Another participant explained the enjoyment she felt from children’s appreciation: *“The amazement on children’s faces to be brought out of Tallaght, seeing animals, cows. Some of them have never been outside of Tallaght, never mind down the country”.*

- **Interagency Cooperation**

Numerous participants described *“positive interagency cooperation and good services”* as being an important aspect of their role satisfaction. Strong interagency coordination and work was described by participants as a key strength in TW and suggested that service providers’ commitment is key to enabling this.

4.4 Positive Aspects of Tallaght West

The factors which offer individual work satisfaction were mirrored in responses to what is going well in Tallaght West.

- **Strength of Community**

Strength of community was a recurring theme with contributions such as a *“big community spirit..... a lot of goodwill and ambition that is positive and continuing”*. Tallaght West is described by participants as *“long established.....a good strong stable community”*. Participants perceive that extended families living in the area have contributed to creating an established and stable community. They note that this strength of community has prevailed in spite of continuing social and economic challenges. Efforts by local communities to develop sports clubs and engage children in these facilities are described as *“absolutely phenomenal”*.

- **Interagency Cooperation**

Community strength is also understood in terms of effective interagency coordination and working: *“A lot of services, organisations work well together, good opportunities to collaborate with other organisations on projects and respond to needs. That’s a strength”*.

Participants also described a good quality range of services that meet client needs: *“I like working in Tallaght because any individual or family that engages with me whatever the issue, you can find help in Tallaght. You will be able to find the service, fit and support”*.

- **Educational Attainment and Improved Services**

Service providers point to a *“huge increase in educational attainment in young people”*. While it is noted that this has slightly slipped since the recession, awarding of junior certificates and literacy levels have nonetheless improved: *“Young people are starting to see themselves as having opportunities that they wouldn’t have seen years ago, such as getting qualifications”*.

Another service provider observes that services for some vulnerable groups have improved and individuals are engaging with these services: *“The most vulnerable have access to medical service.....with good vaccination rates. The social inclusion side of keeping people linked into medical and care services are working”*.

4.5 Disconnect between Management and Grassroots

In spite of positive aspects of their roles, their job satisfaction and views of what is working well in Tallaght West, service providers expressed strong dissatisfaction and frustration arising from a perceived disconnect or *“mismatch”* between service providers and management. Service providers described the current ‘top-down’ decision-making approach as hierarchical and overly focused on a statistical model.

Service providers described a *“huge change in policy to statistical models away from individuals and away from community... the language is economic, it’s outcomes, productivity, activity”*. According to participants there is a lack of direct engagement and dialogue between decision-makers and local communities, and a lack of willingness on the part of management to engage with service providers and communities. Participants expressed frustration that management and decision-makers have disengaged from communities despite it being *“their role and responsibility to be there and hear what is going on in communities”*.

- **Impact of “Disconnect” on Communities**

Inherent in this frustration is the belief that decision-makers do not understand community needs and the *“concept of community development or participation”*. One service provider explained that decision-makers have *“removed themselves from communities. They are not visible or engaging with the community anymore”*. Participants suggested this detachment has significantly weakened community ties.

The current management structure is perceived as creating obstacles to parents coming together to plan and provide childcare, education entertainment. Participants expressed the belief that community residents should be better facilitated to engage in their communities, particularly in challenging economic times, but feel that *“it’s become harder to do more because of new regulation”*. As one service provider explained, *“we need a structure that allows parents to be involved in these childcare units without regulation and hassle.....start removing that regulation and responsibility off volunteer workers.....They are a barrier”*.

Service providers described the impact of this disconnect as resulting in communities being disempowered and disenfranchised, having *“retreated”* from engagement: *“we are making it more and more difficult for the community to be empowered. Decision-makers have detached themselves from community lives where communities are “living in fear”*.

- **Impact of “Disconnect” for Service Providers**

Participants expressed immense frustration and a feeling of powerlessness regarding current ‘top-down’ approaches and how they hinder efficient service delivery. Participants identified the challenges that this structure has brought for service provision: *“We are not focusing on the clients, the families and the children’s needs and building around that”*. Another participant highlighted the potential long-term implications: *“If you don’t*

develop community then the long-term outcomes for youth are prison, probation, mental health services, and addiction services. They're not getting the role of investment training, development and restructuring. They don't get interagency integration work". Participants explained the impact of limited engagement on their work: *"Lack of engagement reduces the quality of the work you're offering. It undermines the whole group ethos and peer support ethos, which is crucial to the initiative"*. Service providers expressed frustration that within the current model they feel they are not sufficiently resourced understood or supported in their roles.

4.6 Need for a Community Development Model

Service providers call for a more participatory approach in which the "community voice" plays a more central role. Participants cited effective examples of community engagement that have taken place in the past, such as the collaboration of a programme involving local Traveller women and Gardaí, which led to vastly improved relationships between stakeholders and a sense of empowerment on the part of local community groups.

Participants observed that the perceived "stigma" and negative associations of specific mental health services can hinder the engagement of young people and residents. Individuals and families can be reluctant to accept support from specific services out of concern for how they may be perceived in the community. According to one participant, *"the HSE does not have a good reputation in some of its (mental health) services so people don't go there and there is a huge stigma around mental health, whether it's youth suicide or mental health"*.

Service providers explain the merit of instead placing mental health services *"within the community (given) a community base and funded appropriately"*. Jigsaw² is cited as a positive example of this, which participants feel does not share the same stigma as traditional HSE mental health services. Service providers call for a partnership model within the community that is *"for community services with a community development approach to develop some of the health services"*.

Participants also referred to Meitheal³ as an example of a positive working model with the *"potential to be a better access point for families to get support at an early intervention level"*.

4.7 Barriers to Community Engagement

In the Focus Groups, participants identified a key challenge in their work as engaging with and developing strong relationships with residents and communities. Several service providers explained that for some parents their non-engagement in child and education services can arise because other basic needs are not being met. One participant explained, *"engaging with speech and language services becomes less of a priority for parents if the family is cold and hungry"*, in which case speech and language may be perceived as an *"optional need"*.

Another participant elaborated that some families *"don't have the mental energy to work towards (engaging in such services)"*. Participants also pointed out that parents may not have the means to pay for public transport to access a service.

Another service provider explained that parents often take unfounded healthcare and nutritional advice from family and friends instead of adopting expert advice from healthcare practitioners. It is suggested that this may

² Jigsaw is The National Centre for Youth Mental Health.

³ Meitheal is the national practice model for agencies working with children, young people and their families where children need extra support. It enables the needs and strengths of children and their families to be properly identified and understood. Meitheal brings together a team around the child to deliver preventative supports that are outcome-focussed, planned, documented and reviewed over time (Gillen et al., 2013; Túsla Child and Family Agency, 2013).

arise due to lack of knowledge or because the parent assigns more importance to the views of family members than healthcare practitioners.

4.8 Overcoming Barriers to Engagement

Participants discussed the challenge of engaging families and residents in services despite offering “a hugely valuable and expensive service” and identified a number of approaches that could improve levels of participation.

Service providers pointed out that there is a need to reflect upon and understand the views of community individuals: “(these are) people who are doing their best with what they know.....They’re doing their best and we don’t always know what they want”. One participant suggested the need for greater reflection and awareness on the part of service providers: “A wrong assumption is for us to think that they’re not doing enough. They think they are doing good enough with the finances, experiences and education that they have and the situation that they’re living in”.

Participants suggested that community services need to be offered in more innovative and creative ways in order to encourage and develop increased engagement: “We need to do something different yet still offer the traditional piece to families that want it and can avail of it”.

Greater flexibility in addressing needs within communities was also noted:

“We need to keep in mind that we need to meet basic needs that change over time. We need to ask them to save, to plan and problem-solve. Basic organisational skills and help them to come up with solutions”.

Creating a sense of connectedness and attachment among young people within their communities was noted as a particular challenge. Service providers observed that a lack of connectedness “can be driven from a lack of empathy that is formed from early childhood”. One service provider pointed to a sense of detachment among young people from their own communities, with males in particular, viewing community as external to them instead of perceiving themselves as an intrinsic part of it. Other service providers noted that stigma and negative stereotypes associated with living in Tallaght West can hamper self-confidence in young people as well as their employment prospects, as they may face discrimination on the basis of their address when applying for jobs.

Participants highlighted the importance of early intervention in creating connection, empathy and awareness in young people, and an understanding of the impact of their own behaviour on communities. Teaching young people to have greater respect for their community and involving them in clubs where they play an active and supportive role for young children:

“At 13 or 14 (years of age) most lads drop out of football and other activities that they were involved in..... so it’s trying to re-engage them.....get them involved in positive things” with the understanding that “this is part of community and everything I do has an impact on somewhere else.”

Resilience is cited as a significant strength of community life in Tallaght West, but it is noted that there is a need to further empower communities, and address the “huge gap” that exists between the community’s capability to act and, on the other hand, the perceived regulations and barriers that hinder community action and engagement.

Service providers observed the impact of the recent economic recession on community lives:

"We've come through a really rough period and people have been beaten down and retreated into themselves and it will take a while for the positive mentality to come back again".

Participants were insistent that Tallaght West has not experienced a recovery: *"We thought that this year was going to be better but the recession is still here. The expectation for recovery is wrong. A double insult for people who have gone through recession"*. One participant observed that there is a reluctance on the part of residents to work together to resolve difficulties and challenges within communities, and this reluctance may arise from a *"lack of confidence and ability to tackle things themselves"*.

- **Personal Responsibility and Motivation**

While respondents described *"strength of community"* within Tallaght West, as outlined, they also made reference to the need for greater personal responsibility from individuals within communities and neighbourhoods. Some service providers perceived a lack of engagement on the part of residents and parents as arising from an absence of personal responsibility: *"You do see families who want everything and it's all offered and they don't realise that they're the key person who can change their own situation"*.

One service provider explained that engagement needs to come from parents themselves and there needs to be recognition by parents of their own needs: *"Parents themselves need to engage in the first place"*.

Several participants in the Focus Groups alluded to a lack of motivation on the part of parents and young people, and a strong mind-set that things cannot change. Inherent in this mind-set, according to service providers, is the belief among some young people that nothing in their lives will change for the better, which leads to apathy and a lack of motivation. Participants discussed the challenge of motivating and empowering young people to move beyond this mind-set, including the need to develop better self-esteem and pride among young people.

Others offered different viewpoints and depicted a strong degree of motivation and ambition on the part of residents which is hampered by external challenges:

"I see a generation of people who want better for their children, they want better for themselves, they want to get out there and do things. Every time they want to do something there is a financial barrier, housing barrier or service barrier. Coming up against brick walls all the time".

4.9 Resources: "Regression not Recovery"

In spite of positive feedback on their roles and the neighbourhood, a number of service providers conveyed uncertainty regarding efficacy: *"We're not sure if we're making an impact"*. This was expressed in the context of a perceived lack of resources for engaging with residents and families and to adequately meet their needs, and the detrimental impact of this lack of resources on local communities.

Participants described a state of *"regression"* since the outset of the recession, as homelessness, deprivation and poverty remain key concerns and challenges for communities. One participant compared Tallaght West to *"a place from the 80's, all the investment put in, and all of a sudden we're back to square one"*. Another explained *"we thought maybe last year we were turning a corner slightly but now we are going nowhere in the community"*.

Participants were unanimous in highlighting the challenges posed by a lack of resources: *"Our resources are so small for the numbers of families that are so large"*, and *"Response does not match need."* Service providers explained how *"thinly resources are stretched"* in their efforts to meet *"very significant challenges"* in communities.

The persistent lack of resources is presented as a constant and immense challenge: *"Everybody here is trying really hard, pulling resources from here, there and everywhere but it's just not getting to those who actually need the supports and children are at risk terribly within the communities"*.

Service providers described limited resources and cut-backs in services as having a detrimental impact on families and communities, leading to an inability to plan and meet the needs of vulnerable children and families: *"I'm being told to do more with less. I've done that and the well is run dry. There's nothing more I can do... I just see waiting lists everywhere, and behind these waiting lists there are people on the brink"*.

Service providers describe their efforts as *"fire-fighting"* and *"struggling"* amidst continually *"shrinking"* services and *"chronic"* waiting lists, no doubt feeding into the frustrations referenced above.

The housing crisis and homelessness were highlighted by service providers as a key concern in relation to children and families. Participants expressed awareness of the impact on families: *"How can anybody even do parenting in a hotel room? ...People are screaming out for help"*. They also emphasised the challenge of adequately and effectively meeting the needs of children in emergency accommodation:

"We're struggling to try to confirm if the children in the B&BS have had their vaccinations, are attending school, and are doing their homework. It's very, very difficult. Some families are three years in that system. That's a child's future gone".

Respondents feel that, due to the lack of resources they are prevented from reaching out to children at risk and intervening early on in children's lives, at a time when children's need for intervention and support is greatest. Participants recognise early intervention in childhood as crucial but demands and *"chronic"* waiting lists mean that *"trying to get intervention at a young age is so difficult"* and *"children's lives are passing by while they sit on waiting lists"*. This challenge is compounded by the difficulty of engaging parents, developing a rapport and supportive relationship with parents. Respondents describe their efforts of *"exhausting all avenues"* with parents in an effort to engage them in child services.

For service providers limited resources mean that *"we're constantly dealing with the crisis"* instead of addressing issues before they reach crisis point, and are unable to become embedded in the community. As one participant questioned, *"how do you interact with the community and get to people before the crisis point?"*.

Participants perceived this as *"overwhelming"*, and highlighted the prevalence of stress and burn-out among colleagues and service providers in Tallaght West: *"What I see is a shocking degree of burnout from people working in the centre and that has an impact on our customers, on the target group we are supposed to be serving"*.

4.10 Safety Concerns

In Focus Groups with service providers the theme of an unsafe and fearful community emerged strongly, with one service providers describing Tallaght West as *"intensely unsafe"*, *"volatile"* and *"dangerous"*. It was

suggested that the recession has resulted in a notable increase in frustration and an escalation of violence, with alcohol, drugs and gang intimidation cited as significant challenges, and areas within Tallaght West being described as “war-zones” or “no-go areas”.

Gang intimidation, (defined as “gangs of young men harassing people”) is a significant and constant challenge: “We’ve seen it all from houses being egged, to bins being set on fire, then all of a sudden there are break-ins and sexual assaults, so I think things are deteriorating and getting worse”. Participants reported a fear among residents of reporting anti-social behaviour to the Gardaí, and the possibility of being targeted by gangs.

- **Social Vulnerability**

Social vulnerability is evident in participants’ accounts: “Single mums and parents with undiagnosed learning difficulties and they are extremely vulnerable”. The impact on older people is also of concern: “It affects older people as well and they have a wealth of experience behind them that we could tap into but they are afraid to leave the house and become isolated. A lot needs to be done in terms of safety for children, older people and people with disabilities”. Participants refer to genuine fear in the community as “families are terrorised” by gangs, “parents are often afraid to open the door because they don’t know who is knocking. Speaking to parents at night time it’s a no-go area. A lot of robbed cars, drug dealers in the area and afraid to go outside the door”.

One service provider noted that: children’s exposure to drugs and gang intimidation creates an unsafe environment, whilst a lack of social workers and skilled practitioners and lengthy waiting times adds to this risk. Service providers’ ability to support children at risk, and children not receiving the support they need were identified as concerns.

- **Drugs and Crime**

According to participants, a lack of Garda resources means that crime and drug problems in the area have risen. Intimidation in local communities also arises from an increasing drug culture, which is described as “very open and accessible”, with prescription drugs being sold door-to-door. The exposure of young people to drugs was noted as a key concern: “every second and third house are abusing drugs, selling them, dealers at houses. So it is much more accessible. It’s not even as expensive as it used to be”.

- **Lack of Safety**

Participants describe the consequences of this sense of fear and powerless as being to retreat instead of engage; “You are not left in a position that could do anything else...this becomes their reality”.

Some service providers also noted that colleagues are sometimes fearful for their own safety in certain areas of Tallaght West. Participants discussed the impact of the delivery of services: “There are certain areas I won’t go into after 4 o’clock in the afternoon, as I know there will be gangs hanging around and I know I might have the windows of my car smashed in”.

4.11 A Lack of Facilities

Service providers perceive a lack of financial funding and resources as a barrier to residents who might be otherwise willing to participate and volunteer in community events and the development of facilities for young people: “There are people who would love to get involved but the money for insurance or kits are stopping them”. Funding is described as a constant challenge, “Every year it’s like ‘where are we going to get the money to fund us again?’ Every year is a fight.”

While the respondents note good facilities such as a transport system, swimming pool and extra-curricular activities, they cited a need for improved facilities for young people, such as community centres. They perceive that such facilities take the focus off pubs and bars as a space to meet and mingle with peers. Akin to the young people who participated in the Focus Groups, they observe that young people often have to travel outside of Tallaght to access facilities, and furthermore, it can be difficult to access facilities outside of their communities in other areas of Tallaght West.

Appendix 5: Key Findings from Volunteers and Leaders

A total of 11 community volunteers and leaders participated in two Focus Groups. Of these, four were female and seven were male, and all were actively involved in neighbourhood and community groups in Tallaght West. Their roles involve coordinating youth groups, maintaining and improving residents' gardens, setting up a local radio station and theatre group, establishing a "Men's Shed", running a horse project for young people, coordinating a residents' association, volunteering in a community Garda programme, and working with people with disabilities.

5.1 Overview of Key Findings

- Community volunteers are motivated largely by a perception of need within the community and their altruistic motivation to encourage a sense of belonging and empowerment;
- Community volunteers identified a strong sense of community strength and spirit, as well as local services and the geographic location of Tallaght West as being positive factors;
- Participants suggested that Tallaght West is stigmatised, with inherently negative associations, and that this stigma has a negative impact on local confidence and pride;
- There is a need for improved emphasis on early intervention with families and young people, and more resources to address mental health issues;
- A greater mix of social and private housing is required as a means of addressing current housing challenges;
- Safety is a significant concern among volunteers, as is a perceived lack of Garda resources;
- Participants demonstrated mixed views on facilities for young people. While some recognised the availability and quality of facilities for young people, others expressed concern over the perceived lack of resources invested in such facilities;
- There is significant consensus that barriers to implementing community development processes exist, including lack of information and awareness, issues around control, and a top-down management approach. The need for the implementation of an improved community development model that actively engages people from Tallaght West was suggested.

5.2 Factors Promoting Active Participation

- **Identifying Need**

When asked what prompted their active involvement in community life, the participating volunteers and leaders explained that they wanted to improve everyday life and counteract the effects of living in a neighbourhood affected by lack of safety and anti-social behaviour. Identifying a need and finding a way to address it, was described by a number of participants. For another participant, a perceived lack of communication and interaction motivated him to set a local radio station and theatre group. Another participant explained that her parents' involvement in local sports prompted her to continue their role once they stepped back.

One female respondent identified how an awareness of isolation and loneliness among new mothers prompted her to join the Community Mothers Group and support young mothers by visiting them: *"I became aware of the isolation of these young women in their own homes."* She subsequently set up a mother and toddler group operating out of parents' homes. For participants, active community involvement was an antidote to the frustration associated with challenges in their neighbourhood.

- **Encouraging Belonging & Empowerment**

Respondents believe that their active community roles elicit a strong sense of belonging and personal empowerment in others. One male participant described his role of encouraging and supporting people to improve and maintain their gardens, which he believes instils a sense of pride and empowerment. Through this gardening initiative, he has succeeded in involving local councillors in a larger landscaping project. In this way, the volunteer felt he achieved respect for the work he carried out from some of the local professionals, and, as a result, was able to access bridging capital available beyond the immediate community setting.

- **“Giving Back”**

Driven by a sense of fairness and social justice, respondents sought opportunities to seek positive community change. They expressed an interest in *“social issues and society in general”* and a belief in altruism and *“giving back”*: *“I always believe in whatever skills you have, giving them back”*. Some respondents explained that they actively seek opportunities to contribute: *“[b]uilding up people’s self esteem and letting them know they have a place in the community”*. They described their role as *“sharing”*, *“What I give to the community is myself. I’m not afraid to share ... It’s sharing not just your knowledge and skills but also your experiences which make a big difference.”*

Another respondent explained, *“It takes everybody to raise a child. The whole idea of community is that everyone has different experiences and different views and to keep it all to yourself is selfish.”* Participants view their engagement and volunteer roles as a positive contribution to making people’s lives better. Adopting an active role in attempting to bring about social change in the community was linked to feelings of pride and community belonging.

5.3 Positive Aspects of Tallaght West

- **Community Strength and Spirit**

In discussions with community volunteers and leaders, a myriad of positive aspects were identified in Tallaght West. Respondents highlighted a *“very positive energy in Tallaght West”*, *“and a wonderful community all over Tallaght”*. A sense of pride and the perception that *“[p]eople are proud that they come from here”* were also noted. One participant explained the camaraderie: *“The community spirit and solidarity in Tallaght is probably one of the best in the country and when you get us together we do come out and make a difference”*.

- **Local Services and Location**

Well developed local services were also identified. *“There’s a lot going for Tallaght. There’s a lot in IT Tallaght, really good courses, shopping centre, hospital here, and library. It has an awful lot going for it. I think the energy is really good here too. I’m living in Tallaght seven years and you have the Luas and everything”*. Also mentioned is the variety of active community groups: *“There are so many groups and active groups, Killinarden is a brilliant example of that, how active it is.”* Respondents described Tallaght’s geographic *“location beside the Dublin Mountains”* as an excellent location and a notably positive attribute.

5.4 Facilities

Local volunteers offered mixed views on the availability and quality of facilities for young people in Tallaght West. Some note the swimming pool, sports clubs, Luas facilities, and one interestingly pointed out, *“We don’t lack in facilities but what we do lack in is confidence and pride”*.

Other volunteers identified a lack of facilities for young people as a challenge:

"Some areas have state of the art facilities and services where others close by don't get the same thing." One respondent expressed a sense of frustration: "We were given land for a designated youth centre, the plans were drawn up, architecture, the whole lot, the money was there apparently and that just got pulled."

Accessing community centres outside of a local area can bring safety challenges:

"We can't take kids and tell them that they have to go to Brookfield Community Centre. On a map it might look like a ten, fifteen minute walk, but it's a dangerous ten or fifteen minute walk when you look at taking young people from one area to another."

The community leaders and volunteers identified a number of additional concerns:

5.5 Concerns

Safety

The community volunteers identified safety as a significant concern, with a former community liaison officer noting that *"many people are afraid to walk in certain areas"*. This volunteer noted a lack of Garda resources and suggested that one Garda station in Tallaght is not sufficient to meet the needs of such a vast area.

Social Stigma

Participants largely believe that Tallaght West area is stigmatised and has an inherently negative association. Participants explained how this stigma impacts on young people in daily activities as they describe how they are kept under surveillance by security in shopping centres *"to make sure they're doing nothing wrong"*. Participants suggested that this stigma can mean that residents feel isolated and detached from the wider Tallaght community. One respondent observed that it only serves to compound the socially disadvantaged position of Tallaght West.

Housing

Local volunteers identified housing as a key issue, specifically calling for a greater mix of social and private housing to promote social cohesion and overcome 'place' stigma. Currently, the perceived focus on social housing over private housing is viewed as compounding the disadvantage of those who are already economically marginalised.

5.6 Young People and Early Intervention

Local leaders recognise the importance of early intervention: *"You need to not just think of adults, you need to empower the young people."* A lack of confidence and self-belief on the part of young people was identified as a challenge. One respondent who works with young people described the importance of encouraging young people to *"find their voice"*. *"The more young people and children that get those opportunities and build up those confidence and skills the better it is for everybody."*

Several respondents identified a need to intervene with whole families, not just children: *"We have families with problems and we tend to some extent, deal with the children, away from the families."*

One respondent highlighted the importance of early intervention: *"They spend thousands a week looking after*

people in prison. If that was put into children, they wouldn't be going into prison....they need it when they're young".

Mental health in young men was identified as a key concern: *"One of the biggest, particularly in young men, is depression. Some young men have serious problems because they don't have a role in life."* A lack of employment and education among young men was identified by respondents as a challenge:

"A lot of them are unemployed and I find it's just a lot are soul-destroyed. They're hanging around with no futures or education. That's the biggest thing facing them. They're not a problem, they're our problem."

5.7 Overcoming Barriers to Community Participation

Community leaders presented differing views on the availability of community development programmes aimed at supporting local people. While one respondent identified *"initiatives and programmes to empower the local people.....to give them the knowledge and training to do strategic planning and how to run your Boards and Committees"*, this view was largely challenged by other respondents: *"The community gets disenfranchised because they [community] don't understand how the system works or how to apply for the grants, you're depending on someone else to do it and when it comes to making a decision, you don't have the control of the finances."*

There was general consensus that in relation to community engagement, local residents have been disempowered rather than supported: *"People have been disempowered and just don't have the control over their own area and decision making."*

According to the volunteers, organisations that are meant to be community-based do not always encourage the involvement of local residents: *"You get people coming in, setting up an organisation, taking control of it, and the community then are just tagging along."* Another participant noted that *"they are putting in charge those that don't live in the area, have that involvement and don't see things and don't have that input"*.

Lack of involvement on the part of young people was also noted. For example, *"there are very few young people who get involved these days. There seems to be a lack of interest amongst the youth in developing communities"*.

A lack of information and awareness of services and supports were also presented as challenges to community participation:

"They say they have staff in place that are supposed to go in free of charge and give training in committee skills, strategic planning, conflict management, anything that you think is necessary or needed to run a successful community group.....but people aren't aware that they're there and.....they're not advertising that actively."

A top-down management approach was identified by participants as a hindrance to community involvement in local issues: *"The community are supposed to have a say but you just have all different organisations on the Board and if you're voluntary on the Board, you don't have the time, expertise or support to sort of do anything or make decisions. I was really disappointed over the years with community development. It was never developed so that the community could have a say."*

Nonetheless, participants identified a cohort of local voluntary agencies that actively empower and support local communities, such as Foroige, An Cosan and Obair *“who are always trying to empower the local people to get up and try do things for themselves and realise their rights.”*

Participants made suggestions on how a better community model could be implemented:

“If there was a better model where professional community workers came in and they had a certain period of time to say right, in two or three years time we’ve done that, now you handle it yourselves. There are other ways it’s done in different countries and it works well. This country is very centralised”.

Respondents were unanimous in their belief that community organisations should actively involve people from Tallaght, with one respondent suggesting that it should be mandatory that a specific percentage of staff delivering services and board members are Tallaght residents who are *“empowered and educated”* to contribute to and support local communities.

Appendix 6: Residents Questionnaires

How Is Our Neighbourhood?: Resident Survey

Hi, my name is _____ and I am carrying out a survey on behalf of the Tallaght West Childhood Development Initiative (or CDI). Do you have time to talk now or would you like me to call back at a time that's more convenient to you?

Have you heard of CDI? Well, CDI are based in St. Mark's House in Fettercairn. Do you know where the farm is (e.g. the donkeys and the geese)? That's where CDI is! CDI is a charity and it hopes to support a better life for children and young people in West Tallaght by understanding needs within the community.

The survey is anonymous which means that those living and working in the Tallaght West area are offered a chance to say what they really want to say about their neighbourhood. The survey will take about 25 minutes of your time.

.....

We'd like to start by asking about your understanding of your neighbourhood:

- | |
|--|
| 1. Can I ask you, what people and/or places do you think of when you think about the word 'neighbourhood'? |
| 2. In your own words, how would you describe your own neighbourhood? – EG friendly, lively, boring, quiet, unsafe. |

We're interested in how people relate to their neighbours. We'd like to ask you some questions about whether or not you get along with your neighbours:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3. Do you know any of your neighbours personally – that is, you know their names and stop to talk to them at least every once in a while? | (1) Yes, I know a lot of neighbours
(2) Yes, I know just one or two
(3) No
(4) Not applicable – no neighbours nearby |
| 4. How often do you talk to your neighbours? | (1) Daily
(2) Several times a week
(3) Once a week
(4) Between once a week and once a month
(5) Several times a year
(6) Don't know |

5. Do you talk to your neighbours using social media, such as whatsapp, facebook, texting?	(1) Daily (2) Several times a week (3) Once a week (4) Between once a week and once a month
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6. Now can you tell us how true the following statements are for you:				
	Completely True	Mostly True	Mostly Untrue	Completely Untrue
People living in my area do not share the same values.	4	3	2	1
My neighbours look after their properties.	4	3	2	1
I have almost no influence over what my neighbourhood is like.	4	3	2	1
If there is a problem in this neighbourhood people who live here can get it sorted.	4	3	2	1
My neighbours and I want the same things for our area.	4	3	2	1

We'd like to ask you now about whether or not you feel you belong, or have a sense of attachment to your neighbourhood:

7. How long have you lived in the neighbourhood?	(1) Born here (2) Less than 1 year (3) 1-2 years (4) 3-5 years (5) More than 5 years (6) Don't know
8. Have you noticed changes over that time?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
IF YES	
9. What changes have you noticed?	
10. What do you most like about your neighbourhood?	

11. What do you like least about living here?- e.g, litter, crime or anti-social behaviour.	
12. How has this affected you?	
13. In general would you say that people in your neighbourhood look after each other and help out when they can, or do they pretty much do their own thing?	(1) Do their own thing (2) A little of both (3) Look out for others.
14. How important is it for you to feel a sense of belonging with other people living nearby?	(1) Very important (2) Somewhat important (3) Not important
15. Would you say you feel a sense of belonging to this neighbourhood?	(1) Very strong sense of belonging (2) Somewhat in between (3) Very little sense of belonging

Now we'd like to ask you about your ethnic background:

16. Which ethnic group would you consider that you belong to?	(1) White Irish (2) White British (3) White other (4) Black Irish (5) Mixed white + black Caribbean (6) Mixed white + black African (7) Mixed white + Asian (8) Mixed other (9) Indian (10) Pakistani (11) Bangladeshi (12) Other Asian (13) Black Caribbean (14) Black African (15) Black other (16) Chinese (17) Other
17. Thinking about the people in your network, such as friends and neighbours, are they mainly part or not part of your own ethnic group?	(1) Part of my ethnic group (2) Not part of my ethnic group (3) Mixed (4) Don't know

18. Do people from different ethnic groups in your neighbourhood mix together?	(1) Yes (2) Sometimes (3) No (4) Don't Know
IF YES/SOMETIMES 19. When does this happen?	Record all that that apply (1) At schools/Creches (2) In local community projects (3) Neighbourhood associations (4) Sports/clubs (5) Other
20. How well integrated do you feel you are in this neighbourhood?	(1) Very well (2) Somewhat in between (3) Not at all

We are trying to get a sense of what it is like for children living and spending time in this neighbourhood:

21. Do children live here, or visit you here? IF 'NO' GO TO Q.24	(1) Child(ren) live here (2) Child(ren) visit/stay here (3) No Child(ren) live or visit here
IF YES 22. Do you have use of a private garden where children can be safely left on their own for a short while?	(1) Yes (2) No
23. What do you like least about living here?- e.g, litter, crime or anti-social behaviour.	(1) Yes (2) No
24. Overall, how would you rate this neighbourhood as a place to bring up a family?	(1) Very good (2) Fairly good (3) Neither good nor poor (4) Fairly poor (5) Very poor

Next we'd like to ask you about your family, friends and the people you go to for support and help.

25. Do you have family living in your neighbourhood? IF 'NO' GO TO Q.27	(1) Yes (2) No
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26. How often do you stay in contact with them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Daily (2) Several times a week (3) Once a week (4) Between once a week and once a month (5) Several times a year (6) Don't know
27. Do you have many friends in this neighbourhood? IF 'NO' GO TO Q.29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Yes (2) No
IF YES 28. How often do you get together with them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Daily (2) Several times a week (3) Once a week (4) Between once a week and once a month (5) Several times a year (6) Don't know
29. Where do you go when you socialise with family or friends?	Record all that that apply <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) At home (2) Café/Pub/Restaurant (3) Community centre (4) Shopping centre (5) Park (6) Club (7) Various (8) Other (9) Don't know

30. Next we'd like to ask who you turn to when you need help or advice. Over the <u>past month</u> have you had the following types of help? Enter Yes, No or Not Applicable.			
	Do you get this help?	Could you get this help if needed?	From who? (family, friend, neighbour, other)
Been lent or given a sum of money			
Left your child(ren) with someone overnight			
Got a lift to an important appointment			
Had help with chores / maintenance (e.g. cleaning, gardening, lifting)			

	Do you get this help?	Could you get this help if needed?	From who? (family, friend, neighbour, other)
Talked to someone because you felt depressed or upset			
Received care at home while you were ill			
Other			

31. What about you- do people come to you for help or support?- such as to talk about a concern, to borrow something, childcare, a lift or transport. IF 'NO' GO TO Q.34	(1) Yes (2) Sometimes (3) No (4) Don't Know
32. Who comes to you for help?	(1) Friend (2) Family member (3) Neighbour (4) Other
33. What type of help or support does [PERSON(S)] look for?	Record all that that apply (1) Borrow something (2) Help with household chores or maintenance of house (3) Talk about a concern (4) Babysit/Childcare (5) Mind a pet (6) Transport/Lift (7) Other

34. Next we'd like to ask you about facilities that are available in your neighbourhood, and the facilities that you use. Enter Yes, No or Don't Know.			
Facility	Is Facility Available Yes/No/Don't Know	Used Yes/No	How often used (daily, monthly, few times a week)
Supermarket			
Shop			
Post Office			
Library			
ATM Machine/Bank/Credit Union			
Church/Place of Worship			
School			

Facility	Is Facility Available Yes/No/Don't Know	Used Yes/No	How often used (daily, monthly, few times a week)
Doctor's Surgery or Primary Care Centre			
Community Centre			
Sports Facility			
Pub			
Restaurant/Café			
Public Transport			
Adult and Further Education Classes			

35. Do you know what facilities and activities are available for teenagers and young people living in this neighbourhood?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know If YES, GIVE DETAIL:
36. Do you know what facilities and activities are available for senior citizens?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know If YES, GIVE DETAIL:
37. What is your opinion of facilities in your neighbourhood?	(1) Not good (2) Good (3) Very Good (4) Excellent

We're interested in finding out whether or not you play a role in neighbourhood activities:

38. Have you been involved in any groups or organisations over the last 12 months? IF 'NO' GO TO Q.41	Record all that apply (1) Charity/Volunteer (2) Political group (3) Recreational/Sports group as a volunteer/coach/helper (4) Residents group/neighbourhood watch (5) Religious group (6) Parents' associations (7) Other (8) Don't know
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39. How much time do you spend on activities related to this/these groups or organisations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Most days (2) A few hours every month (3) Very occasionally (4) Other (Specify) (5) Don't know (6) Not relevant
40. In what kinds of activities do you engage on behalf of these organisations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Teaching/coaching (2) Fundraising (3) Distributing newsletters (4) Secretarial work (5) Attending meetings (6) Other
41. Do you feel you have the opportunity to contribute to the neighbourhood in the way you would like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know

Now we'd like to know a bit more about safety in your neighbourhood and your views on safety:

42. Do you feel safe in your neighbourhood?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
43. In your words, what is a 'safe' neighbourhood?	
44. Do you think the council looks after your neighbourhood area?, such as fixing broken street lights, or foot paths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Yes (2) Sometimes (3) No, not enough (4) Don't know

45. In general how safe do you think children are in your neighbourhood a scale of 1-10?

Unsafe 1 ----- **Safe 10**

46. Which two problems specific to safety in your neighbourhood would you like to change?
It's ok if you can only think of 1 problem.

(1)

(2)

Now we'd like to know a bit more about whether or not there are problems in your neighbourhood, and if so, how you and your neighbours manage these problems:

47. Do you think there are problems in your neighbourhood?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't Know
IF YES 48. What problems are there?	Record all that that apply (1) Rubbish and litter lying about (2) Homes and gardens in bad conditions (3) Vandalism and deliberate damage to property (4) People being drunk or taking drugs in public (5) Other
49. Do you talk about neighbourhood problems with people in your area?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't Know
50. IF YES, who do you talk to?	Record all that that apply (1) Friends/Family (2) Neighbours (3) Shopkeepers (4) Canvassers (5) Members of organisations to which you belong (6) Online activity/Social media, such as Facebook, Whatsapp (7) Other (Please specify)
51. Has action been taken by residents in the neighbourhood to address the problems? IF 'NO' GO TO Q.54	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't Know
52. IF YES, what action has been taken?	Record all that that apply (1) Approached local politicians (2) Sent a petition to the relevant authorities (3) Held a demonstration (4) Held a meeting (5) Organised a media campaign (6) Other (Please specify) (7) Don't Know
53. Have you been involved in any of these actions yourself? IF 'NO' GO TO Q.54	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know

54. What actions have you been involved in?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Approached local politicians (2) Signed a petition (3) Joined a group/organisation (4) Participated in a demonstration (5) Held a demonstration, (6) Mobilised/involved people you know (7) Engaged in online mobilisation activity (8) Other (Please specify)
55. Can you name any active leaders or champions in your area?	
56. Do you think they play an important role in your neighbourhood?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know

57. We would now like to ask you about things that have happened to you over the past year and how you have coped with them. Either now or in the past year have any of the following things happened to you? **Enter Yes or No**

Living Situation	Moved house	
	Moved country	
	Difficulties with neighbours	
	Homelessness	
Relationships	Difficulties with children	
	Break-up of a relationship	
	Difficulties with close relatives or friends	
	Death of close relative or friend	
Antisocial behaviour	Victim of crime	
	In trouble with the Gardai	
Education & Employment	Change of job	
	Problems at work	
	Redundancy	
	Child changing school	

Health	Birth of a baby	
	Sudden health problem	
	Accident / Injury	
Income	Loss of money (stolen purse, redundancy)	
	None of these	IF 'NONE' GO TO Q.60

58. Which of these events happened most recently?	
59. How did [EVENT] affect you? (e.g. emotionally, physically, materially)	
60. What did you do to deal with the [EVENT]?	
61. Overall, how would you say you coped with the [EVENT]? Would you say . . .	(1) You coped with it well (2) You coped with it OK , but it was very difficult (3) You didn't really cope
62. Overall, which of the following statements matches how you currently feel?	(1) You do not really have any problems at the moment (2) You do have some problems at the moment but you are managing OK (3) You have problems and you are not coping with them

63. Next can you tell me how much you agree with the following statements?
I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times (1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree
I have a hard time making it through stressful events (1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree
It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event (1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree
It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens (1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree
I usually come through difficult times with little trouble (1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree
I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life (1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree

64. Now we've some questions relating to your health. Please indicate which statements best describe your health today.	
Mobility No problems in walking about Some problems in walking about Confined to bed	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Care No problems with self-care Some problems washing or dressing yourself Unable to wash or dress yourself	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Usual Activities (e.g. work, study, housework, family or leisure activities) No problems with performing your usual activities Some problems with performing your usual activities Unable to perform your usual activities	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Pain/Discomfort No pain or discomfort Moderate pain or discomfort Extreme pain or discomfort	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Anxiety/Depression Not anxious or depressed Moderately anxious or depressed Extremely anxious or depressed	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Lastly, we would like to ask you some questions about yourself. Please be assured that your answers will remain fully confidential.

65. What is your current employment status? Are you:	(1) Working full-time (2) Working part-time (3) Unemployed (4) Retired (5) Looking after family home (6) Unable to work owing to permanent sickness or disability (7) Government programme (e.g. FAS) (8) Full-time education training course
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IF (1), (2), (3), (5), (7), (8): 66. If you wanted to work, would you be able to take up work?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
67. What might prevent you from taking up work?	
68. What is your occupation?	
69. Where do you go to work/college/training?	

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey!

Appendix 7: Young People's Questionnaire

How Is Our Neighbourhood?: Young Person Survey

This survey is being carried out by the Childhood Development Initiative in Tallaght West. We are doing this survey to understand young people's lives and neighbourhood needs in Tallaght West.

The survey is anonymous, and does not ask for any names or addresses. Parts of the survey may ask some sensitive questions about your thoughts, feelings or things that might have happened to you. Again, no one will know your answers, and the information sheet gives a list of contact details for support agencies. There are no right or wrong responses, and the information you give will help us gather a true picture of life for young people living in Tallaght West.

You can fill it in using pen or pencil. For multiple choice questions, you can circle the correct response, as in this example:

- (1) Yes
- (2) **No**
- (3) Don't know

Other questions will allow you to give a fuller answer and more information, such as in the first question below. This survey will take about 30 minutes of your time to complete. Thank you for taking part in this survey.

Place & Belonging

We'd like to start by asking about your views of your neighbourhood:

1. Can I ask you, what people and/or places come to mind when you think about the word 'neighbourhood'? Fill in your answer on the right.	
2. Does your neighbourhood fit this description?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
3. In your own words, how would you describe your own neighbourhood? e.g, friendly, lively, boring, quiet, unsafe. Fill in your answer on the right.	

We'd like to ask you now about whether or not you feel you belong to your neighbourhood:

4. In general would you say that people in your neighbourhood look after each other and help out when they can, or do they pretty much do their own thing? Circle your response.	(1) Do their own thing (2) A little of both (3) Look out for others.
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5. How important is it for you to feel a sense of belonging with other people in your neighbourhood?	(1) Very important (2) Somewhat important (3) Not important
6. Would you say you feel a sense of belonging to your neighbourhood?	(1) Very strong sense of belonging (2) Somewhat in between (3) Very little sense of belonging
7. If it were possible would you like to move, or are you happy to live in your neighbourhood at the moment?	(1) I am happy to stay here and would not like to move (2) I am not happy to stay here and would like to move (3) Don't know

8. Now tell us how true the following statements are for you. Please circle the number that applies to you.				
	Completely True	Mostly True	Mostly Untrue	Completely Untrue
I think my neighbourhood is a good place for me to live	4	3	2	1
People living in my neighbourhood share the same values.	4	3	2	1
My neighbours and I want the same things for our area.	4	3	2	1
I can recognise most of the people who live in my neighbourhood.	4	3	2	1
I feel at home in my neighbourhood.	4	3	2	1
I have some influence over what my neighbourhood is like.	4	3	2	1
If there is a problem in my neighbourhood people who live here can get it sorted.	4	3	2	1
People in my neighbourhood generally get along with one another.	4	3	2	1
I expect to live in my neighbourhood a long time.	4	3	2	1
I feel a sense of pride in my neighbourhood.	4	3	2	1

We are trying to understand what it is like for young people living and spending time in this neighbourhood:

9. In your own words what is a 'good' neighbourhood? Fill in your answer on the right.	
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10. How good do you think your neighbourhood is?	(1) Very good (2) Fairly good (3) Neither good nor poor (4) Fairly poor (5) Very poor
11. What do you enjoy most about living in your neighbourhood? e.g., friends, school, green areas. Fill in your answer on the right.	
12. What do you like least about living in your neighbourhood? e.g., rubbish, graffiti, noisy neighbours, crime.	
13. What would you like to change most about your neighbourhood? Can you describe or name 2 things. If you can't think of 2, then 1 is fine.	(1) (2)
14. Who do you think should be involved in making your neighbourhood a better place?	
15. Who do think are active leaders or champions in your neighbourhood? Can you give names.	
16. Do you think they play an important role in your neighbourhood?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know

Family & Friends

Next we'd like to ask you about your family and friends.

17. How many friends do you normally hang around with?	(1) None (2) 1 or 2 (3) Between 3 and 5 (4) Between 6 and 10 (5) More than 10
18. How many of your friends are from a different ethnic background to you?	(1) None (2) 1 or 2 (3) Between 3 and 5 (4) Between 6 and 10 (5) More than 10

19. How old are the friends that you usually hang around with? Please place a tick in the box that applies to you. You can leave the other boxes blank.			
	None	Some	Most or All
A year or more younger			
About the same age			
A year or two older			
More than two years older			

20. How often do you get together with your friends outside of school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Daily (2) Several times a week (3) Once a week (4) Between once a week and once a month (5) Several times a year (6) Don't know
21. How many of your friends would you describe as close?	
22. Where do you go when you socialise with friends?	<p>Circle all that apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) At home/friend's home (2) Café (3) Community centre (4) Shopping Centre (5) Park/green area (6) In an estate (7) Club (8) Other _____ (9) Don't know
23. Thinking about time you spend with your friends outside of school every day, how much of this time is face-to-face?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) No time (2) Less than 1 hour (3) 1- 2 hours (4) 2- 3 hours (5) 3- 4 hours (6) More than 4 hours

24. Thinking about this face-to-face interaction, how much of this interaction is formal, such as in a sports club?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) None (2) Less than 1 hour (3) 1- 2 hours (4) 2- 3 hours (5) 3- 4 hours
25. How much of this interaction is just hanging out informally with friends, such as at home or in a park?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) None (2) Less than 1 hour (3) 1- 2 hours (4) 2- 3 hours (5) 3- 4 hours

Next, there are some questions about your interaction with friends online and on social media.

26. Do you own a smart phone, ie., Android or iphone?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Yes (2) No
27. Approximately, how long have you been using social media? Circle your response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Don't really use social media (2) Less than a month (3) 1-6 months (4) 6-12 months (5) 1-2 years (6) 2-4 years (7) 4+ years
28. How much time do you spend interacting with your friends on social media every day? ie, Facebook, twitter, Whatsapp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) No time (2) Less than 1 hour (3) 1-2 hours (4) 2-3 hours (5) 3-4 hours (6) 4-5 hours
29. What apps/social media do you use most to stay in touch with your friends?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Facebook (2) Yik Yak (3) Whatsapp, (4) Viper (5) Twitter (6) Snapchat (7) Instagram (8) Other. Please specify _____

30. Is there any time of day when you do not have your phone on you, apart from school, or while showering/changing?	(1) No (2) Yes. Please specify.
31. When you have your phone on you, how often do you check your phone? E.g, to check messages, updates, voice calls, to get the time.	(1) Every 10 minutes or more often (2) Every 30 minutes or more often (3) Every hour (4) Every 2-3 hours (5) One or twice a day (6) Weekly (7) Other

32. The following statements ask about your relationship with your friends. Please place a tick in the box that applies to you. You can leave the other boxes blank.					
	Almost Never or Never	Not Very Often	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always or Always
I feel my friends are good friends					
When we talk, my friends care about my point of view					
I wish I had different friends					
My friends understand me					
My friends accept me as I am					
I feel alone or apart when I am with my friends					
My friends listen to what I have to say					
My friends are fairly easy to talk to					
I can count on my friends when I need to get something off my chest					
I trust my friends					
I get upset a lot more than my friends know about					
I can tell my friends about my problems and troubles					
If my friends know something is bothering me they ask me about it					
My friends come to me for help or to talk about problems					

33. What are the biggest challenges and difficulties for young people in your neighbourhood?

34. Thinking about the last 6 months.... **(Please place a tick in the box that applies to you. You can leave the other boxes blank)**

	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Have you been afraid of other boys or girls?					
Have you felt bullied by other boys or girls?					

35. If yes to any, how often would this have occurred? Circle your response.

(1) Daily (2) Weekly (3) Monthly (4) Rarely (5) Never

36. Thinking about the last week.... **(Please place a tick in the box that applies to you. You can leave the other boxes blank)**

	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Have your parent(s)/guardian understood you?					
Have you felt loved by your parent(s)/guardian?					
Have you been happy at home?					
Have your parent(s)/guardian had enough time for you?					
Have your parent(s)/guardian treated you fairly?					
Have you been able to talk to your parent(s)/guardian when you wanted to?					

37. Who do you turn to when you need help or advice?

- (1) Friend(s)
- (2) Family member
- (3) Teacher
- (4) Neighbour
- (5) Other. Please specify.
- (6) No-One
- (7) Don't know

38. What sort of support/advice have you received from this person?	
39. Is there someone in your neighbourhood that you look up to?	(1) Yes (2) No
40. If Yes, who is this person?	(1) Someone you hang around with who is older than you (2) Family member (3) Teacher (4) Sports coach (5) Other. Please specify.
41. Why do think you look up to this person?	

Education & Training

Next we have some questions about education and training.

42. Which of the following do you attend?	(1) School (2) Training course (3) Other. Please specify.
43. What do you like about school or training?	
44. What do you dislike or find challenging about school or training?	
45. Do you intend to finish training or secondary school?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
46. Do your parents/guardian expect you to finish training or school?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
47. Are there reasons why you think you might not finish training or school?	

48. Would you like to do further training or go to college?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
49. Do you think your parents/guardian expect you to do further training or go to college?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
50. Does your school/teacher offer you guidance about training and further education?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
51. If yes, what is your opinion of this guidance?	(1) Not good (2) Good (3) Fair (4) Very Good (5) Excellent

52. Please place a tick in the box that applies to you. You can leave the other boxes blank.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I get on well with my teachers/trainers				
It is important to do your best in school/in training courses				
My teacher's/trainer's opinion of me is important				
I find it difficult to concentrate in school/in training				
School/Training is a waste of time for me				
Most of the rules in school/training are stupid or petty				

Facilities & Activities

53. What facilities are available in your neighbourhood?	Is Facility Available Yes/No/Don't know	Used Yes/No	How often used
Library (outside school)			
Community Centre			
Sports Facility			
Restaurant/Café			

Park			
Public Transport			
Other facilities _____			

54. What is your opinion of facilities in your neighbourhood?	(1) Not good (2) Good (3) Fair (4) Very Good (5) Excellent
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55. In a typical week, are you involved in activities that take place outside of school hours? Please place a tick in the boxes that apply to you. You can leave the other boxes blank.	
Activity	Yes/No
A sports team	
After-school Club	
Swimming pool	
Scouts, brigades, army cadets	
Music, dance, drama	
A homework club or language class	
Charity/Volunteer group	
Other activity, please name	

56. Would you like to partake in more neighbourhood activities?	(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
57. If yes, what stops you from taking part?	

Well-Being

Next we have some questions about your physical activity in terms of energy and fitness, feelings and satisfaction with life:

58. In general, how would you say your health is?	(1) Excellent (2) Very good (3) Good (4) Fair (5) Poor
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59. Thinking about the last week.... (Please place a tick in the box that applies to you. You can leave the other boxes blank.)					
	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Have you felt fit?					
Have you been physically active (e.g., running, climbing, cycling)?					
Have you felt full of energy?					
Have you felt satisfied with your life?					

Here are some questions about your feelings, satisfaction with life, general mood, and emotions. **Please place a tick in the boxes that apply to you. You can leave the other boxes blank.**

60. Thinking about the last week.... (please tick)					
	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Have you been in good mood?					
Have you felt cheerful?					
Have you had fun?					

61. Thinking about the last week.... (please tick)					
	Never	Seldom	Quite Often	Often	Always
Have you felt sad?					
Have you felt fed up?					
Have you felt under pressure or stressed?					

62. We would now like to ask you about things that have happened to you over the past year and how you have coped with them. Either now or in the past year have any of the following things happened to you? **Please place a tick in the box that applies to you. You can leave the other boxes blank.**

Living Situation	Moved house
	Moved country
	Difficulties with neighbours
	Moved into temporary emergency accommodation such as hotel or refuge
	Homelessness
Relationships	Difficulties with parents or family member
	Difficulties with friends
	Death of friend or close relative
Antisocial behaviour	In trouble with the Gardai
School	Change of school
	Problems at school
Health	Injury/illness of family member
	Sudden personal health problem of yourself
	Accident / Injury of yourself
	None of these

63. Which of these events happened most recently?	
64. What did you do to deal with the [EVENT]?	
65. Overall, how would you say you coped with the [EVENT]? Would you say...	(1) You coped with it well (2) You coped with it OK , but it was very difficult (3) You didn't really cope

66. Overall, which of the following statements matches how you currently feel?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) You do not really have any problems at the moment (2) You do have some problems at the moment but you are managing OK (3) You have problems and you are not coping with them
67. Thinking about your future and life ahead of you, can you name 2 things that are most important to you? e.g, getting a job, staying in contact with friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) (2)

Lastly, we'd like to ask some personal details. **Because this survey is anonymous, do not include your name here:**

68. Are you female or male?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Female (2) Male
69. What class are you in?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 1st Year (2) 2nd Year (3) 3rd Year (4) 4th Year (5) 5th Year (6) 6th Year
70. How old are you? (in year 2016):	
71. Where do you live?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Jobstown (2) Brookfield (3) Killinarden (4) Fettercairn
72. Where do you go to school/training?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Jobstown (2) Brookfield (3) Killinarden (4) Fettercairn
73. Where were you born (e.g. Ireland, Latvia, Nigeria, France, China)?	

When completed, please return this survey immediately to your teacher or youth facilitator. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey!

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