

FLEMINGTON COMMUNITY RESEARCH PROJECT:

Liveability and Flemington: An analysis of the issues of most concern to the community in the hinterland of Flemington Community Centre, Balbriggan



Flemington Local Development Group (FLDG) is a forum for representatives from the local community, local authority, state agency and local development to discuss social needs in the Flemington area of northwest Balbriggan and to work collaboratively to address issues emerging at a local level.

Fingal County Council is the authority responsible for local government in the county of Fingal, Ireland. It is one of three local authorities that comprised the former Dublin County Council before its abolition and one of four councils in the Dublin Region. As a county council, it is governed by the Local Government Act 2001. The council is responsible for housing and community, roads and transport, urban planning and development, amenity and culture, and environment. The council has 40 elected members.

Cairde is a non-governmental organisation working to reduce health inequalities among ethnic minorities and supports the participation of minority communities in enhancing their health. Cairde works through a rights based approach, believing that the absence of equality and respect for human rights is correlated to the existence of health inequalities.

Balbriggan Integration Forum (BIF) is a voluntary body that believes in developing positive intercultural relationships by respecting and sharing the richness, beauty and potential of all people and their respective cultures which will add significantly to the quality of people's lives in the area.

Dr Lucy Michael is a Lecturer in Sociology at Ulster University and President of the Sociological Association of Ireland. Her research expertise is in community studies, in particular on diverse neighbourhoods and integration, as well as victim experiences of racist violence and discrimination. She works closely with civil society organisations and public bodies to improve reporting and recording of crime and safety issues, and to collect data to understand the particular experiences of minority groups in Ireland. Her work has been used by the European Commission and the United Nations as well as by a wide range of Irish governmental and non-governmental organisations. www.ulster.ac.uk/staff/l-michael

Dr Marianna Prontera since working in an asylum seekers detention centre in southern Italy 20 years ago, has maintained a strong interest in ethnic minority issues and has pursued this interest during her studies at Trinity College Dublin where she completed a PhD in sociology. She has extensive experience in working in the NGO sector. She worked for Cairde over the past 10 years as Health Advocacy Officer and she has recently started working for Pavee Point, Traveller and Roma Centre as Coordinator of the Roma Project.

We would like to thank Mick Dunne, Nuala Kane, Louise McCulloch, Sarah Duku, Bahtiyar Muhtarov, Luis Domínguez Villoria, Emily Murphy, Dr. Florian Marie, Jordan Calabria and Gennaro Davide for their precious contributions to this work.

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This project was funded by:

Fingal County Council

Published by FLDG in September 2019

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this research project is to identify the issues experienced by residents living around the Flemington Community Centre, to analyse them and to provide a range of recommendations to efficiently address the mentioned issues.

This study was carried out over a period of approximately a year. The methodology used in this research project is participatory action research therefore the fundamental feature of this study was to engage actively with the people living in the Flemington Area. Cairde, in collaboration with Ulster University, trained a group of eleven people in social research methods. All the trainees live or work in Balbriggan and the majority of them reside in the Flemington area.

The key areas in this report were identified by the trainees during the research training. The areas identified are the following: Housing and Accommodation, Training and Education, Employment, Health, Awareness of Local Services, Transport, Money, Neighbourhood Quality, Crime, Safety and Policing, Diversity, and Discrimination.

Overall this research shows that the Flemington area is very diverse and presents specific needs which need to be addressed. Findings show that the vast majority of respondents state that they feel accepted by the people living in the Flemington area however they feel that their needs are not suitably represented in all the public services. They believe that the diversity of the community is not reflected by the people working in the community such as teachers and Gardai.

Other key findings show that a third of the respondents state that their accommodation does not meet their needs. The respondents also state a desire to return to study, however they express the need to diversify the availability of courses in Balbriggan and mention that childcare expenses and the costs of studying are distinct barriers faced when returning to study. Data shows that more than half of the respondents face barriers when accessing health services such as cost, distance, and language. Money is a major issue of concern for the vast majority of participants who worry about their housing situation, health and education among other expenses. This is reflected in the high unemployment rate and low paid jobs among participants. These are only some of the issues mentioned throughout the report.

With reference to the recommendations, it is suggested that the FLDG should engage with the relevant statutory bodies and other organisations mentioned in the Recommendations Section in order to progress actions on the identified issue. The key recommendations would be to carry out more research on the housing situation in the area to produce policy evidence documents that can be used to improve Flemington residents housing needs. Moreover, since Balbriggan is a fast growing town it may be effective to conduct further research on the educational needs of the local population in order to provide more options to the inhabitants of the Flemington area and of Balbriggan town in general. There is the requirement for new local health based services and for the expansion of local health services to meet the populations' needs. Finally, among other things, participants suggested that more integration projects would be helpful.

PREFACE

This report was commissioned by the Flemington Local Development Group, a group that comprises community representatives and representatives from a range of service providers working in the local area. The commissioned research is qualitative and a strong emphasis was put on hearing the 'unheard voices'. Local people were trained as 'community researchers' and they collected the responses from neighbours and local residents. Importantly, the community of Flemington, in Balbriggan, have been listened to.

The findings of this ***"Flemington Community Research Project: Liveability and Flemington: An analysis of the issues of most concern to the community in the hinterland of Flemington Community Centre Balbriggan"*** are both important and challenging. They are important because the community in the area have been asked directly about issues that affect their quality of life, their environment, and the factors that affect their 'capacity to thrive' in the place where they live. The findings will be challenging for all and particularly for agencies and service providers working in the Flemington area. Issues highlighted will require action and it is hoped that service providers will respond to these issues through their future strategies and plans and through engagement with the local community.

I want to thank all of the people involved in the research; the local community researchers, the respondents, Dr. Marianna Prontera from Cairde who led the research and also Dr. Lucy Michael from Ulster University. I want to thank the members of the research sub group Mick Dunne (Fingal County Council), Nuala Kane (Empower) and Louise McCulloch (North Dublin Regional Drugs Task Force) and also the members of the Flemington Local Development Group who secured the funding and commissioned the research.

Margaret Geraghty

Director of Services Housing & Community Department, Fingal County Council

BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO THE STUDY

The Flemington Area selected for this study is composed of 16 small areas adjacent to the Flemington Community Centre with a total population of 5,592. Based on the information provided by Census 2016 on 'birthplace' 35% of this population is born outside of the Republic of Ireland and only 48% categorise themselves as white Irish. The Flemington Area is a very multicultural area even within the larger context of the urban area of Balbriggan. Balbriggan is one of the towns, in the Republic of Ireland, with the largest ethnic minority populations per capita with 27% of its inhabitants born outside the country.

According to the information provided by Pobal¹ through the 'deprivation indices' (2016), out of the 16 small areas that form the Flemington area, 6 are classified as 'marginally above average' while the remaining 10 are classified as 'marginally below average'. The information supplied also shows that the ratio of lone parents is 31% and the percentage of people with third level education is 35.5% in the Flemington area. Therefore the percentage of lone parents' family units among the interviewees in Flemington is higher than the national average of 25.4%. In comparison, the percentage of people with third level education among the interviewees in Flemington is lower than the national average which is 42%. In relation to the unemployment figures, the information provided discloses that the male unemployment rate is 17% while the female rate is 19%. This is against the 13.8% national male unemployment rate and 12% national female unemployment rate (Census 2016)².

In order to understand the specificity of this study, it is also important to mention that the population of urban Balbriggan grew from 8,473 in 1996 to 21,601 in 2016. Therefore, within the span of twenty years there was an increase of 155% in the population. This rapid increase of diverse population poses significant challenges and this is the backdrop on which this study is set up.

1 <https://maps.pobal.ie/WebApps/DeprivationIndices/index.html>

2 <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/pressreleases/2017pressreleases/pressstatementcensus2016resultsprofile11-employmentoccupationsandindustry/>

Legend

- Flemington
- Small Areas

Source: OSM contributors

Legend

- Fleming's Area
- Marginally below average
- Marginally above average

Source: Pobal 2016

METHODOLOGY

The methodology, employed in this study, is *participatory action research*. This type of methodology overturns the notion of 'external experts' employed to research people's needs in an area that they are extraneous to by advocating that the 'real experts' are the people who live those issues in their everyday life experiences. Therefore, the essential aspect of this project is to engage the active participation of the people living in the Flemington Area in the process of determining their issues. All of the researchers who took part in this project live or work in Balbriggan and the majority of them reside in the Flemington Area. The researchers come from European countries (i.e. Ireland and Poland) and African countries (i.e. Sierra Leone, Somalia, Nigeria). Almost all of the researchers are naturalised Irish and four of them are BIF (Balbriggan Integration Forum) members.

This study was carried out over a period of approximately 1 year. It consisted of three main phases: 1. capacity building training; 2. data collection; 3. data entry, data analysis and the writing up of the report.

In the first phase of the project Cairde, in collaboration with Ulster University, trained a group of eleven people in social research methods by providing a brief overview on qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. During this training, the research team helped to develop a survey tool which would be used in one-to-one interviews to provide key information about use and awareness of services, barriers to accessing services and employment, experiences of living in the neighbourhood and identify key issues which affect liveability. Liveability refers to the degree to which resources of the place meet the needs of residents and satisfaction with the person–environment relationship, and it is an assessment by individuals of environmental features most relevant to their lives. Using liveability as a key concept in this research means keeping a focus on residents' needs and their identification of what is important to them.

The community research group identified a range of key areas which the questionnaire would address and which each have a dedicated section in this report: Housing and Accommodation, Training and Education, Employment, Health, Awareness of Local Services, Transport, Money, Neighbourhood Quality, Crime, Safety and Policing, Diversity, and Discrimination. The topics were selected through a series of team activities as part of the capacity building training to map the Flemington area in terms of services, everyday activities, use of space and perceived or actual limitations on participation in neighbourhood life, as well as patterns of movement in and out of the area for work, education, leisure, health and other everyday activities.

Each section of the questionnaire has a range of closed questions to collect baseline data and open-ended questions to gather data on the experiences and perceptions of residents. The questionnaire was designed to make sure that it would be culturally appropriate both for the people involved in the research group and for those interviewed.

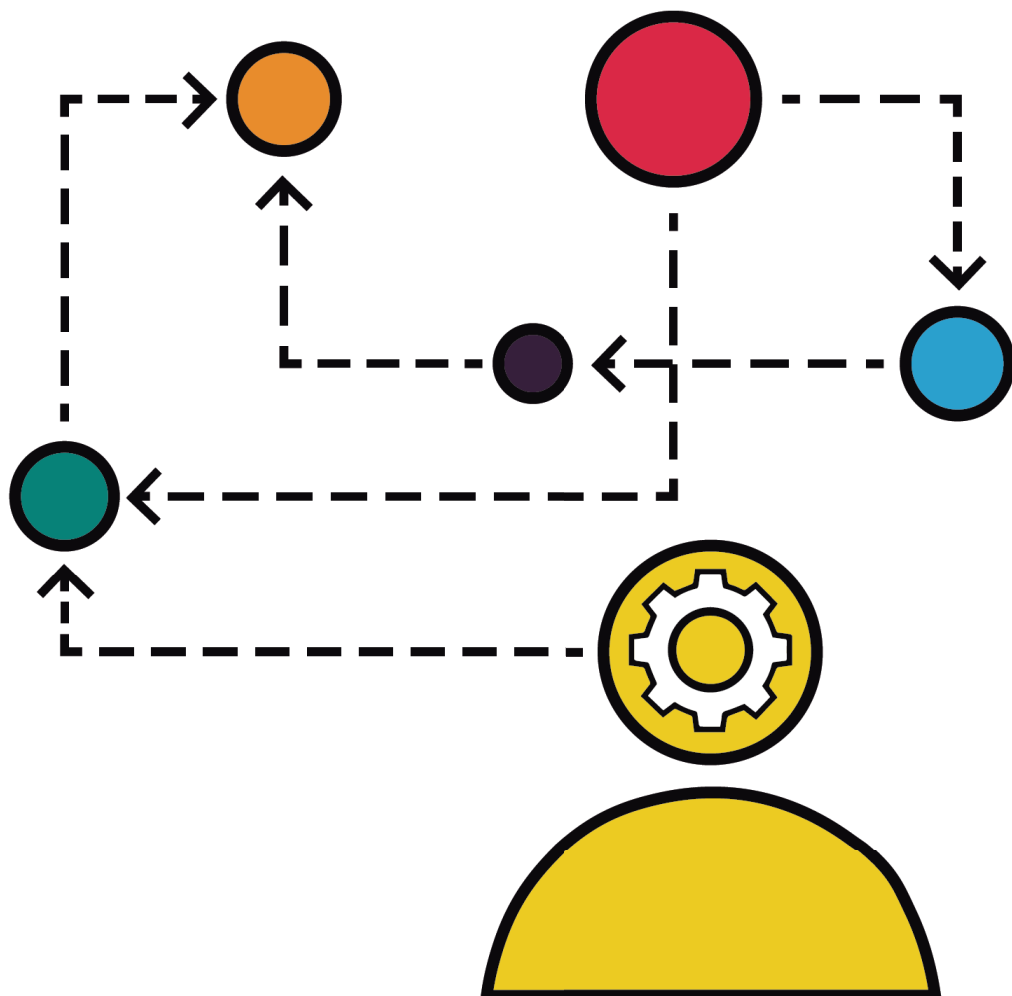
In the second phase of the project, the newly formed community research group carried out the data collection in one-to-one interviews and 56 residents of the Flemington area were interviewed. The interviewees were selected through a stratified sample based on gender, place of birth (nationality and ethnicity were also considered) and age categories (from 16 to 55+).

In selecting a sampling strategy, the group chose to represent the widest range of experiences across Flemington, with a particular view to highlighting issues with access to and awareness of services, integration and the identification by a cross-section of the community of those issues most important to creating liveable neighbourhoods in Flemington.

Stratified sampling is a type of sampling method in which the total population is divided into smaller groups or strata, based on some common characteristics in the population data. After dividing the population into strata, the researcher randomly selects the sample proportionally. Stratified sampling is a common sampling technique used by researchers when trying to draw conclusions from different sub-groups or strata. The strata or sub-groups should be different and the data should not overlap. Stratified sampling is used when the researcher wants to understand the existing relationship between different groups. This way the research can represent even the smallest sub-group in the population. The use of stratified sampling is recommended where the impact of differential outcomes has an impact on the experiences of the whole sample. For example, if some groups are considerably worse off than others, or if there is conflict between some groups, it may affect the liveability of the neighbourhood for everyone who lives there. Where there is rapid change in a neighbourhood, this can offer a more comprehensive account of the issues for attention than a representative sample. This sampling strategy enabled this project to highlight the differential experiences of a range of ethnic groups living in the Flemington area, ensuring that their voices are heard in this project.

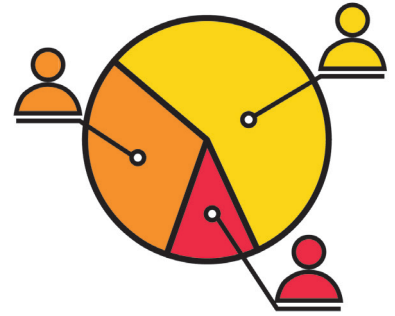
The data must however be read in light of the sampling strategy. A representative sample would provide a more accurate reflection of the neighbourhood's overall baseline data, but would not provide such a detailed or wide-ranging account of the issues affecting liveability in Flemington. Percentages presented in the report reflect the stratified sample rather than a representative sample of the residents. To be effective, however a stratified sampling strategy must identify the main groups and develop a means of weighting them appropriately. Based on the information provided by Census 2016 on 'birthplace' and 'ethnic or cultural background', five main groups of interviewees were selected as the most numerous categories: White Irish; Polish; Black or Black Irish; Other EU Countries; Rest of the World. Irish Travellers and Roma were also included as an important minority subgroup living in the area. However, in this report, in order to protect participants' anonymity and to avoid any type of ethnic generalisations, the results of the data are deliberately presented together, without naming any specific group. Moreover, in general, there were more agreements and similarities among groups than differences.

The third and final phase of the project consisted of data entry, data analysis and the writing up of the report. The analysis was first conducted by Dr Marianna Prontera (Cairde) and Dr Lucy Michael (Ulster University), then discussed in consultation with the community research group, recommendations developed with the group, and the report written up from this consultative process. The overall aim of this once off research project is to identify the issues experienced by people living in the community around the Flemington Community Centre, to analyse them, and to provide a range of recommendations to effectively address the issues identified.



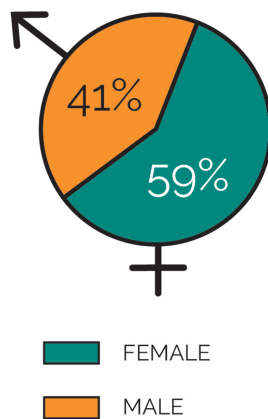
SECTION 1:

PARTICIPANTS' PERSONAL PROFILE

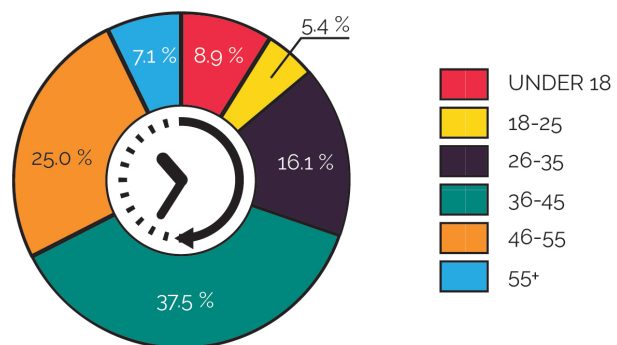


Fifty-six participants took part in this study. Out of these participants, 59% are female and 41% are male. The age span of the participants ranges between 16 and 55+ years old, although the majority of respondents are between 36 and 45 years old with 37.5% and the second most common age group is between 46 and 55 years old.

GENDER

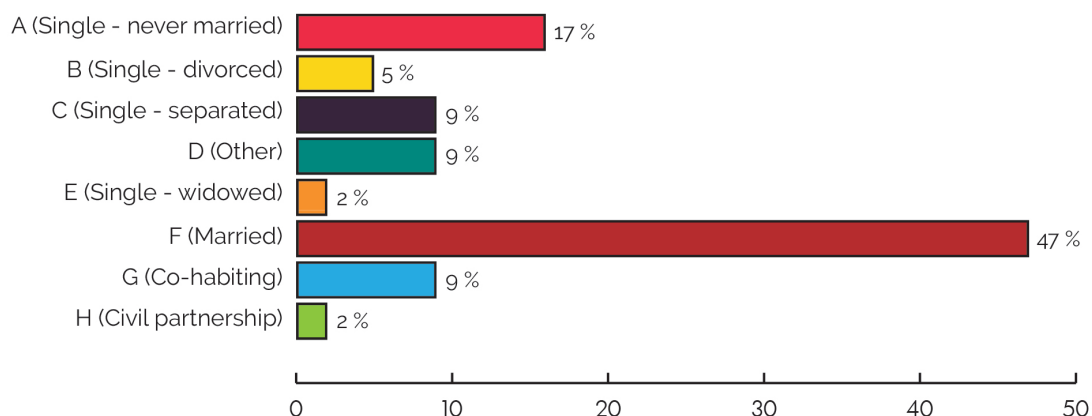


AGE

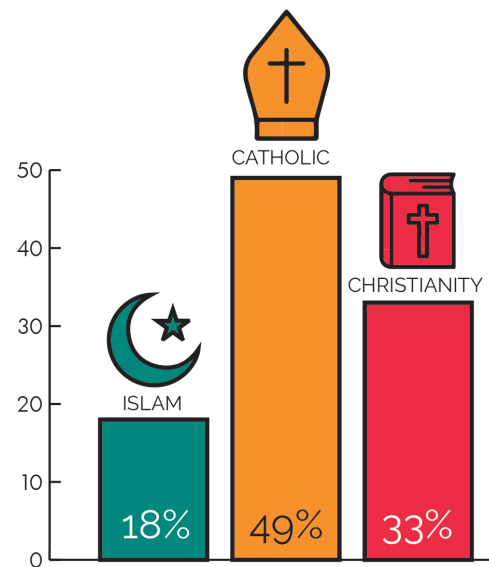


Among the respondents, the most common marital status is *married* with 47%.

MARITAL STATUS

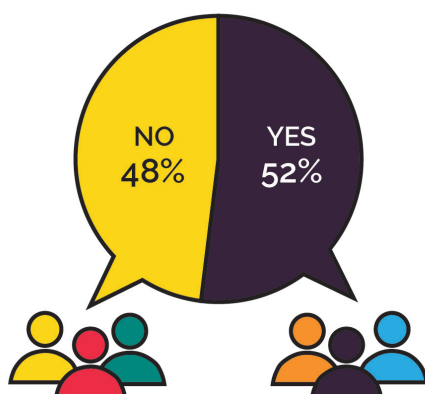


71% of the respondents have children under 18 years old and 25% have adult children. The average number of children per family is 2.9 which is more than two times higher than the Irish national average³ ; 71% of which are under 18 years old. 5% of the respondents state that they have children outside of Ireland. The most common religion among respondents is Catholic with 35% followed by Christianity 24% and Islam 13%.

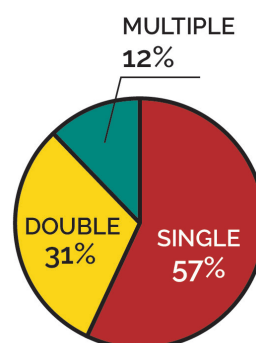


Among the respondents 52% speak English as their first language and 31% of the respondents can speak two other languages apart from English.

IS ENGLISH YOUR FIRST LANGUAGE?



WHAT OTHER LANGUAGES DO YOU SPEAK?



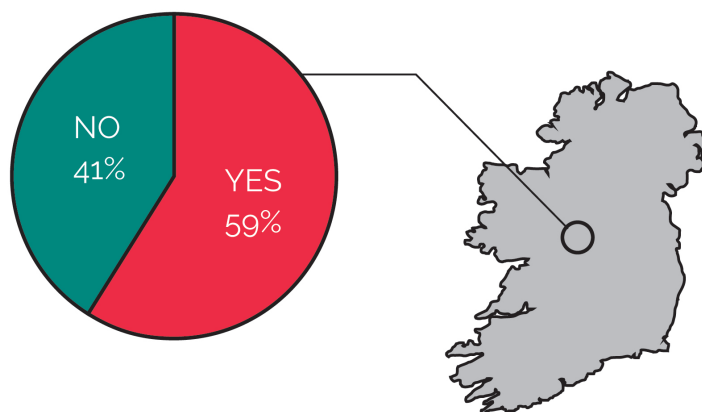
There is a variety of languages spoken by participants however German, Yoruba, Polish and French are the most used after English.

³ According to Census 2016, the average number of children per family in Ireland is 1.38% <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp4hf/cp4hf/fmls/>

There is a variety of languages spoken by participants however German, Yoruba, Polish and French are the most used after English.

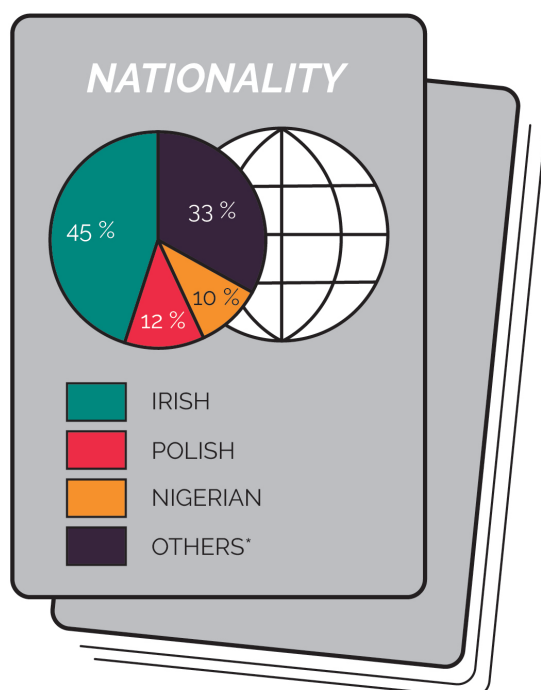
The average time that respondents have lived in Balbriggan is 10 years. Only seven respondents have been in Ireland for less than five years. Out of 56 respondents only 3 were born and lived in Balbriggan.

**HAVE YOU EVER
LIVED OUTSIDE
IRELAND?**



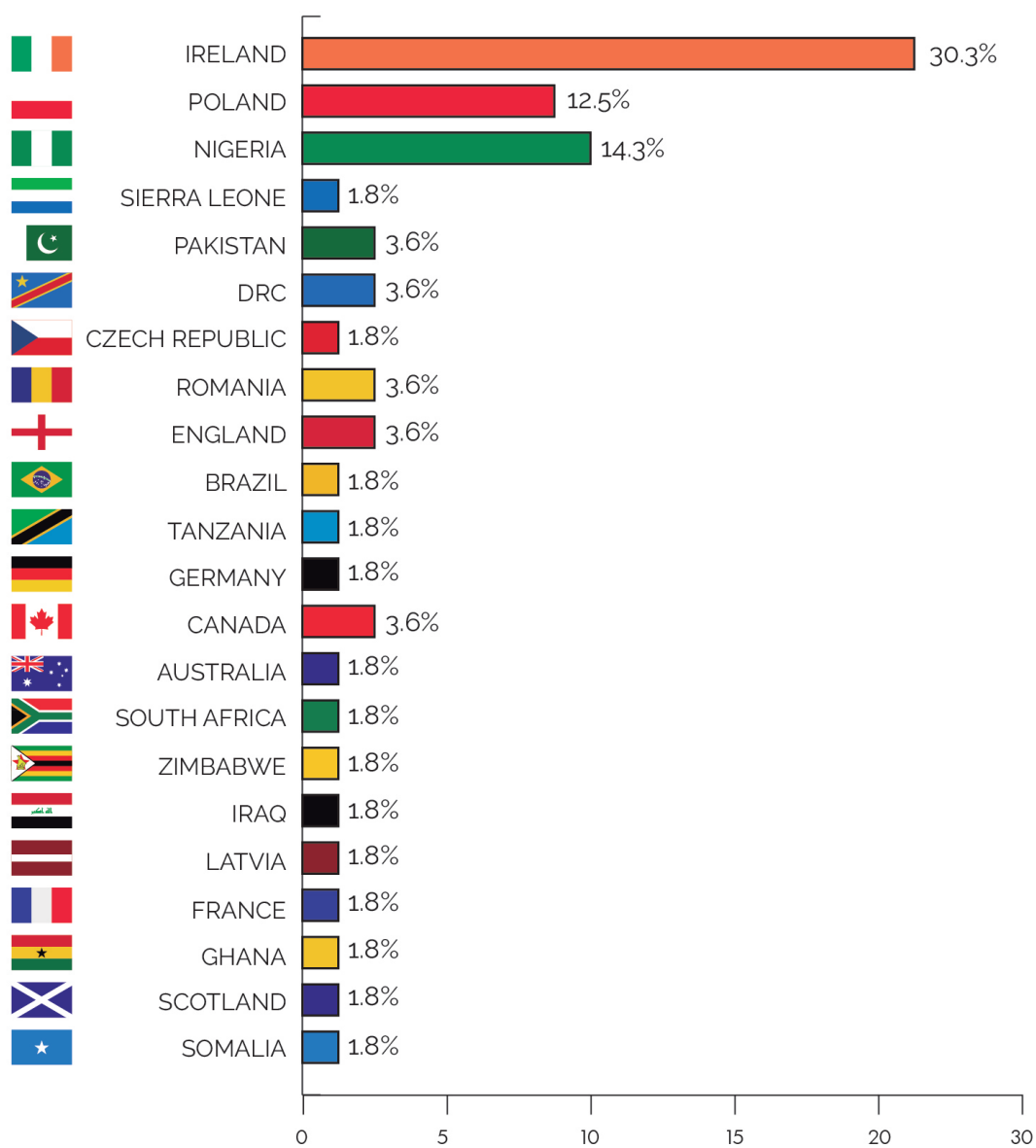
Concerning the ethnic data, respondents self-identified themselves and 20 categories emerged from the analysis. White Irish, Yoruba and Polish were the most frequently mentioned ethnicities with 20%, 16%, and 11% respectively. Participants also came from Black-African and Black-Irish groups, South Asian, South American, other European, Irish Traveller and Roma groups.

There were 19 different nationalities* in the study. The most frequently mentioned nationalities were Irish with 45%, Polish with 12%, and Nigerian with 10%. Finally, respondents were born in 22 different nations spread over all 5 continents. In our sample, 30% were born in Ireland, 14% in Nigeria, 13% in Poland, 27% in the rest of the world, and 16% in the other EU countries.



* THE OTHER NATIONALITIES MENTIONED WERE: PAKISTANI, TANZANIAN, SOMALIAN, GERMAN, SOUTH AFRICAN, SIERRA LEONEAN, BRAZILIAN, LATVIAN, IRANIAN, CONGOLESE, GHANAIAN, AUSTRALIAN, ROMANIAN, CANADIAN, CZECH, FRENCH (19 NATIONALITIES ALL TOGETHER)

PARTICIPANTS' PLACE OF BIRTH



SECTION 2:

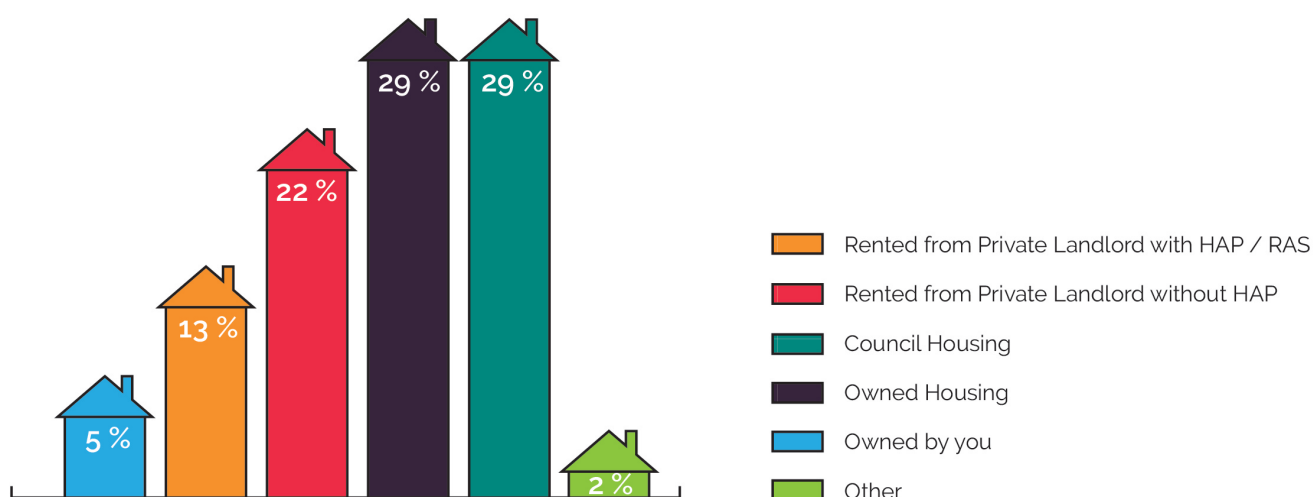
HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION



In this section, respondents were questioned about their housing situation. They were asked about the type of accommodation they live in and if they have/ had any serious problems with it. These questions were asked to see if residents were satisfied with their current housing arrangements.

Nearly a third of our sample (29%) live in county council accommodation and the same percentage of respondents say that they own a house. 22% rent from a private landlord without HAP (Housing Assistance Payment) and 18% rent from a private landlord with HAP or through the RAS (Rental Accommodation Scheme) scheme. 73% live in a house. A third of the respondents state that their accommodation does not meet their needs, often because it was too small for the number of people living there, and 30% of respondents state that they had serious problems with their accommodation in the Flemington area. Common problems included pyrite, damp, limescale, landlords refusing repairs, broken white goods provided by the landlord and not repaired, and no access to hot water. A minority of respondents mentioned poor reading and writing in English as a limitation when it comes to accessing housing.

About a third of the respondents are on the social housing list, of which about 25% are women and 35% are men. Considering that 29% of respondents already live in social housing this means that more than half of them qualify for social housing and therefore are low income households. Among the respondents who live in social housing, approximately 30% are women while 25% are men. 10% of respondents state that they have been homeless at least once.



SECTION 3:

TRAINING AND EDUCATION



In this section, residents were asked questions relating to their education and training history and current educational needs in order to assess if they are satisfied with what is offered locally, and more generally to understand if their education needs are being met.

Approximately 95% of the respondents, men and women, state that they received formal education. Twelve and a half years is the average amount of time spent in school; 4% of the respondents never attended school while 11% only completed primary school and 30% attended secondary school; 41% attended college.

Currently about a third of the respondents, men and women, are attending training and education courses, however the majority (60%) of them would like to return to study. Participants identify childcare expenses (35%) and cost of studying (26%) as the most significant barriers to returning to education.

Half of interviewees have attended some training/ classes (no school) in Balbriggan at a certain point in their lives. 35% of respondents state that there are other type of training/classes that themselves or their family would need.

"[We] need diversity in training courses for my son – I could only find barista training or security guard training for him (FAS/Solas) and neither was suitable."

Desired classes included music classes for children, sports training and personal development classes for adults and children. This data emphasises the need to diversify courses in Balbriggan and the need for access to third level education, through courses in loco, more support in entry to third level education, and help with accessing financial support, as well as considerations like availability of affordable and accessible transport.



EMPLOYMENT



In order to understand interviewees' working experiences, several questions about employment were asked. The questions asked aimed to understand if participants were working part-time or full-time and if they were unemployed why that was the case and what sort of barriers they faced to find suitable employment.

From the analysis of the questionnaires, it emerged that the unemployment rate among respondents is very high, with 56% stating that they are not in paid employment. This is against the current national unemployment rate of 13%. Of the interviewees that are employed, approximately 40% are women and 60% are men and overall 64% work full-time and 36% part-time.

63% of interviewees who have lived outside Ireland (including those born here) state that before arriving or returning to Ireland they were employed in different sectors than they are in Ireland. Only a minority managed to find employment in their field of specialisation in Ireland. One of the reasons that can explain this phenomenon is that it can be quite time consuming, tedious and expensive to get a foreign qualification formally recognised in Ireland. Sometimes it involves starting training again from the beginning. Poor reading and writing in English are also mentioned by respondents as barriers in accessing employment.

"We didn't have good English so I was working from home, selling traditional clothes, and my husband was working part-time in a halal shop in Blanchardstown."

Additionally, racism and discrimination were also identified as barriers to secure employment. Considering that 41% of interviewees attended college and more than 50% are unemployed, racism is a plausible explanation to interpret this data, particularly when considering the diversity of interviewees in the sample.



Employment outside Ireland included a wide range of professions and expertise. Jobs included: graphic designer, journalist, shopkeeper, cattle farmer, structural drafting technician, seamstress and retail. This range of expertise should be recognised in encouraging community collaborations, take advantage of local skills and encourage creative participation.

Barriers to finding similar or suitable jobs include childcare, care for elder parents, cost, distance and public transport problems and access to healthcare locally.

HEALTH



The questions that were asked in this section aimed at understanding if the current health service provision in Flemington, and more generally in Balbriggan, responds adequately to residents' needs.

Approximately 95% of the respondents state that they have a GP, of which 97% are women and 92% are men; 66% are medical card holders of these 76% are women and 57% are men. The most commonly used health services are GPs and hospitals. The other services mentioned range from dentistry to physiotherapy as well as addiction and mental health support services.

58% of respondents state that they have health concerns either for themselves or for a family member. The most commonly mentioned health issues among respondents are asthma, mental health and cancer. Hearing issues, diabetes and arthritis are also frequently mentioned.

A significant minority (41.5%) of respondents state that they are not aware of the GP services available in the Flemington area. 55.5% of respondents state that they face barriers when accessing health services; cost is mentioned by 38% of the respondents together with distance 30% and language 15% are the most mentioned barriers when it comes to accessing health services. Cost is particularly an issue for those who have to travel to hospital appointments, since public transport does not adequately link for those with health problems.

Suggested improvements to healthcare access for residents of Flemington and Balbriggan included: shorter waiting times, bus services to hospitals, translation services available more readily, local hospital/specialist services provision, childrens' dental services to be expanded, later/extended opening times and more mental health/bereavement services for children.

SECTION 6:

AWARENESS OF LOCAL SERVICES



In this section, the questions explored local residents' awareness of services currently available in Balbriggan, and more precisely, in the Flemington Area.

Three-quarters of respondents answer that they are aware of where to go to *get help finding a job*. A quarter would look for employment online, while a similar number would seek support from the Department of Social Protection Intreo offices and 10% mentioned the older FAS services. Other services mentioned are Citizen Information Centres (CIC), Cairde and Crosscare.

More than two-thirds of respondents report they would know where to go for support in relation to *housing issues*. 36% mention Fingal County Council. Cairde and Citizen Information Centres are also mentioned frequently.

The highest reported awareness was in relation to social welfare support. 81% of respondents state that they would know where to go to access *social welfare* support if they needed to. Intreo (36%) was the most mentioned answer, followed by Citizen Information Centres and Cairde.

65% of respondents state that they know where to go if they have problems accessing health services. 46% specifically mentioned that they would go to their GP while 23% mentioned HSE services in general. Again Cairde and Citizen Information Centres are also mentioned.

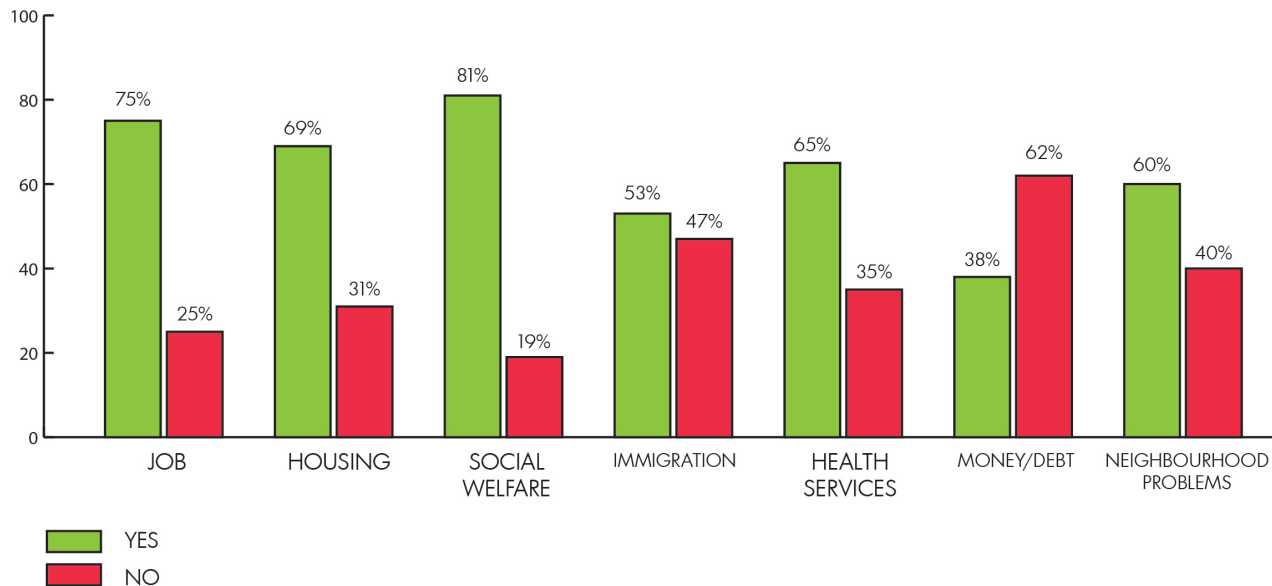


60% of respondents state that they would know where to go to get help if they have *neighbourhood problems*. 60% of this group (36% of the total sample) would go to the Gardai while a minority mentioned Citizen Information Centres and the County Council.

The lowest levels of awareness reported were in relation to immigration issues and finance. Respondents have less awareness of where they can find information on 'immigration' issues (i.e. renewal of legal status, family reunifications, citizenship, etc.) with almost 50% citing difficulty. Only 26% of the respondents stated that they know where to go to look for immigration advice, and they specify that they would go to Citizen Information Centres followed by Cairde.

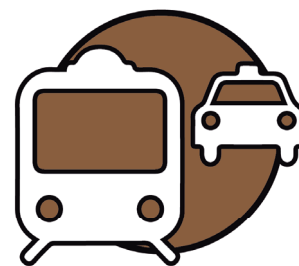
The majority of respondents state that they would not know where to go to if they were looking for help with *money or debt*. Only 29% of respondents state that they know where to go if they experience problems with money or debt, and they mention MABS first, followed by Citizen Information Centres and the banks.

Overall, 11% of the respondents state that they have had difficulty accessing services because of poor reading and writing in English. Access to multilingual leaflets or websites can help partially, in raising awareness of advice services available.



SECTION 7:

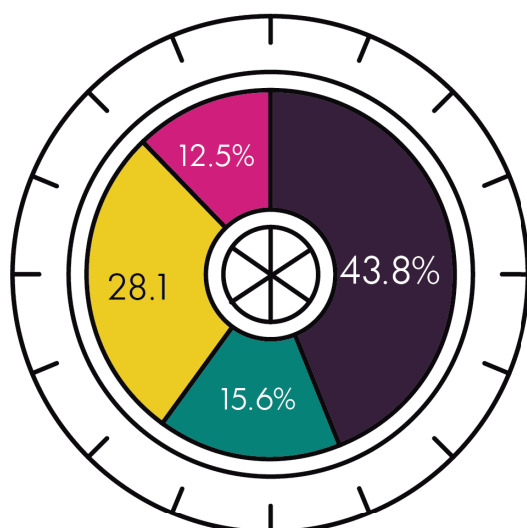
TRANSPORT



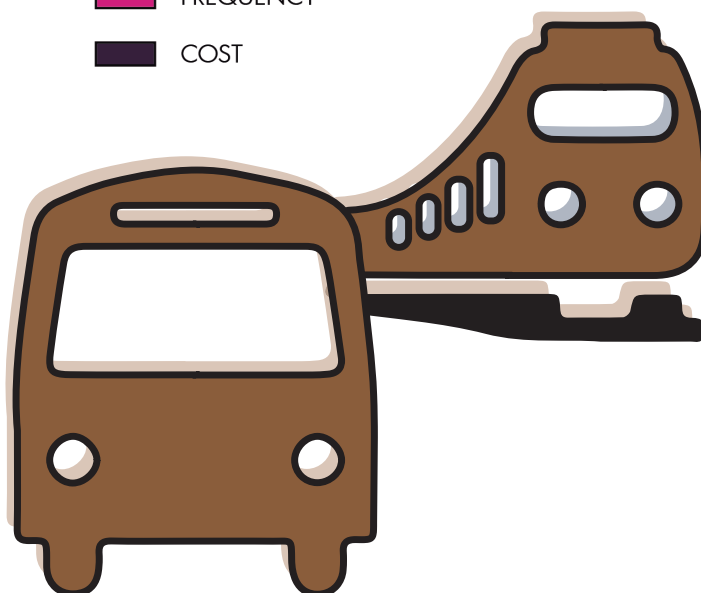
The questions asked in this part aimed at understanding respondents' experiences in relation to transport. This section especially assesses if public transport meets local residents' needs.

Nearly a third of respondents state that they do not have access to a car. Of this, 33% are women and 26% are men. More than half of those with access to a car (52%) also use public transport. Therefore nearly four-fifths (82%) of our sample use public transport. Respondents say that they use public transport for a very wide range of purposes, including work, family life, health and legal appointments, education and leisure.

Amongst these, more than two-thirds state that public transport does not meet their current needs. The most common complaint is the high cost of public transport (44%). Timetables are the second issue mentioned with 28% of respondents being unhappy with them, followed by routes and frequency complaints. Public transport is a key barrier to accessing (any or better) employment and a wider range of further educational courses.



- ROUTES
- TIMETABLES
- FREQUENCY
- COST



SECTION 8:

MONEY



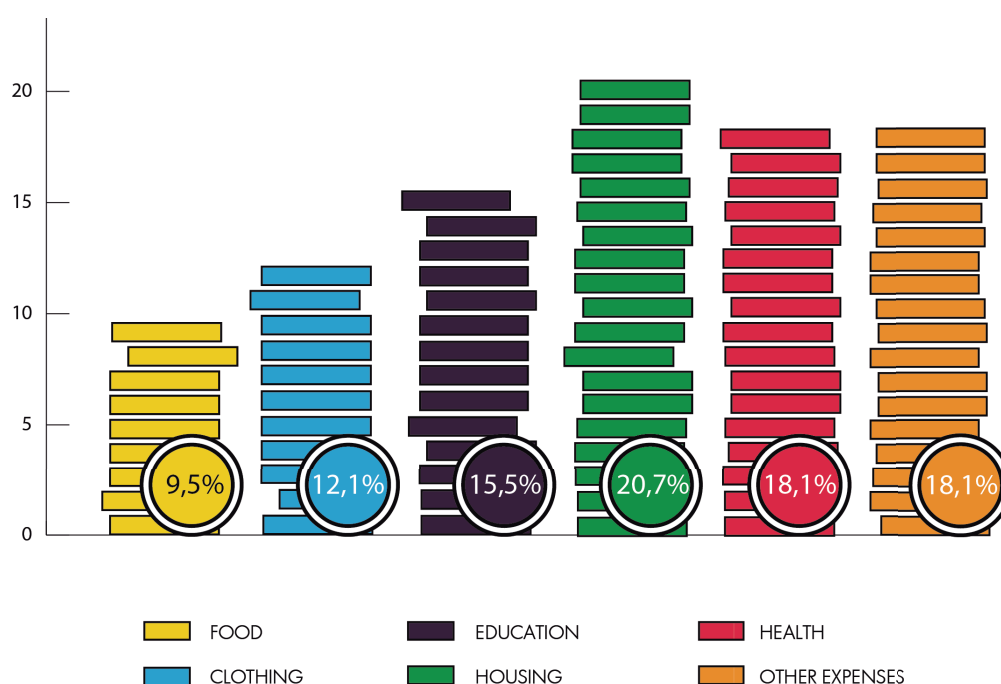
Although the issue of affordability is related to a range of other neighbourhood and community issues, like access to affordable housing, transport, education or paid work, we asked two specific questions about money to gather information about the most pressing financial issues for residents in Flemington.

Participants were first asked 'Does money worry you?'. Four-fifths (80%) answered yes, despite almost half of them currently being in paid employment.

Participants were then asked to indicate which categories of expenses caused them worry; food, clothing, education, housing, health, or other expenses.

Collectively, they were most worried about their housing situation (21%), health (18%), education (15%), and about other expenses (18%). Of those with worries about affording education, only a third were currently working. Half of those with worries about affording housing, health and other expenses were currently working, and those were mostly full-time employees.

Food and clothing were of less concern financially to the majority, but of key concern to a small number. Most of those with worries about affording food were not currently working. Food poverty should be of concern to local authorities given its established connection to other social issues including malnutrition, failure in education and antisocial behaviour.



SECTION 9:

NEIGHBOURHOOD QUALITY



In this section, residents were asked about amenities in the local area, where they spend time with their families, what improvements they would like to see in local streets or buildings and public spaces, and to what extent they are aware of and participate in local community groups. This section addresses both the physical environment and the attachment of residents to it.

Physical environment

Respondents were asked 'what improvements would you like to see in the local streets or buildings to make them better for you?'.

"It would be good to see estates handed over fully to the council – the drains would be better maintained by the council, for example"

"More facilities, monitored better to avoid anti-social behaviour."

"[Public] trash bins to be removed more than once a week."

It is evident that many of the suggestions given by participants are in fact connected to increasing place attachment. Greater planting of trees and shrubs was suggested by a number of respondents, as well as opportunities to bring 'DIY' onto the street, perhaps in the form of community or commissioned art projects. Beach front development would both attract tourism and improve a resource which is used by many of the respondents on a regular basis. These options were popular across all of the surveyed ethnic groups and age groups.

However there are two key issues of safety raised in relation to the physical neighbourhood. The first is the nature of traffic and parking in the Flemington area. Traffic and parking are a cause of disruption, as well as making neighbourhoods less safe and raising noise levels across the area.

"The traffic starting from Dunnes towards Naul Road and all over Balbriggan is too much. The roads should be wide enough. Also the way people park on both sides of the road is mad. [Where I live] the roads are very narrow, two cars cannot pass each other and you will find some road users who are not considerate of other honking their horns loudly in residential area."

Particularly for childrens' safety, residents identified the need to review existing and future pedestrian crossings, and the provision of assistance for children to cross the road (e.g. 'lollipop lady') outside all schools. Speeding is a particular concern, with the lack of enforcement or deterrence tools (e.g. speed bumps, signage) in the Flemington area identified as an area for

improvement. Residents are frustrated and some take dangerous steps to reduce the overall risk, parking their own cars in such a manner as to slow those speeding through the neighbourhood, particularly on Moylaragh Road.

The second issue was that of safe spaces for children to play and to socialise. For toddlers and young children, there are some (if few) amenities parents use and while they are happy with the spaces themselves, the safety issue dominates their concerns.

"Good playgrounds, so yes for child's age group."

"There are only 3 play grounds that I know, and all are not safe for my children."

Asked 'Do young people have enough access to local and affordable amenities?', only 10 participants said yes. More than two-thirds (39) said they did not. This was the most discussed single issue in relation to neighbourhood quality.

"The kids go to the park. It is always full, some get beaten up in the park."

"No, because unfortunately parks attract trouble in the evening."

The lack of safe and free or affordable spaces for young people to socialise outside the home has a financial impact on parents who choose to pay for activities to give their children supervised interactions with other young people outside school rather than risk their safety. Parents are aware of some of the community facilities available for use by young people and to rent for groups, but are wary of costs and responsibilities involved. Despite this, the most common desire of respondents was to have more public spaces available for social interactions across the community. Their concerns about safety should not, therefore, be interpreted as a fearful retreat from community, but a desire for greater and safer interactions in public.

Social environment

Awareness of local community groups in Flemington is low across all of the participant subgroups. Almost half (23) of the respondents stated that they do not know any local community groups in the Flemington area. However only 3 of them have lived in Balbriggan for less than 5 years, and 17 of them had lived here 8 years or longer. Length of residence is not a factor in levels of awareness of local groups, and nor are gender, age, ethnic background or citizenship.

Groups and community activities in Flemington and Balbriggan mentioned in the research included:

- Mother and toddler groups
- Residents associations, including Martello, Hamlet, Bremore Pasture and Dun Saithne
- Balbriggan Tidy Town
- Youth groups including Foróige, Youthbank

- Choir
- Mens' Shed
- Running events and clubs, including ParkRun, Junior ParkRun and Balbriggan Roadrunners
- Flemington Community Centre
- Balbriggan Women's Group; Muslim Women's Group
- Balbriggan Integration Forum
- Cairde
- Church in Flemington
- Sports groups including Indoor Bowls, Football
- and other activities/groups including Order of Malta, AA, Meals on Wheels, and Slimming World

Two participants mentioned that their residents' association no longer functioned, and that this affected their ability to deal with neighbourhood issues.

Almost two-thirds (64%) state that they are not part of any local group in Flemington or Balbriggan. The most commonly mentioned reason for not being part of a group is awareness of groups for their age group/ interests and time to engage in groups.

Participants were asked the best way to meet other people in the Flemington area. The most common answers were: through public events, through use of the Flemington Community Centre, through schools (for parents), at the shops (particularly for young people), and by joining clubs in Balbriggan. Some participants also mentioned that it was possible just to chat to people in the street, and this is reflective of the way in which residents perceive their community as generally open to newcomers and people of different backgrounds. However, four-fifths (82%) of respondents, both women and men, stated that there are not enough public spaces in Flemington to socialise and that they are often forced to go outside the area to find such spaces.



SECTION 10:

CRIME, SAFETY AND POLICING



The presence of crime and perception of unsafety in a neighbourhood can significantly affect the ways in which residents think about their homes, communities and attachment to place⁴. Policing services are important to neighbourhoods for a range of reasons: visible police presence encourages residents to act in ways that deter crime, knowledge of and relationships with Gardai ensures that issues are dealt with promptly and in ways that acknowledge the equality of all residents in the neighbourhood, and ensures that Gardai have accurate information and an ongoing interest in resolving criminal and sub-crime incidents in the neighbourhood in a collaborative approach with residents.

Neighbourhoods which have experienced rapid change can sometimes suffer from distrust arising from people not knowing each other, from vulnerability to crime arising from sudden changes in patterns of everyday life, and from slow adaptation of public services to new sets of social relations in the neighbourhood.

During the design of the survey, residents on the research team identified a range of incivilities and issues of crime and disorder, as well as perceptions of unsafety, which might affect issues of neighbourliness, access to and use of goods, services and public spaces, and overall perceptions of liveability in Flemington.

Participants were asked six questions about crime, safety and policing. Results of these questions, as well as answers to other questions, show that there are a small number of significant issues around crime and safety which participants feel are important to address in order to improve their experiences of living, working and/or socialising in Flemington. These must be considered in a context where 79% say that they feel accepted in the area, and there are a wide range of positive comments made about relations in the area across all of the subgroups interviewed.

Crime and safety

Asked about safety concerns in the area, there were a number of key concerns, including the lack of CCTV in Dun Saithne, repeated vandalism of cars and criminal damage to houses in the neighbourhood.

Fifteen of the participants (28%) had been victims of crime in Balbriggan within the last 3 years. It is interesting to note that the vast majority of respondents were women, with more than 70% stating

⁴ B.B.Brown, D.D.Perkins and G. Brown (2004) 'Incivilities, place attachment and crime: Block and individual effects', *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24, 359-71.; R.B.Taylor (1996) 'Neighbourhood responses to disorder and local attachments: The systemic model of attachment, social disorganisation and neighbourhood use value', *Sociological Forum*, 11 (1), 41-74.

they had been victims of crime. These included (mostly) car vandalism or theft, theft of garden machinery, and criminal damage of houses. The perception that crime is recurrent in Flemington is reflected in the concerns of participants. One resident sold their car because it was repeatedly vandalised, and one did not replace a stolen car. Another worried about criminal damage of houses becoming so frequent that her windows might be smashed, since she did not think that the Council would cover the cost if this happened. Most said that they had been supported by neighbours after the event. However in three incidents that related to racial harassment and assault, two involving young people, the families did not feel supported by neighbours at all. Most of the participants described a general feeling of unsafety in the neighbourhood, indicated by recurrent examples of disorder, low level crime and concern for the safety of their families, particularly their children.

Young people in the street are also a cause of worry amongst residents. They are named explicitly as safety concerns in the survey. Respondents described those concerns as including "anti-social behaviour, drugs, intimidation of younger kids", "large groups of teenagers being intimidating", and "less teenagers out on streets (summer is worst)".

In the research, parents also described knowing that the presence of their children in public spaces (particularly those of ethnic minority identity) makes them vulnerable to stereotyping and harassment, both from neighbours and from Gardai.

Satisfaction with Gardai

A general question of satisfaction with policing in the neighbourhood is a common feature of liveability surveys internationally. The police provide important advice and normative functions (setting local standards for behaviour) as well as control functions. Police services have to balance these functions to create adequate levels of trust amongst the resident population to allow them to police neighbourhoods peacefully and effectively. Because of the impact of fear of crime on residents' place attachment and commitment to maintaining local standards, it is important that police and residents have strong communications and positive regular interactions. These can be met through community consultations, inclusive responses to persistent problems which take account of residents' primary concerns, and through awareness-raising around victims' rights and established modes of community-police communications (e.g. residents' forums, etc.).

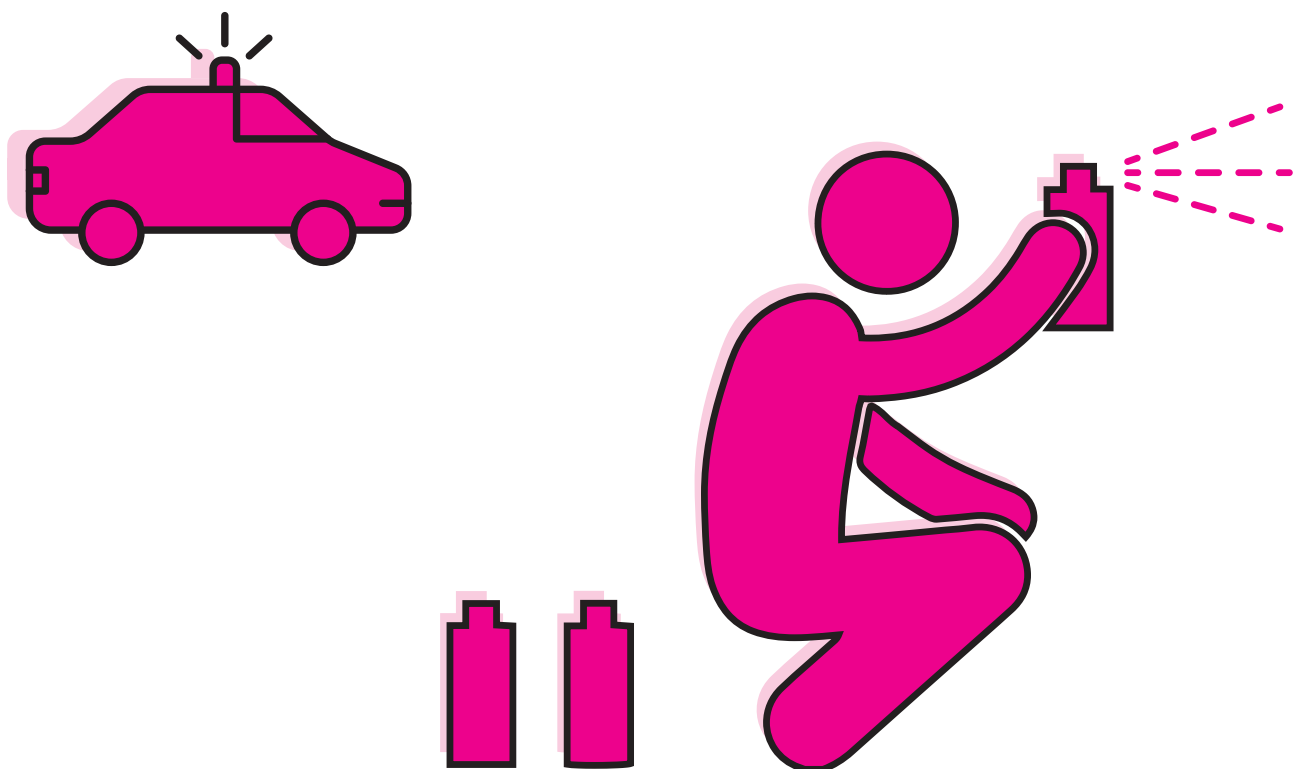
About 70% of respondents state that they are not satisfied with policing in Balbriggan. Their responses to this survey suggest that there is a need in the Flemington area to make greater use of local mechanisms to increase the visibility of this work, and to ensure that residents' concerns are addressed, explicitly, in the development of strategic approaches to community safety issues. This might include acknowledging tensions between residents' desires for safe public spaces for some groups, and the rights of all groups to peaceable use of those spaces, and the impact of some demands for greater policing on limited resources available at the local level.

There is also a need for awareness raising around the rights arising from the Victims' Rights Directive and how the exercise of these rights are enabled by An Garda Síochána in the area. For example, all victims of crime are entitled to information about the progress and outcome of cases they have reported and support from the Victims of Crime Offices of An Garda Síochána in procuring this information. Of those who have been victims of crime in Flemington in the last three years, almost 9 in ten have reported it to the Gardai. However, only three people were able to confirm that the crime had been investigated. The most common response was that a report had been taken and no outcome was known.

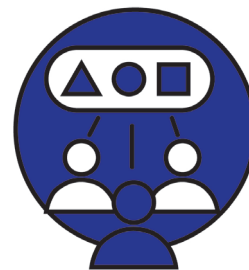
Persistent safety problems, particularly around speeding cars which present a danger to residents and children, have heightened expectations of how An Garda Síochána should respond to these known problems, even though they would be classed as non-emergency cases. For example, slow responses from Gardai made parents concerned:

"This crazy person was zooming around the estate, I was worried my kids were outside playing so I rang the Gardai and explained, guess what? they came to my house 2 hours later!"

Disproportionate surveillance and arrest of young people by Gardai was also raised by respondents. The treatment of Black and mixed race young people in particular by Gardai was questioned by parents, who would like to see greater training of Gardai and liaison with young people in a positive manner. Parents are open to facilitating positive conversations on this issue with local Gardai and encouraging better communication on both sides. This demonstrates that there is some level of trust in the service, even if satisfaction levels are currently low in relation to the persistent problems named above.



DIVERSITY



One of the ways in which the research group felt that Flemington had changed was in the level of diversity of people living in the community from a wide range of different ethnic and national backgrounds, some with experiences of living and working internationally. Flemington can benefit from this wide range of experiences and perspectives to ensure that community life in the area is vibrant and sustainable, and that residents maintain the high level of place attachment which is described in previous sections. In order that this is fully realised, it was important to establish the extent to which that diversity is recognised and valued in the public services and organisations operating in Flemington and in Balbriggan.

In a section of the questionnaire entitled 'Diversity', we asked participants 3 questions:

- Do you feel your needs are suitably represented in the public services e.g. council, police, social welfare, HSE and other services?
- How is the diversity of the community reflected in the people involved in the community e.g. teachers, Gardai, youth workers?
- Is Flemington Area inclusive of people from different backgrounds?

We noted that participants in this research were born in 22 countries, although some have Irish citizenship after years of living and working here, and many are raising Irish-born children. Included in our sample are also some young people who are born in Ireland of ethnic minority background.

In previous sections, we have discussed the impact of immigration and return migration on some participants' current educational, employment and housing statuses. We also note the impact, in the most recent sections, of the issues of social integration and of racism. While there are some areas identified for improvement in service provision and inclusion by statutory agencies, there are also many positive stories about the level of integration in the Flemington area.

Given the diversity of the stratified sample by ethnic and national background, and the experience across Ireland of slow diversification of political and public service representation, it would be unusual if this survey showed a high level of satisfaction with current representations in public services. However we did not expect the very low level of satisfaction we found. Just 24 % – less than a quarter – of participants felt that their needs were suitably represented in public services.

Approximately 20% of participants believe that the diversity of the community is reflected in the people working within community roles such as teachers, Gardai and youth workers, while approximately 80% of the women and men who took part in the questionnaire do not believe such diverse representation exists. These roles represent the people who establish standards for the community and provide guidance and mediation if social conflict arises. In other sections, participants have provided a lot of evidence to support the finding that both teaching and policing most need to change to reflect the diversity of the community, in terms of recruitment and training, particularly to support positive interactions with and role models for young people in the area.

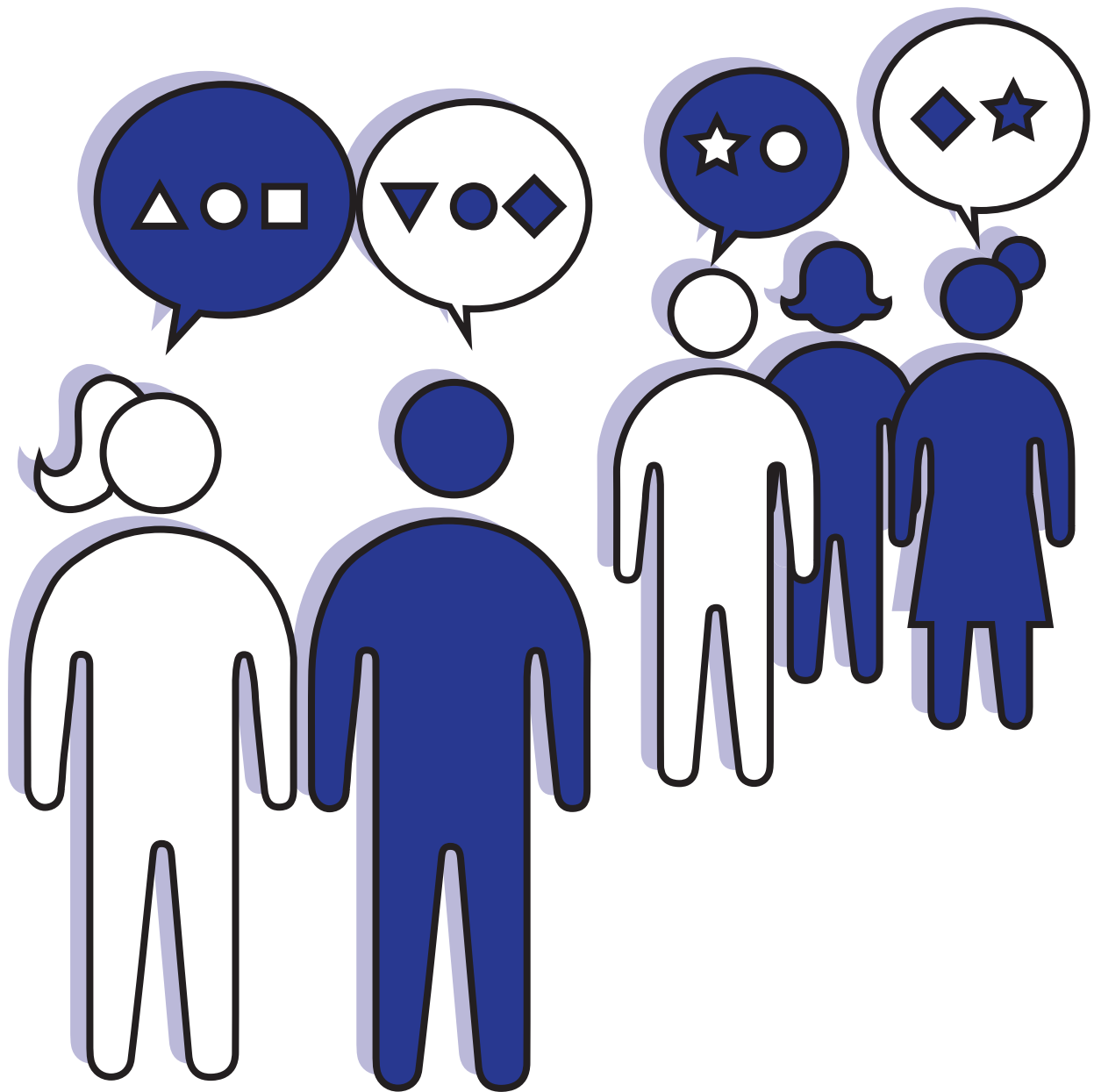
Neither high or low satisfaction was connected to being from a single ethnic, religious or national group, since those who said they were satisfied included participants born in 8 different countries (for comparison, those satisfied with police were born in 9 different countries). There was also no connection between length of time living in Balbriggan and satisfaction with public services, nor with financial security, employment or reliance on social services.

In contrast with the very low number of positive responses to the previous two questions, there was a much more positive response to the third question: 'Is Flemington Area inclusive of people from different backgrounds?'

82% of respondents answered that the Flemington area is inclusive of people from different backgrounds. This is a significantly high result, and reflects the general impression across the whole data set that Flemington is an area which has adapted well to diversification and that there are high levels of cooperation and inclusion amongst residents.

These responses on diversity are best understood alongside the other questions we asked about place attachment and support from neighbours. We asked, in the section on housing, "Do you feel accepted by the people living in Flemington?" (Q.30), and in the section on crime, "If the crime happened in Flemington, how did you feel about your neighbourhood after? Did you feel supported by people in the local area who knew about it?" (Q.79). These questions allow us to look at how feelings of acceptance and support in the neighbourhood correlate with perceptions of diversity and inclusion more widely.

Almost all of those who told us that they did not feel accepted by the people living in Flemington also said that they did not feel their needs were suitably represented in public services, and that the diversity of the community was not reflected in roles like teachers, Gardai and youth workers. However almost all of them said that the Flemington Area is inclusive of people from different backgrounds. The personal experiences of each of these participants was negatively affected by interactions with public services or organisations poorly equipped or supported to serve the diversity of the area, which they told us about in relation to a range of issues including policing, education, housing and employment.



Those who said they had not felt supported by neighbours after experiencing a crime also reported that they did not feel their needs were suitably represented in public services, but the same group said that the Flemington Area is inclusive of people from different backgrounds.

These analyses show it is useful to separate perceptions of integration at community level from perceptions of diversity or representation in public services.

Forty two participants indicated that they felt accepted in Flemington, but only 7 of these thought that the diversity of the community was represented in people working in the community like teachers, Gardai and youth workers.

DISCRIMINATION



Participants were asked if they had ever experienced discrimination, and if they answered yes, they were asked a series of 6 questions about their experiences.

- Q. 83 Have you ever experienced discrimination?
- Q. 84 Have you experienced discrimination in work?
- Q. 85 Have you experienced discrimination in accessing shops, pubs, restaurants or leisure facilities?
- Q. 86 Have you experienced discrimination in accessing public services?
- Q. 87 Have you experienced discrimination from any person in authority?
- Q. 88 Have you ever felt excluded or discriminated against in a public place or gathering?
- Q. 89 If you were able to change anything in your area to address discrimination against you or anyone else, what would you change?

Discrimination had been knowingly experienced in Ireland by approximately 60% of men and women participants who took part in the study, including half of those born in Ireland. Discrimination can have a range of impacts on victims who discover it, from no effect to very serious psychological effects and consequences including lack of access to public goods and services, such as health, education, policing, accommodation, and use of public spaces, and to private goods and services, in use of shops, hotels, leisure facilities or employment.

Much discrimination is invisible and not known about by the victims. The statistics below only reflect experiences known about by those affected. Discrimination can be on the basis of age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality or other characteristics.

More than a third (34%) of participants report that they have been or still are discriminated at work - of this approximately 25% are women while 40% are men. Discrimination when in a public place or gathering has been knowingly experienced by 28% of participants. Around a fifth of participants have been aware of discrimination against them in using public services (21%) and when accessing shops, pubs, restaurants or leisure facilities (18%).

Around a quarter of participants (27%) felt that they had experienced discrimination from a person in authority. It is interesting to note that while the answers to the other discrimination questions did not present a significant gender discrepancy, this answer did; 40% of women participant's stated that they experienced discrimination from a person in authority while only 20% of men

commented that they did. For example, some reported experiencing discrimination from Gardai while reporting other incidents, including one who suffered criminal damage to their house and car. These participants were born in 14 different countries, from Ireland, EU and non-EU countries. Only around half of these reported having experienced discrimination in response to any of the other questions, mostly in access to leisure facilities.

A quarter of participants offered suggestions of how to reduce discrimination in response to the final question, and their answers were knowledgeable both about discrimination and ways to reduce it. This knowledge should be utilised by public services in the Flemington area to ensure that discrimination is understood and reduced.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are informed by the analysis of the data and were developed after a consultative process with the researchers involved in this project. These recommendations reflect and are divided according to the sections in the report.

FLDG should engage with the relevant statutory bodies and other organisations, mentioned below, to progress actions on the identified areas. A work plan with realistic time scales should be developed by FLDG at the earliest opportunity.

HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION

In order to improve Flemington residents housing needs, there is a need to carry out more research on the housing situation documenting the extent of the issues mentioned in the report and producing case studies that can be used as policy evidence. Fingal County Council, Residential Tenancies Board and housing agencies could conduct research which gives voice to the issues that people are currently experiencing with their accommodation.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

It is evident that the education options available in Balbriggan are not sufficient to meet the current or future needs of the local community. At present in Balbriggan it is not possible to advance beyond QQI level 6. People need to commute in order to be able to further their educational level, and there are transport and other barriers to this as discussed above. However since Balbriggan is a fast growing town with a very high percentage of young people, it may be effective to:

- a. Conduct further research on the educational needs of the local population. This could give research based proofs for the need to diversify the subjects that are currently available in the town.
- b. Engage with the local Fingal Adult Education Service and potentially the Department of Education and Skills, that manages State subsidies for universities and third-level colleges, to explore the possibility of establishing courses beyond accreditation level 6. The cost of studying which is mentioned as an issue can be partially minimised by having a third-level college in Balbriggan as this will reduce transport expenses.
- c. Finally, the local Intreo office (Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection) and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs could work to address the childcare expenses issues (i.e. subsidised child care for low income families) to enable residents, who want to study or go back to study, to do so.

EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment is a very significant issue among respondents. Nuanced schemes that would promote and encourage the use of people's existing skills and expertise are necessary. Work with the local Intreo office (Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection) is advisable to explore several ways to reduce the barriers that people face when looking for employment. Barriers to finding similar or suitable jobs include lack of access to affordable childcare, lack of flexibility to facilitate care of elderly parents, cost and convenience of public transport.

English language provision would increase access to and security of employment.

Racism and discrimination were also identified as barriers to obtain employment. Statutory and non-statutory bodies should set up procedures to welcome cultural diversity and provide intercultural and anti-racism training for all staff.

It would be also important to explore the creation of a range of alternative forms of employment including entrepreneurship and social enterprise.

HEALTH

Access to primary health care services is a key issue in Balbriggan. The lack of any accessible health service in Balbriggan during out of hours including GP services poses serious issues for the local population given the high number of children. The D-Doc is an out of hours GP service for North Dublin City and County but is not available in Balbriggan, and in order to access it people need to travel to Swords (the closest centre in the area). Moreover, the lack of a local Hospital or supplementary A&E service in Balbriggan makes access to health services difficult particularly at night when also public transportation is limited. It is also essential to expand the GP services available in Balbriggan as residents complain of excessive waiting times.

The FLDG together with Cairde can share the findings of this research with the HSE (local regional area) in order to make the case for these new local health based services and also the expansion and the improvement of the existing services. The newly launched *National Intercultural Health Strategy 2018-2023*⁵ can be a key document to guide and legitimise the demands.

AWARENESS OF LOCAL SERVICES

Publicising local statutory and other services is essential to raising awareness and particularly improving the depth of knowledge in Flemington about available supports regarding money and immigration. In order to make sure that information on different services is shared the FLDG could promote and support festivals such as Millfield Community Day festival. The group can also

⁵ <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/primarycare/socialinclusion/intercultural-health/hse-intercultural-health-strategy-web-final.pdf> accessed on the 26/01/2019

support events that promote the civic and community spirit in Balbriggan such as the Balbriggan Summerfest or can organise information sessions with all the services available in the area to establish a new event based in the Flemington Area in Balbriggan.

TRANSPORT

Residents are highly reliant on public transport for access to employment, education, health, leisure, and social connection. Parents cite the cost of travel on public transport to youth facilities as a major barrier to participation in sport and leisure. Cost is also a barrier to employment outside Balbriggan. FLDG should take into account the impact of criminal damage on the transport usage of residents.

- FCC could review available public transport routes in Balbriggan and feed into consultations by transport providers.

MONEY

Money worries are a key concern for participants in this research. This includes those who are already in full-time employment.

- FLDG and Empower could collaborate with Citizens Information Centres and MABS (Money Advice and Budgeting Service) to provide seminars on debt and budgeting in the local area.

NEIGHBOURHOOD QUALITY

Traffic, and in particular dangerous driving at speed, was a key concern. Residents are creating diversions to slow/deter traffic which were also potentially dangerous.

There were a high number of suggestions to improve the appearance and feeling of the neighbourhood, increasing residents' use of shared spaces together and sense of joint ownership, and making it attractive to visitors. These included planting, DIY community or commissioned art projects and beachfront development.

In the Flemington area FCC in conjunction with An Garda Síochána could:

- Review parking restrictions
- Review provision of traffic management at schools, including 'lollipop people'
- Review speed restriction enforcement in residential neighbourhoods and placing of pedestrian crossings

FCC could work with An Garda Síochána to address dangerous driving issues through coordinated awareness and prevention strategies, acknowledging fear for childrens' safety in particular.

FCC can continue to support the establishment of residents' associations in the area and develop representational capacity.

FCC and the FLDG could seek residents' ideas for new projects to develop 'creative communities' – including collaborative temporary and permanent installations, community arts events in their own streets, and in local public services, schools and spaces (see for example creativepeopleplaces.org.uk/map). These can include natural and created materials, designed and collectively built by residents, to increase a sense of place attachment and control over the neighbourhood (in turn decreasing fear).

CRIME, SAFETY AND POLICING

Criminal damage of cars and houses, and dangerous driving, were the most reported crimes that made participants feel unsafe in Flemington.

Safety in public spaces (streets and parks) for children and young people was also mentioned frequently, and parents wanted more freedom for their children to be outside the home to mix with others.

Participants who had called Gardai, about a range of crime and disorder issues, felt that response times were very slow and did not support the apprehension of offenders.

An Garda Síochána can:

- Support the establishment of neighbourhood watch groups and other mechanisms to feedback to residents on crime issues
- Address responses to vandalism, particularly criminal damage on cars and houses
- Review policing of public spaces, in particular in relation to the positive importance of public places for children of all ages to mix with one another

DIVERSITY

82% of respondents answered that the Flemington area is inclusive of people from different backgrounds. Participants suggested however that more opportunities for integration work would be helpful to sustain these positive relations, particularly in light of recent efforts by the far-right to divide the community.

Only 21% of participants believe that the diversity of the community is reflected in the people working in the community in roles such as teachers, Gardai and youth workers.

FLDG could work with FCC, Intreo, local schools, An Garda Síochána, and youth organisations to promote the importance of equality and diversity training, consultation with stakeholders across a range of backgrounds, and linking with diverse community groups. Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 places a positive duty on public sector bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and protect human rights, in their daily work.

FCC and the FLDG could support new projects which focus on integration at the local level through dedicated funding, links with publicly funded organisations, promotion and other forms of support.

DISCRIMINATION

Almost two-thirds of participants have experienced discrimination. These include discrimination from people in authority and in accessing public and private services as well as in employment. Discrimination against others is most mentioned in relation to police discrimination against young people and racism against ethnic minorities by neighbours and by police.

Foróige and the FLDG could work with An Garda Síochána to:

- Promote equality initiatives
- Facilitate meetings about the policing of young people in public spaces
- Investigate ways to establish positive relations between Gardai and young people, including promoting safe use of public places in Balbriggan
- Address issues of youth disorder through mediation

Foróige could work with local schools to promote safe behaviours and identify diversion activities, particularly for the summer months.

Foróige could establish a youth forum for the area so that young people can raise their concerns and address them in collaboration with key agencies and provide a space for new ideas for diversion and creative participation in the neighbourhood.

APPENDIX I: RECOMMENDATIONS

ISSUES	HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	KEY AGENCIES
<u>HOUSING</u>	Improve access to housing and quality of accommodation	Research to be conducted on the housing situation documenting the issues raised in the report and producing case studies that can be used as policy evidence proofs	Residential Tenancies Board Fingal County Council Housing agencies Housing Advocacy Organisations
<u>TRAINING AND EDUCATION</u>	Increase the range and level of education provision in Balbriggan	Conduct further research on educational needs of the local population Subsidize childcare costs for low income families to enable residents who want to study to do so Explore the provision of a PLC college and/or 3rd level college provision in Balbriggan	Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection Department of Education & Skills Department of Children & Youth Affairs Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education & Training Board Fingal Adult Education Service
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>	Address issues that are acting as barriers to employment	Provision of nuanced schemes that promote and encourage the use of people's expertise as evidenced in this report Statutory agencies to consider the barriers to employment that have been identified in this report Support intercultural and anti-racism training for staff in statutory and non-statutory bodies	Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection Relevant NGOs i.e. LIR
<u>HEALTH</u>	Increase access to primary health care in the Flemington area	Provision of D-Doc services in Balbriggan (there is currently no out of hours service for the town) Expand GP services in the town and explore A&E service possibilities	Health Service Executive Cairde

ISSUES	HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	KEY AGENCIES
<u>AWARENESS OF SERVICES</u>	Increase awareness of local services	<p>Promotion of events and festivals that promote civic and community spirit such as the Balbriggan Summerfest</p> <p>Promote and create initiatives that support the sharing of information between services and with the communities they serve particularly on money and immigration issues</p>	<p>Fingal County Council</p> <p>Empower</p> <p>MABS</p> <p>Cairde</p> <p>CIC</p>
<u>TRANSPORT</u>	Increase accessibility of public transport in Balbriggan	<p>Review available public transport routes in Balbriggan and feed into consultations by transport providers</p> <p>Increase range and scope of consultations with residents</p>	<p>Fingal County Council</p> <p>National Transport Authority</p> <p>Public transport providers</p>
<u>MONEY</u>	Develop community initiatives that assist local people to manage better financially	Provision of seminars on debt and budgeting in the local area in conjunction with MABS and Citizen Information Centres	<p>Empower</p> <p>Fingal County Council</p> <p>MABS</p> <p>CIC</p>
<u>NEIGHBOURHOOD QUALITY</u>	Improve the neighbourhood quality in Flemington	<p>Regarding traffic in the Flemington area, review could be undertaken on traffic management at schools (including lollipop people), speed restriction enforcement and parking restrictions</p> <p>Dangerous driving could be addressed in part through coordinated awareness and prevention strategies</p> <p>Increase the availability of, and access to community arts projects and support</p>	<p>An Garda Síochána</p> <p>Fingal County Council</p>

ISSUES	HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	KEY AGENCIES
<u>CRIME, SAFETY AND POLICING</u>	Public safety of all residents in the Flemington area	<p>Support the establishment of neighbourhood watch groups and other mechanisms to feedback to residents on crime issues</p> <p>Address responses to vandalism, particularly criminal damage on cars and houses</p> <p>Review policing of public spaces, in particular in relation to the positive importance of public places for children of all ages to mix with one another</p>	<p>An Garda Síochána</p> <p>Foróige</p> <p>FCC</p>
<u>DIVERSITY</u>	Increase opportunities for integration work	Promote the importance of equality and diversity training, consultation with stakeholders across a range of backgrounds and linking with diverse community groups	<p>All agencies</p> <p>Local schools</p> <p>Foróige and youth organizations</p> <p>Intreo</p> <p>BIF</p> <p>Cairde</p>
<u>DISCRIMINATION</u>	Reduction of discrimination felt by people in the Flemington area	<p>Promote equality initiatives</p> <p>Facilitate meetings about the policing of young people in public spaces</p> <p>Investigate ways to establish positive relations between Gardaí and young people</p> <p>Address issues of youth disorder through mediation</p> <p>Establish a youth forum for the area so young people can raise their concerns and address them in collaboration with key agencies and provide a space for new ideas for diversion and creative participation in the neighbourhood</p> <p>Work with local schools to promote safe behaviours and identify diversion activities over the summer months</p>	<p>An Garda Síochána</p> <p>Foróige</p> <p>Local schools</p> <p>BIF</p> <p>Cairde</p>

APPENDIX II: RECOMMENDATIONS

PSEUDONYM	GENDER	AGE BREAKDOWN	NUMBER OF YEARS SPENT IN BALBRIGGAN	OCCUPATION/ OR EMPLOYMENT STATUS	COUNTRIES OF INTERVIEWEES' BIRTH
Interviewee 1	Female	55+	15	Unemployed	Pakistan
Interviewee 2	Female	26-35	6	Unemployed	Tanzania
Interviewee 3	Male	36-45	5	Unemployed	Somalia
Interviewee 4	Female	26-35	12	Unemployed	Germany
Interviewee 5	Female	36-45	16	Unemployed	South Africa
Interviewee 6	Male	46-55	17	Unemployed	Sierra Leone
Interviewee 7	Female	36-45	11	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 8	Female	26-35	13	Employed	Nigeria
Interviewee 9	Male	55+	15	Retired	Zimbabwe
Interviewee 10	Female	36-45	10	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 11	Female	26-35	8	Employed	Ireland
Interviewee 12	Female	36-45	1	Employed	Ireland
Interviewee 13	Female	36-45	11	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 14	Female	46-55	15	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 15	Female	55+	15	Employed	Ireland
Interviewee 16	Male	36-45	7	Employed	Brazil
Interviewee 17	Female	36-45	13	Employed	Latvia
Interviewee 18	Female	36-45	13	Unemployed	UK
Interviewee 19	Male	36-45	4	Employed	Poland
Interviewee 20	Male	36-45	1.5	Unemployed	Iraq
Interviewee 21	Female	55+	14	Employed	Ireland

Interviewee 22	Female	26-35	12	Unemployed	Nigeria
Interviewee 23	Female	46-55	10	Unemployed	Nigeria
Interviewee 24	Female	26-35	8	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 25	Male	46-55	8	Unemployed	DRC
Interviewee 26	Male	36-45	11	Employed	Ghana
Interviewee 27	Male	46-55	11	Employed	Poland
Interviewee 28	Male	36-45	13	Employed	Poland
Interviewee 29	Male	46-55	14	Employed	Poland
Interviewee 30	Male	36-44	12	Employed	Australia
Interviewee 31	Female	46-55	4	Employed	Poland
Interviewee 32	Female	46-55	13	Employed	Poland
Interviewee 33	Female	18-25	4	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 34	Male	36-45	20	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 35	Female	26-35	9	Unemployed	Romania
Interviewee 36	Male	46-55	8	Unemployed	Nigeria
Interviewee 37	Male	36-45	9	Unemployed	DRC
Interviewee 38	Male	46-55	12	Employed	Nigeria
Interviewee 39	Male	36-45	2.5	Unemployed	Nigeria
Interviewee 40	Male	36-45	10	Employed	Nigeria
Interviewee 41	Male	18-25	12	Employed	Nigeria
Interviewee 42	Female	46-55	11	Employed	Canada
Interviewee 43	Female	46-55	12	Unemployed	UK
Interviewee 44	Female	36-45	7	Employed	Romania

Interviewee 45	Female	46-55	15	Employed	France
Interviewee 46	Female	26-35	6	Unemployed	Pakistan
Interviewee 47	Male	36-45	11	Employed	Poland
Interviewee 48	Male	26-35	12	Employed	Scotland
Interviewee 49	Female	36-45	13	Employed	Czech Republic
Interviewee 50	Female	18-25	13	Employed	Canada
Interviewee 51	Male	Under 18	8.5	Employed	Ireland
Interviewee 52	Male	Under 18	4.5	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 53	Female	Under 18	All life	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 54	Female	Under 18	All life	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 55	Female	Under 18	All life	Unemployed	Ireland
Interviewee 56	Female	46-55	9	Unemployed	Ireland

QUESTIONNAIRE

=====

Please note that all the information you supply will be treated as anonymous and confidential.

=====

SECTION I: PERSONAL PROFILE INFORMATION

Q. 1 Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

Q. 2 Age (Please tick the relevant box)

Under 18 ☐

18-25 ☐

26-35 ☐

36-46 ☐

46-55 ☐

55+ ☐

Q. 3 What is your ethnicity? _____

Q. 4 What is your nationality? _____

Q. 5 In what country were you born? _____

Q. 6 Have you ever lived outside Ireland? YES/ NO

If YES, how long have you lived in Ireland for? _____

Q. 7 How long have you lived in Balbriggan? _____

Q. 8 What is your current marital status?

Single (never married) ☐

Single (widowed) ☐

Single (divorced) ☐

Married ☐

Single (separated) ☐

Co-habiting ☐

Other (specify) ☐

Civil Partnership ☐

Q.9 Number of dependants

Number of :	In Ireland	Elsewhere
Children		
Adults		

Q. 10 What is your Religion, if any?

Q. 11 Is English your first language? Yes/No

Q.12 What other languages do you speak?

Q.13 Have you ever had difficulty accessing services because of your reading or writing in English? YES/ NO

Q. 14 If YES please tell me more

social welfare ☐ housing ☐ health services ☐
council ☐ police ☐ immigration services ☐
other ☐ bills ☐

Q. 15 Have you ever had difficulty accessing employment because of your reading or writing in English? YES/ NO

Q. 16 If YES please tell me more

SECTION 2: HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION

Q. 17 Is your current home:

Rented from Local Authority (RAS) ☐
Council Housing ☐
Rented from Private Landlordwith HAP ☐
Owned by You ☐
Rented from Private Landlord without HAP ☐
Shared accommodation ☐
Staying with friends or relatives ☐
Other ☐

Q. 18 Is your current home:

A House ☐

Room in someone else's house /apartment ☐

A Flat ☐

A Bedsit ☐

Temporary or Mobile Home ☐

Other (please specify) ☐

Q. 19 How many bedrooms are in this accommodation? _____

Q. 20 How many people do you live with? _____

Q. 21 Does your current accommodation meet your needs?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q. 22 If Not, Why? _____

Q. 23 Are you on the list for social housing? YES/ NO

Q. 24 If yes, for how long? _____

Q. 25 If not, do you need social housing? _____

Q. 26 Have you had any serious problems with your accommodation in Flemington in the past?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q. 27 If Yes, please describe _____

Q. 28 If you have arrived or returned to Ireland from abroad, how often have you moved house since? _____

Q. 29 Have you ever been homeless? If so, when and for how long?

Q. 30 Do you feel accepted by the people living in Flemington?

SECTION 3: TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Q. 31 Have you ever attended formal education? YES/NO

Q. 32 If not, please go to Q.36

Q. 33 If yes, how many years did you go to school? _____

Q. 34 What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

Primary ☐

Secondary ☐

College ☐

Other ☐

Q. 35 At what age did you leave school?

Age: _____

Q. 36 Are you currently studying? YES/ NO

Q. 37 If YES What and Where? _____

Q.38 If not, would you like to go back to study?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q. 39 If yes, what would you like to study? _____

Q. 40 And at what level? _____

Q. 41 Is there any issue that prevents you going back to study (e.g. childcare, distance, cost, work etc.).

Please specify _____

Q. 42 Have you ever attended any training/classes (not school) in Balbriggan?

Training/classes	Where?	For how long?

Q. 43 Are there any other type of training/classes that you or your family need?

SECTION 4: EMPLOYMENT

Q. 44 Are you working? YES/ NO if NO go to Question 47

Q. 45 If you are in paid work, what is your present job? -----

Q. 46 Is it full time or part time? -----

Q. 47 If you are not in paid work, why do you think this is the case? -----

Q. 48 If you are looking for work, what are the barriers to finding a suitable job?

Q. 49 If you have lived outside Ireland, what did you work at before arriving or returning to Ireland?

Q. 50 Have you ever worked in a similar job in Ireland? YES/NO

SECTION 5:HEALTH

Q.51 Do you have a GP? YES/NO

Q. 52 Do you have a medical card? YES/NO

Q. 53 Do you have a GP visit card? YES/NO

Q. 54 Do you or any member of your family have any health concerns?

Q. 55 What are the health services you most use? -----

Q. 56 Are you aware of any GP services in the Flemington Area?

Q. 57 What are the barriers for you or your family when you visit the GP or other health services? (e.g. Language, distance, cost, information)

Q. 58 Is distance a barrier to accessing health services?

Q. 59 What improvements would you suggest for local health services?

SECTION 6: AWARENESS OF LOCAL SERVICES

Q. 60 Do you know where you can go to get help....?

(a) finding a job YES? NO if YES where? -----

(b) problems with housing? YES/ NO if YES where? -----

(c) access to social welfare? YES/ NO if YES where? -----

(d) help with immigration? YES/ NO if YES where? -----

(e) problems accessing health services? YES/ NO if YES where? -----

(f) problems with money or debt? YES/ NO if YES where? -----

(g) neighbourhood problems? YES/ NO if YES where? -----

Other -----

SECTION 7: TRANSPORT

Q. 61 Do you have access to a car? YES/ NO

Q. 62 Do you use public transport? YES/ NO if YES What for? _____

Q. 63 Does public transport meet your current needs? (e.g. routes, timetable (frequency, cost etc.) _____

SECTION 8: MONEY

Q. 64 Does money worry you? YES/NO

Q. 65 If yes, how?

- ☐ Food
- ☐ Clothing
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Other expenses _____

SECTION 9: NEIGHBOURHOOD QUALITY

Q. 66 Do you know any local community groups in the Flemington area (e.g residents associations)? Yes / NO

Q. 67 if YES which ones? _____

Q. 68 Are you or your family part of any local group in Flemington or Balbriggan?

Q. 69 If you know any of the community groups do you think they have access to a good range of resources in the Flemington area?

Q. 70 What is the best way to meet other people in the Flemington area?

Q. 71 Are there enough public spaces in Flemington to socialise?

Q. 72 Do young people have access to enough local and affordable amenities?

Q. 73 What places do you spend time with your family in the local area?

Q. 74 What improvement would you like to see in the local streets or buildings to make them better for you?

SECTION 10: CRIME, SAFETY AND POLICING

Q. 75 Are you satisfied with policing in Balbriggan? How do you feel about policing in Balbriggan/ Flemington Area?

Q. 75b Do you have any safety concern in the area (e.g. anti-social behaviour, theft, discrimination, harassment)?

Q. 76 Have you been a victim of crime in Balbriggan in the last three years? YES/ NO If NO go to Q. 80

Q. 77 If YES please tell me about that

Q. 78 If yes, did you report it? What was the outcome?

Q. 79 If the crime happened in Flemington, how did you feel about your neighbourhood after? Did you feel supported by people in the local area who knew about it?

SECTION 11: DIVERSITY

Q. 80 Do you feel your needs are suitably represented in the public services e.g. council, police, social welfare, HSE and other services?

Q. 81 How is the diversity of the community reflected in the people involved in the community e.g. teachers, Gardai, youth workers?

Q. 82 Is Flemington Area inclusive of people from different backgrounds?

SECTION 12: DISCRIMINATION

Q. 83 Have you ever experienced discrimination?

Q. 84 Have you experienced discrimination in work?

Q. 85 Have you experienced discrimination in accessing shops, pubs, restaurants or leisure facilities?

Q. 86 Have you experienced discrimination in accessing public services?

Q. 87 Have you experienced discrimination from any person in authority?

Q. 88 Have you ever felt excluded or discriminated against in a public place or gathering?

Q. 89 If you were able to change anything in your area to address discrimination against you or anyone else, what would you change?

SECTION 13: CLOSING QUESTIONS

Q. 90 Do you have anything else you want to add about Flemington?

THANK YOU



