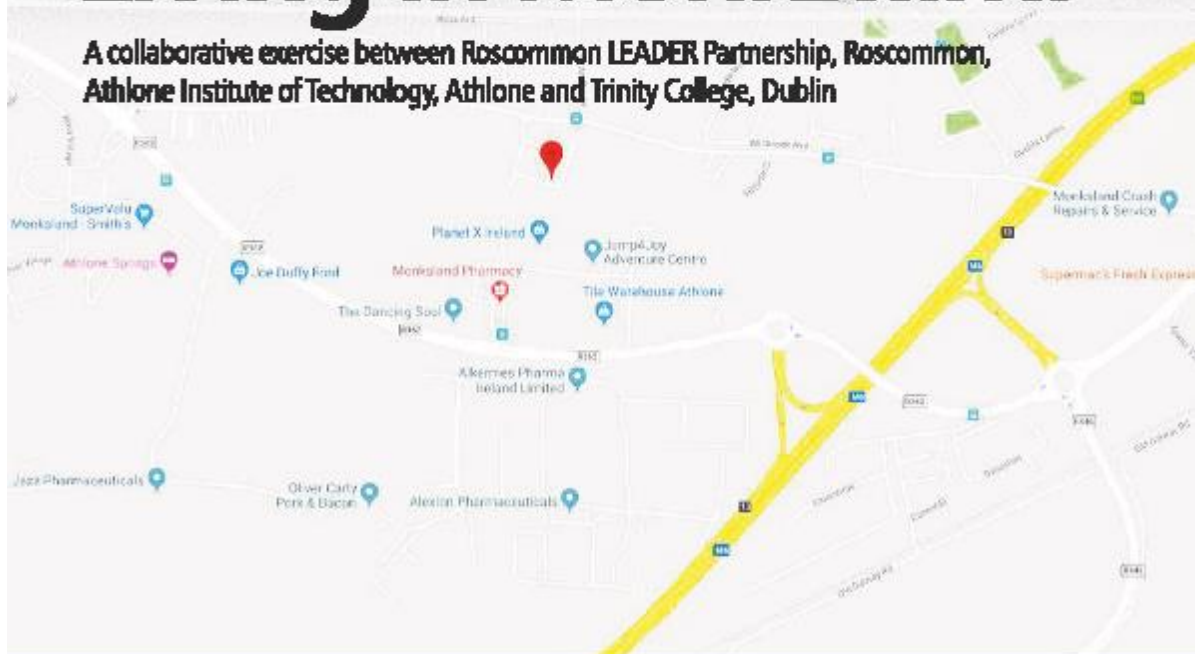


Linda Sice
DECEMBER 2018



Living in Monksland

A collaborative exercise between Roscommon LEADER Partnership, Roscommon, Athlone Institute of Technology, Athlone and Trinity College, Dublin



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Introduction and Background

The settlement of Monksland is located on the outskirts of Athlone in the Athlone West Electoral Division. The Monksland/Bealanmullia (Athlone West) area is situated west of the River Shannon, within the administrative jurisdiction of Roscommon County Council and it borders the development boundary of Athlone Town Council and Westmeath County Council to the South East. This is a location that has developed as a principle service and employment centre for Co. Roscommon. Centrality and accessibility are key advantages to this strategic location.

The residential development in Monksland is dense with a number of housing developments built and both North and South of the new Tuam road R362. In contrast, the housing development along the Crannagh Beg Road is characterized by 'ribbon' development of single dwellings. Athlone is located on the River Shannon just south of Lough Ree, and is linked by rail and the M6 motorway to the east and west of Ireland.

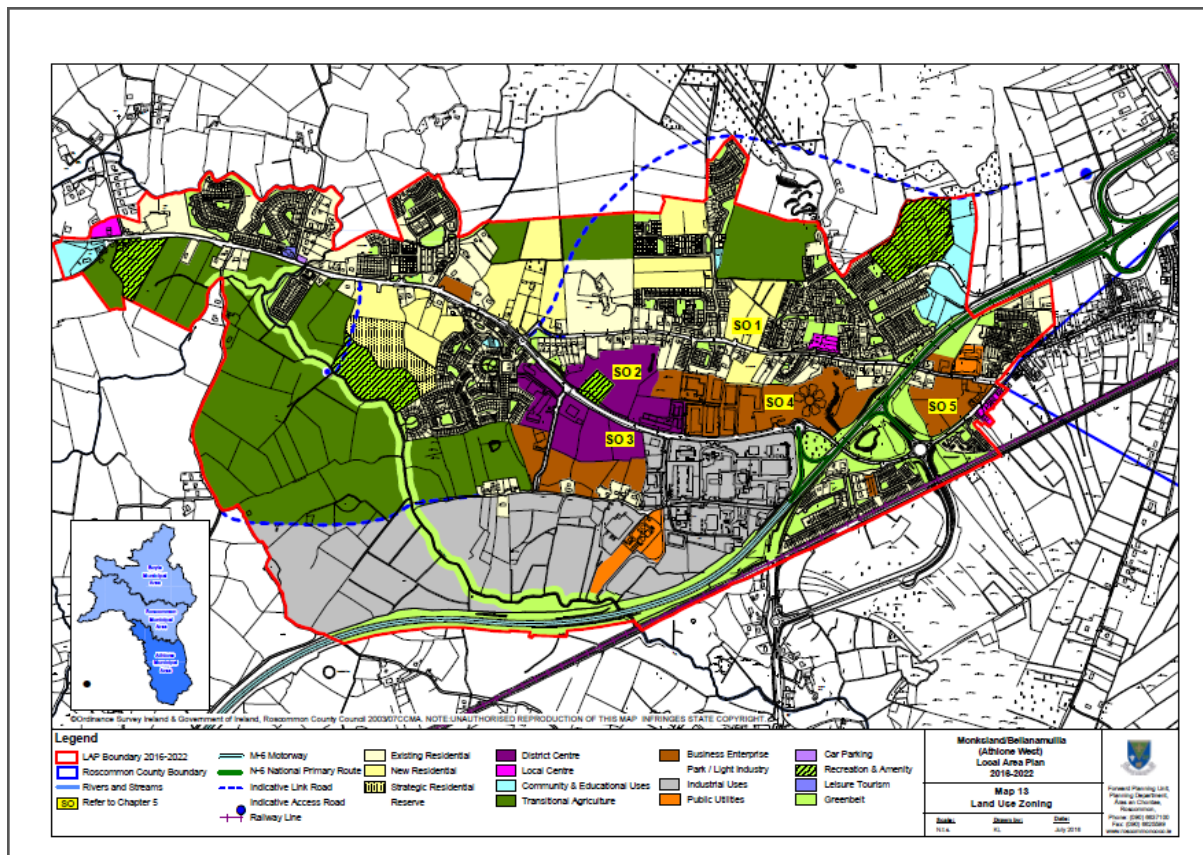


Fig. 1 Map of Monksland Area

Large scale Industrial as well as Business, Enterprise Park/Light Industry and Warehousing developments are prevalent in Monksland with limit provision of social and community facilities.

Agencies in the Community Voluntary and Statutory Sector have for many years wanted to support community, social and economic development in what is the largest settlement in County Roscommon. This has led to a partnership approach to establishing the need within the area. The collaborative partners leading this research are Roscommon LEADER Partnership, Athlone Institute of Technology, Roscommon County Council and locally Monksland Town Team.¹

¹ Roscommon County Council (RCC) established 6 town teams as part of a strategic action under its economic development remit, to support the revival and re-branding of six towns in the county, one of which is Monksland. Its objective is to facilitate local communities and organisations to engage with

The primary rationale for this study is to establish the needs of the Community in Monksland, and by so doing to use the information gleaned as an evidence base to develop a Strategic Action Plan of targeted interventions for the Community of Monksland.

The research sets out to examine Monksland under a number of different categories

Monksland as a Place to Live

- * The degree of residents' satisfaction with housing and environmental conditions in Monksland
- * The degree of residents' satisfaction with the quality of services and local facilities
- * Residents' perceptions about living conditions in Monksland
- * The degree of residents' attachment to the area
- * The degree of residents' pride in the area

Monksland as a Social Community

- * The sense of community in Monksland
- * The involvement of residents in the social life of the Community
- * The degree to which residents are interested in involving themselves in Community Life in the area

RCC and other relevant agencies to identify the key economic, social, and cultural & community resources as development opportunities in the local towns and their surrounding areas of influence. Town Teams include representation from retailers, consumers, citizens and communities of interest with the purpose of developing strategies to reinvigorate their local town and with the support of Roscommon County Council, Roscommon LEADER Partnership and other agencies/service providers to create jobs, facilitate start-up businesses and above all re-instil "Pride of Place" in the towns.

Monksland as an Economic Community

- * Sources of household incomes
- * Employment and Opportunities
- * Education and Training experiences and interests of local residents

Literature Review/ Theoretical Perspective

The basis for this research is to explore the needs of the local residents in the Monksland Area. It is firmly grounded in Community Development Principles. Community Development stresses the need for collective action. It is essential that the community have the capacity to work collectively to affect change. However, it is necessary for the needs of the Community to be established. Community Development aims to improve the life situations of the community, be it a community of Interest, Community of Attachment or a Geographic Community. The ideal of Community Development is that the projects and programmes are led from the bottom up and prioritised as a result of a felt or expressed need in the area. The premise behind the prioritisation of initiatives from a community development perspective is that all community development initiatives should, in theory, be initiated as a result of an expressed need from the Community with the active participation by the socially excluded in the development process. Craig views Community Development as a process that

“works towards helping groups and communities articulate needs and viewpoints and influence the processes that structure their everyday lives” (1995)

Willmot (1986) identifies Territorial/ Place Communities as assuming that people living in an area share a common identity, interact on a regular basis. This needs analysis will establish to what extent individuals residing in the Monksland Area share a common identity for the area and interact on a regular basis.

In that community development responds to perceptions which communities hold of their own needs, it potentially relates to any factor that influences the quality of community life. A satisfactory quality of life can be achieved when people both individually and collectively have their social, economic and environmental needs met and when these conditions are maintained in a sustainable equilibrium.

Community Development definitions take the view that the perceptions and priorities of people in relation to their own experiences should be the basis for action. Hence, there is an

emphasis on the felt and expressed needs of communities. This is not just a value but also a practicality in that it is recognised that people are motivated to act based on their own experiences. Identifying the needs of the residents of Monksland using Community Development Principles will undoubtedly enhance the quality of life and opportunities of the area.

Volunteering and Community Engagement

As part of Athlone Institute of Technology, (AIT) AIT's Strategic Plan for 2014-2018, Pillar Seven focussed on Socio-Economic Engagement and External Stakeholders Partnerships with its key strategic goal "To construct and embed a sustainable and measurable approach to civil engagement (Social, economic, cultural) that permeates AIT's curriculum and advances regional development". Volunteering and community engagement if fostered with third level students may lead to a better society for all citizens.

A Volunteerism Survey (Deloitte, 2017) highlighted that employees like it when businesses incorporate involvement in the community into the workday. This integration has been shown to boost morale and creates a more positive working environment. Other information from the Deloitte Report (2017) showed that millennials who got involved in volunteer activities were more likely to be *proud, loyal and satisfied employees*, in comparison to those who rarely or never volunteered.

A recent Fortune article also showed that employers who support their employees to get involved in charitable efforts have found that it drives a more productive, engaged workforce. Of 357,000 surveyed, those who had a positive experience of volunteering were four times more likely to say their teams were willing to go the extra mile to achieve (Peters & Lewis, Kluin, 2017). Volunteering and community engagement is a win win situation for all concerned.

Over the last number of years there has been an increased focus on community and civic engagement within higher education in Ireland. The Carnegie Foundation of which Athlone Institute of Technology was part of The Irish Pilot Study of Community Engagement Classification initiated in 2013 by NUI Galway in partnership with University of Massachusetts and Merrimack College, Boston. This was the first time for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning to be piloted outside the US.

Twelve Higher Education Institutes joined forces and created a group to support the pilot and discussions therein. It was part of a national process to build an evidence-base of third level college's contribution to civic and community engagement in line with higher education policy.

It is important that volunteering and community engagement is about serving the public good and fosters alignment for community-based teaching, learning and scholarship. For the last three years AIT nursing students have participated in voluntary work in Uganda.

There were a range of transferable skills gained from volunteering which can help an individual have self-awareness.

Engagement of people with a community involves connecting with one another using shared values whilst enabling them to achieve things that would not be possible on their own (Field, 2008). Social capital is a term used to explain the formation of networks with friends and family, work colleagues, membership of various groups, including involvement in one's local community (Halpern, 2005). Putman talks about community involvement as been high among young adults, then a decline as family obligations take over with a rise in retirement and widowhood (Putnam, 2000). This is also echoed by the National Social Life Health and Aging Project (NSHAP) (Cornwell et al., 2008).

Communities with good community engagement are more likely to benefit from lower crime figures, better health, higher educational achievement, and better economic growth (Halpern 2009). Portes (1998) suggests that although certain strong ties may benefit members but on the other hand can also exclude others. There may be a potential restriction of personal freedom which can discourage the more independent minded from investing in a group (Portes, 1998). Lack of mobility, loss of partner and closure of community facilities are events that can result in isolation for an individual (Lillyman & Land, 2007) thus inhibiting community engagement.

The Hunt Report defines engagement as “at its simplest, engagement means taking on civic responsibilities and cooperating with the needs of the community that sustains higher education – including business, the wider education system, and the community and voluntary sector ...also means understanding the value of the autonomy that higher education has, and contributing to wider public discourse on areas of particular expertise”. Engagement

“requires going beyond the expert model that often gets in the way of constructive university-community collaboration...calls on faculty to move beyond ‘outreach,’ ...asks scholars to go beyond ‘service,’ with its overtones of noblesse oblige. What it emphasizes is genuine collaboration: that the learning and teaching be multidirectional and the expertise shared. It represents a basic re-conceptualization of...community-based work.”(O’Meara, 2005)

Aging and Community Engagement

Volunteering for the older person is generally associated with higher levels of social connectedness which leads to strong social networks and increased levels of trust (Warburton & Stirling, 2007). Volunteering maybe an act that one performs without expecting compensation (Gasiorek & Giles, 2013). Volunteering describes it as the what the older person may choose to do for others outside their home and its focus is on the wider community (Veere, 2011). Volunteering according to Putman (1993, pp.163-164) is the mechanism for building trust and social networks. Putnam describes civic action as not only good for the individual, he describes it as a lifesaver (Putnam, 2000, p.331). There is a difference between formal and informal volunteering (Morrow-Howell 2003; Martinez et al., 211). Older adults who volunteer and engage in their local communities, obtain benefits from this informal service (MorrowHowell, 2003; Krause, 2009).

Intergenerational projects that aim to close the intergenerational gap are wonderful opportunities for the young to learn from the old. An example from the McGill University shows that students are matched with a local elder in the Montreal community, whom they then interview. Based on these interviews and stories, students write, record, produce and broadcast a radio play. The project is called Hidden Gems and provides a wonderful opportunity “for students to learn about issues facing older generations, to find value in personal stories and to understand and express themes capable of transcending generations”. (<http://hiddengemsmcgill.tumblr.com>,2018)

Some older adults volunteer in an informal capacity with family and friends but also in a more formal capacity (Haski-Leventhal 2009, Lum2005; Gasiorek & Giles 2013,). The positive association between volunteering and wellbeing has been well highlighted (Morrow-Howell et al., 2003; Harris, 2005; Lum & Lightfoot, 2005; Haski-Leventhal, 2009. Van

Willigen (2000) showed that older adults benefit most from volunteer work with religious associations or groups.

There appears to be an increase in volunteering following retirement (Dosman et al., 2006) with people reporting better self-rated health with increased physical activity and increased quality of life (Reker, 2001; Lum, 2005; Haski-Leventhal, 2009; Gasiosek & Giles, 2013). The time allocated for good health appears to be between 2 to 15 hrs a week (Windsor et. al., 2008). The older man appears to be associated with formal volunteering whereas the older woman tends to be associated with informal volunteering (Gray et al., 2012).

The older person with their life experiences are prepared to support society by volunteering if they are given the opportunities (Carr, 2009). Retired volunteers has a greater life satisfaction which lends itself to successful ageing (Reker 2001). Retirees who do not participate in volunteering tend to report more depressive symptoms and mental wellbeing scores (Schwingel et al., 2009) supporting the research by Li. et.al., (2013) which found that volunteering has a positive effect on mental health echoing other work demonstrating that volunteering slows the decline in functioning levels, decreases depression levels and a reduction in mortality rates (Lum & Lightfoot, 2005; Harris & Thoresen, 2005).

Data from the Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) surveyed 30,023 Europeans aged fifty and over in twelve different countries. The highest rates were found in northern Europe while the lowest rates were in the south of Europe. Volunteers reported higher levels of physical health, life satisfaction and lower rates of depression (Haski-Leventhal 2009). It is interesting to note that in Northern European countries where the social welfare system is strong and retirees have good pensions their sense of life satisfaction rates high irrespective of their volunteer work (Haski-Leventhal 2009). Higher levels of education (Tang, 2008) is associated with volunteering (Barrett 2011).

The National Positive Ageing Strategy in Ireland (2013) promotes the concept of active volunteering and involvement in local communities. In Ireland in the TILDA study volunteering was measured by asking the question “How often, if at all do you do volunteer work?” The results showed that fifteen per cent of older adults volunteer at least once per week, 11% at least once per month, 16% at least once per year with 58% never engaging in volunteer work. The older adult in the bracket 65-74years were more likely to volunteer than the other groups. Forty five per cent of all women aged 65-74 provide care to children or

grandchildren (TILDA, 2011). Older adults, from a higher socio-economic background are more likely to volunteer with them more likely to benefit from the positive outcomes of volunteering (Gasiorek & Giles, 2013, TILDA, 2011). Heenan (2009) in a Northern Ireland study, found evidence of strong mutual relationships between older people and their neighbours

It is vital that opportunities are created for the older person to access resources needed to volunteer so that they and communities mutually benefit from this engagement (Carr, 2009). Older people's knowledge, skills, experience, reliability and commitment can be utilised (Principi et al., 2012), which can benefit society at large. Henkin & Zapf (2006) advocated that a supportive structure promoting community connectedness with resources is essential to enable older people to contribute. Public policies need to be developed to address these issues and provide the necessary supports and facilities warranted so that the older person can engage with volunteering in a positive way (Principi et al., 2012).

Methodology

Secondary research was conducted which included reviewing information from the following plans:

- Monksland/Bealanmullia (Athlone West) Local Area Plan 2010-2016; Roscommon County Council
- Monksland/Bealanmullia (Athlone West) Local Area Plan 2016-2022; Roscommon County Council
- Roscommon County Development Plan 2014 – 2020; Roscommon County Council
- County Roscommon Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 to 2021; Roscommon County Council
- Feasibility Study Report Athlone Chamber into establishment of a smart technology enterprise hub at Monksland Athlone; Momentum for Roscommon LEADER Partnership

The research survey (Appendix 1) was designed following a collaborative process between the Steering Committee Members² led by Linda Sice Brogan, Roscommon LEADER Partnership, Athlone Institute of Technology, Monksland Town Team³ and Professor Myra O'Regan. Once designed the survey together with all supporting documentation was submitted to Dr. Mary McDonnell Naughton, chairperson of the Ethics Committee, Athlone Institute of Technology for adjudication. Once ethical approval was secured the survey was pilot tested in the field and minor adjustments made.

The questionnaire included both closed and open ended questions; the researcher completed the questionnaire with the participant on the door step. 481 individuals participated in the research from households that were chosen based on stratified random sampling by housing

² A full list of Steering Committee Members in Appendix 2

³ A full list of Monksland Town Team Committee Members in Appendix 3

estate. Every 3rd house was surveyed from a housing stock of 1400 units in the Monksland Area. A recall policy of returning twice after the initial call was employed, and information on the survey was left on the first attempt to contact the participant. The response rate was 97%.

The response rate to each question varies throughout the survey, whilst in the main the questions were answered by in excess of 450 individuals there were a number of questions where the response rate to that particular question was low, we have indicated the response for each individual question.

Data Analysis

Survey data was accumulated by each interviewer, the answers were coded, and all data was entered into SPSS for analysis

Layout

The report is divided into 4 sections covering the findings under 4 headings, Demographics, Monksland as a place to live, Monksland as a Social Community and Monksland as an Economic Community. The report then explores the key findings and conclusions.

Section 1

Demographics of Monksland

This section provides an overview of the demographics of the area, providing data on age bands, household structures, age profile of children, marital status and religious preferences.

The following is the breakdown of the age profile of the respondents

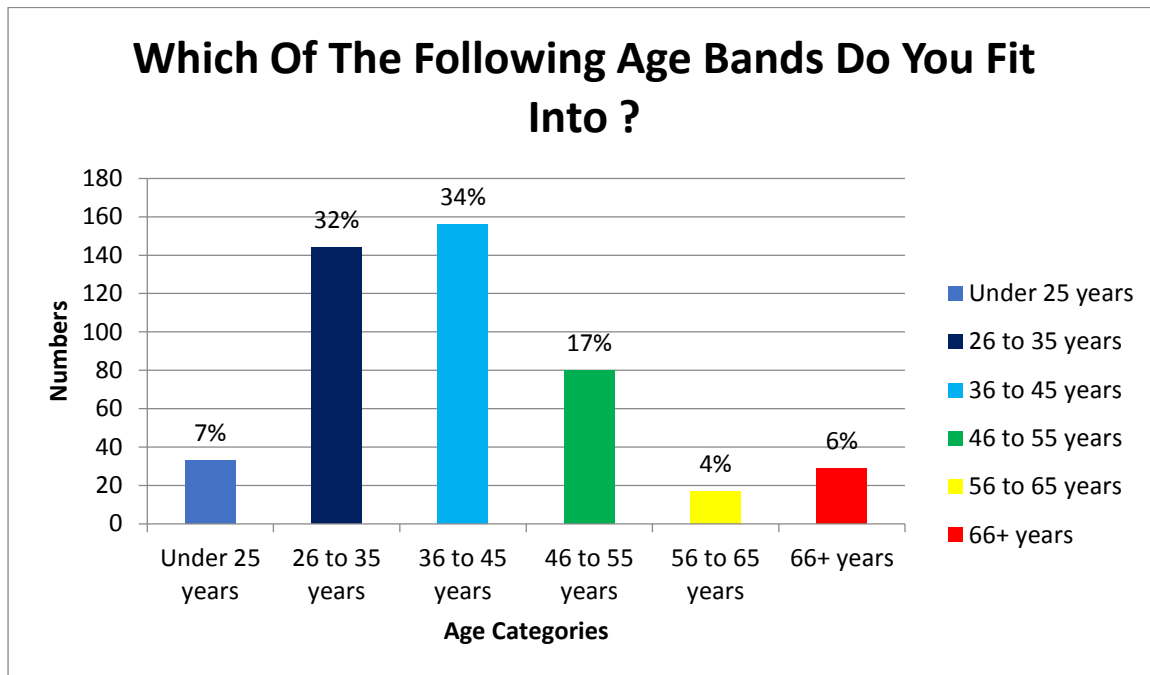


Fig. 2

n=457

Of the 457 respondents to this question, 7% were under 25 years, 32% were in the age range of 26 to 35, 34% were between 36 years and 45 years, 17% interviewees were in the bracket 46 to 55, 4% of those interviewed were in the age range of 56 to 65 and finally 6% were 66 years and older.

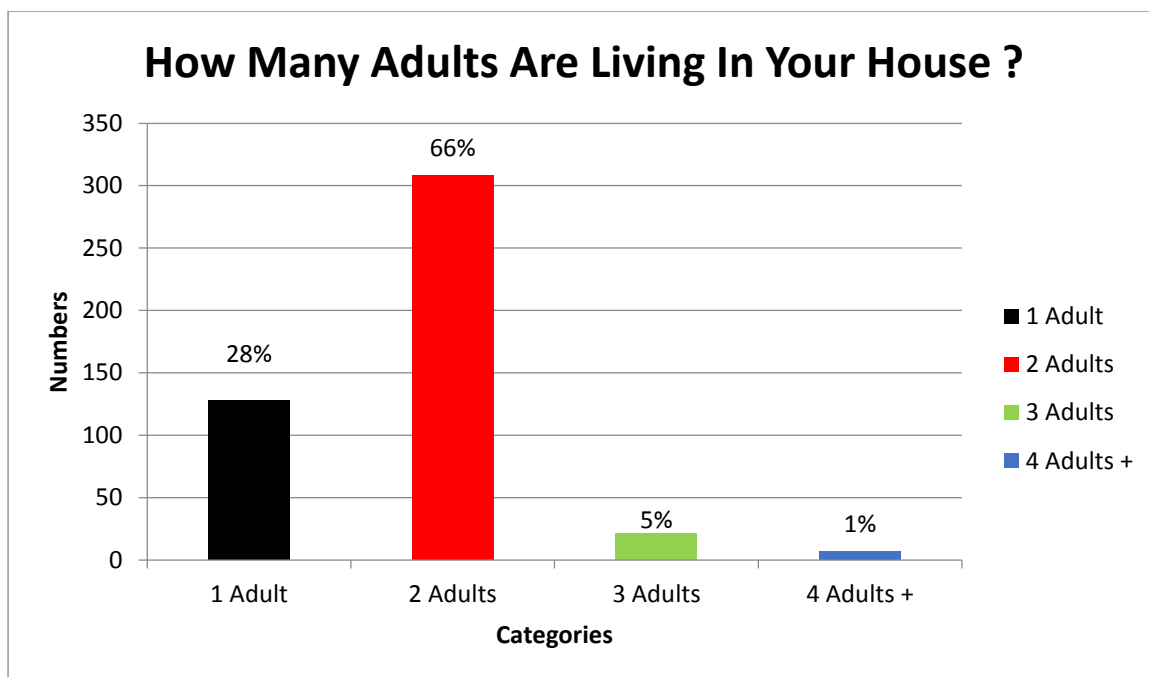


Fig. 3

n=464

Of the 464 that answered this question 28% were living in single adult household, 66% lived in a 2 adult household, 5% lived in a 3 adult household with a further 1% shared their home with 3 other housemates.

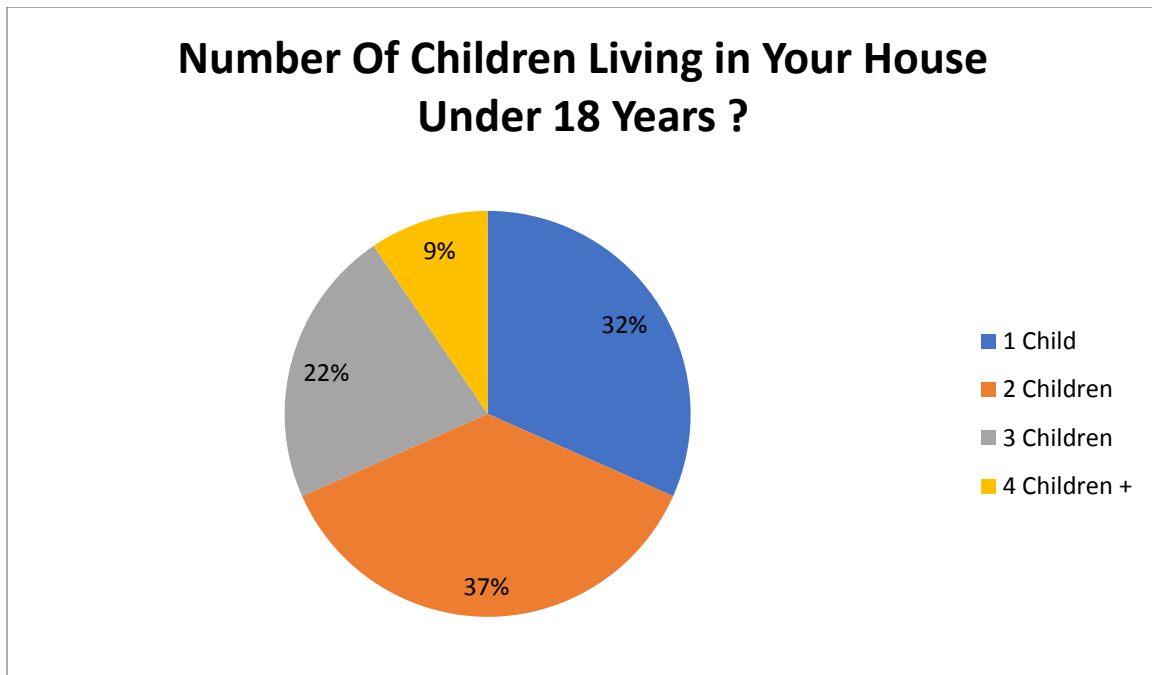


Fig. 4

n=316

Of the 316 respondents to this question, 37% lived with 2 children under 18, 32% lived with just 1 child under 18, 22% lived with 3 children under 18 and finally 9% were sharing their home with 4 or more children under 18 years of age.

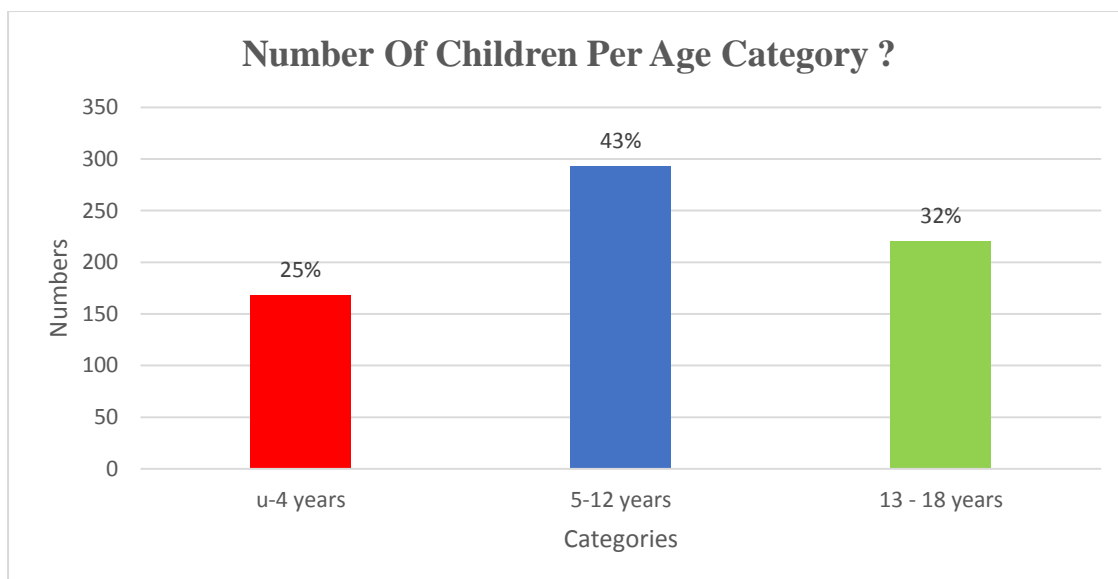


Fig. 5

n=279

In terms of the breakdown of the children, 43% (293) of children were between 5 and 12 years old, a further 32% were 13 to 18 years and the remainder 25% were 4 years and under.

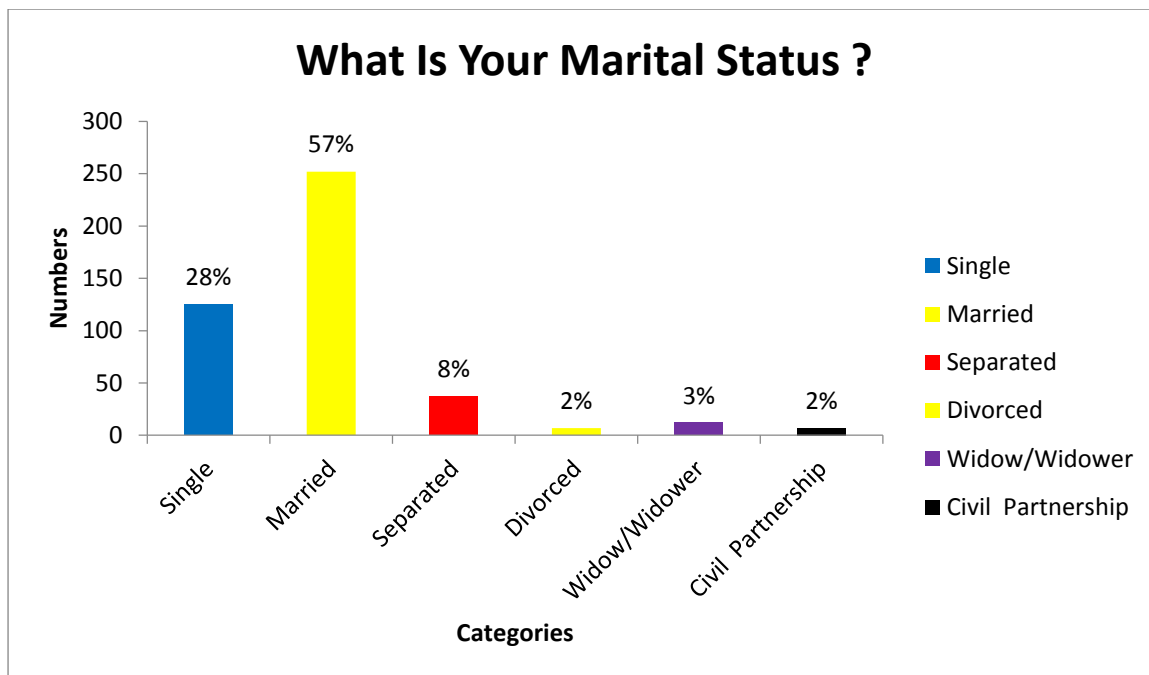


Fig. 6

n=440

Of the 440 individuals who answered this question, 28% of the respondents were single, 57% were married, 8% separated, 2% divorced, 3% were widowed with the remaining 2% in civil partnerships.

Monksland is at a slight variance with both the National and Roscommon figures when Marital status is examined. Nationally 54 % of the population are single, the equivalent figure for Roscommon is 49%, whereas in Monksland this is much lower with 28% of the respondents single.

In contrast 37% of the population Nationally are married or 40% in Roscommon and Monksland is much higher with 57% of the respondents married.

When we contrast the National and County figures for separated people we also see a significant difference, Nationally 2.4% of the population are separated, for County Roscommon this enumerated at 2.5% of the population, however in Monksland it is 8%.

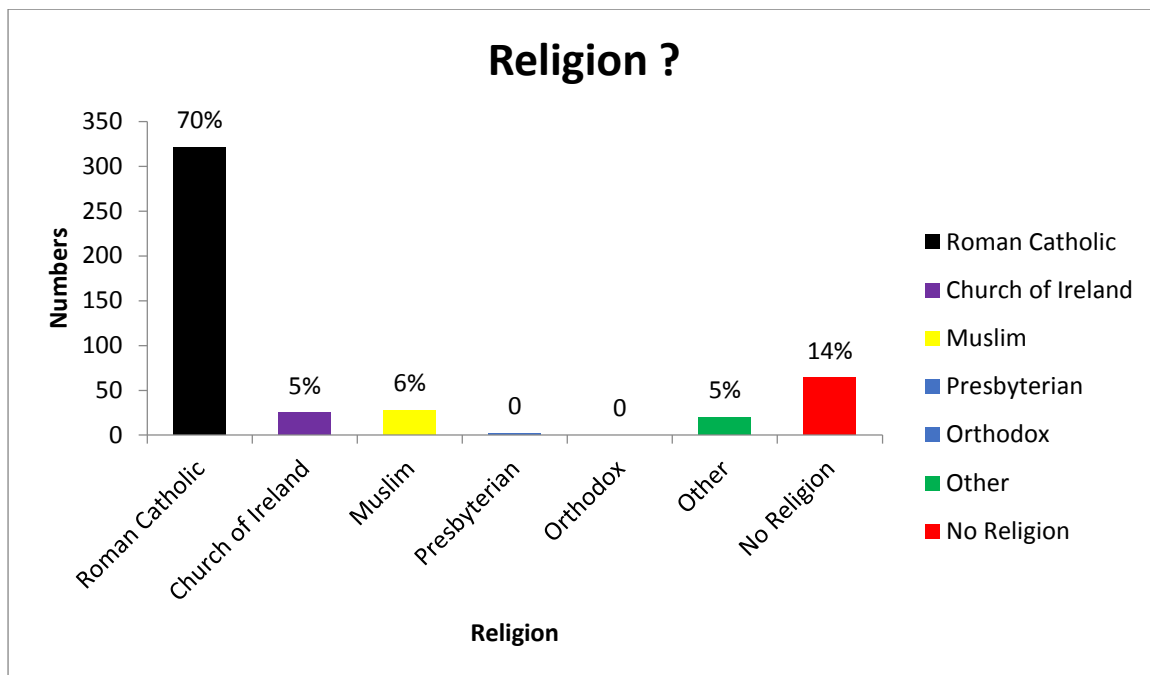


Fig. 7

n=460

In terms of religion by far the most common amongst the 460 respondents was Roman Catholic at 70%, followed 14% had no religion, 6% were Muslim, 5% Church of Ireland, and the remaining 5% identified as other.

The following is the data which we have extrapolated from analysis of the findings as they relate to Demographics.

Sixty Six percent of the respondents were between the ages of 26 and 45 years of age, and 66% of the households were 2 person households. 37% of households included 2 children, with a further 32% had 1 child living in the house. 43% (293) of children were between 5 and 12 years old, a further 32% were 13 to 18 years and the remainder 25% were 4 years and under. 57% of the interviewees were married, with another 28% single. The greater majority of the respondents identified as Roman Catholic. This demographic profile will allow us analyse the rest of the data in the knowledge of the profile of the area.

Section 2

Monksland as a place to live

Monksland is a large urban area on the outskirts of a very sizable town. It is important to establish how residents perceive the area, identifying needs and issues and the impact this has in terms of a sense of place and how this relates to community spirit and potential development.

Four hundred and eighty individuals answered the question as to when the respondents moved to the Monksland Area. Of those that responded, 26% (126 individuals) answered that they had moved to the area in the last 2 years whilst approximately 25% of the respondents have lived in the area for over 10 years.

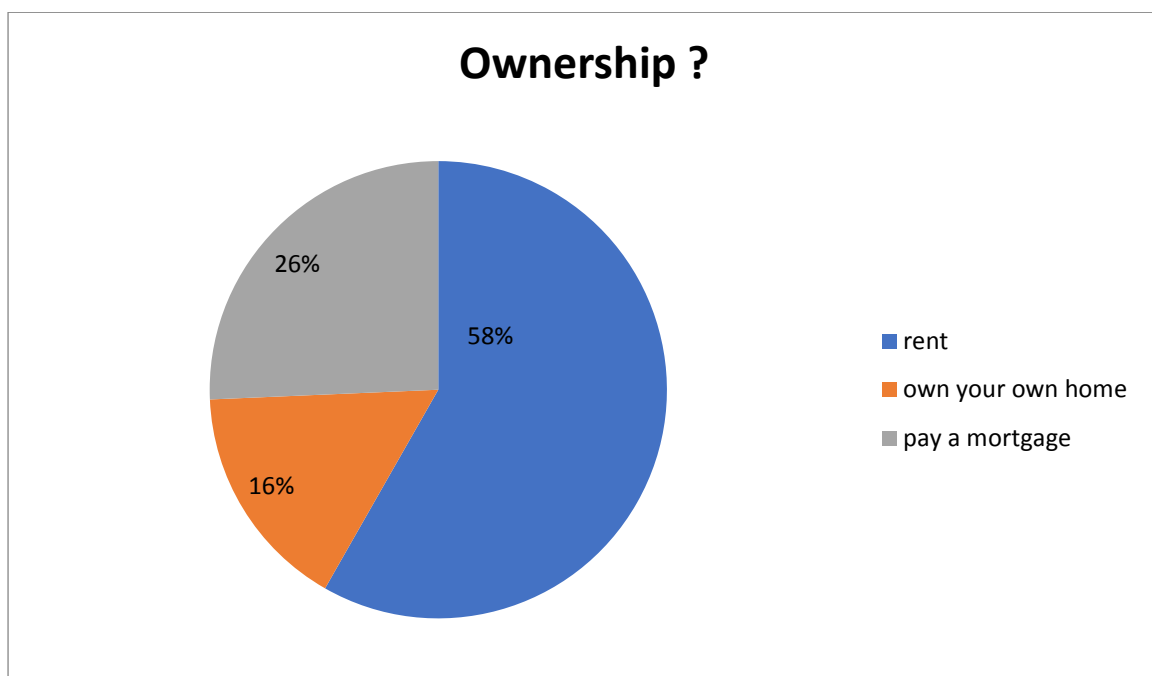


Fig. 8

n=480

This lead on to the question as to whether the householders rented, were paying a mortgage or own their own home outright. From this data where we can see that the majority, 280 of the 480 interviewees rent their home equating to just over 58% of all those surveyed. In comparison, just under 26% (123) of the respondents are currently servicing a mortgage and another 16% (77 individuals) own their own home outright.

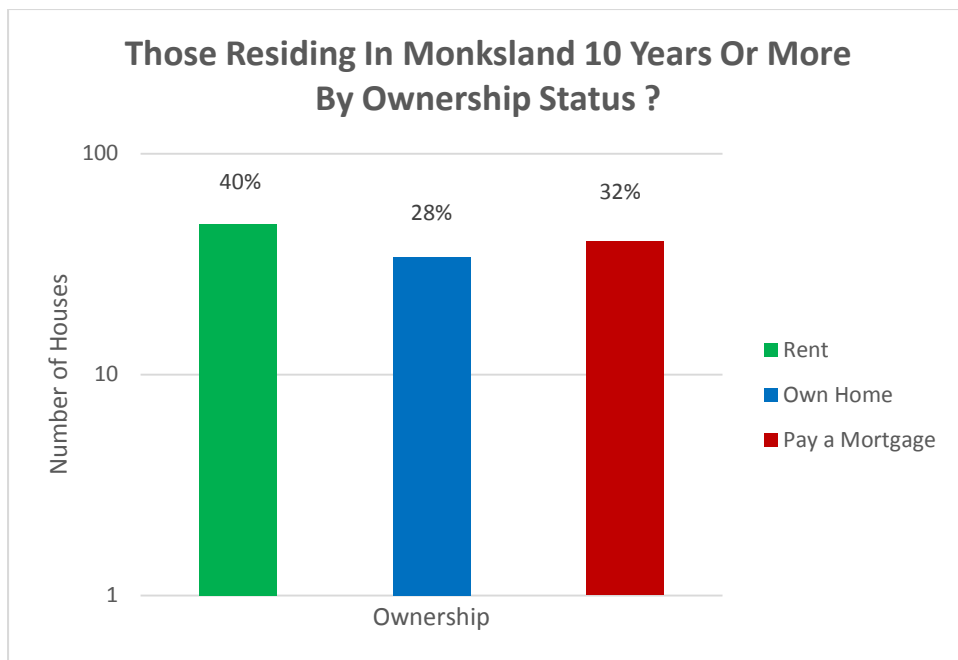


Fig. 9

n=122

Further analysis shows that of those 122 households residing in the Monksland area for more than 10 years, 40% (48) of those living in the area for more than 10 years are renting, with the balance of 60% having bought in the area; 28% (34) own their own home, with a further 32% (40 individuals) paying a mortgage. This illustrates a diverse mix of house ownership and clearly depicts that there are a significant proportion of households renting in the area for 10 years or longer.

Renting Breakdown

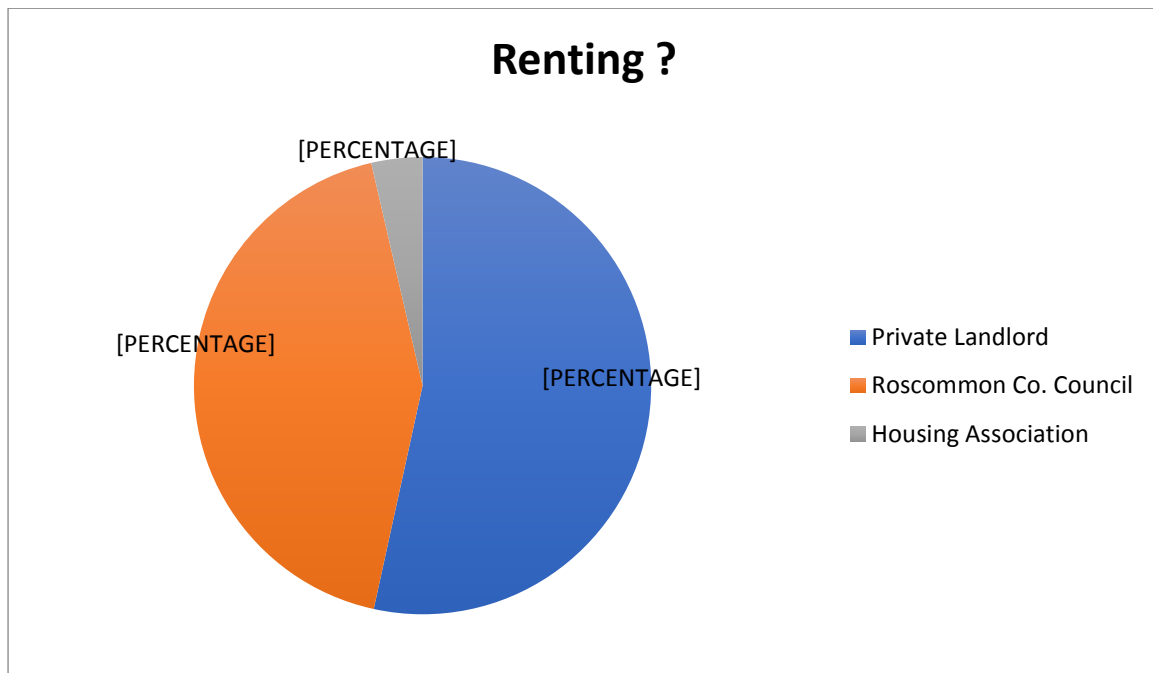


Fig. 10

n=480

Two hundred and Eighty of the 480 surveyed or 58% of the total respondents to this survey are renting their homes at present. Of these 280, 277 answered the question from whom they were renting. It was apparent from the analysis of the data that 53% (148) of respondents were renting from a private landlord, and a further 43% (119 households) were renting from Roscommon County Council and only 4% (10) of the respondents to this question were renting from a Housing Association.

Living in Monksland

In order to establish if those living in Monksland are happy residing in the area, and satisfied or otherwise with services, facilities and activities on their estate or in the Monksland neighbourhood, we asked a series of questions which are analysed below. Pride in an area, community involvement, engagement and satisfaction with activities, facilities, services and quality of housing are major contributors to overall happiness and community wellbeing.

The overall responses to living in the Monksland area are very positive. When asked if they enjoyed living in Monksland, of the 468 who answered this question, an overwhelming majority of those who responded 93% indicated that they enjoyed living in the Monksland Area.

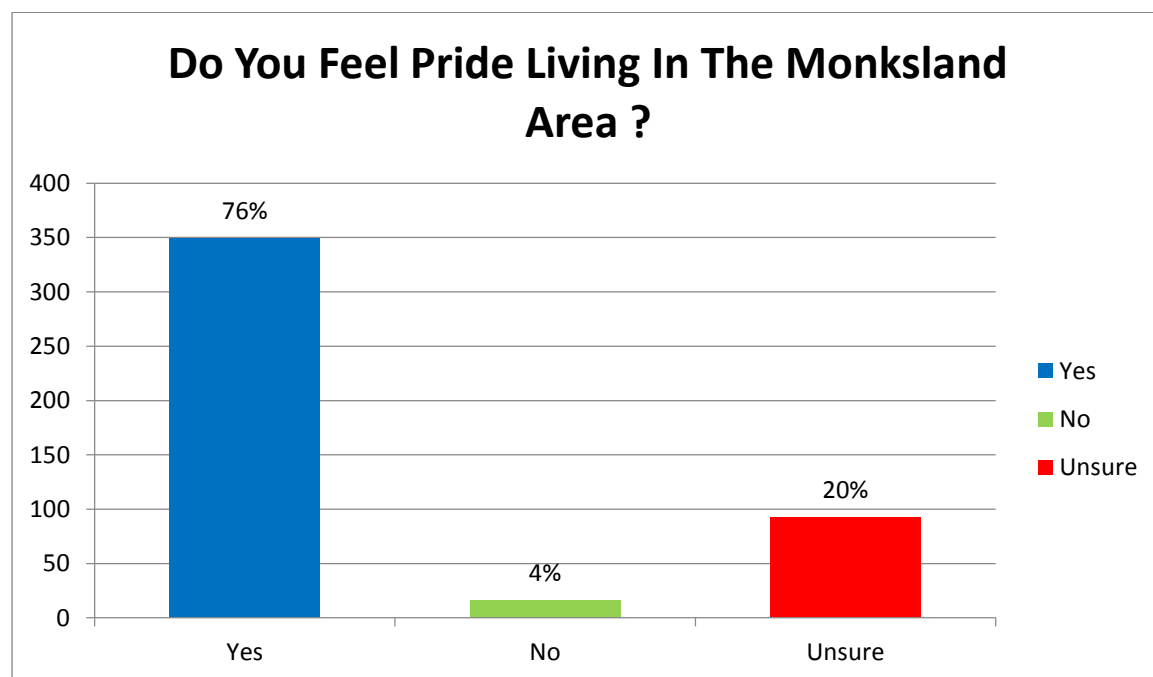


Fig. 11

n=458

When the respondents were asked the question whether they feel pride living in Monksland, 458 individuals answered this question, with a strong majority of 76% indicated that they did, with one in five unsure of whether or not they had pride in the Monksland area and 4% not feeling any pride living in the area.

The following were the answers received when the interviewees were asked what do you perceive to be the most positive aspects of living in Monksland?⁴



Fig. 12

⁴ Full list in appendix 4

From the opposite perspective the following Negative Aspects/Specific Problems that need to be highlighted in the Monksland area were identified as⁵:



Fig 13

⁵ Full list in appendix 5

Satisfaction Levels

Satisfaction levels with different in the Monksland area are outlined in the table below.

Question Posed	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Number
Satisfaction with Quality of Homes	14%	68%	12%	4%	2%	408
Satisfaction with Parking	18%	64%	12%	3%	3%	469
Satisfaction with Lighting	10%	73%	11%	4%	2%	464
Satisfaction with the Appearance of Area	10%	65%	17%	6%	2%	459
Satisfaction with Community Activities and Events	3%	44%	36%	13%	4%	446
Satisfaction with Community Facilities and Spaces	2%	37%	37%	19%	5%	433

Table 1

Appearance, Parking, Lighting and Housing Quality

Quality of Housing

The vast majority of those who replied to this question;82% were either satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their homes. At the other end of the scale just 6% (25 individuals) were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the quality of housing.

Duration living in the area with satisfaction levels in relation to quality of their homes

Satisfaction Levels	Duration		
	<=2 years	2-5 years	5 years+
Satisfied	84%	79%	83%
Neither	13%	15%	8%
Dissatisfied	3%	6%	9%
Total	129	118	161

Table 2

n=408

From the tabulation above we see that those living in Monksland for 2 years or less are the most satisfied with the quality of their homes, followed by those who are living in the area for 5 years or longer, those who are residing in the area for between 2 and 5 years are those who are least satisfied with the quality of their homes, with just under 79% indicating that they are Satisfied. On the other end of the scale, those living in the area for 5 years or more account for the highest rate of dissatisfaction at 9%.

Ownership with satisfaction levels in relation to quality of their homes

Satisfaction Levels	Ownership		
	Rent	Own	Pay Mortgage
Satisfied	80%	91%	88%
Neither	14%	0.0%	7%
Dissatisfied	6%	9%	5%
Totals	272	23	113

Table 3

n=408

When the crosstabulation of ownership type with satisfaction levels of quality of homes was derived it was clear that the most satisfied category was those who owned their own homes outright, followed by those paying a mortgage on their own homes, those that are renting are the least satisfied with the quality of their homes. The most dissatisfied however, were also those who owned their own homes outright followed by renters.

Parking on Estate

When asked about satisfaction levels in terms of parking in the local area, by and large the 469 were satisfied, those respondents that were satisfied or very satisfied enumerated at 82% of the respondents, only 6% (28 respondents) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the appearance of the local area.

Some examples:

Positive examples of satisfaction with parking were:

- *Always get a space*
- *Not a problem*
- *Plenty of parking*

Negative examples of dissatisfaction with parking were:

- *Not enough parking (Monksfield three storey houses)*
- *Only room for two cars*

When asked about satisfaction levels in terms of lighting in the local area, again it is clear that there is a high level of satisfaction on the part of the 464 respondents to the question 83% of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with only 6% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the lighting in the local area.

Appearance of Estate

When asked about satisfaction levels in terms of the appearance of the local area, by and large the 460 respondents to this question were satisfied or very satisfied enumerating at 74% of the respondents, only 8% (37 respondents) dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the appearance of the local area.

Ownership with satisfaction levels in relation to appearance of the local area

Satisfaction Levels	Ownership		
	Rent	Own	Pay Mortgage
Satisfied	72%	75%	81%
Neither	19%	20%	11%
Dissatisfied	9%	5%	8%
Totals	268	77	115

Table 4

n=460

When we further analysed the satisfaction levels with the appearance against the ownership of property in the area it transpires that those who were most satisfied with the appearance in the local area were those that were paying a mortgage on the property they resided in, followed by those who owned their own home. Those that were most dissatisfied with the appearance of the local area were those that were renting.

Positive examples relating to satisfaction with the appearance of the local area were received from 116 individuals and they included the following:

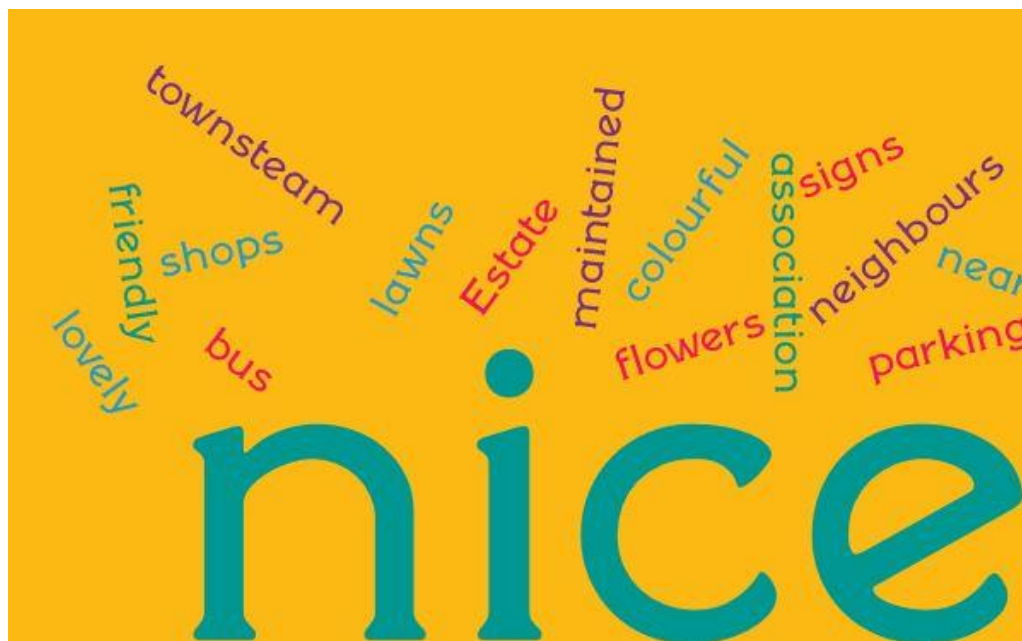


Fig. 14

- The County Council keep the area well maintained
- Nice colourful houses in the area (River Village)
- No one bothers me
- Nice place to live
- Lovely Estate
- Nice flowers in the area
- Everyone keeps their lawns well
- Good Residence Association
- Good friendly Neighbours
- Good bus service
- Good shops and parking
- Lovely new Monksland signs
- Good work by Towns Team
- Mature estate
- Near everything

Negative examples relating to satisfaction levels with the appearance of the local area were received from 61 individuals and they included the following:



Fig. 15

- Unfinished building sites (Oyster Homes and site at the Elan roundabout)
- Too many houses and not enough green space
- Very clean except for dogs mess
- Some gardens are disgraceful as they are not maintained by landlords
- Too many people living in the area
- No proper planning or thought put into the layout of the area
- Concrete jungle
- No town centre with shops and restaurants where people can meet
- Some houses in poor repair
- Not enough green area for children to play
- No space between houses
- Dislike large green fences that give the look of an industrial estate rather than a residential area
- Unfinished building sites
- Another 75 houses to be constructed compounding existing problems
- Small houses
- Poor planning too many houses
- Houses too near the road

Community Activities, Events, Facilities and Spaces

Community Activities and Events

Thus far, it is clear that the majority of the residents of the Monksland area are satisfied with the utilities on the estates, appearance and the quality of housing, however when we went on to ask about satisfaction levels in relation to Community Activities, events and facilities the response is much less positive.

Of those 446 who completed the question on satisfaction levels in terms of Community Activities and Events, only 3% (12 respondents) were very satisfied, 44% (or 197) of interviewees were satisfied, another 36% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied with the remaining 17% either dissatisfied (60) or very dissatisfied (16). This indicates that less than half (47%) of the respondents answered that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the Community Activities and Events in the local area, evidencing a need to consider what other activities and events could be developed/ provided, and how and where information about existing community activities and events is available.

We compare satisfaction levels in terms of Community Activities and Events against the length people have lived in the area to establish if there is a pattern in terms of satisfaction levels, likewise we also compare them with home ownership to explore where the highest levels of satisfaction lie.

Duration of living in the area with satisfaction levels with activities and events in the Local Area

Satisfaction Levels	How long they are living in Monksland		
	<=2 years	2-5 years	5+years
Satisfied	35%	46%	56%
Neither	45%	41%	27%
Dissatisfied	20%	13%	17%
Total	130	127	189

Table 5

n=446

On crosstabulation of the satisfaction levels in terms of activities and events in the local area with the length of time respondents have lived in the area, it is clear that those who are living in the area for 5 years or longer indicate higher level of satisfaction levels with activities in the area, at the other end of the scale those that are living in the area for 2 years or less have responded with higher levels of dissatisfaction with the activities and events available in the local area.

Ownership with satisfaction levels in relation to activities in the local area

Satisfaction Levels	Ownership		
	Rent	Own	Pay Mortgage
Satisfied	50%	42%	42%
Neither	37%	26%	42%
Dissatisfied	13%	32%	16%
Total	261	74	112

Table 6

n=447

When further analysis was conducted to establish levels of satisfaction with activities in the area amongst the different categories of homeownership, it emerged that those that rented were the most satisfied with the activities, and those who owned their own home outright were least satisfied, it also became apparent that those who owned their own home outright were the most dissatisfied with the activities available locally with over 32% dissatisfied with range of activities available in the area, in stark contrast to only 13% of those that are renting being dissatisfied.

Community Facilities and Spaces

A further increase in dissatisfaction levels is present in the question relating to Levels of Satisfaction with Community Facilities and Spaces. This question obtained the highest level of dissatisfaction, this question also showed the highest percentage of individuals who were neither satisfied or dissatisfied. 433 individuals responded to this question of this only 39% were either satisfied (162) or very satisfied (7), with a further 37% (160 individuals) indicating that they were neither satisfied or dissatisfied, leaving 24%, or almost one quarter of those surveyed being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the range of community facilities and space in the area. Once more, there is a clear indication that the community in Monksland are less satisfied with communal community spaces and facilities in the area than they are with the quality of housing and related aspects to living on estates in the area.

We compare satisfaction levels in terms of Community facilities against the length people have lived in the area to establish if there is a pattern in terms of satisfaction levels, likewise we also compare them with home ownership to explore where the highest levels of satisfaction lie

Duration of living in the area with satisfaction levels with the range of community facilities and space available in the Local Area

Satisfaction Levels	How long they are living in Monksland		
	<=2 years	2-5 years	5+ years
Satisfied	30%	33.%	50%
Neither	42%	43%	29%
Dissatisfied	28%	24%	21%
Total	125	124	184

Table 7

n=433

The highest level of satisfaction rates can be found in those that are living in the area 5 years or longer, accounting for just under 50% of this category, only 21% of individuals residing in Monksland for 5 years or longer indicated dissatisfaction with level of community facilities and space available in the Local Area. 28% of those living in the areas 2 years or less are dissatisfied with community facilities and space available in the Local Area, compared to just over 21% of those living there 5 years or longer.

Ownership with satisfaction levels with the range of community facilities and space available in the Local Area

Satisfaction Levels	Ownership		
	Rent	Own	Pay Mortgage
Satisfied	39%	45%	36%
Neither	40%	22%	39%
Dissatisfied	21%	33%	25%
Total	248	74	112

Table 8

n=434

Upon further analysis of the levels of satisfaction with availability of local facilities and spaces it was clear that those that were most satisfied were those that owned their own homes, however, those that were most dissatisfied with the range of facilities and spaces locally were also those that owned their own homes outright. Satisfaction levels across all 3 categories was less than 50%. Both those that were renting and those that were paying a mortgage presented with high percentages in the category of neither satisfied or dissatisfied.

Given that there were low levels of satisfaction with Community Facilities, spaces and equipment it was not unexpected that when asked what was needed by way of facilities, spaces and equipment a long list was presented (of facilities; space, amenities or equipment and activities needed) for children under 12 in the Monksland area.

Community Facilities, spaces and equipment:

- Community green area with playgrounds
- Football pitches
- A place for children to meet
- A Centre for scouts and girl guides
- More childminding facilities
- Bigger green areas
- Parks
- Astro turf
- Running track
- Benches
- Mini camps
- Youth clubs
- More After-schools in each estate

Activities:

- Youth clubs
- After-schools in each estate
- Playgrounds
- Music, Art classes
- Team sports
- Girl guides, Scouts
- Youth Centre
- Skate Board Rink
- Running Club
- Mini- Rugby
- Drop –in Centre
- Music Lessons
- Cheap Creches
- Safe Green area
- Dance Club

Equally there was also a considerable list of facilities (space, amenities or equipment) and activities needed for children 12 and 18 in the Monksland area, some of which were also identified for the younger age group

Community Facilities, spaces and equipment:

- Community Centre where activities can be carried out
- Youth Club/Foroige
- Drama
- Rugby
- Grinds
- Running Track
- Skate-Board Rink, young people travel to the Regional Sports Centre to use the facilities there
- After 7pm everything closes and there is no place for young people to meet often leading to anti-social through boredom
- Need for more organised and supervised activity for this group of young people
- Full sized Astro-Turf pitches similar to the Regional Sports Centre
- Drop-in Centre
- Cinema

Activities:

- Local GAA Club or feeder club for Clan Na Gael
- Social Clubs
- Pitches

A wide variety of Community Facilities, spaces, equipment and activities were also identified as a requirement for adults living in the area. The following is a list in order of frequency:

- Community Centre where different social groups can meet
A more modern larger building than the current Community Centre, more centrally located and kitted out to address the needs of a medium size town that is Monksland.
- Classes
- Cheap Gym and outdoor equipment, and running track
- Pub
- Yoga
- Social Clubs
- Walking Track/Running Track
- Café
- Cookery
- Art
- Day Centre
- Men's Sheds
- Women's Groups
- Astro Turf
- Music
- Childcare
- Local Book Club
- Library
- Computers
- Fun related activities for adults
- Organised activities for adults
- Garden Allotments
- Parenting Classes
- Pre School
- GPs
- Creche
- Beauty Class
- Spinning Class
- Swimming Lessons
- Adult Education
- Flower Arranging
- Woodwork
- Language Classes
- Photography
- Cricket Club
- Dance Classes

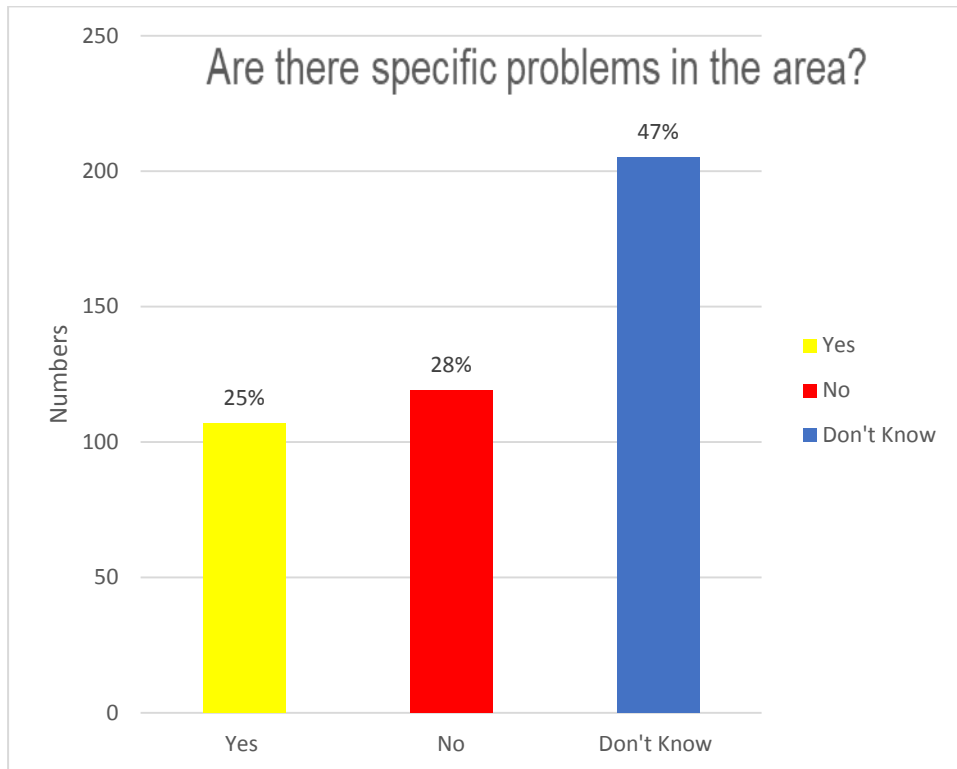


Fig. 16

n=431

When asked if there were specific problems in the area, 205(47%) individuals who responded to this question indicated that they did not know almost 25% indicated that yes, there were specific problems, with a slightly higher number, 119 individuals or 28% felt there were no specific problems.

The following were the examples of specific problems in the area



Fig. 17

When we analyse the findings in the Section Monksland as a Place to Live we find that the one quarter of the residents have lived there for 10 years or longer and just over one in four have lived in Monksland land for 2 years or less. There is thus a significant population who have been resident in Monksland for between 3 and 9 years. 58% of the respondents are renting their homes, with 40% of those who are there for 10 years and longer renting. The greater majority of the participants in the research 93% indicated that they enjoy living in the Monksland area, with another high percentage, 76% having pride in the area. There were high percentages of satisfaction with Quality of Homes, Parking and Appearance of the Area, however the satisfaction levels with Community Activities and Events and Facilities and Spaces were very low 47% and 39% respectively. The highest satisfaction levels with facilities and spaces was from those who were living in the area for 5 years and more and also those who owned their own homes.

SECTION 3

Monksland as a Social community

In order to establish the needs of the neighbourhood in terms of community engagement and development we need to in the first instance identify what level of participation there is and what potential there is to engage others further in volunteering. Community engagement and activism play significant parts in Community Wellbeing. In order to have true and meaningful participation of individuals living in Monksland it is essential to establish need and identify areas where capacity building supports can be provided.

Community Life

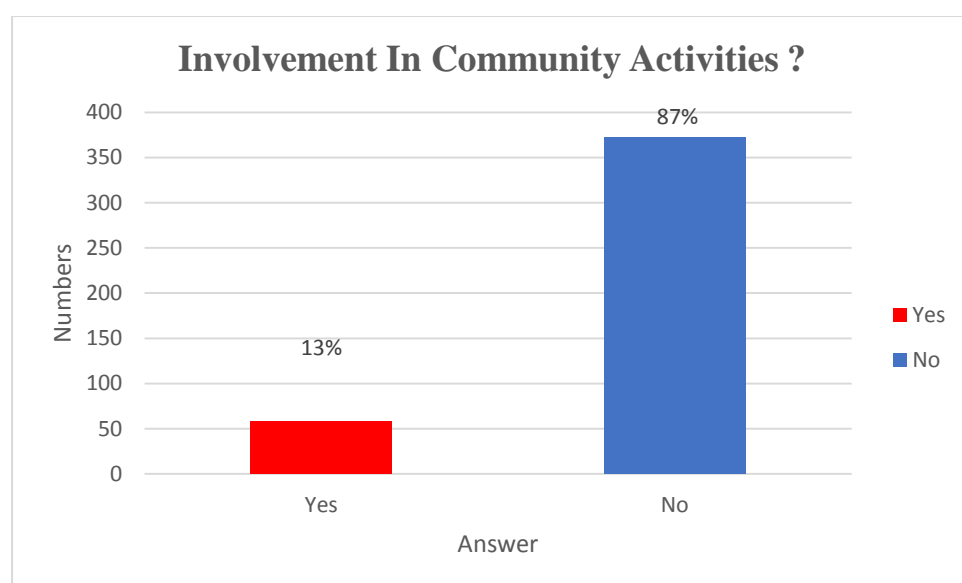


Fig. 18

n=430

Of the 430 respondents, 87% (372 individuals) were not involved in any community activities with just 13% (58 individuals) involved. There is a stark need therefore to engage more individuals in Community Development. If we further explore who are involved in Community Activities at present it is clear that almost 32% of those who own their own home are involved, with just under 12% of those who rented involved. This indicates that there is a greater engagement on the part of those who have invested financially in the area to participate in Community Activity.

We compare involvement in community activities against ownership and age profile to establish if there is a pattern in terms of engagement and involvement in Community Activities.

Ownership by involvement in Community Activity

Percentage Involved	Ownership		
	Rent	Own	Pay Mortgage
Involved	30	20	8
Percentage	3%	32%	7%
Totals	254	63	113

Table 9

n=430

When we analyse the overall number of those who are involved against whether they are renting, own or pay a mortgage it is clear that those who are most involved in Community Activity are those who own their own homes, with 32% of this overall cohort engaged in Community activity, followed by 7% of those who pay a mortgage and 3% of those renting engaging in Community Activity.

Age Bands by involvement in Community Activity

Levels of Involvement	Age Band				
	<25	26-35	36-45	46-65	66+
Involved	5	7	22	12	9
Percent	17%	6%	15%	14%	38%
Total	29	126	144	89	24

Table 10

n=412

When this data was further analysed by the age groups who were involved in Community Activity in Monksland the most active age group were those 66 years and older, followed by those under 25 years of age.

How long they are living in Monksland by involvement in Community Activity

Levels of Involvement	How long they have Lived in Monksland		
	<=2 years	2-5	5+
Involved	13	10	35
Percent	10%	8%	19%
Total	125	120	184

Table 11

n=429

Further delving into the data it shows that those that are living in the area for 5 years or more are the most involved in Community Activity, followed by those residing there for 2 years or less. The least involved in community activity are those who have been living in the area for between 2 and 5 years.

From the above we can form a picture of the Volunteering Profile in Monksland. It appears that those who own their own home, are 66 years and older and those under 25 years, have lived in the area for more than 5 years make up a large proportion of those who are currently engagement in Community Activities. The Rural Volunteerism: Impacting Development and Sustainability report supports this thinking in that over 34% of rural volunteers surveyed were in the 18 to 25 (Farrell, M. 2018)

In order to identify the potential possibilities for increasing Community Engagement, increasing involvement in Community Activities and Volunteers and Volunteering opportunities in the Monksland Area. It is essential to establish what the current issues are presenting as obstacles for getting involved in community activities.

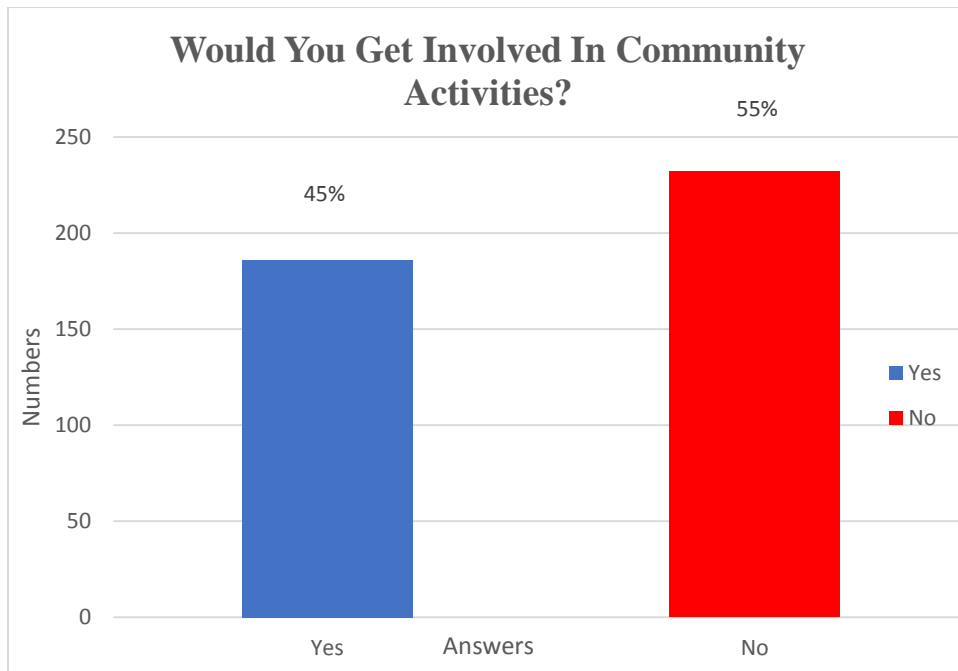


Fig. 19

n=418

When asked if they would like to become involved in any community activities, of the 418 who replied to this question, almost 45% indicated that they would, with the remainder not interested in getting involved. It is clear that just less than 45% of people living in the area have an interest in participating in Community Activity.

We compare interest in becoming involved in community activities against ownership and length living in the area to establish if there is a pattern in terms of interest in becoming involved in Community Activities.

Ownership by those who would get involved in Community Activity

Levels of Involvement	Ownership		
	Rent	Own	Pay Mortgage
Would get Involved	111	33	42
Percent	44%	56%	39%
Total	252	59	107

Table 12

n=418

When the data was further analysed it was apparent that those who owned their own homes outright were more interested in getting involved in Community Activity, compared to those who were paying a mortgage who were least interested in getting involved.

How long you are living in Monksland by those who would get involved in Community Activity

Levels of Involvement	Duration living in Monksland		
	<=2 years	2-5	5+
Would get Involved	37	49	100
Percent	30.1%	41.2%	57.1%
Total	123	119	175

Table 13

n=417

On further analysis it is apparent that those most interested in getting involved are those living in the area 5 years or more.

When we develop a profile based on the above of those who are willing to become involved in Community Activity and Volunteering in the Monksland area we can once again see the most interested classification by housing ownership is those who own their own homes, and also those who have lived in the area for more than 5 years.

The range of Community Activities which individuals are interested in getting involved with include⁶:



Fig. 20

⁶ Please reference list in Appendix 6

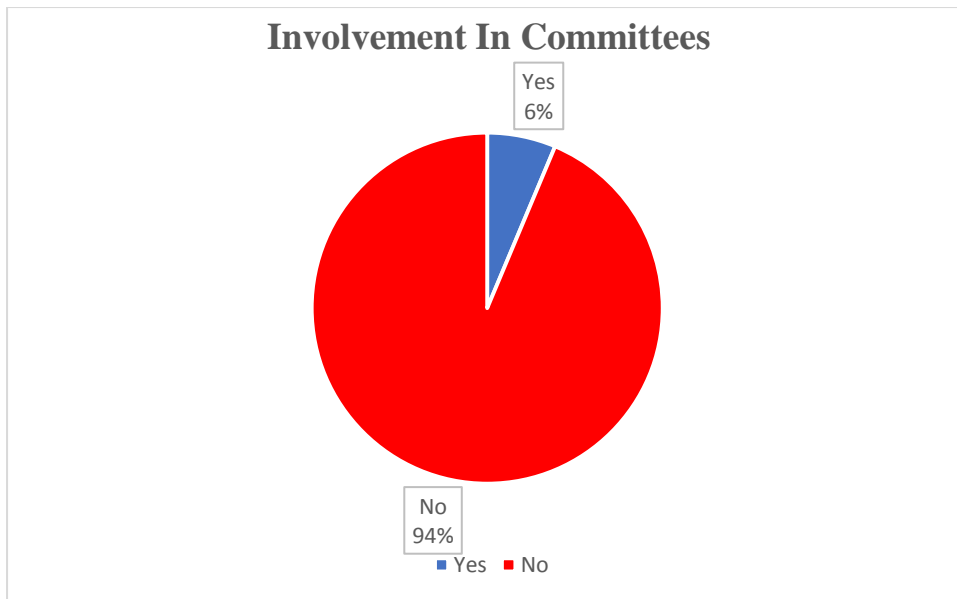


Fig. 21

n=395

Of the 395 individuals who answered this question, 6% (25) indicated they were on a committee, the remainder accounting for 94% of all those surveyed were not involved in any committees, which poses the question about ownership and engagement of the locals in decision making

Which Committees are you involved in

The overwhelming majority, 80% were on Residents Associations (20 of the 25) with 1 individual involved in each of the following

- Football
- Board of Management of school
- Credit Union
- Fishing Club
- County Council

It in itself indicates the lack of engagement of those survey in other activities relating to the Monksland area, beyond the resident's committees of the estates they reside on.

When asked if they would you be interested in becoming involved in decisions that concern your area, the following were the responses.

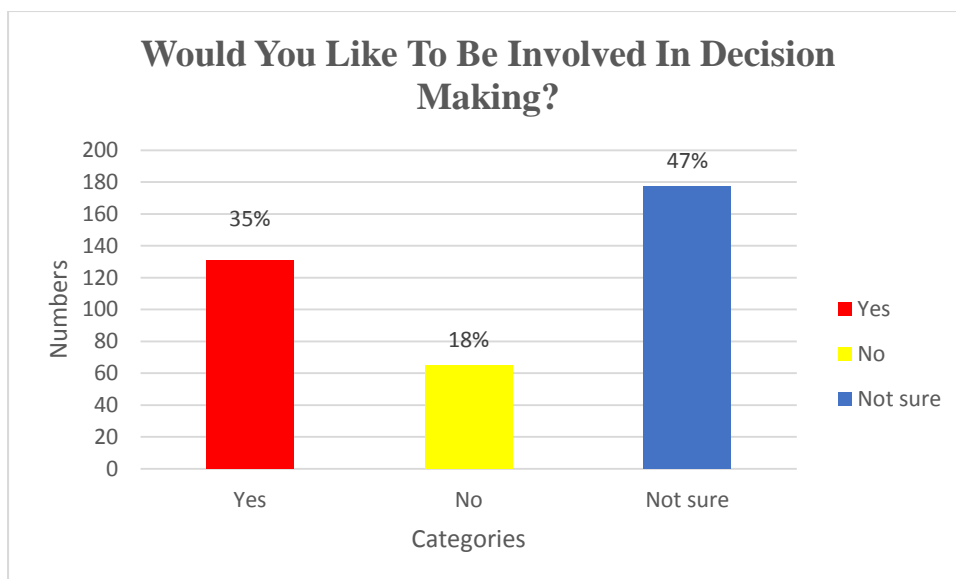


Fig. 22

n=373

Of the 373 that responded to this question, the largest answer came from those that were unsure at 47%, however, 35% are interested in being involved in making decisions about their local area, and only 18% (65 individuals) giving a definitive no answer. It is clear that people are interested in having a voice in decisions about their area with more than a third of those who answered this question, answering in the affirmative. In order to facilitate more individuals to participate in decision making in community activities in their local area it was essential in the first instance to establish what were the current barriers preventing them from participating in decision making structures.

When asked what was stopping them getting involved the following barriers were listed:

- Lack of info
- Work / children
- Childcare
- Time
- Job
- Unsure where to go
- Don't know about any
- No committee in place for all Monksland
- Never on committee, wouldn't know what to do
- Don't know how to get involved
- Low confidence
- Lack of local knowledge
- Unaware of developments in community
- No community centre to deliver courses/meetings
- No info on community events
- If I was to stay in the area, I would get involved
- Old age
- Grandkids

- Just renting, will move
- Lack of childcare-especially in the evenings
- Poor English
- Confidence-don't know other people in the area
- Just moved in

Section 4

Monksland as an Economic Community

In this section we establish the employment status of the community of Monksland, education levels, potential in starting up your own business and what may prevent self-employment, and what are the barriers that exist in getting employment.

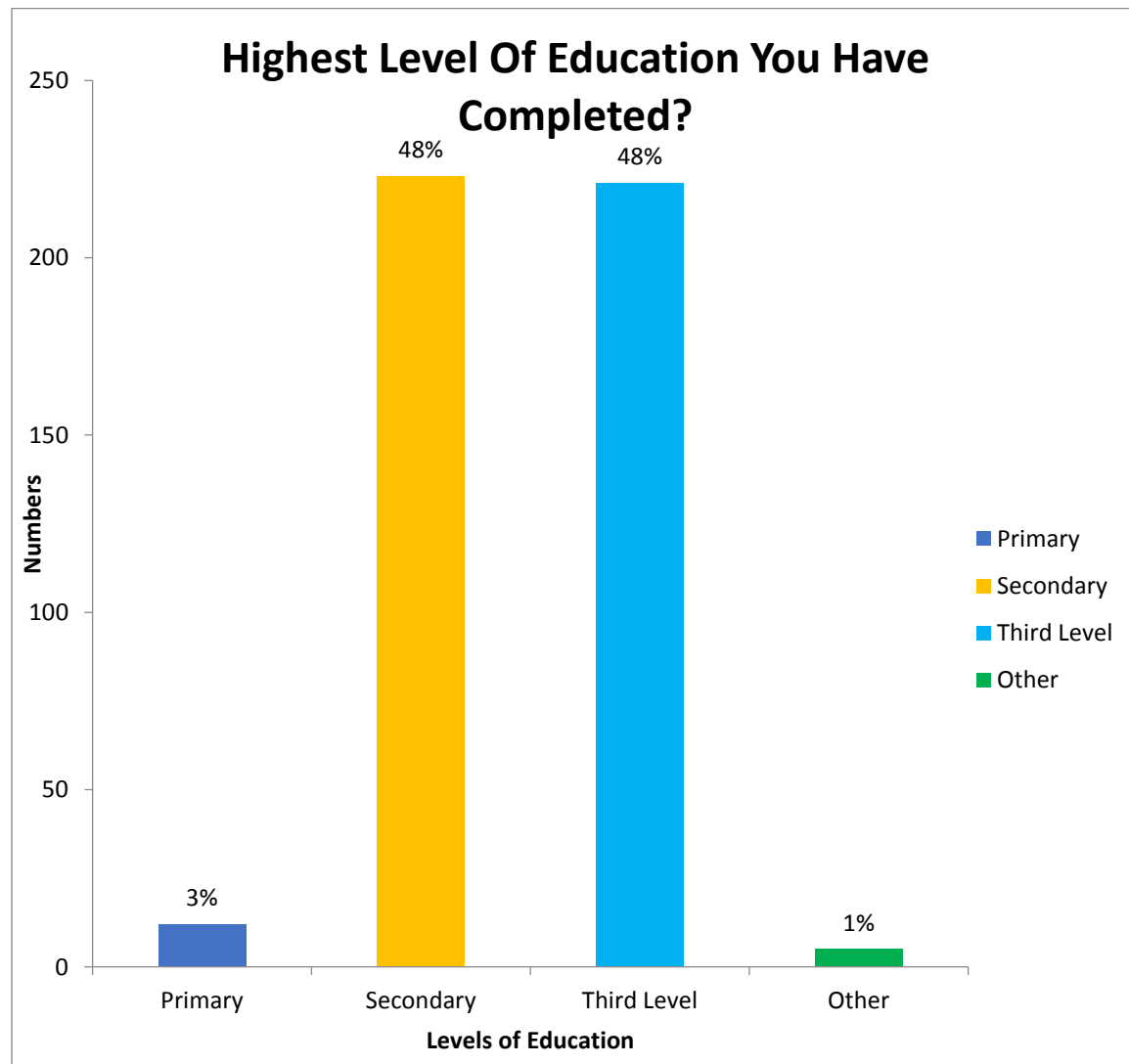


Fig. 23

n=461

When asked about the highest level of education, of the 461 individuals who responded, only 3% (12 individuals) had just primary only education, with just over 48% having secondary education and just short of 48% having third level education. This indicates that those who were surveyed have a good standard of education. Other mainly relating to FETAC/QQI qualifications and Army.

In County Roscommon the standard of education across the population is improving. According to the Census 2016 16,235 individuals over the age of 15 years living in County Roscommon had a minimum of lower or upper secondary school education, and a further

18,713 or 43% of the population over 15 years of age have third level education, compared to the national average of 48% for the same set of criteria. Roscommon has produced a consistently high number of students that proceed to third level education. For the academic year 2016 there were 2,390 students from Roscommon studying in Third Level. On the other end of the spectrum, 6,399 individuals indicated that they had no formal education, or primary only education which equates to just under 10% of the population of Roscommon. The levels of primary only education in Monksland are low in comparison with the County figures. (Sice, L. 2017)

In order to establish if individuals are participating in education and training we asked respondents if they pursued a course in the last 2 years.

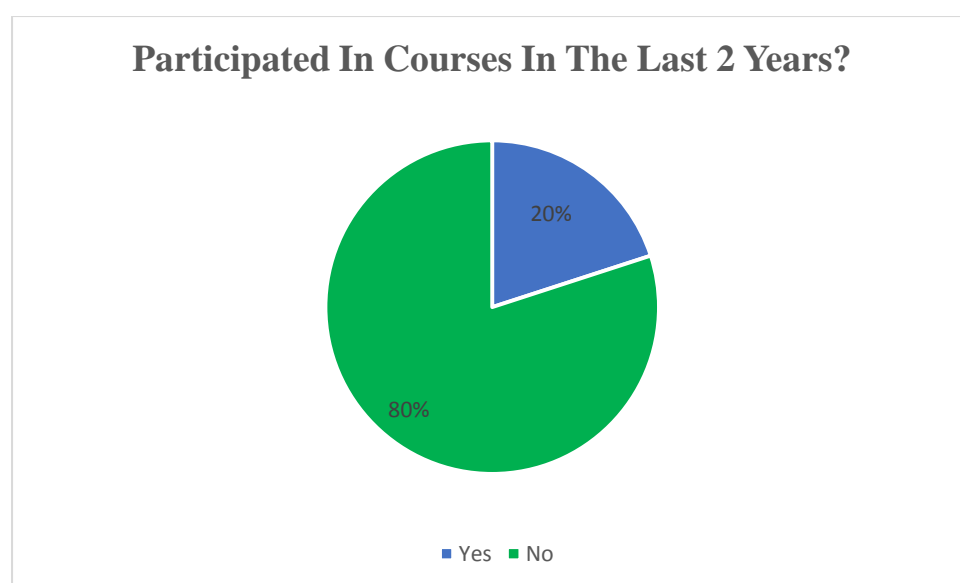


Fig. 24

n=420

Four hundred and twenty individuals responded to this question, however only one fifth had completed any training in the last 2 years.

When asked what course they completed in the past two years the responses in order of frequency were:

- Computers
- Health and Safety
- Work related courses
- TEFL
- Payroll
- Train the Trainer
- Cookery
- Communications
- Leaving Cert adult education
- Irish Training & Education Centre
- Accountancy
- Degree
- ECDL

- CPR
- Marketing
- Social Media
- MSC management
- Cookery
- First Aid
- Basic English
- Dental Nurse

The most popular courses pursued were Computers and Health and Safety.

To establish the education needs of the Community of Monksland we asked them if they were interested in pursuing a course; 57% (204 of the 361 individuals) of those that responded to this question were interested in doing a course, with the balance of 43% not interested in pursuing any courses.

The following are the courses that individuals were interested in doing a course

- Payroll
- Horticulture
- Cookery
- Yoga
- Computers
- Crafts
- Beauty
- Childcare
- Healthcare
- Communications
- Parenting
- Hairdressing
- Sports instructor/Personal trainer
- Hairdressing
- Arts and crafts
- Business management
- Start own business
- English course maybe TEFL
- Any adult education
- Knitting
- First aid
- Yoga
- Dancing
- Photography
- Medical/ pharma skills
- Gardening
- Woodwork
- SNA

- Tourism
- Language course
- Social work
- Communications

If 57% of the individuals who responded to the question were interested in pursuing a course, there must be barriers which are currently preventing engagement in education, and which need to be addressed to allow for more individuals from the Monksland area to return to education.

The following were the barriers listed by individuals which might stop them attending courses in the future

- Time
- Childcare
- Confidence
- Shift-work
- English Language
- There aren't any
- Not aware of classes

In order to pursue further training and courses ideally access to a PC is important. When asked if individuals had access to a computer at home the vast majority (389) 97% of the 403 respondents indicated that they had indeed a computer in their home.

When asked if they had access to the internet at home 99% (445) of the 451 who answered this question had internet access at home with only 6 respondents not having access.

Of the 435 individuals who responded to the question about attending a computer course, 68% indicated an interest in doing a computer course.

Previously there was an indication that awareness of courses and activities happening in Monksland was a barrier to participation. When asked if they were aware of courses running in the Monksland area, the greater majority of the 414 who replied to this question were not aware of courses taking part in the Monksland area, this equates to over 78% of the respondents, with (90 individuals) 22% of those who responded being aware of courses and training that were taking place in the area.

Employment

The following is the breakdown of those currently in employment and not in employment

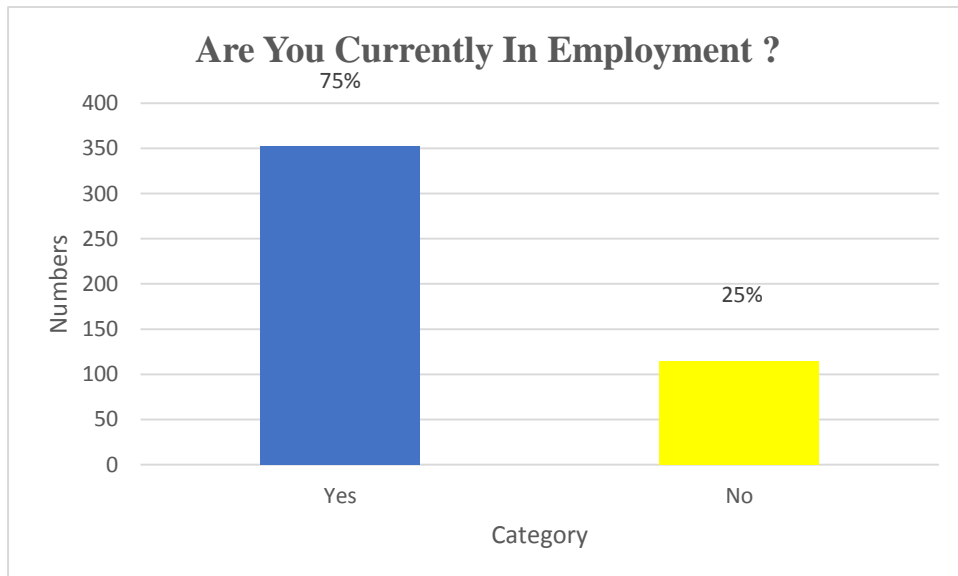


Fig. 25

n=467

Of the 467 that responded to this question just under 25% were not in employment.

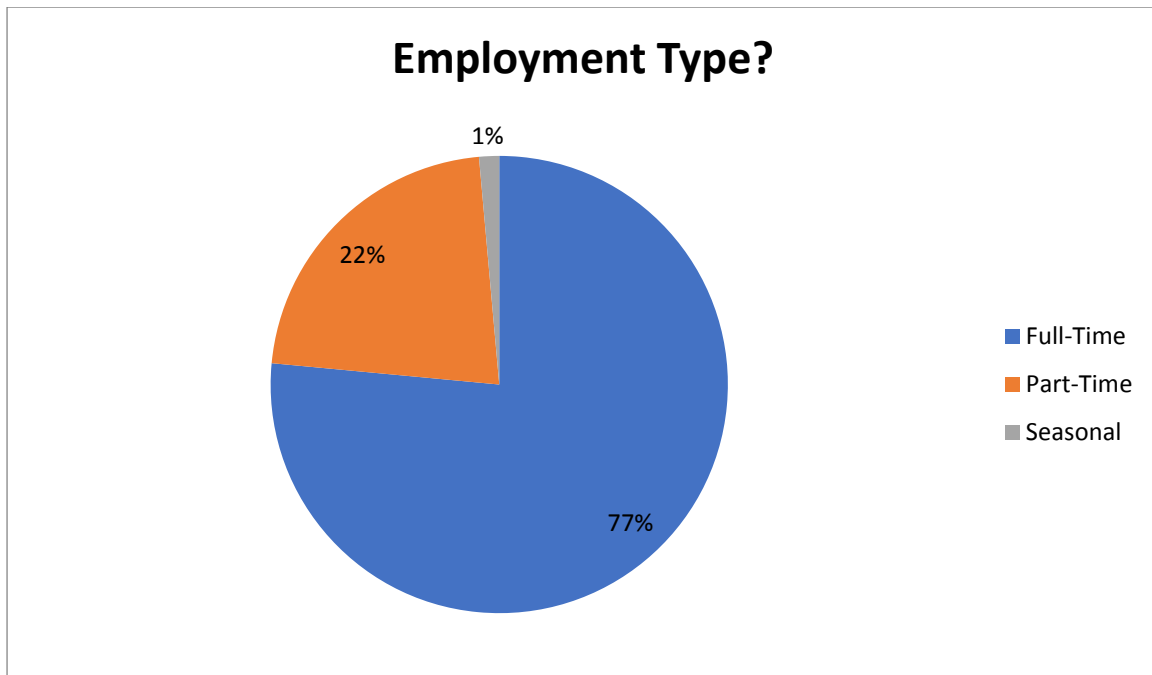


Fig. 26

n=353

Of the 353 who responded to question about the type of employment, over three quarters of individuals were employed full time, 22% (78) were employed part time and the remainder 1% (6) were employed seasonally.

The following is a breakdown of the sectors worked in by the 337 interviewees to this question. 48% (165) worked in the private sector which represented the largest sectoral employment amongst all the respondents, followed closely by the public sector which employed 43% (145 individuals) 6% and 3% respectively worked in State Sponsored Schemes and are self-employed.

Roscommon still remains reliant on agriculture, construction, retail and public sector for employment within the County. The 2016 census indicated that there was a 15.39 % increase in Industry a 11.1% increase in Construction and an 8.2% increase in public service employment in Roscommon from the 2011 census. The number of active enterprises in Roscommon in 2014 was 2908 second lowest to Leitrim in the Western Region. The pattern in Monksland is in keeping with the overall County wide pattern in terms of sectors of employment and low levels of self-employment. (Sice, L. 2017)

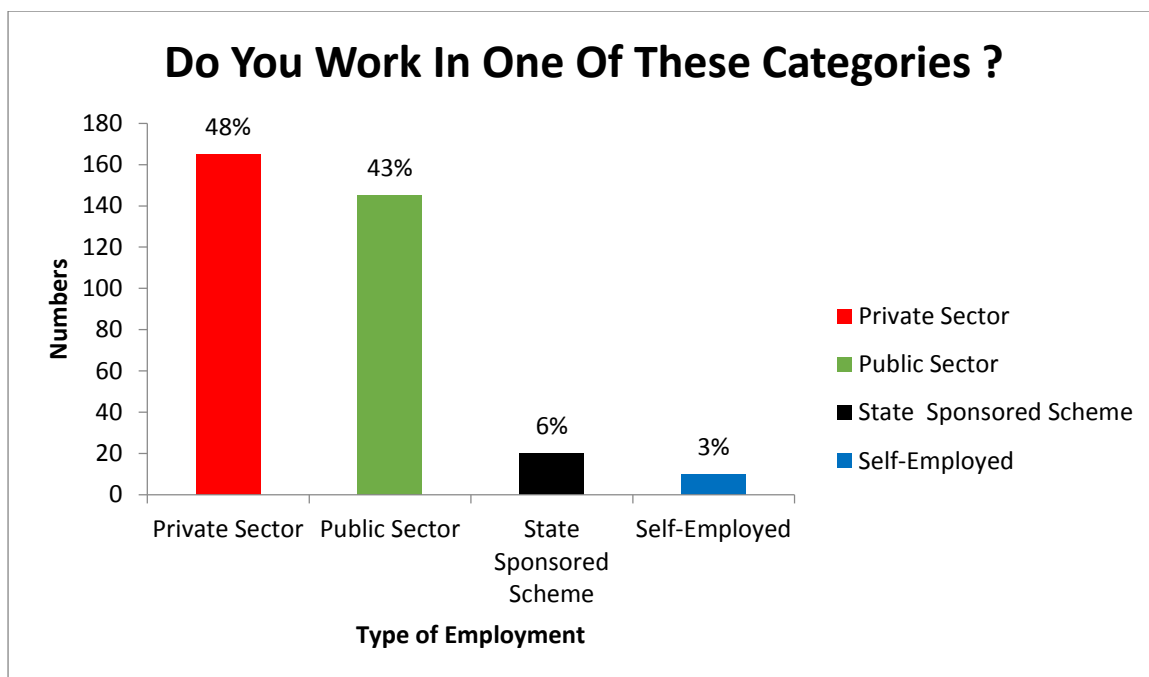


Fig. 27

n=337

In order to establish if people had to commute to work or whether their skills level met employment needs locally we asked how many kilometres people travelled to work.

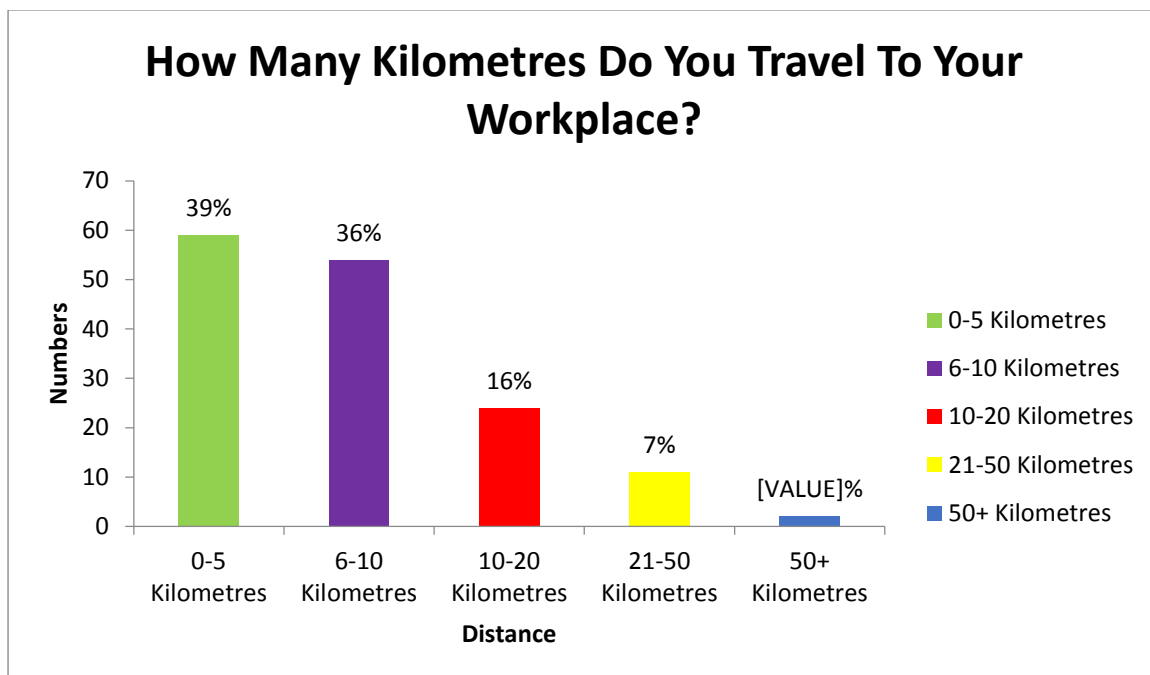


Fig. 28

n=150

This graph gives an indication that the majority of those who replied to this question are employed locally. Of those who answered this question, just under two fifths commute 5 kilometres or less to work with a further 36% only commuting to between 6 and 10 kilometres for employment. Sixteen percent of those who travel to their work base commute between 10 to 20 kilometres and a further 7% make a journey of somewhere between 21 and 50 kilometres to work, a very small percentage, only 2% travel in excess of 50 kilometres to their place of work.

The following is a breakdown of the activities engaged in by those who are not in employment:

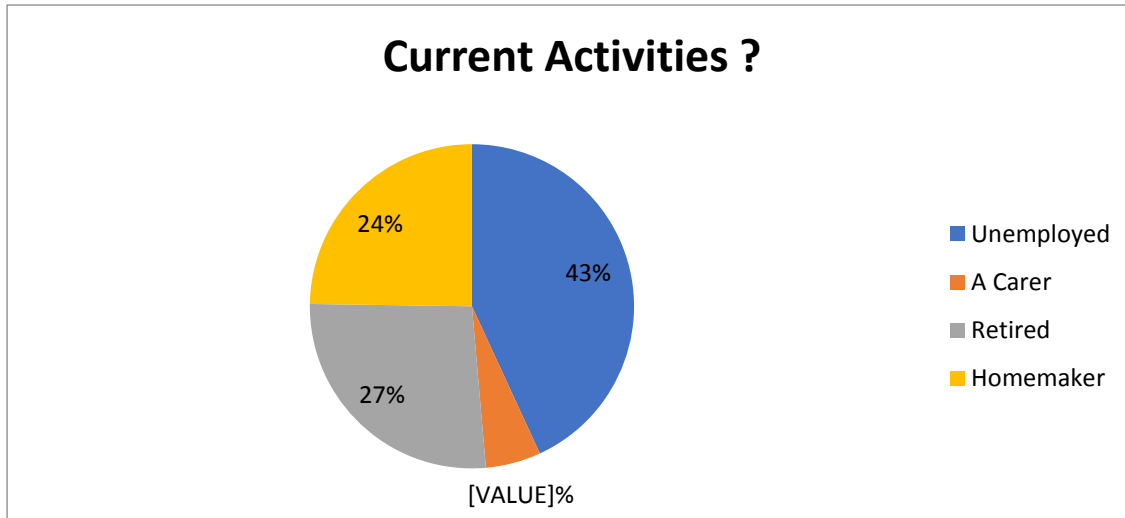


Fig. 29

n=109

Of those 109 who responded to this question , 43% were unemployed, 6% were carers, 27% retired, and 24% Homemakers.

When asked what the barriers to being in employment the following were sighted as the reasons:

- Childcare
- Suitable job opportunities for the skills that I have
- Can only work Part-time
- Finding it difficult because of my age
- I am a Carer at present and not in a position to access work

Setting up your own business in Monksland

Respondents were asked whether they would like to set up their own business. Of the 154 who responded 8 (5%) were interested. This low figure may perhaps be as a consequence of the barriers to starting up your own business as identified below, or perhaps a lack of awareness of supports available when setting up your own business. Roscommon traditionally has a very low entrepreneurial base. The number of active enterprises in Roscommon in 2014 was 2908, this was the second lowest in the Western Region, with Leitrim being the lowest in the region.

What would assist you in setting up your own business.



Fig. 30

It is clear that funding and grant aid are the biggest barriers to individuals starting their own business, this could also link to a lack of awareness of the supports that are available for those wishing to become self-employed.

What type of business would you establish

Secretarial Service
Hotel/food/tourism
Catering in peoples homes and centres
Restaurant
Dance Classes

When we delve into these findings we can establish that the greater majority of the respondents 96% had either second or third level education, the only 25% were not in employment, but less than half of those were actually unemployed and 6% were carers. One in Five have participated in some training in the last 2 years, with 57% interested in training. Those that are in employment working in the Private sector 48% and public sector 43%. 75% of those in employment were employed locally travelling 10km or less. Notably there was little interest in Self-employment.

Conclusion

The surveys carried out in the Monksland area laid the basis for the research presented in this report. The research process was initiated in April 2017 and finalised in October 2018 and has produced a wealth of findings related to Monksland as a Place to Live.

Sixty Six percent of the respondents were between the ages of 26 and 45 years of age, and 66% of the households were 2 person households. 37% of households included 2 children, with a further 32% had 1 child living in the house. 40% of the children were between the ages of 5 and 12 years and 37% of the children were 4 years of age and under. 57% of the interviewees were married, with another 28% single. The greater majority of the respondents identified as Roman Catholic.

Key Findings:

25% of the respondents have lived in the area for over 10 years.

58% of all those surveyed rent their home

53% of respondents were renting from a private landlord, 43% were renting from Roscommon County Council and only 4% were renting from a Housing Association.

There were many positive findings in the report:

The overall responses to living in the Monksland area are very positive. When asked if they enjoyed living in Monksland, an overwhelming majority of those who responded; 93% indicated that they enjoyed living in the Monksland Area.

76% indicated that they feel pride in the area

82% were either satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their homes

82% of the respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with parking

83% of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with lighting

74% of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with appearance of the area

45% indicated that they would be interested in getting involved in community activities.

35% are interested in being involved in making decisions about their local area

48% having secondary education and just short of 48% having third level education indicating a good level of education

97% have a computer at home and 99% have access to the internet at home

25% were not in employment but less than half of those were unemployed

Of the 75% working; 48% worked in the private sector followed closely by the public sector which employed 43% in keeping with employment trends in Roscommon

75% of respondents travel less than 10 kilometres for work, indicating that most worked locally

Some less positive elements include

Only 47% were satisfied or very satisfied with community activities and events

39% were either satisfied or very satisfied with community facilities and spaces, The highest level of satisfaction rates can be found in those that are living in the area 5 years or longer

87% were not involved in any community activities

There was an overall lack of awareness of education and training options and community activities

It appears that those who own their own home, are 66 years and older and those that are under 25, those that have lived in the area for more than 5 years comprise of most of those that are currently engaged in Community Activities. The age profile for volunteering is in keeping with National Literature on profile of Volunteers.

When we develop a profile based on those who are willing to become involved in Community Activity and Volunteering in the Monksland area we can once again see the most interested classification by housing ownership is those who own their own homes, and also those who have lived in the area for more than 5 years.

To conclude the greater majority of the Community enjoy living and working in the area, and have pride in Monksland, they are also happy with the lighting, parking, quality of housing and appearance in general. Those living in Monksland have a good standard of education and a significant proportion are in employment, there is a keen interest in education and training, but a lack of awareness of training and courses available locally.

There is less satisfaction for Community Activities, events, facilities and spaces and a significant list of requests for children and adults has been provided, again there is a lack of awareness about availability of activities, groups and events. There is an interest to engage in community activity thus, a need to ensure adequate community infrastructure and support to meet this need.

In the main there is great positivity for the Monksland area and a great interest in becoming engaged in the Community and participating in education and training.

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Appendix 1 - Questionnaire

Roscommon LEADER Partnership, AIT, and Monksland Town Team are putting together a plan for the Monksland Area and we want to hear what you think about living here. I'm hoping you might tell us what's good and what might need to change about the area, and maybe a bit about what services and activities are needed here. This will help us put a good plan together. Just to let you know that all answers you give will be treated confidentially and will be used solely for purpose of planning for Monksland.

INDIVIDUAL

We would like to start by learning a bit about you and your own lifestyle.

1) When did you move to the Monksland area?

2) Do you Rent ☐ Own your Home ☐ Pay a Mortgage ☐

(ONLY ASK Q 3, IF RENTING)

3) Are you renting from

A private landlord ☐ Roscommon County Council ☐ or Housing Association ☐ ?

4) How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the **quality of your house?**

Very Satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied ☐

Dissatisfied ☐ Very Dissatisfied ☐

5) How long do you think you will stay in the Monksland area?

Local Area/ Local Environment/ Place to Live

Maybe I could ask you a bit about living in Monksland in terms of its appearance, services and facilities, and any thoughts you have on improving the area or any suggestions for new facilities or activities that could be set up.

6) Do you enjoy living in Monksland? Yes ☐ No ☐

7) How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the **appearance** of the local area?

Very Satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied ☐

Dissatisfied ☐ Very Dissatisfied ☐

Can you give us some examples?

8) How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the **parking** the local area?

Very Satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied ☐
Dissatisfied ☐ Very Dissatisfied ☐

Can you give us some examples?

9) How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the **lighting** in the local area?

Very Satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied ☐
Dissatisfied ☐ Very Dissatisfied ☐

Can you give us some examples?

10) What do you perceive to be the most **positive aspects** of living in Monksland?

11) (a) How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the range of community **activities and events** (social

activities, groups, classes, support services) available in the area?

Very Satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied ☐
Dissatisfied ☐ Very Dissatisfied ☐

(b) How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the range of **Community Facilities** (amenity or equipment) **and Spaces** available in the area?

Very Satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied ☐
Dissatisfied ☐ Very Dissatisfied ☐

12)

(a) What facilities (space, amenity or equipment) are needed for children under 12 in the Monksland Area?

(b) What activities are needed for children under 12 in the Monksland Area?

(c) What facilities are needed for young people between 12 and 18 in the Monksland Area?

(d) What activities are needed for young people between 12 and 18 in the Monksland Area?

13) What activities are needed for adults in the area?

14) Do you feel a pride in living in the Monksland area? Yes ☐ No ☐
Unsure ☐

15) What do you perceive to be the most **negative aspects** of living in Monksland, if any?

16) Are there any **specific problems** in the area that need to be highlighted?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

Could you give us some examples?

COMMUNITY LIFE

We are interested in finding out more about your participation in community activities and whether you are aware of what is happening in the community.

- 17) Are you involved in any community activities? Yes ☐ No ☐
- 18) Would you like to become involved in any community activities? Yes ☐ No ☐
- 19) Which activities would you like to get involved with?

- 20) Are you on any committees? Yes ☐ No ☐
- 21) Which one(s)?

- 22) Would you be interested in becoming involved in decisions that concern your area?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐
- 23) What is stopping you getting involved?

EDUCATION

Can I ask you now about education, what courses you have done and any courses you may be interested in.

24) What is the highest level of Education you have completed?

Primary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Secondary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third Level	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

(If other please specify)

25) (a) Have you completed any courses in the last 2 years? Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) What was the course?

26) Are you interested in doing a course? Yes ☐ No ☐

(ONLY ASK Q 27, IF INTERESTED IN A COURSE)

27) If you were interested in doing a course, is there a specific area you have in mind?

28) Are there any barriers that might stop you attending courses in the future?

29) Do you have a computer in your home? Yes ☐ No ☐

30) Do you have access in your own home to the internet? Yes ☐ No ☐

31) Are you interested in doing a computer class? Yes ☐ No ☐

32) Are you aware of courses running in the Monksland area? Yes ☐ No ☐

EMPLOYMENT

I was hoping to ask you a bit about your employment status, work opportunities as you see them, possibly starting up your own business and if you're not working any barriers which are stopping you accessing work?

33) (a) Are you currently in employment? Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) Do you work

Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐ Seasonal ☐

(c) Do you work in the private sector, public sector, on a State Supported Scheme or Self Employed?

Private Sector ☐

Public Sector ☐

State Supported Scheme ☐

Self Employed ☐

(d) What scheme are you working on?

Community Employment ☐ Rural Social Scheme ☐

TUS ☐ Community Services Programme ☐ Other ☐

(e) How many kilometres do you travel for employment? _____

(ONLY ASK Q 34, IF NOT WORKING AT PRESENT)

34) So, you're **not working** at the moment, can I ask you are you?

Unemployed ☐ A Carer ☐ Retired ☐ A Homemaker ☐

Other _____

35) How long have you been unemployed? _____

36) Are there any barriers to you being in employment? _____

37) Do you receive any Social Welfare payments? Yes ☐ No ☐

38) Which one(s)

39) Have you thought of setting up your own business in Monksland? Yes ☐ No ☐

40) What would assist you in this?

41) What type of business would you establish?

42) Are there any barriers that might stop you setting up your own business?

DEMOGRPAHICS

43) Which of the following Age Bands do you fall into?

U-25☐ 26-35☐ 36-45☐ 46-55 ☐ 56-65☐ 66+☐

44) How many adults and children under 18 years of age are living in your home?

Adults _____ Children U-18 years of Age _____

45) How many children have you in the following age bands?

0- 4 _____

5-12 _____

13-18 _____

46) What is your marital status?

Single ☐ Married ☐ Separated ☐ Divorced ☐

Widow/Widower ☐ Civil partnership ☐

47) Can I ask you, what is your religion?

Roman Catholic ☐

Church of Ireland ☐

Muslim(Islamic) ☐

Presbyterian ☐

Orthodox ☐

Other, please Specify ☐ _____

No religion ☐

48) Are there any other comments you have about living in Monksland?

49) Is there any question you would have liked to have been asked, but we didn't ask you?

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in the research.

Appendix 2

Steering Committee Members

Mr. Tomás Beades, Roscommon LEADER Partnership

Ms. Martina Earley, Roscommon LEADER Partnership

Dr. Mary McDonnell Naughton, Athlone Institute of Technology

Mr. John McKenna, Athlone Institute of Technology

Professor Myra O'Regan, Trinity College Dublin

Ms. Janet Owens, Athlone Institute of Technology

Ms. Linda Sice Brogan, Roscommon LEADER Partnership

Ms. Lorna Walsh, Athlone Institute of Technology

Appendix 3

Monksland Town Team Committee Members

Mr. Fred Carney

Ms. Patricia Greene

Mr. Tim Dolan

Mr. James Kilmartin

Ms. Kelly Marie Neary

Ms. Caroline Reid

Mr. Tom Harrison

Mr. Joe Harney

Ms. Catherine Carney Hogan

Cllr John Keogh

Cllr John Naughten

Facilitated and Supported by Mr. Colm Kelly, Community Integration Officer, Roscommon County Council.

Appendix 4 List of Positive Aspects of Living in Monksland

It's coming a town itself, that's good
Close to town, motorway, schools, good footpaths
Good bus service, good road access, plenty of walks
Convenience of shops
Nice neighbours
Nice area, quiet good neighbourhood
Close to work
Live near amenities
Near shops and medical centre
Close to Athlone
Gym and family
Near amenities
I live beside family
New houses
Neighbours
Close to shops
Friends
Nice area for young children
Gym and very nice people around
Near motorway
Buses every 15 mins
Near shop, hotel and gym
Easy to get to work
Near shops
Nice area
Friendly people
Nice neighbourhood
Colourful houses
Near my parents
Quiet area near shops
Warm houses new
Close to N4
Close to work
Near town and motorway
Nice neighbours
Just moved in
Near work
Near everything
Apartments are nice near shops
New doctors surgery, lights to the road, Supervalu,
Colourful
Near main road
new enough houses colourful
Near Athlone

Close to town
Colourful Friendly
Near shops
Near my job
Nice people, nice houses
Gym close by
Near Supervalu
Near shops nice neighbourhood
Estate well laid out
Nice neighbourhood
Young families in the area
Good place to bring up young family
Living close to friends and family
Near amenities
Nice people
Nice area
Quiet, suitable for busses
Colourful area
Close to shop and gym
Living near family
Village feel, friendly
Nice place to bring up children
Nice area for children safe
near all amenities
Nice area near shops
Safe and big houses
Amenities, Near town
Nice houses
Living close to friends
Quiet area
near Athlone town
Good neighbours and friends, safe place to live
Near town and motorway
Close to tow
Amenities are easily accessible
Lovely people living there, Supervalu close
The community
Gym & Yoga
Supervalu, Hairdressers
Near shops/Hairdresser
How close we are to the town
Nice neighbours, near Athlone
Nice area
Close to work and town
Near town centre
Mature families

Nice area, good neighbours
Near shops
Close to everything
Houses all kept well
Location, close to gym and yoga
Close to work and schools
Colour of houses, good community
Close to town
Friendly
Lovely friends, live near family
Good neighbours
Well maintained
Good neighbours
Neighbours
people in Monksland, amount of shops, Supervalu
Warm houses
People take pride in the area, good residents shop
Close to work and schools for kids
Small village
Available buses
Good area for children
People
Close to work and town
Friendly neighbours
Supervalu and hairdressers
playground is lovely
Near shops
Supportive Residents Association
Nice area to live in Quiet
The green for kids is safe
Like the area
Near main road, Colourful, Friendly
Child friendly
Nice layout
Houses well kept
Houses look lovely
Lots of children/Busy town

Appendix 5 List of Other Aspects of Living in Monksland

- Lads running around the road
- A lot of young kids everywhere
- Children running no safe space for them - playground
- Close to road
- Not enough advertisement for classes
- No focal point
- Lack of community and no courses or opportunities to meet people
- Squashed small houses
- Not enough spaces between houses
- Space between houses
- No meeting point, one big estate
- No area for kids to go
- Some classes too expensive
- Too many houses
- No where to go in the evening
- No green area
- No one knows each other
- Small gardens
- Ugly houses
- Small gardens, no room
- Lack of community spirit
- No advertising of courses
- no centre to it
- Young people hanging around
- Children on road

- No community spirit, No community centre
- Unaware of activities , not very friendly place by appearance
- Houses too squashed
- no parks or walkways
- Kids hanging round (drinking)
- Bins not collected
- Not enough activity for youth
- More outdoor gym
- No cheap shops
- No info on classes
- Bigger play areas
- hard to meet people
- Appearance and lack of community spirit
- Lack of resources, no centre point
- Appearance very industrial/No sense of community
- Lack of sports clubs
- Lack of services, bottle bank and community centre
- No centre point/Community centre
- Lack of social clubs and sports clubs. no pubs in the area apart from hotel.
- Anti-social behaviour amongst teenagers
- Lack of centre point e.g. Community centre
- No place for depressed young people, no outlet for help, Community centre
- Too many housing estates and unfinished sites
- Need more sports facilities
- Nothing for young people to do at night
- Not enough places for kids to play
- Move outdoor gym, need town hall

- Move outdoor gym,
- There are no negative aspects
- Gym too expensive
- Too close to road
- No community base
- Lack of green area, walks or trails
- One large housing estate no character
- Not enough space for children
- No town centre, are we Roscommon or Westmeath?
- Don't know your neighbours-constantly people moving away after a few months
- No focal point
- Poor planning and unfinished building sites
- Lack of community spirit and nowhere to go to meet people
- very industrial, No sense of community, nowhere for teenagers to go
- Poor planning
- No community centre
- Move outdoor gym
- Not enough places for parents to go
- Anti-social activity
- No soul in the place
- No soul to the place, everyone is just passing through
- Close to main road noisy
- Need more activities for adults
- Kids running everywhere, nowhere to go
- Noisy road
- Like a big housing estate
- Move outdoor gym

- No pubs/Restaurants
- Need more facilities for teenagers
- Children running around in evening-dangerous
- Young people getting into trouble because they have no place to go
- Maintenance

Appendix List of Community Activities which individuals are interested in getting involved with include

Cookery/Computers
Walking / choir/ cycling/ running
Yoga, Sport, Activities
Women's club
swimming
Parenting course
Craft courses
Cheap Pilates/Yoga
Community development
Sports
Anything horticulture related
healthcare course and Residents committee
Gym
art
Organising children's events
Tidy towns
Social media for the area
Crossfit
Football
Working with youth
Establishing Women's group
A computer course
Team sports
Clubs
Men's group
English course
Classes-educational
Dancing
Photography
Family centre
Drama
Horticulture
Rugby
Music
Maintaining the grass
TEFL
Meet other parents
Dog walking club
Organise skateboarding
Helping the elderly
Spin classes
Building the community

Book club
Gardening
flower arranging
Fundraising for more facilities for young people
Evening courses