

Corduff Community Strategic Development Report

Report commissioned by Corduff Needs Analysis Steering Group

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Our Values and vision

The approach adopted in this report has been guided from the outset by a set of values as to what community consultation and research should be and as to how an often 'silent' community can be offered an opportunity to have its voice heard. It has also been driven by a vision of what community-based planning is as well as by a vision of what should underpin community development in participation and ownership terms.

This study was carried out in a community which, like many others in and around Dublin, is, in many key respects, 'excluded' from mainstream Irish society. On any chosen range of deprivation indices, Corduff scores highly (see below) – its health, education, environmental and economic profile parallels that of other disadvantaged communities. Alongside these 'objective' indices of exclusion, the communities that make up Corduff also experience the censorship of finding it difficult to have 'their voice' heard - self-censorship as well as social censorship.

An analysis of development plans shows that for the majority of the citizens of Corduff, planning is something that happens to them – it is not something in which they are given or take an active role. This study represents one small but significant step in the process of responding to this reality. From the outset, one of our guiding concerns was to ensure that no-one, who wished to be heard about the needs of Corduff, would be excluded. This objective presented us with a number of research challenges and these are discussed below.

This report sets out to present the voices of the people of Corduff with regard to the needs of their community as they see it. Those who have initiated and overseen this research hope that it will guide future planning for the area in real and needed ways. The report is written to be considered and acted upon by the Steering Committee that initiated the research as well as by the host of statutory and community organisations that impact on development in Corduff. But it is also presented as an attempt to sketch out how the people of Corduff should be offered a range of opportunities to shape and 'own' that development.

In our view, offering residents real and realistic opportunities to influence the future development of their communities is a fundamental right that not only needs to be asserted but also given substance. Planning is often presented as an area for 'experts' only – such an approach is clearly deficient. Communities are not experienced in planning and in grappling with its often complex and contradictory aspects. But if community development and community-based planning are to have any real meaning in Ireland, communities must be offered the chance to 'practice' it. This report has been conceived as a significant contribution to that process.

Alongside publishing this report, we are also undertaking a community education and information programme to ensure that those who participated receive the necessary and expected feedback. Again, we believe that this is vital to the realisation of community rights in planning.

We offer this study as a first step in building an effective and influential voice for the people of Corduff. In its own right, the study can achieve nothing – it is only when it is used by all concerned with the future of Corduff in mind – when it is discussed and argued over – that it will have served its purpose.

Survey Conclusions – a summary

The results of this research, carried out during the summer amongst 50% (605) of households in Corduff should give cause for serious concern and renewed action amongst both statutory and community-based organisations. Despite the many projects and works carried out in the area over the past number of years, Corduff could still be fairly characterised as a *'community in crisis'*. Residents remain angry and concerned about the absence or quality of many key services in the area, about a range of important issues as well as about the image of their community.

However, the picture is by no means solely negative – the majority of those interviewed in the course of this study expressed high levels of satisfaction with many services, expressed considerable optimism that much could be done given the right circumstances and were particularly concerned for the future of youth in the area.

In summary, the main conclusions of the survey are:

- On any reasonable set of either quantitative or qualitative criteria, Corduff is a seriously disadvantaged area – all of those consulted during this research from the residents to statutory bodies to community groups recognised this and were clear as to its various dimensions and manifestations.
- It is clear to us that one of the greatest challenges highlighted by this reality is the danger that cynicism and fatalism within Corduff will increase – cynicism on the part of the community that *'no-one is particularly bothered'* and fatalism *'that nothing can be done'*.
- However, it is important to stress that such a general conclusion would be incomplete and, therefore, inaccurate in a number of crucially important ways. It is singularly clear from the views expressed in this survey that the majority of residents care passionately about where they live, about their neighbours, the environment and, crucially, about the future for young people in the area. One of the key findings of this report is that the residents of Corduff are very critical of the current condition of the area and of the provision of services and support within the area precisely because they do care.
- Despite continued disadvantage and exclusion, community spirit and hope remain relatively strong – but they must not be taken for granted.
- When given the opportunity (as in this research), the residents of Corduff have much to say – they display considerable *'balance'* in their assessment of the area in recent years – they acknowledge openly what has been done and the many contributions of both community and statutory organisations.
- Residents of Corduff accept that the community of the area has a key responsibility for moving the agenda forward and they are at pains to challenge the negative image of their community.
- Additionally, the people of Corduff have many positive suggestions and ideas to offer concerning the future.
- The current situation within Corduff should command increased, urgent and sustained attention from both statutory and community organisations. If the problems and challenges that currently characterise Corduff remain un-addressed, and if the responses to the situation amount to *'more of the same'*,

the results are as inevitable as they are predictable – increased alienation, marginalisation and exclusion with all their attendant manifestations – drugs, violence, fear and isolation.

- It is the central conclusion and key recommendation of this report that the Steering Committee established to manage this research should lobby for the creation of a co-ordinated, multi-agency task force for Corduff. A new, strategic plan for Corduff is urgently required with adequate funding to ensure effective delivery of current and new initiatives in a number of key areas.
- Such a plan must be based on considerable community consultation, information and participation if it is to succeed and to garner the support of residents for the effort and challenges ahead. Such an approach must, additionally, be based increasingly upon a rights perspective rather than the dominant 'welfare' approach that characterises current attitudes and initiatives.
- A second, related, key conclusion is that communication with and from the people of Corduff is seriously inadequate and contributes to the problems of the area. It is imperative that the results of this research, and the responses that will hopefully follow it, are communicated to residents and that an effective and ongoing communication process is established.
- Throughout this survey it is clear that the residents of Corduff have an overly negative image of themselves, the area itself and the level of services and support present. It will not be sufficient to simply dismiss their views as erroneous (mis)-perceptions. The perception of Corduff is generally (and unfairly) negative and it is the responsibility of the various agencies working in the area to challenge and change this view.
- This report includes a number of conclusions and recommendations on a number of specific issues and concerns raised by residents and these include the following areas:
 - Community Safety and Security
 - Education, Training and Unemployment
 - Housing and the Environment
 - Community Facilities, Resourcing and Services
 - Minority Groups
 - Youth
 - Communication and Co-ordination
 - Community Involvement

Introduction

It is a truism to note that Ireland has, over the past number of years, experienced a rise in economic prosperity but that this increasing prosperity has not touched everyone equally. Whole communities and areas have been left behind, remaining socially and economically disadvantaged, while the rest of the country moves forward at an unprecedented rate. Because of this reality, area-based studies are essential to determine the needs of these areas in order to enable them to 'catch up' in social and economic terms. Such studies are also vital in moving away from a welfare approach to disadvantage to one which emphasises a rights-based approach and which places a premium on participation and 'ownership' of any future development in Ireland.

The ***Corduff Community Strategic Development Report*** is the product of five months' research into the experiences, views and needs of the people of Corduff between March and July 2002. The research was initiated by the Corduff Needs Analysis Steering Group and supported by a range of community and voluntary groups as well as statutory agencies in the Blanchardstown/Corduff area.

The research was carried out in order to:

- elicit the views of the people of Corduff on their current situation and their priority needs for the future
- compare the present experience of people in Corduff with past experiences in order to identify real or perceived improvements or dis-improvements within their quality of life
- assist with the development of a strategic plan for the community for the coming three years based on the stated needs of the people of the area
- indicate to statutory agencies where funding is most urgently required and where it might best be invested to respond to people's expressed needs

A Steering Committee was set up to oversee and guide the work (see Appendix 1 for details of membership). The Steering Committee then engaged 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World – an educational and community development non-governmental organisation to design and carry out the research. The project was based in the Corduff Community Resource Centre.

The research was undertaken in five stages:

- consultative meetings with statutory, voluntary and community groups and other interested parties to identify and discuss current issues in Corduff
- a literature review of social and economic studies of Blanchardstown and Corduff
- a questionnaire was then designed, based on the issues arising from the consultative meetings and the literature review, to elicit the views of a significant and representative sample of the people of Corduff on the issues most important to them. Details of this methodology are included below.
- focus group discussions with community residents and organisations on various issues arising from the questionnaire responses were also held
- a draft report was circulated to interested parties for comment and any appropriate and necessary changes were then included.

Introducing Corduff

Corduff is a part of Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, one of three large 'new' towns on the western fringe of Dublin City. For planning purposes, 'Blanchardstown' takes in both the Mulhuddart and Castleknock wards. The town, including the suburb of Castleknock, stretches from the North-Western boundary of the Phoenix Park to a point approximately one mile from the County Meath boundary, a distance of three and a half miles.

The part of Fingal County that is immediately adjacent to County Meath is not yet developed but is zoned for both residential and industrial development as part of Blanchardstown. Therefore, the eventual South-East to North-West axis will stretch for four and a half miles along the N3 National primary route. Currently, the South-West to North-East axis of the town is approximately two miles in most places.

However, zoned areas for development extend for three miles on this axis, and in some places three and a half miles. According to Lynch (2000), the eventual geographic size of the town, including industrial zones is likely to be at least as big as South Dublin City.

The population of Blanchardstown (including Castleknock) has now reached over 70,000 from only 3,000 in the early 1970s. The 1999 Fingal County Development Plan states that the ultimate target population is 100,000, although this may be revised by the Council based on the 2002 Census. It is clear that the town will continue to be one of the main population and industrial growth areas in Dublin for the next six to ten years and this will have a significant impact on planning, service provision, transport and local development (for further details see Blanchardstown Area Partnership, 2001).

Corduff is one of eight District Electoral Divisions (DEDs) in Blanchardstown, which fall under the remit of Fingal County Council. Its boundaries are neatly formed by Ballycoolin Road to the North East, the Navan Road to the South West, Blanchardstown Road North to the Northwest and Snugborough Road to the Southeast.

Blanchardstown DEDs

- ◆ Abbotstown
- ◆ Coolmine
- ◆ Delwood (Castleknock ward)
- ◆ Roselawn (Castleknock ward)
- ◆ Blakestown
- ◆ Corduff
- ◆ Mulhuddart
- ◆ Tyrellstown

According to Lynch (2000), most of these areas show substantial evidence of social and economic disadvantage except for Roselawn, Delwood and parts of Blakestown. For this reason, Corduff, along with Coolmine, Mulhuddart and Tyrellstown became a CODAN area (County Dublin Area of Need), which signifies its recognition as an area of overall disadvantage within County Dublin in 1994. These areas are entirely or mostly comprised of housing estates with very high levels of social and economic disadvantage, where the majority of housing is local authority owned.

It should be noted at this stage that statistics for Blanchardstown can often be skewed somewhat by the inclusion of Castleknock. Roselawn and Delwood in the Castleknock ward are relatively affluent and can significantly alter measures of social disadvantage for Blanchardstown as a whole.

Although there has been significant development in Blanchardstown since 1994, there are still communities in the area suffering from 'cumulative poverty', as defined by the National Anti-Poverty Strategy. Consequently, Corduff, was selected in February 2001, as one of fourteen areas in Greater Dublin and twenty-five in the entire country, which have been identified by the Government's RAPID initiative, as amongst the most disadvantaged areas in the state using objective criteria.

RAPID is the Government's initiative for revitalising such areas through planning, investment and development, where resources, through the National Development Plan, will be '*front-loaded*' and focused on those most at risk. The initiative is a recognition that some areas of the country have failed to benefit proportionately from improved living standards. RAPID will also focus on integrating community, voluntary and statutory services to improve their delivery to residents.

According to the Fingal County Council (FCC) Housing Strategy Report 2001 - 2005 the construction of large amounts of public/social housing will not continue. The current housing list of FCC is approximately 2,500 (May 2002). With regard to the social housing bill, the Council views the social housing component as comprising 'shared ownership houses', houses for the elderly and local authority properties. Lynch (2000) maintains that if relatively little public housing is built over the next few years, this will significantly alter the social and economic make-up of Blanchardstown, creating a positive benefit for the majority. However, as there is little new house-building going on in Corduff at present, the impact of this new source of prosperity is unlikely to be felt to any great extent.

Furthermore, Lynch argues that the social disadvantage and cumulative poverty of people living in areas like Corduff may in fact increase, due to the high prevalence of young people, single parent households, increasing numbers of refugee/non-nationals and high rates of long-term unemployment.

Corduff in profile

Population

According to 1996 Census figures, the population of Corduff was 4,725. In this number, there were 2,299 (49%) males and 2,426 (51%) females. The national figure was approximately 50 % respectively. It was expected that the Census 2002 would show a decrease in the population of Corduff, despite the expected overall increase in the Blanchardstown population. This expectation was based on the reasonable assumption that the population of Corduff is getting older and that a number of those in the 20 - 30 age group have moved on from their parents' homes. Preliminary figures from the Central Statistics Office (25th July 2002) bear out this expectation. The population of Corduff now stands at 4,350, which represents a decrease of nearly 8 %. A breakdown of these figures by age and gender is not yet available.

Dependency Ratio

Percentage Age Dependency is the total population defined as 'dependent' – i.e. those under 15 years and those 65 or over and is calculated by combining the under 15 years group with the over 65 years group as a percentage of the earning population i.e. those in the 15-64 age range.

In 1996, 32% of the population of Corduff was aged 14 years or under (see table 1), compared to 27% in Fingal, 22% in Dublin and 24% nationally. Only 2% of the population of Corduff was in the 65+ age bracket in comparison with a figure of 10% in the Dublin region and 11% nationally. The total number of age dependants was 1615 or 34%, which compares favourably with 33% nationally.

However, In 1996, 34% of Corduff's male population were under 15 years of age, compared to the National figure of 25% (See Appendix ?, table 1). 31% of the female population in Corduff was under 15, compared to the National figure of 23%. The dependency ratio in Corduff therefore differed in 1996 from the rest of the country not in absolute figures but in the profile of that dependency i.e. Corduff had a far higher youth dependency ratio but a much lower elderly dependency ratio.

Table 1 - Overall Age Profile – Corduff - 1996

Age group	%
0-14 *	32.1
15-24	23.6
25-44	26.2
45-64	16.0
65+ *	2.1

N = 4725

* Number of age dependents = 1615 (34.2%)

Young People

Although it is not possible without up-to-date Census statistics to estimate the current number of young people in each age cohort, a look at the Electoral Register provides some idea of the number under 18 years. In total, 1,211 of the 1,263 houses in Corduff are on the Electoral Register (Feb 2002). This means there are 52 houses not on the Electoral Register. The total number of voters registered in Corduff is 3,123. If we divide the number of voters by the number of houses, we get an average occupancy rate for over 18's of 2.6. In other words there is an average of 2.6 people over the age of 18 living in each house in Corduff. If we then multiply this figure (2.6) by the number of houses not registered (52), we can assume there are 135 people over the age of eighteen living in Corduff who are not registered to vote. This gives us a total population of 3,258 persons over the age of 18 in Corduff out of a total population of 4,350. The remainder, 1,092 (or 25%) are therefore under 18.

School enrolments in Corduff are not a viable measure of the age cohorts within the under 18 group, as a large number of children from the Corduff area attend schools outside Corduff itself.

Given the fact that nearly 56% of the Corduff population were under the age of 24 in 1996 and that approximately 25% are currently under 18, there are significant issues around young people in the area, in particular with regard to facilities. Recognising this factor, Corduff Development Project (CDP), in conjunction with Blanchardstown Youth Service (BYS) has formed a Youth Strategy Group and is currently undertaking an audit of planned programme and service development. The objective of this audit is to establish what is available for young people in the area, identify gaps and develop programmes and services in a co-ordinated manner.

Lone Parents

A characteristic shared by the most deprived parts of Dublin City is an above - average proportion of lone parent households for which there are a number of definitions. The first is the total number of households consisting of a single male or female parent with children of any age. This can be further broken down into lone parent households with all children under the age of 15 and households with at least one child aged under 15 years.

Table 2 - Lone parent households – Corduff – 1996 (N = 1206)

Household Description	%
Lone parents all children	17.6

Lone parents all children < 15	9.6
Lone parents at least one child < 15	15.1
Non-lone parent households	57.7

Using the first definition, Corduff, at 18%, was well above the national rate of 10% in 1996. When this is broken down, Corduff consisted of nearly 10% lone parent households with all children under 15 years, compared to Fingal (4%) and a national figure of 3%. The final breakdown shows that 15% of such households in Corduff in 1996 had at least one child under 15, compared to Fingal at 6% and a national figure of 5%. Whatever way these statistics are broken down, Corduff displays a significant disparity both regionally and with the rest of the country in terms of lone parent households, an indication of greater levels of deprivation.

Figures from the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs show that there are a total of 560 people in the Blanchardstown/Corduff area, claiming Lone Parent Allowance. Residents of Corduff may claim their allowance either at the post office in Blanchardstown or in Corduff. Of the 560 claiming Lone Parent allowance, 185 do so at the Corduff post office. There may however, be more lone parents from Corduff who claim their allowance in Blanchardstown.

Educational attainment

“A strong link exists between educational attainment and earning capacity. Thus the level of educational disadvantage in an area may be regarded as a proxy for social and/or economic deprivation” (GAMMA, Sept 1998).

Table 3 - Educational attainment – Corduff – 1996

Type of Education	N	%
No formal or primary education only	909	33.9
Lower secondary education only	842	31.4
Upper secondary education only	725	27.1
Third level education	202	7.5
Education ceased at or before 15 years	1189	44.4
Education ceased at or after 20 years	112	4.2

Total population who had ceased formal education in 1996 = 2, 678

Corduff compares unfavourably for educational attainment with Fingal, Dublin and the country as a whole. For example, in 1996, 34% of the Corduff population had no formal or primary education compared with Dublin (25%) and nationally (30%). Furthermore, although just over 44% in Corduff had ceased formal education at or before the age of 15, compared with Dublin (49%), the equivalent figure for Fingal County was 25% and the rest of the country was 35%.

Riversdale Community College Overview (2000) outlines some of the problems experienced by people in Corduff, which contribute significantly to early school - leaving. These include:

- lack of an educational background in the adult population
- lack of role models within the family and the community
- educational, psychological and emotional difficulties unsupported by

- adequate services
- inadequate staffing levels to provide for small numbers who wish to take subjects at higher levels
- a small percentage of very problematic students affecting the progress of the majority
- the perception that schools outside the area make “better” provision for brighter pupils
- unemployment levels and other social problems in the area which lead to lack of motivation, poor attendance and lack of respect for authority
- negative media coverage of the area leading to poor self-esteem
- environmental factors such as buildings and grounds (due to lack of resources)
- low level of parental involvement for social and educational reasons

Between 1994 and 1997, Riversdale Community College, along with a number of other schools in the area were involved in the Potential Early School Leavers Programme (PESL), aimed at enabling participants to remain in school for as long as possible. The Home School Community Liaison Scheme (HSCL) is also in operation based on the Teacher/Pupil/Parent/Community participation model. This initiative is an acknowledgement of the importance of community participation and support in formal education and attempts to break down the barriers between school and home.

Corduff falls down significantly in the percentage of population remaining in education beyond the age of 20. Only 4% of the Corduff population in 1996 had remained in education after 20 years of age. This compares with Fingal (17%), Dublin (19%) and nationally (15%). The figure for Third Level educational attainment was 7.5 % in Corduff, compared with Fingal and Dublin (25%) and nationally (20%).

Recent figures from the Higher Education Authority show that Dublin 15 had a participation rate of 40.5% in higher education in 1998 (HEA Fourth Report on participation in Higher Education, 2002). As noted earlier, Dublin 15 which includes Castleknock, Roselawn and Delwood, showed participation rates of 28% and 30% respectively in 1996 compared to the 7.5% figure for Corduff. Although it is possible that there is now a slightly higher participation rate in Corduff (due to the fact that the highest proportionate increase in participation rates across the country was for the lower socio-economic groups), it is unlikely that third level education participation in Corduff was anywhere near the 40.5 % recorded for Dublin 15 in 1998.

Social class

The social class of all persons aged 15 years and over is determined by their occupation and employment status. The social class of family dependants is derived from the social class of the parent having the highest social class.

Table 4 - Social class structure – Corduff – 1996 (N = 4725)

Social Class	%
Social Class 1: Professional workers	1.1
Social Class 2: Managerial & technical	12.0
Social Class 3: Non-manual	17.5
Social Class 4: Skilled manual	29.1
Social Class 5: Semi-skilled	17.8

Social Class 6: Unskilled	11.5
Social Class 7: All others gainfully occupied	10.9

The percentage of the national population in social classes 1 and 2 in 1996 was 27%, while Fingal County and Dublin were 36% and 31% respectively. The comparable figure for Corduff was 13%, with only 1% falling into social class 1. In Corduff, the distribution of the population between the different social classes is skewed towards non-manual, skilled manual and semi-skilled occupations, social classes 3, 4 and 5 and towards skilled manual in particular (social class 4).

Unemployment

In May 2002, there were 2,659 people signing on for unemployment payments in Dublin 15 (1,543 males and 1,116 females) - of these 669 females and 602 males were signing for Unemployment Benefit. The remainder were signing for Unemployment Assistance (some of this group would be signing for credits without receiving payments but the figure is likely to be small – source, Blanchardstown Social Welfare Office).

The main service for providing information, counselling and guidance to the long-term unemployed in Blanchardstown is the Local Employment Service (LES), which was established in November 1997. The LES consists of a network of centres, one of which is located in Corduff. LES Joblink is the main channel through which most of the special courses and services developed and implemented by the Blanchardstown Partnership for the long-term unemployed can be accessed. LES Joblink has responsibility for the Jobs Club, which is currently being developed, and for recruitment to the FIT (Fastrack to Information Technology) courses. The Blanchardstown Centre for the Unemployed, which is also located in Corduff, provides information on social welfare entitlements, health entitlements, tax etc., adult education courses, help with CVs, computer courses and the Newsletter *Insight*, which has become one of the most readily identifiable sources of information in the Corduff Community.

The FAS Employment Service Office is located in Blanchardstown Village. This office provides a one-stop-shop facility for job seekers covering the full range of training and employment services available and also provides co-ordination for the local Community Employment (CE) Programme. The main training options for those who are long-term unemployed are provided through the CE Programme and the Job Initiative.

A survey on barriers to employment for long-term unemployed people in 1999, concluded that although significant economic and social development in the Blanchardstown area has been characterised by enhanced employment opportunities within the local labour market, the low skills and educational qualification levels of the unemployed local labour force has meant the emergence of a serious labour market marginalisation in parts of the area (Murphy, 1999).

Drug Use

There has been no research into drug use specifically in the Corduff area. However, a recent study of drug abuse in the Blanchardstown area showed that a little over 30.5% of respondents in the Greater Blanchardstown area came from Corduff (D'Arcy, 2000). Although this is somewhat mitigated by the fact that Corduff maintains a satellite clinic, which made it possible to contact respondents, the highest

number of respondents in the survey gave Corduff as their address. One of the findings that surprised D'Arcy was the number of drug users in the 30 – 35 years age group (16.4%), several of whom came from Corduff. Her explanation for this finding is the fact that Corduff is one of the earlier Local Authority estates developed in the area.

According to the Blanchardstown Area Partnership Social Inclusion Plan (2000 – 2006), the most common traits of drug misusers in Blanchardstown are:

- Backgrounds of low income / unemployed or lone-parent households
- Poor school performance / early school-leaving
- Unemployment
- High youth population
- Male

Offenders

Committals to prison of young people (aged 16-21) from Blanchardstown were 73 in 1999, 62 in 1998 and 74 in 1997. D'Arcy's report on drug use in Blanchardstown showed that of 128 respondents (all of whom misuse drugs), nearly 7 out of 10 admitted to committing a property crime at some time and four out of ten to committing a crime against a person. 6 out of 10 admitted to selling drugs at some time, 4 of them to having sold heroin.

Deprivation Score

“The fundamental implication of the term deprivation is of an absence of essential or desirable attributes, possessions and opportunities, which are considered no more than the minimum by that society” (Coombes et al, 1995).

According to GAMMA (1998), the nature of deprivation must be conceptualised in broad terms, in order to include not only income poverty but also social and environmental problems, which are particularly important in the context of area-based studies. The Haase Index (a deprivation score developed by social researcher Trutz Haase) therefore includes variables beyond measures of material deprivation e.g. unemployment rate, levels of car ownership, number of medical card-holders, overcrowding etc.

On the Haase Index, a Rank Factor Score (RFS) is given to each DED on a scale of 1-10 (1 being most affluent, 10 being most disadvantaged). The higher the deprivation score, the more deprived is the DED. In 1991, 4 of the 8 DEDs in Blanchardstown were in the most deprived 20% in the country. The national Mean Deprivation Score (on the Haase Index) was 5.1. The Deprivation Score for Corduff was 10. By 1996, this had reduced to 9 for Corduff and 4.7 for the country as a whole. This gives a good indication of the level of deprivation in Corduff by comparison with the rest of the country.

Although not explicitly covered in the survey, it is commonly understood that shortage of money and general poverty are underlying factors in all of the issues touched on, given the deprivation score for Corduff, its designation both in the CODAN report and as a RAPID area.

Table 5 - Deprivation Score

	1991	1996	Change in Score
Corduff	10	9	- 1.0
National	5.1	4.7	- 0.4

To indicate clearly the connection between unemployment, early school-leaving and deprivation, the following table compares Corduff with the Greater Blanchardstown area in 1996 (table 5a).

Table 5a – Deprivation factors

	Deprivation ranking	Unemployed	Ceased ed. <15 yrs
Corduff	9	27.8	44.4
Greater B'town area	4.7	17.8	33.5

Source: BAP, 2000

Women & domestic violence

A report for the Blanchardstown Area Partnership (BAP) in 1997 indicates that domestic violence is a serious problem in the Blanchardstown area, compounded by the lack of resources available to deal with it and the lack of an accessible refuge (Bowen, 1997).

One of the obstacles to obtaining accurate statistics on this subject is the lack of a specific agency for dealing with domestic violence in the Blanchardstown area, so that record keeping is almost impossible. Although many professionals and others come across domestic violence in their work e.g. Gardaí, priests, nurses and social workers, there are no specific guidelines or referral practices in effect. The only services specifically geared towards helping (female) victims and (male) perpetrators of domestic violence are Women's Aid and treatment programmes for violent men, both of which are outside Dublin 15.

Travellers

The 1996 census identified Fingal as having the largest Traveller population of any County or County Borough, with 1,108 individual Travellers. The Fingal County Council Census of the Traveller Community in November 1997, enumerated 162 individual families living in Fingal, of which 152 were living in the Greater Blanchardstown area. The number of Traveller families in Fingal (162) represented 0.3% of the Fingal County Council population in the 1996 Census (47,721 households). A census of Travellers carried out for the Blanchardstown Travellers Support Group in March 1998 showed 114 Traveller families living in the Greater Blanchardstown area. 25% had therefore moved since the Fingal County Council census of Nov 1997. According to this report:

“Travellers in Blanchardstown are a seriously marginalised, disadvantaged group in an area of disadvantage” (Quinlan, 1998).

Currently, there are settled Travellers living in Corduff according to local sources but there is no agreement on exactly how many. In addition, there are Travellers living

on the outskirts of Corduff e.g. Ballycoolin, who also consider themselves to be living in Corduff.

Homelessness

There is very little reliable data on homelessness in the Blanchardstown area. However, Murphy's report "Think Twice, homelessness in Blanchardstown" (1999) identified 30 homeless individuals in the Blanchardstown area. A few of these cases represent family units. It is more than likely that this figure underestimates homelessness in Blanchardstown as it is based only on those seeking help or services. Drugs were the main cause of homelessness, accounting for 24% of those identified.

Asylum seekers and ethnic minorities

Figures on asylum seekers and ethnic minorities are difficult to estimate. The Blanchardstown Area Partnership uses registration with Health Boards as a measure but acknowledges that this is in no way deemed to be accurate. However, on the basis of Health Board registration, BAP states that "Blanchardstown has a larger share of immigrants than other areas, because of the relative availability of rented housing in a middle-price range. This trend is likely to continue" (BAP, 2000). In 2000, there were 327 children classified as refugees attending the 10 primary schools in the Greater Blanchardstown area. The major needs identified for refugees/asylum seekers are literacy courses, counselling and training for employment.

People with disabilities

Estimates for disabled people in the Blanchardstown area in 2002 were approximately 4000 (BAP, 2000). There are no estimated figures for the number of disabled in Corduff.

Chapter 2 – Research Methodology

The project commenced in March 2002. All statutory, voluntary and community bodies working in Corduff were invited to attend preliminary consultative meetings to define what they felt to be the most important issues in order to provide a focus for the project. The primary objective of the research was to elicit the views of the people of Corduff on their current situation and their needs for the future.

It was intended from the outset that this project would 'belong' to the people of Corduff. With this in mind, one of the main aims was to involve as many people from the community as possible in the project. This aim was achieved in a number of ways. In the first instance, members of the community became involved in the Steering Committee. Leaflets were distributed to every household in Corduff regarding the project and local newsletters also publicised the survey. 14 field researchers were employed from within the community to deliver questionnaires to 50% of households in Corduff. Members of the community who were not interviewed at their door were invited to go to the Resource Centre to complete a questionnaire.

Focus groups were held on various issues arising from the questionnaire with different sectors of the community as well as statutory and non-statutory bodies working in the area. A draft report was distributed to interested parties for comment prior to finalisation.

Up-to-date population statistics were unavailable before the survey began. Thus it was necessary to calculate the population for sampling purposes. Statistics from the 1996 Census were utilised in conjunction with the Fingal County Council occupancy rate in 1996 and 2002. In 1996, the Census recorded 1,206 houses in Corduff with a population of 4,725 and an average occupancy rate of 3.92 as against the average occupancy rate for Blanchardstown of 3.66. According to Fingal County Council (FCC) there are now 1,263 houses in Corduff, an increase of 57. The current occupancy rate used by FCC for Blanchardstown is 3.42.

We therefore assumed that the occupancy rate in Corduff has decreased by the same amount as the occupancy rate in Blanchardstown ($3.66 - 3.42 = 0.24$). Using this method, we obtained an occupancy rate of 3.68 for Corduff and by multiplying the assumed current occupancy rate in Corduff by the number of houses ($1,263 \times 3.68$), we arrived at a population of approximately 4,647, indicating a decrease in the population since 1996. Preliminary statistics from the CSO (July 2002) have since shown that the decrease is higher than expected and the population now stands at 4,350.

The questionnaire was drawn up by a sub-group of the steering committee and documentation from the preliminary consultation meetings and the literature review were also used to frame the questionnaire. A pilot test was undertaken with a small group of residents and the questionnaire was subsequently revised.

Delivery of the questionnaire in person was emphasised and field researchers were instructed to go through the questionnaire with respondents at the door rather than simply dropping questionnaires through letter-boxes. This was necessary primarily in order to achieve a representative sample of age and gender rather than merely reaching a target number of households. In addition it was desirable to have researchers fill in questionnaires at the door to overcome problems some respondents may have had with literacy. Where respondents did request the questionnaire to be left with them for completion, field researchers did so with an

agreed call-back time. It was of enormous benefit to the survey that questionnaires were delivered by local residents with whom they could identify more readily.

As a result of the above, a representative sample of the Corduff population responded in detail. A total of 605 responses were received, representing almost 50 % of households in the Corduff area and a good spread of gender and age groups.

Table 6 Age & Gender of respondents

Age	Gender		Total N
	Male %	Female %	
18-24	20.4	19.5	120
25-30	12.0	17.0	91
31-40	22.2	24.9	145
41-50	20.8	21.1	127
51-60	19.4	13.6	95
61+	5.1	3.9	26
N	216	389	605

In addition, a number of focus groups were held in Corduff over the period of the survey with women, youth groups, statutory agencies, community groups and the elderly. The objectives of the focus groups were to:

- add depth to the findings from the questionnaire
- examine themes arising through the questionnaire with specific interest groups
- create a forum for input by statutory, semi-statutory, community, and voluntary groups working in the community

Focus groups were undertaken with three youth groups in order to reach as many young people as possible. A focus group was held with a class of transition-year pupils from Riversdale, a group of sixth-class pupils in St. Patrick's and a group of young people attending the Youth Club in the Resource Centre.

The Women's focus group was organised through the Resource Centre and was comprised of women living in Corduff. The Evergreens Social Club for seniors facilitated a focus group with their members and all statutory, semi-statutory, community and voluntary groups working in the area were invited to attend relevant focus groups.

The community was notified by means of a flyer to every household about focus groups taking place. It was not possible to organise a Men's focus group as there is no particular forum for men to meet in Corduff and there was no response to the flyer from men wishing to participate. Due to issues of confidentiality, it was also not possible to organise a focus group for drug-users.

The information from the questionnaires and the focus groups was collated with the quantitative data being analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) while the qualitative data was analysed manually so that none of the detail would be lost.

Respondents were asked to indicate the number and ages of people living in their house. Approximately 90 respondents did not fill in this section or left gaps, however an age profile of the community can be surmised from those questionnaires where this section was completed. In the households of those who did fill in this section, there were 238 children between the ages of 0 to 5; 437 between the ages of 6 and 15; 554 aged between 16 and 24 and 943 over the age of 25. A majority of respondents (80%) have lived in Corduff for over eleven years (Table 8).

Table 7 Estates where respondents live (N = 605)

Estate	%
Ashling Heights	7.4
Ballycoolin Road	0.5
Brookhaven Drive	4.0
Brookhaven Grove	4.8
Brookhaven Lawn	3.0
Brookhaven Park	2.5
Brookhaven Rise	2.5
Corduff Avenue	4.0
Corduff Close	2.3
Corduff Cottages	1.2
Corduff Crescent	1.8
Corduff Gardens	3.1
Corduff Green	4.6
Corduff Grove	6.3
Corduff Park	7.9
Corduff Place	3.3
Corduff Way	1.8
Edgewood Lawn	17.5
Greenridge Court	1.5
Sheephill Avenue	6.6
Sheephill Green	4.0
Sheephill Park	3.0
Westway Close	1.2
Westway Grove	0.5
Westway Park	1.3
Westway Lawns	0.2
Westway Rise	0.8
Westway View	2.5

Table 8 Length of time living in Corduff (N = 605)

Length of time	%
Less than one year	1.7
1-5 years	9.3
6-10 years	9.0
11-15 years	14.1
16-20 years	18.4
21+ years	47.5

Chapter Three

Survey Results

Living in Corduff – *the view of residents*

Positive aspects

➤ The people and the community spirit

- *Everybody knows everybody. Good community spirit*
- *People stick together. If a tragedy occurs they help him or her out. That's why I have lived so long in Corduff*
- *Great neighbours*
- *The lovely people I have met over the years trying to better the community*
- *Great sense of humour, good atmosphere, people get on well in general*
- *Community spirit, a sense of home.*
- *We have very good neighbours and very friendly people*
- *Great community spirit. People rally round in a time of need.*

➤ Facilities, services and amenities

- *everything you need is accessible*
- *it's central to everything*
- *Schools, shops and shopping centre are all within walking distance*
- *We have the town centre, sport organisations, ok road and rail infrastructure*
- *The Institute of Technology for young and middle aged people to attend. It gives Corduff an added bonus. Corduff Resource Centre. Corduff Local Employment Service. It's good to have them.*
- *Close to a lot of amenities now but still far enough away from the city centre*
- *Well laid out estate. Plenty of open spaces*
- *Close to Tolka Valley, Phoenix Park, Shopping Centre. Close to rural countryside*

Privacy and quietness

- *Quite and private*
- *Quiet, open spaces*
- *It's quiet living here*
- *Been living in Corduff Green for a while and have never had any trouble*
- *Have always felt happy and safe, lots of greenery, the park*
- *Away from the city*

The refurbishments and recent developments

- *Houses look better*
- *The renovations in the Grove*
- *Nice houses since refurbishment*

Negative aspects

➤ The environment

- *The state of the area when going out the door*
- *Corduff shopping centre is a disgrace*
- *Area could do with cleaning on a regular basis*
- *Corduff shopping centre should be knocked down*
- *The ghetto-style housing... Corduff shopping centre... inhuman conditions for people in Corduff Park*
- *County council not looking after the area (cutting grass, weeding, footpaths with overgrown grass and pavement stone, sinking roots from trees coming up through footpath and lots more).*
- *Residents throwing litter over the back wall of their gardens*
- *Local shops are a show – shopping area at Corduff needs total revamping*
- *The houses are falling to bits and need to be done up so that people can feel proud of where they live and therefore they'll have more respect for the area*

➤ **Public Transport**

- *Terrible 220 and 38 bus routes – should be more frequent*
- *Unreliable public transport*
- *Transport into the city and lack of services to Blanchardstown*
- *Dublin Bus, no trains, traffic*
- *Lack of a transport system*
- *Bus services – isolated*

➤ **The Behaviour of a Minority**

- *A small minority of people are damaging the area*
- *There is too much anti-social behaviour*
- *It appears that the mentality of the average honest hardworking household is one of 'them and us' with 'them' given a free hand to carry on as they like and 'us' to pay for any damage or loss*
- *Level of intimidation from some neighbours and other residents*
- *The crime – the few people who are involved bring down the whole area*
- *Sometimes when you say to people where you live you get embarrassed from their reaction - not everyone here is the same*
- *The name it has, there is only a small amount of bad behaviour but everyone suffers as a result*
- *I think there are a minority of people in Corduff running the streets*
- *Council doesn't listen, letting anti-social people back into the community*

➤ **The perception of Corduff and discrimination**

- *Hearing about it on the news, it has a bad name*
- *It is not a respectable place*
- *It has a very bad reputation*
- *Perception of the area by outsiders*
- *If anything bad happens the whole area is brought down by the media coverage but you seldom hear the good things*
- *People think about Corduff in a negative way i.e. stolen cars, beatings etc.*
- *Bad publicity, always about drugs and joy-riding*
- *Job discrimination*
- *Sometimes when you say to people where you live you get embarrassed from their reaction*

- *People have brought disrespect to the area. The same people who don't care about the upkeep of their own property. Honest decent people have no chance to keep it clean of dirt and drugs etc.*

➤ **Drugs**

- *The drugs and alcohol abuse especially in underage people*
- *Drugs are available freely and drug users hanging around*
- *Too many young people on drugs as well as grown-ups*
- *Drugs, violence, anti-social behaviour, trying to keep my own boys safe*
- *Open drug selling and taking*
- *Certain amount of drug-related violence*

➤ **Crime and Security**

- *There is just not enough for people to do so it leads to robbed cars flying around and a lot of drug use in the area*
- *Joy-riding and burnt out cars, drinking and lighting of fires on the green area supposed to be for children to play*
- *Too much violence and not enough policing*
- *Need to stop youth from drinking to excess and all the related problems*
- *Gangs drinking in the Valley and on the corners*
- *The anti-social behaviour by sections of the community who feel that they can do as they please because they have 'lived there longer'.*
- *I don't feel safe on my own*
- *The way the area is policed is a disgrace. The Gardai have a horrible approach to the younger generation and they spend all their time harassing people*
- *I felt safe until recently when I witnessed a racial act – an act of vandalism on property simply because the person was foreign*
- *Abuse from young people is fairly persistent, people being afraid of youth in their own community*

➤ **Lack of facilities**

- *Not much for 18 year-olds, no proper facilities for the youth*
- *Nowhere for children to play, nothing much for children to be doing*
- *There are not enough activities for children between the ages of 10-18. There are no clubs apart from football clubs around so we just hang around the roads*
- *Not enough for the children, drugs are available freely. Local councillors don't do what they promise*
- *No social clubs, drug problem, no teenage facilities, the hopelessness for young people*
- *Poor standard of shopping facilities*
- *No supermarket, no chemist*
- *Lack of facilities for teenagers, no playground for kids*
- *Not much to do as a teenager – have to go outside Corduff for entertainment*
- *Most of all, the drugs going around. It gets to children. There is nothing to give the kids to do, there's no sport to keep them safe.*

➤ **Lack of community spirit**

- *No community spirit left, neighbours fighting etc.*

- *Lack of community spirit that used to exist in the area*
- *Lack of pride in the area, low morale*
- *There's nothing in it. Everyone thinks they know everyone else's business and in regard to getting involved in community projects/ the renewal of the area etc. they are only in it for what they can cut for themselves and not the community as a whole*
- *Split caused by private/social housing – keeps people apart from each other*

➤ **Traffic problems**

- *Lack of interest by Government, proposed building in the area, no planning and traffic flow*
- *Too much traffic*
- *Traffic from the factories*

➤ **Marginalisation – forgotten by the authorities**

- *I feel we were put out into Corduff and forgotten about*
- *Lack of interest by Government and the Council*
- *Gardai don't respond or care, Council don't respond or care*
- *I feel that people don't get a fair chance of employment or education*
- *The few people who are involved bring down the whole area. Police don't care what they do.*
- *Local councillors don't do what they promise*
- *Marginalisation, we are segregated from the rest of Dublin 15 and are completely ignored by Fingal County Council*
- *Neglect by most authorities*
- *Politicians in general have no interest in our area*
- *Council don't listen, letting anti-social people back into the community*

Introduction

As already stated at the outset of this report, Corduff is an area, similar to many others in and around Dublin, experiencing serious and sustained exclusion from many of the key dimensions of 'normal life' in Ireland. On any chosen range of deprivation indices, Corduff scores highly – its health, education, environmental and economic profile parallels that of other disadvantaged communities. Alongside these 'objective' indices of exclusion, the residents of Corduff feel themselves to be excluded and to be branded as 'second class citizens' in society. This perception and the realities that underpin it may be challenged in some key respects but it cannot be denied. Equally, the considerable anger and frustration expressed during this research should not be under-estimated – it is too real and too consistent to be dismissed.

However, to highlight the negative dimensions only would be to do a serious dis-service to the people of the area. Residents of Corduff were quick to acknowledge the work that had been done to improve the area in many real and valued ways. Many residents care passionately about where they live, their neighbours, the environment and, crucially, about the future for young people in the area. Despite continued disadvantage and exclusion, community spirit and hope remain relatively strong – but they must not be taken for granted.

When given the opportunity (as in this research), the residents of Corduff have much to say – they display considerable 'balance' in their assessment of the area in recent

years – they acknowledge openly what has been done and the contributions of community and statutory organisations. They accept that the community of the area has a key responsibility for moving the agenda forward and they are at pains to challenge the image of their community. Additionally, they have many positive suggestions and ideas concerning the future – these dimensions are explored more fully below.

The main challenges identified by the people of Corduff include the following:

- The strong sense of neglect, insecurity and marginalisation felt by the people of Corduff. Given the size of the sample included in the survey and the consistent nature of the ‘negative’ comments, it is clear that the dominant image and sense of Corduff is negative. This reality is obvious across the entire range of respondents. In this sense, Corduff is clearly a community experiencing ‘crisis’. It would be a distortion of the results of this survey to artificially ‘*playdown*’ the negative dimension or to characterise it as the view of a vocal minority.
- Perceived lack of safety and security is paramount, crime is mentioned often, including muggings, burglary and car-theft and many do not feel safe walking around after dark or in certain areas, because there is a perceived ‘criminal element’.
- However, the worst aspect of Corduff (according to residents interviewed), is the anti-social behaviour, in particular, the joy-riding and intimidation by ‘*gangs hanging around*’. Many people associate the anti-social behaviour in Corduff with young people having ‘nothing to do’ and therefore hanging around the shops or drinking in public, engaging in graffiti and petty vandalism and most of all, joy-riding.
- These problems are compounded by a perceived lack of effective policing. According to many respondents, there are simply not enough police on the streets to keep people in the area safe.
- There is a strong sense that young people have very little to do and thus ‘hang around’ fuelling the perceived or real threats to security. It is important to exercise caution in interpreting this finding, as ‘*gangs*’ of young people hanging around does not necessarily constitute a threat, and ‘*hanging around*’ in groups is what young people do when they have nothing else to do, without necessarily having any sinister motive.
- Closely connected with anti-social behaviour and to an even greater extent with the crime rate in Corduff, is the issue of drugs. While underage drinking is seen as a major contributory factor, the more serious crimes in the area such as muggings, street-violence, car-theft and burglary are seen to be associated with drugs. People fear for their own safety from drug-users (and dealers) but also for the safety of their children.
- Many people perceive that there is a small minority of undesirables bringing the whole community down. This small minority is associated in the minds of residents with much of the crime, drug-dealing and anti-social behaviour that takes place and as a result of this, the bad reputation Corduff has acquired. There is a sense of frustration and despair at the apparent lack of willingness or ability to do something about it and because it is felt that the whole community is being tarred with the same brush.

- In addition, the stigma that some perceive because of their address is apparently compounded by a negative portrayal of Corduff in the media. Almost three-quarters of respondents believe that Corduff is negatively portrayed in the media.
- One of the persistent undertones throughout the survey was a 'divide' between the social housing and private housing areas. Although not explicitly asked about in the questionnaire, field researchers reported that there is a significant divide in this regard. A number of those who declined to participate in the survey, did so on the basis that they *are 'not part of Corduff'*, even though according to the boundaries mapped out by Fingal County Council, their estate falls into Corduff DED. Some who agreed to complete the questionnaire reiterated that they do not consider themselves to be part of Corduff stating that Corduff is *'over there'*. In these cases, people were keen to point out that this is not a 'snobby' point of view, it is simply an issue of postal address. They do not wish to be associated with Corduff because of the bad reputation.
- A number of respondents also mention that the community spirit, which used to exist is in danger of disappearing and that people are no longer concerned with the community but only with themselves. According to these respondents, there was a good sense of community spirit but now people have lost pride altogether. There are different reasons given for this. Some feel that it is the same everywhere. Others say that it is because there is greater employment and people don't have as much time to give to the community as they might have had before. The divide between social and private housing is also seen as a contributory factor.
- Lack of facilities is repeated over and over as a major source of concern, in particular, for children and teenagers, primarily because it is seen as being so closely connected to anti-social behaviour, drug abuse and crime. The most commonly suggested facilities are sports (indoor and outdoor), a (safe) playground for young children and a drop-in centre for teenagers where they can get together in a safe environment. Other facilities mentioned as lacking are a local supermarket and a chemist.
- The environment is a major issue at present, including litter, general dumping and the perceived neglect by FCC of general maintenance but also the appearance of buildings. Corduff Shopping Centre is a source of great irritation among the residents not only because it does not provide them with shopping facilities but because the building and the whole area is an eyesore that makes the place look run-down.
- The community does not entirely blame the authorities for neglecting the area, there is an acknowledgement that some residents contribute to the dirt and rubbish and do not take pride in their area. Most who commented on this agree that if FCC took the lead and cleaned and maintained the area properly, the residents would follow suit. They feel that if the standard of the environment is improved, the community will work to keep it that way. The refurbishment at the Grove is cited as an example of what can (could) be achieved. People there feel uplifted by an improvement in their environment and now have a sense of pride that was lacking before.
- The lack of an efficient public transport system is mentioned occasionally as an issue but not as frequently as might be expected based on comments from the

question on services. In conjunction with public transport, traffic is mentioned occasionally. Some people feel there has been no real planning with regard to traffic flow in and around Corduff.

Ranking Issues in Corduff (this will be presented in box format)

Respondents in the survey were asked to rank the following five major issues in order of priority for funding, with 1 representing the highest priority and 5, the lowest. Each heading contained a number of sub-headings, which respondents had already prioritised.

Education, training, unemployment

- Early school-leaving
- Adult education programmes
- Access to third level
- Training
- Unemployment

Housing and environment

- Quality and appearance of buildings (houses, shops etc.)
- Environmental issues (Litter, dumping of waste & general tidiness)

Community safety and security

- Crime, vandalism and graffiti
- Anti-social behaviours (dangerous drivers, joy-riding, public drinking, verbal abuse, intimidation etc.)
- Drug-dealing
- Substance abuse
- Security and safety issues (house-breaks, theft, muggings)
- Domestic violence
- Community policing

Minority groups

- Issues for Lone parents
- Issues for the elderly
- Issues for people with disabilities
- Issues for Travellers
- Issues for foreign nationals (incl. refugees / asylum seekers)
- Issues for the homeless

Availability and accessibility of community facilities and resources

- Provision of housing / housing allocation
- Availability & accessibility of community facilities and resources
- Availability & accessibility of information on services and facilities
- Availability & accessibility of childcare facilities
- Availability & accessibility of youth facilities
- Provision of sport, recreation and leisure facilities

- Availability & accessibility of family support services
- Public transport
- Community involvement

Many people who did not rank certain issues wrote that they 'do not know'.

Ranking '*the issues*'

Table 9 Ranking of major issues for Corduff

	1	2	3	4	5	*	Rank
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Education, training & unemployment	30.7	25.3	20.8	9.8	2.8	10.6	2
Housing and environment	19.7	27.8	24.6	11.9	4.5	11.6	3
Community safety & security	32.2	24.0	19.3	9.4	4.0	11.1	1
Minority groups	1.7	2.6	9.1	25.8	49.1	11.7	5
Community facilities and resources	5.3	9.3	14.7	31.4	27.9	11.4	4

N = 605 (* percentage of respondents who did not rank this issue)

(Note: the results of the ranking will be presented as a graph in the published report.)

As can be seen from the results, community safety and security was ranked number one overall, followed closely by education. Housing and environment were ranked as a third priority, while community facilities and resources and minority groups took fourth and fifth place respectively.

The fact that community safety and security was ranked number one is no surprise given the commentary elsewhere in the questionnaire and in the focus groups. However, because of the link in other parts of the survey between lack of facilities and anti-social behaviour, drugs and crime, it is surprising that community facilities and resources is given such a low priority rating. Many view facilities and resources as an important long-term objective to underpin other measures, while they want to see safety and security and the environment dealt with as a matter of urgency. Furthermore, it appears that respondents have formed a link here between community safety and security and education, training and unemployment. This is an issue to which we return below.

Prioritisation of sub-headings within the main issues

Respondents were not asked to rank these issues against one another, simply to prioritise each issue as high, medium or low priority, based on its own merits. However, for ease of analysis, they have been ranked here in order of those aspects that received the largest percentage response for '*high priority*'.

Table 10 Prioritisation within Community Safety & Security

	1	2	3	Missing	Rank
	%	%	%	*	N

Crime, vandalism, graffiti	84.1	9.1	3.6	3.1	2
Anti-social behaviour	86.8	7.6	3.6	2.0	1
Drug-dealing	81.7	9.9	4.1	4.3	3
Substance abuse	70.2	18.7	4.1	6.9	6
Security & safety issues	71.1	18.2	5.5	5.3	5
Domestic violence	51.2	26.3	13.2	9.3	
Community policing	77.2	13.9	5.1	3.8	4

N = 605 (* percentage of respondents who did not prioritise this aspect)

There is no surprise in the priority given to the top three in this category - anti-social behaviour, crime, vandalism/graffiti and drug dealing.

All three are relatively close together in terms of high priority and feedback from field researchers indicates that many respondents found it difficult to prioritise these particular issues because all three are viewed as requiring urgent action. In order of importance, they are followed by policing, viewed by many as the key to resolving these issues.

Domestic violence is not ranked in the above table as there was reluctance on the part of respondents to prioritise this issue either because they know little about it or because they don't feel that they are in a position to comment on this aspect of community safety and security. 9.3% of respondents declined to prioritise this issue.

With regard to the open comments on community safety and security, policing unequivocally drew the most commentary. The majority of responses centred around a perceived lack of police 'on the beat'. Many suggested that police in cars is not enough to deter the crime and anti-social behaviour. A significant number of people clearly do not feel safe in their area and want a more visible police presence. The interesting aspect of all of these comments is the belief on the part of most respondents that having more police on the streets will resolve or at least improve the situation with regard to these issues. Apart from some reference to parental control, residents in general feel that increased policing is the only way to deal with the current situation. In this regard, it is interesting that lack of facilities is mentioned only rarely in this section. Taken together with commentary in other parts of the questionnaire and in the focus groups, this indicates that facilities are viewed very much as a preventive measure for anti-social behaviour, crime and drugs, while the police are viewed as a front-line cure for the social ills that are already prevalent.

It is not just increased policing however, that concerns people but a more effective community policing policy. This includes greater visibility such as police on the beat or on horses rather than in cars but also police that people get to know and that get to know the people in Corduff. One of the problems mentioned is that people have no chance to get to know their community police before they are moved on to another area. The issue of police '*stop and search*' policies in relation to young people as well as general attitudes amongst some Gardai also surfaced frequently in the focus groups.

However, not all of the comments about policing were negative, some respondents believe that the police do what they can but that the 'bad element' is simply allowed to walk when it comes to court.

In this regard, Fingal County Council also comes in for some criticism regarding housing policy. Respondents feel that FCC does little to screen new residents in the area. This view fuels the (mistaken) perception that the Council simply takes people off its housing list by ‘dumping’ them into Corduff without consideration for the impact that certain families might have on the area. The reality is that FCC does, in fact, screen all applicants and takes people from the list by date of application. This misperception also highlights the serious deficiencies in communications within the area.

As is the case in other parts of the survey, respondents associate crime (house break-ins in particular) with drug use. Attitudes towards drug users vary from absolute antipathy to sympathetic calls for help to be given to drug addicts. However, regardless of attitude towards drug-users, it is clear that respondents view drug-use and drug-dealing as the underlying causes of much that is negative about Corduff, including crime, violence, intimidation and the bad reputation Corduff maintains.

Joy-riding and young people ‘*flying around*’ on motorbikes are two aspects of community safety and security that disturb residents greatly and more ramps in the estates were suggested frequently as a solution. Some called for jail-sentences for joy-riders while, in the youth focus groups, the suggested solution to this problem was the provision of an enclosed rallying course to enable young people (safely) indulge their passion for car or motorbike racing.

Table 11 Prioritisation within education, training and unemployment

	1	2	3	*	Rank
	%	%	%	%	N
Early school-leaving	69.9	18.3	8.1	4.0	1
Adult education programmes	35.0	46.9	13.6	4.5	5
Access to third level	48.6	31.2	14.9	5.3	4
Training	59.3	27.3	6.9	6.4	3
Unemployment	69.8	19.0	7.1	4.1	1

N = 605 (* percentage of respondents who did not prioritise this aspect)

Within the heading of education, early school leaving and unemployment were considered equally to be the most important aspects, followed by training.

There is a clear connection in people’s minds between the importance of education and training and employment opportunities. There is some indication that employment among young people is considered to be a greater problem than unemployment among the older generation and many note a lack of training for early school-leavers and young people in general. A significant number comment on the need for a FAS training facility locally. Currently, many of those wishing to participate in a FAS training course must travel outside the area and this excludes young people from participating in courses that could help them to find employment.

The issue of education and in particular early school leaving shows a clear divide among respondents. Some feel it is the responsibility of the State to ensure that young people remain in school to complete their education, that schools should do more to encourage young people to stay in school. On the other hand, there are those who believe that the opportunities are there to be taken if people so choose

e.g. early school-leaver courses, FAS training, access to IT Blanchardstown, adult education etc.

However, a number of people indicated that they do not perceive the Institute of Technology to be accessible because of cost and that funding for students in the area should be increased to enable them to participate more fully in third level education. With regard to courses there appears to be a lack of information as to what is available.

Table 12 Prioritisation within Housing and Environment

	1	2	3	Missing *	Rank
	%	%	%	%	N
Quality & Appearance of buildings	71.7	19.3	6.6	2.3	2
Environmental issues	76.0	15.0	4.1	4.8	1

N = 605 (* percentage of respondents who did not prioritise this aspect)

Both aspects of the environment were given a high priority rating although environmental concerns such as litter, dumping of waste and general tidiness received a higher ranking.

The fact that quality and appearance of buildings was given second place does not in any way detract from the importance of this issue for the community. In the 'open comments', Corduff Shopping Centre features over and over again as the issue of greatest concern to residents. It is described as an 'eyesore' and a 'disgrace' and some feel it should be 'demolished' altogether. The refurbishment at Corduff Grove is cited here again as a positive aspect and people feel the same should be done with Corduff Park and the shops as soon as possible.

Although a significant number indicate their dissatisfaction with the level of maintenance by Fingal County Council, there is here again, a recognition that residents themselves have to take some responsibility for maintaining the area and an acknowledgement that there is a lack of community pride at present. Comments such as *"it shows when people like where they live"* are frequent. Nonetheless, there is a feeling that Fingal County Council needs to work more closely with the community to continue to improve the Corduff environment. Numerous comments were made about the fact that skips have been taken away.

Environmental issues are of greater concern in all areas now because of charges for waste disposal, leading to illegal dumping. There appears to be a vicious circle at work whereby the 'look' of some estates leads to a lack of pride, which in turn leads to pessimism and a disinclination to maintain the area. All of this contributes to a feeling of abandonment and living in a ghetto.

Table 13 Prioritisation within availability and accessibility of community facilities and resources

	1	2	3	Missing *	Rank
	%	%	%	%	N
Provision of housing / housing allocation	67.8	18.5	7.8	6.0	2

Community facilities and resources	50.1	36.9	5.8	7.3	8
Information on services and facilities	40.5	39.8	11.6	8.1	9
Childcare facilities	58.8	24.6	10.1	6.4	5
Youth facilities	69.3	18.5	5.6	6.6	1
Sport, recreation & leisure facilities	66.9	20.8	6.3	6.0	3
Family support services	52.7	30.9	8.3	8.1	6
Public transport	64.6	20.7	10.4	4.3	4
Community involvement	52.2	31.2	9.8	6.8	7

N = 605 (* percentage of respondents who did not prioritise this aspect)

Availability and accessibility of community facilities and resources received a lower than expected ranking, fourth overall. Again this may be indicative of the view of facilities and resources as a preventive measure requiring a long-term approach, while community safety, security and the environment are seen as issues that can be addressed immediately. It may also be that there is a wide range of sub-issues listed under this heading, some of which are clearly not as important to respondents as others.

Within this category, youth facilities received the highest priority. Again, this is no surprise because the provision of youth facilities is viewed as being most important in preventing boredom leading to anti-social behaviour and drugs. A drop-in centre for teenagers is suggested by some in this regard.

The placement of housing and housing allocation at number two is explained in the commentary by a lack of comprehension of FCCs housing policy. People talk about overcrowding and young people from the area not being able to get houses while people from 'outside' are put into houses before them. Sport, recreation and leisure facilities feature strongly in this category and some respondents feel they have been left waiting for facilities that were promised a number of years ago.

The sub-heading 'public transport' was intended to include taxis and private bus companies operating in the area but, it was Dublin Bus that attracted all of the attention. The most common complaint is the 38 route 'detour' through Castleknock and a number of respondents commented that there should be more 38As and 38Cs, which avoid Castleknock.

With regard to childcare, people feel there should be yet more childcare places at an affordable rate than currently exist. This is not an issue that is specific to Corduff however, given the rise in employment in the area, childcare has become an increasingly important issue for residents.

There appears to be a consensus that community involvement is limited although the reasons given for this differ. Some maintain that the facilities and resources are available for use but that some people just will not participate. Others feel that there are insufficient facilities and resources – in particular funding – available to encourage community participation. Nevertheless, despite a difference of opinion about the availability of facilities and resources, the comment: "*We all need to get involved in the community to make Corduff better*", seems to best express the general feeling.

One of the issues raised in relation to this is the question of volunteers. A number of respondents point out that youth and childcare facilities are being run solely by

volunteers. They feel that these people should be given proper support to enable full utilisation and expansion of existing facilities and to encourage community involvement. The need for parents to be more involved in their children's recreation and for community leaders is also pointed out.

Information on services and facilities received the lowest percentage of 'high priority' responses (40%), which is surprising because elsewhere in the survey, respondents have highlighted the information deficit in Corduff. However, the fact that it received a relatively low priority rating may in itself indicate a lack of information, as people were simply not aware of many of the services and facilities listed in Section III of the questionnaire.

Table 14 Prioritisation within Minority groups

	1	2	3	Missing	Rank
	%	%	%	%	N
Issues for lone parents	42.0	38.8	13.2	6.0	4
Issues for the elderly	69.4	20.5	5.6	4.5	1
Issues for people with disabilities	68.6	20.3	5.6	5.5	2
Issues for travellers	17.5	40.5	33.2	8.8	5
Issues for foreign nationals	16.9	30.4	45.1	7.6	6
Issues for the homeless	70.4	16.4	8.6	4.6	3

N = 605 (* percentage of respondents who did not prioritise this aspect)

The situation with regard to minority groups was placed at number five in the overall ranking and consequently this issue is obviously not considered to be pressing at present. Within this heading, the elderly, the disabled and the homeless are considered to be a greater priority than either Travellers or foreign nationals. While issues for lone parents receive a slightly higher priority percentage than either of these two, it is still far lower than the top three.

The commentary on this subject however, offers an interesting insight into the perspective of the community regarding minority groups. Respondents appear to have prioritised these issues on an emotional rather than an objective level i.e. they are simply stating that these groups are worthy of assistance, not whether there are significant issues surrounding these groups in Corduff.

For example, the three top groups appear to have been highlighted because they are perceived as being less able to look after themselves, while lone-parents, Travellers and foreign nationals are perceived to be groupings that have a lot of 'political clout'. Yet in the commentary, respondents had very little to say on the subject of those with disability.

Conversely, people had much to say about the perceived inequality regarding foreign nationals in terms of housing etc. and this group appears to have become the focus of much dissatisfaction among residents regarding housing and other social problems. This points to a serious communication gap between state agencies and the community - assumptions and myths abound where information is lacking. Children, in particular, pick up very quickly on negative attitudes and the youth focus groups mirrored this to an alarming extent. Yet, when asked to elaborate on exactly what was negative about foreign nationals, these same young people were only able

to comment that *'they'* get houses instead of Irish people. This opinion is clearly inherited from adults. In addition, some stated that *'they'* are always fighting. When asked whether any of the young people present had ever witnessed a foreign national involved in a fight, they had to concede that they had not.

There is some concern about the elderly with the recognition that the previously small elderly population in Corduff is now increasing and will be much larger in the next ten to twenty years. Some respondents express fears about intimidation from young people while others comment on the lack of services and facilities for seniors. There are a small number of comments regarding the homeless, primarily relating to the belief that homelessness should no longer exist in our society because of the relative increase in wealth but also commenting once again on the 'boarded-up houses', which it is felt, could be used to house these people.

Respondents give the impression that they do not believe issues for lone-parents are particularly serious. Here, there appears to be a moral divide between those who are considered to be *'genuine'* lone parents and those who are not, leading to comments such as *"Lone parents aren't always lone. They have their partners living with them sometimes"* and *"Lone parents who are responsible deserve better"*. This is evidently not a clear-cut issue for respondents and they have prioritised it accordingly.

There were only one or two comments concerning Travellers. Respondents appear to be relatively unaware of any Travellers living in the community and this was also apparent in the focus groups.

Priority issues facing Corduff – the views of residents

- *Education – kids leaving fall into gangs*
- *Drugs and the worry of the youths coming up today. Corduff is a great area but a certain amount, for whatever reason, tries to destroy, but the people bounce back*
- *Safety & security – the lack of this has crime at an all time high and growing. The negative portrayal of Corduff through media only serves to make matters worse*
- *To have Corduff Park done quicker, it would give people more heart in their homes*
- *Not enough for the young, which inevitably leads to problems*
- *The increasing amount of young families in relation to the social facilities*
- *Corduff is divided into two communities, not working together. How can this be achieved?*
- *No one cares – residents themselves just don't care*
- *Unemployed people can't get a job when they say they live in Corduff*
- *Early school-leaving has always been one of the most important issues in the area*
- *Corduff should concentrate on acting as a resource to the needs of the youth – if the proper support structure is put in place through education and appropriate youth facilities in terms of supporting the youth, we may survive the drug 'devastation'.*
- *Drug-dealing and a few 'bad pennies' around*
- *Education – because there are a lot of people who seem to not make it through school*
- *The heroin problem is the most important.*
- *Lack of political education and empowerment of local people to have a say in what happens in their own community*

Facilities and Services in Corduff

This section of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate whether or not they had used the services or facilities listed. If they had used them, they were asked to say whether or not they were satisfied. If they had not used them, they were asked to indicate why e.g. because the service or facility does not apply to them, because they could not get a place or appointment or because they were unaware of the existence of the service or facility. Respondents were then asked to say why they were dissatisfied with the services or facilities for which they had ticked '*not satisfied*'. It should therefore be noted when reading this section that respondents were only asked to comment on the services or facilities with which they were unhappy so that the commentary may appear somewhat unbalanced.

A number of facilities and services drew particular attention from respondents and it might be assumed that these are the ones about which, people are most concerned.

Table 15 Usage and satisfaction level with services and facilities

	Used & does not say if satisfied %	Used and satisfied %	Used and not satisfied %	Not used, does not say why %	Not used, does not apply ¹ %	Not used, not available ² %	Not used, not aware ³ %
Childcare facilities	1.4	16.3	2.6	10.8	58.3	5.1	5.5
Youth facilities	2.2	27.3	8.1	8.6	39.0	3.6	11.1
Adult recreation facilities	1.7	10.2	4.0	12.5	41.7	5.9	24.0
Senior Citizen's facilities	1.7	3.5	1.4	11.3	69.6	1.9	10.6
Corduff Resource Centre	4.7	38.0	7.3	10.1	30.9	2.6	6.4
Corduff Development Project	1.0	8.3	1.3	13.1	39.9	1.6	34.2
Sports Groups in Corduff	1.8	15.4	5.6	14.4	44.4	3.7	14.7
Corduff Health Clinic	4.4	43.0	3.5	6.8	35.7	0.9	5.8
Corduff Counselling facilities	0.7	7.0	3.1	15.0	55.0	1.9	17.4
Drug Treatment & support	0.7	2.6	1.7	14.6	70.0	0.9	9.5
B'town Centre for Unemployed	2.1	13.5	2.2	13.7	61.2	0.7	6.6
Local Employment Service	2.3	9.2	1.6	13.9	58.5	1.0	3.5
Local courses	1.7	22.6	1.7	12.9	46.2	1.4	13.4
Library (mobile unit)	2.4	19.8	2.8	17.3	40.6	0.9	16.3
Primary schools in Corduff	4.7	44.8	4.9	9.3	34.6	0.5	1.2
Secondary schools in Corduff	4.4	31.9	6.7	11.2	43.8	1.1	1.1
Corduff Shopping facilities	5.5	27.6	51.9	4.5	8.6	1.6	0.3
Churches in Corduff	7.8	72.3	3.1	3.3	12.7	0.2	0.5

N = 605

1. not used because the respondent does not require this service or facility
2. not used because the respondent could not get a place or an appointment

3. not used because the respondent was unaware that the service exists

Table 15 Usage and satisfaction level with services and facilities in Blanchardstown

	Used & does not say if satisfied %	Used and satisfied %	Used and not satisfied %	Not used, does not say why %	Not used, doesn't apply ¹ %	Not used, not available ² %	Not used, not aware ³ %
Library	6.0	59.3	1.2	7.0	23.9	1.4	1.2
Primary schools	4.7	35.1	1.2	9.3	48.7	0.7	0.2
Secondary schools	4.1	21.7	1.9	12.5	58.9	0.5	0.4
Youth services	1.6	18.8	2.3	15.8	53.2	2.1	6.2
Sports facilities	2.5	25.5	6.1	13.2	41.9	2.5	8.4
Garda Siochana	5.1	39.8	28.5	5.3	19.5	1.2	0.5
Fire Department	3.1	27.8	1.6	15.8	50.1	0.7	0.9
FCC Customer Service	2.7	22.5	20.4	12.5	34.3	1.6	6.1
TDs, Councillors Clinics	2.3	14.5	13.6	15.8	48.9	1.6	3.2
Dublin Bus	4.9	22.0	54.7	4.4	13.0	1.1	0.0
JCM Hospital	7.2	50.3	31.2	2.8	8.1	0.2	0.4
GPs	7.2	63.6	8.1	4.8	15.4	0.4	0.5
Community Welfare Officer	1.8	12.4	9.4	17.2	51.7	0.5	7.1
Family Support	0.9	4.4	2.3	19.0	63.3	0.7	9.3
Social Workers	1.1	3.5	3.3	18.8	66.6	0.4	6.3
Probation Service	1.1	1.6	1.1	19.6	70.6	0.9	5.2
FAS including CE	3.7	26.2	4.0	15.0	47.2	0.7	3.2
Adult Education courses	2.3	19.5	0.9	16.9	53.5	0.5	6.3
B'town Area Partnership	1.6	9.3	2.7	17.6	56.5	0.4	12.0
B'town Institute of Technology	2.0	9.0	1.6	18.3	63.7	0.4	5.1
Citizens' Information Centre	2.1	10.5	1.4	19.2	54.6	0.4	11.7
Social Welfare Services	2.7	18.5	6.6	18.0	50.0	0.5	3.7

N = 605

1. not used because the respondent does not require this service or facility
2. not used because the respondent could not get a place or an appointment
3. not used because the respondent was unaware that the service exists

Table 16
Satisfaction rating for those who have used services and facilities in Corduff

	Used & does not say if satisfied %	Used and satisfied %	Used and not satisfied %	N
Childcare facilities	6.8	80.5	12.7	118
Youth facilities	6.0	72.5	21.5	218
Adult recreation facilities	10.9	64.1	25.0	92
Senior Citizen's facilities	26.3	52.6	21.1	38
Corduff Resource Centre	9.4	76.0	14.6	288
Corduff Development Project	9.4	78.1	12.5	64
Sports Groups in Corduff	7.7	67.7	24.6	130
Corduff Health Clinic	8.6	84.5	6.9	291
Corduff Counselling facilities	6.5	64.5	29.0	62
Drug Treatment & support	13.8	51.7	34.5	29
B'town Centre for Unemployed	11.7	75.7	12.6	103
Local Employment Service	17.3	70.7	12.0	75
Local courses	6.6	86.7	6.7	150
Library (mobile unit)	9.8	79.0	11.2	143
Primary schools in Corduff	8.7	82.3	9.0	311
Secondary schools in Corduff	10.2	74.3	15.5	245
Corduff Shopping facilities	6.4	32.5	61.1	493
Churches in Corduff	9.4	86.8	3.8	478

Table 17
Satisfaction rating for those who have used services and facilities in
Blanchardstown

	Used & does not say if satisfied %	Used and satisfied %	Used and not satisfied %	N
Library	9.0	89.2	1.8	379
Primary schools	11.5	85.5	3.0	234
Secondary schools	14.7	78.3	7.0	157
Youth services	7.0	82.8	10.2	128
Sports facilities	7.3	74.9	17.8	191
Garda Siochana	7.0	54.2	38.8	415
Fire Department	9.4	85.6	5.0	181
FCC Customer Service	5.9	49.4	44.7	255
TDs, Councillors Clinics	7.7	47.6	44.7	170
Dublin Bus	6.0	27.0	67.0	464
JCM Hospital	8.1	56.7	35.2	506
GPs	9.2	80.5	10.3	447
Community Welfare Officer	7.5	52.6	39.9	133
Family Support	11.7	58.1	30.2	43
Social Workers	13.3	44.4	42.3	45
Probation Service	28.6	42.8	28.6	21
FAS including CE	10.9	77.2	11.9	193
Adult Education courses	10.1	86.0	3.9	129
B'town Area Partnership	11.8	68.4	19.8	76
B'town Institute of Technology	15.5	71.8	12.7	71
Citizens' Information Centre	15.2	74.7	10.1	79
Social Welfare Services	9.6	66.7	23.7	156

Of all the facilities and services in Corduff and Blanchardstown, Corduff shops receive by far the most comment. The percentage of those not satisfied speaks for itself. Of the 493 respondents who have used the Corduff shops, just over 60 % are not satisfied. The central issues listed include the general appearance, dirt, out of date products, price, lack of specific services (a chemist) and safety.

The need for a proper supermarket including a chemist is reiterated time and again although some recognise the dangers for a chemist in the area with so many drug addicts. Nonetheless, the vast majority of respondents feel that a proper shopping centre, which could house a variety of shops to give people real options, without having to go into Blanchardstown, would change the whole aspect of the area thereby improving the situation with regard to gangs hanging around and drug-dealing.

Policing

Over half of those who have used the services of the Gardai are satisfied with the service they received, however, 39 % are not. There was considerable comment about dissatisfaction with the service, which is indicative of the importance people in Corduff attach to the issue of policing in the area.

Comments about the Gardai point to a belief in Corduff that the Gardai have little time for people from Corduff and that this is the reason why response times are so slow. The other main concern is the lack of community police or police on the beat. Residents feel that the Garda presence simply isn't strong enough to deter crime in the area. Again, the issue of perceived 'harrassment' is brought up with a number of respondents commenting that police stop young people who aren't doing anything or they go after 'small-time criminals' rather than the 'real problem people', even though they allegedly know who these people are.

This presents somewhat of a catch-22 situation for the police. When they make their presence felt, they are perceived to be harassing the wrong people while, on the other hand, they are accused of doing nothing when anti-social behaviour occurs. This may be symptomatic of the lack of rapport between community police and the community itself. The police who are put in the area do not appear, for whatever reason, to get to know the community well enough and this leads to mis-trust on both sides.

Against this many recognise that the Gardai are simply under-resourced and therefore under-staffed. Numerous comments indicate a belief that the Gardai do what they can, based on limited resources. Nonetheless, the perception of discrimination based on address is very prevalent throughout the survey and is something that requires attention before Corduff becomes marginalised even further.

Dublin Bus

Dublin Bus, as expected, receives an avalanche of commentary in this section. Only 27 % of users are satisfied with the service, while 67 % are not. Although there is recognition that the bus service has improved, respondents say that more improvement is needed. It is the perceived unreliability of Dublin Bus and the infrequency of buses that do not, according to respondents, run to timetable, which most disappoint users of the service. The main complaints revolve around the fact that there are not enough buses for the size of the area, so that there are long waits between buses, particularly at peak times. The other factor, which respondents find most irritating is what they call the 'Castleknock detour'. They claim there should be as many buses using the Navan Road route as are currently using the Castleknock route, which requires going through a lot of traffic.

A smaller but nonetheless important issue is the state of the bus shelters. A number of respondents feel there should be more bus shelters to provide protection from the weather and seats for the elderly, particularly in an area where so many people rely on buses for transport.

Fingal County Council

The satisfaction rating for Fingal County Council is marginally higher at 49% than its dissatisfaction rating at 45%. Dissatisfaction is attributed primarily to a slow response times (people claim to have spent years waiting for maintenance to be done or on housing lists), gaps in the provision of services and lack of clarity re lines of responsibility between departments. However, FCC contracts out maintenance

work and applies a strict timetable to contractors, so this may be an historical perception and no longer factually correct.

It is also claimed that customers are passed around by staff, thereby passing on responsibility. Some comment that although Fingal will take complaints over the phone, they never get back to customers about complaints or follow up on them. The issue of a perceived 'poor attitude' amongst some staff is mentioned, however, respondents do not believe that this is specifically because they come from Corduff.

TDs

TDs and Councillors receive a relatively high dissatisfaction rating of 45 %. There is a sense of cynicism on the part of the community in relation to TDs, whom they feel are only around at election time, making empty promises that they do not keep. Respondents also feel that TDs have their own agenda and are not really interested in the needs of the area or what the people have to say. This level of cynicism should be a matter of concern for the future political attitude of residents.

James Connolly Memorial Hospital and GP Services

James Connolly Memorial Hospital (JCMH) attracted a lot of commentary as did the local GP service. Over half of those who used JCMH were satisfied (57%), while 35 % were not. Reasons given for dissatisfaction were primarily to do with long waiting times, particularly in the Accident and Emergency Department. Many respondents commented that the wait is too long, while recognising that this is because the hospital is under-serviced and under-staffed. Although complaints about the waiting times echo those of the rest of the country due to staff and bed-shortages, a large number feel that JCMH is under-serviced by comparison with other hospitals in Dublin because it does not have a paediatric ward or a maternity ward or a cancer screening facility.

Respondents resent having to go to Temple Street with their children, when hospitals in other areas of Dublin have their own paediatric ward. Furthermore, numerous comments were made about the appearance of the hospital itself. The words 'dirty' and 'filthy' were used frequently and many feel the hospital is badly in need of refurbishment – in fairness, it should be noted that at the time of this review, the Hospital was undergoing development and refurbishment.

GP services are widely considered to be too expensive and not extensive enough. Although 80% expressed satisfaction, some respondents feel that the service has been diminished in terms of opening hours and an unsuitable appointments system, while the cost of the service is beyond the means of many. The cost is definitely a prohibitive factor for some and was expanded on in the focus groups. A significant number of women who attended these groups said that if their children are sick, they will bring them to the doctor, but if they are sick themselves, they will not go because they cannot afford to. Respondents also feel that the current appointments system just does not work.

Corduff Health Clinic

The Corduff Health Clinic received a relatively high satisfaction rating at 85%. Some respondents commented however, that the clinic is not clean and that its appearance is off-putting. Furthermore, its facilities are considered to be inadequate for the size of the area and it is apparently understaffed and not fully equipped. The importance of a comprehensive, fully-staffed health centre in Corduff, catering for all age groups,

was emphasised frequently in the section on health and in focus groups. Many residents use the Roselawn Medical Centre, which requires travelling to another area.

Just over half of the 29 respondents who have used drug treatment and support services in Corduff say they are satisfied with the services, while nearly 35% are not. Very little is said about drug treatment facilities or services in the commentary. However, respondents would like to see a greater awareness about drugs and crime in the schools. This view was also expressed by many in the focus groups and refers to both students and teachers.

Nearly 30% of those who used counselling facilities in Corduff were not satisfied, while just over 17% claimed to be unaware that such services existed. Reasons given for dissatisfaction include the lack of privacy and the limited scope of services - *“Counselling could be more user-friendly or developed to cater for more needs than at present”*. This reflects calls within the statutory and community focus groups for more suitable facilities for the Corduff Counselling Services.

Schools and Education Facilities

It is particularly interesting to look at comments on the service provided by schools because early school-leaving is considered to be such a significant problem by respondents. Some insight can therefore be gained by reading the commentary from this section. There is a perception throughout the survey that a better education can be obtained in schools outside of Corduff. Corresponding to this, primary and secondary schools in Corduff received a lower satisfaction rating (just under 75% in the case of the secondary school) and a far higher dissatisfaction rating than schools outside of Corduff.

Some respondents suggest that teachers in the secondary school in Corduff are not sufficiently experienced or supported to take students to honours level or that there is a rapid turnover of teachers, which disrupts pupils' education. Other comments indicate a belief that teachers do not expect students from Corduff to achieve much and drop their standards accordingly. However, as the commentary in this section of the questionnaire only deals with negative aspects of services and facilities, these assertions should be interpreted with prudence.

A number of comments indicate that students are not happy with Transition Year and it is felt by some to be *‘a waste of time’*. In addition, there is a sense that the school and its teachers are exclusively responsible for keeping pupils interested after Transition, once they return to do their Leaving Cert. This attitude is also reflected very clearly in the youth focus groups. It indicates a belief on the part of many young people that early school-leaving is related more to boredom and a failing on the part of their school, than to parental attitudes towards education, the desire to earn an income or to other social factors that might be assumed to play a pivotal role.

With regard to the parental role in education, there is a sense among respondents that they feel somehow excluded from the process of their child's education and that they do not have any say in the way the schools in Corduff are run. This may contribute to a lack of understanding about the difficulties faced by both the primary and the secondary schools in an area with high levels of social disadvantage. For example, the use of 'streaming' into the secondary school is considered to be problematic by some respondents. However, the school may feel that this is the only way to ensure a suitable approach based on ability.

Recreational sport and leisure facilities

Nearly 15% of respondents to the question on youth facilities in Corduff say they do not use these facilities either because they are not available or because they are not aware of any existing. Just over 18% of those who responded to the question on sports groups in Corduff gave the same reasons for not using them. Of 191 respondents who used sports facilities in Blanchardstown, three-quarters were satisfied, while 18% were not. Commentary indicates that this is due to exclusion based on cost. Nearly one-quarter of those answering the question on adult recreation facilities in Corduff say they are not aware of any such facilities existing, while over one fifth of those using senior citizen's facilities are not satisfied with them.

Childcare

The majority of people (81%), who expressed a view about childcare facilities in Corduff are happy with the service – this represents a high level of satisfaction. Again, most of the commentary about childcare is concerned with the need for additional places. Dissatisfaction is related primarily to inability to obtain a place, while 5.5% say they were unaware of the available facilities.

Corduff Community Development Project

Just over three-quarters of people who have used the Corduff Community Development Project are satisfied with its facilities and services but it scores a 15% dissatisfaction rating. Negative comments offered include a perception of exclusivity and 'cliques' operating within the Centre itself. Some respondents also comment that opening times are not suitable for them i.e. it does not open late enough. The fact that a number of people mention a scarcity of activities in the Centre indicates a lack of information about what is happening there, as the Centre does in fact, use its space to full capacity.

There is some evidence that the mandate and role of the Corduff Community Development Project is misunderstood within the community. Only 11% of respondents have used the CDP, while 40% say it does not apply to them and a further 34% say they were unaware of its existence – this is an issue to which the CDP is currently responding.

There is very little by way of comment regarding FAS (including CE), LES, the Blanchardstown Centre for the Unemployed, or other courses in the area (including Adult Education courses). However, all of these receive relatively high satisfaction ratings, in particular local courses in Corduff and adult education courses in the Blanchardstown area with 87 and 86 % respectively (tables 16 & 17). A number of respondents did comment that there should be more courses run through FAS and that participants should not have to travel to Coolmine to take a place on the courses offered. Some respondents perceive the Blanchardstown Centre for the Unemployed to be too narrow in scope because it only deals with the long-term unemployed – again a mis-perception.

Social Services

Satisfaction with the Community Welfare Officer Service is at just over half of those who used this service while dissatisfaction rates reached 40 %. A number of respondents who commented on this service found some element of condescension on the part of the service or simply felt that the Officers were '*not very helpful*'. There is a need for care in interpreting such comments because of the inherently

'judgemental' nature of the work itself in that the system itself pits one person against another. Equally, there is a need to review the nature of communication and interaction between such services and the community.

Family support in Blanchardstown receives a relatively high dissatisfaction rating at 30% but there was little in the commentary to indicate why this should be the case.

Nearly one quarter of respondents who have used social welfare services are unhappy with the service they received – some respondents made reference to a lack of information and too much red tape.

Social workers receive an almost equal satisfaction and dissatisfaction rating of 44 and 42% respectively, among the 45 respondents who have used this service. The only comment made about the service is that 'social workers are not available', so there is little information as to why respondents have found the service unsatisfactory. The same is true of the Probation Service, which receives a 29% dissatisfaction rating from the 21 respondents who used the service.

Other Services

Dissatisfaction with the mobile library is higher at 11% than with the Library in Blanchardstown (1.8%). Comments indicate that this is primarily because the mobile library is perceived to be badly stocked and that the times when the mobile library is available are not suitable because children are in school. Lack of awareness about the mobile library is also far higher than that of the Blanchardstown Library at 16%, with some respondents asking '*what library?*' or commenting '*I didn't know we had a library*'. There is also reference to a 'bad attitude' in the mobile library leading to a 'bad experience' for some. The library in Blanchardstown is well subscribed to (379 respondents) and nearly 90% of these are satisfied with the service.

The Fire Department is well -respected within the community, it's services have been used by 181 respondents and it received an 86 % satisfaction rating. Any negative comments relate to under-resourcing e.g. "*The Fire Dept. was built in 1983 and supplied with one ambulance and fire engine. There is still only one of each and the population has almost doubled since then*".

The Blanchardstown Area Partnership and the Citizens' Information Centre have been used by 76 and 79 survey respondents respectively. Only one fifth of those who used the Partnership expressed dissatisfaction and there were no comments to expand on this or on the 90% satisfaction/10% dissatisfaction rating for the Citizens' Information Centre.

Throughout the responses on services and facilities, there is a clear need for more information on what is currently available. Many respondents indicated that they are unaware of certain services, their mandates and functions and that the survey was the first time they had heard of these services and facilities.

Suggestions for Improvement

Respondents outlined a number of suggestions for the improvement and development of the above services and facilities.

- **Shops** - Given the amount of comment throughout the survey about the state of the shops, it is unsurprising that most suggestions in this regard are along the lines of *“knock it down and rebuild it from scratch”*, some suggest tidying the place up, painting what is there and opening new shops in the unused units. Better security, a greater police presence might be useful but the majority believe the only solution is to demolish and begin again with a well-established supermarket outlet, including greater security.
- **Policing** - the primary suggestion regarding policing is simply to have more police on the beat in Corduff, or at the very least, driving around in patrol cars. The other issue relates to the perception of people in Corduff by the Gardai. Respondents want the Gardai to take time to get to know the area, to know who the ‘decent’ people are and who the *‘troublemakers’* are so they can respond accordingly instead of writing off the whole of Corduff. There are calls for more community police and a better relationship with the Gardai generally.
- **Fingal County Council** - suggestions relate to perceived poor customer service and relationships. Many suggest better staff training and support and there are numerous calls for better information flow from Fingal to the communities it is serving. Respondents want to know what is happening with their area, particularly in relation to boarded-up houses.
- **Environment** – many suggestions were offered for improving the general environment. These included the cleaning up the Valley, making it safe in order to realise its full potential as a green area; the cutting away of bushes etc. around the Lane; education programmes for children in school about the importance of maintaining the environment; involving young people in maintaining the environment; landscaping the Park and employing a grounds-keeper to maintain it; an organised clean-up every now and then and entry into tidy towns to give people an incentive.
- **Dublin Bus** - as expected, the main suggestions about Dublin Bus are first and foremost to provide more buses, particularly at peak times, and secondly to stop the 38 going through Castleknock. A number of respondents suggested the provision of private buses, thereby improving the service and creating jobs. Many simply want the buses to adhere to the timetable provided by Dublin Bus.
- **Health** - the most frequent suggestions regarding the health service are to increase staffing at JCMH to reduce waiting times, particularly in the A&E, and to build a paediatric and a maternity ward. Respondents feel that although money is being spent on the hospital, it is not being spent in the right areas and that even when the refurbishment is complete, there still won’t be a paediatric or a maternity ward. With regard to the local health clinic, respondents want to see a primary health care centre with comprehensive facilities built in the area (the Eastern Health Board plot is the most frequently suggested site). This health centre should be better-staffed, with more GPs and GPs should be allocated patients rather than ‘passing them to and from each other’. The final suggestion is for greater use of the Medical Card. Many respondents want to see children receiving a Medical Card automatically to reduce their expenditure on GPs.
- **Education** - there is a strong emphasis placed on the responsibility of schools within Corduff and many respondents recognise the need for schools and parents to work together to provide a comprehensive education for their children. Some respondents suggested a more integrated approach and a wider scope to the

concept of education for the youth in the area. In addition, there are calls to upgrade the appearance of the schools, which are not considered to be conducive to learning and are classed as 'off-putting'.

- **Drugs** - there are only a small number of suggestions regarding the drug problem. Some respondents obviously feel that more help is required for drug addicts by way of treatment and counselling and that greater resources should be put into this problem. However, most respondents throughout the survey have concentrated more on prevention of the drug problem through education and facilities.
- **Support for the community/community involvement** - many local people want more involvement and consultation in general, they want to feel as though they are a part of the process and not outside of it. There are numerous suggestions along the lines of support for and development of community leaders, greater consultation with the community, a more integrated approach between statutory, voluntary and community bodies and greater facilitation of community groups. The desire for involvement and a say in what happens to Corduff is summed up in the response *"It's about time someone listened to the people from Corduff. We are the ones who have to live here"*.
- **Corduff Resource Centre** - respondents suggested a number of improvements, more funding should be made available to extend the Resource Centre so that it can offer more. Secondly, many feel the Resource Centre is currently under-utilised and that there should be more clubs available through the Centre, especially for teenagers. Finally, as a number of respondents feel that the Resource Centre suffers from 'cliques' having been formed, there is a suggestion that Committee members should be voted on by local people to dispel this perception. Again, this view needs to be challenged to ensure more effective understanding of the role and structures of the centre in the community.
- **Sports and recreational facilities** - an extension and improvement of sports clubs that already exist and the introduction of new clubs and facilities are suggested. A number of respondents indicated that the proposed sports club should be built as soon as possible. There is also the suggestion that parents and residents should take more interest in running sports clubs and organising training for young people. With regard to recreation facilities, respondents suggest that there should be more variety in social gathering places as currently, there is only the pub. Many point to the need for a social club for different age groups, as a focal point for gathering, in order to bring the community together. It has been suggested elsewhere in the survey that the Resource Centre should be used for this purpose, or that there should be a new drop-in centre that could cater for all age groups with a coffee shop and somewhere to just 'sit and chat'.
- **Facilities for children** - the main suggestion for the improvement of children's facilities is for a supervised playground along with additional organised activities although there is no mention as to who should organise these. In addition, there are many calls for more childcare places in creches and playgroups.
- **Youth facilities** - the majority of suggestions on youth facilities centre on the need for more activities for young people. Some respondents recognise the need to empower young people by involving them and asking them what they would like for themselves. The idea of a youth centre where young people can just be

together in a safe environment, without having to participate in organised activities is a popular one.

- **Information Provision** - respondents suggest that facilities should be better advertised with many saying they were unaware of what was on offer. Some suggest advertising at the shops and others suggest flyers or newsletters. There were also ideas for a central information point for residents, where there would be a constant up-date of what is going on in the community.

Additional general suggestions include painting the church walls and keeping the area around the church clean as well as ensuring that the laws regarding the selling of alcohol to under-age youth are enforced.

- **New services** - there were suggestions on the need for a supermarket with a pharmacy, a video shop, an ATM and a security system including CCTV, alongside a supervised playground. The need for a paediatric ward in JCMH is considered to be critical. Other health services and facilities not considered to be available in the area are breast-screening, drug rehabilitation and a medical centre for the elderly. The sports club is high on the list as well as a social club.

Some respondents would like to see the introduction of specific groups into Corduff such as a women’s group, a men’s group, a young mother’s group, drama etc. A programme to train leaders in the community and young people in particular, is suggested as is the need for a resident’s group to liaise with bodies such as Fingal County Council. Co-ordinated dissemination of information about what is happening in Corduff is important to a significant number of respondents who feel there is an information gap. The introduction of Neighbourhood Watch is seen as important by some for security and respondents hope to see the metro system coming to Corduff. In addition, a small number of residents point out the need for a dog warden, and public telephones.

- **The ‘Bertie’ Bowl** - the issue of the Bertie Bowl elicited a huge amount of commentary from respondents. Very many respondents were in favour of the stadium although many expressed concerns about issues such as ‘funding diversion’, ‘exclusivity’ and transport problems. It was clear during the survey that the vast majority of residents felt strongly about the lack of local information and consultation.

Given recent Government decisions regarding the stadium, it is now unlikely that it will proceed.

Health Issues

Health was considered to be a key issue in the survey as the perception of a community regarding its health is closely related to social issues such as economic disadvantage, substance abuse, depression etc. Respondents were asked to assess their own health and to express how they feel about the health services in their area.

Table 18 Rating of own health

Age	How do you rate your own health?			
	Good %	Fair %	Poor %	N %

18-24	84.9	12.6	2.5	119
25-30	85.6	12.2	2.2	90
31-40	77.9	20.0	2.1	145
41-50	75.0	20.2	4.8	124
51-60	56.5	37.0	6.5	92
61+	52.0	40.0	8.0	25
Total	75.5	20.8	3.7	595

Three-quarters of respondents rated their own health as 'good' and a further 21% rated their health as 'fair'. Not surprisingly, 85% of those in the 18-30 age group rated their health as 'good', while 8% of those in the 61+ age group rated their health as 'poor'. Overall, the health of the population is considered to be 'good' as 85% of respondents indicated that their families' health is good and only 2% rated their families' health as 'poor'.

Table 19 Attitudes towards substance use in the community

	Priority of substance abuse		
	High %	Medium %	Low %
Mis-use of illegal drugs by adults	71.4	21.2	7.5
Mis-use of illegal drugs by young people	93.0	4.5	2.6
Excess use of alcohol among adults	61.6	29.7	8.7
Underage alcohol use	87.7	8.4	3.9
Tobacco addiction among adults	44.9	34.2	20.9
Tobacco addiction among young people	68.2	23.3	8.5

N = 605

With regard to addiction and substance-use, respondents view this as being a higher priority issue for young people. Mis-use of illegal drugs by young people and underage alcohol use are given very high priority ratings, while nicotine addiction among adults is given a low priority rating by 21% of respondents.

Table 20 Rating of health services for different sectors of the community

	Are the Health services adequate?		
	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
For Men	43.3	16.8	39.8
For Women	51.1	21.7	27.1
For adolescents	38.4	22.0	39.6
For children	43.5	30.4	26.1
For the elderly	31.7	21.6	46.7

N = 605

On average, only 42% of respondents feel that the health services are adequate for the different sectors of the community. Children's services received the most negative feedback, with over 30% saying they are not happy with the service.

If respondents had ticked no to any of the above, they were asked to explain why they find the services inadequate. As expected, the primary concern about children's health services in Corduff is the lack of a paediatric unit in JCMH. People object strongly to having to bring their children to Temple Street hospital because of the travel and the expense and the fact that waiting times in Temple St. are long.

Respondents would also like to see a maternity ward and cancer-screening facilities for men and women at JCMH. The second greatest problem with the health service in the area is the waiting time – both for GPs and in the A&E of JCMH. Many complain that there are not enough GPs and that despite appointments, waiting times are too long, in an over-crowded waiting room, which is inadequate for the number of people using it. Respondents do not feel they should have to make appointments, particularly when they have sick children. With regard to waiting times at JCMH, people recognise that this is because of under-staffing and they would like to see funding put into having more doctors and nurses available.

Residents would like to see a comprehensive health clinic in Corduff, catering for all age groups. Some commented that GPs in the area are out of touch with adolescents and their needs. It is interesting to note that health services for the elderly produce opposing attitudes in the commentary, with some saying the elderly population is not adequately catered for, while others lament the fact that only the elderly receive adequate health care in the area. In fact, more than half of respondents under 50 say they do not know whether health services for the elderly are adequate. Some would like to see either a day-care centre or nursing homes for the elderly who may not be in a position to look after themselves. A significant number also mentioned the need for a type of ‘Well-Woman’ and ‘Well-Man’ clinic to deal with family-planning and specific gender-based health issues, especially as there is no male GP available in the area and because adolescents are unwilling to go to their family doctor to discuss certain matters.

Table 21 Rating of health services for the elderly by age

Age	Are health services for the elderly adequate?			N
	Yes %	No %	Don't know %	
18-24	30.7	18.4	50.9	114
25-30	33.7	11.2	55.1	89
31-40	22.0	22.7	55.3	132
41-50	30.4	24.3	45.2	115
51-60	40.7	31.4	27.9	86
61+	56.5	21.7	21.7	23
Total	31.7	21.6	46.7	559

Another issue, which produces opposing attitudes is the Medical Card. Some respondents claim that the GP will not take any more Medical Card-holders, while others say the GP will *only* take Medical Card-holders. This indicates an information gap as to GP services and medical entitlements. Lack of information in general arises as an issue for many respondents both in terms of getting feedback from their own GP or from the hospital and in terms of finding out about available services. Table 22 shows where people generally obtain their information about health and health services. The majority obtain their information from a doctor or from the health promotion services, and word-of-mouth between friends and family is another important means of finding out information about health.

Table 22 Sources of information on health

Where do you get your information on health %	
Family & Friends	19.8
Health professionals & health promotion	44.1

services	
Internet	2.2
School	1.5
Media etc.	8.6
Varied e.g. friends, family, internet, media	21.1
Work	1.1
Have no information / do not know	1.5

N = 605

While nearly 57% consider dental services to be adequate, 43% do not and a majority of respondents are not aware of their dental entitlements (60%). A significant number of respondents call for free medical and dental care for children up to the age of eighteen. Many claim that the cost of attending the GP or the dentist is simply too high for them and that if children were entitled to medical care free of charge, this would take some of the burden away. Finally, a small number of respondents link the lack of facilities for exercise or recreation to ill-health in the area, claiming that residents do not take exercise because there is nowhere suitable and safe for them to do so. In fact, only 5% of respondents claim that lack of facilities is what prevents them from undertaking physical activity, while factors such as lack of time and work pressures play a much bigger role.

Table 23 Barriers to physical activity

What stops you from taking exercise and physical activity %	
Tired	5.4
No time	16.3
No interest	2.6
Work	11.4
Doesn't apply (i.e. does take exercise)	27.7
Car	1.8
No facilities	4.6
Weather	7.0
Nothing / laziness	7.5
Children	6.0
Physical health	9.5
Fear of dogs	0.4

N = 605

Understandably, when asked how the health services might be improved, respondents overwhelmingly state that more funding should be made available to employ more staff and thereby reduce waiting times. Funding would also enable greater service provision in the area of paediatric and maternity care. Respondents believe there should be more GPs available in the area and that a health clinic with appropriate facilities for both males and females in all age groups should be built. Some suggest having GPs on call-out or more health nurses in the area to reduce waiting times at the GP, as well as longer opening hours at the surgery. Many respondents would like to see the Medical Card introduced for both medical and dental care for under-18s. People would like to see a specific clinic for drug-users, to avoid the situation of users coming to a regular GP clinic.

Once again, the need for information is very apparent. Many respondents claim they do not know what services are available to them, what their entitlements in regard to these services are or how to go about finding the information. They would like the Health Board to disseminate information on a wider-scale about health services in the area. In addition, a number of respondents would like to see more attention to education programmes in all areas e.g. drugs, healthy eating, lifestyle etc. Another issue, which surfaced occasionally, is the need for transport to JCM and Temple St. for children and the elderly.

Identified Improvements in Corduff – *residents' views* (note: not sure where this will go in final version of report, it will depend on layout)

When asked whether there have been any improvements in the area, a significant number of 'successes' were listed. These included:

- the refurbishment at Corduff Grove and the sense of pride created by this has encouraged people and they hope that more re-furbishments will be done as quickly as possible
- there has also been an improvement in the environment according to some, as the place looks generally tidier than it used to
- the adult education courses run in the schools are given much praise and they are a very welcome development
- respondents also greatly appreciate the Counselling service but note that it needs bigger and better facilities to provide the service required of it
- a number of respondents say that crime has reduced somewhat in recent times and that anti-social behaviour around the Grove has diminished since the houses there were refurbished
- increased employment has brought a new-found confidence to the area according to some although the fear is expressed that this has, ironically, increased early school-leaving
- the Resource Centre is perceived to be providing much-needed facilities, particularly in respect of the Youth Club
- childcare facilities are also seen as a positive and productive service
- public transport appears to have improved but nearly all respondents who say this also point out that more improvement is needed
- the Town Centre is seen as a real cause for optimism, providing jobs and raising the profile of the area
- some work is also seen to have been done in the area of drugs prevention and rehabilitation
- in addition, respondents mention the Food Bank, the Swap Shop, the Evergreens, outings, parties, the carwash, the hairdressers, the Library, the I.T. and the Housing Committee
- finally, respondents also mention an increased amount of information and awareness about what is happening in the community through newsletters such as '*Insight*', but say there needs to be more information so that everyone can pull together.

However, there are still a large number of respondents who feel that there have been no improvements in Corduff and a small number say that it has actually worsened over the past few years in terms of crime, the environment, apathy etc.

Additional suggestions and comments

Below, we include a representative selection of comments made in the survey and which present a general overview of the tone and content of 'open ended' responses.

- There should be a local community council in Corduff made up of local groups, services and organisations and local people should be invited to attend. All groups or organisations and services should be appropriately accountable to the community they serve. Each group should devise a system of communication with the local community and get feedback, interact with and invite local participation
- More radical changes need to happen and more involvement between community, voluntary and statutory agencies
- Crime needs to be addressed by better relations with the Gardai
- Ramps should be removed and areas should be separated by walls (to stop car thieves from speeding through long stretches of road but to leave openings for pedestrians to pass through). Green areas should be closed in with railings and made safe for children
- A park for more family activities and a playground and some benches as well as some flowers and shrubs
- A victim support group for people in the area
- A bigger crèche than 55 Corduff Grove to give everybody a chance to enrol their toddlers so that they too get a chance to get part-time jobs or do courses
- A primary care centre which can take blood and x rays needs to be established, it should have 24-hour cover and be available to all and a chemist is needed
- Close off the laneway from Garda Station to Corduff as it is a 'trouble spot'
- Dublin area is experiencing crisis in accommodation, huge growth in economy, Corduff should be getting professional people moving in.
- A drop in centre, especially for the youth and elderly
- Support for parents with abusive children
- More information about the building of facilities or the creation of services, local people's opinions need to be considered and respected.
- The Insight Magazine has been the only constant regular communications in the parish over the past years. All organisations should promote themselves with this. It needs to be expanded to serve all the community.
- It should be compulsory to campaign for local voluntary involvement and input. Communities in general are shy and sometimes don't have this type of confidence. If the services and facilities groups do not have the active support of community members, institutions fail.
- Corduff should carry out a community skills audit and each organisation should describe the skills that are needed
- Leadership training is badly needed – Corduff CDP has a leadership role here
- Women's issues seemed to have slipped into the background once again – are there ways to highlight the issues women experience as part of the process of resourcing and supporting children and youth – there are a lot of wise women and mothers and grandmothers living in this community
- How about putting on some courses that look at social analysis – analysing power structures, acknowledge inequality, look at systems that promote inequality and discrimination

There were also a number of comments regarding the survey itself, with some people expressing doubts about whether anything will actually happen as a result of it. Others were glad to be asked their opinion and felt that the survey is a good means of encouraging community involvement.

Chapter Four

Conclusions

The general conclusions from this survey have already been presented on pages ???????. What follows below are the specific conclusions related to various individual issues and areas of concern.

Community Safety & Security

Safety and security tops the list of issues that concern people in Corduff, many feel themselves to be under siege in their own community because of crime and anti-social behaviour. Drugs are associated almost universally, as either cause or effect, with the numerous social problems of the area.

Some feel that the situation can only be resolved through increased policing and security, while others acknowledge the underlying causes and recognise the need for prevention by means of a multi-faceted approach with regard to services and facilities. Evidence from the survey indicates that there is a small number of *'problem families'* engaging in crime and drug dealing. Much of the less pernicious anti-social behaviour is due to boredom and lack of facilities.

Policing is considered to be a major challenge not only in terms of response to crime but also because of the lack of an effective relationship between the police and the community. There is a real need for the community to liaise energetically with the police about their needs. Without effective engagement, other policing needs take priority and the deep-seated mistrust that is apparent on both sides continues unimpeded.

Education, Training and Unemployment

The apparent divide on the issue of early-school leaving and the reasons for its prevalence in Corduff shows a need for greater communication between parents and schools in the area. Parents and teachers need to work together to promote the importance of a good education and encourage pupils to remain in school to Leaving Certificate. Teachers cannot maintain this ethos without the help of parents, just as parents cannot single-handedly maintain their child's interest in school.

Social problems in the area contribute to learning difficulties for some pupils and disciplinary problems for teachers, which in turn diminishes the educational experience for a large number of pupils, leading to early school-leaving, poor results for some and consequently, increased social problems in the area. This cycle will not be broken by apportioning blame but only through an imaginative partnership between parents and teachers to provide the best education possible.

Many parents feel excluded from the running of the schools and do not feel they are in a position to contribute their skills or experience to enhancing the educational experience of their children. This needs to be addressed with greater communication through parent/teacher associations. In addition, pupils must also be included, as far as possible, in the process of their own education, particularly at upper-secondary level. The most valuable source for ideas on how to keep pupils in school, is pupils themselves and these ideas should be explored as far as possible within the parameters of the national curriculum, particularly during Transition Year.

Although unemployment did not feature strongly throughout the survey and the majority perceive the unemployment situation to have improved greatly, there is nevertheless notable concern about unemployment among the younger population as well as about long-term unemployed. A local training facility is required to encourage greater participation in FAS courses, in particular for early school-leavers and those in the 16 to 18 years age group. It is apparent that the need for travel to different training centres creates a barrier for a significant number, who might otherwise participate.

Housing and Environment

The connection between services, facilities and social problems in Corduff is clear from the results of the survey as is evident in a very real way in relation to housing and the environment. The shops and the houses that are awaiting refurbishment are a major source of concern. The shops in particular not only have an offensive appearance, they are also a focal point for much of the anti-social behaviour that takes place in the area. An imaginative housing refurbishment at Corduff Grove produced an entirely positive result both in terms of increased pride and morale and importantly, a reduction in the anti-social behaviour that was previously centred around the Grove. The same needs to be done for the shops and for Corduff Park without delay.

Effective communication is required from Fingal County Council about housing policy, environmental and waste-management policies and other areas that impact on the people of Corduff. Aspects of these policies that are currently incomprehensible to the people in Corduff (e.g. boarded-up houses, waiting lists and allocations), might be easily explained and understood if an effective communication channel existed between the Council and the community. Bin tax and the absence of skips are not specific to Corduff and the environmental problems there are more complex than could be solved by a re-introduction of free bin and skip collection. However, policies regarding waste management and recycling need to be clarified as part of a nation-wide plan to reduce waste. People also need time-frames for completion of maintenance, building and landscaping works, transparent procedures for housing allocation, and generally, to feel included in the process so that they do not become further marginalised even when FCC is attempting to resolve problems and do some good in the area.

Community facilities, resources and services

Clearly, the most pressing need in terms of facilities and resources is a venue for young people. While the suggestion of a drop-in centre or social club for all age groups is put forward throughout the survey, the need for a safe environment for young people to gather in is considered to be imperative at present. Youth facilities including indoor and outdoor sports are seen by the majority in Corduff as a long-term solution to many social problems centred around young people, the most consequential being anti-social behaviour and drugs. With regard to young children, the need for a safe environment to play in is of primary importance. A supervised playground that is secured at nighttime is considered vital.

Once the needs of children and youth have been catered for, people would like to see the establishment of reasonably priced sporting, leisure and recreational facilities within easy reach for all age groups. At present, the pub is considered by many to be the only leisure facility available in the area for adults or seniors, while the Park and the Valley are viewed as being unsuitable for family recreation in present conditions.

Many recognise the potential of what the area does possess in terms of indoor and outdoor space and feel that it should be fully utilised for the good of the community.

The 'Bertie Bowl', if built, would be broadly welcomed locally if appropriate planning is put into infrastructure.

Although the lack of facilities for youth and sporting facilities in general are almost universally acknowledged, opinions about the availability and accessibility of other community facilities and resources are divergent. Some claim that many facilities are available both in Corduff and in Blanchardstown but that they are under-utilised and under-resourced in terms of both funding and community input. Many others however, feel that there is simply nothing available. The extent to which this latter opinion prevails depends on the amount of information people have about what is actually available. Information is therefore key in changing the attitudes of people about the area in which they live.

The Resource Centre has a crucial role to play in this regard. However, a significant proportion of the population has clearly lost touch with the Resource Centre and its purpose in the community. Many regard it as a valuable asset but feel distanced from what goes on there. Wider publicity is required to communicate its aims and to encourage greater input from the community as a whole. People need to be made aware that the Resource Centre, apart from being a physical facility, is a valuable source of information on everything that is available to the people of Corduff.

Of all the services mentioned throughout the survey, the most pressing needs relate to shopping and transport. People require a suitable shopping centre with a variety of shops including a chemist. They also want a reliable bus service that caters to the needs of people in Corduff and takes account of the size of the population.

With regard to health, the most important requirements are for a paediatric ward at JCM and a comprehensive health clinic built within Corduff to cater for all sectors of the community. A maternity outreach unit and improved waiting times both at JCM A&E and at the GP are also high on the list of priorities. As with other facilities and services, access to information regarding health services is vital in order to give people some level of control over their own healthcare.

Minority Groups

Issues around minority groups are not considered to be of great importance currently, by comparison with other, more pressing social needs. However, concern about the elderly is growing due to the increasing elderly population in Corduff and the perceived vulnerability of their situation vis à vis crime or anti-social behaviour and a lack of suitable facilities or services.

Although issues regarding foreign nationals are not considered to be a priority, there is a need for accurate information about the situation regarding foreign nationals living in the community in order to dispel the myths that allow one group to become marginalised within a community already suffering from marginalisation. A pro-active education project around the challenge of multiculturalism in Corduff and Blanchardstown would appear to be necessary.

Youth

The feelings of alienation and exclusion as well as cynicism amongst young people should be a matter of immediate and serious concern. None of the solutions

suggested by those young people consulted are very complex and many of them seem ultimately achievable, yet these young people are not optimistic that anything will actually be done. The very fact that they are afraid to hope there might be something better for them in the future is an indictment of the failure by which they are surrounded every day.

The combination of apathy, despair and the sense of marginalisation they feel is extremely discouraging because social problems in an area like Corduff are exacerbated hugely by despair and apathy among its young population. Programmes to democratically involve young people in the running of their own community, as part of a wider programme of community involvement, are badly needed to stem the sense of alienation and importantly, to develop community leaders for the future of Corduff.

The very real sense of fear among young people is of particular concern. A community-based programme to facilitate relations between the police and the youth of Corduff is required to remove prejudice on both sides and enable young people to allow the police to help them feel safe in their own area.

Communication and Co-ordination

A consistent theme running throughout the survey is the apparent lack of coherence between social problems and the planning and delivery of aspects of services and facilities. This points to the need for an integrated approach between agencies and between community groups and agencies. There is no one solution and none of the problems in the area can be resolved in isolation, yet there is a somewhat disjointed approach at present, whereby each group works on its own to achieve specific goals within set parameters. This exemplifies the need for a forum to allow greater communication between agencies themselves and between agencies and the community to look at all services and facilities in a co-ordinated manner as a means to achieving a better result overall.

The lack of facilities and problems with services are referred to over and over throughout the survey as the underlying cause of many social ills. In fact, there are many agencies, organisations and groups within whose remit Corduff falls, but there is little connection between them and as a result, efforts to provide the community with comprehensive services and facilities are dissipated. There is a very real communication deficit both between these groups and with regard to the wider community. People simply do not know what others are doing in the area and although individuals and groups may be working very hard for the community, a disjointed approach diminishes returns for the effort they put in.

This situation is compounded by a lack of continuity in the volunteer and community sector, which leads to an almost exclusively statutory perspective with regard to funding. There is a real need for information on what is available in the area, discussion between statutory, community and voluntary agencies about where the gaps lie, co-ordination on the provision of services and facilities and most importantly, training and support to ensure that facilities are sustainable from within the community. The role of the CDP is vital in this regard as a point of contact between Corduff and the various agencies and groups who are working in the area.

Community Involvement

It is clear from commentary throughout the survey that a residual sense of community spirit remains in Corduff, although it is perceived to be diminishing. This presents a

challenge for the community in that many respondents recognise the need for greater community involvement but also, that this comes at a time when such input is increasingly difficult to encourage. Improved national economic conditions appear to have played a role, as more people are now employed and have less time to devote to community activities. Furthermore, many residents seem inclined to distance themselves from Corduff because of the bad reputation it has acquired and its portrayal in the media. The challenge for the community now is to harness the spirit that still remains in order to tackle the rising tide of apathy, divisiveness and dependency. Residents need to take responsibility for their own area. As long as they feel that things are being 'done to' rather than 'in conjunction with' them, the sense of dependency coupled with marginalisation will continue and there will be no coherent policy in the area.

It is evident from all sides that there is a real need for capacity-building within the community, first and foremost to build confidence in the community itself and secondly, to enable an effective engagement with statutory and semi-statutory agencies working in the area. A change in dynamics is needed so that both community and agencies can move from a social-work perspective to a support perspective. The limitations of a purely professional or social-work methodology are evident and there is a need for a paradigm that encompasses both the professional and the community-based methodology. The community needs to engage, communicate and liaise effectively with the professionals in order to move forward. However, community members cannot engage effectively with professionals in the process of community development without support and training.

Chapter Five

Survey Recommendations

Many suggestions and proposals were made by survey respondents and by participants in focus groups throughout this research. There is no shortage of ideas and proposals as to how to address the many issues that arose in Corduff. They relate to all dimensions of the situation there - problems, opportunities and challenges. However, this section of the report does not include all of the ideas, suggestions and proposals put forward by individuals in the course of the research – these have been outlined elsewhere throughout the text. Rather, this section outlines a number of key strategic initiatives necessary to address many of the underlying challenges and which should form an effective base for moving forward.

The scale of this research and the coverage achieved is representative of the community in Corduff but in and of itself, it does not form an adequate basis for developing an overall strategic plan for the area. It does however, represent a firm basis for engaging in a process for developing such a plan and it is, in our opinion, a matter of considerable urgency that such a process begin immediately and be seen to begin immediately. If there is not clear and unambiguous evidence that this initiative will produce results for the residents of Corduff, then the demoralisation process described in this report will be rooted even deeper with all its attendant results and consequences.

Our recommendations are based around four key areas:

- **Structures and Processes**
- **Infrastructure and Capital Projects**
- **Long-term proposals**
- **Confidence and capacity building proposals.**

All of these recommendations are inter-dependent, relate directly and build upon each other. Many individual recommendations could be implemented in isolation yet, in order to achieve maximum impact and coherence, they should be viewed in their overall context. Overall, effective and sustained engagement between the community and its various support agencies in both the voluntary and statutory sectors is vital. In addition, communication and information sharing are essential components in ensuring sustained engagement on the part of the community with any overall strategic plan.

It should be noted at this stage that it would have been relatively easy to simply enumerate the various pending and proposed capital projects for Corduff – they form an essential and much needed dimension for the future. However, it is our convinced view stemming directly from the research that recognising the absolute need for such projects in Corduff, their effective use and impact depends hugely on addressing the broader, underlying community development issues and challenges especially as regards confidence, capacity and attitude within Corduff.

Overall Recommendation

This report should be considered by the members of the project Steering Committee who should then take responsibility for deciding on the most appropriate methods and mechanisms for taking the recommendations

forward. The Steering Committee, along with all the involved statutory and community-based organisations has a responsibility to respond, at an appropriate level to the outcomes of the research.

1. Structures and Processes

Overall Recommendation:

Effective and sustained engagement and coherence is required between statutory, semi-statutory, community and voluntary organisations and the residents of Corduff.

1.1 It is our overall recommendation that a co-ordinated and integrated, multi-agency supported **strategic plan** (supported by adequate funding) is urgently required to ensure effective delivery of initiatives in a number of key areas.

1.2 The project Steering Committee should lobby for, and support the work of, a specially convened **Corduff Task Force** - comprising key agencies and organisations central to the future development of the area. The strategic plan should be developed by the Task Force and the process underpinning it needs to be based on sustained community consultation, information and participation if it is to succeed and garner the support of residents for the effort and challenges ahead.

Greater emphasis should be given to a rights perspective and approach rather than the dominant 'welfare' approach that characterises current attitudes and initiatives. This can be done in many practical ways – ensuring local people are represented on the Task Force, organising local meetings and listening carefully, being seen to respond to the concerns and needs of residents etc. There are many limitations to the current attitude towards the provision of services and support in Corduff.

The strategic plan should be realisable within current and projected budgets and timeframes. As a matter of confidence building, it should deliver visible improvements in environment, information flow, consultation, housing information and access, key interventions with specific groups (e.g. youth) etc.

The plan should represent a pooling of the current and planned activities of many agencies into a coherent and deliverable agenda within a specific time-frame. The plan should not try to address all issues but, instead, should form a basis for reasonable and realistic delivery of identified and urgent targets. The basis for such a plan already exists within each of the services and organisations currently active in Corduff – it would, in effect, amount to a pooling of expertise, plans and funds to ensure coherence and co-ordination as well as participation.

1.3 Once established, the Task Force should actively consider the key areas and issues identified by respondents in the course of this survey and develop specific action around each. The Task Force would ensure both continuity and complementarity between policy development and service delivery, encouraging a coherent and effective approach. It would also reduce duplication and allow for co-operation on addressing gaps identified in services and facilities. Monitoring and evaluation is an essential part of this process, including service-user feedback.

1.4 A lead role in the facilitation of the Task Force should be played by the Steering Committee of this project as well as by the CDP with the necessary support from structures such as RAPID and the Blanchardstown Partnership. The CDP would also provide effective liaison between the Task Force and the wider

community. The capacity of the CDP, required for such a lead role, needs to be reviewed.

1.5 In order to ensure the capacity of local people to engage in such a process (of effectively engaging with the shaping and delivery of a strategic plan), a programme of capacity building, around a range of focus groups (covering all cohorts within the community), should be initiated without delay. A central role within such a process should fall to the community- focused groups, in particular the CDP and the Resource Centre. Apart from the development of skills and capacities, such a programme would additionally focus on teasing out further as well as prioritising the many elements that will need to be incorporated within the strategic plan. The objective of such a process (which need not be overly pro-longed) should be to engage the community, develop key skills, renew energy and ideas as well as building an effective platform for extended community involvement.

Statutory and semi-statutory agencies (including Fingal County Council and the Blanchardstown Area Partnership) should ensure that all training and support to the community through the CDP is coherent and effective in promoting community involvement and community leadership.

1.6 Additionally, the Fingal Volunteer Centre should be better resourced, for the provision of peer leadership training, professional outreach support with a defined path of progression for volunteers.

1.7 Key to the future of effective planning in Corduff is the process of **communication and consultation**. It is clear that many residents are ill-informed (or, more accurately, non-informed) about current initiatives, groups, services and plans. There is an urgent need to review communication strategies and to put in place procedures and mechanisms for ensuring people have their information entitlements. Such a task is the duty of all organisations and services engaged with Corduff – the process should be pro-active and outreach focused. It should not wait for the residents to come looking for information.

1.8 A locally focused **Corduff Community Forum** is needed as a basis for developing plans, sharing information, consulting residents and challenging the apathy and cynicism that currently exist. The Forum should comprise residents of different areas within Corduff (with care to ensure effective coverage) in addition to specific interest groups (sports, elderly, Travellers, minorities, women's groups etc.). Such a forum would play a central reference role within the development of the proposed plan. The Forum could also play a key role in the suggested capacity building activities. It would supplement the work and agendas of proposed resident's groups.

1.9 The outcomes of this research must be reported back to the community in Corduff via structures such as the CDP, the Resource Centre, the proposed Community Forum etc. The full report should be available for those who wish to read it, while an **accessible summary of the main findings and recommendations from the report** should be circulated generally along with the organisation of a number of feedback workshops.

1.10 Estate management should be streamlined with the establishment of fully-functioning estate management committees in each estate in Corduff, to liaise with Fingal County Council on matters relating to housing allocation (including screening policies), maintenance and the environment. Estate-management training should be facilitated by the Resource Centre and CDP.

Issues affecting the wider community should be dealt with by estate management committees through the Community Forum (see above) to ensure a bottom-up approach and a broad scope of community opinion.

1.11 Urgent priority must be given to the effective initiation and support of youth focused activities. A number of full time youth workers are urgently needed directly in Corduff as is an effective support structure for such work. A series of consultative meetings should take place with young people locally in order to develop a list of desired and 'owned' priority actions. Some obvious areas suggest themselves (and are not offered as a list but rather as stimulus for discussion) – drugs related issues, activities for young people, political education etc. The VEC, BAP, Fingal County Council as well as the Department of Education and Science, the CDP and the Resource Centre all have a key role to play in addressing this sector – together. An (initial) '*plan*' for youth support and provision should be in place within 6 months of the publication of this report.

1.12 The recently established Youth Strategy Group (co-ordinated by Blanchardstown Youth Service and the CDP) should consider the findings of this study in developing their plan and agenda. As a matter of priority, the Steering Committee of this project should afford all support to the Youth Strategy Group.

2. Infrastructure and Capital Projects

The provision of necessary and needed facilities in Corduff should be given high priority, in particular, those for which funding has already been made available

2.1 A drop-in centre for young people is required as a matter of urgency and could be built either as an extension to the Resource Centre or in a separate area. There should be appropriate adult supervision with maximum input from young people, within guidelines for the running of the Centre by young volunteers.

2.2 The planned Sports and Leisure Centre should be built without delay with transparent information to residents about past delays and a proposed time-frame for completion.

2.3 Outdoor facilities such as football pitches should be enhanced by Fingal County Council and maintained as part of the proposed sports centre when it is built.

2.4 Fingal County Council should build a suitable playground for young children as soon as possible, in a safe area, with railings that can be secured at night.

2.5 The proposed Health Centre should be built by the Northern Area Health Board without delay on the Health Board site and should comprehensively cater for primary care for all age groups. In addition, the issue of breast-screening could be addressed by the Task Force through approaching Breastcheck Ireland with a view to launching an outreach service in Corduff.

2.6 A drug-addiction & rehabilitation centre is required and should also be considered by the NAHB. This Centre could be built either in Corduff or in the grounds of the hospital thus enabling drug users to receive treatment privately, within the area, without having to use local GPs.

2.7 Additional funding for the Corduff Counselling Service should be sought through the NAHB for separate larger premises to enable it to provide a comprehensive service to a greater number of people in the area.

2.8 Planned housing refurbishments by Fingal County Council for which funding is available must go ahead immediately.

2.9 Plans for the shopping centre should be considered as a matter of urgency. The shopping area is badly in need of refurbishment, and a well-recognised supermarket chain could be attracted into the area to provide the anchor for a comprehensive shopping facility including a pharmacy. Security services should be engaged with CCTV around the shopping area at all times.

2.10 Fingal County Council must liaise with the community to organise a proper clean-up of the whole area including the Park and the Valley and work with the Residents' Association to maintain a high standard in these areas. Bushes at Corduff laneway should be cleared and improved lighting installed.

2.11 In the opinion of many of those surveyed during this research, the role and impact of the Off-licence should be reviewed in association with the Gardai. Accusations of underage drinking must be addressed.

2.12 Immediate attention should be given to enhancing the role and capacity as well as the facilities of the Resource Centre on the basis of an agreed and negotiated agenda relating to the proposed strategic plan whilst also ensuring current activities. Careful and focused discussion with Fingal County Council on this matter is needed. The extension to the Resource Centre should be considered a priority for funding without prejudice to the proposed Sports and Leisure Centre. Extra space could then be allocated to a drop-in centre for adults and seniors to provide a focus for community gathering.

2.13 The Steering Committee should approach the Government regarding the future status of Campus Stadium Ireland and, should the development proceed ahead, local communities need to be given assurances on issues of concern to them by the relevant government departments in relation to the stadium.

2.14

Long-term proposals

Improved service provision and effective communication with the community is required to reduce the sense of marginalisation prevalent in Corduff

3.1 Fingal County Council needs to open effective communication channels with the people of Corduff directly as well as via the Corduff Community Forum and the Estate Management Committees etc. Policies regarding the environment, maintenance, housing allocation, waste management, recycling etc. should be clarified with as much information as possible disseminated to the community.

3.2 The Corduff Community Forum needs to liaise with police about the provision of a pro-active community policing service and the functioning of a Policing Forum. Programmes to encourage a relationship between young people in Corduff and the police should be developed by the Youth Strategy Group and the Gardaí.

- 3.3 Fingal County Council should consider housing elderly people together in close proximity to transport, shopping facilities and other services, with the use of CCTV for increased security in all future plans.
- 3.4 Dublin Bus should liaise with the community and the Community Forum regarding bus routes and timetables to facilitate greater improvement in the service to the area.
- 3.5 FÁS should liaise with the community and the Community Forum regarding possibilities for the provision of more locally-based training places.
- 3.6 Greater consideration must be given to encouraging and supporting the parents of schoolchildren attending St. Patrick's school and Riversdale College in order to promote a more active role in their children's education through, for example, Parent/ Teacher associations. The associations must be given support by the Community Forum to facilitate as wide involvement as possible by parents.
- 3.7 There is also a need for expanded support for already existing courses in parenting within the area over a sustained period of time in order to maximise potential benefits.
- 3.8 The Community Forum should lobby for extra funding to upgrade school facilities in the area, in order to create the best possible environment for learning.
- 3.9 The Community Forum could liaise with other communities availing of facilities at JCMH, to lobby for funding for a paediatric ward, a maternity outreach unit and cancer-screening facilities.
- 3.10 The Resource Centre needs to raise its profile as a community resource by advertising itself regularly as a one-stop-shop for information about all aspects of living in Corduff. Imaginative ideas for reaching those in the community who may have problems with literacy should be further explored.
- 3.11 Education and awareness programmes on drugs in both the primary and secondary schools (for both teachers and pupils) need further development and should be given attention by all relevant organisations and structures.
- 3.12 The Health Promotion Unit, through the Resource Centre, should provide the community with all available information on health services in the area. Classes on living a healthy lifestyle could also be organised through the Resource Centre.

Confidence and capacity building proposals

Education and Information are key aspects in changing people's attitudes about the area in which they live.

4.1 Whilst it might appear to be a 'luxury' to some when set against other, more immediate needs, building a new 'image' for Corduff is important and pressing. Key to building such an image could be the setting up of a Community Forum, the appointment of a youth worker, the initiation of ongoing focus group capacity building etc.

However, the suggested Corduff Task Force should consider a number of 'arts focused' activities involving current groups, new groups, schools and the community at large. The objective of such activities would be:

- to challenge images of Corduff through a range of visible and creative ‘outputs’
- to bring out the creative side of the community
- to engage young people (via, for example, music workshops, creative work with cars, motorbikes and engines etc.)
- to illustrate that there is more to the ‘Corduff issue’ than services, bricks and mortar and problems.

There are many examples of such approaches throughout Ireland, North and South, that merit exploration.

4.2 This report has provided much information that should be of immediate and direct use in the development of the strategic plan. However, additional research is needed to focus and sharpen key aspects of the changes needed e.g. housing, educational disadvantage and educational issues in general, health issues, the shopping centre, environmental problems etc. – detailed exploration of such issues was outside the scope of our remit in this current research. Each area requires careful and considered discussion, something we could not provide in this context. Such research should be a matter for the Steering Committee in the first instance and then the Task Force as well as for the specific statutory and community organisations engaged in these areas.

4.3 Longitudinal studies of the attitudes of, for example, Transition Year students should be encouraged and supported to monitor issues affecting young people that may contribute to early school-leaving. Such students would ideally carry out the research themselves as a part of their curriculum in order to ensure as wide an involvement of young people as possible.

4.4 The Community Forum, in conjunction with the Irish Council for Refugees needs to develop a programme of activities and discussion around issues of identity and how it is changing in Ireland today. It should, for example, organise cultural events that allow children from different nationalities to socialise and learn about one another’s culture. The issue of the perception of minorities and the realities of interaction with them needs to be addressed.

Appendix 1 – Maps

Appendix 2 – Additional Tables

Table 1 - Male Age Profile – Corduff - 1996

Age group	%
0-14	33.5
15-24	23.5
25-44	24.2
45-64	17.1
65+	1.6

N = 2299

Table 2 - Female Age Profile – Corduff - 1996

Age group	%
0-14	30.8
15-24	23.7
25-44	28.2
45-64	14.9
65+	2.5

N = 2426

Table 3 Media portrayal of Corduff

Media portrays Corduff	%
Positively	3.5
Negatively	71.1
Don't know	25.3

N = 605

Appendix 3 – Steering Committee

Armstrong, Maeve	Corduff / Mulhuddart Community Drugs Team
Behan, Niall	RAPID
Boyle, Paddy	Institute of Technolgy, Blanchardstown
Cervi, Catherine	Fingal County Council Housing Dept.
Coady, Marion	Volunteer
Conroy, Darren	Working to enhance Blanchardstown (WEB) Project
Dignam, Noeleen	Volunteer
Donnery, Marie	Volunteer
Gallagher, Felix	Corduff CDP
Gleeson, Aoife	Blanchardstown Youth Service
Grehan, Breda	NAHB
Hughes, Angela	James Connolly Memorial Hospital
King, Angela	Health Promotion Unit
King, Regina	Community Worker
McDonald, Mary Lou	Sinn Fein Representative
McLoughlin, Bernie	Volunteer
O'Shea, Adrienne	Corduff Community Resource Centre
Palmer, Alphie	CCRC Youth Club
Quinn, Kevin	Blanchardstown Centre for the Unemployed
Quinn, Noeleen	Corduff Childcare Service
Rice, Amanda	Volunteer
Richardson, Margaret	Fianna Fail Representative
Ryan, Conor	Blanchardstown Area Partnership
Shannon, Monica	Corduff CDP
Smith, Anne	Corduff Counselling Service
Tighe, Mary	Local Employment Service

Appendix 4 – Questionnaire

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