Community Perspectives on the Criteria for the Development of a Sustainable Community in Irish Urban Areas

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Declaration of Originality

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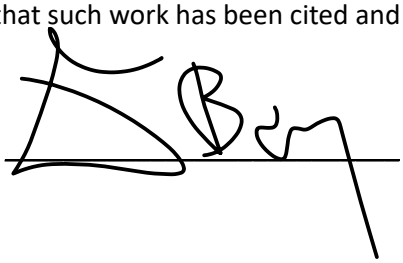
Signed:  ID No.: 13442902 Date: 9th September 2019

Dedication

I'm resilient.

Nicola Barry (1988-2014)

I would like to dedicate this research project to my older sister, Nicola, who lost her valiant fight against cancer on the 1st August 2014. Her bravery and resilience inspired me through some dark days and gave me the motivation to keep going. She is, and always will be, an inspiration to me.

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I would like to thank all those who have helped me in so many ways to complete this research project.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CABE - Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

CEC - Commission of the European Communities

CSDIs - Community Sustainable Development Indicators

CSO – Central Statistics Office (Ireland)

DCC – Dublin City Council

DCU – Dublin City University

DEFRA – Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (U.K.)

DEHLG – Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (Ireland)

DETR - Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (U.K.)

DFID – Department for International Development (U.K.)

DRCD – Department of Rural of Community Development

EU – European Union

FCC – Fingal County Council

FSD – Framework for Sustainable Dublin

GDA – Greater Dublin Area

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GOI – Government of Ireland

ICLEI – International Council for Local Environment Initiatives

IUCN - International Union for Conservation of Nature

LA 21 – Local Agenda 21

LAP – Local Area Plan

NDP – National Development Plan

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

NI – Northern Ireland

NIMBYs – Not in My Backyarders

NPF – National Planning Framework

NPO – National Policy Objective

NSO – National Strategic Outcomes

NSS – National Spatial Strategy

ODPM – Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (U.K.)

OSI – Ordnance Survey Ireland

ROI – Republic of Ireland

SCD – Sustainable Community Development

SD – Sustainable Development

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

UN – United Nations

UNCHS – United Nations Human Settlement Programme

UNCED – United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

UNSD – United Nations Sustainable Development

WCED – World Commission on Environment and Development

Abstract

Emma Barry

Community Perspectives on the Criteria for the Development of a Sustainable Community in Irish Urban Areas

This study investigates the criteria necessary for the development of sustainable communities in Irish urban areas from the perspectives of local residents, key actors and planning policies. The understanding of a sustainable community that underpins this study engages with the complexities of sustainability and sustainable community development (SCD), in which there are often contested views.

The literature suggests that differing, and at times conflicting, views of SCD, are held by international and national bodies. This research provides a working definition of sustainable community development and outlines the criteria which a community must reach in order to be deemed successfully sustainable. It is unique in identifying a 'true' definition of SCD based on bottom-up dialogue with community members in two case study areas, located in urban Ireland, using anonymous surveys.

This qualitative bounded case study which investigates the 'true' definition of SCD in Irish urban areas is scaffolded by three key pillars: the voice of current academic literature; the voice of international and Government policies; and the voice of the local residents. Firstly, the study provides an insight into how current literature has shaped the understanding of SCD, with particular attention paid to the criteria identified within such policies in order for sustainable development to occur. Secondly, an in-depth analysis of the current policies pertaining to sustainable development and sustainable community development across different spatial scales, i.e.: international, national and regional, is undertaken to provide a contextualisation of this research within policy circles. Finally, the perspective of the local resident on the criteria which make their community sustainable is investigated, with attention paid to their lived experience.

Chapter One: Introduction to the Research

If you want to know how the shoe fits, ask the person who is wearing it, not the person who made it

Nick Wates (2000)

1.1 Introduction

As the world becomes increasingly urbanised (over 54% of the world's current population resides in urban areas) the search for the prime quality of life has become the focus of individuals and governments alike (Moore and Scott, 2005a; UN-Habitat, 2016). This growth in urban populations globally is also reflected in the demographic patterns of Irish cities and towns. According to the 2016 Census the urban population of Ireland accounted for 62.7% of the entire population of the State. There were 2,985,781 people in urban areas in Ireland in 2016, a 4.9% increase on 2011 (CSO, 2016: CSO, 2018). The Greater Dublin Area (GDA), comprising Dublin, Meath, Kildare and Wicklow, is currently home to 1.9 million people, 40% of the total population of the State (CSO, 2016). The growing importance of the GDA can be demonstrated by previous Census data. In 1956, the GDA accounted for only 30% of the State's total population but this figure had risen to 38.8% by 1996, which earmarked the cusp of an era of unprecedented economic growth throughout the 1990s and 2000s known as the 'Celtic Tiger.'

The Dublin region is at the heart of the Irish economy and became the great focus of development in recent years. Much attention has been paid to sustainable urban form and the role of spatial planning in sustainable development debates, with policy priority increasingly given to brownfield development over greenfield sites to alleviate pressures on the increasing need for development in the Greater Dublin Area (Gkartzios and Scott, 2010). Brownfield developments promote more compact urban forms and higher densities around transport hubs and along transport corridors, mixed use development, and improving the quality of the public realm and the quality of urban life (Unsworth, 2007). National planning policies such as the *National Development Plan 2000-2006* (GOI, 1999), *National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020* (GOI, 2001), *National Development Plan 2007-2013* (GOI, 2006) and the *National Planning Framework: Project Ireland 2040* (GOI, 2019) all place a great emphasis on Dublin and the GDA in their plans to develop areas across the economy, the environment and the community.

Since the turn of the Twenty-First Century, Ireland's national development plans (GOI, various years) have put much greater focus upon sustainable development (SD) across all

sectors. This is especially apparent in the *Project Ireland 2040* framework (GOI, 2019). In the *National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020* (NSS), which was never fully implemented, the GOI (2001) displayed a commitment to sustainable development, though focused on strategic spatial planning in order to maximise benefit to the environment, economy and society of urban and rural areas across Ireland. *Project Ireland 2040* (NPF) (GOI, 2019) supersedes the commitments of the NSS and pledges to make sustainable development an integral part of its vision for a future Ireland. This is in line with Ireland being a signatory to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which frame national agendas and policies until 2030. Alignment can be seen between the UN SDGs and the NPF's National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) in areas such as climate actions, clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, economic growth, reduced inequalities and innovation and infrastructure, as well as education and health (GOI, 2019).

Almost every level of governance across the island of Ireland has signed up to a vision of sustainability (Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005), yet their commitment to sustainability and sustainable development does not penetrate below even the lowest levels of governance (e.g. local county councils) to involve and engage the community. Community engagement and involvement is widely considered a key element of sustainable development, from international bodies to local city councils (Norwich 21 (1997); ODPM, 2003; DEHLG, 2007a; DEHLG, 2007b; UN, 2015). The Brundtland Report stresses that implementation of sustainable development requires 'a political system that secures effective citizen participation in decision-making' (WCED, 1987, p. 65). However, as Arnstein (1969) claims, much of the public engagement in development planning is mere tokenism and does not reflect the wants or needs of the local community.

This study examines the degree to which the inhabitants of two modern, urban areas value the criteria of sustainable development indicators by engaging with their perspectives on such indicators. Crucially this study also identifies whether local residents within these two areas feel that they are engaged within their community, and whether they feel the planning system is effective in engaging with and listening to the community, as public engagement has arisen as a key component to sustainable development. This chapter provides a contextual background and rationale for this study, it details the research aims and objectives, the chosen methodology and it concludes with an overview of the dissertation.

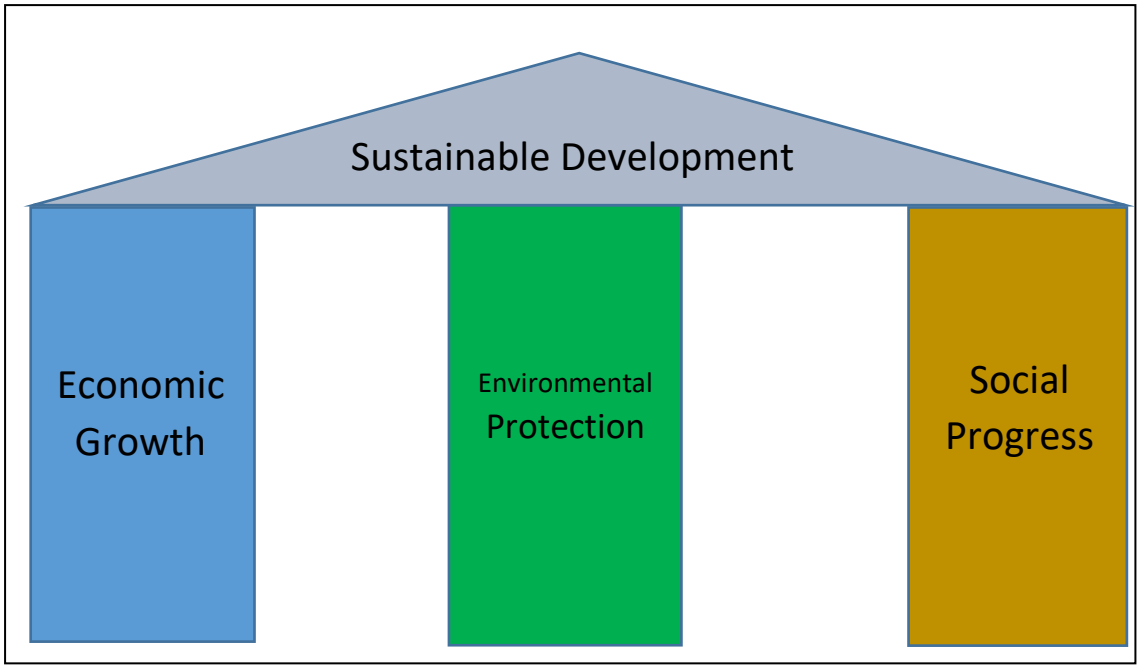
1.2 Contextual Background to the Research and the Role of Sustainability in Urban and Community Development

In the years surrounding the Rio Summit of 1992, sustainable development appeared on the international stage and was warmly greeted by the majority of the world's governments (Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005). The idea of sustainable development had been a widely discussed topic in academic and political discourses since the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1969, where the idea first established itself. The idea of SD has evolved greatly over the past fifty years and has grown from the concept of environmental stewardship to '[achieving] economic growth without environmental damage' (Adams, 2006) to a more holistic view of developing the environment, economy and society to benefit each other, without causing harm (Weingaetner and Moberg, 2011). The Brundtland (1987) definition of sustainability has become hallmark of the concept and is defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' Despite this relatively straight-forward definition, sustainability is often viewed as a 'concept in chaos' (Vallance et al., 2011) and has been approached in a fragmented way (Weingaertner and Moberg 2011). The Brundtland Report explains that 'sustainable development is not a fixed state of harmony, but rather a process of change' (WCED, 1987, p. 9). The ambiguity of the term has been the motivation for both its widespread adoption and frustration over its progress (Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005). Others argue that:

> Sustainable development is not an abstract concept. It is about securing a better quality of life for all, both now and for future generations. It is about achieving a successful, stable economy, while creating a strong and inclusive society and protecting the environment. This is our challenge for the 21st Century. It means understanding the impact of the decisions we make as governments. as businesses, as individuals, and in some cases, making difficult choices to get the balance right (DEFRA, 2003).

What is agreed upon within the literature is the three 'pillars' of sustainability: the dimensions of ecology, economy, and society triangulate to form the classic triad of sustainable development [see Figure 1.1].

Figure 1.1.: The Three Pillars of Sustainability: The Environment, the Economy and Society



(Source: Adapted from Adams, 2006).

Sustainability is a critical but highly contested concept; it is linked with the integration of ecological, economic and social considerations at all geographical scales (Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide, 2009). Ever since the creation of large cities with the advent of industrial capitalism, there have been consequences of urbanisation. However, in the early twenty-first century these fears have taken on added dimensions (Knox and Pinch, 2006). These problems are most acute in the developing world with its very rapid rates of urbanisation and often intense poverty, but they are still very much a threat to cities in the developed world. The majority of the earth's resources are being consumed by urbanities of the developed world where there are also many problems of waste, pollution, noise and traffic congestion (Knox and Pinch, 2006). As emphasised by the Habitat II Summit in Istanbul in 1996, the issues of cities and sustainability are inextricably linked (UN-Habitat, 1996). The consumption-intensive, car-dependent, decentralised, suburban city forms that have become popular in Western cities in the latter half of the twentieth century are clearly wasteful of resources (Knox and Pinch, 2006). The important implication of sustainability is that it is 'not just about resources in isolation, it is intimately connected with social and economic issues' (Knox and Pinch, 2006, p. 290).

Another key component of sustainable development is people's sense of place. Their relationship with nature and the environment are critical in this regard (Cheney et al., 2004). In one sense, the term 'sustainability' is posited as a social value and is greatly shaped by the values

of individual communities (Cheney et al., 2004). Barton (2002, p. 147) defines 'community' as a feeling at first which develops into 'a quality of life that seems collectively valued giving a human being a sense of belonging… [that] resonates throughout our lives.' The term is then further described as the 'layer of society in which interactions take place between people who are neither close family and friends, nor yet total strangers… [which] is not private nor fully public' (Barton, 2002, p. 147).

The term 'sustainable communities' was coined by the UK government in an attempt to establish means through which communities could improve understanding and action on issues such as waste, transport, energy, pollution and nature conservation (Davies, 2002). Barton's (2002) research on sustainable community planning at the local level across the UK at the turn of the twenty-first century demonstrates that certain visions of a sustainable locality amongst local residents were predominant in all cases. These included a visually appealing, safe and green neighbourhood, which is uncongested and free from pollution; a sense of local community and access to facilities both locally and regionally (Barton, 2002). Barton (2002, p. 11) also noted that there was little difference between the wants of rural and urban inhabitants who longed for 'an attractive, convivial and healthy place that balances privacy with community and local provision with city access.'

The need for sustainable community development was first recognised at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro with what is referred to as Local Agenda 21 (LA 21). LA 21 is the global blueprint for sustainable development agreed at the Earth Summit and is the mechanism that emerged to implement this plan (Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide, 2009). It is characterised by two key features: Local Action Plans (LAPs) to achieve sustainability and a bottom-up approach to the resolution of local issues. The UN SDGs (2015) also reflect the sentiments of LA 21 as they are both grounded in local activities as along with local level government, citizens play vital roles in making sustainable development happen. According to Bridger and Luloff (1999), the locality is where the consequences of unsustainable development are most keenly felt and where successful intervention is most noticeable.

Over the last two decades or so, Ireland has experienced a period of sustained economic and social prosperity, leading to a boom in residential development, but also suffered an acute economic downturn which brought with it a standstill of development and times of austerity. Many argue that the 'Celtic Tiger' and subsequent recession were the result of poor financial management and unsustainable lending and development (Böss, 2011). However, present-day Ireland is taking steps towards sustainable development as Taoiseach Leo Varadkar stated 'we

have a responsibility to plan for the changes that we face – to manage our future growth in a planned, productive and sustainable way' so as to avoid the mistakes of the past (Varadkar cited in GOI, 2019).

1.3 Identification of the Research Problem and Rationale

Sustainable development (SD) and sustainable community development (SCD) are topics that have been well discussed across both academic and political circles and Ireland has made some efforts in recent years to bring its policy documentation on SD and SCD in-line with the visions and goals of international bodies and other governments. However, there is still a significant void in the literature regarding these topics in Ireland. Although some research suggests that sustainable development in Ireland is succeeding, this is mostly based upon economic and/or environmental sustainability across the environment, economic, agricultural and food sectors (Deegan and Dineen, 1997; Moore and Scott, 2005a; Motherway and Neill, 2005; Tovey, 2011; Ryan et al., 2016; McCormack, 2019). At the time of writing there is little empirically rigorous research conducted in Ireland to evaluate whether GOI policies or UN SDGs are being successfully implemented in Ireland. Much of the specialist knowledge in SCD in Ireland still relies on research conducted using top-down methodologies that does not involve community input. It appears that little research on SD and SCD in Ireland has gone to the heart of what local residents really think about SCD in their locality. This thesis aims to conceptualise local residents' perspectives of SD and SCD in their local areas. The importance of community engagement and involvement in the development of their areas to aid sustainability has been highlighted, however, it is evident that critical questions have not been raised or answered regarding the effectiveness of current planning policies in producing sustainable communities in our urban areas (ODPM, 2003: UN, 2015: GOI, 2019). In a recent speech to attendees of the Conference on *Catalysing Global Savings to Advance our Sustainability Goals,* an Taoiseach stated that 'we need to make changes now, before it is too late… in this country, we recognise that Government doesn't have all the answers [for sustainable development]. So we will work with people, industry and communities to chart the best and most inclusive way forward (Varadkar, 2019). This suggests a government commitment to engage in bottom-up development but to-date there are no formal frameworks or indicators for this. This contrasts with the UK situation where the ODPM (2003) has identified the criteria which a community/ local area must meet in order to be deemed sustainable. This influenced my decision to place local residents of modern urban communities at the heart of this study to examine their perspectives of such criteria for sustainable community development within their own local

areas. This study will have three-fold contribution, namely: (i) theory; (ii) practice; and (iii) policy. The findings will add value to the considerable body of knowledge of SD and SCD in Irish urban areas and advance the theory of SCD in Ireland by identifying areas worthy of further research. It will contribute to practice by recommending how local government could enhance community engagement in order to meet the needs of the local community through sustainable development.

1.4 Research Aims and Objectives

This research aims to examine local residents' perspectives on the criteria for the development of a sustainable community in Irish urban areas. Inherent in this research aims are the following research objectives:

1. To contextualise the concept of sustainable development and sustainable community development with a specific focus on Irish engagement with these concepts;
2. To examine current policy and legislation which frames sustainable development and sustainable community development at all geographical scales;
3. To conduct a detailed case-study of two modern urban areas which have experienced, and are experiencing, rapid growth over the past twenty years;
4. To examine local residents' perspectives of sustainable community development within their local areas, located within the Greater Dublin Area;

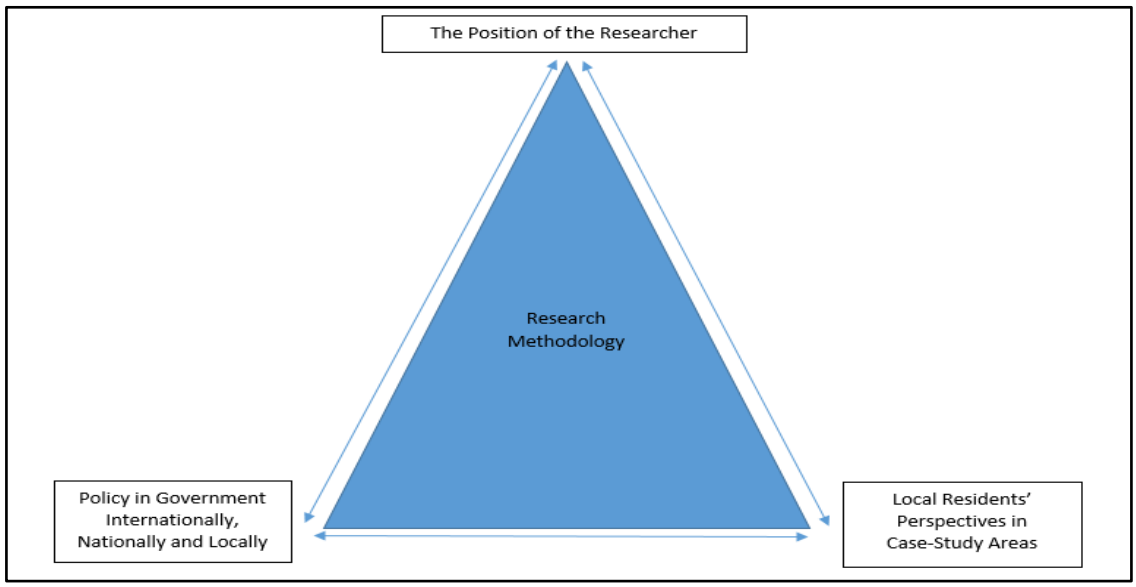
To achieve the overall aim and objectives of this research, I chose the following methodology.

1.5 Methodological Approach

I adopted a mixed-method research approach underpinned by a phenomenological philosophy which I believed was congruent with the overall research aim, objectives and my own research skills and experience. The primary data collection involved anonymous face-to-face questionnaires with local residents within the two case study areas [see Chapter Five]. The survey design allowed for both quantitative and qualitative data to be collected from respondents, i.e. respondents were asked a mixture of nominal and ordinal data questions (quantitative) but were then also asked to provide their opinion/rationale for their answers (qualitative). One of the reasons I chose this topic and case-study areas was the access I would have to local residents and key stakeholders involved in the development of urban areas and urban communities in Ireland. The two case-study areas [see Chapter 5] are relevant case-study

areas because they lie within the area of the two administrative councils which have experienced the greatest change in urban population between 2011-2016 in Ireland, i.e. Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council (CSO, 2016). Such rapid growth has resulted in the development of new housing estates. The existence of relatively modern large-scale development (since approx. 2000 onwards) was paramount to this research, as how communities develop in such areas was more easily identifiable than within a long-established community. I conducted three-hundred-and-fifty surveys across both case-study areas (197 in Donabate, Co. Dublin and 153 in Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13). As it was imperative that these surveys were conducted anonymously and without selection bias, participant selection followed a systematic random sample as every 3rd person in the population would be asked to participate in the research. Such methods are acknowledged for being a representative probability sample, but it is not entirely random as after the first sampling unit, which is chosen at random, is selected, all other units are systematically *n* units away from the previous unit (Dillman, 2000: Kitchin and Tate, 2000). Data collection was conducted in this way as I was mindful that the data generated could be interpreted through the prism of my own preconceptions, so I made every effort to counter bias through triangulation, therefore, I also analysed the concept of sustainability and sustainable community development in government at every geographic level [see Figure 1.2].

Figure 1.2: Triangulation of Research Methodology



(Source: Current Research)

1.6 Introduction to the Case-Study Areas

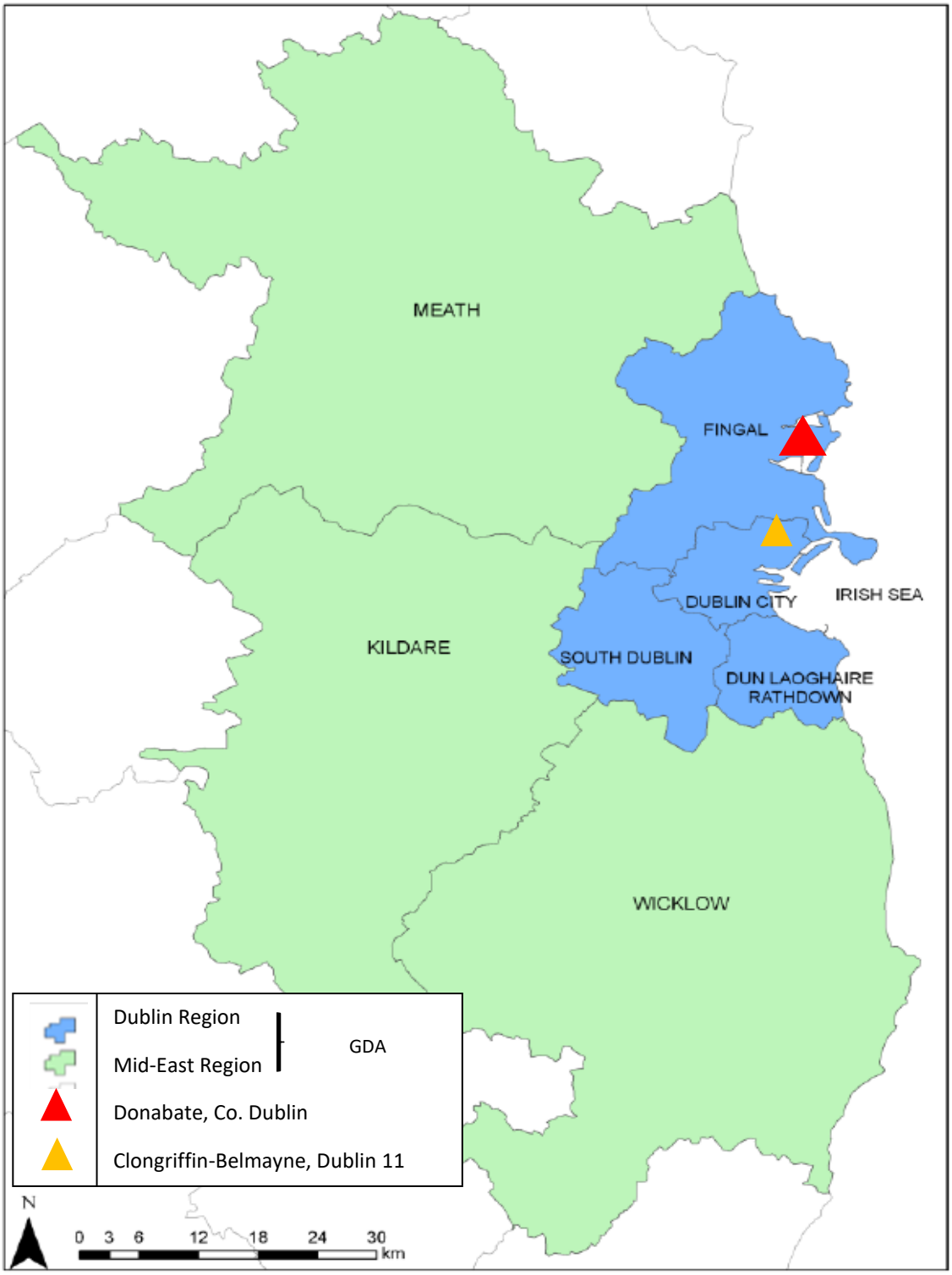
Case studies are one of the most popular forms of qualitative research and the attractiveness of case studies is that they provide a more comprehensive perspective as they focus directly on the social phenomenon and provide insights which are not normally apparent with other methods, and this in turn enables both the reader and the researcher to relate to the data and to understand it at a deeper level (Babbie, 1995). The case may be 'an organisation, community, social group, family, or even an individual and, as far as the qualitative researcher is concerned, it must be understood in its entirety' (Schutt, 2006). A more detailed account of the design, benefits and limitations of the use of case-studies as a methodology is given in Section 4.5.

This research has chosen two case-study areas to conduct face-to-face survey questionnaires [see Section 1.5 and Section 4.6]. Multiple case-study locations were chosen in-line with the literature, which argues that multiple case studies lends to greater validity to the research (Gillham, 2000). The focus of this research is on understanding the perspectives of residents of urban areas upon the criteria necessary for sustainable community development within a specific geographic location, namely the Greater Dublin Area. The GDA is an area which has experienced significant population increase, particularly since the 'Celtic Tiger' era of the 1990s, and is experiencing severe pressure across its housing, infrastructures and amenities as the area rapid develops [see Section 2.5]. Two areas within the GDA were chosen as case-studies for this research, namely Donabate, Co. Dublin and Clongfriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13 [see Figure 1.3]. A comprehensive demographic profile and analysis of these areas is presented in Chapter Five.

Donabate, Co. Dublin, is a small coastal town located approximately twenty kilometres north-northeast of Dublin in the jurisdiction of Fingal County Council. The area has experienced unprecedented growth in recent years. Since 1991 its population has grown by 574% to currently stand at 7443 (CSO, 2016). Similarly, the second case-study area, Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13, has also experienced rapid growth since the turn of the Twenty-First Century with 92% of its permanent private households built between 2001 and 2016. Population in the area grew by 50% between 2011 and 2016 alone (CSO, 2016). Clongriffin-Belmayne is a modern development designated by Dublin City Council within the 'North Fringe' as a greenfield development. It is located close to the northern boundary of the area controlled by Dublin City Council, just ten kilometres from the City. While allowing for an interesting insight into newly developing communities as separate entities, the two chosen locations also allow for worthwhile comparisons to be drawn between them: both areas are significantly similar in location and

proximity to Dublin City, are both coastal in location and have experienced similar population growth in recent years. However, the two areas are also significantly different in that they are both located within different local authority areas and display different demographic profiles, despite both being 'young' communities [see Chapter Five].

Figure 1.3. Map of the Greater Dublin Area Displaying Locations of the Case-Study Areas



(Source: Current Research)

In summary, both case-study locations provide an interesting backdrop to the concept of sustainable community development in Irish urban areas. They are linked by their unprecedented level of development over the past twenty years, which is in-line with the wider Greater Dublin Area, which is the most rapidly growing region in all of Ireland (CSO, 2016). Furthermore, due to this high level of development, the residents of both case-study locations have a heightened sense of what is required for a sustainable community in modern-day urban Ireland, which will prove beneficial to this research.

1.7 Structure of Thesis

This dissertation comprises eight chapters. Chapter One provides a contextual background to this study and details the research aim, objectives and provides an overview of the structure of the dissertation. Chapter Two examines the current body of literature relating to sustainable development and sustainable community development. It concludes with a theoretical framework for SCD in Irish urban areas. Chapter Three examines a contextual framework of sustainable development policy at home and abroad. Chapter Four details the research aim, objectives and questions and the methodological process employed in order to justify the choice of the research design. Chapter Five profiles the case-study areas chosen for this research and also the local residents who participated in this study and examines their demographic profile. Chapter Six analyses the results of the questionnaire in relation to Section A themes of the environment and the economy. Chapter Seven analyses the results of the questionnaire in relation to Section A themes of social factors and community engagement. Chapter Eight concludes this study by outlining the salient research conclusions and recommendations of this research. It also highlights the contribution and the limitations of this research and recommends future research to advance sustainable community development in Irish urban areas.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

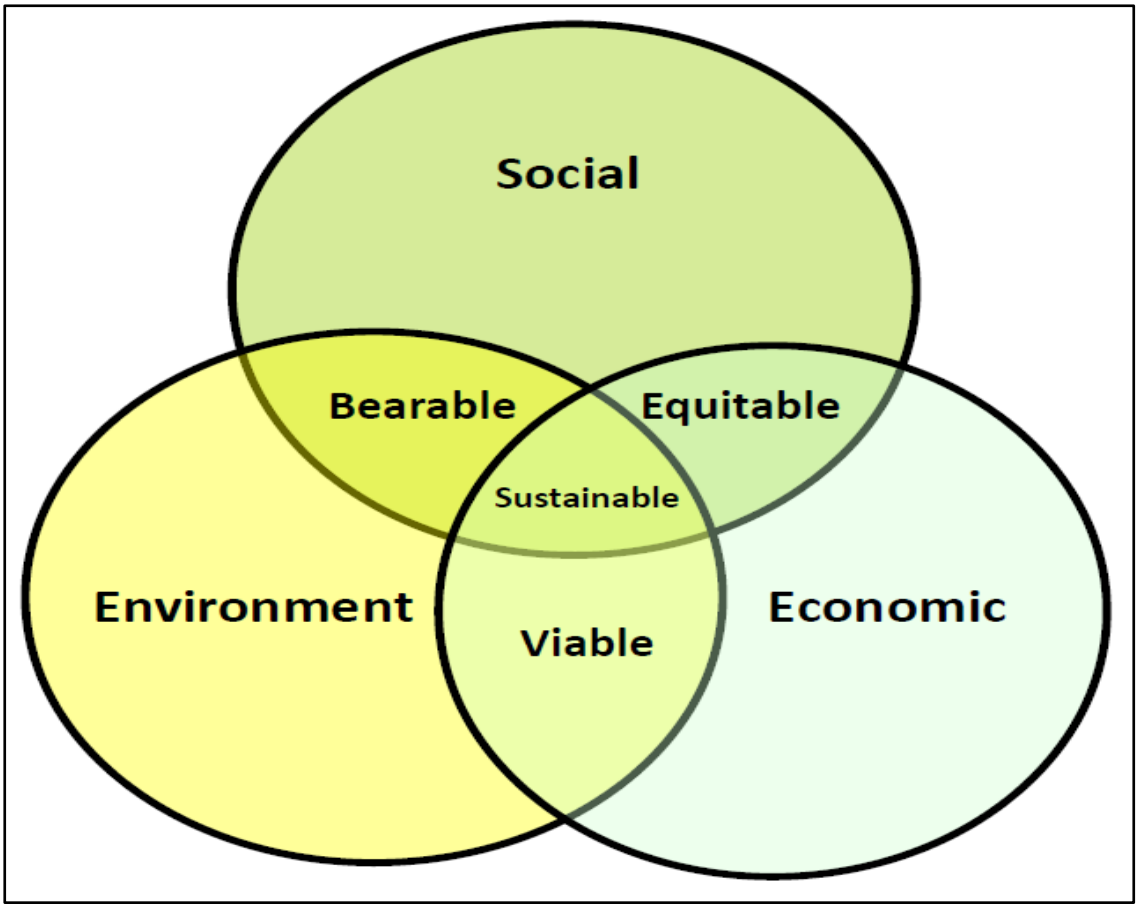
Sustainable Development Begins at Home

Paula J. Dobriansky (2001)

2.1 Introduction

In the forty years since the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) adopted a mandate with the aim of achieving the highest sustainable quality of life and the perpetuation and enhancement of the living world, the notion of sustainability achieved through the process of sustainable development has progressively moved to the forefront of international and national government planning. Despite the passage of time, there remains no single accepted definition of sustainable development, although the Brundtland Report's (WECD, 1987) definition is probably the most widely quoted. It defines sustainable development as: 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WECD, 1987). Indeed, it is this very lack of clarity of the exact definition of 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' that make them all the more attractive as a goal for governing bodies at all spatial scales, NGOs, stakeholders, developers, etc., but this does not come without its own difficulties (Rogerson et al., 2011). As the IUCN (2006, p. 3) report noted: 'the concept is holistic, attractive… but imprecise. There is a concern that because there is no definite meaning to the term that it may well end up meaning nothing' (Adams, 2006, p. 3). However, there is also a wealth of literature which insists that sustainable development is not an abstract concept and by definition, it implies enhanced obligation and should enable people to better relate to each other's needs, without obvious implications for governance. Hence the path to sustainability is a political process with the concept of citizenship at its core (DEFRA, 2003 cited in Moore and Scott, 2005a; Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005). There is general agreement that achieving sustainability requires balancing economic, environmental and social goals (Barton, 2000; Adams, 2006; Morse, 2009; Rogerson et al, 2011). However, for some, 'trade-offs between these dimensions are allowed, while others point out that the three dimensions are unequal, with the environment, for example, underpinning both economy and society and presenting a finite limit of human activity, but with economy and society, of course, impacting on the environment [see Figure 2.1]. In addition, there is no agreed way to measure sustainability and thus define the extent to which sustainable development is being achieved through any set of actions (Campbell, 1996).

Figure 2.1: The Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development



(Source: adapted from Adams, 2006)

The ambiguity surrounding the exact definition of SD, SCD and even the ways in which to measure it does prove advantageous as it creates a beneficial dialogue. The benefit of the continuing discussion between academics, scientists, economists, politicians and communities on how SD and SCD should be understood keeps the topic relevant and a modern concern (Dale and Hill, 2001). This current discussion gives rise to key questions: (i) what exactly *is* sustainable development and sustainable community development? and (ii) how do we measure SD and SCD? This chapter conceptualises these topics at global and national scales by discussing and critiquing literature relating to the four central themes, namely: (i) sustainable development; (ii) sustainable community development; (iii) SD and SCD in urban areas; and (iv) the difficulty in measuring the success of sustainable development and sustainable community development. The intention of this approach is to provide a theoretical framework for sustainable community development in Irish urban areas, against which the research findings will be discussed in Chapters Six and Seven.

2.2 Conceptualising Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainability began to make its way into academic discussion sometime in the mid-1980s and since then it has gone through substantial evolution. The word sustainability brings essential ecological, economic and social objectives together into one imperative. In the real world, these realms interact with one another in complex and unpredictable ways (Condon, 2008). Sustainability as a term defies precise definition. Similarly, 'important and powerful terms such as justice, patriotism, freedom, truth, beauty, God, and faith, also resist clear definition in direct proportion to their power to inspire. The names of the concepts that defy simple definition are often the words that most powerfully motivate individuals and cultures' (Condon, 2008, p. 5). Indeed, the popularity and resilience of sustainable development can largely be attributed to its malleability (Ross, 2009).

The most commonly cited definition for sustainability across literature comes from the 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (also known as the Brundtland Report) which defines 'sustainable development' as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987, p. 39). This definition conceals a number of complexities: 'the most fundamental of these reside in an implied limit on planetary resources and in the possibility that the flow of nature's services could become unbalanced. In short, an ecological view of the physical planet underlies the sustainability paradigm' (Condon, 2008, p. 5). However, the Brundtland definition also provides a convenient point of departure for a broad understanding of this fairly abstract concept as SD is perhaps best thought of as a general concept whose precise definition has yet to be fully explicated (Portney, 2015). At its core, sustainability focuses on the condition of the Earth's biophysical movement, particularly with respect to the use and depletion of natural resources, yet it is not the same as environmental protection, or conservation/preservation of natural resources (Farley and Smith, 2011). Development involves a progressive transformation of economy and society, yet sustainable development is inclusive of the environment, the economy and society (WCED, 1987). The satisfaction of human needs and aspirations is the major objective of development and in essence sustainable development is a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations (WCED, 1987) [see Table 1].

Table 1: A Summary of the Definitions of Sustainability

Six Definitions of Sustainability	Points of Emphasis
Carrying Capacity	Optimum and maximum ability of Earth's systems to support human life and well-being.
Sustainable Use of Biological Resources	Maximum sustainable yield from natural systems, such as forests and fisheries.
Sustainable Agriculture	Maintaining productivity of farming during and after disturbances such as floods and droughts.
Sustainable Energy	Renewable alternatives to fossil fuel reliance to produce heat and energy.
Sustainable Society and Economy	Maintaining human systems to support economic and human well-being.
Sustainable Development	Promoting economic growth only to the extent and in ways that do not cause deterioration of natural systems.

(Source: adapted from Brown et al., 1987)

There is no denying the popularity of the concept of sustainability and sustainable development and this has been aided in recent years by the works of renowned academics (e.g. Barton, 2002; Adams, 2006). However, the main catalyst for this popularity of sustainable development was the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit held in 1992. The Rio Summit agreed a set of action points for sustainable development, collectively referred to as Agenda 21 (agenda for the Twenty-First Century) (Haas et al., 1992).

'Sustainability is generally understood to mean doing things that can be continued over long periods without unacceptable consequences' (Ross, 2009, p. 37). Just as disparities in the definition exist, disparities also arise about the nature of human needs now and in the future, and technology's role in meeting those needs (Ross, 2009; Portney, 2015). Therefore, when differing values between present and future generations, and different definitions of sustainability combine, sustainability can be construed as legitimizing 'weak-sustainability' (Blowers, 1992). Pearce (1993, p. 15) noted that 'on the weak sustainability interpretation of

sustainable development, there is no special place for the environment. The environment is simply another form of capital.' The definition of sustainability changed again in the early 1990s to represent more a trade-off between the environment and economic development (Ross, 2009). Later interpretations at the turn of the Twenty-First Century consider the three components of economy, environment, and society as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars, yet still favour high economic growth (Adams, 2006; Ross, 2009; Portney, 2015).

Twenty years ago, it would have been difficult to imagine that environmental issues would be a subject of discussion in major global leadership meetings. This can be seen as a testament to the growing awareness and importance of sustainable development and its pillar of environmental sustainability. The academic lexicon on the topic is vast, with many writers focusing upon the urgent need to rectify environmental issues such as climate change, sustainable agriculture, sustainable energy and sustainable biological resource use (e.g. Conway, 1985; Brown et al., 1987; Bulkeley, 2003; Rosenzweig, 2011; Healey, 2014; Bulkeley, 2015; Portney, 2015). Many academics, however, focus upon this issue as a global problem, whereas this research aims to identify environmental sustainability at local level, as there a lacuna of empirical research in this area.

The concept of sustainable economic development is also well-documented in the research and it essentially turns traditional understandings of economic growth on their head. Such traditional understandings take it as a given that promoting economic growth requires developing natural resources. Economic growth is important because it represents improvement in the standard of living, and improvement in the standard of living is synonymous with improvement in the human condition, human well-being, or social welfare (Portney, 2015). According to this view, increasing a country's gross domestic product (GDP) is required for improvement in that country's well-being and in order for GDP to grow, natural resources must be used even if the result is inevitable environmental degradation. Thus, this view accepts that there must be a trade-off between environmental degradation and natural-resource use, and improvement in human condition on the other. However, sustainable economic development challenges the idea of such a trade-off. One perspective suggests that such an understanding of the relationship between economic growth and the quality of the biophysical environment is a mere offshoot of the use of GDP as the primary measure of economic growth and human well-being (Portney, 2015). According to academics, unless measures of GDP are modified to account for the value of the degradation of the environment, GDP is a badly flawed measure of human well-being (Daly, 1997). However, attitudes towards environmental sustainability began to change with many economists seeing GDP as an incomplete measure of economic prosperity

(see Solow, 1993). By 2006, mainstream economists had largely accepted the idea that economic growth is not the same as human well-being. Sustainable economic development brought with it the idea that the relationship between traditional economic growth and human well-being needs to be better understood, and that the loss of ecological services and environmental degradation has the potential to undermine that well-being (see Stern, 2006).

There is a large degree of consensus in the literature that following the focus on environmental and economic sustainability, that little attention has been given to the social dimension of sustainability in the built environment disciplines (Littig and Griessler, 2005; Dempsey et al. 2011). Social sustainability, it is argued, appears as a 'concept in chaos' (Vallance et al., 2011, p. 342), which has been approached in a fragmented way (Weingaertner and Moberg, 2014) and is the least conceptually developed of the three pillars (Dillard et al., 2009; Boström, 2012; Woodcraft, 2012). As Colantonio and Dixon (2010) assert, a comprehensive study of this concept is still missing. It is often under-theorized or often oversimplified (Colantonio, 2009). Social sustainability has been defined within the literature as referring to the maintenance and improvement of the well-being of current and future generations (Chiu, 2003). Social sustainability is argued to have been achieved when a development creates a harmonious living environment, reduces social inequality and cleavages, and improves quality of life in general (Enyedi, 2002).

Without doubt, the definition of sustainability and sustainable development still remains somewhat ambivalent, despite the plethora of research conducted on the topic. Brown et al. (1987) made an effort to compare and contrast different meanings and intellectual roots of the general concept of sustainability for the purpose of working toward a common understanding [see Table 1]. Ultimately, they suggested, these six meanings converge around two major aspects or sets of results: those that emphasize ecology and those that emphasize economics, with a distinct lack of focus on social issues.

2.3 Sustainable Development: Urban Areas and Communities

Sustainable urban development may be defined as 'a process of synergetic integration and co-evolution among the great subsystems making up a city (economic, social, physical and environmental), which guarantees the local population a non-decreasing level of wellbeing in the long-term, without compromising the possibilities of development of surrounding areas and contributing by this towards reducing the harmful effects of development on the biosphere' (Camagni, 1998, p. 8). Many of the recent publications by international bodies and governments,

such as the UN and EU, have focused upon the reduction of harmful effects of development on the biosphere, through incentives to reduce emissions, use greater methods of green energy, and reduce our carbon footprint (UN, 2015; URBACT, 2018). According to Briassoulis (1999), sustainable development is now commonly cited as the ultimate urban planning goal, although what it means is not usually specified and details are not given for how it is to be achieved. Akin to the literature on sustainability and sustainable development as a concept [see Section 2.2], participants in urban management processed agree that sustainability in urban areas is concerned with the simultaneous satisfaction of three objectives – environmental protection, social equity and economic development (Lindsey, 2003).

Although much of the conceptual literature on sustainability does not directly address many of the ambiguities in concepts of sustainability and sustainable communities, sustainability efforts in smaller geographic areas within countries have begun to provide answers to their underlying questions (Portney, 2015). When the Brundtland Commission stated that 'cities account for a high share of the world's resource use, energy consumption, and environmental pollution' (WCED, 1987, p. 241), it was arguing that serious attention should be paid to urban sustainability. As part of the UN's 1992 Agenda 21 resolution, significant attention was paid to the relationship between national policies and the activities of local governments. In a section titled "Local Authorities' Initiatives in Support of Agenda 21," the link is made clearer:

> Because so many of the problems and solutions being addressed by Agenda 21 have their roots in local activities, the participation and cooperation of local authorities will be a determining factor in fulfilling its objectives. Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social, and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and subnational environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to the people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilizing, and responding to the public to promote sustainable development (United Nations Environmental Programme, 2000).

However, the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987) is not the only literature that deals with the link between urban sustainability, national policies and local governments. Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide (2009) note how policies and strategies for sustainable development at local level are strongly influenced by quality of life considerations and that the prospect of generating improvements to quality of life at the local level, and indeed the level of the individual, incentivises local efforts towards sustainable activity (Fahy and Ó Cinnéide, 2008 cited in Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide, 2009). However, while sustainable urban development has been widely accepted, both as a theoretical concept and policy goal, its translation into policy implementation remains problematic (Moore and Scott, 2005b). With the growing realisation

that much of the sustainability debate has an urban emphasis, as the world's cities are now the major consumers of global resources and the major producers of pollution and waste, any credible strategy to address these problems has to respond to urban pressures on the environment (McEldowney et al., 2003; Moore and Scott, 2005b). Local Agenda 21 is a subsection of Agenda 21 which was published by the UN following the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (UNSD, 1992). LA 21 focuses on using local government to implement the aims and objectives of Agenda 21 within urban areas as local government is 'the level of governance closest to the people, [and] they play a vital role in educating, mobilizing and responding to the public to promote sustainable development' (UNSD, 1992, Chapter 28, p. 285).

The international policy literature emphasises the importance of local people and local involvement to sustainable urban development (UNSD, 1992; ODPM, 2003; UN, 2015; GOI, 2019). Therefore, it is unsurprising that the development of sustainable communities has also been a key concept within the discourse of sustainable development and sustainable urban development. SCD is a concept which has developed greatly in recent years, as sustainable development becomes increasingly linked with community development and created ideas of 'sustainable' and 'green cities' (Roseland, 1997; Evans, 2002; Hallsmith, 2003; Roseland and Connelly, 2005; Caldwell, 2008). The term 'community' is as difficult to encapsulate as the term 'sustainable' and has been defined in the literature as more a feeling than a tangible entity. Barton (2000, p.147) describes it as the 'layer of society in which interactions take place between people who are neither close family and friends, nor yet total strangers.' Indeed, 'community' is also linked with a sense of pride in an area and a sense of belonging (Corcoran, Gray and Peillon, 2010). A sustainable community, therefore, is not just a group of people living in a certain area, but it is also a cohort that works together 'based on ecological balance, community self-reliance, and participatory democracy (Roseland, 1997, p. 199).

Sustainable community development encompasses a set of policies and activities that work together to create economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and social equity (Rainey et al., 2003). This effectively mirrors the definition of sustainability and sustainable development, as discussed in Section 2.2. However, the key component of sustainable community development is that it operates within a certain area with a certain cohort of people, i.e. a community. Local economic vitality implies increasing and strong standards of living during current times as well as the ability to adjust to changes over time so that local operators and individuals remain competitive within regional, national and global markets (Rainey et al., 2003). Environmental stewardship implies that current and future activities do not degrade local resources such that the community becomes less productive and/or attractive over time. Social

equity entails encouraging development that will benefit all segments of local society. This development process implies educational training that prepares current and future workers not only to meet their current employer's needs but also to be rapid adapters to new technology (Rainey et al., 2003). The UK's Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2003) was one of the first government bodies to identify a list of the criteria for sustainable communities as it stressed that 'the way our communities develop economically, socially, and environmentally… must respect the needs of future generations as well as succeeding now…[so that our communities are] places we want to live and will continue to want to live' (ODPM, 2003, p. 5). However, what is interesting about the ODPM's criteria for a sustainable community is that there was no public involvement in the selection of these criteria, largely failing to adhere to LA 21 guidelines for local participation (see OPDM, 2003). The ODPM criteria for sustainable communities were the product of discussions in a sub-group of the Central Local Partnership between the Local Government Association and Central Government. While this list is comprehensive and, it can be argued, encompasses many requirements of a sustainable community, it does not specify the requirements for levels of community satisfaction and inclusion. Although the ODPM requirements reference active community involvement and participation, the document does not specify whether this would be on a top-down or bottom-up basis. Many academics, such as Sherry Arnstein (1969) argue that citizen participation at a bottom-up level is either non-participation or tokenism, at best. Therefore, it would be more beneficial if these requirements outlined the need for community involvement and participation in planning policies, etc., which directly affect their community in a direct manner, reflecting true partnership and citizen power (Arnstein, 1969).

The term 'sustainable community' is as flexibly defined as sustainable development and can be interpreted in many ways. However, a dominant theme in debates over sustainability of communities is an increased emphasis on action at a local level, summed up in the maxim 'think globally, act locally' (Ellis, Motherway and Neil, 2005). This thinking is also reflected in the large-scale policies that have been developed for sustainable community development thus far (see UNSD, 1992; UN, 1993). Indeed, it has been suggested that sixty per cent of the agreements made at the 1992 Rio Summit and forty per cent of the European Environmental Action Plans have to be implemented at the local level (Gilbert et al., 1996). The potential of LA 21 was widely recognised, with over 6,500 local authorities in 113 countries having established such a process by 2001 (ICLEI, 2002). Yet despite the potential and initial enthusiasm for LA 21, by the end of the 1990s interest in the initiative began to wane due to frustration over progress and implementation issues (Lafferty and Coenen, 2001; Otto-Zimmerman, 2002). The Rio +10 World

Summit on Sustainable Development attempted to reinvigorate the drive towards local sustainability as it recognised that LA 21 had been an effective tool for raising awareness of sustainable development and the role of communities in its delivery (Ellis, Motherway and Neil, 2005). Following this newfound awareness of sustainable community development from policies such as Agenda 21 and LA 21, the rise of sustainable communities' policy focus across developed countries has been regarded as a backlash against the inability of planners to manage urban sprawl and the accompanying range of social and environmental problems (Agyman and Angus, 2003: Hempel, 2009).

2.4 Measuring Sustainability and Sustainable Communities

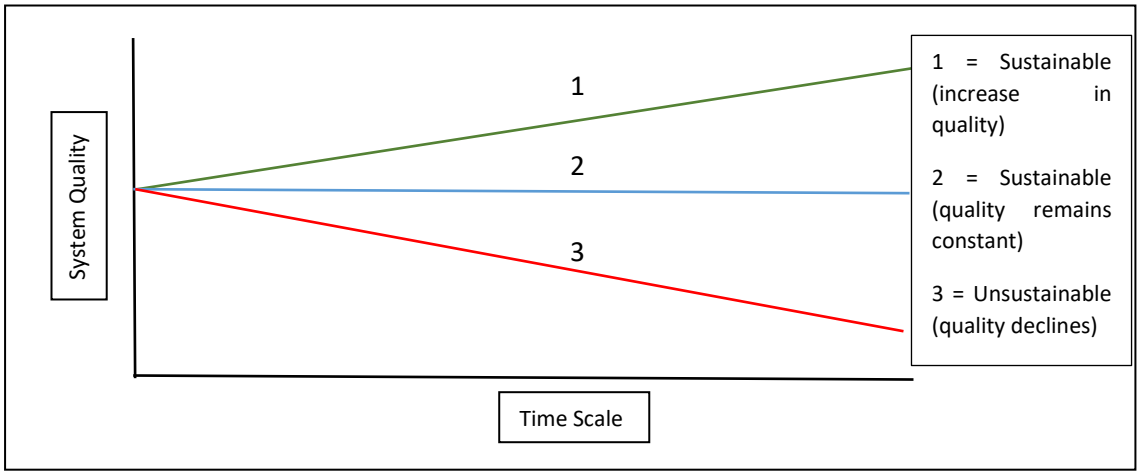
The rhetoric of sustainable development has pervaded planning and other areas of public policy since its conceptualisation in the 1980s, as 'sustainable' has become both a descriptor of something and a target to achieve (Cox et al., 1997). However, both the academic and policy literature suggest a 'significant degree of frustration at the lack of results and the failure of the framework to generate a professional consensus. Does this mean that the concept itself it flawed or is there a problem of implementation?' (Batty, 2006). Batty (2006, p. 29) also argues that 'we are failing to identify and measure our achievements [of sustainable development] adequately' and that this is contributing to the 'lack of obvious success.' It is evident that there are failures in delivering sustainable development, as Batty (2006) suggests – academic and professional lexicons have documented many such failures – from the problems of 'Not in My Backyarders' (NIMBYs) in early LA 21 programmes (Mittler, 2001); and an increasing number of academic and planning policy papers (Senior et al., 2004). It would be reasonable to argue that the distinct lack of identifiable measures and indicators of sustainability again relate to the ambiguity of the concept – indeed, this failure to obtain a universal and concise definition of sustainability has led some authors to take what may be thought of as a rather extreme position:

> Many would argue that it is important to define what sustainability is, or might be, before any actions can be taken towards setting up much sustainable… practices. We do not necessarily subscribe to the need to define sustainability in order to practice it, but the exercise of definitions is one useful way to examine several perspectives and to understand competing views (Gibbon et al., 1995, p.32).

Bell and Morse (1999) argue that the diversity surrounding the meaning of sustainability, as defined by the WCED (1987), relates to the subjectivity of the term 'system quality' [see Figure 2.2]. In this figure sustainability is represented by 'a change in property

referred to as 'system quality' – a very subjective term open to all sorts of value judgements. Sustainable equates to a situation where quality remains the same or increases. If quality declines then the system can be regarded as unsustainable' (Bell and Morse, 1999, p. 11). Of course, the widely accepted measures of sustainable development are the economy, environment and social equity, but it is of course the discussion of *how* to measure these components that has been widely debated across academic and policy circles.

Figure 2.2. System Quality and Sustainability



(Source: Adapted from Bell and Morse, 1999)

To ensure that the level of sustainability of urban renewal projects can be significantly enhanced, due consideration to various needs and expectations of different present and future generations is required in the urban design process (Chan and Lee, 2008). Urban design is defined as 'the art of making places for people' (DETR, 2000) and it is considered to be a process to satisfy functional and aesthetic needs (Couch and Dennemann, 2000 cited in Chan and Lee, 2008). Previous studies have supported that good urban design could bring a lot of benefits to a community as various parties are better off as more investment opportunities are offered, productivity increases, more jobs are created, a wide variety of accessible amenities are provided and quality of like improves (CABE and DETR, 2001; Munday and Roberts, 2006; Couch, 1990 cited in Chan and Lee, 2008).

According to Moussiopoulos et al. (2010) measuring sustainability in urban areas – which are crucial engines of local socio-economic development, but at the same time present concentration points of environmental decay – is a major challenge for decision-makers at all geographical scales. Sustainable development indicators act as 'a solid base for the regular and long-term monitoring of the progress registered in the achievement of strategic objectives of sustainable development and the evaluation of various aspects of sustainability' (Hernandez-

Moreno and De Hoyos-Martinez, 2010 cited in Alpopi et al., 2011, p. 79). Sustainable development indicators are indispensable tools for establishing strategy and policy development and giving a representative image of the three dimensions of sustainable development. According to Scipioni et al., (2009), the adoption of suitable indicators is fundamental to implement SD at the urban level and the use of evaluation indicators as a method for assessing the status of urban sustainable development is required to support urban planning and management. With sustainability as the goal, the use of indicators for urban monitoring and regulation is becoming more and more necessary (Repetti and Desthieux, 2006).

Community sustainable development indicators (CSDIs) are an extension to sustainable development indicators, and relevant to this research. CSDIs have been advocated as a means of making sustainable development a collective experience, by encouraging participation by all sectors of civil society – they are promoted as a vehicle by which communities can participate more fully in their own development (Terry, 2008). MacGillivray et al. (1998) argued that the creation of local indicators enables communities to make their agendas more visible to decision makers. Indicators are a means of identifying issues that can be prioritised. In democratic societies these processes are political as they include identifying issues and communally agreeing on priorities in the absence of sufficient resources to rectify all issues simultaneously (Terry, 2008). Advocates of community-generated indicators claim that it is an empowering process, as the voices of the marginalised become more audible to decision makers. However, empowering one group requires a willingness to share some political power by another (Moore, 2001; Terry, 2008).

There has been some success in certain projects in identifying CSDIs using bottom-up methodologies across academic and policy circles. On a global scale, the *Community Sustainable Development Indicators Project* a DFID-funded project ran between 1998 and 2001 in India and South Africa, aimed to engage all sections of civil society in the target areas with a goal to identify and prioritise agenda issues that could be taken up with decision makers (Terry, 2008). The project was divided into four phases of community engagement: the first phase entailed meeting with politician and representatives of community-based institutions and conducting an attitudinal survey; the second phase included presenting the findings of the survey at a workshop and the dissemination of findings to raise awareness of community sustainable development indicators; the third phase entailed prioritising indicators at workshops of community members (groups sized between 20-50 people); and finally the fourth phase involved internal and external communication of issues and indicators. The community began to organise itself to engage the relevant stakeholders, within and outside the township of the

case-study area, in the issues and indicators for that area (Terry, 2008). However, issues with this project were evident in the participants not being reflective of the entire community of the case-study area as they were generally those who were well-educated, or people who had already been motivated to try and make a difference within their community. While the gender mix of the group was initially even, it was made up predominantly of younger people in their twenties (Terry, 2008). Nevertheless, overall results appear to have been successful, with positive outcomes recorded in all participating communities in the *Community Sustainable Development Indicators Project* (Terry, 2008).

Despite positive actions by international organisations such as the UNCHS and DFID, developing CSDIs at a more local level among national governments fails to engage local communities. The unwillingness of national government can be seen, not in their failure to identify community sustainable development indicators, but rather the lack of bottom-up approaches and direct community involvement in shaping CSDIs. One project which exemplifies this issue is the ODPM's (2003) report *Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future.* The programme was delivered to 'tackle the pressing problems in… communities in England' (ODPM, 2003, p. 5). At the time of its publication it was seen as part of the UK Government's wider drive to raise the quality of life in the UK's communities through increasing prosperity, reducing inequalities, more employment, better public service, better health and education, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and so forth. The ODPM (2003) was successful in identifying CSDIs [see Table 2], but the process whereby these indicators were created was not reflective of community engagement and participation, which is an attribute earmarked on a global platform as essential for sustainable development (WCED, 1987; UNSD, 1992; UN-Habitat, 2006; UN, 2015). The ODPM (2003) failed to effectively engage in bottom-up methodologies for the identification of CSDIs as their identified indicators were the product of discussions in a sub-group of the Central Local Partnership between the LGA and Central Government (as mentioned above). Evidently, this did not effectively engage local residents within communities in the UK and therefore the ODPM (2003) failed to develop indicators that were truly reflective of communities, based on the lived-experience of local people.

Table 2: Key Indicators for Sustainable Communities in the United Kingdom

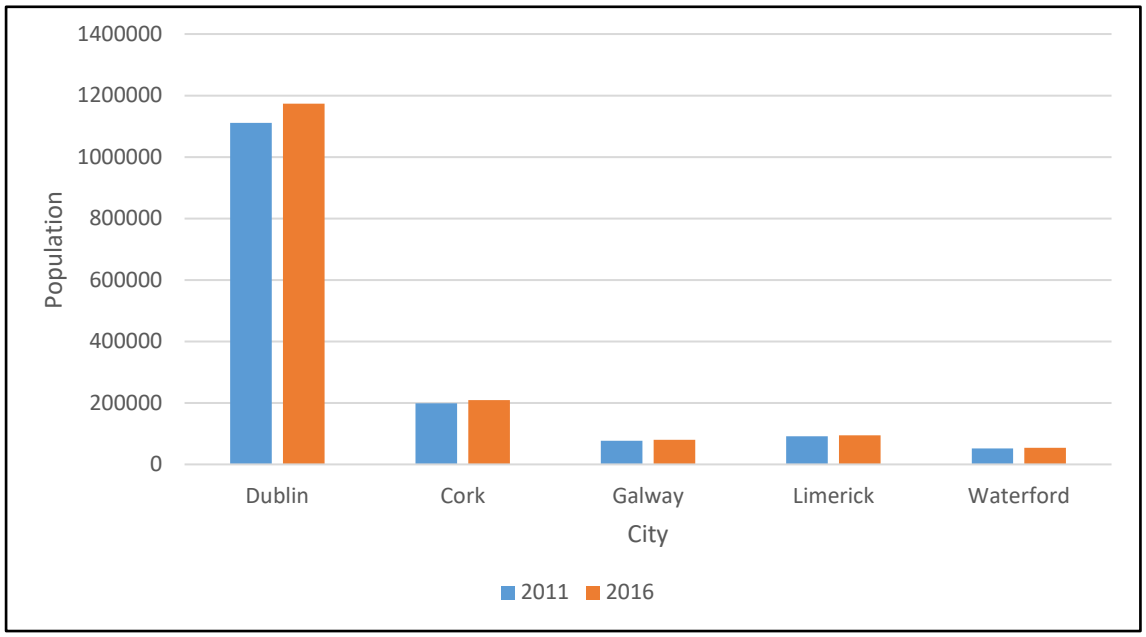
Component of Sustainable Development	Indicator(s) of Sustainable Development
Environment	- A safe and healthy local environment; - Well-designed public and green space; - Sufficient size, scale and density and the right layout to minimise use of resources (including land); - Good-quality built environment including building that can meet different needs over time and that minimise the use of resources;
Economy	- A flourishing local economy to provide jobs and wealth; - Strong leadership to respond positively to change; - Good public transport and other transport infrastructure both within the community and linking it to urban, rural and regional centres; - Good quality local public services, including education and training and health care services;
Society	- Effective engagement and participation by local people, groups and businesses, especially in the planning, design and long-term stewardship of their community; - An active voluntary and community sector; - A well-integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes; - Good quality community facilities, especially for leisure; - A diverse, vibrant and creative local culture, encouraging pride in the community and cohesion with it.

(Source: adapted from ODPM, 2003)

2.5 Situating Sustainability and Sustainable Community Development in an Irish Context

Ireland is now an urban society with the island having experienced rapid urban-generated growth and new patterns of development in recent years (Moore and Scott, 2005b). Dublin has always dominated the urban pattern of Ireland, with other cities in the Republic of Ireland remaining relatively small in population as the rank-size graph shows [see Figure 2.3]. Indeed, Dublin and the Greater Dublin Region experienced much higher rates of growth from 2011-2016 than other counties [see Figure 2.4].

Figure 2.3. Comparative City-Size in the Republic of Ireland



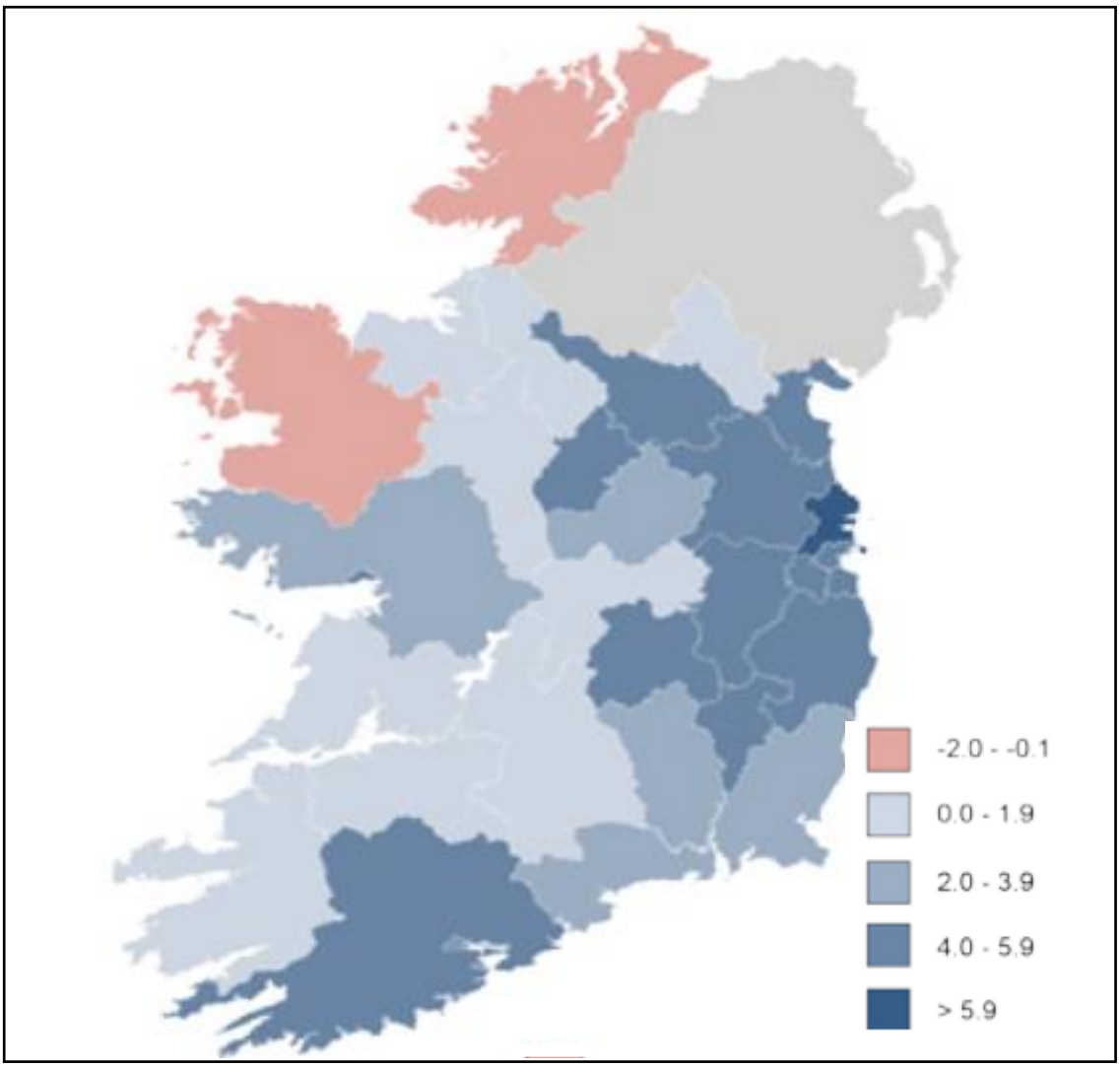
(Source: CSO, 2018)

There has long been a concern with the imbalance between the scale of the Dublin region and the rest of the country in terms of population and prosperity. It is recognised as the economic engine of the country, however, and some people argue that to 'cap' its growth will retard the economic development of the State (Moore and Scott, 2005b). However, this intensity of growth within the Dublin region has put distinct pressure on the development of the region. There is now a growing realisation that much of the sustainability debate has an urban accent.

Almost every level of governance across the island of Ireland has signed up to a vision of sustainability (Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005). However, akin to global and international issues with defining what is sustainable development and indeed what measures it, there are significant difficulties in reforming and reframing decision making in Ireland in a way that

encourages the transition towards sustainable development (Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005). Such problems appear most acutely at local level and the viability of local models of sustainable development is fundamental as it is here that key consumption-informing services such as land-use planning, and environmental health are delivered and where the potential of sustainability to transform patterns of governance is best realised (Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005). Shifts in governance are central to the transition to sustainable development and should include a redefinition of the ethics of decision-making and a widening of our 'communities of concern' (e.g. Selman and Parker, 1999; O'Riordan, 2002). Sustainability policy on the island of Ireland has been shaped against the backdrop of the international aspirations of LA 21 and the national governments of the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and in the case of Northern Ireland (NI), the UK government, have made some attempt to frame strategic approaches to sustainable development. A detailed account of the policy in ROI is provided in Chapter Three.

Figure 2.4. Percentage Population Change by County 2011-2016



(Source: CSO, 2016)

While there is no shortage of reviews and evaluations of LA 21 and sustainable development as a whole internationally and across the UK (e.g. Audit Commission, 1997; Young, 2000; Selman, 2001; Chan and Lee, 2008; Alpopi et al., 2011), comparative information for the ROI is relatively scarce. This is not only true in relation to policy framework analytics across the ROI for SD and SCD, but at the time of writing there are still very few works that engage with SD and SCD at local level in a meaningful way. One such project which does address sustainability and sustainable community development in Ireland was conducted by Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide (2009). This work explores contemporary understandings of community in urban-fringe locations in Ireland and analyses the main preoccupations and concerns in such rapidly-developing areas in relation to what can broadly be described as 'quality of life.' Traditional sustainability issues such as transport, waste management, pollution, access to facilities and green spaces are aspects of place that are highlighted in research into factors contributing to quality of life at the local level in Ireland (Leyden, 2003; Corcoran et al., 2007; Fahy and Ó Cinnéide, 2008). The issues pertinent to sustainability as listed above are noted by Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide (2009) as being in direct conflict with heightened modern-day expectations in Ireland relating to housing and service provision. A successful component of the work of Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide (2009, p. 266) is that it works directly with local residents in identifying 'a collective consciousness of place-related quality of life dimensions' through the use of one-hundred-and-fifty semi-structured interviews across four case-study areas. This decision to engage local residents within their research allows Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide (2009) to align with one of the requirements of sustainable development: community participation (UNSD, 1992; UN, 2015).

2.6 Identification of the Research Question(s)

This review of the literature highlighted a lacuna of qualitative research detailing sustainable development and sustainable community development at a variety of different geographical scales. However, particularly in Ireland, the issues of SD and SCD have been largely ignored within political circles, with only some empirical evidence existing within academia. The aim of this research project is to begin filling this lacuna. The research questions in Table 3 below will form the basis of the primary research and the methodological considerations will be discussed in Chapter Four. According to Quinn-Patton (2002), the most appropriate approach when designing a research methodology is to match the methods to the research questions because this enhances the methodological rigour and places the research at the heart of the study.

The ever-increasing population globally has resulted in the growth of settlements, which is most acutely noted in the growth of cities and urban areas over the past decades. The cities and towns of Ireland have too experienced this trend which is placing a greater pressure on the provision of houses, transport, facilities, food, etc. This pressure on our urban environments has resulted in the recognition that the development of such areas to successfully manage such growth must be responsible, sustainable and proactive in land planning and community development mechanisms. The Local Agenda 21, as published in the wake of the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janerio, recognises the necessity of involving local governments in sustainable development through local scale sustainable initiatives (Smith and Taylor, 2000). Although many environmental issues are global in scale, such as climate change and the loss of biodiversity and habitat around the world, it is nonetheless essential that sustainability programmes find a significant part of the solution in local communities. Despite the recognition of sustainability, SD and SCD and the acceptance that our communities must be engaged in planning for sustainable development, a fundamental flaw in the extant literature is an absence of bottom-up research which identifies community perspectives of their wants and needs for SCD. By placing local residents at the heart of this study, this research aims to give voice to their perspectives of the criteria necessary for SCD in Irish urban areas.

Table 3: Aligning the Research Questions to the Research Objectives

Research Question	RO1	RO2	RO3	RO4
1. How can sustainable development be defined globally, internationally, nationally and locally?	X	X	X	X
2. How can a successful sustainable community be defined? Is this purely empirical or does the literature reflect the lived-experience?	X	X	X	X
3. How do local communities conceptualise sustainable community development: what are the perspectives of local communities upon the criteria necessary for sustainable community development?		X	X	X
4. Does the natural and built environment of an area impact upon the sustainability of a community – does a symbiotic relationship exist here?			X	X
5. Does the economy of an area impact upon the sustainability of a community – does a symbiotic relationship exist here?			X	X
6. Does the society of an area impact upon the sustainability of a community – does a symbiotic relationship exist here?			X	X

2.7 Summary

This chapter highlighted that 'sustainable development' as defined by the WCED (1987) is a highly contested concept. It has also charted the emergence of sustainable community development within academic and policy lacunas and demonstrated the lack of empirical research in this field. This lack of empirical evidence could also be attributed to the difficulties in evaluating sustainable development and sustainable community development. The literature has shown that there is no standard definition for the concept, nor is there a definitive list of indicators. This has caused much frustration in relation to the success of implementing sustainable development policies at local level, where issues are most acutely felt. This study aims to bridge the gap between the evolving definitions of sustainability, policy frameworks, and the indicators/criteria of sustainability at local level within communities. Even though the perspectives of local residents do not feature strongly in the literature, I believe that it is important to place them at the heart of this study in order to gain a more nuanced and balanced understanding of sustainable development within urban communities in Ireland. Chapter Three will provide a contextual framework for this research in relation to global, international and Irish sustainable development policy and the impact upon local governance, particularly within the two case-study areas of Donabate, Co. Dublin and Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13.

Chapter Three: Contextual Framework: Sustainable Development Policy at Home and Abroad

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Sustainable human life on this globe cannot be achieved without sustainable local communities. Local government is close to where environmental problems are perceived and closest to the citizens and shares responsibility with governments at all levels for the well-being of humankind and nature. Therefore, cities and towns are key players in the process of changing lifestyles, production, consumptions and spatial patterns.

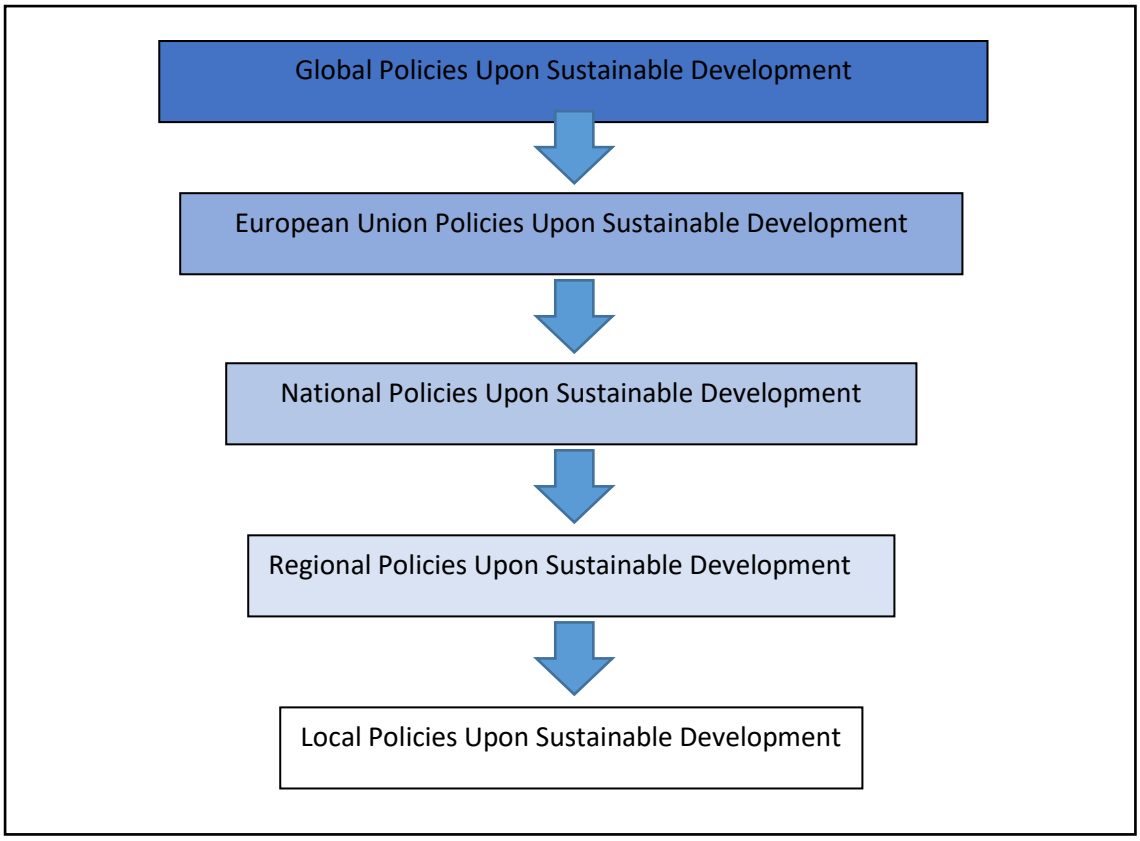
— Charter of European Towns and Cities Towards Sustainability (1994, p. 1)

3.1 Introduction

The pace of change in cities around the world has become so rapid, that at times, planners cannot adequately cope (UN-Habitat, 2007). Therefore, a strategic urban planning (SUP) approach, which can anticipate some of these changes, is a necessity. Older and conventional approaches such as the use of 'master plans' are no longer sufficiently flexible nor adequate in addressing the challenges of the Twenty-First Century (UN-Habitat, 2007; UN-Habitat, 2009). As Briassoulis (1999) highlighted, sustainable development is now commonly cited as the ultimate urban planning goal and hence policies surrounding urban development had to adopt adequate strategies to achieve such a goal.

As urban policy can be defined to include any policy that is particularly relevant for cities (i.e. housing, transportation, public health, crime, internal mobility, etc.), it is necessary for urban policy to be coherent and well implemented (Glaser, 2012). This research acknowledges the growing need for holistic and more cohesive urban policies at an international, national, regional and local level and will discuss the current policies and frameworks in place across all scales, inclusive of their background context. It will also discuss the trickle-down effect of planning policies, legislation and frameworks at international and national Government level to the local level [see Figure 3.1]. Therefore, an analysis of the policies, legislation, frameworks and programmes, etc. as developed and adopted by the upper tiers of the scale must be conducted in order to give context to the development which is happening at regional and local level.

Figure 3.1: Visualisation of Trickle-Down Effect from International to Local Level



(Source: Current Research)

This chapter details the theories and policies that contextualise the current development of communities in urban areas in Ireland. In line with traditional planning efforts, this chapter will follow a 'top-down' structure, with the global policies being discussed initially. Further to this, the policies of the European Union (EU) will be analysed, followed by Irish policies at National level. This Irish viewpoint will continue into discussions of regional and local policies which shape the current development of urban areas.

3.2 Global Policies Influencing Sustainable Development in the Twenty-Frist Century

The United Nations (UN) has been actively involved in the production of conferences, agendas and reports which revolve around achieving sustainable development. These include the Brundtland Report (1987), Earth Summit (1992), Agenda 21 (1992), the Millennium Development Goals (2000), and Agenda 2030 (2015) (WCED, 1987; UN, various years).

One of the most notable events of the Earth Summit was the publication of the agreement Agenda 21. Agenda 21 reinforced one of the key themes of sustainability as put

forward by the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987): public participation. The agreement was described as an action plan for sustainable development at global, national and local levels and was signed by over one-hundred-and-fifty countries at the Summit (UNSD, 1992). The focus upon local participation was reinforced in Chapter 28 of Agenda 21, which became known as Local Agenda 21 (LA 21). LA 21 essentially calls for local authorities to enter into a dialogue with their citizens to encourage local action and the cultural and behavioural change required for sustainable development (Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005. Laffety (2001) surmised that an LA 21 process would entail; (i) an explicit attempt to relate environmental effects to economic and political pressures; (ii) an active effort to relate local issues and decisions to global impacts; (iii) a focused policy for achieving cross-sectional integration of concerns, goal and values; (iv) greater efforts to increase community involvement including participatory assessment; (v) a commitment to define local problems within a broader ecological, geographical and temporal frameworks; and (vi) specific identification with the Earth Summit and Agenda 21.

The Millennium Development Goals and Agenda 2030 (UN, 2000; UN, 2015) provided architecture for OECD countries to support developing countries using trade, aid and debt relief, amongst other instruments. The focus of these goals was on economic and social development, the combination was labelled 'Human Development,' while also protecting our environment (Walsh, 2016). The United Nations' Agenda 2030 was deemed 'truly an agenda of the people, for the people and by the people' as it incorporated participation of UN Secretariat and member states, UN groups and other stakeholders (Dodds, Donoghue and Roesch, 2016). At the core of the SDG Agenda 2030 is a universal set of seventeen Sustainable Development Goals and one-hundred-and-sixty-nine targets to end poverty in all its forms, in all nations by 2030 (UN cited in Walsh, 2016). Compared to the Millennium Development Goals, these goals have moved beyond social goals for households to include goals for cities, companies, the planet and governments (Walsh, 2016).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development perfectly demonstrates the influence which policies developed at 'higher' scales exert on national and regional policies, especially within United Nations' Member States. As such, the 2030 Agenda will spur actions led by governments in partnership with the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders to end poverty and build a more sustainable world (Walsh, 2016). This initiative is reflective of the UN's acknowledgement that people are at the centre of everything – that people need to work together in partnership and peace, at local, national, regional and global levels to eliminate harm on nature and humanity for current and future generations (Walsh, 2016).

In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, and other global development agreements and frameworks, the United Nations devised The New Urban Agenda, which represents 'a shared vision for a better and more sustainable future – one in which all people have equal rights and access to the benefits and opportunities that cities can offer, and in which the international community reconsiders the urban systems and physical form of our urban spaces to achieve this' (Clos cited in UN, 2017, p. iv). This Agenda stresses that if it is well-planned and well-managed, urbanisation can be a powerful tool for sustainable development (Clos cited in UN, 2017). Most notably, the New Urban Agenda reaffirms the UN's commitment to acknowledging the need for sustainable development in an integrated and coordinated manner at the global, regional, national, subnational and local levels, with the participation of all relevant actors (UN, 2017). Furthermore, the UN (2017) highlight their commitment to strengthening the coordination role of national, subnational and local governments, and their collaboration with other public entities and non-governmental organisations in the provision of social and basic services for all. Whilst this is a positive step for those at the lower-levels of power, it is still not indicative of the involvement of communities at the planning stage of development.

However, despite the UN's effort to incorporate some level of community involvement within planning and community development, UN policies and agendas are only successful if states comply with them. Compliance with the UN (or other international law) is haphazard and is something that has confused scholars for many decades (Keohane, 1984). However, as Henkin famously stated in relation to the issues surrounding UN compliance, 'it is probably the case that almost all nations observe almost all principles of [international law] and almost all of their obligations almost all of the time' but are not legally bound to follow any obligations (cited in Fischer, 1981).

3.3 International Policies Influencing Sustainable Development: The European Union Objective

At European level, the sustainable urban development agenda has gained a high political currency since the early 1990s. In 1990, the Commission of the European Communities (CEC) published the 'Green Paper of the Urban Environment,' providing a comprehensive review of the challenges facing the urban environment. This was then developed further in the 1997 CEC Communication 'Towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union,' which stressed the need for an urban perspective in EU Policies (Moore and Scott, 2005b). This was then followed by the

1998 Communication 'Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework for Action,' which outlines four independent policy aims that provide a holistic perspective on sustainable development [see Figure 3.2].

Figure 3.2. Policy Aims for Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union

(Source: Adapted from CEC, 1998)

Furthering on from CEC (1998), CEC (2004) also outlines a series of policy themes to promote sustainable urban development as follows:

- Improve ambient air quality in urban areas, and the reliability and quality of drinking water supplies, and the protection and management of surface and ground water;
- Reduce at source the quantity of water requiring final disposal and reduce environmental waste;
- Protect and improve the built environment and cultural heritage, and promote biodiversity and green space in urban areas;
- Promote resource efficient settlement patterns and minimise land-take and urban sprawl;
- Minimise the environmental impacts of transport through aiming at suitable transport modes such as public transport and cycle-ways;

- Improve environmental performance of enterprises by promoting goof environmental management in all sectors;
- Achieve measurable and significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in urban areas and increased use of renewable energy sources;
- Minimise and manage environmental risks in urban areas;
- Promote a more holistic, integrated and environmentally friendly sustainable approaches to the management of urban areas.

The European Union has recognised that that problems of urban sustainability are most sharply experienced 'in areas where residential densities are low and where day-to-day activities (home, work, shopping) are widely separated' (EU, 2001, p. 2), which in turn results in the Union favouring local responses to urban issues, similar to the approach of LA 21 (UNSD, 1992). In the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) sustainable development, assigning equal importance to economic and environmental issues, was explicitly identified as a key strategy for the EU. The primary recommendations of the more recent Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent are to control the expansion of urban areas through increasing the supply of land within cities by recycling previously-used land, revitalising deprived neighbourhoods, and engaging in environmental regeneration of former industrial sites (CEMAT, 2000).

The EU is also committed to the adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the EU and its Member States will foster 'a stronger and more sustainable, inclusive and prosperous Europe' (Tanjani et al., 2017, p. 4). In response to actions taken by the UN, the EU published the New European Consensus on Development, which is informed by EU policy and treaties such as the Treaty on the European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Tanjani et al., 2017).

3.4 National Policies and Legislation on Sustainable Urban Development in Ireland

Since the 1990s, the global, regional and national sustainability agenda has moved forward significantly, and the new urban policy approach is commonly built around three themes of competitiveness, cohesion and governance (Buck et al., 2002) and is inclusive of a heightened appreciation of the role of civil society within achieving SD (Lovan et al., 2004). As Glaeser (2012) suggests, urbanisation is closely correlated with national prosperity, which highlights the need for nations to adequately plan and implement urban development / regeneration policies in order to ensure sustainable growth.

This heightened appreciation of SD only became evident in Ireland from the 1990s, years later than the UK, which had a distinct urban policy from the 1960s (Moore, 2005). The focus on SD in Ireland began in response to rapid and unprecedented urbanisation so that urban management, and how to achieve this sustainably, became a critical issue in Ireland. In 1997, in response to the Earth Summit in 1992, the Government published *Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland* (DoE, 1997). What was shocking about this publication was not that it was not published until five years after the Earth Summit, but rather it did not include a chapter on sustainable urban development. The aims and objectives of sustainable urban development are referred to in generic terms, through discussions on the effective utilisation of brownfield sites and existing developed urban areas (DoE, 1997). However, the recognition of the importance of the urban environment in sustainable development became a much more central focus in the *National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020: People Place and Potential* (DoE, 2002). This document provided a framework within which balanced and sustainable regional development could take place in Ireland from 2002-2020 and it argued the need to strengthen existing policies of counter-urbanisation to halt the expansive urban sprawl of the eastern seaboard (DoE, 1997). This strategy also provided the guiding framework for all policy that has followed, including that relating to LA21 and to other policy areas, such as poverty (DSFA, 2002), waste management (DoELG, 2002a), climate change (DoELG, 2000), biodiversity (DAHGI, 2002), and spatial development (DoELG 2002b). The framework (DoE, 2002) also played a critical role in enabling and encouraging local activity in sustainable development, guided by LA21 (UNSD, 1992). However, in the years preceding this NSS framework, Ireland's progress towards local activity was considered one of the most 'tardy' in Europe and LA21 in ROI largely remained at the level of 'latent potential' rather than making 'visible progress' (Mullally, 2001; Ellis, Motherway and Neil, 2005).

Significant progress in achieving SD with local community involvement as a core objective is seen in Ireland's latest national development framework, *Project Ireland 2040* (GOI, 2019). Unlike previous plans, it covers a greater expanse of time and does not 'elevate one idea over another,' but rather holds the ambition to develop 'a single vision,' which is a shared set of goals for every community across the country (GOI, 2019). The Framework brings modern issues to the fore and focuses upon 'Making Stronger Urban Places,' 'People, Homes and Communities,' and 'Realising Our Sustainable Future' as stand-alone, significant entities. From the onset, the Framework identifies that 'sustainability is at the heart of long-term planning' (GOI, 2019, p. 19). Since 2015, Ireland has been a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which frame national agendas and policies to 2030. These SDGs

build on the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and have a broader agenda that applies to all countries (GOI, 2019). Many comparisons can be drawn between the UN SDGs and the National Planning Framework's National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) across areas such as climate action, clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, economic growth, reduced inequalities, innovation and infrastructure, as well as education and health (GOI, 2019). The 2040 Framework outlines ten National Strategic Outcomes, as follows:

1. Compact Growth
2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility
3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
4. Sustainable Mobility
5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
6. High Quality International Community
7. Enhanced Amenities and Heritage
8. Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society
9. Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and Other Environmental Resources
10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services

(Government of Ireland, 2019)

While community development within urban areas is lacking in this Framework as an NSO, the improvement of our urban areas is deeply embedded throughout the Framework itself. There are several National Policy Objectives (NPOs) listed which highlight the focus of this Framework 'to create and promote opportunities for our people, and to protect and enhance our environment - from our villages to our cities, and everything around and in between' (GOI, 2019, p. 10). As stated in NPO 2a, the Framework has a target of half (50%) of Ireland's future population and employment growth to be focused in the existing five cities and their suburbs (Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford), with NPO 4 ensuring that the creation of attractive, liveable, well-designed, high-quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being (GOI, 2019, p.159-160). However, in recognising that this growth in urbanisation will require adequate planning, National Policy Objective 28 states that the Framework will 'plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens,

through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services. However, many argue that while the National Planning Framework 2040 is attempting to address the unequal distribution of growth, this is best left alone. According to Dr Frank Crowley (2018), the Framework merely seeks to enable Cork to counterbalance the development of Dublin and such attempts to spread out growth will undermine long-term National growth in an unsustainable way.

Ireland has experienced a radical restructuring of urban and local governance in recent years; this has included 'a growing shift from government to governance, the emergence of partnerships as a mechanism for local development, and the imperative to include multiple stakeholders in collaborative models of policy formulation' (Moore and Scott, 2005b). According to Broderick (2002), the restructuring of governance relationships in Ireland at a local level emerges from a number of sources: a new national context for governance that describes the basis of social partnership; European and global influences that emphasise the importance of local involvement; and increased community development activities in Irish society.

The formation of local government in Ireland radically changed through the emergence of local partnerships, operating in response to a variety of national and EU programmes, in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Moore and Scott, 2005b). By the end of the 1990s, Walsh (1998) estimated that there were approximately one hundred officially recognised local partnerships in the Republic of Ireland, including: County Enterprise Boards, the Area-Based Response to Long-Term Unemployment, and European programmes such as LEADER, URBAN, and Poverty 3. However, the local partnerships agenda was fraught with tensions and issues arose. Most notably, the issue of citizen participation in local government, the relationship between local government and local government partnerships, and the lack of coordination of local development activities led the Government to introduce a number of measures to mitigate these concerns. The White Paper, 'Better Local Government, A Programme Change' by the Department of Environment and Local Government (1996) (at the time of writing separated into the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government) aimed to enhance local democracy by ensuring that: (i) local communities and their representatives have a real say in the delivery of the full range of public services locally; (ii) new forms of participation by local communities in the decision-making processes of local councils are facilitated; and (iii) the role of councillors in running local councils is strengthened.

3.5 Sub-Regional Development Plans in Ireland: The Case of Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council

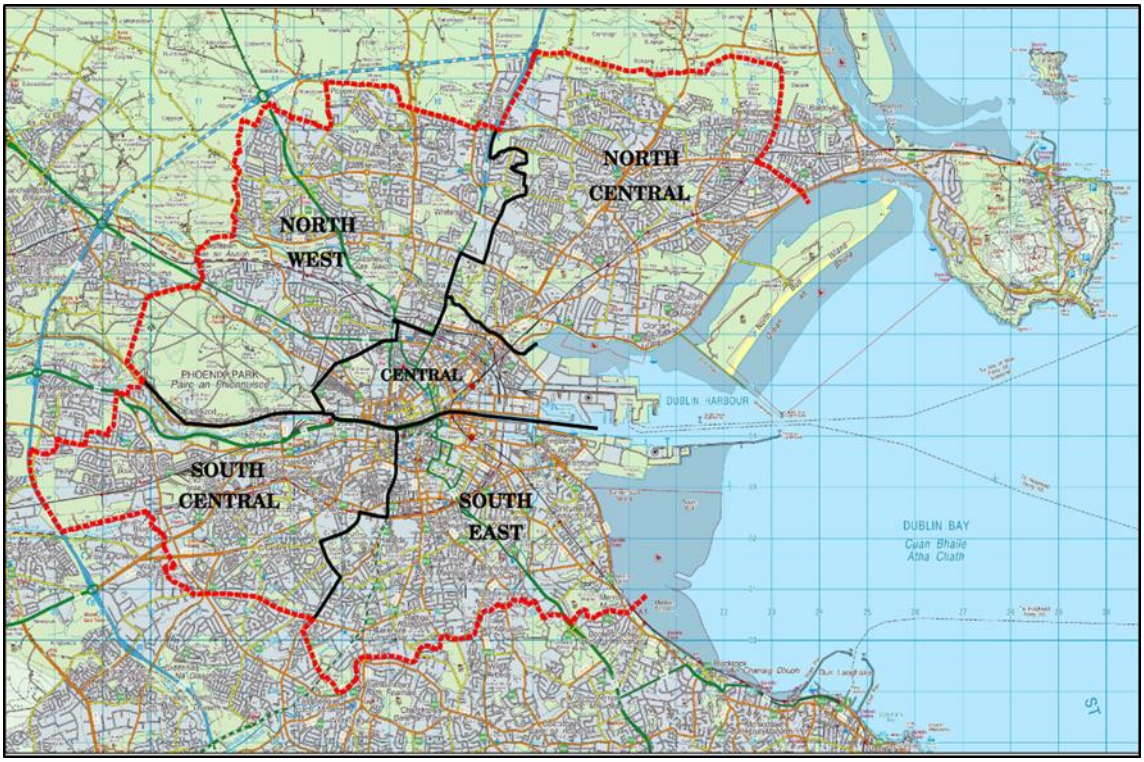
The policies and frameworks which have been developed in Ireland since the 1990s are inextricably linked with those which have been developed within the UN and EU over the same period of time. Particularly, the UN's agenda, LA 21, has had a profound impact upon policies operating within the EU and Ireland, particularly in relation to local involvement and local governance in planning for sustainable development. This objective within the *Framework Policy for Local and Community Development* in Ireland highlights the need for planning to be inclusive of the local community, even though this process is still lacking in the National Development Framework 2040, as mentioned above (DRCD, 2015; GOI, 2019). The DRCD objective requires National and Local government to work with communities to build a shared vision based on a set of core values (DRCD, 2015). However, at present, local governments devise development plans with little input from locals themselves. For the purpose of this research, Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council will be discussed in relation to their planning policies and frameworks as they are the local authority areas of the two case-study areas.

In 1999, the Government established partnership structures called County and City Development Boards in every Local Authority area in Ireland. These Boards address co-ordination at a local level, improve participation of local communities in local decision-making and tacking social exclusion (DCC, 2002). These Boards follow the recommendations made by the Task Force on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development (1998, 1999, 2000 cited in DCC, 2002). The formal statutory basis for all the City and County Development Boards and for the preparation by each Board of an Economic, Social, and Cultural Strategy for its area is set out in Section 129 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (Government of Ireland, 2001). Therefore, the Dublin City Development Board, on behalf of Dublin City Council, published an integrated Economic, Social and Cultural Strategy entitled '*Dublin: A City of Possibilities 2002-2012'* (DCC, 2002).

Subsequent Local Development Plans published by Dublin City Council [see Figure 3.3] adopted these themes and the strategies of aforementioned national, EU and global plans/agendas. Overall, the *City Development Plan 2005-2011* proposed 'a sustainable and vibrant city in the context of the strategy for development of a Greater Dublin' (Fitzgerald cited in DCC, 2005, p. ii). The 2005-2011 Plan placed a large emphasis upon Community development in a holistic manner, something which national frameworks have failed to do. The 2005-2011 Plan acknowledged that community development is about increasing the extent and effectiveness of community activity and improving the local authority's relationship with

communities (DCC, 2005), akin to the objectives of LA 21. 'It involves adopting and facilitating a range of practices dedicated to increasing the strength and effectiveness of community life, improving local conditions and enabling people to participate in public decision making and achieving long term control over their circumstances' (DCC, 2005, p. 32).

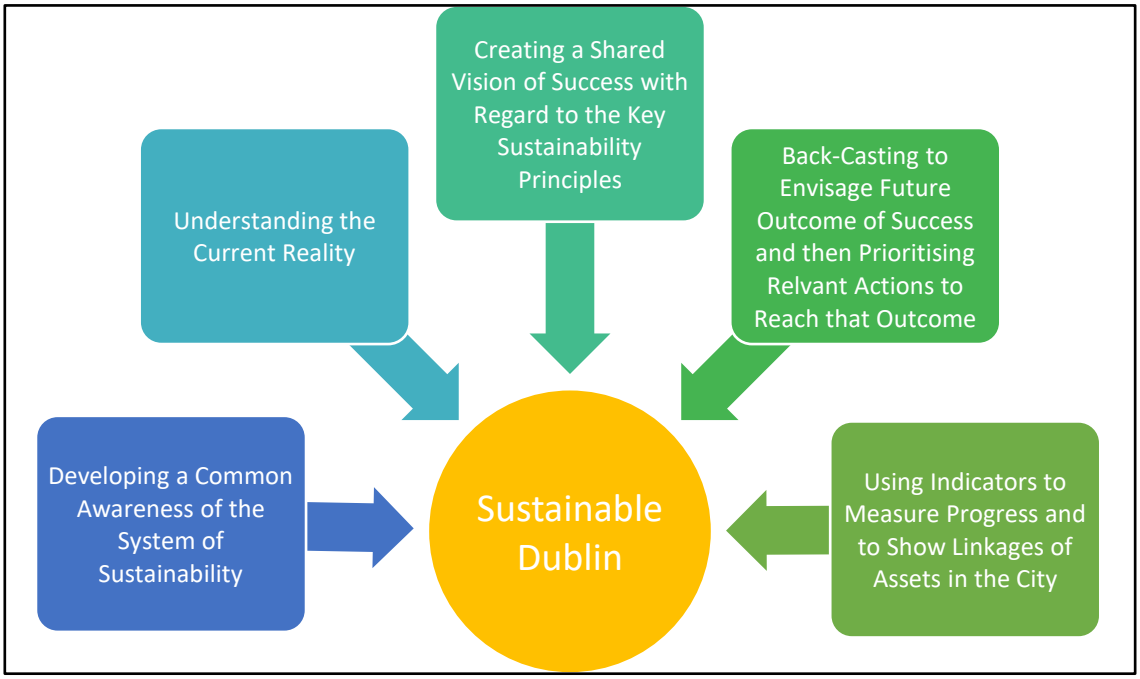
Figure 3.3: The Boundaries of Dublin City Council



(Source: DCC, 2018)

The *Dublin City Development Plan 2007*-2017 evolved significantly from former plans as it aimed to 'provide a coherent spatial framework for the delivery of sustainable development to ensure an improved quality of life for its citizens…[with] a new approach…based on the principles of sustainability and thematic integration' (DCC, 2010, p.6). The Plan included six themes: economic; social; cultural; urban form and spatial; movement; and Environment (DCC, 2010). Throughout the consultation process for this plan, the theme of the environment was emphasised due to the growing awareness of sustainability (environmental) and how this is crucial to the City's success (DCC, 2010). However, Dublin City Council recognised that sustainability also lies outside the parameters of environmental concerns and established the *Framework for Sustainable Dublin* (FSD) as a tool to tackle the challenge of climate change and to progress towards a sustainable society for Dublin (DCC, 2010) [see Figure 3.4].

Figure 3.4. Aims for a Framework for Sustainable Dublin



(Source: adapted from DCC, 2010, p. 180)

The most recent development plan for the City was published in 2016 by Dublin City Council. The *Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022* aims to guide Dublin to recover from the recent six-year long economic downturn with a more cautious return to the provision of much-needed housing by progressing the proposals of the Government-backed task force to expedite the supply of the right housing in the right place (DCC, 2016). The Plan envisions the long-term development of Dublin and this long-term approach is based on the principles of sustainability and resilience on the social, economic and environmental fronts, which all establish a context for the Plan (see Figure 3.4).

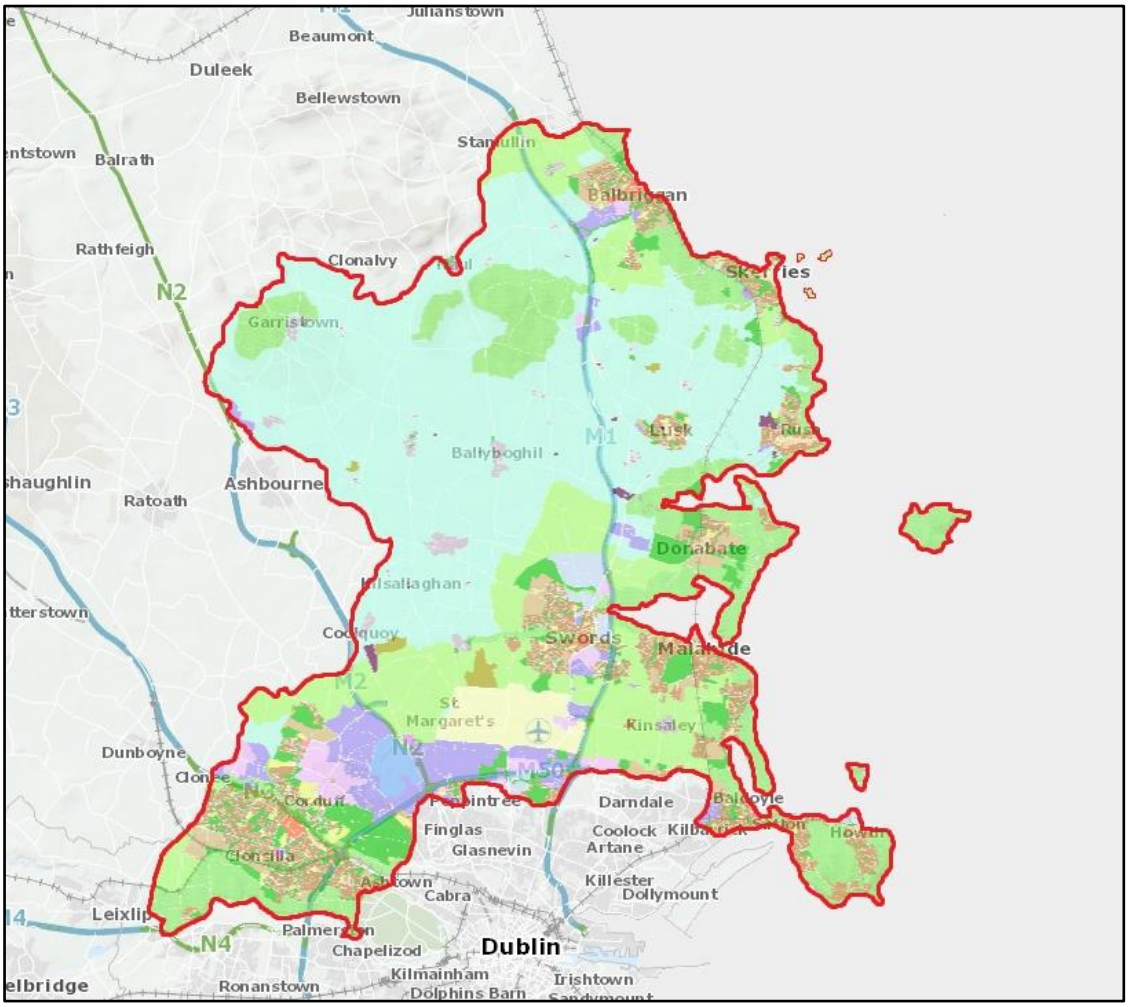
The provision of adequate housing, infrastructure and services in order to facilitate the continued growth of the city, while being mindful of the economic, environmental and social implications is an overall core objective of this Plan (DCC, 2016). Housing in Dublin is a key issue for the city, with housing completions falling from 7,746 units in 2007 to just 502 units in 2013. This fall in unit completion came at a time when demand for social housing grew during the recession, yet output fell as a result of fewer Part V completions and pressure on exchequer funding (DCC, 2016). To combat issues surrounding housing provision, DCC has implemented the following Government policies in their plans: *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities* (DoEHLG, 2007a); *Delivering Housing, Sustaining Communities* (DoEHLG, 2007b); *Construction 2020* (DoHPLG, 2012); *The Social Housing Strategy 2020* (DoHPLG, 2014); *Planning and*

Development (Amendment) Act 2015 (GOI, 2015); *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* (DoHPLG, 2018).

Dublin City Council defines a 'successful neighbourhood [as providing] a unique and enriching life choice for residents and the community… [and] irrespective of their unique and varying characteristics, a common theme is that good neighbourhoods serve as focal points for the surrounding community with a range of services and facilities, typically in a vibrant and attractive physical environment' (2016, p. 212). In order to achieve this, the Dublin City Council within the Development Plan 2016-2022 devise a strategic approach which reflects the National policy guidance within the NSS and the *Local Government Reform Act, 2014*, as well as other relevant Government policies (DCC, 2016). The Plan focuses on the creation of a network of sustainable communities throughout the city through the design and implementation of Local Area Plans (LAPS), Strategic Development Zones (SDZs) and Strategic Development and Regeneration Areas (SDRAs) (DCC, 2016). The Plan focuses upon the delivery of social infrastructure and promote culture as key tools to support sustainable communities through a collaborative approach to endorse inclusive planning and value the enhanced role of the wider community under the Local Government Reform Act, 2014: Public Participatory Network (PPN), the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and the Local Economic Development Committee (LEDC) (DCC, 2016). In their creation of sustainable neighbourhoods, it is a key objective of Dublin City Council to 'engage with cultural, community and corporate stakeholders in an area, to develop inclusive strategies for community infrastructure provision' (DCC, 2016, p.218).

With growth occurring on a large scale, the design, development and implementation of their Development Plans into the Twenty First Century was of crucial importance to the Fingal area [see Figure 3.4]. In the *Fingal County Development Plan 2005-2011*, which succeeded the 1999 Plan, sought to develop and improve, in a sustainable manner, the environmental, social, economic and cultural assets of the County (FCC, 2005). Fingal County Council (2005) also adopted the *Planning and Development Act, 2000* and LA 21 into their Plan; this was in order to allow public involvement at a much earlier stage in the plan preparation process (Government of Ireland, 2000: FCC, 2005). In line with this, FCC carried out an extensive public consultation process involving notification of the public, prescribed bodies, local community and voluntary groups, associations and societies, statutory undertakers and service providers of the review process (FCC, 2005). Over the consultation period, 1,003 written submissions were received by the Council, representing a 0.5% return of the total population (196,413 in 2002) (FCC, 2005).

Figure 3.4: The Boundaries of Fingal County Council



(Source: Fingal County Council, 2018)

The strategic aims of this plan were to plan for and support the sustainable development of Fingal, to provide for the future well-being of the residents, to promote a balance of development across the area, to ensure an adequate supply of zoned lands to meet forecasted economic and social needs, to foster the development of socially and economically balanced sustainable communities which promote social inclusion, and to continue to influence regional and National planning and development policies in the interest of the area (FCC, 2005). The large focus of FCC upon developing the area of Fingal and its communities sustainably required the County to plan and provide for adequate housing for the ever-growing population. The Housing Strategy for the Fingal County Development Plan 2005-2011 was a requirement under the *Planning and Development Act, 2000 Part V* and *Part II of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2000* (FCC, 2005).

A core strategy of this Plan, in line with national policy (the current Social Partnership Agreement), was to 'build a fair and inclusive society and to ensure that people have the

resources and opportunities to live life with dignity and have access to the quality public services that underpin life chances and experiences' (FCC, 2005, p.123). In particular, community participation was a great focus within this plan, with Fingal County Council (2005) seeking to establish a partnership approach with local community groups and relevant agencies as the basis for the formulation of local area plans, or action plans, which reflect the real needs of the community. The plan aims to do this through two simple objectives:

1. Objective SI07: to undertake appropriate consultation and community participation mechanisms in preparation of local area plans, and planning studies indicated in the County Development Plan.

2. Objective SI08: to support the provision of community facilities where necessary and to continue to sponsor community projects where appropriate.

(FCC, 2005).

Like the 2005-2011 Plan, the 2011-2017 Fingal County Council Development Plan also had a public consultation period prior to the draft stage of the planning process. However, participation rates within the total population (239,992 in 2006) dropped to 0.4% in relation to how many submissions the Council received during the consultation phase (FCC, 2011). Nevertheless, efforts were still made to actively engage the public, just relatively unsuccessfully. This Plan was also developed under the *Planning and Development Act, 2000* and the *Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2002* and shares the same vision as previous plans: to sustainably develop the Fingal area in relation to the economy, the environment and society (FCC, 2011).

Within this Plan, the idea of sustainability within developments was much more embedded within the objectives and policies. As such, there was no stand-alone 'sustainability' section within the Fingal County Council Development Plan 2011-2017, but rather a greater awareness that sustainability must take a more practical approach. Unsurprisingly, the urban area of Fingal was emphasised greatly within the plan and a focus upon high quality urban design, housing, community infrastructure and social inclusion came to the fore (FCC, 2011). Fingal County Council (2011) identified the following as methods of achieving a high-quality urban area: urban design; urban centres; residential development; open space; and community infrastructure.

The Fingal County Council Development Plan 2017-2023 is the current development plan which shapes any and all current and planned development within the area of Fingal. The

Council are still notably failing in actively engaging its population, with a submission rate over the entire consultation process against total population figures still at 0.4% (FCC, 2017). This Development Plan is novel in its inclusion of 'Place-Making' as a unique section. This highlights the commitment of Fingal County Council to develop its area in a holistic manner by also focusing upon social development and the well-being of its inhabitants. The Development Plan aims 'to improve the quality of Fingal's urban and rural environments and encourage a high standard of design in all new developments. Adhering to the principles of place-making will achieve accessible, safe and sustainable built and natural environments, which reflect the special character and heritage of the County and its varied townscapes and landscapes' [see Figure 3.5] (FCC, 2017, p.233).

Figure 3.5: Adapted 'Egan Wheel:' Place-Making and Sustainable Communities

(Source: Egan (2004) cited in FCC, 2017)

This Plan also aims to develop 'sustainable communities' which FCC defines as 'those that are economically, environmentally, and social healthy and resilient' and meet the criteria of a sustainable community (FCC, 2017, p. 54). To date there has been no empirical research conducted by FCC to identify such criteria from the perspective of local inhabitants.

3.6 Summary

Without doubt, the policies and frameworks which shape the current development of our local communities are fed down from relevant policies and agreements at higher levels of

governance [see Figure 4.1]. In an Irish context, national plans and policies, and plans at regional level (DCC and FCC) have been greatly influenced by publications by the EU and UN. This chapter provided a contextual framework of these plans and policies so that the development and conceptualisation of sustainable development in urban areas in Ireland in the following five chapters may be better understood.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

To have mastered "method" and "theory" is to have become a self-conscious thinker, a man at work and aware of the assumptions and the implications of whatever he is about.

— C. Wright Mills (1959: 120-1)

4.1 Introduction

There is a lacuna of literature and empirical research relating to the prevalence of sustainable communities in urban areas and the actors which enable this to occur. This chapter synthesises the influence and contribution of key methodologies in the field of sustainable urban development and proffers a conceptual framework for determining the criteria of sustainable urban communities. It provides an examination and justification of the philosophical positions that influenced the research design, approach, methodologies, data and sampling collection methods adopted in this study. A detailed outline of the methodological approach employed is also provided from the perspective of reliability, validity and generalisability, as well as highlighting the ethical concerns and limitations of the overall research programme.

4.2 Research Aim, Objectives and Questions

The overarching research aim is to identify the criteria for the development of a sustainable community in an urban area. It aims to provide a deep, critical investigation of local residents' perspectives of the criteria for the development of a sustainable urban community and the perspectives of key actors in planning for these sustainable communities. The research objectives are:

1. To identify a working definition of *sustainable community development*, which is informed by both existing literature and the lived experience of local residents within two urban case-study areas.
2. To identify the criteria necessary for sustainable community development in urban areas, as defined by the existing body of knowledge in literature/policies at international, national and local levels.
3. To identify the perspectives of local residents on the criteria necessary for sustainable community development and to highlight differences/similarities between these and the pre-existing criteria identified in Objective 2.

4. To identify the perspectives of key actors in local urban development of the criteria necessary for sustainable community development and to highlight differences/similarities between these and the findings of Objective 2 and 3.
5. To develop a proposed framework for sustainable community development in urban Ireland using bottom-up methodologies.

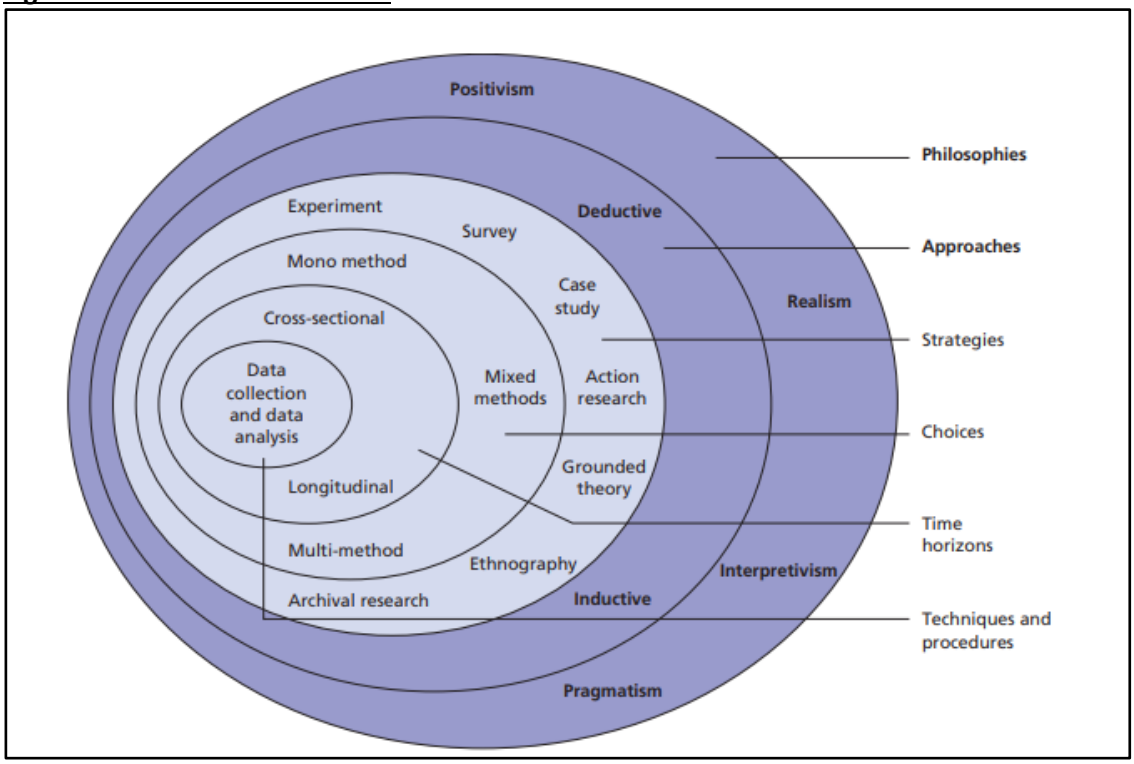
The research focuses on three-hundred-and-fifty local residents across two case-study areas who participated in questionnaire research. Merriman (2001) recommends narrowing the purpose of the study into specific questions in order to address the phenomenon under investigation. Research questions guide the entire research process and the research objectives define the boundaries and scope of a research study (Zikmund, 2000). This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How can sustainable development be defined globally, internationally, nationally and locally?
2. How can a successful sustainable community be defined? Is this purely empirical or does the literature reflect the lived-experience?
3. How do local communities conceptualise sustainable community development: what are the perspectives of local communities on the criteria necessary for sustainable community development?
4. Does the natural and built environment of an area impact upon the sustainability of a community – does a symbiotic relationship exist here?
5. Does the economy of an area impact upon the sustainability of a community – does a symbiotic relationship exist here?
6. Does the society (the interactions of local residents with each other and their area in relation to sense of attachment, social capital, sense of well-being, crime levels, etc) of an area impact upon the sustainability of a community – does a symbiotic relationship exist here?

4.3 Research Philosophy

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) likened the research process to layers of an onion i.e., multiple layers representing key decisions in determining the research design and the heart of the process is data collection and analysis [see Figure 4.1]

Figure 4.1 The Research Process



(Source: adapted from Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 108)

It is necessary to examine each 'layer' in order to explain and justify the methodological approach adopted for this study. With this in mind, this research began with an in-depth analysis of key research philosophies in Human Geography, including both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The task of designing an appropriate research methodology is critical to the success of the research itself (Quinn-Patton, 2002). Given the aim of this research, it was decided that an interpretivist approach be used as this work, albeit a mixed-method study deploying quantitative and qualitative methodologies, focuses largely on the experiences and perceptions of local residents rather than upon fact. The interpretivist viewpoint acknowledges that individuals are different, therefore facts and values are intertwined (Walsham, 1995). According to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (1994), the researcher's aim is not to pursue a definitive or absolute truth, rather their aim should be to appreciate the different constructions and meaning that people place upon their experience. The interpretivist viewpoint cautions to be very careful how we consider our research approaches and to recognise that interpretations are shaped by our own background. The position of the researcher is also an important element to consider in

the interpretivist research philosophy. A researcher's beliefs shape her/his perception of the world which influences how s/he perceives her/himself in relation to her/his environment (Graham-Cagney, 2011). Hearne (2009) posited that a critical researcher attempts to use her/his own work as a form of social or cultural criticism whilst accepting certain basic assumptions. As the primary research instrument, it was imperative that I consider the potential bias in the design and implementation of the research. I attempted to mitigate any potential bias through rigorous analysis of existing literature, which identified the methods of best practice when conducting both quantitative and qualitative research in human geography (Phillip, 1998: Kitchin and Tate, 2000: Gomez and Jones, 2010: Dillman, 2014). However, Yin (1994) maintained that there is no bias-free design in qualitative research because it is predisposed to factors of perception, preconceptions and person values.

As a form of interpretivism, phenomenology believes that what we know of reality is not objective and external but is socially constructed. This favours the use of qualitative methodologies and interpretative analysis which rely on many different sources of data, as have been deployed in this research study. Phenomenology rejects the scientific, quantitative approaches of positivism and instead suggests that we concentrate upon understanding rather than explaining the world. The goal of phenomenology is to reconstruct the worlds of individuals, their actions, and the meaning of the phenomena in those worlds to understand individual behaviour (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). Pile (1993, p. 24) describes phenomenology as a 'people-centred form of knowledge based in human awareness, experience and understanding…. The study of being human, of being located in time and space.' Unwin (1992, p. 148) also highlights how this approach emphasises 'the social construction of places, taking into account such aspects as their emotional, aesthetic and symbolic appeal' and seeks to reflect the ties between individuals and the environment. In-depth interviews are commonly used as the sources of primary data in phenomenological research (Kitchin and Tate, 2000) and while this research acknowledges that its key source of primary data (survey questionnaires) is often used as a positivist (quantitative) method, it has been carefully designed to encompass questions for both quantitative and qualitative data collection.

4.4 Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography

Mixed methodologies suggest that it is possible to blend the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data in the same study, using variegated sets of data and questions to triangulate one's findings (England, 1993: Del Casino, 2009). Triangulation suggests that the researcher can get a clearer picture of the social reality being studied by viewing it from several different perspectives. Each will have some liabilities in a specific research application, and all

can benefit from combination with one or more methods (Brewer and Hunter, 1989: Sechrest and Sidani, 1995: Schutt, 2006). Valentine (2003) suggests when thinking about a mixed methodological framework that, first and foremost, one has to determine the research question being asked. For example,

> When multiple methods are used in this way, the material generated by each technique may throw up apparently very contradictory findings… Such findings are not a problem but rather show how successful you have been in capturing the complexities, contradictions, ambiguities and messiness of human behaviour and everyday life (Valentine, 2003, p. 45).

Mixing methods from across the quantitative and qualitative spectrum, researchers can make a number of 'cuts' at any particular social problem, dissecting how differences and inequalities are socio-spatially organised through a number of geographical processes (Del Casino, 2009). Social scientists often combine these methods in order to enrich their research (Schutt, 2006). For example, Hampton and Wellman (2000) used surveys to generate counts of community network usage and other behaviours in Netville, but to help interpret these behaviours, they also observed social interaction and recorded spoken comments. In this way, qualitative data about social settings can be used to better understand the patterns in quantitative data (Campbell and Russo, 1999, p. 141).

The distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods involves more than just the type of data collected. Quantitative methods are most often used when the motives for research are explanation, description or evaluation. Exploration is more often the motive for using qualitative methods (Schutt, 2006). Quantitative research methodologies lend themselves to the 'scientific method' wherein we begin with a hypothesis that we then test to see if we can either prove is disprove our initial assumptions (Del Casino, 2009). This model of research assumes that we can explain certain aspects of the world and build models that generalise how the world works and hence the world is ordered and operates under these laws. It also assumes that an objective observer can provide a distanced analysis of the generalizable characteristics of the world and that for this model to be 'true,' it must be repeatable and this verifiable under similar conditions (Del Casino, 2009). David Harvey (1969) argued that geographic analysis is best-framed within a hypothetical-deductive model where the geographer posits a model and through a process of experimental tests and verifications determines the validity of the model. This research was successful in this hypothetical-deductive model as defined by Harvey (1969) as it used survey research which was modelled on existing literature, both academic and government-issued, and deployed to test whether community perception validated the model constructed and shaped by the literature. The survey used in this research was itself a mixed-

method survey across quantitative and qualitative questions and is discussed in more detail in Section 4.6 of this Chapter.

If quantitative social geographers seek to investigate broad spatial patterns and relationships, qualitative social geographers tend to focus on the everyday, situated experiences of individuals and groups in and through various spaces (Del Casino, 2009). It is in this definition that the need for a mixed-method approach for this research is apparent as, this research strives both to investigate the broad patterns of sustainable community development in urban area, and also to identify the 'lived experience' of local residents and highlight their individual perspectives on sustainable community development in their area(s). Qualitative methods for geographical research often include participant observation, intensive interviewing, and focus groups that are designed to capture social life as participants experience it rather than in categories predetermined by the researcher (Schutt, 2006). These methods often rely on written or spoken words or observations that do not have a direct numerical interpretation and typically involve exploratory research questions, as those listed in Section 4.2, inductive reasoning, and the meaning attached by participants to events and to their lives. The survey designed for this research [see Section 4.6] included questions which invited participants to contribute their opinions/beliefs and qualitative data was produced. Surveys are generally not considered a qualitative methodological tool, but when open-ended questions are used which give respondents the opportunity to voice their opinion or give their perspective on events and their lives, surveys can also be adopted for qualitative research purposes (Dillman, 2000: Fink, 2003).

4.5 The Case for the Case-Study

Case studies are one of the most popular forms of qualitative research and are defined as a 'strategy for doing research involving an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real- life context using multiple sources of evidence' (Robson, 2002, p. 178). The case may be 'an organisation, community, social group, family, or even an individual and, as far as the qualitative researcher is concerned, it must be understood in its entirety' (Schutt, 2006). The attractiveness of case studies is that they provide a more comprehensive perspective as they focus directly on the social phenomenon and provide insights which are not normally apparent with other methods, and this in turn enables both the reader and the researcher to relate to the data and to understand it at a deeper level (Babbie, 1995). Stake (2005, p.449) suggests that a case study is not merely a methodological choice as it allows researchers to 'place your intellect in the thick of what is going on' and the

methodologies become characterised by the researchers spending extended time on site and personally in contact with the activities and operations of the case study area.

Merriman (2009) offered insights into how case studies can deepen the reader's understanding of the phenomenon being researched, as well as aiding the researcher. By using a case study approach to qualitative research, the researcher can explore a single entity phenomenon bounded by time and activity and can collect detailed data using one or a variety of collection methods during a set period of time (Merriman, 2009). For the purpose of this research, questionnaires were used as the primary data collection method [see Section 4.6] and three-hundred-and-fifty surveys were conducted face-to-face over a four-week period within the case-study areas.

Due to the limitations surrounding data collection in this way, a case study approach is ideally suited to the needs and resources of a small-scale researcher as it allows a tight focus on a small number of examples which results in higher quality data (Zainal, 2007). A case-study approach aims to deepen rather than significantly broaden knowledge and focuses on gaining a detailed insight into a subject that is not easily separated from its context (Babbie, 1995). Furthermore, case studies provide a comprehensiveness of perspective because they focus on the social phenomenon and are used largely as they provide insights which are not normally apparent in other methods (Babbie, 1995). There are arguments in the literature, favouring an empirical research approach, that case studies as a form of inquiry are limited (Stake, 2005: Hearne, 2009). The use of multiple case designs is informed by the replication of multiple experiments and is often viewed as more compelling and robust (Hearne, 2009). Yin (2009) argues that multiple case study research offers a deeper understanding of the processes whilst 'facilitating theory building and theory testing.' In support of the multiple case study approach, Gillham (2000) believes that no one source of evidence is likely to be sufficient (or sufficiently valid) on its own and the use of multiple case studies lends to greater validity to the research. This research operates its data collection within two case-study areas in order to support a more comprehensive research design. As Gillham (2000, p. 102) states, 'case study research is a method not to be wasted on issues that are unimportant. Its real power is in part a function of the uses to which it is put' (Gillham, 2000, p.102).

As Merriman (2009) highlights, the single most important element of case-study research lies in delimiting the object of the study. The literature also suggests that a bounded system can mean the object of the study being separated for research in terms of time, place, or some physical boundaries (Robson, 2002: Creswell, 2005). The focus of this research is on

understanding the perspectives of residents of urban areas upon the criteria necessary for sustainable community development within a specific geographic location, namely the Greater Dublin Area. The GDA is an area which has experienced significant population increase, particularly since the 'Celtic Tiger' era of the 1990s, and is experiencing severe pressure across its housing, infrastructures and amenities as the area rapid develops [see Section 2.5]. Two areas within the GDA were chosen as case-studies for this research, namely Donabate, Co. Dublin and Clongfriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13. A comprehensive demographic profile and analysis of these areas is presented in Chapter Five.

Both case-study areas provide an interesting backdrop for research into sustainable communities as they effectively allow for an analysis of the community from its origins. In each case, much of the population has been living there for twenty years or less [see Chapter Five]. Discussions on the nature and formation of community have variously emphasised the role of place and locality (Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide, 2009). Sociological and geographical research has evolved from the dismissal of spatially deterministic locality approaches (Day and Murdoch, 1993) to focus on locality as socially constructed (Massey, 1993: Day, 2006). This idea of socially constructed communities is key to this research as it highlights the need for individuals to be first located within an area in order to generate social networks with each other to allow the development of communities of interest (Murray, 2007).

In summary, in order to develop a comprehensive and holistic picture of the criteria necessary for sustainable development in urban areas, I conducted extensive primary research amongst residents within Irish urban areas, located within the two-case study areas of Donabate, Co. Dublin and Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13. In all, I conducted three-hundred-and-fifty questionnaires across the two locations in order to ensure the validity of the research and to provide a balanced and triangulated perspective of sustainable community development within Irish urban areas at local level.

4.6 Survey Questionnaires as a Methodological Tool: Rationale and Design

For the purpose of this research, an in-depth questionnaire was designed and administered through face-to-face interviews. The questionnaire survey entitled *Defining the Criteria for Sustainable Communities Survey* was conducted within the two case-study areas, as discussed in Section 1.6. Indeed, sample surveys have become the dominant data source by population researchers, with response rates being historically important in judging the data quality (Rindfuss, et al., 2015). Survey break-off is influenced by a number of factors in addition

to survey length and completion time, including topic, sensitivity of questions, burden of answering the question and the question format (Peytchev, 2009). Therefore, as discussed below, the design of this survey and its questions was given the utmost consideration to mitigate such issues. As there is no correlation between question characteristics and the decision to start, but a significant correlation between these characteristics and the decision to continue (Peytchev, 2009), survey questions must be designed to mitigate survey breakoff.

Face-to-face interviewing is often a preferred mode of survey research as it allows for a rapport to form between the interviewer and the interviewee and also results in fewer 'spoiled' responses than from a self-completion questionnaire, as the interviewer can explain what questions mean to aid the respondent (Sapsford, 1999). However, face-to-face interviews can be difficult to standardise, especially in terms of the interviewer becoming flexible in order to accommodate the vocabulary with which the respondent feels comfortable (Fowler, 1995: Sapsford, 1999). The literature highlights this threat to standardised measurement and offers a guide for designing a survey in order to mitigate this issue, which can be summarized as follows: write clear and unambiguous questions, providing good definitions of all critical terms to avoid confusion within the questions and the results; ensure adequate structuring of the survey so that questions are sequential and everyone is asked precisely the same questions in the same order; use simple language and do not be vague (Fowler, 1995: Sapsford, 1999: Dillman, 2000).

According to Fink (2003), interviewers should ask purposeful and concrete questions, which avoid jargon and use conventional language in order to improve the quality of their survey. Fink (2003) also advocates the adaptation of questions that have been used successfully in other surveys. The benefit of this is evident in the fact that such questions have already been reviewed, used, and shown to collect accurate information. Questions used within Census data collection are a good example. Much of the literature surrounding the terms of 'direct' or 'indirect' questioning highlights how certain question-types lend themselves to 'factual' material and attitudes/opinions, respectively (Sapsford, 1999: Fink, 2003). Direct questions must be worded sensitively and be direct in what answers they require. Similarly, in questions asking about attitudes/opinions, these factors also come into play – specifically, the precise meaning of attitude/opinion questions may be influenced by its precise wording. For this reason, interviewers must be careful not to take a less-direct approach as respondents may merely answer 'I don't know' in these instances, which does not benefit either party (Sapsford, 1999). Direct measures need to be obtained in the same way for all respondents and be comparable across respondents. Therefore, every question should offer a range of answers which exhaust all possibilities and are mutually exclusive (Sapsford, 1999). Sapsford (1999) also highlights the

importance of well-designed questions dealing with indirect measures and attitude/personality scales. He argues that as attitude is something complex, one is simply looking for indicators of it and responses have to be measured somewhat indirectly (Sapsford, 1999). He defines an indicator as 'something which is known or believed to correlate with the quantity of interest, and therefore to predict it, but which does not directly measure it' (Sapsford, 1999, p.118). Indirect measures and attitude/personality scales are commonplace questions within research and aided the design of the survey utilised within this research study. Questions such as Q3, Q7 and Q12 all involve indirect measures and are included in order to give insight into the community's lived experience, which cannot be directly coded [see Appendix B].

The questions utilised within this survey have been designed following an extensive literature review of previous research concerning the goals of sustainable development, the indicators of sustainable development and similar research conducted within communities in the United States, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The aims and objectives of sustainable development internationally have been laid out by the United Nations (2015) in their publication *Agenda 2030.* 'This Agenda is a plan of action for the people, planet and prosperity,' and their seventeen Sustainable Development Goals and one-hundred-and-sixty-nine targets are categorised into five key areas of: people; planet; prosperity; peace; and partnership (UN, 2015, p. 3-4). The United Nations provided their definition of sustainable development in the Bruntland Commission's report, *Our Common Future,* as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987, p. 43).

The European Union (2010) publication *Making Our Cities Attractive and Sustainable* reviews the many ways in which 'the EU supports citizens and local governments in their efforts to make our cities and towns clean and healthy, green and pleasant, efficient and sustainable, well-managed and democratic' (2010, p. 9). In this report, the EU defines these goals for sustainable development using top-down methodologies, using an analysis of reviews and reports of previous policies and programmes. Indicators of sustainable development within urban areas are defined, which include: clean and healthy; green and pleasant; efficient and sustainable; and well-managed and democratic. These indicators are established in order to enhance the impact of current EU legislation, policies and programmes in relation to the sustainable development of Member States and to support Governments in their efforts to improve their cities for their citizens (EU, 2010).

The United Kingdom has been particularly active in addressing and defining indicators of sustainable development within urban areas (ODPM, 2003). In *Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future,* the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM, 2003) acknowledges that 'housing and the local environment are vitally important… but communities are more than just housing. They have many requirements… a wider vision of strong and sustainable communities is needed… The way our communities develop economically, socially and environmentally must respect the needs of future generations as well as succeeding now… [they are] places where people want to live and will continue to want to live' (p. 5). The work of the ODPM (2003) echoes that of the United Nations (2015, 2018) and the European Union (2010) in many ways, but it goes a step further by outlining a list of criteria which communities must meet in order to 'make a sustainable community' [see Table 2] (ODPM, 2003, p. 5).

In the interest of producing a survey that was of good quality, adhering to the best practice according to literature and other surveys, and also user-friendly, the design of this survey was given careful consideration. The survey is divided into two sections: Section A asking questions about the community as a whole and individual perception and Section B asking questions in order to profile the participant for analytical purposes, following standard practice in the field (Dillman, 2000; Leeuw, Hox and Dillman, 2008; Griffiths et al., 2011; Yellow Book Ltd, 2017; CSO, various years). Collecting data in order to profile respondents is an important best practice in survey research. This is so to ensure that survey responses are reflective of the case-study area as a whole, and also so analyse the impact of, e.g. gender/socio-economic status on survey responses (Kelley et al., 2003). The questions for 'Section B', which can be seen in Appendix B, were modelled on the CSO's census forms. These reflect best practice, as the CSO 'subscribes fully to the principles set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice and to the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics' (CSO, n.d.). Such questions will also be familiar to many participants. Furthermore, compatibility with the census will facilitate comparison with the most recent census data.

Section A of the survey, as it deals with both quantitative and qualitative data, using a mix of direct and indirect questions, was much more reliant upon existing literature, both academic and Government body publications, in the framing of its questions. Section A was divided into three sub-sections entitled 'Economy,' 'Environment,' and 'Society' [see Appendix B]. This was completed so as to correlate with the three pillars of sustainability, also known as the 'triple bottom line' as defined in the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987). Furthermore, the literature highlights the need for questionnaires used in survey research to be clear and well-presented, with questions being numbered and clearly grouped by subject (Sapsford, 1999;

Dillman, 2000; Fink, 2003; Kelley et al., 2003). The rationale behind each section within the survey is explained below, with an analysis of each question explained in Appendix A.

Section A: Theme One - The Environment in Your Community

The theme of 'the environment' is a well-documented aspect of sustainability across literature (WCED, 1987; Goodland, 1995; Torrance, 1998; Beatley, 2003; Dryzek, 2003; EPA, 2012; EU, 2017; UN, 2018). Many Irish government policies also include environmental sustainability and how to mitigate the effects of Climate Change and adhere to EU policies (Houses of the Oireachtas, various years). The importance of the environment and environmental aspects in the development of a sustainable community is also well-discussed in the literature. Publications from the ODPM (2003), DCCAE (n.d.), EPA (2012) and the UN (2018) highlight these linkages and suggest indicators for a sustainable local environment. This theme was included in order to identify how the community perceived the lived experience of their local environment and how they identified criteria for environmental sustainability, aiding community sustainability. It was chosen as the first theme to address as the origins of the concept of sustainability are often closely linked to the environment and environmental issues.

Section A: Theme Two - The Economy in Your Community

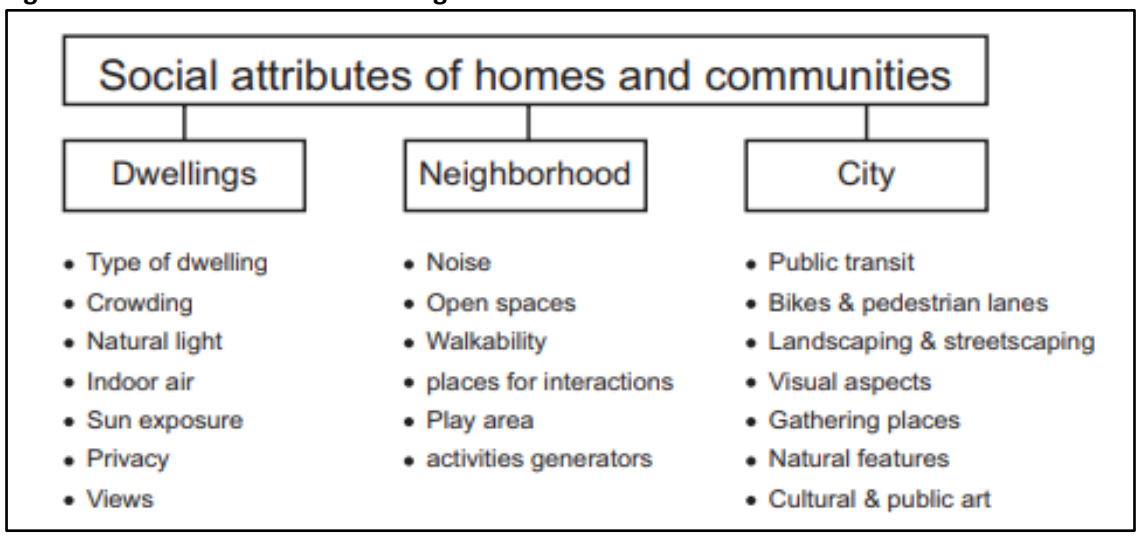
This theme of 'The Economy' within Section A was chosen in accordance with the United Nation's (2018) Sustainable Development Indicator 'economic growth.' Furthermore, research conducted by the EU (2017), ODPM (2003), EPA (2012), Parkinson et al. (2006) and the DCCAE (n.d.) highlights the impact of economic sustainability as an important component of sustainable community development at local, national and international levels. Hence, gauging the local perception of the success of the local economy is important as this carries links to successful sustainability of an area.

Section A: Theme Three - The Social Aspects of Your Community

This theme of 'Social Aspects' within Section A was chosen in accordance with the identification of 'society' as the third pillar of sustainability (Wheeler, 2004). Friedman (2018) synthesised a list of determinants which influence social attribute of homes and communities [see Figure 4.2]. The questions of Theme Three have been heavily influenced by these determinants. Similarly, Ganzer (2009 cited in Lombardi, Geoffrey and Brandon 2017) identified in his work that good community well-being, provision of hard and soft infrastructure to promote cohesive communities, well-connected and accessible communities, and a built form which facilitates diversity of demographic profiles and facilitates community cohesion are all

necessary for sustainable community development under the theme of society. However, further research also highlights how studies of community and social capital include territorial attachment, sense of belonging, social interaction, active involvement, and participation (Corcoran, Gray and Peillon, 2010). Such literature also highlights the intrinsic link between these phenomena and successful communities. Furthermore, international and Government bodies also identify social elements as necessary for sustainable development (OPDM, 2003; EPA, 2012; EU, 2017; UN, 2018).

Figure 4.2: Determinants Influencing Social Attributes of Homes and Communities.



(Source: Friedman, 2018)

Section A: Theme Four – Individual Engagement with your Community

Community engagement within the concept of sustainability has come into much greater focus in recent years. As Arnstein (1969) noted in her work, community engagement must extend beyond mere tokenism and involve genuine practices for community participation within community planning/development and engagement within the community itself. Much of the literature defines community engagements as encompassing membership in clubs/groups/volunteer organizations, engagement/participation with local planning and development, and participatory and representative democracy in governance of the area (Arnstein, 1969; Knox and Pinch, 2006; Yellow Book Ltd, 2017; Friedman, 2018). This section has been designed based on the aforementioned literature in order to identify levels of community engagement among respondents.

The formatting of each question was carefully considered and both academic and policy works were consulted in the selection of their content. Please see Appendix A for a comprehensive thematic and structural analysis of each question within Section A.

Section B: This Section is Designed to Gather Personal Data

All of the questions in this section (Q20 – Q32), with the exception of Q23 [see Appendix B], have been derived directly from Census questions designed by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) (various years). The rationale behind this methodology is to develop a demographic profile of each participant across age, gender, socio-economic and ethnic parameters so to gain a deeper understanding of participant responses in relation to their perspectives on the criteria of sustainable community development in their area. The use of Census questions in this section is advisable as people are used to the format of such questions and the methodology deployed by the CSO has been approved for research at Government level. Just one question, Q23 (see below) was not derived from Census questions. In this case, response categories were formulated during the observation stage of this research through interaction with local residents in both case-study areas, prior to survey design. The importance of collecting demographic data among survey respondents has been well documented in the literature (Dillman, 2000; Knox and Pinch, 2006; Schutt, 2006). A demographic profile of individual respondents allows for the assurance that the survey sample was representative of the entire community population (Schutt, 2006). Furthermore, 'examining relationships is at the centrepiece of the analytic process, because it allows the researcher to move from simple description of the people and settings to explanations of why things happened as they did with those people in that setting' (Schutt, 2006, p. 334). With regard to this research, building a demographic profile of respondents will allow an analysis of how different types of respondents perceive the criteria of sustainability.

This survey questionnaire outlined above was carefully designed in order to respond to the specific research aims, objectives and questions in identifying the criteria necessary for sustainable community development in Irish urban areas [see Table 4].

Table 4: Aligning the Survey Sections to the Research Aims, Objectives and Questions

Research Aims, Objectives and Questions	Section A			Section B
	Environment	Economy	Society	
1. Contextualise the concept of sustainable development and sustainable community development with a specific focus on Irish engagement with these concepts	X	X	X	
2. Examine current policy and legislation which frames sustainable development and sustainable community development at all geographical scales				
3. Conduct a detailed case-study of two modern urban areas which have experienced, and are experiencing, rapid growth over the past 20 years	X	X	X	X
4. Examine local residents' perspectives of sustainable community development within their local areas	X	X	X	X
5. Examine the importance of community engagement and involvement in the development of their areas			X	

4.7 Piloting

A pilot study provides an opportunity to test the viability of a study. It provides an indication of whether the research methodology is suitable, the likelihood of gaining sufficient respondents, and how long the full research project is likely to take (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). Pilot studies frequently result in substantial revisions being made in the survey design, from adding or eliminating survey questions or to make structural changes to improve response rates (Dillman, 2000; Schutt, 2006). Pilot surveys also allow the researcher to find out how long the survey will take to complete, on average (Fowler, 1995). In the piloting phase, data collection procedures are designed to be similar to those to be used in the planned survey, except that people interviewed are likely to be chosen on the basis of convenience and availability, rather than by some probability sampling strategy, approximately 13-35 surveys are conducted with pilot respondents (Fowler, 1995).

The pilot survey for this research was conducted in Poppintree, Dublin 11 in March 2019 over a period of one week. The location of Poppintree was chosen for its similarity demographically and in terms of recent construction activity to the two case-study areas of

Donabate, Co. Dublin and Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13. Poppintree is located in the municipal district of Dublin City Council (DCC), akin to Clongriffin-Belmayne, but is bordered by Fingal County Council (FCC), where Donabate is located, with some of its geographic area extending into Fingal. A total of fifteen surveys were piloted in the area. The surveys were tested using two different administration techniques: a nested random sample of fifteen households and also systematic random sample of people in public areas.

According to Dillman (2000), survey implementation procedures have a much greater influence on response rates than survey design and it is a crucial element of any successful survey-based research. The literature shows that face-to-face interviewing [see Section 4.6] is advantageous in that is proven to receive higher response rates than in any other survey design (Dillman, 2000; Fink, 2003; Schutt, 2006). In terms of finding interviewees for this pilot study, the literature highlights the need for a sample to be representative, without being judgemental or specifically selected (Kitchin and Tate, 2000; Dillman, 2000; Schutt, 2006). For this reason, two administration methods were tested. Initially a random sample totalling fifteen households was conducted. Random sampling is well documented in the literature after first being introduced by Skilling (2006). This methodology has been used in similar mixed-method studies in an Irish context (see Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide, 2009). Upon implementing this method in Poppintree, it quickly became evident that it was fraught with difficulties as the majority of households which were called to did not agree to participate in the research, with residents stating they either did not have the time or did not like people calling to their front-door for security purposes. According to Kitchin and Tate (2000), respondents need to feel that taking part in your interview survey will be pleasant, satisfying and non-threatening. Response rates using this method were extremely low (0.05%) and it was also very time-consuming as a result. Subsequently, a stratified random sampling method was tested in the Poppintree area, which displayed much more satisfactory results. A systematic random sample is not truly random as after the first sampling unit, which is chosen at random, all other units are selected systematically *n* units away from the previous unit (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). Taking on board the comments made by individuals in the Poppintree area regarding issues with house-calls, it was then decided that the research should be conducted in public areas where people were likely to be out for leisure purposes and the interviewer(s) would not be on their private property. A day was spent observing the area to identify key locations within the community where people congregated. These were identified as follows: Poppintree Community and Sports Centre [see Image 4.1], Poppintree Park [see Image 4.2] and Poppintree Parade [see Image 4.3]. A systematic random sampling method was deployed in these areas, with every 3rd individual who passed by

after the initial *n* participant being approached. Response rates improved to 72% (13 people responding out of a total of 18 people approached). This experience informed the decision to conduct the main survey in public spaces.

Image 4.1: Poppintree Community and Sports Centre

Overall, during the pilot phase the survey questionnaire design proved effective with the exception of small changes to questions Q2, Q5 and Q10. The categories listed in these questions were revised following a trend emerging that a single specific response in each question was continuously listed as the least attractive. For example, in Q2, 'Access to clean, safe drinking water' was continuously listed as '6 = least attractive,' yet there is no issue with access to clean, safe drinking water in Poppintree. When questioned on their response, those who ranked this poorly commented that it was not a concern for the area as it was a given that one would have access to clean, safe drinking water in Ireland.

Image 4.2. Poppintree Park

Two questions were also added to the survey following the pilot study, i.e. Q11 and Q19. The former was included due to the inclusion of crime as the most unattractive social aspect by many respondents, despite the fact that this issue had not been mentioned in the original survey. Q19 was added in order to gain a further understanding of local resident's perception of land-use in the area, which could be compared to the LAPs for the case-study areas.

Image 4.3. Poppintree Parade

Overall, the pilot study of the questionnaire and the testing of implementation methods proved very useful and allowed adequate changes to be made which improved the overall success of this research study.

4.8 Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

Rowley (2014) identified data analysis as one of the most difficult aspects of using questionnaires for researchers. There is a common consensus amongst academics that one of the most important principles of data analysis for questionnaires is to plan for the analysis you intend to undertake when designing your questionnaire. If consideration of data analysis is left until after the data has been collected your data, then the success of the research will be undermined (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Indeed, this process can become even more complicated when we consider the implications of mixed-method research. As discussed above, this study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods and therefore appropriate considerations were taken in relation to the data analysis of both of these methods. In order to mix the data analysis of quantitative and qualitative methods together, researchers first need to consider the characteristics of both methods. For example, the major characteristics of traditional quantitative research are a focus on deduction, confirmation, theory/hypothesis testing, explanation, prediction, standardized data collection, and statistical analysis (Johnson and Onwuegbyzie, 2004). The major characteristics of traditional qualitative research are induction, discovery, exploration, theory/ hypothesis generation, the researcher as the primary "instrument" of data collection, and qualitative analysis. As it is evident that the characteristics of these two methods are different, the approach to data analysis is equally unique to each method.

4.8.1 Quantitative Data Analysis: Working with SPSS.

Modern-day analysis of quantitative data has become much simpler and more straightforward, even for those researchers who are not comfortable mathematicians, thanks to the development of data analysis software (Rowley, 2014). In relation to quantitative data analysis, there are three main groups of analysis software: web survey software, such as Survey Monkey; Office software, such as Excel; and, specialist research data analysis software, such as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). While web-survey and Office tools are likely to suit one's need for basic statistical reporting in profiling and descriptive research, if one is undertaking predictive and analytical research, or wants more flexibility, the use of SPSS is highly recommended in the literature (Rowley, 2014). SPSS is a more specialist package that is a core tool for academic research, but it is reasonably easy to learn the basics. Pallant (2001) produces

a useful step-by-step guide to SPSS and covers all of the key tools within the software. She also highlights how these tools are very useful if one has print questionnaires where data needs to be entered into a software package for analysis, as is the case with this research. SPSS can help to check and verify your data, and to generate descriptive statistics and charts and graphs to describe and explore the data (Rowley, 2014).

A range of tools within SPSS were used in order to analyse the quantitative data from the survey questionnaire. For the community questionnaire, the data was coded into six data files: section A of the questionnaire total; section A of the questionnaire Donabate; section A of the questionnaire Clongriffin-Belmayne; section B of the questionnaire total; section B of the questionnaire Donabate; and section B of the questionnaire Clongriffin-Belmayne. Section A of the questionnaire has thirty-one variables, twenty-seven of which are ordinal and four are nominal; it is important to note that an extra nominal variable was included in this dataset to categorise the respondents into those with living in case-study area Donabate and those living in case-study area Clongriffin-Belmayne. This brought the total number of variables to thirty-two in Section A. Section B contains twenty-five variables, all of which are nominal.

One such tool within SPSS which was used to compare the mean scores of the two independent samples of the data was the t-test. There are a number of different types of t-tests in SPSS, but the independent t-test was used in this study as it successfully compares the mean scores of two different groups of people or conditions, i.e. those living in Donabate and those living in Clongriffin-Belmayne. This test is used to highlight whether there is a significant statistical difference existing between the mean values of the two independent samples (Pallant, 2001). The t-test produces a 'sig. value;' which is the risk which must be taken to suggest that a significant difference exists between the two sample means. The lower the 'sig. value' the more certain one is that a significant difference exists (Pallant, 2001). For this study, many of the t-tests returned a 'sig. value' of below 0.1, signifying a significant difference. Those that did not return a 'sig. value' of below 0.1 are not considered to be significantly different, meaning there is no evidence to say that they are different. This will be discussed throughout the results and discussion of the research findings.

Before the 'sig. value' for any t-test is consulted, the outcome of an equity variance test must be consulted (Pallant, 2001). This test determines whether or not equal variances may be assumed in both sample populations. In effect, it tests whether or not the range of data is significantly different in both independent sample populations. In the case of independent sample t-tests concerning the difference of two proportions, it can be shown that the 'sig. value'

associated with 'equal variances not assumed' are the appropriate 'sig. values' that need to be consulted (SPSS Inc., 1999). Sample variance is a measure of a random sample used to estimate the variance of the population from which the sample is drawn. In conducting the independent sample t-tests for this research, equal variance could not be assumed due to the fact the researcher was working with a sample, and therefore dealing with an estimate of the true variance.

All other tools utilised within SPSS were used to conduct a statistical analysis of the quantitative data from all six datasets. The results of these tests will be discussed in the following three chapters.

4.8.2 Qualitative Data Analysis: Working with NVivo.

Seidman (1998) suggested that when researchers employ qualitative analysis methods that most survey questions result in an open-ended response which needs to be coded across participants. As discussed above, the design of a survey must be guided by the data analysis methods which will be utilised and hence the qualitative data questions within the survey [see Appendix B] were posed as open-ended questions which allow the respondent scope to express their opinion and experiences (Dillman, 2000). Grbich (2007) stated that the most commonly used analytical tools in enumerative context analysis are: (i) word frequency; (ii) ranking the order of words; and (iii) key words in context.

This research utilised the qualitative data analysis software of NVivo as it was an effective and simple tool in qualitative data analysis. Indeed, software such as NVivo was developed not 'to supplant time-honoured ways of learning from data, but to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of such learning' and to 'support researchers in the varied ways they work with data' (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013, p. 2). The importance of pre-empting data analysis methods prior to data collection is equally as applicable in qualitative methods as it is in quantitative research. As Bazeley and Jackson (2013) warn; 'if you are coming to NVivo without first meeting qualitative methodology or methods… [you must] be careful about adopting the first approach you encounter as the only approach,' as while NVivo does not prescribe a method, it supports a wide range of methodological approaches in different ways (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013, p. 4).

In setting up your NVivo database to allow for analysis of the research's qualitative data to occur, there are certain key elements which must be considered. In creating this data set, the creation of case nodes is of vital importance. 'A case is a core structural element in NVivo' and

a case could be a respondent to a questionnaire, a person being interviewed, a research site, etc. (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013, p. 52). Cases are incredibly flexible entities in three ways;

1) One is able to include just a single source, multiple sources, or portions of sources as data for each case.
2) Each case might only include one kind of data, such as text in participant transcripts; or it could bring together multiple formats.
3) One can combine related demographic and numeric (attribute) data within the text for each case so that, for example, a flag such as male or female is applied to all the data for the person who is that case.

(Bazeley and Jackson, 2013).

For the purpose of this research, each survey participant was denoted as a case, resulting in three-hundred-and-fifty cases within the database. Each case dealt with qualitative responses to both Section A and Section B of the survey and was entirely text format. The use of coding within cases allows for the common themes of the data to become much clearer. While broad-brush coding relies on the capacity of the software to facilitate recoding or coding on from a text at a case node, coding in detail makes use of the capacity of the NVivo software to cluster like things together in a hierarchical system, to gather related concepts in a set, or perhaps to merge nodes (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013). As this research is based within a phenomenological research philosophy and framed by grounded theory, initial analysis involved detailed, slow, reflective exploration of early cases – completing line-by-line coding, reading between the lines, identifying concepts and thinking about all of each concept's possible meanings as a way of 'breaking open' participant's responses. This is in line with the expectations of the literature on coding qualitative data as Strauss (1987) estimates; the researcher at the beginning of the analysis process will explore each word or phrase for meaning, thinking of the possible implications had a response been phrased differently or a different example used. Micro-analysis of this type generates an awareness of the richness of the data and what can be learned from it; and a coding process that involves detailed attention to the text helps the researcher to focus attention on the text rather than on their preconceptions (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013). Bazeley and Jackson (2013) also highlight that there is no requirement to code at this level of intensity beyond the first few cases. For this reason, I manually coded one-hundred-and-forty cases (seventy from each case-study area), which represented 40% of all cases so to ensure a satisfactory coding system before using the recommended auto-coding tool for the subsequent two-hundred-and-ten cases. I also manually coded ten random cases from auto-coded cases to ensure satisfactory auto-coding was achieved.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

As this research involved interaction with the public and the retention of participant data, it was imperative that ethical considerations were addressed. Ethics are regarded as a set of principles that guide appropriate conduct in a given situation and are generally informed by a code or set of principles (Robson, 2002). There are a number of ethical considerations which researchers and participants in research should explicitly address before commencing the research process. Key to many research projects is the respect for the principles of autonomy, confidentiality, informed consent and the publication of the research findings (Graham-Cagney, 2011). This research was conducted with an adult population and each respondent consented to their participation. In order to avoid any ethical implications, children and vulnerable adults were omitted from the sample of respondents. Participants who were invited to participate in the research were given a copy of a Plain Language Statement [see Appendix D] and verbally consented to participate in the research. This research submitted an Expedited Ethics Review to the Research Ethics Committee in Dublin City University, prior to survey implementation, and was subsequently approved for research in November 2018 so that data collection could begin.

4.10 Summary

This chapter outlined and justified the methodological approach chosen to address the research aim, objectives and questions and concluded that a mixed-method research approach would be congruent with the overall aim.

This chapter also provided a detailed justification for survey use, design and implementation within research in social geography and detailed the most appropriate way for this researcher to analyse both qualitative and quantitative data.

A discussion of the limitations and a reflection on the research process of this study was also incorporated into this chapter, as were considerations regarding the ethical implications of this research.

The data analysis and research findings will be presented within the following three chapters.

Chapter Five: A Comprehensive Profile of the Case-Study Areas

Demographics is Destiny

Arthur Kemp (2007)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the profiles of each of the case study areas. As described in Chapter Four: Research Methodology, case study-areas are beneficial to research and are widely utilised in many social-science studies where in-depth explanations of society are sought (Zainal, 2007) [see Section 4.5]. Furthermore, case-study research, through reports of past studies, allows the exploration and understanding of complex issues. It is a robust research method, particularly when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required (Zainal, 2007), such as within this research. The case-study method in research is particularly prominent with regard to community-based problems (Gulsecen and Kubat, 2006: Grassel and Schirmer, 2006: Johnson, 2006). As described in section 4.5, the areas of Donabate, Co. Dublin, and Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13 are used as case-study areas, justified by the areas' potential to fulfil sustainable community indicators as modern development within the Dublin region and their unique geographic variables.

This chapter outlines the demographic profiles of each case-study area according to Census data and also drawing on the quantitative demographic data collected from survey participants. The term demographics refers to particular characteristics of a population and examples of demographic characteristics include age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, income, education, home ownership, marital status, family size, etc. (Lee and Schuele, 2012). Demographic variables are independent variables by definition because they cannot be manipulated and in research, they may be either categorical (e.g. gender, race, marital status) or continuous (age, years of education, family size) (Lee and Schuele, 2012). Demographic information describes the study sample and demographic variables can also be explored for their moderating effect on dependent variables. A comprehensive insight into the demographic profiles of each area is provided below.

The analysis of demographic data proves particularly useful for this research as it allows for a greater engagement with the aims and objectives of this research, as outlined in Section 1.4. Being able to identify the characteristics of populations within the case study areas is beneficial in exploring the concept of sustainability as, as sustainability is ensuring that the needs

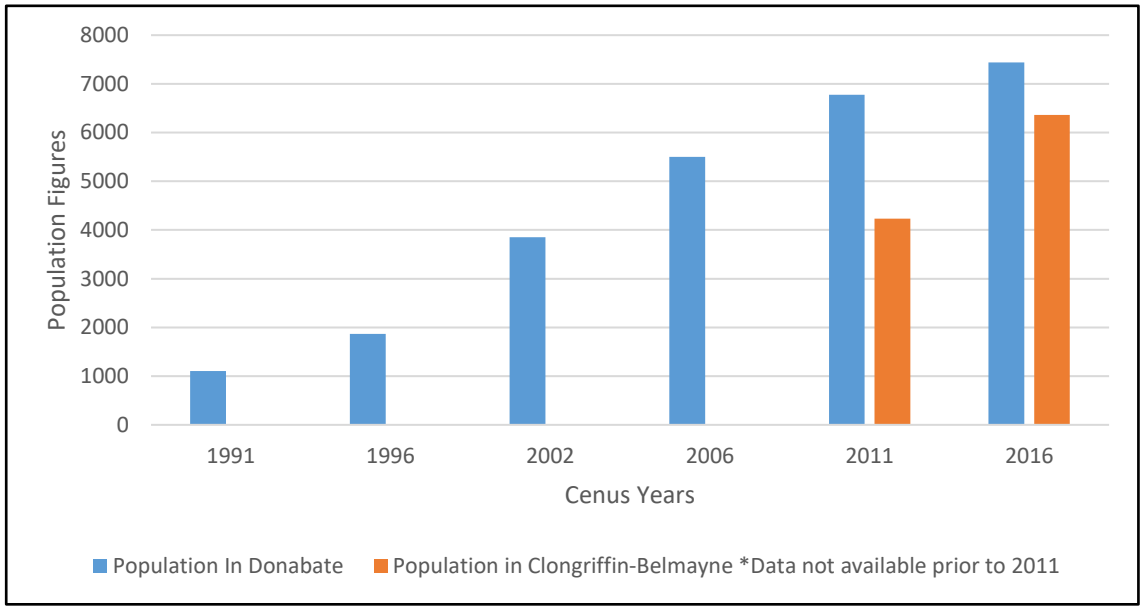
of both the future and present are met, one must be aware of the needs of particular populations and an analysis of such population demographics proves useful for this purpose.

5.2 Population Numbers in Case Study Areas: Census Data and the Lived Experience

As discussed in Sections 1.6 and 4.5, the areas of Donabate, Co. Dublin and Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13 are appropriate case-study locations for research on the development of sustainable communities. Both communities are modern urban developments, with over 75% of the housing stock in Donabate built between 1991 and 2016, and 92% of the housing stock in Clongriffin-Belmayne built between 2001 and 2016 (CSO, 2016: see Appendix C).

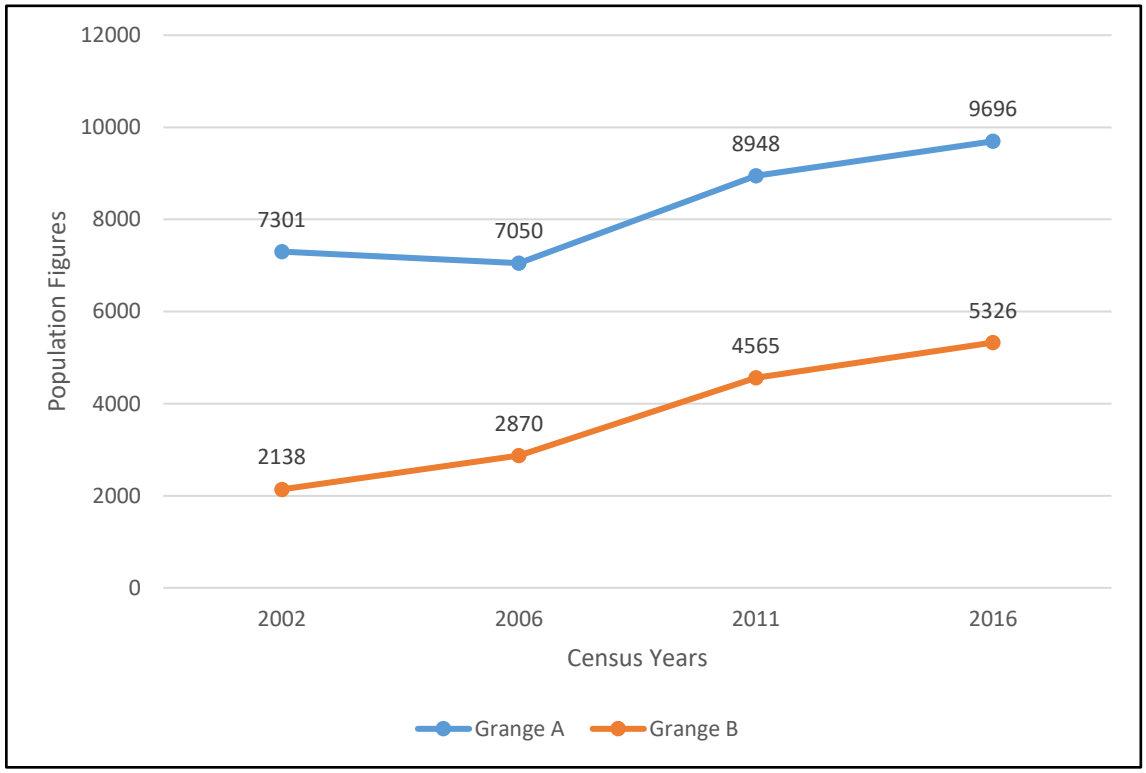
Both case-study areas are also comparable in relation to their size: according to Census 2016 (CSO, 2016: see Appendix C), the area of Donabate has a total population of 7,443 persons and Clongriffin-Belmayne a total population of 6,363. Population growth within the two areas has been unprecedented, especially since the turn of the Twenty-First Century [see Figure 5.1]. Between 1991 and 2016, Donabate experienced a growth of 574% in its total population (CSO, 2016: CSO, 2018). Similarly, growth in Clongriffin-Belmayne has occurred at a staggering rate: in the years 2011-2016, the area experienced an increase of 50% in its population figures (see Appendix C). It was not possible to retrieve accurate population statistics for the area of Clongriffin-Belmayne prior to 2011 as population statistics at local level were unavailable for Small Areas, however, the wider areas of Electoral Divisons of Grange A and Grange B, prove useful in highlighting the trend of a growing population in the region [see Figure 5.2]. Indeed, in the years 2002-2016, Grange B showed an increase in population of 60% (CSO SAPMAP, various years). Furthering to this, Grange A had a population increase of 25% during the years 2002-2016, despite previous decline in this area (CSO SAPMAP, various years).

Figure 5.1. Population Growth within the Two Case-Study Areas



(Source: CSO, various years: see Appendix C)

Figure 5.2. Growth in Population from Electoral Divisions inclusive of Clongriffin-Belmayne (Grange A and Grange B)



(Source: CSO SAPMAP, various years)

Across the two case study areas, a total of three-hundred-and-fifty surveys were conducted from a total possible population of 13,806 (based on 2016 census figures). This represents 2.5% of the total population. Within Donabate, a total of 197 surveys were conducted and a total of 153 in Clongriffin-Belmayne. The margin of error on this finite sample size is +/- 5% at a 95% confidence level.

5.3 Demographic Categories of the Sample Population: A Representative Study?

Another way of determining the representativeness of the survey sample in relation to the overall population of the areas is to analyse the categorical demographic trends of the sample population against the parent population. Two common categories used within research and Census data include gender and age. Within the sample population, a total of 51.1% of respondents were female, 48.3% were male and 0.6% 'would rather not say.' Within the area of Donabate, respondents were 50.8% female, 48.2% male and 1% 'would rather not say': direct correlation can be seen within the overall population of Donabate as women represent 50.7% of the total population, with men totalling 49.3% (CSO, 2016). Within Clongriffin-Belmayne, 51.6% of survey respondents were women and 48.4% were men. This also correlates to Census data as 52.1% of Clongriffin-Belmayne's population is female and 47.9% male (see Appendix C).

The sample population was also reflective of the parent population across both case-study areas in relation to the age profile of respondents. For the purpose of this research, as those aged eighteen and under were not asked to partake in this research due to ethical considerations, only the total of the parent population aged fifteen and over, to correlate with Census data, is comparable to the sample population. In Donabate, some 90.4% of survey respondents were aged 15-64, which is largely reflective of the 93.9% of the parent population aged between 15-64 (CSO, 2016). Similarly, in case-study area Clongriffin-Belmayne, a total of 98.7 survey respondents were aged 15-64, which is in-line with 97.9% of the parent population of the area aged 15-64 [see Table 5].

Table 5: Gender and Age Profile of Survey Respondents in Donabate and Clongriffin-Belmayne

AGE													
		15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	Total
Gender	Female	5	3	30	36	27	15	23	18	5	5	12	179
	Male	1	9	20	29	25	34	15	12	8	7	9	169
	Would Not Say	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Total	6	12	50	65	52	51	38	30	13	12	21	350

(Source: Current Research)

5.4 Settlement Trends of the Sample Population across both Case-Study Areas

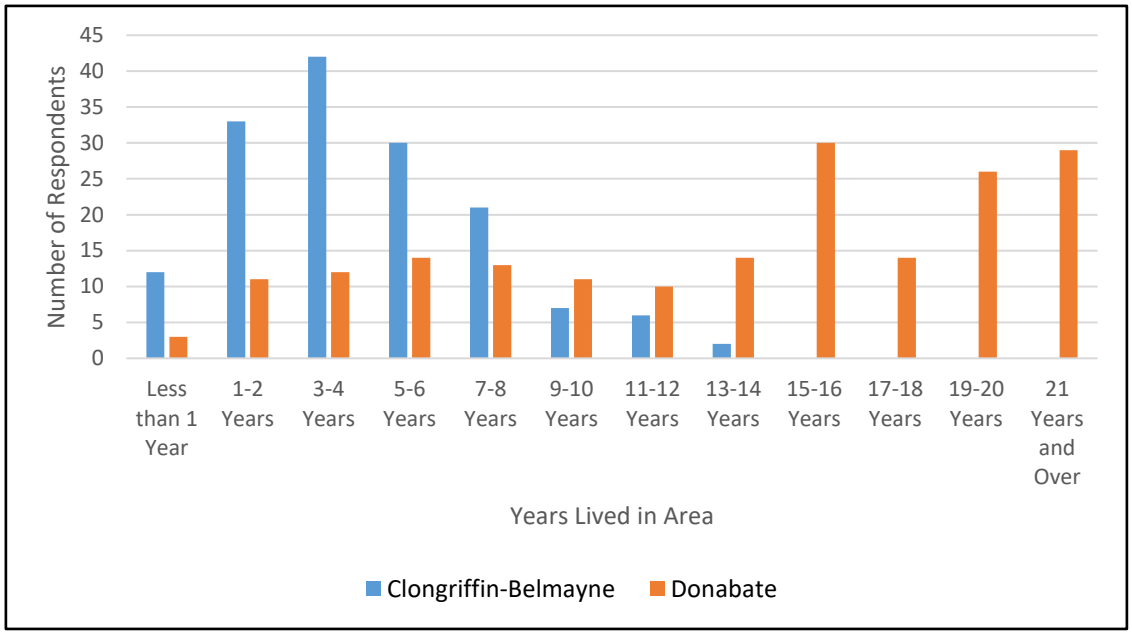
Both the literature and the lived-experience tell a story of a symbiotic relationship between the levels of population and the levels of development in an area: i.e. the more populated an area becomes, the greater the rate of development in that area, and vice versa. This common trend is evident within both case-study areas, with both population numbers and households developing at an unprecedented rate since the 1990s and early 2000s.

According to the 2016 Census, there were 2,414 private households in the settlement area of Donabate (CSO, 2016). This number has grown exponentially over the last twenty years, with figures from the 1996 Census displaying only 667 private households in Donabate – this equates to a 262% increase in housing developments in the area (CSO, 2016: CSO, 2018). Census records show that the vast majority of these houses were built between 1991 and 2010. Indeed, the houses built between these years represent 71% of the entire housing stock in Donabate at the time of the 2016 Census. This data signifies that the area of Donabate has undergone substantial development over the past thirty years, especially from 1991 onwards. This is reflected both in the significant growth in population (574% from 1991 to 2016) and in the numbers of permanent private households (262% from 1996 to 2016) (CSO, 2016: CSO, 2018).

This significant growth in housing developments and population numbers is undoubtedly a modern phenomenon in the areas of Donabate and Clongriffin-Belmayne. Survey results show that 59.7% of the survey population have lived in their current area for ten years

or less [see Figure 5.3]. Survey results also show that less than 20% of the current population in Donabate have lived there for twenty-one years or more, with 32.5% of the entire population only living in the area ten years or less. Notably, as seen in Figure 5.4, the area of Donabate is more settled than Clongriffin-Belmayne as it shows local residents living in the area over a longer period of time. This 'young' community has divided opinions amongst the residents in Donabate themselves: some feel that 'the fact that most people have only moved here the last ten to fifteen years is good cause then people don't take it for granted at all and people do work to make the place better' (Survey Respondent 102). However, another resident felt that 'there's no real sense that Donabate is anyone's home-home; like no one has parents who lived here, grandparents who lived here and that just makes it seem like everyone is only passing through' (Survey Respondent 143). This issue was also acutely felt in the other case-study area of Clongriffin-Belmayne. Clongriffin-Belmayne 56.9% of the current population have lived in the area four years or less, with no-one having lived in the area for more than fourteen years. Many respondents felt that the community was still in its early stages of development and was still 'finding its feet' (Survey Respondent 245), whilst others doubted whether the area would ever feel like a settled community. One respondent commented that 'it's not a case that 'ah I can't be arsed getting to know my neighbours or the neighbourhood,' it's like no-one knows their neighbours or the neighbourhood – talk about the blind leading the blind so we're not really getting anywhere anytime fast' (Survey Respondent 342). Other studies on developing communities in Irish suburban areas, such as that by Corcoran, Gray and Peillon (2010) highlighted the need for a community to consist of 'old-timers' who form the heart of the community and also represent the gatekeepers against which the newcomers can measure their acceptance and integration into the community. However, this proves difficult in the case of Donabate and, especially, Clongriffin-Belmayne without a significant cohort of 'old-timers' in the area.

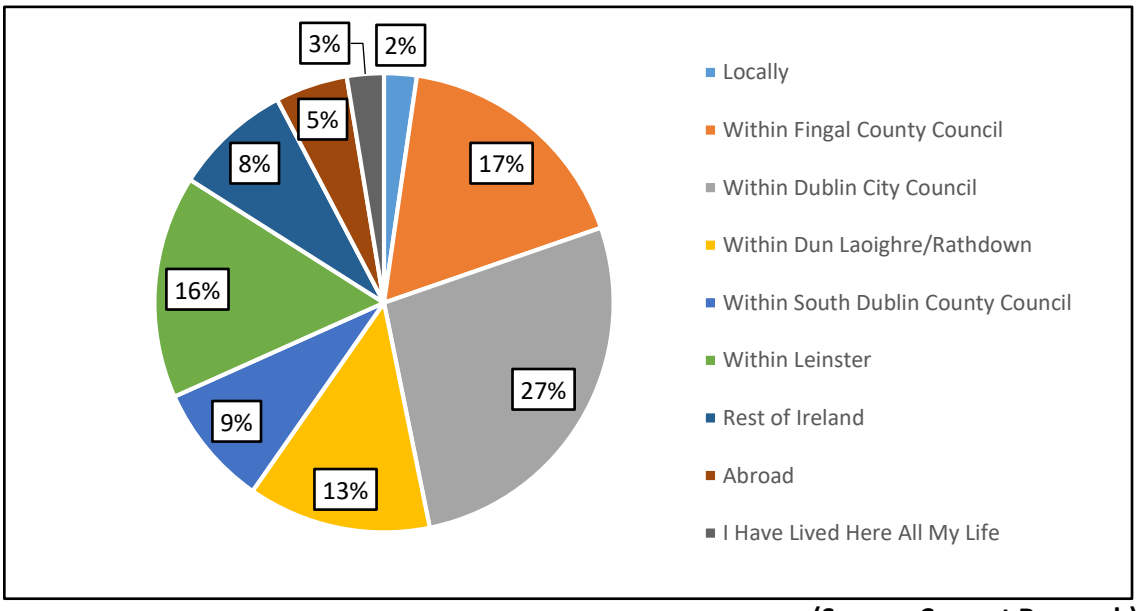
Figure 5.3. Length of Time Lived in Case-Study Areas by Respondents



(Source: Current Research)

Interestingly, common trends also emerged in relation to *where* the population of Donabate and Clongriffin-Belmayne had lived prior to moving to their respective areas. An astonishing 96.6% of the population had previously lived elsewhere, which does corroborate the data that both areas are modern developments, with most inhabitants living there for twenty-one years or less.

Figure 5.4. The Living Areas of the Case-Study Population Before Moving to the Case-Study Areas



(Source: Current Research)

The data also shows that a majority of 44.5% of the population had already lived in either Fingal County Council or Dublin City Council (the municipal districts of Donabate and Clongriffin-Belmayne, respectively) before moving to the case-study areas [see Figure 5.4]. A total of 58.6% of those who identified as Irish within the case-study areas were born in Dublin. A total of twenty-two of the thirty-two counties of the island of Ireland were represented by the population of the case-study areas [see Figure 5.6]. The survey data also highlighted the growing multicultural societies within the case-study areas, as despite only 5.1% of respondents stating that they had previously lived abroad before moving to Donabate or Clongriffin/Belmayne, a total of 20.1% of the population across the two case study areas identified as foreign-national, having a place-of-birth outside of Ireland or Northern Ireland. A total of ten nationalities, aside from Irish, were represented in the population: Poland was the most common birth-place for non-nationals with 32.9% of the foreign-national population being born there, with the U.K. in second place at 20.5%.

As well as showing interesting spatial patterns of the population's previous place of residence and nationality across national and international levels, this data also gives insight into the spatial distribution of the population within each case-study area. In Donabate, a total of twenty-four housing estates/developments were represented by the survey population. Across these twenty-four housing developments, a total of five housing types were noted: detached; semi-detached; terraced house; apartment; and other. There were five different housing tenures noted amongst the population of Donabate [see Table 6]. Over 85.3% of respondents listed their tenure as 'Owner Occupied' which is notably higher than the national figure of 57% (CSO, 2016). Owner-occupation rates in Ireland currently stand at over double the average rate of owner-occupied dwellings within the European Union (Eurostat, 2016).

Owning a suburban home has always been considered the apogee for all families (Jackson, 1985), with high rates of owner-occupation in Donabate clearly adhering to this belief. One respondent spoke of how 'it's just nice to be able to have my own house, my own driveway, my own back garden and really living up to the white picket fence notion out here [in Donabate]. I feel more rooted now that my name is on the deeds' (Survey Respondent 136). Interestingly, the Donabate respondents had lower rates of Local Authority rental housing (5.1%) than the National average, which stands at 7% (CSO, 2018). Rates of renting from a private landlord in Donabate was also much lower than the National average. The data shows that only 8.6% of the total population in the case-study area of Donabate rent from a private landlord, whereas State figures stand at 18.2% (CSO, 2018).

Table 6. Housing Types and Tenures of the Population of the Case-Study Area, Donabate.

	Owner-Occupied (No Mortgage)	Owner-Occupied (Mortgage)	Rented from Private Landlord	Rented from Dublin/Fingal County Council	Rented from Voluntary Body.	Total
Detached House	12	30	1	0	0	43
Semi-Detached House	39	94	6	4	0	143
Terraced House	0	21	29	24	3	77
Apartment	0	19	47	14	3	83
Other	0	2	2	0	0	4
	51	166	85	42	6	350

(Source: Current Research)

The other case-study area of Clongriffin-Belmayne displays a very different trend in relation to housing type and tenure. Within this case-study area, thirty-eight different roads/housing developments were recorded; it is important to note that Clongriffin-Belmayne does not have stand-alone housing estates, but rather has areas of phased developments under different street names. The classification of housing in Clongriffin-Belmayne largely falls into one of two brackets: apartments or terraced housing. A total of 87.5% of the surveyed population of this case-study listed their home as being either an apartment (44.4%) or a terraced house (43.1%). These figures are outliers in relation to figures within the entire municipal district of Dublin City, with figures here showing that flats/apartments make up 34% of the total housing stock in DCC (CSO, 2016d). The development of apartments in our urban core is often seen as the solution to urban sprawl (O'Mahony cited in Hynes, 2016). However, attitudes towards apartments in Ireland have traditionally been very negative; this may be as they have not been built properly in the past, which has exacerbated the public's perception (Bourke cited in Hynes, 2016). There was still evidence of some negative perceptions of apartments in Clongriffin-Belmayne, even from respondents who lived in them. Some commented that 'you feel a bit like

they [developers and DCC] are just packing as many of us as they can into a certain square footage, just building up and up and up' (Survey Respondent 302). Other inhabitants noted that the apartment blocks 'look very looming and ya feel like they block out the sunlight most days' (Survey Respondent 274) and 'look like the poor relations to actual houses, like the Ballymun block towers all them years ago' (Survey Respondent 298) [see Image 5.1 and 5.2].

Image 5.1 Apartment Buildings in Clongriffin, Dublin 13

(Source: Current Research)

Image 5.2. Apartment Buildings in Belmayne, Dublin 13

(Source: Current Research)

Interestingly, the rate of owner-occupation in Clongriffin-Belmayne is much lower than in Donabate. Owner-occupation (mortgage) rates in Clongriffin-Belmayne currently stand at 32%, with no respondents living with no mortgage. This is somewhat lower than the average of Dublin City (50%) and of the State (57%) (CSO, 2016d: CSO, 2018). Frey et al. (2006) argue that high owner-occupation rates are a key component of suburban living. The area reported a 20.9% of its housing stock being rented from Dublin City Council, which would be in-line with Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 wherein states that 'planning authorities can reserve up to 20% of land zoned for residential development…for social and affordable housing' (Section 94(4), DELG, 2000). However, since the Act was amended in 2015, only 10% of housing is now required to be reserved for social and affordable housing. This will be significant for any developments which commenced after 2015 and those which have yet to be planned in the area.

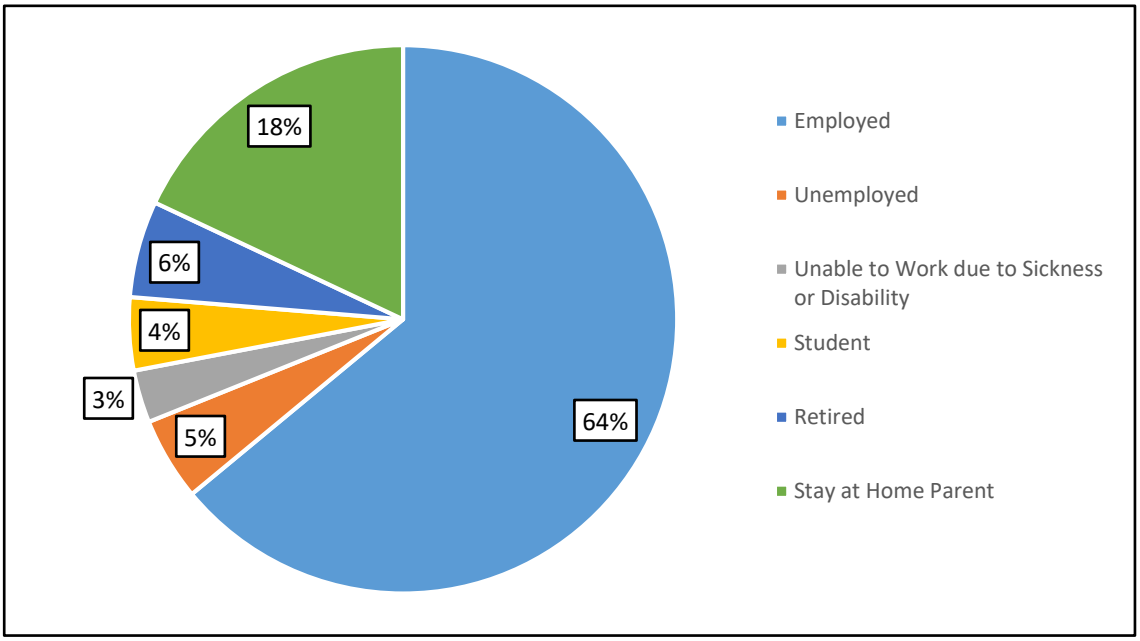
The most common form of housing tenure in Clongriffin-Belmayne is renting from a private landlord, with 44% of respondents in the area listing this as their housing tenure. This figure is over five times that of private renting in Donabate. Some inhabitants in the area, who were themselves owner-occupiers felt that the large volume of renters in the area was turning Clongriffin-Belmayne 'into just another stop on the commuter belt, where people rent to sleep but don't live' (Survey Respondent 287) and was negatively impacting upon community development. The data reflected these 'fears' amongst some of the population as 42.6% of private renters in the area stated that they did not feel attached to Clongriffin-Belmayne, and 50% of renters from DCC stated the same. Those who chose to purchase a house in the area (owner-occupiers) felt more attached to the area as only 32.6% of this cohort stated that they felt no sense of attachment. According to Corcoran, Gray and Peillon (2010) attachment to place and social participation represent key social resources in forming the core of suburban neighbourhoods and a sense of attachment to place is only developed and nurtured over the years through inhabitants' immersion in close familial and neighbourly networks. This issue surrounding attachment and renting in Clongriffin-Belmayne was also picked up by local residents themselves, with one respondent noting: 'I've been living here since 2006 and the place still doesn't feel like a settled community. I think it's largely 'cause of the number of people renting and just living here to be close to the city' (Survey Respondent 256). These thoughts were echoed by Survey Respondent 267 who agreed that 'there are too many people renting here just to live for work for the place to really feel homely. I like Clongriffin but I don't think it'll ever be a proper Irish community with all the rented apartments.' However, in line with the literature, that communities need time to develop, one respondent commented, 'there's nothing *wrong* with the place [Clongriffin-Belmayne], it's just having a few teething problems.

I'd say give it a few years and it won't matter if you're short-term renting or living here donkey's years, it'll feel like home. I'm barely here a wet day and it already is starting to feel like that' (Survey Respondent 328).

5.5 Education and Employment Patterns of the Sample Population across both Case-Study Areas

In a report entitled *Income and Home Ownership*, Struyk and Marshall (1975) identified links between high income rates and high rates of home ownership. Whilst this research did not engage with the monetary earnings of survey respondents within the two case-study areas, it was interested in the current employment status of local residents. Levels of employment in areas, particularly levels of unemployment have often been cited in the literature as being an important part of the economic success of a region. Furthermore, high general unemployment levels may affect people's well-being by reducing their personal economic security. High unemployment rates are also documented for affecting the population as a whole, for example, as a result of general effects like higher crime rates or higher taxes following increased welfare spending (Luechinger, Meier, and Stutzer, 2010). Across the two case-study areas, a total of 64% of the working population was employed. Unemployment rates were significantly low, only totalling 4.9%. This figure is somewhat of an outlier when compared to State figures which are reported at 12.9% (CSO, 2018) [see Figure 5.5].

Figure 5.5. Employment Status of the Survey Population



(Source: Current Research)

The high levels of employment in both case-study areas can also be attributed to the high levels of educational attainment in both areas. Across both Donabate and Clongriffin-Belmayne, a total of 57.4% of the population had received a Third-Level Qualification (Primary Degree) or higher. Only 3.4% of the entire population were early-school leavers. The association between early school leaving and neighbourhood is well accepted internationally. Indeed, early school leaving is one of the indicators of poverty and disadvantage used in Ireland to calculate the 'overall deprivation score' (Stoke, 2003, p. 90). This is to say that there is a strong correlation between early school leaving and socio-economically disadvantaged areas. It is understood that children from disadvantaged areas are less likely to become actively engaged in their education, resulting in early school leavers, as 'disadvantaged children have been considered as those whose home background does not prepare them as well as other children for an education which largely reflects middle-class values' (Edwards, 1974, p. 49). Research conducted by McGarr (2010) further reinforced this correlation with 44% of teachers surveyed in strong agreement that socio-economic disadvantage is a factor which influences a young person leaving school early. With this in mind, it is logical to argue that the case-study areas of Donabate and Clongriffin-Belmayne are not socio-economically disadvantaged areas as they display low rates of unemployment, low levels of early school leavers and high educational and employment achievements [see Table 7].

Table 7. Cross-Tabulation of Education and Employment in both Case-Study Areas

		Employment						
		Employed	Unemployed	Unable to work due to illness or disability	Student	Retired	Stay at home parent	Total
Education	Lower Secondary	2	5	3	0	0	2	12
	Upper Secondary	17	5	0	13	11	27	73
	Technical or Vocational Qualification	34	5	6	2	3	14	64
	Primary Degree	74	0	1	0	3	9	87
	Professional Qualification	34	2	0	0	0	7	43
	Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma	18	0	0	0	0	0	18
	Postgraduate Degree (Masters)	38	0	1	0	3	0	42
	Doctorate (PhD)	7	0	0	0	0	4	11
Total		224	17	11	15	20	63	350

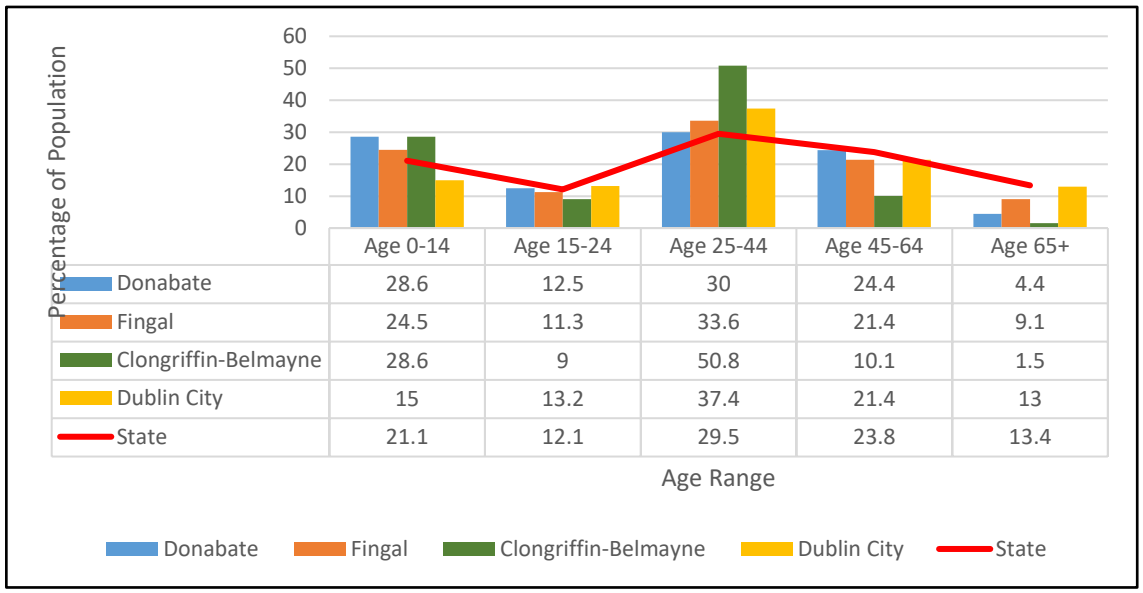
(Source: Current Research)

5.6 The Population of Families across both Case-Study Areas

Both case-study areas have very youthful populations. According to the CSO (2016), 29% of the current population of Donabate is aged 0-14 years. Akin to Donabate, Clongriffin-

Belmayne also had 29% of its population consisting of inhabitants aged 0-14 years, which equates to 1820 children in the area (see Appendix C) [see Figure 5.6].

Figure 5.6. The Demographic Profile Across Different Spatial Scales



(Source: adapted from CSO, 2016; CSO, 2018; see Appendix C]

Both areas can be argued to be popular locations for young families, especially when the data shows that 62% of all families living in the case-study areas have one child or more [see Table 8]. Indeed, many respondents noted the high quality-of-life and suitability of each area for families:

> I moved here [to Donabate] because I wanted my young kids to be able to run around on the green outside our house, not just be cooped up in a small city apartment (Survey Respondent 190).

> I knew a good few of my family members and friends who'd moved out here [to Donabate] and were always singing its praises for children and families (Survey Respondent 24).

> The place [Clongriffin] has a real safe feel to it and there's so many young families here so it's great when me grandchildren come to visit (Survey Respondent 205).

> Myself and my wife moved here [to Belmayne] to rear a family 'cause it seemed like such a good place for families and that's definitely true alright – there's loads of young couples with kids here (Survey Respondent 268).

Against this, the size and composition of families within the two case-study areas also highlight interesting trends. The mean family size consisted of four inhabitants, at 28.6% of all households within Donabate and Clongriffin-Belmayne. The most common family size consisted of two adults (ages 18 years and over) and two children (aged below 18 years) [see Table 8].

Table 8. Cross-Tabulation of Household Size and Number of Children in both Case Study Areas

		How many children (under 18) are in your household					
		0	1	2	3	4	Total
How Many People Are In Your Household including Yourself	1	17	0	0	0	0	17
	2	47	9	0	0	0	56
	3	46	35	0	0	0	81
	4	20	25	44	11	0	100
	5	3	5	20	48	4	80
	6	0	0	0	6	10	16
Total		133	74	64	65	14	350

(Source: Current Research)

According to the most recent Census, married couples with children has long been the most common household type in Ireland (CSO, 2016). Census 2016 also reported that those married increased by 83,547 over the five years from 2011-2016, and the percentage of the population who were married remained stable at 37.6 per cent (CSO, 2016). The proportion of the population which was married within the case-study areas was significantly higher than the State average, with figures standing at 54%. However, Census 2016 also highlighted the emerging trend of single parents in Ireland, with figures increasing to 41% of all one-parent households in Ireland (CSO, 2016). Within the case-study areas, 42% of all single persons reported having at least one child under the age of eighteen in their household [see Table 9].

Table 9. Cross-Tabulation of Marital Status and Number of Children in Household in both Case-Study Areas

		How many children (under 18) are in your household					
		0	1	2	3	4	Total
Marital Status	Single	65	23	19	16	2	125
	Married or Civil Partnership	57	45	38	39	10	189
	Divorced or Separated	8	4	2	3	2	19
	Widowed	1	1	1	0	0	3
	Other (please specify)	2	1	4	7	0	14
Total		133	74	64	65	14	350

(Source: Current Research)

This link between the high instances of households consisting of a married couple with young children and suburban residency is by no means a new phenomenon: previous studies in Ireland have also highlighted this relationship and focus on the historical and symbolic association between the suburbs and family life (see Humphries, 1966: Clapson, 2000: and Corcoran, Grey and Peillon, 2010). Undoubtedly the suburb has played a particular part in the evolution of modern family ideals and practices; the concept has moved from a preoccupation with domesticity to modern ideals of the nuclear family lifestyle existing in semi-rural, easily accessible 'well-paved' suburbs (Miller, 1995; Scanzoni, 1999). Respondents themselves echoed these academics, with one noting:

> I used to love being right in the thick of it in the [Dublin] City Centre… but then I just grew up. I got married, had kids and suddenly the City wasn't right for me or my family anymore: I needed a bigger house with a garden, with good neighbours and a proper community to provide what's right for my family. Moving out here [to Belmayne] was the only way to do that (Survey Respondent 338).

5.7 Emerging Demographic Trends and Themes of the Research

There are a number of consistent demographic trends emerging from this research, namely: (i) a youthful population, with high numbers of children and low numbers of residents aged 65+; (ii) a population which is only recently settled, with the majority of inhabitants living in the area(s) for ten years or less; (iii) a high percentage of detached/semi-detached homes with owner-occupied tenure in Donabate and apartments/terraced housing with private renting tenure in Clongriffin-Belmayne; (iv) an average household of a married couple with two children; and (v) a highly educated population with high employment rates. Each of these emergent trends has influenced a set of themes which have emerged from this quantitative data of this research, which will now be considered.

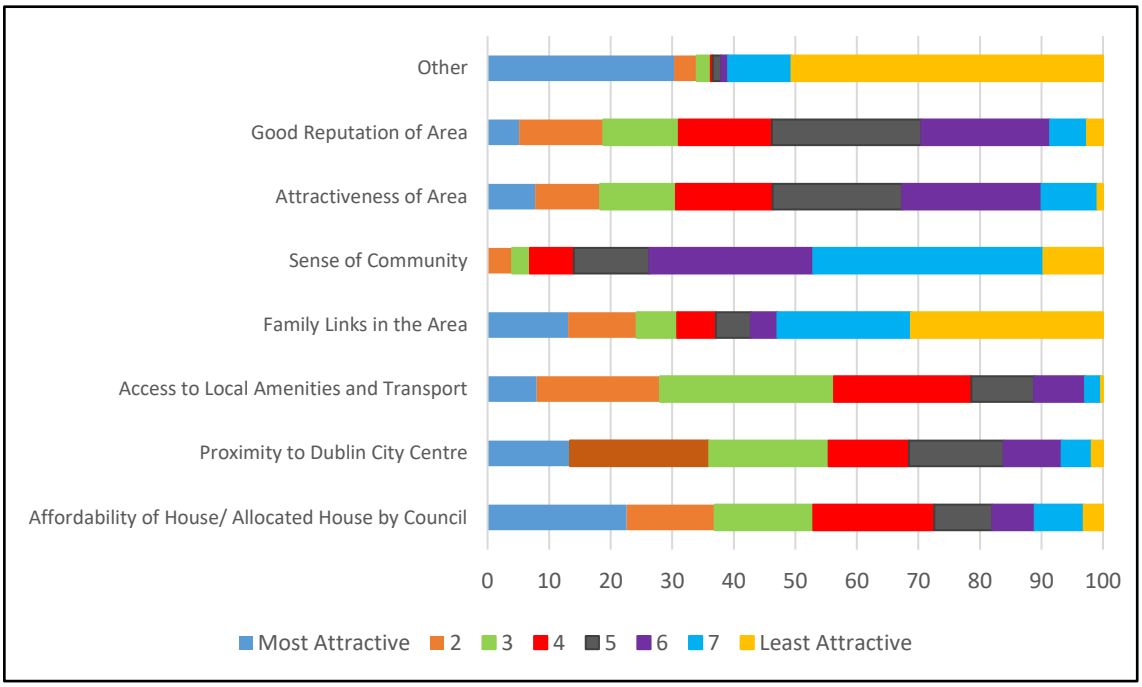
The resident population of the case-study areas highlighted how their area(s) signified a place which is a good location to raise a family. Given that they were not part of an already deeply established community, most welcomed the opportunity to become very involved within a community where they 'can grow as a family as the people… grow together as a community' (Survey Respondent 193). Some inhabitants, however, felt isolated and struggled to form connections with their new community, especially those who rented and did not have any children. One respondent noted:

> It's really fantastic if you've small kids and are running to this, that, and the other group with them or chatting to your neighbours at the school gates – but when you're

childless, you're almost like the odd one out and it can be difficult to find common ground (Survey Respondent 308).

Significantly, despite the theme that modern urban community developments were ideal locations for families in relation to developing a sense of community and attachment, not one respondent listed this as their 'most attractive' reason for wanting to move to their area originally. Indeed, the data showed a wide variety of reasoning as to why respondents chose to move to their respective areas [see Figure 5.7].

Figure 5.7. Significant Factors Influencing the Decision of Local Residents to Move to the Case-Study Areas



(Source: Current Research)

Interestingly, 'Affordability of Housing,' 'Proximity to Dublin City Centre,' and 'Access to Local Amenities and Transport' were consistently listed amongst the top three significant factors influencing locals to move to the case-study areas [see Table 10]. These factors are largely linked to socio-economic activity of areas and this will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six. As a significant factor as to why individuals originally moved to their area, a 'Sense of Community' was ranked the lowest, on average, by all three-hundred-and-fifty respondents. Nevertheless, many of the respondents noted that a sense of community was not important to them as they knew the areas were only in their infancy, as areas of rapid new developments, yet local residents also seemed dismayed that their areas lacked a sense of community as commuting to work and economic activity seemed to take precedence:

> Donabate is a really nice area and I do love what we have here, but sometimes I feel it's lacking that 'special feeling' a bit. Yanno the way people here always seem to be rushing to and from work, or to and from activities: it's like actually getting to know your neighbour slips through the cracks (Survey Respondent 187).

> I know I moved here for the house and the DART line, but I'm beginning to realise why you stay in a place isn't just bricks and mortar, and facilities – it's the people and the atmosphere they create in a place. I massively overlooked it before moving here [to Belmayne] and I'm worried now that that sense… of… of community is completely lost (Survey Respondent 300).

Table 10. Significant Factors Influencing the Decision of Local Residents to Move to the Case Study Areas

Significant Factors	Mean Score	Std. Dev.
Affordability of Housing/ Allocated House by Council	3.47	2.02
Proximity to Dublin City Centre	3.51	1.82
Access to Local Amenities and Transport	3.43	1.48
Family Links in the Area	5.36	2.65
Sense of Community	6.05	1.44
Attractiveness of Area	4.40	1.78
Good Reputation of Area	4.39	1.74
Other	5.36	3.19

(Source: Current Research)

5.8 Conclusion

This research has indicated that both case-study areas have youthful populations, consisting largely of families with a married couple and two children. The area of Donabate consists mostly of detached and semi-detached houses which are owner-occupied, whereas the area of Clongriffin-Belmayne is home to terraced houses and apartment buildings, which are mostly rented from private landlords by their inhabitants. The local residents of the case-study

areas have highlighted the importance of their respective areas for rearing a family, yet most did not deem 'family links in the area,' 'sense of community,' 'attractiveness of area,' or 'good reputation of area' as the most significant factors for choosing to move to their area. Indeed, most inhabitants noted the socio-economic elements of an urban community, such as housing affordability and transport links, as the most significant factors in their decision [see Figure 5.9 and Table 10]. This discussion of the demographic trends of the population of the case-study areas in this Chapter will contextualise the perspectives of local residents of the environmental, economic and social criteria for sustainable community development. These perspectives will be analysed and discuss in Chapters Six and Seven.

Chapter Six: The Impact of the Environment and the Economy on Sustainable Community Development – the Local Perspective

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We Do Not Have to Choose Between a Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy

Hillary Clinton (2014)

6.1 Introduction

Sustainable development is frequently described as the holistic balance between the three pillars of the environment, the economy, and society. It is also commonly mentioned as the intrinsic link between two of these pillars: the environment and the economy. It has long been recognised that in order for there to be economic growth, the environment must be well maintained (OECD, 2016). There is an absence of empirical research to substantiate the claim that economic growth and environmental maintenance are vital to the development of areas across a variety of geographic scales, especially local communities (Everett et al., 2010, Friedman, 2018). Although the voice of local residents does not feature strongly in the literature, I believe that it is important to place local residents at the heart of this research because they have direct lived experience of environmental and economic issues within their community and are in a unique position to discuss and evaluate sustainable development in relation to these two 'pillars'. This chapter analyses the perspectives of local residents from the two case-study areas, Donabate and Clongriffin-Belmayne, using the methodological approaches as discussed in Chapter 4. This represents a synchronic view of the perspectives of local residents of sustainable environmental and economic development within their communities. It is important to highlight that this research is not intended to be either an evaluation of the current environmental and economic status of the two case-study areas, nor a comparative study between the two case-study areas. The aim is to provide an understanding of what environmental and economic criteria are important to local residents in relation to the sustainable development of their [urban] area. This chapter first presents the survey findings in relation to sustainable development and the environment in their local communities, after which the findings in relation to sustainable development and the economy are discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the emerging themes of the research and a synthesis of the overall research finding in relation to the environment and the economy and their roles in sustainable community development in Irish urban areas. The final pillar of sustainability, social, will be discussed in the proceeding chapter, Chapter Seven.

6.2 Resident's Perspectives of Sustainable Development and the Environment

Attitude surveys have consistently demonstrated that the Irish population have, historically, a somewhat ambivalent approach to the environment (Collinson, 2015). Motherway et al.'s (2003) survey of environmental attitudes and behaviour among the Irish population found that most people's engagement with environmental concerns was largely confined to recycling. It also found that concerns over the environment (and a willingness to pay for its protection) were strongly related to household wealth (Motherway et al., 2003, p. 28). While the Irish government began to show an interest in environmental issues, it was late to recognise the importance of environmental sustainability, in part through an incorporation of EU environmental regulations and programmes (Coyle 1994; Tovey, Share, and Corcoran 2007). These observations provide a partial explanation for the discernible dichotomy between 'community' and 'environmental' development in Ireland. The development debate in Ireland has historically been rather one-dimensional, economic considerations usually taking precedence over everything else (Tovey, 2007 cited in Collinson, 2015). While almost every level of governance across the island of Ireland has signed up to a vision of sustainability, the State still lags behind much of continental Europe in its development of environmental sustainability within urban areas (Kelly, 2004; Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005; Barry and Doran 2009).

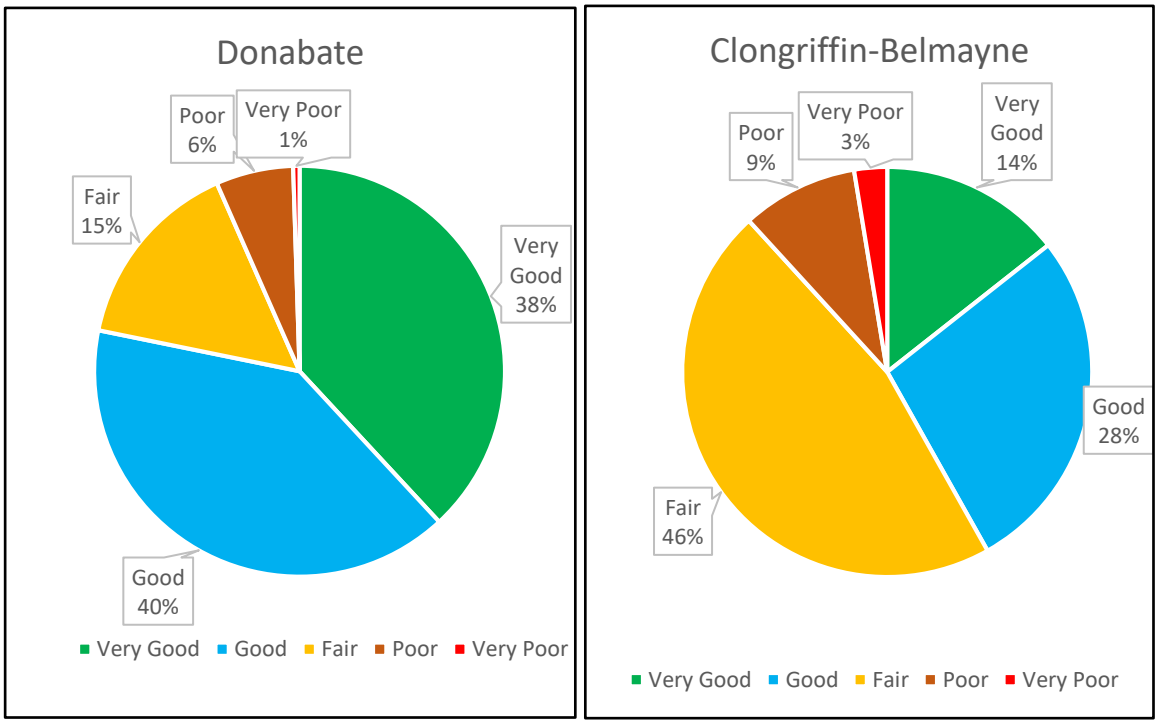
This research highlights the vision of sustainability in relation to the environment by local residents within the two case-study areas. This section analyses and discusses the perspectives of local residents of environmental sustainable development within their communities, noting the common themes of the research, namely: sustainability and public green space; sustainability and the built environment; and sustainability and pollution and waste management.

6.2.1 An Overview of the Perspective of Participants on the Environmental Criteria for Sustainable Community Development in their Urban Area

A total of three-hundred-and-fifty responses were recorded from local residents living within the case-study areas of Donabate, Co. Dublin (Fingal County Council) and Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13 (Dublin City Council). Overall, 62.3% of respondents rated their local environment as 'Good' or 'Very Good,' with few ranking it as 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' (8.8%). The mean response given was 'Good' at 2.20, with a standard deviation of 0.98 from the mean. The minimum value was 1 (representing Very Good) and the maximum value was 5 (representing Very Poor). Interestingly, despite the all responses being within one standard deviation of the mean, the attitudes towards the local environment in each case-study area differ significantly [see Figure 6.1]. The data suggests that the residents of Donabate are somewhat more satisfied

with 78% of respondents recording 'Very Good' or 'Good' responses against only 42% of respondents in Clongriffin-Belmayne opting for 'Very Good' or 'Good.' However, residents in Clongriffin-Belmayne are not exactly dissatisfied with their environment (only 12% responding with 'Very Poor' or 'Poor'), but they are somewhat indifferent to it. One respondent epitomised the consensus of this population by noting: 'it's not as if there's anything wrong with the environment here, or how the place looks. Like it's grand, but it's just that - grand. Oh, and a bit grey' (Survey Respondent 311).

Figure 6.1: Local Perspectives of the Quality of the Environment in the Case-Study Areas



(Source: Current Research)

This survey identified the criteria for a sustainable local environment as defined by local residents [see Table 11]. Public Green Space and the Built Environment were commonly cited as the two most important criteria by respondents. Against this, local involvement in environmental initiatives (such as Tidy Towns and Green Schools), levels of pollution, and waste management were reported to be of lesser importance to survey respondents [see Table 11].

Table 11: Levels of Importance of the Criteria of Environmental Sustainability in the Case-Study Areas.

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Levels of Pollution	3.98	1.70
Biodiversity	3.20	1.72
Public Green Space	2.75	1.56
Built Environment	2.98	1.72
Waste Management	3.76	1.57
Local Environment	4.29	1.39

(Source: Current Research)

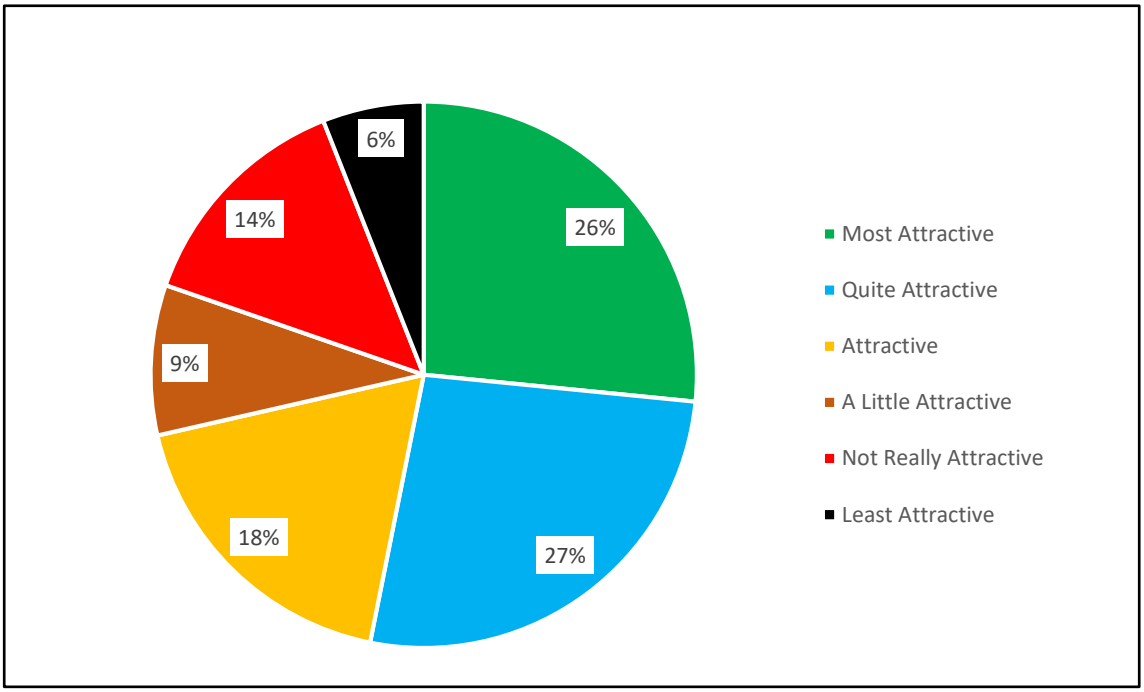
6.2.2 Sustainability and Public Green Space: The Residents' Perspective

As Table 11 shows, Public Green Space was listed as the most important factor for local residents in the creation of an environmentally sustainable local community. A total of 26.6% of respondents listed this criterion as the 'Most Attractive' element of an urban community's environment [see Figure 6.2].

This research finding is unique as it is the result of empirical research conducted with local residents within two case-study areas and yet it reaffirms many academic and policy works which note the importance of public green space to the local resident and its role in the development of a holistic, sustainable urban community. This research confirmed the exceptional importance of urban green space to the future of town and cities in Ireland. In particular, it elaborated on the findings of earlier studies on the role and the importance of urban green space in the day-to-day life of urban dwellers (see Swanwick, Dunnett, and Woolley, 2003).

Urban green space has special value for both its existence – that is people knowing that it is there and seeing the contribution that it makes to the aesthetic of the urban landscape – as well as its use for recreation and enjoyment. As one survey respondent noted: 'I just couldn't live without seeing some grass, trees and flowers about the place' (Survey Respondent 167)

Figure 6.2. A Breakdown of Survey Responses Ranking the Importance of Public Green Space



(Source: Current Research)

It is generally acknowledged that green space provides many benefits in terms of amenity, direct recreation opportunities, health, child development, social interaction and community identity (Bullock, 2005). Recent estimates show that physical inactivity, linked to poor walkability and lack of access to recreational areas account for 3.3% of global deaths (WHO, 2019). In addition, green space has the capacity to provide other benefits such as habitat for wildlife, dust filtration, noise mitigation, climate moderation and flood control (WHO, 2019). At local level, links are seen between the public's awareness of the importance of public green space and these elements of biodiversity as 80 respondents listed these two elements as 'Most Attractive' or 'Quite Attractive' in tandem [see Table 12].

Table 12: Cross-Tabulation of Local Perspectives on Green Space and Biodiversity

				Biodiversity				
		Most Attractive	Quite Attractive	Attractive	A Little Attractive	Not Really Attractive	Least Attractive	Total
	Most Attractive	0	41	28	11	8	5	93
Space	Quite Attractive	39	0	28	9	7	10	93
Green	Attractive	22	13	0	9	9	11	64
Public	A Little Attractive	6	4	7	0	9	5	31
	Not Really Attractive	3	10	3	10	0	22	48
	Least Attractive	3	2	4	2	10	0	21
	Total	73	70	70	41	43	53	350

(Source: Current Research)

Green spaces are also important to mental health (WHO, 2019). Having access to green spaces can reduce health inequalities, improve well-being and aid in treatment of mental illness. The WHO (2008) states that unipolar depressive disorders are now the leading cause of disability in middle- to high-income countries. Evidence is growing that this may, in part, be associated with increased urbanisation (Sundquist, Frank, and Sundquist, 2004). Recent studies analysing the links between public green space and public well-being are unanimous in their findings that the occurrence of good quality green space in urban areas has a significant positive impact on local residents. One particular study conducted by Groenewegen et al. (2006) highlighted the health benefits for urban communities of allotment gardens which include enhanced physical activity, reduced levels of stress and mental fatigue, and a better social and cultural integration within communities. The case-study area of Clongriffin-Belmayne is home to an allotment garden, which was commonly cited as a 'place to relax and get some fresh air. Ya wouldn't have a clue you're in the middle of Dublin when you're out there! 'Tis a real escape so it is' (Survey Respondent 265) [see Image 6.1].

Image 6.1. The Allotment Gardens Located in the Clongriffin-Belmayne Case Study Area

(Source: Current Research)

Against the overall recognition by local residents that the existence of public green space within their community areas was important for sustainable development, there was great concern among survey respondents that public green space and the natural beauty of their areas were being destroyed by the 'onslaught of residential development in recent years' (Survey Respondent 15). It became a common complaint by respondents as they felt 'you can't look anywhere without seeing scaffolding or cement trucks going to and fro' (Survey Respondent 15), and 'all of the buildings, lined up along every street, all looking the same just make the place look so sterile' (Survey Respondent 204). Indeed, urban green space is under strong pressure due to increasing urbanisation, combined with a spatial planning policy of densification in modern Ireland, meaning that more people face the prospect of living in less green residential environments. This would undoubtedly negatively impact upon sustainable community development as green spaces that are appropriately configured within the design of new housing estates and that are well managed by local residents certainly play a significant part in generating an arena for sociability (see Corcoran, Gray and Peillon, 2010). However, the challenge of advocating for the inclusion of more public green space in areas lies in the fact that its benefits are notoriously difficult to measure (Bullock, 2005).

6.2.3 Sustainability and the Built Environment: The Residents' Perspective

For the purpose of this research, the built environment is defined as man-made structures, features, and facilities viewed collectively as an environment in which people live and work. Ireland's urban fabric and the built environment are major resources in the country's economic development and play a vital role in the maintenance of a high quality of life (Stapleton, Lehane and Toner, 2000). Since the mid-1980s, urban environments have greatly changed in Ireland; in addition to the migration of people from rural to urban areas, the centres of cities have been subject to depopulation resulting in rapid growth in the peripheries of cities, forming suburbs (Stapleton, Lehane and Toner, 2000). According to Talja Blokland (2003), the neighbourhood is 'a geographically circumscribed built environment that people use practically and symbolically' (p. 213). As the built environment is viewed among academics as an integral part of the 'make-up' of a community, it is therefore unsurprising that the built environment was also of great importance to local residents. When answering on the built environment, 29.4% of respondents said it was the most attractive element of the environment within a community for them;

> I just think it's so important for the place to be looking well. Yanno, nice even roads with well-kept lawns and good street-lighting, and for the buildings to look clean and maintained. I think people tend to act better or something when where they live looks good (Survey Respondent 98).

An element of the built environment which was commonly cited by local residents which was of great importance to them was the provision of playgrounds within their community. One respondent noted that 'it's just important to have somewhere for kids to play and have fun – it just sends out that message that we look after our young people, and there's no better sound than children laughing' (Survey Respondent 54). However, playgrounds have much in common with the population that they have been built to serve: for the majority of a community's adult populace, the playground is one of the least important sites in their locale; largely ignored in their everyday lives, it is just a place where kids play. Other features of the community, such as shops, roads, footpaths and transportation networks, will all be more important than playgrounds to adults (McKendrick, 1999). However, playgrounds are often incorporated into the design of the 'ideal neighbourhood' by tenants and owner-occupiers as a requirement of their locale. Research also suggests that playgrounds gain greater importance to an individual at different stages of the family-cycle (Corcoran, Grey and Peillon, 2010). There is an 'uncritical and widely accepted belief among adults that children need places in which to play and that the

playground is the space that best fulfils this need' (McKendrick, 1999). Many of the survey respondents involved in this research commented:

> It's just great that we have a playground so close to us so that the kids can play in a safe, enclosed area (Survey Respondent 78).

> Oh, definitely the area *had* to have a playground. We've three small kids and they needed somewhere to play (Survey Respondent 111).

> Sure, my wee ones love the playground; they get so excited every time we go. Sure, what child doesn't love the playground, to be fair (Survey Respondent 349).

It is unsurprising that playgrounds were such a prominent part of the built environment for so many of the survey respondents across both of the case-study areas due to the large percentage of the population aged 0-14years and also the high numbers of families in the area [see Chapter Five]. However, children's playgrounds have been widely critiqued in academic literature as being spaces which confine children's play and do not enable children to explore the geography of their community in a way which is meaningful to them (McKendrick, 1999; Holloway and Valentine, 2000). Nevertheless, playgrounds have been identified as an important element of the built environment as a criterion for sustainable community development in this research.

6.2.4 Sustainability and Pollution and Waste Management: The Residents' Perspective

'Environmental pollution is a major public concern. The immediate reasons for this concern are not difficult to detect, for they assault our senses everyday: our eyes smart with smog; our ears throb with the noise of automobiles, aircraft and construction tools; we are assailed by the odours of polluted waters and the sight of mounting heaps of rubbish' (Commoner, 1970, p. 70). Commoner's observations on environmental pollution are almost fifty years old, but are just as applicable now as they were at the time of writing. We are experiencing high levels of pollution of our air, water and land alike and these problems are intensified within urban areas (Stapleton, Lehane and Toner, 2000).

According to this research, local residents did not identify levels of pollution or waste management as particularly crucial elements of the environmental sustainability of their communities [see Table 11]. However, many respondents were unhappy with the levels of pollution and poor waste management that their areas were currently experiencing. A total of 28.6% respondents ranked levels of pollution as the 'least attractive' element of the local

environment, but residents were slightly more satisfied with waste management, with 24.3% ranking it as 'a little attractive.'

The two most common issues for participants in relation to pollution in the two case-study areas were air pollution (from vehicles and construction works) and litter. Litter for many years has been a significant problem, particularly in towns and cities: the impact of litter is detrimental to economic sectors and damages the aesthetic quality of the environment (Stapleton, Lehane, and Toner, 2000). National litter surveys conducted by the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System (2017) showed that the most common items littered included cigarette ends and packaging; plastic bottles; paper and plastic wrappers; fast food cartons; and beverage cans and bottles. The greatest irritant for local residents in this research's urban case-study areas was instances of dog fouling within their locality. Many cited it as a public annoyance, a hazard to the health and safety of children and other animals in the area, as well as an eye-sore.

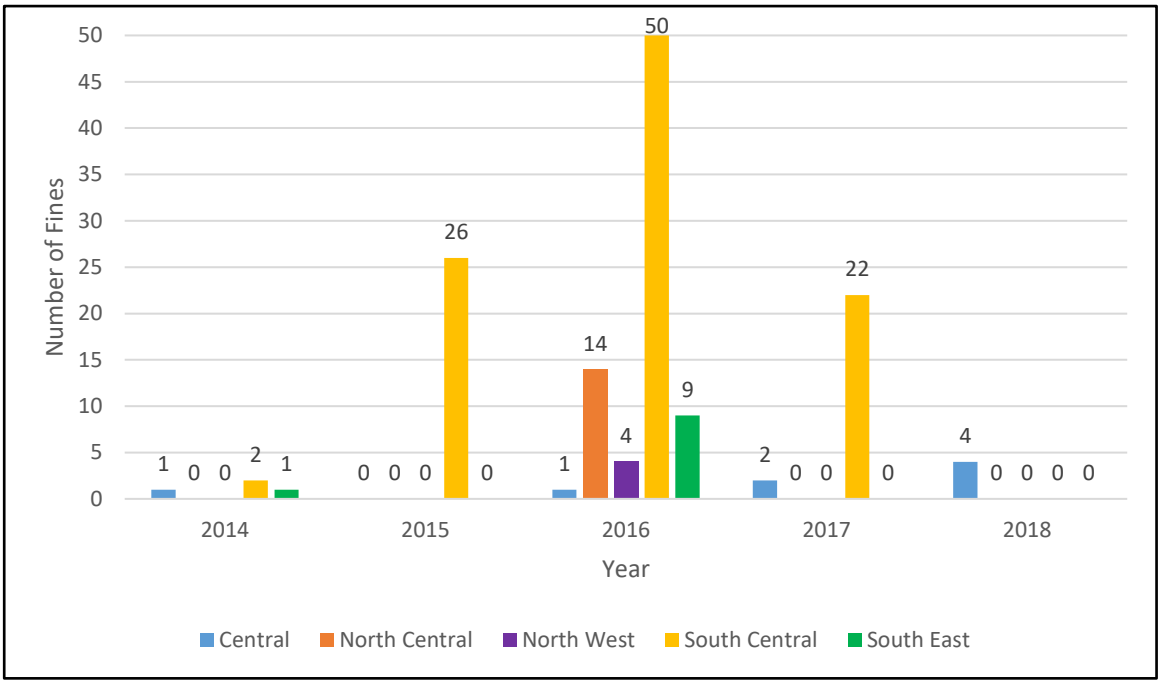
> There's so much shit along the footpaths here, it's disgusting. If I'd a euro for every time I've stepped in it, I'd be a very rich man, let me tell you that (Survey Respondent 326).

> Dog fouling in the area is really rather unacceptable, I think. There's been a few times where my kids will go out to play on the green and one of them will come home with dog foul on their clothes or shoes. Something really needs to be done about it (Survey Respondent 134).

> There's a lot of dog poo in the area and it really lets the place down. I'm a dog owner myself, but I'm responsible and clean up after my pet. But I do know how easy it would be just to leave it there as there's no personal repercussions (Survey Respondent 43).

As noted by Respondent 43, there is no accountability for not picking up your dog's waste in these areas. Despite the existence of signs and dog poo bins, enforcement of this law is lax. According to figures released by DCC (2018), only four dog fouling fines were issued in 2018, which marked a significant decrease on previous years [see Figure 6.3]. There was an acknowledgement by some respondents that dog fouling may not be a 'pressing issue for all the big-guns on the Council, but it's a massive problem when you have to live in an area that has poo smearing the footpaths. I just think that unless something is a big problem according to the UN or EU, our Government just ignore it. But everything is relative, and these are issues that matter to us' (Survey Respondent 229).

Figure 6.3. Instances of Fines Issues for Dog Fouling by Dublin City Council from 2014-2018



(Source: Adapted from DCC, 2018)

6.3 Residents' Perspectives of Sustainable Development and the Economy

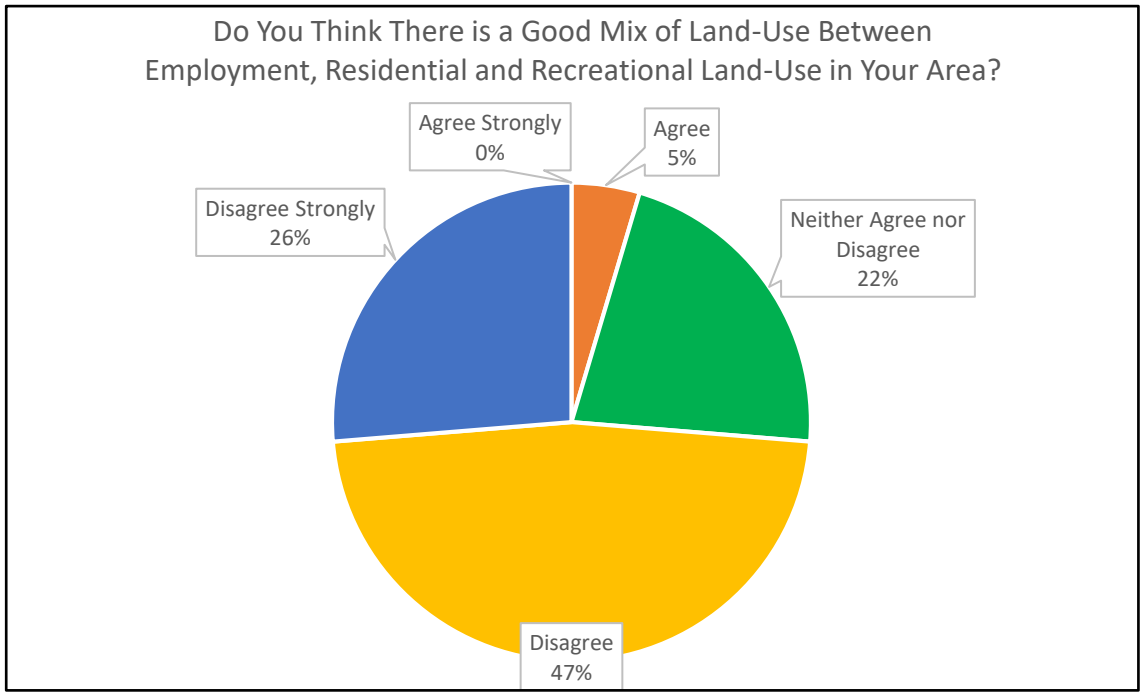
Urban areas are commonly cited as the driving force of the world's economy, with over 80% of global GDP being generated in cities (UN-HABITAT, 2016). As Ireland's primate city, Dublin's economy is of particular importance to Ireland's overall performance on the world's economic stage; Dublin is Ireland's only urban region of sufficient scale to compete with the world's great cities and is Ireland's most attractive location for foreign direct investment and skilled workers from overseas. It produces over 53% of Ireland's GDP and accounts for 62% of Irish tax revenues (Dublin Chamber, 2017). This highlights the importance of all local economies within the Dublin region, including the two case-study areas analysed by this research.

At all spatial levels, the optimal functioning of an urban economy requires that land-uses are organised and circulation operates as efficiently as possible. The geography of employment, the residential location of different types of workforce and the existence of appropriate transportation infrastructures are therefore matters of considerable long-term importance for the sustainability of urban land-use patterns (MacLaran, 2005). The economic sustainability of the urban environment in Ireland is already at risk in relation to balanced land-usage in urban areas: according to this research, a total of 73.7% of respondents across the two-case study disagreed or disagreed strongly that land-use in their areas was a good mix of residential areas, employment areas and recreational areas [see Figure 6.4]. Most respondents

felt that their communities were overwhelmed by residential land-use, with economic and recreational services and facilities were suffering as a result:

> Houses! Houses! Houses! It's just houses everywhere: literally everywhere you look there's either houses that are newly built or houses that are still being built. I can't remember the last time a new shop or playground was built or improvements to the roads were made, but you can rest assured, there's plenty of houses cause that's where the money for Council and Government is (Survey Respondent 65).

Figure 6.4. Public Opinion on Land Use in the Two Case-Study Areas



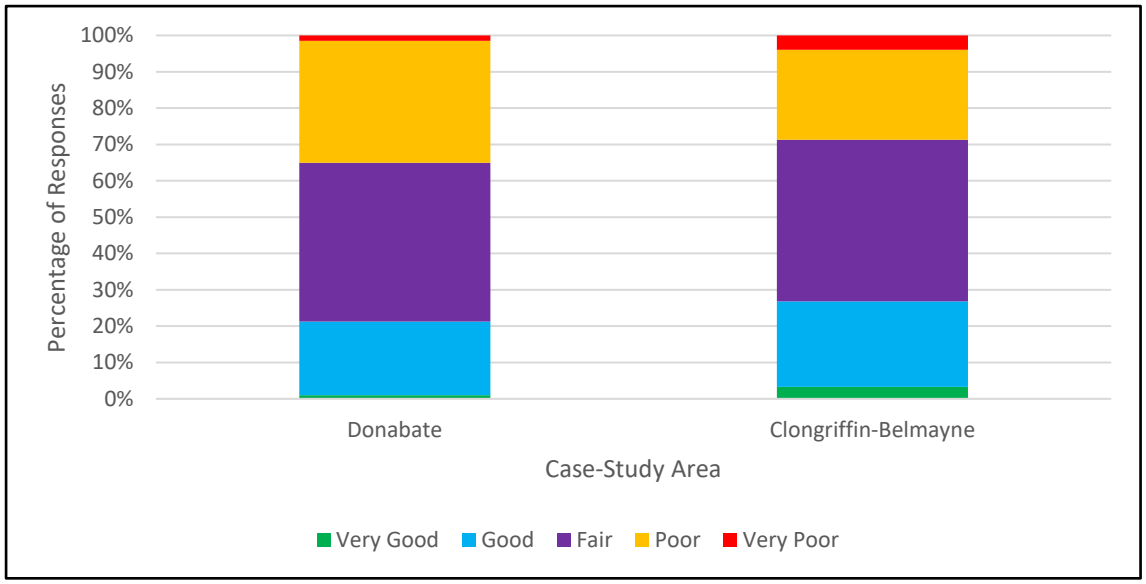
(Source: Current Research)

6.3.1 An Overview of the Perspective of Participants on the Economic Criteria for Sustainable Community Development in their Urban Area

This section will analyse and discuss the perspectives of local residents of economic sustainable development within their communities and highlight the common themes of the research, namely: sustainability and the affordability of housing/cost of living: sustainability and employment opportunities, education and training; and sustainability and public transport. Respondents were not overly satisfied with the functioning of their local economy with 32.3% of respondents rating their local economy as 'Poor' or 'Very Poor.' The mean response given was 'Fair' at 3.09, with a standard deviation of 0.83 from the mean. Interestingly, there was very little difference in local perspectives on the economy of their local community between the two case-study areas [see Figure 6.5]. Both areas recorded a 44% 'fair' response, with general attitudes thereafter staying between 'good' and 'poor.' One respondent epitomised the consensus of this population by noting: 'we're not exactly in the depths of poverty, quite the

opposite – it's a well-to-do area; but it's not money that generated in the area. Ask anyone and they've to commute to work, shop, socialise, and that' (Survey Respondent 77).

Figure 6.5. Local Perspectives on the Strength of the Local Economy in the Case-Study Areas



(Source: Current Research)

This survey was also successful in identifying the criteria for a sustainable local economy, with local residents across the two case-study areas giving insight to their importance [see Table 13]. Affordability of housing/cost of living and public transportation were the criteria which held the greatest importance for local residents in relation to the sustainability of their local economy. Education, training and employment opportunities were not ranked as highly within quantitative data sets, but their importance to the local community was highlighted through an analysis of the qualitative data from the survey.

Table 13 Levels of Importance of the Criteria of Economic Sustainability in Case-Study Areas.

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Employment Opportunities	4.29	1.41
Affordability of Housing/Cost of Living	2.63	1.44
Education and Training	3.23	1.45
Public Transportation	2.19	1.45
Tourism	4.60	1.71
Local Government	4.05	1.31

(Source: Current Research)

6.3.2 Sustainability and the Affordability of Housing/Cost of Living

Housing, an essential aspect of quality of life, is also significant for sustainable development (SD). All of the major international statements on SD refer to housing or settlement strategies (Winston and Pareja-Eastaway, 2008). Such strategies, which have been previously discussed, such as Agenda 21 identified that providing adequate shelter for all; the improvement of human settlement management; and promoting sustainable construction industry activities greatly influenced the sustainability of an area (UNSD, 1992). However, housing and its regeneration and affordability are relatively neglected topics in the SD literature, barring a few exceptions (see Bhatti, 2001; Tosics, 2004; Hall and Purchase, 2006; Williams and Dair, 2007). This highlights the need for empirical research, such as this study, in order to identify the attitudes of local residents towards housing stock and its affordability in their local areas. Such findings also aid in identifying whether or not local residents believe that this is a key criterion for the sustainable development of their area. This research on sustainability in relation to housing is particularly relevant within the context of the Dublin region. Dublin has grown by means of unsustainable housing development for most of the 20th and 21st Centuries. To a large extent, housing development consisted of suburban sprawl on greenfield sites with low density housing (Winston, 2010). These unsustainable trends were exacerbated during the 'Celtic Tiger' years when the demand for housing increased significantly due to economic growth and a range of demographic factors. There has been a significant increase in house prices and rent since the 1990s, with figures steadily increasing in recent years, with average monthly rental costing €2,002 (Murray, 2019).

This pressure to pay high prices for owner-occupancy or tenancy in Dublin has resulted in housing affordability gaining increasing importance for those looking to settle down. Over 73% of respondents felt that the affordability of housing and the cost of living in an area was an attractive component of the economy of that community. Interestingly, a total of 22.6% of respondents listed the affordability of their home as the 'most significant' reason as to why they moved to their area. Local residents echoed this sentiment in their anecdotes:

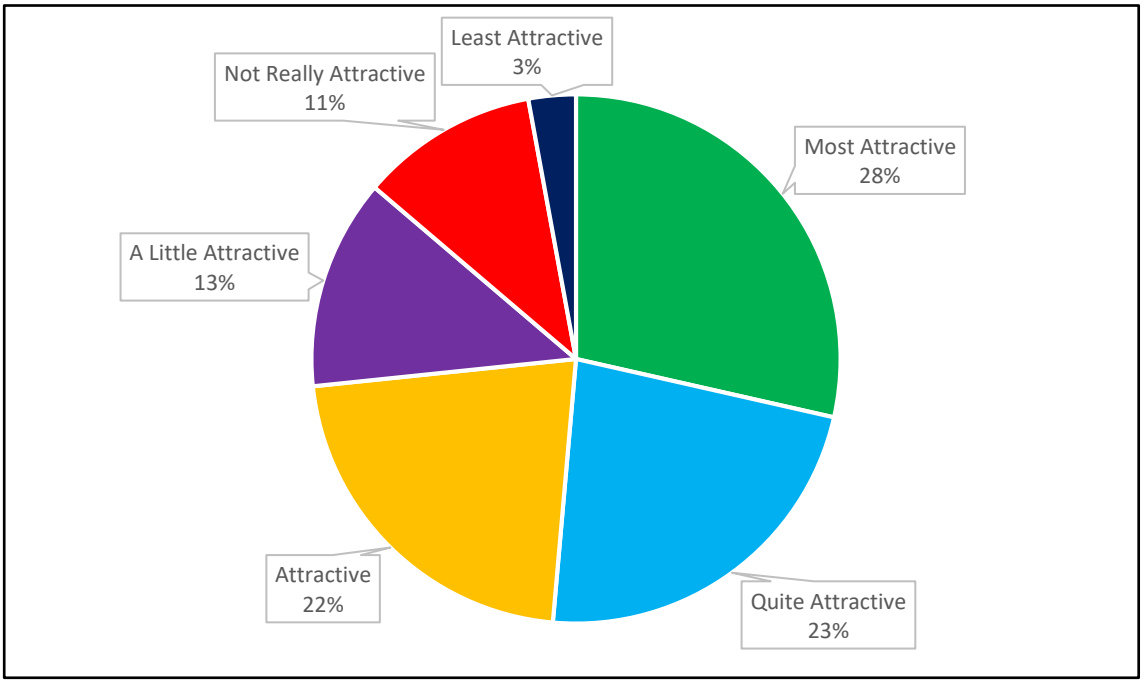
> I really had to think long and hard about where I wanted to live, especially now I'm rearing a family. I wanted the big house, big garden, safe community, close to Dublin, impressive post-code, but ultimately it all came down to the number of 00s on the price tag of the house (Survey Respondent 259).

> I couldn't afford a shoebox in Dublin City Centre, let alone a nice one-bedroom apartment, so I made the decision to move to Donabate. Yeah, the commute is much

longer, but it's better value for money in terms of what I'm renting out here (Survey Respondent 18).

Well it's not as if living here is exactly cheap, but it's more affordable than other places in Dublin and a great location. Yeah, you've to consider the money side of things, but if you choose a place just for euro to square footage ratio, you'd end up out in the back-arse of nowhere with no facilities around you (Survey Respondent 199).

Figure 6.6. Affordability and Cost of Living as an Important Economic Factor: A Breakdown of Responses



(Source: Current Research)

Local residents also commented that the cost of living in the area was generally relatively satisfactory. Common themes which emerged from the survey related to the cost of transport to and from Dublin City Centre, which will be discussed in Section 6.3.4, and the cost of shopping in local supermarkets as they did not 'have enough competition so they can just charge what they like for products, but I suppose it's better than just a convenience store, they're daylight robbery!' (Survey Respondent 108).

6.3.3 Sustainability and Employment Opportunities, Education and Training

As discussed in Section 5.5, employment and education levels were high in both case-study areas. Generally, this is a signifier of an economically viable area which is contributing positively to the community as a whole. Of course, these elements of employment, and education and training have long been cited in the literature as traditional themes for

sustainable development (see Colantonio, 2009) and have been further highlighted by this research.

The theme of employment within this research was met with a somewhat ambivalent attitude by local residents of the case study areas. Whilst data collected showed that residents were mostly employed (64%) with very low unemployment rates (4.9%), the research also highlighted that local residents found employment opportunities in their area to be an unattractive element of their society, yet they acknowledged that it was vitally important for an area to have sufficient opportunities for employment in order to be sustainable.

> It's a bit of a joke, really – to have all these people living here and nowhere for them to work? We need more companies to invest in the area and bring jobs with them. Something like light industry would be perfect, I'd say (Survey Respondent 41).

> I'm lucky enough to have a job in the local shop, but I know that jobs are very rare around here. It's like if there's one job going, you've a hundred people applying for it (Survey Respondent 176).

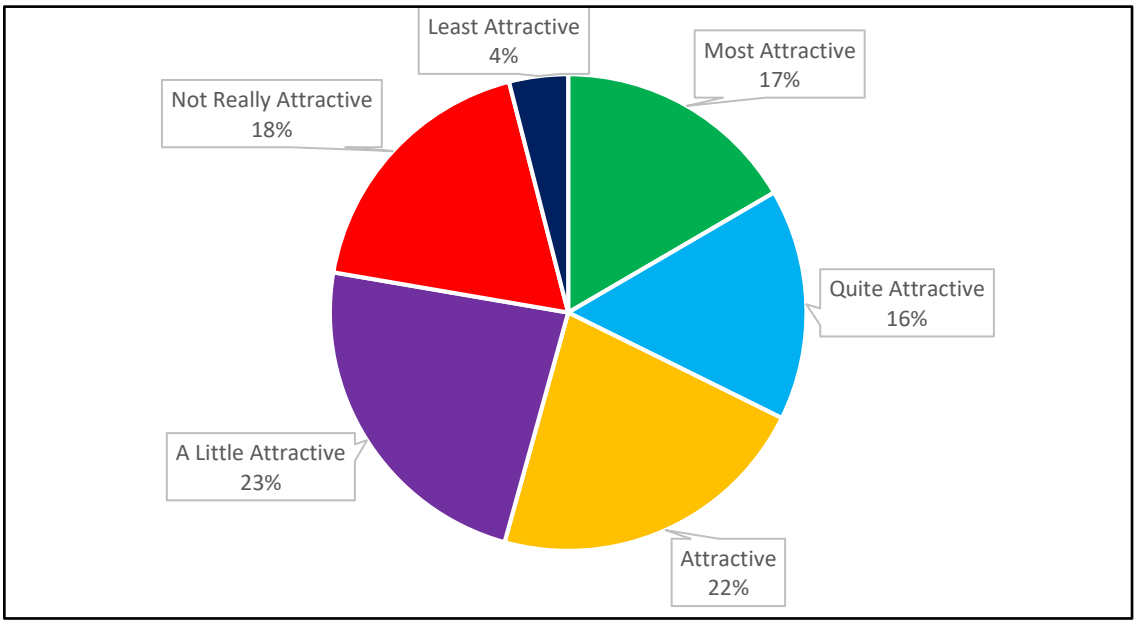
> Realistically you need to travel to Dublin City for work. That's a reality a lot of us are living, but we knew that this would be like a commuter belt before we moved here (Survey Respondent 113).

When asked to rank their opinion of employment opportunities as an attractive element of their area, only 1.4% of respondents listed it as the most attractive criterion [see Figure 6.7]. In fact, the ranking of employment opportunities showed that 26% of respondents believed it to be the least attractive component of their community. The literature is in agreement that sustainable local development is not merely the growth of employment, but the development of employment opportunities that respond to the demands and needs expressed at local level (Sugden and Wilson, 2002; Noya and Clarence, 2007). There was an expressed demand for the creation of local jobs in the service, hospitality, and retail sectors as respondents felt that this would 'bring a lot more life to the area' (Survey Respondent 5). There was also an awareness that the creation of jobs in these sectors would be mutually beneficial to amenities which would enhance the social aspects of the area:

> If more shops, cafes, bars or restaurants opened, it would really boost the place – there'd be more job opportunities and way more places to socialise (Survey Respondent 76).

Interestingly, very few of the survey respondents noted the need for highly-skilled employment opportunities in the area, despite the average participant being highly educated [see Section 5.5]. One resident commented that 'ya wouldn't really mind travelling into the City when you've a well-paid job, but if I was a worker on minimum wage, I'd want a job locally' (Survey Respondent 28). Similar to a large percentage of the population at work, but dissatisfied with employment opportunities in the area, many of the respondents were highly educated, but were relatively indifferent to the opportunities for education and training within the case-study areas. Over 45% of respondents felt that education and training in their areas were only 'attractive' or 'a little attractive' [see Figure 6.7].

Figure 6.7. Participant Perspectives on Education & Training as a Criteria for SCD in their Area



(Source: Current Research)

When asked to comment on the opportunities for education and training locally, local residents commonly highlighted the need for more second and third level institutions in the area, as well as more culturally diverse primary schools:

> I'm in college at the moment and I commute into DCU every day. It's not that I expect to have such a huge college on my doorstep, or anything, but to at least have better access to it would be great – and I mean that in like literally with transport like, but also with stepping-stone courses in those further education colleges; we don't even have one of those (Survey Respondent 94).

> We've only recently moved to Ireland and we've been struggling to find a school place for our son. We want to send him to Educate Together, but there's a lot of competition for places there (Survey Respondent 337).

> My son travels to school now and he has to go a fair distance in the mornings. He's just started First Year. I wanted him to be closer, 'cause I know he struggles with school, but the schools just aren't there. We really need a secondary school in the area and fast (Survey Respondent 263).

Overall, survey respondents, while valuing the importance of employment and education, with the general participant being highly educated and employed, recognised the need for employment opportunities, and adequate educational and training facilities in order for their community to be sustainable. However, local residents also acknowledged that both of these criteria were lacking in their areas.

6.3.4 Sustainability and Public Transport

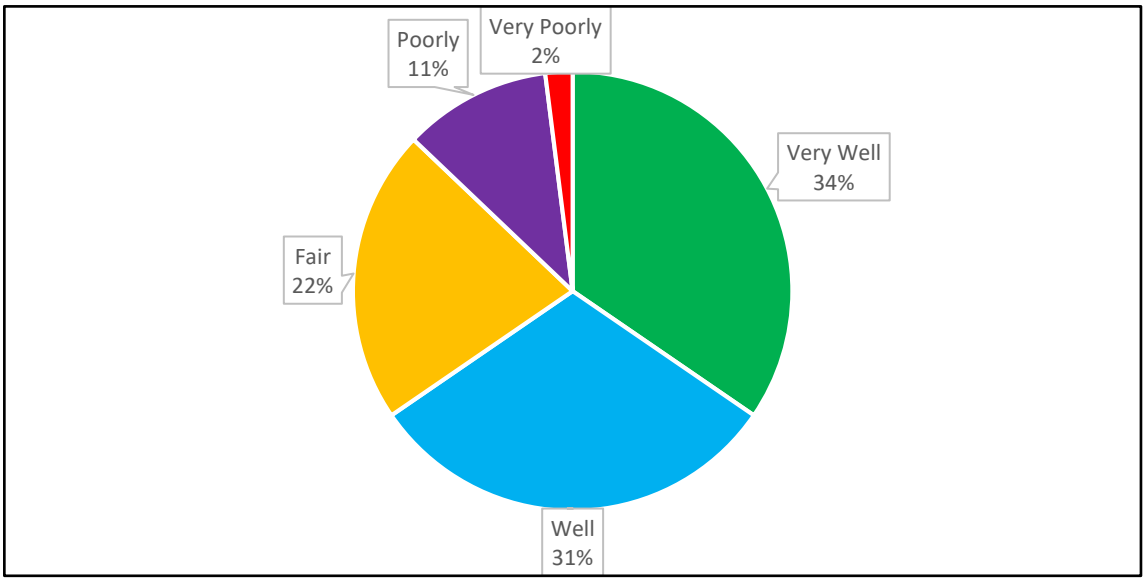
The link between sustainable urban development and the increased use of public transport infrastructures has long been acknowledged in academic discourse. Transport poses a big challenge in achieving the concept of sustainable development, with the demand for travel increasing rapidly, everywhere in the world (Wakeford, 1994). The need for more sustainable transport systems has been widely recognised on the global and National stage, with many current policies and strategies outlining objectives for a 'greener' transport network. The *Project Ireland 2040* framework acknowledges that an 'environmentally sustainable public transport system will enable growth and change, meet the significant increase in travel demand and urban congestion while also contributing to our national policy vision of a low-carbon economy' (GOI, 2019, p. 53). However, local perceptions of a transport system which benefits sustainable community development doesn't focus on low-carbon transport, but rather emphasises the need for 'bloody buses that are on-time and trains that aren't packed to the rafters!' (Survey Respondent 33). Despite there being clear disparities between the criteria of the Government and the criteria of local residents for successful sustainable transport systems, both are in agreement that a good transport network is a must for a successful society:

> I really do think Donabate would be absolutely lost without its bus services and train-lines. Like they're by no means fantastic and, trust me, they need a lot of improvements but realistically, the place wouldn't function without them – no one would want to live here (Survey Respondent 97).

> People need better public transport in this country. So many rely on it to commute to work, or even just to get from A to B, and it's really letting us down. Overpriced, over-capacitated and always late. We need better services than this if we want to stand a chance against other markets globally (Survey Respondent 312).

Within the case-study areas, public transport was ranked as the most attractive criterion for successful economic sustainability [see Table 13]. A total of 43.7% of respondents ranked public transport as the 'most attractive' part of a sustainable community. It was also ranked as the most significant factor for local residents, alongside access to local amenities, in their decision to move to their area. This is unsurprising, however, as 65.4% of respondents believe that their area is 'very well' or 'well' connected to Dublin City Centre via public transport, cycle-ways and road infrastructures [see Figure 6.8].

Figure 6.8 Respondents' Perspective of the Connectivity of their Area to Dublin City via Transport



(Source: Current Research)

Overall, local residents believe that public transport, and overall connectedness of their area to other areas (in this case Dublin City) is an integral part of sustainable development within their community. These beliefs echo those of the literature and current policies pertaining to sustainable development in urban areas across global and national platforms.

6.4 Emerging Themes of the Research

There are a number of consistent trends emerging from this research, namely: (i) local residents acknowledge the importance of the environment in developing a sustainable community in an urban area; (ii) the criteria of public green space, the built environment and low pollution levels are the most important for locals, as identified through quantitative and qualitative research; (iii) local residents also acknowledge the importance of the economy in developing a sustainable urban community; and (iv) the criteria of affordability of housing/cost

of living, employment and education/training, and public transport are recognised as the most important for local residents. Each of these emergent trends have reinforced the themes of sustainability [see Chapter One and Two], which will now be considered.

The resident population of the case-study areas highlighted how their area(s) signified a place with in inclusive of two of the three of the traditional pillars of sustainability, i.e.: the environment and the economy [see Figure 6.1 and 6.5]. Local residents noted how it was important for their communities for both of these pillars to thrive:

> I think everyone knows how important it is for a place to look well and not hurt the environment while still making enough money to keep itself going. You can't really have one without the other: if you neglect the environmental side of things, you won't have anywhere to earn money and if you don't have a strong economy, you won't have the finances to keep the environment well (Survey Respondent 72).

Whilst this is put in rather crude terms, there is a wealth of academic literature which supports this belief amongst the residents of the case study areas (see UNSD, 1992: OECD, 2016: GOI, 2019).

Another theme of sustainable community development which is not so well discussed within academic works is the need for the wants and needs of residents living within the urban area to be the primary concern of policy makers. There was an agreement among the participants that Governments 'don't listen or really care about what we actually need' and were more 'concerned about the brown envelopes being passed around' (Survey Respondent 144), or that 'we can write countless letters to the Council, but nothing will ever change' (Survey Respondent 202). These frustrations of locals are in direct opposition to the objectives of sustainable development strategies, such as Agenda 21 (UNSD, 1992), which aim to engage communities in planning and development so that their needs are met.

6.5 Conclusion

This research has indicated that both case-study areas identify sustainable community development in urban areas as inclusive of the pillars of the environment and the economy. Through a mixed-method approach of quantitative and qualitative research, the perspectives of local residents in relation to the environmental and economic criteria, which an area must meet for sustainable community development to occur, were highlighted and discussed. In summary, local residents believed good quality public green space, a good-quality built environment, and low levels of pollution maintained through sufficient waste management were the three most important criteria for environmental sustainability in their area(s). In relation to the economy,

the identified affordability of housing and cost of living, good employment and educational opportunities, and well-connected and efficient public transport links as the three most important criteria for economic sustainability in their area(s).

The third and final pillar of 'society' will be discussed in Chapter Seven. Furthermore, a fourth pillar, as identified by local residents, will also be highlighted and discussed.

Chapter Seven: The Impact of Social Factors and Engagement Upon Sustainable Community Development

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Community connectedness is not just about warm fuzzy tales of civic triumph. In measurable and well-documented ways, social capital makes an enormous difference in our lives

Putnam, 2000

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is inclusive of the results and discussion of the research which pertain to the topics of social factors and civic engagement and their influence upon sustainable community development in urban areas, from the perspective of local residents. By definition, sustainable development implies enhanced communal obligation and should enable people to better relate to each other's needs, with obvious political implications at its core. This 'underlines that the path to sustainability is, above all, a political process with the concept of citizenship at its core' (Ellis, Motherway and Neill, 2005, p. 171). As a result, one can link local sustainability to the wider debates on the nature of citizenship and social interactions (Corcoran, Gray and Peillon, 2010), and the need to overcome cultural and political differences through the development of civic engagement and 'bridging social capital' (Arnstein, 1969; Putnam, 2000). In Irish society, as highlighted by Russell, Scott and Redmond (2005), there is a growing interest in the role of social factors and the potential to create deeper and more embedded interest in the role of social factors and the potential to create a more sustainable Ireland.

The important implication of sustainability is that it is not just about resources in isolation, it is intimately connected with social and economic issues (Knox and Pinch, 2006). Nevertheless, it is possible to isolate a separate notion of urban social sustainability that involves notions of equity, community and urbanity. Yiftachel and Hedgcock define such a notion as follows:

> Urban social sustainability is defined here as the continuing ability of a city to function as a long-term viable setting for human interaction, communication and development. It is not necessarily related to the environmental and economic sustainability of a city, although the links often exist between the three areas. A socially sustainable city is marked by vitality, solidarity and a common sense of place among its residents. Such a city is characterised by a lack of overt or violent intergroup conflict [crime], conspicuous spatial segregation, or chronic political instability. In short, urban social sustainability is about the *long-term survival* of a viable urban social unit (Yiftachel and Hedgcock, 1993, p. 140).

Despite this theoretically solid definition, social sustainability, it is argued, appears as a 'concept in chaos' (Vallance et al., 2011, p. 342), and is the least conceptually developed of the three pillars or sustainability (Dillard et al., 2009; Boström, 2012; Woodcraft, 2012). As Colantonio and Dixon (2010) assert, a comprehensive study of this concept is still missing. For the purpose of this research, I believe that it was of the upmost importance to place the opinions, perceptions and experiences of local residents at the heart of this study in analysing social factors and civic engagement as a criteria of sustainable urban development, using the methodological approaches as discussed in Chapter 4. This represents a synchronic view of the perspectives of local residents of sustainable social development within their communities. It is important to highlight that this research is not intended to be either an evaluation of the current social or socio-economic status of the two case-study areas, nor a comparative study between the two case-study areas. The aim is to provide an understanding of what criteria are important to local residents in relation to the sustainable social development of their [urban] area. This chapter first presents the survey findings in relation to sustainable development and social factors in their local communities, after which the findings in relation to sustainable development and civic engagement are discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the emerging themes of the research and a synthesis of the overall research finding in relation to the social criteria and the importance of civic engagement in sustainable community development in Irish urban areas.

7.2 Residents' Perspectives of Sustainable Development and Social Factors

The literature has often identified three interrelated dimensions of community, all of which infer the importance of a connection to place. These include 'areal content' (physical or social differences in areas), 'behaviour or interaction' (people's social and economic contacts with others in an around their area of residence), and 'conceptual identify' (relating to a sense of community and a sense of place) (Davies and Herbert, 1993 cited in Mahon, Fahy, and Ó Cinnéide, 2009). Conceptual identity as a dimension refers to aspects such as degree of rootedness of the population, degree of satisfaction with the residential area, feelings of safety and security, degree to which residents feel they have control over the area in terms of influencing its future, and the extent of social cohesion or integration. Mahon, Fahy and Ó Cinnéide (2009, p. 268) argue 'that the ability of individuals to achieve a collective vision is predicated to a large extent on their capacities to interact and collaborate. The dynamic behind collaborative action at the local level is most often linked with the concept of social capital.'

The concept of social capital has a long history and can be traced back to the work of classic sociologists including Durkheim, Marx and others (Portes, 1998). However, the term became popularised by the works of Robert Putnam (2000) and for him, 'social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them' (2000, p. 19). Academics and policy makers alike hold the belief that higher levels of social capital can lead to positive outcomes for sustainable urban development in a range of areas, including: better governance; reduced crime; healthier and better-educated communities and enhanced economic development (Russell, Scott and Redmond, 2005; Office for National Statistics, 2001; Field, 2003).

For the purpose of this research, considerations were given to these dimensions of a community, leading to ideals of social capital within urban communities. This research highlights the vision of sustainability in relation to social factors by local residents within the two case-study areas. This section analyses and discusses the perspectives of local residents of social sustainable development within their communities, noting the common themes of the research, namely: sustainability and levels of attachment; sustainability, the people and equality in a community; sustainability and recreational facilities; and sustainability and crime.

7.2.1 An Overview of the Perspective of Participants on the Environmental Criteria for Sustainable Community Development in their Urban Area

A total of three-hundred-and-fifty responses were recorded from local residents living within the case-study areas of Donabate, Co. Dublin (Fingal County Council) and Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13 (Dublin City Council). Overall, 71.4% of the inhabitants of the two case study areas feel that the sense of community in their areas is 'Very Good' or 'Good,' with very few feeling that the sense of community in their areas were 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' (1.7%). An independent samples T-Test conducted on collected data showed a P value of .00 which indicates that there is a significant difference between the two case study areas.

Respondents within both case-study areas identified the people in their area as the most important part of their community in relation to social sustainability [see Table 14].

Table 14: Levels of Importance of the Criteria of a Sustainable Community in each Case-Study Area

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Sig. (-2 tailed)
The People	Donabate	1.6	1.2	0.020
	Clongriffin-Belmayne	1.9	1.4	0.023
Recreational Facilities	Donabate	3.6	1.83	0.803
	Clongriffin-Belmayne	3.6	1.74	0.802
Equality and Inclusion	Donabate	3.4	1.5	0.002
	Clongriffin-Belmayne	2.9	1.5	0.002
Organised Social Activities	Donabate	4.3	1.4	0.011
	Clongriffin-Belmayne	3.9	1.4	0.012
Volunteering	Donabate	4.1	1.2	0.000
	Clongriffin-Belmayne	4.6	1.3	0.000
Creative Local Culture	Donabate	3.9	1.6	1.000
	Clongriffin-Belmayne	4.0	1.5	1.000

n = 350 **(Source: Current Research)**

The emphasis on the people within a community as key criteria for sustainable social development is well versed in the literature. However, academic works will often focus on the interactions between individuals, the levels of trust between individuals, and the levels of individual engagement with local organisations (Selman and Parker, 1999; Putnam, 2000). Local residents did not appear to be aware of the particulars of human interactions and their

theoretical foundations, but rather they focus on how interacting with other members of their community made them feel, displaying a more intrinsic psychosomatic approach to analysis:

> I just truly love the people here – ya really couldn't ask for better, you know? Just last week my car got a flat tyre and two passing drivers stopped to help; turns out I knew them from the estate. But I just felt so overwhelmed with how eager people here are to be kind (Survey Respondent 125).
>
> I genuinely think the people who live here are some of the best in Dublin, but then again, I am hugely biased! Just everyone makes a real effort to help out their neighbour and the community overall – I really feel blessed and genuinely so happy living out here (Survey Respondent 19).
>
> It's not as if I know every Joe Soap who lives in the area, but I would still feel like I could say hello to anyone or go to my neighbour for a cup of sugar kinda thing and that gives ya a real sense of this place is really home. The people here are good stock, for the most part, and we all work together in making the place what it is (Survey Respondent 309).

This research also highlights that public recreational facilities and equality and inclusion were also ranked in the top three criteria for sustainable social development by local residents [see Table 14]. These three criteria were strongly supported by both the quantitative and qualitative data of this research and they are discussed in greater detail in Sections 7.2.2 and 7.2.3.

7.2.2 Sustainability and Feelings of Attachment/Sense of Place

In this section, we explore how local residents perceive and relate to the places where they live. Existing literature highlights that the quality of urban life depends, in part, on the way residents relate to their urban or suburban environment (Fischer, 1982; Bonner, 1997; Corcoran, Gray and Peillon, 2010). There is 'a dynamic process at work in suburbs wherein residents act as agents that shape their immediate environment and environment in turn helps to shape the parameters of their actions (Corcoran, Gray and Peillon, 2010, p. 83). Corcoran, Gray and Peillon (2010) found that the more people identify with their locality and utilise local facilities, the more likely the locality is to develop a reputation as a good place to live. Similarly, Herbert Gans (1967) found that suburbanites develop a sense of community in terms of loyalty toward the place and identification with the local organisations and sports teams. Borer (2006) also supports the importance of groups and sports teams in helping locals to form their sense of place within cities and their suburbs.

This research has highlighted the levels of attachment that local residents feel within the case-study areas through quantitative analysis and provides a discussion of qualitative data to identify the reasons for this attachment, or not. Over 73% of respondents said that they felt an emotional attachment and sense of place to their area with the local people and their own

personal involvement in community organisations and/or sports clubs continually noted as why they felt this way:

> Ah yeah, I really love living here so I suppose I'm attached to the place. I'm a member of one or two sports teams so that is a great way to mix in (Survey Respondent 29).

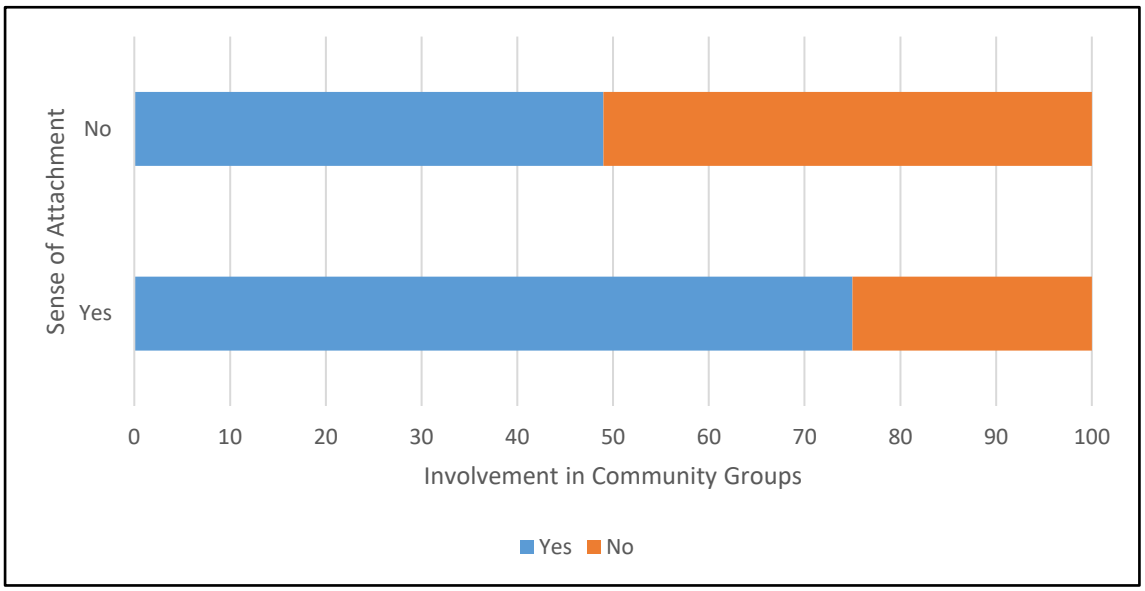
> I've never really thought about being attached to Donabate, but yeah, I am. I'd hate the thought of having to move out and leave all the friends I've made from the groups I'm in – and I definitely don't think I could support another team! "One life, one club" and all that! (Survey Respondent 56).

> The organisations and clubs around here are fantastic. They've really helped the community to grow and for people to get to know one another. I'd be really proud of seeing some of the groups go from strength to strength… so that pride of place is a type of attachment to me (Survey Respondent 275).

> I'd say I'm really attached to the area – mainly because I'm very involved in community life here. I play with a few clubs and am really involved with the local residents' association. Call me biased, but I think that residents' associations are really important to people in looking after their areas and discussing issues and all that (Survey Respondent 39).

This survey highlights the distinct link between local involvement in clubs and organisations, and an individual's sense of attachment to their area. Out of a total two-hundred-and-fifty respondents (of a possible three-hundred-and-fifty) who answered that they were emotionally attached to their areas, 75% were also involved in a community group [see Figure 7.1]. Qualitative analysis of this research displayed trends of what type of community group local residents were most often involved in, namely: sports club; and residents' associations.

Figure 7.1 Local Respondents and Level of Attachment and Involvement in Community Groups



(Source: Current Research)

There is evidence in other academic research of the precedence of residents' associations and the local state and in particular the manner in which residents' associations act as the bastion of opposition to what is perceived as unwelcomed development in their community (see Russell, Scott and Redmond, 2005). This work by Russell, Scott and Redmond (2005) documented that it was only in few residents' associations which helped to create the positive, warm elements of social capital by establishing networks and social support. However, this research displayed a very positive view of residents' associations by participants as they highlighted how such groups 'really helped [people] to get to know others and to have someone, or like a leader, who we can talk to and that we're actually listened to' (Survey Respondent 42). Most notable was the residents' belief that being a member of a residents' association, or having one in the area, was beneficial as they were listened to and have some control over development and maintenance of their local area, particularly within their own estate:

> I like with the Residents' Association that I, or anyone, can say: "I'm not happy about… the trees hanging too low outside my house" – and something is organised to sort it straight away. It's not like if you try to say something to the Council or your local TD and being ignored (Survey Respondent 68).

> I'm in the Residents' Association and it's great to be able to go in and say that something needs to be fixed, or that we're missing something in our estate and everyone can discuss it. It's not like bringing something to the politicians and never hearing a thing more about it (Survey Respondent 317).

This discussion on community engagement and local opinions of local government and sustainable development will be discussed further in Section 7.3.2]. Research conducted by Wann (2006) also shows the importance of an affiliation with a sports club in developing both temporary and enduring social connections within an area. He also stresses the benefits of sports club membership for individuals, especially regarding social psychological health and overall physical health benefits (Wann, 2006). This research also highlighted the equal importance of sports clubs in developing a sense of attachment to local areas, as many respondents noted that they felt a sense of pride in their sports team and, subsequently, their local areas. One respondent captured this sentiment by noting:

> I couldn't put words on it, but when the opposition line out against you on the pitch you're suddenly like "Up Donabate! This is the best place on God's green earth, with the best people, and now we're gonna kick yer asses!" It doesn't make any sense, you could hate the place Monday to Friday, but the second you put on that jersey on a Saturday, you belong to Donabate (Survey Respondent 188).

Overall, this research has highlighted that levels of attachment within urban areas have strong links to membership with Residents' Associations and/or Sports Clubs. However, those who did not feel attached to their areas commonly cited issues surrounding inclusion as a main factor as to why they did not feel included. It is important to stress that the link between exclusion and attachment was not as a result of exclusion due to gender, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation. Rather, qualitative analysis of survey responses linked this feeling of exclusion to two main factors, namely: (i) housing tenure; and (ii) family status:

> I don't really feel a sense of attachment here at all, but I think that's a lot to do with the fact I'm here on a short-term let and only cause it's close to the City – I've no real interest in putting down deep roots (Survey Respondent 270).

> No, I don't feel a sense of attachment to Clongriffin at all. I'd like to, but it can be hard to get involved in the community when it's everyone and their kids everywhere. Like it's not as if I can go up to a yummy mummy group and talk about the best crèche in the area as I've no kids myself (Survey Respondent 200).

> I really tried to become involved locally and warm to the place a bit more, but I just feel that unless you have your mortgaged house, three kids and a dog, you're the odd one out (Survey Respondent 14).

Nevertheless, this research also identified an attitude among those who rented in the area that there 'really wasn't much point in getting involved, just to end up moving on when my

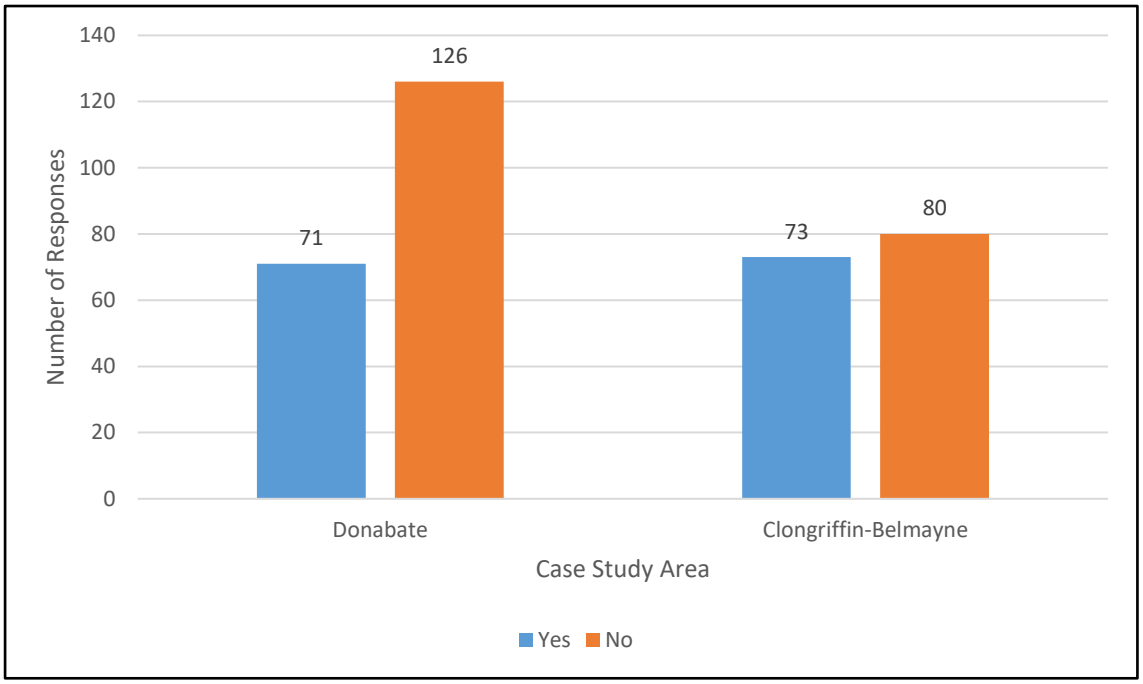
lease is up' (Survey Respondent 234). Furthermore, those who did not feel attached to the area and were also not involved in local community groups [see Figure 7.1], were only a small minority of the population with figures standing at 13.4%.

7.2.3 Sustainability and Attitudes towards Crime in Urban Community Areas.

Until recently, the spatial distribution of suburban crime has received little attention. This neglect is surprising for two reasons. First, Ireland is quickly becoming a decidedly suburban nation, with approximately 66% of its population living in metropolitan areas, and a majority (44%) of this metropolitan population lives within Dublin City Centre and its suburban rings (CSO, 2016). Second, suburban crime rates in this country are increasing (CSO, 2016). This rise parallels a broad process of 'urbanisation' whereby suburbs are acquiring many of the problems and characteristics traditionally associated with the central city (Brown, 1982). Research argues that three factors explain the increased suburban crime rates: (i) the suburbanisation of minority and poverty populations; (ii) the increasing accessibility of suburbs to crime-prone populations; and (iii) the increasing adoption of certain aspects of the criminal lifestyle by members of the largely suburban middle class (Katzman, 1981; MacDonald, 2015). This research highlights the geography of crime within the urban areas of the two case-studies, Donabate and Clongriffin-Belmayne, neither of which meet all three criteria listed above.

Rather, survey respondents identified the following trends in relation to suburban crime in the areas. Overall, most respondents did not believe that there were issues with crime in their area, as overall 58.9% did not feel that crime rates were high in their area. However, what was most interesting regarding respondents' perception of crime in their local area is that there was a significant difference between the two case study areas, with the P value of the one sample T test equalling *Sig. (-2 tailed)* = 0.000. This can also be seen in the percentage of respondents who felt that their area experienced high levels of crime, with an almost 12% difference between the two areas [see Figure 7.2]

Figure 7.2 Differences in Perception of Crime between the Two Case-Study Areas



(Source: Current Research)

Scott (2002) mentions that crimes that have an immediate effect on people living in society, such as burglary, robbery, etc. create a higher degree of fear among individuals rather than crimes done on a larger scale and on a long-term basis. There is no such definition for fear of crime, but it can be described in various ways: a sense of personal security in the society or the community; or an emotional response to possible crime that could be violent or cause any physical or mental harm (Scott, 2002). This research also highlighted that whilst many respondents did not believe that there were high instances of crime in their areas, many commented upon the types of crime that there are aware of and how they adapt the patterns of their daily life to mitigate the risk of a crime occurring to them. The crimes of robbery/mugging and burglary of property/cars were continually cited among respondents as 'the type of crimes you hear about and read about in the papers, but you never actually think they'll happen to you – but you'd still want to double lock your front door and not walk home alone at night. Just in case, yanno' (Survey Respondent 148). Qualitative research in this study highlighted the high levels of fear of crime amongst survey respondents, despite participants noting that they did not believe there were high levels of crime. Another factor in this can be attributed to many local residents feeling that the crimes that are occurring in their areas are 'more of a public nuisance than a public menace' (Survey Respondent 74). These types of 'public nuisance' crimes were categorised by respondents as: (i) vandalism; (ii) petty theft in local shops; (iii) loitering around public areas such as the park, train station, and shops; and (iv) littering.

Interestingly, respondents commonly reinforced the need for a greater Garda presence within both case-study areas as a way in which to mitigate levels of crime across all levels of severity, i.e. from 'public nuisance' crimes (such as vandalism and loitering) to 'public menace' crimes (such as attacks on locals and burglaries). Local residents felt that their areas were not adequately serviced by An Garda Síochána:

> You really wouldn't want to be in a bad situation out here, cause you'd be left out to dry – I once called the Guards when I thought someone was trying to break in to my neighbour's house and I was told "we'll send a squad car up immediately." It was almost two hours later when one showed up – like Jesus Christ if someone had been trying to break in they'd be gone with everything and the kitchen sink in that time! (Survey Respondent 327).

> I couldn't even tell ya where our nearest Garda station is! Is it Swords? Honestly haven't a clue (Survey Respondent 38).

This perception of local residents that there aren't many Garda stations near their localities is a reasonable concern for locals living in the two case-study areas. For the local residents of Donabate, the closest Garda station is Swords Garda Station, which is located 8km away from the centre of the Village. For residents in Clongriffin-Belmayne, Coolock Garda Station, which services the area is 4.2km away. Whilst these locations may not seem significant spatially, they pose great difficulty in terms of access as the two case-study areas are in locations which experience high levels of traffic congestion, particularly during rush-hour times. Local residents voiced their desire for a Garda station to be provided in the area(s) and this was also the greatest entity they felt was missing from their areas in relation to sustainable social development as their areas develop further.

7.3 Residents' Perspectives of Sustainable Development and Civic Engagement

Nationally, the development and strengthening of the organisations of civil society, particularly voluntary and community groups, is recognised of importance and was first given credence by the publication of a Government white paper on Voluntary and Community Activity by the Irish Government (GOI, 2000). As sustainable development is a political process with the concept of sustainability at its core, it is possible to link local sustainability to the wider debates on the nature of citizenship (Isin and Turner, 2002). In their study of LA 21 in England, Selman and Parker (1999) found that the dominant theme of the process is political with its emphasis on participation and citizenship. Indeed, much of the focus of civic engagement within

sustainable development is focused on the community level. 'Local city government is important and plural actors at the city level can influence the outcome of policies and programs that affect people's lives. Public, private, and non-profit sector actors often work together to make decisions about local projects' but local citizens themselves are often excluded (LeGates and Stout, 2011, p. 238). According to Arnstein (1969) citizen participation is like eating spinach – everyone is in favour of it in principle, but the reality might not always be enjoyable. The participation of the governed in their government is, in theory, 'the cornerstone of democracy – a revered idea that is vigorously applauded by virtually everyone' but it is often met with political opposition (Arnstein, 1969, p. 240).

Opposition to local participation within the development of their areas is in direct contrast to global and National policies, such as LA 21 (UNSD, 1992), which all advocate for direct community engagement. Nevertheless, it has been recognised in the literature that 'in Ireland, opportunities to participate at decision-making levels have already been significantly eroded' (Community Work Ireland, 2015, p. 29). Similarly, local residents in both case-study areas also recognised that there were few opportunities to be engaged in a meaningful way within their communities as they move towards sustainable development.

This section will analyse and discuss the perspectives of local residents of social sustainable development within their communities and highlight the common theme of the research, namely: sustainability and community engagement and the Planning System.

7.3.1 An Overview of Residents' Perspectives of Civic Engagement and Sustainable Community Development

Local residents perceive themselves, generally as being well involved within the communities in relation to involvement in community organisations and sports clubs. A total of 67.7% of survey participants responded that they were engaged within their communities. As detailed in Section 7.2.2, the vast majority were involved with community organisations and/or sports clubs which aided them in developing a sense of attachment to the area. Similarly, this participation in such groups also enabled local residents to feel engaged within their community, particularly when such organisations were committee groups for voluntary events:

> Yeah, I would say I'm engaged in the community; I'm always at this event or that event either myself or with the kids. I'm also very involved with the Park Run group – so that counts as engagement, right? (Survey Respondent 347).

> I'm very involved within my community; as well as being a member of a few different clubs, I'm also on the organising committee for the Donabate Summer Festival, and I have a great rapport with my neighbours and locals in general (Survey Respondent 46).

> Well there's generally a lot of committees and groups in the area, like Parents' Councils, Residents' Associations and organising committees for different events, so it's pretty easy to be involved. I'm on the community council so I'd be very engaged with the community (Survey Respondent 32).

However, local residents had an awareness that the type of groups that they were involved in are generally not political in nature and 'aren't really much use for anything except organising social events and fundraisers – oh and catching up on gossip with the neighbours' (Survey Respondent 49).

Furthermore, this research also highlights that local residents were aware that whilst they may deem themselves as emotionally attached to, and engaged with their local community, they had very little engagement with shaping the current and future development of their local area. A total of 51.1% of respondents stated that they were 'not at all' engaged in the planning process. An Independent Samples T Test on this data showed a P value of 0.000, demonstrating a significant difference between the two areas. In Donabate, only 36% of local residents were 'not at all' engaged, with 5% stating that they were engaged 'a great deal' with the planning process. Against this, 71% of the residents living in Clongriffin-Belmayne were 'not at all' engaged and no participants responded that they were engaged 'a great deal' [see Figure 7.3].

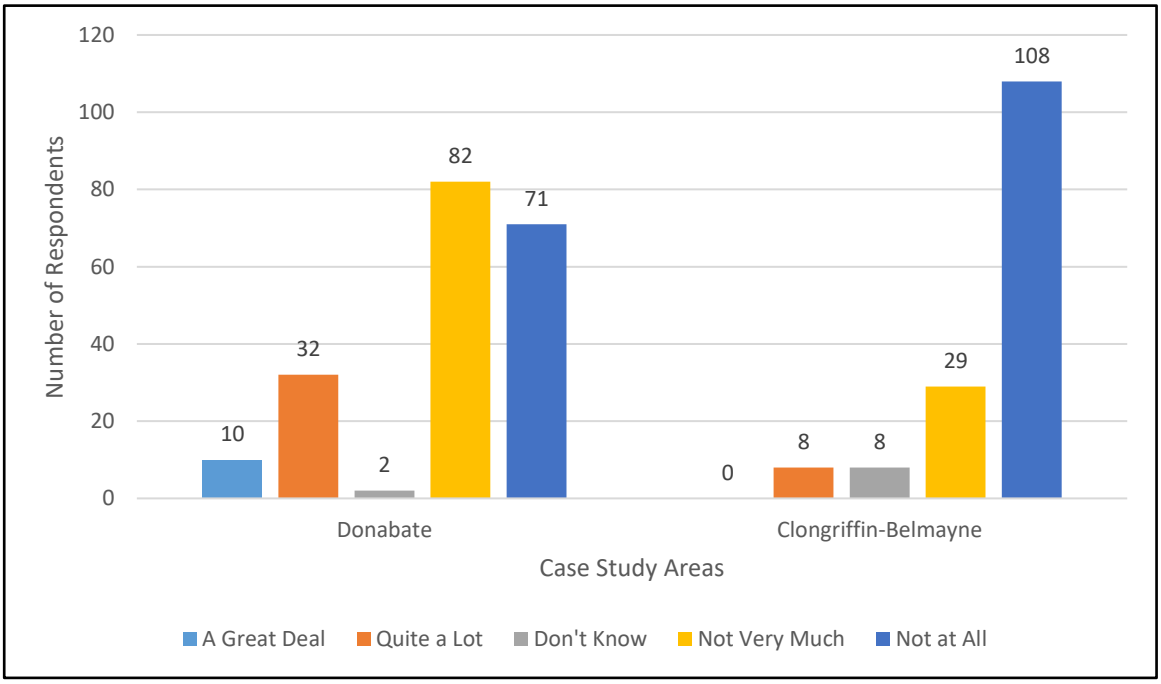
There is a lacuna of empirical research on the impact of local engagement in the planning process at local level. While many policy strategies, such as LA 21 (UNSD, 1992), note that local engagement in the planning and development is a key criterion for sustainable development to occur. However, academics such as Arnstein (1969) have criticised initiatives by governments to involve the local community within the planning process as mere tokenism and ultimately does not signify a meaningful contribution by local residents to the development of their area. Local residents also echoed this sense of 'tokenism' regarding involvement in the planning processes of their areas. Indeed, many respondents expressed feelings of anger and frustration with the distinct lack of local involvement in the development of their local areas:

> It's a complete joke "local engagement in planning;" what a load of shit. Planners and developers don't really want our input and advice and I can tell you that much because we are constantly trying to bring issues and concerns to the local Council and that's getting us nowhere (Survey Respondent 176).

> The day the Government actually want to listen to us and what our thoughts and opinions are on how the place should be developed. Ask anyone did they want loads of houses with poor roads, not enough public transport routes, very few shops and I can already tell you their answer: no (Survey Respondent 191).

> I think the Government make themselves feel better or like tick a box off or something asking what we want when realistically we might say "We want X" and they're like "Oh, well we've already picked Y so here ye go!" and you just have to like it (Survey Respondent 209).

Figure 7.3 Levels of Engagement in the Planning Process across the Two Case-Study Areas



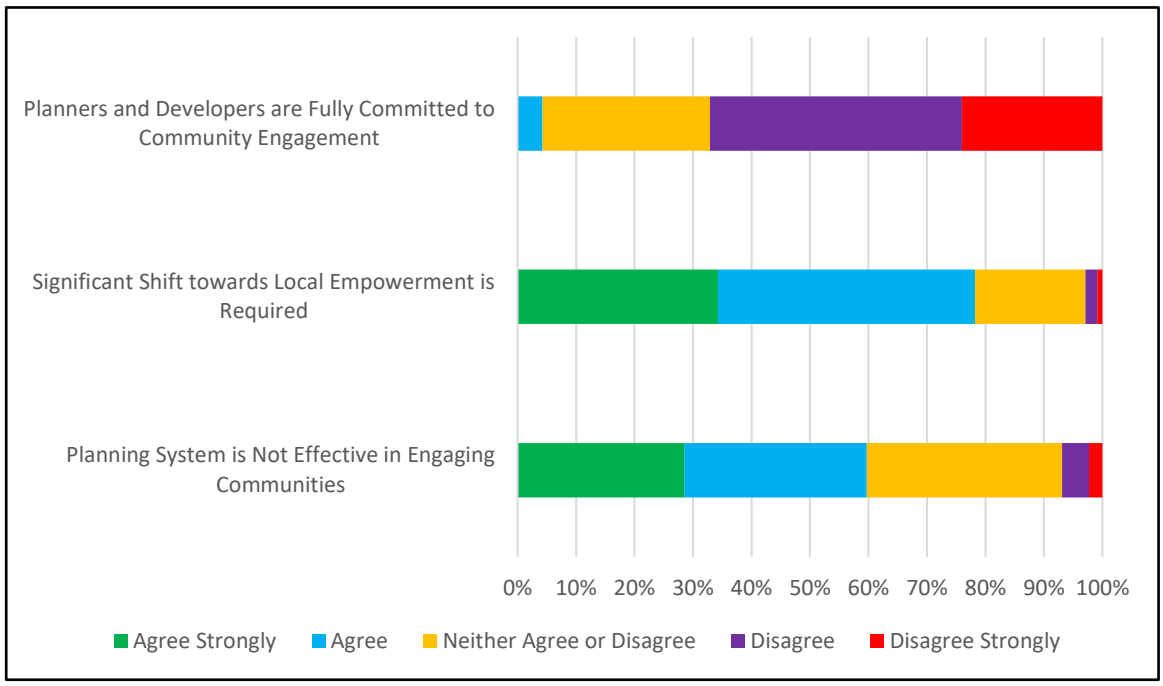
(Source: Current Research)

This research also highlights how the majority of local residents feel that the planning system is not effective in engaging communities, that a significant shift towards local empowerment is clearly required and that, at present, planners and developers are not fully committed to community engagement [see Figure 7.4]. Interestingly, local residents voiced their concern that while they do want to be more involved in the local planning process, they were unsure how this would benefit them in their day-to-day life:

> Yeah like I'd love to be more involved in shaping how Donabate develops over the years, but realistically how would this actually help me in the day-to-day? I really don't think anyone at the bottom of the ladder is going to reshape the wheel on this (Survey Respondent 157).

I just think being more involved in planning wouldn't actually make a blind bit of difference in the real world: here money talks louder than our opinions. And besides, who has that kinda spare time anyway? (Survey Respondent 55).

Figure 7.4 Local Perspectives on Community Engagement in the Planning Process



(Source: Current Research)

Overall, the attitudes of local residents towards community engagement was somewhat ambivalent. Most survey respondents noted that they were engaged within their communities through local organisations and sports clubs, but they were not at all engaged in the planning process. Many respondents felt that this was due to disinterest at local government level in implementing community engagement in a meaningful way, and at present, any community engagement in the planning process is, in Arnstein's (1969) terminology, 'mere tokenism.'

7.4 Conclusion

This research has indicated that both case study areas identify sustainable community development in urban areas as inclusive of the pillar of social factors, in line with the body of academic research. Furthermore, this research argues that sustainable urban community development should be inclusive of a forth pillar: civic engagement. Academic literature and government policies highlight the need for community engagement in order for sustainable development to occur in a meaningful way. Through a mixed-method approach of quantitative

and qualitative research, the perspectives of local residents in relation to social factors and engagement as criteria for sustainability were highlighted in this research. In summary, local residents believed that the local people, recreational facilities, and equality were the three most important criteria for social sustainability in their area(s) [Table 14]. Local residents were also frequently cited crime as a negative in the development of a sustainable community and while many residents did not feel that their areas experienced high levels of crime, almost in exact contrast, they felt that their areas needed greater levels of policing and for a Garda station to be built. In relation to civic engagement, local residents identified involvement with community groups and the need for local residents to be more involved in the planning process in order for greater sustainability levels to occur.

Chapter Eight: Conclusions and Recommendations

We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.

T.S. Eliot, 1942.

8.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters critically examined and discussed the research findings within the context of the extant literature and policy frameworks relating to sustainable community development in urban areas in Ireland. This chapter summarises the salient conclusions and recommendations of this research. Additionally, the theoretical and practical contributions of this research are outlined, together with the recommendations for future research in sustainable community development in Irish urban areas. This chapter acknowledges the limitations of this study and signposts any areas worthy of future research. The overall aim of this research was to examine the perspectives of local residents regarding sustainable community development in their areas and this was achieved through meeting the following four research objectives:

1. To contextualise the concept of sustainable development and sustainable community development with a specific focus on the Irish engagement with these concepts;
2. To examine current policy and legislation which frames sustainable development and sustainable community development at all geographical scales;
3. To conduct a detailed case-study of two modern urban areas which have experienced, and are experiencing, rapid growth over the past twenty years;
4. To examine local residents' perspectives of sustainable community development within their local areas, located within the Greater Dublin Area.

In order to achieve these objectives, I used a mixed-method approach, using both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, to examine local residents' perspectives of sustainable community development in Irish urban areas. The following section will synthesise the key conclusions of this study.

8.2 Conclusions of Research

From a synthesis of both the literature and policy review chapters and a detailed analysis of the research findings, the conclusions can be categorised as follows: (i) there is no exact

definition for sustainable development. Most literature and policy documents refer to the definition given in the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987), but there is still no precise definition, nor set indicators for measuring its success and implementation. From this perspective, sustainable development is inclusive of the three pillars of the environment, the economy, and social factors; (ii) many policies across global, international and National platforms focus upon the involvement of community in working towards a sustainable future; and (iii) local residents also identified with the traditional pillars of the environment, the economy, and social factors for sustainable development, but they also believed that community involvement and civic engagement in the planning process were important criteria for sustainable community development within Irish urban areas. Each conclusion will now be considered individually.

The findings highlight that there is no exact definition for sustainable development which is accepted globally and by all government bodies, NGOs, and local people alike. 'Sustainable development' as defined by the WCED (1987) is a highly contested concept. At its core, sustainability focuses on the condition of the Earth's biophysical movement, particularly with respect to the use and depletion of natural resources, yet it is not the same as environmental protection, or conservation/preservation of natural resources (Farley and Smith, 2014). Development involves a progressive transformation of economy and social factors, yet sustainable development is inclusive of the environment, the economy and social factors (WCED, 1987). The satisfaction of human needs and aspirations is the major objective of development and in essence sustainable development is a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations (WCED, 1987). Operating within these broad conceptualisations of SD, this research found that sustainable urban development may be defined as 'a process of synergetic integration and co-evolution among the great subsystems making up a city (economic, social, physical and environmental), which guarantees the local population a non-decreasing level of wellbeing in the long-term, without compromising the possibilities of development of surrounding areas and contributing by this towards reducing the harmful effects of development on the biosphere' (Camagni, 1998, p. 8). The term 'sustainable community' is as flexibly defined as sustainable development and can be interpreted in many ways. However, a dominant theme in debates over sustainability of communities is an increased emphasis on action at a local level. This research also highlighted the well-documented expressions of frustration in relation to the implementation and measurement of sustainable development in general, but particularly this research focused on the issues surrounding

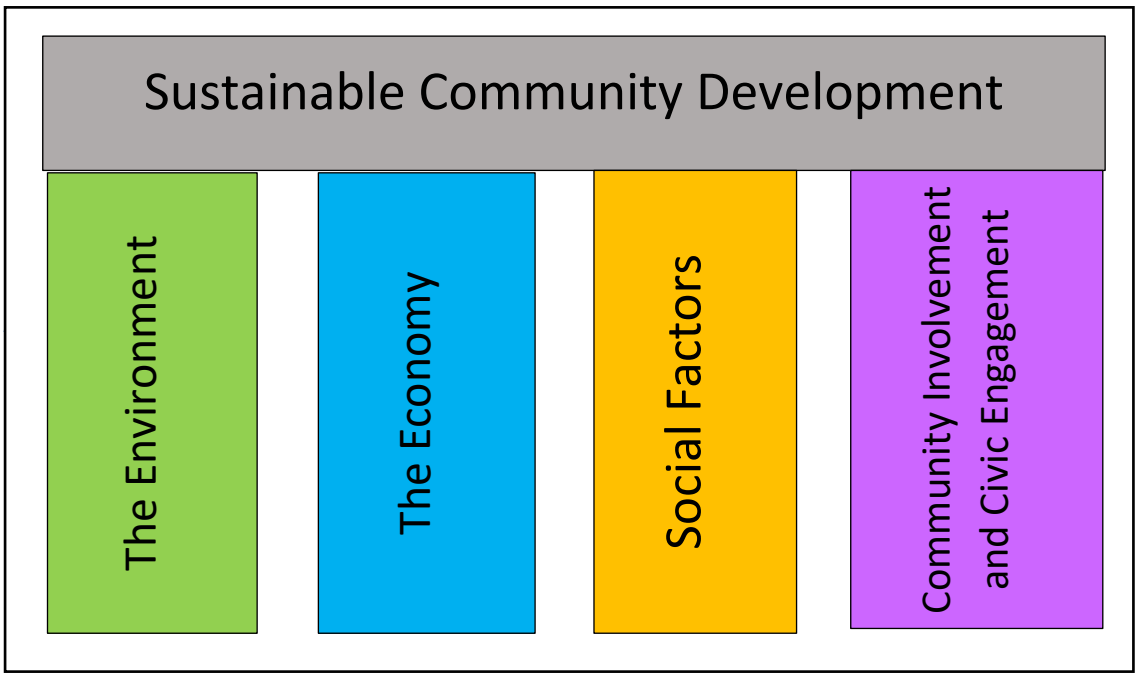
sustainable community development in urban areas. Community development in Ireland has a very strong tradition of local community development. It is rooted in ancient rural practises such as cooring, the sharing of agricultural labour, and meitheal, meaning community solidarity and mutual support. Community development emerged historically from the failure of the State to provide adequately for its citizens and has therefore been seen as a local response to the inadequacy of centralised development planning (Curtin 1997).

Many of the policy documentation surrounding sustainable development gained momentum in the years proceeding the Earth Summit in Rio de Janerio in 1992. While most of these early policies discussed the concept of sustainable development, this research acknowledged the growing need for holistic and more cohesive urban policies at international, national, regional and local level as there is a dichotomy between the objectives/implementation of polices and what local residents actually experience in their every day lives. Such policy programmes as the Local Agenda 21 (UNSD, 1992) was passed in order to mitigate these issues and to involve the local community in a much more meaningful way, and it actively encouraged governments, especially local governments, to plan for development using bottom-up approaches. This research focused particularly upon the policies which operate at a global, international and National level which most greatly effect local development in urban areas. In the Irish Government's most recent publication *Project Ireland* 2040 (GOI, 2019) community development within urban areas is completely lacking an analytical discussion or action plan. However, the improvement of our urban areas is deeply embedded throughout the Framework itself. The Framework also recognises that modern growth in urbanisation in Ireland will require adequate planning: National Policy Objective 28 states that the Framework will plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.

This research also found that in-line with the academic literature and policy documentation, local residents also identified with the three pillars of sustainability as the environment, the economy and social factors. However, local residents also highlighted community involvement and civic engagement as an important fourth pillar within this research [see Figure 8.1]. This research found that the general demographic profile of modern developments in urban areas is consistent of a youthful population, which mostly consisted of families with young children who were hoping to settle down in a new area where they 'could grow as the community grows' (Survey Respondent 198). People living within these developing communities in urban areas were generally highly educated and in employment. These areas,

however, displayed an even mix of owner-occupation and renting (from private landlord or local Council) tenure and the housing stock in the areas largely consisted of semi-detached houses (Donabate), terraced houses and apartments (Clongriffin-Belmayne). Interestingly, many of these local residents lived in other areas before moving to either case-study area: whilst the majority of these were either previously living in Dublin or within Ireland, a total of ten other nationalities were represented by the population. These case-study areas were identified by this research as being modern/young developments as the majority of residents had not lived in the area for twenty-one years or more. Demographics were a crucial for this research to consider as it enabled this research to be representative of the parent populations of these case -study areas, while also contextualising the perspectives of local residents on the criteria of sustainability.

Figure 8.1 The Four Pillars of Sustainability: Defined by Local Residents



(Source: Current Research)

This research identified that many of the local residents in urban areas are satisfied with their local environment and also identified the criteria for a sustainable local environment as defined by local residents [see Table 11]. Public Green Space and the Built Environment were commonly cited as the two most important criteria by respondents within the confines of quantitative research. Against this, a qualitative analysis of survey responses highlighted that levels of pollution, and waste management were reported to be a great concern for local residents in relation to sustainable environmental development within the local, urban areas.

The local economy was also discussed at length by survey respondents as they agreed that this was an important criterion for sustainable community development in the local areas. However, many locals were not overly satisfied with their local economy, with 76.3% of respondents feeling that the strength of their local economy was either 'fair,' 'poor,' or 'very poor.' This research has also identified that local residents perceived the following three as crucial criteria for a sustainable urban economy: affordability of housing and cost of living; good employment and educational opportunities; and well-connected and efficient public transport links. In particular, local residents felt that their areas had to be well-connected to Dublin City Centre via transport links for better access to amenities and employment opportunities.

For many residents, the pillar of the social criteria of the sustainable community development in their local areas was of the utmost importance: as one respondent candidly noted:

> You can drive to a nature spot for a better environment, or commute into the city for work, or education, and that for a better economy, but the society of a place? There's no getting away from that so you have to really like it to stay living where you're living (Survey Respondent 303).

Indeed, the majority of respondents felt there was a high-quality sense of community within their areas. Local residents believed that this was due to the people, the recreational facilities and levels of equality which existed in their areas, as locals perceived these three entities as the important social criteria for sustainable community development in their areas. Survey respondents also noted that they high level levels of attachment to their areas, and that they also believed that this was necessary for sustainable social development to occur: 'sure if you don't feel attached or proud of your area, you're not going to really care if it develops in a sustainable way, or not' (Survey Respondent 65). However, despite local residents believing that the people in their area were the most attractive part of their community, there were high levels of fear of crime evident within these areas. Local residents did not feel that their areas experienced high levels of crimes, but the qualitative analysis of their responses by this research showed trends of a discussion about the risk of crime occurring and the need for a greater Garda presence in the area. Local residents felt that crime would negatively impact upon sustainable community development in the areas.

The final pillar of sustainable community development which the participants of this research identified was the need for community involvement and civic engagement to be considered as necessary criteria for sustainable community development in Irish urban areas.

Local residents felt involved within their local communities through membership of local community organisations and sports clubs, but they recognised that these were only benefitting the people of the community themselves in a social capacity. The majority of local residents had never been involved in the planning process, at any capacity, yet locals felt that they would not be listened to by local government and other key stakeholders, even if they were 'engaged.' Policy frameworks such as LA 21 (UNSD, 1992) and Project Ireland 2040 (GOI, 2019) also highlight that sustainable development requires community engagement, but the lived reality reflects that this is not being done and local communities are exasperated by this.

Overall, this research has acknowledged the definitions of sustainability and sustainable community development which have been defined and contextualised by academic literature and policy documents. However, this research has also been successful in defining sustainable development from the perspective of local residents in Irish urban areas. From the local perspective, sustainable community development must be inclusive of the pillars of the environment, the economy, social factors, and community involvement and civic engagement. Each of these pillars must be inclusive of certain criteria, which this research has also identified through the perspective of local residents. As one local resident commented:

> Well I know what sustainable development is… but it's hard to explain exactly. I suppose sustainable development is a balance between the environment, the economy, the social aspects… but also the feeling like you're being listened to by the Council, or the Government and feeling what you care about, or aren't happy with, actually matter and that you can make a difference (Survey Respondent 49).

The following section will discuss the recommendations of this research. Namely, this will incorporate a discussion on how the findings of this research can positively impact current and future academic literature and policy documents.

8.3 Recommendations of the Research

Acknowledging that the following recommendations will not address all of the challenges inherent in sustainable community development in Irish urban areas, and that they are a synthesis of local residents' recommendations for enhancing sustainable community development in their local urban areas. The recommendations are aligned to the conceptual framework, namely: creating a definition of sustainable development which is shaped by bottom-up perspectives; incorporating a fourth pillar of sustainable community development

and ways in which to measure progress; and engaging local communities in the development of their areas so that this can adhere to concepts of sustainable community development.

8.3.1 Recommendation One: to Establish Sustainable Community Development Indicators and Measure Progress

As highlighted within previous chapters of this research, the term of sustainability is often thought of as a 'concept in chaos' (Vallance et al., 2011). The lack of an accepted exact definition of this term has resulted in ambiguity within academic and policy circles, which has led to frustration in relation to the concept's implementation and in measuring its sustainability. Some academics have attempted to identify indicators of sustainability (see Bell and Morse, 1999), but while these indicators follow traditional concepts (inclusive of environmental, economic, and societal factors), they have an economic outlook as they focus on the 'maximum yield' of these pillars and do not access how they impact the local people living within these communities. Local residents themselves believed that 'there must be some way for the Government to know what's best to be done for its people – like an opinion survey on SurveyMonkey, or a feedback form, or something' (Survey Respondent 289). Whilst this oversimplifies the process, the identification by local residents that something must be done in order to measure local community sustainability in Ireland is interesting. This research recommends the identification of a set of sustainable community development indicators, complied by each local County Council (i.e. administrative areas), using the methodologies utilised by this research. This would enable local key stakeholders to identify the issues, concerns, wants and needs of local residents; which would be rich data as it is shaped by their lived experience. In terms of measuring the success of these indicators within urban communities, this research recommends that an in-depth analysis and discussion of these indicators be conducting on an annual basis, in-line with many other Government reports. This report should reidentify the indicators of sustainable community development and qualitatively measure their success through the perspectives of local residents.

8.3.2 Recommendation Two: creation of Legislation in which Councils and Developers Must Meaningfully Engage with Communities in the Planning and Development of their Local Areas.

According to Arnstein (1969) the issue with civic engagement with the planning process is not that efforts aren't made to engage locals, but rather that the ways in which they are engaged are mere 'tokenism' and do not reflect sincere efforts to work with local communities. For Arnstein (1969), 'tokenism' incorporates methods which inform, consult, or placation (where locals advise, but higher powers still decide) and that these are simply not meaningful ways in which to engage and empower local communities. An explanation as to why local

communities are not adequately engaged within the planning and development of their local communities is that, while many policy documents note that communities should be involved, there are currently no laws or legislation stating that they have to be involved. Therefore, in line with the perspectives of local residents of urban areas, this research recommends that there should be a creation of legislation in which Councils and developers must meaningfully engage local communities in the decisions regarding the planning and development of their local areas. Methods of engagement should not merely be confined to consultations with local communities after plans have already taken shape, but rather, plans should only take shape based on the expressed wants and needs of local residents. Whilst this research acknowledges that this may be difficult to implement, the methodologies used within this research were effective in engaging with local communities and could be used as a framework for analysis.

8.4. Limitations of this Research

The findings underpin the conclusions presented, however, it must be acknowledged that there are some limitations inherent in this study which confined and influenced the research findings. Both time and budgetary constraints limited this research study to Ireland, therefore, this study did not examine any international case-studies. Arguably, by concentrating sustainable community development in Irish urban areas, this study provides a critical Irish perspective of the criteria of sustainable community development, which was previously missing from the literature. This research represents a synchronic view of sustainable community development in Ireland, i.e., a snapshot in time of two case-study areas. While it purports a slight comparative analysis between the two areas, this research also acknowledges that the inclusion of more case study areas across different geographical locations, i.e., urban, suburban, semi-rural, and rural, may have supported a more comprehensive comparative element.

The mixed-method nature of this research necessitated the competition of 350 face-to-face survey questionnaires with local residents within the two case-study areas. This was a time-consuming but worthwhile exercise which yielded an empirical perspective of sustainable community development in urban areas. This research focused exclusively on sustainable community development and it accepted the traditional three pillars of sustainability as identified by the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987). However, there were several limitations of utilising survey research throughout the course of this research. Primarily, survey research can pose issues in relation to yielding an in-depth dataset and is usually required to be followed up by smaller, more detailed focus groups. Focus group sessions allow a greater insight to be gained

by the researcher into specific themes which are unearthed by the survey questionnaire (Fink, 2003). Furthermore, survey research when conducted face-to-face can be difficult to standardise, especially when conducted with a large group of participants. Standardisation is a common issue surrounding survey research and without meticulous plans to mitigate such issues, the integrity of the data may be at risk (Dillman, 2000).

Given the limitations of this research, this study should be considered as an important first step in conceptualising the perspectives of local residents of the criteria necessary for sustainable community development within Irish urban areas. As such, this research provides a springboard for further research in the field of sustainable community development in Irish urban areas.

8.5 Directions for Further Research

Research of sustainable community development is still in its infancy in Ireland, however, it is growing in relevance and importance. This is particularly true for sustainable community development in urban areas as our cities and urban areas are constantly becoming more populated. Further research should investigate the environmental and economic impacts of successful (or unsuccessful) sustainable community development, as these are greater suited to quantitative measurements, to inform and guide policy within Ireland. This study identified the need for qualitative research of community perspectives of the criteria for sustainable community development in Irish urban areas, whereas the same is true for other geographic locations across the country; therefore, future research could analyse the criteria for sustainable community development from the perspectives of local residents living within urban (outside the Dublin region), suburban, semi-rural and rural locations. Interesting findings could emerge from such research through a comparative study between these different geographical locations. Furthermore, there is also the possibility for this research to inform similar studies conducted internationally and hence would enable an Irish perspective to be brought to the international discourse of sustainable community development.

8.6 Conclusion

Sustainable development and sustainable community developments as concepts have experienced unprecedented popularity since the late 20th Century, especially since the publication of the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987), which gave the most commonly cited definition of sustainable development, which defines sustainable development as ‘development

that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WECD, 1987, p. 15). Sustainable development is triangulated by three pillars: the environment; the economy; and social factors. However, civic engagement and community involvement within their own communities, particularly the planning process of these areas, is also becoming more and more prominent in the movement towards sustainable community development.

The perspective of local residents provides rich data and an in-depth look into the needs and concerns of local residents, and how they define sustainable community development themselves. Local perspectives are particularly meaningful to research as it provides data based on the lived-experience and using bottom-up methodologies. To summarize this research using the voice of a local participant in this research (Survey Respondent 12): 'A sustainable community is just a place where people want to live. It's as simple as that.'

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Appendices

Appendix A

Section A: Theme One - The Environment in Your Community

The theme of 'the environment' is a well-documented aspect of sustainability across literature (WCED, 1987; EPA, 2012; EU, 2017; UN, 2018). Many Irish government policies are also inclusive of environmental sustainability and how to mitigate the effects of Climate Change and adhere to EU policies (House of the Oireachtas, various years). The importance of the environment and environmental aspects in the development of a sustainable community is also well-discussed in the literature. Publications from the ODPM (2003), DCCAE (n.d.), EPA (2012) and the UN (2018) highlight these linkages and suggest indicators for a sustainable local environment. This theme was included in order to identify how the community perceived the lived experience of their local environment and how they identified criteria for environmental sustainability, aiding community sustainability.

Q1: How would you rate the quality of the environment (cleanliness, public green space, natural beauty, etc.) in your area at the moment? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ❑ **Very Good**
- ❑ **Good**
- ❑ **Fair**
- ❑ **Poor**
- ❑ **Very Poor**

The formatting of the question, was carefully considered. This question structure is known as a close ended question with ordered response categories and is most useful when there is a well-defined concept (the environment) for which an evaluative response is wanted (Dillman, 2000; Kitchin and Tate, 2000). These answer choices ranging from 'Very Poor' to 'Very Good' are frequently referred to as 'vague quantifiers,' a moniker that tells a lot about their measurement characteristics (Dillman, 2000).

Q2: What do you think is the MOST important part of your local environment? *(Please rank your responses from:)*

1= most attractive	2 = quite attractive	3 = attractive
4 = a little attractive	5= not really attractive	6 = least attractive

Significant Factors	**Response**
Levels of Pollution (litter/air pollution/noise pollution/water pollution)	
Biodiversity (the range of wildlife and plants in the area) and natural beauty	
Public Green Space	

The Built Environment (buildings, parks, lighting, roads and footpaths, plant pots/beds)

Waste Management

Local involvement in environmental initiatives (e.g. Tidy Towns, Green Schools)

The design for Q2 consulted the literature in relation to closed questions with ordered responses. These types of questions are often used in research in order to get ordinal data using common rating scales (Fink, 2003). Fink (2003) also highlights the importance of using a 'meaningful scale' in ranked-ordered questions. She describes a 'meaningful scale' as one that makes sense in terms of the survey's specific objectives (Fink, 2003). For the purpose of this survey and research, it was necessary to utilise a comparison response option in Q2 as the participant's responses are based on comparisons between the elements of their local environment listed: i.e. is the built environment more attractive than levels of pollution? But less attractive than public green space? The above categories were chosen based on extensive reading of a wide range of policies, reports and publications from the UN (1987; 2015; 2018), the EU (2010: 2017), the Irish Government (DCCAE, n.d) and Government bodies from the United States (EPA, 2012) and the United Kingdom (ODPM, 2003: ONS, 2004).

Q3) Please outline what you think could be improved in your community's local environment. These can be different or the same to those listed above. Please briefly explain your answer.

_____
_____
_____

This question is posed as an open-ended question so to allow for the participant to give their opinion/beliefs in relation to what they think the environment in their community needs/what should be improved. By allowing the respondent to do this, the survey is receiving rich data which current literature may not have dealt with and which can subsequently be coded in order to highlight recurring themes/issues in the environment of the local community. Open-ended questions are often beneficial to questionnaires as the respondent is given no set of possible answers. This avoids the problem of suggesting potential answers to the respondent (Kitchin and Tate, 2000). Despite the open-ended question having marked advantages for this research, some existing literature acknowledges that the open-ended question is only useful depending upon the nature of the question itself and the data the surveyor is looking to receive (Dillman, 2007). Indeed, Dillman (2007) notes that the fundamental issue with these type of

questions is that is depends upon the extent to which respondents are willing to think about the question and their answer. He suggests as a method to combat this issue is to allow adequate space for answers so that respondents are aware that a longer answer is required (Dillman, 2007). Hence, more space for writing an answer to this question is given based upon the literature and also following the pilot of the survey [see Section 4.7].

Section A: Theme Two - The Economy in Your Community

This theme of 'The Economy' within Section A was chosen in accordance with the United Nation's (2018) Sustainable Development Indicator 'economic growth.' Furthermore, research conducted by the EU (2017), ODPM (2003), EPA (2012), Parkinson et al. (2006) and the DCCAE (n.d.) highlights the impact of economic sustainability as an important component of sustainable community development at local, national and international levels. Hence, to gauge the local perception of the success of the local economy is important as this carries links to successful sustainability of an area.

Q4: How would you rate the strength of the local economy (financial strength, availability of jobs, level of economic activity, etc.) in your area? Please select one option.

- ❑ **Very Good**
- ❑ **Good**
- ❑ **Fair**
- ❑ **Poor**
- ❑ **Very Poor**

Akin to Q1, Q4 was formulated as a close-ended question with ordered response categories, chosen for the same methodological reasons. The decision to mirror previous question formats was decided upon having consulted with the literature (Dillman, 2000: Sapsford, 1999), which advocates that questions and measures utilised throughout the survey must be standardised and of demonstrable reliability. Questions which are not technically accurate and don't allow for comparisons with previously collected data (whether within the survey itself or externally) lessen the credibility or the survey and the surveyor (Dillman, 2000: Sapsford, 1999).

Q5) What do you think is the MOST important part of your local economy? *(Please rank your responses from:*

1= most attractive	2 = quite attractive	3 = attractive
4 = a little attractive	5= not really attractive	6 = least attractive

7

Significant Factors	Response
Employment Opportunities	
Affordability of Housing and Cost of Living	
Education and Training	
Public Transportation	
Tourism	
Local Government	

The design for Q5 consulted the literature in relation to closed questions with ordered responses and its rationale concurs with that of Q2. The rationale for choosing the categories for responses in Q5 was derived from the literature across a wide range of literature referring to the local economy and factors of a successful economy within communities, with linkages to community satisfaction (Lu, 1999; Sirgy and Cornwell, 2002; Guy and Rogers, 1999; PLuTI, 2015; DCCAE, n.d.; EU, 2017). Most notably, especially as this survey operates within an Irish context, the IBEC (2018) selected 'insights' into the local economy (education/skills, tourism, local government) were also incorporated into the response categories. Furthermore, the categories included above were also refined following observational research conducted within each case-study area prior to survey design.

Q6: How well connected do you think your area is to Dublin City Centre in terms of transportation (via both public transport routes and road infrastructures)?

- ❑ **Very well**
- ❑ **Well**
- ❑ **Fair**
- ❑ **Poorly**
- ❑ **Very Poorly**

This question follows the same design rationale as Q1 and Q4 and has been identically influenced by the literature. However, the decision to include a question which specifically relates to transport in the area followed an analysis of the literature which highlighted the intrinsic link between transport and economic development (ECMT, 2002). This decision was also influenced by the pilot of this survey [see Section 4.7] as transport (specifically public transport) was commonly highlighted as the most important factor of the local economy for residents.

Q7) Please outline what you think could be improved in your community's local economy? These can be different or the same to those listed above. Please briefly explain your answer.

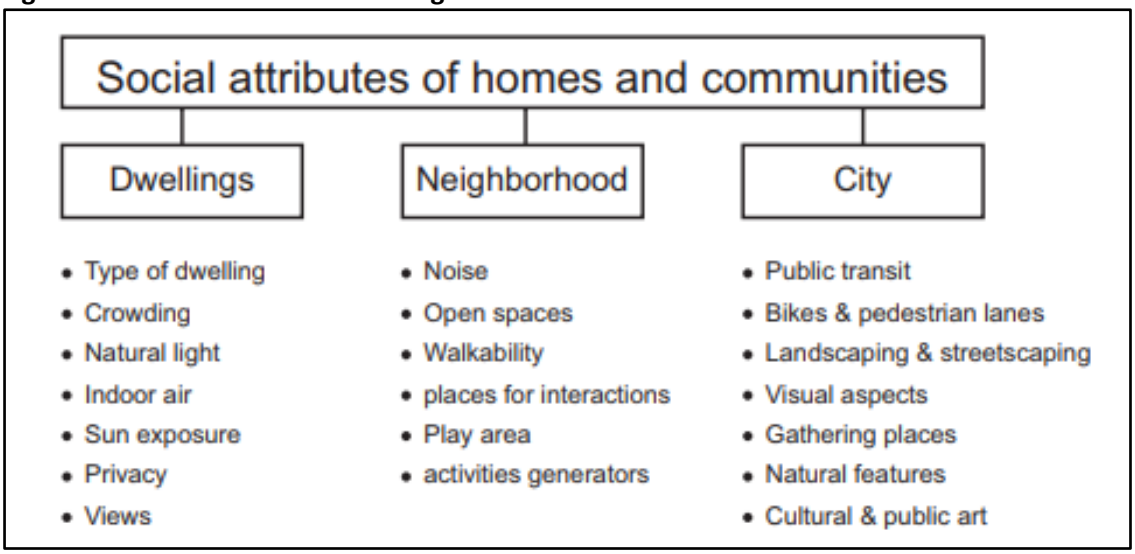
_____
_____
_____

The rationale for Q7 follows that of Q3, in recognizing the importance of open-ended questions as sources for rich data on participant opinions (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: Dillman, 2007). This question was also afforded for space for a written response by respondents following the pilot of the survey prior to data collection [see Section 4.7].

Section A: Theme Three - The Social Aspects of Your Community

This theme of 'Social Aspects' within Section A was chosen in accordance with the identification of 'social factors' as the third pillar of sustainability (Wheeler, 2004). According to Friedman (2018), social needs and equity are broad, all-compassing concepts that can be explained and interpreted in a multitude of ways. Friedman (2018) synthesised a list of determinants which influence social attribute of homes and communities [see Fig 3.3].

Figure 3.3: Determinants influencing social attribute of homes and communities.



(Source: Friedman, 2017)

The categories within the questions of *Theme Three – The Social Aspects of your Community* have been heavily influenced by these determinants. Similarly, the work of Ganzer (2009 cited in Lombardi, Geoffrey and Brandon 2017) identified the criteria for sustainable social community development in the literature. His work identified that good community well-being,

provision of hard and soft infrastructure to promote cohesive communities, well-connected and accessible communities, and a built form which facilitates diversity of demographic profiles and facilitates community cohesion are all necessary for sustainable community development under the theme of society (Ganzer 2009 cited in Lombardi, Geoffrey and Brandon, 2017). However, further research also highlights how studies of community and social capital include territorial attachment, sense of belonging, social interaction, active involvement, and participation (Corcoran, Gray and Peillon, 2010). Such literature also highlights the intrinsic link between these phenomena and successful communities. Furthermore, international and Government bodies also identify social elements as necessary for sustainable development (United Nations, 2018: EU, 2017: OPDM: EPA, 2012: UNHRC 2013: CNI, 2015).

Q8) How would you rate the quality of the sense of community (social events, community groups, trust in other people, social inclusion and equality, etc) in your area at the moment? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ❑ **Very Good**
- ❑ **Good**
- ❑ **Fair**
- ❑ **Poor**
- ❑ **Very Poor**

This question follows the same rationale and pattern as Q1 and Q4. The decision to mirror previous question formats reflects best practice the literature (Dillman, 2000: Sapsford, 1999). Prompts were included to give the respondent an indicator of elements of a sense of community in their area, but these were given as a guideline and worded in such a way so not to lead the respondent.

9) Do you feel an emotional attachment to/ pride in your local community and area? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ❑ **Yes**
- ❑ **No**

Please Specify the Reason for your Answer:

_____
_____
_____

As with Q3 and Q7, an open-ended response option is provided.

Q10) What do you think is the MOST important part of your community? *(Please rank your responses from:*

1= most attractive	2 = quite attractive	3 = attractive
4 = a little attractive	5= not really attractive	6 = least attractive

Significant Factors	Response
The People	
Public recreational facilities (parks, swimming pools, library, children's playgrounds, etc.)	
Equality and inclusion amongst members of the community (race, ethnicity, age, social class)	
Organized social activities in public spaces (mother and baby groups, men's sheds, coffee mornings, etc.)	
Volunteering and charity work	
Diverse, Vibrant and Creative Local Culture	

The design for Q10 consulted the literature in relation to closed questions with ordered responses and its rationale concurs with that of Q2 and Q5. The rationale for choosing the categories for responses in Q10 was derived from a wide range of literature referring to the social make-up of a community and factors which influence its success or cohesion in an area (NESF, 2003: OPDM, 2003: Ostrom and Ahn, 2003: Knox and Pinch, 2006: Corcoran, Grey and Peillon, 2010: EPA, 2012: UNHRC 2013: CNI, 2015: EU, 2017: United Nations, 2018). Furthermore, the categories included above were also refined following observational research conducted within each case-study area prior to survey design.

Q11) (a) Do you think your area experiences high levels of crime?

- ❑ **Yes (if *yes* please go to Q11b)**
- ❑ **No (if *no* please go to Q12)**

b) What type of crime are you most aware of in your area? Please briefly explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

Q11(a) is a simple, straightforward close-ended question with two response categories, making it easy for the respondent (Dillman, 2000). Close-ended questions produce data which is easy to standardize and that can be analysed statistically (Fink, 2003). Respondents who answered *Yes* to Q11(a) are invited to answer Q11(b) which is an open-ended question designed to record their perception of types of crime in their area. Respondents who answered *No* to

Q11(a) are invited to proceed to Q12 as there would be no benefit to them giving their perception of types of crime in the area if they do not believe there to be any crime occurring.

Q12) Please outline what aspect of life you think could be improved in your local community. These can be different or the same to those listed above. Please briefly explain your answer.

_____
_____

Akin to Q3 and Q7, the rationale for Q12 followed the same point from the literature: that open-ended questions allow for participant opinion that has not been suggested by the wording of the question or by response categories and hence prove beneficial to qualitative research (Kitchin and Tate, 2000: Dillman, 2007).

Section A: Theme Four – Individual Engagement with your Community

Community engagement within the concept of sustainability has come into much greater focus in recent years. As Arnstein (1969) noted in her work, community engagement must extend beyond mere tokenism and involve genuine practices for community participation within community planning/development and engagement within the community itself. Much of the literature defines community engagements as encompassing membership in clubs/groups/volunteer organizations, engagement/participation with local planning and development, and participatory and representative democracy in governance of the area (Arnstein, 1969: Friedman, 2018: NESF, 2003: Knox and Pinch, 2006: Yellow Book Ltd, 2017). This section has been designed based on the aforementioned literature in order to identify levels of community engagement amongst respondents.

Q13) Do you consider yourself engaged within your Community? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ❑ **Yes**
- ❑ **No**

Please Specify the Reason for your Answer:

_____
_____
_____

This question was designed following a similar methodology to Q11. However, unlike Q11, respondents were invited to answer both the closed-ended and open-ended sections of this question. No prompts were given in this question, so participants were not coloured with a

definition of what the term 'engaged within your community' meant. The open-ended section of the question thus allows for respondents to identify what engagement means to them in an indirect way.

Q14 a) Are you currently involved in any Community Groups? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ❑ **Yes (if *yes* please go to Q14b)**
- ❑ **No (if *no* please go to Q15)**

b) Please indicated the nature of this group(s) that you are involved with locally: i.e. sports club; resident's association; etc.

_____
_____
_____

Akin to Q11 and Q13, Q14 is designed with both a close-ended question and an open-ended section. It was important to include a question which related to community groups when analyzing individual engagement as the relevant literature suggests that these two entities are linked (Corcoran, Grey and Peillon, 2010: Friedman, 2018: NESF, 2003: ODPM, 2003).

Q15) Have you been engaged in any way with the Planning Process of your local area and to what degree? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ❑ **A Great Deal**
- ❑ **Quite a Lot**
- ❑ **Don't Know**
- ❑ **Not Very Much**
- ❑ **Not at All**

Community engagement with the planning process is often seen as an indicator of a successful and holistic community development wherein local residents are informed about local development plans and are involved in their design (Arnstein, 1969).

The following four questions (Q16 – Q19) were derived from a research study commissioned by the Scottish Government entitled *Barriers to Community Engagement in Planning: a Research Study.* The study was commissioned in response to an independent review of the Scottish Planning system, which aimed to identify barriers to the involvement of communities, young people and seldom-heard groups in the system (Yellow Book Ltd 2016 cited in Yellow Book Ltd 2017). The study (2017) identified that a mutual trust, respect and confidence

must exist as a precondition for effective engagement. Questions derived from their research study, utilised in this survey, focus on this issue.

Q16) The Planning System is not effective in engaging, yet alone empowering Communities? ***(Please tick the relevant box)***

- ❑ **Agree Strongly**
- ❑ **Agree**
- ❑ **Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- ❑ **Disagree**
- ❑ **Disagree Strongly**

Q17) A significant shift towards local empowerment is clearly required ***(Please tick the relevant box)***

- ❑ **Agree Strongly**
- ❑ **Agree**
- ❑ **Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- ❑ **Disagree**
- ❑ **Disagree Strongly**

Q18) At present, Planners and Developers are fully committed to Community engagement. They actively encourage Communities to speak and they listen to what is said ***(Please tick the relevant box)***

- ❑ **Agree Strongly**
- ❑ **Agree**
- ❑ **Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- ❑ **Disagree**
- ❑ **Disagree Strongly**

Q19) (a) At present, there is a good mix of land-use between employment, residential and recreational land-use in my area ***(Please tick the relevant box)***

- ❑ **Agree Strongly (if *Agree Strongly* please go to Q20)**
- ❑ **Agree (if *Agree* please go to Q20)**
- ❑ **Neither Agree nor Disagree (if *Neither Agree nor Disagree* please go to Q20)**
- ❑ **Disagree *(if Disagree* please go to Q19b*)***
- ❑ **Disagree Strongly *(if Disagree Strongly* please go to Q19b*)***

(b) What land-use do you feel is most under-represented in your area? Please briefly explain your answer.

_____
_____
_____

<u>Section B: This Section is Designed to Gather Personal Data</u>

All of the questions in this section (Q20 – Q32), with the exception of Q23, have been derived directly from Census questions which have been designed by the Central Statistics Office

(CSO) (various years). The rationale behind this methodology is so to develop a demographic profile of each participant across age, gender, socio-economic and ethnic parameters so to gain a deeper understanding of participant responses in relation to their perspectives of the criteria of sustainable community development in their area. The use of Census questions in this section is advisable as people are used to the format of such questions and the methodology deployed by the CSO has been approved for research at Government level. Just one question, Q23 (see below) was not derived from Census questions and response categories were formulated during the observation stage of this research through interaction with local residents in both case-study areas, prior to survey design.

Q23) Why did you move to your area*? (Please Rank your responses from 1 (most significant) to 8 (least significant))*

Significant Factors	Response
Affordability of House / Allocated House by Council	
Proximity to Dublin city Centre	
Access to Local Amenities and Transport	
Family Links in this Area	
Sense of Community	
Attractiveness of Area	
Good Reputation of Area	
Other (please specify)	

The importance of collecting demographic data amongst survey respondents has been well documented in the literature (Dillman, 2000: Schutt, 2006: Knox and Pinch, 2006). A demographic profile of individual respondents allows for the assurance that the survey sample was representative of the entire community population (Schutt, 2006). Furthermore, 'examining relationships is at the centrepiece of the analytic process, because it allows the researcher to move from simple description of the people and settings to explanations of why things happened as they did with those people in that setting' (Schutt, 2006, p. 334). With regard to this research, building a demographic profile of respondents will allow an analysis of how different types of respondents perceive the criteria of sustainability, i.e. do people under the age of 35 from a lower socio-economic background value the provision of adequate green space in their area? This type of data-collection is beneficial to the overall analysis and aims of this research.

Appendix B

Defining Criteria for Sustainable Communities

This research is conducted by Emma Barry, a Postgraduate Researcher in the School of History and Geography, Dublin City University.

All information is strictly confidential and participation is anonymous. Thank you for your participation.

Section A

This section is designed to gather information about how you view your Community in relation to the Environment, the Economy and Society:

Theme One: The Environment in Your Community

1) How would you rate the quality of the environment (cleanliness, public green space, natural beauty, etc) in your area at the moment? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ❑ Very Good
- ❑ Good
- ❑ Fair
- ❑ Poor
- ❑ Very Poor

2) What do you think is the MOST important part of your local environment? *(Please rank your responses from:*

1= most attractive 2 = quite attractive 3 = attractive

4 = a little attractive 5= not really attractive 6 = least attractive

Significant Factors	Response
Levels of Pollution (litter/air pollution/noise pollution/water pollution)	
Biodiversity (the range of wildlife and plants in the area) and natural beauty	
Public Green Space	
The Built Environment (buildings, parks, lighting, roads and footpaths, plant pots/beds)	
Waste Management	
Local involvement in environmental initiatives (e.g. Tidy Towns, Green Schools)	

3) Please outline what you think could be improved in your community's local environment. These can be different or the same to those listed above. Please briefly explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

Theme Two: The Economy within Your Community

4) How would you rate the strength of the local economy (financial strength, availability of jobs, level of economic activity, etc.) in your area? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ❑ Very Good
- ❑ Good
- ❑ Fair
- ❑ Poor
- ❑ Very Poor

5) What do you think is the MOST important part of your local economy? *(Please rank your responses from:*

1= most attractive 2 = quite attractive 3 = attractive

4 = a little attractive 5= not really attractive 6 = least attractive

Significant Factors	Response
Employment Opportunities	
Affordability of Housing and Cost of Living	
Education and Training	
Public Transportation	
Tourism	
Local Government	

6) How well connected do you think your area is to Dublin City Centre in terms of transportation (via both public transport routes and road infrastructures)

- ❑ Very well
- ❑ Well
- ❑ Fair
- ❑ Poorly
- ❑ Very Poorly

7) Please outline what you think could be improved in your community's local economy. These can be different or the same to those listed above. Please briefly explain your answer.

Theme Three: The Social Aspects of Your Community

8) How would you rate the quality of the sense of community (social events, community groups, trust in other people, social inclusion and equality, etc) in your area at the moment? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Very Good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Very Poor

9) Do you feel an emotional attachment to/ pride in your local community and area? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please Specify the Reason for your Answer:

_____

_____

_____

_____

10) What do you think is the MOST important part of your community? *(Please rank your responses from:*

1= most attractive 2 = quite attractive 3 = attractive

4 = a little attractive 5= not really attractive 6 = least attractive

Significant Factors	Response
The People	
Public recreational facilities (parks, swimming pools, library, children's playgrounds, etc.)	
Equality and inclusion amongst members of the community (race, ethnicity, age, social class)	
Organized social activities in public spaces (mother and baby groups, men's sheds, coffee mornings, etc.)	
Volunteering and charity work	
Diverse, Vibrant and Creative Local Culture	

11) (a) Do you think your area experiences high levels of crime?

- ☐ Yes (if *yes* please go to Q11b)
- ☐ No (if *no* please go to Q12)

b) What type of crime are you most aware of in your area? Please briefly explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

12) Please outline what aspect of life you think could be improved in your local community. These can be different or the same to those listed above. Please briefly explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

Theme Four: Individual Engagement with Your Community

13) Do you consider yourself engaged within your Community? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please Specify the Reason for your Answer:

_____

_____

_____

14 a) Are you currently involved in any Community Groups? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Yes (if *yes* please go to Q14b)
- ☐ No (if *no* please go to Q15)

b) Please indicated the nature of this group(s) that you are involved with locally: i.e. sports club; resident's association; etc.

_____

_____

_____

15) Have you been engaged in any way with the Planning Process of your local area and to what degree? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ A Great Deal
- ☐ Quite a Lot
- ☐ Don't Know
- ☐ Not Very Much
- ☐ Not at All

Please Give Your Response to the Following Statements

16) The Planning System is not effective in engaging, yet alone empowering Communities? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Agree Strongly
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Disagree Strongly

17) A significant shift towards local empowerment is clearly required *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Agree Strongly
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Disagree Strongly

18) At present, Planners and Developers are fully committed to Community engagement. They actively encourage Communities to speak and they listen to what is said *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Agree Strongly
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Disagree Strongly

19) (a) At present, there is a good mix of land-use between employment, residential and recreational land-use in my area *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Agree Strongly (if *Agree Strongly* please go to Q20)
- ☐ Agree (if *Agree* please go to Q20)
- ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (if *Neither Agree nor Disagree* please go to Q20)
- ☐ Disagree *(if Disagree* please go to Q19b*)*
- ☐ Disagree Strongly *(if Disagree Strongly* please go to Q19b*)*

(b) What land-use do you feel is most under-represented in your area? Please briefly explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

Section B
This Section is Designed to Gather Personal Data

All information is strictly confidential and data on individuals will not be released to a third party or published.

20) Where Do You Live? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ▫ Donabate, Co. Dublin
- ▫ Clongriffin-Belmayne, Dublin 13

Name of Estate/Development:_____

21) What is your place of birth? (*Please tick the relevant box and give the place where your mother lived at the time of your birth)*

☐ Ireland/ Northern Ireland

County:_____

☐ Abroad

Country:_____

21) How long have you lived in this area? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

☐ <1 Year

☐ 1-2 Years

☐ 3-4 Years

☐ 5-6 Years

☐ 7-8 Years

☐ 9-10 Years

☐ 11-12 Years

☐ 13-14 Years

☐ 15-16 Years

☐ 17-18 Years

☐ 19-20 Years

☐ 21+ Years

22) (a) Have you previously lived elsewhere?

☐ Yes (If *yes* please go to Q22b)

☐ No (If *no* please go to Q24)

(b) Where did you live before this area? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

☐ Locally (within the same general area)

☐ Within Fingal County Council

☐ Within Dublin City Council

☐ Within Dun Laoighre/Rathdown

☐ Within South Dublin County Council

☐ Within Leinster

☐ Rest of Ireland

☐ Abroad

☐ I Have Lived Here All My Life

23) Why did you move to your area? *(Please Rank your responses from 1 (most significant) to 8 (least significant))*

Significant Factors	Response
Affordability of House / Allocated House by Council	
Proximity to Dublin city Centre	
Access to Local Amenities and Transport	
Family Links in this Area	
Sense of Community	
Attractiveness of Area	
Good Reputation of Area	
Other (please specify)	

24) What type of dwelling do you currently live in? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

☐ Detached House

☐ Semi-Detached House

☐ Terraced House

☐ Apartment

☐ Cottage

☐ Mobile Home

☐ Other

25) Which of the following categories best describes your current dwelling? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Owner-Occupied (no mortgage)
- ☐ Owner-Occupied (mortgage)
- ☐ Rented from Private Landlord
- ☐ Rented from Dublin/Fingal County Council
- ☐ Rented from Voluntary Body e.g. Iveagh Trust, Capital Assistance, etc.
- ☐ Occupied Free of Rent

---

26) How Many People Are In Your Household including Yourself? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8+

27) How many children (under 18) are in your household: *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10 or more

28) Please specify your gender: *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Would rather not say

29) Please specify your age group: *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ 15-19
- ☐ 20-24
- ☐ 25-29
- ☐ 30-34
- ☐ 35-39
- ☐ 40-44
- ☐ 45-49
- ☐ 50-54
- ☐ 55-59
- ☐ 60-64
- ☐ 65-69
- ☐ 70-74
- ☐ 75-79
- ☐ 80 and over

30) Please specify your marital status: *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Married/Civil Partnership
- ☐ Divorced/Separated
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Other (please specify):_____

31) Please specify your highest level of education achieved *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Primary Education
- ☐ Lower Secondary
- ☐ Upper Secondary
- ☐ Technical or Vocational Qualification
- ☐ Primary Degree
- ☐ Professional Qualification
- ☐ Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma
- ☐ Postgraduate Degree (Masters)
- ☐ Doctorate (PhD)

32) What Is Your Current Employment Status? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

- ☐ Employed
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Unable to work due to illness or disability
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Stay at home parent
- ☐ Other_____

Do you have any additional comments?

_____

_____

Thank you again for your participation in this research study.

Your responses are of great value to us. If you have any queries please contact info.sustainableurban@gmail.com.

Appendix C

CENSUS DATA FROM CLONGRIFFIN-BELMAYNE

APPENDIX C

Appendix C: Clongriffin-Belmayne Census 2016

Population aged 0 - 19 by sex and year of age population aged 20+ by sex and age group

Age Group			
0	94	73	167
1	66	78	144
2	77	82	159
3	53	72	125
4	84	84	168
5	83	74	157
6	72	82	154
7	70	72	142
8	52	68	120
9	42	63	105
10	41	47	88
11	38	35	73
12	40	33	73
13	43	28	71
14	43	31	74
15	31	33	64
16	26	24	50
17	28	20	48
18	38	26	64
19	18	18	36
20-24	135	178	313
25-29	268	369	637
30-34	458	569	1027
35-39	492	513	1005
40-44	284	276	560
45-49	149	144	293
50-54	91	76	167
55-59	55	59	114
60-64	30	38	68

65-69	20	19	39
70-74	14	18	32
75-79	7	9	16
80-84	2	2	4
85+	2	3	5
Total	3046	3316	6362

Population by sex and marital status

Marital Status	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Single	2023	2208	4231
Married (incl. same sex civil partnership)	910	904	1814
Separated	46	75	121
Divorced	49	89	138
Widowed	18	40	58
Total	3046	3316	6362

Usually resident population by place of birth and nationality

Location	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Ireland	4257	4209
UK	182	94
Poland	500	530
Lithuania	129	148
Other EU 28	591	638
Rest of World	664	345
Not stated	0	359
Total	6323	6323

Usually resident population by ethnic or cultural background

Ethnic or Cultural Background	#VALUE!
White Irish	3518
White Irish Traveller	14
Other White	1528
Black or Black Irish	131

Asian or Asian Irish	396
Other	217
Not stated	519
Total	6323
Usually resident population aged 1 year and over by usual residence 1 year before Census Day	
Usual residence 1 year ago	#VALUE!
Same Address	5258
Elsewhere in County	636
Elsewhere in Ireland	67
Outside Ireland	195
Total	6156
	0
Population by religion	0
Religion	#VALUE!
Catholic	3892
Other stated religion	985
No religion	986
Not stated	499
Total	6362
Speakers of foreign languages by language spoken	
Language	#VALUE!
Polish	585
French	73
Lithuanian	145
Other	1356
Total	2159
Speakers of foreign languages by ability to speak English	
Ability to speak English	#VALUE!
Very well	1224
Well	635

Not well	208
Not at all	43
Not stated	49
Total	2159

Population aged 3 years and over by ability to speak Irish	
Ability to speak Irish	#VALUE!
Yes	1453
No	3972
Not stated	467
Total	5892

Irish speakers aged 3 years and over by frequency of speaking Irish			
Frequency of speaking Irish	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Speaks Irish daily only within the education system	273	337	610
Speaks Irish daily within and daily outside the education system	6	12	18
Speaks Irish daily within and weekly outside the education system	0	2	2
Speaks Irish daily within and less often outside the education system	3	0	3
Speaks Irish daily within and never outside the education system	1	0	1
Speaks Irish daily only outside the education system	9	14	23
Speaks Irish weekly only outside the education system	31	39	70
Speaks Irish less often only outside the education system	151	213	364
Never speaks Irish	129	210	339
Not stated	8	15	23
All Irish speakers	611	842	1453

Families family members and children in families by size of family			
Size of family	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
2 persons	639	1278	249
3 persons	470	1410	610
4 persons	368	1472	773
5 persons	129	645	397
6 or more persons	38	238	163

Total	1644	5043	2192	
Family units with children by size and age of children				
Number of children	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	
No children	0	0	0	390
1 child	453	126	0	579
2 children	369	47	55	471
3 children	99	14	43	156
4 children	21	1	19	41
5 or more children	1	0	6	7
Total	943	188	123	1644
Family units with children by type of family and age of children				
Age of children	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	
Number of families	0	0	0	
All children under 15	665	258	20	
All children 15 and over	72	97	19	
Children both under and over 15	80	40	3	
Total	817	395	42	
Number of children				
All children under 15	1151	402	24	
All children 15 and over	121	121	24	
Children both under and over 15	235	106	8	
Total	1507	629	56	
Families by age of youngest child				
Age of youngest child	#VALUE!	#VALUE!		
0-4 years	606	2200		
5-9 years	319	1084		
10-14 years	141	453		
15-19 years	92	264		
20+ years	96	262		

Total	1254	4263
Families by family cycle		
Family cycle	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Pre-family	338	676
Empty nest	37	74
Retired	15	30
Pre-school	318	971
Early school	391	1386
Pre-adolescent	234	828
Adolescent	161	592
Adult	150	486
Total	1644	5043
Females aged 20 years or over by number of children born		
Number of children born	#VALUE!	
0	791	
1	528	
2	504	
3	181	
4 or more	118	
Total	2122	
	0	
Private households by type	0	
Type of Household	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
One person	358	358
Married couple	131	262
Cohabiting couple	190	380
Married couple and children	569	2221
Cohabiting couple and children	145	532
Father and children	34	76
Mother and children	342	898
Couple and others	60	224

Couple children and others	78	413
Father children and others	6	28
Mother children and others	32	123
Two or more family units	28	171
Non-family households and relations	56	151
Two or more non-related persons	198	574
Total	2227	6411

Private households by size		
Size of household	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
1 person	358	358
2 persons	650	1300
3 persons	526	1578
4 persons	424	1696
5 persons	174	870
6 persons	73	438
7 persons	10	70
8 or more persons	12	101
Total	2227	6411

Private households by type of accommodation		
Type of accommodation	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
House/Bungalow	845	2887
Flat/Apartment	1354	3430
Bed-sit	0	0
Caravan/Mobile Home	0	0
Not stated	28	94
Total	2227	6411

Permanent private households by year built		
Period Built	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Pre 1919	5	10
1919 - 1945	10	22

1946 - 1960	2	8
1961 - 1970	6	18
1971 - 1980	64	196
1981 - 1990	21	63
1991 - 2000	53	148
2001 - 2010	1677	4852
2011 or later	191	536
Not stated	198	558
Total	2227	6411

Permanent private households by type of occupancy

Type of occupancy	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Owner occupied with mortgage	757	2190
Owner occupied no mortgage	84	206
Rented from Private Landlord	823	2532
Rented from Local Authority	230	615
Rented from Voluntary Body	183	486
Occupied free of rent	13	39
Not stated	137	343
Total	2227	6411

Permanent private households by number of rooms

Number of rooms	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
1 room	55	111
2 rooms	370	840
3 rooms	621	1671
4 rooms	349	1043
5 rooms	375	1222
6 rooms	231	867
7 rooms	54	211
8 or more rooms	13	44
Not stated	159	402
Total	2227	6411

Permanent private households by central heating	
Central heating	#VALUE!
No central heating	21
Oil	27
Natural Gas	1630
Electricity	433
Coal (incl. Anthracite)	4
Peat (incl. turf)	0
Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG)	2
Wood (incl. wood pellets)	0
Other	4
Not stated	106
Total	2227

Permanent private households by water supply	
Type of water supply	#VALUE!
Public main	1944
Group scheme with public source	91
Group scheme with private source	2
Other private source	1
None	0
Not stated	189
Total	2227

Permanent private households by sewerage facility	
Type of sewerage facility	#VALUE!
Public scheme	1960
Individual septic tank	23
Other individual treatment	2
Other	20
No sewerage facility	0
Not stated	222

Total	2227

Occupancy status of permanent dwellings on Census night	
Occupancy Status	#VALUE!
Occupied	2234
Temporarily absent	63
Unoccupied holiday homes	0
Other vacant dwellings	477
Total	2774

Number of communal establishments and persons in communal establishments	
Communal Establishments	#VALUE!
Number of establishments	1
Number of persons	4

Population aged 15 years and over by principal economic status and sex			
Principal Economic Status	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
At work	1700	1647	3347
Looking for first regular job	15	17	32
Unemployed having lost or given up previous job	155	176	331
Student	172	171	343
Looking after home/family	26	277	303
Retired	34	44	78
Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	44	57	101
Other	2	5	7
Total	2148	2394	4542

Population by sex and social class			
Social Class	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Professional workers	216	211	427
Managerial and technical	872	939	1811
Non-manual	461	762	1223
Skilled manual	482	305	787

Semi-skilled	329	302	631
Unskilled	92	101	193
All others gainfully occupied and unknown	594	696	1290
Total	3046	3316	6362

Persons in private households by socio-economic group of reference person

Socio-economic group of reference person	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
A Employers and managers	330	994
B Higher professional	136	394
C Lower professional	302	862
D Non-manual	576	1614
E Manual skilled	130	409
F Semi-skilled	179	556
G Unskilled	65	209
H Own account workers	53	158
I Farmers	1	2
J Agricultural workers	0	0
Z All others gainfully occupied and unknown	455	1213
Total	2227	6411

Population aged 15 years and over by age education ceased

Age	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Under 15 years	26	28	54
15	49	40	89
16	72	85	157
17	87	100	187
18	181	196	377
19	76	90	166
20	68	90	158
21 and over	485	606	1091
Not stated	614	642	1256
Total	1658	1877	3535

Population aged 15 years and over whose education has not ceased

Education	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Still at school or college	172	171	343
Other	318	346	664

Population aged 15 years and over by field of study

Qualification	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Education and teacher training	11	84	95
Arts	48	28	76
Humanities	23	61	84
Social sciences Business and Law	268	477	745
Science Mathematics and Computing	173	85	258
Engineering Manufacturing and Construction	239	48	287
Agriculture and Veterinary	10	6	16
Health and Welfare	54	195	249
Services	93	125	218
Other subjects	1	4	5
Not Stated (incl. unknown)	738	764	1502
Total	1658	1877	3535

Population aged 15 years and over by sex and highest level of education completed

Education Level	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
No Formal Education	13	17	30
Primary Education	62	64	126
Lower Secondary	170	152	322
Upper Secondary	281	325	606
Technical or Vocational qualification	146	203	349
Advanced Certificate/Completed Apprenticeship	136	87	223
Higher Certificate	90	111	201
Ordinary Bachelor Degree or National Diploma	158	171	329
Honours Bachelor Degree Professional qualification or both	199	263	462
Postgraduate Diploma or Degree	151	245	396
Doctorate(Ph.D) or higher	11	12	23

Not stated	241	227	468
Total	1658	1877	3535

Population aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work school or college

Means of Travel	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
On foot	135	391	526
Bicycle	116	64	180
Bus minibus or coach	455	230	685
Train DART or LUAS	638	44	682
Motorcycle or scooter	27	0	27
Car driver	1397	32	1429
Car passenger	97	450	547
Van	97	2	99
Other (incl. lorry)	1	0	1
Work mainly at or from home	34	1	35
Not stated	326	183	509
Total	3323	1397	4720

Population aged 5 years and over by time leaving home to travel to work school or college

Time leaving home	#VALUE!
Before 06:30	335
06:30-07:00	453
07:01-07:30	478
07:31-08:00	701
08:01-08:30	1037
08:31-09:00	622
09:01-09:30	129
After 09:30	390
Not stated	540
Total	4685

Population aged 5 years and over by journey time to work school or college

Journey time	#VALUE!

Under 15 mins	779		
1/4 hour - under 1/2 hour	1234		
1/2 hour - under 3/4 hour	1066		
3/4 hour - under 1 hour	491		
1 hour - under 1 1/2 hours	408		
1 1/2 hours and over	102		
Not stated	605		
Total	4685		

Persons with a disability by sex

Disability	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Total	265	302	567

Carers by sex

Carers	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Total	61	92	153

Population by general health and sex

General Health	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Very good	1754	1952	3706
Good	790	881	1671
Fair	144	153	297
Bad	26	26	52
Very bad	5	5	10
Not stated	327	299	626
Total	3046	3316	6362

Persons at work or unemployed by occupation and sex

Occupation	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Managers Directors and Senior Officials	123	104	227
Professional Occupations	264	275	539
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	243	218	461
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	117	324	441

Skilled Trades Occupations	290	27	317
Caring Leisure and Other Service Occupations	65	216	281
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	106	183	289
Process Plant and Machine Operatives	149	35	184
Elementary Occupations	208	167	375
Not stated	290	274	564
Total	1855	1823	3678

Persons at work by industry and sex

Industry	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Agriculture forestry and fishing	1	1	2
Building and construction	95	10	105
Manufacturing industries	146	79	225
Commerce and trade	467	474	941
Transport and communications	281	129	410
Public administration	64	73	137
Professional services	219	462	681
Other	427	419	846
Total	1700	1647	3347

Number of households with cars

Motor cars	#VALUE!
No motor car	413
One motor car	1130
Two motor cars	491
Three motor cars	56
Four or more motor cars	17
Not stated	120
Total	2227

Number of households with a personal computer

Personal Computer	#VALUE!
Yes	1572

No	525
Not stated	130
Total	2227

Number of households with internet access

Internet Access	#VALUE!
Broadband	1874
Other	81
No	155
Not stated	117
Total	2227

Appendix D

Plain Language Statement

Defining Community Perspectives on the Criteria for the Development of a Sustainable Community in Irish Urban Areas

This research study is conducted by Emma Barry, postgraduate researcher, School of History and Geography, Dublin City University under the supervision of Dr Ruth McManus and Dr Juliana Adelman. It is funded under a scholarship from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at DCU.

The research asks how local residents define the criteria necessary for the sustainability of communities in urban areas. By 'sustainability of communities' I mean how well a community functions economically, environmentally and socially. An important part of the research is to understand how residents experience their community and how this may differ from information provided by Government bodies, such as the Central Statistics Office and the relevant local council.

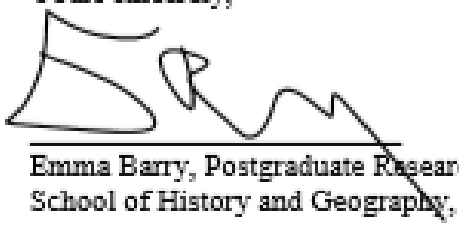
To gain the insight of residents, I would like to invite you and other members of your community to participate in Stage One of this research. Should you choose to participate in the first stage of the research, you will be asked to give approximately ten to fifteen minutes of your time to complete an anonymous survey. The survey will ask you about your experience of living within your community. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any stage, without query. It is sufficient to simply mention to the researcher that you wish to withdraw.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained within the legal limits of data protection and GDPR. Each survey is anonymous and sensitive personal data (such as participant's name, specific address, telephone number, etc.) is NOT required for this survey and will not be collected. All data will be stored securely.

Your involvement in this research will be beneficial in addressing the gaps between current planning policies and the lived experience of communities in your area. By participating in this research, you are giving a voice to your community and communities nationwide.

I would like to thank you most sincerely for taking the time to read this information and for considering your participation in this study.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Barry, Postgraduate Researcher.
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