

09

Community



9.1

Background

Cork City has a long tradition of voluntary and community organising, stretching back at least 70 years. A living tradition, as newly developed organisations, alliances and networks respond to emerging challenges and priorities in each new decade, the community sector often works alongside organisations that have an historic footprint in the city; for example, the Community Councils of the 1950s and the COPE Foundation also of this period, set up to respond to the polio epidemic.

In the 1960s as new suburbs and local authority estates were being built across Cork City a range of organisations were founded in response. This helped to build communities in these new urban settings. Credit Unions (the first in Ballyphehane dates from 1961) were an invaluable source of community finance at affordable rates for working class communities.

Ógra Chorcaí in the mid-1960s responded to increasing youth populations on new estates followed by the community pre-schools of the 70s. These organisations responded to the growing need for peer support for women and community childcare in newly built communities. These later developed into a network of family centres in the 1980s, funded by the Southern Health Board. Though the extent of the homeless crisis has deepened and widened the Simon Community was established in Cork in 1971. Though increased housing was being provided in the city there was still need for a soup run to support those who had no fixed abode.

In the 1980s Community Development Projects (CDPs), part of a national programme with a distinct focus on the communities, were located in and managed by residents. Community Development Projects were established to

respond to increasing social problems such as long term unemployment, educational disadvantage, and housing, supporting those most excluded such as lone parents, long term unemployed, people with disability. Partnership companies were established, a national programme, with North Lee Development (subsequently Cork City Partnership) developed in Cork City. This drew together public service agencies, communities and the social partners of business and trade unions to foster city-wide responses to these challenges. The late 1980s and early 1990s brought the development of Cork Aids Alliance at a time when HIN and AIDS HIV were making an impact. This organisation ultimately developed a more generic Sexual Health promotion role and today is the Sexual Health Centre.

Special Youth Projects began in the 1980s followed by Drugs Task Force Projects in the 1990s through more generic community organisation accommodating disadvantaged youth and facilities in late 90s with Garda Diversion Projects and youth cafés following in the early part of 2000s.

By the mid noughties community organisations were responding to new communities and immigration. The Irish Immigrant Support Centre (NASC) opened its doors for the first time in June 2000 in Cork City.

Since decriminalisation in 1993 there have been significant landmark developments in the area of suicide prevention in Ireland. A National Task Force on Suicide was established in 1995 and today a wide range of community and voluntary organisations provide mental health information and support across Cork, as well as bereavement support services.

The voluntary and community sector is extremely active, vibrant and diverse in Cork City. There are many groups providing a very wide range of services and supports, ranging from premises and facilities for local activities to meals on wheels, sport and cultural activities, health services, community development, youth cafés, services for the elderly, community education, childcare and many others.

Many community groups have grown organically from life-cycle concerns and address specific age-related issues including childcare, youth issues, and older age groups. They have evolved from wholly voluntary groups to part-voluntary with some employees and/or labour support projects such as Community Employment and Tús or community schemes to organisations with staff overseen and managed by voluntary management boards. Much of the following overview of Community and Voluntary structures was compiled by Cork Equal & Sustainable Communities Alliance (CESCA); an alliance of 18 community development organisations in the city with a shared commitment to equality and social inclusion together with HSE Social Inclusion and Community Work sections.

→ YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

Many youth organisations have developed from local voluntary efforts supported by some paid staff and gradually becoming a professionalised youth service provision in the city. Ogra Chorcaí perhaps typified this model of development; local voluntary youth clubs with volunteer leaders and supported by a central organisation with paid professional youth workers. For every youth organisation, child protection and safe-guarding concerns have placed an increasingly high duty of care on them, meaning that the process of volunteering has become both more complex but also more administrative, i.e. processing Garda Clearance applications. Foróige, by contrast, is a national youth organisation and has been working with young people since 1952. Foróige works with over 50,000 young people aged 10-18 each year through volunteer-led clubs and staff-led youth projects.

Ogra Chorcaí merged with Foróige in 2012 to become the single largest youth provider in the city. YMCA and Youth Work Ireland also have significant youth services in the city.

All of the above organisations are involved in delivering a variety of state funded initiatives to youth, including Drug Task Force funded initiatives, Juvenile Liaison projects, Youth Cafés and Young Person's Services and Facilities.

In 1962 Barnardo's set roots in Ireland, initially in Dublin and the border counties. By 1977 Barnardo's established an Adoption Support Service working with birth parents, adopted adults and supporting families who have adopted children and in 1980 opened the doors of its first Early Years Centre working with children in Tallaght, Dublin. Becoming an independent organisation in 1989, Barnardo's opened Family Support Centres in Waterford City, Tullamore, Athlone, Thurles, Carlow, Cork City and Cherry Orchard between 1998 and 2001.

In July 2018, Jigsaw - which is part of the National Centre for Youth Mental Health and one of 13 Jigsaw Hubs nationwide - opened a service in Cork City providing free, confidential mental health support service to young people.

The Children and Young People's Service Committee (CYPSC) is a key structure identified by government to plan and co-ordinate services for children and young people in every county in Ireland. CYPSC are county-level committees that bring together the main statutory, community and voluntary providers of services to children and young people. They provide a forum for the joint planning and co-ordination of activity to ensure that children, young people and their families receive improved and accessible services.

The ultimate goal is to improve outcomes for all children and young people in Ireland.

→ OLDER PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS

Many of the groups in this category began simply as community organisations but their demographic now dictates that the organisations they helped create perhaps two or three decades ago are now older people's groups. This points to an urgent and sensitive community development need for "succession planning; ensuring the sustainability of groups past the "founding fathers / mothers." As the age profile of the city increases, there is more, rather than less, need for these peer-led groups. The Retired People's Network, the Seniors' Parliament and Age Action

provide network opportunities for older people, as well as significant targeted work done by projects in areas of the city where there are substantial older populations (including Ballypheane, Gurrabraher/Churchfield and Mayfield). Isolated older people also have avenues to connect via the Cork City Partnership's Friendly Call Service, Mahon Visitation Scheme and Ballypheane Togher CDP's engagement with older people through community development support for networks, links with supported housing and telephone befriending.

However, it is the emerging structures within the Age Friendly initiative which will probably provide the most significant opportunities for older people to engage with and impact both on the development of the city and public services' response to older age. There is also a necessity to highlight the equity challenges around ageing e.g. the minute proportions of the Traveller community who reach older age; the proportions of the LGBT community population who lived "out" adult lives now ageing and needing services that acknowledge their identity.

→ ORGANISATIONS BASED ON IDENTITY, COMMUNITIES OR COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

Travellers

There are two Traveller led organisations in the city; the Traveller Visibility Group, and the Traveller Women's Network. They work together on many issues key to equality and inclusion, including cultural identity, accommodation, education, health and employment. Both are core funded through Cork Kerry Community Healthcare and of special interest is their participation and engagement with the Traveller Primary Health Care Initiative. Both are linked with national representative organisations Irish Traveller Movement, Pavee Point and Minceir. Additionally, St Vincent De Paul has funded a number of Traveller support initiatives in local communities including in Mahon and Knocknaheeny.

Disability organisations

There are many large service providers in relation to disability including the COPE Foundation, Rehab Care, L'Arche Community, Headway Ireland. There are also a number of support groups organised around a particular disability (e.g. Downs Syndrome Ireland), led often by parents and carers who fundraise for specific services. The Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) acts as an umbrella body for many disability interests in the city. In tandem with the above organisations, it is working to improve community integration for people with disability and away from congregated settings and segregated education and training.

The Cork Access Group represents people with disabilities concerning access to goods and services and in general access to the built environment. The Centre for Independent Living is a peer-led disability organisation and, along with Inclusion Ireland, is advocating for a rights-not-charity based approach to disability by the State and public service agencies.

LGBT Organisations

There are two well established LGBT organisations in the city, Cork Gay Project and LINC, both partner members of CESCO. They each have drop-in resource centres which house core staff, information and support helplines, and from where a variety of programmes are run including youth groups, social, health awareness and education programmes and community employment training schemes. Transgender Equality Network of Ireland (TENI), has a developing organisation in Cork.

New Communities/ Refugee – Asylum Seekers

NASC, a CESCO partner, is a Cork based non-governmental organisation which seeks to respond to the needs of immigrants in the Munster area. It leads the Cork City Integration Strategy and is represented on the newly formed national Direct Accommodation Working Group. It advocates strongly for a human rights and social justice response to the needs of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers and

provides legal and other support services. NASC supports groups of distinct nationalities to self-organise, including Roma, Polish and diverse African countries.

Two other community based responses to the needs of new communities are Cois Tine, a drop-in service which supports people to self-advocate, and Welcome English which provides a range of education supports including language classes. KRAC, the Kinsale Road Accommodation Centre group, has formed recently to advocate for an end to Direct Provision and changes to the ways in which reception centres operate.

Generic Community Based Organisations: Community Development Projects, Family Centres, and Community Associations.

Community Associations date from the 1960s and are found in almost all the older established communities in the city, running multi-purpose community centres. They operate from core principles of neighbourliness, self-help and self-reliance, and a "whole of community" approach.

Community Development Projects (CDPs) have existed in the city for two decades and operated as anchor organisations who provide a crucial focus and support for community development and change in their neighbourhood or community. Another key feature of 'community anchor organisations' is the solid foundation they give to a wide variety of self-help and capacity building activities in local communities. Because of their roots within their communities the range and depth of their relationships, networks and experience distinguish them from the many other groups and organisations operating at community level. CDPs are involved in early years provision, community education, community development and networking of local groups, community arts and community health initiatives.

Cork City Partnership has been in existence for over 20 years; its primary focus is to support both individuals and groups who are experiencing disadvantage in our communities. As a result of a government review of community development and social inclusion programmes, some CDPs were integrated with the Partnership Company in 2011.

Family Centres grew organically to provide a range of services to support the whole family, beginning from childcare (both pre-school and after-school) to community education for adults. Their services include parenting courses, information and access to childcare professionals such as social work, public health nursing and speech and language therapy.

Cork City has a substantial community based infrastructure and much of the best practise of city interagency groups is replicated at local level by community collaborations. CESCA Alliance members are a strong driving force in such collaborations.

Cork Volunteer Centre

The Cork Volunteer Centre opened in 2010 providing a volunteer placement service for the city. The Centre matches individuals who would like to volunteer with non-profit organisations who include volunteers in their activities.

9.2

Community Policing and Safety

Table 194 illustrates the types and numbers of offences in Cork City for the years 2015 to 2017. All data is sourced from PULSE.²⁴⁶ The most common offence for each year, and with decreasing numbers, was 'Theft and related offences' whilst 'Sexual offences' increased by 93.8% between 2015 and 2017. Robbery, extortion and hijacking offences reduced by 34.2%, Burglary and related offences by 29.9%, Controlled drug offences by 13.8% and Theft and related offences reduced by 1.2%.

Table 194: **Types and Numbers of Offences in Cork City, 2015-2017** (Source: Cso²⁴⁷)

Cork City Garda Division²⁴⁸	2015 Total	2016 Total	2017 Total
Homicide offences	3	4	5
Dangerous driving leading to death	0	2	3
Sexual offences	113	110	219
Attempts/threats to murder, assaults, harassments and related offences	1093	1034	1209
Dangerous or negligent acts	345	354	383
Kidnapping and related offences	6	7	6
Robbery, extortion and hijacking offences	117	95	77
Burglary and related offences	861	468	621
Theft and related offences	3795	3418	3751
Fraud, deception and related offences	286	273	281
Controlled drug offences	995	943	858
Weapons and Explosives Offences	113	96	118
Damage to property and to the environment	1472	1487	1405
Public order and other social code offences	2483	2245	2302
Offences against government, justice procedures and organisation of crime	536	576	513

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Sources of PULSE data are from the CSO and from An Garda Síochána.

247 -

'Statistics Under Reservation', please see <http://www.CSO.ie/en/methods/crime/recordedcrime/>.

248 -

<https://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=cjq03>
Recorded Crime Offences Under Reservation (Number) by Garda Division, Type of Offence and Quarter.

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PULSE data.

In 2015, 2016 and 2017 there were 345, 354 and 383 (respectively) 'Dangerous or negligent acts.' In the vast majority of cases these were 'Driving/in charge of a vehicle while over legal alcohol limit.' In 2015 the percentage was 92.5 increasing to 92.7 in 2016 and falling to 89.0% in 2017.

For each year under 'Robbery, extortion and hijacking offences' the most common offence was 'Robbery from the person.' This crime had a 59.0% prevalence rate in 2015 rising to 69.5% in 2016 and 70.1% in 2017. 'Robbery of an establishment or institution' was the second most common type of crime in this category but its prevalence decreased significantly from 35.0% in 2015 to 26.3% in 2016 and 19.5% in 2017.

Most 'Burglary and related offences' for the three years (each around 95.0%) were Non-aggravated Burglary as opposed to Aggravated burglary and Possession of an article with intent to burgle, steal or demand.

Most offences committed were under the category of 'Theft and related offences.' For each year, the majority of these were 'Theft from shop' and 'Other thefts/handling stolen property.' 'Theft from shop' increased between 2015 (45.6%) and 2016 (50.4%) and fell in 2017 to 41.6%. 'Other thefts' decreased from 2015-2016 from 44.4% to 39.3% and increased in 2017 to 47.8%.

The vast majority of offences 'Controlled drug offences' were 'Possession of drugs for personal use.' This offence has increased in proportion each year from 74.5% in 2015 to 78.6% in 2017. The second most common drug related offence was 'Possession of drugs for sale or supply.' This offence has decreased in proportion with each year from 22.6% in 2015 to 17.4% in 2017.

Most 'public order and other social code offences' for each year were 'Disorderly conduct.' The actual numbers for this offence decreased between 2015 and 2017 from 507 to 472 but proportions (of disorderly conduct) increased from 75.3% in 2015 to 79.6% in 2017.

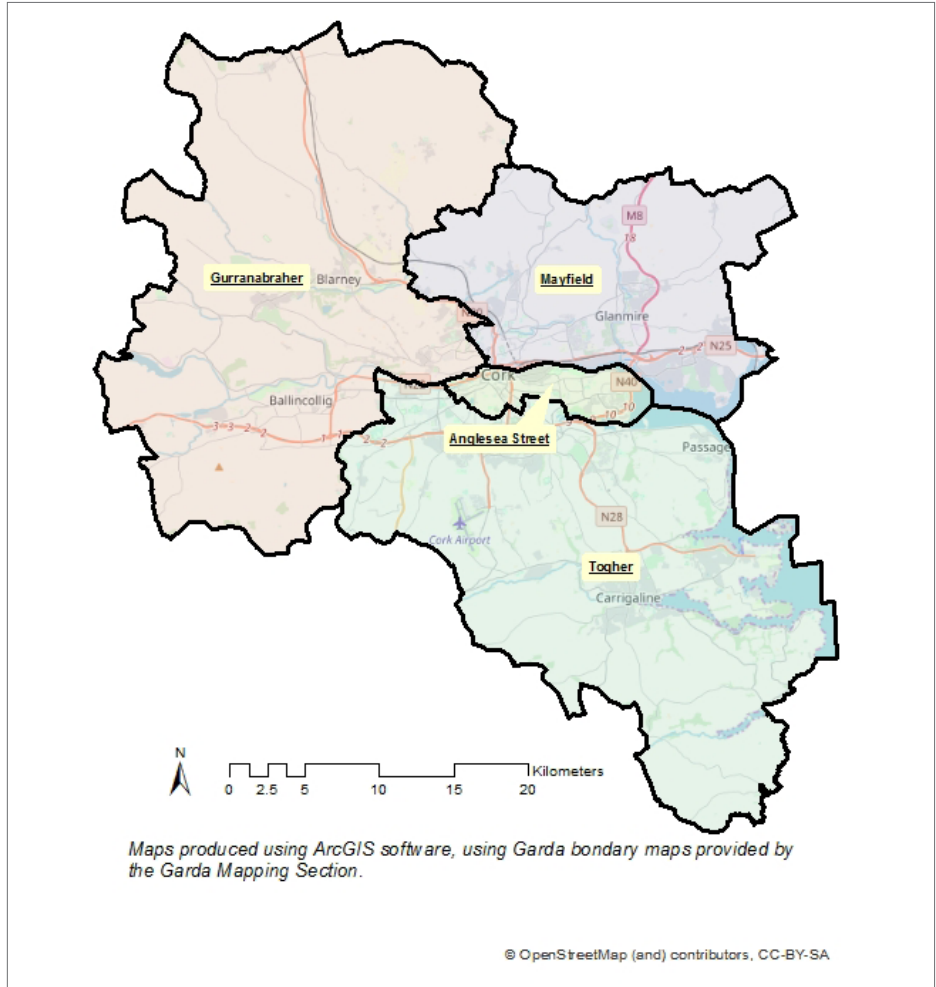
→ AGES OF VICTIMS

From 2015 to 2017 the vast majority of 'all crimes' in Cork City²⁴⁹ were committed against persons aged 15-64 although the proportions decreased marginally over this time from 88.1% to 87.3%. Crimes against persons aged 65+ similarly decreased in this time from 9.8% in 2015 to 8.9% in 2017. Crimes against children aged 0-14 increased between 2015 and 2017 from 2.0% to 3.8% respectively. Reported 'Crimes against the person' saw the proportions of children almost double from 4.6% in 2015 to 8.6% in 2017. This (reported rise) may in part be explained by the establishment of the Cork City Divisional Protective Services Unit responsible for investigating crimes of a sexual nature.

Between 2015 and 2017 the proportions of victims of crime aged between 15-64 decreased for the Garda District of Anglesea Street from 92.6% to 88.9%. Gurranebraher and Mayfield remained the same in 2015 and 2017 but Togher increased from 84.8% to 87.7%. Percentages of crimes against those aged 65+ decreased for Gurranebraher, Mayfield and Togher between 2015 and 2016 with the greatest decrease in Togher from 13.7% to 8.7%. Anglesea Street saw a marginal increase for this age group from 6.0% in 2015 to 7.7% in 2017. The proportions of 0-14 year old victims increased for all districts from 2015-2017.



Figure 68:
CORK CITY DIVISION:
GARDA DISTRICTS



→ **COMMUNITY LEVEL CO-ORDINATING STRUCTURES**

Table 195: **Community Level Co-Ordinating Structures**

Rapid AIT Implementation Teams	Area Childcare networks
Area Youth Networks	Community Education networks
Cork Community Health network	Community Safety Fora
Anchor Community Development projects	Family Resource Centres

Since 2016 every local authority in Ireland is required to have a Public Participation Network (PPN). Cork City PPN is designed to encourage the city’s many communities to contribute to the making and implementing of decisions and policies which impact upon them and the areas where they live. Membership of Cork City PPN has a wealth of combined knowledge and expertise and the network will do all it can to make sure that this is taken into account by elected representatives and policy makers.

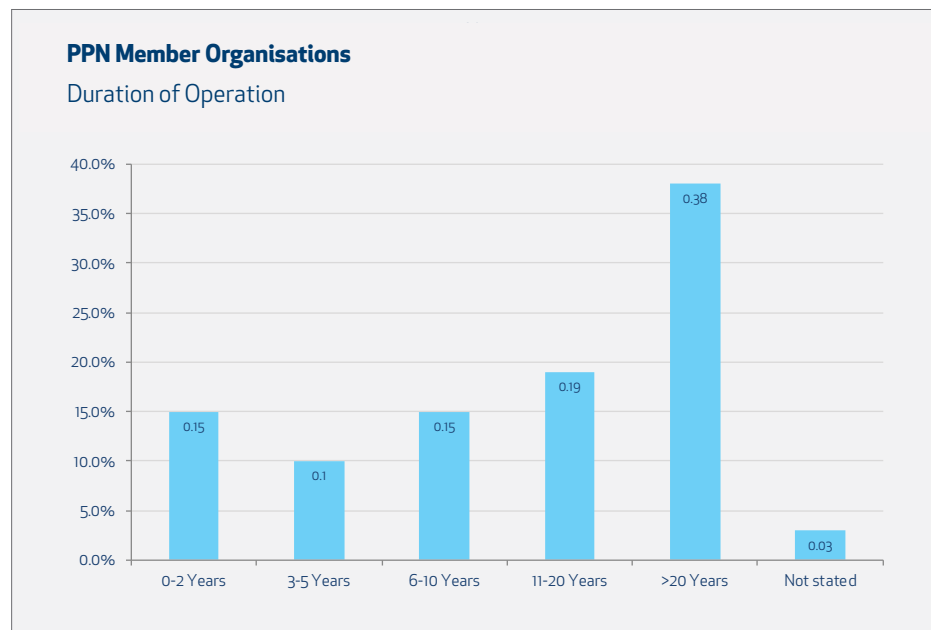
Cork City PPN carried out a Community Participation survey amongst its membership in early 2017. The response rate at the time was 60%, ensuring that the survey reached international standards of robustness for survey return.

The purpose of this exercise was to create a picture of the community and voluntary landscape across Cork City, and the survey revealed a number of key themes and findings detailed below. It is important to note that Cork City PPN membership does not, and did not, comprise all the groups involved in third sector work in Cork City. At the time of the survey, the membership of the PPN was approximately 120 groups, so the results can only be seen to be representative of a sample of community and voluntary groups across the city.

→ **KEY FINDINGS & MESSAGES**

The majority of the Cork City PPN member organisations are stand-alone, have been operating for more than 10 years and serve the local and city area.

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Figure 69:
 PPN MEMBER ORGANISATIONS,
 DURATION OF OPERATION



This speaks to the strong and proud contribution made by the community and voluntary sector to the life of Cork City. Local, grassroots organisation which have evolved in response to distinct challenges and needs form a strong backbone of the PPN membership and contribute nuance and understanding to dialogue between local authority and state agencies and the third sector.

Despite this mature sector profile, PPN membership data suggests that many groups representing new and migrant communities did not participate in the survey. As a result, while there is quality data on groups with a long footprint of work in the city, the low response rate among newer groups leaves a significant gap in the data.

The PPN and other actors looking to engage with the third sector need to be mindful of the need to diversify outreach, engagement and data collection techniques in order to reach these new groups and bring them into the fold of community and voluntary work in the city.

One of the major learning points from this survey is that as a public participation network, Cork City PPN needs, in partnership with organisations already spearheading work with new communities, to focus on engagement with these groups so that the work of the network becomes meaningful to new citizens of Cork.

More than half of organisations work in the areas of education, community development and health and wellbeing, and there is also a strong focus on advocacy, social justice and equality.

Table 196: **Areas of Work**

Top 5 Areas of Work	Number	%
Education	41	57%
Community development	40	56%
Health & wellbeing	36	50%
Advocacy	33	46%
Social justice & equality	33	46%

These focus areas featured strongly for groups and organisations of every size and type. In addition to these, work in arts, culture and family support is carried out by a third of organisations each; work in environment, youth work and housing is carried out by a quarter of organisations each; and work in the area of early years, festivals, self-help and entertainment is carried out by a fifth of organisations each.

Beneficiaries of the PPN members are from across the lifecycle and the general public, with a strong focus on those who are socially excluded and those who have health and wellbeing needs.

Table 197: **Beneficiaries by Category**

Beneficiaries by Category	#	%
Lifecycle and gender	65	90%
Socially excluded	55	76%
Organisational	46	64%
Other	45	63%
Health & wellbeing	44	61%
Justice	15	21%
Environment	13	18%

Table 198: **Top Beneficiaries**

Top Beneficiaries	Number	%
Adults	54	75%
Socially excluded people	43	60%
Children and youth	39	54%
Women	39	54%
General public / community	37	51%
People with mental health issues	37	51%
Unemployed / low income	37	51%

These findings very much echo the reputation of Cork City as an area which places real and meaningful emphasis on social inclusion priorities.

The numbers outlined in these results are arresting- the sum total of individuals estimated to have benefitted from, or participated in, the activities of surveyed PPN members in the year 2016-2017 is 181,084, with the caveat that organisations may reach the same people, so some beneficiaries may be counted more than once. Thus, even though the PPN membership represents mainly smaller organisations, the impact and reach of these organisations, as well as their high rates of participation is substantial, reflecting both universal and targeted service delivery and community activities.

Cork City PPN is certainly in its formative stage and, at the time of survey, represented 120 of a much larger group of third sector organisations in the city. The results of this survey indicates that the contribution of the third sector to the citizens of Cork City is hugely significant and deserving of support from partners, stakeholders and local government.

In terms of policy, the strongest interests of PPN members are in the strategic areas of community development and social inclusion, followed by community grants, arts and culture and community activation.

Table 199: **Policy Areas of Interest**

Top 5 Policy Areas of Interest	Number	%
Community Development	57	79%
Social Inclusion	57	79%
Community Grants	47	65%
Arts & Culture	39	54%
Community Activation	38	53%

Across the three pillars of the Cork City PPN, there is a desire to link to health and education networks including Cork Community Health Network, Community Education Networks, Healthy Cities, Learning City, Cork City Partnership, Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), and New Communities Partnership.

Table 200: **Desired Links with Council Committees, Inter-Agency Structures and Fora**

Top Desired Links with Council committees, inter-agency structures and fora	Number	%
Cork Community Health Network	30	42%
Community Education Networks	29	40%
Cork City Partnership (CCP)	27	38%
Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)	27	38%
Learning City	24	33%
New Communities Partnership	24	33%

There is a clear desire among surveyed members to engage with health in a very broad sense, given the marked interest both in Cork Community Health Network and Healthy Cities. The PPN aims to pursue a work programme which builds on the exemplary work being carried out at the moment. As of Autumn 2018, the PPN is an active participant in and convener of the Cork Community Health Network and is working in close collaboration with Healthy Cities on a number of initiatives.