



South Inner City Community Development Association

COMMUNITY PROFILE AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF THE LIBERTIES AND SURROUNDING AREAS

—

October 2019

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FOREWARD

The South Inner City Community Development Association (SICCDA) is proud to share the following Community Profile and Needs Assessment of the Liberties and Surrounding Areas researched and written by Stephen Rourke. This report includes a history of the area, a breakdown of local demographics and important statistics, and an assessment of the area based on a variety of local voices. We are incredibly grateful for everyone who contributed their insight and advice to make this assessment come to life, especially the 532 individuals who participated in interviews, anonymous surveys, and consultations throughout the research project. It would not be possible to truly understand the changing landscape, challenges, opportunities, and needs of the Liberties without these voices.

Since beginning our work in the Liberties in 1982, SICCDA has taken to heart the importance of continuously reassessing local needs to ensure that community work evolves as the area and people do. Furthermore, in light of how the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated issues already facing the inner city and the most vulnerable community members, it is more important than ever to have a detailed assessment and action plan informed by the current needs of the Liberties. We look forward to collaborating with a variety of community members and organisations to bring the recommendations outlined in this report to life.

We hope that you find this piece of research useful. Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions or ideas on how best to serve the diverse community here in the Liberties.

Sincerely,

Denis Murphy

Chair, SICCDA Board of Directors

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

South Inner City Community Development Association (SICCCA) is a well-established community organisation which provides a range of services to local people living in The Liberties and surrounding areas in the South Inner City of Dublin. SICCCA was established in 1982, has its main offices in Meath Street within The Liberties and is involved in work around the following issues and themes: healthy living (through the Activities Group); support for older people (through the Over 55s Social Club); tackling educational disadvantage (through the After Schools Programme); combating crime and anti-social behaviour (through The Liberties Club which is a Garda Youth Diversion Project); employment and training (through the Local Training Initiative and sponsorship of a Community Employment Programme); young people (through The Liberties Youth Group); and community development (through The Liberties Men's Group and building up the capacity of other community based groups).

SICCCA is always mindful of the need for itself and other service providers in The Liberties and surrounding areas to be as relevant as possible to the needs and circumstances of local residents. SICCCA is also aware of the fact that the profile of people living in the South Inner City of Dublin is changing quite rapidly (e.g. much more intercultural with a higher population of non-Irish people than other parts of Dublin¹; more young people living in the area with the emergence of student housing projects). There are also major infrastructural projects taking place in the South Inner City (e.g. development of Diageo site at St. James's Gate, development of Francis Street, new Children's Hospital; St. Teresa's Gardens Regeneration Programme). In this ever evolving context, SICCCA believes that it is most important to have an accurate community profile and assessment of local needs – this profile and assessment will help to guide the work and priorities of SICCCA and other service provider organisations (statutory, private and community/voluntary sector) for the next 10 years.

SICCCA made a strategic decision in early 2019 to commission work which would involve the compilation and production of a detailed Community Profile and Needs Assessment

¹ Central Statistics Office, Census of Population 2016: Profile of Electoral Divisions (Dublin, Central Statistics Office, 2017)

study for The Liberties and surrounding areas (with an overall population of 24,778 people).² This work contract was put out to competitive tender. Stephen Rourke was successful in this tendering process and began work on the Community Profile and Needs Assessment Study in May 2019. Stephen has produced many Community Profiles for other local communities (e.g. Stoneybatter, East Wall, North Inner City, Blanchardstown, Navan) and is currently the independent chairperson of St. Teresa's Gardens Regeneration Board.³

1.2. METHODOLOGY

The tasks and activities involved in producing the Community Profile and Needs Assessment for The Liberties and surrounding areas took place between May 2019 and September 2019. Key activities which took place over this five month period are as follows:

- A complete analysis of the 2016 Census of Population statistical data for this area has taken place. This analysis breaks down the population of the area into the 9 Electoral Divisions and into much more detailed Small Area Population subsets. This process has served to provide very useful and interesting information around issues such as age profile, nationality and ethnicity, socio-economic circumstances. It should be noted that the Census data does not cover a number of the main issues raised during the project
- Structured interviews have taken place with 65 people identified as being key players within statutory agencies, private businesses and community/voluntary organisations in The Liberties and surrounding areas. These people had insightful views about the area and the main priorities for the area over the next 5-10 years⁴
- Community surveys were completed by over 435 local residents – in hard copy and online. These surveys asked 3 questions (what are the best things about living in the area? what are the worst things about living in the area? what are the 3 things that

² Central Statistics Office, Census of Population 2016: Profile of Electoral Divisions (Dublin, Central Statistics Office, 2017)

³ A detailed background of Stephen Rourke's work is located in the Appendix of this report

⁴ List of interviewees is detailed in Appendix C of this report

need to happen to make the area a better place in which to live and work?). The surveys were available in 20 different locations in the area⁵

- Seven meetings of residents took place during the project. These involved a combination of public meetings in strategic locations in the area and focus group meetings for older people and other groups with similarities and attachments to each other.
- Plans and proposals for The Liberties and surrounding areas have been analysed. These include plans relating to the overall area (e.g. Liberties Area Plan; Greening The Liberties) and plans concerning particular places/communities within the area.

The various tasks and activities that have taken place between May 2019 and September 2019 have involved 532 people contributing to the project (i.e. through completing Community Surveys, through being interviewed, through participating in group meetings). The process has also involved analysis and assessment of a large number of documents⁶. It is considered that this comprehensive and robust process of community consultation and research has formed a strong basis for the analyses, conclusions and recommendations set out in the latter sections of this Community Profile and Needs Assessment report.

It should be noted that the methodology involved a largely qualitative approach insofar as it sought to involve as many people as possible to share their views about living in the area and about future needs within the area. It aimed to be as accessible as possible. It did not involve detailed quantitative based questionnaires and other such research tools which might not have proven to be as accessible and user-friendly as the short open-ended community survey which could be completed within a short period of time. Therefore, the conclusions and recommendations set out later in this report are based on what people said and what people wrote rather than exact percentages of people in favour of or not in favour of particular propositions and proposals which were presented to them (it was intended to be a needs assessment and community planning project, not a market research project).

⁵ Places at which community survey was available are listed in Appendix D of this report

⁶ Documents referenced during this project are listed in Appendix E

1.3. GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

During the consultations which took place between May 2019 and September 2019 there were many discussions about defining the geographical area to be covered by the Community Profile and Needs Assessment of The Liberties and surrounding areas. One of the main conclusions from these consultations was that there should be an expansive rather than narrow definition of the area and that there were many historical, cultural, community and family connections across a relatively large part of the South Inner City (which could be defined as The Liberties and surrounding areas). There was also a view that a more expansive definition (which does not only focus on the core of The Liberties around Thomas Street, Francis Street, Meath Street etc.) would assist in the process of creating a more coherent set of inter-connected communities and would encourage these communities to collaborate and work more closely with other communities in The Liberties and surrounding areas. The more expansive approach would also enable local organisations and groups to put forward stronger cases and arguments for increased resources – for an area with a population of 24,778 people (which is larger than Tralee, Sligo Town, Mullingar, Athlone, Wexford Town or Portlaoise).⁷

There is some consensus that the boundaries for The Liberties and surrounding areas (which may form the basis for future significant initiatives and projects) should be as follows⁸:

- Eastern boundary: Winetavern Street, Werburgh Street, Bride Street, Long Lane, Clanbrassil Street
- Southern boundary: Grand Canal
- Western boundary: Cork Street, Reuben Street, St. James Walk, Basin View, James Street, Steevens Lane
- Northern boundary: River Liffey

⁷ Central Statistics Office, Census of Population 2016: Profile of Electoral Divisions (Dublin, Central Statistics Office, 2017)

⁸ This consensus is based on the views of interviewees when asked about whether this definition of the area corresponded to their understanding of The Liberties and its hinterland

There are a total of nine Electoral Divisions within The Liberties and surrounding areas (as defined by the above boundaries). These Electoral Divisions are Wood Quay A, Merchants Quay A, Merchants Quay B, Merchants Quay C, Merchants Quay D, Merchants Quay E, Merchants Quay F, Ushers B, Ushers C⁹

1.4. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

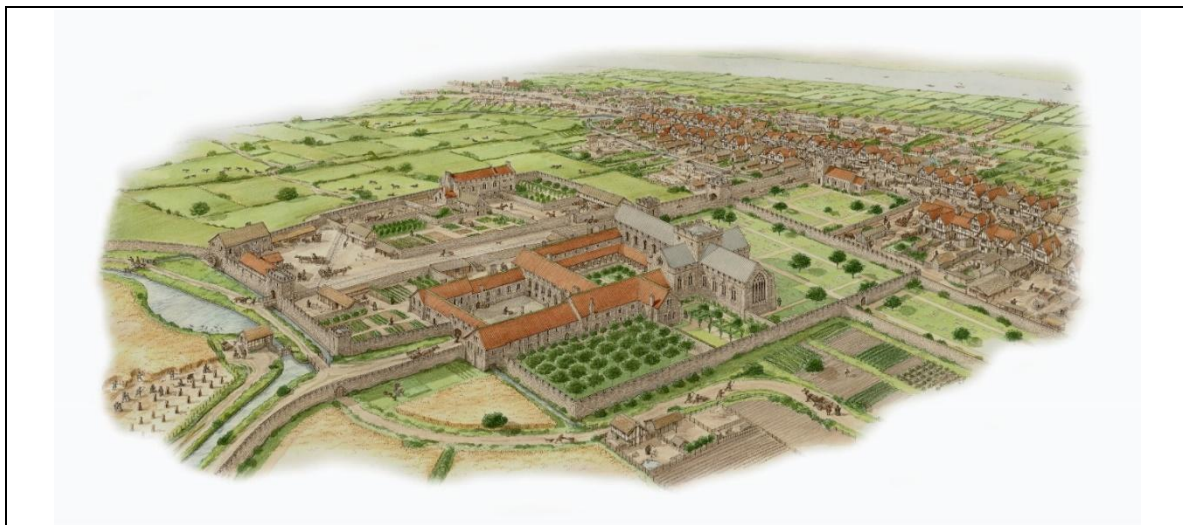
This introductory section to the Community Profile and Needs Assessment report will be followed by a brief history of The Liberties which will serve to highlight the rich heritage and culture which exists in the oldest part of Dublin City (Section 2). Section 3 of the report will set out a quantitative and qualitative profile of The Liberties and surrounding areas. Section 4 will identify the main needs which have to be addressed in the future development of The Liberties and surrounding areas over the next 10 year period. Section 5 will analyse the primary issues and challenges which are of fundamental importance to the successful and effective evolution of the area over the next period of time. Section 6 of the report will set out a Road Map, comprising 43 recommendations, which is based on the ideas and suggestions of people who contributed to the production of this Community Profile and Needs Assessment of The Liberties and surrounding areas.

⁹ The main roads and streets within each of these Electoral Divisions are set out in Appendix A of this report

2. HISTORY OF THE LIBERTIES

2.1. THE LIBERTIES – HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE¹⁰

The city of Dublin grew from two small settlements at the confluence of the River Liffey and one of its tributaries, The Poddle. The original settlements were known as Áth Cliath (The Ford of Hurdles) and Dubh Linn (The Black Pool), later anglicized to Dublin. In medieval times, the city was walled for its protection and administered by a corporation and guilds, which controlled trade and commerce within the city, administered justice, and levied tariffs and taxes to run and protect the city. There are still remnants of the old City Wall of Dublin today at Cornmarket and in St Audoen's Park, and Cornmarket was once the location of the New Gate, the main westerly approach to the city. Outside of the walls, areas outside of the Corporation's control were established called liberties.



¹⁰ This historical perspective has been extracted from libertiesdublin.ie/visit-the-liberties/history-liberties

The area now known as The Liberties developed to the west of the Norman city of Dublin, along the main western approach known as the Sligh Mor. In the 12th century, a royal abbey was established in the townland of Donore and given extensive estates in counties Meath, Dublin and Wicklow, including an area of its own jurisdiction and certain privileges and entitlements to regulate trade and commerce within the 'liberty'. And hence the name, The Liberties. At its height in the 15th century, the abbey would have formed one of the largest complexes in the city, with its main commercial thoroughfare – Thomas Street – lying to the north. Image by Stephen Conlon, courtesy of Dublin City Council.

In the 12th century, King Henry II of England ordered an Abbey of St Thomas the Martyr to be established at a site close to the modern church of St Catherine. The Augustinian monks of the Abbey were given extensive lands to the west of the city, as well as in counties Dublin, Meath and Wicklow, and certain privileges and powers to control trade within their 'liberty' and as a result the Liberty of St Thomas Court & Donore became extremely wealthy (there was also an adjacent Liberty of St. Sepulchre which was attached to St. Sepulchre's Palace, a building on Kevin Street which became home to Dublin's Archbishops and was then regional headquarters for An Garda Síochána). The Abbey of St. Thomas the Martyr in turn gave its name to St Thomas Street, the main street of the area, which itself ran along the alignment of the ancient western route into the city of Dublin (Sligh Mór). It quickly became a bustling marketplace and trading street, lined with mills, hostelrys and various providers all serving the growing city.

With the dissolution of monasteries by King Henry VIII in the 16th century, the abbey's lands passed into the ownership of Sir William Brabazon, an ambitious courtier of the king. The Brabazon family, who later became Earls of Meath, dominated the area as landowners for the next 300 years and different generations of the family were responsible for many of the urban developments we recognise today. The great market space at Newmarket was laid out in the 1620s by the second Earl of Meath and his townhouse was located close by. A later earl supported some of the pioneering Victorian-era housing developments for the working class. Today, street names such as Meath Street, Brabazon Street and Ardee Street evoke the family connection.



This detail from John Roques' remarkable map of Dublin from 1756 shows the then-Earl of Meath's Liberty centred around Thomas Street. The map opens a fascinating window to the past: a densely-packed city of narrow and crowded streets and long-lost place names. Lying at the centre of Thomas Street stood the Corn Market House – a huge 13 bay building that was finally removed in the 19th century. Also marked is the streets famous Glib Market of street traders, a tradition that maintains to this day. To the west, Arthur Guinness's famous brewery had yet to emerge and the dense city gave way to fields and orchards.

The mercantile character of the area attracted generations of tradesmen and crafts. The area grew into an industrial suburb of Dublin, with an extensive tradition of brewing, distilling, tanning, weaving and trade in agricultural produce.

In the 16th and 17th centuries the area had a notable Huguenot population and became a centre of excellence in silverwork, wool and silk weaving, as well as 'dirty industries' such as tanning. European tradesmen brought their own distinctive architectural styles to the city, such as gable-fronted houses or 'Dutch Billys' as they were known, and these houses became a feature of areas such as Pimlico, Spitalfields and The Tenters. The area's place names reflected its diverse and international population: so, Marrowbone

Lane (or *Marie le Bon Lane*), and Fumbally Lane (*Fombily Lane*). The area's growing craft industries drew resistance from English merchants and a series of laws and trade restrictions imposed on Irish produce after the Act of Union in 1801 gradually destroyed a number of key industries. The area began to decline.

During the late 18th and 19th century, The Liberties was dominated by great brewing and distilling families, most notably the Guinness family, who from 1759 built and developed the world's largest brewery at St James's Gate. Renowned distillers Powers, Jameson, Millar and Roe were all located here, creating a Victorian cityscape of chimney stacks, mills, malthouses and bustling streets. The area even had its own harbour linking it to the Grand Canal, and a mini-railway through the St James's Gate brewery to the quays.

However, this industrial wealth and prowess often went hand in hand with dire poverty and horrendous living conditions. The 19th century area had notorious slums which in turn spurred a number of enlightened housing developments by the Earls of Meath and the Guinness and Power families in the latter years of the century. The attractive enclaves about Gray Street and John Dillon Street were originally examples of modern new homes built for the working class by the Dublin Artisan Dwelling Company, while the Iveagh Trust Buildings on Patrick Street remain examples of the first 'flats' built for Dubliners.

The ancient 'liberties' were finally abolished and subsumed into the city in the 1840s. However, the name 'The Liberties' remained and primarily refers to the old Earl of Meath's Liberty.

3. PROFILE OF THE LIBERTIES AND SURROUNDING AREAS

3.1. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The first section of this report mentioned that the territory which defines The Liberties and surrounding areas, comprises of nine Electoral Divisions with population varying from 1,312 persons to 3,996 persons. The total population of the nine Electoral Divisions is 24,778. These figures have been extracted from the 2016 Census of Population¹¹. In considering the profile of The Liberties and surrounding areas the following results and outputs from the 2016 Census are interesting and relevant in relation to the production of the Community Profile:

- The age profile of The Liberties and surrounding areas (hereafter shortened to The Liberties) is similar to Dublin City¹² although there is a greater percentage of people in the 15 years to 49 years age range (i.e. 68% in The Liberties compared to 57% in Dublin City). In relation to the national situation, there are much smaller percentages in the 0-14 age group (13% in The Liberties v. 21% in the Republic of Ireland) and in the 65 years and over group (7% in The Liberties v. 13% in the Republic of Ireland). The figure would suggest that a high proportion of residents in The Liberties are in early adulthood and mid-life rather than being at the younger and older ends of the age spectrum.
- In relation to marital status, 69% of persons in The Liberties are single and this is much higher than the figures for Dublin City (60%) and the Republic of Ireland (54%). Conversely only 23% of people in The Liberties are married compared to a Dublin City figure of 31% and a national figure of 38%. In relation to the other residents of The Liberties, the proportion of people who are separated, divorced or widowed is quite similar to the patterns in Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland.
- In considering the number of same sex marriages and relationships in The Liberties, it is difficult to determine these figures since same-sex marriage did not become legal in Ireland until November 2015, and the 2016 Census of Population only

¹¹ Central Statistics Office, Census of Population 2016: Profile of Electoral Divisions (Dublin, Central Statistics Office, 2017)

¹² Dublin City is defined as the geographical area covered by Dublin City Council

accounts for the relatively small number of same-sex marriages which took place between November 2015 and April 2016. However, on the basis of research carried out by GLEN (Gay and Lesbian Equality Network)¹³ and Daft.ie¹⁴ and of views expressed during the local consultations there would appear to be a significantly higher proportion of LGBTI people living in The Liberties than in other parts of Dublin and Ireland (with the Daft.ie research in 2018 estimating that 8% of relationships in The Liberties being same-sex relationships compared to a Dublin-wide figure of 3%).

- A total of 65% of people living in The Liberties were born in Ireland and the figure is significantly lower than the number for Dublin City (78%) and for the Republic of Ireland (83%). In some Electoral Divisions the number of people born in Ireland is less than 60% (e.g. Merchants Quay B – 54%; Merchants Quay E – 55%; Merchants Quay 5 – 58%; Ushers B – 56%)¹⁵. In overall terms there is a significantly higher proportion of people born outside Europe living in The Liberties (i.e. 16%) than either in Dublin City (9%) or the Republic of Ireland (5%).
- On the issue of ethnicity, 63% of those who completed the Census in The Liberties described themselves as White Irish compared to 78% in Dublin City and 84% in the Republic of Ireland. This figure for ‘White Irish’ decreases to 50% in Merchants Quay B, 51% in Ushers B and 54% in Merchants Quay E. The numbers who define themselves under the other ethnicity options set out in the Census form are higher in The Liberties with ‘Other White’ comprising 22% of the population (compared to 13% in Dublin City and 10% in the Republic of Ireland); ‘Black’ comprising 3% of The Liberties (compared to 1% in both Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland); and ‘Asian’ comprising 7% of The Liberties (compared to 4% in Dublin City and 2% in the Republic of Ireland).
- In relation to religion, slightly over half of the residents in The Liberties are Catholics (56%) and this figure is much lower than comparative figures for Dublin City (70%) and the Republic of Ireland (80%). Catholics are in a minority in Merchants Quay B

¹³ Cairns, S. ‘Dublin 8 holds the Highest Rate of Civil Partnerships in Ireland’ (Dublin, The Liberty, 2012)

¹⁴ Clancy, M ‘Ireland’s largest gay neighbourhoods’ (Dublin, Daft.ie Insights, 2018)

¹⁵ The streets and roads covered by these Electoral Divisions are set out in Appendix A of this report

(49%) and Merchants Quay E (41%). The figures for those with other religions (apart from Catholicism) are higher in The Liberties (18%) than in Dublin City (12%) and the Republic of Ireland (9%). Most notably, however, the numbers saying they have no religion (26%) is much higher than the figures for Dublin City (18%) and for the Republic of Ireland (10%).

- Family sizes are much smaller in The Liberties than in the rest of Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland. Of those families with two members (e.g. husband and wife, single parent and child) or more, there is a noticeably higher proportion with two people in The Liberties (i.e. 60%) than in Dublin City (49%) and the Republic of Ireland (39%). Conversely, the numbers with 3-4 in the family unit (i.e. 34% in The Liberties, 41% in Dublin City, 45% in the Republic of Ireland) and 5-8 in the family unit (i.e. 5% in The Liberties, 10% in Dublin City, 16% in the Republic of Ireland) are much smaller in The Liberties. It is clear that these outcomes have been influenced by the smaller sizes of accommodation units in The Liberties where 69% of units are flats/apartments.
- For families with children, over half of the families in The Liberties have one child (54%) and this compares to a Dublin City figure of 46% and a national figure of 40%. The percentage of families with one child is particularly high in Merchants Quay A (59%) and Ushers B (59%). Conversely, the number of families in The Liberties with 2-3 children (42%) is lower than the figure for Dublin City (48%) and for the Republic of Ireland (54%). The number of families with 4 children and more is also lower in The Liberties (4%) than in Dublin City (6%) and the Republic of Ireland (6%).
- There is a much higher proportion of couples in The Liberties without children (43%) than there is in Dublin City (36%) and in the Republic of Ireland (29%). In some parts of The Liberties, half of all couples do not have children – in Merchants Quay B (58%) and in Merchants Quay E (50%). This can partially be accounted for by the relatively large number of same-sex couples in The Liberties (who would tend not to have the same number of children as heterosexual couples, partly due to restrictions on adoption and parentening rights in recent history).¹⁶ However, in

¹⁶ LGBT Ireland. 'Parenting' (LGBT Ireland 2018).

some parts of The Liberties the percentage of families with children is higher than the figure for Dublin City (which is 64%) – in Wood Quay A there are 70% of couples with children whilst in Ushers C the figure is 68%. This is another demonstration of the diversity of the composition and make-up of people and families in The Liberties.

- For parents with children, there are higher levels of lone parenting in The Liberties than in Dublin City or the Republic of Ireland. In The Liberties, 52% of families are a couple with children whilst the comparative figures for Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland are 64% and 75% respectively. The number of mothers and fathers by themselves with children (i.e. lone parents) is much higher in The Liberties (48%) than in Dublin City (36%) and the Republic of Ireland (25%). The proportion of lone parent families is particularly high within Merchants Quay A (67%) and Wood Quay A (58%) and relatively low in Merchants Quay E (21%) and Merchants Quay D (27%).
- There is one person living by themselves in 34% of the housing units in The Liberties and this figure is noticeably higher than the figure for Dublin City (28%) and for the Republic of Ireland (24%). This outcome is connected, to a certain extent, to the type of accommodation in which people live within The Liberties. There is a much higher proportion of people living in flats/apartments (69%) in The Liberties than in Dublin City (35%) and in the Republic of Ireland (12%). This is a massive difference between The Liberties and the rest of Dublin/Ireland with a virtual juxtaposition of the people living in houses and in flats/apartments (with houses being very dominant in Dublin City and Ireland and flats/apartments being very dominant in The Liberties). The levels of flat/apartment living are very high in Ushers B (97%), Merchants Quay A (96%) and Wood Quay A (86%).
- A significantly large proportion of housing units in The Liberties are over 100 years old (i.e. 25%) than in the comparable situation in Dublin City (15%) and in the Republic of Ireland (9%). Proportionally there were fewer housing units built in The Liberties between 1946 and 1970 (10%) than in either Dublin City (27%) or the Republic of Ireland (15%). However, it is evident that in the last 20 years The Liberties has kept pace with other parts of Ireland, with 21% of existing housing

units being constructed since 2001 – this compares to a Dublin City figure of 16% and a national figure of 29%.

- There are wide disparities in relation to housing ownership and housing management arrangements between The Liberties and the rest of Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland. Only 27% of housing units (flats, apartments and houses) in The Liberties are owner occupied and this compares to a Dublin City figure of 54% and a national figure of 71%. Conversely the proportion of families/individuals renting their housing units is much higher in The Liberties. A total of 45% rent from private landlords compared to a Dublin City figure of 32% and a national figure of 19%. In relation to other rental options, 22% of people in The Liberties rent their housing unit from Dublin City Council and this is much higher than comparative local authority figures for Dublin City (12%) and for the Republic of Ireland (9%).
- In overall terms, the employment and unemployment levels in The Liberties are quite similar to those for Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland. In relation to people who are 'economically active' (i.e. between 18 and 65 years of age and available for employment), 84% are at work and employed – this figure compares to a similar Dublin City and Republic of Ireland figure of 87%. However, it is also evident that unemployment rates are particularly high in some areas within The Liberties. Whilst the overall level of unemployment in The Liberties at the time of the 2016 Census was 13%, the unemployment rate for Wood Quay A was 25% and it was 18% in both Merchants Quay A and Ushers C. it was considerably higher again within some of the Small Areas within much larger Electoral Divisions.
- The levels of educational attainment within The Liberties are higher than those in Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland. Within The Liberties 55% of the population are still in full-time education at the age of 20 – this compares to figures for Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland at 49% and 41% respectively. A total of 43% of adults in The Liberties have a third level qualification compared to 41% in Dublin City and 36% in the Republic of Ireland. Whilst these overall figures are quite positive it is still important to note that there are Electoral Divisions in The Liberties with poor educational attainment levels – 29% of adults in Wood Quay A left school

at 15 years or younger whilst only 25% of people in this Electoral Division have a third level qualification.

- The proportion of people with a disability in The Liberties is close to the average for Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland. There are 14% of the population in The Liberties living with a disability whilst the comparative figures for Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland are 14.7% and 13.5% respectively. The levels of people with disabilities are higher in Electoral Divisions such as Wood Quay A (23%) and Merchants Quay C (16%) and there are considerably higher levels again within some of the Small Areas which form subsets of the larger Electoral Divisions (with disability rates of close to 30% within some of these Small Areas).
- There are far lower levels of car ownership within The Liberties than in Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland. Within The Liberties 60% of households do not have a car whilst the comparative figures for Dublin City and the Republic of Ireland are 36% and 16% respectively. The lower level of car ownership within The Liberties is the result of a combination of circumstances. These include the proximity of The Liberties to the City Centre of Dublin, the good public transport services within the area (Dublin Bus and LUAS), the high proportion of apartments (which may have limited car parking spaces) and the costs involved in buying and maintaining a car.

A complete statistical analysis of The Liberties has been produced (using 2016 Census data) and this analysis is set out in Appendix B of this report.

3.2. LEVELS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE

Whilst the main indicators for determining levels of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage (e.g. employment, educational attainment etc.) would suggest that The Liberties is on a relatively even par with the rest of Dublin City, it is also important to recognise that there are deep levels of disadvantage and deprivation within a number of areas in The Liberties. It is clear that these levels of disadvantage are intergenerational within these areas, areas which have always had higher-than-average rates of poverty and disadvantage.¹⁷ It is clear that one of the most significant challenges over the next 10 years is to focus greater attention and resources on highly disadvantaged

¹⁷ Central Statistics Office, Census of Population, 1961-2016 (Dublin, 1961-2016)

communities within The Liberties, with the intention of breaking the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage and bringing these communities closer to the Dublin norm and national norm around issues such as employment, educational attainment, life expectancy, health and well-being.

The most effective way to identify those communities within The Liberties which are experiencing the highest levels of socio-economic disadvantage is to link into the Pobal HP Deprivation Index, an index which uses a wide range of information and data to identify relative levels of affluence and disadvantage within Electoral Divisions and Small Areas in Ireland (Small Areas are subsets of Electoral Divisions and contain an average number of 90 housing units). Within the 9 Electoral Divisions in The Liberties there are 113 Small Areas and 21 of these Small Areas (19%) are defined as being disadvantaged or very disadvantaged. The Pobal HP Deprivation Index uses its various information sources to produce scores for different geographical and administrative boundaries (e.g. local authorities, Electoral Divisions, Small Areas) and these scores range from +35 for the most affluent to -35 for the most disadvantaged (with 0 being the national average). In relation to levels of disadvantage, a score of -10 to -20 defines an area as 'disadvantaged', a score of -20 to -30 defines an area as 'very disadvantaged' and a score of -30 to -35 defines an area as 'extremely disadvantaged'.

Within The Liberties there are 7 Small Areas defined as 'very disadvantaged' and 14 defined as 'disadvantaged'. These Small Areas are as follows:

Number of Small Area	Location	Score on Deprivation Index
Very disadvantaged		
268098002	Oliver Bond House	-24.62
268098003	Oliver Bond House	-24.12
268098007	Oliver Bond House	-22.48
268100001	Summer Street Flats	-22.48
268103003	St. Teresa's Gardens	-26.71
268150006	Basin Lane Flats	-27.55
268150016	Marrowbone Lane Flats	-24.59

Disadvantaged		
268100002	Summer Street Flats	-14.97
268102003	Griffith College	-17.00
268149007	Emmet House/Robert Emmet Close	-13.24
268149008	Emmet House	-17.55
268150003	Malin Avenue; Lourdes Road	-10.03
268150007	St. James Avenue; Anna Livia House	-12.74
268150008	Mary Aikenhead House	-10.66
268150014	Marrowbone Lane	-19.33
268161001	Iveagh Trust	-15.75
268161002	Iveagh Trust	-17.33
268161003	Iveagh Trust	-15.16
268161010	Iveagh Trust	-12.53
268161011	Iveagh Trust	-11.57
268161012	Iveagh Trust	-13.16

The highest levels of disadvantage exist within some of the local authority flats complexes within The Liberties (e.g. Oliver Bond House, St. Teresa's Gardens, Basin Lane Flats, Marrowbone Lane) and within homeless services which are located in The Liberties. In relation to homeless services, Dublin 8 (which comprises The Liberties and surrounding areas) has the second highest number of people accessing homeless services of any postcode area in Dublin (after Dublin 1) – a report produced by the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive in 2019 estimated that there were 785 homeless people living within homeless services in Dublin 8¹⁸.

In overall terms it is encouraging that the Deprivation Index for the entire population of The Liberties (9 Electoral Divisions with a population of 24,778) is going in a positive

¹⁸ Dublin Regional Homeless Executive, 'Concentration of People Accessing Homeless Services' (Dublin City Council, 2019)

direction – from -1.95 in 2006 to +2.49 in 2011 and to +3.57 in 2016¹⁹. However, it is also important to recognise that significant improvements have not taken place in areas which have had high levels of socio-economic disadvantage over many decades/generations and that these areas have to be the focus of future concentration if The Liberties, as an overall district, is to reach its full potential.

3.3. ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE LIBERTIES

There is a great deal of affection and love for The Liberties and surrounding areas. The large majority of the people consulted during the process of producing this Community Profile and Needs Assessment said that they really like living in The Liberties and that they would never think about moving out of The Liberties (indeed a significant concern for many of those consulted is how their own children can remain living in The Liberties with escalating house/rental prices). According to survey respondents aspects of The Liberties which are most appealing and attractive to those who live and work in the area include the following:

- The location and its proximity to the City Centre of Dublin. For many residents it only takes between 20 and 40 minutes to walk to St. Stephen's Green and Grafton Street
- The history, heritage and culture of the area. Local residents are very aware and conscious of the fact that they are living in the oldest part of Dublin City and are proud of being a resident of The Liberties
- The diversity of people who live, work and visit The Liberties on a daily/regular basis. There is generally a lot of satisfaction about the ways in which long established residents, newer residents (including many non-Irish), students, tourists and others share the same spaces within The Liberties
- The spirit of The Liberties and the fact that it has retained many of its traditional features (e.g. street traders, independent retailers, local cafes/bars, old streets/lanes, urban grit) without becoming too bland or gentrified.
- The hustle and bustle of the area. The Liberties is one of the most densely populated parts of Ireland (close to 25,000 residents in a 2 kilometre square area)

¹⁹ Pobal, 2016 HP Deprivation Index (Dublin, Pobal, 2017)

and has nearly 2 million people visiting tourism attractions in the area each year. Many people like the energy and the vibrancy which all of this brings to the area.

3.4. RECENT CHANGES AND DEVELOPMENTS

The Liberties went through a tough and difficult period from the 1950s onwards. Many of those who participated in the Community Profile project referenced the ways in which traditional industries went into sharp decline; the increasing dereliction which has taken place in The Liberties over the last 50-60 years; the large increase in the number of empty shop units; the negative impact of road-widening programmes (e.g. Cork Street); the criminality and drug dealing which has blighted certain parts of The Liberties; increases in the numbers of homeless people and drug users. All of these factors led some people to believe that The Liberties was being left behind and forgotten about (compared to other parts of the Inner City such as the Docklands and Smithfield) and that there was little future for The Liberties as a thriving, vibrant and sustainable area in which to live and work.

However, participants in the needs assessment interviews and surveys highlighted that there have been developments over the last few years which have given people renewed hope and optimism about the future of The Liberties. These include public realm and street improvement works that are taking place and will continue over the next few years; the increasing recognition of The Liberties as a special and unique place in the history and heritage of Dublin (supported by the Liberties Business Forum and the Liberties Cultural Association amongst others); the development of new green and recreational spaces at St. Audoens Park, St. Catherine's Graveyard Park and Weaver Square; new investments in hotels and student housing (which have created jobs and brought people into the area); the Digital Hub founded in 2003 and Guinness Enterprise Centre founded in 2000 which provide accommodation and other facilities for 190 companies and 1,200 entrepreneurs; the establishment of 4 new distilleries in The Liberties (Teelings Whiskey Distillery, Pearse Lyon Distillery, Dublin Liberties Distillery and Roe and Co. Distillery).

3.5. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

In addition to these developments which have taken place over the last 20 years it is evident that larger and more significant developments have taken place in more recent years and/or are scheduled to take place in The Liberties over the next 10 years.²⁰ These new/planned developments, some of which are contested and have been criticised by local people living in The Liberties, include the following:

- There has been a number of purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) centres developed in The Liberties in recent years and this trend is likely to continue over the next number of years. PBSA projects completed in recent years include Binary Hub (Bonham Street); New Mill (Mill Street); The Tannery (Mill Street); Highlight (Thomas Street); Heyday (Carmans Hall). PBSA projects under construction and planned for the future include Brickworks (Cork Street); Ardee Point (Brewery Block, Ardee Street); Crosslane (Carmans Hall); Greenhearts (Brickfield Lane); Hines (Cork Street)
- In relation to hotels, there was no hotel in The Liberties (with a population of 24,778) up until 2017 when The Maldron opened in Kevin Street. Over the last two years two more hotels have opened in The Liberties – the Marriott Aloft at Blackpitts and the Hyatt Centric at The Coombe. Hotels and aparthotels are also planned for the integrated and multi-purpose developments which will be taking place at St. James's Gate, Newmarket and at Tivoli Place (the site of the old Tivoli Theatre in Francis Street)
- The development of the 29 acres site at St. Teresa's Gardens. When developed by Dublin City Council and Hines (with the assistance and support of St. Teresa's Gardens Regeneration Board), this development will comprise 1,800 new housing units (of which 500 will be social and affordable housing), a new Sports Campus for the South Inner City of Dublin (with full size pitch and ancillary services such as changing rooms and gymnasiums), parks and playgrounds

²⁰ Quinlan R. 'Dublin 8 Revival – Liberties Lined Up for a Docklands-Style Makeover', Irish Times (Dublin, 29th August 2019)

- The development of the 12.6 acres site at St. James's Gate by Diageo. Located at the northern end of the 49 acres St. James's Gate brewery site, the proposed scheme is to comprise 517,000 sq. ft. of residential space for 500 new homes, 678,000 sq. ft. of office space, 237,000 sq. ft. of hotel and leisure/cultural spaces and 54,000 sq. ft. of retail space
- The development of 400,000 sq. ft. of land/spaces at Newmarket Square, spaces which will be allocated for office accommodation, retail units, an indoor market, a microbrewery and a 239 bedroom hotel. The first phase of the new developments at Newmarket Square (the 75,000 sq. ft. Eight Building to be used for Grade A office space) is due to be occupied in the near future
- 55 Fumbally is a 0.55 acre site acquired by The Collective earlier in 2019. Planning permission for this site has been granted for 34 apartments and 26,700 sq. ft. of office space (when the site was owned by Oakmount). With its purchase by The Collective it is anticipated that this scheme will be re-designed with a stronger focus on co-living spaces. Whilst this site has been cleared a large cut-stone distillery building remains and this protected structure will need to be refurbished and incorporated into any future development
- There are a number of small-to-medium housing and apartment schemes which are going through preparatory, planning and/or construction phases and, together with the larger aforementioned substantial proposed building projects at St. Teresa's Gardens and St. James's Gate, will add to the housing stock in The Liberties. These schemes include a 96 apartment development at the old IDA Enterprise Centre at Newmarket Square, 24 apartments for a mixed use development at Blackpitts, 39 apartments on the Hanlons site at Cork Street and 70 apartments on a site opposite the Coombe Hospital. Dublin City Council also intend to provide additional housing on sites at Chamber Street/Weaver Square, Long Lane and Bonham Street
- Dublin City Council also intends to develop its own site/depot at Marrowbone Lane. This site comprises 11.4 acres of space/land and DCC estimate that it will only require 45% of this space/land to continue delivery of essential services. The remaining 55% of the existing land, as proposed by DCC, would be used for the following: the provision of a minimum of 100 new residential housing units, the

provision of additional all-weather sports pitches to be managed by St. Catherine's Leisure Centre and an improved active street frontage and public realm along Marrowbone Lane

- DCC also plans on embarking upon other public realm and environmental improvements in The Liberties over the next few years. These include the development of a new substantial park for the area at Bridgefoot Street; street enhancement projects at High Street, Francis Street, Pimlico; a regeneration initiative for Meath Street (which would aim to maintain the character of this street whilst also making it a more attractive place in which to work and visit); and additional tree planting across The Liberties (and especially in areas which are devoid of trees/greenery such as Cork Street)
- Whilst the New Children's Hospital at St. James is on the periphery of the geographical boundaries for The Liberties used in this Community Profile and Needs Assessment report it is clear that this major national development will have an impact on The Liberties. In particular, it will create a whole variety of employment opportunities for local residents (with residents being trained and educated to take advantage of upcoming employment opportunities in the New Children's Hospital) and it will also create a demand and need for new housing in Dublin 8 to accommodate people working in the hospital

Whilst there is likely to be a lot of new developments taking place over the next 10 years in The Liberties it is also important to recognise that the large majority of these developments are taking place on lands which were derelict and had been vacant/unused for many years. The majority of the lands in places such as St. James's Gate, Player Wills/Bailey Gibson on the South Circular Road, Donnelly Centre on Cork Street were or are vacant and not being used for productive purposes. Indeed, even with the development of these sites there are still unused and under-developed parts of The Liberties – these include the derelict sites and vacant shops on Cork Street and James Street and the iconic Iveagh Markets which comprises 30,000 sq. ft. of magnificent indoor space and has not been used since it was sold by DCC to a private developer in 1997 (as one interviewee said *'The Iveagh Markets is the jewel in the crown*

of The Liberties and has to be brought back into use again at the earliest possible opportunity. We have been waiting for too long to reclaim the Iveagh Markets’).

The population of The Liberties is likely to increase significantly in the next few years with the new housing developments at St. Teresa’s Gardens and surrounding areas (which has the potential to accommodate 5,000 new residents), at St. James’s Gate, at Marrowbone Lane, within student accommodation centres and hotels. This could well result in a population increase in The Liberties which is above the Dublin City and national average but which, at the same time, is manageable within the spaces and amenities/facilities that are currently available within The Liberties. This type of population increase would then place the South West Inner City in a similar position to other quadrants in the Inner City of Dublin which have experienced significant population growth over the last 20 years. Whilst the population of the South West Inner City decreased by 1% between 1996 and 2016, the populations in the South East Inner City, North West Inner City and North East inner City increased by 15%, 42% and 78% respectively in this 20 year period.²¹

²¹ Central Statistics Office. Census of population, 1996-2016 (Dublin, 1996-2016)

4. NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF THE LIBERTIES AND SURROUNDING AREAS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

A total of 532 people participated in the Community Profile and Needs Assessment project on The Liberties and surrounding areas which took place between May 2019 and September 2019. This participation involved a combination of local residents completing community surveys, residents attending community meetings and focus group meetings and people having 1-to-1 interviews with Stephen Rourke (the main consultant/researcher for this project). There was a general sense amongst project participants that The Liberties is going through an unprecedented level of change and development (with new hotels, new student accommodation centres, street improvement projects, major regeneration programmes) after many decades of dereliction and neglect. Whilst the large majority of participants who took part in the Community Profile and Needs Assessment project recognise the need for positive change and development to take place, there is also concern about the pace of development, the types of developments which are taking place and the perceived absence of consultations with local residents and businesses.

In analysing the outcomes from the community meetings and interviews and in assessing the completed community surveys, there are a number of recurring themes mentioned on a frequent basis by people who participated in the various consultation activities. These themes and issues are of significant importance to people living and/or working in The Liberties and if positive actions and initiatives could take place around these themes/issues it would serve to address the main worries and concerns expressed by the people who participated in the consultation project. This, in turn, would make people more hopeful and optimistic about the future and could lead to a situation where the heritage and traditions of The Liberties would be preserved whilst at the same time welcoming new developments and new people into the area. There is a fairly strong view amongst respondents that the area does have ample spaces and buildings where the old/traditional and the new/modern can coexist in harmony with one another and create an area which is economically stronger, socially integrated and safer for its residents, businesses, tourists and students.

There were 9 main issues which recurred on a regular and ongoing basis during the consultations which took place between May 2019 and September 2019. These issues, which have to be at the fore of any Action Plans or Strategic Plans produced for The Liberties and which will be considered in some detail in this section of the report, are as follows:

- **The need for more social and affordable housing within the area**
- **The development of more green spaces and sports pitches and facilities**
- **Improvements to the local environment in order to make the area more attractive and a nicer place in which to live and work**
- **Improvements around issues concerning traffic management and car parking within the area.**
- **The need to tackle criminality, drug dealing, drug use and anti-social behaviour**
- **The development of more community buildings/facilities and creative/cultural spaces within the area**
- **More activities, services and programmes for children and young people living in the area**
- **Stronger community cohesion and integration with all parts of the area working more closely together in order to improve the overall area**
- **The development of the local economy with particular focus on retaining local/street markets and more economic activity in the evenings and during the weekends**

4.2. MORE SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING WITHIN THE AREA

The need for more social and affordable housing is, on the basis of interviews/surveys, the single most important factor in enabling local people to remain living in The Liberties. The Liberties and the wider Dublin 8 area has become a very attractive and fashionable place to live for the factors mentioned earlier in this report e.g. history and heritage of the area, close to the City Centre of Dublin, good transport links etc. For these reasons and others relating to the unique mix of people in Dublin 8 (it is now a very diverse area), it is now one of the most sought-out and popular parts of the Inner City of Dublin in which to live according to many of those who participated in the survey and interviews. This is reflected in the prices of houses and apartments and in

comments made by people who participated in the community consultations e.g. *‘There was a time up to a few years ago when people from Dublin 4 and Dublin 6 would have no interest in Dublin 8 as a place to live. Now they are queueing up for any house or apartment in Dublin 8 which comes on the market’*.

It is likely that this pattern or trend will escalate in future years (as new hotels, restaurants, bars open up in The Liberties). However, there is a real concern that if market forces dictate future housing developments in The Liberties, local people and families with long associations with The Liberties will be priced out of the area and the houses and apartments which come on to the market will be bought by the highest bidder (who will probably be relatively affluent in order to afford deposit and mortgage). This will mean that the children of parents living in The Liberties will not all be able to remain living within the area if they wish to do so – they will simply not be able to afford the price of existing and new houses and apartments. In this context there is a real and urgent need for the Government and Dublin City Council (DCC) to deliver a large number of social and affordable homes over the next 10 years which would help to compensate for the loss of social housing over the last 10-15 years e.g. in St. Teresa’s Gardens the number of flats has been reduced from 360 to 54 with 10 out of 12 blocks of flats now demolished. If social housing stock is not replenished and increased it is likely that the character and spirit of The Liberties will be under severe threat since local people with long-established family roots in the area will not be able to remain living in The Liberties.

In order to maintain the current balances which exist within The Liberties, balances which received many favourable comments during the consultation process (i.e. balance between established residents and new residents, between Irish residents and non-Irish residents) a minimum of 600-700 new social and affordable housing units will need to be built in the area over the next 10 years²². This will serve to provide a balance to the proposed new private housing developments in places such as the former industrial buildings on the South Circular Road (i.e. Player Wills and Bailey Gibson) and St. James’s Gate and will help to ensure that people on-or-below the average industrial wage will be

²² This figure is based on views expressed by interviewees and respondents and is informed by the need to replenish the stock of social housing lost in the last 25 years and the additional social houses required to cope with future population growth.

able to afford to live within the area. It is a positive development that there are proposals for up to 500 social and affordable housing units at the 29 acre Regeneration Programme site at St. Teresa's Gardens and up to 100 social and affordable housing units at the DCC depot site at Marrowbone Lane. These two housing developments, if complemented by other similar developments, would go a long way towards meeting the social and affordable housing needs within the area and help to ensure that people who are financially poorer can remain living within the area. There has been no social or affordable housing built in The Liberties since 2009 (i.e. The Timberyard development).

4.3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE GREEN SPACES AND SPORTS PITCHES/FACILITIES

There have been a number of studies and analyses which have highlighted the lack of green spaces, parks, sports pitches, community gardens and allotments in The Liberties and surrounding areas. The 2015 report entitled 'Greening The Liberties' concluded that *'The Liberties has always been the poor relation to the Georgian part of the City that was arranged around spacious squares and wide streets. The urban form and structure of The Liberties is more organic and haphazard, reflecting its medieval origins and industrial functions. With the exception of St. Patrick's Park, The Liberties has not enjoyed the benefits of benevolent green space making on any significant scale'*. The report also stated that *'The Liberties is extremely deficient in quality green space'*. Accessible quality green space is provided at a rate of 0.7 square metres per person in The Liberties which is a stark contrast to an average of 49 square metres/person for the wider DCC area²³. In addition to the relative dearth of open green public spaces there is also an absence of sports pitches and facilities in the area. Research carried out by Sporting Liberties and Kevins GAA club has indicated that there is not a full-size playing field in the area for team sports such as Gaelic football, hurling, camogie, soccer and rugby and that a total of 31 teams located in The Liberties have to play their 'home' games outside of the area because there are no suitable pitches in The Liberties²⁴.

The relative lack of green spaces and sports pitches within The Liberties is a very clear gap and need within the area that needs to be filled at the earliest possible opportunity.

²³ Dublin City Council, *'The Liberties Greening Strategy'* (Dublin City Council, 2015)

²⁴ Hilliard M. 'Dublin's Liberties not throwing in the towel on sports facilities' (Irish Times, 14th May 2016)

It is not sustainable that The Liberties with a population size larger than Tralee or Mullingar would have very insufficient green spaces, public parks and sports pitches. There is a clear connection between participation in sports, leisure and recreational activities (in public parks and on pitches) on the one hand and healthy living, positive mental health and less likelihood of getting involved in criminal and antisocial activity on the other hand. There are a number of benefits to be derived from participation in sports and recreational activities – however, the levels of participation from people living in The Liberties (and especially young people) are significantly reduced and curtailed by the absence of green/public parks, playgrounds (for children and teenagers) and pitches.²⁵

It is recognised that some improvements have taken place in recent years e.g. Weaver Park play area, St. Audoen's Park. However, this only represents a small proportion of what needs to happen if The Liberties is to get its fair share of green spaces, parks, playgrounds, pitches, community gardens and allotments. There are plans and proposals for a new Sports Campus at St. Teresa's Gardens (which will incorporate full-size pitches for GAA, soccer, rugby), for two smaller pitches at the DCC depot at Marrowbone Lane and for a two acre park to be constructed on a DCC site at Bridgefoot Street. All efforts should be made to ensure that these proposed developments do all take place within the next 3-5 year period. If they do all come to fruition, this will serve to make a significant contribution to reducing the large deficit which currently exists between green/public parks and sporting facilities in The Liberties and these spaces and parks in other parts of Dublin City. It is estimated by DCC that in excess of 4 hectares (over 10 acres) of its lands in The Liberties will be developed for parks and playgrounds over the next few years²⁶.

4.4. IMPROVEMENTS IN THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE APPEARANCE OF THE LIBERTIES (PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS)

Over 300 of the people who participated in the community surveys and consultations referred to the poor state on the environment in The Liberties and surrounding areas. They mentioned the waste and rubbish which is dumped across the area; the absence of

²⁵ Hilliard M. 'Dublin's Liberties not throwing in the towel on sports facilities' (Irish Times, 14th May 2016)

²⁶ Dublin City Council 'Presentation on Proposals for Marrowbone Lane' (Dublin City Council, 2019)

bins within which rubbish could be deposited; the large amount of dog-poo which is regularly left by dog owners in the area; the poor appearance of many of the streets and shop fronts in The Liberties (which could benefit from more vibrancy and colour). There is a general sense that The Liberties could become a spectacular place to live with public realm improvements around more greenery, better use of derelict and redundant sites, more pedestrianisation and street improvement works on key streets in The Liberties. These public realm improvements have the capacity to transform The Liberties and to make it into one of the most attractive and iconic places to live on the island of Ireland.

Whilst it is an area steeped in history, stories and cultural capital, The Liberties remains an urban area with many physical place making and quality of life problems. There is a significant amount of dereliction and vacant sites across The Liberties and more so than in other quadrants within Dublin Inner City - there are far fewer derelict sites in the South East Inner City (Pearse Street, Ringsend), in the North West Inner City (Stoneybatter, Smithfield) and in the North East Inner City (Amiens Street, Talbot Street) than there are within The Liberties. On the basis of a spot check of The Liberties in September 2019 there were 8 derelict sites and 25 empty shops in Cork Street between Ardee Street (Intreo) and Dolphins Barn; 20 empty shops on Meath Street; 15 empty shops on James Street between Thomas Court (Arthurs Pub) and Watling Street²⁷. Many of the derelict sites and empty shops are eyesores and do not present a good image and appearance for The Liberties. With the emergence of new developments and new opportunities in The Liberties there have to be good possibilities of utilising vacant and redundant sites for more productive usages. There are particularly important and strategic sites which, if developed in a proper manner, have the potential to have a transformative impact on The Liberties - these are the Iveagh Markets, Newmarket Square and the old Mendicity Institute on Island Street.

Whilst it is recognised that public realm improvements have taken place in recent years (e.g. energy efficient street lighting, additional cycle parking, repairing street names, caring for small green spaces) there is a clear need to continue these improvements over the next number of years. In more particular terms there is a need to regenerate

²⁷ This spot check of derelict sites and vacant shops was undertaken by Stephen Rourke on 19th September 2019

and to green Cork Street, Meath Street and Francis Street. The area is severely under provided with high quality urban green space and this is compounded by the fact that most households live in apartments and small row houses with little or no private green space. An Irish Times article in July 2019 served to highlight the health advantages of green spaces in urban areas²⁸:

- * Encouraging tree canopies in public spaces may be especially beneficial. A 2015 study in Toronto, Canada, concluded an extra 10 street trees in a city block improved health and well-being outcomes comparable to an increase in annual income of \$10,000 or being seven years younger²⁹.
- * Having 11 additional trees decreases cardiometabolic conditions such as diabetes and this is equal to a \$20,000 pay increase (higher income is tied to better health). There is now a social justice argument for ensuring lower income neighbourhoods have enough tree cover.
- * Multiple factors are cited to explain the health benefits of trees. Greenness may improve heart health, for instance, by boosting physical activity, social interaction and air quality, while reducing stress and offering restoration from mental fatigue.³⁰

4.5. IMPROVEMENTS AROUND ISSUES CONCERNING TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND CAR PARKING

Whilst the levels of car ownership in The Liberties are relatively low (with 40% of households having a car compared to a Dublin City figure of 64% and a national figure of 84%)³¹ it is clear from those people who participated in the consultation process that issues around cars and traffic do pose problems and difficulties for many people living and working in The Liberties. Many of those who completed the surveys and who attended the community meetings referred to cars speeding through The Liberties and the dangers which this presents to local residents (and especially to children). There is a view that there should be more traffic restrictions in the area. In addition, some

²⁸ King A. 'The Health Advantages of Green Spaces in Open Areas', Irish Times (Dublin, 25th July 2019)

²⁹ Kardan O. and Gozdyra P., Neighbourhood Green Space and Health in a Large Urban Centre, Scientific Reports 5 Article No. 116110 (Nature Research, London, 2015)

³⁰ King A., The Health Advantages of Green Spaces in Open Areas: Irish Times (Dublin, 25th July 2019)

³¹ Central Statistics Office, Census of Population 2016: Profile of Electoral Divisions (Dublin, Central Statistics Office, 2017)

consideration should be given to the pedestrianisation of certain areas of The Liberties (e.g. parts of Meath Street).

The issue of car parking, or the lack of car parking, also recurred on a regular basis during the consultation process. It is evident that one of the consequences of the redevelopment and regeneration of The Liberties in recent years has been the large increase in the number of cars/vans of construction workers which are now parked on a daily basis on residential roads and streets in The Liberties. For example, there are two major student accommodations centres being built on Cork Street and the construction of 54 new housing units at St. Teresa's Gardens – these projects have combined to make the availability of car parking a very significant issue for many people living in The Liberties (who, on many occasions, cannot park their cars on their own street). This issue of construction traffic is likely to be an issue for the next 10 years in The Liberties as many new building projects are likely to be commencing within this period of time across The Liberties.

There is a clear need to address issues concerning traffic management and car parking in the area. This will require an area-wide strategy rather than merely looking at individual streets and roads. There is a physical connectedness between the various parts of The Liberties (i.e. the area which runs from the River Liffey to the Grand Canal and from Bride Street to St. James Hospital) and knock-on effects from what happens to traffic management and car parking in particular parts of the area. Some more consideration should be given, for example, to extending the Resident Permit/Pay-and-Display car parking arrangements (i.e. where residents have parking permits and non-residents pay for their car parking) across The Liberties – it is recognised that this can only take place with the support of local residents within individual roads and streets. There should also be more encouragement for other modes of transport apart from cars given the close proximity of The Liberties to the City Centre of Dublin. Footpaths should be improved and widened for pedestrians and there should be more Dublin Bikes stations across The Liberties for cyclists.

4.6. THE NEED TO TACKLE CRIMINALITY, DRUG DEALING AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

There is considerable concern about the levels of criminality and anti-social behaviour in The Liberties. People who participated in the consultation process referenced open drug dealing, violence and aggression, theft and pick pockets, public order offences (e.g. urinating and defecating on streets), children being used as drug couriers, public injecting of drugs. There was a high profile gun attack in October 2019 on an Italian tourist at Longs Place close to the Guinness Storehouse. These criminal and anti-social activities reflect very poorly on The Liberties and, in the view of many people, make it an unsafe place to live and to work. Some survey respondents said that they feel particularly threatened and vulnerable in the evening time and in the dark when the streets are quieter, the tourist destinations are closed and there is less passive surveillance. However, there is a view among survey/interview participants that this situation might change over the next few years with the establishment of new hotels and other initiatives which might result in the evening/night-time economy in The Liberties beginning to thrive more on account of the larger number of people staying within the area.

There is a need to improve the current situation concerning criminal and anti-social behaviour in The Liberties. Survey respondents and interviewees clearly believe that the drugs crisis is the one single factor which is the cause of many of the problems within The Liberties. People are stealing in order to buy drugs, people are more likely to be aggressive and out-of-control when they are on drugs, the open injecting of drugs (into all parts of one's body) on main streets in The Liberties is a shocking sight for many people, the drugs paraphernalia (needles, syringes, residue of heroin etc.) are casually discarded in sites beside schools and churches. The drugs situation is, to a certain extent, exacerbated by the number of units/centres for homeless people within The Liberties and the problems which some homeless people have in relation to drug use and addiction. The drugs crisis requires both a preventative approach (e.g. providing positive alternatives for children and young people) and a care/therapeutic approach (i.e. development of more support services for drug users).

The drugs crisis, and attendant issues around criminality and anti-social behaviour, is particularly serious within those parts of The Liberties which are experiencing the highest levels of socio-economic disadvantage. It is the residents from these communities (places like Oliver Bond House, Basin Lane Flats, St. Teresa's Gardens) who said during the consultation process that they feel very unsafe at times in the area in which they live. They are often more exposed to open drug dealing, casual violence related to the drugs problem and out-of-control young people than people in more affluent parts of The Liberties. It is very clear that there needs to be a much more significant investment in relevant services (e.g. youth services, community services, drug treatment and rehabilitation services) within the more disadvantaged areas in The Liberties. At present there is under-investment or a complete lack of investment – in Oliver Bond House, for example, there is not a single youth worker for a community with 380 housing units and close to 1,000 residents. As well as investing in services, there also needs to be a much more active and visible policing presence across The Liberties (and especially within areas where the drugs problem is at its most serious).

'In the past year I've witnessed a man standing outside NCAD with a needle in his groin for over an hour, a man in a wheelchair urinating on a shop window, a man with all I can describe as wild eyes stumbling down the street with every inch of his face bleeding and cut open, more than 5 people asleep on the side of the street with urine running down the street under them, countless piles of faeces some walked into and dragged down the footpath and some of which were definitely not canine, gangs of addicts cooking and smoking something in doorway at the side of NCAD, along with countless people drinking and smoking marijuana openly on the street.'

Extract from completed survey form

4.7. THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE COMMUNITY BUILDINGS/FACILITIES AND CREATIVE/CULTURAL SPACES

There is a dearth of community centres and creative spaces within The Liberties. The lack of these centres/spaces makes it much more difficult for local residents and others to participate in communal and collective activities with other people – there are simply not enough spaces or venues in The Liberties for these activities to take place. This has

resulted in situations, as described by people who participated in the consultation process, where young people are hanging out on the streets with nothing to do (and often getting involved in harmful and destructive activities) and where older people do not have social outlets or places to meet with other older people. Many people referred to the closure of St. Nicholas of Myra Parish Centre at Carman's Hall a number of years ago (it is now used as a facility for homeless people) and the ways in which the Parish Centre had been used on a regular basis by over 50 different groups and organisations (including youth groups and older peoples groups). This Parish Centre has not been replaced by any other community facility and has resulted in a situation where The Liberties does not have the type of multi-purpose community facility as exists in Stoneybatter (i.e. Aughrim Street Parish Centre) and in the south east Inner City (i.e. St. Andrews Resource Centre).

Whilst Donore Youth and Community Centre on Donore Avenue does provide some community spaces and facilities it is limited in its opening hours and it is not centrally located in the heart of The Liberties. A new multi-purpose, substantial community centre/building is required in The Liberties which has a population of 24,778 people, a population which will exceed 30,000 in 5-10 years' time when the large vacant sites within the area are fully developed³². As well as new housing units being constructed, it is also very important to give adequate attention to the development of a community infrastructure which will provide buildings/spaces for people to meet each other, to socialise, to acquire knowledge, to learn new skills. This community infrastructure also needs to create spaces for creative and cultural activities to take place. The Liberties is a very creative and enterprising district (and has been over the centuries) and is home to Ireland's premier third level art and design college (NCAD). Yet at the same time there is an absence of spaces for visual artists to display their work and for performing artists to perform their works and to entertain other people.

It is most important that community facilities/buildings and creative spaces are factored into future Development Plans and Action Plans for The Liberties. In addition to the loss of St. Nicholas of Myra Parish Centre as a community facility, The Liberties has also lost

³² For example, it is anticipated that the development of the St. Teresa's Gardens site will result in an additional 5,000 people living in the area.

St. Anthony's Hall, the Tivoli Theatre and the Rupert Guinness Theatre in recent times. If The Liberties is to truly regenerate and rejuvenate itself, it is essential that these community and creative spaces are replaced in one form or another. In addition to providing opportunities for local people to meet, to socialise and to entertain, new community and cultural spaces would also enable more activities and performances to take place within The Liberties. This would then have economic and commercial benefits since it would encourage people such as tourists and students to remain within The Liberties in the evenings rather than going into the City Centre (people such as the 1 million people each year who walk through The Liberties to go to the Guinness Storehouse – the other 800,000 visitors use buses and other forms of transport). In relation to creative spaces for visual artists and designers there should be possibilities, within existing and new developments, for vacant shop units to be allocated as places where artists and designers can display and sell their goods and products (and perhaps live above these shop units) – in September 2019 there were 60 vacant shop units in Cork Street, Meath Street and James Street.³³

'The lack of event spaces, creative hubs, artists studios, design workshops, late-night venues, clubs and affordable independent retail spaces means there is little space left for experimentation, innovation and creative expression. These types of unstructured gathering spaces are where the seeds of contemporary culture are sown. They are vital if we want Dublin to have a unique cultural identity that will set it apart as a great city to visit, live and do business in. Without them we are on a slippery slope to becoming a homogenous and bland capital city.'

Una Mullally, Irish Times 22/07/19

4.8. MORE ACTIVITIES, SERVICES AND PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

There are only four paid community based youth workers covering The Liberties which has a population of 24,778 (of whom 10,519 are under the age of 30 years). In relation to the voluntary youth work sector, the majority of voluntary youth clubs that existed in

³³ Based on spot check of derelict sites and vacant shop units carried out by Stephen Rourke on 19th September 2019

The Liberties 20 years ago are no longer in existence for a variety of different reasons. These youth clubs, and other groups which cater for young people, that have closed include Oliver Bond Youth Club, Iveagh Trust Youth Club, Nicholas of Myra Parish Centre Youth Club, Liberties Music and Drama Group, Merchants Quay Youth Club, OLV Youth Club. There are only a small number of youth clubs left in The Liberties and the absence of paid youth workers and voluntary youth clubs has resulted in a situation where there are few organised activities for children and young people and only a limited number of places where they can go and hang out with other young people. This has resulted in a situation where there are far more teenagers and young adults out on the streets and perhaps engaging in anti-social behaviour than would be the case if there were more community centres, youth centres and youth projects in existence within The Liberties. As one interviewee said *'The root cause of anti-social behaviour is boredom'*.

Over 400 of those surveyed and interviewed during the consultation process are of the view that more youth centres and youth facilities should be established within The Liberties in order to provide positive and constructive alternatives and options for young people. There is a particular need to focus State resources on children and young people who are living in the more disadvantaged areas of The Liberties where parents often do not have resources to be able to pay for their child(ren) to attend youth projects and youth activities. It is recognised that City of Dublin Youth Services Board is currently carrying out an audit of youth services within The Liberties and the wider South Inner City area and it is anticipated that the outcomes and result from this audit will serve to demonstrate the serious disparity which currently exists in relation to youth services within The Liberties i.e. four paid youth workers and a small number of youth clubs for a population which is close to 25,000 people. Youth services and community services also need to be funded on a long-term sustainable basis (much of the current funding is one-off and/or only provided on a year-to-year basis without any guarantee of ongoing funding).

There were a number of references in completed survey forms and at community meetings to the need for intensive outreach work to take place with some young people who are living in The Liberties and are actively involved in drug taking, drug dealing and anti-social behaviour. The large majority of these young people are not engaged in any

form of employment, education or training and are often very removed from the services which could support and assist them in creating a better and brighter future for themselves.³⁴ People referenced the TRY (Targeted Response to Youth) project which is operating in Donore Avenue and which has succeeded in engaging with up to 20 young men who had been identified as 'at risk' and 'difficult to reach', who were not accessing services or labour market measures and who were involved in drugs and anti-social behaviour. Through using outreach workers who operate in a person-centred way with the TRY participants, the TRY project has succeeded in enabling most of the participants to make noticeable and positive progress over the last year or so. The TRY project could act as a basis or a model for similar intensive outreach work with vulnerable young people to take place in other flats complexes in The Liberties which are experiencing high levels of drug dealing, intimidation, criminality and anti-social behaviour.

4.9. STRONGER COMMUNITY COHESION AND INTEGRATION

The Liberties would be much improved and in a better place if all of the various agencies, organisations, groups and businesses operating and delivering services in The Liberties worked more closely together into the future. This type of co-operation and collaboration would build upon the work carried out by the Liberties Business Forum (established through Dublin City Council in 2014) over the last number of years. There is however a need to broaden co-operation and collaboration within The Liberties in order to incorporate not-for-profit and community/voluntary sector interests as well as businesses and large employers within the area. Many of those consulted during the process of producing the Community Profile and Needs Assessment of The Liberties mentioned the ways in which the area has been fragmented, disjointed and divided for many decades with different groups and organisations competing against one another. This had not worked in the best interests of The Liberties and there needs to be much more unity, solidarity and a shared vision of what The Liberties might look like in future years.

There is also a need for more integration and common understanding between the various groups and individuals which comprise The Liberties – the long established

³⁴ The Health Research Board estimates that only 14% of drug users are in employment (Health Research Board, National Drug Treatment Reporting System, Drug Data 2012-2018).

residents, the newer permanent residents who have bought property in the area (as one interviewee said *'We bought our house 25 years ago and we are still considered blow-ins'*), the non-Irish (with The Liberties having twice the population of people born outside Ireland as the comparative national figure)³⁵, the students, the tourists. Although these individuals and groups currently occupy the same geographical district (i.e. The Liberties and surrounding areas), there is only a limited amount of integration and opportunities to mix, to mingle, to socialise and to get to know each other. As one interviewee said *'We need to move beyond mere co-existence into a more integrated and connected series of communities in The Liberties'*. In relation to greater integration there is also a high level of interest from some of the regional and national organisations based in The Liberties to play a more active role in the community in which they are based – these organisations include NCAD, St. James Hospital, St. Patrick's Mental Health Services and the Digital Hub.

There is strong support, from the majority of people who mentioned this issue, for setting up appropriate and effective inter-agency structures to bring together the various organisations and groups from the public/statutory sector, the community and voluntary sector, the health sector, the educational sector and the business/commercial sector. If people are clear about the geographical definition of The Liberties and surrounding areas and about what needs to happen to make The Liberties a better place in which to live and work (as articulated in this report which pulls together the views and ideas of 532 people), it makes sense to have unitary and co-ordinated structures in order to progress and implement the key actions and initiatives which need to take place over the next 10 years. This would involve the establishment of a Task Force or an Implementation Board for The Liberties. These types of structures would need to be cognisant of existing networks which already exist e.g. Liberties Business Forum and CORN (Community Organisations and Residents Network) which is a network of over 50 local groups in The Liberties. Any new inter-agency structures would need to liaise closely with these networks and build upon some of the co-operation which already takes place within the area.

³⁵ Central Statistics Office. Census of Population 2016: Profile of Electoral Divisions (Dublin, Central Statistics Office, 2017)

4.10. DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY

There will be very significant economic and employment opportunities within The Liberties over the next 10 years. The New Children's Hospital, the Regeneration Programmes at St. Teresa's Gardens and St. James's Gate, the new hotels and the new student accommodation centres will bring people with spending power into The Liberties. It is important that new people who come into The Liberties (either on a long-term basis or a transient basis) are encouraged to remain within the area and to spend their money in the area (rather than going into places such as Temple Bar and Grafton Street). The additional footfall and spending power which The Liberties will experience over the next 10 years should stimulate many economic and enterprise opportunities within the area. It is hoped that this will help to create the environment and the sustainability which will enable The Liberties to become a more lively and vibrant area in the evenings and at weekends – many people who participated in the consultation process commented upon the lack of economic activity and footfall in The Liberties in the evenings and on Sundays.

In considering future economic growth, interviewees and survey respondents felt that it is important to maintain the tradition of street/market vendors and independent retailers that have characterised The Liberties over the centuries. The Liberties should not become gentrified and bland to the extent that all available retail units are taken over by the type of multinational shops that occupy places such as Grafton Street and Henry Street. The large majority of people who discussed this matter in the consultations felt that this was not going to happen, that the fabric and heritage/culture of The Liberties was not going to fall apart and that there would always be an independent, entrepreneurial spirit within the area. In this context, there is a certain level of disappointment and anger that the markets and enterprises which occupied Newmarket Square had to leave this superb location (which has always been associated with markets) to make way for a re-development project which has not yet taken place. People also referred to other cities and to areas within these cities which had become trendy and popular whilst, at the same time, retaining their character and their traditions. There is a particularly important role to play for Dublin City Council (as the main planning body for Dublin City) in ensuring that there is balanced development

within The Liberties and that economic opportunities continue to be created and promoted for local people and families who have lived in The Liberties for many decades/generations.

There should be ample space in The Liberties for the new businesses who wish to set up within the area and for existing businesses who may wish to expand and/or re-locate their businesses. Earlier references have been made in this report to the 60 empty shops and retail units in Cork Street, Meath Street and James Street (25 in Cork Street, 20 in Meath Street and 15 in James Street)³⁶. There should also be enormous economic opportunities and possibilities when the Iveagh Markets and Newmarket Square are re-opened and when the regeneration plans for St. Teresa's Gardens and St. James's Gate are realised and implemented. There is no reason why the independent retail and market trading sector in The Liberties cannot be sustained and grown significantly into the future. The development of this independent retail and market trading sector should also endeavour to create opportunities for artists and designers (perhaps connected to NCAD) to produce their goods and sell these goods from shops located within The Liberties. This could well prove to be a more pleasurable and authentic shopping experience for tourists and others who visit and pass through the area than the experience of going to shopping districts in the City Centre of Dublin which consist of the same types of shops which exist in many other cities across the world.

'I would love to see all of the stalls back on the streets. It is about time they re-opened the other markets we had around The Liberties (e.g. Dublin Food Co-op and The Green Door in Newmarket Square). I wish people could shop in local, family run businesses to help pay someone's mortgage rather than some CEO's holiday home on some island I have never heard of'

Words of local resident

³⁶ Based on spot checks of derelict sites and vacant shop units carried out by Stephen Rourke on 19th September 2019

4.11. CONCLUSIONS

After many decades of dereliction and neglect, and a strong focus on other parts of Dublin City (e.g. Docklands, Smithfield, Ballymun), it now appears as if The Liberties and surrounding areas could become perhaps the most important single component of urban regeneration in Dublin City over the next 10 years. A number of interviewees are of the opinion that there is simply not the same amount of land available in the other three quadrants of Dublin Inner City (i.e. South East, North East, North West) as in the South West Inner City (which incorporates The Liberties). When fully developed the 29 acre site at St. Teresa's Gardens, the 12 acre site at St. James's Gate, the Dublin City Council lands (at Marrowbone Lane and Bridgefoot Street), Newmarket Square, the Iveagh Markets and other developments have the potential to provide over 5,000 housing units, thousands of bed spaces and other facilities for students, a new Sports Campus for the South Inner City, new parks, new playgrounds, major green improvements to streetscapes and the public realm, new opportunities for street traders and independent retailers, new community facilities and creative spaces for artists, designers and performers.

Whilst all of these outcomes are eminently achievable, and plans are at an advanced stage in relation to some of them, it is also very important that future developments in The Liberties should be fair and balanced. There needs to be the right balances, for example, between the more permanent residents of The Liberties and the more transient residents (with a clear focus on providing housing for long-term residents); between the land being allocated for housing and the land allocated for sporting and recreational activities; between the support being provided to existing businesses (including street/market traders) and new businesses moving into the area; between the clear need to provide more community/creative facilities and spaces and the allocation of space/land for direct commercial purposes.

It should be possible to strike these balances and to embrace and integrate the traditional Liberties and the new/emerging Liberties – this will, however, require key organisations, agencies and institutions to work more closely together (perhaps through a Task Force for The Liberties). There is also an undoubted need to concentrate more

resources on those parts of The Liberties which are most disadvantaged and which have borne the brunt of issues around criminality, drug dealing, anti-social behaviour, educational disadvantage and long-term unemployment. These areas have to be part of the positive outcomes, achievements and rejuvenation which is likely to take place in The Liberties over the next 10 years.

5. KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Whilst there are many reasons to be optimistic about the future of The Liberties, there are also reasons as to why future developments might not go in the right direction. These reasons include an upsurge in property prices (which will make home ownership and home rental unaffordable for many people); an absence of focus and prioritisation on community facilities, youth services, creative/cultural spaces, playgrounds, parks and sporting facilities; and the lack of 'joined-up thinking' between key organisations in the public/statutory, private/business and community/voluntary sectors. However, if these issues and challenges can be adequately addressed, there is no particular reason as to why The Liberties cannot become one of the most vibrant districts in Ireland in which to live – which will provide many opportunities for employment, training, education, socialisation, inclusion and integration.

This section of the report on the Community Profile and Needs Assessment for The Liberties and surrounding areas aims to set out the main issues and challenges for this district over the next 10 years, in order for it to reach its full potential in this period of time. These issues and challenges need to be addressed in a real and meaningful manner if the district is to achieve the goal of balanced development – a goal which will incorporate social/affordable housing, community/creative facilities, parks/playgrounds and sports facilities as well as current plans for student accommodation centres, hotels and private apartments and housing. In order to achieve the required balances in the development of The Liberties over the next 10 years, this section of the report will focus on the following issues and challenges:

- **Concerns about the over development of The Liberties**
- **Maintaining the right balance between the old Liberties and the new Liberties**
- **Bringing derelict and disused buildings and sites into usage**
- **Improvements in the environment and appearance of The Liberties**
- **Development of shared vision and understandings for the future**
- **The need for local residents to feel more empowered and involved**
- **Strengthening the capacity and effectiveness of the community sector**

- **Integration of the various communities and groups in The Liberties**
- **The future of homelessness services within The Liberties**
- **Issues relating to drugs and community safety**

5.2. CONCERNS ABOUT THE OVER DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIBERTIES

There have been many discussions and press articles in recent years about the concerns which some people have about the over development of The Liberties³⁷. In more particular terms, people are worried about the number of student accommodation centres and hotels which are being built within The Liberties and the impact which these developments will have upon local families being able to continue to live within The Liberties and upon the development of community facilities, cultural spaces, green areas and sports pitches. If all of the available lands are to be used for student accommodation, hotels and private apartments/houses, this will leave no space for social/affordable housing, for community facilities and parks/pitches. Earlier references have been made in this report to the significant increase in student accommodation centres (from 0 to 7) and in hotels (from 0 to 3) within The Liberties area which have been developed or will be developed over the next 3 years. This has served to create some sense of foreboding that the area will be taken over by student housing, hotels and other commercial/business concerns.

It is also important to realise that much of the building works for student accommodation centres and hotels have taken place on derelict/unused sites within The Liberties. These student accommodation centres and hotels have not displaced existing residents – as one interviewee said *‘they are helping to fill in eyesores and empty sites within the area’*. They have also assisted in creating employment (e.g. long term unemployed people have been employed in student accommodation centres; there are over 250 people employed in the Hyatt Centric hotel in The Coombe which has been built on a vacant site which was derelict for many years). International research would indicate that three of the most important factors in the rejuvenation and regeneration

³⁷ Fitzgerald, C. ‘Fears that The Liberties will Become Another Temple Bar’, The Journal (Dublin, 20th March 2018)

D’Arcy, R. ‘Liberties Outraged as Hotel Gets Go-Ahead’, Dublin Gazette (Dublin, 30th May 2019)

Thomas, C. ‘Concerns of Over-Development in Dublin 8 as Docklands-Style Makeover Proposed, The Journal (Dublin, 31st August 2019)

of major cities is the influx of students, the development of new and innovative enterprises; and the emergence of new socialisation, community and creative spaces.³⁸ The view of survey respondents is that there is no particular reason as to why the new opportunities being created by student accommodation centres and hotels in The Liberties cannot be accompanied by community and creative facilities and spaces.

‘The last thing that Dublin 8 needs is another hotel. Dublin 8 has been saturated with hotels, aparthotels and luxury student accommodation. What the area needs is sustainable community housing and green spaces’.

Words of one interviewee

‘But naturally, in a time of acute pressure in the housing market, as well as the increasing desire for people to live close to and within the city centre, an area such as The Liberties and wider Dublin 8 should be able to accommodate greater levels of residential development. This is particularly the case given the extent of unused and vacant land in the area, and large swathes of some streets – for example Cork Street – where regeneration is much needed’.

Comments of one contributor to the consultation process

The new reorganised space allows a real opportunity for regeneration; for new connections through the lands; for the creation of a quality public realm and quality urban edge as street frontage both within and on the perimeter of the lands. It will provide a new community space and retail/café uses at ground floor level revitalising the Marrowbone Lane area as well as allocating a new area of green space adjacent to St. Catherine’s. This space will allow for two new all-weather pitches adjacent to existing supporting facilities, as sought by the Liberties Greening Strategy. The Council has made significant progress in implementing the Greening Strategy since the adoption of the current City Development Plan - Weaver Park has been developed and is open; an upgraded St. Audoen’s is almost ready to open; Bridgefoot Street park is being progressed; and a new full size GAA pitch and park is a core part of the planning application being prepared for St. Teresa’s Gardens.

³⁸ Jones P, Evans J (2013): Urban Regeneration in the United Kingdom (London, SAGE, 2013); UNESCO (2016): Culture. Urban. Future - Global Report on Sustainable Urban Development

There are many competing demands on the use of publicly owned land in this area, not all of which can be reconciled. The need to provide new housing for the next generation of families and people within the Inner City has to be balanced with the need for green space, and the balance proposed by the variation seeks to ensure that new housing and community facilities (indoor and outdoor) are delivered. For this reason, the Council has taken the opportunity at a nearby location to include in the Regeneration Plan for St. Teresa's Gardens a full size new pitch as part of a new park of 2.28ha suitable for GAA/soccer (as this is a much larger and physically cohesively shaped site). This will be directly served by upgraded changing and training facilities in an expanded DCC owned community sports facility.

Dublin City Council report on its lands at Marrowbone Lane

What we need to examine is how to retain even small parts of Dublin's character, and implement some kind of system whereby spaces with value beyond the monetary cannot be threatened wholesale.

Una Mulally, Irish Times, 16/09/19

5.3. MAINTAINING THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN THE OLD LIBERTIES AND THE NEW LIBERTIES

It is most important, at all costs and in all events, to preserve the history, the heritage and the culture of The Liberties and surrounding areas. This does not only apply to buildings of historical importance (e.g. St. Patrick's Cathedral, Christchurch Cathedral, St. Catherine's church) but it also relates to features of community life which have been part of the area for centuries – such as street/market trading, creativity/the arts and a strong entrepreneurial spirit. The preservation of the heritage of the area should also take into account sites of historical importance which are not well known and are not on the normal tourist trail e.g. the Quaker Burial Ground at Cork Street. There is a concern that these facets of community life could be swept away with all of the new developments. This cannot be allowed to happen and it should be possible for the old/traditional to live side-by-side with the new/modern.

The challenge is to hold onto the history and the culture of the area and enable local families to remain living in the area whilst, at the same time, embracing the new

developments, new jobs and new opportunities coming onstream over the next 10 years; and to merge the old and the new in a coherent and integrated manner. This type of challenge has been successfully achieved in many other cities across the world where neighbourhoods and communities of historical and cultural importance have been rejuvenated with new buildings, new facilities and new services. Indeed it could be argued that The Liberties went through a period of serious decline and dereliction between the 1950s and the end of the twentieth century and that it really needed new investments and new projects in order to reverse the seemingly never-ending decline being experienced by The Liberties between 1950 and 2000 (a key development was the opening of the Guinness Storehouse in 2000 which has brought 20 million people into The Liberties over the last 19 years).

As well as the large historical tourist attractions (e.g. cathedrals) it is also important to retain other places of relevance and importance which are now an integral part of life within The Liberties (these include Little Flower Penny Dinners, the Mendicity Institute, Alice Leahy Trust). Another part of The Liberties which has to be retained in any new developments is the market culture of the area (both street markets and indoor markets). Markets are a huge source of interest to locals/tourists and a generator of income/jobs in other cities (e.g. Spitalfields in London, St. George's Market in Belfast) and there is no reason why The Liberties could not become the markets leader/capital in Dublin City (especially with the changes taking place in other market quarters such as Smithfield and Moore Street). In relation to new developments which should not be retained there was strong disapproval during the consultation process of Airbnbs. In one long established street it is estimated that 7 out of 47 houses are used as Airbnbs. Unless Airbnbs are controlled and current legislation is enforced there is a real fear that Airbnbs will have an increasingly disruptive and negative impact on The Liberties. This is clearly one aspect of the 'new' which will not blend well with the 'old' within The Liberties over the next 10 years.

'Markets should continue to thrive and remain a vital part of local life. In London, 15 markets have benefited from £12.4 million funding and there is an integrated markets policy. Markets can become anchors for entire city

districts, promoting job opportunities, entrepreneurship, active public spaces and community health.

Market Cities nurture inclusive collaboration, partnerships, and collective action between market operators, vendors, government officials, grassroots community groups, and non-profit partners to advocate for the many benefits that markets bring to cities.

In terms of market types, some communities have large central market halls that act as hubs for the region and function as great multi-use destinations. Others have multiple, substantial neighbourhood markets, both indoors or outdoors, that sell all the day-to-day necessities. Some cities have a combination of farmers markets, produce carts, flea markets, artisan markets, and other small-scale distribution points. In short, there are as many different kinds of Market Cities as there are markets themselves.

Steve Davis, 'Exploring the Potential of Market Cities: Lessons from London'

'The heritage of an historic city quarter sits side by side with dynamic media and tech hubs and highly respected medical and education centres. This is an area of iconic brands, evocative place names, creative energy and engaging architecture where Old Dublin meets New Dublin'

Liberties Business Area Improvement Initiative

'In The Liberties there is a clear need for more bars, restaurants, cafes and things that draw a diverse range of people by day and, more importantly by night. This will have a rising tide effect benefiting everybody. Meath Street is vibrant and buzzing by day but all of the shops close at 5.00 pm leaving only a handful of places open on the street. This is not very inviting on a cold winter's evening. So yeah, some more evening time establishments would certainly help.'

John Mohan, Luckys Bar

It is a lopsided development without much consideration for culture or community. I think that The Liberties is old enough and strong enough to absorb the changes and maintain its identity.

Words of one interviewee

'I moved into The Liberties 25 years ago and was told then that there was going to be massive gentrification and that the heart would be torn out of the historic and traditional Liberties by a huge influx of new people. This has not happened and The Liberties is still as gritty, traditional, grounded and as full of character as it has ever been'.

Words of one interviewee

'The Liberties will be a centre for artisan food production, quality neighbourhood shopping, distinctive independent retailing and a lively café, pub and restaurant scene'.

Liberties Business Forum, 2019

'There is no denying the State's shameful social, economic and environmental neglect of the people and the landscape of The Liberties in the decades since industrial decline set in in the 1950s. This neglect has been compounded in recent decades by the State's indifference to the community's interests and concerns as both State and private capital have again turned their attention to The Liberties'.

Brid Smith, People Before Profit

5.4. BRINGING DERELICT AND DISUSED BUILDINGS AND SITES INTO USAGE

Whilst there are many disused and derelict buildings and sites in The Liberties there are concerns about how long it will take to get these buildings/sites developed and brought into productive use. There is a genuine fear that by the time real work begins on these buildings and sites Ireland might be in the throes of a national or worldwide recession when there will be little money to build any type of significant structure. People have memories of 2007 and 2008 when ventures such as the regeneration of St. Teresa's Gardens and the re-development of the Iveagh Markets were ready to commence –

then the global crash/recession took place and, more than 10 years later, there is still no building work taking place at the Iveagh Markets and the building work on the first 54 housing units at St. Teresa's Gardens only began in January 2019. As one interviewee said *'Most economic cycles last for about 7-8 years and if the current upturn in the economy began in 2014 or so, this will finish in 2022 and we could be back to the bad old times again'*. This type of comment, which was also reiterated by other people who participated in the consultation process, emphasises the importance of moving along projects and initiatives for The Liberties at a fairly rapid pace.

In more particular terms, people talked about the Iveagh Markets (closed since 1997); Newmarket Square (that was home to cherished ventures such as the Dublin Food Co-op and Green Door which had to close to make way for a regeneration project which still has not taken place); St. Teresa's Gardens (where there has been a Regeneration Board since 2001, yet building work only commenced in 2019); and the public realm, streetscape and parklands developments which have been talked about for many years (and may be about to enter a more active phase with streetscape improvements of key streets in The Liberties and the new park on a two acre site at Bridgefoot Street). Mechanisms should be put in place through which valuable assets such as the Iveagh Markets have to be developed within a certain period of time or they are reclaimed, in one form or another, by the State (perhaps through Dublin City Council). The Liberties is only going to reach its full potential and have the capacity to accommodate all of the various interests (long established residents, new residents, students, tourists, artists, performers, homeless people etc.) if major progress is made on key infrastructural projects (such as the ones mentioned earlier in this paragraph). Hence the need to hold people to account (perhaps through Action Plans and an Inter-agency Task Force) to ensure that important projects and initiatives are progressed and implemented within a reasonable period of time.

'The historic marketplace of Newmarket is undergoing dramatic change, rapidly becoming a new destination for visitors to the area. Long appreciated for its regular markets, the arrival of Teeling Whiskey Distillery in 2015 added a new dimension to the square, and coincided with the redevelopment of various vacant sites and former industrial sheds in the area. Dublin City

Council, together with Urban Agency architects, now proposes to radically redesign Newmarket and its adjoining streets, creating a pedestrianised space at the heart of the square and improving pavements, street lighting, street planting and other features. The project received planning permission in Summer 2017 and is now subject to detailed design. Meanwhile a number of privately-owned sites around the public space have begun to redevelop as apartments, offices and for leisure uses.'

Liberties Business Forum

5.5. IMPROVEMENTS IN THE ENVIRONMENT AND APPEARANCE OF THE LIBERTIES

Local people are generally very proud of the fact that they live in The Liberties and they are clearly aware of the heritage and the history which is associated with The Liberties. Yet, at the same time, many of the people who participated in the consultation process were very critical of the state of the environment and the general appearance of the area. Negative comments included the following: many parts of the area are physically oppressive with no greenery or shrubbery; some of the footpaths are in poor shape and are dangerous for people with disabilities and children in buggies; there is inadequate seating within the area for people who wish to take a little break and relax; there are not enough rubbish bins with the result that there is a lot of rubbish just dumped and strewn across the area; there are many ugly and unattractive eyesores and derelict sites (although a number of these have now been developed as hotels and student accommodation centres); there is a lack of colour and vibrancy in many of the shopfronts and retail units; the living environment in many parts of The Liberties is not pleasant with some areas being described as mean and ugly (e.g. parts of Cork Street); the large volumes of construction traffic in some parts of the areas have impacted badly on roads, footpaths and on traffic levels in the area; the closure of allotments and community gardens that were so important to many people living in The Liberties.

Large parts of the Liberties area are of low urban landscape quality. During the late 19th to early 20th century condemned tenements were pulled down and old industrial premises cleared to make way for Local Authority flats - such as Bridgefoot Street, Pimlico and Chamber Street. The widening of roads

also had a detrimental impact. The cumulative effect being the disruption of the historic streetscape of fine grain building frontages and the loss of the human scale of enclosure.

Tree coverage in The Liberties is sparse and good quality street trees are only found in a few small areas notably: Gray Street and Reginald Street, along the South Quays, Cornmarket and the fountain at James Street. There are approximately 1,200 trees in The Liberties area equating to a canopy coverage of less than 5% of the plan area.

Greening the Liberties

There is no particular reason why The Liberties could not be developed into a much more attractive and beautiful area in which to live and work. It should be relatively easy and straightforward, and should not cost an enormous amount of money, to plant loads of trees and shrubs to green and to brighten up the area; to provide more seating for people walking around the area; to have more rubbish bins; to carry out public realm improvements on some of the main streets in The Liberties; and to repair the roads and the footpaths after the construction of buildings/facilities has finished and this construction traffic has left the area. It is also anticipated that public money for these environmental and public realm improvements to The Liberties would be matched (to a certain extent) by contributions from businesses operating within the area – it is also in their interests to have a bright, vibrant, clean and attractive area from which they can run their businesses. Changes which have been suggested and proposed could make a significant positive contribution within a relatively short period – when a major tree planting programme takes place, when shopfronts are brighter and more colourful, when Bridgefoot Park opens up, when there are more outdoor seats and bins. These could all combine to make a substantial and noticeable improvement to the local environment and the attractiveness and appearance of The Liberties.

5.6. DEVELOPMENT OF SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE LIBERTIES

There were numerous references in the interviews and consultations which took place between May 2019 and September 2019 to the ways in which The Liberties had been divided and fragmented over the last number of decades with communities not working in close co-operation with each other in pursuit of the greater, common good of the

overall area. There was a view that part of this was due to a lack of definition of the geographical area being covered since there are differences between Dublin 8, the South Inner City, the South West Inner City and The Liberties. Sometimes these definitions are used interchangeably and it would be helpful if there was a common agreed definition of the area to be covered by any Action Plan or by a multi-agency Task Force for the area. People who participated in the consultation process seem satisfied with the geographical boundaries used in this report – from the River Liffey to the north, the Grand Canal to the south, Bride Street to the east and St. James Hospital to the west. If this definition is accepted, it could form the basis for a stronger shared vision and set of aspirations and hopes for the area.

The development of a shared vision will also require more co-ordination and collaboration between residents, statutory agencies, community and voluntary sector groups and organisations, businesses and local elected representatives. In the first instance, the coming together of these various interests would assist in developing a common/shared understanding and perhaps a position or strategy concerning the significant issues around key issues and questions for The Liberties into the future – key questions such as ‘what do we mean by balanced development?’, ‘how can we ensure that the old can live together with the new in The Liberties over the next 10 years?’, ‘how do we get the balance right between private housing, social housing and affordable housing?’, ‘how do we create more integration and understanding between longer established residents and newer residents in the area?’. Rather than people adopting opposite and adversarial positions on these questions and issues, the consultations which took place between May 2019 and September 2019 would suggest that there is a clear appetite for, and openness towards, people living and working in The Liberties coming together on a more regular basis to discuss matters of common interest and concern (perhaps through Community Forums and a multi-agency Task Force for The Liberties) with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged areas.

5.7. THE NEED FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS TO FEEL MORE EMPOWERED AND INVOLVED

Many local residents said that they feel powerless and voiceless in relation to many of the developments which are taking place within The Liberties and which are planned for

the future. There is a sense that it does not really matter how they feel about things that are happening in their area – these things are going to go ahead anyway and be driven by agencies such as Dublin City Council and by the developers of hotels, student accommodation centres etc. When it is mentioned that they can enter into discussions with local elected representatives and DCC officials about concerns which they have about certain developments, many residents who attended the consultation meetings and who completed the community surveys said that this was meaningless and pointless and would not change anything that was being planned by private developers and by DCC. There is a clear need to establish more trust between local residents and key agencies/organisations and for these agencies and organisations to demonstrate that they are taking ‘on board’ the concerns, ideas and opinions of local residents.

There were references in the consultation meetings and surveys to a number of contentious developments in recent years – these include the proposed hotel on Vicar Street and the social housing proposed for Chamber Street/Cork Street. Some people are of the view that rather than having rows and disagreements about different projects at different times there should be an ongoing process of meetings and consultations about the area between all of the main stakeholders (including local residents). This would assist in the confidence-building and trust-building process when people are meeting each other in the normal course of events on a regular basis rather than just at times of conflict and crisis around individual developments. People mentioned the model of St. Teresa’s Gardens Regeneration Board as one which might have transferrable potential to other areas in The Liberties. This Regeneration Board meets every month, has 20 members and has average attendance levels of 70% - out of the 20 members of the Regeneration Board, 6 are local residents and the regular meetings of the Board give them opportunities to be informed about what is happening in their community and to express any concerns which they may have about developments in the area. In this context, community consultation is not something that hurtles from crisis to crisis but is an ongoing and regular feature of community life.

Many local people feel disconnected, powerless and remote from many of the new developments taking place in the area. Whilst they do see some potential in these developments (e.g. creation of employment and training

opportunities, existing businesses becoming more sustainable with expansion of permanent and transient population) they feel that they have not been consulted or asked for their views and opinions about the future development of the area.

Extract from community survey

'We have been living here since the very beginning and we have a right to have a say. In our area we have builders to the left of us and builders to the right of us and we are stuck in the middle and we haven't a clue what's going on. We just want developers to come to talk to us.'

Words of one resident

'The people in The Liberties don't ask for much. They would just like to be informed of what is happening in their community which in the last few years has changed so much.'

Words of local resident

5.8. STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COMMUNITY SECTOR

People who completed the community surveys and who participated in interviews and focus group meetings referenced the need to develop a stronger, more cohesive and more united community sector within The Liberties. Some of these people mentioned the fact that there has been an historical absence of strong collaboration and co-operation between community organisations and that rather than present joint proposals and plans for the overall benefit of The Liberties, community organisations tended to work in isolation from each other and were primarily interested in building up their organisation and bringing additional resources into their own organisation. This focus on organisational self-interest is not unusual and it could be argued that the main loyalty of staff and Board members is to the organisation in which they are involved rather than to the broader development of an overall area. However, interviewees also said that these two matters are not mutually exclusive and that it is possible to prioritise one's own organisation whilst, at the same time, engaging in collaborative, partnership arrangements with other organisations.

In this context, the emergence of CORN (Community Organisations and Residents Network) as an umbrella, networking organisation within The Liberties is a positive and encouraging development. It is important, in the view of many survey respondents and interviewees that CORN be supported into the future and that CORN develop a clear sense of its own role and objectives and be adequately resourced to achieve these objectives. There were also other suggestions and ideas about ways in which the community sector in The Liberties could be strengthened and enhanced over the next 5-10 years. These included building up the capacity and skills of local residents to play a more active role in local groups and committees; placing a particular focus on enabling more young people to become more involved in community activities and community groups; strengthening and rejuvenating the Boards and committees of community organisations by bringing in new members on a regular and constant basis. In relation to this latter point, there are a number of highly skilled and experienced people from a range of different sectors (e.g. education, health, business) who participated in the consultations and who said that they would be willing to become more involved in supporting the work of community organisations in The Liberties (e.g. through providing strategic advice and guidance, through joining Boards/committees).

5.9. INTEGRATION OF THE VARIOUS COMMUNITIES AND GROUPS IN THE LIBERTIES

One of the most significant challenges for The Liberties is to encourage, promote and facilitate greater community integration across the various geographical areas and groupings (e.g. long established residents, ethnic minorities, students etc.) which comprise The Liberties. It is recognised that The Liberties has a more transient population than virtually any other part of Dublin City with 45% of households renting their homes from private landlords (compared to a private rented figure of 32% for Dublin City and 19% for the Republic of Ireland)³⁹. Many individuals and families living in the private rented sector will move to other parts of Dublin City. In addition, 69% of households live in apartments in The Liberties (compared to a Dublin City figure of 35%) and it is likely that many of these people will buy or rent larger housing units outside of

³⁹ Central Statistics Office. Census of Population 2016: Profile of Electoral Divisions (Dublin, Central Statistics Office, 2017)

The Liberties as their families grow in size. The transient population will increase in future years with the new hotels and student accommodation centres. The key challenge in this context is about how does one build a sense of community and integrate the various communities within the broader Liberties area.

The starting point might be to accept the fact that it is a transient population with some people only staying in the area for a few days (e.g. in hotels), for 9 months (in student accommodation), for a few years (in the private rented sector). In recognising this as a fact of life, it will be necessary to devise strategies and incentives for people to come together to meet each other and to get to know each other – this will clearly involve the development of the evening/night-time and weekend economies in The Liberties (i.e. more things open, more things to do) and the creation of events which will bring people together (these could include street/flea markets, performances in local venues). There is also a need to encourage and promote integration between Irish people and non-Irish people given the fact that some parts of The Liberties have amongst the highest percentages in Dublin City of non-Irish born people and of people from different ethnic backgrounds.⁴⁰ The process of bringing people together and making things happen is likely to involve some type of community leadership. There is no inherent resistance to people from different backgrounds and cultures coming together and getting to know each other and becoming friends. On the basis of the consultations and completed surveys a key requirement relates to training and supporting community leaders and equipping them with the skills, the knowledge and the confidence which would enable and empower them to set up inter-cultural and integration projects and initiatives.

‘We need to get over the language barriers and for migrants to be able to access English language classes’

Words of one interviewee

‘The Liberties could become a model of how communities in Ireland might be more inclusive and more welcoming of others from different cultures and countries’

Extract from community survey

⁴⁰ Central Statistics Office. Census of Population 2016: Profile of Electoral Divisions (Dublin, Central Statistics Office, 2017)

Concerns about population change were most pronounced in relation to the growing size of migrant and ethnic communities within the neighbourhood. Some older participants talked about how they felt that they were unable to communicate with some of these new resident groups. They also noted the sort of challenge that these population transformations might present for integration and community togetherness.

Extract from research report on Three Cities Project

5.10. THE FUTURE OF HOMELESS SERVICES WITHIN THE LIBERTIES

There is a significant number of people accessing homeless services in the Dublin 8 area. In total, 3 postal codes in Dublin City (Dublin 1, Dublin 8 and Dublin 7) account for 42% of the city's homeless population whilst there are no homeless people or very few homeless people accessing services in other postal code areas in Dublin City. Dublin 1 has 1,488 homeless beds, Dublin 8 has 785 homeless beds and Dublin 7 has 728 homeless beds. Within these figures, Dublin 8 (including The Liberties) has the highest number of adults staying in hostel accommodation (434 people) and Dublin 8 also has the highest number of people in hotels and Bed and Breakfasts (271 adults and 52 children)⁴¹. These figures have been sourced from a report produced by the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive in August 2019 (reflecting the situation which existed in March 2019). People within The Liberties and surrounding areas are particularly concerned about the number of certain types of homeless accommodation in The Liberties (e.g. wet hostels where people can consume alcohol, homeless services which offer very short term accommodation, services where service users have to leave the premises at 9.00 am or 10.00 am each morning). As one interviewee said *'It is a difficult situation every morning when up to 250 single people living in three homeless accommodation centres in The Liberties are emptied out onto the streets at the same time'*.

There is also, however, recognition and an appreciation that The Liberties should continue to support people who are experiencing difficulties around homelessness, drug use, addiction and mental health. People involved in the consultation process called for

⁴¹ Dublin Regional Homeless Executive, 'Concentration of People Accessing Homeless Services' (Dublin City Council, 2019)

more co-ordination of services for homeless people in The Liberties. Some services provide accommodation and other services provide day services for homeless people (e.g. food, nursing/medical care, emotional support, an indoor space to shelter and to get a few hours sleep – these day services include Mendicity, Trust, Lantern, Little Flower). In the future, there is a sense that homeless services should be spread more evenly across Dublin City (with people being supported to remain within the community in which they live rather than migrating into homeless services in the Inner City) and that there should be greater co-ordination between all of the homeless services in The Liberties and surrounding areas. It is accepted that the situation around homeless services is constantly evolving within The Liberties – for example, in the second half of 2019, one of the largest providers of accommodation for single people (The Bru) closed down with residents transferred to The Spire in Marlborough Street whilst Dublin Simon has had plans approved to create a further 64 bed spaces at its residential addiction treatment centre location in Ushers Quay. In this type of ever-changing and evolving landscape it would be useful to develop a Homeless Services Forum which would ensure that maximum co-ordination could take place between organisations providing accommodation and day services to homeless people.

5.11. ISSUES RELATING TO DRUGS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Drugs and community safety are issues that were raised on a regular basis during the consultations which took place between May 2019 and September 2019. There is a fairly strong view that the drugs trade is the root cause of many of the problems concerning criminality and anti-social behaviour which are affecting The Liberties, with a particularly strong negative impact on the more socio-economically disadvantaged parts of the area (such as some of the local authority flats complexes). Drugs are often the reason why people rob and steal, they make people more volatile and aggressive, they are the cause of many relationship difficulties, they lead people into addiction and mental illness, they are a factor in educational disadvantage (young people leaving school) and in long-term unemployment (people unable to sustain and retain employment on account of their drug habit). The situation in The Liberties is compounded, to an extent, by the fact that in addition to trying to sort out longer term residents of The Liberties with drug problems, there are also a large number of non-

Liberties residents who are accessing homelessness and drugs services in The Liberties. This situation has exacerbated drugs-related issues and problems in The Liberties over the last 10-20 years. The Dublin Central District Metropolitan Region of An Garda Síochána has the second worst crime rates in Ireland and the highest rate for robberies and burglaries (Source: An Garda Síochána, October 2019).

The National Drugs and Alcohol Strategy for Ireland has five strategic goals/themes and it is considered that all of these are relevant in addressing and tackling the drugs crisis in The Liberties. These goals/themes are (i) to promote and protect health and well-being; (ii) to minimise the harm caused by drugs; (iii) to reduce access to drugs for harmful use; (iv) to provide family support to families of drug users; (v) to develop evidence-based policies and actions. Although some work is taking place concerning these strategic goals, more should be taking place within The Liberties given the extent of the drugs problems and the ways in which the drugs issue is impacting upon the lives of drug users and the general population of The Liberties (e.g. people being robbed to feed a drug habit, open drug dealing, drugs paraphernalia being found in parks and close to schools, injecting of drugs in public places). Greater resources should be allocated to The Liberties and the wider Dublin 8 and South Inner City area so as to enable groups and organisations to do more work around drugs education and prevention, services for drug users, reducing the supply of drugs into the area, family support for relatives of drug users. Addressing and tackling the drugs problems requires a multi-faceted and multi-agency approach and demands effective responses since it is an issue which has the potential to derail and stymie the re-development and regeneration of The Liberties over the next 10 years (i.e. people will be reluctant to invest in the area if there is a rampant and out-of-control drugs problem).

‘My real concern is that drug dealing and drug use is considered unremarkable and has become normalised within The Liberties. We are so used to seeing people shooting up in public, taking drugs on the steps of churches, being out of their heads on drugs, finding needles and all other sorts of drugs stuff, sleeping in doorways and getting really aggressive – we now think that this is normal day-to-day behaviour. It is not and we must do better and raise our

expectations for The Liberties and improve services for drug users and their families.'

Words of one interviewee

5.12. CONCLUSIONS

It is anticipated that the issues and challenges set out in this section of the report will be addressed further by relevant agencies, organisations and groups; and that appropriate actions will take place in relation to issues around balanced development; maintaining the character of The Liberties; bringing derelict buildings and sites back into productive use; enhancing the environment and appearance of the area; developing a shared/common vision for the future of the area; strengthening the community/voluntary sector and community leadership; greater integration between different parts of The Liberties; the number and range of homeless services in the area; and initiatives to tackle the use and supply of drugs in the area. There are many inter-connections between these issues and challenges – for example, when the area is developed further with the creation of many more jobs and more economic activity taking place in the evenings and at weekends, this will provide much more passive surveillance (with many more people mingling around the area) and more opportunities for unemployed people to secure employment rather than being tempted into drugs and criminality.

The issues and challenges to be addressed over the next 10 years will not be fully progressed by individual agencies and organisations doing their own thing. There are very significant links and connections between issues around housing (DCC, developers); the state of the environment and appearance of the area (DCC, businesses, residents); services for homeless people and drug users (DCC, HSE, community and voluntary sector organisations); education (local schools, NCAD); community facilities (DCC, local groups and organisations); and strengthening the community sector in The Liberties (community development projects, Dublin Inner City Community Co-operative). It is imperative that all of these issues are addressed in a holistic and integrated manner and that a whole-of-community and whole-of-person approach is adopted within which all of the various needs of individuals and community are considered (rather than particular agencies and organisations working by themselves on their area of

interest/concern). Whilst there is bilateral and inter-agency work taking place at present this needs to be strengthened so that a number of agencies and organisations (perhaps up to 8-10) are working together in a systematic and effective manner in the best interests of The Liberties and its residents – with a particular focus on improving the circumstances and quality of life of those who are most disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalised.

6. THE LIBERTIES - ROAD MAP FOR THE FUTURE

6.1. INTRODUCTION

532 people participated in the process of producing the Community Profile and Needs Assessment of The Liberties between May 2019 and September 2019 and made recommendations about what needs to happen over the next 10 years to make The Liberties a better place in which to live and work. Many of these recommendations relate to the needs and gaps in the provision of services and facilities and to key issues and challenges for The Liberties over the next period of time. In many cases, the recommendations have been directly informed by people's own analysis of what needs to improve and get better within the area and about what types of actions are required to enhance the social, economic, cultural and environmental development of The Liberties in future years.

This Road Map for The Liberties details the main recommendations which emerged from the surveys, interviews and community meetings that contributed to the production of the Community Profile and Needs Assessment. It will detail these recommendations under the following headings:

- **Development of shared vision and greater collaboration and co-operation**
- **Housing and accommodation**
- **Green spaces and sports/leisure facilities**
- **Public realm and environmental improvements**
- **Transport and traffic management**
- **Community facilities and creative spaces**
- **Strengthening the capacity of the community and voluntary sector**
- **Activities, services and programmes for children and young people**
- **Economic development and growing the local economy in The Liberties**
- **Health and well-being programmes and initiatives**
- **Provision of homeless services**
- **Better integration between different groups and communities**
- **Tackling criminality, anti-social behaviour and drugs**

6.2. MAIN THEMES AND FOCUSES

6.2.1. DEVELOPMENT OF SHARED VISION AND GREATER COLLABORATION AND CO-OPERATION

Recommendation No. 1

An inter-agency Task Force or Implementation Board – comprising representatives from the statutory sector, residents groups, community and voluntary sector, the education sector, the health services sector and the business sector – should be established for The Liberties and surrounding areas. The establishment and ongoing operations of this type of entity would help to ensure that there is more collaboration, co-ordination and co-operation between all of the main players in relation to the future development of The Liberties.

Recommendation No. 2

The proposed Task Force or Implementation Board should formulate a five-year Action Plan or Strategic Plan for The Liberties. This Plan would need to take cognisance of other plans such as the Local Area Plan for The Liberties and Greening The Liberties. It is anticipated that the Plan would incorporate many of the recommended actions set out in this section of the Community Profile and Needs Assessment project – a project which involved engagement with 532 people who live and/or work in The Liberties.

Recommendation No. 3

More work should be carried out on branding and promoting The Liberties. Whilst the Liberties Business Forum has carried out good work in promoting and providing information about The Liberties, this process should be accelerated and enhanced in future years with The Liberties becoming more of an iconic brand. The Liberties Festival could become a more significant occasion for the promotion of The Liberties and street signage could be used to indicate to people that they are in the historic Liberties area of Dublin.

Recommendation No. 4

Mechanisms should be developed for better information sharing about activities, projects and events which are taking place within The Liberties. Whilst it is recognised that the Liberties Business Forum does produce regular newsletters and organisations and groups produce their own newsletters about their work and forthcoming events,

this task of information sharing amongst the wider population of The Liberties needs to be strengthened so that more people in the area feel they are part of the revival and regeneration of The Liberties.

6.2.2. HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION

Recommendation No. 5

There is a need to strike an appropriate and adequate balance between housing and other forms of accommodation within The Liberties and surrounding areas. In particular there is a need to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of houses and apartments as well as the hotels and student accommodation centres which have been built in recent times and will continue to be constructed into the future.

Recommendation No. 6

In relation to houses and apartments, it is most important that there are a relatively high number of social, affordable and cost rental housing units as well as private houses/apartments. This will be necessary in order to enable families and individuals to remain living within the area. There should be a minimum of 800 social, affordable and cost rental housing units constructed in The Liberties over the next 10 years.⁴²

Recommendation No. 7

There should be a stronger focus on communal housing complexes for older people living in the area. On the basis of the demographic profile of The Liberties it is evident that a relatively high proportion of the population will be over the age of 70 in 10 years time. Many of these people would like to live in communal settings with other people of a similar age and consideration should be given to the development of older persons housing schemes (which are working very well in other parts of Dublin).

Recommendation No. 8

There should be a clampdown on Airbnb properties in The Liberties. Whilst there are some controls and constraints concerning hotels and student accommodation centres (i.e. they are within their own buildings with security, CCTV etc.), there are less so in relation to tourists occupying Airbnb properties on a frequent basis. This can be very

⁴² This figure of 800 new social, affordable and cost rental housing units is based on the views of people who participated in this research project and their suggestions as to the minimum number of housing units which would enable local people to remain living in The Liberties and surrounding areas

disruptive and can lead to difficulties with problematic Airbnb tenants. Hence the need for regulations to be enforced and for Airbnb not to grow within the area.

6.2.3. GREEN SPACES AND SPORTS/LEISURE FACILITIES

Recommendation No. 9

New parks and play areas should continue to be developed within The Liberties. In recent years St. Audoen's Park and Weaver Park have been developed in a very effective manner by Dublin City Council. This work should be continued into the future and the plans for new parks at Bridgefoot Street and at St. Teresa's Gardens should be implemented as soon as possible – these would significantly increase the amount of parklands in the area.

Recommendation No. 10

Parks and other green areas to be developed into the future should include provision for community gardens and allotments. It is clear that many local people are both sad and resentful about the loss of allotments and community gardens which did exist in the area up until a couple of years ago. These were a source of socialisation, communing with nature, healthy living and healthy eating. Hence the need to ensure that allotments and community gardens are incorporated into parks developed in the area.

Recommendation No. 11

Sports pitches and sports facilities are an urgent requirement within The Liberties and surrounding areas. There are no full-size pitches in the area which can cater for the main team/field sports such as Gaelic football, hurling, soccer and rugby. There has been a strong lobby in recent years around this issue. A full-size pitch with ancillary facilities is going to be developed as part of the Sports Campus in St. Teresa's Gardens and this Sports Campus should be developed as soon as possible.

6.2.4. PUBLIC REALM AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Recommendation No. 12

There should be a major tree planting programme initiated and implemented in The Liberties. There is a significant deficit of trees within The Liberties (Source: Greening The Liberties) and this makes parts of the area appear to be overly unattractive and drab. Whilst it is encouraging that plans are in place to plant trees in certain parts of the area

(e.g. at Cornmarket) the tree planting programme should be extended to all parts of the area.

Recommendation No. 13

Street improvement works should be continued and accelerated along key streets within The Liberties. It is recognised that there are plans for such works to take place on streets such as Francis Street, High Street and Meath Street (and this may involve consideration of pedestrianisation). The street improvement works (involving upgrading of footpaths, soft landscaping, new street lighting, freshening up of shops etc.) should be extended to other key streets in The Liberties (e.g. Cork Street, James Street).

Recommendation No. 14

Derelict sites and buildings, some of historic and cultural significance, should be brought back into usage in the shortest possible time. This would serve to create more employment, socialisation and shopping opportunities for people whilst also improving unsightly eyesores and empty sights. There is a need to get the Iveagh Markets up-and-running and people also referred to Newmarket Square, the Mendicity Institute and Mother Redcaps as places which need to be redeveloped over the next number of years.

Recommendation No. 15

Strategies should be put in place to reduce the litter within The Liberties and takes away from the natural beauty of the area. Many people are of the view that it is over-littered (with bags of waste dumped indiscriminately, lots of dog poo, too much rubbish on the main streets). Whilst it is recognised that there are issues about too many rubbish bins (i.e. they will just be used by some people as places to dump their bags of rubbish) there should be other strategies that can be put in place to improve issues concerning rubbish and illegal dumping.

Recommendation No. 16

Buildings and places of historic and cultural importance within The Liberties should be retained, preserved and maintained. The Liberties is full of places of historical significance and there is a danger that they could be discarded or destroyed in the midst of all the new developments taking place. It is encouraging that conservation work has taken place on St. Lukes and St. James burial sites and this type of conservation and

presentation work should be extended to the Quaker Burial Ground on Cork Street and other historical sites.

6.2.5. TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Recommendation No. 17

Greater efforts should be made to support and to enable people to make journeys through The Liberties on foot or by bicycle. For pedestrians this is likely to involve improving and widening some footpaths in the area and easing their passage across some of the main thoroughfares in the area (e.g. Cork Street, Thomas Street, The Coombe). For cyclists, it could involve more dedicated cycle lanes on the main streets/roads and more parking stations for Dublin Bikes.

Recommendation No. 18

Car parking arrangements need to be reviewed and improved. There is much more traffic in The Liberties now than there was 10 years ago. In addition to vehicles owned by residents and people parking their cars in The Liberties on their way to work, construction workers are parking in residential streets. This has made it increasingly difficult for residents to park their cars in their own streets. Since construction work is going to continue for many years, new strategies need to be developed to sort out car parking problems in the area.

6.2.6. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND CREATIVE SPACES

Recommendation No. 19

New multi-purpose community buildings and community facilities need to be developed in The Liberties. At present there is a dearth of such facilities and buildings and the increase in population has not been matched by an improvement in the community infrastructure in the area. In fact, the opposite has happened with the closure of community facilities such as St. Nicholas of Myra Parish Centre and St. Anthony's Hall. There is a clear and urgent need to develop the sort of multi-purpose community facilities which exist in other parts of Dublin.

Recommendation No. 20

New creative spaces have to be developed for artists, musicians, designers, performers and others involved in the creative arts. With the closure of venues within The Liberties

and ever rising property and rental prices, many creative and artistic people are not able to live or work in the area. This is detrimental to the future of The Liberties and all efforts should be made to provide creative spaces within which people can create, can perform, can live and can perhaps sell their goods (such as the many empty retail spaces in the area).

Recommendation No. 21

Greater usage should be made of existing facilities and buildings within The Liberties for community purposes. These include public buildings such as Community Centres (which are often closed at the weekends when they could be used for a wide variety of different activities) and buildings owned by organisations such as St. James's Hospital and St. Patrick's Mental Health Services (who would be open to the idea of making their rooms and spaces more available to local community organisations and groups).

6.2.7. STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Recommendation No. 22

There is a need to build up the capacity of people within the community sector to enable them to play a stronger, leadership role within their own communities and within the wider Liberties area. There is a view that the community sector has been fragmented and divided in the past and this has led to the demise and closure of community and youth organisations in the area. With the new opportunities which are going to emerge over the next few years, there is a need to have strong community organisations and strong community leaders.

Recommendation No. 23

There is a need for community groups and organisations to work more closely together as they do in other parts of Dublin City (e.g. North Inner City Community Coalition, North Inner City Task Force Programme Implementation Board). It is encouraging that the CORN (Community Organisations and Residents Network) grouping of over 50 local groups and organisations is in place. CORN, together with other organisations and groups, might form the basis for more collaboration and partnership work within The Liberties.

Recommendation No. 24

Youth leadership should be promoted and supported within The Liberties and efforts made to involve more young people in the work of community organisations (including the governance and management levels of these organisations). The age profile of community leaders does not reflect the young people who live in the area. Yet, at the same time, many young people have an interest in issues around social justice, equality, human rights, environment etc. and could make important contributions to the work of local organisations.

Recommendation No. 25

Community development organisations in The Liberties should consider strengthening their governance structures by inviting skilled and competent people not currently involved in community activities onto their Boards/committees. There were a number of experienced and able people interviewed during the consultation process between May 2019 and September 2019 who said that they would be interested in getting more involved with local community organisations in The Liberties.

6.2.8. ACTIVITIES, SERVICES AND PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**Recommendation No. 26**

There needs to be a far wider and broader range of services, supports and programmes for children and young people living in The Liberties. The area has a population of 24,778 people and only four paid youth workers and a small number of voluntary youth clubs. This situation compares very unfavourably with an area such as the North East Inner City of Dublin. Agencies such as City of Dublin Youth Services Board need to do more to increase and improve youth work provision in The Liberties.

Recommendation No. 27

Intensive outreach and 1-to-1 work needs to take place with those young people who are most distanced from available services being accessed by the general population of young people. For young people not engaging with education, training, employment, youth services etc. who are vulnerable and who are perhaps involved in various types of anti-social behaviour it may be necessary to provide more intense 1-to-1 support and mentoring.

Recommendation No. 28

There should be more venues within which young people can meet and mix with each other in an informal drop-in type of manner. On account of the fact that these venues/clubs do not currently exist to any significant degree in The Liberties, young people are inclined to spend a lot of time on the streets where they are more vulnerable and 'at risk'. Hence the need to develop safer, indoor spaces for young people in The Liberties.

6.2.9. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GROWING THE LOCAL ECONOMY IN THE LIBERTIES**Recommendation No. 29**

More effective linkages need to be established between unemployed people in The Liberties and the organisations and companies which will be creating thousands of employment opportunities into the future (e.g. New Children's Hospital, hotels, student accommodations centres). Local people in The Liberties need to be equipped with the education, training and confidence to be able to take advantage of the labour market opportunities which will be coming on stream over the next 10 years and more Jobs Clubs should be set up in the area.

Recommendation No. 30

The local economy in The Liberties needs to be boosted by more economic activity and more footfall through the area in the evenings and on Sundays. At present there are very few places open at these times and there is little incentive for people to be mingling around the area. This will probably change with the opening of new hotels and student accommodation centres which will, in turn, present opportunities for new enterprises to open in The Liberties (e.g. retail outlets, restaurants etc.).

Recommendation No. 31

The Liberties should endeavour to reclaim its position as the most prominent centre in Dublin for markets – both outdoor/street markets and indoor markets. In the last few years, the markets located in Newmarket Square were instructed to close, pending redevelopment of the area. In the future it is most important that markets assume a prominent position again in The Liberties (in iconic settings such as Newmarket Square

and the Iveagh Gardens) as well as retaining their stalls/pitches on Thomas Street and Meath Street.

6.2.10. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES

Recommendation No. 32

A much greater array of health and well-being programmes and activities should be rolled out across The Liberties - exercise and fitness programmes, park runs, healthy eating, smoking cessation etc. Funding and other resources are available for these types of projects from the HSE and Healthy Ireland. It is recognised that the lack of venues in The Liberties does present a problem. However, with the opening of new parks and new community facilities there should be ample spaces within which to run well-being activities.

Recommendation No. 33

Organisations and agencies in The Liberties should continue to play a lead role in promoting social prescribing as an alternative to the prescription of medicine/drugs. Social prescribing is a mechanism for linking people into non-medical sources of support within their communities in order to improve their physical, emotional and mental well-being. It has been piloted in the South Inner City of Dublin and should continue to be developed over the next few years.

Recommendation No. 34

Low cost or no cost counselling should be provided for people experiencing levels of depression, stress and anxiety in their lives. There is a sense that there are relatively high levels of stress, anxiety and mental illness within the more disadvantaged parts of The Liberties and it is people living in these areas who can least afford the costs of accessing counsellors and psychotherapists. Hence the need for an easily accessible, low-cost counselling service in The Liberties.

6.2.11. PROVISION OF HOMELESS SERVICES

Recommendation No. 35

There should be a forum established of agencies and organisations providing homeless services in The Liberties. Representatives of homeless organisations said that it would be useful to provide a more co-ordinated response to the needs and circumstances of

homeless people both in relation to night-time/accommodation services and day services. The proposed forum would also be useful mechanisms for organisations to share information and to provide updates on what they are doing.

Recommendation No. 36

There should be a reasonable and proportionate number of homeless services within The Liberties and the wider Dublin 8 area. At present, Dublin 8 accommodates 785 homeless people each day and this figure is the second highest of any post code area in Dublin (after Dublin 1)⁴³. Dublin City Council and other relevant agencies should do more equitable planning concerning the location of homeless services and there should be a more even spread of these services across Dublin City.

6.2.12. BETTER INTEGRATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES

Recommendation No. 37

Inter-cultural integration strategies and programmes (using the arts, music, food, community development etc.) should be developed within The Liberties to promote more integration, socialisation and understanding between Irish and non-Irish people living in The Liberties. The area has a high proportion of people not born in Ireland (i.e. 35% compared to Dublin City and Ireland figures of 22% and 17%)⁴⁴ and more could be done to encourage and promote greater integration and to provide opportunities for people to get to know each other.

Recommendation No. 38

There should be more free and low-cost English language classes and lessons for those residents of The Liberties for whom English is not their first language. It is clear that the lack of proficiency in English is a barrier which prevents or inhibits some migrants from accessing services and from getting to know other local people living in The Liberties. The language barrier can also be an issue when service providers are trying to explain what they do and the ways in which people can access available services.

⁴³ Dublin Regional Homeless Executive. 'Concentration of People Accessing Homeless Services' (Dublin City Council, 2019)

⁴⁴ Central Statistics Office, Census of Population 2016: Profile of Electoral Divisions (Dublin, Central Statistics Office, 2017)

Recommendation No. 39

More work should be done to integrate homeless people into the various activities, services and events taking place within The Liberties. People accessing homeless services (i.e. 785 people in March 2019) represent an important minority of the people living in The Liberties at any one time. They tend to keep to themselves (either as individuals or through accessing day services such as Mendicity and the Little Flower). It would be useful to explore ways in which they could become more integrated into the day-to-day life of The Liberties.

6.2.13. TACKLING CRIMINALITY, ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND DRUGS**Recommendation No. 40**

There should be a larger and more visible Garda presence across The Liberties. There is a general sense across people involved in the consultation process that the area could benefit from a more significant Garda presence both in the main streets of The Liberties during the day and in local authority flats complexes which experience particularly high levels of anti-social behaviour. The visibility and presence of Gardaí can be very reassuring and a deterrent to criminality and anti-social behaviour.

Recommendation No. 41

There should be a community garda assigned to each of the main local authority flats complexes within The Liberties. The gardaí assigned to these roles would be a regular presence in the flats complexes and would develop relationships with local residents living in these complexes. In particular, the community gardai would aim to establish good relationships with young people in order to discourage them from getting involved in drugs and criminality.

Recommendation No. 42

Greater resources should be allocated to organisations and projects working with drug users and their families. On account of the prevalence of drug use in The Liberties, and the fact that many drug users come into The Liberties and the wider South Inner City area to access drug services, there is a clear need to provide a range of drug treatment

and drug rehabilitation services in The Liberties. This will involve increasing the support being provided to existing services and perhaps allocating resources to new services.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The Liberties is one of the most historic parts of Ireland. Additionally, it is one of the most culturally diverse areas of Ireland (with a high proportion of migrants and non-Irish residents). In recent years, The Liberties has become a magnet for new investments (e.g. in hotels, in student accommodation) and these investments in the area are likely to continue for many years to come. The Liberties has a large number of homeless services in its catchment area (the second highest in all of Ireland). The Liberties has high levels of criminality, drug dealing and anti-social behaviour (with Dublin South Central District Metropolitan Division having the second highest crime figures in Ireland). The Liberties and the wider Dublin 8 area has 5 of the top 20 tourist attractions in Ireland (with the Guinness Storehouse being the most popular fee paying attraction in Ireland, with 1.8 million visitors each year). Therefore, The Liberties represents a very interesting and diverse area in which to live, to work, to study, to visit.

It is evident that The Liberties is at a particularly critical juncture in its development. There are many opportunities for development and growth (with large derelict and unused sites, and organisations and companies willing to develop these sites). At the same time, however, many people are wary of the rapid pace of development (with more building projects taking place now than in the last 50 years of The Liberties) and are fearful that the character and the heritage of The Liberties will be lost and local people will be forced out of the area (by rising property/rental prices). However, the analysis set out in this report and the contributions made by 532 people who participated in the production of the report would suggest that it should be possible to retain the old Liberties whilst, at the same time, creating many new economic, social and cultural opportunities within The Liberties over the next 10 years.

The key challenge is about managing change and trying to ensure that all sections of the population feel that they are part of the new and emerging Liberties – that they are not being left behind, that they are not forgotten about, that they are not voiceless or powerless. It should be possible to develop mechanisms and strategies through which all residents feel that they are part of the future of The Liberties and that they can influence what is going to take place in the area over the next 10 years. This might

involve an overarching Task Force for The Liberties (with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and groups) and perhaps sub-groupings to cover smaller districts and neighbourhoods within the wider Liberties area. Whichever type of structure is put in place, the main objective is that there should be a common and shared vision for The Liberties and that as many local residents as possible believe that they have a role and an opportunity to shape this vision and to assist in implementing this vision. It is considered that this report, which has been commissioned by SICCDA and which represents the views of 532 people who are living and/or working in The Liberties, is a good starting point in helping to shape this future shared vision for The Liberties.

**APPENDIX A: MAIN ROADS, STREETS AND OTHER PLACES
WITHIN 9 ELECTORAL DIVISIONS IN THE LIBERTIES AND
SURROUNDING AREAS⁴⁵**

ELECTORAL DIVISION	POPULATION	STREETS/ROADS
WOOD QUAY A	2,606	Bride Street Cathedral View Court Christchurch View Iveagh Buildings, Bride Street Iveagh Hostel, Bride Road Iveagh Trust, Bull Alley Street Kevin Street Upper New Street South Nicholas Street Patrick Street St. Kevins Terrace
MERCHANTS QUAY A	2,513	Bridge Street Lower Cook Street High Street John Street West Merchants Quay Oliver Bond House St. Audoens House St. Augustine Street Usher's Quay Usher's Street Westgate, St. Augustine Street
MERCHANTS QUAY B	3,966	Carmans Hall Catherine Street Francis Street Gray Street John Dillon Street Meath Street Michael Mallin House Pimlico Reginald Street Spitalfields Thomas Court
MERCHANTS QUAY C	3,566	Allingham Street Ardee Street Braithwaite Street Brown Street South Chamber Street

⁴⁵ Dublin City Council, Scheme of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2019 (Dublin, 2019)

		Cork Street New Court, New Street Newmarket Square Oscar Square Sophia Housing Southgate, Cork Street The Coombe Weaver Square
MERCHANTS QUAY D	2,185	Blackpitts Clarence Mangan Road Ebenezer Terrace Gilbert Road Hamilton Street O'Carolan Road O'Curry Road O'Donovan Road Sandford Avenue Susan Terrace Sweeney's Terrace
MERCHANTS QUAY E	2,489	Clanbrassil Street Lower Clanbrassil Street Upper Dufferin Terrace Greenville Avenue Griffith Halls of Residence South Circular Road, Leonards Corner St. Albans Road St. Patrick's Court Washington Street Wolseley Street
MERCHANTS QUAY F	2,158	Cork Street Apartments Darley's Terrace Donore Avenue Eugene Street Fingal Street Maxwell Street St. Anne's Road South St. Catherine's Avenue St. James Terrace St. Teresa's Gardens The Coombe Hospital The Tannery, Cork Street
USHERS B	1,312	Binary Hub, Bonham Street Bridgefoot Street Island Street Robert Emmet Walk Steevens Gate, James Street The Maltings, Watling Street

		Usher's Island Victoria Quay Viking Harbour, Usher's Island Watling Street
USHERS C	3,983	Basin Lane Basin Street Basin View DCC Flats, Marrowbone Lane DCC Flats, School Street Echlin Buildings, Echlin Street Grand Canal Place James Street Long's Place Loreto Road Lourdes Road Mary Aikenhead House Our Lady's Road Thomas Court Bawn

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE – RESULTS FROM 2016

CENSUS OF POPULATION

AGE PROFILE FOR THE LIBERTIES

	0-14	15-29	30-49	50-64	65+	TOTAL
THE LIBERTIES	3,146 (13%)	7,373 (30%)	9,320 (38%)	3,096 (13%)	1,833 (7%)	24,768
DUBLIN CITY	83,213 (15%)	134,132 (24%)	180,564 (33%)	84,290 (15%)	72,355 (13%)	554,554
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	1,006,552 (21%)	873,887 (18%)	1,434,966 (30%)	808,893 (17%)	637,567 (13%)	4,761,865

GENDER

	MALE	FEMALE
THE LIBERTIES	12,599 (51%)	12,169 (49%)
DUBLIN CITY	272,270 (49%)	282,284 (51%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	2,354,428 (49%)	2,407,437 (51%)

MARITAL STATUS

	SINGLE	MARRIED	SEPARATED	DIVORCED	WIDOWED
THE LIBERTIES	17,099 (69%)	5,636 (23%)	680 (3%)	623 (3%)	740 (3%)
DUBLIN CITY	333,814 (60%)	170,584 (31%)	13,689 (2%)	12,226 (2%)	24,241 (4%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	2,551,414 (54%)	1,792,151 (38%)	118,178 (2%)	103,895 (2%)	196,227 (4%)

PLACE OF BIRTH

	IRELAND	UK	POLAND/ LITHUANIA	OTHER EU 28	REST OF WORLD
THE LIBERTIES	15,726 (65%)	906 (4%)	829 (3%)	2,657 (11%)	3,965 (16%)
DUBLIN CITY	419,158 (78%)	22,307 (4%)	12,481 (2%)	34,072 (6%)	49,172 (9%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	3,879,515 (83%)	277,206 (6%)	148,505 (3%)	145,282 (3%)	239,413 (5%)

ETHNICITY

	WHITE IRISH	IRISH TRAVELLER	OTHER WHITE	BLACK	ASIAN	OTHER
THE LIBERTIES	13,859 (63%)	39 (0%)	4,952 (22%)	617 (3%)	1,494 (7%)	1,137 (5%)
DUBLIN CITY	396,108 (78%)	2,080 (1%)	65,789 (13%)	6,979 (1%)	20,172 (4%)	14,181 (3%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	3,854,226 (84%)	30,987 (1%)	446,727 (10%)	64,639 (1%)	98,720 (2%)	70,603 (2%)

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RELIGION

	CATHOLIC	OTHER	NONE
THE LIBERTIES	12,771 (56%)	4,111 (18%)	5,900 (26%)
DUBLIN CITY	365,105 (70%)	61,903 (12%)	94,384 (18%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	3,729,115 (80%)	439,055 (9%)	468,421 (10%)

FAMILY SIZE

	2	3	4	5	6+
THE LIBERTIES	2,964 (60%)	1,097 (22%)	614 (12%)	219 (4%)	67 (1%)
DUBLIN CITY	61,006 (49%)	28,797 (23%)	22,370 (18%)	9,490 (7%)	3,537 (3%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	481,489 (39%)	276,638 (23%)	268,327 (22%)	136,588 (11%)	55,328 (5%)

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILIES

	1	2	3	4	5+
THE LIBERTIES	1,533 (54%)	876 (31%)	309 (11%)	73 (3%)	25 (1%)
DUBLIN CITY	37,248 (46%)	27,745 (34%)	11,552 (14%)	3,302 (4%)	1,096 (2%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	341,160 (40%)	307,298 (36%)	152,071 (18%)	47,002 (5%)	15,190 (1%)

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN AND WITHOUT CHILDREN

	WITH CHILDREN	WITHOUT CHILDREN
THE LIBERTIES	2,816 (57%)	1,945 (43%)
DUBLIN CITY	80,943 (64%)	44,257 (36%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	862,721 (71%)	355,649 (29%)

FAMILY COMPOSITION

	COUPLE WITH CHILDREN	MOTHER WITH CHILDREN	FATHER WITH CHILDREN
THE LIBERTIES	1,455 (52%)	1,215 (43%)	146 (5%)
DUBLIN CITY	51,779 (64%)	25,779 (32%)	3,385 (4%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	643,904 (75%)	189,112 (22%)	29,705 (3%)

NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS

	ONE PERSON	MORE THAN ONE PERSON
THE LIBERTIES	3,544 (34%)	7,003 (66%)
DUBLIN CITY	60,001 (28%)	151,746 (72%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	399,815 (24%)	1,302,474 (76%)

TYPE OF ACCOMODATION

	HOUSE/BUNGALOW	FLAT/APARTMENT
THE LIBERTIES	3,291 (31%)	7,177 (69%)
DUBLIN CITY	133,709 (65%)	72,526 (35%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	1,471,650 (88%)	200,879 (12%)

YEARS WHEN HOUSE/APARTMENT BUILT

	PRE 1919	1919-1945	1946-1970	1971-2000	2001 AND LATER
THE LIBERTIES	2,204 (25%)	1,375 (16%)	929 (10%)	2,475 (28%)	1,867 (21%)
DUBLIN CITY	27,370 (15%)	26,428 (14%)	50,330 (27%)	49,514 (27%)	30,692 (16%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	141,200 (9%)	109,668 (7%)	242,148 (15%)	625,328 (39%)	465,199 (29%)

TYPE OF OCCUPANCY

	OWNER OCCUPIER	RENTED FROM PRIVATE LANDLORD	RENTED FROM LOCAL AUTHORITY	RENTED FROM VOLUNTARY BODY
THE LIBERTIES	2,591 (27%)	4,335 (45%)	2,158 (22%)	538 (6%)
DUBLIN CITY	105,273 (54%)	62,865 (32%)	24,654 (12%)	3,274 (2%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	1,147,552 (71%)	309,728 (19%)	143,178 (9%)	16,765 (1%)

COMMUNAL/GROUP ESTABLISHMENTS

	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS	NUMBER OF RESIDENTS
THE LIBERTIES	31	1,457
DUBLIN CITY	736	32,642
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	4,140	126,199

EMPLOYMENT

	AT WORK	UNEMPLOYED	STUDENT	NOT ABLE TO WORK DUE TO DISABILITY
THE LIBERTIES	12,562	2,366	3,037	933
DUBLIN CITY	265,670	39,200	53,067	18,665
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	2,006,641	297,396	427,128	158,348

If we look at the people who are ‘economically active’ and looking for work (i.e. those ‘at work’ and those who are ‘Unemployed’ the following results emerge:

	TOTAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE	NUMBER AT WORK/EMPLOYED	NUMBER OUT OF WORK/UNEMPLOYED
THE LIBERTIES	14,910 (100%)	12,562 (84%)	2,366 (16%)
DUBLIN CITY	304,870 (100%)	265,670 (87%)	39,200 (13%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	2,304,037 (100%)	2,000,641 (87%)	297,396 (13%)

EDUCATION

(i) AGE AT WHICH EDUCATION CEASED

	UNDER 15	15	16	17	18	19	20 AND OVER
THE LIBERTIES	1,206 (11%)	569 (7%)	806 (7%)	813 (7%)	1,121 (10%)	426 (4%)	6,005 (55%)
DUBLIN CITY	25,838 (10%)	14,618 (6%)	22,036 (9%)	21,466 (9%)	32,567 (13%)	10,319 (4%)	123,923 (49%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	K184 (9%)	K125 (6%)	K226 (11%)	K217 (10%)	K359 (17%)	K122 (6%)	K895 (41%)

(ii) HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED

	NO FORMAL EDUCATION OR PRIMARY EDUCATION ONLY	LOWER SECONDARY (i.e. JUNIOR CERTIFICATE)	UPPER SECONDARY (i.e. LEAVING CERTIFICATE)	TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	THIRD LEVEL (i.e. DEGREE/ DIPLOMA)
THE LIBERTIES	2,112 (15%)	1,552 (11%)	2,103 (15%)	2,346 (16%)	6,212 (43%)
DUBLIN CITY	48,909 (14%)	44,219 (13%)	55,059 (16%)	53,536 (16%)	136,763 (41%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	386,498 (13%)	449,766 (15%)	573,643 (20%)	453,850 (16%)	1,034,627 (36%)

PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

	PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY
THE LIBERTIES	3,541 (14%)
DUBLIN CITY	81,502 (14.7%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	643,131 (13.5%)

STATE OF HEALTH

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	BAD	VERY BAD
THE LIBERTIES	13,218 (58%)	6,891 (30%)	1,995 (9%)	438 (2%)	82 (1%)
DUBLIN CITY	308,076 (59%)	151,007 (29%)	47,005 (9%)	9,152 (2%)	2,054 (1%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	2,827,544 (61%)	1,316,467 (29%)	382,905 (8%)	62,697 (1%)	13,738 (1%)

CAR OWNERSHIP – HOUSEHOLDS WITH CARS

	NO CAR	1 CAR	2 CARS	3 CARS +
THE LIBERTIES	5,946 (60%)	3,289 (33%)	544 (6%)	83 (1%)
DUBLIN CITY	257,567 (36%)	85,715 (43%)	35,531 (18%)	6,925 (3%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	257,567 (16%)	696,684 (42%)	567,414 (34%)	125,651 (8%)

COMPUTER OWNERSHIP – HOUSEHOLDS WITH PERSONAL COMPUTERS

	YES	NO
THE LIBERTIES	6,448 (66%)	3,337 (34%)
DUBLIN CITY	139,140 (70%)	59,245 (30%)
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	1,160,603 (71%)	478,487 (29%)

**APPENDIX C: INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED AND CONSULTED
DURING COMMUNITY PROFILE AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT
PROJECT OF THE LIBERTIES AND SURROUNDING AREAS**

NAME	ORGANISATION	POSITION
Lyndsey Anderson	St. Teresa's Gardens Regeneration Board	Co-ordinator
Shauna Barnes	YMCA Dublin	Co-ordinator
Kelly Bermingham	St. Patrick's Cathedral	Community Officer
Lorcan Birthistle	St. James's Hospital	CEO
David Brown	South West Inner City Local Employment Service	Co-ordinator
Fintan Brunkard	School Street Family Resource Centre	Co-ordinator
Paula Byrne	Merchants Quay Ireland	CEO
Pamela Carroll	St. Teresa's Gardens Regeneration Board	Community Development Health Worker
Margaret Collins	HSE	Primary Care Manager
Fearghal Connolly	Donore Community Alcohol And Drugs Team	Co-ordinator
Fr. David Corrigan	Donore Avenue Parish	Parish Priest
Gary Corrigan	Hines	Managing Director
Stephen Coyne	Liberties Business Forum/Dublin City Council	Co-ordinator
Adrian Cristea	Dublin City Interfaith Forum	Executive Officer
Concepta De Brun	HSE	Social Inclusion Manager CHO7
Brena Dempsey	HSE	Head of Health and Well-Being CHO7
Maire Devine	Seanad Eireann	Senator
Michael Egan	RADE (Recovery Through Arts, Drama And Education)	Project Director
Noel Fleming	South Inner City Community Development Association	Board Member

Deirdre Garvey	The Wheel	CEO
Dr. Sarah Glennie	National College Of Art And Design	Director
Paul Gilligan	St. Patrick's Mental Health Services	CEO
Kerri Goodliffe	South Inner City Drugs Task Force	Co-ordinator
John Gordan	An Garda Síochána	Superintendent
Ashling Hanly	South Inner City Community Development Association	Board Member
Brian Healy	City of Dublin Youth Services Board	Regional Manager
Josephine Henry	Dublin Inner City Community Co-operative	Urban Planning Advisor
Carmel Hynes	South Inner City Community Development Association	Board Member
Ashling Kennedy	Family Resource Centre, School Street	Development worker
Brendan Kenny	Dublin City Council	Deputy Chief Executive
Evanne Kilmurray	Inner City Enterprise	CEO
Michael King	South West Inner City Local Policing Forum	Chairperson
Rea Lavelle	South West Inner City Local Policing Forum	Co-ordinator
Grainne Lord	City of Dublin Youth Services	Liaison Officer
David McAuley	Donore Credit Union	CEO
Deirdre McCarthy	Dublin Inner City Community Co-operative	Policy and Research Co-ordinator
Fiach Mc Conghail	Digital Hub	CEO
Jeanne McDonagh	DIAGEO	Head of Society and Engagement
Ingrid McElroy	National Childrens Hospital	Community Benefit Programme Manager
Tina McVeigh	Dublin City Council	Councillor
Brian Moran	Hines	Senior Managing Director
Rebecca Moynihan	Dublin City Council	Councillor

Denis Murphy	South Inner City Community Development Association	Board Member
Criona Ní Dhalaigh	Dublin City Council	Councillor
Nuala Nic Giobuin	TUSLA	Co-ordinator
Tommy O'Brien	South Inner City Community Development Association	Board Member
Darach O'Connor	Dublin City Council	Senior Executive Officer
Mairin O'Cuirean	Robert Emmet Community Development Project	Co-ordinator
Aengus Ó'Snodaigh	Dáil Eireann	TD
Michelle Phelan	HSE	Access Officer, Primary Care
Bruce Philips	Dublin City Council	Local Area Manager
Michael Pidgeon	Dublin City Council	Councillor
Anna Quigley	Citywide	Co-ordinator
Darragh Reid	South Inner City Community Development Association	Board Member
Kieran Rose	Community Activist	Urban Planner
Michele Ryan	South Inner City Community Development Association	CEO
Louisa Santoro	Mendicity	CEO
Bríd Smith	Dáil Eireann	TD
Tony Smithers	Dublin City Council	Area Housing Manager
Mary Taylor	Dublin City Council	Area Manager
Jack Teeling	Teeling Whiskey Company	Managing Director
Noel Wardick	Dublin Inner City Community Co-operative	CEO
Michael Watters	Dublin City Council	Councillor
Kathleen White	South Inner City Community Development Association	Community Development Co-ordinator
Leanne Young	Liberties Training Centre	Manager

APPENDIX D: LOCATIONS WHERE COMMUNITY SURVEY WAS DISTRIBUTED

COMMUNITY CENTRES

1. ST. CATHERINE'S SPORTS CENTRE
MARROWBONE LANE
2. DONORE YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE
DONORE AVENUE

COMMUNITY SERVICES

3. SICCD, 90 MEATH STREET
4. FOUNTAIN RESOURCE GROUP,
ST. JAMES PRESBYTERY, JAMES STREET
5. ROBERT EMMET COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT,
USHER STREET
6. SOUTH WEST INNER CITY NETWORK,
RAINSFORD STREET

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRES

7. MERCY FAMILY CENTRE,
SOUTH BROWN STREET
8. SCHOOL STREET AND THOMAS COURT BAWN FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE,
SCHOOL STREET

EMPLOYMENT OFFICES

9. SOUTH WEST INNER CITY LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE,
RAINSFORD STREET
- HEALTH CENTRES AND HOSPITALS
10. THOMAS COURT HEALTH CARE CENTRE (INCORPORATING JAMES STREET PRIMARY
CARE TEAM, COOMBE PRIMARY CARE TEAM),
CATHERINES LANE WEST

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES

11. NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN,
THOMAS STREET

12. LIBERTIES COLLEGE, BULL ALLEY STREET 13. LIBERTIES TRAINING CENTRE, OLIVER
BOND STREET

OTHER STATUTORY ORGANISATIONS

14. DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL AREA OFFICE,
EBLANA HOUSE,
MARROWBONE LANE

15. THE DIGITAL HUB,
THOMAS STREET

RESTAURANTS/CAFES

16. MANNINGS BAKERY AND CAFÉ
THOMAS STREET

17. CAFÉ DE JOUR
CORK STREET

18. LEGIT COFFEE
MEATH STREET

OTHERS

19. DONORE CREDIT UNION
DONORE AVENUE

20. LITTLE FLOWER
PENNY DINNERS

MEATH STREET

21. ADAM AND EVE CHURCH
(FRANCISCANS)

APPENDIX E - BIBLIOGRAPHY, REFERENCES AND ARTICLES

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APPENDIX F: BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON STEPHEN ROURKE

Stephen Rourke was contracted by SICCCA to produce the Community Profile and Needs Assessment of The Liberties and surrounding areas.

Stephen is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin. Over the past 35 years he has been intensively involved in supporting and guiding a range of voluntary/community initiatives in Ireland. His main areas of work and assignments have included:

- Promoting and supporting community based enterprise in Belfast as a management consultant with Industrial Training Services, and Economic Development Worker with the Centre for Neighbourhood Development.
- Policy formation, strategic development and project support work for the Youth Employment Agency in Dublin. This primarily related to the Agency's Community Enterprise Programme, the national support programme for local employment initiatives
- Work for the Ireland Funds, the largest independent grantgiving foundation in Ireland. Functions included preparing and presenting policy papers and, for a 3 year period, operating as Executive Director of the Funds. Stephen Rourke was on the Board of Philanthropy Ireland for 10 years (including a 5 year period as chairperson); he is currently a Board member of St. Stephen's Green Trust (and was chairperson of this charitable foundation from 2007 until 2017).
- Policy development and organisational development work for Dublin Inner City Partnership; Pobal (assessment of grant procedures and development of policy on disability); Clondalkin Partnership; Irish Youth Foundation (needs and opportunities in Northern Ireland); Youth Council for Northern Ireland (review of Community Relations Grant Scheme); International Fund for Ireland (review of Community Relations Programme and Community Leadership Programme); Co- Operation Ireland (review of Youth, Education and Community Programme); Dublin City-Wide Drugs Crisis Campaign; South Dublin URBAN Initiative; An

Garda Síochána (Community Policing Initiative); the Diocese of Down and Dromore; Ballymun Regional Youth Resource (BRYR); and the inter-agency Travellers in Prison Initiative.

- The formulation of development plans for the Church of Ireland Youth Council; East Bank Development Project (a major youth and community initiative in Derry); Glencree Centre for Reconciliation; Dublin Inner City Partnership (production of strategic plan for the North-West Inner City of Dublin); Cáirde, support organisation for people with AIDS; the Fermanagh Trust; Spirit of Enniskillen Bursary Scheme; Killinarden Education Network; Tallaght Drugs Task Force; An Síol and MACRO community development projects; Parkinson's Association of Ireland; Disability Federation of Ireland; Westmeath Community Development; HIV Ireland; TESO (Travellers Education Support Options) project in Finglas, Dublin 11; and Moyross Community Enterprise Centre.
- Independent evaluations for Tallaght Partnership (analysis of effectiveness/impact); Co-operation Ireland (evaluation of series of significant cross-border exchange programmes); Tallaght Centre for the Unemployed; Blanchardstown Youth Service (evaluation of programme for early school leavers); Barnardos (evaluation of Edenderry Family Centre); Dublin Inner City Partnership (evaluation of Community Technical Aid); Foróige (evaluation of work with young mothers); National Drugs Strategy Team (evaluation of projects in the Tallaght area); Limerick Social Service Council (review of Family Support Initiative); Céim ar Chéim Probation Project in Limerick; Dublin Institute of Technology (review of Chaplaincy Service); and parishes of Moyross and Southill (review of Regeneration Programme in Limerick City between 2007 and 2016).
- Project assessment and appraisal work for Pobal (appraisal of applications made to Dormant Accounts Fund, Enhancing Disability Services programme; Equality for Women Measure); Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (appraisal of cross-community and community development proposals); independent Trust Funds (including the Ireland Funds and St. Stephen's Green Trust); and New Paediatric Hospital Development Board (appraisal of Community Benefit Plans

within completed tenders for main building contracts).

- Project management work for the Franciscan Order (in relation to the re-development of Multyfarnham Abbey in County Westmeath); the Bonaventure Trust (in relation to the re-development of the Franciscan church and friary in Limerick City); Beacon of Light Counselling Centre; HIV Ireland (voluntary Board member for 10 years); Sophia Housing (in relation to buildings and land at Sean McDermott Street, Dublin 1); and The Sons of Divine Providence (in relation to lands and buildings at Lower Ballyfermot, Dublin 10).
- Work around the area of urban regeneration has included chairing the RAPID programme in Ballymun (during the period of Ballymun Regeneration); carrying out a significant independent review of the Regeneration Programme in Limerick City; and chairing St. Teresa's Gardens Regeneration Board in the South Inner City of Dublin (this involves the development of a 29 acre site in a prime strategic location which has the potential to provide 1,100 housing units).
- Production of needs analysis surveys for local communities in Dublin's Inner City (O'Devaney Gardens, East Wall, North East Inner City); in Blanchardstown (Mulhuddart, Blakestown, Mountview, Huntstown, Hartstown); and in Navan. Many of these needs analysis surveys have been carried out in conjunction with the RAPID programme and with other national anti-poverty initiatives.

Stephen has also been Chairperson and a Board member of a number of organisations over the last 30 years. He was a Board member of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation (Chairperson for five years); a Board member of Philanthropy Ireland (Chairperson for five years); a Trustee of St. Stephen's Green Trust (Chairperson for ten years); Board member of HIV Ireland (Chairperson for four years). Stephen is currently Chairperson of St. Teresa's Gardens Regeneration Board which is tasked, together with Dublin City Council, with the re-development of 29 acres of land in the South Inner City of Dublin. Stephen is also a member of the assessment committee for the Croke Park Community Fund.

These work situations have brought Stephen Rourke into contact with a broad cross-section of different interests in the community and voluntary sector. The variety of tasks

- evaluation, fund-raising, training, research, organisational development, practitioner -
have enabled him to gain a thorough understanding of the community/voluntary
sector and the needs of organisations therein.



Thank you!

If you have any questions or ideas on how to bring the recommendations in this report to life, please call (01) 453 6098 or email reception@siccda.ie.

October 2019

