

West Cork Case Study



The following case study is based on the Clonakilty Community Resource Centre Project.

Background to the Project

Family Resource Centres (FRCs) provide services to families in disadvantaged areas and offer an early step towards community participation and social inclusion. Through a bottom-up participative approach that includes representatives of marginalised groups and people from disadvantaged areas, local needs are identified by local people and give rise to a needed response within the community. FRCs provide a structure through which local services may be identified and relationships developed, however informally, to allow for collaboration, co-ordination and even the integration of service delivery and to ensure their non-duplication in times of limited funding across the range of providers operating in an area.

In the West Cork Development Partnership Strategic Plan 2018-2022 we identified that there are currently four FRCs in the West Cork Electoral Area. The strategy outlines how FRCs “funded by *TúsIa* operate in **Dunmanway** and **Caha** (Trafrask). **Castletownbere** is an outreach project funded by *TúsIa*, while **Skibbereen** is a newer FRC project supported by the HSE. The Bantry, Clonakilty and Mizen areas have no local FRC service. All four existing FRCs deliver a range of social inclusion projects in their locality with a variety of target groups. The FRCs also act as a facilitator to support delivery of additional services by 3rd parties into their local area” (such as the WCDP, for instance).

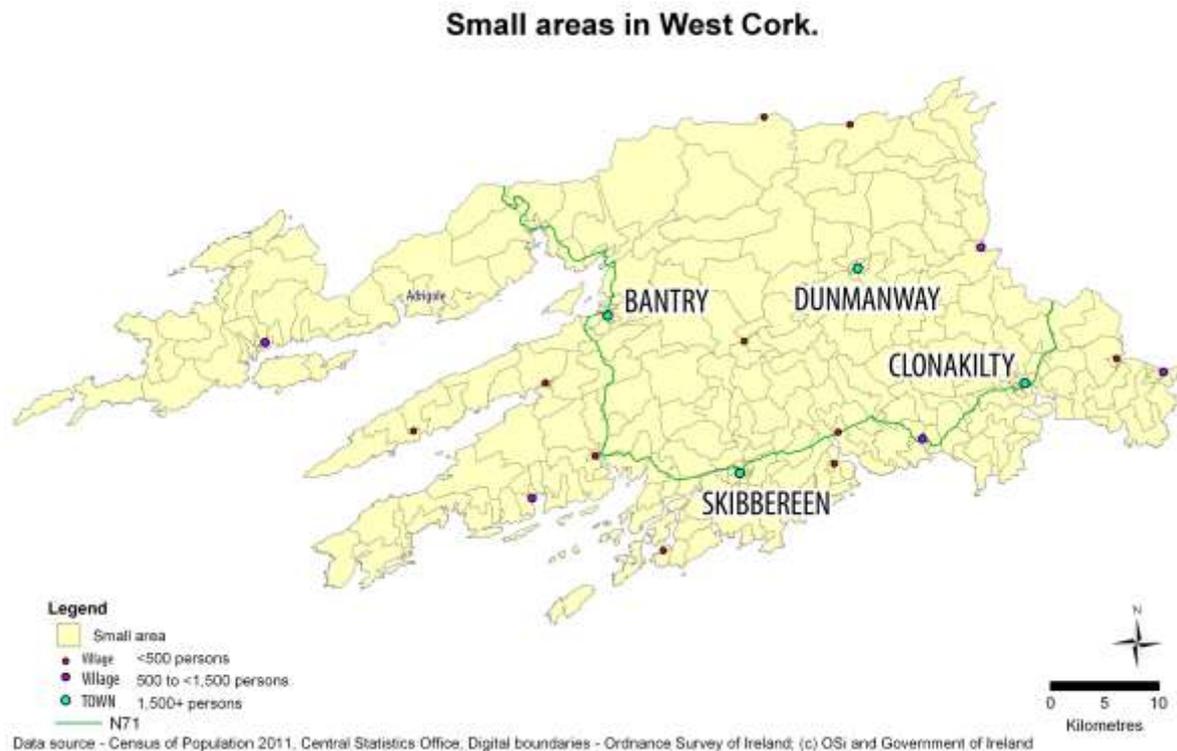
In 2016, data analysis on census information was carried out to assess the extent to which the needs of Clonakilty town and its environs identified support the call for a Family Resource Centre in the town. From this broad snapshot and with the local knowledge of the Development Officers and other local community workers based in and around Clonakilty it was decided to include the setting up of an FRC in Clonakilty as a project under the 2018-2022 strategic plan.

West Cork and Clonakilty

Clonakilty town and environs are located in the West Cork electoral area. The area comprises the south-western extent of County Cork running from the Cork border on the Beara peninsula inland through countryside to just south of Macroom and from there south-east to the coast. It covers almost 2,200 km². Figure 1 shows that Clonakilty, along with Bantry, Dunmanway and Skibbereen, comprise the four larger towns in the sub-region, and that small areas (SAs) - the smallest administrative unit for which census data are made available by the

CSO - become concentrated in these more built-up settlements. This framework for spatial data allows us to explore the pattern of disadvantage even at town level.

Figure 1: West Cork Electoral Area



Population and distribution

At the time of the analysis, the 2011 census data was used and it identified the population of West Cork was 56,530, comprising 14% of the total population of County Cork (excl. Cork City). The population density was 26 persons per km², less than 50% that of the county (54 per km²) and 40% of the state average (67 per km²), reflecting the rurality of the area. Clonakilty is the largest town in the sub-region with a population of 4,721 and lies along the N71, the main tourist route from Cork city to Killarney (compared with Bantry (3,348), Skibbereen (2,670), and Dunmanway (1,585)). With only one-fifth of the area's population living in these towns, the vast majority reside in smaller settlements and open countryside. Such dispersed rural living points to the logistical challenges of delivering services to support West Cork communities at every stage of the life cycle from newborns to the elderly. The challenges become even greater when trying to reach marginalised groups within communities or those living in disadvantaged areas.

Disadvantaged Areas

The Pobal HP Deprivation Index (Haase and Pratschke, 2012) synthesises a range of indicator variables from the Census of Population to measure affluence and deprivation across three dimensions: demographic profile, social class composition and the labour market

situation¹. Relative index scores provide a comparison of each place relative to all other places in 2011 around a national average of ‘zero’. Negative scores on the index imply cumulative disadvantage, while positive values are associated with affluence. Scores range from below -30 (extremely disadvantaged) to over 30 (extremely affluent).

Deprivation in West Cork

A look at deprivation in West Cork suggests why Clonakilty may have been overlooked for an FRC up to now. The adjacent map shows the Pobal HP relative deprivation scores across West Cork in 2011. Marginally deprived areas are most extensive throughout rural areas across the centre and west of the sub-region (light yellow denotes deprivation worse than the national average with scores of -10 to 0). While disadvantaged areas (with scores of -20 to -10) are found in Clonakilty town, the presence of higher-income city commuters, the extent of above-average scores in the environs, and a number of affluent neighbourhoods, have combined to give the town a superior socio-economic reputation relative to other towns. While this is the case to some degree, a closer look at the following table reveals neighbourhoods at risk of being left behind.

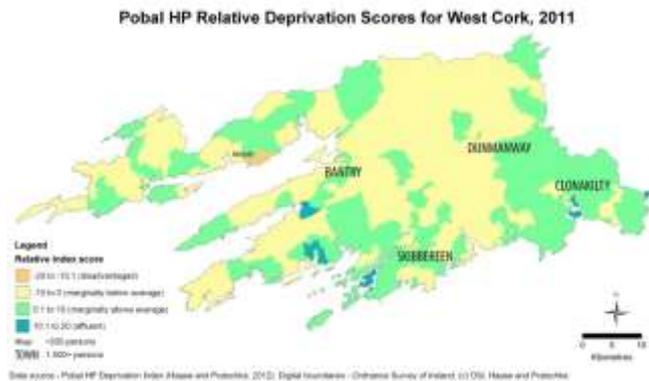
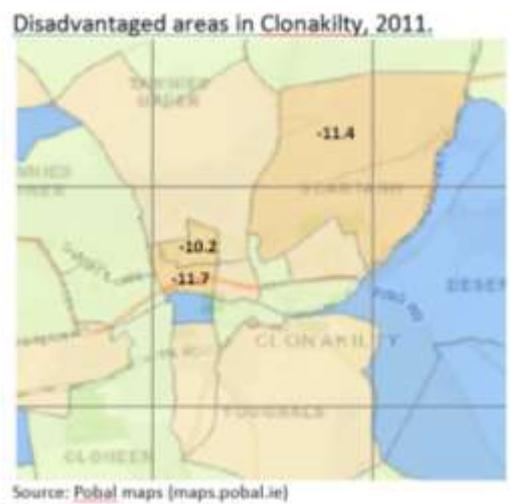


Table 1 details the 11 disadvantaged areas in the sub-region with a close-up of their characteristics. Values in the table are colour coded around the national average for each variable to help the reader interpret the extent of change in each SA. It shows that the 6th, 7th and 11th most disadvantaged small areas in West Cork are to be found in Clonakilty town.

Unlike the other towns in West Cork, **Clonakilty** displays a high degree of social segregation with affluent areas (in blue with scores of +10 to +20) interspersed with disadvantaged and other deprived areas (see adjacent map).

In the town centre, the neighbourhood that includes Oliver Plunkett St., St. Paul's Close and Tawnies Mews has a deprivation score of -11.7 and adjoins the neighbourhood south of Old Chapel Lane and west of Patrick St. with its score of -10.2. Both neighbourhoods have lost one-tenth or more of their populations leaving behind residents characterised by low education levels, above-average unemployment and high rates of elderly residents, people with disabilities and lone parent households. East of the town centre, Scartagh encompassing Boyle St., Convent Way and the area east of McCurtain Hill shows similar characteristics as well as a very high youth dependency ratio signalling young



¹ Haase, T. and Pratschke, J. (2012) The 2011 Pobal HP Deprivation Index for Small Areas (SA): Introduction and Reference Tables available from www.pobal.ie.

families in the area also. Over one-fifth of the population here (89 residents) are aged 18 years or younger.

Table 1: Characteristics of ‘disadvantaged areas’ in West Cork, 2011

Small area and rank of deprivation in West Cork		2011 Characteristics														
		Rel. deprivation index 2006-11	Rel. deprivation index 2011	2011 population	2011 households	% population change 2006-11	% third-level education	% primary education only	Elderly dependency ratio	Youth dependency ratio	% lone parent households	% unemployed males				% unemployed females
	≥ 1.66 times above national average					13.6	50.8	26.6	28.9	53.0	35.9	37.0	24.9	13.1	21.6	29.2
	≥ 1.33 times above national average					10.9	40.7	21.3	23.1	42.4	28.7	29.7	20.0	10.5	17.3	23.4
	≥ national average					8.2	30.6	16.0	17.4	31.9	21.6	22.3	15.0	7.9	13.0	17.6
	< national average					8.2	30.6	16.0	17.4	31.9	21.6	22.3	15.0	7.9	13.0	17.6
	≤0.66 national average					5.4	20.2	10.6	11.5	21.1	14.3	14.7	9.9	5.2	8.6	11.6
	≤0.33 national average					2.7	10.1	5.3	5.7	10.5	7.1	7.4	5.0	2.6	4.3	5.8
						Variables used in deprivation index score							Other			
1	Bantry Reenrou East	↓	-18.7	227	103	-24	4	36	28	19	50	35	18	43	31	22
2	Skibbereen: Market St., Warner's Ln., High St. West, Table Lane, Millview, Rose Villas	↓	-13.0	131	72	-13	17	25	61	9	29	33	29	4	47	27
3	Dunmanway South: Quarry Rd., Victoria Tce., Pk Lawn, Michael McCarthy Tce.	↓	-12.9	193	96	-15	13	28	33	20	31	30	23	14	32	23
4	Dunmanway Sth: Kilbarra, Kilbarry Rd.	↓	-12.6	141	63	-8	11	23	24	53	42	31	10	32	35	18
5	Bantry Reenrou West: St. Canirs Pl., George's Row, Farmer's Ln.	↓	-12.2	159	75	0	14	23	22	31	28	37	30	4	36	22
6	Clonakilty: Oliver Plunkett St., St. Paul's Cl., Tawnies Mews	↓	-11.7	150	70	-10	12	30	30	21	40	27	23	25	47	21
7	Clonakilty: Scartagh, Boyle St., Convent Wy., E. of Mccurtain Hill	↑	-11.4	396	86	-13	25	37	126	55	29	27	16	33	12	44
8	Bantry: Chapel St., Parade Field, High St., Orchard Hill, Beacon Hill	↓	-10.7	147	84	-24	11	23	29	14	25	24	18	1	55	20
9	Skibbereen: Hillcrest, Hawthorns, Fachtna's Terrace	↓	-10.5	263	106	7	13	17	16	36	41	37	12	28	30	16
10	Adrigole: Faha, Trafrask, Roosk, Curragh	↑	-10.4	130	48	1	20	35	43	51	0	29	16	n/a	19	12
11	Clonakilty: Old Chapel Ln., Patrick St.	↑	-10.2	189	88	-14	10	33	38	13	44	18	18	20	36	24



n/a not applicable as no social housing provided in the area

small area became less deprived relative to other areas

small area became more deprived relative to other areas

Source: CSO Small Area Population statistics 2011, www.cso.ie

Collaboration with the local stakeholders

In July 2016, unbeknown to WCDP there was a small group who had come together to discuss the idea of a Resource Centre. This included the No Name Club (Youth); Citizens Information; Clonakilty Wellness Group (Mental Health) and the Grace Centre Committee (Community group). This was reported at a Citizens Information meeting, at which the Development Officer for WCDP was Chair and the link was made. Both groups came together in September 2016, shared information and agreed on an initial plan.

Engagement of target group on local stakeholder group

The initial plan was to hold a public meeting to inform the general public about the proposal and to invite members from the public to become part of a stakeholder group. A central accessible location was booked (O'Donovan's Hotel on Pearse Street) early in the evening (7.00pm) in October 2016 and a publicity campaign was launched, each of the members taking responsibility to promote the event. Posters were distributed, announcements were made from various pulpits, on radio, through the Southern Star and through Social Media. The group had invited Dunmanway Family Resource Centre to give an overview of '*What is a Family Resource Centre*' and then a facilitated discussion was held with the 50 interested parties who had turned up on whether Clonakilty needed and indeed wanted a Resource Centre. The outcome was yes – we both need and want a Resource Centre. A further 5 members joined the stakeholder group.

A meeting was held in November of the new enlarged stakeholder group and ways of engaging the views of the public and bringing them along as part of the process were discussed. The WCDP Development Officer had attended training entitled *Planning for Real* as a possible and innovative way forward. This was agreed and on 24 November 2016, we booked training in the Planning for Real method for January 2017. <http://www.planningforreal.org.uk/what-is-pfr/>

Planning for Real is a participative community planning tool which provides participants with knowledge of how to plan and facilitate a Planning for Real community engagement programme. It was devised in the UK and is based on a 3d model whereby the process allows residents/the community to register their views on a range of issues, to work together to identify priorities and in partnership with local agencies to go on to develop an action plan for change.

Training was held in Clonakilty in January 2017 and 15 people committed to, participated in and received certification following the 2 day training programme. The training was organised and funded through the WCDP SICAP budget.

Planning for Real

Following the training the group set about building a 3d model of Clonakilty using the methods acquired on the course. This involved contacting the local Engineer for Cork County Council who was most helpful in sourcing maps of the town to begin the mammoth task of painting and building the 3d model.



The Clonakilty Arts Centre made their space available to the group for the design and build and indeed the housing of the model. The Cork Mental Health group made their centre available for regular meetings. Alongside the model building the group members each undertook to compile a list of community and voluntary groups in the Clonakilty area.

It was suggested to us that we use the community to help us build the model. A number of sessions were held in the Boys National School and in the Direct Provision Centre but ultimately the group

ended up building most of it ourselves. This was an arduous task and would definitely need to be considered carefully.

Methods of engaging the public – the model

Once the model was complete the group held a series of public meetings and met with local community groups for the following 6 months culminating with the last event in Clonakilty library on 11 April 2018.

These included but the list is not exhaustive:

- The parish centre (after Sunday mass)
- Methodist hall
- Coaction West Cork
- Cope Foundation
- Clonakilty Lodge (Direct Provision Centre)
- Travellers Centre
- 6 Local primary schools
- Clonakilty Library
- Town Council Meeting
- Clonakilty Hospital

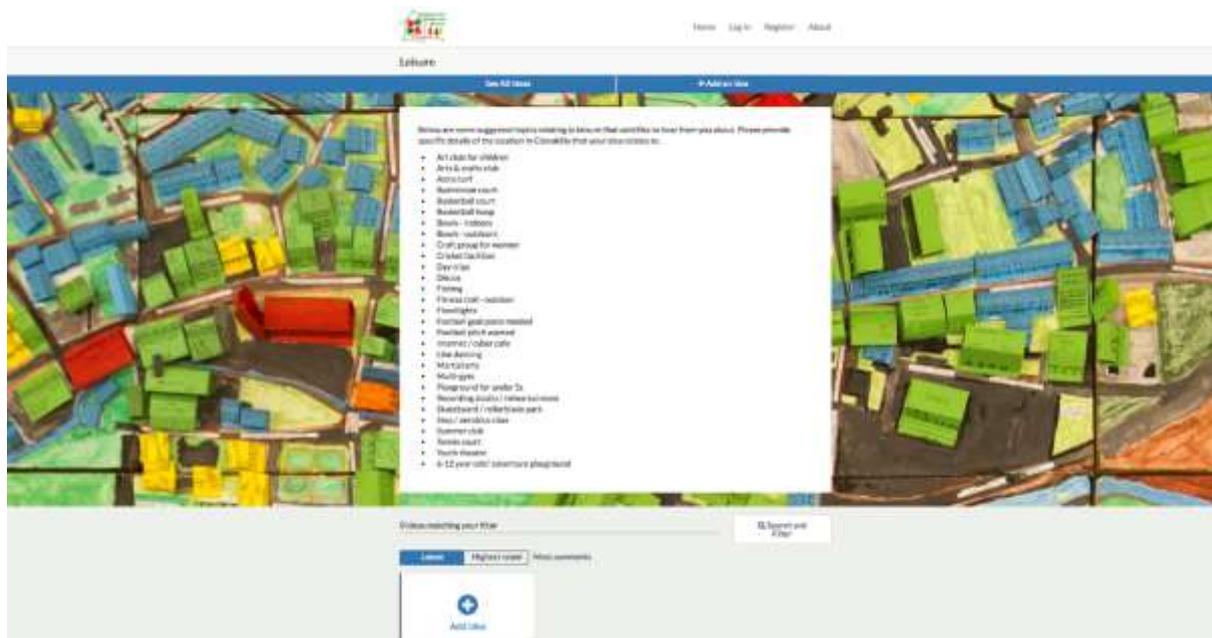


All the feedback was collated and inputted on EXCEL. It has been categorised by colour (green/blue etc according to environment/community or own idea etc); location (street name) and idea (problem/suggestion) and the number of times during an event that the same idea was suggested.

The ideas have yet to be prioritised and report compiled to feed back to the appropriate groups as the Resource Centre will not be responsible for everything suggested.

Methods of engagement – online dialogue

Alongside the 3d model another innovation method of engagement was used. This was again a UK company and involved an online forum. <https://westcork.dialogue-app.com/>



The online dialogue was through a company called Delib <https://www.delib.net/dialogue/>

Dialogue has been used predominantly to give public bodies a transparent, engaging way to involve citizens and stakeholders in their decisions. We felt it would be a way that we could engage target group members who would like a say but who may not feel comfortable engaging through the public meetings or the Planning for Real model for a variety of personal reasons. Fortunately we had the support of the team in Dialogue to set up the site as though it was user friendly none of the group had ever used anything similar during the course of their work or leisure. We encouraged use of this site in the promotion alongside the 'model on tour'. Again the feedback has been collated alongside the feedback of the model. This was sourced, organised and funded through WCDP SICAP programme.

Site visits

Having agreed that the consultation was complete the group set about looking at moving the project forward. The next phase of the project was a site visit on 28 May 2018 to McAuley Place in Naas <http://mcauleyplace.ie/>. This project was using a Housing Project model and building a community element into it. The group came away buzzing from this visit and set about exploring possible options in this direction. The group have looked at potential properties in Clonakilty and ultimately have begun discussions with the Methodist Church.

The house owned by the Methodist Church is located in a central location in Clonakilty. It has remained vacant for 10 years and is in need of renovation but has good potential with CAS funding and support from the Cork Mental Health Foundation. This could be a win-win situation all around as Cork Mental Health Foundation are short of properties in Clonakilty, it would provide a use for the Methodist Church who would like a tenant with a social conscience and a central space for the resource centre. Discussions to finalise the agreement are on-going but took a back seat for the summer.

In the meantime in order not to lose momentum the group put a proposal to the board of the Travellers Centre who have agreed to house the Resource Centre one morning per week in the autumn of 2018.

Conclusion

Meetings have been virtually every 6 weeks throughout the entire period (July 2016 to September 2018) with the exception of summer 2018. It has been a long but very engaging process and one where a new chapter is about to unfold. Financial support has been forthcoming to date through SICAP, the Lions Club, St Vincent dePaul, Cork Mental Health Foundation and through donations at the public events. Benefit in kind has been provided through the HSE (bus to Naas and use of St David's), WCDP, Clonakilty Arts Centre and each member of the group has given time to training, research, consultations, building the model and planning meetings.

The centre will open on Friday 12th October 2018, initially hosted by the West Cork Traveller Centre in Clonakilty.