

Croom FRC Strategic Plan 2022 - 2027



Summary Report



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Croom Family Resource Centre

CFRC was first located on 40 Main Street, Croom, County Limerick but to provide a wider array of supports and services, CFRC has since relocated to the Croom Mills in Croom.

Croom Family Resource Centre (CFRC) is a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity located in Croom, County Limerick.

The Centre aims to strengthen and empower young people, families, and vulnerable individuals within the community by providing support suited to their needs. The core of these services is tailored around the needs of local families and young people, through the provision of childcare support, community development, family support, youth work programmes, counselling, education, and training programmes. In addition, local community services, information and health supports are provided to those most in need.

The work of FRCs is guided by community development and family support approaches, principles, values and methods. The staff and workers empower, enable, and support communities to improve their quality of life.

The Centre is part of the National Family Resource Centre (FRC) programme, Ireland’s largest National Family and

Community-based support. There are currently 120+ FRCs part of the programme working towards similar CFRC principles and methods. A key role of Family Resource Centres is to improve the wellbeing of parents and children by supporting all families through the normal challenges of family life.

CFRC has recently completed an extensive strategic planning process to determine the Centre’s priority areas and objectives over the next five years. The resulting data-driven strategy has been designed to address the needs of individuals and families, particularly but not exclusively those experiencing disadvantage within the catchment.

This strategy and accompanying action plans have been drawn up in consultation with the local community, volunteers, agencies and staff. This document provides an overview of the key findings from the planning process, as well as a snapshot of CFRC’s priorities for the next five years.

Our Vision

Our Vision for the community is to be full of engaged, well-adjusted, confident individuals and that reach their full potential.

Our Mission

To work with the community to encourage and enable all children, families, individuals and groups to actively participate and be included in a society that is free from prejudice, inequality, discrimination and exclusion and which will contribute to their greatest possible well-being.

Our Values

The principles that guide our work are respect, inclusion, openness and understanding. It is very important to us that every person coming into contact with us is welcomed, listened to and treated with dignity. Croom Family Resource Centre works from community development principles. We believe that people themselves have the capacity to solve problems and staff work with volunteers and other organisations to resolve issues and bring about change.

The plan is built around the five national outcomes as identified in the national policy framework *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures*.

The five national outcomes that we want for all our community are that they:

1. Are active and healthy, with positive physical and mental wellbeing
2. Are achieving their full potential in all areas of learning and development
3. Are safe and protected from harm
4. Have economic security and opportunity
5. Are connected, respected and contributing to their world.



01 About Us

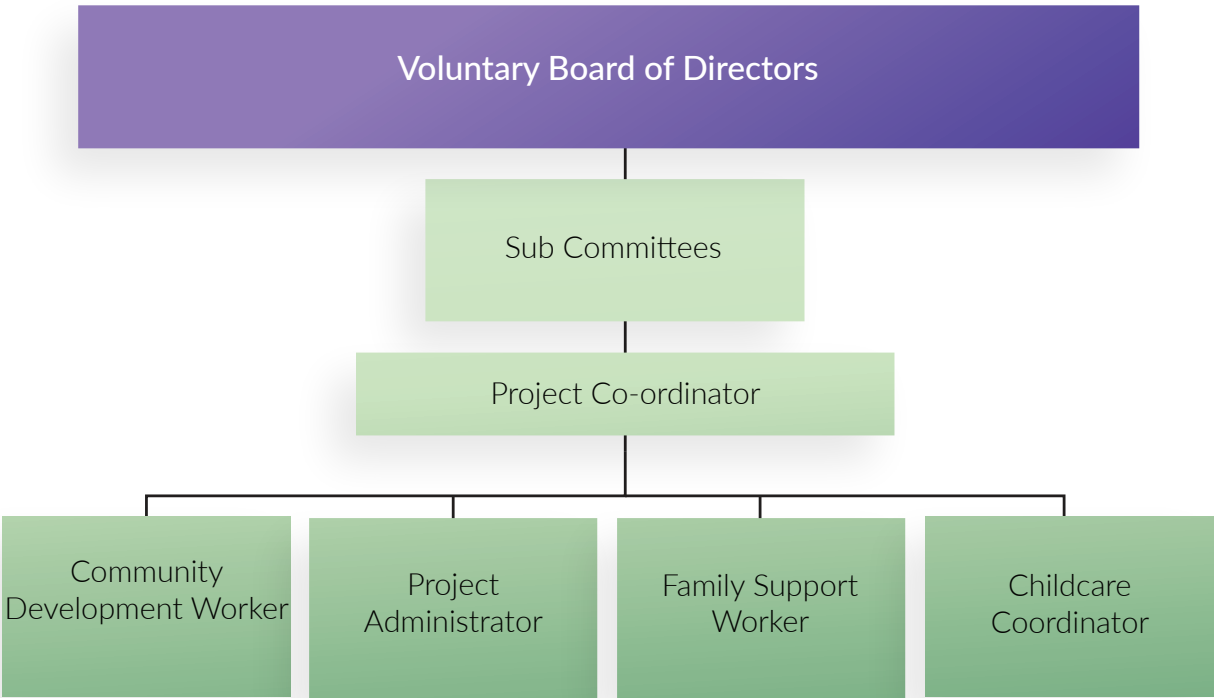
About Us



Our Governance

The centre is a not-for-profit organisation and is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority (Reg. Charity No.20200336). CFRC is run by a Voluntary Board of Management (VBOM). Members of the VBOM are recruited from the greater Croom area, and contribute a variety of interests, perspectives, and experience.

The VBOM ensure the range of supports, services and development opportunities are tailored to address the needs of individuals, groups, families, and communities. The FRC offers a combination of universal services (open to everyone) and targeted services (aimed at those adjudged to be in greatest need), and community work principles underpin all work. The range of programmes is diverse and updated regularly to meet the community’s needs.

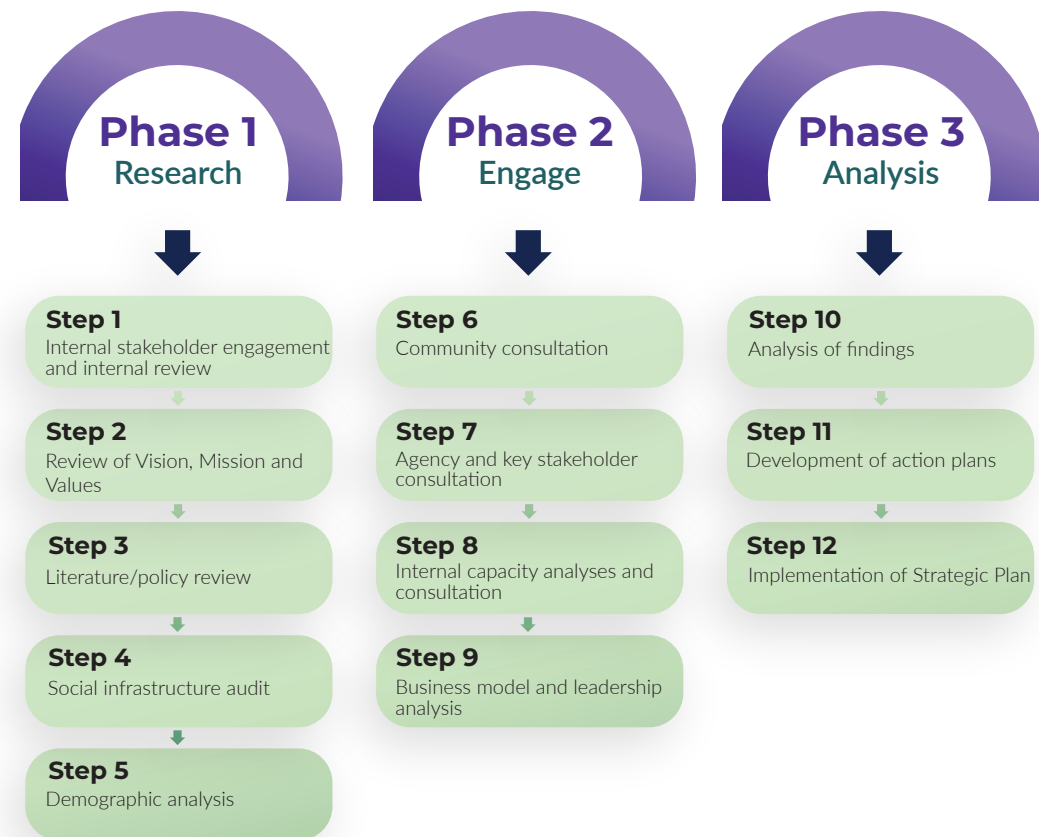


02 Our Planning Process

Strategic Plan Process

Our Planning Approach

The planning process included three phases: research, engage, and analysis. The research phase consisted of a literature and policy review, a demographic analysis, and a review of supports and services available to people living in the catchment area. During the engagement phase, a wide range of stakeholders were consulted with to determine their perceptions and experiences of CFRC. Stakeholders included service users and other community members, service providing organisations, and CFRC staff and VBOM members. The delivery phase included the synthesis and analysis of all of the findings from the first two phases. These key findings informed the development and implementation of the strategic plan.



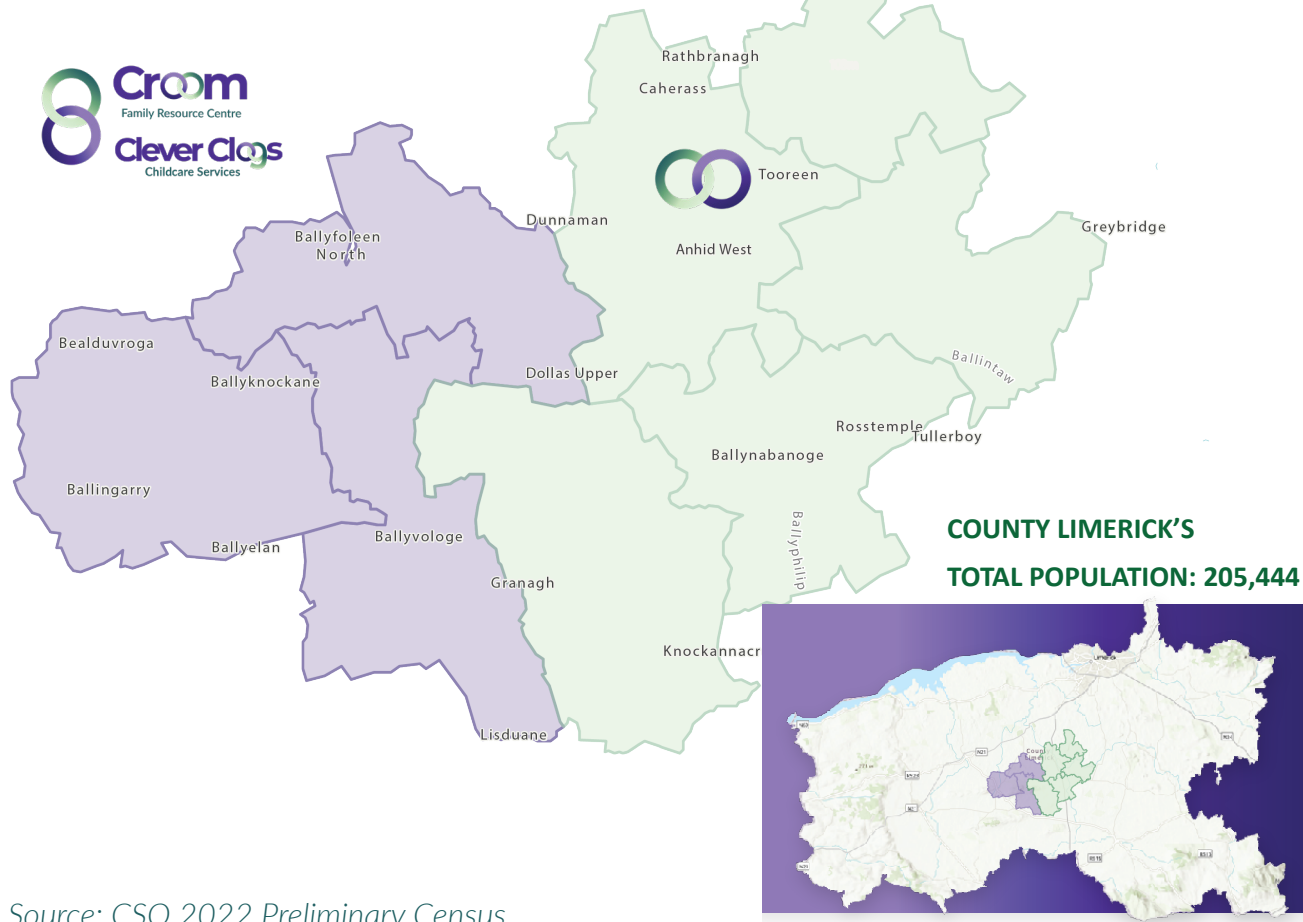
Location and Catchment

Our Catchment

CFRC has a primary and secondary catchment, however, their open door policy means they do not turn community members outside of these areas away. The primary catchment area comprises five Electoral Divisions (EDs): Croom, Garrane, Abbeyville, Ballynabanoge and Coolrus. The secondary catchment area consists of three EDs: Ballygrennan, Ballingarry and Kilfinny.

According to preliminary Census 2022 data, the population of the primary catchment fell by **-3.9%** between 2022 and 2016 (from 3,081 to 2,960). In the same timeframe, the population in the secondary catchment increased by **4.1%** (from 1,513 to 1,575).

PRIMARY CATCHMENT TOTAL POPULATION: 2,960
SECONDARY CATCHMENT TOTAL POPULATION: 1,575



Source: CSO 2022 Preliminary Census



Demographic Analysis

As part of the planning process, an extensive demographic analysis of the catchment area was undertaken using data sets available from the Central Statistics Office, including the Census 2016, Census 2022,, Arrivals from Ukraine in Ireland Series, among others.

Compared to the State, there was a higher...

- Proportion of people **looking after the home/family** in the combined catchment area
- Rate of **car ownership** across the combined catchment
- **Old-age dependency ratio** in the combined catchment
- Proportion of people with a **disability** in the primary catchment
- Level of self reported **bad health** the combined catchment.

Compared to the State, there was a lower...

- Proportion of **one-parent families** in the combined catchment
- Rate of **unemployment** in the combined catchment
- Level of **educational attainment** across the combined catchment
- Proportion of **foreign nationals** in the combined catchment
- Rate of **Irish Travellers** in the combined catchment
- Rate of **ethnic diversity** in the combined catchment
- Proportion of people with a **disability** in the secondary catchment.

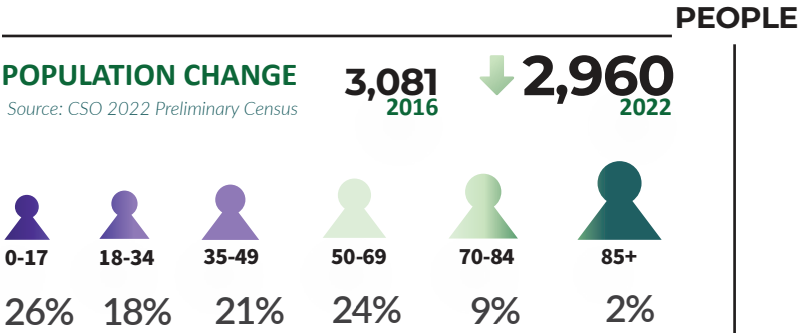
Other key findings included:

- An increase in the proportion of people aged 55 years and older in the combined catchment
- An increase in the overall dependency ratios in the combined catchment
- Increasing ethnic diversity rates across the catchment between 2011 and 2016
- A new community of Ukranian refugees (As of July 2022, 130 Ukrainian refugees had PPSNs registered within the Adare-Rathkeale Local Electoral Area, which includes the entirety of the combined catchment).

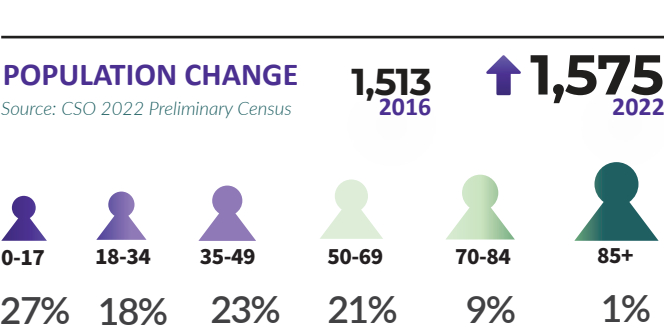


Community Snapshot *Census 2016*

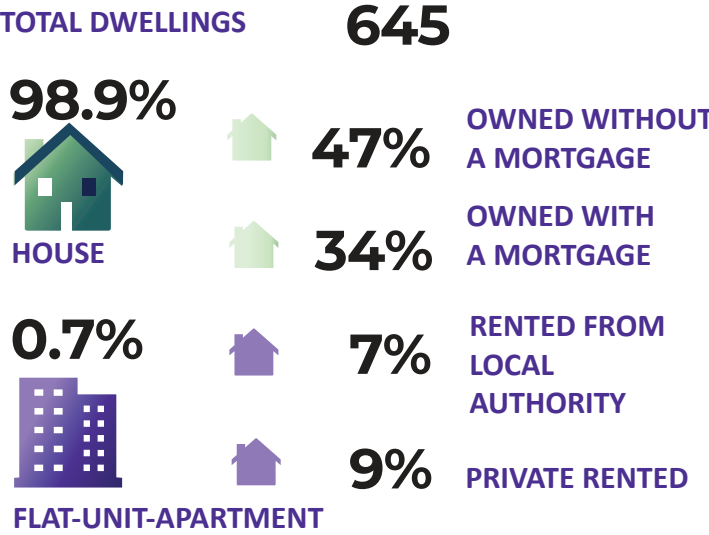
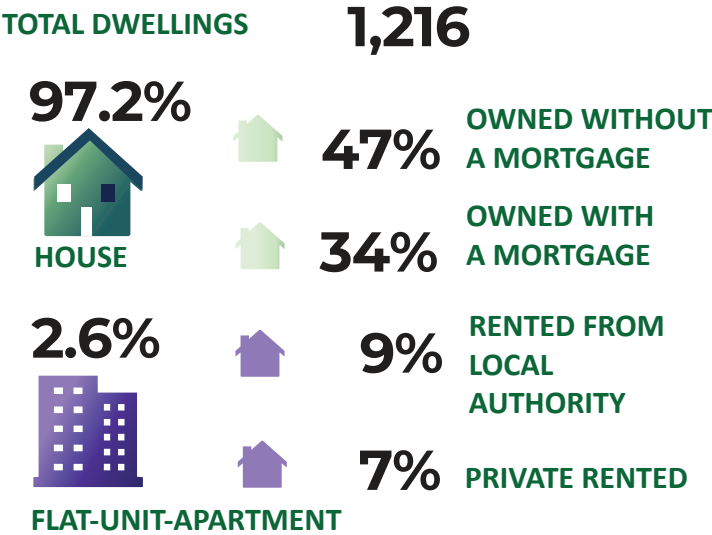
PRIMARY CATCHMENT



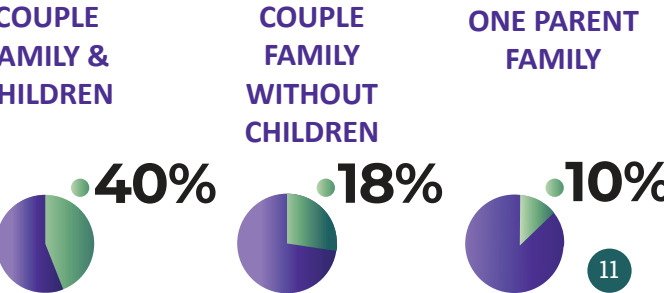
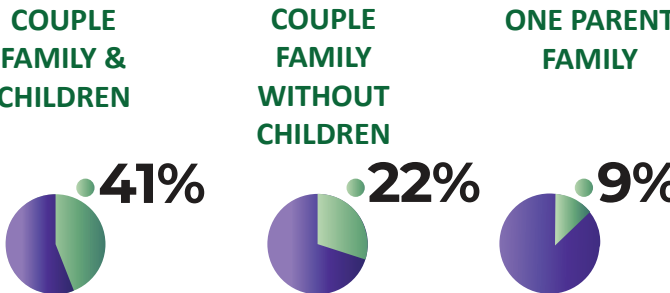
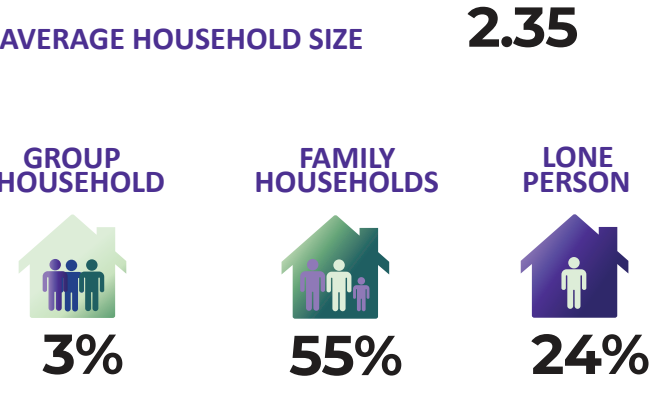
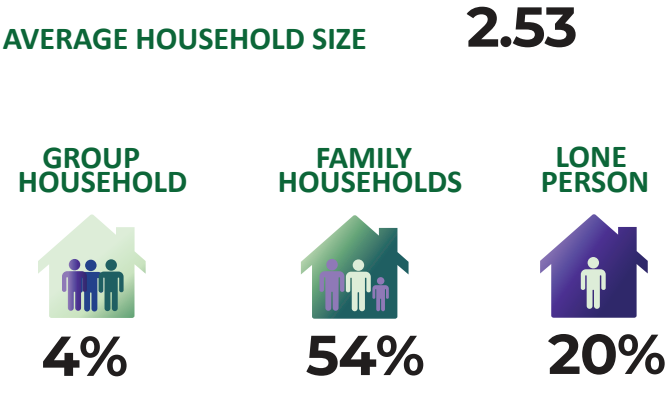
SECONDARY CATCHMENT



HOMES



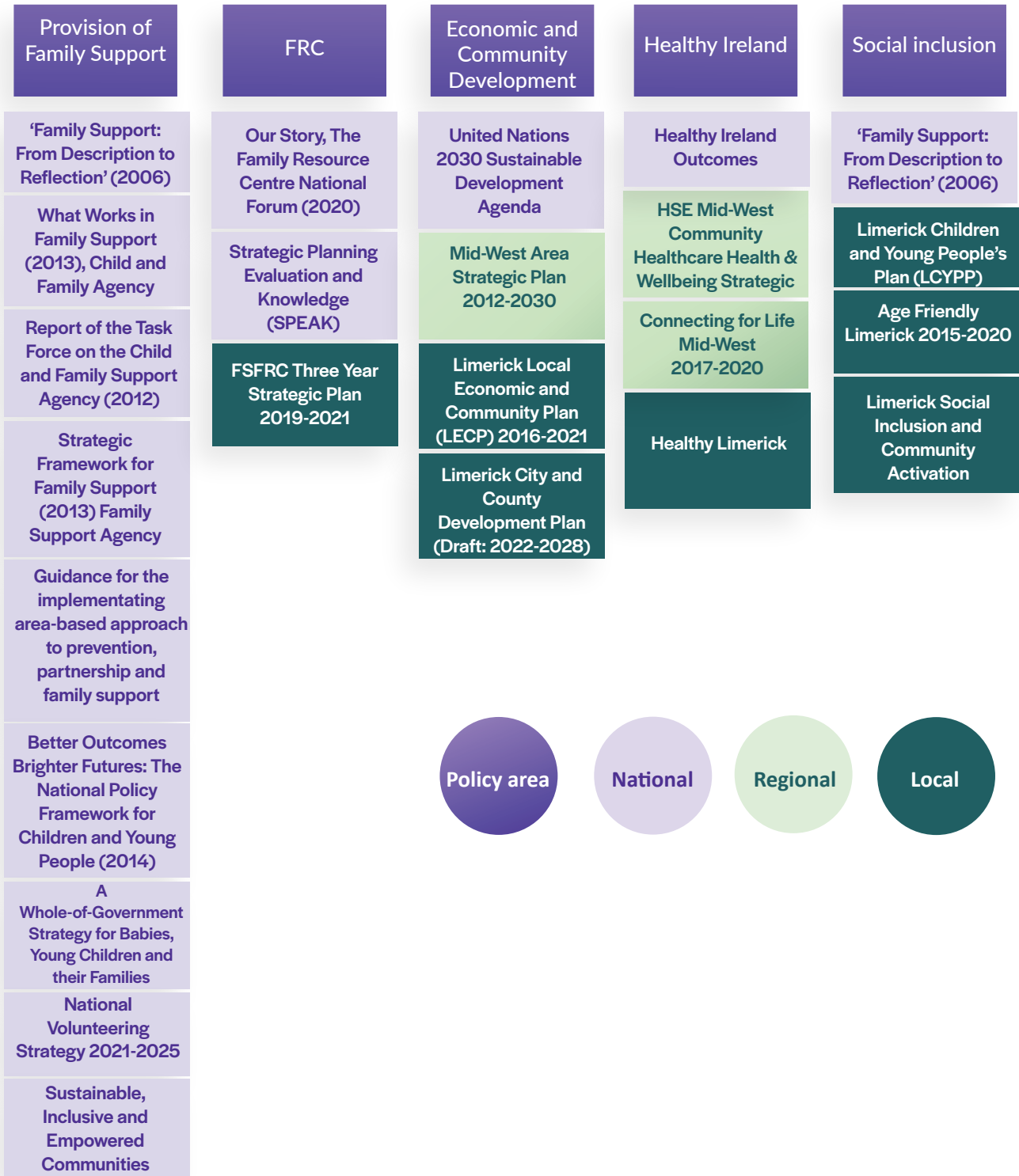
HOUSEHOLDS





Policy Context

Progress towards improving the lives of people in the community requires a collaborative approach. CFRC ensures their work aligns to several national, regional and local policies, as shown in the image below.

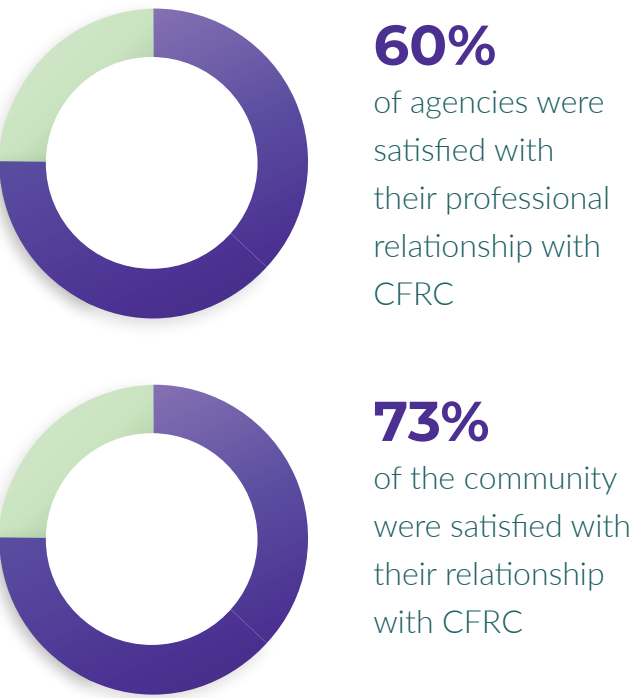


Key stakeholder Consultation

Consultation captured the viewpoints of people who live in, work in, or visit the catchment area. The consultation was open to all ages, genders, socioeconomic backgrounds and ethnicities. Throughout the consultation process, we heard from 100+ people regarding the existing and future service provision at the FRC. The figure below shows how the views and experiences were captured.



Satisfaction rates



Challenges in the community

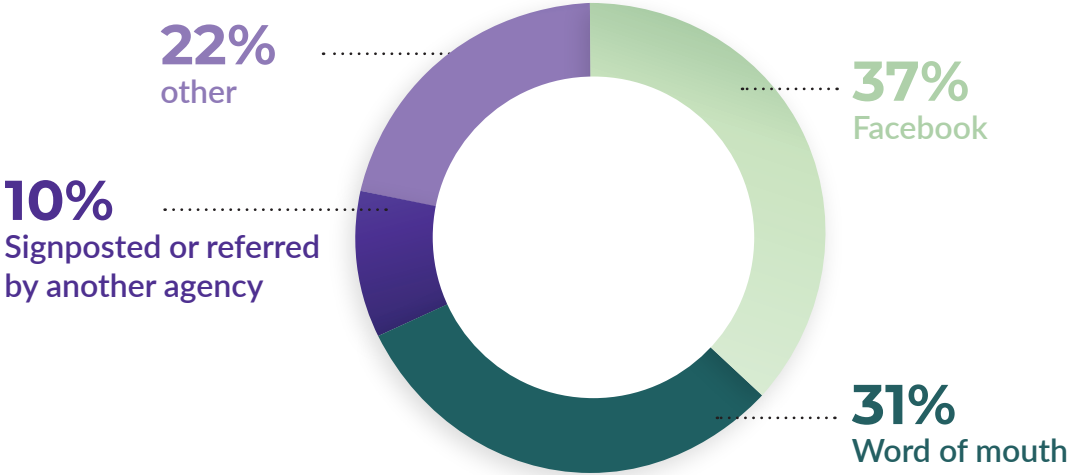
It was identified during consultation that the top 3 challenges for the community were financial difficulties; drug and alcohol misuse and mental health.



What the community and agencies said:



How did you hear about the FRC?



03 Our Plan 2022-2027



Our Plan

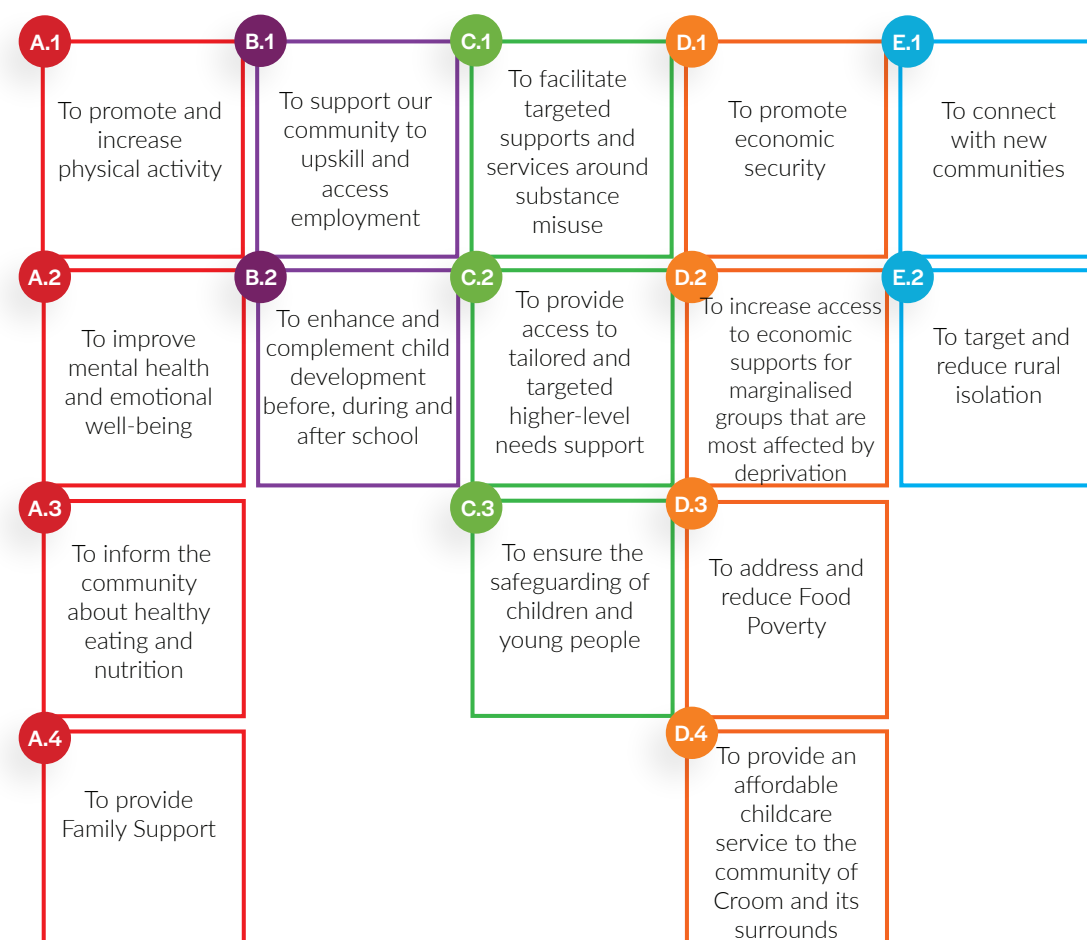
Our Findings

The following section shows how the key findings from the strategic planning research categorised by the national outcomes. Key findings from the demographic analysis, the supports and services audit, and the consultation were analysed together. From this synthesised analysis, key priority work areas and action plans were developed.

National Outcomes



Priority Areas



Active & Healthy

Desktop Analysis Central Statistics Office 2016

Health

The catchment self-reported having higher level of poor health.



Disability

The catchment had a higher proportion of people with a disability than the State.



Dependency Ratio

The old age dependency ratio was higher in the catchment than in the State.



Service provision

Supports and services included counselling and other mental health supports for both youth and adults, fitness classes and activities, sexual health programmes, and a Traveller health advocacy service.

Consultation indicated that a wide variety of regional and local services had waiting lists.

Consultation

"Increased support for mental health and addiction."
- Community Survey

Areas to protect

- Continued and enhanced provision of counselling services to the community
- Protection and expansion in family support services
- Linking with the HSE in delivering community-based health and wellbeing supports such as the living well program etc.

"More availability of counselling [needed]."
- Community Survey

Challenges

- A need for increased mental health and health supports targeting substance misuse
- Limited opportunities for outdoor activities
- A need for mental health and counselling supports for a range of ages, from children and young people through to adults.

"Availability of counselling/ psychotherapy/psychologist meeting groups for all ages..."
- Community survey

Future Opportunities

- Review the sustainability of the existing counselling serviced due to significant community and stakeholder demand
- Identify need for target substance misuses response.

Priority Areas



To promote and increase physical activity.



To improve mental health and emotional well-being.



To inform the community about healthy eating and nutrition.



To provide Family Support.



Learning & Development

Desktop Analysis Central Statistics Office 2016

Early school leavers

A slightly higher proportion of people left school before age 17 in the primary catchment than the State.



Education level

Educational attainment was low in the catchment compared to the State.



Education qualification

Health and welfare qualifications increased the most compared to the State.



Service provision

Supports and services included afterschool programmes, third level education, community and adult continuing education, computer literacy classes, a laptop library, and mainstream education supports for disabled students.

Consultation

“More Teens and youth focused work/engagement. Early school leavers.”
- Agency Survey

Areas to protect

- Childcare and afterschool programs
- Continued support for delivering quality, affordable, accessible education, and training services
- Protection of outdoor play.

“More courses for the unemployed, the youth and the elderly.”
- Community survey

Challenges

- Limited training/skills programs for young people; accessible services
- Limited times for courses
- Accommodation for learners with different lifestyles including morning and evening courses.

New FET centre a great opportunity to develop a new range of education/community supports- Agency Survey

Future Opportunities

- Investigation into opportunities to diversify the range of accredited and non-accredited courses on an ongoing basis. Recommended to link in with the ETB regarding course delivery.

Priority Areas

 To support our community to upskill and access employment.

 To enhance and complement child development before, during and after school.

Safe & Protected

Desktop Analysis Central Statistics Office 2016

Widows

There was a higher proportion of widows in the catchment than the State.



Diversity

The catchment was significantly less ethnically diverse compared to the State average.



Irish travellers

The proportion of Irish Travellers was extremely low in the secondary catchment and higher in the primary catchment compared to the State.



Service provision

Supports and services included child protection, support for rape and sexual assault victims, supports and services for women and children who are victims of domestic abuse, and family welfare services.

Consultation

The community all support each other and know each other.”- Community Survey

Areas to protect

- Continue proving a safe, non-judgemental, and inclusive environment
- Multi-agency family supports, including Meitheals.

“With the Covid people are staying home and violence is more prevalent.”
- Community Survey

Challenges

- Violence in the home was identified as the most significant challenge to being safe and protected from harm
- Alternative opportunities to gather and socialise without alcohol or drugs
- There is perceived limited garda presence.

“Permanent Garda in the community, cracking down on anti-social behaviour and drug dealing.”- Community Survey

Future Opportunities

- The FRC may benefit from cultivating a stronger relationship with An Garda Síochána
- Providing health and safety talks
- Support for the 16 days of Violence Campaign, interagency collaboration with ADAP.

Priority Areas

 To facilitate targeted supports and services around substance misuse.

 To provide access to tailored and targeted higher-level needs support.

 To ensure the safeguarding of children and young people.



Economic Security

Desktop Analysis

Unemployment

The unemployment rate was lower in the catchment than the State.



At work

The proportion of people at work was higher in the secondary catchment but lower in the primary than the State.



One parent families

There was less one parent families than the State.



Service provision

Supports and services included MABS, Community Employment schemes, supported employment for persons with a disability, housing services, food provision, and affordable childcare.

Consultation

“[always welcomed] Food hampers, financial support and access to office facilities.”
- Agency Survey

Areas to protect

- Due to financial difficulties within the community, food support should be retained and investigated as an area for expansion
- Continued support for affordable childcare services at Clever Clogs
- Continued provision of employment focused programs.

“Employment Support.”
- Community Survey

Challenges

- Financial pressures facing families in the area
- Demand for additional employment supports in the catchment
- Widespread lack of affordable accommodation within the catchment.

“Something for [ages] 17-25 that have fallen into the crack and need support to get on their feet - Community Survey

Future Opportunities

- Engagement with Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)
- A new premises with up-to-date technology could generate additional revenue through rental of the space to additional agencies and organisations.

Priority Areas



To promote economic security.



To increase access to economic supports for marginalised groups that are most affected by deprivation.



To address and reduce Food Poverty.



To provide an affordable childcare service to the community of Croom and its surrounds.

Connected & Respected

Desktop Analysis Central Statistics Office 2016

Car ownership

A higher proportion of households in both catchments owned at least one car compared to the State level.



Commute

Shorter household commute times within the catchment than the State.



Older adults

There was an increase in the number of older adults between 2011 and 2016.



Service provision

Connected and Respected supports. Supports and services included: social and support groups, befriending services, men's sheds, women's groups, youth programmes, and community development projects.

Consultation

“I think regular engagement with the community will determine emerging needs.”
- Agency Survey

Areas to protect

- Continued and enhanced provision of counselling services to the community
- Protection and expansion in family support services
- Linking with the HSE in delivering community-based health and wellbeing supports such as the living well program etc.

“Youth centres and opportunities for [youth] to hang out and gain support”
- Community Survey

Challenges

- A need for increased mental health and health supports targeting substance misuse
- Limited opportunities for outdoor activities
- A need for mental health and counselling supports for a range of ages, from children and young people through to adults.

“The village is going to grow over the next 5 years...Now is the time to promote these services.” - Community Survey

Future Opportunities

- Review the sustainability of the existing counselling serviced due to significant community and stakeholder demand
- Explore the potential to provide targeted substance misuse supports.

Priority Areas



To connect with new communities.



Target rural isolation.

04 Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring & Evaluation

The Strategic Plan and annual action plans identified in Section 7 should be reviewed quarterly or as needed to make the necessary changes required to support the FRC's mission. The VBOM should monitor and evaluate the current level of service and community needs annually to ensure the needs of the catchment are being met and that all the family support services and programmes provide the highest quality service.

The Strategic Plan and annual action plans will be subjective to formative internal evaluation through the following methods:

- The staff of CFRC will provide reports on the work plan for the VBOM
- SPEAK Returns, Annual Progress Reports and FRC Evaluation Reports will provide the main evidential materials from which the Board can monitor the progress of the Strategic Plan
- Consultation with the community and users of the Centre.

The CFRC DataHub profile will provide an ongoing, up-to-date socioeconomic analysis of the catchment area. This should be referenced periodically throughout the lifetime of the Strategic Plan to ascertain any necessary changes to actions/objectives required to meet emerging community needs. Where necessary, the Board should seek external consultancy assistance to navigate operational context changes.

Success/achievement will be measured later against the outlined actions and objectives, and whether the Outcomes have been reached.



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Croom
Family Resource Centre

Clever Clogs
Childcare Services