



Roscrea Family Support Needs Analysis



September 2020

Prepared by: Curley Consulting
info@curleyconsulting.ie
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/hilarycurley/>

Family Support Needs in Roscrea

September, 2020

Commissioned by:

North Tipperary Development Company CLG & Tusla Mid-West with support from Tipperary Children and Young People Services Committee & Tipperary County Council.



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Introduction | 3 |
| 1.1 Background to Research | 3 |
| 1.2 Definition of Family Support | 4 |
| 2. Profile of Roscrea Area | 5 |
| 2.1 Socio-Economic Picture | 6 |
| 3. Consultation Analysis | 22 |
| 3.1 Family Survey | 22 |
| 3.2 Young People..... | 27 |
| 3.3 Service Providers Consultation | 28 |
| 4. Conclusions and Recommendations | 33 |
| 4.1 Summary of Findings..... | 33 |
| 4.2 Proposals for Future Development of Family Support in Roscrea | 36 |
| Appendices..... | 41 |
| Appendix 1: Profile of Services and Organisations in the Roscrea Area..... | 41 |
| Appendix 2: Consultation Process for the Family Support Needs in Roscrea Report | 45 |

1. Introduction

Tusla – the Child and Family Agency, has funded a community based family support project in Roscrea since 2008 following research a number of years earlier identifying support for families as one of the key needs of the town. The Family Support Project is managed by North Tipperary Development Company (NTDC) and the funding is primarily used to employ a dedicated Family Support worker located in Roscrea. The role of this worker is to provide one-to-one support, parenting programmes, to co-ordinate Meitheals and assistance in signposting people to other support services that be able to assist or may be more appropriate.¹ The existing Family Support Project has predominantly focused its attention on a number of housing estates in Roscrea town. North Tipperary Development Company integrate this role with other family support services they offer as part of their social inclusion work, namely (a) the Traveller Family Support Project which employs a Family Support worker to work specifically with Traveller families (b) the Youth Service Project which runs a number of programmes aimed at supporting young people, namely: the RAY project which is a Garda Youth Diversion Programme aimed to divert young people who have had contact with the judicial system away from anti-social behaviour or criminal activity; the UBU ‘Your Place Your Space’ project funding which provides out of school supports to young people in their local communities; the Kickback Youth Café (houses staff from the youth and family programmes) and runs clubs and hang-out groups for young people during the week.

1.1 Background to Research

A number of policy documents and research reports prepared over the last number of years point to continuing and ongoing family support issues in the Roscrea area, in spite of the resources already invested in the town. It was agreed by Tusla, NTDC and the Community Action Partnership (CAP) Roscrea² that further investigation was needed with a view to:

- examining the overall situation with regard to family support needs in the Roscrea area;
- identifying what services are currently providing support in the area;
- identifying any gaps in services that may exist;
- making recommendations around better use of existing services and proposals for the future development of family support services.

Curley Consulting was appointed to lead this research linking with a Research Sub-Group comprising of Tusla and NTDC. There were a number of steps taken to address these research aims. First and foremost, a review of policy documents and reports were undertaken to see what information had presented previously and what issues were highlighted. Secondly, Census 2016 data and other data sources were examined to draw up a relatively current profile of the population of the Roscrea Primary Care Team area and identify any issues presenting. Thirdly, a basic profile of each of the organisations involved in family support work in Roscrea was drawn up. The information collected at this first stage was presented as an interim report to the Research Steering Committee in February 2020. The consultation phase of the process which aimed to add richness and context to the desk based process was halted abruptly with the upheaval caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. Once it became clear that face to face consultations would not be possible in the short to medium term, the decision to move the

¹ Meitheal is a case co-ordination process for families with additional needs who require a multi-agency intervention but who do not meet the threshold for referral to the Social Welfare Department under ‘Children First’.

² Community Action Plan Roscrea (CAP Roscrea) is the committee structure set up to drive the Roscrea Community Action Plan (prepared in X date and monitor it’s implementation. Three focus groups were established to correspond to the three pillars of action in the Plan (Environment and Safety; Community Safety; Enterprise Training and Employment). Each of these focus groups comprised of statutory and community representatives. Tipperary County Council calls together each of these focus groups three times a year (called CAP Roscrea) and receives reports from progress from the focus groups and identify any issues that may be arising.

consultation process online was taken. It was acknowledged that doing consultation purely online could affect participation in the process but it was felt that by holding off until some kind of normality returned, would only delay the whole project indefinitely and lose any momentum that had been built up. The consultation process took the form of online surveys, one-to-one phone interviews and small focus groups conducted through online platforms. The final step of the process was the analysis of the consultation and secondary research findings and production of the final report.

1.2 Definition of Family Support

It was important at the outset to ensure there was clarity around the term ‘family support’ for the purposes of this research so the frame of reference was clear. The term ‘family’ can encompass people at different stages of the lifecycle – from the very young to the very old. Just about every organisation or service provider can say they support families in one way or another as they engage with different family members every day in the course of their work. So, what stage of the family lifecycle was the research going to focus on? Were there specific approaches or interventions that allow a provider’s work to be labelled ‘family support’, again for the purposes of this research? The Research Sub-Group clarified that the focus of this study is on the child rearing stage of the family – children, young people and their families and it was further agreed that the Pinkerton et al (2004) definition of ‘family support’ would frame this piece of research:

Family Support is ... Both a style of work and a set of activities which re-enforce positive informal social networks through integrated programmes. These programmes combine statutory, voluntary, community and private services and are generally provided to families in their own homes and communities. The primary focus is on early intervention aiming to promote and protect the health, wellbeing and rights of all children, young people and their families, paying particular attention to those who are vulnerable or at risk.

This piece of research therefore concentrates on services that work in an integrated way with other providers and in partnership with families in order to achieve positive outcomes. Pinkerton et al (2004) also developed a set of practice principles based on national and international evidence and these principles further help in framing the boundaries for this research (see text box).

Text Box 1: Family Support Work Principles

Working in partnership with children, families, professionals, and communities

Family Support interventions are needs led and strive for minimum intervention required.

Require a clear focus on wishes, feelings, safety, and well-being of children

Family Support reflects a strengths-based perspective which is mindful of resilience as a characteristic of many children’s and families lives.

Effective interventions are those which strengthen informal support networks.

Family Support is accessible and flexible in respect of timing, setting, and changing needs, and can incorporate both child protection and out of home care.

Facilitates self-referral and multi-access referral paths.

Involves service users and front-line providers in planning, delivery and evaluation on an on-going basis.

Promotes social inclusion, addressing issues of ethnicity, disability and rural/urban communities

Measures of success are routinely included to facilitate evaluation based on attention to outcomes for service users, and thereby facilitate quality services based on best practice.

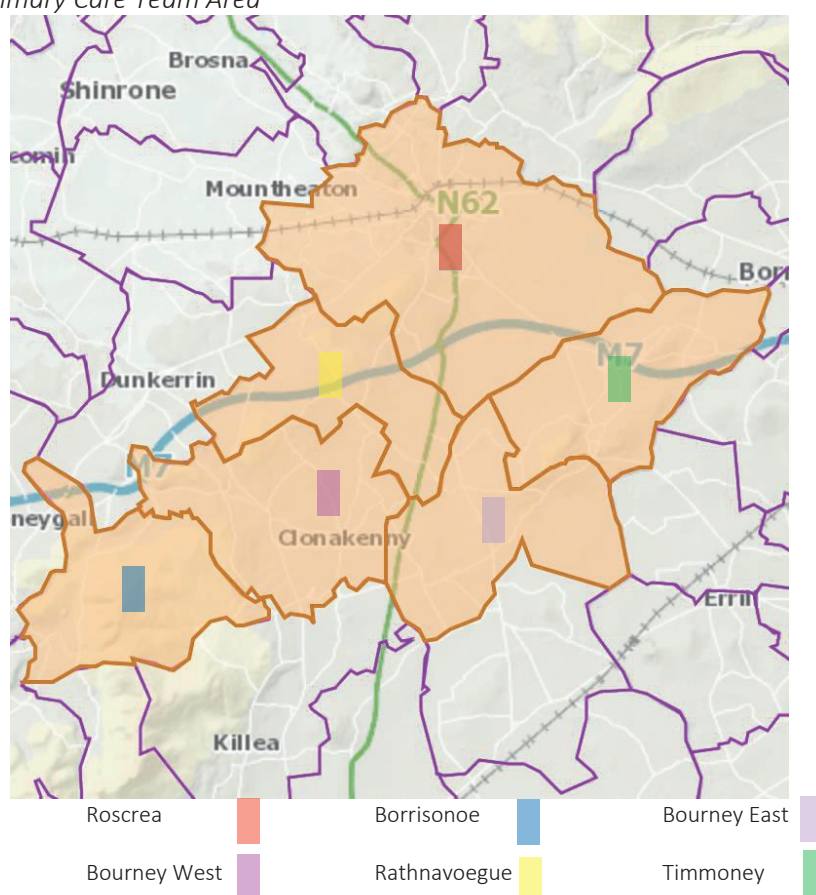
Source: Pinkerton et. al (2004)

2. Profile of Roscrea Area

The research tender was explicit in that it sought an examination of family support needs not just in housing estates in Roscrea but across the whole of Roscrea town and its environs. On further discussion, it was decided by the Research Steering Group that the area of examination would coincide with the Roscrea Primary Care Team area which covered six Electoral Divisions (ED's) in total: Roscrea (the largest in terms of population numbers); Borrisonoe; Bourney East; Bourney West; Rathnavoege and Timmonee. It should be noted that while there is some data available for all the Electoral Divisions, much of the data presented in this section concentrates on the urban footprint of Roscrea as it is the largest of all the ED's in terms of population size.³

Roscrea is a market town situated on the old Dublin-Limerick national primary route, the R445, at its junction with the N62 connecting Athlone, Birr & Thurles. A new motorway, the M7, runs along the east of the town offering road connectivity to Dublin and Limerick. It has a railway station that which serves the Dublin to Limerick route (with a change at Ballybrophy) and a Dublin to Limerick daily busy service (Route 12). It is close to the border between North Tipperary and Offaly and situated in a valley between the Slieve Bloom and the Devil's Bit mountains and the River Moneen flows through the centre of the town.

Fig. 1: Roscrea Primary Care Team Area



³ There is also data available at the more micro level for Roscrea Electoral Division (Settlement Area statistics) concentrating on the urban footprint of the town which is not available for the other Electoral Divisions. It is made clear within the body of the text where the data refers to Electoral Divisions or Settlement Areas. Settlement Area Statistics are produced for areas with 1,500 population or more.

2.1 Socio-Economic Picture

2.1.1 Population

Roscrea Electoral Division (ED) had the largest population (6,305) of the six ED's in 2016 and the population of the entire Roscrea Primary Care Team area was 7,699 in the same Census year. There were small increases in population since the 2006 census with two of the ED's experiencing small population declines over that decade (Bourney West and Rathnaveoge).

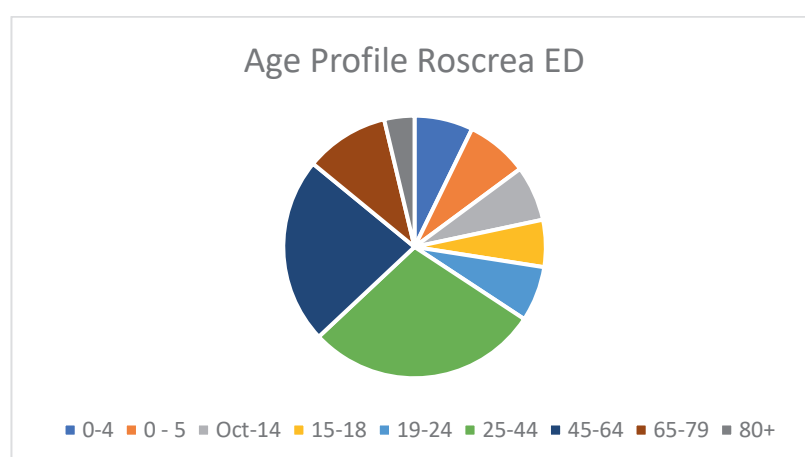
Table 1: Population Numbers and Population Change

| ED Name | Population 2006 | Population 2016 | % Population Change 2016 |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Roscrea | 5906 | 6305 | 0.02 |
| Borrisnoe | 105 | 119 | 0.11 |
| Bourney East | 275 | 270 | 0.06 |
| Bourney West | 371 | 378 | -0.02 |
| Rathnaveoge | 252 | 262 | -0.06 |
| Timoney | 309 | 365 | 0.05 |
| Total | 7218 | 7699 | |

The population age structure in Roscrea ED reflects a relatively young population with a third of the population (35%) aged 24 and under in 2016, higher than the county figure of 32%. In fact, the Roscrea ED had the second highest concentration of 16 – 24 year olds in the county (699 in total), second only to Thurles.⁴ The 25 – 44 age bracket is also quite significant (29%), higher than the county figure of 26% reflecting a strong working age population cohort. The proportion of people over the age of 65 (14%) is in line with the county figure.

Table 2: Population Breakdown in Roscrea Electoral Division, 2016

| Age | 0-4 | 5-9 | 10-14 | 15-18 | 19-24 | 25-44 | 45-64 | 65-79 | 80+ | Total |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| Roscrea ED (No.'s) | 455 | 482 | 429 | 366 | 428 | 1813 | 1445 | 652 | 235 | 6,305 |
| Roscrea ED (%) | 22% | | | 13% | | 29% | 23% | 14% | | 100% |
| County Tipperary | 21% | | | 11% | | 26% | 26% | 15% | | 100% |



This is contrast to the proportion of older people in the other five ED's in the Primary Care Team area where nearly one in every five persons (19%) is over the age of 65.

⁴ 'Needs of NEET's in County Tipperary', Nov 2018, Tipperary ETB.

Table 3: Population Breakdown in the other 5 Electoral Divisions in Roscrea Primary Care Team

| Age | 0-4 | 5-9 | 10-14 | 15-18 | 19-24 | 25-44 | 45-64 | 65-79 | 80+ | Total |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| Borrisonoe | 9 | 12 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 27 | 34 | 15 | 2 | 119 |
| Bourney East | 16 | 21 | 20 | 10 | 13 | 62 | 77 | 41 | 10 | 270 |
| Bourney West | 29 | 23 | 18 | 19 | 21 | 106 | 90 | 58 | 14 | 378 |
| Rathnaveoge | 14 | 21 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 50 | 78 | 33 | 30 | 262 |
| Timoney | 27 | 25 | 28 | 18 | 25 | 89 | 95 | 52 | 7 | 366 |
| % population | 20% | | | 10% | | 24% | 27% | 19% | | 100% |
| County Tipperary (%) | 21% | | | 11% | | 26% | 26% | 15% | | 100% |

The overall age dependency rate for the Roscrea Settlement Area was 54.8% which is a little lower than the county figure of 57.8%.^{5 6} Breaking it down further, the old age dependency ratio is lower than the county figure while the youth age dependency rate is slightly higher at 34% (county figure is 33.7%), reflecting the significant cohort of young people.

2.1.2 Nationality and Ethnicity

Just over 16% of the population of the Roscrea Settlement Area identified as a 'non-Irish national' in the 2016 Census. This was double the county figure of 8.9% and one of the highest proportions recorded in the settlement areas in the county, exceeded only by Cahir (27.3%), Cashel (19.6%) and Nenagh (18.4%). The non-Irish national cohort can be further broken down as evidenced in Table 4 below with strong showings from the nationalities of Poland and Lithuania, followed by people from the 'Other EU 27 states'.

Table 4: Breakdown of Nationality in Roscrea Settlement Area, 2016

| | Non-Irish National | Ireland | Lithuania | Poland | Rest of the World | UK | Other EU 28 |
|----------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|--------|-------------------|------|-------------|
| Roscrea % | 16.40 | 82.10 | 2.9 | 3.7 | 1.26 | 1.48 | 7.1 |
| Co Tipperary % | 9 | 90 | 0.66 | 2.57 | 1.13 | 2.58 | 1.99 |

Looking at ethnic group identifiers, 77% of the population in the Roscrea Settlement Area identified themselves as 'White Irish' significantly lower than the county figure of 88%. People identifying as 'Other White' accounted for 15.5% of the population reflecting the nationality breakdown above. There is a strong Traveller population in Roscrea with 2% of the population identifying as a 'White Irish Traveller', translating into 65 families. This figure again is much higher than the county figure of 0.8%.

2.1.3 Families and Children

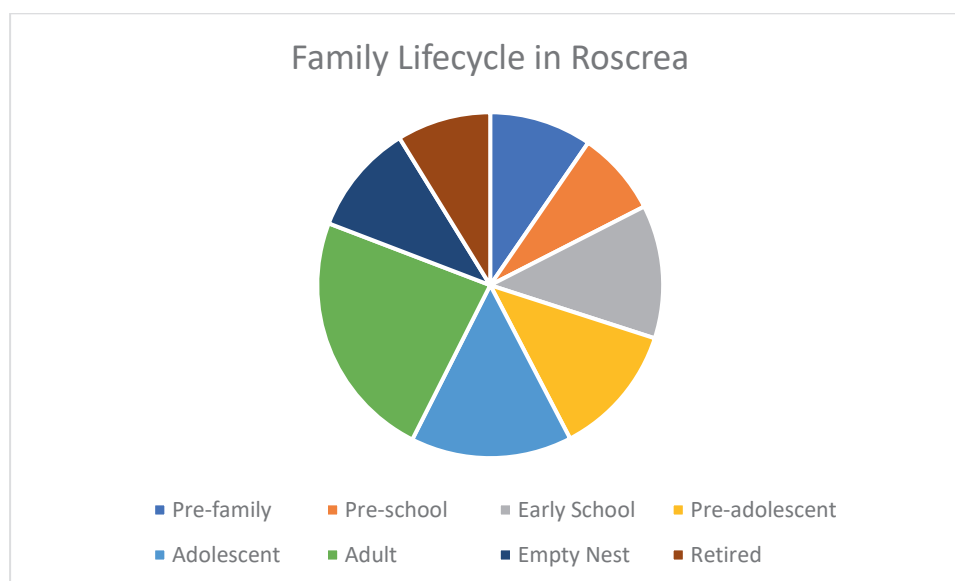
Nearly half of all the families in the Roscrea Settlement Area (48%) in 2016 were actively rearing children from the pre-school stage right through to adolescents. This is a little more than the county figure of 45%, reflecting the relatively young population in the town.

⁵ Settlement Area Statistics are produced for areas with 1,500 population or more.

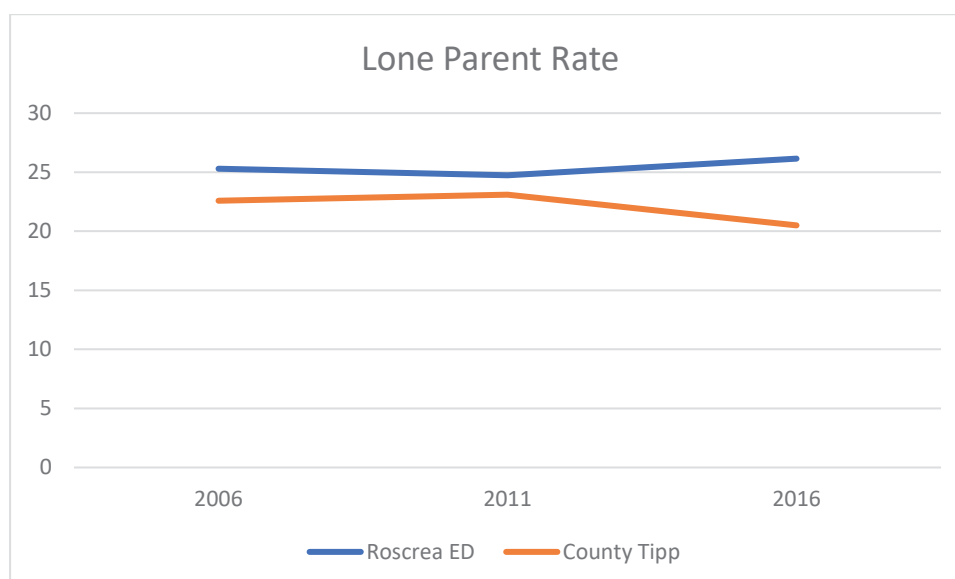
⁶ Dependency ratios are used to give a useful indication of the age structure of a population with young (0-14) and old (65+) shown as a percentage of the population of working age (15-64).

Table 5: Family Lifecycle in the Roscrea Settlement Area, 2016

| | Pre-family | Pre-school | Early School | Pre-adolescent | Adolescent | Adult | Empty Nest | Retired |
|----------------------|------------|------------|--------------|----------------|------------|-------|------------|---------|
| Roscrea SA (%) | 9.6 | 7.9 | 12.5 | 12.4 | 15.1 | 23.4 | 10.4 | 8.8 |
| County Tipperary (%) | 6.4 | 9 | 11.3 | 11.5 | 13.5 | 25.7 | 11.5 | 11.1 |



In the Roscrea Electoral Division, one in every four families (26.15%) with a child under the age of 15 was headed by a lone parent in 2016. This is well above the county figure of 20.5% and has increased from the 2011 census when it registered at 24.74%.



There is data for the other Electoral Divisions for this variable with Bourney West and Timoney recording a figure of 11% and 10% respectively in this regard. It is interesting to note that both these

areas recorded significant lone parent rates in the 2006 and 2011 census, but the rate has fallen in the most recent census.

Table 6: % Lone Parents in the Roscrea Primary Care Team Electoral Divisions

| % | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Borrisnoe | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Bourney East | 17.24 | 8 | 4 |
| Bourney West | 16.67 | 22.22 | 11 |
| Rathnaveoge | 5 | 3.70 | 4 |
| Roscrea | 25.30 | 24.74 | 26.15 |
| Timoney | 9.09 | 7.69 | 10 |
| Co. Tipperary | 22.6 | 23.1 | 20.5 |

Roscrea had over twice the average rate of children in care in 2016 compared to the rate in North Tipperary (7.6 for every 1,000 children in care). The North Tipperary rate is higher than the national rate of 5.6.⁷ Recent referral figures from Tusla Mid-West show that 146 children in Roscrea were referred to social work services in 2019, an increase from 112 recorded three years earlier. The majority of these referrals (80%) are classified under ‘child welfare concerns’ which encompasses a whole range of issues and seems to be a ‘catch all’ category reflecting the difficulty of classifying and labelling complex family issues. The next most common referral categories concern cases of ‘neglect’ (10%), ‘emotional abuse’ (3%), ‘sexual abuse’ (3%) and ‘physical abuse’ (1%).

Table 7: Referrals to Tusla in the North Tipperary Region

| Referrals | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Roscrea | 112 | 127 | 173 | 146 |
| North Tipperary Region (total) | 890 | 988 | 1058 | 1047 |

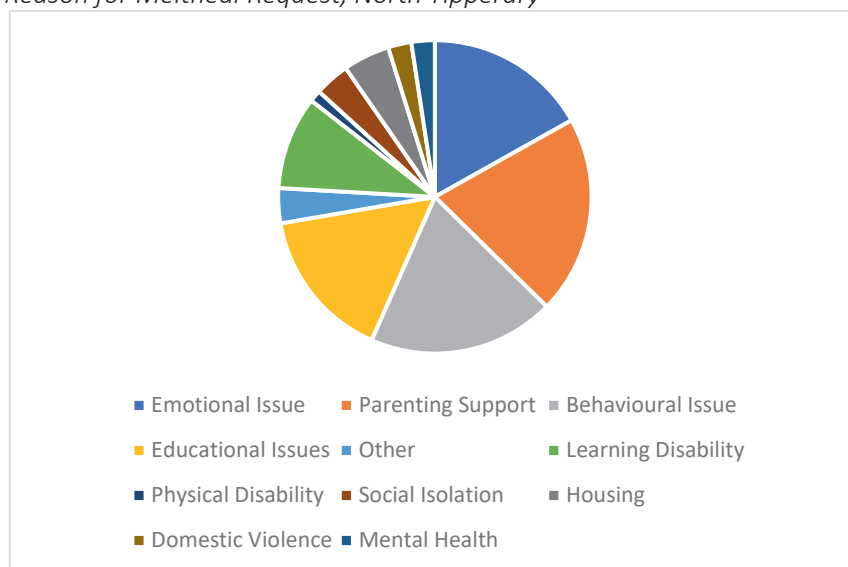
Source: Tusla Mid-West Office, 2020

The number of Meitheal’s taking place in Roscrea has increased from 1 in 2016 to 15 in 2019 which is a significant number when considering that 46 Meitheal requests were received for North Tipperary as a whole in the same year.⁸ There were no new Meitheals recorded for 2020 in Roscrea (Jan – Mar 20) because the family support worker post was vacant. The issues discussed in a Meitheal setting are many and varied but the primary reason for the request in the first instance is assistance around parenting supports, followed by behavioural and emotional issues in children and education concerns.

⁷ Children and Young People’s Plan 2018 – 2020 (July 2018), pg. 18.

⁸ Meitheal is a case co-ordination process for families with additional needs who require a multi-agency intervention but who do not meet the threshold for referral to the Social Work Department under Children First.

Fig 2: Primary Reason for Meitheal Request, North Tipperary



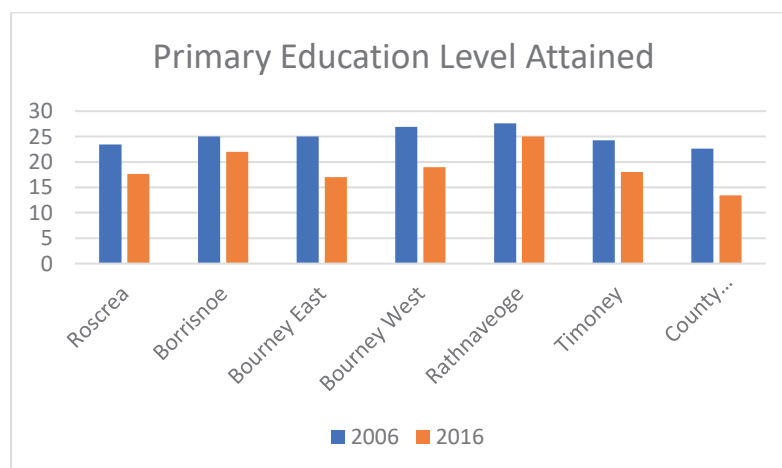
Source: Tusla Mid-West Office, 2020

2.1.4 Education

The proportion of the population who had no formal education or attained primary level education only across all the ED's in the Primary Care area, was much higher than the county figure of 13% in 2016. Almost 18% of people in the Roscrea ED had either no formal education or primary education only. In Rathnavogue and Borrisnoe, it is as high as one in every four or five residents. The picture has improved somewhat across all the ED's from 10 years earlier when the 2006 Census was taken.

Table 8: Proportion of the Population with No Formal Education or Primary Education Only

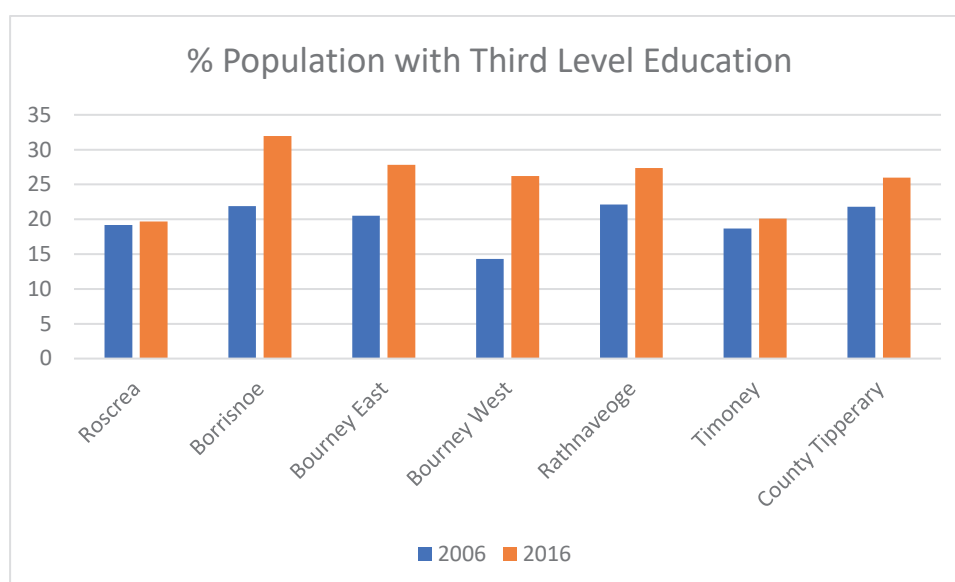
| Electoral Division | 2006 (%) | 2016 (%) |
|--------------------|----------|----------|
| Roscrea | 23.44 | 17.62 |
| Borrisnoe | 25 | 22 |
| Bourney East | 25 | 17 |
| Bourney West | 26.94 | 19 |
| Rathnaveoge | 27.62 | 25 |
| Timoney | 24.24 | 18 |
| County Tipperary | 20.2 | 13 |



Third level educational attainment data is more favourable for some of the Electoral Divisions. Borrisnoe and, Bourney East, Bourney West and Rathnaveoge all record third level attainment levels above the county figure of 26%. Roscrea ED records the lowest level of third level educational attainment at 19.68% which is significant, given the strong youth population in the area. In fact, unlike the picture that emerges at state and county level, there is very little improvement in the ten years between 2006 and 2016 regarding education attainment levels in the Roscrea ED.

Table 9: Proportion of the Population with Third Level Education

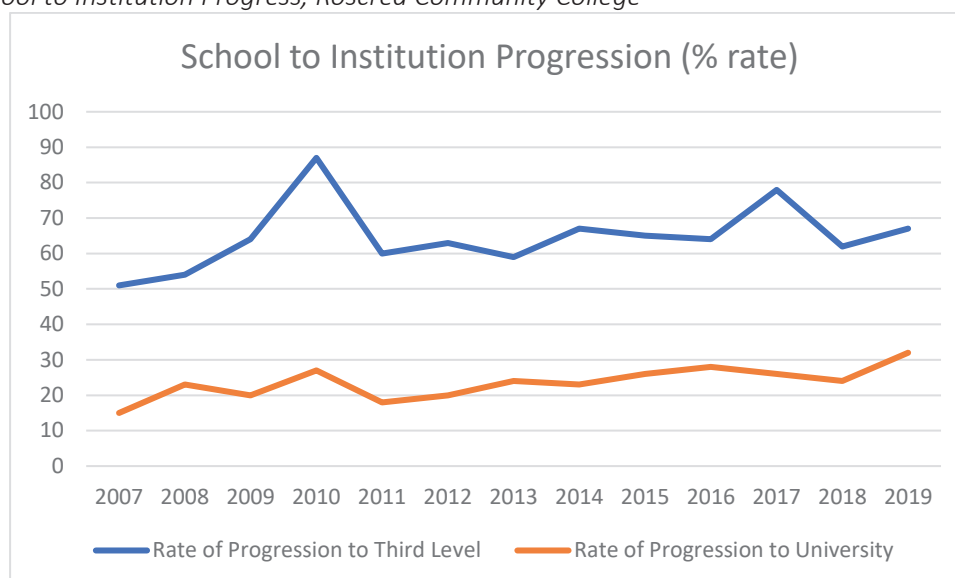
| Electoral Division | 2006 (%) | 2016 (%) |
|----------------------|----------|-----------|
| Roscrea | 19.16 | 19.68 |
| Borrisnoe | 21.88 | 31.94 |
| Bourney East | 20.5 | 27.81 |
| Bourney West | 14.29 | 26.21 |
| Rathnaveoge | 22.10 | 27.37 |
| Timoney | 18.69 | 20.09 |
| Co. Tipperary | | 26 |



A quick look at the feeder school data for 2019 which is produced annually by the Irish Times shows that the local secondary school in Roscrea had a progression rate of 67% to third level education (75 students in all sat the Leaving Certificate). The graph below taken from the Irish Times website⁹ shows the rate of students attending third level education has increased from 51% in 2007 to 67% in 2019. Looking at transfer to University only, this also has been steadily increasing from a low of below 15% in 2007 to 32% in 2019.

⁹ <https://www.irishtimes.com/feeder-schools/colaiste-phob%C3%A1il-ros-cr%C3%A9/76069P>

Fig 3: School to Institution Progress, Roscrea Community College



Source: Irish Times

2.1.5 Employment and Unemployment

The majority of people in the Roscrea Settlement Area were employed in the Wholesale, Retail, Transportation, Accommodation and Food Trade (27.4%) followed by Education, Health and Social Work (27.4%) and Manufacturing (23.7%).

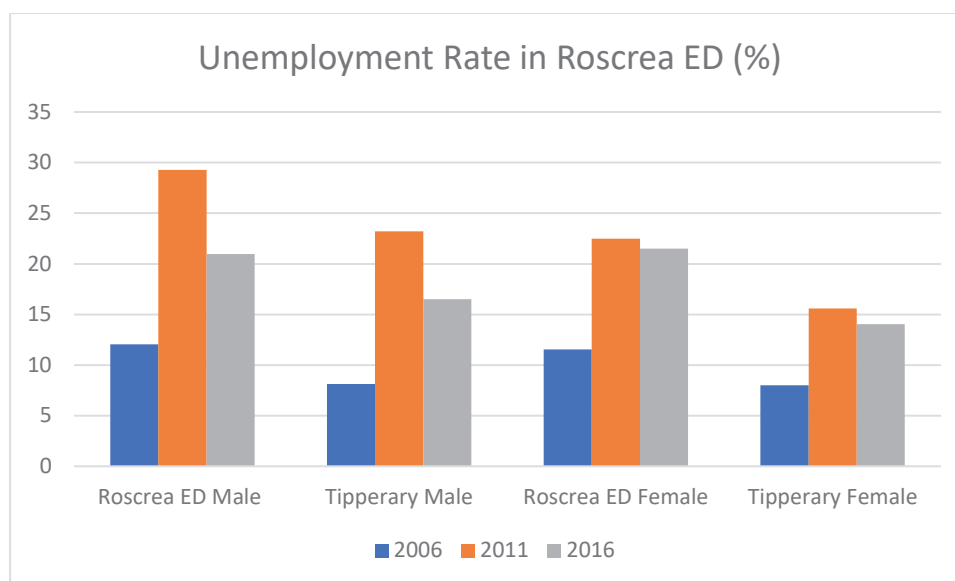
A report commissioned by Tipperary County Council in 2018 on commuting and jobs looked at commuter flows for work purposes in and out of towns.¹⁰ It concluded that, of the people classified 'at work' in the Roscrea Settlement Area, 49% are employed in the area, 8.3% are employed elsewhere in Tipperary, 19% commute out of the county for employment and the remaining 23.7% are classified as mobile workers or their destination is not stated. A further 1,485 people commute into Roscrea for employment everyday - 69% of these come from elsewhere in Tipperary.

Looking at the issue of unemployment among males and females with data available across all the ED's, Roscrea recorded the highest unemployment rate for males and females out of all the ED's in 2016 which is not wholly surprising given its population size compared to the others. The male unemployment rate has reduced from a high in 2011 of 29% to 21% in 2016. But the unemployment rate for women was particularly high at 21.5% compared to the county average of 14% and in actual fact reduced very little between the 2011 and 2016 Census when the country overall was experiencing economic growth.

Table 10: Unemployment Rate broken down by Gender

| | 2016 Male (%) | 2016 Female (%) |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Borrisonoe | 2.56 | 5.56 |
| Bourney East | 5.26 | 4.92 |
| Bourney West | 8.04 | 4.17 |
| Rathnavoege | 7.46 | 10.20 |
| Roscrea | 20.97 | 21.50 |
| Timmoney | 10.71 | 6.85 |
| Co. Tipperary | 16.51 | 14.04 |

¹⁰ 'Commuting and Jobs Profile Tipperary Local Authority' (2018), Spatial Insight Solutions.



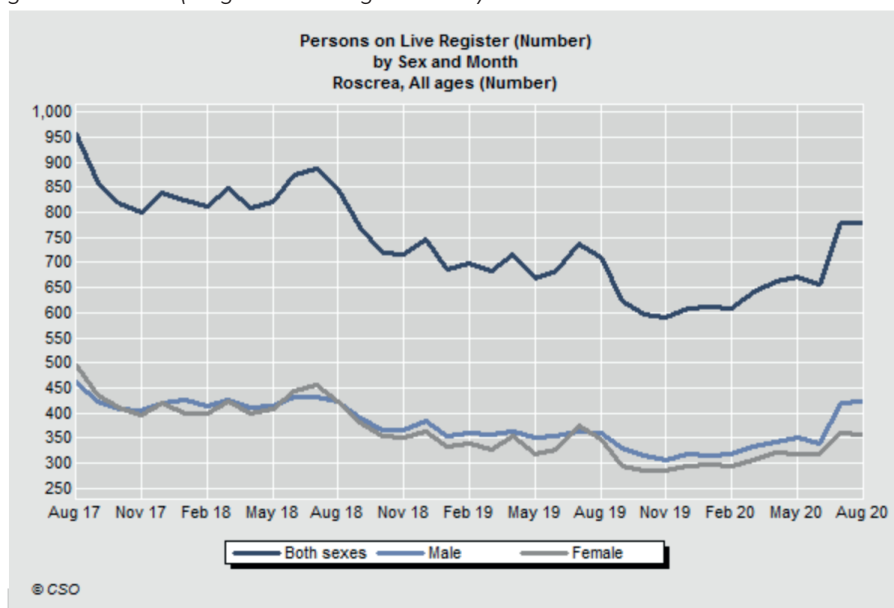
The Live Register, while not measuring the unemployment rate per se, does give some indications about the health of the labour market. The CSO records data for the social welfare office in Roscrea and it shows that as of August of this year (220), a total of 960 people were signing on the Live Register, a number that has increased year on year from August 2018. The graph below illustrates that the number of people signing on was decreasing towards the end of last year, beginning of the new year but numbers began increasing sharply again from May of this year.

The number of people aged under 25 signing on the Live Register has remained relatively static with 116 signing on in August of this year, a slight increase from 110 recorded in August 2019 but down from the figures recorded in the previous two years. The NEET study undertaken by Tipperary ETB looking at the employment needs of young people, noted that out of the 699 young people aged between 16 – 24 in 2016, 30% of this population (209) live in 'disadvantaged' areas of Roscrea with 88 of them living in 'very disadvantaged' areas; 17% of 18 – 25 year olds in Roscrea are on the live register.

Table 11: Live Register Figures for Roscrea Social Welfare Office

| | August 2017 | August 2018 | August 2019 | August 2020 |
|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Male | 422 | 360 | 423 | 462 |
| Female | 358 | 349 | 424 | 498 |
| Under 25 | 143 | 139 | 110 | 116 |

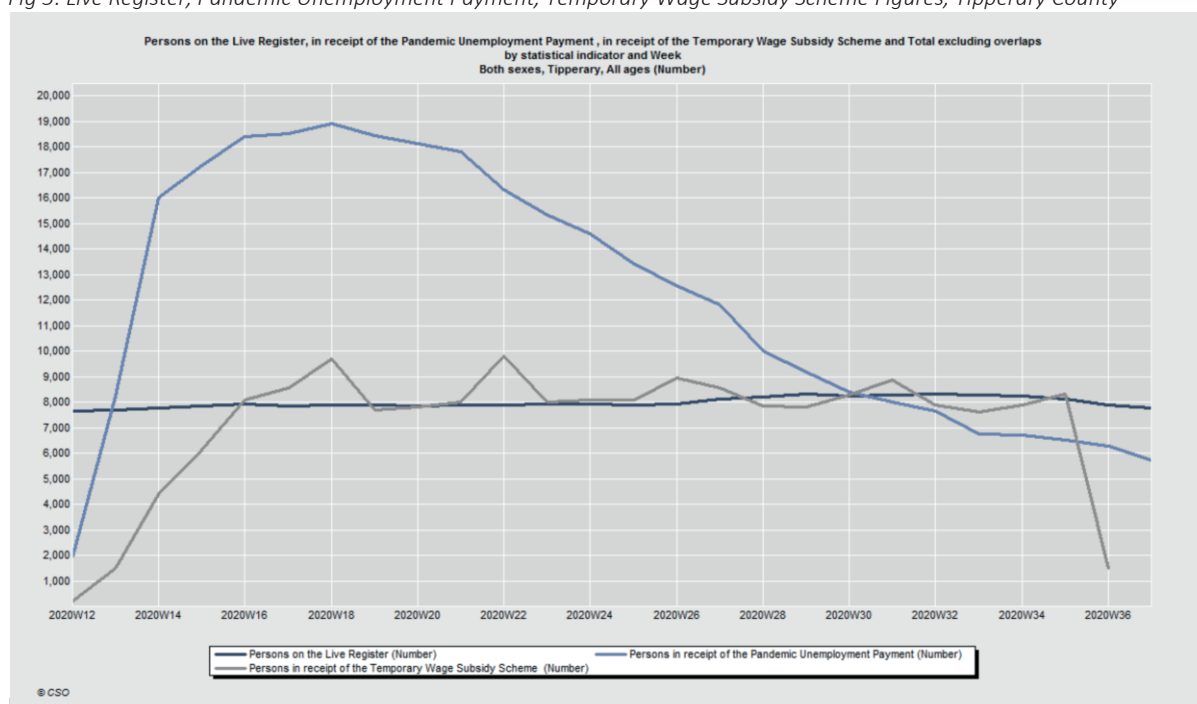
Fig 4: Live Register Roscrea (Aug 2017 – August 2020)



It should be noted that the Live Register figures do not include people on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment or on the Wage subsidy scheme. It is not possible to get specific figures for the social welfare office in Roscrea as they are currently only reported at County level but we can use these as a proxy indicator to ascertain the impact of Covid 19 on employment in Roscrea. Taking the Live Register figures for County Tipperary in mid March (7,647), we can see that this has risen to a high of 8,318 at the end of July, falling again to 7,755 by mid Sept. The Pandemic Unemployment figure is 1,926 in mid march but has seen a large increase to 18,924 people receiving this payment in mid-July (week 18). It began to fall from this date and is at 5,743 people in the county still receiving the PUP in mid-September. The Wage Subsidy Scheme figures show a similar scale of increase rising from 196 to highs of 9,802 in Week 22 but this figure has not reduced significantly with 8,328 people still on the Wage Subsidy Scheme in Week 35.¹¹ The scale of the impact of Covid 19 on employment in the county is immense and it is safe to assume that Roscrea, like many other areas, has felt the repercussions of this shock wave.

¹¹ The Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme ended on the 31st of August with the introduction of the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme. The two schemes ran in parallel from July 1st. This change had just come into effect as this report was being finalised and no data was available to report on Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme figures. This explains the significant drop off on the CSO graph above. Week 36 was the last week to contain TWSS data.

Fig 5: Live Register, Pandemic Unemployment Payment, Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme Figures, Tipperary County



2.1.6 Housing

Out of the 2,822 households in the Roscrea Primary Care Team area, a quarter (25%) are rented from the local authority. The vast majority of these are in the Roscrea Electoral Division (16%) with Bourney West coming next in line at 6.35%.

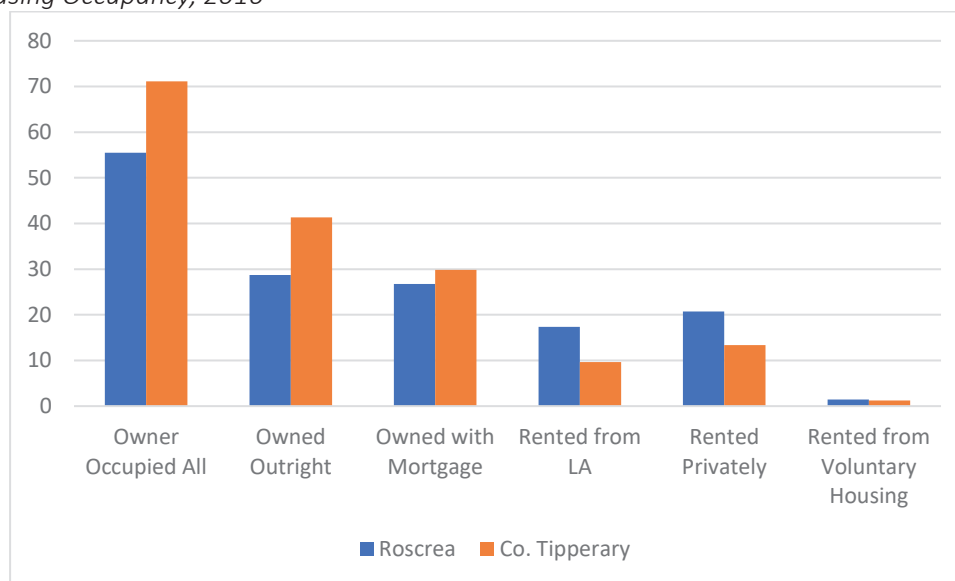
Table 12: % of Houses Rented from the Local Authority across Electoral Divisions

| Electoral Division | Local Authority Rented 2006 (%) | Local Authority Rented 2016 (%) |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Borrisonoe | 0 | 0 |
| Bourney East | 1.15 | 1.09 |
| Bourney West | 5.79 | 6.35 |
| Rathnavoege | 1.37 | 1.27 |
| Roscrea | 11.28 | 15.90 |
| Timmoney | 0 | 0.77 |

The housing data can be further analysed across the Roscrea Settlement Area¹². As can be seen from the table below, there was a low level of owner occupancy (55.49%) in 2016 compared to the county wide figure of 71%. The corollary of that is that there was a large proportion of the population social renting from the local authority (17%) which was nearly double the county figure of 9%. One in every five households was renting privately (20.74%) so combining the private renting figures and the social rent figures (local authority plus the voluntary rented houses), 40% of the population was renting in the Census year in Roscrea which, again, is nearly double the county figure of 24%.

¹² These figures are slightly different from the Roscrea ED figures as it constitutes a smaller area, concentrating on the urban footprint of Roscrea town.

Fig 6: Housing Occupancy, 2016



There are 80 people on the housing waiting lists in Roscrea (figures from March 2020) which accounts for 10% of the waiting list in the Templemore/ Thurles Municipal District. People presenting as homeless to the Council average at 21 per month over the last two years (2018 and 2019).¹³ There is only one emergency B&B for North Tipperary located in Roscrea.

2.1.7 Health and Disability

The vast majority of people in the Roscrea Settlement area registered their general health as ‘very good’ or ‘good’ (85%) with 2.1% of the population rating their health as ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’. A total of 17.1% of the population in the Roscrea Settlement Area had a disability, above the county wide figure of 14.6%, which breaks down to 8.1% males and 9% females.

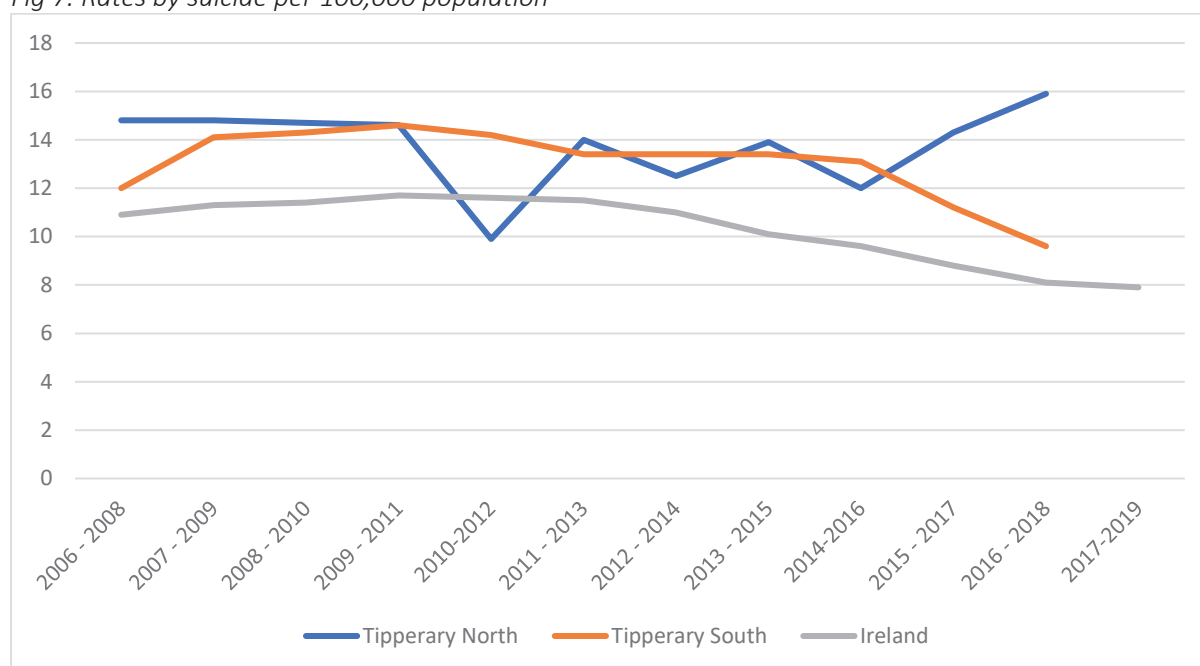
One of the central indicators for mental health and wellbeing are the suicide and self-harm rates collected by the Central Statistics Office. These are broken down by county (separate figures were reported for North and South Tipperary up until 2018) and presented as a rolling average over a number of years as ‘rate of suicide per 100,000 population’.¹⁴ North Tipperary recorded a suicide rate of 15.9 between the years of 2016 - 2018 which is the highest rate recorded in the State for this time period.¹⁵ There is a health warning with this figure however, in that it is based on a two-year (rather than the normal three year) moving averages to conform with reporting changes (i.e. a change to reporting County wide for Tipperary rather than differentiating between North Tipperary and South Tipperary). The rate reported for County Tipperary as a whole for the 2017 – 2019 period for the county was 14.3. Even without the changes to reporting, the previous reporting period 2015 – 2017 recorded a rate of 14.3 in North Tipperary which, along with Clare, was the highest in the State. So there is a consistently high rate of suicide in North Tipperary compared to other counties, over the last number of years. This is evidenced in the chart below.

¹³ The total number of cases presenting in 2018 was 258 and 257 in 2019 but as these figures are compiled monthly, many cases can present multiple times in a year and skews the overall figure somewhat.

¹⁴ All rates by county exclude late registered deaths.

¹⁵ National Office for Suicide Prevention, Briefing on Suicide Figures, June, 2020.

Fig 7. Rates by suicide per 100,000 population



Source: National Office for Suicide Prevention, Briefing June 2020

Looking at self-harm data, a total of 202 people presented with self-harm injuries in 2018 in North Tipperary/ East Limerick Local Health Office area with a slightly higher figure for women than men (119 to 83).¹⁶ While the suicide rates for North Tipperary are among the highest in the State, the self-harm rates are among the lowest. A rate of 220 per 100,000 was recorded in 2018 for men and 250 for women which is slightly higher than the national average rate of 193 and 229 respectively.¹⁷

While there is no information on regional variations, it is noted that the overall rate is generally higher among young people aged 10 – 24 and more prevalent among women. Two in every three self-harm attempts involved drug overdose. Cutting was involved in 30% of all episodes while alcohol featured in one in every three presentations.

A total of 306 children in North Tipperary were referred to the Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in 2019. Of these referrals, 36% (or 109 children and young people) were not accepted into the service because they did not meet the CAMHS service criteria.¹⁸

2.1.8 Substance Misuse

The Community Service Mis-use Team (CSMT) is based in Limerick and offers an outreach service to North Tipperary through centres in Roscrea, Templemore, Thurles and Nenagh. A total of 99 young people under the age of 18 have been referred from North Tipperary – 57% of these are family or self-referral, 38% are from social services, education and health providers and 5% unknown.

Data for a complete calendar year is available from the CSMT for 2018 and it provides some more detail. In that year, there were 35 referrals from the North Tipperary/ East Limerick area (27 male; 8 female)

¹⁶ Methods of self-harm include: overdose of medication and drugs, cutting and attempted hanging.

¹⁷ These figures have been averaged for ease of presentation – the male rate of self harm is between 204 and 236 per 100,000 and the female rate is between 242 and 259.

¹⁸ Figures provided by the HSE Mid-West Mental Health.

with the majority of these referrals coming from the persons family (14). Thirty of these referrals related to problem drug use (namely cannabis, Benzo's and cocaine) and 3 related to alcohol. Some further information relating to the referrals shows that 14 of the people referred had junior certificate level education only and 7 had left school with primary education only.¹⁹

The National Drug Treatment Reporting System, compiled by the Health Research Board, provides information on people over the age of 18 who have been referred for treatment to various services. The data is compiled on the same geographic area as the CSMT i.e. North Tipperary/ East Limerick Local Health Area. It shows a small increase in the number of people referred for treatment from the years 2016 through to 2019.²⁰ The numbers referred for alcohol treatment actually reduced in 2019 while the numbers referred for drug treatment increased during this year.

Table 13: No. of People over the age of 18 Referred for Substance Mis-use Treatment²¹

| Local Health Area | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| North Tipperary/ East Limerick | 263 | 303 | 310 | 308 |
| Alcohol | 130 | 134 | 159 | 130 |
| Drugs | 133 | 169 | 151 | 178 |

Source: National Health Information Systems, Health Research Board

2.1.9 Crime

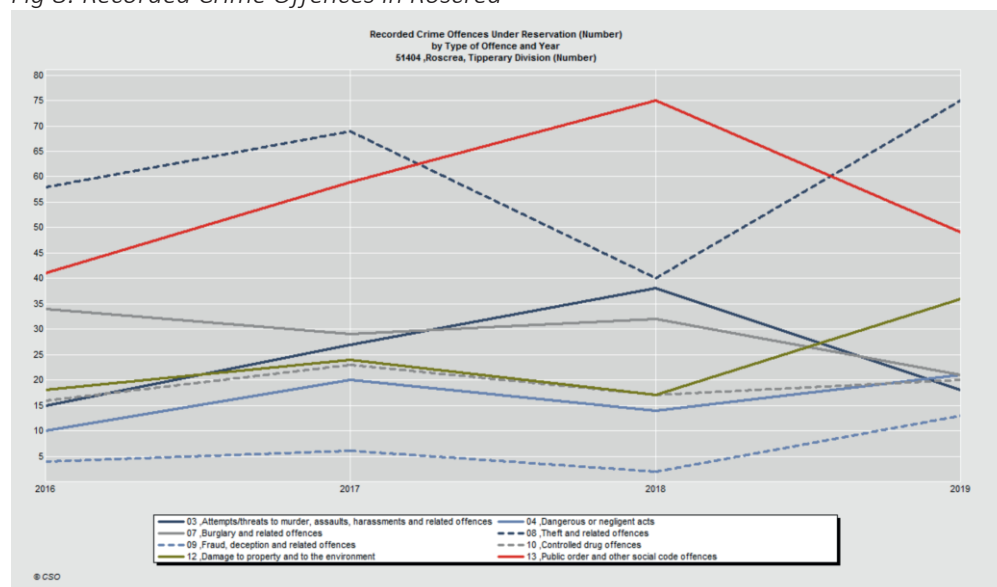
The Roscrea Division of An Garda Siochana recorded 75 theft offences in 2019 which was the highest of all offences, followed by public order (49) and damage to property (36). All of the offences recorded have increased since 2016 except for burglary which has decreased from 34 offences in 2016 to 21 in 2019.

¹⁹ Data sourced from the Mid-West Community Service Misuse Team, 2020.

²⁰ These figures are case based which means that is a possibility individuals appear more than once in the database e.g. where a person receives treatment at more than one centre or at the same centre more than once per year. The figures reflect assessment and entries into treatment in 2019 (i.e. new cases and previously treated cases returning for treatment). They do not include the number of cases continuing in treatment from preceding years.

²¹ These figures are case based and as such there is a possibility that individuals appear more than once in the database – they may have attended more than one centre or they have presented a number of times in one year. These figures also reflect those who enter treatment in these years and do not include the number of cases continuing treatment from a preceding year.

Fig 8: Recorded Crime Offences in Roscrea²²



Source: CSO, 2020

There were 11 referrals to the Garda Youth Diversion Programme in Roscrea in 2019 and a further five referrals up until the end of July 2020.²³ These referrals related to public order and drunkenness offences and reports from the Juvenile Liaison Officer are that COVID 19 restrictions have resulted in things quietening down somewhat, although there is still a number of alcohol related offences. The main dealings with young people in Roscrea are usually late at night and relate to possession of drugs and intoxication.

2.1.10 Access

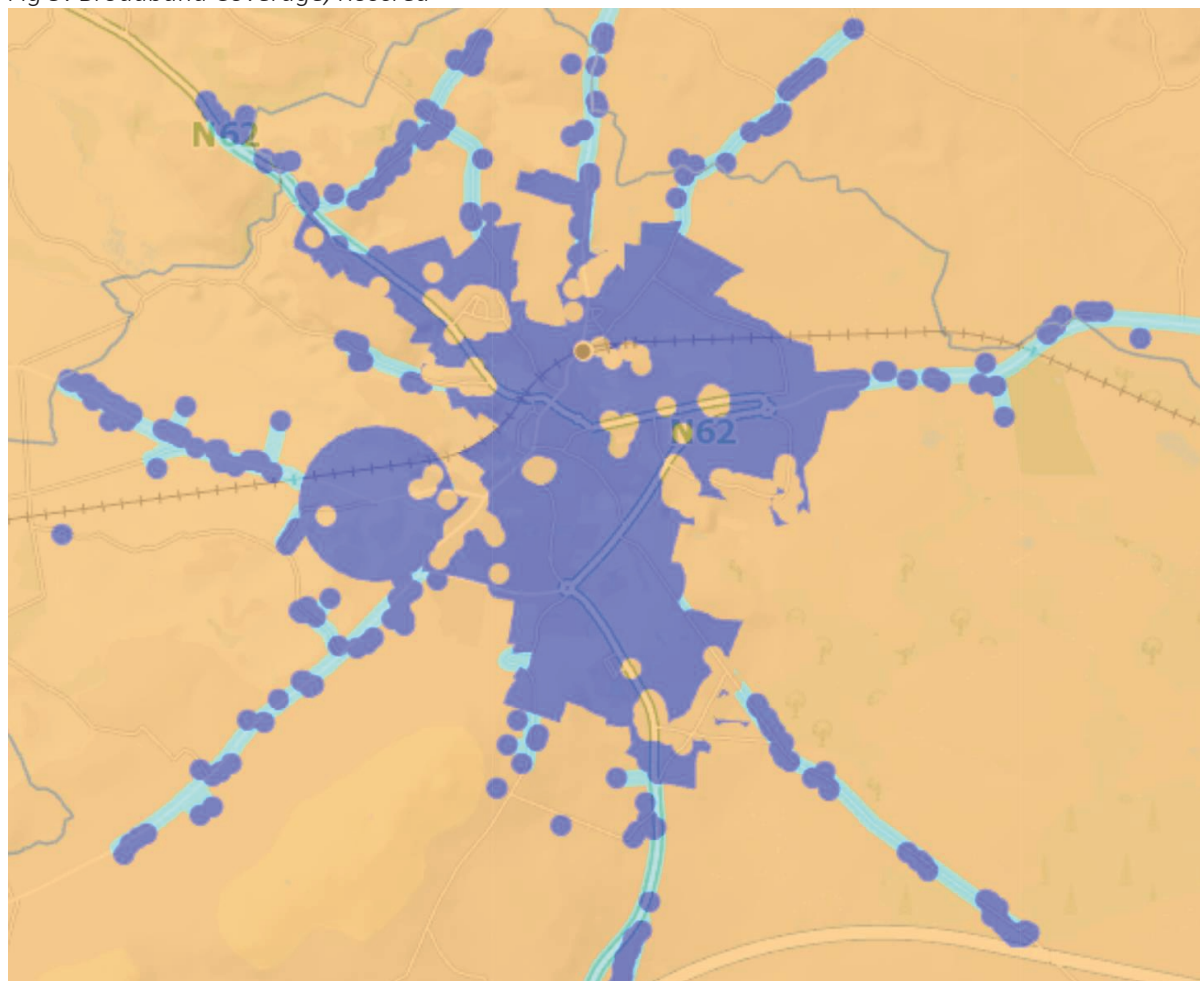
Nearly one in every four households (23%) in the Roscrea Settlement Area did not own a car in 2016. This is significantly higher than the county figure of 13.3% and is one of the highest in the county. This raises serious questions around access for people and communities – to services, to job opportunities, to education, to training and the larger implication for community connectivity.

Access to broadband is another way people and communities connect both for work, social and life purposes. In the 2016 Census, 63.6% of the households in the Roscrea area said they had access to the internet through broadband, a further 25.6% said they had no access. The town itself is well served with broadband coverage as evidenced by the map below. Moving out into the other ED's in the Primary Care Team area, the coverage is patchy at best. The dark blue areas show (as of the first half of 2019) where commercial providers are delivering or have indicated plans to deliver high speed broadband services. The light blue areas are where Eir has committed to commercial rural deployment plans to roll out high speed broadband and the Amber areas are the target areas for the State intervention of the National Broadband Plan, which was approved late in 2019.

²² These statistics are categorised as Under Reservation. This categorisation indicates that the quality of these statistics do not meet the standards required of official statistics published by CSO.

²³ The Garda Youth Diversion Programme aims to prevent young people between the ages of 12 and 18 years of age from entering into the criminal justice system and is called the RAY Project in Roscrea led by North Tipperary Development Company.

Fig 9: Broadband Coverage, Roscrea



Source: Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.

2.1.11 Deprivation²⁴

Deprivation scores show areas that are deemed to be more affluent or disadvantaged relative to other areas. Scores range from >-30 (extreme deprivation) to <+30 (extreme affluence) with zero as the mean. As can be seen from the table below, four out of the six Electoral Divisions fell into the 'marginally below average' category in 2016 with Borrisnoe and Rathnaveoge classified as 'marginally above average'.

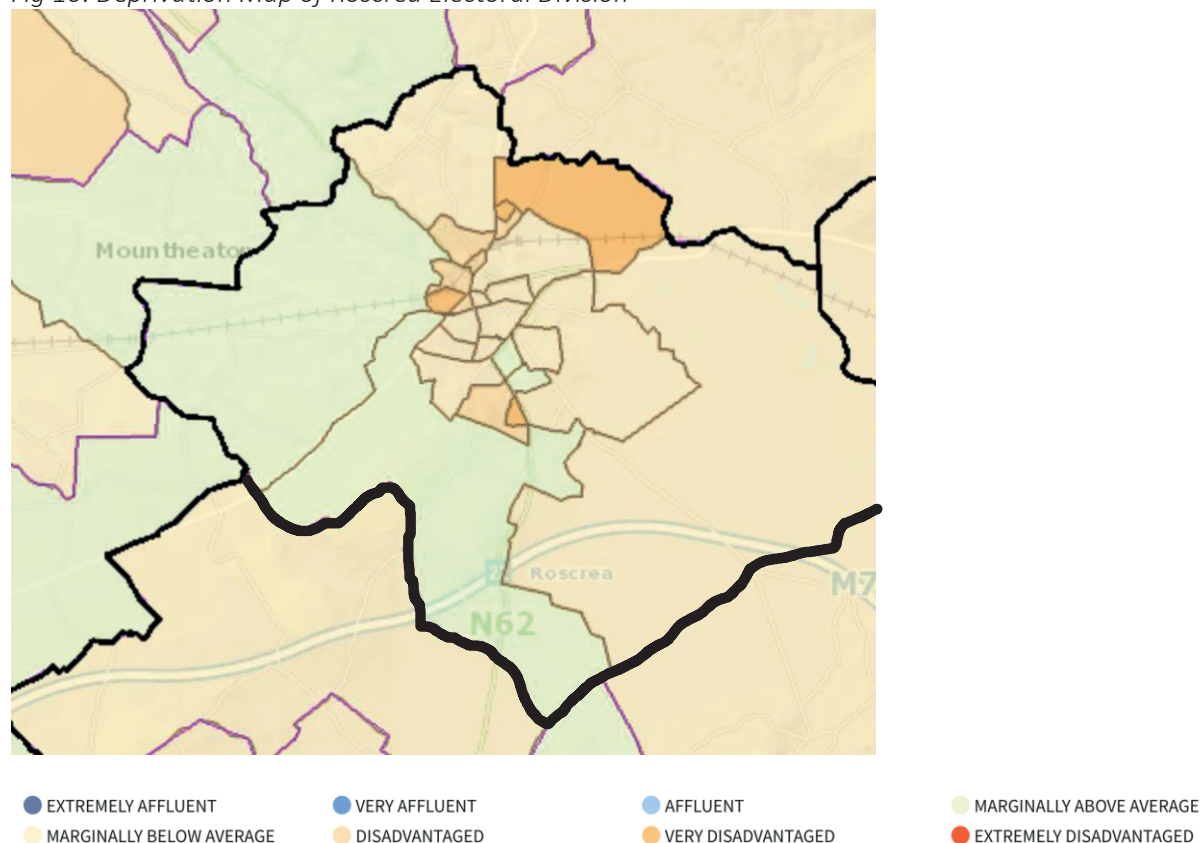
Table 14: Deprivation Score across Electoral Divisions

| Electoral Division | Deprivation 2016 | Score | Deprivation 2011 | Score | Deprivation 2006 | Score |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| Borrisnoe | 5.96 | | 0.88 | | 2.32 | |
| Bourney East | 1.59 | | -1.76 | | -3.09 | |
| Bourney West | -0.06 | | -0.43 | | -4.42 | |
| Rathnaveoge | -2.64 | | 2.04 | | -1.00 | |
| Roscrea | -8.72 | | -8.07 | | -7.94 | |
| Timmoney | -4.55 | | -3.87 | | -1.14 | |

²⁴ The scores range from -30 which is 'extremely disadvantaged' to +30 denoting 'extremely affluent' with the average being zero. This data is derived nationally from the Pobal HP Deprivation Index and is driven by a range of variables including education attainment, unemployment rates, demographic changes, lone parent ratios and housing, among others.

Working off Electoral Division data only can be misleading however as they can vary in physical size and in population size and the data can often mask what is actually going on within communities. For that reason, the Deprivation Indices are broken down into what are termed Small Areas.²⁵ When we examine the data at Small Area level, it highlights significant pockets of disadvantage within the Roscrea ED in particular.

Fig 10: Deprivation Map of Roscrea Electoral Division



Out of the 26 Small Areas that make up Roscrea Electoral Division, four of them fall into the ‘very disadvantaged’ category scoring between -20 and -25 on the deprivation scale. A further six Small Areas fall into the ‘Disadvantaged Category’ scoring between -10 and -20. Translated in terms of population, there are a total of 2,349 people or 40% of the population of Roscrea ED living in these either very disadvantaged or disadvantaged areas. A report by the TETB in November 2018 looking just at youth unemployment (16 – 25), reported that 30% of the total youth population in Roscrea is categorised as disadvantaged (209 people) and out of these, 88 young people are categorised as ‘very disadvantaged’.

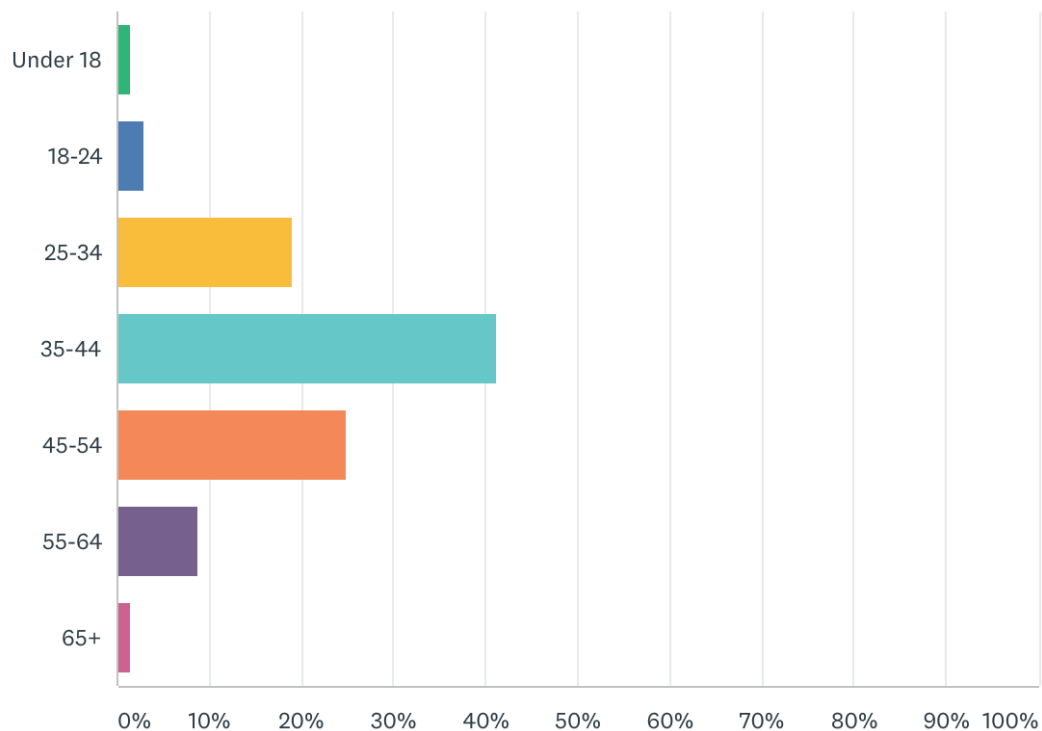
²⁵ ‘Small Areas’ are defined by the Central Statistics Office as areas between 80 – 120 dwellings.

3. Consultation Analysis

3.1 Family Survey

A total of 68 people in Roscrea responded to the family survey, 59 female and 9 male all either living in the town or just outside the town of Roscrea. The majority were in the 35 – 44 age bracket (28 respondents) with 3 respondents aged 24 and under and 1 respondent aged 65+.

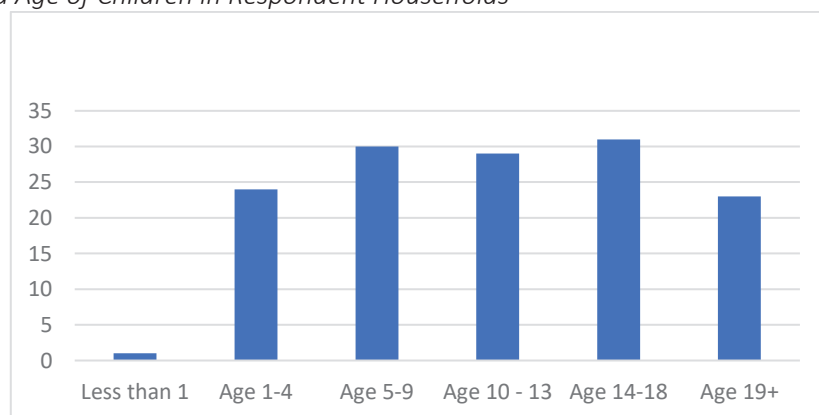
Fig 11: Age Range of Respondents



Households

There are 113 children under the age of 18 live in respondents' households. Eighteen respondent households have 22 children over the age 18 living with them.

Fig 12. No's and Age of Children in Respondent Households

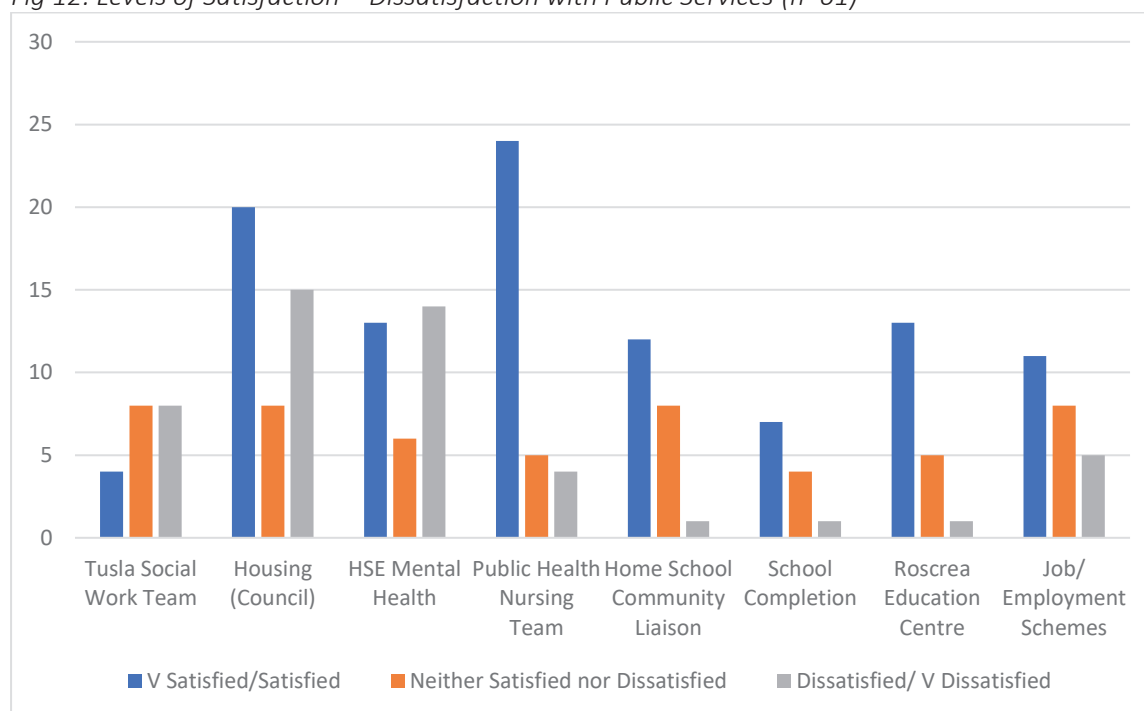


68% of the people who responded to the survey are parenting with a partner (note: this could be married or co-habiting), 21% are parenting alone and a further 11% have either no children or are single.

Engagement with Services

The majority of respondents (67%) said they had not engaged with any support services in the town. Yet, when they were asked to indicate levels of satisfaction with public services they have used, a total of 61 people responded to this question which implies that either more people had engaged with services than had previously been indicated or that they saw a difference between ‘support services’ and ‘public services’.

Fig 12: Levels of Satisfaction – Dissatisfaction with Public Services (n=61)

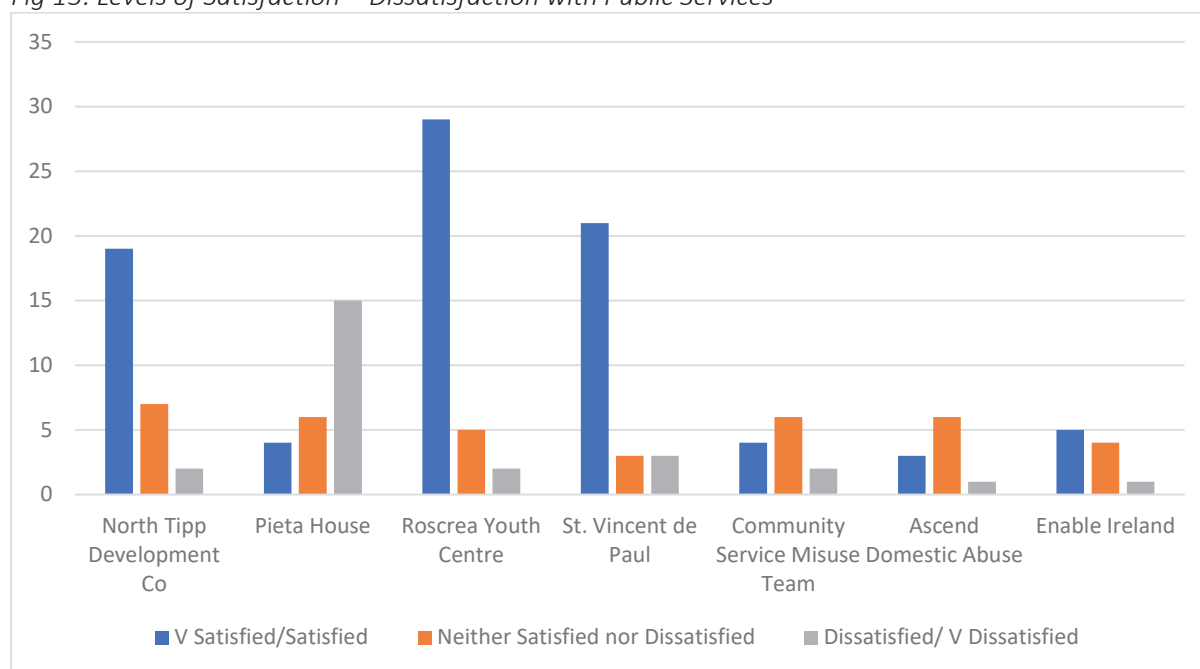


There were a high number of responses on Housing, Mental Health, Public Health Nursing and Tusla Social Work and a lower number of responses for the other services which could indicate a greater degree of engagement by participants with the former. There are relatively high levels of satisfaction and low levels of dissatisfaction with the Public Health Nursing Team, Roscrea Education Centre, the Home school Community Liaison service, and Job Employment Schemes. A significant number of respondents showed high levels of satisfaction with the Housing services in the County Council and HSE Mental Health Teams but, a significant number also registered significant dissatisfaction with these services. While a smaller number of people had engaged with the Home School Completion Service, the School Completion Service, Roscrea Education Centre, and Job Employment schemes, they indicated high levels of satisfaction with these services. Finally, levels of dissatisfaction were higher than satisfaction ratings for the Tusla Social Work service and the HSE Mental Health services.

Participants were also asked if they engaged with any other public services not listed and three people responded to this question citing: GP for counselling supports; the Juvenile Liaison Office and assessment teams.

A similar question on satisfaction levels was asked about engagement with community support services. Much like the previous question, the greater number of responses could imply a greater level of engagement or awareness of these services by participants. Respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with Roscrea Youth Centre, St. Vincent de Paul and North Tipperary Development Company. And while Pieta House garnered a significant number of responses, there were high levels of dissatisfaction with the service indicated.

Fig 13: Levels of Satisfaction – Dissatisfaction with Public Services



Respondents were asked if they wanted to add any feedback on the services and a number took the opportunity with the majority referring to mental health services:

- Dissatisfaction with Pieta House related mainly to waiting lists and opening times
- Long waiting lists for mental health services
- No mental health after hours service available which is much needed
- The youth club and youth centre is great
- Challenges with drug issues in the town
- Lack of early intervention services

Family Issues

Respondents were asked if there were any issues in their families that were difficult to deal with and if they could prioritise them from 1 – 5. A total of 31 people answered this question and the issues identified most often as their first and most pressing priority were:

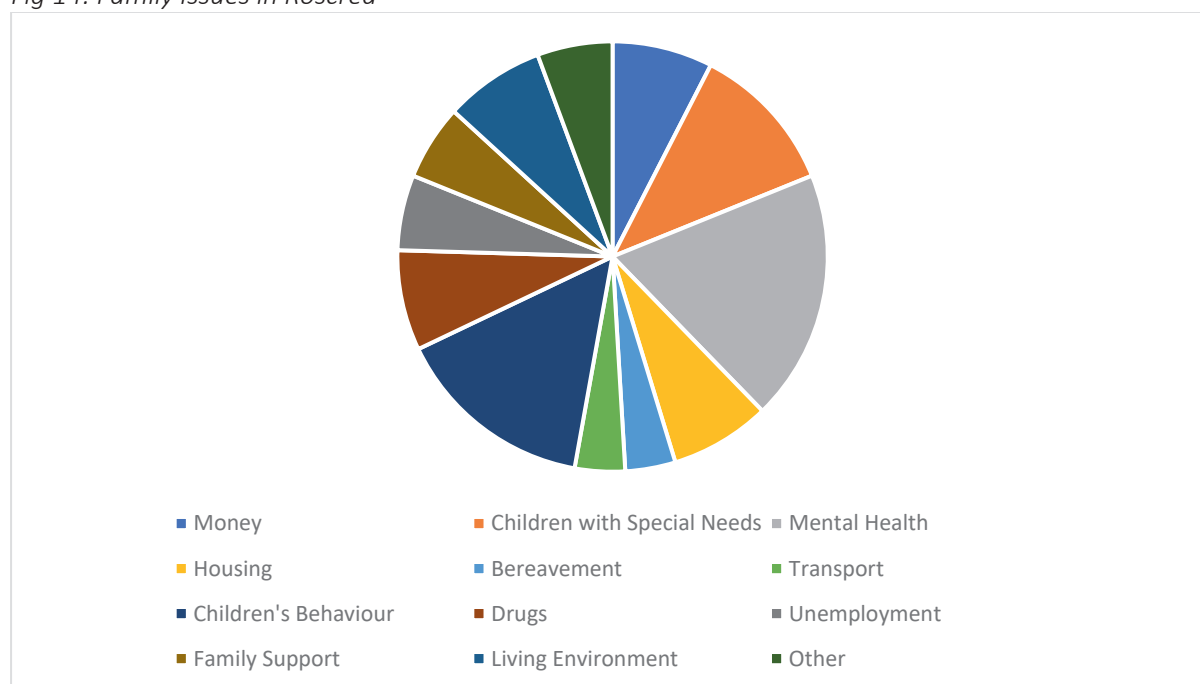
- money worries (19%)
- supporting their children with special needs (19%) – referring to both children with intellectual and physical needs such as physical disabilities, children with learning difficulties, children on the autism spectrum and non-verbal children
- mental health worries (19%) - specific mention was made of issues within the family of anxiety, counselling needs and youth mental health.

While these three issues dominated, they were followed by housing (14%), families dealing with bereavement and grief (10%), assistance needed in handling children's behaviour (10%) such as violence towards parents, tantrums, sleep issues and developing social skills. The other area singled out

as a first priority was around transport with specific mention made about public transport to and from Roscrea and the need for a taxi service.

If we look across the issues presenting across all five priorities (1 – 5), the emphasis changes slightly with mental health worries still the most dominant issue within families (identified by 10 families) but followed now by children’s behaviour (identified by 8 families). These are followed by children with Special Needs (6 families), drugs, housing, money worries and the living environment all identified by 4 families respectively and finally employment opportunities and family support identified as priorities by 3 families apiece.

Fig 14: Family Issues in Roscrea



The information above sheds some light on the issues people are grappling with within their families. When asked what services are needed to help address these needs in their families, that are currently not available or accessible, respondents noted the following:

- mental health supports with a particular focus on after hours services, supports for young people
- parenting supports including help and information with managing children’s behaviour
- quicker assessments and specialised therapies for children with special needs such as speech therapists, play therapists and greater supports in schools
- reliable transport to and from the town and around the town
- more diverse facilities and groups for teenagers and young adults to combat ‘hanging around’ and engage them in different activities.

Community Issues

Survey participants were asked about the community they lived in and what services or supports or improvements could make it a better place to live. Their responses reflect much of what was said earlier but it was presented in the context of Roscrea as a place to live and grow up. There was a general sense that the town has been forgotten about and let down with the lack of investment, the poor job opportunities, the lack of full time services in the town with the onus on families to travel outside for support with very limited public transport options. The environment in which people live has a

significant impact on their physical and mental health. Respondents talked about the closed shop fronts, the lack of seating around the town and the poor state of the streets. This was all interlinked with comments about general ‘hanging around’ of young people and the visibility and access to drugs and alcohol in public areas. Respondents highlighted particular services and supports that are needed in the wider community with mental health, drugs and family support mentioned as the top three.

| Family Issues <i>(No. of times mentioned)</i> | Specific Needs Identified |
|--|--|
| Mental Health (11) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - out of hours mental health service - play therapy - counselling services - long waiting lists for assessments |
| Facilities and Youth Support (11) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hang out area for teenagers - Covered play area - Running track - Cinema - Programmes that can divert young people - Activities and groups for people over the age of 18 - Young people who left school early seem to have fallen through the cracks - Football club - Activities for people who are deaf or hard of hearing - Lack of amenities for children who are not into sport |
| Drugs and Alcohol (10) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for a methadone clinic - teenagers involved in drugs not being dealt with - addiction counselling - addiction services - better education/ awareness around drug use - drug counselling service for families - drug and alcohol support for under 18's is non-existent |
| Family Support (9) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bereavement counselling - Support for new mothers - Support for people parenting alone - Specialised support for children with special needs and their families as there is currently none available - Parent and toddler groups - Support and education around dealing with children's behaviour - Community development worker to set up programmes for young parents, families and teenagers - Central information place with effective signposting system and linking in supports - Budgeting and money management - Drop-in services |
| Community & Living Environment (9) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Red flag alerts if people don't collect payments from post office or other services - Public open areas need to be enhanced - Life needs to be pumped into the town, shops closed up and lying empty - Seating needed around town centre - Support for community estates - Worry that the town has been forgotten |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very few full-time services in the town |
| Job Opportunities (3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More work opportunities - More job opportunities for mothers alongside accessible childcare |
| Safety and Security (3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gardai need to be more visible - More community guards needed - Anti-social behaviour in housing estates - Large groups of intimidating lads |
| Older People (3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assisted living for the elderly - Dementia services - Transport needs of older people as they may have to stop driving as they get older - Meals on Wheels |
| Transport (2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper taxi service - Day service outings for all ages - Daily routes and times so people can get to and from town |

3.2 Young People

There was a very low response from young people to the survey which was to be expected given the time of year it was in circulation (summer months), the constraints on public advertising and the inability to hold face to face meetings. It is worth devoting a short paragraph however to the three responses received as while they may be low in number, they were rich in quality. All the respondents were men aged between 15 – 18.

The activities they liked to do was meeting up with friends, reading, cycling, playing video games and watching movies. The services they were had engaged with at some point include Tusla Social Working Team, CAMHS, the Kickback Youth Café and NTDC.

When asked about the issues they see in Roscrea, they include:

- Drugs/ alcohol
- Crime
- Jobs
- Mental health
- Safe places to go and make friends
- Limited entertainment options if not into sport
- Racism, homophobia and sexism
- Awareness and acceptance of special needs

Two of them noted they would like to be involved in more decision making about the town, but the general sense is they felt no one would listen. Finally, while they mentioned more services in the town, there was a stronger call for the town to become more open-minded and diverse.

I'm not sporty so feel there is nowhere for me to go to meet new people or make friends. I'm very lonely.

3.3 Service Providers Consultation

There was an excellent response from public service providers in Roscrea to the consultation process with nearly all of them engaging in the process through one way or another (a full list of service providers who participated in the consultation process is included in the Appendix).

- Survey: twelve providers completed online surveys; one completed a postal survey; one survey was returned via email as it involved a number of people from the same organisation.
- Phone consultation: 5 telephone consultations were held with 22 people involved, in total.
- Meeting: one meeting was held pre COVID 19 restrictions with a number of people from residents committees and the Community Action Programme committee (5 participants).²⁶

Family Issues

There was a general consensus across all the service providers about the main issues facing families in Roscrea which are essentially mental health concerns, drug and alcohol misuse alongside the low level criminality that often goes hand in hand with this, family supports and the needs of young people (teenager and young adult). These are detailed in the text box below. But these do not present in isolation and are often connected to each other i.e. mental health issues arising from drug misuse. It was aptly described by one respondent as 'layers of an onion' so whereas the outer layer might be the symptom e.g. criminality, underneath are layers and layers of other issues such as poor educational attainment, family issues and mental health needs, that underpin that manifestation.

Mental Health: the issue of mental health mainly, self-harm and suicidal thoughts, dealing with suicide and bereavement, lack of access to counselling and necessary supports, depression and anxiety in mothers, low self-esteem among young people and low level mental health needs that are not appropriate for CAMHS but yet still need to be addressed before they escalate.

Drug and Alcohol Misuse: while these are issues that affect all ages, particular mention was made of the links between drugs and young people. This relates not only to drug misuse but the criminality associated with the supply of drugs which respondents say attracts young people because of the potential financial gain, especially those who may have left school early or who have left school and are not engaged in any kind of training or employment. Linked with this misuse is the lack of addiction services, supports or counselling for addiction and for the families of addicts.

Family Support: Practical parenting supports are needed in Roscrea. Engaging with parents and families at an early stage of family life means that many down the line problems can be avoided or parents are better able to cope with issues when they do present themselves. There is a sense that young parents have lost a lot of confidence in themselves and this translates to a lack of confidence around their parenting skills. By providing a little support and direction, they can build their capacity in this regard. The other challenges parents need assistance with, is managing children's behaviours, dealing with social media, addressing school refusal, setting and maintaining boundaries, managing daily routines and budgeting. One parent families, separated families and new community families require particular attention and support.

Needs of Young People: The focus on young people was consistent throughout the consultation process with service providers. While the issues raised affect the wider community of Roscrea, particular attention was paid to the impact they are having on young people and the issues cited were: self-harm and suicidal ideation among young people; drug and alcohol misuse; addiction with the spin offs or intimidation, violence, fear and criminality; unemployment; lack of purpose; lack of activities (outside of sport) for young people; early school leaving and school absenteeism; lack of confidence and poor self-esteem; children as young as 8 exhibiting worrying behaviour.

²⁶ It is recognised that the residents committee and CAP Committee members are not public service providers but their views are included in this section for ease of analysis.

A number of other issues were also cited by respondents although not as frequently as the ones mentioned above. They are primarily to do with people's living environment and they too have a significant impact on the issues presenting in families – the soil in which the onion is grown, to continue to the onion analogy from earlier. The issues mentioned were poverty within families both in terms of lack of money, poor educational attainment and poverty of opportunity along with access to job and career opportunities, both of which it was said were lacking in Roscrea.

The phone consultations provided a backdrop or a context for looking at family issues in Roscrea. The town was once a thriving market centre with a strong manufacturing base. Well paid low skilled employment for people was plentiful and young people had work opportunities locally which often meant less of a focus on either completing their education or going on to further education. These traditional manufacturing industries closed and left few other employment opportunities. Whole families were affected by these closures and respondents talk about the town spiralling downwards from this point – bypassed by the motor way, withdrawal of full time services, few job opportunities, the loss of the Town Council and the challenge posed by a town balanced on the border of two counties.

Attention was drawn to particular groups in the community of Roscrea who face ongoing challenges:

- new communities in the town of which there are a significant number. There are challenges around engaging with these new families ensuring they are not isolated and integrating in a positive way. Language barriers and differing cultural practices can pose difficulties for service providers and for the families in question.
- Travellers who are more likely to leave school early, have particular health and education needs.
- Families in direct provision in the town.

Issues Facing Services Operating in Roscrea

Over 90% of service providers who completed a survey said the services currently available were not adequate enough to meet the needs identified. The services or supports they said were needed full time in the community were:

- Family support services
- Addiction services
- Counselling services
- Substance misuse services and education
- Mental health
- Youth service to have longer opening hours and offer more programmes
- Employment opportunities

It should be noted that there is a family support worker post in the town of Roscrea funded by Tusla and managed by NTDC. This is essentially one person linking in with families in the town either through self-referral or referrals from other agencies to offer them supports and assistance. Feedback on this initiative, through the consultation process, indicates that this role is hugely valuable but experience has shown that it cannot be done by one person alone operating without the necessary network of programmes, services, supports and team membership that are available in other Family Resource Centre projects. It is a very large catchment area with significant family needs. There is a real sense of isolation with the current approach along with a very large caseload and a lack of support services to link into e.g. no parent or toddler groups; no Community Mothers programme; limited counselling; waiting lists for services. Even the most basic of problems – no place to meet families in a comfortable, private, neutral space and no place to run any kind of groups or programmes. The high turnover of staff in this family support worker post is a reflection of these challenges. Health workers on the ground value the post highly while recognising these difficulties and say when the position becomes vacant, it

leaves a huge gap as there is nowhere for health workers to refer people for practical parenting and family supports. The high turnover of staff also makes it difficult to build up trust between families and the support worker position.

While the vast majority of respondents felt that certain services needed to have a full time presence in the town, they also reflected a view that the services that currently exist need to review their own way of working and look at different ways to engage families on an ongoing basis. There is a perception that the services currently provided across all organisations are rather disconnected from each other, working to address specific needs of individuals instead of a more collaborative family and community approach. People from the community need to be engaged on a sustained and ongoing basis with services in order to overcome the challenges they face in their daily lives. Without a sustained presence in the town and a co-operative approach between services, this is difficult to do. It is particularly difficult if people have to go outside the town to access support services because poor transport options combined with lack of motivation in many cases, means that engagement with services breaks down.

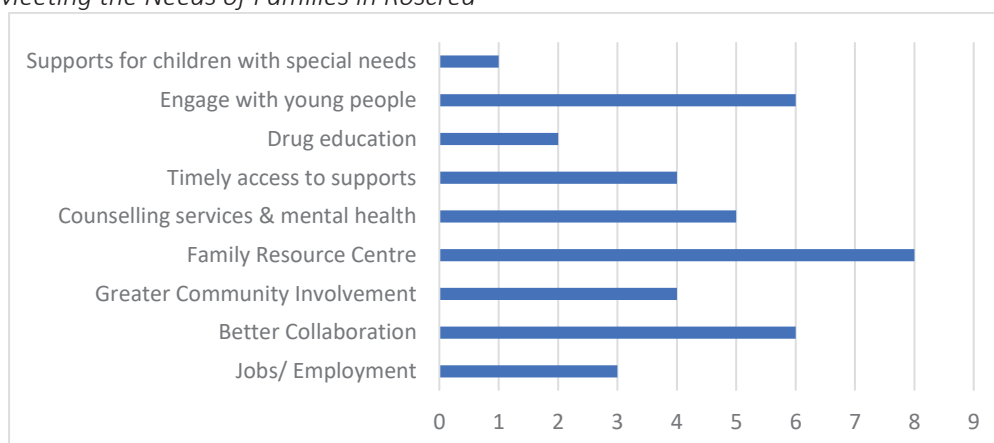
A number of the service providers identified ongoing challenges they face in working in Roscrea. They include:

- lack of garda manpower makes it difficult to build and sustain better relations with the community;
- gaining the communities trust and breaking that barrier between service provider and service user;
- working in a collaborative way with other agencies;
- time and funding, particularly to address mental health issues;
- stigma associated with drug use and it is difficult for families to reach out for support;
- competitiveness between different communities and estates in Roscrea for resources which makes it difficult to pull everyone together;
- lack of suitable meeting space for group work or one-to-one work;
- the lack of job opportunities locally gives rise to a lack of purpose particularly among young people;
- poor transport provision which makes it difficult for people to access jobs or training opportunities or support services outside Roscrea unless there is access to a car;
- organisations are often bound by rules, regulations and criteria which can make it difficult to respond to identified needs in a flexible way;
- the lack of a dedicated adult education centre with sufficient capacity to accommodate all of the adult education provision being delivered in Roscrea and the surrounding areas;
- learners difficulty with online and blended learning as many are struggling with accessing and using computers and relevant software;
- difficulty accessing target groups with information;
- resistance to change and a general sense of hopelessness;
- real reluctance to travel out of town or leave the town to look for work opportunities elsewhere.

Gaps in Services

Respondents were asked what could be done to meet the needs of families more effectively. The survey returns identified supports for families through a Family Resource Centre or a similar type of model and greater collaboration between service providers and between service providers and people in the community. Engaging with young people also featured strongly and this essentially was about involving young people in their community to a greater extent.

Fig 15: Meeting the Needs of Families in Roscrea



The feedback from the consultations identified similar gaps in services:

- the need for a Family Resource Centre or a similar model that involved the local community and offering a range of wraparound services, programmes and supports for families, that would protect people's privacy and anonymity.
- Pieta House is reducing its hours of opening in the town but people were at pains to point out that the services offered by Pieta House were needed more than ever; it is the visibility of the service on the main street which is putting off many people from accessing its service;
- a more constant and visible drug and alcohol misuse service.
- greater access to employment opportunities.
- DEIS status for the secondary school – all the primary schools feeding into the secondary school have DEIS status offering much needed additional supports and resources for learners; the transition to secondary school therefore without these supports and resources is very difficult for a lot of students;
- After-hours service for addiction and mental health.
- Better collaboration and communication between service providers, between service providers and the community and between CAP Committee and the community.
- the current location of NTDC offices which are over a bookies on the first floor of a building is not ideal. It is not accessible or conducive for many people who have mobility problems or any addiction issues. It also does not encourage footfall or the community hub vibe which had been present a number of years ago through Roscrea 2000.
- Timely access to mental health services; there is currently a nine months waiting list for CAMHS and there is very limited supports for people with low level mental health needs;
- A real need for innovative training options because not every child is academic. The concentration at the moment is on caring courses or office skills but a more creative approach is needed looking at manual training, apprenticeships, mechanics courses, offering a range of programmes that attract young people and are geared towards their skills and interest.

Service Providers Proposals

Participants were asked to identify one or two realistic proposals that they would like to see actioned to support families in Roscrea as a final question in the survey and consultations. There was overwhelming agreement from respondents on the initiative with nearly all of them flagging up the importance of a Family Resource Centre or a Community Hub similar to the FRC model for the town.

A central family hub would offer that privacy, anonymity, and visibility that people in rural areas are looking for while also offering the necessary family supports and meeting spaces which are currently lacking in the town. But this proposal was also made along with a very strong caveat – that the Centre

would need to be firmly grounded in the community to foster a sense of ownership by the community. The helicoptering of services into the town has had little impact on halting the decline of Roscrea – the local people need to buy into the Centre and need to be invested in it and in this way, there is more of a chance of the ongoing and sustainable engagement with services that are necessary to address the many issues facing families on a daily basis.

The other area for action that was highlighted by several different respondents was the issue of training and employment. First and foremost, it was about job creation and employment creation in the town of which there has been very little in the past. With the levels of unemployment and youth unemployment, the focus must turn to enterprise creation and the necessary training to support new jobs coming into the town. Respondents noted however, that there needs to be initiative and creativity shown around the training programmes offered – it cannot be training for training sake, it has to look at the interests of the people, the talents of the people and the areas where there is a chance of jobs being created or sourced. This is one keyway to distract or divert young people from ‘hanging around’ or engaging in risky behaviour.

The other proposals for action mentioned centred around young people: firstly, the need for a constant and visible drug service in the town that fulfils the function of educating as well as providing supports and secondly, the need for a neutral space for older teenagers to be together safely.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Summary of Findings

Roscrea has either been the subject of, or featured in, many different studies and reports over the years. This is out of a recognition that the town and surrounding areas has faced many challenges with the loss of traditional industries, stubbornly high unemployment and levels of disadvantage that have proven difficult to tackle. While these issues might not be seen as ‘family support issues’ per se, it is recognised that the living environment has a significant impact on families, on their health and the wellbeing of the communities. No job or a poorly paid job means less money in a household which in turn puts strain on family and family members, particularly if they are parenting alone; poor educational attainment limits job opportunities; poorly planned estates, lack of accessible amenities and green space restricts activities for children and families. So, where people live and how people live is central to a healthy family life.

There are many positives associated with the town of Roscrea. There is a strong community spirit, the historic footprint of the town offers significant tourist potential, there are great sports facilities, and the resilience of the people has been shown over the years. But equally there is a sense that the town has been forgotten about and let down with the lack of investment, the dearth of job opportunities, the lack of full time services in the town and the poor public transport options.

4.1.1 Summary of Roscrea Data

This research was tasked with exploring the family support needs specifically and the findings are presented through this lens. Data from the 2016 Census along with information drawn other relevant sources provides a backdrop to this research:

- Roscrea has a relatively young population with a third of the population aged 24 and under in 2016.
- There is a significant non-Irish national population in town at 16% which is double the County average of 8.9%.
- 2% of the population identified as ‘White Irish Traveller’ in 2016 (County figure was 0.8%)
- One in every four families with a child aged under 15 were headed by a lone parent (County figure 20.5% in 2016)
- Roscrea had over twice the average rate of children in care in 2016 compared to the rate for North Tipperary
- Nearly one in every five people (18%) in Roscrea had no formal education or primary education only in 2016 (County figure 13%)
- 19.7% of the population had a third level education in 2016, lower than the County figure of 26%
- Unemployment remains stubbornly high and the male unemployment rate in 2016 was 21%, similar to the female unemployment rate of 21.5%. The latter is particularly high compared to the county average of 14%.
- 17% of households in Roscrea were renting from the local authority in 2016, nearly double the county figure of 9.7%.
- Nearly 40% of the population is renting in Roscrea when the private renting figures (21%) and socially renting figures are combined, nearly double the county figure of 24%.
- 17.1% of the population said they had a disability in 2016 (County figure 14.6%)
- North Tipperary recorded the highest rates of suicide in the country over the last number of years.

- There has been a slight increase on the numbers of people referred for drug and alcohol treatment in the North Tipperary/ East Limerick area.
- Theft, public order offences and damage to property were the most common crimes in Roscrea in 2019.
- Nearly one in every four households (23%) did not own a car in Roscrea
- 40% of the population of Roscrea lived in a very disadvantaged or disadvantaged areas (2,349 people) in 2016.

This research began before the COVID 19 outbreak and was completed as the country was emerging from restrictions. Although no data is available to measure the impact the restrictions had on the people in the town at this point, it is fair to say that it is unlikely that any improvements or positive changes to these statistics would have occurred during this time. In fact, for indicators such as employment, it is likely that things have dis-improved significantly during this time, as they have done in every other area of the country.

4.1.2 Summary of Family Support Issues

While the statistics presented in the last section provides the scaffolding to build a current picture of Roscrea, the issues in this section derived from consultations and report reviews provide the materials to fill in and complete the picture. There is a surprising consistency to the issues in the town as presented in previous reports and what has been highlighted through this research.

Support for Families

The reports over the years talked about supporting parents in families, particularly parents of children who have behavioural issues, families who may have problems with substance abuse, domestic abuse or mental health needs that require to be addressed. This research provides a snapshot of what families are living with now which is not dissimilar to what went before. Worries about money puts a significant strain on parents and all members of the family. One in every four families are headed by a single parent which brings with it additional financial and emotional challenges. Practical parenting supports at an early stage of family development is important, to provide the tools and support needed so that parents are better equipped as they move through the family lifecycle. Managing childrens behaviour is an ongoing struggle from dealing with tantrums and acting out behaviour, to school refusal, to feeding, to budgeting, to managing daily routines. Dealing effectively with these issues at an early stage and having the support to do this, can often avoid problems down the line for families. While these issues present themselves for all parents, they are particularly acute for children with special needs (physical and intellectual) and there was a strong call in this research for early assessments, greater access to therapeutic supports and group supports for families who find themselves struggling in these circumstances.

Mental Health

The mental health needs of the people of Roscrea, young people in particular, is something that is consistently highlighted through previous reports and it is no different in this research. The problem is that while the issue has been highlighted in the past, not a whole lot has changed in the intervening period. Particular issues mentioned with the long waiting lists for CAHMS, the lack of any supports for low level mental health needs such as anxiety, depression and after-hours supports. The town has experienced the trauma of suicide and the devastation this inflicts on families and on communities. This is under-pinned by the data which points to a high rate of suicide in North Tipperary. It is not surprising that parents are worried about self-harm, suicidal ideation, and depression among young people in particular. The over-arching issue from families and service providers alike is that there are not enough

supports and services available to the local population, that the mental health services are ‘convoluted’ and there is a real need to build resilience within the community.

Drugs and Alcohol Misuse

Linked with the issue of safety and security is the ongoing problem of substance misuse both drugs and alcohol which, anecdotally, has become more prevalent and more visible in the last number of years. While addiction issues affect all generations, it is the involvement of young people in drug and alcohol misuse which is causing concern in Roscrea. The same challenge was highlighted continuously through the research – the lack of value that seems to be placed on education, leaving school early, school absenteeism, the absence of anything else to do for teenagers and young adults other than ‘hang around’, the attraction of the ‘easy money’ to be made by being involved in the drug supply chain and the low level criminality that goes hand in hand with the drug culture. It should be noted that there are no figures or data to support the view that drug use and misuse is increasing in Roscrea – there has been a slight increase of drug related offences recorded in the past number of years (from 16 offences in 2016 to 20 offences in 2019) yet it is high on the list of peoples concerns. What seems to have changed over the years is how much more visible drug dealing has become around the town. What has not changed however, is the limited presence of addiction supports and services in the town. Research participants talked about the low presence of guards in the area which does little to deter this criminal behaviour and the lack of manpower in the area which limits community engagement between guards and citizens.

Financial Strain

The data analysis above highlights the disadvantaged nature of Roscrea town with nearly half (40%) of the population living in a disadvantaged area. But statistics cannot tell the story of what this is actually like for families. The families of Roscrea who responded to this research highlighted money worries as one of their biggest issues. This particular concern can permeate all other areas of life and put significant strain on parents, on children and on relationships. It is evidenced in the food that is bought for families, the ability to access supports that may be needed for children, the bills that are juggled and the social life that can be enjoyed together as a family. On a deeper level it affects choices people make around education, jobs, housing as having little money or worrying about money fundamentally affects people’s choices. Poverty is not just about not having enough money or scraping enough money to get by; it can also dampen peoples ambition and restricts opportunities.

High Unemployment

The issue of high unemployment is a constant feature throughout all the reports, and particularly the high incidence of youth unemployment and female unemployment. The unemployment rates remain stubbornly high in Roscrea which is influenced by a myriad of different things – the lack of new industries in the towns, the poor educational attainment, limited public transport. The problem lies not only with the lack of job opportunities but the types of jobs that are available. The decline of traditional industries that previously sought manual or unskilled labour is felt across the area with little to take its place. The more high-end job opportunities require a level of enterprise infrastructure and investment alongside a local workforce with higher levels of skills and education, both of which are significant challenges.

Transport

Being able to access services, education and jobs is something that is seen as central to the town but a general feeling over the years, that there is no real public transport system available to people of the town and outlying areas. So, unless a household has access to a car, options are often limited.

The Living Environment

There are repeated calls over the years for greater investment and resourcing of community facilities - playgrounds, indoor recreation facilities such as a running track, indoor children's play area, indoor hangout for youths. There is little for young people to do if not interested in sport and it is important that they are diverted or attracted away from the risky behaviour that accompanies the 'hanging around' activity. Dedicated space is sought in residential estates for community groups to meet and community activities to take place – requests for community houses are made repeatedly. The other issues that crop up are problems with insurance within groups or to run activities, the need for community groups to share resources and help with recruiting new volunteers for community groups.

4.1.3 Summary of Service Providers Responses

Service providers identified particular issues with providing family support services in Roscrea:

- The need for greater collaboration between all the providers to provide a seamless and co-ordinated approach to family needs
- The absence of a family resource centre or a similar community hub type model is felt keenly, particularly given the levels of disadvantage and needs among families in the town
- Having one family support worker operating in relative isolation within the necessary access to a network of supports and services together with a large case load, is unfair
- People living in small rural towns will often not access a service they need because of the visibility of that service e.g. Pieta House; anonymity and privacy are particularly important in a rural context
- It is difficult to get families to sustain their engagement with services and this ongoing connection is important to address the myriad of issues facing families on a day to day basis. This is made particularly difficult if people have to travel outside the town to access services on a regular basis. Most of the supports in the town are provided on an outreach basis so access to reliable and frequent public transport is central.
- Lack of garda manpower means that integration and connection with the community is limited
- Competitiveness between different communities and groups in Roscrea makes it difficult to get everyone to pull together
- Lack of suitable meeting space for group work or one-to-one work
- Resistance to change and a pervading sense of hopelessness around the town
- The lack of DEIS status for the secondary school
- Lack of alternative training and employment programmes for young people.

4.2 Proposals for Future Development of Family Support in Roscrea

Roscrea is a town with a strong community spirit and a lot of potential but has struggled to find its feet after the closure of the more traditional factories that supplied steady, well paid jobs for generations. By passed by the motorway and straddling two counties, residents feel that they have been forgotten about or passed over as economic growth and accruing benefits seemed to flow away rather than towards them. Their experience with suicide in the community has left a searing impact on them individually and collectively.

Research of this nature relies on data and statistics and surveys to tell a story, but it is also important to communicate the sense of a place which is more difficult as it is based on impressions and feelings rather than any empirical data. For Roscrea, this can be encapsulated in the phrase ‘lack of confidence’ which was used by participants throughout the research process in referring to different things. Parents are lacking confidence in their own parenting skills; there is a lack of confidence in young people about their own abilities feeding into poor self-esteem; there is a lack of confidence in the local economy as the necessary jobs or job opportunities have not materialised and shutters have been pulled down on many local businesses; there is a lack of confidence in services as they have been slowly withdrawn over the years, replaced by the less tangible or visible outreach supports. This translates into a community that appears to have lost confidence in itself and a general sense of being worn down and tired. It has been made even more difficult by the COVID 19 downturn and all the accompanying restrictions. In the words of one respondent, it needs a ‘gee-up’, a win of some sort to give the community a much-needed boost and assist the kick start for rejuvenation.

This research project was tasked with generating proposals for the future development of family support services in Roscrea. The definition applied to the term ‘family support’ detailed at the start of this report now comes in play with any proposals or recommendations needing to be grounded in this approach. Thus the focus is on early intervention with families, with prevention as important as the management of issues; the services and supports provided by agencies need to be integrated and work in a collaborative way, wrapping around the family seamlessly; they have to be needs led so the issues identified by families and services providers in this report will lead in this regard; support has to be provided in people’s own homes and in the community which challenges the outreach approach that has been taken in Roscrea to date; and they have to be accessible and flexible with the family as partners in the process rather than passive recipients.

Recommendations or proposals are not going to be made on every single important issue raised by families in this report for the very simple reason: it would be impossible to make progress on these in the short to medium term due to issues of resources and the constraints on the local public service bodies guided as they are by national budgets and rules and regulations. What the community does not need is another long list of recommendations and actions that might never be implemented. This will just end up grinding the community down even further – raising expectations only for them to be dashed once more.

The proposals for the future development of family support service in Roscrea in this report therefore are guided by the following: **they need to be realistic; they need to be feasible; they need to be doable; they need to be achievable.**

The overwhelming need identified in this research was for parenting and family supports that would help address the many problems presenting within families and experienced by different family members. A Family Support Worker working in isolation cannot provide the integrated, depth of service that is required for such a large area and such a large caseload. The provision of a **Community Family Hub or a Family Resource Centre** in the town would provide a focal point for this work and an important community space. While it will not solve the many problems identified by families in this report, it would be able to do a number of things:

- Provide a focus on early intervention with families and children to build coping skills among parents that might help combat issues that present further down the line and provide tools for dealing with these issues;
- Provide a central community focused point in the town where people can either access services or be signposted and supported as to where they can access services. The community nature of the centre would mean that the privacy of people would be protected;

- Provide a space where services can work out of and one-to-one work or group work could take place – at the moment, there is no comfortable, private central community space where this can happen;
- Provide the family support worker with a central location point and the potential to build up the necessary network of supports to address the needs of whole families rather than individuals.

It should be noted that at the time this research project was nearing completion, an initiative to develop an enterprise, education and community innovation hub in a central location in the town, was being proposed. It involves a consortium of stakeholders, led by North Tipperary Development Company.²⁷ NTDC have submitted an expression of interest (EOI) to lease the premises and be a partner in the delivery of a community and family hub within the overall project. The outcome of this needs analysis demonstrates the requirement for such a facility. This may provide an opportunity to progress this particular recommendation, but it is too early in the process however to assume anything in this regard. A central feature of this recommendation is that a Community Family Hub or Family Resource Centre needs to be grounded and driven by the local community. It cannot be parachuted in by an existing service, it cannot be owned by one group – it has to be a coming together of people in the community to unite, drive and support a centre that they need and that they will use. The most successful Family Resource Centre models are those that are grounded in and owned by the local community. The role of the service providers and development agencies is to get behind the community and assist in driving this forward aided by their resources and knowledge capacity. While a proposed Community and Family Hub would provide the physical space for the coming together of services, it is important that the work practices of agencies also come together to ensure better collaboration. It is recommended that a Working Group be established, comprising of community and service providers to begin the process of building a strong management committee for a centre of this nature.

There is an issue about the capacity of the community to be fully involved and lead on this project which ushers in the second recommendation: putting in place a **Community Animation Programme**. A community that is doubting itself, that has lost confidence in its own ability to address issues, that feels it has been forgotten about and is angry and fearful about the future, needs a revitalisation from the ground up that is **hope led and hope driven**. The objective of a programme of this nature is to have a community development worker on the ground to work with local individuals, groups and businesses to start the process of tapping into their own abilities, help equip them with the tools they need to make positive changes and work to energise and engage them in addressing their own needs and their community needs; essentially animating the community. Uniting them around the plan for a Community Family Centre Hub will help provide a focus for this work, build the capacity within the community and help to identify local people who could be involved in the development of a centre of this nature.

The process of identifying abilities and developing skills helps build resilience for individuals, families and communities. It is an important ‘taking back control’ mind-set that can help combat the hopelessness and fear that is prevalent among all communities that experience significant levels of disadvantage. Roscrea has an advantage in that it has a history of community spirit and community activism and if harnessed in a positive way, will be a formidable force for change. But all the groups need to work together and put aside the competitive scrambling for resources, which is always an issue among communities that are starved of resources. They need to be supported by development agencies and organisations to do this in a positive and coherent way. The coming together around a

²⁷ The consortium involves: North Tipperary Development Company; Roscrea Enterprise and Community Hub CLG (REACH); Tipperary County Council; Chamber of Commerce; Limerick Institute of Technology; Tipperary Local Enterprise Office; Tipperary ETB; Roscrea Community Development Council.

common project should unite local people and the work of the community development worker is to ensure this happens.

The final central recommendation is the establishment of a **Task Force on Employment and Training for Employment**. While this is not seen as Family Support per se, there is little point in animating communities and putting in place support services if there are no opportunities to work, learn and grow. Families are struggling with money worries, but few opportunities present to increase their earning capacity as there are limited job opportunities. Money worries put huge strain on families and relationships and addressing this issue would be an important lynchpin in the family support jigsaw. It is recognised that bringing employment and jobs to the town is not easy – every rural town is looking to do the same thing and in the post COVID world, will be scrambling even more in this regard. But just because it is hard does not mean it should be done. The work by the NTDC led consortium in developing an enterprise, education and community innovation hub is important in this regard. People during this research process spoke about a lack of purpose, particularly among young people. The unemployment rate in the area is stubbornly high, even during the economic progress made after the last recession. Participants also spoke about the frustration with current job, training and employment schemes – people are going on these schemes with the knowledge that there are no jobs when the scheme comes to an end. This feeds into the hopelessness and low sense of self-worth felt by many individuals and that spreads out into the wider community. Having a purpose, working towards something, feeling somewhat in control of your life – these contribute to positive mental health.

The Task Force could be a sub-committee of the CAP Committee, or a Working Group linked to another Development Agency such as NTDC or LEO or linked to the REACH Consortium. Whatever manifestation it ultimately takes, it should be having open, ongoing communication with other agencies within the town and with the local people. It should have members from business organisations, LEO, Community and Enterprise (TCC), the Town Manager, community representatives, elected representatives, NTDC, Chamber of Commerce, training and education bodies and other key stakeholders. **The objective within the first year is to produce a plan for innovative training, education and apprentice courses for young people that have the potential for employment and to attract at least one new business into the town.**

There are some smaller scale actions that can be pursued and implemented quickly as the first steps in addressing some of the more obvious service gaps in the town:

- Look at setting up a Community Mothers Programme in the area (possibly link with the Silver Arch FRC in this regard) – led by Tusla.
- Support the fledgling parent and toddler group in the town, with a particular focus on providing a regular and suitable space in which they can meet – led by NTDC.
- Support the secondary school's application for DEIS status which would be of great assistance to many young people transitioning to secondary school who will struggle without the additional support – this campaign is currently being led by Roscrea Community College and should be actively supported by CAP and other key organisations in the town.

The important, more deeply entrenched needs raised in this research, should be central to future discussions about the town by all agencies and they include:

- Greater access to mental health services
- Visible and ongoing presence of a full-time drug support service
- An increase of community guard in the town and visibility on the street
- Addressing the deficits of transport availability in the town and surrounding areas.

The final step in this proposal process is to look at the best way to implement these recommendations. These proposals require collaboration and energy to drive the process forward and it is important that all the stakeholders are linked into the implementation process. The issues in Roscrea will not be solved

by one provider alone but require the involvement and energy of many different players to address these complex challenges. It does however require leadership and commitment at all levels - from senior decision makers and elected representatives right down to the influencers in the local community. The CAP Committee has served an important collaborative lynchpin in the fabric of Roscrea for the last number of years. While reviewing the role of the CAP Committee was not part of the terms of reference for this research, there were some references made to it during the consultation process. Many of the service providers and residents did not know it existed or thought it had disbanded. The CAP meeting minutes over the last number of years, also shows that members themselves have talked about the need to review and refocus the CAP Committee in order to keep it current and effective.

An important discussion needs to take place, therefore, about the best way to drive forward the recommendations in this report. Whatever body is tasked with taking these forward, implementation structures and processes need to be underpinned by the following guidelines:

- There needs to be central involvement of local people and families representing communities across the town linked (supported by the community animation programme).
- There needs to be involvement of senior decision makers and elected representatives in the town providing an important leadership role.
- There needs to be a clear communication plan in place (social media, local paper, local radio, newsletters) which ensures regular updates to the wider community and stakeholders about developments.
- There needs to be a focus on better collaboration and co-operation among agencies working

Appendices

Appendix 1: Profile of Services and Organisations in the Roscrea Area

A central part of this research brief is to profile existing services in the Roscrea area. The services identified are the ones that provide valuable support to families either through individual services or household wide services but would not technically fall under the definition of ‘family support’ which frames this research set out in Chapter One i.e. an early intervention with families working in an integrated way in homes and communities that is led by the needs of the families. In reality, is difficult to ascribe this pure ‘family support’ tag to any service but some services are more true to this definition than others such as the Family Support Worker, the Home School Community Liaison Service, the Traveller Health Programme and the Public Health Nursing Team.

Public Services in the Roscrea Primary Care Team Area

| Name | Service | Presence in Roscrea | Opening Times |
|--|--|--|---|
| Roscrea Primary Care Centre | Offers a range of health care services – Public Health Nurse, eye clinic, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, school nurse and Traveller health nurse. | Yes | Monday – Friday office hours |
| Child and Adult Mental Health Services - HSE | Clinical appointments for young people up to 18 years with moderate or severe mental health problems | Operates out of Health Centre on a part-time basis | |
| An Garda Síochána | Maintaining law, order, safety and security in the community. Resources include Guards, Juvenile Liaison Officers | Yes – Garda Station | Presence 24x7 days |
| Tipperary County Council | Developing Tipperary through the following services: Planning and development Housing Environment Arts and Heritage Community and Economic development Libraries Civil Defence Motor tax Sports & swimming pools Water services Roads | No Council office in Roscrea | Attendance in Roscrea when necessary. Library in Roscrea. |
| Citizens Information Centre | Information, advice and advocacy for all on services and public rights in Ireland. | Yes - Office | Mon 10 – 1 Thurs and Fri: 10- 1 & 2-4 |
| North Tipperary Development Company | Run a range of programmes across North Tipperary with particular focus on vulnerable groups and communities. They include the Rural Development Programme, SICAP Programme, Jobs Club and various Employment Schemes (CE; TUS; Rural Social Scheme). A number of services are located specifically in Roscrea, namely the Roscrea Youth Service (see below); Traveller Health Project and Family Support Project (2 workers); Community Childcare service in Roscrea (full time, 51 weeks); Ascend Domestic Abuse Services (Helpline Mon – Fri., 9-5), | Yes - office | Monday – Friday, office hours. |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Pieta House | Centre for prevention of self-harm and suicide. The service offers free counselling for people who are distressed with suicidal ideation, self-harming or people who have been bereaved by suicide. | Yes - Office | Monday: 2 – 7 p.m. Tuesday: 9 – 2 p.m. Wednesday: 9 – 2 p.m. Thursday: 2 – 7 p.m. Friday: 9 – 2 p.m. |
| Roscrea Library | Provides book lending and community supports | Yes – Library in town | Mon – Fri 10- 2; 2-5. |
| Roscrea Youth Service - NTDC | Run by NTDC in the Roscrea Youth Service with the following projects: The RAY Garda Youth Diversion Project – targeting young people aged 12 – 18 years at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour and/or criminal activity. Open to referrals. RAY 8 – 11 years project – early intervention project targeting children who experience challenges in one or more of the following: behaviour, school attendance, emotional regulation, making positive choices, use of leisure time. Open to referrals. The Roscrea Youth Project a UBU ‘Your Place Your Space’ funded youth project offering a variety of onsite group activities, supports and outreach services to young people aged between 10 – 24 years. Open to referrals and drop ins. Youth Counselling Service – targets 10 – 17 year olds offering a mental health and wellness programme for young people with one-to-one counselling and group facilitation services. Open to referrals. Family Support Service – providing one to one support, parenting programmes both group and individual, Meitheals, a listening ear. Open to referrals. | Yes – housed in the Kickback Youth Cafe | The Café runs a drop in facility for secondary school young people every Thursday and Friday and a youth group for 9 – 12 year olds on Wednesday. The Youth Counselling Service (17.5 hours per week). |
| Tipperary Education and Training Board | Provides a range of services across Tipperary including secondary schools, Back to Education Initiative, Adult guidance and information service; Adult Literacy; Post Leaving Certificate Courses; Vocational Training; Local Training Initiatives and Youthreach ... training and work experience programme for early school leavers aged 15 – 20. | Yes – Roscrea Education Centre in town | Monday – Friday, Office Hours and evening classes |
| Department of Social Protection | Welfare support Employment services Job Path (operated by Turas Nua) Youth Employment Support Scheme for 18 - 24 | Yes – SW Office in the town | Mon – Fri Office Hours |
| EmployAbility | Recruitment advice services to business. Employment Supports services to people with disabilities community | No – outreach to Roscrea | Outreach |
| Tusla | Child Protection and Welfare services including family support. Social Workers Early Years (pre-school inspection services) Domestic, sexual and gender-based violence services Services related to the psychological welfare of children Education Welfare Officer Home School Liaison Service in primary Schools School Completion Programme – Secondary School | No Tusla specific office. | Education welfare services operate in the schools. Social workers come on a case by case basis |
| Mid-West Drugs and Alcohol Service | The Mid-West Regional Drugs and Alcohol Forum (MWRDAF) is responsible for ensuring the development of a co-ordinated response to tackling drugs problems in counties Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary and Limerick City. | No | |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|
| Community Substance Mis-use Team | Early intervention service through outreach to young people, aged 18 and under. | No physical presence – one staff member operates across North Tipperary | 3 days a week. Phone Support. |
| Novas Respite House | Provides respite and support to families and loved ones affected by addiction. | Outreach by appointment | |
| Department of Education | Primary and Secondary Schools DEIS Schools Special Education Needs Providers National Educational Psychological Service | Primary and Secondary education | |

Schools in Roscrea

Primary Schools:

Corville National School (DEIS status)
 Gael Scoil na tSli
 Sacred Heart National School (DEIS status)
 St. John's National School (DEIS status)
 St. Cronans National School
 St. Anne's Special School

Secondary Schools:

Colaiste Pobal Ros Cre
 Cistercian College Roscrea (private)

Community Organisations

Ashbury Residents Group
 Chapel Lane Residents Group
 Copper Beech Residents Group
 Geann Glas Residents Group
 Kennedy Park Residents Group
 North East Tipperary Drug and Alcohol Initiative: Information, support and referral drop-in service for those affected by substance misuse (12 – 2 every Tuesday)
 Roscrea Community Development Council: Network for residents' groups and other community groups to meet and exchange information
 Roscrea Enhancement Committee: Implementation of Roscrea Town Plan
 Roscrea Herigate Society: promoting the heritage of Roscrea
 Roscrea Lions Club: Campaigner on local issues and community projects
 Roscrea Men's and Women's Sheds: Community social networking and support service (meets every Tuesday and Thursday evening)
 Roscrea Players: Drama and performance
 Roscrea Scouts: Scout troop including beavers, scouts and venturers
 Roscrea Stands Up: Mental health, suicide prevention and substance abuse
 Roscrea Wellbeing Group: Practical activities to improve health and wellbeing
 Roscrea Youth Centre: a voluntary young organisation running activities for young people in Roscrea out of a local hall every Thursday evening (7.30 to 8.30 for children aged 7 – 6th class and 9.15 – 10.15 for teenagers aged 14 – 17 years of age).
 St. Vincent de Paul: Personal assistance for individuals and families in need
 Roscrea Tidy Towns:

Failte Isteach, Roscrea:

Irish Wheelchair Association: Provider of services to people with limited mobility (office in Roscrea)

Roscrea Bereavement Community Support: monthly bereavement drop in service, phone support; face to face counselling for complicated grief cases.

Roscrea Age Friendly Society: promoting positive ageing in Roscrea

Roscrea Musical Society: music and Drama

Autism Awareness Roscrea: increasing the awareness of the daily challenges facing individuals on the autism spectrum.

Roscrea Community Action Programme Committee: set up to implement the Roscrea Community Action Plan with quarterly meetings

Sports Clubs in Roscrea

Killa Villa Football Club

Roscrea Badminton Club

Roscrea United Football Club

Roscrea Rugby Club

St. Flannan's Athletic Club

Roscrea Walking Group

Roscrea Trail Blazers (walking group)

Streamstown Celtic FC

Roscrea GAA – Inane Rovers Name

Roscrea Hurling Club

Roscrea Golf Club

Roscrea Facilities, Community Events and Amenities

Roscrea Leisure Centre: Swimming pool and gym facilities with tennis courts

Sli na Slainte Route

A Taste of Roscrea Festival

Roscrea Beo Festival

St. Patrick's Day Festival

Roscrea Castle and Damer House

The Butler, Trail

Tourism Information Point

Transport Services

Local Link Service: 854 Roscrea – Nenagh daily; 834 Roscrea – Portlaoise daily; Roscrea Town (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday).

Train Service (train station in Roscrea): daily service from Dublin Heuston to Limerick via Roscrea.

Bus Eireann: Dublin – Limerick via Roscrea daily.

Private Bus Companies: Kavanaghs run daily service from Dublin Airport to Limerick via Roscrea

Appendix 2: Consultation Process for the Family Support Needs in Roscrea Report

Family:

- 68 survey returns
- 3 survey returns from young people

Service Providers:

Surveys:

- Twelve providers completed online surveys
- One service provider completed a postal survey
- One survey was returned via email as it involved a number of people from the same organisation.

Online Consultations:

- 1 Focus Group (8 participants) involve people from Tusla Social Work Department; Home School Community Liaison Service; School Completion Programme; Roscrea Community College; Education Welfare Division.
- 1 Focus Group involving 9 staff members from North Tipperary Development Company.
- A number of phone consultations with the Public Health Nursing Team (2 participants), Family Support Workers (1 participant).

Meetings:

- One meeting was held pre-Covid 19 restrictions with a number of people from Residents Committees (4 participants in total) and community representatives on the Roscrea CAP Committee (2 participants).
- A consultation meeting was held online with Roscrea CAP Committee when the report was in draft stage.



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Commissioned by: North Tipperary Development Company CLG & Tusla Mid-West
with support from Tipperary Children and Young People Services Committee &
Tipperary County Council.