

EDEN VILLAGE

COMMUNITY SURVEY

March 2009



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INTRODUCTION

Carrickfergus Community Forum secured a post for a community development officer in June 2009 the Forum decided that it would try to reach areas within the Borough that had little or no community participation. Eden Village was identified as a priority area.

A community audit was carried out over a six week period during which time three hundred surveys were delivered throughout the Eden area to the local primary school, allotments, churches, handed out door to door and at focus groups.

The purpose of the research was to establish what the key issues are for the community of Eden village. The aim of the primary research is to create an up to date profile of the area both in terms of the residents and their needs.

This report aims to make recommendations towards addressing the issues identified and finding a way forward for the residents of the Eden Village.

This piece of research was carried out independently without any preconceived ideas or bias and a combination of both primary and secondary research methods were used.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- ✚ Research the Eden Area
- ✚ Create an up to date area profile of the residents of Eden village
- ✚ Identify the main issues affecting the residents of Eden village
- ✚ Make recommendations towards how these issues can be addressed

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

Eden is a small village in the Carrickfergus Council, Borough approximately 2.5 miles from Carrickfergus town centre. The village is largely made up of private housing developments. Various developers have built over these last twenty years. Previously in the Edenvale Avenue area around sixty one orlits properties (orlits where built in order to meet the housing shortage after World War two.)

These were replaced by the Fold housing Association in 2003-2006 in preparation for the three phases of new build properties, to be managed by the Fold housing Association. The first phase of 30 properties was completed during 2003 and the second phase of 31 properties during 2006. It is hoped that the final phase of 12 properties will complete during 2010.

The fold Association rebuilt the housing to meet the needs of the tenants living in this area at the time, a number of senior citizens bungalows, three and four bedroom family houses replace the orlits.

At present the NIHE currently have 25 properties in EDEN (11 bungalows, 8 flats and 6 houses) - 36 have been sold to tenants. The current stock was built as recently as 1983/84 except for one older house on the Larne Road built in 1930. They have oil/gas central heating installed except for one property (tenant refusal) that still has solid fuel closed central heating. There is a kitchen replacement scheme proposed to commence in March 2010, subject to availability of finance.

There are 50 applicants for Eden on the NIHE waiting list, 31 of whom are in housing stress (30 points or more) and approximately half of these would be older persons.

All wards in N.Ireland are ranked with one being the most deprived (shankill in Belfast) and 582 being the least deprived (Hillfoot in Castlereagh), wards.

Eden ward ranks 517 out of the 582 wards this places it at the higher end of the least deprived making it harder to attracted deprivation funding.

The 2001 census recorded a resident population of 3978 the overall for Carrickfergus was 37658.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the research is to create a profile of the residents and resources of the Eden area with a view to developing an area action plan.

In order to carry out the research a combination of research methods were used.

Research Design

It was considered necessary to conduct both primary and secondary research in the Eden Village area. The reason for this was to enable comparisons of previous research against current up to date first hand information gathered through primary research.

Primary research

A number of different research methods were considered when deciding how to gather information. After careful consideration of the purpose of the research and the amount of time available in which to carry it out and produce a report it was decided that a combination of qualitative and quantitative data should be collected through surveys/questionnaires, focus groups and a series of face to face interviews.

As the Eden village area is relatively small, it was decided that questionnaires to all households and all residents of the area would be invited to attend focus groups. The participants in the face to face interviews were selected at random from a list of residents in the area.

Secondary Research

In order to gain understanding of the Eden Village area the following resources were used in order to compile the background to Eden.

- ✚ Online resources
- ✚ Official statistics
- ✚ NIHE statistics
- ✚ Public records

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Focus Group and interview Findings

The researcher held a series of interviews with individuals and groups living within the Eden village reported are some of the comments made.

Eden Allotment holders

Council provided 36 plot for Eden allotments in 2008 this has now grown to 189 plots in 2009. This making Eden allotments the largest allotment site in N.Ireland. At present there are forty people on a waiting to be allocated allotments. The allotment holders come from across the Carrickfergus Borough forming a committee to generate interest in healthy life style, build community relations, provide networking opportunities, whilst grown a variety of foods

Issues

The group feel they would benefit from installing:

- A pulley tunnel
- A large communal green house
- A Porto -cabin

Eden residents

The majority of residents stated Eden is a lovely place to live but there are still a lot of issues that need to be addressed.

- ✚ Residents believe Eden Village has been forgotten by statutory agencies
- ✚ Alcohol abuse -local people perceived alcohol abuse to have increased and identified the issues particularly with young people.
- ✚ Poor Banking facilities - the area has no banking facilities identified by local residents as making things more difficult in their everyday lives locals travel to Carrickfergus town centre 2.5 miles away.
- ✚ The Large field area adjacent to the AES plant owned by the NIEB (Higgins Court) fly tipping, dumping and general untidiness causes great concern for residents living near this vicinity.
- ✚ Each year the bonfire is placed in the field at Higgins court this brings a lot of unwanted problems to this area
- ✚ The lack of local community groups was considered a disadvantage to the area no local voice to lobby for issues.
- ✚ Street litter / dog fouling constant recurring issues with residents
- ✚ Nothing for youth or senior citizens to do no community activities
- ✚ There are issues regarding current government policy on allocation of public housing. Perception is that those that have caused problems in other areas eventually find their way to Eden village resulting in disproportionate numbers of antisocial tenants.

Individuals one to one

"No Park in Eden" Stated by a long term resident who has seen change, there is nowhere to take the young children to play; years ago Eden had a play park for

the young it was the hub of the community where people would meet to socialise whilst watching their children.

"Nothing for teenagers to do "A mother who had two teenagers living at home.

"No Community Groups" Previously there had been a residents association in the village that had arranged a lot of activities and the chairperson ran a Youth club since the new housing has been built around eight years ago, and due to ill health this has ceased.

"Other area`s have community courses how do we get something like that it would help us to get to know each other build relationships and give us something to do."

"We would like to see facilities such as job club for the over 16`s they leave school and hang about the shops or just lie in bed "

"I am disabled and have trouble getting on and of buses I would love to see a group being set up that would arrange activities maybe once a week just to get me out of the house"

"I am a senior citizen who would love to know how to use a computer then I could contact relatives "

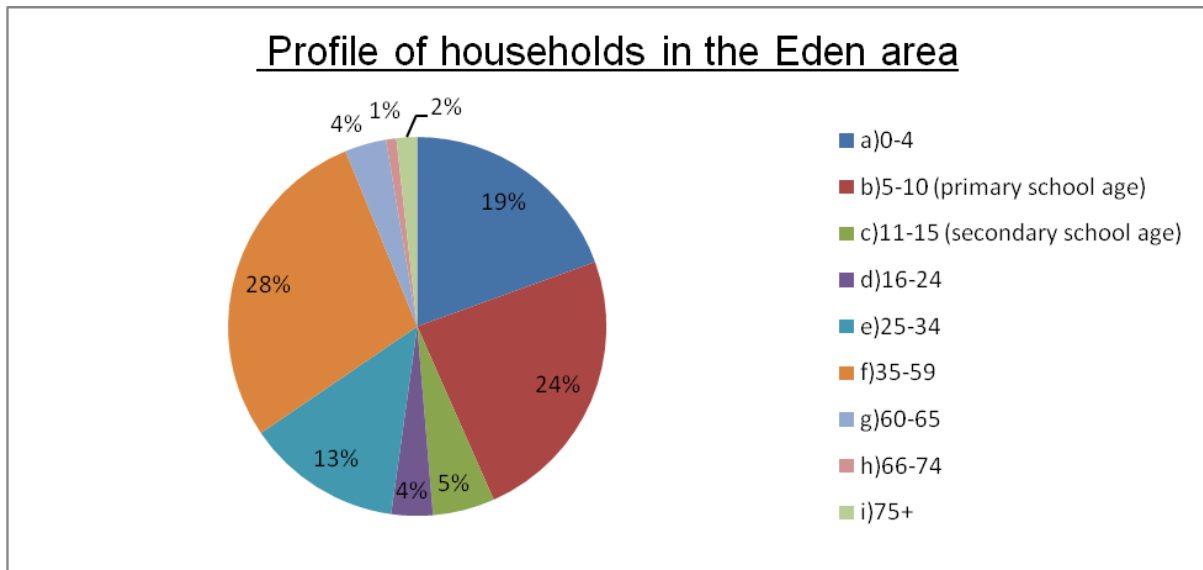
"I am a prisoner in my own home due to the state of the footpaths outside my front door I am disabled and very unsteady on my feet please help me to get something done about this"

" We love the bonfire we just don't like the dumping that goes along with it, it would be good if someone took control and organised it a bit better like other areas in Carrick"

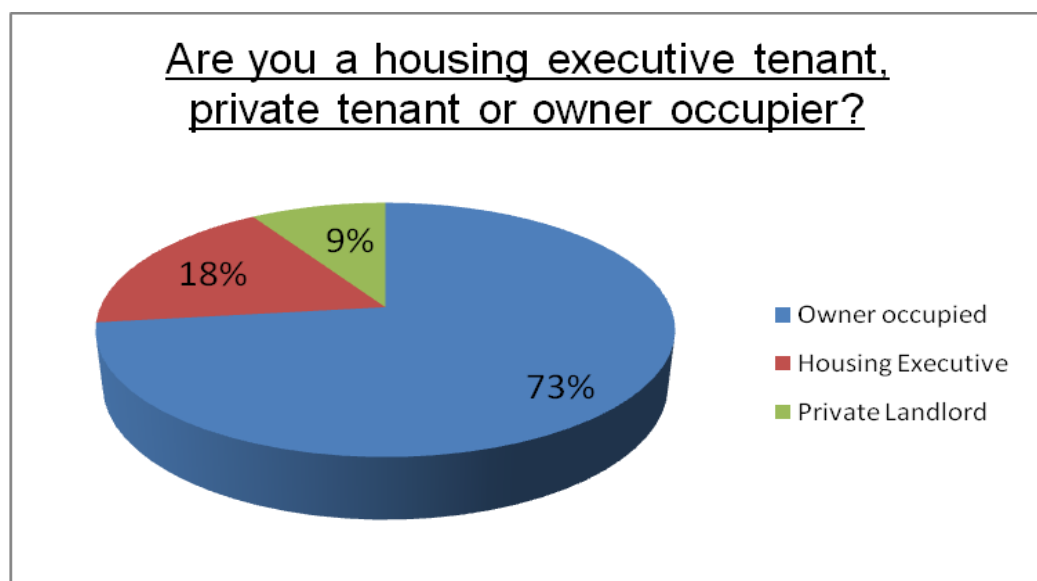
FINDINGS FROM QUESTIONNAIRES

300 questionnaires were distributed throughout the Eden area and a total of 36% were returned.

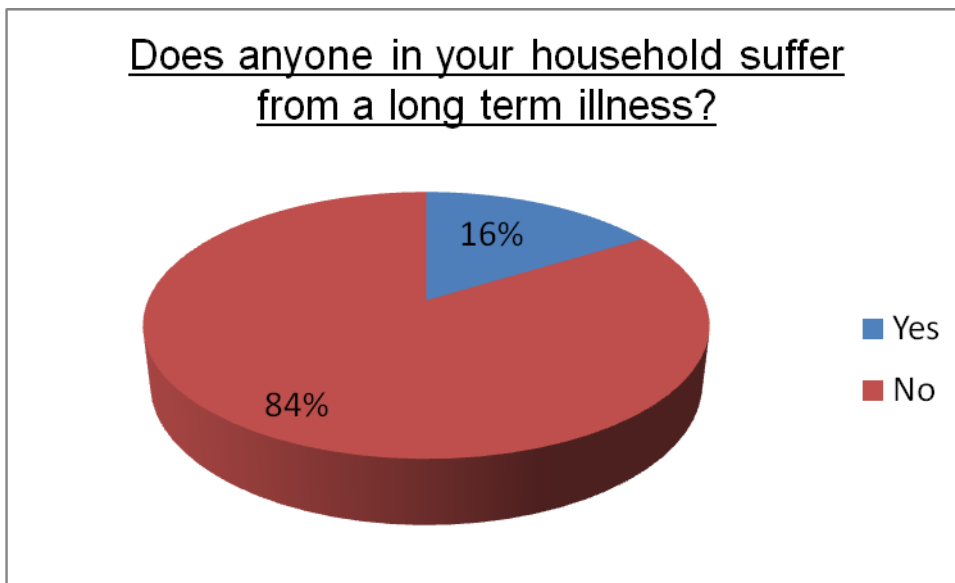
Looking at results of returned surveys Eden has a high population of young families living in the area,



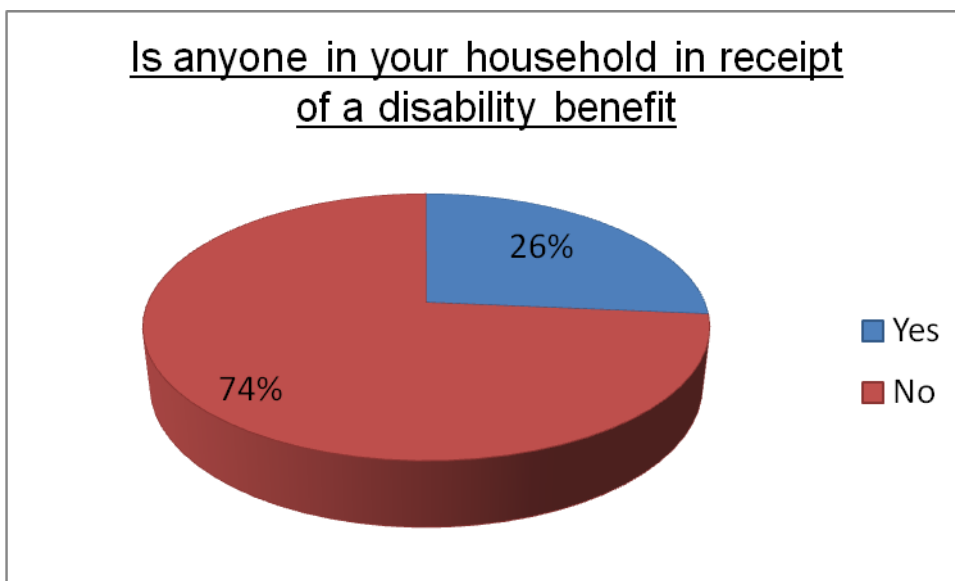
The response for housing would indicate that 73% is owner occupied



16% of the population surveyed suffer from a long term illness.



26% of the population surveyed are in receipt of disability benefit.



0.2 % of respondents were aware of local groups working on behalf of the community.

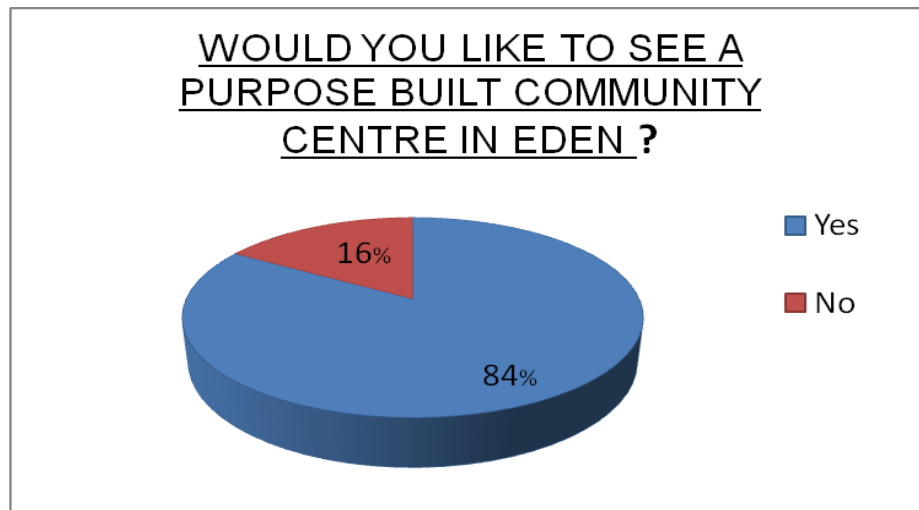
46% of the respondents felt the quality of life to be good in the Eden Area

64.8% felt the quality of life staying the same

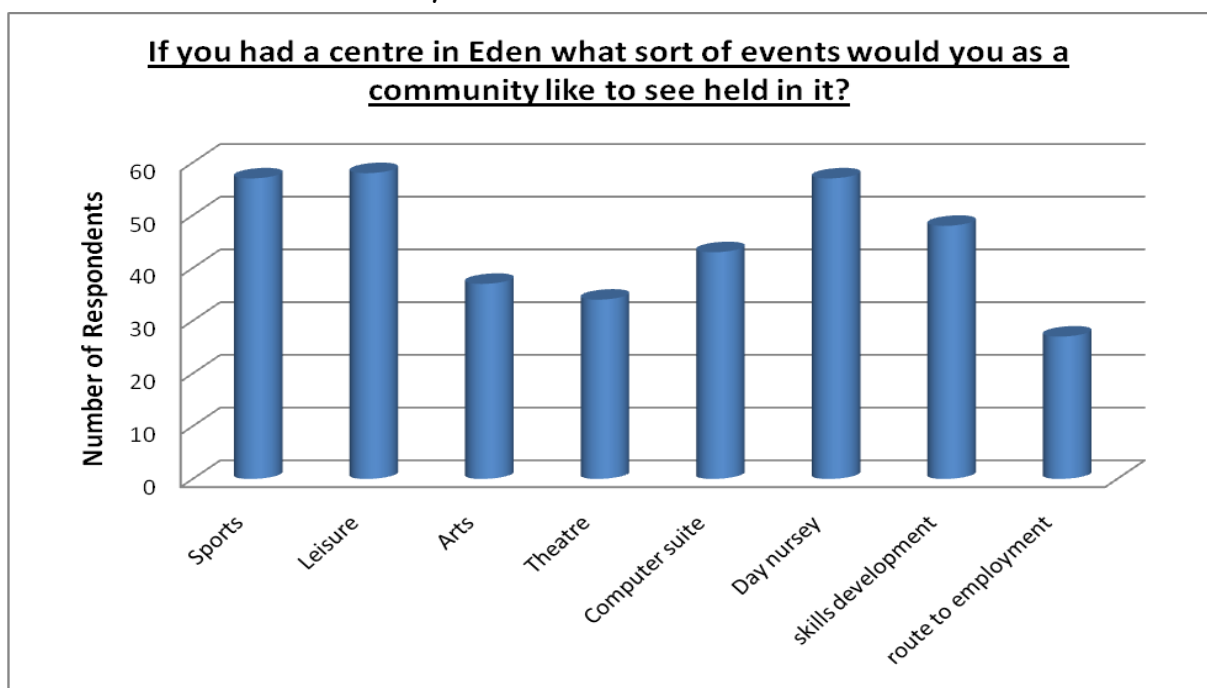
0.6% of respondents have plans to moved out of the area in the near future

When asked would they be interested in joining a community resident association 3.3% said they would be interested in joining a residents association; however, 1% supplied their contact details for future work towards this

The main consensus was that the respondents were too busy doing other things.



From the 78 respondents 84% would welcome a new community centre to be built in the Eden with a variety of activities.



It was felt by respondents that the key people to manage the centre should be elected representatives in conjunction with the community of Eden.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Carrickfergus Community Forum makes the following recommendations

- Youth provisions to be a Key delivery issues in the Eden area
- Youth programme to be introduced
- Play facilities for young people in the area should be provided
- Build a Community facility.
- Local representatives and local community managing the facility.
- Identify community representatives through local community activists.
- Identify volunteers through existing community and church provisions in the area.
- Build capacity of local groups within area
- Build a partnership between groups operating within Eden area.
- Set up and support a networking group
- Set up and support a Parents and Toddlers club
- Setup and support a residents group
- Provide assistance for the arrangement of community classes activities
- Provide capacity building activities for people living within Eden village
- Use relevant agencies and bonfire committee to address bonfire issues.

INVENTORY OF FACILITIES IN EDEN VILLAGE

Orange Hall

Primary school

Kilroot playgroup

St Coleman's Outreach House

Gospel hall

Allotments

Sense (disability house)

Kilroot Play group

Off sales

Fast food take away

Indian restaurant

Mace

News agent / confectionary