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Community Development

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Created On

2020-01-09

Greystones is currently seeing a massive growth in population and with the development of new housing. What are being missed at the moment are open and accessible community spaces, spaces that are run for the community, by the community. Such spaces should be available to all, and be particularly welcoming to those at risk of disadvantage or social isolation. Currently there are a small number of rooms that are used by the community however these spaces are small or privately owned/run and come with rental costs. This means that there is no one, multi-functional space that provides wraparound support for the community. The Community Facilities Hierarchy model in the 2016-2011 County Development Plan for Wicklow states that given the population of 18,140 (2016 census), a Community and Family Resource Centre facility is considered necessary in the Greystones area.

We would like to see a large multi use community/resource centre that is for the primary use of the community. This centre could be used to house a number of community groups (FRC, mens sheds, youth groups, other community groups) and used to support agencies and organisations from outside the Greystones area bringing a wider range of services and supports to the community.

The centre could also be utilised as a space for the community to gather throughout the day for toddler groups, community groups, courses, afterschools, youth cafes and so much more. Similar spaces have been established in areas such as Bluebell where the Bluebell Community and Youth centre and the F2 Centre in Fatima which both offer fantastic spaces and opportunities for the whole community.

Currently Greystones FRC is situated in a small bungalow in Burnaby Court. Here, our work is restricted by the limitations of the building.. There is no space to host groups or anything where there are more than 8 people in attendance.

The house does not offer the privacy that some of our more sensitive work requires. We are looking for a new home, one which would allow us to expand our work, offer more opportunities to the community which include employment, education, community development groups and courses We would also be able to expand supports for individuals, family support, counselling, youth mental health services (space for Jigsaw to offer their services from) and play therapy.

We are working to our limits in the small space we have in the house and the spaces we can rent for larger activities.

However, we have no room to expand and grow alongside the growing community. Before long, the community will develop issues that we could help address if we had more space and more capacity. A dedicated community space could not only be used and run by the FRC but also shared with other community groups, organisations and stakeholders within the immediate and wider community. It is important that the community services and supports, like those we offer grow and develop alongside the community and its needs. At the moment, the population of Greystones is growing at a much faster rate than the provision of community supports.

We would like to see issues being addressed early rather than waiting for problems to occur.

It is important to us that any community space in Greystones is open and accessible to all community members. Facilities should support anyone with limited mobility or those with young children.

A community space must be on good transport routes and have adequate parking

Therefore, a community/resource centre in Greystones should be able to offer

- ground floor access
- private/quiet areas for counselling or play therapy
- a space where people can wait for their children who might be attending our services
- a large multi use space such as a hall that can be used for larger groups
- office space
- storage space
- open space where members of the community can come and socialise
- space that the young people of the community can have ownership of
- outdoor space (grass area, allotments, workshed space)
- parking

If we were able to bring a number of groups and organisations in the community together then we could really foster a space that is open and welcoming, that supports people in the community from womb to tomb and where we are all working together towards common goals.

Please see the Bluebell CDP website <https://bluebellcdp.ie/> or the case study of Fatima Groups United FRC (the F" Centre) in 'Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities' the new 5 year government strategy supporting the community and voluntary sector for examples of what could be achieved in Greystones.