Impact and Context Report: Ballina Centre of Mission

Church Army’s Research Team

## Introduction

This short report provides an overview of the work that’s been taking place at Ballina Centre of Mission (CoM) throughout the financial year 2022-2023, then situates that work within its local context using national census data.

The first section of this report summarises data provided by Church Army evangelists in order to describe the activities undertaken by the CoM, as well as the CoM’s social impact and the ways in which people are exploring and developing faith through the work of the CoM.

The second section of the report uses data from the *Central Statistics Office’s* 2022 census of the Republic of Ireland to describe the population who live within the area local to the CoM.

## Section 1: Activities and impact

The data in this section of the report summarise the Centre of Mission’s activity between November 2022 and March 2023.

### CoM Activities

This year Ballina CoM has facilitated over 986 hours of activity for approximately 1231 people - an average of 82 hours per month. Activities coordinated by Ballina CoM include:

* Pastoral Care to the elderly, single mums, Traveller women, Ukrainian refugees
* Alpha @ St. Mary’s Secondary Sch.
* Carols by Candlelight - December
* St Vincent de Paul (volunteering shop/foodbank)
* St. Vincent de Paul – Conference Visits and Education Grant Interviews
* Childrens Summer Camps/August

## Growing faith

Growing faith can’t always be seen and is tricky to measure, but there have been some encouraging developments at Ballina CoM, including:

* There are at least 20 people growing in faith
* There are at least 15 people actively exploring faith

### Food provision

Ballina CoM have provided 0 food parcels over the course of the year. Details of this provision are given in the table below.

| Food provision | No. boxes/parcels/meals | Details |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Through St Vincent de Paul | — | Volunteeering in the Charity Shop and weekly home visits to ascertain need. |
| Individual need | — | If a need is seen we respond |

### Other essentials

As well as food, the CoM also provided the following essential items or services:

| Provision | No. Items/parcels | Details |
| --- | --- | --- |
| St. Vincent de Paul | — | One of the greatest needs for people in the Ballina area is - fuel poverty. We recommend if people need oil or solid fuel (coal etc..) A major problem is the cost of electricity. Others are behind with the mortgage and struggling with debts. |

### Volunteers

There are 12 volunteers at Ballina CoM. The church backgrounds of these volunteers are shown in the table below:

| Church background | % |
| --- | --- |
| Regular church-goer | 70% |
| Occasional church-goer | 10% |
| Historical church-goer | 10% |
| Never church-goer | 10% |

## Section 2: Local context

This section of the report describes, at a high level, the characteristics of the area in which the CoM operates. Since many Centres of Mission are set up via a partnership between Church Army and a host diocese, each CoM’s area of operation is compared to the population profiles of the local diocese as well as the nation as a whole.

The tables and figures in this section describe the CoM’s area of operation in terms of:

* Age
* Ethnicity
* Religion
* Self-reported general health
* Household composition

All the data in this section of the report were collected in the *Central Statistics Office’*s 2022 census of the Republic of Ireland.

### Methodology

Researchers consulted the lead evangelist at each CoM in order to determine the specific geographical areas in which the CoM operates. These might include, for example, the specific estate on which a CoM runs its activities, or a particular area of housing inhabited by regular attendees of the CoM’s activities. The population characteristics of these areas were approximated via a weighted summation of the populations of the small areas of statistical geography (i.e. output areas) that intersected the area described by the lead evangelist. The weights for this summation were the respective relative intersections of each small area with the area under consideration.

### Age

[Figure 1](#fig-age) and [Table 1](#tbl-age) respectively show the ages of the population at the local, diocesan and national level.

The age profile of the population local to Ballina CoM is broadly similar to that of the Republic of Ireland, although 0-9 year olds and those over the age of 60 are both sligthly more prevalent locally than nationally.

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| Figure 1: Population ages in 10 year bands |

Table 1: Population ages in 10 year bands

|  | CoM | Diocese | Republic-of-ireland |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0-9 years old | 14% | 12% | 12% |
| 10-19 years old | 12% | 14% | 14% |
| 20-29 years old | 10% | 11% | 12% |
| 30-44 years old | 21% | 20% | 22% |
| 45-59 years old | 19% | 20% | 20% |
| 60-69 years old | 11% | 11% | 10% |
| 70+ years old | 13% | 12% | 10% |

### Ethnicity

[Figure 2](#fig-ethnicity) and [Table 2](#tbl-ethnicity) show, at a very high level, the self-reported ethnicity of the population across each geography.

The population local to Ballina CoM is 94% white, and approximately 1 in 20 people are Irish Travellers, compared to approximately 1 in 100 across the diocese and the nation.

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| Figure 2: Population ethnicities |

Table 2: Population ethnicities

|  | CoM | Diocese | Republic-of-ireland |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| White (Irish) | 80% | 79% | 77% |
| White (other) | 9% | 9% | 10% |
| White (Irish traveller) | 5% | 1% | 1% |
| Not stated | 3% | 6% | 6% |
| Asian | 2% | 2% | 3% |
| Other | 2% | 3% | 3% |

### Religion

[Figure 3](#fig-religion) and [Table 3](#tbl-religion) show the religious beliefs of the population across each geography.

82% of the population local to Ballina CoM are Catholic, compared to 74% and 69% of people in the diocese and nation respectively.

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| Figure 3: Population religions |

Table 3: Population religions

|  | CoM | Diocese | Republic-of-ireland |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Catholic | 82% | 74% | 69% |
| No religion | 9% | 12% | 15% |
| Other religion | 6% | 7% | 10% |
| Not stated | 3% | 7% | 7% |

### General health

[Figure 4](#fig-general-health) and [Table 4](#tbl-general-health) show the self-reported general health of the population across each geography.

Within the population local to the CoM, self-reported general health outcomes are slightly worse than the national average; 51% of people locally described their general health as ‘very good’, compared to 57% of the national population. ‘Good’ and ‘Fair’ self reported general health outcomes were more common locally than nationally.

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| Figure 4: Population self-reported general health |

Table 4: Population self-reported general health

|  | CoM | Diocese | Republic-of-ireland |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Very bad | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Bad | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Fair | 12% | 10% | 9% |
| Good | 34% | 33% | 32% |
| Very good | 51% | 55% | 57% |

### Household composition

[Figure 5](#fig-household-composition) and [Table 5](#tbl-household-composition) give a summary of the prevalence of different kinds of household across all geographies.

Households composed of a single person account for over a third of all local households, compared to just less than a quarter of households nationwide. Households comprised of a couple (with or without children) are less common locally than nationally, and one-parent families are sligthly more common locally than nationally.

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| Figure 5: Population household distribution overview |

Table 5: Population household distribution overview

|  | CoM | Diocese | Republic-of-ireland |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| One person | 34% | 26% | 23% |
| Couple w/ children | 29% | 35% | 36% |
| Couple (no children) | 18% | 21% | 21% |
| One parent family | 14% | 11% | 11% |
| Non-family households | 5% | 7% | 8% |
| Multiple families | 1% | 1% | 1% |

## Local Deprivation

[Figure 6](#fig-deprivation-map) shows a map of relative deprivation of the local area. Small areas that are coloured in red are in the 5% most deprived areas nationally, those coloured orange are in the 10% most deprived, and those coloured yellow are in the 20% most deprived. Transparent areas are outside of the 20% most deprived areas in the nation.

Relative deprivation data is sourced from the 2017 Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMD). If you would like to know more about NIMD, you can find out about it [here](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/NIMDM17-%20with%20ns.pdf).

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| Figure 6: fig-cap: Map of local deprivation (NIMD2017) |