

APPENDIX A

MOTIONS TO BE BROUGHT TO GENERAL SYNOD

BILLS PROCESS (CONSISTENCY)

Proposer: The Honorary Secretaries

That the Standing Orders of the General Synod be amended as follows:

- In S.O. 3 the words ‘first and second readings’ shall be replaced with ‘introduction and principle stages’.

ELECTRONIC VOTING AT IN-PERSON MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

Proposer: The Honorary Secretaries

- That Standing Order 44 be substituted for the following:

44. This Standing Order and Standing Order 45 shall apply to physical meetings of Synod.

(a) When any question is to be put to the Synod, the President shall rise and announce that “The question is that ...”, thereupon reading or stating the question, and shall require that as many as are of that opinion shall say “Aye” and as many as are of the contrary opinion shall say “No”. The President shall judge from the answers to such requests and state the result, as an opinion, of putting the question.

(b) After the President shall have stated the result, as an opinion, of the putting of any question, any member may call for a vote upon that question. If a vote is not called for, the President shall forthwith declare the result to be that which had previously been expressed as an opinion.

(c) When a vote is called for, it shall be taken by show of hands or by electronic means, unless 20 members request a division; and the President, before calling for a vote, shall afford sufficient opportunity for requests to be made for a vote by orders.

(d) A vote by orders shall be taken if ten members of either order or the provisions of Ch. 1 sec. 25 of the Constitution so require, and such vote shall be by show of hands or by electronic means unless a division is requested by the requisite number of members.

(e) When a division is to be taken, an interval of five minutes shall be allowed after which the doors shall be closed and the question put a second time. The president shall appoint two tellers for each side and order the house to divide; whereupon every member of the House of representatives present, and wishing to vote, shall record an opinion by passing into the lobby with the “Ayes” or with the “Noes”. At the

conclusion of the voting the tellers, having added their own votes, shall report the result to the President, who shall communicate it to the Synod.

(f) No question shall be deemed to be carried in the House of Representatives unless, in the case of both orders voting together, there is a majority in favour of the same of the representatives voting thereon, or in the case of the votes being taken by orders there is a majority in favour of the same of the representatives of each order voting thereon. (But see S.O. 29(c) in the case of Special Bills.)

APPENDIX B

THE CHURCH OF IRELAND CENTRE, DCU INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

ADVISORY COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE GENERAL SYNOD 2025

MEMBERS

Members are shown with attendance figures for the two meetings held during 2024.

1	Most Rev John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh	School patron (Chair)
2	Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin	School patron
2	Rev Canon Gillian Wharton	Honorary Secretary and member of the General Synod Board of Education (RI)
2	Very Rev Niall Sloane	Member of Board of Management of a Church of Ireland national school and of the General Synod Board of Education (RI)
0	Ms Rachel Fraser*	National school principal
2	Ms Carolyn Good	National school principal from a small rural school
2	Ms Sarah Taylor	Member of the RCB with financial or auditing expertise
2	Rev Canon Prof Leslie Francis	External academic expert
2	Prof Noel Purdy	External academic expert from the island of Ireland

IN ATTENDANCE

Rev Canon Prof Anne Lodge	Director, Church of Ireland Centre
Mr David Ritchie	Chief Officer, RCB and Secretary General
Ms Elaine Whitehouse	Secretary to the Advisory Council

INTRODUCTION

The Church of Ireland Centre ('the Centre') was established in 2016 within the Institute of Education at Dublin City University (DCU) to ensure that the distinctive identity and values of teacher education in the Church of Ireland / Reformed Christian traditions were maintained on an ongoing basis following the incorporation of the Church of Ireland College of Education (CICE) into DCU.

The incorporation process provided that the Centre be supported by an Advisory Council, appointed by the relevant Church authorities. Accordingly in 2016 the Standing Committee of the General Synod nominated the first members to the Council.

The Standing Committee in November 2021 reappointed the outgoing members of the Council for a five-year period.

In collaboration with the governing structures of DCU, the Council is responsible for the relationship of the Church of Ireland with the Centre.

* appointed September 2024 in place of Ms Joyce Perdue (retired June 2024)

The principal activities set out in the Council's terms of reference are to support the work of the Centre and its Director and staff in the training of students as teachers in national schools under Church of Ireland / Reformed Christian faith patronage, and to make recommendations to the Representative Church Body (RCB) as trustee of the Church of Ireland College of Education Fund Trust in relation to the Centre's annual budget and related allocations.

The Council met in April and August 2023 by videoconference. A third meeting scheduled for September had to be cancelled and business requiring urgent approval was transacted by correspondence.

Prof Anne Looney, Executive Dean, Institute of Education was invited to attend part of the April meeting and gave an update on the Centre in the context of the Institute of Education and DCU. Prof Looney reported that the Institute continued to experience strong applicant numbers as well as receiving frequent requests for international delegations. A large proportion of nominees for the 2024 DCU President's Award for Engagement were from the Institute, reflecting a focus on engagement within the Institute, which was coupled with a strong research agenda. Among its current activities, the Institute was working on putting resources in place to provide information to the public on the roll-out of the new primary school curriculum.

The Church of Ireland Centre was commended for its community links and networks, for providing resources and advocating for small schools.

Rev Canon Prof Anne Lodge as Director of the Centre gave a presentation to the Council on the structures, staff and students, programmes, activities and ethos of the Centre. Prof Lodge also spoke to the Council about the teaching of Patrons' Programmes.

Further information on the work of the Centre during the year is included in the report of the General Synod Board of Education on page 202.

At its August meeting the Council received annual budget figures from the Director.

A request for an allocation of €74,757 from the Church of Ireland College of Education Fund Trust in support of the work of the Centre in respect of the academic year 2024/2025 was considered by the Council in September, was recommended to the RB Executive Committee, acting on behalf of the Representative Body in its capacity as Trustee of the Fund Trust, and was approved (2023/2024: €74,800). The allocation from the Fund Trust is used to give bursaries and prizes to students, to support the provision of the teaching of religious education in the Centre and to support projects that further the Centre's ethos.

As reported to the General Synod in 2024, the Standing Committee in March 2024 filled vacancies arising in the membership of the Council by appointing Very Rev Niall Sloane to the role of a member of Board of Management of a Church of Ireland national school and of the General Synod Board of Education (RI), and Ms Sarah Taylor to the role of a member of the RCB with financial or auditing expertise.

In June 2024 a vacancy arose in the membership of the Council for a national school principal, following the retirement of Ms Joyce Perdue. The Standing Committee in September 2024 appointed Ms Rachel Fraser to this role. The Council is grateful to Ms Perdue for her service.

APPENDIX C

BISHOPS' APPEAL REPORT 2025

Membership

Bishops' Appeal Committee

Rt Rev Ferran Glenfield (Chair) (4/4 meetings)
Mrs Iris Sutor (Hon Sec) (3/4 meetings)
Canon John Ardis (4/4 meetings)
Rev Claire Henderson (1/4 meeting)
Mrs Claire Holmes (4/4 meetings)
Canon Jono Pierce (4/4 meetings)
Mrs Gillian Purser (1/4 meeting)
Rev Faith Sithole (joined March 2024) (4/4 meetings)
Very Rev Niall Sloane (4/4 meetings)

Education Advisor

Mrs Hilary McClay

Executive Summary

With support from Church of Ireland dioceses, parishes, and individuals, and in collaboration with key partner mission and development agencies, Bishops' Appeal funded crucial disaster relief responses, as well as longer term education, health, and agricultural community development programmes throughout the past year.

Key to our work in 2024 was our focus on the significance of making the Fairtrade choice, in what was the 30th anniversary of the Fairtrade Foundation, providing grants to 24 projects around the world providing support for health, education, rural development and disaster relief, in addition to our continued response to the Middle East humanitarian crisis, which became the focus of our 2024 Advent and Christmas Appeal. In total Bishops' Appeal distributed grants with a total value of €430,137 in 2024.

Emergency Appeals

Bishops' Appeal would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who donated so generously to our General Funds and also to support the Advent and Christmas Appeal 2024 for those impacted by the situation in the Middle East.

In order to successfully facilitate these various large Appeals, we are dependent upon and so grateful to the RCB Finance Department, who support us in the processing of cheques, the allocating and releasing of funds, and the issuing of receipts.

Parish Donations & Legacies

Over the past number of years, and conscious of the cost of living crisis of the past few years and the strain that has put on peoples' finances, we have been heartened by those digging deep and giving even when things were difficult. It has enabled us to support vital work in some of the most vulnerable communities worldwide. The receipt of legacies are humbly and gratefully received and used in a way that honours the life and memory of those who give.

Vital Projects funded through donations and legacies – a sample

- Projects in Democratic Republic of Congo and Malawi in partnerships with Christian Aid providing humanitarian assistance for displaced people;

- Tearfund Ireland working with M'Lup Russey in Cambodia to improve care for orphans and vulnerable children;
- 'I AM A GIRL' supporting two schools in eastern Uganda with vital health and hygiene interventions to boost the numbers of girls staying in school and completing their completion;
- Supporting people in a very rural area of Madagascar who had previously largely been charcoal producers to pursue a more environmentally friendly silk production sustainable businesses through a grant to Feed the Minds;
- Supporting a school in Afghanistan by helping to build a security fence;
- Supporting survivors of domestic abuse and violence in South America through the work of International Justice Mission;
- Mother-to-Mother project in Baringo Kenya with Self Help Africa;
- Mothers' Union literacy project in Burundi;
- A project with The Leprosy Mission to improve the health, wellbeing, social inclusion & financial resilience of people in Bangladesh from remote, forgotten, 'leprosy hotspots' of extreme poverty;
- Providing funding under the Harman Scholarship for CMS Ireland to bring over someone from Egypt to spend time visiting the Church of Ireland in 2025.

Advent and Christmas Appeal 2024

In response to the ongoing crisis in the Middle East, Bishops' Appeal launched an appeal which ran through Advent and Christmas 2024 to raise funds to support humanitarian work carried out by with Tearfund partners in Lebanon and across the Middle East, as well as raising funds for the work of the Diocese of Jerusalem which operates the Al-Ahli Hospital for humanitarian aid to those injured in the conflict to help with the cost of replacing equipment and supplies that have been destroyed in the conflict.

New Diocesan Link Project

The Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross has embarked on a new partnership with Christian Aid Ireland, and Bishops' Appeal, focusing on 'Liloma – A partnership in hope with Sierra Leone'.

This partnership with Christian Aid Ireland was established in response to the needs of families in the Pujehun District who were displaced from their homes to make way for the development of a large palm oil plantation (Palm oil is a valuable commodity, with around half of all supermarket products containing some trace of it). Prior to their displacement these families depended on their land and ability to farm as a key means for their economic and nutritional survival. Landless and without their homes and livelihoods, families have become impoverished and forced to seek refuge in neighbouring host communities. This partnership has been developed to bring hope and opportunity to both displaced families and their host communities through activities such as agricultural livelihoods training, the supply of farm tools, establishment of village savings and loans associations and mentoring for female leaders in the community. Bishops' Appeal is delighted to see this partnership taking place and looks forward to hearing many stories on hope and transformation because of this initiative.

FAIRTRADE Campaign

2024 saw the 30th Anniversary of Fairtrade and this focus was an important part of Bishops' Appeal's focus for the year – with a motion at General Synod to remind and reinforce our determination to make the Fairtrade choice as often as we can. Members of General Synod were provided with opportunities to taste different Fairtrade products, and the winner of the annual Caption Competition received a special hamper of fairtrade goodies easily available in our supermarkets. Social media stories through the year, and reminders provided at several Diocesan Synods helped to raise awareness of just how easy it is to make a difference simply by the choices we make when we shop.

CMSI Lent Project

Bishops' Appeal was glad to continue to partner with CMSI's Lent Project, providing resources for schools, youth groups and Sunday schools to use during Lent.

Thank You

Bishops' Appeal wishes to thank the RCB Finance Department for their continued support. The Appeal is extremely grateful to all the agencies who partner with the Church, who reach out to communities around the world. Listening to their needs and providing the necessary support and kinship to those in need. Our thanks to the hard-working committee and diocesan representatives of past and present. Finally, Bishops' Appeal expresses heartfelt gratitude to all those across the Church of Ireland, individuals, parishes, dioceses and central structures for their generosity and continuing support.

BISHOPS' APPEAL ACCOUNT 2024

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT	Year ended 31 December	
	2024 €	2023 €
INCOME		
Contributions	347,368	678,856
Deposit Interest	13,617	10,350
Sterling translation loss/gain	4,952	1,139
Tax refunds	13,359	15,783
	<u>379,296</u>	<u>706,128</u>
EXPENSES		
Administration Expenses & Salaries	<u>42,497</u>	<u>20,340</u>
	42,497	20,340
OPERATING SURPLUS FOR YEAR	<u>336,799</u>	<u>685,788</u>
Grants Paid	430,137	527,814
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	<u>(93,338)</u>	<u>157,974</u>

BISHOPS' APPEAL ACCOUNT 2024

BALANCE SHEET

Year ended 31 December

2024 2023

€ €

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at Bank	533,062	587,704
Cash held by the RCB	24,586	42,008
Debtors	5,988	27,262
	<u>563,636</u>	<u>656,974</u>

Total Net Assets	<u>563,686</u>	<u>656,974</u>
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FUNDS EMPLOYED

Balance at 1 January	656,974	499,000
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(Deficit)/Surplus for the year

	(93,338)	157,974
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Balance at 31 December	<u>563,636</u>	<u>656,974</u>
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THE CHURCH OF IRELAND BISHOPS' APPEAL
REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE CHURCH OF IRELAND BISHOPS' APPEAL
BISHOPS' APPEAL CONTRIBUTIONS

	2024		2023	
	Stg£	€	Stg£	€
ARMAGH	16,465	2,544	36,488	5,152
CLOGHER	9,630	250	26,604	3,205
CONNOR	15,083	-	40,844	-
DERRY & RAPHOE	16,844	4,381	34,255	10,478
DOWN & DROMORE	25,950	100	76,927	-
KILMORE, ELPHIN & ARDAGH	-	4,656	321	13,155
CASHEL, FERNS & OSSORY	-	34,916	-	47,899
CORK, CLOYNE & ROSS	-	19,414	-	30,773
DUBLIN & GLENDALOUGH	-	60,116	-	84,965
TUAM, LIMERICK & KILLALOE	-	22,504	-	77,387
LIMERICK, KILLALOE & ARDFERT		-		-
TUAM, KILLALA & ACHONRY		-		-
MEATH & KILDARE	-	13,129	-	21,933
OTHER	20,635	58,945	55,957	70,843
TOTALS	<u>104,607</u>	<u>220,955</u>	<u>271,396</u>	<u>365,790</u>

TOTALS IN EURO 347,368 678,856

BISHOPS' APPEAL GRANTS PAID

TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT	2024	2023
	€	€
Disaster Relief	173,828	353,243
Health & Medical	77,889	37,028
Education/Communications	74,059	97,543
Rural Development	<u>104,361</u>	<u>40,000</u>
Totals	430,137	527,814

DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Christian Aid	106,147	325,980
Tearfund	70,000	53,920
Fields of Life	32,248	31,438
Gorta	19,388	29,667
CMSI	43,827	15,850
Feed the Minds	20,640	11,535
Motivation	12,085	11,535
Habitat for humanity Northern Ireland	18,127	11,655
International Justice Mission UK	12,085	11,535
Others	<u>95,590</u>	<u>24,699</u>
Totals	<u>430,137</u>	<u>527,814</u>

BISHOPS' APPEAL GRANTS PAID

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

AFRICA - € 146,408; Stg£ 82,647;

Project	Location	Agency
Cashew project	Burkina Faso	Self Help Africa
Mpox response to outbreak in Burundi	Burundi	Christian Aid
Humanitarian assistance for displaced people	DRC	Christian Aid
Harman Scholarship application	Egypt	CMSI
Ethiopia Aid	Ethiopia	Ethiopia Aid
Tearfund Ireland	Ethiopia	Tearfund Ireland
Sustainable and independent Self-help groups	Ethiopia	Tearfund Ireland
Self Help Africa	Kenya	Self Help Africa
Water Drops Community Water Storage	Kenya	Waterdrops
Kenya Flood Relief	Kenya	CMSI
Scaling energy access	Malawi	Self Help Africa
Kuwala Ultra Poor Graduation Project	Malawi	Christian Aid
Peru Domestic and Sexual Abuse Education project	Peru	International Justice Mission
Rehabilitation of Berkad to improve water security	Somaliland	Tearfund Ireland
Diocese of Yei Vocational training college perimeter fence	South Sudan	CMSI
Thrive South Sudan	South Sudan	Fields of Life
Ibba Skills Training project	South Sudan	CMSI
Charlene's Project - Secondary School project	Uganda	Charlene's Project
St Leo's School	Uganda	St Leo's School
Tunaswasi "We are thriving"	Uganda	Motivation Charitable Trust
WASH clean water project	Uganda	Fields of Life
Oasis Project - Kikatsu	Uganda	Christian Engineers in Development
I am Girl	Uganda	Fields of Life
<u>ASIA - € 64,000; Stg £ 28,694;</u>		
Health, Dignity & Livelihoods Project	Bangladesh	The Leprosy Mission
Keeping Children in Families	Cambodia	Tearfund Ireland
Tuition for Slum Children	India	Agape
Waynard Disaster Relief Project	India	School of Evangelism and Mission

Harman Scholarship application	Nepal	CMSI
Eyes on Health	Nepal	CMSI
AWARE Pakistan	Pakistan	AWARE
ICAN - Drug Rehabilitation Project	Pakistan	ICAN
<u>MIDDLE EAST - €50,000 Stg £8,410;</u>		
Afghanistan - school security wall	Afghanistan	SAFE
Lebanon aid for displaced people	Lebanon	Habitat for Humanity
Displaced Communities, Southern Lebanon	Lebanon	Habitat for Humanity
Middle East Appeal	Gaza	TEARFUND IRELAND
<u>SOUTH AMERICA - Stg£ 10,000;</u>		
Christian Aid	Honduras	Christian Aid
Domestic Abuse Education	Peru	International Justice Mission UK
<u>EUROPE - Stg £10,700;</u>		
Development Education	Ireland	CMSI
Ukraine Appeal	Ukraine	Habitat For Humanity – Ukraine Appeal

Independent auditors' report to the Advisory Committee of Church of Ireland Bishop's Appeal

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

In our opinion, Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal's financial statements:

- have been properly prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland (accounting standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council of the UK, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland").

We have audited the financial statements, included within the Financial Statements, which comprise:

- the balance sheet as at 31 December 2024;
 - the statement of financial activities for the year then ended;
 - the accounting policies; and
 - the notes to the financial statements.
-

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) ("ISAs (Ireland)"). Our responsibilities under ISAs (Ireland) are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Independence

We remained independent of the entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Ireland, which includes IAASA's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

Emphasis of matter -Basis of preparation

In forming our opinion on the financial statements, which is not modified, we draw attention to the fact that the accounting policies used and disclosures made are not intended to, and do not, comply with the requirements of Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland.

Conclusions relating to going concern

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date on which the financial statements are authorised for issue.

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Advisory Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

However, because not all future events or conditions can be predicted, this conclusion is not a guarantee as to the entity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Advisory Committee with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Reporting on other information

The other information comprises all of the information in the Financial Statements other than the financial statements and our auditors' report thereon. The Advisory Committee are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in this report, any form of assurance thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify an apparent material inconsistency or material misstatement, we are required to perform procedures to conclude whether there is a material misstatement of the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report based on these responsibilities.

Responsibilities for the financial statements and the audit

Responsibilities of the Advisory Committee for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Advisory Committee responsibilities set out on page 4, the Advisory Committee are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable framework and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Advisory Committee are also responsible for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Advisory Committee are responsible for assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Advisory Committee either intend to liquidate the entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Our audit testing might include testing complete populations of certain transactions and balances, possibly using data auditing techniques. However, it typically involves selecting a limited number of items for testing, rather than testing complete populations. We will often seek to target particular items for testing based on their size or risk characteristics. In other cases, we will use audit sampling to enable us to draw a conclusion about the population from which the sample is selected.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the IAASA website at: http://www.iaasa.ie/getmedia/b2389013-1cf6-458b-9b8f-a98202dc9c3a/Description_of_auditors_responsibilities_for_audit.pdf.

This description forms part of our auditors' report.



Use of this report

This report, including the opinion, has been prepared for and only for the Advisory Committee and for no other purpose. We do not, in giving this opinion, accept or assume responsibility for any other purpose or to any other person to whom this report is shown or into whose hands it may come, including without limitation under any contractual obligations of the entity, save where expressly agreed by our prior consent in writing.

PricewaterhouseCoopers
PricewaterhouseCoopers
Chartered Accountants
Place
Date 11 March 2025

Appendix D

Church of Ireland Board for Ministry with Children and Families General Synod Report 2025

www.cfm.ireland.anglican.org

Membership

Rt Rev George Davison, Bishop of Connor (Chair)

Children's Ministry Network representatives:

Rev Rebecca Guildea (RI)

Ms Lynn Storey (RI)

Mr David Brown (NI)

Dr Millie Bellew (NI)

Sunday School Society for Ireland representative:

Very Rev Niall Sloane

Board of Education representatives:

Rev Catherine Simpson (NI)

Ms Carolyn Good (RI)

Standing Committee representative:

Rev Canon John Ardis

Liturgical Advisory Committee representative:

Rev Julie Bell

Staff:

Dr Peter Hamill (Secretary)

Ms Rachael Murphy (Development Officer)

Vision Statement

The Board for Ministry with Children and Families (CFM) seeks to equip, resource and advocate for the increased welcome, enhanced inclusion and full participation of children and their families in the whole life of the Church. Its vision is that every Church of Ireland parish, no matter how big or small, is equipped to provide vibrant and engaging ministry with children and families.

Funding

The Board was delighted that their application for continuous funding from the Representative Body was approved in the autumn of 2024. Ms Rachael Murphy has now been made a permanent member of staff and continues to develop an ever-increasing portfolio of resources and training opportunities for leaders, clergy, and volunteers.

Communications

Over the past three years, the Board has expanded its communication efforts significantly. We now have a robust social media presence, with over 2,000 followers on Facebook and regular viewership of 9,000 to 10,000 people. Additionally, our vibrant website is filled with resources, including ready-to-use lesson plans, crafts, and trails and games. The website consistently attracts approximately 4,000 views each year.

Every quarter, we publish a seasonal newsletter that reaches, on average, 700 people. This newsletter provides updates on training opportunities and offers a variety of resources and ideas for the upcoming

season. It is distributed via email to our database, through Diocesan CFM WhatsApp groups, and on our social media pages.

We have a database of 350 contacts, and we want to invite as many individuals as possible who work with Children and Families in each diocese to connect with us. Those on our database receive regular newsletters, training opportunities, and resources directly. You can sign up by clicking the “Sign up for our Newsletter” button on our website's homepage: www.cfm.ireland.anglican.org. Please share this information with anyone in your parish who is interested in welcoming Children and Families.

Resources

Resources are produced throughout each year and this past year have included: Baptismal Gift Book & Posters; Family Lent programmes; Easter Bible Reading plans; Farming Faith Curriculum for rural parishes; Children's Ministry Health Check for parishes & much more. The Baptismal resources have proven extremely popular, and we are having to reprint over 800 due to demand.

Training

The Board has offered a variety of training opportunities across the island of Ireland and online over the past year. We have trained more than 500 individuals through our workshops, which have included topics such as Welcoming Families, Halloween, Volunteer Recruitment and Retention, Raising Confident Kids, Engaging with Your Local School, and Supporting Families in Poverty.

Additionally, we organised the Building Blocks conference, which took place simultaneously in three locations: Cork, Armagh, and Dublin. This conference focused on toddler groups and summer holiday ideas.

Unfortunately, our National Conference, Neartú, originally scheduled for November 2024, had to be postponed due to the bereavement of an immediate family member of our keynote speaker. We have now rescheduled Neartú, and it will take place on May 24th at the Mount St. Anne's Conference Centre. Tickets are priced at just €25, which includes lunch, and they can be purchased through the Eventbrite link on our website: <https://cfm.ireland.anglican.org/events/>.

We are involved in the development of a comprehensive course for the Children's Ministry Network, aimed at providing training for all CFM leaders and volunteers. Our goal is to roll out this training in every diocese by 2025.

The course consists of ten modules, which serve as a thorough introduction to mission and ministry with children. Designed by the Children's Ministry Network and produced in partnership with Cliff College and TheologyX, the Children's Ministry Essentials program can be taken as a complete course or as standalone modules.

Our website also features a page dedicated to online training that viewers can access at their convenience. This resource will expand over the coming year to include interactive training sessions that can be conducted in parishes. The first two topics to be included are: Supporting Children's Mental Health and Well-Being, and How to Run a Toddler Group.

Children's Ministry Network (Britain and Ireland)

The Church of Ireland is actively involved in the Children's Ministry Network (CMN), which is part of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. Dr Peter Hamill currently serves as the Moderator for this group, while Ms Rachael Murphy is an Executive Group member responsible for supporting the logistics of the two annual conferences.

In 2024, we welcomed all CMN members to Northern Ireland for a 48-hour conference held at the Corrymeela Centre. Additionally, we participated in a 24-hour conference focused on Spiritual Abuse and Safeguarding at the High Leigh Centre.

As a group, in addition to the Ministry Essentials program mentioned above, CMN has also produced a variety of resources designed to help churches welcome their local primary schools.

Appendix 1

Children and Families Ministry Network Members

Development Officer (Chair)	Ms Rachael Murphy
Armagh	Mr David Brown
Clogher	Rev Rebecca Guildea
Derry & Raphoe	Mrs Kirsty McCartney
Down & Dromore	Dr Millie Bellew
Connor	Ms Victoria Jackson
Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh	Mrs Amy Shorten
Dublin & Glendalough	Rev Cathy Hallissey and Ms Lynn Storey
Meath & Kildare	Rev Yvonne Hutchinson
Cashel, Ferns and Ossory	Ms Carolyn Good
Cork, Cloyne & Ross	Rev Abigail Sines
Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe	Rev Canon Jane Galbraith and Rev Vicki Lynch

Members can be contacted through their respective diocesan offices.

Church of Ireland Census 2024 (and comparison with 2023 & 2013)

	2024	2023
Total number of Parish Groups:	449	449
Number of census responses:	446	443
Percentage response rate:	99.33%	98.66%
Number of churches/worship centres:	1068	1043

Diocese		Attendance 11th Feb 24	Attendance 9th June 24	Attendance 15th Sept 24	Attendance 24th Nov 24	Baptisms 2024	Weddings 2024	Funerals 2024	Confirmed 2024
Armagh		4,525	4,865	4,686	5,244	203	76	410	180
Cashel, Ferns & Ossory		2,349	2,261	2,688	2,426	100	29	120	134
Clogher		3,003	2,983	2,946	3,038	139	46	213	173
Connor		6,390	6,768	6,465	7,845	240	78	705	115
Cork, Cloyne & Ross		1,661	1,597	2,025	1,510	67	22	103	107
Derry & Raphoe		4,451	4,917	4,905	4,408	264	84	421	232
Down & Dromore		9,668	9,625	10,042	10,153	235	101	838	143
Dublin & Glendalough		5,002	5,192	5,824	5,544	329	53	287	396
Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh		1,955	2,011	2,009	1,993	101	39	138	89
Meath & Kildare		1,091	1,243	1,179	1,189	59	17	65	77
Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe		1,554	1,649	1,562	1,483	44	18	89	76
Totals		41,649	43,111	44,331	44,833	1,781	563	3,389	1,722

Diocese	Attendance from 2013 Census	Attendance 5th Feb 23	Attendance 11th June 23	Attendance 17th Sept 23	Attendance 26th Nov 23	Baptisms 2023	Weddings 2023	Funerals 2023	Confirmed 2023
Armagh	7,102	4,606	4,933	4,950	5,314	230	81	404	173
Cashel, Ferns & Ossory	2,540	2,380	2,481	2,270	2,293	121	51	139	197
Clogher	3,951	2,855	3,205	3,136	2,842	153	52	235	145
Connor	10,900	6,464	6,452	6,464	7,787	295	92	662	161
Cork, Cloyne & Ross	2,195	1,554	1,565	1,524	1,609	83	22	101	82
Derry & Raphoe	6,066	4,122	4,516	4,554	4,565	325	100	441	297
Down & Dromore	12,800	9,122	9,592	9,308	10,076	239	108	857	150
Dublin & Glendalough	7,252	4,844	4,773	5,619	5,489	327	51	278	473
Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh	2,343	1,857	1,961	2,136	2,016	83	55	160	69
Meath & Kildare	1,463	948	1,015	1,098	1,163	49	31	53	74
Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe	1,818	1,365	1,716	1,511	1,403	49	26	84	50
Totals	58,430	40,117	42,209	42,570	44,557	1,954	669	3,414	1,871

APPENDIX F

CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

MEMBERSHIP

Most Rev Pat Storey (<i>Chair</i>)	House of Bishops	2/4
Rev Canon Gillian Wharton	Honorary Secretary, General Synod	3/4
Rev Ruth Elmes (to May 2024)	Standing Committee	0/4
Rev Carlton Baxter (from September 2024)	Standing Committee	2/4
Canon Dr Kenneth Milne	Chair, Literature Committee	3/4
Dr Raymond Refaussy	Honorary Secretary, Literature Committee	4/4
Ven Dr Stephen McBride	Representative Body	0/4
Very Rev Nigel Dunne	Representative Body	3/4
Rev Alan Ruffi	Liturgical Advisory Committee	3/4
Rev Anna Williams (to May 2024)	Standing Committee*	1/4
Mr Roger Childs (to May 2024)	Standing Committee*	1/4
Mr David Ritchie	Chief Officer, RCB	2/4
Mrs Janet Maxwell	Head of Synod Services & Communications	4/4
<i>In attendance</i>		
Mr Peter Cheney	Press Officer	4/4
Mrs Lynn Glanville	D&G Communications Officer	4/4
Mr Stuart Wilson	Website & Information Administrator	1/4

*Co-option for gender, regional and other balance.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Initiate policy in relation to the communications strategy of the Church;
- Establish and co-ordinate the work of the sub-committees;
- Advise and support staff dealing with communications;
- Recommend and seek funding for communications projects for the benefit of the Church;
- Examine recommendations from the Literature Committee for support from the General Synod Royalties Fund and forward these for approval to the Standing Committee;
- Identify training needs among church communications staff and volunteers, providing training where possible;
- Report annually to the General Synod.

SUMMARY – MAJOR OUTCOMES FOR 2024/25

- The Allocations Committee of the RB continued to relieve financial strain on the Royalties Fund, which has become depleted in recent years, allowing income in the fund to reaccumulate.
- Reprint of *The Book of Common Prayer* by Hymns Ancient & Modern;
- The Church of Ireland website moved to a new domain and a redesign of the main website was proposed along with a review of the overall structure of related websites.

GENERAL SYNOD ROYALTIES FUND & PUBLICATIONS

At the year end, the balances in the GS Royalties Fund stood at €142,123 and £8,141 at representing improvements of 29.9% and 92.6% respectively on the previous year-end position.

During the year, the Allocations Committee assisted with purchase of 500 copies of the reprint of *The Book of Common Prayer* to maintain stock of this publication and also supported printing of two additional volumes of the Braemor Series – *Exploration and Meaning: Considering Faith Formation in Children Aged Six to Eleven* (No.16) by the Rev Andrew Neill, and *The Collision of Worlds. Counter-Formation*

Through Interactivity With Scripture in Deuteronomy and the Daily Office (No.17) by the Rev Cameron Mack – and with grants to support the publication of *SEARCH* and the publication of *The Church of Ireland Gazette*.

The Allocations Committee requested that the Head of Synod Services lead a review of both publications to see what other practical encouragements could be offered in an effort to restore both publications to a point where a sustainable future can be contemplated. *SEARCH* offers readers a valuable series of researched articles in each of the three annual volumes, generally addressing a particular theme within the life of the Church of Ireland in each edition.

The Church of Ireland Gazette combines information and newsworthy material from around the Church with a series of feature articles penned by leading clergy and laity focusing on key aspects of Church life to open new perspectives in thinking about the most pressing challenges facing parishes and dioceses today. Both publications are commended to members of the General Synod for their consideration.

PRESS OFFICE

The Press Office this year welcomed Mr Stuart Wilson into the new role of Website and Information Administrator alongside Mr Peter Cheney as Press Officer. Both members of staff work closely with the Diocesan Communications Officers and Anglewise Communications which provides video production support, primarily through the *Inspiring angles* series on websites and social media.

Inspiring angles covered Bishop Paul Colton's 25th anniversary as Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the history and musical outreach of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, and the Christmas stamp featuring St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh.

Key activities with an external focus included publicity for the 120th anniversary of Belfast Cathedral and the 80th anniversary of D-Day, responses to public disorder in Belfast, and statements of reassurance to members of the Church (and the wider community) from migrant and ethnic minority backgrounds. The RTÉ Christmas Day broadcast with the Archbishops of Armagh was recorded at Armagh Observatory & Planetarium on the theme of the Christmas star, celebrating the rich heritage of astronomy in an institution established by Archbishop Richard Robinson in 1790.

The Press Office provided publicity for a range of central church initiatives including Church and Society Commission resources on homelessness and end-of-life issues, Bishops' Appeal and its support for partners in the Middle East, Pioneer Ministry, the *Mission Matters* podcast series produced by Stephen Fletcher, and the *Take a Minute* prayer initiative from the Liturgical Advisory Committee.

TRAINING

The annual training event for Diocesan Communications Officers, hosted in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, included training in the Canva graphic design package and an introduction to a new week-by-week approach to communications planning, which is being rolled out to all dioceses and central church organisations. Regular media training for church spokespersons and ordinands continued in Belfast and Dublin.

Guidance on copyright and photography was issued to parishes via dioceses, and the Press Office is reviewing resources with a view to providing training on copyright issues. Parishes are reminded that the Canva Pro graphic design platform is available free of charge to registered charities in the UK and Ireland and can help to avoid the unintentional infringement of copyright when sourcing photos for online content.

CHURCH OF IRELAND WEBSITE

During 2024, the Church of Ireland website was moved to a new domain – www.churchofireland.org – to provide a more stable platform for Church members using the site.

The Church of Ireland website has not changed greatly in structure over the last decade, but it has grown immensely in size, and has spawned a number of 'daughter sites', rather like a medieval monastic

foundation. While it has served the Church well, the Central Communications Board felt that the time had come for some reformation and fresh thinking so that the site continues to support the Church for the next decade.

This will be a significant project, requiring a lot of planning and consultation with stakeholders to reach consensus on the way forward.

There is currently a mixed pattern of sections that are either internally managed in terms of content either by central church departments or by committee volunteers, or situated on external sites with links from the main site taking visitors to the relevant pages

As mentioned, the RB has created a new role – Website and Information Administrator – and this role will relate to both the Press Office and to the IT Department. Its purpose is to assist in uploading material and taking down out-of-date material and to assist with the redevelopment of the website.

Among the ideas for website redevelopment being considered by the Central Communications Board are:

1. Update the ‘look’ of the website;
2. Review the structure of the main website (and subsequently the related sites);
3. Consider the overall funding of Church of Ireland websites;
4. Diocesan and parish sites hosting – consider if there is still a need in terms of central support;
5. Consider the value of parish information on main site and the Find a Church function;
6. Review the use of the anglican.org websites and email structures and support;
7. Develop new uses of the website – e.g. various payments and a portal for customer services.

BROADCASTING – RTÉ

Despite the widely reported turbulence surrounding RTÉ in 2023 and 2024, the last 12 months have seen a rich and varied array of religious content reaching the airwaves on TV and radio, across a range of genres, much of it made possible through third party funding or co-commissioning with other broadcasters.

Christian worship remains a mainstay, featuring a diverse range of Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Evangelical Masses and Services and, for the first time, Romanian Orthodox Easter Liturgy, delivered mainly from RTÉ’s Donnybrook studio. This depends on the efforts, creativity and goodwill of contributors from all denominations from all over the country, which is much appreciated by RTÉ.

Streamed daily weekday Masses and Sunday worship on the RTÉ News Channel, first commissioned as an emergency pandemic measure in 2020, when places of worship were closed, have continued. Church services web streams are still attracting around 20,000 viewers a day after nearly five years and providing much valued spiritual support for the elderly, housebound or hospitalised, in particular.

In terms of other religious content, the highest rated documentary on RTÉ in 2024 by some margin was the fruit of a five-year investigation. *Bishop Casey’s Buried Secrets* set the news agenda for days and attracted over 700,000 viewers (44% of linear TV share).

Second on that same list was *The Last Priests in Ireland*, in which, with its companion piece, *The Last Nuns*, Mr Ardal O’Hanlon and Ms Dearbhail McDonald respectively explored the origins, consequences and legacy of Ireland’s clerical culture in a series that was well-reviewed as being both rigorous and fair. This was majority funded by Coimisiún na Meán (CnaM), clearly meeting many of the aims of its Sound & Vision Fund.

The Meaning of Life returned for its eighteenth season, with Mr Joe Duffy once again at the helm, interviewing a diverse range of guests, including two practising Anglicans, Mr Bryan Dobson and Senator David Norris, as well as other voices expressing a range of experiences and perspectives.

Comedian and podcaster Blindboy Boatclub brought his maverick intelligence to bear on *The Land of Slaves and Scholars*, displaying both an informed curiosity and intellectual rigour in his conversations with leading academics about early Irish Christianity and, in the process, rendering the subject accessible and entertaining to a younger audience demographic. That, too, was majority funded by Coimisiún na Meán.

In *Christmas in Kildare*, on RTÉ One and Lyric FM on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, Mr Marty Whelan and Ms Celine Byrne brought the Brigid1500 celebrations to a close in Kildare's 900-year old cathedral, facilitated by Dean Isobel Jackson and the Rev Philip McKinley in the company of a diverse and glittering array of musical talent, with financial assistance from Kildare County Council.

The Kilkenny Nativity was a five-minute sequel to 2020's *Cork Nativity*, putting St Luke's Gospel account of the nativity into the mouths of a wide array of people in Kilkenny town and county, including the Dean of St Canice's, Stephen Farrell. Across all platforms, the film attracted over 750,000 viewers and helped put the Christian message at the heart of RTÉ's Christmas output.

On radio, after the completion of Ms Siobhán Garrigan's series *Witness*, in March, RTÉ commissioned a new series, *Our Divine Sparks*, with Ms Dearbhail McDonald, from Old Yard Productions. It has started confidently with a diverse range of features keeping listeners on their toes, plus a well-received Christmas Special, featuring Canon Gillian Wharton in conversation with Ms Dearbhail McDonald, Fr Kieran O'Mahony OSA and Prof. Zuleika Rodgers, as well as a charming group of Ennis primary schoolchildren, sharing their insights into the Christmas story.

Throughout the year, a variety of writers and thinkers continued to offer *A Word in Edgeways* during Radio 1's *Rising Time* at 6.15am each weekday – short, scripted reflections intended to give listeners food for thought.

In the pipeline in 2025, there's more variety and interest. *Patrick: A Slave to Ireland* is an ambitious examination of the life and legacy of the national patron saint, commissioned in conjunction with BBC Northern Ireland and ARTE, with funding from CnaM.

Iron Ladies will tell the intriguing story of a group of Jewish housewives, who, at the height of the Cold War, took on the might of the USSR in defence of the rights and freedoms of Soviet Jews... and won.

Following the success of the first series of *A Ring and a Prayer*, our series about inter-cultural marriages, CnaM has again provided majority funding for a second series. Similarly, Mr Donal Skehan will continue to explore minority faiths' food culture and beliefs in *Donal's Celebration Kitchen*, discovering how different communities mark their holiest festivals and seasons through what they eat, or don't eat.

BROADCASTING – BBC NI

2024 witnessed two important centenaries for the BBC: the beginning of religious broadcasting and the start of its operations in Belfast. In January this year the 50th anniversary of BBC Radio Ulster was marked. On BBC Radio Ulster, a *Thought for the Day* is broadcast each morning on Sundays to Fridays and the weekly *Sunday Sequence* explores that often confusing area where religion, ethics, politics and social affairs meet. *Morning Service* produced for BBC Northern Ireland by Blackthorn Productions, each Sunday – usually as a live broadcast of what is the normal liturgy of the congregation.

There are also contributions to BBC Radio 4, including six editions of *Sunday Worship*. Particularly noteworthy in 2024 were a service on St Patrick's Day from St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, one in June from Christ Church Castlerock with Bishop Andrew Forster speaking on the greatness of God as revealed in His Creation, and on Remembrance Sunday, Archbishops John McDowell and Eamon Martin reflected on the service of two chaplains to the Royal Ulster Rifles during the Second World War. We also produced for Radio 4 eight series of *Prayer for the Day* and six editions of the *Daily Service*.

We remain immensely grateful to all who accept invitations to take part in these programmes, making local arrangements, preparing scripts and then delivering them. Without such willing work, much religious broadcasting would be extremely difficult, if not impossible.

LITERATURE COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

Canon Dr Kenneth Milne (Chairman)
Canon Peter McDowell
Ven Ricky Rountree
Rev Ken Rue
Rev Bernard Treacy OP
Dr Raymond Refaüssé (Honorary Secretary)
Ms Cecelia West
Mr George Woodman
Mrs Janet Maxwell (*ex officio*)

In attendance: Mr Peter Cheney, Press Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2025 the Committee will set out to:

- Promote church-related publication within and beyond the Church of Ireland;
- Manage Church of Ireland Publishing;
- Evaluate applications for support from the General Synod Royalties Fund.

MAJOR OUTCOMES FOR 2024

Arising out of the Action Plan for 2024:

- The fifteenth booklet in the Braemor Studies series, which seeks to publish the best of the final year dissertations in CITI, was published.
- Cooperation with CITI in the redesign of the cover of Braemor Studies;
- Supporting the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue in the publication of *Guidelines for Interfaith Events and Dialogue*.

CHURCH OF IRELAND PUBLISHING

The Literature Committee has continued to further the work of Church of Ireland Publishing (CIP), the publishing imprint for the Church of Ireland.

The resignation of Bryan Whelan from the RCB Library has left a vacancy for a Publications Officer which has not been filled. The Committee is concerned about this lacuna.

The following titles were published in 2024:

- *Guidelines for Interfaith Events and Dialogue* (new edition);
- Rev Philip McKinley, *From George Berkeley, to George Floyd, to George Nkencho. The Church of Ireland and Black Theology*
- Canon Dr Kenneth Milne & Rev Gregory Dunstan (eds.), *Journal of the General Synod 2024*;
- *Church of Ireland Sunday and Weekday Readings Advent Sunday 2024 to Eve of Advent Sunday 2025*.

ONLINE PURCHASING

The Literature Committee expresses its gratitude to the Central Communications Board and to the staff of the finance and IT departments of Church of Ireland House for supporting the facility to purchase Church-related materials online via the Church of Ireland website.

This facility has proved extremely popular and is being widely used. Ms Heather Jestin continues to assist with the distribution of materials to parishes. Orders can now be placed online, or by e-mail or by phone using the following addresses:

Online ordering: <https://store.ireland.anglican.org/store>

E-mail: heather.jestin@rcbcoi.org

Tel: +353 1 4125 665

GENERAL SYNOD ROYALTIES FUND

The Committee recommended the following grants:-

List of Grants since last report:

€1,000 to Hinds publishers to support the publication of Bishop Kenneth Kearon's book on Marriage and Christian Relationships

€4,500 to support the publication of *Search*.

ACTION PLAN 2025

- Prepare the sixteenth and seventeenth books in the Braemor Studies for publication;
- Support the publication programme of the Liturgical Advisory Committee;
- Support Bishop Kenneth Kearon's proposed book on marriage and Christian relationships;
- Support Bishop Richard Clarke's proposed book on the Disestablishment revision of the *Book of Common Prayer*;
- Support Rev Kevin Moroney's proposed book of essays on Anglican liturgies.

APPENDIX G

CHARITIES REGISTRATION MONITORING WORKING GROUP

MEMBERS

Membership

The Archbishop of Armagh (Chair)	Mr Roy Lawther
Ms Ashley Brown	Mr Lyndon MacCann SC
Mr Ken Gibson/ Ms Hazel Corrigan	Ven Leslie Stevenson

During the year, the Charities Registration Monitoring Working Group dealt with a response to a consultation by the Charities Commission in Northern Ireland on ‘Thresholds for registration’.

A sub-committee was established to prepare the response, the members being led by Ms Ashley Brown, Diocesan Finance Officer, Clogher, to whom the Working Group expresses its thanks.

Sub-committee Members:

Ms Ashley Brown
Mr Ken Gibson
Mr Gavin Harkin
Mr Roy Lawther

In attendance: Mrs Janet Maxwell

The Consultation sought views on a proposal to allow charities with income below £20,000 to be exempt from registration in certain circumstances. The purpose of the Consultation is not to consider alternatives to this proposed threshold, but to seek views on the ‘certain circumstances’ that might apply, in particular if turnover should be used with or without an asset value criterion.

Among the questions that the sub-committee considered:

Will registration status affect the right to access the Gift Aid scheme?

How would spikes in income be treated?

What should be the Commission’s right to request documentation of unregistered bodies?

The following points were noted:

1. The figure of £20,000 would be irrelevant to larger parishes or unions.
2. The use of an asset threshold would catch most small parishes, unless some exemptions were permitted for those vested in an incorporated trustee, or possibly a permitted exemption of heritage assets.
3. Groups might find exemption from registration of use in reducing the administrative burden where there are many very small parishes in a group, and these are not unionised. There is some use of local trustees in these situations, and much might depend on whether these are passive trustees or independently registered bodies.
4. Some dioceses have a rule that all parishes must register. It may not be considered desirable that small parishes would deregister.
5. Some dioceses use information supplied to the Regulator’s website where a small parish does not submit an annual statement of account to the diocese.
6. Many church buildings do not have a recorded book value because they are heritage assets.
7. Grant making bodies often look for registered status as a proof of charitable status.
8. Vesting in the RB gives a protection against careless use of assets, so one approach might be to recommend building categories of assets into the proposed regulation.

9. NICVA suggested a figure of £100,000 for asset value, but from a Church of Ireland point of view, a figure of £250,000 would be more realistic.
10. What would be the implications for local trustees?

The response submitted by the Church made the following suggestions:

Heritage assets and possibly also church buildings or vested assets should be excluded from any criteria regarding exemption from registration of charities with income below £20,000.

The outcome of this consultation is awaited.

Republic of Ireland

The Charities Regulation Authority gave permission for the recommencement of the process to register parishes in the Republic of Ireland in November 2024. This process began in January 2025 with the parishes that had participated in the pilot scheme. The Diocese of Cashel has begun to prepare some of its parishes for registration and this will be followed by other dioceses in due course. Parishes should not worry that they have not been called forward yet – the CRA has indicated that it will process applications at a rate of approximately three per week. This will probably speed up as the process becomes established. Parishes with an urgent need to register because of requirements around grant applications or other issues, should contact Mrs Janet Maxwell in Church House.

APPENDIX H

THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY COMMISSION OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND

REPORT 2025

MEMBERSHIP

Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson (Chair)	(4/4)	Dr Michael Trimble	(4/4)
Mr Ken Gibson (Hon Sec)	(3/4)	Mr Steven McQuitty	(3/4)
Mr Neville Armstrong	(4/4)	Rev Andrew Irwin	(3/4)
Mrs June Butler	(3/4)	Dr Claire Jones	(0/4)
Ms Zephryn Patton	(3/4)	Ms Hannah O'Neill	(3/4)
Rev Jane Burns	(4/4)	Dr Harriet Wilkinson	(1/4)
Rev Dr Andrew Campbell	(2/4)	Dr Caroline Elliott-Kingston*	(0/3)
Mr Keith Gardiner	(3/4)		

* To October 2024

The Church and Society Commission is an advisory group, serving the Standing Committee of the General Synod, and engages with legislatures and governments on a variety of issues, including legislation. The mission of CASC is to provide oversight and direction for the Church of Ireland's work, in respect to social theology in action. CASC's views only become representative of the Church of Ireland after being approved by its General Synod.

The Commission submits the following report with appendices referencing its work since the General Synod of May 2024.

Executive Summary

Over the last year the Church and Society Commission continued its work to provide oversight and direction for the Church of Ireland's work in respect to social theology in action. In the time since the last Synod, the Commission has worked proactively to prepare reports and other resource material for the Church and reactively to respond to government reports, public consultations, and events in society.

Membership

The Commission would like to thank all of those who have contributed their time and expertise over the last year towards helping the Commission achieve the work it has, with particular thanks to Dr Caroline Elliott-Kingston who stepped down from the Commission this year. We are most grateful for her contribution during her membership.

Report

Troubles Legacy

At General Synod 2023 the Church and Society Commission was requested to explore, and if necessary, recommend and/or draft resources that would enable Parishes to engage pastorally with, and care for, individuals and communities that are still deeply affected by trauma from 'the Troubles'.

The following year the Commission reported back on its progress, outlining the form it expected its final response to take.

During the last two years the Commission has collected a wide range of first-person accounts from around the island of Ireland of trauma suffered as part of the Troubles, of the ways in which the Church was able to help and equally the ways in which it failed to help those in need. While this is our final report, the Commission hopes that the work completed here will provide guidance and encouragement to others to take further action to make our Church a place of comfort for those who are suffering.

In the 12 months since our last report, the Commission has worked in consultation with others to bring about the three-pronged response outlined at the last General Synod.

The Commission coordinated with the Liturgical Advisory Committee who created a liturgical response to the issues raised in the motion and which recognised the ongoing pain and suffering of those today dealing with trauma from the events of the past.

Alongside the liturgical resources, an informational booklet titled *Healing and Hope – Addressing the Trauma of the Troubles* was created, with the goal of highlighting support groups and other initiatives that may be of use to those living with this trauma, while also informing Clergy on some core elements of a trauma-informed response to victims. The booklet includes these practical resources alongside prayers and excerpts from victims' stories, demonstrating the lasting effects of trauma, and how the Church can play a part in pastorally caring for those suffering.

The Commission has also liaised with Rev Dr William Olhausen on a proposal to introduce training on *trauma informed pastoral care* as part of Continuing Ministerial Education programme. Such training would be a useful skill for all members of clergy, and invaluable to those who feel they may require more understanding in how best to care for those dealing with trauma like that caused by the Troubles.

The Commission recognises that there are a number of key groups working in this area and expertise on the matter already exists within and outside the Church. Rather than recreate existing work our goal has been to bring these people and organisations together, including inviting representatives to Synod, to assist us in addressing the challenge faced by the Church.

Assisted Suicide

The Commission continued to monitor the progress of legislation put forward in both the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom to legalise assisted suicide.

The Church of Ireland's stance in opposition to any such legislation has been consistent and the Commission has previously engaged with legislators on the matter to voice this opposition. As there are currently no ongoing consultations to engage with, the Commission chose to communicate the Church of Ireland's stance via a short, concise flyer. The flyer provides a brief, up-to-date point of reference for those within or outside the Church of Ireland community, highlighting the scriptural beliefs that underpin the Church's stance alongside, a brief outline of some of the medical, legal, and social arguments that reinforce the stance. The

flyer works to convey these arguments concisely while also paying heed to the deep emotional resonance this issue has for so many people.

Homelessness

The compound effects of the ongoing Housing Crisis and over recent years and increases in the cost of living have driven a surge in the number of people experiencing homelessness. While a true solution will require a significant commitment to action and investment throughout the Island of Ireland, the Commission chose this harvest season to highlight the struggles of those experiencing homelessness in the hope of focusing the spirit of Christian charity into practical action, with guidance for parishes and individuals on steps they can take at a local level to assist those in their community experiencing homelessness.

Responses to Programmes for Government

Since the last report to General Synod, the Commission was heartened to see the release of a Programme for Government for Northern Ireland, which represented an important milestone in establishing a stable government after years of instability. In responding to the Programme for Government, the Commission emphasized the ways in which the Church hopes to assist in creating a better future for the people of Northern Ireland, while also offering critique and urging action where the programme does not adequately address the actions which will need to be taken, particularly around the area of housing.

At the time of writing the Commission is also preparing a response to the Programme for Government published by the newly elected government of Ireland.

Statements and Documents

‘A contribution to healing the pain of the Troubles’ – article for *Church of Ireland Gazette*

Link: <https://www.churchofireland.org/news/12613/a-contribution-to-healing-the>

‘Care for every moment of life’ – flyer on assisted suicide and end-of-life issues

Link: <https://www.churchofireland.org/resources/706/care-for-every-moment-of>

‘Sharing hope with people without a home’ – flyer on homelessness

Link: <https://www.churchofireland.org/parish-resources/703/sharing-hope-with-people-without>

Response to the Draft Programme for Government (NI)

Link: <https://www.churchofireland.org/resources/705/submission-to-the-draft-programme>

APPENDIX I

CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON DISABILITY

Membership

Rev Natasha Quinn-Thomas (Chair) 1/2
Rev Aaron McAlister 1/2
Rev Jono Pierce (resigned Jan 2024) 1/1
Ms Rachel Kenny 1/2
Ms Naomi Swatridge 1/2
Ms Hannah Daly 1/2
Mr Simon Malley 1/2

New Members

A fresh call for submissions of interest was put out in the summer of 2024, and the new Consultative Group met in December to plan work for 2025. The group functions in a consultative way, working with other committees and Church organisations to promote awareness of and action on disability and inclusivity needs.

Planning for the Future

The Consultative Group has certain priorities in its planning for the future:

- a. To make people think beyond disability and towards access for all;
- b. To make people aware of the legislation in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and outline the implications of the same;
- c. To make people aware of key issues involved in making sure properties are accessible.

2025 Plans

- 1) Circulation of recent survey of provision for deaf congregation members to all clergy;
- 2) Launch of a more comprehensive survey across as many aspects of accessibility as possible, to include physical, sensory and hidden disabilities;
- 3) Recommendation that parishes nominate a disability representative who can liaise with the Consultative Group on Disability;
- 4) Website update – the Group’s information on www.ireland.anglican.org has not been updated for some time, and it is now planned to work on this. One of the ways the Group will be looking at to improve the website is to explore the possibility of using ‘Easy Read’, an accessible format for people with intellectual disabilities.

Conclusion

The Consultative Group continues to seek consultation with and support from church members with either a professional or personal knowledge in the area of disability. While Covid-19 has hampered the Group’s efforts, we are hopeful that the next couple of years will allow us to start to make progress on our ideas and plans. We also seek prayerful support in the year ahead as we continue with our first projects.

To get in touch with the group, please contact Ms Aisling Sheridan, Synod Administrator at aisling.sheridan@rcbcoi.org.

GS Complaints procedure

	2024 Total €	2023 Total €	2022 Total €	2021 Total €	2020 Total €	2019 Total €	2018 Total €	2017 Total €	2016 Total €
Income									
Deposits	(725)	(692)	0	(1,000)	0	(1,000)	0	(814)	0
Less - deposit refund	0	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	0
Support from General Purpose Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net deposits	<u>(725)</u>	<u>(692)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,000)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(814)</u>	<u>0</u>
Costs									
Legal - External	19,863	0	0	6,027	0	0	0	0	0
Legal - In-House Legal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Technical	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mediation	0	0	0	6,013					
Expert witness costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative and secretarial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Travel & subsistance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Catering	0	0	0	536					
Sundry	0	0	0	316	0	0	0	0	0
Facilities hire	0	0	0	758			0	0	0
	<u>19,863</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>13,650</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>19,138</u>	<u>(692)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>13,650</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,000)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(814)</u>	<u>0</u>

Costs will be charged to the RCB income and expenditure account in the year the complaint hearing takes place.

Appendix K

Future of Curacies Working Group

Report to General Synod 2025

Membership

- Two members of the Stipends Committee: Mr Michael Johnston (Chair) and Mr William Oliver
- Member of the House of Bishops & Allocations Committee: Rt Rev Andrew Forster (Bishop of Derry & Raphoe)
- A member of Standing Committee (Honorary Secretary): Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston
- One member of the Allocations Committee: Ms Helen Arnopp
- Supported by the RCB Project Manager – Mr Dermot Burns

The purpose of the Future of Curacies working group was to provide recommendations for supporting the deployment, provision and funding of curacies. Following presentation to Standing Committee in September 2023, the Working Group was asked to continue and to come back with recommendations as to how the initial recommendations might be implemented.

The Working Group focused on two key areas – Finance and Education.

Finance

Finance was and is still considered the main barrier for parishes considering appointing a Curate Assistant. Some parishes cannot afford to appoint a Curate Assistant but would be excellent training locations. After consideration, it was recommended that a Curacy Fund be established, funded via Stipends and Allocations Committees. Applications to this fund would be from parishes with the application endorsed by the bishop. Applications to the fund will form part of the appointment of a Curate Assistant to a Training Rector. The Curacy Fund will provide a fixed subsidy for the first three years of curacy. This subsidy which would apply for each year has been calculated as approx. 50% of the expected 2023 average cost of a Curate which was £22k / €27k per year. Each training parish would receive the same subsidy. Should a Curate Assistant be appointed on a part-time basis, the award will be granted on a pro-rata basis. The expected cost of this subsidy is in the region of £500k / €612k per annum, of which £100k / €122k will be provided by the Stipends Fund and the balance from central funds. Note – the initial forecast was based on 7 persons appointed as Curate Assistant per annum and noted that in 2025 it is expected that there will be 11.

Education

A culture of continual learning is a priority. It is important that Training Rectors and Curates Assistant understand what is expected over the period of curacy, and training will be on-going throughout the curacy. The continued availability of the grant to each parish is dependent on the participation of both Rector & Curate. Agreement has been reached with CITI to provide in service training for Rectors. The Curacy Protocol document which Training Rector and Curate Assistant signup was also reviewed and updated.

APPENDIX L

Report on Behalf of the Armagh Agreement Reference Group **To the General Synod of the Church of Ireland 2025** **And the Provincial Board of the British Province of the Moravian Church**

The Armagh Agreement was agreed in 2021. In 2022, it was accepted by both the General Synod of the Church of Ireland and the Synod of the British Province of the Moravian Church. Among other possibilities for our two churches working even more closely together in the future, the agreement enables the interchangeability of ordained ministry between our two churches, while recognising the different ways in which deacons and bishops function in each of our churches.

This year (2024), the reference group has met four times. Two of these meetings were online and two were face to face meetings.

The present members of the group are:

Church of Ireland –	Rt Rev Michael Burrows (Joint Chair)
	Rev Canon Dr Helene Steed
	Mr Roy Totten
	Rev Dr Robert Cotter
Moravian Church –	Rt Rev Sarah Groves (Joint Chair)
	Rev Michael Newman
	Mr Mark Kernohan
	Rev Philip Cooper (Secretary)

We are, also, grateful to Dr David Johnston, who has served on the Reference Group in the past.

On 18th March 2024, a wonderful service was organised by the Reference Group, along with Gracehill Moravian Church and St Patrick's Church, Ballymena. The service took place on the day following St Patrick's Day. The service was in two parts, with a Service of the Word celebrated at St Patrick's Church and Holy Communion celebrated at Gracehill Moravian Church.

The congregation, which included a number of ecumenical guests, was welcomed to St Patrick's Church by the Bishop of Connor, Rt Rev George Davison, and the Rector of St Patrick's Church, Rev Mark McConnell, and to Gracehill Moravian Church, by the minister of the Gracehill congregation, Rt Rev Sarah Groves. Archbishop John McDowell gave an inspiring sermon, and several other ordained and lay people participated in the service, including the Gracehill school choir. Following the service, Sr Roberta Hoey, Chair of the Provincial Board of the British Province of the Moravian Church, shared some profound words and thoughts with us, in a short speech. Then a wonderful buffet meal, in the Gracehill Church Hall, was shared by all.

Prior to the start of the service at St Patrick's a tree was planted in the grounds of the Church by children from St Patrick's. At the end of the service at Gracehill another tree was planted by Gracehill children, in the Village Square. The children and the trees symbolised the hope that the Armagh Agreement will help both churches to grow and flourish together, bearing much fruit for the kingdom of God. On hand to help with the planting, from the Church of Ireland, were Archbishop, John McDowell, and Bishop Michael Burrows. From the Moravian Church, a helping hand was given by Bishop Sarah Groves and Bishop Joachim Kreusel. The occasion was a marvellous and fitting celebration of the agreement. The fellowship was warm, and the Anglican and Moravian styles of worship complemented each other beautifully.

On behalf of the group, Rev Dr Robert Cotter is, at present, writing a history of the events and discussions that led to the creation of the agreement.

Rt Rev Harold Miller and Rt Rev Sarah Groves gave a joint interview, to Mr Peter Cheney, from Church of Ireland Press Office, reflecting on the agreement and the relationship between our two churches. The interview is available on YouTube – [Building our closer relations with the Moravians](#).

In its future work, the group will look at the following subjects:-

- Mutual participation in ordinations of bishops;
- Practice and discipline surrounding occasional ‘interchangeability of ministry, e.g. in the area of safeguarding;
- The possibility of sharing theological training;
- The Moravian Church’s relationships with the Methodist Church in Ireland;
- Production of a leaflet that explains the agreement and what the two churches can do together;
- The possibility of a Clergy Morning, where all the local, interested, clergy, from both churches, would meet together, perhaps, with an inspirational speaker, to discuss ways forward;
- The possibility of sharing in each other’s festivals, patronal celebrations, harvest festivals, anniversary services, etc.
- The possibility of Rt Rev Sarah Groves and Rt Rev Michael Burrows giving a talk about Moravian theology and spirituality at the Theological Institute in Dublin.

The Armagh Agreement is an exciting agreement between the Church of Ireland and the Moravian Church, and the Reference Group hope and pray that the agreement will grow and flourish in the years ahead, bearing much fruit for the kingdom of God.

Rev Philip Cooper
January 2025

PRIORITIES FUND APPLICATIONS

App No	Diocese	Applicant & Description of Project	Requested Sterling	Requested Euro	Recommended Grant Year 1		Recommended Grant Year 2		Total Recommended Grant
				Exchange rate €1.20846	Sterling	Euro	Sterling	Euro	Euro
Outreach Initiatives									
OI- 1	Armagh	Mullavilly	£10,700	€0	£2,500	€3,021	£1,500	€1,813	€4,834
		Apple Blossom Baby Basics							
OI- 2	Ardfert	Tralee and Ballymacelligott	£0	€1,860	£0	€1,000	£0	€0	€1,000
		IT Printing Equipment for outreach work with children							
OI- 4	Cork	Moviddy Union of Parishes	£0	€600	£0	€600	£0	€0	€600
		To Provide a marquee for external parish events							
OI- 5	Cork	Douglas Union with Frankfield	£0	€255	£0	€0	£0	€0	€0
		Childrens choir							
OI- 6	Cork	Cobh and Glanmire Union	£0	€18,000	£0	€10,000	£0	€0	€10,000
		Provide access and sanitary facilities at St Lappans for various groups							
OI- 7	Cork	Fermoy Union	£0	€3,515	£0	€2,000	£0	€0	€2,000
		Little Feet toddler group							
OI- 8	Tuam	Westport-Dugort	£0	€1,200	£0	€600	£0	€0	€600
		Gazebo for events							
OI- 9	Connor	The Blackstaff Mission Area	£52,551	€0	£20,000	€24,169	£15,000	€18,127	€42,296
		Family outreach work for the Blackstaff Mission Area							
OI- 10	Cork	Carrigrohane Union	£0	€60,285	£0	€20,000	£0	€10,000	€30,000
		Mission and Outreach Phase 2 of Carraig Centre							
OI- 11	Cashel	Diocese of Cashel Ferns and Ossory	£0	€15,000	£0	€12,000	£0	€0	€12,000
		COI Stand at National Ploughing Championships							
OI- 12	didn't cho	Agherton Parish	£17,540	€0	£10,000	€12,085	£0	€0	€12,085
		Family Well-Being and Empowerment Programme							
OI- 13	Armagh	St Marks Armagh	£4,977	€0	£4,000	€4,834	£0	€0	€4,834
		Café Hope- Health and wellbeing ministry							
OI- 14	Cashel	Kilkenny Christian Centre	£0	€25,000	£0	€0	£0	€0	€0
		To develop the light house youth & community centre							
OI- 15	Cork	Vision Community Support Services (VCSS)	£0	€28,000	£0	€0	£0	€0	€0
		To improve the well-being and resilience of migrant families in Cork							
OI- 16	Tuam	Omey Union	£0	€554	£0	€0	£0	€0	€0
		Replacement notice-boards at St Thomas, Moyard and Christ Church, Clifden							
OI- 17		Solas	£0	€12,000	£0	€5,000	£0	€0	€5,000
		The Yard project - for young people not in education or employment							

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

STANDING COMMITTEE

PRIORITIES FUND

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT		Year ended 31 December 2024	
		2024	2023
		€	€
INCOME			
Contributions	1	304,798	466,820
Investment Income		19,822	31,292
Individual Contributions		121	347
Bequest Income		-	-
		<u>324,741</u>	<u>498,459</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Administration Expenses	2	(24,981)	(20,981)
Operating Surplus for the Year		<u>299,850</u>	<u>477,478</u>
ALLOCATIONS & GRANTS			
Allocations & Grants Distributed	3	(467,000)	(443,004)
(Deficit)/Surplus after Allocations & Grants		<u>(167,150)</u>	<u>34,474</u>
Valuation Movement		52,259	81,370
Currency translation adjustment		3,837	1,945
Net (Deficit)/Surplus for the year		<u>(111,054)</u>	<u>117,789</u>

STANDING COMMITTEE

PRIORITIES FUND

BALANCE SHEET

Year ended 31 December 2024

		2024 €	2023 €
INVESTMENTS			
Investments held by the RCB	5	1,187,859	1,135,599
		<hr/>	<hr/>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash held with the RCB	6	212,363	375,677
Debtors	7	-	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		212,363	375,677
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Assets		<u>1,400,222</u>	<u>1,511,276</u>
FUNDS EMPLOYED			
Balance at 1 January		1,511,276	1,393,487
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		(111,054)	117,789
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance as at 31 December		<u>1,400,222</u>	<u>1,511,276</u>
		<hr/>	<hr/>

Notes to the Financial Statements

	2024 €	2023 €
1. Contributions		
Contributions from the dioceses	304,798	466,820
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2. Administration Expenses	2024 €	2023 €
Salaries & PRSI	20,044	20,050
Stationary, Printing	4,150	804
Miscellaneous & Transfers	697	127
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	24,891	20,981
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
3. Grants & Loans	2024 €	2023 €
Ministry	49,358	45,436
Retirement Benefits	-	461
Education	102,544	56,527
Outreach Initiatives	263,098	278,674
Innovative Ministry	52,000	61,906
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	467,000	443,004
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
4. Capital Commitments		

As at 31st December 2024 the Priorities Fund had committed grants of €439,439 for Jan 2025 – March 2027. These grants have not been provided for in the Financial Statements.

5. Invested assets are shown at market value at both 31 December 2023 and 31 December 2024.

	2024 €	2023 €
6. Cash on deposit held by the RCB		
Cash on deposit held by the RCB	212,363	375,677
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

This represents cash held on behalf of The Church of Ireland Priorities Fund by the RCB in pooled bank accounts.

	2024	2023
	€	€
7. Debtors		
Contributions Accrued	-	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

8. Foreign Currency transactions have been translated to Euro at the rate of exchange ruling at 31 December 2024, €1 = £0.8275 (2023: €1 = £0. 8669).
9. An accountants' report has not been provided for these Financial Statements as the cash balance of €212,363 and Investment balance of €1,187,859 is included within the scope of the Representative Church Body's audit.
10. The Priorities Fund is not the beneficial owner of any tangible fixed assets, and thus no depreciation charge arises in the current or previous financial year.

Appendix N

Third Level Chaplaincy Review Group

Report to General Synod 2025

Membership

Mr Michael Johnston (Chair)

Rt Rev Andrew Forster (Bishop of Derry & Raphoe)

Ven Barry Forde

Rev Canon Alan Marley

RCB Staff in Attendance

Mr David Ritchie

Mr Dermot Burns

The aim of the Third Level Chaplaincy review group was to draw up a comprehensive plan for the future of third level chaplaincy and a structure for its management. The working group was chaired by Michael Johnston, chairperson of the RB Stipends Committee. The group was supported by the RCB Project Manager, Mr Dermot Burns.

A primary objective of this review group has been to consider a long-term funding model to support and enhance third level chaplaincy, including a budget for investment and allocation into chaplaincy ministry. The research outlined in the paper in September 2023 shows that funding is urgently required to support dioceses that seek to deploy third level chaplains across the third level sector. Funding is also required for chaplains to develop chaplaincy programmes within the third level sector.

Final Recommendations

It is recommended that central church funding for third level chaplaincy should be provided for through the Allocations Committee. Any additional funding sourced externally by the RB Executive Committee should also be managed by the Allocations Committee.

In addition, the following should be considered:

- It is recognised that in the third level education setting the church is an invited guest and it is imperative that relationships are at a local level - diocesan or parochial – building relationships with the institution for access and to tender for services in the future should a tendering process apply.
- Funding criteria for dioceses seeking third level chaplains should be agreed by both the House of Bishops and Allocations Committee
- Funding should be allocated on a case-by-case basis based on a recommendation by the House of Bishops
- Third Level chaplains and those involved in chaplaincy are invited to join CN3 Network and should be encouraged to join
- The existing bespoke programme for third level chaplains, which has already been successfully delivered, be available for delivery by the Church of Ireland Theological Institute (CITI) on an ad-hoc basis

- It is recommended that a Standing Committee establish a Chaplaincy Working Group to champion and encourage chaplaincy ministry across the church and support the work described. It is suggested that the working group should be made up of those some with experience in 3rd level chaplaincy ministry plus a representative from each of Standing Committee, Representative Church Body and the House of Bishops.

In conclusion, after implementing the recommendations a review should be undertaken in the medium term to ensure that chaplains are being supported and what further support, if any, might be required.

Appendix O

Church of Ireland Safeguarding Board

General Synod Report 2025

“All adults and children have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured, cared for and protected from harm or the risk of harm.”

(Church of Ireland Safeguarding Policies)



Mrs Gillian Taylor
Safeguarding Officer (NI)



Dr Niall Moore
Safeguarding Officer (ROI)

Members of the Safeguarding Board

- The Archbishop of Armagh, The Most Rev John McDowell (Chairperson)
- The Archbishop of Dublin, The Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson
- A Clerical Honorary Secretary of General Synod, Rev Canon Gillian Wharton
- Representatives of clergy from Northern Ireland, Bishop Ian Ellis and Rev Dr Christopher St John
- Representatives of clergy from the Republic of Ireland, Rev Ruth Elmes and Rev Eugene Griffin
- Representative of the Representative Church Body, Rev Canon Paul Thompson
- Chief Officer and Secretary General, Mr David Ritchie
- Independent members: Mr Paul Stephenson, Child Protection in Sport Officer at NSPCC, and Ms Shirley Scott, Policy Manager with the Rape Crisis Centre

The Safeguarding Board membership includes representatives of the northern and southern provinces appointed by their Archbishops and independent experts in safeguarding from outside of the Church of Ireland.

Summary of activities

Policy development

The Safeguarding Officers, Mrs Gillian Taylor (NI) and Dr Niall Moore (ROI), worked with external advisors to prepare policies which were presented to the Safeguarding Board for consideration, these included:

Amalgamated Child Safeguarding policy

The new draft policy is currently with the statutory authorities for consideration and comment. Once these comments have been received a final draft will be presented to the Safeguarding Board for approval.

Governance paper

At the November meeting of the Safeguarding Board, a paper proposing a new governance structure for the Safeguarding Office was considered. The paper included several recommendations, including:

- A move towards staff specialisms within the RCB Safeguarding Office;
- Implementing a triage function in the RCB to better direct requests for advice;
- More support for local training;
- Considering how the RCB Safeguarding Office works with dioceses to manage safeguarding allegations.

Safeguarding Strategy

A strategy to cover the objectives of the Safeguarding Office for 2024-2026 was approved by the Safeguarding Board. It can be viewed here: <https://safeguarding.ireland.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Safeguarding-Strategy-2024-2026.pdf>.

Database Development

In April 2024, the RCB Safeguarding Office began a project to develop a centralised secure database. The purpose of this new database is to provide a centralised system for storing safeguarding information relating to contacts, roles, training records, vetting contact information and advice. The system is now fully operational, and it will assist the RCB in providing more efficient and effective communication, more timely and detailed reporting, alongside providing safeguarding statistics that will feed into policy development and training.

Safeguarding training

In 2024 the Safeguarding Officers provided training to 509 people including child safeguarding panels, those involved in adult safeguarding, students in CITI and those involved in pastoral ministry. The Safeguarding Office is working on adding additional modules for the safeguarding database to enable more effective reporting of the training delivered by locally accredited trainers who in turn would deliver awareness raising training for volunteers and staff at parish level.

Implementation of biannual Church of Ireland safeguarding newsletter

One of the actions of the Safeguarding Strategy is to develop and distribute a safeguarding newsletter. The first edition of the newsletter was issued in December 2024, and new editions will be published twice yearly. All editions can be viewed on a new section of the safeguarding website here: <https://safeguarding.ireland.anglican.org/publications/>.

Establishment of a Case Management Committee

Throughout the year work has progressed in developing a Case Management Committee who would assist the RCB Safeguarding Office in offering advice to dioceses for more complex child and adult safeguarding cases. Terms of reference were approved by the Safeguarding Board and members have been appointed. It is anticipated that the first meeting of the Case Management Committee will take place in Spring 2025.

Vetting and AccessNI Services

Parishes, dioceses, Church of Ireland schools and organisations with a relevant Service Level Agreement in place are able to avail of the services of RCB staff who process Garda Vetting applications in the Republic of Ireland and AccessNI checks in Northern Ireland. During 2024 the RCB processed 5774 Garda Vetting applications and AccessNI applications combined.

Throughout the year, RCB staff have worked with the Garda National Vetting Bureau and AccessNI to clarify roles that need to be vetted or receive an enhanced AccessNI disclosure. This work will continue in 2025.

Historical Clerical Child Abuse Investigation

During this year, the Northern Ireland, Inter-Departmental Working group (IDWG) commissioned three interrelated pieces of research on behalf of the Northern Ireland Office to explore child abuse across faith organisations. The purpose of this research is to develop an understanding of the nature and prevalence of child abuse in non-residential settings across faith organisations and the impact it has had on victims and survivors. During this year, the Safeguarding Officers engaged with the project teams commissioned on these three pieces of research to support Diocesan Compliance Officers and those involved in safeguarding at parish level to contribute to these important pieces of research.

Further information regarding safeguarding can be found on <https://safeguarding.ireland.anglican.org/>.

Appendix

Safeguarding Board – Terms of Reference

SAFEGUARDING BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE UPDATED JANUARY 2024 DUE FOR REVIEW JANUARY 2027

Church of Ireland Safeguarding Board - Terms of Reference:

Overall Statement

The Church of Ireland Safeguarding Board ('the Board') exists to develop and approve safeguarding policy, to monitor implementation and to report to Standing Committee and the Representative Body as appropriate. All policies will be in compliance with Irish and UK law as appropriate and will be informed by best practice. The Board is committed to learning from experience. By a process of continuous improvement, it will monitor and challenge the effectiveness of The Church of Ireland's safeguarding policies and processes. The Safeguarding Board will submit an annual report for inclusion in the Church of Ireland General Synod Book of Reports.

Functions of the Board

The Board:

- Will review and agree changes to the policies on an annual basis (in June).
- Will develop a 3-year strategic plan with input from relevant external professional bodies and will monitor progress at least annually.
- Will review child and adult safeguarding policies every three years with input from external professional bodies as required.

The Safeguarding Officers will attend and will report to the Safeguarding Board at each meeting. The reports of the Safeguarding Officers will address:

- Policy – changes in legislation, recommended changes to policies;
- Training – content, delivered, issues arising;
- Compliance – reporting on audits and issues arising from cases;
- Operations – Active case numbers and vetting report;
- Issues – this is an opportunity to report any issue(s) not covered above.

Membership of the Board

- a) Two representatives from the House of Bishops (preferably one from each legal jurisdiction) – one of whom shall be the Chairperson;
- b) One representative from the Representative Church Body;
- c) The Chief Officer and Secretary General;
- d) An Honorary Secretary of the General Synod;
- e) Four members of the clergy: two nominated triennially by the Archbishop of Armagh, and two nominated by the Archbishop of Dublin. In the event of a vacancy arising, it shall be filled by the Archbishop who first nominated the original nominee. Nominations will reflect a gender balance and a rural/urban balance, in so far as is possible;
- f) External expert members (to be co-opted as the Board determines up to a maximum of four people.

The quorum for meetings will be 6 members of the Board to include at least one independent member.

Meetings

The Board will meet at least three times per year.

The Board will meet in January annually to prepare its Annual Report to General Synod, and as often as it determines thereafter.

Dates of meetings for the year will be agreed at the first meeting of the year. Should a matter of urgency arise the Chairperson may convene a special meeting through the Secretary.

Reporting

The Chairperson of the Safeguarding Board shall be responsible for direct liaison with the Chief Officer and the Secretary of the Board following Safeguarding Board meetings, including circulation of minutes, agendas and reports. The Standing Committee of the General Synod or the Representative Church Body may ask the Safeguarding Board to convene to discuss any Safeguarding issue upon which it requires further advice.

Evaluation of terms of reference

The Safeguarding Board's terms of reference will be reviewed annually. Any amendments to these Terms of Reference will be submitted to Standing Committee for approval.

APPENDIX P

STANDING COMMITTEE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	Notes	2024 €	2023 €
INCOME			
Representative Church Body	1	728,968	571,341
Royalties Fund Income		45,314	48,413
Grants/Contributions		5,511	15,157
Deposit Interest	2	1,422	2,213
		<u>781,215</u>	<u>637,124</u>
EXPENSES			
Services provided by RCB	3	358,518	330,545
General Synod Expenses	4	53,257	44,616
Miscellaneous Expenses	5	58,703	19,238
		<u>470,478</u>	<u>394,399</u>
OPERATING SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		<u>310,737</u>	<u>242,725</u>
ALLOCATIONS AND GRANTS			
Allocations to Ecumenical and Anglican Organisations	6	125,522	128,039
Allocations to Church related Organisations	7	174,744	251,951
		<u>300,266</u>	<u>379,990</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) for year		<u>10,471</u>	<u>(137,265)</u>

STANDING COMMITTEE

FUND ACCOUNT

Year ended 31 December

		2024 €	2023 €
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash on deposit held by RCB	8	157,789	149,454
Net Assets		<u>157,789</u>	<u>149,454</u>

FUNDS EMPLOYED

Balance at 1 January		149,454	289,599
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		10,471	(137,265)
Currency translation adjustment		864	1,925
Adjustment to opening balance		(3,000)	(4,805)
Balance as at 31 December		<u>157,789</u>	<u>149,454</u>

Notes to the Accounts

1. Income from Representative Church Body

	2024 €	2023 €
Representative Church Body allocation	856,816	804,065
Refund unexpended allocation	(127,848)	(232,724)
Total income from RCB	<u>728,968</u>	<u>571,341</u>

This represents amounts which were allocated by the Allocations Committee of the Representative Church Body to fund the activities of the Standing Committee.

2. Deposit Interest

	2024 €	2023 €
Royalties Fund	1,422	2,213
	<u>1,422</u>	<u>2,213</u>

3. Services provided by RCB

Services provided by the RCB relates to the time apportionment of certain RCB staff who provide Standing Committee support.

4. General Synod Expenses

	€	€
Venue and Facilities	53,257	44,616
	<u>53,257</u>	<u>44,616</u>

5. Miscellaneous Expenses

	2024 €	2023 €
Publications & Printing	8,916	7,826
Honorary Secretaries' expenses	6,850	7,250
Porvoo Expenses	2,816	-
COI Church & Society CO	1,065	-
Council for Mission	24,415	1,070
Commission on Ministry	9,839	2,827
Subscriptions	3,353	265
Histographer	1,300	-
Sundry	149	-
	<u>58,703</u>	<u>19,238</u>

6. Ecumenical and Anglican Organisations	2024 €	2023 €
Anglican Consultative Council	59,072	56,388
Irish Council of Churches	28,127	25,570
Churches Together in Britain and Ireland	12,085	11,535
Irish Inter-Church Meeting	13,853	12,594
World Council of Churches	4,955	4,637
Conference of European Churches	-	5,310
Irish School of Ecumenics	2,000	-
Delegates' expenses (travel/conferences)	5,430	12,005
	<u>125,522</u>	<u>128,039</u>
	<u><u>125,522</u></u>	<u><u>128,039</u></u>
7. Allocations to Church related Organisations	2024 €	2023 €
Central Communications Board	144,424	127,988
Grants paid to General Church Organisations	5,000	5,000
Grants paid to Support Allocations	12,000	11,000
Church of Ireland Marriage Council	11,774	9,102
Royalties Fund Expenditure	1,546	98,861
	<u>174,744</u>	<u>251,951</u>
	<u><u>174,744</u></u>	<u><u>251,951</u></u>
8. Cash on Short Term Deposit	2024 €	2023 €
Royalties Fund	155,652	110,298
Other Account Balances	2,137	39,156
	<u>157,789</u>	<u>149,454</u>
	<u><u>157,789</u></u>	<u><u>149,454</u></u>

This represents cash held on behalf of Standing Committee by the RCB in pooled bank accounts.

9. Foreign currency transactions have been translated to Euro at the rate of exchange ruling on 31 December 2024, €1 = £0.8275 (2023: €1 = £0.8669).

10. An accountant's report has not been provided for these financial statements, as the balance of €157,789 is included within the scope of the Representative Church Body's audit.

ENC D

GENERAL PURPOSES FUND

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	2024	2023
	€	€
INCOME		
Interest and dividends	1,249	1,201
	<u>1,249</u>	<u>1,201</u>
EXPENSES		
Registrar's fees	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
OPERATING SURPLUS FOR YEAR	1,249	1,201
Balance 1 January	52,306	48,029
Currency translation adjustment	3	3
Unrealised Gains on Revaluation	<u>1,938</u>	<u>3,073</u>
Balance 31 December	<u>55,496</u>	<u>52,306</u>
FUNDS EMPLOYED		
Investments	44,586	42,645
Cash held by RCB	<u>10,910</u>	<u>9,661</u>
	<u>55,496</u>	<u>52,306</u>

Sterling balances and transactions have been translated to Euro at the rate of exchange ruling at 31 December 2024, €1 = £0.8275 (2023: €1 = £0.8669).

APPENDIX Q

WORKING GROUP CONCERNING A CO-ORDINATED RESPONSE BY THE CHURCH TO HISTORIC INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE (HISTORIC INQUIRIES WORKING GROUP)

Members:

Archbishop of Armagh (3/4)
Archbishop of Dublin (4/4)
Ms Hilary Prentice, Chair RB Executive (3/4)
Rev Canon Gillian Wharton, Honorary Secretary (4/4)
Mr Ken Gibson, Honorary Secretary (4/4)
Mr Lyndon MacCann SC (4/4)
Mr David Ritchie, Chief Officer & Secretary General (4/4)
Mrs Janet Maxwell, Head of Synod Services (4/4)

The Institutional Inquiries Working Group met on five occasions since the last meeting of General Synod. The main topics dealt with during this period were:

- Further research into records of the Church of Ireland Adoption Society records in Northern Ireland;
- Monitoring of progress on matters related to the Inquiry into Mother & Baby Homes in Northern Ireland;
- Noting progress on the Inquiry into Historic Clerical Child Sexual Abuse in Northern Ireland which is being monitored and responded to by the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Board;
- Engagement with the Irish State representative in relation to the Government's Mother & Baby Home redress scheme;
- Engagement with State bodies and individual enquiries to locate relevant records that may be of assistance, including the Adoption Authority of Ireland regarding centrally archived materials, and the Director of the National Archives in Ireland about relevant records under the Maternity Protection, Employment Equality and Protection of Certain Records Act 2024, and Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in respect of records in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland

In May 2024, a further update on the developments in the Mother and Baby Home Inquiry in NI was published in the form of an Interim Report from the Truth Recovery Independent Panel, which was set up by the NI Executive to survey records relating to Mother & Baby Homes, Magdalen Laundries in Northern Ireland. This mentions:

- Kennedy House - operated by the Church of Ireland Moral Welfare Association (Northern Dioceses) with partnership finance from two County Boards, 1947-56; (the report also identifies a home of the same name run by the Church of Ireland Rescue Society 1912-1946. The Church of Ireland Rescue Society, was a women's lay committee which had no direct links to either the central church, nor dioceses. The earlier Kennedy House did not seem to have much functional activity after the late 1930s.) Between 1922-1956, some 168 women were admitted to the two institutions known as Kennedy House.
- Hopedene Hostel (the Board of which, comprised representatives nominated by a wide range of organisation including the C of I Moral Welfare Association (Northern Dioceses) and the Church of Ireland Rescue League, alongside representatives of various other denominational, civic and medical institutions). Hopedene was closed in 1984 following a review conducted by the three main Churches liaising with the Department of Health & Social Services, which was providing funding to sustain the home. The decision to wind up in 1984 led to sale of the building. Funds were directed in part to the Church of Ireland Board of Social Responsibility, now an independent charitable organisation called

Family Routes, which also took in the records and used these to set up an adoption tracing service. Between 1922 and 1984, the Interim Report identified 670 women using the facility.

Link to the original Report : <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/publication-research-report-mother-and-baby-homes-and-magdalene-laundries-northern-ireland>

In July, the Working Group met to consider the work of the Independent Panel and other matters. The Working Group noted that the Independent Inquiry will consider the experiences of both pregnant women who used mother and baby facilities but also the experiences of non-pregnant women who were there because of other issues such as addiction or domestic abuse. Some excerpts are noted below with reference to page numbers.

‘It is proposed that the inquiry will look into whether there were systemic failings in:

- *what led women and girls to be admitted to such institutions;*
- *their treatment while there;*
- *their departure from the institutions;*
- *the placement of children, now adults, (other than with a birth mother), born while their mothers were in an institution, for the purposes of adoption, fostering or other care arrangements; and*
- *the registration, regulation or inspection of the institutions. (p.15).’*

The Inquiry will also look at individuals and organisations attached to these homes in Northern Ireland:

‘The policy intention is to focus not only on the institutions themselves but also on any organisations or individuals linked to their activities. This reflects the recommendation of the Report “to investigate individual, institutional, organisational and state departmental / agent responsibility concerning human rights violations experienced in Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries, Workhouses and their pathways and practices (including the adoption system, related institutions such as ‘baby homes’ and private nursing homes, and cross border and international transfers of children and women)”. (p.18)’

The Working Group has already secured funding from the RB to provide grant assistance to Family Routes to conduct independent research into the adoption files of The Church of Ireland Adoption Society with a view to ascertain what standards of care were exercised in the adoption work carried on by the society. Two phases of this study have been completed covering 20% of the files and a further study to address another 10% of records has been approved during the year. To date, the Working Group understands that this is the only study of its kind undertaken on adoption records relating to the work of the Inquiry and hopes that it will be of use to the Inquiry as it conducts its business. The independent researchers who conducted the first two studies reported that no major issues of concern were found in the first two studies.

The Working Group noted that the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Board is engaging with the State in Northern Ireland regarding the Historic Clerical Child Sexual Abuse in Northern Ireland.

Republic of Ireland

A - Engagement with Independent Negotiator on behalf of the State (Redress Scheme)

In July, Ms Sheila Nunan, Independent Negotiator on behalf of the Government in respect of the Mother and Baby Redress Scheme, contacted the Church of Ireland to seek a further meeting to discuss a voluntary contribution to the Irish Government’s Redress Scheme.

The Working Group noted that the Church has previously and publicly acknowledged the wrongs that were visited on so many women and their children, when pregnancy outside wedlock led to a situation where society often rejected these women and their children. The Working Group also noted that the fewer numbers in the Protestant Homes also suggests that many families must have found ways to keep both unwed mothers and their children within the family, a situation that is sometimes mentioned to members of the Working Group. Consequently, the Working Group suggests that the State should perhaps seek evidence of such social practices, which might help to understand why the Mother and Baby Home was not an inevitable outcome for unmarried, pregnant women in Ireland and Northern Ireland at this period.

The meeting with the Government's representative, Ms Sheila Nunan, took place in November 2024 and Ms Nunan restated her desire for a voluntary contribution from the Church of Ireland in respect of the women who had been admitted to mother and baby homes referred to as 'Protestant homes' in the Report of the Irish Inquiry into Mother and Baby Homes.

Prior to the meeting, the Working Group noted that while the Church recognised the ill that had been endured by many women and their children, it felt that the State's approach to the Church of Ireland was inequitable. The Church of Ireland is the only body that was neither the founder, owner or manager of a home included in the Inquiry, and the only Protestant Church to be included in the request to provide funds to support the Redress Scheme. The Working Group also felt that the Government's representatives had not provided sufficient detail to allow the Church of Ireland to consider the Government's request.

The Church of Ireland did not found, own or manage the Bethany Home, The Magdalen Asylum Leeson Street (later Denny House) or Miss Carr's Flatlets, or other homes mentioned in the report. The Church pointed out that there is a lack of fairness, equity or justice in this approach. The Church has requested information about the number of claims relating to Protestant homes, but this has not been provided. A further issue raised is the request for the use of Church funds to help fund the Government's scheme in respect of homes that were not under Church ownership.

Following this meeting, there was a further exchange of correspondence to reiterate the Church's position on the request.

B - Preservation of Certain Records

Following legislation to ensure the preservation of records relating to Mother and Baby homes in Northern Ireland, similar legislation has been passed in the Republic of Ireland. The Maternity Protection, Employment Equality and Protection of Certain Records Act (2024) resulted in correspondence to Archbishops and Bishops with responsibilities in the Republic of Ireland to make Statements of relevant records that they may hold regarding relevant institutions and relevant bodies and relevant people, to the Director of the National Archives, Dublin. It should be noted that the institutions defined are broader than mother and baby homes and include orphanages and industrial schools. The relevant period is 1922-1998.

Relevant 'institutions':

1. A Mother & Baby Home;
2. A County Home;
3. A Magdalen Laundry;
4. An industrial school, reformatory or related institution;
5. An orphanage;
6. An institution designated by the Minister (which seems to mean 'added' having not been previously noted).

At the time of writing, Dr Hood and Mrs Maxwell are working with the Archbishops and Bishops and with the staff of the National Archives to prepare the necessary statements ahead of the deadline for reply on 20th March 2025.

APPENDIX R

WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW CLERGY TENURE REPORT 2025

Members and Attendance (as at February 2025)

Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston (Chair) (3/4)
The Bishop of Connor (4/4)
Ms Helen Arnopp (4/4)
Rev James Boyd (4/4)
Mrs J Bruton *appointed November 2024* (1/1)
Rev Ruth Elmes *appointed November 2024* (1/1)
Ven Barry Forde (4/4)
Rev Canon Nicola Halford (2/4)
Miss Irene Knox (4/4)
Mr Lyndon MacCann SC (2/4)
Mr Glenn Moore (2/4)
Mr Willie Oliver (4/4)
Very Rev Stephen Farrell (1/4)
Dr Nicole Gallagher (staff in attendance)

Executive Summary

This Working Group was originally formed as a Select Committee at the General Synod of 2023 but has since become a Working Group. The objectives of the Working Group, as per its terms of reference, are as follows:

- To review the concept of clergy tenure as understood within the governance of the Church of Ireland;
- To consider the tenure of other clerical/ministerial titles (Priest-In-Charge, Bishop's Curate, Pioneer Minister, Chaplain etc.);
- To undertake a review of the provisions currently in place within the Constitution in respect of breakdown of pastoral relationships and to consider additions or amendments to these provisions, if appropriate, as well as possible measures to prevent the occurrence of pastoral breakdown in some cases before an issue occurs;
- To review the concept of tied houses and whether they are still fit for purpose in the parish context.

Membership

At the June meeting of the Standing Committee, it was agreed to amend the terms of reference for the Working Group to Review Clergy Tenure to allow for three co-options onto the group as opposed to the original two. A further two co-opted places were added in November.

External Consultations

The Working Group has undertaken a series of consultations with other denominations to see how the subject of Clergy Tenure is dealt with in different Churches. The Group met with the Rev Dr David Bruce from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Rev Dr Heather Morris from the Methodist Church in Ireland and Mr Patrick Shorrock from the Church of England. These consultations were very informative, and the sincere thanks of the Working Group goes to those who took part. It was also intended to have a representative from the Church in Wales speak to the Group but, at the time of printing, we had yet to receive a reply despite numerous attempts to make contact.

Internal Consultations

As well as consulting with other denominations, the Working Group has also undertaken consultations within the Church of Ireland to evaluate the issues surrounding clergy tenure from an 'on the ground' perspective. An

online survey was circulated to all Bishops, Archdeacons, Diocesan Secretaries and Honorary Secretaries of Diocesan Synods. This survey looked at four key areas:

1. Tenure under Chapter VIII Disciplinary Processes of the Constitution;
2. Tenure when there is medical incapacity or prolonged ill-health;
3. Tenure in situations of parochial breakdown (that do not sit under Chapter VIII) and which may or may not involve some period of absence due to ill-health;
4. Tenure when there is parochial reorganization.

Twenty-six responses were received, and all responses were anonymous. The thanks of the Working Group goes to Mr Jonathan Hull for his assistance in putting the survey online and compiling the results.

As well as this online survey, the Working Group was also joined at one of their meetings by Mr Eddie Hallissey, RB HR Manager, who spoke to the group on the Dignity in Church Life Clergy Permanent Health Insurance Policy and also by Ms Antoinette Doherty from the RB Legal Department who spoke to the group about the complaints procedure currently in place within the Church of Ireland. Mrs Pauline High, Head of Property and Trusts, joined a meeting of the working group in January for a discussion on the benefits and pitfalls of tied housing in relation to tenure.

In order to gain an ‘on the ground’ perspective, the Working Group intends to undertake further consultations with members of the clergy once proposals and recommendations begin to take form.

Future Work

Now that the majority of the consultation process has come to an end, the Working Group to Review Clergy Tenure is beginning to look at what can be done to address the various issues that have been raised over the course of the past year. The group recognises that not all issues regarding clergy tenure can be fixed overnight, or even at all, but fully believes that a number of changes can make a significant impact for the better. Over the coming year, the Working Group will consider what changes it believes are required to be made to the Constitution and the intention is to present its final report to the General Synod of 2026 along with draft legislative proposals with these proposals being put to a vote of the General Synod of 2027.