



## **Irish charities already feeling effects of Brexit**

Ripples can already be felt in the Irish community, charity and voluntary sector following the British vote to exit the European Union in the 23 June referendum.

[Ann Marie Foley](#) writes -This is according to Deirdre Finlay, European Programmes



Coordinator of the Wheel, a representative body for 1,335 organisations in Ireland.

She warned that, “With the adverse effect on trade, people’s income and ability to donate could be negatively impacted, which raises concerns for fundraisers.”

Uncertain currency and share prices, potential recession in the UK are just some of the issues

that might cause UK companies and charities to establish a base in Ireland.

“Already one Northern Ireland-based charity which does extensive programming in the south is investigating the possibility of opening an office in Dublin” she stated.

However, she said it is uncertain if such moves would bring more competition for funding in Ireland or on the other hand the newcomers to the Irish charity sector could bring strength in new ideas, advocacy initiatives and programming.

An immediate concern is border counties and Northern Ireland, where EU funding has enabled cross-border collaboration and programming such as PEACE and Interreg.

Already border county members of The Wheel are unsure whether to apply for funding under the PEACE IV programme.

The potential opportunities for Irish charities post Brexit are more corporate donations from new US and other companies who base themselves in Ireland.

However, if Brexit causes economic uncertainty in Ireland donations may slow down.

Deirdre Finlay points out in her blog published on The Wheel's website that an "obvious direct hit" to the UK charity sector will be an inability to access EU structural funds, should the UK government not establish alternative programmes or allow access to certain EU funding streams.

This is an issue that was raised by Auxiliary Bishop William Kenney of Birmingham before the vote and he said groups such as CAFOD, the overseas aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, and SCIAF, the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund, would lose grants following a Brexit victory.

Representatives of CAFOD and SCIAF did not comment at the time and took a neutral position.

## **Irish Methodist President endorses British Methodist call for respect and tolerance on Brexit**

The President of Methodist Church in Ireland has endorsed the call by the Methodist Church in Britain, for respect and tolerance and to challenge racism and discrimination, in our national life in the wake of the divisive EU referendum campaign.

At this year's Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in Britain, the following resolution was unanimously passed.

In the debate, the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Rev Bill Mullally spoke concerning the possible adverse effect the result of the EU Referendum could have in Northern Ireland, especially in respect of the Peace Process, which has benefited greatly from EU Funding, and also in regard to our future relationship with the Irish Republic who will remain within the EU.

During the Conference discussion the President said: 'I welcome this resolution and would encourage our members where appropriate to contact their Westminster MP on this matter.'

The text of the Resolution is as follows:

The Methodist Conference believes that the British Isles are enriched by diversity and celebrates the contribution made by those who have come from other parts of the world.

The Christian tradition calls for respect, tolerance, love of neighbour and hospitality to the stranger. All bear responsibility of speaking

and acting for healing, reconciliation and mutual respect.

The Methodist Conference abhors and deeply regrets those actions and words which incite hatred and lead to victimisation of groups within society and notes with concern that such actions and words have been normalised in recent public discourse. Believing that racism is a denial of the gospel and that to stay silent when others are abused is to collude with those who seek to promote hatred and division, the Methodist Conference calls:

- . on the Methodist people to challenge racism and discrimination.
- . for a political debate which neither demonises any nor leaves the vulnerable (the foreigner, the immigrant and refugee) in danger of victimisation.
- . on political leaders to work together for the good of the whole community putting the needs of the nation before party politics.
- . on all those in positions of power and authority to hear the voice of those who have been marginalised and alienated to respond to them in ways which offer real hope for the future.

‘I am asking that this statement be sent to MP’s and others in positions of leadership,’ Mr Mullally concluded.

## **Dominicans leave Limerick city after 800 years**

It was truly the end of an era in Limerick this week when the Dominican Order bid farewell to the city after almost 800 years residing there.

However, there was some comfort for the congregation with news that St Saviour’s Church is to remain open and will be served by a number of priests from the diocese of Limerick.

The Dominican order arrived in Limerick city in 1224, setting up a church in 1227, and have been based in Glentworth Street for 200 years.

Addressing the congregation at the final Mass in the city on Sunday last, Fr Francis Downes, prior of the community said, “In times of strength, of weakness and great persecution, we remained steadfast, thanks to the support and generosity of you and your ancestors, the people of Limerick.”

“Our presence in Fish Lane, off Sir Harry’s Mall dated back to 1755 when the Roche family of



Mary Street gave refuge to the friars in their back garden.”

At the end of the Mass, Fr Downes handed the keys to the church to Fr Eamonn Fitzgibbon, representing the diocese of Limerick.

The Order announced its intention to withdraw from Limerick in September of 2014 citing “falling numbers of friars” to staff its commitments as the reason for the withdrawal from a number of locations, including St Saviour’s on Glentworth Street.



The Dominicans also said last year that it was to begin a process of “re-organising our commitments in Ireland”, a move it confirmed would include a withdrawal from Limerick.

Three priests who were based at the Order’s house in the city will now move to other Dominican houses around the country.

In 2015, the Order currently had 125 Dominicans, just 51 of whom are under the age of 65, while some are still in training and not all are in robust health.

The Dominicans plan to concentrate development on other centres in Ireland, resulting in a “process of withdrawing” from a number of locations as well as Limerick, including St Magdalen’s, Drogheda, Leeson Park in Dublin, St Dominic’s, Athy and St Saviour’s, Ballybeg, Waterford.

## **Movilla Abbey community allotment outreach**

An exciting mission project has begun to take shape in the grounds of Movilla Abbey Church,

Newtownards, with the creation of an allotment that will benefit the whole community.



Annette McGrath writes - The church at Movilla Abbey is shared by Methodist and a Church of Ireland congregations, each with its own minister. The idea was birthed in one of Movilla's home-based Life Groups, which meet weekly for fellowship, study, worship and mission together.

“Initially we thought that we could grow vegetables and give them away to people who need them. There are a number of foodbanks in Newtownards but none of them take fresh produce,” said group leader Simon Hodge, “But the more we thought about it the more we

realised that this could be a real community thing.”

Simon brought the idea to his rector, the Revd Alan Peek, and also to the Methodist minister, the Revd Michael Spence.

As a result both congregations have come behind the project with finance, the offer of the church grounds and practical help, including a great contribution from the local Scouts.

“We’ve had endless people offer us greenhouses, cash, gardens and time,” Simon said. “Our plan is to work all the way down to the bottom fence. That’s our vision. We want this to be big. After all, God has given us all this land.”

Meanwhile both church ministers are delighted at the way the idea has been owned and progressed by so many.

“It’s one very visible expression of the new things that God is doing among us right now at Movilla Abbey Church,” Mr Spence commented. “For some time we’ve been encouraging our members to form into Life Groups to pray together, eat together, apply God’s word to our lives together and to serve the local community together. The allotment has grown out of that

very simple vision. There are green shoots all around – metaphorically and now literally as well.”

“This is about Movilla Abbey Church doing mission together,” Mr Peek agrees. “Church of Ireland and Methodists and also the wider church community in terms of the Scouts and the things that go on around the edge of our church. It’s about community.”

## **Cathedral and choral : RSCM choir day at Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin**

The Royal School of Church Music Ireland is holding an event in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, on 27 August 2016. They are inviting all singers to join them for a day of singing with Andrew Reid, Director of the RSCM, using the RSCM’s festival book *With Saintly Shout and Solemn Jubilee*. The day will end with a service at 5pm using music rehearsed during the day.

The event is open to all singers, individuals and choirs alike, affiliates and non affiliates. The cost per person is €20 (music, light lunch and refreshments are included).

The outline for the day is as follows:

[churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

10.30: Registration

11.00: Rehearsal

13.00: Lunch

14.00: Rehearsal

16.30: Break

17.00: Service in cathedral

18.00: Finish and depart

For further details please contact Thérèse Gaughan – [secretary@rscmireland.com](mailto:secretary@rscmireland.com) or call [+353 \(0\)87 762 4380](tel:+3530877624380). Bookings must be completed by Friday 29 July 2016, so that music can be ordered and distributed.

A Facebook link is available here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1698660570393831/>

A link for singers to book tickets for the event is here: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/with-saintly-shout-and-solemn-jubilee-rscm-singing-day-tickets-25773424005?aff=efbevent>

## News briefs

The **annual service at Clonmacnoise** will take place on the traditional date of the 31st of July,

at 4pm. A lead role will be taken by the Meath and Kildare Youth Group, The Conmacnoise Warriors. Bring your hymn books please.

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**Clergy appointments Armagh diocese - Revd William Orr** who is currently Rector of Muckamore, Killead & Gartree in the Diocese of Connor will become Rector of St Mark's Portadown. The Institution Service will be on Thursday 15th September.

**Revd Iain Jamieson** who is presently Curate assistant of Ballymena (Kilconriola) and Ballyclug in the Diocese of Connor will be Instituted as Rector of the Drogheda, Ardee & Kilsaran Unions on Thursday 1st September 2016.

## **Church of England Evangelical Council tries to stall gay marriage**

THE Church of England Evangelical Council (CEEC) has attempted to push back the movement towards greater acceptance of same-sex relationships.

Church Times - On the eve of the Shared Conversations at the General Synod in York this weekend, the Council has issued a Q&A

designed to puncture notions that scripture could be compatible with same-sex relationships.

And, writing in the *Church Times*, the Bishop of Blackburn, the Rt Revd Julian Henderson, argues that the authority of the Bible “must not be superseded by pastoral, anthropological, and missional arguments”.

The Church should not be worried about being at odds with cultural norms, says Bishop Henderson, who is the president of the CEEC. “The Christian community has never been called to popularity,” he writes. “The gospel is an offence because of its call to repentance.”

The CEEC paper, offered as guidance to Evangelicals on General Synod as they “engage in formal/informal discussions which might arise as part of/around the Shared Conversations in York”.

It refers obliquely to a collection of senior Evangelicals whose views about gay relationships were published last month ([News, 24 June](#)). “It is the case that a number of (well-known) individual Evangelicals have changed their convictions regarding sexual ethics in recent years.

“However, the significant issue is not that they have changed their convictions, but whether they have been right to do so. The only way to test this is to compare what they now believe with the teaching of scripture, and it is our conviction that in order to do so they have departed from a classic approach to scripture.”

The CEEC paper also rejects the argument that opposition to same-sex relations damages the Church’s mission. “The never changing vocation of the Church is to be true to the gospel — even if it is counter-cultural, or at odds with the political philosophy of the time.”

The paper also denied any ambivalence in the Bible. “The Bible describes all forms of sexual activity outside opposite sex marriage, whether between people of the opposite sex or people of the same sex, as sinful and to be avoided by God’s people. There is nowhere in scripture which suggests any alternative sexual ethic might be legitimate.”

And it rejects the idea of “good disagreement” or agreeing to disagree with others by citing St Paul, who allowed believers to differ over food but not sexual ethics.

The paper’s one concessionary statement is that the Church “has sometimes been an



environment in which gay and same-sex attracted people have felt they needed to hide their sexuality. This is not healthy, and we welcome the greater openness we now have about sexuality,” it says. “It is also important to note that we are not holding straight married people up as some kind of ideal. Our fallen nature impacts every marriage and all sexuality.”

The Church of England issued its own guide to Synod members taking part in the conversations — *Grace and Dialogue: Shared conversations on difficult issues* — last month ([News, 24 June](#)). It has advice on topics of unity, disagreement, and debate, and suggests that participants should “refuse to give up on anyone, no matter how unpleasant, opinionated, or difficult you find them”.

The CEEC paper in full at -  
<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2016/8-july/news/uk/ceec-tries-to-stall-gay-marriage>

## **Scots Moderator addresses national service on 'deeply personal nature of war'**

A faded photograph and a wartime telegraph were used by the Moderator to illustrate his

address on the deeply personal nature of conflict at the Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh.



***The Moderator and his chaplain Rev David Denniston at the Scottish National War Memorial.***

Rt Rev Dr Russell Barr produced the image of his wife's great uncle, 21 year old David Wyllie in his Black Watch uniform along with the original telegraph sent to his family in East Lothian informing them of his death in France in 1917. He was speaking as guest preacher at the Memorial's annual service of commemoration, which was also attended by HRH the Princess Royal, Princess Anne.

Dr Barr's address was delivered at approximately the same time the Chilcot Inquiry into the British government's decision to go to war in Iraq was reporting its findings on Wednesday morning. Dr Barr said

"The photograph of David Wyllie and the telegraph are poignant reminders that although the 1<sup>st</sup> World War has often been described as carnage on an industrial scale, there was nothing industrial about the terrible news brought by this telegraph to the Heugh farm on the outskirts of North Berwick.

The telegraph also helps me remember that although politicians and commentators will all have their say about the Chilcot report, its publication is very personal for the families of the 179 British service men and women who were killed and the many who were wounded, some with life changing injuries.

It is also very personal for mothers like Rose Gentle whose son Gordon was killed by a road side bomb and who has campaigned with such determination and dignity for the truth of why the war was conducted.

Speaking to people after the service who are used to listening politely to such sermons, they told me the telegraph had caught their attention

and made them listen harder. I find comfort in my faith that the God who knows and loves each one of us always keeps it personal. I hope others touched by conflict regardless of time or context will find that hope and comfort too.”

- [Moderator's address to the Scottish National War Memorial on 6 July 2016](#)

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