

## 1.1. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF MOYROSS

At the time of the Census of Population in April 2011 there were 2,183 people living in Moyross – 1,035 males and 1,148 females. The 2011 population of 2,183 in Moyross is less than half of the population of Moyross in 1992 (when it stood at 4,448). The 2011 population is 34.5% less than the population in 2006 (when it stood at 3,486). This is an incredible rate of out-migration with 1,203 people having left Moyross in the five year period between 2006 and 2011. In any community in Ireland the loss of over a third of its population in a five year period would present major challenges for community spirit, for community cohesion, and for community self-belief and confidence.

A further significant outcome from the 2011 Census of Population is the ageing nature of the population in Moyross. This has implications for projects such as CCM and for other agencies and organisations providing services to local residents. It is clear that from the 1970s (when the first houses were constructed and young families began to move into Moyross) through to the 1990s Moyross had a predominantly young population with well over half of the residents aged under 25. The demographic profile has changed significantly over the last 10-15 year period with the teenagers of the 1980s and 1990s now entering middle age and becoming parents themselves. This pattern is reflected in the figures which have emerged from the 2011 Census of Population.

Age Range	Numbers in Moyross	Percentage of Overall Population
0-15	615	28.2%
16-24	343	15.7%
25-54	822	37.7%
55+	403	18.4%
	2183	

The 2011 Census of Population also indicates the high levels of socio-economic disadvantage within Moyross. In relation to the 11 small Census areas which comprise Moyross there are more people defined as ‘unemployed’ rather than ‘at work’ within each of the 11 small areas. In relation to the population aged 15 and over (1,583 people) a total of 564 (35.6%) are ‘unemployed’, 412 (26.0%) are ‘at work’ and 175 (11.1%) ‘unable to work due to permanent illness or disability’. The remainder of the adult population are students, retired or looking after the home/family. In relation to education the vast majority of adults in Moyross had ceased

their full-time education at age 18 and younger (638 out of 722 responses – 88.4%) and only a relatively small percentage of the population has advanced to third level education (122 out of 1,087 responses – 11.2%)

The outcomes from the 2011 Census of Population also indicate that there is a high proportion of lone parents living in Moyross. In 10 out of the 11 small Census areas within Moyross there are more family units defined as ‘mother and children’ and ‘father and children’ than there are defined as ‘husband, wife and children’. 242 family units are ‘mother and children’ and ‘father and children’ whilst 172 family units are ‘husband, wife and children’ and ‘cohabiting couple and children’. A final interesting figure is the number of households with one person – this is particularly useful for projects like CCM which have a focus on people who may be lonely or socially isolated. The total number of people living by themselves in Moyross is 184/23.6% (out of an overall housing stock of 778).

## **1.2. KEY FEATURES AND ASPECTS OF MOYROSS**

In the course of the evaluation process local residents made many comments about what it is like to live in Moyross. In addition to the statistics which have already been highlighted in this section of the evaluation report it is also considered important to reflect the views of the local population when presenting a profile of Moyross. Key outcomes and issues which emerged from the evaluation interviews and analysis of reports produced about Moyross include the following:

- *Community spirit in Moyross.* A number of the evaluation interviewees commented favourably upon living in Moyross and about community spirit in the area. They said that neighbours look out for each other, they help each other when help is needed and they believe that Moyross is a really good place to live. These interviewees said that the issues around criminality and anti-social behaviour had improved significantly in recent years on account of the greater policing presence in the area and the fact that some of the more prominent troublemakers no longer lived in Moyross.

*‘A lot of us would never leave Moyross even if we were offered a palace in the country’.*

- *Erosion of community cohesion and confidence.* It is also recognised, however, that the last 10 years has been a very difficult time for people living in Moyross. There has been a very serious problem around criminality and gangs, the area has a very poor name and reputation in some quarters and there are major difficulties around unemployment and educational disadvantage. This situation has been exacerbated over the last five years

by the loss of over one third of the population of Moyross (including many strong and capable community leaders and residents). In addition the look and image of Moyross has been blighted by the burnt out and boarded up houses and by the gaps/space left behind after houses have been demolished.

- *Regeneration of Moyross.* Residents in Moyross said that they felt positive about the regeneration process when it began although there was some concern about the need to demolish all existing housing in order to replace them with new houses. In the opinion of many evaluation interviewees the houses had only been built in the last 30-40 years and were of a fairly high quality. There is a recognition locally of the value of the social programmes, the new amenities and the increased policing presence which has been achieved through the regeneration process. At present, however, there is concern and uncertainty about how regeneration will develop over the next few years and whether the original plans will ever be realised

*'I don't want Moyross to be stuck in no-man's land where maintenance works will not take place because all of the houses are going to be demolished and where there is no big money for new houses to be built'*

*'I fear for the future of this area because the longer that people are away the more likely it is that they will make a new life for themselves in another area and not return to Moyross. A lot of good people have left Moyross in recent years and we need them back to help us make Moyross a better place to live for everyone'.*

- *Feelings of neglect and abandonment.* Many of the evaluation interviewees said that they felt neglected and forgotten about because they lived in Moyross. They talked about local authority housing estates being located 'out of the way' at different estates to the north west (i.e. Moyross) and south east (i.e. Southill) of Limerick City. They talked about the fact that there is only one main entrance into Moyross ('*making it into the biggest cul-de-sac in Limerick City*'); that the people who live in other parts of Limerick have no reason to visit Moyross ('*it is not on the road to anywhere and it is only people who live or work in Moyross who come into Moyross*'); and that the condition of Moyross is not visible to the large majority of people who live in Limerick.
- *Services and infrastructure within Moyross.* Local residents recognise the fact that there are considerably more services and supports available now in Moyross than there were 10 and 20 years ago. Many more statutory agencies are located within the area and there

has been a proliferation of community services (which have been led, on many occasions, by Moyross Community Enterprise Centre). There is still a view, however, that Moyross still does not have any main focal point or commercial centre, that it is too dispersed and that it does not yet have the type of infrastructure to support a population of over 2,000 people.

- *Negative aspects of life in Moyross.* A recent report on the regeneration areas of Limerick City referred to negative elements of community life within these areas.<sup>1</sup> These elements, which are not unique to regeneration areas, included bad parenting practices with incidences of younger children and older children misbehaving without any consequences; dangers from traffic including stolen cars, horses and quad bikes; the consumption and sale of drugs; and the issues of feuds, firearms, intimidation and anti-social behaviour. These aspects of community life were mentioned on a number of occasions by evaluation interviewees and it evident that they do present a problem and a concern for many residents and especially for the parents of teenagers and younger children.
- *Insecurity and vulnerability.* Many of the evaluation interviewees in Moyross talked about their own insecurities and about the levels of depression and negative feelings which exist within the Moyross area. There is a particular concern about people who live alone, who are socially isolated and who might not have contact with many other people. There is a view that a lot of people in Moyross may be spending too much time by themselves (it is interesting to note that a quarter of the population live by themselves) and that more opportunities should be presented for befriending and for socialisation through projects such as CCM and other community initiatives within the Moyross area.

*‘There are a lot of really sad and fragile situations in Moyross where families and individuals are suffering but they have not come to the attention of statutory agencies and organisations’*

*‘Parents and carers in regeneration areas are more likely to face multiple problems in the family, including domestic violence, addiction, and family members in prison, as well as more severe financial pressures, including owing money. Some behaviours*

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<sup>1</sup> Report entitled ‘How Are Our Kids’ produced by ICOS Research and Consultancy together with Mary Immaculate College

*(aggression, violence in the home) seem to be normalised on the regeneration estates (i.e. they are not unusual and, as such, not considered particularly to be a problem for those affected)'.*

*'Children in families in regeneration areas are also more likely to experience specific traumas, including separation from parents and bereavement in the family (including the death of young family members such as siblings and uncles). Consequently, children living in the most deprived areas of Limerick are less likely to feel secure, and more likely to be exposed to accidental and intentional harm in the family context compared with an average child population'.*

- Extracts from the 'How Are Our Kids' report.

