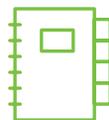


# Irish in Britain



**Annual Report  
2014/2015**





**We  
celebrate**

**We lead**



**We  
champion**



**We  
connect**

**We  
listen**



Our work is made possible through the continued support of our funders to whom we are extremely grateful.

Our primary funder continues to be the Irish Government, through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Emigrant Support Programme.



We are also generously funded by:



**st. stephen's green trust**



Extending our links with business has been a great asset for our organisation and for the wider community, we thank the following for their support:



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*"We're very privileged to have Irish in Britain representing and linking the Irish community and organisations in Britain. The diversity of their activities from political and cultural to social and health ensures that our voice continues to be heard locally and nationally. As a small organisation we are limited in the amount of policy work we can undertake so it is reassuring to know that our views, and that of our partners, will be well represented by the team at Irish in Britain."* Claire Barry | Director of Mind Yourself





## Message from Minister Deenihan



As Ireland's first Minister for Diaspora Affairs, it is my job to work to ensure our connection to our global family remains central to Government policy.

I am particularly pleased to have delivered 'Global Irish: Ireland's Diaspora Policy', in March of this year. Since then work on implementation has continued apace, with the creation of a new Inter-departmental Committee on the Irish Abroad and the convening of the first ever Global Irish Civic Forum. I was delighted to see Irish in Britain, as the umbrella organisation for Irish community groups in Britain, playing a leading role at the Forum.

I want to acknowledge and pay tribute to the members of Irish in Britain — the community groups, organisations, and individuals, many of whom I have met, who have worked hard throughout this past year, and indeed their entire lives, to encourage and promote Irish community support, culture and heritage throughout Britain. As the Minister with responsibility for the Emigrant Support Programme worldwide, I am very appreciative of the work you undertake and proud that the Irish Government has provided more than £68 million in funding to Irish community groups in Britain since 2004.

In line with the Diaspora Policy, and to help people to stay in touch with home and their heritage, we have developed a new resource for the Irish abroad, an online portal available on the Department of Foreign Affairs website ([www.dfa.ie/Global-Irish](http://www.dfa.ie/Global-Irish)), which will provide signposts for Irish people and people of Irish descent and affinity, to information that might be helpful to them in their lives overseas or for those thinking of coming home.

**Minister Jimmy Deenihan T.D.**  
**Minister for Diaspora Affairs**



AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA AGUS TRÁDÁLA NA hÉIREANN  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE OF IRELAND





## Chair / CEO Statement



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mary Tilki'.

Dr Mary Tilki, Chair

Any charity trying to survive in the current climate must ensure it has access to high quality information, support and guidance about best practice in governance and management, planning and review, funding and more. Irish in Britain has worked hard to be the go to organisation for our members to get the support they need to build their sustainability for the future and respond to the changing and enduring needs of our community.

Across all our projects we have sought to bring value to our members. Connecting members to share experiences and learn together, highlighting the work of our members through our extensive communications activities or advocating on behalf of our members to ministers, policy makers and influencers. We are the only national representative organisation for Irish civil society in Britain and we ensure our message reflects that of our members. The launch of the Global Irish Strategy is something to be celebrated and Irish in Britain is pleased to have fed into the consultation leading to its development. Our members represent a sizable element of Ireland's global civil society and we are proud to highlight the value of the work they do. We will continue to do this over the coming years.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jennie McShannon'.

Jennie McShannon, CEO

Nurturing partnerships across our membership, across the Irish community, and across different sectors including the arts, heritage and the wider British social care sector is at the heart of our work and our staff have become vital conduits and connectors in the fast changing environment in which our members are operating. Opportunities have been seized and some really interesting, sustainable and impactful work has emerged from it. Read on to find out more.

We were created by our membership and are supported by the generosity of our funders, donors and supporters. We are especially indebted to the Irish government for their sustained support over many years.

Of course we could also not achieve what we do without our staff whose commitment, passion and energy for our members and our role in the community is the backbone of our organisation.





## Our Year Highlights

Our members reach out to the most vulnerable in their local communities providing a range of support and interventions to improve individual and community inclusion. Supporting and sustaining our members, providing leadership and spearheading campaigns in order to improve the health and well-being of our diverse community is at the centre of all our work.

We recognise that the most pressing issues change and evolve over time and so we have continued to ensure that up to date research and data is available for our members as they adapt and respond to a challenging and fast changing environment.

We are pleased to see growth in our membership and proud to have supported a number of new groups to form and join us who reflect the diversity within the community. They have been joined by more Individual Members who are taking an active role in supporting our goals, bringing new perspectives to our community conversations and enabling us to connect to the community in a new way.

This year we focused on our five core values to underpin our work with members in social care, community services and clubs across Britain, in Westminster at the All Party Parliamentary Group, in the Dáil and Dublin Castle in Ireland and particularly online.

 **We celebrate**

 **We lead**  **We connect**

 **We listen**  **We champion**

## THIS YEAR WE HAVE

Helped **87** member organisations with **164** urgent capacity building interventions.



Welcomed almost **1,700** guests to more than **20** events across **6** British cities.



Published a suite of **7** Irish Census Analysis Reports.

Working in partnership with Dave Oldroyd of 'Emerald Personalised Support' we have supported members with numerous funding applications successfully securing more than **£164,500** of funding so far.



Over **£9,000** secured for Leicester Survivors by Leicester & Leicestershire Irish Forum in partnership with Irish in Britain and Coventry Irish Society.

Increased engagement with our Facebook Community **264%** and with our Twitter followers by **193%** — totaling **29,027** engagements!



Attracted nearly **15,000** people to view more than **72,500** pages on our website.



Connected **16** Advice and Support Workers through our quarterly Forums.





## Financial Statement Year Ended 31 March 2015

**2013/14** Total funds at start of year £285,170 Net Income: £38,185

**2014/15** Total funds at start of year £323,355 Net Income: £ (632)

### WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM

**£IN**  
TOTAL  
**525,283**



### HOW WE SPENT IT



**£OUT**  
TOTAL  
**525,915**

The summary financial information above has been extracted from the full audited financial statements which can be obtained from the charity office.  
Trustees: Dr Mary Tilki (Chair), Declan Carroll (Treasurer), Danny Maher (Secretary), Paul O'Donovan, Dermot Lappin, Pauline Roche, retired Oct 2014 Bill Dee, retired Oct 2014 Sheila Large, retired Oct 2014 Mary Spillane, John Nolan, Patrick Morrison, Luke Donovan, Patrick Harte and Tom FitzGerald appointed Oct 2014 John McCarthy and Séin Ó Muineacháin co-opted Oct 2014



## Building the Sustainability of Irish organisations

Support for strategic planning, improved governance, better access to funding, and improving quality are all ways in which we have built the capacity of our members. We promoted the critical work that many of our members do, ensuring that the often unacknowledged benefit that they bring to local communities across Britain is better recognised.

We conducted extensive research into our club members and proactively identified core operating challenges. We have used these results to establish an effective National Clubs Forum that has opened up opportunities for clubs to work together to strengthen their future sustainability.

Facilitating members to come together to share best practice, new ideas and generate peer to peer support has proved to be a successful way to support innovation and sustainability.

*“The professional support and guidance received from Irish in Britain over the past two years has enabled Lewisham Irish Community Care to get through a very difficult period and grow from strength to strength. Irish in Britain have supported us at every level from business planning, capacity building to one to one mentoring and support.”*

Kathleen Sheridan | Director at Lewisham Irish Community Care Centre

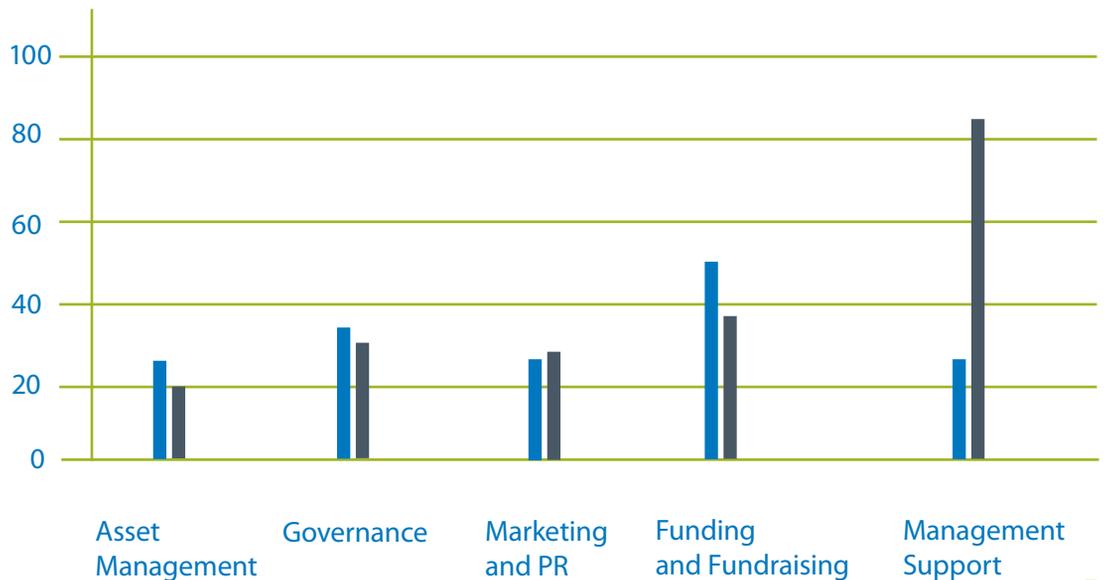
*“BIAS was really pleased to be able access marketing expertise from Irish in Britain on how best to present, design and deliver our AGM report to maximum effect.”*

Mike McGing | Director at Brent Irish Advisory Service (BIAS)

## Support for our Member Organisations

# 365

 Urgent Capacity Building Interventions  
 Scheduled Interventions





Building the Sustainability of Irish organisations

The impact of our capacity building work is clear for our members, it means:

Improved  
governance.

Better financial  
and  
asset management.

Enhanced internal  
management systems.

Increased awareness  
of quality assurance mechanisms.

Improved relationships with local  
statutory health and social care services.

Better access to commissioning and  
funding to support long term sustainability.



**Irish  
in Britain**





## Projects and Campaigns for Irish in Britain

Our campaigns generate community-wide awareness and debate on various issues of concern. We have been able to successfully work with the national community press, social media, business and professional networks and a wide spectrum of partners across civil society to increase engagement in our key campaigns.



### **CUIMHNE** **Irish Memory Loss Alliance**

We continue to deliver dementia awareness training and campaign for the rights of Irish people to have culturally sensitive care when memory loss is a problem.

Cuimhne has continued to bring many opportunities to strengthen community action towards improved health and well-being through cross community collaboration. In Coventry, an innovative partnership with St. Finbarr's has led to the creation of an annual sports event for older people. Supported by a number of Irish businesses and local health promotion agencies, this event uses cultural initiatives to engage older people over 55 in activities to promote cardio-vascular health.

In Brent, we have been facilitating a whole community response based on the Cuimhne model to enable the borough to become dementia friendly and inclusive of people with memory loss. We participate in a pan-London alliance of BAME communities raising awareness of need and lobbying for investment in grassroots organisations to provide culturally competent support and accessible information for people living with dementia.



### **Ireland Inspires** **Our Cultural Work**

Our cultural work continues to provide an essential and proven route to high quality engagement with our community across Britain, from small scale projects like our 'Healthy Eating for Healthy Memories' Project in London, to complex and multi-partnered work on the Irish experience in Birmingham. We have successfully gained funding and have delivered creative projects to Irish people of all ages which benefits wellbeing and enhances our community in ways that are often not possible through more typical community support services.

Supporting our day-to-day projects, we have focused on developing strong relationships with key cultural policy partners including Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery. These allow us to expand our role to lobby and work on behalf of our community. In doing so we develop better opportunities, better access and ultimately better cultural outcomes for all of the Irish in Britain.



### **Diaspora Voice** **Listening To The Community**

Our Diaspora Voice campaign has been an effective mechanism to inspire community engagement with the Irish Government's 'Global Ireland Strategy', the RTÉ Longwave campaign, preparation for the Civic Forum and generating debate on the on the Marriage Equality referendum. Our RTÉ Longwave campaign directly engaged with a wide section of the community as our petition attracted more than 4,500 signatures which helped convince RTÉ of the need to consult further with the community the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to fund research into its importance.





## Projects and Campaigns for Irish in Britain



image ©gavinfreeborn

*“The passion of Irish in Britain and their determination to address dementia in the Irish, Gypsy / Travellers and all BAME communities is praiseworthy. The Cuimhne strategy as a whole community approach, delivering training and raising awareness across the community is a model to be highly commended”*

Ian Sheriff | Academic Partnership Lead for Dementia at Plymouth University Peninsula Schools of Medicine & Dentistry | Chair of the Prime Ministers Rural Dementia Friendly Task and Finish group

*“Working with Irish in Britain over the last year has been very productive and a real pleasure. Irish in Britain worked with us and the local community to begin some difficult conversations and we are now working in ways that were not previously possible. By sharing our interests in community history and education, we are bringing together new communities of learning in the city.”* Gavin Schaffer | Director of Graduate Studies at the University of Birmingham





## Connecting Irish in Britain

As the keystone of the community, we are the central conduit connecting the varied experiences of the Irish community across Britain.



### Communication Channels

We have actively strengthened our channels of communication this year enabling us to share news from our members and promote opportunities for more than 3,000 readers of our eNews bulletin every six weeks.

Our Magazine has increased its circulation to more than 5,000 readers, while our online communities across Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter have grown to more than 10,000 connections. Our varied events programme has allowed us to connect with almost 1,700 people attending one of our 20 events across six British cities. Our projects and campaigns inspire Irish people to learn more about our work, get involved and join us as members. We connect Irish people of all generations and from all backgrounds drawing on their ideas, energy and diverse skills and experiences to enhance our work and that of our members.



### Policy and Partnerships

Our policy work has ensured that our members are up to date with changes in health, cultural and social policy through regular policy e-bulletins.

Our regular advisory forums are opportunities for members to share best practice in responding to policy changes and community need. Partnerships with the NHS, collaborations across other minority ethnic groups to build successful social enterprises and changes to the Care Quality Commission inspections were just some of the issues explored. As a result members have pooled and replicated ideas on building their local response to the current environment.



### Development Work

Advice and Support workers from sixteen organisations gathered each quarter to share best practice, avail of free training and connect to others in similar positions. Our recently formed Clubs Forum is building a collaborative network to empower clubs across Britain to address the needs identified in our national survey which was completed last year. Facilitated by Irish in Britain, a group for Irish Survivors now meets monthly at the Emerald Centre in Leicester, helping to overcome isolation and build friendships with people with similar backgrounds and childhood experiences.

As well as the clubs and other forums, we have sustained a number of peer support groups which share best practice and innovation and genuine support with problem solving.





## Connecting Irish in Britain



*"The recent good work of Irish in Britain in co-ordinating diaspora opinions in advance of the Global Irish Civic Forum; taking an active part in the Forum and then feeding back the outcomes, illustrates the effectiveness of Irish in Britain. Many of these outcomes can now feed into the Global Irish Economic Forum in November and a key challenge will be to evolve ways in which diaspora in the business world can work more closely with the many community organisations for the betterment of all. The representation and campaigning work that Irish in Britain undertake, in addition to their co-ordination and support for so many organisations across the country, is to be highly commended."*

Andy Rogers KSG KMCO PDSA

*"My experience as an individual member of the Irish in Britain charity has been deeply enriching and very rewarding. As someone who works in business, this charity has offered many opportunities to network with the Irish diaspora, civic organisations and charities I wouldn't normally encounter in my daily life. The breath of issues and concerns handled on a daily basis is remarkable and it's run by a dedicated team of people who give us all an important voice here in Britain."*

Conrad Bryan | Individual Member





## Representing Irish in Britain

It's a challenge to ensure the Irish dimension is included in government policy. We are pleased to have had many successes but it is an ongoing issue, which we continue to address. Throughout the year we have undertaken much needed representation of the Irish voluntary and community sector in Britain to those who make and influence policy.



### Representing Dementia

Over the last year we have made extensive representation to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Dementia to challenge lack of diversity in Government responses to memory loss in Irish and other BAME communities. We have also engaged directly with Public Health England (PHE) and regularly represent Irish needs on Prime Minister David Cameron's two advisory groups for dementia friendly communities, the Voluntary Sector and Civil Society Group and the Rural Task Force.

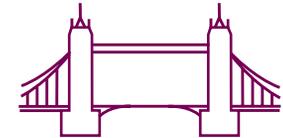


### Representing Our Community in Ireland

We have worked with Ministers and Government Departments in Ireland to promote the role of our members in meeting the needs of the community.

We presented the health inequalities faced by the Irish community in Britain to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children. We also presented to the Oireachtas Committee on European Affairs and contributed to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Diaspora policy review.

As the year ended we were delighted to see the announcement of the Global Irish Civic Forum, which we were subsequently a part of.



### Representing Our Community in Britain

Irish in Britain provides the Secretariat to the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Irish in Britain which has established a substantial base of cross party engagement in Irish issues.

Some of the ways in which we engaged civil society in consolidating British Irish relations and improving the experiences of Irish people living in Britain included; celebrating the state visit of the Irish President, the centenary of the Home Rule Act and the laying of a wreath on behalf of the Irish community in Britain at Ypres to mark the Irish who died in WW1 as part of the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly.





## Representing Irish in Britain



*"I have been particularly impressed with Irish in Britain's performance this year as the conduit organisation for the Irish community here in Britain. The range of involvement it generates and facilitates amongst community groups is very impressive, but its ability to connect with policy makers and government officials both in Britain and Ireland with inclusion in events such as the Global Irish Civic Forum, the historic visit by Queen Elizabeth II to Ireland and the Presidential visit to Britain by Michael D. Higgins shows how well-regarded and connected it has become."*

Ant Hanlon | Chief Executive at Leeds Irish Health & Homes

*"The Irish Heritage Foundation benefits from being a member as it is important to have the issues of the Irish living in Scotland being discussed at Westminster level and this is more relevant now with the change in the makeup of the benches within the Westminster parliament. We also look forward to working with Irish in Britain as it expands its work in Scotland."*

Isabelle Grey | Development Manager at Irish Heritage Foundation





## Understanding Irish in Britain

Our members and the wider community inform our policy position so we can accurately advocate for our sector. It is important that members have high quality information to evidence the need for their services. Our clubs research is typical of the ongoing needs analysis that we have undertaken.



### Research

During 2013 - 2014 we completed and launched a comprehensive suite of free census analysis reports so that our members and wider civic society might better understand our community through the snapshot that the 2011 census provided.

We also released a useful piece of research on the experiences and expectations of Irish teachers in Britain, which has since seeded a new Irish Teachers Network — this was a key finding in the report.

*"We have found Irish in Britain's recent initiative to support clubs incredibly helpful. Coming together with other clubs has been of really beneficial to us. Great leadership by Irish in Britain."*

*Rosalie Carleton | Chair of Milton Keynes Irish Centre*



### Community

Our early investigations into the needs of more recent arrivals gave accurate assessments of the challenges they face (Fresh Perspectives, LIC/Irish in Britain 2013) and members have been able to use this to evidence their own funding applications.

To assist our members who provide essential culturally sensitive services under difficult circumstances, we continued to foster collaborative relationships across the social care sector; building partnerships, sharing best practice, encouraging joint fundraising and purchasing along with developing and identifying funding for new services. The Irish Support Partnership and the Leicester Survivors Group are particularly strong examples of this.



### Monitoring

Irish in Britain seeks regular feedback from our members for all areas of our work and our members report a very positive experience with tangible benefits from their membership and our support.

Participation and inclusion are at the heart of all that we do. This means we must know and understand what our existing and potential members want from their membership; and to what degree we have achieved this. We have in place robust qualitative and quantitative monitoring and evaluation systems and are pleased to have the Charity Evaluation Services PQASSO Award level 2.





## Understanding Irish in Britain



*"Irish Community Care Merseyside has found the report 'BAME Third Sector Marginalised and Exploited' by Mary Tilki, Irish in Britain Chair, an excellent resource document to back up our challenges locally to the current contracting culture. We have used it in our discussions with Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Groups and local authorities. In the report authors highlight how small BAME organisations like ourselves who do excellent work and achieve great outcomes for very little investment are marginalised by the current trend of public bodies of commissioning generic services and tying up funding for 3 – 5 years in this process. We are unequal partners in the tendering process, which means we have very few opportunities to secure funding to sustain vital community services."*

*Breege McDaid | Director of Irish Community Care Merseyside*

*"As a frontline welfare agency we are well aware of the increasing demand for our support and advice services from Irish people here in NW London. The undercount of the Irish in official government statistics was unhelpful as it didn't truly reflect the numbers of Irish people in the country or the level of social and welfare needs. Now, through the excellent and very professional analysis Irish in Britain has provided us with clear and current statistical information which we are using to plan service provision for the coming years. This is the kind of excellent service we expect from a membership organisation."*

*Danny Maher | Chief Executive of Ashford Place Foundation*





## Get Involved

# Irish in Britain



Irish in Britain prides itself on being of and for the community; we are the keystone that links together the sometimes disparate worlds of culture, sport, community, business and policy. We achieve this by bringing people from these strands of the community together and we invite you to join us and get involved.

Our organisation is made up of members across Britain and our members are central to our organisation. They are a diverse combination of cultural organisations and festivals; social and sporting clubs; business networks; care providers; campaigners and individuals like you who kindly support our work through their Individual Membership.



Of course membership is just one facet of getting involved. We are always looking for volunteers for our projects and keep a register of those who wish to give their time to Irish in Britain or our members.

Our Community Members often come to us to recruit board members and you can pre-register your interest with us by joining our Trustee database.

We particularly welcome those who wish to help with fundraising for vital services and campaigns. If you are intending on taking on a personal challenge and want to raise money and awareness on behalf of the most vulnerable in our community, please speak to us to see how we can support you.

**Log on to [irishinbritain.org/get-involved](http://irishinbritain.org/get-involved)**

**If you want to support our work you can do so simply by sending a text message: Text IINB17 £5 to 70070 to donate to Irish in Britain to help fund our projects and make a difference today.**



Increasingly the community is getting involved online — contributing to vibrant discussions on our Facebook page, sharing stories through our Twitter and posting notices on our LinkedIn group.

The community is changing and we are changing with it.

### Join in the conversation:



**Twitter: @irishinbritain**



**Facebook: Irish in Britain (page)**



**LinkedIn: Irish in Britain (group)**

**Text  
IINB17 £5  
to 70070**





## Our Community Members

*"Irish in Britain has been incredibly supportive of our group. As a new group, Irish in Britain helped us navigate some obstacles and have been invaluable in assisting us"* Dr Joseph Healy | Secretary of the London Irish LGBT Network

Annitsford Irish History Society	IDL Brian Boru Branch	Mansfield and Dukeries Irish Association
Ashford Place	IDL Club Haslingden	Milton Keynes Irish Centre
Aylesbury & District Irish Association	Immigrant Counselling & Psychotherapy (ICAP)	Milton Keynes Irish Society
Basingstoke Irish Society	Innisfree Housing Association	Mind Yourself
Batley Irish Democratic League Club	Institute Of Irish Studies	Momentum Care Services
Birmingham Irish Association	Irish Association Social Club	NOAH Enterprise
Birmingham Irish Heritage Group	Irish Chaplaincy	North Herts Irish Association
Birmingham St Patrick's Festival	Irish Community Care Manchester	North Wales Irish Society
Bolton Irish Community Association	Irish Community Care Merseyside	Northampton Irish Support Group
Bradford Irish Club	Irish Community Services	Nottingham Irish Studies Group
Brent Irish Advisory Service	Irish Elderly Advice Network (IEAN)	Oxford Irish Society
Bristol Irish Society	Irish Heritage	Pendle & District Irish Society
Causeway Irish Housing Association	Irish Heritage Foundation	Police Emerald Society GB
Celtic & Irish Cultural Society	Irish Literary Society	Portsmouth Irish Society
Coláiste Na nGael	Irish Network Stevenage	Reading and District Irish Association
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann	Irish Pensioners Forum – East London	Rotherham Irish Society
Conradh Na Gaeilge Glaschu	Irish Tuesday Club Liverpool	Safe Home Ireland
Console	Irish World Heritage Centre	Safe Start Foundation
Corby Irish Centre	Jersey Irish Society	Sandwell Irish Community Association
Council of Irish County Associations (London)	Kilburn Irish Pensioners	Sandwell Irish Society
Council of Irish County Associations (Manchester)	Lancashire Federation of IDL Clubs	SanKTus Welfare Project
Coventry Irish Society	Leeds Irish Centre	Sapphire Independent Housing
Derby Irish Association	Leeds Irish Health & Homes	Sheffield Irish Association
Dewsbury Irish National League Club	Leeds St Patrick's Day Parade	SIFA Fireside
Doncaster Irish Association	Leicester & Leicestershire Irish Forum	South London Irish Association
Emerald Social Club	Leicester Irish Society	South of Tyne Irish Society
Felling Irish Association	Lewisham Irish Community Care Centre	Southwark Irish Pensioners Project
Fianna Phadraig Pipe Band	Lewisham Irish Pensioners	St Albans Irish Association
Fifth Province Productions CIC	Liverpool Irish Festival	St Michael's Irish Centre
GAA Provincial Council	London Irish Centre	The Irish Club, Warrington
Gloucester & District Irish Society Ltd	London Irish Lawyers Association	The Traveller Movement
Golden Shamrock Club	London Irish LGBT Network	Tyneside Irish Centre
Green Curtain	London Irish Network	Tyneside Irish Cultural Society
Halifax & District Irish Society	Luton Irish Forum	West Hampstead Women's Centre
Haringey Irish Association	Manchester Irish Festival	Woking and District Irish Association
Haringey Irish Cultural & Community Centre	Manchester Irish Language Group	

### **Vision**

Our vision is a confident, healthy and empowered Irish community recognised and valued as part of an inclusive British Society.

### **Mission**

Our mission is to be the representative voice providing leadership, campaigning and support to the Irish community in Britain.

**[irishinbritain.org](http://irishinbritain.org)**

