

CAMPAIGNING
OPPORTUNITIES
MEMBERS
PUBLIC
HERITAGE
ORGANISATIONS
PARTNERSHIP
BUSINESS
ENGAGEMENT
FUNDING
DELIVERY
CELEBRATING
ISSUES
FEDERATION
WORKSHOPS
GROUPS

It's been an amazing year...

IRISH

Federation of Irish Societies
Annual Report 2011-12

CHALLENGES
VITAL
CULTURE
BRITAIN
SUPPORT
MEMBERS
REPRESENTATION
SOCIETIES
ACROSS
COMMUNITIES
OLD ORGANISATIONS
YOUNG
PLANNING

NET
GO
HELP
CONTRIBUTION
DR

We have been...

...LISTENING
CAMPAIGNING
REPRESENTING
CELEBRATING
SUPPORTING
DELIVERING...

...to make a difference for the
Irish community in Britain

**Thank you for supporting us
to make this happen**

A special thanks to our funders:



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



LOTTERY FUNDED



and to our Corporate Supporter:

HA

HIBERNIAN ASSOCIATES
Legal advice you can trust.

**Additional thanks to the All Party Parliamentary Group
on the Irish in Britain, the Embassy of Ireland
and the support of the Irish media.**

Message from the
Tánaiste & Minister
for Foreign Affairs
and Trade

**MR. EAMON
GILMORE T.D.**

to the Federation of
Irish Societies Annual
Meeting 2012



“I am very pleased to express my support for the work done by the Federation of Irish Societies and its affiliates over the past 12 months. I want to place on record the Government’s deep appreciation for the work all of you do. Your work continues to make a real and tangible difference to the quality of life experienced by many thousands of members of the Irish community in Britain and deserves the gratitude of all Irish people.

Recent immigration from Ireland has added a new dynamic to the Irish community in Britain and, as is the case with earlier emigrants, the Government is committed to engaging with these new arrivals to these shores. I know that the established Irish community will make these new emigrants welcome, not just as users of Irish clubs and organisations and networks, but also by encouraging them to become agents in shaping the future direction of the Irish community in Britain.

The Government is facing significant budgetary pressures. However, it remains committed to supporting the work of Irish organisations in Britain, particularly those providing frontline services to the elderly, vulnerable and marginalised. The organisations can maximise the effectiveness of the assistance they are providing by developing partnerships and collaborations as a means of enhancing services and demonstrating that Emigrant Support Programme funding is used to the very best effect. The Federation is well placed to advise organisations on how best to achieve this.

Finally I would like to congratulate the Board and staff of the Federation of Irish Societies and all of its members on your achievements and I wish the Federation and its affiliates all the best for the year ahead.”

Chair & CEO

STATEMENT

As the only national representative Irish organisation in Britain we provide leadership, campaigning and support to the Irish community. We work with Members, partners in government, business, the arts and the third sector to share, innovate, inspire and create a network to promote growth and well-being within our community, in which all the Irish in Britain can participate.

LOOKING BACK OVER 2011–12



Dr Mary Tilki
Chair

We have developed many strands of work over the year; celebrating our culture through 'Ireland Inspires', tackling health awareness through our Cancer campaign and building a portfolio of information and research about the community. We have been the first port of call for almost 100 organisations and groups seeking support and advice as they struggle in challenging economic circumstances.



Jennie McShannon
CEO

We are a growing political voice in parliament. Working in partnership with the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Irish in Britain and the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly we have initiated various policy discussions with government departments. The Federation of Irish Societies were honoured to represent the Irish in Britain during the historic visit to Ireland by the Queen. A visit defined by gestures which symbolise a modern relationship between Britain and Ireland based on friendship and respect.

Above all we have aimed to be a dynamic and collaborative agent of change within the community.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2012–13

Our focus in the coming year will be:

- A national Irish community dementia strategy with relevant partners
- Concentrated funding, development and planning support to Members
- Continued celebration of and support for Irish culture in Britain
- Delivery of a major research project on the Irish in Britain.



Photo: Gavin Freeborn

CONNECTING

the Irish in Britain

Our Members really value the role of the Federation of Irish Societies in sustaining a vibrant network of Irish community organisations such as Irish clubs, societies, support services and cultural groups.

OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR

- We enhanced the network with **improved events tailored to Members and special programmes** to get the Membership together to discuss shared experiences and opportunities.
- We **delivered forums, learning and discussion groups for 150 people** ranging from advice workers, leading social care providers, clubs and community centres, to artists and musicians.
- Our 'Made in Ireland' Conference was the **first national Irish Arts conference** bringing together 85 community cultural organisations and individual practitioners to look at the contribution of Irish arts and culture to Britain and explore how FIS can support the Irish cultural sector.
- We saw a **50% increase in our followers on facebook and twitter** extending the reach and awareness of our work and the work of our Members across the community.
- **Over 10,000 individuals engaged with FIS** campaigns, research and Irish events as supporters and volunteers in 2011–12.
- A partnership with the **GAA British Provincial Council** has been an exciting new development with FIS promoting competitions nationally and regionally through our online networks and the GAA supporting our community campaigns around health, well-being and community engagement.

Members tell us that by being better connected with each other they are learning about best practice in supporting the Irish community and making positive changes and developments to their local service — making a difference for the Irish community in Britain.

OUR YEAR

in highlights

“We’ve been very impressed with the way in which FIS has raised the profile of the Irish community’s needs over the past year. The important work in identifying gaps in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the development of the national consortia group for working together and the historic Alternative Perspectives conference have all shown that FIS’s vision for the future remains strong and committed to the inclusion of ALL Irish people in British society.”

Ant Hanlon, CEO, Leeds Irish Health and Homes



“The recent publications are excellent, what a resource for members!”

Breege McDaid, Director, Irish Community Care Merseyside

“It was great to attend your lively and well organised conference in Camden. I came away with a much better sense of the range of activity in Irish Arts in the UK; a great list of contacts and an awareness of a committed and creative bunch of potential collaborators. We look forward to forging new partnerships.”

Sunniva O’Flynn, Curator, Irish Film Institute

“Without the Federation of Irish Societies, I do not believe the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Irish in Britain could have got off the ground, let alone establish a thriving cross-party membership. FIS has kept Members of Parliament informed about issues of concern to our Irish constituents and helps us stay abreast on Irish affairs, north and south. Your staff are a fantastic advert for the Irish community and keep us on our toes!”

Chris Ruane MP, Chair, APPG Irish in Britain

“FIS have greatly improved the range of services offered and delivered over the past two years with limited resources. FIS are also recognising and valuing the excellent practice within our sector and promoting this as a valuable resource. Long may it continue!”

**FIS Members Survey,
July, 2012**

“Many British families have members who live in this country, as many Irish families have close relatives in the United Kingdom. ...These ties of family, friendship and affection are our most precious resource. They are the lifeblood of the partnership across these islands, a golden thread that runs through all our joint successes so far, and all we will go on to achieve.”

**Queen Elizabeth II on her
state visit to Ireland**

Ireland Inspires – the launch of a cultural strategy for the next

4 years

100

MPs signed up to the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Irish in Britain

116

Irish Member organisations

350

interventions ensuring that 85 Irish organisations across Britain are more sustainable

10,000

individuals directly engaged with FIS campaigns, research and events

50,000

Health supplements raising awareness about Cancer in the Irish community distributed



We're inspired, are you?

Building the **SUSTAINABILITY** of Irish organisations

The sustainability of Irish support services is critical to ensuring the most vulnerable in the community receive the support they need. Irish clubs, centres and societies provide an essential place for the community to celebrate their culture and nurture their well-being. Our team offers dedicated one-to-one support to Members to enable them to manage for today and plan for the future.

OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR

350 interventions over the year have ensured that 85 Irish organisations across Britain are more sustainable, with better governance and more effective planning and management of assets.

We have:

- Co-ordinated regular **collaborative working meetings** for 38 organisations.
- Provided regular briefings on funding and training opportunities. **20% of our Members have seen their funding improve through direct fundraising support.**
- **Given in-depth support to more than 20 Irish centres and clubs** to help them better manage their assets and make potential savings.
- **Assisted 41 organisations on strategic business planning** - including options appraisals, planning days for committees and staff, and advising on and supporting funding bids.
- **Trained 19 welfare organisations in 'Self-Directed Care Services'** to enable them to access new income streams for their ongoing services to vulnerable Irish people.
- Provided specialist marketing and communications advice which has seen over **20 organisations increase their visibility within the community.**
- **Nine organisations** are now formally recognised as companies or charities.



Image: NCAT

“With the advice of the FIS Club’s Officer we have managed to save £21,000 across expenditure over the year....We have derived consistent support from him over the past several years and his knowledge of practices has been very helpful.”

Tony Corcoran,
Secretary, Tyneside Irish Centre

CAMPAIGNING

for the Irish in Britain

Campaigns on culture and health have been a key focus for us this year.

OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR – CULTURE

In November 2011, FIS launched the 'Ireland Inspires' campaign, a national platform for the promotion and development of the Irish contribution to the wider British cultural landscape. This year we have:

- **Engaged with over 160 individual artists** to raise awareness of their work and advise on funding and how to develop their projects.
- Delivered the **first national conference for Irish arts in Britain** - attracting over 85 delegates including key funders such as Arts Council England.
- Launched the **Ireland Inspires website: www.irelandinspires.me.uk**
- Supported the GAA British Provincial Council via the APPG to **address Gaelic Games being excluded** from the official list of school sports in recent changes to legislation.
- Played a key role on the **Irish Community London Olympics Planning Committee**.
- **Provided organisational development advice to over 15 arts, sports and heritage organisations.**

Ireland
Inspires
Me.....

OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR – HEALTH

We have continued to run health campaigns to raise awareness in the community.

- **Over 150 Irish individuals attended four events during Ethnic Minority Cancer Awareness Week** to listen to Cancer experts and get more information
- With the support of the National Cancer Action Team we published a magazine aiming to improve awareness of Cancer amongst the Irish community. **Over 50,000 have been distributed to date.**



Photo: Louise Jefferson

UNDERSTANDING the Irish community

The Federation of Irish Societies continues to be the central source of intelligence on the emerging and continuing needs within the Irish community.

OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR

- We have **conducted and supported five research projects over 2011–12 exploring issues facing the Irish in Britain at both a national and local level.** This includes research on Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and material deprivation amongst older Irish people by the FIS policy team, as well as a partnership with London Irish Centre to review the continuing and emerging needs of the Irish pan-London.
- National material deprivation figures show 11% of older people can be classed as deprived. **Evidence gathered by FIS shows that at least twice as many older Irish people could be described as deprived.** This will inform our future support and policy strategies for the older Irish population in Britain.
- Over the year we have also **collated an anthology of 240 academic and community research reports, articles, and multi-media resources** available to our Members and of value to researchers, students, and external agencies needing to know more about the Irish community.
- Our work ensures a substantial portfolio of current and relevant evidence and research on the community **enables Irish organisations to adapt their services or initiate new services to meet unmet need.** It also is critical to Members seeking to evidence the needs of local Irish people and secure funding to run vital services.

Case study:

Local Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) across each health area in the UK are the main way to ensure that local communities are appropriately assessed and their needs included in service planning. Over the year, FIS investigated the inclusion of Irish and Irish Travellers in 51 JSNAs across Britain. Our Members have been able to use this research as the basis for discussion with local government about more explicit inclusion of identified Irish needs. Over the coming year further work in this area will be undertaken.



Photo: Malcolm McNally

REPRESENTING

the Irish in Britain

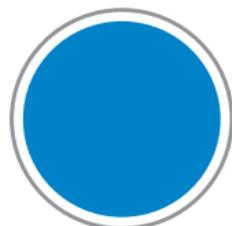
The Federation of Irish Societies is the only national representative organisation in Britain raising the profile of the Irish community across Britain: our strengths, needs and aspirations.

Our policy work draws on the intelligence we receive from our Members about the real issues facing the most vulnerable to inform and direct our work. We also aim to promote the self-confidence and standing of the community by developing and pursuing a programme of advocacy and engagement with political institutions.

OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR

- We supported the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) to secure the **first parliamentary debate on the Irish in Britain which took place in April 2011**. MPs highlighted the significant contribution of Irish people to British life but raised issues of real concern for the community: the plight of older more vulnerable Irish people, particularly those with dementia and Traveller health and housing.
- We played a **vital role** in the campaign to 'Save The Irish Post' and supported the Irish Cultural Centre in Hammersmith via our engagement with the APPG.
- Following a dynamic and engaging Census campaign 'How Irish Are you?' we have continued to **work with the Office of National Statistics to ensure the Irish ethnicity figures are comprehensively presented** when released next year. We will lead distribution of further analysis to key statutory agencies and Irish groups working in Britain.
- We **submitted responses to national government departments** on policies which will affect or support the Irish in Britain. FIS has kept alert to NHS, benefit and social care changes and made local and national representation of the impact on the most vulnerable Irish.

£546,987



Incoming resources from charitable activities

WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM

TOTAL: £592,240

£25,891



Voluntary income

£16,050



Activities for generating funds

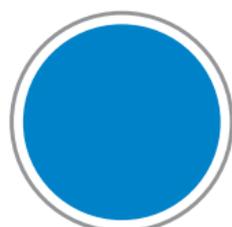
£3,312



Investment income

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2012

Staff costs



£343,496

Other charitable activities



£181,067

Travel and accommodation



£22,216

Governance costs



£12,670

TOTAL: £559,449

HOW OUR MONEY IS SPENT

TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

£185

DEBTORS

£20,314

CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

£524,388

CREDITORS: AMOUNT FALLING DUE IN ONE YEAR

£294,140

TOTAL FUNDS AT START OF YEAR

NET INCOME

2011

£148,155

£53,841

2012

£201,996

£32,791

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, Bill Dee, Sheila Large, Mary Spillane, Kevin Meagher (resigned 25/10/11), Claire Hoey (co-opted (01/11/11), Michael Snee (RIP March 2012)

A special thank you to all staff this year for their hard work — making a difference for the Irish community in Britain.

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