

Irish Support and Advice Service

serving the Irish Community

Annual Report
2004-2005

A Review of the Year - Managers Report

The Irish Support and Advice Service (ISAS) has been through a difficult period of change with a number of Management Committee members, staff and volunteers have now moved on. ISAS like most voluntary agencies experienced cash flow difficulties and local authority grant cut backs had a major impact on service delivery of the organisation.

ISAS is currently in negotiation with Hammersmith and Fulham Council on how best to achieve funding to support the Irish community.

Review and Assessment of the service

A new manager was appointed to the service November 2003 and a review and assessment of service provision in relation to staff, finances and client needs has been completed. A number of identified organisational changes to the service, including making necessary adjustments to staffing levels in addition to a significant reduction in operational costs have been implemented.

It has been a difficult time for the service with a number of equally urgent competing priorities and limited staff and financial resources available. The service continues to attract an average of between five and ten client visits per day and referrals are by word of mouth. The service continues to generate clients with limited external advertising and networking. The census and deprivation details for LBHF confirm that many members of the Irish Community live in areas of deprivation within the borough. They have the highest identified needs within the ethnic minorities within the borough. It is the experience of ISAS that the client group is predominantly aged fifty plus and one in three clients are male. They are reluctant to engage with mainstream services and are often isolated.

Irish Support and Advice Service continue to operate to agreed standards of service delivery and retain accreditation by Legal Services Commission.

Business Plan and Funding Strategy

The three-year business plan has been completed and the funding strategy has been implemented. ISAS would like to develop an additional range of services to meet those currently unmet, which are also not being addressed by LBHF. These additional services will only be developed when we have secured appropriate funding.

- Elders Outreach Service
- Elders Community group

Partnerships

ISAS has strong links with Advice U.K, VSRA and the London Irish Centre. We are currently working with the Federation of Irish Societies who are providing support, consultation and assistance in developing capacity building programme.

Client Visits and Outcomes

There were over 1300 client visits in 2004. The enquiries concerned a range of problems. Welfare, Housing and finance were the major problem areas for our clients. It is the experience of ISAS that the majority of clients using the service are aged 50 + and the ratio is excess of three male to one female in clients. It is also clear that a large percentage of these clients are single people without family or support networks. This reflects the predominantly male migration patterns of the past for employment in particular industries such construction.

From our experience there are an increasing number of elderly Irish people who are isolated and are reluctant to engage in mainstream. There is a real need to assist clients in maximising benefit entitlement, advice on housing, accessing social service provision and specialist Irish advice matters. The Irish Community is one of the largest ethnic groups in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

Direct Outcomes

Specialist Irish advice services

- Emergency repatriation to Ireland -12 persons –homeless with the return fare.
- Assisted 4 client in receiving offer of accommodation in Ireland (via Safe home programme and other organisation)
- Irish Pension in excess of £25,000 back dated.
- Identification –assisted 123 clients with birth/passport applications
- Referred two clients to healthy living scheme

Local Authority accommodation

- Secured emergency accommodation for five persons with priority need via local authority.
- Secured sheltered accommodation for four persons-with local authority-2 more applications currently being processed.
- Secured accommodation for three person with Irish Housing Agencies

Housing/Welfare benefits

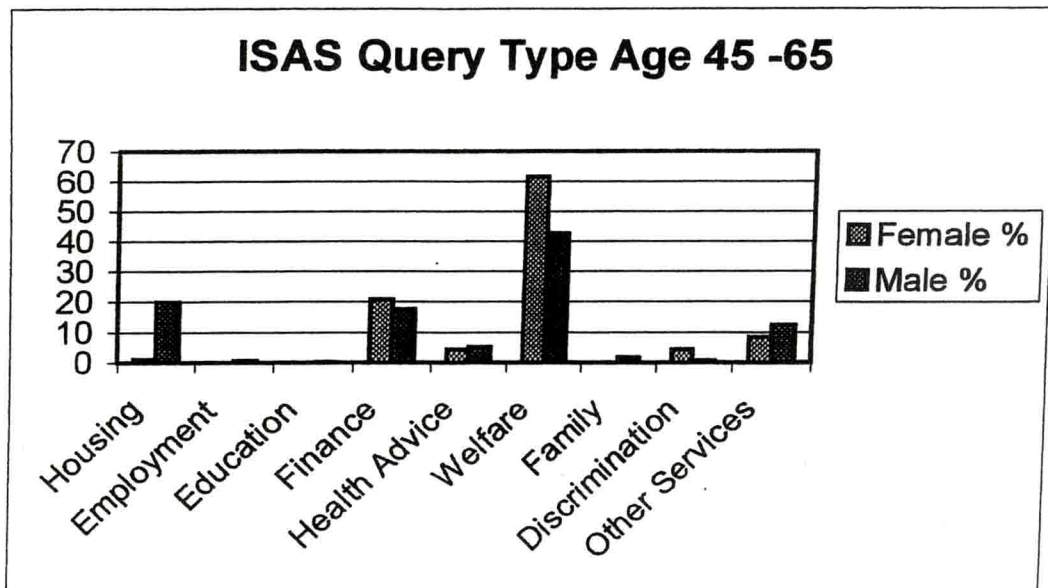
- Directly assisted two clients in not being evicted for rent arrears and was successful in back dating housing benefit in excess of £3500 pounds and receiving benefit entitlement.

- Assisted another client having possession order suspended for housing. Successful in assisting a further three clients in receiving back dated HB in excess of £5000 and assisting a further three clients with benefit reinstatement.
- Welfare Benefits-benefit entitlement in excess of £30,000
- As a service we have assisted seven clients with successful DLA/AA, pension applications in excess in excess of £10,000
- Client grants -Assisted seven clients in successful applications, in achieving over £1000 Client grants

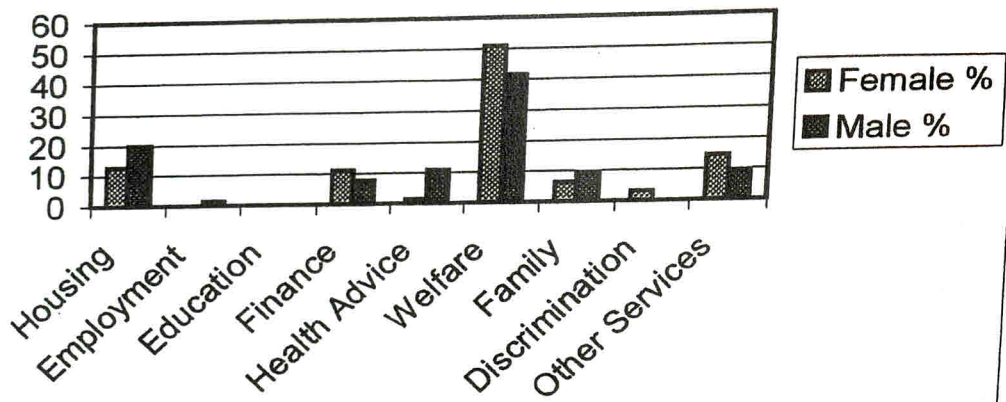
Housing and social service issues

- Acted as advocates for three clients –two of which were potential to lose H.A accommodation and the other was social service meeting

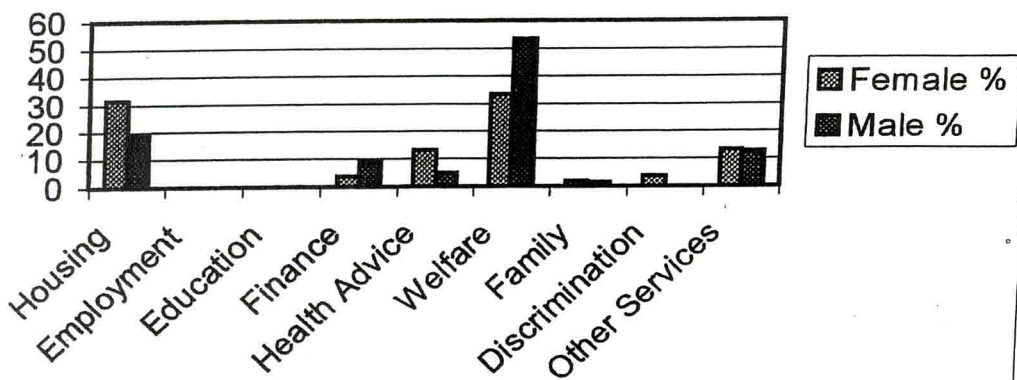
QUERIES PROFILE BY AGE & GENDER



ISAS Query Type Age 25-44



ISAS Query Type Age 65+



Chair's Report

I was invited to rejoin ISAS November 2003.

The service was experiencing funding problems with the local council and it was hoped that my experience could assist in negotiating funding and resolve any service issues. I met with the head of Equalities and Policies of Hammersmith and Fulham Council and was advised that due to financial constraints ISAS was unlikely to receive funding for 2005/06.

A number of letters have been sent to both local councillors regarding funding of our service and we have enlisted the support of the Federation of Irish Societies. A meeting has been arranged with by the Local Authority to meet with the Federation and we await details of any potential outcome.

I would like to express my thanks for the work done by the Manager Mike McGing.

It is acknowledged that considerable progress has been made by the Manager to raise the profile of the service with a number of partner agencies and the review and assessment of the service has been completed and implemented 2004. The business plan and funding strategy has been completed and ISAS is confident of achieving further additional varied funding streams. ISAS has secured funding for an Advice Worker and will be looking to secure further funding for an Advice/Outreach Worker.

ISAS would like to recruit more trustees to strengthen the Management Committee with relevant experience within an Advice and voluntary setting.

It is essential that ISAS is expanded to meet the needs of the Irish community both within the borough and within the West London area. ISAS continues to be in negotiation with the Council on how best to support the Irish community. As a service we continue to attract funding from Dion (Irish Government) and Bridge House Estates- we would like to thank these organisations for their continued support.

The Management Committee, staff and volunteers of the Irish Support and Advice Service are proud to be celebrating 35 years of serving the Irish Community within the West London area and look forward to the new challenges that 2005 may bring.

Tony Hennessy-Chair

Finance/Treasurers Report

1. Enclosed with this report are the accounts prepared for the financial year 2003/04 by our independent auditors, Michael Bell & Co. Two members of the Management Committee have verified them.
2. Our net reserves at 31st March 2004 are £25308 and includes restricted reserves of £4279
3. Dion have provided increased funding to the service and includes a capital injection of £25,000
4. Bridge House Estates upon monitoring review have provided the 2nd tranche of funding of £15,000 for the post of Elders Outreach worker

Trustees Report for the year ended 31st March 2004

The Executive Committee presents its report together with financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2004.

Objects and Principal Activity

Our Charity was established for the purpose of relieving poverty and distress amongst Irish emigrants to the United Kingdom with particular regard to:

- 1) Assisting emigrants where required to find suitable employment and accommodation in the U.K.
- 2) Endeavouring to supply the material and emotional support required by each emigrant in need.
- 3) Assisting Irish and other immigrants to obtain the benefit of the statutory and voluntary support networks available.
- 4) Providing information generally for immigrants with regard to social and recreational activities.
- 5) Advising and assisting immigrants in connection with repatriation.
- 6) Assisting persons in difficulty or need generally without regard to race, religion, colour, gender, sexual orientation, class or disability.

Of all the demographic profiles, the two which we deal with on the most regular basis are young people, often those recently arrived unprepared from Ireland, and Irish immigrants who came from Ireland in the 40's and 50's, working in manual labour.

Today, most of these people are of retirement age and a most unacceptable percentage have little provision for the future. Alone, friendless and in poverty there is perhaps no single group of Irish people worldwide who face such isolation and marginalisation.

Constitution

The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. There are eight Members who are liable to contribute a sum not exceeding £1 each in the event of the company being wound up while they are members of a year thereafter.

Trustees Report (continued)

Risks

The Trustees have identified the major risks to which this Charity could be subjected to, and have taken the necessary steps to mitigate same.

Reserves

The Trustees are committed to a policy of achieving general reserves, equivalent to Three months running costs, in order to effect an orderly wind-down should it ever prove necessary.

Statement of Executive Committee's Responsibilities

Company Law requires the members of the Executive Committee to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of income over expenditure of the company for that year. In preparing these financial statements the Members of the Executive Committee are required to:-

- * select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- * make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- * prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue in business.

The Members of the Executive Committee are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and any other irregularities.

Auditors

The Executive Committee appointed Michael Bell & Co, as auditors and a resolution will be put to the forthcoming Annual General Meeting that Michael Bell be re-appointed for the ensuing year.

This report was approved by the Executive Committee on 8th December 2004.

Signed on behalf of the Members of the Committee


.....
Kay Curtin (Company Secretary)

**Dependent Auditors' Report
to the Trustees
The Irish Charitable Trust**

We have audited the financial statements of the above named company for the year ended 31st March 2004 which comprise the Profit and Loss Account, Balance Sheet and the related notes.

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out therein.

This Report is made solely to the company's members, as a body in accordance with Section 235 of the Companies Act 1985. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

The directors' responsibilities for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards are set out in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities. Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and United Kingdom Auditing Standards.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Directors' Report is not consistent with the financial statements, if the company has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding directors' remuneration and transactions with the company is not disclosed.

We read other information contained in the Annual Report, and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other information comprises only the Directors' Report. We consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with United Kingdom Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

Independent Auditors Report (continued)

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31st March 2004 and of its result for the year then ended, and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Bell & Co". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Bell & Co.
Registered Auditors/Chartered Accountants
56 St. James's Street
E17 7PE

9th December 2004

Statement of Financial Activities - Year Ended 31st March 2004
(Including a summary of Income & Expenditure)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2004	Total Funds 2003
Incoming Resources:		£	£	£	
Donations/Other Incomes		2,138	0	2,138	4,12
Activities to further the charities objects:					
Grants receivable	(2)	25,000	65,387	90,387	139,08
Investment income		125	0	125	18
Bridge House Estate Trust		0	15,000	15,000	
Total Incoming Resources		<u>27,263</u> =====	<u>80,387</u> =====	<u>107,650</u> =====	<u>143,39</u> =====
Resources Expended:					
Charitable expenditure	(3)	19,749	43,511	63,260	86,12
Management & administration	(5)	3,235	31,876	35,111	59,70
Total Resources Expended:		<u>22,984</u> =====	<u>75,387</u> =====	<u>98,371</u> =====	<u>145,82</u> =====
 Net Movement of Reserves:-		4,279	5,000	9,279	-2,430
Balances brought forward		21,029	0	21,029	23,459
Total Funds at 31/3/04		<u>25,308</u> =====	<u>5,000</u> =====	<u>30,308</u> =====	<u>21,029</u> =====

The charitable company has no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the year as set out above.

All of the activities of the charitable company are classed as continuing.

The Irish Charitable Trust

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2004

	Notes		2004 £	
Fixed Assets:				
Tangible assets	9		0	
Current Assets:				
Debtors/prepayments	10	30,000		
Cash at bank and in hand		3,733		23,130
		<u>33,733</u>		<u>23,130</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year:-	11	3,425		4,030
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Net Current Assets:			30,308	19,100
			<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities:-			30,308	21,029
			=====	=====
Reserves:				
Unrestricted funds		25,308		0
Designated funds	12	5,000		21,029
Restricted	13	0		0
		<u>30,308</u>		<u>21,029</u>
		=====		=====

These financial statements were approved by the members of the committee on the 8th December.2004, and are signed on their behalf by:-

R. F. Mulcahy
Bob Mulcahy (Trustee/Director)

**Members of the Management Committee
and other ISAS appointed organisations**

Chair	Fr. Jerry Kivlehan	Resigned November 2004
	Tony Hennessy	Appointed November 2004
Vice Chair	Bob Mulcahy	
Treasurer	Gerry Keegan	Resigned November 2003
Patrick McNally	Company secretary	Resigned October 2004
Kay Curtin	Company Secretary	Appointed October 2004

Fr. Bob Dunne Passed away (December 2004)

Enid Marron Resigned November 2003

Alice Casey Kennedy Jerry Crilly Jacqui Read

Auditors	Michael Bell & Co	Solicitors	Cliona O'Tuama
	Chartered Accountants		Hamilton House
	56 St. James Street		1 Temple Avenue
	London E17 7PE		London EC4V OHA

Bankers Allied Irish Bank plc
Sovereign House
361 King Street
Hammersmith W6 9NA