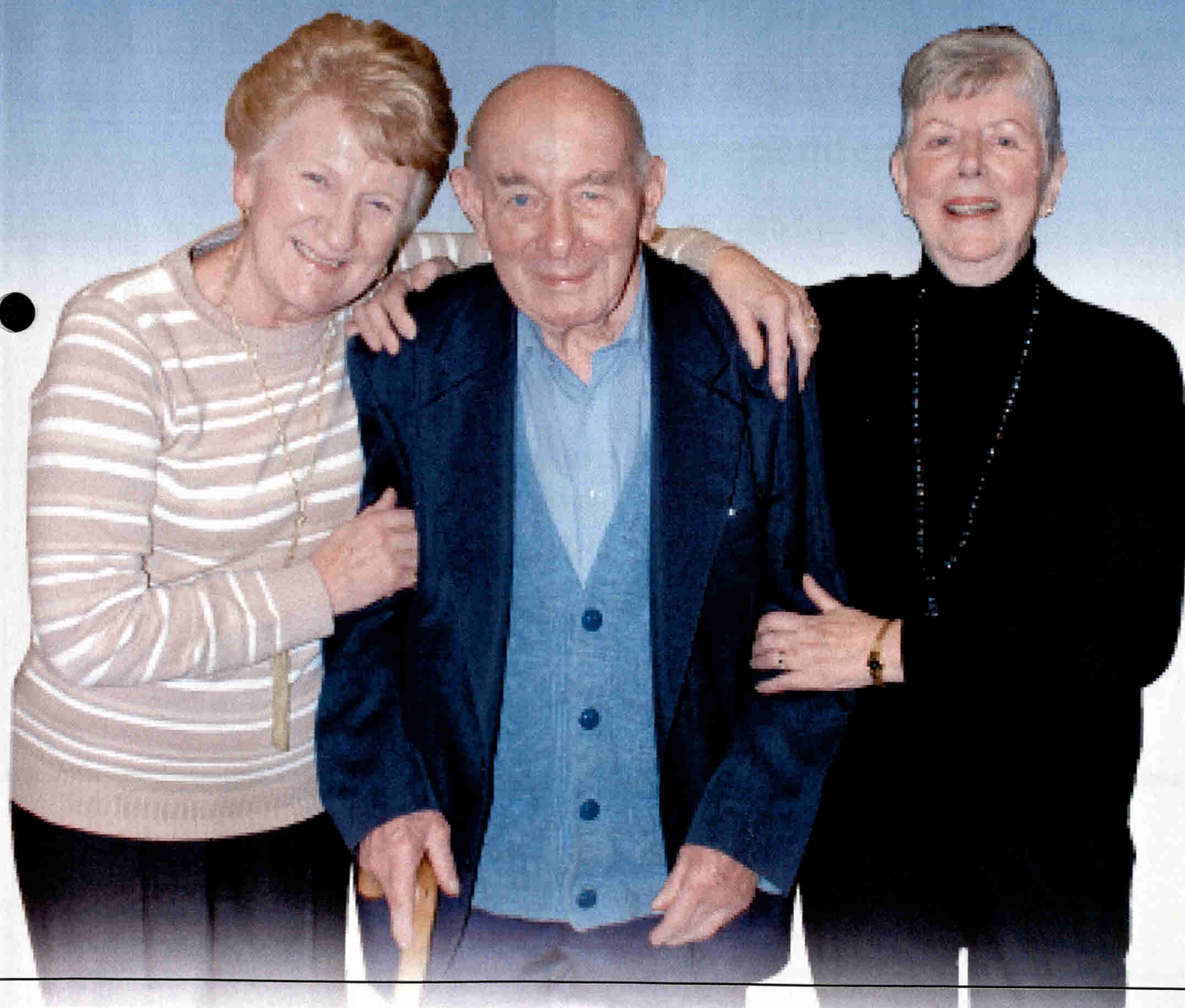


ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2011



**Celebrating 40 years of
“Supporting the Irish community, solving
problems, bringing people together”**



ISAS

MISSION STATEMENT

**The Irish Support and Advice Service,
ISAS, provides a culturally sensitive
service, to meet the needs of the
Irish Community in London,
by providing advice and support on
social, welfare, law and health matters.**

**ISAS services are independent,
confidential and accessible
to all people of Irish descent.**

**The Irish Support & Advice Service
Irish Cultural Centre
Black's Road
London W6 9DT**

www.irishadvice.org.uk

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ISAS - IRISH SUPPORT & ADVICE SERVICE



INTRODUCTION

The Irish Support and Advice Service, (ISAS), is a registered charity and was first set up in 1970 to provide core support and advice to the Irish community in the Borough of Hammersmith. Since then, in one form or another, ISAS has been working to identify and meet the culturally specific needs of the Irish community in the borough, extending over time to other parts of London. ISAS currently operates from the Irish Cultural Centre, in Hammersmith, West London, and plays a large part in the provision available in the Centre.

Over the years, ISAS has steadily developed as an organisation and is now firmly established as a key Irish advice and advocacy agency operating in five London boroughs, with clients from many other London boroughs accessing our wide range of services. ISAS has developed a proven track record for delivering high quality, value-for-money services to the Irish community.

Over 1700 people came to ISAS in 2010, 1400 to the advice and advocacy service, and 300 to the pensioner groups. As one measure of how effective the service is, we know that for every pound received in funding in 2010, we were able to generate over £6 in previously unclaimed benefits for our clients. Independent research confirms that support services for the elderly, such as those we provide, can result in improved morale, better mental and physical health, more fulfilled lives, and thus the greater likelihood of people remaining independent for longer.

ISAS contributes to the collection of data aimed at identifying the changing and unmet needs of the Irish community, as well as to developing strategies to provide relevant, alternative services that can best meet those needs. The data ISAS has gathered, matched by the data collected nationally by the Federation of Irish Societies in the United Kingdom, clearly show that our specialised services are required in order to meet the needs of the elderly Irish community who came to the UK in the 1940's, 50's and 60's, many of whom are living in areas of high deprivation, where they are usually isolated, and do not engage with mainstream services. Particular attention will be given to data gathering over the next three years, beginning with a baseline study which will allow for better tracking of such changes amongst our own clients.

The three-year business plan for ISAS sets specific goals to develop our provision so that we meet changing needs, as they are identified, through an additional range of appropriate services, as well as continuing to meet existing needs. Such developments depend on our securing the necessary funding, and this too is a major objective in the business plan. ISAS must meet changing needs, while continuing to draw in people who do not access or are overlooked by other service providers.

CHAIR'S REPORT

ISAS can look back over the past year with considerable satisfaction in terms of what we have achieved for clients and of how the service has developed. These achievements show a continued strengthening of the organisation and its ability to meet the needs of the people it aims to serve.

In June ISAS celebrated 40 years of serving the Irish community in Hammersmith and other London boroughs. Dr Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland, was our guest of honour and speaker at the event, and a second guest of honour was Fr Brian Lawlor, who started the Service. The 300 guests included the Irish Ambassador, MPs and Peers, the mayors from three of the boroughs where ISAS works, as well as councillors, and representatives of other Irish organisations. We gave the first showing of a DVD about the clients and work of ISAS (you can view this on our website). After the official ceremony, Dr Robinson took time to meet many of the clients who were in the audience.

When the Service began, it was funded entirely by the local Irish community. Today, ISAS needs to win back that community support so that its finances are less dependent on public funding. The major part of the budget continues to come from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs' Emigrant Support Programme. For several years ISAS has only had annual grants from any of the awarding bodies that have supported it. From next year it will have two three-year grants, one from the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, the other from the City Bridge Trust, which permit longer term planning and will enable the development of innovative services. It is pleasing to have won these grants, but the need to broaden the funding base and win back the support of the community remains.

While fundraising continues to be a major focus of activity, we are also developing other areas of the organisation. A new three-year business plan and a staff handbook have been completed during the year. We continue to develop the staff appraisal scheme so that organisational goals and operation are better understood and supported, and so that staff get the support and training that they need. The Board has recruited new members with skills that are needed to enable us to improve our promotion and fundraising.

When we look at the context where ISAS operates, we see that these are not easy times for a small charity. The Irish government has continued to give ISAS generous and substantial support, despite the difficult economic situation the country finds itself in. Projected figures for migration from Ireland over the next year suggest that services such as ISAS are likely to see need for its services increase, while, in any case, ISAS has seen its client base continue to grow over the last year. The new government in the UK is looking to the third sector to play an even greater role in responding to and dealing with social problems in coming years, while it plans cuts in budgets and services. ISAS will need all its strengths and abilities to face and meet the challenges to its provision and its financing that are to come. Within this context we are exploring the advantages and practicalities of developing partnerships that will strengthen and assure the provision of a very necessary service to the isolated, vulnerable and needy in the Irish community in London.

On behalf of all in ISAS, clients, staff and Board, I give most sincere thanks to all those bodies and individuals who fund our work; ISAS continues to give excellent value for that support, and will continue to strive to ensure this is so. The funds provide the means to make real improvements in people's lives.

To the staff and director of ISAS, to volunteers, and to fellow members of the Board I give personal thanks for their commitment, enthusiasm, ideas and debate, input and effort which go to make this a successful, caring and learning organisation. There is no time to rest on our laurels, but we can look round, see we are doing well and go on to achieve even more.

Dermot Murphy

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I would highlight my special thanks to the board of ISAS, staff and volunteers for all their hard work, commitment, enthusiasm and humour over the last 12 months. This has enabled the service to continue to expand and develop services, improving the lives of so many needy and isolated older Irish.

It is particularly pleasing that ISAS has reached the milestone of its 40th Anniversary, and continues to play a key role in the Irish community across London. With funding from the Irish Government, the Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, the Ireland Fund of Great Britain and other generous funders, both foundations and individuals, ISAS supports over 1700 people each year through our information advocacy outreach service and through our pensioner groups. In 2010 we raised over £1.2 million for clients in extra income. Currently we coordinate six Irish Pensioners' Groups in four London boroughs and expect to have over 10,000 yearly attendances in the coming year, when we will inaugurate two new groups. Our pensioner groups help to reduce isolation, and improve confidence and health; they specifically encourage the members to take an active role in the planning and running of these services, which should ensure sustainability for the future.

ISAS has maintained its track record for delivering high quality, value-for-money services to the Irish community and has exceeded performance targets and expectations with the successful help of key volunteers. However, with limited resources available, we are not always able to do what we want to and believe is necessary.

Funding avenues continue to be ever more difficult as proposed government cuts and policy putting greater dependence on the voluntary sector have the effect of increasing competition for the limited funds available. On a very positive note, it is particularly pleasing in these difficult economic times that ISAS has secured funding, from both Hammersmith & Fulham Council and from the City Bridge Trust, which recognises the needs of the Irish Community and enables two three-year projects to develop new services.

A culturally specific service is unique in its nature, real evidence for the idea that one size does not fit all, and that is why ISAS' approach to service delivery for the Irish Community has been so successful in reaching out to those often overlooked by mainstream services. We are passionate about the Irish Community and going the extra mile to ensure that both statutory services and entitlements are received by the Irish Community, and to that end ISAS works proactively with a number of partner organisations.

Small charities with very limited resources require a strong board of trustees with a wide range of skills and abilities, professional, flexible and hard-working staff as well as committed volunteers to manage, guide, and develop their services. ISAS has these, and they make enable us to compete with larger organisations in these difficult and competitive times. The contribution they make is essential for ISAS to meet its aim of delivering a cohesive and effective service. Once more, a big thank you to everyone for your valued contributions to ISAS.

There are a number of challenges for ISAS and the Irish voluntary sector. It is my hope that the Irish sector can become stronger by working closer in partnership and by providing a platform for one voice which will further enable the Irish Community to have equal access to services and funding, as they are so often overlooked by both statutory and grant-making services in the United Kingdom. A phrase used by many Irish charities is the "forgotten Irish", and ISAS sets out to make sure that this does not apply to its clients.

Mike McGing

TREASURER'S REPORT

ISAS' financial position remains stable, with a continued ability to fund activities from our various income sources.

In the year to the end of March 2010, the scope of ISAS' operations has remained similar compared to the previous year and outgoings are consequently similar to the prior period.

The financial goal for 2009-10 stated at the last AGM was the further diversification of funding sources. This goal has been met emphatically with the proportion of funding from the Irish Government falling from over 90% in 2008-9 to less than 70% in 2010-11.

The major funding source continues to be the Irish Government's Emigrant Support Programme, but new funding from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and City Bridge are highly significant. Other funding sources such as the Ireland Fund of Great Britain remain valuable to the organization.

The summarised financial information contains extracts from the Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st March 2010. Our total income for the year to 31st March 2010 was £189,326 and our expenditure was £195,139, compared to £200,134 and £182,860 respectively for the prior period. ISAS at this time has five full-time and two part-time members of staff in addition to a number of unpaid volunteers to whom the Board remain ever grateful.

Our accounts indicate that ISAS continues to operate a lean and cost-effective service. For every £1 received by ISAS the Service generates over £6 of income for clients in the form, for example, of pension that may be owing to them, or benefits to which they are entitled.

Fiona Gowen and Gary O'Brien



Andrew Slaughter MP, Dermot Murphy ISAS Chair, Dr Mary Robinson, Cllr Piers McCausland Mayor of Wandsworth



Veronica Power, Dr Mary Robinson, Mary Robinson, Fr Brian Lawlor founder of ISAS, Barbara Naughton

THE IRISH CHARITABLE TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Including Income & Expenditure Account)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2010

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2010 Total Funds £	2009 Total Funds £
Incoming Resources					
<i>Incoming resources from</i>					
<i>Charitable activities</i>					
Grants	3	0	169,650	169,650	179,437
<i>Incoming resources from</i>					
<i>Generated funds</i>					
Donations and Grants		1,508	0	1,508	3,090
Other Income (Clients)	3a	0	15,307	15,307	8,290
Income Generation		1,158	0	1,158	4,205
Investment Income		1,703	0	1,703	5,112
Total Incoming Resources		4,369	184,957	189,326	200,134
Resources Expended					
<i>Charitable activities</i>					
Salaries / ENIC		0	137,597	137,597	145,594
Other Staff Costs		0	1,792	1,792	2,745
Clients Welfare		0	5,977	5,977	4,798
Pensioners Group		0	13,279	13,279	1,825
Website		0	728	728	1,100
Hall Hire		0	0	0	0
Promotional Literature / Events / Launch		0	4,133	4,133	2,574
Volunteers Expenses		0	391	391	65
Premises Costs		0	11,760	11,760	13,963
Operational Costs		0	12,699	12,699	6,198
<i>Governance costs</i>	4	0	6,783	6,783	3,998
Total Resources Expended		0	195,139	195,139	182,860
Net incoming (outgoing) resources					
For the year		4,369	(10,182)	(5,813)	17,274
Balance brought forward at					
1 April 2009		51,828	75,332	127,160	109,886
Balance carried forward at					
31 March 2010		56,197	65,150	121,347	127,160
			=====	=====	=====

**THE IRISH CHARITABLE TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2010**

	Notes	2010 £	2009 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	7	532	1,472
Current assets			
Debtors & Prepayments	6	467	0
Cash at bank and in hand		128,386	150,201
		<u>128,853</u>	<u>150,201</u>
Liabilities: amounts falling due within one year	5	(8,038)	(24,513)
Net current Assets		<u>120,815</u>	<u>125,688</u>
Net Assets		<u>121,347</u>	<u>127,160</u>
Funds			
Unrestricted income funds:			
General		12,849	8,480
Designated - Contractual Liabilities	8	43,348	43,348
Restricted funds:		65,150	75,332
		<u>121,347</u>	<u>127,160</u>
		=====	=====

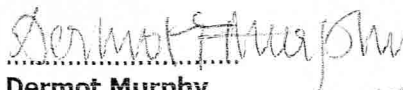
For the year ended 31 March 2010 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

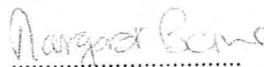
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors' acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to small companies' regime.

The Board of Directors approved these accounts on the 16th November 2010.


Dermot Murphy
Director / Trustee


Margaret Beirne
Director / Trustee

Real-life Advice and Support Cases

1) Let me tell you about two of the people who came to us last year. Mr X had worked all his life and was now over 60. Through ill-health he found himself with no money and sleeping in a car. He was not aware of assistance available to him relating to welfare benefits and housing options. When Mr X approached ISAS, he was in a very distressed state, but within a month we had sorted out his pension credit and got him a one-bedroom sheltered accommodation property as well as some money from a small Irish charity to help him buy some furniture. Mr X's quality of life had completely changed and improved because of his involvement with ISAS. We are all very proud of this and feel that clients such as Mr X are the reason why our service is so crucial.

2) Another case I would like to tell you about is that of Mr B who had been living in a small studio room for about 15 years. The room was crumbling with damp, and Mr B had no access to a bathroom as the landlord had piled the bathroom absolutely full of rubbish. The room was extremely dark as it was in a basement, and had a tiny stove and a small sink only in it and a foldaway bed on the floor. Following a visit to Mr B in his home, ISAS made an application for sheltered housing and submitted with this application a very strong letter of support.

Following a visit from the sheltered housing officer, Mr B received the offer of a new flat within a matter of weeks. ISAS also assisted Mr B with grant applications to get new furniture as most of his belongings had been ruined by damp over the years. Mr B is very happy in his new flat and regularly pops in to see us to say thank you and to let us know how he is getting on.

These are just two of our many success stories of last year; with the continued growth and expansion of ISAS we hope that we will be able to reach out to many more people in similar situations and offer assistance and support to them.

3) An elderly client (Mick) was referred to me and he has recently discharged from hospital due to poor health and he continues to be monitored closely by the hospital. He is 68 years of age, and he has become very isolated living in a room in a hostel. He has tried to get work to pay his rent but because of health and age he has not been successful and was at risk of losing his accommodation. He was unaware that he was entitled to any benefits whatsoever as he had worked on the 'lump', and so thought that too many questions would be asked of him, and perhaps, even an investigation or prison.

I applied for his weekly State Pension for him (£30) and because it was very low we applied for Pension Credit bringing his income up to £120.00 on a weekly basis. I also applied for Housing and Council Tax Benefit, and these Benefits are now in place which enabled Mick to get his rent paid. I am in the process of applying for Attendance Allowance due to his poor health and have applied for sheltered housing which will provide a home for life. Mick feels a lot more confident about his life and he knows that he is no longer on his own and can get support.

Staff Team

Helen Busquette	Pensioners Worker
Carole Fox	Pensioners Worker
Mary Kelly	Community Coordinator
Ann Laffey	Pensioners Coordinator
Mike McGing	Director
Sarah Taylor	Senior Advice Worker
Katie Westbrook	Advice Worker
Frances Whelan	Advice and Outreach Worker

Management Committee

Maggie Beirne	Director	Appointed 2009
Maeve Buckley	Director	Appointed 2010
Peter Curran	Director	Appointed 2009
Kevin Germaine	Director	Appointed 2010
Fiona Gowen	Treasurer	Appointed 2008
Kathy King	Director	Appointed 2010
Marie Linnane	Director	Appointed 2008
Francis McGuinness	Director	Appointed 2007
Robert Mulcahy	Director	Appointed 1970
Dermot Murphy	Chair	Appointed 2008
Gary O'Brien	Director	Appointed 2007
David Perkins	Director	Appointed 2010

Bankers

Allied Irish Bank
361 King Street
Hammersmith W6 9DT

Auditors

Smartwise Management

Acknowledgements

The Irish Support & Advice Service would like to thank both existing and past funders to the service.

The Emigrant Support Programme of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs
The Ireland Fund of Great Britain
The Irish Chaplaincy
Society of the Sacred Heart (Hammersmith)
London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
St Johns Southworth Fund