


íRÍsh studies centre

The Polytechnic
of North London



Two-thirds of the Irish population in Britain lives in the South East, with the highest concentration living in the North London community — where the Polytechnic of North London operates from five sites in Islington and Camden. The development of an Irish Studies Centre signifies the Polytechnic's recognition that the Irish contribution to all aspects of British economic, cultural, political and social life is a substantial one.

The Polytechnic is in the process of establishing an Irish Studies Centre which aims to increase the understanding and appreciation of Irish social and cultural history, and the unique relationship which exists between Britain and Ireland. By means of teaching, research and community interaction, the Centre aims to explore the life and times of the Irish in Britain — and in London in particular — and to develop a comprehensive data resource. It will strive also to promote the educational interests of local Irish people and to develop active educational links with Ireland — in the first instance with the Dublin Institute of Technology.

Two researchers will staff the Centre initially. **Dr. Alan Clinton** and **Ms Mary Hickman** have been appointed as Research Fellow and Researcher respectively. In addition, **Gearoid O'Meachair**, well known for his work with the Irish community over the years, will act as Senior Research Fellow and Consultant. Dr. Clinton is currently Chair of the Finance Committee of the London Borough of Islington. An historian with an impressive list of publications, he has done much of his research in Labour Studies and Industrial Relations. Ms Hickman is an educationalist with expertise in Irish Studies and is a founder member of the Irish in Britain History Group.

There are three main tasks to which the staff of the Irish Studies Centre will address themselves immediately.

The **FIRST TASK** is the establishment of a comprehensive and accessible Resource Centre. This will provide information for academics inside and outside the Polytechnic who are already working on aspects of Irish Studies, and for groups at work in the community. It will bring together existing data to form a solid base on which to add new research in

Irish Studies. The Polytechnic will be looking to the community for relevant material and would welcome any contributions to the Resource Centre. Staff will produce a series of position papers on aspects of Irish life in Britain during this first year.

The **SECOND TASK** will be the development of the educational potential of the Centre. Commitments have already been entered into with local educational institutions whereby the Centre's expertise will be available for short courses in Irish Studies for local people. An Adult Education Course will begin in October this year at the Islington Adult Education Institute. A degree course is planned to form part of the Polytechnic's unique Evening Degree Scheme and preparations are in progress for a February 1988 start.

The **THIRD TASK** will be to seek external funding for the Centre and staff are confident of success by the end of the year. This will give the Centre a more secure financial base.

Day-to-day management of the Irish Studies Centre will be provided by a group of senior Polytechnic staff: **Michael Collins**, Personal Assistant to the Director; **Gearoid O'Meachair**, Consultant; and **Dianne Willcocks**, Director of Research and Consultancy. In addition, prominent members of the community with specialist interests in this area have been invited to join a Management Board.

The project has attracted a good deal of attention in the press and a large number of interested groups and individuals have offered support or expressed interest in the Centre in various ways. It is planned that the Centre will become an affiliation organisation, offering a range of services and information to members, including a regular newsletter.

If you would like to be kept informed of developments at the Irish Studies Centre, please fill in the slip below or telephone Michael Collins on 01-607 2789 Ext. 2370; Dianne Willcocks on Ext. 2061; or Gearoid O'Meachair on 01-281 2401.

I would like to be kept informed about the Irish Studies Centre at the Polytechnic of North London.

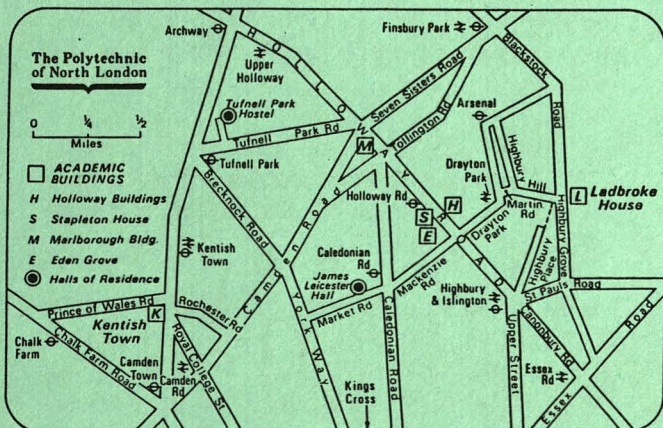
NAME:

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION/COMMUNITY GROUP (or address only if individual).

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Please return completed form to the Information Office, The Polytechnic of North London, Holloway Road, London N7 8DB.

The Irish Studies Centre
is located in the Main Holloway Road Building



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