
BAIS ELECTIONS 1992

Dear Member,

Much has been achieved by BAIS in the past six years and the Irish Studies movement in Britain has taken great strides forward. We are proud to have contributed to these developments.

However, despite its record of achievement, the Association is now facing severe financial difficulties. Because of this, it has had to dispense with the services of its one full time official, and will have to rethink its strategies and restructure in order to maintain existing services to members. It is, therefore, vital that the representatives chosen in this election will be those best qualified to guide the Association through the difficult period ahead.

We have allowed our names to go forward for election because we feel that we have qualities which fit us for this task. Each of us has a proven record of achievement within the Association and within the Irish Studies movement. Our various contributions cover the development of Irish Studies nationally as well as within our own areas of expertise. These areas include higher education, adult and further education, schools and Irish language. We include among our number the administrator of the Association over four years, the pioneer of one of the three Irish Studies degree courses in Britain, and the organiser of an important national educational conference now approaching its tenth anniversary.

While the achievements of BAIS have been considerable, there are areas of BAIS performance which require improvement. We have argued for some time now that the Association's approach to fundraising needs to be much more structured and clearly organised in order to bring in the money we so badly need. We have also made specific proposals as to how the BAIS membership can be more actively involved in the Association through a regional strategy. This strategy would encourage the development of organic links between third level providers of Irish Studies and the membership at other levels. It would encourage the emergence of new leadership on a basis of participation and achievement. We believe also that the Association must, through its publications and activities, act as a show-case for the Irish Studies expertise among its membership.

Please consider carefully *all* candidates standing for officer positions. Judge them individually by their experience and commitment to the development of Irish Studies, and/or by your personal knowledge of them. We feel we have abilities and achievements which make us particularly suited to provide leadership to the Association at this point in time. However, you must be the judge of that, using the criteria we have suggested.

There is also an election for eight members of the Executive. We would ask you to approach your task in choosing these in exactly the same way. If elected, we will not be able to operate effectively without the active support of an Executive with a proven track record of participation and achievement.

It is important that the outcome of these elections should be a balanced Executive Committee, representative of all levels of education and reflecting the broad spectrum of all those involved in Irish Studies.

Yours sincerely,

Seán Hutton

Prospective Chair

Executive Director BAIS 1988-92

Paul Stewart

Prospective Vice-Chair

Jim McAuley

Prospective Secretary

Current Secretary

Jim O'Hara

Prospective Treasurer

Current Vice-Chair

Nessan Danaher

Prospective Conference Secretary

Current Convenor Adult Education Sub-Committee