

**BRENT IRISH ADVISORY SERVICE  
(BIAS)**

*Working with the Irish Community*

***Directory of Services***

*Provided by*

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**BIAS Information Centre**

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**BIAS Community Services**

***BIAS Information Centre 1996***  
***6th Edition 3/96***



## Introduction

Brent Irish Advisory Service (BIAS) was established in 1978 and we are now in our seventeenth year of operation. Brent Irish Advisory Service is a community development and welfare organisation which is non-party in politics and religion and provides a practical, essential service to all Irish people in the Brent area of North-West London and beyond. The large and diverse Irish community forms a substantial proportion of the resident population in Brent and is the Borough's largest national group which originates from any single overseas country in the world. Indeed, Brent's Irish population is the largest of any local authority in London.

With an ancient cultural heritage, combined with a modern lifestyle, Irish people who emigrated from their own country to find employment and make a new life have contributed much to the development of industry, commerce and services in Britain. Even to-day, as we move through the 1990's, young migrants still come to Britain to seek work and accommodation. As foreigners in a strange land, many Irish people, especially those from rural and Irish-speaking backgrounds, may experience culture shock, alienation and racism. Some of them may have problems with housing, jobs, social security and welfare.

Within the Irish community, there is a disproportionate number of older Irish, people with disabilities and mental ill-health, and homeless people. There are also groups of Irish people who have particular needs, including women, young people, pensioners, travelling people and the unemployed.

*Brent Irish Advisory Service* provides free (except for some publications that we have to charge for to recover printing costs) and confidential services through:

### **\*BIAS Information Centre \* BIAS Community Services**

If you have any queries or would like further information about any of the services listed in this Directory, then please contact - **BIAS Information Centre**, 76-82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY

Telephone BIAS Information Helpline :- 0171-328 1188

Fax :- 0171-328 1988

## **BIAS Information Centre**

### **1. Telephone Information and Advice Helpline**

*For information on -*

- \* *Housing Options*
- \* *Welfare Rights, Benefits and Services*
- \* *Employment & Training Opportunities*
- \* *Health Services*
- \* *Legal Services*
- \* *Irish Social & Cultural Activities*
- \* *Moving to Ireland*
- \* *Working in Europe*

### **TELEPHONE BIAS' INFORMATION AND ADVICE HELPLINE ON:**

**0171-328 1188**

Open :- Monday to Friday (10.00am - 5.00pm)  
Closed :- Wednesday (10.00am - 1.00pm)  
Closed :- 1.00pm - 2.00pm daily

*Answerphone out of office hours*

*or contact us at* **BIAS Information Centre**  
**76 - 82 Salusbury Road**  
**London NW6 6NY**

## 2. Information & Advice Sessions

### *HOUSING \* JOBS \* RIGHTS \* SERVICES*

Details of Advice Sessions  
(by appointment)

Tuesday :- 2.00pm - 5.00pm

#### **HOUSING OPTIONS**

(Information/advice on finding somewhere to live for single people who are homeless, threatened with homelessness or in housing need).

Thursday :- 2.00pm - 5.00pm

BIAS can provide information and advice on :

#### **INFORMATION & ADVICE**

(Information/advice on welfare services and benefits, employment and training opportunities, education services, social and cultural activities)

Because of the demand, the above advice sessions are by appointment only.  
For an appointment call into BIAS Information Centre or telephone BIAS on :- 0171-328 1188.

The advice sessions are held at :- BIAS Information Centre, 76 - 82 Salusbury Road, LONDON NW6 6NY, Tel:- 0171-328 1188.

BIAS Information Service is funded by - *London Borough of Brent, (Education, Arts & Libraries Department), London Boroughs Grants Committee, Irish Government (DION Committee), Irish Youth Foundation*



### 3. Publications

***Irish in Britain Directory, 5th edition (£5.99)***

Comprehensive guide to all aspects of Irish life in Britain, includes sections on; Irish Information & Advice agencies, Social & Community groups, Education, Arts & Culture and, Business and Commerce.

***Moving to Ireland (£2.00)***

Practical guide for anyone planning to move, or in many cases, return to Ireland. Includes a directory of useful telephone numbers and contacts in Ireland.

***Moving within the European Community (£2.00)***

A concise guide to living and working in other European countries.

***BIAS News (£6.00 annual subscription)***

Monthly newsletter providing up-to-date information for the Irish Community

**BIAS Information Centre also produces a range of specialist reports:**

***Irish Homeless Families in London (£2.00)***

Difficulties Irish families experience in securing housing

***The Irish in Ealing (£2.50)***

First major study on the Irish in the London Borough of Ealing

***The Irish Community and "Mental Handicap" in Brent (£1.50)***

Examines the experience of "Mental Handicap"/Learning Disability within the migrant Irish community

***Mental Health Experiences of the Irish Community in Brent (£1.50)***

Looks specifically at the mental health experiences of the largest migrant community in Brent

***Who Cares for the Irish Community? (£2.50)***

A report on the Community Care needs of single homeless Irish people, experiencing mental distress, in the London Borough of Brent

***Alcohol and the Irish in the London Borough of Brent (£3.50)***

Comprehensive and indepth research investigation into alcohol consumption within the Irish community in Brent.

*THE HIDDEN MEMORY (£5.00)*  
*Mental Health & THE IRISH EXPERIENCE IN*  
*BRENT*

## Order Form

Copies of all the publications listed above are available directly from the publisher at BIAS Information Centre. Please ring or send order requirements to :- BIAS Information Centre, 76 - 82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY, tel:- 0171-328 1188.

All prices quoted include postage and packaging.

Please made cheques/postal orders payable in sterling to "BIAS Information Centre".

*Please send me the following publications:*

Titles required and number of copies

Name

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Organisation (if any)

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Address

---

---

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Tel

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I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to *BIAS Information Centre* for £ \_\_\_\_\_

Date

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Signed

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## **BIAS Community Services**

### **4. BIAS Children & Families Social Work Service**

#### **Information for individuals**

BIAS Community Services employs a qualified Social Worker to work with Irish children & families. The Social Worker is there should you wish to talk to someone about issues affecting you, your family or your children.

You can contact the Social Worker at BIAS Community Services on 0171-328 1188 to arrange an appointment.

#### **Information for Agencies**

BIAS Social Worker is able to take direct referrals from Brent Social Services for work with Irish children & families. Referrals can be made for the BIAS Social Worker to become involved in :-

1. Initial assessment with London Borough of Brent Social Worker of client need/family situation.
2. Joint casework **with** LB Brent Social Worker.
3. Individual casework with family.
4. Consultancy on specific issues related to work with Irish families.

Referral forms and further information about this service can be obtained by contacting:- Carol Colton, Children & Families Social Worker, *BIAS Community Services*, 76 - 82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY (0171-328 3368).

BIAS Children & Families Social Work Service is part of BIAS Community Services and is funded by *London Borough of Brent Social Services Department*.

## 5. Home Visiting Service

BIAS provides a home visiting service for Irish pensioners in the London Borough of Brent, who are housebound or have restricted mobility.

The visiting service is provided by a team of experienced voluntary workers supervised by Jeanne Dermody, Pensioners Worker at BIAS.

Visits can be arranged to provide any of the following :-

- Information, advice and support to obtain welfare benefits, health services, housing services and personal social services that you may be entitled to.
- Information on, and access to, Irish cultural and community activities and events.

### How to use the Visiting Service

Use of the service is by written referral. The referral can come from the person themselves, relative, friend, neighbour, church, community group, other agency.

Referral forms can be obtained from BIAS Community Services, 76 - 82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY (0171-328 3368). Completed forms to be returned to Jeanne Dermody, Pensioners Worker, BIAS Community Services, at the above address.

The Home Visiting Service is part of BIAS Community Services Irish Elders Project, which is funded by *Joint Finance (Brent and Harrow Health Authority and London Borough of Brent Social Services)*.



## 7. Coplands Club

BIAS Community Services in co-operation with London Borough of Brent Social Services Department organises a weekly information, support and activities session for Irish pensioners, held at the Copland Resource Centre for the Elderly in Wembley.

The session is particularly aimed at isolated Irish pensioners in Wembley and surrounding areas.

Established	:-	1992
Managed by	:-	BIAS Community Services in co-operation with Brent Social Services
Address	:-	Copland Irish Elders Club Copland Resource Centre 1 Copland Avenue Wembley MIDDLESEX HA0 2EN
Number of Places	:-	15
Open	:-	Every Wednesday 1pm - 4pm
Services Provided	:-	1. Traditional Irish Afternoon Tea  2. Irish Social and Cultural Activities 3. Information/Advice on Housing and Welfare Services/Benefits
Transport	:-	Because of the current funding level, transport is unfortunately not available. Those wishing to use the session will have to arrange their own transport
How to Use the Copland Club	:-	Written referral from self, relative, friend, neighbour church, agency.

Referral forms can be obtained from *BIAS Community Services*. Completed forms to be returned to: Jeanne Dermody, Pensioners Worker, BIAS Community Services, 76-82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY (0171-328 3368)

Copland Club is part of the Brent Irish Elders Project which is funded by *Brent Joint Finance (London Borough of Brent Social Services and Brent and Harrow Health Authority)*.

## 6. Westbrook Luncheon Club

BIAS Community Services in co-operation with Brent Elders Voice, organises a weekly Luncheon Club for Irish pensioners in the Harlesden area of Brent.

The Luncheon Club, established in 1990, is held at :-

Venue	:-	Westbrook Community Centre Knowles House 51 Longstone Avenue Harlesden London NW10 3UN
Open	:-	Every Tuesday 12.00- 3.00pm
Number of Places	:-	22
Services Provided	:-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Hot Meal</li><li>2. Irish social and cultural activities (music/dance)</li><li>3. Information/advice on housing and welfare services</li></ol>
Transport	:-	We are able to provide transport for a limited number of people
How to Use the Roundwood Club	:-	Written referral from self, relative, friend, neighbour, church, other agency.

Referral forms can be obtained from *BIAS Community Services*. Completed forms to be returned to; Jeanne Dermody, Pensioners Worker, BIAS Community Services, 76-82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY (0171-328 3368).

The Westbrook Luncheon Club is part of BIAS Community Services' Irish Elders Project which is funded by *Brent Joint Finance (Brent and Harrow Health Authority and London Borough of Brent Social Services)*.

## **General Information**

### **8. Equal Opportunities Policy**

#### **Statement of Intent**

BIAS accepts that in society certain groups and individuals are disadvantaged and, as a result, is committed to taking positive steps to redress the balance in terms of its employment practices and service delivery. BIAS also believes that passive policies in themselves do not provide equality of opportunity. BIAS has therefore committed itself to the task of establishing and implementing an effective Equal Opportunities Policy. In addition to the responsibility outlined above, BIAS also accepts the statutory requirements laid down by the Race Relations Act, the Sex Discrimination Act and the Employment Acts.

BIAS wishes to employ the most suitable staff and therefore intends to ensure equality of opportunity so that no person will be discriminated against, either as actual or potential employees, particularly on the grounds of race, nationality, religion, gender, disability, sexuality, class, marital status or unrelated criminal conviction.

BIAS is also committed to ensuring that its services are accessible and safe to users of the agency. To this end, BIAS employees will actively work to ensure that this is the case, which will include challenging discrimination, abuse or harassment by individuals in contravention of this policy. All of our offices are not wheelchair accessible yet. We are working towards that however.

#### **Responsibility**

Each member of staff has a responsibility to work to implement this policy in all aspects of their work.

#### **Recruitment**

There is a separate recruitment procedure, a copy of which is available from BIAS' office.

#### **Training**

Staff will be made aware of training opportunities available to them, and will be positively encouraged to take these up. This will apply to all staff, whatever their position in the organisation. In particular, training will be provided in order to realise potential where formal qualifications and experience may be lacking.



## Monitoring and Review

The Co-ordinator in co-operation with the staff team will provide an Annual Report on the implementation of this policy, analysing in detail failures and successes to the Management Committee. To assist in this process, all monitoring information on recruitment and service delivery which has been collated during the previous year, will be used and commented upon, and acted upon where necessary.

### **9. User's Comments**

To ensure that its services are being provided expertly and efficiently, BIAS Information Centre welcomes the comments of those who use them.

For what reason did you approach BIAS?

Information/Assistance on :- (please tick more than one if necessary)

homelessness/housing .....	children & families issues .....	moving to Ireland .....
social security .....	pensioners issues .....	council tax .....
social services .....	health .....	housing benefit .....
cultural/social .....	employment .....	training .....
legal .....	education .....	

any other (please give details) .....

Was your enquiry dealt with to your satisfaction?      Yes ..... No .....

If NO, please say what happened :- .....

.....

.....

What changes (if any) do you feel should be made to improve the service you required?

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How did you get to know about BIAS? (please tick)

from a friend/relative .....

from an Irish agency (please specify) .....

from another agency (please specify) .....

Date .....

When completed, please return form to:

BIAS Information Centre

76 - 82 Salusbury Road

London NW6 6NY

Tel:- 0171-328 1188

Thank you for completing this form.

It will be used to help BIAS ensure that the services it provides are of the highest possible standard and are meeting the needs of the Irish community. If you have other comments or suggestions that you would like to make about BIAS and the work it does, please contact :

Stan Quirey, Co-ordinator of BIAS, at the above address or telephone on 0171-328 1188.

## 10. Complaints Procedure

### Complaints about BIAS Information Centre

#### How to make a complaint

If you have a complaint about BIAS' Information Centre, or any of its employees/volunteers/members who work in this service, then you should follow the procedure below -

1. Write to :      The Co-ordinator  
                         BIAS Information Centre  
                         76 - 82 Salusbury Road  
                         London NW6 6NY

Please give your name, address, telephone number you can be reached at, and details of your complaint, ie, What do you think BIAS Information Centre did wrong or failed to do and what has given you cause to complain?

2. You will receive a reply from the Co-ordinator within 7 days.
3. If you are not satisfied with the reply then contact the Co-ordinator at the address above or by telephone (0171-328 1188) and ask for a Complaint Form to be sent to you.
4. Complete the Complaint Form and return to: The Chairperson, Brent Irish Advisory Service at the address above. You will receive a reply within 7 days.
5. If you are not satisfied with the reply you receive, then you can contact :-

(1) Mr Frank Holmes Senior Grants Officer Dept of Education, Arts & Libraries London Borough of Brent Brent Voluntary Sector Team 519 North Circular Road Neasden LONDON NW2 7QG (regarding information service in Brent)	(2) Mr David White Senior Grants Officer Community and Cultural Services Team London Boroughs Grants Unit 5th Floor, Regal House London Road Twickenham MIDDLESEX TW1 3QS (regarding information service in London)
(3) Ms Lois Elliott Commissioning Officer Children's Commissioning Social Services Department LB Brent, Box 440 Wembley HA9 0LD (regarding Children & Families Social Work Service)	(4) Ms Cath Attlee Assistant Director of Commissioning - Brent Brent and Harrow Health Authority Grace House, Harrobian Business Village Bessborough Road Harrow HA1 3EX (regarding service to older people)

Each of these officers will give you information about how to make your complaint.



## **11. Voluntary Work with BIAS**

Voluntary work with BIAS Information Centre and BIAS Community Services

Are you interested in voluntary work?

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO WORK WITH THE IRISH COMMUNITY IN THE BOROUGH OF BRENT**

You could:

- \* visit a lonely, isolated or elderly person at home
- \* escort people who have difficulty in travelling
- \* give practical help to people with disabilities - shopping, giving information on events and activities
- \* help at our elders luncheon club
- \* distribute newsletters and information leaflets around the borough
- \* organise fundraising activities
- \* provide support to families with young children
- \* provide support to homeless people
- \* work in our information centre - reception work, administration work, giving information

How much of my time will it take?

Anytime you are free. There is someone who needs you in the day-time, the evening and at week-ends, either regularly or occasionally.

**YOUR HELP \* YOUR SKILL \* YOUR COMPANY \* YOUR TIME**

can make all the difference to someone

If you would like to become a volunteer, then contact :- Catherine O'Reilly, BIAS Information Centre, 76 - 82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY Tel:- 0171-328 1188, to obtain a Volunteer Application Form and further information.

## **BIAS INFORMATION CENTRE**

BIAS Information Centre is an Information and Resource unit. It offers a specialist, professional service to the Irish community, and to individuals and organisations with an interest in Irish affairs.

BIAS Information Centre provides a comprehensive range of services.

### **Telephone Information Lines**

Open Monday to Friday (10.00am - 5.00pm); Closed Wednesday (10.00am - 1.00pm)

Closed 1.00pm - 2.00pm daily

### **Postal Enquiry Service**

The Centre ensures a quick and accurate response to queries received by post

### **Information & Advice Service**

Available to personal callers

### **Database & Resource Centre**

BIAS Information Centre holds an up-to-date and comprehensive range of information and resources through the maintenance and development of a computer database and central resource collection.

### **Publications**

The Centre specialises in producing publications and specialist research reports. Most recent titles include: Moving to Ireland, Moving within the European Community (EC), the Irish in Britain Directory (5th edition) and the 1996 research report with Equal Access The Hidden Minority (Mental Health and the Irish Experience in Brent).

### **Research & Development**

In conjunction with BIAS Community Services, the Information Centre undertakes an extensive programme of research and development.

### **Training**

BIAS Information Centre provides training to the Statutory and Independent sector on the experiences of the Irish migrant community.

### **Media**

The Centre works effectively with all branches of the Media to ensure accurate coverage and to raise public awareness of issues.

### **Trainee and Student Placements**

BIAS Information Centre and BIAS Community Services accept students/ trainees for work placement.