

BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR IRISH STUDIES

- 1 Is there a need for the British Association for Irish Studies in the 1990s? Should individual institutions and organisations go ahead with their own developments without BAIS attempting to provide a network or act as an enabling agency? Is there an inevitable conflict between centres of Irish Studies and an association for Irish Studies which creates tensions through channelling money raised under its name? Should we consider dissolving BAIS into European Irish Studies or into the Institute for Irish Studies? III ?

- 2 If there is a need for BAIS, what kind of association should it be?

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NCC.
- i) A small-scale pressure group that raises funds for Irish Studies but does not seek members or produce journals or hold conferences. It would do good work by stealth.
 - ii) An academic society that recruits members from higher education who pay their subscriptions and in return receive an academic journal and hold a conference from time to time. It would restrict its activities to those that could be paid for out of members subscriptions.
 - iii) A more broadly-based association that aspired to serve all sectors of education promoting Irish Studies at all levels throughout Britain. It would need a high membership and a means of resolving tensions between the competing claims of different sectors. It would also need corporate sponsorship and a successful strategy and mechanism for obtaining substantial funds on a permanent basis. ?

- 3 It could be argued that BAIS since it started has included elements of all three models but has lost direction and credibility as emphasis varied between its leaders over future direction as income fell short of expenditure.

A small group of fundraisers did succeed for a time in raising significant amounts of money, notably the AIB grant for £150,000, but the record has not been commensurate with the expectations raised in recent years.

The great majority of BAIS members are in higher education and if BAIS is about looking after its members then they should be given a priority.

BAIS has notable achievements in supporting adult education, sixth-form conferences and the Irish language, albeit on a modest scale, but also in providing a network of information to individuals who otherwise might feel isolated.

- 4 If there is a consensus that BAIS is needed and ought to be a broad-based association it needs to have a clear sense of purpose, a development plan and a financial strategy. A major practical difficulty is that without the financial means to employ permanent staff, BAIS is reliant on what officers and executive committee members can do on an unpaid and voluntary basis. Reacting to the pace and demands of the world outside has proved difficult, especially in response to funding applications.

£15,000.

S'land

W. Yorks?

L'pool.

Leicester

B'ham

Bath

London $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} N = UNH \\ S = St Marys \end{array} \right.$

Oxf/Canb.

① { brief for each comm.
[regional sectors

② bigger than others?
- all people for
all meetings

- 5 A financial strategy requires a consensus on funding priorities and agreement on the membership of a funding group.

i) What are the priorities?

Core funding to support administration and the BAIS office?

Cost of publications, ISR, BAIS Newsletter, ILS?

Support for conferences, BAIS and Soar Valley?

Running an annual lecture series?

Support for Irish language?

Supporting Irish Studies in the schools?

Postgraduate bursaries?

ii) What about membership of a funding group?

A suggested membership

Three members of the Executive Committee:

Graham Davis, Sean Hutton, Maureen Carter (convenor and secretary).

Three individuals with financial expertise and contacts in the business of fund-raising:

Niall Crowley (Alliance and Leicester Building Society)

Niall Gallagher (Allied Irish Bank)

Baroness Ó Catháin of the Barbican

The group to keep a record of meetings and to report to the Executive Committee on fund-raising activities.

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If BAIS is to act as a network for Irish Studies and may not be able to afford an office and a permanent secretary to provide information to members, an alternative could be found in the establishment of an Education Committee. All institutions where there is a recognised Irish Studies presence could be represented and be urged to act as a national co-ordinating body for Irish Studies throughout the country and also to act as a focus within their local region for Irish Studies at all levels. This could promote links between institutions at national and local level. A suggested list of places would include the Institute of Irish Studies at Liverpool, Soar Valley College, St Phillips 6th Form College, Birmingham, the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, Bath College of Higher Education, the University of North London, and St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham.

Related to what his tasks are.
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Outline of M'ship

Edgehill.

Structure should follow same as other committees.

GRAHAM DAVIS
15 MAY 1993

Does it overlap with Advisory body.