

BIAS

WORKING WITH THE IRISH COMMUNITY

DIRECTORY
OF
SERVICES

PROVIDED BY

BIAS INFORMATION CENTRE

BIAS COMMUNITY SERVICES

BIAS INFORMATION CENTRE 1996

BIAS' MISSION STATEMENT

BIAS aims to give accurate, skilled and impartial information, advice and support to Irish people in need, in London.

BIAS is contracted to provide services through :-

***BIAS Information Centre, 76-82 Salusbury Road,
London NW6 6NY
Telephone 0171-328 1188***

***BIAS Community Services, Premier House, 313
Kilburn Lane, London W9 3EG
Telephone 0181-968 6914***

***Fax 0171-328 1988 (this fax is used by BIAS Information
Centre and BIAS Community Services)***

***BIAS is a Company Limited by Guarantee Registered Number: 2269918
Registered Office: 76-82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY***

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BIAS INFORMATION SERVICE - 0171-328 1188

BIAS COMMUNITY SERVICES - 0181-968 6914

INTRODUCTION

BIAS was established in 1978 and we are now in our eighteenth year of operation. BIAS 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. This is where BIAS comes in.

I. BIAS INFORMATION SERVICES

1. LONDON-WIDE INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE HELPLINE

For information on, and referral to an appropriate agency dealing with :-

- * *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' LONDON-WIDE INFORMATION AND REFERRAL
SERVICE HELPLINE ON:**

0171-328 1188

Telephone lines are open : **10.00am - 1.00pm** Monday to Friday

[Answerphone service out of office hours]

or, write to us at

BIAS Information Centre , 76 - 82 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NY

2. ADVICE SERVICE APPOINTMENTS

HOUSING * JOBS * RIGHTS * SERVICES

Appointments may be made with an Advice Worker at BIAS.

For an appointment, telephone BIAS on :- **0171-328 1188**

The advice service appointments are held at :- BIAS Information Centre, 76 - 82
Salisbury Road, London NW6 6NY.

BIAS INFORMATION SERVICE is funded by - *London Borough of Brent, (Education, Arts & Libraries Department), London Boroughs Grants Committee, Irish Government.*

3. PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM BIAS

INFORMATION GUIDES

***IRISH IN BRITAIN DIRECTORY, 5TH EDITION* {ISBN 0 9507294 3} (£5.00)**

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* {ISBN 0 968 3453} (£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* {ISBN 0968 3461} (£2.00)**

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

RESEARCH REPORTS:

***THE HIDDEN MINORITY* (£5.00)**

A research investigation into mental health and the Irish experience in Brent.

***ALCOHOL AND THE IRISH IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT* (£3.50)**

Comprehensive and in-depth research investigation into alcohol consumption within the Irish 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

***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* (£2.00)**

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

II. BIAS COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. CHILDREN & FAMILIES SOCIAL WORK SERVICE

BIAS Community Services is contracted by the Children and Young People Commissioning Team of London Borough of Brent Social Services Department, to provide support services to Irish children and families in need, in the borough. Under our current contract a direct referral can be made by Brent Social Services for work with Irish children and families who currently live in the Brent area.

BIAS Social Work Service can offer the following :-

- **Assessment** work with or without London Borough of Brent Social Worker.
- **Joint casework** with LB Brent Social Worker.
- **Family work, direct work, group work** by BIAS Social Worker.
- **Consultancy** on specific issues relating to work with Irish families
- **Advocacy**

Further information about BIAS' Social Work Service can be obtained by contacting:-

BIAS Community Services

Premier House

313 Kilburn Lane

LONDON W9 3EG

Tel:- 0181-968 6914

BIAS Children & Families Social Work Service is part of BIAS Community Services. The Service is contracted by the London Borough of Brent Social Services Department under The Children Act, 1989.

2. IRISH TRAVELLERS SERVICE

(i) TRAVELLERS HEALTH ACCESS PROJECT

BIAS Community Services have been commissioned by the NHS Ethnic Health Unit to work with Irish Travellers in the London Boroughs of Brent and Harrow.

The Health Access Project aims to improve Irish Travellers access to Primary health care services in the 2 boroughs.

(ii) CHILDREN'S SERVICE

BBC Children in Need have funded BIAS Community Services to develop play activities for Irish Traveller children in the London Borough of Brent.

For more information about the above projects contact :-

BIAS Community Services

Premier House

313 Kilburn Lane

London W9 3EG

Tel : 0181-968 6914

3. ELDERS COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

(i) WESTBROOK DAY CENTRE PROJECT

BIAS Community Services in co-operation with Brent Elders Voice provides community care services for Irish elders in the Harlesden area of the London Borough of Brent.

These services provided under contract since 1990, are held at :-

Venue	:-	The Westbrook Community Centre Knowles House 51 Longstone Avenue Harlesden London NW10 3UN
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Open	:-	Every Tuesday 12.00 - 3.00pm
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Number of Places	:-	22
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Services Provided	:-	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hot Meal• Irish social and cultural activities (music/dance)• Information/advice on housing and welfare services
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Transport	:-	We are able to provide transport for a limited number of people
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How to Use the Westbrook Day Centre Project	:-	Written referral from Social Services or Health Services in Brent
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Referral forms can be obtained from *BIAS Community Services*. Completed forms to be returned to :- Jeanne Dermody, Irish Pensioners Worker, BIAS Community Services, Premier House, 313 Kilburn Lane, London W9 3EG, Tel:- 0181-968 6914.

The Westbrook Day Centre Project is part of BIAS Community Services. The Project is contracted by *Brent Joint Consultative Committee (Brent and Harrow Health Authority and London Borough of Brent Social Services)*.

(ii) COPLAND DAY CENTRE PROJECT

BIAS Community Services provides community care services for Irish elders in the Wembley area of the London Borough of Brent.

These services provided under contract since 1992 are held at :-

Venue	:-	Copland Resource Centre 1 Copland Avenue Wembley Middlesex HA0 2EN
Open	:-	Every Wednesday 2.00 - 5.00pm
Number of Places	:-	14
Services Provided	:-	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Traditional Irish Afternoon Tea• Irish Social and Cultural Activities• Information/Advice on Housing and Welfare Services/Benefits
Transport	:-	Transport is not provided
How to Use the Copland Day Centre Project	:-	Written referral from Social Services or Health Services in Brent

Referral forms can be obtained from *BIAS Community Services*. Completed forms to be returned to :- Jeanne Dermody, Irish Pensioners Worker, BIAS Community Services, Premier House, 313 Kilburn Lane, London W9 3EG, Tel:- 0181-968 6914.

The Copland Day Centre Project is part of BIAS Community Services.
The Project is contracted by Brent Joint Consultative Committee (London Borough of Brent Social Services and Brent and Harrow Health Authority).

(iii) HOUSEBOUND SERVICE

BIAS provides a housebound visiting and support service to isolated and frail elderly Irish people in Brent.

Further details about the service are available from Jeanne Dermody at BIAS Community Services.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

STATEMENT OF INTENT

BIAS accepts that in society certain groups and individuals are disadvantaged and, as a result, the agency 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 it's 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.

2. COMPLAINTS/COMMENTS PROCEDURE

COMPLAINTS/COMMENTS ABOUT ANY OF BIAS' SERVICES

If you would like to make a complaint or comment about any of BIAS' Services or any of its employees who work in these services, then you should follow the procedure below -

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

Please give your name, address and telephone number, and details of your complaint or comment i.e., What do you think BIAS did wrong or failed to do and what has given you cause to make a complaint or comment?

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/Comment Form to be sent to you.
4. Complete the Complaint/Comment Form and return to: The Chairperson, BIAS 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
Deputy Director
London Borough of Brent
Brent Voluntary Sector Team
Room 5
Town Hall Annexe
Forty Lane
Wembley HA9 9JW
(regarding BIAS' Information Services in Brent)

(2) Mr Christopher Andrews
Principal Grants Officer
Community and Cultural Services Team
London Boroughs Grants Unit
5th Floor
Regal House
London Road
Twickenham TW1 3QS
(regarding BIAS' Information Services in London)

(3) Mr. Robert Smith
Commissioning Officer
Children's Commissioning Team
Social Services Department
LB Brent, Box 440
Wembley HA9 0LD
(regarding BIAS' Children & Families
Social Work Service)

4) Ms Cath Attlee
Assistant Director of Commissioning - Brent
Brent and Harrow Health Authority
Grace House, Harrovian Business Village
Bessborough Road
Harrow HA1 3EX
(regarding BIAS' Community Care Services
to older people)

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

3. STUDENT PLACEMENTS

BIAS Community Services offer placement opportunities for students undertaking social work training courses.

For further information about the availability of placements, please contact :-

Karen McHugh, BIAS Community Services, Premier House, 313 Kilburn Lane,
London W9 3EG [telephone 0181-968 6914]

BIAS INFORMATION SERVICES

BIAS INFORMATION CENTRE offers a specialist, professional service to the Irish community, and to individuals and organisations with an interest in Irish affairs.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CENTRE INCLUDE :-

LONDON-WIDE TELEPHONE INFORMATION LINE

Open Monday to Friday (10.00am - 1.00pm)

POSTAL ENQUIRY SERVICE

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

ADVICE SERVICE

Available to personal callers by appointment

DATABASE & RESOURCE CENTRE

BIAS Information Service 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

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

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 sectors on the experiences of the Irish migrant community.

MEDIA

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