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Story Telling  
Business Plan.*

### Editor :

*Cecilia Greene  
Development Worker*

# BIAS NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 4

Spring 2002

Welcome to our very special and extended **St Patrick's Day** edition of our BIAS newsletter.

It is great to see preparations going on all over London to celebrate the feast day of our Patron Saint. Indeed places all over the world where large numbers of Irish People have emigrated to such as New York and Boston have long been awaiting the spectacular parades and displays which dominate these cities on **17 March**.

We are pleased to say that BIAS will be having a float in the Trafalgar Square parade, (for details see page six) as well as playing a central part in our local Brent parade which will take place in Willesden High Road.

We hope that everyone will partake in the celebrations and join in the spirit of togetherness and fun which is very much part of the day.

Since our last edition we have reached our full compliment of staff and we are in the process of finalising our three year business plan. In our summer edition we will present our executive summary with plans and targets for the next three years.

We are very grateful for all your ideas, comments and contributions which we have incorporated into our newsletter and we hope that you will continue to support us in planning for our summer edition.

*Lá féile naomh padraig*





# Irish Travellers' Movement In Britain

## Mission Statement

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

### **Brent Irish Advisory Service**

The Old Library Building  
Willesden Green Library Centre  
95, High Road,  
London,  
NW10 2ST.  
Tel: 020 8459 6655  
Fax: 020 8459 6699

E-Mail: [bias.brent@btconnect.com](mailto:bias.brent@btconnect.com)

### **BIAS Travellers Project**

Tel: 020- 8459 7638  
Fax: 020-8459 1028  
E-Mail: [biasitp@btconnect.com](mailto:biasitp@btconnect.com)

Charity No:  
1059801

Company No:  
2269918

### Management Committee Members

Colum Moloney	Chair
Jim Smith	Vice chair
Mary MacNamara	Treasurer
Marie Dalton	Member
Margaret Gallagher	Member
Tony Donnelan	Member
John Healy	Member
Agnes O'Connor	Member
Kathryn Maguire	Member
Karen McHugh	Secretary



Brent Irish Advisory Service

As you are aware, the ITM recently distributed more than 600 hundred questionnaires to Travellers, Traveller and other organisations and interested individuals. The response has been very successful. We have been able to gauge an understanding of the issues affecting the Traveller community. From the questionnaires feedback we have been able to process the following information.

*Before the questionnaire, 48% of the organisations contacted had no knowledge of the ITM and were unaware of its role.*

### **The Issues that were identified through the questionnaires were:**

- ✓ Accommodation Provision 27%
- ✓ Discrimination 20%
- ✓ Education 16%
- ✓ Lack of Cultural Awareness 10%
- ✓ Others include harassment, lack of access to services, poverty and unemployment, continual movement and conflict 27%

### **The organisations contacted felt that the role of the ITM should be to:**

*"Raise the profile of the Traveller Movement, through support and awareness...addressing issues for Travellers... and to provide advocacy on behalf of the Travelling community in relation to their needs and rights"*

Overall the response has been overwhelming and huge assistance. We will process the final results before easter. We would like to thank everyone who has replied. As developments arise within the movement, we will keep you updated, within the BIAS newsletter. If you would like to receive regular information, please complete the mailing request form below.

We would also like to thank Tammy Tallon for assisting the ITM with the questionnaire over the past 10 weeks. Tammy has been on placement with us from Maynooth University, Ireland and has made an invaluable contribution for which we would like to thank her.

The ITM would like to wish you a very happy St. Patrick's Day.

### **ITM Mailing List**

**Name:** .....

**Organisation:** .....

**Address:** .....

.....

**Phone no:** .....

**Email:** .....

**Irish Travellers' Movement**  
Old library building, Willesden Green Library Centre,  
95 High Road, Willesden, NW10 2ST.  
Tel: 0208 4597638 Fax: 02084591028  
E-mail: [noelettekeaneitm@hotmail.com](mailto:noelettekeaneitm@hotmail.com)



## How to claim an Irish Birth Certificate

If you were born in Ireland you should be able to obtain a copy of your birth certificate

1. Send the following information in writing:
  - Your full name (forenames & Surname).
  - Your date of birth.
  - Your place of birth (hospital / village / town & county).
  - Your father's full name.
  - Your mother's full name (maiden name)
2. Enclose a postal order, money order or cheque made payable to the Registrar-General to the value of £5 sterling or 6.98 Euros.

Which Registrar Office?

If you were born in Northern Ireland, send it to:  
The General Register Office, Oxford House, 49-55  
Chichester St, Belfast, BT1 4HL, Northern Ireland,  
**Tel: 02890 252000.**

If you were born in Dublin, send it to: Ground Floor,  
Joyce House, 8-11 Lombard St. East, Dublin 2.  
**Tel: 00 353 1 6711968.**

For people born anywhere else in the Republic of Ireland, it may be quicker to send it to the local Office in the county of your birth. These addresses may be obtained from BIAS or found in Irish telephone directories under 'Health Boards'.

Forms should be completed as fully and as clearly as possible, in **BLOCK CAPITALS**.

The General Register office holds records of (a) Marriages other than Roman Catholic Marriages registered in Ireland since the 1st of April 1845, and (b) Births, Deaths and Roman Catholic Marriages registered in Ireland since the 1st of January, 1864.

The Northern Ireland Office holds records for the whole of Ireland up to the end of 1921. After that date records are held at the Belfast address given above.

If you require any further information please contact **BIAS** on **0208 459 6655**.

## The Traveller Law Reform Bill

The Traveller Law Reform Bill is the product of over years of discussion and collaboration by Gypsies and Travellers and their organisations including BIAS Irish Travellers Project and the statutory and voluntary sectors (including representatives from the police, local authorities, education and health providers, churches, equality organisations, lawyers and planners).

Many of the clauses in the Bill make important amendments to remove discriminatory statutory provisions. The Bill's most significant innovation, however, concerns the extent to which it seeks to remove from the political stage decisions concerning site provision and site toleration. In effect it creates self-enforcing provisions: measures which do not depend upon 'political will' for their subsequent enforcement.

This is to be achieved by:

1. Creating a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Commission which will be responsible for assessing the need for sites throughout England and Wales.
2. Local Authorities will be required facilitate site provision (by e.g. providing for planning permissions for owner occupied sites, tolerating historic sites and collaborating with Housing Associations which will have power to provide, develop and manage sites).
3. Local Authorities which have failed to facilitate the provision of sufficient sites will have greater difficulty in evicting illegal encampments on their own land; likewise planning inspectors will have to regard to such a failure when determining applications by Gypsy and Travellers for permission to develop their own sites..

## Children's Trip To Victoria & Albert Museum

On February 20th, 6 children from Lynton Close Travellers Site in Brent visit the Victoria & Albert Museum. There they will view an exhibition of photos of European Gypsies, and discuss these images. This will be followed by a visit to Lynton Close by Jo McGuire, a professional photographer, whose photographs of Irish Travellers and English Gypsies have been featured in The Times and exhibited at The Irish Centre, Hammersmith. She will spend a day with the children, guiding them on how to frame and take good photographs. They will be supplied with cameras. The Museum will develop and print the photographs. Each child will receive an album with copies of their photos. Three sites are taking part in this project. The 50 best photos will be selected by Donald Kenrick, the photographers and the V & A Museum. These will be exhibited at the V & A in October. This project was organised by Donald Kenrick, of Stepping Stones Education, together with the V & A. Donald is a well-known activist for civil rights for Roma, English Gypsies/Travellers and Irish Travellers and has published many books, including "Moving On: the Gypsies and Travellers of Britain". He gave evidence on behalf of Irish Travellers in the campaign to establish a site in Brent, which resulted in the provision of the Lynton Close Site.



# SOCIAL WELFARE

If you are receiving social security benefits in Britain and intend moving to Ireland, it's necessary to take steps before travel to ensure continuity of payment. It is important to inform your Department of Social Security office of your intention to leave Britain to return to Ireland. If possible, give a forwarding address in Ireland. Any social insurance contributions made while in Britain count toward social welfare benefits in Ireland. For more detailed information, contact:

**Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, Áras Mhic Dhiarmada, Store Street, Dublin 1 Tel: 00-353-1 874 8444**

**Identification needed:** At least one of each of the following forms of ID is normally required.

1. Full Version of Birth Certificate or Passport
2. Driving Licence, Rent book, Mortgage Repayment Documents, National Insurance number card, P45/P60, bills addressed to your previous home, bank card, Post Office, Building Society or Credit Union book

### Northern Ireland Social Security System

Because the United Kingdom shares a unified social security system, people moving from Britain to Northern Ireland will find little difference in the benefits system.

### The Republic of Irelands Social Welfare System

The Social Welfare system in the Republic of Ireland differs from its UK counterpart. Social Welfare payments are usually made by personalised payable order, postdraft or Electronic Information Transmission using a Social Services Card at a post office of your choice), and direct payment into a bank, Building Society or An Post accounts. For benefit purposes, cohabiting couples are treated in the same way as married couples.

### Personal Public Service number (PPS Number):

In order to work or receive benefits, you will require a PPS Number. This number replaces the former Revenue and Social Insurance (RSI) number. If you have an RSI number, this automatically becomes your PPS Number. If you have had an RSI number, but cannot remember it or require a PPS number, the local Social Welfare local office can help in either situation. You will need to give some identification, including a long version of Birth Certificate, Passport or Driving Licence and supporting documentation, such as household bills.

### Social Welfare Benefits.

There are four main types of social welfare benefit:

1. **Contributory or Social Insurance** payments which are made on the basis of your PRSI record. PRSI is very similar to National Insurance payments you make from your pay in the UK. Some people call them "stamps".

To qualify, you should have sufficient weeks of contribution made at the correct rate or class on your record. Your National Insurance record in Britain can help you to qualify for these payments in Ireland. Bring any P60's (Employee annual pay, tax and National Insurance record) you have to Ireland with you as they may help you to qualify for contributory benefits.

2. **Non-Contributory or Social Assistance** payments.

If you do not qualify for contributory benefits, you may qualify for Social Assistance payments. Usually, you will have to satisfy a means test for these benefits. Means tests vary according to the benefit sought and usually cover any family (including cohabiting couples) income you have and any other resource that might provide earnings or be a subsidised form of income, such as free rent.

3. **Universal Services**

These benefits are not means tested nor based on Social Insurance contributions. They include such as Child Benefit and Free Travel for women and men aged over 66. Further information is available from your local social service office.

4. **Health Benefits**

Usually, these benefits are administered by the local Health Board offices and include Medical Cards and Supplementary Welfare Allowance.

There is a wide range of benefits available depending on your circumstances. Some benefits carry specific conditions. For instance, you are required to be capable of, actively seeking and available for work in order to receive unemployment benefits. You are also obliged to inform the relevant Department should your circumstances change while receiving benefits.

### APPEALS

If you are dissatisfied with a Departmental decision on any benefit claim (other than Supplementary Welfare Benefit-see below), you should appeal in writing on Form SWAO1, (available at Social Welfare offices) or by letter within 21 days of the claim decision. Your local Centre for the Unemployed should be able to help you with your written appeal. Send your appeal to **Social Welfare Appeals Office, D'Olier House, D'Olier Street, Dublin 2.**

### UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE

#### Transferring Unemployment Benefits

If you are receiving Unemployment Benefit in Britain and you move to Ireland then you can still receive payments when you return home. To qualify, you should have been registered as unemployed in Britain for at least four weeks before leaving the country. It is important to inform the Benefits office in Britain of your intention to move at least four weeks before you depart. There you can acquire Forms E104 and E301, which will help avoid delays to your payment on return. The transferred payment is made for up to 13 weeks. You can then apply for Unemployment Assistance in Ireland.

#### Benefits for Unemployed people

*Unemployment Benefit:* This is paid to people between the ages of 16 and 66 who have suffered a loss of employment, are capable of, available for and actively seeking work. If you have a child, you will have to show that you have childcare arrangements to ensure you can take up work at short notice. Keep records of all job searches. Also note that if you work for just one hour in a day, you are considered to be unavailable for work for the full day. To qualify, you must be fully unemployed for at least three of six consecutive days. You must also meet the appropriate PRSI contributions and have a recognised address (usually means non-tourist facility) in Ireland.

You should apply for this benefit on the first date you become unemployed by registering at your local Social Welfare Office. Unemployment Benefit is usually payable for 15 months, after which you may be entitled to Unemployment Assistance. As with other benefit claims, suitable means of identification is required with your application.

*Unemployment assistance:* To qualify for Unemployment Assistance, you should be aged between 18 and 66. As with Unemployment Benefit, you must be available for, actively seek and be capable of work. Keep records of all job searches. Similarly, you must have a recognised address (see above) and be unemployed for at least three days in any consecutive six day period.

This benefit is similar to Income Support in Britain and is means tested. You may be asked for copies of bank accounts or statements. To apply for this benefit, you should register at your **Social Welfare Local Office**. Once again, be sure you have relevant identification. An inspector may call to you at your home for details of your means.

#### Child Benefit (Childrens Allowance):

This is not a means tested payment and is usually paid monthly to the child's mother or guardian. Each child under the age of sixteen, living in the Republic of Ireland, qualifies for Child Benefit. You will also qualify if your child is aged up to eighteen and in full-time education or is disabled. *You should claim Child Benefit within three months of your return to Ireland or within three months of eligibility.* Claim forms are available from post offices, your local Social Welfare Office or **Social Welfare Services Office, Child Benefit Section, St. Oliver Plunkett Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. (Tel: 074 25566 or Dublin 01 874 8444).**



## Moving To Ireland

### Family Income Supplement (FIS)

This is a weekly payment to assist families (including lone parent families) who work on low pay. Applications should be made as soon as you start work in low paid employment having moved to Ireland, as this benefit cannot be backdated. In order to qualify you must: (i) work at least 19 hours per week (ii) be contracted to work for a minimum of 3 months (iii) have at least one child under 18 (or between 18 and 22, if in full-time education) and (iv) have a weekly family income below a certain level - e.g., in 2000/1 a family with two children qualify for FIS if the combined family income is less than IRE253 (2001-2) and the other conditions have been met. FIS is paid by a book of payable orders and is renewed annually. The benefit can be collected at your Post Office of choice.

Claim forms (**FIS 1**) are available from Social Welfare Local Offices. Completed forms should be sent to: **Family Income Supplement Section, Social Welfare Services Office, Government Buildings, Ballinalee Road, Longford. (043-45211)**

### One Parent Family Benefit

This is a means tested benefit for a man or woman bringing up children without the financial help of a partner. It can be paid in addition to Child Benefit and Family Income Supplement. The claimant cannot be cohabiting and must live with and be the main source of care for the children. If divorced, you must be separated for at least three months and have made efforts to acquire maintenance from your ex-spouse or partner. If your spouse is in custody or serving a prison sentence, you may also qualify for One Parent Family Benefit for the duration of confinement. As part of a reciprocal maintenance agreement between Ireland and Britain, you may be required in your application to ask the DSS in Britain to help trace your ex-spouse or partner with a view to serving a maintenance summons on them.

Claim forms (**OPF 1**) are available from Social Welfare Local Offices. Completed forms should be sent to: **Pension Services Office, Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, College Road, Sligo (071-69800)**

### Supplementary Welfare Benefit

This Benefit is administered by Health Boards at local Health Centres and provides a basic weekly means tested allowance to people with little or no income. You should be resident in the Republic of Ireland and have registered as available for work with FAS. (see Employment section) The means test takes into account your total income, the value of any free board or lodging you might have and any personal investments. There are four types of payment available under the Scheme.

- 1. Basic Payment:** If you have no income or are waiting for a claimed social welfare benefit to be paid, you may be entitled to a basic Supplementary Welfare Allowance. If your income is lower than the basic rate, you may be entitled to a top-up to the basic rate level. Note that any amount paid in respect of welfare benefits which might be due at a later stage will be deducted from subsequent benefits received. A decision on your claim normally takes a week and is given in writing. Payment is by cheque. **Appeals can be addressed in writing to the Appeals Officer at the local Health Board.**
- 2. Supplements:** If your income is too low to meet certain special needs such as rent or mortgage interest payments, additional heating or dietary expenses owing to certain medical conditions, you may be entitled to a weekly supplement. The supplement amount is based on circumstances and is decided by the Health Board.
- 3. Exceptional Needs Payments:** In exceptional circumstances, one-off payments may be made at the discretion of the Health Board for expenses such as essential housing equipment (including bedding), funeral costs or other unforeseen requirements of a one-off nature.
- 4. Urgent Needs Payments:** This is an allowance paid to assist with immediate needs in the aftermath of a fire or flood and includes such as food and clothing. You may qualify even if you do not ordinarily qualify for Supplementary Welfare Allowance. However, any sums paid by the Health Board to you will later be recovered from any related insurance claim.

### Household Budget Scheme

This scheme is run by An Post to assist you with household budget management. Under the Scheme, An Post will make deductions from certain welfare benefits paid to you in the Post Office to help you pay ongoing bills, such as Council rents, gas, phone and electricity. The scheme is completely voluntary and deductions can be made by application

to An Post. The maximum deduction allowed is 25% of your total benefits. Further details: **An Post: -Freephone 1800 707172. (In Ireland)**

### Pensions

The majority of people in the United Kingdom contribute to State Pensions Scheme through National Insurance contributions from pay. Some people, such as Local Authority and State employees pay contributions from gross pay (usually 4-5%) into a centralised pension Scheme and consequently are "opted out" of the State Pensions Scheme. If you pay pension contributions (sometimes called "superannuation") to any employer-run Scheme, contact the Scheme administrators before you depart.

You will need to leave a forwarding address and acquire Scheme contact details for future enquiries and pension claim by you. If you have not made the required number of contributions, you may be entitled to a refund of contributions. Otherwise, your pension benefits will be frozen until you reach retirement age.

### Transferring pensions from Britain to Ireland

If you are paid a pension in Britain, then you may have your British pension paid to you in Ireland.

You should inform your local DSS office of the date you intend on moving to Ireland and, if possible, your new address in Ireland. You will also need to quote your National Insurance number when making your application for transfer of pension.

**Further details: Department of Social Security, Pensions & Overseas Benefits, Tyneview Park, Whitley Road, Benton, Newcastle upon Tyne NE98 1BA Tel: 0191-83782 Website: [www.dss.gov.uk](http://www.dss.gov.uk)**

### THERE ARE THREE MAIN TYPES OF IRISH PENSION:

#### 1. Retirement Pension

In order to qualify for Retirement pension, you must be aged over 65, be retired from insurable employment and meet the necessary social insurance contribution records. You can be employed part-time, but earn less than £30 gross per week at insurance class J or if self-employed earn less than £2500 per annum. You should apply for Retirement Pension six months in advance of your 65th birthday, if you are applying from outside Ireland. If you receive Retirement Pension you will automatically be sent a Free Travel Pass when you reach 66.

#### 2. Old Age Contributory Pension

To qualify you must be over 66 and meet the necessary social insurance contribution conditions. You can work without affecting your Contributory Pension. You should apply for Retirement Pension six months in advance of your 66th birthday, if you are applying from outside Ireland. If you receive Old Age Contributory Pension a Free Travel Pass will be sent to you automatically.

Any social contributions you made while in Britain may be added to help you qualify for either Retirement or Old Age Contributory pension in Ireland. Should you qualify, you may receive a pro-rata pension from each country. Application forms for both Retirement and Old Age Contributory pensions (**Form RP/ CPI**) are available from main post offices, local social welfare offices and **Pension Services, Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, College Road, Sligo (00-353-71 69800)**

#### 3. Non-Contributory Old Age Pension

If you do not qualify for either Retirement or Contributory Old Age Pensions, you may qualify for a Non-Contributory Pension. In order to qualify you must be aged over 66, satisfy a means test and be resident in Ireland. A Social Welfare Inspector will ask for details of your means and may call to you at your home. If you receive Non-Contributory Old Age Pension, a Free Travel Pass will be sent to you automatically. Application forms for Non-Contributory Old Age pensions (Form OAP1) are available from main post offices, local social welfare offices and **Pension Services Office, Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, College Road, Sligo (071 69800)**

People in receipt of Irish pensions and others over pensionable age may qualify for extra benefits, such as free electricity, free television licence, free telephone rental and a medical card. If you do not qualify for an Irish pension, you may qualify for a Free Travel pass. For more details on these benefits, contact the **Free Schemes Section at the Pension Services Office as above.** 5



## History of Saint Patrick

St. Patrick's birthplace was probably Roman Britain - most likely Wales. Patrick was about sixteen years old when he was abducted and enslaved by Irish marauders, under their leader, Niall of the Nine Hostages. He worked as a shepherd on the slopes of Slemish Mountain in County Antrim. During this time he prayed to the Christian God while captive in a pagan land.

After six years an angel came to him in a dream, prompting him to escape and seek out his homeland. After travelling for more than 200 miles by foot, he was eventually given passage on a boat travelling across the Irish Sea. His first destination was Britain, but he soon settled in France.

Patrick spent twenty years of his life as a monk in Marmoutier Abbey. There he again received a celestial visitation, this time calling him to return to the land where he has been enslaved, though now with a mission as a priest and converter. Patrick was called to Rome in 432 whereupon Pope Celestine bequeathed the honour of Bishop upon him before he left on his holy mission.

Patrick and 24 of his followers arrived in Ireland in the winter of 432. In the Spring, Patrick decided to confront the high King of Tara, the most powerful King in Ireland. Patrick knew that if he had the King's support he would be free to take Gods message to the people of Ireland.

Patrick and his followers were invited to Tara by the King of Laoghaire. While he was there he plucked a shamrock from the ground and tried to explain the to the druids and the King that the shamrock had three leaves just like God had three personas - The Father, The Son and the Holy Ghost. This was called the Trinity.

King Laoghaire was very impressed and chose to accept Christianity. He also gave Patrick the freedom to spread Christianity throughout Ireland. St. Patrick is also known to have driven the snakes out of Ireland. However, the snakes were at that time a symbol of Paganism, and it was the Pagans that were driven out.

Patrick is thought to have died sometime between 463AD and 493AD. There is a dispute as to his place of burial; the site with the strongest claim seems to be Down Cathedral, where a large slab of rock on which the word Patric is inscribed protects the grave of St Patrick.

Veneration of Patrick gradually assumed the status of a local cult; he was not simply remembered in Saul and Downpatrick, he was worshipped. Indeed, homage to Patrick as Ireland's saint was apparent in the eight century AD. At this time Patricks status of national apostle was made independently of Rome; he was claimed locally as a saint before the practice of canonisation was introduced by the Vatican. The veneration in which the Irish have held St Patrick is evidenced by the salutation, still common today, May God, Mary and Patrick bless you.

Within the Christian calendar Patrick has long been remembered with fondness. This began as early as the ninth century AD with the Feast of St Patrick's falling asleep in other words his passing on 17 March. The Book of Armagh included a note directing all monasteries and churches in Ireland to honour the memory of the saint by the celebration, during three days and three nights in mid-spring.

Fables about Patrick ridding Ireland of snakes or his use of the shamrock to explain the Trinity, still endure as part of modern St Patrick's Day folklore and custom.

### Local events:

Saturday, March 16, 3-5pm.

*Childrens Dance Competition & Pascal and the Virginians.*

*Bridge Park Complex, Harrow Road, London NW10.*

Sunday, March 17.

*Brent Parade,*

*Willesden Green Library Centre*

Sunday, March 17.

*Trafalgar Square,*

*Parade 1 - 2:30pm.*

*The parade starts from*

*Westminster Cathedral.*

*Entertainment includes The*

*Dubliners, Mary Coughlan, Finbar*

*Furey, Celtic Feet and Bellefire.*

Sunday, March 17.

*Lewisham St Patrick's Day Parade*

*begins at Lewisham Irish Centre*

*at 11:30.*

### National

Monday 11th March until

Saturday 23rd March.

*Harrods Irish Food Promotion*

*Relish the flavour of Irish Food at*

*Harrods famous food halls.*

Sunday March 17.

*Birmingham St Patrick's Day Parade*

*begins at 12 noon from Camp Hill via*

*the Bullring and Digbeth to St Anne's.*

*Manchester St Patrick's Day Parade*

*begins at the Irish World Heritage*

*Centre at 12 noon and arrives at*

*Manchester's Town Hall to be*

*greeted by the Mayor.*

*Nottingham St Patrick's Day Parade*

*begins at the Forest Recreation*

*Ground at 12:30 pm and proceeds to*

*Old Market Square.*

### Dublin

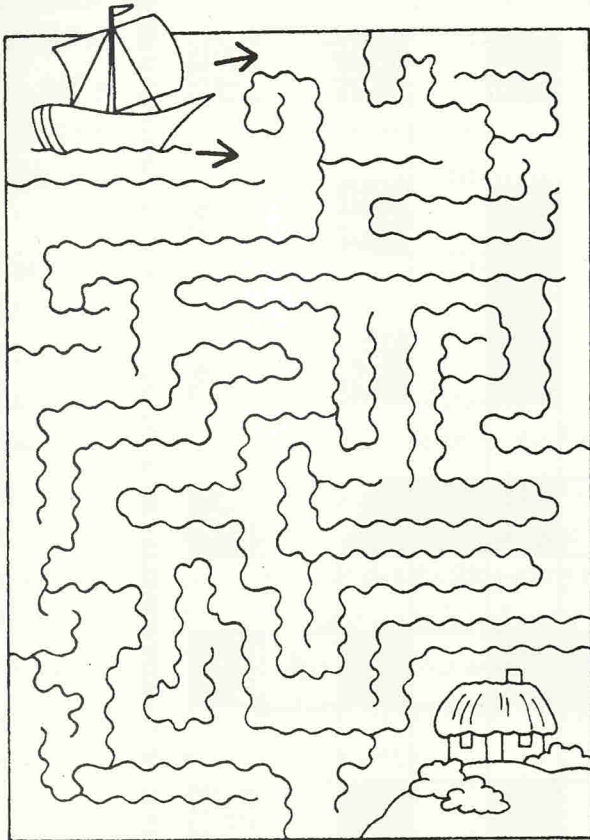
Sunday, March 17, 12 noon.

*The parade starts from Patrick St*

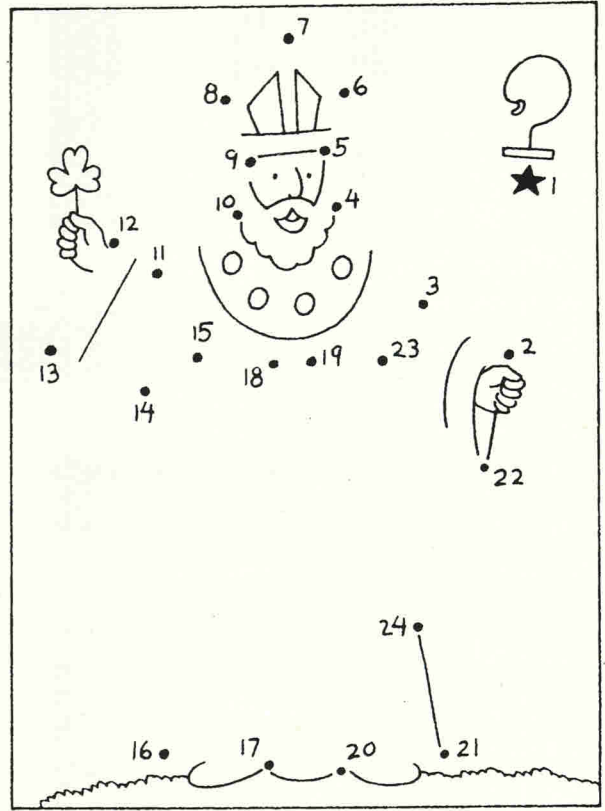
*along Christchurch Place, along*

*Dame St, O'Connell St and finishing*

*on Parnell Square west.*



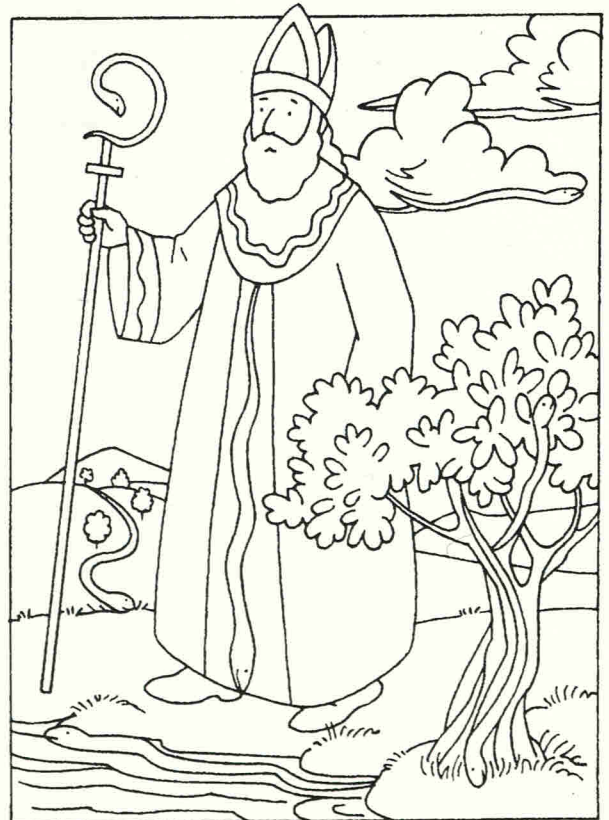
Sail across the choppy sea to Ireland.



Connect the dots to reveal the Patron Saint of Ireland.

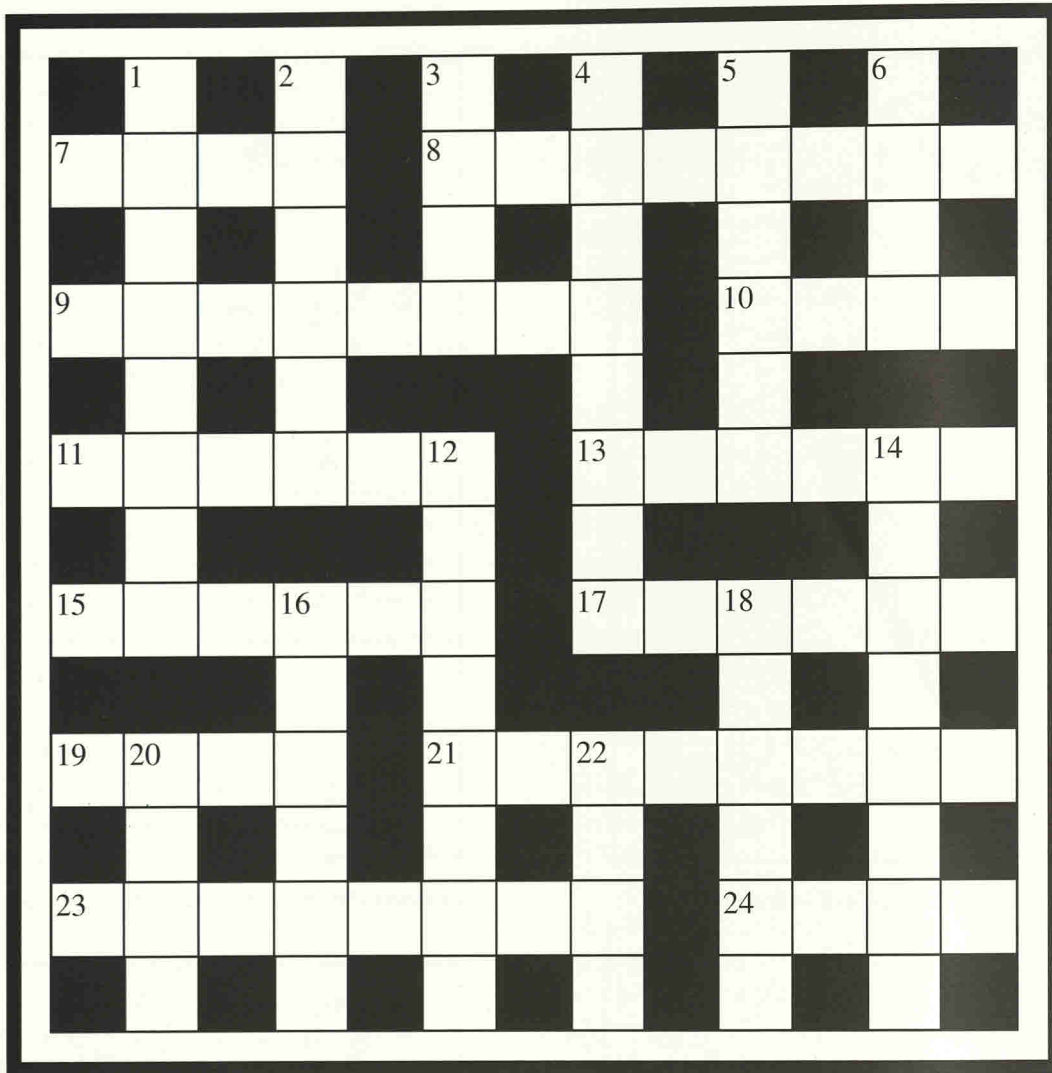
D	U	B	I	N	A	Y	N
U	D	U	B	L	I	N	I
B	I	D	Y	O	Y	C	D
A	B	L	C	I	R	K	U
K	A	C	A	R	U	I	B
E	N	O	K	E	L	L	S
L	T	R	I	D	N	D	U
C	R	U	C	O	R	A	L
B	Y	L	O	L	Y	R	I
A	N	T	R	Y	U	E	N
N	I	Y	K	A	L	L	S

Find the following Irish cities in the search-a-word puzzle: Bantry, Dublin, Cork, Kells, Kildare. The words can be spelled side-to-side or up-and-down.



7 snakes are hiding from St. Patrick. Can you find them?





**ACROSS**

- 7. Stage before All-Ireland Final. (abbr.) (4)
- 8. Munster County in verse, maybe.(8)
- 9. Film with Richard Dreyfuss and Emilio Estevez. Kate's out (anag.) (8)
- 10. Adam and Eve's Garden (4)
- 11. Let's in quietly (anag., 6)
- 13. Full, complete (6)
- 15. Town in Co. Cork. My fore (anag.) (6)
- 17. Fairy with stripe, maybe. (6)
- 19. River in Northern Ireland (4)
- 21. Irish ex-soccer star. Andy\_\_\_\_\_ (8)
- 23. Worked for Tony Blair, maybe. (8)
- 24. River in Kilkenny (4)

**DOWN**

- 1. Boy band; Sligo-Dublin mix (8)
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Rock and the Miami Showband. (6)
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ ran. Out of the frame. Too. (4)
- 4. Suffocates. Stifles (8)
- 5. Cleric. Anagram of 17 Across (6)
- 6. Measure of land (4)
- 12. Film. Xmas tale for childrens gifts, maybe. (3,5).
- 14. Famous Wexford GAA Club; run earth (anag) (8)
- 16. Small fish. Mown in (anag. 6)
- 18. Irish tune. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Moon. (6)
- 20. Island off the West Coast of Ireland. (4)
- 22. Broad. (4)

Answers to Crossword will appear in the next edition.

All entries to BIAS office by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2002. The winner will be notified by 12<sup>th</sup> April.



**It is often written that the orphanages of Ireland are the subject of controversy - in that, all we usually hear about are the hard/bad times children have had in these homes - my story tells a different tale.**

*I had spent the first eight years of my life at home with my parents, and (my then) 4 sisters and 4 brothers, we were a poor family (as were most then) whose Father was an alcoholic, and whose Mother took to bed on the onset of every pregnancy. My older sister and brother and I spent our days roaming the streets, or down by the docks begging off the sailors instead of being at school, and often my sister had to go begging off the butcher, the baker, and the neighbours - one day our lives changed forever.*

It was a lovely summer day - the day the lady from the Social Services came to take my two sisters and myself away to a decent life in Nazareth House, Derry. I remember the loud clang of the heavy front door as it closed behind us, entering a large hallway, and going down the long corridors to enter a room full of children - children who were to be my family for the next twelve years. I was in awe at the immense size of the place, but I didn't take long to settle in - I especially looked forward to the decent meals we had every day; Breakfast every morning - a massive fry-up on Sunday morning after Mass, a three-course meal at twelve o'clock, the evening cooked meal, and my favourite a pastry and milk just before bed. There were rules of course as in every house, but given that there were over one hundred girls in the home they weren't too bad: up at six every morning for Mass, lots of prayers throughout the day (as we had our own chapel), Rosary and Benediction straight after school, one

hour of television then homework, and off to bed dead on eight every night. Life in the home had its compensations, we didn't have to go far to Primary School (we had our own school downstairs), and we had our own Ceili Band and Choir that travelled a fair bit to do concert and ceili - we even travelled to England, Scotland, America and Belgium - and the older Ceili Band had appeared on "Opportunity Knocks", we made records, five LPs and one single. I was a solo singer for the band and a member of the choir so I had a great time. Frank Carson and Phil Coulter were regular visitors to the house, and Phil wrote a song especially for us titled "We're One Big Happy Family" - very apt! I particularly looked forward to Christmas time when the Bishop came and we entertained him, then he would present us with our presents one by one - there was always something to wear, something to eat, something to play with, and a tin of gibbs powder toothpaste with I ate like sherbet within a week. All in all I had a very happy childhood with lots of happy memories to share with my family, and the nuns who brought us up keep in touch just like parents would.

*Georgina from Derry*

### BIAS Christmas Cards 2001/2

CONGRATULATIONS to the two girls who won the BIAS Christmas Card Competition: Sarah and Soukaina, both aged 9 drew the winning pictures which were chosen by members of BIAS Elders' Friday Club.

Many thanks to Official Stationers and Tanna's Stationers in Willesden for donating the pastels and video prizes.

Our thanks also to Abbey DPM for printing and providing the recycled paper.



## Kilburn Irish Pensioners Group

*Kilburn Irish Pensioners Group* (KIPG) was founded on March 10th 1986 by five Irish pensioners who recognised the need for a place where older Irish people could meet and socialise in a culturally sensitive setting. There were many elderly Irish people in the Kilburn area who felt totally isolated in the community, it was a time in their lives when their children had left home and also a time when sadly many of them had lost their life long partners.

It was clear that Irish elders needed somewhere where they could get together to support each other, share life experiences, a safe environment where they would feel welcome, understood and accepted for who they were.

*Kilburn Irish Pensioners Group* was formed by five hard working and committed Irish people (who are still active members) and now after 16 years in existence, membership has grown to fifty people. It is a self-support, user led group with all members over the age of 65. In fact the average age is eighty years. They meet weekly on a Monday at Kingsgate Community Centre for lunch.

The group has never had core funding which has meant that over the years the group has had to depend on the generosity of local businesses who were sympathetic to their cause and who kindly donated what they could to the group.

## My Journey

My name is Paul, from Limerick city. I came to London in July 1998. I started off okay, I was working and had a nice flat and everything was sound. But then I started to get into drugs and drink and I suffered from depression. I had never taken cocaine before but pretty soon I developed a serious problem which cost me £200 pounds a week to sustain. In June 2000 my girlfriend kicked me out of her flat and I was on the street with nowhere to go. I ended up drinking everyday and staying in other alcoholics' houses, something which I had never done before.

I woke up one morning and made the journey from Peckham to the Camden Irish centre to get some help to get out of the area as my life was going down hill fairly lively. They put me in a hostel in Kilburn called Conway House. I stayed there for 10 months but other people living there were drinkers too so I was caught up in the drinking buzz again. By this I was really depressed and I ended up getting kicked out on the streets again. I was homeless for six months and I couldn't seem to get help anywhere. I was giving up hope of ever getting out of the vicious circle of drinking.

Over the years the *Kilburn Irish Pensioners Group* while rearing their families saved whatever money they could to send home to their families in Ireland often denying themselves in order to do so. As a result many of these people haven't had the opportunity to return to Ireland for many years because they couldn't afford to. It is this section of the Irish community who contributed to the Irish economy over the years which we now know as the Celtic Tiger.

Many of the members have not been back to Ireland since the day they left and for some this is more than forty years ago. It has always been their dream to return to their native homeland. It was for this very reason that the original members of the *Kilburn Irish Pensioners Group* have decided to make this dream become a reality for these elderly Irish people who could never afford to do this on their own.

The first fundraising event to be held by the KIPG is a benefit dance which is to be held on **Saturday, 13th April 2002, 9-11pm** at the *Mazenod Community Centre in Kilburn*. Please come along to support this very worthy cause and don't forget your dancing shoes!

For further information please contact Marie Sargent on 020 7624 8772.

Then one day I was with my cousin in Willesden and she said "Let's try BIAS". Now I didn't know what it was at the time. I went into BIAS and they helped me to get a flat in the space of a few weeks. The flat is through Brent Mind and I am now getting help for my depression. Life has some meaning again. All I can say is thanks to BIAS I am now a drug and alcoholic free person again and looking for work.

## Claire Louise Bland.

A Traveller woman, Claire Louise Bland, blind since birth, has composed and recorded many songs about Travellers and travelling life. She has composed a song of particular interest to Irish Travellers and boxing fans entitled "Atlanta". This is a tribute, in song, to Frances Barrett, the first Irish Traveller to represent his country in the Olympics, and creating an Olympic Record, which still stands today. Claire has very kindly donated a copy of her video to BIAS Irish Travellers Project.

If anyone has any photos, books, videos, tapes, records of Travellers or travelling life, BIAS Irish Travellers Project would like to hear from you. Please contact BIAS on 0208 459 7638.



## Harrow Irish Elders Friendship Club

Are you of Irish descent or have Irish connections?  
Would you like to meet other people from the same cultural background in a safe and caring environment for a cup of tea and a chat?

Or would you like to become a volunteer

Then Harrow's friendship club is for you!

Why not give Trish O'Farrell or Karen Gilchrist a ring at BIAS on **020 8459 6655**

or alternatively send your details to:

Trish O'Farrell or Karen Gilchrist

Brent Irish Advisory service.

The Old Library Building.

Willesden Central library centre.

95 High Road.

Willesden.

NW10 2ST.



## High & Dry

Conway House hostel in Kilburn is host to a new High & Dry club, a social evening for those in the community who seek the opportunity to socialise in an alcohol and drug free setting. The evening starts from 6-9pm every Friday. There are pool tables, a table tennis table, board games, videos, refreshments and hot food in a relaxed and informal setting. All this for Free!!

Phone Dee on **020 7692 7285** for more information.

## Laptop computing with lunch scheme

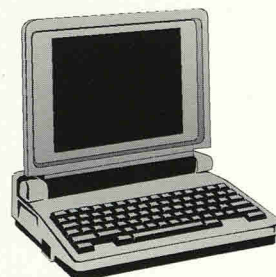
An exciting new project will be starting in the Tuesday luncheon club from April 2002 in conjunction with Head to Head Training and Brent Elders Voice.

Head to head training have gained funding to provide free computer training to Irish Elders who attend the Tuesday club at the West Brook Community Centre.

The sessions will take place from 11.30am-12.30pm. There will be advocacy workers from head to head training who will teach you basic computer skills. Members can also have access to on-line computer training.

If you are interested in taking part in this scheme or if you were interested in volunteering free training can be provided.

You can ring Karen Gilchrist at BIAS for further details on **0208 459 6655**.



## Recycling

We are delighted to report progress on our paper recycling efforts. In keeping with our environmental policy we have been recycling paper at both the *BIAS* offices. At present Brent Council's recycling department do not collect waste paper from businesses, therefore we have to take our waste paper to the recycling banks. However we have now linked up with *Pauline Hunter* who is the Community Arts Development Officer based at *John Wilson House*. Pauline has set up a very innovative project called *Pulp Designs* which aims to create skills training and employment opportunities for people experiencing or recovering from mental ill health. Pulp Designs is a co-operative in the social enterprise sector, helping people who experience economic discrimination become self employed.

The enterprise will produce interior decoration such as : ceiling centres, wall plaques and tiles which will be made from recycled paper waste thus creating employment from waste whilst contributing to waste minimisation. We at *BIAS* would like to wish Pauline and everyone at *John Wilson House* the best of luck in their new and exciting enterprise.

For more information you may contact Pauline on **020 8459 8398**. Email: [paulinehunter@btclick.com](mailto:paulinehunter@btclick.com)



**BIAS would like to thank the following volunteers for their on-going work and commitment in our Elders Project**

Bridget Timlin	Ellen Sheehan	Nora Jones
Gerry Cougan	Mary O'Connor	Myra Scalon
Carmel Murphy	Kelly Brown	Bridget Quirke
John Keyes	Nino Bryan	Joanne Henry
Andrew Mc Hugh		

We would also like to thank Jim Donnelly who cleans our office carpets at regular intervals.

**BIAS STAFF TEAM – March 2002**

**MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION**

Karen Mc Hugh	Co-ordinator
Richie Butler	Finance Worker
Anthonia Marchington	Administrator
Patsy Twomey	Administrator (Travellers Project)
Gabriel Mackintosh	Development Worker
Marina Richards	Volunteer/Staff Trainer
Cecilia Greene	Development Worker

**PROJECT WORKERS**

Marian O'Donoghue	Team Leader/Advice Worker
Anne Nagle	Outreach Worker
Karen Gilchrist	Volunteer Organiser
Patricia O'Farrell	Social Worker/ Elders in Harrow
Patricia McCrossan	Family Support Worker
Danny McCloskey	Housing Advice Worker
Maureen Conway	Elders Day Care Worker
Julia Grey	Social Work Student
Michelle Cawley	Social Work Student

**TRAVELLERS PROJECT**

Veronica Kemp	Project Manager
Yvonne MacNamara	Youth at Risk Worker/ Deputy Manager
Geraldine Clancy	Youth Worker
Leanne O'Leary	Youth Worker
Margaret Sellers	Families Worker
Positive Parenting Worker	Vacant
Health Promotion Worker	Vacant
Edmund O'Brien	Fund Raiser
Mentoring Co-ordinator	Vacant
Mentoring Training and Support Worker	Vacant
Oonagh Honeyman	Social Work Student

**IRISH TRAVELLERS MOVEMENT (ITM)**

Development Worker	Noelette Keane
Tammy Tallon	Student

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

**AGIY (Action Group for Irish Youth)**

Tel: 020 7700 8137

**BIAS (Brent Irish Advisory Service)**

Tel: 020 8459 6655

**BIAS Irish Travellers Project**

Tel: 020 8459 7638

**Cairde na nGael (Newham)**

Tel: 020 8519 5089

**Cricklewood Homeless Concren (Brent)**

Tel: 020 8208 1608

**Federation of Irish Societies**

Tel: 020 7916 2733

**Haringey Irish Community Care Centre**

Tel: 020 7272 7594

**Haringey Irish Cultural & Community Centre**

Tel: 020 8365 1125

**Irish in Britain Representation Group (IRBG)**

020 7263 4748

**Irish in Greenwich Project**

Tel: 020 8854 4466

**Irish Support and Advice Centre - Hammersmith**

Tel: 020 8741 0466

**Irish Travellers Movement**

Tel: 020 8868 6788

**Irish Chaplaincy in Britain**

Tel: 020 7482 5528

**Irish Commissioners for Prisoners Overseas**

Tel: 020 7482 4148

**Lewisham Irish Community Care Centre**

020 8695 9608

**London Irish Survivors Outreach Project**

Tel: 020 7916 7300

**London Irish Centre – Camden**

Tel: 020 7916 2222 (Community Services)

Tel: 020 7916 7272 (Social & Cultural Services)

**London Irish Elders Forum**

Tel: 020 7813 1478

**London Irish Women's Centre**

Tel: 020 7249 7318

**Safe Start Foundation**

Tel: 020 8452 9990

**The Embassy of Ireland**

Tel: 0207 0207 235 2171 (General Enquiries)

Tel: 0207 225 7700 (Passport Office)

**Solas Anois – Irish Women's Domestic Violence Project**

Tel: 020 8664 6289

**ShelterLine**

Tel: 0808 800 4444

**The Irish Post**

Tel: 020 8735 9411

**The Irish World**

Tel: 020 8453 7800