

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
We invest in people Standard



Birmingham Irish
ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025



www.birish.org.uk



0121 604 6111



info@birish.org.uk



45 Alcester Street, Digbeth, B12 0PH



CONTENTS

Birmingham Irish Association	3
Chair's Report 2024 - 2025	4
CEO's Statement	5
Meet the Staff	6
Meet the Board of Trustee's	7
Our Volunteers	8
Our Projects	9
Support for Travellers	17
Funding & Finances	18
Achievement & Performance	20
Plans for the future	21

Birmingham Irish is the Midlands' leading charity providing welfare and cultural services to the Irish community. We are based in the Heart of the Irish Quarter in Digbeth, Birmingham.

We provide **help & services** with people in mind.

We impact the lives of thousands of people in Birmingham by providing **quality advice & support services**.

Birmingham Irish provide contact by telephone, drop in centres, advice sessions and social clubs.

Image credit to Steve Hearn Photography



Social Inclusion

We provide opportunities for our clients to take part in varied and stimulating activities and events.



Elders Healthcare

We provide support to older adults who may be suffering from physical and mental health problems.



Dementia Care

We support those living with dementia through culturally sensitive Support Centres around the city.



Culture & Heritage

Alongside others, we encourage and promote Irish culture and heritage events in Birmingham.



All Things Irish

Not only do we provide support and care in our community, we can also help you with all things Irish.



Emotional Support

We offer preventative support for children and young people struggling with emotional wellbeing.



Passport Help

We can assist with passport applications and offer guidance with applying first time or renewals.



Family Support

Providing support to young children & families with issues such as isolation, welfare, debt, and more.



Chair's Report

2024 - 2025

Since 1957 Birmingham Irish Association has always had the primary aim of trying to improve the quality of all members of the Irish community's lives by listening to them and their needs and trying to translate these needs into action. I hope that by reading this Review and Annual Report you will see the extensive work that has been done.

It is very important for us to continue to work closely with our funders and partner groups including the National Lottery Reaching Communities England Fund, Birmingham City Council, Health Authorities and other voluntary organisations to strengthen and to be effective in the services provided by BIA.

None of this would be possible without the hard work, dedication and commitment from our management and staff, who in addition to their normal duties in providing excellent services have worked very hard over the past year on fundraising. All staff produce a very detailed and in-depth report to the board which we receive at each trustee board meeting. It is very clear to see that their dedication and commitment to their roles and responsibilities, is second to none. They are a real asset to the charity.

Special mention should be made of the fantastic efforts by our many volunteers, supporters and fundraisers who play an essential role in both our service delivery and fundraising activities. Indeed, they have been doing so for many years and have also been an important force in helping our service users in numerous ways which often greatly improve their quality of life and ability to accept help. Again, their dedication and commitment to the charity is amazing. They are wonderful people.

The voluntary sector continues to have reduced funding. BIA continues to deliver on services to all communities within and around Birmingham, wherever possible.

It was with a very heavy heart, the board, alongside the CEO, made the difficult decision to postpone this year's St Patrick Day's parade. We deeply regretted the disappointment this caused in Birmingham. But it was the right decision for us to make for financial and security reasons. We are looking forward to planning the festival for 2026. Discussions are already taking place.

It is very important for us to continue to work closely with our funders and partner groups including the National Lottery Reaching Communities England Fund, Birmingham City Council, Health Authorities and other voluntary organisations to strengthen and to be effective in the services provided by BIA.

I would like to thank the trustees for supporting me in my role and giving me the opportunity to be chair, which is an honour. It is a pleasure to work with Maurice and the team. Maurice works tirelessly as CEO and is well respected not only in the West Midlands and beyond, but also in Ireland, with his regular visits, as Council of State member to President Michael D Higgins.

JOAN SMITH - CHAIR



CEO's Report

2024 - 2025

It gives me great pleasure to be able to reflect on the past 12 months and highlight some of the highs and lows that have seen BIA continue to thrive in very difficult circumstances for the third sector. Firstly I have to pay tribute to the team's performance in meeting the needs of our clients which has been exemplary. It is a well-worn cliché but nevertheless true that the greatest resource any organisation has is its people. I thank each and every one of BIA's staff team and our many volunteers for their commitment, dedication, energy and loyalty. The following pages of this review details service profiles and achievements. Partnership and collaboration is paramount in the development of any organisation. This year we have worked alongside many other organisations, we have developed strong relationships built on a mutual understanding of the ever changing needs of the people we serve. All the work of BIA is overseen by our board of trustees who ensure the good governance of the organisation. I want to personally thank BIA's board members for their dedication, time and perseverance! I also wish to thank our funders for their continued trust in BIA and all those who donate funds or time in support of our work.

Operating in the third sector constantly presents challenges that has a uniqueness only those who dedicate their time for the benefit of others can overcome. BIA has always been at the heart of the Irish community and even though obstacles have been put in our way we have always challenged ourselves to be stronger and creative in how we develop. You will see from the following pages some of the fantastic work our team have carried out in the last year. From the lows of not being able to deliver the St Patricks days parade to the highs of securing a purpose built dementia support service at the new Irish Centre, it has been a roller coaster ride. Although it is with great sadness that the organisations relationship with Digbeth will soon be at an end I'm sure that the new facilities at Kings Heath will provide the springboard for the charity to bloom and more importantly for our community to be able to rely on a modern and flourishing organisation.

The economic instability alongside the cost of living crisis are going to prove difficult for us all and most especially for those who have the least. BIA will have to weather the economic cutbacks like all charities and we will face major challenges in retaining our services. We need all our supporters and stakeholders to sustain and encourage us to ensure that BIA can continue to provide succour to those most vulnerable in our society. It is with this in mind that we move forward with hope and determination.

Meet Our Staff



Maurice Malone
CEO



Trudy McGroarty
Service Manager



Samantha Malone
Finance Manager



John Mulry
Minibus Driver



Emma McGrath
Health Enablement Team



Paulene McDermott
Children's Support Worker



Roisin Mason
Traveller Research Worker &
Volunteer Co - Ordinator



Sharon Toy
Dementia Centre Co- Ordinator



Claire White
Children's Emotional Support
Worker



Samantha Ataria
Dementia Support Worker



Sinead McTernan
Culture, Sport & Heritage
Project Officer



Catherine Kelly
Front Office Manager



Ravinder Gill
Activities & Wellbeing Worker



Rosie Pocklington
Financial Enablement Worker



Debbie Lynch
Cook



Bernie Walsh
Health Enablement Team

Meet our Board of Trustee's



Joan Smith
Chair



Mick O'Brien
Treasurer



Terri Lynk
Trustee



Alan Downton
Trustee



Dee Smyth
Trustee



Eddie O'Connor
Trustee



Fr Eamonn Corduff
Trustee



Maurice Malone
Company Secretary
& CEO

Our Volunteers

Our dedicated volunteer team are part of what makes Birmingham Irish what it is today.

At the heart of everything we do is the Birmingham Irish community and our volunteers are crucial and centre-stage in helping us transform and change the lives of this community.

From the moment you step into our front office or attend our dementia centres, our amazing volunteers are your first port of call.

In our front office they help with your passport applications, provide you with advice about services available, refer you to the appropriate member of staff depending on the problem you may have; be it benefits, legal, housing or health issues.

They are also very good at helping you choose well known Irish store cupboard favourites from our on-site shop.

In our dementia centres volunteers support the service users with activities, socialising, quizzes or even just simply sitting down to have a chat over a cup of tea.



Social Inclusion



Providing an opportunity for clients to take part in stimulating activities, social interaction, and access to advice and personal support aimed at alleviating loneliness, social isolation and depression and dementia care.



"Social Inclusion Matters"

"Real care in the community"



Elders Healthcare

We provide support to older adults who may be suffering from physical and mental health problems and are having difficulty in engaging with statutory services with the aim of improving their quality of life and personal wellbeing.



Dementia Care

Many people with dementia describe the impact as a series of losses, and that adjusting to them is challenging. Birmingham Irish aims to support those living with dementia through our dedicated culturally sensitive Dementia Support Centres around the city. We have a dedicated minibus to pick up and drop off clients from their homes and we take them to the centres. This gives the client's family or carers a much needed break. The project encourages our service users to improve their quality of life and personal wellbeing. Each activity is designed to include everyone ensuring that no one is marginalised.



“We are like one big family”

Birmingham Irish, alongside others, encourages and promotes Irish culture and heritage events in Birmingham by developing activities that celebrate and enhance the Irish identity, and a vibrant active community.

Culture & Heritage

Meeting the cultural and heritage needs of the first, second and subsequent generations of Irish in Birmingham.



Image Credit to Silver Leaf Photography



"Enhancing identity & wellbeing"

We have promoted Irish culture and heritage in Birmingham through developing our own activities and events, or by cross promoting activities organised by associate groups. Over the last year we have worked on a number of projects with a number of partners across the community, and also with schools.

Young People & Dementia



This project involves supporting children who have a Family member living with Dementia.

The project involves visiting schools and delivering sessions to children in the classroom, as we believe children will feel more at ease in a familiar environment and they may be more willing to share their ideas amongst the children they know.

Following that, we will then tailor individual and smaller group sessions to support children who have a family member living with Dementia.

We want to encourage children to ask questions and talk about any worries they may have. Our sessions are fun and engaging and are completely child friendly. They will involve lots of discussion and some fun and informative activities.



"Tailored support is critical"

Emotional Support

Our Emotional Support Project offers low-level, preventative support for children and young people under 21, who are experiencing difficulties with emotional wellbeing, self-esteem, confidence, relationships, bullying and identity.



“ We focus on building the children’s resilience, self-esteem and social skills.”

Through a range of one-to-one, drop-in and group workshop sessions, we are able to help those who need it, to get back on their feet once more. Currently working in school’s throughout Birmingham. Referrals are received from members of the school pastoral team which includes Heads of House, Pupil Support, attendance officer, school nurse and school social worker.

Preventive support is given to families, addressing issues at an early stage before they escalate. Parents are supported to access housing, welfare benefits, healthcare, debt advice, education/ training and to improve parenting skills. In addition to the school, we work alongside agencies from the statutory and voluntary sector to achieve positive outcomes.

We work individually with children and young people in school providing support with attendance, behaviour, emotional issues, anxiety, transition from primary to secondary school and bereavement. Working closely with the school, our aim is to remove barriers to learning and enable children to achieve their full potential

Housing and Benefits



We provide welfare and support advice on an appointment basis.

Our benefits and welfare advice includes:

- Full entitlement claims
- Benefit applications
- Benefit appeals
- PIP, ESA,
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
- Supporting people
- Sitting in on benefit tribunals
- Service Reports
- Debt Advice
- Organising food parcels
- Working with social workers
- Providing information to people coming over or going back to Ireland
- Opening or accessing bank accounts in Ireland
- Land disputes, wills and family arguments

“Support starts with the right advice.”

passport Service



“Supporting connection through citizenship.”

We offer guidance & support for Foreign Birth Registrations & Irish passport applications for both first time and renewals.

We have a photo booth for the passport images & a witnessing service available on site.

All applications can be processed by us at our office. An appointment with one of our friendly team is required.

We can order your official certificates from the UK & Ireland.

The passport service is a very busy service here at Birmingham Irish. Helping with Irish passports means helping people stay connected to their roots.

For more complex cases we can arrange for Late Registration of Birth or amendments (Ireland only).

“Equality, Dignity & Inclusion”



Support for Travellers

Birmingham Irish Association's Traveller Research project encourages individuals and organisations to reach out when they want to learn more about Travelling communities. We want people to learn more by educating themselves about this much misunderstood community. The project receives information requests from university students, statutory organisations, charities and councils. Through our work we want the Traveller community to feel they can be seen, be heard, be proud and be able to celebrate their identity without fear.

- We share good news stories and events on our social media pages
- We highlight social injustices and inequalities faced by the community
- We support campaigns for changes in national policies by national Traveller organisations
- We have contributed to regional policy documents ensuring the needs of the Traveller community is included in the conversation
- We celebrate Gypsy (Romani), Roma, Traveller History month every year
- We network with numerous organisations to raise awareness and make sure the Traveller voice is heard
- We support Travellers requiring support and assistance through our office services

Funding & Finances



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (incorporating INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

		<u>Year to 31 March 2025</u>			<u>Year to 31 March 2024</u>		
	<u>Note</u>	<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Total</u>
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		-	30,919	30,919	-	55,031	55,031
Charitable activities:							
Emigrant support		293,684	-	293,684	285,684	-	285,684
Community support		274,011	-	274,011	82,812	-	82,812
Health and hardship		88,810	-	88,810	88,280	-	88,280
Schools programme		-	7,150	7,150	750	6,908	7,658
Activity centre		-	-	-	-	-	-
Other trading activities:	2	-	12,420	12,420	-	12,149	12,149
Investment income		-	20,586	20,586	-	8,343	8,343
Total Income		656,505	71,075	727,580	457,526	82,431	539,957
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	-	9,931	9,931	-	9,758	9,758
Charitable activities:	5						
Emigrant support		314,148	-	314,148	287,612	-	287,612
Community support		189,953	-	189,953	206,201	-	206,201
Health and hardship		108,762	-	108,762	116,965	-	116,965
Schools programme		-	15,997	15,997	-	17,627	17,627
Activity centre		-	519	519	-	200	200
Other charitable expenditure		-	49,588	49,588	-	62,638	62,638
Total expenditure		612,863	76,035	688,898	610,778	90,223	701,001
Unrealised gains/losses		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net (expenditure)/income		43,642	(4,960)	38,682	(153,252)	(7,792)	(161,044)
Transfers between funds	13	20,243	(20,243)	-	29,298	(29,298)	-
Net movement in funds		63,885	(25,203)	38,682	(123,954)	(37,090)	(161,044)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		317,178	245,031	562,209	441,132	282,121	723,253
Total funds carried forward		381,063	219,828	600,891	317,178	245,031	562,209

Funding & Finances



BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025		2024	
		£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	8	47,904		67,532	
Investment property		-		-	
			-----		-----
			47,904		67,532
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stock	9	1,504		1,504	
Debtors	10	15,540		14,179	
Cash at bank and in hand		577,623		526,868	
			-----		-----
			594,667		542,551
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	11		(41,680)		(47,874)
			-----		-----
NET CURRENT ASSETS			552,987		494,677
			-----		-----
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			600,891		562,209
			-----		-----
NET ASSETS			600,891		562,209
			=====		=====
CHARITY FUNDS	14				
Unrestricted Funds			219,828		245,031
Restricted Funds			381,063		317,178
			-----		-----
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS			600,891		562,209
			=====		=====



Almost 4,000 phone calls received

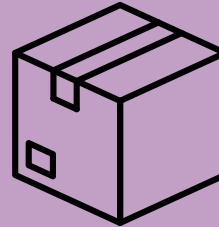
Over 2,500 welfare phone calls took place



Over 4,000 virtual attendances at our drop in centre and activity clubs



Nearly 300 families and young children supported through the Family Support Project



2,000 Food parcels distributed

Achievement and Performance



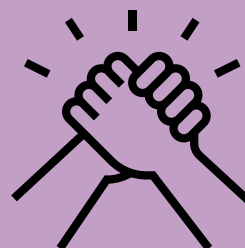
Approaching 450 people addressed their health needs through the Primary Care Project



Over 2,000 clients accessed advice and support services through front office team



We had over 1,500 virtual visitors to the office looking for help with passport applications or visiting the shop



Over 1,000 clients received support with Debt and Welfare benefit related issues

Our Plans For The Future

- 
- Raise the profile of Irish Culture, Sport and Heritage in Birmingham and the wider area.
 - Continue to raise awareness of BIA and the needs of the Irish Community in Birmingham.
 - Further enhance the memory awareness service and created dementia services for the traveller community.
 - Continue to provide quality services in a tough financial environment.
 - Develop partnership working with other like-minded organisations in the West Midlands.
 - Increase younger persons services including mental health support and dementia awareness.
 - Review and deliver a new celebration for St Patrick's Day Festival Engage with local Irish sports clubs including GAA.
 - Complete the relocation to a new centre in Kings Heath.