

**Irish
in Britain**

**IRISH IN BRITAIN
STRATEGIC PLAN
2022 - 2025**

www.irishinbritain.org

INTRODUCTION

Irish in Britain is the national membership body for Irish community organisations and Irish individuals in Britain. As a progressive voice for diaspora interests our mission is to make a positive difference to the lives and experiences of Irish people across Britain.

We actively champion a diverse coalition of Irish organisations by building sustainability into our membership network, promoting health equality; campaigning for issues of common interest; conducting research to inform, educate and drive policy; and promoting the interests of the Irish in Britain through our parliamentary representation and as Secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Ireland and the Irish in Britain.

We are proud of the diversity of experience we represent and champion the inclusion of all who share our vision. As a values driven organisation we celebrate and facilitate participation with all our constituencies, as recipients or providers of services; as supporters of our campaigns, as sharers of expertise, as members, partners, commentators and as audiences.

OUR MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

VISION

Our vision is a confident, healthy and empowered Irish community recognised and valued as part of an inclusive British Society.

MISSION

Our mission is to be the representative voice providing leadership, campaigning and support to the Irish community in Britain.

VALUES

WE ARE EMPOWERING.

We believe in bringing out the best in our people; equipping them to make their own decisions and reach their potential.

We want to enable our community to flourish through support and advocacy, and in our own work, we look to constructively challenge ourselves and each other.

WE ARE INCLUSIVE.

We respect and value people for who they are, and believe that by giving people a voice, and listening to what they have to say, everybody benefits

We are open, and value differences. We look to involve our members, volunteers and staff in all we do, and where we see it, we will challenge discrimination. We believe in giving people at all levels a voice in decisions.

WE VALUE INTEGRITY AND TRUST.

In every aspect of our work through our commitment to openness, honesty and transparency.

We will positively challenge even where there may be difficulty in implementing our values in service delivery, advocacy and representation.

WE ARE CREATIVE.

In all our practice we look for ways to innovate and develop our services so that we can enable community development in a sustainable and ethical way.

We're constantly listening and learning. We're open to change and work with others so that we can achieve more and find solutions to the common and new challenges we face.

WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE.

We take responsibility for our actions, keeping people informed and always do what we've said we'll do. We communicate openly and honestly. We take on board feedback and evaluate our results and impact as we strive to improve.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

A. Provide sector leadership and be a collective voice for the community and civil society organisations.



Why this matters to us

Our membership network is a community-led response to improve the experience and lives of Irish people in Britain. Our mission to represent is mandated by our membership since our foundation in 1973 and we believe these interests are advanced effectively by evidence-based research, policy, leadership, collaboration and campaigning.

We recognise that Irish community interests are common with aims of wider equality and social justice and that we should take an active role in strengthening civil society.

How we will get there

Create an ambitious picture of what Irish community society can contribute

Represent the experiences, needs and collective impact of our members to those with the ability to make positive changes for the sector

Lead in promoting, modelling, and measuring best practice in equity, diversity and inclusion for a more equitable, safer network

Develop dynamic policy capability commensurate with public profile. Take a bold campaigning approach, which enables members to play an active role and lend the weight of their experience and knowledge to changes at a systems level, both locally and nationally

Strengthen and deepen collaborative work with civil society infrastructure bodies to deliver cross-sector shared objectives

Deliver programming that encourages wellbeing, self-expression and empowerment, in particular by promoting community-based solutions based on emerging needs

Champion and model good governance as an enabling force for greater impact

Model best practice Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and stand against all forms of discrimination. We aim to embed EDI across all areas of our structure and work and have produced an allied EDI Strategy to sit alongside this plan

Collaborate and contribute to cross sector representation to amplify sector voice and lobbying capability

B. To facilitate Irish community development through a broad and inclusive network, embracing the different communities of interest throughout the Irish in Britain.



Why this matters to us

We celebrate the diversity of the diaspora community and recognise that true representation actively seeks to include the history and lived experiences of all those connected through ties of citizenship, heritage and affinity.

We believe that representation is progressive only when participation and engagement of all groups within our network is active, authentic and meaningful and adapts to enhance inclusion.

How we will get there

Champion the Irish diaspora profile in Britain and our commitment and actions for inclusion within a shared identity narrative

Recognise the unique role and history of the Irish community and the leadership that it obligates - using it for the benefit and recognition of the community and all communities

Align with Diaspora strategy priorities that enable active participation of intergenerational groups, LGBTQ+, people of mixed heritage, Travellers, and marginalised voices and interests seeking representation within our network

Make it easier for organisations to identify themselves as members of Irish in Britain and engage at all levels within the organisation in ways that suit their circumstances

Connect people, practice and policy through collaborative projects and cross-sector initiatives

Play a leading role in the emerging collaboration between health bodies, local authorities and our membership in order to improve health outcomes for diaspora communities. Promoting recognition and value of Irish community resources within local government

Strengthen relationships between our welfare-orientated members and advice/advocacy organisations and ensure our members understand the legal frameworks and how to effectively advocate locally and regionally

Champion Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion both in our own work and across the sector, ensuring that the diverse needs of Irish community are identified and met (within ESP funded network) in the most appropriate ways

C. To support the sustainability and growth of the community network to serve the changing demographics of the Irish community and the wider community agenda.

Why this matters to us

We recognise that civil society is the ecosystem that can influence social change outside of the family, market or government. Our membership provides critical services as part of an extensive voluntary sector network and is rooted in the values of community action.

They are best placed to understand and respond to local need – our primary objective is to generate and share the tools, resources and information that enable our network to be as effective and adaptable as possible.

How we will get there

Facilitate members to connect and learn from one another through peer support and sharing

Support our members to improve their practice via information and resources, training and events, networking and grant making

Engage with and encourage members to participate in public affairs, policy and advocacy work

Produce rich digital and face-to-face programmes that provide inspiration, information, conversation and support

Sensitively manage changes within the profile of our member services and the needs they serve. Support adaptation to changing needs and conditions. We will help manage change sensitively that honours legacy but recognises cycle of renewal and evolution

Secure independent funding for our campaigning work that enables us to have a strong voice and legitimate opinion on behalf of our members, in pursuit of ‘a confident, healthy and empowered Irish community recognised and valued as part of an inclusive British Society.’

Develop and facilitate compelling multimedia content that highlights good practice and innovative thinking

Develop innovative approaches to learning and crisis management, encouraging members and the wider community to grow as leaders and organisations

Facilitate research to inform practice, policy and broker as community resource

Support review and development of the application processes for ESP, as part of a data-driven needs analysis (Census 2021)

D. Ensure a sustainable and socially responsible organisation to fulfil our charitable objectives.

How we will get there

Develop fundraising strategy 2022 - 2025 based on external independent review.

Focus on hybrid revenue model that supports core costs and added value programming by June 2022

Adopting organisational reserves policy that balances investment in beneficiary programmes and priming sustainability activities.

Develop an environmental policy and environmentally sustainable actions wherever possible.

As a membership body we recognise our responsibility to champion environmental sustainability and to adapt our own procedures for impact.

Why this matters to us

As an independent charitable organisation, we work to support and represent our members and their beneficiaries. In order to do this we take an enterprising approach to our activities and finances. To supplement our core funding streams, we try wherever possible to self-generate resources.

This can be via fundraising and corporate sponsorship, training and consultancy, bidding for contracts that further our Vision and Mission and is underpinned by demonstrating our values in practice. We commit to transparency and accountability in everything we do.

We recognise our responsibility as a charity to promote a commitment to social responsibility and environmental sustainability to ensure trust and accountability in our sector.