



2022



**Lewisham Irish
Community Centre**

Annual Report

OUR MISSION

The Lewisham Irish Community Centre was established for the benefit of Irish people living in the Borough of Lewisham, their descendants and the wider community.

At the heart of our mission is collaboration with local authorities, voluntary organisations and local population.

In 2017 we have striven to further our core aims and enrich the lives of those using our centre. We strive forward with these core objectives, laid out in our constitution.

OUR AIMS

To advance education in Irish culture & heritage

To relieve sickness & deprivation

To provide social and recreational activities for the wellbeing of the community

TRUSTEES REPORT

It has been another busy year for the Lewisham Irish Community Centre. A year which saw us work with more organisations than ever before and welcome a record number of people through our doors. We are proud to have once more worked with people from all areas of our community and to have offered support to the most isolated and vulnerable.

Our mission, set out by the Management Committee in the first few weeks of the year, is that the Lewisham Irish Community Centre exists to support and enrich the lives of both our local Lewisham and Local Irish Community and this is core to everything we do.

Having seen the up-take of services exceed 750 per week in 2017 and an annual total attendance that exceeded 25,000, I think it is safe to say we have lived up to our mission.

During 2017 we invested in our digital infrastructure as part of a longer term digital marketing strategy. The main investment came in the form of our new website. www.Lewishamirish.org. We are already seeing the rewards of this investment with hall hirers and services users finding and contacting us online.

Our profile within the local community grew substantially in 2017/18. We forged relationships with other community groups, worked more closely than ever with the Irish Embassy and Irish in Britain and hosted a number of local politicians.

This is a trend that looks set to continue. Since the

start of the new financial year we have already hosted TD's from the Committee of Foreign Affairs and representatives from the Irish Embassy, welcomed the Mayor of Lewisham to our Centre along with several Lewisham Councillors and worked with a number of Irish Groups we haven't previously worked with such as London Irish LGBT.

One of the biggest challenges we as a community face, is undoubtedly the UK's decision to leave the European Union. Brexit and the uncertainty that surrounds it, is understandably a concern for many in our community. We want to assure you that we are in close contact with the Irish Embassy and Irish in Britain and have attended workshops on the matter to ensure we are informed and in a position to offer support. We will continue to celebrate the invaluable contribution the Irish community has had here in London and wholeheartedly support Irish in Britain's stance of solidarity with our fellow EU citizens during this challenging time.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who have enabled us to achieve what we did in 2017/18. Our funders, partners, volunteers, members, hall hirers, management committee and so many more, we could not do what we do without you. I would like to pay a special tribute to Kathleen and her team, their continued commitment and dedication are what ultimately allows us to have such an impact.

James Farrell
Chair – Trustee Board



2017 IN REVIEW

MANAGERS REPORT

LICC has had another very successful year. We have managed to increased membership , partnerships and access to our core services. We have raised the profile of the organisation at local level through building effective partnerships and hosting local community groups and forums.

We concentrated on strengthening existing services and long term sustainability of the charity. We have consolidated our services and supported both Rushey Green Playgroup and Lewisham Irish Pensioners Association to come under the umbrella of LICC. We have continued our commitment to quality assurance.

We have secured continued funding from Emigrant Support Programme to provide advice and advocacy to vulnerable and older Irish community. This period we provided 389 advice sessions to 133 individuals. The advice service hold the AQS with casework to 2020.

We secured a three-year contract with London Borough of Lewisham to provide support and advocacy to the Gypsy Roma Traveller Communities. This period we provided 253 appointments to 56 individual clients and their families.

We secured £7500 from a Crowdfunding campaign to create an accessible community allotment

We delivered 48 sessions of youth activities to an average of 26 young people weekly . LICC Youth Club was awarded Bronze level quality mark with London youth in 2016/17 and the Silver Level Quality mark in 2018/19

We provided 130 sessions of health living and social activities to over 100 older adults weekly .

We provided 79 playgroup session attended by an average of 62 adults and 88 children weekly . Total attended this period 11,850.

Our overall income has increased by 11% (£16,282) due to successful funding applications to Ireland Fund of GB, Big Lottery Awards For All, ESP and LBL Crowd funding.

79

PLAYGROUP SESSIONS

389

ADVICE SESSIONS THIS YEAR

253

APPOINTMENTS TO SUPPORT THE GRT COMMUNITY

48

YOUTH ACTIVITY SESSION

BRONZE

LONDON YOUTH QUALITY MARK ACHIEVED



CONTRIBUTING WITH IMPACT

This period we have continued to work in partnership with several Irish and local groups to provide core services within the borough. ICAP provided 102 satellite counselling sessions.

Colaiste Na nGael delivered 39 weekly Irish language classes. Ewing's and co solicitors continue to provide monthly advice service. We were awarded Neighbourhood 2 funding to work in partnership with Urban dandelion, Elim Church and Diamond club to organise two holidays from home for the elderly, the first holidays took place since the end of the financial year, 183 individuals attended over both days.

Rushey Green Time Bank and Lewisham Food cycle partner to provide a free weekly community meal to over 40 individuals. We provided a free St. Patrick's Day lunch in partnership with Lewisham Food cycle and RGTB to 150 members of the local community.

We have hosted Rushey Green Local Assembly, Neighbourhood 2 forum and Lewisham Travellers forum meetings.

I would like to thank our partners and supporters including Ewings and Co. Solicitors, Rushey Green Time Bank, Lewisham Foodcycle, Training for Life, Irish Community Services, Tanya Dirrane School of Dancing, New Creation International Church, Colaiste Na Ngael, Immigrant Counselling and Psychotherapy services, Panther Taekwondo, Irish in Britain, Lewisham Community Connections , Voluntary Action Lewisham and London Youth for their support.

Special thanks to our funders including ESP and LBL for their continued support too enable us to deliver essential services.

Finally I would like to thank our volunteers, staff team and management committee for their commitment and dedication to the values and goals of our community centre and serving our local community.

Kathleen Sheridan
Manager

39

IRISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

100+

OLDER PEOPLE USING LICC
EVERY WEEK

100+

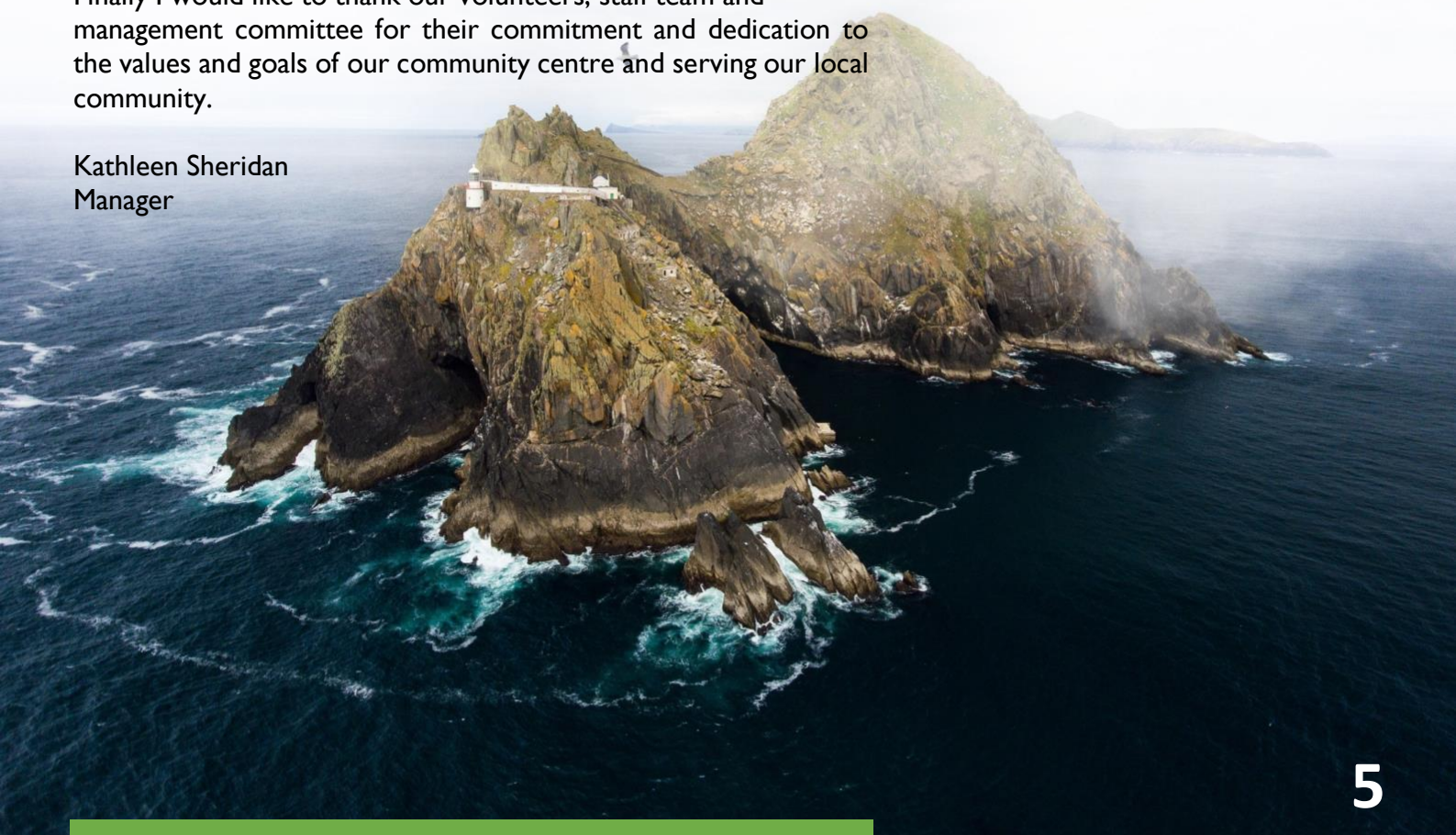
COUNSELLING SESSIONS
PROVIDED BY ICAP

40+

RECEIVE A FREE MEAL EACH
WEEK AT THE CENTER

150+

AT OUR ANNUAL ST
PATRICKS DAY EVENT



ACCOUNTS

The Lewisham Irish Community Centre is primarily funded by two grants. One grant is from Supporting People, London Borough of Lewisham, which contributes towards the Gypsy Roma Travellers Outreach Service. The other major grant is paid by the Irish Government, Department of Foreign Affairs - Emigrant Support Programme, which pays for the delivery and management of the advice services and the Irish Traveller element of the Gypsy Roma Traveller Outreach Service.

Income increased by 11% and expenditure has decreased by £3,160

Reserves

LICC operates a reserves policy that aims to cover cash flow shortfalls due to uncertainty in the timing of future grant awards. The Trustees regard £40,000 as a prudent sum to cover running costs for three months. Unrestricted funds currently stand at £1,572 (2017 £4,713), however £1,305 (£2017 £1,808) is required to cover future depreciation of fixed assets.

Turnover



11% ↑

Increase in funding

LOOKING FORWARD

Our Aim

We will make the best possible use of LICC by reviewing the usage of the hall, making best practical use of the Centre while ensuring we are maximising our own services. We will concentrate on our improving our financial stability, become a community hub for local groups and charities to access and work with to increase our community development outcomes and our profile locally.

We aim to develop partnerships with local organisations to provide activities for older adults, children and young people to open access to a wider section of the local community, to reach out too hard to access clients, to raise the profile of LICC within the borough.

We aim to develop the current Irish cultural programme of events to increase access to the arts while generating income and raising LICC profile.

Our Services

The Irish community is an ageing one which brings with it need in terms of health, accommodation, isolation and access. We aim to create a part time community outreach worker to further strengthen our welfare services for the benefit of the local Older Irish Community.

We aim to expand our youth services through the development of a senior youth project for 12-16 year olds. We aim to Increase access to the arts for children attending the playgroups.

We aim to re-launch Lewisham Traveller Forum to raise awareness among local professional of GRT needs and to give Travellers a voice within the borough.

Governance

We will continue to focus on principles of good governance and develop strategies for working effectively as a management committee.

Trustees will develop a five-year business plan in consultation with key stakeholders.

We will seek to recruit new Trustees with a broad range of skills and knowledge.

Finance

We will identify funding streams to support existing projects and the development of new services while generating our own fundraising initiatives through fundraising and cultural events to build some reserves.



HIGHLIGHTS

95%

OF ADVICE SERVICE USERS
ARE IRISH BORN

100+

OLDER ADULTS ACCESS
SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES
WEEKLY

**SILVER
QUALITY
MARK**

ACCREDITATION ACHIEVED BY
LICC YOUTH CLUB

1107

ANNUAL ATTENDANCE AT
LICC YOUTH CLUB

WEEKLY

IRISH DANCING CLASSES

750

PEOPLE USE OUR SERVICES
EVERY WEEK

**COMMUNITY
LIBRARY**

PLANNING WELL UNDERWAY

**OUTDOOR
SPACE**

PLANNING UNDERWAY

OF THE YEAR

26 CITY LEADERS

DEVELOPED THROUGH YOUTH
PROGRAM

25,000

CENTER VISITORS THIS YEAR

**BUSINESS
PLAN**

DEVELOPED TO DRIVE THE
ORGANISATION FORWARD

WEBSITE

LAUNCHED TO INCREASE
OUR ONLINE PRESENCE

11,850

ATTENDED PLAYGROUP

45

PARTICIPANTS IN OUR
SUMMER ACTIVITIES
PROGRAM

83

ATTEND HOLIDAY AWAY FROM
HOME

**AMBITIOUS
PLANS**

TO IMPROVE AND EXTEND
SERVICES IN 2018 AND BEYOND



An Roinn Gnóthaí
Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of
Foreign Affairs and Trade