

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

Fields
2nd Floor
Landchard House
Victoria Street
West Bromwich
West Midlands
B70 8ER

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

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SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY
GENERAL INFORMATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

TRUSTEES:	Mrs B Hynes Ms M Molloy Ms J Walsh Ms L Grigg (appointed -22.07.2020) Ms N Young (ceased -22.07.2020)
ADDRESS:	Kenrick Park Community Centre 70 Glover Street West Bromwich West Midlands B70 6DU
CHARITY REGISTRATION NO:	1116750
BANKERS:	National Westminster Bank Plc 3 Church Street Oldbury West Midlands B69 3ND
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:	S L Broomhall., F.C.C.A Fields Certified Accountants and Registered Auditors 2 nd Floor Landchard House Victoria Street West Bromwich West Midlands B70 8ER

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

The trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2020.

Legal and Administrative Information

Sandwell Irish Society is a registered charity set up in 2002, which evolved out of an awareness that, despite the large number of people of Irish descent in Sandwell, most of whom have contributed in many ways to the rich tapestry of life in the borough, there was a lack of knowledge of the community, it did not have a focal point and many of the needs and aspirations of its members went unrecognised.

Other legal and administrative information is provided on page 1.

Organisational structure

The Society has one full-time member of staff (Manager) and an active management committee made up of local Irish people. Membership is open to anyone from the Sandwell and surrounding area that support its aims and objectives. It also has 30 plus active volunteers from the community who can be called upon for help and support as the need arises.

The Society has grown steadily over the past nineteen years and its presence has been welcomed by many community members, voluntary organisations and statutory bodies. The Society has established itself as an essential source of information and representation, and also as a point of contact for local authority and health service professionals and others who wish to seek the views of or engage with Irish people. This has resulted in an increasing awareness of the Irish and Irish Traveller communities in Sandwell and the surrounding Black Country area, their needs and aspirations, also in opportunities for developing partnerships and projects.

The Society continues to develop and update its structures, policies and procedures, also to source appropriate training and information for staff and volunteers on new legislation and opportunities that arise in an ever-changing funding and service delivery environment. Staff, management committee members and some volunteers are constantly working to develop their skills and knowledge in order to support the Society's progress and to identify its priorities and potential.

- Method of appointment or election of trustees

The management of the charity is responsibility of the trustees who are elected under the terms of the trust deed.

Objectives and Activities

The objectives of the Society are: -

- to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of the Area of Benefit, in particular but not exclusively, the Irish community by the advancement of education and training and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and other leisure-time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of said inhabitants, and;
- to advance the education of the general public in the history, culture, arts and traditions of the Irish community.

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY

TRUSTEES' REPORT – continued

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

Achievements and Performance

The Society works to achieve vibrant Irish and Irish Traveller communities in Sandwell that are engaged and empowered to play an active role in society. The Society believes that this can only be achieved by improving the confidence, health, awareness and image of the communities and by ensuring that the contribution of Irish people, over many years, to the economic, social, cultural and historic richness of Sandwell is recognised and acknowledged.

The Society offers advice, information and support on a wide range of issues including welfare benefits and entitlements, health and social care, housing and homelessness, Irish birth certificates and passports etc. It continues to raise awareness of its services to the Irish and Irish Traveller communities in the area, also to a wide range of other professionals and organisations. It continues to promote its services and activities, also engages particularly with older people, those people who may have mental health problems, those who are isolated through age, ill health and disability, those who have difficulties accessing services and are often deemed “hard to reach” by service providers and those who experience social exclusion for a variety of reasons. It provides regular opportunities for older people to get together socially and engage in a range of activities e.g. Irish language sessions, health walks, gentle exercises, craft sessions etc. in order to reduce loneliness and isolation and enable people to build their own social networks. It engages with schools and other community organisations to share cultural activities, which promote community cohesion and enable people of second and subsequent generation Irish to explore their heritage and identity.

The Society continues to be involved in local and national meetings and conferences and in regular contact with statutory agencies and other organisations to ensure that Irish people have opportunities to articulate and contribute their views at a local and national level.

The Society manages a local authority community Centre on behalf of the local council. This provides the Society with a firm base in the borough, enables a range of activities to take place and has enabled to extend its reach within the Irish and wider community. For most of the year, these activities could not take place at the Centre due to Covid-19 restrictions, so alternative ways of working had to be found so that the Society was able to deliver some of its services and maintain contact with most previous users plus additional people who came to their attention. This ensured that, as far as possible people were not left without support, and it was easy for them or their families to request help.

Hundreds of deliveries of “goody bags” and afternoon teas by a team of fantastic volunteers were a lifeline for our community members and meant they did not feel so lonely and isolated. Regular receipt of our gentle exercise sheets/booklets, quizzes and wordsearches kept people busy at home. Regular befriending and welfare calls, from selected volunteers to individuals and families meant that people were supported. Interviews with several recipients as well as with volunteers, who worked so hard to source, buy, pack and deliver the “goody bags”, was filmed by Irish TV in the UK and subsequently shown on Sky and shared on social media channels.

The Society’s Club Eireann project, which enables smaller groups of people to come together on a regular basis and take part in a variety of activities, sadly had to stop in March 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic and several events which celebrate the best of Irish culture, traditions and heritage did not take place, including our popular and much awaited St. Patrick’s Day Celebration.

Some outings were arranged and took place but sadly some had to be cancelled, including our second joint Inter-Generational Project with Birmingham Irish Association, Coventry Irish Society and several local primary schools.

Still there remain some outstanding issues to be resolved after damage to the building caused by holes in the roof and heavy rain. Lockdown has caused delays to sort these out.

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY
TRUSTEES' REPORT – continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

Financial review

(a) Reserves policy and Going Concern

It is the policy of the trustees to maintain free reserves at a level which is considered adequate to provide sufficient funds to cover ongoing management and administration costs as well as be in a position to respond to any contingencies for the next 12 months.

Plans for the future

Lockdown has affected and still affects many of our community members and service users. We have no idea as to if, and when things will get back to normal and some things are very much up in the air. The Society believes that its culturally sensitive services will be even more in demand in the future, given how many peoples' lives have dramatically changed so far and who knows how much other things will change and how services will be affected. An increased number of people request application forms for Irish passports and often assistance with their completion since Brexit. Many service users are elderly and/or vulnerable so the Society continues to work, sometimes remotely, with Irish and other organisations in an endeavour to address the issue of social isolation and exclusion, also dementia and other related diseases which affect a growing number of older people.

Having our own improved Centre means that we are in a strong position to continue to provide a range of services and activities of interest to an increasing number of people, but we are unable to use the Centre until advised by the Council officers. Some work has been done by the volunteers on two small garden areas within the Centre boundary and we hope to continue to develop these when we are allowed. Some of our older people are looking forward to this, particularly in the months ahead. We know this will continue to improve their health and well-being as well as reduce social isolation.

Approved by the Trustees on 7th September 2021 and signed on their behalf by:

Mrs B Hynes

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of Sandwell Irish Society

I report on the financial statements of the Sandwell Irish Society for the year ended 31st December 2019, which are set out on pages 6 to 9.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the financial statements (under section 145 of the 2011 Act)
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioner. An examination includes review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the financial statements accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosure in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedure undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently no opinion is given as to whether the financial statements present a 'true and fair view', and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Acthave not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



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Date: 8th September 2021

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

Comparative information by fund types

	Restricted Funds 2020	Unrestricted Funds 2020	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019
	£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS				
Irish Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Programme Grant	30,000	0	30,000	30,000
Irish Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Programme Grant; St Patrick's Day 2020	3,845	0	3,845	4,500
Sandwell MBC Voluntary Programme	3,414	0	3,414	3,380
Birmingham Irish Association Inter-generational Project 2020	3,000	0	3,000	2405
Birmingham Irish Association Joint Covid Response Fund	6,645	0	6,645	0
Sandwell MBC Covid Grants	0	11,334	11,334	0
Rental income / Room hire	0	0	0	281
Election Polling Centre Income	0	297	297	594
U3A	0	46	46	120
Donations	0	250	250	0
Total Receipts	46,904	11,927	58,831	41,280
PAYMENTS				
Salary	24,016	0	24,016	22,697
PAYE/ NI	3,780	0	3,780	4,015
Accountancy/Payroll	192	0	192	630
Travel	1,295	0	1,295	1,085
Insurance	0	0	0	291
Utilities	1,792	0	1,792	0
Telephone/Internet	1,025	0	1,025	1,549
Postage	459	0	459	634
Projects costs	7,795	0	7,795	5,933
Grant repaid to Irish Government unspent portion re 2017 St. Patrick's Day	0	0	0	990
Office/Admin costs	2,492	0	2,492	735
Total Payments	42,846	0	42,846	38,559
Surplus for the year	4,058	11,927	15,985	2,721

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2020

		2020	2019
	Notes	£	£
Current assets			
Cash at bank	2	<u>73,361</u>	<u>57,376</u>
Income funds			
Unrestricted funds	3	27,447	15,520
Restricted funds	3	<u>45,914</u>	<u>41,856</u>
		<u>73,361</u>	<u>57,376</u>

Approved by the Trustees on 7th September 2021 and signed on their behalf by:

Mrs B Hynes

Ms J Walsh

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

1. Accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material in relation to the accounts.

Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and on a Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with applicable accounting standards.

Fund Accounting

The charity's funds are shown within the financial statements as either restricted or unrestricted. Unrestricted funds are expendable at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the objects of the Charity. Restricted funds can, because of the wishes of the donors, only be expended at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of some particular aspect of the objects of the Charity.

Grant Income

During the year ended 31st December 2020, Sandwell Irish Society received a grant of £33,845 from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Emigrant Support Program. The grant awarded covers the period running from 1st July 2020 to 30th June 2021 and was for the following activities:

-£30,000 contributions towards salary and running costs for Advice and Support Worker/Club Eireann Project (£15,000 of this relates to the period 01/01/21 to 30/06/21 and has still to be spent at 31/12/20)

-£3,845 contributions towards costs of St. Patrick's Day Celebration project 2021, (all of this is unspent at 31/12/20).

The grant awarded in the previous year for the St. Patrick's Day Celebration 2020 has not been spent during this year.

The Society also received a grant of £14,334 during the period from Sandwell MBC of which £3,414 was towards Voluntary Program and the remainder £11,334 was by way of a Small Business Grant towards dealing with the effects of Covid-19.

2. Cash at bank

	2020	2019
	£	£
NatWest Bank account	<u>73,361</u>	<u>57,376</u>
	<u><u>73,361</u></u>	<u><u>57,376</u></u>

3. Funds

At beginning of period	57,376	54,655
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	<u>15,985</u>	<u>2,721</u>
At end of period	<u><u>73,361</u></u>	<u><u>57,376</u></u>

SANDWELL IRISH SOCIETY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

4. Trustees- remuneration, benefits and expenses

None of the Trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration.
But one or more of the trustees had their expenses paid for by the charity for attendance at Annual General Meeting and other committee meetings as follows:

	<u>£</u>
Travel	115
Subsistence	42
Accommodation	105

5. Employees

Number of employees

The average number of employees during the year was - 1 (2019 - 1)

6. Taxation

The Sandwell Irish Society considered to pass the tests set in the paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable trust for UK income tax purposes.