

## The CORE System - Positive Moves

As reported in the last edition of AGIY INFO the National Federation of Housing Associations and the Housing Corporation are currently devising an ethnic classification system called CORE (Continuous Recording System) to help housing associations in Britain to collect and record information about the people they house. In the system three "standard" ethnic categories were proposed which did not include a separate category for the Irish community and thereby would fail to establish Housing Associations' response to Irish housing need.

Following representation and lobbying efforts by Irish community groups including AGIY and the London Irish Youth Forum, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the National Federation Housing Associations (NFHA) responded by expressing general support for the inclusion of a separate Irish category. The Housing Corporation remained unconvinced suggesting that there wasn't enough room in the database for a further category.

With the support of the CRE and NFHA and further lobbying efforts in the housing journals *Inside Housing* and *Housing Associations Weekly*, the Housing Corporation finally conceded and responded on the 11th August stating that *"A main aim of the CORE project has been to attract the highest rate of return of the most pertinent, accurate information. Nevertheless we have now agreed that we introduce a new "Irish Code" and we may also introduce a further floating code, which will allow us to obtain lettings information for other ethnic groups"*.

This achievement is a significant step for Irish community groups' attempts to collect accurate, up-to-date and precise information on the level of Irish housing need nationally; this data should also help to facilitate the development of a strategy for the provision of adequate resources and services to meet that need. The Housing Corporation is meeting with members of

the London Irish Youth Forum in September to discuss these developments and related housing issues. Watch AGIY INFO for further news and information.

## A Guide to London for Young Irish People

The Revised Edition of *A Guide to London for Young Irish People* has just been received "hot off the presses" and is now available directly from AGIY (See enclosed leaflet).

This year, to comply with legislation in the Republic of Ireland prohibiting the provision of any information on abortion, AGIY has published two Guides - (a) a special "Ireland version" of the handbook which does not include such details and (b) a "UK" version of the Guide.

AGIY regrets this in light of the continuing numbers of Irish women annually forced to leave Ireland for abortions, (in Britain these numbers are currently estimated at 6,000 per year) often without adequate advice or counselling. However, we have taken this measure to ensure the greater distribution of the Guide by agencies in Ireland and to increase the availability of crucial "survival-type" information about finding a place to live, getting a job, claiming the dole etc. to young people before they emigrate.

The Guide also includes comprehensive information on training and further education in London, services for women, travellers, gay men and lesbian women, things to do, Irish contacts in London, the police, the law, health care and advice centres.

New information in the Guide includes chapters on what to do before emigrating, a survival check-list, employment rights, trade unions, information on working on building sites, the poll tax and voting rights. The Guide has been produced with the financial assistance of the Wates Foundation and the Thames Telethon Trust and the co-operation of member agencies of the London Irish Youth Forum.

## Poll Tax is looming!

Starting in April 1990 most adults aged 18 or over will have to pay the Poll Tax/Community Charge. The tax is based on people rather than property and is a flat rate charge that is not related to ability to pay - a nurse for example living in a bedsit will pay the same as a millionaire living in a mansion!

Those exempt from paying the tax will mainly include long term hospital patients, prisoners, people in residential care, 18 year olds whose parents are entitled to child benefit for them, people sleeping rough and the "severe mentally impaired".

Currently, local authority Poll Tax staff are setting up a register of the people who have to pay - sending out forms followed by house to house canvassing. It is illegal not to complete the Poll Tax registration form or to give false information. There will be a penalty of £50 for the first offence and £200 for any subsequent offence. Failure to pay the fines could lead to legal proceedings and ultimately to imprisonment. The Poll Tax register will be available for public viewing so if the appearance of your name could put you or a member of your household at risk of violence e.g. women at risk of domestic violence you can ask for your name and address to be left off the list.

There will be poll tax rebates similar to rate rebates. As for rates, everyone will have to pay the first 20% of their poll tax and people entitled to Income Support will get the rest rebated. Depending on your income and circumstances, you may be able to claim poll tax rebates.

AGIY is concerned that the Poll Tax is likely to have adverse effects for the Irish community. In a recent study of the electoral register in one London borough, of those families with at least five adults a significant proportion were Irish and would face a severe Poll Tax burden from next April.

Young emigrants are also likely to encounter serious problems when the Poll Tax is introduced. Many will be unaware of the new system and confusion could lead to fines being imposed on them. It will also be more difficult for those on low incomes

to obtain accommodation where the landlord is responsible for collecting the Poll Tax from them. People will have to pay the Poll Tax first and then wait for possibly weeks for their rebate.

Those who attempt non-registration will in practice be unable to claim housing benefit, use council leisure services or go to a social worker as the Poll Tax Registration Officer has the right to acquire lists of names and addresses of people in contact with any other department of the local authority. Nor will they be able to claim Income Support as the Department of Social Security (DSS) will pass the names of its clients on to the Poll Tax Registration Officer.

In reality those who will be tempted to go "unofficial" in this way are those who do not yet have a relationship with local welfare services - the young, casually or unemployed without a place of their own. The consequence may be that a large number of this group may simply opt out of official society. There is evidence to suggest that this is already happening. In Scotland the number of people on the electoral register has dropped by around 26,000 and a recent survey of inner city local authorities in London has shown an unexpected drop in registration on the electoral roll of close to 28,000 people which may be due to fears of the introduction of the Poll Tax.

**For further information you should contact the Poll Tax Helpline in your borough. The Town Hall in your area will be able to give you their contact number.**

**There are also a number of "campaigns against the poll tax" based locally in individual London boroughs and there is LONDON AGAINST THE POLL TAX c/o Gary Kent, 726 Holloway Road, London N19 3JD.**

## Diary Dates

Over the next two months there are a series of conferences and meetings addressing various issues concerning Irish people in London. Below is a list of dates, venues and contact numbers/names for further information:

Date	Conference & Venue	Contact
14th Sept. 11.00 a.m.	"London Travellers Forum" Irish in Islington Project, Eastgate Building, 131 St. John's Way, Islington N19	c/o Camden HASSLL Tel. 837 1436
16th Sept. 2.30 p.m.	"Irish Forum" Association of London Authorities, 36 Old Queen St., SW1 All Irish groups welcome	Bill Coomber Association of London Authorities Tel. 222 7799
23rd Sept. 10.00 - 5.00 p.m.	"The Needs of the Irish in South East London" West Greenwich House, 141 Greenwich High Road, SE10	Irish in Greenwich Project Tel. 317 1435
30th Sept. 9.30-5.00 p.m.	"An Irish Perspective on British Welfare" Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Hill, SW2	Lambeth IBRG Tel. 326 4740
14th Oct. 10.00 - 5.00 p.m.	"Ard Fheis 89" Hammersmith Town Hall, King St., W6	Irish Support & Advice Centre Tel. 741 0466
19th Oct. 3.00 p.m.	"Lobby of Parliament" by Construction Safety Campaign	Tony O'Brien, 52 Ansdell Rd, SE15
26th Nov. all day from 10.00 a.m.	"The 5th London Irish Women's Conference", The Albany Centre, Douglas Way, Deptford, SE8	London Irish Women's Centre Tel. 249 7318

## ILEA Job News

### Detached Youth Worker for Irish Young People

Salary £11,706-£15,078 inc (level 2b)

£11,706-£13,392 inc (unqual)

Camden is the only London Borough to appoint a youth worker with Irish young people. This post is a response to the recent growth of the Irish population there and is in recognition of their specific needs. The innovatory work initiated by the original worker now needs to be maintained and extended, so an experienced worker is required.

The worker appointed will be expected to undertake detached work, to support existing premises-based programmes and to provide advice and support to agencies who wish to develop such work.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of current issues facing Irish young people.

The post will be part of "NETWORKS" project. The worker will be expected to work as a member of the project team and

to be responsible to the senior worker.

Assistance may be available towards household removal expenses.

This post is suitable for job share. Applications will only be accepted if made on a paired basis.

The post is subject to block recruitment by the London Borough of Camden.

Closing date: 22nd September 1989.

Job description and application form available from: Camden Area Youth Office, 6, Camden High Street, NW1 OJH. Tel: 01-388 2011.

Please send self addressed envelope.

The Inner London Education Authority is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

## Agency Profile

### Providence Row Hostel

Providence Row Hostel is a long established hostel with the aim of providing single homeless people with a period of supported housing. The hostel provides an emergency service and has

dormitory accommodation for up to 21 women and 24 men. All facilities are shared and bed, breakfast and evening meal are available. There are no kitchen facilities so residents usually have lunch outside the hostel. All residents are classified as boarders for DSS purposes and the weekly inclusive charge is £59.15.

#### Referrals

Referrals to the project are usually made by other welfare agencies by telephone although people can refer themselves either by telephone or in person. However, it is not advisable to self refer in person as the hostel is normally full.

The project will accept referrals for women between the age of 17 and 60 and for men between the age of 17 and 65. The men's dormitory is usually full.

On admission, every resident is interviewed and allocated a key worker to provide support and advice on housing options, welfare benefits and counselling.

There is a doctor's surgery once a week and access to specialist alcohol and drug help agencies. A maximum stay of 8 weeks can sometimes be extended.

Providence Row has a small number of move-on nominations in the London Area Mobility Scheme (LAMS).

For further information contact:  
Providence Row, 50 Crispin St., London E1. Tel. 247 2159.

## London Irish Youth Forum (LIYF)

**The next LIYF meeting is on**

**Thursday 21st September  
1989**

**at 2.30 p.m.**

**Irish Centre**

**50 Camden Square**

**London NW1**

**The main agenda item will  
be**

**1992 The Single European  
Market and Young Irish  
People**

**Speaker: Nish Vaithilingam  
from Camden Committee  
for Community Relations  
and Whose Europe  
campaign.**

**AGIY INFO IS A SIX WEEKLY PUBLICATION. SHOULD  
YOUR GROUP WISH TO PUBLICISE ANY EVENTS,  
NOTICES ETC. SEND DETAILS TO EITHER JOAN OR  
DAVE AT THE AGIY, 5-15 CROMER ST. LONDON WC1H  
8LS OR TEL. 278 1665**

AGIY is funded by the London Boroughs Grants Scheme and DION the Irish Government Committee for Welfare Services Abroad.