

BENEFIT DANCE

held on behalf of

Luton Irish Forum

PRESS RELEASE

On Friday 20th of November over 200 people attended a fund raising dance organised by users of the Luton Irish Forum, and was held in recognition of the work carried out by the Welfare Team. The event took place at the Holy Ghost Parish Centre, Westbourne Road, Luton.

Live music was provided by the Seamus McNamee Band and also the Forum's Emerald Pipeband. The Arsenal Football Club donated a signed and framed team photograph, which was auctioned on the night and raised a great amount from the excited bidders.

On the night Mary Fitzmaurice, Welfare Advice Officer, confirmed that "the proceeds would help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in Luton". She added "many are moving to local authority accommodation and cannot afford basic amenities whether it is a fridge, a cooker or a carpet. The Forum will use the money raised to purchase the necessary items required for them to move in".

Michael Maguire, the Advice Service Coordinator, thanked the organisers for all their hard work in organising a very successful and enjoyable evening. He also thanked everyone that had donated the raffle prizes and to all that supported the event.

***** Ends *****

For more information on all the services of Luton Irish Forum, please contact us on 01582 720 447, by email to info@lutonirishforum.org or visit our website on www.lutonirishforum.org

Notes

- LIF welfare service is accessed by the Irish and other communities within Luton, Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas.
- Users are supported by 2 full-time and 1 part-time advisors.
- Our largest user groups are vulnerable adults, older people, people with physical disabilities and also mental health issues.
- LIF received 3784 welfare enquiries in 2008/ 09: Disability - 31%, Housing - 30%, Pension -10%, Benefits - 11%, Employment - 4%, Social - 5%, Appeals - 1% and Other (including debt) - 8%
- A variety of support is available including home visits and drop ins and our holistic view enables us to deal with several complex issues at once.
- LIF delivers a 'needs led' service; working hand in hand with our users to solve their problems. We advocate and support the user's family whilst remaining culturally sensitive to our diverse users.
- At the last count [2004], only 25% had obtained a professional benefit check in the previous 5 years. This indicates that many people may not be receiving what they are entitled to, or in need of.