

NIMMA News

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‘Business as Usual’ as NIMMA’s Belfast office closes in funding crisis

It is ‘business as usual’ for the Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association (NIMMA) despite government restrictions and the closure of its Belfast office. The charity was forced to shut down its city-centre operation due to a lack of funding, ironically in the same week that the national lockdown started.

But NIMMA, which has been providing support and advice to mixed marriage people for more than 40 years, 25 years of those at Bryson House, will now continue its work online.

Urgent core funding is needed if it is to have any chance of getting new premises, according to Chairman Ken Dunn.

“Bryson House has been sold and all tenants were given notice to leave, but, given the state of our finances, we cannot commit to any new office at the minute. The pandemic has put paid to anything of that sort anyway, but it will be ‘business as usual’ all the way.

“Until funding is sourced, we will be ‘working from home’ and relying on our website, our hotline and considerable e-mail contacts to keep up our good work of support and reconciliation.”

NIMMA is a small charity that, despite punching well above its weight in terms of impact in the community and even international recognition and is enjoying arguably the most successful period in its history, will suffer without an urgent financial injection.

Mr Dunn said, “Our third book has just been printed, although its official launch has been postponed due to the situation, and a total of more than 700 NIMMA books from the trilogy had been being distributed to integrated schools as NIMMA News went to press.

“It is indeed ironic that NIMMA’s success comes at this successful time for us and this time of great uncertainty, but our search for funding goes on. We have approached both the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin and the Northern Ireland Executive within the past few weeks and we will continue to lobby other trusts and charitable foundations in the UK when the virus crisis has passed.

“We’ve been through hard times before and they have made us stronger. I’m confident that we will come through this.

One thing is for certain, we will continue to work tirelessly for reconciliation and to provide the very best pastoral care and support for those who need it.”