

An Taisce
The National Trust for Ireland

Annual Report 2022

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An Taisce
The National Trust for Ireland

PROTECTING IRELAND'S HERITAGE,
SAFEGUARDING ITS FUTURE

AN TAISCE IS A MEMBERSHIP **CHARITY** THAT WORKS TO CONSERVE **IRELAND'S NATURAL** AND **BUILT** HERITAGE. WE ARE AN **INDEPENDENT** VOICE FOR THE **ENVIRONMENT** AND FOR **HERITAGE** ISSUES

EDUCATION

We develop and operate some of Ireland's most popular and successful environmental programmes and campaigns.

PROPERTIES

We hold a range of heritage properties in trust, including historic buildings and nature reserves.

ADVOCACY

We promote the conservation of Ireland's nature and biodiversity as well as its built heritage.

Political non-affiliation

Our members are all ages and come from all walks of life. The one thing we have in common is our concern for the environment and a shared passion to protect nature and our natural heritage.

In accordance with the guidance note (Feb 2018) issued by the Charities Regulator under section 14 of the Charities Act 2009, An Taisce has a charitable purpose only. An Taisce engages in political activities or promotes a political cause only where that relates directly to the advancement of our charitable purpose. An Taisce does not endorse any political party or candidate.

Front cover photo by Gary McCall - Peaty River Meets the Atlantic, Dunfanaghy, Co Donegal. An Taisce Clean Coasts 'Love Your Coast 2022' finalist.

Registered in Ireland 12469
Charity No. CHY4741

Chair's Report

Philip Kearney,
Chair



A Revised Strategic Plan for An Taisce

To ensure An Taisce's ongoing relevance and resilience, it is vital to revisit and refresh the core principles on which the National Trust is based and which express its ethos, values and *raison d'être.*

A process to draft a revised Strategic Plan to guide An Taisce for the coming years continued through 2022 with the assistance of long-standing member, Brian Lavery, as consultant. Board members have been very involved, Council has been consulted and a special gathering of staff in September invited and gathered their inputs. The Vision and Mission have been redrafted as follows:

Vision: An Ireland where our environment, natural and built, is actively prioritised and a lasting legacy of sustainability and resilience is ensured.

Mission: To protect and celebrate Ireland's natural and built heritage, and to fight for a liveable future on Earth.

It is anticipated that a final version of the Plan will be agreed and published by mid-2023.

Project 75

Preparations for the 75th anniversary of An Taisce's foundation in 2023 began early in the year. A committee representing staff, members and volunteers was formed and met fortnightly generating ideas for a programme of events. Plans were made for: a lecture series with prominent speakers addressing heritage, climate and biodiversity issues; an RTE Nationwide programme devoted to An Taisce's work; highlighting some of the properties held in trust; participation in the Bloom Festival in the Phoenix Park and other celebrations bringing members together. Some of the Local Associations are also planning special events.

Reporting on Activities and Programmes

The key components of An Taisce - Education, Advocacy, Planning and Properties - report extensively on their activities in the various sections of the Annual Report. It is not necessary to restate their achievements here other than to acknowledge the continuing commitment and enterprise of our excellent staff, all of whom choose to work with An Taisce because of their commitment to environmental sustainability and community wellbeing and resilience. Many of them - if not all - could earn higher salaries in other sectors but that is not their primary motivation.

Council and Local Associations (LAs)

The Co-Speakers of Council, Anny Wise and Dr Mark Clinton, embraced their roles with energy and have been seeking to reinvigorate Council and the Local Association Network. It has proven difficult to find new recruits for Council and the LA network has been in steady decline over the past two decades. There were 20 LAs at the turn of the millennium, now there are hardly more than a handful in active operation.

This leads to significant succession problems throughout the organisation and prompts the need for a serious review and rethink of our structures and membership. An assessment of the model that worked in previous years is now essential and it may result in some radical reorganisation. A survey of the remaining LAs and the wider membership will be central to this assessment and Council will obviously play a key role.

A similar evaluation of the operations of the three policy committees - Natural Environment, Properties and Climate - is also required. In the meantime the ongoing work of these committees is acknowledged and, as always, members are encouraged to join them and read their regular reports.

Litigation

Although ultimately the Supreme Court did not find in our favour in the Cheese Factory planning case, the widespread public commentary generated a great deal of support and recognition for the important role An Taisce plays as an environmental watchdog.
After careful consideration informed by the best available science, the Board agreed to undertake another significant legal challenge where An Taisce sought leave to judicially review the Nitrates Action Programme (NAP). Leave has been granted and the case will be heard in mid-2023. The grounds for taking this case have been articulated by our Natural Environment Officer, Dr Elaine McGoff, in a detailed article on the An Taisce website. In brief, the basis for the case is the disastrous impact on water quality nationally as a result of the failures in the previous four NAPs.

Senior Management Team

Probably the most significant development of 2022 was the creation of a Senior Management Team for all of An Taisce's operations, programmes and activities. The Board decided to create a permanent CEO post and Gary Freemantle, previously Interim CEO, was appointed. With

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Philip Kearney accepts a Lord Mayor's Award from the Lord Mayor of Dublin on behalf of An Taisce, March 2023

Board support and external advice and assistance, Gary then recruited Cathy Baxter as Director of the Environmental Education Unit (EEU) and created the important new post of Financial Controller. This completed a major component of organisational restructuring leading towards a unified An Taisce where all elements are integrated and collaborating.

The outgoing Director of the EEU, Michael John O'Mahony, and the Business Administration Manager, Dawn Parkinson, were of great assistance in this transition and their long-standing and valuable contributions to An Taisce over many years are acknowledged.

As part of the ongoing organisational renewal a staff event bringing together the almost 100 employees of An Taisce took place in Galway in September. It was an important exercise in team-building and consolidation across the different activity areas and it gave the staff the opportunity to make inputs to the ongoing work on a revised Strategic Plan for An Taisce.

Legacy4LIFE

The EU-funded LIFE project made significant progress in establishing the three work packages on promoting ponds as biodiversity reservoirs, advancing the Farm to Fork programme with emphasis on organic agriculture and developing a Green Flag for communities. An update on the project's progress can be found in these pages.

Finance

The extensive review and upgrading of An Taisce's financial accounting and reporting systems was led by the Treasurer, Aoife O'Gorman. This essential work transformed our understanding and management of our finances and moved us into a new era of unified and simplified procedures. It also enhanced our relationships with funders and other stakeholders. There is now a centralised finance function with extra staff engaged to address bookkeeping, payroll and HR issues. As a result, the 2021 audited accounts were produced much earlier than in previous years.

Governance

Having returned to the Board at the end of 2021, Olivia Rogers resumed her rigorous and well informed leadership of the Governance, Compliance and Risk committee (GRCC). This is a vital component of the Board's responsibility to ensure that An Taisce fulfils all the requirements of Company and Charity legislation.

Towards the end of the year the Board was able to report to the Charities Regulator that the requirements of the Governance Code have all been met and we are in compliance. A comprehensive Risk Register has been prepared by the CEO and the GRCC and is kept under ongoing review.

Board update

During the course of 2022 the Board undertook an Appraisal process led by the vice chair, Trish O'Connell. This is an important element of compliance with the Governance Code.
A comprehensive Board Work Plan was drafted by the Treasurer and approved by the Board. It addresses the areas where the need for improvement was identified in the Appraisal process. Starting with the October Board meeting, a rigorous new reporting schedule and revised agenda for Board meetings was implemented including revision of all key policies and regular reporting on all programmes.

In conclusion

2022 was a year of further organisational consolidation and professionalisation with the finances being established on a sound footing. The contributions and achievements of staff are considerable as you will see in the enclosed reports and the committees continue to operate although all of them struggle with recruitment and resource issues.
As the organisation transitions to a professionally managed charity constrained by a range of legislative and compliance requirements, the long-standing tradition of volunteer-led local associations and committees is coming under strain and is in significant decline. This is a key challenge that requires attention and imagination to resolve. The Board, Council and staff need to address it as a matter of some urgency.

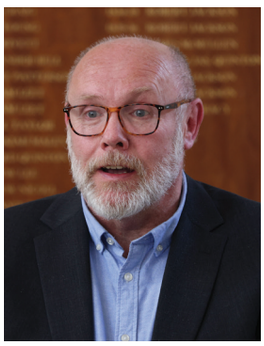
All of An Taisce's work is infused with a sense of urgency as a result of the escalating crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental decline. Whereas our founders in the 1940s were operating on the basis of a future which could be assumed with some confidence, this is no longer the case. The level of threat is now such as to call into question the survival of the ecosystems that sustain us. So the need for organisations that educate, advocate and campaign on these existential threats is greater than ever. An Taisce is such an organisation.

Philip Kearney,
Chair

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CEO's Report

Gary Freemantle, CEO



I am very pleased to confirm that 2022 was another successful year for An Taisce. We successfully emerged from the pandemic without any significant impacts on our operations. We continue to operate our services in blended online and in-person modes.

We continue the work of restructuring the Organisation and facing the challenges of reacting to and leading the way on Climate Action. We have reviewed and redefined our Vision and Mission following extensive communications internally including work groups with Council, the Board and staff who had a significant input at a training and strategy event in Galway.

An Taisce worked proactively to ensure we were able to continue to deliver on our commitments under the various programmes and to continue to show leadership on environmental issues. Some key personnel changes also occurred during the year. Michael John O'Mahony who expertly led the Environmental Education Unit (EEU) and Dawn Parkinson - Business Administration Manager, both with extensive service departed. Such, however was the strength and depth of knowledge within the organisation that we were able to appoint Cathy Baxter to the role of Director of the EEU. In addition, we created the new position of Financial Controller, appointing an experienced Financial Accountant to oversee the financial transition of processes and systems to meet the needs of our stakeholders and employees. Planning obligations and related matters are delivered upon.

I am pleased to report that An Taisce operated and continues to operate within budget and that we are trading on a sound basis. Our income increased during the year, driven by a number of factors including increased funding from stakeholders, most notably in the Safe Routes To School programme. The introduction of a new EU Life-funded Legacy 4 Life programme led primarily by Professor John Sweeney was launched and continues to grow from strength to strength. Completion of the sublet of the basement of Tailors' Hall to deliver a cafe/restaurant has also contributed to our income growth.

The improvement of membership numbers continues to be a focus of our attention. While we saw a increase in new members and a steadying in retention of members, we have seen decline in Local Association activity and membership. This decline is something that we will need to focus on in the coming year.

A lot of work is underway to make membership attractive to the student population. Whilst it is early days we have developed relationships with a number of Colleges and the student bodies to develop that interest and I see this as an important opportunity for the life blood of An Taisce.

As reported previously, An Taisce's accounts are SORP compliant and are audited regularly. As some of you will be aware, SORP regulations determine the requirements for restricted funds, that is funds that are provided specifically to run those individual programmes. Our programmes which are funded largely by Government are subject to regular audit by Government and/or external auditors on behalf of the funders. Agreements with our funders also detail the arrangements for oversight, monitoring and reporting in compliance with Government regulation and governance requirements (e.g. DPER Circular 13/2014, Public Financial Procedures, etc.) I am delighted to report that this continues to be the case with no issues arising.

We received two substantial donations at the end of 2022. One in the form of a legacy and a very significant donation which we will use to to further integrate the organisation into a single fit for purpose entity. There is still much to do to build clear structures and collaborations within the organisation. I stated previously that I believe the two strong pillars of Advocacy and Education can equally coexist within our organisation, with clear communication and high levels of organisational understanding.

Clear reporting linkages between the Board, committees, and Operational Units, to deliver transparent, compliant and efficient processes that meet the Charities Regulator's Governance Code continues to be at the heart of my work.

Key challenges include - a just transition for farming, and the need for us to find ways to work together with that sector to protect nature, the impacts of data centres on our climate and energy needs, active mobility, and natural and built heritage. The development of our Education programmes in schools and across various volunteer and interest groups are also key.

So in conclusion, we have and continue to build a strong team. The challenges to our planet are clear. Our employees and volunteers are committed and we will continue to stand up for what is right using science, education, sound judgement and action. Any future legal actions undertaken by An Taisce will continue to be undertaken strictly on a no foal no fee basis.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the work and support of the Board, Cathy Baxter, Sinead Owens, Ian Lumley and all the senior team during the year. My thanks to each of them.

I look forward to meeting the upcoming challenges and securing a strong future for An Taisce in the years ahead.

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Honorary Treasurer's Report

John Conroy,
Honorary Treasurer



I had the privilege of being appointed Honorary Treasurer in February 2023 and many thanks must go to the previous treasurer, Aoife O'Gorman, for her work over 2022 and for her support to me in the new role. I wish Aoife well in her new role as Financial Controller and look forward to continuing to liaise with her in future. Thanks must also go to all who contributed to the development and further improvement of the finance and operations of the organisation over the course of 2022 in the context of increased supervision and regulation across the charity and not-for-profit sector.

All of this work meant that we approved the 2022 financial statements in April 2023 in line with 2021 and ahead of prior years. Early 2022 saw the end of lockdowns for most and that brought with it a greater opportunity for An Taisce to carry out its core activities. This corresponded with an increase in turnover and financial activity across most of our programmes with a total of €8.5m of income received through a combination of donations and legacies, charitable activities, and investments. As in prior years, the vast majority of this funding was project related, with the commencement and restart of projects which had been delayed and postponed during 2021 and 2020.

In particular, funding from the National Transport Authority and the Department of Transport for Green Schools Travel and Safe Routes to School programmes were the main drivers of increased turnover during the year making up a combined €6.1m of the total. While income is a crude metric of overall performance of the organisation, it does help to indicate where financial activity and administration has been most concentrated.

Other financial highlights included the signing of the 2021 financial statements in April 2022, the continued development and automation of our financial systems and the hiring of a new financial controller in June 2022.

An Taisce also saw an increase in income from unrestricted sources meaning we have had the opportunity to further strengthen our independent financial position as part of an ongoing process since 2019. This has helped to put the organisation on a firmer financial footing and reduce concentration risk in project funding. These funds also help to contribute to central support and management of the organisation which has increased in line with general activity in 2022.

Continued support from our funders, members, individual donors, and pro-bono service providers will allow the organisation to pursue its mission and objectives. I hope that this year's report adds to the foundations built in previous years and lays a pathway towards further development and improvement in the finance function and the financial position of the organisation over the years to come.

John Conroy
Honorary Treasurer
treasurer@antaisce.org



Dunmore Head, Dingle, Co. Kerry. Credit Kevin Grace, a Love Your Coasts 2022 finalist

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Honorary Secretary's Report

Stuart McCaul,
Honorary Secretary



An Taisce's Local Associations are an essential part of our mission to protect and celebrate nature and heritage. Members play a crucial role in advocating locally for conservation, and Local Associations provide a forum for participants in all of our activities to come together to collaborate and support each other. In 2022, the importance of Local Associations was a recurring topic for An Taisce, as we recognised the need to revitalise and expand these critical local networks.

As you'll see later in this report, Local Associations organise lots of activities for members:

- Guided walks and tours of historic sites, nature reserves, and areas of interest.
- Advocacy and lobbying efforts to preserve historic buildings, oppose harmful development projects and strengthen local ecological protections. An Taisce has a statutory role in the planning process, and local knowledge can be invaluable in campaigning to protect local ecology or heritage.
- Education and promotion of sustainable practices through community events, workshops, and presentations on recycling, energy conservation, and sustainable transportation.
- Conservation and restoration initiatives such as tree planting, beach cleanups, and restoration of historic buildings.
- Research and recording of local history and natural heritage through oral histories, landmark research, and local flora and fauna.
- Networking and collaborating with local groups directly or through Local Environmental Networks or Public Participation Networks.

Local Associations also send delegates to An Taisce's Council, which provides a platform for you to collaborate in developing national environmental policies and campaigns. Throughout 2022, Council met five times with leaders in environmental education, conservation, community engagement, and advocacy from Ireland and abroad.

For example, Ariel Brunner, Senior Head of Policy at BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, discussed the impact of EU farming policies on farm families and the environment. Dr Elaine McGoff, Natural Environment Officer at An Taisce, discussed the EU Nitrates Directive and its role in reducing pollution and farm input costs. We also had the honour of hearing from Bill McKibben, the founder of 350.org, who discussed the urgent action required to address the climate crisis and An Taisce's critical role in this effort.

Council also heard from Melissa Jeuken, Howth Goatherd, and Sean Carolan, Chair of the Irish Wild Goat Society, who presented the case for goats as a natural solution for conservation and land management. Additionally, we were fortunate to hear from our friend Andriy Andrusevych, Senior Policy Expert at the Resource and Analysis Center, who discussed the extreme challenges faced by eNGOs in Ukraine in the context of war. We also discussed the value of community engagement and the importance of social justice with Sarah Clancy, Clare Public Participation Network co-ordinator and poet.

Council brings together delegates from Local Associations with representatives of our Policy Committees. These committees consist of experts and campaigners passionate about climate action, nature conservation, and protecting our heritage. If you would like to join these committees, please get in touch with me.

By getting involved in your Local Association, you can actively contribute while building connections and relationships within your local community. Join us in our efforts to build a sustainable and resilient future for people in Ireland by joining your Local Association today!

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank Phil Kearney, who is coming to the end of his very successful term as Chair of An Taisce. Under his leadership, An Taisce has grown more robust, united, and better equipped to face the environmental challenges Ireland will face this century. As we continue to grapple with the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and cultural heritage degradation, we need leaders like Phil who are committed to building a sustainable and resilient future for Ireland.

We thank John O'Sullivan, Brian Beveridge, David Rowe, their families, and Carol Colburn Grigor for their generous gifts and bequests to An Taisce in 2022. With your support, An Taisce can achieve our shared mission.

Stuart McCaul
Honorary Secretary
secretary@antaisce.org

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Environmental Education Report

Cathy Baxter, Director, Environmental Education Unit



Introduction

An Taisce operates a wide variety of national and international programmes and projects with a professional staff of 85+. Over the course of 2022 there was a widespread return to face-to-face and in-person outreach and activity post-pandemic where possible which was very welcome for all the staff, programme participants and key stakeholders. However, a number of the key innovative online engagement methodologies developed during the pandemic were also maintained to enhance our overall delivery models.

We operate all FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education) programmes in Ireland. FEE has over 80 members all over the world delivering environmental education and behaviour change programmes.

Our programmes are funded, supported and partnered by a number of Government Departments (e.g. DTTAS, DECC, DHPLG, DFA, DRCD, DAFM) and Agencies (e.g. National Transport Authority, EPA, SEAI, Irish Aid, Coillte, NPWS, Failte Ireland), Local Authorities, Utilities (e.g. Irish Water) and Foundations (e.g. Wrigley Foundation, JS Greene Foundation, King Baudouin Foundation).

Programme Reports

Climate Action Programme

The Climate Action Programme is focused on improving climate literacy, enabling active engagement, and supporting climate action. The team have developed a number of initiatives to achieve these goals including teacher-training, educational resource development, Climate Action Week and the Climate Ambassador and Primary Climate Ambassador programmes.

In 2022, a further 191 Climate Ambassadors received training and support from our Climate Action Officers bringing the total number of Irish Climate Ambassadors to over 800 since the programme began in 2017. Throughout the year Climate Ambassadors undertook over 600 actions and held 249 events with an overall reach in excess of 5 million people. A new pilot Primary Climate Ambassador programme was also launched in 2022 which aims to increase climate literacy in senior primary students and empower them to take climate action in their school, home and wider community.

The online summer course "Climate Change Science & Action" developed by the team continued to grow in popularity. The Climate Action team also took to the road to speak to the general public at a wide variety of festivals and events throughout the year.

Green Flag for Parks Award

Only awarded for exceeding tough environmental standards in green space management, and excellence of visitor attractions – the Green Flag Award Scheme is the mark of a quality park or green space and is recognised throughout the world.





Gaelscoil Mhainistir na Corann Co. Cork

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Clean Coasts group, Ballynamona Co. Cork

In 2022, 104 sites were awarded the Green Flag. Eighty-five of these were formal public parks and nineteen were voluntary community sites.

Five Parks were awarded the Pollinator Plan Awards by the National Biodiversity Data Centre and twelve Irish Green Flag Sites were accredited "Green Heritage Accreditation" standard.

Once again more Green Flag Awards have been secured by Irish Parks and Gardens than by any country, other than the UK where the scheme originated in 1996. This year participating European countries include Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

GLOBE & Clean Air Together

The EPA funded GLOBE programme and

Clean Air Together campaigns continued to grow and reach wider audiences in 2022. 300 schools registered to participate in GLOBE's air quality campaigns recording over 800 measurements. A Weather Station Project also took place in collaboration with Fingal County Council which involved workshops and weather data visualisation. The first EPV Approved GLOBE Teacher Training Course took place in August 2022 looking at Citizen Science and how to collect meaningful environmental data.

The Clean Air Together Campaign took place during four weeks in October 2022 in Cork City. 1,000 participants recorded levels of Nitrogen Dioxide in their local area. The results will be available in early 2023.

The data from Clean Air Together (Cork City) will be combined with air quality data from the EPA's monitoring network to give a bigger and better picture of air quality in Cork City.

These data points will be used to check EPA air quality computer models. These computer models will help to better understand air quality in Cork.

The project aims to increase awareness of air quality, inform and affect policy and change attitudes to air quality issues. The project also aims to encourage behavioural change that will lead to better air quality for us all.

National Spring Clean

The ever popular National Spring Clean had its biggest year in 2022 with over 5,640 groups registering to participate. Residents associations, schools, Tidy Towns groups, committed individuals, colleges and community groups made up the amazing 500,000 volunteers who organised clean-ups in their local areas. National Spring Clean is Ireland's largest anti-litter initiative with an estimated 2,800 tonnes of litter collected in 2022 alone.

Neat Streets

In 2022, the Neat Streets Programme saw an impressive level of engagement from schools across Ireland, reaching full capacity, which contributed to significant progress towards reducing litter and preventing waste.

This year marked the programme's 11th year of operation (2021-2022). This was celebrated at the Aviva Stadium in Dublin with a rugby-themed conference, in sync with the Six Nations tournament, focusing on tackling litter and waste. The event was the first large in-person gathering hosted by the Environmental Education Unit since the start of the pandemic and



Neat Streets Conference, 2022

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was a resounding success, attracting the participation of up to 20 schools. All our schools that participated in the programme earned their first Green-Schools flag for litter and waste management.

Irish Business Against Litter

2022 saw the 20th year IBAL has commissioned An Taisce to carry out Litter Surveys nationally. Two surveys were carried out nationally in 2022 with over 500 sites in towns and cities visited for each survey.

The results from 2022 saw a significant rise in the numbers of areas deemed clean across Ireland. Three quarters of the 40 cities and towns surveyed were clean, with Naas winning the overall award. City areas showed greatest improvement, notably Dublin City.

Cleanliness levels nationwide improved by 6% in 2022.

Blue Flag & Green Coast Awards

Blue Flag remains one of the most recognised eco-labels both nationally and internationally, celebrating 35 years in 2022. This prestigious designation was awarded to 95 sites in Ireland in 2022- 85 beaches and 10 marinas. It was a highlight of the year to return to the in-person Blue Flag Awards in Curracloe, Co. Wexford.

The Green Coast Award, also operated by the Environmental Education Unit, is a symbol of environmental excellence and has been established to acknowledge, promote and protect the environment of our beaches. The award is for beaches



which have excellent water quality, but which are also prized for their natural, unspoilt environment. Applicant sites must be managed in partnership with the local community to be considered for the Green Coast Award. Sixty-three sites received this award in 2022.

107 Blue Flag in-season control visits were carried out by sixteen staff assessors in thirteen counties across the country, along with 67 Green Coast Award control visits.

Blue Flag Ireland presented an international example of best practice for environmental education initiatives at the National Operator Meeting for Blue Flag Countries in Madeira in October 2022.

Clean-Coasts

The Clean-Coasts team delivered a diverse range of action-based, awareness raising and information campaigns and initiatives throughout 2022, along with providing guidance and support to the 2,000 Coast Care groups and 40,000 volunteers who are now participating in this extensive programme.

They provided clean-up kits to eight hundred volunteers and #2minutebeachclean kits to 350 volunteers to support groups organising actions in their local areas and also saw great engagement in the Big Beach Clean with 500 groups registering and 63 tonnes of litter removed. A further 250 clean-ups were registered for World Oceans Day where 22.5 tonnes of litter were removed. It was a huge positive to see such active engagement post-pandemic.

Clean-Coasts Roadshows were also held – 10 in-person and five online. The Clean-Coasts Roadshows are a series of free talks and workshops for coastal communities. The Roadshows aim to bring together all those with an interest in protecting their local beaches, seas and marine life and environment. The #BreakUpWithPlastic and #PlasticFreeJuly campaigns proved extremely popular.

Clean-Coasts operates two Irish Water supported awareness raising campaigns which showed real, effective impacts in 2022. Think Before You Flush and Think Before You Pour provide advice, information and resources around why we need to ensure we only allow the correct items down our toilets and sinks. Research collected showed that Think Before You Flush saw a 14% decrease in people regularly flushing damaging items down the toilet while Think Before You Pour saw a 12% decrease.

The ever-popular Love Your Coast Photography Awards (which received over 1,100 entries) and the Ocean Hero Awards events took place in-person in 2022. Twenty-eight groups and individuals were shortlisted for the Ocean Hero



Cliffoney NS Bike Week

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Awards which was a celebration of the inspirational work going on all over the country to protect our coastline.

Green-Schools

The Green-Schools programme saw 642 schools being awarded a Green Flag across the ten thematic areas of the programme in 2022. 53 schools were awarded the Green Flag for the first time, and 21 received the first flags for the latest theme of Food and Biodiversity.

Green-Schools operates across a vast network of schools and is engaged in a wide variety of projects and initiatives to support schools to achieve the over-arching aims of the programme. 2022 saw a return to many in-person initiatives but a number of online techniques were maintained where it was shown they had been successful. For example, initial teacher-training seminars continued to be held online for ease of access for attendees. These seminars saw over 800 teachers involved, which is the highest number to date. The programme also delivered approved EPV teacher training courses during the summer.

161 students participated in the Water Ambassador programme which provides training and active opportunities for students. 528 Irish Students participated in the Green-Schools Global Classroom Project along with students from Kenya, South Africa and Dubai.

While in-person engagement returned at a local and regional level through workshops and events, some national initiatives took place online such as Marine Week, Biodiversity Week and Global Goals Week. These initiatives saw a combined reach of approximately 20,000. The annual Green-Schools Awards also took place online in 2022, however it is envisaged that these popular and rewarding events will return to in-person in 2023.

The scale of the programme requires support from our key stakeholders and dedication from the participating schools.



Climate Ambassador Awards 2022

Green-Schools Travel

The Green-Schools Travel programme operates nationally and is comprised of the Travel and Global Citizenship Travel themes. In 2022 there was a wide variety of engagement directly with schools working on these themes individually with their dedicated Green-Schools Travel Officers who are based all over the country and work with schools to achieve sustainable behaviour change and modal shift. The team and the schools implement a suite of innovative interventions and collect large data sets. Overall data suggested that 70% of schools participating saw an increase in the numbers of students cycling to school with an average 20% decrease in car usage.

Nationally, a number of key campaigns occurred throughout the academic year to promote sustainable travel to school including Clean Air Week, Scoot to School Week and Walk to School Week. Over 20,000 students participated in WOW days (Walk on Wednesdays), over 4,000 carried out COW days (Cycle on Wednesdays) and over 2,700 participants scooted to school on SOW days (Scoot on Wednesday).

The #andshecycles Ambassador Programme is an initiative of the Green-Schools Travel programme with a focus on addressing the teenage cycling gender gap. This is achieved through building and supporting student leaders to take action to enable and empower teenage girls to cycle to school. The objectives of the programme are to develop role models and leaders for school cycling amongst teenage girls and empower and provide opportunities for them to cycle.

Awards events for the #andshecycles ambassadors and the Big Travel Challenge were held in-person during the course of the year.

138 schools were awarded the Green Flag for the Travel and Global Citizenship Travel themes in 2022.

Safe Routes To School

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Programme was developed in partnership with the NTA and Green-Schools in 2020 as a response to the need to support schools to increase walking and cycling to school and build on the existing work of the Green-Schools Travel programme.

The main programme objectives include improving safety at the school gate, improving sustainable access to school routes and increasing the number of students who cycle to school.

In 2022, delivery plans were developed for over 100 schools and the Safe Routes

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To School team engaged with all 31 Local Authorities and 170 schools. A bilingual toolkit was also developed to support schools in adapting to infrastructure changes.

Air Quality monitoring was carried out to track the changes in the air quality at schools caused by the infrastructure works under the programme.

436 schools received cycle parking, and 37 schools received scooter parking through this initiative. Safe Routes to School infrastructure has now been put in place in 18 schools.

Green-Campus

Green-Campus in Ireland is a diverse and innovative programme, frequently cited as international best practice. There are now fifty-one campuses and teaching hospitals registered with the programme. There is particular growth and interest from hospital sites with ten participating across the country.

The annual Green Campus Network Meeting took place online in 2022 and included lightning presentations from participants in University College Cork, Maynooth Green Campus, Cork University Hospital and the Climate Ambassador Programme. Valuable insights were gained throughout the day and at two breakout sessions which looked at the following: 'Insights and Impacts of the Climate Action Plan' and 'Climate Action Solutions'. Insights taken from this event were documented as a series of graphic harvests and will be used to inform the future development of the programme. Sixty-five participants attended the event.

National Green Week for third-level campuses and Climate Action Week 2022 also saw great engagement from Green-Campus participant sites.
Sligo University Hospital, Kinsale College, Mary Immaculate College Thurles and IT Sligo were all awarded the Green-Campus Green Flag in 2022.

Young Reporters for the Environment

Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) is one of five FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education) programmes operated by the Environmental Education Unit. It is an environmental journalistic competition for young people. This competition provides great opportunities for synergies and collaboration across the environmental education unit with entries from Green-Schools, Green-Campus and Climate Ambassador programmes growing each year.

2022 saw twelve schools and three campuses involved with 86 participants and 38 entries received. There is also an international competition where each participating country put forward their successful national entries. There was Irish success in 2022 when Trinity College student Kate Burke came second in the International Competition with her article "Climate Change and Religion".

YRE also developed a series of educational webinars in 2022 on topics such as journalistic skills, photography, and mobile journalism.

Woodland Programmes

An Choill Bheag is a long-term educational programme, an initiative of LEAF Ireland. Choill Bheag is a small, dense, biodiverse native woodland habitat on the school grounds. Choill Bheags are outdoor living classrooms, with space created for seating for classes to spend time learning outside. As An Choill Bheag matures, nature trails can be developed and students can learn the necessary skills to maintain, monitor and study this essential and beautiful ecosystem in their school grounds. It is based around practical sustainable tree planting and long-term woodland and eco-system education, management and practical skills. It has a strong emphasis on creating the woodland and hedgerow habitat that are then studied and managed as part of a longer-term educational initiative.

During the 2021/22 period, 14 An Choill Bheag's were put in place around the country with 2,260 native trees planted.

The "Investigate Forests" project (funded by the Department of Food, Agriculture, and the Marine (DAFM) under the Woodland Support Projects 2021/22) concluded in 2022, having delivered 200 workshops, engaging 5,000 students directly. The project gave the opportunity for participating students to learn about trees and forests. Each school that took part received two hands-on workshops exploring the benefits of trees and their positive impact on the environment. Students learned about the role trees play in their everyday lives and the range of products they use which come from trees. This project also gave students the opportunity to spend time outdoors learning through games and practical activities.

SEAI Workshop Programme

The Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce administers the Schools' Energy Workshop Programme on behalf of the SEAI, the purpose of which is to drive awareness and engagement around energy use. Workshops are delivered by both An Taisce facilitators and a network of Science Foundation Ireland education centres throughout the country.

There are a variety of different workshops on offer, and they are extremely popular with schools from Junior and Senior Primary workshops to Transition Year workshops and Teacher CPD workshops. A total of 764 workshops were delivered in 2022. 279 Junior Primary workshops were delivered along with 428 Senior Primary Workshops. A further 22 Transition Year workshops were carried out while five Teacher CPD sessions took place.



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An Taisce Advocacy Unit

Advocacy Report



Ian Lumley, Heritage Officer



Dr. Elaine McGoff, Natural Environment Officer



Phoebe Duvall, Planning and Environmental Policy Officer



Katlyne Armstrong, Advocacy Assistant

2022 was a particularly busy year for Advocacy. Our role as an independent statutory consultee for planning applications, forestry licensing, aquaculture licensing, infrastructure proposals, and other projects of course continued to be a key aspect of our work. However, this year also necessitated a major focus on legislation and legal issues.

Planning system review

In 2022, the Government began the major review of the planning system required by the Housing for All policy and ultimately aimed at overhauling the entire Planning and Development Act. Phoebe represented An Taisce on the Planning Advisory Forum (PAF), the stakeholder forum formed as part of that review and which met throughout the year. Discussion papers on various aspects of the planning system were prepared by the Department of Housing and subsequently discussed at Forum meetings. Phoebe followed up each meeting with detailed written submissions, some in collaboration with the Environmental Pillar which was also represented on the Forum.

We very much welcome the opportunity to participate in the Forum, however, a number of issues hampered its overall effectiveness in our opinion. The topics covered were quite high level policy issues - the Forum was provided with very little detail on the actual proposed changes to the planning legislation and no analyses, data, or rationale on what is and isn't working well in the current planning system. Moreover, even though this bill and our planning system in general have such a profound impact on all of society, the Forum also suffered from a significant lack of civil society representation, a problem that we raised repeatedly. Despite the issues, it was very important for An Taisce to be involved and get numerous key points on the record in the run up to the new Planning Bill being introduced.

The draft bill lands in 2023 - we will be working hard scrutinising it, engaging with the Joint Oireachtas Committee, and engaging with our members and the wider public on the issues that arise.

Other planning legislation

Separate from the planning system review, the Government introduced and rushed through two very problematic pieces of legislation compromising key aspects of our planning process. In July, just before the summer recess, the Government proposed a slew of last-minute planning legislation amendments, several of which would seriously compromise the judicial review process, with essentially no time for Oireachtas or public scrutiny.

The most problematic of the changes would have let An Bord Pleanála change a planning decision at any time, including after a judicial review had been initiated, essentially giving the Board a get-out-of-jail-free card. We worked closely with colleagues in the Environmental Pillar and the legal profession to fight these amendments, and ultimately, the most problematic one (on changes to decisions) was withdrawn.

In December, Government introduced changes to multiple elements of the appointments process for An Bord Pleanála Board members and gave the Minister unrestricted powers to create an appointments procedure of his or her choosing. The Bill removed all safeguards, Oireachtas oversight, and checks on these powers. Given the Board's vital role in making planning decisions in the public interest, it's key that it is fully independent from Government. It's also crucial that it has a rigorous, transparent,

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and competitive recruitment process that maintains the balance of appropriate skills and knowledge. The bill seriously compromised these things.

Phoebe contributed significantly to the pre-legislative scrutiny process on this bill, with many of An Taisce's recommendations reflected in the Joint Oireachtas Committee's report. She also worked extensively with politicians on amendments to the bill. Unfortunately, the Government rushed the legislation through the Oireachtas right before the Christmas recess. The Government's approach to this bill and the July amendments is symptomatic of a wider pattern of ramming problematic planning legislation through the Oirechtas without full scrutiny or adequate respect for parliamentary custom.

Legal action on the Nitrates Action Plan

Following an extended period of review An Taisce initiated a judicial review on foot of the finalisation of the Nitrates Action Programme (NAP). The Nitrates Directive is the central legislative framework that protects our rivers and lakes from the impacts of agricultural pollution. It requires member States to devise and implement a Nitrates Action Programme setting out specifically how water quality will be protected from agricultural impact for the next four years.

The NAP provides a basis for binding regulations over agricultural practice - known as the Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) regulations. The effectiveness and implementation of these measures and regulations is critical given that intensive land use is the principal cause of the pollution of Irish waterways. To date, this approach has not worked, with agriculture negatively impacting on more than half (53%) of Irish waterbodies.

An Taisce repeatedly challenged the new measures being put forward by Government in draft documents. Those proposed actions were based on a paucity of evidence that they would be any more effective than previous Nitrates Action Programmes, which the Government themselves admitted had failed.

These concerns were not addressed at all. Regrettably, instead of putting in place something that could help halt and reverse water pollution, the government has chosen to sideline the science and the law in framing a weak and inadequate NAP.

Accordingly, and based on the evidence of an inevitable further deterioration in water quality An Taisce had no option but to challenge this approach. The case will be heard in 2023.

Abstraction Bill

An Taisce was involved in the pre legislative scrutiny of the Abstraction Bill back in 2019. This is a piece of legislation which puts controls in place for the abstraction of ground water or surface water, as required by the Water Framework Directive. The final Bill came before the Oireachtas at the end of 2022, and Elaine engaged extensively with politicians to try to get amendments accepted to bring the Bill into compliance with EU law. Unfortunately, the Bill was rushed through and no amendments were accepted. This will now be a matter for the European Commission to address.

Highlights from our policy work

Elaine continued to work on nitrates and water in 2022, inputting to the final consultations on the Nitrates Action Programme, following two others in 2021. The draft River Basin Management Plan, which is essentially the implementation plan for the Water Framework Directive, went out for consultation, and An Taisce worked closely with the Sustainable Water Network coalition to establish eNGO asks for the plan and to campaign around that to strengthen the plan.

It was a busy year for forestry consultation, with the Coillte strategy, the Forestry Strategy and the Forestry Vision all seeking public input.

For biodiversity, the National Biodiversity Action Plan was also out for consultation, and the Citizens Assembly on Biodiversity Loss finally took place throughout 2022, with Elaine representing eNGOs during one of their sessions. The committee heard from a vast array of people,

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and we look forward to seeing their recommendations in 2023.

On the climate front, in collaboration with An Taisce's Climate Committee, Damien Ó Tuama (our Cycling Advocacy Officer), and our Legacy4LIFE team, we made a detailed submission on the Climate Action Plan 2023, which sets out the suite of measures the Government intends to implement to meet the legally binding emissions reduction targets. Our submission covered a very wide range of topics including electricity generation, sustainable transport, agriculture, land use, forestry, just transition, building retrofitting, etc.. Crucially, we also highlighted the ongoing major flaws with the current sectoral emissions ceilings, including the fact that they do not cover the 2021-2025 period, and how these issues could seriously impact our ability to meet our emissions reduction requirements.

An Taisce staff news and representation

Alongside her work in the Advocacy Unit, Katlyne completed her MA in Anthropology, and An Taisce was a key participant in her dissertation research. You can read more about her work elsewhere in this Annual Report.

Elaine had four very competent interns throughout 2022, Sinead Loughran and Elizabeth Quinn Sheridan, followed by Liz McAuley and Julian Suarez. They did excellent work on our forestry licensing submissions and other ad hoc support work for Elaine. We are very grateful to all of them.

Elaine continued to represent An Taisce on several fronts, including:

- Member of the Water Forum, a multi-stakeholder forum, set up to advise the relevant Minister on water quality issues;
- Member of 'Project Woodland', a multi-stakeholder group set up by Minister Hackett to chart a way forward to fix the forestry licencing process.
- Steering Committee member of the Environmental Pillar for 2021-2022, and 2022-2023
- Member of the Board of Directors of the Sustainable Water Network (SWAN)

Phoebe represented An Taisce on the Planning Advisory Forum (run by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage) as part of the review of planning legislation. She was also a member of the Institute of International and European Affairs' climate and energy working group.



Dr Elaine McGoff with Citizens Assembly Chair Dr Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin and Padraic Fogarty of Irish Wildlife Trust and Karin Dubsky of Coastwatch

The Advocacy Unit staff would like to sincerely thank An Taisce's various committees, Council, members, volunteers and Local Associations - An Taisce's work is greatly amplified and bolstered by all of their critical contributions



An Taisce Advocacy Staff , L-R, Dr Elaine McGoff, Dr Damien Ó Tuama, Phoebe Duvall, Kevin Keane and Ian Lumley

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Legacy4LIFE

An Taisce was one of two Irish organisations that successfully tendered for an EU LIFE award in late 2021 designed specially to assist NGOs whose activities had been curtailed by the Covid-19 pandemic. While John Sweeney composed the proposal, Ian Lumley was successful in obtaining the necessary matched funding from two government departments and the European Climate Fund to enable a team of around seven people to be employed for the two year project. The proposal sought to address key issues relating to the deterioration of the Irish environment in terms of climate change and biodiversity.

Over the past 35 years the number of pristine water courses in Ireland have declined from 575 to just 20, with approximately half of our rivers, lakes and estuaries not considered to be in good ecological health. 30% of private wells are now contaminated with E. coli arising from animal and human waste, and not surprisingly this country has the highest incidence of VTEC in Europe. In Ireland, the number of premature deaths attributable to air pollution is estimated at 1,300 people. This is principally as a result of particulate emissions both from domestic and transport sources. Due to its dispersed population, high car dependency occurs and the average Irish car travels just under 20,000km per year as opposed to the EU average of 12,000. Ammonia emissions have exceeded the EU National Emissions Ceiling Directive since 2016 and Greenhouse Gas emissions have trended upwards since 2011 with the most recent annual increase being 5.2% at a time we are supposed to be heading for a reduction of 51% on 2018 levels by 2030.

Addressing these serious trends needs the full implementation of the EU Green Deal with the support of key stakeholders such as government departments. This is particularly the case with respect to biodiversity, agriculture and the



An Taisce Legacy4Life team on launch day - L-R, Robert Moss, Rob Gandola, Ellen O'Hora, Aoife O'Rourke, Minister Malcolm Noonan, Francesca Loughran, John Liston, Professor John Sweeney and Marc Ó Cathasaigh TD

mobilisation of public opinion. Accordingly, the specific objectives of the Legacy4Life project are as follows:

i. Enhancing the role that ponds can play as biodiversity refugia by supporting capacity development and expertise in pond creation, management and conservation. In addition, the objectives address the need for enhancing public awareness and mobilising community consciousness regarding the amenity value these small wetland habitats possess for biodiversity, water quality and climate adaptation.

ii. To promote the implementation of Farm to Fork as a strategic direction for the future of Irish agriculture. This to be done mainly through an examination of barriers to the uptake of more sustainable farming models such as organic agriculture.

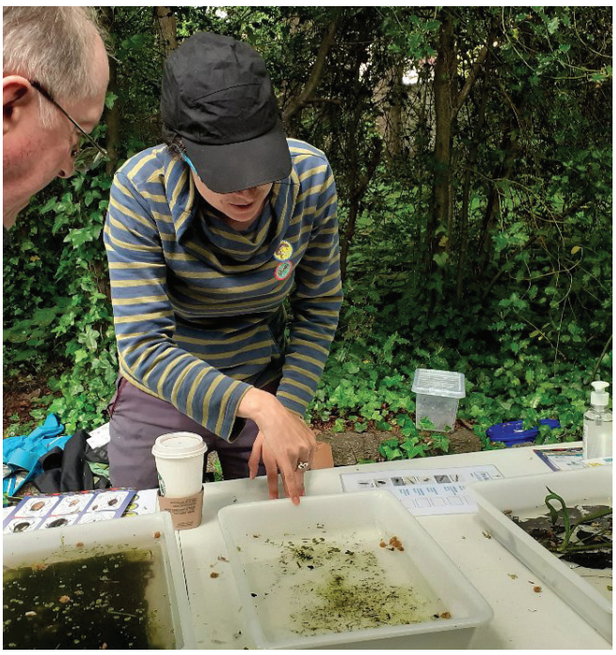
iii. In accordance with the Green Deal objective of incorporating an ambitious Greening Plan for certain urban areas by 2030, the project also seeks to establish the stakeholder interactions and practical steps necessary to establish low carbon town centres.

In each case, considerable progress has been made over the past year. For 'ponds' a network of local authorities have collaborated in establishing a network of demonstration sites and the team have been engaged in workshops, surveys, citizen science exercises and efforts to get pond establishment into local authority planning objectives. A handbook for pond establishment and management, and illustrative pamphlets, are currently under preparation.

Having an established organic farmer on the team has been especially valuable in investigating the barriers to entering organic farming, and field visits to a wide range of different enterprises has been undertaken with 'best practice' documentation being produced. A survey of what improvements can be made to encourage further uptake has also been completed. Educational resources, including a children's book, is also in preparation and will be distributed via the Green Schools network. In what was probably a first for An Taisce, representation at the National Ploughing Championships also occurred.

Climate action can also take place at a local level, and the third strand of the L4L project seeks to provide a template for how towns can choose a low carbon future. This part of the project selected Maynooth as its test case, partly because a university town is rich in data sources but also because it was also the choice of Kildare County Council with whom cooperation on a variety of fronts proved fruitful. Using high resolution census data to work out housing characteristics and other sources to map Building Energy Rating data, traffic, land use, commercial and agricultural emissions, a spatial model of emissions was constructed. Going beyond this, however, needs community and stakeholder consultations, and the team is hoping to make a 'user friendly' carbon calculator that will be web-based and enable community choices regarding their priorities for reaching emission targets to be ascertained. Of course the priorities in a large town in eastern Ireland may be very different from that of a small town in western Ireland and the team are also studying how these differ using a case study of Ballyvaughan in Co. Clare. All going well, An Taisce will have established a useful tool that can be applied elsewhere in Ireland by local authorities to help meet their obligations.

These are exciting times for An Taisce as it interfaces with a range of public authorities and private sectors. In improving the profile of the organisation, and changing some perceptions of it, Legacy4LIFE is making a useful contribution in key areas to tackling the climate and biodiversity emergencies.



Pond Demonstration at The Grove, Morehampton Road, Dublin



Members of the Legacy4Life team at the Organic Beef Open Day 2022 with Minister for Agriculture, Charlie McConalogue

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National Cycling Coordinator's Report

Dr. Damien Ó Tuama



The strategic partnership between An Taisce and Cyclist.ie - the Irish Cycling Advocacy Network entered its 10th year in 2023, after the position of National Cycling Coordinator (NCC) was created back in 2013. The seed funding for my NCC position was originally provided by the European Cyclists' Federation which advocates at a pan-European level for everyday cycling to be a core part of transportation.

I comment below on each of the six strategic priorities of my NCC work, listed here:

1. Develop a vibrant and resilient all-island cycling advocacy community
2. Influence the national conversation on mobility and quality of life
3. Seek to ensure public policy embraces cycling
4. Advocate for more effective institutions and new legislation
5. Seek to ensure there is ample funding spent on cycling
6. Seek to secure high quality routes and infrastructure

Community

The NCC role amplifies the huge volunteering energies of the wider cycling advocacy community of Cyclist.ie, which itself comprises 35 local groups. As we emerged from Covid restrictions in 2022, in-person meetings of our countrywide cycle campaigning community became possible again; and at a European level, the Velo-city International Cycling Conference allowed for the national advocacy organisations and other stakeholders to convene again. In 2022, Velo-city was held in Ljubljana in Slovenia with a strong Irish contingent present, both from government and NGO circles. I was definitely reinspired by attending and speaking at Velo-city.

While allocations to local authorities for active travel and greenways remained high, which kept morale high in the campaigning community, funding for cycling advocacy remains hard to come by. My own NCC position was sustained in 2022 largely through a grant from Rethink Ireland and ongoing support from Dublin Cycling Campaign. As per my yearly call, the securing of funding for the NCC position needs serious attention - the position has been too precarious for too long.

Conversations

Our work to change the conversations around mobility and quality of life takes place on a daily basis. This happens through our social media postings, newsletters and web articles, plus our regular contributions to TV and radio programmes and podcasts, and print and online media. Huge credit is due here to the wider volunteering community for all of their efforts.

Policy

Both the current Programme for Government and the National Development Plan include significant commitments for investing in cycling, and the annual allocations for the National Transport Authority and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (and hence to Local Authorities) for active travel are unprecedentedly high. From a policy perspective, cycling is in a far better place than it has been for, perhaps, any other period in the history of the state - and our advocacy work has played an important role in this positive change.

In 2022, we engaged directly with TII on plans for the National Cycle Network, and the updating of the Rural Cycleway Guidance document. We also welcomed the



Damien and other delegates from Ireland at the Velo-city Conference in Ljubljana, 2022

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publication of the CycleConnects proposals by the NTA, and we made detailed submissions on all of these.

At the end of 2022, the Climate Action Plan 2023 was published, with the transport chapter influenced strongly by the publication of the OECD's Redesigning Ireland's Transport for Net Zero report, as commissioned by the Climate Change Advisory Council. We warmly welcomed this OECD report with its strongly articulated arguments for transformative change in the mobilities space - not simply changes focused on the electrification of the car fleet which, on its own, will do nothing for the relief of congestion, for the liveability of our built-up areas or for road casualty rates.



Legislation

In 2022, we pressed on with advocating for road traffic legislative changes to improve cycling and for more effective enforcement of legal sanctions against drivers of motorised vehicles who endanger the safety of cyclists and pedestrians. We continued to advocate for 30km/h to become the default speed limit in built-up urban areas. Additionally, we have been in regular contact with the Road Safety Authority and the Department of Transport on the updating and improvement of legislation in favour of active travel.

Funding

We were very concerned in 2022 about the under-spend of active travel allocations by local authorities. As reported in the Irish Times in August 2022, "more than half of the funding provided to rural local authorities last year [i.e. 2021] for active



Damien speaking at the Velo-city Conference in Ljubljana, 2022 (Photo Credit - Cykelframjandet)

cycling and walking infrastructure was unspent". Much of this underspend was attributed to the lack of capacity at local authority level. At the time of writing (May 2023), we are now more hopeful that local authorities are improving their performance in this critical area and are fully spending their allocations.

High quality infrastructure

We engaged closely with the planning process in 2022 and delivered approx 100 high quality submissions to Local Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on active travel schemes. Additionally, we continued to seek temporary quick-to-construct cycle facilities with a view to having these carefully assessed and then made permanent as improved designs.

Overall, we were pleased to see the publication of a revised version of TII's Rural Cycleway Design Standards (Aug 2022), with specific changes made as a result of our meetings and submissions. We also spent much of 2022 prodding the NTA on progressing the revision of the National Cycle Manual. It is a great source of frustration that this document is way behind schedule, particularly because so much public funding is now, finally, being spent on active travel infrastructure.

On the rural cycling environment, Cyclist.ie's Rural Collective was very active in 2022 - with the running of a national "Rural Ireland can cycle" campaign to encourage Councillors to endorse the "Vision for Cycling in Rural Ireland", and with the publication of a paper on removing and replacing 80 km/h signs on certain rural roads.

Conclusion

Over the coming period, we expect to see the increased political focus on and funding for active travel infrastructure bearing fruit - and not before time. As always, I am happy to hear from An Taisce members with an interest in active travel and transportation with any questions or offers of help. Email: **damien.otuama@antaisce.org.**


The almost complete Shannon Cycle - Pedestrian Bridge in Athlone - Photo credit Westmeath County Counci

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Natural Environment Committee (NEC)

Declan Murphy,
Chair NEC 2022-23.



On a lovely, sunny but cold morning in February 2022 the NEC held an excellent guided field trip on Bull Island. About 60-80 people attended and our guide was Pat Corrigan, manager of the Interpretive Centre on Bull Island. He spoke about the history of the island that has been in existence for only 200 years, yet is now the most designated site in Ireland and part of the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. He discussed and demonstrated the prolific plant and bird and species, and the tidal and geological features. Following a lunch break we moved to St Annes's Park on the mainland and heard about its history, ecology and fine buildings. The event was planned and organised by local resident and NEC member Anto Kerins. Later in the year there was another fascinating field trip to the Old Irish Goats Society (OIGS) visitor centre in Mulranny, Co. Mayo. Lead organiser was Anny Wise who advocates passionately for the protection of these goats. They are native to Ireland having been present for over 5000 years, and are distinctive in both DNA and appearance. In June 2022 they were officially designated as a Native Rare Breed to Ireland, giving them limited protection from hybridisation with the more recent but more numerous feral 'Swiss' goats.

An Taisce received national media focus during the year in connection with two major legal challenges spearheaded by our Natural Environment Officer (and NEC member) Elaine McGoff. The Glanbia Cheese Factory planning application was permitted by Kilkenny County Council and An Bord Pleanala. An Taisce's challenge was based on inadequate assessment of the 'upstream' impact of the cheese factory on cattle numbers and therefore nitrate contamination of water bodies (and air quality) from cattle slurry. The extensive media reporting had major impact on public perception of government policy on agricultural intensification. Our reputation for professionalism and independence was enhanced as An Taisce was the only voluntary or public body to 'walk the walk'.

The EU Nitrates Directive requires governments to implement a Nitrates Action Plan specifying the measures proposed to ensure safe water and prevention of pollution by cattle effluent and fertilizer runoff. Elaine described the latest Nitrates Action Plan 2022-27 as 'weak and inadequate'. An Taisce applied for a judicial review of government's agreement to the flawed NAP in May but legal progress is slow and by year end there was no decision.

The Citizens Assembly on Biodiversity Loss was one of the most encouraging events during the year. An Taisce was again represented by Elaine McGoff who made a powerful presentation on citizens' constitutional right to a safe environment. Speakers from other Irish environmental NGOs spoke about the loss of biodiversity among all wildlife, including iconic species. We await the Assembly's final report with anticipation, as it has a track record



Old Irish Goats

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Pond Dipping at the Grove, Morehampton Road

of being well ahead of political parties in recognising radical change in public opinion.
The long delayed publication of the Review of the NPWS was widely praised. The numerous recommendations will be critical to restoring NPWS to its vital role in protecting our wildlife heritage.

An Taisce successfully applied for EU funding for a 'Legacy for Life' (L4L) programme. It consists of three separate projects related to enhancement of biodiversity and the environment. One project concerns the conservation of existing ponds and creation of new ones, and already is showing encouraging progress. Ponds and waterbodies have widespread benefits ranging from filtration of water to biodiversity enhancement to health benefits for all. Another project aims to increase the number of organic farmers, which in Ireland is extraordinarily low compared with our designated targets. The third project aims to spread environmental sustainability measures to smaller rural communities in townlands, villages and rural towns. Each county is required to nominate one location to act as a pilot project. A total of six funded staff positions related to these projects have been filled, and they are expected to lead to wider environmental benefits. NEC member John Sweeney was largely responsible for this visionary programme.

An Taisce's Natural Environment (NE) properties are a special interest for the committee. The Grove in Dublin 4 is a small wildlife site within the city. It has nesting sparrowhawks, a fox, two small ponds, and a wide variety of mature and regenerating trees and plants. Booterstown Nature Reserve is a wonderful wildfowl and bird sanctuary in south county Dublin, jointly managed by local An Taisce enthusiasts and DLR council.

The NEC meets approximately two monthly when we discuss important NE developments nationally and locally, review the status of our NE properties, debate national and international environmental issues and report to Council. The main requirement for NEC membership is an enthusiasm for wildlife, and we welcome new members with or without expertise. Meetings are never dull!



Croaghaun Sea Cliffs, Achill Island, Co Mayo - credit Kevin Foley Clean Coasts Love Your Coast 2022 finalist

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An Taisce Climate Committee Report

Dr Ciara Beausang, Outgoing Chair, An Taisce Climate Committee



The An Taisce Climate Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis and has held over 100 meetings since its foundation in 2014. December 2022 marked the first hybrid meeting of the committee since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, allowing members the option of dialling in remotely via Zoom or attending in person in Tailors' Hall.

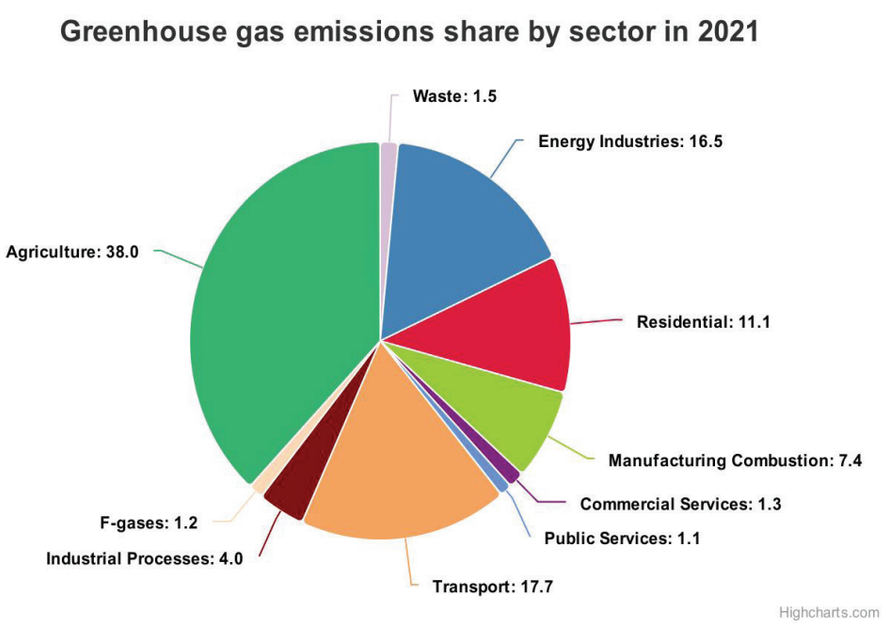
Greenhouse gas emissions in Ireland increased by 4.7% in 2021 [2]. Emissions are higher now than pre-pandemic 2019 figures. Ireland is still not on the pathway required to meet future targets and a climate neutral economy. This comes as the IPCC released its most recent synthesis report, which highlights the unprecedented scale of the challenge required to keep warming to 1.5 degrees. It indicates that current plans are insufficient to tackle climate change [3].

UN Secretary-General António Guterres warned "the climate time-bomb is ticking" and has called on leaders of developed countries to commit to reaching net-zero as close as possible to 2040 [4].

The messages are stark. But there are multiple, feasible and effective options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and they are available now. Effective and equitable climate action will provide wider benefits. Changes in the food sector, electricity, transport, industry, buildings and land-use can reduce greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, they can make it easier for people to lead low-carbon lifestyles, which will also improve health and wellbeing. The IPCC synthesis report indicates that the economic benefits for people's health from air quality improvements alone would be roughly the same, or possibly even larger than the costs of reducing or avoiding emissions [3].

The An Taisce Climate Committee continues to do its part to unite behind the science and scrutinize measures by the Irish Government to address the climate crisis. The committee has closely followed the progression of the programme of three five-year carbon budgets, required to comply with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act. We argued that stricter action is required

During the pandemic, much emphasis was placed on a "Green Recovery", where measures related to economic recovery would also benefit the environment. This included measures for renewable energy, sustainable transport and green jobs. Three years later, how is this so-called Green Recovery going? Analysis undertaken in 2021 for the United Nations Environment Programme found that "global green spending is so far incommensurate with the scale of ongoing environmental crises" [1]. Of the measures taken by the world's largest economies, only 2.5% of total spending is expected to enhance sustainability. To the question, "Are we building back better?" the answer is: not yet.

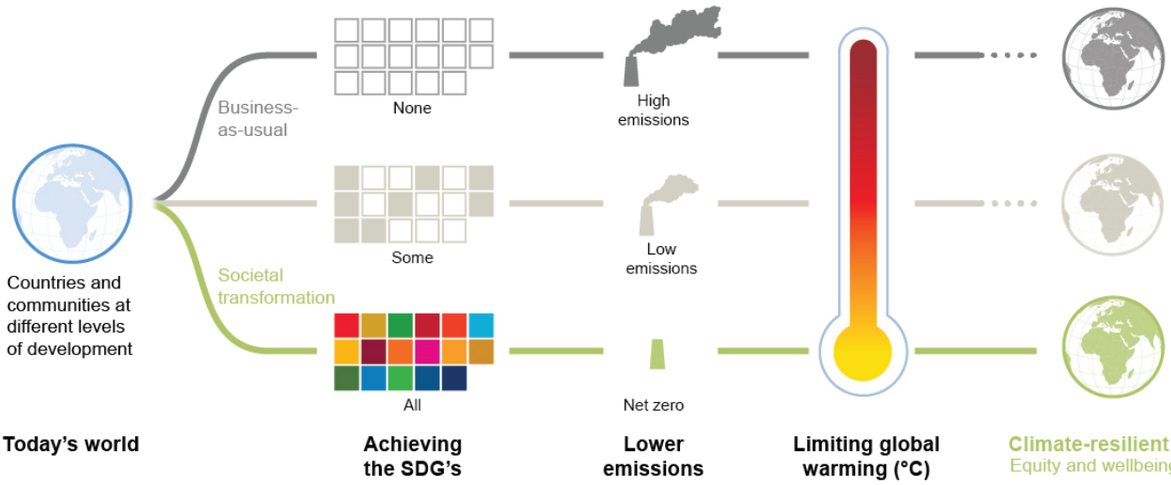


Credit IPCC

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FAQ5.2: **Climate-resilient development pathways**

Decision-making that achieves the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), lowers greenhouse gas emissions, limits global warming, and enhances adaptation, could help lead to a climate-resilient world



Credit IPCC

to rapidly reduce emissions in the *immediate period to 2025* (the first carbon budget period).

The An Taisce Climate Committee meets on a voluntary basis and the work of the committee supports the wider An Taisce organisation, including the Advocacy Unit. With your support, An Taisce will continue to work to drive effective climate action at all levels, informed by the best available scientific understanding.



Photo credit Mika Baumeister, Unsplash

[1] United Nations Environment Programme, 2021, Are We Building Back Better? Evidence from 2020 and Pathways to Inclusive Green Recovery Spending https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/35281/AWBBB.pdf Accessed 21 Mar. 2023.

[2] EPA, 2022, Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Key Messages, https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/ghg/key-messages/# Accessed 21 Mar. 2023.

[3] IPCC, 2023, Urgent Climate Action Can Secure a Liveable Future for All, https://www.ipcc.ch/2023/03/20/press-release-ar6-synthesis-report/ Accessed 21 Mar. 2023.

[4] United Nations, 2023, Secretary-General Calls on States to Tackle Climate *Change 'Time Bomb' through New Solidarity Pact, Acceleration Agenda, at Launch of Intergovernmental Panel Report*, https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21730.doc.htm. Accessed 21 Mar. 2023.

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An Taisce Planning Committee

Properties Committee Report

Finbarr Murray has been appointed Chair of Properties Committee for 2023, the previous Chair Geoff Power having stepped down at the end of 2022.

Tailors' Hall

The sub-lease of Tailors Hall basement to a cafe came into effect with the new business opening in early 2023. The cafe will be accessed from the High Street side. The Hall came back into use for events and meetings post-COVID and this is something which will be continued, both for community and commercial purposes.

Babes Bridge/Boyne Navigation

Very little restoration work happened along the Boyne Navigation during 2022. Nevertheless there are two active teams of IWAI volunteers working when they can on clearing scrub, water weeds and small overhanging branches from the canal and its immediate vicinity. Lock gates have been repainted and the fairway into the sea lock has been cleared to ease boat passage from the river into and out of the lock.
A separate team of IWAI volunteers has been busy throughout the year along the Ramparts section of Canal at Navan. A number of fallen trees were removed from the Canal and tow path and the surrounds of Rowleys Lock has been kept in pristine condition. The popularity of the Ramparts for recreational walking is gradually increasing and is becoming a valued amenity for the town.

An Taisce personnel were consulted and invited to a number of meetings during the year, in Meath County Council to discuss plans for the use of the old Spicer's Bakery Site adjacent to the Ramparts. In future phases of the planned development, existing stone buildings and an old Mill on the site may be used to house a County Museum.



IWAI volunteers working on the Boyne Navigation

Hopefully this important facility will record the industrial and social history of Navan.

In regard to the Boyne Greenway, continued delays to the advancement of this plan are negatively impacting any further restoration projects on the Navigation by the volunteers of IWAI Boyne Navigation due to the planning embargo imposed five years ago – pending identification of the preferred route for the Greenway.

Gort Weigh House

The Burren Lowlands group, which had rented the Weigh House pre-Covid, will now return in 2023, bringing this very central little building on the Market Square into regular use. The old weighing scales are currently being repaired and will be reinstalled.

The Grove, Morehampton Road

A plaque was presented by the family of Estella Solomons, longtime friend of Kathleen Goodfellow, the original donor of the Grove. It is now positioned on the gate to the property. The unveiling of the plaque in October coincided with an exhibition of Estella Solomons' work at the National Gallery called Still Moments, which included a portrait of Goodfellow. National Biodiversity Week saw a pond dipping demonstration by our Legacy4LIFE team. The Grove was opened to the public for these events, showcasing the value of the nature sanctuary for the area. Gustavo Zoladz continues to do great work at The Grove, documenting and filming wildlife active at the site.

Booterstown Marsh - Dun Laoghaire Local Association

To add to our suite of studies on Booterstown Marsh Nature Reserve we completed three projects on the Marsh.

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The Insect Study and The Borrer's Saltmarsh Grass Survey have given valuable information on the changing nature of the marsh and its guidance as to how to protect and ameliorate this sensitive urban ecosystem. We are pleased that 540 invasive young Grey Poplar were removed. The council will fell the remaining large trees in the Autumn of 2023. We thank the Local Authority Water Programme Fund and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council for their significant financial support. Two Masters post grads from GMIT completed theses on the Marsh's water quality and microplastics in the sediment, we look forward to their findings, or perhaps not!

Tests were taken of the Marsh water on foot of our complaints to Dublin City Council pollution control section, we are awaiting test results.

Sliabh Beagh

During 2022 Sliabh Beagh benefited from the conclusion of the cross border EU funded Collaborative Action for the Natura Network (CANN) scheme. This included blocking of drains caused by 20th century peat cutting and removal of invasive conifer and laurel species however the continuation of unauthorised turf cutting by machines coming across the wide open exposed border with Northern Ireland remains unresolved.

The accommodation of controlled Dexter cattle grazing, which is of benefit in reducing fire risk from uncontrolled molina grass, is a model which could be an exemplar for similar areas. Opportunities are being pursued for future cross border partnership opportunities for ecological enhancement and non car-based eco tourism in the wider area.

Rough Island - by Noel Foley, An Taisce Donegal Local Association

Rough Island and Gull Island are the two islands in Mulroy Bay, Co Donegal that are owned by An Taisce. Both islands were tree covered (with Sitka spruce and pine species) when they were gifted to An Taisce some 50 years ago. The trees on Gull Island, the small island (area c 0.3 hectares), remain growing.

The trees on the larger Rough Island (area c 3.0 hectares) were clear felled and removed about 20 years ago. We scattered seed of birch (from Glenveagh National Park) in part of the island and allowed other trees on the island to regenerate naturally. We made some forays to the island to cut out some of the Sitka spruce that regenerated from the seeds of the trees that had been clearfield previously. A small herd of goats and sheep (about 9 in number) came to be on the island, uninvited and not welcome, about 16 years ago.

We visited Rough Island, on Saturday September 24th 2022. The woodland trees are well developed, with an average height of 4 metres and have a full canopy. The dominant native species are birch and holly with a small percentage of rowan and ash. Some 10% of the area is dominated by Sitka spruce from the seeds of the former tree cover. The herb layer is over grazed by trespassing goats and apart from foxgloves is practically non-existent. The bark of the majority of the holly trees is damaged by browsing but the trees continue to thrive. The population of goats seems to be well reduced (perhaps down to 2) and sheep seem to be absent.

As you can see, our properties all require different types of maintenance, even those run as nature sanctuaries. We would be delighted to hear from anyone with an interest in property management and would like to volunteer some time to help us look after them. Contact us at info@antaisce.org for more information.



360 degree view of the Grove. Credit John Roch Simons



Gort Weigh House

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Monuments and Antiquities Report

Dr Mark Clinton



A running theme throughout the year has been the number of reports received by An Taisce concerning a development project situated 'near' or 'beside' a monument. One recent report concerned a proposed telecommunications mast near Kentstown in County Meath. A recently discovered bi-vallate ringfort is located nearby. The distance, however, is c.450m. Whilst the immediate environ of a monument does enjoy some legal protection the official practice is minimalist in approach. The development in effect has to be on or abutting a monument before the State will intervene. Let us not forget that the number of prosecutions taken under the National Monuments Act since 2007 has reached a grand total of 9!

The environs of a monument may have been as important to the original builders as the monument itself. The importance of an 'archaeological landscape' is recognised at a European level. The Valletta Convention was formulated in 1992. Ireland signed up in January 1997. The Convention gave specific recognition and comprehensive protection to 'archaeological landscapes'. Incredibly, not only are these 'landscapes' being ignored in the forthcoming Bill – The Historic and Archaeological Heritage Bill 2023, but hitherto legally recognised features as 'Landscapes' and 'Seascapes' have been quietly omitted from the legislation. Ms. Síle de Valera T.D., addressing the Dáil in 1997, enquired 'Why has nothing been done about this Convention?' Indeed, the same question, 26 years later, could still be reasonably asked.

Another prevalent belief is that when a monument has been gradually degraded over the centuries or, indeed, destroyed in one sudden illegal swoop, that monument is 'gone'. Whilst this is true in a small minority of ancient structures, generally this is a gross misconception. Invariably, no allowances are made for not only the myriad of potential subsurface features but also for the legally protected associated objects. The immediate environ of a very unusual triangular monument in County Wexford, of possible Anglo-Norman origin, was the recently chosen location for two proposed houses. It was argued in the planning application that the formerly substantial earthen banks, as illustrated on the 1st edition of the relevant Ordnance Survey map, were long gone. The County Council Planning Authority accepted An Taisce's recommendation of archaeological monitoring, with excavation a possible outcome.

Professor Roger Stalley, a leading authority on Medieval architecture and



Corlican Graveyard, Co Wexford



Muiredach's Cross, Monasterboice - credit Irish Archaeology

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Dr Mark Clinton and Gary Freemantle presenting to the Oireacthtas Committee on Housing on the Monuments Bill

sculpture, brought to An Taisce's attention the condition of the renowned High Crosses at Monasterboice, Ahenny, and Kilkeeran. The artistic designs of the 10th century cross at Monasterboice in County Louth were being overwhelmed by white lichen whilst those on the Tipperary and Kilkenny crosses were covered in a hard organic growth. A letter was duly dispatched to the relevant Minister of State, urging him to instruct the Office of Public Works to fulfil their function.

A proposal to create a new entrance to the grounds of Howth Castle was lodged with Fingal County Council. The site of the proposed entrance is located to the immediate east of St. Mary's Church. During the construction of the original church in 1816 a considerable number of human burials were uncovered. Its 1866 replacement again resulted in the discovery of a striking number of burials. In 2017 a drainage trench was scientifically excavated. It resulted in the recovery of the remains of 31 individuals of 8th/10th century A.D. date. The location of the Church of Ireland foundation was not on the site of an earlier ecclesiastic site. Accordingly, the burials must be part of an Early Medieval Secular Cemetery. The limits of the cemetery have not been established. An Taisce urged the Council to make a Trial Archaeological Excavation in the area of the proposed new entrance a planning condition.

2023 marks the 75th anniversary of the foundation of An Taisce. Amongst many other events a select number of our properties will be highlighted. One candidate will be Corlican in County Wexford. This site is unique in Ireland – a late 1st Millennium A.D. ringfort playing host to a 17th century Society of Friends (Quaker) Burial Ground! Amongst the interments there are Sarah Holmes, the wife of Thomas, and three of their children. Thomas Holme went on to lay-out the street pattern of the new city of Philadelphia at the request of his friend William Penn. He also served as the 1st Surveyor-General of Pennsylvania.

In February 2022 an An Taisce delegation appeared before a Joint Oireachtas Committee considering the new Monuments legislation. The three key arguments advanced were subsequently adopted by the Committee. It was, therefore, a great disappointment to learn that none of these recommendations advanced by the Committee were accepted by the relevant minister. The new Bill – The Historic and Archaeological Heritage 2023 – will thus ignore the Valletta Convention (which affords great protection to Archaeological and Historical Landscapes) signed by the Republic of Ireland in 1997! Advance absurd penalties rather than prevent monument destruction, and maintain all the powers of 'the life and death of a monument' in the absolute control of one individual, the Minister de la jour of Heritage. No recourse to the courts, no Heritage Ombudsman, in fact no checks or balances whatsoever.

Built Heritage is the physical manifestation of a Nation's ancient past, the calling cards of our ancestors. In Ireland, the motivation for the destruction of monuments will inevitably be financial or land gains. In Ukraine the destruction of Heritage is a deliberate and cynical attempt to erase an entire culture. As of 30th May, 139 Heritage sites had been identified by UNESCO as having suffered verified damage. That was 8 months of continuous warfare ago. This wanton destruction is a vile repeat of the waves of destruction launched by the Moscow regime in the 1920s and 1930s which were responsible for the almost complete elimination of sacred art and icons in Central and Eastern Ukraine. An Taisce has maintained contacts with fellow environmentalists in that tortured country. The importance of the survival of a Nation's Heritage could never be so stark.

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Dublin City Planning Report

Kevin Duff,
Dublin City Planning Officer

Cases dealt with in 2022 included a proposal for a 24-storey tower on the Liffey Quays at the site of the former City Arts Centre on the corner of Moss Street and City Quay, and across from the Custom House. This was a sort of 'piggy back' application, following permission having been given in 2019 for a similar tower nearby at Tara Street Station, also looking over to the Custom House. While a Local Area Plan (LAP) for the George's Quay area had indicated the possibility for a tall building at the Tara Street Station site, the LAP had envisaged a six-storey building at the City Arts Centre site. The application was refused permission by Dublin City Council on the basis that it did not form part of a coherent height cluster and its adverse effect on the setting of the historic landmark Custom House.

Also reviewed was an application for an eight-storey, 74-unit Build-to-Rent (BTR) development to the rear of a terrace of 19th century Protected Structures at Drumcondra Road Lower. On account of its size, bulk and proximity, this eight-storey scheme would have represented gross overdevelopment to the rear of the Protected Structures (residential houses), would have failed to protect their amenities and special interest, resulting in loss of light reach and outlook to their rear windows, and would negatively effect the re-sale value of the houses. The proposal was contrary to the policies of Dublin City Council requiring that new development within the curtilage of Protected Structures should not harm their setting and integrity in respect of design, form, scale, height, proportions, siting and materials, and permission was refused.

Also successfully opposed was a proposal for off-street parking at Lower Rathmines Road. The application required part-removal and alteration of an elaborate set of railings and gates bounding the front garden of an 1830s house. This original historic boundary treatment survived across nine properties in this location, none of which had been altered to date for off-street parking. Furthermore a 2005 City Council conservation report on Rathmines Road Lower had noted this "complete set of railings and gates of extraordinary beauty and quality", saying it was essential that these were protected and that "removal of railings for car parking in the front gardens of these houses should not be open for consideration by the planning authority". It was also pointed out that the inner-suburban location featured a variety of transport options at hand such as Luas, Dublin Bus, bicycle- and car-sharing schemes which would reduce the justification for alteration of the front garden of a period property for private car parking.



Before and After. The renovation completed in 2022 of this early-Georgian house on Fenian Street, Dublin 2 is a remarkable transformation, showing the potential improvement results for many other dilapidated 18th and 19th century buildings around the city

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Cork City Planning Report

Colm Desmond,
Cork City

An Taisce Corcaigh, the Cork City Association, continues to actively monitor planning proposals in the city. Among the more significant were the following:

Our appeal against permission for a 7-storey office building above the historic Queen's Old Castle building on Grand Parade was refused by An Bord Pleanála. We were concerned about the inappropriate height and design above this NIAH-listed structure and the significant adverse impact on the vista towards Daunt's Square at the top of St. Patrick's Street. This is arguably the most central place in the city with a characteristic mixed vernacular townscape, bounded by two architectural conservation areas (North Main Street, Paul Street). The city conservation officer had expressed concern about this aspect, and the city architect had suggested a reduction in height. An Taisce also requested a reduced height and a redesign of the steel-framed dark glazed design of the new building. Notwithstanding these issues, the board approved the scheme in line with its inspector's recommendations in a detailed report (ABP PL 28/312570).

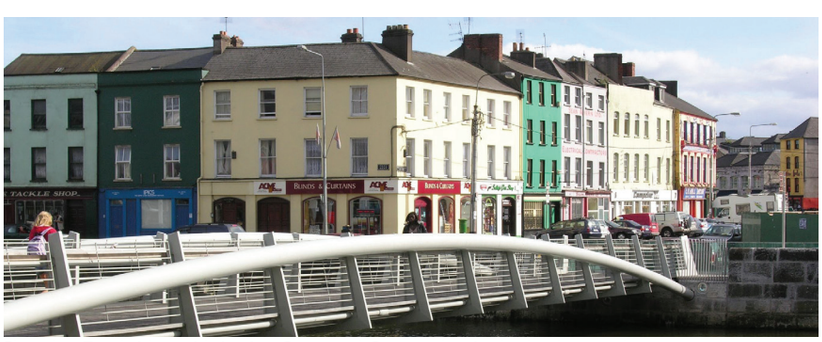
This scheme is part of a trend of approvals for large scale glazed structures within the historic centre, rather than directing these to more accepting dockland or brownfield sites. An Taisce Corcaigh has consistently supported the need to rejuvenate the inner-city centre with appropriate contemporary designs, while avoiding pastiche, but the approval of generic designs in recent years in the general area of the Grand Parade is noticeable. The challenge of providing new office and retail space within the city centre could be better achieved with designs which respect the existing built environment.

The proposal for the restoration, significant internal reconfiguration and extension of the Crawford Art Gallery occupied our attention at the end of the year, with approval granted in early 2023. The restoration of the fine 18th century former custom house block will be particularly significant for the city. Grafton Architects have also designed a new 8-storey building to rise behind this block, in materials which will complement the existing redbrick gallery complex. The height aspect was of concern to us given the precedent in this historic inner-city setting. Other relatively high structures in the immediate area will mitigate the impact to some extent. Overall, it is hoped that the innovative design and quality finish of the new building will be a positive addition to this significant national cultural institution.

Several other planning applications merited an observation this year but our limited volunteer resources in the city did not permit this. Among those we inputted on: (i) a proposal to replace an old shop building on Cornmarket Street with an apartment and retail building which was refused due to inappropriate design and configuration in this historic setting, and (ii) a proposed apartment building at Glanmire on a site with a known flooding risk, which is premature pending commencement of the approved local Flood Relief Scheme

The public consultation on the Bus Connects Cork project drew a large public response. The National Transport Authority's Plan for the delivery of a sustainable public transport network for the Cork Metropolitan area, includes 12 new Sustainable Transport Corridors (STC) with approx. 93 km of bus lane/bus priority, 112 km of cycle facilities/56km of the cycle network, extended pedestrian zones and other works. The impact on existing public and private lands was naturally a significant concern across the city area. Welcoming the main principles underlying the Plan, An Taisce Corcaigh pointed to the unsustainable impact of current traffic volumes on all communities and the need to transition to a more balanced and sustainable transport network. Noting that the city has well-populated and vibrant residential communities adjacent to its centre, we felt the Plan would assist in further rejuvenation and environmental benefits for the city centre area. BusConnects, if implemented, could also begin to reverse the increasing dislocation of social and economic activity between the outer suburbs and the centre, by re-establishing transport links and rebalancing economic and social activities affected by the growth of out-of-town shopping centres. Specific comments on the proposed STCs reflected the need to limit unduly adverse impact on residential areas, community heritage, trees and other natural features, noting that National Strategic Outcome 7 of the National Planning Framework seeks to enhance amenity and heritage, among other national priorities. Following consideration of some 3,000 submissions, a number of revisions and alterations have been made to several STC routes, with further amendments being debated, prior to further public consultation.

AnTaisceCorcaigh@antaisce.org



Shandon Footbridge with Lavitts Quay and Cornmarket in the background

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Planning Committee - An Taisce Galway Local Association

Galway City Planning Report

2022 was a busy year for our group. Some of the projects we made submissions on in 2022 are as follows.

Galway City Ring Road. This project should have been (but was not) assessed against the Climate Action Plan. When that is done in 2023 it will probably not be approved. This will bring to an end a long-running saga of transport strategy based on facilitating private cars at the expense of public transport. The Galway Transport Strategy is also at odds with the objectives of the Climate Action Plan so we welcome plans to develop a Galway Transport Metropolitan Area Strategy in 2023. An Taisce will be arguing in favour of re-allocation of road space to public transport lanes. We will also be arguing for consideration of a central East-West spine of Light Rail/Very Light Rail as part of an integrated transport system.

Galway BusConnects. This is the first proposal to prioritise public transport in Galway City for 20+ years. While An Taisce welcomes the project, leaving on-road car parking in place on University Road and College Road will significantly limit its potential to prioritise public transport and we have included that in our submission to An Bord Pleanála.

Housing Developments. The low levels of house/ apartment completions in the city and surrounding villages have not matched population growth, thereby contributing to long commutes and high rents. An Taisce supports properly planned sustainable housing developments which would increase the supply of housing and thereby reduce rental prices. For that reason we have not objected to sustainable housing developments which are properly planned.

Galway Inner Harbour Area. The absence of any residential developments for anything other than student accommodation and hotels is, we consider, a major planning problem. There is an urgent need to build apartments, including affordable apartments, in the city centre whose occupants would not need to own cars and therefore contribute to achieving the objectives of the Climate Action Plan.

Student Accommodation. Student Accommodation is a subset of overall need for more accommodation. An Taisce supports properly planned Student Accommodation. We do not agree however that commercial Student Accommodation/ Short-term Rental and hotel accommodation within the Inner Harbour/Harbour lands should be classified as residential accommodation satisfying the requirement that 30% of developments should be "residential".

Galway Port Extension. We do not believe that there is a need to reclaim lands from the Galway Bay Special Area of Conservation, upon which to build apartments, a deep sea harbour and a new marina. Enlargement of the deep sea harbour at Ros an Mhil will likely bring an end to unloading of wind turbines destined for Connemara or for offshore Wind Farms. The recent designation of Galway Docks as an EU Ten-T port is to enhance EU energy security. We don't see the EU endorsing the Port of Galway's commercial desire to develop facilities for the handful of Cruise Ships each year who might wish to dock in Galway City. The addition of land by Port of Galway which has/ will have Special Area of Conservation status will not, we feel, meet EU obligations to protect the Inner Galway Bay Special Area Conservation (even if purchased by Port of Galway).



Sunrise over Galway Bay - credit Prof Chaosheng Yang

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Enforcement of Planning Permissions. We are aware of a major development recently completed in Galway City centre in 2022 which was not completed in compliance with the Planning Permission granted. No application for retention for the major differences has yet been made. We will be pursuing this in 2023. Of concern also are planning applications for conversion of much needed residential accommodation to short-term lettings (eg Airbnb) in Galway City & County on which we have made submissions.

Athlone to Galway Greenway. This project has the potential to bring about a modal shift to cycling /walking if it is properly connected to Galway City and to each village on its route. We met with the project consultants to discuss their emerging preferred route and expressed the view that the connections from the proposed Greenway (e.g. Ballyloughane to Eyre Square plus the villages on the proposed route) should be brought forward for An Bord Pleanala approval at the same time as approval is sought for the Greenway.

Hydrogen Hub. This appears to be a very worthwhile project which could bring about conversion of local and intercity public transport to a more sustainable use of energy. Its location at the Industrial Park at Galway Docks is appropriate (assuming safety concerns can be adequately dealt with) given its proximity to the bus depots and train station. Using it as an argument however to extend the docks is not valid as the resources required are electricity from wind turbines in Connemara plus water from the River Corrib with no requirement to use the docks.

Other Developments. We await a decision from An Bord Pleanála on the proposed retail, apartment, hotel and multi-storey car park development at Augustine Hill beside Ceannt Railway Station and a proposed Hotel opposite the Harbour Hotel, both of which we have made submissions on.
Water Quality. Our research has identified a predictable link between rainfall levels in Galway City and releases of untreated wastewater containing E-Coli and Intestinal Enterococci into the River Corrib at the Claddagh Basin (plus water quality at Grattan Road and Balloughane beaches). The recent series of very dry Summers has hidden the problem but we expect it to be more obvious if and when wet Summers return. Increased capacity of the Mutton Island Wastewater Treatment Plant and new pipework leading to it is needed. Also needed is the construction of a long-promised East Galway Wastewater Treatment Plant.

2022 may just be the year when the need for properly planned, sustainable development has finally been heard in Galway City and County. We look forward to 2023.

Need for new Committee members. The Galway Planning Committee of An Taisce has delegated authority from An Taisce HQ to comment on Planning Applications in Galway City and County. Our efforts however are currently limited mainly to Galway City, Salthill and Oranmore. If we had more people on the committee we could expand our remit. If you would like to be part of that effort, to help make Galway a better place please contact our Chairperson, Peter Butler on peterbutle@gmail.com

Galway Planning Committee of An Taisce
Galway@antaisce.org

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Profiles and Activities of Active Groups

Local Associations

Clare

In the first half of the year we started a series of online Zoom lectures or Webinars in January and continued them on the subject of Climate Change and Biodiversity until the end of the year. Lectures took place on the following subjects -

- Prof John Sweeney gave an update on his "Clare Climate Change" presentation that he gave to Clare County Council
- Pollination and Bees
- Nitrates and Water Quality with John Gibbons
- A COP27 report from Clare member Theresa O'Donohoe

We had two in-person meetings: our Annual Bat Meeting for children at Dromoland during Heritage Week, back after missing two years due to COVID-19, and our stand at the Clare Garden Festival in Ennis. We have now sold out of our "Bee Garden Packs" with seeds and only have a few information packs (without seeds) now available. We did notice two things from this year's Garden Festival though:

- Most of the information was known and people were getting involved in making space for pollinators.

The attitude towards An Taisce in general had improved and we felt this was mainly due to the Kilkenny Cheese case – the public was very supportive with our action in this case which was on water quality issues.

We got involved with The Old Irish Goat Society and visited them in Mayo and they asked us to get involved with the wild goats on the Burren where there are many.

This year, 2023, we are going back to well-known and well-supported in-person events and one for the 75th Anniversary of the founding of An Taisce: the National Trust of Ireland in September.

Limerick

There is an ongoing campaign to get Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) to enforce notices, one at No 46 Nicholas St for an unauthorised extension to the second floor carried out during COVID, and the second for the unauthorised removal of historic windows at No 24 Mallow St.

Limerick Association committee met Minister Malcolm Noonan in May. Subjects discussed included the ongoing problem of dereliction in Limerick City and issues with enforcement.

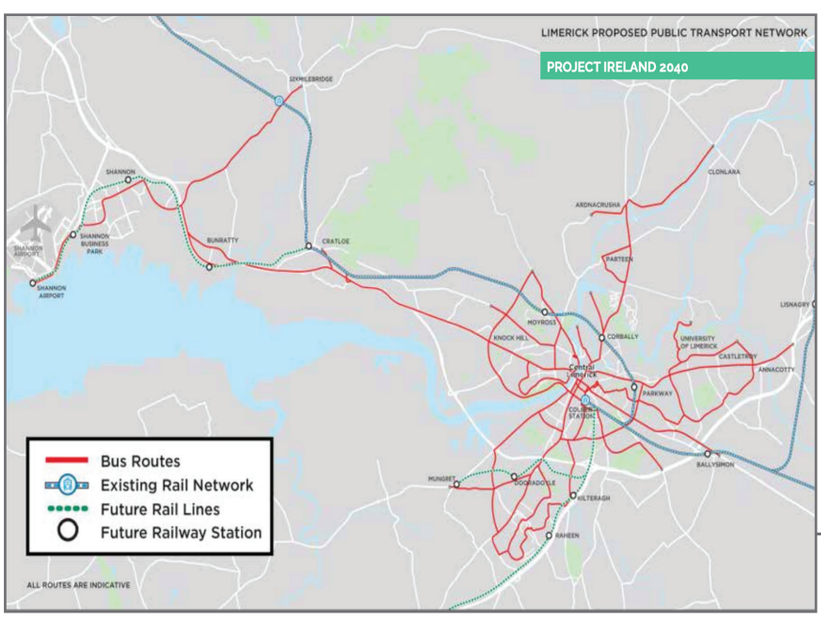
The issue of Sarsfield House was also discussed, and the problems caused by Technical Guideance Document B which is putting Conditions and Fire Requirements for new buildings on to Historic Buildings.

The Living City Initiative was also brought up. Sarsfield House was scheduled for demolition under Limerick's 2030 Plan but was the subject of a campaign to keep it, for sustainability reasons among others. It may be put to other uses.

A submission was made regarding the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS), an important plan for the future of sustainable transport for the Limerick/ Shannon region.

During Heritage Week members of the committee attended the unveiling of phase 1 of the Conservation of Roche Castle in the grounds of Limerick City and County Council 27th June 2022 & a tree planting ceremony. The CEO of Regeneron Daniel Van Plew spoke very kindly of An Taisce Dublin who had helped him when they first came Ireland.

Submissions were also made on the Proposed Cycle Route from LIT Moylish to the Ennis Road and the South Circular Road Cycle Route.



Map of Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

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The grounds at Belvedere House.

Meath

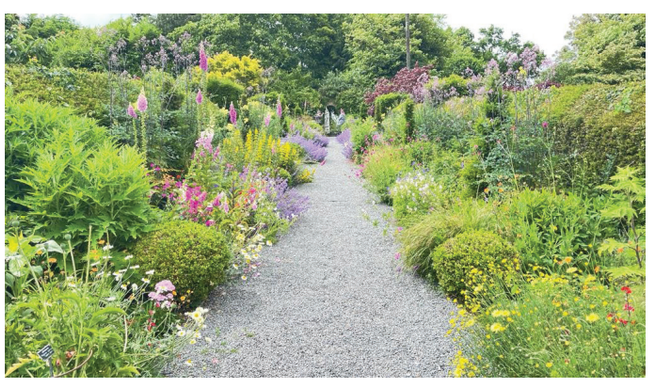
The Meath Association held its AGM April 2022 at the Slane and District Mens Shed, Slane. The guest speaker was Mark McKeever, co-owner of the walled Hardymount Gardens, Tullow. Mark gave an overview of the development of the formal gardens of Leinster and south Ulster from the 1700s including Lismore Gardens, Tollymore Park, Slane Castle, Barmeath Castle and Headfort House. The social calendar and cultural calendar titled 'A Tale of Many Castles was launched on the night'.

The first event was a June visit to Belvedere House and gardens, Mullingar. The house of Palladian architecture was designed by Richard Cassells and built c.1740 for Robert Rochfort. Members strolled the walled gardens, 'Jealous Wall' folly and mature woodland dating back to the 18th century.

In July the Meath association got the opportunity to visit Dunsany Castle and Demesne and to meet with owner Randal Plunkett, the 21st Baron of Dunsany. The castle, which was built c.1180 by Hugh de Lacy, is one of Ireland's longest inhabited homes and includes the library where the famous Lord Dunsany created many of his fictional novels and poems in the early 1900s. Randal, naturalist and film-maker gave members a tour of some of the rewilding work he has undertaken on 750-acres of the estate to create a nature reserve. He outlined how banning pesticides and fertilisers allows the environment to take care of itself and enables the land to return to its native natural state which has been evidenced by the return of many species. Walled gardens and the Church of Saint Nicholas were also viewed.

To complete the castle theme of the social calendar, Noel French in early September gave an in-depth talk on his recent publication:- *'Hugh de Lacy' who was So Bold - Developer, Military Architect, Conqueror and King'.* Noel's insight into this dominant man from Meath's past has influenced Ireland's heritage with the construction of many castles which changed the landscape, agriculture and trade of Meath in a few years.

A Christmas party was held at Teltown House, Donaghpatrick, Navan, courtesy of the Clarke family in early December. This beautiful 17th-century country house overlooking the River Blackwater sits close to the site of the historical Tailteann Games. Close by is a 17th century burial site, ruins of a medieval church and ancient rock art dating back to 2,000 BC. Members had plenty of history and culture to discuss over the wonderful Christmas lunch.





Belvedere House and Gardens

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Donegal

Donegal Local Association had a busy year and continues to be very active in all areas. We sponsored and formed part of the judging panel for the May McClintock Wildlife Friendly Garden Competition in association with Letterkenny Tidy Towns.

We continue to have representatives on the following bodies: The Donegal Co Council Heritage Forum, Donegal Local Development Company and the Errigal Stakeholders Group.

We continued to maintain the An Taisce May McClintock Butterfly Garden in Letterkenny.

Our calendar "Treasures of Donegal 2023" had a print run of 1,200 and sold well in 2022.

Maurice Simms, one of our members, led a very well attended Butterfly Walk in Sheskinmore, the "top butterfly site in Donegal" near Ardara on July 16th 2022.

Project: River Lennon - A Nature Corridor 2022

An Taisce Donegal Local Association applied for and received a grant from the Donegal Community Water Development Fund 2022 as part of the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) initiative for the development and implementation of River Basin Management Plans to comply with the obligations of the Water Framework Directive. The project is entitled "The River Lennon ~ a Nature Corridor 2022". Nature NorthWest were contracted to lead the project.

The project involved pupils and teachers from four National Schools, Gartan, Rathdonnel, Trentagh and Stramore. These schools are in the upper catchment of the River Lennon (also called Leannan). 70 school children plus their teachers took part.

The project took place over 3 days, one in the class room, the next day a field day along the river and the final day kayaking on Lough Gartan and, later that day, reporting the results at a gathering indoors in Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre.

In the Classroom

This project of 2022 started with a half day in the classroom of each school to discuss the River Lennon, a "high priority river" for water quality and biodiversity, its place as a wildlife corridor in the catchment, the factors that might influence water quality in different parts of the catchment and how water quality may be measured from the creatures that live on the river bed.



Field day, "A school day in the catchment". This classroom session was followed later by a full day visit to the river for 2 combined schools at a time. There were 3 stops along the river from the top of the catchment to the lower catchment. The pupils were assigned to each of 3 teams for each of the 3 stops. THey recorded vegetation, insect-life, and river-creatures as well as water quality.

Kayaks and canoes on Lough Gartan



All 4 schools came together for the final day at Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre. The brave and hardy pupils and teachers spent the morning on the water in kayaks and canoes, teamwork was vital. They then came ashore for much needed food, heat and refreshment.

Presentation of the results:



Afterwards each school gave a presentation of their results and experience of their visit to the 3 sites on the river during their field day.
The creatures captured by kick sampling along the river bed in the Bullaba river in the upper catchment indicated excellent water quality. There was very little if any human disturbance in the catchment upriver of that location. Water quality tended to drop (but was still classified as "good", Q4 and Q3) as we progressed farther down the catchment. There was increased human activity upriver of these latter locations. The challenge for us nationally (and at an EU level) will be to restore water quality to the highest level in all rivers and lakes.

Noel Foley
donegal@antaisce.org

Note regarding South Dublin Local Association

It is with regret that we announce the wind up of An Taisce South Dublin Local Association. Despite the best efforts of our long-standing volunteer committee it was not possible to continue. We hope that new South Dublin members may come together in the future to restart what was a very vibrant and active association. An Taisce would like to take this opportunity to thank all those members who made the association a success and for all their help and support to the organisation over the decades.

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Dun Laoghaire

Regrettably two of our esteemed colleagues on the Executive retired to take up new challenges. Veronica Heywood, our Chair of Booterstown Marsh Management Advisory Committee and active member of both the Natural Environment Committee and Properties Committee after years of committed and valuable work is leaving to concentrate on other worthwhile projects. Veronica played a major role in saving and conserving the beautiful Oratory in Dun Laoghaire and has worked for the protection of An Taisce property Booterstown Marsh Nature Reserve. Our thanks also to Alison Carter, retired Chair of the Trees, Environment and Events Committee. Alison actively helped to protect the environment and trees on development sites and was involved in a huge number of tree plantings while sharing her love of bird watching through volunteering. We thank Veronica and Alison for their years of hard work and wish them both the very best. No doubt they will keep an eagle eye on us all.

At our Booterstown Marsh Spring clean up in April we welcomed An Taisce Chair Phil Kearney and 35 hardy but happy souls. Margaret as usual provided tasty scones and treats and we thank Britt Johnson and the volunteers from the Dun Laoghaire Volunteer Centre, Clean Coasts, Shay and the Sathya Ireland Volunteers, DLR Council whose work protects this vulnerable ecosystem. In September Sean Hogan gave an excellent bird talk to enthusiastic attendees and later that week our Autumn clean up assisted by adults and children yielded 11 sacks of rubbish. A few weeks later we returned and planted 22 native species of trees on the marsh boundary and hope to continue this work in 2023. We had a meeting with Irish Rail regarding the boundary treatment of the carpark and the issue of littering.



Booterstown bird talk with Sean Hogan

Our Planning Committee is in need of support as the workload is huge. Files are complex and require considerable time to study. We lodged appeals on sites in Merrion road, Cherrygarth, Mount Merrion, Killiney Hill and Dun Laoghaire but due to changes in legislation it is difficult to have an impact on many applications. If you live in the Dun Laoghaire area and would like to get involved in this area please contact us at the email address below. **dunlaoghaire@antaisce.org**



Booterstown Clean Up April 2022

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Farm Pond Kilkenny

Kilkenny

When we came out of Covid restrictions in early 2022 our committee of six decided to continue holding most monthly meetings via Zoom. Our attention was focused mainly on planning applications within the architectural conservation areas of the city and around protected structures.

The City & County Development Plan 2021-2027 aims to grow the city. The focus for greenfield development is on the Breagagh Valley to the south west and on Loughmacask to the north west of the city centre. During the year, planning applications for two schools and a number of housing estates in these areas were successful. Public consultations were held but we still have concerns about the failure to provide good transport infrastructure and complete the western section of the Ring Road. So far there has been no evidence of well-planned neighbourhood centres.

Although important for tourism, there has been excessive interest in the development of hotels relative to residential buildings in the city centre while the local population has increased. Some dereliction is being dealt with by densified redevelopment of individual houses in a way that is providing many similar buildings, reduced garden sizes and a risk of changing street character. We hope that the Residential Zoned Land Tax will deal with dereliction where Vacant Site legislation failed.

We welcomed the success of applications by State Street and Abbott Ireland for developments in an industrial estate which will provide employment. The County Council has proposed urban enhancement and refurbishment of areas in the city centre such as Kieran Street and Market Square. While we acknowledge improvements, there has been a worrying trend of removing trees and replacing them with smaller container plants. We participated in a consultation on a 'Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan' for the City and await decisions.

Development continued at the Abbey Quarter in the City Centre where the Brewery building has been completed as an office block, and a new mixed use building (No. 7) has been proposed. Alterations are still underway at the Mayfair building which will house the new City library. The County Council has commenced a public consultation on a review of the *Abbey Quarter Masterplan Design Code* before proceeding with further developments.

Engagement with the PPN continued in 2022 with input to Environmental Pillar meetings, plenary meetings and SPC meetings through our committee member Brian Hamilton. Our local AGM was held in-person in September in the historic Home Rule Club in the city. We held a walk in October along the River Barrow towpath. It started in the village of Goresbridge and headed southwards on a lovely sunny morning. We enjoyed boats passing through Bally Ellen Lough and the surrounding landscape. In December we invited local members to observe our committee meeting and join us for lunch in a city centre pub. **kilkenny@antaisce.org**



Kilkenny members outing on the River Barrow towpath

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A Reflection on Heritage through the study of Boglands

Katlyne Armstrong,
Advocacy Assistant



Through the summer of 2022, as a part of a MA in Anthropology and Development, I explored boglands as an intersection of heritage, planning and resistance. My short-term ethnographic fieldwork was made up of participant-observation and interviews where I moved between An Taisce, community groups, webinars, conferences, and natural landscapes.



An Taisce property Mongan Bog, Co Offaly

Stemming from a fusion of interests in anthropology and environmental justice as well as my work with An Taisce, the product of this project reveals life that emerges despite of and in response to colonial and extractive logics at a time when we need radical, scaled environmental action.

Boglands are not just a space but a *living* space of resistance, for both human and more-than-human connection and action as well as a subject encompassing and struggling for life itself. Interestingly, boglands have materialised as a formative and fluid ground and the forms of resistance transpiring in boggy spaces are incandescent for imagining alternatives.

The crux of my research, however, surrounds a hurting heritage, a concept borrowed and developed in the context of Irish landscapes, of bogs in particular. While bogland heritage encompasses many contours of hurt, I focused on two forms within my project.

Heritage can 'hurt' by way of a historical event that inflicts lasting ecological emotion or implications. Here, I explored colonialism as a part of Ireland's historical heritage, and how it has had major consequences for land, including bogs, as well as how it continues to reverberate in profound ways.

Heritage can also 'hurt' by allowing culture and heritage to excuse ecological bad practice. Here, I explored turf-cutting and renewable developments that have or are taking place on boglands, and the ways in which Irish heritage is moulded to advocate against, continue, or promote these practices.
Interestingly and contrary to what many



Female stonechat in a bog

perceive, heritage is not stagnant; it is a process renegotiated through time and communities are constantly redefining what is and what is not heritage. Peatland communities, for example, are fighting to conserve a living heritage[1], illustrated by way of navigating planning processes and traversing human-bog relationships.

In this way, heritage is as multi-layered as the bog, a *catalyst* for environmental justice, reflecting our past yet calling for mobility in the present to shape our future.

The question thus becomes: What do we value and what do we want to pass on to future generations? This is not to say, however, that it is easy to renegotiate and seek to move beyond practices and traditions that bear tremendous emotion as much as it is to illuminate a path toward alternatives we all have a hand in crafting – toward a vibrant, viable and just Ireland.

[1] Flood, K. (2022). Conserving peatland heritages, A Bog's Life [online]. 9 May 2022. Available at: https://abogslife.com/ (accessed 28 June 2022).

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Membership Team

Administration Membership and Donations



Sinead Owens, Operations Manager



Annette McCaul, Membership Officer



Kevin Keane, Climate Advocacy Officer

As we came out of the pandemic and back to normal activities it became more important than ever to review what it means to be a member of An Taisce. Your support is so important to us as it contributes directly to the maintenance of our environmental watchdog role and all the work that comes with that.

We want to continue to improve our service and recognise the important role members have to play in the organisation. This involves reviewing and expanding the range of benefits available. We know that many of you simply want to support our work which we appreciate greatly. In 2023 we will be contacting all our members and supporters for their views. This information will help us as we look to improve engagement and communications with supporters.

As you will see from the Honorary Secretary's report, members can contribute by getting involved in the organisation both at a local and a national level. We are always looking for people who have something to say and want to give some time to what are now becoming more pressing issues. Our Policy Committees on Climate, Natural Environment, Monuments and Properties need new members who can help drive us into the future, whatever that may hold.

Our Advocacy and Planning sections receive a small amount of public funding but otherwise rely nearly entirely on donations and membership. If you would like to assist this important work please donate what you can. You can also decide to leave a bequest in your will, ensuring that future generations will benefit from your generosity.

Looking forward to our 75th Anniversary

An Taisce 75 YEARS 1948-2023
The National Trust for Ireland

An Taisce celebrates its 75th anniversary of incorporation in 2023. The world is a very different place to the one our founders knew, however even then they recognised the preciousness of the world around us and were concerned enough in 1946 to come together to form what was originally the Association for the Preservation of Places of Interest or Beauty in Ireland, a non-governmental organisation whose aims would be to preserve Ireland's heritage. This was subsequently incorporated as An Taisce - The National Trust for Ireland in 1948.

As part of this we will be holding a series of events during the year, looking to the future as well as reflecting on past achievements. We look forward to celebrating this important milestone with our members.

Thank you all for your continuing support.

Annette McCaul
Membership Officer

Keep in touch on social media:

https://twitter.com/AnTaisce

https://www.instagram.com/antaisce/

https://www.facebook.com/AnTaisce

Each of the An Taisce Environmental Education Unit programmes are on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram under their own names.

Further contact details can be found www.antaisce.org/contact

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Company Registration No. 12469 (Republic of Ireland)

AN TAISCE - THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

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Company Information

Directors

Philip Kearney, Chairperson
Patricia O'Connell, Vice Chairperson
Stuart McCaul, Secretary
John Conroy, Treasurer (Appointed 11 February 2023)
Aoife O'Gorman, Treasurer (Resigned 02 February 2023)
Prof. John Sweeney
Hugh O'Reilly
Olivia Rogers
Rónán O'Brien
Finbarr Murray (Appointed 11 February 2023)
Cáit Ní Cheallacháin
Kathleen Vandenberghe
Jack O'Sullivan
Charles Stanley Smith
Declan Murphy
Mark Clinton
Geoff Power
Patricia Oliver
Eric Conroy
Ruaidhri O'Boyle
Nick Armstrong
Eamonn Moore
Liam Murtagh
Gerry Crilly
Robin Mandal
Kate Carmody

Company Secretary

Stuart McCaul

Honorary Officers

Sean McDonagh, President
Philip Kearney, Chairperson
Patricia O'Connell, Vice Chairperson
Stuart McCaul, Secretary
John Conroy, Treasurer (Appointed 11 February 2023)
Aoife O'Gorman, Treasurer (Resigned 02 February 2023)

Council Members

Sean McDonagh, President
John Sweeney, Past President
Philip Kearney, Chairperson
Patricia O'Connell, Vice Chairperson
Stuart McCaul, Secretary
Alan Price
Anny Wise
Damon Matthew Wise Âû
Kevin Hurley
Anne McGowan
Gerald Tomkin
Mairead Mehigan
Rebecca Jeffares
Derrick Hambleton
Tadhg Hanifin
Mary Brennan
Margaret Monaghan
Jean Carr

Governance, Risk and Compliance Committee

Majella Walsh
John Sweeney
Olivia Rogers
Gary Freemantle
Stuart McCaul

Audit and Finance Committee

John Conroy
Ruaidhri O'Boyle
Eric Conroy
Shae McCrone
Finbarr Kelly
Jaimie-Leigh Bail
Sandra Bowen
Aoife O'Gorman

Litigation Committee

Philip Kearney
Gary Freemantle
John Sweeney

Nominations Committee

Hugh O'Reilly
Gerald Tomkin
Paul Rogers
Sinead Owens

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Properties Committee

Trish O'Connell
Geoff Power
Peter Wise
Geoffrey Clarke
Declan Murphy
Veronica Heywood
Sinead Owens
James Leahy

Climate Committee

Ciara Beausang
Ruaidhri O'Boyle
Phil Kearney
John Sweeney
Nick Armstrong
Barry McMullin
Paul Price
Charles Stanley Smith
Theresa O'Donohoe
Aideen Ó Dochartaigh
Criodán Ó Murchú
Karen Mahon
Ian Lumley
Phoebe Duvall
Damien Ó Tuama
Elaine McGoff

Natural EnvironmentCommittee

Declan Murphy
John Sweeney
Bernard Goggin
Anny Wise
Anto Kerins
Liz Pilkington
Rebecca Jeffares
Ian Lumley
Eric Conroy

Company number 12469

Charity registered number CHY4741

CRA number 20006358

Registered office

Tailors' Hall
Back Lane
Dublin 8, D08 X2A3

Business addresses

Tailors' Hall
Back Lane
Dublin 8, D08 X2A3

5A Swift's Alley
The Liberties
Dublin, D08 TN88

Auditor Browne Murphy & Hughes
Chartered & Certifed Accountants &
Registered Auditors
28 Upper Fitzwilliam Street
Dublin 2

Bankers Bank of Ireland
2 College Green
Dublin 2

Solicitors FP Logue
8-10 Coke Lane
Smithfield
Dublin 7

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Directors' Report
For the Year Ended 31 December 2022

The Directors present their annual report together with the audited financial statement of An Taisce - The National Trust for Ireland for the year ended 31st December 2022.

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with accounting standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council including FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland as modified by the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" effective 1st January 2019 and the Companies Act 2014.

An Taisce is a registered charity founded in 1948 as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. The principal office of the company is Tailors' Hall, Back Lane, Dublin. The company's registered number is 12469, its charity registration number is CHY4741, its charities regulator number is 20006358, and its EU Transparency Register number is 473905437651-60.

Our Vision
An Ireland where our environment, natural and built, is actively prioritised and a lasting legacy of sustainability and resilience is ensured.

Our Mission
To protect and celebrate Ireland's natural and built heritage, and to fight for a liveable future on Earth.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

During 2022, An Taisce undertook a consultation on our strategic objectives. This process is an iterative one, is ongoing into 2023 and will deliver revised strategic objectives for the coming years. The most recent set of objectives being considered are:

1. Climate & Biodiversity: To drive an urgent and effective Irish public policy response to the climate and biodiversity emergencies.
2. Land and Water: To promote practices that support healthy ecology, prosperous rural society, and national food security.To promote practices that support healthy ecology, prosperous rural society, and national food security.
3. Heritage: To safeguard Ireland's architectural and archeological heritage.
4. Planning: To promote the development of sustainable and people-centred urban and rural communities.
5. Community and Society: To drive meaningful and widespread behavioural change through education and community engagement.
6. Organisation: To adopt robust governance, management, and operational processes that secure a long-term future for Ireland's national trust.

An Taisce's strategic objectives are delivered by advocating, educating and promoting in a wide variety of areas as is fitting of such a wide-reaching mission and vision. The main areas of activity are:

Green Schools Travel and Safe Routes to School, Green Schools, Clean Coasts, Litter and National Spring Clean, Legacy4Life, LEAF and An Coil Beag, Globe and Clean Air Together, Neat Streets, Blue Flag, Planning policy and oversight, Conservation of the Natural and Built Environments, Cycling Development, Green Flag for Parks, Monument and Building Preservation.

How we delivery our activities

An Taisce is privileged to have committed and passionate staff and volunteers who are the key to delivering our activities. These groups work closely with funders, donors and other organisations. An Taisce is very grateful for the inspirational hard work of all involved. An Taisce could not achieve its goals without the support of these groups.

Our Management and Staff

An Taisce's operations is led by a CEO with a team of 3 senior managers.
Over 90 staff members work in the delivery of over 30 educational programmes. These programmes operate closely with individual funders delivering key objectives in a timely and budgeted manner.

A smaller team of 5 deliver the advocating, policy and protecting aspect of our mission. This team is funded by individual donors who generously support this work and an element of our membership and general donations.

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Our Members and Volunteers

An Taisce's members support our work in a wide variety of ways. An Taisce's Board, Council, policy, organisation and fundraising committees and local associations are all comprised of members generously giving their time and expertise in a voluntary capacity.

The maintenance, monitoring and development of our land and buildings is delivered almost entirely by member's' voluntary time led by our Natural Environment and Properties committees.

There are tens of thousands of volunteers contributing each year to programmes such as the National Spring Clean and Clean Coasts cleanup programmes.

European, State and Private Grantors

An Taisce works with Government departments, public bodies and corporate sponsors to deliver over 30 activities in Environmental Education, including Green Schools Travel, Green Schools, Clean Coasts, Blue Flag, Clean Air Together and Legacy4Life. The support of our funders is vital to the delivery of these activities. The funding agreements with Government departments and public bodies are operated under DPER circular 13/2014.

Our Individual Donors and Pro Bono Service Providers.

Individual donors and members are generous in their support of our advocacy work. These people are too numerous to list in this report. These large and small donations allow the work of our advocacy team to continue. An Taisce's work is also supported by a team of lawyers who provide their services on a no foal, no fee basis. An Taisce assesses the costs of legal cases to ensure there is no impact on funding for all other An Taisce activities, particularly those programmes funded with restricted income.

Other Environmental NGOs in Ireland and Europe

An Taisce works closely with a large number of NGOs in Ireland and across the European Union. This is work on a collaborative basis and we value these relationships.

How we assess our impact

Acting as an independent voice for the environment and our heritage, we strive to assess the impact of our activities in both the short and long term. Each of our education and promotion programmes and advocating areas sets annual KPIs and reports on these to the individual stakeholders for that programme. The collaborative process undertaken to review and refine our strategic objectives will strengthen our objectives and allow us to completely align our activities with the renewed objectives. Assessing the medium and longer term impact of our activities will then become an integral part of our strategic reviews.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022

During 2022 we progressed all of our strategic objectives. In particular,

- Further expansion in the Green Schools Travel Programme with capital investment Safe Routes to School and Green Schools Travel.
- Managed the return to in-person delivery of our schools, coast and other programmes in line with the lifting of Covid19 restrictions.
- Successfully delivered a catch up on those activities which had been postponed during the Covid19 restrictions.
- Commencement and delivery of the first year of the Legacy4Life Programme.
- Sought leave to proceed with a Judicial Review on the Nitrates Action Programme and progressed other important litigation.
- Represented An Taisce in various national fora - Planning Reform; Forestry Strategy; Citizens' Assembly
- Reorganisation of the Senior Management team
- Introduced a detailed Board Workplan to improve Board functioning and achieve strategic objectives
- Created a Board sub-committee to develop our membership and volunteering areas.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income

Total income for the year increased from €6.9m to €8.5m in 2022.

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The main driver of our increased income is the expansion of the Green Schools Travel and Safe Routes to Schools programmes in collaboration with the NTA and Department of Transport. We look forward to continuing this programme in the coming years.

In addition, Legacy4Life, LEAF and LEAF Coil Beag and some Green Schools activities increased their funding in 2022. This is partly offset by reduced funding in a limited number of activities as expenditure caught up from previous years funding.

The value of pro bono legal services received is a reflection of the ongoing support of a team of solicitors and barristers who provide free legal services to An Taisce.

An Taisce's major funding sources in 2022 are set out in the table detailed on page 47.

Expenditure

An Taisce's expenditure has four categories

Employee Remuneration

Employees work directly for our activities. Their work is led by a team of managers supported by a Financial Controller, Education Unit Director & CEO.

Employee Remuneration is the largest cost category in An Taisce, and is detailed in note 12 of the financial statements. Our programmes are dependent on large and dedicated staff. The salary costs are allocated on a timesheet basis to each specific activity.

Direct costs of delivering our activities

Direct costs are budgeted each year for each activity. These budgets are agreed with our funders and expenditure is monitored against the budgets during the year. The ending of Covid-19 restrictions during 2022 resulted in increased direct costs in some programmes as activities returned to pre-pandemic levels. Considerable management was required to return to visiting schools, holding in-person award ceremonies and meeting with communities throughout Ireland.

Shared Costs

An Taisce's shared costs include rent, utilities, office costs, insurance, IT, HR, audit, management, administration and finance. These costs are delivered by a combination of service providers and staff within a hybrid shared service function. There has not been any significant change in these costs in 2022.

The allocation of these shared costs to all our activities is subject to specific funding agreements and An Taisce operates a transparent system which allows all funders access to all cost allocation information as they require.

Shared costs not allocated to activities are included in general costs and funded by general income.
It is a priority for An Taisce that allocation of shared costs reflects the balance of resources utilised by each activity.

Management Remuneration

An Taisce has a team of 3 senior managers. Details of these costs are included in note 12 of the financial statements.

Where managers work on specific programmes, their costs are included in the respective programme's activities. The remaining management costs are part of the shared costs allocation process.

Net Surplus for the Year

The results of the year are given on page 51.

An Taisce monitors the activities of the company to ensure that each activity is delivering within the individual activitiy's funding levels. The surplus in 2022 arises from a combination of a catch up of expenditure in some programmes following the lifting of Covid19 restrictions, ongoing investment in the organisation from general reserves and the support of our funders and donors, including the receipt of a significant legacy in late 2022. Both the catch up programme expenditure and ongoing investment in the organisation are planned to ensure our reserves remain in line with our accounting and finance policies.

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An Taisce continually explores and develops new funding initiatives. In 2022, this is reflected in the increased activities in areas such as air quality, safe travel to schools, and biodiversity in the natural environment, in developing philanthropic opportunities in the USA and in membership and ongoing donations remaining stable.

Reserves and Reserves policy

Reserves At 31st December 2022, An Taisce had total reserves of €1,629,101 (2021: €1,579,948). This is divided between restricted and unrestricted reserves.

Unrestricted reserves
At 31st December 2022, An Taisce had unrestricted reserves of €340,848 (2021: €123,073). An Taisce has designated funds from these for some land, buildings and policy work.
Most significant of these is the designated fund for Tailors Hall which has been in deficit since upgrading work to the building was undertaken in 2016. The Board has monitored plans to return this designated fund to surplus and were pleased to enter into the sublease of part of the building for use as a café in early 2022.

An Taisce seeks to maintain unrestricted reserves to cover at least six months of costs not allocated to restricted funding activities.

Restricted Reserves

An Taisce maintains a separate restricted reserve for each activity within our programmes.

An Taisce has an Environmental Education and Promotion restricted reserve. This restricted reserve has three purposes.

Firstly, it provides supplementary funding exclusively to activities within the Environmental Education and Promotion programmes. When such an activity within these programmes does not have sufficient restricted funding for the year, An Taisce maintains the activity with funds from this restricted fund. When such an activity within these programmes does not have sufficient restricted funding for the year or has significant expenditure prior to receiving the current year's funding, An Taisce supports the activity with funds from this restricted fund. During 2022, some activities returned part or all of previously provided working capital.

The second purpose of this restricted reserve is to provide funding to develop new activities within the Environmental Education and Promotion programmes.

Thirdly, An Taisce has identified risks specific to the Environmental Education and Promotion programmes and this reserve would be utilised in the unfortunate occurrence of any of these risks.

Restricted reserves relating to advocacy work are created from donations specific to advocacy work. While general funds are always available for our advocacy work, An Taisce's fundraising plan includes a target of increasing these specific donations to provide greater surety of specific funding for advocacy.

Net assets

An Taisce's net assets are €1,629,101. The low level of fixed assets , €28,299, is due to the nil value of all of the properties held by An Taisce. Bank balances of €1,736,983 and accounts receivable and accrued income of €685,304 are the main component of current assets of €2,502,489. This is offset by deferred income of €373,999, accruals and provisions of €80,868, other creditors of €148,380 and bank overdrafts of €298,440.

Going Concern

Having made reasonable enquiries, the Directors have a legitimate expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

The Directors have considered the financial position and trading performance of An Taisce for 2022 and beyond into 2023. A budget for 2023 has been approved, which indicates that An Taisce will be in a positive unrestricted fund position on 31st December 2023 and will have maintained a desired level of restricted reserves.

For these reasons, the Directors have no hesitation in adopting the going concern basis in preparing these financial statements.

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PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

- All involved in An Taisce are cognisant of the urgent changes required to combat climate change and protect our heritage. We continue to work to fulfil our mission and vision. During 2023, we are looking forward to
- Celebrating An Taisce reaching its 75th Anniversary and everything achieved in those 75 years.
- Completing work on our strategic objectives and development of related work plans.
- Commencing a new agreement with the National Transport Authority for our Green Schools Travel and Safe Routes to School programmes.
- Continuing and building on the work of our Educational and Promotional programmes and our policy and advocating team.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governance and management structures are set out in the Constitution.

The Strategy of An Taisce is the responsibility of its Directors, who are appointed by An Taisce Council in accordance with terms of the Constitution. Council oversees the Board's performance. The Directors are also the Trustees of An Taisce for the purposes of charity law.

The names of persons who have served as Officers, Directors, on Council and on committees at any time during the financial year and since then are shown on the company information pages.

Directors Remuneration

As a registered Charity and in accordance with the Constitution, Directors are not entitled to any remuneration for acting as a member of the Board. None of the Directors received any remuneration for their office during the year. If claimed, board meeting costs are reimbursed to directors and totalled €665 in the year.

Management

The Board Handbook details the relevant obligations of Directors and Trustees, the An Taisce Constitution and the full set of policy documents along with the requirements of the Charities Regulator.

Council and Organisation Committees also provide representative and consultative support to the Board. Council comprises of delegates from Local Associations of An Taisce and representatives elected by the general membership.

The Governance, Risk & Compliance and Audit & Finance sub-committees of the Board meet quarterly to further progress and monitor compliance and governance objectives.

An Taisce complies with the Charity Regulator's Governance Code and all other applicable legislation. Day to day management of An Taisce's operations are delegated to a management team led by a CEO.

Internal Controls

The high level of funding received from government and public bodies make strong Internal Controls an essential for An Taisce. All financial procedures and resulting financial transactions are available to all funders. Income, expenditure, overhead and management costs allocation are key areas of focus by management. An internal review in 2021 of An Taisce's finance function and internal controls highlighted areas for change which will result in a more efficient finance function with simpler financial procedures. Implementation of these recommendations continued in 2022. This will in turn aid the monitoring of internal controls.

Risk Management

The Directors have assessed the major known risks to which the charity is exposed. A detailed risk register is regularly updated with sufficient risk mitigation plans and regular monitoring of progress by the Board.

Political Contributions

There were no political contributions that require disclosure under the Electoral Act 1997. In accordance with the guidance note (Feb 2018) issued by the Charities Regulator under section 14 of the Charities Act 2009, An Taisce has a charitable purpose only. An Taisce engages in political activities or promotes a political cause only where that relates directly to the advancement of our charitable purpose. It does not endorse any political party or candidate.

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Taxation Status

An Taisce is a charity and accordingly any positive net income is exempt from corporation tax.

Members Liabilities

An Taisce is a company limited by guarantee and it does not have share capital. The liability of members is limited as defined in An Taisce's Constitution and shall not exceed €6.35 in the event of the winding up or dissolution of the company.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO AUDITORS

Each of the persons who are Directors at the time that this Directors' Report is approved has confirmed that so far as that Director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditor is unaware, and that Director has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Director in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that.

Accounting records

The company's directors are aware of their responsibilities, under sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014 as to whether in their opinion, the accounting records of the company are sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited and are discharging their responsibility by:

- employing qualified and experienced staff
- ensuring that sufficient company resources are available for the task
- liaising with the company's auditors

The accounting records are held at the company's two business addresses, Tailors' Hall, Back Lane, Dublin 8 and 5A Swift Alley, The Liberties, Dublin, D08 TN88.

Auditor

In accordance with the Companies Act 2014, section 383(2), Browne Murphy & Hughes continue in office as auditor of the company.

Post reporting date events

The risk associated with economic cycles, movements in interest rates and inflation could have an adverse impact on the business.

Statement of disclosure to auditor

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable Irish law and regulations.

Irish company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Generally accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland) issued by the Financial Reporting Council. Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at the financial year end date and of the profit or loss of the company for that financial year and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014.

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies for the company financial statements and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for ensuring that the company keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the company, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the company to be determined with reasonable accuracy, enable them to ensure that the financial statements and Directors' Report comply with

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the Companies Act 2014 and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Name of Grant Making Agency	Name of Grant Programme	Amount Utilised	Term
Irish Public funds:			
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (NTA)	Green-Schools Travel	2,283,890	2022
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (NTA)	Safe Routes to School	2,523,628	2022
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Green Schools Climate Action	308,034	2022
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Green Schools Marine Litter	113,404	2022
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Green Schools Core	180,000	2022
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Clean Coasts Core	334,000	2022
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	National Spring Clean	219,978	2022
Irish Water	Green Schools Water	210,000	2022-2023
Irish Water	Clean Coasts Think Before You Flush	175,000	2022-2023
Local Authorities Nationwide	Green Schools Core	133,328	2022-2023
Irish Aid	Green Schools Global Citizenship	120,000	2022-2023
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland ("SEAI")	Green Schools Energy	119,263	2022
EPA	Globe Clean Air Together	110,736	2022
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Blue Flag Core	100,500	2022
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Clean Coasts - 2 minute beach clean	99,893	2022
EPA	Globe Core	78,824	2022

Name of Grant Making Agency	Name of Grant Programme	Amount Utilised	Term
European, US, and Irish Corporate, NGO and Individual Funders			
EU Life	Legacy 4 Life	202,897	2021-2023
John O'Sullivan	Legacy Donation	171,226	2022
King Baudouin Foundation	Neat Streets	120,559	2022-2023
Irish Environmental Network	Core Funding	66,795	2022
EUPACT	Green Schools Climate Action	52,682	2022
Textile Recycling Ltd	Green Schools Core	50,000	2022
Wrigleys	Green Schools Core and National Spring Clean	50,000	2022

On behalf of the board

Philip Kearney
Director

John Conroy
Director

29 March 2023

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Directors' Responsibilities Statement

For the Year Ended 31 December 2022

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable Irish law and regulations.

Irish company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Generally accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland) issued by the Financial Reporting Council. Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at the financial year end date and of the profit or loss of the company for that financial year and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014.

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies for the company financial statements and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for ensuring that the company keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the company, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the company to be determined with reasonable accuracy, enable them to ensure that the financial statements and Directors' Report comply with the Companies Act 2014 and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the directors in office at the date of approval of this annual report confirms that:

- so far as the director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditor is unaware, and
- the director has taken all the steps that he / she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself / herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of section 330 of the Companies Act 2014.

On behalf of the board

Philip Kearney
Director

John Conroy
Director

29 March 2023

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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of An Taisce - The National Trust For Ireland

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of An Taisce - The National Trust for Ireland (the 'company') for the year ended 31 December 2022 which comprise the income and expenditure account, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, and the related notes. The relevant financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is the Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.*

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at 31 December 2022 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are described below in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard for Auditors (Ireland) issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information in the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

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Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014
In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

We have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, are necessary for the purposes of our audit.

In our opinion the accounting records of the company were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited, and the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified any material misstatements in the directors' report.

The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the requirements of any of sections 305 to 312 of the Act, which relate to disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions, are not complied with by the company. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of directors for the financial statements
As explained more fully in the directors' responsibilities statement, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework that give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, if applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the company's financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the company's financial statements is located on the IAASA's website at: https://www.iaasa.ie/Publications/Auditing-standards/Standards-Guidance-for-Auditors-in- Ireland/Description-of-the-auditor-s-responsibilities-for. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities
This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Jon Byrne
for and on behalf of Browne Murphy & Hughes 29 March 2023

Chartered & Certified Accountants & Statutory Auditors
28 Upper Fitzwilliam Street Dublin 2

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Statement of Financial Activities Incorporating Income and Expenditure Account

For the Year Ended 31 December 2022

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2022 €	Restricted funds 2022 €	Total funds 2022 €	Total funds 2021 €
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	**3**	284,201	88,333	372,534	377,871
Charitable activities	**4**	100,231	8,035,808	8,136,039	6,585,282
Investments	**5**	173	-	173	-
Total Income		384,605	8,124,141	8,508,746	6,963,153
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	**6**	185,732	8,281,609	8,467,341	6,989,564
Total expenditure		185,732	8,281,609	8,467,341	6,989,564
Net surplus/(deficit) before investment gains		198,873	(157,468)	41,405	(26,411)
Net gains on investments	**12**	7,748	-	7,748	232
Net surplus/(deficit) before transfers		206,621	(157,468)	49,153	(26,179)
Transfers between Funds	**20**	11,154	(11,154)	-	-
Net movement in funds		217,775	(168,622)	49,153	(26,179)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	**20**	123,073	1,456,875	1,579,948	1,606,127
Total funds carried forward		340,848	1,288,253	1,629,101	1,579,948

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Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022 €	€	2021 €	€
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**14**		19,320		34,757
Investments	**15**		8,979		1,231
			28,299		35,988
Current assets					
Debtors	**16**	765,506		419,712	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,736,983		2,180,815	
		2,502,489		2,600,527	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**17**	(901,687)		(1,056,567)	
Net current assets			1,600,802		1,543,960
Total assets less current liabilities			1,629,101		1,579,948
Capital and reserves					
Unrestricted funds	**20**		340,848		123,073
Restricted funds	**20**		1,288,253		1,456,875
Total funds			1,629,101		1,579,948

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on 29 March 2023 and are signed on its behalf by:

Philip Kearney
Director

John Conroy
Director

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Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022		2021	
		€	€	€	€
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash absorbed by operations	24		(386,514)		(380,346)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(2,008)		(3,131)	
Dividends received		173		-	
Net cash used in investing activities			(1,835)		(3,131)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(388,349)		(383,477)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,826,892		2,210,369
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,438,543		1,826,892
Relating to:					
Cash at bank and in hand			1,736,983		2,180,815
Bank overdrafts included in creditors payable within one year			(298,440)		(353,923)

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Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 December 2022

1. Accounting policies

Company information

An Taisce - The National Trust for Ireland is a limited company domiciled and incorporated in Republic of Ireland. The registered office is Tailors' Hall, Back Lane, Dublin 8 and it's company registration number is 12469.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis in accordance with the Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland, issued by the Financial Reporting Council. The company has applied the recommendations contained in Charities SORP (FRS 102) effective 1 January 2019.

The financial statements are prepared in euros, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest €.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of certain financial instruments to fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the directors continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Income

Income is recognised when An Taisce is entitled to the income, the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and it is probable the income will be received. Income includes membership, donations, gifts, legacies and government and other grants.

Membership income is accounted for and deferred on a time basis. Donations are recognised when receivable.

Legacies are recognised when receipt is probable including that probate has been granted, it has been established that the estate has sufficient assets and the terms of the legacy have been met.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income from government and other grants is recognised when An Taisce has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Investment income is included when receivable

1.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred.

Costs of generating funds are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

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1.5 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are recorded at historical cost or deemed cost, less accumulated depreciation. Costs includes prime cost, overheads and interest accrued in financing the construction of tangible fixed assets.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the costs over their expected useful lives on a straight line, over the following years:

Leasehold improvements	12.5% Straight Line
Fixtures and fittings	10% / 12.5% / 33% Straight Line
Computers	20% / 33% Straight Line

The company's policy is to review the remaining useful economic lives and residual values of fixture and fittings and computer equipment on an on-going basis and to adjust the depreciation charge to reflect the remaining estimated useful economic life and residual value.

1.6 Heritage Assets

An Taisce holds certain heritage sites for the intangible benefits accruing to the Irish state and its citizens. No value is attributed to these assets.

1.7 Investments

Investments are held at fair value, unless fair value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment.

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting period end date, the company reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any). Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the company estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents are basic financial assets and include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.10 Trade and other debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at cost and subsequently measured at amortised cost less any provision for impairment for bad or doubtful debts.

1.11 Trade and other creditors

Trade and other creditors are recognised at cost and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, unless the effect of discounting would be immaterial, in which case they are stated at cost.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation.

1.12 Taxation

The company has obtained exemption from the Revenue Commissioners in respect of corporation tax, it being a company not carrying on a business for the purposes of making a profit. DIRT tax is payable on any interest income received in excess of €32.

1.13 Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension plan for its employees. A defined contribution plan is a pension plan under which the company pays fixed contributions into a separate fund. The company has no further payment obligations once the contributions have been paid. The contributions are recognised as expense when they are due.

1.14 Employee benefits

The costs of short-term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense, unless those costs are required to be recognised as part of the cost of stock or fixed assets.

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

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Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the company is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.15 Leases

Rental income from operating leases is recognised on a straight line basis over the term of the relevant lease. Initial direct costs incurred in negotiating and arranging an operating lease are added to the carrying amount of the leased asset and recognised on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1.16 Fund accounting

Restricted Funds represent grants, donations and sponsorships received which can only be used for particular purposes specified by the grantor, donor or sponsor.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds assigned by the Directors for particular purposes. The designated funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements. The designations have an administrative purpose only and do not legally restrict the Board's discretion in applying the funds.

Remaining unrestricted funds are general funds which are expendable in furtherance of the objectives of An Taisce.

2. Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the company's accounting policies, the directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

a) Establishing useful economic lives for depreciation of fixed assets.

The company's accounting policy for depreciation are set out in policy 1.5. The annual depreciation charge depends primarily on the estimated useful economic lives of each type of asset and estimates of residual values. The directors regularly review these asset's useful lives and change them as necessary to reflect current thinking on remaining lives in light of prospective economic utilisation and physical condition of the assets concerned.

3. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Restricted funds 2022 €	Total funds 2022 €	Total funds 2021 €
Donations and fundraising	196,927	-	196,927	36,606
Donated services	-	88,333	88,333	240,000
Membership subscriptions	87,274	-	87,274	101,265
Total donations and legacies	284,201	88,333	372,534	377,871
Total 2021	137,871	240,000	377,871	

Donated Services represent legal services provided to An Taisce and services from a US philantrophic Trust.

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4. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2022 €	Restricted funds 2022 €	Total funds 2022 €	Total funds 2021 €
Green Schools Travel	-	4,777,521	4,777,521	3,553,592
Green Schools	-	1,323,717	1,323,717	1,260,614
Clean Coasts	-	747,301	747,301	719,275
Litter	-	290,030	290,030	279,966
Life	-	203,115	203,115	-
Leaf	-	124,686	124,686	25,525
Globe	-	141,178	141,178	182,050
Neat Streets	-	119,455	119,455	115,681
Advocacy	68,195	100,430	168,625	137,727
Blue Flag	-	110,400	110,400	103,200
Smaller Programmes	32,036	97,975	130,011	178,550
General	-	-	-	29,102
Total	100,231	8,035,808	8,136,039	6,585,282

We can confirm that no capital grants were received in the year.

5. Investment Income

	Unrestricted funds 2022 €	Restricted funds 2022 €	Total funds 2022 €	Total funds 2021 €
Dividend income	173	-	173	-
Total	173	-	173	-
Total 2021	-	-	-	

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6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Restricted Funds 2022 €	Total 2022 €	Total 2021 €
Green Schools Travel	-	4,777,277	4,777,277	3,551,615
Green Schools	-	1,436,303	1,436,303	1,236,341
Clean Coasts	-	824,625	824,625	731,990
Litter	-	266,524	266,524	256,132
Life	-	159,326	159,326	-
Leaf	-	113,013	113,013	44,328
Globe	-	215,642	215,642	211,457
Neat Streets	-	98,110	98,110	121,751
Advocacy	48,361	190,935	239,296	390,595
Blue Flag	-	105,591	105,591	109,781
Smaller Programmes	24,006	85,930	109,936	119,882
General	113,365	8,333	121,698	215,692
	185,732	8,281,609	8,467,341	6,989,564
Total 2021	271,745	6,717,819	6,989,564	

Donated Services represent legal services provided to An Taisce and services from a US philantrophic Trust.

7. Governance costs

	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Restricted Funds 2022 €	Total 2022 €	Total 2021 €
Auditors remuneration	15,375	-	15,375	13,714
Legal and professional fees	18,562	-	18,562	29,682
Depreciation - tangible fixed assets	18,119	-	18,119	17,638
Total	52,056	-	52,056	61,033

8. Analysis of Expenditure by expenditure type

	Staff costs 2022 €	Other Costs 2022 €	Total 2022 €	Total 2021 €
Charitable activities	3,628,040	4,787,245	8,415,285	6,928,531
Governance (Note 7)	-	52,056	52,056	61,033
Total 2022	3,628,040	4,839,301	8,467,341	6,989,564
Total 2021	3,035,909	3,953,655	6,989,564	

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9. Interest receivable and similar income

	2022	2021
	€	€
Other income from investments		
Dividends received	173	-

10. Operating surplus/(deficit)

	2022	2021
Operating surplus for the year is stated after charging:	€	€
Fees payable to the company's auditor for the audit of the company's financial statements	15,375	13,713
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	17,445	17,638

11. Taxation

The company is a registered charity (CHY4741) and is exempt from corporation tax. We can confirm that the company is fully tax compliant as at 31 December 2022.

12. Employees

The average monthly number of persons employed by the company during the year was:

	2022	2021
	Number	Number
Employees	98	84

Their aggregate remuneration comprised:

	2022	2021
	€	€
Wages and salaries	3,170,662	2,643,420
Social security costs	345,700	297,728
Pension costs	111,678	94,761
	3,628,040	3,035,909

Following reorganisation An Taisce is now led by a team of 3 senior managers along with the CEO.
In 2022, their aggregate remuneration was €126,895.

Previously An Taisce has 12 key management staff, led by an interim CEO. In 2021, their aggregate remuneration was €603,103.

The number of employees whose remuneration was greater than €60,000 was 0 (2021:1)

	2022	2021
€60,000 -€70,00	-	1

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	2022	2021
	€	€
Remuneration - Administration & Management	263,216	195,667
Remuneration - Charitable Activities	3,364,824	2,840,242
	3,628,040	3,035,909

13. Fair value movement on investments financial assets

	2022	2021
	€	€
Gain on fair value movement of current asset investments	7,748	232

14. Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures andfittings	Computers	Total
	€	€	€	€
Cost				
At 1 January 2022	120,678	108,457	119,714	348,849
Additions	-	878	1,130	2,008
At 31 December 2022	120,678	109,335	120,844	350,857
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 January 2022	90,504	107,698	115,890	314,092
Depreciation charged in the year	15,085	153	2,207	17,445
At 31 December 2022	105,589	107,851	118,097	331,537
Carrying amount				
At 31 December 2022	15,089	1,484	2,747	19,320
At 31 December 2021	30,174	759	3,824	34,757

Certain properties which have been vested by the Company do not appear on the balance sheet as they were acquired at no cost. On 31 December 2022 An Taisce - The National Trust for Ireland held the following properties at nil value:

Boyne Navigation.
Corlican Graveyard, Corlican, Wexford, Co. Wexford.
Crocnafarragh, Co. Donegal.
Kanturk Castle, Kanturk, Co. Cork.
Killaha West, Kenmare, Co. Kerry.
Mongan Bog, Co. Offaly.
Morehampton Road Wildlife Sanctuary, Donnybrook, Dublin 4.
Gortlecka, Inchiquin, Co. Clare.
Oweninny Bog, Balcorrick, Co. Mayo.
The Gull Islands and Rough Island, Mulray Bay, Co. Donegal.
The Crane - Gort Weigh House, Market Square, Gort, Co. Galway.
Booterstown Marsh, Booterstown, Co. Dublin.
Sliabh Beagh, Co Monaghan and Co. Tyrone

The premises known as Tailor's Hall is leased at peppercorn rent. Booterstown Marsh is also a leasehold property at Nil value.

15. Fixed asset investments

	2022
Market Value	€
At 1 January 2022	1,231
Fair value movement	7,748
At 31 December 2022	8,979

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16. Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2022 €	2021 €
Trade debtors	372,792	318,563
Other debtors	359,553	88,416
Prepayments	33,161	12,733
	765,506	419,712

17. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2022 €	2021 €
Amounts owed to credit institutions	18	298,440	353,923
Trade creditors		31,119	4,862
PAYE and social security		76,661	(6)
Deferred income		373,999	540,591
Other creditors		40,600	53,305
Accruals		80,868	103,892
		901,687	1,056,567

18. Loans and overdrafts

	2022 €	2021 €
Bank overdrafts	298,440	353,923

19. Deferred income

	At 1 January 2022 €	Movement in Year €	At 31 December 2022 €
Green Schools			
- Local Authorities	87,499	(1,280)	86,219
- Core	-	8,333	8,333
- Biodiversity	-	26,641	26,641
- Global Citizen	50,000	14,000	64,000
-Water	19,088	(19,088)	-
Clean Coasts	4,900	(4,900)	-
Life	202,892	(101,443)	101,449
Leaf - Coil Beag	16,000	9,000	25,000
Globe			
- Clean Air Together	62,675	(62,675)	-
- Pulchra	19,219	(19,219)	-
Neat Streets	18,989	1,104	20,093
Blue Flag	100	(100)	-
Smaller Programmes			
-Tailors Hall	13,750	(6,875)	6,875
-Green Flags for Parks	22,000	-	22,000
General - Membership	23,479	(10,090)	13,389
Total	540,591	(166,592)	373,999

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20. Statement of funds

	Reserves at 31/12/2021 €	I&E Movement €	Proposed Transfers €	Reserves at 31/12/2022
Designated funds				
General Properties	22,033	(2,816)	-	19,217
Advocacy	-	19,834	3,165	22,999
Sliabh Beagh	10,000	-	-	10,000
Boyne Navigation	2,987	3,677	-	6,664
Tailors Hall	(108,003)	7,168	-	(100,835)
Climate Committee	1,665	-	(1,665)	-
Natural Environmental Intern	1,500	-	(1,500)	-
Total Designated funds	(69,818)	27,863	-	(41,955)
General funds	192,891	178,758	11,154	382,803
Total Unrestricted funds	**123,073**	**206,621**	**11,154**	**340,848**
Restricted funds				
Educate, Promote, Advocate	670,004	-	44,727	714,731
Clean Coast Group Support	81,564	31,403	-	112,967
Litter - National Spring Clean	51,872	24,013	-	75,885
Green Schools Campus	57,608	2,412	-	60,020
Life	-	43,789	-	43,789
Green Communities - Flags For Parks	-	52,555	(8,834)	43,721
Green Schools Climate Ambassador	-	42,396	(3,293)	39,103
Neat Streets	16,451	21,345	-	37,796
Green Schools Core	92,764	(68,878)	2,833	26,718
Funds below €20,000	486,612	(306,503)	(46,586)	133,523
Total Restricted Reserves	**1,456,875**	**(157,468)**	**(11,154)**	**1,288,253**
Total Reserves	**1,579,948**	**49,153**	**-**	**1,629,101**

21. Related party transactions

Gary Freemantle (An Taisce CEO) is a director of IEN (Irish Environmental Network, a registered charity). Gary Freemantle does not receive any gratuity from IEN. During 2022, An Taisce received funding from IEN. This funding is awarded to An Taisce in line with IEN's funding criteria have been no related party transactions during the year.

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23. Contingent liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities as at 31 December 2022.

24. Cash absorbed by operations

	2022 €	2021 €
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	49,153	(26,179)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income	(173)	-
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	17,445	17,638
Fair value movement on investments	(7,748)	(232)
Movements in working capital:		
Increase in debtors	(345,794)	(151,367)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	67,195	(191,943)
Decrease in deferred income	(166,592)	(28,263)
Cash absorbed by operations	(386,514)	(380,346)

25. Analysis of changes in net funds

	1 January 2022 €	Cash flows €	31 December 2022 €
Cash at bank and in hand	2,180,815	(443,832)	1,736,983
Bank overdrafts	(353,923)	55,483	(298,440)
	1,826,892	(388,349)	1,438,543

26. Non Audit Services

Browne Murphy & Hughes assist the company in the preparation of the financial statements and also with completion of company secretarial returns.

27. Approval of financial statements

The directors approved the financial statements on 29 March 2023.

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An Taisce
The National Trust for Ireland

COUNCIL OF AN TAISCE

Name	Position	Association
Fr Sean McDonagh SSC	President	
Prof John Sweeney	Immediate Past President	Kildare
Phil Kearney	Chair	Dublin City
Trish O'Connell	Vice Chair	
Stuart McCaul	Honorary Secretary	
Alan Price	Delegate	Carlow
Anny Wise	Delegate	Clare
Damon Matthew Wise	Elected 2022	Clare
Kevin Hurley	Delegate	Cork
Anne McGowan	Delegate	Donegal
Mairead Mehigan	Delegate	Dun Laoghaire
Rebecca Jeffares	Deputy Delegate	Dun Laoghaire
Derrick Hambleton	Delegate	Galway
Declan Murphy	Delegate	Kilkenny
Mary Brennan	Deputy Delegate	Kilkenny
Margaret Monaghan	Delegate	Meath
Jean Carr	Deputy Delegate	Meath
David Geary	Delegate	Limerick
Jack O'Sullivan	Delegate	Westmeath
Charles Stanley Smith	Delegate	Tipperary North
Dr. Mark Clinton	Re-elected 2022	Fingal
Geoff Power	Re-elected 2022	
Patricia Oliver	Re-elected 2019	Meath
Eric Conroy	Elected 2019	
Ruaidhri O'Boyle	Elected 2019	
Nick Armstrong	Elected 2019	Dublin South
Liam Murtagh	Elected 2021	
Gerry Crilly	Elected 2021	
Robin Mandal	Elected 2021	
Kate Carmody	Elected 2021	
Karen Mahon	Elected 2021	

Representatives of An Taisce

European Environmental Bureau: Attracta Ui Bhroin
International National Trusts Organisaton: Sinead Owens
Europa Nostra: Paul O'Brien
Wexford Monument Trust: Ian Lumley
Alfred Beit Foundation: Ian Lumley
IWAI Boyne Navigation Branch Committee: James Leahy
Coalition2030: Charles Stanley Smith
Environmental Pillar: Elaine McGoff
Environmental Law Implementation Group: Alison Hough
Stop Climate Chaos: Theresa O'Donohoe

BOARD OF DIRECTORS / TRUSTEES

Philip Kearney, Chair, Joined Board in 2016
Trish O'Connell, Vice-Chair, Joined Board in 2019
Stuart McCaul, Honorary Secretary, Joined Board in 2019
John Conroy, Honorary Treasurer, joined Board in 2023
Prof. John Sweeney, Joined Board in 2015
Olivia Rogers, Joined Board in 2021
Rónán O'Brien, Joined Board in 2021
Finbarr Murray, Joined Board in 2023

KEY EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

An Taisce Senior Team

CEO: Gary Freemantle
Education Unit Director: Cathy Baxter
Financial Controller: Aoife O'Gorman

Administration

Operations Manager: Sinead Owens
Fundraising and Membership Officer: Annette McCaul

An Taisce Officers

Heritage Officer:
Ian Lumley
Planning Officer:
Phoebe Duvall
Natural Environment Officer:
Dr Elaine McGoff
National Cycling Coordinator:
Dr Damien Ó Túama
Climate Advocacy Officer:
Kevin Keane
Monuments and Antiquities Contact:
Dr Mark Clinton
Green Schools Travel Manager:
Ciara Norton
Green Schools Manager:
Joanne Scott
Safe Routes To School Manager:
Tracey Lydon
Clean Coasts Manager:
Sinead McCoy
National Spring Clean Manager:
Emlyn Cullen
Green Campus Manager:
Deirdre O'Carroll
Blue Flag Manager:
Ian Diamond
Green Flag Award for Parks Coordinator:
Emlyn Cullen
Learning About Forests (LEAF) Coordinator:
Rachel Geary
Neat Streets Officer:
Stephen O'Reilly
Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) Coordinator:
Adele O'Connor
Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) Officer:
Eoin Heaney
GLOBE Officer:
Sabrina Moore

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