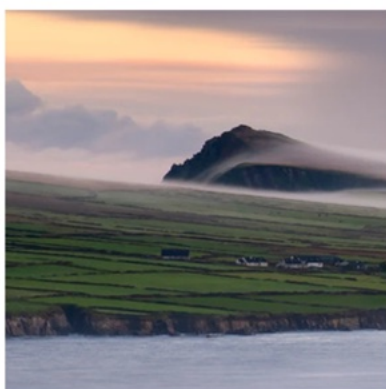
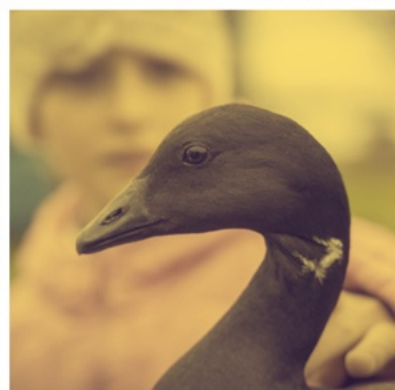


Protecting Ireland's heritage, safeguarding its future

2024 Annual Report



The An Taisce Family



Founded in 1948, An Taisce is one of Ireland's longest-serving environmental charities, fostering connections throughout Irish society. It is dedicated to preserving and protecting the nation's precious natural and built heritage. An Taisce is an authoritative, independent advocate for environmental and heritage issues and it is not a part of government or a semi-state agency.

It's also the national operator of a number of highly successful environmental education, sustainability and behaviour change programmes including Green-Schools, Blue Flag, National Spring Clean, Clean Coasts and Climate Ambassador.

An Taisce is proud to work with a wide range of participants, supporters and sponsors to deliver these programmes across Ireland. In 2024, An Taisce was awarded SDG Champion status by the Government of Ireland.



Cover images from An Taisce programmes include Learning about Ecosystems and Forests, National Spring Clean, Clean Coasts, Green-Schools Green Flag for Parks Awards, with gorse and oak photos from Pixabay.com and the two-panel centre image is the first place winner 'Coastal Landscape' category in Clean Coasts Love Your Coast Competition by John Hooton — Fog on the three sisters - Clogher Head, Dingle, Co. Kerry.

Company Information



Company Name:

An Taisce

Company number
12469

Charity registered number
CHY4741

CRA number
20006358

Registered office

Tailors' Hall, Back Lane, Dublin 8, D08 X2A3

Business address

5 Foster Place, Temple Bar, Dublin 2, D02 V0P9

Auditor

Browne Murphy & Hughes Chartered & Certified Accountants & Registered Auditors,
28 Upper Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2

Bankers

Bank of Ireland, 2 College Green, Dublin 2

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Introduction

Setting the Scene for An Taisce

Welcome to the 2024 Annual Report of An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland. This year, as we continue our mission to protect and celebrate Ireland's natural and built heritage, we reflect on a year of impactful initiatives, strengthened partnerships, and tireless advocacy for a sustainable future.

The world faces unprecedented challenges in climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and heritage conservation. Against this backdrop, An Taisce remains at the forefront of Ireland's efforts to champion environmental stewardship and safeguard our cultural and natural legacy for generations to come.

In this report, we aim to highlight the breadth of our work and the collective achievements of our team, volunteers, members, and supporters over the past year. From grassroots community programs to national campaigns and international collaborations, our initiatives are rooted in the belief that lasting change starts with education, advocacy, and action.

2024 has also been a year of renewal for An Taisce. We launched new strategies to address emerging challenges while remaining steadfast in our commitment to the values that have guided us since our inception. This report not only reflects on what we have achieved together but also looks forward to the opportunities and ambitions that lie ahead.

**Together,
we can
build a more
sustainable
and resilient
Ireland**

On behalf of An Taisce, we thank our members, volunteers, staff, and supporters for their invaluable contributions and dedication. Your commitment enables us to continue advocating for Ireland's environment, its people, and its future.

**We hope you find this report both
inspiring and informative.**

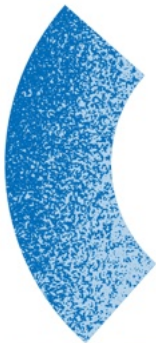




Snapshot of 2024



90%
of Irish schools
engaged



94 
sites awarded

16

Properties
in Trust

 SAFE ROUTES
TO SCHOOL

66

delivery
plans
complete



students
reached in
programme

6,000



events
organised
5,430



 **seai**
SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY AUTHORITY
OF IRELAND
EDUCATION
AND YOUTH
967
workshops



Young Reporters
for the environment

52
schools
participated



2,840
trees
planted
nationwide



54
registered
campuses

50
climate
challenges
completed



45k
volunteers



148
Ambassadors
trained



120
Green Flags
Awarded

Chair's statement

A Chairde,

As Chair of An Taisce, I am proud to represent a movement of people who refuse to look away from the twin crises of climate breakdown and biodiversity loss. At a time when some global institutions are assuming a 3°C world, and when disinformation threatens the very idea of the public good, our mission as the National Trust for Ireland has never been more urgent or more necessary.

What sets An Taisce apart is the breadth and depth of our response. We are a bridge between Ireland's heritage and its future, connecting soil, sea and society. Across schools, beaches, bogs, boardrooms and courtrooms, our volunteers show that the Irish people care deeply about protecting the commons: our shared public goods – clean water, healthy soil, breathable air, and the ecosystems we all depend on.

In 2024, that belief was made visible in thousands of actions across the country. We trained Climate Ambassadors, held hands-on environmental workshops, planted native trees, and helped over 3,500 schools lead on climate, waste, water and active travel. We conserved heritage buildings, challenged unsustainable planning decisions, and stood up for nature in Europe's highest court. We connected new generations to old places, and made the case that our built environment, like our natural environment, must be protected in the public interest.

One of our most important areas of growth has been the development of An Taisce's role as a true national trust: not just preserving heritage, but actively fighting for it. This year, we laid the groundwork for a bolder approach to dereliction – turning empty buildings into spaces of renewal, memory and community. With the support of donors and the 1772 Foundation, we are building capacity to acquire and restore buildings at risk, to conserve land for nature and the life-sustaining systems it provides, and to return places of significance – historic and natural – to public use. This is not just conservation. It is nation-building.

The properties we hold in trust – from the wild uplands of Sliabh Beagh to the Grove at Morehampton Road, from Tailors' Hall to the Burren – are living expressions of our values. They are not assets on a balance sheet; they are gifts. Entrusted by donors, shaped by nature, and stewarded with care so they can nourish future generations. I want to thank everyone who has supported this work through a gift, a legacy, or an act of voluntary service. You are helping to weave a different kind of future.



Stuart McCaul
Chairman of An Taisce



I want to thank everyone who has supported this work through a gift, a legacy, or an act of voluntary service. You are helping to weave a different kind of future.

Chair's statement



The recognition of An Taisce as an SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Champion 2023-2024 — and now in our exciting new role as SDG Ambassador — affirms the reach and relevance of our work.

But the real test of impact is in the ordinary, extraordinary acts: a student campaigning for active travel, a volunteer clearing invasive species from a riverbank, a local association opposing reckless rezoning, a planner, or teacher, or legal advocate standing firm in the face of pressure. This is where change takes root – not in statements, but in solidarity.

An Taisce has changed. We are now a unified, well-governed National Trust with a clear mission and joined-up leadership. Our finances are strong. Our partnerships are growing. And our sense of purpose has never been sharper. We are ready not only to scale our own work, but to stand alongside and support other trusts and organisations pursuing aligned missions in heritage, nature and public good. I want to thank our professional employees and volunteers, our Council and Trustees, our Local Associations and Policy Committees, and our donors, who give us the independence to lead and the courage to persist.

The work ahead will be difficult. Climate shocks are accelerating. Biodiversity is collapsing. Public spaces are shrinking. But the values that guide us – integrity, courage, science, inclusion - have never been more necessary. Ireland needs institutions that will protect its living heritage, its capacity for collective action, public imagination, and long-term thinking. An Taisce is such an institution. Ní neart go cur le chéile.

Le meas,
Stuart McCaul
Hon. Chairman

Our partnerships are growing. And our sense of purpose has never been sharper. We are ready not only to scale our own work, but to stand alongside and support other trusts and organisations pursuing aligned missions in heritage, nature and public good.

Message from the CEO

As we reflect on 2024, it is clear that An Taisce's role in safeguarding Ireland's natural and built heritage has never been more crucial.

This past year has brought both challenges and achievements, reinforcing our commitment to climate action, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development. In the face of increasing environmental pressures, we have strengthened our advocacy efforts, expanded our educational programmes, and deepened our engagement with communities across the country.

I am delighted to confirm that An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland remains financially stable. Our strategic priorities for this year and the next continue to reflect the substantial organisational changes we have experienced in recent years. As we move into 2025 we will renew our focus on enhancing National Trust heritage initiatives and safeguarding our properties. Our financial performance continues to be robust, achieving a solid surplus last year, supported by factors such as strong performances in key programmes.

Throughout the year, we have continued to advocate for policies that protect Ireland's environment. From engaging with the Planning Bill to addressing pressing water quality concerns, our work has ensured that environmental stewardship remains at the forefront of national discourse.

Our efforts to influence policy and protect vital habitats have been recognised, strengthening our role as a trusted environmental advocate. Additionally, our involvement in key legislative discussions, including the National Planning Framework and the Nature Restoration Law, has helped shape policies that prioritise sustainability and conservation.

Our education and community programmes have seen remarkable growth. Green-Schools, Clean Coasts, and the Climate Ambassador Programme have engaged thousands of individuals across the country, fostering a deeper understanding of environmental responsibility and empowering people to take meaningful action.

In 2024 alone, over 3,500 schools actively participated in Green-Schools initiatives, while Clean Coasts mobilised over 40,000 volunteers to remove litter from Ireland's beaches and waterways. The Climate Ambassador Programme has trained a new generation of environmental leaders, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to advocate for sustainability within their communities.

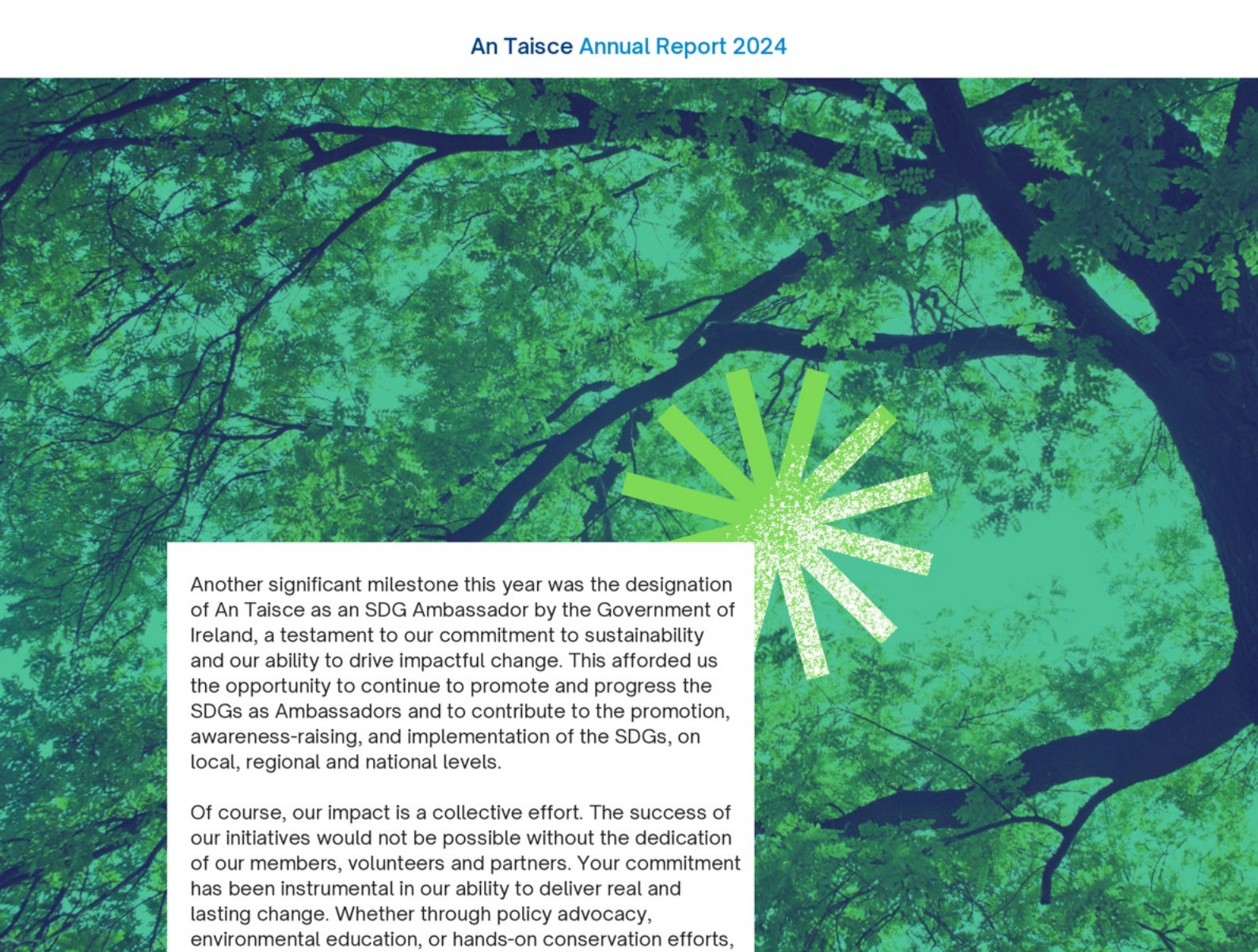


Gary Freemantle
CEO of An Taisce



In 2024 alone, over 3,500 schools actively participated in Green-Schools initiatives, while Clean Coasts mobilised over 40,000 volunteers to remove litter from Ireland's beaches and waterways.

The Climate Ambassador Programme has trained a new generation of environmental leaders.



Another significant milestone this year was the designation of An Taisce as an SDG Ambassador by the Government of Ireland, a testament to our commitment to sustainability and our ability to drive impactful change. This afforded us the opportunity to continue to promote and progress the SDGs as Ambassadors and to contribute to the promotion, awareness-raising, and implementation of the SDGs, on local, regional and national levels.

Of course, our impact is a collective effort. The success of our initiatives would not be possible without the dedication of our members, volunteers and partners. Your commitment has been instrumental in our ability to deliver real and lasting change. Whether through policy advocacy, environmental education, or hands-on conservation efforts, each contribution plays a vital role in protecting Ireland's natural and built heritage.

Looking ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission to protect and celebrate Ireland's heritage while addressing emerging environmental challenges. We will continue to expand our programmes, strengthen our partnerships, and advocate for policies that ensure a more sustainable future for generations to come. We will work even harder to promote our natural and built heritage promoting the further development of the National Trust. Our heritage will remain at the heart of our work. As we embark on another year of action, I invite you to join us in our mission to build a more sustainable, resilient, and environmentally conscious Ireland.

I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who has supported An Taisce in 2024. Specifically our dedicated employees who work tirelessly to promote our mission and vision and who everyday deliver those aims.

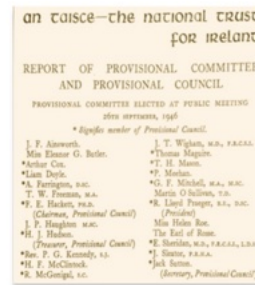
Together, we will continue to drive meaningful change and safeguard Ireland's environment for future generations.

Gary Freemantle
CEO of An Taisce



Of course, our impact is a collective effort. The success of our initiatives would not be possible without the dedication of our members, volunteers and partners.

The roots of An Taisce are long ...



1946
Established on a provisional basis

1948
Incorporated as an association 'not for profit'
First President naturalist Robert Lloyd Praeger (seen left)

1951
Kanturk Castle leased to An Taisce from UK National Trust

1954
An Taisce joined International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) — the first global environmental union

1961
An Taisce & Irish Georgian Society lobbied against demolition of Tailors' Hall, infill of the Grand Canal and preventing waterbody pollution

1962
Received ministerial request to agree to be formally consulted on conservation

1964
Given advisory role supporting local authorities, gained a seat on An Foras Forbartha

1965
Involved in planning referrals for Bourne Vincent Memorial Park, Cliffs of Moher, Booterstown Marsh, Bull Island & Mountjoy Square

1969
Campaign to stop demolition of Georgian Dublin including houses on Hume Street, first campaign to circulate education materials in schools

1970
Membership passed 5,000 for first time with majority non-Dublin



1971
Joined Europa Nostra, prevented Bull Island usage as part rubbish dump, took over care of Booterstown Marsh, carried out tree survey of Dublin

1972
Sought provision for environmental impact assessments for large developments



1974
Co-founded European Environment Bureau

1979
The Grove, Morehampton Road in An Taisce's care



1982
Recognised as a charity

1984
Moved to Tailors' Hall, Dublin (photo right pre-restoration)

1987
EEC funding secured for projects and publications

1988
Tailors' Hall officially opened

1990
Policy document on forestry followed by conference, active engagement on the future of Irish bogs

1992
Foundation of Dublin Civic Trust



1993
Asked by State to take over Blue Flag, second conference on aquaculture with subsequent papers published

1996
Launched training on environmental matters for industry with IBEC and EPA. Launched Green-Schools programme



1997
Launch of litter surveying by An Taisce for Irish Business Against Litter

1998
Launched National Spring Clean. First University branch in UCD



An Taisce moves forward, dedicated to protecting and celebrating Ireland's natural and built heritage for present and future generations ...

An Taisce: SDG Champion 2024



An Taisce: Embracing the Role of SDG Ambassador

As a proud advocate of sustainable development, An Taisce was honoured to serve as an SDG Champion Organisation for 2023-2024.

Building on this achievement, we are excited to announce our continuation in this vital initiative as an SDG Ambassador. This transition reflects our unwavering commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and our determination to integrate these principles across all facets of our work.

A New Role, A Continued Commitment

The SDG Ambassador designation allows us to strengthen our advocacy and further showcase best practices in aligning organisational activities with the SDGs.

Our responsibilities as an SDG Ambassador include:

- **Advocating and Promoting the SDGs:** Inspiring individuals and organisations to embrace sustainable development in their actions.
- **Demonstrating Best Practice:** Providing tangible examples of integrating SDGs into organisational strategies and operations.
- **Linking Work to the SDGs:** Ensuring our initiatives remain deeply connected to the global goals, fostering societal and environmental impact.

Celebrating Collective Impact

This journey has been made possible by the dedication of our team, particularly Joanne Scott and Birgit O'Driscoll, whose efforts in liaising with the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), submitting reports, and attending meetings have been pivotal. To all staff, volunteers, and partners who contribute to creating initiatives, events, and resources around the SDGs—thank you. Together, we've demonstrated the power of collective action.



Our Vision and Impact

An Taisce's mission aligns seamlessly with the SDGs. Through our extensive education and outreach programmes, we engage with schools, community groups, volunteers, third-level institutions, and local stakeholders across Ireland. These programmes span an impressive range of themes, including biodiversity, water conservation, marine life, climate action, and global citizenship, ensuring tangible contributions to all 17 SDGs.

Key programmes such as Green-Schools, Clean Coasts, and the Climate Ambassador initiative empower individuals and communities to adopt sustainable practices. For instance, the Green-Schools Programme reaches students and teachers across the country, fostering behavioural changes in areas like waste management, travel, and energy efficiency. The Clean Coasts initiative mobilises thousands of volunteers annually to protect Ireland's waterways and coastlines, while the Climate Ambassador programme trains individuals to lead climate action within their local communities.

The Global Classrooms project exemplifies our international commitment to the SDGs. By connecting Irish schools with their peers in Kenya, South Africa, and the UAE, the programme integrates design thinking and problem-solving skills with SDG principles. Through this initiative, students engage with goals such as Gender Equality (Goal 5), Climate Action (Goal 13), and Life Below Water (Goal 14), fostering critical thinking and collaboration across borders.

An Taisce: SDG Champion 2024

An Taisce's reach extends beyond education.

Our work supports innovation, circular economy practices, and sustainable tourism.

The Blue Flag and Green Flag for Parks programmes champion environmental stewardship and ensure quality green spaces for communities.

Similarly, the LEAF (Learning about Ecosystems and Forests) programme reconnects the next generation with their natural environment through hands-on learning, while Neat Streets empowers students to develop anti-litter campaigns for their local areas.

As the Irish National Operator for the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), we are part of a global network of over 80 NGOs dedicated to advancing the SDGs.

This international collaboration enables us to share experiences, address challenges, and amplify the global impact of our initiatives.

Our work reflects a shared vision of sustainability, with measurable, intergenerational impact that supports a sustainable future for all.

Looking Ahead

As we step into our role as an SDG Ambassador, we will continue to integrate the SDGs into our programmes and demonstrate how organisations can meaningfully contribute to a better future. A new logo will soon symbolise our role, and we look forward to using it to represent our commitment to this important work.

Our ongoing initiatives will focus on deepening engagement with communities, advancing sustainability practices, and building new partnerships. Through these efforts, we aim to remain a leading advocate for the SDGs, inspiring others to join the collective journey toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



An Taisce: SDG Champion 2024



Across its diverse initiatives, An Taisce consistently models and champions sustainability, ensuring that its internal operations and public-facing projects align with its values. By integrating practices that reduce waste, enhance biodiversity, and promote resource efficiency, the organisation embodies its mission to protect and celebrate Ireland's environment while setting a benchmark for sustainable action



Green Flag for Parks:
Tralee Town Park

Sustainability Practices in An Taisce

An Taisce's demonstrates leadership in sustainability throughout its operations, such as transitioning to digital resources and reducing reliance on printed materials in programmes like Green-Schools. It minimises waste and aligns with An Taisce's ethos of responsible resource use. In promoting active travel, programmes incorporate low-carbon infrastructure planning, ensuring long-term benefits for air quality and public health.

Materials used in workshops, community clean-ups, and school engagements are often made from recycled or biodegradable sources. For example, the National Spring Clean distributes reusable and sustainably sourced materials such as litter-picking kits, ensuring that the campaign exemplifies the principles it promotes. This commitment extends to digitalising operations, further reducing the environmental footprint of its nationwide activities.

The Green Flag for Parks initiative exemplifies how sustainability is embedded in the stewardship of public spaces. Participating sites adopt practices such as eliminating harmful chemicals, reducing peat usage, and implementing biodiversity enhancement measures.

Sustainability is evident in community-led programs. Local Associations prioritise biodiversity restoration and climate-resilient planning. Many associations have adopted sustainable event practices, such as using locally sourced, reusable/recyclable materials for workshops and activities.

In educational programmes, a focus on responsible consumption and production is woven into operations. For example, Safe Routes to School promotes active travel and efficient use of existing infrastructure, reducing the need for resource-intensive road development. These programmes align closely with global sustainability goals, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility from the ground up.

Directors Report

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 2024.

Mission, Values & Pillars

Mission
To protect and celebrate Ireland's natural and built heritage for present and future generations.

Vision
An Ireland where our environment, both natural and built heritage, is actively prioritised.

Mission
To protect and celebrate Ireland's natural and built heritage for present and future generations, and to ensure Ireland leads the way in defending a liveable planet.

An Taisce's mission reflects its foundational commitment to safeguarding Ireland's natural and cultural heritage. Through education, advocacy, and action, we aim to protect the environment while fostering sustainable development. This mission guides all aspects of our work as we address today's pressing environmental challenges.

Vision
An Ireland where our environment's natural and built heritage is actively prioritised, ensuring a lasting legacy of sustainability and resilience.

This vision captures the ideal future that An Taisce strives to achieve: one where ecological balance, architectural heritage, and societal well-being coexist in harmony. It is a call to action for Ireland to be a global leader in addressing the climate and biodiversity crises.

Values
Driven by core principals that guide our actions and decisions

- Values**
An Taisce's work is driven by core principles that guide our actions and decisions:
- **Integrity, Leadership, and Courage:** We act with honesty and boldness to protect the environment.
 - **Evidence-Based Advocacy:** We rely on the best available science to inform our initiatives.
 - **Community and Inclusivity:** We engage with diverse communities, ensuring participation and representation in environmental efforts.
 - **Sustainability and Resilience:** We promote long-term solutions that benefit both people and the planet.

These values underpin our activities and ensure our work remains relevant, impactful, and inclusive.

Mission, Values & Pillars



Each pillar is a foundation of An Taisce's approach, reflecting the holistic integration of environmental, cultural, and social priorities in our strategy.

Strategic Pillars

An Taisce's work is organised into six strategic pillars, grouped into three thematic pairs that reflect the interconnected nature of our activities:

Nature:

- **Climate & Biodiversity:** Tackling the climate and biodiversity emergencies with urgency and impact.
- **Land & Water:** Promoting healthy ecosystems, sustainable land use, and resilient water systems.

Built Environment:

- **Heritage:** Safeguarding Ireland's architectural and archaeological legacy.
- **Planning:** Advocating for sustainable, people-centered urban and rural communities.

People:

- **Community & Society:** Driving meaningful behavioural change through connection to nature and heritage.
- **Organisation:** Building a robust, integrated, and secure National Trust for Ireland.

An Taisce's Strategic Goals

An Taisce's Strategic Plan 2023-2026 is guided by specific goals that outline our priorities and desired outcomes under each pillar:



Climate & Biodiversity:

Goal: An urgent and effective Irish response to the climate and biodiversity emergencies.

Objectives: Raise awareness, promote climate justice, and provide actionable solutions at all levels.

Measures: Improved public engagement, better environmental outcomes, and effective government policies.



Land & Water:

Goal: Healthy ecology, prosperous rural society, and national food security.

Objectives: Protect natural habitats, advocate for sustainable land use, and empower local communities.

Measures: Increased participation in restoration projects and improved environmental standards.



Heritage:

Goal: The safeguarding of Ireland's architectural and archaeological heritage.

Objectives: Protect historic sites, enhance heritage policy, and foster public appreciation.

Measures: Sustained advocacy leadership and expanded public knowledge.



Planning:

Goal: Sustainable and people-centered urban and rural communities.

Objectives: Improve planning processes, advocate for future-proof infrastructure, and shape local policies.

Measures: Inclusive planning systems and enhanced public dialogue.



Community & Society:

Goal: Meaningful behavioral change driven by connection with nature and the built environment.

Objectives: Strengthen stakeholder engagement, inclusivity, and public participation.

Measures: Increased membership and participation in An Taisce's initiatives.



Organisation:

Goal: A robust and secure long-term future for Ireland's National Trust.

Objectives: Enhance internal operations, establish unified practices, and celebrate diversity.

Measures: A transparent and supportive culture within a cohesive operational framework.



Looking Ahead

An Taisce's Strategic Plan charts a course for decisive action and transformative change over the next three years.

Guided by our mission, values, and strategic pillars, we are committed to building an Ireland where the environment and heritage are safeguarded for generations to come



Future Ambitions



At An Taisce, we are deeply aware of the pressing need for action to address climate change and preserve our heritage. We remain committed to advancing our mission and vision with vigor and determination.



Nature: Climate & Biodiversity, and Land and Water

Expand our initiatives in areas previously supported by temporary funding, such as An Taisce Legacy4Life and Green Awards.

Broaden the scope and impact of our activities to address organisational goals and the challenges posed by climate and biodiversity crises including the marine.

Built Environment: Heritage and Planning

Enhance An Taisce's standing as Ireland's National Trust including developing and delivering achievable objectives for each of An Taisce's properties and land holdings.

Promote sustainable and people-centred urban and rural communities through our Planning objectives.



People: Community and Society, and Organisation



Implementing our Strategic Plan including determining success metrics for each Strategic Objective.

Introduce structured Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for all our colleagues

Increase recognition of our volunteers' contributions as we roll out our Strategic Plan, fostering community and societal engagement.



Oversee the recruitment and succession planning for Board members, Policy Committee Chairs, and key personnel ensuring a robust and secure organisational structure.

Upgrading our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database to better communicate with our stakeholders, particularly Members, Schools and Coastal and Volunteer groups.

Structure, Governance & Management



An Taisce operates as Ireland's National Trust, governed by a robust structure designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and the effective fulfilment of its mission to safeguard the nation's natural and built heritage.

The organisation's framework integrates governance, management, and volunteer engagement, enabling coordinated action across diverse programmes and initiatives.

Structure

An Taisce is a registered charity founded in 1948 as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. 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

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for managing An Taisce's activities and resources. Members of the Board are elected by the Council and serve on a voluntary basis. Key responsibilities include:

- Setting the organisation's strategic direction in consultation with the Council.
- Ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Overseeing operational performance and financial management.
- The Board consists of up to 11 members, including the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and other trustees, bringing expertise from various fields such as conservation, law, and public health.

Council

The Council acts as the central forum for policy development and organisational oversight. It represents members' interests and provides guidance on key issues. Composed of:

- Delegates from Local Associations.
- Members elected at the Annual General Meeting.
- Representatives of An Taisce's policy committees.
- Current and former Presidents, co-opted members, and officeholders like the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Speaker.

Meets five times annually and plays a critical role in:

- Developing and discussing environmental, heritage, and planning policies.
- Overseeing the Board's activities and ensuring alignment with An Taisce's objectives.
- Supporting the work of Local Associations.

Local Associations

An Taisce's Local Associations are regional groups that engage directly with communities on local environmental and heritage issues. Operating autonomously under national guidelines, these associations:

- Participate in planning discussions affecting their regions.
- Organise community events and manage An Taisce properties.
- Serve as a vital link between national policies and local actions.

Currently, there are 11 active Local Associations, with representatives participating in Council meetings.

Committees

The Board is advised by the following committees: Governance, Risk and Compliance Committee, Audit and Finance Committee, the Natural Environment Committee and the Climate Committee. Members can include volunteers and staff.

Membership and Members

An Taisce's members are central to its mission, actively participating in advocacy, education, and local initiatives. Membership offers:

- **Access:** Members enjoy free entry to An Taisce properties and discounted admission to selected heritage sites across Ireland. Additionally, through the INTO Places programme, members gain free access to National Trust properties worldwide.
- **Regular Communications:** Members receive newsletters and updates on environmental, heritage, and climate topics, keeping them informed about activities and initiatives.
- **Event Invitations:** Members are invited to exclusive events, such as member evenings focused on environmental, heritage, and climate issues, as well as regular Council forums.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:** Members have the chance to further contribute by volunteering through An Taisce committees or Local Associations, actively engaging in conservation and advocacy efforts.
- **Discounts at Eco-Friendly Stores:** Members receive discounts at various home-grown, zero-waste, and eco-friendly stores, supporting sustainable local businesses.

Structure, Governance & Management



Membership fees and donations directly support An Taisce's advocacy and policy work.

This includes reviewing and making observations on planning applications, forestry and aquaculture licensing, and policy submissions on water quality, intensive agriculture, sustainable planning, conservation, and beyond.

As the only legally appointed NGO in Ireland acting as an environmental watchdog in the planning process, An Taisce relies on member support to protect nature, preserve built heritage, and combat climate change. Together, members and An Taisce can protect our planet and build a better future for everyone.

Governance

Governance at An Taisce is built on the principles of inclusivity, accountability, and sustainability:

- **Annual General Meetings:** Members elect Council representatives, review organisational performance, and approve the strategic direction.
- **Committees:** The organisation establishes committees for specific focus areas, such as planning, heritage, and climate action.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** An Taisce complies with the Charity Regulator's Governance Code and all other applicable legislation.

Vision for Governance and Management

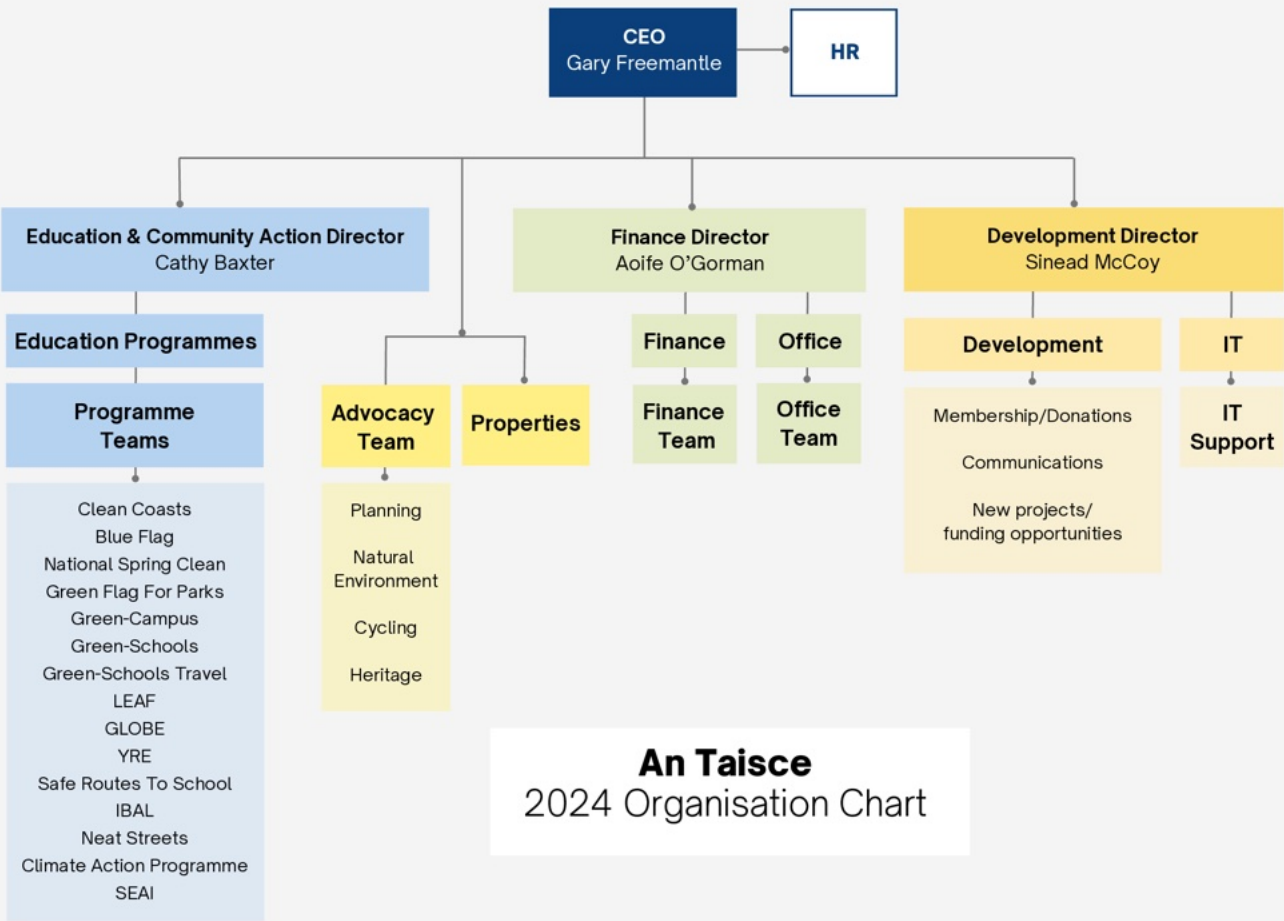
An Taisce is committed to continuously enhancing its governance and operational structures to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

Future priorities include:

- Strengthening membership community to deepen community engagement.
- Expanding volunteer networks and training programmes.
- Leveraging technology to enhance member participation and operational efficiency.

Through its integrated governance and management structure, An Taisce ensures a collaborative approach to preserving Ireland's natural and cultural heritage, aligning its operations with its strategic vision and charitable objectives.

Structure, Governance & Management



Management

Leadership and Staffing

An Taisce’s operations are led by a dynamic Chief Executive Officer (CEO) supported by a senior management team overseeing programme delivery, advocacy, and property management. This team collaborates with over 100 staff members who deliver impactful initiatives across environmental education, advocacy, and conservation.

Volunteer Network

Volunteers form the backbone of An Taisce’s impact. From contributing to clean-ups through the National Spring Clean programme to supporting planning and heritage projects, tens of thousands of volunteers provide invaluable support annually.

Collaborations

An Taisce works closely with government bodies, NGOs, local authorities, and international organisations to amplify its impact. Partnerships enable access to funding, resources, and shared expertise for programmes like Green-Schools and Clean Coasts.



Our People

Driving An Taisce's Mission Together



An Taisce is proud to be supported by a diverse and passionate community of staff, volunteers, and members. Together, they're the cornerstone of our mission to safeguard Ireland's natural and built heritage. Their dedication, expertise, and collaboration enable us to deliver meaningful results across all our initiatives.

During 2024, Clean Coasts volunteers hosted events targeting themes like **biodiversity, education, and habitat restoration**, in addition to their clean-ups



Our amazing Volunteers

The Heart of An Taisce's Impact

An Taisce's success would not be possible without the tireless contributions of our volunteers.

Across Ireland, tens of thousands of volunteers dedicate their time and expertise to improving and protecting our natural environment.

They play an essential role in safeguarding Ireland's landscapes, biodiversity, and cultural treasures.

Our dedicated workforce

An Taisce's activities are led by a dynamic leadership team consisting of a CEO and three senior managers. They are supported by over 100 colleagues who work tirelessly to deliver impactful programs and initiatives. This unified team is driven by a shared commitment to protecting and promoting Ireland's unique environment and cultural heritage.

Our staff works closely with funders, donors, NGOs, and public bodies to implement projects that make a tangible difference. Whether it's influencing policy, coordinating events, or leading conservation efforts, the synergy between these groups is essential to achieving our goals.

Through the dedication of our workforce, An Taisce has become a vital force in preserving Ireland's environment and heritage for current and future generations.

Heritage and Property Maintenance:

Volunteers are instrumental in preserving An Taisce-owned properties. Whether it's maintaining historic sites, monitoring wildlife, or organizing restoration projects, their work ensures that Ireland's cultural and natural assets are cared for with the utmost dedication.

Advocacy and Education: Volunteers engage in policy advocacy, awareness campaigns, and educational activities, amplifying An Taisce's mission to inspire a deeper connection between people and their environment.

Through their selfless contributions, volunteers embody the spirit of community action, creating a lasting legacy for Ireland's future.

Our People Volunteers



Exploring the
'Glories of the
Woodland' event
at the Grove
Property in Dublin



From left to right: An Taisce Membership's Annette McCaul with Eileen Collins. Eileen was a hugely valued, dedicated & long-serving member who sadly passed away last year

Volunteer Contributions at a Glance

Programme Engagement: An Taisce is privileged to have tens of thousands of dedicated volunteers who are the driving force behind our education and community engagement programs. These incredible individuals lead by example, inspiring communities throughout Ireland to take action for a more sustainable future. Their unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship and education transforms our initiatives into impactful movements that benefit all.

Through flagship programs like National Spring Clean, Green Schools, Clean Coasts, and the Climate Ambassador Program, volunteers promote sustainability at every level. From cleaning beaches and green spaces to educating communities about waste reduction and climate change, their work empowers people to create lasting change in their local environments. Volunteers also play a pivotal role in connecting communities with actionable solutions, helping foster a nationwide culture of environmental responsibility.

This vast network of volunteers is not just a backbone of An Taisce's work—they are an inspiration. By giving their time, energy, and passion, they are helping to shape a more sustainable Ireland and ensuring that future generations inherit a cleaner, greener, and more connected country. Their collective efforts amplify An Taisce's mission, making a real difference in the fight against environmental degradation and climate change.

An Taisce's Local Associations:

They play an integral role in advancing the organisation's mission at a grassroots level. These groups are embedded in communities across Ireland, addressing local environmental and heritage issues while contributing to national initiatives. Each association operates under An Taisce's governance structure, ensuring consistency in policy while tailoring efforts to the unique needs of their regions.



The 'Wild Child' Event by Clean Coasts in Culdaff Beach, Donegal



Pond-dipping at The Grove as part of Woodland event

Our People Membership



Membership

An Taisce Membership: A Commitment to Climate and Heritage Advocacy
Becoming a member of An Taisce means joining a movement that is committed to safeguarding Ireland's environment and heritage. Our members are more than supporters; they are active participants in preserving the nation's landscapes, biodiversity, and cultural legacy.

The photo below is from a membership trip to Clare Island walking in the footsteps of An Taisce founder, Robert Lloyd Praeger



Joining An Taisce is not just about enjoying benefits; it's about being part of a transformative movement. Members become advocates for change, leaving an indelible impact on Ireland's environmental and cultural legacy.

Why Join An Taisce?

- **Access to Ireland's Heritage:** Members enjoy exclusive access to natural and historic sites across Ireland, connecting them to the country's rich cultural and environmental tapestry.
- **Educational Opportunities:** From guided nature walks to heritage lectures, members gain unique insights into Ireland's history, ecology, and conservation efforts.
- **Community Involvement:** An Taisce offers members opportunities to participate in local clean-ups, advocacy campaigns, and other impactful activities, fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose.
- **Exclusive Benefits:** Discounts on eco-friendly products and cultural attractions, alongside monthly updates through newsletters, allow members to engage with sustainable living while staying informed about An Taisce's initiatives.
- **Policy Influence:** Members have a collective voice in shaping Ireland's future, advocating for stronger environmental protections and sustainable development practices.

Partnerships & Funding



An Taisce remains an independent voice for the environment. Funding, support and pro bono services all contribute to the delivery of our activities. We work with a large variety of stakeholders from Government Departments, public bodies and Local Authorities to corporate and individual donors.

These relationships, alongside the required governance and scrutiny are vital to our work. We are very appreciative of these on-going commitments, support and funding streams.



The funding agreements with Government departments and public bodies are operated under DPER circular 13/2014. We apply these standards to all our activities.

An Taisce's major funding sources in 2024 are set out in these tables.

European, US and Irish Corporate, NGO and Individual Funders

Name of Grant Making Agency — using 2024 names	Name of Grant Programme	Amount Utilised	Term
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, and Irish Environmental Network	Funding	€303,807	2024
Various Legal Services	Natural Environment	€250,000	2024
King Bauduin Foundation	Neat Streets	€124,984	2024/25
Cyclist.ie	Cycling	€60,000	2024
Textile Recycling Ltd	Green Schools Core	€50,000	2024
Kia	Clean Coasts	€50,000	2024
Wrigleys	Green Schools Core National Spring Clean	€50,000	2023/24

Partnerships & Funding



Irish Public Funds

Name of Grant Making Agency — using 2024 names	Name of Grant Programme	Amount Utilised	Term
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (NTA)	Green-Schools Travel	€2,528,920	2024
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (NTA)	Safe Routes to School	€1,266,143	2024
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Clean Coasts Core	€467,701	2024
Department of Environment, Climate and Communication	Climate Action	€373,066	2024
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Green Schools Core	€230,000	2024
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	National Spring Clean	€225,000	2024
Uisce Eirean	Green Schools Water	€234,877	2023/24
EPA	Globe Ireland	€209,837	2024
Local Authorities Nationwide	Green Schools Core	€200,262	2024
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Green Schools Marine	€194,000	2024
Uisce Eireann	Clean Coasts Think Before You Flush	€160,000	2024
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)	Energy	€150,472	2024
Irish Aid	Green Schools Global Citizenship	€120,000	2024/25
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Blue Flag	€116,044	2024
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Clean Coasts 2 Minute Beach Clean	€112,594	2024
Meath County Council	Boyne Navigation	€99,821	2024



Financial Review

Income

Total income for the year reverted to €8.4m in 2024 from an exceptional high of €10.5m in 2023. This stability in funding has been very beneficial given the recent years of high cost inflation and world events.

Expenditure

An Taisce's expenditure has 3 categories:

- **Salaries**

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 our colleagues for delivery. 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.

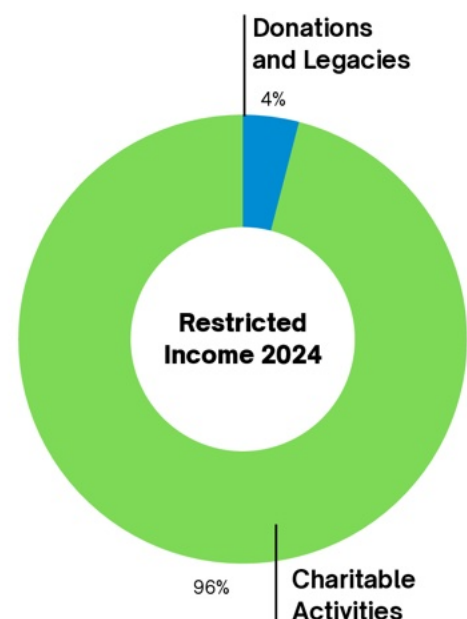
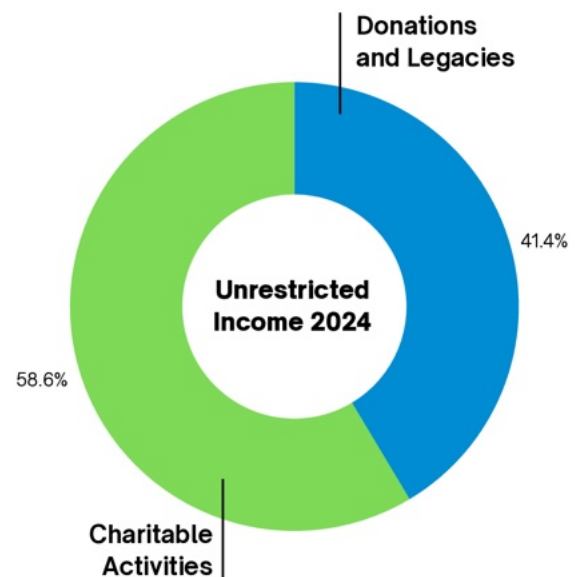
- **Central Costs**

In 2024, An Taisce's central costs included utilities, office costs, insurance, IT, HR, audit, governance, management, administration, development and finance. These costs are delivered by a combination of service providers and staff within a hybrid shared service function. 2024 was the first full year of our office at 5 Foster Place, a listed Georgian Building, with various maintenance projects contributing to Central Costs. Included in Central costs is the remuneration of the senior management team.

At the beginning of 2024, the role of Development Director increased the senior management team to four. Details of these costs are included in [note 12] of the financial statements. The allocation of central 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.

The central costs which are not allocated to activities are categorised as general costs and funded with general income.

It is a priority for An Taisce that allocation of central costs reflects the balance of resources utilised by each activity.





Financial Review

Internal Controls

The high level of funding received from government and public bodies make strong Internal Controls essential for An Taisce. All financial procedures and resulting financial transactions are available to all funders. Income, expenditure, overhead and management cost 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, resulting in a more efficient finance function with simpler financial procedures. Implementation of these recommendations continued in 2024 and aided 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.

Net Surplus for the Year

The results of the year are given on page 107.

Reserves and Reserves policy

At 31st December 2023, An Taisce had total reserves of €2,692,067 (2023: €2,676,066). This is divided between restricted and unrestricted reserves. Unrestricted reserves At 31st December 2024, An Taisce had unrestricted reserves of €1,302,581 (2023: €1,423,627).

Unrestricted reserves

At 31st December 2024, An Taisce had unrestricted reserves of €(2023: €340,848).

An Taisce seeks to maintain liquid unrestricted reserves to cover at least six months of related expenditure.

Restricted Reserves

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

Net Assets

An Taisce's net assets are €2,692,067. Fixed assets €1,116,000 is the depreciated cost of 5 Foster Place. Other properties held by An Taisce are carried at nil value, representing the nil cost of acquisition. Bank balances of €2,535,167 and accounts receivable and accrued income of €963,225 are the main component of current assets of €3,534,700. This is offset by accounts payable €98,632, deferred income of €370,989, accruals and provisions of €123,712, other creditors of €165,938 and bank overdrafts of €1,269,056.

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 2024 and beyond into 2025. A budget for 2025 has been approved, which indicates that An Taisce will be in a positive unrestricted fund position on 31st December 2025 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.

Post reporting date events

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

Safeguarding Heritage

An Taisce's Sliabh Beagh Property forms part of a larger Special Area of Conservation



Achievements in 2024

Planning Advocacy: Safeguarding Sustainable Development

An Taisce's role as an independent statutory consultee is central to its mission to protect Ireland's natural and built environments. The Planning Team engages with planning applications, forestry and aquaculture licensing, and infrastructure proposals, ensuring that environmental considerations are prioritised in national and local decision-making. In 2024, this role proved particularly critical amidst significant legislative developments and policy challenges.

Planning Bill

The Planning Bill was a major focus for the Advocacy Team, which worked tirelessly to influence its provisions.

Over three years, An Taisce engaged extensively with policymakers, providing evidence to the Joint Oireachtas Committee, drafting potential amendments, and scrutinising the Bill's impact.

Despite these efforts, the Bill was passed with provisions that undermine sustainable planning and the environmental movement in Ireland.

Key concerns included its failure to facilitate the delivery of critical infrastructure while safeguarding environmental protections.

Although the Bill's passage was disappointing, An Taisce succeeded in raising awareness about its implications. The team's work ensured that critical issues were debated publicly, laying a foundation for future advocacy.

National Planning Framework

The Draft Revised National Planning Framework (NPF) was a focal point of An Taisce's efforts in 2024. Representing the organisation on the Planning Advisory Forum, the team raised concerns about the NPF's failure to align with climate obligations and carbon budgets.

While the revised NPF showed incremental improvements over its 2018 version, it lacked specific targets and timetables necessary for implementation, leaving many of its objectives aspirational.

An Taisce highlighted the need for more ambitious measures to address Ireland's sprawl-driven, car-dependent development patterns.

Land and Water Advocacy

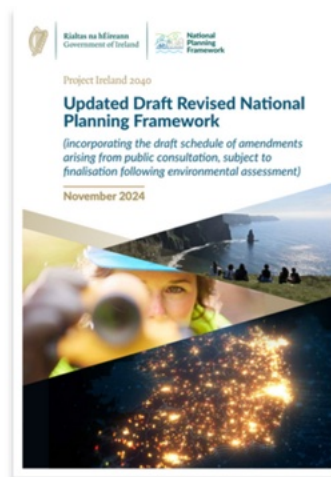
An Taisce continued its legal challenge against Ireland's fifth Nitrates Action Programme (NAP), with the case progressing to the European Court of Justice.

The team also provided expert evidence to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture regarding the nitrates derogation and engaged with EU officials during their visit to Ireland. Despite the publication of the River Basin Management Plan, An Taisce assessed it as lacking the ambition and detail required to reverse the long-term decline in water quality.



Defence Against Anti-An Taisce Legislation

An Taisce faced a direct challenge to its statutory role when a planning-related Bill was introduced in the Dáil seeking to remove its prescribed body status. The Bill was defeated resoundingly, with TDs from across the political spectrum recognising the importance of An Taisce's independent voice in the planning system. This defence reaffirmed the organisation's critical role in safeguarding Ireland's heritage and promoting sustainable development.



The Draft Revised National Planning Framework lacked specific targets on how our climate obligations will be addressed.



Achievements in 2024

Heritage Advocacy Protecting Ireland's Built and Natural Legacy

An Taisce's Heritage Advocacy continues to be a cornerstone of its mission to protect Ireland's architectural and archaeological heritage, while advancing nature restoration efforts. In 2024, the team focused on addressing dereliction, influencing legislation, and advocating for stronger protections for Ireland's historic and natural environments.

Architectural Heritage

An Taisce raised the critical issue of dereliction and the endangerment of Protected Structures to county councils nationwide.

The failure of planning legislation to adequately address the dereliction of major buildings remains a significant challenge.

Despite the passage of the 2024 Planning Act, no meaningful provisions were introduced to tackle this issue, leaving many of Ireland's architectural treasures at continued risk of decay.

Historic and Archaeological Heritage Act

In May 2024, the Historic and Archaeological Heritage Act was commenced.

While it introduced some updates to heritage protections, it failed to align Ireland's legislation with the Valletta Convention on Archaeological Heritage, particularly regarding the protection of monument settings.

An Taisce had advocated for stronger provisions, but the opportunity for a more comprehensive approach was missed.



Nature Restoration Law

The historic EU Nature Restoration Law was adopted after significant political negotiations.

Ireland played a leading role in securing its passage, and An Taisce campaigned extensively to support the law.

The team worked closely with Irish MEPs, mobilising members and supporters to amplify calls for its approval.

Although elements of the law were diluted during the legislative process, its adoption is a landmark achievement. The law provides a vital framework for member states, including Ireland, to draft national nature restoration plans over the next two years.





Achievements in 2024

Active Travel Advocacy Championing Sustainable Transport

An Taisce's Active Travel Advocacy focuses on promoting walking, cycling, and public transport as vital components of Ireland's sustainable transport future. Since 2013, the organisation has collaborated with the Irish Cycling Campaign (formerly Cyclist.ie) through the shared post of National Cycling Coordinator. This partnership combines the expertise and volunteer efforts of both organisations to address transport challenges at local and national levels.

Supporting and Challenging Active Travel Schemes

The team worked closely with local authorities to support high-quality active travel infrastructure projects while countering opposition to the reallocation of road space for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users.

In July 2024, An Taisce joined a coalition of organisations, including the Dublin Commuter Coalition, Dublin Cycling Campaign, and others, to advocate for the implementation of the Dublin City Centre Transport Plan.

Despite opposition from vested interests, such as city centre multi-storey car park owners, the coalition's efforts ensured that the progressive plan was approved and is now moving forward, albeit with some modifications.

Sustaining Political Engagement

2024 was a critical year with Local, European, and General Elections taking place. An Taisce engaged extensively with political parties to keep active travel and sustainable transport at the forefront of political agendas.



July 2024, An Taisce joined a coalition to advocate for implementation of the Dublin City Centre Transport Plan



With government allocations for active travel remaining at approximately €360 million annually since 2020, An Taisce's advocacy has focused on ensuring these funds are used effectively.



Achievements in 2024

Dublin City Planning Report

Case highlights



(Left and right): This formerly unloved Victorian brick building at Harold's Cross in the south-inner suburbs of Dublin was tastefully renovated in recent years for a cafe, and illustrates the value of investing in the existing historic fabric of Irish towns and cities.



Fruit and Vegetable Market

Cases dealt with in 2024 included an application for a tourist hostel beside the landmark Fruit and Vegetable Market, Mary's Lane, Dublin 1.

Concern was expressed about the piecemeal manner in which development had begun to take place around the 1892 market building, a Protected Structure, undermining the opportunity for its successful regeneration. A 2006 Framework Plan had envisioned the repurposing of the building as a European-style market and foodhall with adjacent new public square, and surrounded by new, mixed-use buildings of appropriate scale and quality to an overall plan.

However, development which had taken place, or was permitted to take place, thus far was ad hoc in nature and lacked appropriate quality, while the plan for a new public square had apparently been abandoned with its site having been converted to a surface carpark and part play area some years earlier, and the market/foodhall for the main building had not materialised. A planning decision on the tourist hostel has not yet been reached.

Georgian Dublin

A submission was made in September to an application for redevelopment of a building currently housing a small Tesco supermarket on Baggot Street Lower, Dublin 2. While the existing structure to be demolished was not of value, the proposed replacement was considered to be overscaled and lacking architectural sensitivity towards the subject Georgian Conservation Area. Broad and tree-lined, Lower Baggot Street is one of the most attractive streets of Georgian Dublin, with sedate terraces of four-storey brick houses (now mostly in office use) largely surviving on both sides. It was considered that the proposed new building needed to be revised to better respond to this calm and sensitive Georgian setting and avoid a jump in height with existing adjoining buildings. Dublin City Council refused permission for the proposal and the applicant subsequently lodged an appeal against this. A decision from An Bord Pleanála is awaited.

Usher's Island

The future of the important Liffey-side Georgian townhouse at No. 15 Usher's Island, Dublin 8 - real-life setting of James Joyce's world-famous short story, *The Dead* - remains uncertain.

Following years of vacancy and endangerment in the 1980s and '90s, its missing top storey and pitched roof were reinstated in the early 2000s when the house was restored for visitor centre use by barrister and Joyce aficionado Brendan Kilty. It fell disused again at the time of the late-2000s economic crash and in 2019 planning permission was received by new ownership for conversion to a tourist hostel but this did not proceed.

In July 2024 a new application was lodged for residential use, with the applicant seeking conversion of the house to ten apartments. Serious concern was expressed by An Taisce and other parties at the loss of the cultural use, and the impact and intensity of the proposed works on the historic fabric of the building. Dublin City Council has requested further information from the applicant indicating inter alia that the number of apartments should be significantly reduced, and a response is awaited.



Achievements in 2024

Other Policy Work Highlights

In 2024, An Taisce continued to deliver impactful policy interventions across a wide range of environmental issues. This work underscores our commitment to addressing climate and biodiversity challenges through informed advocacy and strategic submissions.

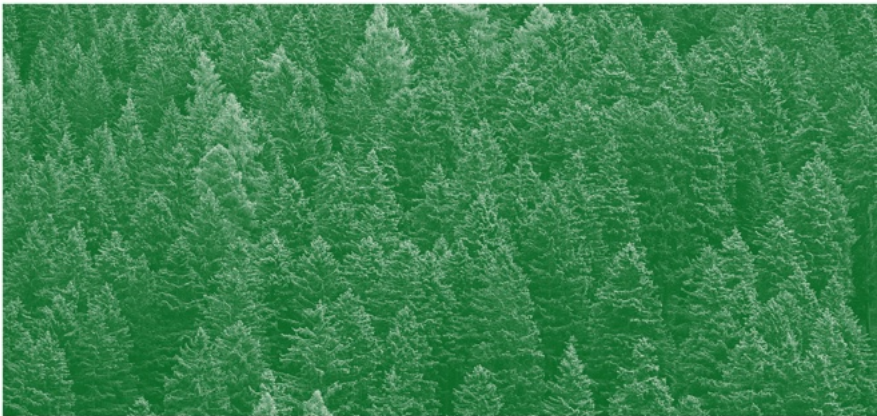
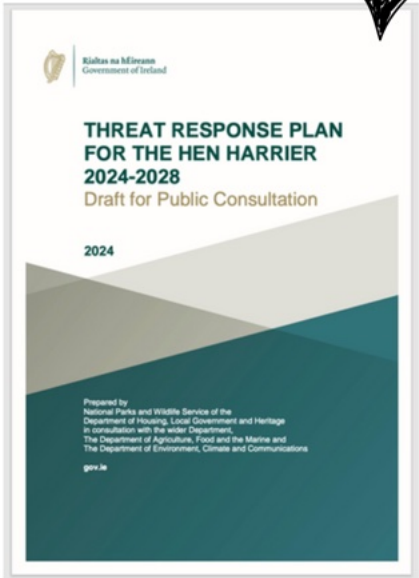


Forestry and Aquaculture Licensing

An Taisce maintained its role as a prescribed body for afforestation and aquaculture licensing, ensuring that these activities align with environmental standards and sustainability principles. This work was bolstered by the addition of Francesca Loughran, who joined as an intern to focus primarily on forestry, contributing to improved oversight and engagement in this critical area.

Hen Harrier Threat Response Plan

Collaborating with other environmental NGOs (eNGOs), An Taisce contributed significantly to the development of the Hen Harrier Threat Response Plan, which was published by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in 2024. Public engagement was a key success, with the Save the Skydancer campaign generating a substantial number of submissions during the consultation phase. These efforts highlight the importance of collective action in protecting biodiversity.



Wildlife Protection

As part of the ongoing review of the Wildlife Act, An Taisce called for stronger national legislation to address wildlife crime. Recommendations included enhanced enforcement mechanisms, better funding for conservation programmes, and the introduction of more stringent penalties to deter violations.





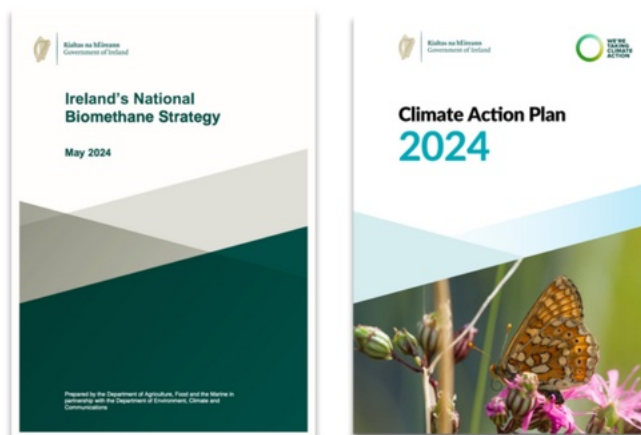
Achievements in 2024

Other Policy Work Highlights

Climate and Energy Policy Submissions

Draft National Biomethane Strategy: An Taisce submitted detailed comments on the strategy, raising concerns about its failure to fully assess the potential climate and environmental impacts of biogas production. This included highlighting risks such as land-use pressures and biodiversity loss.

Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24): While engaging with CAP24, An Taisce criticised its incremental approach to addressing climate change, advocating instead for the bold, systemic changes necessary to meet Ireland's climate commitments.



Dublin Airport Expansion

An Taisce also engaged in the planning application for Dublin Airport's proposed passenger cap expansion from 32 million to 40 million passengers annually.

Key concerns raised included:

- The climate impacts of international aviation.
- The aviation sector's relentless growth aspirations without proportional investment in sustainable alternatives like rail and sail.
- Noise pollution and its effects on local communities.
- The need for balanced regional development.



Offshore Windfarm Applications

An Taisce reviewed and provided feedback on four major offshore windfarm planning applications in 2024, including:

- Oriel
- Arklow Bank
- North Irish Sea Array
- Codling

While An Taisce supports offshore wind development as a key element of decarbonising Ireland's energy system, the team emphasised the importance of balancing renewable energy expansion with biodiversity conservation.

This work ensures that projects minimise their ecological impact while delivering sustainable energy solutions.





Achievements in 2024



Partnering with NGOs

The Advocacy Team at An Taisce works in close partnership with a wide range of NGOs across Ireland and Europe.

These collaborations are fundamental to our mission, allowing us to leverage collective expertise, diverse skills, and extensive knowledge to enhance the impact of our work.

Our representation and partnerships extend across numerous esteemed organizations and initiatives, including:

- ESD Advisory Council
- European Environmental Bureau
- Europa Nostra
- Alfred Beit Foundation
- Irish Environmental Network and Environmental Pillar
- Environmental Law Implementation Group
- Clean Air NGO Forum
- Forestry Strategy
- Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss

In addition, we actively engage with various appointment committees and Joint Oireachtas Committees, such as those focused on Heritage, Housing, and Environment.

We are also proud contributors to Stop Climate Chaos, working tirelessly to advocate for sustainable policies and systemic change.

These partnerships underscore our commitment to collaboration and the shared goal of protecting and preserving our environment for future generations.





Achievements in 2024

Direct Contact with Government Advocacy Highlights

Planning

The Planning Bill was a central focus for An Taisce's Advocacy Team in 2024.

Over the past three years, considerable effort was invested in influencing the Bill to ensure it safeguarded sustainable planning principles. Phoebe Duvall and Dr Elaine McGoff collaborated closely with Attracta Uí Bhroin of Environmental Law Ireland throughout the Bill's development.

Their work included advising on the Bill before drafting, providing evidence to the Joint Oireachtas Committee during its scrutiny, and drafting potential amendments. While the Bill ultimately passed, their efforts were instrumental in raising awareness, scrutinising the proposals, and ensuring key concerns were debated and recorded.

In October, An Taisce faced another legislative challenge when a planning-related Bill was introduced by the Rural Independent Group in the Dáil (image below from debate). This Bill sought to remove An Taisce from its statutory role as a prescribed body for planning. In response, An Taisce engaged directly with TDs to highlight the importance and value of its contributions to Ireland's planning system.

The Bill was overwhelmingly defeated by 120 votes to 10, with strong support for An Taisce from across Government and opposition TDs, reinforcing the organisation's role as an independent and essential voice in planning.



Dr Elaine McGoff, Prof John Sweeney, and Ian Lumley appeared before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture

Water Quality

Water quality was another key area of engagement for An Taisce in 2024.

Representatives Dr Elaine McGoff, Prof John Sweeney, and Ian Lumley appeared before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture to discuss Ireland's nitrates derogation and broader water quality concerns. The team raised critical issues, including the adequacy of existing measures to combat nitrogen water pollution and the ongoing environmental impacts of agricultural runoff.

As Ireland began preparations for a new nitrates derogation for 2026 onwards, An Taisce participated in discussions with European Commission officials from DG Environment during their visit to Ireland.

An Taisce contributed to both a multi-stakeholder meeting and a bilateral discussion, emphasising need for more robust measures to address nitrogen pollution, despite increased State investment in water quality initiatives.

In the lead-up to the publication of the River Basin Management Plan, An Taisce engaged with Minister Malcolm Noonan and departmental officials, advocating for more ambitious commitments in the final plan. Despite increased focus on water management, the organisation highlighted gaps in the measures proposed to reverse long-standing water quality declines.



Achievements in 2024

Direct Contact with Government: Advocacy Highlights

Biodiversity

An Taisce actively lobbied for stronger protections for biodiversity, focusing on endangered species and ecosystem restoration. In collaboration with the Environmental Pillar, the organisation campaigned to strengthen the Hen Harrier Threat Response Plan through the Save the Skydancer Campaign.

Despite these efforts, the final plan lacked the strength needed to address the steep declines in Ireland's Hen Harrier population, underscoring the urgent need for further advocacy.

The Nature Restoration Law was another significant focus for An Taisce's biodiversity efforts. Working closely with the Environmental Pillar, the organisation engaged with Ministers Malcolm Noonan and Eamon Ryan, who played pivotal roles in championing the legislation at the EU level.

The law's passage represents a crucial step toward restoring ecosystems across Ireland and Europe, though An Taisce recognises the need for ongoing work to ensure its implementation achieves meaningful outcomes.

Vision for the Future

An Taisce's Advocacy Team is committed to building on the achievements of 2024 to drive systemic change and advance sustainable development in Ireland. Key priorities for the future include:

Strengthening Legislative Frameworks:

- Advocate for stronger planning laws that address dereliction, biodiversity loss, and climate adaptation.
- Support Ireland's implementation of the EU Nature Restoration Law through a robust national restoration plan.

Advancing Sustainable Development:

- Promote policies that balance renewable energy expansion with biodiversity conservation.
- Ensure active travel and sustainable transport remain at the forefront of government spending and planning.

Protecting Ireland's Heritage:

Champion comprehensive reforms to protect architectural and archaeological heritage. Collaborate with policymakers to ensure compliance with international conventions like the Valletta Convention.

Engaging Communities and Stakeholders:

- Expand public engagement initiatives to amplify community voices in environmental decision-making.
- Strengthen partnerships with local authorities, NGOs, and international organisations to drive collective action.

By maintaining its independent voice and expertise, An Taisce's Advocacy Team will continue to lead efforts to protect Ireland's environment, foster sustainable communities, and ensure a legacy of climate and biodiversity resilience for future generations.



Achievements in 2024



Advocacy: Alignment with mission and SDGs



Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Advocacy Team's work supports a wide array of Sustainable Development Goals by integrating environmental protection, heritage conservation, and sustainable transport solutions into Ireland's policies and practices:

- **Goal 3:** Good Health and Well-being: Encouraging active travel reduces pollution and promotes physical health, creating healthier communities.
- **Goal 6:** Clean Water and Sanitation: Advocacy for improved water management through the River Basin Management Plan and Nitrates Action Programme ensures the protection and sustainable use of Ireland's water resources.
- **Goal 7:** Affordable and Clean Energy: Promoting sustainable renewable energy projects, including offshore windfarms, supports Ireland's transition to clean energy while balancing ecological needs.
- **Goal 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities: Work on planning frameworks and active travel initiatives prioritises equitable, sustainable urban and rural development.
- **Goal 13:** Climate Action: Through its submissions on climate policies, renewable energy, and sustainable transport, the team champions systemic solutions to address the climate crisis.
- **Goal 15:** Life on Land: Efforts like the Hen Harrier Threat Response Plan and the Wildlife Act submission protect biodiversity and address habitat degradation.

An Taisce's Mission and Pillars

The Advocacy Team's work aligns seamlessly with An Taisce's mission to protect Ireland's environment while fostering sustainable practices. By addressing challenges in planning, heritage, active travel, and policy, the team contributes directly to the organisation's strategic pillars:

- **Community and Society:** Advocacy initiatives engage communities in shaping policies that promote sustainability and equity. This includes defending An Taisce's statutory role in planning and ensuring community voices are represented in decision-making processes.
- **Climate and Biodiversity:** Submissions and campaigns on nature restoration, renewable energy, and wildlife protection address urgent climate and biodiversity crises, reinforcing Ireland's environmental commitments.
- **Land and Water:** Efforts to enhance water management, protect wetlands, and ensure sustainable land use reflect An Taisce's dedication to preserving Ireland's natural heritage.
- **Education and Advocacy:** Through campaigns like Save the Skydancer and active travel workshops, An Taisce raises awareness and inspires action, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.



Achievements in 2024

Properties: Protecting & Enhancing Ireland's Natural and Built Heritage

An Taisce's renewed focus on property management in 2024 has seen significant progress in the conservation and care of both natural and built heritage sites. The appointment of a Properties Lead marks a strategic step forward in achieving An Taisce's objectives. This role focuses on enhancing the conservation and management of existing sites while exploring opportunities to expand the portfolio. This approach aims to foster greater collaboration with partner organisations and strengthen community engagement in the stewardship of heritage properties across Ireland.

Community Engagement and Activities

- National Biodiversity Week:** The Grove was opened to the public over two weekends, hosting activities such as children's workshops, tree planting, and talks on nature photography. Additional events included field trips to An Taisce properties at Gortlecka in the Burren and Booterstown Marsh in South County Dublin.
- Heritage Week:** An on-site visit to Babe's Bridge, one of Ireland's oldest surviving stone bridge arches, highlighted recent restoration efforts. This project, a partnership with Meath County Council and funded by the Communities Monument Fund, showcased the bridge's history and the conservation work completed.
- Sliabh Beagh Visit:** In June, members of the Natural Environment Committee explored the heathlands of Sliabh Beagh in Monaghan (see below — photo courtesy Peter Wise). The visit included discussions with local stakeholders, highlighting the cultural and natural significance of the site as a vital community amenity.

National Biodiversity Week at The Grove in Dublin



Heritage Week at Babe's Bridge in Meath



Monaghan/Tyrone Sliabh Beagh June 2024

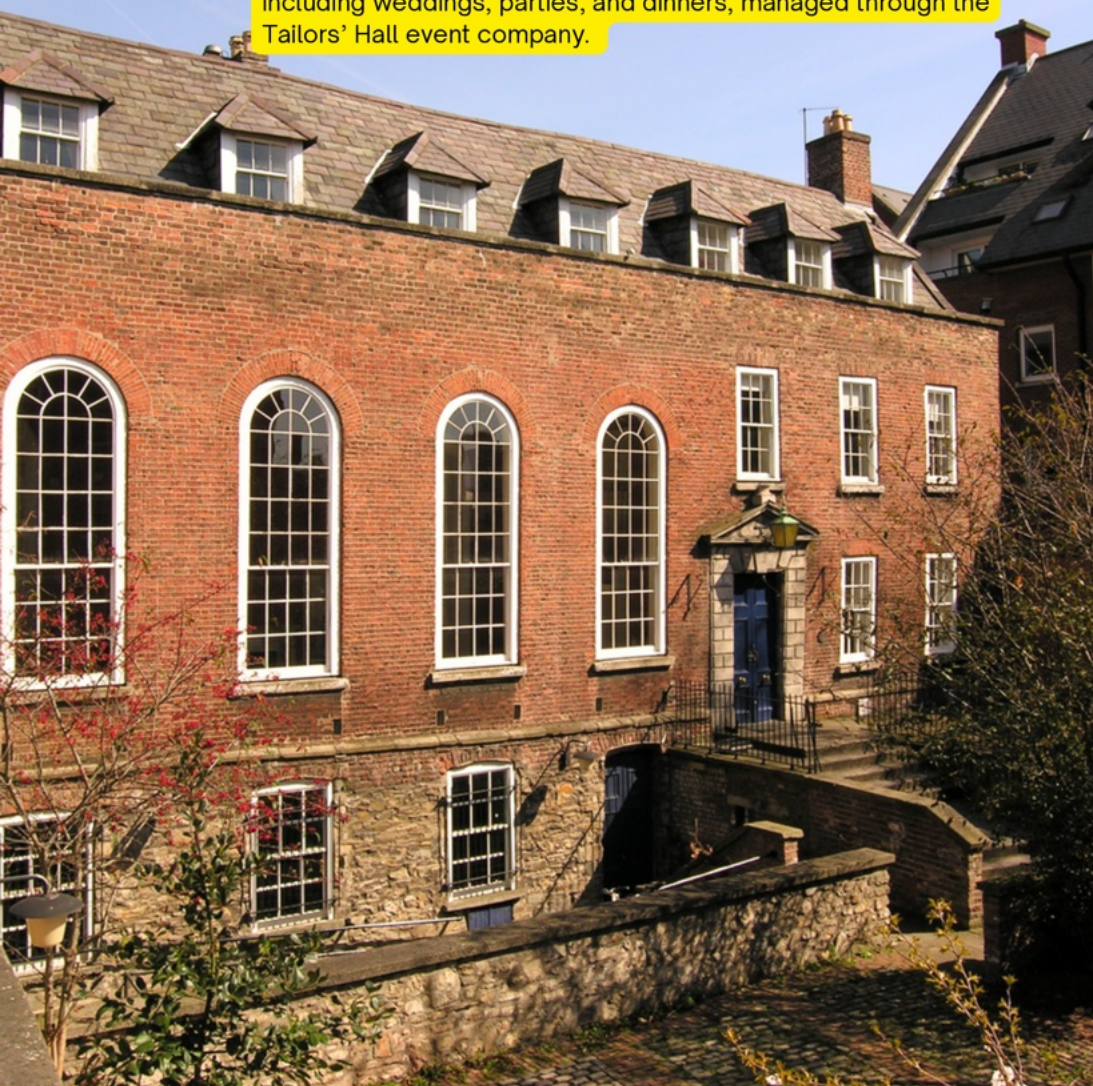


Achievements in 2024

Properties: Protecting & Enhancing Ireland's Natural and Built Heritage

Dublin: Tailors' Hall

An Taisce's historic headquarters, continues to serve as a vibrant hub for local groups, community projects, and partner organisations. The venue also accommodates private events, including weddings, parties, and dinners, managed through the Tailors' Hall event company.



Kerry: Kenmare



Offaly: Mongan Bog



Galway: Gort Weigh House

Meath: Boyne Greenway Project

An Taisce supports the ongoing development of the Boyne Greenway along the Boyne Navigation Towpath. Led by Meath County Council, this project promises improved public access, better visitor facilities, and enhanced flood protection. Public consultation on the Option Selection Report is scheduled for early 2025.

Biodiversity Action Plans

A key achievement in 2024 was the development of a Biodiversity Action Plan for Morehampton Wildlife Sanctuary (The Grove), funded by the Heritage Council. This plan provides the foundation for an active management strategy aimed at enhancing the site's biodiversity and ecological value.



Achievements in 2024



Properties: Alignment with mission and SDGs

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
The Properties team's work aligns with several SDGs:

- **Goal 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities: Enhancing access to heritage and natural sites while fostering community participation.
- **Goal 15:** Life on Land: Protecting and restoring biodiversity at An Taisce properties, including Morehampton Wildlife Sanctuary and Sliabh Beagh.
- **Goal 13:** Climate Action: Supporting projects like the Boyne Greenway that mitigate flooding and promote sustainable land use.

Alignment with An Taisce's Mission and Pillars

The Properties team contributes directly to An Taisce's pillars:

- **Community and Society:** Encouraging community-led stewardship of natural and built heritage sites.
- **Climate and Biodiversity:** Enhancing biodiversity through action plans and sustainable site management.
- **Land and Water:** Advocating for projects like the Boyne Greenway that align with sustainable land use and water management.

An Taisce Properties

- 1 Tailors' Hall
- 2 Foster Place
- 3 Morehampton Wildlife Sanctuary
- 4 Booterstown Marsh
- 5 Boyne Navigation
- 6 Babe's Bridge
- 7 Corlican
- 8 Mongan Bog
- 9 Oweninny Bog
- 10 Sliabh Beagh
- 11 Crocnafarragh
- 12 Rough and Gull Islands
- 13 Burren
- 14 Gort Weigh House
- 15 Kenmare
- 16 Kanturk Castle



Vision for the Future

Looking ahead to 2025, An Taisce aims to:

- **Expand the Portfolio:** Identify and acquire new properties to safeguard Ireland's heritage.
- **Enhance Nature Conservation:** Implement biodiversity action plans and develop innovative strategies for ecological restoration.
- **Strengthen Community Engagement:** Collaborate with local stakeholders to ensure long-term care and appreciation of heritage sites.

Through its dedicated efforts, An Taisce's Properties team continues to protect and enhance Ireland's natural and built heritage, fostering a deeper connection between people and their environment.



Education and Engagement



One of An Taisce's great programmes is Learning about Forests (LEAF) — a dynamic and impactful initiative focused on fostering awareness and education about the essential role of forests in supporting biodiversity, mitigating climate change, and driving sustainable development.



Achievements in 2024

Green-Schools Programme

Leading Environmental Education and Action in Ireland



The Green-Schools Programme, Ireland's most prominent environmental education initiative, has continued to inspire and empower students, teachers, and communities to take meaningful action on sustainability. Established in 1997 by An Taisce, the programme is part of the international Eco-Schools initiative and has grown to engage over 90% of Irish schools. Through its ten themes, Green-Schools provides a comprehensive framework for fostering environmental stewardship and behavioural change.



Seakeepers Beach Day Event in Lahinch:

Programmes like Marine Week and the SeaKeepers Project reached over 9,896 individuals, fostering awareness of ocean health and biodiversity

90%
of Ireland's
schools are
registered

Programme Overview

Green-Schools follows a seven-step methodology, which enables schools to address environmental issues systematically while empowering students to lead change:

1. **Green-Schools Committee**
2. **Environmental Review**
3. **Action Plan**
4. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
5. **Curriculum Integration**
6. **Informing and Involving**
7. **Green Code**

Schools adopt these steps across ten themes, including Litter and Waste, Energy, Water, Travel, Biodiversity, and five Global Citizenship themes (Marine Environment, Litter and Waste, Energy, Travel, Food and Biodiversity). Each theme incorporates project-based learning, community involvement, and measurable outcomes.

The programme's success is supported by a range of sponsors and partners, including the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, the Department of Transport, Úisce Éireann, and numerous private sector organisations.

General Achievements

- 3,599 schools are registered in the programme, **representing over 90% of Ireland's schools.**
- **760 Green Flags** were awarded this year, with 50 awarded to first-time participants.
- **86 long-term deferred schools re-engaged** with the programme, and 13 new schools joined.
- **Green-Skills Week reached over 3,000 secondary students** across 137 classrooms, equipping them to lead sustainability initiatives.
- **Teacher Training: Over 750 teachers participated** in 84 online training seminars.
- A newly designed Green-Schools website enhanced access to resources, with **views increasing by 21%.**



Achievements in 2024

Green-Schools Programme



Call-to-Action Events:

- **#andshecycles Campaign:** A flagship initiative, #andshecycles empowered young women to cycle more confidently. The campaign addressed barriers to cycling for female students, offering support through workshops and networking events. Ambassadors participated in a bike maintenance session and velodrome cycling experience, culminating in media coverage that amplified the campaign's reach.
- National events such as **Bike Week**, **Walk to School Week**, and the **Big Travel Challenge** motivated schools to embrace sustainable commuting. These initiatives encouraged thousands of students and parents to reduce car dependency, improving local air quality and fostering healthier lifestyles.
- **Bus in the City:** This innovative project introduced students to public transport through experiential learning. Schools in Kilkenny, Limerick, and Waterford engaged with the programme, learning about public transport systems and the environmental benefits of sustainable commuting.

Engagement and Activities:

- **88 Green Flags** were awarded to schools for their outstanding achievements in promoting sustainable travel.
- **478 schools** participated in the programme in the 2023-2024 academic year, with 1,388 school visits conducted by Travel Officers.
- **127 walkability audits and 25 walking bus support sessions** helped schools identify safe routes and foster active commuting.





Achievements in 2024

Green-Schools Programme

Theme-Specific Achievements

Litter and Waste

- **85 Green Flags** were awarded under this theme.
- **63% of schools reduced waste** sent to landfill, and 43% carried out community clean-ups.
- **75% held educational action days** focused on reducing, reusing, and recycling, while 70% participated in programmes like Picker Pals and National Spring Clean.



Energy

- **8 schools achieved Green Flags** for their work on energy conservation.
- Schools conducted energy audits, implemented renewable energy projects, and engaged in climate action education, helping students understand Ireland's carbon budget and energy challenges.

Travel

The Travel theme remains a leader in promoting active and sustainable transport: The Travel theme remains one of the most impactful and dynamic aspects of the Green-Schools Programme, encouraging students, teachers, and parents to adopt sustainable and active modes of travel.

Water

- **72 Green Flags** were awarded for water conservation efforts.
- The Water Ambassador Programme **trained 164 secondary students** across 42 schools, while regional workshops and campaigns like Walk for Water engaged hundreds more in water stewardship.

Since its launch in 2008, the programme has worked with over 2,650 schools, **reaching approximately 636,574 students and 56,768 staff members.**

In 2024, the theme continued to lead transformative change in school communities nationwide.





Achievements in 2024

Green-Schools Programme



Green-Schools Ireland Let's Fix Fashion event in Cashel, Co Tipperary: from left to right; Jeffrey Jabulani from Makini Cambridge, Nairobi, Sarah Burns and Noah Coffey from Coláiste Muire Cobh, Co Cork, and Brenda Kisiyenya from Ruaraka High School, Nairobi, Kenya

Global Citizenship, Litter and Waste and Energy

- The Global Citizenship themes expand the scope of the Green-Schools Programme, linking local actions to global environmental challenges.

In 2024:

- **213 Green Flags were awarded** across these themes.
- The **Let's Fix Fashion Campaign engaged 40 schools**, raising awareness about the environmental impact of fast fashion. Activities included film screenings, workshops, upcycling projects, and a cultural exchange with Kenyan students. The campaign's highlight was a catwalk event showcasing sustainable designs created by students.
- **Design Thinking Workshops in 10 schools** introduced 252 students to innovative approaches to sustainability. The workshops focused on peer-to-peer learning, fostering global awareness and practical solutions.

Global Citizenship Marine Environment

- **88 schools were awarded Green Flags** for marine conservation efforts.
- Programmes like Marine Week and the SeaKeepers Project reached over 9,896 individuals, fostering awareness of ocean health and biodiversity.

Let's Fix Fashion and Kenyan Exchange

One of the programme's standout initiatives in 2024 was the Let's Fix Fashion and Kenyan Exchange, a collaboration with the Kenya Organisation for Environmental Education (KOE).

This project tackled the environmental impact of fast fashion, promoting sustainable practices and empowering students to drive change.

- **Workshops, Panel Discussions, and Catwalk Events:** Students from Irish and Kenyan schools showcased upcycled and thrifted fashion, demonstrating creative ways to reduce waste.
- **Exchange Programme:** Kenyan students from Makini Cambridge and Ruaraka High School visited Ireland in April 2024, participating in immersive workshops, school visits, and activities that explored the environmental and social impacts of fast fashion.
- **Cultural Exchange:** Students engaged in traditional Irish hurling lessons, toured heritage sites like Killarney National Park and Spike Island, and collaborated on sustainable fashion solutions.

This exchange fostered a sense of global citizenship and mutual understanding, broadening students' perspectives on global challenges such as climate change and waste. Participants expressed gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate, and many were inspired to advocate for sustainability in their communities.



Achievements in 2024

Green-Schools Programme



Alignment with An Taisce's Mission and Pillars

Green-Schools aligns with An Taisce's mission through:

Community and Society:

Building sustainable habits within schools and local communities.

Climate and Biodiversity:

Empowering students to address biodiversity loss and climate challenges.

Education and Advocacy:

Inspiring the next generation of environmental leaders.



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Green-Schools supports all 17 SDGs, with particular emphasis on:

- **Goal 4: Quality Education:** Providing lifelong learning opportunities and environmental education.
- **Goal 13: Climate Action:** Mobilising schools to take meaningful climate action.
- **Goal 15: Life on Land:** Supporting biodiversity through habitat creation and restoration.
- **Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities:** Promoting sustainable transport and infrastructure.

Vision for the Future

Looking ahead, Green-Schools plans to:

- Launch the Little Green Fingers Erasmus Project to engage younger students in edible gardening and design thinking.
- Expand the energy theme with a new sponsor and increase participation.
- Re-engage schools that have lapsed in the programme, welcoming back 165 schools in 2025.
- Enhance teacher training with new seminar formats and resources.

Through its transformative approach, Green-Schools continues to shape the future of environmental education in Ireland, empowering students to lead sustainability efforts in their communities and beyond.



Achievements in 2024

Safe Routes to School Transforming School Travel in Ireland



The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programme, launched in 2021, represents a groundbreaking collaboration between the National Transport Authority (NTA) and An Taisce's Environmental Education Unit, initiated by the Department of Transport. Its mission is to create safer, healthier, and more sustainable school journeys by enhancing safety in 'front of school' zones, improving access to school grounds, and accelerating the delivery of walking, cycling, and scooting infrastructure.



Programme Overview

Since its inception, SRTS has made significant strides in promoting active travel within school communities across Ireland.

The key aims of the programme are to:

- Accelerate the delivery of 'front of school' treatments enhancing school visibility and student access into school grounds.
- Accelerate the delivery of walking, cycling and wheeling infrastructure to promote active travel along key routes to school.
- Expand the amount of cycle and scooter parking at schools.

The programme's structured approach includes a detailed engagement process, delivery plans tailored to individual schools, and the installation of essential infrastructure.

Achievements

By the end of 2024:

- 421 schools have been brought on to the active programme.
- All 31 local authorities are engaged in delivering the programme.
- 66 Outline Delivery Plans were completed in 2024, bringing the total complete to 212.
- 50 schools received infrastructure improvements in 2024, bringing the total to 96.
- Cycle and scooter parking facilities were installed in 144 schools in 2024, bringing the cumulative to 826 schools equipped.

Higher Speed Rural Road (HSRR)

In 2024, in collaboration with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), a trial was rolled out to 3 HSRR schools of School Zones to address the unique needs of rural Irish schools. The trial included a range of signage and road markings at the front of the school. The goal for HSRR School Zones is to alert motorists to the presence of schools, encouraging lower speeds and more attentive driving. This work paves the way for 'School Zones' to be implemented at other HSRR schools. Since completion of the trial, Safe Routes to School has launched Round 3 of the programme which includes 67 HSRR schools throughout the country.



Achievements in 2024

Safe Routes to School



November 2024 — Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan and Minister of State James Lawless joined the National Transport Authority (NTA) at Holy Child National School in Naas Co Kildare to announce that an additional 142 schools across the country will benefit from Round 3 of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programme.

Expansion nationwide

The programme is delivered in rounds, reflecting its progressive expansion:

March 2021

Initial call for applications, with all schools in the state invited to participate

June 2021

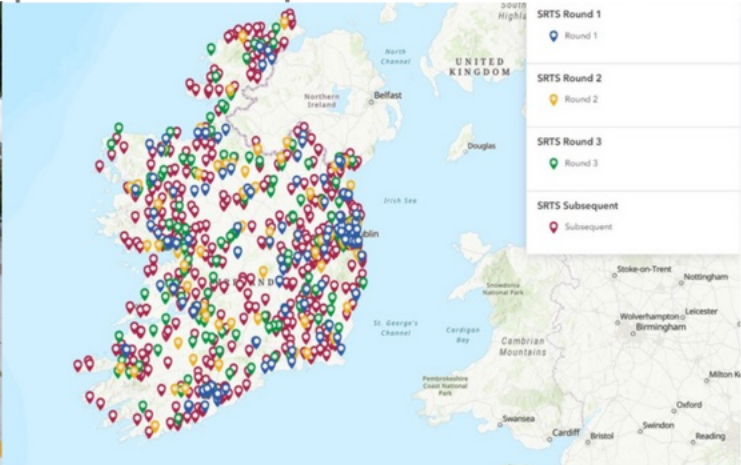
Launch of Round 1, involving 170 schools

December 2022

Start of Round two, with 108 schools from around Ireland joined.

November 2024

Round 3, adding 142 schools, including 67 schools on Higher Speed Rural Roads (HSRR) for first time, addressing unique challenges in these areas.





Achievements in 2024

Safe Routes to School



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- **Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being:** Delivering infrastructure that promotes active travel and reduces road traffic accidents, directly addressing Target 3.6.
- **Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities:** Providing sustainable transport systems, ensuring equitable access to safe school travel, aligned with Target 11.2.
- **Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production:** Encouraging sustainable practices in operations, supporting Targets 12.6 and 12.8.
- **Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals:** Facilitating collaboration between local authorities, schools, and the NTA, exemplifying effective multi-stakeholder partnerships under Targets 17.16 and 17.17.

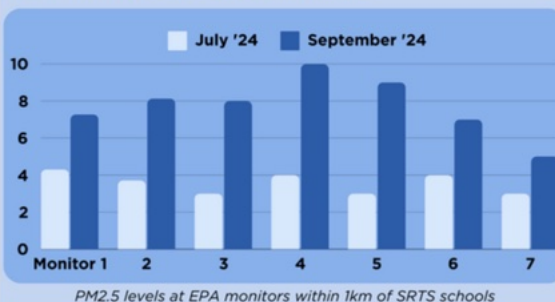
Contribution to An Taisce's Mission and Pillars

- **Community and Society:** Encouraging active travel within school communities enhances public recognition of infrastructure improvements. This leads to safer driving behaviours and stronger community support for sustainable initiatives.
- **Planning:** Infrastructure delivered under SRTS is frequently cited as a model for best practices in local area plans, influencing future developments and planning applications.

Air Quality at SRTS Schools

We compared the data from EPA air quality monitors located within 1 km of SRTS schools between July and September 2024. They showed that PM2.5 levels doubled at all locations when the school year started, reflecting increased car traffic and idling during pick-up and drop-off times.

SRTS encourages active travel like walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting to school, or using Park and Stride as alternatives to stopping outside schools.



Vision for the Future

Looking ahead, the Safe Routes to School programme aims to:

- Expand its reach to include additional schools, ensuring the benefits of active travel are available to more communities.
- Develop new solutions tailored to unique challenges in rural and urban settings.
- Strengthen partnerships with local authorities and community groups to enhance the delivery of safe, sustainable infrastructure.
- Through its holistic and innovative approach, SRTS continues to transform school travel in Ireland, fostering healthier, safer, and more sustainable communities.



Achievements in 2024

GLOBE Ireland Advancing Environmental Stewardship Through Citizen Science



GLOBE Ireland, coordinated by An Taisce with support from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), has established itself as a leading programme in environmental education and citizen science. With its roots dating back to the 1990s and a full relaunch in 2017, the programme empowers students and teachers to engage in scientific research, fostering a deep connection between education and environmental action.



Citizen Science Campaigns

GLOBE Ireland delivered five core campaigns in 2024, engaging approximately 6,000 students nationwide.

Each campaign addressed a critical environmental issue:

- **Air Quality:** Monitoring nitrogen dioxide and launching a PM Pilot project with low-cost sensors in schools.
- **Rainfall and Flood Resilience:** Encouraging schools to measure rainfall and explore how "spongy" their grounds are to prevent flooding.
- **Surface Temperature and Climate Resilience:** Engaging schools in land cover analysis and climate resilience studies under the "How Cool is Your School?" campaign.
- **River Ecosystems:** Training students to evaluate the health of local rivers through biodiversity and water quality assessments.
- **Phenology Campaigns:** Centralized campaigns such as "Green Up and Green Down" monitored seasonal changes in vegetation, coordinated with GLOBE Europe Eurasia.

These campaigns not only educated students but also contributed valuable data to the international GLOBE database, linking local efforts to global scientific research.





Achievements in 2024

GLOBE Ireland



Students from Kilglass National School, Galway with a Lego model of their school.

Teacher Training and Resources

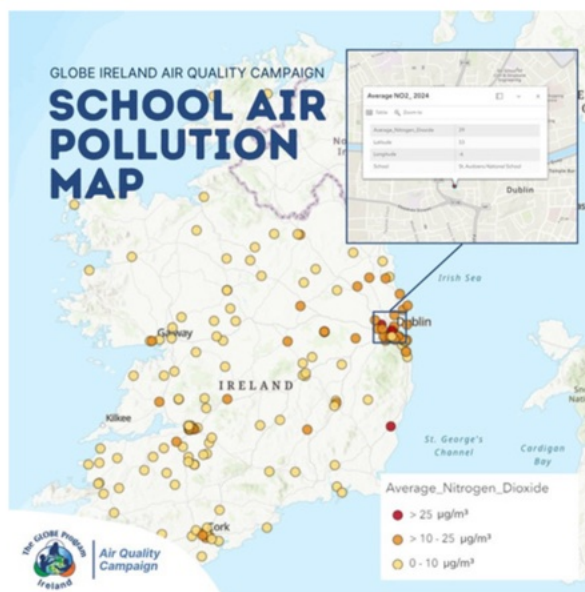
A cornerstone of the programme is empowering educators to lead citizen science projects:

- **Teacher Training:** Approximately 168 teachers received training in GLOBE protocols in 2024, enabling them to integrate scientific methods into their classrooms.
- **Local Support:** GLOBE connected schools with grant opportunities through the Local Authorities Water Programme, funding green infrastructure projects and sustainable water management initiatives.

Event Highlights

GLOBE Ireland hosted approximately 30 events in 2024, including webinars, training sessions, and international conferences:

- **Annual Project Sharing and Prizegiving Event:** Held at Richmond Barracks, Dublin, this event celebrated the achievements of 17 schools, with keynote addresses from An Taisce and EPA leadership. Over 120 guests attended, including 78 students.
- **Tree Day Webinar:** Co-hosted with Green-Schools Biodiversity, this interactive event featured NASA's Brian Campbell and reached 70 schools (approximately 1,500 students).
- **International Collaborations:** GLOBE Ireland partnered with countries such as France, Malta, and the Netherlands to facilitate cross-cultural scientific exchanges.
- **Regional and Global Engagements:** Represented at the GLOBE Annual Meeting in Fredonia, USA, and the GLOBE Europe Eurasia Regional Meeting in Slovenia.
- Hosted a **Clean Air Webinar** with Green-Schools Travel and NASA's Peter Falcon, attended by 40 schools from 10 countries.





Achievements in 2024

GLOBE Ireland Alignment with goals

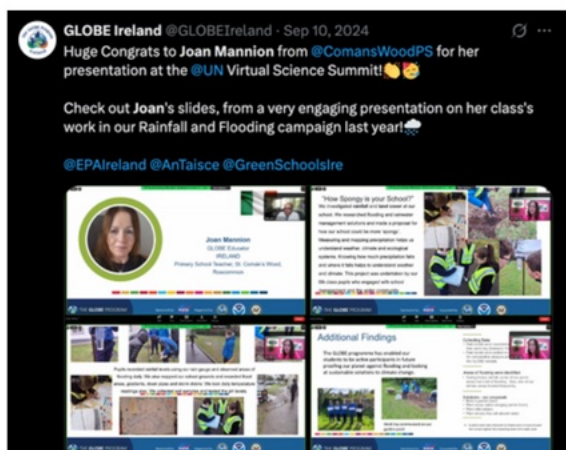


Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

GLOBE Ireland's campaigns directly support several SDGs, demonstrating the programme's relevance to global environmental and social challenges:

- **Goal 4:** Quality Education: Providing structured citizen science education.
- **Goal 6:** Clean Water and Sanitation: Monitoring water quality through campaigns like "How healthy is your local river?"
- **Goal 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities: Helping students redesign schools to be more climate-resilient.
- **Goal 14:** Life Below Water: Addressing water pollution and protecting aquatic ecosystems.
- **Goal 15:** Life on Land: Promoting biodiversity through phenology campaigns and land cover analysis.

In 2024, GLOBE teacher Joan Mannion showcased Ireland's contributions to these goals at the UN General Assembly Science Summit, highlighting the transformative impact of student-led environmental projects.



The GLOBE Team travelled to Slovenia in November for the annual GLOBE Europe Eurasia Regional Meeting. 120 participants from 26 countries (county coordinators, teachers, trainers, scientists, GLOBE Implementation Office, and NASA

Alignment with An Taisce Mission and Purpose

GLOBE Ireland aligns closely with An Taisce's strategic pillars:

- **Nature (Climate & Biodiversity, Land & Water):** Addressing critical environmental issues through citizen science.
- **People (Community & Society):** Empowering schools and local communities to become agents of change.

The programme exemplifies An Taisce's vision by fostering a culture of environmental stewardship and data-driven solutions.

Vision for 2025

As GLOBE Ireland continues to expand, its goals for 2025 include:

- Enhancing teacher training to reach more educators and students.
- Strengthening international collaborations to promote cross-border scientific exchanges.
- Developing new resources and campaigns to address emerging environmental challenges.

GLOBE Ireland's innovative approach to citizen science ensures that students and teachers remain at the forefront of Ireland's environmental response, creating a generation of informed, empowered, and inspired environmental leaders.



Achievements in 2024

LEAF Ireland — Learning about Ecosystems and Forests

Nurturing Forest Education and Sustainability



The Learning about Forests (LEAF) programme stands as a dynamic and impactful initiative focused on fostering awareness and education about the essential role of forests in supporting biodiversity, mitigating climate change, and driving sustainable development. LEAF is coordinated by the Foundation of Environmental Education (FEE) at an international level. Since its inception, LEAF has become a beacon for environmental education, engaging educators, students, and communities in meaningful activities that connect them with the natural world while promoting sustainable practices.



In 2024, LEAF partnered with Mary Immaculate College, Marino Institute of Education, and St. Patrick's College, as well as several schools, to host a series of outdoor workshops.

LEAF's mission

In 2024, the LEAF programme continued its mission by reaching a diverse audience through a range of innovative and interactive projects. Central to LEAF's approach is the belief that empowering educators with knowledge and practical tools will have a ripple effect, extending its impact to generations of learners. By focusing on teacher training, research, and public engagement, the programme combines academic rigor with hands-on activities to promote an appreciation of forests as vital ecosystems and resources.

A key component of the LEAF programme is its teacher training initiative, which collaborates with third-level institutions, secondary schools, and primary schools to equip educators with the skills and knowledge to integrate forestry education into their teaching.

In 2024, LEAF partnered with Mary Immaculate College, Marino Institute of Education, and St. Patrick's College, as well as several schools, to host a series of outdoor workshops. These sessions introduced trainee and practicing teachers to the environmental, social, and economic benefits of forests.



Achievements in 2024

LEAF Ireland — Learning about Ecosystems and Forests



In 2024, LEAF celebrated five years of An Choill Bheag — creating small native woodlands nationwide

The workshops emphasised how forests contribute to the bioeconomy, mitigate climate change, and enhance biodiversity, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of ecosystems.

Through its hands-on workshops, LEAF provided participants with tools and methodologies to conduct ecological research and contribute to Citizen Science. Participants were trained to use techniques such as transects and quadrats to collect data on species diversity within newly created woodland habitats. This data was then shared with the National Biodiversity Data Centre, contributing to national efforts to map biodiversity. By engaging participants in active learning, LEAF encouraged critical thinking and inspired educators to explore innovative ways of teaching environmental topics.

Milestones in 2024

- **Tree Planting and Restoration:** Over 2,840 native provenance trees were planted as part of 15 planting projects and one restoration project.
- **Educator Engagement:** The programme reached 325 trainee teachers across three higher education institutions and introduced forest education to 54 secondary schools and one primary school.
- **Research Contributions:** Data from seven An Choill Bheag sites was collected and partially uploaded to the National Biodiversity Data Centre, providing valuable insights into the ecological benefits of native woodlands.
- **Community Impact:** More than 1,000 participants were directly engaged in LEAF projects, fostering a wider appreciation for forestry and sustainability.



Achievements in 2024

LEAF Ireland

**Overall
impacts:
52 planted &
1 restoration**



An Choill Bheag

One of the standout features of LEAF is its focus on creating small native woodlands, known as An Choill Bheag.

These woodlands serve as living classrooms where participants can observe and study forest ecosystems firsthand.

In 2024, LEAF celebrated five years of this initiative, which has grown to include multiple sites across the country. The planting of An Choill Bheag has not only enriched local biodiversity but has also provided schools and colleges with spaces that benefit various disciplines beyond geography and science.

The programme also expanded its reach through the production of a multimedia campaign, including the creation of a video series titled Talking Trees: The Importance of Healthy and Resilient Forests. These resources aim to engage a wider audience by highlighting the ecological and societal value of forests. The videos complement LEAF's educational efforts by presenting compelling narratives about how forests support communities and ecosystems.

Transformative Feedback and Global Recognition

Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive, with educators praising the workshops for their engaging and practical approach.

Many expressed a desire for more frequent sessions, emphasising the transformative impact of learning in outdoor settings. Some participant insights include:

- “The workshops equipped me with the confidence to incorporate these methods into my future teaching.”
- “The sessions were not only informative but also inspiring, sparking ideas for new ways to engage students with environmental topics.”
- “The planting of An Choill Bheag on our campus was transformative, creating a space that benefits multiple disciplines.”
- The LEAF programme's influence extended beyond Ireland in 2024, with its work being presented at the Green Schools Grounds for Everyone Conference in Belgium. This recognition underscores the programme's role as a leader in forestry education and its potential to inspire similar initiatives globally.



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals

The programme aligns closely with global sustainability goals, including:

- **Goal 15:** Sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation.
- **Goal 4:** Inclusive, equitable education promoting sustainable development.
- **Goal 6:** Protecting water-related ecosystems.

By promoting these goals, LEAF contributes meaningfully to Ireland's environmental and educational objectives.



Achievements in 2024

SEAI Energy Workshops: Empowering Schools to Lead on Energy Education



The SEAI Energy Workshops, managed by An Taisce, form a cornerstone of Ireland's efforts to engage schools in energy education. These interactive workshops, aimed at primary and post-primary students, equip young learners with the knowledge and tools to understand energy efficiency, renewable energy, and climate change. By fostering a culture of sustainability, the programme empowers students and teachers to take actionable steps toward a more energy-conscious future.



25,331 students participated in 967 workshops across Ireland, marking a 34% increase from the previous academic year

Programme Overview

The SEAI Energy Workshops offer dynamic, curriculum-aligned sessions that make complex topics like energy conservation and renewable energy engaging and accessible.

Workshops cater to a range of audiences:

- **Junior and Senior Primary Students:** Hands-on activities and engaging storytelling spark curiosity and build foundational knowledge of energy concepts.
- **Post-Primary Students:** Tailored workshops explore energy transitions, climate science, and the role of sustainability in daily life.
- **Teacher Training (CPD):** Facilitator-led workshops provide educators with the resources and confidence to integrate energy education into their classrooms.

Workshops are delivered nationwide, including to underserved areas and DEIS schools, ensuring equitable access to energy education.

Achievements in 2024

Workshop Reach

- 25,331 students participated in 967 workshops across Ireland, marking a 34% increase from the previous academic year.
- The programme returned to pre-pandemic levels, showcasing its resilience and value to schools.
- Workshops were delivered in all 26 counties, with additional hubs established in Irish-speaking regions.

Innovation in Workshop Content

- Revised workshop content reflected the latest energy statistics and aligned with curriculum updates.
- New activities were introduced, such as practical demonstrations with solar props for hands-on learning.

Teacher Training and Engagement

- 131 teachers participated in CPD workshops, enhancing their ability to teach energy-related topics.
- Training included a mix of in-person and online sessions, increasing accessibility for educators in remote areas.

Non-Standard Events

- The SEAI team engaged over 10,195 participants through events like the Munster Maths and Science Festival and the Fota Science Weekend, which drew over 7,000 attendees.



Achievements in 2024

SEAI Energy Workshops

Alignment with goals



Workshops cater to a range of audiences



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The SEAI Energy Workshops support several SDGs:

- Goal 4: Quality Education: Offering engaging, accessible energy education to students and teachers nationwide.
- Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy: Promoting understanding and adoption of renewable energy technologies.
- Goal 13: Climate Action: Equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to address energy-related climate challenges.
- Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production: Encouraging energy-efficient practices among schools and communities.

Alignment with An Taisce Mission and Purpose

- Community and Society - The workshops foster a sense of responsibility and active participation in energy conservation, building a foundation for sustainable community practices.
- Climate and Biodiversity - By addressing energy efficiency and renewable energy, the programme contributes to broader climate action goals and the reduction of Ireland's carbon footprint.
- Education and Advocacy - The integration of energy education into school curriculums reflects An Taisce's commitment to lifelong learning and environmental advocacy.

Vision for the Future

Looking ahead, SEAI Energy Workshops aim to:

- Expand workshop availability, addressing the growing demand and reducing waiting lists.
- Enhance the scope of non-standard events, reaching broader audiences through science fairs and festivals.
- Continue innovating workshop content to reflect advancements in energy technology and sustainability practices.
- Through its comprehensive approach to energy education, the SEAI Energy Workshops programme empowers Ireland's youth to lead in creating a more sustainable future.



Achievements in 2024

Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE)

Empowering Youth Through Environmental Storytelling



The Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) programme, coordinated by An Taisce, provides a platform for students to explore environmental issues through journalism, photography, and videography. By encouraging participants to research, analyze, and communicate environmental challenges, YRE fosters environmental literacy and equips young people with the skills to advocate for meaningful change. The programme's dynamic structure includes competitions, training, and international collaboration, making it a cornerstone of An Taisce's educational initiatives.



2024 Video Winner:
Climate Change by
Mark Monaghan,
Piper's Hill College



2024 Article Winner:
Oceanic Symphony
Disrupted: Common
Dolphin Foraging and
Communication Under
Siege from Shipping
Noise by Amy Roche,
St. Joseph's Rush

Programme Overview

YRE empowers students to address environmental issues creatively and effectively through three key mediums: article writing, photography, and videography.

The programme offers a range of skill-based training seminars that enhance students' abilities to communicate complex topics and drive awareness in their communities. Participants are encouraged to connect local challenges to global contexts, fostering a sense of global citizenship and collaboration.

In 2024, the programme expanded its reach and impact, engaging students and educators across Ireland and internationally. The competition categories were updated to reflect the evolving digital landscape, introducing formats such as podcasts, TikToks, and photo stories to connect with modern audiences.

Achievements in 2024

Skill-Based Webinars and Training

- Three skill-based webinars were hosted in 2024, focusing on article writing, photography, and videography. These webinars reached:
- 420 participants, including students and teachers.
- Equipped participants with practical skills to produce compelling, solutions-oriented content.

Programme Reach

- 52 schools participated, engaging over 1,500 students and teachers.
- Two colleges were involved, reaching 1,200 students.
- Ireland submitted its first entry into the International Collaboration category, with Coláiste Muire in Cobh partnering with Ruaraka and Makini High Schools in Nairobi, Kenya. This project explored the environmental impact of textile consumption in Ireland and its consequences in Kenya.

Competition Excellence

The 2024 YRE competition featured diverse and high-quality entries on themes such as:

- Climate anxiety.
- Invasive species like the New Zealand flatworm and Sika deer.
- Biodiversity loss and the destruction of Ireland's flora and fauna.

The introduction of new competition categories—podcasts, TikToks, and expanded photo formats—allowed participants to connect with audiences in innovative ways, further broadening the programme's impact.



Achievements in 2024

Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) Alignment with goals

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The YRE programme directly supports several SDGs:

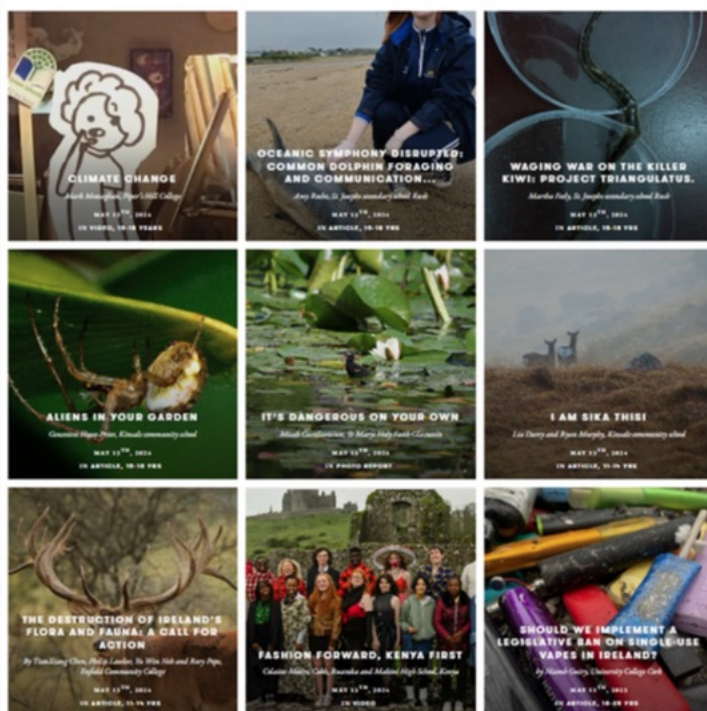
- **Goal 4: Quality Education:** Providing participants with lifelong learning opportunities that empower and inspire.
- **Goal 13: Climate Action:** Raising awareness and promoting actionable solutions for climate challenges.
- **Goal 15: Life on Land:** Addressing biodiversity loss and promoting ecosystem restoration.
- **Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals:** Building international collaborations, such as the partnership between Irish and Kenyan schools.



YRE IRELAND

SUBSCRIBE

WWW.YREIRELAND.ORG



Alignment with An Taisce Mission and Purpose

The YRE programme aligns seamlessly with An Taisce's strategic pillars and vision by:

- Promoting climate action and environmental literacy through student-led storytelling.
- Raising awareness about the urgency of the climate and biodiversity crises.
- Providing practical solutions at local and global levels.
- Building collaborative coalitions, such as international partnerships and national training initiatives.

Vision for the Future

In 2025, YRE aims to:

- Expand the reach of its training and competitions, engaging more schools and colleges across Ireland.
- Strengthen international collaborations, fostering global citizenship and cross-cultural understanding.
- Integrate more digital formats and platforms to connect with broader audiences and enhance storytelling capabilities.
- Through its focus on education, creativity, and collaboration, YRE continues to empower Ireland's youth to become informed advocates for a sustainable future.



Achievements in 2024

Neat Streets Empowering Schools to Tackle Litter and Waste



The Neat Streets Programme, coordinated by An Taisce, has served as a vital initiative for secondary schools in addressing litter and waste issues. Since its inception in 2011, the programme has engaged over 185,000 students, fostering environmental responsibility and instilling practical waste management habits. In 2024, Neat Streets continued its impactful work, delivering measurable improvements in waste reduction and litter management, while preparing for a structured wind-down as it transitions to its final phase.



Programme Overview

Neat Streets encourages schools to develop structured anti-litter and waste action plans through:

- Establishing a Neat Streets Committee of students.
- Conducting Baseline and Follow-on Surveys to track progress.
- Implementing school-wide action days and community engagement events.
- Running educational workshops and awareness campaigns.
- Schools receive direct support through school visits, resources and participation in national events such as the Neat Streets Conference.

Vision and Legacy

As the programme enters its final phase, the focus is on ensuring a smooth conclusion while celebrating its achievements:

- **Legacy of Success:** After over 13 years, Neat Streets has left a lasting impact on schools and communities, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.
- **Continued Recognition:** Schools will continue to be honoured through awards presented at Green-Schools ceremonies.
- **Transition and Resource Preservation:** Efforts are underway to update programme materials, ensuring they remain accessible to schools pursuing the Green-Schools Litter and Waste theme.

Neat Streets has been a transformative programme for Irish schools, leaving behind a legacy of behavioural change, community engagement, and measurable environmental impact.

Achievements in 2024

Participation and Engagement

- 16 schools participated in the 2023–2024 programme, engaging 9,702 students across 7 local authority areas.
- Each school organised at least one National Spring Clean event, complemented by regular litter picks and community clean-ups.
- Schools demonstrated significant behavioural change, with a 29% reduction in littering within schools and a 37% reduction in the wider community.

Neat Streets Conference

Held in January 2024 at the Aviva Stadium, the conference welcomed over 100 students and teachers, focusing on the theme of “Students Championing the SDGs”. Highlights included: Interactive workshops on designing sustainable cities and campaigns. Presentations by students showcasing their Neat Streets journeys. An inspiring keynote address by Dr. Sabrina Dekker of Dublin City Council.

Quantifiable Results

- 48% increase in recycling rates compared to baseline surveys.
- Over 71% of identified litter black spots in schools were classified as either ‘Litter Free’ or ‘Slightly Littered’ post-programme, a significant improvement.
- Schools achieved an average 60% increase in recycling rates over the programme’s 13-year history.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- **Goal 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities: Empowering students to lead community-focused waste management initiatives.
- **Goal 12:** Responsible Consumption and Production: Encouraging sustainable waste practices and recycling.
- **Goal 13:** Climate Action: Reducing landfill contributions and fostering awareness of environmental impacts.



Achievements in 2024

Green-Campus Programme Transforming Higher Education Through Environmental Stewardship



The Green-Campus Programme, coordinated by An Taisce, is an innovative environmental education and management initiative designed for higher and further education institutions. By fostering collaboration across campus communities, the programme empowers students, staff, and stakeholders to implement sustainability practices and address environmental challenges. Introduced in Ireland in 2007, Green-Campus has grown to include 54 registered campuses as of 2024, with 21 achieving Green-Campus accreditation.

On the 18th April 2024, University College Cork received their Green Flag — an historic goal — the first higher education institute in the world to secure this award for the fifth time

Programme Overview

The Green-Campus Programme is based on the successful Green-Schools model, encouraging third-level institutions to adopt a whole-campus approach to environmental management.

Participants follow a seven-step methodology that integrates environmental action into campus operations and community engagement:

1. **Establishing a Green-Campus Committee.**
2. **Conducting an Environmental Review.**
3. **Creating an Action Plan with measurable goals.**
4. **Monitoring and Evaluating progress.**
5. **Linking Activities to Learning on campus.**
6. **Informing and Involving the wider campus and community.**
7. **Developing a Green Charter to formalize commitments.**

Themes addressed by campuses include litter and waste, energy, water, transport, biodiversity, and climate change. Emerging themes like greening laboratories, air quality, and climate justice reflect the programme's evolving priorities.



Achievements in 2024

Programme Growth

- Three new campuses registered, bringing the total to 54 registered campuses, including universities, technological universities, teaching hospitals, and colleges of further education.
- Eight campuses achieved or renewed their Green-Campus flags, including University College Cork (fifth flag), Maynooth University (third flag), and TU Dublin (first flag).

Recognition and Collaboration

- The University of Galway Environmental Society received the Best Green Initiative Award at the Board of Irish College Societies Awards for its Organic Garden Project.
- The programme supported two Erasmus+ projects, promoting sustainability in higher education through systems thinking and innovative green initiatives.



Achievements in 2024

Green-Campus Programme



Kate Raworth
Creator of Doughnut Economics

Notable Activities

- **Climate Action Week 2023:** Featured events like biodiversity walks, swap shops, permaculture gardening, and tree planting, fostering campus-wide engagement.
- **National Green Week 2024:** Seventeen campuses hosted events such as sustainable transport fairs, climate change workshops, and Green Week roadshows.
- **Green Campus Hospitals Meeting:** The September 2023 meeting highlighted sustainability efforts in hospitals, with 13 participating sites.
- **Green Campus Doughnut Economics Event 2024:** A World Café-style afternoon on how to shape Ireland's Future within Planetary Boundaries with special guest, global thought-leader Kate Raworth as its keynote speaker. She is the creator of Doughnut Economics, a model that balances human needs with planetary boundaries.

Above: Kate Raworth was keynote speaker at the Doughnut Economics event. Below is from Maynooth University's Green Week and bottom, Sligo University Hospital awarded their second Green Flag.





Achievements in 2024

Green-Campus Programme

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Green-Campus Programme directly contributes to multiple SDGs:

- **Goal 4: Quality Education:** By integrating environmental education into campus curricula.
- **Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy:** Through energy conservation and renewable energy initiatives.
- **Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities:** Promoting sustainable campus infrastructure and practices.
- **Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production:** Encouraging waste reduction and sustainable procurement.
- **Goal 13: Climate Action:** Supporting initiatives like tree planting and climate resilience projects.
- **Goal 15: Life on Land:** Enhancing biodiversity through habitat restoration and conservation efforts.

Vision for the Future

As the Green-Campus Programme continues to grow, it aims to:

- Expand participation to new campuses, including hospitals and colleges of further education.
- Launch the Greening Laboratories sub-theme to address sustainability in high-resource-use areas.
- Strengthen partnerships with national and international organisations to advance sustainability in higher education.

Through its collaborative and adaptive approach, the Green-Campus Programme remains a leader in transforming educational institutions into sustainable communities, driving meaningful environmental change at local and global levels.

TU Dublin was awarded its first Green Campus Flag in 2024





Achievements in 2024

Primary Climate Ambassadors Cultivating Young Climate Leaders



The Primary Climate Ambassadors Programme, launched as a pilot in 2022, is designed to introduce younger students to climate science, solutions, and advocacy. By engaging primary schools that have completed all Green-Schools themes, the programme inspires students to take the lead in their school communities.



St. Brigid's Girls' National School with their upcycled cape

Programme Overview

Primary Climate Ambassadors participate in challenges, training days, and collaborative projects that foster a deep understanding of climate issues.

The programme includes:

- **Climate Challenges:** Activities such as biodiversity restoration, renewable energy projects, and rainwater harvesting.
- **Teacher Training Seminars:** Equipping educators with resources and strategies to support student-led initiatives.
- **Avatar Competitions:** Creative exercises to encourage engagement and innovation among participants.

Achievements in 2024

Key Milestones

- **37 schools trained in climate science**, solutions, and communications.
- **50 climate challenges completed by students nationwide**, addressing issues like upcycling, composting, and biodiversity.
- The **Primary Climate Ambassador Awards**, held at Richmond Barracks, recognised outstanding achievements, with St. Brigid's Girls' National School, Dublin, awarded first place.

Impactful Engagement

Students showcased their creativity and leadership through:

- Rainwater harvesting projects and energy conservation initiatives.
- Community outreach campaigns that engaged local stakeholders in climate action.
- Sustainable Practices

The Primary Climate Ambassadors Programme promotes sustainability through:

- Encouraging hands-on projects that restore biodiversity and reduce waste.
- Empowering schools to adopt eco-friendly practices such as renewable energy usage.



Achievements in 2024

Primary Climate Ambassadors

Alignment with goals



Gráinne Ryan, An Taisce, with students representing St. Brigid's G.N.S. Palmerstown and their Green-Schools Coordinator Ms. Slaughter, who were awarded first place as Ireland's Primary Climate Ambassadors 2024 by Minister of State, Ossian Smyth

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This programme contributes to:

- **Goal 4:** Quality Education: Introducing climate science into primary education.
- **Goal 13:** Climate Action: Cultivating a generation of climate-conscious youth.
- **Goal 15:** Life on Land: Promoting biodiversity conservation through student-led projects.

Vision for the Future

Looking forward, the Primary Climate Ambassadors Programme aims to:

- Expand its reach to more schools across Ireland.
- Introduce new challenges that address emerging climate and sustainability issues.
- Foster deeper collaborations with local communities to maximise impact.

By empowering young students, this programme builds the foundation for long-term climate action and sustainability leadership.

Community & Society



The amazing Tomhaggard Clean Coasts group in Wexford

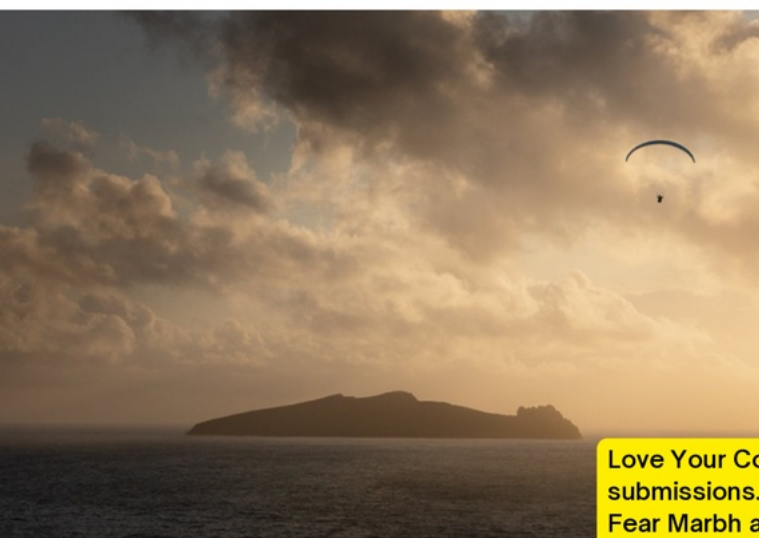


Achievements in 2024

Clean Coasts Programme: Championing Coastal Stewardship



The Clean Coasts Programme, spearheaded by An Taisce's Environmental Education Unit, stands as Ireland's premier initiative for protecting and preserving coastal and marine environments. Supported by the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage, as well as Fáilte Ireland, the programme engages communities across the country to safeguard the integrity of Ireland's coastlines and seas. Through a combination of volunteer initiatives, awards, and public awareness campaigns, Clean Coasts fosters a culture of environmental stewardship and active participation.



Love Your Coast Photo Competition attracted 1,297 submissions. Left: Overall winner: William Murphy - An Fear Marbh agus an Fear ag eitilt - Kerry
Right: Mark O'Leary - Compass Jellyfish, Clare

Programme Overview

The Clean Coasts programme is made up of two key elements:

Volunteer Engagement

At the heart of Clean Coasts lies its extensive volunteer network, encompassing over 2,500 registered groups and more than 45,000 individual volunteers.

These groups, ranging from community associations to schools and sports clubs, organise hundreds of clean-up initiatives each year, removing substantial amounts of marine litter from beaches and waterways. In 2024, Clean Coasts recorded its largest Big Beach Clean to date, with over 600 clean-ups and 95 tonnes of litter removed, engaging nearly 16,000 participants nationwide.

Green Coast Awards

The programme also includes the prestigious Green Coast Award, recognising beaches of exceptional environmental quality.

In 2024, 70 sites were awarded, including seven dual-award beaches that achieved both the Green Coast and Blue Flag distinctions, highlighting community and environmental excellence.

Key Campaigns

Clean Coasts integrates impactful campaigns to address specific environmental challenges:

#2MinuteBeachClean: Encourages individuals to dedicate two minutes to cleaning up litter during their beach visits. In 2024, the campaign reached over 7.5 million people and supported 88 bilingual cleaning stations across Ireland.

Think Before You Flush/Pour: Tackles the improper disposal of non-biodegradable waste into wastewater systems. Seasonal campaigns in 2024 included creative initiatives like "Oil I Want for Christmas" and reached over 11 million people nationally.





Achievements in 2024

Clean Coasts Programme



The success of the Big Beach Clean exemplified the programme's reach and effectiveness. In 2024, the event saw unprecedented participation, with over 600 clean-ups taking place across the country.

Achievements in 2024

The Clean Coasts Programme experienced a landmark year in 2024, with significant milestones in community engagement, environmental impact, and educational outreach. Each initiative underscored the programme's commitment to protecting Ireland's coastline while fostering a culture of environmental stewardship.

Community Engagement

Clean Coasts strengthened its volunteer network, solidifying its role as Ireland's largest coastal conservation programme. Over 2,500 groups registered with the initiative, representing a wide array of participants including community groups, schools, residents' associations, and sports clubs. Together, these groups engaged over 45,000 individuals in hands-on coastal protection.

Nearly 16,000 volunteers contributed their time and effort to remove 95 tonnes of litter from beaches and waterways—a record-breaking accomplishment. This massive collective effort not only improved the appearance and health of Ireland's coastal environment but also raised awareness about the need for sustained action against marine litter.

Educational Outreach

The programme's emphasis on education extended its impact beyond clean-ups, fostering greater understanding of marine conservation:

- **Roadshows:** Clean Coasts hosted 18 roadshows across Ireland, providing workshops and hands-on activities for coastal communities. These events reached a combined audience of 7.8 million, up significantly from 4.5 million in 2023. Roadshow activities included biodiversity talks, marram grass planting, and citizen science initiatives.
- **Water Safety Webinars for Schools:** A three-part webinar series organized in collaboration with Cork County Council reached 8,000 students, combining practical water safety advice with environmental education, including the importance of initiatives like the #2MinuteBeachClean campaign.
- **Youth Engagement:** Programmes like "Turtle Talks" workshops by Tomhaggard Clean Coasts in Wexford and biodiversity scavenger hunts by Friends of Rosstown in Donegal engaged schoolchildren and youth groups in interactive, educational activities.
- **Corporate Volunteering:** Clean Coasts partnered with businesses to host 21 corporate clean-ups and biodiversity workshops, directly engaging 3,788 individuals in stewardship actions.



Achievements in 2024

Clean Coasts Programme



Campaign Impact

The programme's core campaigns expanded their reach and influence in 2024



#2MinuteBeachClean: This flagship campaign encouraged individuals to dedicate just two minutes to cleaning litter during their beach visits. With a reach of 7.5 million (up from 7 million in 2023), the campaign provided bilingual cleaning stations at 88 beaches and distributed thousands of cleanup kits. Initiatives like the "Summer Swim Club" further integrated the campaign into recreational activities, creating opportunities for environmental engagement alongside leisure.

- **Think Before You Flush/Pour:** Tackling improper disposal of non-biodegradable waste, this campaign ran five national and 37 regional actions, achieving a combined audience reach of 11.4 million. Seasonal efforts like "Oil I Want for Christmas" brought creative messaging to public attention, while partnerships with schools and festivals amplified its impact.
- **Big Beach Clean:** The programme's largest citizen science project continued to grow, with data cards and entries via the Clean Swell App providing insights into marine litter. The 2024 event, supported by Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup, highlighted the global significance of local actions.



Achievements in 2024

Clean Coasts Programme



Clean Coasts runs awards like Ocean Heroes and Love Your Coast (left & below) and biodiversity projects such as Dune Habitat Restoration (above).



Award Ceremonies and Recognition

Clean Coasts celebrated the contributions of its volunteers and groups through high-profile award events:

- **Ocean Hero Awards:** Held in November 2024 at Dublin's Gibson Hotel, this event recognized 30 outstanding groups and individuals across six categories, including "Group of the Year" and "Campaigner of the Year." The event's reach grew to 19.7 million (up from 11.1 million in 2023) and featured recycled-plastic awards, emphasizing sustainability.
- **Love Your Coast Photography Competition:** Attracted 1,297 submissions showcasing Ireland's coastal beauty. The event's awards ceremony featured an exhibition and a partnership with the Irish Examiner to display winning photographs online and in print, reaching 22.7 million people.



Biodiversity and Habitat Restoration

Clean Coasts maintained its commitment to biodiversity through targeted restoration projects and awareness campaigns:

- **Dune Habitat Restoration:** Over 40 marram grass planting projects have been conducted since 2006, with efforts continuing in 2024 to combat coastal erosion and improve dune stability. A retrospective review of previous planting efforts demonstrated measurable improvements in coastal health, particularly at sites like Ballyheigue in County Kerry.
- **World Sand Dune Day:** Clean Coasts marked this annual event with workshops, guided nature walks, and invasive species removal activities, reaching 3.6 million people through its online campaign.
- **New Educational Resources:** Developed tools like biodiversity bingo, dune flora signage, and seashore mapping games to enhance understanding of coastal ecosystems.



Achievements in 2024

Clean Coasts: Alignment with goals



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- **Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being** - Removing litter reduces environmental toxins, improving ecosystems and human health. Initiatives like Coastal Ecotherapy promote mental and physical health through connection to nature.
- **Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities** - By organizing clean-ups and fostering community-led conservation, Clean Coasts builds stronger, more sustainable communities.
- **Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production** - Campaigns like Think Before You Flush/Pour emphasize sustainable practices, such as proper waste disposal and reduced plastic consumption.
- **Goal 13: Climate Action** - Advocacy for sustainable lifestyles and the removal of harmful waste contribute to mitigating environmental impacts.
- **Goal 14: Life Below Water** - Cleaning beaches and waterways directly protects marine ecosystems, reducing threats to biodiversity.
- **Goal 15: Life on Land** - Restoring dune habitats and preventing waste from entering ecosystems support broader biodiversity and land-based environmental health.
- **Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals** - Collaborations with local authorities, community groups, and NGOs amplify the programme's reach and effectiveness.



Vision for the Future

Looking ahead to 2025, Clean Coasts will focus on the theme of "Connection," aiming to deepen ties:

- Encouraging mindfulness and personal well-being through nature connection.
- Fostering collaboration among communities to overcome environmental challenges.
- Empowering groups to protect biodiversity through education and direct action.

With ambitious goals for expanding volunteer engagement, improving biodiversity awareness, and integrating innovative campaigns, Clean Coasts remains a cornerstone of environmental stewardship in Ireland, ensuring a cleaner, greener future for its coastlines and marine life.



Achievements in 2024

Blue Flag: Recognising Excellence in Ireland's Beaches and Marinas



The Blue Flag Award, administered in Ireland by An Taisce since 1993, is an internationally recognised standard for sustainable tourism development in marine and freshwater areas. Originating in 1987 under the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), the award celebrates beaches, marinas, and tourism boats that meet stringent criteria for water quality, environmental management, safety, and environmental education. With its roots in promoting sustainable practices, the Blue Flag programme has become a symbol of excellence in environmental stewardship and visitor engagement.



The Blue Flag and Green Coast Award presentation ceremony, was held at the Galway Bay hotel in Salthill in conjunction with Galway City Council on May 20th 2024

Programme Overview

The Blue Flag Award reflects Ireland's commitment to preserving its natural heritage while fostering sustainable tourism. Sites that achieve Blue Flag status demonstrate compliance with high standards in:

- **Water Quality:** Regular testing and compliance with EU Bathing Water Directives.
- **Environmental Management:** Implementation of sustainable practices to protect marine ecosystems.
- **Visitor Safety and Accessibility:** Providing accessible facilities and ensuring safety measures.
- **Environmental Education:** Informative displays about local biodiversity, habitats, and sustainability practices.

The award is highly sought after by local authorities and communities, driving improvements in environmental standards and fostering local pride.

Award Milestones

- 94 sites were awarded the Blue Flag in 2024, including 85 beaches and 9 marinas, representing 16 local authority areas.

Notable achievements included:

- Bettystown Beach in Meath receiving its first Blue Flag since 1996.
- Enniscrone in Sligo being awarded for the first time since 2014, following significant improvements in water quality.

Accessibility Initiatives

An Taisce collaborated with the Disability Federation of Ireland and international Blue Flag partners to improve accessibility at awarded sites. This included updates to criteria and practical measures to ensure beaches and marinas are welcoming to all visitors.



Achievements in 2024

Blue Flag: Alignment with goals



Training and Administration

An Taisce delivered training sessions to local authorities, guiding them through application and quality control processes.

- **106 in-season control visits** were conducted to ensure ongoing compliance with Blue Flag criteria. Reports were shared with local authorities to address any non-compliances.

Programme Impact

The awarded sites collectively welcomed over 2 million visitors during the summer season. Informational displays at Blue Flag locations educated the public on local flora, fauna, and sustainable practices, further connecting visitors to their environment.

Photo: Naoise Culhane Photography

Alignment with An Taisce's Mission and Pillars

The Blue Flag programme contributes to An Taisce's pillars of Community and Society, Climate and Biodiversity, and Land and Water by:

- Engaging communities in sustainable tourism development.
- Promoting the conservation of marine and coastal ecosystems.
- Enhancing public awareness of environmental issues through education and outreach.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Blue Flag programme supports key SDGs:

- Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation: Ensuring high water quality and safe bathing areas.
- Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities: Promoting sustainable tourism and community engagement.
- Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production: Encouraging waste reduction and sustainable management practices at sites.
- Goal 14: Life Below Water: Protecting marine ecosystems through rigorous environmental management.

Vision for the Future

As the Blue Flag programme continues to grow, An Taisce aims to:

- Expand the number of awarded sites, ensuring broader community involvement.
- Enhance accessibility and inclusivity at beaches and marinas.
- Advocate for international best practices in sustainable tourism through active participation in FEE's global network.

By recognising and supporting the highest environmental standards, the Blue Flag programme ensures that Ireland's beaches and marinas remain world-class destinations while fostering a deeper connection between people and their environment.



Achievements in 2024

Green Flag Award for Parks: Celebrating Excellence in Green Space Management



The Green Flag Award for Parks, coordinated in Ireland by An Taisce, stands as a globally recognised standard for exceptional public green spaces. Established in the UK in 1996, the programme has become an emblem of quality, sustainability, and community collaboration. Since its launch in Ireland in 2016, the Green Flag Award has fostered innovation and excellence in park management, ensuring that green spaces contribute meaningfully to both environmental health and public well-being.



Programme Overview

The Green Flag Award programme provides a framework for managing green spaces to the highest standards. It assesses parks and green spaces based on their ecological, social, and cultural contributions, offering recognition to sites that excel in sustainability, accessibility, and community engagement. An Taisce has continued to build momentum for the programme in Ireland, with 2024 marking a record-breaking year for participation and awards.

Key Developments

- The Community Flag, introduced in 2017 and funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, continued to empower local groups managing community spaces.
- The Heritage Flag, introduced in 2021 with support from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, recognized sites that conserve and showcase Ireland's unique historical and natural heritage.

2024's Green Flag Pollinator Plan Award overall winner: Tralee Bay Wetlands Eco & Activity Park in Kerry.
Photo: Domnick Walsh

Award Milestones

- Record Participation: 120 Green Flags were awarded this year, the highest number to date.

Community and Heritage Growth:

- 27 Community Flags were awarded, representing an increase of 8 from 2023.
- 13 Heritage Flags were awarded, celebrating spaces of historical and cultural significance.
- Global Recognition: Ireland now boasts the highest number of Green Flags awarded outside the UK, underscoring the programme's success.



Achievements in 2024

Green Flag Award for Parks: Alignment with goals



Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Green Flag Award programme supports several SDGs, reflecting its commitment to sustainability and community well-being:

- **Goal 3:** Good Health and Well-being: Providing quality green spaces that enhance physical and mental health.
- **Goal 15:** Life on Land: Promoting biodiversity through habitat protection and annual awards like the Pollinator Plan Award.
- **Goal 13:** Climate Action: Encouraging low-carbon management practices and climate-resilient planting.
- **Goal 17:** Partnership for the Goals: Collaborating with local authorities, community groups, and other stakeholders to achieve shared environmental objectives.

Alignment with An Taisce's Mission and Pillars

- **Community and Society** - The Community Flag initiative empowers local groups to protect and enhance their environments, fostering a sense of ownership and community pride.
- **Climate and Biodiversity** - The award promotes biodiversity-friendly practices, including indigenous planting and the elimination of chemical pesticides. The annual Pollinator Plan Award highlights projects that excel in enhancing habitats for pollinators.
- **Heritage** - Heritage Flags recognise spaces that preserve Ireland's historic landscapes and built heritage, showcasing their significance to future generations.
- **Land and Water** - The programme ensures equitable access to quality green spaces, promoting best practices in their management to meet community needs and enhance ecological health.
- **Organisational Growth** - By 2024, the programme partnered with 47 organisations managing green spaces across Ireland. These collaborations support knowledge-sharing and encourage continuous improvement.

Vision for the Future

Building on the success of 2024, the Green Flag Award programme aims to:

- Increase the number of awarded sites while maintaining high standards.
- Expand partnerships to include new organisations and community groups.
- Further integrate climate resilience and biodiversity enhancements into award criteria.
- Strengthen the recognition of Ireland's green spaces as exemplary models of sustainability and community engagement.

The Green Flag Award continues to inspire excellence in the management of parks and green spaces, creating healthier, greener, and more sustainable communities across Ireland.



Achievements in 2024

National Spring Clean: Ireland's Largest Anti-Litter Initiative



2024 marked the 25th edition of the National Spring Clean (NSC), reaffirming its status as Ireland's largest and most enduring anti-litter initiative. Since its inception in 1999, the campaign has inspired individuals, community groups, businesses, and schools across the country to take collective responsibility for the environment by organizing clean-ups in their local areas. Traditionally held in April, NSC has, in recent years, extended its scope into the summer and autumn months, reflecting the growing enthusiasm and commitment of its participants.



A Celebration of 25 Years

The 2024 edition of NSC not only reflected on the programme's enduring legacy but also highlighted its adaptability and growth. The campaign has continually evolved to meet the challenges of litter management in modern Ireland. Its embrace of digital tools, partnerships, and extended timelines underscores its commitment to sustainability and innovation.

Programme Overview

This year's campaign continued its legacy of success with remarkable levels of engagement and impact. Registrations opened in late January, with campaign packs distributed from February. Clean-ups began in March, peaked in April, and continued well into May, with several extending through the summer.

The campaign concluded in September with a collaborative effort alongside An Taisce's Clean Coasts' Big Beach Clean. This innovative partnership emphasized the interconnectedness of land and marine ecosystems, reinforcing the message that all litter collected on land helps protect our waterways and seas.

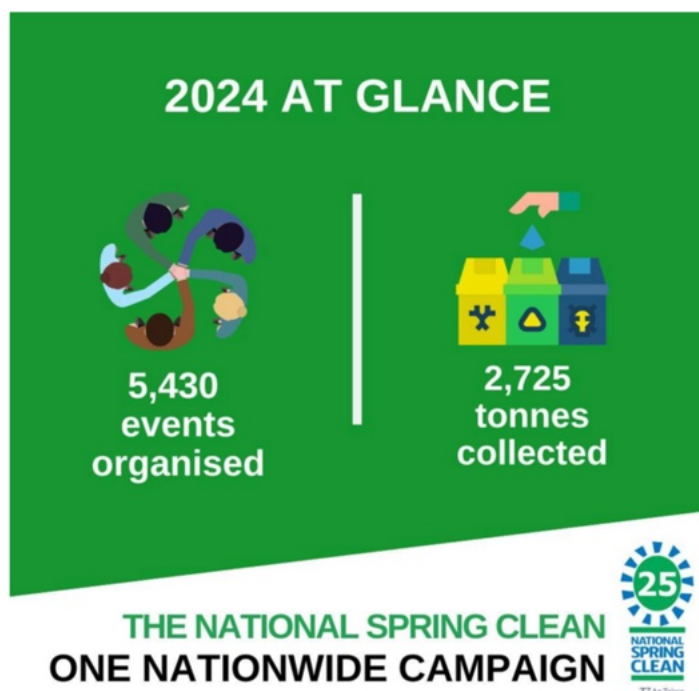
Milestones

- The primary aims of the 2024 National Spring Clean were to foster a culture of environmental responsibility, promote the principles of reduce-reuse-recycle, and build community spirit through collective action. Specifically, the campaign sought to:
- Encourage clean-ups throughout the spring, summer, and autumn months.
- Promote personal responsibility for litter prevention.
- Heighten awareness of litter and waste management issues.
- Highlight the importance of recycling and reusing materials.
- Foster a sense of community through local environmental initiatives.
- Ensure clean-ups were conducted safely and sustainably.
- The campaign achieved these objectives, engaging 5,430 volunteer groups nationwide who collectively removed an estimated 2,725 tonnes of litter. Notably, approximately 35% of the collected waste was recycled, showcasing the campaign's alignment with broader environmental sustainability goals.



Achievements in 2024

National Spring Clean: Alignment with goals



Key Developments

- **Volunteer Engagement:** Over 5,430 groups participated, representing communities across Ireland.
- **Litter Removal:** Approximately 2,725 tonnes of litter were collected, significantly improving the cleanliness and appearance of urban and rural areas.
- **Recycling and Sustainability:** Of the waste collected, 35% was recycled. The campaign also maintained its commitment to paper-free operations, with all materials (e.g., bags and hi-vis vests) designed for reuse and produced sustainably using recycled materials.
- **Extended Campaign Duration:** While the core activity occurred in spring, the campaign extended into summer and concluded with a high-impact cross-programme collaboration in September during the Big Beach Clean.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The impact of the National Spring Clean extends beyond the immediate removal of litter. The programme is intrinsically linked to several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including:

- **Goal 3 – Good Health and Well-being:** Removing long-term litter prevents the release of toxins that harm ecosystems and human health.
- **Goal 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities:** By mobilizing local communities to take action, the campaign fosters a sense of ownership and pride in shared spaces.
- **Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production:** The programme emphasizes reducing waste, reusing materials, and recycling wherever possible.
- **Goal 13 – Climate Action:** Facilitating recycling and reducing waste helps mitigate the environmental impacts of litter.
- **Goal 14 – Life Below Water:** The campaign prevents litter from reaching waterways and seas, reducing pollution and protecting marine biodiversity.
- **Goal 15 – Life on Land:** Removing litter protects terrestrial habitats and prevents harm to flora and fauna.

Alignment with An Taisce's Mission and Pillars

- **Community and Society:** By bringing people together for a common cause, NSC strengthens social cohesion and builds a network of environmentally conscious citizens.
- **Climate and Biodiversity:** Litter removal protects biodiversity by preventing toxins, habitat damage, and ingestion of waste by wildlife. Actions on land also safeguard marine ecosystems by stopping litter from entering waterways.
- **Heritage Preservation:** Clean towns and countryside enhance Ireland's built heritage and natural landscapes, promoting pride and respect for shared spaces.
- **Land and Water:** The campaign improves the appearance of both urban and rural environments, contributing to a cleaner and greener Ireland.

Vision for the Future

As NSC moves into its 26th year, the programme remains a vital force for environmental stewardship in Ireland. Its combination of grassroots engagement and sustainability practices are core to its ability to promote systemic change.



Achievements in 2024

Climate Ambassador Programme: Empowering Climate Leadership



The Climate Ambassador Programme, an integral initiative of An Taisce's Climate Action Team, inspires and equips individuals across Ireland to lead on climate action within their communities. Launched in 2018, the programme has trained hundreds of ambassadors to address the climate crisis through education, advocacy, and practical solutions. In 2024, the programme reached new milestones in training, engagement, and awareness.



Some of the Climate Ambassador Team during 2024's Climate Action Week for the Bike Disco event.

Programme Overview

The Programme focuses on cultivating climate literacy and empowering participants to take meaningful action. It provides training, resources, and platforms for ambassadors to share knowledge, organise events, and engage with their communities.

- **Regional Training Days:** Interactive sessions to equip ambassadors with skills and knowledge.
- **Network Gatherings:** Opportunities for collaboration and idea exchange.
- **Climate Clinics:** Community-oriented workshops addressing local climate challenges.
- **Citizen Engagement Events:** Public discussions and forums to foster climate dialogue.

The programme emphasises inclusivity, accessibility, and a focus on solutions, ensuring ambassadors are well-prepared to lead climate action at every level.

Milestones

Training and Network Gatherings

Hosted five regional training days in Dublin, Cork, and Galway, and two online sessions. A total of 148 ambassadors received training, covering topics such as climate science, solutions, and effective communication. These training sessions emphasised practical actions, empowering participants to deliver impactful initiatives in their communities.

Network gatherings served as hubs of collaboration and learning. Across 14 in-person gatherings and 10 virtual events, participants shared experiences and strategies for climate action. Notable gatherings included:

- **Peatland Restoration in Wicklow:** Volunteers engaged in hands-on conservation activities.
- **Seaweed Foraging in Cork:** Participants explored sustainable marine practices.
- **Indigenous Voices in Dublin:** Highlighted the intersection of indigenous knowledge and climate action.



Achievements in 2024

Climate Ambassador Programme



Public Engagement and Climate Clinics

Ambassadors organised over 57 climate clinics and attended 17 citizen engagement events nationwide. These forums provided opportunities for community members to learn about climate issues and participate in solutions-focused discussions. Events like the Galway Climate Festival and Macroom Food Festival drew significant public interest, further expanding the programme's reach.

Award-Winning Projects

The Climate Ambassador Awards celebrated exemplary projects, including the efforts of Kurt Reinhart from Mayo, who transformed Connacht GAA into a model of sustainability. His initiatives included planting 10,000 trees, banning single-use plastics, and installing solar panels, exemplifying how sports organizations can champion climate action.

Seaweed Foraging in Cork



Climate Literacy Initiatives

- The programme complements its ambassadorial efforts with a robust focus on education:
- **Primary Climate Ambassadors:** This initiative engaged over 1,000 primary school students in 2024 through challenges like biodiversity projects, renewable energy exploration, and upcycling. The annual awards recognized outstanding contributions from schools nationwide.
- **Teacher Training:** The “Climate Change, Science and Action” course equipped 28 teachers with strategies to integrate climate science into their curricula, empowering educators to inspire climate-conscious students.

Media and Communications

- The Climate Ambassador Podcast entered its fourth season, covering a range of topics from biodiversity to renewable energy. With over 3,250 downloads in 2024, the podcast has become a key platform for climate discussions, reaching audiences through engaging stories and expert insights.
- Social media played a vital role in amplifying the programme's impact, with Facebook and Instagram campaigns reaching tens of thousands of users. These efforts fostered public engagement and expanded the programme's visibility.



Achievements in 2024

Climate Ambassador Programme



The Climate Ambassador Awards 2024

From L to R: Gráinne Ryan, Climate Action Programme Manager. Sharmila Bano, Liam Coyle, Hannah Gilligan, Trevor Seery, Ruth Barron, Eddie Bradley, Rachel Smyth, Dana Manlagnit. Conor Anderson, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications. Sarah Bennett. Credit: Conor Healy/Picture It Photography

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The programme aligns closely with several SDGs:

- **Goal 13:** Climate Action: Building leadership and advocacy skills to address climate challenges.
- **Goal 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities: Empowering communities to implement sustainable solutions.
- **Goal 15:** Life on Land: Supporting conservation projects to protect biodiversity.

Vision for the Future

The Climate Ambassador Programme will continue to expand its impact by:

- Increasing engagement through enhanced training and community events.
- Strengthening partnerships with local authorities, NGOs, and community groups.
- Advocating for systemic climate action at local, national, and international levels.
- Through its comprehensive approach, the programme remains at the forefront of cultivating climate leadership across Ireland.



Achievements in 2024

Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL): Driving a Cleaner Ireland

ibal
Irish Business
Against Litter



The Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) Programme, operated by An Taisce, continues to be a cornerstone in Ireland's fight against litter pollution. For over 20 years, An Taisce has conducted comprehensive surveys and delivered results that not only highlight litter trends but also foster greater accountability and community engagement.



Cleaner Communities:

Over 60% of towns and cities surveyed were deemed 'clean' by European standards, with Naas (pictured) finishing at the top of the rankings for the third time in four years.

Programme Overview

IBAL surveys are conducted twice annually, covering 40 towns and cities nationwide and assessing over 1,000 sites. While there is a rotation of towns included in the surveys, the methodology remains consistent, offering a general impression of litter presence rather than detailed counts.

By spotlighting problem areas and celebrating clean communities, the programme has become an essential driver for change, leveraging competitive spirit and public awareness to encourage cleaner environments.

Milestones — Community and Legislative Influence

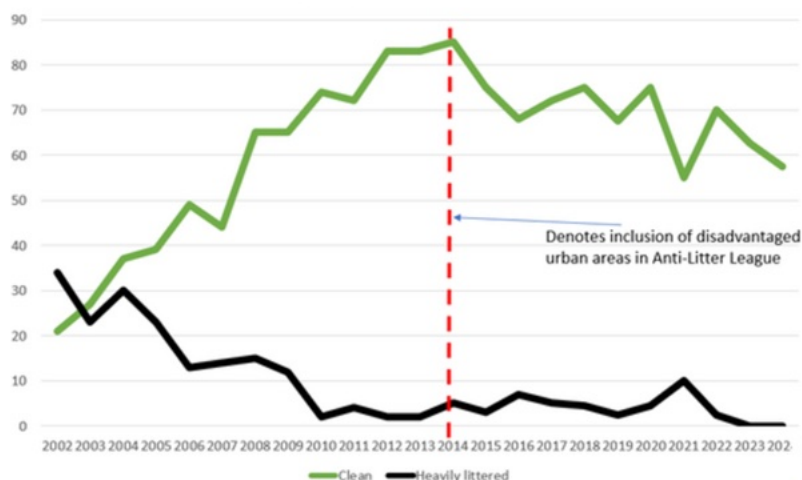
- As the programme has evolved, IBAL has gained increased support from local authorities and community groups, such as Tidy Towns initiatives, signaling a shift in public perception. What was once met with resistance has now become a point of pride for participating towns and cities. The programme's competitive nature motivates communities to improve their rankings, fostering grassroots engagement and stronger community ties.
- IBAL has also been instrumental in advocating for policy changes to address litter issues at their source. In addition to pushing for the latte levy and the expansion of the Deposit Return Scheme to include alcohol bottles, the programme has been pivotal in influencing local and national legislation aimed at reducing single-use plastics and improving waste management practices.



Achievements in 2024

Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL): Alignment with goals

2002-2023: Clean vs Littered towns



IBAL surveys are conducted twice annually, covering 40 towns and cities nationwide and assessing over 1,000 sites.

Source: IBAL Anti-Litter League



Alignment with An Taisce's Mission and Pillars

IBAL aligns with An Taisce's strategic objectives, particularly within the Land and Water theme. By targeting urban and suburban areas, the programme directly improves the quality of Ireland's built and natural environments.

Additionally, IBAL fosters community engagement, inspiring citizens to take ownership of their local spaces and work collaboratively towards cleaner, healthier towns and cities.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

As an SDG Champion, An Taisce integrates IBAL with several SDGs:

- Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation: By reducing litter, IBAL prevents pollution in waterways, protecting aquatic ecosystems and water quality.
- Goal 14: Life Below Water: The programme mitigates marine litter, safeguarding marine biodiversity and ecosystems.
- Goal 15: Life on Land: Litter-free environments contribute to healthier terrestrial ecosystems and enhance biodiversity.

Vision for the Future

Looking ahead, IBAL aims to:

- Continue advocating for legislative measures to further reduce litter, including the introduction of the latte levy and expanding the Deposit Return Scheme.
- Strengthen community partnerships, ensuring greater buy-in from local groups and authorities.
- Through its surveys, policy advocacy, and community engagement, IBAL remains a powerful force in shaping a cleaner, greener Ireland, where towns and cities can thrive without the blight of litter.



Achievements in 2024

Local Associations: Empowering Communities for Environmental and Heritage Advocacy

An Taisce's Local Associations play an integral role in advancing the organisation's mission at a grassroots level. These groups are embedded in communities across Ireland, addressing local environmental and heritage issues while contributing to national initiatives. The following pages include some of the activities sent in by the groups. Associations are located in Clare, Cork, Donegal, Dun Laoghaire, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick, Meath and Tipperary.

Overview

Local Associations engage in a variety of activities, including:

- **Planning Advocacy:** Reviewing and submitting recommendations on local planning and development proposals to protect heritage and biodiversity.
- **Community Engagement:** Organising events for National Biodiversity Week, Heritage Week, and other key occasions.
- **Heritage Conservation:** Collaborating with local authorities and stakeholders to maintain and restore cultural and natural heritage sites.
- **Educational Programmes:** Hosting field trips, guided walks, and biodiversity workshops for schools and the wider community.

These efforts are amplified by collaboration with local councils, community organisations, and government bodies, ensuring that environmental and heritage priorities are represented across all levels of decision-making.



Guided Walk – Malin Head - Influence of Water on its Environment and Culture.

Donegal Local Association

The Donegal Association has delivered impactful projects this year, focusing on biodiversity, education, and community engagement:

Biodiversity and Education Projects:

- Delivered the River Lennon Wildlife Corridor Project, funded by LAWPRO, to four national schools. Activities included water quality testing, macroinvertebrate identification, and riparian habitat studies, engaging 80 pupils and six teachers. This initiative fostered a deeper understanding of the links between land use, biodiversity, and water quality.

Heritage Week Guided Walks:

Organised two guided walks:

- Merville's Marine Heritage and Seashore Safari: Explored the area's unique marine biodiversity, attracting 36 attendees.
- Malin Head – Influence of Water on Its Environment and Culture: Despite torrential rain, this walk highlighted the interplay between natural and cultural heritage.

Biodiversity Events:

- Hosted a wildflower and butterfly walk at Sheskinmore, Donegal's leading butterfly site, in collaboration with local NPWS staff and Friends of Sheskinmore.
- Continued maintenance of the May McClintock Butterfly Garden in Letterkenny and sponsored the May McClintock Wildlife Friendly Garden Competition.

Heritage and Publications:

- Produced the Treasures of Donegal 2025 Calendar, featuring landscapes and species, with educational descriptions for each month.
- Actively participated in the development of Donegal's Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030, making substantial contributions during pre-draft consultations.



Achievements in 2024

Local Associations

Clare Local Association

The Clare Association continues to champion biodiversity and heritage conservation despite challenges in volunteer recruitment:

Events and Collaborations:

- Organised a Biodiversity Week Field Trip to the Burren and a Bat Meeting during Heritage Week, engaging local volunteers and NGOs such as Shannon Wetland.
- Expanded community outreach through newsletters and appeals for volunteer participation in initiatives such as KULYANA, focusing on climate change advocacy.
- Volunteer Engagement:
- Despite difficulties in recruiting new members, the association maintained its annual programme, showcasing resilience and commitment to its objectives.

Cork Local Association

The association continues to monitor planning and development matters in Cork City.

The UCC Planning Society's annual conference in April, organised by the UCC Centre for Planning Education and Research was a very informative day. Presentations included: Sustainable Futures and the National Planning Framework; Compact Growth Strategies in Planning; the Cork Docklands Development Framework; and planning for green and blue infrastructure in cities.

An Integrated Urban Strategy for the historic Shandon area of Cork City is underway, with a view to its revitalisation. This heritage and community-led study is being carried out under the Government's Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme (THRIVE). It is co-funded by the Government and the European Union through the Southern, Eastern and Midland Regional Programme 2021-2027, in line with the guidance set out in the "Town Centre First Approach for Irish Towns" and the THRIVE guidelines. A detailed submission to Cork City Council was jointly drafted by Kevin Duff, An Taisce Advocacy and An Taisce Corcaigh.

We noted the significant potential of an area which contains several landmark buildings within an architecturally rich urban fabric. However, the area has become run down and dominated by cars. While it is a designated architectural conservation area which has seen some individual refurbishment projects, this has not led to an appreciable improvement in the overall condition of the area. Inappropriate materials and poorly designed shopfronts dominate, and important building fabric has been lost. We recommended the development of a "conservation culture", a high-quality public realm treatment and mitigation of the significant adverse effects from traffic.

Significant planning issues in 2024 included:

Successfully challenged design of apartment building adjacent to the classical-style St. Mary's Dominican Church on Popes Quay
Adjustments to planning a largely satisfactory outcome at this visually sensitive location.

Concerns raised over proposed conversion into residential use of two significant listed properties at the junction of Castle Street and Paradise Place/South Main Street, in the oldest part of the city. These buildings are mainly mid-19th century and incorporate the Catholic Young Men's Society Hall, an impressive gothic revival hall with a significant social history. Application refused due to the inadequate approach. The council's own conservation reports were particularly thorough. The applicant has appealed to An Bord Pleanála.

Challenged design of a large hotel on the corner of MacCurtain Street and Brian Boru Street on the former Coliseum site. A hotel was granted permission in 2020 incorporating the protected façade of the mid-20th century postal sorting office on Brian Boru Street. The new proposal is a very banal generic design which would have an adverse impact on the adjacent historic streetscapes. City Council has recently requested a complete redesign of the proposed building for these and related reasons.

Sought protections for all NIAH-listed heritage and built structures for Georgian Dunkettle House lands in planning of the Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) of 550 houses
While welcoming much needed housing development, Cork City Development Plan aims to protecting and enhancing the heritage. Application is under consideration.



Local Associations

Cork Local Association continued:

Finally, of note is the planned upgrading work on two 18th century houses on George's Quay, currently in poor condition. An important pair of early 19th century protected Georgian houses at 60/61 Shandon Street near North Gate Bridge are also due for refurbishment, with retention of significant internal features.

Various premises in the city centre streets have similarly been identified for apartment conversion in the last year or two. The interior features of many of these buildings have been lost over the decades but the sensitive restoration of external features is largely being achieved. With some reservations on conservation practices, this is a welcome trend as the city has a significant stock of old buildings that could be upgraded for living purposes in an architecturally sensitive way.



Dun Laoghaire Local Association

Despite freezing temperatures in January, a group of dedicated birders gathered at Booterstown Marsh to observe overwintering birds. With the incoming tide, there was plenty to see.

In April, 16 volunteers participated in our Spring Clean, collecting 12 sacks of rubbish and planting 30 native trees. The effort was rewarded with tea and cake afterward.

May marked the beginning of Year 2 of the Borrer's Saltmarsh Grass (*Puccinellia fasciculata*) Habitat Amelioration Project, led by Catriona Brady and her team. Three test sites were opened for summer surveys, but due to high water levels, the grass did not appear in the marsh. Plans for 2025 include surveying the perimeter and islands by boat, as the species may be present there. However, its spread to Blackrock Park is an encouraging development.

To celebrate National Biodiversity Week, a large group gathered at the viewing area on a warm, sunny Sunday in late May. After an introduction to the history of the marsh, Sean Hogan discussed the bird species that frequent the area (photo).

While many overwintering birds had already departed for breeding grounds, attendees observed godwits, ducks, starlings, crows, swallows, a sparrowhawk, and more. A rare migrant, a Ruff, was also spotted, though it lacked its characteristic Elizabethan-style ruff.

Botanist Catriona Brady led a walk along the marsh's muddy western path to explore its plant life. She identified Sea Spurrey (*Spergularia marina*), a pink-flowering species not previously recorded at this location, growing on cleared tracts within the project site.

Also abundant were Borrer's Saltmarsh Grass (*Puccinellia maritima*), the edible Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritima*), and the striking Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*). Additionally, three small stands of the invasive *Spartina anglica* (Cord Grass) were found on the marsh's margin, and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has agreed to fund its eradication.

Our Autumn Clean-up on October 13th saw 21 volunteers collect 11 sacks of rubbish, along with larger items such as a shopping trolley, an office chair, bicycle wheels, and plastic containers. Volunteers also planted hawthorn and holly trees to enhance the bank near the DART car park. While tents had been occupying areas near the marsh, they have now been removed.

The land north of the marsh is currently for sale, and public acquisition would be a significant environmental benefit. Although we no longer have a dedicated planning committee, a successful submission was made regarding a property within the Monkstown Architectural Conservation Area (ACA).



Achievements in 2024

Local Associations



Limerick Local Association

The Limerick Association has been at the forefront of planning and biodiversity advocacy in 2024, contributing to both local and regional initiatives:

Planning Advocacy:

- Submitted comprehensive recommendations on the Arthur's Quay Framework, one of the largest riverside development projects in the region. The submission highlighted concerns around biodiversity loss, public access, and the preservation of 120 trees in Arthur's Quay Park.
- Provided detailed input on Nicholas Street, where an enforcement case regarding an illegal structure is ongoing. The association continues to advocate for the reinstatement of the building's original hipped roof.
- Submitted recommendations for the Limerick Noise Action Plan 2024-2028, focusing on transport, biodiversity, and air quality, alongside climate action measures.
- Engaged with the Limerick Biodiversity Framework, submitting proposals on tree coverage, wildlife corridors, wetlands, and invasive species management.

Heritage and Built Environment:

- Advocated for the preservation of Fernbank House, part of the historic Cleeves site, in discussions with LCCC and development stakeholders.
- Submitted objections to the redevelopment of 11/12 Clontarf Place, ensuring the retention of historic elements in the heart of the city.

Community Engagement:

- Supported biodiversity enhancements in collaboration with Limerick Tidy Towns, focusing on pollinator-friendly planting and tree preservation.
- Participated in public consultations and community forums, including surveys on the night-time economy and urban safety in Limerick City.

Kilkenny Local Association

Kilkenny's Local Association has been a leading voice in planning, biodiversity, and heritage advocacy:

Planning Submissions:

- Addressed proposals for major developments, including hotels, retail spaces, and with sustainable development and heritage preservation principles.
- Advocated for improvements at the Dean Hotel, Hebron House, and Pudding Lane, engaging An Bord Pleanála on these significant projects.
- Submitted concerns regarding the protected 19th-century gable wall at the old mart site, pushing for its incorporation into a new structure that respects the site's historical significance.

Biodiversity Advocacy:

- Actively contributed to the Kilkenny Biodiversity Action Plan, participating in its working group and submitting detailed recommendations during consultations.
- Hosted a biodiversity-focused field trip to Jenkinstown Woods, highlighting the ecological and historical importance of the estate and its surroundings.

Heritage Collaboration:

- Welcomed international collaboration through a visit from the Deputy Head of Mission of the German Embassy, fostering dialogue on shared environmental and heritage goals.





Achievements in 2024

Local Associations



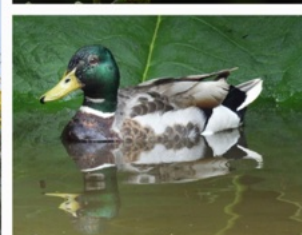
Meath Local Association Report

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place on May Day at Dalgan Park, Navan. Following the meeting, new committee member Aisling Killilea took on the role of social media coordinator and established the association's Instagram page: @antaiscemeathlocalassociation.

Our first social outing of the year was to Hamwood House, Dunboyne, thanks to the generosity of Charles Hamilton. Dating back to 1746, the house features stunning 19th-century pine-lined corridors, tiled floors, and many watercolours painted by Eva and Letitia Hamilton in the early 20th century. After lunch, we explored pathways lined with azaleas, camellias, rhododendrons, and old scented roses.

In June, we visited Barmeath Castle, which overlooks Dundalk Bay and has been home to the Bellew family since the 1670s. The castle, originally a late medieval tower house, was transformed into a neo-Norman residence in 1830 by architect Thomas Smith. The gardens, designed in the 1740s by Thomas Wright, include a lake, walled gardens, a rustic rock bridge, and sculptures.

July brought two memorable visits. The first was to Swainstown House, Kilmessan, courtesy of the Preston family. Built around 1750 by Nathaniel Preston, brother of John Preston of Bellinter House, this Palladian-style home features a seven-bay centre block with two wings. Caroline Preston, author of *This Tumult*, guided us through the property before we explored the adjoining pesticide-free farm and enjoyed coffee at the farm shop. Later in the month, we visited Hardymount Gardens, where the McKee family welcomed us with coffee and homemade cakes before leading a tour of the 2.5-acre secluded garden.



The estate boasts one of Ireland's largest Spanish chestnut trees and many unusual plants, including lilac-coloured *Erysimum* and heritage roses. The visit concluded with a trip to Altamont Gardens, a 16-hectare estate gifted to the state by Mrs. Corona North and now managed by the OPW. Designed by Irish gardener William Robinson, the gardens blend seamlessly with the natural environment, featuring lawns with rare trees, moulded yews, and ancient oaks over 500 years old. The walk led us to the Slaney River, where stunning water lilies provide shelter for fish and wildlife.

For Heritage Week, we visited Lisnawully Farm, Dundalk, thanks to Sally Cox. The site features a ringfort with three standing stones, reputed to be the graves of Cúchulainn, his wife, and son. Daragh Smyth, author of *A Guide to Irish Mythology* and *Cúchulainn: An Iron Age Hero*, spoke about the legendary warrior, followed by archaeologist Aoibheann Lambe's discussion on the ancient open-air rock carvings found on the farm. Visitors also had the opportunity to view the farm's recently discovered ice house, making it number 103 recorded in Ireland. The event was well attended, thanks to promotion on the National Heritage Week website.

The year concluded with a Christmas celebration at Teltown House, where the Clarke family hosted a festive lunch. Following the meal, Timothy Smyth provided an overview of recent planning designs and changes to the streetscapes of Kells.



Achievements in 2024

Local Associations

Meath Local Association continued:

Ongoing Projects and Representation

Karen Mahon continues to represent our local association on the Meath Environmental Network.

Boyne Navigation and Greenway

Geoffrey Clarke represents us on the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland Boyne Navigation Branch. Through this collaboration, efforts to preserve different sections of the navigation continue while awaiting further public consultation on the Option Selection Report for the Boyne Greenway project. The greenway, planned along the Boyne Navigation Towpath from Drogheda to Navan, is expected to progress, with a report from Meath County Council promised for early 2025.

Geoffrey was also involved in Meath County Council's planning application for the redevelopment of the Spicers Bakery site in Navan, along with an adjacent property. Planning permission was granted by An Bord Pleanála in March 2025. Phase 1 of the project will introduce a public amenity area and an extension to the Ramparts Car Park, as well as remove existing boundary walls and old industrial buildings.

These changes will open up views of the Boyne Navigation Canal Basin, creating a natural terminus for the Boyne Greenway in Navan and enhancing public access to the Ramparts walk.



Babe's Bridge

The last remaining arch of Babe's Bridge (see before and after above) has been successfully restored thanks to funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage and the Community Monuments Fund.

This achievement was the result of dedicated campaigning by James Leahy and Geoffrey Clarke. During Heritage Week, James spoke about the restoration efforts. Further funding is now being sought to install signage with historical and interpretative information about the bridge and its restoration.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The work of Local Associations contributes significantly to achieving key SDGs:

- **Goal 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities: Promoting sustainable urban and rural planning and preserving local heritage.
- **Goal 13:** Climate Action: Supporting initiatives that mitigate climate impacts at the community level.
- **Goal 15:** Life on Land: Protecting biodiversity through habitat creation, species monitoring, and advocacy.

Vision for the Future

An Taisce's Local Associations aim to:

- Strengthen volunteer engagement to expand their reach and capacity.
- Collaborate more deeply with local councils, government agencies, and other stakeholders to amplify their impact.
- Develop new projects and educational programmes that address emerging environmental and heritage challenges.

Local Associations represent the grassroots strength of An Taisce, empowering communities to take action for the environment and heritage. Their collective achievements and continued dedication ensure that local perspectives drive national progress on sustainability and conservation.

European Union Projects





Achievements in 2024

EU Projects: partnerships & collaborations

An Taisce has long had partnerships and collaborations across the EU. It continues to play important roles in EU projects aligning with its core mission and values. These projects build on and overlap with the work of the programmes in An Taisce.



Free LitterAT

— INTERREG Atlantic Area EU project

Free LitterAT is an INTERREG Atlantic Area project aimed at advancing towards litter-free Atlantic coastlines, by utilising knowledge, tools, technology, and engaging stakeholders in litter prevention, recording, and removal. An Taisce's Clean Coasts are involved in marine litter prevention by improving waste management and recycling in Atlantic ports and coastal cities with a specific focus on fishing-related waste.



BCORE21

— Erasmus+ education partnership EU Project

The BCORE21 project is pioneering a unique three-step methodology to foster grassroots innovation in education through leveraging collective expertise. Including Green-Schools, there are five partner organisations from across Europe. The project features a commitment to future-proof education, making learning relevant, accessible, impactful, and engaging for young learners aged 5 to 18 from diverse backgrounds.



BioBeo

— EU circular bioeconomy education project

An Taisce's Green Schools Biodiversity team are part of the BioBeo project, a two and a half-year EU Horizon project with 15 partners in countries all around Europe. BioBeo will provide better coordination between bio-science and education in schools by developing the Circular Economy Science-Society message with a particular focus on circular lifestyle and behaviours, and a governance framework on society-wide engagement in bioeconomy policy.



as New European
Bauhaus Labs

NEB-LAB Eco²Schools

— Erasmus+ partnership EU Project

Eco² Schools as New European Bauhaus Labs (NEB-LAB) is a partnership between five eco-renovation educational building projects across the EU in Sweden, Portugal, Germany, France, Greece and UCC in Ireland. An Taisce is one of the partners and coordinates communications. The sites develop replicable climate action plans to be transformed into innovation hubs in their communities.



SUST-HEIn

— partnership EU Project

Green Campus is a partner in the Sust-HEIn project. It aims to elevate the transition of Higher Education Institutions to green, sustainable organisations, by fostering the whole-institution approach to sustainability through systems thinking. It will identify, develop, test and assess the whole institution approach to sustainability through systems thinking in the Higher Education sector, which responds to the key European priorities of the European Green Deal

Board & Committee Profiles



Puffin
photo by Gustavo Zoladz



Board and Committee Profiles 2024

The Board

The Board of Trustees is responsible for managing An Taisce's activities and resources. Members of the Board are elected by the Council and serve on a voluntary basis.

Key responsibilities include:

- Setting the organisation's strategic direction in consultation with the Council.
- Ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Overseeing operational performance and financial management.

Stuart McCaul, **Chair**

Stuart is a senior executive in the business technology sector who is deeply committed to sustainability. He was appointed as a trustee and secretary of An Taisce in 2019 and elected Chair in 2023. He is currently convening our Planning Committee. Stuart holds a Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law from King's Inns and an MBA from Hult Ashridge.

Patricia O'Connell, **Vice Chair**

Trish, a commercial leader in telecommunications, possesses extensive national and international business experience and a passion for architecture and built heritage. She was appointed as a trustee and Vice Chair of An Taisce in 2019 and played a leadership role on our Properties Committee. She earned a Master in Historical House Studies from Maynooth University and a Diploma in Equality Studies from UCD.

Laura Segura Gutierrez, **Secretary**

Appointed January 2024

Laura is an experienced Project Management (PMP) certified Programme Manager with a diverse background managing large-scale, global strategic initiatives across industries. Appointed Secretary of An Taisce in January, she holds a BA in Fine Arts, a MA in Education and an MBA from TCD.

John Conroy, **Treasurer**

John is a Chartered Accountant with a decade's experience as a Financial Controller in industry and a keen interest in the history of our built heritage. He was appointed Treasurer in 2023, having previously served on our Audit & Finance Committee, which he now leads. He holds a Master of Accounting from UCD and is an Associate Chartered Accountant with Chartered Accountants Ireland.

Olivia Rogers

Olivia serves as the Head of Governance & Compliance and Client Services Manager at a financial advisory firm. Appointed a trustee of An Taisce in 2019, she leads our compliance efforts with the Charities Regulator. She is a Chartered Banker and holds a Management Diploma in Governance and Compliance and an MBA from Manchester Business School.

Rónán O'Brien

Rónán is an accomplished communications and public affairs professional with extensive experience in government relations, and corporate and crisis communications. Appointed a trustee of An Taisce in 2021, he holds an MSc in Climate Change from DCU, a Diploma in Legal Studies from TUD, and a BA in History and Politics from UCD.

Finbarr Murray

Finbarr, a corporate services specialist and current Director of Corporate Affairs at Rehab, has diverse experience in the health, government, banking, retail, and voluntary sectors globally. He was appointed a trustee of An Taisce in 2022 and leads our Properties Committee. He earned a Master of Facilities Management from the University of Salford.

Company Secretary —

Stuart McCaul: Resigned 25 January 2024

Laura Segura Gutierrez: Appointed 25 January 2024



Board and Committee Profiles 2024

The Board

Sinéad Mercier

Appointed February 2024

Resigned December 2024

Sinéad is a lawyer, PhD researcher, and author focusing on climate and environmental law and policy, with an emphasis on just transition and human rights.

Appointed a trustee of An Taisce in February after being elected to the Council in 2023, she now leads our Cultural Heritage Committee. She holds an LLM from the London School of Economics and a Diploma in Gender and Human Rights from NUIG.

Terri Morrissey

Appointed February 2024

Terri, an author, lecturer, and award-winning organisation development & coaching professional with a background in business psychology, was appointed a trustee of An Taisce in February and now leads our Climate Committee.

She holds a degree in Psychology from UCD, an MBA from Fordham University New York, and a Diploma in Business & Executive Coaching from the Michael Smurfit School of Business.

Dr Tony Holohan

Appointed November 2024

Dr Tony Holohan serves both as an Adjunct Full Professor of Public Health and Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre on One Health in University College Dublin (UCD). He was awarded an Adjunct Full Professorship in the School of Public Health and Primary Care in Trinity College Dublin in March 2024. He's chair of the governance committee of FutureNeuro, and is a board member of the Irish Hospice Foundation. He works with the WHO on a number of projects at the European level.

He is also a member of the EU Advisory Committee on Public Health Emergencies. He is a consultant in public health with the National Cancer Control Programme. Dr Holohan served as Ireland's Chief Medical Officer from 2008-2022 and led the public health response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Board consists of up to 11 members, including the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and other trustees, bringing expertise from various fields such as conservation, law, and public health

Helen Shaw

Appointed February 2024

Helen is a communications expert and leads her company Athena Media, an award-winning storytelling agency. She is a former Managing Director of RTÉ Radio and previously worked with the BBC as an editor and started her career as a news reporter with the Irish Times.

Helen holds an MSc Climate Change, Policy, Media and Society, DCU, a BA and MA, UCD, a postgraduate degree in journalism, DCU and was a Fellow at Harvard University. Helen was appointed a trustee of An Taisce in February, and she is focussed on our communications strategy and the delivery of the National Trust initiative. She is also a member of the Climate Committee.

Phil Doyle

Appointed February 2024

Phil, an equity investor, senior executive, and advisor in the sustainable infrastructure and energy sectors, currently leads an impact fund investing in clean energy, energy efficiency, and decarbonisation. He was appointed a trustee of An Taisce in February with a special focus on our National Trust strategy.

He holds a Master of Public Policy from the University of Chicago and a Bachelor's in Biology and Geography from Syracuse University.



Board and Committee Profiles 2024

Committee Profiles and Reports

Governance Committee

The role of the Governance, Risk and Compliance Committee is to advise the board on all matters related to governance and risk, and to lead the Board in its compliance with the Charities Regulator's Governance Code. It conducts an annual review of governance structures and processes.

Members

- Olivia Rogers, (Chairperson)
- Stuart McCaul
- Gary Freemantle (Staff member)
- Prof John Sweeney
- Laura Segura Gutierrez
- Pat Hayes
- Leo Regan
- Neil Whoriskey

Audit and Finance Committee

The Audit and Finance Committee's role is to assist the Board in meeting its responsibilities by providing independent oversight of An Taisce's systems of internal control, audit appointment processes and financial reporting, both internal and statutory.

Members

- John Conroy (Chairperson)
- Jaimie-Leigh Bail
- Sandra Bowen
- Ruaidhrí O'Boyle
- Eric Conroy
- Finbarr Kelly (Resigned 14 March 2024)

Natural Environment Committee

The role of the Natural Environment Committee (NEC) is to oversee and guide An Taisce's natural heritage initiatives, promoting biodiversity, habitat conservation, and environmental management. The committee meets approximately five times annually and remains dedicated despite its small size.

Members

- Anny Wise (Acting Chairperson)
- Bernard Goggin
- Rebecca Jeffares
- Eric Conroy
- Phil Kearney
- Ian Lumley (Staff member)
- Declan Murphy
- Martin Rochford

Additionally, An Taisce CEO Gary Freemantle, Natural Environment Officer Elaine McGoff, and Chair of Council Stuart McCaul are invited and attend most meetings.

Key Achievements in 2024

Played an instrumental role in advocating for the adoption of the EU Nature Restoration Law by writing to 26 EU member-state embassies in Dublin. The contribution may have helped to support the successful passing of this key piece of legislation. The German Embassy Head of Mission visited Kilkenny to observe An Taisce's local work and subsequently invited NEC representatives to the German Unity Day garden party.

Organised impactful field trips, including:

- A visit to see the native Old Irish Goats grazing on Howth Head, Co. Dublin.
- A two-day exploration of Sliabh Beagh, An Taisce's new heathland property in Counties Monaghan and Fermanagh.
- Participation in the An Taisce trip to Clare Island, Co. Mayo, featuring a guided ecological tour by John Feehan.
- Campaigned to ban the importation of bare-root Hawthorn plants to prevent the spread of Fireblight bacteria, though the effort was ultimately unsuccessful.
- Explored the potential for a constitutional referendum on the Rights of Nature, a proposal supported by the NEC and Council but not realised.

Challenges and Future Directions

- NEC is restructuring, which under review since 2023, completing this process will allow for the development of clear work plans in 2025
- With property management transitioning to the Properties Committee, the NEC will focus on developing and implementing environmental management plans.

The NEC remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing An Taisce's environmental goals and fostering meaningful conservation efforts.



Board and Committee Profiles 2024

Committee Profiles and Reports

Climate Committee

The role of the Climate Committee is to address policy issues arising in Ireland and in its global interactions regarding the challenges of human-caused climate change. Its scope includes education, media engagement, collaboration with institutions, and advocacy with the Irish government to ensure accountability in preserving a liveable environment for future generations.

The Climate Committee's terms of reference include:

- **Education and outreach:** Engaging citizens nationally and internationally to enhance understanding of the climate challenge and empower positive responses.
- **Media engagement:** Facilitating informed public debate on Ireland's policy initiatives and responses.
- **Institutional collaboration:** Informing and responding to interventions by public and private institutions.
- **Government advocacy:** Engaging with state agencies, local government, and national representatives to hold them accountable for their environmental obligations.

Members

- Terri Morrissey (Chairperson)
- Nick Armstrong
- Pat Cassidy
- Phil Kearney
- Clare Kelly
- Saoirse McHugh
- Barry Mc Mullin
- Karen Mahon
- Liam Murtagh
- Ruaidhri O'Boyle (Secretary)
- Aideen O'Dochartaigh
- Theresa O'Donoghue (retired in October 2024)
- Paul Price
- Helen Shaw
- Charles Stanley-Smith
- John Sweeney

Staff Members:

- Phoebe Duvall
- Elaine McGoff
- Sean O'Callaghan
- Damien O'Tuama
- Ian Lumley

Key Achievements in 2024

- Developed a Roadmap to govern the committee's work from 2024 to 2026.
- Produced an An Taisce manifesto on climate, environment, and ecological priorities for the 2024 election and subsequent Programme for Government negotiations.
- Engaged with organisations such as the EPA, CCAC, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, Teagasc, and Gas Networks Ireland on the carbon budgeting process.
- Developed a programme of policy papers on climate-related issues.
- Strengthened links with national and international organisations and NGOs in the climate and biodiversity space.
- Celebrated its 10th anniversary on 12th March 2024 at a special event hosted by Ian Lumley at Henrietta Street, Dublin. Previous contributors and guests joined the committee following its regular monthly meeting, sharing stories of past achievements and challenges.

Hosted a series of guest speakers, including:

- Sinead Walsh, Department of Foreign Affairs (Pre and post COP 29 analysis)
- Orla Kelleher, CLM (Climate Litigation)
- Liz Bruton, Earth Institute, UCD (Journalists in Residence)
- Grainne Ryan, An Taisce (Climate Ambassador Programme)

The Climate Committee met 12 times in 2024, demonstrating unwavering dedication to its mission of addressing the climate crisis through education, advocacy, and collaboration.

Board and Committee Profiles 2024



Committee Profiles and Reports

Property Committee

The Property Committee of An Taisce is entrusted with the stewardship of sites of exceptional heritage and environmental value across Ireland. Its role is to support the long-term conservation, management, and appropriate use of these properties in line with the mission of An Taisce as the National Trust for Ireland.

The Committee works to uphold and promote the principles of sustainability, cultural preservation, and public engagement. This includes advising on site maintenance and restoration, advocating for best practice in conservation, and collaborating with other committees, members, and external partners. In doing so, it aims to ensure that the built and natural assets under An Taisce's care are protected for future generations.

Members

- Finbarr Murray (Chairperson)
- Trish O'Connell
- Geoffrey Clarke
- Peter Wise
- Noel Foley
- John Conroy
- Kevin Duff
- Mark Clinton

Staff Members:

- Sinead Owens
- Ian Lumley

While 2024 marked a quieter period for the Property Committee due to an ongoing internal review and reform process, much of the year's relevant oversight and involvement is reflected in the properties section.



Kanturk Castle, Cork

Looking ahead to 2025, the Committee is actively seeking to broaden its collective expertise and develop a comprehensive work plan that aligns with An Taisce's long-term strategic goals. A key ambition for the coming year is to expand An Taisce's portfolio of historical buildings, sites, and natural assets—ensuring these are representative of Ireland's diverse heritage and continue to support our objectives of environmental stewardship, public access, and national pride.



Board and Committee Profiles 2024

Council Members

An Taisce Council is a national forum for joined-up environmental and heritage policy development by volunteers. Council has a role in governing the charity because it appoints and dismisses the charity's Trustees and represents members' interests between AGMs. Council also elects volunteers annually as the Chair and Vice Chair of An Taisce, and the Speaker of Council. Council is made up of the President and the former Presidents, the Chair of An Taisce, the Vice-Chairperson, the Secretary, delegates of our Local Associations, members elected at the AGM, representatives of our policy committees, and co-opted members. All members of Council are members of An Taisce.

You can see the current list of Council members below. By profession, they are artists, farmers, scientists, business people, activists, writers, historians, lawyers, conservationists, archaeologists, architects, and public health experts. An Taisce holds Council meetings five times a year.

COUNCIL — MEMBER ROLE — LOCAL ASSOCIATION (if affiliated)

Stuart McCaul	Chairman	
Patricia O'Connell	Vice Chair	
Philip Kearney	President	
Fr Sean McDonagh	Former President	Meath
Prof John Sweeney	Former President	Kildare
Éanna Ní Lamhna	Former President	
Robin Mandal	Speaker	
Sinéad Mercier	Elected	
Dr Patrick Bresnihan	Elected	
Martin Rochford	Elected	
Dr Nick Armstrong	Elected	
Kate Carmody	Elected	Kerry
Eric Conroy	Elected	
Gerry Crilly	Elected	
David Geary	Local Association Delegate	Limerick
Saoirse McHugh	Elected	
Rebecca Jeffares	Local Association Interim Delegate	Dun Laoghaire
Miriam Mooney	Elected	
Karen Wise	Local Association Delegate	Clare
Geoffrey Clarke	Local Association Delegate	Meath
Liam Murtagh	Elected	Monaghan
Jack O'Sullivan	Local Association Interim Delegate	Westmeath
Geoff Power	Elected	
Damon Matthew Wise	Elected	Clare
Brian Hamilton	Local Association Delegate	Kilkenny
Dr Thomas Muinzer	Co-Opted	
Colm Desmond	Local Association Interim Delegate	Cork

Stuart McCaul

Stuart McCaul
Chair

On behalf of the board:

13th May, 2025

John A. Conroy

John Conroy
Honorary Treasurer



Further information

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 were nil in 2024.

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.

An Taisce is a nominating body on the Cultural and Heritage Vocational Panel for Seanad Éireann. It put out a call for suitably qualified candidates for Seanad General selection 2025 and there was a lot of interest. An Taisce Council voted to select Éanna Ní Lamhna as nominee. During the campaign, An Taisce promoted Éanna's life-long alignment with our values and mission, and we proudly donated €1,000 in kind to support her.

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.

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 organisation's business addresses at 5 Foster Place, Dublin 2, D02 V0P9, Republic of Ireland.

Auditor

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



**Financial
Statements**



Financial Statements

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 2024**

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Financial Statements

DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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 the 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

Stuart McCaul
Director

John Conroy
Director

Date: 13th May, 2025



Financial Statements

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 2024 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 2024 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.



Financial Statements

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF AN TAISCE - THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR IRELAND

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://iaasa.ie/publications/description-of-the-auditors-responsibilities-for-the-audit-of-the-financial-statements/>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

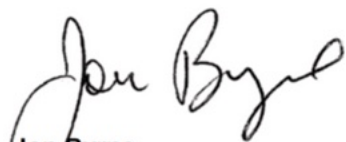


Financial Statements

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE MEMBERS OF AN TAISCE - THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR IRELAND

Use of our report

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

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

Date: 13th May, 2025



Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2024 €	Restricted funds 2024 €	Total funds 2024 €	Total funds 2023 €
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	113,047	326,870	439,917	1,794,682
Charitable activities	4	159,857	7,747,753	7,907,610	8,687,752
Investments	5	318	-	318	201
Total Income		273,222	8,074,623	8,347,845	10,482,635
Expenditure on:					
Expenditure	6	399,327	7,937,576	8,336,903	9,440,626
Total expenditure		399,327	7,937,576	8,336,903	9,440,626
Net (deficit) / surplus before investment gains					
Net gains on investments	12	(126,105)	137,047	10,942	1,042,009
		5,059	-	5,059	4,956
Net surplus/(deficit)		(121,046)	137,047	16,001	1,046,965
Net movement in funds		(121,046)	137,047	16,001	1,046,965
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	19	1,423,627	1,252,439	2,676,066	1,629,101
Total funds carried forward		1,302,581	1,389,486	2,692,067	2,676,066



Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	2024		2023	
		€	€	€	€
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		1,166,000		1,189,999
Investments	12		18,994		13,935
			1,184,994		1,203,934
Current assets					
Debtors	14	999,533		841,968	
Cash at bank and in hand		2,535,167		1,718,094	
		3,534,700		2,560,062	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(1,897,627)		(922,930)	
Net current assets			1,637,073		1,637,132
Total assets less current liabilities			2,822,067		2,841,066
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	16		(130,000)		(165,000)
Net assets			2,692,067		2,676,066
Total reserves					
Unrestricted funds	19		1,302,581		1,423,627
Restricted funds	19		1,389,486		1,252,439
Total funds			2,692,067		2,676,066

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on 13th May, 2025 and are signed on its behalf by:

Stuart McCaul

Stuart McCaul
Director

John A. Conroy

John Conroy
Director



Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	2024		2023	
		€	€	€	€
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	22		(60,756)		1,098,339
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-		(1,200,000)	
Gain on investment		(5,059)		(4,956)	
Net cash used in investing activities			(5,059)		(1,204,956)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(65,815)		(106,617)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,331,926		1,438,543
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,266,111		1,331,926
Relating to:					
Cash at bank and in hand			2,535,167		1,718,094
Bank overdrafts included in creditors payable within one year			(1,269,056)		(386,168)



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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 its 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.



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 — Accounting policies (Continued)

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.

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:

Freehold land and buildings	2% Straight Line
Leasehold improvements	12.5% Straight Line

The company's policy is to review remaining useful economic lives and residual values 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.

All other borrowing costs are recognised in profit or loss in the period in which they are incurred.

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.



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 — Accounting policies (Continued)

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.

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.



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

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.

b) Provision for doubtful debts.

The company makes an estimate of the recoverable value of trade and other debtors. The company uses estimates based on historical experiences in determining the level of debts, which the company believes, will not be collected. These estimates include such factors as the current credit rating of the debtor, the ageing profile of debtors and historical experience. Any significant fluctuations in the level of customers that default on payments would result in an increase/decrease in the level of bad debt provision and this, in turn, would have an impact on the operating results. The level of provision required is reviewed on an on-going basis.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2024 €	Restricted funds 2024 €	Total funds 2024 €	Total funds 2023 €
Donations, Fundraising and Membership	113,047	76,870	189,917	1,282,909
Donated services	—	250,000	250,000	511,773
Total donations and legacies	113,047	326,870	439,917	1,794,682
Total 2023	1,193,850	600,832	1,794,682	

Donated Services in 2024 represent legal services provided to An Taisce for specific legal cases (2023 total donated services amounted to €511,773 which included legal donated services €420,106). The services are provided on individual cases which are undertaken following cost protection guarantees. These legal services are separate from the legal and other services provided to An Taisce in the normal course of its activities.



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 €	Restricted funds 2024 €	Total funds 2024 €	Total funds 2023 €
Government Departments	-	1,920,240	1,920,240	1,682,366
State Bodies	6,675	4,840,570	4,847,245	6,040,493
Local authorities	2,360	386,998	389,358	210,089
Funding from EU Organisations	-	103,180	103,180	315,147
Philanthropic Organisations	120,197	265,100	385,297	214,847
Corporate Sponsorships	-	220,258	220,258	161,903
Merchandise Sales and Teacher Training	-	11,407	11,407	11,209
Membership	-	-	-	18,138
Properties	30,625	-	30,625	33,560
Total	159,857	7,747,753	7,907,610	8,687,752

No capital grants were received in the year.

5 Investment Income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 €	Restricted funds 2024 €	Total funds 2024 €	Total funds 2023 €
Dividend Income	318	-	318	201
Total	318	-	318	201
 Total 2023	 201	 -	 201	

Investment income arises from Equities which have been donated to An Taisce.



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

6 Expenditure

	Unrestricted funds 2024 €	Restricted funds 2024 €	Total funds 2024 €	Total funds 2023 €
Donations and Legacies	56,673	310,604	367,277	807,601
Charitable Activities	306,940	7,589,394	7,896,334	8,571,057
Governance Costs	35,714	37,578	73,292	61,968
	<u>399,327</u>	<u>7,937,576</u>	<u>8,336,903</u>	<u>9,440,626</u>
Total 2023	<u>174,549</u>	<u>9,266,077</u>	<u>9,440,626</u>	

Included in Donations and Legacies is €250,000 Donated Legal Services (2023 legal donated services €420,106)

7 Governance costs

	Unrestricted Funds 2024 €	Restricted Funds 2024 €	Total 2024 €	Total 2023 €
Auditors remuneration	922	14,453	15,375	15,375
Legal and professional fees	10,792	23,125	33,917	17,273
Depreciation - tangible fixed assets	24,000		24,000	29,320
Total	<u>35,714</u>	<u>37,578</u>	<u>73,292</u>	<u>61,968</u>



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

8 Analysis of Expenditure by expenditure type

	Employment costs 2024 €	Services and Resources 2024 €	Total 2024 €	Total 2023 €
Donations and Legacies	37,505	329,772	367,277	807,601
Charitable activities	4,545,421	3,350,913	7,896,334	8,571,057
Governance Costs	-	73,292	73,292	61,968
Total 2024	<u>4,582,926</u>	<u>3,753,977</u>	<u>8,336,903</u>	<u>9,440,626</u>
Total 2023	<u>4,049,484</u>	<u>5,391,141</u>	<u>9,440,626</u>	

9 Operating surplus

Operating surplus for the year is stated after charging:

	2024 €	2023 €
Fees payable to the company's auditor for the audit of the company's financial statements	15,375	15,375
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	<u>24,000</u>	<u>29,321</u>

10 Employees

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

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Employees	<u>112</u>	<u>123</u>



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

10 Employees

(Continued)

Their aggregate remuneration comprised:

	2024 €	2023 €
Wages and salaries	4,039,646	3,555,925
Social security costs	438,067	387,247
Pension costs	105,213	106,312
	<u>4,582,926</u>	<u>4,049,484</u>

The number of employees whose remuneration was greater than €60,000 was:

	2024	2023
€60,000 -€70,000	2	1
>€70,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

	2024 €	2023 €
Remuneration - Senior Management	272,638	193,522
Remuneration - Support	274,403	329,920
Remuneration - Activities	4,035,884	3,526,042
	<u>4,582,926</u>	<u>4,049,484</u>

In 2024, the Senior Management Team increased from three to four. The team now comprises CEO, Finance Director, Director of Education and Communities, and Development Director. This team supports the managers and employees delivering An Taisce's activities.



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold buildings €	Leasehold improvements €	Total €
Cost			
At 1 January 2024 and 31 December 2024	1,200,000	120,678	1,320,678
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 January 2024	10,000	120,678	130,678
Depreciation charged in the year	24,000	-	24,000
At 31 December 2024	34,000	120,678	154,677
Carrying amount			
At 31 December 2024	1,166,000	-	1,166,000
At 31 December 2023	1,190,000	-	1,190,000

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 2024, 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.
- Kenmare, Co. Kerry.
- Mongan Bog, Co. Offaly.
- Morehampton Road Wildlife Sanctuary, Donnybrook, Dublin 4.
- Gortlecka, Inchiquin, Co. Clare.
- Oweninny Bog, Ballycorrick, 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 (Leasehold).
- Sliabh Beigh, Co. Monaghan and Co. Tyrone.
- Tailors' Hall (Leasehold).

An Taisce's collection of pictures, documents, maps and manuscripts are held at nil value. This collection has been donated by members, volunteer groups and from An Taisce's work since 1948. An Taisce management of this collection includes storing, displaying, restoring and occasionally disposing of elements of the collection.



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

12 Fixed asset investments

Market Value

At 1 January 2024

Fair value movement

At 31 December 2024

Investment income arises from Equities which have been donated to An Taisce.

2024
€

13,935

5,059

18,994

13 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 2024.

14 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:

Trade debtors

Other debtors

Prepayments

2024
€

2023
€

565,701

552,608

397,524

244,545

36,308

44,815

999,533

841,968

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Notes

2024
€

2023
€

Amounts owed to credit institutions

17

1,269,056

386,168

Trade creditors

98,632

64,759

PAYE and social security

-

82,513

Deferred income

18

370,989

310,723

Other creditors

107,289

63,767

Accruals

51,661

15,000

1,897,627

922,930

16 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

2024
€

2023
€

Other creditors

130,000

165,000



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

17 Loans and overdrafts

	2024 €	2023 €
Bank overdrafts	1,269,056	386,168

18 Deferred Income

	At 1 January 2024	Recognised in year	Received in Year	At 31 December 2024
	€	€	€	€
Green Schools				
<u>Core</u>				
- Local Authorities	112,453	(200,262)	206,859	119,050
- Cloths Pod	8,333	(58,333)	50,000	-
<u>Biodiversity</u>				
- Bio Beo - Horizon Europe	16,953	(8,446)	-	8,507
- Little Green Fingers - Erasmus +	-	(8,776)	21,064	12,288
- Hedgehog - Kildare County Council	-	(2,720)	8,160	5,440
<u>Global Citizen</u>				
- Irish Aid	50,000	(120,000)	120,000	50,000
- Department of Education	15,625	(26,736)	25,000	13,889
- Designathon	-	(5,778)	9,246	3,468
<u>Neat Streets</u>				
- King Bauduin Fund	21,444	(23,350)	126,887	124,981
CAP				
<u>Climate Smart</u>				
- SFI	26,985	(66,327)	39,342	-
Leaf				
- Local Authorities	27,000	(27,000)	-	-
Green Campus				
- Neb-Lab	3,183	(15,919)	19,103	6,367
- Sust-hein	2,935	(2,935)	-	-
Green Flags for Parks				
- Dept of Community and Rural Affairs	22,000	(22,000)	27,000	27,000
- Student Pilot	3,813	(3,813)	-	-
Total	310,723	(592,395)	652,661	370,989



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

19 Statement of funds

	Opening Reserves	Income	Expenditure	Closing Reserves
	€	€	€	€
Designated funds				
General Properties	1,008,044	6,675	(41,655)	973,064
Advocacy	9,684	123,057	(132,741)	-
Sliabh Beigh	10,000	-	-	10,000
Boyne Navigation	6,664	-	(1,845)	4,819
Tailors Hall	(84,811)	30,625	(6,350)	(60,536)
Total Designated funds	949,581	160,357	(182,591)	927,347
General funds	474,046	117,924	(216,736)	375,234
Total Unrestricted funds	1,423,627	278,281	(399,327)	1,302,581
Restricted funds				
Educate, Promote, Advocate	707,104	-	(11,347)	695,757
Clean Coast Working Capital	124,006	106,870	(68,262)	162,614
National Spring Clean Working Capital	97,448	25,000	(17,867)	104,581
ELIG	-	181,250	(71,997)	109,253
Climate Ambassador Working Capital	42,970	17,320	-	60,290
Funds Below €50,000	280,911	7,744,183	(7,768,103)	256,991
Total Restricted Reserves	1,252,439	8,074,623	(7,937,576)	1,389,486
Total Reserves	2,676,066	8,352,904	(8,336,903)	2,692,067

20 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions during the year.

21 Contingent liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities as at 31 December 2024.



Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

22 Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations

	2024 €	2023 €
(Deficit) / surplus after taxation	16,001	1,046,965
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	24,000	29,321
Movements in working capital:		
Increase in debtors	(157,565)	(76,462)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(3,457)	161,791
Increase/(decrease) in deferred income	60,266	(63,276)
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	(60,755)	1,098,339

23 Analysis of changes in net funds

	1 January 2024 €	Cash flows €	31 December 2024 €
Cash at bank and in hand	1,718,094	817,073	2,535,167
Bank overdrafts	(386,168)	(882,888)	(1,269,056)
	<u>1,331,926</u>	<u>(65,815)</u>	<u>1,266,111</u>

24 Non Audit Services

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

25 Approval of financial statements

13th May, 2025

The directors approved the financial statements on



Kingfisher
Photo by Gustavo Zoladz



**A gift in your will helps An Taisce plan ahead for the future
and secure Ireland's natural and built heritage for everyone, forever.**

For an information pack, please email info@antaisce.org or call (01) 4541786



The National Trust for Ireland | Protecting Ireland's heritage, safeguarding its future

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EU Transparency Register no. 275657497595-21