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Images above-
from new
membership
leaflet, showing
the beauty of
nature and the
built environ-
ment.

Doctor's Orders for a Healthy Membership

Attached with this newsletter you will find a copy of our new membership recruitment leaflet. This has been beautifully designed for us on a voluntary basis by a member who is just setting up a graphic design business (see www.Aux1.ie). But more than just look at it we want you to use it!

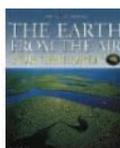
The doctor's orders for the healthy future of An Taisce are to make a member regularly. If every person who received this newsletter printed off a copy of the membership form and persuaded another person to join, it would make a huge difference to keeping An Taisce in the pink.

Also attached with the newsletter is a document of frequently asked questions, that come up regularly when we are recruiting. This should

help you answer any of the queries you may encounter.

We really need to get more members to help us through the downturn and to keep our voice being heard by those who matter.

As an extra incentive we are running a small competition. If you can get 5 members to join up we will send you a copy of "1000 Garden Ideas"; 10 new members will earn you a copy of the beautiful coffee table book "The Earth from the Air". We will



also enter all recruiters into a prize draw for a special prize in the summer. To enter simply get the new members to fill in their details (DD if at all possible as it saves us a huge amount of admin costs) on a



copy of the form and send them with your name and contact details to Abby McSherry, at Tailors Hall, Back Lane Dublin 8.

If you would rather use a professionally printed version of the leaflet please let me know how many you need and we can post you a stock out—there is no point having boxes of them stored at HQ when they could be out and about, doing their job. So if you know of anywhere that it may be suitable to display the leaflet let us know. For example Clare Local Association has just organised with Burrenbeo to have copies of the leaflet sent out with tourist information to over 200 tourism providers, we would like to thank them for organising this initiative, and I am sure there are many more ideas out there.

Biodiversity – Engaging with Our Lifeline

During 2010 International Year of Biodiversity there is an urgent need to raise awareness of the relevance of biodiversity in people's lives. There is also a need to progress from awareness to active engagement. In order to help deliver this the National Parks and Wildlife Service have provided funding through the IEN for events and activities in communities which highlight the relevance of biodiversity to the commu-

nity as well as emphasizing the role of biodiversity in addressing other pressing environmental issues.

We are applying for funding to run events during biodiversity week in June and we are looking for ideas that people may have for activities in their areas that they would like to run but lack the money to carry out.

The key messages should include some of the following: *What is biodiversity?* (Genetic,

species, and habitat diversity). *Biodiversity as basis of human existence* (our life support system). *Biodiversity and public benefits*. *Diversity of Irish habitats*. *Biodiversity Loss*; driving factors & what happens after 2010. *Threats to biodiversity* with special emphases on Climate Change. *Ireland and Global Biodiversity*. How YOU can become an active citizen for Biodiversity.

If you have an idea please contact membership@antaisce.org
The closing date is 10th March 2010



“ biodiversity services include ... providing clean water, protecting soil resources, capturing and storing carbon and acting as a reservoir of genetic resources.”

“Getting Good Status in our waterbodies is fundamental to a healthy ecosystem”

*Camilla Keane
Natural Heritage
caseworker*



Photo credits: Abby McSherry

10 Messages for 2010



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

Every month the European Environment Agency EEA is issuing a “message for 2010”, which will highlight one theme per month until the tenth meeting of the conference of the parties (COP) to the United Nations convention on Biological diversity (CBD). Each message provides a short assessment focusing on a specific ecosystem or issue related to biodiversity in Europe. A summary of February’s message is below; follow the link to see the full message.

Protected Areas

Protected areas provide a wide range of services in a context of increasing pressures and a rapidly changing environment. Europe is the region with the greatest number of protected areas in the

world but they are relatively small in size. Europe’s Natura 2000, unique in the world and still young, and the Emerald network under development, are international European networks of protected areas that catalyse biodiversity conservation. The full message can be found at

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/10-messages-for-2010/message-2-protected-areas.pdf>

The message was written by Marcus Zisenis (ECNC, ETC/BD), with contributions from the ETC/BD by Dominique Richard/MNHN, Sophie Conde/MNHN, Brian Mac Sharry/DEHLG, Otars Opermanis/MNHN, Zelmira Sipkova/

Biodiversity Basics—The Water Frameworks Directive

The Water Frameworks Directive (2000/60/EC) couldn’t sound more dry and dusty and frankly any less interesting if it tried, but in fact if it was referred to as “the rules to help us get clear, clean, healthy water full of wildlife” this vital piece of legislation might be met with a bit more enthusiasm. The aim of the directive is to ensure that all member states of the EU get and maintain **Good Status** for all their water bodies by 2015. The water bodies concerned include all rivers, streams, lakes, coastal water and even underground water and getting good status in these is fundamental to having a healthy ecosystem. Helping to make the directive work is thus an essential role for An Taisce.

To help us meet our obligation, Ireland is split up into eight river basin districts and each has a management plan developed for it which is to be implemented this year. To help develop these action plans each River basin district has an Advisory Council which is run by a lead local authority in each region. An Taisce, along with SWAN, the Sustainable Water Network, has been very active in pursuing meaningful and effective implementation of the directive over the last six years. Last month An Taisce representatives were nominated through SWAN to several of the RBD Advisory councils, including our chair Charles Stanley Smith for the Shannon council, Camilla Keane from the Natural Environment Unit on the Eastern council and Tim Ryan, an An Taisce volunteer from Wexford on the South Eastern council.

For this month’s newsletter we asked Camilla

to tell us why the Water Framework directive was so vital.

“ Rivers, lakes, coastal and ground waters are essential natural resources and achieving Good Status is essential to obtaining healthy ecosystems – and we have to remember the ecosystem includes human beings and these water bodies also aid water purification, flood control and carbon sequestration for us” she said,

“ They provide drinking water for us” she continued, “and are an important resource for industry and recreation”

“ These water bodies are crucial habitats for many different types of wildlife, providing conditions necessary for some of the most biologically diverse aquatic habitats in the country as well as linking to terrestrial habitats such as wetlands.”

Protecting and improving the aquatic environment is an essential part of sustainable development. However a large number of these water bodies on which our livelihood and health depend are damaged or under threat. An Taisce will continue to press for good management plans that can deliver the objectives, will seek timely implementation of these, and will up our efforts to deliver these objectives through the Advisory Councils. All of this in the hope that the Water Frameworks Directive will result in improved quality for Irish waters for years to come.

National Spring Clean Hit Half a Million Last Year—can 2010 be even better?

It's that time of year again! For the 12th consecutive year, An Taisce's National Spring Clean, Ireland's largest anti-litter initiative gets underway this April. Having achieved the highest participation levels to date in 2009, sights are being set even higher for this year's campaign.

Last year's National Spring Clean involved more than 500,000 volunteers for the first time. An Taisce would like to thank everyone who was involved for helping us reach this important landmark. We are looking forward to an even more event-filled month in 2010.

Taking part in the National Spring Clean is very straight forward. Organise for a clean-up of your local area, to take place any time during April, and register your event online at www.nationalspringclean.org or by phone by calling the National Spring Clean team on 01 4002219.

Once you have registered you will re-



ceive a FREE clean-up kit from An Taisce. The clean up kit contains valuable tips on how to hold a successful clean-up event, posters to advertise your event, ideas on how to make your event different and lots more useful information. The pack also includes

colour-coded plastic bags in which to collect your litter and recyclable material, tabards to keep your clothes clean and

gloves to keep your hands safe and clean.

Once you have a firm date for your event you should contact your Local Authority's Environmental Officer. They will provide you with details for waste disposal following your clean-up.

It's that simple! If you require any additional information, just contact the



national Spring Clean team at nsc@antaisce.org or 01 4002219.

Administration volunteers wanted

The National Spring Clean Team is also looking for volunteers to help organise the behind the scenes work. We need one, two or three people able to work the five day week between them, answering the phone, registering the groups and keeping records on the computer. You would need basic computing experience with an organised and unflustered manner on the telephone

An Taisce Intervention in Significant Supreme Court Case

On the 17th February a supreme court judgement found in favour of An Taisce in a significant case regarding a large scale development at Ballymoreustace in Co Kildare. The application, along with an environmental impact statement, were sent to An Taisce in 2002 for comment under our role as a prescribed body. We made a long and detailed response.

However a request for further information (based on our comments) was made by Kildare County council just one day after the legal time limit of 8 weeks. The developer, Abbeydrive claimed that this

meant that default planning permission should be given. At the same time we were told that the application had been invalidated and were not told that Abbeydrive was taking action to get default permission. Abbeydrive's application for default permission was turned down by the High Court, but they then appealed this judgement to the Supreme Court, and it was only at this stage that An Taisce found out about the proceedings in a newspaper article.

We initiated pleadings in the Supreme Court asking that our interest and EU law issues be addressed before issuing any default planning permission and on 17th February the five-member

court upheld our argument. The full judgement can be found at and more details of the significance of the finding can be read on our website, but basically the judgement was that default permission could not be granted on a development under environmental impact assessment directive since this would mean that the development would go ahead without an assessment. The implications of this judgement go way beyond the case and turns around a record of negative judgements against planning and environmental matters. Already the case is being cited at law seminars as a major and progressive judgement.

Focus on Kanturk Castle

Continuing our series of focus articles about An Taisce properties, this month John Ducie looks at Kanturk Castle. It is planned that full length articles on all the properties along with slide shows will be available on the website in the near future.

Kanturk Castle was originally acquired by the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings in Ireland Committee in the 1880's, the freehold was then donated to the National Trust UK in 1900 when it became the seventh property of that Trust and the first large house to be owned by them. In 1951 it was given by the National Trust UK on a 1000 year lease to the fledgling An Taisce along with £500 towards its upkeep. Since then extensive restoration and stabilisation has been carried out and the surrounding land has been purchased by An Taisce. The freehold was passed to An Taisce in 2000 following a special act of the British Parliament. Prior to 1601 the Blackwater Valley, where Kanturk is located, had grown rich on exporting wool and provisions and had a thriving import economy based on wine. Kanturk was



built by the McCarthy dynasty whose thousand year old lineage had provided the Kings of Munster and who were powerful Gaelic princes. Kanturk was a highly fashionable building, clearly linking

Ireland with the latest thinking in architecture in Britain and the continent. The name of Kanturk comes (allegedly) from the story that the last wild boar (Ceanntuirc) in Ireland was killed in that area. A wildboar festival is held there every year. The castle is one of the largest fortified houses in Ireland, but it was never completed or lived in. In 1618 all work was ceased on order of the Privy Council in Britain who were uneasy about such a large castle being in the hands of a Gaelic Prince. As it was never roofed, it was not seen as a threat and burned as many similar

properties were after the Battle of Kinsale. And this together with the later preservation of the site has meant that it provides an almost unique and complete insight into the minds and aspirations of Ireland's Gaelic Princes before their flight. The building combines traditional Irish Tower house architecture with Tudor and even Renaissance features. It is four stories high, with four corner towers raised to five stories. Most of the structural limestone was quarried on the site, but the fine worked limestone around the windows and fireplaces would have been from elsewhere. Surrounding the castle is a mixed grove of Irish and English oaks planted to commemorate the co-operation of the two National Trusts.

The castle is in the guardianship of the OPW and is open all year round free of charge. Kanturk castle is 1.6km away from Kanturk town in North Cork on the N72 Mallow – Killarney road. It is served by the Banteer Railway station on the Mallow-Tralee Line and by bus Eireann from Cork City.

This Place Matters, Dublin City and Counties Clare and Laoise

This Place Matters is in full flow again in 2010. The city of Dublin is next in reviewing its Development Plan. We will be holding a meeting for interested individuals and groups at Tailors' Hall Back Lane Dublin 8 at 7.30 this

Thursday. Any input will be added to the already valuable work carried out by the Local Association in making a good positive submission.

Counties Clare and Laoise are the next

councils reviewing their development plans. Watch out here for further details



Tailors Hall,
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E-mail concerning issues in this ezine:

jeff@rokeby.ie

general enquiries admin@antaisce.org

**Preserving our built and natural
heritage for future generations**

Your views are important to An Taisce. Please don't hesitate to send us any feedback on content, format, etc. of this newsletter, and if there are any topics in particular that you'd like to see covered, we'll do our best to get them in.

Sincerely,

Jeff Young

Hon Secretary, An Taisce -- the National Trust for
Ireland jeff@rokeby.ie

and Abby McSherry, Local Associations Officer

membership@antaisce.org

