

AN TAISCE NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 5
SEPTEMBER 2011

A NEW CHAIR FOR 2012

NATIONAL STRATEGIES
FOR DEALING WITH
IRELAND'S DEBT
CRISIS EXPLORING
THE OPTIONS

AN TAISCE CALLS FOR
MORATORIUM ON
FRACKING

MINISTER SHATTER
SHOOTS DOWN
TIPPERARY CASINO

CLARE WINDFARM
GRANTED PERMISSION
BUT MAY NEVER BE
CONNECTED

A THANK YOU TO ANJA
AND WELCOME TO
CAOIMHE

BOOK TAILORS' HALL
FOR YOUR EVENT

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PAST ARCHIVES

JUL 2010
AUG 2010
SEP 2010
OCT 2010
NOV 2010
DEC 2010

JAN 2011
FEB 2011
MAR 2011
APR 2011
SEP 2011



An Taisce
The National Trust for Ireland

Chair and Vice Chair for 2012

Charles Stanley-Smith has undertaken over 4 years as Chair of An Taisce and as he stated at the AGM he feels that it is time that another person took over as Chair to ensure the continuance of the good work of An Taisce. Also, unfortunately Alice Charles, who was elected Vice-Chair at the AGM has had to tender her resignation for genuine and selfless reasons.

At the last Council meeting Charles outlined a succession plan. That an election for Vice-Chair be held at the next Council Meeting on October 1st. Charles will then work with that elected person in a hand-over until the December Council meeting at which time Charles will retire and we hold an election for Chair. It would be expected that the person elected Vice-Chair in October would be a strong candidate for the election of Chair in December, but obviously we cannot prescribe who should be nominated for the position of Chair at the December Election.

National Strategies for dealing with Ireland's debt crisis Exploring the options



The Foundation for the Economics of Sustainability
"Designing systems for a changing world"

NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH IRELAND'S DEBT CRISIS EXPLORING THE OPTIONS

Thursday afternoon 22nd – Friday 23rd September

Mont Clare Hotel, Merrion Square, Dublin

Ireland's current national economic and monetary strategy has been described as 'relying on the kindness of strangers'. Very few alternatives to the current policy approaches have been properly explored. There are plausible reasons for this – the fear of an adverse market response, the lack of intellectual leadership, perhaps the vested interests of the status quo.

Whatever the reason, alternative strategies that Ireland could adopt to deal with its unprecedented debt crisis need to be fully explored and debated. Feasta's autumn conference will examine measures that this country could adopt to secure its economic future which do not leave it reliant on external factors, largely outside of its control.

This two-day event will address several key questions –

Can Ireland rely on global economic growth to resolve its public debt crisis? What is the relationship between energy, the crisis and future economic growth? What about private debt problems including mortgage debt? Can the Euro survive? Should Ireland plan for a Euro-zone break up? Is anything to be gained by leaving first? Could a new Irish currency working in parallel with the Euro be a better solution?

Leading international economists have been invited to respond to these important questions:

- **US based Marshall Auerback (Roosevelt Institute Fellow & global portfolio strategist for Madison Street Partners, LLC)** will address the quandary of the Eurozone from a provocative new monetary perspective.

- **Prof. Charles Goodhart** (member of the Financial Markets Group at the London School of

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A Message from the Chair

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continuing support.

We could not do what we do without the practical commitment of those who support An Taisce financially and through voluntary effort. Unfortunately in 2011 we face a major funding crisis which severely threatens our operations.

We thought it might be appropriate to provide a tangible but symbolic gift in return for your donation which you can give to someone who values our heritage as you do. Though initially intended as a Christmas gift catalog of symbolic gifts, our 'Treasury of Gifts' is still available to you. The recipient of your gift will receive a certificate outlining the significance of your donation choice.

We hope that some of these ideas in An Taisce's 'Treasury' of gifts appeal to you as a novel way to support An Taisce and maintain our ongoing contribution to Ireland's built and Natural heritage.

Your support is genuinely appreciated in these trying times because it our joint strength that makes it possible for us to continue to protect the environment of Ireland for the people of Ireland.

Charles Stanley-Smith, Chair An Taisce The National Trust for Ireland

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Important

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Economics & former monetary adviser to the Bank of England) will discuss the merits of a parallel/ secondary currency model.

- **Bernard Lietaer** (*author of 'The Future of Money' & international expert in currency systems*) will share his insights into the potential benefits of regional currencies within a larger monetary union.

Respected Irish economists of both mainstream and alternative viewpoints will engage with these ideas, discuss their own proposals and fully explore the options available to Ireland. Speakers include **Fergal O'Brien** (Chief Economist IBEC), **Richard Douthwaite** (Sustainability Economist and Author), **Dan O'Brien** (Economic Editor Irish Times), **Paul Sweeney** (Economist with ICTU), **Prof Ray Kinsella** (UCD, Michael Smurfit Business School), **Constantin Gurdjiev** (Adjunct Prof. of Economics TCD) and **David Korowicz** (Physicist and Human Systems Ecologist)

The audience will be encouraged to fully participate in the debate, which will be stimulated by Moderators who are also expert in their fields. Moderators include **David McWilliams** (Economist), **Peter Matthews TD** (Banker and Fine Gael TD), Prof. **Terrence McDonough** (Economics Dept. NUIG), **Karl Deeter** (Irish Mortgage Brokers), **Graham Barnes** (IT Currency Consultant), **Deirdre de Burca** (Former Green Party Spokesperson on EU affairs) and **Emer O'Siochru** (Architect and Renewable Energy Developer)

The conference is aimed at economists, politicians, policy-makers, business people, social partners and other interested parties.

Date:	Thurs & Friday September 22nd & 23rd
Registration:	1.00pm Thursday 22nd Sept.
Conference:	Thurs 2.00p.m—5.30 p.m Friday 10am – 4pm
Venue:	Mont Clare Hotel, Merrion Square Dublin 2.
Conference Fee:	€80 full conference, €60 one day, €250 Corporate Fee Concessions for Feasta and IEN members.

Advance booking is essential

www.feasta.org/debt-conference/registration_form.php

Further information www.feasta.org/debt-conference

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An Taisce calls for Moratorium on Fracking

An Taisce called for a moratorium on 'Fracking' in a presentation to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Environment, Transport, Culture and the Gaeltacht.

At yesterday's Oireachtas Joint Committee on Environment, Transport, Culture and the Gaeltacht Charles Stanley-Smith, Chair of An Taisce The National Trust for Ireland stated "An Taisce is calling for a Ban on 'Fracking' until such time as the People of Ireland can be convinced that it is possible to regulate Fracking, so that it can be undertaken sustainably and as a result there will be no environmental, social or economic harm."

He continued "Fracking has gained a very poor reputation in recent years, with many cases of

where most effective to sustain our operations.

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environmental and societal damage recorded in the US. Much of this is due to the large amount of land used and its proximity to population and groundwater. Many would say that the pollution was caused by lax regulation in the past. Others say that Europe and Ireland can learn from the mistakes of the US and 'Frack' under 'Best Practices'. Unfortunately, Ireland has an extremely poor history of environmental enforcement and the environmental threats of Fracking are many and due to the hundreds of sites involved will be cumulative. Can you really convince the People of Ireland that 'this time it will be OK'?"

"An Taisce is very aware of the potential jobs that 'Fracking' could provide so we are also calling for a full 'Life Cycle Analysis' to be undertaken on Fracking to see if it will really bring benefits to the People of Ireland and at what risk?"

Download An Taisce's Presentation from here

There are three phases to the exploitation of Shale Gas in Ireland.

1. The first phase is the application to and issuing Onshore Licensing Options, which are meant to produce information. By late 2012 or early 2013, an the assessment of the petroleum resource potential for the area must be provided along with costed plans for further exploration or exploitation. This phase will not include fracking but may include 'shallow geological sampling' (drilling to 200 metres). We question why this phase does not require Planning Permission and the usual EIA's etc.
2. The second stage is the application for an Exploration License, which does involve drilling and may involve test fracking. We take it will require Planning Permission for each drilling site – which will according to Minister Rabbitte, require an Environmental Impact Assessment.
3. The Third Stage is the exploitation stage, which will not only require a number of wells and associated fracking infrastructure but also a system of gathering pipelines and infrastructure to deliver the gas to the grid. All of which will require Planning Permission.

The current licences are for phase one and we therefore have 12 to 18 months in which to ensure that a full and rigorous set of regulations is put in place before there is any drilling or fracking under exploration licences. The process of creating these regulations must include full public participation and must take into account a realistic view of the authorities' ability to police the regulations. We also need to determine if there are specific requirements in the Environmental Impact Assessment.

The threats to the environment from leaking gas and the chemicals used in fracking are real. The people are entitled the information on this and to participation in the decision making to ensure that any exploration or extraction of Shale Gas is environmentally, socially and economically safe.

If we cannot show that the safety of the people and the environment can be safeguarded, then fracking should be banned.

Minister Shatter shoots down Tipperary Casino.

We welcomes Minister Shatter's decision on Super-Casinos and his statement that future Casino licensing law would not allow for "large resort-style casinos, such as have been proposed by some promoters"

Justice Minister Alan Shatter announced today (21st September) that Cabinet has decided there is no need for a resort-style casino in Ireland and provisions will be made for more modest-sized casinos under new up-coming gambling legislation. He said the plan was far too big and the legislation will provide for smaller licenced operations. "There is no social benefit in a resort of this scale," he said. "The new legislation will provide for more modest-sized establishments."

Clare Windfarm granted permission but may never be connected.

An Taisce Calls for joined up thinking between the Commission for Energy Regulation, The Department of Environment and Planning Authorities.

An Taisce recently appealed two wind farms on environmental concerns, one in Co. Galway (PL07.238734) and one in County Clare (PL03 .237524). Last week An Bord Pleanála refused

planning permission for the one in Co. Galway and this week they granted planning permission for the one in Co. Clare but this may never be connected to the Grid.

Connection of wind farms to the electricity Grid is conducted on a queuing basis, first come, first served. The proposed Co. Galway wind farm has an offer of being connected to the electricity Grid in 'Gate 3', which is the third application period. (It is possible to get a Grid connection offer without having planning permission or without even owning or having land leased.)

The Co. Clare wind farm did not get an application within the 'Gate 3' period. This means it must wait until the next application period to get a Grid connection offer. This could take years.

Charles Stanley-Smith, Chair of An Taisce The National Trust for Ireland states "An Taisce appealed both wind farms to An Bord Pleanála on environmental concerns and we now have one wind farm with planning permission but no grid connection and one wind farm with a grid connection and no planning permission. An Taisce is calling for a review of the Gate system to break this impasse and allow a second gate for connections to wind farms with planning permission."

"We further need a National Spatial Strategy for Wind Energy that prioritises Environmental concerns for selection of suitable areas for wind farms and is tied to a Connection Strategy that prioritises connectivity to these suitable areas. This calls for a comprehensively integrated system between the Commission for Energy Regulation, The Department of Environment and Planning Authorities. "

He continued "We have a target of 40% renewable energy electricity by 2020, we haven't even achieved our 2010 target of 15%. Last year in fact, fossil fuel generated electricity increased while that of renewable energy decreased. This flies in the face of our climate change commitments and does nothing to improve the three main pillars of Irish and EU energy policy: security of supply, energy efficiency and competitiveness. We urgently need strategic thinking in our provision of renewable energy".

A thank you to Anja and welcome to Caoimhe

We are truly grateful for all the work that Anja Murray did for us in the 6 years that she was Natural Environment Officer for An Taisce. I am sure that you will all join us in wishing Anja well in her new post with Birdwatch Ireland and thank her for the work she did for An Taisce and the truly professional way that she represented us in many different arenas.

We would like to do a more detailed appreciation in the next newsletter so please email us your appreciation for inclusion.

We would also like to take the opportunity of welcoming our new Environment Officer - Caoimhe Muldoon - she can be contacted on 01 7077063 and caoimhe.muldoon@antaisce.org

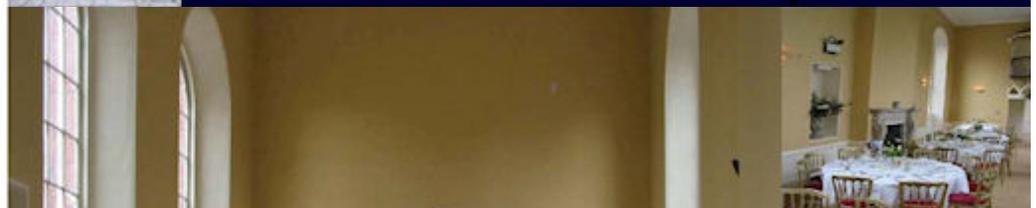
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The Great Hall has the elegance you expect from an early 18th century building. The Lower Hall, with its beamed ceiling and original stone walls, is ideal for entertainment of your choice.

We can advise you on how to put it all together and who supplies what to make your day complete.

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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,
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