

# AN TAISCE NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1  
JANUARY 2011



An Taisce  
The National Trust for Ireland

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO  
ALL SUPPORTERS OF  
AN TAISCE

NOTICE OF ANNUAL  
GENERAL MEETING

PHOTOGRAPHIC  
COMPETITION

THIS PLACE MATTERS  
COUNTY LAOIS

FUNDRAISING UNIT  
NEWS

NATIONAL SPRING  
CLEAN NEWS

GREEN SCHOOLS  
NEWS

GREENING  
COMMUNITIES NEWS

GREEN HOMES NEWS

COASTAL  
PROGRAMMES NEWS

CONTACT US

## PAST ARCHIVES

JUL 2010  
AUG 2010  
SEP 2010  
OCT 2010  
NOV 2010  
DEC 2010  
JAN 2011

An Taisce Shop here

A Message from the Chair

I would like to take this

## A Happy New Year to all Supporters of An Taisce

Happy New Year to all our readers! How are the resolutions going? One easy-to-keep resolution would be to pass this ezine to a friend. In the last issue we promised that we would provide an in-depth look at the work of our Education Unit, so most of the ezine is dedicated to this along with some regular news. In the next few weeks we will be putting together a special supplement regarding our appeal of the Corrib pipeline which we hope you will find interesting... To find out how you can help to ensure that environmental laws are upheld robustly in Ireland click on [corribjr.antaisce.org](http://corribjr.antaisce.org) An Taisce believes the implications of this decision go far beyond the Corrib gas pipeline and will have significant repercussions for the status of European directives in Ireland. This particular case will be prove to be a strain on our financial resources so if you would like to help with the costs click on [corribjr.antaisce.org](http://corribjr.antaisce.org).



Images show areas around proposed landfall of Corrib pipe-line

## Notice of Annual General Meeting

In accordance with section 11b of our Constitution we are taking this opportunity to announce that the **An Taisce A.G.M** will take place in The Tailors Hall, Dublin on **Saturday, June 11th 2011 at 11.30a.m.**

Notice of any motion proposed to be made at a General Meeting shall be delivered to the Honorary Secretary of the Company thirty clear days before the meeting at which the motion is to be proposed and shall be circulated with the notice convening the meeting. Such notice shall be signed by the Proposer and one Secunder, being Members of the Company, and no motion shall be entertained by a general meeting unless notice thereof has been given as aforesaid.

Further announcements will be circulated to members in due course.

## Photographic competition

Have your photograph selected for the cover of An Taisce's annual magazine!

An Taisce The National Trust for Ireland's annual magazine will be published in June this year, and we are inviting you, our members, to submit a photograph which you feel would be suitable for the cover of the magazine.

The theme of this year's magazine is the vision we have of our future Ireland so the image can capture this idea, or alternatively the image can depict any of the areas An Taisce works within from our built and natural heritage to properties and architectural conservation, education or sustainability.

The image itself must be submitted as a pdf and be portrait in orientation with the top 2" being a light area to allow sufficient room for the title of the magazine.

We will also be looking for images to match the articles inside so whilst your photograph may not be selected for the cover it may be used in conjunction with an article in the magazine.

And, if photography isn't quite your thing but words are maybe you could help us out with a new title for the magazine! All valid suggestions are welcome!

Please submit your entries for both by March 30th 2011 to Carol O'Connor, [admin@antaisce.org](mailto:admin@antaisce.org).

All images used will be fully accredited and the person whose image is chosen for the cover will receive a €50 voucher for a place of their choosing!

## This Place Matters County Laois

The new year sees a continuation of the successful This Place Matters project. The next county to be reviewing its County Development Plan is Co Laois. We will be holding a meeting at the **Parish Centre in Portlaoise on February 3rd at 7.30pm**

So if you live in Laois and ever wished you could have a say about the future of your own place, come along. Don't complain after the plans are made, help to make them now.

Many people do not feel able to make a submission of their own about a county development plan, but by bringing your views to

opportunity to wish you the best for the New Year.

We could not do what we do without the practical commitment of those who support An Taisce financially and through voluntary effort. Unfortunately going into 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 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, enclosed in an An Taisce Christmas Card.

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

[An Taisce Shop here](#)

## Important

Please note these gifts are intended as symbolic reflections of how your donation supports the work of An Taisce. Where subscriptions do not match required expenditures or critical needs are identified - actual contributions will be allocated where most effective to sustain our operations.

[An Taisce Shop here](#)

many people do not feel able to make a submission of their own about a county development plan, but by bringing your views to this meeting or contacting [membership@antaisce.org](mailto:membership@antaisce.org) you can add your ideas to the submission that An Taisce are making and also find out more about how simple and vital it is to make your voice heard.



The parish centre at Portlaoise features a beautiful grass roof.

## Green Communities News



SOUTHERN & EASTERN  
Regional Assembly  
Promoting Our Region



IRELAND WALES  
2007 - 2013



Ireland's EU Structural Funds  
Programmes 2007 - 2013  
Co-funded by the Irish Government  
and the European Union



EUROPEAN REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT FUND



Green Communities is an environmental project operated jointly by the An Taisce Education Unit in Ireland and Keep Wales Tidy, with primary funding from Interreg Ireland-Wales Programme, 2007-2013; and match funding from the DoEHLG and An Taisce.

Through Green Communities, An Taisce and Keep Wales Tidy work with volunteer community groups, facilitating events and creating an environment to actively enhance local biodiversity, while minimising the carbon footprint of group activities. We are on hand to support community groups with project activities, to provide information and guidance and to provide a basic toolkit

for their efforts, including public liability insurance. Small annual grants are also available. Examples of typical Green Communities activities include the following:

- Development of community gardens producing local food and bringing communities together.
- Regular clean ups and conservation work (e.g. marram grass planting on dunes).
- Sensitive clearance work (e.g. clearing a neglected land to provide a green space to enjoy and an enhanced habitat for wildlife)
- Erection and maintenance of bird, bat, hedgehog, owl boxes
- Management of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed,

The response to Green Communities has been very positive with a steady increase over time in the number of groups participating and the development of a website [www.greencommunitiesproject.org](http://www.greencommunitiesproject.org) among other achievements. Community groups involved in the project have received ongoing and valuable support, training and funding from the Green Communities team.

A 'hands on' approach to group support ensures that An Taisce staff are available to assist in biodiversity training and mapping, to advise on health and safety issues and so on. Ongoing contact between An Taisce staff, group leaders and other relevant bodies such as Environmental Awareness Officers in county councils, training providers, other NGOs, etc ensures that group members receive the best possible support service and advice.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2010

- **January 2010** Large clean ups and biodiversity awareness events in Tramore, Waterford. Partners included Waterford CoCo and Irish and Welsh groups: Tbay Surfers, BICA Surf Club from Llangrannog and Portmarnock Coast Care.
- **February 2010** Orchard planting & developing a community garden with asylum seekers in North Dublin.
- **March 2010** Welsh and Irish groups attend a marine litter summit in South Wales. Green Communities training: eight horticultural workshops are held in various sites around Dublin over March and April 2010.
- **April 2010** Groups participate in An Taisce's National Spring Clean. We run horticultural workshops for community groups and close involvement with the Dublin Community Growers Association ensures that more community gardens join Green Communities.
- **May 2010** Representatives from 20 community groups travel from Ireland to South Wales to attend the Green Communities biodiversity seminar in the National Botanic Gardens of Wales. They meet with Welsh & Irish groups and to network, share ideas and experiences. Weekly visits by Green Communities staff to the Baleskin Reception Centre for asylum seekers helps clients to develop a community garden on site.
- **June 2010** Website [www.greencommunitiesproject.org](http://www.greencommunitiesproject.org) is launched by Trevor Sargent TD at an outdoors event in Dolphins Barn Community Garden. Green Communities groups participate in Clean Coast week events. Butterfly workshops, funded and supported by An Taisce, take place in Dolphins Barn Community Garden. Green Communities staff enlist as members of the Invasive Species Ireland Education and Awareness Group. Green Communities staff participate in a community clean up of the Great Western railway site in Phibsborough, Dublin

- **July 2010** weish orchard groups travel to visit the South Dublin Allotments Association Open Day and are provided with an opportunity to network and to share ideas and experiences. Butterfly workshops at community garden sites continue. Eve Ltd training centre for adults with intellectual disabilities in North Dublin hold a willow sculpture day, funded and supported by Green Communities. This receives attention in local media.
- **August 2010** The St Helena's community garden in Finglas is celebrated by An Taisce staff and volunteers at a community event. Butterfly workshops at community garden sites continue. Cara Park, a halting site in Clondalkin, sees the development of a community space to reflect the cultural values of the travelling community with the help of Green Communities staff & funding.
- **September 2010** Lismore Tidy Towns, a Green Communities group, win the Tidy Towns biodiversity award for 2010, partly due to their invasive species removal project which was funded and supported by the Green Communities project. Balscadden Community Council in North Dublin carry out invasive species (Japanese Knotweed) removal work with the help of the biodiversity officer in Fingal County Council. Access 2000, a women's group in Wexford town, hold an Open Day to celebrate their new community garden which received funding and support from the Green Communities project.
- **October 2010** Groups participate in the 'National Day of Volunteering'. Groups are provided with further training in biodiversity at a special lecture and field trip event organised by An Taisce. St Basils Traveller Training Centre hold a planting day which is supported and funded by a grant from Green Communities.
- **November 2010** Green Communities staff receive training in climate change awareness in order to transmit awareness and relevance of behavioural change to groups. A public meeting is held in Blarney Park in Kimmage to discuss the development of a community garden on site – feedback from members of the public is generally positive. The 'Grow Your Own Future' horticultural course for lone parents in North Dublin begins with support & funding from Green Communities.
- **December 2010** The St Helena's Community Garden is launched by President Mary McAleese and funding from Green Communities is acknowledged at a dedicated ceremony.

## FEEDBACK FROM GROUPS ON CROSS BORDER EXCHANGES AND TRAINING

*"It was also a good opportunity to network, and exchange ideas of other groups in Wales"* Betwys y Coed Anglers, Conwy, Carbon reduction seminar in Dublin May 2009

*"It is reassuring to know other groups experience the same issues. We found chatting to the other volunteers in the breaks was as useful as the formal sessions. As a group we have more experience of removing rubbish than planting so the information on native species will be very useful for our next project."* Welsh group on the Dublin training event November 2009.

*"It was lovely to meet so many like minded people who are so interested in our environment and want to maintain it."* The Julianstown Residents Association on Biodiversity Seminar in Wales.

Please note that the Green Communities project is not available in every county in Ireland or Wales. For a list of applicable counties, please visit our website [www.greencommunitiesproject.com](http://www.greencommunitiesproject.com) or call 01 4002205.



 Insect hotel at Julianstown and community garden at Dolphins Barn.

## GREEN COMMUNITIES STAFF - DIERDRE MCGOVERN

*I have enjoyed working for the An Taisce Education Unit for three years now. My primary degree was in English and Sociology. After graduating from UCD, I moved to London where after working in sales I began to realise an interest in working in the environmental sector. I first volunteered as a nature guide for a local nature reserve and for UK charities such as TRAIID & the London Community Recycling Network. I also worked for Waste Watch UK on recycling awareness.*

*After I moved back to Ireland, I began working & volunteering with the IWT and Cultivate. A masters in Sustainable Development in DIT included a work placement in the Irish Peatlands Conservation Council which I thoroughly enjoyed.*

*My research on the subject of Farmers' Markets in Ireland was used to advise Trevor Sargent's committee on a Farmers' Market certification scheme. Whilst conducting my research, I worked with SEI on their education programme before starting as Green Home Officer with An Taisce.*

*I then moved on to the Green Communities Project where I now work with community groups in Ireland and Wales on environmental improvement projects.*



Deirdre McGovern

groups in Ireland and wates on environmental improvement projects.

*I love my job as it gives me an opportunity to work both with community groups and on biodiversity related topics – the perfect match for me! I am married and expecting my first child in February.*

## National Spring Clean News



Former Minister for the Environment John Gormley TD, Erica Roseingrave, Coca-Cola HBC Ireland; Karen Mahon, Alupro Ireland; TDs Jimmy Deenihan, Chris Andrews, Lucinda Creighton and Mattie McGrath were led by the Friends of the Grand Canal in a clean-up of Dublin's Grand Canal, the first official event of National Spring Clean 2010.

National Spring Clean is Ireland's largest and most popular anti-litter initiative. The campaign encourages every sector of society to actively participate and take responsibility for litter, by conducting clean-ups in their local areas. The National Spring Clean is traditionally run throughout the 'spring' month of April, to kick start the national conscience and to highlight the problem of litter as summer approaches.

The key objectives of the 2010 campaign were to:

- Encourage clean-ups throughout the whole month of April
- Promote personal responsibility for litter
- Heighten awareness of litter and waste issues
- Highlight the importance of Recycling and Re-use in the wider context
- Increase the number of events and participants

Spring Clean 2010 was successful in achieving these objectives. The number of participants in this year's campaign was up 6% on last year and there was a 4% increase in the number of events.

Over 525,000 volunteers took part in some 5362 events nationwide. An estimated 1675 tonnes of litter was collected. 35% of the total amount of waste collected was recycled.

Now in its 12th year, the partnership between An Taisce, Government, Local Authorities and dedicated commercial sponsors has proved to be a considerable recipe for success. The goal for the future is to continue expanding the campaign. This can be achieved by expanding and diversifying the volunteer base.

The real success of the Spring Clean is due to the effort and enthusiasm displayed by those volunteers who give up their time to take part in their local events. The dedication of Local Authorities in facilitating these local events must not be overlooked either. The National Spring Clean has now become a fixed date on the calendars of schools and community groups nationwide. It is the on-going participation of these volunteers that ensures the sustained popularity and success of the initiative.

We are now hard at work organising National Spring clean 2011, if you are interested please get in contact on 01 400 2219 or go to the website [www.nationalspringclean.org](http://www.nationalspringclean.org) to register. It does not have to be a huge affair, a couple of friends picking up one bag of rubbish is as important as a huge multi-tonne litter pick and every effort makes a real difference to your community.

### **EMLYN CULLEN**

*I have an MA in Heritage Management as well as one in Archaeology. I started working for the An Taisce Education Unit in 2007, managing the National Spring Clean campaign, a position I still hold. Since then I have also taken up a role as project officer for the Green Communities project as well as running other short term projects. I have worked for An Taisce for over four years now and have thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of my job*





Emlyn Cullen

## Green Schools News

The Green-Schools programme enjoyed another hugely successful year in 2009-2010. The numbers of schools involved continued to grow with 3,300 primary and secondary schools now registered, 83% of all the schools in the country! A massive 60% of all participating schools have now been awarded at least one Green Flag, and we enjoyed the wonderful occasion of the awarding of our 2000th Green Flag in 2010 to St. Mary's Boy's National School in Rathfarnham, Dublin.

Schools continued their great work on themes such as Litter and Waste, Energy, Water, Travel and Climate Change. The new theme of Biodiversity was also launched. This new theme should prove great fun for the schools involved with a wide variety of possible activities and hard work ahead!

We have calculated that a combined overall minimum saving of around €3 million was achieved by awarded schools working on the programme during the school year 2009-2010. This was achieved through diversion of waste to landfill, reduction in energy and water consumption, use of transport fuel and reduced CO2 emissions.

Research shows that over the school year Green-Schools:

- Diverted 2,500 – 3,000 tonnes of waste from landfill
- Saved 15 – 20 million units of electricity
- Saved 200 million litres of drinking water
- Saved 6-700,000 litres of transport fuel.

Midleton C.B.S. Primary in Cork was announced as the Repak Recycling School of the Year 2010 at the National Convention Centre in recognition of their excellent work on Litter and Waste.

The annual Green-Schools Travel competition attracted over 1,000 entries of songs and poems based on the theme of "What Green-Schools Travel means to you!" A prize giving ceremony was held in May.

The Green-Schools Energy Project, which is sponsored by ESB Independent Energy, saw schools from all over the country partnering with local business to develop projects illustrating the practical application of energy efficiency. The winning school for 2010 was St. Mary's National School in Tallaght, Dublin who partnered with Westpark Fitness Centre to consider how the business could reduce its carbon footprint.

Scoil Naisiúnta Mhuire in Stratford-on-Slaney in Wicklow were the winners of the Climate Change Eco-Code Competition sponsored by HSBC.

Thank you to all the students and teachers involved this year.

Also, thank you to our sponsors and partners, Local Authorities, the DoEHLG, the DoT, Repak, ESBIE, The Wrigley Company, and HSBC.

### ALISON SHERIDAN

*I am originally from Kildare but now live in Dublin 8. I spent four years studying at Dublin Institute of Technology in Bolton Street where I received a degree in Environmental Management. My dissertation on the topic of Environmental Education led me to seek employment within Green-Schools. Fortunately I received the opportunity to join An Taisce in April 2009. Following a few months travelling in Australia I returned to An Taisce in July 2010 where I am currently working on developing the Green-Schools website and also as a development officer with schools working on the Water Theme in Wicklow.*



Alison Sheridan

## Greening Communities News

An Taisce is developing a Greening Communities programme for Ireland. The concept of this programme was born from the National Conference on 'Greening Irish Communities' which was held on the 27th April 2009 at Farnleigh, Dublin. The conference, hosted by the EPA, DoEHLG and An Taisce, and provided a valuable platform to showcase some existing initiatives that could form the foundation of a Greening Communities Programme in Ireland.

Speaking at the conference, Dr. Mary Kelly, EPA Director-General, said: "This conference marks a starting point for mobilising communities in Ireland to live more environmentally sustainable lives. Our vision is to develop a network of organisations and individuals which will work together to integrate initiatives such as green schools, green homes, green hotels, green businesses, tidy towns, and transition towns into every Irish community, big or small. I firmly believe that the result of these activities will include real and measurable reductions in environmental impact such as reduced waste production, reduced energy consumption and a reduced carbon footprint for Ireland".

The development of the programme is scheduled for a 12-month period and will be tested by engaging at least five pilot studies around the country. The programme will aim to replicate the success (scale and legacy) of other An Taisce programmes such as Green Schools, GreenHomes, Blue Flag for beaches, Green Communities and the National Spring Clean.

### BRIDIN MULHALL

*I am new to the Education Unit at An Taisce and was appointed Irish Greening Communities Co-ordinator in October 2010. I trained as a natural scientist at undergraduate level in Trinity College Dublin and hold a master in Environmental*



*Technology from Imperial College, London. During that last 10 years, I have worked in environmental management and assessment, both in the public and private sector. I also work on the Steering Group of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), which is the professional membership body for promoting best practice standards in environmental management in Ireland.*



Bridin Mulhall

## Green Homes News

Green-Home was developed as a framework to support and encourage all householders to reduce their environmental impact. Many people are now becoming more aware of how we have to make all aspects of our lives more sustainable. The Green Home programme is supported by the Environmental Protection Agency National Waste Prevention Programme which is funded from the Environment Fund.

To date 54 primary schools and dozens of community groups have been awarded the Green Home flag. The programme in 2011 continues to grow and reach out to more schools, households, community groups and businesses with ways to reduce their household bills and have a positive impact on the environment.

Earlier in June, An Taisce in partnership with the EPA, awarded 37 Green Home flags to communities who completed the Green Home programme. The awards ceremony took place in Croke Park and celebrated the participants successes and acknowledged the efforts of house-holders to take environmental actions within the home. The aim of Green Homes is to raise environmental awareness and support positive and sustainable environmental action amongst house-holders and community groups.

The programme focuses on waste reduction, energy efficiency, water conservation and promotion of sustainable travel. Householders receive information and advice through the programme to help them make informed decisions and take actions that will help the environment whilst also saving money.

Green Homes, builds on the Green Schools programme and started in 2006 and to date almost 10,000 families in 65 different communities have participated. Dorothy Stewart of the Education Unit who manages Green Homes said: "groups taking part in the programme found that it helped to unite the community in working together towards a common purpose of being more environmentally responsible."

Getting involved in Green-Home is a great way of starting this process. Furthermore, it will save you money and it should be fun. Green-Home can be undertaken by an individual householder or a household can be part of a community or school hub. Just go to [www.greenhomes.ie](http://www.greenhomes.ie) and sign up, it will only take a minute and the programme is great fun.

### **DOT STEWART**

*I joined the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce in 2008 as the Manager of the Green Home Programme. I have a background in political science, human geography, sociology and sustainable development. I have lectured on resource management and have spent many years working in the private sector. My recently completed PhD research looked at the concept of Smart Growth as an alternative to urban development. My Irish smart Growth Toolkit will help implementation of current planning policy and strategy and gives a candidate list of sustainability indicators to evaluate progress towards sustainable urban development. My interests include behavioural change and the future sustainability of the urban environment within the climate change challenge, I believe an opportunity now exists in Ireland with initiatives such as Green Home to develop ways to grow now and in the future in a manner that is economically viable and socially and environmentally responsible.*



Dot Stewart

## Coastal Programmes News

It was a terrific year for An Taisce's Coastal Programmes. The Blue Flag programme has been operating in Ireland since 1988 on behalf of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and is An Taisce's longest running environmental education programme. 2010 saw 74 beaches and 2 marinas being awarded Blue Flags. From the wonderful beaches of Donegal in the North West to the beautiful beaches of Wexford in the sunny South East, Ireland's Blue Flag award beaches have something to offer everyone, with excellent water quality, lifeguarded swimming areas, bustling promenades, world class surf; secluded bays and biodiversity rich sandy shores.

The Clean Coasts Programme which is made up of two complimentary strands; the Green Coast Award and Coastcare, and both have experienced another year of growth. 46 beaches achieved the Green Coast Award of excellence and there are currently over 130 Coastcare groups acting as guardians of the coastline of Ireland. 2010 was the inaugural year for the Clean Coasts Photography Exhibition which was a huge success. There were over 500 entrants and the best of these photographs are currently on tour around Ireland. In 2010 we launched the first ever year of Clean Coasts Week which was a week-long promotion of coastal events including beach clean-ups, sub aqua clean-ups, sand sculpting competitions, marram grass planting and lots lots more. The 2010 Coastcare Merit Awards were held in October and the winner of the "Coastcare Group of the Year" were Cara Partners while the "Individual of the Year" went to Emily Diabold of Skerries Adopt a Beach initiative.

### **ANNABEL MCLOONE**

*Being a native of Donegal and growing up close to the beach, I have always had a love of things coastal. I have an MSc in Conservation Ecology and biological Management from QUB and I completed further research in a Masters from ULK focussing on carbon footprinting and environmental auditing. I have been working with An Taisce for 3 years now and have been fortunate to work on numerous programmes most recently as Coastal Programmes manager*



**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  
and Abby McSherry, Local Associations Officer [membership@antaisce.org](mailto:membership@antaisce.org)  
Tailors Hall,  
Back Lane,  
Dublin 8  
Phone: 01 4541786  
e-zine E-mail: [jeff@rokeby.ie](mailto:jeff@rokeby.ie)  
general enquiries [admin@antaisce.org](mailto:admin@antaisce.org)  
website [www.antaisce.ie](http://www.antaisce.ie)  
newsletters An Taisce Newsletters

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