

An Taisce
The National Trust for Ireland

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

PROTECTING IRELAND'S HERITAGE,
SAFEGUARDING ITS FUTURE

WWW.ANTAISCE.ORG



Kanturk Castle



Sea Sessions 2Minute Beach Clean

Green-Schools
An Taisce

neat streets

CLEAN AiR TOGETHER

LEARNING ABOUT FORESTS

Green-Campus
An Taisce

NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN
An Taisce

Clean Coasts
An Taisce

Green Flag Award
Community

An Taisce
The National Trust for Ireland

CLIMATE AMBASSADOR
An Taisce

Young Reporters
for the environment

Legacy4LIFE
An Taisce

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

The GLOBE Program



Ringed Plover, Caoimhe Tyndall

COMPANY INFORMATION

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

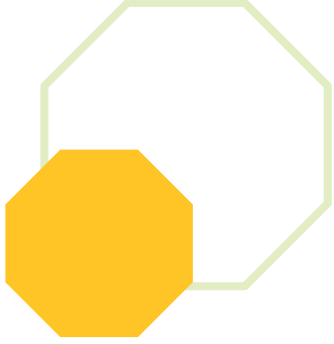
Bank of Ireland

2 College Green

Dublin 2

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2023 "AT A GLANCE"

1
CEO

4
Senior Management

123
Staff

16
Properties

75
years old

25
years
of An Taisce
Green-Schools

20
years
of An Taisce
Clean-Coasts

9
Green campuses
were successfully assessed or re-assessed for their Green Flag

2,000
Clean-Coasts
volunteer groups

500,000
active volunteers
participated in An Taisce's National Spring Clean

40,000
Clean Coasts
volunteers

3677
schools and centres are now registered for Green Schools

747
Green Flags
awarded to schools

Trained
179
An Taisce Climate Ambassadors

An Taisce LEAF planted
12
Choill Bheag woodlands at various sites across Ireland

Over 200 schools nationwide
took part in the An Taisce GLOBE Air Quality Campaign

84
Blue Flag
beaches

10
Blue Flag
Marinas

65
Green Coast
beaches

101
sites received An Taisce's Green Flag for Parks Award

300
submissions on planning applications, forestry licenses and aquaculture licenses

10
submissions made on issues from major national legislation to climate policy to new planning guidelines

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) AT WORK IN AN TAISCE

An Taisce has been selected as an SGD Champion for 2023-2024 by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

The relaunched SDG Champions Programme was developed to raise public awareness of the SDGs and to demonstrate, through the examples provided by the SDG Champions, that everyone in society can make a contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Following an open call for expressions of interest, 12 Champions were chosen to take part in Ireland's first SDG Champions Programme.

For the 2023-2024 Programme, 26 champions have been selected, consisting of 22 newly appointed organisations, along with four former SDG Champions who have chosen to continue the role cut short by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Champions have been selected from across the public, private, community, voluntary, youth and NGO sectors and are represented by larger, national organisations and smaller, community groups.

An Taisce's education programmes operate across Ireland engaging with schools, students, teachers, community groups, coast-care groups, climate ambassadors, third-level communities and many committed individuals and volunteers of all ages. This inter-generational engagement and meaningful impact across society embraces the overall ethos of the Sustainable Development Goals. We see the Goals as an integrated framework that aligns with our vision and mission to create a sustainable future for all. We value the partnerships, support, collaboration, and participation from all who work with us.



CHAIR STATEMENT



Reflecting on the past year, I am filled with a profound sense of responsibility and honour as your chairman. Inheriting a legacy of dedication and vision from my predecessor, Phil Kearney, who is now our President, I find daily inspiration in the commitment that defines An Taisce.

2023, our 75th anniversary, was a landmark year of celebration and transformation. We not only commemorated our rich history but also clarified our commitment to future generations. The enthusiastic adoption of our strategic plan, crafted with input from across our organisation, has set us on a new course towards a sustainable, resilient Ireland.

This year saw significant changes to our Council, caused by our 6-year term limit, leading to the departure of many long-standing members. Their invaluable contributions have laid a strong foundation for the influx of new volunteers, who bring fresh perspectives and expertise. This transition has revitalised Council, enhancing our potential to develop coherent policies with structured input from our dedicated committees on climate, natural environment, cultural heritage, properties, and planning. These largely voluntary committees not only support but also extend the vital work of our advocacy staff, enriching our efforts to shape impactful environmental policies.

Our policy focus has been sharply influenced by the challenging landscape of European environmental regulation and a particularly troubling gap between declared targets and actual progress in Ireland. Despite high levels of trust in state narratives, our investigations and advocacy reveal a disconcerting divergence from the urgent actions required to meet our climate goals. For instance, while Ireland has adopted legally binding carbon budgets, the trajectory set by current policies may achieve only half of this target.

A recent intervention by the European Court of Human Rights on climate action has underscored the vital role of judicial oversight when other parts of government fall short. This context will underpin our efforts as we strive to live within the natural limits of our world. In 2023, An Taisce took the significant step of initiating a High Court challenge to government policy to protect water quality.

An important new initiative this year is our strategic effort to significantly develop An Taisce's role as a steward of national heritage. Recognising the misalignment between our activities and the expectations for a National Trust, we are embarking on an ambitious plan to expand our heritage property portfolio. This includes acquiring properties of natural and built heritage value for community use and ecosystem services, particularly focusing on our Buildings at Risk and important derelict buildings in regional town centres. This initiative aims to leverage our properties to platform our activities and community engagement while developing financial strategies for property management that ensure their preservation and generate income.

The appointment of five new trustees by Council in February will be crucial in driving our strategic initiatives forward. In 2024, Council will focus on shaping the future direction of our local associations to ensure they continue as robust forces for community engagement and environmental action.

This year, we reached a monumental milestone, with over 500,000 volunteers now actively engaged in various initiatives across Ireland. This incredible volunteer base is a testament to the widespread support for our mission. Additionally, we have successfully trained over 1,000 Climate Ambassadors, equipping them with the skills to lead community actions and advocate for environmental sustainability at a grassroots level. In 2023, we proudly celebrated the 25th birthday of An Taisce Green-Schools and the 20th birthday of An Taisce Clean Coasts!

Our designation as a UN SDG Champion underscores our longstanding commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This recognition is a testament to our efforts to integrate these global goals into our national work, influencing policies that promote sustainability.

Financially, An Taisce is on solid footing, bolstered by vigorous fundraising, careful management, and the unwavering dedication of our members and supporters. We have established the capacity and robust governance systems needed to manage and significantly increase the level of philanthropic investments we receive. A key milestone this year was the consolidation of our operations at 5 Foster Place, Dublin, facilitated by a substantial donation from philanthropist Carol Colburn Grigor. This move not only symbolises our commitment to a unified An Taisce but also positions us as a credible organisation for significant philanthropy. With all staff teams now strategically aligned under one roof and under the leadership of our CEO, Gary Freemantle, we are enhancing collaboration and propelling our mission forward with renewed vigour.

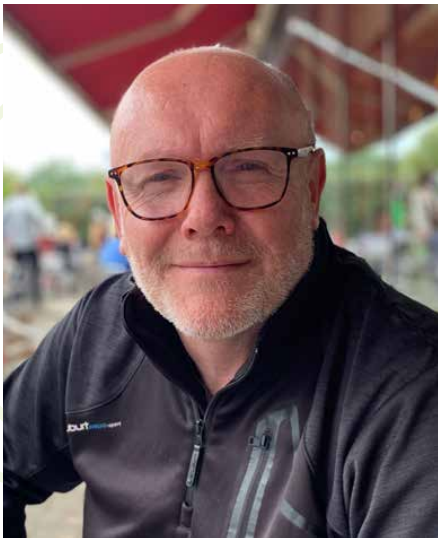
As we move forward, we remain committed to upholding our values of acting with integrity, relying on the best available science, and promoting inclusiveness and community participation at all levels as we strive to be good ancestors. These values are more than principles; they are a call to action for each of us to contribute to the environmental legacy we leave behind.

I urge each of you to organise locally within our An Taisce Local Associations and to demand urgent systemic change at all levels. Together, let's harness our collective energy to push for policies that ensure a high quality of life for current and future generations.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication. Together, we are not just preserving the past; we are actively crafting a legacy that enhances the well-being of all communities.

Warm regards,
Stuart McCaul
Chair of An Taisce

CEO STATEMENT



I am very pleased to confirm that An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland continues to operate on a sound financial footing. Our strategic focus this year and next takes account of the significant organisational changes we have undergone in recent years.

As we move forward, we will refocus our attention to develop the National Trust activities and property protection. Our Financial performance remains strong delivering a solid surplus last year driven by a number of factors including funding growth in key programmes such as in our Safe Routes to School programme, and a significant donation from a private benefactor which allowed us to purchase our new office in Foster Place. Year on year we have increased our revenue and put new fundraising initiatives in place to support the National Trust. All of this is supported by a strong, and experienced senior leadership team, fully committed to the delivery of our plans.

Our new headquarters has also allowed us to bring all elements of An Taisce operations together into one location. This in turn has created positive cultural and operational impacts and further enhances the National Trust. Tailors Hall continues to be an important and iconic property and very much part of our plans and community use.

Our Strategy is an extension of our previous strategies. In it we reassert our vision, mission and values. This is what we live by. One of my key focuses is to drive our ongoing relevance and resilience. The strategic direction we have set will ensure the organisation's contribution is appropriate to the challenges we all face. Central to this are our values of 'Acting with integrity, leadership, and courage'.

We continue to move forward. Our learning is inspired by what we have learnt in the recent years: the steadfast support of our funding and programme partners; the resilience and ingenuity of employees, stakeholders, volunteers and members and our expertise and dedication. We will continue to be courageous and to do the right things.

Our comprehensive suite of national education programmes, training initiatives and campaigns continue to deliver a myriad of opportunities for engagement and action on environmental issues across the country. From pre-school students to grandparents, our programme participants and volunteers in every county give their time and effort in their hundreds of thousands.

The collective efforts of volunteers participating in the National Spring Clean campaign, Climate Action Week, and those observing the unwavering commitment of our Clean-Coasts groups, Climate Ambassadors, and educational communities engaged in initiatives like Green-Schools and Green-Campus have a profound impact. Their work contributes significantly to environmental preservation and sustainability.



We are grateful to all who have been involved with us in 2023 and remain committed to supporting and working with our volunteers and members going forward to continue to make a positive and meaningful difference in 2024 and beyond.

Our partnership approach with the key stakeholders, enables us to actively support and work nationally to contribute to improving sustainability measures.

We face some difficult challenges in 2024 and beyond. The current legal case around the Nitrates Action Programme is an important part of our work this year. The outcome of that decision will have significant implications for the dairy farming sector. Despite these types of challenges, An Taisce needs to find ways to work closely with the farming community and others to build a better way of solving the problems we face.

The current and increasing impact of climate change will be a significant challenge for us all also. We will continue to work to understand the best available science and to use that knowledge to help improve our work in advocating for a better future. The need for us to continue to set good example and to work even harder to educate for a sustainable future is another important challenge for us. Continued investment in these work areas and in organisational capacity is a key driver to deliver against these challenges. I am confident and beyond buoyed by the knowledge that our professional and committed employees remain focused on making a real difference through education, example setting and by advocating for a better and sustainable Ireland.

Gary Freemantle
CEO

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Founded in 1948, An Taisce is one of Ireland's oldest and largest environmental organisations. An Taisce is a charity that works to preserve and protect Ireland's natural and built heritage. We are an independent charitable voice for the environment and for heritage issues. We are not a government body or semi-state agency.

We are a member of the International National Trusts Organisation (INTO) and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Europe's largest federation of environmental organisations, with more than 180 member organisations. We are also the Irish member of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), a global organisation of over 81 countries which is recognised as a world leader in education for sustainable development and environmental education.



THE WAY FORWARD

INTRODUCING OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2026

This plan sets out An Taisce's strategic focus for the coming three years. This period is of historic importance for the organisation, due to both the increasingly urgent external context in which we operate, and the significant journey that we have been on internally, as we have brought the various parts of the National Trust together into a more integrated and aligned operation. Our strategic objectives have been conceived to take account of these developments, and to lay a path for the future.

The plan is an extension of our previous strategies, and starts by reasserting our vision, mission, and values. However, to ensure An Taisce's ongoing relevance and resilience, it has been vital to revisit the core principles on which the National Trust is based.

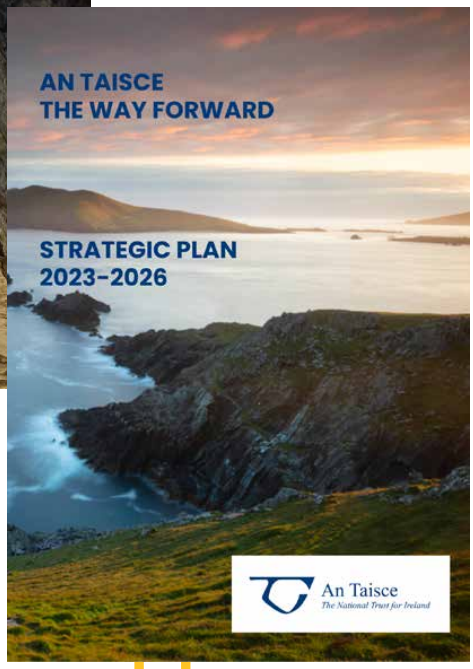
Much of the inspiration provided by the founders in 1948 remains at the heart of what we do. However, there are new, overarching concerns and challenges that Robert Lloyd Praeger and his colleagues could not have envisaged. Specifically, the prospect of a future eclipsed by escalating climate and biodiversity crises was not in their world view.

This Strategy Statement empowers us to look forward. It is inspired by what we have learned in recent years: the steadfast support of our funding and programme partners; the resilience, dedication, and ingenuity of our employees and members; and the proud history of An Taisce as the National Trust for Ireland.

The years ahead will pose ever greater challenges, for Ireland and for humanity. In the face of these, An Taisce will continue to be a source of courage and brave work to protect what we cherish together.



At the Cave, Todor Tilev



VISION

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

MISSION

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



VALUES

- Acting with integrity, leadership, and courage
- Relying on the best available science
- Promoting inclusion and community participation at all levels

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Our strategic objectives sit under three core and interdependent pillars:



Activities

The first step in implementing this Strategic Plan is to review all our activities to ensure alignment with our strategic objectives. In 2023, our main areas of activity were:

Green-Schools, Green-Schools Travel and Safe Routes to School, Clean-Coasts, National Spring Clean, Legacy4Life, LEAF, Globe, SEAI Schools Energy Workshop Programme, Neat Streets, Blue Flag, Planning policy and oversight, Conservation of the Natural and Built Environments, Cycling Development, Green-Campus, Green Flag for Parks, Properties Management, Young Reporters for the Environment and Monument and Building Preservation.

PARTNERSHIPS AND FUNDING

OUR STAKEHOLDERS

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 sponsors and individual donors. These relationships, alongside the required governance and scrutiny are vital to our work.

We are very appreciative of these ongoing commitments, support, and funding.

An Taisce's major funding sources in 2023 are set out below.

Name of Grant Making Agency	Name of Grant Programme	Amount Utilised	Term
Irish Public funds:			
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (NTA)	Safe Routes to School	2,571,380	2023
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (NTA)	Green-Schools Travel	2,528,503	2023
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Clean Coasts Core	436,190	2023
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Climate Action	329,744	2023
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	National Spring Clean	225,000	2023
Uisce Eireann	Green Schools Water	210,400	2022-2023
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Green Schools Core	180,000	2023
EPA	Globe	180,000	2023
Local Authorities Nationwide	Green Schools Core	151,200	2023
Uisce Eireann	Clean Coasts Think Before you Flush	150,000	2022-2023
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland ("SEAI")	Energy	146,517	2023
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Green Schools Marine	121,298	2023
Irish Aid	Green Schools Global Citizenship	120,000	2023-2024
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Blue Flag Core	119,236	2023
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Clean Coasts - 2-minute beach clean	105,023	2023

Name of Grant Making Agency	Name of Grant Programme	Amount Utilised	Term
European, US, and Irish Corporate, NGO, and Individual Funders			
Dunard Fund USA	Properties	1,000,000	2023
Various Legal Services	Natural Environment	344,112	2023
EU Life	Legacy 4 Life	202,897	2021-2023
King Baudouin Foundation	Neat Streets	128,682	2023-2024
1772 Foundation	General	91,667	2023
Irish Environmental Network	Funding	62,442	2023
Textile Recycling Ltd	Green Schools Core	62,000	2023
Cyclist.ie	Cycling	55,000	2023
Wrigley's	Green Schools Core and National Spring Clean	50,000	2023



Neat Streets Conference with Annalise Murphy



Blackhead Lighthouse, Piotr Machowczyk



Fenit Conservation, Co Kerry, Marram Grass Planting event

PARTNER NGOS

An Taisce works closely with many NGOs in Ireland and across the European Union. This is work on a collaborative basis and we value these relationships and the expertise and breadth and depth of skills and knowledge it provides to the organisation.

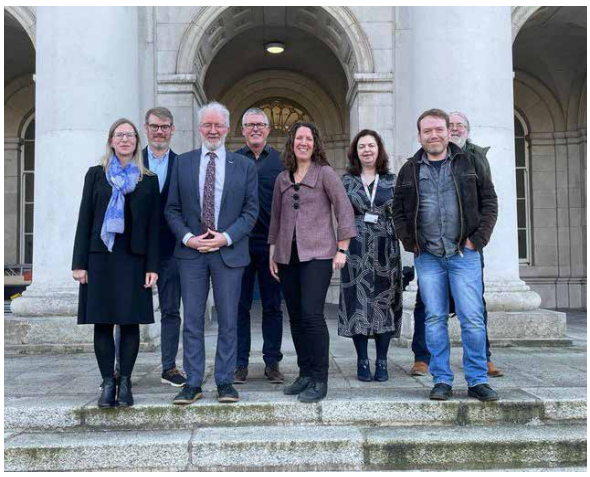
We are represented on and work in collaboration with ESD Advisory Council; European Environmental Bureau; Europa Nostra; Alfred Beit Foundation; Irish Environmental Network and Environmental Pillar; Environmental Law Implementation Group; Clean Air NGO Forum; Forestry Strategy; Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss; various appointment committees; and Joint Oireachtas Committees including Heritage, Housing, Environment; Stop Climate Chaos.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Acting as an independent voice for the environment and our heritage, we strive to assess the impact of our activities in both the short and long term. Each of our education and promotion programmes and advocating areas sets annual KPIs and reports on these to the individual stakeholders for that programme. Assessing the medium- and longer-term impact of our activities will now form part of the implementation and assessment of our Strategic Plan.



Launch of Report of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity



Meeting with Minister Malcolm Noonan



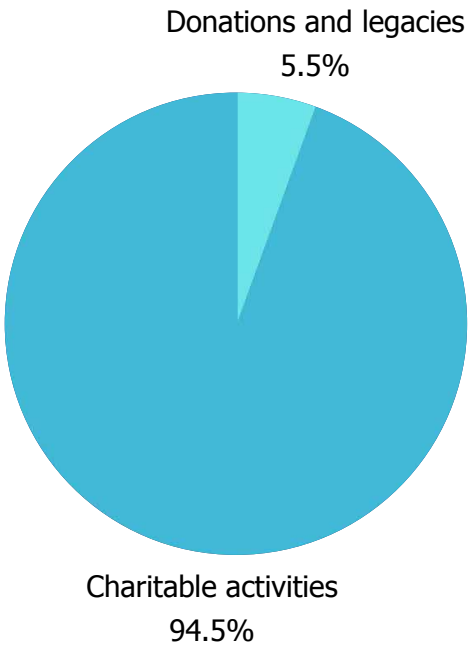
Environmental Pillar meet with farmer Donie Regan & the Farm Carbon EIP

FINANCIAL REVIEW

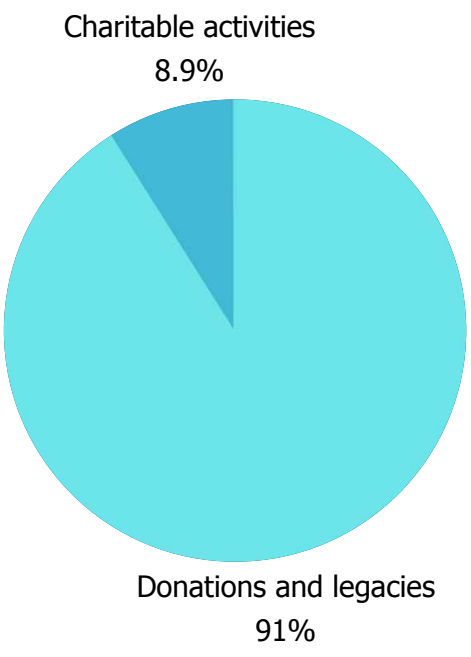
Total income for the year increased from €8.5m in 2022 to €10.5m in 2023.

INCOME – RESTRICTED V. UNRESTRICTED

RESTRICTED INCOME 2023

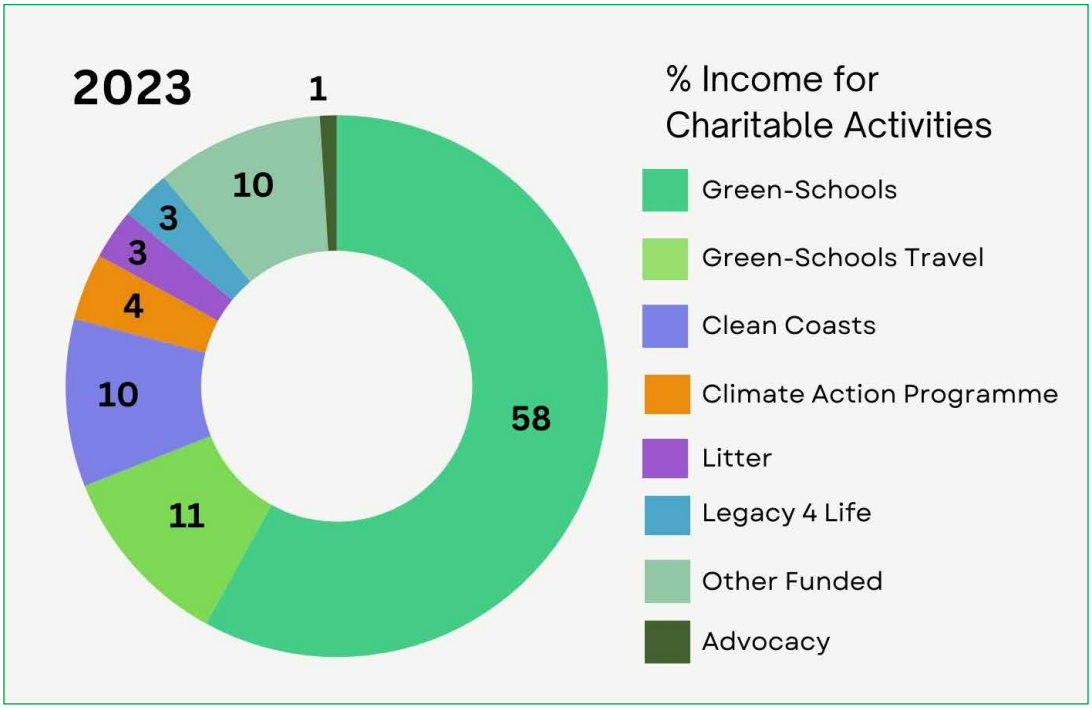


UNRESTRICTED INCOME 2023



Income from:	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
Donations and legacies	1,140,105	511,773	1,651,878	372,534
Charitable activities	112,066	8,718,490	8,830,556	8,136,039
Investments	201	0	201	173
	1,252,372	9,230,263	10,482,635	8,508,746

INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES



The main driver of our increased income is the donation for the acquisition of the property at 5 Foster Place as well as further expansion of An Taisce Green Schools Travel and Safe Routes to School in collaboration with the NTA and Department of Transport.

EXPENDITURE

An Taisce's expenditure has 3 categories:

Salaries

Colleagues work directly on our activities. Their work is led by a team of managers supported by a Finance Director, Education Director, and CEO.

Employee Remuneration is the largest cost category in An Taisce and is detailed in note 9 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 2023, An Taisce's central costs included rent, 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. Towards the end of 2023, An Taisce vacated the offices at Swift Alley, Dublin 8 and terminated the lease on that building, thus removing that building's rent from our costs for 2024 and beyond. This will be replaced by a smaller maintenance cost from the upkeep of 5 Foster Place, a listed Georgian Building.

Included in central costs is the remuneration of the senior management team. During 2023, An Taisce had a team of three senior managers, increasing to four at the beginning of 2024. Details of these costs are included in note 9 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.

NET SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR

The results of the year are given on page 106.

RESERVES AND RESERVES POLICY

At 31st December 2023, An Taisce had total reserves of €2,676,066 (2022: €1,629,101). This is divided between restricted and unrestricted reserves.

UNRESTRICTED RESERVES

At 31st December 2023, An Taisce had unrestricted reserves of €1,423,627 (2022: €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 as required for each relevant funding agreement.

NET ASSETS

An Taisce's net assets are €2,676,066. The large increase in fixed assets this year from €28,299 in 2022 to €1,203,934, can primarily be attributed to the purchase of 5 Foster Place. Bank balances of €1,718,094 and accounts receivable and accrued income of €791,162 are the main component of current assets of €2,560,062. This is offset by deferred income of €310,723, accruals and provisions of €15,000, other creditors of €376,039 and bank overdrafts of €386,168.

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 2023 and beyond into 2024. A budget for 2024 has been approved, which indicates that An Taisce will be in a positive unrestricted fund position on 31st December 2024 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.

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.

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.

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.

Community and Society, and Organisation

- Implementing our Strategic Plan including determining success metrics for each Strategic Objective.
- Introduce structured 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 CRM database to better communicate with our stakeholders, particularly Members, Schools, and Coastal and Volunteer groups.



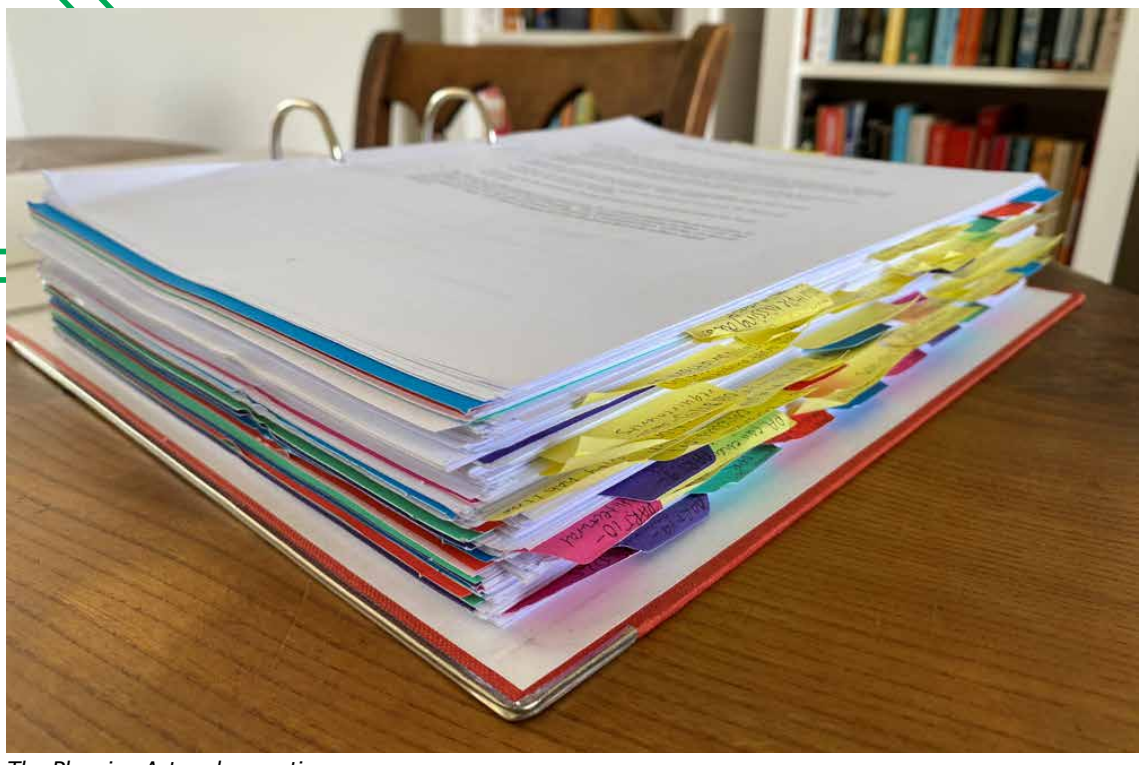




DIRECT CONTACTS WITH GOVERNMENT

Planning Bill

- A major focus for Advocacy in 2023 was the draft Planning and Development Bill. It is the third largest piece of legislation in the history of the State and is overhauling the current Planning Act. While there are some positive aspects of bill, it very problematically restricts public participation and access to justice while also centralising power in the hands of the Minister. Ultimately, the bill, if passed, will almost certainly lead to years of litigation and delays, hampering delivery of key projects in housing and renewable energy.
- We engaged extensively on the Bill, appearing before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage as part of their pre-legislative scrutiny of the bill and making an in-depth written submission. Many of our recommendations were accepted by the Committee, but unfortunately most of the Committee's recommendations were rejected by the Minister.
- We engaged with TDs and Government Departments throughout the year to try to improve the draft Bill and bring it into compliance with our various legal obligations around environmental protection and public participation. We also worked on raising public awareness of Bill which is crucial since it will shape our natural and built environments for decades.
- The final version of the Bill was published in November, and we will be working hard on it again in 2024, particularly around amendments.



The Planning Act under scrutiny



Planning Officer Phoebe Duvall presenting at a Committee hearing on the Planning Bill

Another key area for Advocacy was the review of the National Planning Framework (NPF). An Taisce is represented on the Planning Advisory Forum, the focus of which in 2023 was the NPF revision. Our priorities included updating NPF policies to adequately address the climate and biodiversity crises as well as improving the NPF to better deliver on its sustainable compact growth objectives. We also took a lead role in highlighting various environmental legal compliance issues. The draft revised NPF is due for publication in mid-2024, and we will be reviewing it in-depth at that point.

An Taisce was a key participant in the legislative process for the Historic and Archaeological Heritage Bill 2023. We gave evidence to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing, Local Government during their pre-legislative scrutiny sessions. They took onboard many of our suggestions, but ultimately, those recommendations were rejected by the Department and did not make it into the final law.

The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate and Environment considered the recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly, and requested written input from An Taisce on the topic of the mandates of Bord na Mona and Coillte, and the ongoing validity of the Arterial Drainage Act.

The Joint Oireachtas Committee further recommended their mandates be assessed, and that the Arterial Drainage Act be reviewed, in keeping with our asks.

Water Quality – EU representations

- In 2023 there was a significant focus on agricultural pollution of Irish waterways.
- This culminated in a visit by Commissioner Sinkevičius to Ireland to address a group of stakeholders, primarily agri-business stakeholders, along with 3 representatives from eNGOs, including An Taisce.
- The outcome of the meeting, and the process leading up to it, was that the upper limit of Ireland's derogation was reduced from 2024 onwards. That means, that farmers previously authorised to spread up to 250 kg/ha/year of organic nitrogen can now only spread 220 kg/ha/year.
- An Taisce raised their water quality concerns bilaterally with the European officials dealing with this brief throughout 2023, and directly with the Commissioner during his visit.
- The River Basin Management Plan is due to be published early in 2024. This will be a key piece of policy for the protection of water quality, and An Taisce will be fully reviewing that.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Nature: Climate & Biodiversity and Land & Water

- An Taisce LEAF planted 12 Choill Bheag woodlands at various sites across Ireland.
- Over 200 schools nationwide took part in the An Taisce GLOBE Air Quality Campaign.
- An Taisce awarded 84 beaches and 10 Marinas a Blue Flag Award, and 65 beaches received our Green Coast Award
- 101 sites received An Taisce's Green Flag for Parks Award.
- Advanced legal action to protect water quality and biodiversity, and to uphold the ideals of public participation in decision making.
- An Taisce successfully re-tendered for the delivery of the SEAI Schools Energy Workshop Programme Commencement and delivery of An Taisce Legacy4Life focusing on pond development for aquaculture and organic farming.



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

Built environment: Heritage and Planning

- An Taisce's Safe Routes to School was designated as a Pathfinder project
- An Taisce continued to facilitate community, environmental and An Taisce groups meeting in Tailors Hall
- Contributed to the scrutiny of the new Planning Legislation
- Contributed to the review of the National Planning Framework
- Represented An Taisce on the Wexford Monuments Trust
- Acquisition of our new offices at 5 Foster Place, Dublin 2 in August 2023, a listed Georgian Building
- Took part in the selection processes for the Chair of An Bord Pleanála and Director of the Environmental Protection Agency
- Fulfilled our Prescribed Role by responding to planning applications and policy consultations in line with An Taisce's planning policies.

People: **Community & Society and Organisation**

- Celebration of 75 years of An Taisce with 22 events involving members, volunteers, and colleagues
- Celebration of 25 years of An Taisce Green-Schools
- Celebration of 20 years of An Taisce Clean-Coasts
- 9 campuses were successfully assessed or re-assessed for their Green Flags as part of An Taisce Green-Campus
- An Taisce was designated a Sustainable Development Goals Champion
- 500,000 active volunteers participated in An Taisce's National Spring Clean
- Trained 179 An Taisce Climate Ambassadors
- Further developed our membership with a focus on recruiting new and younger members including hundreds of third level students



An Choill Bheag planting



Chair Stuart McCaul at Members' Award ceremony



Heritage event at the Mansion House, Dublin



Legacy 4 Life community pond creation

OUR PEOPLE

How we deliver our activities

An Taisce is privileged to have committed and passionate employees and volunteers who are the key to delivering our activities. These groups work closely with funders, donors and in coordination with other NGOs and public bodies. An Taisce could not achieve its goals without the support of these groups.

Our Workforce

An Taisce's activities is led by a CEO with a team of 3 senior managers.

Over 100 colleagues work on our activities. The unity of purpose and commitment to delivery these activities with the best outputs possible is evident across our employees.

Our Members and Volunteers

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

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

There are tens of thousands of volunteers participating each year in programmes such as National Spring Clean, Clean-Coasts, Climate Ambassador and the many different school and campus-based initiatives.

Through our workforce, members, and volunteers, An Taisce has become part of the fabric of Irish society.



Advocacy staff with Paul Price of Climate Committee and An Taisce President Phil Kearney

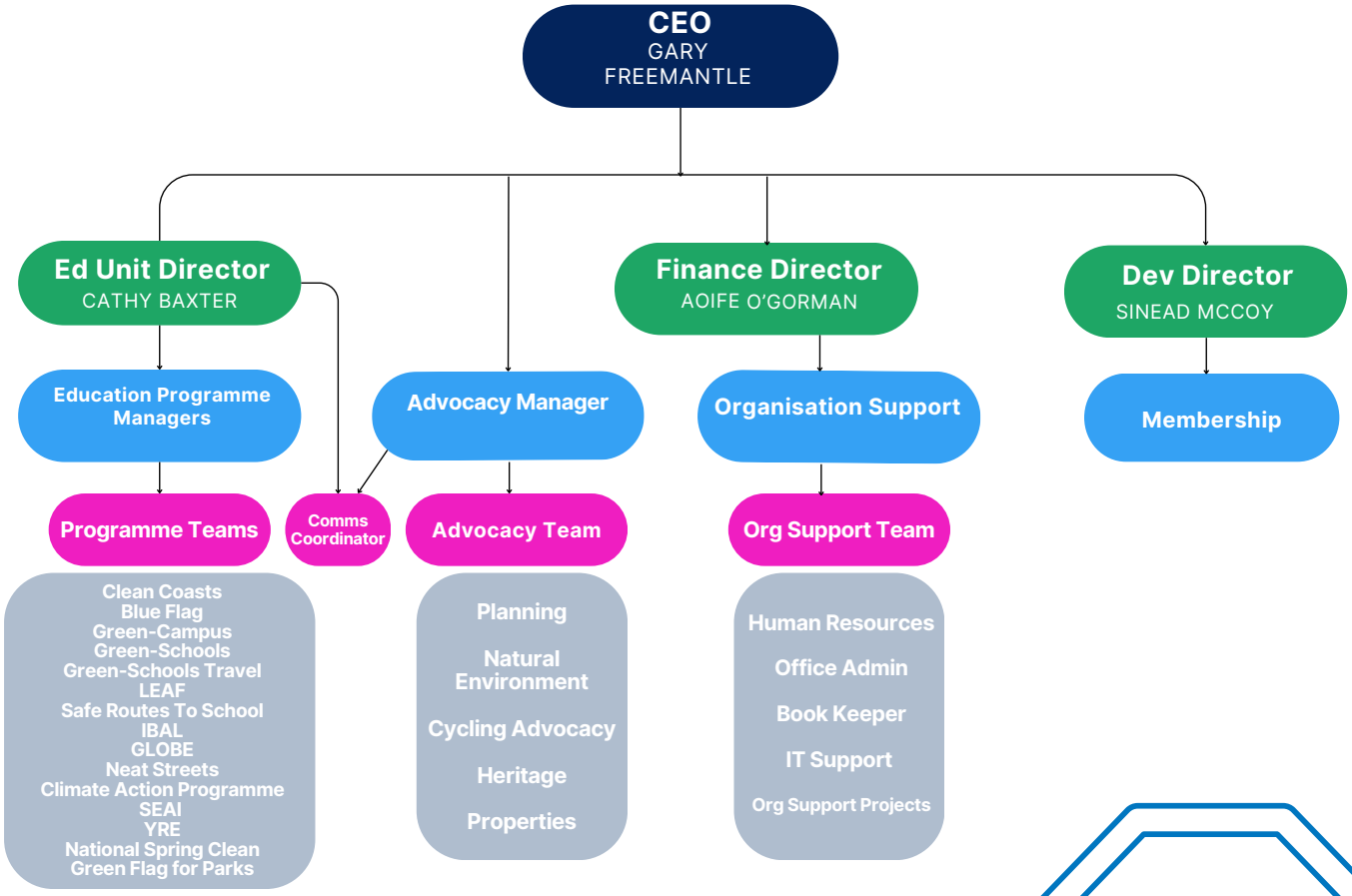


An Taisce staff at Lord Mayors Awards



Donegal Local Association at Glenveagh National Park

AN TAISCE ORGANISATION CHART 2024





Climate Action Team



Fenit Conservation Co Kerry Marram Grass Planting event



Heritage Walk in Cabinteely

PROPERTIES



1. **Tailors Hall**
2. **Foster Place**
3. **Morehampton Wildlife Sanctuary**
4. **Booterstown Marsh**
5. **Boyne Navigation**
6. **Babes 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. **Killaha West**
16. **Kanturk Castle**

One of the ways An Taisce fulfils its mission is through the ownership and management of various properties across the country.

Preservation and Conservation

An Taisce properties are not just structures or pieces of land; they are windows into Ireland's past and important markers of its environmental diversity. Each property tells a story, whether it's a historic building that has witnessed centuries of change or a natural reserve teeming with biodiversity.

One of the key aspects of An Taisce's work with these properties is preservation. Many of these sites are carefully maintained to ensure they retain their historical and ecological significance. From maintaining the integrity of ancient stone structures to protecting delicate ecosystems, An Taisce takes its role as custodian seriously.

Educational Opportunities

An Taisce properties are not only for preservation but also for education. Many of these sites are open to the public, providing valuable opportunities for visitors to learn about Ireland's history, culture, and environment.

The Boyne Navigation, managed by An Taisce, is one such property. This historic canal, once a bustling artery of Ireland's transportation network, now offers visitors a journey through time. The canal, which stretches from Drogheda to Navan, is a testament to Ireland's industrial past. We are indebted to members of the Meath Local Association and IWAI volunteers for their interest and upkeep of the canal.

In addition to historic canals, An Taisce properties include natural reserves and wildlife habitats. The Burren, a unique limestone landscape in County Clare, is one such property. Visitors to The Burren can

explore its otherworldly terrain, home to rare flora and fauna, while learning about the importance of preserving such delicate ecosystems.

We were also delighted to celebrate one of our most treasured properties, the Grove on Morehampton Road, Dublin. On Culture Night in September, we opened the doors of Tailors Hall where artist John Roch Simons introduced his upcoming exhibition entitled Intention, Place and Legacy. These beautiful works introduced the public to Kathleen Goodfellow and her legacy, given to An Taisce in 1980. The Grove also featured on the An Taisce RTÉ Nationwide special, along with Booterstown Marsh.

Community Engagement

An Taisce properties serve as focal points for community engagement and involvement. Local communities often play a role in the preservation and upkeep of these sites, fostering a sense of ownership and pride.

Volunteer programmes, guided tours, and educational workshops are frequently organised at these properties, inviting people of all ages to connect with their heritage and environment. Whether it's a guided walk through a nature reserve or a workshop on traditional crafts, An Taisce properties offer diverse ways for the public to engage with Ireland's rich tapestry of culture and nature.

Looking to the Future

As Ireland continues to develop and evolve, the work of An Taisce in preserving its properties becomes increasingly important. These sites are not just relics of the past; they are living, breathing entities that contribute to Ireland's identity and well-being.

Through its dedication to conservation, education, and community involvement, An Taisce ensures that future generations will have the opportunity to appreciate and learn from these valuable assets. The organization's commitment to sustainability and responsible stewardship ensures that An Taisce properties will continue to inspire, educate, and protect Ireland's natural and cultural heritage for years to come.

In conclusion, An Taisce properties stand as beacons of Ireland's past and guardians of its future. From historic canals to natural reserves, each property represents a chapter in Ireland's story, inviting us to explore, learn, and connect with the country's rich heritage. We will continue to develop and enhance our role as a national trust, preserving history for future generations.



Booterstown Marsh



Foster Place Front



RTE Nationwide filming in The Grove



Tailors Hall training day setup

LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

Local associations within An Taisce remain actively engaged in various activities, including managing An Taisce Properties, participating in planning discussions regarding the local environment, and organizing events. The local associations find strength in their collective efforts, recognizing the impact they can make when united. If you want to get involved locally, or even start a group where there is none, please contact us.

DONEGAL

Donegal Local Association- Annual Report 2023

Practically all the activity of Donegal Local Association is aimed at raising awareness of An Taisce, its aims and objectives and raising awareness of the treasures of the landscape, built heritage, archaeology, and biodiversity of Donegal. The association undertook a number of projects, walks and other activities, culminating in a Local Association Day hosted by An Taisce in Letterkenny.

- **Project - River Lennon – A Wildlife Corridor 2023 - Guided Walks.**

The objective was to raise awareness of the dramatic decline in the number and spatial distribution of "Blue Dot sites" (sites with high water quality) in the county (and in the country) since the 1970s to the present, and to highlight the value of rivers and streams as wildlife corridors.

These walks were enabled by a grant from the Donegal Local Area Water Programme (LAWPRO). The project consisted of 5 Guided walks (including a canoe trip) in the upper River Lennon Catchment.

- **Annual Butterfly walk**

Sheskinmore (machair) is the top butterfly site in Co Donegal with a recorded 21 species of butterflies with abundant wildflowers including orchids. An Taisce Donegal has had an annual guided Butterfly Walk there for the past 7 years. This years' walk was guided by Maurice Simms, one of our committee.

- **Guided Tree Walk & History of the Stewart Bam Estate – Ards Friary, Creeslough Co Donegal,**
- **"Association Day" in Letterkenny Sat Nov 25th, 2023**

This event was organised by the Association with the assistance of An Taisce Membership.

The event was chaired by Declan O'Carroll. Speakers were Gary Freemantle, An Taisce CEO, Phoebe Duvall, Planning & Environmental Officer Alena Kunkel, Donegal Clean Coasts Programme Officer, Noel Foley Donegal Local Association. There was time afterward for networking over tea and sandwiches. The latter proved a valuable addition for informal conversations.

We continue to have representatives on Donegal Co Council Heritage Forum, and the Errigal Stakeholders Group/ASCENT project.

We continued to maintain the May McClintock Butterfly Garden in Letterkenny, and sponsored and formed part of the judging panel for the May McClintock Wildlife Friendly Garden Competition in association with Letterkenny Tidy Towns.



Stalkers Hut



Trip along the upper catchment of the River Lennon

MEATH

The main Strategic Objectives of the Meath Association is the preservation of the natural and built environment i.e. our heritage which we achieve through.

1. Overseeing the restoration of the Boyne Navigation by working closely with IWAI and Meath County Council and
2. Organising social outings
3. Educational talks on the environment and historical properties
4. Engaging with other local environmental groups e.g. Bat Conservation Ireland, BirdWatch Ireland
5. Being represented on the PPN under the environmental pillar
6. Being represented on the Meath Heritage Forum
7. Contacts with Meath Historical and Slane Historical Society

At local level our focus is on organising social and cultural outings for members. County Louth is included as they have no active local association, and they strongly support our activities.

In 2023 we held AGM at An Tobar, Navan where Ian Lumley gave a slide show. The AGMs allow us invite key people from An Taisce who members might never meet otherwise.

In June visited Hillsborough Castle in County Down, Followed by Killineer House and Beaulieu House in Drogheda in July. All venues had wonderful gardens where members saw different garden designs and habitats, biodiversity at its best. Members also learned from the owners the best horticultural practices for growing in walled and organic kitchen gardens.



Beaulieu House



Beaulieu House

To commemorate 75 years of An Taisce and Heritage Week Geoffrey Clarke along with Stephen Earley, Chairperson of Boyne Navigation Branch of IWAI gave a tour and history talk on the restoration of the lock gates at Oldbridge in August. The final event was a Christmas party at Teltown House, which sits close to the site of the historical Tailteann Games. Prior to the lunch members visited Donaghpatrick Church.

The outings have a number of impacts.

- Events are educational
- Promotes Climate Change and biodiversity awareness
- Enables members to get to know one another
- Provides a safe environment for many of the elderly members
- Provides a network to keep us informed of local cultural activities or planning issues in the county
- Non-members also welcome so it encourages them to join
- Due to the good reputation of An Taisce can organise visit private homes/venues that may not generally be open to the public

Planned activities for 2024 are the social and cultural diary with:

- AGM at Dalgan Park, 1st May
- May - Hamwood House, Dunboyne
- June - Barmeath Castle, Togher, Co. Louth
- July - Altamont gardens & other venue near Tullow

KILKENNY

During 2023 the Kilkenny Local Association of An Taisce continued its longstanding role in advocating for sustainable environmental management and heritage conservation. The committee meets monthly to consider, among other matters, planning proposals to Kilkenny County Council.

- A planning application for a major hotel development on a pivotal site that is part of the Irish Rail station complex was responded to over the 2022-2023 new-year period. A decision is still awaited. We made a robust submission to what we regard as its unattractive 'brutalist' design in a city-edge location. Its immediate neighbourhood includes attractive vernacular 19th c. housing, with archaeological and historic sites close by, and an imposing parish church directly opposite.
- Other planning applications proposals to which we made submissions included one in the iconic Talbots Inch village, a major hotel at Johns Green, and yet another major hotel development at Hebron House just outside the Ring Road.
- We made a submission to the Abbey Quarter Masterplan located at the large city centre site of the former Smithwick's brewery. Despite its huge size and location there is not a single house built on-site as yet, despite a national housing crisis. The Council emphasis is for large business to locate there, despite the post Covid phenomenon of working-from-home, and many recently vacated business and retail premises. Large former city centre schools are locating to rural sites outside the city boundary which will be car or bus dependent, despite national policies to encourage walking and cycling. The bigger rural towns in the county have benefitted from excellent Council investment and restoration projects, notably Callan, as well as Castlecomer, Thomastown, and Graiguenamanagh. Disappointingly, a protected 19th century two-storey gable wall containing medieval elements and supported by ugly steel-scaffolding, remains in Kilkenny city centre a decade after the original vernacular terrace was destroyed. The An Taisce-proposed solution from the outset has been to construct a new house on the same footprint as the original, incorporating the gable wall in its structure.
- We had field trips to Altamont House and Gardens, to Jenkinstown Woods and Dunmore Woods. The newly appointed Biodiversity Officer of Kilkenny County Council met and spoke to us of her plans and proposals for biodiversity protection and enhancement.
- The committee consists of Brian Hamilton, Ann Tierney, Maria Dollard, Martin Rochford and Mary Rice and they have a variety of expertise and life experience that contributes enormously to absorbing discussion. We welcome potential new members who would contribute to the variety of opinions and insightful meetings.

CLARE

Clare Local Association is involved in the upkeep of two An Taisce properties, The Weigh House at Gort, Co Galway, and a site on the Burren – Gortlecka

2023 Activities included

- Bat walk in grounds of Dromoland Castle in August
- An Taisce 75th anniversary event at the Inn at Dromoland
- Annual field trip in May to the Burren to view flora and fauna at the An Taisce property there.

DUN LAOGHAIRE

- 2023 kicked off with a walk and talk at Booterstown Marsh Nature Reserve with Sean Hogan and a month later volunteers took part in our National Spring Clean.
- Ecologist Catriona Brady began phase 1 of the Borrer's Saltmarsh Grass Habitat Amelioration project and carried out a plant walking survey of the marsh and Blackrock Park.
- During the summer Dr Roisin Nash and colleagues from the Atlantic Technological University continued their onsite research on the edible mussel bed and finalised two Masters Theses on pollution in the marsh.
- In October we enjoyed good weather for our autumn Spring Clean and welcomed our overseas bird migrants. We met with UCD SCORE project leaders who are carrying out water tests in the Williamstown Creek SPA while meetings were held with Irish Rail, DLR's Anne Murray and NPWS.

- We thank LAWPRO, DLRCoCo, NPWS, Clean Coasts and all who volunteered for their support throughout the year.
- Bord Pleanála, in the face of our objections, gave planning permission for a Leisure Centre on the adjoining land north of the Marsh. We also lodged an observation on the Dalguise Development which is now the subject of a judicial review. Our Planning Committee is in need of new members. If anyone in the area is interested please make contact.

Rebecca Jeffares Hon. Sec.

GALWAY

The Galway Planning Committee continues to have input into development and infrastructure in the city and surrounding areas.

Of concern in 2023 has been water quality due to and limited wastewater treatment capacity. In August we called for more accurate, reliable, and transparent reporting of water quality at beaches in Galway City. This followed a posting on the Galway City Council Facebook Page. The posting reported "Excellent" water quality at Ballyloughane when it was tested on Monday 31st July 2023.A check on the EPA-run www.beaches.ie website found that the water quality at Ballyloughane Beach on Monday 31st July 2023 was actually "Poor", not "Excellent", with E.coli and Intestinal Enterococci at very high levels where are unsafe for swimming. An Taisce called the Facebook Posting by Galway City Council very misleading".

A submission was made on the application for construction of a new 949 cubic metre underground storage tank. The underground storage tank will provide additional wastewater storage capacity to the Merlin Park pumping station. While Mutton Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (built 20 years ago) to process 170,000 p/e the pipework leading to it from east and west of the city does not have matching capacity, resulting in regular discharges of untreated wastewater into the Galway Bay SAC.

Complaints were made to the council regarding unauthorised short-term letting and its effect on the housing shortage in the city. Other submissions were made in relation to proposed hotel, housing and retail developments. Housing development is considered to be moving at a very slow place. Neither LDA project (Dyke Road, Sandy Road) have been progressed to build stage after 3-5 years and no plans to build on the docklands have been progressed.

Another pressing planning issue in Galway City is limited public transport. The committee has made a submission to the Dublin Road Bus Connects project. The City and County Councils have no Plan B to the proposed Ring Road/ Bypass which is unlikely to be approved by An Bord Pleanála. The option of Bus Connects+ Public Transport has been progressed on only one side of the city (Dublin Road) whereas it is needed on all approach roads.

LIMERICK

The Branch remained active throughout 2023, with six branch meetings over the course of the year. As a branch we remained vigilant to a number of developments occurring across the city and also submitted observations on a number of new proposals from the city council. Below is a selection of our activities for the year 2023.

- On-going observation of 46 Nicholas St. Limerick where the owner has illegal erected an extension to a heritage building. The site is currently before the courts.
- Observations on a number of planning applications, which we felt were of poor-quality design and not in keeping with the area.
- On-going efforts to get Cleeves House (part of Cleeves factory and a Limerick 2030 development site) on the protection list.
- Newspaper article on a site in Thomas Street that partial collapsed highlighting the precarity of heritage buildings in the city.
- Observations on the planned new bus routes for the city.
- Submissions on the city council litter management policies.
- Ongoing observations and discussion on the future of Arthurs Quay Park which is endanger of being redeveloped.

AN TAISCE CORCAIGH - CORK CITY REPORT

The association continues to monitor planning and development matters in the Cork City area. 2023 saw relatively few major office and retail developments in the city centre area, the focus having moved downriver with the commencement of site clearance work for various significant South Docks development projects. Significant housing and apartment development proposals are also arising in suburban areas which tend to attract a large number of local submissions. In that context, An Taisce Corcaigh continues to focus mainly on the city centre and docklands zones, where very few third-party submissions are made.

In late-2023, a proposed apartment building on a prominent position on Pope's Quay, adjacent to St Mary's Dominican Church led to a submission seeking to have it reduced in height, given its proximity to this iconic neo-classical building on the north channel quayside and its location within the Shandon Architectural Conservation Area. At time of writing, the City Council have requested adjustments to the proposal.

Substantial works to a substantial Georgian house in Tivoli were brought to our attention in September. It appeared that Lotabeg House (NIAH 20864011) and grounds were being adapted for accommodation purposes without planning permission. We conveyed our strong concerns about this work to Cork City Council, stating that we had no objection to work being carried out to a protected structure but that this should be subject to a thorough planning assessment and best conservation advice in line with the relevant provisions of the current City Development Plan. A planning enforcement notice had already been issued to the owner by the council requesting that reinstatement works be carried out. An Taisce has been associated with this process at our request. In the meantime, the indications are that significant internal adjustments were made to the house and grounds before work was ceased. At the time of writing, we await a detailed response from the council on the enforcement process. In the meantime, there must be concern at the vulnerability of this property.

On 6th December 2023, association members met with Lord Mayor Cllr. Kieran McCarthy at the City Hall to mark his tenure and to update him on the work of the Cork association. We discussed a range of issues around planning and development, flood protection, public transport networks and urban rejuvenation. We thanked the Lord Mayor for his work on these issues, given his longstanding interest in conservation and related areas. A follow up meeting with council officials may be sought in 2024.

An important aspect of our planning submissions in the city over the years has been to seek not just restoration of individual buildings of merit, but also the rejuvenation of the streetscape in an appropriate manner. It is good to see, therefore, the restoration by 2023 of three important late-18th century protected buildings on Morrison's Island and their incorporation into a new hotel/office complex on the surrounding site. This development restores a sense of the original quayside architecture and significantly enhances the vista along the south channel of the Lee, showing what can be achieved by way of contemporary rejuvenation in the city centre. Sadly, not all such quayside developments in the city are of the same visual quality, including another major hotel being completed on the north channel, about which we have expressed concerns to the City Council.



Premier Inn Cork, Morrisons Quay credit Elliot Group, and Irish Building Magazine

MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

An Taisce Membership: A Voice for Climate and Heritage Advocacy

An Taisce, stands as a guardian of the nation's natural and built heritage. Its members are not just supporters but active participants in the preservation of Ireland's landscapes, biodiversity, and cultural treasures. Joining An Taisce is not just a membership; it is a commitment to safeguarding the environment and heritage for future generations.

Benefits of Membership:

1. Access to Ireland's Rich Heritage: An Taisce members gain exclusive access to some of Ireland's most natural and historic sites.
2. Educational Opportunities: Membership offers a plethora of educational experiences, from guided nature walks to historical lectures. These events provide members with deeper insights into Ireland's history, ecology, and conservation efforts.
3. Discounts and Offers: An Taisce members enjoy discounts on eco-friendly products, outdoor gear, and even entry to select cultural attractions. These rewards make sustainable living more accessible and affordable.
4. Quarterly Magazine: Stay informed with An Taisce's quarterly magazine, packed with articles on environmental issues, heritage preservation, and member stories. It is a window into the ongoing work and achievements of the organization and its members.
5. Community Engagement: Joining An Taisce connects individuals to a community of like-minded people passionate about preserving Ireland's natural and cultural heritage. From local clean-up events to advocacy campaigns, members can actively participate in making a difference.

Student Membership

For students, An Taisce offers a unique opportunity to engage with environmental and heritage conservation while enjoying tailored benefits:

1. Affordable Rates: Student memberships are offered a reduced rate of €2, making it accessible for young individuals passionate about conservation and heritage.
2. Networking: Students can connect with professionals in environmental science, conservation, and heritage management through An Taisce's events and programs. These connections can be invaluable for future career paths.

Giving Voice to Advocacy:

The most compelling aspect of An Taisce membership is the opportunity to have a voice in vital advocacy efforts:

1. Environmental Advocacy: An Taisce is at the forefront of environmental advocacy in Ireland. Members contribute to campaigns addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and sustainable development which play a crucial role in shaping Ireland's environmental policies.



Membership Officer Annette McCaul


Members' Awards December 2023



Members' Awards Ceremony December 2023

2. Heritage Preservation: Ireland's rich heritage is under constant threat from development and neglect. An Taisce members actively work to protect historic buildings, landscapes, and archaeological sites. Their voices are heard in planning processes, ensuring that heritage is preserved for future generations to enjoy.

3. Policy Influence: An Taisce leverages the collective voice of its members to influence government policies. From advocating for stronger environmental regulations to promoting sustainable land use practices, members can have a direct impact on shaping Ireland's future.

4. Public Awareness: Through educational campaigns and media outreach, An Taisce members raise public awareness about pressing environmental and heritage issues. Whether it is highlighting the importance of biodiversity or celebrating Ireland's architectural gems, members amplify these messages to a broader audience.

We were delighted this year to have so many members join us for our 75th anniversary events. There was something for everyone, from field trips to heritage and climate talks, to art exhibitions, to name a few. We are also very grateful to those members who volunteered for events throughout the year.

In conclusion, An Taisce membership is not just about enjoying benefits; it is about being an active participant in the preservation and advocacy of Ireland's environment and heritage. From the student eager to learn and make a difference to the seasoned environmentalist looking to effect change, An Taisce offers a platform for all. By joining An Taisce, individuals gain more than membership—they gain a voice in a movement that is shaping the future of Ireland's natural and cultural legacy.

75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Overview of An Taisce's 75th Anniversary programme of events

The An Taisce 75th Anniversary year was book-ended with award ceremonies.

We were delighted to be chosen by Lord Mayor Caroline Conroy to be one of five organisations to receive one of her annual awards. There was a splendid ceremony in the Round Room of the Mansion House attended by many An Taisce staff and volunteers. The award was presented to the Chair, Phil Kearney, who was accompanied by Cathy Baxter, director of the Education Unit and Dr Elaine McGoff. The award - a striking and weighty piece of glass with an internal flame - is now on display in the new headquarters building in Foster Place.

In December we held our own award ceremony where Honorary Life memberships were conferred. Gold commemorative pins were also awarded to a small group of dedicated and longstanding volunteers. Amongst the Life memberships was Prof Joe Haughton, the last remaining founder member of An Taisce from the late 1940s. There is a fine video interview with Joe conducted by John Sweeney where he tells of his early experiences in the Dublin Naturalists' Field Club including outings with Robert Lloyd Praeger. Sadly, Joe has since passed away at the age of 104. His family have told us of how much the award meant to him and to them.

Dr Catherine McMullin of Kerry was also an award recipient at the same ceremony. She was a stalwart of An Taisce activities in the county and served on An Taisce Council for many years. Family members came to the award ceremony to represent her. She passed away shortly afterwards. We are glad we were able to recognise both for their vital contributions.

In between these events which acknowledged An Taisce's contributions to national wellbeing and recognised the core role of volunteers in that history, there was a series of events commemorating and celebrating the 75 years of commitment to 'protecting



Prof Kevin Anderson talk July 2023



Intention, Place and Legacy Art Exhibition opening at Tailors Hall. November 2023



Lord Mayors Awards 2023



Heritage talk Mansion House April 2023



Clare Island Group with John Feehan



Project 75 Organising Committee

Ireland's heritage, safeguarding its future'. These included:

A visit to Clare Island 'walking in the footsteps' of Robert Lloyd Praeger who conducted a ground-breaking ecological study there in the early 20th century. We were fortunate to be led by Dr John Feehan of the Royal Irish Academy who was an expert on the island's flora, fauna, and archaeology. This was a hugely successful and fully subscribed group outing supremely well organised by Annette McCaul, membership officer. It will no doubt be replicated in future.

A lecture series on climate and related issues started with a Heritage conversation in April in the Mansion House hosted by Dr Mark Clinton. Over the following months we heard from prominent climate scientists, Profs Kevin Anderson and John Sweeney, and the former Secretary General of the European Environmental Bureau, Jeremy Wates. The critical state of environmental breakdown was restated, and the significance of the forthcoming European elections highlighted. These were celebratory events with refreshments resulting in plenty of interaction and networking.

An Taisce was hosted at a garden party in Áras an Uachtaráin in July. We want to record our thanks to President Michael D. Higgins for this special honour and for his continuing support of An Taisce over many years. A wide range of staff, members, and friends of An Taisce attended the memorable event. The role of Board member, Rónán O'Brien, in liaising with the President's staff to facilitate this highlight of the anniversary year's programme is acknowledged.

Towards the end of the year, An Taisce was featured in a special episode of RTE's Nationwide. This programme covered a wide range of our activities including Clean Coasts and Green Schools and highlighted some of our nature reserve properties such as The Grove and Booterstown Marsh. There were interviews with CEO Gary Freemantle, EEU director Cathy Baxter, Head of Advocacy Elaine McGoff, and Clare-based volunteer and Legacy4LIFE staff member, Theresa O'Donohoe. The programme emerged from a close collaboration between presenter Anne Cassin and our Operations Manager, Sinéad Owens.

The commemorative anniversary programme included many more events, some at local level, and too many to record here. Thanks to all who contributed to marking this highly significant milestone in An Taisce's history. The organising committee was chaired by Gary Freemantle, Annette McCaul and Sinead Owens were key players, supported by Board members Rónán O'Brien and Phil Kearney.

A theme running through the year was the escalating ecological crisis and the urgency for transformative action. We no longer have an assured future stretching before us. We do not have another seventy-five years to reverse biodiversity decline and loss of heritage. The anniversary underscored that An Taisce has a crucial role to play in addressing and mitigating these huge challenges.

Philip Kearney
President,
An Taisce

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ALIGNMENT

Green-Schools Pillars	
Green Schools Travel	
Safe Routes to Schools	
National Spring Clean	
Green Campus	
Globe	
Blue Flag	
Clean Coasts Communities,2 min Beach Clean, Events, Think Before You Flush	
LEAF including An Choill Bheag	
IBAL	
Green Flags for Parks	
SEAI workshops	
Neat Streets	
Climate Ambassador Programme	
Young Reporters for the Environment	
Advocacy including Planning, Natural Environment and Cycling	
Legacy4Life – Ponds, Green Communities and Agri	

Community and Society

Organisation

Planning

Heritage

Climate & Biodiversity

Land and Water

GREEN-SCHOOLS

Green-Schools Website



SeaKeepers Project

Programme

Schools follow seven steps and renew their flag every two years. The steps are…

- Green-Schools committee
- Environmental Review
- Action Plan
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Curriculum work
- Informing and involving
- Green Code

Green-Schools is supported and sponsored by a variety of public and private organisations, many of which are linked to a specific theme or aspect of the programme. See our Partnerships and Funding section for details.

General Green-School Achievements 2023

- Green-Schools celebrated 25 years of the programme
- Message of congratulations from President Higgins "our schools have become laboratories for environmental innovation"
- 3677 schools and centres are now registered for the programme, with 3401 awarded at least one green flag (89percent of all schools in Ireland are registered with the programme)
- During the academic year 2022-2023, a total of 747 schools were awarded the Green Flag, 74 of which received the award for the first time.
- The award ceremonies were held during the month of May in Dublin, Meath, Donegal, Cork, Kilkenny, Athlone, Mayo, and Galway. They were attended by approximately 3000 students, staff, and parents.
- 78 teacher training seminars were held online by Green-Schools staff and a total number of 942 teachers attended.
- 16 teachers took part in a weeklong teacher training course entitled "Green-Schools and the SDGs" in conjunction with Globe Ireland. The course is approved by the Drumcondra Education centre and teacher received three EPV days on completion
- Over 100 teachers completed the "Climate Science and Action" teacher summer course which ran online in July and August.

- Launch of Let's Fix Fashion Campaign, screening of "A Textile Mountain" to 520 students across the country

Theme specific achievements

Litter and Waste:

73% of schools reduced the amount of general waste sent to landfill. 74% of schools noticed an increase in awareness of litter and waste issues and improved waste management practices. 66% of schools carried out a community clean up, 58% held an educational action day around reduce, re-use and recycling and an additional 30% took part in textile recycling with Clothespod.

Water

- 130 schools were awarded the Green Flag for their work on the Water theme
- 8th year of the Water Ambassador programme, 168 secondary school students participated from 56 secondary schools. 16percent increase in the number of schools. 75 teachers supported the ambassadors in their endeavours.
- 10 in person water workshops (5 primary and 5 secondary school)
- 4 regional water workshops, with over 120 attendees, the feedback was very positive, with teachers praising the hands-on nature of the workshops with plenty of practical ideas that could be carried out back in schools
- 3 regional walk for water campaigns were held in Wicklow, Sligo and Killarney National parks. There were 175 students, 33 teachers and 10 Uisce Eireann representatives in attendance.
- 4 regional primary schools and 4 regional secondary schools were selected as Water Schools of the Year for their region, in addition two of the regional winners were chosen as National Water school of the Year for Primary and Secondary.
- 2955 entries were received for the Water Poster competition in 2023, a 74 percent increase on the previous year.

Global Citizenship Marine Environment

- 72 schools were awarded the Green Flag for their work on the GC Marine Environment theme
- 6 regional primary schools workshops took place. They were entitled "Life Below Water". Over180 primary school students took part and learned about the importance of protecting our marine ecosystems
- It was the 5th year of the very popular Seakeeper programme, 110 primary school classes took part from 61 schools. Classes learn about specific native marine species including, basking shark, mackerel, common limpet, bladder wrack, ouster catcher and grey seal.
- 2 marine film club events took place in cinemas, two episodes of "Our Planet" narrated by David Attenborough were shown to 69 students and teachers from 3 secondary schools, with special guest speakers
- Marine week took place from 24th -28th April, an online weeklong event celebrating the marine environment. 265 teachers from primary, post-primary and special schools registered to take part with their classrooms, an estimated reach of approximately 10,000 individuals.



Let's Fix Fashion Walk 2023



Marine Conference 2023



Green-Schools Awards 2023



Green-Schools Awards 2023

- Marine creative writing competition entitle "The Mysterious Deep" was run again in 2023 and received 350 entries.

Global Citizenship Litter and Waste and Energy themes

- **173 schools were awarded a flag for their work on these themes.**
- The Green-Schools Let's Fix Fashion Campaign launched its second year in October 2022 and ran until May 2023. The campaign was open to students in secondary schools that were actively working on Litter and Waste, and Global Citizenship themes. A total of 30 schools participated across the country. 4 online webinars took place in 2023 and the campaign culminated in the live catwalk event where 5 participating schools were chosen to take part and show case their thrifted, upcycled and swapped outfits on the catwalk.
- The Global Classrooms project included 4 linked online events for 11 Irish schools, 3 South African schools, 7 Kenyan Schools and 1 school from UAE. The events created peer to peer learning opportunities for participants.
- Global Goals Week took place online to support the students learning on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It was co facilitated with our FEE colleagues in Kenya and South Africa. Over 15,000 primary schools here in Ireland were engaged in the week. They learned about `taking action to reduce world hunger, reduce climate change and reduce inequalities.
- Design thinking classroom workshops took place in 11 schools, engaging 242 schools through in person workshop on 7 of the SDGs.
- The Global Goals book club continued, and seven more books were added in 2023
- It was the second year of the Global Goals Advent calendar which runs in the December, with a reach of over 20,000 people through social media, it creates great learning opportunities for schools on the SDGs
- Climate classrooms training sessions were developed in conjunction with Designathon Works in the Netherlands for primary school teachers using design thinking methodologies and addressing Climate Change and Global/ Climate Justice issues.
- Six primary school teachers and 15 student teachers from the Froebel Department in Maynooth University were trained under this project.
- 4 regional primary schools and 4 regional secondary schools were selected as Global Citizenship Schools of the Year for their region, in addition two of the regional winners were chosen as National Global Citizenship school of the Year for Primary and Secondary.

Biodiversity

- 148 schools achieved the Green Flag for work on Biodiversity and Global Citizenship Biodiversity
- National Tree Week took place during March 2023 the Green-Schools Biodiversity team collaborated with LEAF Ireland (www.leafireland.org) and GLOBE Ireland to support schools with live webinars, online lesson plans, activities, fact sheets and quizzes. We held three live webinars which focused on Phenology, Irish Tree Mythology and Tree Communication. 113 classes attended these webinars.
- Green-Schools ran a weeklong programme of events for schools during National Biodiversity Week in May 2023. Each day focused on a different animal or plant species with the final day showing how they all connected in an ecosystem. 122 classes joined during the live events and a further 165 watched the recordings on our Green-Schools You-Tube channel. In total approx. 13,000 individuals were reached during the week.
- 6737 trees were planted this school year.
- Schools also created other spaces and food sources for wildlife including 301 wildflower gardens, 216 leaf or log piles and 626 bird feeders.
- Schools working on the GS Food and Bio theme grow 10 food crops with an incredible 36 different crops in total being grown.

FEEDBACK Quotes form school applications

"Working on the Green School program within a school can bring about numerous positive highlights, contributing to the overall well-being of the school community and the environment. It fosters a sense of environmental responsibility among students, teachers, and staff. It promotes a culture of sustainability and conservation within the school community. It enhances the educational experience by integrating real-world environmental issues into the curriculum. It provides hands-on learning experiences that connect theoretical knowledge to practical applications. It strengthens ties between the school and the local community. It encourages innovative thinking and creative problem-solving. Provided a platform for students and staff to develop and implement new ideas for sustainable practices".

"Collaborating with students beyond our own classrooms was truly rewarding. Their boundless enthusiasm and eagerness to engage in our initiatives and workshops was inspiring. Our experience on the Green School Committee has been invaluable, providing us with abundant learning opportunities".

"The children's knowledge of the connection between all our animals, birds, plants, and flowers have greatly increased. An increased comprehension of the local flora and fauna."

"The Green Schools programme is great for educating pupils about environmental issues, sustainability, and the importance of conservation. It allows pupils to engage in meaningful discussions and activities that foster a deeper understanding of their role in protecting the environment. Pupils become actively involved in initiatives such as waste reduction, energy conservation, and biodiversity enhancement, which empowers them to make positive changes in their school and community".

"Children have gained a better awareness of their local environment; children are more aware of the importance's of saving water not only locally but globally."

New for this academic year 2023-2024

- In November 2023 "Green-Skills Week" was introduced for the first time offering a 30-minute webinar on different topics daily to secondary school students. They learned how to hold a committee meeting, run a communications campaign, how to write an email to senior management, facilitations skills and much more. Over 150 students attended the week.
- Development of yearlong projects for schools who have completed all ten themes of the Green-Schools programme is ongoing and will be launched in September 2024 to eligible schools.
- New Irish Language officer was hired in Feb 2024 to help create more Irish language resources and to further support Gaelscoil and Gaelcholáiste in their work on the programme.
- The Green-Schools website was updated and will be relaunched in April 2024.
- We are looking forward to the arrival of students and teachers from Kenya and our FEE partner from Kenya as we embark on an exchange programme for the Let's Fix Fashion project in April 2024.

GREEN-SCHOOLS TRAVEL

Green-Schools Travel Website



AndSheCycles Awards

Green-Schools Travel Programme (encompassing Green-Schools Travel and Global Citizenship Travel Themes)

About: 29 staff working across Ireland, funding provided by the NTA through the Department of Transport.

2023 Achievements:

- 569 schools across 31 Local Authority areas actively engaged in a Travel theme nationwide in 2023. These schools received the support dedicated Travel Officers to tailor the Green-Schools Travel programme to their specific needs.
- Over 158K students from 432 primary,130 post-primary and seven non-mainstream education centres participated were engaged in a Travel theme in 2023
- 123 schools were awarded their first Green Flag award for the Travel theme in 2023.
- 61 schools revisited the Travel theme through the Global Citizenship Travel theme and were awarded their ninth Green Flag in 2023.
- 88% of awarded schools recorded an increase in walking to school
- 20 Get in Gear cycle training for adults/parents were delivered by GST staff
- 157 Walkability Audits were conducted
- 400 scooter training workshops were delivered.

Events throughout 2023:

Big Travel Challenge 2023

During February schools across Ireland were invited to take part in this year's GST competition: the Big Travel Challenge. This year's challenge was promoted to schools active on Green-Schools Travel themes via a mailed letter and poster and all awarded Travel schools (over 4,000 email recipients) were sent an email. This year the BTC included two new prize categories: a Staffroom Challenge where teachers are asked to promote sustainable travel in the staffroom and report back on modal shift or share stories of personal change from the Big Travel Challenge in moving to sustainable travel. The programme also added a new TikTok Challenge encouraging schools to share their Big Travel Challenge journey via social media. As the mid-term takes place during February applications from schools were accepted into March and from late January to allow schools to do 10 consecutive days for the challenge.

Big Travel Challenge Awards 2023

The annual Big Travel Challenge Awards took place in Dublin Zoo on Tuesday, April 25th. The event celebrated the winners of the annual Travel competition. At the event 12 schools were awarded, with ten schools making the journey to Dublin Zoo for the event. The winning school, Ireland's Travel School of the Year, was St. Brigid's National School, Meath Hill, for their Park 'n' Stride efforts.



Travel Awards 2023

Scoot to School Week 2023

Green-Schools celebrated Scoot to School Week 2023 from Monday, March 27th to Friday, March 31st. Prior to Scoot to School Week a working group devised new resources for schools taking part in the week along with a new obstacle course challenge to encourage students to create scooting obstacle courses in their school grounds. During the week officers were busy promoting scooting via SOW Days (Scoot on Wednesday), scooter training sessions and more.

#AndSheCycles Ambassador Programme

In 2023 the #AndSheCycles Ambassador Programme continued to support the 2022/2023 group of #AndSheCycles ambassadors through online interaction and support and in-person training. In February the group met in Athlone for a training day focused on communications, community participation and networking. In May the group joined an online celebration to mark International Women's Day.

#AndSheCycles Awards 2023

The third annual #AndSheCycles awards were held at Richmond Barracks, Inchicore, Dublin on May 4th. A total of 31 ambassadors were awarded ambassador status this year. Each ambassador received an #AndSheCycles medal, and five Outstanding Ambassadors were awarded for their exceptional commitment to the programme and enterprising and inspiring ways of promoting cycling in their schools and communities.

Bike Week 2023

Bike Week 2023 was a great success for all participating Green-Schools and Travel Officers were keen to celebrate with their schools. Officers worked closely with schools, local authorities, and sports partnerships to deliver events across the country for communities. National COW Day took place on Wednesday, May 19th and from preliminary numbers returned to Green-Schools: 4,129 students cycled to school for National COW Day.

Green Flag Awards 2022/2023

During May the Green-Schools team was busy organising and hosting Green Flag Award ceremonies across the country. 747 schools nationwide received their flags throughout the month with 123 schools awarded for the Travel theme and 61 awarded for the Global Citizenship Travel theme. Ceremonies were held in Dublin; Kilkenny; Athlone; Galway; Mayo; Donegal and Cork for the first season of in-person awards since 2019.

Walk to School Week 2023

October 2-6. Walk to School Week was a busy week for Travel Officers and schools around the country taking part in this annual call to action event. This was the first time we celebrated Walk to School Week in October, and it was welcomed by schools who can find September events overwhelming at the start of the academic year. Walk to School Week coverage included national and regional radio interviews and news items.



Walk to School 2023

Teacher Training Seminars

In September and October Primary and Secondary School Seminars were hosted by Green-Schools Travel. These focused at introducing teachers and students to the Travel themes in their first year of working on the programmes.

Green Skills Week

November 2023. Green Skills Week is a new event from the Green-Schools Programme in direct response to feedback from secondary school students about their desire to build skills while working on Green-Schools. Travel Officers were among the daily presenters offering online training in real world administrative and project skills.

Clean Air Week 2023

November 16-20: In November we celebrated our annual call-to-action week focused on aspects related to clean air including engine idling, air monitoring and active travel promotion. This year we included an art competition asking schools to create banners focused on promoting active travel and clean air – we have picked five winners who will have their artwork transformed into a banner for their school to display. This year we also added a No Idling Survey to the event, the results of which will be available in our Annual Report for 2023. CAW featured on national TV and radio along with regional radio and news items.

Cycle Parking & Cycle Right Training Grants

Cycle Parking (Oct-Dec 2023):

- 56 SRTS schools with complete cycle and/or scooter parking installed
- 32 GST schools with complete cycle and/or scooter parking installed

2024 applications

- A total of 151 applications have been received for the cycle and scooter parking funding for 2024 - these are SRTS and Travel schools who have not received any type of parking from SRTS in the last 3 years.

Cycle Training (2023):

- 173 schools applied for cycle training in 2023 and received grants
- 6012 pupils trained nationally

2024 Outlook

Big Travel Challenge: Our annual competition has had a facelift for 2024 and will focus on county-level competition between schools with regional and national winners to be awarded for efforts promoting active and sustainable travel to school. This year we will also include our popular Staffroom Challenge element so teachers can focus on travel to school too.

Scoot to School Week moved: As we have refreshed the BTC we have decided to move Scoot to School Week to June, when primary schools (main audience for push/kick scooters) are still in session and can enjoy many outdoor scooting workshops

In 2024 we will deliver four Bus in the City events: 4 x regional bus events geared at raising awareness of bus use and public transport links in Limerick, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Athlone.

Training: In April staff will avail of customised training from psychologists focused on exploring the links between psychology and climate change and supporting the team as daily practitioners in their professional and personal lives.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Safe Routes to School Website



Scooter parking delivered at Tagaot National School, Wexford

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Programme was developed in partnership by the NTA and Green-Schools, An Taisce, in 2020, as a response to the need to support schools to increase walking and cycling to school.

Aims of the SRTS Programme:

- Improve safety at the school gate by providing 'front of school' treatments to alleviate congestion and improve access
- Improve access routes to school by improving walking and cycling infrastructure; and
- Increase the number of students who cycle to school by expanding the amount of cycle parking

2023 Achievements

- 278 schools across Rounds 1 (170) and 2 (108)
- 195 parent / guardian surveys in 2023, 366 cumulative surveys undertaken
- All 31 Local Authorities engaged in SRTS
- 678 cumulative schools received cycle and scooter parking
- 45 schools with works delivered to date

Before and after photos and some photos from launches and new cycle/scooter parking delivered linked below.



Gaelscoil Sáirséal, Limerick - Before



Gaelscoil Sáirséal, Limerick - After



Scoil Mhuire, Abbeyleix, Laois - Before



Scoil Mhuire, Abbeyleix, Laois - After



Gaelscoil Sáirséal - Launch of School Zone



Cycle parking delivered at Scoil Íde, Limerick



Gaelscoil Sáirséal - Launch of School Zone



Scoil Naomh Abbháin, Wexford - Launch of School Zone



Scoil Maelruain, South Dublin - Launch of their School Street

NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN

National Spring Clean Website

Campaign Overview

2023 saw the 24th edition of the National Spring Clean, Ireland's largest and most popular anti-litter initiative. Since its inception in 1999 the campaign aims encourages every sector of society to take responsibility for the environment by conducting clean-ups in their own local areas. The National Spring Clean (NSC) traditionally runs throughout the 'Spring' month of April, with the aim of raising awareness of the problem of litter nationally as we enter the summer months. But over the last couple of years the breath of the campaign has extended through the length of the summer.

2023 took the pattern of the traditional Spring Clean Campaign, with registrations being taken from late January, packs being sent out from late February and clean-ups and collections happening in March, April, and May, with a few carrying on through the Summer.

This year's campaign was very successful with 5,450 volunteers registering to take part and an estimated 2750 tonnes of litter were collected.

The campaign ran on in a smaller capacity into the summer months and the year ended off with the Spring Clean involvement with An Taisce Clean Coast's Big Beach Clean week in mid-September.

Spring Clean groups were invited to take part with the idea that all litter collected, anywhere on land, prevents litter entering our waterways and ending up in the sea. This cross-programme collaboration is a fantastic way of growing the Spring Clean's reach and efficacy and provides added value to the campaign.

The aims of this year's National Spring Clean were:

- Encourage clean-ups throughout the summer and autumn.
- Promote personal responsibility for litter.
- Heighten awareness of litter and waste issues.
- Highlight the importance of Recycling and Re-use in the wider environmental context.
- Foster community spirit through local environmental action.
- Ensure clean-ups happen in a safe environment.

National Spring Clean 2023 achieved these objectives.

In Summary:

- There were 5,450 clean-up events nationwide.
- An estimated 2,750 tonnes of litter were collected.
- Approximately 35% of the total amount of waste collected was recycled.



National Spring Clean Kit



Tidy Towns Spring Clean celebrates 25yrs

GREEN CAMPUS

Green Campus Website

The Green-Campus Programme encourages a partnership approach to environmental education, management, and action in third level institutions. The Programme primarily aims to ensure that members of a campus community can engage in a meaningful way to enhance sustainability on campus. It rewards long term commitment to continuous improvement from the campus community.

1. 2023 Ongoing/Significant activities

- The Green Campus Network Meeting took place in February 2023 with delegates from participant sites and a diversity of student and staff speakers from participating campuses, provoking great discussion, and forging valuable connections within the Green Campus community.
- The third National Green Week for third-level campuses in Ireland took place from March 6th to 10th 2023 and surrounding weeks. Green Week 2023 event themes relating to the An Taisce Strategic Goals of Heritage, Climate and Biodiversity and Community & Society, Land & Water included: beach cleans and litter picks, environmental awareness and Irish folklore, the sustainable development goals, food waste awareness, zero waste, mindfulness & meditation, repair workshops, green library events, green hospitality, plastics awareness, vegan cooking, book clubs, climate action, bike clinics and active travel workshops, ethical farming, decarbonising energy and logistics and more.
- The Green Campus hospitals programme is growing in numbers and popularity, reflected in the 13 teaching hospitals now registered on the programme, with two awarded a green flag. The hospitals programme provides a framework for teaching hospitals to engage with the hospital community and learning on site, practice environmental care and to pursue sustainable healthcare goals. Nineteen teaching hospitals and organisations attended the inaugural Green Campus Hospitals Meeting in Richmond Barracks in September 2023 with a range of speakers from: Cork University Hospital and Sligo University Hospital, the HSE Climate Action & Sustainability Office, Irish Green Labs, Irish Doctors for the Environment, and the South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital.
- As an SDG Champion, An Taisce held several SDG awareness raising events for SDG Week 2023 including a Green Campus assessment visit to Maynooth University and St Patrick's College Maynooth where the two campuses were jointly assessed for their second green flag in recognition of their sterling work on the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG3: Health & Wellbeing.
- Climate Action Week 2023: Events took place in campuses around the country to mark Climate Action Week in October including film screenings and events relating to Walktober, Green Labs, Sustainable Fashion projects, Repair workshops, making an environmental submission, Climate Comedy, tree planting, Eco-feminism, Climate Fresk, a wildlife orchestra, a flag raising ceremony and the reassessment of the original Green Campus site: UCC.
- Linking with Other An Taisce programmes: Green Campus committees are informed each year of relevant An Taisce programmes such as National Spring Clean and Clean Coasts events. Participation in these programmes can help to enhance green campus activities on site and meet requirements under the seven-step programme of Green Campus such as Step 6: Informing and Involving the Campus and Wider Community. The Climate Ambassador programme and Young Reporters for the Environment both present wonderful opportunities for crossover with students involved on Green Campus committees, providing an additional layer of support and resources to students looking to get involved in environmental action and care.

- Ireland is a lead country in the development of FEE EcoCampus, the international version of Green Campus, demonstrating the success of the Green-Schools programme in Ireland. An Taisce is a lead partner in the development of the programme structure and guidance documents for the FEE EcoCampus Programme and the Green Campus programme will be represented at an international conference for FEE EcoCampus participants in Lisbon in April 2024.
- Erasmus+ Research: The Green Campus Programme is involved in an Erasmus+ research project; 'Sust-HEIn – Fostering whole institution approaches to sustainability in Higher Education'. The main objective of this research is to boost the transition of Higher Education Institutions to green, environmentally friendly and resource-efficient institutions (thus contributing to the aims of the Green Deal, the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals).

2. Impact of the activities and reach

- By the end of 2023, 10 new campuses joined the Green-Campus programme bringing to 59 the number of registered sites from across the higher and further education sector and hospital sites. A few campuses are in the 'consultation phase' and are due to register in 2024.
- Twenty two of the above 59 sites have been awarded at least one green flag.
- Ten green flag assessments or reassessments took place in 2023 and with nine more due to take place in 2024.
- The Green Campus programme has grown in popularity, indicated by the annual increase in new registrations and by the annual growth in awarded or renewal sites. The seven-step programme of Green Campus can be applied equally well in the university setting as it can in the further education sites and a teaching hospital setting, hence the popularity of the programme across the higher and further education and the hospital sectors. Long term commitment by the campuses to the programme is reflected in the number of campuses pursuing their second, third, fourth and even fifth green flag.

Figure 1 below indicates the growth in the number of registered campuses from the pilot phase of the programme in 2007.

Figure 2 below indicates the growth in annual assessments and reassessments from 2010 when the first green flag was awarded to UCC to assessments and reassessments planned for 2024.

Figure 3 below shows the growth in the award of first green flags to campuses since 2010.

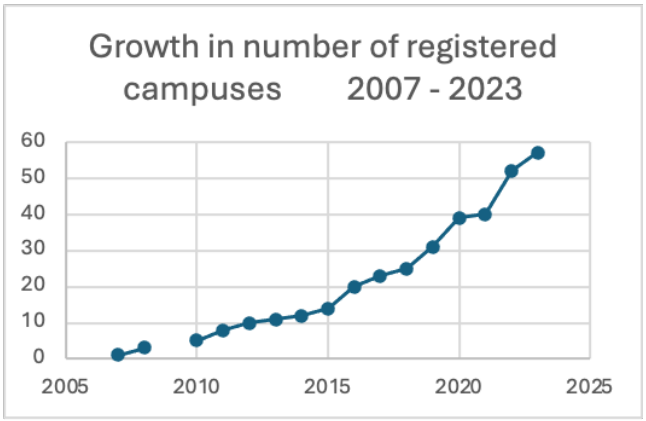


Figure 1: Registrations on the Green Campus programme 2007 - 2023.

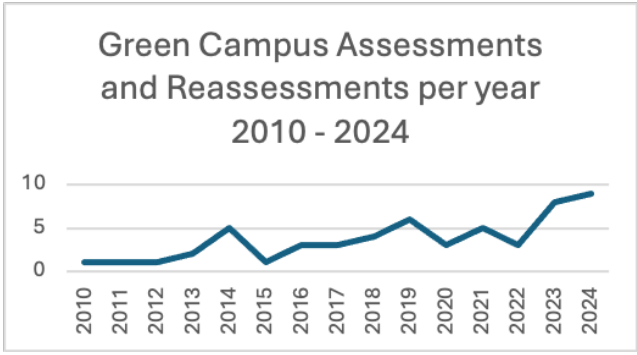


Figure 2: Green Campus assessments and reassessments since 2010.

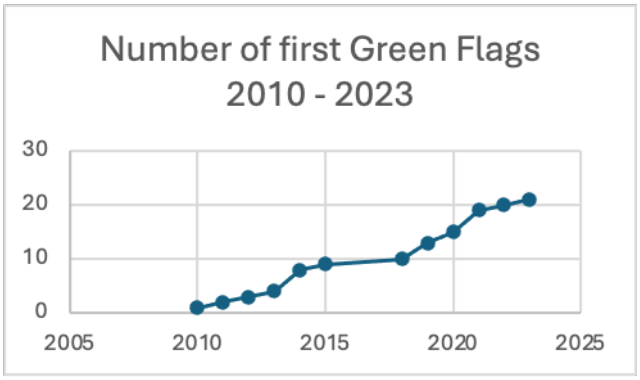


Figure 3: Number of First Green Flags 2010 - 2023

3. 2024 plans

2024 will proceed with an annual calendar of events including a Green Campus Network Meeting in February, Green Week in March, FEE EcoCampus Conference in Lisbon in April Climate Action week in October and various campus assessments and reassessments throughout the year.



The Inaugural Green Campus Hospitals network meeting, September 2023



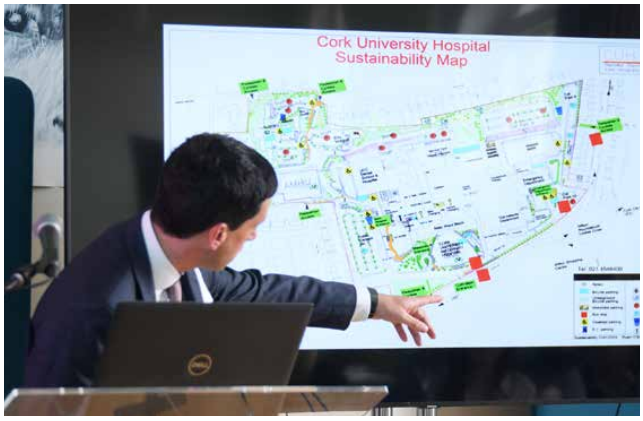
Dr Cathy Burke, Irish Doctors for the Environment at the Inaugural Green Campus Hospitals network meeting, September 2023



ATU Connemara Green Week 2023 in the Community Native Woodland in partnership with local agencies



ATU Mayo Green Week Talk on Swift conservation with Lynda Huxley





Hospitals event 14.9.23 Richmond Barracks



Maynooth Green Week 2023

GLOBE

Globe Website



GLOBE Ireland student sharing and prize-giving event, May 2023.

The objectives of GLOBE are to

- Raise awareness and understanding of the connections between biodiversity and climate and highlight the urgency of the climate and biodiversity emergencies.
- Promote climate action, climate justice, and environmental literacy.
- Provide practical, tangible, meaningful solutions and actions from national to local levels
- Protect, enhance and restore Ireland's land, freshwaters and marine environment
- Create and shape public conversations about how we use land and water in Ireland

In 2023, GLOBE Ireland coordinated citizen science campaigns with over 350 primary and secondary schools on air quality, phenology (seasonal tree observations), weather and climate (climate resilience), and river ecosystems (water quality, habitats, and biodiversity).

The team developed new collaborations with experts, scientists, and local authorities to deliver fulfilling, relevant, and meaningful citizen-science experiences to teachers and students across Ireland.

In May 2023, we held our first in-person student sharing and prize-giving event since 2019. Over 100 students and teachers joined us in Dublin for an inspiring morning of student presentations and an award ceremony. The event included keynote opening speeches from Cathy Baxter, Director of the An Taisce Environmental Education Unit, and Laura Burke, Director General of the EPA who provided an inspiring key-note speech about the importance of citizen science and the value of solutions-oriented climate observations by children and young people. The event successfully showcased the creative talents of students and teachers in GLOBE Ireland schools combined with their rigorous scientific accomplishments.

In October 2023, over 160 schools around Ireland took part in the GLOBE Air Quality Campaign. Schools created *Clean Air Maps*, measured traffic-related pollution, conducted traffic counts and school travel surveys, monitored weather, and created School **Clean Air Action plans**. Winners of the best Clean Air Action plans were awarded **Clean Air School** banners for their schools.

GLOBE Ireland has facilitated multiple successful and rewarding international collaborations between Irish schools and the international GLOBE community including GLOBE France, GLOBE Malta, GLOBE Israel, and GLOBE Netherlands schools over the past year.

In 2024, the GLOBE programme plans on coordinating campaigns on the themes of weather and climate (Jan-March 2024) – 'How spongy is your school' an investigation of rainfall and flooding reliance, 'How cool is your school?' – an investigation of surface temperature, landcover and heat resilience; Water Quality (Spring 2024) – 'River Ecosystem - how healthy is your local river?'; Air quality (Autumn 2024) – Traffic-related pollution campaign.



St Brigid's National School, Joint-Winners of the GLOBE Best School Clean Air Action Plan, 2023.

BLUE FLAG



Representatives from Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council with Mayor of Fingal Cllr. Howard Mahony; Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Daragh O'Brien TD and Mariana Colman from An Taisce; celebrate the award of 2 Blue Flags to Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council at the 2023 awards presentation ceremony. A record-equaling 85 beaches and 10 marinas were awarded Blue Flags for the 2023 season. The presentation ceremony was held on May 19th, 2023, in Donabate, Co. Dublin

Blue Flag is a global environmental management, information, and education programme of the Foundation for Environmental Education. It is operated on behalf of FEE at national level by national operators, In Ireland the Blue Flag has been administered by An Taisce since 1993.

In order to qualify for the award, a series of stringent environmental, educational, safety-related and access-related criteria must be met and maintained. Central to the ideals of the Blue Flag programme is the aim of connecting the public with their surroundings and encouraging them to learn more about their environment.

This is achieved by:

- Informing visitors about the site they are visiting through information provision on facilities, local landmarks, water quality, details on sensitive habitats, flora, and fauna in and around the awarded beach or marina.
- This allows people to easily navigate the area and to learn more about the indigenous flora and fauna.
- With an average footfall of 19,000 visitors per day across 95 beaches and marinas awarded for the 2023 season the potential reach of environmental information put in place to satisfy Blue Flag criteria is over 2 million for the award season of June 1st to September 15th alone. With greater numbers flocking to beaches throughout the year, the reach of this information is even greater.



Blue Flag Common information board at Baile an Sceilg (Ballinskelligs), Co. Kerry



Environmental Information at Fanore, Co. Clare



Beach wheelchair availability at Galway Blue Flag beaches



"Beach Wheelchair Launch at Fintra", Photo courtesy of Donegal County Council.



Ireland's first Stepdown Changing Place facility at a beach at Narin, Portnoo, Co. Donegal

The revision of the Blue Flag award criteria for beaches, marinas and tourism boats is currently underway, having begun in 2023 and new criteria sets are scheduled to be completed in 2025. As an active member of the international network An Taisce is represented on the working group revising the criteria related to accessibility of sites and information. It is vitally important that public amenities and services can be used and information on our natural environment understood by all regardless of age or disability. The Blue Flag team will be collaborating with representatives from the Disability Federation of Ireland, their member organisations and our International Blue Flag partners over the coming years with the aim of improving the accessibility of Blue Flag sites globally.

CLEAN COASTS



Big Beach Clean

About: 12 staff working across Ireland, funding provided by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, Failte Ireland, with additional support for the Big Beach Clean event by Cully and Sully, and additional support generated through a Corporate Social Responsibility programme.

Clean Coasts is a network of over 2000 volunteer groups, these groups vary in size and type, ranging from community groups/resident associations and sports groups/ interest to family groups or groups of friends. These groups adopt a beach site and work to protect and enhance that area through beach cleans, education and citizen science projects, and biodiversity enhancement works.

Clean Coasts programme also contains the Green Coast Award. The Green Coast Award is an award of excellence, awarding sites with excellent water quality, a beach management plan and that have an active Clean Coasts group involved.

Clean Coasts programme provides a calendar of events and supports to the volunteer groups within the Clean Coasts network. In addition to this work the Clean Coasts programme run national standalone campaigns such as Think Before You Flush/Pour, funded by Uisce Eireann, and #2MinuteBeachClean campaign, funded by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

2023 Achievements:

- In 2023, Clean Coasts programme celebrated its 20th birthday
- The Clean Coasts network of groups has grown to over 2,000 volunteer groups and 40,000 volunteers
- The Clean Coasts social media community has grown to 38k followers
- Clean Coasts gave a Clean Coasts grant support of €18K to volunteer groups within the Clean Coasts network in 2023
- 26 Clean Coasts Roadshow events were organised from January to April 2023
- 66 Green Coast Award sites were awarded for the 2023 bathing season
- Over 300 clean ups were registered for World Ocean Day call-to-action, June 2023, and 25 tonnes of litter were removed from Irelands coastline



- 7,700 volunteers registered to take part in our Big Beach Clean 2023 and 46 tonnes of litter was removed
- Over 1,300 entries for Clean Coasts' Love Your Coast photography competition
- After 100s nominations made, 33 groups and individuals were shortlisted for Clean Coasts' Ocean Hero Awards 2023
- Clean Coasts programme provided volunteers with hundreds of Clean-up kits over the course of the year
- Through our Think Before You Flush campaign, we saw a 14% decrease in people regularly flush damaging items down the toilet
- Through our Think Before You Pour campaign, there was a 12% decrease in people regularly pouring damaging items (fats, oils and greases) down the sink
- The #2MinuteBeachClean campaign continue to grow in 2023, and a dedicated newsletter was introduced in 2023 that amassed 1,800 subscribers in its first year
- Clean Coasts released additional resources for it #BreakUpWithPlastic campaign in February 2023
- Clean Coasts marked World Sand Dune Day by hosting a series of marram grass planting workshops in several coastal locations
- Clean Coasts started a campaign tackling smoking related litter on our beaches #BinTheButt
- Clean Coasts programme were delighted to be able to add a new Biodiversity Officer to the team in 2023, and allowing the programme to have a stronger focus on biodiversity and better met the needs of our volunteer network
- As part of An Taisce we were one of the SDGs Champions 2023/24

<u>Key events</u>

The Clean Coasts programme has a calendar of events to support the Clean Coasts groups throughout the year with their work. The key events every year for the Clean Coasts programme are:

- Clean Coasts Roadshows
- Big Beach Clean
- Love Your Coast
- Ocean Hero Awards

In addition to this Clean Coasts programme hosts additional event to support the work of the groups as required. In 2023 these additional events and activities included, World Ocean Day Clean Ups, World Sand Dune Day, #BreakUpWithPlastic, Valentines Day promotion, Plastic Free July and #BinTheButt campaign.



Clean Coasts Roadshow in Donabate 01.04.23.

Clean Coasts Roadshows 2023

Clean Coasts Roadshows are a series of regional events for Clean Coasts groups and residents which take place all along the Irish coastline. These events aim to bring together those with an interest in protecting their local beaches, and in turn the ocean, seas, and marine life. Clean Coasts Roadshow originally took a seminar approach but after consultation with Clean Coasts groups and staff they have been developed to also include training opportunities for groups and engagement events. In previous years these training sessions include, marram grass planting and communication workshops, engagement events including panel discussions, film screenings alongside discussion sessions and workshops. Clean Coasts Roadshows remain regional events to build the Clean Coasts network, but the variety of events has allowed Clean Coasts to engage a wider audience, run an increased number of events and tailor events to region requirements. The events were promoted to media and through our social media channels achieving an overall initiative had a reach of over 4.5 million.

Love Your Coast 2023

The Love Your Coasts Photography Competition, a pivotal part of the Clean Coasts programme, highlights the scenic allure of Ireland's coastlines while promoting conservation efforts. Launched annually from mid-May to August, the competition features 6 categories, including a new one, 'Protectors of the Coast,' introduced to commemorate Clean Coasts' 20th anniversary, inviting photographers to capture volunteerism along Ireland's coastline.

Despite initial plans for an in-person awards ceremony, logistical challenges led to an online announcement for the 2023 competition, efficiently communicated through online platforms and social media channels. Winners received personalised congratulatory messages on the night of the awards. The partnership held with the Irish Examiner persisted, featuring shortlisted images on their website and in a printed supplement.

The communications strategy targeted photographers in Ireland, emphasising the opportunity to capture the coast's beauty. Promotion efforts spanned social media platforms, the Clean Coasts website, blog posts, press releases, email campaigns, and Clean Coasts Monthly catchups, resulting in a substantial reach of 16 million and 10,000 engagements.

Big Beach Clean 2023

Clean Coasts collaborates annually with the International Ocean Conservancy to organise the Big Beach Clean, a national call to action for groups to join in a collective effort to clean up Ireland's coastline. This is Clean Coasts aim citizen science project with volunteers are asked to submit data via data cards and the Clean Swell App regarding the material they are collecting during their research. The initiative commenced with the announcement at the end of June, followed by registration openings in late July to the Clean Coasts network. A wider public promotion begins in August throughout September. Impressively, 514 groups registered, contributing to the removal of over 63 tonnes of litter.

The communication strategy aimed at engaging Clean Coasts groups, volunteers, and ocean enthusiasts in

Ireland, promoting participation in clean-up activities and citizen science projects. It emphasized the local and global impact of these efforts. Messages highlighted the accomplishments of groups and volunteers, recognizing their role in coastal cleanliness and marine science. The initiative reached 22.1 million people in Ireland, inspiring and educating the community about the importance of protecting the ocean.

Ocean Hero Awards 2023

The Ocean Hero Awards Ceremony, hosted by Clean Coasts in December 2023, aimed to acknowledge, and honour the exemplary efforts of groups, individuals, communities, and businesses in Ireland dedicated to safeguarding local coastlines and the environment. This event, held at the Radisson Blu Royal Hotel in Dublin, marked Clean Coasts' 20th Anniversary, reflecting on two decades of impactful initiatives.

The ceremony featured seven categories with 33 nominees competing for the Ocean Hero title, each showcasing commendable work. Winners included Tomhaggard Clean Coasts Group for Group of the Year, Martha Farrell from Maharees Conservation Association CLG for Individual of the Year, and The North West Home Education Group for Youth of the Year, among others. Special Recognition Awards were presented to groups like Bull Island Action Group in honour of Clean Coasts' milestone anniversary.

The communication strategy for the Ocean Hero Awards targeted Clean Coasts registered groups and volunteers, while also aiming to showcase their achievements to the wider Irish public. Promotion was conducted through various channels including social media, email, blog, website, and press releases sent to both regional and national outlets. The initiative reached an audience of 11.1 million with 2,000 engagements in December 2023. The awards ceremony not only celebrated past accomplishments but also served as a catalyst for further engagement and support for the protection and celebration of Ireland's oceans.



Ocean Hero Awards Martha Farrell Individual of the Year

LEAF



Castletroy Tree Planting 2023

The Learning about Forests (LEAF) programme is designed for schools and encourages environmental education through awareness raising among students, teachers, and the wider community. The programme looks at all the functions of forests, ecological, social, economic, and cultural.

The overall aims of the programme are to see an increased level of awareness and knowledge about the key role forests play for sustainable life on our planet and to stimulate activities that will help students achieve an increased level of environmental maturity irrespective of age and previous knowledge.

An Choill Bheag is a long-term educational programme, an initiative of LEAF Ireland. Choill Bheag is a small, dense, biodiverse native woodland habitat on the school grounds. They are outdoor living classrooms, with space created for seating for classes to spend time learning outside.

In 2023, the staff of LEAF Ireland delivered 11 An Choill Bheag projects alongside students, staff, and community members throughout the country.

2023 activities:

- Planted 11 Small native woodlands.
- Planted 2,670 Native trees / shrubs.
- Restored 1 school grounds (An Choill Bheag) plus restoration of grounds) St. Pat's BNS Limerick.
- Directly engaged with and educated approx. 450 participants from schools and communities around the country. Indirectly engaged with 3,000 students and teachers.
- Revisited 6 existing An Choill Bheag sites to care for and further educate / upskill participants.

LEAF Ireland was delighted to team up with Limerick City and County Council, and the GoGreenRoutes project, to plant a Choill Bheag, a small, native woodland, along the Greenway in Castletroy. This An Choill Bheag project is kindly being funded by GS Memorial Foundation.



Pres SS group



Tralee Bay Wetlands 2023



Ballyboy 2022

Main news story for 2023:

Celebrated five years of An Choill Bheag, an initiative of LEAF Ireland, since 2018, LEAF has planted thirty-three little woodlands throughout the country, with approximately 5,850 native trees planted over three years (planting ceased for two years due to the COVID pandemic).

Celebrating five years of An Choill Bheag:

Short: LEAF Ireland - YouTube

News story: AN CHOILL BHEAG CELEBRATING 5 YEARS – LEAF (leafireland.org)

We were invited to speak at the National Operators Meeting for Eco-Schools, YRE and LEAF 2023 – workshop showcasing our An Choill Bheag initiative and asked to sit on the Green-Campus panel speaking about how we incorporate LEAF into the programme.

2024 plans

With the UN's Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, it is more important than ever that more actions like the ones mentioned above are funded, creating natural habitats in what could otherwise be a concrete jungle, sharing these vital woodland skills and knowledge with the next generation and encouraging schools and community groups to spend more time outdoors in nature.

We are proud to be part of a global network that goes beyond educating about topics relating to forests such as biodiversity, climate, water, community, and products. Our goal is to help educators feel confident to go outdoors with their students and celebrate the nature on their doorsteps and encourage them to allow their students the freedom to tap into their natural curiosity.

We are delighted to receive funding from the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine to help us achieve this goal and work with soon-to-be teachers at Marino Institute of Education, Mary Immaculate College and St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra. We will be delivering workshops that focus on the benefits of healthy and resilient woodlands and showing the soon-to-be teachers how to record and monitor these important habitats with their students.

Specific plans for 2024

- Plant 11 Small native woodlands
- Plant approx. 2,000 Native trees / shrubs
- Engage with and educate participants from 11 schools and communities around the country.
- Revisit 10 existing An Choill Bheag sites to care for and further educate / upskill participants.
- Work with three teachers training colleges educating the soon-to-be teachers about the importance of forests and methods of recording.

Attend and present at The Natural Way Forward Conference in Belgium this April: Program - The natural way forward

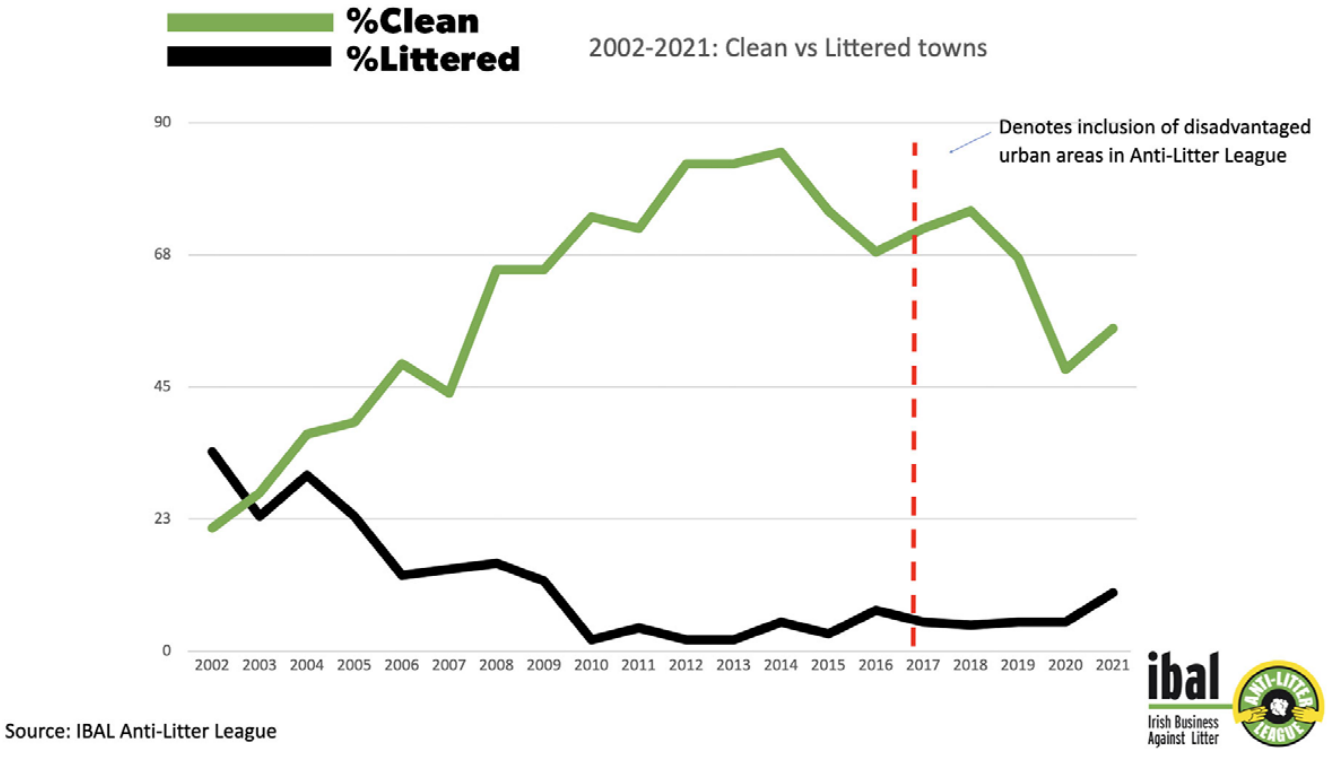


IBAL

The Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) programme has been running for 20+ years, with 2023 recording one of the best overall results. For the first time since the surveys began, there were no areas deemed 'seriously littered' – this is in sharp contrast to the early days when there were towns which were not just 'seriously littered' but some which fell into the category of 'litter blackspot.' The inaugural IBAL survey showed less than 10% of towns deemed 'Clean to European Norms'. In 2023, over 60% of towns were deemed to be clean, with Maynooth edging out Mallow and much improved Sligo for the top spot. It was most encouraging to see the Green Campus students in Maynooth University playing such an active role in helping Maynooth achieve this result. Watch: How students help keep Maynooth litter-free (rte.ie)



Anti-Litter League



Source: IBAL Anti-Litter League

For each IBAL survey, over 500 sites are surveyed, twice in year, totaling 1,000+ sites. A variety of location types are included to get an 'overview' of a town, with a wide selection of 'litter categories' noted. Final year end results are announced in January. Local authorities receive a report of the town with a short summary comment on each individual site. The experience has been that as the programme has progressed, there is far greater support from Tidy Towns and 'concerned citizens' throughout the country – everybody and the entire ecosystems benefit from a cleaner environment.

2023 saw the introduction of a new litter category – disposable vapes. Anecdotally it had been noted that there was evidence of vape litter in previous years, but 2023 was the first year such information was collected. The casual disposal of single use vapes can have detrimental effects on the environment due to both the plastic and battery composition. February 2024 saw the national roll out of the 'Deposit Return Scheme' for plastic bottles and cans – it will be interesting to see if this has any impact on litter items. Round 1 of IBAL surveys start during April and results will most likely be announced in early June.

IBAL Marine – 2023

The IBAL Marine programme took place during the summer months. This programme was first rolled out in 2018 to include not just beaches, but rivers, canals and harbours, along with the immediate hinterland of same. The 2023 results showed that most of the heavily littered areas had cleaned up over the previous year but still the majority fell short of clean status. For the first time since this survey took place in 2018, no area was deemed a 'litter blackspot' – this was a particularly good news story for the likes of Blackrock Castle (Cork Harbour) and very much testament to the great work being down by local groups e.g. Blackrock Clean up Group and Clean Coasts Ballynamona.

With An Taisce deemed to be Sustainable Development Goals Champions, the IBAL / IBAL Marine programmes feed in to three of these, Life on Land, Life below Water and Clean Water and Sanitation.



Similarly, with regards to An Taisce Strategic Objectives – the IBAL / IBAL Marine programmes fit the 'Land and Water' theme. A natural byproduct of the programme is the role of 'Community' with greater buy in from Tidy Towns / concerned citizens.

GREEN FLAGS FOR PARKS



Green Flag Award Vandeleur Walled Garden

The Department of Rural and Community Development began supporting An Taisce Environmental Education Green Flag Community Award in2017. The initiative was then rolled out for the first time in 2018.

The idea behind extending the Green Flag Award for Parks Scheme into our community run parks, gardens, and green spaces is to recognise community and volunteer groups hard work by applying Green Flag Award values to their spaces.

Whereas standard Green Flag Park applicants must pay an application fee to join the programme, the DRCD's funding of the Community Award allows community run parks to apply for a flag free of charge – removing a barrier to accessing the programme.

Originally An Taisce had successfully introduced the Green Flag Award for Parks Scheme nationwide in 2016. As of 2023 the programme encompassed 37 different organisations including, Local Authorities, University Campuses, the NPWS, the OPW, and independent, community run, operators of parks and gardens nationwide. Park and green space amenity operators see the benefit of the programme to their spaces for the following reasons:

- It raises the quality of green space and local people's engagement with it in a cost-effective manner.
- For park operators it offers a cheap and credible way to safeguard the capital investment made in new and existing green space sites.
- Rather than the expense of consultancy, the programme provides access to annual peer reviewed expertise in keeping and improving standards across the 27 Green Flag Award criteria.

The Green Flag Community Award now stands alongside the Green Flag Award as the benchmark for parks and green spaces which are managed by volunteers. Wherever you see a Green Flag Community Award displayed, you will know that you are visiting an exceptional space managed to high standards.

The Green Flag Community Award puts a very heavy emphasis upon community engagement including appropriate levels of recreational facilities for all sectors of the community. The scheme also reviews the marketing of the park or garden, its activities, and its attractions. This encourages and grades whether there is good provision of information to users, including activities, features, and ways for visitors to get involved with the park or garden.

Sites eligible to apply for the award included:

- Allotments
- Community Gardens
- Community Orchards
- Community Parks
- Community Sensory Gardens
- Heritage Sites
- Organic Nurseries
- River Walks

Site are assessed against eight strict criteria, including horticultural standards, cleanliness, sustainability, and community involvement.

Community Flag winners 2023

101 sites around the country received Green Flag Awards this year and 18 of these were Community Awards. This represents a drop in the number by one park since last year. Cloontuskert Community Orchard didn't apply this year due to lack of volunteers, but every effort will be made to bring them back into the programme next year.

Green Community Award Flag Winners:

Bagenalstown Town Park	Carlow County Council
The River Walk Dungloe	Donegal County Council
Dromiskin Heritage Park	Dromiskin Tidy Towns
Santry Demesne Community Garden	Fingal County Council
The Rock Garden	Fingal County Council
Foulksmills Park	Foulksmills Tidy Towns
Ballyglunin Railway Restoration Project	Galway County Council
Zero Waste Community Garden	Kildare County Council
Ballina Karen Community Garden	Mayo County Council
Ballyhaunis Community Garden	Mayo County Council
Our Lady's Island Community Park	Our Lady's Island Community Development Company
Ballaghaderreen Community Garden	Roscommon County Council
Knockvicar Organic Garden	Roscommon County Council
Rosslare Harbour Memorial Park and Gardens	Rosslare Harbour/Kilrane Environment Group
Headford Community Orchard	The Church of Ireland
Julianstown Community Garden	Meath County Council
Hungry Hall Park	Broomfield and District Residents

Awards announcement 2023

The 2023 Green Flag Awards were announced by An Taisce Environmental Education on 20th September acknowledging Ireland's best public parks and gardens. A press release was put out to mark the occasion, bring attention to the fact that the **Green Flag Community Award** brings the award to community initiatives such as Community Gardens, Community Parks, and Tidy Towns Projects. By acknowledging the work done by local groups this Community Award helps empower community groups to improve their local area and environment.

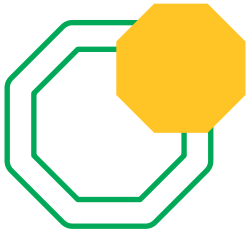
The release included the following quote from The Minister of State for Community Development and Charities; Joe O'Brien stated that:

"The Department of Rural and Community Development has supported An Taisce with the expansion of the Green Flag since 2018 into community run spaces. By doing this we have been able to leverage the Green Flag Award values and standards for the benefit of our communities and their voluntary work.

I want to thank all community volunteers, across the country for all the work they have done by maintaining the many parks, gardens, and greens across the country. It is a great credit that they have helped deliver this Green Flag accreditation across Ireland."

Looking forward to 2024

As outlined above, the DCRD' funding of the Green Flag Community Award brings the award to community initiatives such as Community Gardens, Community Parks, and Tidy Towns Projects free of charge. Many of these groups wouldn't be able to take part in the programme without this funding which allows them to apply for the flag free of charge.



SEAI WORKSHOPS

SEAI Website



Objectives:

Create dialogue with the public and stakeholders to build collaborative coalitions

Provide life-long learning opportunities that empower, inspire and support participants and members.

Develop collaborative coalitions with other bodies, nationally and internationally, to better achieve our objectives.

Promote climate action, climate justice, and environmental literacy.

Provide practical, tangible, meaningful solutions and actions from national to local levels.

- 2023 activities: 18,714 students from schools across Ireland participated in SEAI energy workshops as part of SEAI Education and Youth programme. Under this programme 681 student workshops were delivered by An Taisce and Science Foundation Ireland Staff on behalf of SEAI.
- During the summer of 2023, primary and secondary workshop content revision working groups were set up and all workshops were updated with delivery of training at the first Energy Education Forum and Facilitator training day on October 25th in Richmond Barracks in Dublin. This is to ensure scripts and resources are current.
- In addition to student workshops, several extra-curricular workshops and events were delivered by An Taisce EEU staff in 2023 including Wicklow Energy Day, Fota Island Cork Events, SEC Skerries festival, SEC Energy Day, Arklow, Munster Maths and Science Festival.
- The first Irish language hub took place in the third quarter in Kerry with 250 students and a total of 15 workshops.
- 2024 plans- 3/4 Irish workshop hubs to be delivered during a school year with provision of some additional Irish workshops delivered outside of hubs as per requests when feasible in local areas. CPD development.



SEAI Team

NEAT STREETS



In 2023, the Neat Streets Programme saw an impressive level of engagement from schools across 17 counties in Ireland, reaching full capacity, which contributed to significant progress towards reducing litter and preventing waste. This year marked the programmes 12th year of operation (2022-2023).



Geographical locations of Neat Streets Schools 2022-23



Secondary schools take part in the Neat Streets Programme for one full academic year. The Neat Streets Programme Officer conducted workshops with students and teachers from participating schools between October 2022 and May 2023. They provided support for student committees, including assistance with baseline surveys, campaign launches, and action plans. Schools organized whole school action days, clean-ups, and litter pick events, with ongoing support from the officer.

Each participating school received a Neat Streets Equipment Pack, containing practical materials and resources to aid in implementing their programmes

and for high-profile actions and events throughout the year. Packs include litter pickers, branded hi-vis vests and hoodies, gloves, and general waste, and recycling refuse bags. Additionally, upon registration, schools receive a pack of 30 Neat Streets Pin badges.

The Neat Streets programme offers a €200 grant to each participating school. During the 2022/23 academic year, 22 schools applied for and received the grant. The funds are used in various ways by committees, including purchasing bins, treats for student action days, funding prizes for competitions, and organizing trips to recycling plants and landfills. The grant is highly valued by committees and teachers as it provides essential funding for action plan events and boosts morale.

The annual Neat Streets Conference was held on Tuesday, January 24th, 2023, at the Aviva Stadium in Dublin. We delved into the theme of the Circular Economy with over 150 students and teachers from secondary schools across Ireland. A Circular Economy, which is often called one of the best possible solutions to our problems, consists of 5 consumerism-altering concepts – Reducing, Reusing, Refurbishing, Repairing and Recycling. We were privileged to have Olympic Medallist and round the world sailor Annalise Murphy share her personal experiences with marine pollution and research through Turn the Tide on Plastic, and her Olympic spirit, reminding us that hard work towards our goals can unleash our potential for greatness. We were also excited to welcome Kevin Murphy from 2GoCup as one of our champions who showcased how his deposit return business supports the Circular Economy providing solutions. Our Waste to Wealth workshop that followed his presentation saw students become entrepreneurs creating businesses that re-use items destined for waste.



The Neat Streets awards event took place on the 2nd of May 2023. Schools achieved the award based on successful implementation of the Neat Streets Programme Criteria. Successful schools attended the high-profile awards ceremony in the historic Gresham Hotel, Dublin. Each attending school delivered a short PowerPoint presentation outlining their programmes and achievements, to their fellow Neat Streets participants from other schools. The ceremony was followed by a celebratory lunch and awarding.



Over the twelve years of the programme An Taisce has overseen on average 67% increase in schools' recycling rates, the programme has effectively targeted litter black spots and increased the number of favourable sites to 87% at school and 86% wider community areas. There has been an average decrease in students littering in school and the wider community by 35% and 31% respectively over the last year.

CLIMATE AMBASSADOR

Climate Ambassador Website

Climate Action Team Goal:

To empower a climate literate community through creative communications and engaging actions, building resilience with people. The programme continued to develop in 2023. New and innovative methods of engagement were developed, and participant engagement was high which demonstrated the desire from the public to learn more about climate science and participate in climate action. To date, we have trained over 1000 Climate Ambassadors in Ireland.

Key outcomes in 2023 include:

- 179 Climate Ambassadors trained
- 5 training days delivered in Cork, Galway, Dublin (in-person)
- 1 training event delivered virtually (for those unable to travel)
- 18 in-person Network Gatherings on a range of topics including storytelling, peatland restoration, pond making, foraging, swap shops, biodiversity, the SDG's, climate comedy and making an environmental submission
- 10 virtual Network Gatherings on a range of topics including bridging the skills gap, the marine environment, digital clean-up, green careers and the Community Climate Action Fund.
- 50 Climate Clinics took place (one-to-one sessions with Climate Action Officers)
- 17 Public Outreach events and 5 webinars



NG wind energy biodiversity





The Climate Action Team from left to right Ali, Justyna, Daithí, Gráinne, Monica and Mariana

- 2873 people directly engaged via training,
- The Climate Ambassador Awards took place on November 23rd

2024 plans

- Climate in the curriculum
- Teacher training
- Podcast season 4
- Climate Ambassador 2024
- Primary Climate Ambassadors 2023-24/24-25
- **#ClimateActionWeek October 14th-20th 2024!!!**
- Codesign external evaluation of the Climate Ambassador programme with an academic partner

YOUNG REPORTERS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (YRE)

Objectives of the Programme:

- To provide life-long learning opportunities that empower, inspire and support participants and members.
- Develop collaborative coalitions with other bodies, nationally and internationally, to better achieve our objectives.
- Promote climate action, climate justice, and environmental literacy.
- Provide practical, tangible, meaningful solutions and actions from national to local levels
- Raise awareness and understanding of the connections between biodiversity and climate, and highlight the urgency of the climate and biodiversity emergencies

YRE gives young people aged 11-25 a platform to research environmental issues and promote solutions through investigative reporting, photography, and video journalism.

Empowering young people to take a stand!

Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) is an award-winning programme coordinated by Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). The programme empowers young people to take an educated stand on environmental issues they feel strongly about and gives them a platform to articulate these issues through the media of writing, photography or video.

How does it work?

The YRE programme is run by An Taisce in Ireland and by other operators in more than 40 countries around the world. Youth between the age of 11-25 can join the programme in these countries through their school, youth group or as individuals.

Empower

Young Reporters for the Environment empowers young people to have their say on environmental issues in their locality which they feel are not being adequately addressed. It gives them an outlet for their frustrations and a platform from which to make a difference.

Unite

Coordinated by the Foundation for Environmental Education and active in 42 countries worldwide, the YRE programme brings students of all backgrounds together with a sense of common purpose.

Develop

YRE helps participants to develop skills and acquire knowledge which will stand to them for the rest of their lives: communication skills, individual initiative, teamwork, critical analysis, social responsibility and leadership skills are all honed through involvement in the programme.

Drive

A competition is held annually to encourage young people from all over the world to push themselves to their limits in the search for a story which will ultimately bring to the fore a real and current local environmental issue.

2023 activities: High quality of articles and videos coming through. Shortlisted entries can be viewed here: YRE Ireland - Told with Exposure

2024 plans: Three skill-based webinars scheduled for participants to provide life-long learning opportunities that empower, inspire and support I the form of Article writing, Photography and Videography webinars.

ADVOCACY

An Taisce Advocacy

Planning

Our role as an independent statutory consultee for planning applications, forestry licensing, aquaculture licensing, infrastructure proposals, and other projects continued to be a key aspect of our work.

We were delighted that we were able to expand our team in December 2023 by hiring a second full-time Planning Officer, Seán O'Callaghan. With a background in sustainability governance, Seán hit the ground running in this new role. Having him onboard is greatly increasing Advocacy's capacity, particularly around our planning work.

We established a Planning Committee to further increase our capacity and shape An Taisce's planning policies. The Committee is made up of staff, members and volunteers with expertise in a broad range of areas within the planning sphere.



An Taisce Advocacy part of group of observers at pre-legislative scrutiny meeting on the draft Planning and Development Bill

Heritage

- We hosted a symposium on the The Historic and Archaeological Heritage Bill in the Mansion House. The panel of speakers, mostly of an environmental legal background, identified the strengths and flaws of the Bill.
- As of the end of 2023 it was awaiting final approval by Council.
- We also continued raising issues of the dereliction and endangerment of Protected Structures to County Councils around the country. The current planning laws are not strong enough in this area, and this was an important area of our advocacy work around the Planning Bill as well.
- An Taisce contributed to the consultations around the drafting of World Heritage Strategy for Ireland. Establishing dedicated frameworks and bodies for the conservation of world heritage in this country is a welcome development.
- In 2024, we hope to find sufficient resources to update and better publicise our Buildings at Risk Register. It was developed in response to a concern at the growing number of structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest throughout the country that are vacant and falling into a state of disrepair. The Register is designed as a resource to raise public awareness and enable advocacy work about vacancy and dereliction of our heritage buildings.



Sinead Mercier and Amy Strecker speaking at Mansion House Heritage event

Land and Water

The An Taisce Nitrates Case

- In 2022 An Taisce launched proceedings to judicially review the Government's fifth Nitrates Action Programme (NAP).
- The case was heard in front of Mr Justice Richard Humphreys from the 12th – 15th December 2023

in the High Court. An Taisce is represented by FP Logue Solicitors, and Counsel are James Devlin SC and John Kenny BL. The IFA and ICMSA are both Notice Parties to the challenge.

- The Nitrates Action Programme underpins the legal and regulatory basis for agricultural activities that are actively contributing to water pollution. The environmental assessment submitted as part of the preparation for the NAP said that there was uncertainty whether the measures in the NAP would prevent adverse impacts on water quality. It is on this basis that An Taisce determined, in accordance with its mandate, that the assumption of approval for the NAP must be challenged.
- The Nitrates Case will likely conclude with a judgment due at some point in 2024.

Climate and biodiversity

- Biodiversity was in focus in 2023, with the Citizens Assembly on Biodiversity Loss releasing their report and recommendations in the Spring of 2023.



Citizens Assembly Final Report launch

Nature Restoration Law

- The Nature Restoration law underwent a turbulent few months as it passed through the European legislative process
- The proposed law proposed to implement measures to restore at least 20% of the EU's nature on land, rivers, and seas by 2030.
- The law was subject to a widespread and vigorous misinformation campaign at the EU level, and resulted in the law being voted down in the Envi committee,
- This led to a large mobilisation campaign by eNGOs, both in Ireland and Europe to exert pressure on MEPs to support the law, and it passed a European Parliament Plenary vote by a majority in July of 2023, albeit much watered down compared with the original Commission proposal. The role of Irish MEPs in passing that was instrumental, and An Taisce was very active in the Irish campaign to mobilise the Irish public on this issue.
- As of the end of 2023 it was awaiting final approval by Council.

Active Travel / Sustainable Transport

- The context in which advocacy for active / sustainable transport was happening in 2023 was one where there were significant allocations for schemes provided by the Department of Transport to the National Transport Authority (NTA) and to Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) – approx. €360 million in total – which in turn were disbursed to the 31 Local Authorities countrywide. Therefore, the role of advocacy involved, to a large degree, supporting and challenging Local Authorities to develop *high quality schemes* and busting the myths circulated by those opposing the reallocation of road space to people looking to walk, cycle and take public transport. This is a different type of advocacy work than was demanded in previous years when there was little government attention on active travel. Following on from this, there were six main strands to the work of active travel advocacy work in 2023.

1 – Building the advocacy community. Since 2013, the fruitful strategic partnership between An Taisce and Irish Cycling Campaign (formerly known as Cyclist.ie) has continued, thus enabling the energies and volunteering efforts of both organisations to be combined and channelled effectively at both local and national levels. At an international level, the work of the cycling advocacy community plugged into that of the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) which, in turn, seeks to influence new directives, policies and investment frameworks (and much else).

2 - Influencing the national conversation. Throughout 2023, one major media focus was on broadly supporting the advancement of the BusConnects proposals and working to improve the quality of the bus, cycle and public realm aspects of the schemes. As well as the submissions delivered to An Bord Pleanála regarding the 12 Core Bus Corridor Dublin schemes, there were many media interviews conducted and contributions made to the press in support of the BusConnects proposals, and further efforts made to nurture political support for the schemes. Another major media focus was on the proposals to change the speed limits on Irish roads – particularly the very welcome proposals to change the default speed limit in built-up areas from 50km/h to 30km/h. This work is continuing into 2024.

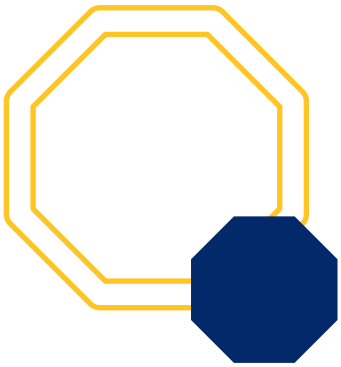
3 - Ensuring Public Policy Embraces Cycling. In 2023, we commenced the work of engaging with all the political parties with a view to shaping the transport aspects of their manifestos for the Local and European (and possibly even General) Elections taking place in 2024. Amongst the priority asks were a further prioritisation of active travel and public transport in transport capital budgets, and stronger resourcing of Local Authorities for skilled active travel professionals. These engagements with political parties were complemented by regular meetings with officials in the Department of Transport, the NTA and the RSA (Road Safety Authority), all focused on keeping cycling to the fore and radically improving conditions.

4 - Advocating for more effective institutions and new legislation. A major piece of work in 2023 was the series of regular engagements with An Garda Siochána (and the Assistant Commissioner for Community and Roads Policing, Paula Hilman, in particular). These formal meetings focused especially on, firstly, the enforcement of road traffic law regarding car parking on cycle tracks and, secondly, the advancement of plans around the development of a portal to allow for the uploading of video evidence showing dangerous / overly close passing of cyclists by drivers. Other issued covered were improved collision data collection and tackling bike theft. This – often difficult and frustrating – work continues into 2024.

5 - Seeking to ensure there is ample funding spent on cycling. The Pre-Budget Submission delivered in August 2023 stressed again the need for a continued prioritisation of funding for active travel schemes, particularly in the light of construction inflation, and a much more inclusive Bike to Work scheme – i.e. one that would allow children, retirees, unwaged people, carers, people on disability allowances to avail of an equivalent system, and hence enable more bike use. Again, the work on this continued into 2024 and will do so right up to (and beyond) the General Election.

6 - Seeking to secure high quality routes and infrastructure. We warmly welcomed the publication in August 2023 of the Cycle Design Manual (CDM) which was prepared by the National Transport Authority (NTA) and overseen by the Department of Transport. That replaced the previous National Cycle Manual, published by the NTA in 2011. Through many meetings and written submissions, we sought to ensure that the latest design guidance would enable much higher quality designs to be advanced and implemented on the ground. The retraining of the engineering and planning professions with the new CDM continues apace and bodes well for the future.

As with previous years, a significant slice of the National Cycling Coordinator's time is spent on sourcing funding to enable the NCC position to exist and to give some basic level of security to the position. As always, the hope and the plan are that this challenge will be resolved in the coming year so that much more of the NCC's time can be spent on core campaigning issues.



LEGACY 4 LIFE

An Taisce Legacy 4 Life

An Taisce, has long been at the forefront of promoting sustainable practices and preserving the country's natural heritage. The An Taisce Legacy 4 Life programme, which completed its objectives in December 2023, embodies this commitment, focusing on three key initiatives which were…

- Promoting ponds as reservoirs of biodiversity
- Addressing barriers to organic farming
- Championing the Low Carbon Town initiative.

These efforts are not only about preserving Ireland's environment for future generations but also about creating a more sustainable and resilient nation.

The first project aimed to improve Ireland's ponds' role as biodiversity refugia by supporting capacity development and expertise in pond creation, management, and conservation. It aimed to raise public awareness about ponds' value, water quality, and climate mitigation benefits through projects, public engagement, workshops, and national collaboration.

This project successfully addressed the need for a leading voice on Ponds in Ireland, highlighting the need for an All-Ireland Pond Plan. The project engaged policy makers, local authorities, education, and the public, but only scratched the surface. A longer time frame and larger team are needed for future Ponds for Biodiversity projects. A spreadsheet of interested community groups, state agencies, and international collaborators has been collated for potential future projects. The project demonstrates the great hunger and potential in Ireland for an All-Ireland Pond Plan.

One of the outputs was a pamphlet on how to create your own pond, 1000 copies to be commercially printed. There was such a high level of interest from local authorities, community groups and the public, that this expanded into two separate pamphlets (one on pond creation and one on the biodiversity of Irish ponds). Over 7,000 copies are printed to date, all additional print runs being sponsored by various local authorities.

The second project focused on organic agriculture and emission reduction options, based on Green Deal Theme 6 'Farm to Fork'. It aimed to educate producers and consumers in Ireland about the Farm to Fork alternative to intensification-based



Legacy 4 Life ponds presentation at Bloom 2023



Legacy4Life Farm to Fork - farm visit

policies. The objectives include clarifying scientific underpinnings, promoting a robust, diverse food system, and effectively communicating emissions reduction requirements from the dairy sector.

This project exceeded expectations, bridging the gap between the farming community and the environmental/NGO community in Ireland. The project's engagement with the farming community and the involvement of a 15-year-certified organic farmer helped meet emission reduction targets. Increased Organic Farming Scheme payment rates, access to the ACRES environmental scheme, and agroforestry payments on organic areas provided benefits for farmers. The farming community's interest in nature-based practices and biodiversity restoration was evident, and many farmers used materials from WP1 to create ponds for better water quality.

One initial output of the project was to engage with the Green Schools programme to promote Farm to Fork and organic farming, through the creation of a booklet. This grew to become a high-quality children's book which guides the reader through a "farm walk" on an organic farm. The book was launched at the National Organic Training Skillnet BioFarm conference and has now been distributed through the Green Schools system, at key events (Access Europe, Dublin 2023) as well as the Irish and UK library systems and is great legacy piece from the project.

The Green Deal aims to create environmentally friendly urban areas by 2030. The third project, Green Communities, focused on low-carbon town centres. It involved stakeholder interactions and practical steps to achieve this goal. Additionally, it explored how successful tools like Green Flag awards can encourage community participation. Furthermore, it considered extending similar sustainability efforts to smaller rural centres.

This initiative strives to make cities greener, involves community collaboration, and extends sustainable practices to rural areas.

Green Communities has developed a methodology for baseline emissions and emission reduction forecasting, which is a template for low carbon community planning.

The Green Communities Handbook aims to engage citizens in the planning of their future, allowing them to vote for their preferred decarbonisation activity. The Green Communities Carbon Calculator allows users to manipulate levers to lower their carbon emissions at a community level. The calculator is currently in beta but is expected to be developed to full functionality for national rollout.



Legacy 4 Life books and posters

A SUSTAINABLE MOVE

In October 2023, an exciting and sustainable transition took place as staff at Swifts Alley and Tailors Hall bid farewell to their old workspaces and embraced a new home at Foster Place. The journey towards this office move began months prior, with a strong commitment to sustainability guiding every decision.

One of the key elements of this move was the conscientious choice of furniture, suppliers, and equipment. Rather than discarding the old furniture, which was too large for the new office space, it was traded in and repurposed. This not only reduced waste but also gave new life to previously loved pieces. To furnish the new office, a thoughtful mix of new and used furniture was sourced, ensuring functionality without compromising sustainability.

Upon entering the ground floor, one is greeted by the "heritage room," a space that reflects Dublin's rich history. The room boasts period pieces of furniture donated or acquired from house clearances, creating an ambiance that pays homage to the city's past. It serves not only as a functional space but also as a reminder of the legacy that surrounds us.

Looking ahead, plans are in place to introduce green spaces both indoors and outdoors at Foster Place. The aim is to create a harmonious blend of nature and work environment, even within the bustling streets of Dublin 2. These green spaces will not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of the office but also contribute to employee well-being by bringing a touch of nature into their daily work lives.

The sustainable office move to Foster Place represents more than just a change of address. It embodies a commitment to responsible practices, where every decision—from furniture selection to the layout of green spaces—has been made with sustainability in mind. This move is a testament to the organization's dedication to reducing its environmental footprint while creating a workspace that inspires and nurtures its employees.

As they settle into their new home at Foster Place, the team looks forward to embracing this sustainable ethos fully. The journey continues as they strive to keep nature close, even amidst the urban landscape of Dublin's bustling city centre.



Foster Place Reception Room



Farewell to Swifts Alley



Work on Foster Place

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

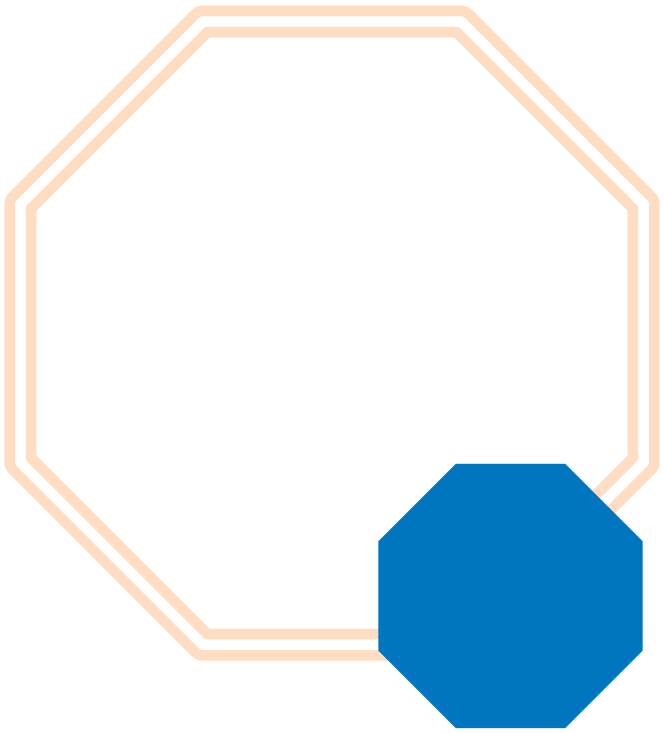
Governance and management structures are set out in the Constitution.

The Strategy of An Taisce is the responsibility of its directors, who are appointed by An Taisce Council. Council oversees the Board's performance. The Directors are also the Trustees of An Taisce under charity law.

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

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

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



BOARD PROFILES

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

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 10 February 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.

Sinéad Mercier
(Appointed 10 February 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 10 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.

Helen Shaw
(Appointed 10 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 10 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.

Company Secretary

Stuart McCaul (Resigned 25 January 2024)

Laura Segura Gutierrez (Appointed 25 January 2024)

Resignations/Retirements

Philip Kearney, Chairperson (Resigned 24 June 2023)

Aoife O'Gorman, Treasurer (Resigned 02 February 2023)

Prof. John Sweeney (Resigned 24 June 2023)

Hugh O'Reilly (Resigned 23 April 2023)



COMMITTEE PROFILES AND REPORTS

Governance, Risk and Compliance 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 Charities Governance Code. It conducts an annual review of governance structures and processes.

Majella Walsh, Chairperson

Members - Stuart McCaul, Gary Freemantle, Olivia Rogers, Prof. John Sweeney

Audit and Finance Committee

The Audit and Finance Committee's role is to help the Board meet their responsibilities by providing independent oversight of An Taisce's systems of internal control and financial reporting.

Members - John Conroy, Chairperson, Eric Conroy, Ruaidhri O'Boyle, Sandra Bowen, Jaimie-Leigh Bail, Finbarr Kelly (Resigned 14/03/2024)

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee is an ad hoc committee which is responsible for the recruitment of Board members. Successful candidates are then nominated to the An Taisce Council for appointment.

Members - Paul Rogers, Rónán O'Brien, Stuart McCaul, Gary Freemantle

Properties Committee

Finbarr Murray, Chairperson

Members - Sinead Owens, Geoffrey Clarke, Peter Wise, Chair of NEC (currently vacant), Trish O'Connell, Geoff Power, John Conroy, Noel Foley

Properties Committee

The An Taisce Properties Committee is established to oversee the management, preservation, and utilisation of historical built environments under the jurisdiction of An Taisce. The committee collaborates with various stakeholders to ensure the sustainable preservation and promotion of Ireland's architectural heritage. The Property Committee is the primary committee in An Taisce for all property-related decisions, policies and management.

Committee Aims for 2024 -

- Focus on how we can get a better understanding, oversight, reporting and plans in place for each of the sites in the portfolio.
- Ensuring local oversight for all sites and ensure that committee reps get to the sites on a cyclical basis
- Developing stakeholder and network engagement with other bodies
- Developing our ability to access grant applications

Some Property Activity

- Morehampton Wildlife Sanctuary - Kerkus Forest School has opened since June 2023. It operates every Friday.
- Gort Weigh House – Currently rented to Burren Lowland Trust as an information office.
- Boyne Navigation - Minimal restoration work happened along the canal during 2023. Nevertheless, there are two active teams of IWAI volunteers working when they can on clearing scrub, water weeds and small overhanging branches from the canal and its immediate vicinity.
- The Boyne Greenway Way, Navan to Oldbridge is a proposed greenway extending from Navan westwards to Oldbridge estate joining the existing greenway, an overall length of approximately 26km An Taisce has recently submitted a substantial response to the Emerging Preferred Route (EPR) for the proposed Boyne Greenway setting down our comments. The EPR largely utilises the canal tow-paths owned by An Taisce - which would be made available to Meath County Council for this purpose.
- Booterstown Marsh has been tended to by the Dun Laoghaire Local Association. See that report for activities.

Policy Committee - Climate Committee

Terri Morrissey, Chairperson

Members - Phoebe Duvall, Barry McMullin, Ruaidhri O'Boyle, Nick Armstrong, Phil Kearney, Paul Price, John Sweeney, Charles Stanley-Smith, Aideen O'Dochartaigh,

Ciara Beausang*, Damien Ó Tuama, Theresa O'Donohoe, Elaine McGoff, Criodán Ó'Murchú, Karen Mahon, Ian Lumley

*stepped down as ATCC Chair in Feb 2023 and as ATCC member in July

The scope of the Climate Committee is all policy issues arising directly in Ireland and in Ireland's interaction with the rest of the global human community in relation to the challenges of rapid human-caused climate change in global climate patterns.

Specifically, it has a number of areas of priority:

- Education and outreach in relation to responses to the challenge of climate change
- Interaction with national media in order to facilitate informed public debate
- Engage with public and private institutions to respond to and inform their interventions
- Interaction with the Irish state agencies, local government and national government to hold them to account and preserve the environment for future generations

The Climate Committee met 12 times in the year.

During 2023 its key achievements were

- Hosted Kevin Anderson on his visit to Ireland in the summer 2023
- Engaged with the Environment Protection Agency on GHG projections to 2040, highlighting that its reporting was misleading and that this exceeding of carbon budgets would have a knock on effect on future carbon budgeting
- Raised concerns with Government in December 2023 about critical failings in draft National Biomethane Strategy, which lead to a delay in its rollout

A low light for the Committee was its lack of success in pushing for greater transparency in the Climate Change Advisory Council's Working Group on carbon budgets

Policy Committee - Natural Environment Committee

Anny Wise, Interim Chairperson, replacing Declan Murphy who retired in Sept 2023

Aine Lawless, Elaine McGoff, Bernard Goggin, Declan Murphy, Liz Pilkington, Eric Conroy, Finbarr Murray (Chair of Properties Committee), John Sweeney, Liane Costello, Saoirse McHugh, Stuart McCaul (as Chair of An Taisce), Ian Lumley, Phoebe Duvall, Trish O'Connell, and Phil Kearney (President)

The Natural Environment Committee meets five times annually. It consists of An Taisce members, board members and staff all concerned with the natural environment. Discussions take place on An Taisce policy in this area. Some work crosses over into Properties Committee due to many An Taisce sites being purely natural in nature. As a result, the Chairs of NEC and Properties sit on both committees.

Some 2023 activities.

- Successfully brought motions to An Taisce Council which became An Taisce policy.
- To express formal support for the Citizens Assembly recommendation to government for a referendum on an amendment to the Constitution to incorporate Rights of Nature in the Constitution
- A call for a ban on importing hedgerow plants that may carry disease.
- Anny Wise led a field trip to our property in Gortlecka on Burren lands in May during Biodiversity Week. Investigation has shown that one of the four habitats of the site is that of a former oak temperate rain forest.
- Field trip to Howth Head by committee members.
- NEC member Liz Pilkington led a Heritage Walk around Cabinteely, Co Dublin. The area has a rich natural and built environment and a historic medieval road. The tour filled up very quickly and was very successful.
- Some members conducted a cleanup of the Grove on Morehampton Road in preparation for the opening of Kerkus Forest School.

Policy Committee - Cultural Heritage Committee

This committee takes over from the original Monuments and Antiquities Committee and deals with protection of cultural heritage, most notably monuments and historical sites.

- In April 2023 Mark Clinton hosted the first of An Taisce's 75th anniversary events with "The Way that We're Going", a discussion on the future of cultural heritage in Ireland.

- Work on the Historic and Archaeological Heritage Bill 2023 has drawn to a close. An Taisce's participation in the process began with an appearance before the relevant Joint Oireachtas Committee back in February 2022. Thanks to a combined effort made in association with key TDs and Senators An Taisce did achieve some of our objectives in the form of amendments subsequently passed.
- The Valletta Convention is now finally acknowledged in the Bill: Section 3 – 'that (in particular, as regards the general function referred to in Section 168) the Valletta Convention should be adhered to, as well as any other international treaty, to which the State is a party, (etc.) ….'
- However, it is hard to see how the 'Archaeological Reserves' promoted in the Valletta Convention will be realised without defining the areas in question on all the relevant maps. Al Registered Monuments should have a clearly defined area marked on a map.
- The new port proposed for Bremore in North County Dublin will come under discussion this year. The area designated contains at least two, if not four, damaged Passage Tombs in Gormanston that would have to be taken into consideration and their legal status fully recognised.
- 2024 will see plans to clear invasive vegetation at An Taisce property Corlican in County Wexford. This site is unique in Ireland – a late 1st Millennium A.D. ringfort playing host to a 17th century Society of Friends (Quaker) Burial Ground. Amongst the interments there are Sarah Holme, the wife of Thomas, and three of their children. Thomas Holme went on to lay-out the street pattern of the new city of Philadelphia at the request of his friend William Penn. He also served as the 1st Surveyor-General of Pennsylvania

Members

Sinead Mercier (Chairperson), Dr Mark Clinton, Ian Lumley, Dr Amy Strecker, Thomas Muinzer

Policy Committee - Planning Committee

In our ongoing commitment to proactive environmental and heritage advocacy, An Taisce has established a new Planning Committee that commenced its operations this year. Meeting monthly, the committee plays a pivotal role in shaping our response to critical planning issues across Ireland.

Focus and Activities

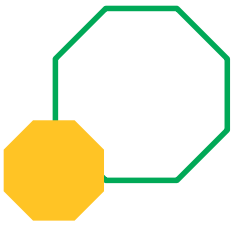
The Planning Committee is dedicated to influencing and improving legislative frameworks, with a current focus on the draft planning bill. Its efforts are aimed at ensuring that this legislation aligns with sustainable development principles and effectively addresses the environmental, social, and economic needs of the community.

Additionally, the committee actively participates in the National Planning Forum, advocating for policies that promote transparency, inclusivity, and environmental responsibility in national planning processes. It is also tasked with drafting An Taisce's planning policies, thereby setting the standards and guidelines for our involvement in planning matters. We are currently writing a policy on wind energy.

A significant area of the committee's work involves addressing strategic planning issues that have broad environmental implications, such as the proposed expansion of Dublin Airport. The committee argues that this expansion is unaligned with Ireland's climate targets and advocates for revising plans to better support the nation's commitments to reducing carbon emissions.

Members

Stuart McCaul (interim committee chair), Phoebe Duvall (Senior Planning Officer assigned to the committee), Sean O'Callaghan (junior Planning Officer), President Phil Kearney, Colm Desmond, Charles Stanley Smith, Nick Armstrong, Judy Osborne, Alena Kunkel, Gavin Daly, Brian Hamilton, Ian Lumley, John Conroy, Elaine McGoff, Peter Butler, Nick Armstrong.



AN TAISCE COUNCIL

The An Taisce Council meets six times a year and is made up of members of An Taisce who volunteer their time. The members represent different Local Associations, the various policy committees, the Board, and past Presidents. The remainder are elected every year at the AGM for a three-year cycle. Council approves all Board nominations. It considers reports from committees and Local Associations.

Council has two principal areas of responsibility: oversight of the Board, and providing a forum for organisational communications and enhancement, and the development of science-based environment, heritage and planning policy.

Members

COUNCIL MEMBER	ROLE	LOCAL ASSOCIATION
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	
Áine O'Gorman	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 Âû	Elected	Clare
Brian Hamilton	Local Association Delegate	Kilkenny
Dr Thomas Muinzer	Co-Opted	
Colm Desmond	Local Association Interim Delegate	Cork

GOVERNANCE

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 2023.

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

An Taisce complies with the Charity Regulator's Governance Code and all other applicable legislation.

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 more transparent financial procedures. Implementation of these recommendations continued in 2023 and aided the monitoring of internal controls.

Lobbying and Political Contributions

An Taisce serves as an independent voice for environmental and cultural heritage conservation. We are committed to advocating for policies that ensure a sustainable and liveable future. In alignment with our dedication to transparency and accountability, we strictly adhere to the Regulation of Lobbying Act.

Every instance of lobbying activity directed at designated public officials in Ireland is meticulously documented and transparently registered with the Lobbying Register. This practice underscores our commitment to upholding the highest standards of integrity and openness in all our advocacy efforts.

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.

Taxation Status

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

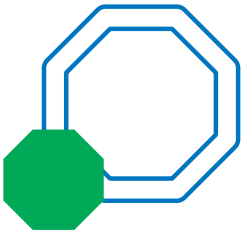
Members Liabilities

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.

Conflicts of Interest

In any charitable organisation, conflicts of interest are inevitable from time to time, particularly among volunteers. An Taisce addresses this challenge with a robust governance framework. We maintain and annually update an Interests Register to transparently record any potential conflicts. Additionally, new conflicts are declared at the commencement of each meeting.

To ensure that these conflicts do not affect our operations or decision-making processes, they are managed with strict adherence to our governance policies. Typically, this management involves the conflicted individual abstaining from relevant discussions and decisions, thereby safeguarding the integrity and impartiality of our Board and committee actions.



Protected Disclosures

At An Taisce, we maintain the highest standards of integrity and accountability, underpinned by our Good Faith Reporting/Whistle-Blowing Policy. This policy ensures that all employees can report potential improprieties or wrongdoing within the organisation safely and confidentially.

In 2023, there were no protected disclosures.

Child Safeguarding Statement

An Taisce is committed to a child-centred approach to working with children and young people and undertakes to provide a safe environment and experience wherein the welfare of the child is paramount. In adherence with recommendations in *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2011* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs revised 2017), and *Our Duty to Care: The principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people* (Department of Health and Children 2002), An Taisce has implemented Child Protection procedures covering:

- Recruitment and staff selection.
- Management and supervision of staff.
- A code of behaviour for all staff.
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse.
- Involvement of primary carers.
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse carried out by staff.
- Incidents and accidents.
- Complaints and comments.
- Confidentiality.

GDPR

An Taisce is committed to upholding the highest standards of data privacy and adheres strictly to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines. Our comprehensive privacy policy, available on our website, outlines the measures we take to protect personal data and ensure transparency in our data handling practices.

In 2023, we continued to enforce rigorous data protection protocols to safeguard the information of our members, supporters, and employees. During the year, we received one data subject access request. This request was handled promptly and in compliance with GDPR timelines, demonstrating our efficiency and dedication to the rights of data subjects.

Decision-Making

An Taisce adheres strictly to its Constitution and by-laws when making decisions, ensuring all actions reflect the organisation's established legal and ethical standards. In line with our commitment to enhancing the democratic quality of our operations, we strive to employ a multi-option decision-making approach for complex issues. This method fosters broader participation and considers multiple perspectives, thereby enhancing the inclusiveness and effectiveness of our decisions.

The Board maintains a formal written agreement with the Chief Executive Officer, specifying matters reserved for Board decision. This clear delineation of authority ensures that strategic oversight remains with the Board while operational decisions are efficiently handled by the CEO.

Additionally, the Board has approved a comprehensive statement of committee protocols and local association standing orders. These documents detail the specific decision-making powers delegated to our voluntary groups, ensuring that local actions are both empowered and aligned with our national standards.

Board Evaluation

Board performance at An Taisce is subject to ongoing scrutiny to ensure effective governance and alignment with our strategic goals. This evaluation is conducted continually by the Council, which holds the authority to appoint and dismiss trustees, thereby maintaining a high standard of leadership and accountability.

The Chair of An Taisce delivers a detailed report at each Council meeting and at the Annual General Meeting of Members, providing transparency and updates on Board activities and organisational progress. Additionally, the Board engages in an annual self-assessment process, spearheaded by the Vice Chair, to introspectively review its operations and effectiveness.

Looking forward, in 2024 we plan to enhance our evaluation process by conducting a comprehensive 360° review with the assistance of an independent advisor. This initiative is designed to further refine our governance practices and ensure our continued commitment to excellence and responsible leadership.

Risk Register

The Board's sub-committee on Governance, Risk and Compliance diligently oversees the maintenance and updating of a dynamic Risk Register. This critical document categorises each identified risk and outlines corresponding mitigation plans to address these potential issues effectively. The structured approach ensures that each risk is systematically assessed and managed.

Annually, the Risk Register is thoroughly reviewed by the Board. This regular scrutiny facilitates proactive adjustments and reinforces our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of risk management. This process not only helps in safeguarding our operations but also ensures that our strategic objectives are pursued with a clear understanding of the associated risks.

Tax Clearance

An Taisce complies with Circular 44/2006 "Tax Clearance Procedures Grants, Subsidies and Similar Type Payments" by providing the tax clearance access number, to grant providers when requested.

DPER compliance

An Taisce rigorously adheres to the guidelines set forth in DPER Circular 13/2014, applying these standards not only to our funding agreements with government departments and public bodies but across all our operational activities. This comprehensive approach ensures consistency and adherence to the highest standards of financial and administrative compliance.

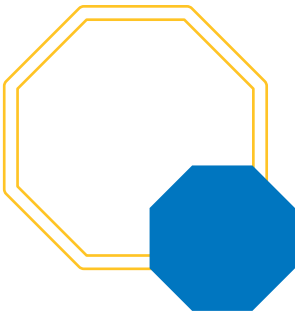
Our compliance with these regulations is regularly validated through external audits conducted by the grant-making bodies themselves. These audits confirm our commitment to transparency and accountability in the management of the funds entrusted to us by public bodies and other stakeholders.

Code of Conduct & Complaints Procedure

An Taisce is committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity and professionalism across all aspects of our operations. Our Code of Conduct is a cornerstone of this commitment, providing clear guidelines to ensure that all trustees, staff, and volunteers act in a manner that reflects our values and mission.

In 2023, we are pleased to report that there were no complaints filed under our Code of Conduct, which underscores the effectiveness of our ongoing efforts to foster a culture of respect, accountability, and transparency. This achievement not only reflects the strong ethical foundation of our organisation but also reinforces the trust placed in us by our members, supporters, and partners.

The Code of Conduct is available for review on our website, allowing all stakeholders to understand the standards to which we hold ourselves. We remain dedicated to not only maintaining these standards but continually enhancing them to ensure that An Taisce operates in the best interest of the communities we serve and the environment we protect.



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 2023

COMPANY INFORMATION

Directors	Philip Kearney, Chairperson (Resigned 24 June 2023) Stuart McCaul, Chairperson (Appointed 09 September 2023) Patricia O'Connell, Vice Chairperson Aoife O'Gorman, Treasurer (Resigned 02 February 2023) John Conroy, Treasurer (Appointed 11 February 2023) Prof. John Sweeney (Resigned 24 June 2023) Hugh O'Reilly (Resigned 23 April 2023) Olivia Rogers Rónán O'Brien Finbarr Murray (Appointed 11 February 2023) Laura Segura Gutierrez (Appointed 10 February 2024) Philip Doyle (Appointed 10 February 2024) Sinéad Mercier (Appointed 10 February 2024) Terri Morrissey (Appointed 10 February 2024) Helen Shaw (Appointed 10 February 2024)
Company Secretary	Stuart McCaul (Resigned 25 January 2024) Laura Segura Gutierrez (Appointed 25 January 2024)
Governance, Risk and Compliance Committee	Majella Walsh, Chairperson Stuart McCaul Gary Freemantle Olivia Rogers Prof. John Sweeney
Audit Committee	John Conroy, Chairperson Eric Conroy Ruaidhri O'Boyle Sandra Bowen Jaimie-Leigh Bail Finbarr Kelly (Resigned 14/03/2024)
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
Auditor	Browne Murphy & Hughes Chartered & Certifed Accountants & Registered Auditors 28 Upper Fitzwilliam Street Dublin 2

COMPANY INFORMATION

Bankers	Bank of Ireland 2 College Green Dublin 2

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DIRECTORS' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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 2023.

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

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

An Taisce – The Way Forward 2024-2026

During 2023, An Taisce completed a consultation on our strategic objectives. This process was an iterative one, with implementation into 2024 and beyond.

Our Vision

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

Our Mission

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

Our Strategic Objectives

Our strategic objectives sit under three core and interdependent pillars:

Nature

1. Climate & Biodiversity: An urgent and effective Irish response to the climate and biodiversity emergencies
2. Land and Water: Healthy ecology, prosperous rural society, and national food security

Built environment

1. Heritage: The safeguarding of Ireland's architectural and archaeological heritage
2. Planning: Sustainable and people-centred urban and rural communities

People

1. Community and Society: Meaningful behavioural change driven by connections with nature and the built environment
2. Organisation: A robust and secure long-term future for Ireland's National Trust

The first step in implementing this Strategic Plan is to review all our activities to ensure alignment with our strategic objectives. In 2023, our main areas of activity were:

Green-Schools , Green-Schools Travel and Safe Routes to School, Clean-Coasts, National Spring Clean, Legacy4Life, LEAF, Globe, SEAI Schools Energy Workshop Programme, Neat Streets, Blue Flag, Planning policy and oversight, Conservation of the Natural and Built Environments, Cycling Development, Green-Campus, Green Flag for Parks, Properties Management, Young Reporters for the Environment and Monument and Building Preservation.

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

How we deliver our activities

An Taisce is privileged to have committed and passionate employees and volunteers who are the key to delivering our activities. These groups work closely with funders, donors and in coordination with other NGOs and public bodies. An Taisce could not achieve its goals without the support of these groups.

Our Workforce

An Taisce's activities is led by a CEO with a team of 3 senior managers.

Over 100 colleagues work on our activities. The unity of purpose and commitment to delivery these activities with the best outputs possible is evident across our employees.

Our Members and Volunteers

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

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

There are tens of thousands of volunteers participating each year in programmes such as National Spring Clean, Clean-Coasts, Climate Ambassador and the many different school and campus-based initiatives.

Through our workforce, members and volunteers, An Taisce has become part of the fabric of Irish society.

Our Stakeholders

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 sponsors and individual donors. These relationships, alongside the required governance and scrutiny are vital to our work.

We are very appreciative of these ongoing commitments, support and funding.

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 2023 are set out in the table detailed on pages [100-101].

Partner Environmental NGOs in Ireland and Europe

An Taisce works closely with many NGOs in Ireland and across the European Union. This is work on a collaborative basis and we value these relationships and the expertise and breadth and depth of skills and knowledge it provides to the organisation.

We are represented on and work in collaboration with 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; various appointment committees; and Joint Oireachtas Committees including Heritage, Housing, Environment.

Impact Assessment

Acting as an independent voice for the environment and our heritage, we strive to assess the impact of our activities in both the short and long term. Each of our education and promotion programmes and advocating areas sets annual KPIs and reports on these to the individual stakeholders for that programme. Assessing the medium- and longer-term impact of our activities will now form part of the implementation and assessment of our Strategic Plan.

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2023

Nature: Climate & Biodiversity and Land & Water

- An Taisce LEAF planted 12 Choill Bheag woodlands at various sites across Ireland.
- Over 200 schools nationwide took part in the An Taisce GLOBE Air Quality Campaign.
- An Taisce awarded 84 beaches and 10 Marinas a Blue Flag Award, and 65 beaches received our Green Coast Award
- 101 sites received An Taisce's Green Flag for Parks Award.
- Advanced legal action to protect water quality and biodiversity, and to uphold the ideals of public participation in decision making.
- An Taisce successfully re-tendered for the delivery of the SEAI Schools Energy Workshop Programme
- Commencement and delivery of An Taisce Legacy4Life focusing on pond development for aquaculture and organic farming

Built environment: Heritage and Planning

- An Taisce's Safe Routes to School was designated as a Pathfinder project
- An Taisce continued to facilitate community, environmental and An Taisce groups meeting in Tailors Hall
- Contributed to the scrutiny of the new Planning Legislation;
- Contributed to the review of the National Planning Framework
- Represented An Taisce on the Wexford Monuments Trust;
- Acquisition of our new offices at 5 Foster Place, Dublin 2 in August 2023, a listed Georgian Building
- Took part in the selection processes for the Chair of An Bord Pleanála and Director of the Environmental Protection Agency
- Fulfilled our Prescribed Role by responding to planning applications and policy consultations in line with An Taisce's planning policies.

People: Community & Society and Organisation

- Celebration of 75 years of An Taisce with 22 events involving members, volunteers and colleagues
- Celebration of 25 years of An Taisce Green-Schools
- Celebration of 20 years of An Taisce Clean-Coasts
- 9 campuses were successfully assessed or re-assessed for their Green Flags as part of An Taisce Green-Campus
- An Taisce was designated a Sustainable Development Goals Champion
- 500,000 active volunteers participated in An Taisce's National Spring Clean
- Trained 179 An Taisce Climate Ambassadors
- Further developed our membership with a focus on recruiting new and younger members including hundreds of third-level students

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income

Total income for the year increased from €8.5m in 2022 to €10.5m in 2023.

The main driver of our increased income is the donation for the acquisition of the property at 5 Foster Place as well as further expansion of An Taisce Green Schools Travel and Safe Routes to School in collaboration with the NTA and Department of Transport.

Expenditure

An Taisce's expenditure has 3 categories:

Salaries

Colleagues work directly on our activities. Their work is led by a team of managers supported by a Finance Director, Education Director, and CEO.

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Employee Remuneration is the largest cost category in An Taisce and is detailed in note 9 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 2023, An Taisce's central costs included rent, 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. Towards the end of 2023, An Taisce vacated the offices at Swift Alley, Dublin 8 and terminated the lease on that building, thus removing that building's rent from our costs for 2024 and beyond. This will be replaced by a smaller maintenance cost from the upkeep of 5 Foster Place, a listed Georgian Building.

Included in Central costs is the remuneration of the senior management team. During 2023, An Taisce had a team of three senior managers, increasing to four at the beginning of 2024. Details of these costs are included in note 9 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.

Net Surplus for the Year

The results of the year are given on page 106.

Reserves and Reserves policy

At 31st December 2023, An Taisce had total reserves of €2,676,066 (2022: €1,629,101) . This is divided between restricted and unrestricted reserves.

Unrestricted reserves

At 31st December 2023, An Taisce had unrestricted reserves of €1,423,627 (2022: €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 as required for each relevant funding agreement.

Net Assets

An Taisce's net assets are €2,676,066. The large increase in fixed assets this year from €28,299 in 2022 to €1,203,934, can primarily be attributed to the purchase of 5 Foster Place. Bank balances of €1,718,094 and accounts receivable and accrued income of €791,162 are the main component of current assets of €2,560,062. This is offset by deferred income of €310,723, accruals and provisions of €15,000, other creditors of €376,039 and bank overdrafts of €386,168.

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 2023 and beyond into 2024. A budget for 2024 has been approved, which indicates that An Taisce will be in a positive unrestricted fund position on 31st December 2024 and will have maintained a desired level of restricted reserves.

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

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.

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.

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.

People: Community and Society, and Organisation

- Implementing our Strategic Plan including determining success metrics for each Strategic Objective.
- Introduce structured 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 CRM database to better communicate with our stakeholders, particularly Members, Schools and Coastal and Volunteer groups.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governance and management structures are set out in the Constitution.

The Strategy of An Taisce is the responsibility of its Directors, who are appointed by An Taisce Council. Council oversees the Board's performance. The Directors are also the Trustees of An Taisce under charity law.

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

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

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

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 2023.

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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

An Taisce complies with the Charity Regulator's Governance Code and all other applicable legislation.

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 more transparent financial procedures. Implementation of these recommendations continued in 2023 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.

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.

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 primary addresses, 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.

Post reporting date events

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

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Statement of disclosure to auditor

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

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

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

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

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

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Name of Grant Making Agency	Name of Grant Programme	Amount Utilised	Term
Irish Public funds:			
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (NTA)	Safe Routes to School	2,571,380	2023
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (NTA)	Green-Schools Travel	2,528,503	2023
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Clean Coasts Core	436,190	2023
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Climate Action	329,744	2023
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	National Spring Clean	225,000	2023
Uisce Eireann	Green Schools Water	210,400	2022-2023
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Green Schools Core	180,000	2023
EPA	Globe	180,000	2023
Local Authorities Nationwide	Green Schools Core	151,200	2023
Uisce Eireann	Clean Coasts Think Before you Flush	150,000	2022-2023
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland ("SEAI")	Energy	146,517	2023
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Green Schools Marine	121,298	2023
Irish Aid	Green Schools Global Citizenship	120,000	2023-2024
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Blue Flag Core	119,236	2023
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Clean Coasts - 2 minute beach clean	105,023	2023

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

European, US, and Irish Corporate, NGO and Individual Funders

Dunard Fund USA	Properties	1,000,000	2023
Various Legal Services	Natural Environment	344,112	2023
EU Life	Legacy 4 Life	202,897	2021-2023
King Bauduin Foundation	Neat Streets	128,682	2023-2024
1772 Foundation	General	91,667	2023
Irish Environmental Network	Funding	62,442	2023
Textile Recycling Ltd	Green Schools Core	62,000	2023
Cyclist.ie	Cycling	55,000	2023
Wrigleys	Green Schools Core and National Spring Clean	50,000	2023

On behalf of the board

.....
Stuart McCaul
Director

.....
John Conroy
Director

Date: 28.09.2024

DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

On behalf of the board

Stuart McCaul

.....

Stuart McCaul

Director

John A. Conroy

.....

John Conroy

Director

Date: 28.03.2024

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 2023 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 2023 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.

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.

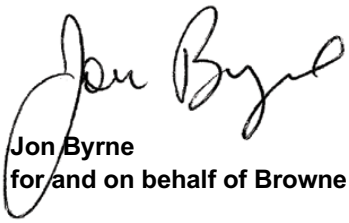
A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the company's financial statements is located on the IAASA's website at: https://iaasa.ie/publications/description-of-the-auditors-responsibilities-for-the-audit-of-the-financial-statements/. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

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

The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities

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



Jon Byrne
for and on behalf of Browne Murphy & Hughes Date: 28.03.2024

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

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2023 €	Restricted funds 2023 €	Total funds 2023 €	Total funds 2022 €
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	**3**	1,140,105	511,773	1,651,878	372,534
Charitable activities	**4**	112,066	8,718,490	8,830,556	8,136,039
Investments	**5**	201	-	201	173
Total Income		1,252,372	9,230,263	10,482,635	8,508,746
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	**6**	174,549	9,266,077	9,440,626	8,467,341
Total expenditure		174,549	9,266,077	9,440,626	8,467,341
Net surplus/(deficit) before investment gains		1,077,823	(35,814)	1,042,009	41,405
Net gains on investments	**12**	4,956	-	4,956	7,748
Net surplus/(deficit)		1,082,779	(35,814)	1,046,965	49,153
Net movement in funds		1,082,779	(35,814)	1,046,965	49,153
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	**20**	340,848	1,288,253	1,629,101	1,579,948
Total funds carried forward		1,423,627	1,252,439	2,676,066	1,629,101

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 €	2023 €	2022 €	2022 €
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**12**		1,189,999		19,320
Investments	**13**		13,935		8,979
			1,203,934		28,299
Current assets					
Debtors	**15**	841,968		765,506	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,718,094		1,736,983	
		2,560,062		2,502,489	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**16**	(922,930)		(901,687)	
Net current assets			1,637,132		1,600,802
Total assets less current liabilities			2,841,066		1,629,101
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	**17**		(165,000)		-
Net assets			2,676,066		1,629,101
Total reserves					
Unrestricted funds	**20**		1,423,627		340,848
Restricted funds	**20**		1,252,439		1,288,253
Total funds			2,676,066		1,629,101

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on 28.03.2024 and are signed on its behalf by:

Stuart McCaul
.....
Stuart McCaul
Director

John A. Conroy
.....
John Conroy
Director

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 €	2023 €	2022 €	2022 €
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	**23**		893,182		(386,514)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,000,000)		(2,008)	
Dividends received		201		173	
Net cash used in investing activities			(999,799)		(1,835)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(106,617)		(388,349)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,438,543		1,826,892
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,331,926		1,438,543
Relating to:					
Cash at bank and in hand			1,718,094		1,736,983
Bank overdrafts included in creditors payable within one year			(386,168)		(298,440)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies

Company information

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

1.1 Accounting convention

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

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

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

1.2 Going concern

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

1.3 Income

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

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

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

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

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

Investment income is included when receivable

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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
Fixtures and fittings	33% Straight Line
Computers	33% Straight Line

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

1.6 Heritage Assets

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

1.7 Investments

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

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

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

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.10 Trade and other debtors

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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 2023 €	Restricted funds 2023 €	Total funds 2023 €	Total funds 2022 €
Donations and fundraising	1,000,000	-	1,000,000	196,927
Donated services	-	511,773	511,773	88,333
Membership subscriptions	140,105	-	140,105	87,274
Total donations and legacies	1,140,105	511,773	1,651,878	372,534
Total 2022	284,201	88,333	372,534	

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023 €	Restricted funds 2023 €	Total funds 2023 €	Total funds 2022 €
Green Schools Travel	-	5,104,883	5,104,883	4,777,521
Green Schools	-	985,806	985,806	822,119
Clean Coasts	-	855,244	855,244	747,301
Climate Action Programme (CAP)	-	355,254	355,254	362,335
Litter	-	252,410	252,410	244,978
Legacy4Life	-	296,013	296,013	203,115
Leaf	-	46,567	46,567	124,686
Globe	-	177,335	177,335	141,178
Energy/SEAI	-	146,517	146,517	119,263
Neat Streets	-	127,329	127,329	119,455
Advocacy	60,367	55,500	115,867	168,625
Blue Flag	-	128,936	128,936	110,400
Smaller Programmes	51,699	186,696	238,395	195,063
Total	112,066	8,718,490	8,830,556	8,136,039

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

5 Investment Income

	Unrestricted funds 2023 €	Restricted funds 2023 €	Total funds 2023 €	Total funds 2022 €
Dividend income	201	-	201	173
Total	**201**	-	**201**	**173**
Total 2022	173	-	173	

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

6 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 €	Restricted Funds 2023 €	Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
Green Schools Travel	-	5,094,456	5,094,456	4,777,278
Green Schools	-	1,048,778	1,048,778	986,420
Clean Coasts	-	835,255	835,255	824,625
Climate Action Programme (CAP)	-	362,789	362,789	319,939
Litter	-	230,847	230,847	220,965
Life	-	339,802	339,802	159,326
Leaf	-	91,764	91,764	138,055
Globe	-	193,212	193,212	190,600
Energy/SEAI	-	144,659	144,659	112,355
Neat Streets	-	95,319	95,319	98,110
Advocacy	73,682	484,424	558,106	159,296
Blue Flag	-	119,384	119,384	105,591
Smaller Programmes	37,272	133,722	170,994	223,727
General	63,595	91,666	155,261	151,054
	174,549	9,266,077	9,440,626	8,467,341
Total 2022	271,745	8,195,596	8,467,341	

Included in Advocacy Charitable Activities are Donated Legal Services of €420,107 and in General Charitable Activities are Donated Philanthropic Services from a US Trust of €91,666.

7 Governance costs

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 €	Restricted Funds 2023 €	Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
Auditors remuneration	489	14,886	15,375	15,375
Legal and professional fees	17,273	-	17,273	18,562
Depreciation - tangible fixed assets	29,320	-	29,320	18,119
Total	47,082	14,886	61,968	52,056

8 Interest receivable and similar income

	2023 €	2022 €
Other income from investments		
Dividends received	201	173

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

9 Analysis of Expenditure by expenditure type

	Staff costs 2023 €	Other Costs 2023 €	Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
Charitable activities	4,049,484	5,329,173	9,378,657	8,415,285
Governance (Note 7)	-	61,968	61,968	52,056
Total 2023	4,049,484	5,391,141	9,440,626	8,467,341
Total 2022	3,628,040	4,839,301	8,467,341	

10 Operating surplus

Operating surplus for the year is stated after charging:	2023 €	2022 €
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	29,321	17,445

11 Employees

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

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Employees	123	98

Wages and salaries	3,555,925	3,170,662
Social security costs	387,247	345,700
Pension costs	106,312	111,678
	4,049,484	3,628,040

An Taisce's senior management team was reorganised during 2022. The team of CEO and two directors was in place for the full year in 2023. Their total renumeration for 2023 was €193,522 (2022:€126,897).

The number of employees whose remuneration was greater than €60,000 was 2 (2022:0)

	2023	2022
€60,000 -€70,000	**1**	**-**
>€70,000	1	-

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

11 Employees **(Continued)**

	2023 €	2022 €
Remuneration - Administration & Management	523,442	263,216
Remuneration - Charitable Activities	3,526,042	3,364,824
	4,049,484	3,628,040

2023 Management and Admin costs (€523,442) are prior to any recharge to funding arrangements. The 2022 Management and Admin Costs (€263,216) are after recharge to funding arrangements.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold buildings €	Leasehold improvements €	Fixtures and fittings €	Computers €	Total €
Cost					
At 1 January 2023	-	120,678	109,335	120,844	350,857
Additions	1,200,000	-	-	-	1,200,000
Disposals	-	-	(109,335)	(120,844)	(230,179)
At 31 December 2023	1,200,000	120,678	-	-	1,320,678
Depreciation and impairment					
At 1 January 2023	-	105,589	107,851	118,097	331,537
Depreciation charged in the year	10,000	15,089	1,484	2,747	29,320
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	-	(109,335)	(120,844)	(230,179)
At 31 December 2023	10,000	120,678	-	-	130,678
Carrying amount					
At 31 December 2023	1,190,000	-	-	-	1,190,000
At 31 December 2022	-	15,089	1,484	2,747	19,320

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 2023 An Taisce - The National Trust for Ireland held the following properties at nil value:

Boyne Navigation.
Corlican Graveyard, Corlican, Wexford, Co. Wexford.
Crocnafarragh, Co. Donegal.
Kanturk Castle, Kanturk, Co. Cork.
Killaha West, Kenmare, Co. Kerry.
Mongan Bog, Co. Offaly.
Morehampton Road Wildlife Sanctuary, Donnybrook, Dublin 4.
Gortlecka, Inchiquin, Co. Clare.
Oweninny Bog, Balcorrick, Co. Mayo.
The Gull Islands and Rough Island, Mulray Bay, Co. Donegal.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

12 Tangible fixed assets **(Continued)**

The Crane - Gort Weigh House, Market Square, Gort, Co. Galway.
Booterstown Marsh, Booterstown, Co. Dublin (Leasehold).
Sliabh Beagh, Co. Monaghan and Co. Tyrone
Tailor's 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.

13 Fixed asset investments

	2023 €
Market Value	
At 1 January 2023	8,979
Fair value movement	4,956
At 31 December 2023	13,935

14 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 2023.

15 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2023 €	2022 €
Trade debtors	552,608	372,792
Other debtors	244,545	359,553
Prepayments	44,815	33,161
	841,968	765,506

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2023 €	2022 €
Amounts owed to credit institutions	**18**	386,168	298,440
Trade creditors		64,759	31,119
PAYE and social security		82,513	76,661
Deferred income		310,723	373,999
Other creditors		63,767	40,600
Accruals		15,000	80,868
		922,930	901,687

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

17 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2023 €	2022 €
Other creditors	165,000	-

18 Loans and overdrafts

	2023 €	2022 €
Bank overdrafts	386,168	298,440

19 Deferred income

	At 1 January 2022 €	Movement in Year €	At 31 December 2023 €
Green Schools			
- Local Authorities	86,219	26,234	112,453
- Core	8,333	-	8,333
- Biodiversity	26,641	(9,688)	16,953
- Global Citizen	64,000	1,625	65,625
CAP			
- Climate Smart	-	26,985	26,985
Life	101,449	(101,449)	-
Leaf - Coil Beag	25,000	2,000	27,000
Neat Streets	20,093	1,354	21,447
Smaller Programmes			
- Neb-Lab	-	3,179	3,179
- Sust-hein	-	2,935	2,935
-Tailors Hall	6,875	(6,875)	-
-Green Flags for Parks	22,000	-	22,000
General - Membership	13,389	(9,576)	3,813
Total	373,999	(63,276)	310,723

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

20 Statement of funds

	Opening Reserves €	Income €	Expenditure €	Closing Reserves
Designated funds				
General Properties	19,217	1,000,000	(11,173)	1.008,044
Advocacy	22,999	60,367	(73,682)	9,684
Sliabh Beigh	10,000	-	-	10,000
Boyne Navigation	6,664	-	-	6,664
Tailors Hall	(100,835)	33,561	(17,537)	(84,811)
Total Designated funds	(41,955)	1,093,928	(102,392)	949,581
General funds	382,803	163,400	(72,156)	474,046
Total Unrestricted funds	**340,848**	**1,257,328**	**(174,549)**	**1,423,627**
Restricted funds				
Educate, Promote, Advocate	714,731	(7,386)	(241)	707,104
National Spring Clean Working Capital	75,885	252,410	(230,847)	97,448
Clean Coast Working Capital	-	89,059	-	89,059
Neat Streets	37,796	127,329	(95,319)	69,806
Green School Campus	60,020	20,000	(15,666)	64,354
Green Flags For Parks	43,721	42,000	(37,805)	47,916
Green Schools Climate Ambassador	39,103	329,744	(325,877)	42,970
Green Awards	-	42,740	-	42,740
Clean Coast Support	112,967	-	(78,019)	34,948
Green Schools Core	26,718	429,507	(452,235)	3,990
Life	43,789	296,013	(339,802)	-
Funds below €20,000	133,523	7,608,847	(7,690,266)	52,104
Total Restricted Reserves	**1,288,253**	**9,230,263**	**(9,266,077)**	**1,252,439**
Total Reserves	**1,629,101**	**10,487,592**	**(9,440,626)**	**2,676,067**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

21 Related party transactions

Until November 2023, Gary Freemantle (An Taisce CEO) was chair and a director of IEN (Irish Environmental Network, a registered charity). Gary Freemantle did not receive any gratuity from IEN. During 2023, An Taisce received funding from IEN. This funding is awarded to An Taisce in line with IEN's funding criteria. In November 2023, Gary Freemantle rotated off the IEN Board.

22 Contingent liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities as at 31 December 2023.

23 Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations

	2023 €	2022 €
Surplus for the year	1,046,965	49,153
Adjustments for:		
Investment income	(201)	(173)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	29,321	17,445
Fair value movement on investments	(4,956)	(7,748)
Movements in working capital:		
Increase in debtors	(76,462)	(345,794)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(38,209)	67,195
Decrease in deferred income	(63,276)	(166,592)
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	893,182	(386,514)

24 Analysis of changes in net funds

	1 January 2023 €	Cash flows €	31 December 2023 €
Cash at bank and in hand	1,736,983	(18,889)	1,718,094
Bank overdrafts	(298,440)	(87,728)	(386,168)
	1,438,543	(106,617)	1,331,926

25 Non Audit Services

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

26 Approval of financial statements

The directors approved the financial statements on 28.03.2024

KEY STAFF

An Taisce Senior Team

CEO: Gary Freemantle

Education Unit Director: Cathy Baxter

Financial Controller: Aoife O'Gorman

Development Director: Sinead McCoy

An Taisce Programme Managers

Head of Advocacy: Dr Elaine McGoff

Green Schools Travel Manager: Allison Phillips

Green Schools Manager: Joanne Scott

Safe Routes To School Manager: Tracey Lydon

Clean Coasts Manager: Bronagh Moore

National Spring Clean Manager: Emlyn Cullen

Green Campus Manager: Deirdre O'Carroll

Blue Flag Manager: Ian Diamond

Green Flag Award for Parks Coordinator: Emlyn Cullen

Learning About Forests (LEAF) Coordinator: Rachel Geary

Neat Streets Manager: Stephen O'Reilly

Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) Coordinator: Adele O'Connor

Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) Officer: Claire McDonald

SEAI Officer: Claire McDonald

GLOBE Officer: Aileen Bright

Bookkeeper: Allison Dunne

Properties and Projects Manager: Sinead Owens

Fundraising and Membership Officer: Annette McCaul

Representatives of An Taisce to other Organisations

European Environmental Bureau: Attracta Uí Bhroin

International National Trusts Organisaton: Sinead Owens

Europa Nostra: Paul O'Brien

Alfred Beit Foundation: Ian Lumley

IWAI Boyne Navigation Branch Committee: James Leahy

Coalition2030: Charles Stanley Smith

Environmental Pillar: Elaine McGoff

Environmental Law Implementation Group: Alison Hough

Stop Climate Chaos: Theresa O'Donohoe

NOTES

A GIFT IN YOUR WILL HELPS AN TAISCE PLAN AHEAD FOR THE FUTURE AND SECURE IRELAND'S NATURAL AND BUILT HERITAGE FOR EVERYONE, FOREVER.

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