Annual Report

January to December 2024



Annual report and financial statements
28TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Company No. 560881 / Revenue Charity No. CHY 21602
Registered Charity No. 20106200

Directors 2024	**Gill Weyman (Chair)** **Appointed** **Brian McElligott (Director)** **Yudeshtra Naidoo (Treasurer)** **Eileen O'Riordan (Director)** **Jess Bird** **Maggie McColgan**
Company registered number	560881
Charity tax exemption number (CHY Number)	20103200
Charity Regulatory Authority number	21602
Registered office	An sibin, Ballinvoher, Castletownroche, County Cork P51 X897
Company secretary	Rosiane Bencik
Accountant	Dan O'Riodan Ballincollig, Cork City
Principal Bankers	PTSB. Mallow

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Chairperson's Report



Our significant accomplishments during this year include receiving a runner-up award for the heritage funds, acknowledging our efforts in Beaumont Quarry. Additionally, we successfully launched the inaugural online transition year educational pack focused on otters. We enhanced our website, optimising it for mobile accessibility, and expanded our events and engagement initiatives.

The year 2024 marked a period of consistent advancement and constructive transformation for Cork Nature Network. We upheld our exemplary safety record and motivated our volunteers to participate in the training programs we provide. Furthermore, it was decided last year to rebrand Cork Nature Network to better represent our national endeavours and to create the necessary opportunities for growth as a nationally recognised organisation. During 2024, we commenced planning for the rebranding process.

Our robust governance structure, along with our committed team of contractors and volunteers, remains the cornerstone of our achievements. We eagerly anticipate building upon these successes in 2025 and the years to come.



1. Summary of the Organisation's Purpose and Activities

Purpose: *"To benefit the community of Ireland by promoting the protection of Ireland's wildlife and habitats, through education, conservation and research; to restore a healthy ecosystem for all species and habitats. "*

Vision and/or mission statement: *Protecting and promoting Ireland's wildlife through education, conservation and research to restore a healthy ecosystem for all species and peoples of Ireland.*

Our strategic purpose from our Strategic Plan

1. Maintaining a healthy volunteer base
2. A good reputation
3. Mission-driven core values
4. Responsible fiscal management
5. Dealing with and adapting to change
6. Reaching the right audience
7. Collaborating with stakeholders and communities
8. Measuring progress and outcomes

2. Our Core Values

1. We recognise that our members, volunteers, supporters, and visitors are vital to our success, and we seek to provide excellent standards of service and response to their needs.
2. We will aim for the highest possible standards of professionalism and efficiency in all aspects of our work.
3. Where possible, we will work in partnership with other organisations in pursuit of common objectives and efficient use of resources and, in particular, to help deliver progress towards our Vision for a Living Landscape.
4. We will apply an environmentally and socially responsible stance to financial decisions involving sponsorship and procurement of goods and services.

5. We work to connect and increase public understanding of how nature is interconnected and that acting now is key to reducing the impacts of habitat and species loss.
6. Our conservation and land management decision-making are based on sound scientific evidence, research, and consultation with appropriate experts.
7. We believe that anyone can make a difference.

3. Organisational Structure and Directors' Report

Board of Directors

Chair: Gill Weyman continues to serve as Chair, a role she has held since 2015. Her long-standing leadership has guided the organisation through nearly a decade of growth and development.

Treasurer: Yudeshtra Naidoo serves as Treasurer, taking on this important role in 2023 and continuing through 2024.

Health and Safety: Brian McElligott 2019 to present.

HR and Training: Eileen O'Riordan 2020 to present.

Marketing: Jess Bird 2022 to 2024. Niamh Byrne September to December 2024.

Development/Grants: Maggie McColgan served from September 2021 to September 2024.

Communications : Laura Farrell Followed by Clare Busher O'Sullivan.

Rosiane Bencik holds the position of Secretary, ensuring proper governance and record-keeping for the organisation.

Operations Team

Cork Nature Network does not have employees but works with several contractors, including:

- Ronja Crede (Administration)
- Patricia Coleman (Bookkeeper)
- Sarah Rohu (Beaumont Quarry)
- Joan Pass and John Arnold, Marketing contractor

We also had project managers in 2024, including Cathy Fitzgibbon, who worked on the NPWS Peatlands and Climate Change project. Tara O'Donohue. Biodiversity Action Plans.

4. Directors' Reports

Treasurer (Yudeshtra Naidoo)

This year, for the first time, the accounts showed a deficit. This was due to outstanding funds from some projects, which were then paid in early 2025. The main bulk of the expenditure was on project costs. Our main income remains to be project funding.

Health and Safety (Brian McElligott)

Our safety record continues to be outstanding. CNN documented just a single incident in 2024 - a bee sting experienced by a child at an event held at Beaumont Quarry. Our on-site team promptly administered first aid. In the last five years (2020-2024), we have recorded merely two reportable incidents at CNN events. This reflects the exceptional efforts of our volunteers and event organisers who consistently prioritise safety. We express our gratitude to every volunteer for their commitment and diligence.

Human Resources and Training (Eileen O'Riordan)

Our 2024 survey indicated that volunteers are highly satisfied with their experience working with us. Numerous individuals expressed their enjoyment of the supportive and positive environment within our organisation. We have continued to host regular welcome evenings for new volunteers. These gatherings assist newcomers in getting started and feeling at ease in their positions. We consistently review and update these sessions to ensure they remain beneficial. In 2024, we introduced specialised welcome sessions specifically for directors to enhance support for their crucial roles. We distributed a survey to directors to ascertain their training needs. This will enable us to develop more effective training programs in the future. We have revised our files, folders, and welcome packs to facilitate easier access to information for volunteers. We have promoted volunteer opportunities through IVOL and social media to assist individuals in finding roles that align with their skills and interests. Additionally, we have begun the process of applying to join the Training Links Network. This initiative will enable us to collaborate with other organisations to develop improved training programs.

Development and Grants (Maggie McColgan and Harry Sealy)

In 2024, CNN marked a significant transition as it began to broaden its focus from primarily Cork to establishing a national presence, all while maintaining our regional foundations. Key Grant Team Activities

- We continuously monitored new funding opportunities throughout the year.
- We submitted grant applications to sustain our staff and finance new initiatives.
- We enhanced our operational methods for improved efficiency.
- We examined government environmental policies to identify new project prospects.
- We prepared to revise our long-term strategies to facilitate CNN's expansion.
- We engaged with directors of major Cork infrastructure projects (BusConnects and LUAS) regarding potential impacts on Beaumont Quarry. These discussions were productive and enabled us to cultivate strong relationships while demonstrating our expertise in site and environmental regulations.

Corporate Development (David Madden)

This was a new directorship on the Board of Directors. Over the first three months, the foundations of a corporate engagement plan were developed, and early outreach was made to build interest in strategic partnerships. These first steps are laying the groundwork for a stronger, more diverse funding base to support Cork Nature Networks' long-term ambitions.

Marketing (Jess Bird and Niamh Byrne)

A project proposal was developed to enhance the existing website to be more mobile-friendly. A web designer was hired to upgrade the current site, and a project manager was appointed to supervise the content.

5. Projects

Cork Nature Network ran four projects: Climate Change, Valuing Insects, Otters and Restoring Nature.

Climate Change

We secured funding to run a promotional project around Peatlands and Climate Change. As part of this project, we organised two workshops. The first was in Kerry and the second was organised in West Cork.



Photos. Workshops in Cloghane County Kerry and Glengarriff, West Cork. Photos C. Fitzgibbon, S.Smok.

Valuing Insects

We ran 2 webinars and also participated in a bioblitz, identifying several species in Beaumont Quarry. We also led a bug hunt in the quarry for families during the Bioblitz.



Photos courtesy S.Smok, Freenature.eu.

Otters

In 2024, we launched a transition year online education pack. This was funded by Fota Wildlife Park. We also linked in with Sports Cork in September running a promotional campaign with prizes for winners who walked the otter trails and answered questions from the otter signs.



Images. R. Crede, R. Ferris and Freenature.eu

Beaumont Quarry

This is our flagship restoration project. In 2024, we secured funding from Creative Ireland to run several outdoor workshops, encouraging creativity, connections to nature, and an understanding of climate change. We ran storytelling workshops, created cyanotype prints, and held hibernation-inspired workshops.







Images. K. Sonnenberg, A. McCarthy

We also ran a campaign called "Green today, Gone tomorrow". This was in response to a Bus Connects proposal to put in an overhang of a 1m pedestrian bridge into the third area, which is planned for rewilding. We objected to the proposal and encouraged the public to also voice an objection during the third consultation stage. An online petition raised 2302 objections. Talks with Bus Connects are still continuing.

As well as this we won a Heritage Week award for our work in Beaumont Quarry and the Bioblitz event. We won runners up in the Climate and Sustainability category.

A Friends of Beaumont Quarry Group was set up and developed as a result of the clean-ups. A total of 4 clean-ups were held where a number of tasks were undertaken, including clearing of grass from a cut meadow, removal of litter and removal of Old Man's Beard, an invasive plant that covers parts of the site.

6. Events

In 2024, Cork Nature Network successfully organised a total of 35 public events as part of our outreach efforts. Among these 29 events, we conducted 8 physical wildlife walks and talks, 4 in-person workshops, 3 online workshops/webinars. Additionally, we set up 5 informational stalls, which included our participation in the Cork City St. Patrick's Day parade. At Beaumont Quarry, we hosted 4 clean-up events, our annual Easter Egg Hunt, and the Beaumont Blitz.

In 2024 we participated in National Tree Week, Ireland's National Biodiversity Week, the Cork Lifelong Learning Festival, Cork Harbour Festival, Native Species Weekend, National Heritage Week, and Cork Walking Week.

In total 680 individuals registered for the 33 events planned. Registrations and attendees were not recorded for informational stalls. Number of events and participants increased from 2023, partly due

to more events around projects such as the Peatlands and Climate Change and Creative Ireland Fund project in Beaumont Quarry.

The events with the highest attendance rate were our January Peatlands & Climate Change: The Connections webinar (72 attendees), Sherkin Island guided nature walk in memory of Julian Wyllie (40 attendees), and Beaumont Blitz (30 attendees).

Table 1. List of events in 2024

Date	Event	Type of Event	Registered
09/01/2024	Peatlands and Climate Change: The Connections	Online	122
13/01/2023	BQ Clean Up	Presence	N/A
27/01/2024	What to Look for in a Winter Woodland	Presence	25
03/02/2024	The Wetlands of Tramore Valley Park	Presence	38
02/10/2024	Otter Walk	Presence	30
2/24/2024	BQ Clean Up	Presence	16
16/03/2024	Easter Egg Hunt	Presence	30
17/03/2024	St. Patrick's Day Parade	Presence	N/A
23/03/2024	Walk in the Gearagh	Presence	30
22/03/2024	Ballydehob BAP launch	Presence	3
28/03/2024	Peatlands webinar	Online	8
10/04/2024	UCC Sustainable Careers Expo	Stall	N/A
13/04/2024	What Makes a Healthy Waterway?	Presence	12
20/04/2024	BQ Clean Up	Presence	6
02/05/2024	Coolagown BAP Launch	Presence	N/A
22/05/2024	The Trees of Beaumont Quarry	Presence	33
25/05/2024	Exploring Insects of the Glen	Presence	30
08/06/2024	Otter Walk	Presence	25
07/07/2024	Botanical Painting Workshop	Presence	10
27/07/24 - 28/07/24	Stall	Presence	N/A
03/08/24-04/08/24	Lush Table	Presence	N/A
10/08/2024	Sherkin Island Walk (in memory of Julian Wyllie)	Presence	46
17/08/2024	Beaumont Blitz	Presence	19
18/08/2024	Stories of Green Spaces	Presence	10
21/09/2024	Autumn Woodland, Hedgerow and Pond Life	Presence	18
28/09/2024	Sun, Leaves and Stems: Cyanotype Making Workshop	Presence	15
12/10/2024	Time to Hibernate! Den-making workshop	Presence	15
19/10/2024	BQ Clean Up	Presence	9
26/10/2024	Peatlands: Powerhouses for the Planet! Workshop	Presence	28
09/11/2024	Peatlands and Climate Change Workshop	Presence	40
13/11/2024	UCC Volunteering Fair	Stall	N/A
21/11/2024	Where Do Insects Go in Winter?	Online	TBC
23/11/2024	BQ Clean Up	Presence	12
TOTAL 2024	33 events organised		**680**
TOTAL 2023	26 events organised		**423**

7. Monthly Photo Competition

Each month, a photo competition is held on Facebook, which has raised our profile. As a result of liaising with photographers, it was decided to trial an Amateur and an Advanced category. Photos are sent in and then voted upon by the public. The winning photos are placed on the banner of our page.



Images: Piotr Wozniak (October), and Pat Somers (August), O'Sullivan

8. Accounts

Nature Network Ireland CLG
INCOME STATEMENT
for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024 €	2023 €
Income	**4**	**76,189**	109,861
Expenditure		**(103,453)**	(107,650)
(Deficit)/surplus for the financial year	**12**	**(27,264)**	2,211

The company has no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the financial year. The results for the financial year have been calculated on the historical cost basis. The company's income and expenses all relate to continuing operations.

Nature Network Ireland CLG
STATEMENT OF TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES
for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 €	2023 €
(Deficit)/surplus after taxation	**(27,264)**	2,211
Total recognised losses/gains for the financial year	**(27,264)**	2,211
Total recognised losses/gains since last annual report	**(27,264)**	2,211

Note of historical cost surpluses and deficits
The difference between the results as disclosed in the Income Statement and the result on an unmodified historical cost basis is not material.

Nature Network Ireland CLG
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
as at 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024 €	2023 €
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	7	1,513	2,071
Current Assets			
Debtors	8	12,282	26,566
Cash at bank and in hand		20,966	33,034
		33,248	59,600
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	(1,400)	(1,046)
Net Current Assets		31,848	58,554
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		33,361	60,625
Reserves			
Income and expenditure account	12	33,361	60,625
Members' Funds		33,361	60,625

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the micro companies' regime.

We as Directors of Nature Network Ireland CLG, state that -
(a) the company is availing itself of the exemption provided for by Chapter 15 of Part 6 of the Companies Act 2014,

(b) the company is availing itself of the exemption on the grounds that the conditions specified in section 358 are satisfied,

(c) the members of the company have not served a notice on the company under section 334(1) in accordance with section 334(2),

(d) we acknowledge the company's obligations under the Companies Act 2014, to keep adequate accounting records and prepare financial statements which give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company at the end of its financial year and of its profit or loss for such a financial year and to otherwise comply with the provisions of the Companies Act 2014 relating to financial statements so far as they are applicable to the company.

Nature Network Ireland CLG
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DETAILED INCOME STATEMENT
for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 €	2023 €
Income	76,189	109,861
Expenditure		
Use of premises	521	-
Insurance	369	369
Project Production Costs	85,568	91,659
Repairs and maintenance	2,498	2,519
Printing, postage and stationery & carriage	8,002	1,433
Advertising & PR Literature & Brochures	466	665
Computer & internet costs	944	2,848
Mileage & travelling exp	3,251	1,247
Legal and professional	-	5,302
Accountancy	1,230	1,046
Bank charges	-	4
General expenses	46	-
Depreciation	558	558
	103,453	107,650
Net (deficit)/surplus	(27,264)	2,211