

# Cork Nature Network

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# Annual Report 2021



## **ABOUT CORK NATURE NETWORK**

Cork Nature Network is a not-for-profit registered charity which was established in 2015. The organisation was developed to provide a local source of information on wildlife and to promote conservation. The aims of Cork Nature Network are:

“To benefit the community of Ireland by promoting and encouraging the conservation of wildlife and habitats by educating and increasing the awareness of the need for conservation in Ireland.

1. To promote nature conservation.
2. To educate and increase awareness of the need for conservation.

The Board of Directors in 2021 was:

Gill Weyman (Chair)  
Harm Deenen (Treasurer)  
Rosianne Benick (Secretary)  
Helena Gavin (Marketing)  
Val Soma (Webmaster)  
Brian McElligott (Health and Safety)  
Eileen O’Riordan (Human Resources and Training)  
Maggie McColgan (Development/Grants)

The company address is An sibir, Ballinvoher, Castletownroche, County Cork. 0872282040.

## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

It is with great pleasure that I present the annual report for Cork Nature Network for 2021. We have continued to work through COVID-19 and have adapted our work programmes to use online communications. In August 2021, with the relaxation of regulations, for the first time since 2020, we were able to deliver events by physical presence.



The marketing team have continued to grow and updated its operations resulting in a dedicated team. The team have produced more resources and increased the awareness of our name through posting and promotions on our social media channels. This was aided by an improved website which acts as a central core for our marketing and promotional activities.

Our training programmes for volunteers focused on increasing skills and with the help of our Training Director, we developed more resources for volunteers and offered new skills training programmes in presentation and GDPR.

We have increased our income through grants and a strong dedicated grants team. The successful bid on a tender for Water Biodiversity Training boosted our income and has made an enormous impact on local groups in the IRD Duhallow area, who learnt about their local watercourses and have been able to be given a voice in developing and managing local actions.

The organisation has continued to develop, and this has been reflected in our projects and activities. The online events have tended to book up quickly and we have delivered a range of exciting talks such as rewilding, hedgehogs, marine protected areas, and orchid identification. However, we have found that online events prove more difficult in raising income with reduced donations, and memberships. In 2021, we began to look at our membership online page and developed presentations for online events to encourage participants to become members.

Cork Nature Network is growing, in terms of its work and reach and this recognition has been shown by two awards, one won by Eileen O’Riordan our Human Resources and Training manager for her hard work as a director and the Otter project won recognition by the International Otter Survival Fund for our work such as the otter trails and the surveys that we are running. mammal.

I would like to finish by thanking our volunteers and our members. Their support and commitment have made Cork Nature Network the organisation that it is today.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'G. Weyman'. The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Gill Weyman  
Chair



## REPORT FROM THE DIRECTORS

### HELENA GAVIN (MARKETING DIRECTOR)

In 2021 the focus of the Marketing Team was to consolidate the changes made in 2020, which include improving communication and public engagement. All volunteers were trained at the start of the year to be aware of the updated Cork Nature Network branding.



In 2021 the number of volunteers within the team increased. This proved to be a key aspect of the considerable growth enjoyed by all our platforms.

The writing and graphic design team were renamed from the Technical Team to the Creative Content Team. They proved to be an invaluable piece of the puzzle, creating engaging content and assisting all other teams within the organization.

The website was fully revamped into a more user-friendly platform. The number of Social media pages were reduced, and considerable work was put into by the volunteers to ensure all information was easily and readily available.

Social media overall increased its coverage and reach over all platforms. Instagram and Facebook pages had slight decreases in engagement. During Covid-19, a regular feature on Facebook called “Biodiversity with Luke” brought in a regular audience. We now plan to produce a number of videos from this activity as they include a wealth of tips and advice on wildlife management.

### VAL SOMA (WEBMASTER)

In 2021, the main website was modified in terms of layout, and design, and we ensured the content was more user-friendly.

In December, we bought a new tool to allow us to manage our membership differently, by creating private content on the site.

In 2021, we also created the eLearning platform to offer educational content to schools, through the Beaumont Quarry primary school education pack, and to other targets, like the IRD Duhallow project.





## **BRIAN MCELLIGOTT. (HEALTH AND SAFETY/LEGAL MATTERS)**

Cork Nature Network had no reported accidents or injuries during 2021. This is a welcome trend which has continued for a number of years now. Due to Covid-19 lockdowns, there was limited activity with our events during the first half of 2021 which may have been a contributory factor. Cork Nature Network put in place a number of procedures to facilitate a safe return to activities later in the year, including revised risk assessments, bespoke guidance, and support for those of us re-engaging in outdoor activities.

## **MAGGIE MCCOLGAN (GRANTS)**

In 2021 we received €29,350 in grant funding from a wide range of funders including: Cork County Council, Cork City Council, The Heritage Council, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Fota Wildlife Park, LUSH, Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) and the Office of Public Works. Our grant writers worked hard to secure funds for our projects and specifically searched for operational grants to help cover organisational costs as Cork Nature Network continues to grow. We implemented new strategies to help streamline grant applications and ensure internal and funder reporting is accurate and timely.



## **EILEEN O'RIORDAN (HUMAN RESOURCES AND TRAINING)**

We offered the following training to Cork Nature Network Volunteers:

A member of our team delivered Podcast Training, via Zoom and a virtual class. This included an informative session on what Podcasting is, how it could be used within CNN, free apps and tools and provided reading documents for reference.

A one-day Presentation Skills Training for team members was offered as online/ virtual sessions. The training explored how to design and develop presentations, deal with nerves and appropriate use of tone and body language and how to deliver effective presentations.

A video MP4 was designed and developed on Gmail / Google Drive Training This included training on key areas including organising and managing folders, adding tasks, accessing Google Drive, key features of Google Drive, setting up contacts and accessing the Master Filling System we use in Cork Nature Network. This training supports asynchronous learning and can be watched at the learner's own pace.

We designed and developed GDPR Training via MP4/Video, explaining what personal data is, what are the risks, how we can protect data and our roles in respecting personal data. This training supports asynchronous learning and can be watched at the learner's own pace.

The recruitment procedures were also reviewed and updated. Cork Nature Network is now linked in with the Cork Volunteer Centre for recruitment.



## CORK NATURE NETWORK ACTIVITIES



Cork Nature Network ran a number of talks and events during 2021. These were all held on Zoom as restrictions were in place regarding Covid-19. The activities team developed procedures for Zoom and set out processes that made it clear and easy for presenters and the audience.

In February, a team of volunteers developed and led a Nature quiz as a fundraiser. Over 31 people booked a place on the quiz. Other events included: talks on microplastics, the curlew, river citizen science, birds, a wildlife walk on Sherkin Island, birds in Cork, insects

in Cork City, rewilding, and orchids. In November, a Zoom mushroom event was organized with Bill O’Dea for our members.

Numbers booking on our events increased by 457. (Table 1). The increase was due to the popularity of events such as the West Cork tree talk, hedgehogs, and orchids. The Culture Night otter walk was the first non-virtual event offered by our team and places were booked up within days.

**Table 1. Summary of events, including event topic and type, and numbers registered via Eventbrite in 2021**

EVENT TOPIC	EVENT TYPE	REGISTERED
Fundraising event	Online Quiz	31
Let’s talk Birds	Online presentation	100
World Meteorological Day-Climate Change and weather effects on wildlife	Online presentation	96
West Cork CNN launch. Trees.	Online presentation	150
National Spring Clean Month-Talk on marine Plastics	Online presentation	91
Rivers	Online Presentation	75
Dawn Chorus	FB Presentation	n/a
Biodiversity Day- Curlews	Online Presentation	81
Harbour festival- Marine Protected Areas	Online Presentation	55
Insects in cork city	Online Presentation	64
Wildlife Wander on Sherkin Island - West Cork	Walk	16
Knepp: Rewilding project	Online Presentation	110
National Heritage Week- Orchids	Online Presentation	139
National Heritage week: Discovering Hedgehogs	Online Presentation	174
National Heritage Week- Sand artist	Installation	n/a
Culture Night - Otter walk	Guide Walk	15
Wild Spaces in Cork City	Online Presentation	70
Membership Event - Mushroom event	Online Presentation	55
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1322</b>

## PROJECTS

In 2021, Cork Nature Network continued with its two long-term projects: Otters and Beaumont Quarry. A new project called “Wild Walks” was developed, and we also ran a once-off project on the Clearwing Moth and won a tender with IRD Duhallow on a water biodiversity training course.

### OTTERS

In 2021, the survey on otters in Cork Harbour and Cork City finally began after a delay due to COVID-19 restrictions. A consultant, Rory Dalton was engaged to identify otter areas of sprainting in the city and harbour, map the location of spraints, note areas of activity, and collect otter spraint for DNA analysis. The survey was funded by Cork City Council, Fota Wildlife Park, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and the Office of Public Works. Funding was originally gained in 2020 but due to COVID-19 restrictions, it has been carried over to 2022.

Funding was secured to develop otter trails in Bishopstown, Ballincollig, and Youghal. In 2021 the otter trails in Bishopstown and Ballincollig were completed, and maps were put up on the Cork Nature Network website. Funding from the Youghal and Ballincollig projects was not spent until 2022.

Cork Nature Network also ran an event in Youghal when the otter team worked with Sean, Corcoran, Joe Lonergan, More Clay Less Plastic, and Blue Green to raise awareness of otters. This was an amazing day with considerable community support, and we successfully raised awareness of the importance of otters. A film showing part of the event is available on our YouTube channel. ([https:// www.youtube .com /watch? v=2CFgmfCwvDE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CFgmfCwvDE)). The film was funded by Fota Wildlife Park and Cork County Council. The video was produced by MC Photography.

### BEAUMONT QUARRY

The main focus of Beaumont Quarry in 2021 was the removal of Winter Heliotrope, an invasive plant species which has a high presence on the site. Funding was obtained from the Heritage Council to undertake research on alternative methods to remove the plant in order to avoid spraying. The invasive species were mapped by consultants, and recommendations included that there was no perfect way of removing Winter Heliotrope as it is a species that spreads horizontally and is difficult to eradicate. Cork Nature Network also developed trials in Ballincollig Regional Park and Beaumont Quarry to test for methods such as covering the area and hot water treatments.

### WILD WALKS PROJECT

This was funded by Cork City Council and Jacobs Engineering (A prize donated by a member of staff for excellent work on the environment). Several sites in the city boundary were identified and surveyed and then a map was developed of the sites with information on species found

### CLEARWING MOTH

This project was funded by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and consisted of putting down pheromone lures at several sites in Cork City and County and surveying to see if



Clearwing Moth species would be attracted to them. The survey found only one site which reiterates their scarcity.

## IRD DUHALLOW BIODIVERSITY WATER TRAINING

Cork Nature Network won a tender for the first training course in Ireland on water biodiversity. A team from Cork Nature Network led the training and development of Action Plans. In all, nine catchments in the IRD Duhallow area received the training and nine action plans were produced. The project concluded with a launch in September 2021. This was the first big tender won by Cork Nature Network and has contributed to our increased income for 2021.





## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### AWARDS

In October Cork Nature Networks Eileen O’Riordan won an award for her work on the board of directors of Cork Nature Network from the Cork Volunteer Centre.

The awards were presented by the Cork Volunteer Centre in November in the Kingsley Hotel where each winner was filmed talking about their award and then a final online presentation was shown as a celebration night in December.

Cork Nature Network was delighted to win the group/organisation award from the International Otter Survival Fund for our work on otters. A huge thank you to all the team for their arduous work in promoting the conservation of otters in Ireland.

### FUNDRAISING

Cork Nature Network would like to thank Orla Tighe and Clodagh Murphy for running the women’s mini marathon for the organization and to the team who developed the nature quiz and ran it earlier in the year to secure funds.



## FINANCIAL REPORT

Our accounts have increased from 2020 as shown in the income statement below. This has been due to the IRD Duhallow tender which boosted our income. Membership declined due to the membership online system and to the online presence instead of physical events where it would be more convenient for people to register as members from a paper leaflet. Due to COVID-19, finance for some projects was carried over to 2022.

### Cork Nature Network CLG INCOME STATEMENT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2021

	Notes	2021 €	2020 €
Income	4	59,524	29,824
Expenditure		(56,014)	(13,557)
Surplus before tax		3,510	16,267
Tax on surplus		-	-
Surplus for the financial year	10	3,510	16,267

The company has no recognised gains or losses other than the surplus 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.

## Cork Nature Network CLG

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the financial year ended 31 December 2021

### Departure from Companies Act 2014 Presentation

The directors have elected to present an Income and Expenditure Account instead of a Profit and Loss Account in these financial statements as this company is a not-for-profit entity.

### Income

The income for the financial year is analysed as follows:

	2021 €	2020 €
<b>By Category:</b>		
Membership & Donations	8,458	20,571
Sales	803	84
Third Party Funding	50,263	8,565
Sundry Income	-	604
	<u>59,524</u>	<u>29,824</u>

The whole of the company's income is attributable to its market in the Republic of Ireland and is derived from the principal activity of advancement of environmental sustainability.

### Employees

The average monthly number of employees, including directors, during the financial year was 0, (2020 - 0).

## Cork Nature Network CLG

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the financial year ended 31 December 2021

continued

<b>Creditors</b>	2021 €	2020 €
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Accruals	1,230	914
Deferred Income	14,248	5,000
	<u>15,478</u>	<u>5,914</u>

### Status

The liability of the members is limited.

Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of its being wound up while they are members, or within one financial year thereafter, for the payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before they ceased to be members, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up, and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves, such amount as may be required, not exceeding € 2.

### Income and expenditure account

	2021 €	2020 €
At 1 January 2021	28,753	12,486
Surplus for the financial year	3,510	16,267
At 31 December 2021	<u>32,263</u>	<u>28,753</u>

### Capital commitments

The company had no material capital commitments at the financial year-ended 31 December 2021.

### Post-Balance Sheet Events

There have been no significant events affecting the company since the financial year-end.

### Approval of financial statements

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board of directors on 15 August 2022.



## Cork Nature Network CLG

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

#### DETAILED INCOME STATEMENT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2021

	2021	2020
	€	€
<b>Income</b>	<b>59,524</b>	29,824
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Insurance	-	559
Project Production Costs	46,338	5,509
Repairs and maintenance	671	541
Recruitment & training	-	875
Printing, postage and stationery & carriage	1,744	1,068
Advertising & PR Literature & Brochures	1,547	1,147
Computer & internet costs	1,234	203
Mileage & travelling exp	2,202	305
Legal and professional	-	50
Education, School Talks	-	1,325
Accountancy	1,230	861
Bank charges	490	191
General expenses	-	643
Subscriptions	-	34
Depreciation	558	246
	<b>56,014</b>	13,557
<b>Net surplus</b>	<b>3,510</b>	16,267

Cork Nature Network would like to thank its volunteers and members for all their support. Thank you also to our funders for projects. Including Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Fota Wildlife Park, Office of Public Works, National Parks, and Wildlife Service, Lush and Local Waters Communities Programme.

