

Regulations for the establishment and conduct of Local Associations

Governance:

Under article 95 of the **An Taisce Constitution 2020** members may join together to form a Local Association. Articles 95 – 103 cover the establishment and duties of Local Associations.

Establishment of new Local Associations:

1. Only current members (fully paid up members) of An Taisce can form a Local Association. There should be a minimum of four members involved in the setting up of a Local Association.
2. Members considering forming a Local Association must seek a mandate from the Board.
3. It is of utmost importance that any active member of a Local Association openly declare whether they have either a personal, professional or financial interest with any planning or other issue that the Local Association intends to comment on or be involved with or is likely to consider some action in relation to the specific development/issue. Members with a declared interest should abstain from comment or involvement in relation to the matter. The chairperson of the Local Association may make an overriding determination in this regard in extraordinary cases.
4. Local Associations can be set up in universities and third-level colleges. These Associations should coordinate their activities with those of the Local Associations within whose boundary they are located.

THE STANDING ORDERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AN TAISCE

1. **The NAME** of the Association shall be “.....”.
2. The **OBJECT** of the Association is to assist and publicise the work and aims of An Taisce - The National Trust for Ireland (hereafter referred to as the Charity) in accordance with the Constitution and the policies promulgated by the Board of the Charity.
3. The **AREA** in which the Association operates is defined as “.....”. Before finalising or announcing any decision or policy which impacts on an area of a neighbouring Association, the Association shall consult with such neighbouring Association to ensure agreement.
4. The **Members** of the Association are those whose application for membership of the Charity have been accepted by Council in accordance with the Constitution, who live within the above-mentioned area and who have paid the current membership subscriptions. Members of the Charity who reside in another area not included in the boundary of a particular Local Association may on request become members of that

Association. They will also automatically be members of a Local Association in their area if there is one. They should not be active in campaigns or be a spokesperson for both Associations and can only vote in one association.

5. Local Associations must adhere to the Code of Conduct of An Taisce.

Conduct of Local Associations

General Meetings:

6. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be convened by the Association once in each calendar year, and not more than 15 months after the previous AGM. It shall be held within the above defined area at a place decided on by the Committee and convenient to the members.
7. At least 21 clear days' notice of any general meeting shall be given to all members of the Association, and to the Secretary of the Charity, who shall be entitled to attend as a member, or appoint another member of the Charity to attend in his/her stead. A copy of the Honorary Treasurer's report (containing a copy of the financial statements of the Association) shall be circulated with the notice of the AGM.
8. DECISIONS at any General Meeting shall be limited to those matters on which Notice of Motions have been given and shall be determined by consensus or by a simple majority of votes of members present, except that a postal vote of all members shall be held if called for by five or more members. The papers for the ballot shall be issued forthwith or on the next day following the meeting. The results of the ballot shall be notified to the members within a fortnight in such manner as the Officers shall decide. The chairperson shall have a second or casting vote in the event of a tie.
9. Only members as defined in Article 4 above shall be ELIGIBLE TO VOTE at any General Meeting.
10. Each individual membership, family or corporate membership shall have ONE vote
11. The QUORUM for any General Meeting shall be six members or one-third of the members eligible to vote, whichever is the less. Only members in good standing can vote.
12. ANNUAL REPORTS by the Chairperson or Honorary Secretary, and by the Honorary Treasurer (whose report shall include the Statements of Accounts) shall be prepared for adoption at each General Meeting. The Association shall submit a report of its activities and the above-mentioned Statement of Accounts annually to the national office of the Charity.
13. An EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING shall be called by the Honorary Secretary within one calendar month of the receipt of a petition to this effect signed by twelve individual, family or corporate members of the Association, or by 10% of the membership, whichever is the lower, for the SOLE PURPOSE of dealing with proposals contained in the petition or matters arising directly therefrom.
14. The Committee may call an Extraordinary General Meeting if it deems it to be necessary.

15. The Board may direct officers of the Association to call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association and may nominate a person to chair such an Extraordinary Meeting.
16. The EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY of the Association shall be vested in a Committee appointed in accordance with the regulations below.
17. Committee Member Elections
 - a. If the Association has less than 40 members the Committee may comprise as a minimum the Officers appointed in accordance with the regulations below.
 - b. If the Association has 40 or more members, the Committee shall be appointed at each Annual General Meeting in accordance with the regulations below.
 - c. The outgoing Chair shall be ex-officio a member of the incoming Committee.
 - d. All those co-opted during the year shall retire automatically. At least half the other members of the outgoing Committee excluding the Chair, shall retire. If insufficient numbers volunteer to retire, those longest serving since the previous election shall retire. In the event of an equality of such service, retirement shall be settled among them by lot. All retiring members shall be eligible for re-election.
 - e. Proposals for membership of the Committee may be made and seconded at the meeting by members of the Association as defined in Article 4 above. Candidates must be members of An Taisce and must signify their willingness to serve.
 - f. If required, an election shall be held at the meeting to bring the numbers of members on the Committee to a maximum of 12.
 - g. The Committee shall have the power to CO-OPT to bring the number of its members up to a maximum of 14.
18. The Committee shall normally meet at least six times per year. If the Association has less than 40 members, the Committee shall have the authority to invite all members of the Association to attend any meeting. All Committees are encouraged to include all members as much as practical.
19. Any vacancy in the Committee may be filled by co-option from the general membership of the Association.
20. Decisions at Association or committee meetings shall be arrived at by consensus if possible, and failing this shall be determined by simple majority vote, the Chairperson having a second and casting vote in the event of a tie.
21. The Quorum for a Committee meeting shall be five members present, one at least being a current officer as defined in Article 23 below. Local Associations with less than 40 members shall have a quorum of four members with at least one officer present.
22. The Committee shall have the authority to invite Expert Advisers or An Taisce members who are not members of the Association to attend any (or part of any) meeting but these invitees shall not have a vote.
23. The Committee is empowered to set up SUB-COMMITTEES (or WORKING GROUPS) and to appoint members thereto and to define the terms of reference. The

- Committee may permit a proportion of the sub-committee/working group, not exceeding a third, to be made up of persons who are not members of An Taisce.
24. The Chairperson of each sub-committee/working group shall be appointed by the Committee and must be a member of the Committee. The office of Chairperson of each sub-committee/working group shall fall vacant at the first Committee meeting after the Annual General Meeting.
 25. Sub-committees/working groups shall have the power to CO-OPT from the membership.
 26. The Committee shall not delegate its authority to any sub-committee/working group.
 27. Any member of a Local Association who has a PERSONAL or FINANCIAL INTEREST in any matter under discussion shall make a declaration to this effect when a matter is raised and shall not take part in any discussion or decision on this matter.
 28. No person shall speak for the Association or Act on its Behalf without the authority of the Committee, or a General Meeting of the Association. The Association may consider appointing a spokesperson(s) who can use social media both for the dissemination of information and to respond to queries and issues raised by members of the public. The same person(s) could also deal with other areas of media. The Local Association cannot (without approval from the Board) respond to national matters and issues which should be dealt with by the National Office. Any statements made by the spokesperson must align with National An Taisce Policy.
 29. Delegate(s) appointed by a Local Association or committee and representing a Local Association at national An Taisce meeting such as an AGM or EGM must represent the view of the Local Association on any motion considered at the meeting. If the LA has no position on a particular motion then the representative/s may vote as they see fit.

Officers

30. If the Association has less than 40 members the Association shall elect Officers from its own membership at the AGM each year.
31. If the Association has 40 or more members, the Committee shall elect Officers from its own membership at the first meeting after the AGM each year.
32. The Honorary Officers shall include a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Treasurer and a Secretary and may include a Planning Officer. No member may act in any of these capacities if such member either holds an office of profit under the Charity or is directly or indirectly knowingly interested in any contract with the Charity and fails to declare to the association the nature of his/her interest therein.
33. The Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson (in the absence of the Chairperson) shall preside at all Committee or Local Association meetings and general meetings. If neither is present within fifteen minutes of the start of the meeting the members present shall elect one of their number to chair the meeting.
34. The Vice-Chairperson shall assist or deputise for the Chairperson.

35. The Honorary Secretary shall convene all meetings of the Association, keep the minutes, carry on the correspondence on matters initiated by the Committee and shall arrange for proper files to be kept.
36. The Honorary Treasurer shall be accountable to the Committee for the funds of the Local Association and shall furnish an annual statement of accounts at each AGM, made up to date not more than two months before the said meeting, and connecting with the balances shown in the last preceding account presented to an AGM. Local Association bank accounts should have a minimum of 2 signatories. Local Associations may use the banking service provided by An Taisce Head Office.
37. The Planning Officer, if one is appointed, shall be responsible for all planning matters undertaken by the Committee, and shall conform with such regulations as Board requires concerning training, the handling of appeals, the submission of records to Head Office and any other relevant matter.
38. Normally no individual may hold office of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Honorary Treasurer or Honorary Secretary for more than six consecutive years.
39. Any VACANCY in the Officers may be filled by co-option from the general membership or by a vote.

Matters Referable to An Taisce Board

40. The Association shall not incur debts without the prior written authorisation of the Board.
41. Any planning appeal proposed to be taken by the Association shall be taken only with the prior approval of the Board or any person or persons appointed by it (referred to as 'appointees' in this paragraph), who will be entitled to request such details and/or information as they deem necessary. Where the Board or its appointee/s deem(s) the appeal to have national significance the appeal shall be taken in consultation with the Board or its appointees. These appeals will concern planning applications in the area covered by the Local Association. Objections or observations on any planning issues should be based on objective planning criteria or actions contrary to local council development plans.
42. In the event that the Association ceases to exist, for whatever reason, all the books, files and records, and all funds at its disposal shall be given over to Head Office, to be disposed of in such manner as the Officers of the Charity determine.
43. These Standing Orders may be suspended in whole or part or in respect of any area of their application, and for any period specified, by the authority of the Board of the Charity.
44. These Standing Orders may be modified by a resolution of the Board of the Charity, and such resolution shall have effect immediately as if the provisions thereof were incorporated in the Standing Orders.