



Áiseanna Tacaíochta
Annual Report
2013



Contents

1. Introduction	
▪ Chairperson's Address	3
▪ Director's Report	4
2. 2013 In Review	6
3. Update 2014	8
4. Governance	13
5. Fundraising	16
6. Acknowledgements	17
7. Financial Information	18



“To provide leadership and support in Ireland to empower those of us who have disabilities to direct our own lives and enjoy the same equality and freedoms as non-disabled citizens”

Mission Statement of Áiseanna Tacaíochta

Chairperson's Address

I am delighted to present the Áiseanna Tacaíochta Annual Report for 2013, my first full year as Chair of the new Board. The election of the new Board at last year's AGM has strengthened ÁT's governance and the addition of new Board members has helped to develop the organisation as it moves from the pilot phase to an established project.

The key development of a suite of common company policy guidelines for our members was at the cornerstone of the work in 2013. These policies will provide a framework for existing and new members of ÁT. As a membership organisation, ÁT was able to significantly increase its membership in 2013 from six to twelve members. This exciting development will focus attention on the ÁT model as one which is viable and is in line with government objectives to create structures which allow people with disabilities to take increasing control of their own lives.

The progress achieved in 2013 has been due to the confidence expressed in the ÁT Network by its main funders, the Health Service Executive (HSE), Genio and the National Lottery Fund. We are grateful to these organisations for their continued recognition and support. In addition, our strong ongoing relationship with the Department of Health, the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) and the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) has allowed our members to transition smoothly to the ÁT Network's way of working.

I am grateful to all our members who have supported the ÁT Network, to past and present Board members for their enthusiastic support and to the staff of ÁT for working to provide the continuity necessary to keep the organisation moving forward.

Geoff Day

Chairperson
Áiseanna Tacaíochta

Director's Report

Dia dhaoibh,

It is with pleasure and pride that I present Áiseanna Tacaíochta's 2013 Annual Report. Here we stand, a pilot no more!

I was recently reminded of a quote by William Frederick Halsey which appeared in last year's report;

"There are no great people in this world, only great challenges which ordinary people rise to meet".

And here it appears again because once again, it rings true.

I don't say this to belittle or undermine the 'ordinary people' working hard and supporting ÁT rather, what I would like to illustrate is - and those of you who know me know this to be a reliable line of mine - the extraordinariness of 'ordinary' people, as well as the extraordinary things that we can achieve when we work together.

I believe that it is within all of our limits to be exceptional and to do great things. In 2013, everyone involved in and supporting ÁT defiantly rose to the many challenges placed before them. This is true of our Leaders, who have accepted responsibility and opportunity to boldly break the historical cycle of dependency. And it is true of our young ÁT Board, just one year old. I cannot overemphasise the work that our Board is doing or the time that they generously give us.

Our Board has considerably strengthened ÁT's governance giving us stability, and instilling trust in our service, which is vital if we are to continue to progress. They are mentors to our small staff, many of whom are at the beginning of their careers. Competently, carefully they protect the values of ÁT and steer us forward - and they do this on a voluntary basis receiving no out-of-pocket expenses.



Their dedication captures the indomitable spirit that, lucky for us, surrounds the ÁT Network. ÁT is built and operates on a spirit of solidarity and volunteerism. At ÁT volunteers work alongside paid staff. This is one of the main reasons why ÁT has exceptionally low core costs allowing us to focus on supporting and empowering Leaders through the development of materials and training, and to carry out continuous active research. Encouraged by what we have seen and experienced, we have created more roles for volunteers in 2014. We are developing a three strand programme that will bring ÁT and Independent Living into the mainstream.

Looking back on 2013, I attribute our success – or at least our persistence – to the indomitable spirit among all of those involved with ÁT. This spirit is visible in the strong work ethic and dedication shown by ÁT members, staff, Board and volunteers alike, and in the level of volunteerism, support and cooperation that we are fortunate enough to benefit from. It is these strengths that have allowed us to overcome challenges to establish a Direct Payments model in Ireland and enable people to direct their own Personal Assistance services, to conclude 2013 with a sense of achievement and begin 2014 with ambition and anticipation.

Slán,

Martin Naughton

Director

Áiseanna Tacaíochta



2013 In Review

HSE Risk Assessment

The past year was a hugely important one for Áiseanna Tacaíochta in terms of growth and development. In April 2013, ÁT successfully emerged from the pilot phase following an assessment of risk and an independent evaluation.

The process of completing the risk assessment in conjunction with the HSE commenced in late 2012 and continued through to early 2013. During this time, ÁT considerably strengthened its focus on organisational governance. We established a new Board comprising of experienced people with strong links to the disability sector and an impressive array of skills to boot. We also established the necessary internal structures (e.g. Ethics Committee), and policies that would make our organisation more robust and effective. In April 2013, ÁT received confirmation from the HSE that, following the risk assessment, they were happy to enter into a new Service Level Agreement (SLA) with ÁT.

Transfer of Undertakings and Protection of Employment (TUPE)

In terms of legal implications, there was a lot to consider regarding the movement of staff from service provider to Áiseanna Tacaíochta/Leaders - Transfer of Undertakings and Protection of Employment (TUPE). ÁT, in collaboration with stakeholder organisations and colleagues from the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) and HSE, were able to successfully negotiate these hurdles. We believe that we have set a precedent for direct payments in Ireland that did not previously exist; the work of ÁT has created a blue print that other organisations can use in terms of exploring direct payment options, particularly pertaining to management of TUPE and de-bundling of funding via personal budgets.

The successful negotiation around the management of TUPE and the completion of the risk assessment was a crucial turning point in ÁT's development. ÁT was now ready to progress from pilot phase and move forward in its work of supporting people with disabilities to transition from dependency on service providers to gaining control over their own services, over their own budgets and ultimately over their own lives.



Overview of Services

Leaders in Control

By 2013, the original Leaders from 2012 had successfully completed the Four Stages of Empowerment. These Leaders are independent and managing their own Personal Assistance services with help from their Circles of Support. By the end of 2013, they were paying a reduced rate of subscription fees to ÁT having lessened their support needs, and had moved to a stage where they were running all their affairs through their own companies.

Their companies are much more efficient and more cost effective than ever. ÁT has been working step-by-step with the HSE as funders to achieve this. The main connection with ÁT now is the obligatory accounting for funding.

New Members

With the completion of the pilot phase, ÁT could move forward in developing our model of Direct Payments. Taking on board what we had learned and achieved, we set about rolling out the model and making it available to others.

From mid-2013 onwards, interest in the ÁT model increased. In this time, eight members came on board and began the process of gaining control over their own services. They are now all on the verge of establishing their own companies. The members have received a lot of training, including peer support in the form of face-to face-discussions. We estimate that all eight should have completed the process and have their companies up and running, with funding going through their own Circles, by the end of September, 2014. The majority of the Leaders are ready for this responsibility, although two may need further support.



2014 Update

We optimistically predict that 2014 will be a big year for Áiseanna Tacaíochta. Our 2014 work plan contains ambition and is intended to set us on the path to sustainability. When we were developing our new work plan it was important for us to be forward-thinking, to not only focus on keeping our heads above water but on equipping ourselves for the long haul.

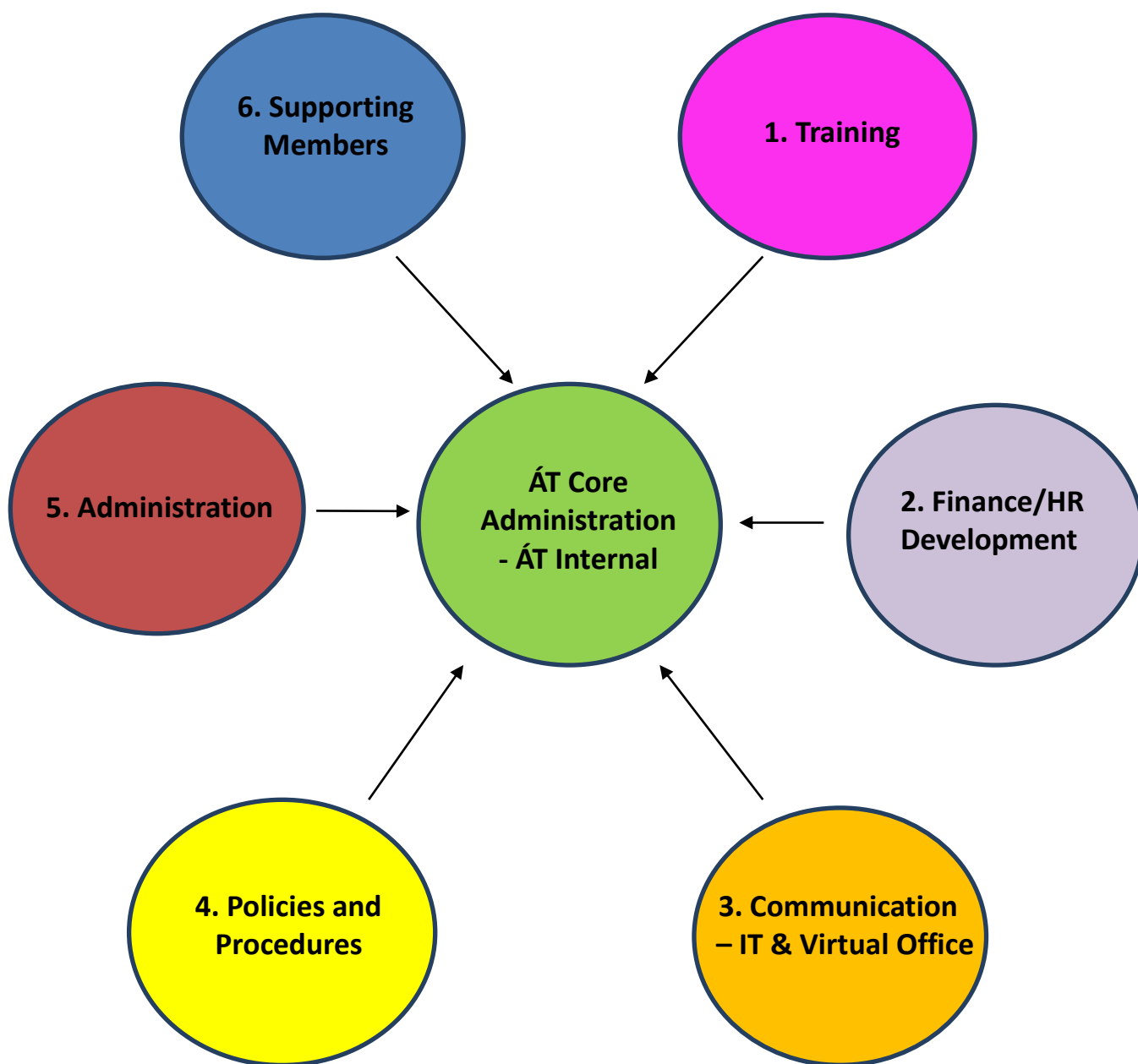
The ÁT work plan identifies actions that need to be carried out in six key areas - training, Human Resources and finance, communication, policies and procedures, administration and supporting members. We have laid out goals for 2014 in our work plan which have helped us to organise our time and our priorities. However, in addition to the work plan, we are engaged in a number of important activities in 2014.

In November, ÁT will host our annual event to remind people who we are, what we are doing and to facilitate a conversation about direct payments and Independent Living. We also hope to commission an independent Cost Benefit Analysis which will be a key step towards verifying the financial and social gains of 'the Áiseanna Tacaíochta way'.

So far this year, we have achieved a lot. Together, ÁT staff and Board have been driving the work plan. We have been busy putting in place structures and laying the ground work for the year ahead. These actions will produce the momentum that will allow us to see the year out, hopefully with a sense of achievement and some modest signs of success.



2014 ÁT Workplan



2014 ÁT Workplan

1. Training

Áiseanna Tacaíochta's training programme is extensive. It is aimed at members, Circles of Support and PA's, and covers disability awareness/Independent Living, finance, peer support and self-advocacy. Our goal is for all training to be as accessible and cost effective as possible. Therefore it is our intention that people will have the option of participating in training online via webinars.

2. Finance/HR Development

The design of Reporting Templates and documents for training is ongoing and is expected to be ready around mid-Quarter 3. We are also compiling a HR Handbook. Changes to the HSE Service Agreement mean that new payment guidelines and templates will be issued to members. ÁT is developing policies in relation to the new stream of volunteers we hope to recruit. This will include a Fundraising Policy and policies and strategies relating to roles such as Human Rights Ambassadors.

3. Communication – IT and Virtual Office

The ÁT Website is currently being updated and new content has been created. The biggest innovation will be a new and improved 'Members Area' which will contain the following: materials for members, training videos, a members section with a public forum, and a private members profile with uploading facilities.

4. Policies and Procedures

ÁT is currently in the process of updating all Member policies. The new collection of policies will be a resource for members and Circles because we have simplified the compliance process in relation to HSE regulations and Company law. All policies are designed to be accessible and relevant to the purpose and activities of Leaders companies.



5. Administration

The development of ÁT's new website is key from an administration point of view as well as being a huge resource for members. The website will become self-sustaining as members will have access to all (updated) materials and policies, training videos, peer support and uploading facilities. This approach will promote independence and initiative among members placing less of an administrative burden on ÁT.

6. Supporting Members

ÁT maintains contact with Leaders and their Circles in order to strengthen and build confidence in Leaders, assist them in setting up and running their companies and to monitor progress to make sure that direct payments is working for each individual. We record all updates on members and carry out ongoing research internally and as members of other groups such as the Self Directed Support Network at The Centre for Disability, Law and Policy (CDLP) at NUI Galway.

Event

Áiseanna Tacaíochta will hold its annual event on **November 22nd** this year. While important details, such as the venue and programme, are still being arranged, our aim is to use the opportunity to celebrate and promote our work. We are keen to give our members the opportunity to talk about their experiences and to offer guidance and advice to others.

The hope is that the event will be consciousness raising. By presenting the ÁT model, we are presenting a new way of thinking and a new way of doing things. We are asking the question – how can we make Independent Living a reality on the ground for people with disabilities?

Cost Benefit Analysis

Áiseanna Tacaíochta is currently in the process of commissioning an independent Cost Benefit Analysis of our service. We want to develop an evidence base to show the value for money achieved by using a Direct Payments model. We are eager to demonstrate quantitative outcomes



as well as qualitative to show that good, innovative practice can exist in a landscape of consolidation and reducing expenditure.

By showing the cost benefits that ÁT generates for members, we hope that we can continue to be supported and resourced and to operate as a model of good practice. We want to continue to empower individuals and to make Independent Living accessible and establish it as a right for people with disabilities.



Governance

Our Board

Owen Collumb

As a founding member of ÁT and a person with lived experience of disability, Owen brings firsthand knowledge and understanding to the Board. This ensures that ÁT continues to be person centred and supportive of the individual while also working to promote Independent Living. Owen provides training courses on manual handling. He is an active board member for a number of organisations' including Greater Dublin Independent Living, Cheshire Ireland and Lucan Disability Action Group.

Geoffrey Day

Geoffrey Day is an Independent Health and Social Care Consultant with health and social care expertise based on over thirty years working in the health sector in Ireland and the UK, with particular experience in primary care, community care, health promotion, mental health and suicide prevention. Geoffrey has managed the implementation of 'Reach Out', the 'National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention' and acted as a spokesperson for the HSE on suicide prevention matters. Geoffrey was recently appointed to the panel of investigators for the Irish Prison Service.

Ann Kennelly

Ann Kennelly qualified as an Occupational Therapist from the College of Occupational Therapy, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin in 1983. In 1994, Ann completed an M.Sc.Econ. in Management of Care awarded by the University of Wales (UW) and the University College Dublin (UCD). As an Occupational Therapist (OT), Ann's role as a member of a multidisciplinary team involved providing a range of Assessment and Therapeutic Occupational Therapy services to clients with physical and sensory disabilities. Ann worked in both the hospital and community public services in Ireland, the UK and Canada and she also worked as an OT and a Regional Manager with the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) in the voluntary sector. Ann joined the South Eastern Health Board

in 1994 and managed a range of hospital services before working as the Director of Disability Services in the South East for seven years. In 2005, Ann took up a post as Local Health Manager HSE South for PCCC Services in North Cork. Ann's final year working for the HSE in 2010 was spent working in the role of Interim National Assistant Director for Disability Services. Ann now works in a private capacity as an Occupational Therapist and is involved with many voluntary groups and individuals with disabilities.

Shari McDaid

Dr. Shari McDaid was appointed Director of Mental Health Reform in October 2013. Shari joined Mental Health Reform as Policy Officer in August 2011. Prior to that, Shari worked with Amnesty International Ireland from 2008 to 2011 as Policy Officer for the mental health campaign. She was previously Policy Officer at the National Disability Authority (NDA) and, before that, Policy and Administration Manager at Schizophrenia Ireland (SI). Shari has a B.A. from Northwestern University (NU) and a Masters in Social Science from the Open University (OU). Shari received her doctorate in 2008 from the Equality Studies Centre at UCD, with a thesis entitled 'Power, Empowerment and User Involvement in the Public Mental Health Services Ireland'.

Martin Naughton

Martin is a disability activist and pioneer of the Independent Living (IL) movement in Ireland. Martin has the lived experience of disability and has spent the last fifty years working to improve the lives of people with disabilities. He was involved in developing the Centre of Independent Living (CIL) in Ireland. Martin is one of the founding members of ÁT, the Co- Executive Director of the European Network on Independent Living (ENIL) and is a Support Officer for the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI). Martin is an active board member of Headway, Citizens Information Board, and Áiseanna Tacaíochta.

Joan O'Donnell

Joan is an experienced social justice advocate, working in the area of social policy and advocacy with the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI). With over 20 years' experience working in the disability community sector in Ireland and Scotland, both in service provision and policy

development, she brings a fresh and grounded perspective to social policy. Current areas of focus include strategic strengthening of the leadership role of DFI as a voice for people with disabilities as well as income protection and employment. Her academic background has evolved from psychology and counselling, and moved more into the area of systems thinking and analysis. She has also worked as a trainer and facilitator. She has a strong commitment to social change and institutional development.

Máiríde Woods

Máiríde Woods is a writer and researcher and has been involved with disability matters for many years. She had a daughter with a disability who attended St Michael's House day services and she has been on the Board of St Michael's House for some years. 'Frontline', an Irish quarterly magazine published for workers and families at the front line of intellectual disability, has also been one of her interests and she has written many articles. In the 1990's, Máiríde was a rapporteur for the Transport Group of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities and also undertook some research with Action for Mobility and the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI). In recent years, she worked as an Advocacy Executive with the Citizens Information Board (CIB) and she was also closely involved with the setting up of the National Advocacy Service for people with disabilities (NAS) and with advocacy services in the Citizens Information Services (CIS). Máiríde has a Diploma in Sociology and Social Research and a Masters in Equality Studies – both from UCD. She has received a number of prizes for her writing. She has published two collections of poetry and has had stories included in several anthologies and broadcast on RTE. Máiríde was brought up in Cushendall, Co. Antrim but spent most of her life in Dublin.

Fundraising

Áiseanna Tacaíochta has been working during 2013 to secure additional funding for the organisation in order to expand and develop its work to a point where it will be possible to be financially self-sufficient through volunteerism and membership contributions.

We were fortunate to receive Grants from Genio and the National Lottery and we are also waiting on one outstanding source of funding.

Genio 2013 - 2014

In 2013, Áiseanna Tacaíochta applied for a grant from Genio, an Irish Non-Governmental Organisation that works to bring Government and private/philanthropic funders together to develop better ways to promote inclusion, individualised supports and services, and the full participation of various groups, including people with disabilities, in the community. Genio has supported the ÁT Network from our humble beginnings as a pilot project in 2010 and we were delighted to reprise our partnership.

Genio is helping us to support individuals to use direct payments to live independent and meaningful lives in the community through the pursuit of personal goals and ambitions. Their assistance is also helping us to focus on the sustainability of the ÁT Network, building capacity and governance so that we can continue to develop and strengthen our Direct Payments model.

National Lottery 2013 - 2014

Áiseanna Tacaíochta gratefully acknowledges the receipt of a National Lottery Grant from the Department of Health. Their support has allowed us to review members' materials and training programmes, particularly in relation to parents and families. It has also allowed us to focus our attention on building organisational capacity and to continue to conduct internal research.

Acknowledgements

Áiseanna Tacaíochta would like to thank our supporters who have provided us with encouragement, assistance and expertise in 2013. We value all of your help – big and small.

Specifically, thank you to:

ÁT members and Circles for your enthusiasm and determination to try something new, to the **ÁT Board** for their hard work and dedication, to **Genio**, in particular Madeline Clarke and Hugh Kane, for their support and encouragement during difficult times when on occasions we have felt like giving up, to Allen Dunne and Cathy Mc Grath at the **Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI)**, to Chris Hoey and Michael Doyle at the **Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA)**, to **Cheshire Ireland**, in particular Mark Blake Knox who is always available to support us in sharing the benefit of his wisdom, to the **National Lottery** for their belief and assistance. Finally, thank you to the **HSE** for working with us and helping us to bring direct payments to Leaders across the country.

Thank you everyone for trusting in Áiseanna Tacaíochta and believing in our vision.



Financial Information

2013

Aiseanna Tacaíochta Ltd

(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital)

Matters on which we are required to report by the Companies Acts 1963 to 2013

- We have obtained all the information and explanations which we consider necessary for the purpose of our audit.
- In our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the company.
- The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.
- In our opinion the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements.

Emphasis of Matter Going Concern

As explained in note 8 the future of the company is dependent on future funding which the directors currently believe the company will receive from the HSE or by matching overheads with funding.

Matter on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the provisions in the Companies Acts 1963 to 2013 which require us to report to you if, in our opinion the disclosures of the directors' remuneration and transaction specified by law are not made.

Paschal O'Sullivan FCCA.,
Statutory Auditor
For and on behalf of
Accounting & Commercial Solutions Ltd
Independent Statutory Auditors

'Pax'
Weavers Row
Clonsilla Village
Clonsilla
Dublin 15

27th May 2014

On behalf of the board

Geoffrey Day
Director

27/05/14

Martin Naughton
Director



Aiseanna Tacaíochta Ltd

(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital)

Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2013

	Notes	€	2013 €	2012 €
Current Assets				
Debtors	3	48,972		5,217
Cash at bank and in hand		99,194		48,894
		<u>148,166</u>		<u>54,111</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4	(143,584)		(55,962)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)			<u>4,582</u>	<u>(1,851)</u>
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			<u>4,582</u>	<u>(1,851)</u>
Capital and Reserves				
Income and expenditure account			4,582	(1,851)
Equity Funds	5		<u>4,582</u>	<u>(1,851)</u>

The Directors acknowledge the obligations of the company under the companies acts 1963 to 2013, to keep proper books of account and prepare accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company at the end of its financial year and of its surplus or deficit for such a year and to otherwise comply with the provisions of those Acts relating to accounts so far as they are applicable to the company.

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 27 May 2014 and signed on its behalf by

Geoffrey Day
Director

Martin Naughton
Director



Aiseanna Tacaíochta Ltd

(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital)

Cash Flow Statement for the year ended 31 December 2013

	Notes	2013 €	2012 €
Reconciliation of operating profit to net cash inflow from operating activities			
Operating profit		6,433	88
(Increase) in debtors		(43,755)	(4,390)
Increase in creditors		87,622	19,877
Net cash inflow from operating activities		<u>50,300</u>	<u>15,575</u>
Cash Flow Statement			
Net cash inflow from operating activities		50,300	15,575
Grant received on capital expenditure		-	-
Increase in cash in the year		<u>50,300</u>	<u>15,575</u>
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds			
Increase in cash in the year		50,300	15,575
Net funds at 1 January 13		48,894	33,319
Net funds at 31 December 2013		<u>99,194</u>	<u>48,894</u>



ÁISEANNA TACAÍOCHTA

Charity Registration Number CHY 19324 (Ireland)

Company Registration Number 489250

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