



*Irish Countrywomen's Association*

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**Bantracht na Tuaithe Tuairisc Bliantiúil**

**2020—2021**



*ICA — for all Women*



# CONTENTS

## COMPANY AND ICA INFORMATION

Page: 4	Company information
Page: 5	Address from National President Josephine Helly
Page: 6	The Irish Countrywomen's Association in brief
Page: 7	Actions and Impacts

## ICA ACTIVITIES

Page: 9	Federation activities
Page: 11	Guild activities in Covid times Enhancing Well Being
Page: 11	Guild activities in Covid times Improving Quality of Life through Co-operative Effort

## AN GRIANÁN

Page: 13	An Grianán news
----------	-----------------

## ICA REPORTS

Page: 14	Treasurer's report
Page: 15	Report from the National Advisory Committee (NAC)
Page: 16	Competitions

## GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

Page: 19	Corporate Governance Practice Framework
Page: 20	Members of the National Executive Board (NEB) and the NAC
Page: 21	National Executive Board (NEB) meetings matrix
Page: 22	National Advisory Committee (NAC) meetings matrix
Page: 23	Finance and Governance committees meetings matrix
Page: 24	Strategic priorities and achievement
Page: 25	Income and Expenditure
Page: 26	Balance Sheet

## **COMPANY INFORMATION Irish Countrywomen's Association**

<b>Business address:</b>	58 Merrion Road, Dublin 4
<b>Auditors:</b>	DMQ Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors Summer Hill Wicklow A67 TD54
<b>Accountants:</b>	CDM Accountants 1st floor Unit 14 Block C Athy Business Campus Kilkenny road Athy Co. Kildare
<b>Bankers:</b>	AIB Bank Dyer Street, Drogheda Co. Louth  Bank of Ireland 14 College Green Dublin 2
<b>Solicitor:</b>	Paul A. Moore & Co. Solicitors 4 Dyer Street Drogheda Co. Louth
<b>Registered Number:</b>	16219
<b>Charity Number (Revenue):</b>	CHY4947
<b>Charity Registration NO:</b>	20006730
<b>Company Secretary:</b>	Eleanor Calnan





## JOSEPHINE HELLY

### National President

### A Year in Review

Dear Friends,

**2020 was a year like no other!** The Covid pandemic has impacted so many lives around the globe and it's effects will be felt by us all for many years to come. The changes that have taken place in our society will be difficult to forget. Here, at the start of Spring 2021, almost a year since the pandemic first scourged our lives, as we move towards recovery, I see hope in the vaccination programme and I reflect of the changes that will shape our organisation in the future.

**During the year** the majority of Guild activities were curtailed and many Guilds have not been able to meet up. However, many were brave enough to move to an online world and discovered the benefits of Zoom and other online platforms to stay connected. We learned how to join online painting and craft classes, we participated in Zoom drama workshops and we did chair yoga on Facetime. Despite the many challenges brought by the pandemic, the women of ICA showed great ingenuity in how to stay connected and kept the spirit of community alive in so many ways as we fought the virus together while staying apart.

**ICA made important strides** in many ways but not least in the world of technology. Not a favourite for many of us but we faced it bravely and upskilled at Guild and Federation level. At National level we held the majority of our NEB and officers meetings via Zoom. Despite only seeing each other in the flesh a couple of times during the year we still made important strides in improving our governance processes and moving towards full compliance with the Charities Governance Code. This work is ongoing and continues into 2021.

**This Annual Report** will cover some of the reduced number of activities that took place this year but you will notice some of our much loved activities are missing including reports from the Arts, Produce and Craft committees as they did not meet this year. However I was delighted to have been invited to give an online knitting class to some members alongside Dympna Judge, Bronwyn Murray, Eleanor Hewitt and Breda Bohan who kept us all busy crafting at home. We hope that you will enjoy reading of how the resilience and ingenuity of our members shone through the darkness of this year.

**This spirit has served us well** in the past and will be of continued value to us in facing the uncertain future now before us. The impact of the pandemic on the association has yet to be understood although the Board has flagged it as possibly negative on membership growth and it has been added to the risk register of the association.

**The inspirational motto of the United Irishwomen 'Deeds not Words'**, so cherished by Muriel Gahan, continues to provide relevant guidance to the ICA. Through our deeds we must contribute to ourselves, our families and our communities. The active involvement of ICA members is essential to who we are and what we do. I urge you all to stay safe and in communication with each other until our ICA activities recommence in full, with a renewed vigour and energy.

Yours in fellowship and friendship,

Josephine Helly National President

# **The Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA)**

ICA is a national organisation of women founded in 1910. Today almost 8,000 members in 439 Guilds across the country come together in friendship and fellowship to enhance their wellbeing and develop new skills. A hallmark of the ICA's work for over a century has been its contribution to community life, in leading the advancement of women's role, their rights and opportunities, and improving the quality of family life.

Our charitable objectives are to advance education and benefit the community through:

- Bringing women together in fellowship and friendship, developing and improving the well-being, knowledge and skills of women and improving the general quality of life in Ireland through co-operative effort
- Supporting and promoting Irish language and culture
- Promoting the development of women in Ireland, nationally and internationally.

## **Our organisation**

ICA members can be found in communities across Ireland. In 2020 there were 439 Guilds in 27 County Federations. In normal times members meet regularly and plan a programme of events for the year, which generally runs from September to June. Across all Guilds there are common features – meetings, social events, campaigning activity, cooperative work in communities, fundraising, and participation in Federation and national ICA activities. Each Guild is different and responds to the interests of its members. Guilds come together in County Federations to work on their county and national issues and campaigns, led by the National Executive Board and the National Advisory Committee.

ICA Central Office provides support to the whole organisation, facilitating training and conferences, events and competitions. It manages the national resources of the Association. An Grianán, our Adult Education College in Co. Louth, provides education, training and specialist programmes which ICA members can attend as individuals or in Guild and Federation groups. It also welcomes guests who are not members of the ICA to a wide range of courses.

## **ICA ACTIONS AND IMPACT 2020-2021**

Wherever ICA members gather, we come together in fellowship and friendship and to make a difference through educational, co-operative, national and international work. ICA activities are at the centre of communities, making a huge contribution to community life, supporting voluntary activity, and raising funds for many local charities. Through friendship and fellowship, members' work demonstrates the creativity, co-operative work, and continuing commitment of ICA members everywhere to the quality of life, well-being and rights of women, girls and families, here and elsewhere. Across these ICA objectives thousands of ICA members come together and volunteer their time to make a difference as the examples over the next few pages of this report show.

- Enhancing women's well-being, knowledge and skills
- Improving quality of life through co-operative effort
- Supporting and promoting Irish language and culture
- Promoting the development of women in Ireland and internationally
- 

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2020-2021**

The ICA Strategic Plan 2018/21 provides the framework against which the national work is organised and overseen. The Strategy sets three priorities for the National Executive Board to take action on:

- 1. Support the Membership Organisation:** Support/nurture current ICA membership; promote ICA to potential members through a targeted approach; influence through advocacy.
- 2. Sustain and develop An Grianán as a centre for learning and leisure:** Sustain and develop ICA member's usage; develop the external business; develop and upgrade the facilities available.
- 3. Deliver good governance:** Achieve and maintain excellence in governance & compliance; manage assets effectively; ensure decision-making is effective; plan and develop staff.

*(Full Strategic plan available to download from [www.ica.ie](http://www.ica.ie))*

## **ACHIEVEMENTS 2020-2021**

- Many Guilds moved to an online world and learned how to use new technology.
- Inventive and unusual routes were discovered to continue to communicate with each other.
- ICA members fundraising provided a donation of €1,528 Breast Cancer Research
- ICA members donated €3,040 for Education & Capacity Building in developing countries
- ICA members made protective clothing and scrubs for nursing home and healthcare staff during the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown
- Upgrading and renovation of accommodation at An Grianán

## ICA at Work and Play

Crafting outdoors in Ballyloughan  
Guild Carlow Federation



Wicklow Federation Zoom Christmas  
party fun.

Breast Cancer Walk in Dromore Woods  
in Clare Federation



Chair Yoga in Camross Guild Wexford  
Federation



Bonniconlon Guild Mayo Federation  
fundraiser for the SVDP



One million stars campaign supported  
by Kilkenny Federation





## SELECTION OF FEDERATION ACTIVITIES

ICA is divided into 27 different County Federations (Tipperary having two). Here is a sample of the good work done at Federation level from April 2020 to March 2021.

**Clare Federation:** Clare Federation organised walks on Monday evenings in different locations during the summer months. They explored local walking routes including woods, riverbanks and country roads. They also marked the International day for the elimination of violence against women by making various butterflies in various media which formed one large butterfly

**Kilkenny Federation:** Kilkenny Federation became hugely involved in the International day for the elimination of violence against women. They encouraged Guild members from all over the county and further afield to weave stars which were then exhibited in the local shopping centre.

**Mayo Federation:** Mayo Federation invited all its Guild members to get involved in the Mayo Guilds History Booklet. This documented the achievements, social history and photographs of this very active Federation. They also celebrated International Women's day by all walking within their own 5 K radius, documenting it by taking photos and then recording them on the Federation Facebook page.

**Monaghan Federation:** Monaghan Federation had an unusual celebration of Seachtain na Gaeilge in 2021 on Zoom sponsored by Energia. The outline for the night included interactive discussions surrounding the Seanchaí, the history associated with fairies, fallen angels, changelings, leaplings, banshees and leprechauns. Recipes for porridge bread were shared and Irish coffees were sampled during the evening. They shared a cupán agus comhrá after a recitation by Breedge Lenehan and they shared their seanfhocail.

**Sligo Federation:** Sligo Federation chose Creativity Online as their way to bring members together. Live Facebook Paint Along took place every Saturday morning hosted by Mary Fergus the President. Each week they painted a different topic and a gallery was set up for individual artistic creations. It was such a success that members from Cork, Donegal, Wicklow, Longford and Mayo also joined in proving that there is fun to be had in online activities.

**Wicklow Federation:** Wicklow Federation is well known for its annual Drama Festival which is now in its 65th year. Because of Covid the members in Wicklow were missing their annual festival so Hilda Roche Federation President and Chair of the NAC set up "Anyone for Drama" on Zoom. This has been held twice a week throughout the third lockdown and members from all over the country get involved in short sketches, recitations and one acts plays.

**Roscommon Federation:** This year members in Roscommon Federation collected warm clothes, toiletries, hygiene products, dry food and toys for an orphanage and village community in Romania.

**Laois Federation:** Laois Federation ran a Garden Photography Competition during the summer and invited members to send in photos of their hard work in their beautiful gardens in 3 distinct categories. Thirty three entries were received from many different Guilds and it was a great way to be involved in ICA while not leaving your home.

## A year in Photos 2020-2021

10 Cavan Guilds Yarnbombing Cavan Courthouse to celebrate International Women's Day



Castlebar Guild Mayo Federation celebrates 70 years



Members of Portlaoise Guild Laois Federation at the Great Pink Run



Socially distanced Yoga in the Park with Carrig na bhFear Guild Cork Federation

Ballyconnell Guild Carlow promoted physical wellbeing by cycling during the pandemic



Cycling the Blueway with Annaduff Guild Leitrim Federation





## SNAPSHOT FROM GUILDS in Covid times

The main objectives of the Association are to advance education and benefit the community through bringing women together in fellowship and friendship thus developing and improving the well-being, knowledge and skills of women and improving the general quality of life in Ireland through co-operative effort of women.

These snapshots show examples of ways in which ICA Guild activities fulfil the objectives of the association.

**Fitness in Scariff Guild:** Clare Federation have been very active in promoting fitness throughout the county. The members of Scariff Guild met up each Monday evening for a walk and as the evenings shortened this moved to Saturday afternoon. They brought their own refreshments and all their walks took place within the Covid guidelines. They discovered new areas of interest including woods, lakeshores, upland areas and boglands. They had a local walking guide on one of these walks who gave them a talk on local history as they rambled.

**Chair aerobics in Camross Guild:** Twenty members of this Wexford Guild got together and organised Chair aerobics which took place over 6 weeks in September following all the Covid Guidelines. For some of the members it had been their first exercise activity since March!

**Fun Zoom quiz in Muckross Guild:** This Kerry Guild would normally hold a weekly craft night but Covid got in the way so they moved online! Instead of crafts they learned how to use Zoom and one member said that it was a great way to encourage members to get to grips with modern technology! Each week a different member was responsible for making up the questions, with four rounds of six questions each week, followed by a bit of chat. It certainly helped to combat social isolation of members living in quite a remote area.

**Crafts at home in Bruskey:** This Cavan Guild travelled where possible to each other's homes and did crafts together. They made sensory muffs for Alzheimer patients and crocheted lap rugs for people in local nursing homes. They used up all their own crafting materials and gathered more from their neighbours. It gave them a sense of purpose in difficult times.

**Genealogy in Moy:** This Mayo Guild were keen to find out more about their family trees. They applied for a MSLETB grant and together with lots of interested Guild members they did Zoom classes all over the winter with the facilitator Dora Murphy. They discovered lots about their own ancestors and their shared heritage.

**Fundraising for helicopters in Kerry:** Spa Fenit Guild ran a tuck shop during their local drama production just before lockdown and raised over €500 for the much needed helicopter ambulance service in the local area.

**Dignity bags in Galway:** Knocknacarra Guild spent time and effort making up dignity bags for their local homeless youth services. These included hygiene items and basic necessities much needed by homeless young people. They also made up Halloween bags for the younger children in hospital who could not enjoy the fun of trick-or-treat.

**Aiding the elderly in Roscommon:** Drum Guild in Athlone improved the quality of life of some of the older members in their local community doing shopping and running errands for those cocooning. They also took part in helping to sanitise the local church.

**Masks in Killabban:** The members of this Laois Guild helped prepare children to go back to school in September by making masks for school children. Regular face masks weren't the appropriate size for some of the children and these fun designs were greatly appreciated in the local schools.

**Face coverings in Aughavas:** The members of this Leitrim Guild joined forces with the local community centre committee and obtained a Covid 19 emergency fund grant to purchase materials to make face coverings for the North West Hospice. At the time there was a shortage and these donations were of much help both health workers and incoming patients alike.

**Walking with Poles in Roscommon:** In September Roscommon Town Guild embarked on this fitness programme with the help of funding from Roscommon Sports Partnership. They also enjoy a monthly book club on WhatsApp.



## SNAPSHOT FROM GUILDS in Covid times

**Crafting in polytunnels:** Annaduff Guild in Leitrim Federation put the community polytunnel to good use and held their outdoor craft class inside. They also hired electric bikes and explored the Drumleague Lock Loop.

**Edenderry WhatsApp group:** This Offaly Guild would normally meet every Tuesday night but as soon as Lockdown hit they set up their first technological form of communicating in the way of a WhatsApp group. All the members benefited as so many of them live on their own. They communicate via WhatsApp every day and have become more strongly connected than ever sharing photos of their arts, crafts, photography and fitness regimes.

**Muff Magic:** This Donegal Guild took to their needles at the beginning of lockdown and have been making fidget blankets for Alziemer patients, hats, cardigans and blankets for the local premature baby unit and dresses for Mary's Meal Children.

**Mindfulness Zoom in Boyle:** This Roscommon Guild ran a 6 week course in Mindfulness for their members a reminder to all of the importance of mental health, they also enjoyed a weekly walk promoting physical health.

**Weekly Zoom in Clare:** Kilmurray McMahon and Corofin Guilds in Clare Federation have enjoyed the benefits of a weekly Zoom chat and exercise classes to stay in contact. Every Monday night there is a weekly get together with a different theme. It has greatly enabled members to become familiar with communication technology in a relaxed atmosphere.

**Afternoon Theatre in Delgany:** 2020 was the year that this Wicklow Guild celebrated 80 years but unfortunately, they were unable to enjoy the many events they had planned. They did however enjoy Afternoon Theatre an online drama workshop that kept the Guild busy and rehearsing if at home in their own homes.

**ACWW funding in Ballymun:** This Dublin Guild is itself a member of ACWW and empowers women by funding small scale women led projects in key focus areas across the globe.

**Christmas Dinner in Ballyloughan Guild:** This Carlow Guild collected foodstuffs for Christmas Hampers which were donated to St Clare's Hospitality Kitchen providing meals for the needy every day.

**New signs in Laois:** Castletown Guild in Laois Federation needed a new sign for their meeting hall. Between the 2nd and 3rd lockdown they bought a long piece of timber and using pyrography they designed a new welcome sign for over the front door. It allowed small numbers to meet up and catch up and work on the project.

**Pitch and Putt in Tradaree:** This Clare Guild got out for some outdoor fun in the summer. Some members had never played before and it was great to get out both mentally and physically.

**Walks in Barna:** This Galway Guild has met up for a weekly walk since lockdown and together with their new WhatsApp group they are keeping in contact and able to raise funds for Galway Hospice too.

**Friendship calls in Mulranny:** This Mayo Guild celebrated International Women's Day by asking each Guild member to make a phone call to three other members who they would not normally call, spreading friendship.

**Raffles in Bennekerry:** Again the WhatsApp group was of great help when members in this Carlow Guild started to knit squares to make up a Knitted Throw which was then used as a prize for a local raffle.

**Beauty in Finn Valley:** This Donegal Guild had the wonderful idea to produce a calendar with the theme "Beauty on our doorstep". Each member was involved taking photos on their daily walks which were used to produce the calendar raising funds for the maintenance of a defibrillator in the Gaeltacht.

**Basket weaving on Zoom:** Crosserlough Guild in Cavan Federation enjoyed 8 weeks of art/painting classes during lockdown and are now moving on to Basket Weaving! They also use Zoom to socialise.

**Essential Wellness in Castlebar:** This Mayo Guild used a grant from the MSLETB to do 4 weeks of exercise and 6 weeks of essential wellness on Zoom. A Great hit with all the members and they celebrated 70 years too!

**Fundraising in Ballinaclogh:** When Covid prevented this North Tipperary Guild from holding its annual fundraiser for the Hospice they did a Bucket collection instead and raised over €1,000 euro!

**Patchwork Advent calendars in Tullamore:** This Offaly Guild held a work day in June and made patchwork and advent calendars as donations. They enjoyed spending the day sewing and learning together.



# An Grianán



**Overview:** An Grianán is ICA's residential Adult Education College, providing courses in crafts, life-skills and rural development – all delivered in a beautiful setting surrounded by gardens and walks. An Grianán is an important part of life for many ICA members and for the many other groups and individuals who visit.



**Niamh Donegan Manager says:** This is a year to look at with a small sense of achievement rather than focus on the "Covid" word, achievement that we have taken this time to make essential repairs and upgrades to both the main house and bungalows at An Grianán. Some examples of this can be seen below.

**The Bungalows** Currently we have 4 out of 6 of our bungalows leased to long term tenants. We have increased the attic insulation in the bungalows, and installed heat panels in some of the larger bedrooms. We have installed our first wood burner in one bungalow and hope to replicate this as more funds become available. We envisage a strong demand for short term lettings this year for our remaining bungalows and welcome any enquiries from our members and their families.



## Boxing Club



Although currently due to government restrictions both the Boxing Club and Tennis Club are not active, the Boxing Club have spruced up their premises here on the An Grianán Campus and we look forward to their return. Significant improvements have been made.

Upgraded Boxing Club ready to re-open.

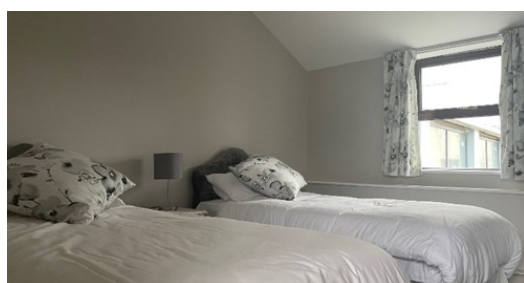
For up to date information on all courses and visits to An Grianán.

visit [www.an-grianan.ie](http://www.an-grianan.ie) or call 041-9822119

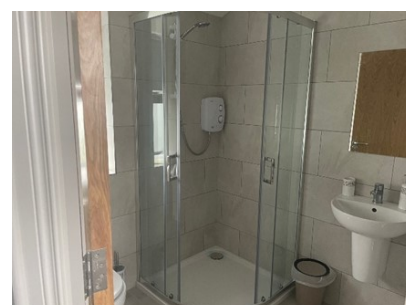
New windows (right) in the dining room can open onto the patio outside. Great for large gatherings and the ICA Garden Party.



For sample cookery school videos  
[www.facebook.com/angrianancookeryschool](https://www.facebook.com/angrianancookeryschool)



Newly renovated twin bedrooms with en-suite showers are now available for guests.



## The Treasurers report 2020-2021

As we reach the end of a turbulent period of office I am happy to report that financially we have survived the first year of lockdown, and as I hand things on to my successor to manage, I wish her every success with the years ahead.

We have taken Lockdown as an opportunity to update and improve facilities at An Grainán and I do hope many of you will soon be able to visit and see for yourselves what has been achieved. Having hostel accommodation on site has meant that although we have not been welcoming guests, there have been people around keeping an eye on the place.

Even in years like 2020 when nothing seems to happen there are still bills to pay, standing charges remain and insurance to be kept up. So, the Board decided to reduce the fee to half for 2021, for any member who had paid in 2020. The discount coupons for An Grainán will be extended into 2022.

In May, please do try and get your fees of €25 in as soon as possible, and encourage as many women as possible to join us, and get activity going again. Detailed Financial reports on pages 25 and 26.

Thank you for your support over the last few years, you have kept me going!

**Helen Rutter** National Treasurer

Ballinode Guild Monaghan launders masks for delivery to Spain.



Taghmon Guild Wexford Federation enjoying Forever Fit



Roma Hennessy's amazing creation to celebrate 80 years of Delgany Guild in Wicklow Federation



Outdoor Christmas Crafts in a community Polytunnel in Leitrim





## REPORT FROM THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NAC)

A Cháirde,

When I wrote my report during the first Lockdown in March 2020, I did not think that we would be in lockdown for the third time when writing this for the Annual Report 2020-2021. It has been a difficult and challenging time for everyone. My sympathies to all who have lost loved ones during this pandemic. Scheduled NAC meetings had to be cancelled due to Covid. I tried to keep Federation presidents informed and updated following NEB meetings, so that they could pass on the information to their Guilds.

During the summer as things eased, I contacted all Federation presidents by phone and we agreed to have an actual meeting, so that Federation presidents could discuss problems and how to safely reopen Guilds when restrictions allowed. Unfortunately several attempts were made, but this meeting did not happen due to Covid restrictions. However it was clear that Federation Presidents needed a forum where they could meet, discuss, share ideas and learn from each other. With the agreement of the NEB the first meeting of the Federation Presidents Forum was held in November on Zoom.

NAC meetings on Zoom were held in November 2020 and February 2021 and there will be another before the AGM. AGMs, postal vote, motions, fees, terms of reference and role of the Information Specialists and fundraising were discussed.

An amazing amount of money is raised each year by Guilds for various charities. If the amount raised by Guilds in a year was logged in Central Office, it would be great recognition of how much fundraising is done by ICA members for charities large and small around the country.

The NAC discussed the difficulties facing all Federations while Guilds were not able to meet and where many members were not sufficiently adept at using technology. Federations and Guilds are keeping in touch with members by phone, WhatsApp groups and Facebook pages.

The Zoom training given by Paul McNamee at no cost to ICA was really helpful and appreciated by those who took part and was passed on by them to other members.

It was great to hear that many activities have been happening around the country on Zoom such as Yoga, Mindfulness, Painting classes, Drama, Quizzes and Photography competitions.

Members have been busy with Arts and Crafts and some Guilds have had arts and craft sessions on Zoom. It would be wonderful when restrictions allow, to have an exhibition of the beautiful work that has been done by ICA members during the pandemic and showcase the talent we have in ICA.

We are all missing ICA. We are missing our meetings, seeing our friends and having a chat. We want to meet physically and have a cup of tea together. We want to laugh together. We want to have our craft mornings, our drama rehearsals and all our normal events. We want to go to An Grianán and see the refurbishment that has been done while our wonderful college has been closed.

We want our lives to get back to some sort of normality. There is light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccinations. We will get back to ICA and we will celebrate together.

Beidh spórt agus craic againn le chéile. Tabhair aire daoibh féin.

Stay safe and stay well.

**Hilda Roche Chair of the NAC**

## National Competitions 2020-2021

National Competitions is challenging but very rewarding when completed successfully. We, the Longford Team, feel a bit cheated by Covid-19 as we were denied the chance to develop the competitions in a more relevant way for ICA in the 21st Century.

Year 1 was a great success even though it was our induction year and it was an extremely short year as we were only given the job in November 2018.

Year 2 2020 We introduced two new Competitions

- Baking Competition with 6 Classes at the Dublin Cake Art Show
- Blackberry Solo Singing Competition

Unfortunately all our team and hands-on Competitions had to be cancelled for 2020 due to Covid-19. However our postal competitions were all completed successfully and prizes awarded. Trophies have all been engraved with winners names. The 2020 winners will not get the opportunity to have possession of those trophies unfortunately. Another casualty of Covid - 19 and beyond the control of ICA. However the individual personal prizes will be presented to all the winners and placements at the first available opportunity of meeting again.

Year 3... 2021 Ten of the original competitions were again cancelled and ten completed. This has been most unfortunate as the Teams and hands-on competitions were the most enjoyable events and formed a large part of the work of ICA on the whole. The camaraderie among 27 smart ICA Bakers at the Gempack baking was amazing. The cookery demo at An Grianán on that day was a packed house full of fun and laughter and the anxious wait for the results of the winners of the baking competition was palpable.

Of course the overnight stay in An Grianán, sponsored by Gempack, was the icing on the cake. This competition is always well supported by every Federation and we thank Gempack for their Annual Sponsorship.

The Baking Competition at Dublin Cake Art Show was a huge success. While we only had the baking on Day 1 of the Show I would recommend a second Baking competition on Day 2 as it gathered great interest and added greatly to what is an already wonderful Show. There was a void on Day 2 in the space occupied by ICA on Day 1. We also secured a Stand for the Regional Presidents to have an ICA Information Stand which also proved very successful. We fostered good relationships with the Dublin Cake Art Committee. Hopefully this event will continue in the future.

Blackberry Hearing offered us sponsorship for a National Competition and we gladly accepted. We agreed the competition and so "Blackberry Hearing Solo Singing Competition" was born. This will be held in the future in An Grianán hopefully. All entrants have a sponsored overnight stay in An Grianán.

We thank all the members who take the time to enter competitions as without you there would be no competitions. We are always amazed and in awe of all the wonderful work submitted for entries. Ladies you have such talent of high standard in ICA. The attention to detail in individual entries and the dedication to practicing for perfection in team events is nothing short of brilliant. We would love to display all your work at events and AGM but only enough space for winners at AGM. We only had the pleasure of displaying your work at one AGM thanks to Covid -19. However awarding and presenting prizes is very rewarding.

We thank all our judges for the past 3 years. It has been difficult with all the restrictions. Closing dates changing. Competitions postponed and cancelled. The safety of our competitors and judges was paramount.

We thank our sponsors Gempack and Blackberry Hearing. Without them National Competitions would not survive. National ICA do not contribute financially towards the competitions. It is my belief that this too must change.

We thank Niamh and Staff at An Grianán for a gracious welcome always and 100% commitment to help us successfully run off all the team events held there, Singing, Dancing, Table Quiz, Baking, Pitch & Putt etc.

I thank the dedicated Longford team Ursula, Angela, Anne, Helen and Margo. Without those wonderful volunteering members we would not succeed. They were brilliant.

We thank Madam President Josephine Helly who entrusted us with the task of the Competitions and gave us the opportunity to experience this part of ICA. She dressed up glamorously and showed up to all our events presenting the prizes with humour and passion. Thank you Josephine. I do regret you were denied the opportunity to complete the three years successfully due to Covid -19.

I wish our successors every good luck in the future and we will do all we can to help you out in any way.

Mise le Meas  
May Campbell  
National Competitions Secretary.

#### Inter-Federation Cup for Crafts

1st Prize **Betty Denning** Cross Guild Cavan Federation

2nd Prize **Rebecca Palmer** Cappamore Guild Limerick Federation

3rd Prize **Carol McKay** Drumboylan Guild Roscommon Federation



Madame President Josephine Helly presenting 2nd prize for white soda bread to Eilish McDonnell Westmeath Federation President at the Irish Sugar Craft Show 2020





## ICA AT WORK AND PLAY

Portlaoise Guild Laois Federation presenting cheque to PATH Action for the Homeless.



An example of one of the live paint along artworks done in the live class given by Mary Fergus Sligo Federation President.



Rolestown Guild Dublin Federation socially distanced coffee morning raised €700 for the Hospice.



Kathleen O'Shea Moore Guild Roscommon Federation cycled 200 K to raise funds for Cancer research!



Members of Crosserlough Guild Cavan Federation with donations of lap quilts and knee blankets for local nursing homes.

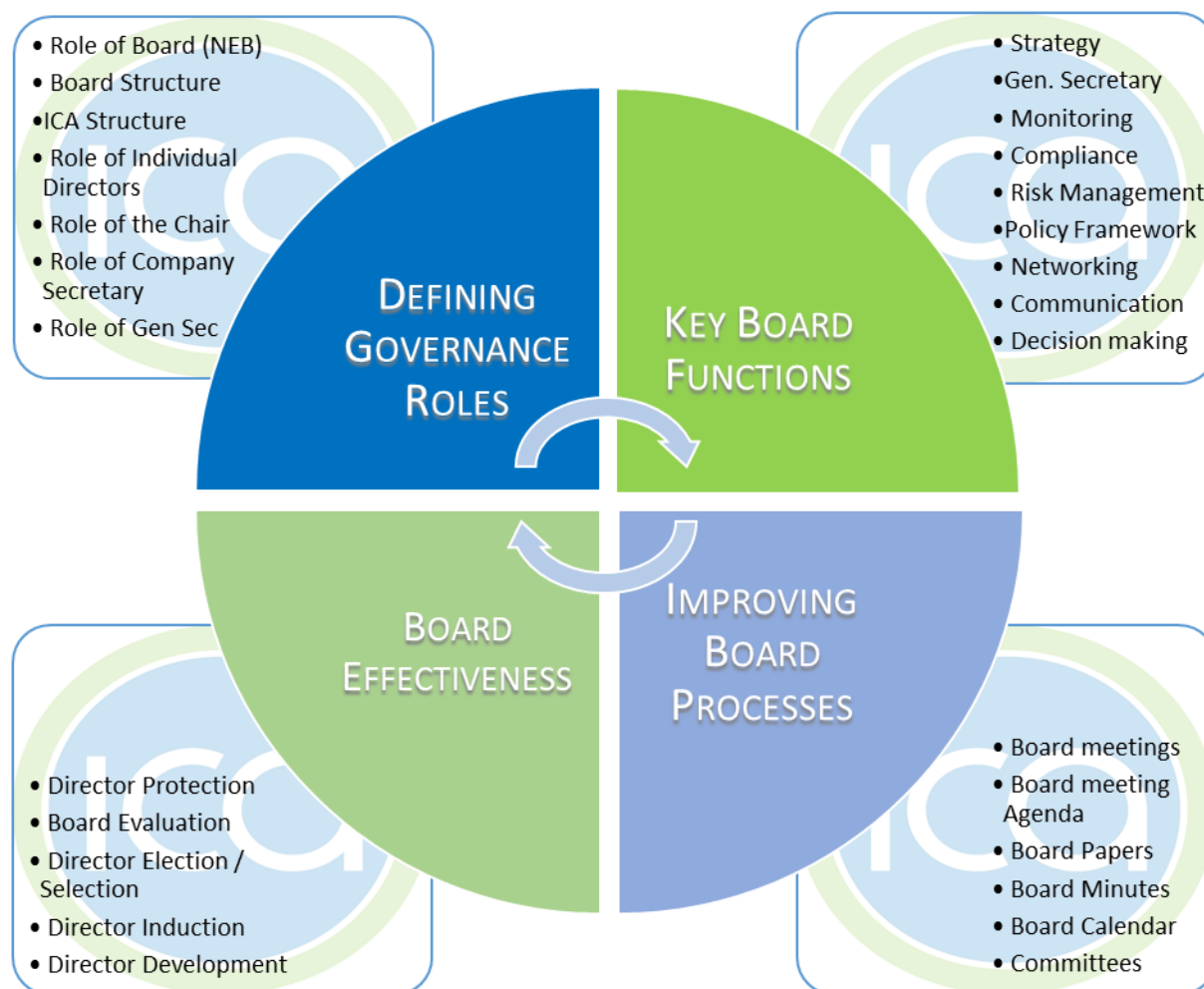


Presentation of Scrubs to Wygram Nursing Home by Wexford Federation.





## ICA Corporate Governance Practice Framework



### ACTIONS TAKEN:

**Board Governance Handbook:** A Board Governance Handbook is being compiled to assist the Board (NEB) to operate in compliance with the ICA Constitution and relevant Company and Charity Laws. Four written documents (ICA Constitution, Memorandum & Articles, Board Governance Handbook and Member's Handbook) will together provide a framework to support best practice and good governance in ICA.

**Charities Governance Code – Current Situation:** It is mandatory to comply with the Governance Code in 2020 and to report on compliance in 2021. The NEB is following a structured plan to bring ICA into full compliance in 2021. ICA will be able to report full compliance to the Charities Regulator in 2021 and show evidence of compliance. Good Corporate Governance practices as documented in the Board Governance Handbook will support ongoing compliance as required by law.

*Further information can be found on [www.ica.ie](http://www.ica.ie)*

## Members of the National Executive Board and National Advisory Committee 2020-2021

**Membership Organisation:** ICA is a membership organisation with an emphasis on member centred governance underpinned by a constitution. ICA is a ground-up organisation with a membership of circa 8,000 women organised in the following structure:

**Guilds:** A Guild is the primary organisational decision making and activity unit of the association. 439 Guilds nationally, each with a high degree of autonomy.

**Federations:** A Federation consists of all the Guilds in a particular County, represented by the Guild Presidents. There are 27 Federations (Tipperary having two)

**The National Executive Board (NEB):** The NEB is the body legally responsible for governance of the ICA. It consists of up to 17 members (4 National Officers, Chair of NAC, 4 Regional Presidents; 9 Federation Presidents in rotation).

**National Advisory Committee (NAC)** is an advisory body to the NEB between AGMs, and a conduit for representation from, and communication to, Federations. It is the key support body in delivery of ICA national activities.

### Members of the NEB 2020-2021

Josephine Helly (Chair)	National President
Eleanor Calnan	National Secretary
Helen Rutter	National Treasurer
Hilda Roche*	Chair NAC
May Campbell	Regional President
Ena Howell**	Regional President
Margot Hennessy	Regional President
Sharon Kelly**	Regional President
Eilish McDonnell	Westmeath Federation
Carmel Garrett	Galway Federation
Nellie Dillon Forde	Kildare Federation
Anne Payne	Laois Federation
Annette Long	Limerick Federation
Kitty Harrington	Roscommon Federation
Geraldine Mc Nally**	Meath Federation
Maureen Mc Laughlin**	Donegal Federation
Michelle Early**	Leitrim Federation

\* Joined NEB \*\* Retired from NEB

### Members of the NAC 2020-2021

Hilda Roche	Chair of the NAC Wicklow
Josephine Helly	National President
Eleanor Calnan	National Secretary Cork
Helen Rutter	National Treasurer
May Campbell	Regional President
Ena Howell	Regional President
Margot Hennessy	Regional President
Sharon Kelly	Regional President
Annette Reddy	Carlow Federation
Mary Duffy	Cavan Federation
Mary O'Halloran	Clare Federation
Maureen McLaughlin	Donegal Federation
Joan Canning	Dublin Federation
Carmel Garrett	Galway Federation
Collette Dalton	Kerry Federation
Nellie Dillon Forde	Kildare Federation
Ann Kelly	Kilkenny Federation
Anne Payne	Laois Federation
Michelle Early	Leitrim Federation
Annette Long	Limerick Federation
Olive Quinn	Longford Federation
Susan Reynolds	Louth Federation
Kay Devine	Mayo Federation
Geraldine McNally	Meath Federation
Susan Clarke	Monaghan Federation
Sandra O'Connor	Offaly Federation
Kitty Harrington	Roscommon Federation
Mary Fergus	Sligo Federation
Kathleen Corcoran	Tipperary North Fed
June O'Dwyer	Tipperary South Fed
Noeline Power	Waterford Federation
Eilish McDonnell	Westmeath Federation
Mary D'Arcy	Wexford Federation

## NEB meetings matrix April 2020—March 2021

Year:	2020	2020	2020	2020	2020	2020	2020	2020	2020	2020	2021	2021	2021	2021
Date:	3rd April	26th May	30th Jun	11th Aug	17th Sep	20th Oct	17th Nov	24th-Nov	1st Dec	15th Dec	2nd Feb	5th Feb	15th Feb	2nd Mar

Josephine Helly														
Helen Rutter														
Eleanor Calnan					Zoom*									
Hilda Roche														
May Campbell														
Sharon Kelly														
Margot Hennessy														
Ena Howell														
Maureen McLaughlin														
Carmel Garrett					Zoom*									
Nellie Dillon														
Anne Payne														
Annette Long														
Geraldine McNally														
Kitty Harrington														
Eilish McDonnell														
Michelle Earley														

	Attended meeting
	Absent for meeting
	Resigned from NEB
	Restricted

The Board meeting on 30th June took place in the Sheraton Hotel Athlone. The meeting on 17th September took place in the Midlands Park Hotel in Portlaoise where two members joined via Zoom\* as noted above. All other meetings were held on Zoom or by teleconference.

## NAC Meetings Matrix April 2020—March 2021

	2020	2021
Name:	7th November	12th February
Hilda Roche - Chair		
Josephine Helly		
Helen Rutter		
Eleanor Calnan		
Michelle Early		
May Campbell		
Margot Hennessy		
Ena Howell		
Sharon Kelly		
Annette Reddy		
Mary Duffy	Anna Rose McCormack	
Mary O'Halloran		
Maureen McLaughlin		
Joan Canning		
Carmel Garrett		
Collette Dalton		
Nellie Dillon		
Ann Kelly		
Anne Payne		
Annette Long		
Olive Quinn		
Susan Reynolds		
Kay Devine		
Geraldine McNally		
Susan Clarke		
Sandra O'Connor		
Maura Allen		
Kitty Harrington		Catherine Guckian
Mary Fergus		
Kathleen Corcoran		
June O'Dwyer		
Noeline Power		
Eilish McDonnell		
Mary D'Arcy		

## ICA COMMITTEES

### Finance Committee 2020—2021

**Helen Rutter** (Chair)

**Margot Hennessy** (Secretary)

**May Campbell**

**Nellie Dillon Forde**

**Anna Sinnott**—Finance Manager, Staff

	Attended meeting
	Did not attend
	Not in office

Meeting date	Helen Rutter	Margot Hennessy	May Campbell	Nellie Dillon Forde	Anna Sinnott
14th Dec 2020					
16th Oct 2020					

### Governance Committee 2020-2021

**Hilda Roche** (Chair) NEB

**Mary D’Arcy** NAC

**Mary O’Halloran** NAC

**Carmel Garrett** NEB

Meeting date:	Hilda Roche	Mary D’Arcy	Mary O’Halloran	Carmel Garret
27th Nov 2020				
29th Jan 2021				

# ICA Strategic Priorities and Achievements 2020-2021

## Governance and Management

Actions and Key Goals	Key Indicators
Company, Charity and Revenue law	In compliance
ICA Constitution	In compliance
Charities Governance Code	On the journey
Upgrade and refurbish	An Grianán and Central Office underway
Effective decision making	NEB decision making template
Have clear objectives	Operational plan 2020

## ICA Membership Organisation

Actions and Key goals	Key Achievements
Increase membership	Interrupted by Covid 19
Increase Number of Guilds	Interrupted by Covid 19
Improve service to members	Provided online activity/classes

## Develop An Grianán

Actions and Key goals	Key achievements
Develop business from ICA	Interrupted by Covid 19
Develop business outside ICA	Interrupted by Covid 19
Upgrade An Grianán	Upgraded dining room and bedrooms

**The Countrywomen's Trust**  
**Income and expenditure account**  
**Financial year ending 31st December 2020**

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Income</b>	€570,885	€1,266,923
<b>Cost of sales</b>	(51,385)	(173,059)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Surplus</b>	519,500	1,093,864
<b>Administrative expenses</b>	(525,955)	(964,180)
<b>Other operating income</b>	88,075	30,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	81,620	159,684
<b>Other interest receivable and similar income</b>	-	1
<b>Interest payable and similar expenses</b>	-	(3,440)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	81,620	156,245
	<hr/>	<hr/>

All the activities of the company are from continuing operations.

**The Countrywomen's Trust**  
**Statement of income and retained earnings**  
**Financial year ended 31st December 2020**

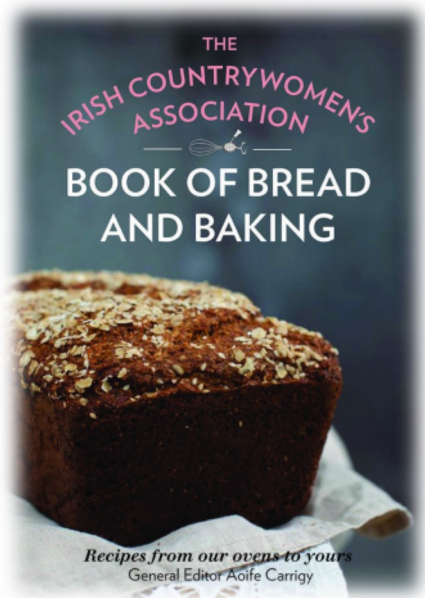
	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	€	€
<b>Surplus (deficit) for the financial year</b>	81,620	156,245
<b>Retained earnings at the start of the financial year</b>	3,985,231	3,828,986
<b>Retained earnings at the end of the financial year</b>	4,066,851	3,985,231



**The Countrywomen's Trust**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**as at 31st December 2020**

	2020		2019	
	€	€	€	€
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	12,300,831		8,534,220	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	12,300,831	12,300,831	8,534,220	8,534,220
Current assets				
Stocks	8,810		12,721	
Debtors	26,161		34,155	
Cash at bank and in hand	817,723		783,207	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	852,694		830,083	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due</b>				
<b>within one year</b>	(132,234)		(174,307)	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
<b>Net current assets:</b>		720,460		655,776
		<hr/>		<hr/>
Total assets less current liabilities		13,021,291		9,189,996
Creditors: amounts falling due		-		-
after more than one year		=====		=====
Net assets		13,021,291		9,189,996
Capital and Reserves				
Revaluation reserve		8,932,721		5,183,046
Restricted funds		21,692		121,723
Income and Expenditure Account		4,066,878		3,885,227
		<hr/>		<hr/>
Members funds		<b>13,021,291</b>		<b>9,189,996</b>

## ICA BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS



Late in 2019 the ICA Book of Bread and Baking was published as the fifth book in the series published by Gill and Macmillan, edited by Aoife Carrigy. Like all the other books in the series the book of bread and baking relied on the very many recipes chosen from those sent in by members around the country.

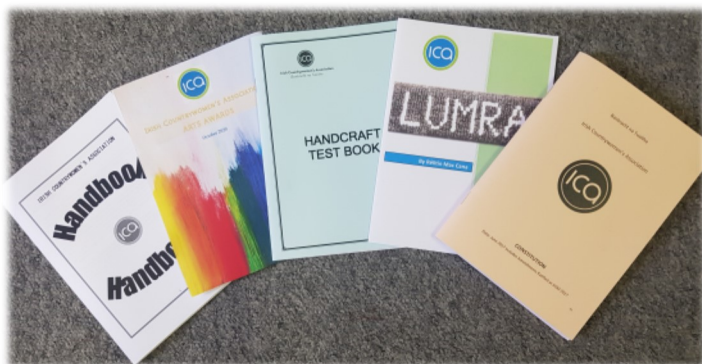
Recipes from 70 members feature in the book including traditional recipes for brown bread, Irish soda bread, fluffy scones and timeless fruit cakes are firm favourites. There are also more modern recipes like sourdough bread, onion focaccia and gluten-free options including muffins and bread and a delicious recipe for a vegan blackberry cake.

*Available for purchase from the ICA Central Office.*



The Book of Bread and Baking is part of the ICA family of books. These include The Book of Christmas, The Book of Tea and Company, the Book of Home and Family and the original ICA Cookbook. All are published by Gill & Macmillan except The Book of Crafts, published by Mercier.

*Available from [gillbooks.ie](http://gillbooks.ie) and [mercierpress.ie](http://mercierpress.ie)*



### *Other publications on sale from ICA:*

Handcraft test book	€3:00
Arts Awards book	€3:00
Constitution	€3:00
Handbook	€3:00
Lumra	€5:00

*Call Central Office: 01 6680002*

**Would you like to join the ICA?**

Please call ICA Central Office on: 01 6680002

Send an email to [office@ica.ie](mailto:office@ica.ie)

See our website: [www.ica.ie](http://www.ica.ie)

Content submitted by Guilds and Federations.

Report compiled and edited by Rebecca Ryan Central Office.

**Would you like to set up a Guild?**

Please call ICA Central Office on: 01 6680002

Send an email to [office@ica.ie](mailto:office@ica.ie)

See our website [www.ica.ie](http://www.ica.ie)

Annual Report 2020-2021 *Tuairisc Bliantiúil*

Copies of the report are available to download  
from [www.ica.ie](http://www.ica.ie)

