

Annual Report: 2020

1. Administrative Details

1.1 - Name of National Committee: **Irish National Committee of the Blue Shield (INCBS)**

1.2 - Date Report Completed: **February 2021**

1.3 - Reporting period covered: **November 2019 – December 2020**

1.4 - Names, positions and emails:

The current members of INCBS are:

Chair: Zoë Reid (ICA - joined 2018) zoereid@nationalarchives.ie

Secretary: Elizabethanne Boran (IFLA - joined 2020) EABORAN@tcd.ie

Daniel Ayiotis (ICA – joined 2018) danielayiotis@gmail.com

Jessica Baldwin (ICOM Ireland – joined 2020) jessicahbaldwin@outlook.com

Helena Bergin (ICOMOS Ireland – joined 2019) Helena.Bergin@fingal.ie

Patrizia La Piscopia (joined 2018) Patrizia.lapiscopia@gmail.com

Hugh Maguire (ICOM Ireland – joined 2020) hugh@hughmaguire.ie

Fergus McCormack (ICOMOS Ireland – joined 2020) fergus.mccormick@opw.ie

Having completed two (4 year) terms of office on the INCBS the following members stepped down from the committee in January 2020:

Chair: Lar Joye (ICOM Ireland, 2012- 2020)

Secretary: Deirdre McDermott (ICOMOS Ireland, 2012-2020)

Cathy Daly (ICOMOS Ireland, 2012-2020)

Kassandra O'Connell (ICA, 2012- 2020)

1.5 - Address and email:

Irish National Committee of Blue Shield
c/o National Archives of Ireland, Bishop Street, Dublin, D08 DF85, Ireland
Email: irishblueshield@gmail.com

1.6 - Website and social media:

Thanks to the continued support of our partner organisations INCBS maintains website pages at the following sites:

ICOM Ireland - <https://www.icomireland.com/blue-shield-ireland>

ICOMOS Ireland - <http://www.icomos.ie/index.php/blue-shield/incbs>

The committee also actively engages in using social media to promote the work of Blue Shield, the local committee and its ethical principles. Although modest the social media presence continues to grow.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IrishBlueShield>

Twitter: @IrishNCBS

2. Income:

The Committee does not currently have a bank account and is therefore unable to manage any potential funding grants or expenditure without the assistance of one of its nominating bodies.

3. Report of Activities: Achievements & Performance

In the reporting period (November 2019 – December 2020) the activities of the Irish National Committee of the Blue Shield (INCBS) focused on supporting the following key objectives:

1. Law, policy development and implementation
2. Education, training, and capacity building
3. Proactive protection and risk preparedness
4. Emergency response in disaster, domestic emergencies, and armed conflict
5. Co-ordination of Blue Shield and with other relevant organisations

Concentrating on promoting the work of Blue Shield and awareness of the importance of preserving heritage sites and their contents in peacetime and during conflict.

At the end of January, following the completion of two (4 year) terms of office on the INCBS, Lar Joye (Chair), Deirdre McDermott (Secretary), Cathy Daly and Kasandra O'Connell stepped down. They are all thanked for their dedication and hard work on behalf of Blue Shield. New representatives from the four nominating bodies were welcomed to the Committee and are detailed above, which is now chaired by Zoë Reid.

A three-day course on **Cultural Property Protection (CPP) for Peacekeeping Deployments** was organised by the Committee with the support of the Heritage Council of Ireland, the Military Archives and the Dublin Port Company (6-8 November 2019). The course was led by Professor Peter Stone, Chair of UK Blue Shield and the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Property Protection and Peace (CPP) at Newcastle University and Major Bobby Friel who is a member of the UK Cultural Property Protection Unit. Sessions of the course were also presented by members of the INCBS, Lar Joye, Patrizia La Piscopia and Zoë Reid.

The course was designed specifically to respond to the needs of a force operating in peace keeping missions. At the core of the training was the idea participants should be encouraged to think about the importance of Cultural Property Protection (CPP) during deployment while also understanding the complexity of group values and identities related to their own heritage. This was the first CPP course held in Ireland for the Irish Defence Forces and Heritage Professionals and attended by 17 participants.

Following the course, an article entitled 'Towards a Monument's Men Unit? The Irish Defence forces welcome the first training to protect Archaeology and Cultural Property' by INCBS member Patrizia la Piscopia, was published in *Archaeology Ireland: Spring edition 2020*. The article was also published in English in an Italian journal of military penal law, *Rassegna della giustizia militare*, 2, 2020.

https://www.difesa.it/Giustizia_Militare/rassegna/Bimestrale/2020/Documents/02_2020/RGM_02_2020_rev1.pdf

Lar Joye (Chair) presented the work of Blue Shield at an event entitled '**All that remained**'—**The Four Courts Blaze of 1922** on 27 January. This panel discussion, organised in association with the INCBS, was held at Trinity College Dublin as part of the *Out of the Ashes* Lecture Series, which is considering the form of cultural atrocity now subject to international war crimes prosecution: the deliberate targeting of cultural heritage as a means to control social memory and to erase identities. The basis for the Blue Shield in the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property and its additional first and second protocols, ratified by Ireland in 2018 was highlighted. The event is available to view here:

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=650603892376927&ref=watch_permalink

National Emergency Coordination Committee Framework document

On 17 February, INCBS were invited to meet with Keith Leonard, Director of Emergency Management at the Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The meeting was hosted by Caroline McMullan, Programme Director for the MSc in Emergency Management, DCU Business School. Cathy Daly, a Cultural Heritage Management, Conservation and Research Specialist based at the University of Lincoln and former INCBS committee member also attended. INCBS was invited to draft guidelines for first responders to an emergency situation which included cultural property or a heritage site. These have been drafted and will be formalised in 2021.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting government restrictions unfortunately led to the postponement of the following planned events:

Climate Adaptation Framework meeting (26 March) INCBS had been invited to attend to explore potential for providing training on Disaster Recovery for staff in the Dept Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Heritage Council of Ireland (16-17 June) INCBS had been invited to present the activities of Blue Shield at the annual meeting of the Heritage Officers which was to be held in Ennis Co. Clare.

Heritage Week (17 August) This half-day *Cultural Heritage Protection in Ireland* seminar was planned to raise public awareness and aimed to highlight the work of Blue Shield and the role of the Irish National Committee of Blue Shield.

The Committee is working to reschedule these events in 2021, where possible moving to online training events.

The Committee continued to meet virtually across the year and contact with partner organisations and stakeholders was maintained and strengthened.

1. Main issues faced:

Looking to the future the main issue facing INCBS is the lack of funding to expand its activities and support the strategic objectives of Blue Shield. The Committee does not currently have a bank account and is therefore unable to manage any potential funding grants or expenditure without the assistance of one of its nominating bodies.

The advent of the COVID-19 lockdown highlighted the importance of establishing an online presence for INCBS, however addressing this in 2020 was not possible due to financial constraints.

2. Future goals

The 2021 Strategic Plan of the INCBS, details the key goals that the committee aim to focus on are:

- Raise awareness of the INCBS through capacity building activities, education and training
- Support the development of proactive protection and risk preparedness in Ireland

- Strengthen relationships with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media (DTCAGSM), DHLGH, the Heritage Council and relevant bodies
- Ensure the good governance of the committee
- Secure funding
- Grow presence on social media
- Host and maintain our own dedicated website

3. Other

Through its connection to Newcastle University, BSI is sometimes able to access funding that can be shared with research institutions to further the work of Blue Shield. Does your national committee have any connections with research institutions interested in its work (e.g. in risk management, heritage protection, etc.). If yes, please supply the names and contact details here.

Not currently.