

Annual Report

Prepared By :

Thomas Mc Cabe
National Manager



Company Details

Company number	488914C
Company Type	CLG - Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered Name	Siel Bleu Ireland
Address	18 Eustace St, Temple Bar, Dublin 2, D02 WR53
Bank	Allied Irish Bank, Dame St, Dublin 2
Solicitors	McCann FitzGerald, Riverside One, 37 - 42 Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Grand Canal Dock, Dublin 2
Auditors	ND Audit & Advisory, 41-41 Grattan St, Maryborough, Portlaoise, Co Laois, R32HR62
Charity Number	CHY19489
CRA Number	20076504
National Manager	Thomas Mc Cabe

A Message from the National Manager



Thomas McCabe
National Manager

Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

As we reflect on 2024, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the progress Siel Bleu Ireland has made in empowering individuals through physical activity. This year has been one of transformation and resilience, as we expanded our reach, deepened our impact, and strengthened our collaborations to improve the health and well-being of communities across Ireland.

Our commitment to providing accessible, evidence-based exercise programmes has never been stronger. Thanks to the dedication of our passionate team, the trust of our partners, and the unwavering engagement of our participants, we have reached over 10,000 people this year. We have successfully expanded our chronic disease programmes in partnership with the HSE, enhanced our collaboration with organisations such as the HSE, Nursing Home Ireland, COPD Support Ireland and Parkinsons Ireland, and continued to advocate for the role of exercise in preventative healthcare.

The road ahead presents new opportunities to innovate and grow. As we look to 2025, we will continue to expand our services, explore digital solutions to enhance accessibility, and advocate for greater recognition of physical activity in health policy. Our vision remains clear: to empower as many people as possible to live healthier, more independent lives through movement.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we are making a lasting difference.

Sincerely,

Thomas McCabe

A Message from the Chairwoman of the Board



Sinead Lonergan
Chairwoman, Siel Bleu Ireland

Dear Friends and Supporters of Siel Bleu Ireland,

Siel Bleu Ireland achieved a considerable milestone in its growth in 2024, increasing services and headcount, and expanding its reach outside of Dublin, impacting the promotion of health and well-being for all, especially among older adults and those living with chronic conditions.

In 2025 our mission remains the same: to provide accessible, safe, and empowering exercise programs that improve the quality of life for individuals, protect their mental health regardless of their age or physical ability.

We also recognise that the social nature of group exercise classes in communities is fundamental to avoid isolation. Innovation in programs and service delivery will continue to transform lives and further our ambition to make exercise more inclusive and accessible, through our increasing network of instructors and the deepening of partnerships with healthcare professionals and local organizations.

The Siel Bleu programmes for nursing home residents and staff continue to grow in popularity and we value these partnerships. Families with ageing relatives are increasing recognising that Movement Matters to their loved ones. The commitment of the team to empowering people to take charge of their health, build strength, and find joy in movement is unfaltering. In 2024 we invited Corporate sponsors along on the journey with us. A big thank you to those who answered the call. Your support and belief in our cause is very important.

The overarching goal is to grow this movement that celebrates strength, vitality, and the power of community while shifting perceptions around ageing and physical ability, inspiring individuals to live healthier, happier lives. Our board, together with the dedicated Siel Bleu team and our partners, will endeavor to provide the right care, right place, right time.

Warm regards,

Sinead Lonergan

About Siel Bleu Ireland



Vision

To create a society where older adults living with disease can experience the benefits of physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour irrespective of their social, cultural or economic background.

Mission

The mission of Siel Bleu Ireland is to provide affordable and accessible exercise programmes for all members of Ireland's older population and for people living with disease, to ensure they live full and independent lives.

Our Values

- Equality
- Integrity
- Respect
- Innovation
- Empathy
- Honesty
- Professionalism



Who we are

Siel Bleu Ireland is a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving the health and well-being of older adults and people living with chronic conditions or disabilities through tailored physical activity programmes. Established in 2010, the organisation is part of the wider Siel Bleu network, which originated in France in 1997.

Siel Bleu Ireland's mission is to empower individuals to maintain their independence, enhance their quality of life, and prevent or manage health conditions through exercise. The organisation works with a wide range of partners, including healthcare providers, local authorities, community groups, and businesses, to deliver accessible and engaging physical activity programmes.

Their evidence-based approach ensures that programmes are safe, inclusive, and designed to meet the specific needs of participants. Classes are delivered in various settings, including nursing homes, community centres, hospitals, and online, making them widely accessible. Programmes target areas such as fall prevention, mobility improvement, and disease management, with a strong focus on social connection and mental well-being.

Siel Bleu Ireland collaborates with research institutions to measure the impact of its initiatives, demonstrating improvements in physical and mental health among participants. The organisation also advocates for the integration of physical activity into healthcare policy to support healthy ageing and disease prevention.

By combining expertise in physical activity with a commitment to social impact, Siel Bleu Ireland continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of thousands across the country, ensuring that exercise is a tool for health, dignity, and independence.



Our Work

Residential Settings

This is the core of the activity that Siel Bleu Ireland delivers. Siel Bleu Ireland deliver a wide range of programmes in nursing home and day care centres each week throughout Ireland. Our trainers travel to each contracted day care centre and nursing home on a weekly basis and deliver programmes that range from fall prevention programmes for more able-bodied service users to around the table programmes for service users living with a severe cognitive impairment.

Patient Groups

Exercise is seen as one of the main methods of treatment for numerous chronic diseases. Siel Bleu Ireland deliver programmes that are tailored to meet the needs of people with chronic disease and deliver programmes with the following patient organisations;

- Irish Heart Foundation
- COPD Support Ireland
- Parkinson's Ireland
- Alzheimer's Ireland
- Living Well with Dementia
- Arthritis Ireland

Disability Groups

Siel Bleu Ireland currently work with numerous groups who provide services for people managing physical and intellectual disability;

- Enable Ireland
- HSE Intellectual Disability services
- Prosper Intellectual Disability Services & Supports
- Private nursing homes

Community Groups

In 2024, Siel Bleu Ireland delivered numerous programmes with numerous community groups including;

- Irish Men's Shed Association
- Active retirement associations
- Dublin Southside partnership
- HSE funded community groups
- Walking groups
- Stand-alone community groups



Individual Sessions

Siel Bleu Ireland trainers travel to people's homes to deliver sessions in situations where people are unable to travel to a community session or prefer to exercise in their own home.

Online Programmes

Siel Bleu Ireland's Online Programmes bring expert-led physical activity sessions directly to individuals and groups, making exercise accessible anytime, anywhere. Designed for older adults and people living with chronic conditions, our virtual classes focus on improving strength, mobility, and overall well-being. Whether delivered live or on-demand, our programmes are safe, engaging, and tailored to individual needs. From seated exercises to strength training and balance work, our sessions help participants stay active, independent, and connected. Perfect for individuals at home, community groups, or residential care settings, Siel Bleu Ireland's online programmes ensure that everyone has the opportunity to move and thrive.

Mental Health Services

In partnership with St James' Hospital and Mullingar Hospital, Siel Bleu delivers exercise programmes that aim to promote the physical, social and mental benefits of the patients in living with Mental Health difficulties. The aims are to improve patient's strength, mobility, aerobic capacity and balance. Each programme is tailored to the group and adapted to each participant and their ability level and centered around improving the participants mental and physical health.



2024 in Review

In 2024, Siel Bleu Ireland continued to build on the progress made in previous years in achieving its mission to promote health and well being across communities. Key highlights of Siel Bleu Ireland's progress in 2024 include;

Strengthened Partnerships

The collaboration between Siel Bleu Ireland and Nursing Home Ireland in hosting educational webinars for activity coordinators and healthcare professionals has proven highly successful. These sessions cover crucial aspects of older adult health, including physical fitness, mental wellbeing, and nutrition. The practical approach, featuring expert presentations and hands-on exercise sessions, ensures immediate applicability for professionals working with older adults. The webinars also foster a supportive community and allow for the exchange of ideas. Due to the positive response, future webinars are planned, continuing the commitment to continuous learning and community building. The impact on the well-being of older adults is significant, and recordings ensure wider accessibility to the valuable content.

Expansion of Reach

Siel Bleu Ireland expanded its reach to reach even more individuals in need of our services. Through innovative approaches such as virtual classes and new offerings, Siel Bleu Ireland was able to engage with diverse demographics, empowering them to lead healthier, more active lives. Siel Bleu Ireland has also expanded our services in Galway, Monaghan, Wexford and Cork throughout 2024 and will continue to expand in 2025 in these areas and beyond.

Growth in the Community

Siel Bleu Ireland forged strong partnerships with healthcare providers, community organisations, and local authorities, amplifying its reach and impact. By collaborating with like-minded entities, the organisation was able to leverage resources, expertise, and networks to better serve its target population. The expansion of programmes with COPD Support Ireland in the community is a direct example of this.

Development of new programmes

2024 saw the development of new programmes for a number of patient organisations. It is hoped that these programmes will be rolled out in 2025.

France Ireland Business Links

The relationship between Siel Bleu Ireland and the French Embassy in Dublin is based on shared interests in health, wellness, and the promotion of French-Irish cooperation in the healthcare and social sectors. As Siel Bleu was originally founded in France in 1997 before expanding to Ireland, there is a natural link between the organisation and French institutions, including the Embassy. In July 2024, the then French ambassador to Ireland, Vincent Guerend visited a Siel Bleu Ireland class in Kilmainham. The embassy and the France Ireland chamber of commerce is supporting Siel Bleu Ireland's efforts to grow.

Awards and Recognition

- The Social Innovation Fund Ireland SED Fund recipient 2019
- Dublin City Inner City Enterprise Awardee 2019
- Nutramino Health & Fitness Awardee 2019
- Charity Impact Award Finalist 2018 & 2019
- The Social Enterprise Development Accelerator Programme 2018
- Medtronic Health Communities Fund 2016
- Social Entrepreneurs Ireland Impact Award Finalist 2016
- Irish Healthcare Award – Best Patient Education Project 2015
- Irish Healthcare Award – Best Patient Lifestyle Project 2015
- King Baudouin Foundation Social Innovation for Active & Healthy Ageing Finalist 2014
- Launch of HAPPIER report 2014

Partners

Irish Heart Foundation

Throughout 2024, Siel Bleu Ireland delivered tailored physical activity programmes online for people living with stroke and heart failure on an online basis. Siel Bleu Ireland have also developed two handbooks for people living with stroke to exercise at home throughout the pandemic.

COPD Support Ireland

COPD is the 4th largest pathology in Ireland, with 400,000 living with it currently. Over the past 9 years, Siel Bleu Ireland have developed a community based pulmonary rehabilitation programme, called “Exercise, COPD & Me” that was previously not in place and now delivers community based pulmonary programme to over 30 COPD support groups around Ireland.

Parkinson’s Ireland

In 2018, Siel Bleu Ireland were approached by the Dublin branch of Parkinson’s Ireland and rolled out three pilot programmes with the Swords, Portmarnock and Harold's Cross Parkinson’s groups. The groups have continued following the completion of the pilot and a fourth class in Loughlinstown joined soon after. In 2024, programmes were expanded into Wexford and it is hoped to expand further in 2025 into Cork city and county.



The Wheel

The Wheel is Ireland's national association of community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises that provides training and advocacy services for its members. Siel Bleu Ireland has been a member of The Wheel since 2015 and has availed of numerous training opportunities for staff and Board members in recent years.

Irish Men's Sheds Association

Siel Bleu Ireland have worked in partnership with the Irish Men's Shed Association since 2016 delivering programmes in the Men's sheds with the aim of improving cardiovascular fitness, walking ability and strength of the members of the Men's Shed groups throughout Ireland. In recent years, Siel Bleu Ireland are involved in the Shed's for life initiative which promotes healthy lifestyles in sheds nationwide.

Alone

Alone is an organisation working with older people who are socially isolated, living in poverty or crisis and that ultimately supports older adults in Ireland to live at home. Siel Bleu Ireland established a partnership with Alone in 2019 and have rolled out programmes in the Dublin north, Ardee and 12 Dundalk areas. A referral pathway has been developed between Alone and Siel Bleu Ireland. Both organisations are currently collaborating on a programme to be rolled out in 2025.

Arthritis Ireland

Siel Bleu Ireland has delivered programmes on behalf of Arthritis Ireland since 2013. 2024 saw a large increase in the number of programmes delivered by Siel Bleu Ireland to Arthritis community groups throughout Ireland. It is hoped that this expansion of services will continue in 2025.

Charities Institute of Ireland

The Charities Institute of Ireland (CII) support and enable charities to create positive social change. As an organisation, the CII works with its members to help them professionalise, sustain, grow, maximise their impact and improve the welfare of others. The CII also provides educational programmes and resources for charities all across Ireland. Siel Bleu Ireland has sought the advice of the CII in recent years in relation to governance compliance.

Nursing Homes Ireland

In 2024, Siel Bleu Ireland deepened its partnership with Nursing Homes Ireland (NHI) to bring tailored physical activity programmes to care home residents across the country. Recognising the crucial role that exercise plays in maintaining mobility, independence, and overall well-being for older adults, this collaboration has enabled us to provide structured, engaging, and evidence-based exercise sessions within residential care settings. Through this partnership, we have supported both residents and staff by fostering an environment where movement is encouraged, social interaction is enhanced, and quality of life is improved. Our joint efforts with NHI reflect our shared commitment to ensuring that older adults in nursing homes remain active, empowered, and engaged in their daily lives.

Organisational Growth & Governance

Board and Committee Members

Siel Bleu Ireland has had an effective board in place. The role of the Board is to oversee governance and the strategic direction of Siel Bleu Ireland. In 2024, the board included the following members;

- Sinead Lonergan - Board Chairwoman
- James Hogan - Board Member
- Colin Edwards - Board Member
- Guillaume Lefebvre - Board Member
- Jean-Daniel Muller - Board Member
- Michael Lynch - Board Member
- Barry Minnock - Board Member
- Tara Goodwin - Board Member
- Tanya O'Brien - Board Member

In 2024, Sheena Forde stepped down as a Board member of Siel Bleu Ireland. Tara Goodwin and Tanya O'Brien joined the Board of Directors during 2024.

Meetings of the Siel Bleu Ireland Board took place on the following dates in 2024; 3rd March, 16th July, 14th October & 12th December.

Governance Sub Committees

The following sub-committees are currently in place to support specific projects;

Governance Code

This subcommittee aims to oversee Siel Bleu Ireland's compliance with all governance requirements set out by the Charities Regulator.

In 2024, the board included the following members;

- Tanya O'Brien - Chair
- Sinead Lonergan
- Colin Edwards
- Thomas McCabe

Finance

The Siel Bleu Ireland Finance Subcommittee provides oversight and strategic guidance on financial planning, budgeting, and risk management. It ensures transparency, compliance, and sustainability by reviewing financial reports, monitoring performance, and advising on funding strategies. The subcommittee supports informed decision-making to strengthen Siel Bleu Ireland's long-term financial health and impact.

In 2024, the board included the following members;

- James Hogan - Chair
- Sinead Loneragan
- Guillaume Lefebvre
- Thomas McCabe

Remittance

The Siel Bleu Ireland Remittance and Compensation Subcommittee oversees staff remuneration to ensure fairness, transparency, and compliance. It reviews salary structures, benefits, and financial disbursements, ensuring timely and accurate processing. The subcommittee supports sustainable financial practices while maintaining equity and alignment with organisational goals and regulatory requirements.

In 2024, the board included the following members;

- Tara Goodwin
- Sinead Loneragan
- Guillaume Lefebvre
- James Hogan

Fundraising

The Siel Bleu Ireland Fundraising Subcommittee drives strategic efforts to secure funding through grants, partnerships, and donor engagement. It identifies opportunities, develops fundraising initiatives, and ensures alignment with organisational goals. The subcommittee supports financial sustainability by expanding revenue streams, strengthening stakeholder relationships, and enhancing the impact of Siel Bleu Ireland's mission.

In 2024, the board included the following members;

- Colin Edwards - Chair
- Tara Goodwin
- Barry Minnock
- Camille Richard
- Cormac Walsh
- Thomas McCabe

Staffing

At the time of writing, Siel Bleu Ireland has a staff of 44 with 29 full time, 8 part time and 7 placement students.

Process Update

Auditors

In 2024, Siel Bleu Ireland's 2023 audit was carried out by ND Audit & Advisory.

Strategic Planning

Work on a revised strategic plan for Siel Bleu Ireland over the coming years is underway to ensure that Siel Bleu Ireland can continue to grow and meet the strong demand for our services nationwide.



Looking Ahead to 2025

As Siel Bleu Ireland looks forward to 2025, we aim to continue to scale and grow so we can improve the quality of life of our service users nationally. The following points are key priority areas for Siel Bleu Ireland in the year ahead;

Expand Reach & Impact

Increase the number of older adults and people with chronic conditions benefiting from Siel Bleu Ireland's programmes, including through partnerships with healthcare providers, community groups, and corporate wellness initiatives.

Secure Sustainable Funding

Strengthen financial sustainability through successful funding applications (e.g., HSE tenders, corporate sponsorships, and philanthropic grants) while exploring new revenue streams.

Enhance Programme Innovation

Develop and refine physical activity programmes to better serve target groups, incorporating the latest research on exercise, rehabilitation, and healthy ageing.

Strengthen Advocacy & Partnerships

Collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, healthcare organisations, and advocacy groups) to promote the importance of physical activity in preventative healthcare and chronic disease management.

Increase Brand Awareness & Public Engagement

Enhance marketing, public relations, and digital engagement efforts to position Siel Bleu Ireland as a leading voice in healthy ageing and inclusive exercise.

Develop Organisational Capacity

Invest in staff training, operational efficiency, and technology to support sustainable growth and service delivery at scale.

Communications

In 2024, Siel Bleu Ireland continued to strengthen its presence across multiple communication channels, solidifying our mission to provide affordable and accessible exercise programmes for older adults and individuals living with chronic conditions. Through strategic use of social media, webinars, radio, and events, we expanded our reach, empowered communities, and deepened public awareness of our organisation.

Social Media Impact

Our digital presence has grown significantly, with an overall increase in followers across all platforms, reinforcing the strength of our online community. Our various partnerships were further solidified through consistent updates, and collaborative posts. By leveraging diverse content formats, including testimonials, exercise demonstrations, and educational videos, we successfully reached new and existing audiences, inspiring more people to prioritise their health and well-being through regular physical activity.

Webinar Success and Growth

In September 2024, Siel Bleu Ireland strengthened its partnership with Nursing Homes Ireland (NHI) by hosting an educational and impactful webinar, attracting over 180 registrants. Recognising the success and growing demand, we have committed to hosting two webinars annually on topics related to physical activity in nursing homes. These sessions serve to inform, empower, and connect with healthcare professionals, providing valuable insights into the benefits of physical activity for older adults living in nursing homes.

Looking ahead to 2025

As we move into 2025, Siel Bleu Ireland aims to continue raising awareness of its programmes and their benefits so that more people can access regular physical activity. We will expand our awareness efforts by strengthening our current initiatives and exploring new communication channels such as newspaper and radio. Our commitment to inclusion, accessibility, and well-being remains at the core of our mission, and we look forward to another year of growth, engagement, and positive change.



Acknowledgements

We extend our deepest gratitude to our funders, partners, and supporters, including the HSE, Nursing Home Ireland, COPD Support Ireland, The Hospital Saturday Fund, Alone, Baillie Gifford, the Irish Men's Sheds Association, corporate sponsors, and local community groups. A special thank you to our dedicated team, Board and volunteers who bring our mission to life every day.

Most importantly of all, we thank our participants for their commitment to their health and well-being.



