Action Community and Enterprise CLG

Annual Report and Financial Statements

1 January – 31 December 2025

Supporting Community Through Enterprise Since 1995

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The Origins of Ace Enterprise Park

Established in 1995, Action Community and Enterprise CLG, trading as Ace Enterprise Park ("Ace"), began as a community-led initiative in Neilstown with fewer than ten business units. Over the past three decades, it has evolved into a thriving dual-campus social enterprise in Clondalkin, now home to more than 80 businesses and community organisations, supporting over 35 shared-space users each month, and sustaining more than 230 jobs across the local economy. This growth reflects **Ace's mission to reduce unemployment, champion inclusion, and foster sustainable local enterprise throughout South Dublin.**

Today, Ace Enterprise Park is much more than a workspace provider. As a hands-on enterprise support hub, our team offers members guidance in areas such as **digital marketing, business strategy, networking, and enterprise development**. Members also benefit from access to content creation tools, professional facilities, collaborative workspaces, and opportunities to showcase their businesses to stakeholders, partners, and prospective customers. At the heart of everything we do is **a commitment to inclusivity, sustainability, and empowerment.** Our spaces are more than places to work. They are communities where businesses can grow, connect, and thrive.

Ace's evolution has required continuous innovation behind the scenes. Like many of Ireland's early community enterprise centres, Ace originally operated a more traditional "social landlord" model, providing workspace with limited organisational involvement in business development. However, following a comprehensive review of our role and impact over recent years, it became clear that a more active and supportive approach would better serve both existing and aspiring entrepreneurs.

Historically, open-ended licence arrangements meant some businesses remained in place long after they had outgrown the supports available, while demand from new start-ups continued to increase. In response, our Board supported a strategic shift towards a more **hands-on model focused on supporting the growth and progression of enterprises.** A three-year maximum licence structure was introduced, beginning with an initial one-year term, with renewals linked to demonstrable progress and business development through annual wellness reviews**. This approach has strengthened enterprise culture across both centres while ensuring space remains available for new and scaling businesses.**

By 2020, we identified a further gap within the local enterprise ecosystem. Many aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly sole traders and individuals exploring self-employment for the first time, required support long before they were ready to commit to a dedicated workspace. Financial constraints, uncertainty, and a lack of business confidence often acted as barriers to entry. To address this need, Ace launched the **Monthly Membership Model** in 2021. This flexible offering provides access to mentoring, events, shared workspaces, meeting rooms, and business supports without the commitment of a private office or unit. The model allows entrepreneurs to develop at their own pace while enabling Ace to support their progression and identify when they are ready to scale into private facilities. Today, this remains a cornerstone of the Ace Enterprise Park model and continues to support businesses at every stage of their development.

As a social enterprise, we remain actively involved across both the enterprise and community sectors, working closely with organisations including the South Dublin Chamber, Connected Hubs, the Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland (SERI), People and Planet First, and Good Market. Through these networks, Ace connects with national and international communities of enterprises that prioritise social and environmental impact, knowledge sharing, collaboration, and sustainable economic development. **In 2025, Ace's CEO was selected as one of 100 leaders participating in the SERI Leadership Network,** a national programme bringing together social enterprise leaders from across Ireland to share learning, strengthen leadership capacity, and support the continued growth of the sector.

The Ace Vision and Mission

At Ace Enterprise Park, **our vision** is to be at the heart of a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable local business community. **Our mission** is to empower that community by fostering enterprise, reducing local unemployment, and addressing disadvantage through the management of centres for small to-medium business innovation. Everything we do is rooted in this vision; providing not just workspaces, but supportive, collaborative hubs where businesses of all sizes can grow and positively impact our surrounding communities.



Celebrating 30 Years of Supporting Community and Enterprise

In 2025, Ace Enterprise Park proudly celebrated 30 years of **supporting entrepreneurship, community development, and local economic growth in South Dublin.**

To mark this significant milestone, we welcomed more than 60 guests to our Bawnogue campus, including members, neighbours, local business owners, councillors, TDs, Ministers, and key stakeholders from across the public, private, and community sectors. The celebration highlighted not only the achievements of Ace Enterprise Park over the past three decades, but also the success and diversity of the businesses and organisations that call Ace home.

Guests enjoyed a market-style showcase highlighting the talent and entrepreneurship of Ace-based food producers. The event featured authentic Indian cuisine from **Manna Biriyani**, grazing canapés from **The Happy Tables**, artisan baked goods from **Croissantly Bakery** and **Wagashireland**, a collaborative food offering involving **La Tradizione**, local sausage producers, and **Happy Hour Foods**, whose traditional Brazilian-style savoury bites have become increasingly popular across the Irish food market, alongside refreshments provided by **FoodCloud**. Collectively, these businesses showcased the quality, creativity, and diversity of food enterprises operating within the Ace community.

The event provided an opportunity to reflect on **three decades of impact** while looking ahead to the future of enterprise support in South Dublin. Live music from **local musician Maria Hymas** created a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere as guests networked and gathered around Ace's newly developed community garden.

Several distinguished speakers addressed attendees during the celebration, including **Mayor of South Dublin Councillor Pamela Kearns, Minister Emer Higgins TD, Deputy Shane Moynihan TD, South Dublin Local Enterprise Office Senior Enterprise Development Officer Peter Connolly, Ace Chairperson Justin Mulhern, former Ace member and local entrepreneur Siobhan Monaghan of Sweet Cicely, and Ace CEO Lisa Rowntree.**

The event served as a powerful reminder of the role Ace Enterprise Park has played in supporting early-stage entrepreneurs, strengthening community connections, creating employment opportunities, and driving social and economic impact since 1995. **While much has changed over the past 30 years, our commitment to empowering local people and supporting sustainable enterprise remains as strong as ever.**



Ace Enterprise Park team celebrates 30 years



Justin Mulhern, Former Ace Chairperson



Manna Biriyani founders serving traditional South Indian biriyani for lunch



South Dublin Chamber peers joining the summer celebration



Minister Emer Higgins speaking about Ace's community impact during its 30-year journey



Maria Hymas performing live



Senior leadership teams from fellow Irish enterprise hubs in attendance



A taste of food innovation on the lunch menu by Happy Hour Foods x La Tradizione

Appointed Host Organisation for the South Dublin County PPN

Another significant milestone of 2025 was **Ace Enterprise Park's successful appointment as Host Organisation for the South Dublin County Public Participation Network (PPN).**

The Public Participation Network serves as the formal structure through which community, voluntary, social inclusion, and environmental groups engage with local government and public decision-making processes. It provides community organisations with opportunities to participate in consultations, influence policy, and contribute to the future development of their local communities.

Following a **competitive procurement process**, Ace Enterprise Park was selected to host and support the South Dublin County PPN, reflecting confidence in the organisation's governance standards, community engagement expertise, and track record of delivering stakeholder-led initiatives. The initial hosting agreement will be for three years, subject to annual review.

As Host Organisation, Ace assumed responsibility for establishing and supporting the operational foundations of the network. This included leading the recruitment process for a full-time PPN Coordinator role following a period of inactivity within the network, facilitating applications, interviews, onboarding, and initial programme development. Ace also supported the recruitment and onboarding of a second full-time administrative and digital support position to assist with the day-to-day operation of the PPN.

Throughout the year, Ace worked closely with the newly appointed staff team, the PPN Secretariat, South Dublin County Council, and community representatives to **support the successful re-establishment of the network and its activities.**

In addition to providing operational support, Ace fulfils a range of responsibilities associated with the Host Organisation role, including human resource management, payroll administration, line management support, insurance provision, governance oversight, and the creation of a safe and supportive working environment for PPN staff at our Bawnogue centre. The organisation also works closely with South Dublin County Council and the PPN Secretariat to support the delivery of annual work plans, community engagement initiatives, reporting requirements, and organisational development activities.

The appointment further strengthens Ace Enterprise Park's position as **a trusted intermediary between communities, enterprise, local government, and civil society organisations.** It also reflects our commitment to supporting active citizenship, community participation, and inclusive decision-making across South Dublin County.



Recognised as South Dublin's Best Small Business

In 2025, Ace Enterprise Park was honoured to receive the **Best Small Business Award at the South Dublin County Business Awards**, hosted by South Dublin Chamber.

The South Dublin County Business Awards are among the region's most established and recognised business awards programmes, **celebrating excellence, innovation, leadership, customer service, and business performance across South Dublin County.** The awards attract entries from businesses and organisations of all sizes and are designed to recognise those demonstrating outstanding achievement and contribution to the local economy. South Dublin Chamber describes the awards as an opportunity to celebrate, showcase, and acknowledge the strength and success of the South Dublin business community.

The Best Small Business category recognises independently owned organisations with fewer than ten full-time equivalent employees that have **demonstrated exceptional growth, effective management, operational excellence, and strong organisational performance.** Winning this award represented significant external recognition of Ace Enterprise Park's governance standards, strategic leadership, sustainability initiatives, community impact, and commitment to supporting enterprise development across South Dublin County.

The award reflected the substantial progress achieved under Ace's 2024 – 2028 Strategic Plan to date and recognised the organisation's continued evolution as a community-led enterprise hub. Judges considered evidence of organisational growth, innovation, stakeholder engagement, sustainability, financial stewardship, and the measurable impact created for businesses and community organisations operating within the Ace ecosystem.

2025 South Dublin Chamber Awards

Among the Ace Enterprise Park achievements highlighted through the awards process were:

100%
Occupancy Maintained
Across Both Ace Sites

The Atrium
Coworking Hub Opened
New Workspace Solutions

Ace Digital
Services Expanded
Supporting More SMEs

Climate Action
Projects Accelerated
Investment in Sustainability

SME Supports
Launched for Members
New Programmes Introduced

PPN Host
For South Dublin County
Appointed Host Organisation

Member Success
Awards & Recognition Earned
Strengthening Ace's Profile

Future Growth
For Ace Enterprise Park
Progress Towards a Third Centre



Ace Enterprise Park wins the Best Small Business Award, celebrated by Deputy Shane Moynihan TD, Mayor Pamela Kearns, award sponsor Crowe, Minister Emer Higgins, and South Dublin Chamber President Thomas Stone



Thank you to Crowe for sponsoring the Best Small Business Award





Ace CEO Lisa Rowntree presents Red Mountain with the Best New Start-Up Award

The award also acknowledged **Ace's unique approach to enterprise development.** Unlike a traditional enterprise centre, Ace actively supports members through **mentoring, business development, networking, training opportunities, digital supports, and strategic guidance.** This hands-on model has helped create an environment in which businesses, social enterprises, and community organisations can start, grow, and scale successfully.

While the award was presented to Ace Enterprise Park, it is ultimately a reflection of the businesses, community organisations, Board members, staff, volunteers, partners, and funders who continue to contribute to the success of the wider Ace community.

Supporting Emerging Enterprise:

In keeping with Ace Enterprise Park's mission of fostering entrepreneurship and supporting the next generation of business owners, the organisation was also **proud to sponsor the Best New Start-Up Award** at the South Dublin County Business Awards.

The 2025 award was presented to **Red Mountain**, recognising the company's innovation, ambition, and future growth potential. Supporting emerging entrepreneurs remains central to **Ace's vision of creating an inclusive and thriving local enterprise ecosystem,** and we are proud to play a role in recognising and celebrating new business success stories across South Dublin.

Ace Enterprise Park 2024 – 2028 Strategic Plan

Our vision at Ace is to be at the centre of a thriving local community and business environment that is sustainable, inclusive and nurtures the ambition of all.

Our mission is to empower our local community by fostering a robust enterprise environment, reducing unemployment and disadvantage through the provision and management of centres for small-to-medium business innovation.

Community & Inclusion:

Promoting inclusivity & equal opportunity for all community members, with a special focus on supporting the marginalised and disadvantaged alongside bolstering local business.

Entrepreneurship & Impact:

Encouraging innovation and creativity, seeking novel solutions that leave a real impact on our neighbouring communities.

Governance & Transparency

Considering the impact of our actions, we are dedicated to seeking ways to minimise our negative environmental footprint while maximising positive societal impact.

Structure: To evolve Ace's organisational structure to ensure financial stability and provide greater flexibility to fund strategic objectives.

Growth: To broaden Ace's reach and services, with the consideration of brownfield sites for development / management contracts of other enterprise centres.

Sustainability: To reduce Ace's climate impact, and support Ace members and the wider community in their own climate goals.

Leadership: To develop industry-leading facilities as a trailblazer and advocate for the sector at a regional and national level.

2025 Strategic Goals, Key Efforts and Challenges

Strategic Goal 1: Structure

To evolve Ace's organisational structure to ensure financial stability and provide greater flexibility to fund strategy objectives.

Key Actions in 2025:

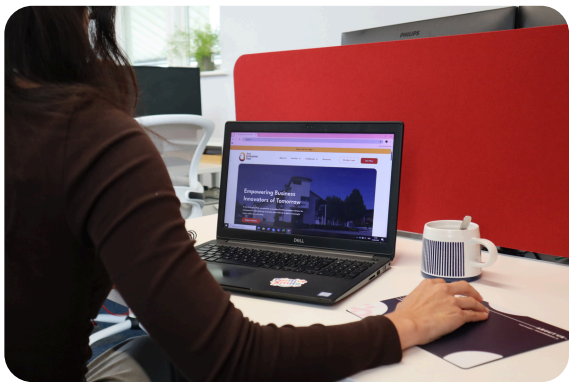
Building upon the organisational review undertaken in 2024, Ace Enterprise Park continued to strengthen its operational structure, governance framework, and long-term sustainability throughout 2025.

One of the most significant organisational developments of 2025 was **Ace's appointment as Host Organisation for the South Dublin County Public Participation Network.** The appointment required the establishment of new staffing, reporting, governance, and stakeholder engagement structures, strengthening the organisation's operational capacity and community leadership role.

Ace also continued to strengthen its own internal capacity through strategic staffing developments. In June 2025, **the organisation welcomed Paula Maydana as Community & Marketing Assistant**, supporting the growing volume of member engagement activities, communications, events, and digital services delivered across both centres.

Another major milestone for the organisation was the **official launch of Ace Digital Services,** a new enterprise support initiative providing affordable digital marketing expertise to SMEs, entrepreneurs, and community organisations. Delivered directly from Ace Enterprise Park, Bawnogue, the service offers support in branding, content creation, social media marketing, digital strategy, and communications. By **making professional marketing expertise more accessible and affordable to early-stage enterprises,** Ace expanded its support offering while also creating a new revenue-generating service aligned with its social enterprise mission.








The Atrium, Ace's newly refurbished coworking hub, developed in Q4 2024 and opened in Q1 2025

Infrastructure investment also played an important role in strengthening organisational resilience. Following refurbishment works commenced in late 2024, **Ace officially opened The Atrium,** a dedicated coworking space designed to provide flexible options for entrepreneurs, remote workers, local trainers, and community organisations. The project also included **the creation of The Lounge,** a new shared networking space in Bawnogue designed to encourage collaboration and engagement between members. In response to member demand, Ace also introduced **a new onsite printing membership service,** further diversifying the range of affordable business supports available onsite.

Throughout 2025, the organisation invested significantly in improving its internal systems and operational efficiency. Through the support of the **South Dublin Local Enterprise Office Digital Transformation Voucher**, **Ace undertook a comprehensive review of its digital infrastructure, workflows, and reporting systems.** As a small team of four full-time staff supporting more than 80 resident businesses and community organisations, alongside an average of 35 shared-space users each month, efficiency, accuracy, and data quality are essential to maintaining high service standards. The project enabled Ace to work with a specialist consultant to assess existing systems, identify opportunities for improvement, and develop a roadmap for future digital transformation.

As a direct result of this work, Ace commenced planning for **the implementation of a dedicated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and a facilities management platform** to improve member communications, enquiry tracking, reporting, sales processes, and property management. The review also informed future organisational planning, identifying a growing need for operational leadership and expertise in systems optimisation, process improvement, and digital transformation as Ace continued its modernisation journey.

Recognising the growing importance of emerging technologies, Ace also began exploratory research into the **practical application of artificial intelligence** within enterprise development and organisational operations. The focus was not simply on technology adoption, but on ensuring a small team can continue to effectively support a growing member base through improved efficiency, stronger reporting, streamlined administration, and enhanced service delivery.

In the year, **Ace also contributed to the development of the South Dublin Economic Strategy 2025–2030**, ensuring the perspective of SMEs, social enterprises, community organisations, and enterprise centres was represented within long-term economic planning for the county. As a hub for local enterprise development and community engagement, Ace remains committed to supporting an environment where businesses can not only start locally, but continue to grow, scale, and remain within South Dublin throughout their lifecycle.

During 2025, **Ace also participated in the Connected Hubs Engagement Lab,** a national pilot programme exploring how behavioural science can improve customer experience, member engagement, communications, and community development. The initiative provided valuable insights into the changing needs of entrepreneurs, remote workers, and community organisations, helping Ace continue to refine and strengthen the services and types of facilities it offers.



2025 also represented a significant milestone in Ace's long-term growth ambitions. Following extensive feasibility work, stakeholder engagement, and financial planning, the Board approved the release of investment reserves for **the development of a third Ace Enterprise Park location.** A preferred building was identified, and Heads of Terms negotiations progressed towards completion. This decision reflects years of prudent financial management and represents a major step forward in **addressing demand for affordable enterprise space within South Dublin County** while increasing the organisation's capacity to support future generations of entrepreneurs, social enterprises, and community organisations.

Collectively, these developments strengthened Ace Enterprise Park's organisational resilience, diversified service offerings, increased operational capacity, and created stronger foundations for long-term financial sustainability. **By investing in people, systems, infrastructure, and future growth opportunities, Ace is better positioned to deliver on the objectives outlined in its 2024–2028 Strategic Plan.**

Key Challenges in 2025:

As the organisation continued to expand its activities and influence throughout 2025, several challenges emerged alongside new opportunities.

The successful appointment as Host Organisation for the South Dublin Public Participation Network represented a significant organisational achievement, but it also required a substantial commitment of time and resources during the transition period. Following a period of inactivity within the network, effort was needed to rebuild systems, establish working relationships, support recruitment processes, and navigate historical operational challenges. While demanding, this work has strengthened Ace's capacity to support collaborative community engagement and positioned the organisation as a trusted intermediary between local government and the wider community sector.

While significant progress was made towards **the development of a third Ace Enterprise Park location**, including the Board's approval of the release of investment reserves, the identification of a preferred property, and the advancement of Heads of Terms negotiations, the complexity of the process resulted in a longer timeline than originally anticipated. Property acquisition, legal negotiations, project planning, and future operational requirements all require careful management to ensure expansion can be delivered sustainably.



The Digital Transformation Voucher project similarly highlighted both opportunities and challenges. While the review process provided a clear roadmap for modernising systems and improving efficiency, implementing new platforms, migrating historic information, onboarding staff, and embedding new ways of working requires significant organisational investment. As with many transformation projects, identifying the solution represented only the first phase of a wider implementation journey.

Finally, as a social enterprise, Ace must continue **balancing commercial sustainability with social impact objectives.** Rising operational costs, compliance requirements, insurance premiums, and infrastructure investment needs require careful financial management while ensuring that enterprise supports remain affordable and accessible to the SMEs, social enterprises, and community organisations the organisation was established to serve.

Strategic Goal 2: Growth

To broaden Ace's reach and services, with the consideration of brownfield sites for development and management contracts of other enterprise centres.

Key Actions in 2025:

2025 was a year of sustained growth for Ace Enterprise Park, driven by strong demand for enterprise space, flexible memberships, business support services, and community engagement opportunities.

Both Ace Enterprise Park centres **maintained 100% occupancy** throughout the year, reflecting **continued demand** for affordable workspace and enterprise supports across South Dublin. By year end, the organisation supported 80 businesses and community organisations, including 20 new members, while also engaging with more than 35 shared-space users a month through its flexible membership offerings.

Demand for Ace services continued to grow beyond existing capacity. Throughout 2025, the organisation **received more than 175 new enquiries** from entrepreneurs, SMEs, social enterprises, and community organisations seeking workspace, supports, mentoring, networking opportunities, and membership opportunities. This growing demand further reinforced the need to progress plans for a third centre and explore additional future expansion opportunities.

A key feature of the Ace model is its **commitment to fostering a diverse enterprise ecosystem**. Through a carefully managed occupancy approach, Ace seeks to avoid direct competition between members wherever possible, ensuring businesses can grow alongside one another rather than competing within the same marketplace. As a result, **the organisations operating within Ace represent a broad mix of sectors and expertise,** including food production, professional services, wellness, technology, education, creative industries, social enterprise, childcare, and community development. This diversity strengthens opportunities for collaboration, innovation, peer learning, and local procurement across the wider Ace community.



With The Atrium now fully operational throughout 2025, Ace expanded its ability to support remote workers, sole traders, local trainers, consultants, students, parents, and early-stage entrepreneurs. Through a range of affordable daily, weekly, monthly, and dedicated membership options, **The Atrium has made professional workspace more accessible to a wider audience** while creating new pathways into the Ace ecosystem.

Throughout its first year of operation, **Ace Digital Services expanded Ace's reach** beyond the provision of physical workspace to include branding, digital marketing, content creation, website development, and communications support. The service delivered a range of projects for member businesses and SMEs throughout 2025, including ongoing **social media marketing retainers**, a **website transformation project** for a local training provider, **brand redevelopment and logo design** for a personal services business operating within the park, and a series of **consultations** designed to help entrepreneurs and community leaders strengthen their digital marketing capabilities. By providing affordable access to professional expertise, Ace Digital helps remove barriers that frequently prevent small businesses and community organisations from accessing specialist support while creating an additional revenue stream for the organisation. The service reflects Ace's continued commitment to evolving its offerings in response to the changing needs of contemporary entrepreneurs.

Growth was also reflected in the wider economic impact of the organisation. Throughout 2025, businesses, social enterprises, and community organisations operating within the Ace ecosystem **supported more than 230 jobs** directly and indirectly, representing **an estimated €7 million in annual employment value within the local economy.** Importantly, **one-third of all occupants remain social enterprises and community organisations,** ensuring that organisational growth continues to align with Ace's social mission and commitment to community development.

Looking ahead, the development of a third, and potentially fourth, Ace Enterprise Park location remains one of the organisation's most significant growth opportunities and strategic priorities. In addition to progressing plans for a new multipurpose enterprise centre in South Dublin, including the identification of a preferred building and ongoing Heads of Terms negotiations, Ace began exploring longer-term opportunities for dedicated food enterprise infrastructure and continued to examine how artificial intelligence could support enterprise growth, operational efficiency, and service delivery as demand for supports continues to increase.

Collectively, these developments have broadened Ace's reach, strengthened its service offering, increased its economic impact, and positioned the organisation for continued growth in the years ahead.

Key Challenges in 2025:

Maintaining sustainable growth while preserving the personalised support model that defines Ace Enterprise Park remained a key challenge throughout 2025.

Demand for workspace, memberships, and enterprise supports continued to exceed available capacity across both sites. While 100% occupancy demonstrates the effectiveness of the Ace model, limited physical space restricted the organisation's ability to accommodate all prospective members and reinforced the urgency of progressing plans for additional locations.

The opening of The Atrium coincided with continued shifts in workplace behaviour driven by economic uncertainty, rising living costs, and changing remote and hybrid working patterns. Understanding evolving demand and adapting services accordingly remains an ongoing priority. Despite these broader market challenges, **The Atrium has welcomed users, visitors, training providers, and remote workers from across Ireland and abroad since opening.**

The growing number of food sector enquiries also highlighted a structural challenge within the local enterprise ecosystem. While supports exist for businesses at start-up stage and there is some availability of shared kitchen facilities across the county, there remains a shortage of affordable scale-up space for food producers seeking to move into larger production environments. Addressing this gap will require collaboration, planning, investment, and innovative approaches to enterprise development.

As Ace continued to broaden its range of services, maintaining sufficient staff capacity also remained an important consideration. New initiatives, including Ace Digital Services, the South Dublin PPN hosting agreement, expansion planning, and enhanced member supports, all required significant organisational resources while maintaining the high standard of service expected by members.

Finally, sustaining growth in a manner that remains financially viable, operationally manageable, and aligned with Ace's social mission will continue to require careful planning, stakeholder engagement, and investment as the organisation enters its next phase of development.

Strategic Goal 3: Sustainability

To reduce Ace's climate impact, and support Ace members and the wider community in their own climate goals.

Key Actions in 2025:

Sustainability remained a central focus for Ace Enterprise Park throughout 2025. Building upon the foundations established in previous years, the organisation **accelerated its efforts to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency, increase biodiversity, and support members and the wider community in their own sustainability journeys.**

During 2025, **Ace secured €177,449 in sustainability-related funding** through a combination of programmes, including the South Dublin County Council Climate Action Fund, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Sustainable Social Enterprise Fund, SEAI supports, ChangeX, and Greenstart. This investment enabled the delivery of a range of environmental, energy-efficiency, biodiversity, and community sustainability initiatives across both Ace campuses.

Funding Source	Amount
Climate Action Fund	€66,941
DAF Sustainable Social Enterprise Fund	€89,798
SEAI Energy Master Plan	€10,000
ChangeX	€5,000
Greenstart	€2,500
SEAI Supports	€3,210
Total Secured	**€177,449**

A major focus of the year was **improving the energy performance of the Bawnogue campus.** Retrofit works were undertaken within the Community Hub building, home to many of Ace's social enterprises, charities, and community organisations. Triple-glazed windows were installed alongside energy-efficiency improvements designed to **reduce heat loss, improve comfort levels, and lower long-term energy costs** for both occupants and management. These upgrades contributed to **a measured 24% reduction in energy consumption** within the Community Hub following installation.

Additional energy-efficiency improvements included **LED lighting upgrades** within the Community Hub and shared areas across the campus, **reducing electricity consumption while improving lighting quality** and **operational efficiency.** These investments form part of Ace's wider transition towards fossil-free operations and support the long-term decarbonisation objectives identified through the organisation's Energy Master Plan.

The organisation also continued its transition towards cleaner energy systems. **Solar PV infrastructure** installed in late 2024 completed its first full year of operation during 2025, **generating more than 3,000 kWh of renewable electricity** and contributing directly to reduced emissions and lower reliance on imported energy. Based on standard electricity emissions factors, this level of generation is **estimated to avoid over one tonne of CO_2 emissions annually.**

Further improvements included **expanded energy monitoring systems** and the installation of **two electric vehicle (EV) chargers** at the Bawnogue centre. Since installation, the charger has supported more than 200 charging sessions, delivering approximately **1,904 kWh of electricity and contributing towards lower-emission transport options** for members and visitors alike.

A significant milestone during 2025 was the commencement of **Ace Enterprise Park's first formal Energy Master Plan under the Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) programme.** Working alongside local experts **Climate23** and **Energy Wolf,** Ace established its first comprehensive energy baseline and developed a roadmap to support future investments in renewable energy, building efficiency, and decarbonisation. The study identified opportunities to **reduce annual energy consumption by more than 219,000 kWh** and **annual emissions by up to 41 tonnes of CO_2** through future projects and upgrades.

Beyond infrastructure, Ace continued to demonstrate leadership within the wider sustainability ecosystem. Throughout the year, the organisation remained **actively involved in the Clondalkin Decarbonising Zone** and continued to contribute to sustainability initiatives through the **Connected Hubs Sustainable Energy Community network.** These partnerships enabled knowledge sharing, collaboration, and the promotion of practical climate action across both the enterprise and community sectors.

Sustainability efforts also extended beyond energy and emissions. Throughout Autumn 2024, Ace undertook a significant **landscaping and biodiversity enhancement programme** across its Bawnogue campus. Underutilised spaces were transformed into green communal areas designed to encourage outdoor working, informal networking, rest, and community engagement. New planting, seating areas, biodiversity features, and public-facing landscaping improvements enhanced both the environmental and social value of the site. This progress continued into early 2025.

A key part of this redevelopment included the creation of a dedicated memorial seating area **in honour of former colleague Marie Kealy**, whose contribution to Ace and the wider community continues to be remembered today. Family members, colleagues, and community stakeholders gathered onsite during 2025 to mark the first anniversary of her passing and celebrate her lasting legacy.

The landscaping and biodiversity works were largely delivered by long-standing members of the Ace team participating in the **Community Employment Programme**, supported by **South Dublin County Partnership.** Throughout Autumn 2024 and early 2025, team members completed additional training in horticulture, tree planting, landscaping, maintenance, communications, and workplace development. South Dublin County Partnership's continued support of both training opportunities and materials for a range of site enhancement projects played an important role in enabling these improvements. Through this collaboration, the team contributed significantly to the enhancement of shared community spaces across the campus while developing valuable skills and experience. **Their efforts also support an ongoing application for a major horticultural excellence award.**

Another major milestone was the development of **a new community polytunnel,** supported through **ChangeX**. The polytunnel serves as both an environmental and social inclusion initiative and is actively maintained in partnership with Ace members from St John of God Community Services.

Participants regularly engage in planting, maintaining, and harvesting produce onsite. Research has shown that gardening and horticultural activities can improve physical wellbeing, confidence, social connectedness, motor skills, mental health, and overall quality of life for people with intellectual and physical disabilities. The project therefore generates both environmental and social impact while **strengthening opportunities for inclusion, purpose, and community participation.**

Resource efficiency also remained a key priority. Working alongside **KeyGreen Waste** and the **Ace Green Team**, the organisation achieved a **25% increase in organic waste diversion** alongside **a 5% reduction in general waste** compared to 2024. Composting initiatives and improved waste segregation systems further supported circular economy principles across both campuses.





Ace also continued supporting sustainability beyond its own operations. Through partnerships with **SEAI, Trinity College Dublin, Munster Technological University, Connected Hubs, South Dublin County Council**, and other key local stakeholders, the organisation participated in a range of climate action initiatives and projects. This included involvement in a **Community-Based Climate Innovation project** exploring community-led approaches to environmental sustainability and climate action.

More than **60 participants engaged** directly in sustainability-focused activities facilitated through Ace during the year.

Community engagement remained a core component of this work. Throughout Summer 2025, Ace regularly hosted the **FoodCloud** food truck onsite, providing affordable meals produced using surplus ingredients that would otherwise have gone to waste. FoodCloud, a long-standing Ace member, provided an excellent example of how **environmental sustainability, circular economy principles, and social impact can work together.**

Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate Ace Enterprise Park's commitment to creating measurable environmental impact while supporting members, community groups, and residents in their own sustainability journeys.

Key Challenges in 2025:

While significant progress was achieved throughout 2025, the pace and scale of Ace's sustainability ambitions continued to present challenges.

As a small social enterprise, many of the projects identified through the Energy Master Plan require capital investment and long-term financial planning. While grant funding enabled significant progress during 2025, the delivery of future retrofit, renewable energy, and decarbonisation projects will require continued access to external funding opportunities alongside careful management of organisational resources.

Operating within a live business environment also creates complexity. Sustainability projects must be delivered while minimising disruption to day-to-day operations. Infrastructure upgrades, retrofit projects, landscaping works, and energy-efficiency improvements all require careful planning, communication, and stakeholder coordination to ensure business continuity is maintained throughout project delivery.

Encouraging behavioural change across a diverse membership base remains another ongoing challenge. While interest in sustainability continues to grow, SMEs, social enterprises, and community organisations often face competing priorities and limited resources. Ensuring sustainability remains practical, accessible, and achievable for members requires ongoing engagement, education, and support.

The age and diversity of Ace's building stock also present challenges. While recent upgrades have delivered measurable improvements, many buildings were not originally designed to modern energy-efficiency standards, meaning retrofit projects can be technically complex with phased implementation.

Finally, as Ace transitions from individual projects to a long-term decarbonisation strategy, **maintaining momentum will be critical.** The Energy Master Plan has provided a clear roadmap for future action, but achieving its long-term objectives will require continued investment, collaboration, measurement, and organisational commitment over the coming years.

Strategic Goal 4: Leadership

To develop industry-leading facilities, act as a trailblazer and advocate for the sector at a regional and national level.

Key Actions in 2025:

Throughout 2025, Ace Enterprise Park continued to strengthen its role as a recognised leader within the enterprise, social enterprise, community, and sustainability sectors. By **actively contributing to national discussions, supporting policy development, leading collaborative networks, and investing in professional development,** Ace ensured that the voices of local businesses and community organisations were represented beyond the boundaries of the enterprise park itself.

Ace continued to demonstrate leadership through the development and facilitation of collaborative networks. During 2025, the organisation **played a leading role in the Dublin Food Managers Network**, bringing together enterprise centres and stakeholders supporting food businesses across the region. The network provides a platform for knowledge sharing, problem solving, and advocacy around issues affecting food entrepreneurs and emerging producers.

Recognising the value of collaboration between enterprise centres, **Ace also established the Dublin Centre Network**, creating opportunities for managers and operators of enterprise hubs to share best practice, collaborate on common challenges, and strengthen support pathways for SMEs across Dublin.

The organisation continued to maintain an active presence in a wide range of regional and national networks, including **Connected Hubs**, the **Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland (SERI)**, **South Dublin Chamber,** local business networks, and sector-specific communities of practice. Ace's CEO Lisa Rowntree also participated in the **SERI Leadership Network** and **bi-monthly Lean In circles** supporting female leaders within the social enterprise sector.

Ace's leadership role extended into policy and strategic development. Through representation on the **South Dublin County Council Economic and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee**, participation within community-focused policy structures, and active engagement with local and national stakeholders, Ace sought to ensure that the experiences of SMEs, social enterprises, and community organisations helped inform future decision-making.

Throughout the year, Ace also contributed to discussions around sustainability and climate leadership through continued involvement with the **Clondalkin Decarbonising Zone** and leadership within the **Connected Hubs Sustainable Energy Community network.** These engagements enabled the organisation to share practical learning from its own sustainability initiatives while supporting wider adoption of climate action measures across the sector.

A particular highlight of 2025 was the hosting of a **Public Procurement Forum with Minister Emer Higgins**. The event formed part of a national consultation process for Ireland's first National Public Procurement Strategy and brought together businesses, public sector stakeholders, and enterprise support organisations to discuss barriers and opportunities within public procurement. The forum **provided local SMEs with an opportunity to influence national policy discussions** while ensuring the perspectives of smaller businesses were heard throughout the consultation process.

Professional development remained a key component of Ace's leadership strategy. Staff and Board members participated in a range of programmes and training opportunities throughout the year, including supports delivered through **Carmichael**, the **Local Enterprise Office**, **Connected Hubs**, **Winmark**, and the **Irish Management Institute**. These opportunities enabled the organisation to strengthen expertise across governance, leadership, enterprise development, communications, sustainability, and strategic planning.

Ace also maintained a strong presence at regional and national events throughout 2025, ensuring the organisation remained informed about emerging trends, policy developments, technological advancements, and best practice. Representatives attended the **Dublin Tech Summit, Dargan Forum, National Social Enterprise Conference, PPN National Conference, Connected Hubs Summit, Culture of Food Ireland Symposium, DTNI All-Ireland Conference**, and a Community Finance event hosted alongside the **Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Ireland.**

Leadership is ultimately about influence and contribution rather than visibility alone. During 2025, this was demonstrated through activities ranging from judging the **Good Governance Awards** to **sponsoring local initiatives such as the Clondalkin Youth Band Lip Sync Battle.** These contributions reflect Ace's commitment to supporting strong governance, community development, and social impact both within and beyond the enterprise park.

Collectively, these activities strengthened Ace Enterprise Park's reputation as a trusted leader, advocate, and collaborator within the enterprise, social enterprise, community, and sustainability sectors.

Key Actions in 2025:

As Ace's influence and profile continued to grow, balancing leadership ambitions with operational responsibilities remained a priority throughout 2025. Participation in national networks, policy discussions, conferences, working groups, and stakeholder forums **creates valuable opportunities for learning and influence**. However, these activities require time, often alongside the day-to-day delivery of services, programmes, and supports for members.

Determining which partnerships, networks, and opportunities will deliver the greatest long-term value also remains an ongoing consideration. **As interest in collaboration continues to grow,** Ace must ensure resources are directed towards activities that align closely with the organisation's mission, strategic objectives, and member needs.

Leadership within emerging areas such as sustainability, digital transformation, and artificial intelligence presents additional opportunities alongside challenges. **Remaining informed and actively engaged in these rapidly evolving fields requires continuous learning and adaptation.**

Ace is proud of its growing role within regional and national conversations, and the organisation remains committed to **ensuring that leadership activity translates into meaningful benefits** for the businesses, social enterprises, community organisations, and residents it exists to support.



2025 Highlights and Achievements

Introduction

While the previous sections of this report detail the strategic actions taken across Structure, Growth, Sustainability, and Leadership, some of the most meaningful achievements of 2025 cannot be measured by metrics alone.

Throughout the year, Ace Enterprise Park continued to strengthen its reputation as a collaborative community where businesses, social enterprises, and community organisations can **connect, learn, celebrate success, and support one another.**

From member award wins and business expansions to community events, networking opportunities, and sector leadership activities, **2025 was a year defined by engagement, collaboration, and shared achievement.**

Celebrating Member Success

One of the greatest indicators of Ace Enterprise Park's impact is the success of the businesses and organisations that call our centres home.

Throughout 2025, Ace members achieved significant milestones, secured prestigious awards, expanded operations, entered new markets, and created new employment opportunities both locally and internationally.

Happy Hour Foods completed the Grow with Aldi programme while simultaneously having two products shortlisted as finalists in the Irish Food Awards. **LM Skin Clinic** was recognised nationally as the Best Skin Clinic in Ireland at the Goss.ie Awards, while **The Glow Bar** retained its title as Dublin Beauty Salon of the Year at the Irish Hair & Beauty Awards for the second consecutive year.

Fashion and accessories business **Flaunta** continued its remarkable growth journey, securing the Local Enterprise Office Start-Up of the Year award, appearing on Ireland AM, exhibiting at the National Ploughing Championships, and successfully launching within Arnotts. Meanwhile, **K Factory** continued its award-winning trajectory as a finalist in the SFA National Business Awards.

Growth was also evident through the expansion of existing Ace members. One of the most visible examples was **Croissantly Bakery,** which outgrew its original unit in just six months onsite and expanded into a larger facility with Ace. The move enabled the business to increase production capacity, hire additional staff, and invest in its first food truck. Several additional members, including **FoodCloud, Future Proof Finance, Smiles Photography**, and **My Cloud PA**, also began planning their next phase of growth beyond Ace Enterprise Park as they approached the conclusion of their three-year licences.

One of the strongest examples of the Ace growth model in action from 2025 is **OrderIT**. Having entered Ace Enterprise Park in 2021 as little more than an ambitious business idea led by its two founders, the company used the enterprise park as **a launchpad for growth.** Beginning with a single office, the business later expanded into additional space within Ace as its client base, team, and ambitions grew. **By 2025, OrderIT had successfully scaled to employ more than 15 staff across multiple countries, secured international clients, and received recognition through a number of business awards and industry accolades.** Having benefited from the flexibility, affordability, and support available through the Ace ecosystem during its formative years, the company ultimately graduated into its own permanent premises in nearby Park West. Their journey represents the type of sustainable business growth and progression Ace Enterprise Park exists to support.

Throughout the year, Ace also **welcomed more than 20 new members across a diverse range of industries and sectors.** New additions included **Creative Hare**, a design, signage, and print studio; **Blade Restaurants**, a well-established Dublin hospitality group using the Shared Kitchen to develop a new product concept; **Treats by Sylvia**, an award-winning producer of handmade Irish cheesecakes; **MyMind**, Ireland's largest blended mental health service provider operating in partnership with the HSE; and **Kumon Learning**, which delivers weekly maths and English tuition programmes for children in the local community. These organisations further strengthened the breadth of expertise, services, and community impact represented within the Ace ecosystem, reinforcing Ace's commitment to supporting a diverse mix of commercial enterprises, social enterprises, community organisations, and creative industries.



Building Community at Ace

Community remains at the heart of everything we do.

To celebrate Ace Enterprise Park's 30th anniversary year, **a wide-ranging programme of engagement, learning, networking, and community events was delivered throughout 2025**, creating opportunities for members, stakeholders, neighbours, and supporters to connect, collaborate, and learn from one another. The following highlights represent a selection of the activities delivered across the year.

The year began with **Galentine's Day at Ace Enterprise Park**, a showcase **celebrating the female-founded businesses operating across our centres.** More than **30 attendees** joined the evening, many of whom were visiting Ace for the first time. The event featured **LM Skin Clinic**, **The Glow Bar, KS Beauty, Hair by Ingo, The Beauty Empire,** and **Flaunta**, creating an opportunity for attendees to experience the products and services of several Ace entrepreneurs in one location.

The event generated **immediate commercial outcomes for participating businesses.** Flaunta secured direct sales, while LM Skin Clinic generated retail product sales and new client appointments, and The Glow Bar welcomed new customer bookings. Beyond immediate sales, the event connected dozens of potential loyal customers and future collaborators with the wider Ace ecosystem, while showcasing the talent, expertise, and innovation of female entrepreneurs operating locally.



Ace Enterprise Park's Galentines Showcase



Co-facilitator, LM Skin Clinic





Attendees enjoyed light bites, refreshments, shopping, and a live skincare demonstration

Photos by Smiles Photography | 20 February 2025

Building on this momentum, Ace launched a new **Lunch & Learn series.** The initiative was developed in recognition of the fact that entrepreneurs and business owners often struggle to prioritise their own professional development and wellbeing amidst the demands of running a business. Through short, accessible lunchtime sessions, Ace aims to encourage members to step away from their desks, invest in continuous learning, explore new ideas, and build relationships with others who may positively contribute to their personal or professional growth. The inaugural session, **delivered by award-winning skin specialist Lorna Mooney from LM Skin Clinic** ahead of International Women's Day, explored skincare, wellbeing, and preventative health. **FoodCloud** provided a healthy lunch for attendees, creating another example of members supporting members while encouraging knowledge sharing across the community.

The organisation's flagship celebration came in July with the **Ace Enterprise Park 30th Anniversary Garden Party**, welcoming **more than 60 guests** including local business owners, elected representatives, South Dublin Chamber members, Local Enterprise Office representatives, project partners, community stakeholders, and long-standing supporters. The celebration provided an opportunity to reflect on three decades of impact while showcasing the wide range of businesses currently operating within the Ace ecosystem. Several participating food businesses reported strong sales and new customer connections, with Croissantly Bakery later noting that sales generated at the event exceeded those achieved across an entire weekend of external market trading.

A particular highlight of the year was the **Public Procurement Forum hosted by Minister Emer Higgins at Ace Enterprise Park.** Attended by **more than 50 business owners, entrepreneurs, and local stakeholders,** the event formed part of the national consultation process for Ireland's first National Public Procurement Strategy. Participants were given an opportunity to share both positive and challenging experiences of public procurement while contributing directly to discussions around how future procurement opportunities can become more accessible to SMEs and micro-enterprises. The event also generated significant visibility for Ace Enterprise Park and demonstrated its growing reputation as a venue for meaningful policy engagement and community dialogue.



Ace Enterprise Park CEO Lisa Rowntree welcoming local SMEs and guests



Minister Emer Higgins leading Public Procurement Forum in Bawnogue

Responding directly to member feedback, Ace also launched **The Lounge**, a new communal café-style breakout space located within the Ace Enterprise Hub in Bawnogue. The launch event featured complimentary refreshments from Ace Shared Kitchen member **Haijz**, who has since secured a permanent retail opportunity within Lucan Shopping Centre following the continued growth of his business. Since opening, The Lounge has become **home to networking events, office hours, community gatherings, and informal introductions that may not otherwise have occurred.**

Community spirit was once again evident during the **Third Annual Together for Hospice Coffee Morning,** which **raised more than €1,000 in support of Our Lady's Hospice and Care Services.** The event brought together Ace members, local businesses, neighbours, and community groups, with **food kindly donated by Croissantly Bakery, FoodCloud, Pieman, St John of Gods, Freshways Café**, and **Londis Bawnogue**. Raffle prizes were generously contributed by **LM Skin Clinic**, **McCauley's Pharmacy**, **Salvatore DiMartino Photography**, **Heavenly Treats,** and **Úna Ahearne Therapy**. The event highlighted the close relationships that continue to exist between Ace, its members, and the wider Bawnogue community.

Ace also extended its support beyond the enterprise centre itself through **sponsorship of the Clondalkin Youth Band Lip Sync Battle.** More than a fundraising event, the initiative supported a long-standing local organisation that provides young people with opportunities to participate in music, travel, performance, creativity, and community life. Ace proudly sponsored local participant **Mary Thunder**, **Manager of McCauley's Pharmacy, Bawnogue,** a long-standing neighbour and supporter of the Ace community. The event ultimately **raised more than €21,000 for the youth organisation** and reflected Ace's ongoing commitment to supporting positive community development beyond its own walls.

The year's events programme concluded with **Thanksgiving at Ace**, a member-only celebration hosted in The Lounge. More than 30 members gathered around a potluck-style meal to reflect on the year, strengthen relationships, welcome newer occupants into the community, and celebrate the collective achievements of the Ace ecosystem. The evening served as a reminder that while enterprise development remains at the heart of Ace's mission, meaningful relationships and community connections remain one of the organisation's greatest strengths.

Strengthening Collaboration Within the Ace Ecosystem

One of the most encouraging developments throughout 2025 was the **continued growth of collaboration within the Ace community itself.**

As occupancy increased and relationships strengthened, members increasingly turned to Ace staff for recommendations from within the enterprise park before seeking suppliers externally. This created new opportunities for businesses to support one another while strengthening the internal economy developing across the Ace ecosystem.

Catering became a particularly strong example of this trend. Through introductions facilitated by Ace, three food businesses secured catering contracts with trainers, workshops, and external organisations using the centre. At least one of these opportunities developed into a recurring contract, demonstrating how simple introductions can translate into meaningful commercial outcomes at an enterprise centre.

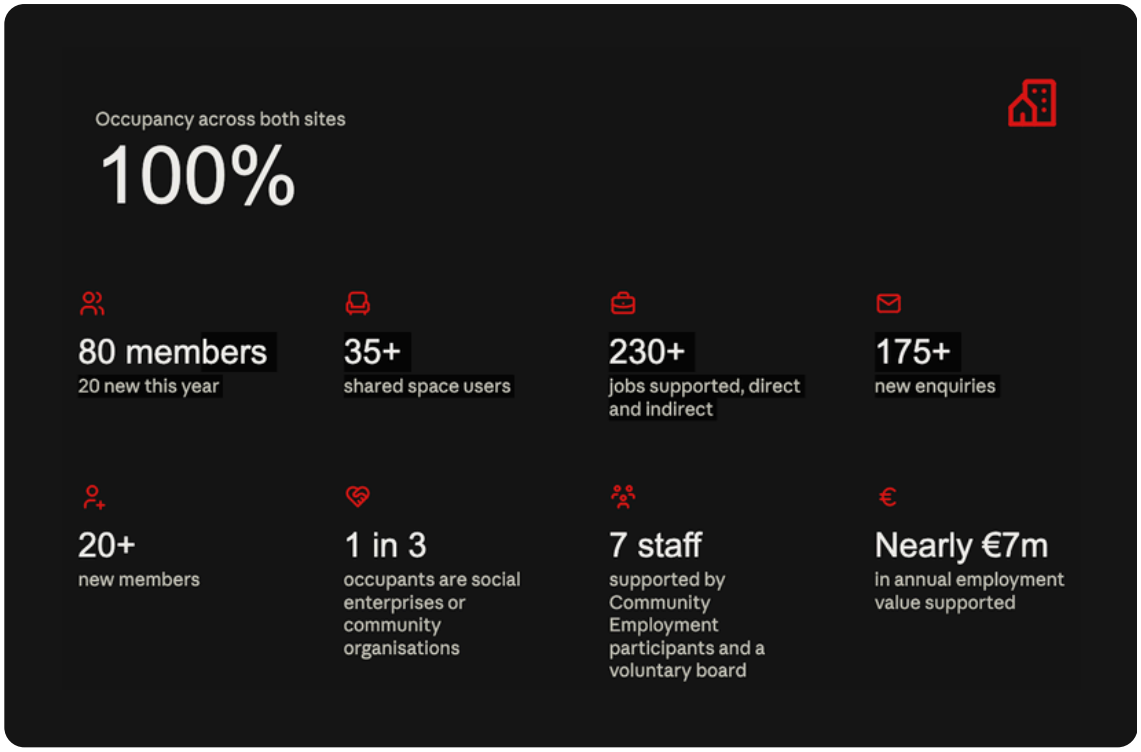
Partnerships between members also became increasingly visible throughout the year. FoodCloud provided catering for member events and educational workshops, **LM Skin Clinic** generated additional promotional opportunities following Ace's Galentine's Day Showcase, and **Haijz Drinks** used the launch of The Lounge to introduce its products to a wider audience before later securing a permanent retail opportunity in Lucan Shopping Centre.

Beyond commercial opportunities, collaboration was also evident in the willingness of members to share expertise, mentor one another, contribute to events, and support community initiatives. Whether providing raffle prizes for charity fundraisers, delivering Lunch & Learn sessions, or showcasing products and services at community events, members consistently demonstrated the value of a connected enterprise community and a genuine commitment to contributing to the wider success of the Ace ecosystem.

The growth of internal collaboration reflects one of Ace Enterprise Park's core objectives: **to foster a community where businesses can learn from one another, identify new opportunities, and grow together in a supportive environment.**



2025 at a Glance



According to Community Enterprise Association Ireland (CEAI), the national community enterprise sector supports approximately 18,600 jobs and contributes €1.8 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) to the Irish economy annually. Ace is proud to contribute to this wider national impact through its support of local SMEs, social enterprises, and community organisations.

Looking Ahead to 2026

As Ace Enterprise Park celebrates 30 years of supporting community through enterprise, the organisation remains firmly focused on the future.

Demand for affordable workspace, enterprise support services, and community-focused initiatives continues to grow across South Dublin. Existing members are scaling their operations, new businesses are emerging, and opportunities for collaboration both within and beyond the Ace ecosystem continue to expand.

Building on the momentum of 2025, Ace will focus on progressing the development of a **third enterprise centre,** advancing **long-term sustainability objectives** identified through the Energy Master Plan, **implementing new digital systems** to improve efficiency and service delivery, and **strengthening supports** for entrepreneurs, SMEs, social enterprises, and community organisations at every stage of their journey.



The organisation will also continue to **champion collaboration, community participation, and local economic development** through its work with members, stakeholders, partners, and the wider South Dublin community.

While much has changed since Ace first opened its doors in 1995, our purpose remains the same: to **create opportunities, remove barriers, and provide the environment, support, and connections that enable people, businesses, and communities to thrive.**

As we enter our fourth decade, we look forward to continuing that journey together.

2025 Strategic Objectives, KPIs and Outcomes

In 2024, Ace Enterprise Park introduced its first set of measurable strategic objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs), establishing a clear framework for assessing organisational impact and performance. Developed in alignment with our Ace Enterprise Park 2024–2028 Strategic Plan, these KPIs enable us to measure progress **across our four strategic pillars of Structure, Growth, Sustainability, and Leadership.**

By establishing 2024 as our baseline year, Ace is now better positioned to evaluate trends, demonstrate impact, and make evidence-based decisions that strengthen our support for enterprises, community organisations, and the wider South Dublin community. These metrics help ensure that our activities remain aligned with our mission, allowing us to track not only outputs, but also the meaningful outcomes and long-term impact of our work.

The following section outlines our strategic objectives, associated KPIs, performance targets, and 2025 outcomes.

Objective 1

Objective 1: Sustainability & Climate Action	KPIs	Targets	2024 Outcomes	2025 Outcomes
Ace Sustainability Impact in our Investment Plan	% of Net Profit Reinvested in Renewable Energy	Minimum 3%	Nearly 50% of net profit was allocated to these efforts in 2024.	92% of operating profit reinvested into property improvements and sustainability initiatives in 2025, supported by capital grants from SEAI, Pobal, DAF and CCAF.
	% Reduction in Direct Emissions (YoY)	10% YoY Reduction	Baseline yet to be set as installations are still ongoing. 2025 will be our first attempt at reaching this target.	2024 baseline of 116 tonnes CO_2 established. Initial renewable energy generation of 4.3 MWh achieved, with the full impact on emissions reduction to be assessed as sustainability projects continue to scale in 2026.
Wider Community Education/Involvement	Number of Sustainability-Focused Workshops Delivered in Partnership with SEC / SEAI	Minimum of 4 Events / Year	4 Events Hosted in 2024	4 Events Hosted in 2025
	Number of Participants Engaged in Sustainability Education	70 Individuals Engaged	14 Ace members signed up for the SEC. SDCC Decarbonising Zone meetings were held twice in 2024, with a combined audience of 61 attendees.	60+ individuals engaged through sustainability initiatives delivered by Ace in 2025, including staff, members, delivery partners, and community stakeholders.

Objective 2

Objective 2: Wider Community Impact	KPIs	Targets	2024 Outcomes	2025 Outcomes
Community Inclusion	Number of Community Events Hosted Onsite	Minimum of 2 Events / Month	2 events per month delivered throughout 2024.	Minimum target achieved, with 2 community events hosted per month throughout 2025.
	Number of Social Inclusion Events Hosted at Ace	Minimum of 2 Events / Year	3 social inclusion events hosted at Ace during 2024.	6 social inclusion events hosted at Ace during 2025, exceeding the annual target by 200%.
Business Impact	Number of Local Businesses Supported	Minimum 10% of Overhead Spend P.A.	€189k spent locally in 2024, representing nearly 49% of overhead expenditure.	89% of overhead expenditure retained within the local economy during 2025.
	Number of Ace Full-Time Members	At least 80% Occupancy Across Site / Month	Achieved 100% occupancy every month in 2024.	Achieved 100% occupancy every month in 2025.
	Number of Ace 'Shared Space' Members	Minimum of 10 Across the Services	Consistently exceeded 10 at each reporting period, averaging 27 members across 2024.	Consistently exceeded target throughout the year, averaging 35 shared-space members across 2025.
	Number of New Member Enquiries	Minimum of 4 New Enquiries / Month	Averaged 10 new enquiries per month in 2024.	Averaged 15 new enquiries per month in 2025, exceeding target by 275%.

Our Impact – 2025 Member Testimonials

"Ace Enterprise Park is absolutely fantastic! I've had my studio here for two years and I honestly couldn't ask for a better place to run my business. The facilities are spotless, secure, and well-maintained. The team is incredibly supportive and always on hand to help with anything you need. You can tell they genuinely care about the businesses in the centre.

The atmosphere is professional yet friendly, and being surrounded by other growing businesses is so motivating. The location is convenient, parking is easy, and the overall setup makes day-to-day operations stress-free.

I'm genuinely grateful to be part of Ace Enterprise Park. If you're considering a space for your business, I couldn't recommend it more highly!"

— Michelle Dolan | Founder, The Glow Bar

"Ace Enterprise Park has truly been a blessing for me and my business, Manna Biriyani Ireland.

From the moment I started here, the support, professionalism, and community spirit have been absolutely amazing. The team is extremely friendly, helpful, and always willing to guide you in the right direction.

As a small food business owner, finding the right place to operate from is so important, and Ace has gone above and beyond. Their facilities are excellent, well-maintained, and perfectly suited for a growing business. The environment is safe, supportive, and very entrepreneur focused.

Starting my journey here has been one of the best decisions I've made. I would highly recommend it to anyone looking for the right place to build and grow their business.
Thank you, Ace Enterprise Park, for everything you do!"

— Joel Onix | Co-Founder, Manna Biriyani





"If you're a start-up, or even just exploring a business idea, Ace Enterprise Park should be your first stop. The incredibly supportive and friendly team offers end-to-end support, giving you everything you need to get started and grow with confidence.

No more wasting time hunting for office space, managing bills, chasing service providers, or stressing over cleaning and maintenance. From workspace to Wi-Fi, Ace delivers a seamless, one-stop solution that lets you focus entirely on what matters most: your business.

The team genuinely cares about your success and has built a community where entrepreneurs feel empowered and supported. Couldn't recommend it more!"

— Yang Tong | Co-Founder, OrderIT & My Cloud PA

"I'm a portrait photographer renting a studio at Ace Enterprise Park, and it's been an excellent experience. The space is very nice and perfectly suited to my photoshoots. The staff are professional, friendly, and always available to respond to any questions or requests.

The booking process is smooth and convenient, making it easy to schedule sessions. The facility also has plenty of parking, which is a great plus for both me and my clients. Another big advantage of being part of Ace is access to a network of other businesses, which offers great opportunities for collaboration and referrals.

Overall, I highly recommend Ace Enterprise Park to any business looking for a professional, well-managed, and supportive environment."

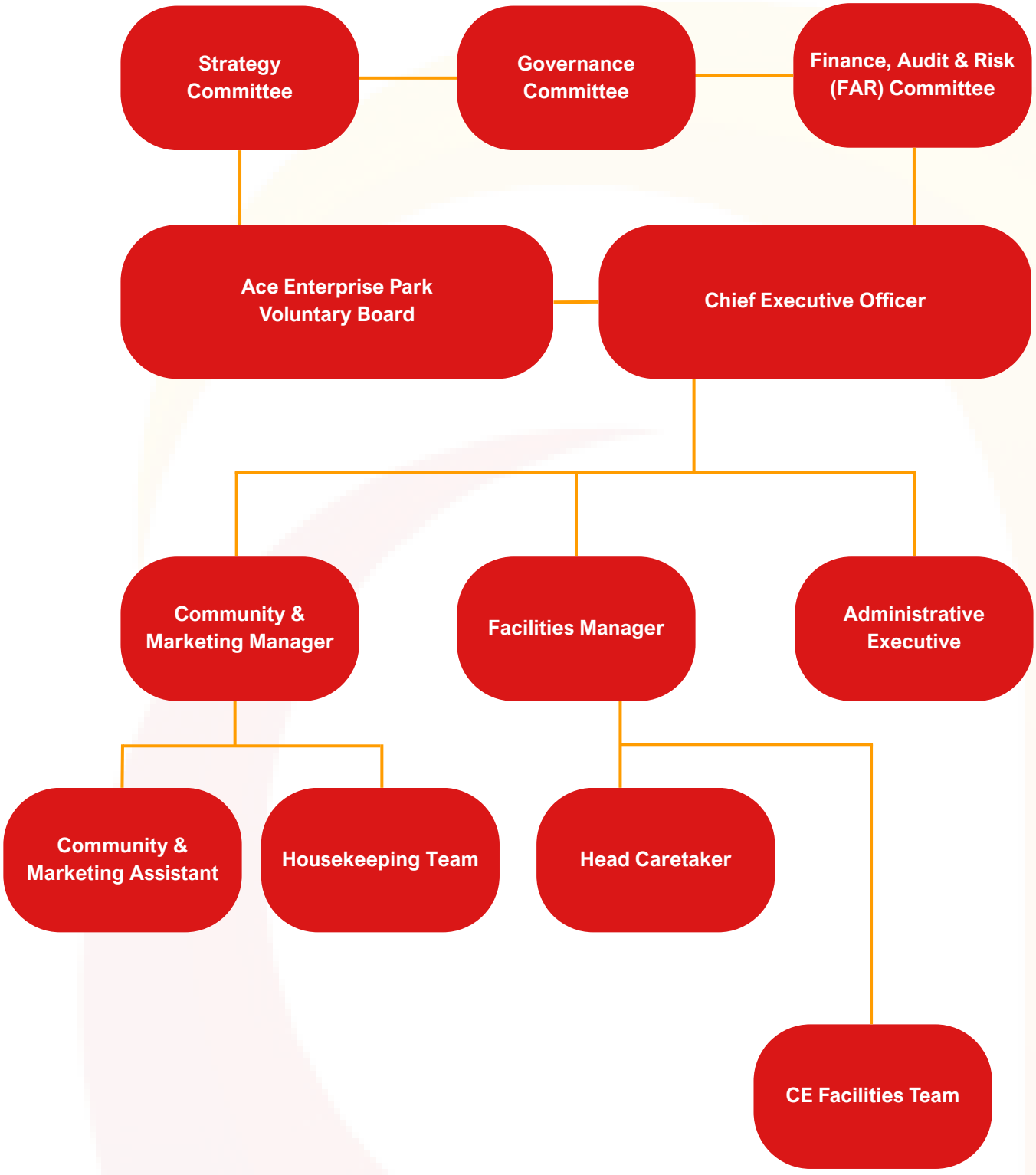
— Salvatore Di Martino | Owner, SDM Portrait

"Ace Enterprise Park is an amazing place for start-ups like us. The whole team at Ace is great to work with and is very friendly, which makes the overall work environment easy for us. They are always available to provide support and go the extra mile to create a great community for everyone operating in the park.

The park itself is very well maintained, and kudos to the team for that. Special mention to Lisa, Kaitlin, and Mary for being such a great support system. I would highly recommend Ace Enterprise Park to any start-up company."

— Shikha Gauba | Co-Founder, The Happy Tables

2025 Organisational Structure





A Note from Our Chairperson

It is a distinct honour and privilege for me to present this year's Chairman's statement on behalf of Ace Enterprise Park and reflect on what has been a landmark year for the organisation. In 2025, Ace not only celebrated 30 years in business, but also demonstrated how a value-led social enterprise can **continue to evolve, innovate, and deliver meaningful impact for its members and community across South Dublin County.**

This year marked a period of **strong organisational momentum.** Ace achieved national and regional recognition, most notably being named **Best Small Business at the South Dublin Chamber Awards,** a significant endorsement of the quality of our management, governance, and overall impact. This recognition belongs to the entire Ace team, whose commitment and professionalism continue to underpin our success.

Operationally, the organisation strengthened its foundations. Following a period of inactivity in the South Dublin Public Participation Network, Ace successfully led the recruitment and onboarding of a full-time Public Participation Network (PPN) Coordinator, alongside the appointment of a second full-time administrative support role. These appointments were critical in enabling Ace to assume responsibility for hosting the South Dublin PPN, further reinforcing our role as **a trusted intermediary between communities, enterprise, and local government.**

2025 also saw meaningful progress in how Ace supports its members. The **official launch of Ace Digital Services** represents an important evolution in our offering — providing affordable, expert digital marketing support to enterprises at all stages of development. This initiative reflects Ace's ongoing commitment to removing barriers to growth and ensuring that SMEs and community organisations can access the tools and expertise they need to compete and thrive.

The opening of the **new coworking space,** The Atrium, expanded flexible workspace options and responded directly to growing demand. Enhancements to the complex — including new landscaping, community gardens, seating areas, and energy efficient triple glazed windows — have improved both sustainability performance and the quality of the shared campus experience. These projects demonstrate Ace's belief that enterprise ecosystems should be productive, inclusive, and environmentally responsible.

Sustainability was a defining theme throughout the year. Ace continued its transition towards fossil free operations, commenced the **SEAI Energy Master Plan,** and delivered multiple capital and behavioural energy upgrades. These efforts were supported by a range of national and EU funding awards, reflecting external confidence in Ace's capacity to deliver complex, impact driven projects. Importantly, sustainability at Ace extends beyond infrastructure; it is embedded in how we work, collaborate, and plan for the future.

Ace's influence also extended well beyond its campuses. Board representation, sector leadership, and active participation in national networks — including **Connected Hubs, SERI, South Dublin Chamber, and multiple PPN structures** — ensured that Ace contributed meaningfully to policy, strategy, and sector development. The establishment of new networks and continued leadership of existing ones further strengthened collaboration across enterprise, food, and social innovation ecosystems.

A particular source of pride is **the success of our members.** Throughout 2025, Ace-based enterprises achieved national awards, expanded into major retail markets, and scaled their operations both within and beyond our centres. These successes are the clearest measure of Ace's impact and reaffirm the effectiveness of our hands on, participatory support model.

None of this progress would be possible without the dedication of the Ace team, the leadership of our **CEO Lisa Rowntree,** and the ongoing commitment of a voluntary Board that brings expertise across governance, finance, sustainability, and enterprise development. I would also like to acknowledge our partners, funders, and stakeholders whose collaboration continues to strengthen our work.

As we look ahead, **Ace is well positioned for its next phase of growth.** With new projects underway, continued demand for workspace and supports, and planning progressing for a third centre, the organisation remains focused on delivering inclusive, sustainable enterprise solutions that respond to real community need.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to Ace Enterprise Park over the past year. We are proud of what has been achieved and confident in the organisation's ability to continue delivering impact long into the future.



— Paul O'Brien | Chairperson, Ace Enterprise Park



Chief Executive Officer Statement

I am so proud of my team at Ace and, with the full backing of my Board, our 2025 Annual Report presents **a year of significant progress, growth, and recognition** for Action Community and Enterprise as we celebrated 30 years of supporting community through enterprise in South Dublin. I am reminded of the phrase, “A rising tide lifts all boats,” which describes our purpose in a familiar way.

Building on last year's success, the report highlights 2025 as a landmark year marked by several major achievements, acting as the Host Organisation for the South Dublin County Public Participation Network, recognition as South Dublin’s Best Small Business, the celebration of its 30th anniversary, the launch and development of Ace Digital Services, and the opening of The Atrium coworking and collaboration Lounge space. Demand for Ace’s facilities and supports remained strong throughout the year, with 100% occupancy across both campuses, more than 175 new enquiries, 20 new onsite members, and continued growth in the use of shared workspace options.

With my team, we can report progress against the four pillars of Ace’s 2024–2028 Strategic Plan: Structure, Growth, Sustainability, and Leadership.

Structure, Ace strengthened its governance, staffing, systems, and operational capacity while progressing plans for a third enterprise centre. Our team grew and, with that, so did our impact, as our member testimonials attest, while also creating space to explore new ideas.

Growth, the organisation expanded its reach, diversified its services, supported member success, and identified emerging opportunities, particularly in food enterprise infrastructure in conjunction with SDCC and Enterprise Ireland. We finally identified our third site and entered negotiations to secure the lease and begin planning for its renovation.

Sustainability, Ace secured more than €177,000 in climate and sustainability-related funding, delivered energy-efficiency upgrades, advanced its first Energy Master Plan, increased biodiversity, and supported community-based environmental initiatives. We finally commenced the retrofitting programme, which has the added complexity of being delivered alongside "business as usual".

Leadership, I continued to influence regional and national conversations through networks, policy engagement, events, and sector collaboration. Kaitlin, our Community & Marketing Manager, grew alongside me and found her own place within our networks, becoming a valued contributor while continuing her own personal and professional growth.

Looking ahead to 2026, Ace Enterprise Park is positioned for continued growth and impact. **Key priorities include** progressing the third hub, implementing ambitious digital transformation projects with AI at their centre, advancing sustainability and decarbonisation objectives, strengthening member supports, and continuing to champion inclusive local economic development across South Dublin.

I sincerely thank everyone who made this last year possible.

Lisa Rowntree

— Lisa Rowntree | Chief Executive Officer, Ace Enterprise Park



The Atrium, Ace's new coworking hub



Celebrating 30 years of Ace Enterprise Park



CEO Lisa Rowntree with Kaitlin, Community & Marketing Manager



Ace's new polytunnel, supporting biodiversity and community-based environmental initiatives

The Ace Enterprise Park Board

Ace Enterprise Park is governed by a board of dedicated volunteer directors, each balancing their professional and personal commitments alongside their board duties. **The board convenes every six weeks in a hybrid format,** with each member **required to attend at least three meetings** in person annually. Subcommittees manage their own check-ins between these sessions, while the Chair and Deputy Chair meet with the CEO fortnightly. Since adopting the hybrid model, we have achieved **100% attendance**. Directors serve three-year terms, after which they may stand for re-election if they choose, with a maximum of three terms (nine years in total) before stepping down.

Subcommittee Structure

Each subcommittee has their own board-agreed terms of reference. Ace Enterprise Park regularly rotates the Board of Directors between the subcommittees to ensure optimal learning across the organisation.

Conflict-of-Interest Policy

The library of policies has been collated as part of our internal controls. A new policy revision system is in place since late 2024. All policies, including the Conflict-of-Interest Policy, will be **reviewed on a minimum three-year basis** unless a change in regulation or guidance dictates an increase in frequency.

As part of the library build, all policies were reviewed and updated where necessary. The Conflict-of-Interest Policy was reviewed in line with these standards in **May 2024.**

Each board member undergoes a comprehensive induction, including a review of the Directors Handbook. This covers the register of interests, conflict-of-interest protocols, and Ace Enterprise Park's best practices. **At the start of every meeting, a conflict-of-interest call is made,** and if any conflicts arise, the respective director is required to step out during related decision- making processes. **While the CEO attends all board meetings, they are not a board member.** The Board operates with a clear distinction of roles: the CEO is responsible for day-to-day operations, while the Board focuses on governance, policy development, strategic direction, and oversight of organisational performance. In addition to approving organisational strategy, the Board monitors the effectiveness of its implementation through regular reporting and performance review to ensure the organisation remains aligned with its mission, values, and strategic objectives.

Key Stakeholders

At the heart of this social innovation is a **participatory approach** that engages a wide range of stakeholders, from early-stage entrepreneurs to local government, throughout all stages of concept, delivery, and scaling. The innovation is rooted in co-creation, continuous consultation, and collaboration, ensuring the spaces and supports provided at Ace are truly reflective of local need and opportunity.

Current Key Stakeholders

- Ace Enterprise Park Management Team
- Voluntary Board of Ace Enterprise Park
- Start-Up Ace Members
- Scale-Up Ace Members
- Economic, Enterprise, and Climate Action Teams at South Dublin County Council
- South Dublin County Public Participation Network (PPN)
- Local entrepreneurs, learners, and course participants (past, current, and prospective)

Each stakeholder group plays a unique role. Some provide governance and strategic direction, while others contribute directly to the design, delivery, and evaluation of our supports. This is particularly true of our members and programme participants.

Stakeholder Engagement

At Ace Enterprise Park, **we prioritise open, consistent communication with all our stakeholders** to **ensure transparency, alignment, and collaboration.** This is achieved through a variety of channels, including:

- **Weekly internal staff meetings** to review progress, share updates, and address any immediate needs.
- **Bi-monthly meetings with the Ace Enterprise Park Board** to provide oversight and strategic guidance.
- **Quarterly meetings with South Dublin County Council** to strengthen our partnership and ensure our work remains aligned with county priorities.
- **Regular participation in local business networks,** including Lucan B2B, Tallaght B2B, South Dublin Chamber, and South Dublin PPN events, where our CEO and management team represent both Ace and our members.
- **Bi-weekly one-to-one meetings** between the CEO and each member of the managerial team, ensuring all operational streams are well supported and functioning effectively.
- **Ongoing member communications,** delivered through social media marketing campaigns, email newsletters, direct correspondence, and onsite events throughout the year.

Our participatory approach began at the strategy level. In 2023, our voluntary Board led the development of a strategic framework that embedded innovation and impact as core pillars. These were broken into **four focus areas: Structure, Growth, Sustainability, and Leadership.** Each focus area was informed by feedback from our members and designed to address long-term enterprise challenges and local needs.

2025 Ace Enterprise Park Board Members

Following the conclusion of Justin Mulhern's term as Chairperson in September 2025, the Board appointed Paul O'Brien and Alison Delahunt as Co-Chairpersons. The Board wishes to acknowledge Justin's admirable leadership and contribution to Ace Enterprise Park during a period of significant organisational growth and strategic development.



Justin Mulhern | Chairperson & Senior Stakeholder Liaison (January – September 2025)

Justin Mulhern is an experienced management professional with a proven track record in operations and organisational performance. With extensive experience leading teams, streamlining processes, and driving results, Justin brings a strategic and people-centred approach to leadership.
Board Skills: Organisational & Project Management, IT



Paul O'Brien | Co-Chairperson (September 2025 – Present)

Paul O'Brien is a senior manager with AIB and serves as the ESG Lead on the Ace Enterprise Park Board. With an extensive background in management, sales, compliance, and business transformation, Paul combines corporate expertise with strong community representation. He holds qualifications in Hospitality Management, Financial Advice (QFA), and Data Protection and is a Chartered Banker with wide-ranging experience in regulatory reporting and governance.
Board Skills: Corporate Governance, ESG, Risk & Compliance



Alison Delahunt | Co-Chairperson (September 2025 – Present)

Alison Delahunt brings a diverse professional background spanning healthcare, nursing, teaching, executive coaching, and public affairs. Currently engaged in Public Affairs at the Houses of the Oireachtas, Alison offers a unique perspective on leadership, education, and values-driven practice. Her passion for empowerment, coaching, and mentoring continues to inform her contribution to the Ace Enterprise Park Board.
Board Skills: Learning & Development, HR, Public Relations



Shane Moynihan | Strategy Committee Member

Dr. Shane Moynihan is a Fianna Fáil TD for Dublin Mid-West and has represented communities across Palmerstown, Lucan, and Clondalkin since 2019. Shane has an extensive background in public policy, economic research, and data-driven insights, including senior roles at LinkedIn and within international consultancy. He brings deep expertise in labour market policy, education, and public representation.
Board Skills: Community Development, HR, Organisational Development

2025 Ace Enterprise Park Board Members



Ronan Crossan | Strategy Committee Member

Ronan Crossan is an executive with extensive experience in investment management, data, and financial technology. He currently leads the sustainable investing agenda at Setanta Asset Management and brings expertise in ESG strategy, product development, innovation, and leadership.

Board Skills: ESG, Investment, Strategic Planning



Peter Connolly | Strategy Committee Member

Peter Connolly has more than 18 years of experience in the public sector, holding senior roles in customer service, staff management, and local enterprise development. As a Local Enterprise Business Advisor, he works directly with SMEs on funding, training, and growth programmes, bringing valuable knowledge of enterprise supports and business development.

Board Skills: Community Development, Enterprise Support



Paul Tuhill | Finance, Audit & Risk Committee Member

Paul Tuhill is a senior engineering and development manager with more than 20 years of experience across technical, financial, and broadcast industries. He has led diverse teams in systems engineering, cloud technologies, software development, and business continuity management. Alongside his professional role, Paul contributes to several non-profit organisations in advisory and governance capacities.

Board Skills: Information Technology, Digital Transformation



Gemma Shine | Finance, Audit & Risk Committee Member

Gemma Shine is a Chartered Accountant with An Post and an Associate Lecturer in International Financial Reporting at TU Dublin. With over a decade of audit and assurance experience across multiple sectors, Gemma provides strong financial oversight, audit expertise, and governance leadership.

Board Skills: Finance, Audit, Risk Management



Michal Kazio | Secretary & Finance Committee Member

Michal Kazio is a qualified accountant with more than 15 years of experience in fund administration, financial reporting, operations, and regulatory compliance within the financial services sector. His analytical expertise and leadership experience support the Board's commitment to strong financial governance.

Board Skills: Accountancy, Financial Governance

2025 Ace Enterprise Park Board Members



Sarah Owens | Governance Committee Member

Sarah Owens is a senior development manager with Respond and has more than 20 years of experience delivering affordable housing projects. She brings significant expertise in project delivery, stakeholder engagement, governance, and community-focused development.

Board Skills: Property Management, Stakeholder Engagement



Yang Tong | New Member (joined Summer 2025)

Yang Tong is an entrepreneur and founder of multiple award-winning South Dublin businesses, including My Cloud PA and OrderIT. Through his experience scaling and managing successful SME ventures, Yang brings valuable insight into digital innovation, business growth, customer experience, and entrepreneurship.

Board Skills: IT, SME Growth, Entrepreneurship



Paul Molloy | New Member (joined Autumn 2025)

Paul Molloy is the founder of a specialist tax consultancy and brings more than 20 years of experience in taxation, accountancy, and business development. Having trained with Deloitte, he has advised SMEs across a wide range of sectors, helping business owners navigate complex tax matters and identify opportunities for sustainable growth.

Board Skills: Finance, Audit, Taxation, SME Advisory

Ace Enterprise Park Board Recruitment

We utilise **Boardmatch** and our own business and community networks to recruit new board members as necessary. Our goal is to **ensure a balanced diversity of skills, professional experiences, and forward-thinking perspectives,** with an emphasis on building the Board around organisational needs and identified skills gaps.

The review process begins with the prospective **Director's CV being shared** with current board members. If the application is accepted in principle, the **CEO meets the candidate off-site for an informal discussion.** Following a positive introduction, the **candidate visits the Ace site** for a more in-depth **conversation with the Chairperson.** If these meetings are successful, the candidate is invited to **attend up to three Board meetings** to ensure a mutual fit and to gain a practical understanding of the organisation's governance culture.

Once agreed, candidates are formally proposed and seconded by the Board. New directors **complete an induction process** which includes a review of the Directors Handbook, governance policies, board responsibilities, conflict-of-interest procedures, and Ace Enterprise Park's strategic priorities. We believe that **co-opting new directors onto a Committee at an early stage** is the most effective way for them to gain a deeper understanding of the organisation and begin contributing to governance discussions.

The Board regularly reviews its composition to ensure it maintains the skills, experience, diversity, and expertise required to support the organisation's strategic objectives. Within their first 12 months, new Board members are expected to attend at least one formal governance or leadership development programme.

Ace Enterprise Park Board Training

The CEO of Ace Enterprise Park **actively reviews learning opportunities, training providers, and upskilling programmes** on an ongoing basis to identify opportunities that can positively impact both Board and staff members. Relevant individuals then attend and complete programmes, workshops, and certifications appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.

In 2025, all Ace Board members participated in professional development opportunities through Winmark. The Strategy Committee undertook strategic visioning and leadership-focused learning, the Governance Subcommittee completed governance and board effectiveness programmes, and the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee participated in training focused on SORP reporting, financial oversight, and risk management. The CEO also refreshed her professional development in relation to the responsibilities and governance obligations of a Chief Executive Officer.

For new Board members, **completion of Carmichael's online training programmes,** including Introduction to Charity Trustees and The Charities Governance Code, **is mandatory.** In addition, two Board members completed **Board Culture training with Boardmatch** during 2025.

Ace views continuous learning as a key component of good governance. The rapidly changing regulatory, economic, technological, and environmental landscape requires Board members to remain informed and equipped to make effective strategic decisions on behalf of the organisation.

Looking ahead, **Ace has secured a 2026 membership with the Irish Management Institute (IMI)**, Ireland's leading provider of executive education and leadership development. IMI has supported generations of business leaders through internationally recognised programmes designed to strengthen leadership capability, strategic thinking, governance, and organisational performance.

Through this partnership, Ace Board and staff members will gain access to world-class executive education, expert faculty, research-led insights, industry networks, and ongoing professional development opportunities. The programme will support Ace in continuing to strengthen its governance framework, enhance leadership capacity, and ensure the organisation remains well positioned to respond to future opportunities and challenges.

Decision Making & Delegation

Operational management is the sole responsibility of the CEO and Senior Management Team, while the Board focuses on policy development and assessing the impact across various areas of the organisation and its stakeholders. Prior to Board meetings, relevant documents and data are circulated for review. Specific topics, such as depreciation, are examined by the Finance, Audit, and Risk Committee, which then presents recommendations to the Board. Broader topics are categorised on the agenda as either "for discussion" or "for decision." Should new information emerge, or if consensus is not reached, a topic may revert to "discussion." **All directors are encouraged to actively participate in these discussions,** and any matters requiring further consideration are deferred to the next meeting.

Structure of the Board Subcommittees



Synopsis of the Terms of Reference for the Strategy Committee

Purpose: To enable the Ace Enterprise Park Board to realise a medium-to-long term vision for the organisation, ensuring our mission, vision, and purpose aligns with our Constitution and Charitable Purpose. It will enable faster, positive decision making for the operation of the organisation and clearly identify which opportunities we seize.

Responsibilities: To advise, recommend and warn the Board on strategic matters and understand the unintended consequences on other functions in the organisation. Regular communication with the other committees will be necessary to ensure effective advice.

Authority: Recommendations for adoption or change to the strategic plan adopted by Ace.

Deliverables: Board-wide strategy workshop to be held at minimum every three years, resulting in the development of an active strategy for the organisation. Identify key objectives, assign a Board member to work with operational team, and develop the list of action points or activities for the Board to approve. The CEO will report against the progress of these activities at the regularly scheduled Board meetings.

Synopsis of the Terms of Reference for the FAR Committee

Purpose: Provide oversight of Ace Enterprise Park's financial management, audit processes, and risk framework. Ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance in all financial and operational matters. Members of the FAR Committee are expected to discharge their duties and make their decisions in an independent, non-biased manner.

Responsibilities: Monitor and review the accuracy of financial statements, policies, and procedures, as well as oversee the effectiveness of internal controls, risk management, and the external audit process. Ensure that all contractors are tax compliant and appropriately insured, and that financial reporting to funders is accurate and timely. The committee also recommends pay structures for employees, reviews hiring proposals, and provides the Board with recommendations on auditor appointments, remuneration, and terms of engagement. In addition, it is responsible for maintaining systems by which Ace staff may confidentially raise concerns regarding financial reporting or improprieties.

Authority: The committee is authorised to approve payments, transactions, or liabilities up to €15,000, to approve changes to the bank mandate, and to approve the opening or closing of financial accounts. It also has authority to ensure access to financial systems is limited to authorised users, and that passwords are stored securely and updated regularly.

Deliverables: Accurate and timely financial reporting to both the Board and funders. Conduct annual reviews of audit effectiveness and risk management practices, and oversee the implementation of board-approved financial, audit, and risk strategies. Provide the Board with recommendations on key financial and risk issues to ensure robust governance.

Synopsis of the Terms of Reference for the Governance (ESG) Committee

Purpose: Support the Board of Ace Enterprise Park in maintaining strong governance practices, ensuring the organisation meets its legal and regulatory obligations, and operates in line with its mission, vision, and values.

Responsibilities: To develop, review, and recommend governance policies and procedures, as well as provide induction, mentoring, and ongoing training for board members. It also monitors the performance of the Board as a whole and evaluates the contribution of individual members. In addition to providing supports the Chairperson in delivering annual board performance reviews and goals, while making recommendations on any changes to governance practices as required. Ensures compliance with constitutional, legal, and regulatory requirements, oversees board elections and appointments, and establishes conflict of interest procedures to ensure transparency.

During 2025, as the Ace Enterprise Park 2024 – 2028 Strategic Plan moved into active implementation, **the committee's remit expanded to include oversight of environmental, social, governance (ESG) matters and strategic performance monitoring.** Following a mid-year review, the Governance Committee was renamed the ESG Committee to better reflect this broader responsibility. **A formal Strategy Pulse Check process was introduced** to monitor progress against strategic objectives, with updates reported through the committee and reviewed at each Board meeting to ensure effective execution of the organisation's strategic plan.

Authority: Recommend governance policies, procedures, and frameworks to the Board for adoption. It also has authority over the processes for board elections, appointments, and removals, ensuring they comply with the constitution and legal requirements.

Deliverables: Create and maintain a comprehensive governance framework that is reviewed and updated regularly. Conduct annual board performance reviews and risk assessments and provide recommendations to strengthen governance practices. Ensure that policies are in place to provide clarity, accountability, and effectiveness in board operations, and that induction and mentoring processes for board members are robust and effective.

2025 Board Meeting Attendance

ESG Committee **

Board Member	4 Feb	6 May	17 Jul	26 Aug	10 Sept	14 Oct
Sarah Owens	✓	*				
Paul O'Brien	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Left the Board

** *The Governance Committee was renamed the ESG Committee during 2025, following an expansion of its remit to include ESG oversight and strategic performance monitoring.*

FAR Committee

Board Member	28 Feb	4 Mar	28 Apr	5 May	1 Jul	9 Jul	3 Sep	9 Sep	14 Oct	22 Oct	4 Dec
Gemma Shine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Paul Tuhill	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Michal Kazio	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X

2025 Board Meeting Attendance

General Board Meetings

Board Member	24 Jan	7 Mar	4 Apr	2 May	20 Jun	25 Jul	12 Sept	24 Oct	12 Dec
Ronan Crossan	✓	*							
Justin Mulhern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	
Paul Tuhill	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alison Delahunt	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
Shane Moynihan	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Peter Connolly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gemma Shine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Michal Kazio	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X
Paul O' Brien	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sarah Owens	X	*							
Yang Tong				**	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Paul Molloy						**	✓	✓	✓

**** Left the Board***
***** Joined the Board***

Risk Management at Ace

The Finance, Audit, and Risk (FAR) Committee have the responsibility of reviewing the Ace Enterprise Park Risk Register on an annual basis. Once completed, they are the ones responsible for bringing it to the Ace Board for a full review and approval.

The Risk Register operates under the following headings:



We use the full library of **National and European Legislation** to inform our work each year and put each identified risk through the matrix of likelihood and severity.

Current Risks to Organisation and Approach

The Finance, Audit & Risk (FAR) Committee **reviews the organisational Risk Register annually,** with significant risks reported to and reviewed by the Board throughout the year.

Economic Slowdown

A slowdown in the economy would have a direct impact on our income, as we are fully reliant on trading revenue to cover operational costs. While Ace can sustainably operate at occupancy levels significantly below current performance, we aim to maintain 100% occupancy to enable continuous reinvestment into our facilities, services, technology, and sustainability initiatives. Our anchor occupants, representing approximately 35% of income, come from the community sector and provide a reliable revenue stream that supports financial stability. **With occupancy remaining at 100% throughout 2024 and 2025 and demand continuing to exceed available capacity, Ace remains well positioned.** However, the organisation continues to monitor economic conditions closely and maintains the ability to adjust expenditure where necessary.

Future Funding and Sustainability

We work with three-year cash projections based on 95% occupancy, stress-tested down to 70% occupancy. Our expansion strategy is primarily driven by increasing trading income and creating new trading opportunities in new geographical areas. In addition to growing membership income through new space, we actively seek partnerships and programmes with the potential to strengthen our trading position. 2025 marked our first step in diversifying income through the launch of Ace Digital Services, which we will continue to expand into 2026 and beyond in response to member needs.

Ongoing Energy Crisis

Rising energy costs and volatility within utility markets continue to present a financial risk to Ace Enterprise Park. Significant increases in electricity, heating, and related operating costs could impact organisational surpluses, reduce funds available for reinvestment, and place additional pressure on service affordability for members.

To mitigate this risk, Ace has adopted a long-term approach focused on improving energy efficiency, reducing reliance on external energy sources, and strengthening organisational resilience through sustainability investments. During 2025, **the organisation secured more than €177,000 in sustainability funding** and completed a range of energy-efficiency improvements across its campuses. The development of **Ace's first Energy Master Plan has also provided a structured roadmap for future energy reduction and decarbonisation projects.** While external energy pricing remains beyond the organisation's control, these measures help reduce exposure to rising costs and improve long-term financial sustainability.

Rising Insurance Costs

We continuously review our Risk Register, provide quarterly staff training, and ensure our premises remain a safe environment for staff and members alike. **During 2025, all staff completed refreshed First Aid, AED, and CPR training,** while health and safety procedures continued to be reviewed as part of our wider risk management framework. These measures help mitigate operational risks and support efforts to manage rising insurance costs.

External Political Risks

We carefully monitor external political, regulatory, and economic developments and strive to align organisational strategy with evolving local, regional, and national priorities. Through **active engagement with stakeholders** including South Dublin County Council, the South Dublin PPN, South Dublin Chamber, Connected Hubs, SERI, and relevant Strategic Policy Committees, **Ace seeks to remain informed** of emerging policy changes that may impact enterprise development, community initiatives, sustainability objectives, or the wider operating environment.

Global Uncertainty

Global economic and geopolitical uncertainty continues to present potential risks to the organisation and the wider enterprise community we support. International conflicts, changing trade relationships, inflationary pressures, supply chain disruption, fluctuations in energy markets, and broader economic instability may impact business confidence, operating costs, investment decisions, and demand for enterprise supports. **As a self-financing social enterprise, Ace Enterprise Park remains attentive to external developments** that could affect both organisational sustainability and the businesses operating within our centres. To mitigate this risk, **the organisation maintains prudent financial management practices,** regularly reviews market conditions, monitors occupancy and enquiry levels, maintains operating reserves, and continues to diversify its income streams through new services and strategic growth initiatives.

While these external factors remain largely outside the organisation's control, Ace's strong occupancy levels, diverse membership base, and long-term strategic planning help strengthen resilience and support informed decision-making in an evolving environment.

Fraudulent Applications

Fraudulent applications for membership, funding, services, or supplier relationships present a risk to both the reputation and financial integrity of Ace Enterprise Park. To mitigate this risk, Ace has implemented a robust due diligence and verification process for all prospective members, creditors, and service users. Applications for occupancy are subject to **Board-level review** and require supporting documentation, including business references, financial projections, business plans, and evidence of banking history.

Where applicable, company and charitable entity registrations are independently **verified through the Companies Registration Office (CRO) and Charities Regulator.** Prospective occupants must also provide appropriate insurance documentation, including Public Liability and Employers' Liability cover, before taking occupancy. In line with Ace's maximum three-year occupancy model, members seeking licence extensions are subject to a further review process at Board-level, which assesses business progress, growth, community engagement, and continued alignment with the objectives of the enterprise centre.

Additional controls include independent verification of references, business registration details, banking information, and supplier credentials. All new creditors are verified by phone and cross-checked against submitted IBAN details, while staff receive ongoing training to identify potential warning signs associated with fraudulent applications and documentation.

Cyber Security Risks

As a digitally enabled organisation, cyber security remains a key area of risk. To address this, **Ace has put strong controls in place:** all online banking and financial systems require dual authorisation and multi-factor authentication; access to our accounting software (Xero) is restricted and fully traceable by user; and passwords are updated on a rolling 90-day cycle.

Staff receive training on phishing awareness and data protection best practice, while our IT policies are regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with GDPR and evolving cyber security standards. We also have **a dedicated IT support team** from local Irish business **Squarebreed**, available to respond quickly and responsibly in the event of a cyber-attack.

These measures safeguard both organisational data and member information against cyber threats. As Ace continues its digital transformation journey through the implementation of new systems, CRM software, facilities management tools, and emerging technologies, the organisation remains committed to ensuring that all digital solutions are introduced in accordance with cybersecurity best practice. New platforms undergo appropriate review to ensure that **security, GDPR compliance, access controls, and data protection requirements remain central to implementation and ongoing management.**

Complaints Policy

Ace Enterprise Park maintains a Complaints Policy to ensure that members of the public, member businesses, and other stakeholders can raise concerns regarding our services or activities. We are committed to providing an accessible, transparent, and responsive complaints process and to treating all complaints fairly, confidentially, and in a timely manner.

In the first instance, complaints are managed by the **Community & Marketing Manager,** who works with the complainant to identify an appropriate resolution. Complaints are **acknowledged within seven days** and, where possible, **resolved within 21 days.** All complaints are recorded in a **Complaints Register** and monitored through to resolution, with the register reviewed annually by the Board.

Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the initial outcome, **they may escalate the matter to the CEO** and, if necessary, to the **Chairperson** for consideration by the Board. Feedback, including complaints and compliments, is valued as an important tool for continuous improvement and helps ensure Ace remains responsive to the needs of its members and wider community.

Remuneration and Performance Management

Remuneration

- Remuneration is **reviewed by the Finance, Audit, and Risk Committee** in conjunction with the Chairperson. The CEO is not present for these discussions.
- Ace rolled out a **staff-wide PRSA pension scheme** in Q3 2024.
- The CEO is also held to a close performance review on an annual basis by the Chairperson.
- It was agreed in 2023 to link the salary increase of the CEO to the same increase scale as the public service as agreed in 2023 which gives clarity to the CEO for the immediate future. **The CEO remuneration is declared in the 2025 Financial Statements,** included later in this report.
- The CEO **performance manages the Senior Team on an annual basis** and makes the recommendations to the Finance Committee at budget time for appropriate salary increases.

Finance Policy

We have a documented Finance Policy, last reviewed December 2024, alongside complementary policies including Procurement, Risk Appetite, Depreciation, Bad Debts, Capital, Investment Appraisal, and Reserves. **Our financial statements are fully audited annually by Whelan Dowling & Associates.** A Finance, Audit & Risk Committee (FAR), composed of three board members (two of whom are qualified accountants) and the Chief Executive (also an accountant), meets bi-monthly. This committee reviews comprehensive monthly management accounts, including aged receivables/payables, cash flow, bank balances, and performance against budget. These reviews inform reporting to the full Board at each meeting.

Annual Budget Process

Our annual budget process begins in September each year, with remuneration planning as the first step. A draft budget is reviewed by the FAR Committee in November, then formally adopted by the Board in December and uploaded into Xero for monthly monitoring.

To ensure strong financial controls:

- All purchases over €10,000 are subject to a **formal tender process.**
- Payroll is managed externally by a third-party provider.
- **No cash is handled on site.**
- Segregation of duties is enforced wherever possible to reduce the risk of internal fraud.
- **All new creditors are verified** by phone and cross-checked against submitted IBAN details.
- **Bank payments require dual authorisation** (CEO and one authorised Board member), and all online banking uses multi-factor authentication.

Reserves Policy

We also have a Reserve Policy in place, which ensures **a minimum of €30,000 is ringfenced** to cover operational costs in the event of a downturn. This figure is based on what our monthly overheads could be reduced to in an emergency, calculated by reducing staffing to a bare minimum while still delivering a service.

It is highly unlikely we would ever be without trading income, as **our client base is diverse and our income streams cover a variety of services.** In the event of an economic downturn, 35% of our trading derives from community-based organisations who would have visibility of any change to their budgetary funding, while the remaining 65% comes from the private enterprise sector, where we have full flexibility to discount fees to maintain occupancy at a minimum of 70%. Since COVID-19, we have also introduced a service charge covering overheads such as security and insurance, ensuring that even members unable to pay their licence fee must still contribute toward the space they occupy.

In practice, **Ace has consistently operated with more than the minimum reserve,** which also covers reinvestment in property maintenance and upkeep. Historically, the organisation has not fallen below the reserve threshold and has traded at a surplus even accounting for a strong depreciation value, a non-cash movement. The reserve amount is evaluated in conjunction with the Risk Register and is ringfenced within all reinvestment projections.

Accounts

For Accounts Payable, the CEO runs reports **twice per month** from Xero. Invoices due for payment are flagged and passed to the **Accounts Administrator** to set up on the banking system. **These are then reviewed and authorised by the CEO and a Board signatory.** The bank transactions all require a dual authorisation mandate along with multi factor authentication.

Our accounts are managed through the **Xero** software which permits all board members to access and read. Access is restricted to avoid editing and the software has a fully traceable system, as each user leaves a trail/fingerprint. Our Xero accounting system provides secure access for board members (read-only). All actions are traceable by user, ensuring transparency and accountability. Financial records are organised by “Cost Centres,” allowing for detailed project tracking.



Meet the Ace Enterprise Park Team

Ace Enterprise Park is supported by a dedicated team of professionals who bring expertise across enterprise development, facilities management, finance, marketing, community engagement, and administration. Together, they work to deliver high-quality services, maintain strong governance standards, and support the growth of the businesses and organisations that call Ace home.



Lisa Rowntree | Chief Executive Officer

Lisa joined Ace Enterprise Park in late 2018, bringing more than 30 years' leadership across the Irish business sector, including senior roles in manufacturing and enterprise development. A qualified Food Scientist and Management Accountant, she has been instrumental in driving Ace's strategic growth, strengthening governance, and positioning the organisation for long-term sustainability.



Kaitlin Brozek | Community & Marketing Manager

Kaitlin joined Ace in 2024 and is a member of the organisation's management team. Holding an MSc in Digital Marketing Strategy, she brings expertise in brand development, communications, and community engagement. Kaitlin leads Ace's marketing, events, partnerships, and member engagement activities, working closely with member businesses and community organisations to foster collaboration, visibility, and growth opportunities.



Mick Gaffney | Facilities Manager

Mick joined Ace Enterprise Park in October 2022 and brings over a decade of experience in facilities and site management, supported by a strong background in construction. He oversees the maintenance, development, and day-to-day operation of both Ace campuses and has played a leading role in delivering a range of refurbishment, sustainability, and capital improvement projects across the organisation.



Mary Durkan | Accounts & Admin Executive

Mary joined Ace in October 2021 and works remotely as part of the administration and finance team. She manages the organisation's day-to-day financial administration, member accounts, and compliance processes, ensuring that operational systems run efficiently and effectively across the organisation.



Paula Maydana | Community & Marketing Assistant

Paula joined Ace Enterprise Park in June 2025 as a part-time member of the Marketing and Community team. Holding a bachelor's degree in business administration, she supports member engagement, event delivery, administrative activities, and day-to-day communications. Paula plays an important role in assisting the delivery of projects, programmes, and community-focused initiatives across the organisation.



Celine Smith | Head Housekeeper

Celine joined the team in Summer 2023 and is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness, presentation, and functionality of the Bawnogue campus. Her commitment to high standards helps ensure that members, visitors, and stakeholders always experience a welcoming and professional environment.



Stephen Lyons | Head Caretaker

Stephen joined Ace as a full-time employee in February 2024, having successfully completed the Community Employment Scheme with the organisation over the previous three years. Working closely with the Facilities Manager, Stephen supports site maintenance, refurbishment projects, landscaping initiatives, and infrastructure improvements, helping to ensure projects are completed safely, efficiently, and within budget.

