



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2022**

TALLAGHT  
ENTERPRISE CENTRE  
DUBLIN 24



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The main object for which Partas is established is "the relief of poverty for residents of Tallaght, and the suburbs thereof in particular (provided that this shall not preclude us from operating outside this area) by the promotion of beneficial community based facilities and services which, through education and training, facilitate the entry into employment or self-employment or the return to education of long term unemployed persons".



## INTRODUCTION

Partas is an economic development social enterprise which was established in 1984 to combat unemployment and disadvantage in Tallaght, South Dublin and has as its objective: *to build an inclusive and thriving community by being a leading source of excellence in development of local enterprise and of social economy*. Since then Partas has evolved into quite a large organisation with a staff of just over 65 and a voluntary board drawn from its membership.

Partas has worked with other stakeholders in developing enterprise space around Tallaght and now manages four successful Community Enterprise Centres in Tallaght Village, Brookfield, Killinarden and Bolbrook, now reborn as The Edge. In recent years Partas has established a range of parallel traded income sources including Social and Local Enterprise Alliance DAC; County Fare and Coffee @ The Edge (artisan coffee shops); KitchenTime (hourly commercial kitchen rental); Priory Brewing (craft brewery).

Partas is also a training organisation and delivers business training, mentoring and labour market activation schemes. We are also specialists in the development of social enterprise and work with many other stakeholders nationally and at EU level to advance policy and practice in the sector.

## MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

At Partas we are very open about our performance, finances, governance and leadership. Our mission is to build an inclusive and thriving community by being a leading source of excellence in the development of local enterprise and the social economy.

In order to fulfil this mission and achieve these goals we believe we should be 100% transparent and accountable to our service users, funders and partners.

Partas is a registered trading name of Partas CLG. We provide our audited accounts to the Companies Registration Office every year and a copy of our latest Financial Statement can be downloaded from our website.

### **Mission Statement:**

Our aim is to build an inclusive and thriving community by being a leading source of excellence in development of local enterprise and of social economy.

### **Objectives:**

1. To foster and support entrepreneurship within the community through appropriate business training, mentoring and ongoing support.
2. To create improved opportunities for sustainable employment within all sectors of the local community through lifelong training, re-training, personal and business development programmes.
3. To effectively manage, develop and maintain enterprise centres for the community, which offer affordable workspace in support of local enterprise and act as focal points for local community development.
4. To support the innovative development of the social economy through new approaches to analysing, understanding and developing all aspects of the sector at local, national and European levels.
5. To encourage inclusivity through continual analysis of and proactive responses to the needs of marginalized groups within the community.
6. To promote the highest standards of service, commitment and professionalism within our own organisation as a means of meeting our mission objectives and of enhancing the personal and career development of all our staff.
7. To act as a voice and as an agent for change on issues relevant to the above.

## WELCOME FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

2022 was another excellent year for Partas with some key projects delivered, new projects commenced and an ever growing engagement across the community and we were delighted to hit a number of significant milestones thanks to our fantastic team led by John Kearns our CEO.

During the past year we had a number of new starters with many of them based at The Edge. I would like to congratulate all the staff of The Edge for their contribution to making it such a success in its opening period.

Our on-going success is directly linked to our very hard working teams. We have made extraordinary progress this year, and I'd like to personally thank every member of staff for their energy, commitment and consistency in driving our organisation forward.

Sadly, we said goodbye to a number of retiring staff this year, Noreen Byrne, Teresa McGrath, Yvonne Cusack, Margaret Murphy & Rene Synnott whom we can all agree, had a big impact during their time with us. We are deeply saddened that Yvonne has passed away earlier this year and a short time later our retired colleague, Jack Finlay, also passed. They will remain cherished in our memories.

Some of my personal highlights from our activity this year include:

- The growth of The Edge post Covid with the official opening by An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar in October 2022.
- Seeing full occupancy of all Units in Brookfield and Killinarden Centres
- Three more successful Webnet Programmes delivered
- The Apex and The Studio completed in September
- Work commencing on Main Road for our latest project Priory Market.

We extend our gratitude to Enterprise Ireland for their continued support and to the Dept. of Justice & Equality for their support through the I.I.P. Programme. These important investments have created the opportunity to continue the innovative development of our centres.

For 2023 our focus will be on the very exciting Priory Market development and the introduction of a new concept in hospitality in the Tallaght region. Watch this space!

Thank you all for another excellent year and I look forward to an equally exciting 2023.

**Barbara Quinn**  
**Chairperson**

We are told that we should live in the moment and for most people that will be good advice. However for a CEO the requirement is to live in the future – most likely two, three, four or five years into the future. While others manage the current conditions at sea, the CEO must be scanning the horizon and plotting the course for where we need to be at some future stage. This thought struck me as particularly appropriate as I set about writing my report on the year 2022. It is apt because the planning for 2022 began some six years earlier when together with the Board of Partas, we adopted the strategy of ‘Social + Local’ – a radical re-envisioning of how we were going to position the organisation to set it on a more sustainable path and maintain the impact of our mission to create an inclusive and thriving community in Tallaght. We were emerging from a severe downturn for the country and our organisation and it was an ongoing struggle to keep the ship afloat.

As a strategy, ‘Social + Local’ saw us embark on our own entrepreneurial journey and re-focus our energies on purely local economic and entrepreneurial development and social enterprise development. We would retreat from European partnership projects and devote ourselves to Tallaght alone. As goals go, it was as hairy and audacious as they come. However, we can say with reasonable certainty at this stage that it was the correct path for us. We have completed one of the major elements of the strategy in bringing about ‘The Edge’ which has certainly found its position within the local community. It operates not just as an entrepreneurial hub for local start-ups but as a favoured venue for the local community and as a hub for various business and community events. It hosts 20 businesses with 75 employees together with a co-working community of 47 members. The Black Box is highly in demand as a high tech conference/multimedia room for meetings, training and podcasting. ‘Coffee @ The Edge’ operates daily for social gathering and in the evenings for occasional fund-raising, supper-club or business seminars. The centre was officially opened in November 2022 by then Tánaiste, Leo Varadker.

Ambitious as The Edge was, the challenge to redevelop our Main Road enterprise centre as a major food-based hub seemed at times like an impossible dream. Tallaght Enterprise Centre was aging badly and in dire need of urgent rehabilitation. The vision of creating a food-based centre coincided with the opportunity of acquiring the required investment through the Immigrant Investor Programme and the major plank of ‘Social + Local’ became realisable. 2022 saw us begin to reshape Tallaght Enterprise Centre into Priory Market – Tallaght’s Left Bank. Phase one was completed with the addition of two new multi-purpose spaces - The Apex and The Studio. The Apex is a 90-seat theatre, conference and performance space and The Studio is a flexible space for stand-alone events or as extra space for use within Priory Market. The €3.4m redevelopment will not just secure the sustainability of Partas into the future but create training and career pathways for local artisans and act as a focal point for Tallaght and increase its tourism potential. Priory Market is scheduled to open in early 2024.

We also availed of various opportunities during 2022 to bring our other two enterprise centres in Brookfield and Killinarden up to the standard we felt desirable. Both have benefitted from a level of attention that we had not been in a position to afford them in recent years and are now rightly

fit for purpose. A special acknowledgement needs to be made here to the support and full cooperation of South Dublin County Council and Enterprise Ireland, both of whom have been indispensable in helping us to achieve all that we have in recent years.

The other side of our 'Social + Local' strategy was our commitment to social enterprise, both in our own example and in promoting and supporting social enterprise. While we have become a successful model for social enterprise we have also been highly active in operating to promote social enterprise in policy and practice at national and EU level. Partas continues as the Irish member on the expert advisory group to the EU Commission (GECES). We are also a founding member of SERI, the practitioner led network for social enterprise in Ireland and have hosted high level discussions and seminars of the topic, including one as the Irish hub of the Social Enterprise World Forum in 2022 with guest speaker Leo Clancy, CEO of Enterprise Ireland. We continue to work with SERI and the Department of Rural and Community Development in further enhancing the social enterprise ecosystem.

The last few years have been intense in bringing about this radical transformation in the organisation. 2023 is proving just as intense and daunting but I remain confident that we will see a fruitful outcome and finally arrive at the promised land for which we set out some six years ago. We have a dedicated and talented team working to bring this about and the support of a committed and visionary Board. We are beginning to enjoy the fruits of so much labour and the best is yet to come.

**John Kearns**  
**Chief Executive**

<b>BOARD MEMBERS</b>
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During 2022 the following members constituted the Board of Partas:

**Chairperson:** Barbara Quinn

**Vice-Chairperson:** Carol Pemberton

**Board Members:** Sheri Brennan  
Tara de Buitléar  
David Kennedy  
John Lahart TD  
Michelle Licciardi  
Damien Roche  
Peter Vallely

**Board Secretary and CEO** John Kearns

### Tallaght Enterprise Centre

- Renovation of the centre became the new focus
- The process for applying for change of use commenced.
- The process of starting to move licence holders out of the centre commenced – at end December two unit holders still in place but hope they will complete moves in early 2023
- The roof needed a temporary patch until the entire roof works begin.
- The builder and engineers prepared development schedule and costs. Works commenced in March and are expected to take at least eighteen months.
- Underground pipe and drains survey: Drain survey found a myriad of issues, including: Broken Pipes, Roots going through pipes, Junctions with numerous pipes over-laid from previous remedial work that were carried out ad hoc with no overview of the required system.
- Demolition of internal walls downstairs has commenced – as each unit become vacant its walls come down
- Studio space and ‘conference centre’ completed
- Toilets installed in units along back corridor of centre – this allowed for units to be closed off completely from centre
- New entrance for Threshold and Partas completed
- Carried out research on food stalls, Brewery refit and remodelling, Commercial Kitchens, Meat grills
- Exeed (SEAI), Phase 1 of grant application was approved. Phase 1 pays for 70% of consultant’s fees, to assess the Building and generate a cohesive innovative energy plan, for the future use of the premises. This design analysis will be used in Phase 2 of the application to Exeed for funding.

### The Edge - Bolbrook

- The main building offices are fully occupied
- The co-working space was launched with a social media campaign in January
- Connected Hubs – Heat pump for main building; upgrades to Black Box (audio/visual equipment and air conditioning system); Kitchen extension; attic conversion; Boundary fence designed and painted
- The Official launch of The Edge with Leo Varadkar and other impressive speakers and dignitaries was an outstanding success. The positive vibe was effusive from all attendees. It was fantastic to witness.
- Due to demand two offices were created inside The Annexe – both occupied since creation
- The Supper club night held in December which was a resounding success
- Co-Working is slow but it is the same situation on a national basis.
- The Edge is running smoothly and has become a community and members hub. The Hangout area has become as popular as we had hoped.

### **Killinarden Enterprise Park**

- Demand for units is on the increase following the slowdown under Covid
- Due to lack of maintenance over the years the window seals are breaking down and are causing water damage to the walls of some of the offices – in discussion with SDCC about repairs
- Enterprise Ireland’s Enterprise Centre Fund allowed us to enhance security by automating the main gate.
- Fire alarm system upgraded thanks to SDCC
- Blocks 1 and 6 were repainted under SDCC’s Business Support Fund
- A refurbishment of the lift was completed in October. The full cost of this was met by South Dublin Co. Council.
- Drainage issues sorted with costs being met by SDCC
- Parking is an ongoing issue without an easily acceptable solution

### **Brookfield Enterprise Centre**

- New access system installed on Main Building to allow unit holders to access the building without the need for a Reception area
- New car park lighting and cameras installed
- Under Enterprise Ireland’s Enterprise Centre Fund the windows in the Main Building were replaced and the un-needed reception area was converted into an additional office space. The entire centre was also painted.
- Due to anti-social behaviour we had to engage the services of a private security firm at various times during the year
- Rene resigned
- Stacey Burke appointed as CE Assistant Supervisor
- The Fire alarm needs a total upgrade and we have requested financial assistance from the SDCC.

### **Training**

Partas completed its WEBNET+ contract, which was co-funded by the Irish government and the European Social Fund as part of the ESF programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014 – 2020. The main objective was to increase female participation in the labour market, enhance skill levels among marginalised women and ongoing engagement with women through networking.

The programme which ran from October 2019 to September 2022 delivered eight 18 week programmes over the three year period to 123 women.

The Final event “Resilience” was held in The Apex on 14 September 2022. This was the first event to be held in the new venue and was attended by the Mayor of South County Dublin Cllr. Emma Murphy and Daragh Solan from the Funds Administration Unit, Dept. Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

Below is a summary of the programme -

**Engagement:**

- WEBNET successfully engaged, and recruited 123 women on to its 8 programmes between and February 2020 to June 2022.
- 15 were over 54 years of age, and 0 was under 25
- 34 were of migrant background, 11 had a disability, 11 other disadvantage and 1 was homeless
- 29 identified as living in a Rural area

**Education:**

- 4 women had primary/junior cycle as highest level of educational attainment
- 38 had leaving certificate or further education
- 81 had higher certificate or above
- 110 (89%) women gained a qualification upon leaving and 79 (64%) gained 2 qualifications
- Start Your Own Business Awards (79) – Distinctions (40), Merit (31), Pass (8)
- Career Planning Awards (110) – Distinctions (64), Merit (43), Pass (3)

**Employment/Self-employment:**

- When starting the programme, 27 were identified as short term unemployed of this 20 were long term unemployed
- 57 were identified as Inactive and 53 Inactive not in education or training
- 39 were identified to be in Employment/Self Employed

**30% (n37) new businesses were set up. (Inactive -15, Long Term Unemployed - 13, Employed - 7 and Unemployed < 12 months - 2).** Some of the remaining women who completed the programme have aspirations at some point in the near future to become self-employed.

**Networking:**

- 144 WEBNET+ sessions were delivered over three years (432 hrs)
- 22 monthly networking sessions were held 16 Online and 6 Live
- Jo Davey from Jo's Absolute Nutrition held a session on 5 May 2021
- Katita Pellegrini Fogarty (WEBNET+ 6) gave a presentation to her peers on her new Wellness business
- A group of women attended the National Women's Day networking event 8 March 2022
- A group of women attended the Saoirse networking event 10 March 2022
- The ladies continue to network since the programme ceased

**Community Employment**

The 27<sup>th</sup> year of our Community Employment programme began in January 2022 and finishes in January 2023.

During 2022 our numbers remained between 27-30 participants with 1 supervisor and 1 assistant supervisor in place based in Brookfield Enterprise Centre. Our participants are now carrying out their duties in all four centres as Administrators; Centre Attendants; Gardeners; Kitchen Assistants/Chef; Maintenance; Receptionists and Security Operatives.

Throughout the year there was very little training undertaken as most providers were only offering online programmes. These don't suit the majority of our participants because most don't have access to the technology needed to participate and a lot have issues with language and are unable to undertake training until their English levels have been improved.

**Bernard Bennett**  
**Chief Operations Officer**

## **Coffee @ The Edge**

### **Staffing:**

Over the past year, our coffee shop has experienced growth and expansion, not just in terms of our events and community engagement but also within our dedicated team. I am thrilled to share the exciting staffing updates that have taken place, highlighting the talent and commitment within our organization.

First and foremost, we warmly welcomed several new staff members to our team. These local individuals have been a great addition to our team and we are delighted to have 14 in house trained baristas. Their presence has contributed to the positive atmosphere and continued success of our coffee shop.

Additionally, I am delighted to announce the well-deserved promotions of three of our team members. Their outstanding dedication and contributions have led them to take on new leadership roles within our organization, further enhancing our operational effectiveness and customer experience.

These promotions reflect our commitment to recognizing and nurturing talent within our organisation. We are confident that their expertise, combined with the collective efforts of our entire team, will further drive the success of our coffee shop as we continue to provide outstanding experiences for our customers.

### **Community Engagement and Impact:**

In the year 2022, as Covid-19 restrictions began to ease, our coffee shop began to fill up with familiar and smiling faces. As the year progressed, we expanded our horizons by organising a series of events within our coffee shop, aimed at fostering community engagement and making a positive impact.

We began with International Women's Day. It was a great success and a joyous occasion that allowed us to celebrate the accomplishments of women in our local community and the work that Saoirse Domestic Violence Services do. We successfully raised an impressive €2038 for SDVS.

In May we opened our doors to our community to provide a place for them to stop off for a coffee and a chat after their Darkness into Light walk.

As we reflect on the past year, it is evident that our coffee shop has evolved into more than just a place for coffee; it has become a platform for social impact and connection. We are proud of the positive difference we have made, and we remain committed to continuing these endeavours in the future.

Thank you to our dedicated team and our loyal customers for making all of this possible. Together, we have truly created a space that extends beyond the boundaries of a traditional coffee shop, enriching lives and strengthening our community.

## **ARISE**

Partas were awarded funding from Pobal under the ARISE project. The aim of the ARISE funding was to provide grants to Social Enterprises to help them promote the positive impact they have on their local communities.

This funding presented Partas with a unique opportunity to collaborate with 30 social enterprises across Dublin and acknowledge their contributions through the provision of plaques. These plaques served as a visible symbol highlighting their status as social enterprises.

The initiative proved to be an enriching experience for our team as we delved into the diverse landscape of social enterprises in Dublin. We discovered an array of organisations that were making a significant impact in various sectors, addressing social issues, and fostering positive change within our community.

Each plaque featured a QR code, strategically placed to capture the attention of passers-by. The QR code acted as an enticing gateway, encouraging individuals to scan and explore further details about the specific social enterprise and the meaningful work it undertakes. It provided an opportunity for people to learn more about the organisation's mission, values, and the positive impact it has on society.

We are delighted to report that the response to the QR codes has been overwhelmingly positive. The engagement and curiosity of the public have resulted in over 390 scans of the QR codes on our plaques. This demonstrates a genuine interest in learning about social enterprises and their contributions to creating a more equitable and sustainable world.

## **Events @The Edge**

### ***Social Enterprise World Forum***

In conjunction with SERI we hosted an event on the 27th of September which proved to be an exceptional evening, marked by a distinguished panel of guests, including Leo Clancy from Enterprise Ireland, Joanne O'Riordan, Leyla Karaha, Fergus Finlay, Ailis McSweeney, Stephen Power and John Kearns .

This remarkable gathering was not limited to physical attendance, as the event was also streamed globally in partnership with the World Forum in Brisbane, Australia. The virtual outreach allowed us to extend the event's impact beyond our physical location and engage with a diverse audience worldwide. The evening was widely enjoyed by all participants, creating a vibrant atmosphere conducive to networking and fostering meaningful connections within the social enterprise sector.

### **Supper Club**

During the month of December, we had the pleasure of hosting Chef Mindi Keane from Ireland AM at the Edge for our inaugural Supper Club event. This exclusive gathering proved to be an exceptional evening filled with a delightful blend of flavourful dishes and light-hearted laughter. The event left a profound impression on all attendees, resulting in a truly remarkable experience for everyone involved.

**Amy Keatinge**  
**Enterprise and Projects Manager**



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