

AGENDA ITEM 8



Din I-Art Helwa

RESOLUTIONS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FEBRUARY 2022

1) BUREAUCRATIC DELAYS WITH GUARDIANSHIP DEEDS PUT HERITAGE SITES AT RISK

Din I-Art Helwa members, at the Annual General Meeting of Saturday 26 February, 2022, urged government, and in particular the Minister in charge of the Lands Authority, and the Minister for Cultural Heritage, the Arts and Local Government, to urgently resolve the bureaucratic issues around the granting of heritage sites to NGOs in Guardianship. DLH expresses its disappointment for the unreasonable and exaggerated delays with which Guardianship Deeds are concluded leaving the organisation without answers for many months notwithstanding that it has carried out the required studies, acquired the necessary permits and found funds for restoration. DLH expresses its concern that, as a result of these delays, many historic sites continue to deteriorate through neglect and abandon.

2) RESOLUTION THAT A NEW NATURE PARK BE CREATED IN GOZO AND EXISTING PARKS EXPANDED IN MALTA

Din I-Art Helwa members, at the Annual General Meeting of Saturday 26 February 2022, urged government and the Ministry for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning, and the Lands Authority, to support the organization's proposals for the creation of new Nature and History Parks and the extension of existing ones:

- 1) At the Ta' Soppa area in Nadur, Gozo, to incorporate two headlands including a Natura 2000 site and the coastal watchtower which was restored by Din I-Art Helwa to create nature destinations for families, children and visitors in Gozo.
- 2) The extension of the Majjistral Nature and History Park to cover the area formerly managed by the Gaia foundation around Għajn Tuffieħa, and the North towards iċ-Ċummnija which is currently a rubbish dump.
- 3) The neglected area around the White Tower, a heritage site currently restored and maintained by Din I-Art Helwa in Aħrax, limits of Mellieħa.

Din I-Art Helwa members urge the government to support these park extensions that are incremental and uncontroversial, and most of which should already be protected and managed. These projects would show Malta's commitment to the environment and generate tangible benefits for the communities and tourism sectors alike.

The organisation stressed that with increasing threats from Climate Change, habitat loss and over-development, any failure to act will mean we are in danger of erasing the islands' natural beauty forever, particularly in Gozo.

We call on all political parties to endorse the creation of the Nature and History Park in Gozo and the expansion of existing parks by including these projects in their respective electoral manifestos

3) FURTHER PROTECTION TO BE GIVEN TO TREES AND GARDENS

Din I-Art Helwa, at its Annual General Meeting of Saturday 26 February, 2022, called on the Political Parties to include in their electoral manifestos that further protection be given to trees, gardens, and green open spaces within urban areas, through the 'Classification and scheduling of Green Open Areas within development zones. i.e. Historic, Modern and Private Gardens, Green spaces AND the protection of micro green sites such as the particular space or spaces where trees and shrubs grow or may still be grown'.

The current planning framework fails to ensure the protection of green open spaces and mature gardens within urban areas, which are increasingly threatened, often to simply increase the development potential of sites. Furthermore, the TREES AND WOODLANDS PROTECTION REGULATIONS as enacted through S.L.549.123, fails to ensure the preservation and protection of several tree species, especially those within urban areas that fall outside of the recognized scheduled zones.

Din I-Art Helwa urges the political parties to substantially increase efforts to have trees, gardens and other green open spaces within the urban areas protected.

4) GOOD GOVERNANCE SHOULD BE AT THE CENTRE OF PA MANAGEMENT AND DECISIONS

Din I-Art Helwa, at its Annual General Meeting of 26 February, 2022, called on the Planning Authority to keep the principles of good governance at the centre of all its decision-making and management. Too often the PA appears to prioritise the demands of big developers, while it should instead look out for and defend the quality of life of the wider community, and also focus on the needs of residents and neighbours. Good governance in the planning sector includes encouraging the participation and representation of all stakeholders. Din I-Art Helwa calls on the PA to strive harder to prevent the loss of open spaces, to prevent the destruction of treasured streetscapes and skylines, as well as to prevent the widespread and relentless daily inconveniences to citizens caused by the frenzied over-development taking place all over Malta and Gozo.