



<p>Communications Plan</p>	<p>A communications plan for 2015 GeoparkLIFE has been developed, and will be positioning the Geopark as an authority on sustainable tourism destination development. Initially, the content that will be used to showcase this is the results of the Code of Practice training and the Enterprise Survey that was conducted this summer. Case studies showcasing the standout results of this programme are being developed along with supporting video clips and press releases. As the B2 and B3 elements of the programme progresses, we will also highlight these case studies and achievements.</p> <p>While progress has been made on progressing the GeoparkLIFE communication plan much of the winter months have been taken up with working with the BEN Marketing committee developing and visitor communication initiatives</p>
<p>B.E.N. Marketing</p>	<p>The 2015 marketing programme with BEN has continued to support the existing products of the Burren Food trail and The Burren Outdoor &amp; Activity trail, their festivals and events.</p> <p>Below is an outline of the Initiatives</p> <p>1. Local - Coordinating an information dissemination campaign with the aim of increasing awareness of the products and experiences in the destination among the tourism businesses in the region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burren Tourism Story Event</li> <li>• Production and distribution of product leaflets and posters (Food and Activity)</li> </ul> <p>2. National - Targeting domestic visitors by promote the Geopark as a holiday destination with excellent food, activities and festival through the following actions and communication channels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print Media - Create and distribute press releases highlighting our products, experiences, festivals and awards to newspapers and magazines (Travel, food, lifestyle sections)</li> <li>• TV – Develop target Nationwide, eco-eye, tracks and trails, food programmes</li> <li>• Radio – through offering competition prizes on national radio stations</li> <li>• Attendance at national events to promote the destination, products, experiences and festivals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Holiday World</li> <li>○ into the West</li> <li>○ Bloom in the Park</li> <li>○ The Ploughing Championships</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website – Burren.ie <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Upgrade website to a responsive site to tackle bounce rate from mobiles and tablets</li> <li>○ Create new and engaging content for visitors through the BEN Blog and by being the go to location for what’s on in North Clare (creation of a Music, festival and events guide)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>3. International - highlighting the Geopark as a destination that has an abundance to offers in terms of food, activity and walking through the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship building with Tourism Ireland and Failte Ireland and supplying stories, photography and press releases</li> <li>• Awards applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Applying for destination and product awards to raise awareness</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Social Media – have developed a social media strategy which sees each member of BEN writing one blog post per year and taking charge of a curated Twitter account</li> <li>• Website upgrade</li> <li>• Presence at Tourist offices - Targeting visitors that have arrived in Ireland and are looking for things to do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Building relationships and presenting the products to Tourist office staff</li> <li>○ Dressing the windows in tourist information offices for scheduled periods to highlight festivals, products and events</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>GeoparkLIFE Communications</p>	<p>We are positioning the Geopark as an authority on sustainable tourism destination development with the expert knowledge gained from the undertaking of the GeoparkLIFE project.</p> <p>Below is an outline by audience of the communications initiatives that are on-going:</p> <p>Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newsletter – A newsletter has been developed to communicate the GeoparkLIFE project progress and will be mailed out to stakeholders on a monthly basis.</li> </ul> <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have taken a monthly column in the local paper (the North Clare Local) to explain about the Geopark and the GeoparkLIFE project</li> <li>• The Burren tourism story event was targeted at the local business community. The event which was held in March this year showcased the products and experiences that have been developed by the Geopark and the Burren ecotourism network to promote the region as a tourism destination and to encourage visitors to ‘stay another night’</li> </ul> <p>Partners and Policy Makers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cases studies – showcasing the standout results of B1 and the sustainable code of practice programme are in development</li> </ul>

along with supporting video clips. The case studies have been written and are in the process of being branded while the filming schedule for the supporting video clips is in development

- Awards Applications
  - The Geopark have been shortlisted for in the Irish Tourism Industry awards that take place on 24<sup>th</sup> April in two categories, firstly in the Local Authority category for the GeoparkLIFE project and secondly in the environmental category for the Code of practice

#### Coach Drivers

- We have developed a programme to target coach drivers that travel through the Geopark region
  - We will be setting up a trade stand at the Cliffs of Moher to speak to drivers and guides to gauge their level of knowledge of the Geopark, to promote leave no trace and to unearth what type of information they might require to aid them with the interpretation of the landscape for their visitors

#### Schools

- We are currently working on a schools education programme with Lisdoonvarna secondary school which will see transitions year students develop a methodology for training primary school students on conservation

#### **Social media**

The Facebook page has continually grown throughout the year. From October 17<sup>th</sup> to April 16<sup>th</sup> our Page Likes have increased from 875 to 1,445, an increase of 570. On numerous occasions our posts have reached over 1400 people, and it has proved an effective way to promote and inform of Geopark activities and events.

The Twitter page has also continued to grow throughout the year from 969 in mid October to 1370 on 16<sup>th</sup> April

#### **Website update**

We are currently undergoing a process of updating and reorganising [www.burrengeopark.ie](http://www.burrengeopark.ie) to ensure that the communications plan above can be clearly presented and that the work of the GeoparkLIFE programme is woven in more effectively into the promotion of the Geopark as a destination. The website is going has been reconstructed to provide easier navigation and more detailed and regularly updated information on the GeoparkLIFE project.

#### **Press**

Since October we have received a number of press articles in both local and national papers with two of the biggest stories being the GeoparkLIFE awards and our success at the Green Hospitality awards.

We are currently undertaking a process to evaluate the monetary value of the coverage we have generated for the destination.

We have received 38 pieces of press from October 2014 – April 2015

