



## **ACTION B2 SITES AND MONUMENTS PROGRESS REPORT**

25-10-2016

### **1. KEY OBJECTIVE**

To develop transferrable toolkits for the monitoring and visitor management of sites and monuments

Through the development of

- A collaborative approach
- Baseline data for seven selected demonstration sites
- A work programme and testing of interventions at demonstration sites
- Monitoring and managing change
- Reporting
- Policy implications

### **2. PROGRESS**

**April 2016-October 2016**

The Table below provides detail of

- issues identified for each demonstration site,
- actions completed to date and
- actions underway

Site	Issues	Collaboration	Work programme	
			Actions completed	Actions underway
<b>Slieve Carran</b>	Lack of archaeological and architectural baseline data.	B2 working group (NPWS, OPW, NMS, CCC)	Baseline geology, ecology, archaeology and architectural reports - Completed December 2014. Archaeological Assessment of Oratory site completed August 2015.	The Slieve Carran site is owned by the DAHG and managed by the NPWS. Discussion has been requested within the Dept. on the future integrated management of this site.
	Impact of visitor numbers and footfall on walking trails	NPWS, RRO, MAC Ltd. Limerick (SDI4Apps project)	Collection and analysis of visitor numbers: Four footfall counters installed Sept. 2014. Data collected and analysed Sept 2014-September 2016.  Path monitoring data collected by NPWS 2014. Testing of trail monitoring app carried out on site August 2016.	Continuous collection of visitor numbers using footfall counters.  Trail monitoring app under development with MAC Ltd. Limerick
	Deposition of votive offerings at MacDuagh's oratory site	NPWS	Baseline report on numbers and types of offerings present – completed March 2016. All votive offerings were removed by NPWS staff in April 2016. This was an agreed action by the B2 working group in order to monitor the scale of deposition during the 2016 summer season. Monitoring of votive deposition was undertaken from May to October 2016.	A GeoparkLIFE Leave No Trace ethics brochure has been developed and is currently being printed which will address the practice of 'votive deposition' in the Burren  Continuing monitoring of votive offering deposition
<b>Burren National Park</b>	Traffic congestion at Gortlecka Crossroads and Crag Road	NPWS, local landowners and businesses	GeoparkLIFE contributed to the development of the brief of work required under a RFT document for 'A Visitor and Traffic Management Plan for the Burren National Park' which was circulated on tenders on August 19, 2016. The successful applicant was Brendan McGrath & Associates Corofin and the contract is now underway and due for completion 27 February 2017.  GeoparkLIFE has completed the following actions which will feed into this study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From August 1-31<sup>st</sup> a traffic survey was undertaken at 4 road locations around the Gortlecka crossroads. This survey was completed by Abacus Transport Surveys Ltd. Athlone and organised by GeoparkLIFE in collaboration with the NPWS.</li> <li>• A parking survey template was developed by GeoparkLIFE and a survey was completed over the month of August 2016 in conjunction with NPWS staff.</li> <li>• Collection and analysis of data from 6 footfall counters on walking trails within the BNP</li> </ul>	The research for the 'Visitor and Traffic Management Plan for the Burren National Park' is underway by Brendan McGrath & Associates. GeoparkLIFE will continue to feed into this process as required.  Collection of footfall data continuing

<b>Blackhead/ Fanore</b>	Fanore Beach: Impact on dune system due to recent storms, climate change and recreational activity.	Clare County Council Engineering staff	'Fanore Beach and Dune Management Report: Current problems and Planning for the Future' was completed in August 2016 by MaREI (Marine Renewable Energy Ireland Centre) UCC.	Work plan being prepared for implementation of recommendations of report by CCC including restructuring of signage at the site
	Lack of data for user numbers of Blackhead walking trail and across uplands.	Rural Recreation Officer, Clare LEADER Company.	Monitoring of visitor numbers along Blackhead Trail using footfall counter installed November 2014. Data collected and analysed Nov 2014 – Sept 2016.	Continued recording and analysis of numbers using footfall counter.
	Damage to archaeological monuments	Landowners, Aegis Archaeology, NMS	A RFT document for the development of a method statement for conservation work at Murroghkilly cairn and the implementation of a 'community' conservation project at the cairn was prepared in collaboration with Christine Grant (NMS) and circulated at the end of June. Aegis Archaeology was contracted to the project on 14 September. Initial survey work has been completed at the site  UCD carried out a drone survey on Sept 27 <sup>th</sup>	Preparation and Submission of method statement and notification of works proposed to NMS.  If the project is approved by the NMS conservation work will be undertaken using a group of local volunteers.
	Traffic congestion due to lack of parking facilities along narrow coastal route	CCC engineers, Heritage Officer and NPWS	A feasibility report with regard to the lands purchased by CCC in 2010 for the potential development of parking lay-bys was completed in August 2016.	The report is currently under review by CCC awaiting decision on how to proceed
<b>An Rath/ Cahermore</b>	Road safety issues due to sightlines and lack of safe parking areas at both sites. Large numbers of visitor impacting on earthen banks at An Rath causing soil erosion. Very small numbers visiting Cahermore.	CCC, OPW, NMS, NPWS, landowner	All drawings prepared for submission for planning permission	Permission being sought from landowner to submit for Part 8 planning  Footfall monitoring continuing at Cahermore.
<b>Poulnabrone</b>	Lack of toilet facilities  Anti-social behaviour  Integration of management of site (monument and car park under different management – OPW and CCC )	Clare County Council, OPW	Feasibility study completed (Tracy Duffy, Environment Section CCC) April 2016.  Research completed re provision of CCTV July 2015.	Awareness campaign to be developed with regard to where toilet facilities are available.  Continuing exploration of development of integrated management plan for site.

<b>Carran Church</b>	Lack of Parking  Condition of Church building	Planning/ Engineering Departments of CCC	Feasibility for provision of parking area completed by CCC Dec 2015. Result – sightlines not favourable on western side of R480. Eastern side unsuitable due to presence of several archaeological monuments.  RFT prepared and circulated September 16 <sup>th</sup> for the Design of Repairs to a section of Carran Mediaeval Church, Preparation and Evaluation of tender documents for the employment of a contractor for the above repairs and final report.	Tenders awaiting assessment.
<b>All Sites</b>	Dated information on interpretive panels and panels in need of replacement	All site owners and managers	Sample panel template designed which could be used at all sites to provide uniform branding, design and recognition. The name and logo of the main agency responsible for the site in question will be placed in the upper left hand section and other agencies logos in lower right. Sample presented to B2 working group 7 September 2016.	Discussion ongoing re development of uniform signage at all sites
	Lack of Universal Design Guidelines for natural heritage sites	National Disability Authority (NDA) and the Brothers of Charity Group Ennis	The Brothers of Charity Learners group report on demonstration sites received December 2015. NDA workshop for site managers delivered Jan 25, 2016. NDA/Fáilte Ireland workshop for BEN members (service providers) delivered 10 Feb, 2016. Gradients recorded for Orange Trail in BNP (August 2016) to use as case study for developing of a transferable ‘walkability’ audit template	‘Walkability’ audit form for natural heritage sites currently being designed as they only exist for built heritage sites. Organisation of one-day audit by Brothers of Charity group and Age Friendly group to assess a walking trail in the BNP. This data will be used to develop guidelines for the adaptation of a trail to allow ‘least restrictive access’.
	The Heritage Map Viewer	The Heritage Council	All data collected for the demonstration sites will be collated and presented through a specific Burren and Cliffs of Moher section of the Heritage Council Map Viewer. Layout and input of existing datasets underway. Initial GeoparkLIFE demo sites information uploaded.	Preparation of further GeoparkLIFE data for input.
	Monitoring APP	MAC (Microelectronics Application Centre) Limerick/NP WS/RRO	An app based monitoring tool for the seven demonstration sites is currently being developed with MAC Ltd. The purpose of this toolkit is to provide a holistic approach to the monitoring of heritage sites. It incorporates 3 monitoring forms – visitor observation, infrastructure/buildings and walking trail/approach paths. The first draft was tested on the ground in August 2016 and revisions/additions have been made to the visitor observation and buildings forms. Discussions are underway with MAC Ltd to develop the trails form as it is hoped to develop this section with detailed mapping and tracking facilities.	Ground testing of revised app. Further development of trails section under agreed contract.
	Visitor impacts on the landscape	Leave No Trace Ireland,	A Burren specific Leave No Trace ethics brochure has been developed and is currently being printed	Distribution of Burren Leave No Trace brochure.