



**LIFE11 ENV/IE/922**

## Minutes of Meeting

<b>Project</b>	Steering Group Meeting	
<b>Date</b>	17/4/2013	
<b>Location</b>	Clare County Council Offices, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare	

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Abbr.</b>
Yes	Phil Deegan	Shannon Development	PD
Yes	Flan Quilligan	Shannon Development & Failte Ireland	FQ
Yes	Sarah Gatley	Geological Survey of Ireland	SG
Apologies	Michael Fitzsimons	Failte Ireland	MF
Yes	Carleton Jones	NUIG	CJ
Apologies	Gabriel Cooney	UCD	GC
Apologies	Beatrice Kelly	Heritage Council	BK
Apologies	Margaret Keane	National Monuments Service	MK
Yes	Christine Grant	National Monuments Service	CHG
Yes	Hugh Carey	National Monuments Service	HC
Apologies	Paul McMahan	Office of Public Works	PMcM
Yes	Ken Curley	Office of Public Works	KC
Apologies	Enda Mooney	National Parks & Wildlife Service	EM
Apologies	Emma Glanville	National Parks & Wildlife Service	EG
Yes	Congella McGuire	Clare County Council	CMcG
Yes	Shane Casey	Clare County Council	SC
Apologies	Mary Burke	Clare County Council	MB
Yes	Tracey Duffy	Clare County Council	TD
Yes	Joan Tarmey	Clare County Council	JT
Apologies	Sean Lenihan	Clare County Council	SL
Yes	Tina O'Dwyer	Consultant to Geopark	TO'D
Yes	Brian Callinan	Consultant	BC
Yes	Carol Gleeson	Burren Geopark/Clare County Council	CG
Yes	Eamon Doyle	Burren Geopark	ED
Yes	Richard Morrison	Burrenbeo Trust	RM
Yes	Pat O'Connor	Ex-Geological Survey of Ireland	POC
Yes	Katherine Webster	Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre	KW
Yes	Christy Sinclair	Burren Ecotourism Network	CS



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Burren Charter</u>: CG explained how EU Life project could support the Burren Charter on a range of initiatives relating to tourism and conservation, signage, transport, Heritage Training Programme and Burren Festivals. RM gave an update on status of Burren Charter: draft is currently up on the website <a href="http://www.burrencharter.com">www.burrencharter.com</a> or via <a href="http://www.burrenbeo.com">www.burrenbeo.com</a>. One round table meeting is likely to be called (mid-year) to see if it can be signed off. Lack of funding making progress difficult.</li> </ul>	
3.0	<p><b>Education &amp; Research Update (Eamon):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Evening Course</u>: 20 participants on the evening course this year and gaining momentum year or year; very good feedback with some demand for a follow-up course. This is currently being investigated.</li> <li>2. <u>Burren Geological Field School</u> – Caherconnell has obtained accreditation for NUIG (6 credits) and the plan is to have it up and running by June 2013.</li> <li>3. <u>Burren in Bloom</u> – Geopark and Burren Ecotourism Network featuring a number of walks and talks throughout the festival.</li> <li>4. <u>Burren Rocks Festival</u> takes place w/c 17<sup>th</sup> June.</li> <li>5. <u>Dark Sky Reserve</u> : ED investigating possibility of becoming the first such reserve in Ireland, potentially opens up a new niche market and would achieve further international recognition for the Geopark.</li> <li>6. <u>Introduction to Geology Course</u> for primary schools: Burren Outdoor Education Centre launched this programme and a total of 600 students participated. ‘</li> <li>7. <u>Higher Level Research</u> – ED liaising with NUIG, University of Illinois, University of Plymouth on different projects.</li> <li>8. <u>Research Archive</u>: via new website, seek to develop archive of past research and publications on the Burren and maintain an updated record of current research; the aim is to capture research as it’s happening so the Burren benefits from it. CMcG and RM were very supportive of this sharing experiences of past efforts at this and cases of research lost to the Burren simply because we are unaware it’s happening.</li> <li>9. <u>Young Scientists</u>: John Simms research is being catalogued.</li> </ol>	
	<p><b>Action B1 Tourism Enterprises Update (Tina)</b></p> <p>Much activity during March and April related to product development and trade activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Burren Food Trail &amp; Burren Weekly Food Series ready to launch.</li> <li>- Burren in Bloom series of Walks and talk on 16<sup>th</sup> March “Burren Ecotourism explores Outdoor Ethics”</li> <li>- 2 media visits planned for late April/early May</li> <li>- 1 incentive operator on a fam visit in May.</li> <li>- TOD attended Irish Tour Operators Association (ITOA) Workshop in March and will attend Meitheal Workshop in late April on behalf of the tourism enterprises.</li> </ul>	

	<p>With regard to sustainable standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 22 tourism enterprises received Ecotourism Ireland certificates on completion of the ecotourism training programme; 11 enterprises obtained Ecotourism Ireland certification while 5 have progressed to Green Hospitality certification. The programme is now complete.</li> <li>• European Tourism Indicator System: Tina outlined the new indicators for sustainable destinations – one developed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and the other by the European Commission. Tina presented the proposal to adopt the European Commission system for the Life project and to use this as a framework for measuring and monitoring progress. This was accepted by the Group. Tina will attend the technical Meeting in Brussels on 19<sup>th</sup> April (meeting of destinations ready to implement the system). After that, the priority is to establish the methodology and tools for data collection and allocate responsibility for collection i.e. which partner organisations can collect data for each indicator, how and by when. Tina will liaise directly with partners as appropriate.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Action B2 Update – Habitats and Monuments (Carol)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CG circulated updated map showing the 7 proposed sites. CG previously circulated a tabular representation of each location, including its demonstration value and other items. Would like partners to supplement this table in the areas of Research, Interventions, policies and training programmes.</li> <li>- CG proposed site visits by partners and creation of a small sub-group to progress it further. There was much discussion around approach, recording and follow-up. FQ highlighted that the Wild Atlantic Way project has already conducted significant research on the impact on the area – could eliminate need for some field work.</li> </ul> <p>Dates:  Background Reports: Submit by May 3<sup>rd</sup>. (change to Excel format CG)  Day 1: Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April (Sites 2 and 3)  Day 2: Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May (Sites 1, 6 and 7)  Day 3: Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May ( Sites 4 &amp; 5)</p>	<p>All partners.</p>
	<p><b>B3 Conservation Management (Carol)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CG updated on progress of sub-committee that looked at developing a programme. Progress has been slow and requires a further meeting to tie things down further. GC had proposed idea of a programme that could be credited under the ECTS system. Planned round-table meeting in June that interested partners are welcome to attend.</li> <li>- KC had also provided information from OPW e.g. Dry Stone Walling Module. KC confirmed that OPW can offer demonstration and</li> </ul>	

	<p>materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dick Cronin mentioned possibility of certification through the County Council. SG also highlighted that the GSI should really be involved in B3 as well.</li> <li>- Meeting with GC will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> May (full day) if partners wish to attend. CG invited all partners to submit any information, programmes, projects that may be of interest.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Administration Matters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CG will meet separately with Shannon Development and FI representatives regarding what's happened about the amalgamation. Signed agreements must be in place by end of June.</li> <li>- For financial partners, timesheets are critically important – these equate to money for the project. All members strongly encouraged to fill out the sheets month by month to avoid ending up in a backlog situation. Greg from Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience helping with a management system for this.</li> <li>- Budget code set up internally in each organisation for expenses. Keep track of expenses this way.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BC clarified that if a 3<sup>rd</sup> party finds funding for a project, the process is that they give that to one of the partners who then manage it.</li> <li>- Next Meeting Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June in Ennis. 10am – 1.30pm followed by lunch.</li> </ul>	