



LIFE Project Number

LIFE11/IEE/922

Inception Report

Covering the project activities from 01/10/2012 to 31/05/2013

Reporting Date

30/06/2013

LIFE+ PROJECT NAME or Acronym

Burren Tourism for Conservation

Data Project

Project location	Burren, County Clare, Ireland
Project start date:	01/10/2012
Project end date:	31/12/2017
Total budget	€ 2,225,245
EC contribution:	€1,108,872
(%) of eligible costs	50%

Data Beneficiary

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1. CONTENTS

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
2. List of abbreviations	3
3. Summary	3
4. Administrative aspects	4
5. Technical aspects	5
6. Financial aspects	13
Annex 1 Partnership Agreement	18
Annex 2 B1 Tourism Enterprises	27
Annex 3 B2 Monuments and Habitats	36
Annex 4: B3 Conservation Management	41
Annex 5: Steering Group minutes	46
Annex 6: Steering group pictures	63
Annex 7: Initial indicators	

2. List of abbreviations

None

3. Executive summary

3.1 General progress

The project aims to strengthen the integration of tourism and natural heritage, reconciling tourism development with conservation of geology, biodiversity and cultural heritage in the Burren area of Ireland. This inception report covers the period 1 October 2012 to 31 May 2013.

The steering group and the project management team have been established and have held several meetings. Action for tourism enterprises (B1) has concentrated on defining guidelines, developing the approach to environmental impact and promoting the action to the enterprises. For monuments and habitats (B2) action in this first period concentrated on site selection. To date three steps have been completed: site identification, definition of evaluation criteria and field review. In conservation management (B3) activity in this first period concentrated on more detailed specification of the terms of reference and project planning. Also, development work on the first component (modules) has been initiated. Introductory work has also been completed on other tasks: establishment of monitoring systems (C1), project web site (D1) and networking with other LIFE projects (E1).

3.2 Assessment as to whether project objectives and work plan are still viable

The project objectives have been confirmed and the work plan is still viable.

3.3 Problems encountered

Three issues are the withdrawal of Shannon Development, the introduction of new partners and a proposal for name change.

In May 2012 the Irish government decided to merge the functions of Shannon Development and Fáilte Ireland. As a result, Shannon Development will not continue in the project. Fáilte Ireland will take over all responsibilities and tasks envisaged for Shannon Development under B1 (tourism enterprises). Fáilte Ireland will also provide the matching contribution.

Two organisations have indicated interest in entering the partnership: National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology. Both of these had earlier decided not to enter the project at the initial application phase but have since reviewed the matter and now wish to participate. Both would make a valuable contribution to B2 (monuments and habitats) and B3 (conservation management). However, this will require negotiation with the other partners and budget re-allocation. We propose to do this at a later date as part of an adjustment to the grant agreement and the partnership agreement.

A change of the short name is proposed to Burren Geopark LIFE.. This change in the short name is necessary to ensure a clear identity for the project and to avoid confusion with the previous Burren LIFE project. It is also a branding issue. The Burren Tourism for Conservation LIFE project has been coordinated with a related project, the Burren & Cliffs of Moher 'Geopark' project, where the Burren is recognised as region of international geological importance under the Global Geoparks Network, recognised by UNESCO. The Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark is non-funded. The LIFE project is integrated with the Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark project and, to achieve this, the steering groups of the two projects have been merged under the banner of 'Burren Geopark LIFE'. The Geopark brand is also very important to the continuation of the programme beyond the term of the LIFE project. Hence the need for a single name.

4. Administrative Aspects

4.1 Description of project management

With project start in October 2012, the project manager worked initially with each of the 8 project beneficiaries to elaborate the project and prepare detailed specifications on the contribution of each beneficiary. This set of individual meetings was very important in securing clarification and work planning for the different inputs.

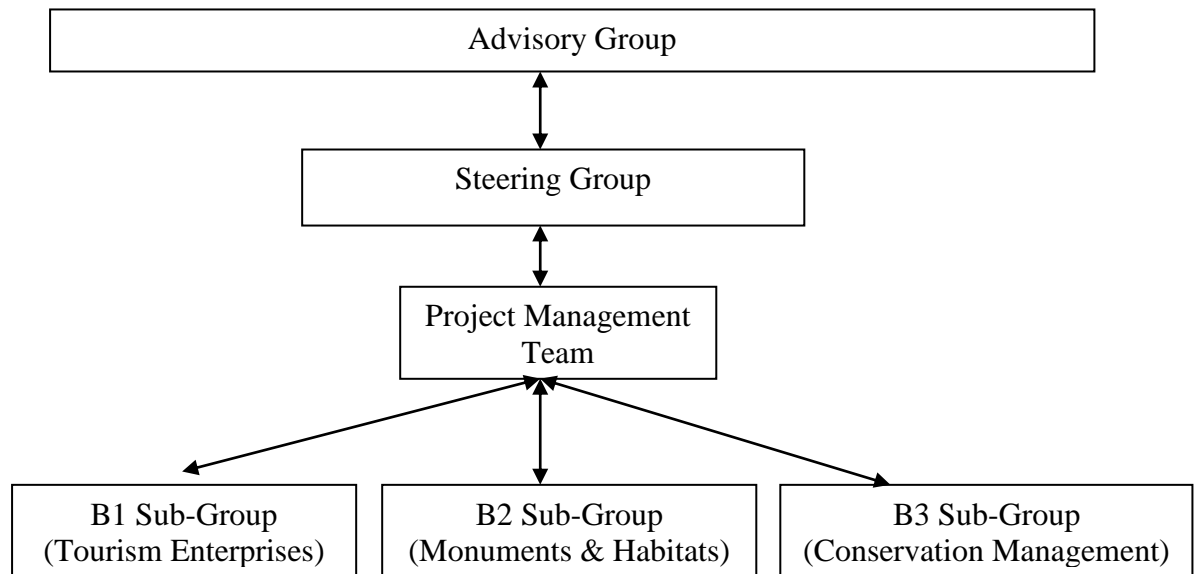
Following the individual meetings, the kick-off meeting of the steering group was held on 6 December. The kick-off meeting was supported by the LIFE Monitor and most of the discussion centred on the LIFE systems and procedures and how the Burren project could most effectively be developed within this framework. The LIFE Monitor also visited the project on 5-6 June. The second steering group meeting on 23 January focused on the details of the three main activities: tourism enterprises (B1), habitats and monuments (B2) and conservation management (B3). Key issues addressed at this stage included specific project planning and capitalising on the interactions of the three activities. Special sub-group meetings took place on 26 February (B2) and 27 May (B3)

Subsequent steering group meetings on 3 March and 17 April further addressed the details of the planned activities. Briefings were also given to the beneficiaries on report requirements, including financial information, time-sheets and other procedural aspects. Minutes of steering group meetings are included in annex 5

The Advisory Group will comprise the wider stakeholders. This group already exists as part of the existing Geopark network and individual members have already been actively engaged in the project planning. The first meeting of the Advisory Group for this LIFE project will coincide with the launch event. The Steering Group will submit the detailed project work plan to the Advisory Group for approval.

The project manager (Carol Gleeson) has been appointed. Carol Gleeson is a permanent staff member of Clare County Council. Financial control support will be provided by Greg Davidson (Clare County Council, permanent staff). Task support to the project manager for the co-ordination of B1, B2 and B3 will be appointed as external experts.

4.2 Project Management Structure



4.3 Partnership agreement

This has been completed and signed and is attached as annex 1 to this Inception Report

5. Technical Aspects

The project aims to strengthen the integration of tourism and natural heritage, reconciling tourism development with conservation of geology, biodiversity and cultural heritage in the Burren area of Ireland (an internationally renowned karst limestone area that supports a rich and diverse selection of flora and fauna, archaeological monuments and traditional cultural practices). The state of the art is that tourism for conservation embraces several elements, such as nature-based tourism, sustainable tourism and eco-tourism, although the boundaries between these are not universally agreed. The innovative aspect of the Burren project will be to advance tourism for conservation as a European methodology of value to local communities. This will aim to be a strong demonstration project with pilot actions being stimulated to test the use of tourism for conservation in the Burren.

5.1 Actions

5.1.1 Action B1 Tourism Enterprises

Action for tourism enterprises will aim to strengthen the capability of enterprises in the use of natural resources, resource efficiency, use of renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste reduction, reducing the carbon footprint. Resource management by the enterprises will be concerned with interaction by the tourism sector with the natural resource of the Burren.

Main action components are:

- Improving environmental impact
- Improving economic impact
- Resource planning for the enterprise
- Implementing the plan

5.1.1.1: What has been done

Initial work concentrated on defining guidelines for action, developing the approach to environmental impact and promoting the action to the enterprises.

Guidelines for action:

Key issues include benchmarking, performance indicators and strategic marketing for the network. Baseline information has been found to be missing in most areas. This is a critical gap that needs to be addressed immediately and should include levels of awareness of conservation issues and the programme or agency supports that already exist. The question of information days/evenings to assess levels of awareness has been considered.

Discussions are under way on how to recruit more businesses and what criteria should be used for accepting new businesses onto the programme. It was agreed that the existing Burren Ecotourism Network was the best model to work with, as it incorporated a geographic boundary, ethos and criteria that covered more than environmental impacts and suited the broader aspirations of the LIFE programme. It was agreed that the LIFE project deal with businesses that sign up to the principles guiding membership of the Burren Ecotourism Network.

One project beneficiary (Fáilte Ireland) has been found to have training programmes with the flexibility to be tailored to suit the needs of this programme. It was agreed that Action B1 should be a vehicle for encouraging (as opposed to enforcing) knowledge and compliance with environmental legislation. It was also agreed that Action B1 accommodates local circumstances when recommending solutions to waste and water management; that one system will not suit all, that we take into account cost effective systems, group schemes and take advantage of existing grants and supports. It was further agreed that Action B1 should take a holistic landscape and heritage approach and develop a few core demonstration models of good practice; utilise the experience of other EU LIFE projects, especially Burren Farming for Conservation; look at interpretation of landscape practices; address impacts of waste, water and energy management.

Developing the approach to environmental impact

Several methods were identified as a framework for the environmental impact component:

- The European Tourism Indicator System was launched by the European Commission in February. This is a comprehensive set of indicators designed to benchmark and measure sustainable destinations. It provides a framework within which the LIFE project can measure progress on its sustainability journey. It presents a number of advantages: ready-made templates, reporting templates, destination comparison potential, EU framework, potential destination certification.
- STEP Green Communities is a package that is offered by Sustainable Travel International (STI) whereby it is possible for the destination to 'license' the certification scheme and manage it locally in a way that is financially sustainable. This is awaiting scenario-costing from STI in order to assess further.
- Geopark Code of Practice: This has been discussed with the executive of the Burren Ecotourism Network and is being developed as a local set of criteria for enterprises managed under the LIFE programme, based on the feedback of the LIFE Partners and the Network Executive.

Promoting the project to the enterprises

Work has concentrated on building on the existing network of enterprises, and contact was made directly with over 50 enterprises during this first period. This included groups such as the Burren Ecotourism Network, the network of tourism enterprises interested in eco-tourism which will form a core group within the LIFE project. The project manager initiated a series of presentations and discussions with local stakeholders and is using the broad network of community contacts to communicate the aspirations of the LIFE project and invite participation in its development. The project management team also worked with the Burren Food Trail (launched in April 2013). This group are tourism enterprises promoting food-related tourism and will be an active set of local beneficiaries to engage with the LIFE project.

A survey of enterprises was undertaken and this confirmed the strong interest of the enterprises to engage in eco-tourism within a strengthened and expanded structure of the Burren Ecotourism Network. Major emphasis was placed by the enterprises on marketing, networking, potential of the Geopark as a sustainable destination brand, attracting new members to the network, business planning, conservation training and spreading the benefits. The report of this survey is included in annex 2.

5.1.1.2 Problems and delays

None

5.1.1.3 Progress review

The basis has been established for the environmental impact component. This component had been scheduled in the project document for completion in Dec 2013. However we now understand this component better and it will be continued throughout the life of the project. In addition, the other two components (economic impact and resource planning) will also continue throughout the life of the project. By the next report (Sept 2014), we expect the training programme with a target of 100 enterprises to be well under way.

5.1.1.4 Achievement of objectives

The aim of a tourism for conservation programme for 100 enterprises is confirmed and we expect this will be achieved within the originally envisaged timetable. Work is already under way contacting the overall pool of 600 enterprises from which this group will be drawn.

5.1.2 Action B2 Monuments & Habitats

The Burren comprises a range of geological sites of international importance, national archaeological monuments and natural habitats within Special Areas of Conservation. The key approach will be to develop a few priority focal points, such as geological and archaeological sites, monuments along walking routes, small car parks, footpaths and natural habitat sites. There will be five major steps: site selection and assessment; definition of work programme; action; maintenance and monitoring; report and evaluation.

5.1.2.1 What has been done

Action in this first period concentrated on site selection. To date three steps have been completed: site identification, definition of evaluation criteria and field reviews. Initially, a series of sites were identified as embracing both tourism and conservation objectives. These were then grouped into 7 zones of tourist areas:

1. Flaggy Shore (addressing Climate Change issues, interactions between visitors and locals, tourism capacity and disabled access)
2. Blackhead/Fanore (addressing increase in tourism capacity and visibility in an existing highly visited, visible and sensitive location).
3. Ballyreen/Doolin (a case study for appropriate responses to increasing visitor expectations in a highly visited and protected area where agreed access, capacity and visitor management are major issues.
4. Route 480 (Addressing route development and dispersal of visitors in an area rich in geological interest, mediaeval buildings, ring forts, churches) This route runs through the centre of the Burren and has an array of prominent attractions and natural/cultural locations adjacent to it.
5. Roughan Hill/Dysert O'Dea (a case study for an approach to an area rich in heritage value with active, well organised local community groups willing to participate in a balanced approach to its conservation and promotion.)
6. Lough Bunney (a test case for the development of visitor amenities in an undeveloped location of high natural and heritage value. Developed as a baseline indicator for other undeveloped areas, measuring the impacts on local communities, land owners, and businesses from a start-up position.)
7. Slieve Carron (addressing the development of publicly owned sites in vulnerable locations.)

In addition, a test case is planned for policy surrounding the development, monitoring, management and promotion of vulnerable locations in public ownership in relatively inaccessible and undeveloped areas in terms of tourism infrastructure.

The zones are illustrated on the map and described further in annex 3.

The steering group then drew up a series of criteria by which the sites could be evaluated:

Ownership: Is the land-owner agreeable to granting access?

Tourism impact: Is the site of interest to visitors, especially international visitors (including holiday-makers and educational/research)?

Conservation impact: What type of conservation impact will there be? Is the site highly sensitive? Does it have the capacity to absorb extra users?

Access: Is access to site easy? Are there any significant costs associated with provision of access?

Location: Is the site in a good location? Does it help with visitor management? Is this a location where visitors should be guided? For example, is it in an area under-utilised for tourism? Or does it help manage over-crowding in tourism?

Demonstration effect: Will this demonstrate the environment for tourism? Will it be highly visible? Will there be high added value? Is there a linkage effect with other sites or projects?

Facilities: Is there the benefit of existing facilities on site? Would the project capitalise on previous work?

Three field visits were undertaken on 29 April, 10 May and 20 May to evaluate the individual sites in more detail. The field visits were undertaken by the full steering group and provided an opportunity to apply the evaluation criteria to the actual situation on the ground.

Following discussion with the project monitor, it is likely that a number of key demonstration projects may possibly be selected, coinciding with the locations illustrating key examples of the tourism/conservation challenge: mass tourism (a congested area with special problems of high-density demand), general interest tourism (management of tourism and conservation with medium-density demand) and special interest tourism (remoter areas with wilderness-protection issues). The priority will be to aim for projects that are “quick-win” with high demonstration impact for conflict resolution between tourism and conservation.

5.1.2.2 Problems and delays

None

5.1.2.3 Progress review

The process of site selection and step no 2 (definition of work programme) will be complete and actual work on the chosen sites will have commenced before the next report date (Sept 2014).

5.1.2.4 Achievement of objectives

The objective of improvements to 7 monuments or sites is retained at this stage. However, the need to concentrate on a limited number of high-visibility demonstration projects combined with the constraints of scarce resources, may cause this number to be reduced. .

5.1.3 Action B3 Conservation management

This aims at a transferrable tool kit and integrated policies for visitor management and promotion of natural and heritage sites producing training modules, case studies and an evaluation tool kit and policy.

5.1.3.1 What has been achieved

Work in this first period concentrated on more detailed specification of the terms of reference and project planning. Also, development work for the first component (modules) was commenced.

The steering group re-examined the project and agreed specific guidelines as follows: modules need to be practical and tailored to the target audiences and ensure policies and processes are clear and relevant; the project should look at the Burren Farming for Life model of Farm Plans as examples of checklists for the case studies; there is also a need to link in with, and utilise, local learning initiatives such as Burrenbeo's educational programmes, Leave no Trace, Fáilte Ireland, FETAC and Clare County Council training, etc; linkages need to be created with other national programmes; there is a need to create a level of standardised conservation practice that is transferrable; through the training the aim should be to reinforce the ethos of the project - developing supports and encouragement to participate; the potential of the third-level university partners to deliver the programme should be strengthened.

Work is now under way to specify themes at the level of user groups. It is likely that four groups will be prioritised: enterprises, public authorities, conservation volunteers and communities. For each of these groups more detailed specifications are now being prepared under the following headings: What are their needs? What knowledge content do they require? How can the knowledge be delivered?

Highlights of main needs include environmentally sustainable practice (enterprises), planning sustainable destinations (public bodies), Leave No Trace (conservation volunteers) and mapping local knowledge (communities). Details of a working paper on preliminary training needs analysis are included in annex 4.

5.1.3.2 Problems and delays

None

5.1.3.3 Progress review

The process of module design will be complete and implementation of case studies will be well under way before the next report date (Sept 2014).

5.1.3.4 Achievement of objectives

The objective of 20 conservation management actions will be achieved.

5.1.4 Action C.1 Monitoring

5.1.4.1 What has been achieved

Tourism enterprises: work has commenced on the definition of the baseline situation with the enterprises.

Monuments and habitats: site selection process is under way and site assessment has commenced

Conservation management: this is at project planning stage

Policy evaluation: baseline review is under way

5.1.4.2 Problems and delays

None

5.1.4.3 Progress and review

The full monitoring system will be established by the next report (Sept 2014).

5.1.4.4 Achievement of objectives

The objective of establishing and implementing the monitoring system will be achieved.

5.1.5 Action D: Communication and dissemination actions

5.1.5.1 What has been done

Project web site (D1) is being established. The proposal is to have this hosted on the Burren Geopark web site, thus highlighting how the LIFE project is integrated into the overall Geopark project and long term work programme. We understand that it is normally expected to set up a stand-alone LIFE web site. However, in this case, because of the need to integrate the Geopark and LIFE projects, we propose to have the LIFE web presence prominently hosted on the Burren Geopark site.

No action so far has been taken on LIFE+ information boards (D2) and layman's report (D3) Targeted communications (D4) is at early implementation stage: media statement has been released and opening conference is at planning stage for the autumn 2013.

5.1.5.2 Problems and delays

None

5.1.5.3 Progress and review

The opening conference will be held, further media releases will be issued and the information packs will be designed before the next report (Sept 2014).

5.1.5.4 Achievement of objectives

Targeted dissemination will be achieved.

5.1.6 Action E1 Project management

Project management team and steering group have been established and are working actively. It is proposed to engage external experts to support the project management team.

5.1.7 Networking with other LIFE projects

The project manager has commenced networking with the local LIFE project on farming for conservation in the Burren.

The project manager also attended a meeting of Irish LIFE projects in 2012.

A member of the project management team presented the Burren Tourism project at the LIFE information session in Dublin (Feb 2013)

Members of the project management team participated in an international seminar on the European Tourism Indicator System.

5.2 Availability of appropriate licenses and authorizations

The need for specific licences or authorizations will not be known until the site selection is finalized. However, from work done so far in the inception phase, this is not envisaged as likely to be a constraint. The Senior Planner for the region is now on the Steering Committee

5.3 Envisaged progress until the next report (Sept 2014)

<i>Action</i>	<i>Progress envisaged June 2013 to Sept 2014</i>
B1 Tourism enterprises	Completion of baseline assessment Recruitment of enterprises to join the project Implementation of training programme
B2 Monuments & habitats	Completion of site selection and assessment Definition of work programme Commencement of works
B3 Conservation management	Completion of site selection Design of training modules
C1 Monitoring	Monitoring system established
D1 Project web site	Continued development
D2 LIFE+ information boards	Being implemented
D3 Layman's report	-
D4 Targeted communications	Opening conference completed Media releases issued Schools programme established

D5 After-LIFE communication plan	-
E1 Project management	Ongoing management
E2 Networking	Interactions secured with other selected LIFE projects

Outlook for main deliverables is shown below. Milestones are included in the subsequent chart “Progress with actions: planned and actual”

Deliverable	Original target	Progress
Report on tourism enterprises	31-12-2016	On target
Report on monuments & habitats	31-12-2016	On target
Report on conservation management	31-12-2016	On target
Layman’s report	31-05-2017	On target
After LIFE communications plan	31-12-2016	On target
Overall final report	31-08-2017	On target

6. Financial aspects

6.1 The accounting system

This has been put in place in collaboration with the financial officers of the coordinating beneficiary, Clare County Council. The accounting system will be based on the established Council system (Agresso). At the time of writing detailed financial reporting requirements had been given to the beneficiaries.

6.2 Continued availability of co-financing

This is anticipated to continue with no difficulties.

6.3 Costs incurred

With 8 out of 60 months, 13% of the time has elapsed. By comparison total actual expenditure has been 5% and personnel expenditure has been 7%. This low ratio is to be expected as almost all effort so far has been on project planning with very little implementation. We believe that such concentrated effort on planning in this early phase will pay dividends, leading to highly focused and effective implementation in later periods.

Cost category	Total costs	Costs incurred 1/10/2012 to 31/5/2013	%
1. Personnel (estd)	1,146,270	79,000	7%
2. Travel & subsistence	148,855	3,178	2%
3. External assistance	740,620	15,975	2%
4. Durable goods	15,000	0	0%
5. Land purchase/lease	0	0	0

6. Consumables	68,000	4,609	7%
7. Other costs	42,400	0	0
8. Overheads	64,100	3,000	4%
Total	2,225,245	105,762	5%

Action number and name	Foreseen costs	Spent so far	Remaining	Project final cost
B1 Tourism enterprises	470,400	11,100	459,300	470,400
B2 Monuments & habitats	753,810	44,000	709,810	753,810
B3 Conservation mgmt	380,015	20,000	360,015	380,015
C1 Monitoring	80,000	0	80,000	80,000
D1 Project web site	17,500	0	17,500	17,500
D2 LIFE+ info boards	29,000	0	29,000	29,000
D3 Layman's report	5,000	0	5,000	5,000
D4 Targeted communications	156,800	0	156,800	156,800
D5 After-LIFE comms plan	0	0	0	0
E1 Project mgmt & monitoring	254,620	26,662	228,200	254,620
E2 Networking with LIFE projects	14,000	1,000	13,000	14,000
Overhead	64,100	3,000	61,300	64,100
Total	2,225,245	105,762	2,129,745	2,225,245

ANNEX 1



<p>Partnership agreement Concerning the LIFE project Burren Tourism for Conservation LIFE11 ENV/IE/922</p>
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1. Identification of the contracting parties

The Coordinating Beneficiary
Clare County Council
County Hall
Ennis
Co Clare
Ennistymon
Co Clare
Represented by Ger Dollard, Director of Services

AND

The Associated Beneficiaries

Fáilte Ireland
Amiens St
Dublin 1
Represented by Kevin Kidney, Head of Destination Development

Geological Survey of Ireland
Beggars Bush
Haddington Road
Dublin 4
Represented by Koen Verbruggen, Director

National Monuments Service
Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
Custom House
Dublin 1
represented by Terry Allen, Principal Officer

University College
Belfield
Dublin 4
represented by Donal Doolan, Head of Finance

Heritage Council
Church Lane
Kilkenny
represented by Michael Starrett, Chief Executive

National University of Ireland
Galway
represented by John Glynn, University Solicitor

Office of Public Works
Trim
Co Meath
represented by Frank Shalvey, Principal Officer

HAVE AGREED

2. Subject

This partnership agreement is concluded in relation to the LIFE project

- Burren Tourism for Conservation, LIFE11 ENV/IE/922, 11 Oct 2012
- 1 October 2012 to 31 December 2017
- Maximum eligible costs: 2,225, 245 EU
- Funding rate: 50%
- Maximum EU contribution: 1,108,872

The grant agreement (and any amendment to the grant agreement) signed by the coordinating beneficiary and the European Commission, which includes special provisions, the Common Provisions, the full project proposal and the other annexes, forms an integral part of this partnership agreement.

The provisions of the grant agreement, including the mandate (Common Provisions: Articles 5.2 and 5.3), shall take precedence over any other agreement between the coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiary which may have an effect on the implementation of the above agreement between the Commission and the coordinating beneficiary.

3. Duration

The partnership agreement enters into force when the last party signs. The partnership agreement terminates on the date of the payment of the balance by the coordinating beneficiary to all the associated beneficiaries.

4. Role and obligations of the coordinating beneficiary

4.1 The coordinating beneficiary is the entity which is solely legally and financially responsible to the Commission for the full implementation of the project measures in order to achieve the project objectives and for the dissemination of the project results.

4.2 The coordinating beneficiary, through the mandate annexed to the grant agreement, is granted power of attorney by the associated beneficiaries, to act in their name and for their account in signing the grant agreement and its possible subsequent amendments with the Commission.

4.3 The coordinating beneficiary accepts all the provisions of the grant agreement with the Commission.

4.4 By virtue of the mandate signed, the coordinating beneficiary alone is entitled to receive funds from the Commission and distribute the amounts corresponding to the associated beneficiaries' participation in the project and as specified in this agreement.

4.5 Whenever an associated beneficiary reduces its financial contribution, it shall be incumbent upon the coordinating beneficiary, in agreement with its associated beneficiaries, to find the necessary resources to ensure correct implementation of the project. In no case shall the Commission increase its contribution or the rate of co-financing.

4.6 Notwithstanding the provisions in Article 24 of the Common Provisions, the coordinating beneficiary shall contribute financially to the project.

4.7 The coordinating beneficiary shall be the single point of contact for the Commission and shall be the only participant to report directly to the Commission on the technical and financial progress of the project. The coordinating beneficiary shall therefore provide to the Commission all the necessary reports, in accordance with Article 12 of the Common Provisions. The coordinating beneficiary will provide the associated beneficiaries with copies of technical and financial reports submitted to the Commission as well as the Commission's reactions to these documents. The coordinating beneficiary will inform the associated beneficiaries about important "events" related to the project, e.g. requests for amendments to the grant agreement and the reply given by the Commission to such requests

4.8 This agreement is fully compatible with the grant agreement signed with the Commission, and makes reference to the present common provisions and has the contents described in the Guidelines issued by the Commission. The agreement has been signed by the coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiaries and notified to the Commission within nine months from the starting date of the project. The provisions of the grant agreement, including the mandate (Articles 5.2 and 5.3), shall take precedence over any other agreement between the associated beneficiaries and the coordinating beneficiary which may have an effect on the implementation of the above agreement between the coordinating beneficiary and the Commission.

5. Role and obligations of the associated beneficiaries

5.1 The associated beneficiaries are exclusively the organisations listed in this agreement. The associated beneficiaries have signed this agreement and will be directly involved in the technical implementation of the appropriate tasks of the project. Details are in the annexes.

5.2 The associated beneficiaries, through the mandate annexed to the grant agreement, grant power of attorney to the coordinating beneficiary, to act in his name and for his account in signing the grant agreement and its possible subsequent amendments with the Commission. Accordingly, the associated beneficiaries mandate the coordinating beneficiary to take full legal responsibility for the implementation of the grant agreement.

5.3 The associated beneficiaries accept all the provisions of the grant agreement with the Commission, in particular all provisions affecting the associated beneficiary and the coordinating beneficiary. In particular, the associated beneficiaries acknowledge that, by virtue of the mandate signed, the coordinating beneficiary alone is entitled to receive funds from the Commission and distribute the amounts corresponding to the associated beneficiaries' participation in the action.

5.4 The associated beneficiaries shall do everything in their power to help the coordinating beneficiary fulfil the coordinating beneficiary's obligations under the grant agreement. In particular, the associated beneficiaries hereby shall provide to the co-ordinating beneficiary whatever documents or information (technical and financial) may be required, as soon as possible after receiving the request from the coordinating beneficiary. Regular progress reports will be provided by the associated beneficiaries at least every three months.

5.5 Each associated beneficiary will contribute financially to the project as set out in section 11 and shall benefit from the financial contribution from the Commission in the conditions stipulated in this agreement.

5.6 The associated beneficiaries shall not report directly to the Commission on the technical and financial progress unless explicitly requested to do so by the Commission.

6. Common obligations for both the coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiary

6.1 The coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiaries shall maintain up to- date books of account, in accordance with the normal accounting conventions imposed on them by law and existing regulations. For the sake of traceability of expenditure and income, an analytical accounting system (cost centre accounting) shall be put in place. The coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiaries shall retain, throughout the project and for at least five years after the last payment, all appropriate supporting documentation for all expenditure, income and revenue for the project as reported to the Commission, such as tender documents, invoices, purchase orders, proof of payments, salary slips, time sheets and any other documents used for the calculation and presentation of costs. This documentation shall be clear, precise and effective and shall be submitted to the Commission when requested. The coordinating beneficiary shall retain copies of all supporting documents of all the associated beneficiaries.

6.2 The coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiaries shall ensure that all invoices include a clear reference to the project, linking them to the analytical accounting system.

6.3 The coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiaries shall ensure that the Union support is publicised, as detailed in Article 13 of the Common Provisions

6.4 The coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiaries shall share freely the know-how necessary for implementation of the project.

6.5 The coordinating beneficiary shall not act, in the context of the project, as subcontractor or supplier to the associated beneficiaries. The associated beneficiaries shall not act, in the context of the project, as sub-contractor or supplier to the coordinating beneficiary or other associated beneficiaries.

7. Subcontractors

7.1 Any public coordinating beneficiary/associated beneficiary must award subcontracts in accordance with the applicable rules on public tendering, in conformity with Union Directives on public tendering procedures. For contracts exceeding € 125 000, any private coordinating beneficiary / associated beneficiary shall invite competitive tenders from potential subcontractors and award the contract to the bid offering best value for money; in doing so, it shall observe the principles of transparency and equal treatment of potential subcontractors and shall take care to avoid any conflict of interest. The rules on tendering referred to in the previous two paragraphs shall also apply in case of purchase of durable goods.

7.2 All invoices issued by subcontractors shall bear a clear reference to the LIFE+ project (i.e. number and title or short title) and to the order/subcontract issued by the associated beneficiary. All invoices shall also be sufficiently detailed as to allow identification of single items covered by the service delivered (i.e. clear description and cost of each item).

8. Civil liability

The coordinating beneficiary and associated beneficiaries shall assume sole liability towards third parties, including for damage of any kind sustained by them while the project is being carried out;

9. Conflict of interest

The coordinating beneficiary and all associated beneficiaries undertake to take all the necessary measures to prevent any risk of conflicts of interest which could affect the impartial and objective performance of the grant agreement. Such conflicts of interest could arise in particular as a result of economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional reasons, or any other shared interest. Any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interest during the performance of the grant agreement will be brought to the attention of the Commission, in writing, without delay. The coordinating beneficiary and all associated beneficiaries will, without delay, take whatever steps are necessary to rectify this situation. The Commission reserves the right to check that the measures taken are appropriate and may itself take further action if this is deemed necessary.

10. Technical activity reports

Main reporting dates are as follows:

- Inception report: June 2013
- Progress report: Sept 2014
- Mid-term report: Dec 2015
- Progress report: Feb 2017
- Final report: March 2018

The associated beneficiaries will provide any relevant information to the coordinating beneficiary in due time before the submission of reports to the Commission and be available with additional information, should the Commission request so.

11. Communication actions, publicity for Community support and audio-visual products

11.1 The coordinating beneficiary and associated beneficiaries shall publicise the project and its results, always mentioning the Union support received. Details of this activity will be given in each activity report.

11.2 The coordinating beneficiary and associated beneficiaries will acknowledge the support given by the Union in all documents and media produced in the framework of the project, using the LIFE logo provided by the Commission. For audio-visual material, the credits at the beginning and/or at the end shall include an explicit and readable mention to the LIFE financial support (e.g. “With the contribution of the LIFE financial instrument of the European Union”)

11.3 The LIFE logo will not be referred to as a certified quality label or eco-label. Its use shall be restricted to dissemination activities.

11.4 The coordinating beneficiary shall create a project website or use an existing website for the dissemination of project activities, progress and results. The web address where the main results of the project are available to the public shall be indicated in the reports. This website shall be online at the latest six months after the start of the project, shall be regularly updated and shall be kept for at least five years after the end of the project.

11.5 The coordinating beneficiary and associated beneficiaries shall erect and maintain notice boards describing the project at the locations where it is implemented, at strategic places accessible and visible to the public. The LIFE logo shall appear on them at all times.

11.6 A summary of the project, including name and contact information of the coordinating beneficiary, will be placed on the LIFE website and made available to the general public.

11.7 All durable goods acquired in the framework of the project shall bear the LIFE logo unless otherwise specified by the Commission

11.8 The project will contain an obligatory set of measures for networking activities. Unless duly justified by the coordinating beneficiary as non appropriate, these will include visits, meetings, exchange of information, and/or other such networking activities with an appropriate number of other relevant LIFE projects (ongoing or completed). It may also include similar exchanges with other non LIFE projects and/or participation in information platforms related to the project objectives (including at international level where justified). These networking activities shall aim at ensuring an efficient transfer of know-how and experience in order to foster its replication in similar contexts.

11.9 The Commission are authorised to publish, in whatever form and in whatever medium, including the Internet, all the information related to the project or produced by the project that it considers relevant. The coordinating beneficiary and all associated beneficiaries grant the Commission the non-exclusive right to reproduce, to dub if necessary, to distribute or to use any audio-visual document produced by the project, completely or partly, without time limit, for non-commercial purposes, including during public events. Nevertheless, the

Commission shall not be considered as “co-producer”. The Commission reserves the right to use the photographs submitted in the various reports referred to in Article 12 to illustrate any information material it produces. It undertakes to credit these by indicating the project reference number.

12. Confidentiality

The Commission and the coordinating beneficiary/associated beneficiaries undertake to preserve the confidentiality of any document, information or other material communicated to them in confidence, disclosure of which could harm another party. The parties shall remain bound by this obligation beyond the closing date of the project. The personal data included in the project will be placed on an electronic management tool, which is made available to the European Commission, to other Union institutions and to an external monitoring team, which are bound by a confidentiality agreement. This management tool will be used exclusively to manage LIFE projects

13. Financial reporting

Regarding the final statement of expenditure and income, the associated beneficiaries shall provide the coordinating beneficiary with a dated and signed "participant cost statement summary" for the mid-term report and the final report in the schedule set out in part 10 of this agreement. The associated beneficiaries will report costs as specified in the Common Provisions and the grant agreement. In particular, the associated beneficiaries will comply with Part II "financial provisions" of the Commission Provisions.

The main project steering group will meet at least 4 times per year. Associate beneficiaries will provide the necessary financial reports within the time schedule set out by the coordinating beneficiary.

14. Estimated eligible costs and associated beneficiary's financial contribution to the project

The contribution of the beneficiaries will be as set out in the table below. The estimated total costs incurred by the associated beneficiaries will be regularly reviewed during the project. In agreement with the coordinating beneficiary (which will take into account the total costs of the project incurred by all participants), the amounts specified in this Article can be modified, provided that the modifications are in line with the grant agreement concerning the project budget. The final settlement will be based on the Commission's assessment of the final statement of expenditure and income and more precisely on the accepted eligible costs of the project.

<i>Partner</i>	<i>Partner contribution</i>	<i>EU contribution</i>	<i>Total</i>
Clare County Council	453,398	445,897	899,295
Fáilte Ireland	246,200	246,200	492,400
Geological Survey of Ireland	32,045	32,045	64,090
National Monuments Service	48,390	48,390	96,780
University College Dublin	59,630	59,630	119,260
Heritage Council	48,960	48,960	97,920

NUI Galway	97,750	97,750	195,500
Office of Public Works	130,000	130,000	260,000
Total	1,116,373	1,108,872	2,225,245

15. Payment terms

All payments will be made to the designated bank account of the associated beneficiary. The coordinating beneficiary will distribute stage payments to the associate beneficiaries following receipt of their expenditure details, including information required by the coordinating beneficiary, such as time sheets and receipts. The coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiaries agree that all payments are considered as pre-financing payments until the Commission has approved the final technical and financial reports and has transferred the final payment to the coordinating beneficiary. The coordinating beneficiary will transfer the share of the final payment to the associated beneficiary after the Commission has made the final payment, and will incorporate a provision according to which the coordinating beneficiary may recover amounts unduly paid to the associated beneficiary.

The Coordinating Beneficiary may retain EU funds for expenditure on the project on the request of the relevant Associate Beneficiary.

13. Financial audit

An independent auditor, nominated by the coordinating beneficiary, shall verify the final statement of expenditure and income provided to the Commission. The auditor shall verify compliance with national legislation and accounting rules and certify that all costs incurred comply with this grant agreement. The auditor shall also check the sources of the project financing, and in particular that co-financing does not stem from other Union financial instruments. The work to be performed will be in accordance with, and in the format of, the Guidelines provided by the Commission

14. Checks and inspections

The Commission, or any representative authorised by the Commission, may audit the coordinating beneficiary or associated beneficiaries at any time during the project implementation period and up to five years after the final payment of the Union contribution. The Commission or any authorised representative shall have access to the documentation required to ascertain the eligibility of the costs of the participants in the project, such as invoices, payroll extracts, purchase orders, proof of payment, time sheets and any other documents used for the calculation and presentation of costs.

15. Termination of partnership agreement

The coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiaries agree the conditions for any termination of the partnership agreement, as set out in the Common Provisions, Article 19.

16. Jurisdiction clause

Failing amicable settlement, the relevant court in Ireland shall have sole competence to rule on any dispute between the contracting parties in respect of this agreement. The law applicable to this agreement shall be the law of Ireland.

Done at Ennis on (*date*), in duplicate in English

ANNEXES:

- The grant agreement signed between the European Commission and the coordinating beneficiary;
- The Common Provisions:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/toolkit/pmttools/lifeplus/documents/commonprov_11_en.pdf
- The approved project proposal (LIFE_BurrenTourism_19July2012
- Inception Report

ANNEX 2

Working paper: Survey of Enterprises (B1)

Survey Size: 35 businesses. December 2012-January 2013.

Series of one-to-one meetings/conversations between Tina O'Dwyer and business owners. Part of an action research project aimed at developing performance benchmarks and measurements for sustainable tourism in the Geopark.

1. WHAT EMPHASIS WOULD YOU LIKE B.E.N. TO HAVE FROM THIS POINT ONWARDS?

These themes appear in order of frequency of mention

a. **Packaging & Marketing**

Make marketing a priority; use the relationships and strength of the group to create innovative packages that grab attention in the marketplace.

Develop a marketing plan with clear objectives so that the marketing committee knows what it has to achieve. Will also help determine how successful or otherwise any activity is.

b. **Networking/Internal familiarisation/internal referrals**

It was suggested that 3 internal fam trips should take place in March where members visit each others premises. Would help generate referrals and provide inspiration for collaboration. Would bring cohesion and greater depth of understanding to the group.

c. **Geopark**

Many mentioned the benefit to the group of the Geopark status and the ongoing support of the Geopark Office and Carol Gleeson. Many mentioned the points made by Peter Curtin at the Review Day in Hotel Doolin and there was general agreement with what he said (even though they don't always agree with everything you say Peter!! ☺). Some expressed uncertainty as to what it really meant and some were not so sure that BEN should lose its identity within the Geopark. One business mentioned that it's important that the GEopark brand benefits those who have become certified and made the effort (as opposed to being open to all Burren businesses).

d. **Attracting and facilitating new members**

Strength in numbers. Attract more businesses and enable them to integrate quickly. Spread the ethos and practice of ecotourism. Get up to 70, 80..100 businesses involved at a base level. Others felt that no new members should be taken at this point until BEN is very clear on future training, certification and overall activity. Some felt that next set of members should be approached rather than issue an open invite to the whole business community. One person mentioned that it was important to include businesses from the 'fringe areas'.

B.E.N. now has a mechanism to enable businesses to reach a common standard and to co-ordinate businesses into protecting the area.

e. Business Plan

Vision, Objectives, Strategy. Get focused on a small number of relevant and achievable objectives. Include ways of measuring success and progress. Get clear on certification and what it means and what the future options are.

f. Conservation Activity & Training/Awareness building

So much emphasis on certification followed by so much emphasis on marketing. Let's not forget conservation. Some expressed a desire that BEN could be a vehicle for practical advice/exchange on 'going green(er)'; some expected that this when joining the Network. Awareness and engagement in conservation is not consistent throughout the group and it should be an aim of BEN to enable businesses reach a defined standard. Need greater participation and more than beach clean ups.

g. Ensure as even a spread of benefits as possible

BEN activity should take account of the imperative for all businesses to be able to get a benefit from BEN – ensure the small businesses benefit as much as the big ones; ensure it takes accounts of the different constraints on businesses e.g. include some events/publicity that is aimed specifically at micro businesses; aim some training specifically at their needs. Do more to support members who are 'just surviving'.

h. More training and Maximising the outputs of training events

Great training is provided but are we sure the Network/the Burren is benefitting from it. Do we follow up to ensure things happen as a result of training?

Future training should be very practical and should include business and environmental training.

i. Care and improve support for the community

j. Make businesses more green in day to day activity and make businesses more supporting of the community.

k. Information-sharing.

“BEN feels like it's 'dangling in the air' a bit – what's the position on certification? Where does it fit with the Geopark exactly? What's happening about re-certification?”

2. DO YOU PERCEIVE ANY BARRIERS TO YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT IN B.E.N.?

1. Time & personal workload

- a. Just don't have the time.
- b. Evening meetings/events impossible for some; day meetings/events impossible for others

2. Frustration at meetings

- a. Same voices at all the meetings, personal feeling of frustration at a) not having a voice or b) not making progress on things that really matter
- b. A number of people found there was a lot of giving out, bitching, infighting which was very disheartening; lots of complaining with little sense of responsibility – the members own the group and therefore pointless to talk about what 'they' are doing wrong.
- c. another person felt very put off by an element of fault-finding which would deter them from putting effort into committees – too much debate on decisions and this hinders progress.
- d. Expectations high and unrealistic –it's a long term project that will take time.

3. Personal Motivation

- a. 'at it a while now' (4 years)

4. Disappointment with work on conservation side of things

- a. 'ticking the box' approach
- b. very poor participation
- c. Poor depth of understanding
- d. More space given to things like Leave No Trace

5. Inadequate notice of dates for events

- a. A number mentioned they need a lot of notice due to diary commitments.
- b. Two suggested an annual calendar where all dates were known.

6. Lack of access to the B.E.N. website to be able to edit and update own information.

3. DO YOU PERCEIVE ANY BARRIERS INHERENT IN B.E.N. THAT MAY HINDER ITS FUTURE PROGRESS?

1. Participation Levels

- are some people dropping out/being left behind? Often the same faces at all events.
- Uneven participation levels
 - Contribution needs to be monitored and everyone must contribute in some way – people cannot be allowed to piggyback on progress made by the group if they are members ‘in name only’.
 - BEN is a wonderful idea if people use it like a proper Network. Those who are not contributing or giving referrals are not engaging in the spirit that is required.
 - Co-operative and proactive spirit is very important – no space for sniping and griping.
 - If there’s really only 4 meetings a year, then people really should be able to attend at least 3 of them.
 - If you don’t participate in it, then don’t stay in it – it’s a Network and all networks only work if people participate and contribute to each other.
 - On the other side, some businesses felt the talk of losing people or benefits on the basis of participation was counterproductive and there should not be threats like this. Some mentioned that BEN should avoid anything that amount to self-policing or members policing each other.

1. Sustainability

- How it could manage itself into the future without supports and current dependence on work of certain individuals.
- Dependence on external funding or funding provided by Burren Connect – what happens when that is all gone?
- Emphasis should be on creating a space where a person can be employed to co-ordinate, administrate and market centrally. That person should be briefed to make their own job sustainable.

2. The pricing and cost structure not clear (3)

- Would like to know full fees in advance and the benefits that could be expected in return.
- Having to ‘pay-in’ in a piecemeal way is very difficult to manage.
- Income disparity in the group means not all are impacted as much by this.

3. Lack of a macro vision on matters affecting the Burren

- Group has little idea of what’s going on in the wider Burren and the members do not engage with each other on these issues; neither does the Network

engage with other groups on significant issues e.g. Burrenbeo Learning Landscape feasibility study, parking at Mullaghmore.

- B.E.N. could be more proactive on seeking out this information and engaging as a strong body on many issues.
- This is a reason cited by a number of people for joining in the first place or for staying involved – wanted to be part of an influential group with a voice.

4. Achieving ‘real’ networking and ‘real’ cohesion.

- Will it be possible to truly get so many businesses collaborating together for joint mutual benefit?

5. Lack of clear objectives and clear priorities.

- Needs focus and stewardship
- B.E.N. needs a list of priorities and needs to focus on just these. The priorities should be realistic and achievable.
- B.E.N. has maybe spread itself too wide and is therefore not making tangible achievements on some fronts. Could the GEopark share some of the weight that B.E.N. is struggling to carry?
- B.E.N. should have 5 achievable objectives for 2013 (ideally in a formal business plan) and at the end of the year, the group would look at progress against these objectives.

6. Uncertainty around certification

4. HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU CONSIDER CERTIFICATION TO BE (AS A CORE REQUIREMENT OF B.E.N.)?

- All businesses felt that standards and independent assessment of standards was critical to BEN.
- Four businesses felt that external certification should be replaced by Burren-based self-assessment
- Five businesses felt that the current model of certification worked well and should continue. The remainder were in favour of certification but had some reservations and concerns:
 - Question of sustainability and affordability (2)
 - Supportive of Burren-specific base criteria if that means more businesses reach a common standard. These would have to be very clear.
 - Something not as demanding as Ecotourism Ireland. The standard was largely irrelevant to my business.
 - The value is that it brings a glue to the Network and the Network brings benefits back to the business; however certification does not yield business benefits.
 - Ongoing and future costs are a real concern; many smaller businesses afraid of being 'kicked out' or having to leave. Acknowledge that all have done a great amount of work to get as far as they have and they should not be allowed fall away for purely financial reasons.
 - Certification shouldn't take over - it's a means to an end.
 - Hard to measure the benefit of certification.
 - Can't use BEN logo until fully certified – this should change.
 - It depends. Not sure it matters to individual businesses but it is a way of controlling standards. Would see it as less relevant if we had our own set of criteria that acted as a baseline.
 - Performance and checking never took place over the two years since first certified.
 - Initial accreditation unsatisfactory due to lack of rigour (1 from first group)
 - Apparent significant disparity in standards between providers despite all having attained certification.
- 7. Need to identify lead partners who can run a package on behalf of the group, that package could then get certified..
- 8. Geopark baseline criteria might be a good option if it can be properly administered. What happens if people don't provide the information or don't do what they are being asked to do? What needs to be provided must be clear-cut from the start. 3rd party certification still desirable though.
- 9. B.E.N./Geopark standards for certification should be set up that keeps money currently spent on external certification within the Burren region and feeding back into the Burren economy.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF BEN (no particular order)

- BEN needs to define the benefits of joining clearly so that existing and new businesses know what they're getting and know what money it will cost them.
- Encourage and entice people by what they can gain, rather than using a stick.
- Get organised on group purchasing
 - o Preferential rates and bottom line reduction in costs make a real difference to businesses.
- Organise smaller groups that focus on specific themes or tasks (rather than general training days)
- A focus on organising events is a way forward as this is a way of involving people.
- EU Life provides a window to B.E.N. to set itself up like a business, be run like a business, with a clear monetary payback to businesses through bookings. This is the only thing that's measurable.
 - o Another business also mentioned needs a booking system on website; need to generate revenue.
 - o Echoed by 2-3 businesses
- Needs an injection of vision and passion!
- Try to improve channels of communication with Burrenbeo. B.E.N. should make an approach and seek to co-operate more and reduce the areas of overlap between the two.
- BEN should aim to profile the carbon footprint of its visitors
- We could pay for some training ourselves – does it really all need to be subsidised???
- B.E.N. needs to generate real tourism (not gimmicky tourism feeding on fam trips and study trips) by getting businesses to work together.
- Meetings should be restricted to collective network business only.
- B.E.N. should get another marketing intern if possible
- Would be good if there was an attendance pre-list circulated before training/meetings – could the 'poke' people or text them saying 'need to meet you'; expectation of who you'd meet would help participation.
- Networking benefit alone is worth the €100 and businesses should acknowledge the value of membership.
- There should be a wall certificate/plaque/window sticker for all members as this is important to highlight it to local people and other businesses.
- Suggestion of SuperValu or similar businesses joining – concern raised that this would really dilute the brand.
- Danger of trying to get too much in – people must have free time too!
- Workshop on staffing and costs (managing staff, wages, working times)
- Relationship with the Geopark should be nurtured
 - o The group can have faith in Carol Gleeson & The Geopark as there is a good track record of 'doing things' and 'finding money'.

- Most agreed with the suggestion of a higher membership fee if that was the only fee for the year.
- While supporting the idea of Burren-specific criteria, it was suggested that these needed to be tailored to three distinct groups: accommodation providers, activity providers & visitor experience and optional
- More effective use of website and magazine
- New positions on the Executive should be filled by new members
- Future training should be more focused and more practical; tailored to practical requirements of the business.
- Question of associate members paying same membership fee, having the same contribution requirement and yet no right to vote. Should associate members be included in initiatives such as the magazine?
- People need to be reminded of the B.E.N. Ethos – the reason it came into being and what it set out to achieve. The positive spirit of that ethos needs rekindling in the group.
- Need an online portal to reduce emails. A lot of information and resources could be made available there.
- Set up a network group for purchasing and a network group for ‘internal networking/familiarisation’
- An open system of tracking what people do so that where it’s clear to see what people are doing.
- A system for regular updates/communication from Executive; what are outcomes of key activity
- Move the AGM to October i.e. the start of the low season so that any major issues/changes are addressed early in the time when people are in a position to work on them.
- Next big step is to make sure all members ‘buy into’ the fact that we have huge strength in numbers. And we all have long term potential to gain from the network as well as short term gains.
- BEN should have no more than 5 overall objectives and these should be known to everyone. A couple of people mentioned that they would like a clear vision for BEN articulated and that the objectives should feed from that. The agenda for main Network meetings should revolve around those objectives and the meetings should be managed to retain a focus on them. A business plan, that would allow measurement of progress, is desirable for a number of members.

One member took the time to put their thoughts on an email and so part is included here:

“We become more more attractive as a marketing attraction when we have

- *huge range of choice and variety as to is on offer in this one unique place*
- *The Burren can attract all members of the family (or work group, tem, corporation for their employees etc...any group) as we have something on offer to attract everyone*
- *cooperation between businesses, interaction, packages, choice, variety....huge range of activities for everyone*

- *It is much more cost effective to pool our resources and work together. It is more affordable for each of us to chip to get a magazine designed and published rather than each of our businesses trying to do this on our own. Magazine is only one example... there will be dozens more in the future.*
- *The stronger we get as a group and the more used we get to working together, we can become quite a strong and formidable force which can be applied to various issues or policies or causes in the future. This can include getting the attention of Failte Ireland and getting them to put more focus on the Burren.... and hopefully in time... green principles...and ecotourism.*
- *Or widening the focus of the Electric Car to include more areas within the Burren... or whatever... attracting in a TV program.... Nationwide...*
- *We can also learn from each other. Talk to each other and get ideas how to do things. How we can improve our own businesses. Get feedback from others. Invite them into our businesses to look around with fresh eyes, and be open to constructive criticism, and learn what to focus on to improve.*
- *Good to arrange a visit to each of our businesses for all members. To learn what each of us are offering. Get ideas how we can improve our own businesses. Get ideas for cooperation and synergy.*
- *We should aim to 'become experts at showing people around our business. We should do this by showing it first to our members and hearing feedback.... before we invite in journalists or tour operators.*

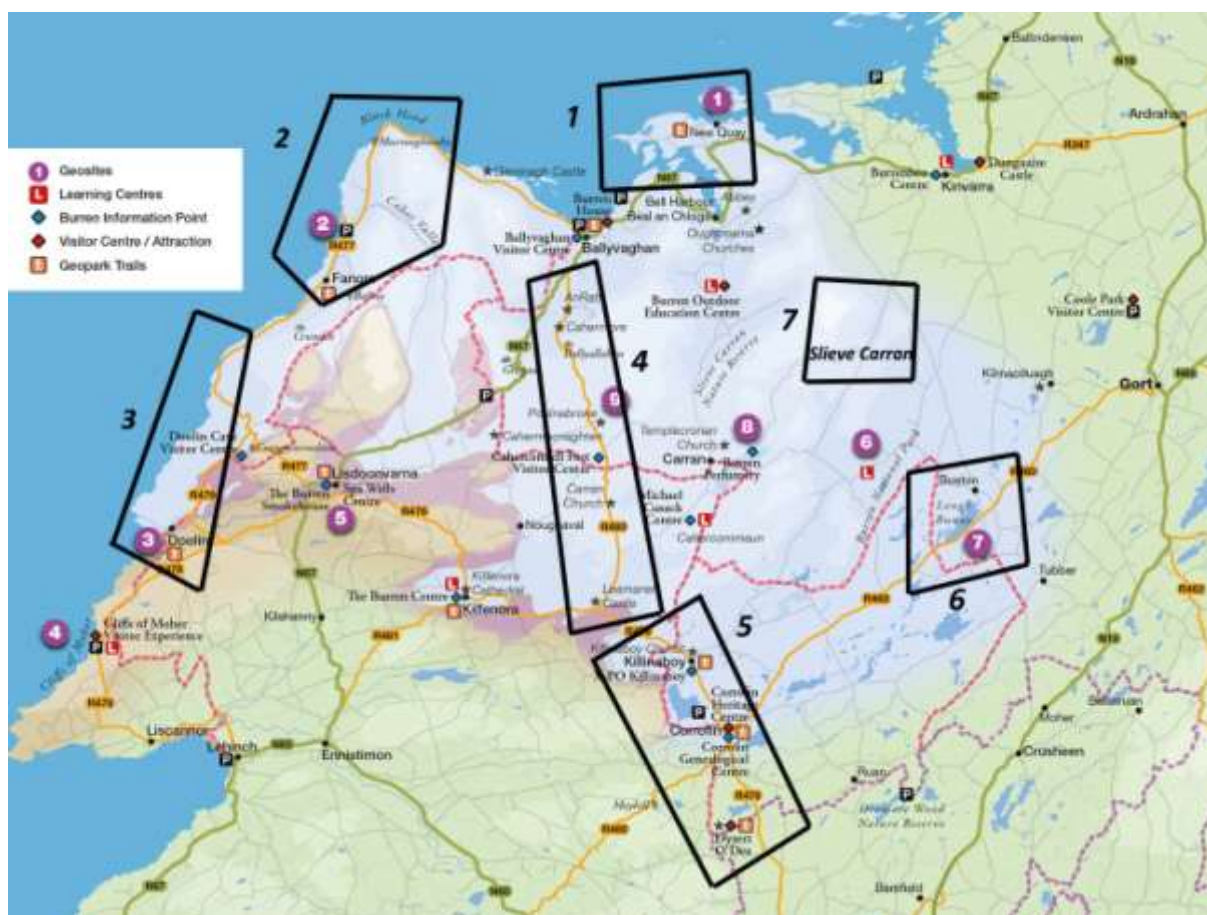
OTHER COMMENTS & FEEDBACK

- Acknowledgements of work of Katherine Webster as secretary
- A number also acknowledged work of Chris, Eva and all those who worked on the Ecotourism Food Fayre in October.
- Boundary as defined by B.E.N. is incorrect (too wide) and process through which it was decided was not transparent.
- Ecotourism Ireland only launched itself in October 2012 while the first groups are certified since February 2011 – not good enough. Didn't get value from first certification; would have had the same value if just in B.E.N.
- Shame there was so much unrest regarding ecotourism ireland this year; diluted the spirit and dampened the enthusiasm.
- Those who put in a lot of time between 2008 and 2011 in getting B.E.N. off the ground and who maybe now don't appear as often feel that that initial contribution should count for something even now.
- BEN has made great practical progress over last 2 years, after two years of 'talking and thinking'; great input and energy brought by new members which changed the face and dynamic of BE; the downside of the enlargement was the re-engaged with 'old' issues that had taken so long the first time round; BEN now needs significant movement forwards again.

ANNEX 3

Working paper: Monuments and Habitats (B2)

Site Location Map



Map Number	Location	Key Characteristics	Demonstration Value
1	Flaggy Shore	<p>Within the Galway Bay Complex Special Area of Conservation SAC (000268) and is also part of the Galway Bay Special Protection Area (SPA).</p> <p>Infrastructural issues surrounding coastal erosion; access to beach, undermining access road, erosion of farm land, etc. The water tables in this area contain both fresh and sea water.</p> <p>Chosen as a Geopark site and trail; providing information on geology, biodiversity and heritage attractions. Good combination of natural and heritage sites of interest. Becoming increasingly popular with visitors and adverse visitor impacts can be especially felt during warm weather and long weekends. Immortalised in a Seamus Heaney poem.</p> <p>The lack of designated parking areas poses problems and there are regular instances of people camping and lighting fires at points along the shore. Tensions sometimes arise between locals driving to their homes and visiting pedestrians on the narrow coast road.</p> <p>A number of local businesses are involved in Burren Ecotourism Network.</p> <p>A group of local representatives, elected at a public meeting, have been working with the Geopark on access issues and the development of the Geopark trail and are willing to collaborate on any work undertaken with LIFE</p>	<p>A case study for dealing with coastal erosion, water quality & management, involving local businesses engaged with the B1 programme.</p> <p>Producing a visitor management strategy balancing conservation with access and visitor awareness of local living requirements, in collaboration with local representatives elected by the community and local businesses engaged with the B1 programme.</p>
2	Blackhead /Fanore	<p>Located in the Blackhead Poulsallagh Complex SAC (000020). Fanore sand dunes is listed as Annex 1 under the EU Habitat Directives. Fanore Dunes is owned in part by Clare County Council. Land has been purchased for parking areas along Blackhead. Agreement with landowners on access for trails at Blackhead.</p> <p>On the R477 coast road, voted one of the top 10 scenic drives in Europe by the Automobile Association. Earmarked as a key route in the Failte Ireland Wild Atlantic Way programme. A popular amenity area, used by swimmers, surfers, rock climbers, fishermen, walkers and cyclists. Popular summer home/caravan/house rental location.</p> <p>Issues relating to traffic congestion, erosion, illegal parking, severe littering, building mini-dolmens and cairns and, in the process, damage the limestone pavement, a priority habitat under the EU Habitats Directive. The dunes have been subject to</p>	<p>Case study for balancing conservation with intense amenity use in a heavily promoted location.</p> <p>Balance restoration with preservation; how to decide how much direct intervention is required to stabilise the monument, and what methods must be employed to prevent future deterioration and vandalism.</p>

		<p>serious erosion over recent years from both natural and human pressure.</p> <p>Several types of cultural monuments; cairn, stone fort, deserted villages, some of whom are heavily impacted by visitors. A number of popular walking routes and a cycling route promoted by Shannon trails and the Geopark; trailheads at Fanore Dunes and village.</p> <p>A number of local businesses are involved in Burren Ecotourism Network.</p>	
3	Ballyreen /Doolin	<p>The presence of fine examples of Burren habitats makes this area, part of the Blackhead Poulsallagh Complex SAC (000020), of international scientific interest. Poulsallagh is also listed as a site of international geological/geomorphological importance by the Irish Geological Heritage Programme.</p> <p>Poulsallagh is mainly held in commonage, historic difficulties with agreeing access and management issues between council and owners.</p> <p>The area suffers greatly from visitor impact; it is a popular stopping off area for coach tours, camper vans, fishermen, rock climbers, walkers and film crews. The removal of stone walls, littering, erosion, fires and human waste are issues that require urgent management.</p> <p>Doolin and its surrounds is the most heavily visited area in the Burren. Aside from the pubs and music, the area has several natural and cultural heritage locations and attractions. Doolin will be the trailhead for a Geopark walk and for the Cliffs of Moher walk, and is also a cycle hub for the region. A section of the coast near the pier is a Geopark site.</p> <p>A Court Tomb is located on the outskirts of Doolin village and is easily accessed from the road and the shore. A local heritage group are undertaking the conservation of a Medieval parish church and graveyard.</p> <p>A number of local businesses are involved in Burren Ecotourism Network.</p>	<p>Commonage issues Access</p> <p>Use Joe McGooley's restoration project as a case study Cliffs of Moher walk and conservation programme as another case study</p>
4	R480	<p>This route runs through the centre of the Burren and has an array of prominent attractions and natural/cultural locations adjacent to it; Leamaneh Castle, Sheshymore Pavement, Carran Church and Meggah Depression, Caherconnel Fort, Poul nabrone Dolmen, Ballyallaban viewing point, Cahermore, Aillwee caves and An Rath. A</p>	<p>Dispersal of impacts</p> <p>Management of a route/trail</p>

		<p>number of the sites are located within Moneen Mountain SAC 000054.</p> <p>Some of these locations are well managed, others have issues with access, conservation and interpretation. They are a mix of public and private ownership. Quite a bit of background research and some planning has been done on car parking for An Rath/Cahermore, and conservation/access issues on Carron Church</p>	Access; parking, interpretation, facilities
5	Roughan Hill /Kilinaboy	<p>The area proposed is between Leamaneh Castle junction and Kilinaboy, taking in a number of townlands. Parts lie within The East Burren Complex SAC 001926.</p> <p>It contains the Roughan Hill complex of archaeological monuments, Kilinaboy Early Christian and Medieval monuments, deserted villages, holy wells, traditional farming features. A Geopark walking trail is currently being developed with the local historical group.</p> <p>The area also has a community centre, XPO, out of which several groups operate which are dedicated to the recording and conservation of local history and culture, who are willing to work with the LIFE programme. The area has a varied archaeological, cultural and farming landscape which has been researched and documented by anthropologists, archaeologists, botanists, geologists and a local mapping group.</p> <p>A number of local businesses are involved in Burren Ecotourism Network.</p>	
6	Lough Bunny	<p>Lying within the East Burren Complex SAC (001926) Lough Bunny and surrounding area is adjacent to the Burren National Park. The Lough itself has very high water quality ratings.</p> <p>Adjacent to the Lough is a small parking area with picnic tables and an interpretative panel. Access to the Lough shore is across the road, through Commonage lands. The owners of the commonage are in principle supportive of developing more managed access to the lake.</p> <p>The Lough shore and surrounding lands are subject to erosion, littering and minor vandalism is a problem.</p> <p>The proposal to create a Geopark trail in the area has brought up issues relating to the challenges and opportunities of developing an amenity in an area with little visitor</p>	

		services. The Geopark Office has met with local people several times on this issue, many of whom are willing to work with the LIFE programme.	
7	Slieve Carran Nature Reserve	<p>Lying within the East Burren Complex SAC (001926), the Nature Reserve is owned and managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. It is in an area where the roads are narrow, where there is little habitation and no adjacent visitor services.</p> <p>The nature reserve has trails and a number of archaeological features, the most popular being St. Mac Duagh's church and holy well. It is becoming increasingly popular as an attraction, placing the monument and its surrounds under pressure. The trails are also being impacted. Monitoring the impacts is an issue NPWS would like to see addressed.</p>	A test case for policy surrounding the development, monitoring, management and promotion of vulnerable locations in relatively inaccessible and undeveloped areas

ANNEX 4

Working paper: B3 Conservation Management

	<p>EU Common Provisions; an overview of eligible expenditure</p> <p>Planning and Environmental guidelines in relation to the Burren and SAC's</p> <p>Learning outcomes on habitat and water management from Burren Life Farming for Conservation</p> <p>B2 specific training: Site assessment techniques Preparing site work programmes and method statements Developing site interpretation plans Preparing monitoring and site maintenance programme Preparing the evaluation process Developing operational budgets Preparing communications and dissemination strategy Agreeing After Life programme</p>	<p>Understanding of EU funding criteria and reporting</p> <p>Understanding of CCC policy and procedures</p> <p>Transfer and adaptation of learnings into project</p> <p>Methodologies for site assessment, detailed project planning, monitoring, management, evaluations and communications.</p> <p>Meeting LIFE B1, B2 and B3 objectives</p>	<p>Brian Callanan</p> <p>Helen Quinn & Mary Burke</p> <p>Burren Farming for Conservation</p> <p>Facilitated workshops by UCD/Gabriel Cooney utilising Case Studies</p>	over longer period?
Target Group	Training Needs	Outcomes	Delivery	Timetable
Conservation Volunteers (to carry out ongoing maintenance and monitoring of LIFE	<p>Health & Safety</p> <p>EU Legislation and policy</p>	<p>Correct procedures relating to use of machinery, lifting, disposal of waste, etc.</p> <p>Understanding of the laws that govern the management of SAC's and good conservation practice</p>	<p>Burrenbeo</p> <p>UCD?</p>	From 2014

B2 locations and transfer best practice to other locations in the Burren)	<p>Leave No Trace</p> <p>Working with County Council, National Monuments and National Parks; general guidelines</p> <p>Stone Wall building and repair</p> <p>Limestone Habitats</p> <p>Hazel Scrub clearance</p> <p>Monitoring techniques</p> <p>Burren Basics</p>	<p>Understanding and practice of the LNT programme and ethos</p> <p>Understanding the policies of CCC, NMS and NPWS</p> <p>Ability to identify dry stone wall types, to identify defects and maintenance requirements. Plan repair or maintenance work for dry stone walls</p> <p>Understand of Limestone habitats and best practice in the conservation and maintenance of Limestone habitats</p> <p>Understanding of management and control of hazel scrub</p> <p>Understanding of monitoring and reporting systems</p> <p>Knowledge of the Burren's landscape, history & biodiversity</p>	<p>Leave No Trace</p> <p>Dick Cronin, Christine Grant & Seamus Hassett</p> <p>OPW</p> <p>Burrenbeo, Clare Biodiversity Group & Geopark Geologist</p> <p>Burrenbeo</p> <p>Relevant LIFE partners</p> <p>Burrenbeo & Geopark Geologist</p>	
Target Group	Training Needs	Outcomes	Delivery	Timetable
<p>Communities</p> <p>Take the X-PO community group as an example of community</p>	<p>Need to consult further on this; for now, suggest the following</p> <p>Mapping and recording local knowledge; folklore, sites, settlements, graveyards</p> <p>Local conservation projects; An Cabhail Mor as a case study</p>	<p>Understanding collection and collation processes</p> <p>Understanding processes and procedures to assist local</p>	<p>Kilnaboy History Group, XPO mapping group, Cuimhneamh an Chlair, Michael Lynch</p> <p>Michael Lynch, Dick Cronin, Christine Grant & Seamus Hassett</p>	<p>From 2014</p>

engagement with conservation, local knowledge and tourism and develop their skills as trainers to other community groups	<p>Working with County Council, National Monuments and National Parks; general guidelines</p> <p>Dissemination: helping visitors access local knowledge</p> <p>Training trainers</p>	<p>conservation projects</p> <p>Understanding the policies of CCC, NMS and NPWS</p> <p>Understanding media and dissemination techniques and developing attractive tourism experiences</p> <p>Development of skills and techniques to pass on to other local groups</p>	<p>Dick Cronin, Christine Grant & Seamus Hassett</p> <p>Dr. Deirdre O'Mahony, Tony Kirby and Tina O'Dwyer</p> <p>Failte Ireland (may need modification)</p>	
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ANNEX 5

Steering Group minutes



Project	Steering Group Meeting	BGL
Date	6/12/2012	
Location	Temple Gate Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare	

Attendance	Person	Organisation	Abbr.
Yes	Ger Dollard	Clare County Council	GD
Yes	Monica Meehan	Clare County Council	MM
Yes	Phil Deegan	Shannon Development	PD
Yes	Sarah Gatley	Geological Survey of Ireland	SG
Yes	Kevin Kidney	Faillte Ireland	KK
Yes	Carleton Jones	NUIG	CJ
Yes	Beatrice Kelly	Heritage Council	BK
Yes	Margaret Keane	National Monuments Service	MK
Yes	Christine Grant	National Monuments Service	CHG
Yes	Hugh Carey	National Monuments Service	HC
Yes	Paul McMahon	Office of Public Works	PMcM
Yes	Lynne Barratt	LIFE Monitoring Team	LB
Yes	Brian Callinan	Consultant	BC
Yes	Carol Gleeson	Burren Geopark/Clare County Council	CG
Apologies	Gabriel Cooney	UCD	GC
			NOTE
1.0	Welcome by Mr. Ger Dollard, Director of Service, Clare County Council followed by introductions from representatives of partner organisations and introduction of the project monitor, Dr. Lynne Barratt, who liaises between the project and the EU LIFE programme.		
2.0	A series of presentations were made (copies attached) on 1. the overall project work programmes and proposed management		

	<p>structures by Carol Gleeson</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. financial administration and reporting by Brian Callanan 3. Lynne Barratt provided added information and recommendations (outlined below). 4. Brian Callanan outlined the main elements of the proposed partnership agreement and the partners agreed on certain actions to progress the project. 	
3.0	<p>Monitor's recommendations:</p> <p>Use the full time allocated to the development of the Inception Report (to be submitted by end of June 2013) which will assess the viability of the project and the details of the work programme and revised budgets. This is a very important step in the projects and should not be rushed.</p> <p>Develop a 'benefits' package for stakeholders; clearly outlining what they will achieve from participating in the project</p> <p>All partners should familiarize themselves with LIFE; look up the programmes web site http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/ and consult other LIFE projects we can learn from.</p> <p>Become familiar with the tool kits available in the LIFE programme and what is expected by the Commission in terms of indicators, reporting, time records, auditing, etc.</p> <p>Always use the LIFE logo in all communications on the project. As the project will be active in Natura 2000 site, this logo should be used also.</p> <p>Develop links with relevant other EU LIFE projects. Visit projects that can assist if possible. A welcome outcome would be a blueprint for managing tourism in SAC's/Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>Keep all financial records for permanent staff (P60's, payroll and bank records) for duration and for 5 years after the project is completed, as the Commission may decide to conduct an audit. If there are any irregularities, the project partners will have to reimburse the Commission. <u>This has happened!</u></p> <p>Make sure all invoices reference the project correctly; LIFE11 ENV/IE/922 Burren Tourism for Conservation</p> <p>Use the service provided by the monitoring programme; submit all reports to Lynne for assessment before submitting them to the Commission.</p> <p>ONLY the lead beneficiary (Clare County Council) can communicate directly with the Commission; all other partners should bring any issues to CCC.</p>	

4.0	<p>Next Steps:</p> <p>The partners agreed to the following:</p> <p>Partnership Agreement: Review the attached draft partnership agreement with their organisations legal team. Any queries should be forwarded to Carol Gleeson and Brian Callanan. Shannon Development will remain as a benefactor until Failte Ireland officially takes over the organisation. The partnership agreement will be signed as soon as all parties are satisfied with the document's contents.</p> <p>Resource Audit: Collate any information/data bases/reports etc that the partners are aware of which may assist the development of the project. Forward this information on to Carol Gleeson.</p> <p>Work Programme: Partners will meet in January to develop details of the 3 Actions; Action B1 Tourism Enterprises, Action B2 Habitats & Monuments and Action B3 Conservation Management (eg. identify sites and criteria) and to agree a programme of local stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Budget revisions: Carol Gleeson & Brian Callanan to review the current budget lines to enhance the project management component of the project. All partners will retain their agreed budget amount.</p> <p>The partners agreed to invite relevant personnel within their organisations to the next meeting.</p> <p>The partners agreed that the most appropriate location for the next meeting is Ennis. We will save a visit to the Burren for later in the year.</p>	
5.0	<p>Date of Next Meeting 22nd January</p>	



LIFE11 ENV/IE/922
Burren Tourism for Conservation
Minutes of Meeting

Project	Steering Group Meeting	
Date	22/1/2013	
Location	Clare County Council Offices, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare	

Attendance	Person	Organisation	Abbr.
Apologies	Phil Deegan	Shannon Development	PD
Yes	Flan Quilligan	Shannon Development & Failte Ireland	FQ
Yes	Sarah Gatley	Geological Survey of Ireland	SG
Apologies	Kevin Kidney	Failte Ireland	KK
Yes	Carleton Jones	NUIG	CJ
Apologies	Gabriel Cooney	UCD	GC
Yes	Beatrice Kelly	Heritage Council	BK
Yes	Margaret Keane	National Monuments Service	MK
Yes	Christine Grant	National Monuments Service	CHG
Yes	Hugh Carey	National Monuments Service	HC
Yes	Paul McMahon	Office of Public Works	PMcM
Yes	Ken Curley	Office of Public Works	KC
Yes	Enda Mooney	National Parks & Wildlife Service	EM
Yes	Emma Glanville	National Parks & Wildlife Service	EG
Yes	Congella McGuire	Clare County Council	CMcG
Yes	Shane Casey	Clare County Council	SC
Yes	Mary Burke	Clare County Council	MB
Yes	Tracey Duffy	Clare County Council	TD
Yes	Joan Tarmey	Clare County Council	JT
Yes	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

		NOTE
1.0	Welcome and introduction of new participants on the Steering Committee; representatives of CCC Heritage, Environment and Water sections and representatives of NPWS, who have joined the project as partners.	
2.0	The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed, one minor change was recommended by FQ.CG reminded the partners of the agreed action on a resource audit of relevant material to assist the development of the project. Please send relevant research etc onto	

	<p>CG.</p> <p>CG distributed copies of the presentation outlining the overall project and introduced the 3 main topics for discussion: Action B1 Tourism Enterprises Action B2 Habitats and Monuments Action B3 Conservation Management</p> <p>The aim of this meeting was to begin the development of a work programme for each action that will be the basis of the Inception Report to be submitted to the EU LIFE team by June 30th.</p> <p>As this was the first meeting focusing on the actions, it generated a lot of discussion which is not documented; the following is a summary of the main points and recorded the decisions made in relation to the main actions.</p>	
3.0	<p>Action B1 Tourism Enterprises Key Outcome: 100 tourism enterprises with capacity to conserve and promote Nature & Heritage The actions are: Improved Environmental Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on energy, waste & water management • Certification Improved Economic Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing overheads • Networking, packaging, marketing Increased Visitor Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality training on interpretation and knowledge of the Burren Resource Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business planning/Sourcing funding • Environmental Policy & Conservation Plans <p>CG distributed the Burren Ecotourism Network (BEN) magazine which provides a concise profile of the network and its ethos.</p> <p>TO'D provided an overview of work undertaken to date on the development of the Burren Ecotourism Network's certification programme and provided a brief update of her on-going research into the development of benchmarking, performance indicators and strategic marketing for the network. A copy of the completed report will be circulated to the Steering Committee.</p> <p>The UN, EU and Global Sustainable Tourism Council are working together to develop criteria for sustainable tourism destinations and it is recommended that we work with these criteria, as the project benchmarks, when they are launched in late February 2013.</p> <p>Baseline information is missing in most areas. This is a critical gap that needs to be addresses immediately and should include levels of awareness</p> </p>	

	<p>of conservation issues and the programmes/agency supports that already exist. Do we have information days/evenings before we assess levels of awareness?</p> <p>A discussion ensued on how we recruit more businesses and what criteria should be used for accepting new businesses onto the programme. It was agreed that BEN was the best model to work with, as it incorporated a geographic boundary, ethos and criteria that covered more than environmental impacts and suited the broader aspirations of the LIFE programme. It was agreed that LIFE project deal with businesses that sign up to the principles guiding membership of BEN.</p> <p>FQ proposed that Failte Ireland training programmes have the flexibility to be tailored to suit the needs of this programme.</p> <p>It was agreed that Action B1 should be a vehicle for encouraging (as opposed to enforcement of) knowledge and compliance with environmental legislation.</p> <p>It was agreed that Action B1 accommodates local circumstances when recommending solutions to waste and water management; that one system will not suit all, that we take into account cost effective systems, group schemes and take advantage of existing grants and supports.</p> <p>It was agreed that Action B1 should take a holistic landscape and heritage approach and develop a few core demonstration models of good practice. Utilise the experience of other EU LIFE projects, especially Burren Farming for Conservation. Look at impacts of interaction with, and interpretation of landscape practices as well as waste, water and energy management.</p> <p>Buy in from the broader community is necessary; all potential stakeholders need to be consulted as soon as possible and given opportunities for involvement. CG has already initiated a series of presentations and discussions with local stakeholders and is using the broad network of community contacts built up since 2007 to communicate the aspirations of the LIFE project and invite participation in its development.</p>	
4.0	<p>Action B2 Habitats and Monuments</p> <p>Key Outcome: Visitor access, interpretation & management improved at 7 natural & heritage sites</p> <p>Site selection & assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitats & monuments selected based on agreed criteria <p>Work programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan interventions based on agreed guidelines Implementing conservation measures with public & private stakeholders. Establish Policy 	

	<p>Maintenance & monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed programme involving public and private stakeholders. • Establish Policy. <p>Report & evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each site evaluated on the basis of both conservation and tourism objectives. <p>CG presented a list of potential sites, with the caveat that these sites were proposals only and do not preclude the inclusion of others for consideration.</p> <p>After much discussion on the objectives of Action B2, it was proposed that the main priority should be to develop a conservation model of best practice that can be adapted to <u>not just</u> sites impacted by tourism, but also to areas that are vulnerable and sensitive (distinction between both terms needs to be highlighted) to environmental and human impacts. This model can therefore be applied to landscape management issues in general.</p> <p>It is important that the objective is very clear as it will influence the development of criteria for the selection of sites.</p> <p>BC reminded the committee that the inclusion of sites with an international dimension, interest, and transferable learning outcome is a priority for EU LIFE programmes.</p> <p>Many examples of criteria were discussed. It was agreed that prior to the next meeting CG would circulate a matrix including revised list of sites (based on recommendations of the partners) and proposed criteria, including a space for comments/pro's and con's.</p>	
5.0	<p>Action B3 Conservation Management</p> <p>Key outcome: Transferrable tool kit and integrated policies for visitor management and promotion of natural & heritage sites</p> <p>Training Modules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop & deliver training modules relating to overall objectives of the project with input from public and private stakeholders <p>Case studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and utilise monuments & habitats as case studies for practical application of training modules with input from public and private stakeholders <p>Evaluation Tool kit & Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce transferrable guidelines and policies on international best practice in sustainable tourism & conservation • Has conservation management been integrated with stakeholders objectives? <p>It was agreed that modules need to be practical and tailored to the target audiences and ensure policies and processes are clear and relevant</p>	

	<p>Look at the Burren Farming for Life model of Farm Plans as examples of checklists for the case studies</p> <p>Link in with, and utilise, local learning initiatives such as Burrenbeo's training programmes, Leave no Trace, CCC training, etc.</p> <p>Create linkages with other national programmes, such as the Longford St. Mary's Cathedral skills training project</p> <p>Create a level of standardised Conservation practice that is transferrable.</p> <p>Through the training reinforce the ethos of the project; developing supports, encouragement to participate ... NOT enforcement.</p> <p>Investigate the potential of a 3rd Level partners to deliver the programme</p>	
6.0	<p>It was proposed that to progress the development of the 3 actions, sub groups of the partners can meet to discuss in more depth the subject that they can contribute most expertise on. These sub groups would report back and make recommendations to the Steering Committee at the main meetings.</p>	
7.0	<p>BC gave a brief overview of the requirements of the Inception Report that is due at the end of June; it requires a clear work programme, signed partnership agreements and updated budgets that fit the work programme and reflect changes generated by the strict implementation of staff embargo in CCC which has implications for the administration of the programme. The inclusion of the NPWS has the potential to alter the distribution of budgets, but this has to be discussed in more detail with NPWS. EM indicated that NPWS will probably not require a budget and is happy to provide expertise to progress the project.</p>	
5.0	<p>Date of Next Meetings</p> <p>The partners agreed to hold a series of planning meetings to progress the work programme and Inception Report. They also agreed that the most appropriate location for the next meetings is Ennis. We will save a visit to the Burren for later in the Spring.</p> <p>14th February, CCC Training Room, New Road, Ennis. 14th March, CCC Training Room, New Road, Ennis.</p>	

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LIFE11 ENV/IE/922
Burren Tourism for Conservation
Minutes of Meeting

Project	Steering Group Meeting	
Date	11/3/2013	
Location	Clare County Council Offices, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare	

Attendance	Person	Organisation	Abbr.
Apologies	Phil Deegan	Shannon Development	PD
Yes	Flan Quilligan	Shannon Development & Fáilte Ireland	FQ
Yes	Sarah Gatley	Geological Survey of Ireland	SG
Yes	Michael Fitzsimons	Fáilte 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 McMahon	Office of Public Works	PMcM
Apologies	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
Yes	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

		NOTE
1.0	<p>Welcome and apologies.</p> <p>Minutes of previous meeting were reviewed and there were no proposals for amendment. Minutes proposed by SG and seconded by SC.</p> <p>CG welcomed Michael Fitzsimons, who has replaced Kevin Kidney as the Fáilte Ireland representative on the project.</p>	

	CG distributed and discussed diagram on how B1, B2 and B3 are integrated through the project, and highlighted the benefit in them being viewed as one project, rather than 3 separate elements.	
2	Action B3: Habitats & Monuments	
2.1	<p>Criteria & Selection</p> <p>CG summarized the discussions that took place in the subgroup that met to draw up a shortlist of sites. Group decided to adopt an holistic approach to sites, and to consider them in relation to their surrounding areas and so 'areas' rather than sites were selected.</p> <p>CG outlined rationale for selection of the areas, and also distributed a summary of locations, key characteristics and their 'demonstration value'.</p> <p><u>Submission on behalf of Dysert O'Dea working group:</u></p> <p>Dick Cronin (Conservation Officer at Clare County Council) addressed the group to propose extending the map to include the Dysert O'Dea project, and outlined a number of arguments to support this (the project was assured 2 years ago that Dysert would be included in the Burren and had worked on that basis since; site attracts 12,000 visitors a year and will be marketed as 'The Jewel of the Burren' in 2013; is an archaeological site of significance and houses the Clare Archaeology Centre).</p> <p>Group agreed to extend the proposed Kilnaboy area to include Dysert and to identify it as a Gateway area. Group also adopted CHG's suggestion that the Dysert experience of community involvement could be considered as a case study/background learning to the whole project.</p>	CG
2.2	<p>Discussion and input on the areas that are shortlisted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flaggy Shore: MB highlighted that this is a shellfish water area of significance and group really needs to look at the carrying capacity of this location given higher visitor numbers. SC highlighted the potential for aquaculture in the Flaggy Shore area – bear this in mind when developing anything for tourism. MF pointed out that the Western Fisheries Action Mgt Group (FLAG) looking at the development of aquaculture in Galway Bay and that there was some funding available through there. Seamus Breathnach in BIM is the contact person and MF to send on details. MF: highlighted that FI will be doing a lot of work in access, signage capacity, visitor management as part of the Wild Atlantic Way. There was a general appreciation for the demonstration values table that was circulated as it helps to clarify what outcomes are sought from each location. SG suggested adding the geological sites for each section and it was agreed that each partner should add information relevant to their area that might be important to the location. BC advised the group that this was a shortlist only, which provided a framework to work within. A much deeper assessment of these sites is now required (impacts, costs, financial implications, affordability). For example, a value for money criteria would now 	MF

	<p>need to be introduced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHG highlighted that a number of desired outcomes would be cost-neutral, and also proposed that the group place a value in determining good approaches and processes, and not focus exclusively on outcomes – achieve a balance between the two. <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CG to further develop the demonstrations spreadsheet with an expanded set of variables that each partner could populate as relevant. It is now for the partner to identify anything pertinent they know about each location, what they would like to see as an outcome of including this location and what they could contribute to each location. It is important that each partner provides feedback on whatever data is already there and that the central administration can collate this in a usable way. Each partner must take account of both tourism and conservation implications at each site – it is imperative to adopt an holistic approach to each area bearing in mind that the project is about the interaction between tourism & conservation. The group will reconsider this at the next meeting and will continue work on it over the summer. At a minimum, each partner should feedback their initial reaction to the information already received and identify the priorities for each organization by the next meeting in April. 	<p>CG</p> <p>All partners</p>
<p>3</p> <p>3.1</p>	<p>B1 Tourism enterprises</p> <p>TO'D updated on a number of items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SUSTAIN: the European Tourism Indicator System which was launched by the European Commission in February. This is a comprehensive set of indicators designed to benchmark and measure sustainable destinations. IT provides a framework within which the B&CofM Geopark and the EU Life project can measure progress on its sustainability journey. It presents a number of advantages: ready-made templates, reporting templates, destination comparison potential, EU framework, potential destination certification. STEP Green Communities is a package that is offered by Sustainable Travel International (STI) whereby it is possible for the destination to 'licence' the certification scheme and manage it locally in a way that is financially sustainable. Awaiting scenario costing from STI in order to assess further. Geopark Code of Practice: This has been discussed with the Executive of the Burren Ecotourism Network and is being updated based on the feedback of the Life Partners and the Network Executive. Burren Food Trail – a Geopark initiative – will be launched in April 2013 and will include both Network and non-Network members, highlighting the potential of the Geopark, through the tourism enterprises, to lead destination-level projects that can encourage more and more businesses to engage with the sustainability project. 	

4.0	<p>Action B3: Some discussion took place on GC's proposals on an ECTS-based programme. CJ advised the group that GC's proposal corresponded to what he thought initially (as discussed at the first meeting) and agrees that UCD should lead this action. Felt NUIG could operate better at the level of specialised, packaged training tailored to the needs of communities. CJ highlighted that UCD was already quite involved with communities through the MA in Heritage Management and is best positioned to lead B3; NUIG has specialisation in Burren-based archaeology and is positioned to contribute best in action B2 (e.g. field work on case studies, community training). How the two elements fit under Action B3 can be discussed directly between CJ and GC.</p> <p>Carlton will get involved in next subgroup discussion with GC, CG, TO'D and Brigid Barry of Burren Beo. TO'D to circulate Burren Beo review of heritage education to the group.</p> <p>Partners should also include information on policy and relevant training in the spreadsheet that is being circulated.</p>	<p>CJ/GC</p> <p>CJ</p> <p>TO'D</p> <p>All Partners</p>
5.0	<p>Administration Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CG to resend all information to MF. - CG to circulate timesheets again. All partners should submit them at the next meeting and they must be signed. They should be submitted once a quarter; all time allocated to the project (not just time in meetings) should be included. 	<p>CG</p> <p>All Partners</p>
6.0	<p>Geopark Advisory Committee (G.A.C.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreed to amalgamate the G.A.C. with the Geopark Steering Committee. - G.A.C. recommended to expand itself to include other influential people in the area; use as a panel of experts; also act as ambassadors in the area; meet twice a year; very structured meetings and including other events e.g. seminar, field trip - A.C. And Steering Group to meet twice a year at above mentioned events. 	
7.0	<p>Launch of LIFE programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - April 27th will go ahead as a Geopark Information evening and launch of a number of Geopark funded initiatives. - It is planned to launch the LIFE programme at a public life event in October – details yet t.b.c. 	
7.0	<p>Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CG and BC are now working on budgets and outcome will be included in the inception report. • NPWS do not expect an allocation so no need to redistribute. • Two matters need to be resolved before greater clarity on budget can be gained. The first is what exactly will happen with Shannon Development allocation when that organisation is merged with Failte Ireland. The second is the need to decide the management 	<p>CG/BC</p>

	<p>structure and personnel that are required to run the project and the associated costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHG highlighted that the task of filling in the sheet referred to above would be easier if the partner had an idea of budgets and money that might be available to work on projects. • However, budget can't really be determined until all information from partners has properly been collated and we have a clear picture of what needs to be spent where. 	
8.0	<p>Next Meeting 17th April. 1st joint meeting of merged Steering Groups. Venue: Ennis; Training Room, Clare County Council</p>	



LIFE11 ENV/IE/922
Burren Tourism for Conservation
Minutes of Meeting

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

Attendance	Person	Organisation	Abbr.
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
	Margaret Keane	National Monuments Service	MK
Yes	Christine Grant	National Monuments Service	CHG
Yes	Hugh Carey	National Monuments Service	HC
Apologies	Paul McMahon	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

	<p>Atlantic Way signage being piloted in Dingle right now. The plan is to have the full route signposted by March 2014. CG highlighted that the Burren Signage Plan is for the whole Burren and not just the coastal area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Blackhead Pull In Areas</u>: CCC will revert to NPWS for advice on how to proceed with the project in relation to the Sweetman ruling; considering re submitting an amended proposal to CCC much reducing the number of parking bays to areas where there is no impact on the limestone pavement. - <u>Burren Charter</u>: CG explained how EU Life project could support the Burren Charter on two particular projects – Heritage Training Programme and the Burren Winterage Festival. RM gave an update on status of Burren Charter: draft is currently up on the website www.burrencharter.com or via www.burrenbeo.com. 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. 	
3.0	<p>Education & Research Update (Eamon):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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. 3. <u>Burren in Bloom</u> – Geopark and Burren Ecotourism Network featuring a number of walks and talks throughout the festival. 4. <u>Burren Rocks Festival</u> takes place w/c 17th June. 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. 6. <u>Introduction to Geology Course</u> for primary schools: Burren Outdoor Education Centre launched this programme and a total of 600 students participated. ‘ 7. <u>Higher Level Research</u> – ED liaising with NUIG, University of Illinois, University of Plymouth on different projects. 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. 9. <u>Young Scientists</u>: John Simms research to be catalogued. 	
	<p>Action B1 Tourism Enterprises Update (Tina)</p> <p>Much activity during March and April related to product development and trade activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burren Food Trail & Burren Weekly Food Series ready to launch. - Burren in Bloom series of Walks and talk on 16th March “Burren Ecotourism explores Outdoor Ethics” - 2 media visits planned for late April/early May - 1 incentive operator on a fam visit in May. - TOD attended Irish Tour Operators Association (ITOA) Workshop in 	

	<p>March and will attend Meitheal Workshop in late April on behalf of the tourism enterprises.</p> <p>With regard to sustainable standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. • 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 19th 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. 	
	<p>Action B2 Update – Habitats and Monuments (Carol)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. - 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. <p>Dates: Background Reports: Submit by May 3rd. (change to Excel format CG) Day 1: Monday 29th April (Sites 2 and 3) Day 2: Friday 10th May (Sites 1, 6 and 7) Day 3: Monday 20th May (Sites 4 & 5)</p>	All partners.
	<p>B3 Conservation Management (Carol)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. - KC had also provided information from OPW e.g. Dry Stone Walling Module. KC confirmed that OPW can offer demonstration and materials. - Dick Cronin mentioned possibility of certification through the County 	

	<p>Council. SG also highlighted that the GSI should really be involved in B3 as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting with GC will be held on 27th May (full day) if partners wish to attend. CG invited all partners to submit any information, programmes, projects that may be of interest. 	
	<p>Administration Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. - 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 Davidson from Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience helping with a management system for this. - Budget code set up internally in each organisation for expenses. Keep track of expenses this way. 	
	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BC clarified that if a 3rd party finds funding for a project, the process is that they give that to one of the partners who then manage it. - Next Meeting Tuesday 11th June in Ennis. 10am – 1.30pm followed by lunch. 	

ANNEX 6 Steering Group pictures

