



LIFE11 ENV/IE/922

## Minutes of Meeting

<b>Project</b>	Geopark LIFE Partners Meetings	
<b>Date</b>	04/04/2017	
<b>Location</b>	The Farmyard, Corofin, Co. Clare	

Attendance	Person	Organisation	Abbr.
Apologies	Ger Dollard	Clare County Council	GD
Apologies	Risteard Ua Croinin	Clare County Council	RUC
Apologies	Congella McGuire	Clare County Council	CMcG
Yes	Tracey Duffy	Clare County Council	TD
Yes	Karen Foley	Clare County Council	JT
Yes	Sarah Gatley	Geological Survey of Ireland	SG
Apologies	Anne Reynolds	Clare County Council	AR
Apologies	Michael Fitzsimons	Fáilte Ireland	MF
Yes	Gabriel Cooney	UCD	GC
Yes	Joanne Gaffrey	UCD	JG
Apologies	Beatrice Kelly	Heritage Council	BK
Yes	Christine Grant	National Monuments Service	CHG
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	Katherine Webster	Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience	KW
Yes	Brid Fahy	Burren Ecotourism Network	CS
Apologies	Martin Waldron	Burren Ecotourism Network	MW
Apologies	Frank O'Grady	Kilinaboy Historical and Heritage Society	FOG
Yes	Eoin Hogan	RRO, Clare Local Development Company	EH

No	Chris Corlett	Cultural Tourism Officer, Dept. AHG	CC
Yes	Brian Callinan	Consultant	BC
Apologies	Niall Hughes	Burren Ecotourism Network	NH
Apologies	Tiernan Henry	NUIG	TH
YES	Eamon Doyle	CCC Geologist	ED
Yes	Zena Hooctor	B2 Co-ordinator	ZH
Yes	Carol Gleeson	Manager	CG
Yes	Tina O'Dwyer	B1 Co-ordinator	TO'D
Apologies	Laura Cotter	Communications Co-ordinator	LC
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and Opening Introductions and review of the minutes</b>		
	<b>Please go to</b>		
<b>2.0</b>	<p><b>Report on the UNESCO EGN meeting</b></p> <p>The UNESCO EGN Spring meeting, hosted by the Burren &amp; Cliffs of Moher Geopark. CG noted that 68 out of 69 European Geoparks attended. The meeting was very well supported by the BEN network and sponsors CCC/GSI/Shannon Group. Thanks to Brid, Sarah, Eamon and Zena for their contributions. The Falls hotel staff were excellent hosts. CG gave a presentation on the LIFE programme and a number of Geoparks expressed their interest in the toolkits, particularly the Code and the Monitoring App. UNESCO EGN is an organisation interested in the potential of transferring GeoparkLIFE outcomes to their territories.</p> <p><b>Report on Sustainable Transport</b></p> <p>Niall Hughes gave a presentation recently at a BEN meeting and the group are lobbying extensively for a review of day coach tourism. KW is planning to make presentations to the County Council and submissions to FI Visitor Experience Development Plan on Sustainable Transport., making reference to the gaps identified under the Policy Review undertaken by UCD for GeoparkLIFE and expressed the hope that there is a growing realisation within the Council that there needs to be a policy developed around sustainable transport, particularly in relation to the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience.</p>		CG  KW
<b>3.0</b>	<p><b>Action B1 Tourism Enterprises</b></p> <p>TD gave a review of progress which is outlined in the report on line. She outlined how the Code of Practice has evolved over the years. The online version is very practical and clear, action orientated, evidence based and tailored to different types of businesses. It is an incremental system, where businesses can build up their commitments to the various standards over time. TD went through the on line version and how it works. It will be supported by a downloadable handbook, which will be an important tool for other destinations who may want to transfer the Code to their place.</p> <p>The development of the Code is 6 months behind due to technical challenges.</p>		TD

	<p>The system has been tested by a pilot group and will be rolled out to the rest of the members. This year code submissions should be evaluated by the end of September in time for the next BEN membership deadline. The role of the administrators and evaluators was outlined.</p> <p>The Code will be owned and managed by Clare County Council for the Geopark, and will be administrated and updated by the Geopark. The resources required for the administration, evaluation and promotion of the Code will be identified more specifically when the Code is finalised. How this will be made available to other destinations is to be finalised in the coming months.</p> <p>How it will it be financed is also under review.</p> <p>BC commented on the balance of the economic and environmental sustainability in the Code and this is important from an EU perspective.</p> <p>The programme should show the economic advantages of undertaking the Code. Should raise awareness of the practice of the Code as a good business proposition. The Code gives tools to create a business plan and helps ring fence resources – such as ongoing operational costs.</p> <p>BC asked if the business plan template for the network as a collective is transferable to other locations? Suggest developing a model plan for a European context, and to consider the headings that come out of the extensive consultation.</p>	
4.0	<p><b>Action B2 Habitats and Monuments</b></p> <p>ZH gave an update on the <b>Heritage Map Viewer</b> programme and is requesting comments back from the Committee members. Looking to identify the gaps in information and localised information. We are trying to achieve a one stop shop of information for planners and communities for one area.</p> <p>ZH went through the map viewer and how it works, showing the layers of information and how to access this information.</p> <p>The ongoing management system of the map viewer will be the responsibility of the Heritage Council</p> <p>ZH highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of data sets in some areas, showing areas for future research</li> <li>- The need to identify one point of contact to send data to and to agree responsibility for updates; for example community groups should forward local research to the Heritage Officer who will forward it on to the Heritage Council.</li> <li>- Agreement sheets are provided on the system that agree the criteria on the supply and quality of the data</li> <li>- Agree “alerts” for updates when they are input</li> <li>- Commitment to ongoing contributions by partners and data providers as part of the AfterLIFE work programme</li> </ul> <p>This is a platform for sharing the information we have gathered under B2 and</p>	

	<p>B3.</p> <p>GC highlighted the importance of this as a resource for the management of the Geopark and suggests that the responsibility for co-ordinating the updating of the information should be the responsibility of the Geopark, as an essential part of the ongoing work programme of the Geopark.</p> <p>CG proposed that as this is a partnership approach and the tool is for the use of all of the partners and should be a collective responsibility. CG highlighted the challenge of securing future resource issues for the Geopark, and the responsibility for that within the Council. The ideal scenario would be that all partners would adopt the Map Viewer as a working tool and would continue to populate it with relevant research as it is produced.</p> <p>GC recommends the development of an agreed system of updating, which could be overseen by the Geopark.</p> <p>ZH continued to present the Monitoring App</p> <p>Developed from the various surveys carried out under the B2 programme. A way of integrating the conditions, conservation and the visitor and other uses of sites and trails, and providing the info required to efficiently managed sites and trails in an integrated way. The App is undergoing testing and upgrading. Testing undertaken by ZH, OPW (KC), NPWS (EG) and RRO (EH).</p> <p>EH reported on the roll out of the National Trails Office plans to develop a nation wide scheme of monitoring all trails in the country, using a single monitoring system, to replace a paper based, un-coordinated system and that this prototype would be a very useful transferrable tool for this purpose.</p> <p>BC suggests that the future success of these tools lies in the way they become everyday tools for management teams.</p> <p>The management of this App will rest with CCC, which will host the App and manage a series of super users, such as the partners.</p>	
5.0	<p><b>Action B3 Conservation Management</b></p> <p>The key outputs will be a concise report, a series of Case studies and checklists. Some of the case studies will be used to profile policy impacts and legislation. Toolkits on 'how to' with tips and advice will be produced from the relevant case studies.</p> <p>All the case studies and checklists will be included in the Map Viewer.</p> <p>No ongoing management issues, these outputs are stand alone documents that will be freely available on websites and the Map Viewer.</p> <p>BC highlighted the crucial role of the Geopark in providing external facilitation and navigation of funding and policy for community groups. The outputs of this section should identify clearly the supports community groups need in taking on conservation management projects. The importance of this B3 programme is to highlight what happens locally, at a community level.</p>	

	<p><b>Policy Review</b></p> <p>GC presented an update on the Policy review and its conclusions, which highlight the 2 most important policy instruments; the County Development Plan and the UNESCO Global Geopark. Policy gaps and coherence are highlighted through a series of case studies. The research is underpinned by an extensive consultation process.</p> <p>Final Report on Policy</p> <p>The main document will be large and detailed, but the executive summary can be produced as a stand alone summary.</p> <p>The key features will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coherent executive summary</li> <li>- 3 sections of current draft as appendices</li> </ul> <p>The final report will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote a management process more than a plan for After LIFE and all destinations</li> <li>- Highlighting the policy that needs to underpin the process</li> </ul> <p>The process should focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outcomes should be solutions to real issues</li> <li>- Using the tools produced</li> <li>- Show accountability and focus</li> <li>- Identify the inputs from partners</li> <li>- Show how existing resources can be harnessed</li> <li>- Show how added value can be created</li> <li>- Present techniques for community engagement</li> </ul> <p>The plan/process should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A designated programme for work that is influenced by LIFE outputs</li> <li>- Guided by the key criteria of the operational guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks</li> <li>- Legal structure</li> <li>- Formal agreements</li> <li>- Indicators</li> <li>- Community engagement</li> </ul> <p>Partners are asked to produce comments on the current draft before Easter. GC will provide a final draft for circulation on a final draft by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June.</p>	
6.0	<p><b>Communications</b></p> <p>CG informed the committee on the approach from the World Travel and Tourism</p>	

	<p>Council to showcase a business that has benefitted from our LIFE programme at the launch of their annual conference in Thailand at the end of April. We are one of four destinations chosen. Filming is happening over the next few days. Copies of the video will be posted on the BEN and Geopark web site.</p> <p>CG gave a presentation on the pilot template for Integrated Signage, showing the proposed layout, design, location and hierarchy of logos and site manager agency text. Fanore is the demonstration site for the amalgamation and reduction of signage. Other demonstration sites are less challenging.</p> <p>GC highlighted the importance of reducing signage at sites, from an aesthetic perspective. He recommended also the subtle integration of the directional signage within the Geopark.</p> <p>CG also presented the Business Partner and Geosite signage. There will be a design link between the Geopark business signs, demonstration site and Geosite signage. She noted that the 'protected landscape' signage has been replaced with 'Welcome to the Geopark' signs. All of these signs include the LIFE logo.</p> <p>CG also noted that CCC and FI are trying to re-activated the Burren Signage Plan, originally prepared in 2011.</p>	
<b>7.0</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
<b>8.0</b>	<p><b>Next Steering Group Meeting</b></p> <p>Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September</p> <p>Venue tba.</p>	