

# The Burren and Cliffs of Moher **UNESCO Global Geopark** Newsletter

Welcome to the sixth edition of our newsletter, your guide to what the Geopark is all about, with updates on the GeoparkLIFE project, events, LEARNING. LIVELIHOOD. education initiatives and much more....

### Launching four new trails during Heritage Week

gust) will see the launch of four additional heritage trails to the existing Geopark Heritage Trail series. The new trails at Fanore, Doolin, Kilinaboy and Carron will bring the total number of Heritage Trails in the Geopark to nine.

The new trails have been designed to celebrate the cultural and built heritage of the communities and will be launched by Geopark Geologist Dr. Eamon Doyle with local heritage experts.

each of the self-guided trails. The map illustrates the walk and the sights to see on the way while small

This Heritage Week, (19th-27th Au- footprint signs along the route ensure you are on the right path.

Guided walks for Heritage Week:

- Fanore, 22nd August 2.00pm Patsy Carrucan of Fanore will tell his stories of the heritage of Fanore on a walk from Craggah to Fanore Beach. Meeting point: Outside O'Donohues pub, Craggah, Fanore
- Cusack to Cahercommaun, 24 August, 11am. Agnes O'Loughlin of the Michael Cusack Centre will guide a walk to the ancient stone fort of Ca-A trailhead map is the start point for hercommaun along the Cusack - Cahercommaun Geopark Heritage Trail. Meeting Point: Michael Cusack's Centre, Carran

NATIONAL HERITAGE **WEEK 2017** 19-27 AUG

• Killinaboy, 24 August, 7:30pm Join Frank O'Grady and explore the fascinating history of the village of Kilnaboy along the Kilnaboy Geopark Heritage Trail. Meeting Point: Old Killinaboy church

• Doolin, 26 August, 10:30am The Intriguing story of the history of Doolin as told by archaeologist Joe McCooey in a walk along the Doolin Geopark Heritage Trail. Meeting Point : Russell Community Centre, Doolin

### New European Atlantic Geoparks Route

The Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark along with 13 of our European Geopark partners have successfully applied to the EU Interreg Atlantic Area Programme for funding to promote sustainable tourism between and across Geoparks and aspiring Geoparks along the Atlantic Area.

The 30 month project aims to forge new tourism links along a defined Atlantic route through highlighting our common interests and heritage.

Our fellow Irish Global Geoparks, Waterford's Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark and the cross border (Cavan/ Fermanagh) Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark will also be participating in the project alongside partners from the UK, Spain, Portugal and France.

Beginning in September this year the project will look at promotional opportunities, networking and IT infrastructure.

The international project group will travel to the Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark in November this year for a study visit to our region to attend our GeoparkLIFE final conference (see page 4.) where they will see the tools we have developed during the LIFE project.

**Right: Map of the European Atlantic** Geoparks route.







### **An International Place of Learning**

The 3rd International Burren Geology Field School at Caherconnell took place in June. The 14 day field school is a collaboration between the Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark, Caherconnell Fort, and the Earth and Ocean Sciences Dept of NUI Galway. The Field School attracts students from the US, who spend two weeks in the Geopark studying and earning credits towards their university courses.

The students learn about the world-class geology of the Burren and how the region has been changed over millions of years by floods, tsunamis, earthquakes and ice ages. This year were delighted to have Dr. Markus Pracht from the Geological Survey of Ireland sharing his skills and expertise in field mapping and core logging with our students.



Above: The students spent time in the field studying stratigraphy

Above right: the students on a visit to Poulnabronne where they looked at the Limestone pavement.

Right: The students on their final day with Geopark Geologist Dr. Eamon Doyle who presented them with their certificates of completion and copies of the Geopark 's geology field guide *Stone, Water and Ice.* 



## New Geosites and a new publication

This year we released the third edition of our geology publication *Stone, Water and Ice*. The extended publication highlights our new Geosites which include Caherconnell Stone Fort, Doolin Cave and Aillwee Cave, bringing the total number of accessible and interpreted sites of geological importance in the Geopark to eighteen.

The guide is a geology trip through the Burren, taking the reader through the evolution of the Burren from the start of its formation over 300 million years ago when it was the seabed of a tropical ocean, through tectonic plate activity, ice ages, rises and falls of sea level, erosion and deposition, all to create the Burren we know today. Each of the Geosites featured illustrate aspects of this story.







### **Education**

## The Burren Rocks again in 2017

The 2017 Burren Rocks festival took place in partnership with the Burren National Park, Ennistymon Public Library and the Burren Outdoor Education Centre.

The festival forms part of the European Geoparks week and took place on 25th to the 29th May. During the festival we explored how the history, culture, flora and fauna of the Burren

Right: Reading the Burren landscape during a walk in the Burren National Park.

Below left: Students taking part in the Burren Rocks school quiz in the Burren Outdoor Education Centre.

Below right: A talk in the Ennistymon public library titled '*There is life in the old rocks of* 





## Young Environmentalist Win for Uisce Aille

The GeoparkLIFE funded Integrated catchment management project, Uisce Aille, featuring research by Lisdoonvarna Transition year students was named as joint winner of Senior Water Award at the ECO UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards in June this year. The awards honor Ireland's greenest teens for their innovative environmental projects.







### GeoparkLIFE: Tourism for Conservation Conference

# Presenting a model for balancing tourism development and heritage conservation in tourism destinations

Date: Thursday, 23rd November, 2017 Venue: The Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare To book your place: www.burrengeopark.ie

#### Overview

For decades, visitors have flocked to see Ireland's landscape and heritage attractions. They are the cornerstone of the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East. Many of these attractions are considered national treasures and an important part of our cultural identity and are protected by EU directives and national legislation. Their conservation is a priority and should be integrated with their development as tourism attractions. This needs a long view, a top down meets bottom up approach involving local communities, landowners, tourism businesses and management agencies.

#### Experience

We have a long history in the Burren of engaging multiple stakeholders in the management of landscape and of tourism. Since 2004, the BurrenLIFE farming for conservation project has engaged farmers as key actors in the conservation of their landscape.

For several decades agencies and communities have been working together on the management of tourism through various programmes. Since 2012 this collaboration has been continued by the GeoparkLIFE programme under Clare County Council.

#### GeoparkLIFE

The GeoparkLIFE programme focused on developing partnerships between tourism businesses, communities and agencies in integrating tourism development and the conservation of our heritage. Tourism businesses helped create a sustainable model of tourism for their businesses. Tourism and conservation agencies developed a new approach to heritage site management. All stakeholders contributed to the investigation of policy impacts and proposals for future policy and governance.

The outcome of the Geopark LIFE programme has been the development of a model for the integrated management of tourism and conservation. This model is underpinned by a policy and governance framework, and is demonstrated by case studies and practical toolkits.

#### Our Objectives:

- To work with tourism businesses in developing a sustainable code of practice for their business.
- To work with tourism and conservation agencies to develop integrated management systems at sites of high conservation value.
- To work with agencies, businesses and community groups to test policy on the ground and to influence the integration of these policies and their governance.

#### **Our Approach:**

- Creating platforms for collaboration between all stakeholders
- Allowing time to build relationships and trust
- Creating a vision
- Providing leadership and facilitation structures
- Focusing on practical actions and measured outcomes

#### Our Gains:

- Increased and continuing collaboration, engagement and understanding between stakeholders
- A destination approach to sustainable tourism
- Award winning sustainable tourism products
- A large body of businesses implementing environmental practices
- A code of practice toolkit that generates environmental, social and economic gains for established and emerging tourism businesses
- A model for business to business networking and referrals
- Heritage sites and trails monitoring and data management tools
- Transferrable integrated management plan templates for heritage sites
- Policy and governance proposals to national tourism and conservation agencies
- International recognition through a series of prestigious awards





### GeoparkLIFE Conference Programme 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017 Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare

9:00	Registration
9:30	Welcome
	Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr Tom McNamara
9:40	Introduction and opening remarks
	Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council
	Carol Gleeson, Manager, Geopark LIFE
10:00	Policy and Governance; context and future
	Prof. Gabriel Cooney, UCD, Funding Partner, Geopark LIFE
10:30	The engagement and contribution of Tourism Businesses
	Tina O'Dwyer, Tourism Enterprises Co-ordinator, Geopark LIFE
11:15	Coffee Break
11:45	The development of an integrated management approach
	Zena Hoctor, Sites and Monuments Co-ordinator, Geopark LIFE
12:30	What we have learned
	Carol Gleeson, Manager, Geopark LIFE
1:00	Q&A session
	Moderator: Eoghan Corry, Travel Journalist and Writer
1:30	Lunch
2:30	Stakeholder Panel Discussion
	Representatives of the agencies, businesses and communities that engaged with
	Geopark LIFE
	Moderator: Eoghan Corry, Travel Journalist and Writer

#### 3:30 Demonstration of Toolkits – 3 Parallel sessions

3.30	4.00	4.30
Room 1: The Site Monitoring App	Room 1: The Site Monitoring App	Room 1: The Site Monitoring App
Room 2: The Heritage Map viewer	Room 2: The Heritage Map viewer	Room 2: The Heritage Map viewer
Room 3: The Code of Practice for Sustainable Tourism	Room 3: The Code of Practice for Sustainable Tourism	<b>Room 3:</b> The Code of Practice for Sustainable Tourism



## Out and about



Hosting an international visitor: Above left: Orla Vaughan, Kilfenora Hostel and Frances Connole, The Burren Centre with KM, Manager Hong Kong Global Geopark. Above right: KM with Janet Cavanagh, e-Whizz and Tony Kirby, Heart of Burren Walks

Ask Me about the Geopark: Right: Geopark Geologist Dr. Eamon Doyle with the guides from Aillwee Cave during a training session on the Geopark

#### Walks and Talks:

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Below left: Carol Gleeson, Geopark Manager speaking at the High Nature Value seminar in Kilfenora.

Below right: Dr. Eamon Doyle leading a walk with the North Clare historical society.







United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



The Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark supports people and organisations to work together to ensure a cared-for landscape, a better-understood heritage, more sustainable tourism, a vibrant community and strengthened livelihoods Follow us on Twitter and Facebook

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