

CCGHT Activity Newsletter

(Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust)



CAUSEWAY COAST & GLENS
HERITAGE TRUST

Issue 6

June 2011

SUCCESS AT NITB TOURISM AWARDS



The Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust was presented with a 'Highly Commended Award' at the NITB Tourism Awards 2011, held on the 26th May at the Belfast Ramada Plaza Hotel, for the ÉCONOMUSÉE Northern Europe Project.

An ÉCONOMUSÉE, or working museum, is a Québec inspired tourism initiative that encourages visitors to come and watch an artisan at work. As well as creating an attraction where visitors can discover the authentic handcrafted products and learn about their cultural heritage, the Trust aims to provide employment opportunities for young people with a goal of creating at least 18 new jobs within the Causeway Coast and Glens area, under the Northern European Project, which has been funded by the

Northern Periphery Programme 2007-2013 and the NI Tourist Board.

Marion Woodburn Designer Jewellery in Galgorm is the first ÉCONOMUSÉE in the United Kingdom, and she opened her doors to visitors on 24th February 2011, launched by the DETI Minister, Arlene Foster. The Trust has been commended by the Tourist Board for 'successfully creating a viable wet weather attraction within the Causeway Coast and Glens area. Tourists receive an enhanced visitor experience as they take away a premium product that has depth, history and has been handcrafted on the premises.'

CCGHT will continue to work with a second local artisan, Michael Scullion of Scullion Hurls in Loughguile, to transform his workshop into an ÉCONOMUSÉE by 2012 and therefore a craft trail of ÉCONOMUSÉES will begin to develop in Northern Ireland.

Trust Director's Report

Back in March 2011 when I wrote the Trust Director's Report, I considered that we had clearly demonstrated our worth and indeed added value in delivering our Strategy and Business Plan on behalf of our partners. In terms of this translating into funding, it has been a hard slog, but we are there, however only just.

I am delighted to report that NITB has awarded a financial contribution for 2011/12, but this was reduced based on its perception that we do not deliver tourism initiatives. I am unclear as to why this is the case especially in terms of the fact that our major initiatives clearly sit within delivering tourism.

We were awarded a 'Highly Commended' for the Économusée project at the recent prestigious NITB Tourism Awards ceremony. CCR Alive and the CCR interpretation clearly show our commitment to tourism initiatives. What has changed is the way we deliver it – sustainably! It is a very clear objective within the Strategy and Business Plan – Objective 4: To ensure best practice in sustainable development principles throughout CCGHT geographical area. As we move forward our focus on tourism will be on delivering the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas; a major project for us with a five year commitment. The second phase of Économusée will be implemented along with the review of our AONB management plans and our involvement with the WHS management plan. All of which will have tourism central to their implementations. Of course we are grateful for the monies received from NITB, but it is always difficult to know that we have not been as successful in securing monies from NITB as our colleagues in the Mourne Heritage Trust who secured an additional £30,000 on top of our monies.

Our core funding for 2011/12 is safe, but we cannot sustain dipping into our Accessible Reserves monies to a sum of £32,000 p.a. We need buy-in from our core funders as well as looking for new core funders. In order to demonstrate our 'value', the annual business plan now has an additional column that states the impact of activities within each of the council's boundaries. A working group has also been set up to look at our future in terms of securing long term monies. Again, we are very grateful for the continued support of the core funders, but the current level of funding is not adequate nor is it sustainable. We reduced the amount requested from the councils to £11,000 to help the councils through RPA. This did not happen and is not likely to happen until after 2015. The original level of funding should be reinstated in the short term and reviewed to reflect what we deliver. This is prudent especially with the issuing of the National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA) – a UK-wide assessment which clearly states that nature is worth billions to the UK. Indeed, NEA states that the health benefits of merely living close to a green space are worth up to £300 per person per year!

I hope the 'value' of the Heritage Trust in looking after our landscapes on behalf of our partners is truly appreciated and reflected in securing 3 year funding from all our core funders per se and being able to access new sources of funding. So what is the value of our landscapes, especially the 3 AONBs? The simplest way to answer that is a quote from Ian Bateman, an economist from the University of East Anglia, who played a principal role in the analysis of NEA – 'Without the environment, we're all dead – so the total value is infinite.'



PECS Visit 18th-23rd May 2011

The Trust Director had the opportunity to visit the North Pennines AONB unit in Stanhope, County Durham in May. The purpose of the meeting was to progress the LIFE+ funding application for the Peatlands Economic and Carbon Storage project (PECS). It was with some reluctance that we concluded we would have to postpone an application to LIFE+ until the 2012 funding round. This was because CCGHT had not managed to secure 50% of its funding for the project prior to the deadline of the 2011 application round. Work will continue to secure these monies and a number of tentative applications have been forwarded, in particular to NIEA and RSPB – both of whom are supportive of the project. We are also hopeful that the HLF Landscape Partnership Scheme – Heart of the Glens project will be able to contribute to the project, if successful. Other funding sources will be explored.

Causeway Coastal Route

Installation of the Causeway Coastal Route Interpretation signage is currently underway throughout the route. Interpretation panels, way markers and finger posts can all be seen at various spots along the route. All works are due to be completed by the end of June 2011, which will complete this signature project. The main aim of this project is to encourage visitors to stay longer and explore more along the Causeway Coast and Glens area.



CCGHT Updates

60th Board meeting & AGM

On the 21st June 2011 the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust held its 9th Annual General Meeting and 60th Board of Directors meeting. Cllr Roy Craig, Dr David Erwin, Cllr Hubert Nicholl, Don Wilmont, Richard Gillen, Kevin McGarry and staff member, Carole O'Kane have attended the majority of these meetings over the last nine years.

Risk of Redundancy

Following much consultation and deliberation it was with deep regret and as a result of the imminent cuts in core funding that the Directors decided at the Board meeting on 8th March 2011 to issue Risk of Redundancy notices to all CCGHT staff. These were subsequently issued on 16th March 2011. Further updates will be made available following the Annual General Meeting.

Carole O'Kane, Office & Communications Manager attended the Handling Redundancy Seminar hosted by NICVA on 14 June 2011.

Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: Building Bridges - Seeking Solutions

The Trust Director and the Sustainable Development Officer are travelling to Serbia for the 7th Charter networking meeting "Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: Building Bridges - Seeking Solutions" which will take place from June 28th – 1st July in Donji Milanovac, Djerdap National Park, Serbia.

Speeches and workshops will examine the thinking and imperatives behind sustainable tourism, whilst bringing examples of good practice from around the Charter network. There will also be a chance for existing Charter areas to discuss the mechanics of the Charter and look to how we can improve the system. There will be ample opportunities to network and share examples, get new ideas and make new contacts.

For a protected area(s) to be awarded the EU Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, a number of steps must be followed. CCGHT has submitted the application documents, prepared a Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2016, engaged a new Sustainable Tourism Forum and more recently hosted a verification visit.

This visit provided EUROPARC Federation with the opportunity to see the work being carried out by organisations, local tourism businesses and individuals on sustainable tourism in the Causeway Coast and Glens area. The entire application will now be assessed, and a 30 page report has been written up by EUROPARC on our area. This will be brought to the evaluation committee in Serbia at the end of June, and CCGHT hope to receive the outcome of the application by the middle of the summer 2011. If successful, CCGHT will be invited to the annual EUROPARC Conference in Germany to receive our Charter Award for the area.



Antrim Coast & Glens AONB

The Antrim Coast and Glens AONB Management Group has held its first Site Visit Day. This is part of a review of Management Group meetings, to learn about ongoing projects in the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB. On the 16th of May, the Management Group met at Laragh Lodge with Daniel McAfee from the Glens Red Squirrel Group to learn about the Group's activities and their Red Squirrel Safari project. Devina Park from NIEA Water Management Unit also presented the work of the Unit on the new Glens and Rathlin Local Management Area Action Plan.

Causeway Coast AONB

An agreement has been made with Northern Ireland Environment Agency regarding the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust co-ordinating the Giant's Causeway World Heritage Management Group and lead on the review of the WHS Management Plan. This will allow the Trust to also start with the formal review of the Causeway Coast AONB Management Plan. Both plans will be reviewed in parallel to ensure that duplications are avoided and when possible an integrative approach is promoted. Over the next few months, existing information, policies and strategies will be collected, reviewed and analysed. A series of engagement/consultation exercises will also be set up both with local residents, visitors and management stakeholders to gather and analyse views and perceptions. These will lead to the production of new AONB and WHS management plans.

CCGHT Updates

Économusée 2nd stage

The second phase of the ÉCONOMUSÉE Northern Europe project, entitled 'Craft International' has now been approved and this phase will start on 1st July 2011. CCGHT will work with Michael Scullion of Scullion Hurls, Loughguile to develop his workshop into the 2nd ÉCONOMUSÉE in the UK. We will also be searching for a 3rd artisan to transform into an ÉCONOMUSÉE in 2012.

This will allow for an ÉCONOMUSÉE craft trail to develop within the Causeway Coast and Glens area. The ÉCONOMUSÉE Northern Europe Project seeks to reveal artisans at work, offering a unique tourism experience, whilst encouraging employment within rural communities.



Verification Visit

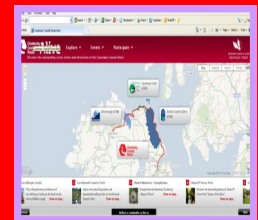
CCGHT has applied to the Europarc Federation for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism for the Causeway Coast, Binevenagh and Antrim Coast & Glens Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Charter is a practical management tool which helps protected areas to continuously improve the sustainable development and the management of tourism taking account of the needs of the environment, the local population and the local tourism businesses.



In April 2011 CCGHT hosted verification officers for the Federation, Hans Schiphorst and Richard Partington. The Trust arranged site visits and an action-packed itinerary allowing the verification officers the opportunity to sample local produce, local activities and speak to local tourism businesses .

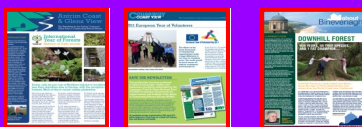
CCR Alive

It is hoped that CCR Alive will launch in June/July 2011. Work is currently underway to prepare for the launch of the CCR Alive digital experience. You can register your interest at ccralive.com



Save Our Newsletters!!

CCGHT have been encouraging members of the public, family and friends to show how much they value our AONB newsletters by clicking on www.surveymonkey.com/s/QDRQKZY and completing the short questionnaire. Feedback has been good with a wide range of feedback received already.



AWARD :)

Maxime receiving the NIEA Water Award on behalf of the trust from Alex Attwood, the NI Minister for the Environment on Thursday 26th May at an awards ceremony in Belfast.

Congratulations to the new Minister for the Environment, Alex Attwood. We have made contact with the Minister

and look forward to meeting and working with him to promote and enhance the Causeway Coast & Glens area.

STAFF TRAINING

CCGHT staff attended a "Winning Grants " training course organised by NICVA on 17th May 2011

Elections 2011

Congratulations to ex-CCGHT Director, Cllr Cathal O'hOisin who was elected MLA at the recent NI Assembly elections. Cllr Roy Craig and Ald Hubert Nicholl were re-elected in Local Council elections and subsequently were reappointed to the CCGHT Board. In addition Ald Hubert Nicholl was appointed Mayor of Ballymena Borough Council. We welcome back our elected members wishing them another fruitful term with the Trust and we wish success to those who have chosen another path. We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome new Directors, Cllr Sam Cole, Cllr Cathal McLaughlin, and Cllr Catherine McCambridge.



Any Other Business

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CAUSEWAY COAST & GLENS
HERITAGE TRUST

Acknowledgement

The Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust would like to take this opportunity to thank NIEA, NITB, Ballymena BC, Coleraine BC, Larne BC, Limavady BC and Moyle DC for their support and funding over the last financial year. We are also delighted to announce that we have secured core and project funding for the incoming financial year as follows:

Ballymena Borough Council (under negotiation) - £3,000

Coleraine Borough Council—£11,000

Larne Borough Council—£11,000

Limavady Borough Council—£11,000

Moyle District Council—£11,000

NIEA Core Funding—£113,542

NIEA Raising Awareness—£15,000 (tbc)

NIEA Implementation of Management Plans—£28,255.00

NIEA World Heritage Officer— £26,180 (tbc)

NITB Service Level Agreement—£25,000

RDP—Sustainable Tourism Charter—£5,000

Économusée—£29,784

World Oceans Day 8th June

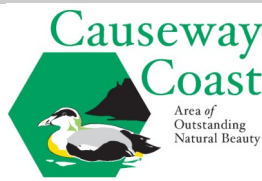
NIEA Water Award



CCGHT was awarded the Water Environment Community Award under the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, for the River Bush Catchment area. CCGHT decided to develop a water journey of the River Bush, following the meandering path from the source at Slieveanorra, to the mouth at Portballintrae beach. The 15 children from Armoyle Primary School attended a media workshop on Monday 6th June, to learn about writing press releases. After their water journey, the water detectives were asked to develop a press release based on where they visited along the River Bush. The children went to Altnahinch Dam, Magherahoney, Bushmills Salmon Station and Portballintrae harbour to see a SurfSUP demonstration. To celebrate the importance of water and to present the children with their certificates, a water for life event is planned for Friday 24th June at Portballintrae village hall from 9.30-11am.

STUDENT PLACEMENTS

- A group of students from Queen's University Management School has undertaken a consultancy project that looked at the opportunity to set up an Antrim Coast and Glens AONB membership card giving offers at local shops within the AONB with profits being invested back into the management of the AONB. Outcomes from this study will be made available to the Trust members.
- Neil Dickson, Heritage Science Masters student has just completed a short study looking at an investigative tool to monitor peat changes on Garron Plateau. Neil will continue to work with the Trust over the next few months to investigate possible Geopark status for the Causeway Coast and Glens area.
- Áine Scullion, a graduate student in Land Use and Environmental Management, has recently started a placement with the Trust. Over the next 3 months Áine will work on Sustainable Tourism projects as well as helping to develop AONB sustainable tourism business networks, assisting with the organisation of a local sustainable tourism conference to be held in October 2011, researching the potential to introduce a visitor payback scheme within the Causeway Coast and Glens area as well as developing a 'Hidden Gems of the Causeway Coast and Glens' visitor information guide.



13th Annual NAAONB Conference

5-7 July 2011, Penryn

Helen Noble, Cllr Roy Craig and Michael Jones are due to attend the 13th annual conference in Penryn to look at how the collaborative working of AONB partnerships can provide local solution to national issues. There will be a series of practically focused field trips to the AONBs, to see examples of how the local AONB partnerships are dealing with the challenges and opportunities set before them. Whilst each field trip will be interesting and enjoyable in its own right, it will also focus on taking a landscape approach.

The overall approach of the Conference is to demonstrate that the integrated collaborative approach taken by AONB partnerships locally makes the AONB Family, as a whole, a strategic national asset.



Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust is grateful for support from:

