



## Local Involvement in Countryside Management

### What is Working?

Glendalough Hotel  
County Wicklow

23 – 24 October 2007



## Local Involvement in Countryside Management – What is Working?

The objectives of this workshop are to:

- Examine the advantages and reasons for local participation in countryside management.
- Review models for local involvement, including statutory/non-statutory partnerships.
- Provide an opportunity to share experiences of local involvement in environmental management and recreation.

The event will be of interest and value to: sustainable development NGO's; LEADER groups; partnership companies; community groups; the farming sector; recreational/environmental organisations; consultants; EU, national and local government and state-sponsored bodies working in this sector.

Outcomes of the workshop will include: local perspectives on countryside management; improved understanding between statutory and non-governmental bodies and identification of models for effective delivery of local involvement.

The programme has been designed with small discussion groups to increase the opportunity for participant input and networking.

**Come along with questions and ideas, share your experiences and make this a landmark event.**

## PROGRAMME

### Tuesday 23 October

#### 11.30am – 12.30pm

Registration at Glendalough Hotel.

#### 12.30pm

Lunch and welcome address by Sean Byrne, Board member, Wicklow Uplands Council and Michael Starrett, CEO Heritage Council.

#### 2.00pm

Choice of five field trips; see panel for details.

#### 7.00pm

Drinks reception at Glendalough Hotel.

#### 8.00pm

Workshop dinner sponsored by Wicklow County Council.

After dinner address by Prof. Frank Convery, Chairperson of Comhar, the Sustainable Development Council and Heritage Trust Professor of Environmental Policy, University College Dublin.



### Wednesday 24 October

#### 10.00am

#### The Wicklow Uplands Council experience

Three 10 minute presentations, followed by group discussions.

Wicklow Uplands Council genesis, structure and governance – *Helen Lawless, Countryside Recreation Officer.*

A flavour of Wicklow Uplands Council's current projects – including vegetation management, access routes and village interpretive panels – *Lenka Mulligan, Development Officer.*

A farmer's view of how well Wicklow Uplands Council is working – *Philip Maguire, Board member.*

#### 11.00am

Tea/Coffee.

#### 11.30am

#### Discussion Session 1

Six topics to choose from; see panel for details.

#### 12.30pm

Lunch.

#### 1.30pm

#### Discussion Session 2

Six topics to choose from; see panel for details.

#### 2.30pm

Tea/Coffee.

#### 3.00pm

Feedback from discussion sessions.

#### 3.40pm

Plenary discussion chaired by Frank Nugent, Irish Uplands Forum.

#### 4.20pm

Conclusions and closing remarks.

#### 4.30pm

Close.

## FIELD TRIPS

Each participant should select one of the following field trips. Field trips will include discussion in the context of the overall theme for the workshop. Transport will be provided from, and back to, the Glendalough Hotel.

### 1. Tinahely Railway Walk & Tomnafinnoge Wood

Walking route developed along a disused railway line where farmers have given written agreement to public access. Also a series of waymarked trails in Tomnafinnoge Wood, an oak woodland under care of the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS). Discussion led by representatives of Tinahely Area Development Association and Eamonn Doran, NPWS.

### 2. Cronelea Wind-Farm

The first wind-farm developed in Co. Wicklow, located near Shillelagh. Discussion will cover the challenges and opportunities in wind-farm development, with a focus on community involvement. Option to visit farm forestry developed in partnership with Coillte. Discussion led by Tom Ryan (landowner), and Tommy Cooke, Chairperson of Meitheal na Gaoithe.

### 3. Glenmalure Access Route & Ballinacor Boardwalk

Visit Glenmalure where an old hunting path is being restored by Mountain Meitheal volunteers as part of a project to develop agreed access routes across private land. Also includes a visit to Ballinacor where local residents have raised over €500,000 to develop facilities which include a boardwalk with wheelchair access. Discussion led by Pat Dunne (landowner), Helen Lawless (Project Officer), Mountain Meitheal representative and Pat Kennedy, Ballinacor Community Project.

### 4. East Coast Nature Reserve, Blackditch Wood

This 89ha wetland site was purchased by BirdWatch Ireland under the EU Life/Nature programme and is part of the Natura 2000 network (SAC site). Management to date has included reversing the effects of intensive farming with a focus on restoring the fen habitat in favour of target bird species such as Kingfisher and Little Egret. Discussion led by Jerry Wray, Project Officer, BirdWatch Ireland.

### 5. Ballinastoe Mountain-Biking Trails

Visit Ballinastoe woodland to see how Coillte is developing a network of mountain bike trails. Discuss the issues in mountain bike use management and trail development and the need for responsible users to engage with land managers. Discussion led by Bill Murphy, Tom Lyng and Daithi de Forge (Coillte) and a representative from Mountain Biking Ireland.

## DISCUSSION SESSIONS

Each participant may join in two of the following discussion sessions as the same sessions will run during the morning and the afternoon. Each session will involve an introductory presentation of approximately 10 minutes followed by a 40 minute discussion.

### A. Is there a future in farming the environment?

Discuss farming for conservation and the BurrenLIFE initiative to develop a new model for sustainable agriculture in the Burren. *Brendan Dunford, Project Manager, BurrenLIFE Project and Michael Davoren, Burren IFA.*

### B. Whose forests are they?

Examine the potential and benefits of community engagement in woodland through the Neighbourwood scheme and other initiatives. *Sharon Casey, Heritage Officer, Cork County Council, John Feeney, Chairperson of Coolagown Development Group, Fermoy, Co. Cork and Bob Wilson from the Centre for Environmental Living & Training (CELT), Co. Clare.*

### C. Identifying LEADER's role in countryside recreation and eco-tourism

Discussion in the context of the Rural Development programme 2007-2013, Rural Social Scheme and Comhairle na Tuaithe. *Led by Brian Kehoe, Manager, Wicklow Rural Partnership and Padraig Casey, Acting Economic Co-ordinator, Ballyhoura Fáilte, Co. Limerick.*

### D. Working in partnership to manage the rural environment

Practical advice on setting up a group, promoting local involvement and working in partnership. *Mary Tubridy, Chairperson, Irish Uplands Forum and Billy Murphy, Sustainability Co-ordinator, Co. Wexford Partnership.*

### E. Rural planning and sustainable rural communities

Explore ideas about community in rural areas, new settlers and a building code which protects the landscape, whilst invigorating use and occupation. *Gareth Harper, Programmes Manager, Rural Community Network, Northern Ireland with Philip Geoghegan, Senior Lecturer, School of Architecture, Landscape & Civil Engineering, UCD and partner in iCON Architecture & Urban Design.*

### F. Local authority and community partnership in trail development

Look at the role of local authorities in trail development, the need for community involvement and how the two can converge. *Jeremy Smith, Walking & Trails Development Officer, Donegal County Council and Sr Maureen Lally, Project Manager, Tochar Valley Rural Community Network, Co. Mayo.*

## BOOKING FORM

Name: .....

Organisation: (if applicable) .....

Position: (if applicable) .....

Address: .....

E-mail address: .....

Telephone: ..... Mobile: .....

Dietary or other requirements: .....

May we include your contact details on a list for distribution to other workshop participants? Yes  No

If you have a preference regarding who you share a room with please indicate here .....

### FIELD TRIP Tuesday 23rd October (see panel for details)

Please circle the number corresponding with your preferred field trip.

1 2 3 4 5

### DISCUSSION SESSIONS (see panel for details)

#### Discussion Session 1 (11.30am Wednesday 24th October)

Please circle the letter corresponding with your chosen session.

A B C D E F

#### Discussion Session 2 (1.30pm Wednesday 24th October)

Please circle the letter corresponding with your chosen session.

A B C D E F

As numbers in discussion groups may have to be limited, please indicate a third choice. A B C D E F

### WORKSHOP FEES

The fee includes lunch on both days, tea/coffee, workshop dinner and shared accommodation at the Glendalough Hotel or in a local B&B on Tuesday 23rd October (subject to availability).

State, semi-state, local government & commercial representatives €150  
Representatives from community & voluntary organisations (NGOs) €100  
Individuals €50

To reserve a place, please complete this form and send it to Wicklow Uplands Council, Saville House, Saville Cross, Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow (electronic form available on [www.wicklowuplands.ie](http://www.wicklowuplands.ie)).

### Payment may be made:

- by sending a cheque payable to Wicklow Uplands Council.
- online at [www.wicklowuplands.ie](http://www.wicklowuplands.ie)
- if you require an invoice, or if you wish to make payment directly to Wicklow Uplands Council's bank account, please phone Margaret Murphy on 0404 43958 or e-mail [info@wicklowuplands.ie](mailto:info@wicklowuplands.ie).

This workshop is jointly hosted by Wicklow Uplands Council and Irish Uplands Forum with funding support from the Heritage Council, Wicklow County Council and Wicklow Rural Partnership Ltd under the European Union LEADER+/National Development Plan 2000–2006.

Wicklow Uplands Council promotes the sustainable use and enjoyment of the local landscape in partnership with those who live, work and recreate there.

Irish Uplands Forum is a non-profit, national voluntary organisation established to support sustainable development in the Irish uplands.

