



SUPPORT FROM NI ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

'My congratulations go to the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust and to all those who participated in developing this first management plan for the Binevenagh Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is never easy to arrive at a concise statement of what it is that makes an area special to those with widely differing interests. Even harder is to agree a course of action to ensure that the area's outstanding landscape qualities are placed foremost in the minds of those who can shape its future.'

This plan is testament to the determination and abilities of those who came together to develop it and to the enthusiasm of the local community and others who contributed to it.

It also speaks volumes of the special place this landscape clearly has in the hearts of those who live in or visit the area.

With the help of all those the plan identifies as key partners, I am confident I will see Binevenagh's outstanding living landscape continue to provide inspiration and sustenance to its residents and visitors in the future.'

Edwin Poots

Minister for the Environment



Ross Canning, Ballyhackett PS



Adam Dallas, Hezlett PS

THE TWELVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE BINEVENAGH AONB

Land and Sea

1. Ensure that opportunities are offered to all to learn about the special environment of the AONB
2. Ensure good protection of the natural habitats and species of the AONB especially priority habitats and species
3. Ensure that national and international designated sites are in good condition, well managed and protected
4. Ensure that wider environmental conditions are of the highest standard
5. Ensure that the character of the AONB is protected

Historic Environment

6. Improve awareness of, and participation in, the historic environment and encourage its enjoyment by all, enhancing access where appropriate
7. Ensure that knowledge of historic environment and cultural heritage available in the AONB is comprehensive
8. Ensure good protection of designated buildings, sites and monuments

Sustainable Communities

9. Encourage and enhance a sense of ownership, awareness and respect for the distinctive character of the area amongst visitors and local people
10. Enable vibrant communities to grow sustainably in the Binevenagh AONB by stimulating economic prosperity and local culture, and maintaining the distinctive character of the area
11. Ensure that the Binevenagh AONB offers first class experience for visitors and local people wanting to enjoy the area especially in the outdoor recreation domain

Making it Happen

12. Establish a mechanism for the effective implementation of the Binevenagh AONB Management Plan

This Management Plan was developed and produced through funding provided by Northern Ireland Environment Agency, Coleraine Borough Council and Limavady Borough Council.



Kevin Moran, St Anthony's PS

SUMMIT UP!



Summary of the Binevenagh AONB Management Plan

Chelsea Moore, Macosquin PS

BINEVENAGH AONB

Over the past eighteen months the spotlight has been on Binevenagh AONB, developing a strategy for the long term management of this spectacular area. In the early stages a series of public events were held to gather the views of the local communities.

These helped develop the long term vision of the AONB which was agreed in December 2009 by Binevenagh AONB Management Forum. The Forum then looked at and refined the objectives of the Management Plan leading to the development of a 5 year Action Plan. Following on from this a series of meetings, workshops and email consultations further developed both the Management Plan and Action Plan. In April 2010 the plan went live and the next phase began, with the continuing help and support of the partners and the local community implementation of the plan is underway to secure the long term future of the AONB.

Thank you to all those who have taken part in this process, and thank you for your continuing support to implement this plan. Only with this support will Binevenagh truly be in safe hands!

PEOPLE'S VISION IS THAT IN 2030...

Binevenagh AONB is a rich mosaic of sweeping landscapes and seascapes with stunning views where natural, built and cultural heritage is appreciated, conserved and enhanced; where people live, work and relax; and where visitors are welcomed and contribute to a vibrant rural economy. It is a place where the highest environmental quality is seen as a key economic driver and where all economic activity is in harmony with maintenance of the landscape.

'Tranquil, majestic and picturesque beauty'

'Outstanding natural scenery'

'Unique variety of flora and fauna'

'Internationally important area for migrating birds'

'Stunning views of Foyle Basin'

'Rich in heritage'

'A microcosm of Ireland'

'A unique panorama – visually, geologically, historical and environmental'

WHAT PEOPLE HAVE TO SAY...

Caleb Ewart, Hezlett PS

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For more information on the Binevenagh AONB please check the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust website: www.ccght.org

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage provides a secretariat service for the Binevenagh AONB. The trust is grateful for support from the following organisations:



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Conor O'Kane, Ballyhackett PS

FACT BOX

Just what is the Management Plan?

Who wrote it?

People who live and work in the area, with help from the Binevenagh AONB Management Forum

When does it run until?

Ten years from 2010 to 2020

What's in it?

51 pages explaining what's special about the area – and how to keep it that way, with a 5 year Action Plan

Where can I get one?

Contact

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust
Web: www.ccght.org
Tel: 028 2075 2100
Email: info@ccght.org

Why is it needed?

To look after the area and make sure it stays special



Ciara McCormack, St Anthony's PS

WORTH PROTECTING

The plan sets down in one place for the first time just what's so special about the Binevenagh AONB. There are hundreds of reasons to look after it, but here are eight for starters...

1. Magical Marine Life

Lough Foyle is home to one of the best areas in Europe for native oyster. Cetaceans, such as harbour porpoises are a common sight. In summer months, basking shark, the second largest fish in the sea, are regular summer visitors to these waters.

2. A Glorious Coastline

The coastline is dominated by its wide sandy beaches and extensive dune system which provides a natural backdrop to the coastal setting. The dune systems at Magilligan and Portstewart are some of the finest and most complete dune systems in the whole of Ireland and are home to a wide range of wildlife.

3. Spectacular Cliffs

The cliffs of Binevenagh represent a unique habitat in Northern Ireland where arctic plant species such as purple saxifrage can be found, along with nesting sites for a range of birds including peregrine falcon.

The spectacular maritime cliffs at Downhill also host a wide range of wildlife, including breeding kittiwake, guillemot and ravens.

4. Steeped in History

The landscape of Binevenagh AONB reflects a long and rich history of human activity from prehistoric occupation sites to settlements and ecclesiastical remains dating from the early Christian period to more recent times with the Plantation Period (17th century) and the rise of estates (Bellarena House, Drenagh House, Fruithill House), the construction of the railway from Coleraine to Londonderry in the 19th century, and World War II defence heritage buildings.

5. Rich Maritime Heritage

The coastline of the Binevenagh AONB has a range of maritime sites, from fishing stations, landing places and shell middens to coastal defence sites such as the Martello tower or World War II pill boxes.

Off shore there are a large number of ship wreck sites, with seven wrecks or strandings on Tunes Bank alone. In addition there are at least 25 shipwrecks and strandings recorded as occurring at the Barmouth.

6. Unique Archaeology

There are a number of sites, monuments and features of archaeological interest recorded in the Binevenagh AONB. One of which is the Grangemore sand dune system, which has produced worked prehistoric flint, pottery and burnt stone and is currently dated the earliest such sand dune occupation in Ireland.

7. Something for everyone

There is something for everyone, from historic monuments; a stunning railway journey; a wealth of wildlife; spectacular walks and scenery; a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities; and most of all a warm welcome!

8. A living landscape

The dramatic cliffs of Binevenagh form a striking back drop to this flat coastal plain. The rugged outline of the sand dunes along the edge of Magilligan Strand stands out clearly in contrast to the flat, expansive lowland to the south. These lowlands are artificially drained, which creates sandy soils that are some of the most productive farmland in Northern Ireland. The open fields, ditches and roads form a distinctive pattern of straight lines and right angles.



Liam McIlhinney, St Aidan's PS

HOW IT WORKS – your questions answered

Why has the Binevenagh AONB got a management plan? First designated in 1966 as the North Derry AONB, the Binevenagh AONB was re-designated and extended in 2006, joining eight others in Northern Ireland and forty in England and Wales. The AONB designation recognises landscapes of national importance and therefore worthy of protection. Protected areas need careful management to balance their many uses, and so special plans are necessary.

What are the challenges, and how will the plan help?

The area is changing — old farmhouses, barns and other historic features are disappearing from the landscape, wildlife habitats are threatened or already lost, house prices are increasing rapidly and new development is altering the character of settlements. Producing a management plan is an important step, recognising what is valued in the area, devising objectives for the future and finding mechanisms to make sure that change helps to maintain the intrinsic character of the countryside.

What's the legal background?

The area was designated under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands Order (Northern Ireland) 1985, providing it with formal statutory recognition as a landscape of national importance. It allows the Department of the Environment to formulate proposals for conserving its natural beauty, wildlife, historic objects and natural phenomena, for promoting its enjoyment by the public and for providing or maintaining public access to it. The

Planning Service may include the area within Countryside Policy Areas and set policies that help to control damaging development.

Is the plan law?

No, it's not a statutory document — it provides guidance for organisations and individuals who have an interest in the protection and management of the area, and presents an evidence base and vision that can help in the formulation of planning policy.

Which places are covered?

The area stretches from the Bann Estuary and Portstewart Stand in the east to the Roe Estuary and the shores of Lough Foyle in the west and south over Binevenagh to Keady Mountain, covering 16,594 hectares. It lies within Limavady Borough Council and Coleraine Borough Council. This plan also considers the marine issues.

Who is the plan for?

Everyone who lives and works in the area, visits it, or who has an interest in its wellbeing for the future. It has been compiled through discussions

with a wide range of organisations and individuals including consultation with the community, and by using studies and strategies relevant to the area.

Is it part of a framework of policies?

It recognises, and is informed by, other plans and strategies that may have an impact on the area, for example conservation, economic development and tourism provision. It sits alongside the Regional Development Strategy, Planning Policy Statements and Area Plans.

What's in the plan?

The first part, the strategy, provides background information, identifies recommendations a vision and objectives for the future. The second part, the action plan, tackles how to make the visions and objectives happen, suggests lead and partner agencies to take things forward.

How is the strategy structured?

It follows a progression from presenting the background and overall vision of the plan, setting the scene, through a series of themes that tackle the important



Aidan Gilfillan Bellarena PS

THE CHAIRMAN'S VIEW



"Binevenagh is a very special place and a bit of a well kept secret in terms of Northern Ireland's landscape."...

"What makes Binevenagh unique is the range of landscapes within a relatively compact area. The extensive coastline features wide sandy beaches, dune land, seaside towns and estuaries backed by a distinct cliff line and upland area."...

"Binevenagh AONB deserves to be looked after. I urge you to get involved regardless if you live, work or play in this landscape."

Richard Gillen

Chairman, Binevenagh AONB Management Forum

issues of the area. To recommending mechanisms for the plan's delivery. To making it happen. And finally summarises the legislative and organisational contexts into which the area and this plan fit. What are the Themes

Each theme summarises the main issues and presents long-term management aims. It then identifies the current resources which were identified during consultation, their condition and the trends that are affecting them, and objectives for management in the future. The themes are: Land and Sea; Historic Environment; and Sustainable Communities.



Leah Gilfillan, Bellarena PS



Ryan McCracken, Bellarena PS