

# Antrim Coast & Glens View

The Newsletter for the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

## Chairman's View

Welcome to the eighth issue of the Antrim Coast & Glens AONB newsletter. Due to cuts in budgets we have been forced to reduce our publication of the newsletter to just one per year.

With the promise of heat waves, droughts and a blistering summer, the severe winter weather that we endured this year has been forgotten. Certainly the beauty of the snow covered landscape, under clear blue skies, attracted the attention of many photographers. People were very glad to see the Spring with the return of our wild flowers and a good crop of lambs. There can be little doubt that the Glens are at their best in those days when new life is all around and the days become brighter.

The bridge at Cushendun, which was closed for major structural repairs, has been re-opened. The bridge was designed by Charles Lanyon whose main work in the area is the viaduct on the Cushendall/Ballycastle road. The closure caused major disruption to public transport and considerable inconvenience to locals, traders and visitors. Now that we are back to normal it is to be hoped that the new bridge is appreciated.

Glenmona House, home of the late Lord Cushendun, is going to be refurbished in the coming year. When finished it should enhance the appearance of one of 'The Five Big Houses' of Cushendun.

Recently grey squirrels have been seen in the area as well as up in Glenariff Forest Park, however the native red squirrel seems to be surviving in reasonable numbers.

Enjoy the beauty of the countryside and please do not drop any pieces of litter as you go.



**Joe McFadden**, Chairman  
AC&G AONB Management Group



## The Glens Red Squirrel Group

Red squirrels are one of the oldest native Irish species, in that they pre-date human history and were common at the end of the ice age when forests covered most of the landscape. As farmers arrived and cleared away the forests for farming and for timber, red squirrels in Ireland became almost extinct and had to be re-introduced from England about 200 years ago. They did very well and became common again in woodlands. However, in 1911 a number of grey squirrels were brought from America to "Castle Forbes" in Co Longford as a wedding gift for some local gentry and so began a spiral of decline which now sees the red struggling to survive.

The 1976 Wildlife Act protects the red squirrel and makes it illegal to trap or keep captive. The same act forbids the release of any grey squirrel trapped; the act designates them as vermin.

The grey squirrels can digest unripe nuts and berries that the red cannot and so clears the area of food. Recent tests suggest that a number of red squirrels have died due to starvation.

The grey squirrels carry a virus that does not affect them but will kill red squirrel.

The virus is called Para Pox. Symptoms include lethargy, skin ulcers, scabs as well as discharge and swelling around the eyes and mouth it will kill a red within 15 days.

The Glens Red Squirrel Group was formed in January 2008 and our aims are:

- To protect and help maintain the population of red squirrels in the Glens of Antrim.
- To provide whatever assistance possible to enable them to thrive.
- To raise public awareness of the plight of the red squirrel
- To encourage and educate young people in the conservation of the "reds" throughout the Glens.
- To co-operate with and to assist all other individuals and organizations who are working to achieve the same objectives.

The group has set up feeding sites in areas that we know red squirrels exist but with help from the public the group hopes to establish further feeding sites throughout the Antrim Coast & Glens AONB.

The Glens are the last stronghold for the red squirrels. Grey squirrels are making their way closer; already the group has cleared an area on the outskirts of Glenariff that had been taken over by grey squirrels. Within 3 months of the grey being removed red squirrels had moved back into the site.

We need help from anyone who sees a squirrel, grey or red even if it is the unfortunate victim of road kill. Land owners can also help if they find any greys or reds on their land. So if you want to join the group or if you spot a squirrel call us on:-

**The Glens Red Squirrel Group Hot Line: 08713 157376**



THIS IS THE TIME TO DO SOMETHING THAT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE. SAVE THE RED SQUIRREL FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.

**Joe Dowdall** Chair GRSG  
**Daniel McAfee** Vice Chair GRSG



## Glenarm Community leads the way in pioneering planning process



as Glenarm Village Committee, Larne Borough Council, Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust, Roads Service and Planning Service together around the same table to discuss the needs of residents and visitors and to discuss potential solutions to local problems.

At the heart of the process, the Princes Foundation Team adheres to six guiding principles which promote a sustainable and holistic approach to the process of design and development. The process echoes the values of the CCGHT in promoting,

'Design that respects the complex character of a place and takes into consideration its history, geology, transportation links and its natural landscape.'



The people of Glenarm have led the way in being the first community in Northern Ireland to take part in a pioneering planning process designed to regenerate their village.

The Glenarm Village Committee, Larne Borough Council and Planning Service worked in partnership to promote an Enquiry by Design process facilitated by the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment under the Patronage of His Royal Highness, Prince Charles.

Having paid an earlier visit to Glenarm in 2009 to view the potential of the village, Prince Charles was keen to lend the support of his Foundation to the project.

The three day Enquiry by Design (EbD) process in February 2010, brought key stakeholders such



The workshop was supported and attended by the Minister with responsibility for the Environment, Mr. Edwin Poots and by local MP, Sammy Wilson. At the culmination of the event, Minister Poots launched the presentation of

the draft plan to the Deputy Mayor of Larne, Cllr. Greg McKeen and a packed audience of local stakeholders.

The detailed draft plan for Glenarm is now available. Further information may be obtained from Mrs. Ainsley McWilliams at Larne Borough Council via email on [mcwilliamsa@larne.gov.uk](mailto:mcwilliamsa@larne.gov.uk).

Further information on the work of the Princes Foundation for the Built Environment is available at [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org).



## Antrim Coast & Glens AONB Management Group (est. 2004)

### Who's who?

#### Rachel Bain AONB Officer, CCGHT



Rachel Bain joined the CCGHT team in November 2010 as the AONB Officer. Although not a native of these parts she has worked in Northern Ireland for more than 14 years. Her background is in nature

conservation. Rachel is looking forward to working with you all and turning the Action Plan into action on the ground.

#### Max Bryant, National Trust



Max has worked for the National Trust for the past 2 years and is their General Manager for the North Coast. All of the National Trust sites under Max's management, from Rough Fort in the West to

Cushendun and Layde in the East lie within the North Coast's 3 AONBs.

#### Ainsley McWilliams, Larne Borough Council



Ainsley manages Larne Tourist Information Centre, Carnfunnock Country Park, Glenarm Marina, Carnlough Harbour, Portmuck Harbour & Ballylumford Harbour. She is responsible for the delivery of LBC's tourism strategy and other tourism

related initiatives and capital projects within the AONB.

#### Lyndsay Dunlop, Ballymena Borough Council



Lyndsay Dunlop has been the Countryside Officer with Ballymena Borough Council for the past ten years and particularly enjoys the less extreme countryside recreation activities such as a walk on the Antrim Hills Way.



## Heart of the Glens



Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced the results of this year's round of Landscape Partnership Funding (LPS), unfortunately the Heart of the Glens project narrowly missed out on the funding this year. However on a positive note CCGHT staff had a very upbeat feedback meeting with HLF. At the meeting HLF positively encouraged CCGHT to take the feedback on board and resubmit the application when the

funding opens again in February 2011.

While the Heart of the Glens was unsuccessful on this occasion, Northern Ireland did well as a whole with two of the four applications being successful, those being the Mourne Heritage Trust and the Belfast Hills Partnership. A total of seven applications were successful throughout the UK.



## 2010 International Year of Biodiversity

The United Nations has declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB)

Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth. It includes the whole of the natural world and is essential for sustaining the natural living systems that provide us with food, fuel, health, wealth, and other vital services.

Biodiversity enriches our lives in so many ways, that we often take it for granted. It has shaped our culture, our traditions and societies. It is the basis of economy and trade, it provides services essential to human well-being such as climate control, pollination, flood protection, and so many others. If the current loss of biodiversity continues, we will not only be poorer, in every sense of the word, but our very existence will be threatened.

[www.ni-environment.gov.uk/biodiversity/international\\_year\\_of\\_biodiversity.htm](http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/biodiversity/international_year_of_biodiversity.htm)

### For more information check out:

[www.biodiversityni.com](http://www.biodiversityni.com) or [www.biodiversityislife.net/?q=do-one-thing](http://www.biodiversityislife.net/?q=do-one-thing)



## Magic Moyle biodiversity

Biodiversity is the amazing variety of life on earth, animals, plants, fungus and even people! It is fundamental to our daily lives providing us with all our food, much of our raw materials and many of our medicines.

Moyle has a great coastline which is superb for viewing cetaceans (whales and dolphins) and of course it is an important breeding site for many important seabirds such as the puffin, fulmar, kittiwake, guillemot and razorbill.

Back on dry land, Moyle is one of the last areas where the native red squirrel still lives without the intrusion of the North American grey squirrel.

There are dedicated groups of people all over Northern Ireland who work tirelessly to protect these timid little creatures.

To protect the future of habitats and species in Moyle, the council have employed a Local Biodiversity Officer.

If you require any information on local biodiversity or if you would like to receive one of the Wildlife in Moyle posters contact Cara McCusker at [cmccusker@moyle-council.org](mailto:cmccusker@moyle-council.org)

## Competition

Can you identify this species of bird? If you miss the dawn chorus, their song is just as spectacular at dusk.

Not only is it a Northern Ireland Priority Species but it is also a Red status species. This means that it is globally threatened and its breeding population is in decline.

To win a framed poster just email your answer and contact details to [carole@ccght.org](mailto:carole@ccght.org) or enter by post to the address below before 31 August 2010.

Congratulations to Christine McAfee from Ballycastle who correctly identified Kinbane Castle in issue seven of the Antrim Coast & Glens AONB newsletter.



## Antrim Coast & Glens AONB Fact File:

Date Of Designation **1988** Area **70600 ha**

[www.ccght.org](http://www.ccght.org)

## Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust

For more information on the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB please check the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust website:

[www.ccght.org](http://www.ccght.org)

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



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