At their last Causeway Coast AONB Management Group meeting, the Group came to the unanimous view that:

- Visitor facilities at the Giant’s Causeway should remain in public ownership;
- The current process for new visitor facilities at the Giant’s Causeway, being led by the Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, an integral element of the three stranded approach to issues at the site, should be resumed; and
- No solution for integrated management at the Giant’s Causeway would be possible without full participation of Moyle District Council and the National Trust.

Before coming to her final decision on the application the group urged Minister Foster to give full consideration to:

- Existing planning policies (notably BH5 of PPS6 and COU 12 of the draft Northern Area Plan);
- The content of the 2003 UNESCO Mission report on the Giant’s Causeway WHS;
- The 2003 AONB management plan; and
- The 2005 WHS management plan.

Following the meeting a spokesperson for the Management Group said:

The position of the Management Group underlines the views expressed across the North Coast by many individuals and interested parties. It supports the position of both Moyle and Coleraine Councils and is a genuine representation of the strong feelings felt in the management group.

The spokesperson went on to say it is now incumbent on all of the interested parties to get together to produce an agreed world class visitor experience at the Causeway. This must recognise the conservation and landscape values of the site and the international obligations that go with World Heritage Site status.
New Coastal Zone Centre

We are delighted with the new facilities at the Coastal Zone, fast set to become a hub of excellence in interpreting our coastal environment and educating the public through multi-sensory experiences.

Highlights include a 3D model of a plunging wave, interactive beachcombers club involving children’s craft area, model of Drontheim boat used by local fishermen and an encased exhibit showing a complete porpoise skeleton. There is also the opportunity to view the fish and marine life close up with newly installed fish tanks and replica rock pool.

As well as being a popular North Coast visitor attraction, the centre has long played a key role in interpreting the natural history and maritime culture of the North Antrim Coast and more particularly the Causeway Coast.

In addition, it has operated as a local base for EHS maintenance work within the many National Nature Reserves and Areas of Special Scientific Interest in Co Antrim, including coastal sites such as the Skerries, Whitepark Bay and Rathlin Island.

The remodelled centre has the potential to become a hub of excellence in interpreting and educating the public about the coastal environment, whilst building upon its status as a popular North Coast visitor attraction.

Entrance to the new exhibition is free (groups need prior booking). Further information is available from the Centre staff on 028 7082 3600.

This summer, Portrush Countryside Centre was relaunched as the Coastal Zone, Environment & Heritage Service’s first dedicated coastal and marine exhibition centre. The centre aims to inspire and inform the public about the wealth of marine life around our shores. It caters for local people, the educational sector and tourists, in addition to specialist groups looking for a coastal venue.

The new exhibition Time and Tide opened this summer tells the story of how the rich marine environment and natural processes of the Northern Ireland coast and more specifically the Causeway Coast have and continue to influence past, present and future human activities — from fishing to tourism and from wars to settlement, and how it itself is now under threat by modern pressures. Gerard Cutmore, Portrush Site Manager explained:

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One of my favourite spots in the Causeway Coast AONB!

The view from Portaneve is breathtaking. It changes with the weather. Looking east you can see the Mull of Kintyre, Islay and Jura and Rathlin Island to the north. Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge is just below. Looking west the view opens up to include the Skerries, Portrush and Inishowen. Portaneve is a great place to take time out and get things in perspective. If you’re lucky you’ll have it all to yourself with only the sound of the gulls and the sea crashing along the shoreline below. Try Portaneve on a cold winter morning and watch the Atlantic waves crashing into Bull Point or huge seas swirling around Rathlin Sound. Or go there just before dusk on a long summer evening. The sunsets here are the best on the North Coast.

Peter left the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust at the end of August to take up a new position as a Planner with Colin Buchanan and Partners Limited. Peter had been with the organisation as Trust Director since it was established in May 2002.
I hope I will be able to visit again and experience the new visitor centre when completed.

They had the good sense to get on an excursion to the Giants Causeway for the day actually on an All Round Ireland cruise as the best way of seeing the beauty and whose boat visited

Occasionally I accosted such a visitor to ask what they thought of the landscape and how they heard about it. It was clear that the status of part of the Causeway Coast as a World Heritage Site is truly important as it alone must generate thousands of visits. This status must be maintained at all costs and any developments moulded to fit the area rather than the area fitting the developments.

On one of my weekend jaunts I came across an old political colleague from Birmingham who was actually on an All Round Ireland cruise as the best way of seeing the beauty and whose boat visited Belfast for the day. They had the good sense to get on an excursion to the Giants Causeway for the day rather than tour Belfast, as they already knew what a thriving City looks like.

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The Causeway Coast was an eye opener for me when I arrived in Northern Ireland in 2005. I had not previously visited and neither had I seen any of the Coast to Coast programmes on television. I therefore had no idea of the sheer splendour that awaited.

Areas of outstanding natural beauty are just that - natural and beautiful. I only made it once on official business, but during my frequent duty weekends a visit was a must. The coaches parked up told a story of people from the Island of Ireland in attendance. Furthermore the languages spoken by visitors included most of Europe especially eastern Europe.

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Trust Director

Helen Noble

Helen Noble replaced Peter as the Trust Director of the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust in October 2007. Helen graduated in Public Administration BA (Hons) and English Law (LLB). She has over 15 years of senior management within protected areas throughout the UK and Europe working primarily within the national park and AONB family and for non governmental organisations, whose remit covers protected areas and landscapes throughout Europe. Over the years, Helen has been able to develop experience and expertise in strategic and policy development, management planning, financial and funding management, people skills and organisational development. She has applied these skills at international, national and local levels.

Her main career has involved working closely with and engaging key stakeholders, agencies, partners and local communities to produce statutory plans including management plans, state of the park reports and local development plans. She has extensive experience and knowledge of consultation and facilitation processes.

Her European experience has enabled her to explore and experience many spectacular places, cultural and built environments. Helen has two grown up children, who are currently studying. She enjoys outdoor activities including horse riding, sailing, jogging and walking.

The Causeway Coast AONB Management Group wishes both Peter and Helen success in their new posts.

Leatherback turtle

Off the coast and with a bit of patience marine mammals such as the harbour porpoise or common dolphins can sometimes be spotted. Leatherback turtles, a sea going reptile also occasionally visit the coastal sea off Portballintrae. Sometimes the leathery carapace of this amazing animal is mistaken for an upturned boat.

Leatherback turtles are the largest living turtles in the world and can grow to 1.5m in length and weighing anything between 200 and 700 kg feeding mainly on jellyfish. Leatherback turtles can live to a great age and will undertake many long distance migrations in a single life time.

Guest Contribution

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Congratulations: 
Marie Wells from Ballycastle 
correctly identified 
Bushmills Education Centre 
from the photograph in the 
 third issue of the Causeway 
Coast View and won a 
bottle of Bushmills Whiskey.

Do you know your AONB? This photograph was 
taken somewhere in the Causeway Coast 
AONB. Do you know where it is?

Send your answer to: Maxime Sizaret, Causeway Coast and Glens 
Heritage Trust, 18 Main Street, Armoy, Co. Antrim, BT53 8RQ.

Identify the photograph and win a framed poster of the Giant’s Causeway. 

Competition entries must be returned to Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage 
Trust office before 31 December 2007.

The Causeway School museum is housed in a former school that 
functioned as such from 1915 to 1962. The building was designed by 
Clough Williams-Ellis. It was built by the Macnaghten family in 
memory of their father Baron Macnaghten of Runkerry. During term 
time it is widely used for living history lessons by visiting schools. 
Pupils and teachers get the chance to dress up and experience a 1920s 
school day. Visitors to the Causeway School are able to have a hands 
on experience. They can sit in the rows of desks, use nib pens and ink 
wells, read from old text books, do sums in imperial measures and ,

\[
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\]

The Causeway School is well worth a visit and if you miss it, you miss 
something very special and ‘unique’ to the Giants Causeway.

Know your AONB

A series of evening talks on the Causeway Coast AONB has been 
organised for this winter. The talks are open to the general 
public and anyone interested is welcome to come along and join 
us to listen and discuss with our specially invited speakers.

The talks are free of charge. Tea and coffee provided. As capacity is limited pre-booking is recommended, please contact the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust offices on 028 2075 2100 or info@ccght.org

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