

CO-OPERATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN THE BINEVENAGH AREA

One of the main functions of the new Castlerock Visitor and Information Centre is to encourage and enable access to Castlerock itself, a village steeped in history and dominated by both the ruin of a great house, Downhill Castle, and by the majestic cliff and vantage point of Binevenagh. Castlerock itself is currently in the throes of an ambitious programme - Village Renewal. The funding provided by the Regional Development Programme, under Measure 3.5 Village Renewal, enabled a Project to get off the ground just twelve months ago, with the simple name of Village Beautiful (VB). This Visitor and Information Centre was designed to serve as the hub for village activity in general and so it fulfils this role for the VB Project also. In 2011 the

emphasis was placed on 'saying it with flowers' as baskets and tubs were set up all round the core of the village, centring on the railway station, to such good effect that the station subsequently gained an award in the Ulster in Bloom competition. A consignment of top quality benches and picnic tables, destined mainly for the seaside areas in the village has arrived and is shortly to be erected. A landscape gardener has been hired to tidy- and plant-up several so far neglected areas in the village and a bold basalt stone will soon be figuring as the centrepiece of a striking village entry feature. An art feature, chronicling the most significant aspects of the area's past, will soon grace the wall of the Peter Thompson Hall, as work continues to transform the present

outdoor recreation pitches into a gem of a public park. The recreation idea being to retain the football pitches themselves but also to make the area as a whole much more multi-functional. All this has been achieved because numerous individuals working for both official and volunteer bodies and numerous organisations have lent the Project their enthusiastic support. Rachel Bain, formerly with the CCGHT, was one of the first to vet and encourage our plans and to provide lots of support as the Centre progressed. Now in a new role with local councils, the same enthusiast for bio-diversity still finds time to lead forays to count our local moths and bats, to lead groups, also of schoolchildren, to hack away at our all-encroaching sea buckthorn and to lead a project to restore bio-diversity on the Downhill cliff-top. Rachel's former colleagues at CCGHT and equally able new staff are continuing to co-operate with VB,

providing advice, help and support in every way, recognising that the success of VB serves to add to the attractiveness of this wonderful gift from nature that is Binevenagh and its environs. Much of what VB has achieved also owes a considerable debt to the tremendous encouragement as well as material and labour support which Toby Edwards and his National Trust team have given, mostly in their own time to this project.

Several Coleraine Borough Council Staff also deserve accolades in this respect, particularly Jenny Sproule of Collage in Garvagh. The moral at the end of this tale teaches us that close co-operation between a vibrant community and bodies both private and public of all kinds is the key to success if we wish to lift ourselves out of the current economic mire 'by our own bootstraps'.



BINEVENAGH VISITOR CENTRE?

In Viking times the local villagers will have stood on what we now call the Gortmore area and been transfixed by the sight of the longships riding out a storm on Lough Foyle. A thousand years on, and local farming folk would have paused to watch Bishop Hervey flying past in his fine coach and on his own recently completed Bishop's Road, heading home to Downhill Castle, standing proudly as it still does even in its ruined state today, on its promontory and challenging the Atlantic to do its worst. A few decades later the cottages that lined this fine highway were destined to fall into disrepair as the blight decimated the potato crop and the people whose lives depended on these same potatoes, too. Now it was the turn of a new generation to halt the shuffle of their weary limbs, in order to peer across from their vantage point

on Binevenagh and to watch the emigrant ships carrying off their kith and kin as they headed out of the Foyle towards the promised refuge of the New World. Yes, Gortmore could tell many a tale if asked. I'd like to see a cabin built up there, a rough-sawn and rustic museum, which would stand up boldly on the skyline and chronicle the sufferings and the lives of those who had to go, so that those who remained could survive to live another day.

In short, Binevenagh needs its own imaginative and evocative heritage trail, based on and around the immortal Bishop's Road with its splendid views, second to none in Ireland. We need a striking Visitor Centre, well stocked with keen informants and good literature about the area and close to the actual summit of the Mountain, from which cycle and walking paths would radiate out towards

Derry, Limavady, Castlerock and Magilligan with interpretative signage and thus enable the visitor to understand just what a wonderful area he or she was privileged to enjoy on that day.

Mike Jones

Castlerock Community Association



A VOICE ON THE HILL

To mark the tenth anniversary of the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) local MLAs Mervyn Storey and Cathal O h'Isin hosted an event in Stormont on 7th February 2012.

This event provided an opportunity to meet and discuss, with the Directors and the staff, the Trust achievements over the last ten years, but also the opportunities and challenges for the Causeway Coast and Glens area over the next few years, including the challenge of the economic downturn, the prospect of the first Northern Irish National Park, the need for sustainable development principles, the rise of the Causeway Coast and Glens as a renowned tourism destination and the continuous need to conserve, enhance and promote our unique landscape and heritage.

CCGHT worked with media production students and lecturers from the Northern Regional College in Ballymoney to produce and deliver a short corporate film to delegates in the Long Gallery.



Brain Teaser

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 P E S A N E R A L L E B K C U Y T

- AONB
- HEZLETT HOUSE
- BELLARENA
- LIMAVADY
- BENONE
- LIONS GATE
- BINEVENAGH
- LOUGH FOYLE
- CASTLEROCK
- MAGILLIGAN
- DOWNHILL STRAND
- MUSSENDEN TEMPLE
- GLIDER
- ST AIDANS CHURCH

LEAP DAY BEACH CLEAN AT MAGILLIGAN



Staff from CCGHT, Limavady Borough Council and NIEA worked side by side on 29th February to undertake an audit

and thorough clean of the beach at Magilligan. When you are out and about in Binevenagh AONB we would encourage you to follow the 7 principles of the Leave No Trace Ireland programme. Leave No Trace is about our personal responsibility for protecting the areas we use for recreation whether on land, underground or afloat. www.leave-notraceireland.org



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The views expressed in newsletter articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust. It is the purpose of this periodical to share a variety of viewpoints.

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

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Binevenagh AONB Fact File:
Designated: 2006 (Formerly North Derry AONB designated in 1966)
Area: 14100 ha
Population: 5706 (Estimate based on 2001 census)
www.ccght.org
www.binevenaghaonb.ccght.org



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



about Binevenagh

The newsletter for the Binevenagh AONB

CHAIRMAN'S VIEW

Binevenagh Mountain and the area surrounding its base are redolent with history from many ages and one of our long-term tasks is certainly to revive and bring to life for resident and tourist alike, the past ages when this northerly corner of Ireland was throbbing with human activity.

The natural world is at its finest on Binevenagh and we must be careful when opening it up and providing access to the eco-conscious tourist, but equally we must create this access, which is sorely needed now.

I am only all too aware that money is tight – the future of this very newsletter itself is under threat, as I write – but we must create a vision of progress and sustainability for the present and for the future, or we will be seen to be failing in our task.

Michael Jones
 Chairman
 Binevenagh AONB
 Management Forum



GOLD in Binevenagh



CCGHT is the lead partner in Northern Ireland delivering ÉCONOMUSÉE, or working museum, a Quebec inspired craft tourism initiative that is being developed in Northern Europe.

The project is funded under the Northern Periphery Programme 2007-2013 and includes Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, The Faroe Islands, Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Each ÉCONOMUSÉE offers a unique experience, inviting visitors to watch artisans at work, learn about the history of their craft and the heritage of the traditional skill.

Brighter Gold has been selected as the third artisan to join the ÉCONOMUSÉE network in Northern Ireland. Grown, harvested, pressed and bottled on the family farm on the foothills of the Binevenagh Mountain, Brighter Gold Rapeseed Oil is one of the healthiest oils on the market.

The name originates from the hoard of gold unearthed on the farm in 1896. The gold was handed over to the National Museum in Dublin where it still resides.

Behind every bottle of Brighter Gold Rapeseed Oil is a wealth of history. The traditions are rooted in the beautiful countryside around Binevenagh Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the health benefits, which the oil gives back to the local people, are greater than anyone of the Kane family could ever imagine.

Tweet @ArtisansNI to learn more about the ÉCONOMUSÉE Project in Northern Ireland, or follow on facebook through the CCGHT facebook page!



BINEVENAGH AONB MANAGEMENT FORUM WHO'S WHO?



MEET THE FORUM

Toby Edwards, National Trust

Toby Edwards Estate Warden, National Trust Downhill Demesne & Hezlett House, North Coast.

In position since 2007 Toby has integrated himself within the local community extending and improving relations with the areas communities/stakeholders and National Trust. Having spearheaded the estate restorations he has stepped 'outside the boundaries' and supports various projects within the AONB such as the Village Beautiful renewal in Castlerock. With Downhill Demesne being such an iconic presence within the AONB the restorations have transformed the estate for the better not just for visiting tourism but local visitors too through working with the estate team to deliver numerous events for all ages.

Discover more on the estate blog @ facebook.com/DownhillNationalTrust



Robin Rudduck B.Ed.

Born in Carlow, Robin spent his childhood summers swimming and snorkelling in the sea and playing on the beaches in Co. Wexford. During teacher training at Stranmillis College he spent many active summers teaching kayaking at camps in Donegal. He is now married with his own family of four and has spent summer holidays wild camping and exploring the coastline and islands of Ireland. Robin is a qualified teacher of Physical Education with Biological Science and has a wide range of qualifications in adventure sports. Some of his other interests include beachcombing, traditional music, Irish and Inuit culture, Celtic Christianity, maritime heritage, the study of cetaceans and conservation.



Carol Kelly

Carol Kelly joined the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust, as AONB Officer in June 2011. Her responsibilities in the role include co-ordinating and promoting the implementation & review of the Management Plans for 3 AONBs in the Causeway Coast & Glens area. Carol is working on a range of initiatives and projects which promote best practice environmental management across the area. A key area of her work entails raising the profile of the AONBs in national & regional policy. Carol brings her previous experience as a Town & Country Planner to her new role with CCGHT.



Grazing in Binevenagh AONB

CCGHT in conjunction with Limavady Borough Council has established a grazing scheme in the Binevenagh AONB.

Located within the internationally renowned Magilligan dune system, notable for its size and largely unmodified nature, this conservation initiative, funded by the NGO Challenge Fund and Limavady BC, will benefit the great variety of plant and animal communities supported in this coastal habitat. Two paddocks at Benone will be grazed during the winter months, as a means to control scrub encroachment and will provide improved protection, management



New Walking Trails at Gortmore!

Located within the Binevenagh AONB, Gortmore Viewing Point is accessed from the Bishop's Road which links Limavady & Downhill, a location which offers some of the finest views that the North Coast has to offer. Panoramic views here stretch for miles over Lough Foyle, Roe Valley, the Inishowen Peninsula and on a fine day some of the Scottish islands are visible.

Working in partnership with Limavady Borough Council and the National Trust, our AONB Officer has assisted

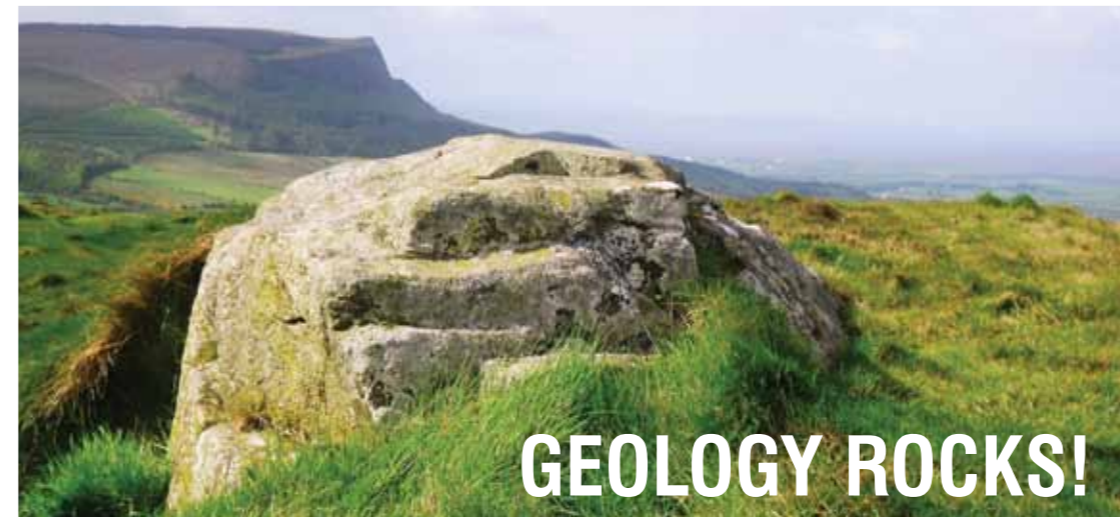
and conservation of the Benone dunes in line with neighbouring areas within the wider Magilligan system. Grazing is recognised as the most effective means of controlling the growth of scrub and more rigorous species and to help maintain open areas for specialist native floral species. Enhanced access provision also features in the project, to encourage public enjoyment of this coastal landscape.

with the development of 2 walking trails at Gortmore with funding provided for trail furniture and trail signage through the NGO Challenge Fund. The two trails provide an off road alternative to the Ulster Way and provides additional recreation opportunities for the public to explore the natural landscape of Binevenagh AONB.

For more information on the NGO projects contact the CCGHT AONB Officer. carolkelly@ccght.org

NGO CHALLENGE FUND PROJECTS

The Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust has been awarded £31,000 under the NGO Challenge Fund to deliver five environmental projects in the Causeway Coast & Glens area. Three of these projects are located within Binevenagh AONB.



GEOLOGY ROCKS!

The character of the Causeway Coast & Glens has its foundations in the underlying rocks that are the result of millions of years of the Earth's history.

Carol Kelly, AONB Officer with the Trust has developed a project which focuses on the geological resource of the area including an interactive geology heritage trail which will be accessible on the CCGHT website. Approximately 20 sites across the Causeway Coast & Glens feature on

the heritage trail including, Binevenagh Mountain and Magilligan Point in the Binevenagh AONB. The heritage trail is complemented with a self guide geology booklet which explains the geological history of these sites and how they have come to shape the landscape we see today.

A rock detectives club to engage schools with the AONB landscape has also been developed and the Heritage Trust has worked closely with Geological Survey Northern Ireland and Magilligan Field Centre to develop this.



BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

The CCGHT AONB Officer has been working with Butterfly Conservation NI to deliver a series of practical conservation projects across the Causeway Coast & Glens.

Scrub clearance and site enhancement works have taken place at Benone to benefit a range of butterfly species including the Common Blue, Six Spot Burnet and the Small Eggar. Conservation Volunteers NI were commissioned to carry out the works with the support and guidance of the Local Biodiversity Officer, Rachel Bain.

A leaflet featuring the butterflies and moths of the North Coast will be available on the CCGHT website in April 2012, which will seek to educate and

increase awareness of the wide variety of species in the Causeway Coast & Glens. Sites featuring in the Binevenagh AONB include Magilligan Nature Reserve, Benone Strand, Downhill Demesne and the Moors Castlerock.

For more information on the Implementation of AONB Management Plan projects contact the CCGHT AONB Officer. carolkelly@ccght.org

NATURAL HERITAGE



Wetlands and Waders

World Wetlands Day was on 2nd February and there is nowhere more perfect than the mudflats of Lough Foyle to experience the biodiversity of a RAMSAR (wetland) site.

Richard Gillen Countryside Recreation Officer with Limavady Borough Council and Andy Sides from the Loughs Agency hosted a small group of staff and Directors from the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust at the RSPB reserve in Ballykelly to discuss the importance of the Lough in terms of tourism, agriculture and biodiversity.

Tom McDonnell from the Rathlin Community Association, a keen wildlife photographer and bird spotter pointed out a variety of visiting birds including the Little Egret, Oystercatchers, Whooper Swans and Curlews.

Andy Sides informed the group that: 'The Little Egret, once an extremely rare bird in these parts, has been

occasionally sighted feeding in the marshlands bordering the lough.'

Sam Cole, Councillor with Coleraine Borough Council and RSPB member spotted in the distance three white and grey gulls feeding off the rich arable flatlands which he identified as the Glaucous Gull, a rare visitor from Iceland and the Arctic region.

Cllr Roy Craig from Larne Borough Council and CCGHT Vice Chairman said: 'These study trips have been organised as part of CCGHT's ten year celebrations but they are also a very useful tool for experiencing and learning about sites within the Trust's remit. The Trust organised a similar trip in November to Gracehill in Ballymena to experience the built and cultural heritage of a Moravian settlement and today we have been very fortunate to experience the natural heritage of a very important wetland site. We look forward with intrigue to the next trip.'

BINEVENAGH 2012

Peace Camp - A poetic celebration of the languages and coastline of the UK. 19 - 22 July 2012 Downhill Beach

Inspired by the Olympic Truce, Peace Camp is a poignant exploration of the great love poetry of our nations and a celebration of the extraordinary variety and beauty of our coastline.

Two of Britain's pre-eminent artists - director Deborah Warner, and actor Fiona Shaw - are collaborating to create this major new artwork as part of the London 2012 Festival.



Clipper Round the World Yacht Race

In July 2012 Lough Foyle will be the homecoming stopover on Leg 8 of the 10 of the Clipper Round The World Yacht Race.

The Maiden City plans to celebrate the homecoming with a major festival and welcome boat owners and spectators to join in this unique opportunity to celebrate the arrival of the world's longest race to our shores.

Derry~Londonderry is one of the 68-foot yachts which have been navigating their way round the world since July last year. The yachts are raced by people from all walks of life, sailors and non-sailors alike, each yacht has 18 crew members and a professional skipper.

The race track is 40,000 miles long and it will take eleven months to complete the circumnavigation. There are 15 individual races in total and, just like in Formula 1, points are awarded at the end of each race, building towards a championship total.

The adventure started from the UK in August 2011 and crossed the Atlantic Ocean, the South Atlantic, the Southern Ocean, the Java and South China Seas plus the mighty Pacific. It visited the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Leeuwin - and visited New Zealand for the first time in Clipper's history.

For more information please visit: www.derrycity.gov.uk/clipper & www.ni2012.com.



EU CHARTER FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The Causeway Coast and Glens destination has been awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. For this award, CCGHT coordinated a verification site visit with a EUROPARC consultant, and developed a 5 year Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2012-2017 for the destination. Sarah, the Sustainable Development Officer, facilitated discussion and consultations in order to understand the needs of tourism businesses, communities, and agencies, and how they see sustainable tourism in the Causeway Coast and Glens. The region received the award in Germany in September 2011, at the annual EUROPARC Federation conference.