

23rd March 2024

Biodiversity Educational Resource Launched for Primary Schools in Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

In a significant stride towards fostering environmental education and awareness, the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) has proudly launched the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Key Stage 2 Biodiversity Educational Resource. The event, hosted in Portballintrae Village Hall, on Thursday 21st March 2024 was marked by the enthusiastic participation of Dunseverick, Straidbilly and Bushmills primary schools, educators, and key stakeholders.

Spanning 30km, the Causeway Coast AONB coast is home to a diverse array of landscapes, including the iconic Giant's Causeway and the Causeway Coast UNESCO World Heritage Site. Renowned for its stunning coastal scenery, the area boasts a unique blend of natural beauty, historical sites, and a rich tapestry of wildlife, making it an ideal educational resource.

The Biodiversity Educational Resource, developed by Michelle McGarvey and Jarlath McGill, encapsulates years of expertise into a digital format tailored specifically for the Causeway Coast AONB. Its design aligns with the Northern Ireland Curriculum, offering Key Stage 2 educators a tool to engage students with their local environment, while instilling an appreciation for its natural, built, and cultural heritage.

Aiming to enhance local knowledge, enrich learning experiences through practical activities, and foster a deep understanding of biodiversity, this resource encourages students to become actively involved in their learning. With a focus on Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities, it serves as a bridge between theoretical knowledge and real-world application.

Tiérna Mullan, CCGHT Project Officer, expressed enthusiasm about the initiative, highlighting "It has potential to not only educate but to also connect children with their environment, strengthen community relationships, and inspire projects that contribute to local biodiversity."

Leanne Smyth Principal of Dunseverick Primary School complimented the educational resource, "This Biodiversity Education Resource and loan case equips us with all necessary materials for both classroom and outdoor activities, it is a valuable resource to teachers and pupils, who will benefit from the detail and inspiration. This innovative approach can allow for an immersive learning experience, further supported by the possibility of extending activities into the broader Causeway Coast AONB during school activities and excursions."

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust is grateful for support from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, reflecting a shared commitment to environmental education and the preservation of Northern Ireland's unique landscapes.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust invites educators, community groups, and stakeholders to explore and utilise this comprehensive resource, aiming to cultivate a knowledgeable, environmentally conscious generation, poised to cherish and protect their natural, built, and cultural heritage.





