

# WICKLOW MOUNTAIN VIEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF WICKLOW UPLANDS COUNCIL



AUTUMN 2006

Wicklow Mountain Views –  
The Newsletter of  
Wicklow Uplands Council

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Promoting  
Responsible  
Waste Disposal  
in the  
Wicklow/  
Dublin Uplands

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear friends



It is my pleasure to introduce the autumn 2006 edition of the Wicklow Uplands Council newsletter. So far, 2006 has been an unusually interesting and challenging year for us. On the positive side, we have been making strides with major projects on access, trail development and waste management. A major milestone has been increased core funding support from the Heritage Council, which has enabled us to create the new post of development officer. We are delighted to welcome Lenka Brodeková to this post as a colleague for Colin Murphy, director; Cara Doyle, project officer and Margaret Murphy, administration.

Although our activity thus far in 2006 has brought us to new levels of achievement, we have also been learning about the challenges of maintaining consensus and building partnerships. Two cases in point:

- Encouraged by the Heritage Council, we thought it would be a good idea to promote a broad, local debate on the future management and development of the Wicklow/Dublin uplands. However, some of our members took the view that: "There is enough regulation around and we should not fall into the trap of talking ourselves into even more". Having learnt that 'top-down' dialogue can be seen as threatening, we are now turning our attention to working locally through established structures e.g. county development boards and public representatives.
- Since our foundation in 1996 our policy has been to seek partnership with the statutory sector wherever possible. Nevertheless, we are finding in certain cases that a project idea which we originate can quickly be adopted by others with the result that our role can be diminished. To guard against this, we realise that we need to be clear on a case by case basis what our

objectives are and where we fit into the scheme of things. Whether or not we ultimately "own" and directly manage projects which we may initiate and nurture is of secondary importance. Our overriding concern is always to ensure that worthwhile projects get off the ground and deliver tangible benefits to our stakeholders.

Given our dedication to consensus and partnership, we know that we must always seek to be part of the solution to any challenge. The need for this approach is becoming all the more evident as major changes in the way countryside recreation is managed are being rolled out. I believe that our members wish us to welcome these opportunities in the interests of good sustainable development practice.

Our AGM in June was addressed by Mr Eddie Sheehy, Wicklow County Manager. Board members Anne Dowling, Clare McEvoy, Richard Nairn and Lorcan Sweetman retired on that occasion and were duly replaced by Pearse Connolly, Claire Chambers, Peter Galvin and Joe Walker. We acknowledge the contributions of those who have stepped aside and offer a warm welcome to newly nominated colleagues.

I wish to thank all our external supporters, especially the Heritage Council, Wicklow County Council and members of the Uplands Business Forum. Renewed appreciation is due also to our staff, individual and organisational members, executive committee and board of directors. The support of former and new colleagues is important to us as we approach the first milestone in the delivery of our three year plan 2006/2008.

I believe that the contents of this newsletter will convince the reader that we remain true to our mission: 'To promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of the Wicklow Uplands in partnership with those who live, work and recreate there'.

Sincerely yours

**DERMOT J. HAND**  
Chair, Wicklow Uplands Council



## A NETWORK OF INTERPRETATIVE PANELS FOR VILLAGES – A WICKLOW UPLANDS COUNCIL INITIATIVE

This new project aims to develop a network of panels that provide information and interpretation for villages around County Wicklow. This partnership initiative is involving local communities, e.g. Tidy Towns committees, local historical societies etc., working with Wicklow Uplands Council, Wicklow West Tourism Forum, Wicklow County Tourism and with Wicklow County Council Heritage Office.

We are hoping that the partnership will develop a network of village panels which will add to visual amenity and support sustainable tourism around the county. The panels will provide information on the wide spectrum of attractions in the locality including: tourist amenities, local history, built and natural heritage and recreational/cultural activities. A simplified map and pictures and photographs of the village and surrounding area will make it easy for visitors to find out what is on offer and how to get there.

Wicklow Uplands council have begun discussions with community groups in Blessington and Aughrim, who are open to the idea and are potential pilot sites for the scheme. Assuming satisfactory completion of a feasibility study, planning approval etc. it is hoped to begin this year and to extend the scheme throughout the county in due course.

There are many designers around who have experience in developing unique, contemporary and original signage concepts for this type of project.

Figure 1

Example of signage in South-West of France.



Figure 2

The Wicklow Way signage which was recently erected along the Wicklow Way as part of the Wicklow Sustainable Trails Networking Project.



Materials such as native timber, stainless steel or recycled ecoplastic are used throughout Europe so we should be able to adopt and adapt best practice examples as we work to find the best scheme for County Wicklow. We are aware of the work being done by Wicklow County Tourism on signage in general for the county and we are working to ensure that our scheme fits into the overall plan whenever it is put in place.

Interested groups should contact Lenka Brodekova on 0404 43958, email: [lbrokekova@wicklowuplands.ie](mailto:lbrokekova@wicklowuplands.ie).

## CO-OPERATING WITH BELFAST HILLS PARTNERSHIP

No matter what part of Belfast you are visiting, the Belfast Hills are usually visible, a line of basalt hills to the west and north dominating the landscape and sheltering the urban areas of Belfast Lisburn and Newtownabbey along the Lagan river valley.

The west and northern edges of the city butt up against the feet of these mountains, so close that half an hour's walk can bring some from front door to mountain top and a view across to Scotland, the Isle of Man and the Mourne mountains. This proximity brings its own issues as well, a rare mixture of rural upland and urban fringe problems such as illegal fly tipping and landfilling, falling agricultural incomes, unauthorised scramblers and quad bikes, managing upland wildlife, housing development pressures and visitor access.

In the 1990s, a number of concerned groups and government departments got together to discuss how the Belfast Hills could be better managed. Proposals to create a regional park were formulated but ultimately abandoned due to landowners concerns. The sometimes heated discussions that it inspired led to a common realisation that the Belfast Hills really needed a co-ordinating body to push for improved management and awareness of the hills and the threats they faced. Plans were drawn up, funding was secured and in 2004 the Belfast Hills Partnership was created.

Since those days not so long ago its partners and its three staff have worked on major waste issues such as new landfills, made sure the Hills' voice has been heard in regional consultations and planning issues, brought together the many different bodies managing conservation sites to work together across the area, and publicised the places and wildlife to see and enjoy in the hills. In particular we have kept in close contact with your Wicklow Uplands Council because we share so many of the same issues and hopefully just as many solutions. Last October we hosted some of the Council's staff and partners looking at very live waste issues, and are looking forward to coming down this October to look at your urban fringe farming problems and how you handle waste differently down in Wicklow. We still have a long way to go but are grateful to Wicklow Uplands Council for their helping hand.

**Jim Brady**  
Director, Belfast Hills Partnership

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

All meetings will be held at the Glendalough Hotel at 8.00pm

Wednesday, 18th October 2006

Farming and Landowning Panel Meeting

Thursday, 19th October 2006

Community Panel Meeting

Monday, 6th November 2006

Environmental and Recreational Panel Meeting

Tuesday, 7th November 2006

Economic and Tourism Panel Meeting

## LAUNCH OF THE PURE (PROTECTING UPLANDS & RURAL ENVIRONMENTS) PROJECT



On September 1st 2006, Mr Dick Roche TD and Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government launched the start-up of a new environmental partnership initiative at Avondale House in Co. Wicklow to combat the escalating problem of fly-tipping and small scale illegal dumping.

PURE (Protecting Uplands & Rural Environments), is a new regional initiative which incorporates local authorities including: Wicklow County Council, Dublin City Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council as well as Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service, ESB, and a number of non-statutory organisations represented by the Wicklow Uplands Council, to halt incidents of small scale illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin upland regions.

The project aims to tackle the increasing amount of fly-tipping and small scale illegal dumping by introducing a number of measures, including a dedicated clean-up vehicle to provide an effective and timely clean-up response to dumping incidents. A lo-call-phone-line 1850 365 121, which was established by the EPA will enable the general public to report incidents of fly-tipping/illegal dumping and report on individuals who are involved in such activities. The creation of an education programme, in conjunction with public awareness campaigns and the distribution of informational literature, will inform the public on the detrimental affects of fly-tipping/illegal dumping.

Speaking at the launch on Friday, Ian W Davis, the project manager of PURE stated that, 'The PURE project will be particularly concentrating on community groups, recreational users of the upland areas, and landowners and farmers, all of whom are directly affected by dumping. The PURE project welcomes input and recommendations from each of the above organisations in assisting us in reaching our objectives, for it is only through collaboration and working in conjunction with these groups that the project will succeed in its aim.'

Over the years many of the organisations involved with Wicklow Uplands Council have voiced their disgust at illegal dumping and fly-tipping. Walkers, cyclists, hikers, mountaineers, gun clubs, anglers, have all encountered incidents where the famous aesthetic splendour or the Wicklow countryside has been tarnished by mindless, indiscriminate dumping, which is caused by a minority within our society. Landowners and farmers have been particularly targeted by habitual fly-tippers resulting in costly clean-up operations. With the establishment of the PURE project they can now seek the assistance of this new anti-dumping campaign. Colin Murphy, Director of the Wicklow Uplands Council further commented,

'The PURE project will provide the community and members of the Wicklow Uplands Council with a direct point of contact in relation to illegal dumping and fly-tipping. Landowners are being continual affected by dumping and the establishment of PURE project will be a welcomed relief for all farmers in the Wicklow uplands region.'

The PURE project will also be collaborating with An Garda Síochána and local authority Environmental Enforcement Officers, with the introduction of CCTV monitoring of 'black spot' areas and regular Garda check points to insure transporters have legitimate waste permits. The project has also created a data-base to record all incidents of illegal dumping and will 'name and shame' any offenders who are convicted of such offences.

On launching the project the Minister welcomed the introduction of the PURE project, stating that,

'The start-up of this project is good news for the Wicklow/Dublin upland region. It is an excellent example of local partnership in action. For the first time it will unite all the main players – local authorities, the Gardaí, business, community groups and associations – in working together towards a solution to the scourge of littering and fly-tipping in the area. The project is a unique and innovative one and I am delighted to be able to provide the funding to get it up and running'.

Although large scale illegal dumping has ceased in the Wicklow/Dublin region, fly-tipping and habitual dumping activities on a smaller scale have increased in recent times. The management committee responsible for establishing the PURE project are eager to involve all members of the community in assisting with their objectives by both, promoting the lo-call-phone-line, 1850 365 121, to report fly-tipping or dumping incidents, and identifying those involved in dumping activities. The Chairman of the PURE project, Mr. Tom Lyng of Coillte commented,

'Fly-tipping and illegal dumping affects our landscape both, aesthetically and environmentally and we are determined to combat this problem. By calling the lo-call-phone-line, 1850 365 121, the general public can alert us to any incident of dumping with an added assurance of a fast clean-up response time'.

The concept of the PURE project developed after a number of forums between the above organisations were held over a one year period, between 2005 and 2006, with the objective of finding a solution to the increase of fly-tipping and small scale illegal dumping activity in the Wicklow/Dublin upland regions, as each organisation were affected by the problem.

The project is funded directly by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and supported by the EPA and the first statutory and non-statutory regional partnership initiative established in Ireland to deal with incidents of fly-tipping/illegal dumping. It will operate on a regional basis concentrating on the Wicklow/Dublin upland areas and has secured funding for three years. At the conclusion of the project, it will be evaluated to determine whether it should be continued and extended to other areas.

For more information, please contact Ian W. Davis, PURE Project Manager, 0404 45547, [ian\\_davis@environ.ie](mailto:ian_davis@environ.ie)

**TO REPORT FLY-TIPPING/ILLEGAL DUMPING:**  
**LO-CALL 1850 365 121**



Minister Dick Roche handed over a key of the new clean-up vehicle dedicated for the PURE project to Tom Ling, the chair of the PURE project management committee. From left to right: Pat Doyle (Wicklow County Tourism), Wesley Atkinson (Wicklow Mountains National Park), Andrew Lawless (Wicklow County Council), Eamonn Murray (ESB), Colin Murphy (Wicklow Uplands Council), Tom Lyng (Coillte), Minister Dick Roche T.D., Ian W. Davis (PURE project manager) and Cllr. Joe Behan (Cathaoirleach) at the PURE project launch in Avondale.



## WICKLOW WEST TOURISM FORUM

As the Wicklow West representative, I proposed some months ago that a dedicated offshoot of Wicklow County Tourism be set up, called Wicklow West Tourism Forum, (WWTF). In the meantime, I have met with Michael Sargent, Chairman of the Blessington Forum and with ad-hoc groups such as Lakes Tourism, Baltinglass Forum and Dunlavin Forum. Each of these area groups has now nominated representatives to WWTF as follows: Baltinglass (3), Dunlavin (2), Blessington (3) Kippure/Wicklow Uplands Council (1). The first meeting of the new group took place at Kippure Estate on September 14th 2006.

This initiative has been endorsed by Wicklow County Tourism and WWTF has been accepted as a subsidiary. The rationale for WWTF is to direct attention to the west of the county, which is designated by Fáilte Ireland as a tourism infrastructure black spot. In my experience, all the focus on Wicklow tourism is on the centre, north and east of the county where the bulk of the population is located. The west is underdeveloped and yet contains many of the jewels that tourists demand in the way of landscape, walking, heritage and lakes. Much of the uplands and the National Park is in the West and the Blessington lakes are unknown in tourism terms. Most of Dublin's population growth is taking place at the northern end of the N81 in south and west Dublin. In spite of this new potential market on the doorstep, planning problems in the Heritage Town of Baltinglass and similarly in Blessington have resulted in under provision of hotel accommodation in the area. In comparison, Tullow, across the border in County Carlow, boasts substantial accommodation growth, including a 160-bed Hilton Hotel, as well as around 70 self-catering houses.

The objective of WWTF is to raise the profile of the west in tourism terms, to promote Blessington as a visitor gateway, to develop the visitor potential of the lakes and the other natural, cultural and scenic assets of the region. We expect funding and other support from Fáilte Ireland, Wicklow Uplands Council and Wicklow Rural Partnership. Wicklow County Tourism will be asked to direct special attention to the west in its marketing campaigns, especially in terms of a dedicated brochure, website and other marketing collateral.

I would also envisage Wicklow Uplands Council becoming more involved in tourism projects in the west, for example with looped walks/trails, as well as help with access, (where problems exist), to historic and prehistoric monuments in particular around the Baltinglass area. The Wicklow Uplands Council proposal for tourism information/interpretation panels for Blessington and Aughrim is a very worthwhile tourism initiative, which has been very well received in both towns.

In the meantime, in conjunction with Pat Doyle, Co-ordinator of Wicklow 400, the WWTF is participating in the following tourism-related events:

- Blessington – October 21st: Blessington Lakes Appreciation Day.
- Kippure – November 4th/5th: Two-day workshop on Wicklow's recent history.
- Dunlavin – November 10th or 12th: History Workshop and Booklet Launch.

A tourism promotional DVD, funded by Wicklow 400 and Wicklow Rural Partnership, was launched on 25th September, 80,000 copies of which will be distributed world-wide.

**Tim Kyne**

**Wicklow West Tourism, Wicklow County Tourism**

## LEAVE NO TRACE IRELAND – WHY?



Ireland's countryside is undoubtedly a high quality natural resource, both spatially extensive and diverse in nature. The extensiveness and diversity of the resource base lends itself to the provision of opportunities for a wide range of countryside recreation activities for both the local population and for an increasing number of tourists.

As pressure on our landscapes and seascapes from recreational use continues to increase, it is appropriate that a national system is put in place which will ensure that visitors to the Irish countryside, whether locals or tourists, visit with care.

To date no national Country Code has existed in the south of Ireland, although a plethora of codes from various organisations have been developed. In the UK, currently, three different versions of the Country Code exist. In 1999, the Countryside Access and Activities Network (Northern Ireland) revisited the Country Code and modified it to make it more relevant to recreational users. More recently, England and Wales published a new Country Code following the introduction of the CROW Act and Scotland published another version, the 'Access Code', following the introduction of its freedom to roam legislation. In early 2004, an ad hoc committee was established in Ireland to progress the idea of establishing one system for all of Ireland. The committee consisted of the Countryside Access and Activities Network (NI), Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (NI), Coillte, National Parks and Wildlife Service (ROI), Heritage Council, Irish Uplands Forum, Mountaineering Council of Ireland, Mountain Meitheal, Scouting Ireland and The Presidents Award.

In 2005, it was agreed that the Leave no Trace message was the most relevant to the Irish context. Leave no Trace differs from all existing country codes in that it is an 'education programme' that

constantly puts the message and skills before outdoor users. Leave No Trace concepts can be applied in Ireland's uplands and lowlands, in urban parks, on lakes and rivers or in local neighbourhoods.

Leave No Trace Ireland hopes to promote and inspire responsible outdoor recreation through education, research and partnerships. The programme will strive to build awareness, appreciation and respect for Ireland's natural and cultural heritage and is dedicated to creating a nationally recognised and accepted outdoor ethic that promotes personal responsibility and land stewardship.

It encourages all outdoor enthusiasts (eg. walkers, mountain bikers, canoeists, orienteers, horse riders) to do their part to maintain those lands used by the public for the benefit of fragile ecosystems and for future generations.

At the heart of Leave No Trace are seven principles for reducing the damage caused by outdoor activities. These are:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Be Considerate of Others
3. Respect Farm Animals and Wildlife
4. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
5. Leave What You Find
6. Dispose of Waste Properly
7. Minimise the Effects of Fire

If you are interested in Leave No Trace training, or would like more information, please contact **Jane Helps**, **Leave No Trace Ireland Co-ordinator**, 086-8109022, [info@leavenotraceireland.org](mailto:info@leavenotraceireland.org) or have a look at our website [www.leavenotraceireland.org](http://www.leavenotraceireland.org)

## Initiative to reintroduce best vegetation management practice in the Wicklow Uplands



Atlantic heathlands are characteristic ecosystems of Western Europe dominated by evergreen ericaceous dwarf shrubs *Calluna vulgaris* known as heather. Heathlands are semi-natural systems, which require maintenance by human management in order to preserve their floristic composition and their conservation value.

Heathland habitat dominates in the Wicklow uplands along with blanket bog and upland grassland. Generally, any grassland where heathers and bilberry coverage exceeds 25% is considered to be heath. Heath is commonly formed over upland, peaty soils and often grows in association with upland grassland. Heath can be described as being wet or dry depending on the depth of peat and drainage.

Uplands landscapes were successfully managed by sheep farmers for centuries. Controlled burning was the major traditional heather management practice. This practice was carried out in order to improve the upland vegetation for sheep grazing. Unfortunately, such management has declined in many areas of uplands. Moreover, since 1991 the majority of local upland heaths have become incorporated into the Wicklow Mountains National Park, where a reduction in sheep numbers grazing the hills has contributed to the excessive growth of heather.

The heather management situation has deteriorated under the new amendment to the Wildlife Act 2000, under which the vegetation management season was shortened by 46 days, starting on the 1st September and ending on the last day of February.

Reduction of the vegetation management season by six weeks was welcomed by groups whose interest was to strengthen the protection of lowland hedgerows as nesting sites. However, as

reported on the Heather Burning Community Workshop in Glendalough in January 2003, this legislative change was not welcomed by farmers and landowners, the Irish Deer Society, Wicklow Game Conservation Council, Coillte and Wicklow Uplands Council. On that occasion it was reported that the shortening of the burning season was also presenting problems for Dúchas (now National Parks and Wildlife Service).

Traditional management practices have ceased since the new legislation was enacted, with expected result that heather growth is totally uncontrolled. The overgrown vegetation creates problems for sheep grazing, grouse population and recreational activities such as walking. Another major problem is the risk of fire and the damage, should overgrown heather be set on fire. This is a major concern for residents and forestry owners in hill areas. Indeed, uncontrolled burning occurs frequently in the Wicklow uplands leaving large areas devastated.

Currently, members of the Wicklow Dublin Mountains Board are working with Lenka Brodeková (development officer of Wicklow Uplands Council), to prepare a case for a review of the burning regime which would improve the management of heather in the uplands.

The proposed changes will allow previous sustainable management regimes to be reintroduced by:

- Adopting the Scottish management model (The Muirburn Code), which allows flexible burning regimes on the basis of height above sea level and that distinguish between 'hedgerows' and 'ground cover'.
- Vegetation management training and instruction for landowners, estate workers etc.
- Introduction of legal deterrents against improper proliferation of invasive plant species (e.g. furze, gorse, bracken, purple moor-grass).

It is hoped to make an application to the Department of the Environment that is based on the above rationale and that would enable best uplands vegetation management to be re-established in the Wicklow uplands.

**Murtagh O'Keeffe**

**Chair, Wicklow Dublin Mountains Board**

### WICKLOW/DUBLIN MOUNTAINS BOARD 2006

NON-STATUTORY		STATUTORY	
<b>Farmers and Property Owners</b>		An Garda Síochána	Vacant
Saive Coffey	Wicklow County IFA	Coillte	John O'Sullivan, Regional Manager
Frank Maguire	South County Dublin Rural Preservation Group	Coillte	Tom Lyng, District Manager
Sean Malone	Wicklow County IFA	Dublin City Council	Milo Kane, Architects' Department
John Murphy	Cheviot Sheep Owners	Dun Loaghaire/Rathdown Co Co	Mary Mallon, Dir. of Community & Enterprise
Murtagh O'Keeffe (CHAIR)	Cheviot Sheep Owners	ESB	Eamonn Murray, Manager, Turlough Hill
Roderic O'Connor	Irish Land Owners' Organisation	Forest Service	Pat Farrington
<b>Community</b>		National Parks & Wildlife Service	Wesley Atkinson (Observer for Minister Dick Roche TD)
Eileen Cullen	Wicklow Pro-planning Committee	South Dublin County Council	John Hannon, County Councillor
Stephen Bray	Blessington & District Community Council	Teagasc	John Keating, County Agriculture Officer
<b>Environmental &amp; Recreational</b>		Wicklow County Council	Andrew Doyle, County Councillor
Pat Ewen	Mountaineering Council of Ireland	Wicklow County Council	James O'Shaughnessy, County Councillor
Joss Lynam (VICE-CHAIR)	National Waymarked Ways Advisory Committee	Wicklow County Council	Christopher Fox, County Councillor
David Rowe	An Taisce	Wicklow County Council	
<b>Economic and Tourism</b>		<b>Facilitator</b>	
Richard More-O'Ferrall	Jigsaw Cottage Guest House	Wicklow Uplands Council	Colin Murphy
Tim Kyne	Kippure Lodge		



## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN MEMORY OF ADRIAN PHILLIPS

### This initiative marks the 10 year anniversary of the Wicklow Uplands Council and Irish Uplands Forum.

Wicklow Uplands Council and Irish Uplands Council are aware of young people as our greatest resource and best hope for the future, a fact which is reflected in this new initiative. The project plans to offer bursaries to up to 50 transition year students in schools within the Wicklow/Dublin uplands. Participants will be given opportunities to discuss rural development and countryside recreational issues from their own perspectives and to give their views on what should happen in the future.

Participants will learn about rural issues affecting their own communities and to develop their own ideas on issues such as: countryside recreation; how the needs and interests of farm families, users of the countryside and statutory agencies can be accommodated and make their own distinctive contributions to the local and national debates.

Participants will be involved in a programme, which consists of four elements:

- Residential interactive workshop
- Action projects
- Young peoples' forum and conference

The residential interactive workshop will feature a diverse range of activities including practical sessions, site visits and lectures. Participants will explore issues associated with recreation in the uplands. During this workshop participating students will be encouraged to develop their own ideas for action projects with an uplands theme.

It is expected that students will carry out the work on these action projects in small teams over a period of months, under the supervision of their transition year coordinator and the project leader.

The culmination of the programme will be a Youth Conference. This will be organised as a one day event during which students will present their findings and views in the form of presentations to key decision makers in the region. Students will be encouraged to write press releases for the local and national press on their vision for the future of the upland region.

We are hoping that our initiative will inspire and promote future initiatives and help to establish a Youth Forum in the Wicklow Uplands. This movement would hopefully be established after the youth workshop and conference based on interest from the participating students and their friends.

Benefits of the programme:

- Promoting the sustainable use and enjoyment of the Wicklow Uplands in partnership with the young people, who live, work and recreate there.
- Reconnecting young people with nature.
- Improving environmental awareness.
- Giving opportunity to speak, to be listened to and to be considered.
- High profile – benefiting schools and involved partners.
- Out-of-school experience, research & presentation skills.
- Achievement of the educational Adrian Phillips Award certificate

This project is designed in line with the transition year mission "to promote the personal, social, educational and vocational development of pupils and to prepare them for their role as autonomous, participative and responsible members of society."

## WICKLOW WAY CELEBRATES 25 YEAR ANNIVERSARY



From left to right Cll. Thomas Fortune, Cll. Derek Mitchell, Liz McManus T.D., Michael Nicholson (WCC), Cll. Andrew Doyle and Charlie Bird (RTE).



RTE's Charlie Bird, with members of the Glen of Imaal Mountain Rescue team.

A week of celebrations took place along the Wicklow Way from 7th – 14th May to celebrate 25 years of Ireland's oldest long distance walking route.

The celebrations commenced at Marlay Park on a beautiful Sunday afternoon on 7th May. RTE broadcaster Donncha O'Dulaing unveiled a new granite stile and interpretive panel to mark the beginning of the Wicklow Way. This was followed by a reception in Marlay House hosted by the Parks Department of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.

On Wednesday 10th May the Wicklow Mountains National Park hosted a Leave No Trace education day for over 200 primary school children from schools along the length of the Wicklow Way. Leave No Trace is a code of outdoor ethics which has recently arrived to Ireland from the United States – a sort of updated version of the Countryside Code. It has been adopted by many of the leading Irish bodies responsible for countryside management and recreation. As the name suggests it promotes responsible outdoor recreation to all those who venture into the great outdoors.

It teaches simple ideas such as dealing with waste, being prepared for the outdoors, respecting wildlife and other recreational users. The Leave No Trace day focused on reinforcing these messages by using a variety of different games and activities and encouraged the children to become aware of their impact on the surrounding environment.

The main celebratory event of the week was held at the Glenmalur Lodge on Friday 12th May. Over 120 people walked to the forest entrance opposite Drumgoff Barracks to see Charlie Bird, unveil a granite way marker identifying the half way point on the Wicklow Way. The Glen of Imaal Mountain Rescue was on hand with their rescue vehicle and equipment to inform people about their rescue work in the Wicklow Mountains. An evening of food and traditional musical entertainment continued late into the evening at the Glenmalur Lodge.

Walkers stop for a bite to eat on the Wicklow Way walk from Glendalough to Glenmalur



Andrea Webb speaks to children at the Leave no Trace day a Wicklow Mountains National Park

The week ended in style at the southerly end of the Wicklow Way in the normally quiet village of Clonegal in Co Carlow with a short walk along the final section of the Way led by Ballindaggin Pipe Band. Minster Dick Roche T.D. was there to unveil a new interpretive sign and two granite benches in Wicklow Way Park, followed by a pageant display by local children and a heritage reception organised by Clonegal Village Committee.

The Wicklow Sustainable Trails Committee wishes to thank all those who were involved in the organisation of the week of celebratory events which was a fitting tribute to all those involved in original establishment and ongoing development of the Wicklow Way.



Ballindaggin Pipe Band lead walkers along the last section of the Wicklow Way into Clonegal.

## RURAL SECURITY

Wicklow Uplands Council has gained a place on the new Local Policing Liaison Committee established by Wicklow County Council under a scheme developed by An Garda Síochána and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

At board meetings of Wicklow Uplands Council and Wicklow/Dublin Mountains Board in September MR SEAN MALONE of Roundwood was unanimously nominated to take up this appointment.

Sean Malone says: "I am pleased that we have a place at the table of the new policing liaison committee as there are many concerns about rural crime and security in the uplands. I will be asking questions about policing levels, response time to reported incidents, special needs of isolated farm families and other issues. I look forward to working with An Garda Síochána and other agencies to deal with these problems".

## WICKLOW RURAL PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER A SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WICKLOW

The recent announcement by Éamon Ó Cuív T.D., Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs of a trebling of the 'Outside the Farm Gate' Rural Development Budget for Ireland means an increase for LEADER type activities from €21m to €60m per year.

For Wicklow Rural Partnership this means that the budget for the new Rural Development Programme will be approximately three times the current LEADER Programme project budget of €3.36m, therefore potentially giving a budget of €10m for projects and groups in County Wicklow over the next seven years.

The current LEADER Plus Programme is coming to a close with 31st December, 2006 the last date for project approvals. However, due to the success of the Programme in County Wicklow, almost all of the budget has been allocated. The figures below demonstrate the high rate of activity since July 2002:

No. of grant applications	289
No. of grant applications approved	242
Applications withdrawn/refused	47
Project funding approved to date	€3.35m
Project funding paid out to date	€2.36m

The real impact of the Programme on rural areas and communities is only now being seen as many projects reach completion in the latter stages of the Programme. Aughrim, who recently received a gold award in the European Entente Florale competition, is a prime example of a group that used Wicklow Rural Partnership funding in an integrated manner for the development of their new Bowling Green and Community Pavilion.

The Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs will be issuing a call for proposals for the new Rural Development Programme shortly, with a view to starting the delivery of the

Programme early next year. Preparation for the new Programme is already under way and WRP will be conducting an extensive consultation process with project partners, rural communities, other stakeholders and the general public.

There will be a specific focus on the following sectors in developing a Plan for the new Programme:

- Community Development
- Renewable Energy
- Rural Tourism
- Rural Enterprise & Food

There will also be an emphasis on ensuring complementarity with the company's other programmes in keeping with an integrated approach to rural development which should maximum the benefits for those being assisted. The programmes delivered by Wicklow Rural Partnership in addition to the LEADER + and NRDP Programmes are:

- Wicklow Information Network
- Employment & Social Inclusion
- Learning@work Programme
- Independent Parenting Programme
- Wicklow Rural Transport
- Rural Social Scheme
- Clár Programme

The substantial increase in funding presents an unprecedented opportunity for rural Co. Wicklow. We in Wicklow Rural Partnership would like to hear the views of individuals and groups/organisations in determining how best the new programme should be delivered over the next seven years.

**Brian Kehoe**  
**Manager, Wicklow Rural Partnership**  
**Tel: 0404 46977 or Email: info@wicklowleader.ie**



## BOARD MEMBERS 2006-2007

### FARMING AND LANDOWNING PANEL

Seán Byrne (Hon. Treasurer)	Farmers and Property Owners (Lough Dan)
Saive Coffey	Wicklow County IFA
Pat Dunne	Wicklow County IFA
Philip Maguire	South County Dublin Rural Preservation Group
Seán Malone	Cheviot Sheep Owners Association
Murtagh O'Keeffe (Vice-Chair)	Cheviot Sheep Owners Association
John Power	Roundwood IFA

### ENVIRONMENTAL AND RECREATIONAL PANEL

Pearse Connolly	Mountaineering Council of Ireland
Pat Ewen	Motor Cycle Union of Ireland
John Flynn	County Wicklow Game Preservation Council
Philip Geoghegan	An Taisce

### COMMUNITY PANEL

Stephen Bray	Blessington & District Community Council
Claire Chambers	Roundwood & District Community Council
Brian Kehoe	Wicklow Rural Partnership
Eileen Kennedy	Glencree Centre for Reconciliation

### ECONOMIC AND TOURISM PANEL

Peter Galvin	Wonderful Ireland
Tim Kyne	Kippure House Estate
Richard More-O'Ferrall	Jigsaw Cottage Guest House

### CO-OPTIONS

Donal Anderson (Hon. Secretary)
Dermot Hand (Chair)
David Rowe
Joe Walker

### WICKLOW UPLANDS COUNCIL

Wicklow Uplands Council is an independent, voluntary organisation with charitable status. The Council provides a forum where interested non-statutory organisations and individuals can have their say in the decision making process affecting the sustainable development of the local environment in the spirit of Local Agenda 21. The Council was formally established in January 1997 and has since endeavoured to implement its core mission:

### MISSION STATEMENT

'To promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of the Wicklow Uplands in partnership with the people who live, work and recreate there'.

### WICKLOW UPLANDS COUNCIL SEEKS TO

- Build consensus and trust
- Foster a partnership approach to sustainable development
- Manage/transform conflict
- Protect and enhance the uplands environment
- Undertake initiatives with support from the local people
- Engage in initiatives that make economic sense

### STAFF

Director – Colin Murphy  
Project Officer – Cara Doyle  
Development Officer – Lenka Brodeková  
Administration Officer – Margaret Murphy

For further information please contact us at:  
**WICKLOW UPLANDS COUNCIL LTD.,**  
**SAVILLE HOUSE,**  
**RATHDRUM,**  
**CO. WICKLOW, IRELAND**

Tel: +353 404 43958  
Fax: +353 404 46995  
Email: [info@wicklowuplands.ie](mailto:info@wicklowuplands.ie)  
Website: [www.wicklowuplands.ie](http://www.wicklowuplands.ie)



Wicklow Uplands Council would like to thank the following for providing photographs for the newsletter: County Wicklow Film Commission ([www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)), Jim Schofield Photography ([www.jimschofield.com](http://www.jimschofield.com)).



Colin Murphy  
Director



Cara Doyle  
Project Officer



Lenka Brodeková  
Development Officer



Dermot Hand  
(Chair)



Murtagh O'Keeffe  
(Vice-Chair)



Seán Byrne  
(Hon. Treasurer)



Donal Anderson  
(Hon. Secretary)



Saive Coffey



Pat Dunne



Seán Malone



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John Power



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Philip Geoghegan



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Stephen Bray



Claire Chambers



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Eileen Kennedy



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