

Out to Learn:

Principles & practice of learning from our places

LEARNING LANDSCAPE

SYMPOSIUM 2014

Kinvara, Co.Galway

10th-12th July, 2014

FEEDBACK DOCUMENT

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Introduction

The Burrenbeo Trust held its third Learning Landscape Event between 10th-12th July, 2014. This year's *Learning Landscape Symposium* brought together leading specialists on the theme of how best to use our local places as a learning resource. The title for this year's event was *Out to Learn: Principles & practice of learning from our places*. Featuring keynote speakers, workshops and fieldtrips, the symposium investigated ways to use local resources to make learning a richer, more exciting and rewarding educational experience, as well as an opportunity to network with individuals that work in same sector. This Learning Landscape Symposium attracted place-based educators, teachers, parents and anyone with an interest in place-based learning to meet likeminded individuals and to explore the concept of place-based learning a bit more. See Appendix 1 for the programme.

Based in Kinvara, Co. Galway, this event enabled delegates from across the country to have open engagement, exchange ideas and experiences, whilst hearing from some place-based educators in a relaxed atmosphere. Fieldtrips into the Burren, Ireland's ultimate outdoor classroom, provided additional inspiration to those who want to find new and innovative ways to engage with their place.

37 delegates and 20 workshop leaders and coordinators attended the event. The opening evening introduced the Trust and the event, followed by four 15-mins talks on *Advancing place-based learning*. This session was followed by an open forum discussion to encourage an exchange of opinions and ideas. This opening evening finished up with an ice-breaker and networking session to get the delegates interacting and starting the conversation around many issues.

The following day 3-workshops sessions encouraged participants to expand their skills and enhance their observational work around their landscape by using as many senses as possible. The first two were based in

Kinvara village largely indoors. These were complemented throughout the day with a sense of getting to know the local Kinvara environment – a trip to the farmer's market for lunch; the local community venues that had a feeling of being present in the location; many local teachers and educators were involved in the event. The event itself was place-based learning in action and the delegates were immersed in this. The afternoon session was split between Slieve Carron Nature Reserve and Garryland to allow for an outdoor place-based learning session. See Appendix 2 for the



workshop leaders and Appendix 4 for the workshop abstracts.

Workshops culminated with a review and reflect session to digest the day's workshops and to feedback. The final day, delegates were invited on an optional day to join the Burrenbeo Trust, Burren Farming for Conservation Programme and the Burren Ecotourism Network on a relaxing outing to the National Park, learning more about how different conservation models work through communities, farming and tourism.

The 2014 *Learning Landscape Symposium* was embraced by a group of positive and energetic delegates and workshop leaders. The Burrenbeo Trust is grateful to everyone that was involved and look forward to hosting another place-based learning event next year.

Opening Night

On the evening of the 10th there was a short introduction to the event followed by four 15-mins presentations on *Advancing Place Based Learning – making it real*. These are meant to get the mind flowing and thinking about place-based learning from different angles. This was followed by ice-breakers and a networking session.

Notes from each speaker:

Brendan Dunford:

- Place-based learning helps foster community spirit and protection of places.
- It is known to improve the well-being and health of individuals.
- Using local resources provides rich experiences and builds up conservation values.
- It is a great way of building up advocacy for an area.
- The Burren has huge potential to be a central hub for place-based learning in Ireland.
- There is the clear potential to make it a sustainable industry.
- Place-based learning should be a fun, memorable and inclusive journey.

Susan Pike:

- Imagining buildings backwards – what was there before them.
- People and places are all geographical.
- Children's Geographies (Simon Catling)
- Ethnogeographies (Fran Martin (Exeter University))
- Children's own
 - Experiences
 - Attitudes
 - Learning

Has an implication. Research conducted by Susan was participatory (ask the participants/students what they want to do).

- Interviewed 164 children – only 2 didn't like the place they lived in (those 2 had moved). When asked what they wanted to change? Ultimately they wanted nothing to change.
- Enquiry learning is in the Geography curriculum but it's really teacher dependent.
- Give participants a sense of responsibility/freedom.
- Pushkin Project – how is our landscape changing.

Mary White:

- Importance/power of keeping records – Mary has 30 years of recording in the Burren. (Could encourage schools to start/keep ongoing landscape records?)
- Power of a cause to unite a community. A community can then create sustainable businesses from the environment.
- Sometimes all it takes is one tree in a playground – PBL can happen in the most amazing places.
- Silent Spring (Rachel Carson)
- Enthuse, Network, Collaborate, Energise.

Sarah O'Malley:

- EE has spread beyond public policy & academia.
- Consensus that we've moved more towards urbanisation, landscape change and technology leading to restrictions in play and fear around changes. A time of disconnect.
- Bubblewrap Generation (Malone).
- Children given cameras to take photos and over 50% took pictures from the back seat of the car.
- Few baseline studies done to establish the benefits of EE.
- Growing up in Ireland poll – 81% of parents would like to let their children out to play but of those 46% felt there was no suitable space.
- There is the need to balance red tape and play.
- Wildchild Poll – looks at difference between children now and children past (today's adults).
- Eurobarometer surveys – public opinion is becoming more pro environment in attitudes but no change in behavioural studies.
- Has EE failed? Why hasn't EE caused great empathy for nature? Still environmental degradation. It EE too global, too much responsibility, while nature is relaxing and more local.
- Empathy in the curriculum? Not featured hugely. EE much more than just learning – also sense of well-being, attachment and spirituality.
- Public doom and gloom on environmental issues stops creativity. Global problems can disempower children and adults, whilst positive local action can empower.
- What kind of connection do we want to make and how do we want to make it?

Discussion:

- Move from concern to connection.
- Individual teachers make a difference.
- Curriculum overload in primary schools.
- Focus on process rather than the product.
- Negativity stifles creativity – focus on a positive solution.
- Let the children lead.
- Astir – curriculum for birth to 6 years.
- UK guidance for school trips has been hugely cut down – more common sense.
- Don't be afraid of being asked a question you don't know the answer to.
- Allow/importance of free, unstructured play. The more people/teachers/adults take children outside, the easier it will get. People are just scared of the unknown.
- Different ways to engage different groups.
- Vast range of children/adults with vast range of attitudes/nature experiences.
- Love not Loss (Futura Sustainable Communications (Lucy Langden)
- Focus on alternative language by creating a positive image.



Chris Chapman's *Seed Dating* session afterwards included:

- A quick move around, hello and how are you with someone you don't know.
- A what do you do with someone you don't know.
- In groups of 3-4 talk about what interests you PBL
- In the large group have an inner and outer circle. The inner circle moves and the outer circle doesn't – find a few words that identify you and say a different one to each of the individuals after.
- Go around and ask what you hope to get from this event. What you hope to give to this event.



Workshops Feedback

There were two indoor sessions and one outdoor session on the 11th July. The indoor workshop were two hours long each, the outdoor workshops were 2.5 hours each. Below are the main points of feedback from the workshops and are completely subjective to the recorders viewpoint – it may not cover everything. See Appendix 4 for the workshop abstracts.

Indoor Session 1 Friday, July 11th, 2014, 8.30am-10.30am, Kinvara

Workshops on Principles and Practice.

KW1 Title: A Practical Approach to Programme Planning

Workshop Leader: Sam Moore

Recorder: Áine Bird **Participants:** 9

Lessons learned

- Keep end in mind when planning – why you're carrying out programme and what you want to achieve.
- Stages are deciding: Aims – Learning Points – Logistics – Activities & Review – Theme – Resources.
- First decide are you best person/organisation to deliver the programme. Do you have the skills, knowledge and behaviour to write/deliver the programme? Can you get them if not? Are you the right person in the org? Be Honest. Pass on if not – grows sector.
- Aim: A single sentence valid for everyone that asks (participants, funders etc.) – elevator pitch. Ok to have unwritten aims – mention them and then have them to refer to when necessary eg. Be Safe and Have fun.
- Decide on your Learning & Development points. At the end of the programme what Knowledge (what do I want my participants to know), Skills (What do I want my participants to be able to do) and Behaviours/Attitudes (How do I want my participants behaving?) do you want to have achieved.
- Logistics: What do I already know; Who, What, When and Where. (Participants, Staff, equipment, money, dates, time of year, pre-framing, continuation, location, accommodation, facilities, etc... - write it down!)
- Activities, Reflections & Review: (most people only start the programme planning here – missing the important earlier stages). Timetable review time – often where learning happens.
- Activities – make a list and link them to learning points. Need self discipline – don't just run activities because you like them – need to fit your learning points.
- When timetabling look at the intensity build-up.
- Review with participants and staff and then tweak where necessary.
- Theme: where appropriate can strengthen activities. Hook to get people engaged. eg. Robin Hood, Sherlock Holmes, Nature Detective, Wild Child etc. Follow through for whole event. Moving between areas can pick up pieces of Brain Teasers. Have a 'press briefing' about the activities, project management (divvy out roles to participants).
- Always give people a reason to complete the task – don't just expect that they'll want to do it.
- Resources: Logos (makes them see you're serious, feel part of something, you care about it), certificates, workbooks, prizes, souvenirs.



KW2 Title: Nature Journaling

Workshop Leader: Sophie Nicol & Katy Egan

Recorder: Kate Lavender **Participants:** 14

Lessons learned

- Paired activity – picture of a creature tied onto string. String around the neck, picture hanging down your back. Have to work out what the creature is and try to draw what you think it looks like by asking your partner questions about the picture on your back. Can't ask what it is! Need a piece of paper and pencil.
- Creating your blank journal– lots of resources – great idea of using wall paper samples as the covers for the journals, lots of stickers, stamps, glitter and sequins. String and hole punch for attaching pages. It was very free in that you could make your journal how you liked with size, shape, etc.
- First journal page – go and look for a creature. How does it move? What does it look like? Use magnifying glass/lens. Describe the creature in your journal writing as much about it as you can. Draw a top view and side view of the creature. It doesn't matter if you don't know what it is. Tell the children it is the alien test – you have to describe the creature in such a way that an alien would be able to picture what it looked like!
- Next journal page – explain that all pigments for colours come from nature (or would have done in the past). The children have to create a rainbow on a piece of card by using only natural things and rubbing them onto the card. The strip of card can have double sided sticky tape on the back so they can be stuck onto a journal page. You can also stick another strip of double sided tape next to the rainbow strip in the book so children can stick onto it what they used to make each colour. Not sure if younger children would get the rainbow spectrum idea.
- Next journal page – pick any creature that may live in the place where you are and imagine how that place would look to that creature. Draw that creature's view into your journal. e.g. for an ant a tree would be monstrous and the grass really tall. Sophie had a bug lens to look through so that you could see what everything would look like through a complex eye!
- Find a comfortable place to sit and close your eyes. When you hear the signal (the drum in this case), open your eyes and really concentrate upon your surroundings. Start to focus on each sense – what colours can you see, what can you smell, what can you hear, what can you touch that is next to you and what does it feel like? When you hear the next signal (the drum beat faster) get up and followed back to the courthouse in silence (this next part could be done in situ without having to change location). Back in the courthouse (still in silence) start free writing into the journal – writing whatever comes into your head about your experience or anything, e.g. I have no idea of what to write, or that was amazing and describing the colours, smells etc. The idea is to keep writing to see what words come out so the pen is



not to leave the paper for about a minute/minute and a half. When the writing is finished each key word should be circled – any descriptive word or name of something, then on the next page list all the key words in any arrangement you like. The key words all together can create something like a poem (or can just be a random jumble) but some of the words read out by delegates really did sound like poetry. It's one way of getting children to write a poem without boring or terrifying the children. This really wouldn't work for smaller children – more for 5/6th class or secondary. Works great with adults.

- Forest game - everyone in a circle and mark each person's place with something (bag, water bottle, shoe if weather nice...). Use maybe three different types of animal (can make more or less depending upon group size) and person in the centre of the circle tells each person what animal they are e.g. fox, badger, deer (only use about 3 different animals so quite a few people are the same animal). Person in the centre also has to be one of the animals too. The animals in the circle have a home (their place in the circle) but the one in the centre doesn't have a home and is trying to get one. Person in the centre calls out one of the types of animal and all that type of animal have to run to a different home – one of them will be homeless and will become the person in the centre of the circle. If the person in the centre calls out 'whole forest' then all the animals have to run to find a different home. A variation of this for older children is to hand out laminated cards of all different animals. The person in the centre will look at their card and call out 'any creature that has.....' and anyone with a creature on their card that has that characteristic has to move places – e.g. a creature that flies, a creature that has scales, a creature that is a herbivore etc.
- Pollinator game - Have a set of cards with flowers on them and the name of the flower on the bottom of each card. There has to be two of each flower. Cards are handed out to the children but 2 to 3 people are selected to be a bee (or any other pollinator) and they get no cards. Cards must be hidden unless the 'bee' asks to see it. After the card has been seen it must be hidden again. It is a matching game with all the 'bees' at the same time trying to match the flowers up. When a bee has successfully matched each flower those flower people stand together in a group (a group for each bee) – these are the pollinated flowers. It is a race to see which bee can pollinate (match) the most flowers.

KW3 Title: Experiencing Place: Enquiry Learning on the Doorstep

Workshop Leader: Susan Pike

Recorder: Brendan Dunford **Participants:** 8

Lessons learned

- Important to ask children and adults what they would like to know about a place and encourage them to find the answers themselves, with some assistance.
- Write down some questions about the place that you would like to know on scraps of paper etc.
- Get together as 'question buddies', bringing all the Q's together.
- Aggregate the questions, identify a question, then go find the answers.



- Go walkabout and come back with some answers that can be creatively put together – looking at the same space with different eyes.

KW4 Title: Facilitating like a natural

Workshop Leader: Chris Chapman

Recorder: Brigid Barry **Participants:** 15

Lessons learned

- A good facilitation is about getting the audience engaged.
- Sometimes it is good to start twice, ie why are we all here? Hear everyone's voice if possible. Then what the aim of the session is.
- Tap into the audience dynamic, not just individuals.
- Recognise that there are 3 relationships (the facilitator/the place/the audience).
- Empower a group and find ways to break up the dominant individuals.
- Need to look at why we are doing it (income, need within ourselves or an active player in humanity)
- When facilitating you need to be 'present' (leave all your own 'stuff' outside), you need to making equal exchange conversations, to assist conversations and assist learning from each other.
- There is a fine balance between controlling and nurturing.
- In every environment there is something people haven't noticed – this is important to highlight that none of us know everything. Ask them something that they have seen.
- The role of the facilitator is to get a sense of what is missing and introduce what there isn't enough of; this might be to bring emotion, knowledge or fun to the crowd if appropriate.
- Sometimes you have to create a calm situation to figure out what this is.
- Think about doing co-facilitation with someone that is different from yourself.
- Silence is a good navigator for the facilitator.



Indoor Session 2 Friday, July 11th, 2014, 11am-1pm, Kinvara

Workshops on Principles and Practice.

KW5 Title: Tracing Places

Workshop Leader: Deirdre O'Mahony

Recorder: Áine Bird

Lessons learned



- Community mapping allows deeper engagement with places. Establishing sense of place helps to maintain integrity of places.
- Important to decide on how you're going to 'frame' the place & equally who is going to represent the place.
- One option is to frame through 'Social spaces' or lack of.
- Representing alternative histories – stories that get overlooked. 'Oral History of Place'
- X-Po traced inhabitants from earliest records to current day in 51 townlands. VNB engaged older men.
- Not just terrain but the human perspectives on it.
- Key Questions; How do we share our work? What kind of public reception can we create for engagement? Copyright (work/maps)? Getting others to contribute?
- Ways to figure out shifts & movements in settlement? Images, Surveys, Human Interaction, Narratives, Internet, Print & Broadcast. Unofficial surveys also good – process versus product (things come out of it) – look at it as co-creation not data creation.
- Also material objects, local archives.
- Task: Step 1
 - Be '*Flanneurs*' (walk without direction). 10 minute walk and make a map. Stop at one site.
 - Step 2
Survey & List
Photograph, Audio Recordings, Review Archives (Cresswell), Material Objects (discarded/overlooked), take interview notes, drawings.
 - Step 3
Return & Analyse. How does the information read.

KW6 Title: What if we had a shared language

Workshop Leader: Tracy Meisterheim

Recorder: Brendan Dunford **Participants:** 11

Lessons learned

- It is important to recognise that we are living systems, not mechanic systems.
- Interesting exercises (touch your toes, draw different shapes through a third party description) which show this and also illustrate the need for a shared language (in this case, around sustainability).
- Rule of sustainability (ABCD) – outline **A** Vision, **B**ackcast from this vision to the present, propose **C**reative ideas, **D**iscern through wise action.
- Be aware of what the situation is, apply the 4 principles to it (success, strategy, actions, tools). Then create opportunities or steps to success.
- Our ability to continue to exist within in natural cycles depends on our physical interactive with nature: (take, make, damage and disrespect).
- See 'Sustainability Illustrated' and 'Natural Step Framework' on YouTube.



KW7 Title: Spies in the landscape

Workshop Leader: Ruth Marshall

Recorder: Brigid Barry **Participants:** 8 (+2 children)



Lessons learned

- Stories are great for explaining features of a landscape. For engaging children in the area they are. A warm up is to create a sentence out of the place ie Kinvara (K = King etc).
- Encourage your audience to be invisible, it creates a sense of wonderment and exploration that they are the first to see this. You can do this through disguises or just being still and silent and observing. Stillness, patience and awareness are all key to becoming 'part' of the landscape.
- Encourage stillness by getting the audience to breathe in what is around them.
- When going through a creative process there are some steps to do: 1) the What/Who am I? Perhaps measure it, list things about it, describe exactly what you see. 2) Then take down its relationship with what is around it, is why it is here, what is its point in time and space. Or who has it come to be who it is? 3) The find the inspiration / medium that you are going to use to express this part of the landscape – this could be through art, writing, dance etc. 4) Express that thing. Pretend to be it and express it through creative means. 5) Allow it inform the expresser on where to go from here.
- Go outside in small groups, without speaking, find something that catches your eye and all look at it for moment. Then come back to 'base', write a haiku (17 syllable poem) on what you saw. Tell each other and you will see that you all saw something slightly different or express it in a different way.
- Then work on an individual bases by using the 5 steps above to express something in this landscape.

KW8 Title: Improvisation in Nature

Workshop Leader: Katy Egan & Sarah O'Malley

Recorder: Kate Lavender **Participants:** 15

Lessons learned

- Good to establish rules when doing a workshop ie the rules of the workshop were explained: 1. Accept what the audience tells you. 2. Say yes to anything. 3. Commit wholeheartedly. 4. No violence. 5. No I. T (photos/videos, etc.).
- The first activity – try a laugh. Walk around the room, using all the space and try different laughs at other delegates as you walk past them as suggested by the leader, e.g. a dolphin laugh, horse laugh, evil laugh, etc.



- Next activity was to copy the animal pose (yoga idea). One person would shout out a type of creature and make a pose for that creature. Everyone else had to copy the pose. No taking in turns, anyone could shout out at any time.
- Third activity – objects on a table. In pairs take it in turns to select an object and come up with 10 completely unlikely uses for it, demonstrating each use, e.g. a bit of seaweed could be used as a beard comb, or a fascinator, etc.
- Fourth activity – walk around the room, pointing to anything and shouting out what it is. Then expand to pointing at something and shouting out what it was you were pointing to previously.
- Fifth activity – counting game. This is where the entire group is trying to shout out the numbers from 1-10 (or higher if possible). Anyone can shout out the next number in the sequence but if two people shout out the same number at the same time then the count has to start again. Repeated with the group standing in a circle to see if it made it any easier by trying to read other peoples body language and predict if anyone was going to call out the next number. Activity was then carried out walking down the street to the park.
- Next activity - All in a circle with a bamboo cane and a finger holding it upright with one end resting on the ground. When the leader shouted left or right everyone had to let go of their pole and try to catch the next pole in the direction which was shouted. The advanced version was no one shouting directions but anyone at any time could move to get the pole to the right or left of them and the rest of the group had to copy.
- Next activity – the group leader would shout out a number and the name of an animal. The group had to split into small groups consisting of the same number of people as the number called out by the leader then use themselves to make that animal. Anyone that didn't make it into a group of the correct number was out. Game progresses until only two people left.
- Next activity – create a still fairy tale picture of any well-known fairy story involving an animal. Each group has to decide upon their fairy tale, the key scene, and how they are going to create a still picture using everyone in their group. Each group then has to show everyone else their still picture and the other groups have to try to work out the fairy story. Fairy stories done in this workshop were the three little pigs, red riding hood and Rapunzel. This game can be adapted for children in groups to create a still picture of their favourite experience of the day as a review technique.
- Next activity – all standing in a circle. First person starts the first line of a story, next person takes up the next bit of the story and it passes on around the circle. Slightly harder version – the leader points to the person when they decide it is their turn to tell the story. The person telling the story must keep going until the leader points to someone else. Another version could be using a ball and throwing it to the next person to carry on the story.
- Nature documentary activity – 2 people are selected from the group. The group then makes up an animal out of lots of bits of other animals, e.g. a lion ant, with snakes for hair, that eats elephants, then the group decides upon a presentation style (e.g. like a famous person, or an emotion), and the two people have to present the documentary in the style they have been told (one can be the animal or they are both commenting on the animal). They get no planning time, has to be done straight away. Another

version of this can be the shopping channel, where again two people are selected and the rest of the group decide what it is they have to sell and what style they have to sell it in.

- The lie game – arrange the group into two equal lines facing each other (so each person has a person opposite them). Each person has to tell the person opposite them one truthful thing and two lies. Then the person at the top of the ‘moving line (doesn’t matter which line is the moving one but only in the moving one does anyone move!!) moves down to the bottom and everyone on the moving line moves up a person and so the game progresses until everyone in the moving line has spoken to everyone in the not moving line. Have to say the one truth and two lies quickly – no time to think....

- Finally, the facilitator opened up the workshop for anyone else’s ideas –

Arms game – one person stands behind the other. The person in front puts their hands in their pockets and the person behind puts their arms forwards and becomes the arms for the person in front. The person in front then has to narrate what they have done in their day with the arms acting out what was done.

Doors game – two people make an arch with their arms. The rest of the group have to line up behind and walk through the arch. As they come through the arch they have to say ‘I walked through the door today and saw...’.

How to start a lawnmower – everyone to mime starting a petrol mower, having to pull on the string a couple of times making the starting up noise, then to run around with arms out in front as if the lawnmower has run away with them and making a lawn mower noise. Very funny!

Bat and moth also mentioned.

Indoor Session 3 Friday, July 11th, 2014, 2.15pm-4.45pm, Slieve Carron & Garryland

BW1 Title: Decoding the landscape

Workshop Leader: Mary & Robert White

Recorder: Brigid Barry **Participants:** 16

Lessons learned

- Always good to ask a group before you start, what do they expect from the workshop.
- Being an outdoor educational guide isn’t just about telling the audience, it is about getting them to feel, touch and see.
- It is important to create an interactive group dynamic to get everyone included.
- Never assume anything ie that everyone knows what a dandelion is. Get everyone to stand beside a yellow flower, then ask them to shout out the amount of petals they have, the amount of leaves, the types of features on the leaves etc. It is a good way to get everyone to see that there are loads of different flowers that look similar.



- When guiding include the science, the mystic, the historic, the medical use, culinary use, the conservation etc. Many 'common' things have an interesting story, use, or background.
- Hooper's hypothesis is an interesting way to discover the age of a hedge.

BW2 Title: Trainer in a Rucksack

Workshop Leader: Sam Moore

Recorder: Kate Lavender **Participants:** 13

Lessons learned

- Have stuff in a ruck. Everyone had to take one item that represented their morning so far and then had to explain it to the group. Then everyone had to swap their item with someone else for something that best represented their greatest strength. Items in the rucksack were things like map and compass, survival bag, spare food, head torch, laminated white cardboard (to use as a whiteboard!), marker pen (for the whiteboard), a large climbing sling and a 20m length of 8mm dynamic rope.
- Short walk to an area of flat ground where everyone had to stand in a circle holding hands. One person had the long climbing sling looped around them (have to unjoin hands briefly to do this) then the each person had to get through the sling and move it onto the next person without letting go hands or using fingers to hook the sling. The idea was to get the whole group through the loop in the shortest time possible. Variations on this activity can be to use two slings or make the loop smaller. If the group is too large it can get boring waiting for your turn. Some people don't like holding hands – can get them to hold a hat between them.
- Walking to the next area, in pairs, find out something you both have in common. Pairs join up and have to again find something in common with everyone. Groups join up into larger groups and so on until the entire group has to find something they all have in common.
- On the next patch of flat ground using the group shelter, played in and out – go inside the group shelter if you have.....if you haven't you have to stay out.
- Sam has a cheating bag in his rucksack. This is a small bag containing a small ball (a juggling ball so it won't roll if dropped), a bungee cord circle (apparently called a racoon circle – there is a book out there of about a million different activities to be done with one!), some card games (details of which can be found on Sam's website www.bit.ly/trainerinarucksack), and some blindfolds (although can use woolly hats etc. for this if no blindfolds available).
- Racoon circle game – get everyone to pass through the ring as quickly as possible. The group has to decide what method to use. Time the activity then get them to try and beat the time. Or you can put the ring on the floor and everyone in the group has to try to get inside the loop at the same time. Can make the loop smaller and smaller (shrinking island game). Can also play the 'this is not a racoon circle game where the group is in a circle and each person in turn has to hold the racoon circle and come up with a mad use for it – e.g. this is not a racoon circle but a giant hair bobble, etc.



- Card games –the one we tried involved everyone in the group have one or two cards with a small bit of information on them. The group had to try and work out the answer to a question linked to the info on the cards. You can only read out the information on your card, you cannot show it to anyone.
- Blindfold game – tie small loops into the climbing rope spaced well apart and enough loops for one each for each group member. Then the group is all blindfolded apart from the leader. Each member of the group puts a loop from the rope around their wrist then the leader takes the end of the rope and takes the group on a blindfold walk.
- Reviewing techniques: 1. Using the wall mark one place to be 0 out of 10 and another spot further along to be 10 out of 10. The leader has to make statements about the day and people stand along the wall for how they feel about each statement, e.g. 0 is they hated it, 10 they loved it, etc. 2. Using each other for feedback – put your hands on the shoulder of someone who....made you laugh the most.....taught you something new....helped you with something.....etc. 3. Hold up your fingers to rate statements – 5 fingers loved it, 0 hated it, etc.

BW3 Title: Forest School

Workshop Leader: Ciara Hinksman

Recorder: Áine Bird **Participants:** 16

Lessons learned

- **Activities:**
 - Otter in middle of circle protecting fish. Group try to get it off them. If otter tip's you you have to go back to edge.
 - Before entering new habitat eg. Forest. Ask the 'guardians' if it's ok for you to enter. Come up with a question as a group, ask and if everyone gets a 'yes' you can go in. Anyone that doesn't get a yes, centre yourself and ask again.
 - Name and animal that has same first letter act out and everyone repeat.
 - Find your pair – have pairs written on piece of paper in bag – give each person one. Stay in their pairs for all other activities, use the animal sound/activity to find your pair for subsequent activities.
 - Energiser – Teacher/one person is 'on' – everyone only safe if touching something – eg. tree, flower etc.
 - 'Come on in' – leader says this and everyone that hears them repeats it...spreads out so that everyone has heard it to gather back in the group.
 - Making disc's for pendants/spinning tops/ mobiles etc. : Laplander saw - Tool does all the work. One observer always. Give all safety brief. Holly and a drill bit - palm drill for putting holes in disc to hang. Use wool for pendants – breaks easily.



- Like fox/rabbit game. Get each student to put a stick in a pile. Creep in and blindfolded person points when they hear someone. Game pauses and if pointed have to go back. Use 'Fox walk' – start with toes and slowly feel about to make sure it won't make noise and then commit foot.
- Sense meditation – near end of day send each child away to sit on their own somewhere. Get them to listen to quietest sound, try and see the smallest thing, touch the softest thing, smell the sweetest smell.

Forest Schools:

- Benefit risk assessment done for each activity – all about setting up a safe container for risk assessed activities. 1:4 adult child ratio.
- Set up boundaries with ribbons etc
- Tim Gill – Rethinking Childhood, Growing up in a Risk Averse Society.

Principle 1: Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural environment, rather than a one-off visit. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are integral elements of Forest School.

- Forest School takes place regularly, ideally at least every other week, with the same group of learners, over an extended period of time, if practicable encompassing the seasons.
- A Forest School programme has a structure which is based on the observations and collaborative work between learners and practitioners. This structure should clearly demonstrate progression of learning.
- The initial sessions of any programme establish physical and behavioural boundaries as well as making initial observations on which to base future programme development.

Principle 2: Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.

- Whilst woodland is the ideal environment for Forest School, many other sites, some with only a few trees, are able to support good Forest School practice.
- The woodland is ideally suited to match the needs of the programme and the learners, providing them with the space and environment in which to explore and discover.
- A Forest School programme constantly monitors its ecological impact and works within a sustainable site management plan agreed between the landowner/ manager, the forest school practitioner and the learners.
- Forest School aims to foster a relationship with nature through regular personal experiences in order to develop long-term, environmentally sustainable attitudes and practices in staff, learners and the wider community.
- Forest School uses natural resources for inspiration, to enable ideas and to encourage intrinsic motivation.

Principle 3: Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners

- Where appropriate, the Forest School leader will aim to link experiences at Forest School to home, work and /or school education
- Forest School programmes aim to develop, where appropriate, the physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the learner.

Principle 4: Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

- Forest School opportunities are designed to build on an individual's innate motivation, positive attitudes and/or interests
- Forest School uses tools and fires only where deemed appropriate to the learners, and dependent on completion of a baseline risk assessment.
- Any Forest School experience follows a Risk-Benefit process managed jointly by the practitioner and learner that is tailored to the developmental stage of the learner.

Principle 5: Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.

- Forest School is led by qualified Forest School practitioners, who are required to hold a minimum of an accredited Level 3 Forest School qualification. Find more information on Forest School qualifications here.
- There is a high ratio of practitioner/adults to learners
- Practitioners and adults regularly helping at Forest School are subject to relevant checks into their suitability to have prolonged contact with children, young people and vulnerable people.
- Practitioners need to hold an up-to-date first aid qualification, which includes paediatric (if appropriate) and outdoor elements.
- Forest School is backed by relevant working documents, which contain all the policies and procedures required for running Forest School and which establish the roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers.
- The Forest School leader is a reflective practitioner and sees themselves, therefore, as a learner too.

Principle 6: Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning

- A learner-centred pedagogical approach is employed by Forest School that is responsive to the needs and interests of learners.
- The Practitioner models the pedagogy, which they promote during their programmes through careful planning, appropriate dialogue and relationship building.
- Play and choice are an integral part of the Forest School learning process, and play is recognised as vital to learning and development at Forest School.
- Forest School provides a stimulus for all learning preferences and dispositions.
- Reflective practice is a feature of each session to ensure learners and practitioners can understand their achievements, develop emotional intelligence and plan for the future.
- Practitioner observation is an important element of Forest School pedagogy. Observations feed into 'scaffolding' and tailoring experiences to learning and development at Forest School.

Review & reflect session:

- Why do feedback – for the organiser, for the individual, or for the group? Figure out what your motives.
- Have some colours on the floor – pick a colour that describes how you feel after the event. Find someone with similar colour, what do you have in common experience – using one word. Pick someone with opposite colours – tell them why did you pick your colour.
- Can split it up between those that want to do creative work (put together a postcard of your journey, write to someone that you want to tell about it) or how would you tweet the event for those that don't want to be creative.
- Can show people the 'blobbymen' and get them to show where they are on the picture.
- Go around the room and ask people to reflect on what they learned.
- Finally, fill out a feedback form.
- Other review and feedback include blogs, websites etc.



Below is the results of the feedback forms taken in at the above session.

Post-event Feedback

We received good response to the 2014 event. We are grateful for both the positive response and the constructive criticism. Not everything could be put in this document due to space but rest assure all comments been considered in our recommendations going forward to future events. Below is a taster of some of the feedback.

Personally, I was delighted to be involved. I enjoyed every session as I did the other parts of the event that I attended. It's a lovely gathering and I understand it went very smoothly for all involved - so well done you and all the team!

Thanks so much for allowing me to be a part of this inspiring weekend. I thought it was really well organized and the workshops were all wonderful. I was sorry not to get to the reflect back and the Saturday event but I got alot out of what I did attend.

I was trying to think of useful feedback on how the organisation might be improved but I really can't think of any! I loved that everything was so close to each other, yet not in one venue. Spilling out into the village for lunch was a highlight for me, making it feel like we were part of the community, if only for a small time.

APPENDIX 1 Programme 2014

PROGRAMME

Thursday 10th July

IMMERSION, DISCUSSION & CROSS-POLLINATION

- 2.15-3.45pm *A Stroll in the Burren* with a NPWS Burren National Park Visitor Guide
Meet at Gortlecka Crossroads in the Burren National Park or there is a free bus leaving from Corofin Information Centre at 2pm and returning at 3.45pm.
- 4-6pm: *Registration* - Burrenbeo Trust Office, Main Street, Kinvara.
- 6.45-8.30pm *Welcome* with Brigid Barry, Johnston's Hall
Burren TED Talks: 4 x 15 mins each
Advancing Place-Based Learning in Ireland – making it real.
- Brendan Dunford *Ireland's Learning Landscape – our vision*
Susan Pike *Place-based Education – research and practice in primary schools*
Mary White *Building Links in the Private Sector to Broaden Local Businesses*
Sarah O'Malley *Trends and Developments Here & Beyond*
Followed by *Open Discussion.* Led by Declan Kelleher.
- Break*
- 8.45-9.45pm *Seed Dating.* Led by Chris Chapman.
Fun skills in ice-breaking & discussion

Friday 11th July

TRAINING & UPSKILLING

Indoor workshops. Session 1. (8.30-10.30am) Kinvara

Coordinators: Áine Bird (ÁB), Brendan Dunford (BD), Brigid Barry (BB), Kate Lavender (KL)

- K1: Sam Moore *A Practical Approach to Programme Planning* (Burrenbeo Office/ÁB)
K2: Sophie Nicol & Katy Egan *Nature Journaling* (Courthouse/KL)
K3: Susan Pike *Experiencing Place: Enquiry Learning on the Doorstep* (Johnston's Hall/BD)
K4: Chris Chapman *Facilitating like a Natural* (Greene's Pub/BB)

Break

Indoor workshops. Session 2. (11-1pm) Kinvara

- K5: Deirdre O'Mahony *Tracing Places* (Burrenbeo Office/ÁB)
K6: Tracy Meisterheim *What if we had a shared language?* (Johnston's Hall/BD)
K7: Ruth Marshall *Spies in the Landscape* (Greenes/BB)
K8: Katy Egan & Sarah O'Malley *Improvisation in Nature* (Courthouse/KL)

1-2pm *Meet & eat:* Lunch is available to buy in farmer's market.

Tea, coffee and space to convene will be available at Johnston's Hall.

2pm Car shares depart for Slieve Carron outside St. Joseph's National School.

Car shares depart for Garryland from grass triangle on the quayside.

Outdoor workshops. (2.15-4.45pm) Slieve Carron & Garryland

| | | | |
|-----|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| B1: | Mary & Robert White | <i>Decoding the Landscape</i> | (Slieve Carron/BB) |
| B2: | Sam Moore | <i>Trainer in a Rucksack</i> | (Slieve Carron/KL) |
| B3: | Ciara Hinksman | <i>Forest School</i> | (Garryland/ÁB) |

4.45pm Car shares depart for Kinvara.

7.30-8.15pm *Review & Reflect.* Led by Kathy Walsh

Followed by optional gathering at a music session in the local pub.

Saturday 12th July

CONVERSATION & CONSERVATION

9.45am Depart from Kinvara outside St. Joseph's National School.

(10.30am-12.30pm) Gortlecka Crossroads

An opportunity to learn about leading national models in 'place-based conservation' and how they might be introduced into your work or your community.

Farming for Conservation (Burren Farming for Conservation Programme – Brendan Dunford)

Tourism for Conservation (Burren Ecotourism Network – Tina O'Dwyer/Christy Sinclair)

Communities for Conservation (Burrenbeo Trust & Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers – Brigid Barry & Kate Lavendre)

Followed by *A Burren Picnic* – Sit out in one of the finest species-rich meadows overlooking Mullaghmore Mountain in the Burren National Park. Bring your sandwiches!

1.30pm END

APPENDIX 2 Workshop Leaders & Coordinators

BARRY, Brigid

Brigid coordinates the Burrenbeo Trust. She works extensively in designing education programmes for place-based learners, educators, schools and higher institutions. Prior to Burrenbeo, she was the Biodiversity Officer for Co.Clare.

BIRD, Áine

Áine is the Communications Officer for the Burrenbeo Trust. Among other things she coordinates the place-based education programmes that we administer including a 20-week heritage course in primary schools and the 10-week place learning course with transition years. Prior to Burrenbeo she was an education officer in Glenveagh National Park.

CHAPMAN, Chris

Chris is a specialist in facilitating cultures of engagement and effective collaboration, with a particular interest in how leadership needs to evolve in complex and rapidly changing times. He has a postgrad in 'Change Agent Skills and Strategies' and has worked extensively in the context of sustainability and how a shift to greater sustainability and resilience can happen.

DUNFORD, Brendan

Brendan is the Manager of the Burren Farming for Conservation Programme and a founding member of the Burrenbeo Trust. Brendan initially came to the Burren to do a PhD on the theme of 'Farming and the Burren'. His interests relate to the relationship between people and their places and ways through which this relationship might be enhanced for the benefit of both.

EGAN, Katy

Katy works as the Ecology and Sustainable Living Officer for Presentation Ireland, a faith-based NGO working towards a fairer, just and sustainable world. A background in ecology with a postgraduate in Environmental Education and Communication (Royal Roads University, Canada). Katy has since developed education programmes and workshops for a range of schools and organisations in Ireland including the NPWS, Kippure Outdoor Education, The Irish Wildlife Trust, P.U.R.E, Leave No Trace Ireland and Conservation Services. Recently Katy has become fascinated by the links between how humans interact, perceive and treat animals both domestic and wild, and how it mirrors our relationship with nature as a whole.

HINKSMAN, Ciara

Ciara is grateful to have been inspired by some incredible mentors over the years. In 2009 Ciara started her company, Earth Force Education, and became a consultant educational facilitator for Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland. By 2013, inspired by the nature connection movement in the UK, she brought the first Forest School Programme Leadership training to the Republic of Ireland, with a fully booked second course this July in Co. Wicklow. Ciara is a Biodiversity Green Schools expert, a Heritage in Schools specialist for nature connection and sustainability and runs Forest School, nature and bushcraft camps for children. She offers Continuous Professional Developments for Forest School practitioners, nature educators, group leaders etc. She's been involved with Mountain Meitheal trail conservation since 2006 and coordinated a woodland restoration project where she played in the woods as a child. She was featured as part of *RTE Goes Wild* series on Nationwide last year.

KELLEHER, Denis

Former principal Scoil Mhuire Náisiúnta, Corofin, former president Irish National Teachers' Organisation. Currently deputy chairperson National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and council member of An Chomhairle Mhúinteoireachta.

LAVENDER, Kate

Kate is the Programmes Officer for Burrenbeo Trust. Among other things she coordinates the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers and the Burren Wild Child programme. Prior to Burrenbeo she was a geography teacher and an education officer with the Burren Outdoor Education Centre.

MARSHALL, Ruth

Ruth is a storyteller, facilitator and the author of 2 books: *Celebrating Irish Festivals* and *Clare Folk Tales*. She studied archaeology and botany, has a certificate in Steiner early years education and many years' experience as a facilitator of creativity and personal transformation. She works with people of all ages and abilities, from primary school children, teenagers, retired people, and tells stories in schools, museums and at festivals around Ireland. She visits schools through the Heritage in Schools scheme. She has used this method of exploring landscape with many groups including The ALFA Project, Raheenwood and Mol an Oige Steiner schools and the Irish Seed Savers Association.

MEISTERHEIM, Tracy

Since the 1980s, Tracy has been an experiential educator working at the intersection of leadership development, environmental education, Native American traditions, and sustainability. With the intention of supporting current and emerging leaders to work consciously and creatively towards a thriving future, she incorporates the land, designed challenge, deep dialogue, and reflective practice to create conditions for personal, organizational and systemic transformation. Tracy works independently and in collaboration on sustainability initiatives, leadership education, and community resilience in the U.S and abroad, specializing in process design and facilitation for transformational change. Owner and Principal at Blue Heron Sustainability Associates, an Art of Hosting steward, and associate with The Natural Step, Tracy co-founded and for ten years directed, a sustainability education center based on permaculture, social entrepreneurship and community resilience. Since 2011 she has served as the Program Director of the Master's in Strategic Leadership towards Sustainability (MSLS) in Karlskrona, Sweden.

MOORE, Sam

Sam started Totem Development as a means to help people make the most of the outdoors as a training medium. He is an accredited practitioner of the Institute of Outdoor Learning and holds a number of qualifications including being a Mountain Leader and Level 3 Kayak Coach. He has worked with a wide range of clients, from disengaged youth, primary school children to octogenarians and has created experiential learning courses for charities, small businesses, schools, apprentices and blue-chip companies. He has also led several expeditions.

NICOL, Sophie

Sophie is the Education Officer for Global Action Plan Ireland (GAP). GAP Ireland is a not-for-profit environmental NGO borne from GAP

International. GAP Ireland have been based in Ballymun, north Dublin, for over a decade. The key focus of the organisation is delivering programmes that assist people in integrating green practices into their daily lives, limiting their impact on the environment, maintaining a sustainable future for us all. GAP Ireland delivers a range of gardening, youth and community focused environmental programmes to individuals, schools and communities. Sophie has a background in environmental biology and a PhD in marine ecology, and has been working in environmental education for over a decade. She has developed and delivered educational programmes to children and adults on behalf of local authorities and a number of organisations such as Earthwise Education, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, ECO-UNESCO, Discover Primary Science and Maths, The Heritage Council, Conservation Services, Presentation Ecology, Sonairte – The National Ecology Centre and Kippure Estate Outdoor Education Centre. Sophie is particularly interested in developing programmes on current, relevant scientific topics (such as climate change, biodiversity and biomimicry) that aim to inspire a positive relationship between people and their environment, leading to long-term behaviour change.

O'DWYER, Tina

Tina O'Dwyer provides independent consultancy services in the areas of sustainable tourism, business networking, enterprise training and destination development. As part of the GeoparkLIFE Tourism for Conservation Programme (2013-2017), Tina works as a Sustainable Tourism Co-ordinator with the Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark. Since 2011, she has led the ongoing development of the Burren Ecotourism Network, which now comprises 50 tourism enterprises who work together to promote the area as a leading sustainable destination. Tina manages the Geopark Sustainable Code of Practice for Tourism and leads training, networking and business development programmes for the member enterprises.

O'MAHONY, Deirdre

Deirdre is an artist, writer and lecturer at the Centre for Creative Arts and Media, GMIT, Galway. She completed a PhD through practice-based research at the University of Brighton in 2012. In her latest research she is exploring three themes arising from earlier work on the perception and representation of rural landscapes. This concerns creating public space for re-thinking ideas of community in rural places; the contemporary use-value of tacit, practice-based cultivation and creative knowledge and eco-aesthetic strategies through which to think through the relationship between politics, ecology and activism in what is rapidly becoming a post-natural world. Selected exhibitions include *T.U.R.F.* curatorial project for *Labour and the Lockout*, LCGA, Limerick (2013), *A letter to Lucy Pallas* Projects, Dublin (2013), *Hybrid*, Denver USA, (2012) and she was recently nominated by EVA International Biennial of Contemporary Art curated by Bassam El Baroni for the Anna Lindh Foundation Network Activity in Morocco (2014). Public art projects include *River Culture* 2013, *Abandoned* Clare, 2010-11 and *X-PO* 2007- and *Cross Land*, (2007). She has received numerous Arts Council Visual Arts Bursaries, Project and Travel Awards and international fellowships including a Pollock-Krasner Foundation award.

O'MALLEY, Sarah

Sarah is a PhD candidate (IRCHSS) in the School of Political Science and Sociology at NUI, Galway. Her thesis examines and investigates the development and evolution of environmental education in Ireland. Having a particular interest in the children's (dis)connection with the natural environment and the role of environmental education she has extensive experience in the field of environmental education. She has worked with a number of organisations such as the Burrenbeo Trust, Burren in Bloom, Free Range Kids and the National Parks and Wildlife Service where she was also awarded a bursary studentship during her undergraduate degree at G.M.I.T. She has developed and delivered educational programmes to primary and secondary school students as well as public walks and talks on a variety of environmental topics.

PIKE, Susan

Susan is a Lecturer in Geography Education at St Patrick's College, Drumcondra. Susan teaches Geography Education to all students on the Bachelor of Education, Post Graduate Diploma in Primary Teaching and the Professional Masters in Education. These courses merge theory and practice in geography education and contain a substantial amount of enquiry-based place based and outdoor education. Susan teaches a number of modules on Masters programmes, and leads the Geography Education modules on the Master of Education. Susan coordinates the Geographical Association Geography Champions network in Ireland, facilitating groups of teachers to work together to share their practice. Susan is currently working with children and teachers in 15 schools producing a book for teachers entitled "Teaching Primary Geography: Ideas and inspirations from the Classroom, to published by Routledge in 2015. Susan's research interests focus on children and teachers' experiences of school, especially learning in geography, the use of places and the locality in learning and learning through geographical enquiry. Her doctoral thesis investigated the links between children's learning and their experiences in their localities.

SINCLAIR, Christy

Christy is the founder of Adventure Burren. He has over 20 years experience in leading outdoor activities in Ireland and beyond. He has a diploma in Outdoor Education, has a Mountain Leader qualification and a Rock Climbing Leader qualification. He spent many years working with the VEC and the Youthreach. He is currently a leading member of the Burren Ecotourism Network.

WALSH, Kathy

Kathy is an independent social researcher and facilitator. She works with all sorts of groups from the very young to the very old. She has a curious mind and enjoys the process of working with people to enable them question, learn and reflect on their experiences and the experiences of people around them.

WHITE, Mary

Mary has worked with environmental groups, in schools and supporting voluntary organisations in Carlow/Kilkenny for over twenty years. She has written a *Walk Guide to Blackstairs* with the late Joss Lynam and a book on *Environment Mining and Politics*. She is a Heritage Expert on the Heritage Council's expert panel. Her forte is bringing the landscape, flora and fauna alive in an easy learning environment. She is also a forager. She has worked with children with special needs, youth groups and Active Retirement Groups. The emphasis is on having fun in the wild.

WHITE, Robert

Has been leading Ecotrails with Mary for over twenty years. Founded Blackstairs Ecotrails in 2011, slow walking looking at the landscape. Robert is a geographer, specialising in landscape, flora and fauna. He brings an innate understanding of landscape, and the biodiversity thriving in particular habitats. He has taken part in bird surveys, the Breeding Atlas & Winter Atlas for Birdwatch Ireland. He has been recording biodiversity including, ferns, fungi, birds and butterflies for over twenty years. He has also lead ecotrails for Carlow Tourism and other voluntary organisations over the years.

APPENDIX 3 Delegate Biographies

Clare Bromley Clare works for Glenveagh National Park for the past 7 years as the Education Co-ordinator, teaching school children about nature and wildlife. She loves being outdoors and as the mum of two children herself she believes inspiring children to know and love the landscape is now more vital than ever. She enjoys creating innovative new ways and writing materials on how to do this and recently produced a book on minibeasts for children, parents and schools. **Email:** clare.bromley@ahg.gov.ie

Áine Brosnan Áine is an archaeologist and has been on the heritage in schools panel since 2003. She really enjoys working with the school children and is always delighted by their curiosity and enthusiasm. She also works as a tour guide and is in the middle of setting up her own business so is really looking forward to what looks like a very interesting event. **Email:** ainebrosnan.ie@gmail.com

Michele Castiaux Michèle is a geologist and environmental scientist. She visits primary schools (Heritage in Schools Scheme) and secondary schools, where she gives workshops and presentations on subjects such as geology, environmental management, water conservation, biodiversity and sustainable development. She is also an active member of the Irish Geological Association. More info on www.geologyandenvironment.com **Email:** owenandmichele@eircom.net

Caitriona Cunningham **Email:** cunninghamcaitriona@yahoo.co.uk

Rose-Mary Cussen Rose-Mary is a professional archaeologist and specialises in prehistoric rock-art at Durham University. Her dissertation looked at regional variation between Cork and Kerry landscape rock-carvings. She is currently a Heritage Specialist with the Heritage in Schools Scheme and is particularly enjoy informing Primary School children of Ireland's rock-art and archaeology. She loves nature and the outdoors. **Email:** rmcussen@yahoo.com

Paddy Daly Paddy has a longstanding interest in the natural environment and has recently set up Feevaghwoods, a 12 acre native woodland/ancient pasture land setting with some wooden cabin accommodation as a place for education on the whole area of ecology and care for the earth. Paddy is hoping that schools will come to visit and experience first hand the wonder of a natural environment and also see first hand how humans can interact in a positive way with our natural environment. Paddy is at the very early stages of this project. **Email:** paddyaoife@yahoo.com

Anne Dolan Anne has a PhD and is a lecturer in primary geography in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Current research interests include development education, primary geography, participatory approaches to education and children's concepts of place. She is interested in the use of the outdoor environment as an extension of the classroom. **Email:** anne.dolan@mic.ul.ie

Elaine Doyle Elaine is passionate academically, professionally and personally about sustainable development. Through her training in engineering and sustainable development, and her work in waste management, wind farm development and environmental education

she is developing an environmental product development company through the School for Social Entrepreneurs Ireland. She is a Heritage Council educational specialist, she sits on the National Committee of Engineers Without Borders Ireland and the Development Education Committee of EIL and she is a Ashoka Change Nation volunteer for Transition Towns. **Email:** doylelaine@gmail.com

Brona Dunne Brona recently started working as an Environmental Education intern for Presentation, Ireland. There she assists in the planning and delivery of environmental education workshops and education materials. She is also currently involved with updating the sustainable living programme for community groups. She has a background in Environmental Science and Health (DCU) with a postgraduate in Sustainable Development (DIT). She has a great interest in all things related to sustainability and the environment. **Email:** ecopresintern@gmail.com

Kate Flood Kate has just finished year 1 of an MSc in World Heritage Management, during which she focused on natural heritage conservation. Her principal area of interest is education and interpretation at peatland sites, and she has conducted guided walks around Girley Bog NHA in County Meath for the last three summers. She is researching how environmental interpretation and education can best communicate the message of conservation to encourage people to take action for the environment and whether education/interpretation can achieve behavioural change outcomes. She is also a member of the Meath Ecotourism Network, which was set up with advice from Ecotourism Ireland and a member of the Burren Ecotourism Network who came to talk to them about their experiences. **Email:** kateflood@yahoo.com

Grace Garde Grace studied Botany, Zoology and Geology in U.C.D. and graduated in 1997 with an Honours Degree in Science with Botany as her speciality. Grace has been involved in education for 15 years ranging starting in software education courseware, to outdoor nature education. She also has had keen experience in garden design and landscape implementation. Outdoor nature education (all levels) has been a focus since contracting with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in 2009. Currently Grace is registered with the Heritage Council as a 'Wicklow Expert' and travels to Primary Schools in Wicklow and Dublin delivering outdoor nature education programmes that she has developed for the Heritage Council. Grace has a deep love of nature and started her early days in U.C.D. studying Science, started the U.C.D. Scuba diving club - so she could pursue her love of wildlife underwater. Currently Grace spends time managing and growing food in her allotment scheme, and visiting schools with the 'Heritage-in-Schools.ie' programme. **Email:** grace_garde@hotmail.com

Una Halpin Una has worked in environmental education for 10 years and currently runs her own company Wildways Adventures specialising in outdoor nature based activities for families and groups. Una is a Heritage in Schools specialist, and also runs workshops and teacher trainings on behalf of SEAI and Discover Primary Science and Maths. **Email:** una@wildwaysadventures.ie

Lucy Hunt Lucy is finding her feet as the new Education Officer for the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group. She loves raising awareness of the fantastic marine biodiversity in Irish waters. This summer she is setting up a new initiative in her hometown Waterville, Co. Kerry; called Sea Synergy Marine Awareness and Activity Centre. **Email:** [Lucy Hunt <lucynhunt@yahoo.co.uk>](mailto:LucyHunt@yahoo.co.uk);

Paul Kavanagh Paul is a landscaper and has 32 garden allotment that he manages and has a big interest in biodiversity/sustainability. **Email:** seasonpark@hotmail.com

Dolores Keegan Dolores is a Heritage in Schools Specialist and leads outdoor education programmes in Brigit's Garden, Galway. **Email:** dolores1@eircom.net

Declan Little Declan is the Project Manager of Woodlands of Ireland, an ENGO dedicated to the appropriate management and expansion of native woodlands. His work involves numerous activities ranging from leading woodland walks for schoolchildren to engaging, encouraging and training woodland professionals, contractors, landowners and farmers in the promotion of native woodland, especially the Forest Service 'Native Woodland Scheme'. **Email:** woodsofireland@iol.ie

Ann Lynch Ann is the Founder of the Ballyboughal Hedgerow Society founded to protect and enhance these biodiversity corridors and a base for greenways and way marked ways. She is a promoter of local landscape including wild flowers, grasses, native trees, vernacular walls and old buildings. She would love to promote local tourism with emphasis on trails, local enterprise and food, local historical features. **Email:** lynchjustice@gmail.com

Marie McGauran Marie a local walking guide lives in the heart of the Burren. Her love and passion for her local area is enhanced by the in-depth knowledge she gained during the completion of an honours degree in Heritage Studies. Marie abides by the John Muir quote, "In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks". **Email:** burrencottage@clareireland.net

Ian McGrigor Ian runs Gortbrack Organic Farm near Tralee, Kerry which is home to Kerry Earth Education Project for the last 15 years. Environmental/Biodiversity and organic growing educational programmes for schools, communities and individuals. Gortbrack also has Eco cabin accommodation. **Email:** gortbrackorg@gmail.com

Joanna McInerney Joanna is the manager of the Burren Outdoor Education Centre and has been involved in outdoor education for over 20 years. She has just completed research confirming the positive impact of outdoor education on adult learners and is very interested in knowing more about all facets of outdoor learning and how these, including place based learning can develop in the Burren. **Email:** jmcinerney@clarevec.ie

Marty Mulligan Marty is the official tour guide of The Hill of Uisneach in county Westmeath, which is on the tentative list to be a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Marty is also co founder of Uisneach Guiding and Director of Mindfield at Electric Picnic. **Email:** martymull@gmail.com

Elaine O'Riordan Elaine is the manager of the Galway County Biodiversity Project. This is a joint initiative between the Heritage Office of Galway County Council and the Applied Ecology Unit of NUI Galway supported by the Heritage Council and the Galway County Heritage Forum. The project promotes awareness, knowledge and conservation of biodiversity in County Galway. Elaine works with community groups, schools, Council staff and researchers on a range of local biodiversity projects. **Email:** elaine.oriordan@nuigalway.ie

Vincent O'Sullivan Vincent is a organic farmer and is a heritage in schools specialist. He is involved in local walks, Tidy Towns, and other community related activities. **Email:** voscullahill@gmail.com

Mary Quealy Mary is a teaching principal in Carron NS in the Burren and is currently undertaking doctoral research in place based education. **Email:** marybquealy@gmail.com

Gráinne Ryan Gráinne is currently interning with Global Action Plan (GAP) Ireland which is part of an international network of organisations committed to empowering local communities and initiating environmental change. Her role in GAP is the Environmental Education Assistant. She has a background in Environmental Policy (MSc) and research interests in the citizen science movement. **Email:** grainne@globalactionplan.ie;

Amanda Ryan Amanda is an administrator with the Heritage Council with responsibility for its Grants Programmes and Heritage in Schools Scheme. **Email:** aryan@heritagecouncil.ie

Siobhán Sloane Siobhán is a BA student in Heritage Studies at GMIT. She has a particular interest in biodiversity, cultural landscape and farming for conservation. She is interested in exploring the curative properties of nature, both from a medicinal and wellbeing perspective. Siobhán is also a qualified yoga instructor of alignment based Hatha Yoga. Siobhán enjoys spending time out and about walking on beaches and quiet country roads of Mayo. She is intrigued by how the Burren landscape has been formed through a combination of geological and human activity and views this as an acknowledgment of the interconnected essence of all things.

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Karen Sorensen Karen is an artist, writer, and fundraiser, who has recently moved to the Burren from NYC. While Karen was working as the Director of Individual Giving & Special Events at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden she developed an interest in community gardening and outdoor education. For the past year she has been on adventures exploring the flora and fauna of the Burren with her 4 year old son. **Email:** conkare@hotmail.com

Kay Synott Kay is a horticulturalist with particular interest in biodiversity. She works with primary and secondary schools in the area of environmental education. She also establishes and maintains school gardens as part of the Heritage in Schools Scheme, as well as with other projects. She is a member of the environmental education team in Brigit's Garden, Co. Galway and she teaches horticultural skills to adults. www.livinggardens.ie / info@livinggardens.ie **Email:** killanninhouse@eircom.net

Eleanor Turner Eleanor is a marine biologist who has grown up on her family farm and loves working in the outdoors. She is currently helping set up the Sea Synergy Marine Awareness and Activity Centre in Waterville, Co. Kerry. **Email:** ejt_99@hotmail.com

Gráinne Vaughan Grainne work in the education section of Irish Seed Savers Association and she is on the Heritage in Schools panel. **Email:** vgrainne@gmail.com

Irene Wall Irene is an intern with Heritage Council with a Degree in Rural Development. **Email:** iwall@heritagecouncil.ie

Karen Webster **Email:** karenwebster.art@gmail.com

APPENDIX 4 Workshop Abstracts

Indoor Session 1 Friday, 8.30am-10.30am, July 10th Location: Kinvara

Code: **KW1**

Workshop Leader: **Sam Moore**

Title: *A Practical Approach to Programme Planning* Designing sessions and courses can sometimes feel like a jigsaw puzzle. Take the activities you run and slot them into the time you have available and allocate the staff you have to run them. This workshop aims to offer a more proactive approach to programme design, putting the desired learning and development at the core of the experience. By separating the design process out into a number of discreet steps, we can aim to ensure that practicalities and logistics don't get in the way of producing learning experiences.

Code: **KW2**

Workshop Leaders: **Sophie Nicol & Katy Egan**

Title: *Nature Journaling* This workshop will introduce the concept of nature journaling to educators, while facilitating three different approaches to increasing observational and scientific skills with individuals and groups. Journaling is a fantastic way for learners to discover the wonders of the natural world all around them, in a creative and scientific way. It offers learners an opportunity to increase observational, experimental and recording skills in a fun enquiry-based, experiential manner, in line with the current science curricula. The workshop will bring participants through a variety of approaches (scientific, artistic, reflective) to incorporating nature journaling into environmental education or the school classroom, while highlighting how these activities can be used to cover aspects of science and literacy. Games and activities will be introduced that can help learners focus in on the detail (species, landscape) to increase observational skills, and participants will create their own personalized journal to take home.

Code: **KW3**

Workshop Leader: **Susan Pike**

Title: *Experiencing Place: Enquiry Learning on the Doorstep* Compelling and fascinating evidence exists for the cognitive and affective benefits of using places and localities in learning. There are also powerful arguments that using enquiry approaches to teaching and learning can enhance both learning and well-being. This workshop draws together these ideas and will explore ways to learn and develop place-based education using the immediate locality, through principles of enquiry learning. The enquiry process used will also draw on the principles of slow pedagogies. During the workshop participants will develop their own place-based questions and learning activities, through an enquiry framework.

Alternative questions and activities will also be provided.

The outcomes will be enhanced knowledge and awareness of their surroundings, attachment to place and sense of citizenship as well as other learning outcomes determined by initial questions. Taking part in the workshop will enable participants to consider the enquiry process and the slowing of learning in place based education.

Code: **KW4**

Workshop Leaders: **Chris Chapman**

Title: ***Facilitating like a natural*** With groups in the outdoors, in the classroom, or at a workshop...What is it that people who are naturally good facilitators do? What is in their way of being that enables it to seem so easy? Are there facilitator tricks of the trade that might help? How do you meet different needs in the same group? How can you build relationships as well as learning? How can you create events that have the maximum chance of leading to follow up action? How does one review and learn? Or is all facilitators do is ask question after bloody question?!! You are warmly invited to this workshop - you might never facilitate or review the same again!

Indoor Session 2 Friday, 11am-1pm, July 11th Location: Kinvara

Code: **KW5**

Workshop Leader: **Deirdre O'Mahony**

Title: ***Tracing Places*** The theme of this workshop is using maps and exploring place names as a technique for developing a community spirit. This hands-on workshop explores mapping practices that participants may consider when attempting to (re)connect communities and local learners to place. Using a case study from a successful community project, the workshop will discuss how mapping shared stories and forgotten places, and creating networks of memory, have been used by local groups to imagine alternative, more positive, futures. The workshop will enact and discuss a range of place-based learning methods that may be used by participants to realize their own local goals. Participants will carry out practices that they can consider using in their own communities to attend to the stories, pathways, networks and imaginative geographies of place, landscape and community.

Code: **KW6**

Workshop Leader: **Tracy Meisterheim**

Title: **What if we had a shared language? A living systems perspective on 'Sustainability'** When you hear the word 'sustainability', what comes to mind? Environment? Well-being? Economics? Keeping your business alive over the long-haul? This term is often used but rarely does it mean the

same thing to everyone. This introductory workshop will offer a definition of environmental and social sustainability, developed through scientific consensus over the past 25 years, with a strategic framework for understanding the conditions for social & ecological well-being, and a method of planning that supports wise action towards the sustainable future we all want for our children. The only pre-requisite is curiosity and an appetite for the tools to more effectively communicate, design, influence and engage in moving towards sustainability. (This workshop is based on what is commonly known as 'The Natural Step' framework for strategic sustainable development.)

Code: **KW7**

Workshop Leader: **Ruth Marshall**

Title: *Spies in the Landscape* Shelly once said, "Poets are God's spies". In this workshop, we will practise making ourselves invisible. Through games and exercises we will sharpen our senses and become secret observers of our environment, its features and its inhabitants. Once we are ready, we will go out into the streets and green spaces of Kinvara, undercover, to look and listen, letting the 'spirit of place' whisper to us. Using our bodies and our voices, we will explore and discover what this place feels like, smells like, tastes like, its gesture, the shape it takes, and what it wants to say to us. Then, drawing words from our encounters, we will distil these into poems and stories that express the spirit of the place. In this creative, playful and profound workshop, all of us become poets, all of us are storytellers.

You will experience place in a new way, and take away games and techniques to help others become spies in the landscape. Some of the writing will be individual, some collaborative, and everyone's input is a valuable contribution to the whole. No previous creative writing experience is needed.

Code: **KW8**

Workshop Leader: **Katy Egan & Sarah O'Malley**

Title: *Improvisation in Nature* Join us for a fun session full of games and activities that can be used with students in the outdoors with little to no materials. Activities are designed to facilitate students as they gain confidence, stay focused and learn about their natural environment and most important of all have fun. Improvisation is a great tool for creating great group cohesion, helping people get to know each other and stretching the creative muscles.

Outdoor Workshops **Friday, 2.15pm-4.45pm, July 11th** **Location: Slieve Carron/Garryland**

Code: **BW1**

Who: **Mary & Robert White**

Title: *Decoding the landscape* This workshop is about what our ancestors taught their families about the secret world of the outdoors. This hands-on workshop explores the living environment and how it can

teach us about natural larders, looking for wild safe food. Observing, using smell and hearing and memory to understand the landscape. Exploring the living hedgerow and why it is so important for those that live there! Working in small areas and examining the landscape; eyeballing an Eyebright, peering at plantains and getting down among the daisies. Suitable for people who work with children in the outdoors or those who work in guiding.

Code: **BW2**

Workshop Leaders: **Sam Moore**

Title: ***Trainer in a Rucksack*** We've all been there, a delayed minibus pick up, a bored group at lunch or an excitable group at a campsite with nothing to do before bedtime. Come for a walk and discover a collection of games, activities and review techniques that can help you keep your group engaged using nothing more than a handful of cheap props.

Code: **BW3**

Workshop Leader: **Ciara Hinksman**

Title: ***Forest School, an Antidote to Nature Deficit Disorder*** Forest Schools are based on outdoor schools in Scandinavia, where children and young adults play and learn in nature. The Forest School Association defines it as, '*An inspirational process that offers children, young people and adults regular opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a local woodland environment.*' Forest School is held outdoors, with regular sessions in all weathers, in a local wooded area. It's child-centred, healthy for bodies, minds and souls and fun all at once. In this workshop you will play nature awareness games, experience learning habits that help us unlock the mysteries of nature and get hands-on experience making typical Forest School woodland crafts. You will be encouraged to reflect on how this might be useful for your own work in the outdoors.

Conversation and Conservation Saturday, 10am-12pm July 12th

Gortlecka Crossroads (Burren National Park)

Code: **BCV1:** Title: ***Farming for Conservation*** A look at how farming has shaped our landscape and how farming can also help to sustain and protect our places into the future. Join us on a farm walk to look at how Burren farmers have become active leaders in looking after their special place. (Burren Farming for Conservation Programme)

Code: **BCV2:** Title: ***Tourism for Conservation*** A look at how building up a network of tourism and educational providers can help enhance visitor experience, protect the environment and improve business. Join us for a 'walk and talk' in the wonderful Burren National Park with Eco tourism business owners and promoters. (Burren Ecotourism Network)

Code: **BCV3:** Title: ***Communities for Conservation*** Growing awareness within communities of their local area and their role in its conservation is the best long-term way to look after our landscapes and

heritage. Join the Burrenbeo team to find out how a range of initiatives have been introduced to achieve this in the Burren. (Burrenbeo Trust & Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers)
