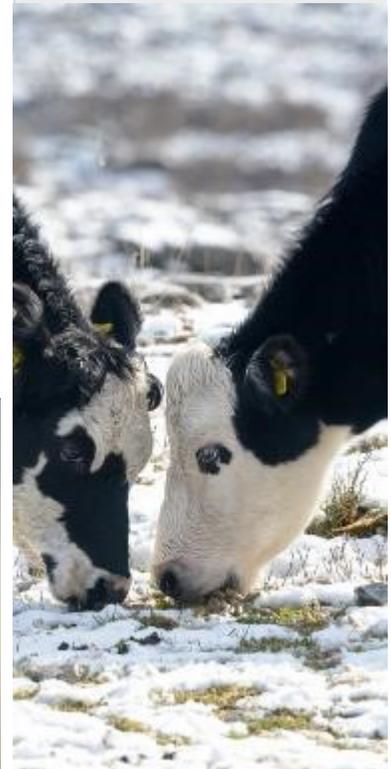


WELCOME

Welcome to the December Edition of the Burrenbeo newsletter.... and seasons greetings from all of us here at Burrenbeo Trust! We are well and truly wrapped up here in the office as there is no denying winter has arrived in the Burren; the water is returning to the turloughs along with the wildfowl, the cattle are happy in the hills and the winter light is casting fascinating shadows on the limestone. It's a really beautiful time to visit or get out exploring – the monuments and geological features are particularly worth a look at this time of year. While you're out be sure to support the local businesses and markets, there are plenty of great local gifts to be found.



BURREN NEWS

The Burren Winterage Weekend another resounding success! The annual Burren Winterage Weekend (27th-30th October) was a fantastic weekend of high nature value farming demos, walks, talks, a conference, open farm, evening story telling, and much more all culminating with the annual cattle drive. The weather played ball, and it is hard to believe that we were in t-shirts just one month ago following these pregnant ladies (the cattle!) up to their winter pastures. A superb weekend. We have so many people to thank—with over 60 organisers of 28 different events it is impossible to name everyone but we are so grateful for all the input for this no-budget, non-profit event. **SO THANK YOU!** Some memories here:

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST THIS MONTH

- Most winterages are now well stocked with out-wintering cattle. There is plenty of grass, water and shelter for these 'suckler cows' right now, though after Christmas as they come closer to calving and the grasses die back, they may need some extra feeding and attention. Especially in icy weather
- Now that the hazel and blackthorn scrub has shed its leaves, it's a wonderful time to go hunting for archaeology, and no better place than the Burren to do it! But remember, most of the Burren is privately-owned land and great care must be taken not to disturb animals on the hills.





Burren Farmers are recognized for their hard work towards biodiversity in the region

The Bord Bia Origin Green Farming for Conservation Awards 2016 were held on Friday, 28th October, in recognition of hard work carried out by Burren Programme farmers to improve the environment of their land in the Burren, Bord Bia generously awarded prizes across 6 different categories. The winners were as follows: Farmer of the Year (Michael Collins), Farm Family of the Year (the Daly Family), Most Improved Farm (Pat McGuane), Best Winterage Pasture (Donat O'Brien), Best Lowland Meadow (Anthony and John Hynes), and Best Standard of Farm Conservation Works (Denis O'Callaghan).

Minister of Agriculture, Food and Marine visits the Burren

The Burren farmers hosted a visit from Minister Creed to showcase their result-based farming scheme for which he was gathering information for potential roll out of the scheme elsewhere.

Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers shortlisted for awards

Fingers crossed for our most dedicated volunteer Richie Jones who has been shortlisted for the National Volunteer of the Year award in the wildlife category. Richie has an outstanding BCV attendance of 74 events in the last 6 years and has been a dedicated member of the BCV committee since it was established. Not only is he passionate about archaeology but he has a great love of walling, scrub clearing and generally working in the outdoors. Good luck Richie, you deserve to win! Also, well done to the BCV for being shortlisted for An Taisce's Ocean Hero's award in the 'event of the year' category. April saw a group of over 30 volunteers (BCV, local scouts, Galway Bay sea anglers and the Clare Outdoor Club) gathered at Fanore beach to clear a whopping over a tonne of marine litter. The winner will be announced on Dec 1st in Dublin. If you're interested in finding out more about the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers or think you may like to join us on one of our events then please email volunteer@burrenbeo.com



Ballyvaughan Film Society 7th winter season runs from October 2016 – February 2017 at the Burren College of Art. Season membership and individual film tickets available. Films commence at 8pm. December's films range from Turkish to Icelandic. Check out www.discoverballyvaughan.com for more information.

Geology course is open for registration

This course is an introduction to the geology of the Burren aimed at anyone with an interest in the Burren. It will run for 5 Thursday evenings in February/March 2016 for 2 hours each evening at the Burren Outdoor Education Centre in Bell Harbour. This course is run by Colin Bunce (Burren Outdoor Education Centre) and Dr. Eamon Doyle (Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark) and is now in its 6th year. Topics covered are: an introduction to geology, the geology of Ireland, the geology of the Burren, fossils, geological maps, geology and the Burren landscape; there is also a field trip. On the last night there will be a guest speaker. The course is designed to be relaxed, informative and practical. No previous geology knowledge is required (and there are no exams!). Cost: €60 Dates: Feb 2nd – March 2nd inclusive. Time: 7.30 – 9.30 p Venue: Burren Outdoor Education Centre, Turlough, Bell Harbour. Bookings and Enquiries: colin.bunce@lcteb.ie or info@burrengeopark.ie or 065 7078066

Archaeology Lecture and Launch

Hylands Burren Hotel, Ballyvaughan, 7pm Friday 9th December 2016. To mark the launch of her new book: Archaeological excavations in Moneen Cave, the Burren, Co. Clare: insights into Bronze Age and post-medieval life in the west of Ireland, Dr Marion Dowd, IT Sligo, will present a lecture on archaeological excavations that took place in Moneen Cave, located outside Ballyvaughan village. The book will be launched by Dr Brendan Dunford at 8pm. All Welcome!

Kids put together their impressions of winterage

As part of the season that it is in it, different schools around the Burren put together their impressions of what winterage is about. There were some beautiful creations and entries. Thanks to all the schools that took part.

Lights for Christmas Christmas Stage, Kinvara Pier, 3rd of December 2016 – looking for cash contributions to the event. Contact Mark Dwyer 086 6739266 or Breffni O'Rourke 087 2744500

Burren on the Radio

Check out "Radio Beams - Family Farms in Clare" on Mixcloud <https://www.mixcloud.com/raidiorcorcabaiscinn/radio-beams-family-farms-in-clare/> for stories from the land. Extracts from Willie Hanrahan from Doonbeg, Patrick McCormack from Kilnaboy and Martin McMahon who lives in O Callahans Mills. Also, the recording done during the winterage weekend by Ella McSweeney for BBC Radio 4 will be broadcast this Sunday (27th November). For those sensible souls who sleep in a little on Sunday, it'll be podcast straight afterwards...<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/bo83m1vr>

News from Further Afield

St Brigit's Garden is looking for a General Manager. Visit www.brigitsgarden.ie/home/vacancies to view the full job specifications. Applications by 5 pm on Wednesday 14th December 2016.

Congratulations to field botanist Zoe Devlin been awarded distinguished recorder of the year award by the NBDC. She will receive the award on the 25th Nov at the National Museum of Ireland.



BURRENBEO TRUST EVENTS CALENDER Dec 2016 (Print & Post)

Sun 4th 2pm Kilnaboy

Burrenbeo Trust December walk '*Exploring the High Common*' with Stephen Hegarty. Meet at High Common North Junction. More info on www.burrenbeo.com/ 091 638096 or email aine@burrenbeo.com.

Sun 4th 11am Fanore

The Ballyvaughan Fanore walking club are walking from Ballyreen to Poll Salach. Meet at O'Donoghue Pub in Fanore at 10.30am to car pool to Ballyreen. Leaders: Kevin McCormack & Mary Daly 086 3272472.

Mon 12th 8.30pm Tubber

Burrenbeo Trust December talk is 'From Boston to the Boardroom' with Breege O'Donoghue at Tubber Village Hall, Tubber, Co. Clare. More info on www.burrenbeo.com/ 091 638096 or email aine@burrenbeo.com.

Sun 1st January Carron

Burrenbeo Trust January walk '*Blowing off the Cobwebs*' with Richard Morrison and friends. Meet at the earlier start of 1.30pm at the Chip dump in Carron. More info on 091 638096 or email aine@burrenbeo.com.

BUY LOCAL THIS CHRISTMAS!.....

Kinvara Christmas Fair

This year the fair will take place over 2 weekends – 3rd & 4th and 10th & 11th December from 11am-6pm in the Community Centre. As usual there will be a wide range of local crafts, hot food, mulled wine and mince pies, baking and music.



PLACE-BASED LEARNERS

Learning about place, through place, in place.

Burrenbeo Trust aims to help connect people to the Burren landscape and their role in safeguarding it—this is place-based learning and community stewardship. The following sections give an insight into some of our programmes and how you can get involved.

Ecobeo and Áitbheo

We are currently putting a lot of time into developing and updating the Ecobeo programme. There are some exciting ideas in the pipeline so bear with us and we'll be in touch with all local schools once we've finalised the details.

Monthly Heritage Walks

December's Walk is with Burren native Stephen Hegarty on the High Commons. Stephen is passionate about the Burren and its history. He lives on a farm with his wife Eva, near an Iron Age ringfort outside Kilfenora. Working as a part time beef and free range pork farmer, he has a keen interest in sustainable farming, rural development and eco-tourism. The walk will meet at the junction on the Commons North between Kilnaboy and Carron. While not a strenuous walk, this will include some walking on limestone pavement and broken rock so a reasonable level of fitness is required. Good walking shoes or boots are recommended along with warm clothes and waterproofs etc. Since we will be walking on farm land where we may encounter livestock, unfortunately no dogs will be allowed. The walk start point is marked [here](#). The walk is open to everyone, and will focus on information sharing rather than covering long distances, although a reasonable level of fitness is required. It is free for Burrenbeo Trust Members and a donation of €10 is suggested from non-members. For more information please email aine@burrenbeo.com or phone 091 638096.



January's Walk to blow off the cobwebs is a planned walk up over Termon Hill. Meet at the chipdump just down from the Carron Field Station on the 1st January 2017 @1pm. Thanks to Colin Bunce for leading a fascinating walk in November in Carron on the geological features in that area. Thanks to Martin Kiely as always for sharing his photos.

Winter Tea Talks

The Tea Talks in full flow in the village hall in Tubber. December's talk on Monday 12th November at 8.30pm with Burren native Breege O'Donoghue talk about going 'From Boston to Boardroom'. Originally from the nearby Boston, Breege went on to become a Board Member & Group Director (Business Development & New Markets) at Penneys/Primark and she continues with an Ambassadorial role in Primark. Breege has held government appointed positions on the board of a number of state companies including An Post, Aer Rianta, Chairman of Shannon College of Hotel Management, Chair of the Labour Relations Commission. As it is in the lead up to Christmas this will be preceded by mulled wine and mince pie so do join us. It is open to everyone. However, it is free for Burrenbeo Trust Members and a suggested €5 donation from non-members. For more information please email info@burrenbeo.com or phone 091 638096. Link to Tubber Village Hall [here](#). Thanks to Brendan Dunford for leading the November tea talk on Reminiscing from the Past with the help of materials from the McCormack family and Deirdre O'Mahony.

High Nature Value Farming

Burrenbeo Trust are part of a new exciting project that is developing the Burren as one of 12 Learning Areas for High Nature Value Farming Europe. For more information on this project go [here](#).



CONSERVATION NOTES

We have developed this section to fill you in on what is special about the Burren, what are some of the conservation challenges, and how you can get more actively involved.

The Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers (BCV) are continuing to work on a range of projects including stone wall building and scrub clearing. Volunteer events are interesting, sociable and educational – why not get out and join the volunteers this month!



A Review of the Year by Eileen O'Connor (Chairperson of the BCV Committee)

2016 has been another fantastic year for the Burrenbeo Trust Conservation Volunteers (BCV). 24 events were completed, 95 volunteers attending at least one event with a grand total of 230 participants. There are many ways to volunteer in the Burren and our Action Plan for 2016 set out goals for five categories.

- 1. Habitat management:** The encroachment of scrub threatens the species rich grassland, biodiversity and built heritage of the Burren. The BCV have a yearly scrub clearing plan and this year we cleared scrub from several archaeological sites as well as from a nationally important Lesser Horseshoe bat maternity roost. Each of these events was carried out under the guidance of an expert.
- 2. Rebuilding Stone Walls:** Work continued on our walling project in the Burren National Park. In addition volunteers monitored the impact of tourism in relation to the building of mini dolmens at many tour bus stop-off points. These have a significant impact on the landscape.
- 3. Volunteers continued to be involved in Active Research** including butterfly monitoring and assisting with local archaeological projects. We assisted in the post excavation work from a Mesolithic shell midden site at Fanore as well as participating in scrub clearance work in preparation for excavation of a wedge tomb on Roughan Hill under the guidance of local archaeologists.
- 4. March** saw the first of our **Community Events** when we participated in An Taisce's Clean Coasts Initiative Big Beach Clean along a section of coast at Fanore. We also linked our April event to An Taisce's national

Spring Clean campaign. Between the two events 44 volunteers cleared 1 ton of rubbish from a section of the Burren coastline. As these events are family friendly they are a great way to encourage the volunteers of the future. In October we assisted with the annual Winterage Weekend.

5. Our **training events** this year commenced with a Butterfly Workshop in March. Learning to identify and record butterflies provides an opportunity for volunteers to be involved in a citizen science project. All records collected feed in to the Irish Butterfly Monitoring Scheme and over time trends in population numbers can be identified. In August we hosted "A Celebration of Active Volunteering, Working for Wellbeing of Person and Place". This event, which was run with Burrenbeo Trust, saw volunteers from all over the country attend for lectures and fieldtrips on a variety of topics. We had the opportunity to network with other organisations and gain from their experience as well as showcasing the work of the BCV. Finally we held an Invasive Alien Species (IAS) workshop in September. Following the IAS workshop we went on to map the occurrence of Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Knotweed and cotoneaster in large sections of the Burren.

So as 2016 draws to a close, on behalf of the BCV Committee, I would like to thank all our volunteers for their time and hard work in all kinds of weather conditions. I would also like to thank our experts who have given their time and expertise so freely at our events, and to our BCV leaders who have ensured the events run smoothly.

We look forward to next year, to more great days on the Burren working in the most special of places with lots of laughter, good company and of course, cake!

Places need to be booked by emailing Kate at volunteer@burrenbeo.com. When you have a place booked more details of the event will follow.

Join the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers



Becoming a volunteer offers you an opportunity to build skills, knowledge about place and indeed, lasting friendships whilst also making a difference to the conservation of this unique landscape. This is an active group of conservation volunteers that have been working in areas of archaeology conservation, rare species monitoring, managing scrub encroachment and much more since 2010. We have 1-2 events a month. Why should you get involved?

- **Get outdoors, enjoy some healthy exercise and give something back in the region**
- **Learn new skills in conservation and heritage management**
- **Be part of a friendly, inclusive and active conservation community**

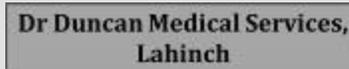
The Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers are continuing to work on a range of projects including stone wall building and scrub clearing. Volunteer events are interesting, sociable and educational – why not get out and join the volunteers this month! This month's upcoming events are an archaeology event and a bat workshop. See below. **More information contact volunteer@burrenbeo.com**

BURRENBEO TRUST BUSINESS FRIENDS

BURRENBEO BUSINESS FRIENDS 2016

Please support these businesses that support the work of the Burrenbeo Trust working towards the future sustainability of the region together.

More details on our business members [here](#)



Why not become a Burrenbeo Business Friend this year?

Not only are you supporting the education and conservation of the Burren region but you are giving your business an advantage—it is advertised here on our newsletter and on our website with an accumulative audience of 80,000 people. It is €180/€360/€600 for the year. Our business friends so far this year are listed above. More information go [here](#).

St-Tola Cheese

St-Tola won a Gold Medal for their St.Tola Ash Log at the World Cheese Awards in San Sebastian last week. Congratulations to them.

Their cheese range including the St.Tola Hard Cheese that they had not produced for the last 4 years, will be available to purchase at the cheesehouse in the lead up to Christmas Mon - Fridays 11a.m - 3pm Sat & Suns 10am -12noon as of the 5th of Dec .

They will also have specially designed limited edition of St.Tola cheeseboards available.

They will be exhibiting at The National Craft Fair in the RDS open to the public from Wed 30th Nov until Sun 4th Dec where all range will be on sale so do drop into them in you are in the area.



Burren College of Art

Burren College of Art are pleased to announce the launch of a new residency/workshop programme in Spring of 2017. The [Winter Schools](#) invite those who wish to reignite their art practice after a long break or are ready to take the leap to become the artist they've always wanted to be. In these sessions, you will have the opportunity to develop your creative skills through personal exploration combined with the support of twice weekly studio visits and introductory workshops taught by their faculty and visiting artists in a supportive, creative community. The School is offered in 2- to 4-week sessions, taking place during the months of February, March, and April as Spring returns to the unique and vibrant landscape of the Burren. Over the duration of the program you will have 24/7 access to your own, dedicated studio space as well as the use of our campus facilities including: 3D sculpture lab, digital print lab, black and white photography darkroom, library and free Wi-Fi throughout the campus. Please contact Julia Long at julia@burrencollege.ie if you'd like to apply or find out more about available dates and tuition or visit www.burrencollege.ie/winterschools. Bookings are now open for their [Summer workshops 2017](#). The programme introduces two additional courses: [Walking, Painting and the Burren](#) with Conor McGrady and [Investigating identities - an introduction to art therapy](#) with Catherine Phillips. So... before the Christmas madness overtakes you, make sure to secure your place on your chosen workshop in May or August - you might also consider a [gift voucher](#) for someone special. Please book your place at <https://www.burrencollege.ie/workshops> or email julia@burrencollege.ie for further details.



BURRENBEO TRUST IN NUMBERS

Since the beginning

- 5,104** **People have attended** the **158** educational monthly heritage walks and winter talks series since 2009. With an additional **2843** attendances on our annual Burren in Bloom walks and talks series since 2010.
- 1,182** **Young Burren Experts** have graduated from our free 10-week Ecoceo heritage programme in **27** different local schools since its inception in 2003.
- 331** **People** have registered, for free, with the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers to carry out active conservation projects in the region since 2010.
- 189** **Place Heroes** have graduated from our Áitbheo 10-week active place-based learning programme since 2013 in Transition Year.
- 120** **Monthly e-newsletters** have been sent out to a growing base of Burrenbeo subscribers with news and events from the region since 2007. Currently **4514** people receive this free each month.
- 102** **Grants** were written to different 23 funding bodies since 2009 in order to keep this organisation afloat so far. 55 were successful, generating €357,808 for the organisation in the past 8 years.
- 75** **Primary school teachers** from **13** different counties have trained on our 5-day place-based education courses since 2014; this is key in order to spread the model of place-based learning nationally.
- 24** **Different Burren farmers** have led walks across their land in the Burren for Burrenbeo Trust in order to raise awareness of this exceptional landscape with its unique story since 2008. A further **78** different heritage experts have also given their time for free to raise awareness through walks and talks for the organisation.
- 8** **Years ago** the Burrenbeo Trust was launched as a landscape charity building on the educational work of Burrenbeo Teoranta started by Brendan Dunford and Ann O'Connor in the 5 years earlier.

BURRENBEO TRUST IN NUMBERS

This year

- 35,550** **People have viewed our website** this year with over 100 pages of information on the Burren's natural, built and cultural heritage. This amounted to **96,204** individual page hits and includes our subsidiary festival websites.
- 6,217** **People** currently follow us on the social media sites Facebook and Twitter.
- 3,852** **Voluntary hours** were donated by the community to the organisation this year amounting to **€77,040** in potential fees donated. This excludes the work by the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers as accounted for below.
- 2,797** **People attended our public events** this year celebrating the Burren and learning from it, including the Learning Landscape Symposium, the Burren in Bloom festival, the Working for Wellbeing of People and Place conference, and the Winterage Weekend. This does not include our monthly walks and winter tea talks as accounted for above.
- 352** **People** are currently members of the Burrenbeo Trust. Ideally this should rise to 1000 in order to increase our reach across the region.
- 138** **Thousand Euros** is the amount that Burrenbeo Trust had to raise this year with no core funding. This is a shoestring budget to deliver the wide range of programmes and a testament to the value for money that the organisation is.
- 95** **Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers** made up **230** attendances at **24** conservation events this year. This adds up to approximately **1150** man-hours donated to the region in active conservation.
- 50** **Programmes** were coordinated and delivered by the Trust this year.
- 18** **Grants** were written this year by Burrenbeo Trust with only 7 being successful amounting to only 25% of what we need. It is increasingly difficult to fit heritage, environment and sustainable communities into grant requirements.
- 3** **Staff** currently work at the Burrenbeo Trust office amounting collectively to just **84** hours a week to coordinate and deliver the 50 programmes the organisation has today. With no core support, this is only possible with outstanding community support and voluntary time.

*I hope you will agree we achieve a lot on very little. With no core funding we depend on the donations and support of our members. **So please become a member this Christmas for as little as €2.50 a month or consider a one-off donation by following this [link](#).***

We are truly grateful in advance!

Our HIGHLIGHTS 2016 This holiday season we wish all our members, contributors and friends a happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you all out in the Burren in the New Year. Here are some of our highlights from the last year.....



We coordinated the wonderful community-led Burren Winterage Weekend;



We restructured our website to reflect our evolving message and to expand on the Burren information we are sharing;



We joined the European wide HNV-LINK network where our models of land stewardship will be shared;



We coordinated the annual Learning Landscape Symposium which continues to help guide us all on the future of place-based learning in Ireland;



We pulled together the inaugural 'Working for Wellbeing of People and Place' workshop which showcased the great work our conservation volunteers are doing in the Burren and brought together conservation volunteers from all over Ireland;



We continue to deliver a high standard of monthly heritage walks and talks, the Burren in Bloom festival, place-based learning programmes in schools, conservation volunteer events and much more.



Burrenbeo Trust is proud of what it manages to achieve each year on a shoestring budget with an outstanding amount of volunteer input. **Without your support, whether financial or in-kind, we would not have been able to achieve a fraction of what we have, so THANK YOU.**