

Open your eyes to the Beauty of Kilkishen

A Biodiversity Plan for Kilkishen

2019-2022



Introduction

Kilkishen Development Association applied to take part in the biodiversity training which was run by Burrenbeo Trust and funded by CLDC through LEADER. The biodiversity training culminated in the creation of this biodiversity plan.

The aim of this plan is to increase awareness of the beauty and importance of Kilkishens biodiversity and the need to protect and enhance it. We wish to prevent further decline in biodiversity in our area and thereby have suggested actions and activities that will benefit nature.



View of Kilkishen Village from the 12 o'clock hills. Clonlea Lake is in the foreground while behind the village lies, Cullaun Lake.

What is biodiversity?

Short for *Biological Diversity*, Biodiversity is the variety of life we see around us every day - trees, flowers, grasses, mammals, birds and insects.

Biodiversity also includes the habitats or places where plants and animals live. From hedges to woodlands, from small streams to the sea, from your back garden to farmers' field - all of

these habitats provide a place to live for the many types of plants and animals that can be found the County Clare. Biodiversity is declining all around the world and Ireland is no exception. Giving nature the space and protection it needs is the only answer to stop this decline. With that in mind Kilkishen has made this Biodiversity Action Plan.



Common knapweed (*Mallach dubh*) photographed in Kilkishen. It is a favourite of all kinds of butterflies, including Common Blues, Marbled Whites and Meadow Browns.

Protected areas

Kilkishen is surrounded by a number of European and National designated sites. Most of these are lakes, bogs and wetlands. Bogs, and wetlands are under threat from a variety of sources, due, in part, to a lack of understanding and appreciation of the functions and benefits they provide. These benefits range from their role as carbon stores, water purification and flood regulation, to supporting bio-diversity and recreation.

Local protected sites include the following;

- Proposed Natural Heritage Area: Lough Cullaunyeeda
- Special Area Conservation: Danes Hole, Poulnalecka SAC
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area: Danes Hole, Poulnalecka
- Natural Heritage Area: Doon Lough NHA

- Proposed Natural Heritage Area: Castle Lake
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area: Rosroe Lough
- Special Area Conservation: Kilkishen House SAC

The latter, Kilkishen House, is an 18th century, two-storey over basement mansion situated on the edge of Kilkishen village. It contains an important winter roost of the Lesser Horseshoe Bat and therefore is a site of international importance. Natterers' Bats also inhabit the house. The woodland and wetland nearby provide suitable foraging areas. Soprano Pipistrelle, Common Pipistrelle and Leislars Bat are also present in the area.



Aerial showing the many valuable wetlands around Kilkishen village.

History of the village

Kilkishen village was built in the 1800s to provide for the needs of the many workers who were employed in the huge Studdert estate. It was built in a straight line down from the estate and its style unique in East Clare. The original village dwellings were single story and thatched. These dwellings were later replaced by the two story stone built buildings that we have today. After a period of depopulation, Kilkishens population has recently increased due to the addition of several housing estates.

Recent village projects

Several projects have been successfully undertaken in the community. These include, but are not limited to, the development of the nearby 12 O’Clock hills as a walking amenity, the creation of the Castle bog walk, the conservation and development of the old church as a cultural centre and the preservation of the old Forge. The creation of the bog walk allows locals and visitors alike to become acquainted with a patchwork of habitats and rich biodiversity. It is a treasured resource, and therefore, a number of the actions in this plan relate directly to it.



The bog walk in its autumn beauty

Actions

	Project	Reason
1	Maintain and increase the wildflower habitats both in the village and along the Bog Walk.	To increase habitats for wildlife.
2	Promote use of bog walk top locals and visitors.	So that many may enjoy its natural beauty and reconnect with nature.
3	Maintain the heritage signage both in the village and along the Bog Walk.	To inform the public about the heritage of Kilkishen – people cannot care about something they don't know about.
4	Maintain the biodiversity of the bog walk while also managing the bracken.	To ensure continued access to walk.
5	Complete plans for a pollination board within the bog walk.	To inform on the importance of pollinators.
6	Continue to hold walks and talks based on the flora and fauna of the surroundings, including bat walks.	So that everyone may enjoy and learn more about our rich local biodiversity.
7	Continue our policy of using recycled materials to make seating and planters in conjunction with Kilmurry Mens Shed.	To reduce our carbon footprint
8	Continue with regular litter picks up and promotion of the mutt mitt system	To reduce unsightly litter and dog waste
9	Work with the local primary school by doing nature walks etc	Open children's eyes to nature and allow them to connect with and learn about the natural world.
10	Research the heritage of the ancient Clonlea graveyard and continue to manage for wildlife.	To build on our knowledge of local heritage

Potential collaborators

We endeavor to work with all groups in the community to achieve the aims of this plan. In particular we hope to continue to work with the Kilkishen National School and Kilmurry mens shed. We also anticipate working closely with Clare county council as we have done in the past.



Bird box, made by Kilmurry mens shed, which was erected along the bog walk.

Useful resources

Trees and tree planting

- http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/heritage/pdfs/buds_of_the_banner.pdf
- <http://www.clarecoco.ie/services/arts-recreation/heritage/county-clare-tree-design-guide-for-towns-and-villages-24243.pdf>

Developing nature or heritage trails/ walking routes

- [www.irishtrails.ie/National_Trails_Office/Publications/Trail_Development/Guide to Planning and Developing Recreational Trails in Ireland.pdf](http://www.irishtrails.ie/National_Trails_Office/Publications/Trail_Development/Guide_to_Planning_and_Developing_Recreational_Trails_in_Ireland.pdf)
- www.noticenature.ie/Walking_Trails_in_Ireland.html

Interpretive signage/ materials

- [http://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/Services/Heritage/Publications/Telling People About Our Heritage-Interpretation and Signage Guidance.pdf](http://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/Services/Heritage/Publications/Telling_People_About_Our_Heritage-Interpretation_and_Signage_Guidance.pdf)
- [http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/miscellaneous/Board of Boards.pdf](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/miscellaneous/Board_of_Boards.pdf)
- <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/wildlife/Interpretive-trail-signs-exhibits.html>

Building bird or bat boxes

- <http://www.birdwatchireland.ie/>
- www.batconservationireland.org/pubs/reports/Leaflet_3_batboxes.pdf

Planting to attract wildlife and pollinators

- <http://pollinators.ie/>
- www.butterflyconservation.ie/
- <https://www.rspb.org.uk/makeahomeforwildlife/wildlifegarden/>
- <http://www.ipcc.ie/advice/wildlife-gardening-tips/>