

Burrenbeo Trust Strategic Plan 2023-2025

Introduction

Burrenbeo Trust is an independent charitable organisation dedicated to its mission of connecting all of us to our places and our role in caring for them. Based in the flagship heritage landscape of the Burren, Burrenbeo Trust works to raise awareness of the significance of the Burren and to empower and encourage local communities to act as stewards of its priceless heritage. Building on lessons learned over the past two decades, Burrenbeo also advocates for ‘place based learning’ across Ireland as a means through which communities can learn more about their place and their role in actively caring for it.

This document outlines a Strategic Vision and 3-year Plan for the Burrenbeo Trust. It is based on consultation with members, staff and directors of the Trust. It will be reviewed on an annual basis and will inform the drafting of Annual Work Plans to deliver on its aims.

Our Vision

That the Burren is an internationally recognised exemplar of community stewardship whereby farmers, local businesses, local and visiting communities and other stakeholders all make a positive contribution to the care of this unique landscape – and to have fun and build new relationships while doing so!

By the end of this Plan, in late 2025, our Vision is that Burrenbeo is ever more deeply embedded in the Burren, continuing to deliver innovatively and impactfully for the heritage and communities of the Burren, while empowering and inspiring communities across Ireland and beyond to engage proactively with the conservation of their own places.

Our Values

Burrenbeo Trust holds the following values in the pursuit of its Strategic Vision and Goals:

- To be guided always by what is best for the Burren
- To pursue sustainability in all its forms in all that we do
- To value our people – staff, members, volunteers, donors and others
- To carry out our work with respect, integrity, professionalism and transparency
- To be inclusive and to work in partnership where possible

Strategic Goals 2023-2025

Annual Work Plans will be developed to achieve these Goals.

1: To create an efficient, impactful, grounded and resilient organisation

To continue our development as an inclusive, independent, accountable and transparent charity which respects and supports all those who are involved in its work.

- a) Support our staff, the heart of our organisation.
- b) Ensure good governance, compliance and accountability.
- c) Value and support our members, patrons, volunteers and donors.
- d) Secure sustainable sources of funding to enable medium-long term planning and impact.
- e) Ensure access for staff to comfortable office space and all necessary equipment.
- f) Continue to plan strategically but to adapt as necessary.
- g) Support local product and service providers.

2: To promote, enable and support community stewardship and active conservation in the Burren

To engage the communities of the Burren in further understanding and appreciation of their unique landscape and their role in its care (note: educational work is covered under 3 below)

- a) Host regular Members Heritage Walks.
- b) Host regular Heritage/Landscape 'Tea Talks' and/or Webinars.
- c) Organise regular conservation and social events for the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers.
- d) Deliver The Hare's Corner measures and information to local landowners.
- e) Plant and maintain Burren Pine Project mini woodlands.
- f) Host the annual Burren in Bloom Natural Heritage festival (May).
- g) Organise the annual Burren Winterage Weekend (October).
- h) Organise one-off events: Dawn Chorus Walk, Heritage Week events, family events, evening events etc.
- i) Continue to examine the purpose, value and impact of events and adjust where needed.

- j) **Build in opportunities for community building, wider engagement, ongoing relationships with participants and networking to events.**

3: To better connect communities with their place and their planet, and their role in its care

To develop and deliver place-based learning programmes in the Burren and beyond and to share best practice with others

- a) **Deliver Heritage Keepers to schools, youth groups and communities in the Burren and beyond.**
- b) **Provide training and resources on place-based learning and community stewardship.**
- c) **Research impact and best practice on PBL and Community Stewardship initiatives and integrate findings into future initiatives.**
- d) **Host an annual learning event on PBL and Community Stewardship (Communities for Heritage and/or the Learning Landscape Symposium).**
- e) **Host visiting groups to the Burren, focussing on (ideally, fee-paying) farmers, educators, public servants and students.**
- f) **Look to identify ongoing and new threats and opportunities for the Burren and consider our role in taking action on these.**

4: To provide information about the Burren across a range of media

To act as a source of high quality, easily accessible and up-to-date information on: the Burren, its communities, heritage and conservation; Place Based Learning; the work of the Burrenbeo Trust

- a) **Provide comprehensive, up-to-date information on the Burren through the Burrenbeo Trust family of websites.**
- b) **Maintain and enhance our growing presence on social media.**
- c) **Prepare an annual report and share it with members, funders and others.**
- d) **Prepare and share monthly snapshot newsletters with Members.**
- e) **Distribute Burren Field Guides, books and other relevant information materials.**
- f) **Engage with local, national and international media to share relevant information (e.g. re events, initiatives).**

5: To advocate for the Burren and for community stewardship here and elsewhere; to build strategic alliances in order to do so more efficiently and effectively

To work strategically with others to advance our key objectives – place-based learning and community stewardship; sustainable farming; the conservation of the Burren and its role for learning

- a) Build alliances to advocate for place based learning and community stewardship.
- b) Build alliances to advocate and work for the conservation of the Burren (NPWS, NMS, universities, Tidy Towns, LAs, BEN etc).
- c) Develop and deliver the Farming for Nature programme.
- d) Support the ACRES Burren Aran initiative.
- e) Continue to develop the Burren’s potential as a learning landscape.
- f) Look to engage at policy level and with influential organisations, businesses and individuals on topics around PBL, community stewardship and conservation.

Burrenbeo Trust Strategic Plan 2023-2025						
Goals <i>(What we plan to achieve)</i>	Objectives <i>(Actions to reach goals)</i>	Timeframe			Team member	Actions
		'23	'24	'25		

1: An efficient, impactful, grounded and resilient organisation <i>To continue our development as an inclusive, independent, accountable and transparent charity which respects and supports all those who are involved in its work.</i>	(a) Support our staff, the heart of our organisation.	X	X	X	AB, BD	Hold regular monthly team meetings (minuted); Conduct annual reviews; Prepare staff handbook; Ensure any issues arising are resolved fairly and promptly, in line with agreed procedures.
	(b) Ensure good governance, compliance and accountability.	X	X	X	AB, BD, Board	Hold regular (at least quarterly) Board Meetings; Publish Accounts and Annual Reports (ARs); Continue Work to comply with the Charities Governance Code and to follow agreed procedures.
	(c) Value and support our members, patrons, volunteers and donors.	X	X	X	AB, KL, PB	Provide regular updates incl. E-Newsletters and ARs; Deal promptly with member's concerns in line with complaints procedures; Reward contributors (e.g. speakers, leaders) where funds are available.
	(d) Secure sustainable sources of funding to enable medium-long term planning and impact.	X	X	X	AB, ALL	Apply for relevant grants; Source donations, Sustain/grow merchandise (books etc); Develop fundraising initiatives (pine project); Provide paid services (time permitting); Grow membership; Grow event income and sponsorship.
	(e) Ensure access for staff to comfortable office space and equipment	X	X	X	AB, JL	Enable comfortable home/office working space for staff; Ensure all staff have the equipment they need to carry out their work.
	(f) Continue to plan strategically but to adapt as necessary	X	X	X	BD, AB	Prepare Annual Work Plan, review and revise annually; Prepare a 3-year plan and review/revise annually.
	(g) Support local product and service providers	X	X	X	JL	Favour local (Clare-Galway) suppliers for goods and services; otherwise, adopt a 'buy Irish' policy;

Goals <i>(What we plan to achieve)</i>	Objectives <i>(Actions to reach goals)</i>	Timeframe			Team member	Actions
		'23	'24	'25		
2: Promote, enable and	(a) Host regular Members Heritage Walks.	X	X	X	PB	Organise, promote and host regular walks, ensure advance availability of leaders, volunteers etc

<p>support community stewardship and active conservation in the Burren <i>To engage the communities of the Burren in further understanding and appreciation of their unique landscape and their role in its care (note: educational work is covered under 3 below)</i></p>	<p>(b) Host regular Heritage/Landscape ‘Tea Talks’ and/or Webinars.</p>	X	X	X	PB, BD	Organise, promote and host regular Talks/Webinars, ensure advance availability of leaders, panellists etc; Post webinar events on You Tube;
	<p>(c) Organise regular conservation and social events for the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers.</p>	X	X	X	KL	Help organise (with support from the BCV Committee) and promote monthly conservation outings (including Health & Safety training event); Ensure advance availability of leaders;
	<p>(d) Deliver The Hare’s Corner measures and information to local landowners.</p>	X	X	X	LW, PB	Advertise, promote, coordinate and deliver The Hare’s Corner measures to as many local landowners as funding is available for; develop and share relevant resources; regularly communicate with participants; consider model for upscaling to other areas.
	<p>(e) Plant and maintain Burren Pine Project mini woodlands.</p>	X	X	X	PB, KL	Source suitable sites; sell pine sponsorship; organise planting and maintenance; regularly communicate with supporters.
	<p>(f) Host the annual Burren in Bloom Natural Heritage festival (May).</p>	X	X	X	PB, KL, BD	Organise, promote (update website etc) and host BiB; Secure sponsorship; Consider partnership; Ensure advance availability of leaders, speakers etc; Include local schools programme in lead up; Post event highlights on You Tube;
	<p>(g) Organise the annual Burren Winterage Weekend (October).</p>	X	X	X	BD, PB, KL	Organise, promote (update website) and host WW; Secure Sponsorship (DAFM, FBD), Partnership (ACRES, FFN); Include local schools programme in lead up; Ensure advance availability of leaders, speakers etc; Post event highlights on YT;
	<p>(h) Organise one-off events: Dawn Chorus Walk, Heritage Week events, family events, evening events etc.</p>	X	X	X	PB, KL	Organise and promote events to mark specific occasions, needs etc throughout the year; Ensure advance availability of leaders, speakers etc
	<p>(i) Continue to examine the purpose, value and impact of events and adjust where needed.</p>	X	X	X	AB	Monitor and evaluate all programmes in terms of expected outcomes and impact. Report on same.

(j) Build in opportunities for community building, wider engagement, ongoing relationships with participants and networking to events.	X	X	X	All	Consider wider social and networking potential for events to engage wider audience and maintain relationships with participants (including education programmes).
---	---	---	---	-----	---

Goals <i>(What we plan to achieve)</i>	Objectives <i>(Actions to reach goals)</i>	Timeframe			Team member	Actions
		'23	'24	'25		
3: Place Based Learning: Connecting people with their place and their planet and with its care <i>To develop, implement and disseminate place-based learning programmes in the Burren and beyond and to share best practice with others</i>	(a) Deliver Heritage Keepers to schools, youth groups and communities in the Burren and beyond.	X	X	X	MD, BN, AB	Deliver Heritage Keepers in person to Burren schools and communities and online to others. Assess numbers each year depending on funding.
	(b) Provide training and resources on place-based learning and community stewardship.	X	X	X	MD, KL, AB	Provide workshops to teachers, students and communities as required and withing capacity. Revisit the Teacher Training week year on year.
	(c) Research impact and best practice on PBL and Community Stewardship initiatives and integrate findings into future initiatives.	X	X	X	AB	Engage with research and best practice recommendations as available. Implement changes as required and assess impact.
	(d) Host an annual learning event on PBL and Community Stewardship (Communities for Heritage and/or the Learning Landscape Symposium).	X	X	X	KL, MD, BN	Coordinate and host a learning/celebration event for PBL and conservation volunteering annually.
	(e) Host visiting groups to the Burren, focussing on (ideally, fee-paying) farmers, educators, public servants and students.	X	X	X	KL	Host groups based on demand, availability, priority and ability to contribute to costs.
	(f) Look to identify ongoing and new threats and opportunities for the Burren and consider our role in taking action on these.	X	X	X	All	Regularly consider the developing needs of the Burren and it's communities and assess our role in addressing these. Engage with initiatives happening here and elsewhere to see if there is potential for collaboration.

Goals (What we plan to achieve)	Objectives (Actions to reach goals)	Timeframe			Team member	Actions
		'23	'24	'25		
4: Information Provision across a range of media <i>To act as a source of high quality, easily accessible and up-to-date information on: the Burren, its communities, heritage and conservation; Place Based Learning; the work of the Burrenbeo Trust</i>	(a) Provide comprehensive, up-to-date information on the Burren through the Burrenbeo Trust family of websites.	X	X	X	PB	Update website content regularly; Address design/functionality issues in conjunction with Trebania; review update needs for main BBT site; Ensure hosting remains active; Reply promptly to all emails received (AB)
	(b) Maintain and enhance our growing presence on social media.	X	X	X	PB	Post updates regularly on TW, FB, IG, LI; Post video content on our YT Channel; Source interesting materials for content use;
	(c) Prepare an annual report and share it with members, funders and others.	X	X	X	KL	Source new material from contributors; Work with designer on format; print and post copies to members, funders etc; share pdf on-line with public
	(d) Prepare and share monthly snapshot newsletters with members.	X	X	X	PB	Prepare and distribute monthly e-news updates to the BBT Mailing list
	(e) Distribute Field Guides, books and other relevant information materials.	X	X	X	KL	Distribute Field Guides and other materials (Calf and the Cuckoo book) to local shops and sell via our on-line shop
	(f) Engage with local, national and international media to share relevant information (e.g. re events, initiatives).	X	X	X	PB	Prepare PRs; Distribute to Media Lists; Directly contact local radio and newspapers re content to share.
Goals (What we plan to achieve)	Objectives (Actions to reach goals)	Timeframe			Team member	Actions
		'23	'24	'25		
5: Advocacy and Alliance <i>To work strategically with others to</i>	(a) Build alliances to advocate for Place Based Learning and Community Stewardship.	X	X	X	AB, BD,	Engage with Key Strategic Partners including: The Heritage Council, The NCCA, the EPA, the NPWS, the NMS; NUI Galway, Eco Unesco,
	(b) Build alliances to advocate and work for the conservation of the Burren (NPWS,	X	X	X	AB, BD	Build on the work of the Burren Community Charter to engage with Key Partners including:

<i>advance our key objectives – place-based learning and community stewardship; sustainable farming; the conservation of the Burren and its role for learning</i>	NMS, Universities, Tidy Towns, LAs, BEN etc).					The Burren Aran ACRES, The Burren IFA, The Burren EcoTourism Network, Clare and Galway County Councils.
	(c) Develop and deliver the Farming for Nature programme.	X	X	X	BB, LB, BD	Identify ambassadors; organise ongoing networking opportunities; provide information and resources; organise ambassador awards during WW.
	(d) Support the ACRES Burren Aran Initiative.	X	X	X	AB	Regular communicate with the team and identify areas for collaboration and support.
	(e) Continue to develop the Burren’s potential as a learning landscape.	X	X	X	AB	Host groups of Students to learn in the Burren; Build up database of farmer-trainers, venues and itineraries; Build Curricula for students; Revisit LL Feasibility Study report;
	(f) Look to engage at policy level and with influential organisations, businesses and individuals on topics around the Burren, PBL, community stewardship and conservation.	X	X	X	AB, BD	Organise Burrenbeo Academy in partnership with Matthijs Schouten; look to input on relevant consultations; engage with relevant politicians, policy makers and others.

Our Team

Name	Job title <i>and key roles</i>
Áine Bird	Burrenbeo Trust Coordinator Overseeing Trust Staff and Activities. Governance (Board etc) and Compliance. Place-based Learning - with a focus on Research, Development and Impact Scaling.
Kate Lavender	Education, Membership and Volunteer Officer Managing membership. Coordinating Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers. Delivering education programmes in the Burren. Outreach work. Organising Communities for Heritage. Supporting Burren in Bloom and Winterage organisation.
Pranjali Bhawe	Communications Officer Updating website, social media, e-newsletter etc. Organising Members Walks, Talks, Webinars etc. Organising Burren in Bloom, supporting the Burren Winterage Weekend. Managing the Burren Pine Project. Managing the Hare's Corner.
Mary Dillon	Place Based Learning Officer Coordinating, developing and delivering Heritage Keepers to schools and communities. Organising Communities for Heritage.
John Lambe	Admin Officer Managing accounts and finances.
Lee Worrell	Hare's Corner Officer Liaising with Hare's Corner participants. Developing materials and resources to support the Hare's Corner.
Brian Nally	Heritage Keepers Officer Delivering Heritage Keepers to schools and communities. Supporting Heritage Keepers projects. Supporting organisation of the Communities for Heritage.
Brigid Barry	Farming for Nature Manager
Lucy Bowler	Farming for Nature Programmes Officer
Brendan Dunford	Volunteer, Secretary Strategic Planning. Supporting Staff and Board. Organising Winterage Weekend & School. Fundraising. Outreach. Supporting Farming for Nature Project.

Our Finances

Based on estimates of expenditure, the delivery of the Strategic Goals as outlined below will require an annual budget in the region of **€370,000**. This will vary depending on a number of factors, in particular the extent to which our ambitions for national outreach are realized.

The (annual) projected sources of income to meet this expenditure for the period of this Strategic Plan include (**estimated value**):

- Heritage Council Support **€50,000**
- Burren Pine Project **€20,000**

- Membership **€40,000**
- Donations **€45,000**
- Educational services **€10,000**
- Restricted project income **FFN €120,000 THC €40,000 HK €30,000**
- Event income **€10,000**
- Merchandise **€5,000**