

Kilkelly Nature and Wildlife Plan 2014–2017



*An Action of the County Mayo Heritage Plan
2011-2016*

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to everyone in Kilkelly who helped with the development of this plan. Special thanks to Kieran Tarpey for helping to promote the biodiversity training, and the Community Centre for the use of the venue. Thanks also to Deirdre Cunningham, Heritage Officer, Mayo County Council, for all her support and assistance with the project.

Text: Janice Fuller (www.janicefuller.ie)

Photos: Janice Fuller

Introduction

Kilkelly is an attractive small town in east Mayo just off the N17, 6km south of Knock Airport. Famous for the 'Kilkelly Ireland' song based on the letters to an immigrant son, Kilkelly has a thriving music scene. The town is built on the River Trimogue, a tributary of the River Moy.

The '*Kilkelly Nature and Wildlife Plan 2014-2017*' is a community-based biodiversity plan that outlines projects, activities and events that will run in the Kilkelly area over a three year period for the benefit of nature and wildlife, the environment, and the local community. This plan aims to raise awareness of, protect and enhance the rich natural heritage in the area.

Biodiversity training was provided for the community in Kilkelly in order to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity and the many benefits of biodiversity for people, communities and the environment. Three biodiversity training sessions were held in Kilkelly in early 2014 with a view to producing a local biodiversity plan for the area. The training and production of the plan was facilitated by a consultant ecologist but the projects in the plan were decided by the local community. This project is an action of the County Mayo Heritage Plan 2011- 2016.

***Biodiversity** simply refers to all living things (including plants, animals, microbes, fungi and people), the places where plants and animals etc. live (habitats), the interactions among living things (the web of life) and their environment (ecology). Biodiversity is the nature all around us, everywhere and in our everyday life. Biodiversity is life and sustains life on Earth. Biodiversity provides us with clean air and water, food, fuel, building products and medicines. It also provides us with many free 'services' such as nutrient recycling, pollination and water filtration etc. Making space for nature in our towns and villages enhances and protects the local environment, and improves our quality of life by providing natural amenities for recreation (e.g. swimming, fishing, walking and relaxing).*

The community in Kilkelly recently participated in the Community Futures project to produce a Kilkelly Community Action Plan 2011-2016. This plan outlines the vision of the local community for the future in Kilkelly. There are several groups in the area that are working to improve the appearance and environment in the town, and amenities including the Tidy Towns group and Kilkelly District and Development Company. The '*Kilkelly Nature and Wildlife Plan 2014-2017*' is an opportunity to learn more about the rich natural heritage in the area, to protect and enhance this wonderful resource for the benefit of nature and wildlife, visitors to the area and the local community.

Nature and wildlife in Kilkelly

Kilkelly has a history of quarrying due to local deposits of sand and gravel, which gives the town a unique appearance as some hills have been shaped by extraction of materials or cutaway altogether. Old quarries such as these are often home to Sand Martins that like to nest in sandy cliffs.

The landscape around Kilkelly is predominantly gently rolling farmland with several raised bogs, small lakes and wetlands. The River Trimogue is a focal point in the town. It has a good stock of Brown Trout. The River flows north-westwards into the Moy River, which is one of the best Salmon rivers in the country. There is a short nature walk along an old breen adjacent to the river (which may be extended in the future). The river can also be viewed from the bridge in the town and the old graveyard, which has been developed into a beautiful small park with a seating area.



Old quarry in Kilkelly

There are some steep-sided eskers on the edge of the town that have been quarried for sand and gravel. Old quarries are often refuges for birds and rare plants once quarrying activity has ceased. A remnant of the last Ice Age, eskers are ancient rivers that once flowed under the ice sheets carry sand and gravel that was deposited as the ice sheets melted.

Several lakes occur to the north and south of the town. Lough Nambrackragh is a short distance from the town and it is a beautiful spot for family picnics or fishing.

There are also several pockets of forestry in the area as well as several raised bogs. There are a few walking routes along bog roads and local roads that are great for relaxing and enjoying the natural environment around Kilkelly.

The raised bogs started to form in former lake basins and depressions soon after the end of the last Ice Age. The deep layers of peat accumulated over thousands of years. Raised bogs contain a remarkable flora that can tolerate the waterlogged and acidic nature of the peaty substrate.



Bog cotton

Kilkelly Nature and Wildlife Plan 2014-2017

	Project/ activity	Project leader (group or individual)	Project partners	Time frame	CF Theme*
1	Develop community gardens (in centre of town and at Highland Lodge).	Tidy Towns	Western Care, Heritage Officer, Mayo CoCo	2015	
2	Develop local management plan for Trimogue River	Tidy Towns	Inland Fisheries Ireland	2015	5
3	Develop nature trail/ walk along the River	Tidy Towns	Mayo Walking Officer	2015	4
4	Run school and youth biodiversity projects	School	Foróige Club, Heritage Officer	Annually	4
5	Develop biodiversity section on local website	Tidy Towns	Heritage Officer	2016	
6	Run composting workshop	Tidy Towns	Mayo CoCo	2014	
7	Organise nature walk/ talk during Heritage Week e.g. bat walk, birds of the quarries	Tidy Towns	Heritage Officer	Annually	
8	Promote angling locally; reinvigorate angling club	Tidy Towns	Inland Fisheries Ireland	2015-2017	5
9	Run Annual Spring Clean	Tidy Towns	An Taisce, Mayo CoCo	Annually	
10	Develop habitat map of village and environs	Tidy Towns	Heritage Officer	2016	
11	Harvest rainwater for planters in town	Tidy Towns	Mayo CoCo	2015	
12	Undertake wildlife audit in local disused quarries	Tidy Towns	Heritage Officer	2016	

* CF theme = Community Futures plan theme

Ensuring success

The successful implementation of a local biodiversity plan requires commitment from the community to support the projects, activities and/or events outlined in the plan. Ideally a local group should be established to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the 'Kilkelly Nature and Wildlife Plan 2014-2017'. They should meet at least twice a year in order to set annual goals and to review progress to date. The Mayo County Heritage Officer will be available to support the local community implement their plan.

Resources for implementing the plan

	Project/ activity/ event	Resources
1	Community gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.giyinternational.org/profiles/details/414/pages/pages/grow_the_giy_magazine • http://dublincommunitygrowers.ie/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/FINAL-City-Guide-to-Community-Gardening.pdf • http://www.changingireland.ie/communitygardening.html • http://communitygardennetwork.ning.com/
2	River management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inland Fisheries Ireland (096)22788 (Ballina Office) • www.fisheriesireland.ie
3	Develop nature trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
4	School and youth biodiversity projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.greenschoolsireland.org/_fileupload/biodiversity%20resources/Insect%20Hotel%20Habitat.pdf • www.rte.ie/radio/mooneygoeswild/factsheets/naturegarden/
5	Biodiversity section on local websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Officer
6	Composting workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Section, Mayo County Council • (094)9024444; environment@mayococo.ie
7	Nature walks/talks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Officer
8	Promote angling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inland Fisheries Ireland (096)22788; www.fisheriesireland.ie
9	Annual Spring Clean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.antaisce.ie • www.mayococo.ie/environment
10	Habitat map of village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Officer • http://www.secadgreenyourcommunity.org/biodiveristy-and-habitat-mapping.php • http://www.secadgreenyourcommunity.org/resources/Biodiversity%20&%20Habitat%20Mapping_Rachel%20Boyle.pdf
11	Harvest rainwater for planters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Section, Mayo County Council • (094)9024444; environment@mayococo.ie

Potential funding sources

Fund/ Funding Body	Description
Leader	Leader full and part funding for a variety of community-led projects. Discuss potential projects with the Community Development Workers prior to submitting applications to determine if they meet the Leader Programmes criteria for projects.
The Heritage Council	The Heritage Council offer grants to community groups and individuals for heritage projects. See their website for details of the grant application criteria and application process (www.heritagecouncil.ie)
Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund, Mayo County Council	This fund is administered by the Environment Section of Mayo County Council; it promotes sustainable development by assisting small scale, non-profit environmental projects at a local level. Application forms and further information are available online at www.mayococo.ie (Environment Forms Page) or telephone Sharon Cameron, Environment Awareness Officer, Mayo County Council, Aras an Chontae, Castlebar, Co. Mayo, on 094 9047360 or email – environment@mayococo.ie
Environment Fund for Biodiversity Awareness Grant Scheme 2013	This grant was offered in 2013. The main aim of the grant is to raise awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystem services. It is administered through the Biodiversity Policy Unit of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. For more information contact: biodiversitypolicy@ahg.gov.ie
Foras na Gaeilge	Foras na Gaeilge provides grants for signage and booklets etc. that include use of the Irish language
Mayo County Council	Funding for Heritage Week events; contact Deirdre Cunningham, Heritage Officer dcunningham@mayococo.ie , 094 9047684

Useful contacts and websites

Name (Group/ Individual)	Activities/ Expertise	Contact details
Deirdre Cunningham, Heritage Officer, Mayo County Council	All matters relating to heritage	dcunningham@mayococo.ie Tel: 094 9047684 www. mayococo.ie/heritage
National Parks and Wildlife Service	Responsible for the protection of Ireland’s natural heritage, particularly sites designated as Special Conservation Areas, Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, and Nature Reserves etc., and species of conservation concern e.g. hen harriers.	District Conservation Officer (098)49996
Vincent Wildlife Trust	Promote conservation of bats and other mammals; provide information and advice; organise walks and talks on bats	katemcaney@vwt.org.uk www.mammals-in-ireland.ie/
BirdWatch Ireland, Mayo Branch	Promote conservation of birds and their habitats; conduct surveys and organise birdwatching events in Mayo	www.birdwatchmayo.org/ birdwatchmayo@yahoo.com
Irish Wildlife Trust (IWT), Mayo Branch	IWT is a conservation charity committed to raising awareness of Ireland’s natural heritage and protecting it for future generations.	Contact Seán Murphy at IWTmayo@gmail.com
Mayo Naturalists’ Field Club	The aim of the Field Club is to promote an interest in all aspects of natural heritage.	www.mayococo.ie/en/Services/Heritage/MayoNaturalistsFieldClub/

Appendix 1: List of participants

	Name
1	Mike Devaney
2	Anne Peyton
3	Eileen McGrath
4	Kieran Tarpey
5	Rita Flatley
6	Christina Coakley
7	Patrick Lenehan
8	Kathy Gallagher