

# The Clare Champion



## Awards recognise sustainable tourism work

NORTH Clare tourism operators and businesses were recognised for their work in the development of sustainable tourism when the 2014 Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark Life Awards Night took place last Thursday at Hotel Doolin.

The Boghill Centre won three awards, while the Burren Nature Sanctuary and Sea View House both won two awards.

The annual awards scheme recognises achievements and examples of good practice in the development of sustainable tourism throughout the Burren region. Tourism operators and businesses competed in two separate award schemes, namely the Geopark Sustainable Code of Practice for Tourism Awards and Burren Ecotourism Network Member Awards.

Carol Gleeson, project manager, Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark, which itself has recorded numerous award successes for promoting sustainable tourism, commented, "These awards help to promote and give official recognition to the wide range of fantastic work that is ongoing throughout the Burren through sustainable business practices. The awards also help us to monitor progress in relation to the Geopark Sustainable Code of Practice for Tourism programme.

"Since 2008, Clare County Council has been working in the Burren to develop a truly sustainable tourism destination that gives direct benefits to the local community, promotes and celebrates local culture and produce, preserves the environment and provides a great experience for our visitors. This has been achieved with great support and partnership from local



■ Mary Birmingham, Tony Kirby, Darra and Niall Hughes, Chris O'Neill, John Ryan and Ger Dollard at the awards.

Photograph by Philippe Goebeau

communities and businesses and agencies responsible for tourism and conservation and local development. These awards reward those who have contributed to this process." Ms Gleeson added.

The Boghill Centre was named the sustainable business of the year and won the energy management award in the GeoparkLIFE awards, as well as picking up a further award for member of the year in the Burren Ecotourism Network Member awards.

The Burren Nature Sanctuary won two GeoparkLIFE awards in the categories of Visitor Interpretation and Leave No Trace, with the award for contribution to conservation going to the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience.

Sea View House won the code of practice champion and the visitor communication awards, with the outdoor visitor communication accolade bestowed on Tony Kirby of Heart of Burren Walks.

Burren Free Range Pork took home the waste management title, while Café Linnalla scooped the water management award. Kilshanny House was recognised for its contribution to community and St Tola's Goat Farm was acknowledged for its promotion of sustainable tourism. Doolin Hostel won an award for best improvement.

In the Burren Ecotourism Network Member awards, which were voted for on the night, the Burren Food trail won the committee of the year award, while Martin Waldron of Cragmoher House was named Networker of the Year.

## The Clare Champion 2014



[www.burren.ie](http://www.burren.ie)

# Burren Tourism Awards take place in Doolin

By Mark Dunphy - December 8, 2014



**The 2014 Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark Life Awards Night took place on Thursday night (4 December) at Hotel Doolin.**

The annual awards scheme recognises achievements and examples of good practice in the development of sustainable tourism throughout the Burren region.

Tourism operators and businesses competed in two separate award schemes, namely the Geopark Sustainable Code of Practice for Tourism Awards and Burren Ecotourism Network Member Awards.

Carol Gleeson, Project Manager, Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark, which itself has recorded numerous award successes for promoting sustainable tourism, commented: "These awards help to promote and give official recognition to the wide range of fantastic work that is ongoing throughout the Burren through sustainable business practices. The awards also help us to monitor progress in relation to the Geopark Sustainable Code of Practice for Tourism programme."

"Since 2008, Clare County Council has been working in the Burren to develop a truly sustainable tourism destination that gives direct benefits to the local community, promotes and celebrates local culture and produce, preserves the environment and provides a great experience for our visitors. This has been achieved with great support and partnership from local communities and businesses and agencies responsible for tourism and conservation and local development. These awards reward those who have contributed to this process," Ms. Gleeson added.

#### **GeoparkLIFE Awards:**

Visitor Interpretation – Burren Nature Sanctuary Leave No Trace, Burren Nature Sanctuary Contribution to Conservation, Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience Visitor Communication, Sea View House

Visitor Communication (Outdoor) – Tony Kirby, Heart of Burren Walks Energy Management, Boghill Centre Waste Management, Burren Free Range Pork Water Management, Cafe Linnalla

Contribution to Community – Kilshanny House Promotion of Sustainable Tourism, St Tola's Goat Farm Best Improvement, Doolin Hostel Sustainable Business of the Year, Boghill Centre.

#### **Burren Ecotourism Network Member Awards:**

Committee of the Year – Burren Food Trail

Networker of the Year – Martin Waldron (Cragmoher House)

Member of the Year – Boghill Centre



# The Clare Herald

# December 8<sup>th</sup> 2014



[www.burren.ie](http://www.burren.ie)

## Three times' a charm for Kilfenora Boghill Centre

Andrew Hamilton  
ahamilton@clarepeople.ie

THE Boghill Centre in Kilfenora was the big winner of this year's Burren and Cliffs of Moher GeoparkLIFE Award which took place over the weekend. The centre took three of the 15 awards on offer on the night, including the main prizes in both the GeoparkLIFE awards and the Burren Ecotourism award.

The annual awards recognise achievement of Burren businesses in the development of sustainable tourism in the region. There were two sets of awards up for grabs on

the night with eleven GeoparkLIFE awards and three awards from the Burren Ecotourism Network.

The Boghill Centre took the overall Sustainable Business of the Year award and the Energy Management award in the GeoparkLIFE awards while also being crowned Member of the Year by the Burren Ecotourism Network.

It was also a good night for the Burren Nature Sanctuary who won the Visitor Interpretation and Leave No Trace awards, while the Cliffs of Moher Experience, Sea View House, Heart of Burren Walks, Burren Free Range Pork, Cafe Linnalla, Kil-

shanny House, St Tola's Goat Farm, Doolin Hostel, Burren Food Trail and Martin Waldron of Cragmoher House, all won awards.

"These awards help to promote and give official recognition to the wide range of fantastic work that is ongoing throughout the Burren through sustainable business practices. The awards also help us to monitor progress in relation to the Geopark Sustainable Code of Practice for Tourism programme," said Carol Gleeson of the Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark.

"Since 2008, Clare County Council has been working in the Burren to develop a truly sustainable tourism destination that gives direct benefits to the local community, promotes and celebrates local culture and produce, preserves the environment and provides a great experience for our visitors. "This has been achieved with great support and partnership from local communities and businesses and agencies responsible for tourism and conservation and local development. These awards reward those who have contributed to this process."

Left:  
Mary Birmingham, Tony Kirby, Darra and Niall Hughes, Chris O'Neill, John Ryan and Ger Dollard at the awards.



## The Burren celebrates eco-friendliness

Ongoing work to keep two of Ireland's best-loved natural attractions in pristine 'green' condition has been recognised at a double awards ceremony in County Clare.

The 2014 Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark LIFE Awards have marked sustainability achievements throughout the Burren, the rugged Irish moonscape that has lured travellers for centuries and which is home to the magnificent Cliffs of Moher.

The remarkable landscape in the wild western edge of the country has become a must-see destination for eco travellers, while seeing the Cliffs of Moher is one of top things to do on a visit to Ireland.

A total of 15 individuals, organisations and businesses netted prizes at the awards night, which celebrated the commitment of local communities and businesses to sustainable experiences, activities and amenities in the region.

Among the winners was Burren Nature Sanctuary, an interpretive centre for the flora and fauna of the area that features an exhibition, nature walks, indoor and outdoor play areas, education activities, a limestone rock garden, artisan cafe and farm shop.

The Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience, one of the best known discovery points along the Wild Atlantic Way, took home a contribution to conservation award, while St Tola's Goat Farm, known internationally for its premium organic goat's cheese, scooped a promotion of sustainable tourism prize.

Formed in the Ice Age, the austere beautiful moonscape of the Burren is scattered with ancient dolmens, vast cave complexes, spectacular cliffs, surf beaches and sculpted mountains and is also legendary as a vibrant hub for Irish traditional music and good food.

The wild, welcoming terrain is one of the wonders of the world and was given the prestigious UNESCO Global Geopark status in 2011 in recognition of its geological heritage and importance.

The Cliffs of Moher are 8km long 214m high and provide amazing views of the Aran Islands, Galway Bay and mountains in Connemara.

Enjoying the area can range from walking on a cliff edge with a guide whose family has farmed the land for centuries, to surfing or kayaking along the Flaggy Shore, to sleeping in a family-run guesthouse or hotel, to chatting to the locals while waiting for a ceili to begin.

All of experiences in the Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark can be enjoyed safe in the knowledge that the area is committed to conservation and environmental protection.

[www.ireland.com](http://www.ireland.com)  
[www.burrengeopark.ie](http://www.burrengeopark.ie)  
[www.burrenecotourism.com](http://www.burrenecotourism.com)

