# Stakeholder engagement and collaborative management in the Burren *Brendan Dunford*



The Burren - a 'High Nature Value' (**HNV**) farmed landscape... 72,000ha in size, c.30,000ha SAC, managed by 450-500 farm families.



...with a deeply interwoven cultural heritage: 'One vast memorial to bygone cultures' 'densely settled and intensively farmed' some 4,500 years ago (Jones, 1997). In recent decades, the rate and scale of change in farming has outstripped the Burren's ability to adjust, resulting in a growing imbalance between farming and nature.

When **under**-farmed or **over**-farmed, the Burren's heritage becomes eroded.



**Farming intensity** 

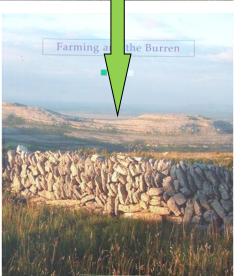
**Our focus – restoring the balance between farming and the Burren** 

#### 1. Reframing the Narrative – community as a (sustainable) conservation resource



The Impact of Agricultural Practices on the Natural Heritage of the Burren Uplands, Co. Clare

James Brendan Dunford





'... the majority of local people have not taken ownership of their own heritage, both cultural and natural... is once more imposed 'from above' and 'from outside (O'Rourke, 2001).

#### 2. Co-creating Solutions and earning trust



Scientists and farmers co-creating solutions to deal with specific local issues: e.g. supplementary feed

Farming for Conservation in the Burren

A Guide to Feeding Cattle on Burren Winterages BURRENLIFE BEST PRACTICE GUIDE No. 4



#### Joint Winner 'Best Ever' LIFE Nature Project in Europe

- 3. Rewarding positive management (paying for ecosystem services)
- The Burren Programme pays farmers for Ecosystem Services on a 'results-basis'

and also provides funding for **actions** to help address underlying environmental problems

Annual performance payment

+ fund to address the environmental problems on farm

"RBAPS: 'Result Based' Agri Environment Payment Schemes"



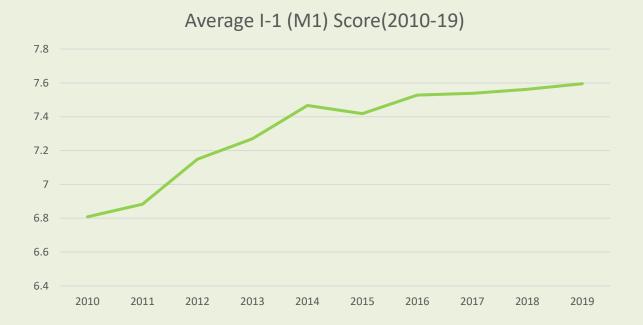
RBAPS approach helps to improve farmer engagement, value for money and environmental impact.

4. Providing training and support at a local level



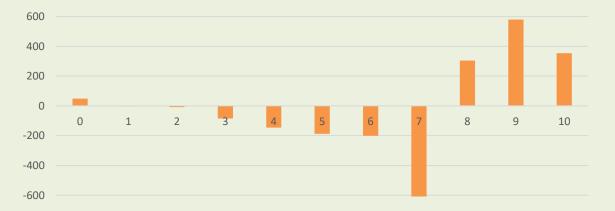


#### **IMPACT**: Environmental (extracts from BP 2020 report)



#### Substantial improvement in high-scoring farmland

Difference in area (ha) per score, Y10(2019) vs Y1(2010)



## Conservation infrastructure completed since 2010

<b>Encroaching Scrub</b>	320ha (1.4%
removed	of BP area)
Scrub pathways	205.5km
Stone wall repair	127.5km
Wire fencing	50km
Gate installation	844
Water Troughs	530
Feed Troughs	221
New Access Tracks	28.7km
Upgrade Access	37.4km
Tracks	
Habitat Restoration	161
Jobs	

## All work *co-funded by farmers.*

Must apply to get funding (currently 60% of farmers have undertaken work) An additional, not an alternative, product, the price of which is guaranteed for 5 years.

### Improvements in farming infrastructure (and cultural heritage)



#### 5. Reconnecting people with their place and their role in caring for it

burrenbeotrust connecting people and place



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## Community wellbeing initiatives

burrenbeotrust connecting people and place

#### **Community Engagement:**

- Better understanding between farmers and public
- Stronger, more connected communities
- New business opportunities e.g. farm tours
- Better outcomes for biodiversity and heritage



#### The need for a new, more inclusive, positive narrative...and for peer learning

'To change the world, let's start by changing the way we talk about it, and let's highlight those initiatives that are having a positive impact on people & the planet, to renew our confidence and spur us into action' (Sparknews)



A series of walks for the **Farming For Nature** farmers to showcase their contribution to nature and good farming practices on their land

SAT 7 MARCH 2PM



in the man

FARMING FOR **nature** 

#### WALKS ARE £5 TO ATTEND & YOU HAVE TO REGISTER IN ADVANCE AS SPACES ARE LIMITED.

SAT 28 MARCH 11AM SAT 25 APRIL 2PM SAT 9 MAY 2PM SAT 16 MAY 2PM SAT 30 MAY 2PM SAT 6 JUNE 2PM SAT 20 JUNE 2PM AT 27 JUNE 2PM SAT 18 JULY 2PM SAT 25 JULY 2PM SAT 1 AUGUST 2PM SAT 8 AUGUST 2PM SAT 15 AUGUST 2PM SAT 22 AUGUST 2PM SAT 5 SEPTEMBER 2PM SAT 19 SEPTEMBER 11AM SAT 10 October 2pm Edmund Joyce, Co.Ca

Registration and more information at buytickets.at/farmingfornature



Bord Bia





Thede events have been jointly supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine and the National Parks and Wildlife Sorvice. Community as a resource – management, knowledge, education...



Robert Creswell Collection © Kinvara Community Council

Recognition of this resource: Burren Winterage included in register of Intangible Cultural Heritage









#### **Challenges:** mass tourism, limited infrastructure, resources, plans, enforcement ...









#### Designations important but...

#### 2019

NMS Permissions

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PMP2

Name: Thomas J. Guthrie Address: Teeskagh, Kilnaboy, Ennis, Co. Clare Phone No: 086 8398803, (065) 7089134

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PROCESSING OF PERMISSIONS AND CONSENTS FOR WORKS CARRIED OUT UNDER BURREN PROGRAMME



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Cleaning out any s	spring using a machine e.g. digger or tractor bucket	Y		1	
Walling off open s	spring with cement, concrete, blocks etc to retain water	Y		1	
Creating new acce	ess track for vehicles <1km	Y	Y	1	
Drilling into limes	tone for fencing (new or old fence)			1	
New livestock har	ndling facilities	Y		1	
Name of Assessor	r				
Date					
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Include: habitat ty	ye and if relevant condition. Describe impacts of the Jab briefly.				
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NPWS consultatio					

io not delete or change plz.

Name: Thomas J. Guthrie							
Address: Teeskagh, Kilnaboy, Ennis, Co. Clare							
Phone No: 086 8398803, (065) 7089134							
This assessment includes screening for:	Task		Task		Task		
Planning and Development Regulations screening for investments not exceeding Co. Co. thresholds.	Yes/No/ n/a	Comment	Yes/No/ n/a	Comment	Yes/No/ n/a	Comment	
Does the investment exceed the thresholds outlined in Table 6? (of the permissions document - see above list).							
Are there any public safety issues, traffic hazards or obstructions to the view of roads users arising from the development?							
Will the investment adversely impact the sight lines of existing buildings including neighbouring dwelling houses? i.e. for silos							
Does the investment require a new or wider access to a public road?							
Does the investment affect a building feature or site listed for preservation in the							
development plan or draft local development plan?							
Will the investment obstruct a public right of way?							
Is the investment in a special amenity area?	No		No		No		
Is the investment at or near a protected structure?							
For new trackways, are there any alternative routes available than that proposed,							
with less impact, taking into account archaeological, habitat and other local site considerations?							
For fencing investments are there any slope, substrate, local conditions,							
construction methods which have not being addressed appropriately?							
NPWS Passed							
NMS Passed							
Name of Assessor Date:							

#### An Chomhairle Oidhreachta The Heritage Council



An Roinn Cultúir, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht



## Field Monuments Advisor Programme

X checked by

Is it Low to

No Impact?

Code

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#### Working with farmers - some lessons I have learned

The value of deep listening – to build trust, understanding and knowledge – and a mistrust of external 'experts'

The importance of understanding why people do things, rather than blaming them for doing them.

The central, and potentially positive role of farming in sustaining heritage, and our collective failure to harness it.

The depth and strength of the connection between farmers and their land, their livestock, their community, their 'place'.



The importance of money in influencing decision-making, but the realisation that it's not the only motivation.



The importance of a strong evidence base in making change.

The power of partnership and the disaster of division.

All farms and farmers are different, this complexity is challenging but it's what makes our countryside special.

#### Summary

Farm families (and the broader community) are a conservation 'resource'. To use this resource we need to influence the farmer's *pocket, head and heart*:

- Clearly explain what it is we want farmers to deliver on their land and why.
- Reward and acknowledge farmers who deliver what we want to do so.
- Provide farmers with practical, relevant (local?) technical support.
- Do better at making farmers feel part of the solution not the problem









An Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta, Gnóthaí Réigiúnacha, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta

> epartment of Arts, Heritage, eqional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs