

Working with Communities for Cross Border Development

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Co. Monaghan

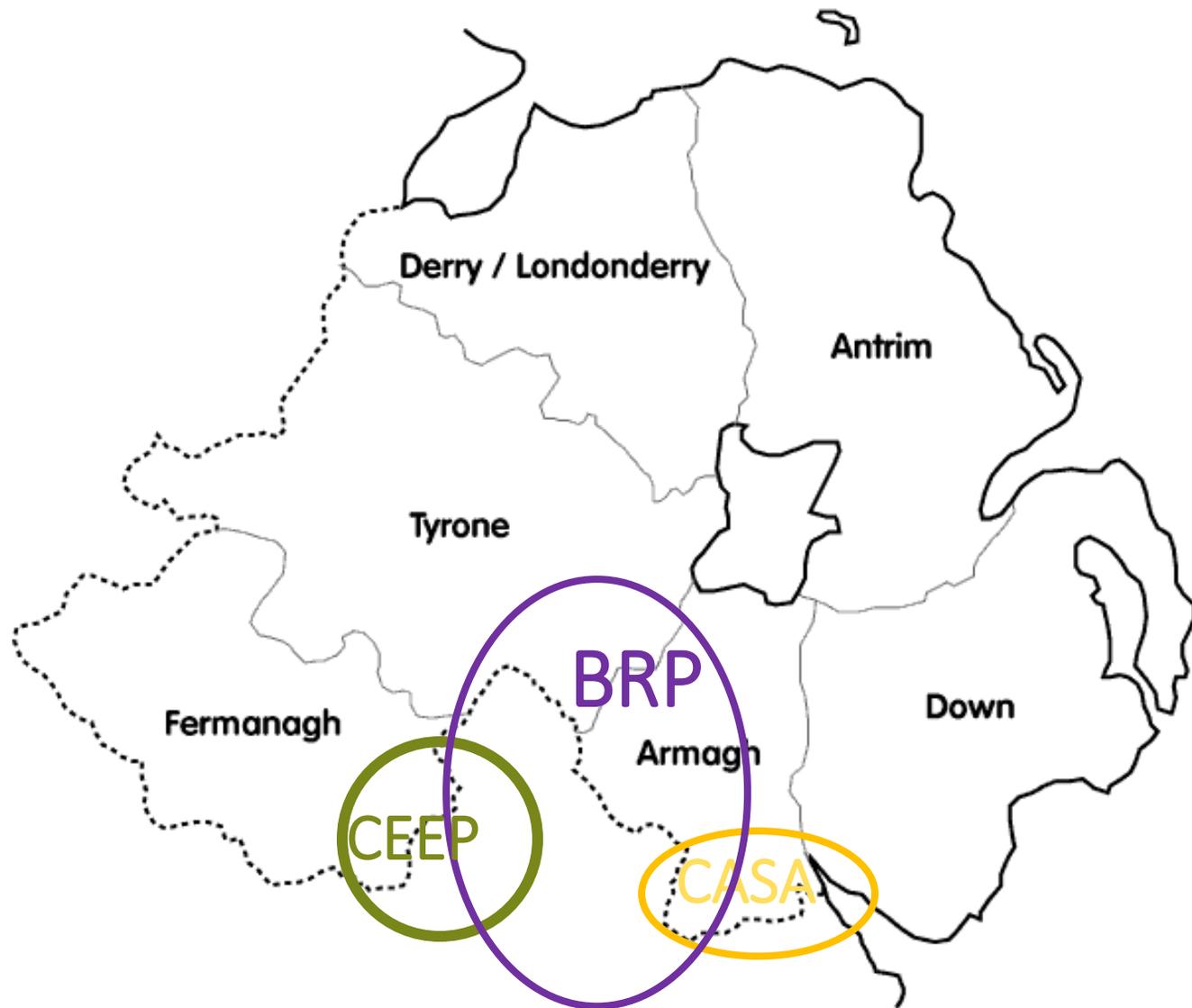
- the longest length of border of any county
- surrounded by Northern Ireland
- our economic well being is linked to that of NI, esp for tourism



Figure 1. Map of Primary and Secondary Greenway Routes

There's an interdependence to our two jurisdictions developing for tourism when you consider how people travel around the island when on holiday

The strategic importance of Monaghan's location in the development of greenway routes in Northern Ireland – Priority routes for development identified in NI Greenways Strategy 2016



Cross border partnership going back many years

Blackwater Regional Partnership (BRP)

- Monaghan Co Co with:
- Armagh City & DC
- Dungannon & South Tyrone BC

Castleblayney & South Armagh (CASA)

- Newry & Mourne DC

Clones Erne East Partnership (CEEP)

- Clones Town Council with
- Erne East borough of Fermanagh DC



Council and
Community
working together
to improve the
quality of life for all
living in the area

Economic, social, cultural projects

Large scale infrastructure

Building of identity/ branding

Recreational, tourism and
community amenities

Taking care of the environment –
eg cross border river basins,
Natura 2000 sites

Significant levels of funding
secured for border communities

Case Study:
Supporting the
Communities of
Sliabh Beagh

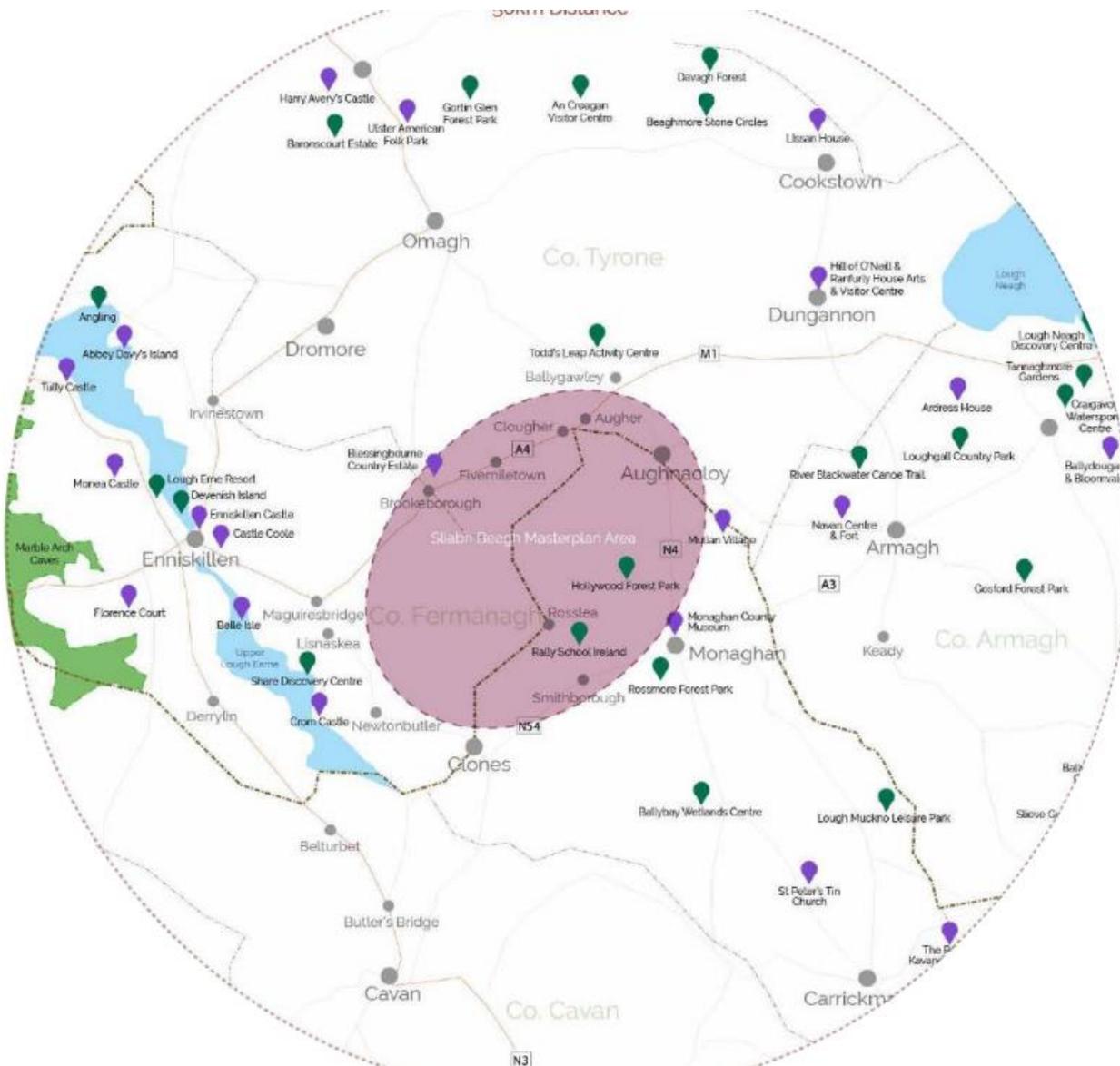
Began life as a CEEP initiative

Identified that there had been a reduction in cross border community activity since the cessation of PEACE II funding

Invited reps from the communities across the mountain to meet with CEEP to discuss how we could support them

Facilitated discussion led to a document suggesting possible ways forward

The path chosen by all was to commission a Masterplan for the development of Sliabh Beagh



Sliabh Beagh

An uplands area which straddles the border

Takes in parts of Cos. Fermanagh, Tyrone and Monaghan

250 square miles of blanket bog, forestry and upland grazing

Special Area of Conservation and a Special Protection Area for several species, including the Hen Harrier. One of the few places in Ireland where the curlew has been sighted nesting in 2020.

One of only 9 water sources in Ireland remaining with pristine water quality status

8 village communities scattered over a sparsely populated landscape, presenting unique challenges, but also opportunities



Published 2018 following over a year of consultation with the communities living on the mountain

1

A Haven for Wildlife

Cherish and Enhance our natural environment

The primary asset of Sliabh Beagh is our natural landscape of bogs, lakes, woodlands and pastures. We must continue to value and protect these places for future generations, while finding opportunities to enhance them.



2

A Great Place to Live and Work

Support and grow quality of life and economic development

To be sustainable, Sliabh Beagh must flourish as a place in which to live, work and prosper. Continued investment is required in facilities and connections, providing for existing and attracting new residents and businesses.



3

A wonderful place to visit and explore

Grow the visitor economy and establish Sliabh Beagh as a uniquely authentic destination

We are proud of Sliabh Beagh and will work to welcome more people to join us in exploring its natural beauty, cultural curiosities, events and adventures. In doing so we will shape an authentic destination and experience.



Aims



**Protect, manage
and enhance
natural habitats**

The natural habitats of Sliabh Beagh and the wildlife they support are a special feature of this landscape. They must continue to be protected, managed appropriately and enhanced where possible, with the aim of sustaining and increasing populations of key species.



**Strengthen networks
and infrastructure**

Improving the movement of people, vehicles and information to, from and around Sliabh Beagh will be an essential component of its increased success as a place to live, work and visit. The infrastructure for transport, communications and communities must be strengthened to sustain and grow residential and business populations.



**Define and
develop place identity**

Sliabh Beagh has a unique identity and culture, shaped by its landscape and history, which has been expressed through language and the arts. To preserve and enrich the shared place identity of Sliabh Beagh, it must be further understood, defined and developed, increasing meaning to all who live there and visit.



**Increase tourism
infrastructure and
capacity**

Those who visit Sliabh Beagh are met with a warm welcome and a fascinating landscape to explore. As a key part of our economy, we will seek to increase visitor numbers through effective promotion.

Objectives

10 THEMES

A) PARTNERSHIP & ADMINISTRATION

B) IDENTITY & PROMOTION

C) CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

D) DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

E) GATEWAYS

F) ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

G) PATHS & SIGNAGE

H) DESTINATIONS & EXPERIENCES

I) EVENTS & FESTIVALS

J) HOSPITALITY & ACCOMMODATION

Each
Theme has
a list of
Projects

An Action Plan identified the individual projects, the role of each partner and the scale of investment required

	REGENERATION PLAN PROJECTS	PRIORITY	LEAD DELIVERY AGENTS	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	COST BRACKET	
G	PATHS & SIGNAGE	1) Detailed condition survey	I	LG	Env & Sports	€€
		2) Path design guide	I	LG	Env & Sports	€
		3) Phased improvement programme	VH	LG	Env & Sports & Comm	€€€€
		4) Wayfinding Strategy	H	Comm	TA & CG	€
		5) Signage & Public Art (inc Sliabh Beagh waymarkers)	H	LB	Comm & TA & CG	€€
H	DESTINATIONS & EXPERIENCES	1) Conservation Management Plan to identify site specific requirements	H	LG	Comm & Hist & Env & Arts & Sports & TA	€€
		2) Development & Coordination of Activities & Experiences	H	Comm	All	€
		3) International Dark Skies Certification	H	TA	Comm & TA & CG & Env	€
		4) Light pollution control	H	LG	TA & CG & Edu	€€
		5) Development of astronomical infrastructure & activities	M	LB / Env	LG & CG	€€€
I	EVENTS & FESTIVALS	1) Annual Calendar & Promotion	VH	Comm & LG	Comm & TA	€
		2) Sliabh Beagh Event Development Initiative	H	Comm	Comm & TA	€
		3) Cross-border Walking Festival	VH	Sport	LG & TA & CG	€€
J	HOSPITALITY & ACCOMMODATION	1) Community & Private Sector Development Support	VH	TA	CG & TA & LB	€€
		2) Coordination & Networking	I	TA	LB & Comm	€

KEY

PRIORITY

IMMEDIATE - I
VERY HIGH - VH
HIGH - H
MEDIUM - M

LEAD DELIVERY AGENTS & KEY STAKEHOLDERS

LG = Local Governments
CG = Central Government
TA = Tourism Agencies
LB = Local Businesses
Comm = Community groups

Env = Environmental groups
Hist = Historical groups
Edu = Education providers
Sports = Sport and activity groups
Arts = Arts and cultural groups

COST BRACKET

€ = 0 - 20,000
€€ = 20,000 - 100,000
€€€ = 100,000 - 500,000
€€€€ = 500,000 +

Implementation

Creation of an identity for the area



Bith – son of Noah, sent forth to repopulate the world after the Flood, after whom Sliabh Beagh is named



Creation of viewing points, car parks, picnic areas, with funding from Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)



ACTIVITY

Battle Archery



ACTIVITY

Bike Hire



ACTIVITY

Cycling



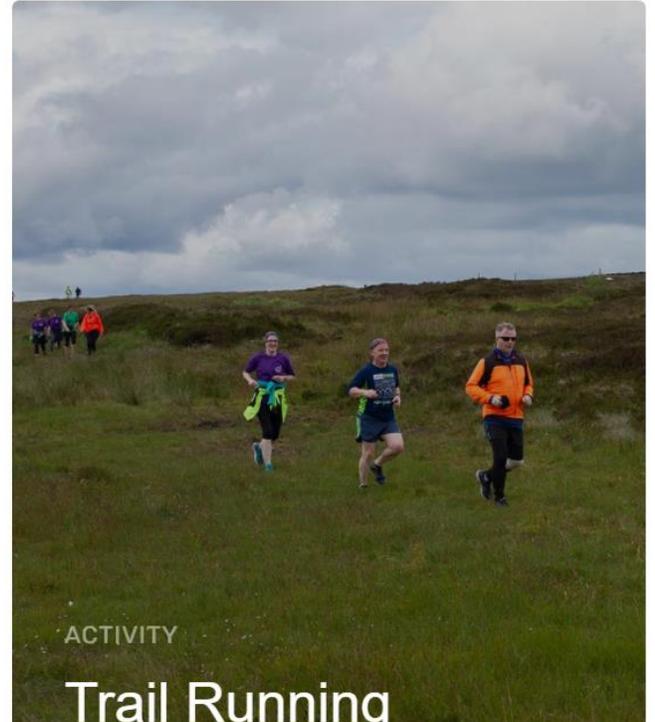
ACTIVITY

Orienteering



ACTIVITY

Walking



ACTIVITY

Trail Running

Trail upgrades & supports to new tourism businesses (LEADER)



Restoration of the blanket bog & conservation of wetlands habitat as part of a network of sites participating in a €9.5 million INTERREG IVA project



Currently Working on

Putting new Partnership in place to drive progress

- Mid Ulster Council (new to the project)
- Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
- Monaghan Municipal District Council
(taking over from Clones MD)
- Local community reps
- Preparing a Tourism Action Plan to flesh out the ideas in the Masterplan
- Upgrading the trails & seeking accreditation with National Trails Office

Challenges

Changes to Local Authority Structures – north and south

- we've had to build relationships again from scratch
- some of our new partners are not so familiar with working cross border

Different funding structures, rules and priorities between north and south

Difference in timing between calls for funding in NI and Republic make it difficult to co-ordinate the projects on the ground.

Different procurement rules and building codes can make the practicalities of delivering a capital project on a cross border basis difficult, but where there's a will, there's always a way