

The settlements at The Bay Glenariffe and Waterfoot, viewed from the shoreline at Cushendall

The Gleann Airbh Plan

The Gleann Airbh Plan - GLENARIFFE & WATERFOOT VILLAGE PLAN - JULY 2007 : REV. OCT 2007, FEB 2008 & JUN 2008 MOYLE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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GLENARIFFE & WATERFOOT VILLAGE PLAN

JULY 2007: REVISED OCTOBER 2007, FEBRUARY 2008 & JUNE 2008

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1.0 Introduction

Moyle District Council secured funding under Sharing a Vision for Our Coastline – Coastal Village Improvement Programme to undertake a series of environmental improvement works in Waterfoot, Co Antrim. The project was part financed by the European Union through the Interreg IIIA Programme managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by the East Border Region Interreg IIIA Partnership and Moyle District Council and was part of an overall scheme involving eleven villages spread along the coastlines of Co Antrim, Down and Louth.

1.1 A Note about Spelling

Early discussions at public meetings indicated disagreement on the spelling of the name of the area. Agreement was reached on the name of the district in its Irish spelling - Gleann Airbh – and it was then agreed to use the English version spelt Glenariffe. Certain maps, locally named bodies and other material used in the preparation of the document refer to Glenarriffe, in which cases the spelling has not been altered.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this village plan is twofold – firstly to set out the broad vision for the future of the area as conceived at the residents' meetings and secondly to facilitate some improvements which can be carried out during the period June 2007 – June 2008 using the available funding. Previous examples of local communities influencing planning include designations of Areas of Townscape Character or Conservation Areas with specific criteria which steer development. Additionally the creation of, for example, a new village commercial centre has been achieved by informing the Planning Service of the residents' concerns and wishes, thereby enabling development to be steered towards meeting these legitimate local interests.

3.0 Methodology

Moyle District Council initiated a series of well advertised community meetings in Waterfoot. These meetings have dealt with issues which residents have considered important in the district, identifying problems and opportunities for improvements. Each meeting has included a report on progress towards defining

- the type and shape of the plan and
- the future organisational capacity of the area, including both Council and local people's roles and responsibilities.

A Draft Plan was produced in July 2007, including the concept of developing a "Handbook" which will provide a continuing record of actions and progress into the future. The draft plan was accepted in principle and the Handbook concept was approved as the appropriate methodology for continuing the work beyond the production of the plan document. The draft plan was substantially revised and proposals grouped and streamlined following discussions with GIG in June 2008.

In parallel with the community meetings held in Waterfoot, the existing Glenariff Development Group and Glenariff Community Association continue to meet. Reports to the meetings have indicated that the Development Group wishes to disband because of a lack of interested people willing to work voluntarily for the better future of the area. The Glenariff Development Group and Glenariff Community Association have produced a community survey and the results of this are included as an appendix to this Plan.

The author of this plan, Arthur Acheson of The Boyd Partnership Chartered Architects LLP, attended the meeting of the Glenariff Development Group which discussed the community survey results. The priorities of that group, as expressed during the meeting, are the provision of a community notice board in Waterfoot and the promotion of greater opportunities for young people in the area.

Various suggestions have been made which relate to the operation of the groups in parallel – the constituted Glenariff Development Group and Glenariff Community Association and the community planning meetings group, which has now become a constituted group working for the future of the area and known as Glenariffe Improvement Group.

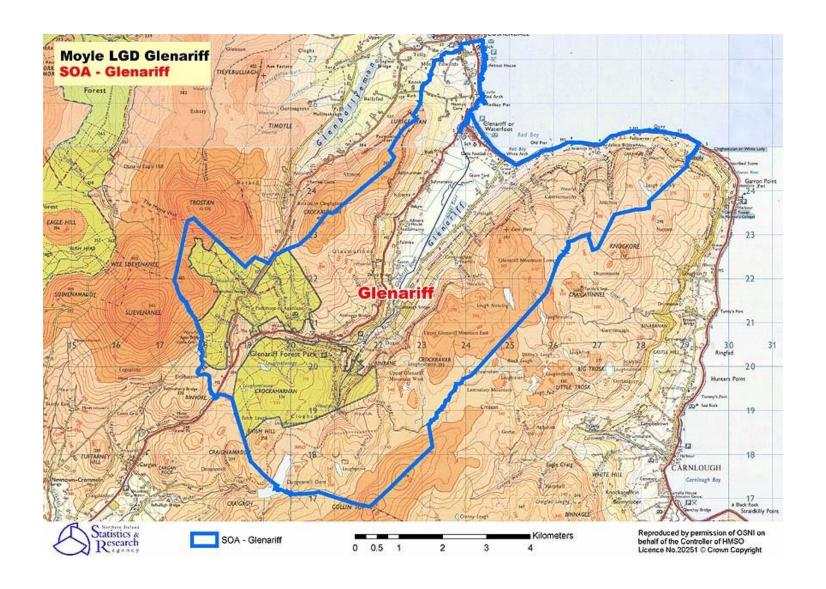
Moyle District Council encourages constituted community groups by start-up funding and annual financial assistance.

Future independent initiatives by separate groups in Glenariffe are possible, but it is recognised that there will be benefit in regular communication and possible co-operation on shared projects. Suggestions of a local newsletter, a website, shared meetings or perhaps a shared annual general meeting have been made, but no decision has yet been reached.

The Plan is as much about the creation and adoption of a future management / communication system as about prescribed outcomes.

4.0 Physical Context

The Queen of the Glens, as Glenariffe is known, was formed by glacial action upon rock of volcanic origin. It sweeps in a classic "U" valley formation to the sea at Red Bay, so called because here the volcanic rock gives way to the red sandstone of the coastline. At the foot of the valley, where the Glenariffe River enters the sea, lie the small village of Waterfoot and less than a kilometre south, the even smaller settlement known as Glenariffe Bay. An early meeting agreed that the village settlements and glen are in effect a single working unit. The definition of the area was agreed at a meeting held on 8th February 2007. It closely matches the "SOA" (Super Output Area) as presented by NISRA (Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency) and is indicated on the map below.



5.0 Social Context

The social history of the settlement is well described in the 1997 book "A Glimpse at Glenariffe" written by Robert Sharpe and Charles McAllister (Impact Printing, Ballycastle & Coleraine).

Memories of a busy tourist destination in the 1960s are being rekindled by the current high numbers of visitors to the area, encouraged by the development of acceptable devolved government and the 2007 political settlement in Northern Ireland.

In addition to the meetings being held with the community planning group, meetings were held with children at the primary school and the youth group in Waterfoot to seek views of younger people in the area.

Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005 figures for Glenariff are available in Appendix 1.

The Community Survey produced by Glenariff Development Group and Glenariff Community Association forms Appendix 2.

6.0 The shape of the settlement

The geographical layout of the area is a clear reflection of its historical development, with the separation of Waterfoot, The Bay Glenariffe and Glenariffe rural settlements. The settlement pattern is unusual with the church, church hall, GAA pitch, play area and a small number of houses at The Bay Glenariffe separated from the village of Waterfoot by some 1000 metres of undeveloped land. The geographical layout was not perceived by those attending meetings as unusual or problematic. People are used to the shape of the place and have not expressed any desire for change.

Attendees at meetings felt that the three areas worked together as a single unit in spite of the undeveloped frontage gap, giving a range of choices for people to live. It was also accepted that Planning Policy regulates development between the settlements, effectively retaining the separation between the existing settlements with no more houses being permitted along the seafront or in the rural area unless they meet the policies for development in the coastal and/or green belt/countryside policy areas.

The GAA pitch is situated at the small settlement, The Bay Glenariffe; although it is a little removed from the Waterfoot village centre, it is perceived locally as an integral part of the Waterfoot and Glenariffe area.

People from The Bay Glenariffe settlement use the shop in Waterfoot. It is also recognised that the larger town of Cushendall is intimately connected with Waterfoot and Glenariffe; many events take place in Cushendall and local residents are regular users of many of the facilities of Cushendall.

7.0 Coastal Erosion

The Department of Environment, Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) takes an interest in this aspect and has prevented the Pitch & Putt development proposal. It is understood, however, that there is no specific programme of coastal protection in place.

8.0 Housing

Within the area there is a reasonable range of housing choices. Values of individual dwellings vary by a factor of about 5, indicating a wide range which should enable people in various categories to be catered for. Informal valuations by local people at the time of meeting ranged from £110,000 to £550,000. Examples would include lower cost older housing, mainly in terraced or semi-detached forms on smaller sites in the original part of the village of Waterfoot, through higher priced "new-build" (mainly detached) houses in developments in Waterfoot and Glenariffe Bay, generally with increased garden space to individual houses, often on large sites, some distance from the village settlements and usually sited within the land designated as Green Belt all the way from the beach to the top of the glen.

Glenvale, Bayview Park and Warren Park are perceived as having a number (something less that 25%) of second homes, occupied mainly at holiday and weekend periods.

9.0 Existing Groups in the Area

Part of the Action Plan has been the introduction of an operating manual for the continuing management of Glenariffe. The Operating Manual – **The Gleann Airbh Handbook** – will be developed by GIG and will include information on each project and on the roles of the various statutory, voluntary, community and private organisations who operate or wish to operate in the area. In compiling the handbook and implementing the plan, the following local groups may have a part to play:

- **9.1** Glenariffe Youth Club (Bay Hall)
- 9.2 Bowling Club
- 9.3 Glenariff Community Group
- 9.4 Glenariff Development Group
- 9.5 Primary School
- 9.6 Other Groups
 - Bingo Groups etc ceased to function as they didn't generate sufficient continuing interest
 - SPREAD 9-10 year olds
 - History Group Glens

9.7 Potential for additional youth work

- It was noted that there is a shortage of groups dealing with younger age children (under 14 years).

10.0 Current Planning Framework

Recent developments have been culs de sacs which reflect the Department of the Environment's & Department of Regional Development's guidance notes in respect of road and parking layouts, resulting densities and built forms that were current when the various schemes were granted planning permission. The culs de sacs are therefore essentially independent of the village in type and style. They lack local character and local consistency and reflect standardised solutions of their immediate eras of "permissions". Current design guidance would be more flexible and would encourage greater contextual empathy and coherence in design, together with an emphasis on linkage between developments other than by leaving one development, travelling along the main road and entering another. Waterfoot is a classic case of "piecemeal development according to rule books current at the time". The predominance of culs de sacs in the new developments was noted by the residents represented at the meetings.

The rural roads and linear settlements along them, leading to the glen, were noted as a coherent part of the overall area. Mention was made that such development which may be regarded as typical of the glen has now ceased as a result of "Green Belt" planning policy.

The older section of the village is by contrast densely and closely developed with some new infill housing set on roads and lanes which do not appear to be adopted and are ill-maintained in parts.

11.0 Planning Guidance for the Future

11.1 The Northern Area Plan

The draft Northern Area Plan is currently at the stage of counter objection. Its vision for the future is essentially a conservation approach with very closely drawn "Development Limits" and minimal new sites identified within the limits and none beyond the limits. There are no dramatic changes planned in the new Area Plan. If this plan is adopted, experience shows that development, if it comes to the area, will tend to redevelop gap sites and properties with larger site areas, causing a more dense village environment with little need for government intervention in physical regeneration. The more dense settlement, with higher densities than previously anticipated in the village, should in theory be more sustainable and lead to better facilities such as shops, cafes, restaurants, etc. Unfortunately the draft Area Plan does not attempt to deal with the area as a whole, preferring instead to rely on a raft of "designations" which overlap and confuse in an attempt to protect.

11.2 This Very Local Plan

This very local plan, by contrast, aims to integrate the various aspects of the area into a satisfying and sustainable whole, rather than a series of overlapping designations. This plan recognises the value of the "software of the village" – the people and organisations who keep the lights on – rather than merely the shape of the settlements.

12.0 Improvement Objectives

"Repairing and restoring derelict properties" -





and "Traffic management"

were the most important things to the people who attended the meetings.

During the course of the meetings, 77 separate items were identified as important and following detailed discussions, these were amalgamated and reduced to 15 aspects of village and district improvement which are summarised in the table below. It is believed that each of these proposed improvements represents an achievable objective for the first year of work.

Improvement objective		Actions required	Agencies to be contacted	
1.	Signage	Increase for tourist attractions Consider implications of signature project "Causeway Coastal Route"	DRD Roads Service Moyle District Council NI Tourist Board	
2.	Dereliction	Research how best to remedy	Moyle District Council Building Contro Land & Property Services (Rating) Health & Safety Executive	
3.	Recycle garden waste	Research best means to recycle	Moyle District Council	
4.	Christmas tree	Agree site with private owner in writing Agree insurance requirements & costs Agree electricity supply position Agree electricity metering	Private owner Moyle District Council DRD Roads Service - Streetlighting Division	
5.	Traffic management; road safety; speed limits (incl. speed ramps Warren Pk)	Agree best means to provide convenient parking in the village for residents and visitors Agree road safety proposals including speed limits, traffic calming and enforcement	DRD Roads Service Police Service of Northern Ireland	
6.	Youth drop in centre	Research needs and resources, existing providers, statutory agencies	Youth Club at The Bay NEELB Youth Service Moyle District Council Dept of Education	
7.	Area opposite caves - car / coach park, slip way; bridge to link to village	Seek means to have a sketch scheme prepared for consideration Reconsider and assess Antrim County Council scheme from 1971 for which land was vested but scheme not carried out	Moyle District Council NI Tourist Board	
8.	Lighting – redistribute/ reduce Main St car park lighting; lighting along footpath round to pier	Agree final recommendations Write to statutory agencies with proposals	Moyle District Council DRD Roads Service NI Tourist Board	

9.	Reorganise old toilet block area; toilets at play park/ move play park; floodlighting basketball court	Seek means to have a sketch scheme prepared for consideration Seek to change existing provision which does not match needs	Moyle District Council NI Tourist Board
10.	Address coastal erosion; aim for blue flag beach; address concrete drop at beach entrance	Research criteria for Blue Flag beach Consider "common sense" and technical / engineering solutions to coastal erosion and dangerous drop	Moyle District Council European Union EHS NI Tourist Board
11.	Promote work of Glenariff Improvement Group	Write to all local people to explain the work of the group. Write to statutory and voluntary bodies explaining the group's need to see proposals on any changes before they occur	Moyle District Council NI Tourist Board
12.	River – dirt; maintenance of river walk; flooding at mound area	Confirm responsible owners / agencies	Rivers Agency Moyle District Council Private owners
13.	Anti-social behaviour; quads on beach; behaviour at bus shelter	Observe and record behaviour Identify method of dealing with breaches of good behaviour together with emergency provisions	Police Service of Northern Ireland Moyle District Council – Community Safety
14.	Height barriers at car park are in unsafe condition and may no longer be required	Confirm whether barriers are still perceived to be required and if so, whether there are any alternatives, whether or not camping in the car park is possible and how to create a safe, welcoming car park	Moyle District Council Police Service of Northern Ireland
15.	Encourage visitors to stop in area; provide attractions to stop in village; promote local culture	Prepare a cultural audit of performing arts, feis, community arts, crafts, heritage, history and publications	Glens historical societies Cultural groups Arts and crafts societies Moyle District Council

13.0 Implementation of Improvement Objectives

• Glenariffe Improvement Group (GIG) is a constituted organisation registered with Moyle District Council. Terms of reference and a Constitution which are attached as Appendix 3. GIG is willing to co-ordinate activities in the local area on a continuing basis for the next twelve months, to 30 June 2009.

Enablement – It is proposed that GIG should become the single point of contact for local people, statutory, community, voluntary and private sector initiatives in the local area. It is believed that this will ensure that investments of time and resources will be co-ordinated to provide best value and best results for the area.

Procedures – Successes in the area can be identified and celebrated, procedures maintained and facilities enhanced to ensure that these successes continue and develop in future

Micro-funding: - During the year, Glenariffe Improvement Group (GIG) accepted the need to have money in a "community chest" to fund special small projects, enabling GIG to "micro-manage" on a continuing basis with ongoing cash in a bank account. GIG has been inventive in fundraising – in addition to donations from members, calendars have been printed and sold. There is every confidence that GIG will find means to regularly top up the community chest to ensure continuing viability.

14.0 Traditional Skills

Special skills already noted in the area include gardening, crochet work, traditional Irish language and cultural activities, including ceili; these skills could be acknowledged and developed in the interests of the residents of the local area and visitors.

There may be a way in which these skills can be presented to visitors to the area, through the design of proposed artwork and the availability of crafts and publications for sale in the immediate locality.

A further suggestion for building owners whose properties are currently unused or derelict would be that temporary repairs (including blocking up of windows, etc.) could use artwork to refer to local traditional skills and to views of the natural scenery through photographs or paintings. Insurance issues may need to be addressed..

15.0 Credit / recognition

The group agreed that people who have done good things in the village should be publicly recognised on an annual basis.

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16.0 Good Practice Case Studies

16.1 Celebrating Warren Park

A very positive local initiative was successfully implemented when donations were made from households to help volunteers to tidy the area; the SPREAD group helped last year. This work stopped for a time but volunteers were willing to restart the scheme which was active again in 2007. Some insurance issues may need to be resolved.



The floral displays are visible on entering Waterfoot from The Bay Glenariffe

16.2 Celebrating Beach Watch

An excellent procedure has been established (apparently informally) to deal with the problem of the loss of safety lifebelts on the beach at Waterfoot. Entitled "Beach Watch", this is an arrangement whereby the local people who walk the beach daily act as volunteers to replace any missing lifebelts. Moyle District Council ensures that new lifebelts are supplied to the volunteers on request, so that there is always a replacement lifebelt available in the village. This ensures that the beach is as safe as possible at all times without endless complaints to the Council about missing lifebelts and operates with the goodwill of all concerned to the benefit of all beach users.

17.0

The Gleann Airbh Handbook

Issue No. 3 June 2008

This Issue Editor: Arthur Acheson arthuracheson@hotmail.com

Introduction

The Gleann Airbh Handbook has been designed as a working document. It is available in electronic format and can therefore be easily expanded / amended when more items need attention. When issues have been resolved they can be deleted from the Handbook.

The Handbook could be updated after each meeting so that progress on actions can be monitored and those which need attention can be dealt with by the appropriate local person, in collaboration with the relevant statutory authority.

Each update should carry a new Issue Number and date, together with the name and contact point of the editor of the new Issue.

Availability

An updated copy could be made available on a **Gleann Airbh** website, or at a new e-mail address with passwords, enabling all interested parties to note the current state of each item for action.

Format

This issue of the Gleann Airbh Handbook contains the fifteen Improvement Objectives outlined above and allows for progress to be recorded as work proceeds

Continuity

If regularly updated after each meeting, the Handbook could prove a concise checklist of the state of Glenariffe and Waterfoot village at any time in the future, enabling changes in personnel in the local area to be smoothly accommodated. Recognising that the future administration of the area is still to be determined under the final terms of the Review of Public Administration, and knowing that responsibilities for statutory duties are not yet finalised, the regular updating of the Handbook will enable all concerned to keep in touch with those who are responsible for the various matters of concern and interest in the local community.

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Improvement objective		Actions required	Agencies to be contacted	Lead GIG member to action	Lead statutory agency	Target date	Actual date
1.	Signage	Increase for tourist attractions Consider implications of NITB signature project "Causeway Coastal Route"	DRD Roads Service Moyle District Council NI Tourist Board	action	ugency		
2.	Dereliction	Research how best to remedy	Moyle District Council Building Control Land & Property Services (Rating)				
3.	Recycle garden waste	Research best means to recycle	Health & Safety Executive Moyle District Council				
4.	Christmas tree	Agree site with private owner in writing	Private owner Moyle District Council DRD Roads Service - Streetlighting Division				
		Agree insurance requirements & costs					
		Agree electricity supply position					
		Agree electricity metering					
5.	Traffic management; road safety; speed limits (incl. speed ramps Warren Pk)	Agree best means to provide convenient parking in the village for residents and visitors	DRD Roads Service Police Service of Northern Ireland				
	waiten FK)	Agree road safety proposals including speed limits, traffic calming and enforcement					
6.	Youth drop in centre	Research needs and resources, existing providers, statutory agencies	Youth Club at The Bay NEELB Youth Service Moyle District Council Dept of Education				

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7.	Area opposite caves - car / coach park, slip way;	Seek means to have a sketch scheme prepared for consideration Moyle District Cou NI Tourist Board consideration	
	bridge to link to village	Reconsider and assess Antrim County Council scheme, 1971 for which land was vested but scheme not carried out	
8.	Lighting – redistribute/ reduce Main St car park lighting; lighting along footpath round to pier	Agree final recommendations Write to statutory agencies with proposals	Moyle District Council DRD Roads Service NI Tourist Board
9.	Reorganise old toilet block area; toilets at play park/ move play park; floodlighting basketball court	Seek means to have a sketch scheme prepared for consideration	Moyle District Council NI Tourist Board
		Seek to change existing provision which does not match needs	
10.	Address coastal erosion; aim for	Research criteria for Blue Flag beach	Moyle District Council European Union
blue flag beach; address concrete drop at beach entrance		Consider "common sense" and technical / engineering solutions to coastal erosion and dangerous drop	EHS NI Tourist Board
11.	Promote work of Glenariff	Write to all local people to explain the work of the group.	Moyle District Council NI Tourist Board
	Improvement Group	Write to statutory and voluntary bodies explaining	

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		it occurs	
12.	River – dirt; maintenance of river walk; flooding at mound area	Confirm responsible owners / agencies	Rivers Agency Moyle District Council Private owners
13.	Anti-social behaviour; quads on beach; behaviour at bus shelter	Observe and record behaviour Identify method of dealing with breaches of good behaviour together with emergency provisions	Police Service of Northern Ireland Moyle District Council – Community Safety
14.	Height barriers at car park are in unsafe condition and may no longer be required	Confirm whether barriers are still perceived to be required and if so, whether there are any alternatives, whether or not camping in the car park is possible and how to create a safe, welcoming car park	Moyle District Council Police Service of Northern Ireland
15.	Encourage visitors to stop in area; provide attractions to stop in village; promote local culture	Prepare a cultural audit of performing arts, feis, community arts, crafts, heritage, history and publications	Glens historical societies Cultural groups Arts and crafts societies Moyle District Council

the group's need to see proposals on any work before

List of Contacts for Glenariffe to be updated by GIG

- Local Community Voluntary Organisations
- District Council
- Local branches of Central Government
- Local branches of Community / Voluntary Organisations
- Private Sector Organisations

APPENDIX 1	Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005 figures for Glenariff

Community Survey by Glenariff Development Group and Glenariff Community Association, 2007

APPENDIX 2

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APPENDIX 3	Terms of Reference & Constitution of Glenariffe Improvement Group

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