

1.4.9 Support the planning and implementation of projects in the Slieve Ardagh area

Co-ordinating Partner

Slieve Ardagh Rural Development

Update September 2005:

In the six-month period since the previous Slieveardagh partners meeting, Maura Barrett the new Business Plan Development Executive, has taken up her position. While the business plan in its totality will need to be implemented, Maura has had three focuses in her initial period in the position:

1. Helping the committee of Slieveardagh Rural Development a sustainable management/ usage plan for the Slieveardagh Culture & Enterprise Centre in Killenaule
2. Developing and strengthening the structures of Slieveardagh Rural Development (SRD) and its allied organisations.
3. Working with other organisation and individuals assisting them in developing community and rural tourism projects of benefit to the region.

1 Maura has concluded the negotiations, (begun by Des Burke) with the South Tipperary County Enterprise Board (CEB) for the establishment of an IT training centre facility in the Culture & Enterprise Centre. The CEB have delivered 20 state-of-the-art computer workstations to the centre in late August. The centre has also been equipped with broadband IT capability. It is hoped that the training centre will start to operate in early Autumn.

The County Museum in Clonmel has agreed to provide the centre with a number of display panels of the Derry-naflan horde. These panels are to be displayed in the centre and it is proposed that they form the focus of a permanent exhibition of significant events, artefacts and activities in the Slieveardagh region.

Plans are being drafted in relation to alterations to the buildings fabric which will allow more sustainable uses. These plans are expected to be completed in the coming weeks and the securing of any planning permissions and funding to complete the work will commence as soon as possible.

2 A series of meetings were held with officers of SRD on strengthening its structures and communication channels. On the 4th of August a proposal paper was put by Maura to a joint meeting of officers of the company board and management committee. These proposals were generally accepted by the officers and Maura was approved to being the process of implementing the changes required. Maura has also spent some time working with the company accountant, solicitor and the Company Registration Office in regularising some issues.

3 A number of meetings have taken place on the future development of fishing and amenity lakes in the Glengoole area. The proposal was to develop further lakes and amenities in the area of the existing lake and wetland. There are significant community and rural tourism benefits to be expected from such a project. These meetings included local community representative, Bórd na Mona, South Tipperary County Council, BNS

Rural Development and Slieveardagh Rural Development. While the meetings were positive and assistance was available from a number of sources, there is a need for an appropriate organisation to 'take ownership' of the project, if it is to proceed.

Michael Dwyer, the Tipperary Institute mature student on placement with SRD, has completed the organisation of the reprinting of the local history book *Kilcooley, Land & People*. This will go to print in September and be available for purchase soon thereafter, with any profits going to fund Slieveardagh community projects. This will be part funded by BNS.

A newsletter publicising the work of SRD and the Slieveardagh Partners project will be published in Autumn. This will be part-funded by BNS.

Update February 2005:

Good progress has been made in the Slieveardagh area over the past year. A second public meeting for farmers was held in Gortnahoe Hall on the 22nd November 2004. The well-attended meeting discussed topics that included decoupling and farm safety. A further meeting covering REPS 3 will be held in spring 2005.

The financial resources that were provided by South Tipperary County Council were utilised to employ a research worker to evaluate the economic, social and cultural aspects of the Slieveardagh area and to present a plan that would provide a framework for the future development of the area. The second part of the plan was presented at a well attended partners meeting on the 20th January 2005. Following a discussion on that report, the need to renew and strengthen community structures was identified as an issue. Representatives of Muintir na Tire were invited to the meeting in order to progress a suggestion to make a proposal to the InterReg III-A for funding to support community structures. BNS may be involved in supporting the InterReg application.

A list of further actions was agreed at the January partners meeting and the next meeting is planned for 15th September 2005.

Update October 2004:

A business plan has been prepared for the Slieve Ardagh area which focuses on targeting 4-5 economic areas (IT, childcare, heritage tourism and small food production), upskilling of smallholders and the co-ordination of local development services in the area. A developer has been identified to advance major project in the Kilcooley area.

Update March 2004:

This action was agreed at the November 2003 Board meeting.

Curam Slieve Ardagh held a seminar with CDB members in April 2003, following which the group developed a plan for the area and consulted with local groups prior to submitting the plan as a potential new action in the county Economic Strategy.

Measure 1.4 Matching locations with opportunities

Curam Slieve Ardagh is the lead stakeholder and TEAGASC, South Tipperary Co Council and Tipperary SR County Enterprise Board have already committed resources to supporting implementation of the plan.

The first joint action with a CDB member was in November 2003 when a joint seminar was organised in the area on the future of farming post Fischler by TEAGASC and Curam Slieve Ardagh.