

# Abbeyleix Bog Project: Progress to date



*Abbeyleix  
Bog Project*



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*The Abbeyleix Bog Project is managing the 500 acre bog in Abbeyleix on behalf of the Community. The bog was formally transferred from Bord na Mona to the community in April 2012.*

In the short time that our committee has been operational we have delivered a significant list of actions. A sample of these are summarised as follows:

#### Setup

Formed Company Limited by Guarantee  
Put effective and accountable management structure in place  
Arranged for Public Liability Insurance  
Completed Health and Safety Statement.  
Completed a Baseline ecological study –  
Erected gates at the entrance to the bog

#### Communications:

Website [www.abbeyleixbog.ie](http://www.abbeyleixbog.ie) set up to provide comprehensive history of the bog/  
compilation of all studies to date  
Facebook to engage public  
Monthly newsletter enclosed in parish newsletter  
Children's section added to the website with information relevant to school curriculum  
Presented at local national schools to raise awareness of site among school children

#### Public events:

June 4<sup>th</sup> Dawn Chorus with Fintan Bracken for Abbeyfest  
June 4<sup>th</sup> Rhododendrons sold in the Square during for Abbeyfest (fundraiser)  
June 5<sup>th</sup> Macro Photography with Mark Sedgewick for Abbeyfest  
June 13<sup>th</sup> Bog Walk with South School older classes led by Dr Fiona McGowan  
June 15<sup>th</sup> Evening Chorus with Dr Mark McCorry  
June 20<sup>th</sup> Bog Walk with South School younger classes by Dr Fiona McGowan  
June 26<sup>th</sup> Bog Walk for general public with Dr Fiona McGowan  
July 1<sup>st</sup> Walk for Laois Walking Festival  
August 21<sup>st</sup> Tell-Tale Walk with Dr Fiona McGowan for Heritage Week  
August 24<sup>th</sup> Evening Chorus with Dr Mark McCorry for Heritage Week  
Sept 17<sup>th</sup> Apple Festival in Heritage House (fundraiser)  
October 2<sup>nd</sup> Participation in National Trail Day

#### Wildlife Interpretation/ Education

Successfully applied for Dept of Environment Section 21 Grant (2000 Euro) to purchase a stock of equipment for wildlife interpretation/ leading walks – this included bat detectors, wildlife guides, pond dipping equipment etc. This has proved very popular with children and schools who regularly use the site.

We have erecting three large map boards on the bog and are in the process of developing interpretative maps and details of the wildlife.

We have made contact with Bolton Street College who are using the bog as a case study for student projects related to their town planning courses.

We arranged a butterfly transect monitoring programme over summer 2011 and forwarded data to the national biodiversity records centre.

### *Walks and Recreation*

We are working with Ann Lanigan (Laois Partnership Walks Officer) and Failte Ireland to include the bog in a new walk being developed around Abbeyleix. Workers from the Rural Social Scheme are presently laying marker posts and laying sleepers/ building bridges etc. to achieve this.

The RSS workers have worked very successfully on the bog and may well serve to be a valuable resource for delivering future projects.

We hosted a "roadtest" of the above walk as part of the 2011 Laois Walks Festival

### *Other Achievements*

Won ***notice nature award*** in the 2010 National Tidy Towns competition which earned 1000 Euro for the local Tidy Towns Group

We arranged a tour of bog for adjudicators in Pride of Place day in Abbeyleix

We were recently runners up in the environmental section of the community awards for Laois.

Submitted proposal to a Documentary Competition run by Crewger and worked with a documentary maker to produce short film telling the story of the bog. This short, entitled "Brown Gold" is posted on youtube and also on our social media and website.

We hosted an apple festival in Abbeyleix in autumn 2011 to fundraise for the bog and also to promote sustainable use of local resources