

LOUGH CARRA CATHCMENT ASSOCIATION
13 AUGUST 2019 - MEETING MINUTES
CORLEY'S ABBEY LOUNGE 8-9.30PM

Chairperson	Tom Byrne	
Vice-Chairperson	Peter Byrne	
Secretary	Lynda Huxley	
Treasurers	Joe Flannelly and Pat Gibbons	
Technical Advisors	Chris Huxley and Cilian Roden	
Antony Baynes	Sean Coyne	Teresa Horan
Klaus Berard	Ronan Cusack	Chris Huxley
Verena Berard	Sean Finan	Lynda Huxley
Patrick Bresnihan	Eugene Finnerty	Michael Kingdon
Deborah Broughton	Joe Flannelly	Pat McHale
Ray Broughton	Pat Gibbons	Peter Mitchell
Peter Byrne	Michael Hegarty	Cilian Roden
Tom Byrne	Ger Heverin	Alan Stephens
Norita Clesham		
APOLOGIES : John Campbell Paul Connolly William Cormacan Ronan Cusack	Philip Doddy Olivia Feeney Mick Kane Bryan Kennedy Kristie Leydon	Al McDonnell Michael Sweeney Fiona White Will Woodrow

AGENDA ITEMS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Sean Finan, CEO of the Irish Bio Energy Association. He read the apologies and expressed the sympathies of everyone involved with the association to Olivia Feeney on the recent loss of her sister.

Presentation Sean Finan, CEO of the Irish Bio Energy Association

Joe Flannelly introduced Sean Finan, CEO of the Irish Bioenergy Association (IrBEA) which was established in 1999. Sean was contacted by Joe and asked to make a presentation to the meeting on the concept of Bioenergy which is a popular concept in the rest of Europe but not yet in Eire.

IrBEA represent all the Bioenergy Sector which includes Biomass, Biogas, Biofuels and Energy Crops

Sean presented two main aspects of Bioenergy :

- 1) Biogas which involves the installation of a Biodigester. There are opportunities for the growth of Biogas given the agriculture greenhouse gas emissions of 32% in total. There are challenges, however, with no biomethane support tariff and no access to low interest finance etc.

IrBEA are working with the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine on an EIP (European Innovation Partnership) project and establishing a small-scale biogas demonstration project. This is being established in partnership with Teagasc, Laois Partnership and Hayes Farm. They are exploring the replicability and widespread deployment.

IrBEA will continue to lobby government in advance of the October 2019 budget to encourage and support such projects.

- 2) Biochar which is a 'solid material obtained from carbonisation of thermochemical conversion of biomass in an oxygen-limited environment' which is a process that mirrors the production of charcoal.

Biochar differs from charcoal because it is used for soil amendment rather than a fuel. The main object being to 'improve soil functions and to reduce emissions from biomass'. Products that can be used to make biochar are e.g. Japanese knotweed, rhododendron, food waste etc.

Biochar could potentially be used in streams to filter out nutrients.

Sean's presentation will be made available on the Lough Carra website under the Catchment Association tab.

Questions / Observations / Responses

Q. What sort of ownership models are there for the small-scale biogas plants?

A. This is being looked at in the above-mentioned EIP project. They are hoping to identify a model that can be rolled-out nationwide. They are concentrating on privately owned farms for this project and not community-led projects.

Q. How long does the Biochar last as a filter in water and when saturated what can be done with it?

A. It depends on the level of filtration, type of material used to make the Biochar and what is being filtered. Biochar currently sells for about €1,700 per tonne. If farm water was being filtered then the spent char could be applied to the land in a controlled manner.

Peter Mitchell of LawPro made the observation that Biochar is generally used as a top layer with a sand filter in waste water treatment. It does become spent quickly. He added that he has had experience with this medium.

Q. Can pipes be filled with Biochar and placed in drains?

A. The group would need to do its own experiments with this and filter drain water and then test it. Sean could help supply Biochar to test this out. The Chair suggested that this could be explored further with the Agriculture Sub-committee.

The Chair thanked Sean for his presentation and for taking time from his holidays to make this presentation to the meeting. Hopefully there will be some direct benefits for the environment.

Minutes of the last meeting

The Chair read out the minutes of the July 2019 meeting.

Proposed : Pat Gibbons

Seconded : Antony Baynes

Matters Arising

a) Life Project Project

Chris Huxley reported that there has been a little delay in the project due to extension of Life Concept Note deadline but there is a meeting with the Technical Working Group on 16 August to lay-out final stage of the consultancy with Woodrow SS.

Woodrow SS will be submitting an Interim Report following the above meeting in addition to an invoice for 50% of the agreed consultancy fee.

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The LCCA has applied for a loan from Clann Credo so that we can pay the consultant and then the Leader Grant can be drawn down from Mayo County Council. The Association has to pay 10% of the fee which will be about €3,000.00.

b) Education

The Lough Carra A6 booklet is nearing completion. A quotation to print 1,000 copies will be obtained.

Dr Philip Doddy's booklet on "Marl Crusts of Lough Carra" - A price will be obtained for printing 50 copies. Also, it will be adapted for primary schools in collaboration with Teresa Horan.

c) Finance

€2,207.85 has been paid to SPS for the demonstration Solar pump system. Peter Byrne was thanked for the donation of €300 made on behalf of the Carra Mask Federation towards the SPS project.

An account has set up with Cummins Hardware and this account was used to purchase the items needed to complete installation of the demo pump system. €276.10 was paid for these items.

Annual association insurance was renewed with JLT €522.50.

Petty cash paid to secretary of €100.00

Bank of Ireland account opened with €50 and a cheque book has been ordered which will have a government levy of €25.00

Balance in the Credit Union is €3,914.53

Any Other Business

- **Tuesday 20 August during Heritage Week**, Benjamin Thebodeau of the Joyce Country Great Western Lakes Geopark Project, will give a talk on the geology of the area. This event is organised by the Partry Heritage Committee and Lough Carra Catchment Association. The talk will be held in Partry Community Centre starting at 7.30pm.

The Chair asked for blanket approval for all decisions and discussions from the meeting. There was full approval from the floor.

NEXT MEETING

The September Meeting will be held in Carnacon Community Centre on TUESDAY 10 September 2019 starting at 8pm sharp.

All meeting minutes and other documents relevant to LCCA can be found on the Lough Carra website <http://loughcarra.org/catchment-association/>