

LOUGH CARRA CATCHMENT ASSOCIATION  
11 MAY 2021 – DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES  
ZOOM MEETING 8-9.30 PM

Present :

Tom Byrne (Chair)  
Lynda Huxley (Secretary)  
Peter Byrne (Vice-Chair)  
Joe Flannelly (Treasurer)  
Pat Gibbons (Vice-Treasurer)  
Chris Huxley (Technical Advisor)  
Cilian Roden (Technical Advisor)  
Sean Coyne

## AGENDA ITEMS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked Lynda Huxley as secretary for keeping things going over the past 12 months during the Covid restrictions. He also thanked Chris Huxley for the time he has spent getting the LCCA established as a Registered Charity.

### **Moorehall Technical Advisory Committee**

Tom informed the committee that he had been asked by William Cormacan, NPWS, to represent the LCCA as stakeholder, on the Moorehall Technical Advisory Committee. He informed the committee that other members on the committee are the principal players e.g. Coillte, Mayo CoCo, National Monuments Service, Carnacon Community Development Association, Vincent Wildlife Trust. He added that Chris and Lynda Huxley were on the committee as independent ecological experts with particular knowledge about Lough Carra.

Tom has, therefore, called this meeting to get authorisation from the committee to represent LCCA on the above committee. He gave the list of other people who have been invited onto the committee :

Colm O'Dwyer (Coillte)  
Michael Donlon (Coillte)  
John Magee (Mayo CoCo)  
Catherine McConnell (Mayo CoCo)  
Padraig Philbin (Mayo CoCo)  
Rob Coyne (Mayo CoCo)  
Denis Strong (NPWS)  
William Cormacan (NPWS)  
Sam Birch (NPWS)  
Gearoid Conroy (NMS – National Monuments Service)  
Bill Brake (Parks Canada)  
Kate McAney (Vincent Wildlife Trust)  
Chris Huxley (Independent Ecological Expert)  
Lynda Huxley (Independent Ecological Expert)  
Tom Byrne (Lough Carra Catchment Association)  
Sean Hallinan (Carnacon Community Development Association)  
Noreen Grealis (NPWS – Minute taker)

Chris and Lynda Huxley have been invited to join the committee as independent ecological experts with specific knowledge of the overall ecology of Lough Carra and not as Directors of the LCCA.

The Chair asked the Directors for their approval for him to accept William Cormacan’s request and represent the LCCA on the Moorehall Technical Advisory Committee. There was overall agreement and approval from the Directors.

Further to this approval, the Chair proposed that the rest of the meeting should deal with looking through the plan so that he could present the observations of the LCCA to William Cormacan (NPWS) by 21 May 2021.

## 1. Discussion regarding the Moorehall Master Plan

The Chair commenced the discussion by noting that the remit of the LCCA is preservation of the lake.

Chris Huxley highlighted that there are two related documents :

- 1) Executive Summary which was produced in November 2020 – although there seemingly have been some changes since then
- 2) the Masterplan.

Chris also highlighted that prior to this Directors’ meeting he had circulated to them a copy of the submission he and Lynda had made to William Cormacan and Padraig Philbin (Mayo CoCo). He added that this submission had been shared with the Directors’ for their information only and that the document is not intended to represent the views of the LCCA. Furthermore, he and Lynda have a meeting scheduled with William Cormacan and Padraig Philbin to discuss issues raised in their submission to decide how they can be addressed in the Master Plan.

The secretary informed the meeting that feedback from members of the Moorehall Technical Advisory Committee is needed by 21 May so that these items can be considered and any necessary changes made to the MasterPlan before it goes to Public Consultation in June.

Following a discussion of the Master Plan, the following observations were noted :

- The Master Plan is a broad sweep document mostly aimed at attracting tourism to the area. It must be noted that not everything suggested in the document will be implemented because any actions that may affect the SAC would be subject to environmental assessment
- LCCA does not see the need for pontoons on the lake because there are adequate access points
- To protect Lough Carra’s unique environment, a by-law needs to be in place to restrict engine size to below 15 horse power and to prohibit the use of long-shaft engines because both of these disturb the marl bed. In addition, the use of jet skis and powerboats should be prohibited. It is understood that Mayo CoCo (Martin Keating) will be putting this into place.
- At certain times of year the channel between the north and south basin is extremely shallow leaving the lakebed vulnerable to damage. Peter Bowyer’s initial modelling work on flow of water in the lake has shown that the shallow channel between the basins is helping to stop water transfer and is thus reducing nutrient flow which is thus protecting certain areas of the lake from pollution. This channel should not be interfered with in any way.
- Renting out boats would be preferable to a) protect local business b) reduce the risk of zebra mussel being brought into the lake.
- It was also suggested that any boats/kayaks brought onto the lake should be disinfected so that they do not bring in zebra mussel. Cilian explained that because Lough Carra is becoming more eutrophic in certain locations this is creating conditions in which zebra mussel could thrive.
- Chris highlighted that one suggestion he has made is that there should be a designated warden/ranger for Lough Carra.
- It is recognised that the development of Moore Hall and environs is a positive move and will provide local employment once it is fully established.

The following items were identified to put forward to William Cormacan as observations from the LCCA :

- 1) The LCCA is in favour of a warden/ranger being employed specifically for the Carra Catchment – as suggested in the Huxley observations.
- 2) The LCCA is in favour of the development of Moorehall area as this will provide employment for the area but request that any development of the wider lake be done in an appropriate way so that the overall ecology of the lake is protected.
- 3) The LIFE Project should be referred to in the Master Plan
- 4) Boat hire is preferable because this would reduce the chance of zebra mussel being brought into the lake by visiting boats and would support local business
- 5) There should be disinfection point and an indication of cleansed craft, without this a craft from elsewhere should not be allowed on the lake.

## 2. LIFE Project

News about the LIFE project application is expected in the coming weeks.

There was some discussion about ideas for a Plan B, should be application not be successful. The following were suggested :

- Potential of EIPs (European Innovation Partnerships) call being opened in the coming year which would create possibility for project funding
- If the LIFE application is not successful at this attempt then it should be possible to resubmit
- Now that LCCA is a registered charity we can start to apply to trusts and grant giving bodies. The Directory of Grant Making Trusts provides a comprehensive list.
- There are some aspects of Lough Carra, such as the krustenstein, which are very unusual and could be used to promote the lake as a site for funded research with the scientific findings being used to highlight the uniqueness of the lake and drive change

## 3. Charities Regulator

Chris reported that the LCCA is now a registered charity and we have a number to identify the association as a registered charity. This number must be put on the website [www.loughcarra.org](http://www.loughcarra.org) on any letterhead and on any documentation.

The LCCA will have to prepare an annual report and accounts. Chris will send a briefing to all the Directors so that they are all aware how we have to behave.

At the 2020 AGM of the LCCA, Sean Coyne was proposed as a new Director. Chris will now prepare the documents to register Sean as a Director with the Charities Regulator.

The Treasurer will enquire with the Credit Union and Bank of Ireland if the charity number needs to show on the LCCA account details.

## 4. Finance

Bank of Ireland €179.00  
Credit Union €9,927.91

Communities Water Development Funds grant applications have been successful for 3 projects

- 1) Solar pump solutions for one system €2500
- 2) Pond-dipping education project €3250

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3) Tree planting education project €2000  
The association will have to purchase the items and then claim the monies from LawPro.