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Lullymore Island looped walk

Connecting the stories of an island in the Bog of Allen



Leonie Tijmsma

Bachelor thesis

23rd August 2013



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Summary

- Lullymore is a mineral island of 4 square kilometers surrounded by the Bog of Allen and is mainly in use as farm land. Lullymore Island is located in the northern part of County Kildare, 50 kilometers west of Dublin.
- An educational looped walk on Lullymore Island that involves the different habitats and the cooperation of the local residents has been developed. With the realisation of a looped walk the Irish Peatland Conservation Council wishes to attract more visitors to the island, to engage with the local community and to offer opportunities for the local economy.
- The development of the Lullymore Island looped walk is part of the Bachelor thesis of the Leonie Tijmsma, a student of Forestry and Nature Conservation at Van Hall-Larenstein University of Applied Science in the Netherlands.
- This project was developed in three stages: survey-, vision- and plan stages. In the survey stage the current qualities of Lullymore, the wishes and interests of the different stakeholders, the required qualities identified by local residents and visitors, and results from best practice in the development of walking routes are described. Based on the results of the survey stage, the plan criteria are determined and a plan vision is developed in the vision stage. Finally, in the plan stage a walking route is developed, that meets the plan criteria and is according to the vision.
- The main visitor attractions of Lullymore Island are the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, the Lullymore Heritage and Adventure Park, the Lullymore Graveyard, the 1798 monument and Lodge Bog. There are 19 different land owners on Lullymore and several other stakeholders with different interests. Organizations such as IPCC, National Trails Office, Fáilte Ireland and Bord na Móna have defined their preconditions for the development of the Lullymore Island looped walk. In addition the development of the looped walk must be done within the context of the Wildlife Act 1976 (amended 2000).
- 48 visitors of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre and 17 local residents filled in a questionnaire. The main results are that both local residents and visitors require natural habitats, scenery, peace and tranquility, and would like to see local historical features, bogs and the countryside in the walk. Besides, good signage, picnic possibilities en route are required. Most of the residents and visitors prefer to walk a loop of 3 to 6 kilometers.
- Four case studies demonstrating best practice in the development of loop walks were analysed during this study; a loop in Bargerveen, the Kruishaarderpad, the Landschappenwandeling Warnsborn (the Netherlands) and the Girley Bog loop (Ireland).
- The proposed Lullymore Island looped walk starts at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre and leads along the old graveyard crossing Lodge bog, the different habitats on the island, over the old railway line on the cut away bog and agricultural land. The walk is a loop of 7.5 kilometers long, which can be short cut to smaller loops of 3, 4 and 4.5 kilometers.
- The proposed walk is realistic and cost effective to realize and maintain. Five recommendations are made to keep the costs for the realization of the walk as low as possible.

- Nine different habitats are found on and around Lullymore Island, which are all covered by the walk, as are 14 features of interest and eleven scenic viewings.
- The walk covers as much existing paths as possible and avoids the R414 road. Construction materials are recommended in order to keep the walk realistic and cost efficient. Involvement of the local community regarding the realisation and further development of – for example- information panels is recommended.
- The walk covers land of three land owners, namely Tom Doyle, Bord na Móna and the IPCC. All land owners have unofficially given permission for people to enter their land and to realise the proposed constructions.
- Two alternative routes are also proposed. These meet the requirements. Compared with the proposed route, the disadvantages of these alternative routes are the extra land owners that are involved, the extra constructions that have to be realised – which is more expensive – and the crossing of fields with cattle.
- 18 Recommendations are made to make the realization of the proposed walk a success and to improve cooperation with the local community.
- The proposed Lullymore Island Looped Walk was presented at the Open Day of 21st July 2013 at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre. The day included a presentation and a walk on part of the proposed looped walk. More than 80 visitors attended the day. The Open Day was sponsored by the Kildare County Council, as part of the Feile An Dúlra scheme.
- Two press releases were sent to the press mailing list of the IPCC. Several organisations had placed the press releases on their website. The Lullymore Island Looped Walk was described in articles in the Irish Times and the Leinster Leader. Also, several messages were placed on the IPCC Facebook page and a web page with information about the Lullymore Island Looped Walk and Lullymore Island has been placed on the website of the IPCC.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Lullymore Island (Co. Kildare, 50 km west of Dublin) is a limestone rock of approximately 2.5 square km located in the famous Bog of Allen. The area has very interesting ecological and historical features.

The increasing demand for high quality recreational walks throughout Ireland, as described in by the Irish Sport Council (2012), shows the importance of the realisation of new (looped) walks. The need for a (looped) walk on the island of Lullymore has been recommended several times in the last eight years (O'Neill, 2005; Roëll and Jansen, 2005; UCD, 2012).

The IPCC (Irish Peatland Conservation Council) wishes Lullymore Island to be more attractive and interesting for the neighborhood and tourists. The IPCC wants to attract more tourists and wants them to spend time and money in the area. With the realisation of an educational looped walk through the island, the IPCC hopes to connect the neighbours with each other and hopes to gain more support and awareness for the area. Also, the increasing number of visitors would give the area an economical boost and create opportunities for both the area and the IPCC.

In the Netherlands, broad knowledge and experience has been gained over the years on the relationship between people and nature and on creating more support and awareness for environmental issues and nature areas. There is also an increasing awareness and knowledge of the socio-economic aspects of nature conservation in the Netherlands (Van der Heide, Janssen & Stobbelaar, 2011). The IPCC wishes to apply the Dutch experience to developing a loop walk in Lullymore and has invited a Dutch student for this project.

Also, a range of different surveys and research has been done on Lullymore Island throughout the years. All this information is saved in different places and reports. In order to develop an educational looped walk, the available information about Lullymore Island has to be collated and the missing information has to be gained by surveying.

1.2 Aims

The main aim of this project is to develop a looped walk that suits with the needs of both the community and the visitors to the island of Lullymore.

Also, the IPCC wishes the walk to be a Fáilte Ireland recognized walk eventually, which means that the walk has to fulfill the highest quality demands.

The walk is an addition to the existing attractions of Lullymore and should attract more visitors to the area, which will hopefully improve the local economy increasing revenue locally and raising awareness about nature conservation, local history and landscape.

1.3 Approach

This project is divided in three stages: survey stage, vision stage and planning stage.

The survey stage is further divided into four components and involved the collection of data in each area:

- current qualities,
- preconditions,
- required qualities and
- best practices.

Based on the data obtained in the survey stage, plan criteria are made of the requirements. Subsequently, the plan vision is written in a few sentences, based on the plan criteria.

The plan criteria and plan vision are the basis of the planning stage of the project.

First several routes are drawn on a map, all fulfilling the criteria, and subsequently these are walked with residents of the local community in order to choose the best route. After that, the difficulties or challenges along the route are mapped in. Solutions to the difficulties are sought with the landowners. Finally, the required materials for the realisation of the looped walk are enumerated.

1.4 Report

Chapter 2 explains the used methods in this project in detail.

In chapter 3 the results of the survey stage are described under the headings above.

The plan criteria and plan vision, which are based on the survey results from chapter 3, are presented in chapter 4.

The proposed route, a description of the Lullymore Island looped walk plus the features, challenges and possible solutions for these challenges are presented in chapter 5.

Subsequently in chapter 6 a reflection on the applied methods is described: what went well and what should have been done in a different way?

Finally, recommendations to make the walk into a success are provided in chapter 7.

Chapter 8 gives an overview of literature references and the figures used for this report.

2. Methods

2.1 Methodic framework

This project is divided in three stages; survey stage, vision and planning, which is shown in figure 1. This figure shows the subjects of this project and the way the report is structured. All the steps have to be taken in order to achieve the looped walk. Basically, the information gained in one step, is necessary to fulfill the next step. The Plan criteria and Plan Vision in the Vision stage are entirely based on the information and results from the Survey stage, and so is the Plan stage entirely based on the results from the Vision stage.

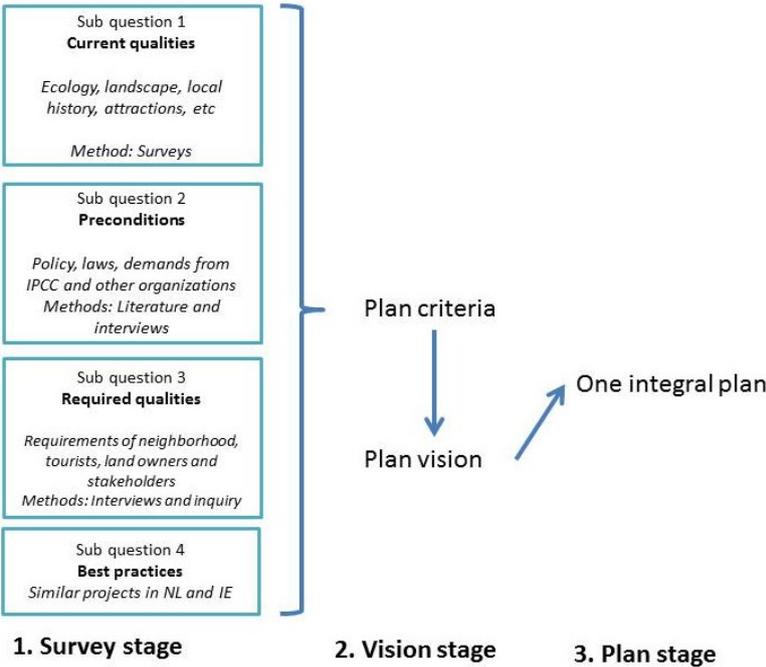


Figure 1 - Methodic framework

2.2 Survey stage

The main aim of the Survey stage is gathering all the required information in order to complete the plan criteria. Therefore, the main question of this stage is:

What is demanded in order to develop an educational looped walk at Lullymore Island, Co. Kildare, in which the different habitats and the needs of the local community and visitors of the island are incorporated?

The Survey stage is divided in four parts, namely the Current qualities, Preconditions, Required qualities and Best practices. Several sub questions have to be answered before the main question can be answered. These sub questions and the methods to solve these are summoned and described in the next sub chapters.

2.2.1 Current qualities

What is the route of the old walks?

On three places throughout Lullymore Island, signage of a walking route are situated, but it is unknown where they lead to. Local inhabitants, Kildare County Council and the National Trail Office (NTO) of the Irish Sport Council (ISC) are asked for the origin of these walk.

What are the historical features?

Hurley (2005) and Jansen and Roëll (2005) did research on the historical features of Lullymore and the area (Bog of Allen). The historical features of Lullymore Island are written in this report.

Who are the landowners and stakeholders?

With the help of IPCC and locals, the landowners and stakeholders of Lullymore Island are checked and updated or identified. A land ownership map is drawn. Subsequently, the landowners and stakeholders are called and/or visited. The project is explained and they are asked about the land uses, what their benefits are on the lands and if they want to get involved into the project and how. This information is drawn up and summoned.

What are currently the main visitors attractions of the island and what do they offer for the neighborhood and tourists? Which touristic activities and facilities are currently offered?

The main visitor attractions and the touristic activities and facilities of Lullymore are determined, visited and researched by reading literature and a short description is made.

What are the different habitats of Lullymore Island? Which other information can be found about Lullymore island and the area?

A lot of information about Lullymore Island and the area is available in a wide range of books, (scientific) reports and websites (for example: Hurley, C., 2005 and Jansen, M. and Roell I., 2005). This information is being used in order to write a paragraph about this topic.

2.2.2 Preconditions

What are the demands of IPCC according to the walk?

The IPCC is asked for demands.

What is involved in getting national recognition for a looped walk?

Fáilte Ireland is contacted and asked what is involved in getting national recognition for a looped walk. The information of Fáilte Ireland is analyzed. A list of demands is drawn up and a manual in order to get this recognition is written.

Also other organizations such as the National Trail Office (NTO) of the Irish Sport Council (ISC), the Slí na Slaínte programme of the Irish Heart Foundation and the Leave No Trace Ireland are researched. What do these organization have to offer and how can these help the development of the Lullymore Island looped walk?

Which laws and rules are of importance in developing a looped walk?

The IPCC is asked about the laws and rules that are involved in this project. A list of these laws and rules are drawn up. Subsequently, the laws and rules of the list are analyzed. Which ones do affect the development and/or realisation of the looped walk and how?

2.2.3 Required qualities

What is needed in order to make a looped walk on Lullymore Island attractive for tourists? What is needed in order to make a looped walk on Lullymore Island attractive for the local community and how can the local community be involved in the development of the looped walk?

Lots of visitors and tourists visit the Bog of Allen Nature Centre at Lullymore. In 2012, 2000 visitors have visited the Bog of Allen Nature Centre. 50 visitors and 20 inhabitants of Lullymore, Drumsu, Barnaran and Capanargid are asked to fill in a questionnaire. The aim of the questionnaire is learning what is important in a walk on Lullymore Island for visitors and local inhabitants and what their demands are. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 7.

The answers of the questionnaires are copied to an Excel sheet and analyzed. In the analysis is searched for the features that are important for most of the participants. Diagrams and tables are made to prove these preferences. The main demands are summoned on a list of demands for tourists.

2.2.4 Best practices

What are the qualities of other successful looped walks?

Three Dutch and one Irish (educational) looped walks are determined to be researched and visited. These determined walks are all successful and spread throughout the Netherlands and Ireland. On internet and brochures, more information is gathered about the theme, features, amount of visitors and the qualities of the walk. After this, the owner or operator of each walk is contacted to be interviewed (by phone and/or e-mail) about the development, maintenance and the other missing information of the walk. The questions that are asked can be found in Appendix 1. Eventually, the looped walk is visited. Hereby pictures are made and qualities and other singularities are noticed. When the three walks are researched and visited, the qualities of each of the walks are summarized.

The three determined Dutch looped walks are:

- Landschappenwandeling Warnsborn
- Bargerveen
- Klompenpad Kruishaarderpad

The determined Irish looped walk is:

- Girley Bog, Co. Meath

2.3 Vision stage

The vision stage is divided in two parts, namely the Plan criteria and the Plan vision.

2.3.1 Plan criteria

Based on the results of the Survey stage, the Plan criteria are determined. Each part of the survey stage leads to some demands. These demands are drawn up and analysed. Are all these demands realistic? Are none of them contradicting? In that case, IPCC will be informed and some of the demands might have to be adapted.

2.3.2 Plan vision

The Plan vision is based on the Plan criteria. In one or a few sentences the vision of the looped walk is clearly presented.

2.4 Plan stage

Route

Based on the Plan criteria and Plan vision, different potential routes that fulfill the criteria are drawn on a map.

The different routes will be walked in companion of residents from the local community, and it is checked if the walkers are satisfied and if the route is realistic. The advantages and disadvantages of these routes are summoned.

Challenges

The different challenges along the route are mapped. Challenges are parts of the route that need some improvement or new construction, for example a path or bridge that has to be realised. After the challenges have been mapped, solutions are sought in consultation with the land owners.

Materials

A rough estimation of the required materials and the different options for the realisation of the looped walk are enumerated. This list is based on the IPCC Peatland Conservation and Management Handbook (1998), best practice from the survey stage, and the recommendations from different persons.

Recommendations

Some of the points of the Plan criteria cannot be applied in the walk itself. These points are translated into recommendations.

Also, several recommendations are given on the (future) costs of realisation and maintenance of the walk.

Finally, during the process of the development of the walk, several persons have made a wide range of recommendations. These are included here.

Open Day

At the Open Day of Sunday 21st July 2013 at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre the proposed route is presented and a part of the walk is walked with the group.

2.5 Involving the local community

The local community is being involved from the beginning of the project. Meetings and activities of the LBDC Community Alert Neighbourhood Watch (see chapter 3.1.5) are attended. Via informal meetings, local residents are invited to share their stories and ideas for the walk and to try different potential routes (see chapter 2.4).

2.6 Media

Two press releases are written and sent to the press list of the IPCC. One press release announces the development of the Lullymore Island Looped Walk and the other announces the Open Day (see chapter 2.4).

Christopher Somerville is a British journalist who writes articles about (looped) walks in Ireland and the United Kingdom for the Irish Independent and The Times. Somerville is invited to the Lullymore Island Looped Walk.

Also, a description and the route of the looped walk will be developed for the website of the IPCC.

3. Survey results

The Survey stage is the first stage of this project. The results of the research are described in this chapter.

3.1 Current qualities

3.1.1 Lullymore Island and area

The Bog of Allen is the largest raised peat bog in Ireland. It covers 9 counties over more than 950 square km through the midlands of Ireland. Almost 90% of the peat of the Bog of Allen has been removed due to turf development over the past 400 years. Nowadays, over 250,000ha of Irish peatland is being protected throughout the country.¹

Lullymore Island is a mineral soil island of 220 ha, totally surrounded by Lullymore Bog, which is part of the Bog of Allen.

Lullymore is located on the R414 roadway between the towns Rathangan and Allenwood, in county Kildare, 10 kilometre north of Kildare town and 50 kilometre west of Ireland's capital Dublin (see figure 2 and 3).

Lullymore Island is characterised by green grass fields, arable land, hedgerows dividing the fields and sites, houses, farms and the small areas of forest/woodland.

The land on Lullymore Island is mainly used for agriculture (see figure 4). In 2005, 145 ha (66%) was in use as grass land, 55 ha (25%) for growing crops, 15 ha (7%) for houses and gardens and 5 ha (2%) was in other uses (Roëll and Jansen, 2005).

The population of the island is approximately 150 persons in 50 homes (Roëll and Jansen, 2005).

3.1.2 Main attractions on the island

Lullymore has five main attractions that bring visitors and tourists to Lullymore. These are the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, the Lullymore Heritage and Discovery Park, the Lullymore graveyard, the 1798 monument and Lodge Bog. These are described in the next sections.



Figure 2 – Lullymore (blue dot), west of Dublin



Figure 3 – Lullymore (blue) dot, in County Kildare



Figure 4 – Agriculture in Lullymore

¹ www.askaboutireland.ie – last visited at 12th May 2013

Bog of Allen Nature Centre

The Bog of Allen Nature Centre is an international centre for peatland conservation, education and research and is situated in the middle of the island of Lullymore (see the map in Appendix 2). The centre offers guided tours through the peatland museum and gardens, which cover information about the ecology, wildlife, development, (cultural) history, conservation and protection of peatlands. Also, school tours for primary, secondary and third level school students are offered. Private people, any kind of association, company and (non) governmental organisation can approach the IPCC for advice in relation to peatlands. Courses for ecological and environmental professionals are offered.² The Bog of Allen Nature Centre and its parking lot are opened only during office hours. Volunteers are welcome at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre.

Lullymore Heritage and Discovery Park

The Lullymore Heritage and Discovery Park is a day visitor attraction and is situated in the southwest of the island of Lullymore (see the map in Appendix 2). The park offers a range of activities to enjoy and learn about the Irish heritage and biodiversity. These activities include a pet farm, train trips, indoor play centre, exhibition about the heritage and environment, themed gardens, school tours and other events such as the Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Happenings and Lullymore Christmas (Leaflet Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park).

The main target groups are families with (young) children and students from primary and secondary school.

The Mission Statement of the organization is:

“The aim is to create a successful, viable visitor attraction. The values and standards we wish to demonstrate are to successfully wean the community into a way of life that will be both satisfying and financially rewarding for the community. We hope the success of our endeavors will be judged by the development of a major day visitor attraction which will create employment, alleviate disadvantage, enhance our Community and act as a catalyst for further development and tourist related employment in our area.”

Source: www.lullymoreheritagepark.ie

Lullymore graveyard

The graveyard contains the remains of a Monastic Settlement, which is said to be St. Patrick’s first church, dating from the 5th century (Hurley, 2005). The foundations are still visible. Also, there is a stone with St. Patrick’s footprint in it, according to the folklore (see figure 5).

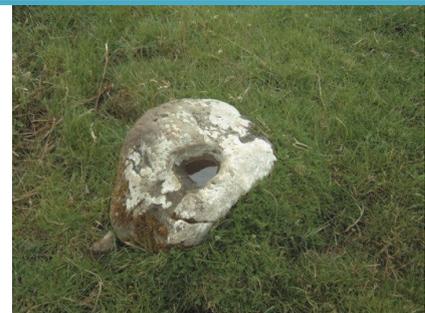


Figure 5 - St. Patrick's footprint

1798 Monument

The monument was erected to honour the Lullymore born Captain John Doorley (1771-1798), who was commander of the battalion which captured the town of Rathangan from the Crown (see figure 6).



Figure 6 - 1798 monument

Lodge Bog

The Lodge Bog is an intact raised bog on the east side of Lullymore Island (see figure 7), which is currently owned and managed as a wildlife reserve by the IPCC. The reserve was acquired from Bord na Móna in 2005 and a local landowner in 2009. A board/walk has been built for visitors to enjoy this unique area of intact raised bog.



Figure 7 - Lodge bog

² www.ipcc.ie – last visited at 25th March 2013

3.1.3 Historical features

Lullymore Island has a rich history and folklore. Roëll and Jansen (2005) have summarized most of the history of the island as follows:

“In old Irish records Lullymore is usually written as Lilcach, Lilgaigaich, Liolcaich and Liolchaich. All these words have the same meaning, namely ‘a cow that has calved’ or ‘a milk cow’. As a place name it could be interpreted as ‘a place suited for a milk cow’, ‘with good grass for a milk cow’.

The island contains remains from a Monastic Settlement. It is said that St. Patrick’s first church was at Lullymore, dating from the 5th century. The foundations of the monastic settlement are still visible surrounding a restored walled graveyard.

The 1798 rebellion. Captain John Doorley (1771-1798), born in Lullymore, was commander of the battalion which captured the town of Rathangan from the Crown forces. A monument to honour the captain is located beside the Bog of Allen Nature Centre.

The last landowners of Lullymore Island were the Murphy family. They built Lullymore Lodge (see figure 8) as a shooting residence about a hundred years ago. The Murphy’s had Lodge bog preserved for grouse-shooting. In 1932 when Major Brudnell Murphy died, the land was sold to the Land Commission.

In 1935, after the Land Commission obtained Lullymore, the land was divided into plots of 10 ha. Most farmers came from Skanavoola to settle on Lullymore ground.

Entrepreneurs began the industrial exploitation of the Bog of Allen in the early 19th century. It was not until 1946, when Bord na Móna was formed, that the industry became organized and the systematic exploitation of the Bog of Allen began. During the Second World War, when coal could not be imported, the Irish Army camped on the island of Lullymore and cut turf in the Bog of Allen, which was then transported by barges to Dublin city.”

Source: Roëll, I. and Jansen, M. (2005), Lullymore Island Heritage Survey, IPCC, Lullymore, Co.Kildare

In addition to this information, there are some other historical features.

13 cross slabs have been found nearby the graveyard, when a ditch was dug by the Land Commission in 1930, in order to divide up a large farm, which was owned by the Murphy family. The depth in which the cross slabs were found has not been documented. But according to local information, the skeletons which were found with the cross slabs were reburied in the graveyard. Nowadays, one cross can be found in the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, three can be found in the restored wall around the graveyard and nine are built into the wall around the 1798 monument (Kelly, 2004 & Kelly, 2006).



Figure 8 - Lullymore Lodge

Hurley (2005) describes some of the archaeological artefacts, of which the three old bog roads, are probably the most well-known.

Two bog roads, called Danes’ Roads, probably dated from the Early Christian period, are found at the southwest of Lullymore Island. They are made from gravel and marl. The Danes’ Roads were built to enable early Christian people to cross the Bog of Allen.

A third bog road, called a togher, was found north of the island. It is situated on the sites of Bord na Móna and Lullymore Nursery. The togher is made of oak wood. It is thought that the togher dates from the pre-historic period.

On the Bord na Móna’s site, the togher has been removed, left in piles on the site, but on the border of both sites, the remains are still visible and are probably still in good condition (pers. comment of Paul Gahan, Chief Executive, Lullymore Nursery).

3.1.4 The old walking route

For years, there have been three NTO/ISC signs of a walk Lullymore, which lead to nothing in particular (see figure 9 and 10). According to Bridget Loughlin, Heritage Officer of Kildare County Council, these are not from the proposed long distance walk of 30 km between Robertstown and Lullybeg that leads through Lullymore (O’Neill, 2005). This walk has never been realised. Nor does the NTO/ISC know about the signage (Jansen and Roëll, 2005). So, it is unknown what the three signs indicate.

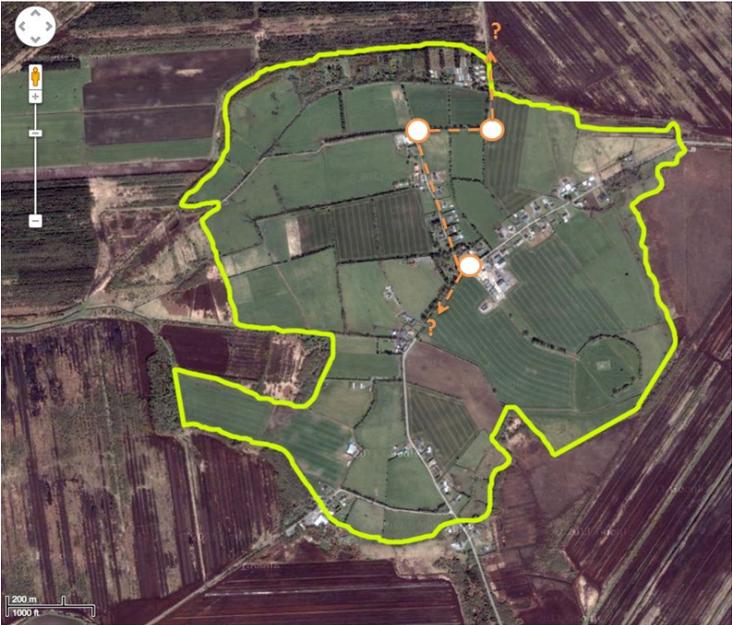


Figure 9 - The three NTO/ISC signage (orange circles) and the presumed route on Lullymore Island



Figure 10 - Signage of a walk

3.1.5 Landowners and stakeholders

Lullymore island and the area directly surrounding the island is owned by 19 different landowners. A map of the landowners can be found in Appendix 3.

Lullymore Island has the following stakeholders:

Farmers

About 200 ha or 91% of Lullymore island is in use as grassland (145ha or 66%) or arable land (55 ha or 25%), according to Roëll and Jansen (2005). Agriculture is important for the area. This involves 14 landowners.

Farmers renting land

Some of the landowners (see chapter 3.1.3 Landowners) rent sites or their property to other farmers. This occurs on some of the land sites of Paddy Gorey, Tom Doyle and Michael Jacob (see appendix 3).

IPCC

The IPCC owns the Bog of Allen Nature Centre and the two nature reserves Lodge Bog and Lullymore West. The parking place of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre is occasionally used as public parking place in case of an event on the island, for example a funeral on Lullymore Graveyard. Both Lodge Bog and Lullymore West are nature reserves.

Bord na Móna

“Bord na Móna is Ireland’s leading environmental responsible integrated utility service provider encompassing electricity, heating solutions, resource recovery, water, horticulture and related services.”³ Bord na Móna has been developing most of the peatland around Lullymore Island for several decades for the winning of turf. Turf is still being developed at the peatlands, mainly at the south and east side of the island. Cutaway lands are turned into pine plantations or agricultural land. Plans are made to realise a wind farm north east of Lullymore. Some of the cutaway lands have been sold to private owners.

Lullymore Nursery

The Lullymore Nursery is located at the north of the island. The nursery had been there for decades before it was left abandoned by its previous owner for 7 or 8 years, according to Paul Gahan, who bought the nursery in 2012 and restarted the business again. He also has plans to build a blueberry farm on the Bord na Móna cutaway peatland east of the nursery.

LBDC Community Alert Neighbourhood Watch

A Community Alert Neighbourhood Watch was established for the villages Lullymore, Barnaran, Drumsu and Capanargid (LBDC) in 2006. These villages are located between the towns Rathangan and Allenwood. The LBDC was established to address an increase in criminal activity in the area. Subsequently, more activities are undertaken and events are organized for the benefit of all the residents (LBDC Community Alert Neighbourhood Watch, 3rd Annual Newsletter, October 2011 – November 2012).

Laura Richardsons’ riding school

In June 2013, Laura Richardson, owner of Lullymore Lodge, got the approval from Kildare County Council to realise a riding school in the land north west of Lullymore Lodge (Laura Richardson, Lullymore, interview at 24th June 2013). Contractors have started the building of the riding school after the plans were approved. The proposed opening time is summer 2014.

³ www.bordnamona.ie – Last visited at 28th May 2013

Lullymore gun club

Despite the signs of the Lullymore Gun Club on Lullymore, the club is not active anymore (Tom Doyle, farmer at Lullymore, interview at 24th June 2013).

Most landowners and stakeholders have given permission for the Lullymore Island looped walk to be realised on their land.

Bord na Móna is the biggest landowner around Lullymore Island and has given preconditions. These are described in chapter 3.2.3. Other land owners have not given any preconditions.

Some of the landowners will not give permission. A map of their lands can be found in Appendix 4. They are:

The Lullymore Heritage and Discovery Park

Visitors to the Lullymore Heritage and Discovery Park have to pay admission to enter the park. The park organization does not allow people to walk on their property for free, as park visitors pay admission.

Bird farm

This property has to be kept undisturbed to benefit the birds that are farmed.

Some of the grasslands of Paddy Gorey

Paddy Gorey has rented out some of the grasslands he owns to another farmer. Young and unpredictable bulls are placed on these lands. Paddy Gorey gives permission for the walking route only on those parcels of land that are not rented out or in use by bulls.

Lodge Bog north

The curlew (*Numenius arquata*) is an endangered species in Ireland. Some pairs are breeding on Lodge Bog north. In order to protect the breeding curlew from disturbance from walkers, the IPCC does not allow the route of the walk to go through wet areas on Lodge Bog north (interview with Catherine O'Connell, 10th April 2013).

Coillte forest

Some of the lands north of Lullymore Island are owned by Bord na Móna, but managed by Coillte Ireland. On these sites north of Lullymore Island, Coillte had planted forests and Bord na Móna does not give permission to realise the walk on these recently planted sites.

3.2 Preconditions

3.2.1 IPCC

“The Irish Peatland Conservation Council (IPCC) is the national charity responsible for peatland conservation in Ireland. They aim is to ensure a representative portion of Irish peatlands are conserved for future generations to enjoy.”⁴ The IPCC is based at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre on Lullymore Island, Co. Kildare. The peatland museum, library, gardens and the areas of intact raised bogs and cutaway bogs along the island make the Bog of Allen Nature Centre a centre for peatland education, conservation and research.

The IPCC has a strong connections with the Netherlands, which started 30 years ago, when the Dutch Foundation for Conservation of Irish Bogs was established (1983). This foundation aims to raise awareness of the necessity for conservation of bogs and supports several projects financially (Nuala Madigan, Environmental Education Officer, IPCC, interview at 24th June 2013).

The IPCC is the initiator of the Lullymore Island looped walk and has the following criteria:

- The different habitats of Lullymore Island have to be involved in the looped walk;
- The looped walk is educational;
- The looped walk has to be realistic and cost effective to realise and maintain;
- The neighbourhood has to be involved into the development of the walk;
- The looped walk has to connect the community with each other;
- The looped walk has to attract tourists and (local) recreants to the area;
- The looped walk cannot go through the northern part of Lodge Bog, as the curlew is breeding there (interview with Catherine O’Connell at 10th April 2013).

3.2.2 Quality looped walks in Irelands

Research would indicate the following:

“Large numbers of Irish people and visitors are looking for good quality, well-marked walks that are relatively easily accessible. Themed trails with an historical, bio-diversity or environmental focus also offer some variety and choice to recreational walkers and trail users. Shorter circular walks with start/finish point in the same location (i.e. a village or car park) are popular with many day visitors. Older people and persons that may use a wheelchair should not be forgotten and by incorporating minor modifications to a trail design their needs can often be accommodated. Overall, walking trails that offer landscape variety, a range of physical challenges with dry underfoot terrain, are relatively easily accessible and have supporting facilities and services usually commensurate good quality walking experiences.”

Source: www.discoverireland.com

This is one of the reasons that organizations such as the Irish Sport Council (ISC), Fáilte Ireland, several County councils and the Irish Heart Foundation have developed manuals in order to develop and maintain looped walks as demanded by Irish people and visitors of nowadays.

⁴ www.ipcc.ie – last visited at 25th March 2013

3.2.2.1 NTO/ISC

“The Irish Sport Council (ISC) is the Irish National sport development authority that plans, leads and co-ordinates the competitive and recreational sport in Ireland. The ISC vision is one where sport contributes to enhancing the quality of Irish life and everyone is encouraged and valued in sport.”⁵

The National Trails Office (NTO) is a subcommittee of the ISC and its main objectives are to oversee the development of the waymarked ways walking routes, to increase participation in recreational walking in Ireland and to promote its health benefits.

Following the statement large groups of people are looking for good quality, well-marked and relatively easily accessibly marked walks, ISC has developed a manual with the key criteria and all the steps in order to achieve such a (looped) walk. The key criteria can be found in Appendix 6.

NTO/ISC recognized (looped) walks carry the yellow hiker mark (see figure 11). In Ireland are 908 NTO/ISC recognized (looped) walks.⁶



Figure 11 – Yellow Hiker mark

3.2.2.2 Fáilte Ireland

Fáilte Ireland is the Irish national tourism development authority that aims to improve the Irish tourism and economy. Fáilte Ireland provides a range of practical businesses in order to support the tourism industry and sustain Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourism destination.⁷

Fáilte Ireland recognized looped walks fulfill in strict criteria and are promoted nationally and internationally. Only NTO/ISC recognized looped walks can get Fáilte Ireland recognition.

The key criteria for getting Fáilte Ireland recognition for a looped walk can be found in Appendix 5. In Ireland are 209 Fáilte Ireland recognized looped walks.⁸

3.2.2.3 Irish Heart Foundation

One of the benefits of getting Slí na Sláinte recognition for a looped walk would be that it attracts specific target groups, such as people with heart issues, their family and friends and supporters of the Irish Heart Foundation. These people might not be reached if the walks have only NTO/ISC and Fáilte Ireland recognition.

“Slí na Sláinte is a simple, innovative scheme developed by the Irish Heart Foundation to encourage people of all ages and abilities to walk for leisure and good health. The programme uses attractive signage at kilometre intervals to encourage people to walk more frequently and to enjoy the benefits of a healthier lifestyle. To date there are over 190 routes around the country. The Slí Network is both nation-wide and international with Heart Foundations in ten countries having implemented the scheme to date.” The Nederlandse Hartstichting (Dutch Heart Foundation) also participates in this project.

“Slí na Sláinte is an important and valuable facility for every community. The widespread appeal of Slí na Sláinte is due to the fact that it provides an easily accessible and inexpensive environment for regular exercise. Health messages are often negative and frightening which is why Slí na Sláinte was developed as a positive and fun incentive to improve people’s health.”

Source: Irish Heart Foundation, 2013

⁵ www.irishsportcouncil.ie – last visited at 25th March 2013

⁶ www.irishtrails.ie/ - last visited at 24th June 2013

⁷ www.failteireland.ie, last visited at 10th April 2013

⁸ www.discoverireland.org, last visited at 10th April 2013

Another benefit is that the Irish Heart Foundation offers a Walking Leader Training course. “In this course participants are trained to motivate people in their locality to take-up walking as a form of health enhancing physical activity and b) plan and lead safe, enjoyable, health-enhancing walking sessions for small groups.”

The aim of this course does not entirely suit with the aims of the IPCC, but a Slí na Sláinte recognition might definitely attract visitors and potential supporters who would not find the IPCC otherwise.

3.2.2.4 Leave no Trace Ireland

Joining the Leave Not Trace Ireland campaign and applying the message into the Lullymore Island looped walk might be interesting for the IPCC. Applying the Leave No Trace message might help to gain more awareness and appreciation for the looped walk and the environment. People will be aware that good behaviour is appreciated by other walkers, the landowners and stakeholders, neighbours and the IPCC. For example, the Leave No Trace message might help to remember people that it is expected that they will bring their litter with them, which means that eventually the Trail Maintenance Committee has to collect less litter along the route and other walkers will enjoy the walk more.

The Leave No Trace message can be applied into the Lullymore Island looped walk, for example by erecting a Leave No Trace information board at the beginning of the walk, or by adding some information on the leaflet, IPCC-website or the information board of the looped walk.

“Leave No Trace Ireland is a network of organisations and individuals with an interest in promoting the responsible recreational use of the outdoors. As increasing numbers of people seek the beauty and exhilaration of outdoor recreation, our collective mark on the environment and its natural processes, increases. Litter, disturbance to vegetation, water pollution, wildlife, livestock and other people are all indicators of the need to develop a national ethic that protects both natural and cultural heritage. Techniques designed to minimise the social and environmental impacts to these areas are incorporated into the Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics Education Programme as seven Principles.

Leave No Trace Ireland promotes and inspires responsible outdoor recreation through education, research and partnerships. The programme strives to build awareness, appreciation and respect for Ireland's natural and cultural heritage and is dedicated to creating a nationally recognised and accepted outdoor ethic that promotes personal responsibility.

It encourages all outdoor enthusiasts (e.g. walkers, mountain bikers, canoeists, orienteers, horse riders) to do their part to maintain those lands used by the public for the benefit of the environment and for future generations.

At the heart of Leave No Trace are 7 principles for reducing the damage caused by outdoor activities. These are:

- *Plan Ahead and Prepare*
- *Be Considerate of Others*
- *Respect Farm Animals and Wildlife*
- *Travel and Camp on Durable Ground*
- *Leave What You Find*
- *Dispose of Waste Properly*
- *Minimise the Effects of Fire”*

Source: www.leavenotraceireland.org/about, last visited at 29th April 2013

3.2.3 Bord na Móna

Bord na Móna is the biggest landowner around the island of Lullymore. Bord na Móna has given permission to realise a walk on the lands around Lullymore island that are not in use commercially. At some places, drains had been inserted to prevent quad bikes from entering an area. Bord na Móna gives permission to realise bridges that can be crossed by walkers, but not by quads. Young lads on quads have caused problems (vandalism) to machinery of Bord na Móna. Another strict demand is the establishment of a Trail Maintenance Committee that is responsible for the maintenance of the looped walk (interview with Thomas Egan, 29th May 2013).

3.2.4 Laws and rules

The next laws and rules influence the development, realisation and maintenance of a looped walk.

3.2.4.1 Wildlife Act 1976 (amended 2000)

“The Wildlife Act 1976 (amended 2000) is Ireland’s primary national legislation for the protection of wildlife. It covers a broad range of issues, from the designation of nature reserves, the protection of species, regulation of hunting and controls in wildlife trading. The Act is implemented by a series of regulations

It provides strict protection for nearly all birds, 22 other animal species, and 86 plant species. These species are protected from injury, or from disturbance / damage to their breeding or resting place wherever these occur. It should be noted that resting places (e.g. badger setts) are protected even if there are no animals present.”⁹

3.2.4.2 Liability Insurances

The National Trails Offices of the Irish Sport Council recommends to organize Public and Employers Liability Insurance. In their report “A Guide to Planning and Developing Recreational Trails in Ireland” (2012), the following is written:

Many trail development groups put in place public liability insurance to protect both themselves and private landowners in the event of a claim that may arise from an accident or injury on a developed trail. On some projects, public liability insurance may also need to be put in place during the development phase of the project. Employers' Liability Insurance is also a matter to consider if persons are directly employed by a development group to carry out trail development work. If a development group is contracting out work to a third party or utilizing volunteers, they should ensure that they are also suitably insured.

Source: National Trails Office - Irish Sports Council (2012) A Guide to Planning and Developing Recreational Trails in Ireland

Therefore, it is recommended to the IPCC and all stakeholders to organize a proper Public and Employers’ Liability Insurance from the initial stage of the development of the Lullymore Island looped walk.

⁹ <http://www.scottcawley.com/newsletter/Species%20Protection.pdf>, last visited at 10th June 2013

3.3 Required qualities

17 Residents of the Lullymore community and 48 visitors of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre filled in a questionnaire about their preferences for a looped walk on Lullymore Island. The results and analysis of the community survey can be found in appendix 8 and the visitors survey in appendix 9. The conclusions of these surveys are described in this chapter.

3.3.1 Local community

The conclusion of the requirements of the local community for a looped walk on Lullymore island survey is as follows:

1. The following features would have to be involved:
 - a. Scenery;
 - b. Natural habitats;
 - c. Peace and tranquility;
 - d. Local history;
 - e. Rural bogs;
 - f. Countryside;
 - g. Bog of Allen Nature Centre;
2. The walk would have to offer photo opportunities;
3. The following would have to be realised on or along the route:
 - a. Good signage;
 - b. Picnic tables and/or benches;
4. A pub, tea room or some other supplier of refreshments would have to be realised on Lullymore Island, preferably at or nearby the trailhead;
5. The terrain would have to be moderate;
6. The walking route would ideally have a length of three to six kilometers. There is also a demand for a longer walk of seven to ten kilometers and for a shorter walk of one to two kilometers.
7. The walk would take one to three hours;
8. Information about the route is at least provided via signs en route;

3.3.2 Visitors

The conclusion of the requirements of the visitors for a looped walk on Lullymore island survey is as follows:

1. The following features would have to be involved:
 - a. Natural habitats;
 - b. Scenery;
 - c. Peace and tranquility;
 - d. Countryside;
 - e. Intact raised bog;
 - f. Archaeology;
 - g. Nature and wildlife;
 - h. Bogs;
2. A sufficient quantity of parking places at the trailhead would have to be available during week days and weekends;
3. The walk would have to offer photo opportunities;

4. The following would have to be realised on or along the route:
 - a. Good signage;
 - b. Picnic tables and/or benches;
5. A pub, tea room or some other supplier of refreshments would have to be realised on Lullymore Island, preferably at or nearby the trailhead;
6. Information about the route is provided via signs en route, guided tours and online;
7. The terrain would have to be moderate;
8. The walking route would have to have a length of three to six kilometers, eventually another round would be rather seven to ten kilometers than one to two kilometers. The walk would take one to three hours;

3.4 Best practice Case Studies

In order to learn about the qualities of successful looped walks, four different walks are visited and examined. Three of these walks are visited in the Netherlands, the other one in Ireland. Also, the managers are interviewed about the development, realisation, maintenance, funding and success stories of their looped walk. This chapter describes the walks and summarizes their qualities.

3.4.1 Similar looped walks in the Netherlands

In the beginning of February 2013, three Dutch different (educational) looped walks are visited and examined. These walks are the Bargerveen walk (Staatsbosbeheer), the Kruishaarderpad (Klompenpad) and the Warnsborn Landschappenwandeling (IVN Arnhem) (see figure 12).

The Bargerveen walk is determined for this research, because the landscape and habitats –(intact) raised bogland and cutted peatland- is quite similar to the area around Lullymore Island.

The Kruishaarderpad is a Klompenpad, which is well known as good quality looped walks throughout the Dutch countryside and in which local people are highly involved in the development. This suits with the demands of the IPCC for the Lullymore Island looped walk.

The Landschappenwandeling Warnsborn is developed by the local department Arnhem of the IVN and has a high educational purpose. The topic of this walk is the landscape, the different habitats in a landscape and the influence of the seasons on the different landscapes and habitats.



Figure 12 - Locations of the three Dutch walks

3.4.1.1 Bargerveen¹⁰

Bargerveen is one of the last and the biggest remains of living peatland in the Netherlands. It is situated in the Netherlands, but the eastern border of the park borders Germany. Bargerveen is owned and maintained by Staatsbosbeheer, the Dutch governmental organization that owns, buys and maintains natural areas and features of cultural and historical value in the Netherlands.

¹⁰ Jans de Vries, conservation ranger Bargerveen, Staatsbosbeheer. Telephone conversation at 28th February 2013

Bargerveen is known for the high biodiversity. Bargerveen is said to be a paradise for butterflies, dragonflies, orchids and more than two hundred bird species. Jans de Vries, ranger at Bargerveen, has developed an educational looped walk. In this walk, people learn about the unique flora and fauna of the peatland of Bargerveen. The walk is 17 km long, and can be shortcutted halfway until 9 km. The walk is not suitable for disabled people or buggies. More than 100,000 people visit Bargerveen each year. Lots of these visitors are local people. A lot of people walk the educational looped walk, but exact numbers cannot be given. A wide range of (looped) walks and cycling routes are offered at and through Bargerveen (see figure 13). Most of these are connected. The different walks are offered by organizations such as Staatsbosbeheer, ANWB (organization for Dutch recreants, tourists and car owners), Provincie Drenthe (County Drenthe) and local organizations and communities.



Figure 13 - A range of routes

Education

Information panels about the flora and fauna, the history and the landscape are placed along the route. The panels about Bargerveen and the looped walks are in Dutch and German, which make the looped walk accessible for both Dutch and German speaking people (see figures 14 and 15). The leaflet with the route also describes about the different landscapes, historical features and flora and fauna along the route.

The looped walk also leads along viewing mounts, bird hides and an old turf cutters house which has been built into an insect house. The viewing mounts are built till the original height of the peatland to show people how much peatland has disappeared.

Development, realisation and maintenance

The route is developed by ranger Jans de Vries and the panels are designed by a local designer. Provincie Drenthe (Drenthe County Council) and IVN (association for nature education and sustainability) are consulted for similar educational walks and projects.

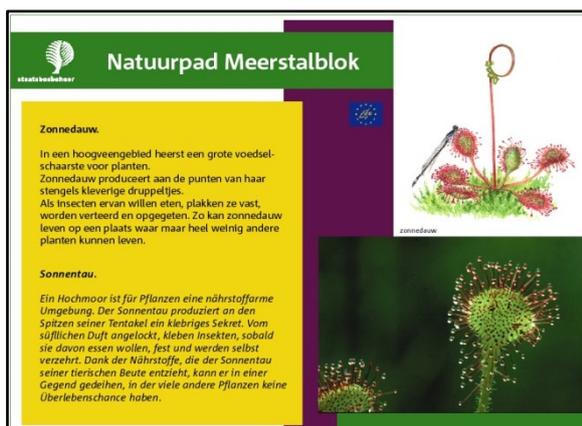


Figure 14 - Information panel



Figure 15 - People reading the information panel

The route was planned on existent paths, which means that only the panels had to be made and placed. The leaflet with information was made by Staatsbosbeheer. There are no direction signs placed along the route.

The looped walk itself does not have to be maintained, only the information panels have to be replaced in case of vandalism. The paths have to be mowed regularly and the condition of the paths also have to be checked on a regular base.

Finance of the walk

The development and realisation of the walk were financed by the LIFE project. LIFE is the European Union's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU.¹¹

Staatsbosbeheer only had to pay for the information panels which were placed along the route. Each panel costs approximately 80 euro. Carriers for the panels did not have to be bought; Staatsbosbeheer had enough in stock.

The maintenance of the looped walk does not cost any money, unless there are damages on the panels caused by vandalism. The walk is developed on existent paths, and the maintenance of these are paid from another budget.

A leaflet with information and the route of the looped walk can be downloaded for free on the website of Staatsbosbeheer. Staatsbosbeheer does not have any income from this looped walk.

Advice of the ranger

For the development of a looped walk on Lullymore Island, Jans de Vries advises to be careful with heavy constructions, because of the very wet circumstances in peatlands.

Qualities of this looped walk

- There is a wide range of other walk and cycling routes available;
- The Bargerveen walk of Staatsbosbeheer is used by local people and tourists;
- The information panels are in both Dutch and German, this makes the route attractive for Dutch and German speaking people;
- The walks also pays attention to cultural and historical facts and features;
- The development, realisation and maintenance are cost effective;
- The costs of the maintenance of the paths are booked in another budget.

3.4.1.2 Kruishaarderpad¹²

The Kruishaarderpad is one of the Klompenpaden (in English: Clogs paths). 47 Klompenpaden can be found in the counties Utrecht and Gelderland and are developed by respectively Landgoed Erfgoed Utrecht and Stichting Landschapsbeheer Gelderland¹³. The Klompenpaden are a big success; each walk attracts 5,000 to 10,000 visitors annually.

The goals of the Klompenpaden are:

- To replace historical paths on the map;
- To make the landscape more liveable;
- To stimulate the local economy.

"Klompenpaden are cultural historical walks that make private owned properties, such as estates and the countryside, accessible for the hiker. The route goes over historical and unpaved paths as much as possible. Quietness and the combination of nature and culture determine the atmosphere and tell the neighbourhood and hikers about the history of their area."

From: Leaflet Kruishaarderpad, Klompenpaden

The Kruishaarderpad is situated east of the town Nijkerk. The route leads through the rural area of Nijkerk and along farms, grasslands, small areas of forest, heather and estates.

The route starts at the railway station of Nijkerk. The map also shows where people can buy refreshment. The route is 15 km, but can be short cut halfway. Signs along the road and the map in de leaflet lead the route (see figure 16).

¹¹ ec.europa.eu/environment/life/, last visited at 4th March 2013

¹² Evelien Kenbeek, Officer Klompenpaden, Stichting Utrechtsch Landschap. Telephone conversation at 28th February 2013 and 7th March 2013

¹³ <http://www.klompenpaden.nl/alle-klompenpaden.html#tab1>, last visited at 24th June 2013

Education

The leaflet of the walk gives a lot of information about the landscape, nature and cultural and historical features along the route. Numbers on the map in the leaflet refer to information. There is one information panel at the start of the route, but no one along the route.



Figure 16 - Signage

Development, realisation and maintenance

Landgoed Erfgoed Utrecht or Stichting Landschapsbeheer Gelderland develop the Klompenpaden, but externs start the initiative. To guarantee the high quality of the Klompenpad, the walk has to fulfil to the Programme of Demands (see Appendix 10).

The development starts with the establishment of a trail development committee with Landgoed Erfgoed Utrecht or Stichting Landschapsbeheer Gelderland, the initiators, farmers, entrepreneurs and the local government. This committee is responsible for negotiate with farmers and other landowners, the development of an app and information panel, the establishment of special fences and bridges, organizing the realisation and maintenance of the Klompenpad.

After the realisation, a group of (local) volunteers is responsible for the maintenance of the walk. This group controls the condition of the route, the paths, signs, bridges etcetera once a month. Small maintenance is done by this group. Big or heavy maintenance is done by the local government. The farmers are responsible for the condition of the paths on his property.

The success of the group of volunteers is proved by each appeal for new volunteers. 50 new applicators is usual.

Finance of the walk

The realisation of one Klompenpad costs €50,000.

The maintenance of one walk costs €8,000 annually. This can be divided in €3,200 for compensation for land owners and €4,800 is paid for coordination, maintaining the website. One quarter of this €8,000 is paid by the local town council and three quarter is paid by the county council. The town council is financially responsible for the maintenance of the Klompenpad.

The leaflet costs €1.50. This price is based on the print costs; if the leaflet has to be reprinted, it can be paid from the income of the previous print.

Both Landgoed Erfgoed Utrecht and Stichting Landschapsbeheer Gelderland are charities, which means that they are not allowed to make any profit. Nevertheless, both organizations wish to be more independent from financial support. One way to reach this is launching a Klompenpaden app. At this moment (March 2013), this app is in development and is freely available. When this app is optimized, people will have to pay for it and this money will be spend into the maintenance of the Klompenpaden.

Advice of the officer Klompenpaden

Evelien Kenbeek, officer Klompenpaden of Landgoed Erfgoed Utrecht, has the following suggestions:

- Organize the maintenance of the walk in advance;
- Realise good facilities, such as seats and litter bins along the road;
- Think about the target group, their demands and how to reach this target group;
- Make sure that people can find information about the route;
- Accommodation providers along the route is important; people like to get refreshment.



Figure 17 - (Agri)cultural features along route

Qualities of this looped walk

- The walk is developed, realised and maintained by local and professional people;
 - Recreants and local walkers and inhabitants are very enthusiastic about this walk;
 - The walks also pays attention to cultural and historical facts and features (see figure 17);
 - The maintenance of walk is paid by the town and county council;
 - The high quality of the walk can be guaranteed because of the regular control and maintenance of the group of volunteers;
- The maintenance of the walk is supported by the local government in case of bigger or heavy maintenance;
 - There are facilities and accommodation providers along the road.

3.4.1.3 Landschappenwandeling Warnsborn¹⁴

The Landschappenwandeling (in English: landscape walk) is an educational looped walk of 6.5 km long and is situated on the old estate of Warnsborn, which is between the cities Ede and Arnhem. The walk is developed by IVN, local department Arnhem. The IVN is a Dutch charity that aims to involve people to the nature locally by organizing excursions, courses, walks exhibitions and studies.

The main goal of the Landschappenwandeling is learning about the different landscapes and habitats and how these differ during the different seasons. The walk leads through a wide range of landscapes, such as different kinds of forest, heather, grasslands, agricultural lands, river valleys etcetera (see figure 18).

The walk starts at a parking place nearby Arnhem. There are no information panels or direction signs at the start or along the route. The route and the other information is described in the information leaflet, which is sold at two nearby campings and can be downloaded on the website of the IVN department Arnhem. The route can be followed by a text description, GPS co-ordinates and by following the map (Boessenkool, F. a.o, 2009).

It is unknown how many visitors walk the Landschappenwandeling each year.



Figure 18 - Scenery along Landschappenwandeling Warnsborn

¹⁴ Mia Vorsterman, IVN member, IVN Arnhem. E-mail Conversation at 15th and 27th March 2013

Education

Every different kind of landscape is described and in addition to this, typical flora or fauna, structures in the landscape, the (cultural) history or the maintenance of each particular landscape is explained.

Attached to the leaflet is more information about the history of Warnsborn and the different seasonal aspects of each of the landscapes.

Development, realisation and maintenance

The development of this educational looped walk was part of the course for Nature Guide of the IVN. Four students decided to develop this loop for their final assignment. During the process they were supervised by an IVN-supervisor. The demands for this looped walk were as follows:

- The walk had to show a total view of the gained knowledge and skills of the course;
- The walk had to suit within the aims of the IVN;
- The walk had to support the local IVN department.

Also, an information leaflet has been published by the students.

The route of the looped walk is realised on existent paths of the old Warnsborn estate, which is currently owned by the Geldersch Landschap, a charity that owns, maintains and protects natural and cultural properties in the county Gelderland. The IVN has no work in maintaining the route.

During the process of developing and realizing the looped walk, the IVN tried to contact the Geldersch Landschap, but did not succeed in it. This means that the looped walk is basically realised without the involvement of the Geldersch Landschap.

Finance of the walk

Both the development and the realisation of the walk did barely have any costs. The walk was developed voluntarily by the IVN-students and the only costs of the realisation were the printing of the leaflets. The leaflets are available at two nearby camp sites and are sold for 1,00 euro, which is approximately what the printing had cost per leaflet. Since 2012, the leaflets can be downloaded for free on the website of the IVN department Arnhem. Eventually costs were paid of the course contribution.

The route leads on paths of the Geldersch Landschap, and it is them who maintain the paths.

Qualities

- The walk is interesting throughout the different seasons;
- The walk leads through a wide range of different landscapes, which makes the walk very divers;
- The walk also pays attention to cultural and historical facts and features;
- Because of the voluntary work of the students, the walk was very cheap to develop and realise;
- The walk is realised on the existent paths owned by the Geldersch Landschap and the Geldersch Landschap maintains the paths and also pays for it.

3.4.2 Similar looped walk in Ireland

The Girley Bog looped walk¹⁵ is situated in the southern part of Co. Meath, close to Kells town (see figure 19). The 5.6 km waymarked Fáilte Ireland recognized looped walk covers varying landscape of forest and bogland.

Traditionally, Meath is a very agricultural county. There are two or three small areas of remaining boglands. The Girley Bog has a very rich biodiversity. There are twelve species of Sphagnum moss, of which two are very special. These two species indicate that the Girley Bog is still growing. Girley Bog was recognized as a Natural Heritage area in 2003 because of its considerable conservation

¹⁵ The information about the Girley bog is mainly based on information given by Kate Brown, Chief executive, Meath Eco Tours, interviewed at 4th and 15th April 2013 en Maurice Eakin, Conservation Ranger Girley Bog, NPWS, e-mail conversation at 25th April 2013.

significance. A part of the bog has been developed as a tree plantation. The looped walk has only been developed in 2009, but can already count on more than 10,000 visitors each year.

Also, the Girley Bog looped walk is the only looped walk in County Meath.

The walk starts at the trailhead, where is a parking place without any facilities. The route uses direction signs along the route to direct people.

There is no public transport to the trailhead, or to Girley Bog. People have to come by car. There is one signage that leads to the trailhead, but people often miss it and then they get lost and can't find the trailhead.

Education

There are different activities organized at the Girley Bog by different parties, for instance a mushroom hunt, sphagnum course, heritage week and the Pink Ribbon walk. The Pink Ribbon walk is organized by the Irish Breast Cancer Association to gain more awareness for breast cancer, and attracts more than 1,500 visitors on one day. There is an agricultural business close to the bog. They organize stag and hen parties where the people can dance in the mud. They also offer guided tours and school groups. It is a good business in the bog, but they stay away from the protected area.

The walk is only being promoted on the internet. There are no leaflets.

There are three information panels available. One is on the parking place and shows a map with the route of the loop (see figure 20). The other two are along the route and show information about the wildlife of the bog.

Development, realisation and maintenance

The motivation for the walk came from a group of local people. Michelle Whelan of Meath Tourism was approached to help this group with the development of the walk. Later Coillte, NPWS (National Parks and Wildlife Services) and two private landowners got involved.

No Trail Maintenance Committee had been established or a Maintenance Plan has been determined. At this moment the walk is not in an optimal condition as it is not being maintained and there is no funding available by both Coillte and NPWS. Currently NPWS ranger Maurice Eakin is making a Maintenance Plan and forming a Trail Maintenance Committee and tries to arrange funding, for example via the local TUS scheme.



Figure 19 – Girley Bog in Ireland

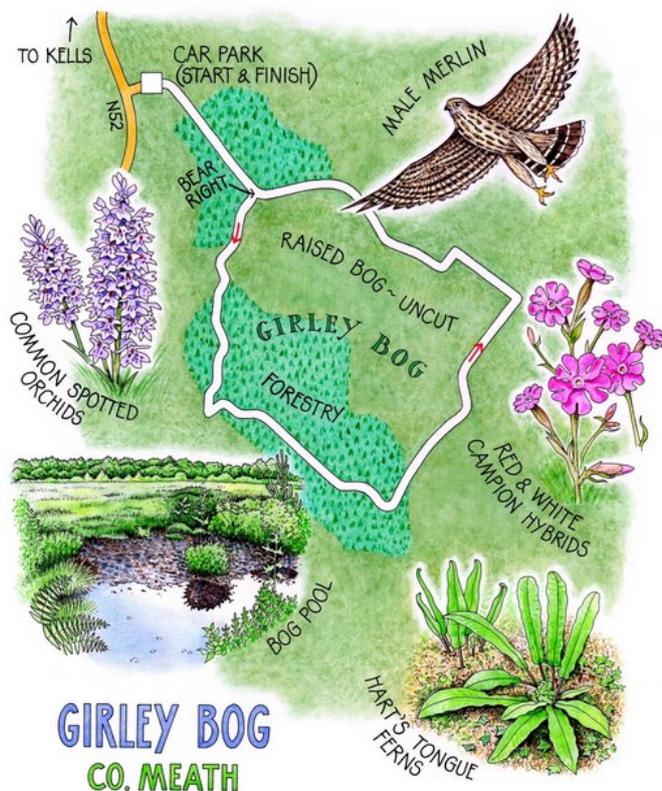


Figure 20 - Girley Bog Looped Walk

Finance of the walk

The realisation of the walk has been funded by Fáilte Ireland. The only costs at this moment is the Liability Insurance.

Advice from a local entrepreneur

- Start a maintenance committee and make a 5 or 10 year maintenance plan.

Qualities

- The walk has a nice distance and is not too challenging for most people;
- The walk is the only looped walk in County Meath.

4. Plan criteria and plan vision

The Lullymore Island looped walk has to fulfill to the demands of the different involved stakeholders. These demands are enumerated in the Plan criteria, which is the base for the Plan vision for the walk.

4.1 Plan criteria

The Plan criteria are divided according to the different stakeholders.

IPCC

1. The different habitats of Lullymore Island would have to be involved in the looped walk;
2. The looped walk has educational value;
3. The looped walk has to be realistic and cost effective to realise and to maintain;
4. The neighborhood has to be involved in the development of the walk;
5. The looped walk should connect the local residents with each other;
6. The looped walk should attract tourists and (local) recreants to the area;
7. The looped walk cannot go through Lodge Bog, as the curlew is breeding there.

Neighborhood criteria

8. The following features should be involved:
 - a. Scenery;
 - b. Natural habitats;
 - c. Peace and tranquility;
 - d. Local history;
 - e. Rural bogs;
 - f. Countryside;
 - g. Bog of Allen Nature Centre;
9. The walk should offer photo opportunities;
10. The next facilities should be realised along the route:
 - a. Good signage;
 - b. Picnic tables and/or benches;
11. A pub, tea room or some other supplier of refreshments should be realised on Lullymore Island, preferably at or nearby the trailhead;
12. The terrain should be moderately tough;
13. The walking route should have a length of three to six kilometers, possibly another loop would be rather seven to ten kilometers than one to two kilometers. The walk should take one to three hours;
14. Information about the route should be provided by information panels en route;

Visitors criteria

15. The next features should be involved:
 - a. Natural habitats;
 - b. Scenery;
 - c. Peace and tranquility;
 - d. Countryside;
 - e. Intact raised bog;
 - f. Archaeology;
 - g. Nature and wildlife;
 - h. Bogs;
16. A sufficient quantity of parking places at the trailhead should be available during week days and weekends;

17. The walk should offer photo opportunities;
18. The next facilities should be realised on or along the route:
 - a. Good signage;
 - b. Picnic tables and/or benches;
19. A pub, tea room or some other supplier of refreshments should be realised on Lullymore Island, preferably at or nearby the trailhead;
20. Information about the route should be provided via signs en route, guided tours and online;
21. The terrain should be moderately tough;
22. The walking route should have a length of three to six kilometers, possibly another round would be rather seven to ten kilometers than one to two kilometers. The walk would take one to three hours;

Landowners and stakeholders

23. The walking route should not be on land for which no permission is given from the landowners (see chapter 3.1.3 and appendix 4);
24. Bord na Móna requires a Trail Maintenance Committee for the walk;
25. The bridges that are to be realised to cross drains, have to be unsuitable for quads to cross;

NTO/ISC

26. The criteria of NTO/ISC should be applied to the loop (see Appendix 6).

Fáilte Ireland

27. The criteria of Fáilte Ireland should be applied to the loop (see Appendix 5).

Note: Before a looped walk can get Fáilte Ireland recognition, it has to have got NTO/ISC recognition. Therefore, fulfilling the demands of NTO/ISC has initially more priority, but it is good to realise the walk in a way that it will eventually cost less effort and money to fulfill the Fáilte Ireland demands.

Laws and rules

28. The loop should not be in conflict with the Irish Wildlife Act 1976 (see chapter 3.2.4.1);
29. Public liability has to be in place (see chapter 3.2.4.2);

Best practices

Based on the experiences from the best practices described in chapter 3.4, the following are recommended:

30. Be careful with heavy constructions on peatlands, they might sink;
31. Organize the maintenance of the walk in advance;
32. Realise good facilities, such as seats and litter bins along the road;
33. Think about the target group, their demands and how to reach this target group;
34. Make sure that people can find information about the route;
35. Accommodation providers along the route are important; people like to get refreshment.

4.2 Plan vision

A description of the plan vision of the Lullymore Island looped walk is written in this sub chapter. The demands described in Plan criteria (chapter 4.1) that cannot directly be applied in the plan vision of the walk itself, are mentioned in chapter 7 as recommendations.

The Lullymore Island looped walk is an educational looped walk on and around the island of Lullymore in which the local community is involved in the development, realisation and maintenance. The walk enables experience of the different (natural) habitats, scenery, peace and tranquility, countryside, intact raised bog, rural bogs, archaeology, local history and nature and wildlife. It goes along the Bog of Allen Nature Centre.

The route is well marked with signs en route and there are picnic facilities along the route. The walk itself is mainly on a moderate terrain. The walk is 3 to 6 kilometers long, with an extension to a total distance of 7 to 10 kilometers, and a shortcut to 1 to 2 kilometers.

The walk fulfills to the high quality standards of the NTO/ISC and aims to get Fáilte Ireland recognition in the future.

5. Plan

Based on the Plan criteria and vision (see chapter 4), a route that fulfills to the requirements has been developed and is described in this chapter. Also, the required measures and materials to realise the walk are summoned and some recommendations to keep the costs of the walk as low as possible.

5.1 Proposed route

5.1.1 Proposed route

The proposed route and its details can be found in figure 21. The route uses as much existing paths as possible, in order to keep the costs of the realisation low. There is one big loop of 7.5 km, that can be short cut to three smaller loops of 3, 4 and 4.5 kilometres. This fulfils in the needs of local residents and visitors (chapter 4.1).

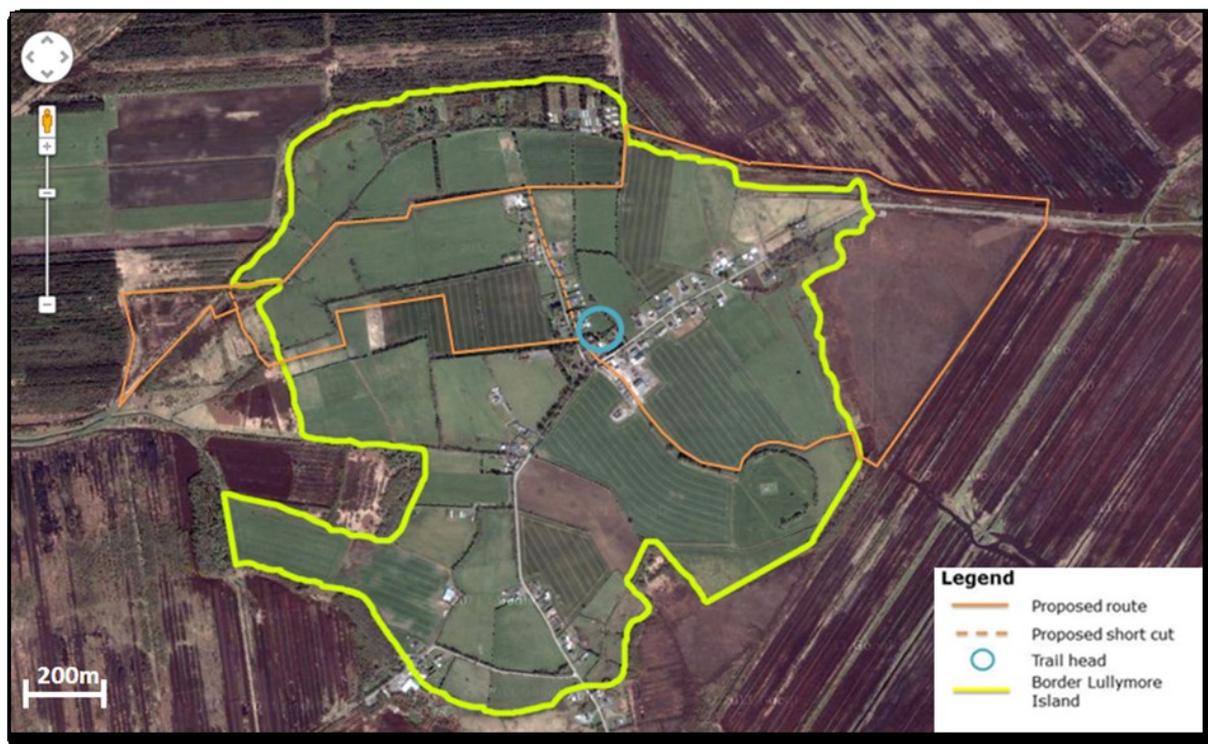


Figure 21 - Proposed route of Lullymore Island Looped Walk

The trailhead of the route is the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, in the centre of Lullymore Island. Parking and sanitary facilities are available here, as is the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, that offers refreshment to visitors of the centre.

Only three landowners are involved into this route, these are Tom Doyle, Bord na Móna and the IPCC (see Appendix 3). The route does not lead on land that has not been approved by the landowners (see Appendix 4). These landowners have unofficially given permission for the proposed realisation of the constructions, which are described in chapter 5.2.

5.1.3 Features along the route

A map with the different features along the route and the kind of required features can be found in figure 23. These required features are summoned and response to the wishes of both the local community and visitors (see chapter 4.1).

Figure 23 also shows the sceneries along the route.

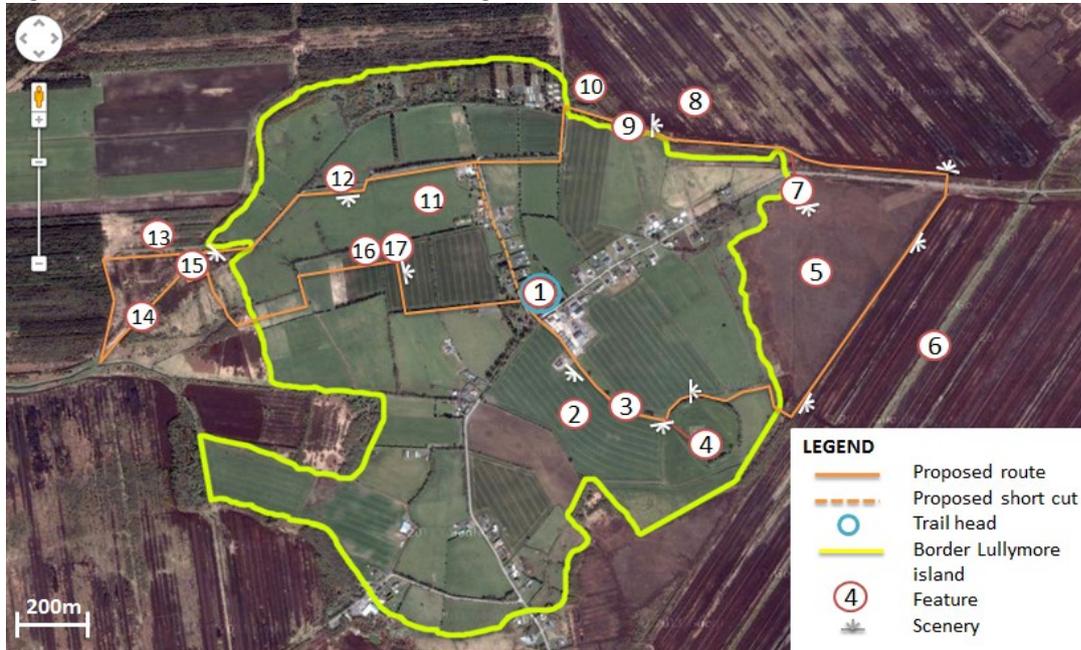


Figure 23 - Features along the route

Features to see along the route:

1. Bog of Allen Nature Centre

- Bog of Allen Nature Centre
- Local history
- Bogs
- Nature
- Wildlife

2. Barley fields

- Countryside

3. Hedgerow

- Countryside
- Nature and wildlife

4. Lullymore Monastery and Cemetery

- Archaeology
- Local history

5. Lodge Bog

- Natural habitats
- Nature and wildlife
- Intact raised bog

6. Cutaway bog

- Rural bog
- Local history

7. Board walk on the bog

- Natural habitats
- Nature and wildlife

8. Regeneration on cutaway bog

- Natural habitats
- Rural bogs
- Local history

9. Old Railway

- Local history
- Rural bogs

10. New forest plantation

- Rural bogs
- Local history
- Nature and wildlife

11. Grasslands

- Countryside
- Nature and wildlife

12. Hedgerow

- Countryside
- Nature and wildlife

13. Lullymore West

- Natural habitats
- Local history
- Nature and wildlife

14. Old railway of Bord na Móna

- Local history
- Rural bogs

15. Fen

- Natural habitats
- Nature and wildlife

16. Murphy's Lane

- Local history
- Natural habitats
- Nature and wildlife

17. Badger den

- Nature and wildlife

5.2 Realisation of the route

Although the main part of the paths and routes along the routes are in a good condition and do not need any adaptation, there are still some parts of the route where some work needs to be done. A map of these challenges can be found in figure 24 and a list of these challenges and their possible solutions are described after it. The proposed solutions are as realistic and as financially cheap to realise as possible. In chapter 5.3, more recommendations to keep the costs of the realisation and maintenance of the looped walk as low as possible are made.



Figure 24 - Challenges on the route

Challenge 1. Opening hours of the parking place of trailhead

Challenge:

- The parking place is only opened during office hours (9 AM – 5 PM);
- Most visitors will come during weekends (see Appendix 8 and 9);
- No other parking facilities.

Possible solution:

- Leave the parking place open if possible;
- Open the Bog of Allen Nature Centre during the weekends.

Landowner:

- IPCC

Challenge 2. Through the barley field

Challenge:

- There is no path through or along the barley field (see picture 25);

Possible solution:

- Realise a path;
- Ask the farmer not to grow crops at the edge of the field, as people can walk there.

Land owner:

- Tom Doyle



Figure 25 - Barley field (challenge 2)

Challenge 3. Lodge Bog (see figure 26)

This challenge has three aspects.

Challenge 3A: Entering and crossing Lodge bog

Challenges:

- There is no path;
- There are fences, drains, potholes and bushes of heather.

Possible solutions:

- Realise a board walk;
- Realise bridges over the drains;
- Realise fence step overs.

Land owners:

- Tom Doyle
- IPCC

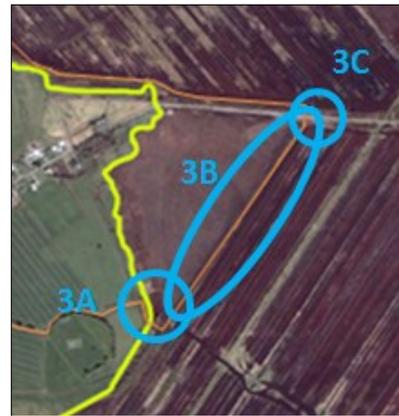


Figure 26 - Challenge 3

Challenge 3B: Between bog and cutaway

Challenge:

- There is no path;
- The surface can be very muddy in rainy weather.

Possible solutions:

- Realise a path made from a under layer of polybrane and a top layer of gravel.

Land owner:

- Bord na Móna

Challenge 3C - Leaving the bog

Challenges:

- There is a drain between the bog and the R414;
- The R414 is a dangerous road to cross.

Possible solutions:

- Realise a bridge;
- Place warning signs along the R414 and the looped walk;
- Realise ramps.

Land owners:

- Kildare County Council (R414)
- IPCC
- Bord na Móna

Challenge 4 – The cutaway

Challenges:

- The surface can be very muddy in rainy weather.

Possible solution:

- Realise a path made from a under layer of polybrane and a top layer of gravel.

Land owner:

- Bord na Móna

Challenge 5 – Muddy field (see figure 27)

Challenge:

- Muddy surface in rainy weather.

Possible solution

- Realise boardwalk;

- Realise a path made from a under layer of polybrane and a top layer of gravel;

- Place planks with chickenwire on top (anti slip).

Land owner:

- Bord na Móna



Figure 27 - Muddy field (challenge 5)

Challenge 6 – Drain against quads (see figure 28)

Challenge:

- Drain has been dug to prevent young lads on quads entering the area

Possible solution:

- Realise a footbridge that is unsuitable for quads

Land owner:

- Bord na Móna



Figure 28 – Drain (challenge 6)

Challenge 7 – Fields of Major Murphy

Challenge:

- During the growing season the barley and grass can vanish the walking paths.

Possible solution:

- Do not sow on the path in the barley fields;

- Keep the grass on the path short on the grass fields.

Land owner:

- Tom Doyle.

Other features to consider are the following:

Board walks and other paths

Several road and path constructions can be built on the looped walk. Different types of board walks are described in the IPCC Peatland conservation and Management Handbook (1998). An alternative for a board walk is a construction made of two layers, namely a under layer of polybrane and a top layer of gravel. This last type of construction is worth consideration as it is cheaper and needs less maintenance than a board walk.

Bridges and fence crossing

At some places on the route (see picture 24) bridges need to be realised. These bridges should be wide enough for walkers, but too small for quads to cross the drain (see chapter 3.2.3).

Also, some fences would have to be crossed. These fences are meant to keep the cattle in the fields, so the fence crossing would have to be suitable for walkers to cross, but would have to keep the cattle in the field.

For both bridges and fence crossings, different constructions are possible with a wide range of materials.

Signage

The loop should be indicated by signage. Most ideal would be to use the NTO/ISC signage, if the NTO/ISC recognition for the Lullymore Island looped walk would be rewarded. As described in chapter 3.2.2.1 this represents high quality walks.

However, it is necessary to remove the three signs, described in chapter 3.1.6, as these will confuse visitors.

Information panels

According to the requirements of both NTO/ISC and Fáilte Ireland (Appendix 5 and 6), an information panel about the looped walk at the trailhead/parking place is necessary. But more information panels along the route about the different features are appreciated, according to the results of the questionnaires (see chapter 3.3).

Picnic facilities

Picnic facilities en route are important for both local residents and visitors of the island (see chapter 3.3). Picnic tables or seats are preferably realised along the route at localities with a rich scenery.

5.3 Costs

Recommendations to keep the costs of the realisation of the walk low, are the following:

- Where a board walk or other construction would have to be build, Thomas Egan from Bord na Móna recommends to realise paths with a layer of polybrane (plastic) and on top of it gravel. This is far cheaper than a board walk and does not need any maintenance (interview at 29th May 2013). Bord na Móna has used this construction in other walks on her terrain and is satisfied about it.
- Val Cross, Chairman of the LBDC Community Alert, recommends to ask local farmers and residents for help. They might like to help with the realisation and/or borrow their machines (interview at 19th June 2013).
- Paul Gahan, Chief Executive of the Lullymore Nursery, offers young people (school drop outs, unemployed people) a work experience at his nursery. He has mentioned that these people can be involved in the realisation of the walk (interview at 5th April 2013).
- Thomas Egan from Bord na Móna advises to realise the looped walk in the autumn and winter of 2013, as Bord na Móna is clearing some of the old railways, which means that they remove the old railway and the vegetation and they also level out the ground. This circumstances are perfectly well for realizing a walk, after Bord na Móna has finished their work (interview at 29th May 2013). On this way the costs of preparing the ground for building work are prevented.
- Consult the NTO/ISC and Fáilte Ireland before the walk is being realised. Both organizations have a lot of experience with the realisation of looped walks and offer help and advice. They can help to exactly determine the required measures, materials and costs for the realisation of the walk.

5.4 Justification of the walk towards the Plan Criteria

Most of the requirements summoned in chapter 4 are directly applied into this plan. Despite, some of the requirements are not, these are:

2. The looped walk has educational value;
11. A pub, tea room or some other supplier of refreshments should be realised on Lullymore Island, preferably at or nearby the trailhead;
- 10B & 18b. Picnic tables and/or benches
24. Bord na Móna requires a Trail Maintenance Committee for the walk;
31. Organize the maintenance of the walk in advance;
34. Make sure that people can find information about the route;
35. Accommodation providers along the route are important; people like to get refreshment.

Nevertheless, recommendations are made in order to fulfill into these requirements. These are described in chapter 7.

5.5 Alternative routes

The next two routes (see figures 29 and 30) also fulfil to the requirements of Chapter 4.

Compared with the proposed route in chapter 5.1, these alternative routes have the following disadvantages:

- More landowners and stakeholders are involved (see appendix 3);
- More constructions such as bridges and fence step overs would have to be realised;
- Realisation is more expensive compared with the proposed route;
- Cattle grazes in the fields around the old graveyard, this is frightening for some walkers;

The specific extra challenges of these alternative walks are summoned under the figures.



Figure 29 - Alternative route A

Compared with the proposed route in chapter 5.1, alternative route A has the following extra challenges:

- 1. Cattle grazes in this field, this is frightening for some walkers;
- 2. A bigger quantity of board walk has to be realised on Lodge Bog;
- 3. This abandoned path would have to be cleared and a bridge would have to be realised to cross a drain.



Figure 30 - Alternative route B

Compared with the proposed route in chapter 5.1, alternative route B has the following extra challenges:

- 1. A pedestrians path would have to be realised along the R414, this is a demand of Fáilte Ireland (see appendix 5);
- 2. A path and several bridges and fence step overs would have to be realised;
- 3. A bigger quantity of board walk has to be realised on Lodge Bog;
- 4. Several bridges and fence step overs would have to be realised.

5.6 Open Day

At Sunday 21st July 2013, the IPCC had organised an Open Day at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre in which the proposed Lullymore Island Looped Walk was presented. Over 80 people visited this Open Day (see figure 31), mainly local residents and members of the IPCC. Special guests were His Excellency Mr. Paul Schellekens, Dutch Ambassador to Ireland, and his wife.

The day included a presentation about the proposed looped walk (see appendix 11) and a guided walk on part of the proposed looped walk.

Irish Times journalist Paddy Woodworth also attended the Open Day and subsequently wrote an article about the development of the looped walk, the Open Day and the Dutch involvement to conserve the Irish bogs (see appendix 13).

The Open Day was sponsored by the Kildare County Council, as part of the Feile An Dúlra scheme.



Figure 11 - Visitors of the Open Day

5.7 Media

Two press releases, one in which the development of the Lullymore Island Looped Walk is described (released at 2nd May 2013) and one to announce the Open Day to launch the walk (released at 27th June 2013), have been written and sent to the press list of the IPCC. These press releases can be found in Appendix 12.

The press releases have been placed on several websites. Also, the development of the Lullymore Island Looped Walk has been announced and described in some newspapers. These websites and newspapers are summoned in Appendix 13. An article in the Irish Times can be found in Appendix 14.

6. Reflection on methods

6.1 Methodic framework

The methodic framework, as described in chapter 2.1 has proved to be suitable for a project like the Lullymore Island looped walk, where a lot of different information from a wide range of sources has to be collated, in order to make realistic plan criteria, a plan vision and finally a plan.

6.2 Survey stage

The used methods turned out to work well in general. However, some methods did not work as foreseen. These are here described.

Questionnaire

Many people (visitors and residents) have filled in a questionnaire. Despite the fact that the questionnaire was tested at the IPCC office, before visitors and residents were asked to fill one in, there were still some difficulties. For example, some participants did not realise that the questionnaire form was two sided and did not fill in the back side.

Other people were confused about the questions “What is important for you in a walk?”, “What feature(s) would convince you to take a Lullymore Island looped walk?” and “What would you like to see on the Lullymore Island looped walk? Why would you come to walk on Lullymore?”. Perhaps these questions should have been formulated differently.

Best practices

Researching and visiting best practices in Ireland was more difficult than foreseen, as there was no car available during the project and the different looped walks could not be visited by public transport.

6.3 Vision stage

When the plan criteria was made, they were checked for contradicting requirements between the different parties. There were no contradictions found.

6.4 Plan stage

By walking and trying different routes with local residents on Lullymore Island, the routes had to be altered bit by bit and eventually the final plan turned out to be the best. The local residents were enthusiast, were engaged in the project and gave useful feedback. Therefore, this stage worked out well.

Open Day

The Open Day turned out to be a success. The overall feedback on the Open Day and the proposed Lullymore Island Looped Walk was very positive. Over 80 people, mainly local residents and members of the IPCC, visited the Open Day.

6.5 Involvement of local community

The involvement of the local community into the development of the looped walk went well. Many residents showed interest in the project and were happy to tell about the history of the island, about their memories and their ideas and suggestions for the walk. Also many residents filled in a questionnaire.

The success of the involvement of the local community into the walk and the work of the IPCC was shown by the big attendance and enthusiasm of residents to the Open Day.

Ideas and suggestions that could not directly be applied into the walk, are described in chapter 7 Recommendations.

6.6 Media

The press releases turned out well, as the development of the Lullymore Island Looped Walk and the announcement of the Open Day were placed on several websites (see chapter 6). Journalists from the Leinster Leader and the Irish Times visited the Bog of Allen Nature Centre to write an article in which the looped walk is described.

7. Recommendations

Co-ordinator

A co-ordinator responsible for the further development, realisation and maintenance of the Lullymore Island Looped Walk should be appointed. This person is in charge of the communication and co-operation with the local community and functions as a contact person to all other parties.

Extending of the opening hours of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre and parking place

Open the Bog of Allen Nature Centre during the weekends. 85% of the participants of the visitors survey are most likely to go walking during the weekend (see chapter 3.3.2). Some of this visitors might want to combine the Lullymore Island looped walk with a visit to the Bog of Allen Nature Centre.

In according to this, most of the visitors of the walk would need to park their car. Opening the Bog of Allen Nature Centre during the weekends, or at least opening the parking place of the center, shall meet with this requirement, which is required by both NTO/ISC and Fáilte Ireland (see appendices 4 and 5).

Refreshment facility

Based on the results of the visitors survey (see chapter 3.3.2), it can be said that there is a need for a pub, tea room or other refreshment facility, preferably on or close to the trailhead than along the route or somewhere else on the island. The IPCC might be able to realise a coffee shop or small restaurant in the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, preferably with the support of the local community. Otherwise, the IPCC might be able to encourage a local entrepreneur to open a refreshment facility. Until then, people can be directed to Allenwood (5 km) and Rathangan (8 km), where refreshment facilities are available.

Trail Maintenance Committee and Trail Maintenance Plan

A Trail Maintenance Committee is a group of local volunteers, residents and/or entrepreneurs who are involved with the maintenance of the trail. In a Trail Maintenance Plan the maintenance of the loop for the next five or ten years is established. This Trail Maintenance Plan includes the funding of the maintenance. Make sure that there is both a Trail Maintenance Committee and a Trail Maintenance Plan before the Lullymore Island looped walk is being realised.

A Trail Maintenance Committee and a Trail Maintenance Plan are required by the standards of the NTO/ISC, Fáilte Ireland and Bord na Móna and recommended by some of the Best Practices (see chapter 3.4). Part of the Trail Maintenance Plan is the funding for the maintenance.

Slí na Sláinte

Involve the Irish Heart Foundation in the Lullymore Island looped walk project, for example by recognizing a small loop in the looped walk as Slí na Sláinte. One of the benefits of getting Slí na Sláinte recognition for a looped walk would be that it attracts specific target groups, such as people with heart issues, their family and friends and supporters of the Irish Heart Foundation. These people might not be reached if the walks have only NTO/ISC and Fáilte Ireland recognition.

Leave no Trace

Leave no Trace Ireland promotes responsible recreational use of the outdoors (see chapter 3.2.2.4). Involving the Leave no Trace principles might improve the outdoor experience on Lullymore Island, and might also make people aware that their actions might influence the experience on the Lullymore Island looped walk for other walkers.

Dogs

A quarter of the visitors says that access for dogs on a walk is important for them (see appendix 9). Consider to allow dogs at least at some parts of the Lullymore Island looped walk, in consideration with the landowners.

Good signage

Having good signage along the route is important for walkers (see chapter 3.3.1 and 3.3.2). Make sure the signage is clear (for example the NTO/ISC-signage (see chapter 3.2.2.1)) and that they are regularly checked and maintained.

NTO/ISC and Fáilte Ireland recognition

For getting recognition for the Lullymore Island looped walk from both NTO/ISC and Fáilte Ireland, follow the steps that are described in both manuals, which can be found in Appendices 4 and 5.

Liability insurances

The NTO/ISC recommends to organize Public and Employers Liability Insurance, beginning from the initial stage of the development of the Lullymore Island looped walk (see chapter 3.2.4).

Consult the NTO/ISC and Fáilte Ireland before realisation of the walk

Consult the NTO/ISC and Fáilte Ireland before the walk is being realised. Both organizations have a lot of experience with the realisation of looped walks and offer help and advice. They can help to exactly determine the required measures, materials and costs for the realisation of the walk.

Expand the walk with a route around the whole island

Tom Doyle, farmer in Lullymore, has assured that a looped walk around the whole island is an excellent expansion to the current plan (see chapter 5) (interview at 5th June 2013).

Develop the information in co-operation with local residents

Involve the local residents in the walk, for example by developing the information panels with different groups from the local community (children, farmers, turf cutters, residents with an interest in local history, Bord na Móna, Lullymore Nurseries and other entrepreneurs).

Develop an app

According to Darren Reidy, Education Officer of Killarney National Park Education Centre, apps for telephones and tablets are getting more popular. He recommends the development of an app for the Lullymore Island looped walk (interview at 2nd June 2013). Also the Dutch Klompenpaden are developing apps (see chapter 3.4.1.2).

Twin with a similar looped walk

Twinning the Lullymore Island looped walk with another looped walk abroad might offer other possibilities for funding and attract new visitors, because it is an international project (Catherine O'Connell, Chief Executive, IPCC, interview at 18th June 2013). A similar looped walk to be twinned with might be Bargerveen (see chapter 3.4.1.1).

Make the walk multilingual

Seán Ó Fearghail (Volunteer, IPCC, interview at 20th June 2013) advised to make the walk multilingual by providing information of the walk in the English, Irish and Dutch language. Adding the Dutch language might highlight this international project and international co-operation with the Dutch Foundation to save the Irish Bogs (see chapter 3.2.1). It might attract Dutch visitors and offer financial possibilities from Dutch funding, for example the Dutch Foundation to save the Irish Bogs, the Dutch Embassy or Dutch nature organizations. Adding the Irish language might encourage Irish language and culture promoting organizations to fund (some parts of the) walk.

Develop leaflets and a website

Leaflets about the looped walk and a website should be developed and realised. These leaflet and website inform and encourage about the walk. Both could be realised cheaply.

Keep on investing and co-operating with the local community

The following actions might help to improve the co-operation between the local community and the IPCC and to increase the awareness and support the work of the IPCC:

- The LBDC Community Alert has offered to announce activities of the IPCC, such as Open Days, to local residents via the LBDC Community Alert SMS service.
- The IPCC could ask local residents to add their e-mail address to the IPCC's mailing list via the next LBDC Newsletter.
- Organise an activity with the LBDC Community, for example a fundraising walk or a picnic on the bog.
- Local residents can attend free courses about gardening, composting, alternatives for the use of turf etc at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre.

8. References

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Illustrations

Figure at the front cover – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 1 - Methodical framework – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 2 - Map Ireland - http://english.freemap.jp/europe_e/ireland.html

Figure 3 – Map Kildare - map-of-ireland.blogspot.com

Figure 4 - Agriculture – Ineke Roëll, IPCC

Figure 5 - Saint Patrick’s footprint – Catherine O’Connell, IPCC

Figure 6 - 1798 monument – Catherine O’Connell, IPCC

Figure 7 - Lodge bog – Catherine O’Connell, IPCC

Figure 8 - Lullymore Lodge – Marleen Jansen, IPCC

Figure 9 - Signage of a walk – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 10 – The three NTO/ISC signage (orange circles) and the presumed route on Lullymore Island – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 11 - Yellow hiker mark – Irish Sport Council

Figure 12 - Location of the three Dutch walks - http://english.freemap.jp/europe_e/netherlands.html

Figure 13 - Information Panel – Jans de Vries, Staatsbosbeheer

Figure 14 - People reading the information panel – Jans de Vries, Staatsbosbeheer

Figure 15 - A range of routes – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 16 - Signage - www.henri-floor.nl

Figure 17 - (Agri)cultural features along route –

<http://flickrhivemind.net/Tags/kruishaardderpad/Interesting>

Figure 18 - Scenery along Landschappenwandeling Warnsborn –

<http://www.eropuit.nl/uitje/wandelen/WarnsbornNSwandeltocht10of18km/id/1000081>

Figure 19 – Girley Bog in Ireland - http://english.freemap.jp/europe_e/ireland.html

Figure 20 - Girley Bog Looped Walk - <http://www.meathecotours.com/girley-bog-looped-walk.php>

Figure 21 – Proposed route of Lullymore Island Looped Walk – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 22 – Habitats on Lullymore Island – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 23 – Features along the route – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 24 – Challenges on the route – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 25 – Barley field – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 26 – Challenge 3 – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 27 – Muddy field – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 28 – Drain – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 29 – Alternative route A – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 30 – Alternative route B – Leonie Tijjsma

Figure 31 – Visitors of the Open Day – Tadhg Ó Corcora

Appendices

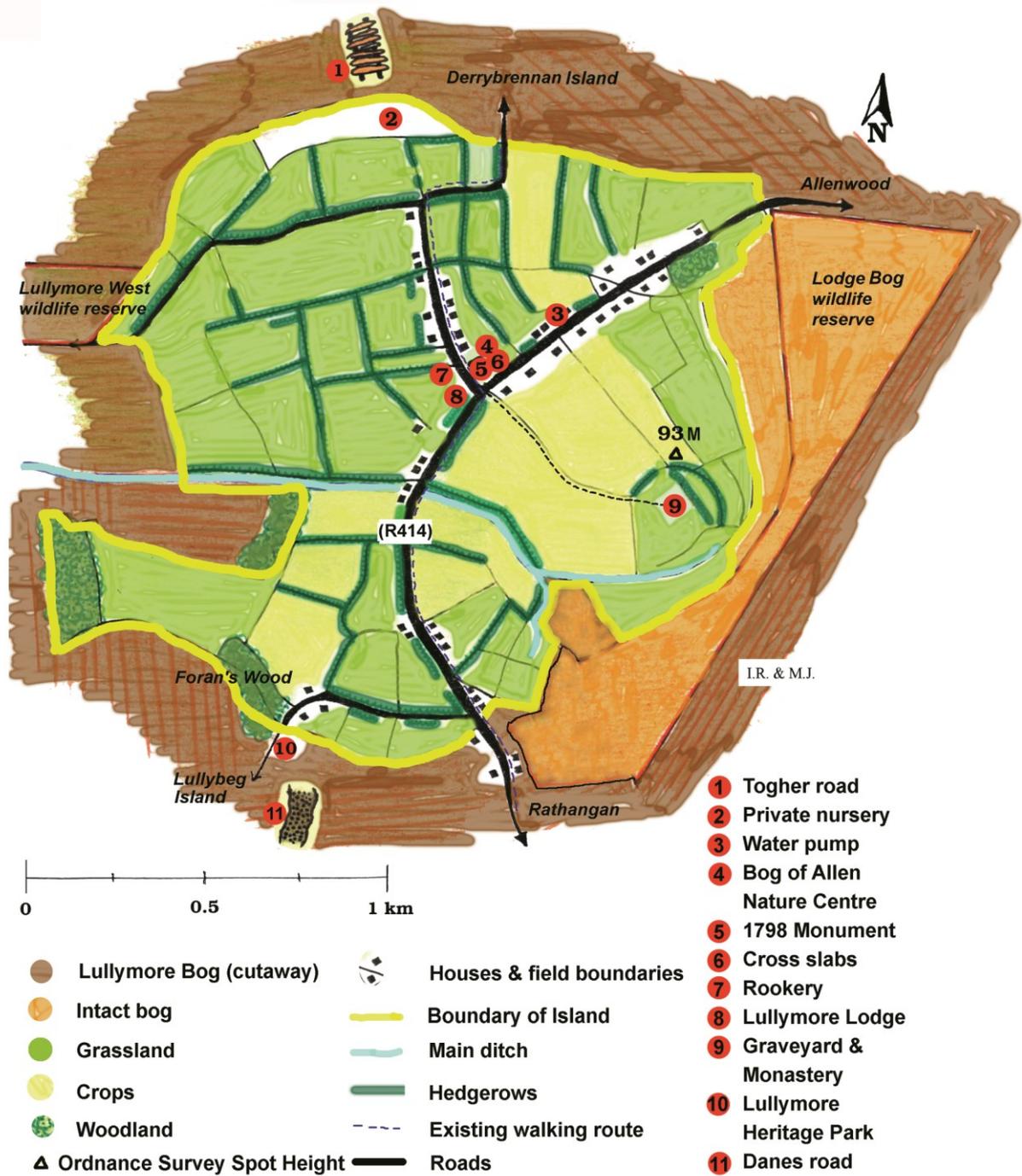
- Appendix 1 Questions Best Practices
- Appendix 2 Map of Lullymore Island
- Appendix 3 Landowners of Lullymore Island
- Appendix 4 Map not accessible land
- Appendix 5 Quality demands Fáilte Ireland
- Appendix 6 Quality demands ISC
- Appendix 7 Questionnaire Visitors and Neighborhood
- Appendix 8 Results Community Survey
- Appendix 9 Results Visitors Survey
- Appendix 10 Quality demands Klompenpaden
- Appendix 11 Presentation Open Day
- Appendix 12 Press releases
- Appendix 13 List of media
- Appendix 14 Article Irish Times
- Appendix 15 Information Lullymore Island Looped Walk on IPCC website

Appendix 1 Questions Best Practice

Questions for the owner/manager of the looped walk:

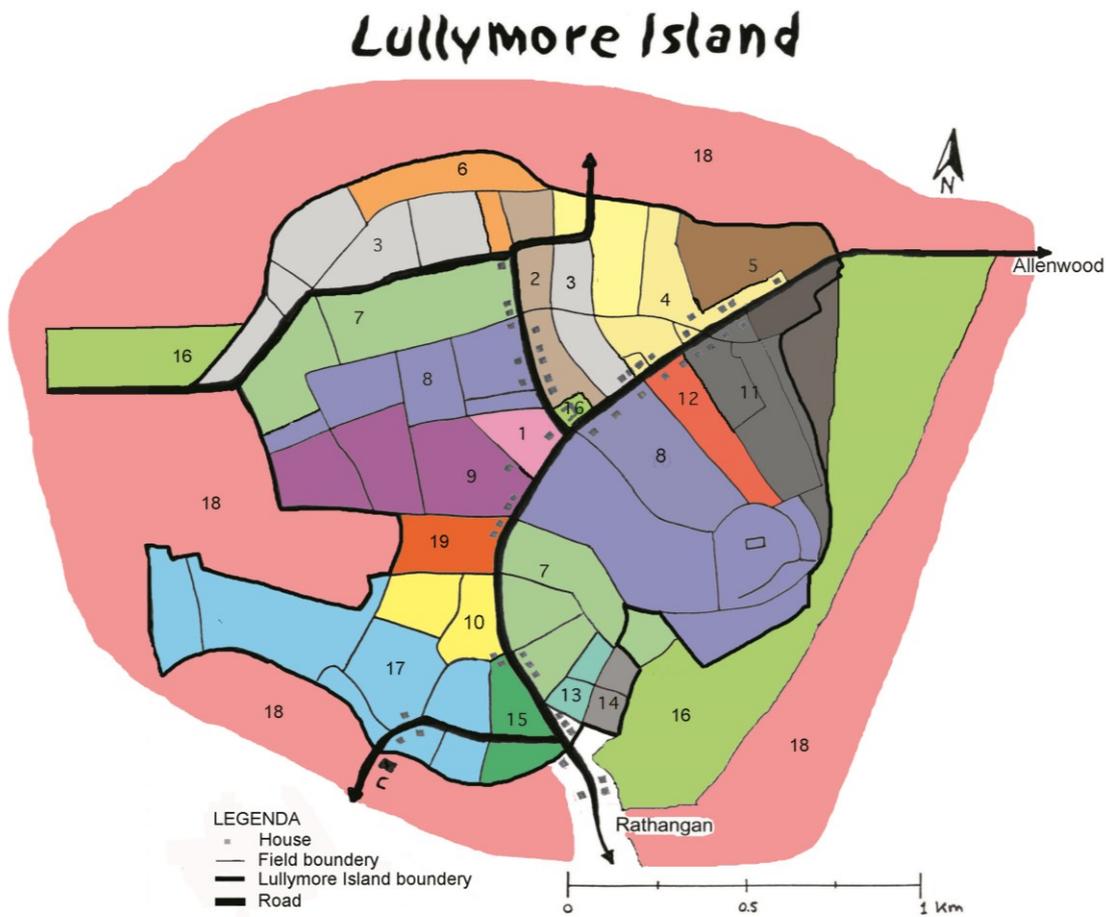
- Why was this looped walk realised? What was the motivation? Was it an addition to an existent activity? Is it part of a bigger project or activity?
- How was this looped walk developed? By what people/organization? What were the demands for this walk and how were those determined? Does the walk have a theme? Did you follow the suggestions of Failte Ireland? From what moment was Failte Ireland involved into the project?
- Is there parking and picnic facilities?
- Are pets welcome?
- What were the costs of the development and realisation of the walk? How was it financed?
- How is the looped walk maintained and by who? What are the costs each year and how is it financed?
- How is the looped walk promoted? How do visitors find the looped walk?
- Is there public transport to the trail head?
- By how many people is the looped walk visited each year?
- Is there a leaflet or map of the looped walk? Do people have to pay for this? Do people have to pay to enter? What is the income of the walk?
- Are the investments worth the results?
- What are the qualities of this looped walk? Why do people come to this walk? How is this walk different from other walks?
- What are the reactions of the public?
- What would you advice IPCC in according to the Lullymore Island looped walk?

Appendix 2 Map of Lullymore Island



This map was made by Ineke Roëll and Marleen Jansen (2005)

Appendix 3 Landowners of Lullymore Island

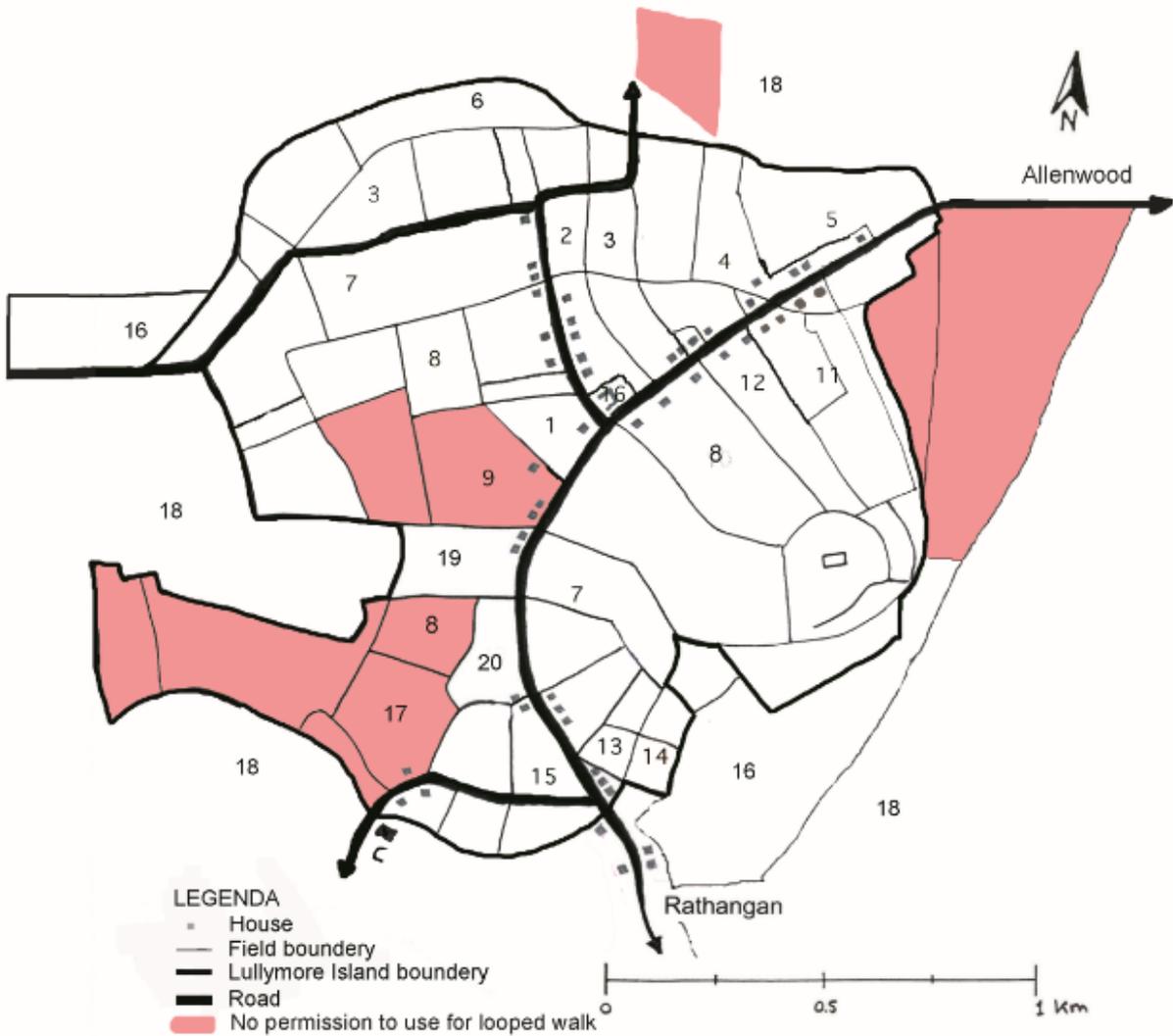


Landowners:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Laura Richardson | 9. Paddy and Mick Gorey | 17. Lullymore Heritage and Adventure Park |
| 2. Johnny Kelly | 10. Anon | 18. Bord na Móna |
| 3. Richard Conner | 11. Mick Gorey | 19. Mark Hurst and Alison Kennedy |
| 4. Joe Smullin | 12. John Cross | |
| 5. Jim Smullin | 13. Tom Higgins | |
| 6. Lullymore Nursery | 14. P.J. Kelly | |
| 7. Michael Jacob | 15. Shay (Seamus) Dunne | |
| 8. Tom Doyle | 16. IPCC | |

Appendix 4 Map of lands not accessible to walkers

Lullymore Island



Appendix 5 Quality demands Fáilte Ireland

Fáilte Ireland - National Loop Walks Criteria

Fáilte Ireland (Irish Tourism Authority) supports the development of National Loop Walks in Ireland. All

National Looped Walk development projects should be planned and developed in close consultation with Fáilte Ireland from the outset.

1. All loop walking trails should adhere to the standards recommended by the National Trails Office, which requires that;

- Permissive access has been granted for the walking trail;
- The trail complies with all recommended standards;
- Public liability indemnity insurance is in place;
- Each trail has a designated committee or responsible authority to ensure the trail quality is maintained at a high standard.

2. The loop must start from and finish at an appropriate trailhead, which provides, at a minimum;

- ample, safe car parking facilities;
- a map board with details of the trail (see Map board in Loop Furniture).

Other desirable elements of a trailhead include;

- services such as shops, pubs, restaurants;
- toilet facilities;
- changing/showering facilities;

Close proximity to public transport links and accommodation outlets is a bonus.

3. The loop should be of 1.5 hours to 4.5 hours duration for the average walker. As the fitness levels and walking speeds of walkers vary considerably, a distance range is estimated at 8km (5miles) to 12km (8miles) - but this will depend on the level of ascent and difficulty of terrain.

4. A map guide specific to the loop, and clearly outlining the trailhead, direction of travel, and key features must be easily available.

5. The loop should be as natural as possible. Physical development should only be undertaken where it is advised in a technical appraisal carried out by an approved inspector, and where;

- the walker's safety would be compromised by not doing so.(e.g. erecting a footbridge at a stream crossing, clearance of vegetation to allow safe access to an old laneway);
- the sustainability of the loop would be compromised by not doing so (e.g. developing a section of stone pathway to prevent erosion).

6. The loop should be off-road and not use any trafficked roads or tarred surfaces. Exceptions may be made in certain circumstances, for example;

where roadway is used to take the walker from the trailhead in an urban setting onto (or off) the loop;

where a short section of road is used to link two sections of the loop because no other possibility exists.

Even in these exceptional circumstances, however;

- a loop should never use National or Regional Roads (i.e. roads with N or R in the number) unless it proceeds on a purpose-built footpath;
- a speed limit of 50kms per hour must be in force on all roads which are included as part of the loop.

7. The trail must provide assured access to the walker. In this regard, the route should be clearly waymarked using a consistent standard scheme throughout and the walker must be able to complete the loop without meeting any physical obstructions or challenges from property owners.

8. The loop should provide the walker with a memorable experience. In this regard, key considerations include;

- a variety of terrain (e.g. open country, deciduous woodland, riverbank, green road);
- a range of on-route sites of interest (e.g. architecture, archaeology, biology, heritage);
- quality scenery and good viewing points.

9. The loop should avoid;

- areas, which endanger the walker in any way. This might include crags or cliffs, steep slopes, deep water, military ranges or game reserves, etc
- special areas such as wildlife reserves or heritage sites.
- environmentally sensitive areas or easily eroded surfaces (e.g. bogland)
- overuse of one type of terrain for example, planted forestry which can be limited in scenic value; or beaches where heavy sand challenges less fit walkers.

10. There must be clear evidence of plans for the sustainable development of the loop and, in particular, ongoing maintenance and marketing. This may be taken on by one organisation (e.g. Local Authority), or may involve a partnership between community organisations, public agencies, and/or private bodies.

11. Loops should fit into one or more of the following themes, with a designated dominant theme:

- Heritage
- Nature
- Mountain
- Coastal
- Island

12. All loops will be assigned a 'level of difficulty' ranging from Easy to Moderate to Hard.

Source: National Trails Office, Irish Sport Council (2012), A guide to planning and developing recreational trails in Ireland, Dublin

Appendix 3

Appendix 6 Quality demands ISC

Summary of Management Standards for Walking Trails in Ireland

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS:

- Must have permitted access from all landowners on the trail route
- Must have evidence of consultation with the appropriate authority if a route passes through a site of environmental, archaeological or architectural interest
- Must not have any hazards with potential to endanger the walker.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

1. TRAIL INFORMATION

Information about the trail should be available to users as follows:

- Trail Map and trail information: (hard copy or printable from the internet):
 - Map showing the route, with sufficient detail such that it can be used for route finding on the trail, including – start/finish points, all junctions where the user could divert from the route must be clearly represented and any other recognised access points to the trail in addition to the main start finish points should be shown.
 - Information on the grade of the trail and a definition of the grades.
 - Length of the trail, estimated time to complete and ascent in metres.
 - Brief route description.
 - Description of waymarking used on the trail.
 - Email or phone number for trail management organization.
 - Emergency services contact details.
 - Information on whether dogs are permitted on the trail.
 - The “Leave No Trace” principles⁴.
- Information Board at the trail head which includes:
 - Map showing route , start and finish point and a ‘you are here’ pointer
 - Information on the grade of the trail and a definition of the grades.
 - Length of the trail estimated time to complete and ascent in metres.
 - Brief route description.
 - Description of waymarking used on the trail.
 - Email or phone number for trail management organization.
 - Emergency services contact details.
 - Information on whether dogs are permitted on the trail.
 - The “Leave No Trace” principles⁷ and any specific trail requirements.
 - Details regarding the permissive access nature of the route if it traverses private property.

⁷ While the standard requires the use of the “Leave No Trace” principles on information boards, it is recognised that some older boards may use “countryside code” messages. This was acceptable up to 2009 but should be updated to the “Leave No Trace” principles (endorsed by Comhairle Na Tuaithe) at the earliest possible opportunity.

2. THE ROUTE

The route must:

- Be unobstructed and passable along its entire length
- Have warning signs on the trail for walkers where it crosses N or R roads or other busy trafficked roads
- Have warning signs for motorists on the road where it crosses N or R roads or other busy trafficked roads

- Be kept away from unprotected cliff tops, tidal beaches, or firing ranges.
- Warning signs must be in place warning of any hazards on the route which require users to take specific care e.g. electric fencing or livestock.
- Have protective tubing on electric fences which need to be crossed by walkers.

3. WAYMARKING

The trail must have:

- Signposting to the trailhead from the nearest public road.
- Waymarking at all junctions
- Reassurance waymarking at least every 1km.
- The same design of waymarking and waymarking standard used throughout an entire route.
- Different colours or numbers on markers or arrow plates if multiple trails are in the same area.
- Use the yellow “walking man” symbol and arrow on National Long Distance routes and this symbol is reserved for such routes.
- Waymarking clearly visible to an approaching walker and free from overgrown vegetation.
- Waymarking securely erected or attached, correctly aligned, clean and not faded.
- Temporary diversions on the trail must be clearly waymarked.

4. TRAIL SURFACE

The trail surface must:

- Be durable, robust and fit for purpose e.g. free from severe erosion and drainage problems. It should not be water logged, have extended sections which are boggy or have deep mud along the route.

5. VEGETATION AND LITTER

The route must be:

- Unobstructed by vegetation.
- Subject to routine general vegetation control
- Monitored for and kept free from litter and fly-tipped waste.

6. TRAIL FURNITURE AND SERVICES

Trail furniture includes:

- Information Boards - Seating - Markers
- Signage - Stiles - Gates
- Bridges - Bog bridges - Boardwalks
- Steps
- Trail furniture must be designed, constructed, installed and maintained such that it is fit for purpose, robust, reliable and safe.
- Walking surface on stiles, board walks, bridges or steps must have a suitable ‘non-slip’ finish.

8 “Fit-for-purpose” i.e. If a trail is aimed at inexperienced walkers, children, family groups etc, it should be relatively wide, flat and have a reasonably smooth and compact surface. It can then be considered to be “fit for purpose”. Another trail developed for experienced walkers, perhaps in remote or upland areas, may have a surface which is substantially narrower, steeper in gradient and extremely uneven but also be “fit for purpose” because it is intended for a different type of user. See ‘Trail Classification and Standards’ issued by the NTO for further detail.

Source: National Trails Office, Irish Sport Council (2012), A guide to planning and developing recreational trails in Ireland, Dublin

Appendix 2

Appendix 7 Questionnaire Visitor and Community Survey

Questionnaire - Lullymore Island looped walk Irish Peatland Conservation Council (IPCC)

The IPCC is developing a looped walk on and around the island of Lullymore and would like to know what is important for you in a looped walk.

Tick which type of walk you would be likely to take on a day out:

Distance: 1-2 km 3-6 km 7-10 km
Time: <1 hour 1-3 hours >3 hours

Picnic enroute: Yes No

Information (your preference(s)):

On line Printed leaflet Signs en route Guide
 Other, nl.....

Level of difficulty:

Easy terrain Moderate terrain Difficult terrain

What day of the week would you be most likely to take a walk?

Week day Week end

What is important for you in a walk?

Access to pub or tea rooms or refreshment
 Photo opportunities
 Access for dogs
 Other

What feature(s) would convince you to take a Lullymore Island looped walk?

Natural habitats Scenery
 Archaeology Countryside
 Local history Rural bogs
 Peace and tranquility Intact raised bog
 Bog of Allen Nature Center Special event organised
 Other, namely.....

What would you like to see on the Lullymore Island looped walk? Why would you come to walk on Lullymore?

Gender:

Male Female

Age:

< 20 21 - 30 31 - 40
 41 - 50 51 - 64 >65

Where do you come from?

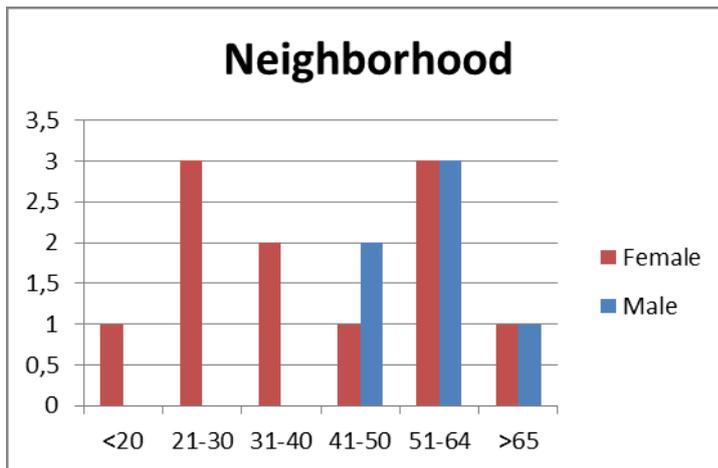
Thank you very much for filling in this questionnaire. If you would like to be informed about the progress of the Lullymore Island looped walk, please fill in your e-mail address.

E-mail address:

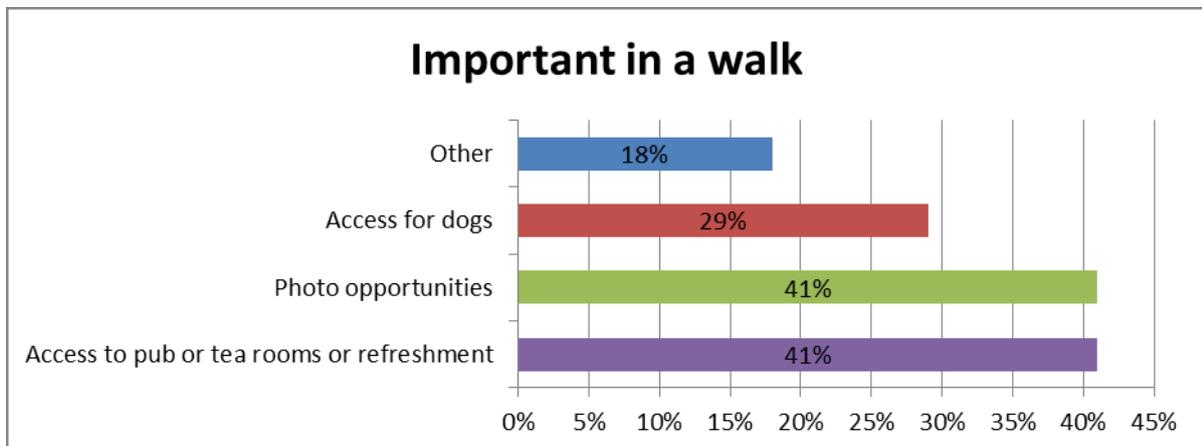
Appendix 8 Results Community Survey

17 residents of Lullymore and other nearby villages have filled in a questionnaire about the development of the Lullymore Island looped walk. The results are described in this appendix. The conclusion of this community survey are described in Chapter 3.3.1. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 7.

Note: At most of the questions, people could tick more than one options, so most of the pie charts count more than 100%.



The walk



Other:

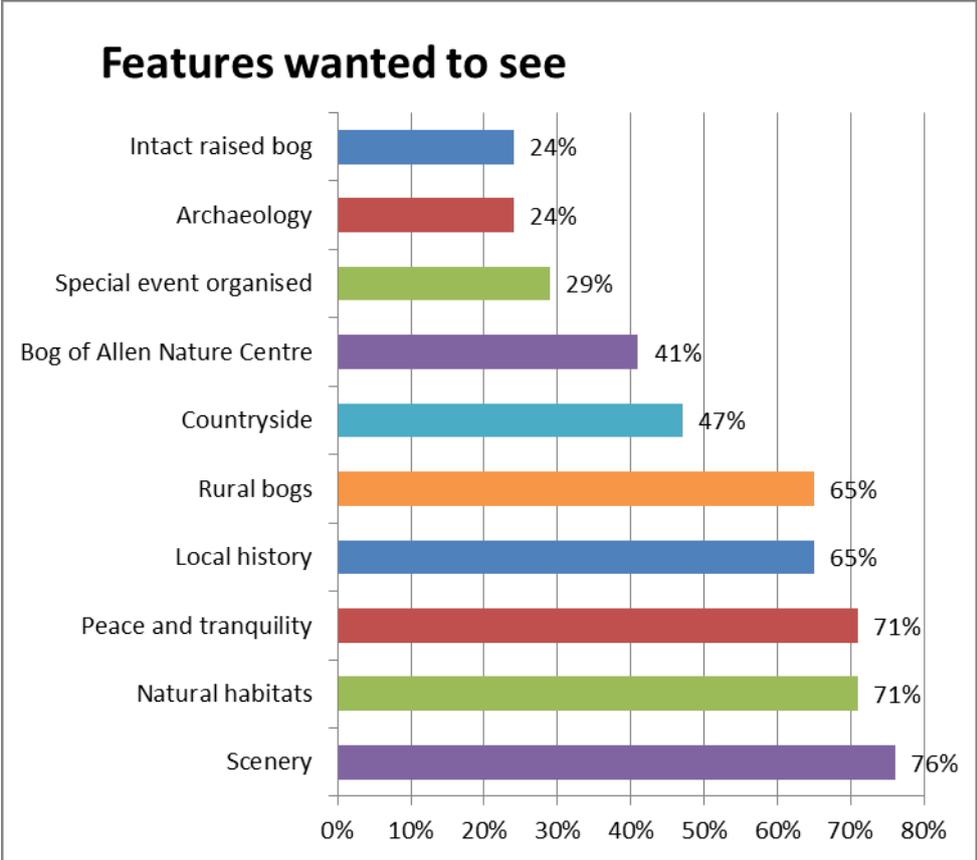
Buggy friendly

Would like to run the route

Easy access

Suitable for children to walk

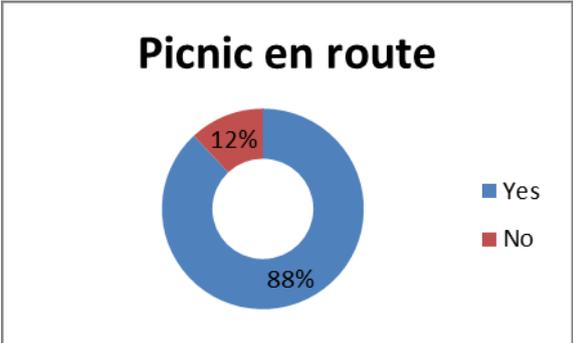
Well marked route



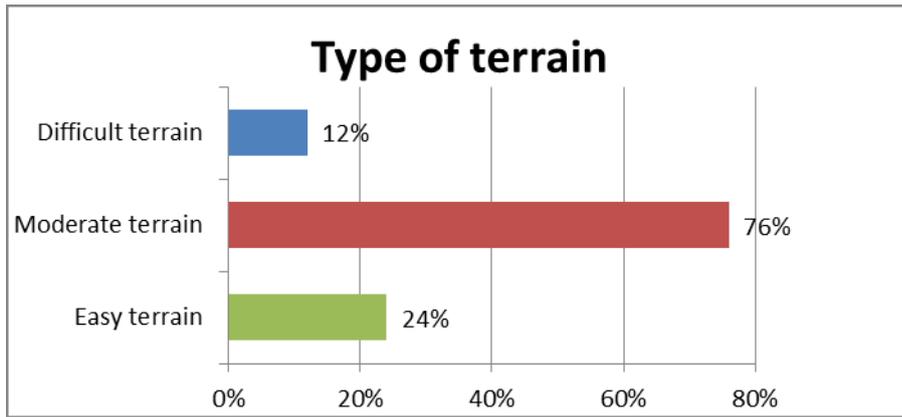
The five features that more than 50% of the participating people want to see are scenery, natural habitats, peace and tranquillity, local history and rural bogs.

Between 33 and 50% of the participants like to see the countryside and the Bog of Allen Nature Centre.

Special events organised, archaeology and intact raised bog are just interesting for a quarter of the participants.



88% of the participants preferred to have picnic opportunities en route.



Three quarter of the participants prefers to walk on moderate terrain. One eighth prefers a difficult terrain and one quarter an easy terrain.

The definitions of the different terrains are as follows:

Easy terrain

More or less flat terrain, with smooth paths or wide board walks.

Moderate terrain

Terrain with some differences in height, the paths are sandy paths, well maintained trails or small board walks.

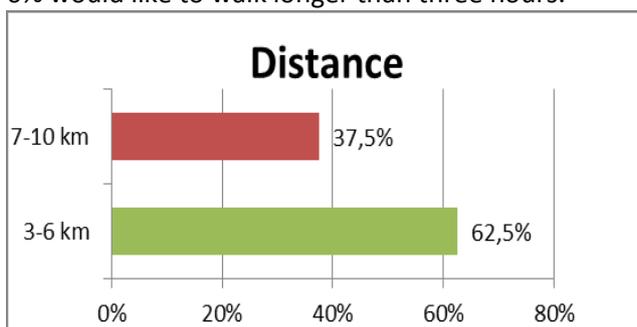
Difficult terrain

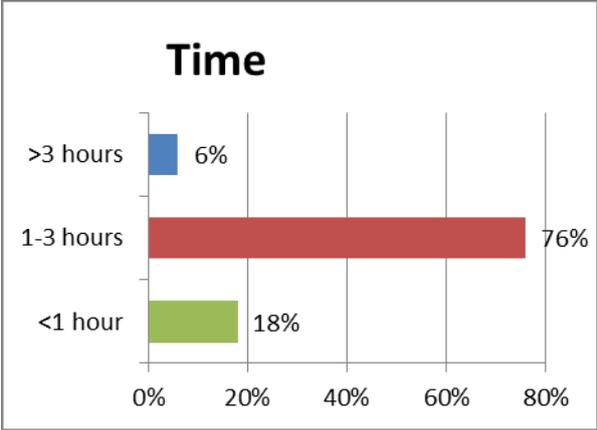
Terrain with much differences in height, the paths are basically tracks and trails and can include some light climbing.

Distance and time of a walk

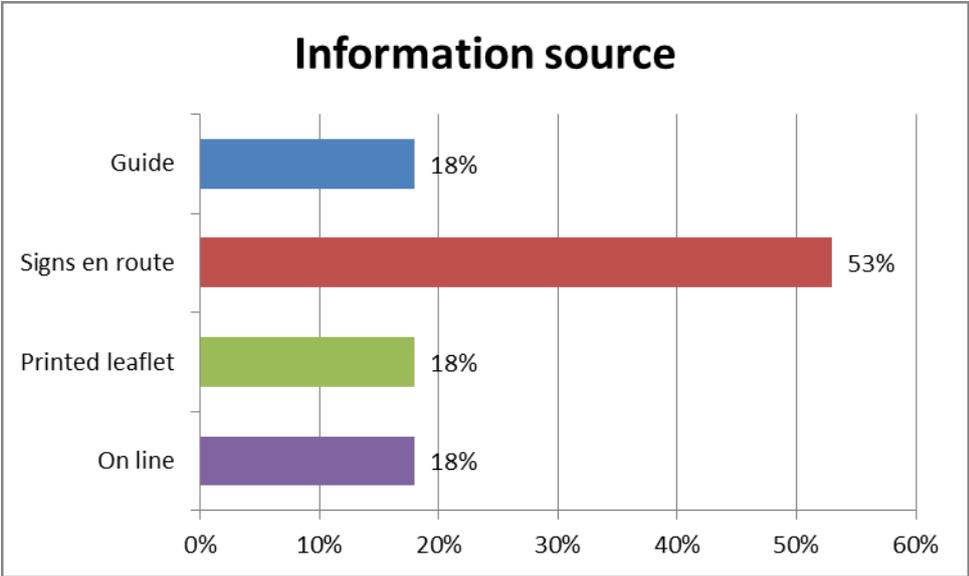
Almost two third of the participating neighbors prefers a walk with a distance between three and six kilometers and one third likes to walk longer distances from seven to ten kilometers. None of the participating neighbors would like to walk a walk of one to two kilometers.

76% would like to walk for one to three hours, while 18% prefers to walk shorter than one hour. Only 6% would like to walk longer than three hours.



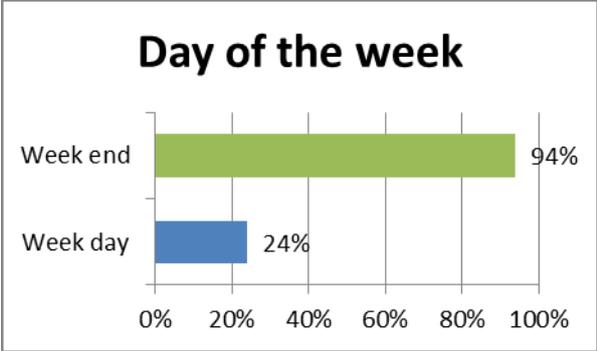


Information source



More than the half of the participants prefers signs en route. Getting the information on line, via a printed leaflet or a guided tour are all called by 18%.

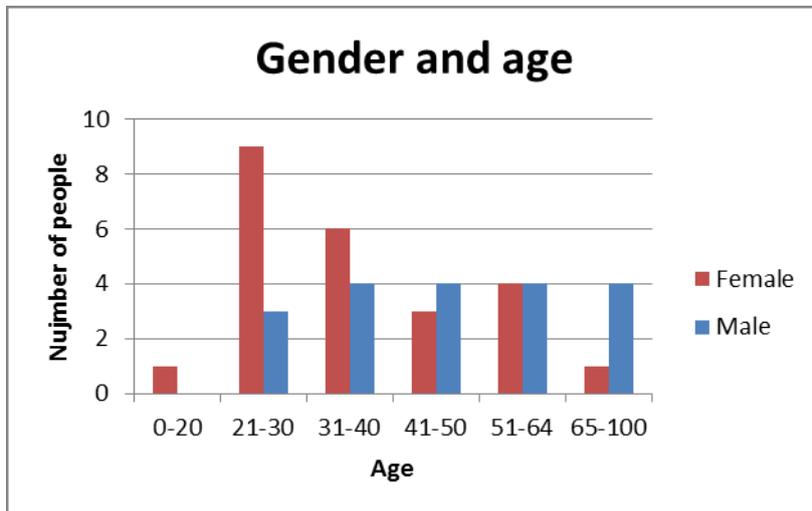
Day of the week



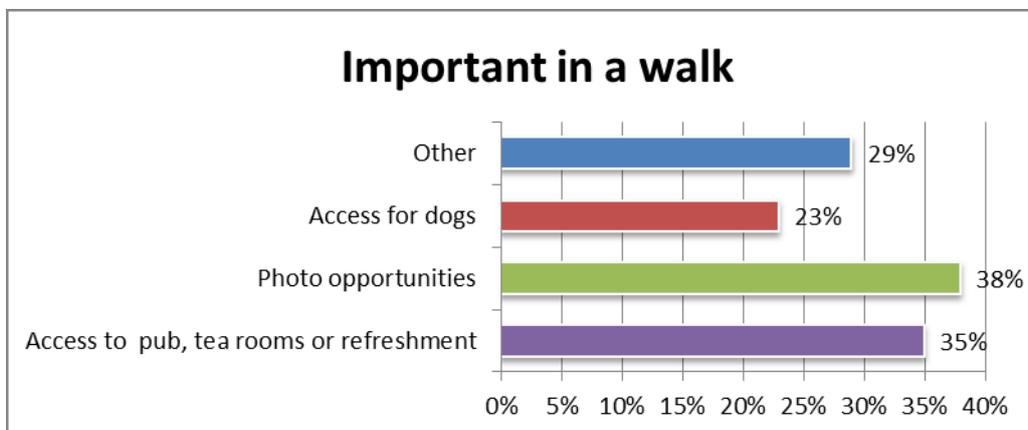
Appendix 9 Results Visitors Survey

48 visitors of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre have filled in a questionnaire about the development of the Lullymore Island looped walk. The results are described in this appendix. The conclusions of this visitors survey are described in Chapter 3.3.2. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 7.

Note: At most of the questions, people could tick more than one options, so most of the pie charts count more than 100%.



The walk



Having photo opportunities along the route and access to refreshment are mentioned as important for more than one third of the participants. The access for dogs is less important for most of the participants, but is still ticked by almost a quarter of the participants.

29% of the participants has given other preferences, under feature "Other". These suggestions are arranged and summoned as follows:

Information and signage

- *Information along the way (signs)*
- *To get out and enjoy nature and other items of interest*
- *Info as you walk on flora and fauna*
- *Good signage*

Picnic and benches

- *Simple picnic area*
- *Place to sit (dry)*
- *Seating en route*

Accessibility

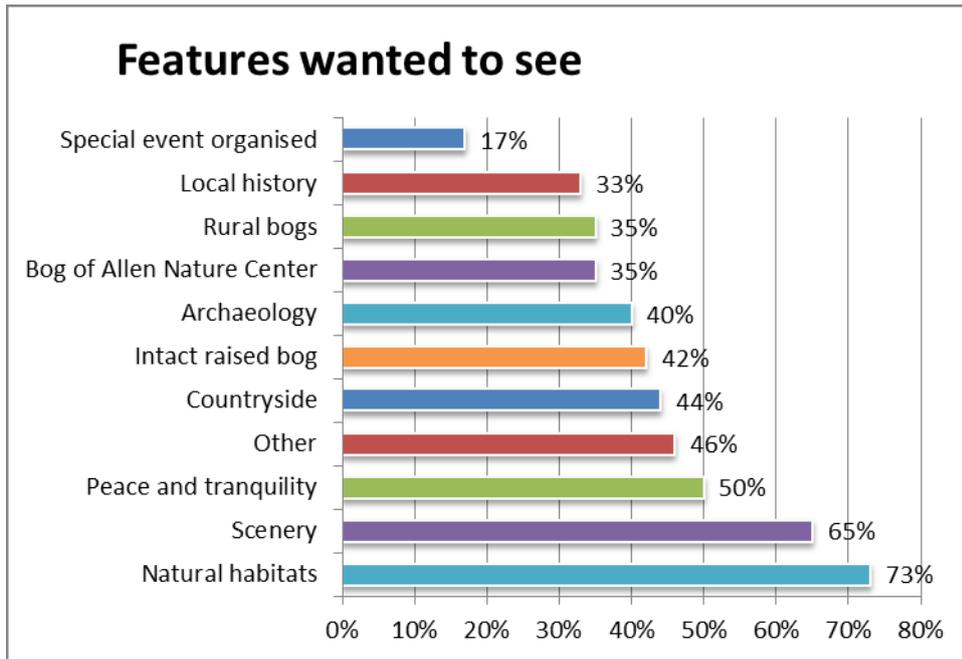
- *Wheelchair accessibility*
- *To bring children*

Features to see

- *Nature, wildlife*
- *Wildlife*
- *Views*
- *Wildlife*
- *Interestings to see*
- *Scenery*
- *Wildlife*
- *Beautiful natural environment*

Other

- *Away from habitations*
- *Row boats*
- *Peace + quiet*



The three features that more than 50% of the participants want to see are the natural habitats, scenery and peace and tranquility.

Between 33 and 50% of the participants want to see and/or experience the countryside, intact raised bog, archaeology, Bog of Allen Nature Center, rural bogs and the local history.

Only 17% of the participations says to like to be attracted by a special event.

46% of the participants has given other suggestions, under feature “Other”. These suggestions are arranged and summoned as follows:

Nature, environment and landscape

- *Limited interference to nature*
- *Beautiful scenery*
- *Scenery*
- *Fresh air*
- *No pollution*
- *Nature*
- *To learn more about the environment there*

Habitats

- *Animals in their natural habitat*
- *Diversity of habitat type*

Flora and fauna

- *Animals-life (birds, butterflies, frogs, hares)*
- *Beautiful wildlife*
- *Look at bogland species of flora and fauna*
- *Wildlife - otters!*
- *Examples of local plant + animal life (e.g. Amphibians, insect, bird)*
- *Bird + plants*
- *Wildlife and plants*
- *Insects + plants*
- *Animals*
- *Birds*
- *Biodiversity in action*
- *Nature, wildlife*

Bogs

- *To see natural bogland*
- *To learn about bogs*
- *Raised bogs*
- *The bogs, if in the area*
- *Enjoy walks in bogland areas*

History

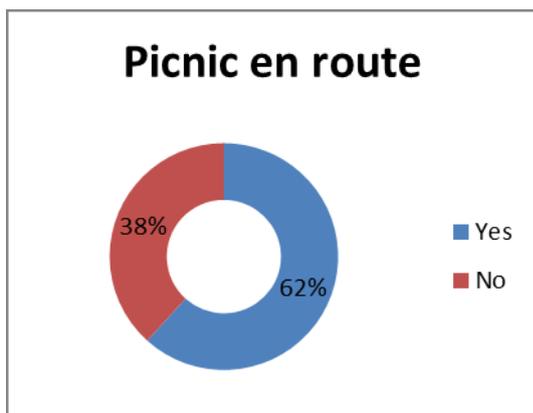
- *History, information*

Refreshment

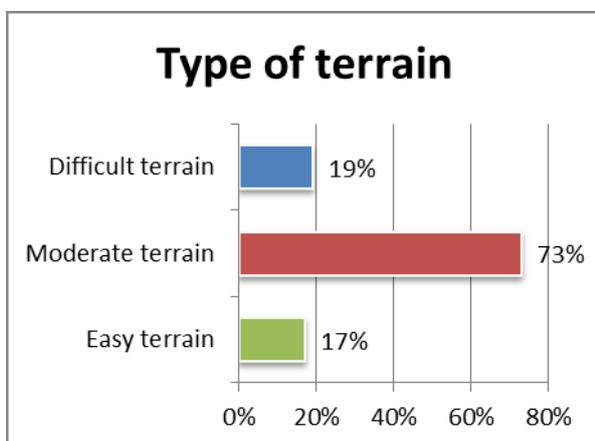
- *Bog of Allen Nature Centre (place to stop, rest, get more info, have cup of tea)*
- *Chance for a cup of tea at end!*
- *Cup of tea or coffee at finish if possible*

The walk itself

- *Seating along route would be nice.*
- *Signage*
- *Exercise*
- *Loop walk, no return on same track*
- *Not too far away from where I live*
- *Just because I've never been there yet*
- *Nice features along the walk that could be shown to visiting groups*



Almost two third of the participants prefers to have picnic opportunities en route.



Three quarter of the participants prefers to walk on moderate terrain. One sixth prefers easy or difficult terrain.

The definitions of the different terrains are as follows:

Easy terrain

More or less flat terrain, with smooth paths or wide board walks.

Moderate terrain

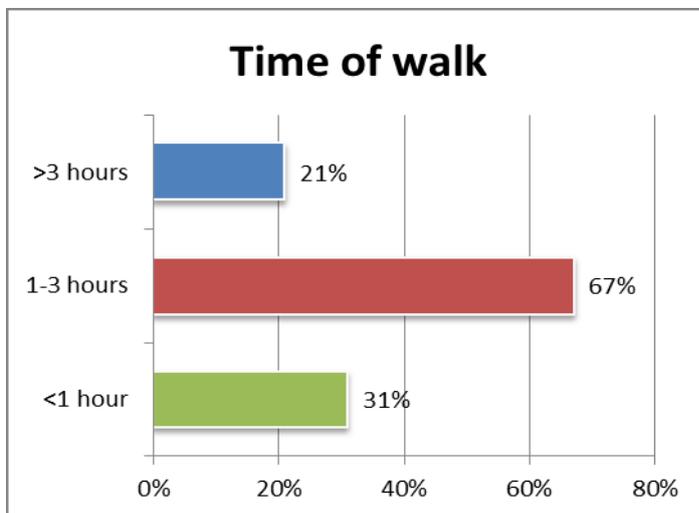
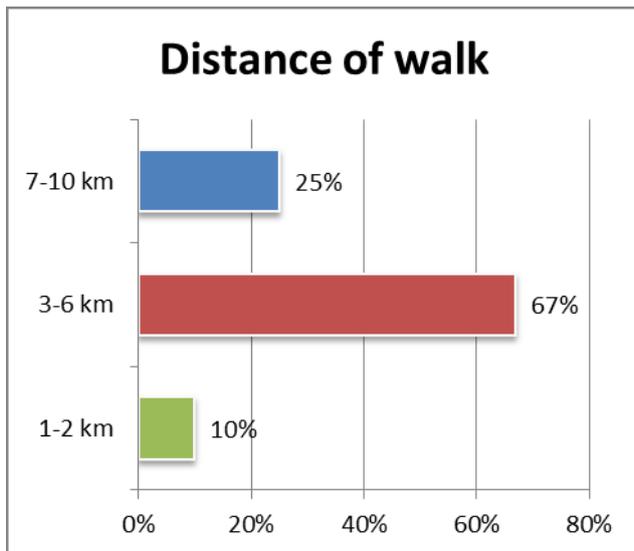
Terrain with some differences in height, the paths are sandy paths, well maintained trails or small board walks.

Difficult terrain

Terrain with much differences in height, the paths are basically tracks and trails and can include some light climbing.

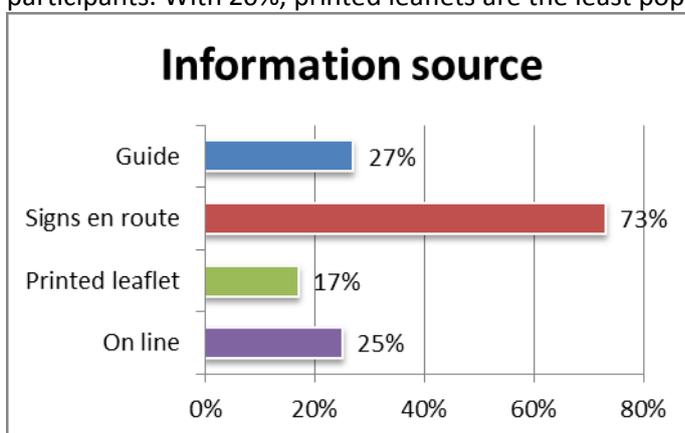
Distance and time of a walk

Two third of the participants prefers a walk with a distance between three and six kilometers, and like to walk for one to three hours. 25% likes to walk longer distances from seven to ten kilometers. 31% prefers to walk for shorter than one hour, while 21% says to like to walk for more than three hours.



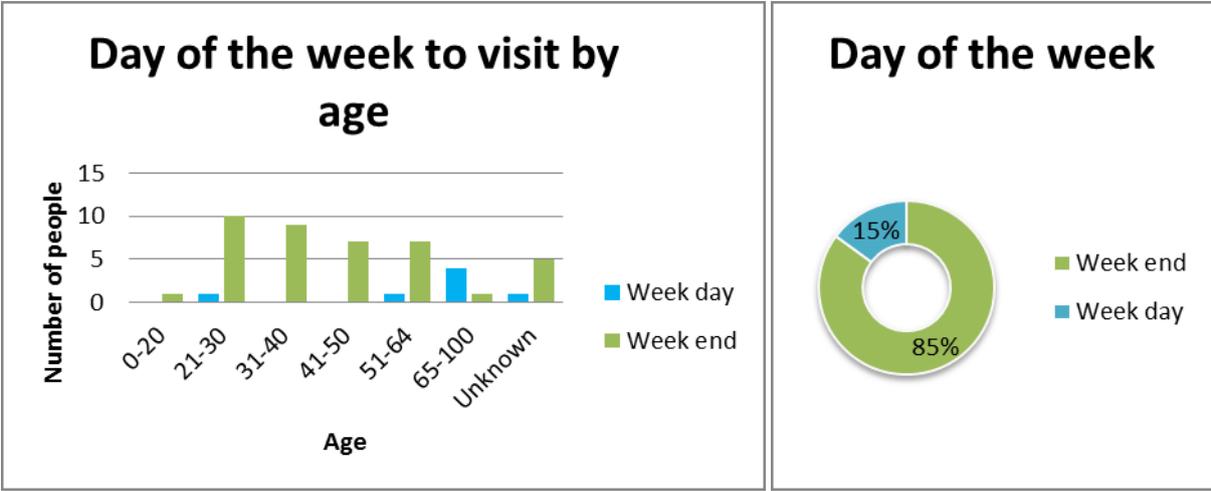
Information source

Signs en route are by far the most important information source for the participants. Guided tours or information about the walk on the internet are important for respectively 18% and 19% of the participants. With 20%, printed leaflets are the least popular information source.



Day of the week

85% of the participants are more likely to go walking at the weekend. Most of the participants who chose to walk on a weekday were older than 65 years and may be retired.



Appendix 10 Quality demands Klompenpaden

Kwaliteitseisen Klompenpaden

Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht en Landschapsbeheer Gelderland hebben bewust gekozen om een bepaald soort wandelroutes aan te leggen. Deze wandelroutes worden Klompenpaden genoemd. Deze naam is als merk geregistreerd door Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht. Als een andere organisatie een Klompenpad wil ontwikkelen, dient zij dat met toestemming van Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht te ontwikkelen. Om aan te geven waar een Klompenpad aan moet voldoen, zijn bijgaand een aantal kwaliteitseisen opgesteld:

1. Klompenpaden zijn rondwandelingen in het agrarische cultuurlandschap, die zoveel mogelijk over historisch tracé gaan.
2. Bij onderzoek naar historische paden wordt ten minste gebruik gemaakt van de kadastrale kaart van 1832 omdat dit de eerste uniforme opmeting van perceelsgrenzen is in Nederland. Indien mogelijk worden aanvullend oudere kaarten gebruikt. Er vallen ook paden onder die bekend zijn op basis van oral history en mogelijk minder oud zijn.
3. De lengte van een Klompenpad ligt tussen de 5 en 15 kilometer. Wanneer mogelijk, wordt bij wandelroutes langer dan 10 kilometer ook een 'doorsteekroute' gecreëerd waardoor de wandelroute ook verkort kan worden gelopen.
4. Een Klompenpad sluit waar mogelijk aan op andere Klompenpaden middels een overstaproute (grijs gemarkeerd). De lengte van een overstaproute is maximaal 2 kilometer (richtlijn, bij andere overwegingen in overleg treden).
5. De wandelroute en overstaproutes zijn in samenwerking met de betreffende gemeente en (representanten van) lokale partijen en bewoners ontwikkeld.
6. Klompenpaden en overstaproutes gaan zoveel mogelijk via onverharde paadjes door het buitengebied en zijn daarom (ten dele) niet geschikt voor kinderwagens en rolstoelen. Op elk klompenpad wordt ergens echt door het boerenland gelopen (streven is minimaal 15% boerenland).
7. Klompenpaden en overstaproutes mogen geen overmatige overlast veroorzaken voor flora en fauna (denk bijvoorbeeld aan eventuele omleidingen tijdens broedseizoen weidevogels e.d.).
8. Klompenpaden zijn vooral bedoeld voor de bewoners uit het dorp (rondje om het dorp) en de (regio)recreant.
9. Klompenpaden en overstaproutes moeten zoveel mogelijk aansluiten bij agrotouristische bedrijven en andere wandelpaden in de streek.
10. Klompenpaden gaan eerder in op regionale natuur- en cultuurhistorie en streekeigenheid dan landelijke.
11. De naam van de wandelroute heeft een historisch tintje, bijvoorbeeld de naam van de buurtschap waar de wandelroute doorheen loopt, of een oude boerderij- of straatnaam.
12. Voor nieuw aangelegde paden is een contract en standaard vergoedingen voor openstelling afgesloten met de betreffende grondeigenaar (en eventuele pachter) voor minimaal 3 jaar, conform het concept-contract van Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht en Landschapsbeheer Gelderland.
13. Het onderhoud van de Klompenpaden is goed geregeld; dat wil zeggen dat er structureel geld is voor onderhoud, er beheerafspraken zijn met de grondeigenaren en de bewegwijzering minstens één keer per maand gecontroleerd wordt. SLG danwel LEU maken daarvoor afspraken met betreffende gemeenten/provincies om deze ondersteuning mogelijk te maken (coördinatie beheer klompenpaden / Steunpunt Klompenpaden).
14. Het onderhoud en de markering van de wandelroute wordt gecontroleerd door een werkgroep (vrijwilligers) met ondersteuning van de SLG danwel LEU (lokaal draagvlak=langdurig succes).

15. Daar waar nodig en mogelijk, worden aanliggende landschapselementen hersteld of nieuw aangelegd.
16. Klompenpaden hebben een informatiestartpaneel volgens het format van Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht en Landschapsbeheer Gelderland. Het infopaneel staat op een goed bereikbare plek (auto en openbaar vervoer) en dicht in de buurt van waar de klompenpadenbrochure verkrijgbaar is.
17. Klompenpaden en overstaproutes zijn bewegwijzerd (2 kanten op). De stickers en plaatjes zijn volgens het huisstijl-format van Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht en Landschapsbeheer Gelderland.
18. Nieuw aangelegde paden of overstaproutes worden voorzien van openstellingsborden volgens het huisstijl-format.
19. Klompenpaden hebben een brochure met achtergrondinformatie volgens het huisstijl-format.
20. De communicatiemiddelen (brochure, de bewegwijzeringsstickers en informatiepaneel) dienen in samenwerking met Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht en Landschapsbeheer Gelderland ontwikkeld te worden.
21. De brochure en de verspreiding is in de provincie Utrecht in handen van Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht en in Gelderland door Landschapsbeheer gelderland. Buiten deze provinciegrenzen zal in overleg bekeken worden wie de coördinatie op zich neemt.
22. Het routekaartje en de brochure van de Klompenpaden mogen alleen op de website www.klompenpaden.nl staan (dit vanwege wijzigingen in de routes). Andere websites mogen uiteraard wel een link maken naar deze pagina.
23. De Klompenpaden mogen alleen worden opgenomen in andere publicaties in overleg met en na toestemming van Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht danwel Landschapsbeheer Gelderland.

Aangepast op 14-11-2011

Quality demands Klompenpaden

Translated from Dutch by Leonie Tijsma

Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht (LEU) and Landschapsbeheer Gelderland (SLG) have chosen awarily to realise a specific kind of walking route. These walking routes are called Klompenpaden. This name is registered as a brand by Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht. If another organisation wishes to develop a Klompenpad, it has to get approval by Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht. A Klompenpad has to be fulfil to the next quality demands:

1. Klompenpaden are looped walks in the agricultural cultural landscape, which lead over historical paths as much as possible.
2. By research to historical paths, at least the cadastral map of 1832 has to be used, because this map shows the first uniform measurements of borders of the sites in the Netherlands. When possible, older maps are additionally used. Paths based on oral history or younger paths are also allowed.
3. The length of a Klompenpad is between 5 and 15 km. If possible, at walks longer than 10 km a short cut is realised, so that people can walk the same route shorter.
4. If possible, a Klompenpad connects with other Klompenpaden by a change route (marked in grey). The length of this change route is maximal 2 km (guideline, consultation is possible).
5. The walking route and change route is developed in cooperation with the particular town council(s) and (representatives of) local parties and inhabitants.

6. Klompenpaden and change routes lead over unpaved paths through the country side and are therefore (partly) not suitable for buggies and wheeling chairs. Every Klompenpad covers partly farmers land (aimed is at least 15%).
7. Klompenpaden and change routes should not cause too much disturbance to flora and fauna (for example eventually diversions during the breeding season of birds etc.).
8. Klompenpaden are mainly meant to the local inhabitants (a round around the village/town) and the (regional) recreant.
9. Klompenpaden and change routes have to connect agrotouristic companies and other walking paths in the area.
10. Regional natural and cultural history and the character of the local area is more important than rural.
11. The name of the route has to be historical, for example the name of the area of the walk or an old farm- or street name.
12. For new realised paths, a contract and standard compensation for accessibility is made with the particular land owner (eventually the stakeholder) for at least 3 years, in accordance with the basic contract of Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht and Landschapsbeheer Gelderland.
13. The maintenance of the Klompenpaden is well organized; this means that there is structural money available for maintenance, there are maintenance agreements with land owners and the route signs are controlled at least once a month. Both SLG and LEU make agreements with the particular town/county council to make this support possible (co-ordination Klompenpaden / Klompenpaden Office).
14. The maintenance and signage of the walking route are controlled by a Trail Maintenance Committee (volunteers) with the support of SLG or LEU (local support = sustainable success).
15. If required and possible, bordering landscape elements are restored or newly realised.
16. Klompenpaden have an information start panel according to the format of Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht and Landschapsbeheer Gelderland. The information panel is placed on a well reachable place (car and public transport) and close to the place are the Klompenpaden leaflet is available.
17. Klompenpaden en change routes are signed into two directions. The stickers and signage are according to the branding format of Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht and Landschapsbeheer Gelderland.
18. Newly realised paths or changed routes are supplied with accessibility signage according to the branding format.
19. Klompenpaden have a leaflet with background information according to the branding format.
20. The communication (leaflet, signage stickers and information panel) are developed in coordination with Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht and Landschapsbeheer Gelderland.
21. The leaflet and its dispersion in the county Utrecht is coordinated by Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht and in Gelderland by Landschapsbeheer Gelderland. Outside of these county borders, it is consulted who will coordinate the dispersion.
22. The route map and the leaflet are only allowed to be available at the website www.klompenpaden.nl (this because of changes in the routes). Of course may other websites place a link to this page.
23. The Klompenpaden may only be publiced in other publications after consultation and approval of Landschap Erfgoed Utrecht or Landschapsbeheer Gelderland.

Adapted at 14-11-2011

Lullymore Island looped walk



Leonie Trjsma
Student Forestry and Nature Conservation



TODAY'S TALK

- Main aims
- Lullymore Island
- History of the looped walk
- My work
- Visitor and community opinion
- The route – highlights



LULLYMORE ISLAND



LULLYMORE ISLAND



NATURE AND WILDLIFE



LOCAL HISTORY





HISTORY LOOPED WALK

Previous work:

- First proposals came from Kildare County Council (2005)
- Ineke Roëll and Marleen Jansen (2005)
- University College of Dublin (UCD) (2012)

Current work:

- Leonie Tijmsa (2013)



REQUIREMENTS IN ADVANCE

- The different habitats of Lullymore Island have to be involved in the looped walk;
- The neighborhood has to be involved into the development of the walk;
- The looped walk has to attract tourists and local visitors to the area;
- The looped walk has to be educational;
- The looped walk has to be realistic and cost effective to realize and maintain;
- The looped walk has to get Fáilte Ireland recognition.

MY WORK



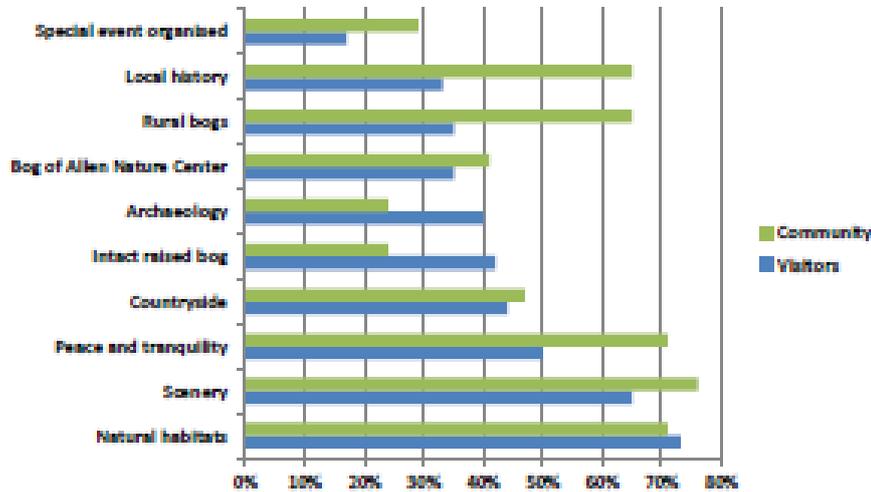
VISITOR AND COMMUNITY SURVEY

- 48 visitors of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre
- 17 local residents of Lullymore, Drumsu and Barnaran townlands.

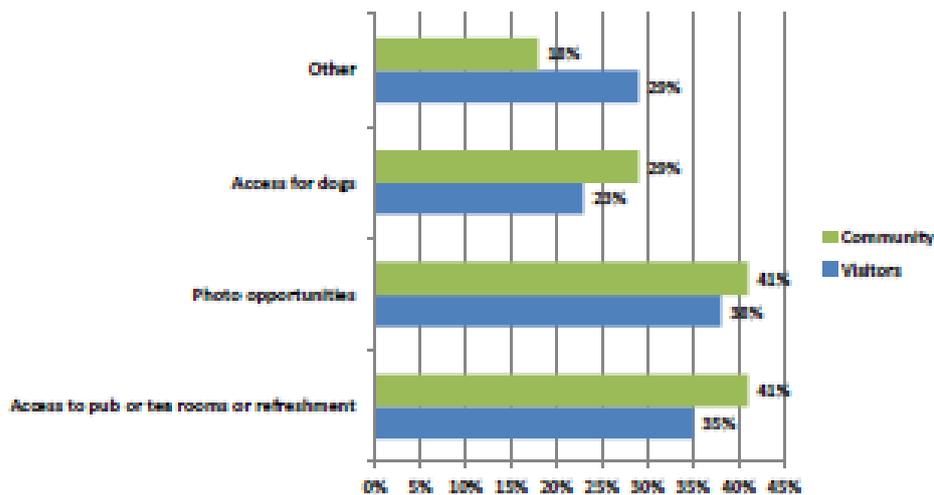




WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ON THE LULLYMORE ISLAND LOOPED WALK?

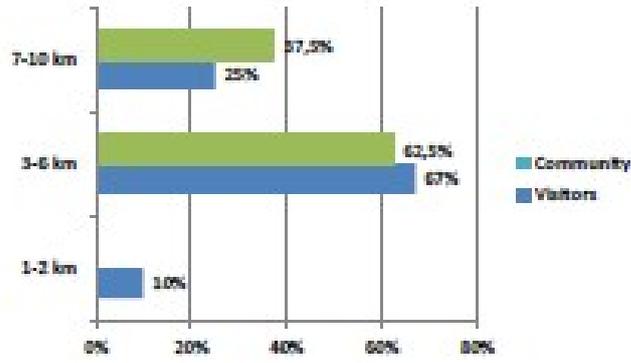


WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU IN A WALK?



Other: Seeing nature and wildlife; information, good direction signs and picnic possibilities en route

DISTANCE



Proposed route Lullymore Island looped walk





DETAILS OF THE WALK

- Length and duration:
 - ⦿ Whole loop: 7,5 km 120 minutes
 - ⦿ West loop: 4 km 60 minutes
 - ⦿ East loop: 4,5 km 75 minutes
 - ⦿ Central loop: 3 km 45 minutes
 - ⦿ West short cut: 100 m 5 minutes
 - ⦿ East short cut: 500 m 10 minutes
- Trailhead: Bog of Allen Nature Centre
 - ⦿ Parking place
 - ⦿ Opened during office hours



WHAT'S NEXT?

- Funding
- Realization of the walk itself
- Information panels
- Direction signs
- Maintenance

- Most important: ENJOY THE WALK!

Proposed route Lullymore Island looped walk



THANK YOU

- Lullymore Island looped walk
- Guided tour or free walk through the museum and gardens
- Visit Lodge bog
- Pond dipping
- Tea and coffee



Appendix 12 Press releases

Whoop whoop to the Lullymore loop

2nd May 2013: A new looped walk is to be developed on and around Lullymore Island, Co. Kildare, taking in the surrounding natural and cultural heritage. Unlike other islands, Lullymore is not surrounded by the sea but by bogland. The mineral island of Lullymore is a small paradise boasting a rich history, that goes back to the Ice Age, and wide diversity of nature including butterflies, hare, curlew, lizard and newt are found there. This project will ensure visitors and citizens can take a walk on the beautiful island of Lullymore.

“It has surprised me that a land-locked island of just four square kilometres as remote as Lullymore, safeguards such a rich biodiversity and history. Especially now as spring breaks through and the weather improves, I realise how nice a looped walk would be to connect the different features, habitats and stories of the area,” says Leonie Tijsma, the project co-ordinator. *“Visitors on the Lullymore Island looped walk can discover bogs, St. Patrick’s footprint, the foundations of a bog road or togher, hedges, the network of small fields and the warm welcome of its island people,”* she added.

Leonie Tijsma studies Forestry and Nature Conservation at the Larenstein University in the Netherlands and has come to Ireland to complete her bachelor thesis. She is working with the Irish Peatland Conservation Council (IPCC), out of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, Lullymore, Rathangan, Co. Kildare. Leonie has begun her work mapping potential routes and engaging with stakeholders around the island. She will be in Ireland to work on this project until the end of August 2013.

Lullymore Island Loop Walk and Talk

27th June 2013: A new loop walk on Lullymore Island, Co. Kildare is going to be presented during an Open Day of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre on Sunday 21st July 2013. Lullymore is a rock in the middle of the Bog of Allen and has a wonderful variety of habitats and local history just 3km in diameter. It was never swallowed up by the bog and it exists today as an “island” in the bog. The new looped walk connects the features of the island.

“The development of the loop walk involved field surveys of the features of the island, talking to residents about local history and looking for the most beautiful and peaceful spots on the island that might appeal to visitors” says Leonie Tijsma, who studies Forestry and Nature Conservation at the Larenstein University in the Netherlands. *“Developing a walk is a nice way to get to know local people and the area. I hope walkers will enjoy the Lullymore Island looped walk as much as I have enjoyed developing it,”* she added.

Admission is free to the Open Day, which takes place from 2 to 5 pm at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre in Lullymore, Rathangan, Co. Kildare. The Open Day includes a presentation and a loop walk. A special guest of the day will be the Dutch Ambassador to Ireland, His Excellency Mr. Paul Schellekens.

Appendix 13 List of media

Several media have copied the press releases (see appendix 12) on their website.

According to a Google search at 8th August 2013, the next websites have placed the press release of 2nd May 2013 on their website.

- Website Irish Environmental Network (IEN) - <http://ien.ie/2013/whoop-whoop-to-the-lullymore-loop/> - Placed on website at 2nd May 2013

According to a Google search at 8th August 2013, the next websites have placed the press release of 27th June 2013 on their website.

- Irish Peatland Conservation Council (IPCC) - <http://www.ipcc.ie/lullymore-island-loop-walk-and-talk/> - Placed on website at 27th June 2013
- Mykidstime.ie - <http://www.mykidstime.ie/listing/bog-of-allen-nature-centre/122908-lullymore-island-loop-walk> - Date placing on website unknown
- Kildare County Council - http://www.kildare.ie/community/notices/heritage/walk_the_lullymore_island_loop.asp - Placed on website at 2nd July 2013
- Green News and Event Guide – Irish Environmental Network (IEN) - <http://myemail.constantcontact.com/Green-News-and-Events-Guide---19th-July-2013.html?soid=1101987987876&aid=3cGRbtrVCn0> – Placed on website at 19th July 2013
- Sustainable Water Network (Swan) Ireland - <http://www.swanireland.ie/category/events/> - 19th July 2013

The development of the Lullymore Island Looped Walk has been mentioned in other articles as well:

- Irish Times - <http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/heritage/how-going-dutch-could-save-more-irish-bogs-1.1476191> – Irish Times of Saturday 27th July 2013, Weekend Review, page 6 – See Appendix 14
- Website of Christopher Somerville - <http://walksireland.com/> - Placed on website at 26th April 2013
- Website Irish Environmental Network (IEN) - <http://ien.ie/2013/the-dutch-and-irish-bog-story-continues/> - Date placing on website unknown
- The Leinster Leader, a local newspaper for the areas Co. Kildare and west Co. Wicklow, has made a video about the Bog of Allen Nature Centre and the Lullymore Island Looped Walk - <http://www.leinsterleader.ie/news/video-a-visit-to-bog-of-allen-nature-centre-in-lullymore-co-kildare-1-5367889> - Released at 8th August 2013.
- A description of the walk for visitors of Lullymore Island - <http://www.ipcc.ie/visitor-attraction/lullymore-island-loop-walk/> - 12th August 2013
- The IPCC has posted several announcements about the progress of the Lullymore Island Looped Walk on their Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/IPCC.ie/timeline>
- Madigan, N., (2013), “Celebration 30 Years of the Dutch Foundation for Conservation of Irish Bogs”. In *Peatland News*, spring 2013, IPCC, Lullymore, Co. Kildare

Appendix 14 Article Irish Times

How going Dutch could save more Irish bogs



Squeezing Spaghnum: Leonie Tijmsa (centre left, in yellow vest) guiding a walk on Lodge Bog, part of the Lullymore complex in Co Kildare. Photograph: Tadhg Ó Corcora

Paddy Woodworth

First published: Sat, Jul 27, 2013, 01:00

Joni Mitchell neatly summed up a paradox about conservation in a single line from one of her most memorable 1970s songs, *Big Yellow Taxi*: “You don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone”.

Or rather, you don’t know you’ve got till it’s nearly gone. And then you have to spend a lot of time, effort and money trying to get it back. “Sustainable development” remains an aspiration in most places.

It so happened that, in the same decade Joni Mitchell was singing her warning, the Dutch suddenly realised they had exploited their once vast peatlands to vanishing point. They did a U-turn, and thought up a radical 50-year conservation and restoration plan that has cost €100 million so far.

To develop the plan, they needed to study peatlands that were still intact and they chose to research Irish bogs. Ironically, this was partly because the Netherlands was importing copious quantities of Irish peat moss for the country’s horticulture industry. If we had so much of the brown stuff, we must still have lots and lots of healthy bogs, right?

So a number of Dutch research students, among them Matthijs Schouten, came to Ireland. They realised rapidly that while Ireland still had a lot more intact bogs than did the Netherlands, they were heading rapidly down the same fatal slope, through overexploitation.

Schouten has not only made a major contribution to scientific research on Irish bogs since then; he also helped to establish the Dutch Foundation for the Conservation of Irish Bogs in 1983.

At the same time, reflecting growing awareness here of the biodiversity value of Irish bogs, the Irish Peatland Conservation Council (IPCC) was established.

By 1987, the Dutch foundation had raised the funds to purchase three Irish bogs. The first title deed was handed over by Prince Bernhard to an Irish minister of state, Noel Treacy, at a high-profile ceremony in the Netherlands. The discreet implication was that our government should really be doing this kind of thing itself.

Slowly, nudged along also by the EU, official attitudes here have indeed shifted significantly. But the most difficult conservation challenge is engaging public opinion positively with conservation issues.

With local people involved, everything is possible. With local people indifferent, or hostile, even the best policies are likely to face shipwreck, as the sad impasse in the turf-cutting controversy shows.

A steady stream of students has followed Schouten's distinguished footprints, including Ineke Roëll and Marleen Jansen. They published a study of Lullymore Island, Co Kildare, in 2005.

Bog of Allen

Lullymore today is an "island" of agricultural land, cultural sites including monastic remains, cutover bog grassland, and remnant raised bog. It sits in the middle of the Bog of Allen, most of which has been industrially exploited by Bord na Móna for decades, and exploited for fuel by local residents for centuries before that.

This is where the IPCC has its visitors' centre, with excellent facilities for families, nature, education and entertainment.

Roëll and Jansen had the idea, as did Kildare County Council, that it would be a good idea to develop a loop walk here, taking in both the cultural and natural highlights of the area.

But nothing much happened until Leonie Tijsma, another Dutch student, arrived last April to research her BA thesis. She chose the loop walk as her project.

Last Sunday, the IPCC's meeting room was packed with local people, as well as the Dutch ambassador and his wife, to hear Tijsma present the features of the planned route, and then to follow her on the first public walk on the loop.

"It's the first time I've been here, and I've lived nearby for many years," said Una Cross after the meeting. Her husband, Val, who pilots a Community Alarm network across four townlands, is a local person, but had been through the centre's doors only once.

So what had brought them, and many other locals, here on this occasion?

"Leonie. She is a power-house," said Una. I heard the same answer, in one shape or another, from a dozen people over a delightful afternoon's excursion. "Better than the zoo, and free," said one parent. But how did they all know about Tijsma's work? It turned out that she had toggled out on a

local football team. She had played drums, for the first time, in a local bar. The Crosses had met her at a walk highlighting youth suicide issues.

In other words, she had got to know people on their own ground before she tried to draw them on to hers. In time, she gets to show people the orchids and butterflies in which Lullymore is so rich. It seems the Dutch involvement in the story of Irish bogs is set to continue.

Tomorrow, as part of a weekend of IPCC bog-related activities, a group of visitors including Schouten will join in a public celebration of 30 years of Dutch links to Ireland at the IPCC centre. See <http://www.ipcc.ie/dutch-share-30-years-of-bog-memories-for-the-gathering-ireland-2013/>

Appendix 15 Information Lullymore Island Looped Walk on IPCC website



Lullymore Island Loop Walk

The Lullymore Island Loop Walk is a project that has been developed by Leonie Tijmsa from the Netherlands at the request of the Irish Peatland Conservation Council. The walk was launched in July 2013 when over 50 members of the communities of Lullymore, Drumsru, Barnaran and Cappanargid gathered at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre to hear a talk about the project

and to walk part of the Loop with Leonie. The Loop walk is under development and a work plan has been put in place by Leonie to help manage the walking route, develop signage, information panels, boardwalks, stiles and bridges where necessary. This will be subject to the availability of funding.

Map of the Lullymore Island Loop Walk



Walking Options

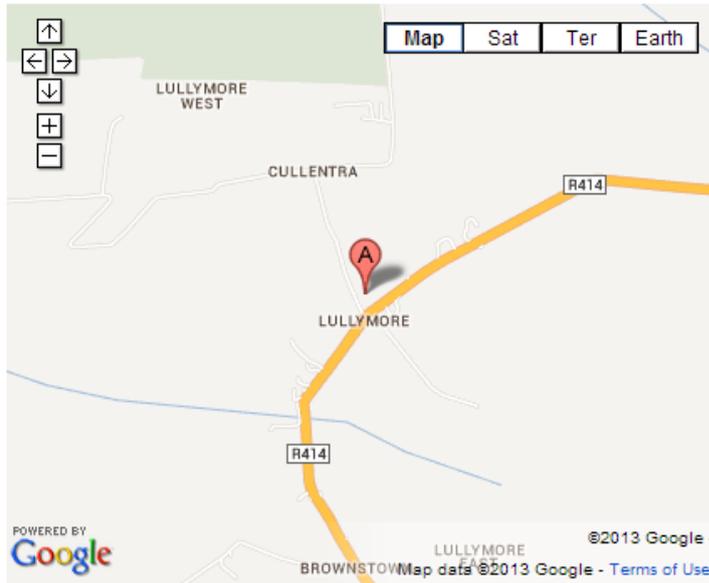
- Full (orange) walk: 5 km / 1 hour and 20 minutes
- West (orange) walk: 2,5 km / 40 minutes
- East (orange) walk: 2,5 km / 40 minutes
- Short cut (orange): 500 m / 5 minutes

Trailhead Directions and Parking

- GPS Co-Ordinates: N 53° 16' 42.392" E -6° 56' 34.125"
- Nearest Town: Allenwood (5km)
- County: Kildare
- Country: Ireland
- Map OS of Ireland 1:50,000 Discovery 49
- Trailhead: Bog of Allen Nature Centre

- Parking: On weekdays during office hours there is free parking in the grounds of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre and limited parking at the weekends just outside the gates of the Centre
- Refreshments: Tea and Coffee are available in the Bog of Allen Nature Centre on week days
- Picnic: picnic tables at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre
- Nearest Pub: Allenwood

Location Map for the Lullymore Island Loop Walk Trailhead



Directions: Travelling to the Bog of Allen Nature Centre

Car: The Bog of Allen Nature Centre is located on the R414 between the towns of Rathangan and Allenwood in Co. Kildare. It can be approached from the M7/N7 or from the N4/M4 roads.

Public Transport: The Nature Centre cannot be directly reached using public transport. The nearest location for public bus is in Allenwood which is 5km from the Nature Centre.

You Will Need

- Hiking boots
- Packed lunch

Lullymore Island Looped Walk Description

Lullymore Island is a big rock of 4 square kilometers that has not been swallowed by the Bog of Allen, an island in the bog it is. Lullymore, or Lilcach in Irish, means ‘a cow that has calved’ or ‘a milk cow’. Lullymore Island itself is a paradise for farmers; the bright green of the grass fields and the warm gold of the barley, enriched with healthy hedgerows, prove this.



Features of the Lullymore Loop Walk

- Spring, summer, autumn and winter; Lullymore Island offers beautiful scenery, tranquility and wildlife at any moment of the year. Walk the Lullymore Island Looped Walk and see it yourself!

- Discover the different habitats of the island –including intact raised bog- with their typical wildlife such as hares, newts, frogs and curlew.
- Explore the worlds of the Curlew and the Marsh Fritillary Butterfly, both very rare in Ireland but living on Lullymore
- Learn about the local history and folklore, which goes back to 1,500 years ago!
- Enjoy the wide diversity of nature on the island, walk through the barley, along grass fields, beside hedges and on the bog
- Learn about peat and bogs, about the turf and the human history with peat
- Visit the Bog of Allen Nature Centre for a break and visit to the museum and gardens



Enjoy Your Visit Safely

Please help us to preserve and protect Lullymore Island and its wildlife so that future generations can enjoy it too. We ask you to follow these guidelines:

- Dumping of rubbish and personal items is prohibited as they damage the Island and spoil the environment.
- Walking pets, camping, fires and the use of motorised vehicles on the walk are prohibited as they disturb wildlife and farm crops.
- It is an offense to feed or molest wildlife or remove or otherwise disturb any natural feature or plant on the Island.
- It is dangerous to leave the walk on the bog surface owing to hidden ditches, soft ground, tree stumps and brambles. Please use the boardwalk provided.
- “Pursuant to the provisions of the Occupiers’ Liability Act 1995, the occupiers of these premises puts all visitors to his premises on notice that his sole duties to them are: (a) not to injure the visitor or damage the property of the visitor intentionally, and (b) not to act with reckless disregard for the visitor or the property of the visitor.”

Contact Us

The Irish Peatland Conservation Council can be contacted at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, Lullymore, Rathangan, Co. Kildare, Ireland. Tel: +353-45-860133; Fax: +353-45-860481; Email: bogs@ipcc.ie

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