

# GGN/EGN - Geopark Annual Report 2019

## 1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

**Geopark name, country, regional Network:** Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark, Ireland, Irish Geoparks Forum, EGN

**Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation:** 2004 / 2019



## 2. GEOPARK FIGURES

**Number of Geopark staffs:** 4 staffs including 1 geoscientist(s)

**Number of visitors:** circa 15000 to visitor recorded

**Number of Geopark events:** 30+ events ran directly by the Copper Coast Geopark

**Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes:** 7

**Number of Geopark press release:** 12

## 3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

### Major achievements in 2019

- Successful revalidation following assessment from UNESCO appointed evaluators. A huge community effort and coming together culminated in the award of a Green Card for four more years.
- Continued participation in the Atlantic Geotourism Route interreg project with 11 other Geoparks across the Atlantic area of Europe. This nearly 2 million euro ERDF funded project is a collaborative effort towards the creation of an Atlantic Geotourist route which will become a thematic trail of Geopark discovery.
- New signage and interpretation project started following an award of funding from a national program for rural development. Signage was designed and a new website update started etc.
- Ambassador Program ran to train and develop local tourism operators within the etho of the Copper Coast Geopark and UNESCO Geoparks generally.
- Partnership agreements with local organisations were signed to formalise their relationship with the Copper Coast Geopark and their understanding of the goals of the UNESCO Global Geoparks program.
- Won a regional prize in a national rural enterprise competition run by Irish bank, Bank of Ireland.
- Created a new/updated geopark management plan for the Copper Coast Geopark

for the next four years.

- Ran and operated a variety of events as part of European Geoparks Week, Science Week, National Heritage Week and other national and international initiatives.
- Continued to develop and run the Copper Coast Festival.

### **Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation**

- Representatives of the Copper Coast Geopark attended the GGN meeting in Valencia as well as the EGN meeting in the Swabian Alps Geopark during 2019.

### **Management and Financial Status**

- The Copper Coast Geopark operates as a charity and social enterprise with a local management team and board consisting of local volunteers and community representatives. Financially, the Geopark is secure, receiving grant funding from the local authority, national Geological Survey and makes revenue from café and visitor centre operation

### **Geoconservation**

- Signage was updated and a major new signage and interpretation project began. Safety of old mine shafts was improved through better security and repair of fencing.

### **Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)**

- A Copper Coast Geopark ambassador program was run in 2019 to better coordinate and promote the local tourism operators of the Copper Coast area. This was a successful endeavor and better cooperation was achieved.

### **New education programmes on geoconservation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction**

- New educational program for tourism operators ran and launched
- Existing geo education programs for the school children were continued and developed in coordination with other stakeholders i.e bealtaine festival.

### **Strategic partnership**

- The Geopark continued to develop its formal partnerships with relevant local and national bodies such as Irish Geoparks Forum, Atlantic Georoute project. Locally the Copper Coast Geopark formalised its partnerships with community groups and other local ngo's by the signing of various partnership agreements.

### **Promotional activities**

- The Copper Coast Geopark has engaged in self promotion as well as the promotion of the Geoparks network through increasing visibility of events related to the Geopark such as EGN week events as well by maintaining a presence in local and national tourism offices via leaflets. The Copper Coast Geopark has also grown its visibility in national and local press through press releases and features with journalists. The Copper Coast has also grown its social media following through active updates and innovative content.
- The Copper Coast Geopark was featured on an episode of "Naitonwide" a national TV program broadcast to 1 million plus people across Ireland.

## **4. CONTACTS**

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