

# Knockree Youth Hostel Conservation Plan



**Protecting Destinations**  
Culture & biodiversity

**HI Association**  
**An Óige – Irish YHA**  
**Hostels involved**  
**Knockree Youth Hostel**  
**SDG Contribution**

## Summary

An Óige's volunteer led Conservation Group was formed in 2007 and since then has worked tirelessly to identify threats, grants, management and educational options to help preserve the native Irish habitats around Knockree Youth Hostel.

## Objectives

The main aim of the Conservation Group is to make both guests and members of An Óige aware of the importance of environmental issues near our hostels. The Conservation Plan for Knockree Hostel will be used by the group to preserve this area of nature for future generations and to help make Knockree the standard bearer for self-lead eco-education in Ireland.

### Economic

- Value for guests
- Financial support

### Social

- Community education

### Environmental

- Awareness
- Conservation of native Irish habitats



## Methodology

### Which steps did you follow to implement this initiative?

The first step of the Conservation Group was to identify the issues and threats to the area. They found that this would require a professional approach. As a result, they identified and secured external funding. This funding was used to produce an ecological survey and management plan for the area. In order to actually achieve identified goals, the group will need to recruit more people. This could be done through university groups, advertising to the general public, partnering with wildlife groups or through package working weekends for guests.

### What simple steps would you recommend to those who would like to start something similar?

Apply for funding even if you have no experience. Ask for help and advice from groups who have done something similar. Identify interested parties and ask them to come on board. If your project is volunteer led it is important to not do it all alone. You will require assistance from staff so secure this early through getting staff interested and passionate about the project.



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*“As a volunteer member of An Óige’s Conservation Group I got to know and love the very special site attached to Knockree Hostel in the beautifully scenic Glencree Valley in the rolling hills of County Wicklow. I was delighted when the opportunity came along to work with other members of the Conservation Group on the project, to develop and implement a Nature Conservation Management Plan, to protect this precious piece of our natural heritage. Working as a member of a team of people passionate about protecting our environment is an ongoing and very rewarding experience for me. From the start of this process we have been conscious of our National Association’s aim of preserving the beauties of the countryside. Advancing the project to its present stage has involved me in a variety of activities, from filling in forms for grant applications, organising meetings, to practical conservation work like collecting seed from local trees and shrubs. The Knockree Conservation Management Plan is now in place and we have begun the process of implementing it. There are challenges ahead, particularly in relation to funding but the planting of over 12,000 native trees this coming winter will be a major milestone.*

*Working on this project has shown me that environmental protection is at the heart of what the Youth Hostelling movement is about both for the Irish National Association and internationally! “*

Philip Hayden



## Technical details

**Duration of the activity:** Ongoing

**Reach:** Local/National

**Frequency:** Constant

### Target audience:

- HI Members
- Guests
- General Public
- Staff
- Children

### How many people are required to run the activity?

- Volunteers: 10

### How is the activity funded?

- % alternative funds: 100%

### How many people are required to organise the activity?

- Staff members: 2
- Volunteers: 10

### How did you communicate this initiative to find participants?

- NA eNewsletter
- Posters in the hostel
- Posters in local shops
- Web page
- Email to members
- Social media

### How did you communicate this initiative to your members/stakeholders?

- eNewsletter
- Email
- Social media

### What equipment is necessary to carry-out the activity?

Forestry equipment and general maintenance equipment.

**Risks:** Allergies. Guests who are allergic to shellfish may also be allergic to insects.

**Partners' satisfaction:** 100%

**Participants' satisfaction:** 100%

**Hostel/Association's satisfaction with the activity:** 100%

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**Would you like to know more about this initiative?**

**Contact:** Colin Keane, Programmes Coordinator

**An Óige Email:** [programmes@anoige.ie](mailto:programmes@anoige.ie)

**Follow An Óige - Irish YHA**



**Follow An Óige Knockree Conservation Project**





Minister of State for Food, Forestry and Horticulture, Andrew Doyle TD Launches the Knockree Nature Conservation Management Plan at Knockree hostel in March 2017.

Building a survival shelter.



Volunteers begin the bracken trampling process.



Result of the trampling down of the bracken and to the right the grassland we are trying to restore.

