

THE  
 QUARTERLY  
 NEWSLETTER OF  
 THE GREENBOX,  
 IRELAND'S  
 FIRST  
 INTEGRATED  
 SUSTAINABLE &  
 ECOTOURISM  
 VISITOR  
 DESTINATION:

# The Greenbox Times



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

WINTER 2006

FIVE  
 GREEN  
 GEMS...  
 SEE HOW  
 THE  
 GREEN  
 BOX  
 FUNDS  
 ECO PRO-  
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## Congrats to the EU Flowers!

The first EU flower ecolabels were awarded to 14 accommodation providers at two ceremonies in October. 11 from south of the border received their awards in Parkes Castle, while three from Fermanagh received theirs in Crom Castle. (see picture)

Presenting the awards, Paul O'Toole, CEO of Tourism Ireland referred to the "enormous potential" of the project. Commending those who achieved the standard, he suggested that the Green Box had "proven itself the leader in ecotourism development in this country" The EU flower is awarded to accommodation pro-



viders who pass a rigorous, independent ecological audit. This covers waste, water, cleaning products, energy use and more.



## Green Box scoops tourism award

Happy days! The Green Box recently achieved a "highly commended" award for "Best New Destination". The event was the First Choice Responsible Tourism Awards, which were part of the World Travel Market 2006, held on the 8<sup>th</sup> November in London. These awards are the largest of their kind in the world for all types of tourism that respects and benefits destinations and local people. There were 1,200 entrants in total.

Speaking after the event Ian Wasson, the Greenbox's ecotourism standards coordinator said, "To come highly commended in these awards is another important milestone in the development of the Greenbox brand and is testament to the hard work of Greenbox businesses over the last eighteen months, particularly the fourteen accommodation providers who were recently awarded the EU Flower eco-label for their premises"

For more on the awards, see: [www.responsibletravel.com](http://www.responsibletravel.com)

**First Choice  
 Responsible  
 Tourism Awards  
 2006**

In association with:  
[responsibletravel.com](http://responsibletravel.com)  
 The Times  
 World Travel Market  
 Geographical Magazine

## New Staff for the Green Box



Ollie Moore gets up close and personal with some organic grapes at a vineyard in the south of England.

First things first, a big hello to everyone from the new network coordinators, Marella Fyffe and Oliver Moore are job sharing the position.

Both are eager to get going as there hasn't been a coordinator in seven months.

Marella runs the Omagh hostel, and has worked in a training capacity with the Organic Centre, Rossinver. She is also heavily involved with the Sperrins Tourism network and with the Independent Hostel Networks.

Oliver is a rural sociologist

based in Sligo Institute of Technology, while also being a journalist and leader of the Erne-Garavogue slow food convivium. Both can be contacted at the Green Box office Monday to Friday on 071 9856898, and on their emails

[ollie@greenbox.ie](mailto:ollie@greenbox.ie) and

[marella@greenbox.ie](mailto:marella@greenbox.ie).

Two more appointments have also been made. Olga McCarrick is now our new administrator, and can provide support for the network. Contact Olga in relation to updates, events

and other news. Bernie Carroll from Fermanagh is our new financial administrator. Both can be contacted at 071 9856898, and at [olga@greenbox.ie](mailto:olga@greenbox.ie) and [Bernie@greenbox.ie](mailto:Bernie@greenbox.ie).



Marella Fyffe



Ecotourism cert class teacher James Hanrahan gets flowered by the whirligirls at the presentation ceremony

## Ecotourism cert class graduates

On the same day and indeed at the same ceremony that the EU flowers were awarded at Parke's Castle, the first ever graduates of Sligo Institute of Technology's ecotourism module received their certificates.

Representing tourism organisations and bodies such as Waterways Ireland, National Parks & Wildlife, Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism, Donegal Co. Council, The Organic Centre, Leitrim Sculpture Centre,

Arigina Leader and the Greenbox, many of these graduates are policy makers who will drive the growth of ecotourism further throughout Ireland.

The second ecotourism class has just completed the course. Again, a range of regional and national stakeholders in the sector were represented, including a healthy and colourful collection of Green Box network members. Results and graduation will follow

soon. Sligo IT course director James Hanrahan said "Ecotourism is not mainstream in Ireland yet. We're a long way behind other European countries but I believe people are becoming more aware of the concept. The course was designed specifically with the Greenbox in mind, with the aim of assisting policymakers to continue their progress of developing the Greenbox as a viable ecotourism destination. Over the next five years, I can see ecotourism emerging as a vital tourism sector for Ireland."



Right: The first ecotourism class graduates and those ubiquitous whirligirls

**Are you interested in joining the Green Box network? Contact the office on 071 9856898 or email**

**[Marella@greenbox.ie](mailto:Marella@greenbox.ie)**

**Marella has already begun meeting up with the network. She will be inviting people into the office and going out to visit existing members, to expand and develop the network**

## Five Green Gems and the Capital Development Programme

The Capital Development Fund, supported by INTERREG IIIA and administered by Border Action and DARD, has €1,162,500 (approx. £750,000) to administer. Letters of offer have already been sent out, and approx. 50 projects will be supported in the programme.

As part of the capital development programme, the Green Box has committed over €400,000 to five flagship projects. The five gems, and just some of their exhaustive eco measures are listed below:

The Irish Landmark Trust received funding to fully restore the Gate House at Colebrooke Park, a small listed property of great architectural merit.

Lough Allen Adventure, an outdoor adventure centre in Ballinaglera, is constructing a new green centre, using sustainable design and renewable technologies. These include solar panels, a native timber frame structure, natural paints, sheep wool insulation and a

wood pellet burning boiler.

The Breesy Centre is a multi purpose community centre incorporating meeting/conference space, visitor accommodation and community facilities. It is operated by Cashelard Community Development Association. The project involves upgrading the existing facilities of centre while meeting the eco standard, using local and ecological building materials.

Organik Matters, a training, consultancy and organic growing business, have been funded to design and construct the Orchard Acre Barn. The Barn will be a compact multipurpose building, with both recycled and local materials, along with hemp, all used in the construction. Eco paints will also be used.

Ard Nahoo Health farm is developing to become an eco holiday centre. The newly developed facility will include three eco lodges, treatment rooms, yoga studio/workshop space, and an outdoor communal bathing area—woohoo! The 'osento', which will include a hot-tub, detox box, steam room and plunge pool. Building work will use wood from a sustainably managed forests, heat will come from a newly installed wood pellet stove and architectural design will be by the local Living Architecture Centre.



Ard Nahoo eco health farm is one of the five gems.....

## Christmas party: 2nd December in Mahon's Hotel, Irvingstown, 7pm

Make a note of this: Mahon's Hotel, Irvinestown Co. Fermanagh, 7pm. Why? Well, it's Christmas party time, and we'll have an amazing night of fantastic food and mesmeric music. Both the Green Box network and the Ecotourism certificate classes are coming together to celebrate the season. The night will pan out as follows: Complementary drinks at 7, meal starts at 8. Our meal will be simply scrumptious, with Teresa O'Hare helping Mahon's head chef, Michael, source the best in local, seasonal, artisan and organic produce. Meat eaters and veggies both catered for. Then, from 10-12, another treat. Jazz trio *Organics* are joined by a man described by the *Irish Times* as "something of a genius...[with] a world reputation amongst saxophonists" - Richie Buckley. Richie has performed all over the globe, and has played with, amongst others, Bob Dylan and Carlos Santana. But wait, there's more! Following this, we have the *Pressure Drop* soundsystem, taking us through til the wee small hours. Fresh from two scintillating sets at this year's Electric Picnic, these guys can get a party going! Whether it's rocksteady, afro-beat, funk, ska or straight up party music, prepare to get up to get down. The evening in total costs £28 contact. For more info, contact Ollie in the Green Box office on 071 9856898 or email him on ollie@greenbox.ie. Some nearby accommodation options: Mcgintys - 028 68621241, Slates - 028 6862 8721, Manor House - 028 6862 2211. You can book a place at the party directly with Mahons. They are on 44 (0) 28 6862 1656. When booking, make sure to tell them you are part of the Green Box group, as we have a limited and specific number of places set aside.

**"You must be the change you want to see in the world".....Mahatma Ghandi**

## Other events: festive food

Want a foodie festive season? Then why not consider these.....

- **1st December:** Grassroot café presents: Caribbean night: 100% organic, 100% vegetarian, 100% fun! Food and music. Call Mairead on 071 9134847
- **2nd December:** Erne-Garavogue slow food convivium: Wintery Walk and lunch, 11-3. A 2 hour walk in the Cavan Burren at 11, followed by a lunch in the "restaurant of the year 2006" (Georgina Campbell's awards). Contact Shiobhan on 353 (0)87 7755799 or Email: [ernegaravogue@hotmail.com](mailto:ernegaravogue@hotmail.com)
- **3rd December:** Green Christmas Craft Fair and Tree Day: Organic Centre ,11-5
- Festive food at your local farmers' markets:
- Boyle (every Saturday, grounds of King House )
- Donegal (1st and 3rd Saturday McGuinleys' Garage, Letterkenney))
- Manorhamilton (first Friday, Bee Park)
- Omagh ( 1st and 3rd Saturday Omagh College car park)
- Sligo (each Saturday, Sligo I.T. car park)

## Look here! Business Opportunity:

Ian Wasson , previously the network co-ordinator, is now managing standards and packages for the Green Box.

According to Ian, "the Greenbox is currently seeking written expressions of interest from suitably talented individuals/companies/entrepreneurs who would be interested in working in partnership with the Greenbox to deliver multiple rollouts of some or all of the following ecotourism packages in 2007". Some examples include



- Survival and Bushcraft Special Weekend
- Surfers Paradise Weekend
- Release Your Inner Artist Weekend
- Greenbox "Budding Prospects" Weekend
- Celtic Elemental Weekend Tour
- Chill Out Special Weekend
- Art for all weekend
- Welcome to the Hidden North-West
- Return to the Ice Age
- In search of Broc and the Madra Rua
- Make Tracks!
- Luxury Nature & Historic Buildings Tour
- Greenbox Birdwatch 2007
- Seven Ancient Peaks Challenge
- Atlantic Coastal Explorer
- Heavens kitchen!
- Go nuts! - Autumnal forage weekend
- Gastronomic Walking Weekend-Walk up your appetite!



Please forward written proposals by Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December via post or e-mail to Ian Wasson, Greenbox Ecotourism Standards Coordinator [ian@greenbox.ie](mailto:ian@greenbox.ie)

The Green Box Times

## Media exposure since October:

- BBC news
- UTV news
- Irish Times
- Sunday Business Post
- Irish Independent
- RTE Radio 1
- Ecoclub magazine (front page!)
- All regional papers and radio



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