

PRESS RELEASE: 14th June 2022

Community information event to discuss sustainable tourism possibilities in the Wicklow Mountains

Individuals and community groups in and neighbouring the southern Wicklow Mountains are warmly invited to a community information evening next Thursday 23rd June 2022 in Rathdrum Library at 6.30pm.

This event is being organised to introduce a new European project ‘CUPHAT – Coastal Uplands: Heritage and Tourism’ which focuses on sustainable and regenerative heritage-based tourism in the coastal uplands of Ireland and Wales. Supported by the European Regional Development Fund through the Ireland-Wales Cooperation programme, the project seeks to showcase the shared and distinctive heritages of the coastal uplands of Ireland and Wales bordering the Irish Sea. CUPHAT focuses on areas outside the reach of traditional tourism offerings with four funded study locations in the Cambrian Mountains and Preseli Hills in Wales, and the southern Wicklow Mountains and the Wexford portion of the Blackstairs Mountains in Ireland. Researchers from UCD School of Geography partnering with colleagues in Aberystwyth University and the Dyfed Archaeological Trust will work with local communities to develop tourism offerings in these areas and they would like your input to connect and co-create sustainable tourism offerings that meet the needs of the local community.

The project leads from UCD, Dr Arlene Crampsie & Dr Christine Bonnin describe CUPHAT as providing an exciting opportunity to increase awareness of the rich heritage of our landscape and to widen accessibility to key visitor sites for local communities and tourists alike. They hope that by collaborating with local communities and stakeholders that CUPHAT can develop locally appropriate tourist activities that support rural economic development and help address some of the sustainability challenges facing coastal upland communities.

“We are keen to meet with people from all sectors of the local community to ensure that the kind of tourism promoted by the project is sustainable and beneficial to this region. We invite anybody who is interested to come along and find out more, meet with us and share their ideas”, they said. They also want to learn about aspects of the cultural and natural heritage of

the Wicklow Mountains that are most significant and meaningful to local people, commenting that “this project offers a unique chance to preserve aspects of the area’s heritage for future generations as well as showcasing it to visitors”.

The CUPHAT project will also bring together community groups and stakeholders from across the four coastal upland areas for learning visits where participants can share experiences from previous projects, discuss new ideas and collaborate on shared initiatives. To find out more, all are welcome to attend next Thursday’s information event. The event is free, but registration is required, by emailing cuphat@aber.ac.uk or completing the google form available at: <https://forms.gle/y4wX8HHobuiPnHtZA> to RSVP.