

Goal 3

artists shared expertise and experiences in the context of the local, national and international contemporary arts scene.

Íomhá 2006 presented a small sample of the diversity and strength of Louth's artistic community, and provided a framework for focussed cooperation between local authorities, development agencies, arts venues, and artists in a positive, mutually – beneficial initiative. Due to its success, plans are already afoot for a similar project in 2008.

Highlanes Gallery – major new art gallery opens in town centre
Highlanes Gallery is Drogheda's brand new art gallery is one of the town's newest and most beautiful public amenities. Situated on Laurence Street, the Gallery opened its doors on October 4th 2006 and was the culmination of many years planning to deliver a dedicated visual arts space for the Irish north east region, of an International standard in terms of design, management, environmental control and security.

The gallery is sited in the former Drogheda Franciscan Church and part of the Friary; known locally as the 'High Lane Church'. The Franciscans gifted the property to the people of Drogheda when they ended their 760 year association with the town in 2000. The buildings date from the early 19th century, though elements date back to earlier times and include the former Franciscan burial crypts.

The main exhibition spaces are open plan and include the old Church level and a new floor at the height of the old balcony and as such, the character of the building is not lost.

The Gallery's board, Drogheda Borough Council and Louth County Council have raised over €4 million from a range of international and local donors. This is a major achievement for the town as none of the cash has come from direct government funding, with several local individuals making cash donations to the project. The board of the gallery also made a strategic decision to purchase much of the adjoining property a number of years ago, to enable it plan for the Highlanes Gallery long-term development. Much of this property has been incorporated in the development and will be rented to cross subsidise the running of the gallery.

The Highlanes Gallery programme over the first year will see it reintroduce the Drogheda Municipal Art Collection to the public for a three-month period. This will be complemented with borrowed works from national and private collections, in order to place the late 19th century works in the Drogheda collection in their context, which has a strong representation from women artists. Other elements of the little known Drogheda Municipal Art Collection – which dates from the 17th Century, will also be shown from time to time. Highlanes Gallery are also working closely with Banbridge District Council who are developing a space dedicated to the studio of F.E. McWilliam, this will lead to joint programming and education services in the coming years between both towns.

For more information on the exhibitions/talks/workshops and events at the gallery visit www.highlanes.ie or call Highlanes Gallery on (041) 980 3311.

Sports/Recreation & Play

Sports and Recreation Strategy

The Draft Louth Local Authorities County Sport and Recreation Strategy document, developed during 2006 through the Corporate services SPC, was approved for public consultation by Louth Co. Council in late 2006. This strategy establishes priorities for Louth Local Authorities use of their resources to best advantage to meet targets set in the CDB 10 year Strategy in these areas and covers the period to 2012. Following the consultation period it is intended that the Strategy will be adopted early in 2007 and published.

Audit of Sports Facilities in County

An audit of Sports Facilities in Co. Louth was commenced with assistance of students from DKIT during the Summer of 2006., Approximately 50% of the facilities have been visited and it is intended to complete the audit during 2007.

Louth Local Sports Partnership

The Irish Sports Council confirmed in August 2006 that Louth is included in the list of new Local Sports Partnership to be rolled out in early 2007.

Social Inclusion/Inter Council-Cross Border project

Louth Co. Council and Newry & Mourne District Council secured funding through SEUPB under Measure 5.2 on the Peace 11 Programme for a pilot Cross Border project on Minority Sports Development. A Development Officer, appointed to the project in October 2006, will focus on heightening the profile/awareness of identified minority sports in both Councils' areas, using them to bring together young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and developing links between them through this medium. Skateboarding, wheeled sports, badminton, water-based and outdoor pursuit type activities were identified as the target minority sports for this project.

Sports Development Initiatives

Existing contacts continued and new contacts were established with Regional Sports Development Officers in a variety of sports (Volleyball, Badminton, Soccer, Basketball, Community Games, Athletics, Soccer and Gaelic) during 2006.

- Primary Schools Volleyball Introductory course and blitzes were held in Dundalk and Drogheda
- A Code of Ethics Course for Children in Sport in Dundalk Tennis/Badminton Club hosted jointly by Louth Co. Council in conjunction with Badminton Ireland attracted 33 participants from 13 different sporting groups
- An Introduction to Badminton Coaching Course was also hosted by the Council in Greenhills College Drogheda

Coach Training Grants scheme

A coach training grants scheme was introduced by Louth Co. Council in mid 2006 to encourage the development/provision of coaches across all sporting codes in Louth. The scheme will be piloted up to the end of 2007 and has already attracted substantial interest from a variety of sports clubs.

Walking opportunities

Walking opportunities in the Cooley range were extended by the inclusion of a new Loop Walk (Slieve Foy Loop Walk) off the Tain Way through Louth Tourism Development .

Existing Sli na Slainte route in Dundalk was upgraded and route agreed for a new Sli na Slainte in Blackrock which will be signed and launched in Spring 2007. Louth Co. Council also agreed to support the provision of a virtual Sli route at the new GAA County Training facility at Darver to be launched on completion of work there in Spring 2007.

Initial meeting with Students from Scoil Ui Mhuiri, Dunleer, on their project to establish a Sli route for Dunleer took place in late 2006 and is progressing.

Show Racism the Red Card

Louth Co. Council supported launch of the national Show Racism the Red Card Initiative in Drogheda.

Play

New Playground and Skatepark were included in the Aisling Park development carried out by Dundalk Town Council. Potential sites for



New Skatepark in Dundalk.



Ashling Park playground.

Skatepark in Drogheda is also being investigated. Play equipment was re-installed at Tower View in Tinure. Further Grant aid secured from Dept. towards provision of Play equipment in Drogheda (Moneymore), Dundalk(Tobberona) and County Louth (Blackrock) area. Sites also tentatively identified at Collon, Dunleer and Tallanstown for further playgrounds.

Louth Co. Council initiated and supported two pilot Play Day projects in Drogheda and South Louth in conjunction with 1st national Play Day.

Drogheda

Drogheda Leisure Centre

Drogheda Leisure Centre, which incorporates a 25mx 5 lane swimming pool, was opened for public use in May 2006. This Centre situated at Marley's Lane, also includes a health spa, sauna and fitness suite with gym/aerobic studios.



Drogheda swimming pool.

Football facilities at Moneymore

Work commenced in latter part of 2006 on development of football facilities in Moneymore, Drogheda. This includes the redevelopment of the existing grassed pitches and provision of an all-weather 5-a side pitch. Work will be completed by mid- 2007

Redevelopment of the Lourdes Stadium

Drogheda Borough Council secured grants of €400,000 from the 2006 Sports Capital Programme and Dormant Accounts funds towards Phase 1 of the redevelopment of the Lourdes Stadium as a multi-sport facility for Drogheda. Preliminary work is expected to commence during 2007.

Rejuvenation of The Glen

Work commenced on the Children's Garden project and general rejuvenation of the open space at The Glen on the north-eastern side of Drogheda. Due for completion early in 2007 these works will enhance this substantially enhance this area and increase play opportunities for children there.

Goal 3

Dundalk

Aisling Park

Opened in June. Landscaped park including public All Weather 5-a-side pitch, playground and Louth's first Skate Park.

Sensory Gardens at St. Leonards Gardens – funding allocated and contracts signed in 2006

Clarkes Forrest

Advertised for expressions of interest to appoint landscape architects in 2006.

Muirhevnamor District Park

Work commenced January 2006 – due for completion May 2007
New facilities to include a grass running track, full size floodlit synthetic pitch, a public tennis court, playground, three MUGA's (multi-use games areas) with markings for 5-a-side, futsal, basketball and tennis and several walking routes through the park. These additions will compliment the existing facilities in the Park (Dundalk sports Centre, Boxing Club, Community Centre and Muirhevnamor FC changing pavilion and pitch)

Dundalk Sports Centre

Sports Co-ordinator – the addition of a sports co-ordinator in December 2006 to develop the Centre run programme of activities.
Sports Capital Programme 2006 – €65,000 secured towards the installation of a timber sprung floor in the main hall which will be fitted in 2007.

Library

A stocktake of all library branches, including the schools and mobile service, was completed in 2006. As a result a stock management policy document was compiled which is available on the intranet. This document covers various issues such as stock rotation, booksales, etc.

A booksale took place in Dundalk & Drogheda branches in September. In advance of the sale, old and outdated stock was withdrawn. Any unsold stock after the sales was donated to charity, with the Dundalk



Storytelling in Dundalk Library.



Watercolour masterclass in County Library.

stock going to Liberia with the Irish Army and Drogheda stock being donated to local charities.

E-newspapers are available in Dundalk and Drogheda. These are online newspapers with over 250 titles to choose from which can be accessed through the public internets.

A replacement schools library van was purchased at the end of the summer. This van visits 75 primary schools throughout the county three times a year on a rota basis.

I.T. developments throughout the year included major network improvements and upgrades – BIPreach connection installed in H.Q. 20Mbs full duplex implemented to Dundalk Library H.Q. and rolled out to Drogheda library. All public internet terminals throughout the county were upgraded with 17" flat screens. A PC and scanner for the visually impaired were installed in Drogheda and the Citrix staff servers were upgraded.

Creative writing classes were held in Dundalk, Drogheda, Ardee and Carlingford libraries and were facilitated by the writer-in-residence Siofra O'Donovan. As a result "The Quilt", an anthology of writings, was published and launched on Sep. 19th in Dundalk Reference Library by Jim Lennon, Louth Co. Council Chairman.

Exhibitions in the various libraries included "Emile" – an exhibition on Irish emigration to America; the Professional Photographers; Carnegie Buildings; Dundalk – A Century of Photographs; Artisans Art Group; Drogheda Photo Club; Drogheda Library Through the Years; Ryder Cup Rewind; RTE Weather.

Outreach activities took place in most branches and coincided with festivals such as Library Ireland Week, Seachtaine na Gaeilge, World Book Day; Children's Book Festival, Science Week, Heritage Week, Maytime Festival and Bealtaine. Events included bilingual storytelling; arts & crafts; design a bookmark competition; table quizzes; watercolour masterclass; talks on healthcare; animates roadshow and exhibitions.

Library tours were given to groups such as Redeemer Pilots (a return

to work group for young women), local primary & secondary schools, Bright Beginnings crèche, Colpe Day Care Centre, Drogheda Community Services, Abacus Group etc. PMDS was rolled out for the library service in the latter part of the year. TDP's and PDP'S took place for the majority of staff.

Louth County Library provided a stand at the A.G.M. of the County & City Councils in the Fairways Hotel in March, showcasing two specific areas relative to its work, namely the Learning Centre and Staff Library. Details of both were promoted through a series of professionally designed posters. Bookclubs are ongoing in Dundalk for adults and young people and in Ardee for adults.

In association with Drogheda Partnership, Drogheda Library provided the computers and the venue for classes in basic internet training aimed at the over 55s. The classes were for 2 hour sessions for three mornings per week in October, November & December. There were also a number of evening sessions from 6-8p.m. Drogheda Partnership provided the instructor who taught the basics in Internet usage, sending e-mails and surfing the net. The feedback from the participants was very positive. They found that the classes were very practical and useful and they were able to link the classes with everyday activities such as shopping, checking holiday opportunities, etc.

Library staff undertook training in the following areas: Irish classes; manual handling; fire safety; disability awareness workshops; Cross-Border management training. A number of staff also attended the Public Library Conference held last year in Cavan.

Museum

One of the enduring missions of a Museum is to put a spotlight on the past which allows us to understand the motives for a particular event but also to understand the importance that it played in the subsequent evolution of history. In the year just gone by three very different events occurred which illustrated this mission in its totality.

Indeed these events not only highlighted the past for the purposes of examination, but also illustrated the role of the museum as an institution where objects are collected, stored and used for research.

In all of these cases the Museum either provided an area for research through reference to its collection, used items in storage to illustrate the nature of specific occurrences or provided its premises for the promotion of a workshop to examine a salient aspect of history. The events in question were the launch of Harold O'Sullivan's Atlas of Dundalk, the opening of the exhibition 'their story' which recounted the fortunes of two of the Irish regiments involved in World War 1 culminating in their involvement in the Battle of the Somme and a one day symposium on 1916 entitled when Peelers fell in far Dundalk.

Book Launch

The launch of the atlas was undoubtedly one of the most satisfying launches to be held in the Museum. Written by Harold O'Sullivan, the book is part of the Royal Irish Academy's Irish Historic Towns Atlas series and vividly describes the development of the town over the last millennium both in text as well as map format in a manner that is



Exhibition on Irish involvement in the First World War at County Museum.

accessible to all. From a Museum vantage point the significant feature here was that items placed in the collection many years ago were used to illustrate this development over the last number of centuries. In essence, this feature struck at the heart of the Museum's mission, i.e. to collect items today which may be used at an unknown point in the future to cast light upon the past.

Exhibition

Their Story exhibition came about as a result of an approach from the Military Heritage of Ireland Trust who were looking to develop an exhibition or a similar project involving museums on both sides of the Border. The subsequent exhibition that developed from this approach facilitated an examination of Irish involvement in the First World War. This examination included the motives for enlisting, the nature of training, the horrors experienced in battle as well as the reaction to the returned soldiers particularly in the aftermath of the 1916 Rising. Developed with the RUR Museum in Belfast the exhibition was opened by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dermot Ahern, T.D. and ran between the months of September and October.

Workshop

When Peelers fell in far Dundalk was a one day workshop which looked to examine the impact of the 1916 on a local, national and international level. Coinciding with the World War 1 exhibition the workshop complemented the display by providing a timely reminder of the manner in which the Rising quickly changed perceptions at home about those involved in the war. In this instance the day highlighted the role that a Museum plays through themed talks and workshops. By facilitating debate during the course of the day a greater understanding of the past is provided for and with it a greater understanding of the present.

Joint Museums' Heritage Project

The Joint Museums' Heritage Project continued apace highlighting the impact of the plantation. The community profiling lectures in both Newry and Dundalk proved to be exceptionally popular with the added attraction of visits to the Public Records Office in Belfast and the National Archives in Dublin. In addition to this was the enrolment of a number of schools from both sides of the Border in the Conflict Resolution module organised with Mediation Network. The project has

Goal 3

also featured living history re-enactments of life in primary schools at the turn of the 20th Century and will be looking at the impact of the Flight of the Earls in the coming year.

Collection

Over the course of the year the Museum has received a variety of interesting and fascinating items including a Viking hone stone which appears to have been used for sharpening pins, a set of golf clubs from the 1950s, a complete jeweller's workshop as well as a set of threads from a textiles factory in Ardee. These items represent the sheer range of items that the Museum might typically receive over the course of the year, and highlights the sheer scope of our collection policy.

Overview

The various activities referred to above serve only to highlight the multi-stranded service that the Museum offers. In receiving items such as the hone stone and the jeweller's workshop future generations will be in a position to understand more fully the broad nature of life in County Louth as experienced by its inhabitants at a variety of points in history. I would like to thank all of those people who have contributed over the past year to provide this service – to the Museum's staff as well as those people who provided us with artefacts for the World War 1 exhibition and those who have donated objects to the Museum collection. We look forward to 2007 building on the achievements of the past year.

Environmental Protection and Waste Management

Waste Management

The Regional Replacement Waste Management Plan was finalised in May 2006 and a number of the initiatives from the Plan will be factored into work programmes in 2007. A Regional Steering Committee met on a frequent basis to co-ordinate implementation of the Plan and such meetings included discussions with service providers to agree time frames and mechanisms for the roll-out of many of the actions contained in the Plan including the introduction of a Brown Bin service.



Official opening of Drogheda Recycling Centre.

The implementation of the WEEE Directive completed its first full year in 2006 with 930 tonnes of WEEE recycled. A total of 143 producers were registered at year end. The End of Life Vehicles Directive came into force in June and 24 producers had registered by the end of the year. Enforcement activity during the year included 119 packaging inspections and 165 awareness letters issued.

Recycling Centres

The recycling infrastructure was greatly enhanced with the opening of the Drogheda Recycling Centre. This facility, together with the excellent facility in Dundalk and the 39 Bring Centres throughout the county as well as seasonal facilities at beaches provided an excellent service to the community enabling them to recycle as much of their household waste as possible. During 2006 14,200 tonnes of waste was recycled representing 27% of household waste.

The provision of these facilities, together with an ever improving and ever increasing waste and recycling programme saw Louth shortlisted for the Local Authority of the Year in the Repak Recycling Awards.

Landfill

Whiteriver Landfill Site, which has a licenced landfill capacity of over 96,000 tonnes, was the subject of major construction and improvement works during the year. Restoration works consisting of two distinct phases commenced and were progressed during the year with Phase 1 comprising of earth works which was complete by the end of the year. Phase II which involves the capping of earlier phases commenced during latter part of the year with the view to completion by mid 2007.

Enforcement

Waste enforcement enjoyed huge focus during the year with Louth being recognised by the Minister as taking a very active role in enforcement of all waste activities but the packaging regulations in particular. The very successful road checkpoints enjoyed success and waste audits of permitted facilities were undertaken during the year. A total of 18 Waste Permits were granted with a total of 43 Waste Permits currently in force at year end. All Waste Permitted sites were audited during the year. At the end of December a total of 170 businesses in the county were registered with Repak. A total 230 waste complaints were received in 2006, 50% of which were closed at year end, 4 were referred for Legal action and the balance were being progressed to regularise matters.

Litter Management

The review of the Litter Management Plan was progressed through the Environmental Services SPC with a view to completion and adoption early in 2007. Enforcement of the Act continued to be a high priority with ?????? on the Spot fines issued in the county during the year. The National Service Indicator Report highlighted Louth's position as a leading enforcer of the Litter Act and this together with a very intensive awareness and education campaign is having an impact in terms of the overall cleanliness rating of the county as evidenced by the National Litter Monitoring Results.

The local Litter League organised among towns and villages in the county enjoyed enormous success and had the dual purpose of

increasing litter awareness and activating local volunteers to ensure that litter management was a priority particularly throughout the summer season in all the participating centres. Tallanstown emerged as Overall Winner in the small village category, Blackrock in the medium sized town/village category and Drogheda was judged to be the cleanest large town. A new sign was designed and erected to highlight the cleanliness rating achieved in each town/village.

Water Quality

The Water Framework Directive encompasses a number of pieces of legislation including the Nitrates Directive, Phosphorus and Dangerous Substances legislation as well as Surface and Drinking Water Quality legislation. Work in implementing these Regulations was ongoing throughout the year with particular emphasis on farm surveys, river water monitoring programme, licensing of trade effluent discharges and inspecting/conditioning Planning Applications.



Raising of Blue Flag at Port beach.

Blue Flag Scheme

Louth retained the prestigious Blue Flag for its beaches at Port and Templetown and to high profile flag raising ceremonies were held in early June together with a series of educational activities on the beaches.

Quarries

All quarries in the County, except those that were granted planning permission since 28th April 1999, were obliged to register with Louth



Beach ecology day.



Protected structure – Barmeath Castle.

County Council by 27th April 2005. Section 261 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 provides for the publication of notice of the quarry registration, the opportunity for concerned parties to make submissions/observations, the imposition within a period of 2 years of the registration by the Council of conditions on the operation of the quarry or the modification of previously imposed conditions, and an appeal process for quarry operators. Louth County Council received 12 applications for registration and during 2006 made decisions in the cases of the first two which were registered. The Council is currently in the process of assessing the remaining quarry operations.

Conservation of Buildings

Conservation and Built Heritage

The Planning & Development Act 2000 restated the provisions for the protection of Architectural Heritage which came into force in January 2000 under the provisions of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 1999. The Conservation officer jointly employed with Meath Co. Council continued her work in this area during 2006. A total of 10 grants for repairs to roofs, stonework, windows and thatching were approved and paid during 2005 at a total cost of €97,000.

Design and Conservation Awards

On 3rd May 2006, Louth County Council became the second county in Ireland to launch an award scheme to encourage and reward good



Design and Conservation Awards.

Goal 3

design in relation to building projects in the County, under seven different categories as follows:

- Best new single house in the countryside
- Best new single house in a town or village
- Best residential refurbishment and/or extension
- Best shop front
- Best new housing estate
- Best conservation project, and
- Best commercial/industrial building.

The award for the overall winner of the Design and Conservation Award Scheme is being named after Peter Rice (1935-1992), a world renowned engineer born in Dundalk who was involved in such projects as the Sydney Opera House and the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Entries were evaluated by an independent panel of five judges from the fields of Architecture, Planning, the Media, Conservation etc.

The award night took place on October 5th in the Tain Theatre, Dundalk. The night was very well attended by architects and agents with over 250 people attending. Speakers on the night include Rose Kenny (Director of Services of Planning and Environment LCC), Henk Ven Der Kamp (President of the IPI), James Pike (president of the RIAI), Sean O'Laire who had been involved in judging the entries and Ian Roberts (Ove Arup).

The overall winner of the Peter Rice Award was DKIT for the superb architecture and design of the Nursing Building within the DKIT campus set adjacent to the wind turbine which is reflective of the modern technology and sustainable energy. The award scheme attracted a lot of interest and was deemed a great success.



Civil Defence multidisciplinary exercise.

Emergency Services

County Louth Civil Defence Services

2006 was a busy year for Civil Defence in Louth. Classes continued in the various centres around the county. Specialist teams in Technical Rescue, Boat and Kayak trained regularly for call-outs in support of the emergency services. Members were busy on community duties and providing first aid cover at sports events. A specialist Rescue Team



Drogheda Fire Brigade extinguishing fire at Marley's Lane.

from Louth Civil Defence were on location at the Poc Fada in Ravensdale and at the International Orienteering event in Carlingford during the summer.

A large contingent from Louth Civil Defence took part in the St Patrick's Day Parade in New York and was officially complimented for their turn-out and marching prowess. Regionally, our personnel were actively involved in exercises, skills days and competitions in casualty, fire, rescue, boat and kayak. All performed well and improved their personal skills.

Outside the county, members provided first aid cover at the Oxigen Concert in Punchestown and at the Electric Picnic in Stradbally. A contingent was present at the Ryder Cup in Straffan in support of the Gardai. The level of professionalism shown at these events by our volunteers was second to none.

In the autumn, 36 members took part in a multi-disciplined exercise in the Dundalk area. This proved to be an enjoyable and informative event for all personnel involved.

Fire Services

Work commenced in June 2006 on construction of a new fire station in Drogheda. Capital funding of €3.6 million was received in respect of this project. Extension to Dundalk fire station fire appliance hall completed. A new fire tender was delivered to Carlingford Fire Service with a new compressed air foam system (CAFS), the first of its kind in Louth. A back-up fire tender for Louth Co. fire services was purchased. Exhaust extraction systems were installed for Health and Safety purposes in Ardee, Carlingford, Dunleer and Dundalk fire stations. Swipe card attendance recording systems and PCs installed in Louth fire stations. New clothes drying units installed in Ardee, Carlingford and Dunleer fire stations. New equipment was provided by Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (at an approximate cost of €200,000) included 2 new vans, new hydraulic cutting tools for Road Traffic Accidents and new mass decontamination equipment. Primary Schools Fire Safety Programme delivered to all schools in Louth. Start-up of driver training and EFAD advanced fire service driver training for Louth fire service personnel.

GOAL 4

To harness community participation, provide civic leadership and encourage civic pride.

Louth Local Authorities play a significant role in supporting and encouraging active community involvement and participation in local decision making processes through the development of the Strategic Policy committees, Junior Council Comhairle na nOg, and Community Fora our environmental campaigns, the promotion of awareness in our heritage and local history and the provision of financial support for Peace II and other Interreg projects..

Participation in Local Democracy

Strategic Policy Committees – Louth County Council

Louth County Council has five strategic policy committees and Dundalk Town Council has four municipal policy committees. The committees were established to enhance the role of elected Councillors and to develop a partnership model at local level with all sectoral interests. The role of the S.P.C. is to formulate policy for recommendation to the Council.

Housing S.P.C.

The Housing, Economic, Community and Enterprise S.P.C. met on 5 occasions during 2006. The main topics considered were:

- Scheme for Allocation of Affordable Housing
- Traveller Accommodation Programme
- Volunteerism
- C.D.B. Action Plan
- Anti-Racism and Diversity Plan (ARD)

- Homeless Strategy
- Naming of Council Estates
- Community Safety Policy
- Draft Heritage Plan
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Action Plan for Social and Affordable Housing

Infrastructure S.P.C.

This committee met on four occasions during 2006. Representation is made up of the following; Local Authority, Business, Community and Voluntary pillars. The main policy issues dealt with during the year included:

- Harbour Bye-Laws
- NRA – Draft Policy on Provision of Tourist Signage on National Roads.
- Policy Statement on Development Management and access to National Roads

The committee also received presentations on Broadband installation in the County (update), Traffic Calming and a Road Safety Working Group was established to explore the matter of new road safety initiatives. The group met on four additional occasions and progressed a number of road safety initiatives.

Planning S.P.C.

This committee met four times in 2006. Representation is made up of the following; Local Authority, Business, Community and Voluntary and Farming pillars.

Goal 4

The main policy issue reviewed during the year included:

- Proposed Variation to County Development Plan to incorporate changes resulting from consultations with Area Committees
- The Conservation and Design Award Scheme 2006 for design in Louth
- North Drogheda Environs Master Plan: outcome of public consultation
- Proposed Local Area Plan for Mullagharlin
- Response to Development Plans Public Consultation on Draft Ministerial Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- Housing Strategy Review
- Category 1 Development Centers – review of remaining development capacity

Environment & Emergency Services S.P.C

This committee met four times in 2006. Representation is made up of the following: Local Authority, Farming, Business, Community and Voluntary pillars.

The main policy issues progressed during 2006 include:

- Litter Management Plan – Review
- Examination of Waterford Composting facility (Brown Bin)
- Examination of Panda Waste Recycling Facility, Ashbourne (Brown Bin).
- Examination of Reverse Vending Recycling.

Corporate, Recreation & Amentiy S.P.C

This committee met on 4 occasions in 2006. Representation is made up of the following; Local Authority, Business, Community & Voluntary and Trade Union pillars. The main policy issues dealt with in 2006 included:

- Sport and Recreation Strategy
- Bye-laws for the regulation of intoxicating liquour in public place
- Sports grants

Municipal Policy Committees – Dundalk Town Council

Housing MPC – met four times in 2006

- Relets
- Housing Building Programme/Action Plan
- Estate Management Policy
- Draft Policy – Self Help Scheme

Environment MPC – five meetings in 2006

- Nuclear Free Local Authorities
- Litter Task Force
- Draft Litter Management Plan
- Vending Machine Policy

Infrastructure MPC – four meetings in 2006

- Public Lighting Refurbishment Programme
- Taxi Regulator Action Plan
- Traffic Signal Technology
- Pedestrian Crossing/Pelican Crossing Policy

Planning MPC – four meetings in 2006

- Draft Policy on non-regulatory road signage.



Electoral Register campaign at Dundalk Train Station.

- Draft Policy on taking in charge of estates.
- Proposed variation to Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2003-2009
- Architectural Conservation Areas.

Register of Electors

The Draft Register of Electors was published in November 2006. This followed an intensive campaign in accordance with guidelines issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and was carried out from July to October. We undertook our most comprehensive campaign ever in anticipation of a General Election in 2007 and every household was called to and where no reply was received, an RFA form was left for completion and return. Forty three Field Officers were employed and we undertook an intensive advertising promotion with one particular event targeting early morning rail commuters from Louth to the capital. For the first time ever voters were asked for their dates of birth, in an effort to reduce duplications and increase accuracy. The Register showed a voting population in Louth as follow:

Dail Electors	89,455	Presidential Electors	88,876
European	90,394	Local Government	92,240

Junior Council

Junior Council 2006 continued to build on its success in recent years, with the third Council ending its term of office during May 2006. The Council held meetings between February and May covering the following topics:

- Louth Anti-Racism and Diversity Plan
- Greenschools/Greenflags for schools
- Comhairle Na nOg
- Waste Management Plan for Louth

Highlights of the year included talks from Ms. Benedicta Attoh who spoke about her life in Louth since emigrating from Nigeria, and a presentation from Mr Jackie Burke, Drug Counsellor on the topic of drug and alcohol abuse. Elections for a new Junior Council were held on the 27th and 28th November with each school forming an electoral area, nominations taken for candidates, ballot papers produced and voting taking place using the PR system. Training for all the elected members was held on December 11th to prepare them for their year ahead.



Louth Junior Council.

Comhairle na nOg

Louth Comhairle na nOg took place in February 2006 and involved thirteen schools. Four delegates from Louth were elected and took part actively in the Annual Dail na nOg event in Croke Park, Dublin.

Young Citizens Award

In March 2006, Cllr. Peter Savage, Chair of Louth County Council presented Young Citizens Award Certificates from President Mary McAleese, to sixteen young people in Louth. The awards ceremony was held in Louth County Council and all recipients plus their sponsors were invited to attend.



Comhairle na nOg group with Minister Brian Lenihan.

Louth County Development Board (CDB) carried out the coordination of the Young Citizen Awards, an initiative of President Mary McAleese to mark European Year of Citizenship through Education.

Active citizenship is about people acting or participating in a socially responsible way in local communities. It is about people learning more about the world and community by "doing". "Doing" helps people to learn more about how they can make things happen in public life, through the knowledge, skills and values that are nurtured and developed through their involvement.

The Young Citizens Award honoured people who have made a



Young Citizens Award.

difference, people who have travelled the extra mile for others and people who have excelled in personal development. Despite a decreasing level of volunteerism particularly among the young, much of the work of the Young Citizens display great gifts of exemplary leadership, of passion for life itself, of discipline, sacrifice or courage, and of generosity and service to others.

As a further extension to the Awards held in Louth County Council, three of the Louth recipients attended a ceremony in Aras na Uachtarain in March to meet President McAleese to receive a specially designed pin for the Young Citizen Award.

County Community & Voluntary Forum

- Successful nomination of Community Forum representatives to the new Joint Policing Committee in Drogheda
- Election of chairs and secretaries for all subgroups of Louth County Community and Voluntary Forum
- Increased membership and participation at all levels of Louth County Community and Voluntary Forum
- Community Forum website research conducted and website subsequently developed
- Branding/logo developed by Louth County Community and Voluntary Forum and now being utilised on all correspondence

Estate Management and Tenant Participation

The Council's policies of ensuring greater involvement in the management of their estates were further implemented throughout the year through the involvement of the Tenant Liaison Officers.

A new post of Anti-Social Behaviour Officer was filled in 2006 and this has already contributed to a reduction in anti-social behaviour in quite a number of estates. A new Housing Rents Scheme was adopted and implemented early in 2006 ensuring an ongoing source of funding for management/maintenance costs.

Joint Policing Committee

In 2006, a Joint Policing Committee was established in the Drogheda Borough Council area. The Committee provides a forum for consultation and discussion on matters relating to the policing of the

Goal 4

Drogheda area. The membership of the committee is drawn from Elected Members and staff of Drogheda Borough Council, members of An Garda Síochána and the Oireachtas, as well as Community Representatives.

The Committee held its inaugural meeting on 23rd October 2006 and meets on a quarterly basis

Environmental Campaigns

Tidy Towns

The Tidy Towns Campaign and Development Programme enjoyed enormous success throughout the year with the County receiving 3 Silver Medals in the National Tidy Towns Competition. The usual support of the Amenity Grant Scheme and local Tidy Districts Campaign was supplemented for the first time by a focused Tidy Towns Development Programme which saw specific Tidy Towns Plans prepared for a number of villages to professionalise the Tidy Towns participation in the County.

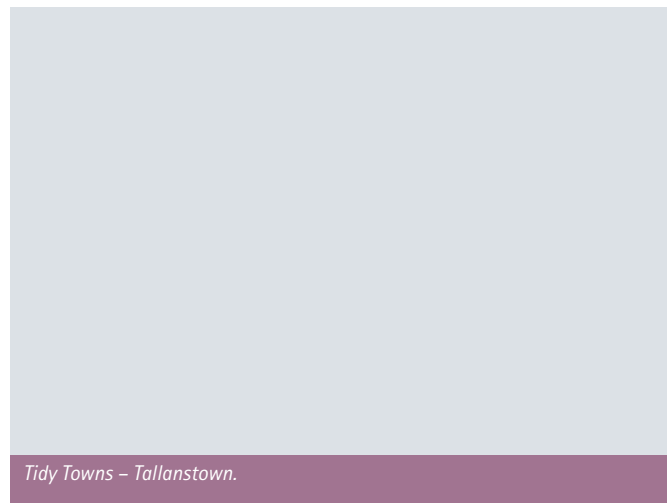
IBAL & Tidy Towns Campaign Drogheda

Drogheda performed well in both of these competitions in 2006. In the Irish Businesses Against Litter League, Drogheda finished 28th in the rankings and was classed as moderately littered despite a poor start to the year. The judges noted an improvement in the appearance of the town on the previous year and commented that there were no serious litter black spots.

Drogheda received a tremendous boost to its Tidy Towns Campaign with the announcement that it received an endeavour award for a 12.9% improvement in their marks on the previous year. This recognised the efforts made by both residents and Drogheda Borough Council in making environmental improvements to the town. The judges praised the initiatives taken in blending the past with the present in the built environment and were impressed with the landscaping and maintenance of the green areas around the town. In order to ensure that Drogheda continues to improve, a Tidy Towns Committee was established at the end of 2006 in order to ensure that all sectors of the community are involved in improving the appearance



Tidy Towns – Reaghstown.



Tidy Towns – Tallanstown.

of the town. The committee had its inaugural meeting in January 2007.

School Environmental Programme

A complete review of the local environmental programme was undertaken during the year resulting in a change to an Awards based



Stabannon National School at Louth Local Authorities Environment Awards.

scheme from the former competition. Schools were judged under the headings of litter, waste and energy management as well as environmental awareness and presentation. A sponsorship deal was agreed with Sustainable Energy Ireland who now work in partnership with the Council to implement and support a schools environmental programme.

Louth's participation in the Green Flag scheme received a further boost with the awarding of four additional Flags to schools in the County bringing the total number of Green Flags to 17 by the end of the year.

National Spring Clean

A massive clean-up of the county which mobilised almost 4,000 volunteers took place during the month of April when the 169



National Spring Clean – Dunleer Traders.



Civic Reception for Louth football team – presentation to Team Trainer and Captain.

registered events ensured our position as one of the top participant in this very important National campaign.

General Environmentals Campaigns

The environment section of the Council worked with Residents Associations, Tidy Towns Groups and schools on a number of campaigns during the year including National Tree Week, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Christmas Decoration Recycling Competition and National Recycling Week all of which received much public acclaim during the year.

Road Safety

The Infrastructural Strategic Policy Committee established a specific Road Safety working group which is facilitated by the Road Safety Officer (RSO). The Committee through the RSO progressed a number of initiatives in 2006 including the successful Seat Belt Sheriff primary schools programme, and a new "Drive for Life" campaign focused at second level schools. In partnership with An Gardaí joint anti collision prevention groups have been revived and those with engineering and enforcement responsibilities are working in conjunction with the educators to improve road safety in the County. Drogheda was chosen to participate in the European Road Safety Audit pilot project. Risk assessments were carried out at the schools in Drogheda in order to establish safety of same. Installations of the appropriate measure were undertaken where safety issues arose.



Launch of Road Safety Campaign

Civic Receptions

Louth

19th June 2006 – Civic Reception: Musician Dermot O'Brien.
Louth Football Team in recognition of their win in the National Football League, Division 2 Final.

Drogheda

1st February, 2006 – Drogheda United Football Club
16th May, 2006 – The following people were presented with Civic Awards in recognition of their voluntary work on behalf of the local community: Joe Leonard, Charlie Byrne, Peadar Reyonlds, Nancy Byrne.
24th May, 2006 – For St. Peters Male Voice Choir (Golden Jubilee).
Halpin & Moran Memorial – February 2006.
Lecture & Wreath Laying Ceremony followed by small reception

Dundalk

17th January 2006 – Civic Reception for four injured firefighters who were nominated County Louth People of Year 2005. Firefighters: Paul Byrne, Paddy Lawless, Colm O'Hanrahan and Eugene Quinn.
11 April 2006 – Civic Reception in honour of St. Patricks tug-o-war team.
26th May 2006 – Civic Reception in honour of Delta Centre Stage.
15th September 2006 – Civic Reception in honour of Roddy School of Dancing.



Dermot O'Brian performing at the civic reception held in his honour.

Goal 4



Civic Reception for Drogheda United Football Club.



Visitors to heritage exhibition.

- Free or reduced admission at: Old Mellifont Abbey; the County Museum (both free) and Beaulieu House (reduced)
- Guided tours and walks at: the Battle of the Boyne site (several); Old Mellifont Abbey; Carlingford; Rathescar Lake; Drogheda (Town Walls)
- Living History RE-enactment events: Battle of the Boyne site (several), Dunany House.
- Public Talks were given in: the Battle of the Boyne site (several); Mellifont; Blackrock; Carlingford; Drogheda and the County Museum in Dundalk (two)
- There were two bird-watching events (Battle of the Boyne site and on the Fane Estuary)
- There was an Open Day at the County Archive and
- Bells were rung and Flags were flown for IWTN day

The Field Monuments Advisor visited all owners of Recorded Monuments in the Cooley area, at home, and advised them on the management and conservation of 'their' monuments. She has also run public events, including giving a talk during heritage week and an evening reception in Carlingford's Heritage Centre for local monument owners.

The heritage officer worked with Blackrock Tidy Towns on an ecological survey of the village, which was funded by the Heritage Council. Financial contributions were made by LCC both to the survey and to the erection of heritage display panels in Blackrock. The heritage officer has developed proposals for birdwatching facilities in North Louth in consultation with staff, commercial interests and voluntary groups. A conservation plan for Drogheda's town walls was developed and launched.

Promoting our Heritage and increasing awareness of our Local history

Heritage

The first ever Louth heritage plan was adopted by all four Louth Local Authorities. Will be designed, printed and launched in 2007.

A comprehensive programme of events was organised for Heritage Week 2006 which included:

- Two exhibitions (Ardee and Dundalk)

Goal 4

the final batch of old plans relating to property in Dundalk was completed in 2006, and the 3rd edition of the Service's newsletter 'Arc News' was issued. A highlight of the year was the successful application to the EU Interreg IIIA programme for funding towards a 'Cross-Border Archive Project' with Newry & Mourne Museum. The main aim of the project is to make archival collections accessible using ICT. With the project due to start in 2007, the Archives Service looks forward to the availability of new archival sources.

Peace II Programme

Louth Led Peace II Task Force

In 2006 Louth County Council led Peace II Task Force awarded a total of 25 projects funding under the Peace II Extension Programme 2005-2006. A total amount of €1,449,000 has been allocated to these projects by the programme in order to assist the promoters in the development of their projects.

In 2006 a total of €556,470 of Peace II Extension budget has been drawn down by the Project Promoters. This is set to continue in 2007. In 2002 under the original Peace II Programme 2002 – 2004 funding



Development of sports facilities at Glenmuir Football Club funded under Peace II programme.

of €4,280,000 was awarded by Louth County Council led Peace II Task Force to a total of 48 projects. In 2006 Louth Task Force successfully achieved the total drawn down of the €4,280,000 funding among the 48 projects. This amounted to a total of €800,365 received by the project promoters in 2006 for successful project completion.

No	Project	Description	Grant Awarded
1	Redeemer Celtic Club	Development of dressing room facilities	€47,000
2	Holy Family Boxing Club	Construction of upper deck second floor facilities	€70,000
3	Dundalk Town Council – Young Music Centre	Development of a Resource Centre for Music in Dundalk	€40,000
4	Glenmore Athletics Club	Installation of lighting and completion of Athletics Track	€90,000
5	Ballymascanlon Union Select Vestry	The restoration of a nineteenth century disused Primary School	€50,000
6	Stephenstown Pond Trust Ltd	Completion of a new multi purpose building	€80,000
7	Mullaghbuoy Community Centre Regeneration	Physical regeneration of Mullaghbuoy Community Centre	€35,000
8	St Josephs GFC Community Development Centre	Provision of additional support and leisure facilities	€70,000
9	Ardee Concert Band	Development of the bandroom adjacent to Bohemian Centre	€150,000
10	Louth GAA – Darver Project	Development of Sli na Slainte route at Louth GAA grounds	€70,000
11	Quay Celtic Football Club	Installation of floodlighting and security fencing	€60,000
12	Glenmuir Football Club	Further development of sporting and recreational facilities	€28,000
13	Dundalk Town Council – Aisling Community Park	Full development of jogging path at Cox's Demesne	€50,000
14	St Mary's Abbey – Church of Ireland Select Vestry	Restore original Chancel and surround walls of Graveyard	€25,000
15	Highlanes Gallery Ltd	Construction of Gallery in Drogheda	€100,000
16	St Patrick's Community Arts Multimedia Centre	Development of an Arts/Concert Hall & Multimedia Centre	€50,000
17	Dundalk & District Minor League	Field Development Project	€10,000
18	Marion Park Residents & Community Development Group	Regeneration of a derelict space to bring it back to constructive community use	€30,000
19	Holy Family Community Association	Development of a modern community facility in place of derelict prefabs	€100,000
20	Kilkerley Community Development Group	Improvements to car park and storage facilities	€40,000
21	Ravensdale Community Centre	The re-roofing of the Ravensdale Community Centre	€28,000
22	St Peters National School/Planting for Peace	The Undertaking of a 'Planting for Peace' Programme.	€8,000
23	Omeath District Development Company	Support economic infrastructure and employment	€100,000
24	Louth Hospitality	Marketing and promotion of the county as a whole	€50,000
25	Moneymore Football Club	Installation of gates and fencing	€68,000
		TOTAL	€1,449,000

GOAL 5

Form alliances and working partnerships, both internally and with other organisations and service providers to meet organisational goals and priorities

County Development Board

The nine implementation groups of the County Development Board (CDB) met on a regular basis throughout 2006 to implement the agreed actions of the Board's Action Plan 2006-2008. The Agriculture and Rural Development Implementation Group held a successful conference on "Energy Crops: A Viable Alternative?" for interested growers. Louth Countryside Management Committee was set up in 2006 and produced the Louth Countryside Code. The Quality of Life Implementation Group held two strategy development workshops on suicide prevention. An alliance of relevant organizations will be established in 2007 to implement a suicide prevention action plan. A seminar on the "Race against Waste" was organised for 30 businesses in the county. The CDB met on a quarterly basis to review the progress made by the implementation groups.

Partnerships with other Organisations

The Office of Community & Enterprise continued to represent Louth Local Authorities throughout 2005, on the following bodies: Louth County Enterprise Board; Louth Leader; Louth County Childcare Committee; Louth County Enterprise Fund; East Board Region Committee; Drogheda Partnership Company; Dundalk Employment Partnership and Dundalk Economic Development Group. There has been continued input from all agencies on the RAPID Area Implementation Team and on specific task groups that are established from time to time. A review and planning session with the Area

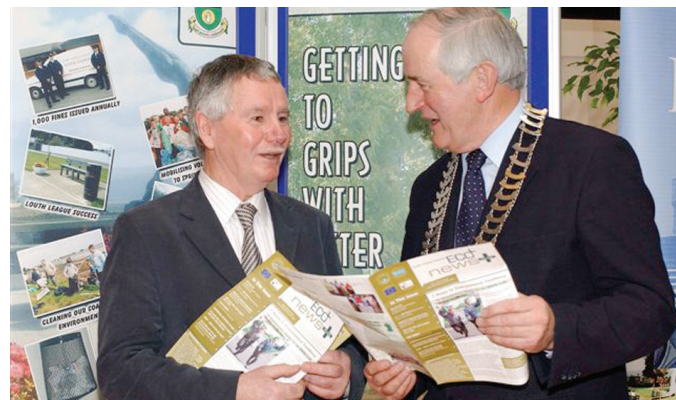
Implementation Team took place during 2005 where progress to date was documented and future priority areas identified.

STEM

A Cross Border project was undertaken during the year, Sustainable Together Environmental Management or STEM which is an alliance between nine local authorities from both sides of the Border working under INTEREGG IIIa to deliver ISO 14001 Standard to each of the Councils involved and BS 8555 to 30 businesses in each of the Council areas.

Community Support

During the year the environment Section formed A PARTNERSHIP with Louth LEADER which saw a number of significant projects co-funded by LEADER during the year including the production and distribution



Louth County Council Chairman and Louth Leader Chairman at launch of Eco newsletter.

Goal 5

of a of Eco-News+ an Environmental Newsletter designed to increase environmental awareness. Other projects jointly undertaken by Louth County Council and Louth LEADER included the completion of 13 Tidy Towns Plans for each participating town and village in the National Tidy Towns Competition, the holding of number of information workshops for the voluntary sector, the funding of a water feature in the centre of Tallanstown and the upgrading of the Railway Walk in Ardee. Other projects were at planning stage at the end of the year.

- The business/corporate sector also became an excellent partner during the year in the Tidy Towns Development Programme with approximately €25,000 committed by a number of key businesses associated with the County to co-fund a range of village enhancement projects identified in the Tidy Towns Plans.

Rapid Programmes

Dundalk

The Dundalk RAPID Area Implementation Team (AIT) has continued its work in targeting resources into the two RAPID areas in Dundalk, Cox's Demesne and Muirhevnamor, in order to improve the quality of life of the residents in these communities. A major regeneration programme for Cox's Demesne and Muirhevnamor has been progressed by Dundalk Town Council, with the first draft master plan developed following an initial public consultation in the first half of 2006. The RAPID AIT commenced the process of devising a social regeneration strategy for the two areas to run in parallel with the physical regeneration.

Some of the key projects developed by the AIT in 2006 have included:

- Completion and opening of the Cox's Demesne community park
- Commencement of works on the Muirhevnamor District Park
- Completion of the 2005/2006 Estate Enhancement Scheme
- The continuation of the Cox's Demesne Local Development Training Initiative (targeting young unemployed males in the area) and the replication of this model in Muirhevnamor, which commenced in October 2006. Dundalk Town Council was presented with an award for its involvement in this multi agency initiative under the Excellence in Local Government Awards 2006
- Completion of pre development work with respect to the potential of securing funding for the provision of CCTV in the estates awarded

Two local task groups are assisted in their work by the Dundalk RAPID Co-ordinator and have a significant role to play in tackling social exclusion in Dundalk. The Dundalk Drugs Advisory Group was established under the auspices of Dundalk Town Council. This multi agency group, through a workshop held in December 2006 have identified a number of actions to tackle the issue of drugs misuse in Dundalk under the headings of treatment, education and prevention, aftercare and research. The advisory group is now in implementation phase. Equally, the social inclusion working group of the Dundalk Economic Development Group has progressed a number of actions in 2006 including targeted employment related training initiatives, initiatives targeting early school leaving and preliminary work to develop an access programme to DKIT for students from socio economic disadvantaged backgrounds.



Dundalk Town Council RAPID co-ordinator receiving award for Local Development Training initiative.

Drogheda

Drogheda RAPID Team has been focusing on the completion of a wide range of infrastructural projects aimed at improving quality of life and education, training and employment opportunities of residents living in the seven RAPID estates. These included the Glen Garden, Marian Park Meadow Garden, Lifestyle Childcare Facility, Moneymore Childcare Centre, Traveller Primary health Care Unit, sensory room for people with disabilities, Holy Family Community Association development as well as a wide range of sports and recreation facilities that have been endorsed for leverage top up funding under the RAPID programme.

Community safety and quality of life have remained key priorities since 2002 and the learning gained from working with communities and agencies which culminated in our local area Seminar in April 2005 has contributed to a very positive relationship with An Garda Síochana and the establishment of a pilot Joint Policing Committee in Drogheda. Infrastructural initiatives supporting community safety and policing activity in RAPID areas involved a successful stage two application for CCTV and subsequent installation of cameras strategically located to impact on five areas located north and south of the town. Alley gating where deemed suitable is now a mainstream activity in RAPID areas involving detailed consultation and signed agreements with tenants.



Landscaping of the Glen funded under Drogheda RAPID programme.

There has been significant progress too on the implementation of recommendations arising from research under taken in 2005 that highlighted the community safety and information needs of older persons. The successful completion of the Interreg Community safety Initiative involving four seminars and publication of a practical guide as well as follow on outcomes such as the introduction of bowling in Pearse Park and Yellowbatter and neighbourhood watch in the same two RAPID areas. Perhaps the most significant out come was the research and introduction of 'Safe and Sound' home security equipment and monitoring package in 31 targeted homes of residents over 70+ some of whom had experienced burglary, bogus callers and the on going effects of anti-social behaviour.

The success of our interagency Youth Training Initiative has led to a second one in Pearse Park. The completion of an impact analysis report on Drogheda Breakfast Club was funded through RAPID. A RAPID newsletter, a case study publication and inclusion in range of national best practice publications has promoted the Drogheda RAPID programme.

Dundalk 2020 Project

Louth County Council is one of the partner organisations implementing the Dundalk 2020 Project which has established a Sustainable Energy Zone within the town. The objective of the Project is to stimulate a national move towards sustainable energy practice through demonstration in an exemplar community. The project is coordinated by Sustainable Energy Ireland. The main project targets it hopes to achieve by 2010 are:

- 20% of electricity used within the community to be generated from renewable energy sources
- 40% improvement in the energy performance of selected buildings
- 20% increase in the amount of heat generated from renewable sources in housing and community sectors

An application for funding under the EU Concerto Programme was submitted in 2006 and contracts are expected to be signed in 2007. In December the Dundalk 2020 Project charter was signed at a public event by the partner organisations and major stakeholders.

Social Inclusion Measures

Louth SIM Group

A comprehensive Review of Louth SIM Group took place in 2006. The following structure was agreed for Louth SIM group in 2007. Four sub-groups will operate across key priority areas in 2007. The sub-groups will each have their own chair and develop a clear action plan for 2007 focused on their own area. They will meet monthly and report into SIM, making recommendations for action and policy development. SIM will meet on a quarterly basis to address and progress the recommendations of the sub-groups and cross-cutting anti-social issues. All members of SIM should be on at least one of the sub-groups.

Cross Border Funding

Interreg Funding

Louth County Council individually and in conjunction with a number of partners accessed funding from Interreg for the following projects:

Social Economy Bridging Programme	€200k
Newry / Dundalk Mini Metropolis	€45k
Promoting pride in our rural villages	900k
Life Long Learning for the Tourism Sector	€25k
East Border Region Tourism Partnership	€386k
Cross Border Community Safety Network	€239k
East Border Arts Partnership Project	€187,045
Highlanes Gallery	€1.179m
East Regional Development Project	€87k

Workplace Partnership

Workplace Partnership continued to make steady progress in Louth County Council, Dundalk Town Council and Drogheda Borough Council in 2006. Through Workplace Partnership significant progress is being made in the development of a modern, efficient and more effective Local Authority System here in Louth Local Authorities.



Partnership – Retirement Awards.

Goal 5



Fas Mature Apprentices Scheme.

Workplace Partnership provides an effective forum in which Management and Trade Unions can have early discussions of a non adversarial type around planned changes, and can also provide a problem solving approach to the handling of the types of conflict that inevitably arises from time to time, around significant organisational change. Experience shows that a stable industrial relations climate and effective and regular management-staff communications can foster an environment in which it is possible to express differences openly and to address them in a problem solving, rather than a conflictual way.

The various Workplace Partnership Committees i.e. Louth Local Authorities Partnership Committee, Dundalk Town Council Partnership Committee, Louth County Council Partnership Committee, Louth Local Authorities Fire Services Partnership Committee and Drogheda Works Committee met regularly throughout 2006. Under the umbrella of the Louth Local Authorities Workplace Committee the following policies were agreed and approved in 2006:

- Louth Local Authorities Staff Induction Policy
- Louth Local Authorities Staff Handbook
- Employee Safety Handbook
- Attendance Management Policy and Good Practice
- Vaccination Policy

Workplace Partnership in Louth Local Authorities was also involved in the following project work in 2006:

The Return to Learning/Progress in Education programme for outdoor

employees continued in 2006. The aim of this course is to assist staff with acquiring certification and accreditation for returning to learning.

The Apprenticeship Scheme for General Operatives continued in 2006 with six general operatives continuing their four year Craft programme through FAS sponsored by Louth Local Authorities. The programme includes for the placement of the Apprentices working either on site with Contractors or with the Local Authority itself in their respective trades and also includes for "off the job" tuition either in FAS or with Dundalk Institute of Technology. These crafts include plumbing, bricklaying and carpentry.

The Retirement Recognition Awards were presented to all employees who had retired from working with Louth Local Authorities in 2006. The awards were presented at the very well attended Annual Pensioners Christmas Mass and Dinner which was again held in the Fairways Hotel in Dundalk on the 12th of December. This event again proved to be very popular and is now one of the most successful events in the social calendar. The Workplace Partnership Committee held the presentation of the Outstanding Achievement Awards 2005 in May 2006 in County Hall in Dundalk. The County Manager, Martina Moloney and the Co- Chairs of Workplace Partnership presented "Outstanding Achievement Awards" to 10 members of staff who were acknowledged for their respective achievements in 2005, as nominated for same by their work colleagues. Each person who received an award received a Certificate of Achievement and a personalised plaque.

Louth County Council Workplace Partnership Committee launched the enhanced work-wear for outdoor based staff on the 24th of March 2006. This involved the changeover from the orange high visibility jackets to yellow high visibility jackets for all staff employed by Louth Local Authorities and the introduction of standardised work-wear with the respective Local Authority crest and safety boots. It is hoped that this very worthwhile initiative will help promote and develop the corporate Image of Louth Local Authorities to the general public and beyond.

Through Workplace Partnership, the Junior Achievement / Young Enterprise Ireland programme 2006 was again delivered in Louth. This involved employees from Louth Local Authorities volunteering to help the teachers in different schools in promoting and encouraging young people to participate in the educational programmes designed to help them understand the world of work. As in 2005 this programme again proved to be very successful.

Members of Louth Local Authorities Workplace Partnership

• Mary Murtagh	Joint Chairperson	Management	• Kieran Lawless	Administrative Officer	Management
• Isabell Murphy	Joint Chairperson	Impact	• Pat Casey	ATGWU	
• Joe Mc Guinness	Director of Service	Management	• John Lawrence	Administrative Officer	Management
• Danny Churchill	Drogheda Works Committee/UCAT				
• Joan Martin	Director of Service	Management	• Workplace Partnership Facilitator		
• Paul Owens	UCAT		Michael Mc Cabe		

Service Indicators

HOUSING '05 '06

Housing Vacancies

A. Total number of local authority stock	2954	2967
B. Percentage that are let	97	97
C. Percentage of dwellings empty	3	3
D. Percentage empty subject to major refurbishment	43.24	50
E. Percentage of empty dwellings unavailable for letting	83.33	95
F. Percentage of empty dwellings available for letting	16.67	5

Average time (in weeks) taken to re-let dwellings for letting

'05	0.6	'06	0.67
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Number of repairs completed as a percentage of the number of valid repair requests received

'05	79	'06	83.97
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Average time taken to inform applicants of local authority decision on application for:

	(days)	'05	'06
Shared Home Ownership	5	1.29	
Housing Loans Scheme	5	4.08	
Local Authority Housing	9	8.96	

Total number of traveller families accommodated as a percentage of the targets set in the local traveller accommodation programme

'05	98	'06	80.43
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ROADS '05 '06

A. Local and regional roads surface dressed per annum (sq. metres)	550457	568358
B. Percentage of local and regional roads surface dressed per annum	8.96	9.39

MOTOR TAX '05 '06

Percentage of Motor Tax transactions which:	'05	'06
Dealt with over counter	97.57	90.81
Dealt with by post	7.85	9.19
Dealt with by other means	6.18	14.58

Number of postal applications and percentage of postal which are dealt with from receipt of application:

A. on same day	1541-	3215-
	23.34%	34.28%
B. on 3rd day or less	2477-	3895 -
	37.50%	41.53%
C. on 5th day or less	947-	857 -
	14.34%	9.14%
D. over 5 days	1639-	1412 -
	24.82%	15.05%

Average number of opening hours per week

'05	28.75	'06	28.75
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ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES '05 '06

Percentage of river channel

A. unpolluted	58	58
B. slightly polluted	21.7	21.7
C. moderately polluted	19.7	19.7
D. seriously polluted	1.4	0.6

Percentage of drinking water analysis in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to:

public schemes	97.81	98
private schemes	81.46	77

Average time to mobilise fire brigades in:

Full time stations	2.48	1.61
Part-time stations	4.51	3.9

Percentage of attendances at scenes where first attendance is:

within 10 minutes	67	83.6
within 20 minutes	27.8	14
over 20 minutes	5.2	2.4

Total number of:

Fire Safety applications received	229	299
Fire Safety applications process	217	292

Percentage of households provided with segregate waste collection	0	0
Percentage of household waste recycled	25.88	19
Percentage of household waste going to landfill	74.12	81

Service Indicators

RECYCLING FACILITIES '05 '06

Glass

No. of Bring Sites	39	37
No. of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2

Total No. of Facilities	40	39
No. of locations per 5000 of population	2	2
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling per of population	2321.60	5000

Cans

No. of Bring Sites	39	43
No. of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2
Total No. of Facilities	40	45
No. of locations per 5000 of population	2	2
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling per 5000 of population	80.27	80.27

Textiles

No. of Bring Sites	0	0
No. of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2
Total No. of Facilities	1	2
No. of locations per 5000 of population	0.049	2
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling per 5000 of population	4.41	107

Batteries

No. of Bring Sites	0	0
No. of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2
Total No. of Facilities	1	2
No. of locations per 5000 of population	0.049	2
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling per 5000 of population	2.46	47

Oils

No. of Bring Sites	0	0
No. of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2
Total No. of Facilities	1	2
No. of locations per 5000 of population	0.049	2
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling per 5000 of population	1.18	11

Others

No. of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2
Total No. of Facilities	40	2
No. of locations per 5000 of population	2	2
No. of Bring Sites	39	0
Tonnage of waste collected for recycling per 5000 of population	425.54	10281

Litter prevention & Environmental Enforcement

Number Of Litter Wardens		
Total number of full time wardens	7	7
Total number of part time wardens	0	0

Total number of wardens per 5000 of population	0.343	0.343
Number of on the spot fines	1222	1886
Number of prosecutions for non payment	222	248
Number of prosecutions secured	83	101

Percentage of local authority areas that are:

Unpolluted	2.4	12
Slightly polluted	58.7	57
Moderately polluted	32.5	26
Significantly polluted	5.6	5
Grossly polluted	0.8	0

Number of environmental complaints received (in three authorities) for waste, litter, water pollution, noise pollution and air pollution	2720	2053
Number investigated	2542	1910
Number enforcement procedures	396	244
Percentage of primary schools in Green	42.47	63

Schools Scheme

Percentage of secondary schools in Green	68.75	69
Schools Scheme		

PLANNING '05 '06

Planning Applications – Decision Making

Individual Houses

No. of applications determined	745	708
No of complete applications determined within 8 weeks	395	336
Average length of time taken to determine an application where further information is sought	66.10	70
% of grants	86.44	82.77
% of refusals	13.56	17.23
% of cases where the decision was confirmed by An Bord Pleanála	44.83	62.96
% of cases where the decision was varied by An Bord Pleanála	21.05	13.79
% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	41.38	37.04

Housing Development

No. of applications determined	101	143
% of complete applications determined within 8 weeks	100	60
Average length of time taken to determine an application where further information is sought	74.02	82
% of grants	73.27	73.43
% of refusals	26.73	26.57
% of cases where the decision was confirmed by An Bord Pleanála	54.55	63.64
% of cases where the decision was varied by An Bord Pleanála	30.77	0
% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	45.45	36.36

Service Indicators

Other: not requiring EIA

No. of applications determined	1073	1112
% of complete applications determined within 8 weeks	99.08	789
Average length of time taken to determine an application where further information is sought	70.87	73
% of grants	93.48	92.99
% of refusals	6.52	7.01
% of cases where the decision was confirmed by An Bord Pleanála	29.41	55.32
% of cases where the decision was varied by An Bord Pleanála	23.40	23.40
% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	21.28	23.26

Other: requiring EIA

No. of applications determined	10	4
% of complete applications determined within 8 weeks	100	1
Average length of time taken to determine an application where further information is sought	79.80	111
% of grants	90	100
% of refusals	10	0
% of cases where the decision was confirmed by An Bord Pleanála	0	100
% of cases where the decision was varied by An Bord Pleanála	0	0
% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	0	0

Planning Enforcement

Number of Planning Enforcements Investigated	845	979
Number of Planning Enforcements Dismissed	40	115
Number of Enforcement Procedures through warning letters	375	171
Number of Enforcement Procedures through enforcement notices	173	75
Number of prosecutions	32	27
Number of Planning Public Counter Opening Hours	39.16	39.16
Average length of time for pre-planning appointment with planning (booking to meeting)	9.83	8.75

Building Control:

Buildings inspected as percentage of new buildings notified	23.13	13.25
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REVENUE COLLECTION '05 '06

Amount of housing rent collected as percentage of due	90.94	88.77
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Percentage of arrears

percentage 4-6 weeks old	10.01	8.32
percentage 6-12 weeks old	13.81	12.64

percentage more than 12 weeks old	64.71	69.60
Amount of housing loans collected as percentage of due	95.98	98.30

Percentage of arrears

Percentage 1 month old	4.58	4.30
Percentage 2-3 months old	4.18	5.09
Percentage more than 3 months old	89.05	87.44
Amount of commercial rates collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	85.31	84.15
Refuse charges	0	0
Amount of non-domestic water charges collected at year end as a percentage of amount due.	57.34	59.16

CORPORATE ISSUES '05 '06

Percentage of working days lost to certified leave	4.07	4.20
Percentage of working days lost to uncertified leave	0.82	0.77
Expenditure on training/development as percentage of total payroll costs	4.99	5.68

LIBRARY '05 '06

Average number of opening hours per week for full-time libraries	39	34.52
Average number of opening hours per week for part-time libraries	23.34	19.66
Number of registered library members as percentage of local population	12830	12416
Number of library issues of books per head	2.74	286416
Number of library issues of other items per head	0.4	51108
Percentage of libraries that offer internet sessions per 1000	100%	100%
Number of Internet sessions provided per 1,000 population	74.65	64955 (total no.)

ARTS & CULTURAL SERVICES '05 '06

Number of arts grants allocated	87	96
Total value of arts grants per 1000 population	543.92	620.83

Recreational Services**Number of playgrounds per 1000 population:**

A. provided by local authority	0.049	9
B. facilitated by local authority	0.0098	1
Number of visitors to local authority facilitated swimming facilities per 1000 population	1762.1	306404

Community Participation & Cooperation

Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na nÓg	94.1	81.25
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Local Indicators

Local Indicators

Local Indicators devised under the National Service Indicators Scheme to affect local priorities

Housing	'05	'06
No. of additional council housing Estates where tenant participation Initiative has been introduced	LCC - 3 DTC - 3 DBC - 2	LCC - 2
Percentage of derelict sites removed from Register	LCC - 0% DTC - 0% DBC - 0%	LLA - 300% (all 3 combined)

Roads	'05	'06
Pay Parking	LCC - €775.85 DTC - €437.82 DBC - €1402.98	LCC - €579.53 DTC - €471.81 DBC - €1525.34
Average Parking/Yield per space in Louth	€721.56	€714.41

Sanitary Services	'05	'06
Average timescale for restoration of water supply where breakdown DBC - 12 hrs	LCC - 3.6hrs DTC - 12 hrs	LLA - 3.75hrs occurs
% of unaccounted for water	LCC - 40% DTC - 40% DBC - 48%	LCC - 40%

Environment	'05	'06
Waste permit audits No. of sites audited within the last 12 months	35%	59%

Recycling Rates	'05	'06
Bring Bank collection weights - tonnage collected per year	Glass 1507.82 Plastics 262.16 Cans 67.23	1705 320 69
Civic Amenity Tonnage collected	9095.09	10906

Vets	'05	'06
Number of dogs licensed	7390	7514
Number of horses licensed	28	37
Rehoming rate of dogs from pound	35.22%	73.38%

Corporate	'05	'06
Recruitment - % of competitions	LCC - 85%	LLA - 73%
Completed within 12 weeks from Managers approval to advertise to offer of contract	DTC - 100%	(all 3 combined)
IT - number of members using Council email on a regular basis	DBC - 85%	
	LCC - 16 DTC - 5 DBC - 6	LCC - 16 DTC - 5 DBC - 6

IT	'05	'06
Percentage. of maintenance calls addressed within 24 hours	LCC 94% DTC - 96% DBC - 99%	LLA - 90% (all 3 combined)

Library	'05	'06
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Library Visits	280,242	268,841
Number of public utilizing public library facilities		

Amenity	'05	'06
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Number of museum visits	12645	11907
Number of archive visits	736	322
Number of public queries	207	319

Finance	'05	'06
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Percentage of payroll on paypath	LCC – 98.10%	LCC – 99.90%
	DTC – 94%	DTC – 100%
	DBC – 99%	DBC – 100%
Percentage of debtors paid by electronic means	LCC – 32.03%	LCC – 11.67%
	DTC – 19%	DTC – 19.50%
	DBC – 6.3%	DBC – 7.17%

Fire Service	'05	'06
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Cost of fire service per head of population	LCC – €26.60	LCC – €19.59
	DTC – €70.56	DTC – €64.06
	DBC – €51.42	DBC – €54.24
Percentage of Chimney Fires of all calls addressed	LCC – 3.5%	LCC – 5.9%
	DTC – 2.3%	DTC – 3.9%
	DBC – 3.4%	DBC – 3.3%

Financial Figures

Financial Figures

EXPENDITURE	AUDITED 2005
Housing & Building	3,564,554
Road Transport & Safety	16,193,092
Water Supply & Sewerage	6,910,635
Development Incentives & Controls	5,015,709
Environmental Protection	8,008,932
Recreation & Amenity	3,319,663
Ag. Ed. Health & Welfare	6,918,064
Miscellaneous Services	3,519,083
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	53,449,732
State Grants	27,690,996
Goods & Services	19,586,454
Contributions from Other LA's	1,466,389
Rates	5,546,049
TOTAL INCOME	54,289,888
Surplus/Deficit for Year	840,156
Transfers to/from Reserves	(2,739,241)
Overall Surplus/Deficit for Year	(1,899,085)
Opening Balance	12,892,066
Closing Balance	10,992,981
Capital Account	
Expenditure	41,310,401
Receipts	55,831,410
Conferences	
Within State*	77,533
Abroad	18,692

DROGHEDA BOROUGH COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL FIGURES (UNAUDITED)

Total Revenue Expenditure 2005 was €24,814,512.22

Total Capital Expenditure 2005 was €32,621,585.78

DUNDALK TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL FIGURES (AUDITED)

Total Revenue Expenditure 2005 was €25,133,859

Total Capital Expenditure 2005 was €30,132,810

* Councillors used some of their conference money to make allocations to local activities

LOUTH SUMMARY OF MAJOR REVENUE COLLECTIONS FOR 2005

	Arrears @ 01/01/2005	Accrued	Write Off	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Arrears @ 31/12/2005	% Collected
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
Rates	361,649	5,546,048	8,075	Nil	5,899,622	5,370,402	529,221	91%
Rents & Annuities	113,189	1,358,518	13,107	Nil	1,458,600	1,366,492	92,108	94%
Commercial Water	509,506	630,008	39,722	6,442	1,093,349	563,307	530,042	52%
Housing Loans	(3,773)	497,574	146	Nil	493,655	485,321	8,334	98%