

Louth oca authorities



Annual Report 2008



**“TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AND TO
DELIVER AN EFFICIENT QUALITY
SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF LOUTH”**

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MISSION STATEMENT

“To provide leadership and to deliver an efficient quality service to the people of Louth.”



Land of Legends

*Conn Murray,
County Manager, Louth Local Authorities*



*Declan Breathnach,
Cathaoirleach, Louth County Council*



*Seamus Keelan,
Chairman, Dundalk Town Council*



We are delighted to present, on behalf of Louth Local Authorities, the Annual Report for 2008. The Annual Report plays an important role in reviewing the performance of the local authorities. It also acts as a source of information to the public outlining the various activities and operations engaged in by the local authorities.

During the year, Louth Local Authorities continued to focus on economic development and progressed a number of economic initiatives geared towards making Louth more accessible and a more attractive business location. This will be complemented by the review of the statutory Development Plan for County Louth and for Dundalk and its Environs, which commenced in late 2008. We will envisage that this Plan will guide our future development.

Progress was made on a number of projects throughout the year which included:

- The completion of Fr. Finn Park, Louth Village.
- The completion of Drogheda Fire Station.
- The launch of Louth Age Friendly County Initiative.
- The success of Tallanstown in the European Entente Florale competition.
- The successful launch of the new Dundalk brand coupled with the ongoing work of the Dundalk Economic Development Group.

Unfortunately, 2008 saw the commencement of the downturn in both the world and national economy which will undoubtedly have an affect on the work of Louth Local Authorities moving into 2009 and beyond.

Sadly, we remember former Louth County Council Chairman, Mr. John McConville and a number of staff members – Paul Taafe, Paddy Duffy, and Brian Mulholland – who passed away during the year. May they rest in peace.

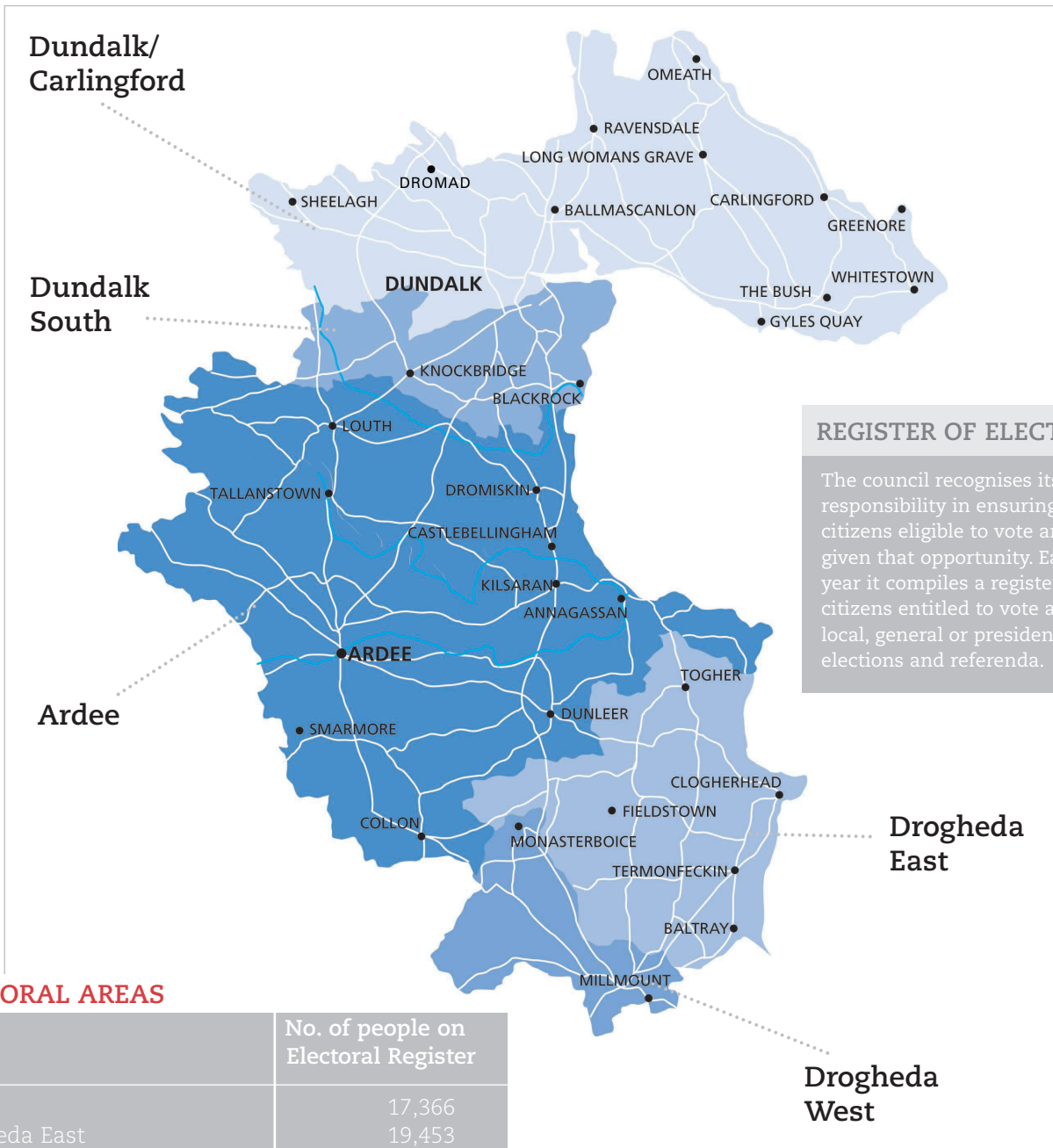
Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work and dedication of the staff and elected members of Louth Local Authorities together with the members of the various Strategic Policy Committees and the County Development Board over the past 12 months. We look forward to continued progress in 2009 working in conjunction with the various state agencies, the private sector and our local communities.

*Frank Maher,
Mayor, Drogheda Borough Council*



*Tom Minogue,
Chairman, Ardee Town Council*





REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The council recognises its responsibility in ensuring that citizens eligible to vote are given that opportunity. Each year it compiles a register of all citizens entitled to vote at local, general or presidential elections and referenda.

ELECTORAL AREAS

Area	No. of people on Electoral Register
Ardee	17,366
Drogheda East	19,453
Drogheda West	13,467
Dundalk/Carlingford	18,376
Dundalk South	20,153



Dundalk/Carlingford

Fine Gael

Terry Brennan



Fianna Fáil

Seamus Keelan



Sinn Féin

Jim Loughran



Non Party

Jim Ryan



Fianna Fáil

Peter Savage



Sinn Féin

Tomás Sharkey



Dundalk South

Non Party

Martin Bellew



Fianna Fáil

Declan Breathnach



Fine Gael

Jim D'Arcy



Non Party

Mary Grehan



Fianna Fáil

Donal Lynch



Sinn Féin

Kevin Meenan



Ardee

Fine Gael
Finnan McCoy



Fianna Fáil
Thomas Clare



Fine Gael
Jim Lennon



Sinn Féin
Pearse McGeough



Fianna Fáil
Liam Reilly



Drogheda East

Fianna Fáil
Jacqui McConville



Fianna Fáil
Jimmy Mulroy



Sinn Féin
Imelda Munster



Fine Gael
Michael O'Dowd



Fine Gael
Oliver Tully



Drogheda West

Fine Gael
Anthony Donohoe



Fianna Fáil
Frank Maher



Labour
Gerald Nash



Non Party
Ken O'Heiligh



Staff of Louth County Council

CONN MURRAY – County Manager

M. CURRAN – Director of Service

J. MARTIN – Director of Service

J. MCGUINNESS – Director of Service

E. WALSH – Director of Service

B. WOODS – Head of Finance

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

C. MOSS (Corporate Services)

M. MURTAGH (Environment)

P. FITZSIMONS (Housing & Emergency Services)

P. DONNELLY (Roads & Marine)

W. WALSH (Planning and Development)

E. MULHOLLAND (Information Technology)

B. LYNCH (Financial Accountant)

R. MCAULEY (Financial Accountant)

A. WARD (County Librarian)

SENIOR ENGINEERS

R. MCKENNA (Housing)

G. KELLY (Roads & Marine)

P. FINN (Environmental Services)

M. O'CALLAGHAN (Sanitary Services)

SENIOR PLANNER

G. DUFFY (Planning)

Dundalk Town Council Members

Non Party
Martin Bellew



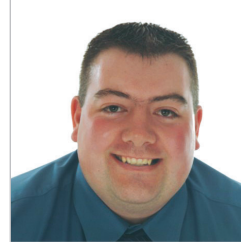
Fianna Fáil
Seamus Keelan



Green Party
Mark Dearey



Sinn Féin
Ian Dooley



Non Party
Mary Grehan



Fianna Fáil
Seamus Byrne



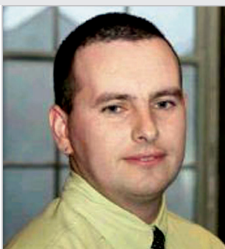
Sinn Féin
Harry Todd



Fianna Fáil
Noel Lennon



Sinn Féin
Kevin Meenan



Fine Gael
Jim D'Arcy



Fine Gael
Eamonn O'Boyle



Non Party
Jim Ryan



STAFF OF DUNDALK COUNTY COUNCIL

Conn Murray County Manager

F. Pentony Town Clerk

David Storey Senior Executive Officer

Catherine Duff Town Engineer

Drogheda Borough Council Members

Fianna Fáil
Tommy Murphy



Fine Gael
Michael O'Dowd



Sinn Féin
Dom Wilton



Labour
Gerald Nash



Non Party
Malachy Godfrey



Fianna Fáil
Jimmy Mulroy



Fine Gael
Anthony Donohoe



Fianna Fáil
Tommy Byrne



Labour
Paul Bell



Sinn Féin
Mathew Coogan



Fianna Fáil
Frank Maher



Non Party
Ken O'Heiligh



STAFF OF DROGHEDA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Conn Murray County Manager

D. Foley Town Clerk

Mary T. Daly Senior Executive Officer

Dermot Agnew Borough Engineer

Ardee Town Council Members

Fine Gael
Niall Carberry



Sinn Féin
Seamus Gaffney



Labour
Leonard Hatrick



Fianna Fáil
Padraig McKenny



Fianna Fáil
Fintan Malone



Non Party
Jim Tenanty



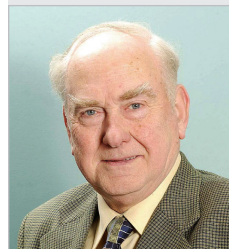
Fine Gael
Finnan McCoy



Fine Gael
Fionnán McCoy



Labour
Tom Minogue



STAFF OF ARDEE TOWN COUNCIL

Conn Murray County Manager

Mairead Duffy Town Clerk

Corporate Services & Housing Directorate

MEETINGS ADMINISTRATION 2008

Louth County Council held all its statutory monthly meetings and budget meetings. Three Special Meetings were held during the course of 2008. Minutes of the council meetings are available on the Louth County Council website.

During the course of the year three Corporate Policy Group meetings were held.

The retirement of Cllr. Tommy Reilly took place on 30th June 2008 after 17 years in which he represented the Ardee Electoral Area. Best wishes were extended to him and his family on his retirement.

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES

HOUSING SPC met on five occasions throughout 2008. Agenda items included the following:

- Scheme for requiring financial contributions from certain local authority housing applicants.
- Banning of certain breeds of dangerous dogs from local authority housing estates.
- Recommendations made including funding for DPGs and ERGs, Peace III Programme and the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2005-2008.
- Housing Strategy.
- Design issues in local authority estates.
- Draft Disability Implementation Plan.
- Homelessness Strategy.

PLANNING SPC met on four occasions in 2008. Agenda items included the following:

- Review of County Development Plan: Presentation of Issues Paper and workshop consideration of critical issues (split into two working groups).
- Review of County Development Plan: Consideration of rural housing issue (split into two working groups).
- Report on the architecture of Main Street, Blackrock.
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Consultation Draft Guidelines.
- The Biodiversity Plan: Presentation by Mr. Brendan McSherry, Heritage Officer.
- Retail Strategy: Report by Senior Planner on current status.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SPC met on five occasions in 2008. Agenda items included the following:

- River Basin Management Plans.
- Presentation of Waste By-Laws.
- County Development Plan Review.
- Waste Permit Regulations.
- Waste Collection Charging Policy.
- Environmental Noise Directive.
- Climate Change Strategy.
- Bring Bank Site Design.

CORPORATE SPC met on one occasion during 2008. Agenda items included the following:

- Play Policy.

Goal 1 – To deliver the best possible service to our customers and clients.

CUSTOMER CARE

Louth Local Authorities have a dedicated Customer Charter and Action Plan to suit the needs of all customers. In 2008:

- Five customer complaints were made through our formal system.
- Seven matters were raised with the Ombudsman.

Our dedicated LoCall number, 1890 202 303, is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and during 2008 we received 4,416 calls during the after hours period. Details of all calls are recorded and where necessary emergency staff are activated. In all other cases the matter is dealt with during the working day.

During 2008, 17 applications were made under the Freedom of Information Act 1997/2003.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

In 2007, a scheme was approved by the Minister under the Official Languages Act which details the services that would be provided through the medium of Irish.

Under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 and at the request of the Minister of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs, Louth County Council prepared an Irish Language Scheme that was adopted in November 2007. This Scheme, which remains in effect for three years until November 2010, sets out what services Louth County Council proposes to provide through Irish only and through Irish and English.

Louth County Council is in the process of implementing the Irish Language Scheme and is committed to meeting its statutory obligations in relation to the commitments set out in the Scheme. Among those commitments in the Scheme which have been achieved to date are:

- Setting up of the Placenames Committee, to formulate guidelines and advise on appropriate naming of new developments.
- Setting up of a generic Irish email address for correspondence in Irish.
- Promotion of and participation in Seachtain na Gaeilge.
- Carrying out an Irish language audit of staff.
- Responding in kind to correspondence received in Irish.
- Identifying members of staff who are capable of handling queries and interviews with Irish language media organisations and providing their contact details to those organisations.

Louth County Council is currently working towards implementing the following commitments set out in the Scheme:

- Providing a fully bi-lingual counter service in the Corporate Services Section.
- Ensuring that all application forms and associated information leaflets for use by the general public are available in a bi-lingual format.
- Ensuring that all such bi-lingual application forms will be available on the Council's website.
- Identifying members of staff who have reasonable skills in Irish and seeking agreement with them to provide services in Irish.
- Providing Irish language training for staff.
- Including language awareness as part of induction and customer service training.

Louth County Council will continue to progress the implementation of its Irish Language Scheme to full completion. Louth County Council recognises the importance of and is committed to encouraging the use of Irish among its staff and providing services to the public in Irish when requested.

REGISTER OF ELECTORS

Louth County Council published its Register of Electors on 14th February 2008, totalling 87,188 electors. During the course of the year, a review was made of the electoral areas which saw a redistribution of one seat from Dundalk/Carlingford to the Drogheda East/West area. In that same area there were some boundary changes made between Dundalk South and Dundalk/Carlingford in County Louth and boundary changes within the urban areas of Dundalk and Drogheda.

HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS

During the course of 2008 a total of €2,887,166.88 was paid for Higher Education Grant applications as broken down in the tables that follow.

Undergraduate	Applications
1st year	79
2nd year	55
3rd year	206
4th year	248

Postgraduate	Applications
1st year	22
2nd year	19
3rd year	11
4th year	3

HEALTH & SAFETY

2008 continued to see significant work in developing and enhancing Health & Safety practices across Louth Local Authorities.

In this period, a new Safety Management Committee was established in relation to the Fire Service. The local authority Safe System of Work Plan (SSWP) for working on roads was also rolled out during 2008.

Other work carried out in 2008 included:

- Louth Local Authorities completed noise and vibration assessments across a range of local authority activities.
- An attempt was made to develop all risk assessments for all activities. A significant number of these were completed.
- A number of lone worker devices were purchased to assist in securing the safety, health and welfare of lone workers and which will be utilised in conjunction with the Lone Worker Policy.

Goal 5 – To form alliances and working partnerships, internally and with other organisations and service providers, to meet organisational goals and priorities.

WORKPLACE PARTNERSHIP

The following Workplace Partnership Committees are in place in the Louth Local Authorities and have met as follows:

	No. of meetings in 2008
Louth Local Authorities Workplace Partnership Committee	12
Dundalk Town Council Partnership Committee	5
Louth County Council Partnership Committee	6
Louth Local Authorities Fire Service Partnership Committee	10
Drogheda Borough Council Partnership Committee	4

Partnership continues to be a productive means of working with all parties to achieve the goals of the Louth Local Authorities.

Goal 1 – To deliver the best possible service to our customers and clients.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources needs of the Louth Local Authorities are addressed by the Personnel Section of Louth County Council.

Staff numbers peaked in Louth Local Authorities during 2008 at levels over 720 staff. During this period, 130 staff joined and 48 left the employment of Louth Local Authorities. A significant volume of works was concluded in this period which included the publication of a new staff handbook, development of a number of policies, as well as dealing with all issues that typically arise in this area.

Work also commenced on the preparation for the introduction of a new HR, Payroll and Superannuation system which will be applied in 2009 in Louth.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Louth Local Authorities are committed to bringing the best possible service to our customers and ongoing training and development of staff is an important factor in influencing the level of performance and efficiency within the organisation.

A number of key training activities were delivered to staff in 2008 to enable them to deliver a high quality of service to customers and clients alike. These included:

- Management Development.
- Intercultural Awareness.
- ICT Skills.
- Customer Care.
- Confined Space Training.
- Driving Skills.
- Contract Management.
- Environmental Legislation.
- Access Training.
- Public Procurement.

Goal 3 – To improve the quality of life for residents, now and for future generations.

HOUSING

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The statutory Housing Needs Assessment was concluded in 2008 and is now valid for a three-year period. It indicated that the total waiting list for the county consists of 2,904 applicants. The Housing Needs Assessment will provide the basic data which will dictate housing provision in the years moving forward.

HOUSING PROVISION

Housing provision is managed through the Action Plan for Social and Affordable Housing. It was agreed with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. 2008 saw the end of the economic boom and the consequences of the high investment in housing saw delivery in 2008 of over 500 new units of social and affordable housing across the county at an overall capital cost of close to €100,000,000.

In the case of Louth County Council, housing developments at Louth Village and Clos na Manach in Carlingford were concluded. Works were commenced at Ardee and Collon.

SOCIAL HOUSING

Louth County Council are now at an all-time high in the number of social units provided. There are over 840 units in stock. During the course of 2008, the Minister for the Environment finally approved the scheme of allocating housing priorities and this is the scheme now in use in all allocations.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

28 units were delivered under the '1999' scheme or indeed through the Part V process within the planning legislation. Louth County Council continued to work with the Affordable Homes Partnership to endeavour to expand and consolidate our role as providers and facilitators of affordable housing delivery.

VOLUNTARY HOUSING

Louth Local Authorities have a distinguished record in working with voluntary bodies for the provision of voluntary housing units. This has continued in 2008 and, in the case of Louth County Council, saw work commence (at Collon through Cluid and Tierney Street and Ardee through Oaklee) in providing units which will be delivered in 2009.

SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

A significant workload and indeed a significant national commitment has seen the management of the various grant schemes for special needs housing. 2008 saw the introduction of the Housing Adaptation Grants, Housing for Older People and Mobility Aids Grants Schemes which were designed to replace the original Disabled Persons Grants Scheme and Essential Repairs Grant. There has been significant demand in this area and indeed there has been considerable delivery with regard to the number of grants paid and the value of these grants.

2008 saw a total of 156 grants being paid under the Disabled Persons Grants Scheme to the value of €1.9m. In the same period, 66 grants to the value of €500,000 were paid in relation to the new schemes. In addition to assisting owner-occupiers to the grant scheme, the Council also carried out a total of 15 adaptations to their existing housing stock such as extensions, bath replacements, etc.

The houses under the new social scheme of Fr. Finn Park, Louth Village were specifically designed and constructed to facilitate tenants with disabilities.

HOUSING STOCK MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

2008 saw 787 requests for maintenance to existing social housing stock. Planned Maintenance works saw the conclusion of the Central Heating Scheme and over 30 houses were refurbished following the departure of the tenants.

HOUSING RENTS

The Housing Rents Scheme provides for income-related rents and is reviewed each year. Differential rents are now set at a minimum of €25 per week.

Transportation & Planning Directorate

TRANSPORTATION SECTION

Goal 2 – To facilitate economic development and maximise our strategic border location midway between Dublin and Belfast.

MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS 2008

DUBLIN-BELFAST ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

The A1/N1 Newry to Dundalk Link Road was officially opened to traffic on 2nd August 2007. The new road has considerably reduced the travel time between Dublin and Belfast and has provided a safer road system for the estimated 20,000 vehicles that use it every day.

During 2008, outstanding works, landscaping, archaeology, and accommodation works have been largely completed. Land acquisition from the various landowners affected by the scheme has also been ongoing.

A beautiful, modern, stainless steel sculpture, depicting the Brown Bull of Cooley was also unveiled during 2008. The bull stands proudly over the north-bound carriageway of the M1 approaching the Ballymascanlon Interchange. This sculpture was funded under the Per Cent for Art Scheme as part of the overall road project.

DUNDALK WESTERN INFRASTRUCTURE

SOUTH AND EAST SECTOR

The roadworks required to access to the IDA's strategic site at Mullagharlin were completed in 2008. These included a striking new roundabout with architectural landscaping on the Southern Link Road together with a section of the Western Infrastructure Road. The IDA was also granted planning permission during 2008 for the development of a Bio-Pharma Complex on their site. It is hoped that this may lead, in coming years, to substantial job creation in the area.

Further elements on the south and east sections of the road were also delivered following agreement with the major housing developer at Haggardstown. This also included some significant water services developments.

NORTH AND WEST SECTOR

Consultants have been appointed to design a section of the Dundalk Western Infrastructure Road between the Armagh Road and the Newry Road which formed part of the Gateway

Innovation Fund application. While no funding was been made available to date from the Innovation Fund, design of the road is ongoing and discussions with developers and landowners is taking place with a view to finding an alternative funding mechanism to deliver this section.

LINKS TO GATEWAY – DUNDALK TO CARRICKMACROSS

Construction on the Red Bog section of the Dundalk/Carrickmacross Road commenced in December 2008. This project will involve major improvement to most of the road from Ballykelly to Essexford and also forms part of the proposed East West Dundalk-Sligo route.

Louth County Council, along with Cavan and Monaghan County Councils, are also progressing the overall Dundalk-Cavan section of the proposed East-West route from Dundalk to Sligo. Tenders have been received from consultants for the preliminary design of the route and for the review of the previous reports on this scheme. Appointment of the consultants is expected to take place in the first quarter of 2009.

NARROW WATER BRIDGE

Preliminary design and route selection were completed in 2008, with a cable stay bridge being chosen as the preferred option. Consultations have taken place with all interested parties and documents have been prepared for the statutory procedures on both sides of the border. Approval and funding from the Department of Transport is now required to enable the process to proceed to the planning and detailed design stage in 2009.

IMPROVING ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

ARDEE BYPASS – WESTERN SECTION

Notice to Treat was served on all affected landowners on 21st May 2007 and during 2008 most of the land necessary was acquired. All the lands were acquired by agreement and there were no cases referred to arbitration. Further progress on this scheme will be dependant on funding being made available by the NRA in 2009 and subsequent years.

N53 DUNDALK CASTLEBLAYNEY ROAD – BARRONSTOWN TO NEWTOWNBALREGAN SECTION

Following advertisement, consultants were appointed in the course of 2008 to progress design of this road improvement scheme. It is proposed that the project will consist of 3.5km of

single carriageway. A number of route options were considered and a preferred option selected. A Part 8 planning procedure will commence in early 2009.

R177 KILCURRY ROAD IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Works were completed in early 2008 on the realignment and upgrading of a 1km section of the R177 through Kilcurry village. The scheme has provided an improved road layout in the area including footpaths, public lighting and drainage in the village centre in addition to a right turning lane at the Forkhill Road junction and other safety features. The quality of workmanship, materials and landscaping on the scheme have served to enhance the overall village environment since its completion.

DEVELOPMENT CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

BLACKROCK-ROCK ROAD

The Compulsory Purchase Order has been confirmed for this scheme and notices have been served to affected landowners. Contract documents for Phase 1 of the scheme, which covers the area between Sandy Lane Junction and the Old Golf Links Road Junction, are now being prepared.

TULLYALLEN VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Works commenced in August 2008 on the upgrading of the main road through Tullyallen Village, from a realigned junction with the R168 to set down areas, parking and footpaths beyond the school and the junction with the Glen Road. The scheme will provide new and upgraded footpaths and provide pedestrian links from Watery Lane and the Collon Road to the village centre. Footpaths will be provided in areas where none currently exist and these will link right throughout the village. Public lighting and drainage will be provided through the core village area. The scheme will be completed in 2009 with road resurfacing, new signage and road markings.

GREEN ROAD

A new junction layout has been constructed to link the R171 to LT117020. The junction facilitates vehicles turning out of the local road onto the regional road in a safe manner and replaces the existing substandard junction. Sight lines and junction safety are greatly increased on the upgraded junction along with improved road widths and road surfacing.

WALTERSTOWN CROSS

Works were carried out at the junction to remove a crest on the north side of this junction on the N52, which has increased the visibility at the junction and improved the stopping sight distance on the northern approach to the junction. The works carried out will help to improve road safety at the junction.

PORT ACCESS NORTHERN CROSS ROUTE (DROGHEDA)

Following an oral hearing, An Bord Pleanála approved an EIS and confirmed CPO for this scheme which is an integral part of the North Drogheda Masterplan Area referred to in the Planning Section of this Report. Works continued through the year in designing the scheme and preparing accommodation works and

agreements with landowners. This scheme is to be funded by a developer consortium and recouped through the Section 48 Development Contribution Scheme adopted for the North Drogheda Environs in 2007.

OTHER ROAD PROGRAMMES

LIS SCHEME 2008

A grant of €113,000 was allocated to Louth County Council in 2008 for the operation of the Local Improvements Scheme. The Local Contribution received from the successful applicants totalled €23,660. Four schemes were carried out in various parts of the county with a total of 1.52km of roadway being improved. A total of 26 families, including agricultural landowners, benefited from the scheme.

LOCAL CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

Louth County Council provided €200,000 in the Road Works Programme 2008 for this scheme. Successful applicants contributed 50 per cent towards the cost of the works. In all, 11 schemes were carried out in various parts of the county and the works carried out included renewal of footpaths in estates, provision of safety signage at schools and improvement of Class 3 roadways.

SAFETY IMPROVEMENT WORKS

Low cost safety improvement grants were obtained from the NRA (€50,000) and the Department of Transport (€126,000). Works undertaken included:

- Anti-skid surfacing, road markings and drainage at Cullaville (N53).
- Improved sightlines, drainage, signage and road markings at Hoathstown (R170).
- Junction realignment, drainage, lighting, signage and road markings at Drumbilla (R177)
- Anti-skid surfacing at Annagassan Bridge and Tobertoby (R166).
- Improved signage, road markings (and public lighting at some locations) at Roche Crossroads, Ballynamoney Road, R178, R165 (Corbally's Crossroads), R168 Collon, R169 Hammondstown.

ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMME 2008

During 2008, Louth County Council's Road Safety Awareness Campaign encompassed all our citizens, both young and old. From the checking of child restraints in cars, *Safe Cross Code* promotion and Seat Belt Sheriff programme for young children, through to educational programmes for teenagers (*Roadsafe Roadshows* and *Drive for Life*), high visibility promotions across the spectrum and road safety advertisements targeting the public at large.

Goal 3 – To improve the quality of life for residents, now and for future generations.

ROADSAFE ROADSHOW AND DRIVE FOR LIFE

The *Roadsafe Roadshow* was developed by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and its objective is to encourage young drivers, and those about to commence their driving career, to adopt a safer and more responsible attitude towards driving. In February, following an invitation from the PSNI, we arranged and covered the cost for over 30 students from Dundalk Youthreach to attend a *Roadsafe Roadshow* in Bessbrook, Northern Ireland.



In conjunction with CAWT Steering to Safety Project and local radio station, LFMF, Louth County Council participated in the organisation, running and sponsorship of **the first ever County Louth Roadsafe Roadshow** in Ardee Community Centre on 1st May. Over 750 secondary school pupils attended what was deemed to be a very effective show. Approximately 650 students were from Louth with the remainder from neighbouring County Monaghan. The favour was returned later in the year (December) when approximately 250 students from Louth attended the first ever Monaghan Roadsafe Roadshow.

Also, with a view to heightening awareness of road safety among teenagers, in 2008 Louth County Council came together with six post-primary schools around the county to jointly fund an interactive presentation entitled Drive for Life, a road safety and hazard awareness presentation specially designed for schools and colleges.

SEAT BELT SHERIFF

During 2008, Louth County Council delivered the Seat Belt Sheriff programme to 23 primary schools mainly in Dundalk town and the north Louth area. The programme demonstrates the importance of wearing seat belts to children in the 7-9 age bracket.

AUTUMN 2008

Our Road Safety Programme in autumn commenced with the revival of the *Safe Cross Code* at the commencement of the new school year. The Brendan Grace "Safe Cross Code" CD and a

supply of "Safe Cross Code" bookmarks – over 10,000 – were delivered to every primary school in the county. We were delighted to assist the Road Safety Authority in publicising their "**Check It Fits**" child seat restraint roadshow which visited the Marshes Shopping Centre, Dundalk in September. Over 140 child seats were tested on the day.

HIGH VISIBILITY CAMPAIGN – BE SAFE, BE SEEN

The 2008 campaign incorporated the distribution of high visibility clothing to senior citizens groups throughout the county and to the Louth branch of PWDI (People with Disabilities Ireland), the sponsorship of high visibility clothing for youngsters participating in school 'walking bus' and the promotion among drivers of the use of dipped headlights during daylight hours over the winter months. We also sponsored Drogheda Positive Ageing Week (September) by providing high visibility clothing for distribution among participants.

WORLD REMEMBRANCE DAY FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS

Louth's Road Safety Officer joined with her colleagues in Meath, Monaghan and Cavan to highlight World Remembrance Day for Road Traffic Victims by broadcasting road safety advertisements throughout the four days leading up to World Remembrance Day (16 November) on local radio station LFMF, who also sponsored the advertisements. This initiative led to an LFMF radio interview with the mother of an RTC victim from Co. Meath that brought reaction from members of the public throughout the country.

COLLISION PREVENTION PROGRAMMES

Local Authority staff and members of the Road Traffic Corps of An Garda Síochána continued to meet during 2008 on committees of the North, Mid & South Louth Collision Prevention Programme (CPP).

CROSS-BORDER PROJECTS

The Transportation Directorate has, in partnership with colleagues in Newry and Mourne District Councils and other Local Authorities in Northern Ireland, been involved in delivering a number of projects funded under the Interreg IIIA programme.

In 2008, the "Experience Carlingford Lough" project was concluded with a major publicity campaign to encourage visitors to the area. Under this project, marine facilities were improved at Carlingford, Omeath and Greer's Pier. Under the "Vision for Our Coastline" project, works were carried out at Annagassan to improve the amenity facilities at the harbour.

MID-LOUTH CIVIC SERVICES CENTRE

The new complex, comprising office and workshop facilities for Louth County Council and the Office of Public Works, a courtroom for the Courts Service and a meeting room for Ardee Town Council, was officially opened on 6th June 2008 by Mr. Dermot Ahern, T.D., Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, and Dr. Martin Mansergh, T.D., Minister of State for Finance.

The new complex has improved the delivery of services in the mid-Louth area and has enhanced the already very popular public park in Ardee.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SECTION

Goal 2 – To facilitate economic development and maximise our strategic border location midway between Dublin and Belfast.

DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME – LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL AREA

A Contribution Scheme, under the provision of Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, was adopted by the Council on 16th February 2004 and has since been in operation. The scheme clearly sets out, for developers, the level of contribution required for each type of development as well as the basis for levying the contribution. Contributions from the scheme will fund the provision of the necessary infrastructure to sustain future development and growth in the county.

A special contribution may also be levied in respect of a particular development where specific exceptional costs not covered by the general scheme pertain in respect of public infrastructure and facilities which benefit the proposed development.

Receipts from this scheme (excluding those levied prior to the adoption of this scheme) amounted to some €3,175,178 during 2008.

In addition, a further €5,124,435 was owing under both this and the previous scheme for developments actually built or under construction by 31st December 2008. When outstanding bonds are included, this figure rises to €5,880,560.

Capital expenditure of monies received as development contributions under the new scheme during 2007 amounted to some €1,295,671.

Note: There is a separate Contribution Scheme in place for the North Drogheda Environs which was adopted by the Council in July 2007.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME – DUNDALK WESTERN TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

In accordance with Section 49 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, a Supplementary Development Contribution Scheme was adopted by the members of Louth County Council and Dundalk Town Council in October 2008 to facilitate the provision of the Dundalk Western Transportation Infrastructure. The scheme will apply to development located within the area of the scheme which directly benefits from the project.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

ACCESS TO PLANNING OFFICE STAFF AND DOCUMENTS

During 2008, the system of ensuring maximum availability of

Planners to deal with general planning queries by telephone was continued. A Duty Planner is available Tuesdays and Thursdays for general planning queries, in addition to the standard availability by appointment on Wednesdays for pre-planning clinics. In addition, since the end of 2007, documents on current and historic planning files are available over the internet to members of the public.

FORWARD PLANNING

OVERVIEW

The year 2008 marked a step change in Forward Planning with the creation of a dedicated unit tasked with the production of development plans and associated strategies for the county. The new unit commenced the year by building on the preparatory work carried out in 2007 on the review of the County Development Plan. The current County Development Plan expires in 2009 and the planning and development legislation stipulates that a review must be commenced two years prior to the date of expiry. The Dundalk and Environs Development Plan has an almost identical timescale for review as that of the County Development Plan and, as such, work on both plans continued in parallel throughout 2008.

The role of the three statutory Development Plans, which apply across the county, is multifaceted. Development Plans provide a primarily physical blueprint for the planning and development of a geographical area. The Development Plans outline the local authority's land use objectives for particular areas. Thus, areas can, for example, be for residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural or a mix of land uses. The Development Plans also detail proposed works which the local authority proposes to carry out over the plans' timescales. These can include objectives and policies relating to, among others, road improvements, environmental improvements, renewal of obsolete areas and the improvement of public amenities.

In many instances, the planned location, timing and means of provision of required infrastructure development (e.g. water, sewage, roads, etc.) will determine the timing and location of private investment. The Plans therefore act as a guide to developers and investors as to what form, nature and extent of development are likely to be acceptable at various locations.

MASTER PLAN FOR THE NORTHERN ENVIRONS OF DROGHEDA

A Local Area Plan for the Northern Drogheda Environs was adopted by the County Council in July 2004 to provide for a range of development uses in the northern environs of Drogheda that would cater for a population of 20,000 within the next 20 years. The Master Plan for the area covers the residential zoned lands within the Local Area Plan and was adopted as a variation of the Local Area Plan by the County Council at its meeting on 15th May 2006.

Following extensive pre-planning consultations with the Planning Authority during 2007, a significant number of

planning applications for the development of the area by the North Drogheda Development Group, comprising developers and landowners, have been assessed. During the year, nine of these applications have resulted in grants of planning permission, and these provide for public parks, a school and over 4,000 residential units.

The assessment of planning applications for the development of the Master Plan area will be ongoing during 2009.

SPC MEETINGS 2008

INFRASTRUCTURE SPC

Five Infrastructure SPC meetings were held in 2008. Matters discussed during the year included the review of speed limits, preparation of the draft Development Plan, roadside memorials, taking charge of estates and the Local Improvement Scheme 2009.

PLANNING SPC

During the course of 2008, the Planning Strategic Policy Committee participated in facilitated workshops in which relevant issues to be considered in the County Development Plan review were identified. In addition, the Committee was briefed on the consultation draft guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment on:

- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management;

- A report on the architecture of Main Street, Blackrock;
- The draft Biodiversity Plan for County Louth; and
- The Retail Strategy Review.

AWARDS RECEIVED BY TRANSPORTATION & PLANNING

ISO 14001 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The Transportation Directorate, which had previously been awarded the ISO 14001 standard for Environmental Management Systems, was subject to an external audit during 2008. The Directorate was successful in retaining the accreditation for the roads function.

QUALITY MARK CERTIFICATION

Following an independent audit of our policies, processes and procedures in December 2007, Louth County Council Planning Section became the first Planning Section in the north east to achieve Quality Mark accreditation. Staff in the section, both professional planners and administrators, deserve credit for the enthusiasm and effort they put into the preparations made in the weeks prior to the audit which led to our success.

Q-Mark process standards were maintained and improved on throughout the year as verified by the annual external audit which took place in January 2009.

Environment & Water Services Directorate

Goal 4 – To harness community participation, provide civic leadership and encourage civic pride.

ENVIRONMENT

NATIONAL TIDY TOWNS CAMPAIGN

2008 was the most successful year to date in the county's Tidy Towns campaign with Louth being the only county in Ireland being awarded four Gold Medals – Tallanstown, Knockbridge, Dundalk and Drogheda being the successful recipients. The community of Tallanstown, following their award of Best Entry in the Midlands East Tourism Region, were honoured with the hosting of the Regional Awards in November when committees from the eight county regions travelled to the village on the night to accept their awards from Mr. John Gormley, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The success of Louth's participation was evident in the number of awards presented on the night including the Regional Award (Tallanstown), Regional Bring Bank Award (Tallanstown), Regional Notice Nature Award (Tallanstown), Sustainable Development Award (Ardee Civic Offices), Can It Award (V. & W. Recycling Bus) and Endeavour Award (Stabannon) as well as the Gold Medal Awards.



The profile of the county was further enhanced when Knockbridge was nominated by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government to represent its population category in the All Ireland Best Kept Town Awards and emerged as winner of the Overall Award for that category, retaining the title won by neighbouring Tallanstown the previous year.



Further good news was on the horizon when Tallanstown was nominated to represent Ireland in the International Entente Florale Competition, which saw the picturesque village being assessed by an international visiting jury in August. There were great celebrations in September when Tallanstown was one of only three European villages to scoop the prestigious Gold Award.





LOCAL TIDY TOWNS COMPETITION

The Tidy Estates/Districts Campaign which served the county well for almost 20 years was reviewed and revamped in 2008 resulting in the launch of the new-style Louth Looking Good Awards, which continue to recognise the efforts of Tidy Towns groups and Residents Associations at local level. A key factor in being able to introduce this more high profile campaign was the generous sponsorship deal agreed with the private sector, specifically Quinn Energy, Daniel O'Connell and Son, McCabes Plant Hire, Oxigen Environmental and Sheils Construction, which resulted in a doubling of the existing prize fund. The campaign attracted huge interest in its first year and the prizes were awarded at a major prize-giving event held in the Crowne Plaza in October.

*Drogheda Tidy Towns
Drogheda awarded 286 marks in Tidy Towns Competition
– Gold Medal winner*

SCHOOLS ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME

Locally, the Primary Schools Environmental Awards Scheme enjoyed its most successful year to date with 47 entries all competing to a very high standard. Awards ranging from Platinum to Bronze were awarded to schools depending on the percentage of overall marks achieved and it was obvious that environmental awareness and commitment is at an all-time high.

Louth's participation in the Green Flag scheme received a huge boost with the award of 23 additional flags resulting in almost doubling the 24 Green Flags in the county to an impressive 47 at the end of 2008.



The Great Debate, an environmental debate for secondary schools, was held with great success with the team from St. Vincent's Secondary School in Dundalk retaining the Overall Award that they won in the inaugural year.



NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN

In excess of 4,000 volunteers took to the highways and byways of County Louth during the month of April to participate in Ireland's biggest anti-litter initiative: National Spring Clean. Louth registered its best participation ever with almost 220 clean ups being organised by schools, Residents Associations, community groups, businesses and sporting organisations, with support from each of the three local authorities.



GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS

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



Goal 3 – To improve the quality of life for residents, now and for future generations.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Louth County Council continued to participate with the other waste management authorities in the region in implementing the measure set out in the North East Waste Management Plan. A key action in 2008 was the adaptation of the Presentation and Collection of Household Waste and Commercial Waste By-laws throughout the region. These by-laws require waste generators to segregate waste for collection into a three-bin system. The main driver for the three-bin collection system is the need to divert organic waste from landfills in compliance with the EU Landfill Directive.

Further progress was made in implementing WEEE regulations, with 1,374 tonnes of WEEE collected throughout the county in 2008. Louth County Council organised a very successful Farm Plastics Collection Scheme during 2008, with a total of 356 tonnes collected.

RECYCLING

The Dundalk and Drogheda Recycling Centres continued to excel during the year with recycling, both in terms of quantity and variety of waste streams, at an all-time high. These state-of-the-art facilities, together with the Bring Bank network in the county, provided an excellent opportunity for householders to recycle as much waste as possible. During 2008, 15,338 tonnes of household waste was recycled using these facilities (an increase of five per cent on the 2007 figure) and this combined with the 10,683 tonnes collected/recycled through the kerbside collection ensured that as much household waste as possible was effectively recycled.

Another significant factor in terms of recycling was the roll out of the Brown Bin Service on a pilot basis in Dundalk, Ardee and Blackrock which enabled householders in those areas to separate their biodegradable household waste as part of the kerbside collection scheme.

This comprehensive recycling programme together with the Council's successful participation in the Green School Programme, National Tidy Towns Competition and waste minimisation activities with communities, businesses and schools saw Louth County Council once again shortlisted for the Repak Recycling Awards. Further attention focused on the Council's recycling programme through the provision and mid-year opening of the county's first underground Bring Bank centre in Tallanstown, which won the Regional Bring Bank Award in the National Tidy Towns Competition.



LANDFILL

Phase 5 Development Works at Whiteriver Landfill was substantially completed in 2008. It is expected that these works will provide landfill capacity to the year 2013. The site has a licensed capacity of 96,000 tonnes per annum.

WASTE ENFORCEMENT

Waste Enforcement continued to receive significant attention during the year. A new enforcement policy on action against illegal waste activity was formulated. Road checkpoints continued to be conducted, with the co-operation of An Garda



Síochána, to check compliance with waste collection permit regulations. Waste-permitted facilities were also audited with further audits and inspections carried out on waste collection permit holders.

In 2008, 24 producers were registered under End of Life Vehicles Regulations. A total of 219 premises were registered with Repak at the end of December, with three self-compliers registered with the County Council under the Packaging Regulations. A total of 214 waste complaints were received in 2008 and 51 per cent were closed at year end.

LITTER MANAGEMENT

Louth's position as one of the leading enforcers of the Litter Pollution Act was sustained in 2008 with a total of 1,055 fines issued by the seven-man Litter Warden Team.

Litter awareness programmes continued with school visits and hospitals and buses advertising Litter Alert posters and signage, as well as the very successful summer Litter League which attracted its highest entry to date, with all centres improving cleanliness ratings.



WATER QUALITY

Louth County Council fully participated in the preparation of the Draft River Basin Management Plans for the Neagh Bann and Eastern Region river basins. These plans were completed and went on public display in December 2008.

Work continued during the year in implementing measures under the Nitrates Directive and Water Pollution Acts, and in licensing and auditing effluent discharges. In all a total of 259 farm surveys were conducted in 2008.

Work continued in implementing the River Monitoring Programme required under the Water Framework Directive. A total of 532 routine river samples were taken. In 2008, 96 water pollution complaints were received and 97 per cent of these were closed out at year end.



BLUE FLAG SCHEME

Louth retained the prestigious Blue Flag for its beaches at Port and Templetown and was honoured to be selected to host the National Blue Flag Presentations for 2008. Minister John Gormley presented the Blue Flag to all successful participants nationally at a well-attended ceremony on Templetown Beach. The Minister also raised the 2008 Blue Flag at Templetown in the course of his visit.



WATER SAFETY

Lifeguards were provided by Louth County Council on beaches at Templetown, Port and Clogherhead during the summer season.

Lifesaving equipment was maintained at popular locations throughout the year.

The Council, through their Water Safety Development Officer, liaised with the local Water Safety Committee to provide training in advanced swimming lifesaving and resuscitation techniques, weekly from September to May, at pools in Dundalk, Drogheda and Gormanstown. Open water outdoor training weeks were held during the summer on Clogherhead Beach and Gyles Quay. These events are very popular and attract a large number of participants each year.

The Council also supports the local lifeboat service, RNLI, in its work.

WATER SERVICES

RESTRUCTURING OF WATER SERVICES

An ongoing project to restructure the provision of water services in County Louth is progressing. This will eventually entail Louth County Council taking charge of all aspects of water services throughout the county. To date, capital projects and the Water Conservation Project have been managed by the county, with responsibility for the water production plants at Dundalk and Drogheda transferring on 1st January 2009. It is also envisaged that responsibility for operation of all commercial water charging will transfer to Louth County Council in the course of 2009.

STALEEN WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Stage 1 of refurbishment works was carried out with Stage 2 due to go to contract in 2009. These works entail the upgrade of existing pumping and treatment facilities to ensure compliance with Drinking Water Regulations.

CAVAN HILL WTP UPGRADE

Additional treatment capacity is to be provided at Cavan Hill which is being part funded by IDA to service the strategic site at Mullagharlin. The Council will also be taking the opportunity to refurbish the existing filters and wastewater recovery system along with upgrading of disinfection facilities. Construction works are due to commence mid-2009.

EAST MEATH/SOUTH LOUTH WATER IMPROVEMENT

This project, which is being led by Meath County Council, will address future water requirements in the Drogheda and south Louth areas. A preliminary report is due to be submitted to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in early 2009.

COOLEY REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY SCHEME STAGE 2

A preliminary report has been completed and is to be submitted to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in early 2009. The Council are seeking approval to carry out advance works to extend the existing Cooley network to Omeath.

MID-LOUTH REGIONAL WATER SCHEME

A brief for the appointment of consultants to prepare contract documentation for a new reservoir in Dunleer and associated

network improvements has been completed. Subject to approval, it is hoped to progress this to construction in mid/late 2009. It is also hoped to obtain approval for appointing consultants to address the provision of a new Mid-Louth Water Treatment Plant in 2009.

WATER CONSERVATION

Phase 2 of the Water Conservation Project has been substantially completed. This entailed active leak detection works being rolled out through all 89 District Metering Areas in the county. To date, some 1,100 leaks have been detected and these are currently being repaired by both Council and contract staff. A second pass is now in progress and the publication of new Water Conservation Regulations in 2008 will facilitate dealing with leakage located on private property. A reduction in water inputs to the distribution system of close to 20 per cent has been achieved. An application has been lodged for funding to carry out rehabilitation works on a number of mains in the Dundalk area, while the replacement of trunk main on the North Quays in Drogheda is expected to progress to construction in 2009. A database has been developed in conjunction with our consultants to assist in managing our repair program and asset information.

NON-DOMESTIC WATER METERING

Progress has continued in the identification and metering of non-domestic water service connection during 2008. Our automatic reading and billing systems are now fully operational and our target turnaround period of eight weeks for issuing bills is being achieved for over 90 per cent of our customers. A significant number of customers have reduced consumption through the elimination of leaks and wastage.

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME

A significant body of works were completed under the aegis of the above programme in 2008. These included:

- Provision of upgraded telemetry and chlorine monitoring systems at water production sites.
- Upgrading of water networks at Mullagharlin, Tullyallan, Ardee, Collon and Cooley.
- Extension to sewerage scheme in Blackrock.
- Replacement of lead mains in Ardee.
- Improvement works at Staleen WTP.
- Upgrade works at Drybridge and Sheepgrange GWSs.
- New GWS scheme at Glack, Ardee.
- Taking charge of Shanliss and Tinure GWSs.

DUNDALK STRATEGIC WATER STUDY

This report, which looks at water supply issues for Dundalk and the surrounding area over a 30-year horizon, has been completed and will be published in early 2009.

LEAD SERVICE CONNECTIONS

Lead was detected in a number of schemes throughout the county in 2008. Lead enters the water supply from lead connections to older houses. Whereas it was possible to address

this issue in most centres through localised replacement of services in conjunction with householders, a major problem was evident in Dundalk where over 2,000 properties are thought to have lead service pipes. The Council is in the process of implementing treatment which involves dosing water with phosphoric acid and is expected to be operational in April 2009. This, in conjunction with water conditioning, will reduce lead concentrations to acceptable levels.

WATER CONNECTION DATABASE

Council staff, in conjunction with a contractor, have developed a water connection management database which is to be rolled out in early 2009. This will facilitate customer service through work flow tracking while also assisting in managing illegal and unauthorised connections to networks.

WATER QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Council has designed and implemented a water quality assurance system to effectively address compliance issues relating to the Drinking Water Regulations 2007.

COLLON, TALLANSTOWN, LOUTH AND KNOCKBRIDGE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS

Construction works commenced on the above project with works expected to be completed in mid-2009. Plant capacity has been increased and storm water and tertiary treatment facilities provided to improve the quality of discharges to receiving waters.

ARDEE SEWERAGE SCHEME

A preliminary report for this scheme was submitted to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and an EIS for the Treatment Plant was lodged with An Bord Pleanála. Subject to approval, it is intended to initially progress the network rehabilitation and improvement element of the scheme and subsequently carry out an extension of the Treatment Plant, taking cognisance of demand for capacity arising in the area.

SOUTH AND EAST DRAINAGE – DUNDALK/BLACKROCK

Two of the three stages of this project, which provides drainage infrastructure for the Haggardstown/Mullagharlin area, have been completed with Stage 3 ready to progress to Contract Award Stage.

BLACKROCK SEWERAGE STAGE 3

Consultants have been appointed and work is underway in preparing a preliminary report for this scheme. This project addresses the provision of wastewater capacity to cater for further development of the Blackrock area along with rehabilitation and improvements to existing networks and is intrinsically linked with the South and East Drainage Scheme.

SOUTH AND WEST DRAINAGE

A full design review has been completed on the wastewater element of the above scheme to co-ordinate same with proposed road infrastructure in the area. A preliminary report

has been submitted to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for approval.

A parallel project looked at the Surface Water Drainage Plan for the area, and has recommended a storage-based approach to manage floodwater in the ramparts river catchment. On implementation, it will facilitate the development of lands located within the Local Area Plan catchment as well as affording a greater degree of flood protection to downstream properties that would have been susceptible to flooding. An EIS will be prepared in 2009 and, subject to funding being made available, the project will progress to design stage.

CASTLEBELLINGHAM SURFACE WATER SEPARATION

A design has been completed for the separation of a significant element of surface water from the drainage network. It is proposed to go to contract in 2009, subject to resolution of wayleave issues.

DROGHEDA WWTP EXTENSION

Phase 2, which extended treatment capacity at the plant to 101,000 Population Equivalent, has now been completed and is fully operational. A further process improvement phase to increase capacity to 125,000 Population Equivalent in the short-term was developed in 2008 and will progress subject to statutory consents and demand considerations.

A strategic design study is also to be commenced in 2009 to look at a further expansion phase which will have to be considered to cope with long-term development pressure in the south Louth, Drogheda and east Meath areas.

DROGHEDA SEWERAGE NETWORK STUDY

This study is mapping and looking at the condition of the sewerage network in the Drogheda Borough area. This project is ongoing and the survey stage is due to be completed in mid-2009 with a report at the end of 2009.

COES ROAD PUMPING STATION

This upgrading of the Pumping Station is being undertaken as part of the IDA project to develop a strategic site at Mullagharlin, Dundalk and is being funded by the IDA. Works will be constructed in 2009.

LICENSING OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

Licence applications have been submitted to the EPA in respect of Dundalk, Drogheda, Ardee, Blackrock and Dunleer Wastewater Treatment Plants, in accordance with the Wastewater Discharge Regulations 2007. Applications for the remaining schemes in the county will be made in 2009. Licences, once issued, will have a significant bearing on allowable levels of development in various centres.

ENERGY

Louth Local Authorities continue to monitor and improve energy efficiency through the activities of the Energy



Committee, who work closely with SEI. These activities are coordinated under Energy Map, an SEI initiative based on IS 393.

A combination of initiatives and projects, over an 18-month period, allowed Louth Local Authorities achieve an energy reduction of over 550,000 kW/h, resulting in a combined CO₂ saving of 280,000 tonnes. As a result of the successes

achieved, Louth Local Authorities were nominated by ESB for the National Energy Awards 2008 and became a finalist in the category of Large Energy User.

STEM

STEM is the project that delivers and maintains the ISO 14001 environmental standard in Louth County Council. Following a two-day external audit in October, Louth successfully retained the standard for the two existing services, Infrastructure and Water Services, as well as adding a new service to its list of services accredited to ISO 14001: the building of the County Hall.

VETERINARY SERVICES

ANIMAL WELFARE

The dog pound continues to have a busy year, with nearly 1,000 dogs passing through the pound. Thankfully, the rehoming rate is still among the best in the country with the figure remaining above 80 per cent. This is a tribute to the quality of the pound as well as the various initiatives in place, such as uploading images and information of all pound dogs onto the website for ease of viewing and rehoming. Horse control and welfare is also a function of the pound and in 2008 a total of five horses were seized, but all were either reclaimed or rehomed.



FOOD SAFETY

The number of meat plants inspected by Louth County Council remained constant at one abattoir and ten meat plants. However, during the year one meat plant closed and a new meat plant was approved. The year ended on a very busy note as a result of the dioxin incident necessitating the full recall of all pig products. Four of the ten meat plants under Louth County Council supervision were involved, however rapid action by council veterinary staff working closely with the meat plant owners allowed unaffected product back onto the market in time for the vital Christmas market.

Community & Enterprise Directorate

Goal 1 – To deliver the best possible service to our customers and clients.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

ARD PLAN

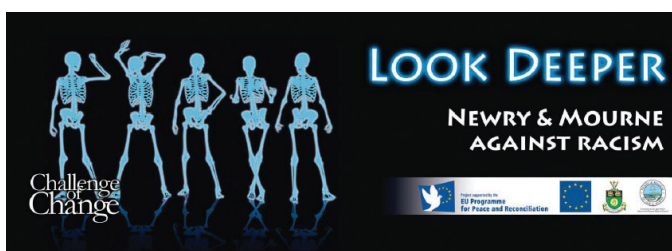
The Louth Anti-Racism and Diversity (ARD) Plan Implementation Team continued to advance the aims of the Louth Anti-Racism and Diversity Plan 2008-2010. The Louth ARD Plan is an inter-agency countywide three-year action plan to provide strategic direction and leadership in countering racism and developing a more inclusive, intercultural society in Louth. Events took place in March to mark Intercultural Week and in November to mark Anti-Racism in the Workplace Week.

Challenge of Change events in 2008 included:

- Intercultural Awareness Day for internal staff (July).
- Anti-Racism in the Workplace Week (October).
- Diversity Conference (September).
- Voter Awareness Training (November).
- Africa Day (May).
- Intercultural Awareness Training (March, April, May, June).

CHALLENGE OF CHANGE PROJECT

The Challenge of Change Project continued during 2008. This project, funded by the EU under Peace II, is a partnership project between Louth Local Authorities and Newry and Mourne District Council and focuses on improving service delivery to ethnic minority groups. The Challenge of Change Project Officer and staff in the Social Inclusion Unit continued to progress actions under the project during 2008. Some of the project's outputs during 2008 included the establishment of an interpretation service in Louth Local Authorities, a regional anti-racism campaign, voter training sessions for community representatives and a local elections awareness-raising campaign for ethnic minority communities.



A very successful cross-border Challenge of Change Conference was held on 18th September at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk. Dr. Terry Waite, CBE was the key note speaker and the conference attracted a large attendance from communities and practitioners from both sides of the border.

NATIONAL DISABILITY FUNDING

Louth Local Authorities Disability Implementation Plan was completed in 2008 and subsequently adopted by Louth County Council.

Louth Local Authorities are committed to assisting persons with a disability to access the local authority's services and received National Disability Strategy Funding to the amount of €425,000 in 2008. This funding facilitated many projects and initiatives including staff training, the establishment of a virtual tourism website, access audits of streets, pavements and harbours, acquisition of loop systems and works to buildings and streets.

OTHER SOCIAL INCLUSION INITIATIVES

The ongoing work of the Unit continued to secure funding for social inclusion initiatives, undertake research activities and liaise with external organisations to tackle social exclusion. Updating of the social profile of County Louth with the 2008 Census figures was completed in 2008. Louth Local Authorities Education Bursary Scheme continued during 2008.

Goal 5 – To form alliances and working partnerships, internally and with other organisations and service providers, to meet organisational goals and priorities.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Implementing the actions of the Integrated Strategy for Culture, Social and Economic Development in Louth continued to be the focus of the members of the County Development Board, with its work programme shared across nine sub-groups, as follows:

1. Agriculture & Rural Development
2. Community & Voluntary Sector
3. Life-long Learning Group
4. Social Inclusion (SIM) Group
5. Enterprise & Investment/Infrastructure & Planning
6. Quality of Life
7. Tourism
8. Childcare
9. Culture

Initiatives engaged by the CDB sub groups included:

- County Sports & Recreation Strategy.
- Louth Local Sports Partnership.
- Sports Inclusion Development Officer Project.
- Walking Development – Cooley Strategy and Táin Way enhancement.
- Arts grants and awards.
- Arts programming – includes a variety of arts festivals which are either initiated, managed or supported by Louth Local Authorities
- Developmental and Community Arts.
- Heritage Plan 2007-2011 adopted and being implemented.
- Draft Biodiversity Action Plan approved.
- Travellers Sub-group formed through the SIM Committee.
- Travellers – Toy Box Project established.
- Anti-Racism and Diversity Committee formed (Challenge of Change Project undertaken and completed).
- Development of Local Strategy on Suicide Prevention.
- RAPID and HSE organised “Community Addiction Studies Courses.”
- Pilot Joint Policing Committee for Drogheda established.
- Implementation of the National Childcare Investment Programme.
- Promotion of a quality agenda by promoting the Siolta National Quality Framework.
- Publicity and promotion of volunteering and the Volunteer Bureau throughout the county.
- Planning permission for bio-pharma facilities secured and will position Louth well in upturn.
- Continued investment in infrastructure both public and private paramount.
- North East Further & Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) established.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- Development of the Boyne Valley as Fáilte Ireland Signature Heritage Project.
- Completion of County Tourism Action Plan 2008-2013.
- Countryside Management Committee Management was established.

The Chairs of the sub-groups together with the secretariat commenced preparation for a review of the Boards Strategy which is planned to be complete by April 2009.

Goal 2 –To facilitate economic development and maximise our strategic border location midway between Dublin and Belfast.

DUNDALK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The three-year partnership project that is Dundalk Economic Development Group (DEDG), under the Chairmanship of Mr. Peter Malone, continued its work in promoting Dundalk to realise its potential as a great place to invest, live, work, study and socialise in. Building on the successful launch of the new Dundalk brand and the distribution of the Dundalk Life and Leisure DVD, the group ran a very successful national radio promotion week. Prizes including weekends in Dundalk were

awarded to the successful participants in the Dundalk awareness initiatives which were a feature on the popular 102FM afternoon radio show.

The success of this public and private sector task force demonstrates the success that can be achieved through the collaboration of the enterprise sector, social development agencies and business community.

LOUTH HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

Louth Hospitality produced Louth's five-year action plan which charts the future growth for tourism development in the county. The committee's mission statement is to attract tourists to Louth by providing a quality experience.

Work programmes for 2008 included: the development and enhancement of the Slieve Foye Looped Walk and the Táin Way National Trail; attendance at UK travel trade shows; completion of the East Border Region Tourism Partnership Rural Village Programmes involving village enhancement projects in Tallanstown, Ardee and Carlingford; The Cooley Peninsula winning the European Destination of Excellence (EDEN) Award 2008; and the annual Táin Walking Festival.

DUNDALK 2020/HOLISTIC PROJECT

The Holistic Project is a European joint initiative between three communities – Dundalk, Modling (Austria) and Neuchatel (Switzerland) – with the observer's communities of Newry (Northern Ireland), Aachen (Germany) and the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea. The Holistic Project is a mix of public and private partners and funded under the EU Concerto Initiative with the concept of establishing low-energy neighbourhoods combined with sustainable energy supply that promote the integration of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy systems. This integration focuses on the retrofit and construction of buildings that are highly energy efficient with the addition of renewable technologies. The Holistic Sustainable Energy Zone contains all elements of the community (residences, schools, a hospital, business, leisure, etc.) and is located in the southern area of Dundalk between Hoeyes Lane to the Xerox Plant and from the hospital to Finnabair Business Park.

The Holistic targets for the Zone to provide by 2012 are:

- 20 per cent of head used from a renewable source;
- 20 per cent of electricity from a renewable source; and
- 40 per cent more energy efficient within selected building.

ACHIEVEMENT IN 2008

To date, the industry in the Zone has made a saving of over €1m and reduced carbon emissions by 5,000 tonnes through applying Best Sustainable Energy Practices. Dundalk Town Council is providing alternative heating systems to 100 of their social houses – 34 from wood pellet stoves, 33 from district heating and 33 from gas condensed boilers – which have been installed and these three systems will be monitored to see which system

is the most cost effective. Dundalk Town Council has also installed insulation in 100 of the social houses which has improved energy efficiency by 40 per cent. O’Fiaich College and the hospital have been refurbished and insulated and there has been a major reduction in their energy bills. The private sector has built 100 homes which have wood pellet boilers and will link into the district heating system which is presently out to tender. 100 Smart Electricity Metres have been installed in social houses in Muirhevnamor and the residents are now managing their electricity more efficient and have made major savings. Duncan Stewart of RTÉ presented a television programme on the energy-saving benefits of this project. Dundalk Institute of Technology are researching the storage of energy from their wind turbine and Louth County Council is taking the lead in establishing an Energy Bureau that will service the region.

In 2008, Louth Local Authorities Energy Management Team, under the Chairmanship of Garrett Shine, was nominated for the National Energy Management Award from SEI and achieved third place with Heinz Dundalk coming first, which was a great achievement for both organisations.

Goal 3 – To improve the quality of life for residents, now and for future generations.

LOUTH – AGE FRIENDLY COUNTY

Louth County Council hosted the Louth Age Friendly County Initiative seminar on 11th November, launching Louth as a place of excellence for people to grow old in. The idea of the Age Friendly Initiative derives from the World Health Organisation (WHO) Friendly Cities Project which involved 35 cities in 22 countries around the world. Dundalk was the only town in Ireland to take part in the study.

The WHO defines an “age friendly” community as one in which service providers, public officials, community leaders, faith leaders, business people and citizens recognise the great diversity among older persons, promote their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life, respect their decisions and lifestyle choices, and anticipate and respond flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences.

An age friendly community benefits people of all ages. Secure neighbourhoods are safe for children, youths, women and older adults. Families experience less worry and stress when their older relations have the services and supports they need. Barrier-free buildings and streets enhance the mobility and independence of both younger and older persons with disabilities. The whole community benefits from the participation of older persons in volunteer or paid work and civic activities. Making cities age friendly is one of the most effective policy approaches for responding to demographic aging.

Minister Dermot Ahern opened the seminar and wished the initiative every success in its endeavours. Two international speakers gave of their experiences in their own localities and

sectors in relation to projects for older people. Linda Sloan, a councillor from Edmontown, Canada who served in the seniors and environment portfolios, and Mary McGowan from Camden, England, who is the corporate lead for older people in the borough and responsible for the delivery of Camden’s Quality of Life Strategy for older citizens, spoke frankly of their respective experiences. Rod Bond from the Netwell Programme, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT), also gave an overview of the Nestling Project in Dundalk.

The speakers were followed by 16 workshops which comprised national and local agencies, NGOs, elected officials, older people and advocates for older people. The feedback from the workshops represented views such as adding value to services which already exist, a more collaborative approach from agencies, better access to services and information on services, the establishment of an older people’s forum and a political champion at local level. The workshops were facilitated by staff of Louth County Council, DKIT and LLP. The information was collated by Louth County Council and assisted by DKIT and will be available early in 2009.

SPORT AND RECREATION STRATEGY

Actions from the Louth Sports and Recreation Strategy 2006-2012 have continued and grown during the past year as follows.

LOUTH LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Ms. Mary Browne was appointed in May 2008 as Co-ordinator for Louth Local Sports Partnership (LSP), which had its formal launch in DKIT in June. Louth LSP continued to increase awareness of its role during the year through its website (www.louthlsp.ie), contact with all local media outlets, presentations to all Louth Local Authorities, meetings with sports clubs and others. Tutors have been recruited and trained





to deliver the Buntús programme in primary schools and the first 20 schools received this training and their Buntús equipment by year end. Roll out of courses on the Irish Sports Council Code of Ethics/Child Protection in Sport commenced in the autumn and a forum for Sports Development Officers working with National Governing Sports Bodies was set up. The LSP Board also allocated €12,000 in grants, under its Sports Development Initiatives Grant Scheme, to some 26 sports clubs/organisations throughout Louth. LSP Board structures were formalised and work on development of a three-year strategy for Louth LSP (due for adoption early in 2009) commenced.

SPORTS INCLUSION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Ms. Lisa Kelly took up duty in March as the Louth Sports Inclusion Disability Officer (SIDO), one of 21 such officers nationally on a two year pilot project funded through Pobal with Dormant Accounts funding. Working under the Louth LSP, the SIDO has been working to increase opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in regular sports and physical recreation activities. The project also aims to increase awareness of the benefits of such participation among those with disabilities. Sports Taster sessions have been held in Drogheda (DIFE) and Dundalk Sports Centre which has led to the establishment of a weekly multi-sports club, adapted aerobics sessions, bocchia clubs in IWA centres and adapted physical activity (APA) training for teachers (in support of the Buntús Programme). A Louth Disability Forum has been established and disability awareness training has also been delivered to a number of groups including GAA and FAI coaches, sports centre staff and commercial leisure facility operators. A highlight of 2008 was the organisation of the County Louth celebrations for the Special Olympics 30th Anniversary celebrations in October.

COUNTY-WIDE AUDIT OF FACILITIES

Work on auditing community, sports and arts facilities as part of a national audit commenced and is due for completion at the start of 2009. The national database resulting from this is intended to assist relevant Government departments in planning for future expenditure in the provision of such facilities on a national basis.

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

Soccer/Gaelic Development Officers

Co-funding of the FAI Louth Community Soccer Development Officer (Mick Neville) and the GAA Club Support Officer (Donal McNally) by Louth County Council continued during 2008. Both officers continued to deliver programmes across the county to increase opportunities, for young people in particular and disadvantaged groups, to participate in soccer and Gaelic sports. Activities included Young Whistlers (GAA referees course), summer camps (Gaelic and soccer) and Girls 4 Gaelic projects (Dundalk and Drogheda). Intercultural soccer and Gaelic events, organised in tandem with the Council's Social Inclusion Officer, are being held early in 2009.

Rugby

Louth County Council also assisted with financing a Tag-Rugby Coaching course and programme for teachers and primary schools, organised with the Leinster Rugby Development Officer, Wayne Mitchell.

COACH TRAINING GRANT SCHEME

This grant scheme, aimed at increasing the number of qualified coaches available across a range of sports in Louth, continued during 2008 and assisted some 102 people to participate in accredited coaching/leadership courses for athletics, basketball, camogie, hill walking, GAA football and soccer.

Cross-Border Initiatives – The Cross-Border Minority Sports Development Project

This was a two-year project led by Newry & Mourne District Council with Peace II Funding finished in June 2008. A Cross-Border Sports Directory was prepared as part of the project and is to be launched in early 2009.

ORIEL 2012 PROJECT

The Oriel 2012 Project was initiated to capitalise on the potential opportunities for the region which will arise from the London 2012 Olympic Games. Killowen Sailing Centre/Carlingford Lough was the only centre in the Newry and Mourne area included in the London Olympics list of pre-games training camp locations produced early in 2008. On foot of this, an application for funding for this project, led by this Council, has been submitted under the Interreg IV(A) – Tourism Strand. A decision on this is expected early in 2009.

WALKING DEVELOPMENTS

A walking strategy has been drafted which sets out proposals for the development and improvement of Cooley and Ravensdale as a walking area for the walking enthusiast and the local Rambler. Work on the strategy will continue in 2009.

TÁIN WAY

Enhancement works carried out during 2008 have removed part of the Táin Way from the heavily trafficked Carlingford-Omeath road. New/additional signage and stiles have also been installed on this route and new looped walks identified will be signed in 2009.

SLÍ NA SLÁINTE

Louth County Council supported the provision of a small virtual Slí na Slainte route at Stephenstown Pond. A full new Slí route provided at Carlingford was formally launched in December 2008. Plans for 2009 include provision of a further two Slí routes and better promotion of same. The Council also supported a small number of local walkers to participate in the Irish Heart Foundation Walk Leader Training during the year.



TÁIN WALKING FESTIVAL

Despite poor weather, the second Táin Walking Festival held in Carlingford in early March attracted an increased number of participants over the two-day event. An extended three-day festival to incorporate more varied and family-focused walks is planned for 2009.

SPORTS FACILITIES

Multi-User Games Areas (MUGAs)

Two MUGAs (Rathmullen and Moneymore) were completed by Drogheda Borough Council during 2008 and work on MUGAs at Fair Green, Ardee and Tobberona, Dundalk are due for completion in January 2009. Grant assistance has been provided for these jointly by FAI and the Department of Arts, Sports & Tourism.

WELLNESS TRAIL

Louth County Council are progressing the possibility of jointly providing, in partnership with the GAA, a Wellness Trail around the virtual Slí na Sláinte route at the Darver Training Complex. Targeting the older and the less fit members of the community, this development is scheduled to open early in 2009.

PLAYGROUNDS

The new playground at Callystown Clogherhead was completed in late 2008. A new playground was also completed by Drogheda Borough Council at Moneymore, in tandem with the MUGA development there.

Sites have been secured for playgrounds at Kilkerry and Kilcurry and it is proposed to progress these new playgrounds early in 2009. Playgrounds at Blackrock, Dundalk Swimming Pool and Tobberona, Dundalk will also be progressed during 2009.



WATER SAFETY

Lifeguards were provided by Louth County Council on beaches at Templetown, Port and Clogherhead during the summer season. Lifesaving equipment was maintained at popular locations throughout the year.

The Council, through their Water Safety Development Officer, liaised with the local Water Safety Committee to provide training in advanced swimming lifesaving and resuscitation techniques weekly from September to May at pools in Dundalk, Drogheda and Gormanstown. Open water outdoor training weeks were held during the summer on Clogherhead Beach and Gyles Quay. These events are very popular and attract a large number of participants each year.

The Council also supports the local lifeboat service, RNLI, in its work.

Goal 4 –To harness community participation, provide civic leadership and encourage civic pride.

COMHAIRLE NA nÓG

Comhairle na nÓg, or Youth Council, held its elections in September 2008. A total of 12 schools took part in the election process, with two representatives from each school elected. The elections were run in each school using the proportional representation system used in local and Dáil elections. The ballot boxes were collected and brought to two count centres: Dunleer Community Centre and Stephenstown Pond, Knockbridge. The students canvassed in their respective schools and came wearing their rosettes and accompanied by their election party. Excitement mounted as the counts came to a conclusion and victory speeches were the order of the day.

Louth County Council and Louth VEC have as an objective to develop Comhairle na nÓg to include Youth Services, which is the direction set by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs.

An Expert Advisory Group was set up in 2008 to develop Comhairle na nÓg. The profile of the group is made up of Youth Services, teachers, and elected members. Comhairle na nÓg is facilitated and supported by the office of Community and Economic Development, Louth County Council and Louth VEC under the auspices of the Youth Officer. Louth successfully received a grant to develop Comhairle na nÓg under the enhanced activities programme of the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs.

The first meeting of the Comhairle saw Dubhaltach Mulvenna elected Chairperson, Aine Kirwan elected Vice Chairperson, and Katie Bailey elected as secretary to the Comhairle. The programme of activities carried out by the Comhairle in 2008 included the councillors carrying out a disability audit in their own schools. The executive took a very active part in the Louth Age Friendly County Initiative seminar in November and received a warm welcome from the Minister for Justice, Dermot Ahern. The councillors are also looking at securing student discount cards for students over sixteen and not yet at third level. Six schools have carried out surveys in their schools identifying the preferred outlets to approach in terms of discounts. A sub-group has been set up to spearhead this action and a plan of action has been agreed and already commenced. Meetings of the Comhairle are alternated between Louth County Hall, Drogheda Borough Council and Scoil Uí Mhuirí, Dunleer.

The Councillors elected six representatives from Comhairle na nÓg Chontae Lú to represent Louth at Dáil na nÓg 2009. This panel of councillors will undergo an election process to elect a representative to the Dáil na nÓg Council. The youth councillors are looking forward to actively taking part in the local democratic process, giving voice to the young people of County Louth.

PEACE PROGRAMMES

PEACE II EXTENSION

Louth County Council led Peace II Extension Programme Task Force

22 projects benefited to the tune of just under €1.5m by the end of 2008 under the Peace II Extension Programme, along with 50 projects which had already benefited under the original Peace II Programme. All of these projects are now complete and provide a much needed amenity and valuable resource within the communities they serve and, indeed, to the wider population on a cross-border basis.

PEACE III

A further tranche of funding under Interreg IV, jointly funded by the European Union and the Department of Finance, was announced during the year.

A Peace and Reconciliation Partnership was established with representation from the voluntary and community sectors and statutory agencies making up its membership under the Chairmanship of the County Manager, with staff from the Community & Enterprise Directorate acting as the Secretariat.

The County Louth Peace and Reconciliation Plan 2007-2010 was compiled after an extensive public consultation process in 2008. Adopted by the Partnership in May, the Plan received approval from the Special European Union Projects Body (SEUPB) in September. The Plan outlines how the County Louth Peace and Reconciliation Partnership will implement the priorities of the Peace III Programme for which it has a responsibility.

Priorities include:

- Challenging prejudice for peace.
- Challenging attitudes through sports and arts across the border.
- Transformative models for communities emerging from conflict.
- Addressing institutional sectarianism and racism.
- Appreciating and valuing diversity.
- Promoting intergenerational understanding for peace building.
- Developing shared heritage.
- Networking for peace.
- Strengthening and mainstreaming Partnership for Peace.

Work commenced on the developmental stage of the Plan in late 2008 and will be followed by implementation and roll out early in 2009.

A budget of €2.8m has been allocated, a percentage of which will be awarded by way of a Small Grants Programme.

LOUTH COUNTY ARCHIVES SERVICE

One of the two main projects for the Archives Service in 2008 was the Cross-Border Archive Project with Newry & Mourne Museum which was completed in June. The Project received €140,146 of EU funding through the Interreg IIIA Programme which is managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by the East Border Region Interreg IIIA Partnership. The aim of the project was to make accessible, via a linked website, archives and information on the historical development of the region. To achieve this aim, two archivists catalogued a number of collections relating to the cross-border region including the Reside Collection in Newry, and the Roden Collection, the Paddy Mallon – Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Collection and the McArdle Moore Collection in Louth. An in-depth new website – www.louthnewryarchives.ie – was then created containing several online archive exhibitions and educational activities, while an educational CD resource was produced for schools.

One of the exhibitions featured on the Project's website is the Landowners of County Louth exhibition. It illustrates the general location of some of the larger landed estates in the county, and indicates the extent of the holdings of selected landowners in 1854. It contains an interactive map of County Louth where you can click on a family name for more detail on the family land. This resource will be of use to students, historians, professionals or anyone with an interest in land ownership.

The project's website also contains a link to the new online archive catalogue which was launched in June. This was a major milestone in the development of the Archives Service, particularly

as Louth is the first local authority in Ireland to have an online archive catalogue. Users can now search the holdings of the Archives Service online where they can also find the descriptive lists for the collections that were catalogued as part of the project. Standardisation work on sections of the archive catalogue is ongoing.

The other main project the Archives Service undertook in 2008 was the hosting of an exhibition on the Great Northern Railway (Ireland), from April to late September, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the closure of the GNR(I)'s once huge railway engineering works in Dundalk. In addition, the Service visited St Oliver's Day Hospital with the exhibition, hosted an Open Weekend in June (which featured an impressive model of the railway works provided by the Model Railway Society) and hosted an Open Day in September. The latter was part of a number of events that took place locally to commemorate the closure, with 30th September being the anniversary of the winding up of the Great Northern Railway Board. It marked the end of Dundalk's long history as a major railway engineering town with the large numbers of redundancies this entailed.

The exhibition was based on the Paddy Mallon – Great Northern Railway (Ireland) archival collection. This collection was donated to the Service in 2006 by Margaret Mallon, daughter of the late Paddy Mallon (1920-2002) who worked at the Dundalk Works from the mid-1930s to the early 1960s achieving the position of foreman of the erecting shops at the Works. It consists of many engineering drawings and material relating to the engineering Works, some of which were placed on display during the exhibition. The exhibition turned out to be very successful, attracting approximately 1,500 visitors over the summer months to learn something about the history of what was once Ireland's most prosperous railway company.

The Archives Service also acquired a number of archive collections during the year. These included the archive collection of St. Peter's National School, Dromiskin which has been processed and has received preservation microfilming; papers of Bernard Rice (1890-1963); a quantity of GNR(I) archival items; and the Old Dundalk Society's collection of photographs. The Service arranged for conservation treatment on a number of archives during 2008, including a quantity of Ordnance Survey maps dating from 1836 to 1846 which was funded by the Heritage Council, and a quantity of Drogheda archives including the charter of King James I and three 17th-century lease books.

HERITAGE SERVICE

Louth Local Authorities are grateful to the Heritage Council for its financial and other support of the Heritage Officer position and for many projects.

PROJECT WORK IN 2008

The main thrust of the Heritage Office Work Programme in 2008, all of which received funding from the Heritage Council, was:

- Surveying selected biodiversity sites and developing

management, connectivity and enhancement plans for these areas. This included both local authority land and sites managed by local Tidy Towns groups.

- Managing the Council-owned Special Area of Conservation at Clogherhead, which comprises most of a small coastal heathland.
- Town wall surveying, planning and practical conservation projects in Carlingford and Drogheda, as well as running major events for Walled Towns Day and Heritage Week (funded by the Irish Walled Towns Network). Also, Ardee applied to join the Irish Walled Towns Network.
- Contracting a private sector consultant to advise owners of field monuments on how to conserve these non-renewable resources.

Other Projects

- The Borderlands book and website was a major cross-border heritage tourism project, funded by Interreg through the East Border Region. See www.borderlands-ireland.com.
- Work continued on a major conservation study at Monasterboice, in partnership with the Office of Public Works and the National Monuments Service of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
- A small but highly visible project was the maintenance and enhancement of the biodiversity garden at the front of the County Hall.

BIRD WATCHING FACILITIES

Work was also undertaken looking at potential sites for a bird watching hide in or near Carlingford and reinvestigating the idea of developing an international bird reserve somewhere on Dundalk Bay.

DEVELOPMENT WORK FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

While managing all of the above, the Louth Heritage Officer is always looking out for and developing potential future projects which could help Louth benefit from its 'heritage dividend' in years to come. This could help Louth capitalise on its rich heritage by improving quality of life or attracting visitors and new residents. The major project in development in 2008 was a proposal to promote, with Interreg funding, the geological heritage of the (cross-border) Carlingford Lough region (north Louth, south Armagh and south Down).

Goal 5 – To form alliances and working partnerships, internally and with other organisations and service providers, to meet organisational goals and priorities.

RAPID

DROGHEDA

2008 was a landmark year for the Drogheda RAPID Plan, first presented in 2002. All major capital actions were completed with the official opening of Grove Early Years Education Centre and Holy Family Community Centre at Ballsgrove. Two multi-user games areas and a long awaited playground for Moneymore were installed this year. Three RAPID estates – Ballsgrove, Pearse

Park and Yellowbatter – were runners up in the Beauty on the Boyne Competition, which is testament to the hard work of residents and the RAPID Community Environmental Initiative funded by FÁS.

The RAPID programme will continue to develop within the framework of six strategic themes, namely: community safety and anti-social behaviour, education, physical environment, health, family support, youth, training and employment. Each theme reflects the remit of specific departments and underpins the contribution each agency makes at a local level in terms of policing, the environment, health, education, family support and so on. Through the mechanism of sub-groups chaired by agency representatives, work is undertaken in collaboration with the community to deliver actions in RAPID estates.

This approach is already having a major impact. For example, in the context of the community safety-themed sub-group chaired by An Garda Síochána, a concerted effort was made by Drogheda Borough Council Cleansing Staff, An Garda Síochána (who accompanied the Cleansing Staff to the various storage sites of waste and tyres for the fires), V&W Recycling, the fire service, residents and the FÁS Community Environmental Initiative who all worked to control and reduce the amount of flammable materials that had been stockpiled since summer 2008. Over 4.22 tonnes of tyres were collected for recycling. Schools were also visited by delegations made up of staff from Drogheda Borough Council, An Garda Síochána and Drogheda Borough Council Environment Section.

Other examples of successful initiatives included the Effective Parenting Support programme (to be developed further in 2009) and the implementation of the National Graffiti Removal programme in RAPID estates and at public buildings throughout the town centre. Response to the health consultation meetings with residents will materialise in 2009.

Once again, the focus stayed on senior citizens with the new Health Leverage Fund with actions to be rolled out in 2008 and the continued expansion of the Home Security Scheme to an additional 28 senior citizens. At the other end of the age spectrum, the Drogheda Young Persons Network was launched. This work will continue into 2009 and beyond.

Finally, community participation in the RAPID programme remains high and in 2008 this was formalised through the setting up of a RAPID Forum, which will continue to be developed into 2009.

DUNDALK

The Dundalk RAPID Programme has been a hive of activity over the past year, its focus being on service integration, leadership and new investment. Through the work of the Dundalk RAPID Area Implementation Team, a number of actions have been progressed and achieved in the two RAPID areas in Dundalk; Cox's Demesne and Muirhevnamor. The other forum, facilitated

by the RAPID Co-ordinator, is the Dundalk Drugs Advisory Group who are actively pursuing social inclusion measures in the RAPID areas.

Key actions achieved during 2008 include:

- Funding secured (€200,000) and completion of RAPID Leverage Schemes works (estate enhancement, playgrounds and traffic calming) in RAPID areas.
- Installation and launch by Dundalk Town Council Chairman, Seamus Keelan, of a new playground facility in Muirhevnamor.
- Funding secured (€100,000) under the HSE Leverage Fund for Older People. All Dundalk RAPID projects submitted were approved.
- The successful roll out of the Community Graffiti Scheme in RAPID areas. Funding of €30,000 secured under this initiative.
- A Community Participation Strategy was developed in consultation with RAPID communities, recommendations of which are currently being implemented at a local level in partnership with RAPID communities.
- Ensured efficient drawdown of funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund – additionally 2007 under the RAPID Programme by successful groups/organisations (€200,000).
- The Physical Environment Improvement Scheme was submitted for approval to the value of €180,000 for the RAPID area. After consultation within RAPID communities, key areas of work were prioritised under this scheme. This programme of works builds on and enhances the work of the Regeneration Officer under the 'Early Wins' for RAPID areas announced in 2008.

Nationally, guidelines with respect to community and agency participation as well as strategic themes were issued. RAPID programmes locally were expected to progress these guidelines in 2008.

The following thematic sub-groups were established in 2008. Each group is chaired by the lead agency of that particular theme and the membership is made up of community and agency representatives. The action plans from each thematic sub-group will form the work plan of the RAPID programme over the next few years.

- **Health:** Implementation of the RAPID strategic theme of 'health' through the establishment of a thematic sub-group and the development of a strategy and action plan for the RAPID area.
- **Community Safety:** Implementation of the RAPID strategic theme of 'community safety' through the establishment of a thematic sub-group and the development of a strategy and action plan for the RAPID area.
- **Family Support:** Implementation of the RAPID strategic theme of 'family support' through the establishment of a thematic sub-group, development of a strategy and action plan and submission of this plan to the NMC.
- **Physical Environment:** Implementation of the RAPID strategic theme of 'physical environment' through the establishment of a thematic sub-group and the development of a strategy and action plan for the RAPID area.

- **Education:** Implementation of the RAPID strategic theme of 'education' through the establishment of a thematic sub-group and the development of a strategy and action plan for the RAPID area.

Other Activities of the Dundalk RAPID Programme

The Dundalk Drug Advisory Group commissioned a Report on Drug Misuse & Drug Service Provision in Dundalk, by Queen's University, Belfast, to look at "improving the community's response". Recommendations from this report are currently being implemented by the Group.

A Midsummer Madness event was held on the Bonfire Night, 29th June (local tradition), in Oriel Park in partnership with Dundalk Town Council, Dundalk Football Club and the FAI. This was an initiative to try and discourage bonfires on local authority estates. Over 300 youths attended this event and it was a great success, with the Chairman of Dundalk Town Council presenting the Player of the Tournament award. This event will now be held annually.

RAPID Kick Start 1 Coach Training Programme

This course is designed to assist parents and coaches to introduce children (aged 6-9 years) to fun soccer games and fundamental movement skills in a well-structured, stimulating and safe environment. A total of 16 children from RAPID areas attended the course.

Estate Management Committee

An Estate Management committee has been established in partnership with Dundalk Town Council, community development projects and community representatives in RAPID areas. This committee meets to implement the Louth Local Authorities Tenant Participation Policy and to promote positive relationships between local authorities and communities.

COUNTY COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY FORUM

The County Community and Voluntary Forum met on a regular basis in 2008 and work continued to promote the work of the Forum and attract new members. The County Fora remain the source for the selection of community and voluntary members to participate on SPCs and MPCs.

Forum members also represent the community and voluntary sector at:

- Louth County Development Board.
- Regional Drugs Task Force.
- Joint Policing Committees.
- Louth County Childcare Committee.
- National Community Forum.
- Louth Leader Company Border Forum.

The three Local Area Fora continued to meet in 2008 and continue to address the challenge of engaging all community groups in their area.

Dundalk Town Council

Goal 3 – To improve the quality of life for residents, now and for future generations.

HOUSING & BUILDING

Work commenced on the Glenwood Infill Housing Scheme in May and is expected to be completed in April 2009. The contract for the Nestling Technology Housing Scheme at Barrack Street was signed in August 2008 and work commenced in September 2008. This is a major collaboration between the Council, Dundalk Institute of Technology and the HSE to provide lifelong living facilities close to the town centre. Work commenced on a 42-house turnkey development at Blackrock Road in August 2008 with an anticipated completion date of October 2009. The Council also completed the purchase of a 17-house scheme at Lennon Melia Court in October 2008. A total of 61 houses were returned to stock by the Council during the year and in excess of 2,000 housing repairs were completed. In addition, the final phase of installation of central heating in the Council's housing stock commenced during the year, bringing the total number of installations to over 700.

REGENERATION

The Council completed significant works in both Muirhevnamor and Cox's Demesne estates under the Regeneration Programme. The works completed included the demolition of old person's dwellings, extinguishment of public rights-of-way, landscaping work, tree planting, traffic calming measures and the appointment of consultants to prepare the 'urban vision' document. In addition, the master plans for both of these areas were completed.

Goal 2 – To facilitate economic development and maximise our strategic border location midway between Dublin and Belfast.

ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

The completion of the Red Barns Road Improvement Scheme was the major scheme completed in 2008. The Scheme consisted of 1.65km of single carriageway, together with two new roundabouts, public lighting, footpaths, removal of overhead lines and the construction of 1.45km of cycle track. In addition, extensive landscaping, planting and boundary treatment formed part of the Scheme. The project, in its entirety, was funded by the Council's Development Contribution Scheme.

Other works completed during the year included resurfacing, renewal of road markings, upgrading of public lighting, provision of bus promontories and the creation of additional cycle lanes.

WATER SERVICES

The Council successfully managed and implemented a lead reduction programme following the detection of excessive lead levels in public water supplies. The programme involved extensive testing of water supplies, supplying bottled water to affected customers, scouring of water mains and the replacement of lead pipes in many locations. The Council, in conjunction with Louth County Council, offered advice to customers on replacing lead pipes and will implement a programme of dosing water with phosphoric acid to reduce the lead levels in 2009.

The Council continued its water conservation project in conjunction with Louth County Council. The work consisted of detection and repair of leaks in the network and the identification of water mains requiring rehabilitation.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

REVIEW OF THE DUNDALK & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2003-2009

An Issues Paper was prepared early in the year and placed on public display from 30th April 2008 to 27th June 2008 inclusive. A number of public meetings and presentations were held during the month of June to brief members of the public on the main issues involved in the review process and to provide an opportunity for discussion and comment. The Manager's Report on the pre-draft submissions received was circulated to the members of Louth County Council and Dundalk Town Council on 22nd August 2008 and was considered by the members at meetings held in September 2008, following which the Manager was directed to proceed to prepare the Draft Plan.

DUNDALK URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK PLAN

An Urban Design Framework Plan for the central areas of Dundalk was prepared by Keith Simpson & Associates on behalf of Dundalk Town Council. The Plan provides clear guidance for future development within Dundalk town centre, including the identification of prime opportunity sites which could act as catalysts for change in specific areas. It comprises the generation of ideas and concepts through the preparation of a series of design statements based on consultation, research and analysis.

MOUNT AVENUE MASTER PLAN

The Mount Avenue area comprises approximately 302 hectares (746 acres) of mostly undeveloped lands. The Master Plan for the area was jointly commissioned by Dundalk Town Council and Louth County Council. The purpose of the Master Plan is to provide a strategic vision for the sustainable development of the

Mount Avenue area. The Draft Mount Avenue Master Plan went on public display from 3rd to 30th September 2008.

DUNDALK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The three-year partnership project that is Dundalk Economic Development Group (DEDG), under the Chairmanship of Mr. Peter Malone, continued its work in promoting Dundalk to realise its potential as a great place to invest, live, work, study and socialise in. Building on the successful launch of the new Dundalk brand and the distribution of the Dundalk Life and Leisure DVD, the group ran a very successful national radio promotion week. Prizes including weekends in Dundalk were awarded to the successful participants in the Dundalk awareness initiatives which were a feature on the popular 102FM afternoon radio show.

The success of this public and private sector task force demonstrates the success that can be achieved through the collaboration of the enterprise sector, social development agencies and business community.

DUNDALK TOWN COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

The total amount of contributions received by Dundalk Town Council in 2008 was €3,224,826.66. The amount of contributions outstanding at 31st December 2008 was approximately €13.2m.

Projects undertaken in 2008 included the Red Barns Road reconstruction, St. Leonard’s Gardens Sensory Park, Muirhevnamor District Park and Castletown River Cycle Path and Walkway.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME – DUNDALK WESTERN TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

In accordance with Section 49 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, a Supplementary Development Contribution Scheme was adopted by the members of Louth County Council and Dundalk Town Council in October 2008 to facilitate the provision of the Dundalk Western Transportation Infrastructure. The Scheme will apply to development located within the area of the Scheme which directly benefits from the project.

The Part 8 planning process was completed in 2008 for the Flume Tower and Slide at Dundalk Swimming Pool & Leisure Centre.

MARKET SQUARE REFURBISHMENT

The Competitive Dialogue procurement process to select the preferred bidder for the Market Square Refurbishment Project was concluded in 2008. The preferred bidder’s proposal comprised the refurbishment of Market and Courthouse Squares, the construction of a six-storey building to incorporate a new Arts Information Office, together with a financial contribution to the Council. The proposed development did not proceed when the Council voted not to dispose of the land at Market Square to the preferred bidder.

Goal 3 – To improve the quality of life for residents, now and for future generations.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

TIDY TOWNS

Dundalk scooped a Gold Medal for the first time at the 2008 Tidy Towns Awards having jumped up the points league to 295, an increase of 15 points on 2007. The judges highlighted new ventures such as the new riverside walkways and cycle paths as being key to the town’s improvement. The judges also noted that Dundalk is “a town that looks great and has a heart that is clearly thriving” and commenting on cleanliness stated: “the hard work put into the Litter Management Plan is clearly paying off as the town was practically spotless during my visits.”

The Council is grateful to the assistance that the Tidy Towns Committee, residents and business community have given to enable the town achieve this award. This remarkable achievement has resulted in Dundalk being chosen to represent Ireland in the prestigious European Entente Florale Competition in 2009.

IRISH BUSINESS AGAINST LITTER (IBAL)

Although Dundalk slipped down the league table in 2008, the town continues to perform well and retained its status as a Litter Free Town and clean to European norms. The town received “three excellent surveys” during the year and it is worth noting that the difference between the top towns is slight

NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN 2008

A massive clean-up of the town, which involved approximately 750 volunteers from residents associations, sporting groups, schools, etc., took place in April 2008. This voluntary effort supported by the local authority resulted in over 40 tonnes of waste being removed from our town.



Pictured are members of Dundalk FC along with Council Chairman, Jim D’Arcy, and Joe Berrill, Dundalk Town Council.

IMPROVE OUR TOWN AWARDS 2008

The annual Improve Our Town Awards night took place in October and a total of 63 prizes were awarded to residents associations, community groups, individual households and members of the business community in recognition of their

efforts to improve the appearance of their own area or business. Once again, there was a big attendance on the night and the following award recipients merit special mention:

Best Estate:

- Category A: Suil Na Mara
- Category B: Willow Grove
- Category C: Manydown Close

Best Local Authority & Voluntary Housing:

An Chearnog

Best Individual Garden:

Kevin McKenna, Doylesfort Road

Best Public House:

The Jockeys

Best Retail Premises:

Jacqueline Woods Interiors

Most Improved Premises:

F. J. Murphy, Park Street

Adjudicators Award:

Redeemer Crèche

Litter Awareness Award:

Diageo, Carrick Road

AMENITY GRANTS SCHEME

Dundalk Town Council continued to support residents associations with their efforts in maintaining their areas to a high standard. In total, grants amounting to €77,500 were given to over 80 residents associations and community groups in the town.

DUNDALK RECYCLING CENTRE

The volume of material recycled continues to grow with 9,780 tonnes of material received in 2008. This, together with the volume recycled through the Bring Bank network, resulted in the town exceeding the 10,000 tonne mark for the second year running. The Centre now supplies its own compost to the Town Council for use throughout the town.

RECREATION & AMENITY

ARTS

The Basement Gallery, which is programmed and managed by the Arts Service, mounted eight full-scale exhibitions which were accompanied by a programme of artists' talks and workshops. The implementation of the Per Cent for Art Scheme resulted in a further 15 artworks being placed in public areas throughout the county. One of the pieces commissioned under this scheme was nominated and shortlisted for a national LAMA Award. 'Clutch' by Rachel Joynt was inspired by nests made by little terns on the Boyne Estuary near Baltray, and the piece reflects the wealth of natural heritage in the area.

Many arts projects, devised and rooted in the community, were developed during the year with one of the more high-profile projects being the very successful Traditional Musician Residency in Drogheda. Seán Corcoran organised and delivered a range of activities which introduced traditional music and song to new audiences, and celebrated the music and song from Drogheda and south Louth. The Residency culminated in the publication of *Sing Out*, a book which provides words, music and background information to songs of the area.

TÁIN THEATRE

There was a huge increase in the Theatre's attendance with a record number of sell-out productions. This year the Theatre held presentations by most of the major production companies in the country, including The Gate Theatre, Opera Theatre Company and Ballet Ireland. The Theatre, in association with other theatre venues in the region, produced a stunning staging of *The Dead School* and this presentation also enjoyed particular critical success. We also presented some of the country's finest music acts including The High Kings, Jack L, Cathy Davey and Interference to name but a few.

The summer was once again brightened up with the staging of the Samhradh Festival, and it was again favourably received and, for the most part, well-attended. The Big Day Out and the children's programme being particular highlights.



The Dead School.



Waiting for Godot.

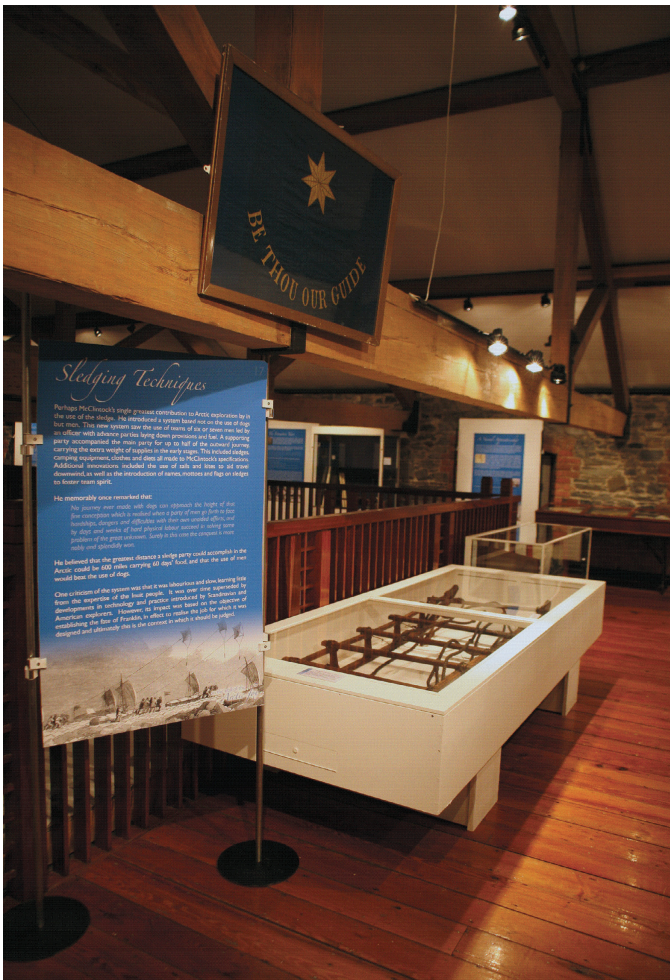
COUNTY MUSEUM

With two high profile Museum exhibitions – on Dundalk-born Arctic explorer Francis Leopold McClintock and prehistoric flint-making in Poland – as well as our continued involvement in the Heritage Council's *Museum Standards Programme for Ireland* and the continued growth and development of the collection, 2008 was indeed a busy year at the County Museum.

EXHIBITIONS

The exhibition on McClintock (best remembered as having established the fate of the Franklin expedition that had disappeared in the Canadian Arctic without trace c1847) generated a great deal of interest and publicity, as well as a

conference, living history re-enactment and website there was something to interest everyone. The conference, which ran over the weekend of 18th-20th January, was a particular case in hand. Over the first two days, delegates heard papers on a variety of topics ranging from the Health & Safety concerns in Victorian expeditions to the history of Irish exploration. From there, many travelled to Banbridge to attend a memorial service commemorating the involvement of the town's own Arctic explorer, Francis Crozier, in the Franklin expedition. After the service, Crozier's descendants laid a wreath in the town centre.



They then made a formal presentation to the McClintock family to mark their appreciation of his efforts to establish what fate had befallen Crozier himself.

The organisation of the re-enactment element was particularly popular with participating schools. Featuring the living history personnel of Armagh's Palace Stables, pupils learned about McClintock's seminal years in Dundalk as well as map-reading and the problems of exploring the Canadian Arctic.

The construction of the website is a legacy of the exhibition. Displaying images from the exhibition as well as the text panels themselves, the website was and is an invaluable feature of the project and one that we will build on for many years to come.



Ernie Coleman, Prof. Russell Potter and Cllr. Jim d'Arcy at the McClintock Winter School.

The Polish Prehistoric Flint-Making exhibition offered a completely different set of opportunities for the Museum. The touring exhibition, organised by the State Archaeological Museum in Poland, provided the opportunity not only observe at first-hand the manner in which flint was produced there but also the chance to compare it with Irish forms of production. Most importantly, the exhibition provided an opportunity to develop and nurture links with a national Museum and with it the possibility of exchanging exhibitions over the coming years. This will be a relationship to bear fruit in the future.

Among the year's other highlights were the annual exhibitions of the Dundalk Photographic Society and North Louth Artists, as well as an exhibition celebrating the Brontë family's Irish connections. In addition to these, the Junior Explorers' Club (for children between the ages of seven and 11) was formed in February; a series of lectures chronicling the development of Irish history from the Stone Age to the present day was held in October and November; with the Museum's series of Christmas activities for primary schools closing the year's activities.



COLLECTION

The Museum's collection policy ensures that a wide range of items relating to the cultural, economic and social life of the county is added to the collection on an annual basis. To date this has resulted in the development of an eclectic and diverse mix ranging from a Heinkel motorcar to a snuffbox owned by Napper Tandy. The additions to the collection over the year were no less diverse. Undoubtedly, the oldest and heaviest addition to the collection in 2008 was that of a logboat uncovered off the coast of Gormanstown during the construction of a gas pipeline. Approximately 2,500 years old, weighing over 500kg and measuring approximately 4.5m, the boat will complement both the existing archaeological and maritime interpretation and will be of interest to all. It is hoped that this item will be on public display before the end of the summer.

Another addition to the collection lay in the acquisition of items from the Irish Photographic Federation. The collection consists of cameras, equipment (filters, lenses), manuals and photographs. Moreover, it will provide a unique insight into the development of photography over the course of the 20th century, not only in Dundalk and County Louth but also in Ireland. As ever, none of these events would have been possible were it not of the continuing efforts of the Museum staff and I would like to acknowledge their support throughout the year.

LOUTH COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICE

Louth County Library Service is operated through five branch libraries at Dundalk, Drogheda, Ardee, Dunleer and Carlingford. A Mobile Library service operates throughout the county, with additional stops added during the year to crèche facilities, day-care centres and nursing homes.

During 2008, library opening hours were enhanced to provide better access to the citizens of County Louth.

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS

Louth Schools Library Department provides a full range of services to 80 primary schools in the county.

A new 'Children's Guide to the Library' was produced by library staff and will be distributed to all national schools in the county. It will also be available in all branches.

The 'Team Read' Challenge was launched in all libraries during the summer months to encourage reading among children and to nurture a love of reading for the future. When the Challenge was completed at the end of August, celebratory events were arranged in each library and children were presented with certificates to mark their achievement.

BRANCH DEVELOPMENT

Plans to develop Carlingford Branch Library were on display in County Hall and Carlingford Library during December 2008. This development will ensure a greatly enhanced service for the local community.

ICT ACTIVITIES

The provision of public internet access in all libraries continued during 2008. The library catalogue, which is available on the internet, continues to be updated.

SILVER SURFERS

'Silver Surfers' weekly computer classes were held in Dundalk and Drogheda Libraries to give people over 55 an opportunity to learn basic computer and internet skills. These classes were conducted by Paul Smith, IT Development Officer in the Community & Enterprise Office. This initiative provides a relaxed learning environment where first time ICT users can learn about aspects of ICT which are relevant to them.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Louth County Libraries in conjunction with Louth Leader Partnership held digital photography classes.

LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTION

Louth County Libraries will continue to acquire relevant materials relating to the history and cultural heritage of County Louth.

GENEALOGY RESEARCH

Dundalk Library offers a genealogical service to individuals from near and far. The main source of research is the database of Catholic Church records for County Louth. The period extends from 1700 to 1900.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Our biggest ever number of Outreach activities took place in all branches to coincide with events such as the Children's Book Festival, Science Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge and Bealtaine.

Activities included:

- Visits and storytelling from internationally acclaimed children's authors.
- Storytime music sessions.
- Magic shows.
- Colouring competitions.
- Short story competitions.
- Mother and Toddler Storytime.
- Bi-lingual storytelling.
- Little Music Makers.
- Informative workshop on nature and animals – with live owls, snakes and tortoises!
- Local studies workshops.
- Book clubs.
- Children's Voices Youth Choir.
- Table quizzes.

EXHIBITIONS

In April, Harry Owens presented an exhibition on the Irish in the Spanish Civil War entitled 'Defenders of the Spanish Republic'. This was followed by a video and discussion on the Irish Brigades who fought in Spain, with particular reference to local Dundalk man Charles Donnelly.

In Drogheda Library, the local Photo Club and Camera Display took place. Of particular interest was the display of cameras and photographic equipment both old and new.

OTHER LIBRARY SERVICES

Learning Centre

Groups using the Learning Centre on a regular basis included FÁS, Rehab, VEC, Slán Abhaile, Hilltop Services and the National Learning Network. A creative writing group set up in conjunction with the Arts Office also uses the Learning Centre as its venue.

Tours

Tours were organised in all branch libraries for groups such as national schools, play groups, secondary school students, and groups from various organisations in the towns.

DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE

2008 was a very successful year for Dundalk Sports Centre during which time the investments made in 2007 (recruitment of a Sports Co-ordinator and a new timber-sprung floor in the main hall) came to fruition, in terms of services provided, occupancy levels and income.

The in-house programmes were expanded to include: an eight-week summer activities programme (multi-sports, mini camp, basketball, tennis, badminton), mid-term camps, Easter camps, a weekly activities day for older people, an after school activities programme (basketball, tennis, soccer), the Louth Secondary School Badminton Competition and the Louth Primary School Basketball Blitz.

We have expanded our Special Needs Activities Programmes (Malta Services, REHAB, St. John of Gods, Louth Disability Network, National Learning Network, St. Brigids, and the Irish Wheelchair Association National Basketball Team) as well as integrating children with special needs into many of our regular activities.

We have also developed an Outreach Programme which includes Physical Education to seven primary schools, school sports days and coaching (basketball, football and fitness). We also run the School Completion Programme activities in conjunction with VEC.

Dundalk Sports Centre also set up the Dundalk SC Ravens Basketball Club in July 2007, which now has ten teams (Under-12, Under-14, Under-16 and Under-18 boys and girls teams and mens and ladies senior teams) with over 100 members and is already one of the biggest clubs in Ireland.

MUIRHEVNAMOR DISTRICT PARK

The refurbished Muirhevnamor District Park was officially opened by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Seamus Keelan, in December 2008. The facility now boasts refurbished tennis and basketball courts, a new playground, walking/jogging paths, extensive landscaping and planting, a new entrance road from Tom Bellew

Avenue and additional car parking. The project was funded by the Sports Capital Grants Scheme, National Playground Grant and the Council's Development Contribution scheme.

CORPORATE SERVICES

MUNICIPAL POLICY COMMITTEES (MPC)

Dundalk Town Council Environment MPC held four meetings during the year and the policy issues dealt with were as follows:

- Review of the draft Tidy Towns Five-Year Plan for Dundalk.
- Development and implementation of a Bonfire Aversion Project.
- Consideration of the Louth Local Sports Partnership Programme.

Dundalk Town Council Planning & Development MPC held three meetings during the year. The main policy issues dealt with included:

- Review of the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2003-2009.
- Protection of urban trees/hedgerows within development sites.
- Update on current plans/strategies.

Dundalk Town Council Housing MPC did not meet during 2008 due to its failure to secure a quorum on two occasions and the cancellation of a third meeting to accommodate a Special Meeting of the Council.

Dundalk Town Council Infrastructure MPC held three meetings during the year and the policy issues dealt with included:

- Pedestrian crossings near schools.
- Review of the usage of the Metropolitan Area Network.
- Review of Energy Audit Report.

CIVIC RECEPTIONS

The Council afforded a civic reception to Dundalk Schoolboys' Team to honour their success in winning the Under-16 Welsh Cup in 2007.

The Chairman laid a wreath at the Kelly Monument in Roden Place to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the men who lost their lives in attempting to rescue the crew of the Mary Stoddard ship in 1858. The ceremony was attended by representatives of the families, the coastguard service, Dundalk Port Company and the Lifeboat Association. The ceremony concluded with a prayer service and music from the Dundalk Brass Band.

Drogheda Borough Council

Goal 3 – To improve the quality of life for residents, now and for future generations.

DROGHEDA FIRE & EMERGENCY CENTRE

Drogheda Fire & Emergency Centre was officially opened by Mr. John Gormley, T.D, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, on 9th June 2008.

The station runs on solar, geothermal, wind and biomass energy with rainwater harvesting technology which, coupled with its eco-friendly architectural design, makes it the most sustainable fire station in Ireland. The €5.1m facility, funded by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, provides state-of-the-art facilities for the 20 full-time and 16 retained members of Drogheda Fire Service. Features of the seven-bay centre include a modern four-storey training tower, upgraded maintenance and workshop facilities, dedicated fitness and leisure facilities for staff and groundbreaking energy-efficient water, heating and lighting systems.

Drogheda Fire & Emergency Centre not only provides the area's dedicated fire service with improved facilities, but also sets a new benchmark in the design and construction of future fire stations. Due to their 24-hour nature, such facilities often have a disproportionately high level of energy consumption, whereas the eco-friendly design of Drogheda Fire & Emergency Centre will result in an energy saving of over 100,000kW/hr per annum. Sustainable Energy Ireland supplied 40 per cent of the capital costs of these renewable energy systems.

Throughout 2008, Drogheda Borough Council's fire service responded to almost 800 emergency calls in Louth and east Meath. This new hi-tech Fire & Emergency Centre will not only allow the service to be provided more efficiently but will also lend itself to the continued training of staff, thanks to its improved training facilities.

Goal 2 – To facilitate economic development and maximise our strategic border location midway between Dublin and Belfast.

PLANNING

In 2008, 245 planning applications were processed by Drogheda Borough Council. In order to facilitate potential applicants, Drogheda Borough Council continues to provide a pre-planning

service. Members of the public can make appointments with the Planners to discuss pre-planning issues on Tuesday of each week. The Borough Council is also maximising the use of the Council website for the dissemination of planning information.

The area of planning enforcement warranted significant attention in 2008 and the Planning Section will continue to implement the legislation in this area in 2009.

NORTHERN ENVIRONS OF DROGHEDA

A Local Area Plan for the Northern Drogheda Environs was adopted by Louth County Council in July 2004, to provide for a range of development uses in the northern environs of Drogheda that would cater for a population of 20,000 within the next 20 years. The Master Plan for the area covers the residential zoned lands within the Local Area Plan and was adopted as a variation of the Local Area Plan by Louth County Council at its meeting on 15th May 2006.

Following extensive pre-planning consultations with the Planning Authority during 2007, a significant number of planning applications for the development of the area have been assessed. During the year, nine of these applications have resulted in grants of planning permission and these provide for public parks, a school, and over 4,000 residential units.

The assessment of planning applications for the development of the Master Plan area will be ongoing during 2009.

DROGHEDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

In 2008, Drogheda Borough Council engaged Indecon International Economic Consultants to prepare an integrated Economic Development Strategy for Drogheda and its environs for the period 2009-2015. Despite the extremely challenging economic times, the Strategy takes a positive approach in identifying the comparative strengths characterising the economy of Drogheda and its environs, and highlights the key issues and economic development opportunities that may be successfully developed between now and 2015.

The overall vision for Drogheda and its environs is for an even larger and more economically active region in 2015 and a flourishing urban centre with vibrant communities either side of the River Boyne. It is envisaged that the area will have a

population approaching 85,000 persons in 2015, representing an additional 22,000 persons compared with the 2006 Census. Most of this growth is estimated to occur in the northern and southern environs of Drogheda.

A proposed Drogheda Economic Forum consisting of the key stakeholders in the area will now be put in place to implement the Strategy and to secure the economic development of the greater Drogheda area over the period 2009-2015 and beyond.

ROADS

WEST STREET ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME

Drogheda town centre, which has been upgraded with an investment of over €8m, was officially reopened on 30th May 2008 by the Mayor of Drogheda, Cllr. Anthony Donohoe.

Funded entirely by Drogheda Borough Council, the West Street Environmental Improvements Scheme has seen improvements from Narrow West Street to the junction of Peter Street and Shop Street to create a pedestrian-friendly space in the centre of the town.

The works, which commenced in June 2006, experienced some delays due to unforeseen complications. Shortly after Phase One of the scheme commenced, poor ground conditions were encountered resulting in significant revisions to work methodologies. Deep excavation was also deemed necessary in order to provide main drainage on the street.

During the works, Drogheda Borough Council met with Drogheda town centre traders to keep them up to date on any delays the works were experiencing so that concerns could be raised. The Borough Council was also in contact on a daily basis with both the architects (Dublin-based Mitchell & Associates) and the contractors (SIAC Construction Ltd.), to ensure the impact of the works was minimised.

The improvements represent a significant investment by Drogheda Borough Council and have completely modernised the urban landscape of the town centre, not only adding to its physical attractiveness but also improving both traffic and pedestrian movement in the street.

R166 CROSS LANES REHABILITATION SCHEME

Road works were completed to reconstruct a section of Cross Lanes with the aid of funding from the Specific Improvement Grant Scheme.

R167 BALTRAY ROAD STRENGTHENING AND REHABILITATION SCHEME

The Baltray Road was strengthened and resurfaced with the aid of funding from the Specific Improvement Grant Scheme.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Special road works were carried out at various locations including James Street, Cross Lanes, Dublin Road, Palace Street

and William Street junction, Rathmullen Estate, North Quay and Blackbush Lane.

Disability works (including raised table and pedestrian crossing facilities at Dyer Street, Haymarket junction, dished footpaths and a new footpath at Patrick Street and disabled bay road markings at various locations) were also carried out.

Road markings and signage were renewed and/or provided at various locations.

Traffic calming measures were implemented at Byranstown Cross Route and Rathmullen Estate.

Traffic Management and maintenance of traffic signals continued. The Traffic Management Study continued to be implemented with the extension of the Pay & Display parking scheme and introduction of new one-way traffic systems at Windmill Road and Church Street.

A review of the Drogheda Appointed Stands (Street Service Vehicles) By-Laws was undertaken.

Low cost safety improvement schemes were carried out at Bolton Street and Patrick Street junction, R132 North Road and R132 Dublin Road.

Road and footpath repairs were carried out and dished kerbs were provided for disabled access at various locations.

Public lighting was provided and maintained throughout the Borough while upgrading of public lighting was undertaken within various estates and residential areas.

The implementation of the European Road Safety Charter was continued with road improvements and traffic management measures at Sunday's Gate, Congress Avenue, Marley's Lane and Newtown Road.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND POLLUTION CONTROL

Actions for Environmental Protection and Pollution Control, both completed and ongoing, are as follows:

- Gas Monitoring continues at the Old Landfill Site on the Collon Road.
- Amenity Grants worth €38,000 were awarded to 45 residents associations and community and voluntary groups throughout the town to help with upgrading and improvement works in their areas.
- Purchase of the following items of equipment to upgrade cleansing equipment: green machine 414, green machine 424, mini road sweeper 636 and two John Deere ride-on mowers.
- Drogheda Borough Council continued to complete surveys for the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System (Litter GIS).
- Improvement Works on Cord Cemetery continue with Phase II completed in 2008.

WATER SERVICES

STALEEN WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Stage 1 of refurbishment works have been carried out with Stage 2 due to go to contract in 2009. These works entail the upgrade of existing pumping and treatment facilities to ensure compliance with Drinking Water Regulations.

DROGHEDA WWTP EXTENSION

Phase 2, which extended treatment capacity at the plant to 101,000 population equivalent, has now been completed and is fully operational. A further process improvement phase to increase capacity to 125,000 population equivalent in the short term was developed in 2008 and will progress subject to statutory consents and demand considerations.

A strategic design study is also to be commenced in 2009 to look at a further expansion phase to cater for long term development pressure in the south Louth/Drogheda/east Meath area.

DROGHEDA SEWERAGE NETWORK STUDY

This study is mapping and looking at the condition of the sewerage network in the Drogheda borough area. This project is ongoing and survey stage is due to be completed in mid-2009 with a report published at the end of 2009.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

In 2008, a compactor for municipal waste was installed at the recycling facility on the Collon Road and a canopy for the storage of electrical goods was also erected.

Goal 3 – To improve the quality of life for residents, now and for future generations.

ENVIRONMENT

Drogheda was awarded a Gold Medal in the Tidy Towns Competition for the first time. This represents a significant improvement and recognises the commitment and the hard work of both Drogheda Borough Council staff and the Tidy Towns Committee.

DROGHEDA ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS

- Drogheda environmental campaigns for 2008 were as follows:
- Beauty on Boyne Awards held for second year in conjunction with Coca Cola, V&W Recycling, Scotch Hall and the d Hotel.
 - Successful organisation of National Tree Week and National Spring Clean.
 - Implementation of Halloween Bonfire Initiative to reduce quantities of waste being burned and the cost of clean up.

BATTLE OF THE BOYNE WAY – RAMPARTS WALK

The 2.4km upgraded walkway from the Bridge of Peace to Rathmullen which links Drogheda to the Battle of the Boyne was officially opened by Mayor Anthony Donohoe on 21st April 2008. It is envisaged that the upgraded walk will encourage greater numbers to tread in the path of history and enjoy the flora and fauna along the magnificent Boyne River along the way.

The design encompasses two distinct character areas along the riverside; a 400m high-quality urban promenade fronting the riverside at St. Dominic's Park which comprises a 6m-wide concrete path with architectural lighting and railings.

The surface was selected because of its warmth, its long term durability and ease of maintenance. The railings along the river opposite St. Dominic's Park have been designed so that the river and its wildlife are visible from within the park. The lighting installed along the edge of the walkway will increase safety and reduce the risk of any anti-social behaviour. It is envisaged that, over time, benches and additional lime tree planting will also be provided along the walk.

The 2km riverside trail which commences at the end of St. Dominic's Park was designed to be sympathetic to its natural surroundings and to accommodate all users – pedestrians, cyclists, buggies and wheelchairs.

Since its completion, the walk has attracted increasing numbers of users and has been widely praised from all sectors of the community. Funding for the project was provided by Drogheda Borough Council, Fáilte Ireland and Earthquake Developments/Niall Mellon Group.

CORPORATE SERVICES

CIVIC RECEPTIONS

Civic Reception – 15th May 2008

The Board of Lifestyle Development Group:

- Pat Kelly
- Bridie Durnin
- Aileen Maher
- Frances Meade
- Nancy O'Mordha
- Mary Conneely
- Sr. Ann Brady
- Angela Donagh
- Mary Shortt
- Noelina Bell.

Civic Awards were presented to the following:

- Jacinta Walsh, Abacas School.
- John Smith, Caretaker, Ballsgrove Community Centre (30 years).
- Nicky Kelly, Caretaker, Ballsgrove Community Centre (30 years).

Civic Reception – 19th November 2008

- Wolfetones GFC, winners of the Louth Junior 2B Football Championship 2008.
- St. Nicholas GFC, winners of the Louth Junior Football Championship 2008.
- The Dreadnots GFC, winners of the Louth Intermediate Football Championship 2008.
- Newtown Blues GFC, winners of the Louth Senior Football Championship 2008.

Civic Reception – 9th December 2008

- Newtown Blues GFC, Ladies Under-16, winners of the Louth Ladies Under-16B Championship 2008.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

Seven applications were received by Drogheda Borough Council in 2008.

JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE (JPC)

The Joint Policing Committee met on three occasions in 2008 and advanced proposals under its Work Plan, including the following areas:

- Provision of town centre CCTV.
- Extension of community-based CCTV and development of protocol.
- Expansion of Home Security Scheme for Older Persons.
- Successful application to National Graffiti Removal Programme.
- Preparation and implementation of a Community Safety Strategy for Hallowe'en.
- Implementation of Alcohol By-Laws in public places.

The Joint Policing Committee, which is chaired by Cllr. J. Mulroy, consists of the members of Drogheda Borough Council; Superintendent G. Smith and Inspector M. Cowley of An Garda Síochána; Ms. Nuala Early, Ms. Marie Russell and Mr. Kevin Callan representing the community and voluntary sector; Deputies F. O'Dowd, S. Kirk and A. Morgan and Mr. Conn Murray, County Manager; and Mr. D. Foley, Director of Services/Town Clerk, Ms. Mary T. Daly, Senior Executive Officer, and Ms. Valerie Artherton, RAPID Co-Ordinator representing Drogheda Borough Council.

ARTS OFFICE**DROGHEDA ARTS FESTIVAL 2008**

Drogheda Arts Festival 2008 was extremely successful with an estimated attendance of 17,000 people. In its fourth year, this colorful multi-disciplinary arts festival presented six days of events and activities, from Wednesday 30th April to Monday 5th May, and featured the very best of national and international drama, street theatre, spectacle, music, dance, visual arts, film, literature and comedy.

The aim of Drogheda Arts Festival is to bring to Drogheda the very best of national and international artists; providing the community with the opportunity to access the arts and raising the profile of Drogheda as a place of cultural excellence. Since its inauguration in 2005, the Arts Office has endeavoured to build on the success of the festival year by year. Taking place over the May Bank Holiday weekend, the festival also presents a significant tourism opportunity.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

In 2008, Drogheda Borough Council engaged a Traditional Musician in Residence. Renowned Drogheda musician, Sean Corcoran, began his appointment as Traditional Musician in Residence in October 2007. The residency incorporated a number of projects through which the Artist in Residence engaged with the community.

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC SERIES

Performances at St. Peter's Church of Ireland included RTÉ Vanbrugh Quartet and Emer McDonough, Baltic Voices in Ireland – Avro Part, Pearls of the Opera, Hugh Tinney, Michael Nyman and his band, Téada, Callino Quartet and Temenos O8 – a celebration of the music of Sir John Tavener and Antti Siirala.

COMMUNITY ARTS

Continuing its commitment to engaging young people in the arts, Drogheda Borough Council also delivered the following initiatives:

- **Drogheda Youth Dance Company:** In its third year this dance initiative for young people aged between ten and 18 years old is an outcome of a unique Dance Artist in Residence programme. The company produced and performed their performance entitled 'Drogheda: Past and Present' in the Droichead Arts Centre in May.
- **National Chamber Choir:** Workshops were provided to Our Lady's College, Greenhills by the National Chamber Choir.
- **The Schools Poetry Competition:** This competition continued with workshops in primary and post-primary schools provided by former writer/Artist in Residence, Heather Brett, culminating in the publication of the fifth student poetry anthology, Pickles and Pancakes.
- **So You Want to Make a Movie?:** Third film summer school for teenagers organised in association with award-winning company, Calipo Theatre and Picture Co. The course included acting for the camera techniques, screenwriting and film production skills.
- **DJ Course:** A five-day summer school for teenagers was organised for 14-18 year olds interested in learning DJ skills and techniques.
- **Leanbh Drogheda Arts Festival for Children:** Highly successful fifth arts festival for children with a packed programme of fantastic performances and inspiring workshops over a six-day period, including dance, puppetry, plays, music and the visual arts.

The Arts Office also undertook a major drama, crafts and storytelling project with traveller groups in association with Drogheda Partnership and Droichead Arts Centre.

ARTS GRANTS

The Arts Office delivered a suite of arts grants for artists, groups and schools in Drogheda. These grants include the Arts Act (Rounds 1 and 2), Tyrone Guthrie Award, Young Music Awards, Classical Music Scholarships, School Musical Instruments Purchase Scheme and Drama League of Ireland Bursary.

HOUSING

The Housing Department is responsible for the maintenance of the Borough Council's housing stock, estate management, collection of rents and loan repayments, sale of houses under the Tenant Purchase Scheme and the Shared Ownership/Affordable Housing Scheme, provision of housing loans, housing adaptation grants and accommodation for travelling people.

By the end of 2008, an additional 323 new homes were provided through the Council's Housing Construction Programme for social, voluntary and affordable units. Maintenance and repair of our rented stock (1,270 dwellings) was completed throughout the year. Planned maintenance included the installation of gas central heating, attic insulation and smoke alarms into 145 dwellings, and window and doors into 150 dwellings.

Social Housing Construction and Acquisition Programme:

- Newtown Meadows – 71 units completed.
- Tredagh View, Marley's Lane – 77 units completed.

Affordable Housing, Part V and the Housing Strategy:

- Newtown Meadows – 24 units.
- Tredagh View, Marley's Lane – 16 units.

Housing Strategy:

- A total of 20 units were acquired by Drogheda Borough Council under the Part V Scheme.

Voluntary Housing:

- Newtown Meadows – 30 units provided by Cluid.
- Tredagh View, Marley's Lane – 21 units provided by Respond.
- Foscaadh Housing Association provided 36 units in 2008 with the remaining 29 to be completed by March 2009.

Special Needs Housing:

- A total of five special needs homes were completed in 2008 in Drogheda Borough (four social and one voluntary).

Housing Stock Maintenance and Improvement:

- Drogheda Borough Council has a housing stock of 1,270.

HOMELESS

Drogheda Borough Council continued to support Drogheda Homeless Aid and Drogheda Women's Refuge. The Women's Refuge moved into their newly-built premises late in 2008. The building comprises five single units and seven family units.

ST. FINIAN'S PARK REMEDIAL WORKS SCHEME

Works on Phase 4 of this project continued during 2008. A total of 70 houses were included in Phase 4. The works included the removal of timber panels to the local authority houses and replacement with solid block and mild steel structural beams and the removal of existing windows and doors and replacement with uPVC double-glazed windows and doors. In addition, the contract also provided for environmental works comprising new paths, gates, boundary walls and driveways. Works were also carried out to privately-owned houses with a financial contribution being made by householders for specific eligible works.

The original project which provided for the refurbishment of 200 dwellings and associated site development works commenced in January 2003 and qualified for capital funding of approximately €20m under the Remedial Works Programme from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. It is anticipated that the project will be fully completed by April 2009.

DISABLED PERSONS GRANTS

In 2008, approx €330,000 (excluding VAT) was spent on 21 different dwellings.

Key Performance Indicators

FIRE SERVICE	2007	2008						
F1: Fire Service Mobilisation			F.3 Fire Prevention		E.2 Drinking water analysis			
A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in full-time stations in respect of fire	1.7	2.17	A. Total number of fire safety certificate applications received	371	180	A. Percentage of drinking water analysis results in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to public schemes	97.63	97.47
B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in part-time stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	4.8	3.57	B. Total number of fire safety certificate applications processed (including cases deemed invalid)	380	170	B. Percentage of drinking water analysis results in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to private schemes (where appropriate)	95	94.99
C. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in full-time stations in respect of all other emergency incidents	-	1.82	C. Total number of applications deemed invalid	-	6			
D. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in part-time stations (retained fire service) in respect of all other emergency incidents	-	3.64						
F.2 Percentage of attendances at scenes			COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION	2007	2008	WASTE MANAGEMENT		
A. Percentage of cases, in respect of fire, in which first attendance is at the scene within 10 minutes	75.9	60.93	CP.1 Participation in local Youth Council/Comhairle na nÓg scheme			E.3 Waste segregation		<i>* Privatised, LCC.</i>
B. Percentage of cases, in respect of fire, in which first attendance is at the scene after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	22.1	34.94	Percentage of local schools and youth groups involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na nÓg scheme	81.25	65.52	A. Percentage of households who receive a waste collection service and are provided with segregated waste collection for dry recyclables	- *	- *
C. Percentage of cases, in respect of fire, in which first attendance is at the scene after 20 minutes	2	4.13	CP.2 Groups registered with the Community and Voluntary Forum			B. Percentage of households who receive a waste collection service and are provided with segregated waste collection for organics	- *	- *
D. Percentage of cases, in respect of all other emergency incidents, in which first attendance is at the scene within 10 minutes	-	53.41	Number of groups registered with the Community and Voluntary Forum	-	108	E.4: Housing waste sent for recycling		
E. Percentage of cases, in respect of all other emergency incidents, in which first attendance is at the scene after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	-	40.91				A. Percentage of household waste collected from kerbside, which is sent for recycling	20	27.59
F. Percentage of cases, in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance, is at the scene after 20 minutes	-	5.68	CORPORATE ISSUES	2007	2008	B. Tonnage of household waste collected from kerbside, which is sent for recycling	7802	10637
			C.1 Working days lost to sickness			C. Tonnage of household waste recycled, which arises from waste collected from recycling facilities (i.e. Bring Banks, Civic Amenity Centres, transfer stations and other recycling facilities)	-	5590
			A. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through certified leave	4.25	4.41	E.5: Household waste sent for landfill		
			B. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through uncertified leave	0.9	0.97	A. The percentage of household waste collected which is sent to landfill	80	72.41
			C.2 Staff training and development			B. The tonnage of household waste collected which is sent to landfill	31129	27911
			Expenditure on training and development as a percentage of total payroll costs:	4.75	5.23	E.6: Recycling facilities		
						The total number of Bring Sites in the local authority area	38	37
			ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	2007	2008			
			WATER					
			E.1 Unaccounted-for water					
			Unaccounted-for water (UFW) as a percentage of total volume of water supplied under the water supply schemes that the local authority is responsible for	-	44.19			

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The total number of Civic Amenity Centres in the local authority area	2	2	W. The total number of facilities for recycling	39	39	B. Number of complaints investigated	2625	2294
Glass			X. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population	2	1.75	C. Number of complaints resolved where no further action was necessary	-	2155
A. The number of Bring Sites for recycling	38	37				D. Number of enforcement procedures taken	217	139
B. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling	2	2	LITTER			E.9: Percentage of schools participating in environmental campaigns		
C. The total number of facilities for recycling	40	39	E.7: Litter prevention and enforcement			A. Percentage of primary schools participating in environmental campaigns	64	76.71
D. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population	1.8	1.75	A. Number of full-time litter wardens	7	7	B. Percentage of secondary schools participating in environmental campaigns	75	87.5
Cans			B. Number of part-time litter wardens	0	0			
E. The number of Bring Sites for recycling	43	37	C. Number of litter wardens (both full and part-time) per 5,000 population	0.343	0.31			
F. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling	2	2	D. Number of on-the-spot fines issued	1207	1093			
G. The total number of facilities for recycling	45	39	E. Number of on-the-spot fines paid	-	910			
H. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population	2.02	1.75	F. Number of prosecution cases taken because of non-payment of on-the-spot fines	174	145			
Textiles			G. Number of prosecutions secured in cases taken because of non-payment of on-the-spot fines	55	44			
I. The number of Bring Sites for recycling	0	0	H. Number of notices issued (under Sections 9, 15, 16, 17 and 20 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997)	-	23			
J. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling	2	2	I. Total number of prosecutions taken (all prosecutions under the Litter Acts 1997-2003)	-	157			
K. The total number of facilities for recycling	2	2	J. Total number of prosecutions secured (all prosecutions under the Litter Acts 1997-2003)	-	44			
L. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population	0.09	0.09	K. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are unpolluted (i.e. litter-free)	14	10			
Batteries			L. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are slightly polluted with litter	78	77.50			
M. The number of Bring Sites for recycling	0	0	M. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are moderately polluted with litter	8	11.88			
N. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling	2	2	N. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are significantly polluted with litter	0	0.63			
O. The total number of facilities for recycling	2	2	O. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are grossly polluted with litter	0	0			
P. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population	0.09	0.09	E.8: Environmental complaints and enforcement					
Oils			A. Total number of cases subject to complaints concerning environmental pollution (relating to waste, litter, water pollution, noise pollution, air pollution)	2755	2342			
Q. The number of Bring Sites for recycling	0	0						
R. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling	2	2						
S. The total number of facilities for recycling	2	2						
T. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population	0.09	0.09						
Other materials								
U. The number of Bring Sites for recycling	43	37						
V. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling	2	2						

HOUSING

2007 2008

H.1: Housing vacancies

A. The total number of dwellings in local authority stock	3160	3344
B. The total number of dwellings, excluding those subject to major refurbishment projects		3320
C. The overall percentage of dwellings that are empty (excluding those subject to major refurbishment projects)		1.17
D. The percentage of empty dwellings unavailable for letting	96	56.41
E. The percentage of empty dwellings available for letting	4	43.59

H.2: Average time taken to re-let available dwellings

The average time taken (in weeks) from the date of vacation of dwelling to the date when all necessary repairs are carried out which are deemed necessary to re-let the dwelling	-	8
The average time taken (in weeks) from the works (above) being completed to the date of the first rent debit	-	3

H.3: Housing repairs

Number of repairs completed as a percentage of the number of valid repair requests received	95	96.19
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H.4: Traveller Accommodation

Total number of traveller families accommodated as a percentage of the targets set

in the local traveller accommodation programme 33 100

H.5: Enforcement of standards in the private rented sector

A. Total number of registered tenancies - 4595
B. Number of dwelling units inspected - 122
C. Number of inspections carried out - 122
D. Number of dwellings inspected as a percentage of registered tenancies (i.e. B as a percentage of A) - 2.66

H.6: Grants to adapt housing for the needs of people with a disability

A. Average time taken (in weeks) to process applications under the Mobility Aids Grant Scheme, including any necessary inspection(s), from the date of receipt of a valid application to the date of decision on the application - 8
B. Average time taken (in weeks) to process applications under the Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, including any necessary inspection(s), from the date of receipt, to the date of decision on the application - 8

H.7: Pre-Tenancy Familiarisation Courses

A. Total number of new local authority tenants - 406
B. Percentage of new local authority tenants who have been offered Pre-Tenancy Familiarisation Courses - 100

LIBRARY SERVICES 2007 2008

L.1 Library public opening hours

A. Average number of opening hours per week for full-time libraries 35 34.5
B. Average number of opening hours per week for part-time libraries (where applicable) 20 19.4
C. Percentage of full-time libraries that have lunchtime openings - 66.66
D. Percentage of full-time libraries that have evening openings - 100

E. Percentage of full-time libraries that have Saturday openings - 100

L.2 Library visits

Number of visits to full time libraries per 1,000 population - 1800.62

L.3 Library stock

A. Annual expenditure on stock per head of population (county/city-wide) - 2.65
B. Number of items issued per head of population (county/city-wide) for books - 2.41
C. Number of items issued per head of population (county/city-wide) for other items - 0.28

L.4 Internet access through libraries

Number of internet sessions provided per 1,000 population - 134.24

MOTOR TAXATION 2007 2008

M.1 Number of motor tax transactions

A. Number of motor tax transactions which are dealt with over the counter - 88680
B. Number of motor tax transactions which are dealt with by post - 4040
C. Number of motor tax transactions which are dealt with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone) - 29339
D. Percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with over the counter 90.81 72.65
E. Percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with by post 9.19 3.31
F. Percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone) 14.58 24.04

M.2 Time taken to process motor tax postal applications

A. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc is issued) on the same day as receipt of the application 3215 1885
B. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc is issued) on the second or third day from receipt of the application 3895 1863

C. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc is issued) on the fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application 857 168

D. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc is issued) in over five days from receipt of the application 1412 124

E. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc is issued) on the same day as receipt of the application 34.28 46.66

F. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc is issued) on the second or third day from receipt of the application 41.53 46.11

G. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc is issued) on the fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application 9.14 4.16

H. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc is issued) in over five days from receipt of the application 15.05 3.07

M.3 Time taken to process driving licence applications

A. Number of driving licence applications which are dealt with on the same day as receipt of the application - 9222
B. Number of driving licence applications which are dealt with on the second or third day from receipt of the application - 2812
C. Number of driving licence applications which are dealt with on the fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application - 1599
D. Number of driving licence applications which are dealt with in over five days from receipt of the application - 3606
E. Percentage of overall driving licence applications which are dealt with on the same day as receipt of the application 53.49
F. Percentage of overall driving licence applications which are dealt with on the second or third

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

day from receipt of the application	-	16.31	submission of further information	94	62	B. Number of decisions in Item A which were decided within eight weeks	6	4
G. Percentage of overall driving licence applications which are dealt with on the fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application	-	9.28	D. Number of decisions in Item A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under Section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000	2	1	C. Number of decisions in Item A which required the submission of further information	8	11
H. Percentage of overall driving licence applications which are dealt with in over five days from receipt of the application	-	20.92	E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought	78	77	D. Number of decisions in Item A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under Section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000	1	1
M.4 Public opening hours			F. Percentage of applications granted	74.31	74.74	E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought	107	97.55
Average number of opening hours per week	28.75	32.5	G. Percentage of applications refused	25.69	25.26	F. Percentage of applications granted	73.33	100
			H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanála	63.64	61.29	G. Percentage of applications refused	26.67	0
			I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	36.36	38.71	H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanála	100	100
			Other: not requiring Environment Impact Assessment			I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	0	0
PLANNING	2007	2008	A. Number of applications decided	1355	1000	P.2 Planning enforcement		
P.1 Planning applications – decision making			B. Number of decisions in Item A which were decided within eight weeks	926	658	A. Total number of cases subject to complaints that were investigated	700	646
Individual houses			C. Number of decisions in Item A which required the submission of further information	414	335	B. Total number of cases subject to complaints that were dismissed	173	123
A. Number of applications decided	722	555	D. Number of decisions in Item A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under Section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000	15	7	C. Total number of cases subject to complaints that were resolved through negotiations	238	156
B. Number of decisions in Item A which were decided within eight weeks	305	202	E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought	75	74.04	D. Number of enforcement procedures taken through warning letters	443	412
C. Number of decisions in Item A which required the submission of further information	406	344	F. Percentage of applications granted	90.55	91.30	E. Number of enforcement procedures taken through enforcement notices	135	168
D. Number of decisions in Item A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under Section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000	11	9	G. Percentage of applications refused	9.45	8.70	F. Number of prosecutions	36	24
E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought	72	76.05	H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanála	59.26	39.13	P.3 Planning public opening hours		
F. Percentage of applications granted	76.45	86.13	I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	40.74	60.87	Average number of opening hours per week	39.17	37.3333
G. Percentage of applications refused	23.55	13.87	Other: requiring Environment Impact Assessment			P.4 Pre-planning consultation		
H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanála	59.26	39.13	A. Number of applications decided	15	16	A. Number of pre-planning consultation meetings held	-	698
I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanála	40.74	60.87	B. Number of decisions in Item A which were decided within eight weeks	48	32	B. Average length of time (in days) from request for consultation with local authority to actual formal		
New housing development			C. Number of decisions in Item A which required the					
A. Number of applications decided	144	95						

meeting for pre-planning consultation	9.61	8.0387	RECREATIONAL SERVICES 2007 2008			B. Percentage of arrears on Housing Loans that are one month old	3.78	10.69
P.5 New buildings inspected			Rec.1 Children's playgrounds			C. Percentage of arrears on Housing Loans that are 2-3 months old	4.85	14.95
Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	15.86	20.97	A. Number of children's playgrounds per 1,000 population directly provided by the local authority	0.06	0.09	D. Percentage of arrears on Housing Loans that are more than 3 months old	88.84	179.30
P.6 Taking estates in charge			B. Number of children's playgrounds per 1,000 population facilitated by the local authority	0.01	0.01	Rev.3 Commercial Rates		
A. The number of residential estates for which the planning permission has expired, in respect of which formal written requests for taking in charge (from residents or developers), were on hands at the beginning of the year	-	64	Rec.2 Local authority-facilitated leisure facilities			Amount collected at year-end as a percentage of amount due from Commercial Rates	76.56	84.28
B. Number of estates that were taken in charge in the year in question	-	8	Number of visitors to local authority-facilitated leisure facilities per 1,000 population	3127.20	3236.69	Rev.4 Refuse Charges		
C. Number of dwellings in respect of Item B	-	309	REVENUE COLLECTION 2007 2008			Percentage of households paying Refuse Charges (including waivers) at year end	0	0
D. Percentage of estates in Item A not completed to satisfaction of the planning authority in line with the planning permission	-	10.94	Rev.2 House Rent			Rev. 5 Non-Domestic Water Charges		
E. Number of estates in Item D in respect of which enforcement action was taken in the year in question and/or the bond was called in	-	1	A. Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due from House Rent	88.35	89.55	Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due for Non-Domestic Water Charges	42.46	59.71
F. Number of estates in Item D in respect of which works were undertaken by the authority to bring the estate to taking in charge standard	-	2	B. Percentage of arrears on House Rent that are 4-6 weeks old	8.91	8.78	ROADS 2007 2008		
			C. Percentage of arrears on House Rent that are 6-12 weeks old	11.19	14.00	R.1 Road Restoration Programme		
			D. Percentage of arrears on House Rent that are more than 12 weeks old	71.41	86.49	Number of kilometres of local and regional roads improved and maintained under the Restoration Programme per annum	-	95.90
			Rev.2 Housing Loans			Number of kilometres of local and regional roads constructed under the Specific Improvement Grant Scheme per annum	-	0.00
			A. Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due from Housing Loans	89.97	90.42			

Breakdown of Representation in Relation to the SPCs

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SPC

Chairman: Cllr. Martin Bellew, 39 Meadow Grove, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Imelda Munster, 252 Melifont Park, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Oliver Tully, Baltray, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Thomas Clare, Main Street, Dunleer, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Mary Grehan, Rath Cottage, Ardee Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Ken O'Heiligh, 43 Ashfield, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Pearse McGeough, 8 St. Mary's Villas, Kilsaran, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Seamus McDonnell, Bellinloughlan, Knockbridge, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Mr. David D'Arcy, c/o Bill Tosh, Chamber of Commerce, Hagan House, Ramparts Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Ms. Penny Butler, 14 Forest Hill, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Ms. Ida Lenihan, 36 Matson Lodge, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Tommy Murphy, 53 Pearse Park, Drogheda, Co. Louth.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES SPC

Chairman: Cllr. Anthony Donohoe, Tymullen, Monasterboice, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Jim D'Arcy, 12 Sandygrove Close, Blackrock, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Tomás Sharkey, 7 Williamsons Place, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Donal Lynch, St. Fursey's, Sandylane, Blackrock, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Michael O'Dowd, Balgathern, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Frank Maher, 51 Meadow View, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Kevin Meenan, 27 Drive 2, Muirhevnamor, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Archbishop Hynes, 5 Anglesea Terrace, Greenore, Co. Louth.
 Ms. Odil Glynn, Setanta Initiative, Marsh Road, Bellurgan, Co. Louth.
 Ms. Phil Conyngham, Congress of Trade Unions, 117 Brookville Park, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Tim Mullins, Dundalk Chamber (email brenda@dundalk.ie).
 Cllr. Ian Dooley, (Dundalk Town Council), 2 Riverside Crescent, Dundalk, Co. Louth.

COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE (INCLUDING RECREATION & AMENITY) SPC

Chairman: Cllr. Peter Savage, Carn na n-Aol, Millgrange, Greenore, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Terry Brennan, Ghan Road, Carlingford, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Kevin Meenan, 27 Drive 2, Muirhevnamor, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Gerald Nash, 115 Newfield Estate, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Jim Ryan, 20 Fr. Murray Park, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Imelda Munster, 252 Melifont Park, Drogheda, Co. Louth.

Ms. Lucy Rafferty, Muirhevnamor Community Council, 2 Grange Close, Muirhevnamor, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Larry Conlon, Bohernamore, Ardee, Co. Louth.
 Mr. William Baldwin, c/o Bill Tosh, Chamber of Commerce, Hagan House, Ramparts Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Mr. James Cumiskey, c/o Bill Tosh, Chamber of Commerce, Hagan House, Ramparts Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Malachy Godfrey, 232 Mellifont Park, Drogheda, Co. Louth.

PLANNING SPC

Chairman: Cllr. Seamus Keelan, Newry Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Pearse McGeough, 8 St. Mary's Villas, Kilsaran, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Liam Reilly, Milltowngrange, Dromiskin, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Finnan McCoy, 92 Rockfield Close, Ardee, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Jim Loughran, Blackgate, Ravensdale, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Gerald Nash, 115 Newfield Estate, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Declan Breathnach, Annagh McCanns, Knockbridge, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Terry Brennan, Ghan Road, Carlingford, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Peter Savage, Carn na n-Aol, Millgrange, Greenore, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Frank Aiken, c/o Bill Tosh, Chamber of Commerce, Hagan House, Ramparts Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Tom Duffy, c/o Bill Tosh, Chamber of Commerce, Hagan House, Ramparts Rd, Dundalk
 Mr. Benny Devlin, Draughanstown, Togher, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Thomas Matthews, Anton, Lawlesstown, Dunleer, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Colm Markey, Duddestown, Togher, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Jim Tenanty, Riverbank, Jervis Street, Ardee, Co. Louth.

INFRASTRUCTURE SPC

Chairman: Cllr. Finnan McCoy, 92 Rockfield Close, Ardee, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Jim Loughran, Blackgate, Ravensdale, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Jacqui McConville, Grangebellew, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Jimmy Mulroy, 1 Matson Lodge, Ballymakenny Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Tommy Reilly, Milltowngrange, Dromiskin, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Cllr. Oliver Tully, Baltray, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Andrew Deary, c/o Bill Tosh, Chamber of Commerce, Hagan House, Ramparts Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Declan Murphy, c/o Bill Tosh, Chamber of Commerce, Hagan House, Ramparts Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Sean Crudden, Jenkinstown Cross, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
 Mr. Mark Deary, 1 Ship Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth.

OTHER MEETINGS – LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL**County Development Board:**

Cllr. Declan Breathnach
 Cllr. M. Bellew
 Cllr. F. McCoy
 Cllr. M. O'Dowd
 Cllr. S. Keelan
 Cllr. S. Byrne
 Cllr. T. Murphy
 Cllr. J. Mulroy
 Cllr. P. Savage

Peace III Partnership:

Cllr. M. Bellew
 Cllr. D. Breathnach
 Cllr. F. McCoy
 Cllr. M. O'Dowd

Traveller Consultative Committee:

Cllr. Liam Reilly (Chair)
 Cllr. Terry Brennan
 Cllr. Kevin Meenan
 Cllr. Carl Dearey
 Cllr. Tommy Murphy

DROGHEDA BOROUGH COUNCIL**COMMITTEES****AMAI:**

Cllr. Paul Bell and Cllr. Tommy Murphy

LAMA:

Cllr. T. Murphy

IPBM:

Cllr. Paul Bell

Border Regional Authority EU Operational Committee:

Cllr. J. Mulroy

Drogheda Partnership Co.:

Cllr. T. Murphy, Cllr. A. Donohoe and Cllr. D. Wilton

Drogheda Community Services Centre:

Cllr. Frank Maher

County Louth VEC:

Cllr. J. Mulroy and Cllr. A. Donohoe

Droichead Arts Centre Board:

Cllr. G. Nash and Cllr. M. Coogan

Drogheda Port Company:

Cllr. Paul Bell

Louth Heritage Forum:

Cllr. Paul Bell

Steering Committee – Drogheda Town Walls Conservation Plan:

Cllr. Paul Bell

Louth Hospitality Ltd:

Cllr. Tommy Byrne

Drogheda Community Drugs & Alcohol Forum:

Cllr. T. Murphy

Homeless Forum:

Cllr. K. O'Heiligh and Cllr. T. Murphy

Infrastructure MPC:

Cllr. Nash, Cllr. Murphy, Cllr. O'Dowd, Cllr. A. O'Donohoe, Cllr. D. Wilton, Cllr. M. Godfrey

Community & Enterprise MPC:

Cllr. T. Byrne, Cllr. K. O'Heiligh, Cllr. P. Bell, Cllr. F. Maher, Cllr. J. Mulroy, Cllr. M. Coogan

Protocol Committee:

Cllr. F. Maher (Mayor), Cllr. G. Nash, Cllr. P. Bell, Cllr. M. Godfrey, Cllr. M. Coogan, Cllr. M. O'Dowd

Breakdown of Representation in Relation to the MPCs

DUNDALK TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT MPC

Cllr. Martin Bellew
Cllr. Seamus Byrne
Cllr. Ian Dooley
Cllr. Seamus Keelan
Cllr. Noel Lennon
Cllr. Jim D'Arcy

Number of meetings in 2008: 4

HOUSING MPC

Cllr. Harry Todd
Cllr. Seamus Byrne
Cllr. Kevin Meenan
Cllr. Mary Grehan
Cllr. Eamonn O'Boyle
Cllr. Jim Ryan

Number of meetings in 2008: Nil

INFRASTRUCTURE MPC

Cllr. Kevin Meenan
Cllr. Harry Todd
Cllr. Jim D'Arcy
Cllr. Noel Lennon
Cllr. Mark Dearey
Cllr. Eamonn O'Boyle

Number of meetings in 2008: 3

PLANNING MPC

Cllr. Martin Bellew
Cllr. Mary Grehan
Cllr. Ian Dooley
Cllr. Seamus Keelan
Cllr. Mark Dearey
Cllr. Jim Ryan

Number of meetings in 2008: 4

OTHER MEETINGS – LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

Dundalk Joint Burial Board:

Cllr. Noel Lennon
Cllr. Seamus Keelan
Cllr. Harry Todd
Cllr. Mark Dearey
Cllr. Eamonn O'Boyle
Cllr. Seamus Byrne
Cllr. Ian Dooley

Midlands East Regional Tourism Organisation:
Cllr. Jim Ryan

Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland:
Cllr. Martin Bellew
Cllr. Seamus Byrne

Regional Authorities Operational Committee:
Cllr. Eamonn O'Boyle

Sub-Regional Review Committee:
Cllr. Mark Dearey

Dundalk Port Company:
Cllr. Noel Lennon
Cllr. Kevin Meenan

Dundalk Employment Partnership:
Cllr. Martin Bellew
Cllr. Ian Dooley
Cllr. Seamus Byrne

Newry & Mourne District Council/Dundalk Town Council – Joint Committee:
All 12 members

Vote and Attend IPB AGM:
Cllr. Mary Grehan

Local Accommodation Consultative Committee (Traveller Accommodation):
Cllr. Mark Dearey

Louth VEC:
Cllr. Martin Bellew
Cllr. Seamus Keelan
Cllr. Jim Ryan

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

Louth County Council has 26 members, representing the five electoral areas of Dundalk Carlingford, Dundalk South, Ardee, Drogheda East and Drogheda West. Monthly Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month, with the exception of August when the Council takes its annual recess. In addition, the Council holds an Annual Meeting. Budget Meetings and Special Meetings are held as the occasion demands. During 2008, a total of 75 meetings were held.

MEMBERSHIP

At the Annual Meeting of the Council, held in June, Cllr. Declan Breathnach was elected Chairperson, taking over from Cllr. Jimmy Mulroy. Cllr. Tommy Reilly retired and the vacancy created in the Ardee electoral area was filled by the co-option of Cllr. Liam Reilly.

DUNDALK TOWN COUNCIL

Dundalk Town Council has 12 members, representing the three electoral areas of Dundalk Central, Dundalk East and Dundalk West. Monthly Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month, with the exception of August, when the Council takes its annual recess. In addition, the Council holds an Annual Meeting. Budget Meetings and Special Meetings are held as the occasion demands. During 2008, a total of 28 meetings were held and 11 MPC meetings.

MEMBERSHIP

At the Annual Meeting of the Council, held in June, Cllr. Seamus Keelan was elected Chairperson, taking over from Cllr. Jim D'Arcy.

DROGHEDA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Drogheda Borough Council has 12 members, representing the two electoral areas of Drogheda North and Drogheda South. Monthly Meetings are held on the first Monday of each month, with the exception of August, when the Council takes its annual recess. In addition, the Council holds an Annual Meeting. Budget Meetings and Special Meetings are held as the occasion demands. During 2008, a total of 15 meetings were held.

MEMBERSHIP

At the Annual Meeting of the Council, held in June, Cllr. Frank Maher was elected Mayor, taking over from Cllr. Anthony Donohoe.

ARDEE TOWN COUNCIL

Ardee Town Council has nine members, representing the electoral area of Ardee Urban. Monthly Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, with the exception of August when the Council takes its annual recess. In addition, the Council holds an Annual Meeting. Budget Meetings and Special Meetings are held as the occasion demands. During 2008, a total of 14 meetings were held.

MEMBERSHIP

At the Annual Meeting of the Council, held in June, Cllr. Tom Minogue was elected Chairperson, succeeding Cllr. Fintan Malone.

REMUNERATION

Councillors are remunerated for their representational role by way of a "Representational Payment" which is paid monthly in arrears. In addition, councillors receive an "Annual Allowance" which is also paid monthly in arrears. The purpose of this allowance is to reimburse the elected representatives for the expenses incurred on behalf of their constituents. Payment is based on a national scheme and varies from councillor to councillor, dependant on the distance travelled from home to base. Councillors are also entitled to claim expenses for attendance at conferences and an annual allowance is payable for Chairpersons of Strategic Policy Committees. An annual allowance is also payable to the County Mayor and Deputy County Mayor. The payments made during the year 2008 are shown in the table on the following page.

SPC/MPC REPRESENTATION

PAYMENTS TO MEMBERS OF LOUTH LOCAL AUTHORITIES	Louth County Council	Dundalk Town Council	Drogheda Borough Council	Ardee Town Council
Annual councillors' expenses in respect of attendance at meetings of the Council and its committees	€133,582.40	€45,172.99	€39,600.00	€7,131.00
Members Representational Payments	€440,005.99	€53,160.36	€52,812.00	€18,589.52
Chairpersons Allowance	€22,000.00	€18,500.00	€20,000.00	€410.80
Vice-Chairpersons Allowance	€8,000.00	€6,000.00	NIL	NIL
Allowance paid to Chairpersons of SPCs/MPCs	€30,000.00	€8,000.00	NIL	NIL
Mobile Phone Allowances	€5,301.15	€1,600.00	€589.59	NIL
Conference Travelling & Subsistence – at home	€106,256.19	€31,760.79	€5,793.90	€1605.01
Conference Travelling & Subsistence – abroad	€6,475.04	€7,618.08	€3,541.37	€3,524.78
Number of Council and Committee Meetings	75	39	24	15

Councillor Conference Attendance Record

(information extracted from Conference Exps Sheets processed as at 31.12.08)

Louth County Council

MONTH	DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	NO. OF COUNCILLORS
Dec 2007	6th-7th	Nuclear Free Local Authotities	Dublin	1
Dec 2007	20th	Challenge of Change Steering Group Meeting	Newry	2
Jan	31st	Going Green Exhibition/EBR	Belfast	2
Feb	1st-3rd	Local Government Planning Service	Dungarvan, Waterford	5
Feb	7th-8th	Planning for Renewable Energy	Adare, Co. Limerick	5
Feb	23rd	Suicide Prevention	Dublin	3
Feb	15th-16th	AMAI Spring Seminar	Trim, Co. Meath	7
Feb	5th-7th	All Ireland Infrastructure Investment Conference	Santry, Dublin	1
Feb	21st-23rd	Ireland's Newest Immigrants	Letterkenny, Co. Donegal	3
Feb	6th-8th	The Association of County and City Councillors	Swords, Co. Dublin	4
Feb/Mar	29th-2nd	Colmcille Heritage Centre Seminar	Letterkenny, Co. Donegal	3
Mar	7th-9th	The Annual Energy Seminar	Clonmel, Co. Tipperary	2
Mar	27th-28th	LAMA Spring Conference	Trim, Co. Meath	7
Mar	26th	Pax Christi – Pease Disarmament, Dublin Castle	Dublin Castle	1
Apr	4th-6th	Training Seminar for Councillors	Letterkenny, Co. Donegal	8
Apr	11th-12th	Inclusion Ireland Conference	Tullamore, Co. Offaly	2
Apr	19th	1916 Revolution or Betrayal	Enniscorthy	2
Apr	17th-18th	Water: The Challenges for Users	Cork	3
Apr	25th-26th	Planning Seminar for Councillors	Patrick PUNCHES Hotel, Limerick	8
May	16th-18th	The Cruachan School	Tulsk, Co. Roscommon	2
May	17th-18th	Local Government & The Environment	Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare	4
May	20th	Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances	Dublin	1
May	21st	Social Economy Bridging Programme/EBR	Ballymascanlon, Dundalk	2
May	21st	Literacy and the Local Authority	Galway	1
May	27th	National Travellers Accommodation Conference	Athlone	1
Jun	3rd	Cross-Border Retail Development Programme/EBR	Monaghan	2
Jun	3rd	Oyster Farming Closure Event/EBR	Newcastle, Co. Down	2
Jun	4th	Workwise Project Event/EBR	Armagh	2
Jun	4th	NASC Conference	Galway	1
Jun	5th	Stem Closure Event/EBR	Monaghan	2
Jun	18th-20th	6th National Tourism Conference	Co. Carlow	4
Jun	24th	Interreg IIIA Showcase & Exhibition/EBR	Ballymascanlon, Dundalk	2
Jun	25th	EBR Environmental Website	Newcastle, Co. Down	2
Jun	27th-29th	Byrne Perry Summer School	Gorey, Co. Wexford	2
Jun/Jul	29th-5th	Synge Summer School	Co. Wicklow	5
Jul	9th-12th	Councillor Training – Alternative Enterprise	Galway	1

Louth County Council *(continued)*

MONTH	DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	NO. OF COUNCILLORS
Jul	4th-6th	The Baltimore Training Seminar	Skibbereen, Cork	2
Jul/Aug	30th-1st	The Role of Local Government in Sport	Oughterard, Co. Galway	1
Jul/Aug	28th-1st	21st John Hewitt International Summer School	Armagh	2
Aug	4th-8th	William Carleton Summer School	Clogher	1
Aug	10th-13th	2008 Parnell Summer School	Wicklow	1
Aug	17th-21st	2008 Merriman Summer School	Ennis, Co. Clare	2
Aug	22nd-24th	Local Government & the Arts	Birr, Co. Offaly	1
Sep	10th	Neagh Bann River Basin District Advisory Committee Meeting	Navan, Co. Meath	2
Sep	12th-14th	Benedict Kiely Literary Weekend	Omagh	2
Sep	11th-13th	AMAI 95th Annual Conference 2008	Sligo	4
Sep	17th-18th	Neagh Bann River Basin District Advisory Committee Meeting	Kilkenny	1
Sep	19th-21st	Energy Efficiency – Heat Recovery & Energy Recycling for the Domestic Dwelling	Clifden, Co. Galway	3
Sep	23rd-25th	Local Government & Sustainable Economic Development	Carlow	3
Oct	2nd-3rd	Getting a Grip 2008 – Addiction-Proofing Our Communities	Killarney, Co. Kerry	4
Oct	3rd-4th	La Touche Conference	Greystones	1
Oct	10th-12th	The Blascaod Commemoration 2008 – Emigration & Beyond	Kerry	1
Oct	10th-11th	TJK Conferences Ltd. – Freedom of Information	Limerick	1
Oct	17th-19th	Douglas Hyde Conference 2008	Roscommon	2
Oct	24th-25th	The Good Friday Agreement	Clifden, Co. Galway	1
Oct	26th-29th	Irish Language Course for Councillors	Furbo, Co. Galway	2
Oct/Nov	31st-1st	The Local Government Budget 2009	Bunclody, Co. Wexford	1
Oct/Nov	31st-2nd	Anti-Social Behaviour & Assoc. Health & Safety Issues	Carrick on Suir, Co. Tipperary	4
Nov	7th	5th National Conference on Local Government Financing	Tullow, Co. Carlow	1
Nov	6th-8th	Festivals & Cultural Events Broadening Horizons – 15th Annual Conference	Ballinasloe, Co. Galway	1
Nov	13th	Neagh Bann River Basin District Advisory Committee Meeting		1
Nov	13th	Public Consultation Conference 'A Practical Approach'	Croke Park, Dublin	1
Nov	14th-16th	Public Relations and Communication Skills for Councillors	Milford Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal	1
Nov	21st-23rd	Training Seminar for Councillors – Information & Communications Technology for Councillors	Bunclody, Co. Wexford	2
Nov	28th-29th	National Tourism Conference	Ennistymon, Co. Clare	2
Nov	26th-27th	LAMA Winter Seminar	Castlebar, Co. Mayo	4

Louth County Council *(continued)*

MONTH	DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	NO. OF COUNCILLORS
Nov	27th-29th	Clare Tourism Conference	Ennistytmon, Co. Clare	2
Dec	5th-6th	Training Seminar for Councillors – Homeless in Ireland	City West Hotel, Dublin	1
Dec	12th-14th	Training Seminar for Councillors – Effective Communications for Councillors	Sligo, Co. Sligo	1

Drogheda Borough Council

(information extracted from Conference Exps Sheets processed as at 31.12.08)

MONTH	DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION (HOME/ABROAD)	NO. OF COUNCILLORS	SUBJECT
		Kadenza Consultancies	Home	1	Local Government Planning Service Waterford
		Third Sector Forum	Home	1	Ireland's newest immigrants
		Colmcille Heritage Trust	Home	1	Colmcille Winter School
		Confederation of European Councillors	Home	1	Tackling poverty and social needs in Ireland North and South
		Kadenza Consultancies	Home	1	Local Government Planning Service Seminar Cork
		Tipperary Peace Convention	Home	1	Tipperary International Festival of Peace
		Intercultural Awareness Training in LCC	Home	1	Intercultural Awareness
		Irish Public Bodies AGM	Home	1	Annual General Meeting
		Seanchai Kerry Literary & Cultural Centre	Home	1	Role of Local Government in community and rural development
		Kadenza Consultancies	Home	1	Local Government Planning Conference
		Esperanza Enterprises	Home	2	Alternative Enterprise and Sustaining Rural Economy
		Retail Strategy Meeting	Home	1	Retail Strategy
Sep	11th-13th	AMAI Conference	Home	1	Annual General Meeting

Ardee Town Council

(information extracted from Conference Exps Sheets processed as at 31.12.08)

MONTH	DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	NO. OF COUNCILLORS
Sep	11th-13th	AMAI Annual Conference 2008	Home	2
		Irish Walled Town Network Conference	Home	2

Dundalk Town Council

(information extracted from Conference Exps Sheets processed as at 31.12.08)

DATE	CONFERENCE	NO. OF COUNCILLORS
12th-14th Dec	Effective Communications for Councillors (Sligo Park Hotel)	2
21st-23rd Nov	Training Seminar for Councillors (Bunclody)	1
14th-16th Nov	Public Relations & Communications Skills for Councillors (Letterkenny)	2
6th-8th Nov	AOIFE Conference (Ballinasloe, Co. Galway)	2
2nd-3rd Oct	Kerry Life Education Ltd. – Addiction-Proofing Our Communities (Killarney)	1
3rd-5th Oct	20th Annual La Touche Conference – Legacy Seminar (Greystones Town Council)	1
16th-18th Oct	Third Sector Forum – Local Authority Financing (Killarney)	1
17th-19th Oct	21st Douglas Hyde Conference (Abbeyfield Hotel, Co. Roscommon)	1
14th Sep	John Boyle O'Reilly School (Scotch Hall, Drogheda)	1
25th-26th Sep	Mid West Regional Authority – Citizens First International (Ennis, Co. Clare)	1
19th-21st Sep	Energy Efficiency – Heat Recovery and Energy Recycling for the Domestic Dwelling (Clifden)	3
11th-13th Sep	Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland (Sligo)	3
21st-24th Aug	Humbert International School (Co. Mayo)	1
17th-23rd Aug	Samhraidh Merriman 2008 (Ennis, Co. Clare)	1
10th-15th Aug	The Parnell Society (Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow)	1
9th-12th Jul	Training Seminar Alternative Enterprise and Sustaining Rural Economy Clifden	2
30th Jun-1st Jul	The Role of Sport in Local Government (Galway)	3
29th Jun-5th Jul	Synge Summer School	1
18th-20th Jun	6th National Tourism Conference – Success on your Doorstep: Managing your Local Environment for Tourism	2
4th-5th Jun	Respond Housing Conference (Portlaoise)	1
20th-24th Apr	Harvard University	1
19th Apr	1916 Revolution or Betrayal Conference (Enniscorthy)	1
8th-9th May	The Role of Local Government in Community and Rural Development (Listowel)	2
15th May	Joint Meeting Newry & Mourne (Newry)	3
27th-28th Mar	LAMA Spring Conference (Trim)	1
29th Feb-2nd Mar	Colmcille Heritage Trust	1
9th Feb-2nd Mar	Colmcille Winter School (Letterkenny)	1
21st-23rd Feb	Ireland's Newest Immigrants – Third Sector Forum (Dublin 17)	1
15th-16th Feb	Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland (Trim)	2
7th-9th Mar	Annual Energy Seminar (Clonmel)	

Financial Figures

Louth County Council Revenue Account

EXPENDITURE	UNAUDITED 2007		UNAUDITED 2007
Housing & Building	6,985,180	Surplus/Deficit for Year	(1,326,680)
Road Transport & Safety	18,912,760	Transfers to/from Reserves	(2,349,342)
Water Supply & Sewerage	10,607,810	Overall Surplus/Deficit for Year	(3,676,022)
Development Incentives & Controls	5,146,865	Opening Balance	7,726,889
Environmental Protection	8,686,293	Closing Balance	4,050,867
Recreation & Amenity	3,560,121	CAPITAL ACCOUNT	
Ag., Ed., Health & Welfare	8,762,496	Expenditure	95,687,958
Miscellaneous Services	4,597,457	Receipts	115,641,722
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	67,258,982	CONFERENCES	
INCOME	UNAUDITED 2007	Within State*	92,022
State Grants	35,297,126	Abroad	14,757
Goods & Services	15,997,820		
Contributions from Other LAs	7,610,910		
Rates	7,026,446		
TOTAL INCOME	65,932,302		

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

DROGHEDA BOROUGH COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL FIGURES (UNAUDITED)

Total Revenue Expenditure 2007: €28,047,442

Total Capital Expenditure 2007: €104,662,858

DUNDALK TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL FIGURES (UNAUDITED)

Total Revenue Expenditure 2007: €30,945,486

Total Capital Expenditure 2007: €30,197,726

LOUTH SUMMARY OF MAJOR REVENUE COLLECTIONS FOR 2007

	Arrears at 01/01/2007	Accrued	Write Off	Waivers Off	Total for Collection	Collected	Arrears at 31/12/2007	Percentage Collected
Rates	€760,454	€7,026,446	€617,097	Nil	€7,169,803	€6,137,697	€1,032,106	86%
Rents & Annuities	€102,993	€1,799,196	€328	Nil	€1,901,861	€1,797,769	€104,092	95%
Commercial Water	€558,489	€1,004,841	€41,212	Nil	€1,522,118	€441,671	€1,080,447	29%
Housing Loans	€7,420	€489,062	(€313)	Nil	€496,795	€439,826	€56,969	89%