



RECREATION & LEISURE



CHAPTER 7

RECREATION AND LEISURE

7.1 Introduction

Drogheda Borough Council recognises the importance of sporting, recreation and leisure activities to the quality of life enjoyed by the people of Drogheda. As such the provision of, and access to, appropriate recreational, leisure and sporting facilities is considered essential to Drogheda's future development. Drogheda has a number of sporting, recreational and leisure facilities. There is a wide variety of clubs and organisations within the town that facilitate sport, recreation and leisure activities.

7.2 Sport Facilities

An initial audit of all sports & recreational clubs in County Louth is presently being compiled and the relevant details of clubs and organisations in Drogheda are contained within Table 1.

Sports and recreational facilities are scattered throughout the town. The town hosts a number of competition & team based sports organisations including five Gaelic football clubs; eight soccer clubs, one of which is a premier League of Ireland club. The town has one Rugby club and there are two Boxing clubs.

Indoor sports facilities in the town provide facilities for badminton, basketball; squash and handball sports, and a number of community venues cater for three indoor bowls clubs. There are also number of martial arts clubs in the town.

The river Boyne provides an amenity and sports facility for two angling and a Kayaking / Canoeing Club. There are two major Golfing Courses located close to the town at Baltray and at Seapoint, Termonfeckin. Within the town there are also two local pitch & putt courses.

An initiative to devise a future recreational strategy for the town and for County Louth as a whole has been put forward and a sports and recreational officer has been appointed to oversee its development.

Drogheda Borough Council in association with Louth County Council have identified the Northern environs area of Drogheda as a potential area, where the provision of new recreational facilities could be provided so as to cater for the needs of existing sports and recreational organisations in the town.

An initial SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses; Opportunities & Threats) of sports and recreational facilities in the town indicates that there is strong voluntary input from local club memberships in the organisation, management and provision of facilities in Drogheda. There is a particularly strong Gaelic football and soccer tradition within Drogheda. The most recent recreational facilities that have been provided in Drogheda include the Boxing Club and the VEC building in Moneymore.



Particular weaknesses within the sports and recreational sector relate to the high proportion of voluntary efforts in the town; the neglect of older age groups in the town and the limited area available for recreation facilities.

Sports enthusiasts have indicated that the development of the northern environs plan area presents the Borough Council with an opportunity to address deficiencies within the sports and recreational sectors. Local sports enthusiasts have stated that there is an opportunity to capitalise on the assets of the River Boyne. Drogheda is strategically located within easy access of a large catchment population area and there may be an opportunity for the town to capitalise on the excellent road infrastructure through the development of a major sports stadium.

The major threats include the lack of funds, the lack of support structures to voluntary clubs and the poor level of facilities within the town. No overall co-ordinating body is looking after sport in the town and there is a need to have a strategy to guide future sports and recreational development within the town.





Plean Forbairt 2005 – 2011

Development Plan 2005 - 2011

NAME OF SPORT	SPORTS & RECREATIONAL CLUBS LISTED AS WITHIN DROGHEDA OR ENVIRONS	Location Ref.
Adventure Sports	Neptune Adventure Centre:	1
Angling	Drogheda & District Anglers & Drogheda Course Anglers Club	2
Athletic Clubs	Drogheda & District A.C. & Boyne A. C. & Lourdes A. C	3
Badminton Clubs	Greenhill College Bad Club & O'Raghallaighs	4
Basketball Clubs	Bullets & Drogheda Basketball Clubs	5
Bowls Clubs	Boyne Bowls Club & St. Patrick's & Stoney Lane Bowls Clubs Drogheda	6
Road Bowls Club	Drogheda & District Road Bowls Club	7
Boxing Clubs	Drogheda Amateur & Holy Family	8
Chess Club	Drogheda Chess Club	9
Cycling Club	Drogheda Wheelers Cycling Club	10
Soccer Clubs	St. Lawrence's Gate F.C. & River Celtic F.C. & Drogheda Boys F.C. & Cedarfield F.C. & Bay F.C. & Drogheda Town F.C. & Boyne Rovers F.C. & Drogheda United F.C	11
Golf Club	County Louth Golf Club Baltray; Seapoint Golf Club, Termonfeckin; Laytown/Bettystown Golf Club	12
Handball & Squash	O'Raghallaigh GFC	13
Kayaking / Canoeing Club	Silverbridge K.C.	14
Martial Arts	Boyne Valley Taekwon Do School & Drogheda School of Karate & Judo Club Drogheda	15
Pitt & Putt Clubs	Cement Road & Mc Bride Pitt & Putt Clubs	16
Rugby	Boyne R.F.C.	17
Snooker	Whitworth Leisure Centre Drogheda	18
Swimming & Water Sports	Drogheda Swimming Club Drogheda Water Polo Club	19
Table Tennis	Saint Paul's Table Tennis Club	20
Tennis	Boyne Valley Leisure Centre	21
Gaelic Football Clubs	Newtown Blues GFC; Oliver Plunkett's GFC; O'RAGHALLAIGH'S GFC; St. Nicholas GFC; Wolfe Tones GFC;	22

Table 1 Sports Clubs & Recreational Organisations operating within Drogheda



Many of the sports facilities in the town and the environs are in private ownership, which limits the level of accessibility to such facilities. Drogheda Borough Council has been proactive in the provision of facilities for which public access is available and are aware of the need for a major sports and leisure complex to serve the needs of a fast growing population. Drogheda Borough Council will continue to facilitate such provision.

As the majority of existing clubs and sporting facilities do not have the required finances to develop their own facilities, Drogheda Borough Council will act in a strategic management role to facilitate the recreational development of their land in co-operation with various sporting agencies and funding sources. Public Private Partnerships will be considered in the development of the recreational lands. The Council will also support a joint partnership efforts between school bodies and sporting organisations so as to maximise usage of existing sporting grounds, both on private lands and within school grounds. e.g. VEC site at Moneymore.

Drogheda Borough Council have also developed a public playground at Dominic's Park which is a formalised play area with childrens play equipment provided.

In terms of Sport and Recreational Facilities, the following are the objectives of Drogheda Borough Council;

OBJECTIVES;

- **S & R 1**

To encourage the provision of indoor sporting/community facilities in co-operation with local community groups and business groups

- **S & R 2**

To support local sports and community groups in the development of facilities through the reservation of suitable land and the provision of funding where available and appropriate;

- **S & R 3**

To support the greater use of existing school sporting facilities by the public and of existing private sporting facilities by school children. The construction and maintenance of community and sporting facilities can be both costly and demand a lot of resources. Drogheda Borough Council will promote a partnership approach between clubs, social groups and the school boards to facilitate such initiatives.



- **S & R 4**

To support Public Private Partnership initiatives to enable the financing of various recreational programmes;

- **S & R 5**

To work with disability groups to ensure that recreational and sporting facilities provided are user friendly;

S & R 6

To cater for the sporting and recreational needs of all sectors and ages of the community and promote the integration of those with special needs into the sporting and recreational environment;

- **S & R 7**

To ensure that developers make provisions for sports and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the development as an integral element of their proposals

- **S & R 8**

To follow up recommendations put forward by the “Drogheda a friendly town Study” (Richard Webb)

7.3 Open Spaces in existing Residential Areas

Public open space and associated recreation facilities are considered to be an important element of existing residential areas. Their main functions are primarily twofold, firstly aesthetically providing a visual break and visual variety in built up areas and secondly, recreational providing playing and sporting facilities.

Policy

In relation to Open Space in established Residential Areas it is the policy of Drogheda Borough Council:

To retain public open space with established recreational uses in existing residential areas where practicable;

To manage and improve existing open space areas in housing which has been taken over by the Council.



7.4 Open Space in New Residential Areas

In new residential development areas, provision for open space should be identified at an early stage. Open space should be integrated into the overall design concept of the housing layout. It should be well designed from a visual perspective and functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings within a residential area. A well-designed open space will be based on the principles of overlooking, supervision and accessibility.

Whilst playing fields will continue to be provided within and adjacent to new residential areas, they should be provided in addition to other types of open spaces, which may be more relevant, and accessible to a larger section of the community. Ideally a hierarchical system of open space should be distributed throughout housing areas and neighbourhoods, ranging from small areas where children can play in sight of their homes to larger areas where older children can indulge in casual ball playing and other play activities. It is desirable that large areas of public open space be located adjacent to existing or proposed neighbourhood centres and community facilities in order to facilitate multi-purpose use. Access roads that adjoin open spaces should be provided with some form of barrier fencing in cases where they are not surrounded by footpaths.

In certain circumstances, where these standards cannot be met and more intensive recreational facilities may be desirable, the provision of such facilities in lieu will be considered or contributions may be levied towards the provision of public facilities, as provided for in Part III Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

In terms of Open Space in New Residential Areas, the following are the objectives of Drogheda Borough Council:

OBJECTIVES

- **S&R 9**

To ensure that open space is provided to enhance the character of new residential areas in accordance with the standards set out in the document 'Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities'

- **S&R 10**

Require through the development control process to provide recreational and community facilities within new housing estates.



7.5 Public Rights of Way

Public rights of way constitute an important amenity and economic asset to Drogheda. Rights of way enable the enjoyment of the area's high quality landscape and they are important for amenity promotion. Drogheda Borough Council is committed to preserving suitable rights of ways, creating new ones where deemed appropriate and promoting the greater use of existing ones.

The Planning Authorities will examine existing rights of way, paths, access points to the River Boyne and other amenity areas, to determine where public rights already exist and where public rights should be created, for the provision of walking routes along the rivers and other amenity areas of the town.

Some public rights of way can cause concern to local communities as they may give rise to anti-social behaviour particularly along unsupervised and secluded laneways. Every effort shall be made to avoid such a situation through lighting, appropriate layout and landscaping.

Drogheda Borough Council will only support development proposals that involve extinguishment of rights of way where they are clearly obsolete and of no demonstrable recreational value. It will expect proposed footpath diversions to follow convenient and equally attractive routes compared with the original. If development proposals require a diversion and therefore extinguishment of an existing right of way, the Planning Authority will require that a suitable alternative route of equal or improved convenience and character compared with the original route be provided. A condition may be attached to any planning permission granted, so as to ensure that the diverted public right of way is implemented prior to the occupation of the proposed development.

OBJECTIVES

- **S&R 11**

To preserve and protect existing rights of way and create new rights-of-way in the interest of amenity as the opportunity or need arises;

- **S&R 12**

To encourage the extension of the public right of way network and seek to ensure that all new or extended routes are appropriately sign posted way marked and kept free from obstruction.



7.6 River Boyne:

The Borough Council shall endeavour to capitalise on the potential of the River Boyne for sports and recreational amenity. It will support voluntary and private groups who wish to develop sports and recreational facilities along the river where they do not conflict with adjoining land uses. Developers will be encouraged to capitalise on the asset of the River Boyne and shall be encouraged to make provision for the recreational development of the river. All developments fronting the Boyne will be required to provide a continuous public boardwalk or walkway along the stretch of the river and adhere to a specific development specification for this walkway.

OBJECTIVES:

- **ENV 1**

It is the objective of the Borough Council to have a continuous uninterrupted walkway on both sides of the river which links existing residential areas and the town centre. The design of the walkway including use of materials, finishes etc. shall conform to an overall design specification that Drogheda Borough Council are preparing.

- **ENV 2**

Developers who have provided walkways provided which do not adhere to the overall design specification may be encouraged to improve and amend the walkway provision to adhere to the specification in agreement with the Borough Council.

- **ENV 3**

The Borough Council shall rezone lands on the north banks of the River Boyne for amenity and recreational use and the lands shall be the subject of an amenity and recreational action plan for the town.

- **ENV 4**

The existing landfill site between the North road and Collon road shall be the subject of a Master plan, which will seek to identify the most appropriate uses for the site. The site has the potential for a major recreational and sports use, however a more detailed examination shall be required by the Council to establish its future use potential. There are serious environment issues on the site, which require to be addressed and these are considered to be outside the scope of the development plan.



- **ENV 5**

Buttergate/Millmount: develop pedestrian walkway facility from River Boyne via Buttergate to Millmount.

- **ENV 6**

The Dale: to encourage the development of pedestrian walkway through the Dale southwards to Beamore Road and Meadowview housing estate.

- **ENV 7**

John Street/Rathmullen Road: retain reservation for riverside walkway on south side of River Boyne from St. Mary's Bridge westwards to Boyne Bridge Bridge of Peace.

- **ENV 8**

Mell: retain reservation for riverside walkway from Boyne Bridge (Bridge of Peace) via Mell on north side of river extending to western end of Borough to Slane Road.

- **ENV 9**

Shop Street to Bridge of Peace: develop riverside walkway on north side of River Boyne from St. Mary's Bridge westwards via Haymarket, Wellington Quay, Murdock's car park.

- **ENV 10**

Rathmullen: To encourage the development of the walkway along the south side of River Boyne from the Bridge of Peace westerly to the borough boundary.



7.7 Trees & Woodlands :

ENV 11

- *It is the objective of the Borough Council to protect the following trees/ groups of trees, woodlands of special amenity value as listed in the table below:*

REF. NO.	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
	BALLYMAKENNY ROAD	
	(i) Brookville	Mature deciduous and coniferous trees on open space.
	(ii) Broadmeadows	Row of deciduous trees along main road.
	(iii) Drogheda Rugby Club	Deciduous and evergreen trees within grounds.
	(iv) Shamrock Lodge	Trees and hedgerows.
	BLACKBUSH LANE	
	(i) Bullys Acre	Row deciduous trees.
	CHORD ROAD	
	(i) Sienna Convent	Deciduous and evergreen trees within grounds of Convent.
	COLLON ROAD	
	(i) Waterunder	Trees at Waterunder Cottage.
	DONORE ROAD	
	(i) Along Roadway	Tree groups between bus depot and entrance to Ballsgrove.
	(ii) Watery Hill	Tree Group.
	DUBLIN ROAD	
	(ii) Cromwell's Lane	Trees overlooking main road. Bayview house.
	(iii) Opposite Railway Station	Tree group on both sides of bridge.
	(iv) St. Mary's Hospital	Trees at entrance.
	(v) Boyne Valley Hotel	Trees opposite Crufty Cottage and lining farm entrance. Trees lining avenue and within grounds of same
	GREENHILLS ROAD	
	(i) The Sycamores	Belt of deciduous and evergreen trees fronting North Strand.
	(ii) The Sycamores	Trees surrounding house.



REF. NO.	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
	LOUGHBOY (i) Fisherman's Wharf (ii) Leonard's Cross	Group of mature deciduous and evergreen trees. Group of mature deciduous and evergreen trees at junction with Slane Road.
	MARSH ROAD (i) Weirhope House (ii) Weirhope (iii) Weirhope (iv) Marsh House Public House	Trees between Weirhope Estate and Weirhope Trees surrounding Weirhope House and fronting onto road. Line of deciduous trees opposite Flogas. Deciduous tree group behind same
	MARY STREET (i) St. Mary's Church	Trees within grounds.
	NEWFOUNDWELL ROAD (i) Newfoundwell Road	Tree group extending along the Glen between Westcourt and Maple Drive.
	NEWTOWN ROAD (i) Newtown Road (ii) Newtown Road (iii) Greenhills College	Trees lining road on approach road to town from Tegral Pipes site. Deciduous trees opposite Greenhills College. Trees within grounds of school.
	NORTH ROAD (i) North of Quarry (ii) Boyne View House	Groups of trees. Mature deciduous and evergreen trees on private site.
	NORTH STRAND (i) Donors Green	Row of deciduous trees
	PETER STREET (i) Peter's Hill	Tree group and trees within the grounds of St. Peter's Church.
	POORHOUSE LANE (i) Poorhouse Lane (ii) Presbytery	Deciduous trees along lane. Trees within grounds and within field adjoining Sacred Heart School.



REF. NO.	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
	RAMPARTS WALK (i) River Boyne	Trees along Boyne Riverside and Walkway.
	RATHMULLEN ROAD (i) Marley's Lane (ii) Ballsgrove Hill, Highfield (iii) Ballsgrove (iv) St. Dominick's Park	All trees on Council ground at junction including a Blue Cedar. All trees within grounds of Swimming Pool. Woodlands. Trees within Ballsgrove House Grounds. Trees between Boyne Bridge and St. Dominick's Bridge.
	STAMEEN (i) Stameen	Trees within the grounds of Stameen housing estate including those in woodland along estate boundary
	TRINITY STREET (i) Mill Lane	Line of deciduous trees at Donaghy's Mill.
	WILLIAM STREET (i) Church Lane	Trees within Blue School Grounds (private residence).
	WINDMILL ROAD (ii) Anneville Crescent	3 no. mature horse chestnuts at entrance to estate.

Table 2: Trees & Woodlands to be protected.