

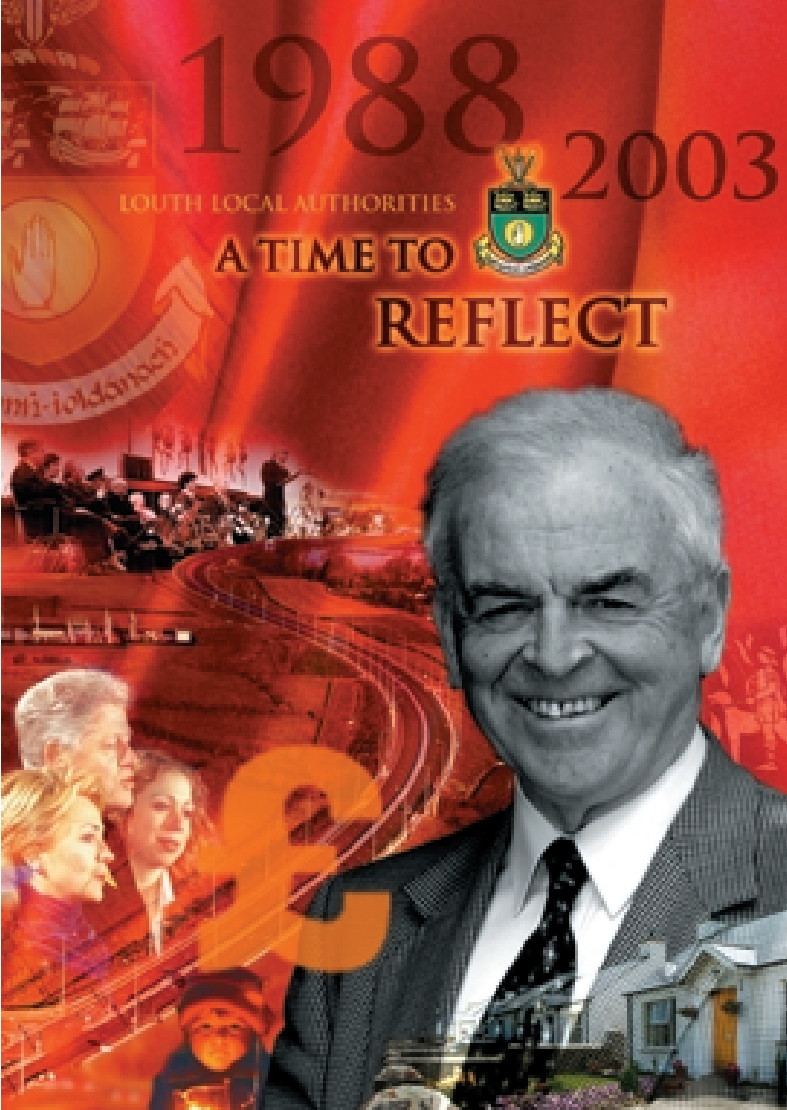
1988 2003

LOUTH LOCAL AUTHORITIES



A TIME TO

REFLECT



1988 - 2003

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FOREWORD

A TIME TO REFLECT

- 1) Stephenstown Pond
- Knockbridge
- 2) Visit of Canadian
Prime Minister to
Carlingford
- 3) Minister for Health
visits Co. Louth
- 4) Father Keegan Park
- Greenore
- 5) Co. Manager with
Cllr. Peter Savage
and David Hynes,
Cooley Distillery

It is probably timely to reflect on the activities of the Louth Local Authorities in recent years. Certainly, the years as depicted do tell a story. As is the nature of local government, there are many strands to this tale; some great achievements, lessons learned and relationships established. In addition, these events must also be couched within the backdrop of the changing social, cultural and economic profile of the county over the period in question.

A key theme has been the absolute necessity to manage resources that became available to the fullest extent possible and, indeed, to identify all available sources of finance which can be applied beneficially. This also involved taking harder decisions in times of retrenchment while using the better times and associated greater finances to the best possible advantage. In addition, the role of the private sector has also proved to be important in this context. The examples cited relating to the Municipal Centre and Haymarket Bridge, Drogheda together with the Icehouse Hill Project represent but a small sample of successful projects which would not have been completed but for the availability of private sector funding.

Another key element relates to the willingness amongst the Louth Local Authorities to participate, often above and beyond the call of duty, in assisting any development that will be of economic, commercial or social benefit to the county. It is not surprising, therefore, that it has been able to attract industry such as Quantum, Xerox, AFL, ICL and ABB to name but a few. Indeed, this trend of co-operation continues to be pivotal particularly in the context of many local agencies coming together to provide a cocktail of funding to facilitate local projects such as the Ardee Enterprise Centre, Partnership Court and Stephenstown Pond which represent but a sample of such activity. In passing, it is pleasing to note that these collaborative relationships have been placed on a more structured basis in recent times in the context of the establishment of the County Development Board.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the county continues to grow and develop, mirroring improvements in the national economy. Its fortunes have certainly been transformed, with unprecedented opportunities for economic and social development having been created. This was also due to a number of factors including the

ANNUAL REPORT SUPPLEMENT



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FOREWORD

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6) Ice House Hill Park

7) Mr. & Mrs John
Quinlivan

8) St. Patrick's Day -
New York

9) Signing of Ice
House Hill Contract

continued improvement in the national economy, the cessation of violence in Northern Ireland, closer European integration, the retention of Objective 1 status and, above all, a proactive businesslike approach being adopted by the Louth Local Authorities. Dundalk and Drogheda, in particular, are likely to grow in light of these factors. These towns have room to expand, are on the cross border digital corridor and have the basic infrastructure to ensure that these become major gateways in their own right. Indeed, given the level of success in terms of the provision of infrastructural services there is now a new emphasis emerging with a focus on the issues of social development inherent in the reform of local government relating to such aspects as social inclusion, urban and rural disadvantage and community/economic development.

Appreciation is also extended to the national agencies, including the Department of the Environment and Local Government, the National Roads Authority, the International Fund for Ireland and other state organisations who have worked fervently in the interests of the county's development. In particular, the elected members deserve credit for their acceptance and approval of proposals put

before them to develop the county and adopt business practices as would be expected from a development corporation. Similar credit can be extended to the loyal, talented and committed staff who have certainly played their part, often through very tough times. The Louth Local Authorities of today are slimmer, trimmer and more efficient organisations. Their role is certainly changing with a focus on adopting a hands-on approach even in areas beyond their traditional remit. The road to change is never an easy one. Society itself is changing and there are increasing demands and expectations. Significant developments in information technology, communications, environmental issues together with the impact of the European Union are growing and current structures must react to these elements with efficiency and innovation. The essence of local government, in this new found leadership role, will be to demonstrate a progressive and inclusive approach.

