

**WATERFORD COUNTY LOCAL
AUTHORITIES**

**ÚDARÁIS ÁITIÚLA CHONTAE
PHORT LÁIRGE**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2013**

**TUAIRISC BHLANTÚIL
2013**

MISSION STATEMENT
RÁITEAS AIDHME

TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF
LIFE OF THE CITIZENS OF COUNTY WATERFORD
AND ESTABLISH COUNTY WATERFORD AS A
WORLD CLASS BUSINESS LOCATION

CAOMHNÚ AGUS FEABHSÚ A DHÉANAMH AR
CHÁILÍOCHT BEATHA SHAORÁNAIGH CHONTAE
PHORT LÁIRGE AGUS CONTAE PHORT LÁIRGE A
BHUNÚ MAR LÁTHAIR GHNÓ DEN SCOTH

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FOREWORD BY COUNTY MAYOR

It has been a great privilege to have served once again as Mayor of County Waterford. As an authority, we have continued to face difficult budgetary decisions and we also face some uncertain albeit challenging times with the progression of plans to merge with Waterford City Council. However, I feel that 2013 was again a positive and eventful year for the Council due to the continued commitment of our local community and voluntary agencies in partnership with the valued staff of Waterford County Council.

Community participation remains a strong contributor to the vibrancy of County Waterford and such commitment was again evident at the annual Community and Voluntary Awards Ceremony which took place in November. The Awards Scheme, a joint initiative by Waterford County Council and the Community Forum, received nominations from 51 community focused groups. It is encouraging to witness such a participatory approach to local development and I commend the efforts of those committed to promoting the themes of arts, culture, social enterprise and inclusion and youth services. I would like to congratulate Waterford County Comhairle na nÓg for taking home the overall award recognising their successful production of a video promoting mental health.

Waterford County Council continued its commitment to local development during 2012 by securing funding through the Smarter Travel initiative. I envisage such a project, through its promotion of sustainable transportation, to greatly enhance the profile of Dungarvan and hence County Waterford as a key destination for both tourism and economic initiatives. Together with the enhancement of our niche festivals, Waterford County Council continues to leverage economic opportunities for the future of County Waterford.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow members of Waterford County Council including the Deputy Mayor, Cllr. John Pratt for their continued support and assistance throughout the year in serving the people of County Waterford. I would also like to express my gratitude for the assistance and cooperation which we continue to receive from the County Manager, Mr. Denis McCarthy and his staff. Although, we remain in difficult and challenging times, I am confident that our united approach can continue to drive an effective Local Government system for the people of County Waterford. It is a great honour to work on behalf of fellow citizens and I will endeavour to continue the promotion of our County to the best of my ability throughout the coming years.

Billy Kyne

Mayor of County Waterford

COUNTY MANAGER'S INTRODUCTION

The publication of the Annual Report presents an opportunity to reflect on the diverse range of services provided by Waterford County Council, from traditional infrastructural activity to the innovative economic and social initiatives undertaking each year.

As Waterford County Council continues to operate in an economically challenging environment, difficult budgetary decisions were once again required during 2013. Despite reduced financial and human resources, a positive commitment to maintaining an efficient local government service was evident and I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the staff of the organisation.

Continuing the focus of preceding years, Waterford County Council embraced a proactive campaign to leverage the business, tourism and agricultural potential of County Waterford. Providing the conditions for economic development is a fundamental responsibility of local government and 2013 saw Waterford County Council proactively manage this task. Regeneration of the Business Support Unit, support of the Waterford Knowledge Campus and delivery of our Economic Plan are all contributing efforts to rebuilding the local economy.

I commend the efforts of our staff in securing funding under the Smarter Travel Initiative which will inevitably further enhance the tourism potential of Dungarvan and surrounding areas. Our festival offering continues to grow and we welcomed many visitors to the region during the year to engage in such vivacious events. Such activity contributes greatly to the local economy and to the pride of the people of Waterford.

The government decision to amalgamate Waterford City and County Councils announced during 2012 represented the single largest reform in the history of Waterford County Council. I acknowledge the increased workload and pressures associated with the amalgamation and appreciate the various concerns our stakeholders may have. However, albeit challenging times ahead, I firmly believe the unified authority has the potential to revitalise Waterford to become a leading economic force in the South East Region.

I welcome the continued support of our dedicated Elected Members, Staff and many stakeholders as we work towards amalgamation in 2014 and continue our dedicated commitment to local government provision in County Waterford.

.

Denis McCarthy, County Manager

INTRODUCTION TO COUNTY WATERFORD

County Waterford is located on the South East coast of Ireland bordering the counties of Cork, Tipperary, Kilkenny and Wexford. Together with County Councils of Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Wexford and Waterford City Council, it forms part of the South East Region. The functional area of Waterford County Council amounts in total to 181,300 hectares. This comprises the entire area of County Waterford, excluding Waterford City.

County Waterford has a coastline which extends from the estuary of the River Suir, in the east, to Youghal, in the west. The county is bordered to the south by the Atlantic Ocean for approximately 145 kilometres. Waterford can boast some 49 beaches, among which are numbered some of Ireland's premier tourist resorts. The largest of these is Tramore, which has approximately 3km of sandy beach.

The county contains parts of the Knockmealdown and Comeragh Mountain ranges to the north and the Monavullagh Mountains in the centre. These mountains contain peaks in the 700-800 metre range. High quality agricultural land in many parts of the county has potential for the retention of profitable commercial farming.

Waterford County Council is the local authority responsible for administration of the county. Within the county there are three Town Councils – Lismore, Tramore and Dungarvan. Each Town Council, within the county area, comes under the jurisdiction of the County Manager.

The 2011 Census Report indicated a 7.6% increase in the population of the county since 2006. The total population of the county stands at 66,960, an increase of 4,747 over 2006 census figures. Gender balance is equal throughout the county, with 50.03% male and 49.97% female.

WATERFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

Waterford County Council has twenty three elected members. Monthly Council meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, excluding 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. A total of eleven meetings were held during 2013.

Representation

Local elections are held every five years. The following members were elected to Waterford County Council at the Local Elections held in June 2009:

Dungarvan Electoral Area: Tom Higgins FG, Tom Cronin FF, Damien Geoghegan FG, Brendan Mansfield SF, Billy Kyne L and Pat Nugent FG.

Comeragh Electoral Area: Ger Barron L, Tony O'Leary FF, Liam Brazil FG, Michael J. O'Ryan FF, Mary Greene FG and Brendán Coffey FG.

Lismore Electoral Area: Nora Flynn FG, Declan Doocey FG, John Pratt L and James Tobin FF.

Tramore Electoral Area: Lola O'Sullivan FG, Ann Marie Power FG, Paddy O'Callaghan L, Pat Daly FF, John Carey FG, Pat Fitzgerald SF and Joe Conway NP.

Annual Meeting

At the Annual Meeting of the Council, Cllr. Damian Geoghegan was elected as Mayor of County Waterford with Cllr. elected as Deputy Mayor. The County Mayor represents Waterford County Council and the people of County Waterford at official civic and public functions.

Remuneration

Councillors are remunerated for their representational role with a 'Representational Payment' paid monthly. In addition, Councillors receive an 'Annual Allowance'. The purpose of this allowance is to reimburse the elected representatives for 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 following payments were made during the year:

Representational Payments	€384,651.54
Annual Allowance	€126,145.45
Attendance at Conferences	€61,577.06
SPC Chairpersons' Allowance	€30,000.00
Mayor's Allowance	€32,264.28
Deputy Mayor's Allowance	€2,532.38
Total	€637170.71

DUNGARVAN TOWN COUNCIL

Dungarvan Town Council has 9 members who meet on the third Monday of each month at 7.30 p.m. in the Civic Offices, Dungarvan. Details of the Council's activities may be viewed on website: www.waterfordcoco.ie. At the Annual Meeting of the Council, in June, Cllr. Teresa Wright was elected Town Mayor and Cllr. Nicky Sheehan was elected Deputy Mayor. The Council employed a total of 54 staff, including indoor, outdoor and FÁS workers. Joe O'Flaherty is Town Clerk and Frank Curran, Director of Services, is Town Manager.

Members

Teresa Wright L, Tom Higgins Ind, Micheál Cosgrove FG, Billy Kyne L, Gerry O'Mahony Ind, Damien Geoghegan FG, Brendan Mansfield SF, Nicky Sheehan L, Ann-Marie Rossiter FF.

Major Projects

During the year, Dungarvan Town Council completed a number of projects under the Smarter Travel Programme including the Fr. Twomeys Amenity Walk, the Monang Road upgrade and the parking facility on Thompsons Lane. It is proposed to commence the N25 upgrade, the Youghal Road upgrade and the Town Centre redevelopment in 2014.

Work has commenced on the demolition of the former Cinema on O'Connell Street and this will be redeveloped when funding becomes available.

Civic Functions

During the year, the Council played host to 2 semesters of students and faculty from Mercyhurst University, Erie, Pennsylvania, Dungarvan's twin city. The 2nd Intelligence Forum was hosted in Dungarvan in August 2013 and it is hoped to progress the development of a university on the OPW site in Shandon in 2014.

TRAMORE TOWN COUNCIL

Tramore Town Council has 9 members who meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 7.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Tankfield. Details of the Council's activities may be viewed on website: www.tramoretown.ie.

Mayor

At the annual meeting Cllr. Blaise Hannigan was elected Mayor of Tramore and Cllr. Pat Finnerty was elected Deputy Mayor. John O'Sullivan is Town Clerk and administers the affairs of the Council. Brian White, Director of Services, is Town Manager.

Town Twinning

A delegation of 18 people from Cadaujac visited Tramore for St. Patricks Day and led out the Parade.

Civic Functions

On the 22nd March 2013, a Civic Reception was held in the Council Chamber in honour of Mr. Kevin O'Sullivan Editor of the Irish Times, and retired Irish Times journalist Mr. Edmond von Esbeck, both of whom were born in Tramore.

Tramore Joint Policing Committee

Three meetings of Tramore JPC were held during the year including a public meeting held on 16th October 2013.

LISMORE TOWN COUNCIL

Lismore Town Council meets on the first Monday of each month and details of their current activities can be viewed on their website. Lismore Town Council has adopted the title of Mayor for its first citizen. From January to December, the affairs of Lismore Town Council were administered by Acting Town Clerk, Anita Meagher. Mr. Michael Quinn, Director of Services was appointed Town Manager in October 2011. Mr. Paul Daly, Acting Director of Services replaced Mr. Michael Quinn and was appointed Town Manager in March 2013. Cllr Jan Rotte was elected as Lismore Town Mayor at its AGM in June 2013.

400th Anniversary Celebrations

On Monday 6th May, 2013, Lismore Town Council held a day of celebrations in Lismore to mark the 400th anniversary of the granting of the Lismore Town Charter. A variety of clubs from the town gathered at Bun Scoil Bhothar Naomh and made their way down the Main Street to the Millennium Park. The parade was led by a lone piper, Ms. Tina Carey and Lismore Town Mayor, Julie Landers. Lismore Dramatic Group dressed up in period dress and really added to the occasion. The parade was met with beautiful music from Dungarvan Brass Band as they arrived at the Millennium Park.

A special commemorative seat in memory of the Late Town Clerk, Mr. Eric Flynn was unveiled in honour of his fantastic contribution to Lismore.

Former Town Commissioner, current Town Councillors, former Town Managers, Town Clerk, Acting Town Clerk and current Town Manager were presented with a beautiful commemorative medal by the Town Mayor, Julie Landers.

Lismore Joint Policing committee

Two meetings of Lismore's Joint Policing Committee were in held in 2013.

Tidy Towns

Lismore was awarded the tidiest town in Co. Waterford in 2013 and also maintained the gold medal award in population Category C.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORSHIP

CORPORATE SERVICES

Higher Education Grants

In 2013, Waterford County Council assisted students under the Higher Education Grants Schemes. Eligibility is subject to means testing and other relevant criteria. The value of a full grant for 2013/2014 was € 3,025 and the Special Rate of Maintenance Grant was €2,890. Partial Fees grants (where applicable) were also available. A total of €1.86m was paid to 248 eligible students in 2013.

Register of Electors

Waterford County Council is the statutory authority responsible for producing the Register of Electors. The 2013/2014 Register of Electors was published on 1st February 2013 and came into force on 15th February 2013.

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act, 1997 was applied to all local authorities with effect from 21st October, 1998. The Act was introduced to allow public access to records not already available under alternative legislation. The Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act, 2003 made a number of amendments to the 1997 Act, the most significant of which was the introduction of mandatory fees for all non-personal information. The Freedom of Information (Fees) Regulations 2003 applies to all requests received on or after 7th July, 2003. Any request for non-personal information must be accompanied by a fee of €15.00. A request for internal review must be accompanied by a fee of €75.00 and a request for review by the Information Commissioner must be accompanied by a fee of €150.00. Reduced fees may be applicable in certain circumstances. During 2013, Waterford County Council received 12 requests for information. Of these, 8 were granted, 1 was part-granted, 1 was withdrawn and 3 requests were refused as the information was available outside the FOI legislation. No decisions were appealed either internally or to the Information Commissioner.

Complaints

Waterford County Council operates a complaints system in-house, aimed specifically at persons that feel unfairly treated by the Council, with an appeal to the Ombudsman available for anyone dissatisfied with the outcome. In 2013, the Council received 7 formal complaints directly from members of the public; while a further 4 complaints were received from the Office of the Ombudsman. A full response was issued to each of these complaints.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Public Service Agreement

Due to the continued moratorium on recruitment, retirements and non-renewal of temporary contracts, staff numbers in the organisation have significantly reduced in the past few years. Under the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013 – 2016 (also known as the Haddington Road Agreement) further sustainable reform measures are being implemented in the following areas:

- Redeployment
- Performance management
- Flexible working arrangements
- Work-sharing arrangements
- Workforce restructuring.

Further measures are required to underpin the delivery of a more integrated, efficient and effective public service and Waterford County Council is implementing the Agreement accordingly.

Public Sector Recruitment Embargo

During the course of the year, the Council continued to implement the Public Sector Recruitment embargo, in order to comply with national policy and in order to operate within the Council's budget for 2013. Retiring staff members and those availing of the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme or other forms of special leave were not replaced. It is acknowledged that restrictions in this area have impacted on existing staff who have continued to support and co-operate with colleagues and management in the continued effective delivery of services to the public during trying times. The challenge will be to continue this quality service delivery in the face of ever reducing staff numbers.

Employment Activation Measures

The HR Department worked closely with FÁS on a number of schemes rolled out as part of the Government's jobs initiative. In 2013 the Council facilitated 13 new placements under the JobBridge programme bringing the total participation to 70 overall. During a 9 month placement, approved by the Department of Social Protection, participants gained real, meaningful experience in the workplace which should enhance their employment potential.

A number of apprentices were also hosted during 2013 under the Redundant Apprentice Scheme. Completing a work phase with the Council allowed the participants progress through their training and assisted them in achieving their final trade qualification from FÁS.

During 2013 Waterford County Council sought 32 placements under the National Gateway Scheme (Labour Activation Scheme). This Scheme is aimed at getting those on long term unemployment benefits trained and up-skilled through work experience over a 22 month period.

Performance Management & Development System

A Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) is embedded in Waterford County Council. Clear work objectives are identified as part of the business planning process. PMDS clarifies the roles and responsibilities of individual staff members and develops their knowledge, skills and other competencies. The Training Plan for staff is based on training needs identified through this process. A revised model of PMDS was introduced during 2013.

CORE HR

During 2013 roll out of the CORE HR system continued. This fully integrated HR/Payroll system includes Time & Attendance, Employee Self Service, Pension and Recruitment, and Training modules. Phase 2 of the project will include PMDS & Health & Safety modules. Both of these modules will be implemented during 2014. The system has greatly enhanced the quality of management information and assisted with workforce planning, attendance management and budgeting processes.

Given the pending amalgamation of Waterford City & County Councils a Core Project Team was set up during 2013 to facilitate the merger and will continue to operate until the end of 2014.

Staff Benevolent Fund

The fund was set up by staff in order to assist colleagues who experience serious financial difficulty as a result of illness or death of a family member, or through other extreme circumstances. Staff members pay a small weekly voluntary contribution and the fund accrued is dispersed as the need arises.

Training & Development

Despite reduced budgets there is a continued emphasis on a good quality training programme in 2013 and for 2014. Health and Safety training is always a priority; it enables us to meet our legislative requirements and to provide for the safety and welfare of all staff.

Workplace Partnership

The Workplace Partnership mechanism continues to be used as a tool for consultation and information sharing between management, staff and Unions.

Industrial Relations

The Council works in partnership with unions and employee representatives to achieve harmonious working relationships and improved working conditions with effective and efficient work practices.

Employee Welfare

Waterford County Council actively promotes and implements the use of various family friendly policies including Work-Sharing, Parental Leave, Term-Time Leave, etc.

Superannuation

Superannuation is concerned with the rights of employees to pension entitlements. The HR Department administers the Local Government Superannuation Scheme and associated Spouse's & Childrens Scheme and Widows and Orphans Pension Schemes for all grades.

Retirements during 2013

Indoor

- Joan Lonergan

Outdoor

- Anna Henley
- Christina Dougan
- Frank Keane
- Gerard Dalton
- Michael O'Donnell
- Pat Morrissey
- Sean McCarthy
- Tom Walsh
- Pat Jacob

Firefighters

- Conor Hurley
- Ian Mason
- Pat Flynn
- Patrick Hennessy
- Simon Hogan

Voluntary Redundancy Scheme

- Jack Lillis
- Máighr ad Walsh
- Martin Walsh
- Marie Coffey
- Jackie Taylor
- Linda Hogan

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

The Information & Communications Technology Section provides and supports the information technology infrastructure within Waterford County Local Authorities.

Online Services

The Council maintains eleven websites ranging from the main site 'www.waterfordcoco.ie' providing information on all major services and online bill pay services to the Waterford Gathering website, supporting the government initiative focused on information for the Irish diaspora. Combined page views of our websites for 2013 amounted to 1,577,356. Our combined Facebook accounts have over 20,000 Fans with 6,400 Twitter followers by year end.

Customer Support Applications

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) supports the seamless operation and integration of customer focused activities and is operational across all Directorates. The (CRM) application records and automates the processing of all customer contacts with the Council. Major improvements in response times, reporting capabilities, strategic visibility and communication across Departments have been achieved. Our CRM platform currently integrates fourteen applications of which 'Customer Care' currently has the most recorded activity (5829). CRM is also integrated with other browser accessible applications such 'FixYourStreet' to facilitate user efficacy.

Networks, Broadband and Telecommunications

Continuous improvement and development of internal communications remained a priority for the ICT department in 2013. The improvement of network speeds through the upgrading of equipment enhanced communication between Area Offices and Libraries with central offices.

Geographical Information Systems

During 2013 Geographical Information Systems (GIS) continued to stimulate the development and effective use of geographic information in Waterford County Council and to streamline the data that exists within the organisation. GIS is now widely employed throughout the organization as a fundamental decision-making technology

This Section continues to capitalise on the evolution of geographic information technology and has commenced the deployment of a rich and fast internal web based GIS solution for the new Local Authority. This solution will bring together all City and County spatial data and allow staff to access it quickly and easily from all staff locations on the network improving decision making and customer relations. The enhanced system will greatly reduce desktop software costs delivering a return on investment including cost avoidance; time savings; increased accuracy, productivity and revenue; and improved decision making.

HOUSING & BUILDING

Construction

Due to the decreased capital funding for 2013, no units were provided during the year, under the Council's direct housing programme. However, a total of 5 units were purchased in County and 5 units were acquired by the Voluntary Housing Sector at the end of the year.

Part V

Under Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000, 3 units were under construction at year end.

Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) and Leasing

There are approximately 300 people receiving rent supplement for a period of 18 months or longer in the Waterford County Council and Dungarvan Town Council areas. At year end over 300 individuals had transferred to RAS. Negotiations were ongoing with landlords. At the end of 2013, a total of 31 properties were signed up to leasing. A further 37 leased units are managed and maintained by the Voluntary Housing Sector.

Housing Adaptation Grants/Housing Aid for Older People/Mobility Aid Grant

Housing Adaptation Grants, Housing Aid for Older People, Mobility Aids and Housing for people with a Disability contributes to meet housing need by adapting the existing homes to meet the needs of the occupants. During the year the Council processed 53 grant applications.

Maintenance

The planned maintenance programme was ongoing at year end. This involved installation of replacement kitchens and bathrooms, electrical rewiring, insulation and radon tested, funded through internal capital receipts. Due to a reduction in the maintenance budget, only emergency and urgent repairs were carried out in 2013.

Energy Retrofitting

The Department of the Environment and Local Government introduced an Energy Retrofitting Programme in 2009. The priority objective of the scheme is to provide financial support to local authorities to retrofit their vacant and void stock, in order to bring the stock back into viable use to meet housing need, while ensuring high quality energy efficient dwellings, which maximise potential energy savings to tenants and avoid the necessity to undertake further costly energy upgrade works at a later stage. The programme was extended in 2013 to cover tenanted dwellings. The programme enabled the local authority to improve the energy efficiency of 300 houses in 2013.

Traveller Accommodation

The Traveller Accommodation Plan 2009-2013 was adopted in 2009. During 2013 the Council assisted families with the provision of accommodation. The Local Traveller Accommodation Committee is actively engaged in the implementation of the Plan. Also the Inter-Agency Traveller Working Group meet on a regular basis.

Estate Management

A Tenant Liaison Officer services the needs of local authority tenants. Pre-tenancy training is carried out for all tenants prior to occupation of the house. Tenant Handbooks are issued to all tenants which explain their responsibility as council tenants.

House Loans

During the year, the Council approved 2 House Purchase loans.

Tenant Purchase

During the year, the Council sold 3 houses under the scheme

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Operational Activity:

Overall the yearly total is up on last year but in line with recent years. This was influenced by a good summer and a large number of malicious fires in the Tramore area.

	Year 2013	Year 2012	Year 2011	Year 2010	Year 2009	Year 2008
Dungarvan	150	125	166	202	265	306
Tramore	185	133	169	174	180	215
Kilmacthomas	71	57	70	97	104	108
Portlaw	60	50	51	62	77	74
Cappoquin	87	71	75	85	137	153
Lismore	50	42	52	72	87	108
Dunmore East	85	72	81	101	125	93
Ardmore	33	18	49	26	40	37
Tallow	40	26	29	45	50	61
	761	594	742	864	1056	1155

Weather Related Incidents:

With the recent spell of inclement weather towards the end of 2013 the Emergency Services became quite busy in dealing with those calls related to weather ie flooding, and blocked roads etc.

The malicious calls in Tramore have ceased towards the end of 2013 we will recommence our efforts to eliminate these with the aid of An Garda should they reoccur.

Training:

The fire service finalized a programme of specialist Hazardous Material training for officers and fire-fighters in December 2013. This training is compatible with National guidance as provided by the National Directorate. We also completed Compartment Fire Behavior training in September 2013 in Carlow and at this point all fire-fighters who were due to receive this training have done so. BA Refresher training for our fire-fighters was part of our on-going training during 2013. This training took place in Clonmel

Recruitment:

Recruitment of new firefighters was ongoing in 2013 with four new appointments in December 2013 alone.

Vacancies in 2013 arose Tallow (1) , Dungarvan (2) Dunmore East (1) which were filled.

Community Fire Safety

We are continuing with our Community Fire Safety programme.

Portlaw:

Approval was received from the National Directorate in 2013 to commence a partial development for the fire station in Portlaw. The Part 8 procedure was advertised and was approved at the January meeting 2014. Building work is hoped to commence later in 2014.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Civil Defence training continued during 2013 in a number of disciplines such as First Aid Auxiliary Fire Service and also in Radio Communication Skills...

Civil Defence participation at community events also continued during 2013 with a large deployment to support the Sporting Events and Horse Racing meetings. These outdoor events provided an opportunity for the volunteer to put their First Aid, Radio communications and Response skills into practice often under testing poor weather conditions.

One of the largest events was the Sean Kelly tour in August and Civil Defence played a major role in monitoring this event to ensure participation safety

BUILDING CONTROL

In 2013 Building Control activity mirrored the building activity throughout the county which remained low compared to previous years.

However 2013 was the eve of the new Building Control (Amendment) Regulations which took effect on March 1st of this year. The introduction of these regulations have received some discussion on national media as they are critical in ensuring an improved build environment.

These regulations will have a significant impact on the work load and manner in which our Building Control section operates in the future.

TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE DIRECTORSHIP

ROAD TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

Waterford County Council currently maintains 2,596 km of public roads classified as National Primary, National Secondary, Regional and Local. Expenditure on the maintenance and improvement of these roads in 2013 was as follows:

- National Roads - €889,000
- Non-national roads - €9.876m
- County roads - €2.479m

Road grants were reduced substantially in 2013. Notwithstanding the reduction the works programme was completed satisfactorily and on budget.

National Roads – N25 & N72

There were no major pavement works on national roads in 2013. Improvements to the junction layouts on the N25 at Knocknagranagh, near Dungarvan Golf Club, the N72 at Rockfield and the junction with the Youghal-Clonmel road, were completed in 2013 under funding from National Safety Schemes.

Non National Roads

A full programme of strengthening and surface dressing was completed in 2013, in accordance with the adopted Roads Plan. Such a programme needs to be continued on an ongoing basis to return the non-national road network to 2009 conditions.

A Specific Improvement Grant was received for completion of the Riverstown Relief Road and the works were completed in 2013.

Accident Counter Measures

The Council continued its programme, funded by the National Roads Authority, of treating high accident locations in the County. Improvements were carried out at:

WATER SERVICES

Public Water Supplies

During 2013 Waterford County Council spent €5.85million on the operation and maintenance of 115 water supplies throughout the county. €2.04million was spent on the East Waterford Water Supply Scheme which serves approximately 60,000 people in Waterford City and East Waterford. These schemes produced approximately 15.5million m³ of water, approximately 8million m³ of which was supplied to Waterford City. The most recent EPA report on the Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland, shows that the Council achieved a 99.7% compliance with microbiological parameters and 99.2% compliance with chemical parameters.

Public Sewerage Schemes

During 2013 Waterford County Council spent €4.352 million on the operation and maintenance of approximately 78 sewerage schemes throughout the County. Included in this is the operation and maintenance of the two DBO (design, build, operate) waste water treatment plants at Dungarvan and Tramore.

Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007

2 WWDA Licenses were issued by the Environmental Protection Agency for the agglomerations of Stradbally & Bailenagaul. Waterford County Council now complies with the following regulatory instruments; 10 Licences and 19 Certificates of Authorisation.

Rural Water Programme

The Rural Water programme comprises of a number of measures to improve public and private water supplies by providing funding for the following:

- Small Public Water & Sewerage Schemes
- Group Water Schemes i.e. privately operated schemes serving more than 1 house.
- Individual Private Supplies, i.e. where no alternative group or public supply is available.

Waterford County Council spent in excess of €798,958.38 under the Small Public Water & Sewerage Schemes Programme in 2013, of which 75% was recouped in grant aid from the DoEHLG. The main focus of this programme is to carry out essential improvements to schemes that are quality/source deficient and essential network improvement works.

Water Metering Domestic Survey

The Water Metering Domestic Survey was completed in-house with a DoEHLG. allocation of €135152.39.

Small Schemes (Minor Capital Program)

Water Services commenced the following 'minor' public water mains upgrade contracts in 2013;

- Carrowgarriff Mains Upgrade
- Glenawillin Mains Upgrade
- Graiguearush Mains Upgrade
- Villierstown Mains Upgrade

Integrated Constructed Wetlands

Waterford County Council completed construction of an Integrated Constructed Wetland (ICW) at Dunhill as an extension to the wastewater treatment facility for the village

A total of €67,000 was spent on developing ICW's in 2013, of which 75% was recouped in grant aid from the DoEHLG.

Clonea Power SS will advance as a pair of ICWs. Planning stage commenced during 2013.

Grants for Individual Water Supplies

The Council administers a grant scheme to assist households who are dependent on private individual water supplies and incur capital expenditure to either provide a piped domestic water supply, or to remedy serious deficiencies in an existing domestic water supply. During 2013 the Council processed 77 applications under this scheme and administered grants in the sum of €111,050.03.

Capital Projects - Water Services Investment Programme (WSIP)2010-2013

The WSIP 2010 – 2013 was published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG) in April 2010 and incorporates a total of 20 Capital Water Services Projects applicable to Waterford County Council. A total of 11 of these projects were expected to go to construction during the period of the programme with the remaining 9 projects scheduled to progress through the planning stages. The estimated cost of the projects scheduled to progress to construction was €76m approximately while the costs of the projects that were scheduled to progress through the planning stages were not included in the current WSIP. Statutory responsibility for the Water Services Capital Programme was transferred to Irish Water under the Water Services (No.2) Act, 2013 with effect from 1st January, 2014.

Waterford Grouped Towns & Villages Sewerage Scheme (WGTVSS)

The overall WGTVSS project consists of the construction of new /upgraded sewer pipe networks (i.e. Collection Systems) under seven individual Traditional Contracts and the construction of seven separate Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTPs)

under a single Design, Build & Operate (DBO) Contract with an operational period of 20 years for the following seven towns and villages throughout the county:

- Ardmore
- Ballyduff/Kilmeadan
- Cappoquin
- Dunmore East
- Kilmacthomas
- Stradbally
- Tallow

The Construction Stage of this scheme commenced on a phased basis during 2007. In this regard, individual contracts for the Collection Systems in Tallow, Kilmacthomas and Stradbally were constructed and completed during 2008, 2009 and 2010 respectively, while construction works on the Ardmore, Ballyduff/Kilmeadan and Cappoquin Collection Systems as well as the Ardmore Interim Treatment System Advance Contract were completed during 2012. Construction works on the Dunmore East Collection System commenced during July, 2013 and are expected to be complete by the end of 2014.

The single WWTP – DBO Contract for the seven separate Wastewater Treatment Plants to service these seven Towns and Villages was progressed to Contract Award Stage and submitted to the DoECLG for formal approval during November, 2013. The Contract Award in this case and further progression of this Contract is now dependent on the approval of Irish Water. In this regard, it is hoped that this Contract will be awarded by Irish Water to the successful tenderer during 2014.

Serviced Land Initiative (SLI) Schemes

- Lismore Wastewater Treatment Plant.** The Contract for an upgrade of this wastewater treatment plant was progressed to Contract Award Stage and submitted to the DoECLG for approval during December, 2013. The progression of this contract is now dependent on the approval of Irish Water and it is expected that construction work on this upgrade will commence during 2014.
- Ballinroad Sewerage Scheme .** Construction works commenced on this Contract during November 2013. It is anticipated that these works will be completed with the overall scheme connected to the main Dungarvan Sewerage Scheme by July 2014.

Cheekpoint Sewerage Scheme.

Construction works on this scheme commenced during December, 2013 and will be on-going during 2014.

Passage East Sewerage Scheme

The Preliminary Report for this scheme was finalised during February,2014 and submitted to Irish Water for approval during March,2014. Further progression of this scheme to the Detailed Design and Contract/Tender Documentation Stage is now dependent on the approval of Irish Water.

East Waterford Water Supply Scheme - Stage 2 - Phase 2

This major water supply scheme involved five separate contracts and was officially opened on 18th June 2010. All snags were complete at the end of 2013.

Water Conservation Stage 3 : Watermains Rehabilitation Project

The Watermains Rehabilitation Projects is part of Waterford County Council's ongoing Water Conservation Stage 3 Programme to improve the operational and maintenance aspects of drinking water supply and distribution networks within the county, with an objective of achieving a maximum Unaccounted for Water (UFW) level of 25%, which is the national objective. This entire project represents the rehabilitation of 12% of the Council's public water supply network and involves the replacement of approximately 101km of existing water mains, including the provision of over 2,500 new service connections. A total of 75% of the required rehabilitation works is located in rural areas while the remaining 25% is located in urban and urban residential areas. The overall estimated cost of the Watermains Rehabilitation Project is €13.2 million. Construction of Phase 1 of the overall proposed Works, on a Direct Labour basis, commenced during May 2011 and was completed during 2012. The Phase 1 Direct Labour Works comprised the replacement of 18 Km of watermains associated with the Ballyhane & Ballyduff/Ballylemon Water Supply Schemes at a cost of €2.8 million. Construction of a 2nd Phase of the Works on a Direct Labour basis, involving the replacement of 11 Km of watermain on five separate Water Supply Schemes throughout the County at an estimated cost of €1.5 million commenced during 2013 and will be completed at the end of June,2014.

The preparation of the detailed design, contract/tender documentation etc. for the remaining 72 Km of the proposed Watermains Rehabilitation Works was advanced during 2013 and any further progression of this overall project is now dependent on the approval of Irish Water.

West Waterford Stage 1 - Phase 1 River Finisk Borehole & Reservoir. The detailed design and contract / tender documentation for this project were completed during 2013. It is expected that, subject to the approval of Irish Water, this project will advance to the construction stage during 2014.

Dunmore East – Phase 1 Works: The main works associated with this projects involve the switching of the supply source reservoir from Sporthouse to Ballydrislane and the provision of new pressure boosting pumping stations at Corballybeg (2

No.), Ballykinsella and Ballygarran. The works commenced during September, 2013 and were substantially complete at the end of March, 2014.

Ardmore - The preparation of the detailed design and contract/tender documentation for this Scheme commenced during late 2013 and further progression of this scheme is dependent on the approval of Irish Water.

Ring/Helvick, Ballinacourty/Deelish, Dungarvan – A comprehensive groundwater borehole drilling and yield/quality testing programme was successfully completed at Mapestown, Dungarvan during 2013 in respect of these three water supply schemes. Additionally, the detailed design and contract/tender documentation in respect of all three schemes commenced during 2013.

A separate phase of the overall Ballinacourty/Deelish scheme, involving a new borehole, reservoir and trunk watermain at Ballintoor (adjacent to the existing Deelish Reservoir) was also progressed during 2013, including the necessary Part 8 Planning Process which was formally approved by resolution of the Council on 10th March, 2014.

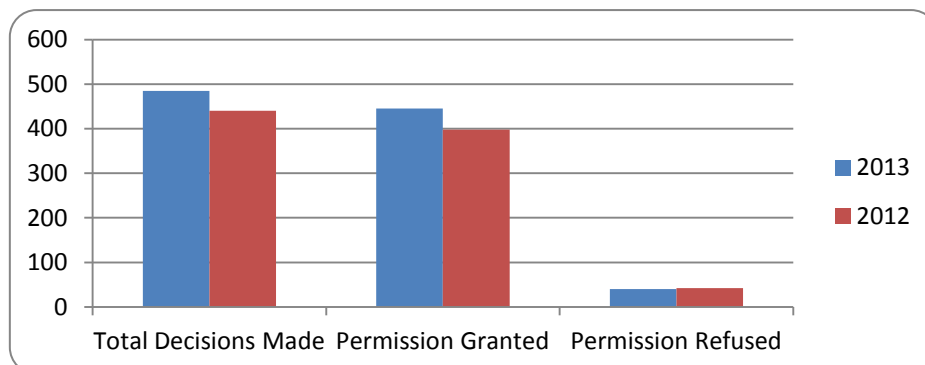
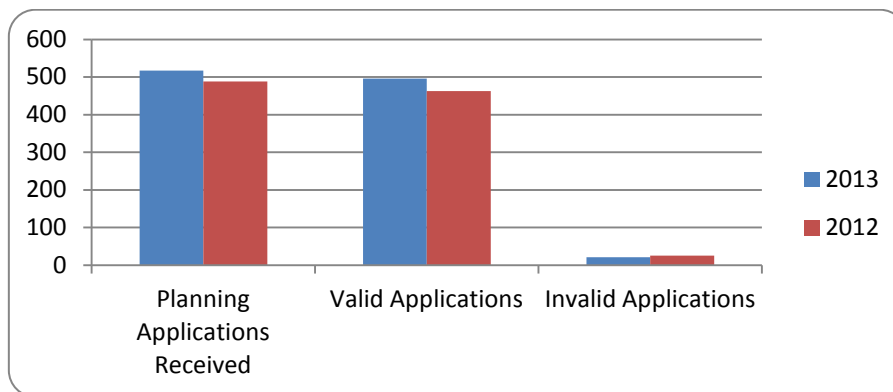
Further progression of these three schemes is now dependent on the approval of Irish Water.

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORSHIP

PLANNING

Development Management

496 valid applications for planning permission were received by the Planning Department in 2013, representing a 7% increase in activity from 2012. 617 applications were processed throughout the year of which 132 were subject to additional information requests. 29 planning decisions were appealed to An Bord Pleanála which issued 29 decisions by year end. The Planning Department also provides a formal pre-planning consultation service and issued a comprehensive pre-planning report to 298 customers in 2013.



Development Contributions

€765, 427 was received in Development Contributions in 2013. In excess of €2,000,000 was allocated from the Development Contributions Capital Fund to facilitate the development of public infrastructure and facilities within the County for 2013. The Development Contribution Scheme is available for viewing at www.waterfordcoco.ie.

Conservation

Under the Structures at Risk Fund 2013 Waterford County Council successfully received funding of €32,500 to support two conservation projects. The Conservation Officer also worked closely with Leader on eight Conservation led projects on historic buildings throughout the County. Over 200 conservation consultations were held with members of the public and their agents during 2013. Such consultations included assistance to people on making a conservation based planning application, technical advice, declarations and advice to owners re insurance, funding etc. The Conservation Officer also engaged in the preparation of the Local Area Plans for Tramore, Portlaw and Lismore and in the publication of the Historic Waterford Guide - a guide to Waterford Coastal Archaeology and Built Heritage.

Forward Planning

The Forward Planning Unit endeavours to support the national policy of proper planning and sustainable development throughout the region and concentrates on the preparation of policy documents and consultation to ensure a progressive planning function.

A review of the Tramore, Lismore and Portlaw Local Area Plans commenced in 2013 with the Draft Plans prepared by year end. Following the public consultation phase, any proposed amendments to these Draft Plans will be brought before the Elected Members at the February Council Meeting in 2014. Following consideration, the proposed amendments to the Draft Local Area Plans will be either adopted or amended by the Members.

The Forward Planning Unit also engages in regional policy formulation and 2013 involved a focus on strategies such as the South East Regional Bio Energy Plan and the Draft Retail Guidelines. During 2013 submissions were also made on the Eirgrid Gridlink Project, and the Wind Energy Guidelines Review currently being prepared by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

During 2014 the Forward Planning Unit will begin a review of all planning policies to support the new unified authority of Waterford City and County Council. Preparation of plans such as the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans among others will commence following the Local Elections in May.

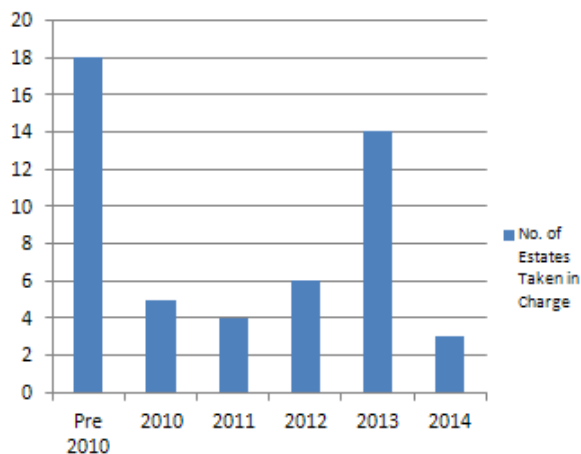
Estates & Enforcement Unit

In 2011, Waterford County Council established the ***Estates & Enforcement Unit*** within the Planning Department to manage the completion and compliance of privately constructed housing developments. There were particular challenges associated with this project due to the limited number of estates that had been previously taken in charge by the Council and the non-completion of developments as a result of the international economic crisis and the decline in the housing market and subsequent collapse of the Irish construction sector.

Taking in Charge of Estates

Waterford County Council has been progressing the Taking in Charge Process under the policy adopted by the Council in July 2008. 54 estates have been taken in charge to date. The largest number of estates (i.e.14) ever taken in charge by the Council in a calendar year was in 2013 and this positive trend is expected to continue in 2014, largely due to the ground work completed by the Estates Unit over the previous three years. The underlying graph highlights the profile of the estates taken in charge by the Council on an annual basis. Progress has obviously been hindered by the legal and financial status of developers and the associated difficulties in completing defects and omissions identified by the Unit. This has on many occasions led to the transfer of the estate to the process which manages unfinished housing developments (UHDs).

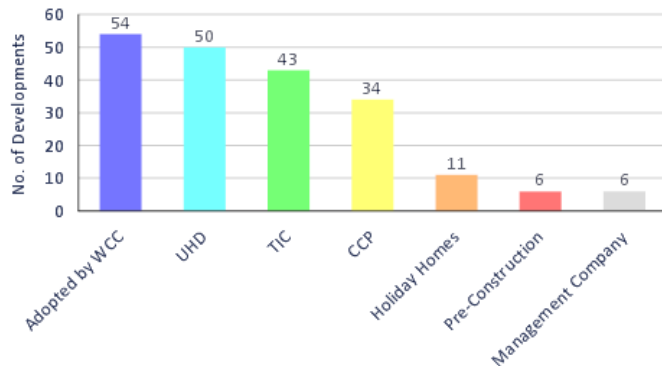
Estates Taken in Charge



Unfinished Housing Developments

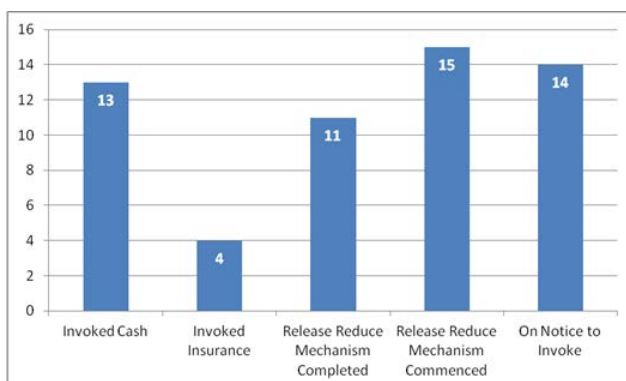
As previously mentioned the collapse of the housing and construction sectors has created a significant issue for local authorities in Ireland. The establishment of the Estates Unit in Waterford County Council was a very proactive measure in addressing the issues associated with unfinished housing developments (UHDs). The Unit's primary focus was to resolve any immediate public safety issues and then to address all serious defects in the identified unfinished housing developments. There are currently 50 developments in the UHD process each at various stages of

completion. The Unit has adopted a collaborative approach to the resolution of developments which means that stakeholder management plays a key role in the process, which include NAMA, Banks, Receivers, Liquidators, Security Providers, Contractors, Developers and most importantly the residents.



Security Bonds

In order to fund the completion of developments it has been necessary for the Unit to invoke security bonds. To date WCC have invoked approximately €650,000 for the satisfactory completion of such estates, using various mechanisms, as shown on the graph hereunder.



Compliance Checking Process

In 2013, the Estates & Enforcement Unit continued with a proactive inspection programme of housing estates, which had commenced the previous year. This programme known as the Compliance Checking Process includes those estates that are not listed in the Taking in Charge or UHD Processes. There are currently 43 estates in the Compliance Checking Process, which may require enforcement action and/or transfer of to the UHD process to achieve completion and compliance.

Enforcement

A total of 147 valid complaints were received in 2013 which represents a reduction from the previous year. The Enforcement Unit makes every effort to have enforcement issues resolved through negotiation and without the necessity of court intervention; however one prosecution was successfully taken in 2013. Thirteen retention applications were received in 2013 on foot of enforcement complaints.

Planning Enforcement Section	
Complaints Logged	147
No. of file inspections	79
No. of Site Inspections	172
Warning Letters issued	17
Enforcement Notices issued	10
Files referred to Co Solicitor	0
Prosecutions	1

ENVIRONMENT

Waste Collection service

Waterford County Council continued in 2013 to provide a three tier segregated waste collection service.

The All Star Household Waste Collection Service was well supported by householders and enabled us to retain a strong customer base. The total tonnages collected by Waterford County Council are as follows:



Organic	Recycling	Residual
1,277 tonnes	1,537 tonnes	3,474 tonnes

Civic Amenity Site and Bring Centres

Waterford County Council provides a Civic Amenity Site in Dungarvan which facilitates the disposal of accepts all types of domestic waste including organic, residual, dry recyclables and hazardous wastes.

A network of 44 bring centres around the county provide a valuable service for the population by facilitating the disposal of glass and textiles. During 2013 1266 tonnes of glass and 71 tonnes of textiles were collected.

Tramore Landfill

This site has been fully remediated and is being monitored and managed in accordance with EPA licence requirements. Leachate is being collected on site and treated at the adjacent waste water treatment plant. Landfill gasses are also being collected and are flared on a continuous basis. Monitoring of the receptors in the vicinity of the site to include groundwater and surface water is continuing and results to date indicate no environmental impacts to the surrounding areas.

Dungarvan Landfill

Following completion of remediation works in 2012 the site is now being monitored in accordance with EPA requirements. The extensive leachate and gas extraction and pumping systems together with the onsite ICW's (Integrated Constructed Wetlands) for the treatment of the extracted leachate helps to make Dungarvan Landfill one of the most environmentally friendly remediated landfills.

Environmental Enforcement

During 2013, the Enforcement Team continued to monitor illegal waste activities throughout the county. The team consists of two engineers, an Enforcement Inspector and administrative support. Enforcement Notices and Warning Letters were issued under Environmental Legislation (Waste, Air, Noise, Litter & Derelict Sites) where non-compliances were noted. Unauthorised waste activities such as littering, burning waste, illegal dumping, use of non permitted sites, non-compliances with waste permits or waste collection permits, derelict sites and air pollution offences were all addressed.

RMCEI Plan

Enforcement Inspections were carried out by the Environment Enforcement Team in 2013 in accordance with our RMCEI Plan (Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections Plan). This Plan provides a comprehensive list of proposed routine inspections, estimated non-routine inspections, responsible persons and allocated resources to carry out these inspections for the year. Scheduled inspections were undertaken in the areas of Waste Permitted Sites, Waste Collectors, End of Life Vehicles, WEEE and Batteries, Packaging, Tyres, Plastic Bag Levy, Food Waste, Air Licensed Sites, Solvent and Deco-Paint Regulations. A total of 497 scheduled inspections were completed in 2013 under the RMCEI Plan. 778 unscheduled inspections were carried out during the year to investigate complaints and incidents brought to the attention of the Environment

Section. The complaints were received from a number of sources including members of the public, area staff, illegal dumping line, EPA referrals and included:

- Investigations of fly-tipping
- Investigation of sites where waste was disposing in an unauthorised manner
- Investigation of sites holding waste in an unauthorised manner
- Investigation of complaints received in relation to permitted sites
- Investigations related to litter offences
- Investigations relating to Backyard Burning
- Investigations related to the contravention of Waterford County Councils byelaws for household waste
- Investigation of environmental complaints concerning odour, noise and nuisance

Litter Enforcement and Monitoring

The Enforcement Team continued to investigate and monitor littering, fly-tipping and illegal signage and issued litter fines where offences were detected. The Team also undertook the annual Litter Monitoring and Litter Quantification surveys as part of the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System. The results from these surveys allow the Enforcement Inspector to focus on 'black spot' areas in the county and to deploy enforcement resources (litter patrols) to those areas.

In 2013, 16 towns and villages from County Waterford took part in the Tidy Towns competition.

Waste and Air Regulation

The Enforcement Section is also responsible for processing waste & air authorisation applications in County Waterford and facilitates pre-application meetings with applicants who propose to apply for authorisation under the relevant waste and air legislation.

In 2013 the following applications were processed:

- Waste Permit & Certificate of Registrations
- Solvent Applications (Namely Dry Cleaners)
- Deco-Paint Applications (Crash Repair Operations)

Derelict Sites

During 2013 the Environment Section continued to address the issue of dereliction through the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act 1990. Derelict sites were inspected and reviewed on a continuous basis and every encouragement was given to the owners to remove these sites from dereliction.

Environmental Awareness

Each year Waterford County Council engages in an Educational and Awareness Programme to promote best environmental practice, increase awareness and enhance compliance with environmental laws. This year the programme engaged in a wide range of events to include National Tree Week, Green Schools with An Taisce, National Spring Clean, Gum Litter Taskforce, EcoCert Environmental certification programme for all SME'S to reduce waste, energy and water and LAPN (Local Authority Prevention Network) Greening of Festivals and events through the Be Green programme.

National Tree Week

One of the main objectives of National Tree Week is to distribute over 15,000 trees nationally through all local authorities. National Tree Week is sponsored by Coillte through the Tree Council of Ireland. **The theme for 2013 was 'A Feast of Trees 'Féile na gCrainn'** and is held on the first week of March.

To celebrate National Tree Week Waterford County Council honored Ardmore Tidy Towns with 50 trees to mark their 50 years together. See below Ardmore Tidy Towns braving the wind and rain during National Tree Week to plant their first of 50 trees to celebrate their big 50 years of unbroken participation in the tidy town's competition.



Members of Ardmore Tidy Towns with local children, Fàs workers, Eoin Dullea Horticulturalist and Anne Sullivan Education and Awareness Officer Waterford County Council

EcoCert

The EcoCert programme continues to gain in popularity among businesses. The EcoCert programme enables businesses to Start Saving Money through;

- Save on Energy costs
- Save on Waste generation and disposal
- Save on Water Costs

- Improve Environmental Performance
- Become Environmentally Certified

A business seminar was held in the Cliff House Hotel in Ardmore in February for local businesses to get involved in the programme. Waterford County Council has continued to promote EcoCert and engaged with Dunhill Ecopark, local garages and businesses throughout the county encouraging them to save water energy and waste through the EcoCert certification programme.

LAPN – Greening West Waterford Festival of Food phase II

Primary School - Make it Yourself - Grow it Yourself Project Mobile Garden Competition

The West Waterford Festival of Food in conjunction with Waterford County Council and Be Green Environment Protection Agency (EPA), GIY (Grow It Yourself) and Glanbia commenced the Mobile Gardens competition with primary schools throughout the county. The Competition was sponsored by Waterford County Council (through the Be Green programme) and Glanbia. Pictured below is Horticulturalist Alan Hartley from Glanbia given advice on suitable containers for growing seeds from recycling material to children from local schools.



Greening The Ready Chef Go Competition

9 Secondary Schools participated in the above competition as part of the West Waterford Festival of Food. As part of the Greening programme at the festival the Environment Department introduced the three tier bins on stage encourage students to segregate waste during the competition.



The official opening of the West Waterford festival of food was hosted by Waterford County Council in the Civic Offices, Dungarvan in April. There was a great attendance from the 8 Primary Schools participating in the MIY GIY Mobile Garden competition: Villierstown National School, St Declan's Ardmore National School, Fenor National School, Kilbrien N.S., Scoil Naomh Gobnait N.S. Cúl Na Smear, Knockmahon N.S., Ballycurrane N.S., Portlaw N.S.



Villierstown N.S.



St. Declan's Ardmore N.S.



**Fenor N.S.
Na Smear**



Scoil Naomh Gobnait N.S. Cúl



Knockmahon N.S.

Portlawn N.S.



Kilbrien N.S.

Ballycurrane N.S.

Waste Segregation at the Waterford Food Festival

Waterford County Council's encouraged all participants at the Festival to BeGreen by providing 10 recycling stations in addition to the existing bins throughout the festival during Saturday and Sunday. A three tier bin system similar to Waterford County Council's Refuse Collection was implemented on the street in Dungarvan during Saturday and Sunday. All bins were clearly marked with the new generic bin labels approved by the BeGreen programme; Brown bin for food waste, Grey Bin for general waste and White Bin for recycling bottles and cans only. Each recycling station was manned by volunteers who instructed the public on the segregated waste collection system



LAPN – Greening the Camphire International Horse Trials 2013



Do the Right thing... Put it in the right bin?

Waterford County Council provided 10 recycling stations at the Camphire horse trials to encourage all festival goers to segregate waste by placing their food waste in the brown bins, plastic bottles and cans in the white bins and general waste in the grey Bins. The Education and Awareness Officer was present throughout the three days of the festival to promote awareness of segregation and importance of greening festivals and events. A 'Green' festival means that you make sure you throw away as little as possible, recycle any 'recyclable materials' by using the right bins provided.

Waterford County Council “moves” up a gear against gum litter in Tramore



During the month of June, the Ad-Tower and Eco Bikes were up and down the promenade promoting anti-gum litter awareness with Waterford County Council's Environment Department. Gum wraps and other campaign materials were distributed to visitors at Tramore Town and Tramore Beach.



Meet the GLT Crew in the Park Lismore

During July GLT ad-bikes were in Lismore Park as part of the national Gum Litter Taskforce awareness campaign to reduce the amount of gum litter in the most practical way possible by going to the root cause of the issue and encouraging the public to “Bin it YourWay”.



Green Schools

A Green Schools Seminar was held in October at the Civic Offices Dungarvan for all Primary and Secondary Schools in the county participating in the Green Schools programme.

The information sessions are intended for green school co-coordinators/ Teachers and parents that are involved in the programme. The information seminars are not targeted for primary school pupils. Secondary school students are welcome to attend. The seminars will be officiated by An Taisce’s Representatives Rachel Boyle and Birgit O’Driscoll (Green Schools Officers), and Anne Sullivan (Environmental Education & Awareness Officer).

For 2013, see below the number of schools engaged in the programme:

- 7 Schools working on Litter and Waste
- 5 Schools working on Energy Flag
- 6 Schools working on Water Flag
- 4 Schools working on Travel Flag
- 5 Schools working on Biodiversity Flag
- 4 Schools working on Global Citizenship Flag

Dungarvan and West Waterford Chamber of Commerce Business and FBD awards 2013

A large number of nominations were received for the 2013 Dungarvan and West Waterford Chamber of Commerce Awards in association with FBD. The awards covered 12 categories, including business, employers, employees and those who made contributions to the local community.

All applications were judged by RIKON and the Waterford Institute of Technology.

The category Waterford Smart Travel/Green/ Environmental Business Award was sponsored by Waterford County Council, Environment Department under the Anti-Litter and Anti- Graffiti Awareness programme. The Greening of Waterford Festival of Food was shortlisted for the award.



WATERFORD ENERGY BUREAU (WEB)

Waterford County Council in partnership with Waterford City Council continues to manage and part fund the Waterford Energy Bureau, based at the Civic Offices, Tramore.

Better Energy Communities Scheme

WEB sourced and managed the allocation funding from Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland, under the “Better Energy Communities scheme”, where a number of projects were funded under a single application. These projects included:

Micro Wind Turbines

A Micro Wind Turbine was installed at the Tramore Civic, Amenity Site. The electricity generated from the turbine replaces imported electricity from the national grid. Waterford County Council now has five operational wind turbines which generate on average approximately 32,000 KWh of electricity each year. Grant funding of €38,000 was received.

Civic Offices Tramore

The extent of energy efficiency / renewable energy work carried out at the Civic Offices Tramore included a photo voltaic system, modifications to the heat pump system and insulation upgrades.

Ballymacrbury National School

Funding was sourced from the SEAI and the WEB oversaw the energy efficiency upgrades to Ballymacrbury National School. The extent of the works carried out included new windows, new condensing oil boiler and insulation upgrades.

Ballyduff Lower Community Centre

Funding was sourced from the SEAI and the extent of the work carried out included, new condensing boiler installation and lighting energy efficiency upgrades.

Local Authority Annual Reporting on Energy Consumption

WCC is meeting its annual target of 33% energy efficiency reductions by 2020. Based on the reference year of 2009, WCC has reduced annual energy related consumption by 7.8% by 2011.

Waterford Renewable Energy Cooperative Society Ltd

“Waterford Renewable Energy Cooperative Society Ltd”, community / farmer owned co-operative formed by WCC in 2009. To date WEB has 52 members, which are made up groups / farmers throughout the county. Funding for formation of the co-operative was made through EU Intelligent Energy for Europe funding program. WEB provides secretarial and technical support to the co-operative and 2013 projects included assistance to the three community wind groups and in the development of bio-energy within the county.

VETERINARY SERVICES

The Council employs one whole-time Veterinary Officer and three part-time veterinary inspectors. The main services provided are approval and ongoing inspection and supervision of low capacity slaughterhouses and meat processing plants in both the city and county area. As of end December 2013, there are three approved slaughterhouses, seven approved meat processing premises and two on farm poultry slaughtering premises under Council supervision.

Slaughter figures for 2013 in 3 approved slaughterhouses and 1 approved wild game handling establishment where Council provides veterinary meat inspection services :

Lambs : 8,978

Cattle : 1,485

Goats : 15

Farmed deer: 96

Wild deer : 216

Wild rabbits: 134

The Veterinary Inspector in conjunction with the Dog Warden conducted inspections of dog breeding establishments under the Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010 which came into force on 1st January 2012. Currently, there are three registered Dog Breeding Establishments in the county area.

The Veterinary Officer is a member of the South East Zoonosis Committee which meets four times a year to discuss diseases transmitted from animals to man. Useful information leaflets and booklets have been produced by the Committee and these are available to download from the Council website. The Committee attended some of the agricultural shows in the south east region during summer 2013 where there was good interaction with the public.

Dog Control

The Council employ a full-time Dog Warden to enforce the Control of Dogs Act 1986-1992 (as amended). Complaints in relation to dogs not being under proper control, straying, bite incidents etc. are investigated by the Dog Warden.

A door to door dog licence inspection programme which targeted various areas of the county was carried out in the period from July to October. The inspection programme was widely advertised in local press and on local radio. The campaign was successful and served to increase the numbers of licenced dogs in the county. 6420 dog licences were issued in County Waterford during 2013.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DIRECTORSHIP

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development remained a priority for Waterford County Council in 2013. The economic priorities for the year were as follows:

TOURISM

During the year, the Council continued to promote niche festival events geared towards capitalising on the county's uniqueness and indigenous assets.

Established events such as the Waterford Festival of Food and The Sean Kelly Tour enjoyed increased visitor / participant numbers contributing approximately €3.4m to the local economy. These initiatives and other events such as the Comeraghs Wild Festival in September provided a significant boost to the county's economy. In addition, a number of projects/initiatives were progressed:

- The programme of work to highlight the county as a walking destination is continuing. A major output of this is the "Walk Waterford Guide" publication highlighting 20 walks across Waterford. A very successful walking conference took place in November 2013. This was organized in association with the GIFT project at Waterford Institute of Technology and attracted over 100 delegates. The main theme was the development and promotion of Waterford as a walking destination.
- The Waterford Gathering was organized in association with Waterford City Council. This was very successful with 100 events taking place in the county. One of the outcomes was the creation of a Waterford Diaspora Database which will be used as a future promotional tool.
- The Comeragh Mountains Forum worked on the development of a new festival 'Comeragh Wild' which took place in September 2013. This was a very successful collaboration between the communities located in the Comeragh Mountain Area. A weekend of events exploring the cultural heritage and natural environment attracted large audiences. The event also received significant national media coverage.
- Negotiations with Coillte were proceeding at the end of the year in respect of the development of a Mountain Bike Park at Glendalligan Woods
- The Greenway Project(walking and cycling routes between Dungarvan and Waterford City) was progressed in 2013. This will bring enormous economic and community benefit to the county when developed.

- The annual Waterford Garden Trail Festival was held in May 2013 highlighting the magnificent houses and gardens of Waterford.
- Marketing of the county was carried out during the year at events such as Holiday World, Dublin and Destination Waterford Day.
- Work has commenced on developing a new Waterford Destination Brand and website for the amalgamated City and County Councils. A steering committee comprising of members of both authorities has been appointed to deliver the project.
- The Council's social networking based tourism website 'Waterford - It's a Feeling' was further promoted. This site is a joint initiative with Waterford County Enterprise Board. Great emphasis is placed on using social networking tools such as Twitter and Facebook for tourism development purposes.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Sites:

A promotional campaign was implemented for a range of sites throughout the County. This attracted investment by software company, TQS in Lismore, creating 50 jobs in the town.

Community Enterprise Centres:

Waterford County Council, continued to support the community enterprise centers in Dungarvan, Dunhill, Lismore, Cappoquin and Tallow. A fund was launched to help these centres to attract food industries. Work is continuing to plan a centre in Kilmacthomas.

Copper Coast Geo Park:

In November, 2013 An Taoiseach Enda Kenny officially opened the Copper Coast Geo Park Interpretative Center in Bunmahon. At this launch, representatives of UNESCO acknowledged the importance of the geology of County Waterford and in particular of the Copper Coast.

Mercyhurst In Ireland:

In 2013 Mercyhurst continued to expand in Dungarvan. Additional semesters were provided by the University in the Town. In addition, Dungarvan hosted the third Global Intelligence Forum, which attracted keynote speakers and high profile delegates from 15 countries.

Access:

Waterford County Council continued to work with Waterford Regional Airport to implement a plan to improve air access to County Waterford and the South East.

Business Support Unit:

By 2013 the business support unit had advised over 30 commercial projects.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Pride Of Place Awards

Waterford Comhairle na nÓg were the winners of the Enterprise and Youth category of the Pride of Place Awards, held in Derry in November. This was largely in recognition of the great work done by Comhairle members on raising issues relating to mental health.

Tallow was selected as the county's entrants in the Tourism Diaspora Initiative Category. Adjudication took place in August and the town looked resplendent on the day. The judges commended all involved on the effort made.

Comhairle na nÓg

Over the course of 2013, Waterford County Comhairle na nÓg firmly established itself as the leading youth council in Ireland with this being recognised through feedback from the Minister and senior management of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. The Comhairle significantly increased their activity within the community through participation in local festivals, events and other initiatives along with their representation of seldom heard young people. The major project for 2013 was "The Cyber Code" which was rolled out on a County-wide Cyber Day and also showcased nationally in Dáil Éireann, Screenagers International and Safer Internet Day. The Comhairle were awarded an All Island Pride of Place Award in the Enterprise and Youth category for their efforts in bringing about social change.

National Bike Week

The County Council, in conjunction with various communities, schools and clubs, organised an interesting and varied programme for the week, held in June.

Waterford Sports Partnership

Waterford Sports Partnership and Waterford County Council partnered successfully on a number of projects during the year including the Sean Kelly Tour of Waterford, National Bike Week and trails development.

Community Forum

The Community Forum offered direct support to its 340 member groups by acting as a source of professional advice and information. The Community Forum Action Plan 2013 was presented and ratified at an executive meeting in January 2013. The Community Forum facilitated National Social Partners from the Community and Voluntary sector to sit on strategic committees in the County. The Community Forum also had representative seats on various other committees and organisations.

The County Waterford Community Forum Community & Voluntary Awards 2013 were launched by Des Whelan of WLR Fm in August in Dungarvan Shopping Centre and took place in the Park Hotel in November with over 230 people attending the ceremony. The Categories for 2013 awards included:

- Arts Culture & Heritage –Sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline **WINNERS – Ardmore Pattern Festival**
- Children & Youth –Sponsored by Mc Donalds **WINNERS - Dungarvan Scouts-11th Waterford**
- Community Services – Sponsored by County Waterford Community Forum **WINNERS-Irish Red Cross-Portlaw Branch & Units**
- Environment Built – Sponsored by Dungarvan Town Council **WINNERS – Stradbally Tidy Towns**
- Environment Natural – Sponsored by Dungarvan Town Council **WINNERS – Newtown & Guillamene Swimming Club**
- Healthy & Active Community – Sponsored by Glanbia **WINNERS- Sean Kelly Tour of Waterford VOLUNTEERS**
- Social Enterprise – Sponsored by Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly **WINNERS- Tramore Community Radio**
- Social Inclusion – Sponsored by Bus Éireann **WINNERS – Cappoquin Active Retirement**

The overall award went to Ardmore Pattern Festival.

Other projects:

- The Forum, in association with relevant Departments of Waterford County Council, worked towards the coordination of a local response to severe weather events.
- In conjunction with Waterford County Council, the Community Forum coordinated the two County Waterford entries in the Pride of Place competition.
- The Community Forum provided co-ordination and administrative support to the Comhairle na nÓg group at county level in 2013.
- Sean Kelly Tour: The Community Forum, in conjunction with Waterford County Council, provided co-ordination and administrative support to this annual event.

- The Community Forum provided support for the setting up and administration of the Social Inclusion Forum.
- The Forum had a key role in supporting the work of the Suicide Task Group, established by the Social Inclusion Measures Working Group of the Waterford County Development Board in January 2013.

Rural Transport Programme

Deise Link Ltd operate local bus services under The Rural Transport Programme, a project established to address issues of unmet transport needs from a social inclusion and community-based perspective with a specific focus on responding to rural isolation and enhancing the mobility, accessibility and community participation of local people, particularly those at risk of social exclusion. Deise Link operates 32 weekly service throughout the County, carrying over 35,000 passengers in 2013. While services are open to the general public, older people and people with disabilities have to date formed the core customer base.

In 2013 the National Transport Authority published plans for the restructuring of the Programme which sees the establishment of 18 Transport Co-ordination Units across the Country. Deise Link was successful in its application to be the Waterford TCU to be established in early 2014. This will see the continuation of current services allied to a more strategic focus on sustainable, integrated public transport services at local level and closer alignment with Local Authorities in the areas of administration and the alignment of transport, spatial economic and community development plans. This scenario represents the most appropriate and efficient model for delivery of rural transport services. The new TCU will also have a role in developing voluntary transport schemes and applications for Local Area Hackney Licences.

Deise Link was one of two RTP Companies successful in an application to the NTA to operate pilot school integration services. The pilots were established to examine the potential to integrate the operation of school and local transport services in areas where there is an absence of any public transport and to examine the potential for a public transport service to enhance the tourism potential of the area. The two pilot areas chosen are the Copper Coast Area, providing a bus link between Tramore and Dungarvan, and an extension to an existing Deise Link service which links Dungarvan to Fermoy via Lismore.

For further information see www.deiselink.ie

ARTS SERVICE

Waterford County Council provides its Arts Service through the County Arts Office. Annually a countywide arts programme is delivered with support from the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. A variety of arts projects across a range of art forms were delivered in 2013.

Artlinks, the joint initiative between the County Councils of Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford in association with the Arts Council supported the professional development of artists in Co. Waterford through artist bursaries, literature mentoring and clinic mentoring for all artforms. See www.artlinks.ie for more details.

Arts in Education facilitated various visual arts and literature residencies, including the popular Architect in Residence Scheme in partnership with the Waterford Festival of Architecture and 'Artifice' a visual arts project in partnership with Lismore Castle Arts. In 2013 a series of Traditional Singing in Schools was fully subscribed. Waterford Hullabaloo, who run creative arts programmes for young children devised a creative literacy pilot programme which was trialed in partnership with the VEC.

Waterford's Dance Artist in Residence delivered contemporary dance in selected second level schools. Over a thousand children have had the opportunity to participate in these residencies in 2013.

Arts projects in a Community context were supported through music tuition at Riverstown Music Club, Tramore. 2013 saw the opening of their new recording facilities supported with an equipment grant from the Arts Office.

The Bealtaine Festival, celebrating creativity in older age, provided a number of events including a touring theatre production, recitals and lectures.

The relationship with Waterford Healing Arts Trust continued with a music project for clients with mental health conditions. In 2013 there was a once off special music workshop bringing service users to St. Stephen's Hospital, Cork.

The Arts Office worked with the County Waterford Childcare Committee to provide for an Art Therapist to work with the Travelers Support Group in West Waterford on an arts project for 4 to 5 year olds on the theme of identity and belonging.

A pilot project ran throughout the year to provide film making and drama opportunities for young people in the Tramore area and its hinterland under the auspices of Waterford Youth Arts.

The Arts Office worked with film and theatre practitioners to communicate LGBTQ issues and to encourage and motivate young people to be involved in the development, production and implication of their own stories into a theatre performance.

Co. Waterford has a number of active Writers and Writers Groups. A series of creative writing workshops and readings took place in 2013. In addition the Arts

Office supports courses on Literature and Film at the Molly Keane Writers Retreat in Ardmore. The established Molly Keane Creative Writing Award continues to be run as a national competition promoting new Irish short story writing.

The bursaries offered to artists based in County Waterford to support them in their professional development included the Tyrone Guthrie Regional Arts Award, O' Regan Arts Bursary, Irish Youth Choir Summer School, Drama League of Ireland Summer School, Writing Bursaries and the Blas Traditional Arts Bursary.

The Old Market House Arts Centre, Dungarvan provided a year round exhibitions programme with local, touring and national exhibitions. Tramore Development Trust continues to run a cultural calendar at the Coastguard Station Cultural Centre, Tramore.

The Arts Office also supported the following in 2013: West Waterford Drama Festival, Art Hand - Film Project on the making of the 'Miners of Bonmahon' documentary, Traditional Concerts with Craobh na gComarach CCE, A contributor to a series of six programmes on travel writer Dervla Murphy commissioned under the BAI Sound & Vision awards. Cór Fear na nDéise - Male voice choir 'as gaeilge' school visits, 'Backstrand Book' by Mark Roper & Paddy Dwan and development of photographic exhibition to accompany the publication, Gealach Gorm Singer Songwriter Festival in Kill, Co. Waterford.

AN GHAeilGE SA CHOMHAIRLE

Oifig na Gaeilge

Bliain gnóthach ba ea í maidir le forbairt agus cur chun cinn na Gaeilge – bíodh sé laistigh d'Údaráis Áitiúla an Chontae, trí sheirbhísí a sholáthar don bpobal, nó i measc phobail na nDéise trí imeachtaí Ghaeilge a reachtáil nó trí thacaíocht a thabhairt don teanga agus don gcultúr Ghaelach sa nGaeltacht féin agus ar fud an chontae.

Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003

Leanadh leis an obair a bhaineann le seirbhís trí Ghaeilge a chur ar fáil don bpobal faoin Acht Teanga agus faoi Scéim Teanga Údaráis Áitiúla Chontae Phort Láirge. Tá an dara scéim teanga fós le haontú leis an Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreacht & Gaeltachta. Déileáladh le trí ghearán ón bpobal chuig Oifig an Choimisinéir Teanga le linn na bliana 2013.

Seachtain na Gaeilge

Eagraíodh sraith imeachtaí do Sheachtain na Gaeilge i gcomhar le Seirbhís Leabharlainne an Chontae agus Coiste Cúram Leanaí Chontae Phort Láirge i mbliana. Eagraíodh **Bingó as Gaeilge** agus **Mála Scéalaíochta & Ealaín** do pháistí i Leabharlanna Dhún Garbhán agus na Trá Móire agus bhí **Scéalaíocht & Rannta** do pháistí 0-3 bhliain d'aois i Leabharlann an Leasa Mhóir le Jacqui de Siúin ó Choiste Cúram Leanaí Chontae Phort Láirge. Bhí clár gníomhach Ceoil Traidisiúnta agus Ciorcal Comhrá ar siúl i Leabharlann na Trá Móire, le grúpa áitiúil Chomhaltas na Trá Móire, feadh na bliana chomh maith.

Tionscadal Logainmneacha na Scoileanna

Dhein an tOifigeach Gaeilge agus Cartlannaí an Chontae a thuilleadh oibre ar Thionscadal Logainmneacha na Scoileanna. Tionscadal é seo chun páistí bunscoile a chur ar obair ar thaighde a dhéanamh ar ainmneacha páirceanna agus ainmneacha eile nach iad ina gceantair féin. Leathnaíodh an tionscadal chuig bunscoileanna an tSráidbhaile i mbliana agus cuireadh saothar pháistí ó Scoil Náisiúnta na Croise Naofa, Scoil Náisiúnta San Séamus agus Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire na Trócaire ar thaispeánt in Halla an Bharúnaigh sa tSráidbhaile mar chuid de chlár imeachtaí Thionól na nDéise 2013 i mí Dheireadh Fómhair. Tá saothar na bpáistí ar fáil ar-líne mar chuid den taispeántas ar an gCanónach de Paor atá ar shuíomh idirlíon Chomhairle Contae Phort Láirge.

Gradam Gnó na nDéise

Scéim í seo a bhunaigh Oifig Ghaeilge Chomhairle Contae Phort Láirge agus Comhlacht Forbartha na nDéise i nGaeltacht na nDéise chun aitheantas a thabhairt do ghnónna i nDún Garbhán agus in iarthar Chontae Phort Láirge a oibríonn chun an Ghaeilge a fhorbairt mar chuid dá ngnó. Deineadh forbairt ar an nGradam Gnó i mbliana, agus reachtáilleadh searmanas na ngradam i nDánlann Joan Clancy sa Rinn i mí an Mheithimh, le tacaíocht ó Chumainn Tráchtála Iarthar Phort Láirge. Bronnadh teastais agus duaiseanna i gceithre chatagóir, mar a leanas:

- (i) **Ó Sealbhaigh, Nuachtánaí** do Sheirbhísí agus Nuálaíocht (*urraithe ag WLR FM*);
- (ii) **Sólás na Mara**, Ceann Heilbhic don nGnó Nua is Fearr (*urraithe ag Beat 102-103 FM*);
- (iii) **Tigh Tábhairne Kiely's Cross**, An Ghráinseach do Chomharthaíocht & Ábhar Priontáilte (*urraithe ag Údarás na Gaeltachta*);
- (iv) **Coláiste na Rinn** d'Fhad-Seirbhís don nGaeilge (*urraithe ag an Dungarvan Leader*);

I mbliana don gcéad uair, bronnadh **Buan-Chorn Ghradam Gnó na nDéise** ar fhear ghnó áitiúil Irial Mac Murchú, úinéir agus bunaitheoir Nemeton Teo, don obair eisceachtúil atá déanta aige ar son na Gaeilge i bPort Láirge. Dhein Comhlacht Forbartha na nDéise coimisiúniú ar an trófaí Criostal na Rinne seo.

Tionól an Fhómhair – Tionól na nDéise

Athraíodh leagan amach an Tionóil i mbliana, ag dul ó dheireadh seachtaine amháin in aon áit amháin, go dtí sraith chainteanna in áiteanna éagsúla ar fud an chontae. Faoin ainm nua, **Tionól na nDéise**, reachtáilleadh an chéad ócáid faoin struchtúr nua i mBaile Mhac Cairbre i mí Mheán Fhómhair, mar chuid d'fhéile nua-bhunaithe, Féile an Chomaraigh. Thug an tOllamh Pádraig Ó Macháin, Ollamh le Gaeilge, Coláiste na hOllscoile, Corcaigh, caint bhreá faoin dteideal '*Oidhreacht na Gaeilge i gceantar an Chomaraigh*' agus bhain an slua a bhí i láthair ard-taiteamh as ceol agus amhránaíocht traidisiúnta ó pháistí Scoil Náisiúnta Bhaile Mhac Cairbre.

Reachtáilleadh an dara Thionól na nDéise do 2013 sa tSráidbhaile i mí na Samhna. B'é an tOllamh Ó Macháin a thug an chaint arís an uair seo, ag labhairt ar "*Tomás & Micheál Ó hAthairne & a gCuid Filíochta*". Bhí ceol le Craobh na gComarach de Chomhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann agus rince le rinceoirí ó Scoil Rince Uí Mhurchú ar an oíche chomh maith.

An Ghaeilge sa Phobal

Thug an tOifigeach Gaeilge tacaíocht do roinnt imeachtaí Gaeilge/dátheangacha mar chuid d'fhéilte éagsúla sa chontae i rith na bliana, ina measc **Féile Bia Phort Láirge, Comórtas Náisiúnta Peile na Gaeltachta** sa Rinn, **Tionól Niocláis Tóibín** agus **Daonscoil na Mumhan**. Deineadh cur i láthair ag seimineár dar teideal "*An teanga is a luach: Ról na Gaeilge in Eacnamaíocht na hÉireann*" i gColáiste Mhuire gan Smál. Reachtaíl an tOifigeach Gaeilge ócáid an-shuimiúil i mí Bhealtaine, a thug scoláirí idirbhliana as Coláiste Aibhistín, Dún Garbhán chomh fada le Caisleán an Leasa Mhóir, chun cur i láthair i nGaeilge ar an taispeántas reatha,

‘Séadchomharthaí’, a thabhairt do bhaill den nGrúpa Gníomhaíochta Lucht Scoir, Cairde na Rinne ó Ghaeltacht na nDéise.

An Ghaeltacht

Lean an tOifigeach Gaeilge ar aghaidh ag obair le pobal Ghaeltacht na nDéise i rith na bliana, trí thacaíocht a thabhairt d’imeachtaí a reachtáil ghrúpaí pobail éagsúla sa cheantar agus trí bheith ina suí ar bhord Chomhlacht Forbartha na nDéise, ag obair i dtreo chúrsaí forbartha pobail sa Rinn agus sa Sean Phobal.

IRISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Irish Office

It was another busy year as regards the development and promotion of the Irish language – both within Waterford County Local Authorities, through the provision of services to the public, and amongst the wider public, through the organisation of Irish events in the county, or by supporting community groups and individuals in organising events or activities which support the Irish language and culture.

The Official Languages Act 2003

Work continued in relation to the delivery of services through the Irish language under the Official Languages Act and Waterford Local Authorities’ Irish Language Scheme. The Council’s second language scheme has yet to be agreed with the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht. A total of three complaints by members of the public to the Office of the Language Commissioner were dealt with in 2013.

Seachtain na Gaeilge

A number of events were organised to celebrate Seachtain na Gaeilge, in conjunction with the County Library Service and the County Waterford Childcare Committee. Events and activities organised included **Bingo ‘as Gaeilge’** and **Storytelling Sack & Art** for children in Tramore and Dungarvan Libraries. Young children 0-3 years of age were enthralled by Storytelling & Rhymes in Lismore Branch Library, with Jacqui de Siúin from the County Waterford Childcare Committee and Tramore Library continued with its regular **Ciorcal Comhrá** and **Trad Music Sessions** with a local branch of Tramore Comhaltas.

Schools’ Field Names Project

The Irish Officer and County Archivist continued work on the Schools’ Field Names Project. This project encourages primary school children to research local fieldnames and other place names in their area. The project was rolled out to primary schools in Stradbally and the work of children from Scoil Náisiúnta na Croise Naofa, St. James’ NS and Our Lady of Mercy NS was displayed in the Barron Hall, Stradbally as part of the Tionól na nDéise event in November. The children’s work is

also available on-line as part of the on-line exhibition on Canon Power on the Council's website.

Gradam Gnó na nDéise - Irish in Business Award

This awards scheme, which recognises businesses in Dungarvan and West Waterford that develop the Irish language as part of their business, is a joint initiative between the Irish Office of Waterford County Council and local Gaeltacht community development company, Comhlacht Forbartha na nDéise, with the support of Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber of Commerce. The Gradam Gnó was further developed this year, and certificates and prizes in four categories were presented to the 2013 winners at an event in May in the Joan Clancy Gallery, An Rinn, as follows:

- (i) **Shalloe Newsagents**, Dungarvan for Services & Innovation (*sponsored by WLR FM*);
- (ii) **Sólás na Mara**, Heilbhic for the Best Newcomer (*sponsored by Beat 102-103 FM*);
- (iii) **Tigh Tábhairne Kiely's Cross**, Grange for Signage & Printed Material (*sponsored by Údarás na Gaeltachta*);
- (iv) **Coláiste na Rinne** for Long Service to Irish (*sponsored by the Dungarvan Leader*)

The new **Gradam Gnó na nDéise Perpetual Trophy** was presented for the first time this year to local businessman, Irial Mac Murchú, founder and owner of TV production company Nemeton Teo, for his exceptional contribution to the Irish language in County Waterford. This Criostal na Rinne trophy was commissioned by Comhlacht Forbartha na nDéise.

Tionól an Fhómhair

Following a review, the layout of Tionól an Fhómhair was changed in 2013, going from one single weekend festival in one location, to a series of one-night events in a number of locations throughout the county. Under its new name, **Tionól na nDéise**, the first event took place in Ballymacarbry in September, as part of the newly-established Comeraghs Wild Festival. Professor Pádraig Ó Macháin, Head of Modern Irish, UCC gave a wonderful talk on the Irish Language Heritage of the Comeraghs and the large crowd in attendance enjoyed traditional music and song from local Ballymacarbry National School children.

The second Tionól na nDéise of the year took place in November in Stradbally, Co Waterford. Professor Ó Macháin was the guest speaker once again, delivering a talk on local Irish language writers and poets, Tomás & Micheál Harney. The large crowd in attendance at the Barron Hall enjoyed music by Craobh na gComarach of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and dancers from the Murphy School of Dance.

Irish in the Community

The Irish Officer supported a number of Irish language/bilingual events as part of different festivals throughout the county during the year, including the **Waterford Festival of Food**, the national **Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta** in An Rinn, **Tionól**

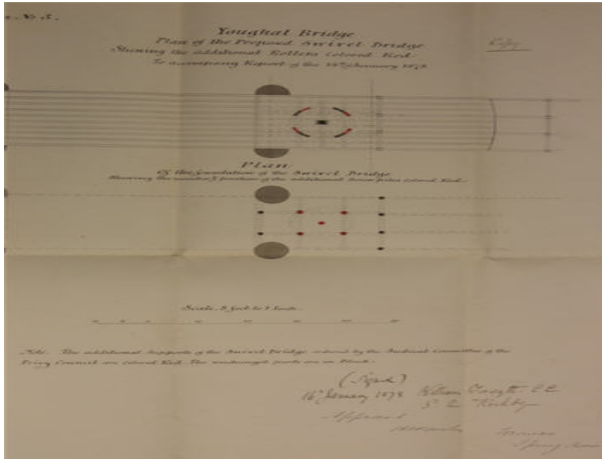
Niocláis Tóibín and the **Daonscoil na Mumhan** summer school in Ring College. The Irish Officer was guest speaker at a conference in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick on the topic of the Role of the Irish Language in the Irish Economy. An interesting event took place in Lismore Castle in May, organised by the Irish Officer, whereby Transition Year students from St Augustine's Friary College, Dungarvan presented their interpretations of the current exhibition, *Monuments*, 'as Gaeilge' to members of the Cairde na Rinne Active Retirement Group from An Rinn.

The Gaeltacht

Waterford County Council's Irish Officer continued to work with Co. Waterford's Gaeltacht community during the year, by supporting events being organised by local community groups in the area, and also by sitting on the board of local community development company, Comhlacht Forbartha na nDéise, working towards the development of community initiatives in An Rinn and An Sean Phobal.

ARCHIVES

January 2013 was the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the new Youghal Bridge on 23rd January 1963 and to mark the occasion the County Archive provided an online exhibition on the history of Youghal Bridge.



Proposed Swivel Bridge, 1878. Copyright Waterford County Council

In order to facilitate public access to archive collections further online exhibitions were provided:

- The River Blackwater and Lismore Weir Maps 1878-1900
- Notes on 19th Century Etiquette

ARCHIVE EXPLORED

As part of the Archives Awareness Campaign run in conjunction with the Archives and Records Association, Ireland an online Storybox about the Dance Halls of County Waterford "Waterford : Licenced to Dance" was also provided in November and a advertisement campaign was run on WLR fm to highlight the project. <http://www.waterfordcoco.ie/en/services/archives/exhibitions/storyboxlicencetodance/>

Talks were provided to Probus groups and school groups and on 20th March a talk "Love, Lies and Lithographs" was provided to Waterford County Museum.

In co-operation with the Arts Office, Conservation Officer, Heritage Officer, Irish Language Officer and County Library events were provided for Heritage 2013 on the theme of "Work in Waterford". A talk "Being Your Grace's Employees in Lismore" was given in Lismore Heritage Centre on 22nd August and Muirne Lydon, Conservator at the National Gallery of Ireland provided a talk on "The Art of Conservation" at the Arts Centre on 24th August. An exhibition titled "The Worst of the Worst Jobs in History for Children" was provided at Dungarvan Library and Tramore Library and children were asked to vote for the worst job that children had to carry out in the past.

In continuance of the Canon Power Field Name Project the County Archive and Oifigeach Gaeilge Chontae Phort Láirge again worked together and worked with the National Schools in Stradbally: Scoil na Croise Naofa; St. James National School and Our Lady of Mercy National School to investigate field names in their area. The results of their research was on display as part of the Tionól na nDéise event in Stradbally on 29th November and will be made available online as part of the Canon Power Exhibition.

Records Management

In January 2013 there was flooding in the Civic Offices but luckily there was only a little damage. Those records that were damaged and were identified as required for audit were sent to Harwell Document Restoration Services for drying and repair and were returned safely to the Records Centre. Records continue to be transferred from departments to the Records Centre and at present there are 52,709 records listed on the Arclink with further transfer sheets awaiting entry. A retrieval service is maintained and staff training and development on file management is continuing. The development of a suitable functional based file structure for the new Waterford City and County local authority will be a priority for 2014.

DIRECTORSHIP

FINANCIAL SERVICES

FINANCE

The Finance Department is responsible for the provision and management of a wide range of services.

Council Budget

The Adopted Revenue Budget for the financial year ended 31st December 2013 was €64.11M. The economic downturn resulted in a reduction across all income streams for the Council and as a result budgeted expenditure had to be curtailed. The budget for the Capital Expenditure Plan for the year was €21.96M.

Rates

Rates are payable on commercial and industrial properties only. Following consideration of the Budget, the elected Members determine the annual rate on valuation (ARV) to be levied for the year. The ARV for 2013 was €69.2247 compared to €69.9239 in 2012.

Revenue Collection

The Accounts Receivable Section is responsible for the billing and collection of a number of Council income streams. These include collection of Council revenues including Commercial Rates, Water/Waste Water, Housing Rents/ Loans and NPPR.

Payment of Accounts

Payments were made for goods and services provided to the Council for various Capital and Revenue purposes. Payment to suppliers is made subject to presentation of valid tax documentation. Under The Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997, as amended, suppliers shall be entitled to late payment of interest on payments that are not paid within the prescribed period. During 2013, Waterford County Council incurred no late payment interest. Total Revenue and Capital expenditure for 2013 amounted to €77.48M.

Payroll

Wages are paid weekly whilst pensions and salaries are paid fortnightly. All wages and salary payments are made by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT).

Insurances

The main areas of activity are Public Liability, Employers Liability, Fire (Housing Stock), Fire (General Properties) and Motor Insurance.

Annual Financial Statement

The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) for the organization is produced in March of each year and is prepared on a full accrual accounting basis, recording Income in the period in which it was earned and Expenditure in the period in which it was incurred. The accounts are audited by the Local Government Auditor who reports to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee met four times in 2013. The committee includes two Council members and three external members.

Water and Waste Water Charges

Under the Government's Water Pricing Policy, which came into effect on the 1st of January, 2007, Waterford County Council was required to introduce a charge for Waste Water Treatment for Non-Domestic Customers. The charge is based on the Polluter Pays Principle and requires all Local Authorities to charge the full cost of Water and Waste Water Services to the user. Domestic customers are exempt as the Government funds the cost of services to them, through the Local Government Fund.

In line with the polluter pays principle the Water Pricing Policy requires that the prices for water and wastewater services should reflect the cost of providing the service. The charges for 2013 were:

- Water Supply Charge € 1.06 per Cubic Meter
- Waste Water Charge € 1.60 per Cubic Meter

Responsibility for the delivery of water services transferred to Irish Water on January 1, 2014.

Motor Taxation

The Motor Taxation Offices process vehicle licence discs, full driving licences and learner permits, certificates of roadworthiness for goods vehicles, trailer licence cards and trade plates to the motor industry. In addition, various non financial transactions are dealt with. All information signs and almost all application forms are bilingual.

From 19th January 2013, the Road Safety Authority (RSA) took over responsibility for administering driving licences in Ireland and the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) was been set up to deliver the service. The service transferred from Motor Tax Offices to the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) on October 29th, 2013

Financial Summary for 2013 (subject to audit)**Summary of Revenue**

Account:	2013	2012
	€million	€million
Opening Balance at 1st January	-6.9	-6.9
Expenditure for Year	59.2	65.6
Transfers to Reserves	2.2	1.1
	<u>61.4</u>	<u>66.7</u>
Income for Year		
State Grants	36.0	41.3
Goods and Services	18.0	17.9
Commercial Rates	7.4	7.5
	<u>61.4</u>	<u>66.7</u>
Deficit for Year	0.0	0.0
Closing Balance at 31st December	<u>-6.9</u>	<u>-6.9</u>

Summary of Balance Sheet

Fixed Assets	1387.6	1391.6
Work in Progress	25.0	20.7
Long Term Debtors	24.0	24.5
Current Assets	15.1	19.4
Current Liabilities	<u>-15.5</u>	<u>-15.0</u>
	1,436.2	1,441.2
Long Term Creditors	<u>53.5</u>	<u>56.4</u>
Net Assets/(Liabilities)	<u>1382.7</u>	<u>1384.8</u>

Represented by:

Capitalisation Account	1387.6	1391.6
Work in Progress	22.8	21.0
Specific Revenue Reserve	1.0	1.0
General Revenue Reserve	-6.9	-6.9
Other Balances	<u>-21.8</u>	<u>-21.9</u>
Total Reserves	<u>1,382.7</u>	<u>1,384.8</u>

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES

Following on from the Local Elections, in June, 2009 Waterford County Council drafted a new Strategic Policy Committee Scheme, in consultation with the Corporate Policy Group. The new scheme was formally adopted by the Council in September 2009 and will continue to have effect for the term of the current Council. The Scheme provides for 5 SPCs, each of which has external representatives drawn from the appropriate National Pillar (Agriculture, Trade Union, Business and Environment) along with community representatives nominated by the Community Forum. Membership of the Council's new SPCs is as follows:

SPC 1 – Environment & Planning

Chair: Declan Doocey, James Tobin, Billy Kyne, John Carey, Mary Greene (Waterford County Council), Nicholas Sheehan (Dungarvan Town Council)

Maxine Keogh (Tramore Town Council), Jimmy O’Gorman (Lismore Town Council) Ken Wigham (Business / Commercial), Tim Guerin (Development / Construction) Margaret Leahy (Agriculture) Ray McGrath (Environment), Sharon Kelly (Community Forum).

Director of Services: Brian White.

During 2013, among the policy matters and issues considered by the committee were:

- Update on revised Planning and Development Act, 2000
- Amalgamation of Waterford City and County Councils
- Micro-wind turbines installed in County Waterford
- R.M.C.E.I. Plan for 2013
- Update on Local Area Plans 2013
- Japanese Knotweed in County Waterford
- Community Clean Ups and proposed new procedure
- Update on Green Schools
- Eirgrid Link Project
- Examination of Policy on Housing Need Applicants
- Discussion on impacts of Irish Water on Planning and Environment Services

SPC 2 – Transport & Infrastructure

Chair: Pat Nugent, Tom Cronin, Paddy O’Callaghan, Nora Flynn, Brendan Mansfield (Waterford County Council), Teresa Wright (Dungarvan Town Council) Joe O’Shea (Tramore Town Council), Jan Rotte (Lismore Town Council), Kevin Whelan, Billy Clancy (Business) Alan Fitzgerald (Trade Union), Stan Nangle (Environment) Gabriel Foley, Sharon Kelly (Community Forum).

Director of Services: Paul Daly

During 2013, among the policy matters and issues considered by the committee were:

- Developments relating to Irish Water
- Developments relating to the Rural Transport Program
- Catchment Flood Risk Assessment & Management Programme
- Smarter Travel
- Winter Maintenance plans
- Road Safety
- Rural Maintenance and Improvement Programme
- Beach Trading
- Services to be provided in housing estates
- Amalgamation of Waterford City and County Councils and implications for directorship.

SPC 3 – Housing, Corporate and Emergency Services

Chair: Pat Daly, Joe Conway, John Pratt, Tom Higgins (Waterford County Council), Nicky Sheehan (Dungarvan Town Council), Orla Russell (Lismore Town Council), Blaise Hannigan (Tramore Town Council), Bettie Marie Burger Smith (Business), Gary Wyse, John Kenneally, Julie O’Halloran (Community Forum). One nomination from the Trade Union Pillar was outstanding at year end.

Director of Services: Frank Curran.

During 2013, among the policy matters and issues considered by the committee were:

- South East Homeless Action Plan 2013-2016
- Traveller Accommodation Plan 2014- 2018
- Housing and Social issues

SPC 4 – Economic Development & Community Services

Chair: *Ger Barron, Ann Marie Power, Liam Brazil, Michael J. O’Ryan Damien Geoghegan (Waterford County Council), Anne Marie Rossiter (Dungarvan Town Council), Jan Rotte (Lismore Town Council), Pat Finnerty, Garrett Wyse, John McDonals (Business), Jim Bowdren (Community Forum), Michael Murphy (Agriculture).*

Director of Services: Denis McCarthy

During 2013, among the policy matters and issues considered by the committee were:

- Tramore Economic Plan
- The Gathering
- Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation ‘Action Plan for Jobs’
- Greenway
- Waterford Airport
- Waterford City & County Economic Plan

SPC 5 – Cultural & Heritage

Chair: *Lola O’Sullivan, John O’Leary, Brendán Coffey, Pat Fitzgerald (Waterford County Council), Michéal Cosgrove (Dungarvan Town Council), Bernard Leddy (Lismore Town Council), Tom Raine (Tramore Town Council), Stephen McCormack (Environment), Ann Harpur (Business), Rosemary Kennedy, Niall O’Brien, (Community Forum).*

Director of Services: Brian White.

During 2013, among the policy matters and issues considered by the committee were:

- Progress update on Culture & Heritage
- Strategy for Public Libraries 2013-2017
- Libraries Programme and Events 2013
- Heritage Programme and Events 2013
- Arts Programme and Events 2013
- County and City merger

CONFERENCES

Waterford County Council was represented at the following Conferences by its elected members during 2013:

CONFERENCE TITLE	DATES
2013	
Tourism in Recessionary Times - National Tourism Conference	17-19 January
Disputes between Neighbours & the Law	25-27 January
New Regional Governance in Ireland: Perspectives & Challenges	21. January
The Criminal Consequences of Breaching Local Authority Regulations	18-19 January
Budget Seminar 2013	11-13 January
Policy & Legal Issues Relating to Developing Wind Energy	25-26 January
Debt Solutions - The New Personal Insolvency Legislation	25-27 January
AMAI Spring Seminar	15/16 Feb
Equal Status (Amendment) Bill 2012	8-9 February
Protection of the Individual V's Freedom of Expression	15-16 Feb
Health Issues pertaining to Local Authority Housing	22-23 Feb
Public Health Seminar on HSE Tobacco Control Policy	22-24 Feb
Action Plan for Jobs	1-2 March
Local Government & Job Creation	22-23 March
Community & Local Development LEADER Funding & The Councillor	15-17 March
Local Authorities as drivers of Local Development	8-10 March
Drug & Alcohol Abuse Seminar	22-24 March
Tax Entitlements Seminar 2013	29-31 March
National Alcohol Awareness Week National Conference (1/2 Day)	20.March
LAMA Spring Seminar	5-6 April
Local Government & the Consumer	19-20 April
Eures Cross Border Partnership Tourism Conference 2013	24. April
Starting & Growing a Chamber of Commerce in your Community	12-14 April
The Economy & Entrepreneurship	11-12 April
The Future of Local Government in Ireland	12-13 April
Water Services Bill 2013	19-20 April
Meeting Management - Principles & Best Practice	26-28 April
Public Health Conference on HSE Tobacco Control Policy	10-12 May
West Cork Tourism Seminar	24-26 May
Substance Awareness Seminar	17-19 May
Contribution of Cohesion & Urban Policy to Economic Recovery	June. 19
Local Government: Learning from the Environment	June 14-15
Supporting Enterprise, Local Development & Economic Growth	June 14-15
Standards for Renting Houses	June 7-8
European Legislation & Local Authorities	June 7-9

Financing current Local Government Expenditure Programs	July 5 & 6
Reflecting on a decade of War & Revolution in Ireland 1912-1923	June. 15
Drug & Alcohol Abuse Seminar for Local Authorities	July 12 - 14
Future is Food Seminar on Employment Opportunities in Artisan Foods	July 26-28
Tax for the Business Sector	Aug 2 & 3
Climate Change Policy Towards 2050	July 12 & 13
Active Citizenship	July 29 & 30
Local Elections Seminar	July 12-13
Public Presentation & PR Management Seminar	August 23 - 25
Changing Social Relations of Housing Tenure	August 30 -31
Community Development	August 23-24
Benefits of Jobs Creation Tax Entitlements Seminar	August 16 - 18
MacGill Summer School	July 28-Aug 2
LAMA Autumn Seminar	October 11/12
AMAI Annual Conference	Sept 12 – 14
How the Elected Member can Combat Crime	Sept 28-29
The Life & Times of Michael Collins	Sept 27-29
New Tendering Requirements for Local Authorities	Oct 4-6
Pathways to Work 2013	Sept 27-28
La Touche Legacy 2013 Autumn Seminar - "Local Government - A New Dawn ?"	Sept 27-29
Motor Vehicle Road Tax, Duties & Licences	Sept 6 & 7
Irish Assoc of Suicidology "Building Resilience & Promoting Recovery"	Oct 9 & 10
Design Guidelines for the Planning & Development of Rural Housing	Oct 25-27
Sport & Community Planning	Oct 11-13
Preventing & Reducing Alcohol Related Harm	Oct 18-19
Supporting Enterprise in the Community	Oct 25-26
Local Government & Enterprise Development	Oct 18-19
Council Budgets: Preparation, Adoption & Amendments	Nov. 1- 3
The Effects of Budget 2014 on the Irish Economy	Nov. 15-17
Early Education & Childcare in Your Community	Nov 29-30
Fostering Stronger Communities	Nov 15-16
Community Based CCTV Scheme	Nov 22-23
Local Authority Employment - Law Practice & Procedure	Dec. 6-8
SIPO & Councillors Obligations	Nov 29/Dec 1
Budget 2014 for Canvassing	Nov 22- 24
Microsoft Excel Training Workshop for Councillors	Dec. 20-22
Housing Grants & Schemes	Dec 13 & 14
Flood Risk Assessment	10-11 May
Mental Health & Well Being Coping Skills for Elected Members	July 5-7