



# Meath County Council ♦ Annual Report 2005

## Meath County Council





3	<b>Introduction</b>
4	<b>Foreword</b>
5	<b>Local Democracy</b>
9	Community, Enterprise, Recreation, Culture and Heritage
29	Corporate Services
39	Environmental Services
44	Housing Services
48	Human Resources
56	Information Technology
59	Infrastructural Services
65	Planning & Economic Development
71	Town Councils
71	<b>Kells</b>
73	<b>Navan</b>
74	<b>Trim</b>
75	<b>APPENDIX I - 2005 Annual Financial Statement</b>
76	<b>APPENDIX II - Breakdown of Applications 2005</b>





## MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL ADOPTED A NEW CORPORATE PLAN IN 2005

In accordance with the guidelines for preparation of Corporate Plans published by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Meath County Council is obliged to prepare an annual operational plan for each year of the Corporate Plan's timeframe.

The Meath County Council 2005 Operational Plan outlined in more detail the activities to be undertaken by different service areas to deliver on the objectives of the Corporate Plan.

This 2005 Annual Report, the first published since the adoption of the Corporate Plan, is based on the 2005 Operational Plan and reports on specific actions, which expand on the normal duties associated with the administration of the respective service areas within Meath County Council.





## FOREWORD FROM AN CATHAOIRLEACH AND COUNTY MANAGER

We are delighted to present Meath County Council's Annual Report for 2005.

Each year the Council compiles an Annual Report outlining its accomplishments and progress on projects undertaken throughout the year by the Council on behalf of the people of Meath. It includes specific activities undertaken by the council and the 2005 Annual Report includes the first full annual progress report on the Corporate Plan 2004 – 2009.

During 2005 the Council continued to take on board the challenges facing the county, including that of meeting the needs of a growing population. We invested in excess of €209m on capital projects, many of which were completed during the year and others which are now at an advanced stage. Over €82m was spent on day to day operations and maintenance of essential services, and tremendous improvements have been made in the development of our physical and social infrastructure.

The review of the County Development Plan commenced with the preparation of Strategic Issues Papers in March 2005 and significant work was undertaken in the completion of the East Meath Local Area Plans. Other exciting initiatives launched during the year included the County and Group Broadband Scheme, the [workinmeath.ie](http://workinmeath.ie) Skills Database and new marketing and promotional initiatives to profile Meath, the Heritage Capital of Ireland, as a leading tourist attraction.

The collective input of the elected members and the executive ensured that the Council's comprehensive programme of works was undertaken in a most efficient and effective way during the year and we thank the members and staff for their continued commitment and dedication to County Meath throughout 2005.



Brian Fitzgerald  
Cathaoirleach



Tom Dowling  
County Manager



**Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) were established in Local Authorities to focus on policy development in areas related to council services. Meath County Council has four such committees as follows:**

## ENVIRONMENTAL SPC

<b>Cllr Patsy O' Neill (Chair)</b>	Wilkestown, Navan, Co. Meath	Cllr Navan Area
<b>Eddie Downey</b>	Monknewtown, Slane, Co. Meath	Pillar – Farming
<b>Patrick O' Brien</b>	East Commons, Station Road, Duleek, Co. Meath	Pillar – Community
<b>Dr Don Mac Auley</b>	The View, Wilkestown, Navan, Co. Meath	Pillar – Community
<b>Penny Mc Gowan</b>	The Secretary, Kells Chamber Office, Maudlin St., Kells, Co. Meath	Pillar – Business & Commercial
<b>Cllr Michael Lynch</b>	4 Whitehall, Oldcastle, Co. Meath	Cllr Kells Area
<b>Cllr James Mangan</b>	Rathfeigh, Tara, Co. Meath	Cllr Navan Area
<b>Cllr Ann Dillon Gallagher</b>	Loughbracken, Drumconrath, Navan, Co. Meath	Cllr Slane Area
<b>Cllr Peter Higgins</b>	High Street, Trim, Co. Meath	Cllr Trim Area
<b>Cllr Tom Kelly</b>	Ui Maine, Laytown, Trim, Co. Meath	Cllr Slane Area
<b>Cllr Brian Collins</b>	Cavan Road, Kells, Co. Meath	Cllr Kells Town Council
<b>Cllr Joseph Bonner</b>	Donaghmore, Ashbourne, Co. Meath	Cllr Dunshaughlin Area

## INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT SPC

<b>Cllr Oliver Brooks (Chair)</b>	Kileen Road, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath	Cllr Dunshaughlin Area
<b>Seamus Mc Gee</b>	Mc Gees Cross, Crossakiel, Kells, Co. Meath	Farming – Pillar
<b>John Maguire</b>	Irish Concrete Federation, 8 Newlands Park, Naas Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22	Pillar – Business & Commercial
<b>Miriam Mc Kenna</b>	Unit 30-32 Navan Enterprise Centre, Trim Road, Navan	Community
<b>Eamon Gavigan</b>	Mason Gavigan, 19 Ludlow Street, Navan.	Business & Commercial
<b>Cllr Noel Leonard</b>	4 St Patrick's Park, Dunboyne, Co. Meath	Cllr Dunshaughlin Area
<b>Cllr Shane Cassells</b>	8 Moatlands Drive, Navan, Co. Meath	Cllr Navan Area
<b>Cllr Jimmy Fegan</b>	Clonfane, Trim, Co. Meath.	Cllr Trim Area
<b>Cllr Charles Bobbett</b>	Kilbegnet, Fleenstown Lane, The Ward, Co. Dublin.	Cllr Dunshaughlin Area
<b>Cllr William Carey</b>	Newcastle, Enfield, Co. Meath.	Cllr Trim Area
<b>Cllr Andy Brennan</b>	3 Parnell Park, Navan	Mayor Navan Town Council
<b>Cllr Michael Gallagher</b>	Drumconrath, Navan, Co. Meath	Cllr Kells Area



## PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPC

<b>Clr Dominic Hannigan (Chair)</b>	68 Lagavooren Manor, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Clr Slane Area
<b>Emer Dunne</b>	Gilltown, Beauparc, Navan	Farming – Pillar
<b>Oliver Reilly</b>	Clegarrow, Enfield, Co. Meath	Trade Union – Pillar
<b>Shaun Lynch</b>	Newlanes House, Duleek, Co. Meath	Community
<b>Sean Boyle</b>	Tara House, 38 Trimgate Street, Navan	Business & Commercial
<b>Clr Bryan Reilly</b>	Rockfield Road, Kells, Co. Meath	Clr Kells Area
<b>Clr Tommy Reilly</b>	Ardsallagh, Navan, Co. Meath	Clr Navan Area
<b>Clr John V Farrelly</b>	Hurdlestown, Kells, Co. Meath	Clr Kells Area
<b>Clr Jim Holloway</b>	Farganstown, Boyne Road, Navan, Co. Meath	Clr Navan Area
<b>Clr Brian Fitzgerald</b>	Warrenstown, Kilcock, Co. Meath	Clr Dunshaughlin Area
<b>Clr Joe Reilly</b>	Faughan Hill, Bohermeen, Navan, Co. Meath	Clr Navan Area

## SOCIAL, COMMUNITY & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT SPC

<b>Clr Nick Killian (Chair)</b>	Ballybin, Ratoath, Ashbourne, Co. Meath	Clr Dunshaughlin Area
<b>Brendan Conway</b>	54 Millbrook, Johnstown, Navan, Co. Meath	Trade Union – Pillar
<b>Maureen Kerrigan</b>	Bohermeen ICA, Cortown, Kells, Co. Meath	Community
<b>James Doorley</b>	D.F.I., St Annes Community Centre, Railway Street, Navan, Co. Meath	Community
<b>Patricia Hehir</b>	The Moate, Rathmoylon, Co. Meath	Community
<b>Clr Seamus Murray</b>	Cullentra, Longwood, Co. Meath	Clr Trim Area
<b>Clr Jenny D’Arcy</b>	Apt 1, 7 Trimgate Street, Navan, Co. Meath	Clr Navan Area
<b>Clr Eugene Cassidy</b>	Possextown, Nobber, Co. Meath	Clr Kells Area
<b>Clr Trevor Golden</b>	Church Lane, Trim, Co. Meath.	Clr Trim Town Council
<b>Clr Phillip Cantwell</b>	“Villa Maria”, Manorland, Trim, Co. Meath	Clr Trim Area
<b>Clr Jimmy Cudden</b>	23 St Cianan’s Villas, Duleek, Co. Meath	Clr Slane Area
<b>Clr Patrick Boshell</b>	Laytown Road, Julianstown, Co. Meath	Clr Slane Area
<b>Clr Liz Mc Cormack</b>	3 Park View, Athboy, Co. Meath	Clr Kells Area

**Meath County Council was represented on the following committees during 2005:**

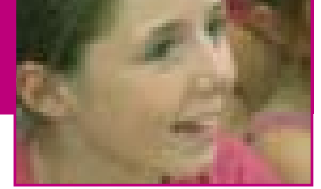
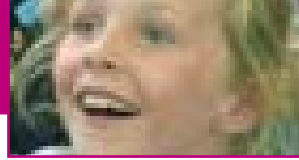
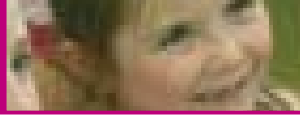
NAME OF COMMITTEE	NAME
<b>The Mid East Regional Authority</b>	Cllr Brian Fitzgerald Cllr Patsy O' Neill Cllr Jim Holloway Cllr Jimmy Fegan Cllr Michael Lynch Cllr. James Mangan Cllr Tommy Reilly Cllr Seamus Murray
<b>The Charlton Endowment Committee</b>	Cllr. Michael Lynch Cllr. Bryan Reilly
<b>The Dublin Transport Office Advisory</b>	Cllr Charles Bobbett Cllr Oliver Brooks
<b>The General Council of County Councils</b>	Cllr William Carey Cllr Jimmy Fegan Cllr Seamus Murray
<b>The Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd.</b>	Cllr Shane Cassells
<b>The Local Authority Members Association</b>	Cllr Jimmy Cudden
<b>The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative.</b>	Cllr Jenny D'Arcy Cllr James Mangan Cllr Anne Dillon-Gallagher Cllr Tommy Reilly Cllr Noel Leonard
<b>Meath County Enterprise Board</b>	Cllr Patrick Boshell Cllr Eugene Cassidy Cllr Noel Leonard Cllr James Mangan
<b>Meath Leader II</b>	Cllr Patsy O'Neill Cllr Dominic Hannigan
<b>Meath Local Sports Partnership Ltd.</b>	Cllr Tommy Reilly
<b>Mid East Regional Tourism Organisation</b>	Cllr John V. Farrelly
<b>Navan Enterprise Centre Company Ltd.</b>	Cllr Jim Holloway Cllr Shane Cassells Cllr Tommy Reilly
<b>Regional Advisory Council, Teagasc</b>	Cllr Seamus Murray
<b>Rural Water Monitoring Committee</b>	Cllr Eugene Cassidy Cllr Michael Lynch Cllr Noel Leonard Cllr Anne Dillon-Gallagher Cllr Seamus Murray
<b>Tara Mines Environmental Monitoring</b>	Cllr James Mangan Cllr Jim Holloway Cllr Joe Reilly Cllr Patsy O'Neill Cllr Phillip Cantwell Cllr Shane Cassells Cllr Tommy Reilly



NAME OF COMMITTEE	NAME
<b>Meath Tourism Board</b>	Cllr Jimmy Fegan Cllr Tommy Reilly Cllr John V. Farrelly
<b>Meath VEC</b>	Cllr Bryan Reilly Cllr Patrick Boshell Cllr Tommy Reilly Cllr Seamus Murray Cllr Nick Killian Cllr Jenny D'Arcy Cllr Charles Bobbett Cllr Dominic Hannigan Cllr Joe Reilly Cllr Noel Leonard Cllr William Carey
<b>Meath Energy Management Agency</b>	Cllr Patsy O'Neill Cllr Tom Kelly Cllr Michael Gallagher
<b>Library Advisory</b>	Cllr Patrick Boshell Cllr Michael Lynch Cllr Peter Higgins
<b>Southern &amp; Eastern Regional Assembly</b>	Cllr Michael Lynch Cllr Jim Holloway
<b>Protocol Committee</b>	Cllr James Mangan Cllr Bryan Reilly Cllr Brian Fitzgerald Cllr Seamus Murray Cllr Patsy O' Neill Cllr William Carey Cllr Tom Kelly Cllr Jimmy Cudden
<b>CPG</b>	Cllr Brian Fitzgerald Cllr Oliver Brooks Cllr Nick Killian Cllr Patsy O' Neill Cllr Dominic Hannigan







# COMMUNITY, ENTERPRISE, RECREATION, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

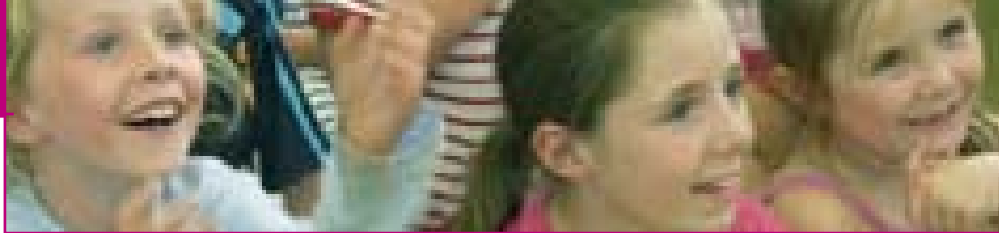
## CORE ACTIVITIES: THE COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE SECTION HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR:

- Community & Enterprise Development
- Meath County Development Board
- Pride of Place Initiatives
- Heritage
- Arts
- Library Service
- Community, Recreation, Leisure and Amenity Facilities/Community Grants Scheme
- Rapid Programme
- Meath Local Sports Partnership

## Strategic objective

To develop and promote a wide range of programmes and services that empower people to participate in community activity and development; and to work together within the Council, with communities and with stakeholders, to best effect to build confident sustainable communities.





## Meath County Development Board

### Strategies

To continue to support and facilitate Meath County Development Board in implementing its ten-year integrated strategy for County Meath.

To promote Meath County Development Board within Meath Local Authorities as a strategic multi-agency partnership for the advancement of cross-sectoral initiatives.

### Review of Le Chéile

In June 2005, Meath County Development Board (CDB) launched Meath In Transition: A Review of Le Chéile – An Integrated Strategy for Meath to 2012, incorporating an Action Plan 2005-2008. Meath In Transition: A socioeconomic Profile was also launched. The latter provides a comprehensive overview of the county and has had a wide range of uses including informing the review of the County Development Plan. The overall review was considered an important part of the implementation phase of the strategy in terms of its evaluation and monitoring and was part of a nationwide review process. Meath was one of the first counties to complete its review process.

The purposes of the review included the consideration of any changes in the environment in which the CDB operates that might impact on the work of the Board, the identification of a limited number of priority integrative actions on which the Board would concentrate over a three-year period and a work programme to implement these actions.

In 2005, Meath County Development Board met six times, including a joint regional CDB meeting held in February 2005 in National University of Ireland Maynooth on Enterprise & Job Creation and a special meeting held in November 2005 to consider the proposal submitted by Meath LEADER and South Meath TIDE under the Cohesion Initiative.



LAUNCH OF MEATH IN TRANSITION - 13TH JUNE 2005

L-R: Tadhg McDonnell, Director of Services; Prof. Jim Walsh, NUIM & NIRSA; Cllr. Tommy Reilly, Cathaoirleach; Tom Dowling, County Manger; Minister Noel Dempsey; Cllr. Oilver Brooks, Chair of MCDB

### CDB Submissions

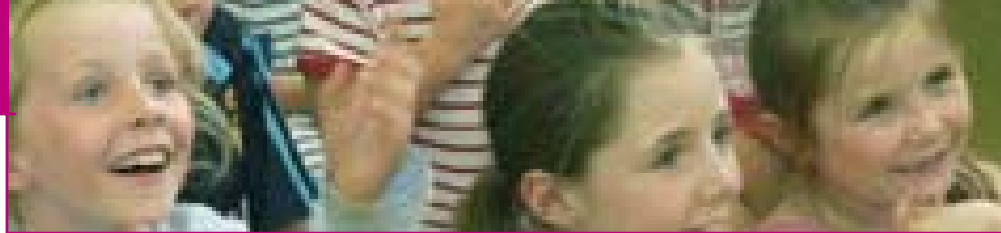
During 2005, the Office of Community and Enterprise, Meath County Council prepared a number of submissions on behalf of Meath CDB. These included submissions regarding the following:

- Meath County Council County Development Plan Review
- An Garda Síochanna Policing Plan 2006

### CDB Tracking System

In 2005, the Office of Community & Enterprise also acquired Project Vision, a software package that will enable CDB member agencies to update and monitor the implementation of actions contained in both the strategy and review. Training for CDB member agencies took place in October 2005.





### Meath Education & Training Forum

Meath Education & Training Forum, a sub-committee of Meath County Development Board, continued its work in 2005 with particular emphasis on the completion of the Meath Education & Training Audit and progressing the implementation of the Meath Strategy for Higher Education.

The Forum is made up of representatives from a number of organisations including Meath County Council, Co. Meath VEC, the Chambers of Commerce, Department of Education and Science, ADM funded companies, Meath County Enterprise Board, FÁS, Department of Social and Family Affairs and Meath County Childcare Committee.

### Meath Investment in Training and Employment (MITE)

The Office of Community & Enterprise represents both Meath County Council and Meath County Development Board on the MITE Development Partnership. MITE is a programme funded under the EU EQUAL Initiative focusing on adaptability, training and employment. Meath County Council supports this programme through full participation on the DP and Management Committee, both of which were established in 2005.

### Strategic Planning Action Network (SPAN)

The SPAN Project, funded under the EU Interreg IIIB Programme, focuses on two central themes: strategic territorial planning and multi-level governance across urban and rural settings. Meath County Development Board and Meath County Council are participating in one of two

pilot territories in Ireland and this participation relates to the research on socio-economic trends in the county, conducted by NIRSA, and the implementation of the CDB strategy. In October 2005, Meath County Council participated in the international SPAN conference held in Dublin and hosted a delegation of international delegates during a field trip to County Meath, also in October.

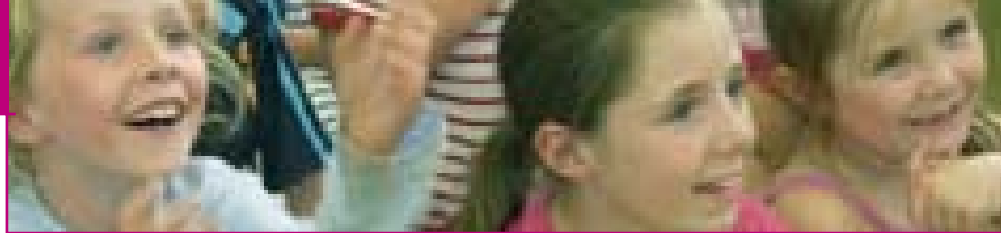
### Improved Cohesion – Local Development & Community Proposals

In 2004, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requested that CDBs facilitate the process of bringing together local community and development agencies to identify proposals for the Improvement of Local and Community Development Structures and Programmes through Improved Cohesion. Following a submission containing a number of proposals, a grant of €40,000 was received from the Department to progress three cohesion projects.

In 2005, the following projects were substantially progressed:

- An audit of local community and development structures;
- Training for frontline staff;
- Combined purchasing initiative.





## Community Development

### Strategy

To highlight, promote and establish the benefits of community development principles and processes within the policies of Meath Local Authorities and their service delivery.

### Community & Voluntary Sector Database

In 2005, the Office of C&E, MCC continued to encourage community & voluntary groups to register on its database. Approximately 750 groups are registered and these groups are regularly contacted with details of projects and initiatives being run by Meath County Council, Meath Community Forum, other state agencies, etc. Registered groups are also eligible to nominate and vote in the election of Community & Voluntary Sector Representatives.

### Community & Voluntary Sector - Election of Representatives

Following an election process, completed in February 2005, the thirteen positions available to the C&V Sector were filled; these positions are: Meath CDB (2), the four Strategic Policy Committees of Meath County Council (7), Meath County Childcare Committee (1), Meath Local Sports Partnership (1) and the North East Regional Drugs Task Force (2).

These representatives, along with committee members from the active Area Fora, form a Steering Group that oversees the activities of the County Community Forum. The C&E Section continues to support these representatives and the County and Area Community Fora.

### Meath County Community Forum & Electoral Area Community Fora

In October 2005, Meath Community Forum hosted a public meeting with guest speaker, Dr. Tom Collins. The Steering Group also produced a newsletter that was circulated to all registered groups.

In 2005, Navan Area Forum held a number of events including an AGM, a multi-cultural day, a meet & greet day and an autism information



COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY GROUP DRAW  
Presentation of PC to 9th Meath Scouts Group, Ratoath at Meath County Council meeting - 7th February 2005 (Dunshaughlin Area members)

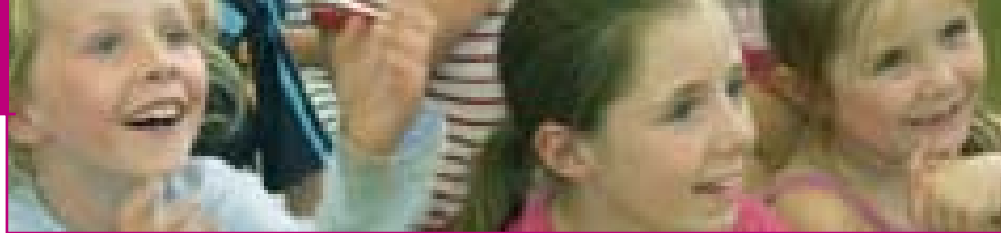
evening. South Meath (Trim) Forum also had a successful year with a number of information events held in various locations; themes included rural transport, community development, training and community alert schemes.

Each of the active fora receives a small annual grant from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, channelled by the Community & Enterprise Section, Meath County Council and for which they must submit a Work Programme and Activity Report. Discussions also commenced with local community groups in the east Meath area to re-establish the East Meath Community Forum.

### Community Information

The C&E Section of MCC has endeavoured to facilitate information exchange to and between communities through a variety of media. The initiatives undertaken have proven successful and it is intended to continue, and where possible extend, efforts in this regard. Many of the initiatives below have been supported by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government through its grant aid for the support of community fora and development.





### 'Community Matters'

In 2005, two issues of the community newsletter, 'Community Matters' was produced and circulated. Each of the CDB member organisations are invited to submit relevant articles for inclusion where these articles are of general community interest. Each issue is circulated to every household and business address in County Meath, with a total circulation of 50,000. This initiative is a very positive initiative with a wide range of information for different sectors of the community.

## Community & Enterprise Development

### Strategy

To identify, develop and implement a range of community development initiatives, including Community Information Technology initiatives, that will encourage community participation and facilitate community empowerment, thereby enhancing the role of Meath Local Authorities in community development

### Community IT Development

In August 2005, Meath County Council recruited a new Community IT Development Officer who is responsible for developing a number of initiatives including Communities Online Together (COT), the community section of meath.ie, the preparation of a Community IT Development Strategy, the schools online initiative, etc.

In 2005, the following progress was made:

#### Communities Online Together

1. Review of status of existing websites.

All existing websites were assessed for their status in relation to:

- Quality of content and frequency of updates.
- Existence of suitable branding (i.e. banner and colour scheme)
- Presence of link to an accessible version
- Search engine optimisation

2. Survey conducted to gain feedback directly from groups, in order to ascertain the effectiveness and suitability of the functionality provided and the perception of the usability of the existing system. The results of this survey were used to inform an upgrade to the system.

3. Website Content Management System upgraded.

- New user friendly interface prepared.
- New features added as per suggestions received via survey.

- Existing features secured through anti-spam measures
- New support material including manual and support website drafted.

4. Training Sessions continued on a monthly basis. Currently over 270 community and voluntary groups had registered to participate with over 190 having received their training and/or operating their own sites.

5. A customised version of the new Content Management System is to be developed for schools in 2006. This will be offered to all schools in the County in 2006, linking in with the Governments' plans for broadband connectivity for schools.

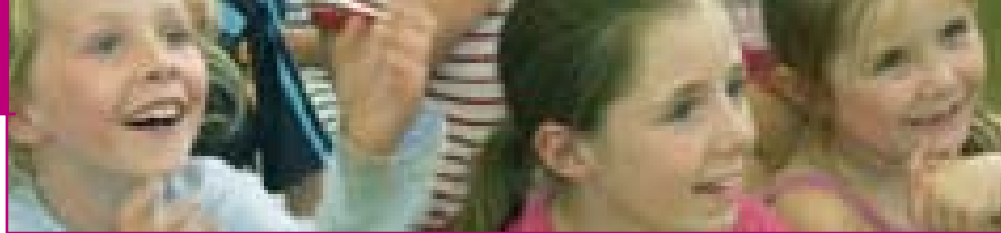
### Community Section of [www.meath.ie](http://www.meath.ie)

The Meath County Council website [www.meath.ie](http://www.meath.ie), includes a Community Section that contains information of general community interest including Council community initiatives, initiatives being run by other organisations, local information and events, community representation, etc. This links closely with the sites established under COT as events and other information are featured on both sites.

### Meath4Funding

In May 2005, the Office of C&E launched a new facility available free of charge, for community groups, businesses and social enterprises.





Meath4Funding offers free access to an innovative service that provides information on grants and supports available. This comprehensive funding database is constantly updated and covers EU, national, regional and local grant and support information. This service is available on [www.meath.ie](http://www.meath.ie).  
See

### Meath Care Portal Proposal & Submission

A proposal for the development of a Care Portal website was drafted and submitted to funding sources. The proposal recommends the design and development of a single source of relevant information for disabled people, older people and vulnerable adults in order to:

- Make information and services more accessible to everyone
- Provide information and services for people in their own home at any time of the day or night
- Reduce isolation and social exclusion
- Help people to make informed decisions

about their care and lives.

To ensure maximum impact and benefit the release of the website will be complimented by:

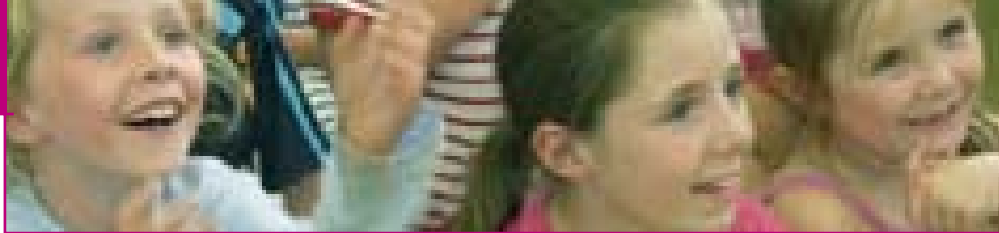
1. The provision of free and accessible PC workstations in key locations throughout the county.
2. Training in the use of the service.

### Education & Training

Meath Education & Training Audit was launched in December 2005 and identified the education and training facilities and services available to the people of County Meath. It also included a number of recommendations to address gaps and duplication identified.

In 2005, a process for progressing the implementation of the Meath Strategy for Higher Education was discussed at CDB level and agreement reached around the approach to be taken. It is intended to finalise this approach in 2006 and to commence with the appointment of an Education Development Officer for Further & Higher Education.





## Social Inclusion

### Strategy

To increase awareness of and address social exclusion, both within and external to Meath Local Authorities through consultation and cooperation.

### County Development Board - Social Inclusion Measures (SIM) Group

In May 2005, the SIM Group supported a concert held in St. Joseph's Hospital, Trim as part of the Bealtaine Festival "Celebrating Creativity in Older Age". The SIM group also supported a multi-culturalism project, entitled 'Family Fun Day', held in June 2005, with other agencies and voluntary bodies in Meath. The aim of the project is to enhance the social integration of the many newcomers to our country and to provide an opportunity for different nationalities to meet, make new friends, network and learn a little about each others cultural differences and similarities.

### Comhairle na nÓg

Further to the recommendations set by the National Children's Office, Meath County Development Board consulted with young people in the county through a local Comhairle na nÓg. In February 2005, in association with the Aisling Group, approximately 60 young people participated in the Meath Comhairle na nÓg.

### Dáil na nÓg

In March 2005, Five young people from Meath were selected from the Comhairle na nÓg process to represent Meath at the 2005 Dáil na nÓg which took place in Croke Park, Dublin.

### Youth Endeavour Awards/Young Citizen Awards

In May 2005, Meath County Council launched the Youth Endeavour Awards, the aim of which was to recognise and acknowledge the contribution of young people in their community. Subsequently,

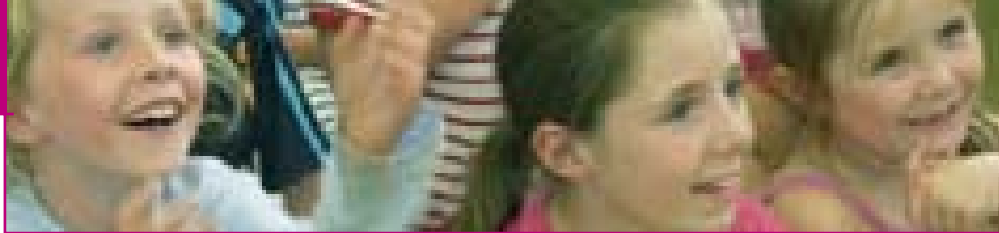
the Young Citizen Award Scheme was introduced as part of the 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education. This scheme, endorsed by President Mary McAleese, was intended to recognise young people who participate in their local communities through active citizenship. Nominations for both schemes were invited and a presentation evening planned for early 2006.

### Disability

Funding was received under National Disability Strategy – Disability Bill 2004 and Local Government Sectoral Plan for the following projects completed in 2005:

- Make Accessibility audit of Meath County Council Facilities
- Make Design/Planning process for the provision of lift at MCC County Hall, a protected structure.
- Make In conjunction with Meath Local Sports Partnership Training Programme for leaders, parents, carers & volunteers involved in the running of clubs for Disabled.
- Make Provision of lift in refurbished /extended Kells One Stop Shop
- Make Provision of Disabled Toilet facilities for public at Duleek One Stop Shop  
Provision of information on Meath Web site to WAI Standards
- Make Provision of a 0.6km "Easy route/trail" at Balrath Woods to Facilitate use by wheelchair users etc.
- Make Provision of Enhanced Facilities at Libraries





## Library Service

### Strategies

To deliver a modern library and information service through the implementation of a five-year Library Development Programme.

To encourage and increase membership, and the use of the wide range of Library services which are available across all sections of the community.

### Meath County Council Library Service

Continued commitment to the Library Development Plan 2001-2005 has resulted in further progress in the areas of reader development, multicultural services, local studies and events. A new 5 year Library Development Plan 2005-2009 was adopted by the full council in April 2005.

#### Highlights of 2005 included:

Official Launch of the 'Libraries and Cultural Diversity Project' by President Mary McAleese at Ashbourne Library in March 2005:

The focus of this project was to investigate multicultural library service provision internationally and nationally in order to help inform strategic policy planning for the further development of such services in Irish Public Libraries. The project also incorporated the first ever Irish Public Library survey of library usage by foreign nationals.

The Project was commissioned by An Chomhairle Leabharleanna (Library Council of Ireland) and involved three local library authorities, namely Dublin City Council Libraries, Meath County Council Library Services and Waterford City Council Library Services.

The project's aims were to explore how Irish Libraries can provide a better library service to the multicultural society in Ireland today. The President was shown a number of exhibits by County Librarian, Ciarán Mangan. The exhibits included a selection of books in various

languages and a collection of books of Irish authors in numerous languages. The President was also shown online resources of various foreign newspapers and the use of Russian keyboards that are now available in all Meath Libraries.

The president also viewed the schools service multicultural collection, which is available for loan for all Meath Schools via the Schools Library Service.



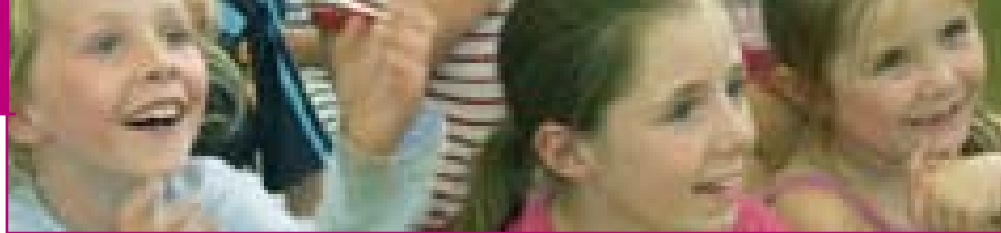
President McAleese with Cathaoirleach Cllr. Tommy Reilly; County Manager, Tom Dowling; County Librarian, Ciarán Mangan and Directors of Services Kevin Stewart and Brendan McGrath with Norma McDermott, Director of the Irish Library Council.

### Major upgrades of branch libraries

Athboy, Kells, Nobber and Trim libraries received substantial funding under the National Disability Strategy. The libraries received funding to replace existing fixed shelving and counter units with modern, mobile, flexible units. In addition to improving access for all users with disabilities the improvements also allow branch libraries to facilitate large-scale events.







### New services for the Visually Impaired

Every branch library in the county also received funding towards a video magnifier to aid the visually impaired.

Optical scanning facilities for the visually impaired were also introduced in Ashbourne, Dunboyne, Oldcastle and Trim.

### Ashbourne Library Borrowers

Ashbourne Library registered over half the population in the first 8 months of opening: The new Ashbourne Library registered 5,000 borrowers in its first 8 months of opening. Mary Oakes from Pinewood Court Ashbourne was the 5,000th borrower registered, when she came to the library to register with her husband Ciaran and her 3 children Ava, Emma and Matthew.

### Trim Library Book Club

Trim Library Book Club appeared on RTE's 'Afternoon Show' in February 2005.

Three member of Trim's adult book club appeared on RTE's Afternoon show to discuss their book of the month. The show was hosted by Bláthnaid Ní Chofaigh and the book discussed was the popular 'Da Vinci Code' by Dan Brown.

### Building Awards

Public Library Building Awards for UK & Ireland July 2005: Ashbourne Library was long-listed for the "Heart of the Community" award.

### Internet Project

Internet Lifesteps Project launched in Meath Libraries December 2005:

The Lifesteps project is a series of booklets, designed for people who have not used the Internet before. They cover a broad range of topics from Farming, Retirement, Music, Government information, finding a job and learning to drive, to name but of few of the 17 guides currently available. These guides were produced and prepared by expert library staff around the country. The subjects have been selected by library staff members in response to common queries they receive from members of the public nationwide. The project was funded by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and managed by the Library

Council of Ireland.

Meath Libraries were involved in preparing the booklet on 'Finding a Job' which was researched by Senior Library Assistant, Carmel Doggett. It features a step by step guide on using the Internet to find a job in Ireland. It covers recruitment websites, company websites, Government agencies, Interview skills and techniques and tips on CV writing.

### Gaeilge

Fuair Leabharlann Chontae na Mí breis is €7,000 ó Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge le fás, feabhas agus forbairt a dheanamh ar bailiúcháin leabhar gaeilge an chontae. Tá na leabhar nua ar fáil i leabharlanna ar fud na chontae.

### Local Studies

**The local studies department organised a number of popular events this year which included:**

• **Genealogy Courses in Ashbourne and Navan:**

In 2005 the department facilitated genealogy courses in Ashbourne and Navan libraries. These were run in February and September over a ten-week period. Participants learned how to use resources such as census returns, parish records and valuations. The best websites for family research were demonstrated and advice given on how to gain the most value from repositories such as the National Library, the National Archives and the Local Studies department in Navan library.

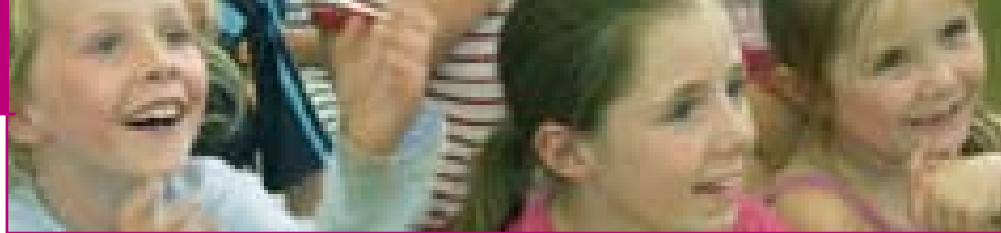
Over 60 adults took part in the courses. All participants were awarded certificates in basic genealogical skills.

• **Ask About Ireland work shops:**

The local history department also organised a series of workshops promoting the 'Ask About Ireland' web site at the start of the year. Meath material on the site includes tobacco growing in Meath, thatched houses of the county and the famine years in Dunshaughlin workhouse. The department added more audio and visual content later in the year on Turlough O'Carolan – his life and legacy. An important feature of the site is the student zone which has been shown to several school groups.

[www.askaboutireland.ie](http://www.askaboutireland.ie)





• **LMFM Radio broadcasts Library's Audio Book**

With permission from the local studies department, LMFM radio broadcast chapters from the Library's Audio Book 'Would They Were With Us Again' by Ultan Brady. This nostalgic memoir of rural life in Meath resulted in new interest in the book, and the audio CD is available in all libraries in the county.

**Reader Development**

• **Children's Book Festival:**

Hundreds of school children all over the county benefited this year from the wide range of activities and author events organised by Meath County Council Libraries. The Service organised over 60 events countywide to celebrate this annual national event.

Meath schools were contacted with invitations to visit their Local library and meet award-winning authors such as Liz Weir, Brianog Brady Dawson, Kieran Fanning, Conor Kostic, Mary Arrigan, Oisín McCann and Vincent McDonnell.

There was also a county-wide colouring competition for the Under 4 age groups and the 5 – 8s sponsored by RTE's Tina Mation.

The Library Service also organised a poetry competition for the older 10 – 13 year age group with prizes sponsored by Easons Ashbourne.

This year, organisers of the national event also organised a national ballot where children are asked to nominate their favourite authors.

A special children's book club event was organised with Author Kieran Fanning, author of the code breaker books 'Voyage to victory' and 'Trapdoor to treachery'.

Michael Moylan also presented 'Irish History live' workshops in some of the larger Meath Libraries after school where children got the opportunity to access real armour, tools and costumes from long ago.

• **'The Reading Voyage' Summer reading scheme launched in Meath Libraries:**  
The Libraries Summer programme began on the 1st of July in all Meath Libraries with the launch of 'The Reading Voyage'. This was a summer reading scheme for the 4 – 12 year olds where children agreed to read six books during July and August and in return they received a free reading log, stickers, fridge magnet, a reading compass and a certificate of achievement when they have completed the scheme. Approximately over 600

children took part in the scheme countywide. It was the first summer reading scheme the service carried out in all Meath Libraries. It has been so successful, it has been decided to run it on a yearly basis. The scheme is run in partnership with the UK's Reading Agency.

• **Ashbourne Library Launches Graphics Novels Collection:**

Ashbourne Library launched their Graphic Novels collection with the help of transition year students from Ashbourne Community School and McDonalds Ashbourne in May 2005.

The collection includes a 'Heroes and Villains' section covering well-known heroes such as Spiderman, Batman, Flash Gordon, Dan Dare, X-Men and many more. The collection has also a humorous selection, which includes the popular 'Simpsons' series. There is also a science fiction selection covering 'Star Wars' and 'Star Trek' material.

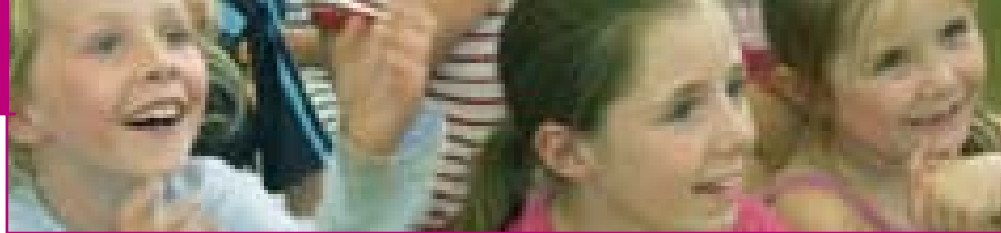


Transition year students from Ashbourne Community College with their teacher Anu Meehan, McDonalds marketing and Executive Librarian Mary Murphy.

**Harry Potter book launch in Meath Libraries:**

Meath Libraries organised Magician events in their Navan, Ashbourne, Dunboyne and Trim Libraries to celebrate the launch of the new 'Harry Potter and The Half- Blood Prince' book in July. Over 500 children attended these events. Copies were made available to the Libraries' children's book clubs and over 50 copies were purchased for the demand of the book county-wide.





## Library Events

### Library Summer Programme:

Meath County Council Library Service and Arts Office teamed up this year to offer a wide range of summer activities for children. The Summer programme began on the 1st of July in all Meath Libraries with the Reading Voyage.

The Summer programme ran throughout July and August and included a wide range of events including magic shows with Rondo the Magician in the larger libraries of the County, Summer arts and crafts, yoga storytelling, Children's book Clubs, storytellers, Puppet shows to name but a few. There was also Hip-Hop dance workshops and Palm reading for fun workshops for the 10 – 13 age groups.

### New Music Club at Ashbourne Library

This year Meath County Council Library Service was successful in running a Musical Appreciation Club in Ashbourne Library.

The Club explores aspects of classical music, traditional Irish music and popular musicals in an informal setting and also draws on a wide range of audio visual material including video, DVDs, cassettes and CDs. Live music from local musicians is also arranged on special occasions. To facilitate this club it was decided to relocate the County's main music collection to Ashbourne Library.

The club is facilitated by staff member Teresa Carley, who is also a local Classical Singer and has a degree in music. She also is an associate of the Trim Musical Society and has directed several musicals, therefore having a wide depth of knowledge to keep the sessions interesting and interactive.

Membership to the club is free and the club has a regular number of fifteen to twenty enthusiastic participants each week. Members are invited to share musical experiences and bring in their own material to share with other members.



Rondo the Magician at Ashbourne Library with some of the 200 children that attended the event.



Children at Navan Library attending the Puca Puppet show

## Library Performance Indicators:

### Average number of public opening hours per week

Full-time Libraries	40.66
Part-time Libraries	17.00

Number of registered users as a % of the local population	16.39%
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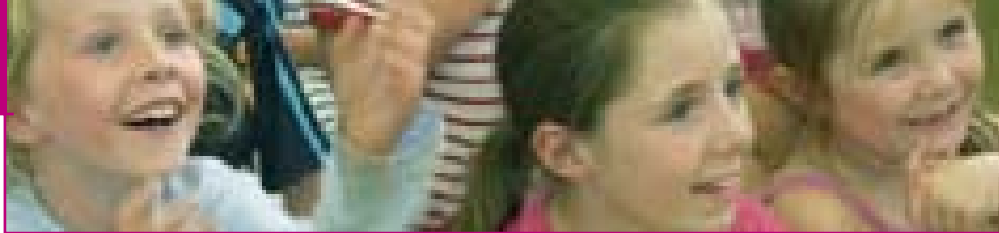
### Number of items issued per head of population

Books	2.65
Non-Book	0.26

% of Libraries that offer internet access	100%
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Number of internet sessions provided per 1,000 population	520
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## Meath Arts Service

### Strategy

To launch and implement the second County Arts Development Plan

### Arts Plan

Mary Cloake, Director of The Arts Council, launched the Second County Arts Development Plan in May. The Plan aims to facilitate further the advancement of the arts in the county over the period 2005 –2007. It sets out measures to further formalise support structures and create opportunities for the Arts both within the Local Authority and the county. It recognises the importance of the arts in areas of personal development, community development, employment and tourism. Cathaoirleach Tommy Reilly made a presentation to Ms Cloake on the night to mark her visit to County Meath.

### Strategy

To continue to promote, facilitate and expand participatory arts initiatives towards social, cultural, community and educational development.

### Children's ArtsFest

Once again the 2005 Children's ArtsFest, aimed at children from 4 to 12 years, was very successful in terms of access, attendance, geographical spread, quality and diversity of art forms. Held in conjunction with the Library Service the programme of events ran from the 2nd of July to August 24th. In total 1,500 children attended workshops, performances and storytelling in seven venues throughout the county. Attendance figures were well up previous years from 570 in 2004.

storytelling, fast becoming lost in our society. This community project was supported by the Arts Council and Meath County Council Arts Office.

### Bealtaine 2005

Wilkinstown Active Retirement Group hosted an exhibition of their work completed over an eight-week workshop programme on June 18th. The official opening was preformed by Leinster MEP Mairead McGuinness and attended by 120 local people. The visual arts workshops were facilitated by artist Niamh Smyth, a participant in the 'Arts in Context' training programme in 2004.

### Arts and Older Persons Programme

Building on the success of last years programme the Arts Office supported Ashbourne and District Senior Citizens Association and Kilbeggan/Carlanstown Active Retirement Group with visual arts workshops.

### Strategy

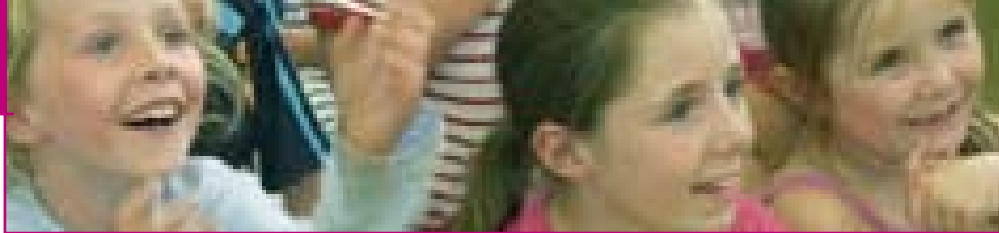
To continue the development and sustainability of professional arts practices and practitioners in the County, taking into account the number of professionals now located in Meath.

### Professional Arts Development

Aurora Theater Company, Oldcastle opened their original production of 'The Good Sister' by Noelle Harrison in the Ramor Theater in Virginia. The play combined drama, dance and projected film scenes. The production was joint funded by Meath County Council Arts Office in conjunction with Cavan and Westmeath Arts Offices.

The 'Forgetmenot' project culminated in a book launch in Nobber Library on the 22nd of October by County Librarian Ciaran Mangan. The fruits of a three-month residency facilitated by Helen Blackhurst with participants from Nobber, Kilmainaghamwood and Kilbeg, the book contained 42 stories recalling times past and childhood in the Nobber area. An invaluable addition to the local studies department of Meath County Library, this publication captured the art of





### Public Art

Under the % for Art Scheme Remco De Fouw's sculpture 'Silent Witness' was installed outside Ashbourne Civic Offices. The installation of this piece marked the completion of five public art features in the East Meath area.

### New Bursaries and Awards

Meath County Council announced three new awards and bursaries in 2005. From 2006 Meath County Council will have eight Art Grant and Award Schemes in operation. The diversity of these schemes provides access to funding to a wide range of organisations and individuals both amateur and professional. The supports provided by these awards are invaluable to organisations, groups, practitioners and the long-term sustainable development of the arts in Meath. In 2005, 86 grants were allocated with the total value allocated per 1,000 population at 156.46.

### Tony Finnegan Memorial Award

In October Tom Dowling, County Manager, launched the inaugural Tony Finnegan Memorial award in honour of Mr Finnegan's outstanding contribution to Harp education in Meath. This Bursary, run in partnership with the Meath Harp School, is intended to assist outstanding pupils at the Harp School attend the annual festival for Irish harp 'An Chuirt Chruitreachta' Termonfechin, Co. Louth. The Meath Harp School board in consultation with the Arts Office will decide award winners. Two awards will be made annually.

### Strategy

To provide a balanced series of cultural events, annually, across all arts disciplines.

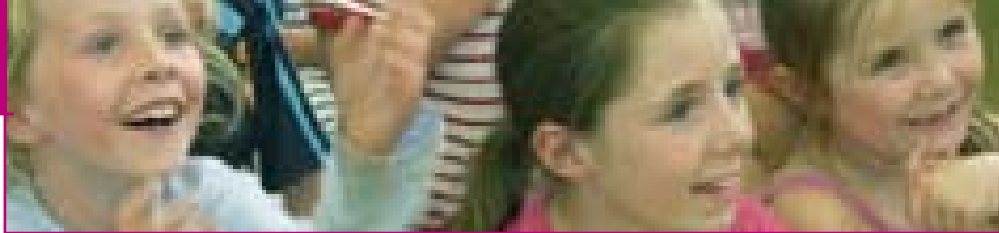
### Festivals and Events

Festivals supported this year were the O'Carolan Harp Festival, Nobber, Le Cheile Contemporary Arts Festival, Oldcastle, Fleadh na Mí, and Kells Heritage Festival.

#### Events included:

- National Chamber Choir in St Mary's Church of Ireland, Navan
- 'Virelai' Early Music Group, St Mary's Church of Ireland, Navan
- Meath Harp Ensemble Performance on the Hill of Tara on the Solstice, June 21st
- 'Celtic Connections' The Best of Irish Tour, Culturlann Na Cille, Gaelscoil, Ashbourne
- 'Trio Resistances', The Boolies, Oldcastle
- 'Ensemble Nordly's' St Mary's Church of Ireland, Navan
- Scoil Sheamis Ennis tradition Irish music workshops





## Navan RAPID Programme

### Strategy

To secure funding and resources to revitalise areas through planning, investment, integration and empowerment.

### Navan RAPID

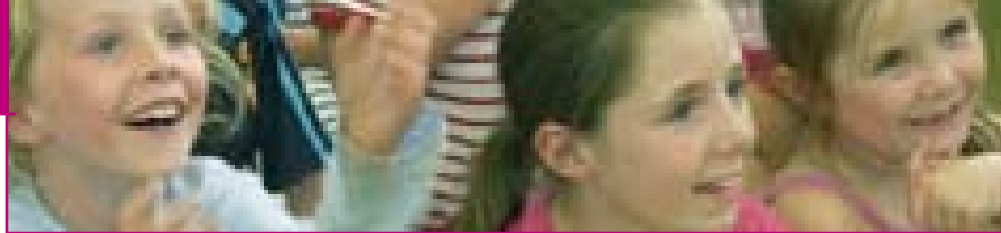
The Navan RAPID Programme started in August 2002 with the establishment of the Area Implementation Team and the Community Consultative Committee. The RAPID Programme was established in order to advance three key areas:

- Increase Investment in key local estates
- Improve service provision in the RAPID estates through better Service Integration
- Enhance Community Spirit through capacity building and increased engagement and participation

### Investment

- Investment has continued to flow into the Navan RAPID area in 2005 with key initiatives being funded.
- Funding of €65,000 has been secured for an expansion to the community playground on Boreen Keel. Work is due to be completed by the end of 2005.
- An environment enhancement project worth €50,000 has been approved for Clogherboy Estate. The project will be completed within 2005.
- A scheme to implement traffic measures in the RAPID area has brought €40,000 to the Navan RAPID area in 2005.
- In 2005, on the request of residents, ramps were installed as a traffic calming measure in Woodview estate.
- The F.I.T. Navan Initiative, which kicked off at the start of 2005, has attracted funding of approximately €300,000 from FAS for an external training programme. There are almost 35 people currently participating in F.I.T. related training courses.
- The WINNER Project, an initiative spearheaded by County Meath VEC was established for the RAPID estates in Navan, attracting investment of almost €200,000 over two years. The Project started in August 2005 and is already providing training and education opportunities for women who live in the RAPID estates. Funding comes from the Equality For Women Initiative which is operated by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
- In 2005, the Women In Motion Programme was established with €24,000 in funding from the National Sports Council. The Programme is created and managed by Meath Local Sports Partnership and operates in association with a similar programme in Athlone.
- Under the Equality For Women Initiative, mentioned above, Navan RAPID in association with four other RAPID areas, were awarded €50,000 to establish the 'F.I.T. for Women' programme in Navan.
- The Navan Schools Completion Programme have this year developed a 'Youth Café' in Beaufort College within the RAPID area at a cost of €20,000. The HSE have approved funding for the capital costs associated with this scheme.
- This year the Navan RAPID AIT was allocated €16,000 towards the Community Support Budget from ADM. This was the third consecutive year that this funding was awarded and Navan has now received in excess of €35,000 from this scheme.
- This year for the first time ADM announced additional funding for communications projects and the Navan RAPID AIT was allocated €3,500. This money was used to raise the profile of RAPID locally through promotional literature and a video initiative.





### Service Co-operation

Local agencies and service providers have continued to work together in 2005 to provide enhanced support and services to the people of the Navan RAPID estates.

- The Kids Klub was established in September in Clogherboy as a response to the needs identified in the Navan RAPID Needs Analysis published last year. This project is supported by the HSE and operates in close association with the community and other local service providers.

- In 2005 the M.I.T.E. project was established by Meath Leader and County Meath VEC in order to address inequalities and gaps in the area of employment. The Navan RAPID AIT has a seat on the Development Partners Group that manages the project which means that people from the RAPID area will benefit from the programme.

- The F.I.T. Navan Working Group was established in 2005 to oversee the development of the F.I.T. Programme in Navan. The Working Group comprises representatives from FAS, VEC, DSFA, IWA, Meath Co.Council, and the community.

- The Sunshine Summercamp, now in its second year, ran for one week in July and catered for 35 children from the RAPID estates. The camp is run by a joint committee that has representatives from Meath Local Sports Partnership, Springboard, Navan Schools Completion

Programme, Meath Youth Federation and the community.

- Garda community engagement scheme – This scheme which was established with Navan Gardai in 2004 in Claremont Estate has been expanded now to include Clogherboy Estate.

- The Commons Road Boys Youth Group continued this year with the ongoing support of the HSE, the community and RAPID.

- The Smoking Cessation scheme which is centred in the RAPID estates continues to run this year with the support of the HSE.

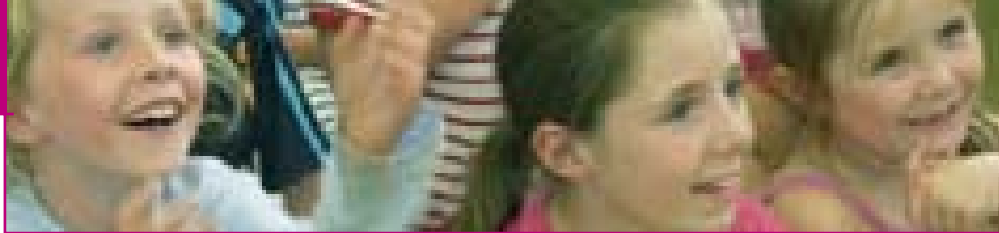
### Community

- The Community Training Programme continued with the support of the Community Support Budget. Capacity building was provided for members of the community.

- Family fun day – the second Navan mini world cup and culture festival was held in Claremont Stadium in July and was a huge success with the local community. A special DVD was created showing highlights from the day.

- Community Network – the community group from Blanchardstown returned our visit of last year when a small group came to Navan and visited the community house in Claremont Estate.





## Heritage

### Strategies

To establish a County Heritage Forum and to prepare and implement a 5-year County Heritage Action Plan in consultation with the community and all stakeholders.

To provide advice and training on best practice in heritage conservation and management to the community, local authority and other agencies.

To raise heritage awareness and facilitate the collection and dissemination of heritage information.

To contribute to local authority policy formulation and decision making.

To promote universal access to heritage sites

### Heritage Officer

The Heritage Officer Programme is a partnership agreement between the Heritage Council and Local Authorities.

Heritage forms the core of our sense of national identity and has a major influence on our quality of life. The Heritage Act, 1995 defines heritage as including monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage parks and gardens and inland waterways.

The Heritage Officer function is wide-ranging and approached in an integrated manner, which requires work on a multi-disciplinary basis.

### Highlights of 2005

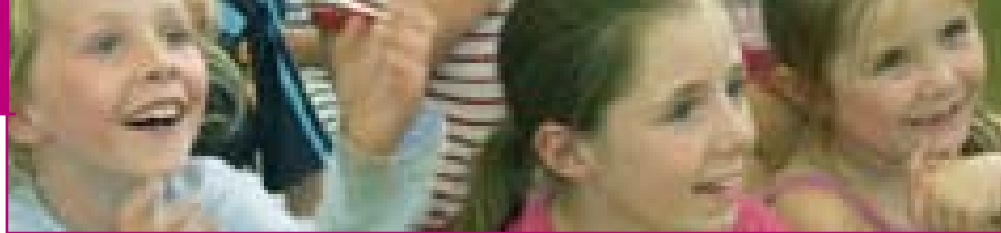
- Received €101,500 funding for built heritage projects from the Heritage Council for the following: restoration of lock gates on the Boyne Canal, conservation works to Old Kells Waterworks, digital mapping of graveyards, conservation works to Cruicetown Cemetery wall, preparation of a conservation plan for Ballyboggan Abbey, Clonard, Co. Meath and an archaeological and historical assessment of St. John's Church and Graveyard, Nobber.
- Actively working on 20 heritage project in partnership with community groups
- Background briefing material researched

and prepared for the County Heritage Plan, which was then presented to Meath County Council's Management, Elected Representatives and Meath County Development Board.

- Established the County Meath Heritage Forum to advise on the preparation and implementation of the County Heritage Plan.
- Phase I of County Graveyard Survey (Desk based survey) initiated
- Developed and delivered a pilot training course for community groups on recording graveyard memorials
- Held an event during Heritage Week to celebrate the heritage of the Royal Canal in partnership with Fingal and Kildare County Councils
- Responded to 250 queries from the public on various aspects of heritage management and conservation
- Facilitated the development of a comprehensive 5-year Tidy Towns plan with Dunderry Tidy Towns Committee
- Held workshops with Castletown and Athboy Tidy Towns Committee to produce a 5-year Tidy Towns Plan
- Supervised the completion of five heritage projects funded under the 2004 Community Grant Scheme and advised heritage applicants to the 2005 scheme
- Expanded the Heritage Website ([www.meath.ie/heritage](http://www.meath.ie/heritage))
- Facilitated work of Slane Village Enhancement Committee to develop and







deliver Slane Village Enhancement Programme

- Project partner with Fingal CoCo and Gwynedd CoCo (Wales) in INTEREG project- 'Living Coasts'
- Delivered Harvest Walk workshop on behalf of Pride of Place
- Promoted Heritage in Schools Scheme 2005 in all national schools in the county

- Worked on a Project in partnership with Kildare CoCo on Baconstown Graveyard Recording Project
- Balrath Neighbourhood Project Steering Committee member
- Heritage Exhibitions held in 2005: Garden Birds and Conservation, Woodland Management, Stone Walls and Earthen Banks

## Meath County Council Pride of Place Initiatives

### Strategy

To continue the development of the Pride of Place Initiatives and the Environmental Action Programme for the next five years in an innovative and flexible manner. To advocate a policy of best environmental management practices for all Local Authority operations and for all activities carried out by Community and Voluntary Groups.

### Meath County Council Pride of Place Initiatives 2005

Pride of Place is a Meath County Council county-wide initiative that is funded on an annual basis from the proceeds of the Amenity Levies on new developments. Each electoral area funds 20% of the scheme. Funding required for the 2005 scheme is €60,000 per electoral area or €300,000. The funding is used for scheme administration, community group training, grant assistance, prize fund and awards ceremony.

Meath County Council Pride of Place is primarily a competition to harness the resources of active community groups to address the demands of a high quality living environment and to foster a partnership with the local authority. It asks each community to share in the responsibility for its area, not as an isolated body but with the advice and support of Meath County Council.

The Pride of Place programme is an efficient and effective use of limited resources of Meath County Council. Citizens of County Meath as elsewhere have high expectations about the quality of their living spaces. Many families are

moving from Dublin where fully fledged parks departments maintained the green spaces and play areas.

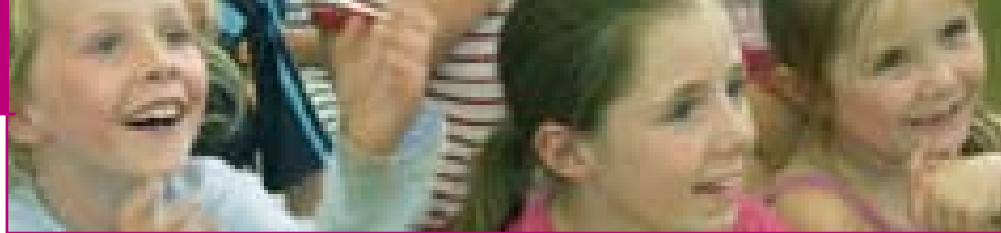
It is not possible for Meath County Council within its limited resources to meet these demands without involving the active participation of local communities. It is estimated that for every €1 invested by Meath County Council in this community development, €3 is invested by voluntary groups in terms of funding, voluntary labour, use of local suppliers and businesses.

### Pride of Place Competitions

The following competitions make up Pride of Place:

- The Royal Bloom Competition for towns and villages
- The Waterways Awards
- The Derelict Sites Improvement Projects
- The Village Paint Scheme
- The Harvest Walks Competition
- Meath County Council Pride of Place (POP) for Schools Competition





### Training

The Pride of Place Initiatives have a strong focus on training and active community groups get a chance to refresh their landscape management skills as follows:

February/May 2005:

- Four one day workshops in National Botanic Gardens
- Tidy Towns Groups Seminar
- Horticulture consultations on locations with groups with Mr Brendan Sayers, National Botanic Gardens.
- Harvest Walk Workshop

### Judging Schedule

All groups receive judging criteria in advance so that they know what the judges are looking for. Every group gets an opportunity to meet the judges to explain the work they have been doing.

- Meath County Council Pride of Place for Schools Competition took place in last week of May, 2005.
- Royal Bloom, Derelict Sites Improvement Projects, Waterways Awards, Village Paint Schemes: last week in July, 2005.
- Harvest Walks Competition: first week in September 2005

### Meath County Council Pride of Place Award Ceremonies

In 2005 the winners were announced at a special evening of community celebration as follows:

- Meath County Council Pride of Place for Schools Awards Ceremony: 8.00pm, Thursday 23rd June, 2005 in Warrenstown College.
- Meath County Council Pride of Place Initiatives Awards Ceremony: 8pm Friday 11th November 2005 in Warrenstown College.

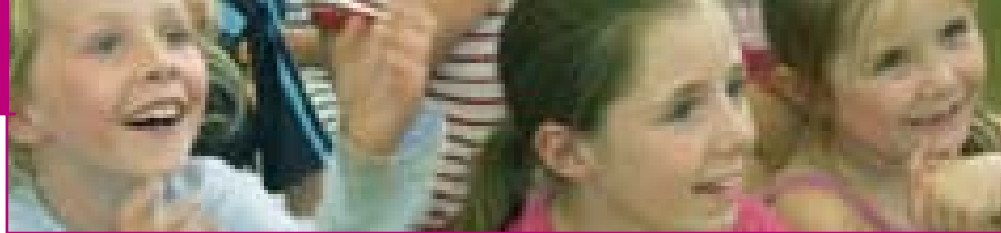
### Community Participation Level in County Meath

The level of participation in the Pride of Place Initiatives increased substantially in 2005 with a total of 152 active groups participating in the competitions. This included 31 primary schools in which pupils, teachers and helping parents created exciting school garden projects, e.g. a

wild garden, an urban and a rural garden.

- Moynalty won the Tidiest Village in Ireland for the second year in a row in the National Tidy Towns Competition
- Trim was the overall winner in the Meath County Council Pride of Place Awards in November 2005 at which 600 guests attended
- Castletown, Ratoath and Kells represented the county in the Co-operation Ireland/Local Authorities Pride of Place Competition in August 2005. Ratoath won the Best Social Integration Project in Ireland for the new community centre
- 150 people attended best practice workshops on gardening, landscape design, a tidy towns seminar and Harvest Walks
- 200 pupils, teachers and parents participated in training workshops in the Pride of Place for Schools Competition and 700 people attended the awards ceremony in June 2005
- 25 groups availed of on-site visits by an expert botanist in preparation for the Royal Bloom Competition





## Amenity Levies Scheme

### Strategy

To provide leisure and recreation facilities throughout the County.

### Amenity Levies Scheme

The Amenity Levies Scheme, which was established in 2003, is administered by the Department of Community, Enterprise, Recreation, Culture and Heritage. The scheme forms the basis of the implementation of the provision of county leisure and recreation facilities. This scheme provides financial assistance to the Council and community-based groups and voluntary organisations for projects and initiatives to develop sporting, recreational, environmental, amenity, heritage and cultural facilities in the county. Funding for community-based group projects and initiatives is administered under the sub scheme- Community Grants Scheme. The Amenity Levies Scheme is

funded annually by the proceeds of amenity levies on new developments in the county.

The Council agreed funding of €5.5m for Council projects and initiatives at County and Electoral Area level and Community Projects in July 2005.

A major funding allocation of €1,061,000 to community groups and voluntary organisations will benefit 37 countywide projects ranging from sporting facilities, community/resource centres, heritage projects, amenity and environmental improvements. The Scheme will continue in 2006 and future years, with applications to be submitted for early April each year.

## Meath Local Sports Partnership

### Strategies

To implement the Meath Local Sports Partnership Strategic Plan.

To develop and deliver a range of quality programmes to increase the awareness of and the benefits of physical activity and sport.

### Development Priority

Meath Local Sports Partnership (LSP) through its strategic plan identified the following as priority areas for development:

- People
- Active Living
- Club Training & Development
- Facilities & Resources
- Marketing Meath Local Sports Partnership.

### Young People

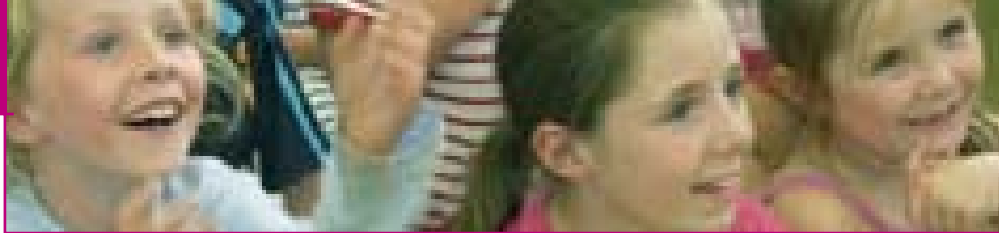
Our goal under the Young People Strategy is to increase opportunities for Young People to participate in Sport and Physical Activity. We have introduced an Irish Sports Council initiative – known as Buntús, to all of the Primary

Schools in Meath .The overall aim of the Buntús Programme is to give Children a fun but high quality introduction to the fundamental skills of sport. They are given access to a wide variety of sports so that they can develop their sporting interests.

To date Meath Local Sports Partnership has introduced the Buntús Programme to all 113 Primary Schools; over 929 Primary Teachers have availed of 3000 hours of contact training, with over 18,300 school children benefiting from the programme. 102 Primary Schools have trained on the FAI Buntús Course.

In 2005 Meath LSP also assisted in the organisation of the Sunshine Summer Camp in the RAPID estates in Navan with 45 children attending the week long camp.





### Active Living

Our disability strategy aims to increase participation opportunities for all people regardless of their ability.

Meath Local Sports Partnership was one of the first partnerships nation-wide to develop a comprehensive swim training programme for Helpers, Assistant Teachers and Teachers of People with Disabilities.

In 2005 Meath LSP in conjunction with Midway Services and Rehab Care took the lead in organising the first All-Ability Summer Camp for People with Disabilities in the county. In excess of 190 service users participated on the camp. Also in 2005 Meath LSP held an Adapted Physical Activity Conference on "Inclusive Sport and Physical Activity for People with Disabilities". To facilitate training and development for older people Meath Local Sports Partnership has hosted Fitwalk Clinics, World Heart Day walks, Walking Leaders courses and Sports Fests. Meath LSP was also involved in the organisation of the Meath Multi-Cultural Family Fun Day.

### Club Training and Development

Meath LSP in 2005 organised its first sports conference entitled "Youth Sport – Making the Most of the Coaching Process."

Almost 100 club representatives attended. Throughout the year Meath LSP trained club representatives in the following:

- Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport Awareness
- Children's Officer Training
- Sports First Aid
- Speed Agility Quickness – Foundation, Level 1 & Conditioning
- FAI Kickstart Level 1



- FUNDamentals of Coaching
- Drug and Alcohol Policy Programme.

Meath LSP was also involved in the Underage Camogie Development Plan.

Over 700 club representatives were trained in the various programmes under the club training and development strategy during 2005.

### Facilities Audit

Meath LSP took the lead in undertaking an audit of all sporting & community based facilities with the county. When complete we hope to be able to identify gaps in the provision of facilities countywide as well as being able to identify possible areas where facilities could be shared.





# CORPORATE SERVICES

## CORE ACTIVITIES: THE CORPORATE SERVICES SECTION HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR

- Communications / Publications / Corporate Identity
- Corporate Buildings & Surrounds
- Corporate Plan
- Customer Care
- Ethics Register (Staff & Members)
- Health & Safety
- Higher Education Grants
- Local Democracy
- Management Team Support
- Meeting Administration
- Members Support
- Register of Electors

This Corporate Services report is based on the 2005 Annual Operation Plan and in this case reports specifically on Members Support, Higher Education Grants, Communications, Corporate Plan, Ethical Framework, Health & Safety and Register of Electors.

## Strategic objective

To work within a framework of democratic principles, which facilitates optimum public participation, and the delivery of quality services for the benefit of our community.





## Communications / Publications / Corporate Identity

### Strategy

To communicate effectively with our customers and community in order to increase awareness of the organisations services and operations

### Proactive Communication

Corporate Services established more efficient and effective communication channels in relation to the positive work done by the Council through the available media and council publications.

In 2005, Corporate Services managed 25 Press Releases and 1074 Media Activities.

### Local Radio, Print Media

The Council availed of every opportunity to maximise the benefits of LFMF local radio and a complement of regional and national newspapers and publications in providing information to all our citizens. The ultimate purpose of these weekly notices is to attract the public's attention to our proposed projects and programme of works.

### Internal Communication

The Council continued to develop new internal communication policies and worked in partnership with the I.T. Section towards the development of a new intranet and notice board which is expected to be launched in 2006.

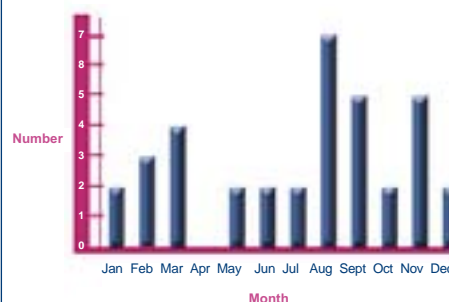
### Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act, 1997, was introduced to allow public access to records not already available under alternative legislation and applies to all local authorities from the 21st October 1998. The Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act, 2003 made a number of changes to the 1997 Act, the most significant of which was the introduction of fees for non-personal information. A fee of €15 is payable in respect of any application for non-personal information while a fee of €75 is payable in the case of a request for an internal review. A fee of €150 must accompany requests for a review to the Information Commissioner. Reduced fees apply to persons covered by a medical card.

### The following are the 2005 statistics relating to Freedom of Information Requests:

Applications Received	33
Carried Forward from 2004	10
Total	43
No. of requests granted/part granted	26
No. of requests refused	10
Requests transferred	0
Withdrawn or dealt with outside FOI	3
Live cases at end of 2005	4
No of Internal Reviews	2
No. of Appeals to the Information	

Freedom of Information Requests - 2005



Commissioner

2

### Official Languages Act

The Official Languages Act 2003 gives legislative effect to Article 8 of the Constitution, which provides that the Irish Language, as the national language, is the first official language. It is now implied that there is a constitutional right to citizens to use the national language on occasions of his / her choice and there is a duty imposed on public bodies to respect that right in all our dealings with our citizens.

The primary objective of the Official Languages Act is therefore to ensure better availability and a higher standard of services through Irish within





the public service.

During 2005 Meath County Council was requested by the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to prepare a "Scheme" under the Official Languages Act 2003. A scheme was drafted in accordance with the guidelines and submitted to the Department on 13th December 2005.

### Advertisements

Corporate Services arranges the placement of statutory and discretionary advertisements and public notices for the organisation in the national and local media.

## Corporate Plan

### Strategy

To oversee the implementation, monitoring and review of the Corporate Plan

### Meath County Council Corporate Plan

During 2005 the Council finalised consultation sessions initiated in 2004, prepared the Draft Corporate Plan for presentation to the Council and published the Corporate Plan for Meath Local Authorities 2004/2009 following its adoption by the council.





## Customer Care

### Strategy

To promote a culture of excellence in service provision, which is responsive to the needs and expectations of our customers and community

### Customer Change

The enhancement of customer services continued to be a major priority for Meath County Council throughout 2005. Proposals were initiated for a change in customer care management for Meath Local Authorities in accordance with the corporate objective outlined in the Corporate Plan.

### Telephony

The Council was pleased to introduce a new telephony response unit which included an automated answering service and the identification of new direct dial contact numbers to immediately improve communication channels.

### Complaints

Corporate Services, in conjunction with Quality Customer Care Working Group, undertook preparatory work to publish a complaints/redress policy which will be made available in leaflet form.

## Ethical Framework

### Strategy

To administer and enforce the provisions of the Ethical Framework for the Local Government Service and oversee the democratic process in an efficient manner.

### Ethics Register and Annual Declaration of Donations

Corporate Services maintained and managed the Annual Ethics Register for all Elected Members of Meath Local Authorities and Relevant Staff in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of Local Government Act 2001. Similarly the Register of Annual Political Donation Statements for the Members of Meath County Council was maintained and managed.







## Health & Safety

### Strategy

To ensure that health and safety is a priority in all aspects of our work.

### Safety & Health Management

Throughout 2005, there was an increased emphasis on quality safety and health management, promotion of awareness of safety and health in the workplace and auditing of safety and health performance. Communication with the Health & Safety Authority was intensified during the year.

### Training

Health & Safety training was provided for 236 technical supervisory staff.

### Meetings

In 2005, the Safety Management Committee (SMC) held 9 meetings.

The Safety Monitoring Group (SMG) held 13 meetings between the five electoral areas. The Health & Safety Advisor attended 2 Local Authority Safety Advisors Group (LASAG) meetings.

### Risk Assessment

The Corporate Safety Statement was prepared. Risk Assessment was completed and supporting Ancillary Safety Statements produced.

### Public Contact

Stronger communication links were established and members of the public were assisted in relation to Health & Safety queries.

## Higher Education Grants

### Strategy

To administer the Department of Education & Science Higher Education Grant Scheme

### Higher Education Grants

In 2005, Meath County Council assisted students under the 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 Higher Education Grants Schemes.

A total of 395 new applications and 451 renewal applications were received for the 2005/2006 academic year. The value of a full grant was €3,020 and overall expenditure in 2005 amounted to in excess of €2.7m. This expenditure, with the exception of €14,045.55, is recoupable from the Department of Education and Science.

There are various categories of grant as follows:

- Full Maintenance and Full Fees
- Part Maintenance (75%) and Full Fees

- Part Maintenance (50%) and Full Fees
- Part Maintenance (25%) and Full Fees
- Part Tuition fees only

For the 2005/2006 academic year, Meath County Council paid the 'Special Rate of Maintenance Grant' (Top-Up Grant) to over 100 students.





## Local Democracy

### Strategy

To support the Councillors in fulfilling and enhancing their democratic and policy role.

### Meeting Administration

Corporate Services applied the provisions of Part 6 of Local Government Act 2001 in relation to all meetings and proceedings of Local Authorities. All pre-meeting, meeting and post-meeting

actionables were managed throughout 2005 through our new Meeting Administration System.

## Members Support

### Strategy

To support and enhance the role of the elected Councillor through the provision of information, training, advice and facilities as required, to carry out their role.

### Conference Diary & Training

Corporate Services managed the 2005 Conference & Training Diary and all associated claims. The Council was represented at the following Conferences during the year:

CONFERENCE	DATE	NAME
Agrivision 2015	20/01/2005	Cllr. Tommy Reilly Cllr. Seamus Murray Cllr. Jimmy Fegan
Cumann Merriman Winter School	28/01/2005	Cllr. Oliver Brooks Cllr. Charles Bobbett
The Local Government Planning Services	03/02/2005	Cllr. James Holloway Cllr. Tom Kelly
Local Energy Responsibilities - A Time for Change	10/02/2005	Cllr. Seamus Murray Cllr. Tom Kelly Cllr. Michael Gallagher
A.M.A.I Spring Seminar 2005	11/02/2005	Cllr. Anne Dillon-Gallagher
The Economic & Social Benefit of Heritage Development in Irish Towns-A Conference	17/02/2005	Cllr. Anne Dillon-Gallagher Cllr. Charles Bobbett





Conference	Date	Name
16th Colmcille Winter School Preliminary Notice	25/02/2005	Cllr. James Holloway
GCCC Annual Conference 2005	03/03/2005	Cllr. William Carey Cllr. Eugene Cassidy Cllr. Charles Bobbett Cllr. James Holloway Cllr. John Farrelly Cllr. Michael Gallagher
Galway County International Genealogical Conference	19/03/2005	Cllr. Michael Gallagher
22nd Annual Conference - LAMA	31/03/2005	Cllr. Nick Killian Cllr. Charles Bobbett Cllr. James Holloway Cllr. Brian Fitzgerald
Civic & Social Life in the Suburbs	08/04/2005	Cllr. Dominic Hannigan
Cork' County Council's Annual Mayor's Conference	14/04/2005	Cllr. Jimmy Fegan Cllr. Seamus Murray Cllr. Tommy Reilly
The Common Agricultural Policy - implications for local devel post 2006	14/04/2005	Cllr. Anne Dillon-Gallagher Cllr. Joseph Bonner
The Duhallow Conference - Role of public representatives in promoting political awareness in schools	21/04/2005	Cllr. Jimmy Fegan Cllr. Seamus Murray
Trade Unionism , the North-South Experience	28/04/2005	Cllr. Tommy Reilly
14th Annual Kerry Environmental Recognition	04/05/2005	Cllr. James Holloway Cllr. Phillip Cantwell Cllr. Patsy O'Neill Cllr. Jimmy Fegan Cllr. Tommy Reilly
The Westport Experience Annual Conference 2005	19/05/2005	Cllr. Phillip Cantwell Cllr. Tommy Reilly
S/E Reg Assembly 6th Annual Conf - Knowledge economy & reg competitiveness implications for regional dev.	19/05/2005	Cllr. Noel Leonard
Media Skills Seminar for Councillors	21/05/2005	Cllr. Joseph Bonner Cllr. Michael Gallagher
Training Programme for Chairs of SPCs - Enfield	26/05/2005	Cllr. Patsy O'Neill Cllr. Dominic Hannigan Cllr. Oliver Brooks





CONFERENCE	DATE	NAME
CIWM Conference: Raising the Standard	14/06/2005	Cllr. Brian Fitzgerald Cllr. Anne Dillon-Gallagher Cllr. Michael Lynch Cllr. Tom Kelly
The potential for Sport in Modern Ireland	23/06/2005	Cllr. Liz McCormack Cllr. Michael Lynch Cllr. Noel Leonard
What will we eat as the oil runs out?	23/06/2005	Cllr. Dominic Hannigan
Future of Rural Tourism	24/06/2005	Cllr. Phillip Cantwell
Preliminary Notice Childcare What's Available - What's Needed	01/07/2005	Cllr. Liz McCormack
Macgill Summer School & Arts Week 2005	17/07/2005	Cllr. Joseph Bonner
William Carleton Summer School	01/08/2005	Cllr. Charles Bobbett
Fixing the Boundaries: Ireland from the Margins	14/08/2005	Cllr. Charles Bobbett
Local Government and The Arts	26/08/2005	Cllr. Oliver Brooks Cllr. Michael Gallagher Cllr. James Mangan
Rural Housing - A Rural Right	31/08/2005	Cllr. Michael Lynch Cllr. Tom Kelly Cllr. Jimmy Cudden
11th Tom Johnson School	09/09/2005	Cllr. Dominic Hannigan
A.M.A.I. Annual Conference 2005	15/09/2005	Cllr. Jimmy Fegan Cllr. Michael Lynch Cllr. Anne Dillon-Gallagher Cllr. Oliver Brooks Cllr. James Mangan
A New Plan for Social Housing 2005	27/09/2005	Cllr. Jimmy Cudden Cllr. Tom Kelly Cllr. Nick Killian Cllr. Eugene Cassidy Cllr. Noel Leonard Cllr. Jenny Darcy
Hidden Truths, Silent Cries.....	01/11/2005	Cllr. Liz McCormack
LAMA - Silver Jubilee Year Annual Winter Seminar 2005	04/11/2005	Cllr. Seamus Murray Cllr. James Mangan Cllr. Michael Lynch Cllr. Nick Killian Cllr. Jimmy Cudden Cllr. William Carey Cllr. Oliver Brooks Cllr. Bryan Reilly Cllr. Noel Leonard





CONFERENCE	DATE	NAME
Planning/Development & Social Inclusion	17/11/2005	Cllr. William Carey
Positioning Tourism Quality or Price?	24/11/2005	Cllr. Anne Dillon-Gallagher Cllr. Patsy O'Neill Cllr. Michael Lynch Cllr. Jimmy Cudden Cllr. William Carey Cllr. James Mangan
Rural Transport Initiative	28/11/2005	Cllr. Liz McCormack Cllr. Patsy O'Neill Cllr. Bryan Reilly
IAS - 5th National Conference - Partnerships for Reducing Youth Suicide	07/12/2005	Cllr. William Carey Cllr. Liz McCormack
The Local Government Budget	10/12/2005	Cllr. Tom Kelly

### Public Representations

In 2005, Corporate Services managed 316 written public representations from Oireachtas Members and 107 from Council Members. This process is facilitated by our document management system (Idocs) which scans and allocates the records to the relevant sections.

### Corporate Event Management

During the year Corporate Services arranged and managed 7 Civic Receptions. Among these honours were Andrew Ledwidge who won the European U20 Cross Country Championships. A reception was also held for executives from PFPC International who is to locate a new operation at the IDA Business Park, Johnstown, Navan.

In September 2005 the members resolved to bestow the honour of Freeman of the County on Sean Boylan, former Meath Senior Football Team Manager in accordance with Section 74 of the Local Government Act 2001 in respect and admiration of his accomplishments over the past 23 years on and off the field of play. The ceremony will take place in 2006.

### Fund Raising Initiative

Meath Local Authorities members, management and staff put partnership in practice in early 2005 when collectively they raised over € 33,000, which was donated towards rebuilding livelihoods in South East Asia, so dreadfully devastated by the St. Stephen's Day tsunami.

The staggering amount was collected through a series of fund raising initiatives including salary and wages deductions, as well as through bucket collections in shops and other premises. Small committees represented members, management and staff co-ordinated the various collections in response to the crisis, which rocked the world.





## Register of Electors

### Strategy

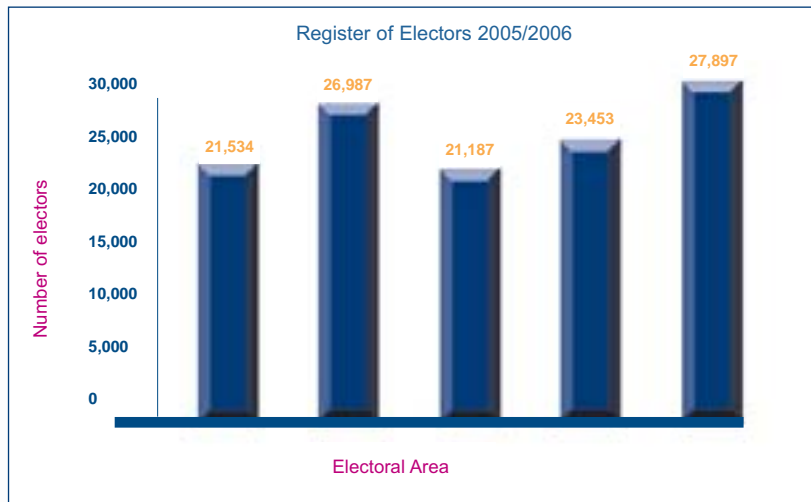
To capture information and manage the quality control, publication and distribution of the Register of Electors, in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Act

### Register of Electors

The Register of Electors was published in February 2005 and showed a voting population as follows:

Dail Electors	119,265
Presidential Electors	118,306
European Electors	119,535
Local Electors	121,058
Postal Voters	241

During 2005 officials from Meath County Council were engaged in a national Business Process Improvement exercise on the Register of Electors. It is expected that this exercise will result in the restatement of best practice and recommendations for a national intensive update of the Register of Electors, which is likely to take place in 2006.





# ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

## CORE ACTIVITIES

This department's remit includes a variety of environmental monitoring and enforcement activities, together with the provision and maintenance of emergency services.

Our annual report is based on our 2005 Operational Plan and reports specific actions, which expand on the normal duties, associated with the administration of our environmental enforcement remit.

## Strategic objective

To support and promote a clean, safe and healthy environment for present and future generations.



## Waste Management

### Strategy

To manage waste in an integrated and sustainable manner in accordance with best practice.

### Participation in OEE Waste Networks

Meath County Council provided a lead in the National Enforcement network dealing with the minimum criteria for Environmental Inspections. Our staff, representing the North East Region, developed and presented a template to the National Enforcement Network. This template will be rolled out nation-wide in 2006.

### Pay by Use Systems

Meath County Council led the national network of nominated authorities in drafting a new Waste Collection Permit document. The introduction of Pay by Use charging mechanisms will be supported by inclusion of supporting objectives in the new North East Regional Waste Management Plan.

### New Recycling Centre

The Kells Recycling centre project at Lloyd Business Park was advanced with the signing of contracts for its construction in December 2005.

### Bring Banks

New Bring Banks were provided in Ratoath, Castletown and Rathkenny. However these gains were regrettably offset by loss of existing facilities in Navan. A mobile CCTV system was purchased in late 2005 and it is hoped that its deployment in Litter Black spots, including problem Bring Banks will reduce the abuse of such facilities.

## Water Quality

### Strategy

To improve water quality in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive

### ERBD Characterisation Report

Meath County Council is represented on 3 River Basin District Steering groups. Our river catchments are covered by the Shannon, Neagh Bann and Eastern River Basin Districts. The council has seconded a Senior Executive Engineer to the ERBD technical staff on a full time basis, and continues to provide water quality data to each RBD.

Councillors Nick Killian and Tom Kelly were nominated to sit on the each of the River Basin District Advisory Councils in 2005.

### Improved efficiency of water sampling

Our water quality monitoring staff proposed and implemented a revised sampling programme during 2005. This initiative released staff to investigate sources of poor water quality and has resulted in the deployment of an officer to full time farm inspections and visits.







## Environmental Awareness

### Strategy

To raise environmental awareness and encourage sustainable actions.

#### Reduce Cost of Recycling Centres

Meath County Council introduced a €2 gate fee at Navan and Trim Recycling centres in May 2005. This initiative provided much needed income and changed user practice at the centres. The tonnage of waste recycled was maintained at approximately 220 tonnes per facility per month while the number of visits decreased by more than 50%.

The Council also provided free access to the recycling centres to individuals and the Electrical Retail Industry to deposit Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) from 12th August 2005.

#### Promoting recycling initiatives

The Council's Environmental awareness officer facilitated joint initiatives with the industry during the annual Hazardous Waste Collection and Clean Up weeks. Green schools were supported and workshops held to promote home composting and waste minimisation practices. The Council also revised its in house practices for the recovery of confidential paper waste and initiated a new procurement process to facilitate this policy.

## Emergency Services

### Strategy

To maintain excellence in the delivery of emergency services.

#### To procure a new Class B Fire Tender

Following completion of the Tender competition an order was placed for a bespoke fire tender which will include a foam suppression unit. This unit will provide and improve the Fire Suppression capability of the existing fleet.

## Environmental Standards

### Strategy

To ensure compliance with environmental standards

Following the employment of an additional technician, planned inspections of permitted facilities and investigations of illegal activity were expanded and formalised. These deployments were informed by a new deployment protocol for all Environmental staff in accordance with the EPA's guidance on Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections.

Additional staff and planned inspections allowed MCC to improve its data gathering practices, which inform our National Waste Database statistical return. Each operator within the waste industry must report the tonnages of waste handled on an annual basis. This data is vital to the planning and provision of waste services and is now verified by audit and site inspections.





## Waste Management Plan

### Strategy

To adopt and implement the Waste Management Plan for the North East Region.

### New Draft Regional Waste Management Plan

Meath, Louth, Cavan and Monaghan County Council representatives, together with RPS Consultants, prepared a Draft Waste Management Plan, which was placed on display between August and December 2005. A programme of clinics and drop in days was facilitated in each area office during the display period. 51 submissions were received which were considered in a consultation report, which informed the final waste Management Plan for the North East Region later adopted in 2006.

## Resources for ongoing awareness campaigns

### Strategy

To provide resources for ongoing Environmental Awareness and Action Campaigns

The Council provides Pride of Place, Energy Management and Environmental Awareness programmes. The Draft Waste Management plan called for a full time dedicated Environmental awareness Officer and a review of existing staff resources in this area was commenced in 2005.

### National Anti Waste Campaign

The North East Region used the Draft Waste Management display period to raise awareness in Waste Management issues. Matching funding was provided through the National Race against Waste Campaign.

## Fire and Emergency Services

### Strategy

To implement the Fire and Emergency Services Development Plan.

### Major Emergency Practice

A major tragic traffic accident presented first hand experience of a real major emergency and the performance of the Council, Health Service Executive and Garda resources were reviewed following the incident. Council Emergency personnel also participated in the review of the National Framework for Emergency Response in December 2005.

### Review the Fire Service Plan

The Council commenced the preparation of a Draft Fire Services Plan, which will inform the development of the Fire Services in Co Meath for the next 5 years. A staff member at Assistant Chief Fire Officer level participated in regional work groups servicing the National Fire Services Change Programme.





## Environmental Enforcement

### Strategy

To implement the Council's Environmental Enforcement Plan.

The Council's Minimum Criteria for Environmental Enforcement is set out in its Environmental Enforcement Plan. We receive in excess of 2000 complaints per annum, which are captured on our Call Management System. Guideline minimum response times have been agreed and our waste and water quality enforcement officers have adopted revised inspection plans to maximise the council's enforcement presence. Access to adjacent Municipal Landfills, negotiated in 2005, has allowed our enforcement officers the opportunity to impound vehicles involved in illegal waste activity.

## Litter Pollution

### Strategy

To implement a wide range of activities to curb and abate litter

With the employment of 2 full time litter wardens the Council adopted a new structured approach to litter related activities, targeting different sectors on a monthly basis. The purchase of CCTV cameras has strengthened the enforcement resource available to Meath County Council during 2005.

### Litter Management Plan

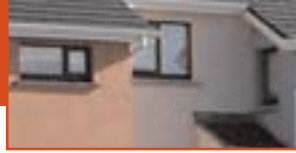
A Draft Litter Management Plan new plan was presented to Full Council in 2005. The Town Councils were invited to submit policy statements to be included in the final document, which will be put on display in 2006.

## Impact of Development

The Environment Department provided expert advice to the Planning Department on the likely impacts of additional development on receiving waters. This advice, supported by the Discharge Licence process administered directly by the Environment Department, ensures water quality is maintained and improved. Our long term goal is to achieve compliance with the water quality standards set out in the Water Framework Directive by 2015

The employment of an additional inspectors has enabled the Council to increase the planned monitoring of existing discharge licences from Commercial activity, and has provided an opportunity to provide advice and inspections to the farming sector in advance of the Nitrates Directive becoming law.





# HOUSING SERVICES

## THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR:

- Land Acquisition
- Implementation of Housing Construction Programme for Social/Affordable Schemes
- Negotiating with developers for the delivery of Social/Affordable units under Part V of Planning & Development Acts (2000 – 2002)
- Processing Affordable Applicants
- Sale of dwellings to council tenants under the Tenant Purchase Scheme
- Processing of Disabled Person Grants and Essential Repairs Grants Applications
- Provision of Housing by Voluntary Schemes
- Operation of the Homeless Strategy
- Provision, allocation, maintenance and management of Traveller Accommodation
- Refurbishment and maintenance of its housing stock of 2000 units
- Development of Estate Management/Resident Participation
- Administration/Customer Care

## Strategic objective

To ensure that all our citizens enjoy an adequate standard of housing accommodation appropriate to their needs and as far as possible, in a location and tenure of their choice and to provide a responsive and supportive housing service for those in need of assistance.





## Land Acquisition/Implementation Housing Construction Programme for Social/Affordable Schemes

### Strategies

To ensure, through the operation of development plans and public utility services programmes, that sufficient serviced housing land is made available in suitable locations throughout the county.

To pursue an ongoing programme of housing land acquisition to facilitate public housing construction programmes.

### Social Housing 2005 Completions

Rurals	4
Athboy 03	21
Ballivor 03	11
Ballivor 04	9
Dunboyne 03	28
Enfield 03	20
Oldcastle 03	22
Oldcastle 04	6
Navan (Windtown)	34
Summerhill 03	10
Trim 04	12
Donore 04	6

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>183</b>
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## Negotiating the delivery of Social/Affordable units under Part V of Planning & Development Acts (2000 - 2002)

### Strategy

To promote the highest possible standards in the planning and design of both public and private housing, while adhering to the principles of sustainable development

Affordable Homes delivered 2005 under Part V	17
Number of houses in progress, on foot of agreements As at 31st December 2005	49
Number of houses proposed on foot of agreements For Voluntary Sector as at 31st December 2005	11





## House Sales and Grants

### Strategy

To participate with the multi-agency Social Inclusion working group, set up under the auspices of the County Development Board, to enhance the role of Local Government in tackling the disadvantaged and promoting social inclusion.

#### Affordable Housing , Tenant Purchase Scheme & Disabled Persons Grants and Essential Repairs Grants

Shared Ownership Scheme applications received in 2005	74
Approvals issued in 2005	46
Disabled Persons Grants Scheme applications received in 2005	205
Disabled Persons Grants Scheme approvals granted in 2005	168
Essential Repairs Grants Scheme applications received in 2005	97
Essential Repairs Grants Scheme approvals granted in 2005	99
Mortgage Allowance Scheme applications received in 2005	18
Sale of Sites applications received in 2005	23

## Operation of Homeless Strategy; Provision, allocation, maintenance and management of Traveller Accommodation

To ensure that all persons are treated equally in the allocation and management of public housing, regardless of origin, race or creed, and that all marginalised groups such as Travellers and the homeless are catered for adequately.

#### Operation of Homeless Strategy in joint venture with the Health Service Executive 478 presenters was serviced in 2005.

Traveller Families housed	14
Traveller Families transferred	3
There were no families on the roadside when the annual census was carried out on 25/11/05	





## Refurbishment and maintenance of housing stock (2000 Units)

### Strategy

To convert and maintain existing housing stock

Central Heating System installed which included upgrading insulation, provision of smoke alarms at a cost of €624,255	105
House Extensions	12

## Development of Estate Management/Resident Participation

### Strategies

To ensure that proper structures are in place for the efficient and effective management of public housing through appropriate estate management initiatives.

To develop and expand the estate Management Schemes in existing council housing estates in new developments as they come on stream.

Pre-tenancy training to new tenants	162
Council Estate Grants and Awards Scheme	49 estates
Self Help Scheme	22
External Paint Grant Scheme	7





# HUMAN RESOURCES

THE HUMAN RESOURCES HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FOLLOWING CORE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

- Staff Returns
- Recruitment & Selection
- Staff Structure
- Staff Leave
- HR Policies & Procedures
- Industrial Relations
- Superannuation
- Performance Management
- Workplace Partnership
- Training

The purpose of the function of Human Resources (HR) is to provide the necessary resources and expertise in order to strengthen the business partnership between Line Managers/Supervisors and the Human Resource Team. In doing so the team aims to assist all Meath Local Authorities sections in the delivery of organisational objectives, while at the same time developing the potential of every staff member.

## Strategic objective

To contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives by developing a competent, highly motivated staff; and fostering a flexible, responsive working environment







## Recruitment & Selection

### Strategy

To manage the sourcing, selection and appointment, in a fair and transparent manner, of the highest calibre people to meet the human resource needs of the organisation

### Staff Returns

Every quarter the HR Team compiles a 'return' of staff numbers, which is submitted, to the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government. This provides overall figures of staff employed by the Council. A more comprehensive 'annual return' is also submitted to the DoEHLG in January of each year. See Table 2 page 50 for a breakdown of staff by sector as of December 2005.

Meath Local Authorities endeavour to recruit and retain competent staff members with the qualifications and experience necessary to provide an efficient and effective service to the community. In 2005 HR arranged and held 62 Competitions and processed over 1,400 application forms (See Appendix II).

The chart adjacent highlights the good gender balance in terms of applications for positions with Meath Local Authorities. In 2005, the Council received 737 applications from males and 710 applications from females.

Sector	Number of Competitions
Admin	19
Professional/Technical	24
Outdoor	17
Fire Service	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>

Table 1. Breakdown of competition by sector

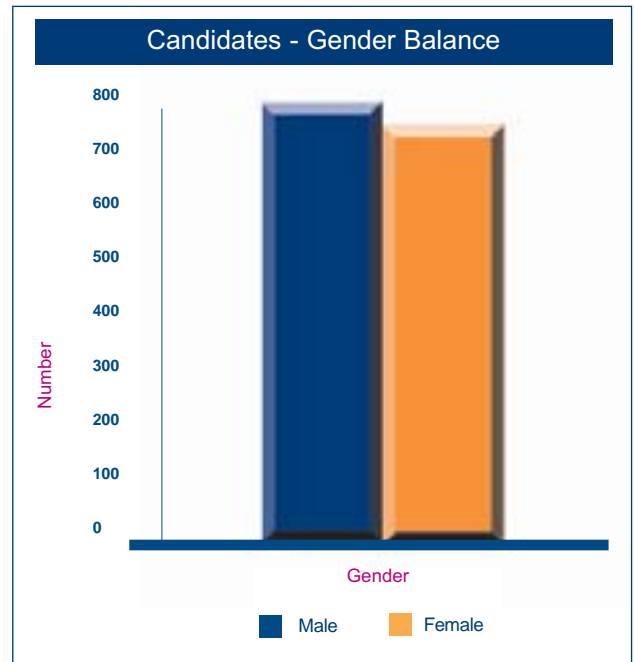


Chart 1. Gender Balance at application stage





## Staff Structure

### Strategy

To effectively manage and maintain as approved, flexible and responsive staff structure that meets the evolving needs of the organisation

68 new staff members joined Meath Local Authorities in 2005. Of these 29 were permanent appointments and 39 were fixed-term contract appointments. The Council accepted 43 staff resignations in 2005 which included 16 Professional/Technical staff, 16 Administrative staff, 8 Outdoor staff, and 3 Information Technology staff. Staff turnover in 2005 was 4.82% as per the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development formula ( $43 \times 100 / 892$ ).

Table 2. Breakdown of staff by sector

Sector	Number	WTE
Managerial	7	7
Administrative	296	252.4
Engineering / Technical	115	114.1
Operational / Outdoor	274	247.44
Contract	128	117.78
Fire-fighter	70	11.66
Non DoEHLG	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>892</b>	<b>752.38</b>

December 2005

## Staff Leave

### Strategy

To manage and facilitate a balance of staff leave entitlements with operational requirements and to promote a culture of successful work-life balance within the organisation

In line with Work/Life Balance ethos, Meath Local Authorities processed & granted the following number of various leave applications in 2005:

Table 3. Work-sharing and Term-time applications

Leave Type	2004	2005
Term Time Applications	3	7
Work Share Applications	39	60

### Sick Leave Indicator for 2005:

Percentage of Working days lost to sickness absence 'Certified' **2.23%**  
 Percentage of Working days lost to sickness absence 'Uncertified' **0.83%**





## HR Policies & Procedures

### Strategy

To develop, through Workplace Partnership, staff policies and procedures to meet organisational needs and to enhance the development of staff at all stages of their working life, having regard to relevant guidelines and legislation.

Meath Local Authorities currently implement 5 national HR policies. These policies were agreed and signed off nationally by Union and Management Representatives and subsequently endorsed at local level by the Partnership Committee of Meath Local Authorities.

The Council also implements 5 local HR policies (specific to Meath Local Authorities). These were agreed and endorsed by local Union and Management Representatives at Partnership in Meath Local Authorities.

There are 5 policies up for review in 2006.

## Industrial Relations

### Strategy

To build on current stable industrial relations, and to promote and develop Workplace Partnership as the way we work, to achieve organisational success

Meath Local Authorities continually work with all staff and their representative Trade Unions in order to resolve a wide variety of issues, which arise from time to time. It is the policy of the Council to actively promote staff and Union consultation in order to resolve any possible IR issues at the earliest possible stages.





## Superannuation

### Strategy

To manage the accurate recording and maintenance of all employment details, and to provide an accurate, efficient service that complies with Superannuation Legislation

All staff members are entered into the Local Government Superannuation Scheme from the date of their commencement of employment with Meath Local Authorities. The following is a breakdown of superannuation activities dealt with in 2005:

Activity	Number in 2005
VEC – Lump sum and pension calculations	8
Meath Local Authorities retirements in 2005	12 (3 officers, 9 employees)
Gratuities for non-pensionable persons	4
Preserved Benefits	2

Table 4. Breakdown of superannuation activities

The total amount of retirement lump sums paid in 2005 was €540,975.96 with €276,915.39 of this paid to Officers and €264,059.57 to employees.

## Performance Management

### Strategy

To devise and implement a performance management system, appropriate to Meath Local Authorities, enabling staff at all levels to understand how their personal contribution is required, for the achievement of overall organisational objectives.

### The rollout of Performance Management and Development Systems (PMDS) in Meath Local Authorities commenced in 2005

Performance Management and Development Systems (PMDS) is a mechanism whereby the organisation through its staff can manage its performance, improve service delivery, and provide better customer service. Equally, it will ensure that the full potential of all staff is realised resulting in improved job satisfaction and career development.

The implementation of PMDS, as agreed under 'Sustaining Progress' began in a number of pilot sites and is being facilitated by two PMDS Trainers, Irene Lynch and Sean Clarke. The Pilot Sites received awareness training before agreeing Team Development Plans and Personal Development Plans. It is envisaged that it will take 2 years to implement PMDS across the entire organisation.





## Workplace Partnership

Meath Local Authorities' Workplace Partnership Committee consists of 7 management representatives and 9 union representatives (2 SIPTU Co. Co., 1 SIPTU Meath Branch, 1 LAPO, 3 IMPACT, 1 TEEU, 1 UCATT).

The Committee's overall objective is that:

'Meath Local Authorities improve their service delivery and the working lives of their staff'

The main activities in 2005 were:

### Policies Agreed through Partnership

In line with the principle of "Deepening Partnership" all organizational policy is now agreed through the partnership process. The following policies have been signed-off: Acting-Up Indoor, Staff Mobility, and Acting – Up Outdoor and a new Training Policy.

### Workplace Review

A Workplace Review was conducted in April with a 57% response from staff. The review comprised a survey of all our employees, offering them the opportunity to give their views and opinions on working for the organisation. The feedback report was presented to the Partnership Committee and is now being used to shape the activities of Workplace Partnership in the future. 75% of respondents agreed that Workplace Partnership is an effective forum for resolving issues and leads to stable IR.





### Partnership Working Groups

Progress on the activities of our Working Groups as follows:

#### Workplace Healthy Options:

- 'Healthy eating in the workplace' promotion.
- Healthy Options and staff integration day 02.07.05
- Unislim Programme.
- Lifestyle Assessments for staff.
- Anti 'flu injections for all staff.

### County Hall Group

This group conducted a body of research on Staff Facilities in proposed new County Buildings and furnished a report and recommendations to the Partnership Committee.

### Quality Customer Care Group

The objective of this group is to promote quality customer care and services to the external and internal customers of Meath Local Authorities.

### Machinery Yard Group

This was the first departmental group to be set up in 2005 to address the issue of improved conditions in the Machinery Yard.

### Return to Learning (RTL)

26 staff members participated in our RTL programmes consisting of studies in Computers, English, Numeracy, and Social learning. This programme, which is coordinated by Meath VEC, offers an opportunity to staff who wish to return to education and develop new skills.

### Long Service Recognition

Long Service Recognition Awards were presented to 17 staff members in December. Tom Dowling, Co. Manager and Brian Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach, Meath County Council made the presentations to the recipients, all of whom had 35 or more years of Local Government Service. The longest serving male and female members of staff, both having 44 years service with Meath Local Authorities received a special presentation. The Management Team, the Partnership Committee, Line Managers and work colleagues joined the



Mary Murray and Mattie Quinn, both with 44 years service, receiving a special presentation from Cathaoirleach, Brian Fitzgerald and Co. Manager, Tom Dowling.

recipients and their guests to celebrate this special occasion.

### National Award for Excellence in Workplace Partnership

Meath County Council's Induction Programme was awarded 2nd. place in the 2005 "Awards for Excellence in Workplace Partnership".

The Awards were presented by Niall Callan, Secretary General, DoEHLG, at a National Partnership Conference in Kilkenny on the 10th. November.

LANPAG initiated the idea to recognise excellence in Workplace Partnership, and each Partnership Committee was invited to submit a project for consideration. The Committee agreed to enter the Induction Project as it felt it met the criteria i.e. innovation and a model of best practice in Workplace Partnership. The project made its way through a regional and national selection process, which culminated in a presentation to conference delegates on the day. Prize-money of \_1,500, for further development of the project, was presented with the Award. The Induction programme was one of our Partnership projects in 2002 and was researched and designed by a Working Group.





## Training and Development

### Strategy

“To systematically assess needs in conjunction with the Performance Management and Development System and Continuous Professional Development programmes, in order to provide the appropriate training, education and professional development, to empower a skilled, productive, flexible human resource, capable of meeting evolving organisational needs”

### National Service Indicators

Local Authorities are required, under the Social Partnership Agreement, “Sustaining Progress” to spend 3% of total payroll, and 3% of total payroll re General Operative & related grades, on training and development of staff.

In 2005, Meath Local Authorities exceeded this target having achieved:

- 3.85% spend of total payroll on training and development
- 4.1% spend of payroll on General Operatives and related grades, on training and development.

#### Other training performance indicators were as follows:

- Total Number of Staff Trained **386**
- Total Displacement cost to the organisation (for staff being released to receive training **€217,249**)
- Total Number of Training Days provided **1165**

### CPD Performance Indicators:

Number of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) days reached **5.18**  
 (Average of 5 days per staff member required to meet national target)



Dr. Paddy Caffrey, President, IEI, presenting the Accreditation to An Cathaoirleach Tommy Reilly, and County Manager Tom Dowling. Also pictured are members of CPD Team.

Other significant developments during 2005 included:

### CPD Accreditation from Engineers Ireland

Meath County Council was the recipient of a three-year accreditation for its Continuous Professional Development programme for engineering and technical staff. President of EI, Dr Paddy Caffrey presented the award to the County Manager, Tom Dowling and An Cathaoirleach Cllr. Tommy Reilly at a special ceremony held at Meath Co. Council's offices on the 12th. April 2005. Meath is the first Local Authority to receive a three-year accreditation for this programme.





# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

## CORE ACTIVITIES:

Meath County Council's Information Technology Department supports the users of approximately 600 PCs and 50 servers and supports diverse systems including:

- Electronic mail; Internet, Intranet and Extranet
- Web based systems
- Agresso financial systems that support the Council's financial management information systems and transaction processing;
- Geographical information systems that provide essential information on roads, cables, pipelines, etc in the county
- Imaging and document management systems
- Planning administration systems
- Housing administration systems
- Remote access and thin client technology

Key roles for the Information Technology Department include :

- Definition and ongoing review of an information technology strategy to support the strategies of the council
- Support of existing systems and platforms to ensure availability and responsiveness for our internal and external customers
- Business analysis to determine requirements for new systems across all areas of the council.
- Selection and implementation of new systems and platforms to support the growing and changing information needs of the council.

## Strategic objective

**To use the talents of our staff and the technological resources and assets of the Council efficiently, effectively and productively to deliver a high quality service to our customers that meets their needs and expectations.**







## Systems and Services

### Strategy

To develop and enhance the capacity of the IT Department to deliver systems and services that meets the needs and expectations of its internal customers, of Councillors, of other public bodies and of the public.

During 2005, the IT department introduced many infrastructural and organisational changes to cater for the growing and changing information needs of our customers.

New secure remote access technology was deployed allowing councillors and staff to work more efficiently.

New Anti-Virus systems were rolled out across the organisation.

Various new applications were implemented including modules of an internal HR system, a system for managing Continuous Professional Development, and systems to allow the scheduling and reporting of road works.

## An Inclusive Information Society

### Strategy

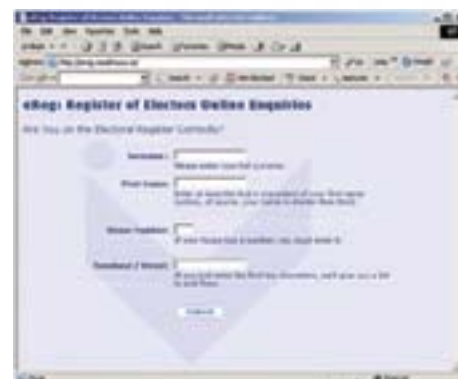
To contribute to and foster the creation of an inclusive Information Society, and to exploit the potential of information technology to enhance democracy and broaden public participation in local government..



Meath's Communities Online Together system received an eEurope award for its continued work on training and supporting new and existing community and voluntary groups to establish a web presence.

Continuous improvements were made in delivering public internet access at all our libraries, and kiosks were installed in public areas of Meath County Council to provide access to relevant websites such as [www.planning.meath.ie](http://www.planning.meath.ie).

A web system allowing the public to query the electoral register was established at [ereg.meathcoco.ie](http://ereg.meathcoco.ie)





## Innovation Strategy:

### Strategy

To lead the development and exploitation of Internet technologies to deliver Council services to the public and to Councillors in a variety of innovative ways.

A Meeting Administration System allowing the efficient and transparent management of Council Meetings was implemented during 2005. This project received an Eircom Innovation Through Technology Award, which was presented by An Taoiseach.

A complete redesign of our internal and external websites was undertaken. To support this, a new Content Management System was implemented and the new websites will be launched during 2006.

## National Initiatives

### Strategy

To work with external organizations to contribute to national technology and eGovernment initiatives to deliver national and local systems and services, and to participate in National initiatives such as Community Broadband and the Metropolitan Area Network ( MAN).

Mapping to plan the routes of Fibre-Optic Metropolitan Area Networks in several Meath towns was completed in 2005. This data was used in a successful application for funding to the Department of Communications, Marine and

Natural Resources. In conjunction with other Local Authorities, requirements were defined for a new National HR, Payroll and Superannuation system for Local Authorities.





# INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES

## CORE ACTIVITIES:

The core activities of the Infrastructure Section relate to the roads services, sanitary water and wastewater services for Meath Local Authorities. This provision must comply with land use policies contained in the Development Plan and with current Environmental Directives.

This infrastructural report is based on our 2005 Annual Operations Plan and in this case reports specifically on the roads services, sanitary water and waste water services for Meath Local Authorities.

All our infrastructure projects adhere to the policies and plans for land use in the Meath County Development Plan and must be complementary and consistent in their planning with our neighbouring Local Authorities and other agencies.

## Strategic objective

To maintain and further develop the Infrastructure of the County and to ensure that infrastructural investment facilitates the physical, economic, social and cultural development of the County.





## ROADS:

### NRA Programme for Primary Roads traversing Meath

#### N2 Ashbourne Bypass/M50 Junction

Realignment of the N2 from the M50 Junction at Finglas to North of Ashbourne to dual carriageway standard works in progress and expected to be completed in May 2006

#### N3 Quality Bus Corridor

Quality Bus Network Phase 1, North of Dunshaughlin, commenced in 2005.

### Programme of works for Regional Routes

#### R150 Duleek/Julianstown

Phase 1 Duleek to Kilsharvan. Major works completed and road opened to through traffic in December 2005. Ancillary works to be completed in 2006.

#### R153 Navan to Balrath

In 2005 the section from Railway Bridge, Athlumney, Navan to Filling Station, Athlumney, Navan of this project was completed.

#### R154 Trim to Dublin

Works substantially completed on Trim to Dublin – Iffernock route in 2005.

#### R158 Trim/Summerhill/Kilcock

Phase 1 – Trim to Summerhill. Major works completed and road opened to through traffic in December 2005. Ancillary works to be completed in 2006.

#### R161 Athlumney

Works substantially completed in 2005 on construction of Bridge over River Boyne and Link Road at Athlumney, Navan.





## Pavement and Improvement Works

**Pavement and improvement works were carried out in the following areas in 2005:**

**N2** - North of Ashbourne to Rathcross and North of Sweep

**N3** - Piercetown Junction; Navan Fire Station to Flowerhill; and Bloomsbury to Kilmainham

**N51** - Athboy to Castletown; Mullaghstones to Ballyboy; and Stackallen.

**N52** - Carlanstown to Normanstown.

## Major Schemes at Planning/Design Stage – Roads

**Meath County Council had the following schemes at the planning/design stage in 2005:**

### M3 Clonee/South of Virginia Bypass

The provisional preferred tenderer for this contract is Eurolink.

### N3 Quality Bus Corridor

Planning and design completed and works to commence in 2006.

### N2 Slane Bypass

At design stage in 2005.

### N51 Navan Inner Relief Phase 2A

Plan prepared to make route a two-way traffic system from Round "O" to Fire Station, Navan.

### N51 Navan Inner Relief Phase 2B

At tender stage. Works to commence in 2006.

### R150 Duleek/Julianstown Phase 2 - Kilsharvan to Julianstown

An Bord Pleanala confirmed Compulsory Purchase Order in 2005. Works to commence in 2006.

### R158 Trim/Summerhill / Kilcock Phase 2 - Summerhill to Kilcock.

The statutory proceedings on this project were substantially completed. Decision from An Bord Pleanala on Compulsory Purchase Order is pending at end of 2005.

### R161 Rathnally/Balreask Old, Phase 2

Pre-contract works commenced. Works to commence in late 2006.

### R161/R153 Link Road – Springfield Glen Navan to Trim Road Navan.

This scheme at design stage at end of 2005.





## SANITARY SERVICES:

### Sanitary Services Programme

#### Meath County Council Sanitary Services Programme consists of:

- Major Capital Investment Programme
- Rural Water Programme
- Serviced Land Initiative Programme

#### Strategy

To implement the Water Services Investment Programme 2005 – 2007.

Programmes that have been identified in the Assessment of Water Service Needs as adopted by Meath County Council must be progressed for inclusion in future Water Services Investment Programmes.

Meath County Council seeks to reduce our dependency on other Local Authorities for water and wastewater services. The Council seeks provision of a major wastewater treatment plant in the Gormanstown Area to cater for the projected needs of Eastern and South Eastern Urban Centres in the County.

### Major Capital Investment Programme

#### The following schemes were completed/under construction in 2005.

##### Ballivor Sewerage Scheme

Substantially completed in 2005 at an estimated cost of €5M

##### Dunshaughlin Sewerage Scheme

Major Sewerage Scheme to cater for Dunshaughlin, Drumree, Dunsany, Kilmessan, Killen Castle, Dowdstown and Ballinter. Proposed extensions to Clowanstown, Ringlestown, Bective Road and Castletown, Tara.

Works in progress at an estimated cost of €34M

##### Longwood Sewerage Scheme

Works substantially completed in 2005 at an estimated cost of €3.2M.

##### Navan Asbestos Cement Mains Replacement, Phase 1

Works completed in 2005 at a cost of €1.8m.

##### Navan Asbestos Cement Mains Replacement, Phase 2

Works commenced December 2005 and is due for completion in Autumn 2006.

##### Summerhill Water Supply

Upgrade of water supply to village. Works commenced in Sept 2005





## Major Schemes at Planning/Design Stage

**In addition the following Schemes are at various stages of planning:**

### Water Supply Schemes

Dunshaughlin Major Water Supply Scheme  
 East Meath, Drogheda and South Louth Water Supply Scheme  
 Navan & Mid Meath Water Supply

### Sewerage Schemes

Oldcastle Sewerage Scheme  
 Stamullen/Gormanstown Sewerage Scheme  
 Kiltale Sewerage Scheme  
 Kilcloon Sewerage Scheme

### Wastewater Schemes

Major Grouped Wastewater Scheme - Treatment Systems for Duleek, Summerhill, Kilmainhamwood, Moynalty, Donore, Athboy, Rathcairn and Rathmolyon under the Design Build Operate procedure.

### County Wide Water Conservation Project

The Council aims to expand the programme of water conservation to all water supply schemes in the County. Consultants appointed in late 2005.

## Rural Water Programme

### Strategy

To implement the measures under the Rural Water Programme in order to improve the quality, reliability and efficiency of water supplies for rural dwellers.

### Small Water and Sewerage Schemes

During 2005 a significant amount of programmes were introduced including the following:

- Drumconrath Water Supply
- Enfield Water Supply Upgrade
- Ballivor Water Supply
- Navan Water Interim Supply - Works substantially completed
- Slane Water Supply - Works substantially completed
- Kildalkey Sewerage Scheme – Works substantially completed
- Hill of Tara Sewerage

### Group Schemes

Completion of the following 3 Group Water Schemes was achieved in 2005:

Ardglassan, Crossakiel, Group Water Scheme  
 Meath Hill Group Water Scheme  
 Tiernurrin Lane, Kells Group Water Scheme

Works are ongoing on completion of the Kilcloon Group water Scheme

These further Group Water Schemes were at the planning Stage in 2005:  
 Rathmolyon; Mooretown / Realtogue, Navan; and Gilbertstown, Longwood.





## Service Land Initiative Scheme

### Strategy

To upgrade existing water and wastewater facilities, where deficient, in order to meet Drinking Water Regulations and Urban Wastewater Directives/Regulations.

### Enfield Sewerage Scheme Stage 2- Network Upgrade

Works substantially completed in 2005 on the upgrade of the sewer network and the provision of a new pumping station. Estimated cost of €3M.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Special Projects were at various stages of planning/construction in 2005

### Kells Civic Amenity Site

Contractor appointed and works to commence in early 2006 for the provision of a Civic Amenity facility on Council lands at Lloyd Industrial Park.

### Meath Arts Centre, Navan

The new 320 seat Theatre & Arts Centre & Exhibition space was substantially completed in 2005 at a cost of approx. €13M.

### Kennedy Road Civic Space, Navan

A Civic Space was provided on Kennedy Road to include car parking, seating, public lighting and street furniture. Value appointed to report on compensation matters.

### Public Park, Navan

Provision of a new 68-acre Public Park to cater for passive recreation and active recreation, football pitches, playground and informal concert area.

### Fairgreen Re-Development, Navan

Design under preparation for the provision of a new underground car park, office, commercial, residential development including civic space on the Fairgreen.

### Trim Sports & Leisure Centre

Provision of a Sports and Leisure Centre to include Swimming Pool, Gym, Fitness Centre, All weather pitches, bowling green and car park. Consultants to be appointed to carry out detailed design.

### Regional Broadband Scheme

Provision of Broadband Infrastructure in Navan, Trim, Kells, Dunshaughlin and Dunboyne/Clonee. Consultants were appointed to design and manage the scheme. Tenders were sought in September 2005 for Civil and Mechanical Engineering Contractors to install the fibre optic network in the 5 towns. Plans also in place to provide Broadband in Athboy, Duleek, Laytown/Bettystown and Ratoath. The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources will fund 90% of the capital cost of the works.

### River Tolka Flood Alleviation Works

Plans prepared to carry out further works to alleviate flooding in the Dunboyne/Clonee area including the replacement of Loughsallagh Bridge and the Old Navan Road Bridge, Dunboyne. Works will commence in 2006.







# PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## CORE ACTIVITIES:

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The Planning Department is responsible for implementing the provisions of the Planning & Development Act 2000 and the Planning & Development Regulations 2001. This involves inter alia.

- The making of physical planning policy
- The preparation and review of the relevant Development Plans /Local Area Plans.
- The consideration of applications for planning permission,
- The control of development and the enforcement of planning legislation.
- The giving of advice on planning matters to the public and to other Council Departments
- The promotion of industrial and other development in the County.
- The promotion of economic and tourism activity



## Strategic objective

To operate a system of physical planning within sustainable patterns of settlement which facilitates and provides the impetus for economic development in County Meath, whilst at all times fostering protection of the natural and built environment of the County.



## Planning Applications

### Strategy

To deliver a high quality, efficient & effective service through skilled and motivated staff, using the most up to date integrated Information Technology packages.

Our service fulfills a statutory duty to decide on all planning applications with adherence to strict statutory requirements and specified timescales, while at all times having regard to the principles of sustainable development and the proper planning & sustainable development of the area.

% of all applications were determined within the statutory 8 weeks without the need for further information requests.

A total of 740 planning applications for rural one off houses in the countryside and 113 housing developments were determined during 2005.

An Environmental Impact Statement accompanied a total of 10 planning applications received in 2004.

In cases where the Planning Authority's decisions were appealed to An Bord Pleanala the Bord confirmed the Councils decisions in 77% of cases, and reversed decisions in 22 % of cases.

### STATISTICS

In 2005 Meath County Council and the three town Councils of Navan, Kells & Trim received a total of 2616 planning applications.

The grant rates for all applications determined in 2005 was approximately 74 % and on average 65

### Statistics – One Off Housing for 2001 to 2005

ELECTORAL AREA	TOTAL APPLICATIONS	ONE OFF APPLICATIONS	GRANTED ONE OFF	REFUSED ONE OFF	WITH DRAWN ONE OFF
Navan	3113	1080	527	358	123
Trim	2779	1205	540	482	90
Kells	3078	1490	756	461	142
Dunshaughlin	2899	807	354	226	145
Slane	2413	769	323	277	92
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14282</b>	<b>5351</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>1804</b>	<b>594</b>

### Major Planning Applications received or determined during 2005 included :

- A Town Centre Development in Oldcastle
- An extension of the existing Platin Cement Works
- A new printing press facility at Loyd Kells
- A mixed development comprising of residential, commercial ,retail and leisure at Main St Dunshaughlin.
- Housing developments in Navan, Ashbourne, Donacamey, Trim and Ratoath.
- Recycling / Composting facilities at Gormanstown & Wilkinstown.





## Development Plans

### Strategy

To review and prepare all Development Plans, Local Area Plans & Area Action Plans and other statutory documents in line with the principles of sustainable development.

### Review of Meath County Development Plan

2005 marked a major development in the preparation of a new County Development Plan with the publication of a consultation Strategic Issues Paper, which looks at significant planning issues that the next County Development Plan will address.

Members of the public and prescribed bodies were invited to make submissions or observations regarding the review of the current plan, which was made in 2001, and the preparation of a new development plan. Following the initial phase of public consultation a draft plan will be put on display following consideration of all submissions and observations by the elected members of the Council.

The Draft County Development Plan will contain the strategic development objectives for the County and will be accompanied by a Record of Protected Structures, proposals for the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas throughout the County, a Landscape Characterisation Assessment of the County and a Housing Strategy for the County. It is proposed that the existing Written Statement and Detailed Objectives for Towns and Villages inclusive of the accompanying book of maps contained in the 2001 County Development Plan shall remain in force pending the preparation and subsequent adoption of individual Local Area Plans for these centres. These Local Area Plans will be prepared within two years of the adoption of this County Development Plan and are the subject of a separate process.

Development Plans are in place for the Town Councils of Navan (adopted November 2003) Kells (adopted October 2001) and Trim (Adopted March 2002). The review process for the Kells Plan commenced in 2005 with the publication of a consultation Strategic Issues Paper.

The East Meath Development Plan 2000 was reviewed and adopted during 2005 in the form of two separate Local Area Plans (LAPs). The northern LAP comprises the urban area of Donacorney, Mornington, Bettystown, Laytown and Julianstown. The southern LAP comprises the urban area of Stamullen, the village of Gormanstown and the proposed urban development north of the existing Gormanstown village, including the Military Aerodrome and Mosney Camp.

### Local Area Plans (LAPS)

A planning authority may prepare a Local Area Plan for any area within its functional area. Plans must be made for areas with a population of 2,000 and a Local Area Plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the Development Plan. It consists of a written statement and a plan of objectives. When making a planning decision, the Planning Authority and An Bord Pleanála shall have regard to the provisions of the LAP for that area.

Meath County Council has adopted Local Area Plans for a number of areas including Trim, Ratoath, and Kilcock Environs. The Navan Kells and Trim Development Plans include objectives for the preparation of a number of Local Area Plans and or Area Action Plans, some of which commenced preparation during 2005





## Enforcement of Planning Control

### Strategy

To use the full rigours of the enforcement provisions of the 2000 Planning Act in ensuring that the integrity of the planning system is maintained and to take appropriate enforcement action against people who carry out unauthorised development.

In response to an unprecedented intensification of development in recent years Meath County Council has allocated additional resources to its Enforcement Section including staff at technical and administrative level. As a result the level of inspections of developments has significantly increased, with a particular emphasis on supervision of projects during the early stages of

development.

During 2005 Meath County Council received a total of 410 complaints and following investigation a total of 238 Warning letters were issued and 57 Enforcement Notices served. It was found necessary to initiate Court proceedings in respect of 10 cases during 2005.

## Pre-planning and Advisory Services

### Strategy

To give advice on planning matters to the public and to other bodies, including the continuation of pre-planning clinics at area level in respect of one off housing or domestic extensions.

This initiative serves to improve the quality of subsequent planning applications, avoids the necessity for seeking further information where possible and in some cases spares the costs of what is likely to prove an abortive application.

During 2005 officials conducted over 1300 pre planning clinics in respect of proposed development including major residential, commercial, industrial and retail type developments.

### Guidelines on Sustainable Rural Housing

In March 2004 the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government issued draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Rural Settlement for the purposes of public consultation. Following consideration of all views expressed during the Consultation process the guidelines were issued as Ministerial Guidelines under the Planning Act 2000 in April 2005.





The draft Guidelines are based on the presumption that people who have roots in or links to rural areas, and are part of and contribute to the rural community will get planning permission for houses. This is provided the proposed development site meets with the normal requirements in relation to matters eg road safety and proper disposal of waste water.

### Development Management – Consultation Draft of Guidelines for Planning Authorities

In November 2005 the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government published as a consultation draft, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, which seek to promote best practise at every stage in the development management process. The Guidelines seek to build on a culture within the planning service, which is positive, responsive and promotes high standards. Best practice is made up of many elements including efficiency in handling planning applications, rational & consistent decisions, effective communication and explanation of

decisions and effective planning enforcement. Meath County Council made a submission in respect of the draft Guidelines which are expected to be finalised during the 2006

### Conservation

It is the policy of Meath County Council to protect the rich heritage of the County and to secure the protection of buildings and structures that are Protected Structures as defined in the Local Government Planning & Development Act 2000.

The Conservation Officer, who is employed on a shared basis with Louth County Council, provides professional advice to owners of protected structures on Conservation Issues and administers the National Conservation Grant Scheme, which provides assistance for appropriate conservation works to eligible structures. The Conservation Officer also makes submissions on planning applications referred to her where the proposed development could impact on the built Heritage.

## Building Regulations

### Strategy

To ensure strict implementation of the Building Regulations to ensure good practice in the design and construction of buildings in the interest of the health, safety and welfare of people who use buildings.

### Inspect Rate of Buildings

The Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government recommend an inspection rate of buildings by Building Control Officials of between 12% and 15% however in this regard Meath County Council achieved an inspection rate of over 90 % during 2005.





## Tourism Promotion and Development

### Strategy

To promote County Meath as a tourist destination in both the domestic and overseas market.

Meath County Council and Meath Tourism commissioned a strategy 'Ireland's Heritage Capital - Marketing Tourism in Meath 2005-2010' in 2005. The overall objective of the strategy was to guide the manner in which development inward investment and marketing for the county will be executed in the tourism sector over these five years. Significant progress of Year One of the implementation of the strategy was achieved during 2005.

### Signage

During 2005, new County Welcome signage was produced by a signage committee of Meath County Council and Meath Tourism. The signage includes welcome signage on approach roads to 14 towns and villages on national roads, motorways and non-national roads and at County boundaries.

### Walking and Cycling routes

Meath County Council and Meath Tourism placed an application to Fáilte Ireland with match funding from Meath County Council to develop waymarked walking and cycling routes.

### Product Development

Meath Tourism was restructured to incorporate product development into its role. A significant number of projects have been assisted by tourism and economic development over the past 12 months.

### Co-operation

The 4 Counties Touring Initiative was a marketing initiative lead by the Local Authorities of Monaghan, Louth, Cavan and Meath to market the four counties together.

Meath Tourism and Kells Chamber of Commerce held a networking evening

### New Marketing Initiatives

Meath Tourism designed, printed and distributed 150,000 brochures during 2005 and set up a network of 'Visitor Information Pubs' to distribute tourist information. Meath Tourism developed a new golf brochure in association with the golf clubs in anticipation of the 2006 Ryder Cup. A new Crafts brochure was developed and launched in November in the Ashbourne Civic Offices.

New photography and a new film available on CD on County Meath were produced over the Summer months.

### Visitor Centres

The strategy recommended that the role of the tourist office and visitor centre would become that of the town councils. This was implemented.

### Familiarisation Trips

Meath Tourism assisted with the development of Familiarisation Trips to the County of Tour Operators and Tourism Ireland staff.

### Nationwide Media Campaign

A nationwide billboard and national radio campaign were implemented to raise awareness of Meath as a tourist destination.

### Domestic and overseas Promotional Shows

Meath Tourism attended a vast number of promotional shows in Ireland (Belfast), Europe (Belgium, Holland, Paris), The UK (London, Birmingham, Yorkshire) and the US in (Fly Fishing in Massachusetts and a Coast to Coast Promotion with Noel V Ginnity).





# KELLS TOWN COUNCIL



Name Cllr Peter Caffrey  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address Cavan Road, Kells, Co. Meath  
 Phone Number 087 2618605  
 Email pcaffrey@members.kellstc.ie



Name Cllr Brian Collins  
 Political Party Labour  
 Address Cavan Road, Kells, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 087 6829205  
 Email bcollins@members.kellstc.ie



Name Cllr Brian Curran  
 Political Party Non-Party  
 Address 4 St Colmcille's Villas, Kells, Co. Meath  
 Phone Number 046 9249984  
 Email bcurran@members.kellstc.ie



Name Cllr Sean Drew  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address 8 Kenlis Crescent, Kells, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 087 4121803  
 Email sdrew@members.kellstc.ie



Name Cllr A.O. Farrelly  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address Moy Cottage, Maudlin Street, Kells, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 086 8625142  
 Email afarrelly@members.kellstc.ie



Name Cllr Conor Ferguson  
 Political Party Sinn Fein  
 Address Navan Road, Kells, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 087 2211103  
 Email cferguson@member.kellstc.ie



Name Cllr Tommy Grimes  
 Political Party Labour  
 Address 14 Fr Mc Cullen Park, Kells, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 087 9806688  
 Email tgrimes@members.kellstc.ie



Name Cllr Oliver Sweeney  
 Political Party Fine Gael  
 Address Hurdlestown, Kells, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 046 9240518  
 Email osweeney@members.kellstc.ie



Name Cllr Bryan Reilly  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address Rockfield Road, Kells, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 046 9240122 086 2599184  
 Email bryan@bryanreillyauctioneers.com





## Structure & Services

Kells Town Council is the local authority for the urban district of Kells. It is composed of nine directly elected councillors who are elected for a period of 5 years.

### Core Activities

The council provides a wide range of services that are vital for the development and functioning of the town. These services include

- housing,
- planning control, development planning,
- sanitary services (in conjunction with Meath County Council), urban roads and environment.

In addition the Council contributes financially to the County Council to support a number of countywide services including fire service, swimming pools and libraries.

The Council's current budget stands at €2.6million, a significant portion of which is spent directly in the town with €7.5million in 2005 on capital projects.

Kells Town Council is a key service provider in the expanding town of Kells while also providing a democratic and representational forum for the people of Kells.

### Kells One-Stop-Shop

Kells Town Hall was originally designed as a bank by William Caldebeck in 1853 and became the Town Hall in 1974. In 2005, work began on an extensive development of the building to secure its future as the administrative centre for the Local Authority in the town and electoral area. The building is being extended from c. 3,000 sq. ft. to c. 9,500 sq. ft. at a cost of €5 million. Great care and attention is being given to preserve the architectural merits of the building and the setting in which it is located. When open, the new One-Stop-Shop will provide a range of local authority services to the public including planning, housing and motor tax.

When finished in Summer 2006, Kells Town Hall will be a building that will project the image of a town looking to the future and proud of the past. A major refurbishment will take place on Headfort Place between the Town Hall and St John's cemetery. This work is to be completed by the end of 2006 and is included in the funding of the Town Hall project.

## Economic Development in Kells

### Kells Enterprise & Technology Centre

Kells Town Council is delighted to announce the launch of Kells Enterprise & Technology Centre (KETC). Due to open in September 2006, KETC will be located in the Lloyd Industrial Park, Cavan Road. Kells Enterprise & Technology Centre Ltd. was set up to oversee the development of the centre. The primary role of the company is to provide incubation / workspace units for the Manufacture and High Technology service sector at economic rent to assist the growth of small businesses and to alleviate the initial start-up costs.

The Centre is a two-storey building, covers a total floor area of 2280m<sup>2</sup> and comprises units varying in size from 20m<sup>2</sup> to 750m<sup>2</sup>. The centre is fully accessible. The design features cater for an advanced IT infrastructure, meeting rooms, training room and video conferencing facility. The administrative centre will supply reception / secretarial services, meeting and conference facilities along with business advice mentoring.

KETC is supported by Kells Town Council, Enterprise Ireland and Meath County Enterprise Board. The project received funding under the National Development Plan 2000-2006, from the European Union and the Irish Government.

### Kells Business Park

In late 2004, Kells Town Council purchased approximately 10 additional acres on the Cavan Road to create the Lloyd Industrial Park.

Development is continuing with a total of 23 acres available. Projects have been agreed on 15 acres, these projects are currently in the planning system.







# NAVAN TOWN COUNCIL



Name Cllr Andy Brennan  
 Political Party Non – Party  
 Address 3 Parnell Park, Navan, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 046 9022253  
 Email abrennan@members.navantc.ie



Name Cllr Shane Cassells  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address 8 Moatlands Drive, Navan, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 086 3399198  
 Email scassells@members.meathcoco.ie



Name Cllr John Duffy  
 Political Party Fine Gael  
 Address Balreask Old, Navan, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number  
 Email jduffy@members.navantc.ie



Name Cllr Pdraig Fitzsimons  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address Rathdaldron, Navan, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 086 8238636  
 Email pfitzsimons@members.navantc.ie



Name Cllr Anne Gibney  
 Political Party Sinn Fein  
 Address 8 Claremount Estate, Navan, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number  
 Email agibney@members.navantc.ie



Name Cllr Jim Holloway  
 Political Party Fine Gael  
 Address Farganstown, Navan, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 086 2355236  
 Email jholloway@members.meathcoco.ie



Name Cllr Christopher Reilly  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address Ardsallagh, Navan, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 087 7736545  
 Email creilly@members.navantc.ie



Name Cllr Tommy Reilly  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address Ardsallagh, Navan, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 087 2786945  
 Email treilly@members.navantc.ie





# TRIM TOWN COUNCIL



Name Cllr Ray Butler  
 Political Party Fine Gael  
 Address 7 Swift Court, Trim, Co. Meath  
 Phone Number 046 9437051  
 Email rbutler@members.trimtc.ie



Name Cllr Phillip Cantwell  
 Political Party Non – Party  
 Address Villa Maria, Manorland, Trim, Co. Meath  
 Phone Number 046 9431515 087 2880288  
 Email pcantwell@members.meathcoco.ie



Name Cllr Trevor Golden  
 Political Party Non - Party  
 Address Church Lane, Trim, Co. Meath  
 Phone Number  
 Email tgolden@members.trimtc.ie



Name Cllr Robbie Griffith  
 Political Party Non – Party  
 Address The Bungalows, Blackfriary, Trim, Co. Meath  
 Phone Number  
 Email rgriffith@members.trimtc.ie



Name Cllr Vincent Mc Hugh  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address St John's, Trim, Co. Meath  
 Phone Number 087 0506414  
 Email vmchugh@members.trimtc.ie



Name Cllr Margaret Mc Givern  
 Political Party Sinn Fein  
 Address 4 Haggard Street, Trim, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 086 8640011  
 Email

Name Cllr Danny O' Brien  
 Political Party Labour  
 Address 74 Eldergrove, Trim, Co. Meath  
 Phone Number 087 2875293  
 Email dobrien@members.trimtc.ie



Name Jimmy Peppard  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address Manorlands Close, Manorlands, Trim, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 086 0600500  
 Email jpeppard@members.trimtc.ie



Name Gerry Reilly  
 Political Party Fianna Fail  
 Address Teaguestown House, Effernock, Trim, Co. Meath.  
 Phone Number 087 2402386  
 Email greilly@members.trimtc.ie



# Meath County Council Annual Financial Report 2005



	REVENUE (€ M)	CAPITAL (€ M)
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Housing & Building	6.579	23.986
Roads Transportation & Safety	28.632	144.424
Water & Sewerage	17.190	26.466
Development Incentives & Controls	7.149	1.454
Environmental Protection	8.458	1.150
Recreation & Amenity	4.636	8.248
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	5.485	0.179
Miscellaneous	4.387	1.714
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82.516</b>	<b>207.621</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
<b>(See funding sources below)</b>		
Net Transfers		0.345
Net Revenue Cost to be funded from County	(40.032)	
Rates	14.083	
Local Government Fund	24.018	
Charges to Urbans	1.220	
Transfer from (to) Reserves	(0.121)	
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	(0.832)	16.871
Opening Balance (01/01/05)	(9.934)	10.608
<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>(10.766)</b>	<b>27.479</b>
<b>FUNDING SOURCES</b>		
State Grants & Subsidies	24.237	179.604
Borrowings		0.698
Other Receipts		44.535
Rents from Houses	4.243	
Housing Loans	0.957	
Commercial Water and Sewerage	1.627	
Planning Fees	2.108	
Recreation & Amenity Activities	0.328	
Fire Charges	1.005	
Pension Contributions	1.237	
Miscellaneous	6.742	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42.484</b>	<b>224.837</b>

# Breakdown of applications in 2005 by post and gender

Title	Sector	Male	Female
Assistant Staff Officer	Admin	3	25
Assistant Staff Officer	Admin	2	22
Acting Exec Planner	Prof/Tech	1	4
Acting Senior Staff Officer	Admin	3	7
Admin Officer	Admin	13	14
Temp Arts Officer	Admin	4	12
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	Prof/Tech	8	0
Assistant Design Engineer - May	Prof/Tech	4	1
Assistant Design Engineer - Nov	Prof/Tech	3	0
Assistant Engineer - July	Prof/Tech	9	1
Assistant Engineer - Nov	Prof/Tech	8	1
Assistant Librarian	Admin	3	16
Assistant Planner	Prof/Tech	22	26
Assistant Resident Engineer	Prof/Tech	9	0
Assistant Staff Officer	Admin	36	193
Branch Librarian	Admin	5	21
Reconciliation Accounting Technician	Admin	1	12
Caretaker Duleek	Outdoor	17	0
Civil Technician Grade 1	Prof/Tech	4	5
Community Arts Worker	Admin	3	18
Community IT Dev Officer	Admin	10	8
Community Worker	Admin	8	7
Craftworker Trim	Outdoor	20	3
Design Engineer - Nov 04	Prof/Tech	3	1
Environmental Tech G1	Prof/Tech	9	13
Environmental Tech G2	Prof/Tech	18	20
Executive Engineer	Prof/Tech	14	1
Executive Planner	Prof/Tech	2	6
Executive Planner - May 05	Prof/Tech	3	8
Executive Planner - Nov 04	Prof/Tech	5	7
General Operative - Dunshaughlin	Outdoor	43	1
General Operative - Navan	Outdoor	60	9
General Operative - Trim	Outdoor	48	5
General Services Supervisor - Duleek	Outdoor	8	0
General Services Supervisor - Navan	Outdoor	7	0
Graduate Design Engineer - May	Prof/Tech	9	1
Graduate Design Engineer	Prof/Tech	4	1
Housing Investigation Officer	Admin	13	7
IS Analyst Developer	Admin	22	17
IS Project Leader	Admin	21	9
School Warden - Dunshaughlin	Outdoor	11	10
Waterworks Caretaker - Slane	Outdoor	41	0
Library Assistant	Admin	15	66
Office Assistant	Admin	11	21
Pool Lifeguard - Kells	Outdoor	4	3
Resident Engineer - Arts Centre	Prof/Tech	4	0
Resident Engineer - March	Prof/Tech	7	0
Retained Firefighter - Ashbourne	Fire	5	1
Retained Firefighter - Navan	Fire	13	1
School Warden - Navan	Outdoor	0	1
School Warden - Ratoath	Outdoor	0	1
Senior Design Engineer	Prof/Tech	4	0
Senior Staff Officer	Admin	10	22
Spatial Services Project Leader	Prof/Tech	1	3
Staff Officer	Admin	11	74
Supervisory Traffic Warden	Outdoor	12	1
Technician G 1 - Road Design	Prof/Tech	2	0
Temporary Wastewater Caretaker - Ashbourne	Outdoor	14	0
Tenant Liason Officer	Admin	0	3
Warden Slane Village Enhancement	Outdoor	11	0
Wastewater Caretaker - Navan	Outdoor	19	1
Water/ Wastewater Caretaker - Kells	Outdoor	57	0
<b>Totals</b>		<b>737</b>	<b>710</b>