



LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL
Annual Report
2008





CONTENTS

Foreword – Councillor Sean Farrell, Mayor	2
Introduction – Mr. Tim Caffrey, County Manager	3
Members of Longford County Council	4
Membership of Strategic Policy Committees	5
Report on Working of Strategic Policy Committees During 2008	7
Key Functions	10
Infrastructural Services Directorate	11
Corporate, Environment, Emergency Services, Recreation and Amenity	19
Housing and Planning Services	31
Human Resources, Community and Enterprise, Economic Development and Cultural Services	37
Finance and Information Systems.....	55
Annual Progress Report on Corporate Plan	65
Service Indicators – Longford Local Authorities 2008	69



FOREWORD

COUNCILLOR SEAN FARRELL, MAYOR

As Mayor of County Longford it is with great pride that I present the Council's 2008 Annual Report. The report highlights some of the principal activities of the Council during the year. This excellent publication is a valuable source of reference material and information with regard to the Council's wide range of services.



The key functions of Longford County Council are delivered across the five Directorates. The challenges facing each Director of Service in managing the services for which he is responsible are significant. I want to thank the Directors of Services and each of the employees of Longford County Council, both indoor and outdoor, for their efforts in delivering a professional and efficient service. I also, wish to thank the elected members of Longford County Council whose diligent attention to their work, ensures that every corner of the County is serviced to a high standard. I particularly wish to thank the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Gerry Brady for the advice and assistance that he provided to me throughout my term of office.

In the current uncertain economic climate and with increasing unemployment and a projected contraction of the economy, the leadership role of Longford County Council in our County will be of greater significance than ever before. The challenges facing the Council's Executive and the Elected Members with regard to maintaining service levels with reduced resources and declining revenues are daunting. However it is my belief that these challenges will be overcome.

In conclusion I commend this report to the people of County Longford as an excellent overview of the work done on their behalf by the County Council in 2008.

Sean Farrell
Mayor



INTRODUCTION

MR. TIM CAFFREY, COUNTY MANAGER



As County Manager I am pleased to present the Annual Report of Longford County Council in respect of 2008. The report illustrates the Council's endeavours to improve the delivery of its services. I am satisfied that during 2008 there has been an improvement both in the delivery of services that the Council is responsible for and the quality of those services. The past decade has been a period of growth and development. For that reason the Council was in a position to provide additional services by virtue of the fact that it had at its disposal added resources. In 2008 the Elected Representatives and the Executive continued to work harmoniously for the betterment of the county and those who live and work here.

During 2008 the economic environment in which the Council operates changed dramatically. It became evident that economic constraints would lead to the Council not being in a position to continue to expand its services. Fortunately the Council had been prudent over recent years. When it became evident that the economic downturn would be severe the Council took decisive action. The planned development of new Civic Offices was put on hold. Planned projects were reviewed and prioritisations were attached to the schemes and projects that are planned. While I am disappointed that not all of the projects and schemes that had been planned will be delivered within the timeframes that had been envisaged I am satisfied that the decisions that have been made are the correct ones.

On a more positive note in 2008 the Council adopted a 3 Year Development Levies Spending Programme. The delivery of this programme will result in significant benefits accruing to all who live and work in the county. Many of the projects that are being funded will aid in the development of a stronger and more attractive tourism product in County Longford. The programme also includes a wide variety of projects that were identified as being most likely to improve the quality of life of everyone associated with County Longford. In 2008 a number of capital projects were commenced that when completed will result in improvements with regard to water supplies, effluent disposal and transportation in the county.

The Council continues to monitor and review the ways in which it communicates with those who live and work in Longford. Further improvements have been made in the areas of customer services and media interaction during 2008. I believe that it is vital that the Council continue to communicate effectively with the people of Longford, public representatives and employees with regard to the decisions that are taken on behalf of the people of the county. This Annual Report is one of the means by which the Council can illustrate the improvements that were made in 2008 to all concerned.

I am confident that Longford County Council continues to deliver services of a quality that are compatible with modern standards and expectations. The Council will continue to work to ensure that County Longford will be well placed to take advantage of the opportunities that will arise when the current economic downturn ends. In 2008 the work of reviewing the County development Plan was continued. This plan will be finalised early in 2009 and will set out the strategy for the future development of the county.

Tim Caffrey,
County Manager



MEMBERS OF LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

DRUMLISH ELECTORAL AREA



GERRY BRADY



LUIE McENTIRE



MARTIN MULLEADY

DRUMLISH

LONGFORD ELECTORAL AREA



DENIS GLENNON



VICTOR KIERNAN



ALAN MITCHELL

LONGFORD



PETER MURPHY



MICHAEL NEVIN



PEGGY NOLAN



SEAMUS BUTLER

GRANARD ELECTORAL AREA



JAMES COYLE

GRANARD



MARTIN FARRELL



FRANK KILBRIDE



MAURA
KILBRIDE-HARKIN



P.J. REILLY

BALLYMAHON ELECTORAL AREA

BALLYMAHON



LARRY BANNON



PADDY BELTON



MICK CAHILL



SEAN FARRELL



ADRIAN FARRELL



BARNEY STEELE



MEMBERSHIP OF STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES

HOUSING, BUILDING, SOCIAL POLICY, PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL

Chairperson:	Councillor Victor Kiernan
Members Longford County Council:	Councillor Alan Mitchell Councillor Maura Kilbride-Harkin Councillor Martin Mulleady Councillor Peter Murphy Councillor P.J. Reilly
Longford Town Council:	Councillor James Keogh
Sectoral Representatives: <i>1 Development/Construction</i> <i>3 Community & Voluntary:</i>	Mr. Kevin Hughes, Construction Industry Federation Ms. Patricia Harrison, Community & Voluntary Forum Ms. Fionnula Spillane, Community & Voluntary Forum Mr. Benson Ogboko, Community & Voluntary Forum

TRANSPORTATION, ROAD DEVELOPMENT, ROAD MAINTENANCE & ROAD SAFETY POLICIES

Chairperson:	Councillor Larry Bannon
Members Longford County Council:	Councillor Adrian Farrell Councillor Paddy Belton Councillor James Coyle Councillor Luie McEntire
Longford Town Council:	Councillor Edward Kelly
Sectoral Representatives: <i>1 Agriculture/Farming</i> <i>1 Trade Union</i> <i>1 Community & Voluntary</i>	Mr. Seamus Treacy, Irish Co-Operate Organisation Society Mr. Bernard Nolan, Irish Congress of Trade Unions Ms. Trish Rouiller, Longford Women's Link



WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY

Chairperson:	Councillor Gerry Brady
Members Longford County Council:	Councillor Martin Farrell Councillor Seamus Butler Councillor Mick Cahill Councillor Peggy Nolan
Longford Town Council:	Councillor Carmel Fay
Sectoral Representatives: <i>1 Agriculture/Farming</i> <i>1 Community & Voluntary:</i>	Mr. Albert Cooney, Irish Farmers Association Mr. Parvez Butt, Newtownforbes Development

ECONOMIC, URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL POLICIES

Chairperson:	Councillor Barney Steele
Members Longford County Council:	Councillor Sean Farrell Councillor Denis Glennon Councillor Frank Kilbride Councillor Michael Nevin
Longford Town Council:	Councillor Paul Connell
Sectoral Representatives: <i>1 Business/Commercial:</i> <i>2 Community & Voluntary:</i>	Mr. Brian Dillon, Longford Chamber of Commerce Mr. Mark Casey, Lanesboro Amateur Boxing Club Mr. Terry McKenna, Ballinamuck Community Enterprise Ltd



REPORT ON WORKING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES DURING 2008





REPORT ON WORKING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES DURING 2008

WATER SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

The Water Services and Environmental Strategic Policies Committee met four times during 2008. The S.P.C. considered the following matters and recommendations:

21st January 2008

- Water Services Act 2007.
- Consideration of Position Paper Relating to Sustainable Water Management in Schools.
- Draft Policy Document Relating to the Recycling of Textiles.

21st April 2008

- Position regarding Council Tenants and Refuse Charges.
- Consideration of the Draft Litter Management Plan 2008 – 2010.
- Policy on Trade Effluent Licensing.

21st July 2008

- River Camlin Flood Study.
- Consideration of the Draft Litter Management Plan 2008 – 2010.

20th October 2008

- Draft Longford County Council (Storage, Presentation, Segregation and Collection of Household Waste) Bye-Laws, 2008.
- Consideration of the need to draft Bye-Laws to regulate the use of Jet-Skis, Power Boats and other recreational watercraft on water courses and lakes in the functional area of Longford Co. Council.
- Information on Water Services Strategic Planning.
- Overview on Drinking Water Safety & Licencing.

TRANSPORTATION, AND ROAD DEVELOPMENT, MAINTENANCE AND ROAD SAFETY

The Strategic Policy Committee met four times during 2008 with a core objective of ensuring that infrastructural transportation policies and investment assist the economic and social development of County Longford, and preserve and improve the particular attractiveness of the County and its background environment.

The dates of the meetings were:-

- 22nd January 2008
- 22nd April 2008
- 22nd July 2008
- 20th October 2008

The main items for discussion and consideration were:-

1. Policy for children at play signs
2. Longford Signage in relation to the National Spatial Strategy
3. Refuse Collection in County Towns
4. Longford Road Safety Strategy
5. Hedge cutting on Public Roads
6. Transportation of Abnormal Loads Policy
7. Identification of Policy for development in 2009



HOUSING & SOCIAL POLICY, PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL POLICY

The Housing & Social Policy, Planning & Building Control Policy SPC met four times during 2008. The dates of the meetings held were as follows:-

- 28th January 2008
- 28th April 2008
- 28th July 2008
- 1st December 2008

The following is a list of the main issues considered by the Committee in 2008:-

- Review of the Taking in Charge Policy
- Review of Longford County Development Plan
- Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)
- Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013
- Housing Bill 2008
- "The Way Home" A Strategy to address Adult Homelessness 2008-2013
- Energy Performance of Buildings
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas

ECONOMIC, URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, CULTURAL AND RECREATION POLICIES

The Strategic Policy Committee met on 4 occasions in 2008. The committee discussed the following policy issues:-

- Industrial Development
- Business Parks
- Cohesion
- Library Development Programme
- County Longford Museum
- Longford Swimming Pool
- Community & Voluntary Forum
- Broadband
- Comhairle na nÓg/Youth Council
- Student Council Training
- Module on Local Government with transition year students
- National Pride of Place Competition
- Pride of Longford Competition
- CCTV
- Tourism
- County and Village Signage
- Sports Partnership
- Joint Policing Committees
- Poverty Profile/Social Inclusion Strategy

COUNTY LONGFORD MUSEUM

An application for funding to construct a new County Longford Museum under the access program was not successful. The issue of managing, preserving and displaying the county's many artifacts must be addressed in association with the Historical Society and County Museum sub committee.

KEY FUNCTIONS

The principal services of Longford County Council are now provided within the following Directorate structure. The five Directorates cover the areas of:-

- **Infrastructural Services Directorate**
- **Corporate, Environment, Emergency Services, Recreation and Amenity**
- **Housing and Planning Services**
- **Human Resources, Community and Enterprise, Economic Development, and Cultural Services**
- **Finance and Information Systems**





INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE



INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES



Cllr. Larry Bannon,
Chairperson of Transportation SPC



Mr. Roger Timlin,
Director of Services

WATER SERVICES

Core Objective:

Provide environmentally sustainable water services and environmental infrastructure to secure economic and social development and to lobby for increased capital funding.

WATER SERVICES INFRASTRUCTURE

There are five regional water schemes serving County Longford and it is estimated that 85% of the population receives a piped water supply treated to EU standards.

The Schemes are: Ballymahon, Lanesboro/Newtowncashel, Longford Central, Lough Gowna and Granard.

Drinking Water Quality is monitored by the Health Services Executive on an agency basis for Longford County Council in accordance with the E.C. (Quality of Water Intended for Human Consumption) Regulations, 2000. All non-compliant results are immediately reported to the Local Authority for appropriate action.

Under the new Drinking Water Regulations, S.I. No. 278 of 2007 European Communities (Drinking Water) (No.2) Regulations 2007, the EPA is the supervising authority for Public Water Supplies. Local Authorities must now report any non-compliance to the EPA immediately and may be directed to develop and implement Action Plans under direction from the EPA.

Under the new Drinking Water Regulations, S.I. No. 278 of 2007 European Communities (Drinking Water) (No.2)

Regulations 2007, the Local Authority is the supervising authority for Group Water Schemes (GWS) and Small Private Supplies (SPS). This is a greatly increased regulatory role.

The Water Services Act 2007 continues to be brought into force in a number of stages.

The Council has prepared a Strategic Rural Water Plan, a Network Appraisal and Rehabilitation Plan and a GIS Spatial Database/Complete Information System of the water and sewer networks in the county.

There are eleven public sewerage schemes in the County: Ballymahon, Kenagh, Lanesboro, Longford, Newtownforbes, Drumlish, Granard, Edgeworthstown, Legan, Abbeyshrule and Clondra.

The Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007 have been signed into legislation. All Water Services Authorities' waste water discharges are to be subject to the new Regulations, requiring licensing by the EPA.

Longford County Council received an EPA licence for the Longford Wastewater Treatment Plant at Cartrons in September 2008, following an application submission in December 2007. The onerous conditions of the license will need to be complied with by Longford County Council.

Further applications for the Wastewater Treatment Plants in Ballymahon, Granard and Edgeworthstown have been prepared in-house and submitted to the EPA in June 2008.



WATER CONSERVATION

Works continued on the Water Conservation Project Stage 2. All District Meter Areas (DMAs) have been set up and all telemetry for monitoring flows have been installed.

Leak detection and repairs was also continued. This project has significantly reduced Unaccounted for Water to an average of 290 litres per kilometre of watermain per hour which is good compared to UK water companies.

In total €1,672m has been spent on Stage 2 of the Water Conservation Project. Additional funding of €375,000 was approved by DOEHLG for further leakage detection and repairs and maintaining existing District Meter Area, with Longford County Council providing the same amount from own funds.

Of this additional funding €215,782 has been spent to date to provide additional telemetry and carry out further leakage detection and repairs.

Final approval for Stage 3 Phase 1 rehabilitation works to water supply pipelines has been approved by the DOEHLG. Contract documents and drawings have been prepared and will be ready to go to tender in early 2009.

Application for Stage 3 Phase 2 rehabilitation works has been submitted for approval to the DOEHLG.

The Non-Domestic Water Metering project has reached substantial completion and customer billing commenced in 2007. This project will be continued for the future maintenance of customer meters and for the billing of future non-domestic customers.

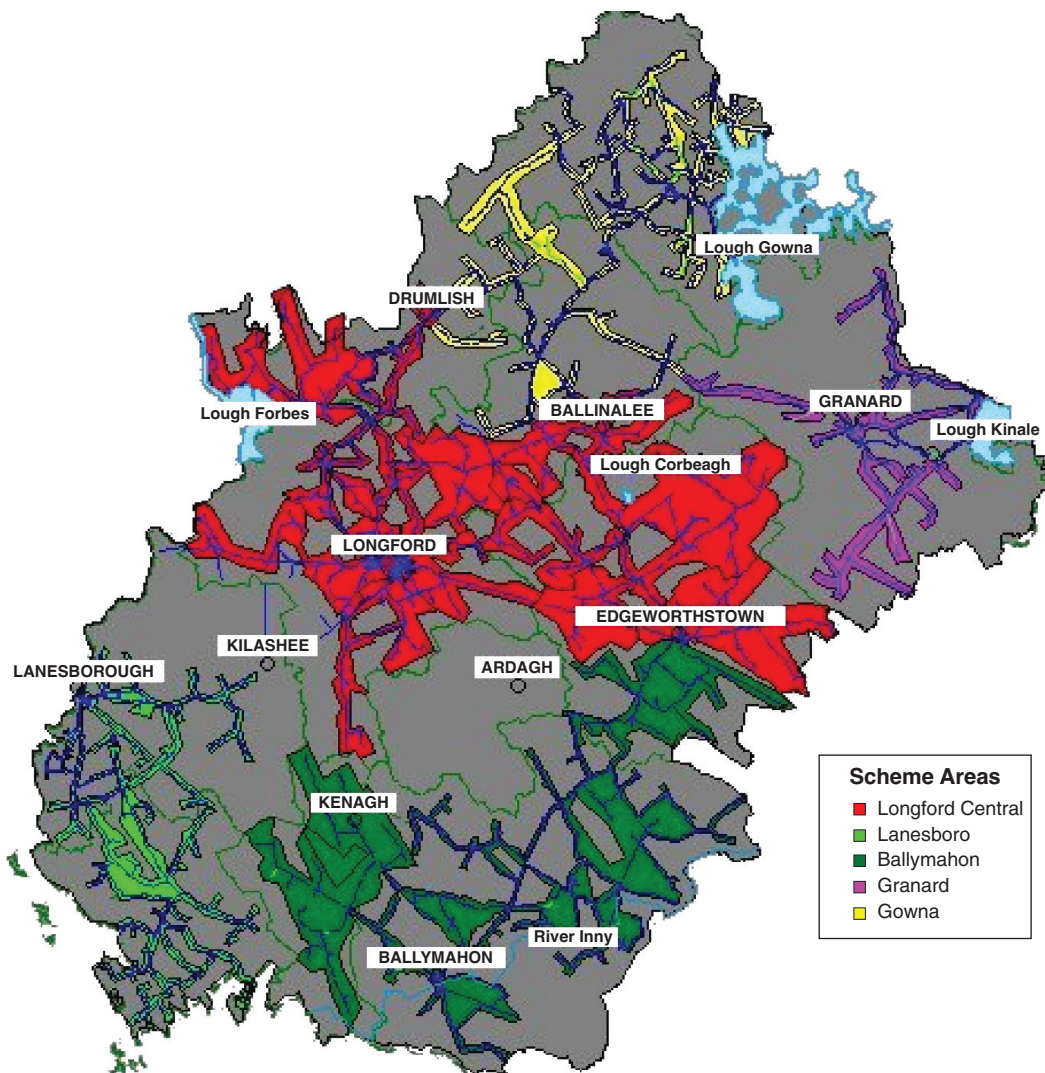


Figure 1. County Longford Regional Network Map

**WATER SERVICES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2007 – 2009**

SCHEMES TO START 2007 W/S	EST. COST
	€
Edgeworthstown Sewerage Scheme (Nutrient Reduction) S	600,000
• Works completed December 2007	
Longford Central Regional Water Supply Scheme (Reservoir and Pipelines) W	7,500,000
• Construction commenced August 2008	
SCHEMES TO START 2008	
Ballymahon Regional Water Supply Scheme (Improvement) W	4,500,000
• Contract Documents being prepared	
Granard Regional Water Supply Scheme W	6,500,000
• Contract Documents being prepared	
Longford Sewerage Scheme Phase 2 (New Sewers) S	5,700,000
• Preparation of Local Area Plan in Progress	
SCHEMES TO START 2009	
Drumlish and Newtownforbes Sewerage Schemes¹ S	8,300,000
• Network Construction to commence January 2009. DBO to follow	
SCHEMES TO ADVANCE THROUGH PLANNING	
Lanesborough Regional Water Supply Scheme W	8,000,000
• Scheme to be advanced through planning stage	
Longford Central Regional Water Supply Scheme Phase 12 W	7,000,000
• Contract Documents for Stage 1 being prepared	
Longford Grouped Towns and Villages Sewerage Scheme Feasibility Study (Abbeylara, Abbeyshrule, Ballinamuck, Barry, Killashee, Ennybegs, Legga, Moydow, Moyne, Newtowncashel, Stonepark and Taghshinny) S	8,060,000
• Feasibility study completed. Design brief for Barry, Abbeylara, Killashee, Ennybegs, Stonepark, Legan and Kenagh (Abbeyshrule and Ballinamuck replaced by Kenagh and Legan) being prepared	
Longford Town Sewerage Scheme (Network Review, Wastewater Treatment Plant and Hub Centre for Sludge) S	9,760,000
• Procurement of Consultants in Progress	
RURAL TOWNS & VILLAGES INITIATIVE	
Ardagh/ Ballinallee/ Aughnaccliffe Sewerage Schemes¹ S	4,000,000
• Network Construction to commence March 2009. DBO to follow	
Lanesborough Water Supply Stage 1 (Wellfield Development) W	1,400,000
• Contract Documents being prepared	
WATER CONSERVATION ALLOCATION	
• Start Construction of Network Rehabilitation Contracts October 09	4,200,000
ASSET MANAGEMENT STUDY	
• Network Mapping	30,000
PROGRAMME TOTAL	75,550,000
1 Bundled together as a Grouped DBO Scheme	
2 Works arising from the Strategic Review	



WATER SERVICES CAPITAL

Longford County Council continued to progress an ambitious Water Service Investment Programme throughout 2008. Clondra Sewerage Treatment Plant was officially opened by Mr. John Gormley T.D. Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in February 2008.

The Edgeworthstown Waste Water Treatment Nutrient Reduction Scheme was completed in 2007. This Scheme provides phosphate removal treatment in order to comply with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations.

The Longford Central Regional Water Supply Scheme Stage 6 – Reservoir & Pipelines involves the provision of a new local water storage reservoir at Knockahaw for Longford Town and its environs and a water supply trunk main from existing storage reservoirs at Prucklish to the new reservoir at Knockahaw. Construction works commenced in August 2008 and should be completed by the end of 2009.

Work has progressed on the Five Villages Sewerage Scheme (Ardagh, Aughnacliffe, Ballinalee, Drumlish and Newtownforbes) with construction of the two network contracts for this Scheme due to commence in January and March 2009. The provision of the Treatment Plants will follow by Design, Build and Operate Contract with construction works to commence in 2010.

Longford County Council sought approval from the DOEHLG in 2007 for funding for major infrastructural improvements in both Water and Wastewater Infrastructure. Approvals received in 2007 for Longford Central Regional Water Supply Scheme Phase 1, Ballymahon Regional Water Supply Scheme and Granard Regional Water Supply Scheme will ensure continued investment in Water Service Infrastructure. This is a vital component in the long term sustainable development of the County.

Longford Central Regional Water Supply Scheme Phase 1 involves upgrading of Lough Forbes Water Treatment Works (WTW), rising mains from Lough Forbes to Prucklish Reservoir and from Glannagh to Lisnanagh Reservoir and new reservoirs at Prucklish and Lisnanagh. Upgrading works at Lough Forbes WTW should be completed by 2010.

Ballymahon Regional Water Supply Scheme involves upgrading works at Abbeyshrule WTW and distribution mains to Edgeworthstown, Kenagh and Forgney and should be completed by end of 2010. Granard Regional Water Supply Scheme involves upgrading works at Lough Kinale WTW and rising main from Lough Kinale to Rathcronan Reservoir and should be completed by end of 2010.

The Department approved the inclusion of Legan and Kenagh Sewerage Schemes in the Water Services Investment Programme at the request of the Council.

RURAL WATER PROGRAMME

Group Water/Sewerage Schemes

In March 2008, the Department for Environment, Heritage and Local Government advised Longford County Council of a Block Grant Allocation of €837,000 for the year 2008 for Group Water Schemes Connecting to the Public Mains, Takeover of Group Water Schemes and New Group Schemes.

Applications for proposed group water/sewerage schemes were received from Ballymakeegan GSS, Cartrongollan GWS, Gurteen No. 3, and Corryena GWS. Design and/or construction work took place on the following schemes in 2008; Knockmartin Lane GSS, Clonmore/Kilmore GWS, Ballintubber GWS, Drumbaun GWS, Cloonard GWS, Listraghee GWS, Legga 2 GWS and Fostra GWS.

Upgrade works were completed on Ardagh GWS and work continued on Moydow GWS – these are schemes connecting to Public Water Mains.

The Longford Rural Water Monitoring Committee met three times during 2008, to review progress on the implementation of the Rural Water Programme. The committee were advised on the current work programme and commitments under the various measures. The E.C. Drinking Water Regulations 2007 were discussed in detail, as were applications for the take-over of Group Water Schemes and the implications of the suspension of CLÁR funding.

Longford County Council formally approved the takeover of 29 no. group water schemes at its meeting of 16th July, 2008.

The committee held an Information Evening for Group Water Schemes on 26th June, 2008 – information was given on the procedure for setting up group water/sewerage schemes, grant aid available, subsidies towards operational costs, Drinking Water Regulations, Quality Assurance, water conservation.

In December 2008 the National Rural Water Services Committee was formally established, under Section 75 of Water Services Act 2007.

The Council submitted proposals to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for Block Grant funding for 2009 totalling €1,412m in respect of the new and ongoing works for group water / sewerage schemes, as well as group water scheme upgrades and proposals for taking group water schemes in charge.

CLÁR funding was received from Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs for Clonard, Drumbawn, Legga No.2 and Listraghee GWSs.

Small Public Water and Sewerage Schemes

In March 2008 Longford County Council were advised that the Block Grant Allocation under the Rural Water Programme Small Schemes measure was €900,000.

Substantial works were carried out in 2008 under this measure, including the in-progress Knockmartin Lane and Ballinamuck Sewerage Schemes. Necessary improvement works were completed at Lough Forbes Water, Granard, Ballymahon and Gowna Water Treatment Plants and Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon Wastewater Treatment Plants

The Council submitted proposals to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for Block Grant funding for 2009 totalling €6,335,963 in respect of Small Public Water & Sewerage Schemes. This submission included funding for proposed sewerage works at Legan, Kenagh and Lanesboro, and major upgrade works to Lough Forbes Water Treatment Plant.

Group Water Scheme Subsidies and Individual Well Grants

Longford County Council processed nine applications for subsidies towards the operational costs of group water schemes, total amount paid out was €27,502.13. In

November 2008 the DOEHLG advised of new rules for subsidies towards operational costs of group water schemes with expenditure from 1st January, 2008 onwards, including an increase in the maximum subsidy to €70 per house from a public water source and to €140 per house from a private water source.

Seventeen applications were received for grants for individual water supplies. Approval was given for eleven applications and one application was refused. Grant payments totalling €23,974.75 were made to thirteen individuals.

In the summer of 2008 the Commercial Accounts Receivable Team was set up through the amalgamation of the Commercial Rates and the Water Billing Revenue Collection Teams. The Team is responsible for the collection of Commercial Water Charges, Commercial Rates and processing Road Opening/Water Sewer Connection Licences. A recent objective incorporated into the Team's goals is to investigate and follow up on all illegal connections made to the public sewer/water network and it is proposed to take a more proactive approach in this area in 2009.





TRANSPORTATION, ROAD DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE, AND ROAD SAFETY

Core Objective:

"Ensure that infrastructural transportation policies and investments assist and enhance the economic and social development of County Longford, and preserve and improve the physical attractiveness of the county and its background environment"

Longford is strategically located near the centre of Ireland and is traversed by National Primary Routes N4 and N5 and National Secondary Routes N55 and N63. These routes give rise to significant traffic flows throughout the county

Fundamental to the proper development of County Longford is a requirement that the road network meets current and projected traffic volume and safety requirements. Strengthening economic activity requires the support of a good quality road network. It is recognised that for Longford to benefit effectively from this growth in industry, agriculture and tourism and the attractions of its lakes, rivers and scenic beauty, the road network and particularly our regional and county roads must be of an appropriate standard, inviting and safe for visitor and locals alike.

Except for a limited number of roads under the authority of Longford Town Council, Longford County Council is responsible for the provision, improvement and maintenance of the public road network within the County. Currently the breakdown of roads under the authority of the County Council is as follows:

Classification (km)	National Primary	National Secondary	Regional	Local	Total
North Area	-	13	53	654	720
Mid-Area	33	18	20	224	295
South Area	15	25	78	452	570
Total Kilometres	48	56	151	1331	1585

Finances available to the Council in 2008 were as follows:

1. National Roads

(National Roads Authority Grants):

Major Planning & Design:	€ 4,025,000
Other Improvement Works:	€ 1,950,000
Safety Measures	€ 22,000
Maintenance	€ 848,572
Total:	€ 6,845,572

2 Non-National Roads

(Department of the Environment & Local Government Grants):

Specific Improvement Works:	€ 1,760,000
Restoration Improvement Works:	€ 3,915,000
Restoration Maintenance Works:	€ 1,400,000
Discretionary Improvement Works:	€ 412,000
Discretionary Maintenance Works:	€ 487,000
Low-cost Safety Improvement Works:	€ 227,000
Local Improvement Schemes:	€ 458,000
Regional Road Signposting:	€ 250,000
Footpath Provision	€ 44,000
Training Programme:	€ 23,100
Total:	€ 8,976,100

3. Non-National Roads

(Council Contribution): € 1,075,000

TOTAL BUDGET: € 16,896,672



In addition works funded by Roads Development Levies to the value of €358,389 were carried out this year on footpaths, public lighting and traffic management projects throughout the county.

Design of National Road Infrastructural Projects has progressed with the assistance of the National Roads Authority Regional Design Office as follows:-

- CPO for N5 Longford Town Bypass Scheme confirmed by An Bord Pleanála 9th July 2008
- Route corridor options identified for N4 Mullingar to Longford (Roosky) Scheme prepared and further public consultations held.
- National Secondary Roads Atkins/McCarthy Plan is continuing implementation stage on the N55.

All other Improvement and Maintenance Works were implemented through the two Area Engineering offices and the Council's Road Design office.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

A total of 19 schemes were completed.

ROAD SAFETY PROMOTION & SCHOOL WARDEN SERVICE

The Road Safety role of Local Authorities is wide and ranges from Road Construction to Safety Promotion to School Warden Schemes. They now have an expanded role in promoting road safety by developing more initiatives at local level such as:-

- Establishment of a working group to co-ordinate the activities of agencies and bodies involved e.g. Gardaí and H.S.E.
- Development of a Road Safety Plan.
- Co-ordination with the National Safety Council – advertising, promotions, and media campaigns.
- The Junior School Warden Service is designed to provide safe crossing facilities for children in the vicinity of primary schools in provincial towns and villages.

The Local Authority is responsible for the introduction and operation of the service with the co-operation of the Gardaí, School Boards of Management, Teachers, Parents and Children. The Road Safety Council provides assistance with the initial organisation of the schemes. Longford County Council has 1 scheme in operation at present Scoil Mhuire National School, Newtownforbes. Adult School Wardens are also provided at St. Joseph's National School, St. Emer's National School, Longford and Lanesboro National School.



CORPORATE, ENVIRONMENT, EMERGENCY SERVICES, RECREATION AND AMENITY



CORPORATE, ENVIRONMENT, EMERGENCY SERVICES, RECREATION & AMENITY



Cllr. Gerry Brady,
Chairperson of Water & Environment SPC



Mr. Jack Kilgallen,
Director of Services

CORPORATE SERVICES

Freedom of Information Requests 2008

A total of 19 FOI requests (13 Non-Personal, 5 Personal and 1 Mixed) was received by Longford County Council during 2008 from a mixed source of journalists, business, clients, staff and other. One request for internal review was received and one appeal was made to the Information Commissioner.

Publication of Manuals

The Section 15 Freedom of Information Manual for Longford County Council was published in 2008 as well as the Section 16 Freedom of Information Manuals for both Longford County Council and Longford Town Council.

FRANCHISE

Conditions for Registration

A person must be at least 18 years of age on the day the Register comes into force (15th February). A person may be included on a Supplement to the Register if the person reaches 18 years of age between the 16th February and the day on which an Election or Referendum is held.

Every resident, irrespective of their nationality who is 18 years or older, is entitled to be on the Register of Electors.

The numbers registered to vote on the 2007/2008 Register of Electors were as follows :-

Local Electoral Areas	No. Of Electors
Ballymahon	8,318
Drumlish	3,762
Granard	6,495
Longford	9,249
Total:	27,824

Section 4 of the Electoral (Amendment) Act, 2001 amends Section 13 of the Electoral Act, 1992 in relation to the Register of Electors. It provides for the preparation of an "edited" version of the Register of Electors. The Edited Register contains only the names of persons who have no objection to their names being used for purposes other than Electoral or other Statutory Purposes. The Statutory position since the 1st of November 2004 is that it is an offence to use details contained in the Register of Electors for anything other than Electoral or other Statutory Purposes.

Revision of Local Electoral Area Boundaries

The Electoral Area Boundary Committee was established by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in January 2008 to review local electoral areas.

The recommendations of the Committee, as accepted by the Minister, in relation to County Longford are as follows:

1. The transfer of electoral divisions:

- Aghaboy, Gelshagh, Lislea and Sonnagh from the Granard to the Drumlish local electoral area, and
- Newtownforbes from the Longford to the Drumlish local electoral area.

2. The redistribution of Council seats among the electoral areas as follows:

- Ballymahon – 6 seats
- Drumlish – 4 seats
- Granard – 4 seats
- Longford – 7 seats

The total number of 21 seats remains unchanged.

Under the above arrangement the Ballymahon local electoral remains unaltered.



The County of Longford Local Electoral Areas Order, 2008 (S.I. No. 438 of 2008) gave statutory effect to the recommendations of the Boundary Committee.

Official Languages Act, 2003

Longford Local Authorities prepared and published a Language Scheme in 2008 in accordance with the provisions of the Official Languages Act, 2003. The primary objective of the Act is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish.

The Irish Language Scheme 2008 -2011 was approved by the Minister for Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs and was commenced on the 1st July 2008.

A number of objectives and targets as set out in the Language Scheme and scheduled for implementation within six months to one year of the commencement of the Scheme have been achieved in 2008. These include the redesign of Headed Paper to include a statement that a reply in Irish will be welcome; the redesign also incorporates a bilingual version of the Directorate titles. The telephone greeting by the Customer Service staff is "as Gaeilge"; a generic email address for queries "as Gaeilge" has been established and the Intranet is being developed as a staff resource for the promotion of bilingualism. On an informal basis coffee mornings for staff with an emphasis on Irish Language conversation were held over a period of months in 2008 to encourage use of the Irish language in the workplace.

The effective operation of the Scheme and the implementation plan will continue to be monitored and reviewed.

Audit Committee

The concept of an Audit Committee was first introduced by Section 122 of the Local Government Act, 2001 and further developed by the Local Government (Business Improvement Districts) Act, 2006. It was envisaged that an Audit Committee would have an independent role in advising the Council on financial reporting processes, internal control, risk management and audit matters as part of a systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures of the Council. Section 5 of the 2006 Act enhanced the role of Audit Committees and

allowed for the inclusion of outside expert membership on such committees. It was thought that the new provisions introduced by the 2006 Act reflected best practice and development in corporate governance in both the public and private sectors. In May 2007 the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requested that each local authority make the appropriate arrangements to establish an Audit Committee

The Audit Committee was established by resolution of Longford County Council at its monthly meeting held on the 19th September 2007.

Membership of the Audit Committee

The Audit Committee consists of five members. Two of these members are elected representatives and the other three are external members:-

- Ms. Karen Clabby, Chairperson of the Committee, Solicitor and current President of Longford Chamber.
- Ms. Jackie Kennedy, Community Development Officer, Rath Mhuire Resource Centre, Granard, Co Longford.
- Mr. John Browne, Accountant.
- Mr. Alan Mitchell, Solicitor and elected member of Longford County Council.
- Mr. Seamus Butler, Managing Director of Butler Manufacturing Services Ltd. and elected member of Longford County Council.

The Audit Committee is non-executive and is independent in the determination of its work programme and in the formulation of its recommendations.

The role of the Audit Committee is advisory in nature and its function is not to usurp the role of management. Its general role is to provide a source of independent advice to management, to review financial and budgetary reporting practices and procedures and to review plans and reports of Internal Audit.

Meetings

The Committee held its inaugural meeting in May 2008 and met three times thereafter. Presentations were given by the Mr. Tim Caffrey, County Manager; Mr. Jack Kilgallen, Director of Services; Mr. Tommy McDonald, Head of Finance; Mr. Tom Roche, Local Government Auditor and other Council officials. The Committee was, also, addressed in September 2008 by Mr. Noel O'Connell, Director of



Audit at the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. During 2008 the Committee reviewed and considered matters relevant to its role including the preparation of an Annual Report for presentation to the County Council in early 2009.

County Council Meetings

Meetings of the County Council were held monthly, with the exception of the month of August.

The Annual Meeting of the Council was held in Newtowncashel on 27th June 2008.

Councillor Sean Farrell was elected Mayor and Councillor Gerry Brady was elected Deputy Mayor.

At the Budget Meeting held on the 15th December 2008, the members adopted the Budget for the financial year ending 31st December 2009.

Monthly Meeting – 26th February 2008.

Ms. Monica O'Malley, Manager, Longford Community Resources Ltd. made a presentation to the meeting on the Leader+ Programme and the various activities of Longford Community Resources Ltd.

Monthly Meeting – 12th March 2008.

Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd. sponsored a new Chain of Office for the position of Deputy Mayor of Longford County Council.

Mr. Pat O'Loughlin from Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd. presented the new Chain of Office to Councillor Adrian Farrell.

Mr. Declan Kiline, Chief Fire Officer made a presentation on the operation of the Fire Service in County Longford.

Monthly Meeting – 16th April 2008.

Superintendent Denis Shields, Longford Garda Station and Superintendent Patrick O'Connor, Granard Garda Station addressed the meeting on policing in County Longford.

Mr. Con Lucey, I.F.A. Chief Economist, Mr. Adrian Leddy, I.F.A. Regional Development Officer and Mr. Sean Reilly, Chairperson, Longford I.F.A. Executive addressed the meeting on the World Trade Organisations Negotiations on Agriculture.

Mr. James MacNerney, Chairman, County Longford Historical Society addressed the meeting on the need for a new Museum for Longford.

Mr. Richard Morton, Midlands Energy Agency, addressed the meeting on the newly established Midlands Energy Agency.

Special Meeting – 23rd and 24th May 2008.

A Special Meeting, incorporating Seminar on the Progress on the Implementation of the Corporate Plan 2005 – 2009 was held in Westport on the 23rd and 24th May 2008.

Monthly Meeting – 18th June 2008.

Councillors Sean Farrell, Alan Mitchell and Seamus Butler were nominated to the Board of Longford Community Resources Ltd.

Monthly Meeting – 16th July 2008.

Mr. David Ryan, Dublin City Council and Mr. Gerry Geoghegan, RPS Consulting Engineers, made a presentation on Dublin City Council's proposed Water Supply Project for the Dublin Region.

Mr. David Minton, Administrative Officer with Longford County Council, made a presentation on the Indecon Review of County/City Development Boards.

Monthly Meeting – 17th September 2008.

Mr. Barry Dunphy and Mr. Gerry Cronin from Nicholas O'Dwyer Ltd. made a presentation on the Preliminary Report on the Camlin Flood Study.

Mr. Ambrose Clarke, Westmeath National Roads Design Office and Mr. Will Murray and Mr. Michael Cleary from Hyder Tobin Consultants made a presentation on the proposed N4 Mullingar to Longford (Rooskey) – Route Corridor Options and Exhibitions.

Councillors Denis Glennon, Alan Mitchell and Sean Farrell were nominated to the County Placenames Committee.

Special Meeting – 6th October 2008.

A presentation was made by Shane Neilon, Ben Hussey and Karina Dennigan, Lanesboro Youth Forum.

A presentation was made by Ms. Caroline Poole, Longford/Westmeath Carers Association on the National Carer Strategy.



Deputies James Bannon, Peter Kelly, Mary O'Rourke and Willie Penrose attended the meeting regarding CLAR Funding.

Monthly Meeting – 15th October 2008.

The County Longford Entrants to the National Pride of Place Competition 2008 were received at the meeting:-

Entrants in the Population Categories –

- Ballymahon Development Association.
- Legan Tidy Towns Committee.

Entrants in the Single Issue Categories

Issue: Care of the Environment –

- Employment Development & Information Centre – Revamp Project.

Issue: Community Facility –

- Temperance Hall Committee.

Issue: Social Care-Services for the Elderly –

- Dolmen Failte Club & Services.

The Mayor presented each group with a certificate from Co-operation Ireland and a cheque from Longford County Council.

Councillors S. Butler, M. Mulleady, M. Cahill, J. Coyle, P. Nolan, P. Belton, L. Bannon, G. Brady, M. Kilbride-Harkin, V. Kiernan, A. Farrell, P. Murphy and M. Nevin were nominated to the County Longford Joint Policing Committee. Mayor Sean Farrell was elected Chairperson of the Committee.

Special Meeting – 28th October 2008.

Mr. Mark Scally and Mr. Simon Deveraux from PDFORA addressed the meeting on the proposed closure of Connolly Barracks in Longford town.

Monthly Meeting – 19th November 2008.

A Commemorative Scroll was presented by the Mayor to the Temperance Hall Committee who won the category for Best Community Facility 2008 in the All Ireland Pride of Place Competition.

Councillors M. Kilbride-Harkin and M. Mulleady were nominated to the Longford Sports Partnership Board.

Mr. Enda Thompson, Project Co-ordinator Shannon IRBD, made a presentation to the members on the Shannon Draft River Basin Management Plan.

Civic Receptions

A Civic Reception was hosted by Longford County Council, Longford Town Council and Granard Town Council on Thursday, 22nd May 2008 to honour Special Olympics Ireland on their outstanding achievements during the past thirty years.

A Civic Reception was held on Friday, 18th July 2008 in Ballinamuck to mark the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Twinning Agreement between Ballinamuck with Essert de Belfort.

A Mayoral reception was held on Monday, 21st July 2008 in the Council Chamber to mark the occasion of the 5th International Rally of the Farrell Clan

The Mall Complex

During 2008 the Longford Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool was completed and it is now fully operational. The provision of improved sports and leisure facilities in the county and a state of the art Swimming Pool has led to increased participation in sporting activities. The All Weather Playing Pitch is open to the public and is used extensively. This facility is fully marked and floodlit and compares very favourably with similar facilities that are available elsewhere in the country.

The Sports Hall at The Mall is fitted with a floor which meets all of the most modern standards for surfaces on which indoor sports are played. The facilities are in regular use and facilitate the playing of many indoor sports.

Other facilities that are available at The Mall include an outdoor Basketball Court and an extended Gymnasium. The fact that the facilities in The Mall have been completed to a high standard has led to increased demand. This is to be welcomed as it indicates that the investment that has been made represents excellent Value for Money.

Playgrounds Provision

During 2008 the provision of playgrounds throughout the county was continued. A playground was provided at Drumlish. It was opened to the public towards the end of the year and there are plans to have an official opening ceremony early in 2009. Work relating to the design and



provision of playgrounds at a number of other locations was also advanced during the year. Funding has been allocated in a variety of spending programmes that will facilitate the provision of further playgrounds in 2009.

Environmental and Amenity Development Levies

During 2008 a number of projects were funded or partly funded on the basis that they qualified under the Council's Development Levies Funding Programme. Funding for projects of a wide variety is included in the Council's 3 Year Development Levies Spending Programme. A consultative process was undertaken in order to identify suitable projects which when they are completed will contribute to the enhancement of the county both for those living here and those visiting Longford.

Disability Strategy

The Disability Act, 2005 is designed to support the provision of disability specific services and to improve access to mainstream public services for people with disabilities.

The Disability Implementation Plan 2008 – 2015 of Longford Local Authorities was adopted by the elected members in September 2008. The Plan provides information on measures that are to be taken to facilitate the provision of improved access by persons with disabilities to information, services, public roads, public places and public buildings in County Longford.

Under the provisions of the Disability Act 2005 annual funding is provided to enable Longford Local authorities to undertake works which will facilitate participation by people with disabilities in activities that for reasons relating to access had previously proved difficult if not impossible. It is intended that over the period of the Plan the specific actions outlined therein will be implemented so as to improve access to services and facilities.

An allocation of €290,000 was made in 2008 by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government under the National Disability Strategy. The funding received to date has been utilised to provide accessibility training and to conduct a number of audits on facilities that have been provided by the three local authorities. During 2008 works were carried out to enhance physical access to the offices of Longford County Council at Áras an Chontae and Camlin Court. Improvements were, also, made to the Municipal Offices of Longford Town

Council which included the provision of automatic entrance doors, a disability friendly Customer Services Desk and extra Disabled Parking Bays in the refurbished Market Square area.

Longford Library Archives and Heritages Services continued to improve accessibility to its buildings, services and information during 2008 with the installation of a ramp outside Longford Library to aid wheelchair access to the building from the carpark. The Library Service, also, hosted during the year a very well attended open morning to promote the accessible services at Longford Library for people with physical and visual difficulties. During the year the collection of Audio Book services was expanded to include Books on MP3 and CD as well as Large Print Books.

Work was also undertaken in a number of cemeteries in the county which has resulted in it being possible for people to access family plots where this was not previously the case. Improvements to footpaths were carried out in a number of locations. It is intended to continue this work in 2009.

SAFETY HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK

Increasingly the necessity to provide for the Health and Safety of all is becoming evident. The Council takes very seriously its responsibilities with regard to Health and Safety. Employees are being trained and up skilled in order that they are as keenly aware as possible of the need to ensure that the undertaking of work is carried out in a planned and safe manner.

In 2008 the following activities were undertaken with the aim of ensuring the Safety, Health and Welfare of employees and others:-

- A standardised Health and Safety Policy was developed for Longford County Council and Longford Town Council
- The Corporate Safety Statement was reviewed and amended where necessary.
- Ancillary Safety Statements for Infrastructure, Community, Enterprise and Finance, Housing and Planning and the Town Council were reviewed and updated
- An Ancillary Safety Statement for the Civil Defence was developed
- There were 3 accidents and 3 near misses reported during the year
- A Procedure for the Management of Construction Projects was developed



- Scheduled and Random Safety Inspections took place within Longford County Council and Longford Town Council
- Regular meetings of the Safety Management Committee and the Safety Monitoring Consultative Committees were held in each of the Directorates
- Display Screen Assessments were conducted where required
- 4 new Automated External Defibrillators were purchased for Longford County Council and Longford Town Council. A number of people are currently receiving regular training on the use of the Defibrillators
- The completion of Area Safety Inspections commenced
- All employees were provided with a Fact Sheet on Risk Assessment for European Safety Week. This assisted with the increased awareness on Risk Assessment amongst employees
- Training was conducted in the following areas
 - Safety Statement Training
 - Safety Induction Training
 - First Aid Training
 - Automated External Defibrillator Training
 - Manual Handling Training
 - Safety Rep Training
 - Laboratory Safety Training
 - Signing, Lighting and Guarding
 - Locating Underground Services
 - Abrasive Wheels
 - CAT Training
 - Health and Safety at Road Works
 - Managing Safely in Construction
 - Training on the Procedure for Managing Construction Projects

The Council is fully committed to meeting its obligations under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and will continue to develop the Safety Management System in ensuring a safe place of work for all its employees and the public alike in 2009.

ENVIRONMENT

This section covers a diverse range of functions and services. The principal areas are:

1. Pollution Control and Water Quality Management
2. Litter Management and Street Cleaning
3. Waste Management
4. Burial Grounds
5. Veterinary Services and Food safety
6. Dog Control
7. Fire and Emergency Services
8. Civil Defence

Pollution Control and Water Quality Management

Pollution control legislation covers areas such as water and air pollution, and noise nuisance. Specific activities undertaken in relation to pollution control include investigation of water pollution incidents, licensing of discharges to waters and the implementation of a monitoring programme for rivers, lakes and closed landfills.

River Water Quality

According to the most recent E.P.A. data, 41% of all the rivers in Co. Longford are classed as unpolluted. 28% of rivers are classed as slightly polluted. 30% are classed as moderately polluted and 1.9% are classed as seriously polluted.

River Basin Management Systems

The Water Framework Directive was introduced in December 2000 in response to declining water quality throughout Europe and is the key European Directive under which Ireland's waters will be managed for the foreseeable future. The WFD was adopted in Irish law by the EC (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 under which River Basin Districts, (RBD), were established. Longford is part of the North Western RBD and the Shannon International River Basin District.

The overall objective is to achieve at least a good status in all waters by 2015. Monitoring programmes have been developed to identify the status of the waters and to enable the measurement of future improvements. The production of a River Basin Management Plan for the Shannon and North Western RBD's is scheduled for 2009.



Camlin River Fisheries Restoration Project

The Shannon Regional Fisheries Board, in conjunction with Longford County Council undertook a joint work programme on rivers in County Longford. This involved Longford County Council assigning machine time to a fisheries rehabilitation programme, in place of carrying out arterial drainage maintenance. The SRFB undertook the construction of vortex weirs, deflectors and gravel beds in the river. The Board also carried out tree planting and fencing where necessary. The works carried out over the past few years have yielded a considerable increase in juvenile trout stocks.

Environmental Laboratory

The County Council Environment Laboratory is located at Park Road, Longford. It provides support to the Water Services and Environment Sections. The principal areas of activity are:

1. Water pollution monitoring and control.
2. Monitoring County Council Urban Wastewater Treatment plants.
3. Landfill monitoring.
4. Monitoring industrial effluent discharges
5. River and lake monitoring

Litter Management

Enforcement of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997 – 2003 is one of the key mechanisms in tackling the litter pollution problem in County Longford. Litter Control is conducted primarily by the Council's Litter Wardens assisted by the Council's Dog Warden and Longford Town Council's own Litter/ Traffic Wardens.

In 2008 Longford County Council issued 511 "On the Spot" litter fines. A total of 34 prosecutions under the Litter Acts were initiated in 2008. Convictions resulted in fines of up to €3,000 being imposed on offenders.

Anti Litter Awareness Grants

Anti Litter initiatives, funded by a DoEHLG grant of €26,000 were enacted during 2008 by Longford County Council.

Longford Tidy Towns Committee (IBAL); Graffiti removal Scheme; Schools Waste Recycling Competition; Litter Black Spot clean up; Purchase of litter pickers, bags, gloves, other material to assist in clean-ups in Co. Longford.

Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund

This fund is a grant scheme funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Longford County Council to support innovative, community-based environmental projects. The fund of €12,680 was distributed to the following organisations:

Longford Tidy Towns Committee, Kelvin Moore, Mc Eoin Park Residents Association, School Book Exchange, Jumbletown, ie, IBOTZ, Irish Peat land conservation council, John Crossan and Andy Booth.

Street Sweeping

In 2008 the Council carried out a regular programme of Street Sweeping in the towns and villages of County Longford. This involved using mechanised equipment as well as manual sweeping of litter and servicing of litter bins in accordance with the County Longford Litter Management Plan. Total expenditure on street sweeping during 2008 was €335,919.

WASTE MANAGEMENT:

Waste Management Plan 2005 –2010

The Waste Management Plan for the Midlands Region 2005-2010, as adopted, sets out a framework for the sustainable management of waste within the five local authority areas (Offaly Co. Council, Laois Co. Council, Longford Co. Council, Westmeath Co. Council and North Tipperary Co. Council) and covers all non-hazardous waste arising in the region. Hazardous waste is managed in accordance with the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan, prepared by the EPA.

Provision of Facilities

There are 26 bring banks in County Longford. Green, brown and clear glasses, as well as, aluminium cans are accepted at all sites.

Over 586 tonnes of glass and 52 tonnes of aluminium cans were collected in 2008 at the bring banks, an increase of 16% on the total collection for 2007.

Enforcement

Longford County Council has an active Waste Enforcement Team combining both technical and administrative disciplines. The Enforcement Team deals with areas such as Waste Facility Permits, Collection Permits, Packaging Regulations, Farm Plastics and all Unauthorised Waste

Activities. During 2008 the Waste Enforcement Team continued to target large-scale incidents of burning and illegal waste disposal. A total of 31 enforcement procedures were initiated in 2008 with 14 cases resolved following remediation and clean-up works. A total of 20 cases will carry forward into 2009 for further investigation and action. Prosecutions taken during 2008 resulted in fines of up to €1,500 and costs in excess of €4,500 being imposed on those convicted of unauthorised waste disposal.

Longford County Council's Policy in the area of Waste Management is to increase awareness and improve compliance with Environmental Legislation.

In 2008, Longford County Council adopted its "Enforcement Policy on Illegal Waste Activity" which outlines the measures the Council will take to deal with unauthorised waste disposal. This document can be viewed on the home page of the Council's website at www.longfordcoco.ie

The Council operates a "Litter Complaints Hotline". Anyone who witnesses illegal dumping or who becomes aware of waste that has been dumped is asked to report the matter to the Council by calling the hotline number which is **1850 434 450**.

Environmental Awareness

During the year continued good work was accomplished in the following areas:

1. National Spring Clean
2. National Tree Week
3. Large Goods Collections
4. Green Schools
5. Composting
6. Hazardous Waste Collections
7. Farm Waste Audits

National Spring Clean

The National Spring Clean campaign 2008 was a great success with over 40 groups and organisations taking part in the town and county areas. Approximately 3.2 tonnes of litter and waste was collected as well as 300kg of metal and 80kg of plastic bottles. Litter pickers, gloves, bibs and colour-coded bags were provided for the community clean-ups.

Large Goods Collections

Six temporary Civic Amenity Collections were organised during the Spring and Autumn months of 2008 and a total

of 25.42 tonnes of waste was collected. These took place in Granard, Longford, Ballinamuck, Ballymahon and Lanesboro.

It has been noticed that since the opening of the second civic amenity site in Longford town and the introduction of the WEEE regulations which introduced free take-back obligations on the retailers, that the tonnages of materials collected have steadily decreased over the years.

Green Schools

Longford was once again very successful in increasing activity in Green Schools. The participation of schools in the Green Schools programme increased with 98% of national and secondary schools registered at the end of 2008. During 2008 five new schools were awarded the green flag and three more schools renewed their flags. This brings the total number of schools with Green Flags in Co. Longford to 17.

The schools that were awarded the green flag for the first time during 2008 were:

- **Moyne Community School**
- **Lenamore N.S. Legan**
- **St Colmcille N.S. Colmcille**
- **Killasonna N.S. Granard**
- **Ballinamuck N.S.**

Composting

Compost sales in 2008 showed a decrease over the 2007 figure, but as part of Longford County Council's commitment to recycling, the public are given the option of purchasing home composting units at a subsidised price of €25.00, and a rate of €15.00 is applicable to holders of pension books. To promote the sale and use of compost bins, all schools in Co. Longford received a complimentary composting unit.



Hazardous Waste Collection

Hazardous Waste Collections were held on the same days as our large goods collections and then bulk collected in November. A total of 4.03 tonnes of hazardous waste was collected in Longford Town. Batteries are now free to recycle and special boxes have been placed in all shops and outlet stores that sell batteries

Local Authority Prevention Demonstration Fund - Farm Waste Audit Programme

Longford County Council continued during 2008 with the pilot Farm Waste Audit Programme with four farmers in County Longford. This Programme is co-sponsored with the Environmental Protection Agency and aims to assist farmers to develop waste prevention practices on their farm. The project will be complete in 2009. A booklet is being produced for all the farmers in County Longford and this is due to be launched early in 2009.

Farm Plastic Collection

Waste farm plastic collections, by private waste collectors, continued throughout 2008. Collection dates and locations were notified to the County Council and these collections were monitored by staff to ensure no waste was left at the site.

Burial Grounds

There are a total of 74 cemeteries in Co. Longford of which 10 are closed. Longford County Council through its wholly-owned subsidiary, Longford Jobs Initiative Ltd., received approval from FAS to extend its existing Community Employment Scheme during 2008. The Scheme now employs an average of 7 participants on the maintenance of cemeteries and the carrying out of minor improvement works. During 2008 Longford County Council continued with the scheme of providing financial support for cemeteries in Co. Longford with 20 Parishes/Cemetery Committees receiving grant assistance towards cemetery maintenance.

Funding from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, as part of the National Disability Scheme, enabled the Council to continue providing wheelchair-accessible facilities at designated burial grounds. Works were carried out to entrances and footpaths at Edgeworthstown, Kilcommock, Carrickedmond, and Shrule (old) Cemeteries.

Construction work was completed in October on a two new cemeteries at Legan and Granardkille and the cemeteries were consecrated in November 2008.



Official Blessing of Legan Cemetery



Official Blessing of Granardkille Cemetery

Veterinary Services and Food Safety

The Veterinary Section of Longford County Council services a contract that is in place between the Council and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland with regard to food safety and public health issues.

The small slaughterhouses and low throughput meat manufacturing establishments in the county are statutorily supervised with a view to ensuring that there is full compliance with food safety legislation.

Cattle and sheep which are produced locally continued to be processed in small slaughterhouses in County Longford in 2008. Each animal that was slaughtered was inspected both before and after slaughter. A sampling programme which is intended to detect harmful substances in meat was carried out during the year. The Local Authority Veterinary Service seeks to ensure that animal health and welfare is maintained in accordance with current legislative provisions.

During 2008 the low throughput meat manufacturing establishments and slaughterhouses in County Longford



continued to work to the standards that were in place. The result of this compliance with current standards was that the meat products which were produced in the county were of a high quality with added value. While there are changes occurring on an ongoing basis with some operators and owners retiring, the level of activity is being maintained by virtue of the fact that new entrants are also becoming involved in the sector.

In December 2008 the efficient recall of pork and bacon products which was required as a result of the dioxin scare was completed in the county. Local meat enterprises were among the first in the country to have certified products cleared for sale following the recall. As a result the disruption to trade and to employment in the sector was minimised in County Longford.

Longford County Council's employees who are involved in the delivery of a number of services relating to food safety and animal health and welfare continued to receive relevant training in 2008. A register of herds which produce liquid milk is kept by Longford County Council. The farms that are included in the register were inspected in 2008 as is required. Activities relating to the disposal of Animal By-Product continued to be an important area of work in 2008.

Meetings of the Regional Zoonosis Committee provide the forum for formal liaison between Longford County Council Veterinary Public Health service and other agencies e.g., Dept of Agriculture and HSE.

Dog Control

Longford County Council provides a full time service in County Longford. The Council employs a Dog warden and operates the Dog Shelter at Little Water Street in Longford Town. Pound fees are charged in respect of the periods of time for which stray animals are in the Dog Shelter. In 2008, 299 stray dogs were picked up by the Dog Wardens. Of these, 48 dogs were reclaimed by their owners. A further 70 dogs were re-homed. In many cases the dogs which were re-homed were selected by their new owners with the aid of the Council's "Save a Dog" Web Page which can be accessed at www.longfordcoco.ie

Unfortunately during 2008, 186 unwanted dogs were surrendered at the Dog Shelter. In many cases the result was that the dogs had to be put to sleep. In order to combat the problem of unwanted dogs, Longford County Council continues to advocate responsible animal

ownership and operates a scheme in cooperation with Dogs Trust for subsidised neutering and health checks for dogs.

In 2008, 1911 individual Dog Licences were issued. Longford County Council continued to promote the need for the owners of dogs to purchase a Dog License. Currently a Dog Licence costs €12.70. Dog Licences can be purchased from any Post Office. The purchasing of a Dog Licence is an important aspect of responsible dog ownership. The Council also continued to promote responsible animal ownership by conducting an educational programme for children relating to animal care and welfare in 2008.

FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Fire and Rescue Service has stations in the following locations;

Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown, Granard, Lanesboro and Longford

These stations are manned by 48 retained fire-fighters who respond to both fire and rescue incidents. The Fire Department was active in promoting fire safety throughout the year. Such activities included the Fire Safety in Schools Programme, where all primary schools were visited and talks given to third class students and working on the Halloween Festival Committees with the H.S.E. and Gardaí which promoted Safety at bonfires and the use of fireworks.

The Fire Department processed a total of 70 Fire Safety Certificates, 38 Planning Referrals, 50 Court Licence Application Referrals. Up to 50 Inspections of Places of Entertainment and Residential-type premises were carried out during 2008.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government have sanctioned approval, in principle, to go to tender for a new station in Edgeworthstown and the extension to Longford Fire Station. Work is ongoing on these projects.

Longford Fire Brigade got a 32m Bronto Hydraulic Platform in 2008. This replaced the 22m 1980 Simon Snorkel Hydraulic Platform.

Ms Marie Lough was appointed as Assistant Chief Fire Officer in August 2008.

A new submission for funding was forwarded to the

Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government for the building of a new fire station in Lanesboro. Approval in principle to appoint consultants to design the project has been sanctioned.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government have sanctioned approval to go to tender for €100,000.00 for major incident equipment. Items on the list include chemical suits, thermal imaging cameras and 1,000 litre Foam Trailer.

A new Major Emergency Plan was implemented on the 30th September 2008 for County Longford.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Civil Defence is part of a global organisation with the primary role of saving lives and the alleviation of suffering in time of war, while its peacetime role is to assist at natural disasters and man-made accidents. At local level, Civil Defence is responsible for the recruitment and training of volunteers and the provision of training centres in the community.

The main activities, programmes, events and developments during 2008 were:

- Co-hosting the Civil Defence National Exercise with Leitrim for teams from 14 Counties in search exercise.
- Assisting with Search and Rescue in other counties.
- Boat crew members updated their training in relation to response to Avian Influenza.
- Over 40 new members achieved Occupational First aid Certificates.
- Over 30 members including County Council Staff participated in Healthcare Provider courses during '08.
- First aid refresher course for existing members.
- Radiation monitoring and reporting and communications course run locally.
- Personnel from Longford undertook duties at various events outside the County such as The Electric Picnic in Co. Laois and the unveiling of the Joe Dolan Statue in Mullingar.
- Civil Defence members were called on to assist at 50 local community events during 2008, such as assisting at the Blood transfusion Service, Longford Marathon, Football Games, Horse Events and Civic Receptions.

NATIONAL EXERCISE 2008



Coastguard briefing search team



Communications Centre



Coastguard joins search

Development Charge Levy funds Projects

Under the supervision of Environment staff, the following projects were undertaken during 2008:-

Longford Electoral Area	Royal Canal walk and Cullyfad Village enhancement works.
Granard Electoral Area	Edgeworthstown N55 footpath, Devine Crescent enhancement works.
Ballymahon Electoral Area	Island bridge (Kenagh) footpath, Millenium walk (Ballymahon), Kenagh Clock refurbishment.
Drumlish Electoral Area	Drumlish playground project.



HOUSING AND PLANNING SERVICES



HOUSING AND PLANNING SERVICES



Cllr. Victor Kiernan,
Chairperson of Housing & Planning SPC



Mr. James Clarke
Director of Services

HOUSING & PLANNING SERVICES

HOUSING

The requirements of the Action Plan for Social and Affordable Housing 2004-2008 continued to be met by Longford County Council. The Housing Needs Assessment takes place every three years. The most recent one was carried out in 2008 and showed an increase in applicants to 482, an increase of 235 on the 2007 figure.

Social Housing

Approximately €11m was spent on the Housing Construction Programme in 2008. This included a number of turnkey developments, purchase of individual houses, the construction of single rural cottages and various works under the Scheme of Improvements in lieu of Local Authority Housing.



Cnoc na Sidhe, Killashee, Co. Longford

The following schemes were in progress at the end of the 2008

Townspark, Longford (50), Ballinamuck (16), Streamstown, Colehill (20), St. Johnstown, Ballinalee (20), River Crescent, Ballinalee (5), Mosstown, Kenagh (12), Kenagh (11), Edgeworthstown Road, Ballymahon (6), Beechwood, Granard (7).

The following schemes were completed in 2008 at

Killashee (23). 26 individual houses were purchased and 8 rural houses were completed. 4 houses at Killashee were also acquired under Part V of the Planning and Development Act as amended. Since the 1st January 2008, there were 164 allocations of tenancies.



Rural Cottage at Tully, Co. Longford

Loan Applications

To facilitate house purchasers, a range of loan options continued to be offered throughout the year. The types of loans on offer included Annuity, Affordable, Caravan, Reconstruction, Shared Ownership and Tenant Purchase. A total of 13 loan applications were received in 2008 with 7 loans approved and 9 advanced. This amount does not include applications refused or withdrawn.

Interest rate increases continued to affect potential borrowers' affordability and this is reflected in the significant reduction in the amount of loan applications and approvals.



Affordable Housing

At the end of 2008, sixteen Affordable Houses had been allocated in Longford Town and County. These houses were acquired under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. The Council continued to gauge the need for affordable housing and to date the main need has been identified in the Longford Town area. It is intended that this need will be sufficiently met by the provision of affordable housing under Part V.

Voluntary Housing

To supplement the rental option, the Council continued to encourage further involvement by the Voluntary Housing Sector particularly in the area of special needs. Construction of 109 units by Respond! started at Townspark, Longford and are due to be completed in November 2009. Approval was also granted to extend the men's hostel at St. Martha's, Longford. Negotiations are ongoing with a number of other bodies in relation to the provision of sheltered housing.

Homeless Forum

In association with Longford Town Council, the Health Service Executive and St. Vincent de Paul, the provision of accommodation for homeless persons continued throughout 2008. Substantial funding, towards the provision of this Homeless Service was provided by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Maintenance/Refurbishment

In 2008, a sum of €750,000 was provided in the budget for the maintenance and repair of Local Authority Housing. This area will be examined to ensure that best practice and value for money are achieved at all times. In 2008, Longford County Council completed its Central Heating Installation Programme.

Estate Management

The Housing Liaison Officer and the Social Worker continued to work with tenants and residents associations throughout 2008. Compulsory pre-tenancy courses are in place for all new tenants. The 'Best Kept Estate' competition was held again in 2008 and River Crescent, Ballinalee was the winner.

Throughout 2008 Longford County Councils stepped up action under its Anti-Social Behaviour policy and at the end

of the year there were five cases put forward for litigation.

In 2008, following a request from the Department, additional information was prepared and submitted for the rejuvenation of Tromra Road, Granard.

Housing Grant Schemes

In 2008, there were a combined total of 350 applications received under the three grant schemes; the Mobility Aids Grant Scheme, the Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme and the Housing Aid for Older People Grant Scheme.

A total of 220 grants were paid out and this amounted to €1,454,541 – this figure includes 68 Disabled Persons Grants in the amount of €564,192 and 30 Essential Repairs Grants in the amount of €182,738. These were grants which were approved in previous years prior to the above mentioned three new grant schemes coming into existence.

Traveller Accommodation

In 2008, the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee met on a quarterly basis. They continued to monitor the progress of the targets set out in the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2005-2008. Work also commenced on the new Traveller Accommodation Plan 2009-2013.

Plans for the refurbishment of the Willow Park Halting Site, to include the construction of 4 transient bays are ongoing. Tenders were sought at the end of 2008.

Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)

In accordance with national policy, the transfer of long term recipients of rent supplement to the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) continued during 2008 with 189 households accommodated in private rented accommodation under the scheme at the end of the year. In addition 9 rent supplement recipients were allocated local authority tenancies. RAS continues to assist the Council's social housing programme by providing good quality, private rented accommodation for persons with a long term housing need.

As part of the transfer process 110 properties were inspected and where necessary works to bring properties up to the required standard for rented accommodation were notified to landlords.

The scheme operated on a self financing basis during the year.

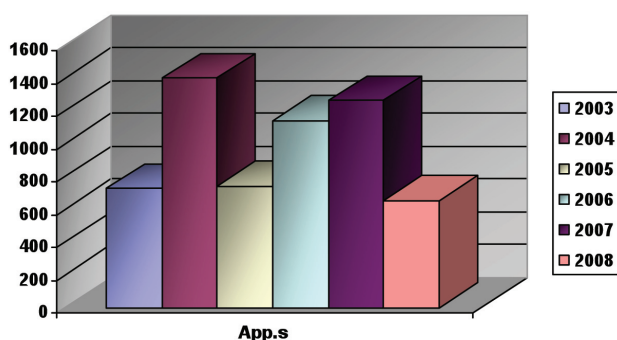
PLANNING

Significant activities undertaken by the planning department in 2008 are outlined below together with a broad Planning outlook for 2009.

Planning and Development Management

The Development Management Section is responsible for processing all planning applications in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations.

Planning Application Numbers 2003 - 2007



The above chart indicates the numbers of applications received over the last 6 years. Peaks in 2004 and 2007 can be attributed to the rural renewal scheme and grant-aid for agricultural buildings respectively. While lower numbers of applications were experienced in 2003 and 2005, those received contained high numbers of complex applications, requiring significant personnel hours to address at all stages in the process from validation and assessment through to completion and compliance. 2008 has seen a substantial change in the number and complexity of planning permissions lodged, with a significant number of applications for modifications of existing permissions granted, one-off houses and smaller developments in general.

Pre-Planning consultations are an integral part of the Development Management process and are utilised on an ongoing and increasing basis. These meetings are held to provide a higher quality and more transparent planning service to the general public. In 2008 over 96 pre planning meetings were held to facilitate discussion with potential applicants on the issues associated with their proposals. Pre-planning meetings are now recorded digitally to

facilitate consistency, transparency and seamless integration with the decision-making process

The continued registration of quarries under Section 261 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, and the processing and issuing of license applications under Section 254 of the Act, principally for roadside signage, has also become a regular feature of the work carried out in the past 2 years, representing a substantial increase in workload over the previous years.

Development Contributions and Taking in Charge

Development contributions are levied in accordance with the scheme adopted by the Council under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Each grant of planning permission contains a condition requiring the payment of a relevant development contribution which becomes payable if and when the development commences. There are many cases where permissions granted have been superseded by alternative permissions on the same site and where permissions granted have not yet been activated. This can sometimes give an inaccurate impression of the amount actually due and owing to the local authority.

The total number of commencement notices received in 2007 was 324, an increase of 11 on 2006, while the total number of commencements received in 2008 was 198.

Work in relation to the taking in charge and regularisation of Housing Estate Permissions is well underway, with the compilation the following databases:

- Planning Permissions for Housing Estates where permission has yet to expire (83 developments)
- Planning Permissions for Housing Estates where Planning Permission has expired (41 developments)

The process of taking in charge is a lengthy one, requiring input across directorates and the allocation of a cross-disciplinary and dedicated team in order to run efficiently. The process involves the following main steps:

- Identification of full planning history of housing estate – this may be a complicated process where several permissions may exist on a site, possibly spanning a broad timescale.
- Survey and inspection must be carried out to determine level of compliance with permission granted.



- The developer responsible must be approached and negotiations held in order to determine how compliance is to be achieved.
- Bonds and contributions must be determined in terms of amounts, phasing of payments and legal arrangements
- Failsafe monitoring systems must be established and maintained in order for the system to operate successfully
- Where enforcement action is unavoidable, this initiates an additional process with which staff must be familiar, also requires a specialised, dedicated cross-directorate Team.

Work in this area is ongoing and expected to become a substantial element of planning over the coming years.

Forward Planning

The Forward Planning Section is responsible for the research, preparation and production of all Development Plans, Local Area Plans and forward looking initiatives. The slow down witnessed in many sectors in 2008 does not affect the forward planning work schedule which is governed by the 2000 Act and ongoing implementation of national and EU legislation in the planning and environmental arena. In addition, the Forward Planning Section is regularly involved with other projects that require substantial time allocation such as CPOs, Route Corridor Studies and other projects from local to national level.

The following summary outlines the main projects addressed in 2008 and looks forward to the 2009 schedule.

Review and Update of Longford County Development Plan, 2003-2009

The review of the current Longford County Development Plan 2003 – 2009 commenced in April 2007 following substantial preparation work carried out in 2006. 2008 was a busy year in the development plan schedule with the majority of the consultation phases being carried out in this period.

New guidelines, directives and judgements issued at National and EU level also required incorporation into the draft Plan process at short notice, such as Flood Risk Assessment, Sustainable Urban Residential Development and Appropriate Assessment. In some instances, such as the population projections for the Midland Region, substantial revisions of the Draft Plan were required in order to facilitate their inclusion in an appropriate and accurate manner.

The following updated guidelines and documents have been incorporated into the draft CDP:

- (i) Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines:
- (ii) Development Plans-Consultation Draft of Guidelines for Planning Authorities:
- (iii) Implementing Regional Planning Guidelines- Best Practice Guidance:
- (iv) Landscape and Landscape Assessment - DRAFT:
- (v) Quarries and Ancillary Activities:
- (vi) Retail Planning Guidelines:
- (vii) Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):
- (viii) Sustainable Rural Housing:
- (ix) Wind Energy Development Guidelines:
- (x) Guidelines on Flood Risk Assessment (September 2008)
- (xi) Requirements in relation to Appropriate Assessment (February 2008)
- (xii) Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (December 2008)
- (xiii) Midland Regional Population Projections (2008 revision)

The following elements of the Plan process were carried out in 2008:

- January – Draft Plan Circulated to members
- March to May – Public consultation in Draft Plan
- August 2008 – Managers Report to members
- November to December 2008 – Proposed amendments to Draft on public display

The Plan is due to be finalised in February of 2009, four weeks after which it will come into force.

The SEA and Appropriate Assessment have been carried out in tandem with the review of the County Development Plan. This work has been conducted in association with Brady Shipman Martin and in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency and other prescribed bodies. An Environmental Statement will accompany the Plan once adopted.

Local Area Plans

Local Area Plans facilitate the planned growth of designated towns and villages, through which development can be promoted to support existing communities particularly in rural areas.



Longford Northern Environs

A Local Area Plan was adopted for Longford Northern Environs in July 2008, a joint plan carried out between both Longford Local Authorities. This was the culmination of an extensive and multidisciplinary consultation process that focussed on achieving a balanced planning and infrastructural vision for the area inside the bypass and north of the Camlin River in Longford Town.

The plan resulted in a comprehensive zoning and circulation strategy for the area over the coming six years with an emphasis on how the area can, through appropriate development, provide reciprocal benefits for the Town core in terms of appropriate regeneration.

Longford Southern Environs

This Plan, another joint project between Longford Town and County Councils, is in an advanced stage of preparation. The plan aims to outline a planning vision for the area and how this can be implemented based on existing and projected available infrastructure over the medium to long-term.

Having initially been circulated in draft form to the members of both Councils in September 2008, this is currently being revised to reflect changes to infrastructural proposals and incorporate these into the planning context. It is envisaged that formal public consultation on the draft plan will commence in March 2009.

Clondra

Clondra LAP is in an advanced stage of preparation, with extensive work having been carried out over the 2008 period, including substantial consultation in relation to SEA and AA with the relevant authorities. The formal public consultation process is due to commence on this project in mid-2009.

Variations

Variations of the Town and County Development Plans were required in order to incorporate the zoning provisions of the Northern Environs Local Area Plan. An additional variation was required in the Town Centre in order to facilitate the proposed regeneration project. These variations were adopted in July 2008 following the relevant statutory processes.

Longford Town Development Plan Review

The Longford Town Development Plan 2004-2010 is also under review by the Planning Section. The process was commenced by formal notice in December 2007, followed up with a public meeting in early January 2008 and public

consultation up until February. The Draft Plan was maintained on public display from September to November 2008. The Managers report on this consultation phase will be circulated to the members in February 2009. The TDP process is running in tandem with an accompanying SEA. The plan has also been screened for Appropriate Assessment.

Other Projects

Land Use and Transportation Study (LUTs)

A land use and transportation study (LUTs) is currently in an advanced stage of preparation for the Longford town and environs area which will feed into the provisions of the relevant plans. Accompanied by an updated traffic model for the town, this, study will provide information such as existing and projected traffic flows, capacities at junctions and potential solutions to existing bottlenecks and problem areas throughout the town. It will also provide guidance on signage, street furniture and the treatment of traffic and pedestrian circulation in new developments. The study has been carried out in close consultation with the other forward planning projects in the area such as the northern and southern environs LAPs and the Town and County Development Plans.

GIS Commitments

The Draft Development plan and SEA monitoring will require the development and implementation of GIS systems to assemble, analyse, store and present planning and environmental data as part of the fulfilment of these projects.

Regional Planning Guidelines

The planning guidelines for the Midland Region are currently under review. This will be a much more intensive process than the original one, with Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment some of the additional elements that must be taken into account. Preparation of these guidelines in a lengthy process that will inevitably involve substantial input from the planning sections of each Local Authority in the Region over the next two years.

ENFORCEMENT

2006-2007, marked another active year for Longford County Council in the area of planning enforcement. During 2007 the Council issued 75 warning letters and 90 enforcement notices. Legal proceedings were commenced on 19 cases. 2008 saw a similar number of enforcement cases, with 82 warning letters issued, 60 enforcement notices issued and 14 legal proceedings instigated.



HUMAN RESOURCES, COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES



HUMAN RESOURCES, COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES



Cllr Barney Steele,
Chairperson of Economic Development,
Cultural and Recreational SPC



Mr Frank Sheridan
Director Of Services

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resource function is primarily a support service for the organisation itself. The Human Resources Department aims to continuously improve the organisations capability through:

- the selection and recruitment of employees in accordance with best practice
- the operation of a full range of work life balance schemes
- the provision of support for employees and management in respect of HR legislation
- the provision of appropriate training and development to enable employees to achieve their full potential and to build on the capability of the organisation.
- the coordination of the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)
- the maintenance of good working relationships using the Partnership process

Recruitment

Recruitment and selection of employees is necessary to service the current and future needs of the organisation. The following statistics demonstrate the continuing high levels of activity in this area in 2008. Recruitment and selection decisions are critical to ensure continued effective performance.

Recruitment Statistics 2008

Number of Competitions Advertised	National Primary Number of Interview Days	Number of Applicants invited for interview	Number of Applicants who attended for interview	Number of employees appointed
32	65	670	486	83 Temporary 24 Permanent

Equality / Diversity

During 2008, the Equality Action Team organised an "Equality & Diversity Morning" which took place in the Council Chamber, Aras an Chontae; employees of the Local Authorities were invited to attend.

The event was held to underpin the principles of equality that are firmly established within the organisation and to remind employees of the benefits and challenges of working in a diverse and integrated workplace.

Contributors to the programme included the County Manager, Mr. Tim Caffrey, employees from Longford Local Authorities and representatives from local external organisations.



Some of the speakers who addressed our Equality & Diversity Morning. Back (Left to Right): Daniel Lynch, Aisling Rocke, Noelle Murtagh, Mary Carlton-Reynolds, Barnard Kroon, Carmel Murtagh. Front: Helena Doyle

During 2008 the Equality Action Team developed a Dignity at Work Charter to support employees and to restate the Council's policy promoting and encouraging the right to dignity at work. The Charter is displayed in prominent locations throughout the organisation.

2008 saw the continuation of the Council's Employee Assistance Programme. This is a confidential information, advisory, counselling and referral service that is open to employees of Longford County Council 24 hours a day, seven days per week. This service gives employees a resource to contact for guidance and help with problems that impact on job performance and affect their well-being

Training and Development

Longford County Council continued in 2008 to demonstrate its commitment to employee development through the equitable provision of training and development activities for all employees across all disciplines.

A total of 54 Training Programmes were delivered over 769 days, the following list covers the some of the areas of interest in which training was offered:

- Environmental Inspection, Legislation & Waste Management
- Agresso & Financial Management
- Crisis Management
- Energy Efficiency
- HR Legislation
- Interview Board Training
- Interview Preparation Talks
- Management Development
- Train the Trainer
- MapInfo & GIS
- MS Publisher
- Minute Taking
- Site Suitability & Supervision
- Technical Report Writing
- Procurement Legislation
- Equality / Dignity at work
- Construction Design & Accessibility Awareness
- Water & Waste-Water Treatment Plant Maintenance

Properly targeted training and development is essential in helping equip employees at all levels to carry out their work and to respond to new challenges.

Longford County Council endeavours where possible to

offer training programmes in conjunction with neighbouring Local Authorities. This cost efficient practice affords the opportunity to maximise the benefit of training provided, facilitates networking and the sharing of expertise.



Presentation of Formal Accountancy Qualification to Michael Hand By County Manager, Tim Caffrey, and Head of Finance, Tommy McDonald

In addition to the listed training courses, a comprehensive programme of Health and Safety (H&S) training was delivered in 2008. The Council continued its delivery of statutory H&S training to employees in response to current and evolving legislative requirements in this area. H&S training courses included:

- ISOH Managing Safely for Construction Managers
- Manual Handling / Safety Awareness and Fall Arrest System Training
- CSCS Signing, Lighting & Guarding at Roadwork's
- CSCS Locating Underground Services
- CSCS Site Dumper
- Safe Pass and Safe System of Work Plans (SSWP)
- Safety Representative Training
- First Aid and AED (Defibrillator) Operator Training
- Dealing with violence & aggression in the workplace

Service Indicator

- % spent on Training & Development as a percentage of total payroll costs 6.18%



Performance Management Development Systems (PMDS)

The Social Partnership Agreements "Sustaining Progress" and "Towards 2016" provide for the implementation and embedding of a Performance Management Development System in every Local Authority nationwide.

In 2008 Longford Local Authorities continued to deliver on this commitment. The HR Department is responsible for the coordination of PMDS ensuring that it is implemented throughout the organisation consistently in accordance with the Local Authority PMDS model.

PMDS is a process designed to enhance and improve employee and organisational performance. The system is based on Team Development Plans (TDP) and Personal Development Plans

(PDP), to ensure that each employee has a greater understanding of the objectives and goals of the organisation and their input and contribution to achieving them.

The maintenance of PMDS throughout the organisation is achieved by the assignment of a key member of staff from each Directorate to coordinate team meetings and ensure that records of meetings are kept and agreed actions implemented.

Ongoing communication is a fundamental element of the PMDS process and this is key to the individual Personal Development Plans (PDP).

The training needs identified as part of PDP conversations form the basis of the Training Plan for Longford County Council and ensure that the training delivered focuses on responding to organisational and employee needs.

Service Indicator

- % of working days lost due to sickness absence:-
 - Certified leave: 4.12%
 - Uncertified leave: 0.50%

Workplace Partnership

Workplace Partnership is the process whereby management, employees and the trade unions work together to bring about organisational change in an open and co-operative manner. The workplace Partnership process is achieved by employee participation and consultation, information sharing, the development of joint objectives.

The Partnership Committee fulfills a key role in relation to the Performance Verification Process in respect of the Social Partnership Agreement Towards 2016. In 2008 a representatives of the Partnership Committee participated in the Performance Verification site visit as a requirement of the verification process.

The Partnership Committee met regularly in 2008, and some of the activities and discussion of the Workplace Partnership Committee in 2008 included:

- Remembrance Service for Deceased Members and Employees: The Partnership Committee organised and held a service in December 2008 for deceased members and employees of Longford Local Authorities.
- Return to Learning Initiative: The Return to Learning Initiative was successful with twelve employees taking part and achieving FETAC accreditation and three progressing to Junior Certificate level.
- Change to Annual Leave Year: A recommendation from the Partnership Committee to revise the Annual-Leave was reviewed, agreed and implemented in 2008.
- Employee Positive Health Initiatives: The Partnership Committee secured funding for initiatives to promote employee positive health and delivered health check for all employees in April & May 2008.
- Work Life Balance Day: The Partnership Committee arranged a Work-Life Balance event in February 2008.
- Project Funding: Project funding was sought and awarded by LANPAG to enable a Communications Review of Longford Local Authorities
- Skills for Work Training Programme: The Partnership Committee secured funding as a pilot site for the "Skills for Work" training programme. Six employees successfully completed this pilot training scheme in November 2008.

The Handling Significant Change through Partnership (HSC) Committee, address the more substantive change management facing the organisation. The committee comprises of the members of the Partnership Committee, Senior Management representatives and Union branch officials.

Established in 2007, the HSC committee met four times in 2008 and discussed the following issues:

- Public Private Partnerships (PPP)
- Modernisation of the Machinery Yard
- Planned Plant Maintenance Contracts
- 3% Payroll Saving as required by Government



COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE

Longford County Development Board

There are 29 members on the Board drawn from four sectors and are as follows:

Local Government (7 members)

Cllr. Alan Mitchell, Chairperson of the Board, Cllr. Sean Farrell, Cllr. Martin Farrell, Cllr. Barney Steele, Cllr. Adrian Farrell, Longford County Council. Cllr. Fintan Flood, Granard Town Council, Mr. Tim Caffrey, Longford County Manager.

Local Development (7 members)

Ms Monica O'Malley, Ms Tess Murphy, Mr. Charles Harrison, Longford Community Resources Ltd., Mr. Michael Nevin, Ms Beatrice Cunningham, Longford County Enterprise Board. Ms Josephine Stroker, Longford Acorn Project, Ms. Patricia Harrison, Longford County Childcare Committee.

State Agencies (10 members)

Supt. Denis Shields (Garda Síochána), Mr. Kevin Kidney (Midland East Regional Tourism), Ms Gillian Maunsell (IDA Ireland), Mr. Simon Cavanagh (Enterprise Ireland), Mr. Donie Murtagh (Health Service Executive), Ms. Marie Cullen (Department of Social Welfare), Mr. Gerry Johnson (FÁS), Mr. Michael Lennon (Teagasc), Ms Josephine O'Donnell (County Longford VEC), Mr. Seamus Murray (Department of Education & Science)

Social Partners (5 members)

Mr. George Shedwell (Irish Congress of Trade Unions), Mr. Mark Casey, Ms. Fionnuala Spillane (Community & Voluntary Sector), Mr. James Brady (Farming Sector), Vacant (Business Sector).

Longford County Development Board Action Plan 2006-2008

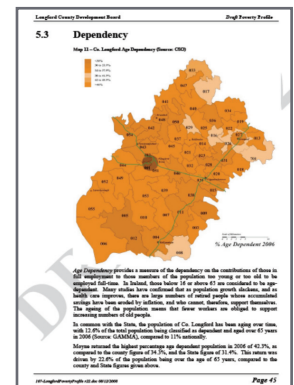
Arising from the review of the CDB Strategy in 2005, the Board agreed an Action Plan in 2006, which prioritises 13 key issues, and subsequent actions for the period 2006-2008. The Board is presently undertaking a review of this Action Plan. The review will focus on a limited number of priorities and actions over the three and a half year period mid 2009 to end 2012, with particular emphasis on interagency co-operation and the need for sharing resources to ensure efficiencies and value for money to meet the needs of the relevant client groups.

Endorsement of Local Development Agency Plans by the County Development Board

A key role of the County Development Board (CDB) is to bring about a more co-ordinated delivery of public and local development services at local level. Central to this co-ordination role is overseeing the implementation of a ten-year strategy through relevant agencies including local development plans. To facilitate better co-ordination the plans of the local development agencies were considered by the Social Inclusion Measures Working Group (SIMWG) and on their recommendation endorsed by the CDB.

Longford Poverty Profile and Social Inclusion Strategy

Exodea Europe was the successful consultants appointed to develop Longford's first Poverty Profile and Social Inclusion Strategy. Managed by the Community and Enterprise Section extensive consultations were conducted throughout 2008.



The purpose of the Poverty Profile is to map disadvantage in our County and allow for more targeted planning and intervention.

These consultations targeted the most vulnerable in our society and included people with disabilities, people on low income, older people, young people, ethnic minorities etc. The Poverty Profile and Social Inclusion Strategy are currently at draft stage and will be the first local strategy to reflect the National Social Inclusion Strategy model – 'Life Cycle Approach'.

Longford Inter-Cultural Strategy

The Community and Enterprise Section represented the Local Authority on a local steering group to develop an Inter Cultural Strategy for Longford. The four member steering group has overseen extensive consultations and research by the Integration Officer and consultants 'Green Hat'. The output of this work is a publication ready strategy for the County launched by the Minister for Integration Conor Lenihan on the 27th of February 2008.

Local Sports Partnership

The new Sports Co-ordinator, Siobhán McGuinness commenced employment with Longford Sports Partnership in October '08. During the final quarter of 2008, a Board was elected to guide the future work of the LSP. It consists

of 17 members, made up of elected and sporting representation as well as local stakeholders. The LSP distributed the Sports Club Grant Scheme (2008) to clubs throughout the County. A total of €6000 was allocated from the ISC and was awarded to 17 clubs. In 2008 Two Code of Ethics/Child Protection training workshops were held, with four more scheduled for later in the year. Additional support is offered to clubs wishing to undergo other training, e.g. Sports First Aid, Disability Awareness, Walker Leader Training etc.

In 2009, 26 schools participated on the Buntus programme, a PE curriculum support programme. Buntus Start is available to all pre-schools and 18 childcare facilities are to be trained this year. A funding application was made for RAPID Additionality funding to start Sport Action Zones for disadvantaged youth and will involve the availability of coaching in several sports, volunteer training and the development of a walking initiative between schools and communities. Longford Sports Partnership is working in conjunction with Laois, Offaly & Westmeath LSPs on the production of a volunteer pack and seminar, which is planned for September 2009. The LSP is also liaising with several local partners in relation to programming for Older Adults, Women in Sport and other target groups.



Mayor Sean Farrell, Siobhan McGuinness, Sports Co-ordinator, Frank Sheridan, Director of Services, Community and Enterprise. Photograph by Willie Farrell.

Smoke Alarm Project

Community and Enterprise has secured funding from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government to equip private households with 'Home Smoke Alarms'. This is a unique initiative targeted at vulnerable households whom might not currently have existing fire alarm systems. In particular the scheme will focus on the elderly, people living with a disability, people

living alone, people living in isolation, people living in rural areas. One of the most unique elements of this project was the utilisation of the Rural Social Scheme based in LCRL. Participants on the scheme were trained on alarm installation by Longford Fire Service. Over 350 houses were fitted with alarms in 2008 providing a vital safety support to vulnerable homes in the County.

Interagency Co-operation in the Delivery of Services and Supports to the Traveller Community

In April 2006, the County Development Board was requested to initiate the process of developing a strategic plan for Travellers. An interagency group of key stakeholders was established to agree how best this could be accomplished. This interagency group oversee the implementation of the Longford Traveller Interagency Plan which has four key areas:

1. Employment initiative.
2. Initiative to secure employment for Primary Healthcare trainees.
3. Employment of Traveller education and employment workers.
4. Initiative to build links between schools and Travellers.

FRIENDS Early Intervention Mental Health Programme

This innovative pilot project is the first of its kind in Ireland after proving immensely successful in many countries throughout the world. The FRIENDS for Life Programme is a school-based early intervention and prevention programme. The programme enhances children's resilience, teaches social and emotional skills and provides children with essential skills for coping with life's challenges. This programme is endorsed by the World Health Organisation as best practice for the treatment and prevention of anxiety and depression in children and adolescents.

For children who are not clinically anxious, FRIENDS significantly increases their level of self-esteem while reducing their feelings of worry and depression. FRIENDS is currently used in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, England, Ireland, The Netherlands, Germany, Portugal and the U.S.





Mental health research conducted by Longford Community Resources Ltd identified a gap in support for children to reduce their anxiety and fears and to improve their coping skills. This unique programme is being rolled out with primary schools through a partnership of the Health Service Executive Longford Community Psychology Department and the Longford County Development Board.



The FRIENDS programme in County Longford is designed to be used with 5th class students and is delivered by teachers in ten sessions within a classroom setting. The programme was offered to all national schools in County Longford. The response from the schools was most enthusiastic. 28 teachers from 25 schools, representing 425 fifth class children, were trained as programme facilitators.

The rollout of the FRIENDS programme is being monitored by a sub committee of the Longford County Development Board and HSE Longford Community Psychology Department.

Lanesborough Community Plan

 <p>3 Things I really like about Lanesborough</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	 <p>3 Things I don't like about Lanesborough</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>
<p>3 Things I really wish we had in Lanesborough</p>  <p>1.</p>	<p>3 Things I don't want coming to Lanesborough</p>  <p>1.</p>

Community and Enterprise Section have initiated a project with the community in Lanesborough to develop a short term action plan for its area. Its primary focus is on identifying key objectives that can be achieved in partnership.

This process intends developing a blueprint that can be transferred to other areas and communities. Initial steps

included surveying all community groups in the area for their priorities then organising facilitated workshops in the community. The success of this project has been solely due to the capacity of the internal community.

Longford Community & Voluntary Forum

The Community and Voluntary Forum have been highly active in 2008. Some of the projects that hit the headlines over the year include:

- Completion of Volunteer Audit of Longford in partnership with the Volunteer Coordinator and Longford Community Resource Ltd. This project has painted a clear picture of volunteerism in the County and the issues facing groups and organizations.
- Two nights of Community Fundraising Training organized for all the sporting, community and voluntary groups in the County.
- Half day training to support groups making applications under the Sports Capital Programme
- Training delivered by Dr. Philip Byrne from the Institute of Public Administration in regard to supporting volunteers on SPC's, Task Forces and development groups.
- Application to Pobal from the Disability Sub-group for a Community Services Programme to support the employment of people with disabilities

The Community and Enterprise Section resources and supports the Community and Voluntary Forum. One of the aims for 2008 is to develop a 3 year strategy for the Community and Voluntary Forum. The Forum were delighted to have Dr. Philip Byrne from the IPA in attendance as keynote speaker for their AGM in 2008.



Under the 'Integration of Local Development Companies' four representatives from the Community and Voluntary Forum were elected onto Longford Community Resources Ltd. The individuals were elected through four clusters representing '**Tourism and Recreation**', '**Environment**', '**Rural Development**' and '**Heritage and Culture**'. Four other representatives were elected from a Social Inclusion Network and all will be affiliated to the Community and Voluntary Forum.

Redevelopment of Richmond Harbour, Clondra

Longford County Council, Waterways Ireland and Failte Ireland are working together on the redevelopment of Richmond Harbour Clondra. The project will include the installation of a floating jetty and safety boom, extension of existing harbour wall, refurbishment of existing derelict building, improving the area with both hard and soft landscaping and also the provision of a much needed play area.

The project will provide a much needed boost for the area and has been embraced by the community through consultation.



Longford Volunteer Centre

The aim of the Longford Volunteer Centre is to:

- To provide supports to existing/groups which have volunteers and wish to retain them and secure more
- To support new groups/organisations in their efforts to secure volunteers
- To work with the steering group to develop a work plan for the Valuing Volunteering project
- To help identify, recruit and select volunteers for groups and services as part of a Volunteer Bank for the county
- To develop and implement relevant volunteer policies
- To establish an accurate profile of volunteerism in County Longford.

The centre was established in October 2007 and is managed by a full time co-ordinator, Karen Byrne, who reports to a steering group made up of representatives from the County Development Board. The centre was funded under Cohesion and she is based in Longford Community Resources Ltd. This is a good example of integrated service delivery in Longford.

Paul Williams Drug Awareness Evening

A drug awareness evening was hosted *Monday the 17th of November in the Temperance Hall, Longford*. The purpose of the event was to raise awareness of drug issues and the impact drugs have on individual and family life. The event was organised by Longford County Council, Longford VEC and the Community and Voluntary Forum. Key speaker on the night was crime correspondent and author Paul Williams accompanied by professionals from the HSE and An Garda Síochána. Over 250 adults and teenagers attended the event.

Arts, Sports and Community Facility Audit

Longford County Development Board, in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism are undertaking an audit of Community, Sports and Arts Facilities in County Longford. The purpose of the audit is to establish the number, type and needs of each facility in County Longford.

Community and Enterprise is currently conducting an extensive survey of facilities in the County.



Pictured at the launch of the Audit is David Minton (Administrative Officer), Frank Sheridan (Director of Services) and Karen Walsh (Community and Enterprise).



Longford Tourism Strategy

Community and Enterprise lead a multi agency Tourism Audit and Strategy. The group consisted of representatives from Longford County Council, Longford Town Council, County Enterprise Board, LCRL, Fáilte Ireland and the project was led by Longford Tourism. A comprehensive audit was completed in 2008 and used as a basis for strategic planning coupled with extensive consultation with the sector. The strategic planning process is ongoing and should be complete in the first quarter of 2009.

Dáil na nÓg & Comhairle na nÓg 2008

The National Children’s Strategy has as its first goal that “Children will have a voice in matters which affect them and their views will be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity”. Dáil na nÓg is the annual national parliament for young people and gives young people the opportunity to discuss issues of concern to them and to influence public policy. Delegates are elected to the Dáil na nÓg through the local Comhairle na nÓg. Five young people from Longford were selected to attend in February 2008. The elected delegates for Dáil na nÓg 2008 were Avril Gilchrist, David Grealley, David Matthews, Sean Egan and Sinead Fleming. Training was provided to the delegates to prepare them for participating at the Dáil na nÓg. The themes for discussion on the day were education reform and emotional and mental health for young people.

The County Development Board has responsibility for organising the annual Comhairle na nÓg. The 2008 event was held in Longford Slashers on the 8th November and attended by young people, aged between 15-18 years old from the post primary schools and training centres around the county. One of the main issues discussed on the day were the lack of dedicated social facilities for the 15-17 age group. The themes put forward by the post primary schools in County Longford for discussion at the National Dáil na nÓg were drugs/alcohol and the lack of leisure facilities for young people. Five young people were elected to represent County Longford at the Dáil na nÓg, which will be held on February the 20th 2009 in Croke Park.

2008 Youth Council Meeting with Laura Heneghan Longford County Council, Martin Kennedy facilitator, guest speakers Karen Clabby, President Chamber of Commerce, Longford and Noelle Murtagh, County Longford Integration Officer.



Mayor Sean Farrell and Laura Heneghan, Longford County Council with Longford Comhairle na nÓg participants.

Enhanced Programme of Activity for the Comhairle na nÓg

Funding was secured from the Office for the Minister of Children to develop the Comhairle na nÓg. An Interagency Steering Group of key stakeholders were established to advise and assist in the implementation of a number of initiatives to enhance the participation in, and the more effective running of the Comhairle na nÓg. Some of the initiatives are as follows:

County Longford Youth Council

County Longford Youth Council represents students from all the post primary schools and training centres throughout County Longford. The aim of the Council is to provide an opportunity for young people from across the County to raise and debate issues of concern to them. A number of meetings were held in 2008 at which a range of issues were debated and recommendations made to local bodies. The main issues discussed were part time pay rates for young people, Integration of new communities, drugs and crime, Youth sports and recreational facilities, community transport initiatives, subject choices and facilities in schools.



Longford County Council Careers Day

In December 2008 the Community & Enterprise department played host to the Transition Year class from Moyne Community School. The students were introduced to the multitude of career opportunities that are available within the local authority. They met a number of employees including an Administrative officer in Community & Enterprise, Sports Co-ordinator, Technician, Planner, I.T Officer and a Health and Safety Officer, IT Specialist and Administrative Officer. Each employee gave a presentation outlining the college course they had studied, the various career paths they had taken to get them to this point and the future prospects in each of their career areas. They also visited the Council Chamber and were given an insight into role and functions of the local authority and the proceedings of a Council meeting. The feedback from the students and teachers was very positive. As well as learning about the structure of the local Authority, they also gained an insight into the careers that were discussed.



Laura Heneghan with students from Moyne Community School in the council chamber.

Student Council Training programme

In 2008 training was provided to Student Councils in post primary schools and Youthreach centres to facilitate the development of Student Councils and to create an awareness of the Comhairle na nÓg and the Dáil na nÓg. This initiative was very successful in fostering a culture of democratic participation by young people.

National Pride of Place Competition 2008

Pride of Place is a competition, which is directed towards recognising improvements by local communities to create civic pride in their area. The all island competition is hosted by Co-Operation Ireland in conjunction with the Local Authority Steering Forum comprising of officials from

authorities in both parts of Ireland. The aim of the “Pride of Place” competition is to encourage best practice, innovation and leadership in providing vibrant sustainable communities that improve the quality of life for all. Pride of place is a unique opportunity for community groups to be officially recognised, on an all island basis, for the valuable work undertaken in their local areas. The nomination process to the all island competition is undertaken through the Local Authorities.

In 2008 Longford County Council nominated five entrants to represent County Longford. Legan and Ballymahon in the population category and the Temperance Hall Committee, EDI REVAMP Project and the Dolmen Failte Club in the single issue category of the competition. Judging took place over three days in July 2008. Each group were required to make a presentation highlighting the range of activities and projects they had undertaken. A National Award Ceremony was held in Cappoquin, County Waterford on the 10th of November 2008 at which the Temperance Hall Committee won the Pride of Place Special Category, Best Community Facility Award, a great honour for Longford and the committee.



Temperance Hall Committee pictured with the President Mary McAleese and Mayor Sean Farrell

Pride of Longford Competition

The Pride of Longford Competition provides an opportunity for Longford County Council to acknowledge and recognise the voluntary work and commitment of local groups to enhancing their local communities. Every year the competition takes different themes and in 2008 they were as follows: Services for Youth, Recreation/ Amenity, Heritage/Conservation. Entry in the competition is open to all community groups in County Longford. Judging took



place in July. An Awards Ceremony was held on Thursday the 16th of October 2008 at which the winners were honoured with certificates and prize money across a number of categories.

Joint Policing Committees

Joint Policing Committees were established in co-operation with the Garda in the three Longford Local Authorities in accordance with guidelines issued in September 2008. Longford Town Council held their inaugural meeting on the 8th December 2008. A Steering group was established to co-ordinate the three committees.

Economic Environment

The rapid growth of the economy in Longford came to an abrupt end in mid 2008. This was particularly evident in the construction sector and its contribution to consumer spending. International trading difficulties including the failure in financial markets and particularly the strength of the euro against sterling adversely impacted on local companies. The strength of the local economy is in their sectoral diversity of companies and the spread of employment across a range of different industries. The local authorities and other support agencies must co-operate in assisting vulnerable enterprises survive the current challenges.

Economic Strategy

Longford County Council continues to pro-actively support economic development throughout County Longford. During 2008 a number of Longford's large companies invested in their facilities including Cameron Willis and C&D, contributing to increased employment and strengthening the local productive economy. The important micro enterprise sector was supported in co-operation with Longford County Enterprise Board primarily through the provision of industrial sites and business supports.

ARTS OFFICE ANNUAL REPORT 2008.

Literature & Creative Writing: Organised and ran Ink (The National Writers Group Literary Festival) - organised National Writers Group of the Year Awards - published "Petals on a Bough" an anthology of creative writing - planned and recorded "The Awakened Life" a literary DVD - restructured a new look www.virtualwriter.net literary website - engaged a Creative Writing Development Officer - sponsored programme of creative writing classes - organised after-school creative writing classes for Longford

secondary schools - recorded series of storytelling workshops for primary school students - organised a workshop in "how to get published" for Longford writers.

Visual Arts: Established two FETAC Level 5 Digital Photography courses in partnership with Longford VEC - Established an Introduction to Photography course in partnership with Longford VEC - organised an exhibition of Longford photography which toured galleries in Westmeath, Longford and Cavan - organised a Master class in traditional painting techniques with artist Kevin Flood - completed the commissioning of a per cent for art feature as part of the Swimming Pool project - initiated the commissioning process of a public art feature for the Fonderman's site for Longford Town Council - organised a master class in abstract painting techniques for midland artists.

Music & Dance: Assisted in the delivery of a master class in sound and art for midland musicians and artists - assisted in the organisation and delivery of a master class in movement skills for performance for midland dancers - supported the delivery of a professional development through the Midlands Musicians Club - supported the Kindermusik pre-school music development programme in three centres in Longford - supported the County Longford Adult Choir.

Drama & Festivals: Delivered the second National Writers Group Festival - assisted in the planning of the Lough Ree Environmental Summer School - provided support to the Goldsmith Summer School - supported the Aisling Children's Art Festival - worked with Backstage Youth Group - supported children's drama project in association with The Aisling Children's Festival.

Miscellaneous: Organised master class in artist led initiatives for professional artists in the midlands - organised a collaborative arts; community authorship and practice seminar in the Tuar Ard Centre Moate for midland community artists - produced Midland culture magazine in association with midlands arts officers - assisted in the completion of an ACCESS funding application for a Longford Museum - assisted in the research into the feasibility of establishing an annual Padraig Colm commemorative event.

LONGFORD CULTURAL SERVICES

LONGFORD COUNTY LIBRARY

Introduction:

Six branch libraries are located at Longford, Ballymahon, Lanesboro, Edgeworthstown, Drumlish and Granard.

The library service this year has been given a big vote of confidence from our customers with the publication of the results of a user survey in September which was part of a national public library user survey which was run in September /October 2007. Longford's results were higher than the national average with 84% of library users expressing satisfaction with the range of books and multimedia on offer and 99% expressing satisfaction with staff assistance. It was interesting to note that of those surveyed 50% said they came looking for information as opposed to borrowing books and of that number 85% said they were satisfied with the information they were given. The demand for and inclusiveness of the service has also been underlined through the 109,092 customer visits which were recorded in Longford town library throughout 2008. The library staff adopted as our logo in 2007 "our library, a welcoming space for all". Through active engagement with the community and a more responsive customer focussed approach to service delivery, the key role of the library in addressing social exclusion is being recognized. Strong partnerships and innovative projects have been developed with other key service providers including our colleagues in Community and Enterprise and with local primary and secondary schools, Longford VEC, Active Age groups, LCRL, HSE, Citizen's Information Service, Women's Link, County Childcare etc.



*Above: St. Joseph's Care Centre Art Exhibition Launch
December 2008*

Social Inclusion:

Library Services For Immigrant Community

12.7% of our current registered members are categorised as non-Irish or "New Irish". The services provided by the library to meet the needs of these members include free use of the internet, online access to a database of 250 newspapers from 55 countries, a wide range of English language learning materials at a variety of levels, multicultural magazine "Metro", and foreign language books. All branches of Longford Library hold a collection of foreign language books for both adults and children. Books in the following languages are included in our collection: Polish, Russian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Slovakian. The majority of these books are supplied to the library on a rental basis by Bright Books in England. However, during the past two years we have purchased a number of foreign language books from both Irish and UK suppliers. Donations of Polish books have been received from the Polish community. A total of 1,858 foreign language books were borrowed during 2008 which is an increase of 34% over the 2007 figures. Polish books proved to be the most popular with a total of 1,514 issues followed by Latvian books (129), Russian (113), Lithuanian (84) and Slovak (18)

Polish Mother and Toddler Group:

The Polish Mother and Toddler Group which meets on a weekly basis in Longford Library continues to be a great success. Each week, an average of 8-10 mothers turn up with their toddlers for a meeting which is facilitated by a bilingual Polish woman and funded by the VEC. The group in addition to supporting each other, are learning English and also improving their knowledge of relevant local and national services through talks on issues such as migrant rights and entitlements and local health and educational facilities. Eight sessions of Music Therapy for Toddlers was organised in cooperation with Longford County Childcare Committee and Longford VEC and facilitated by a professional music teacher for children. The children were introduced to the basics of rhythm and song and encouraged to explore their creativity through music.

Polish language classes for Polish children who want to maintain their mother tongue are held each Saturday from 10.00am -2.00pm. The learners are divided into three groups according to their age and knowledge of their native language.

Intercultural Strategic Plan for County Longford 2008-2011

A comprehensive Intercultural Strategic Plan for Longford was launched in 2008. A number of consultations for the plan were held in the library and library staff contributed to the sessions on "Education & Training", "Health & Welfare" and "Culture, Leisure & Recreation". Library staff also worked closely with the Integration Officer for Longford to plan the Launch of the Strategy in the Temperance Hall which was attended by Minister for Integration, Conor Lenihan. We provided a drama facilitator to work with St. Joseph's and St. Michael's NS to produce two plays for the occasion on the theme of interculturalism. There was a huge turnout for the event from all sectors of the community with Longford Local Authorities receiving recognition from the Minister for its innovative work in promoting Integration.



Above: Katherine Lynch launching Longford Traveller Focus Week

L.A.R.E.D (Longford Against Racism Embracing Diversity)

L.A.R.E.D. meetings are held on a monthly basis in Library Headquarters and a member of library staff contributes to these meetings. L.A.R.E.D. is a network of service providers involved in the process of integration. The meetings facilitate the exchange of information, raising awareness and discussion of relevant issues in relation to racism, integration and the planning of intercultural events.

Forum Theatre and Anti-Racism Training

In the autumn of 2008, a number of L.A.R.E.D. members, including a member of library staff, worked with a lecturer in Advocacy for People with Disabilities from Sligo Institute of Technology, to devise a play script on anti-racism. The

play is now ready for production and it is hoped to roll it out to local schools and statutory and community groups in the coming months.

Longford's Talking Newspaper

A number of library staff assist with the production of "The Longford Leader on Tape" for visually disabled members in our community. The service is organised by the Longford branch of The National Council for the Blind. The work involves selecting relevant and interesting sections from the local paper and recording the articles on a tape which is then copied and sent out each week to a number of local people.

In partnership with representatives from DPOL (Disabled People of Longford), the National Council for the Blind, and a library staff member with a disability a number of information mornings were run for people with disabilities demonstrating services targeted at this group. These proved to be a very helpful and well attended.

Healthy Reading Project

Since the beginning of 2008, library staff have been working on a Healthy Reading/Bibliotherapy project. The aim of the project is to promote positive mental health in the community through the provision of information...self-help books, leaflets, websites, etc. through the public library network. A working group was established consisting of representatives from Longford Library, HSE, Longford Mental Health Association, Suicide Resource Officer and a GP. Thirteen relevant mental health topics were identified and a list of high quality books and web sites were compiled by the group. One complete set of the books has been purchased by the library. We are now hoping to secure funding for a further five sets for the branch libraries and also for promotional materials.

Frontline: First Online Reader Development Course for Library Staff

During the summer of 2008, the first interactive online course for library staff was rolled out to all library authorities by The Library Council. It provides a rigorous introduction to the basic skills needed to promote our core service namely books and reading through a series of seven modules. To date, one member of Longford library staff has completed the course and will now act as the course co-ordinator for Longford. It is hoped that all library staff will complete the course over the next two years.

EXHIBITIONS, BOOK LAUNCHES, SEMINARS, DRAMA

Mar 3	Photographic exhibition by FETAC level 5 students Templemichael College
Mar 4	Fairtrade Fortnight celebration with a series of talks for children and adults on Fairtrade
Mar 6	Celebration of Library Ireland Week and World Book Day local writers evening with guest speaker Heather Brett.
Mar 11	Series of talks on "The Táin" by Longford County Council Heritage Officer Mairéad Ní Chonghaile to celebrate Seachtain na Gaeilge.
Apr 9	A series of storytelling sessions dealing with racism as part of Anti-Racism Week.
May 6	Lisbon Treaty Public Debate with Marian Harkin MEP and John McGuirk, Libertas
May 4-26th	Beáltaine Festival celebrating creativity in older people
June 5	An Information Day for people with visual difficulties
July 4-18	Summer Fun and Reading programme for children
Jul 23	Local History talk with members of the Farrell Clan given by Archivist, Martin Morris
Sep 25	An Evening with writer Dermot Bolger.
Sep 29	Exhibition of art work by pupils from St. Christopher's
Oct 13	Phoenix Centre Art exhibition
Oct 20-30	Children's Book Festival
Nov 3	"In Foreign Fields" Military exhibition by Hugh Farrell.
Nov 24	Exhibition by residents of St. Joseph's Hospital.
Nov. 26	Reading and launch of "The History House" by Kieran Furey and "Liar, Liar" by Alan McMonagle.
Dec 3	Book Launch by Jack Harte and Art exhibition by Reflections Art Group
Dec 5	Launch of Traveller Focus Week with Catherine Lynch
Dec. 11	Presentation of a collection of Irish Children's Literature by INTO Longford branch in memory of teacher Mary Orohoe.



Mayor of Longford County, Seán Farrell and Mayor of Longford Town, Cllr. James Keogh at the launch of "In Foreign Fields" military exhibition by Hugh Farrell



Author Kieran Furey holding his audience spellbound at the launch of his latest book, "The History House"



Classes

Conversational Language Classes in Irish, Italian, French and Spanish are held in Longford Library. Granard Library hosted Irish Classes.

A six week course in partnership with Longford VEC "Exploring Irish Writers" commenced in October 2008.

Polish classes for Polish children every Saturday morning.

Bookclub meets monthly in Longford library.

Bealtaine: festival for older people

Longford Libraries in partnership with Longford Older Person's Network and Active Age groups around the county celebrated Beáltaine during the month of May with exhibitions, quizzes, talks, walks, workshops, music and song.

Library Membership Figures for 2008

LIBRARY BRANCH	ADULT	JUNIOR	2nd Level Student	3rd Level Student	Other	TOTAL	2007	Inc/Dec %
Longford	1704	1763	533	388	39	4427	4395	+0.7%
Granard	211	245	83	19	14	572	530	+7.9%
Lanesborough	194	150	35	24	2	405	433	-6.5%
Ballymahon	126	147	6	5	4	288	295	-3.4%
Drumlish	65	133	31	16	5	250	276	-9.5%
Edgeworthstown	76	164	22	4	5	271	331	-18%
Total	2376	2602	710	456	69	6213	6260	-0.8%

No. of Visits to Longford Branch Library 2008 = 109,09

Total Number of Items Borrowed 2008

LIBRARY BRANCH	ADULT FICTION	ADULT NON FICTION	CHILDREN	TEENS	AUDIO	FOREIGN LANG.	TOTAL	2007	INC/DEC %
Longford	20087	16745	18408	1199	4154	1605	62,198	60,363	+3%
Granard	2905	1459	3481	148	123	56	8,172	8,061	+1.3%
Lanesboro	3174	1694	2799	122	46	70	7,905	7,946	-0.5%
Ballymahon	2133	583	2502	117	26	71	5,432	5,818	-6.6%
Drumlish	1326	772	2519	86	25	36	4,764	4,970	-4.1%
Edgeworthstown	1409	622	2432	63	200	20	4,746	4,399	+7.8%
Total	31,034	21,875	32,141	1735	4574	1858	93,217	91,557	+1.8%

**Public Access Broadband and WiFi Stats for 2008**

Library Branch	No. of Wired Internet Sessions used	WiFi Sessions	Total	2007
Longford	13,902	983	14,885	14,404
Granard	1685	41	1726	1993
Lanesboro	2503	24	2527	2853
Ballymahon	801	-	801	951
Drumlish	654	42	696	673
Edgeworthstown	518	37	555	715
Total	20,064	1127	21,190	21,589

Library Service to Primary Schools 2008

Book Issues to Schools	Total No. of Books on Loan to Schools	No of New Books purchased	No. of Books Withdrawn from Circulation	No. of Primary Schools	No. of Pupils in Primary Schools
14,816	56,995	2,310	899	39	4,625

ARCHIVES SERVICE

The year 2008 was a busy and productive one for the Archives Service, which was involved in a range of activities in the areas of archives and records management across all sectors of the local authority. This post is part-funded by the DoEHLG and is shared with Leitrim County Council.

1. Preservation and access

- The minute books of Ballymahon Poor Law Union, 1881-1922, were cleaned and prepared for microfilming.
- The loose estate maps were digitised and are now available on CD-R, with preservation-standard images on DVD.
- The conservation and re-binding of William Ferguson's account book, c. 1818-1856 (one of the oldest items in the Archives) was completed, and is now available to the public.

2. Records management

The files of the County Development Team, 1967-1997, were appraised, sorted, entered in a database, and boxed for removal to storage.

3. Donations

The following were donated in 2008:

- A file of letters and newspaper reports concerning Mr Martin Timlin and Longford Chamber of Commerce, 1950s-1970s;
- A collection from St Brigid's College, Ardagh, including an account book from the Fetherston estate, 1820-1846; and an album with photographs of Ardagh village, 1877;
- A diary of a sea journey to Rome, c. 1930.

4. Public events and promotion**a. Exhibition:**

The Archivist worked with the Heritage Officer in preparing an exhibition of photographs of Ardagh village 'then and now' (1877 and 2008), in Longford Branch Library for Heritage Week.

b. Richard Lovell Edgeworth Commemoration:

The Archivist co-ordinated the planning of a day to commemorate Richard Lovell Edgeworth (1744-1817), engineer, inventor and educationalist, which took place in Edgeworthstown on 20 September.



c. Activities involving schools:

- 31 March: workshop on 'Archives in Longford' with senior history students in Scoil Mhuire, Longford, with a follow-up visit to Library HQ on 13 May;
- 21 October: walking tour of Longford town with a transition year group from Scoil Mhuire, Longford;
- 6 November: workshops on 'Archives in Longford' with all first year classes in Moyne Community School;
- December: facilitated visits of the two classes of Leaving Certificate Applied Programme, Moyne Community School, to Library HQ to view the local studies and archival collections.

d. Talks delivered to community groups:

- 9 January: Longford ICA: 'Preserving your family records'.
- 14 January: Ballinamuck ICA: 'Tracing your family tree'.
- 31 January: Moatsiders Group, Granard Library: 'The Magan maps'.
- 3 April: Granard ICA: 'Preserving your family records'.
- 14 April: Legan ICA: 'Tracing your family tree'.
- 23 July: the International Farrell Clan Rally, Longford Branch Library: 'Tracing your family tree'.
- 3 September: Longford Active Retirement Group: 'Tracing your family tree'.
- 7 October: Coolamber ICA: 'An introduction to local history'.
- 11 October: Monaduff Social Club, Drumlish Library: 'Drumlish and Ballinamuck in the archives'.

5. Continuing professional development

The Archivist is an active member of the Local Authority Archivists' Group and a member of the Education Committee of the Society of Archivists', Ireland.

LONGFORD HERITAGE OFFICE

The overall aim of the Longford County Heritage Plan is to ensure ***"that our heritage will be part of life for everyone"***. This is being achieved through:

1. The establishment and management of the County Longford Heritage Forum and their buy-into the existing *Longford Heritage Plan 2004 – 2009* and the putting together of the new *Longford Heritage Plan 2010-2015*.
2. The co-ordination and Implementation of the *Longford County Heritage Plan 2004-2009*.
3. The review of the existing Heritage Plan and the drafting of a new Heritage Plan to come into effect from 2010.
4. The overseeing the establishment of the draft Longford Biodiversity Action Plan, sponsored by The Heritage Council.

LONGFORD HERITAGE OFFICE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2008

In 2008 several major projects were undertaken, which further the aims and objectives of the Longford Heritage Plan 2004-2009 were delivered. These comprised:

1 – Survey of Selected Longford Bridges as Bat Habitats

This project followed on from an Architectural Inventory of Longford's Bridges, which was carried out by the Heritage Office in 2007. Bridges can be a good habitat for bats; all varieties of which are protected under Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. From the architectural inventory, the bat survey selected 51 bridges deemed to have the most potential as bat habitats.

2 – Survey of the Industrial Heritage of Co. Longford – Phase 1, desktop survey

The industrial heritage of Co. Longford comprised a large section of Longford's social, archaeological and architectural heritage, of which very little was known. The



purpose of this study was to identify sites of potential industrial heritage interest; codify them on a map and provide initial findings from the results to inform future field surveys.

3 – Heritage Week Programme

The success of previous years' Heritage Weeks was expanded in 2008, with a number of new partners organising events, including the Granard Traditional Harp Festival, Abbeyshrule Tidy Villages and the Longford Vintage Club. The wide-ranging programme included exhibitions, lectures, walking tours (including a bridge tour & bat talk), a céilí, vintage vehicle runs and the unveiling of a commemoration remembering the dead of the Lanesborough/Ballyleague Ferry Disaster of 1707, on the shore in Lanesborough. Feedback from the Heritage Council showed that Longford had one of the highest concentrations of events per capita in the country.

4 – Inventory of the Longford Historical Society Artefact Collection

This is the last of the large individual collections of folk-objects and archaeological artefacts relating to County Longford to be inventorised. This concentrated on the objects in storage within Petit's commercial storage facility in Granard, Co. Longford, with objects in the care of individual members of the Historical Society to be added at a later date. The findings were documented in a report which included advice on the artefacts' care and conservation and a recommendation to secure a suitable long-term storage space for the collection.

5 – Built Heritage Projects

In 2008, Longford County Council continued emergency conservation works to the former Cistercian monasteries at Abbeylara and Abbeyshrule. The Heritage Office has also had input into proposals to conserve and adapt the former Ballymahon courthouse into a library and secured funding to undertake some of the necessary conservation works. The building is a Protected Structure which retains many features of architectural interest. Funding was also received for the replacement of 8 timber sash windows and the repair of two more to the first floor of the town hall in Granard, Co. Longford.

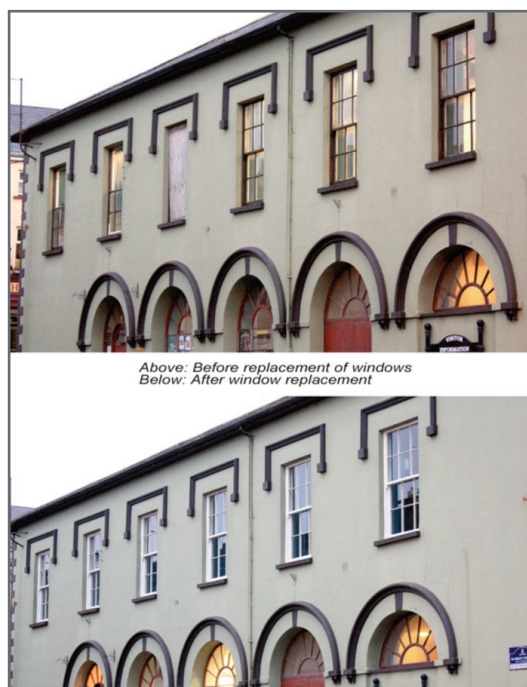
Right: Before & After views of the first floor windows to the Market House/ Granard Town Hall

6 – Heritage Awareness

To further awareness of heritage within County Longford, the Heritage Office undertook the following:

- Carrying out archaeology workshops for children as part of the Longford Summer Festival.
- Promotion of the county's natural heritage through sponsoring a hedgerow maintenance demonstration at the county Ploughing Championships and a display of native birds of prey at the Longford Show.
- Having input into committees, groups and events to further the awareness and protection of Longford's varied heritage including: Edgeworth Commemoration Committee; Museum Committee; Tidy Towns and Villages Committees.
- Having input into national policies and strategies in relation to heritage, e.g. submission to the National Biodiversity Forum as part of the consultation process for the National Biodiversity Plan.
- Providing guidance and advice on heritage matters to Local Authority staff and departments, e.g. Protected Structures and conservation or biodiversity and the legislation surrounding protected plant and animal species.

The Heritage Officer Programme is a partnership arrangement between The Heritage Council and the Longford County Council.





FINANCE AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS



FINANCE AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS



Tommy McDonald
Head Of Finance

FINANCE

Functions

The main functions of the Finance Department of Longford County Council are to:

- Achieve the financial objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan.
- Manage the financial affairs of the Council.
- Ensure that adequate internal controls are in operation to safeguard the assets of the organisation, and to ensure, the accuracy and reliability of the accounting records.
- Ensure as far as possible that value for money is achieved throughout the organisation.

Services

- Motor Taxation
- Rates
- Higher Education Grants
- General Office – processing payments to suppliers and payroll.

Payment Practices

The provisions of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997 and the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations, 2002 applies to Longford County Council and Longford Town Council. Both Local Authorities have systems in place to ensure that interest penalties are not incurred. However, in a small number of cases, late payments occurred in 2008, as follows:

Longford County Council

Total number of late payments	106
Total value of late payments	€528,732.60

Value of all late payments as a proportion of total payments to suppliers	0.66%
Total amount of interest penalties	€5,143.30
Average delay in late payments	49 days

Longford Town Council

No interest penalties were paid in 2008.

Every effort is made to ensure compliance with the Act and Regulations and avoidance of interest penalties. However, the procedures can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against material non-compliance with the legislation.

Internal Audit

Internal Audit is an independent appraisal function charged with reviewing activities across all areas within Longford County Council. It objectively examines and reports on management of risks, the adequacy of internal controls, the achievement of proper, efficient and economic use of resources. An Internal Audit Charter sets out the role and responsibilities of the Internal Auditor and Management.

HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS

Prior to 1968 Councils and County Borough Corporations awarded grants to students pursuing second and third level courses. The Local Authorities (Higher Education Grants) Act, 1968 abolished the making of grants for second level education and revised the system of grants for third level education. Grants are on a graduated basis and may contain a maintenance element as well as fees where exemption from fees does not apply. The bulk of the cost is recouped from the Department of Education with the Local Authority being responsible for a sum equal to the value of the grants awarded by the Council in the 1967 financial year.



Academic Year 2008/2009

Number of new awards issued	93
Number of renewals issued	167
Total number of students in receipt of Higher Education Grants	260
Number of students attending Irish colleges	240
Number of students attending UK colleges (including Northern Ireland) and EU colleges	20

EXPENDITURE

Local Government Act 2001 – Section 142 Expenditure	€
Mayor and Other Allowances	80,000
Entertainment and Associated Expenses	9,589
Representational Payments, Expenses of Members and Representation at Conferences	732,659
Expenses of Members attending Conferences abroad	20,517
Total:	842,765

MOTOR TAX

The Motor Taxation Office issues vehicle licences (tax discs), driving licences and associated documents such as certificates of roadworthiness, vehicle licensing certificates, trailer licence cards, receipts, etc. The income derived is transferred to the Local Government Fund, which is under the control of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

In 2008 total receipts amounted to €7,046,144.00

Motor Tax – statistics 2008

	No of Transactions	Amount
Vehicle Licences (discs)	32,106	6,710,378.00
Driver Licences	6,085	99,020.00
Road Worthiness Certificates	3,345	24,350.00
Trade Licences	97	26,102.00
Miscellaneous Receipts	3,316	186,294.00
Total	44,949	7,046,144.00

Vehicle Licences Issued – 2008

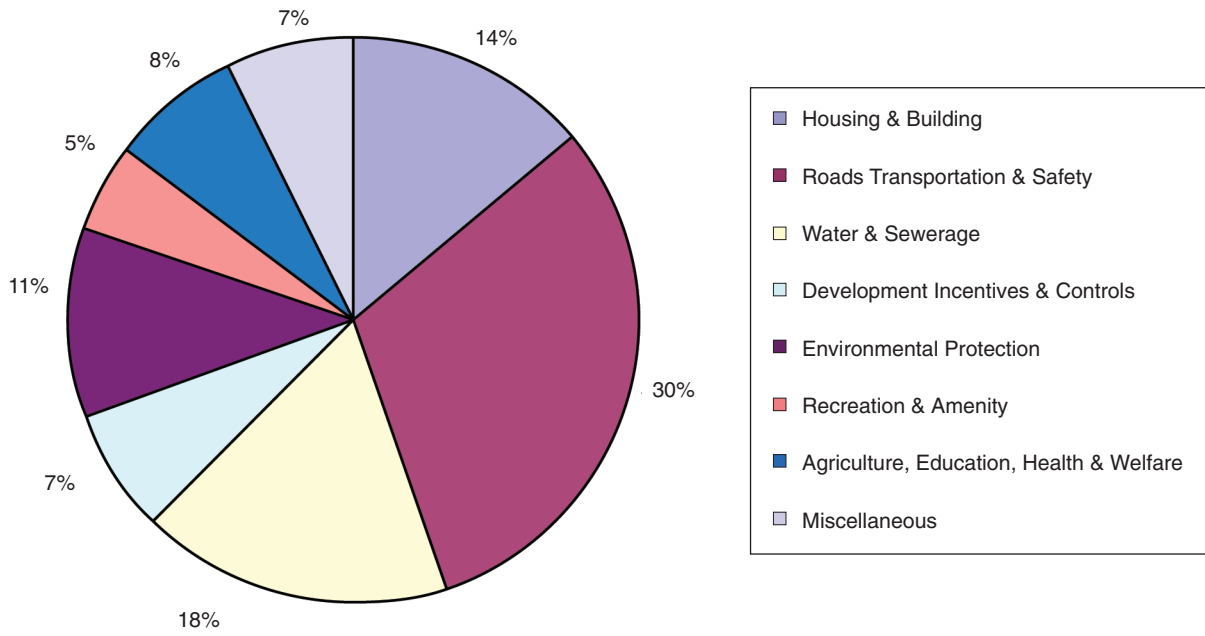
Private	24,822
Goods	5,246
Cycles	144
Tractors	1,039
PSV's (Bus, Taxi and Hackney)	251
Other (incl. dupl.)	576
F.I.L. Vehicle Licences	28
Total	32,106

Drivers Licences Issued – 2008

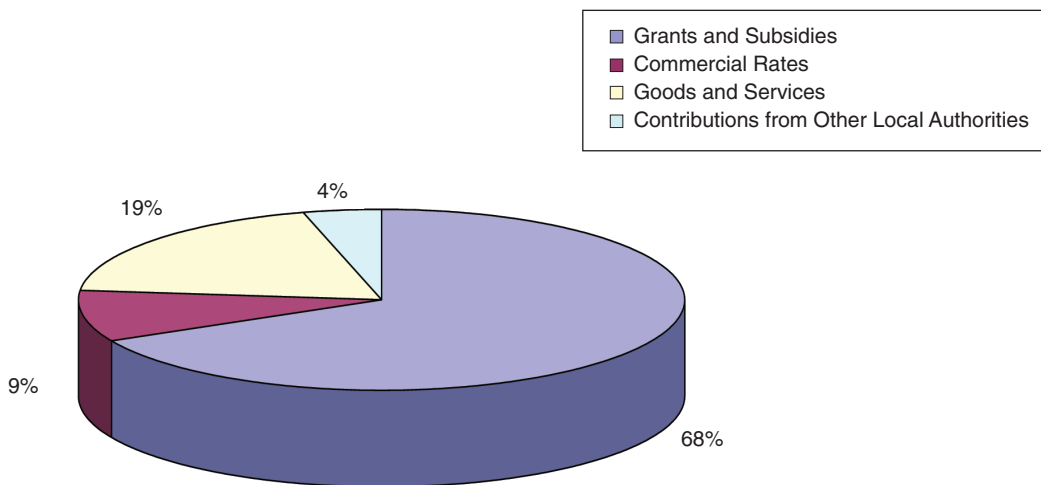
1 Year Driving Licences	35
3 Year Driving Licences	611
10 Year Driving Licences	2,747
1 Year Provisional	623
2 Year Provisional	1,698
F.I.L. Licences	371
Total	6,085

In addition, 7,126 vehicle Licences were issued by Motor Tax Online Service during 2008. These vehicle Licences are issued directly from the Vehicle Registration Unit in Shannon, Co Clare.

REVENUE EXPENDITURE

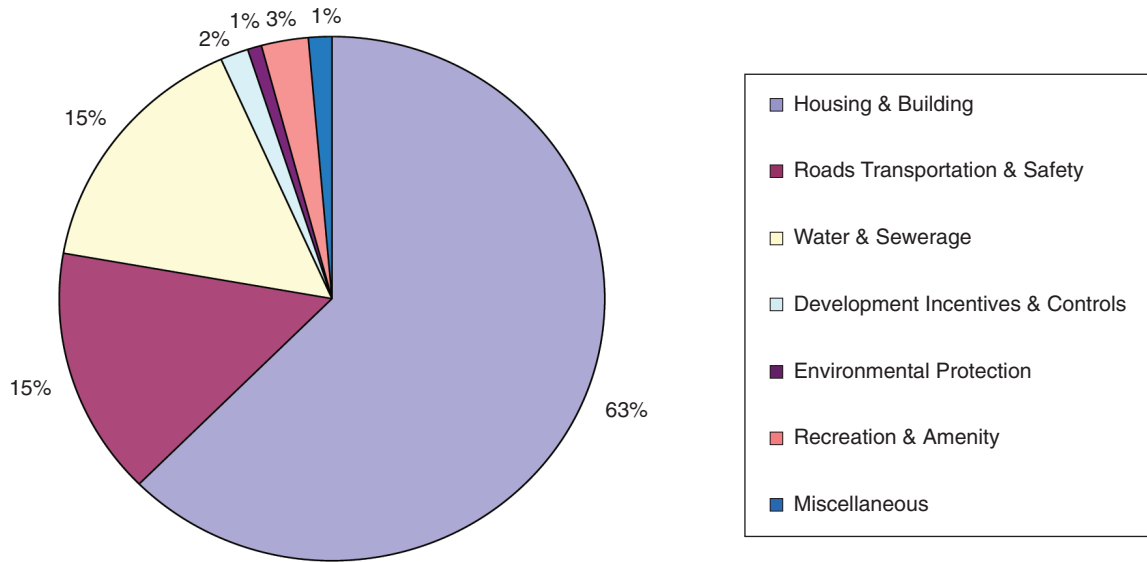


SOURCES OF REVENUE INCOME

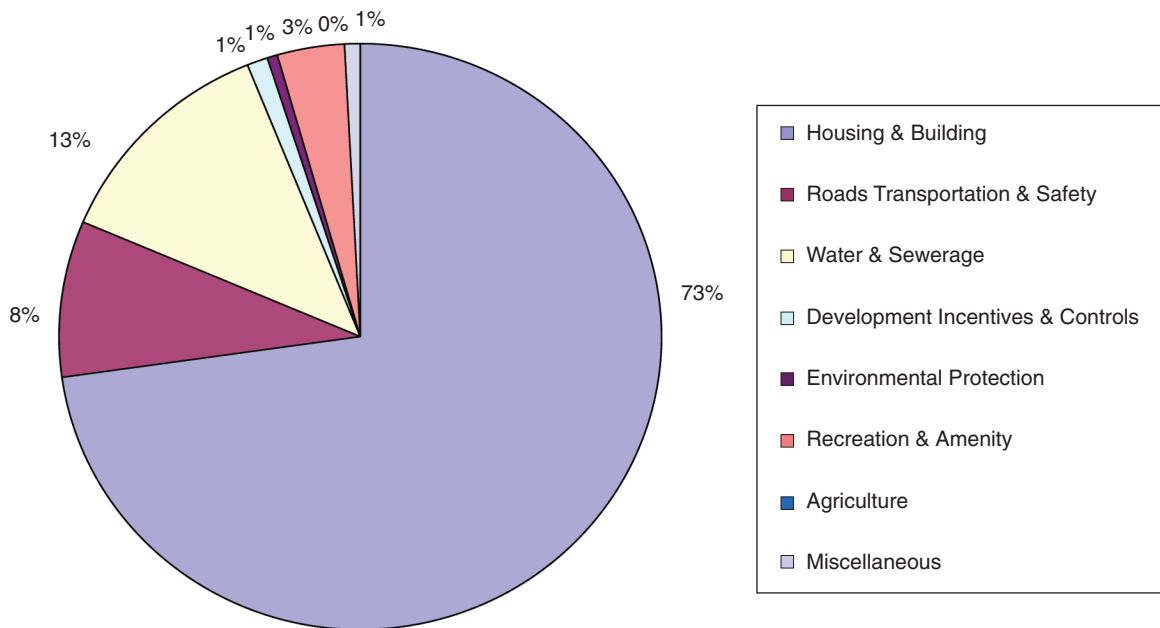




CAPITAL EXPENDITURE



CAPITAL INCOME



LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSE COMPLETIONS AND ACQUISITIONS 2003 - 2007

	COMPLETIONS					ACQUISITIONS					
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
County Councils											
South Dublin	61	244	261	428	239	3	20	9	20	153	1,438
Cork	270	168	167	67	294	60	113	114	47	81	1,381
Donegal	181	164	306	128	300	5	13	29	26	10	1,162
Kerry	253	106	215	155	177	1	55	58	32	51	1,103
Kildare	107	104	170	172	209	27	11	15	5	68	888
Wexford	151	185	128	70	264	9	21	19	0	39	886
Fingal	248	175	95	143	194	0	0	7	4	6	872
Louth	172	126	137	4	170	2	44	27	32	85	799
Laois	54	203	162	51	226	3	21	30	27	16	793
Meath	160	99	183	71	228	5	1	7	0	35	789
Galway	85	93	129	79	191	14	26	25	50	49	741
Sligo	94	127	65	69	102	15	33	28	14	49	596
Wicklow	130	88	163	30	143	4	5	8	0	23	594
Limerick	155	53	89	107	90	4	15	17	16	35	581
Longford	64	41	122	61	92	12	27	51	27	60	557
Carlow	111	54	48	14	181	6	16	40	7	49	526
Mayo	64	97	134	61	148	1	2	4	4	7	522
South Tipperary	123	78	136	28	125	0	10	3	0	13	516
Clare	84	19	112	48	78	19	53	37	11	38	499
Cavan	100	196	57	101	20	2	4	0	10	1	491
Roscommon	105	22	46	195	68	4	5	12	10	5	472
Westmeath	100	113	27	37	72	1	25	25	14	34	448
Kilkenny	40	51	62	47	82	9	40	23	41	53	448
North Tipperary	65	131	69	67	44	2	10	8	12	26	434
Waterford	74	54	25	99	57	0	19	38	19	30	415
Offaly	127	29	82	26	67	3	11	24	11	30	410
Dun Laoghaire - Rathdown	180	50	15	33	122	4	1	1	1	1	408
Monaghan	40	56	47	100	78	13	5	1	5	26	371
Leitrim	25	80	20	47	4	0	2	3	1	0	182
City Councils											
Dublin	531	278	583	436	577	157	219	116	194	326	3,417
Cork	62	172	168	187	159	53	109	95	103	276	1,384
Galway	320	25	52	70	40	0	9	2	28	136	682
Waterford	164	26	72	64	99	1	0	17	30	73	546
Limerick	16	32	62	19	46	17	26	25	28	118	389
Total	4,516	3,539	4,209	3,314	4,986	456	971	918	829	2,002	25,740



LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND ALLOCATION 2008

	2008	Change %	Census 2006	Per head of Population 2008
County Councils				
Longford	15,522,985	5.9%	26,749	580
Leitrim	16,332,646	5.6%	28,837	566
South Tipperary	25,062,115	5.8%	54,612	459
Waterford	24,259,293	6.2%	54,336	446
Sligo	18,731,673	5.7%	42,969	436
North Tipperary	20,481,309	5.8%	49,135	417
Mayo	40,257,276	5.9%	97,633	412
Roscommon	23,308,308	5.0%	58,700	397
Monaghan	16,610,930	5.7%	44,408	374
Carlow	13,171,854	5.1%	36,573	360
Cavan	20,690,378	6.0%	60,007	345
Donegal	44,097,787	6.1%	134,948	327
Westmeath	22,711,775	6.2%	72,433	314
Offaly	17,222,857	6.1%	55,600	310
Laois	19,360,800	5.6%	67,012	289
Kerry	29,139,561	5.6%	102,037	286
Kilkenny	22,021,918	5.7%	78,769	280
Wicklow	21,974,808	8.3%	80,789	272
Galway	40,632,067	5.6%	153,001	266
Louth	14,070,960	5.1%	52,990	266
Dun Laoghaire - Rathdown	41,261,666	4.6%	193,688	213
Limerick	27,483,240	5.3%	131,303	209
Wexford	23,425,682	5.7%	114,700	204
Meath	30,297,653	6.0%	155,045	195
Clare	16,476,569	5.1%	87,936	187
Cork	57,368,547	4.7%	322,925	178
Kildare	28,176,862	6.4%	158,145	178
Fingal	33,756,001	4.7%	239,813	141
South Dublin	27,396,258	4.6%	246,919	111
City Councils				
Cork	28,383,759	5.5%	119,143	238
Limerick	12,258,639	4.6%	52,560	233
Dublin	105,039,762	4.7%	505,739	208
Waterford	8,941,951	4.7%	45,775	195
Galway	9,795,964	4.7%	71,983	136



**REGIONAL AND LOCAL ROAD GRANT ALLOCATIONS
NOTIFIED TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES**
Excluding Local Improvement Scheme
2008

	Km	2008 Allocation	Per Km	% Change
County Councils				
Dun Laoghaire - Rathdown	596	9,384,150	15,745	(37%)
South Dublin	708	10,702,000	15,116	(15%)
Kildare	2,086	28,101,630	13,471	19%
Wicklow	1,964	23,687,866	12,061	21%
Westmeath	1,997	21,166,314	10,598	33%
Fingal	954	9,824,235	10,298	38%
Meath	2,906	28,301,945	9,740	(4%)
Louth	1,147	9,932,750	8,660	15%
Carlow	1,106	7,579,650	6,853	2%
Donegal	5,996	41,018,300	6,841	1%
Monaghan	2,366	16,080,650	6,796	6%
Waterford	2,481	16,058,650	6,472	2%
Laois	1,946	12,267,642	6,305	1%
Offaly	1,838	11,249,649	6,120	1%
Cavan	2,858	17,260,531	6,040	2%
Longford	1,422	8,518,100	5,992	1%
Leitrim	2,109	11,812,650	5,602	0%
Sligo	2,549	14,272,702	5,599	0%
Cork	11,582	63,811,744	5,510	10%
South Tipperary	2,700	14,758,200	5,466	4%
Wexford	3,197	17,393,026	5,440	3%
Kerry	4,220	22,697,813	5,378	2%
Limerick	3,392	17,986,200	5,303	2%
Clare	3,905	20,659,750	5,290	3%
Kilkenny	2,850	14,775,764	5,185	2%
North Tipperary	2,454	12,717,200	5,183	3%
Galway	6,055	30,594,625	5,052	(3%)
Mayo	5,767	28,120,625	4,876	3%
Roscommon	4,000	18,060,200	4,515	5%
City Councils				
Waterford	146	7,300,075	49,932	20%
Limerick	162	4,150,000	25,570	(26%)
Cork	363	7,544,000	20,800	(3%)
Galway	194	3,305,000	17,045	18%
Dublin	1,134	14,934,061	13,165	1%



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Longford Local Authorities ICT Department provides and supports the following ICT Systems:

- Electronic mail, Internet, Intranet and Extranet
- Web based systems
- Agresso Financial systems that support the local authorities' financial management information systems and transaction processing.
- Geographical information systems that provide essential information on roads, water mains etc. in the county.
- Planning administration systems
- Housing administration systems
- Various small database systems.

Network Infrastructure

The network is made up of several complex components which require on-going management, maintenance and monitoring. Responsibility for managing the network also includes maintaining a wide area network which connects all off site offices back to Aras and Chontae, using leased lines, wireless and fibre optic links. There are a total of 13 sites, eight in Longford Town and five outlying Library sites. Following on from a Security Audit an number of enhancements were made during 2008 including the upgrading of the wireless system and the replacement of network switching equipment. A new Uninterrupted Power Supply Unit was also installed.

NEW SYSTEMS

Traffic Fines System

The ICT Department had tendered for a Traffic Fines System for the Town Council in 2007. This system went live in April 2008 with the introduction of hand held equipment for the traffic wardens for issuing fines. There is also an online facility whereby the public can pay traffic fines on the Internet.

Power Management System

A system was put in place in October to automatically power down PC's after business hours, unless authorized to be powered on. There is a huge energy cost savings involved in this solution.

Internet/Intranet

Following on from the successful release of the new version of www.longford.ie in December 2007 the completion of the implementation of a content management solution for the remaining websites www.longfordcoco.ie, www.longfordtowncouncil.ie, www.longfordlibrary.ie and www.virtualwriter.net was rolled out in May 2008. All new sites offer clear accessible content and allow for the easier managing of content by each department. A number of new in-house software systems are also now available via the staff Intranet including Pollution Complaints system, Contact Mngement System, and an Invoice Matching solution for tracking Invoices.

Website visits from April – December 2008

longfordcoco.ie	42,190
longford.ie:	42,924
longfordtowncouncil.ie	7,031
virtualwriter.net	4,181

Longphort Uí Fhearghail





ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON CORPORATE PLAN





INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES

Core Objective:

Ensure that infrastructural transportation policies and investments assist and enhance the economic and social development of County Longford, and preserve and improve the physical attractiveness of the county and its background environment

Maintenance and Improvement of Roads

The Compulsory Purchase Order for Longford N5 Bypass was confirmed in July 2008.

Pavement strengthening was carried out on national routes, and major restoration was carried out on Richmond Street, Longford on the N5.

Specific Grant Schemes were advanced at the following locations

- R198 at Gaique Cross
- R194 at Lisnamuck
- Richmond and Mill Bridges, Clondra
- Newcastle Bridge, Ballymahon
- Saints Island Causeway, Newtowncashel
- R392 at Forgney and Derryveagh
- R398 at Cloontabeg and Derraghan, Kenagh

The Multi-annual Road Restoration and Surface Dressing programmes are ongoing.

Road Safety

Low-cost Safety Remedial schemes have been advanced and are at various stages of completion at

- R194 Ballynacross and Ballynascraw
- R395 Camagh Bridge, Abbeylara
- L 1057 Dring
- L1014 Drumbad, Ballinamuck
- R194 Listraghee, Ballinalee
- L 1013 Melkagh, Drumlish
- L 1001 Cartrons, Longford
- R397 Stonepark, Longford

Road safety recommendations relating to Planning Permissions are ongoing.

Implementation of the multi-annual Public Lighting Plan is ongoing. The Non-National Roads Flashing School Lights Plan is completed

The Council continued to promote, facilitate and participate with the Gardaí, Schools and National Safety Council in the operation of Junior School Wardens.

The Council continued to monitor effective implementation of the EU Commercial Vehicle Regulations in close consultation with the 2No. authorised test-centres in the county.

Traffic Management

Implementation of the multi-annual Non-national Road Signage Plan is ongoing.

Development of off-street parking in Granard is ongoing.

Current Policies

Quality road design standards were promoted for implementation.

Access for the disabled was promoted in accordance with recommended guidelines in consultation with stakeholders. Works were carried out in Ballymahon and Kenagh.

Participation continued in the Steering and Technical Groups managing the National Roads Authority Regional Design Office.

Appropriate liaison was promoted between transportation development stakeholders such as public representatives, representative bodies, the general public, the Department of Transport, the National Roads Authority, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Gardaí, the National Safety Council, Iarnród Éireann, Waterways Ireland, etc.

Implementation of Local Improvement Schemes continued.



ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Services has continued to expand its area of activity in 2008. The following measures were put in place to facilitate delivery of the objectives set out in the plan:-

1. Six temporary Civic Amenity collections were organised during 2008 as part of the National Spring Clean operation.
2. Very successful Hazardous Waste Collections were held in July and October 2008 with 4.03 tonnes of Hazardous Waste collected.
3. During 2008 the Waste Enforcement Team received 1216 complaints all of which were investigated and appropriate enforcement actions taken.
4. Longford is one of the only Counties in Ireland to have 100% participation from Secondary Schools in the Green School programme and 97% participation from Primary Schools.
5. 20 cemeteries availed of financial assistance under the Cemetery Support Scheme with the remaining Council owned cemeteries being maintained by LJI Ltd.
6. Two new Cemeteries – one at Legan and the other at Granardkille were blessed and officially opened in November 2008.
7. The council participated with the Rivers Shannon and Erne District Basin Management Systems.
8. Longford County Council participated in the National Litter Monitoring Scheme.
9. A new Major Emergency Plan was implemented on the 30th September 2008 for County Longford.

HOUSING & SOCIAL POLICY, PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL POLICY

Core Objectives: "Provide and maintain an acceptable standard of Social and Affordable housing in a planned environment that meets the needs of the people of County Longford and promotes social inclusion."

Social Housing

Longford County Council continued to meet the requirements as set down in the Action Plan for Social and Affordable Housing 2004-2008. The latest Housing Needs Assessment took place in 2008 and showed an increase in applicants to 482, an increase of 235 on the 2007 figure of 247.

Longford County Council's housing programme continued throughout 2008. 26 individual houses were purchased and 8 rural houses were completed. 4 houses at Killashee were also acquired under Part V of the Planning and Development Act as amended. There were 164 allocations of tenancy in the year.

Housing Maintenance / Refurbishment

In 2008, Longford County Council completed its Central Heating Installation Programme.

Estate Management

The Housing Liaison Officer and the Social Worker continued to work with tenants and residents associations throughout 2008.

In 2008, Longford County Council also stepped up action under its Anti-Social Behaviour policy and at the end of the year there were five cases put forward for litigation.

Voluntary Housing

The Council continued its association with the Voluntary Housing Sector. Negotiations are ongoing with a number of bodies in relation to the provision of sheltered housing.

Affordable Housing

In 2008, 16 Affordable Houses had been allocated at in Longford Town and County. These houses were acquired under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.



Loans / Grants

13 loan applications were received in 2008 with 7 loans approved and 9 advanced. This amount does not include applications refused or withdrawn.

In 2008, there were a combined total of 350 applications received under the three grant schemes. A total of 220 grants were paid out and this amounted to €1,454,541.

Homelessness

An integrated approach in the provision of accommodation by the various statutory authorities and voluntary agencies continued in 2008.

Traveller Accommodation

The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee met on a quarterly basis and monitored the progress achieved in relation to targets set out in the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2005-2008. Work commenced on the new Traveller Accommodation Plan 2009-2013.

Rental Accommodation Scheme

In accordance with national policy, the transfer of long term recipients of rent supplement to the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) continued during 2008 with 189 households accommodated in private rented accommodation under the scheme at the end of the year.



SERVICE INDICATORS LONGFORD LOCAL AUTHORITIES 2008





SERVICE INDICATORS LONGFORD LOCAL AUTHORITIES 2008

F: FIRE SERVICE

F1: Fire Service Mobilisation

A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of fire	No full time fire station in Longford
B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	6.09
C. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of all other emergency incidents	No full time fire station in Longford
D. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of all other emergency incidents	6.05

F.2 PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDANCES AT SCENES

A. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance is at the scene within 10 minutes	31.65%
B. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance is at the scene after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	51.90%
C. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance is at the scene after 20 minutes	16.46%
D. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance is at the scene within 10 minutes	31.82%
E. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance is at the scene after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	53.64%
F. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance is at the scene after 20 minutes	14.55%

F.3 FIRE PREVENTION

A. Total number of fire safety certificate applications received	56
B. Total number of fire safety certificate applications processed (including cases deemed invalid)	70
C. Total number of applications deemed invalid	7



CP: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

CP.1 Participation in local Youth Council/Comhairle na n-Og scheme

Percentage of local schools and youth groups involved in the local Youth Council/ Comhairle na n-Og scheme 89.00%

CP.2 Groups registered with the Community and Voluntary Forum

Number of groups registered with the Community and Voluntary Forum 167

C: CORPORATE ISSUES

C.1 Working Days lost to Sickness

A. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through certified leave 4.12%

B. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through uncertified leave 0.50%

C.2 Staff Training and Development

Expenditure on Training and Development as a percentage of total payroll costs: 6.18%

E: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

WATER

E.1 Unaccounted For Water

Unaccounted for water (UFW) as a percentage of total volume of water supplied under the water supply schemes that the local authority is responsible for 42.18%

Total volume of water supplied (m³/per day) under the water supply schemes that the local authority is responsible for 18000

Volume of unaccounted for water (m³/per day) under the water supply schemes that the local authority is responsible for 7591.91

E.2 Drinking Water Analysis

A. Percentage of drinking water analysis results in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to public schemes 96.05%

B. Percentage of drinking water analysis results in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to private schemes (where appropriate) 97.13%

WASTE MANAGEMENT

E.3 Waste Segregation

A. Percentage of households who receive a waste collection service and are provided with segregated waste collection for dry recyclables 88.30%

Service privatised in Longford and offered to 100% of households



B. Percentage of households who receive a waste collection service and are provided with segregated waste collection for organics 0

E4: Housing Waste Sent for Recycling

A. Percentage of household waste collected from kerbside, which is sent for recycling 55.12%

B. Tonnage of household waste collected from kerbside, which is sent for recycling 4764.2

C. Tonnage of household waste recycled, which arises from waste collected from recycling facilities (i.e. bring banks, civic amenity centres, transfer stations and other recycling facilities) 1930.42

E5: Household Waste Sent for Landfill

A. The percentage of household waste collected which is sent to landfill 44.88%

B. The tonnage of household waste collected which is sent to landfill 3879.38

E6: Recycling Facilities

The total number of Bring Sites in the local authority area 26

The total number of Civic Amenity Centres in the local authority area 2

Glass

A. The number of Bring Sites for recycling 26

B. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling 2

C. The total number of facilities for recycling 28

D. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population 4.07

Cans

E. The number of Bring Sites for recycling 26

F. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling 2

G. The total number of facilities for recycling 28

H. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population 4.07

Textiles

I. The number of Bring Sites for recycling 2

J. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling 2

K. The total number of facilities for recycling 4

L. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population 0.58

Batteries

M. The number of Bring Sites for recycling 2

N. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling 2

O. The total number of facilities for recycling 4

P. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population 0.58



Oils

Q. The number of Bring Sites for recycling	0
R. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling	1
S. The total number of facilities for recycling	1
T. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population	0.15

Other materials

U. The number of Bring Sites for recycling	0
V. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling	2
W. The total number of facilities for recycling	2
X. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population	0.29

Litter

E7: Litter Prevention and Enforcement

The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:

A. Number of full-time litter wardens	3
B. Number of part-time litter wardens	0
C. Number of litter wardens (both full- and part-time) per 5,000 population	0.44
D. Number of on-the-spot fines issued	700
E. Number of on-the-spot fines paid	313
F. Number of prosecution cases taken because of non-payment of on-the-spot fines	35
G. Number of prosecutions secured in cases taken because of non-payment of on-the-spot fines	20
H. Number of notices issued (under sections 9, 15, 16, 17 and 20 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997)	1
I. Total number of prosecutions taken (all prosecutions under the Litter Acts 1997 to 2003)	38
J. Total number of prosecutions secured (all prosecutions under the Litter Acts 1997 to 2003)	21
K. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are unpolluted (i.e. litter-free)	9.09%
L. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are slightly polluted with litter	52.89%
M. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are moderately polluted with litter	30.58%
N. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are significantly polluted with litter	7.44%
O. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are grossly polluted with litter	0%

**E8: Environmental Complaints and Enforcement**

A. Total number of cases subject to complaints concerning environmental pollution (relating to waste, litter, water pollution, noise pollution, air pollution)	1428
B. Number of complaints investigated	1428
C. Number of complaints resolved where no further action was necessary	1319
D. Number of enforcement procedures taken	775

E9: Percentage of schools participating in environmental campaigns

A. Percentage of primary schools participating in environmental campaigns	97.30%
B. Percentage of secondary schools participating in environmental campaigns	100%

H: HOUSING**H1: Housing Vacancies**

A. The total number of dwellings in local authority stock	1735
B. The total number of dwellings, excluding those subject to major refurbishment projects	1731
C. The overall percentage of dwellings that are empty (excluding those subject to major refurbishment projects)	3.99
D. The percentage of empty dwellings unavailable for letting	43.48
E- The percentage of empty dwellings available for letting	56.52

H2: Average Time Taken to Re-let Available dwellings

The average time taken (in weeks) from the date of vacation of dwelling to the date when all necessary repairs are carried out which are deemed necessary to re-let the dwelling

1

The average time taken (in weeks) from the works (above) being completed to the date of the first rent debit

1

H3: Housing Repairs

Number of repairs completed as a percentage of the number of valid repair requests received

94.86

H4: Traveller Accommodation

Total number of traveller families accommodated as a percentage of the targets set in the local traveller accommodation programme

100%



Number of Traveller families accommodated	12
	<i>Target per Traveller Accommodation Programme is 12 houses per annum over four years</i>
Target number of Traveller families to be accommodated in the year, as set out in the local Traveller accommodation programme	12

H5: Enforcement of standards in the private rented sector

A. Total number of registered tenancies	2326
B. Number of dwelling units inspected	239
C. Number of inspections carried out	462
D. Number of dwellings inspected as percentage of registered tenancies (i.e. B as percentage of A)	10.28%

H6: Grants to adapt housing for the needs of people with a disability

A. Average time taken (in weeks) to process applications under the Mobility Aids Grant Scheme, including any necessary inspection(s), from the date of receipt of a valid application to the date of decision on the application	5
B. Average time taken (in weeks) to process applications under Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, including any necessary inspection(s), from the date of receipt, to the date of decision on the application	5

H7: Pre-Tenancy Familiarisation Courses

A. Total number of new local authority tenants	213
B. Percentage of new local authority tenants who have been offered pre-tenancy familiarisation courses	63.85

L: LIBRARY SERVICES

L.1 Library Public Opening Hours

A. Average number of opening hours per week for full-time libraries	39.3
B. Average number of opening hours per week for part-time libraries (where applicable)	18.5
C. Percentage of full time libraries that have lunchtime openings	100
D. Percentage of full time libraries that have evening openings	100
E. Percentage of full time libraries that have Saturday openings	100

**L.2 Library Visits**

Number of visits to full time libraries per 1,000 population 3434.04

Total number of visits to full-time libraries 118100

L.3 Library Stock

A. Annual expenditure on stock per head of population (county/city wide) 2.85

B. Number of items issued per head of population (county/city wide) for books 3.01

C. Number of items issued per head of population (county/city wide) for other items 0.13

L.4 Internet Access through Libraries

Number of Internet sessions provided per 1,000 population 615.45

Total number of Internet sessions provided 21166

M: MOTOR TAXATION**M.1 Number of Motor Tax Transactions**

A. Number of motor tax transactions which are dealt with over the counter 33572

B. Number of motor tax transactions which are dealt with by post 5128

C. Number of motor tax transactions which are dealt with in other ways
(e.g. online, by telephone) 7126

D. Percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with over the counter 73.26%

E. Percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with by post 11.19%

F. Percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with in other ways
(e.g. online, by telephone) 15.55%

M.2 Time Taken to Process Motor Tax Postal Applications

A. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the same
day as receipt of the application 4977

B. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the
second or third day from receipt of the application 95

C. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the
fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application 1

D. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued)
in over five days from receipt of the application 55



E. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the same day as receipt of the application	97.06%
F. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the second or third day from receipt of the application	1.85%
G. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application	0.02%
H. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) in over five days from receipt of the application	1.07%

M.3 Time Taken to Process Driving Licence Applications

A. Number of Driving Licence applications which are dealt with on the same day as receipt of the application	2883
B. Number of Driving Licence applications which are dealt with on the second or third day from receipt of the application	1879
C. Number of Driving Licence applications which are dealt with on the Fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application	435
D. Number of Driving Licence applications which are dealt with in over five days from receipt of the application	586
E. Percentage of overall driving Licence applications which are dealt with on the same day as receipt of the application	49.85%
F. Percentage of overall driving Licence applications which are dealt with on the second or third day from receipt of the application	32.49%
G. Percentage of overall driving Licence applications which are dealt with on the fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application	7.52%
H. Percentage of overall driving Licence applications which are dealt with in over five days from receipt of the application	10.13%

M.4 Public opening hours

Average number of opening hours per week	35
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P: PLANNING

P.1 Planning Applications - Decision Making Individual Houses

A. Number of applications decided	286
B. Number of decisions in Column A which were decided within 8 weeks	170
C. Number of decisions in Column A which required the submission of further information	111
D. Number of decisions in Column A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and development Act 2000	5
E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought	79.21
F. Percentage of applications granted	76.92%
G. Percentage of applications refused	23.08%
H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala	30.00%
I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	70.00%

New Housing Development

A. Number of applications decided	38
B. Number of decisions in Column A which were decided within 8 weeks	18
C. Number of decisions in Column A which required the submission of further information	19
D. Number of decisions in Column A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and development Act 2000	1
E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought	82.58
F. Percentage of applications granted	84.21%
G. Percentage of applications refused	15.79%
H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala	50.00%
I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	50.00%



Other: not requiring Environment Impact Assessment

A. Number of applications decided	279
B. Number of decisions in Column A which were decided within 8 weeks	210
C. Number of decisions in Column A which required the submission of further information	68
D. Number of decisions in Column A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and development Act 2000	1
E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought	81.72
F. Percentage of applications granted	92.11%
G. Percentage of applications refused	7.89%
H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala	83.33%
I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	16.67%

Other: requiring Environment Impact Assessment

A. Number of applications decided	2
B. Number of decisions in Column A which were decided within 8 weeks	0
C. Number of decisions in Column A which required the submission of further information	2
D. Number of decisions in Column A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and development Act 2000	0
E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought	81.5
F. Percentage of applications granted	100
G. Percentage of applications refused	0
H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala	
I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	

**P.2 Planning Enforcement**

A. Total number of cases subject to complaints that were investigated	147
B. Total number of cases subject to complaints that were dismissed	2
C. Total number of cases subject to complaints that were resolved through negotiations	32
D. Number of enforcement procedures taken through warning letters	88
E. Number of enforcement procedures taken through enforcement notices	67
F. Number of prosecutions	3

P.3 Planning Public opening hours

Average number of opening hours per week	39.38
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Longford County Council increased opening hours to 40 and Longford Town Council to 38.75 with introduction of lunchtime opening

P.4 Pre-Planning Consultation

A. Number of pre-planning consultation meetings held	121
B. Average length of time (in days) from request for consultation with local authority to actual formal meeting for pre-planning consultation	10.23

P.5 New Buildings inspected

Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	21.90
Total number of new buildings notified to the local authority	137
Number of new buildings notified to the local authority that were inspected	30

Rec: RECREATIONAL SERVICES**Rec.1 Children's Playgrounds**

The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:

A. Number of children's playgrounds per 1,000 population directly provided by the local authority	0.20
B. Number of children's playgrounds per 1,000 population facilitated by the local authority	0
A. Number of children's playgrounds directly provided by the local authority	7
B. Number of children's playgrounds facilitated by the local authority	0

Rec.2 Local Authority-Facilitated Leisure Facilities

Number of visitors to local authority-facilitated leisure facilities per 1,000 population	5730.86
Number of visitors to local authority-facilitated leisure facilities	197090



Rev: REVENUE COLLECTION

Rev.1 House Rent

Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due from House Rent	89.24
B. Percentage of arrears on House Rent that are 4-6 weeks old	8.80
C. Percentage of arrears on House Rent that are 6-12 weeks old	14.40
D. Percentage of arrears on House Rent that are more than 12 weeks old	77.15

Rev.2 Housing Loans

A. Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due from Housing Loans	88.07
B. Percentage of arrears on Housing Loans that are 1 month old	12.18
C. Percentage of arrears on Housing Loans that are 2-3 months old	1.65
D. Percentage of arrears on Housing Loans that are more than 3 months old	105.09

Arrears figure per AFS includes credit balances whereas % calculation does not - LGMSB

Rev.3 Commercial Rates

Amount collected at year-end as a percentage of amount due from Commercial rates	87.59
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Rev.4 Refuse Charges

Percentage of households paying refuse charges (including waivers) at year end	<i>Not Applicable as privatised in Longford Local Authorities</i>
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Rev.5 Non-Domestic Water Charges

Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due for Non-Domestic Water Charges	54.41
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R: ROADS

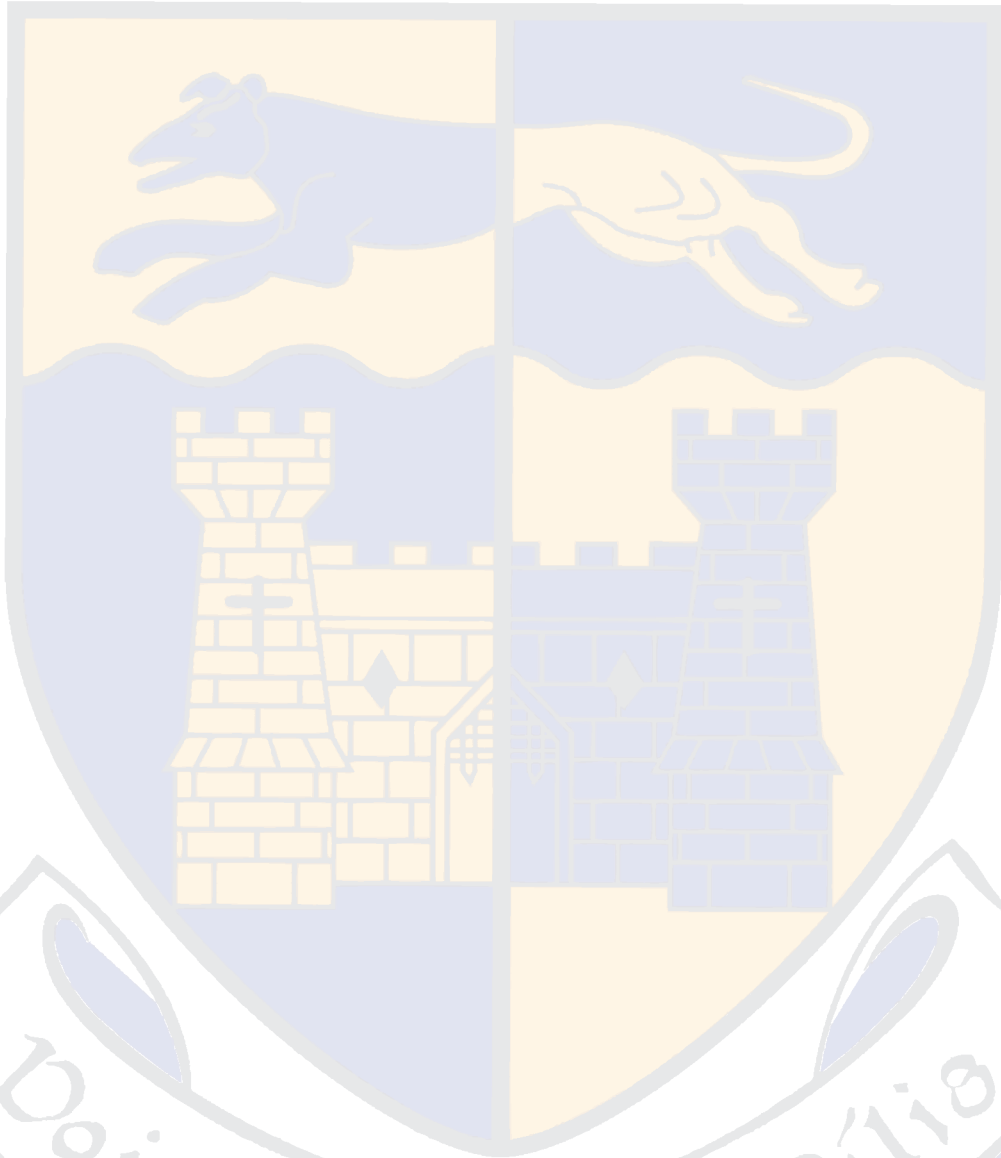
R1: Road Restoration Programme

Number of kilometres of local and regional roads improved and maintained under the Restoration Programme per annum	79.13
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Number of kilometres of local and regional roads constructed under the specific improvement grants scheme per annum	1.7
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Longphort Uí Fhearghail



Beingean agus Bílio