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**'What we achieved' is denoted throughout the Report by this symbol**

Sligo County Council  
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh  
Telephone: +353 71 9143221, +353 71 9156666  
Fax: +353 71 9141119  
e-mail: info@sligococo.ie  
www.sligococo.ie

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## Cathaoirleach's introduction

I am pleased to introduce Sligo County Council's Annual Report for 2002. It was a busy and challenging year for this Authority, and it was encouraging to see so many important initiatives advanced or brought to fruition.

2002 saw the publication of the Sligo & Environs Draft Development Plan 2004-2010 - arguably the most important publication produced by the Sligo Planning Authorities in recent years. The Plan contains a wide range of objectives and proposals designed to establish Sligo as the major city in the Northwest. The Plan also identifies projected commercial and residential demands over the period of the Plan and sets out how these can be met. I feel great credit is due to the staff in Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council who prepared this plan, and co-ordinated the public consultation process to facilitate active community participation.

The slowdown in the Irish economy had evident repercussions for all Local Authorities, but in 2002 many important infrastructural projects were completed. The Housing Construction Programme continued with the provision of 44 houses in Riverstown, Ballymote, Ballisodare and Collooney. The Inner Relief Road received funding of €12.7million from the National Roads Authority in 2002, and almost €2million was spent on Specific Improvement Grants, which funded road improvements on the Rosses Point Road, Strandhill Road and Enniscrone.

As part of our 'Open Local Government Initiative', we introduced a programme of 'Schools Visits' to County Hall. The students received a presentation on our various services and functions, and also attended the monthly meeting of the Council. In 2002 we hosted schools from Sligo City and Ballymote, and this initiative will continue throughout 2003. This is a proving a very worthwhile exercise, as it provides a means of promoting the important role the Local Authority plays in our community.

**Councillor Padraig Branley**  
Cathaoirleach



## Manager's foreword



2002 was an eventful year for the Council as it seeks to continue to deliver quality and competitive services and to be relevant to the needs of the people of the county in the face of continuing and rapid change in society, in government and in the economy.

Among the most significant changes encountered in 2002 was the rapid decline in the fortunes of the world economy which in turn adversely affected the performance of the Irish economy and Government finances. Given that the Council is heavily dependent on Central Government for finance it was perhaps inevitable that this would cause a significant tightening in our financial situation. It is unfortunate that this occurred so quickly after the reorganisation of our staffing structure under the implementation of 'Better Local Government'. This reorganisation has inevitably increased our staff costs and overheads and coupled with the tightening of our financial position means that there is unlikely to be any additional funds for service improvements in the short term.

Notwithstanding the deterioration in our financial position, the Council continued to introduce improvements to service delivery in 2002. Examples of this include the introduction of extended opening times in the Motor Taxation Office and the continuing work on the development of the 'One Stop Shop' in Tubbercurry. The process of improving service delivery requires ongoing commitment and flexibility by management and staff and it is my intention that this improvement process will accelerate in the years ahead.

One of the highlights of the year was the official opening of the refurbished Sligo Courthouse by John O'Donoghue, T.D., Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Whilst the Courthouse is now managed by the Courts Service, the refurbishment project was initiated and managed by the Council and it represented the culmination of the process started some years ago to have restored to their former glory the three great Victorian public buildings in Sligo, the Town Hall, The Model School and The Courthouse.

Other significant events that occurred during the year included the preparation of the 10-year County Development Strategy by the County Development Board and the launch by the Government of the National Spatial Strategy. Both documents envisage a significant future role for Sligo City as a growth centre of regional importance. It will be a major objective of the Council in the coming years to ensure that the aspirations of both documents in relation to Sligo are delivered upon.

**Hubert Kearns,  
County Manager**

# Council Members

## Sligo/Strandhill Electoral Area



Cllr. Declan Bree  
*Labour*  
1 High Street, Sligo  
071-9145490



Cllr. Albert Higgins  
*Fianna Fáil*  
Carraroe, Sligo  
071-60129



Cllr. Jim McGarry  
*Fine Gael*  
Oakfield, Sligo  
071-6111/61515



Cllr. John Perry  
*Fine Gael*  
Teeling St., Ballymote  
071-89333/51011



Cllr. Roddy McGuinn  
*Fianna Fáil*  
19 Langan Dr., Sligo  
071-43891



Cllr. Tony McLoughlin  
*Fine Gael*  
'Beechlaw', Barnasraghy.  
071-60768



Cllr. Sean MacManus  
*Sinn Féin*  
5 Mountain View, Maugheraboy, Sligo  
071-9161460

## Sligo/Drumcliffe Electoral Area



Cllr. Padraig Branley  
*Fianna Fáil*  
'Omra', Pearse Road,  
Sligo  
071-69454/50600



Cllr. Jimmy Devins  
*Fianna Fáil*  
'Lia-Fail', Calry, Co. Sligo  
071-42317



Cllr. Patsy Barry  
*Fianna Fáil*  
Grange  
Co. Sligo  
071-63168



Cllr. Ita Fox  
*Fine Gael*  
Colgagh, Calry,  
Co. Sligo  
071-44932



Cllr. Joe Leonard  
*Fine Gael*  
Cloonaghbawn,  
Ballinfull, Co. Sligo  
071-63443/63548



Cllr. Brian Scanlon  
*Labour*  
5 Mollaway Place,  
Sligo  
071-46093/62774

## Dromore West Electoral Area



Cllr. Mary Barrett  
*Fine Gael*  
Ardabrone, Dromard,  
Co. Sligo  
071-66753/42606



Cllr. Paul Conmy  
*Fine Gael*  
Meenaun, Culleens,  
Co. Sligo  
096-36499



Cllr. Joseph Queenan  
*Fianna Fáil*  
Lacknaslieva, Enniscrone,  
Co. Sligo  
096-36449

## Ballymote Electoral Area



Cllr. Leo Conlon  
*Fine Gael*  
Coolmurla, Geevagh,  
Co. Sligo  
078-47112



Cllr. Michael Conlon  
*Fianna Fáil*  
Rinnatruffane,  
Geevagh, Co. Sligo  
071-9647187



Cllr. Gerry Murray  
*Fine Gael*  
Calterane, Gurteen,  
Co. Sligo  
071-82016



Cllr. Alfie Parke  
*Non-Party*  
Cloonagashel,  
Ballymote, Co. Sligo  
071-83031



Cllr. Eamon Scanlon  
*Fianna Fáil*  
Keenaghan,  
Ballymote, Co. Sligo  
071-9183113

## Tubbercurry Electoral Area



Cllr. Michael Fleming  
*Fine Gael*  
Carrowreagh Cooper,  
Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo  
071-85264/86050



Cllr. Margaret Gormley  
*Independent*  
Carrowloughlin,  
Bunninadden, Co. Sligo  
071-83239

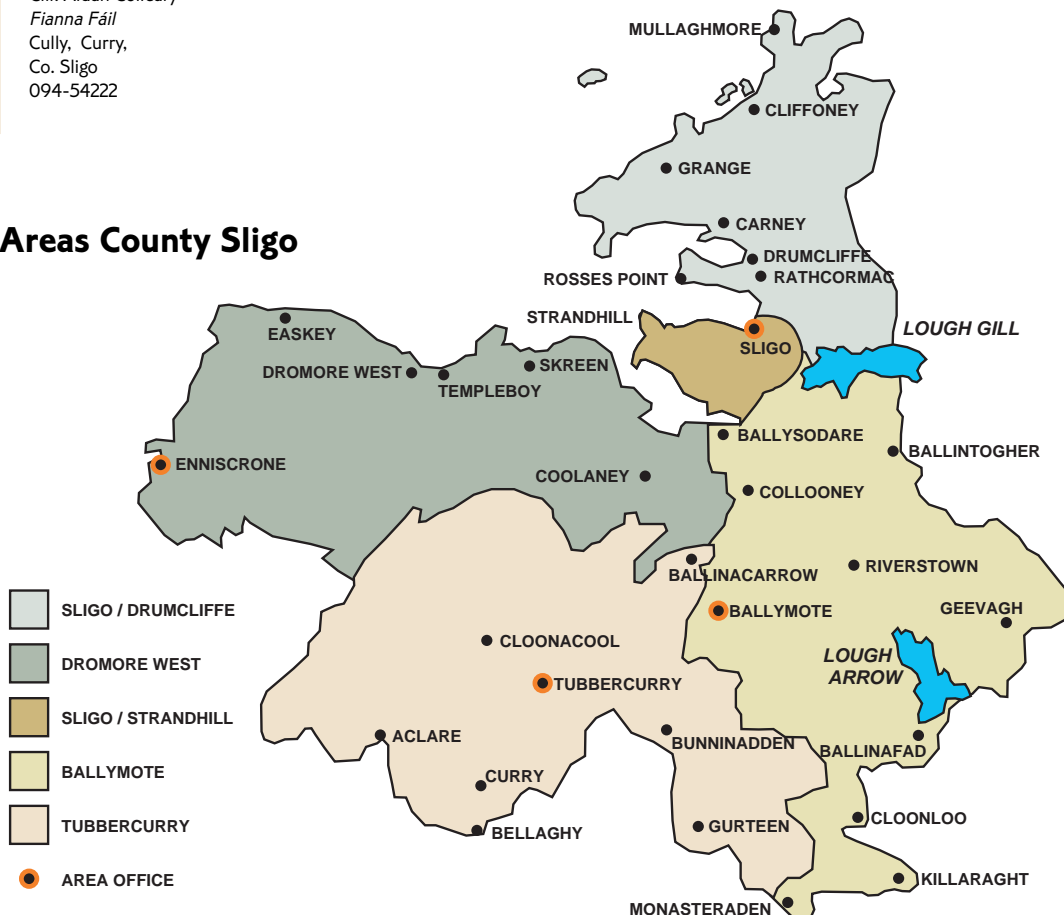


Cllr. P. J. Cawley  
*Fine Gael*  
Emmet Street,  
Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo  
071-85025



Cllr. Aidan Colleary  
*Fianna Fáil*  
Cully, Curry,  
Co. Sligo  
094-54222

## Electoral Areas County Sligo



# Service Indicators 2002

## Housing

Indicator	2001	2002
H1 The percentage of dwellings that are empty:		
(a) Available for letting or awaiting minor repairs	1.0%	1.2%
(b) Others	0.5%	1.6%
H2 Average time taken to relet dwellings available for letting or awaiting minor repairs	12 weeks	9 weeks

## Roads

Indicator	2001	2002
R1 Cost per square metre for surface dressing		
(a) National	€4.00 / sq.m	€4.25 / sq.m
(b) Regional	€3.30 / sq.m	€3.77 / sq.m
(c) Local	€3.90 / sq.m	€4.50 / sq.m
R2 Percentage of Local Roads surface dressed per annum	3.2%	3.2%
R3 Percentage of Regional Roads surface dressed per annum	6.0%	7.5%

## Motor Taxation

Indicator	2001	2002
M1 Percentage of applications, which are postal	40%	30%
M2 Average number of applications and percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e disc issued) from receipt of the application:		
(a) On the same day	31%	65%
(b) On the third day or less	58%	33%
(c) On the fifth day or less	7%	1%
(d) Over 5 days	4%	1%
M3 Public opening hours: average number of hours per week	30 hours	32.5 hours
M4 Transaction costs (direct) per unit	€6.54	€6.83

## Environmental Services

Indicator	2001	2002
E1 Percentage of river channel which is:		
(a) Unpolluted	92%	92%
(b) Slightly polluted	4%	4%
(c) Moderately polluted	4%	4%
(d) Seriously polluted	0%	0%
E2 Percentage of drinking water samples in compliance with statutory requirements*		
% Compliance	62.3%	72%
<i>*based on a basket of 13 specified parameters set out in Table 4.1 of the EPA report - The quality of drinking water in Ireland</i>		
E4 **Bring Facilities - See separate table overleaf		
E5 Litter:		
(a) Number of litter Wardens:		
Full Time	2	2
Part-Time	0	0
As percentage of population	1:28,000	1:28,589
(b) Number of on the spot fines	21	84 issued (38 paid)
(c) Number of prosecutions	12	Of 6 prosecutions 3 were successful

## Fire Services

Indicator	2001	2002
E3 Time, in minutes, to mobile fire brigades in:		
(a) Full time stations	5 mins	5 mins or less to
(b) Part time stations		84% of all calls

\*\*E4 - Bring Facilities

Category	2001		2002	
	Number of Facilities*	Number of locations per 5,000 of population	Number of Facilities*	Number of locations per 5,000 of population
Glass	36	1.6	37	3.1
Cans	12	1.6	37	3.1
Textiles			1	0.08
Batteries			10	0.85
Oils				
Others (Plastic Bottles)		1.6	30	2.5

\* Including facilities provided other than by the local authority.

**Revenue**

Indicator	2001	2002
Rev 1 Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due		
Percentage of arrears:	90.2%	92.6%
(a) 1-3 weeks old	1.0%	1.0%
(b) 4-6 weeks old	2.9%	2.2%
(c) more than 6 weeks old	5.9%	4.2%
Rev 2 House Repayments		
Amounts collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	81%	82.1%
Percentage of arrears:		
(a) 1-3 weeks old	1.9%	2.4%
(b) 4-6 weeks old	3.7%	3.9%
(c) more than 6 weeks old	12.1%	11.6%
Rev 3 Rates - Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	92.7%	91.5%

**Corporate Health**

Indicator	2001	2002
C1 Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence	3.06%	3.05%

**Library Service**

Indicator	2001	2002
L1 Public opening hours - average number of hours per week in: Towns of 5,000 people or more	34 hours	34 hours
L2 Number of items issued per head of population (county/city wide)	2.2	2.2

**Planning and Development 2002**

Category	No. of applications determined	Average time to determine from receipt of valid application (re: those determined within 8 weeks)	Average time to determine from receipt of further information	Average duration of time extensions (in respect of decision files)*	% Grants	% of Refusals	% appealed (of applications decided in 2002)	Results of appeals: % which uphold the Council's decision	Results of appeals: % which reverse the Council's decision
Individual Houses	564	50 days	44 days	9 months	71% (403)	29% (161)	4% (20)	68% (13)	32% (6) ..
Housing Development	75	50 days	52 days	8 months	79% (59)	21% (16)	9% (7)	62% (8)	38% (5) ...
Other: not requiring EIA	333	50 days	34 days	6 months	93% (310)	7% (23)	4% (14)	74% (14)	26% (5) ....
Other: requiring EIA	1	Total processing time from date of receipt  196 days	44 days	-	100% (1)	0% (0)	100% (1)	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>973</b>				<b>773</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>35 (68%)</b>	<b>16 (32%)</b>

- \* Multiple time extensions were sought in numerous cases.
- \*\* Figure includes 1 appeal in respect of condition where An Bord Pleanala directed that the condition be removed.
- \*\*\* Figure includes 1 appeal in respect of condition where An Bord Pleanala directed that the condition be amended.
- \*\*\*\* Figure includes 1 appeal in respect of condition where An Bord Pleanala directed that the condition be amended.



**Sligo County Council Management Team:**  
 Front l-r: Tim Caffrey, Director of Services, Housing, Social, Cultural and Corporate Services; Hubert Kearns, County Manager; Dorothy Clarke, Director of Services, Community & Enterprise;  
 Back l-r: Seamus Concannon, Director of Services, Infrastructural Services; Thomas Kilfeather, Head of Finance; Pat Forkan, Director of Services, Planning, Environment and Emergency Services.



# How we performed in 2002

## Programme Group One - Housing and Building

### Housing

Number on Housing List	735
Number of housing applicants housed	88 - representing 254 people 120 Adults 134 Children
Number of houses purchased	14
Number of houses built	39
Number of houses commenced	21
Number of new residents associations assisted	7

## Programme Group Two - Road Transportation and Safety

### Roads

Length of National Primary roads in County Sligo	102.7 km
Length of National Secondary roads in County Sligo	47.4 km
Length of Regional roads in County Sligo	214.2 km
Length of local roads in County Sligo	2279.5 km
% of local roads surface dressed per annum	3.2% representing 72.6 kms
% of regional roads surface dressed per annum	7.5% representing 16.1 kms
Cost/m <sup>2</sup> of surfacing dressing on national roads	€4.30
Number of non public roads and other projects completed under the Local improvement scheme	44
Length of improved roadway on National Primary overlays	0.4km strengthened 4.0km surface dressed
% Completion of national traffic calming and regional traffic management programme	90% of Ballisodare completed No traffic calming on regional roads

### Non National Roads

Discretionary Improvement Grants	19 completed
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### Restoration Programme

Regional Road surface dressing cost/m <sup>2</sup>	€3.70
Regional Road Improvement (S.R) cost/m <sup>2</sup>	€9.29
Local Road Surface Dressing cost/m <sup>2</sup>	€4.36
Local Improvement (S.R.) cost/m <sup>2</sup>	€4.90

### Motor Taxation

Number of transactions	65,448
Number of car tax disc transactions	46,883
Number of Driving licence transactions	10,143
Number of postal applications submitted	19,634
Amount of income generated	€8,649,308

## Programme Group Three - Water Supply and Sewerage

Amount of water produced in 2002  
9,647,907 m<sup>3</sup> (9,647,907 x 10<sup>3</sup> litres or 2.122243 x 10<sup>9</sup> gallons)

## Programme Group Four - Development Incentives and Control

### Planning

Total number of applications received	991
Total number of applications determined	973
Decisions to grant	773
Decisions to refuse	200
Number of local area plans progressed to public display	2

**Enforcement****Planning Enforcement**

Number of Complaints	163
Time taken to respond to complaints	4 Weeks
Number of warning letters issued	125
Number of cases resolved	75
Number of enforcement notices issued	21
Number of prosecutions	5
Number of injunctions sought	2

**Building Control**

Number of Commencement notices received	436
Number of Commencement notices rejected as invalid	24
% inspection rate achieved	12%
% compliance	98%
Number of warning letters sent	27

**Dangerous Structures**

Number of dangerous structures identified	2
Number of buildings made safe	2

**Tidy towns**

Number of villages participating	14
% increase in Competition results	2.5%

**Heritage**

Number of village design statements completed	4
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**Programme Group Five - Environmental Protection****Fire Service**

Number of incidents attended	765
Number of fire safety certificates issued	114
Number of licencing inspections carried out	150

**Programme Group Six - Recreation and Amenity****Arts**

Number of arts programmes delivered	19
Per capita spend on Arts Programme	€10.15
Number of arts grants allocated	28
	(total value - €173,000)
Number of arts publications developed	11

**Library Service**

Number of reading initiatives developed	15
Membership of library	6385
Total number of books issued	127,595
Cost of books issued	€5.75

**Other key measures:****Corporate Services**

Complaints to office of the Ombudsman	11
Number of cross border programmes delivered	4
No. of County Council Meetings 2002	16 (including adjournments)
No. of Strategic Policy Committee meetings 2002	
SPC 1 Economic Development and Planning Policy	5
SPC 2 Environmental Policy	4
SPC 3 Transportation and Infrastructure Policy	4
SPC 4 Housing policy/Social and cultural Development	5
Number of Press Releases	156
Number of responses to Press Queries	208
Number of Publications	3
% of people employed with disabilities	3.1%
Number of training days per employee	3.6 days
Number of days lost through industrial relations disputes	Nil

# Housing and Building



*New Housing Scheme Riverstown*

The Housing section of Sligo County Council provides a number of very important services, covering every aspect of social housing:

- Helping people who are in need of housing and who cannot afford it from their own resources.
- Provision and management of traveller accommodation.
- Liaison with approved Voluntary Housing organisations and other agencies in the provision of accommodation.
- Encouragement of home ownership through the Shared Ownership Scheme, Tenant Purchase Scheme, Affordable Housing Scheme and various Loan options.

### Housing Construction

The Housing Capital Allocation from the Department of the Environment and Local Government for 2002 was €10,350,000 which was made up as follows:

- Local Authority Housing Programme €10,000,000
- Residential Caravans & Group Housing for Travellers €100,000
- Remedial Works €250,000

It was hoped to reach the four year target under the Multi-Annual Programme of 240 starts within a three year period. However, Departmental approval for Collooney, Coolaney and Bunninadden Housing Schemes were not forthcoming in 2002, therefore, the number achieved by the end of 2002 was 218.

The following sets out in summary, progress on the larger housing schemes:

Completed in 2002		To be Completed in 2003	
Riverstown	6	Geevagh	7
Ballymote	30	Dromore West	14
Ballisodare	10	Grange	22
Collooney	10	Cloonacool	6
		Ballintogher	6
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>55</b>

The Council continued its policy of purchasing houses on the open market where the houses represented value for money and where a demand existed and, by the end of 2002, had acquired 15 properties in this way. However, Department of the Environment and Local Government 'limits' restrict activity in this area. **Ten rural cottages were constructed by the Council in 2002.**

### Housing Maintenance

2002 was the first year of the Council's five year rolling Programme of Planned Maintenance of house repairs. Approximately, 66% of our maintenance budget (€350,000) was used for planned maintenance and the remaining 33% was used for emergency repairs. Planned maintenance was carried out on a contract basis and the work generally involved replacing defective windows and doors.

### Rents

Rents payable on Local Authority dwellings are assessed under a Differential Rents Scheme based on income of the household. During the year, rents were reviewed to bring them into line with increases in disposal income and to meet the ever increasing demand for maintenance and estate management.

### Housing Loans

People who wish to purchase or build a house but cannot get a loan from a building society, bank, etc, may be eligible for a loan from a local authority. The maximum house purchase loan is €127,000 and, **in 2002, Sligo County Council paid out €321,508 in house purchase, construction and reconstruction.**

Loan Approvals 2002		Loan Payments 2002	
Purchases	2	Purchases*	3 €81,683
Construction	1	Construction	3 €176,454
Reconstruction	7	Reconstruction	7 €63,371

\* Includes 2 purchases of Shared Ownership Council Equity.

### Tenant Purchase

Persons who have been tenants of a local authority house for a period of at least one year may apply to purchase their rented house outright or by means of shared ownership under the Tenant Purchase Scheme. The purchase price will be the market value of the house in its existing state of repair and condition, less various discounts.

In 2002, five loan applications were approved under the Scheme compared with seven in 2001.

### Shared Ownership Scheme

This Scheme offers home ownership in a number of steps to those who cannot afford full ownership in one step in the traditional way. Initially, ownership of the house is shared between the shared owner and the Local Authority, however, the shared owner has the option at a later date to purchase the Council's share outright when they are in a better position to afford it.

In 2002, Sligo County Council received an allocation of €1,050,000 to purchase/construct houses under the Shared Ownership Scheme. **36 Provisional Approvals were issued to applicants and 15 Final Approvals were granted under this Scheme to the end of the year.**

### Improvement Works In Lieu of Re-Housing

This Scheme allows Sligo County Council to improve or extend privately owned houses occupied or intended to be occupied by an approved applicant for housing as an alternative to the provision of Local Authority housing. During 2002, twelve houses were upgraded at an average cost per house of €30,453.

### Affordable Housing

During 2002 a development of 10 affordable houses were completed in Collooney. These houses were built by Cawley and Scanlon Builders, Ballymote. The purchase price of each of these houses was €109,197.



Attending the launch of Sligo County Council's Tenants' Handbook were (L-r) Tim Caffrey, Director of Services Terry Rooney, Housing Officer, Cllr Joe Leonard, Chairman SPC, Damien Willis, Estate Officer, Margaret McConnell, Senior Executive Officer

Also during 2002, 6 affordable houses were completed in Dromore West, Co. Sligo. They were built by Seán Kilgannon, Ballyglass, Templeboy, and were sold for €82,533 each.

The price of these houses represents excellent value given the standard of the houses and location.

Construction is on-going on the development of 6 affordable houses in Ballintogher. These houses are due to be completed mid 2003.



Woodbrook Heights Housing Scheme in Ballisodare

### Estate Management

The Estate Management Officer has been active on all Council estates during 2002. Pre-tenancy training and induction programmes took place in Ballisodare, Collooney, Riverstown and Ballymote. Tenant handbooks were published in September 2002 and were launched at the Housing Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on 22 September 2002 and, from 2003 onwards, all new Council tenants will receive pre-tenancy training and a copy of the Tenant Handbook for reference. During 2002, tenant involvement and assistance was evident in Mountain View, Tubbercurry, under the Remedial Works Scheme and also at planning and consultation stage of the proposed refurbishment of Connolly Park, Tubbercurry. Communication links with Resident Associations throughout the County improved during 2002 with the Estate Management Officer attending meetings and building initiatives with the existing associations in Hillview Drive, Ballymote, Hillcrest, Strandhill, Atlantic View, Strandhill, Rowantree Gardens, Collooney, and Woodbrook Heights, Ballisodare, all showing progress and development in areas of tenant involvement.



*Affordable Housing Scheme Collooney*

### Essential Repairs Grants

The principal benefit of the Essential Repairs Grants Scheme is that it enables structural repairs to be carried out to prolong the life of a house for an elderly resident. The maximum grant available under the Scheme is €9,523, with 2/3 of the cost being recouped from the Department of the Environment and Local Government.



**In 2002, 85 approvals were issued during the year and 68 grants were paid out under this Scheme, totalling €356,578.07.**

### Disabled Persons Grants

The Disabled Persons Grants Scheme allows Sligo County Council to make a grant available for the provision of house adaptations to meet the needs of a household member who is disabled. Due to the ever increasing number of applications, the grants are awarded on a priority basis, with a focus on those cases where the applicant's disability seriously impacts on their quality of life.

In 2002, the maximum amount payable under the Scheme was €20,315 with 2/3 of the cost being recouped from the Department of the Environment and Local Government.



**191 approvals were issued during the year and 93 grants were paid out under this Scheme, totalling €463,635.58.**

### Homeless Action Plan

Sligo County Council, together with Sligo Borough Council and the North Western Health Board, have prepared a 3 year joint Homeless Action Plan to provide a more coherent and integrated delivery of services to homeless persons in the county. The Plan was adopted by the Council on 14 January 2002.

Progress under the Plan during 2002 involved the purchase of a house to provide support accommodation for lone parents, plans for the construction of a facility for homeless women and also a facility for victims of domestic violence.

### Traveller Accommodation

There are a number of options available to traveller families seeking accommodation from the Council. Loans may be provided under the Caravan Loan Scheme to a maximum of €6,349 for the purchase of a new/secondhand caravan where applicants satisfy the local authority that they are in need of accommodation and their circumstances are such that they cannot provide it from their own resources. The Council only received one application for a caravan loan in 2002.

During 2002, two traveller families were successfully accommodated in standard housing in the county and the Council will be endeavouring to assist any traveller families expressing a preference for standard accommodation during 2003.

Section 17 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, states that a housing authority shall review its Traveller Accommodation Programme at least once in each 3 year period. The current Programme is in force from 2000 - 2004, therefore, in accordance with the above, Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council undertook to review their joint Programme towards the end of 2002. It was agreed that a replacement Programme would be prepared as a result. Notice, in writing, of the intention to prepare a replacement of the Accommodation Programme was given to prescribed bodies in accordance with Section 8 of the 1998 Act and submissions were received from 6 organisations for consideration in the revised Plan. It is anticipated that a Draft of the revised Programme will be completed early in 2003.

At a Council meeting held on 9 December 2002, the members were asked to consider the provision of traveller accommodation at five locations in the county. Approval was granted for the provision of the sites at Cloonamahon and Collooney.

# Roads Development Programme



*Traffic calming, Ballisodare*

## National Development Plan for County Sligo 2000-2006

The National Roads Authority (NRA) has overall authority for the planning and supervision of works for the construction and maintenance of the national road network.

The Council received €13,119,190 from the NRA in 2002, which included €11m for the Sligo Inner Relief Route County extension, and €450,000 towards the design of the N4 (Sligo-Boyle) and the N17 (Collooney-Charlestown).

The total budget received from the Department of the Environment and Local Government in 2002 was €8,961,900, which was used for the upkeep and improvement of the non-national road network in County Sligo.

## Low Cost Accident Reduction Scheme

Two schemes were carried out on National Primary route N15 in 2002 - In Urlar, Drumcliffe, a hard shoulder was constructed, and also in Rathcormack.

## Restoration Grant Scheme



€30million has been spent on restoring the Regional and Local roads network since this programme was introduced in 1996. In 2002 €5,646,000 was allocated to this scheme.

Under the 'Roads Improvement' element of the scheme, 177 km of roadway benefited from surface restoration, details as follows:

### Regional Roads -

Surface Restoration	15.00 km
Road reconstruction	4.25 km

### Local Roads -

Surface restoration	156.50 km
Road reconstruction	1.10 km

A total of 88 km of roadway was surface dressed under the 'maintenance' element of the scheme - 16km of regional roads and 72 km of local roads

## Pavement Strengthening

Funding of €200,000 was allocated for pavement strengthening along sections of the N59 (Ballisodare - Ballina Road)

## Traffic Calming

A traffic calming scheme for Ballisodare was designed in-house and the works were carried out in 2002; Two mini-roundabouts were constructed, together with traffic islands and associated markings.



*Retired drivers attended Sligo County Council's Safe Driving Awards in 2002  
Back Row l-r; Paddy Hughes, Senior Executive Engineer, Paddy Hoey, Mickey Doyle, Jimmy Daven, Brendan O'Connor, Danny Mullane, Seamus O'Toole Senior Executive Engineer. Front Row; Tommy Carroll, Senior Engineer, Seamus Concannon, Director of Services, Cllr Pdraig Branley, Cathaoirleach, Jimmy Noone, Administrative Officer*

### CLAR Programme

The CLAR programme is administered by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs with the objective of redressing the problem of de-population and lack of services in rural areas.



**Six road improvement schemes were carried out under the programme, involving expenditure of €260,000 - 50% funding provided by CLAR, 50% by the Department of the Environment and Local Government.**

The schemes were -

L2604	Muingwore - Ballymoghney
L2402	Owenbeg
L4601	Carrownaskeagh- Carrownabanny
L8804	Letterbrone-Culdaly
L1804	Meenmore
L1304	Drumcolumb-Emlagh

Work was also carried out under this programme on road 620 at Rockbrook, Riverstown. The cost involved of €40,000 was apportioned between CLAR and the Department of the Environment and Local Government.

A total of €455,000 was received under the CLAR programme for the improvement of Class 3 Local roads.

### Low Cost Accident Reduction Scheme for Non-National Roads

Work carried out at Cregg Junction, Rosses Point road, (R291-L3308) involved road markings and new road signage.

Similar work was carried out under this scheme at Rhue Crossroads - Roads 45403 - 4501

### Local Improvement Schemes

Forty four Local Improvement Schemes were carried out in 2002, at a cost of €426,000.

Additional funding of €152,000 was provided under the CLAR programme which allowed the completion of a further 26 Local Improvement Schemes in CLAR areas.

### Realignment of R291 Rosses Point Road and R292 Strandhill Road

During 2002 work was substantially completed on R291 Rosses Point Road at Ballincar-Shannon Eighter and on the western section of the R292 Tully-Strandhill Road. Much of the work consisted of accommodation works which were carried out both by direct labour and contract.

Work commenced on construction of an embankment at Tully. Over 100,000 cubic metres of material is required to raise an embankment 15m high to bring the proposed road to the level of the existing road at Tully. Applied Ground Engineering Consultants Ltd were appointed to carry out stability analysis of the proposed embankment after site investigations were carried out by Irish Drilling Ltd.

Both these realignments have replaced narrow winding sections of road thereby improving safety and accessibility to Rosses Point and Strandhill. The total expenditure on the Rosses Point Road in 2002 was €350,900 and the total expenditure on the Strandhill Road was €603,500.

### Realignment of R297 Enniscrone Approach at Kinard

The R297 approach road was narrow and winding and provided a low quality access to a rapidly developing village. A section of 500m from Lynotts Pub towards the village was realigned in 2002. Tenders were invited for construction of the scheme. Seventeen tenders were received and Wills Bros., who submitted the lowest tender, were awarded the contract. Work commenced in October and the new road was open before Christmas.

Preparation of contract documents and supervision of work was carried out by members of the road design team of Sligo County Council. The total expenditure in 2002 was €393,320. In 2003 phase 2 of the works will be carried out to complete the scheme in the direction of Enniscrone.

### Mullaghmore Harbour Improvement Works

Mullaghmore Harbour is located along the north Sligo coastline, approximately 17 miles from Sligo town. Originally built in 1841, it is a well established facility for commercial fishing, sailing, sport angling, sub-aqua diving, water skiing, power



*Traffic calming, Ballincar*

boating and boat charter. During initial construction of the harbour, the piers were located to accommodate working in the dry at low spring tides, resulting in a tidally restricted harbour with approximately 0.3m of water at the entrance for Mean Low Water Spring Tide.

The harbour relies heavily on the outer breakwater for providing shelter at the entrance area and within the harbour basin. Constructed of dry masonry, the breakwater suffered ongoing storm damage in the eighties and nineties. As a consequence Sligo County Council carried out routine repairs to maintain the integrity of the deck, during 1987 and 1994 in particular. Unfortunately damage to the seaward end became increasingly more serious as large blocks of masonry between seabed and mean tide level were dislodged and removed by wave action, thus exposing the core material to further erosion. This process would eventually lead to progressive and accelerated collapse of the structure.

Sligo County Council engaged consultants Kirk McClure Morton to assess the condition of the breakwater and to advise on suitable remedial works. In addition to the structural repairs to the breakwater, harbour usage and the needs of the variety of harbour users was assessed. The provision of a landing facility with 1.5m at Mean Low Water Spring Tide and the provision of navigation lighting were identified as key issues that should be addressed.

A scheme was designed to encompass the various improvements, considered necessary for the general development of Mullaghmore harbour, which consisted of the following;

- The construction of a new reinforced concrete deck slab and crest wall. This facility includes surface lighting for night time use and a raised level walkway and viewing area.
- The construction of an extension to the existing breakwater, approximately 40m in a southern direction. This extension is a conventional marine breakwater structure with rockfill core and rock armour protection to a crest level of 4.9m.
- The provision of rock armour protection to the northern face of the existing breakwater.
- The installation of a serviced pontoon boarding facility

located by tubular steel piles at the end of the existing breakwater. This concrete pontoon (20m by 4m) will be protected by the breakwater extension and will be accessed by a marine grade aluminium bridge from the new breakwater deck. Surface lighting and a fresh water supply is to be provided on the pontoon.

- The provision of a solar powered starboard lateral pile beacon with a range of 3 nautical miles. This navigation beacon is located at the southern tip of the new breakwater extension at 6.04m Ordnance Data.

Various other ancillary works on the north pier have also been included in the project such as, improvements to public lighting, provision of a fresh water supply, resurfacing of the deck and modifications to the access road and slipway. During the design process hydraulic computer models were constructed using the available tide, wave and wind data. These models were used to establish theoretical offshore and nearshore wave heights at the site and thus formulate design parameters for the new structure, e.g. rock armour to withstand waves up to 2.65m with periods between 4.5 to 15 seconds. Any possible impact on the surge in the harbour basin as a result of the proposed new structure was also assessed using these computer models.



# Planning & Development



*St Attracta's Community College, Tubbercurry*

## DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

### Sligo & Environs Draft Development Plan

During 2002, substantial progress was made with the review of the existing Development Plan for the Borough and the preparation of a new Plan for Sligo and its environs. This important body of work is being jointly undertaken by Sligo Borough and County Councils, assisted by their consultants, the National Building Agency (NBA). The planning authorities received some sixty written submissions following pre-draft consultations, which included two public events in early May. The Plan and its accompanying Retail Strategy were drafted during the Summer/Autumn period and, after formal consideration by the elected Members, were put on public display on December 2nd.

The Sligo and Environs Draft Development Plan 2004-2010 is a substantial and visionary document, which outlines a comprehensive range of policies and objectives designed to achieve a high quality living, working, investment and physical environment. The proposed development framework is set within a 20-year strategic perspective in line with the Sligo Sub-Regional Development Strategy 2001-2021, which was previously commissioned by the two planning authorities.

The timely publication of the National Spatial Strategy, in November, has confirmed Sligo's position as a 'gateway' centre and provided the Borough and County Councils with a mandate to plan the 'capital of the north-west' in a spirit of confidence and shared purpose.

### Hazelwood-Ballinode Draft Local Area Plan

In January 2002, Sligo Borough and County Councils held a public consultation event to generate discussion and feedback on the Hazelwood-Ballinode Draft Local Area Plan. The forum was well attended and served to highlight a number of local concerns about the Plan's provisions. It was subsequently decided to defer the statutory process and re-visit the Draft Plan when the development framework for the overall Sligo and Environs area has been agreed.

### Strandhill Draft Local Area Plan

After a break of almost two-years and with new staff and IT hardware/software on board, the Development Planning Unit resumed its work on the Strandhill Local Area Plan in early 2002. The Draft Plan was completed in October, and at their November meeting, the elected Members decided to put it on public display and invite submissions and observations. At the end of November, over 100 people attended a very successful 'community workshop' in Strandhill, at which there was a presentation on the proposals, followed by facilitated group discussions. A high level of local interest was shown in the Draft Plan, which was designed and printed in-house and sold over 90 copies.



*New Nursing Home, Enniscrone*

- Major pharmaceutical plant by Abbott Ireland at Ballytivnan, Sligo

### Development Control

A total of 991 applications for planning permission were received by the Council in 2002, in comparison to 1107 applications lodged in 2001.

**The Council decided a total of 973 applications in 2002, the majority of which were decisions to grant planning permission (i.e. 79%). A total of 64% of the planning applications were decided by the Council within 2 months of the receipt of application.**

The Planning and Development Regulations 2001 commenced in March 2002 and introduced significant changes in the way planning applications are to be prepared and processed. As a result of these new requirements, the number of invalid planning applications increased substantially as applicants familiarised themselves with the new provisions. Among the new provisions is the requirement to pay a fee when making a submission or observation on any planning application. A primary aim of the new planning regulations is the streamlining of the planning process by the introduction of new time limits e.g. all submissions by third parties and prescribed bodies must be made to the planning authority within 5 weeks of receipt of the planning application.

The development control planning areas were amended in 2002 to correspond with the four Electoral Areas. Each of these planning areas have now been allocated a planner with the responsibility for undertaking the development control duties in these areas.

- Ray O'Grady - Dromore West and Tubbercurry
- Stephen Ward - Sligo / Strandhill
- Barry Ward - Ballymote

The planning department encourages the public to contact the relevant planner prior to the making of a planning application with a view to explaining and resolving any likely planning issues.

Some of the major planning applications processed (or currently being processed) by Sligo County Council during 2002 include:

- Conversion of Castledargan House into Hotel and Leisure Complex incorporating a new Golf Course and residential development at Ballygawley
- Provision by the Electricity Supply Board of 110kv overhead lines extending across the county
- Development of a Wind Farm comprising 13 turbines at Dunneill
- Construction of a 54 bed space nursing home at Strandhill

### Enforcement

An Enforcement Section was put in place during the year with the brief of ensuring that the Council's regulatory functions were enforced. Since its formation significant progress has been made.

The main areas of focus have been as follows;

- Enforcement of planning control generally,
- Review of system for providing bonds to ensure the satisfactory completion of housing developments,
- Payment of financial contributions,
- Taking in Charge of housing estates,
- Building Control,
- Dangerous structures.

### Enforcement of Planning Control

During the past year there was an increased number of spot checks and a substantial improvement in the response time for dealing with complaints from members of the public. Most developers were generally compliant with the planning laws and regulations and in areas where difficulties did arise, these were generally resolved by discussions and the co-operation of the developers. It is the policy of the Council to resolve any problems or difficulties by agreement but where it is not possible to do so, all legal means available are asked to achieve compliance with the law. The planning Act 2000 has given local Authorities substantial additional powers to ensure that the planning laws are complied with.

The Council received complaints during the year in relation to 163 developments. Of these cases Warning Letters were issued in respect of 125 developments and in 75 cases (approx. 50%) the matters were resolved to the Council's satisfaction during the year. In one case, an unauthorised structure was removed by the developer prior to court appearance. **The Enforcement Section has succeeded in achieving a 100% response rate to all complaints within a period of 6 weeks**, in line with the operational plan of the section and the Planning & Development Act, 2000. At the end of November 2002 a total of seven cases were referred to the Council's Law Agent to institute appropriate legal proceedings; legal process was commenced to seek two injunctions and five prosecutions towards the end of the year. It is anticipated that an increased number of prosecutions and enforcement will take place in 2003 as the section becomes firmly established. It is hoped

that there will be a reduction in the numbers of unauthorised developments in the future due to increased activities of the enforcement section and increased awareness of the need to comply with the planning code.

**Bonds/Security**

In order to ensure that housing developments are completed to a proper standard the amount of bonds required as security for the satisfactory completion of housing estates was increased substantially during the year. This increase was applied on the basis of experience to date in relation to existing developments and in order to ensure that sufficient monies would be available in the event of a developer failing to complete an estate to the required standard.

In accordance with the Council’s operational plan, emphasis has been placed on ensuring that developments of housing estates do not take place in the absence of security being first provided, and the Council has been successful in ensuring that all cases to date have provided the necessary security. The Council will continue to seek 100% compliance on the part of developers providing security prior to the commencement of development.

**Contributions**

A system has been put in place during the past year to ensure that financial contributions are paid in accordance with the requirements of planning permissions granted. This system ensures that contributions are paid in all cases and where the contribution is not paid appropriate legal proceedings will be implemented. The system will be reviewed in 2003 to establish its effectiveness and full compliance by developers. Development contributions provide a vital source of funding for the provision and improvement of infrastructure and facilities throughout the county.

**Taking in Charge**

During 2002 five estates were recommended to the Council for taking in charge.. The appointment of an additional staff member in 2002 should enable significant progress to be made in this area and will ensure that spot-checks are carried out on housing developments during the course of construction.

**Building Control**

The object of the Building Control Section is to encourage good building practice, to ensure that buildings are constructed correctly and that access for disabled and elderly is provided for in building plans. Inspection rates of 15% are presently being achieved in this area, which is in line with the sections operational plan. During the past year information has been supplied to all applicants and agents seeking planning permission regarding compliance with the Building Regulations. It is proposed in 2003 to pay particular attention to compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations, dealing with access for people with disabilities.

**Dangerous Structures**

During the past year the Council identified two buildings as dangerous structures. One building was removed, the other was made safe during the year. It is the policy of the Council to take immediate action in any case where it becomes aware that a building is dangerous. Any potentially dangerous buildings that come to the Council’s attention will continue to be treated as priority.



*New Abbott Plant, Ballytivnan*



# Environment



*One of Sligo's Blue Flag beaches, Rosses Point*

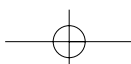
## **Pollution Control - Water Pollution**

Protecting our surface and ground waters from pollution is the primary objective in the water pollution control area. This is governed by the LG (Water Pollution) Acts, 1977 & 1990. A catchment management approach has been taken by Sligo County Council. The county is divided into three main catchments - the Owenmore, which includes Lough Arrow, the Lough Gill, and the Moy Catchments.

Catchment Management involves surveying the area to determine the risk to surface and ground waters, associated with activities in the area. These activities include forestry, farms, septic tanks, industrial discharges and waste water

treatment discharges. On completion and analysis of the survey work, measures shall be put in place to minimise the pollution risk from individual activities, and overall policies will be put in place for each sector.

A Lough Gill Technical Committee, initiated by Sligo County Council, was set up in 2002 to co-ordinate the catchment management work in the Lough Gill Catchment. The Lough Gill Technical Committee members include representatives from Sligo County Council, Leitrim County Council, EPA, North Western Regional Fisheries Board, and I.T. Sligo. The following is a summary of the work carried out by Sligo County Council in the two lake catchments in 2002:



Lake	No. Tech. Comm. Meetings	No. Septic Tank Surveys	No. Farm Surveys	No. Lake samples taken & analysed
Lough Arrow	5	150	112	84
Lough Gill	4*	136	137	73
Total	9	286	249	157**

\* Includes two preliminary meetings with Sligo County Council and Leitrim County Council.  
\*\* Involves 6 sampling trips on each lake.

A Lough Arrow Sediment Study was initiated in 2002. This involves the collection and analysis of two core samples from the deeper areas of the lake to allow compilation of trends in nutrient inputs and productivity over the past fifty years. This should give a historical perspective for benchmarking purposes and assist in the compilation of the overall nutrient budget for the lake. The core samples were taken in 2002 and analysis commenced.

In addition to the above, recommendations were made on all planning proposals and forestry proposals in all the sensitive catchments in County Sligo. The following is a summary of the applications dealt with in 2002:



Type	No.
Single Houses	44
Housing Developments	4
Commercial*	40
Agricultural	48
Forestry	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>

\*Commercial include quarries, wind farms, fuel depots, industries, group & public water schemes.

In 2002, the Environmental Services Section set up procedures with the Forestry Services and Coillte to work more closely with them to minimise water pollution from their activities.

### Enforcement

A large number of pollution complaints including water, waste, air and noise were received in 2002 and they were dealt with on a priority basis based on the potential risk of pollution from the activity or incident. Pollution incidences are dealt with under the LG (Water Pollution) Acts, 1977 & 1990, the Air Pollution Act, 1987 and the Waste Management Act, 1996. The following is a summary of the complaints dealt with in 2002:



	No Investigated	No of Legal Notices Issued	Number Resolved	% Resolved
Water	42	6	27	64
Air*	59	0	59	100
Waste	16	3	14	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>

\* 55 of the Air Pollution complaints related to backyard burning of refuse.

### Air Pollution

2002 saw a dramatic increase in incidence of 'backyard' burning. This was tackled via newspaper articles, radio interviews and advice letters to offenders. See table above.

### Education

A number of publicity and educational initiatives took place in 2002 relating to pollution control, including the following:

- Talks/lectures to IFA groups
- Presentation of an Environmental Information Desk in Sligo Arcade during Science week
- Local newspaper articles

### Environmental Science Laboratory

Under the LG Water Pollution Acts 1977 & 1990, the EC (Quality of Water intended for Human Consumption) Regulations, 1988 and the EPA Act, 1992, (Urban Waste Water Treatment) Regulations, 1994, Sligo County Council are responsible for the monitoring of all the County Council's public water supplies, urban waste water treatment plant discharges and industrial discharges. The Council also sample and analyse private wells for the Rural Water Programme. The Council's water abstraction points are monitored in accordance with the EC (Quality of Surface Waters intended for the abstraction of drinking water) Regulations, 1989. Under the LG (Water Pollution) Act, 1977, (Water Quality Standards for Phosphorus) Regulations, 1998 and the EC (Quality of Bathing Water) Regulations, 1988, Sligo County Council is responsible for ensuring adequate monitoring of rivers, lakes and bathing waters.

In 2002 the sampling was carried out by the County Council with the EPA carrying out some monitoring on an agency basis for the County Council. The samples were analysed in Sligo County Council's Environmental Science Laboratory. The following is a summary of the sampling and analysis which took place in 2002 by or on behalf of the County Council:

Samples Taken and Analysed	No.
Public Water Supply	153
Raw Water Supply Source	20
Private well Tests	30
Urban Waste Water Treatment Plants	398
Industrial Discharges	34
Rivers	346
Lakes	158
Beaches	52
Landfill	3
Miscellaneous*	119
<b>Total</b>	<b>1313</b>

\*Miscellaneous include pollution incidents and intercalibration



Water sampling on Lough Arrow



Extracting sediment from the floor of Lough Arrow

### Blue Flag Beaches

Sligo County retained its Blue Flag status on both Rosses Point beach and Enniscrone beach in 2002, and won back the Blue Flag status on Mullaghmore beach after a two year lapse. The Mullaghmore bathing water quality results for the 2001 season met the Blue Flag criteria standards to enable the Blue Flag to be awarded to Mullaghmore for the 2002 season.

The table below presents the percentage of samples complying with the standards under the EC (Quality of Water intended for Human Consumption) Regulations, 1988, for all public water supplies in County Sligo:

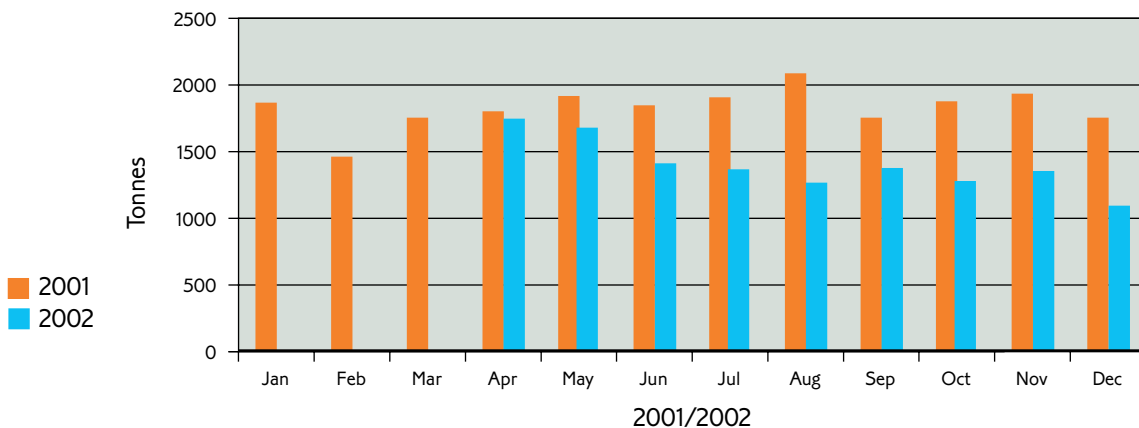
### Waste Management

The target in 2002 was to progress with the implementation of the Connaught Waste Management Plan, adopted in September 2001.

Public Water Supply	Aluminium	pH	Total Coliforms	Faecal Coliforms	Iron	Manganese	Colour	Uranium
Lough Gill	100	100	87.5	100	87.5	100	100	100
Lough Talt	100	100	83	97	100	100	100	100
Lough Easkey	82	91	100	100	100	100	100	100
North Sligo	100	100	100	100	29	86	86	100
South Sligo	100	100	100	100	86	86	100	100
Riverstown	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Kinsellagh	100	100	73	100	64	82	73	100
Calry	100	100	100	100	100	83	100	100

\*A Circular from the DOELG in November 2002 advised all Local Authorities to test water supplies in high radon areas for Uranium. As most of County Sligo is mapped as a high radon area, all public water supplies and private group schemes serving 15 or more houses were tested. All supplies were in compliance with the World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline value for Uranium in drinking water.

### Total Tonnages to Ballina - 2001 v 2002



Note: Figures are not available for the first quarter of 2001. The above figures do not include waste which may have been sent to an alternative landfill.

#### Recycling



**At the end of 2002, there were 33 bring bank stations located in Sligo town and county. This increased from 14 in 2001.** All 33 stations accepted clear, brown and green glass and aluminium cans. 29 of the 33 stations accepted plastic bottles. This was a new initiative introduced in 2002 which proved very popular. It worked very well in County Sligo but capacity was a problem in the Borough due to the high rate of plastic recycling in the town. A total of 66 tonnes of plastic bottles from Sligo were recycled in 2002.

Waste Disposal Sligo, in conjunction with Sligo County Council introduced a newspaper-recycling depot at their premises at Deep Water Quay, early in 2002.

The glass-recycling rate increased dramatically in Sligo in 2002, with Sligo having one of the top glass recycling rates per head in the country. The table below shows a comparison between the 2002 quarterly glass recycling figures for Sligo and those for 2001.

#### Capital Waste Infrastructure Grant Application

In May 2002, Sligo County Council applied for the following waste infrastructure under the DOELG Capital Waste Infrastructure Grant Scheme:

- Expansion of Bring Bank Network
- Recycling Centre, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo
- Green Waste Composting Facility, Union Quarry
- Feasibility Study for Biological Treatment Plant

In November 2002, the County Council were notified of a grant allocation for the capital cost of new bring bank stations.

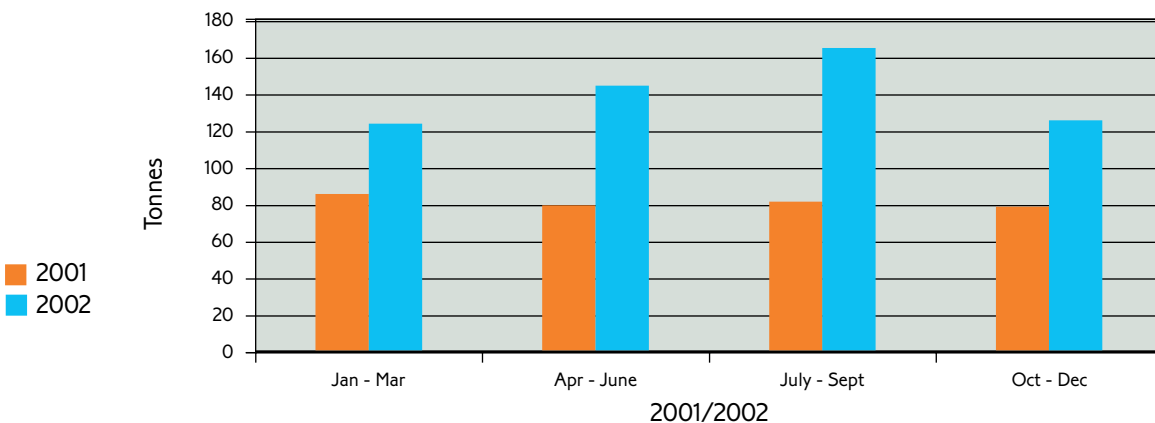
#### Waste Regulation

Sligo County Council, under the Waste Management Act, 1996, has a responsibility for the regulation of waste facilities and waste activities, and the enforcement of Regulations made under the Act. In 2002, Sligo County Council began work on enforcing the Waste Management (Packaging Regulations), 1998. These Regulations require all producers of packaging to separate the packaging waste produced on the premises, and make it available for separate collection by a recovery operator.

**An information pack and waste questionnaire was sent to 220 Packaging Producers.** Over 50% of the questionnaires were returned. All returned questionnaires were analysed and followed up as appropriate. Packaging producers were supplied with a list of collectors, permitted to separately collect packaging waste for recovery.

All complaints relating to the Plastic Bag Levy were investigated and resolved.

### Glass Recycling Tonnages - 2001 v 2002



Mayo County Council, the issuing Authority for Connaught for the Waste Collection Permits, issued 150 Waste Collection Permits in 2002, under the Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations, 2001. Most of the permits are valid in Sligo and Sligo County Council had an input into all applications received in which Sligo was an operating county.

**Environmental Awareness Campaign**

The Environmental Awareness Campaign focuses on education and awareness initiatives within the County. From small beginnings it has now become a significant strand of the environment section. As in 2001, the main focus is on greater awareness in the area of waste management. Encouraging waste avoidance, reduction, reuse and recycling are the main priorities of the Environmental Awareness Office along with the ongoing promotion of the home composting. In 2002, 27 presentations were made on waste management, recycling and composting to community groups. Composting demonstrations and methods of diverting domestic waste away from the landfill are the most frequently requested topics at such open meetings.

In 2002 the EAO made 31 school visits promoting better waste management and encouraging schools to sign up to the Green Schools Programme. To date 18 schools are registered with 9 new comers in 2002. Four schools have successfully passed through the programme with three of these flags awarded in 2002.

To encourage busy primary and secondary school to become involved in the Green Schools Programme the Awareness Office has also developed a framework of financial and resource materials. Schools that work towards a green flag receive free materials, information on aspects of the environment and assistance in running action days. The Awareness Office also ran promotional events to coincide with five National Campaigns.

**National Spring Clean**

During the month of April 2002 over 70 clean up events took place in county Sligo. Most of these events were prompted by the Country's largest anti-litter initiative - National Spring Clean and most were supported by both An Taisce and Sligo County Council. The Awareness Office took part in approximately 8 events and distributed supplementary clean-up materials to many groups as well as paying for the disposal of collected material.

**National Recycling Week**

As part of National Recycling Week (Oct. 2002) the Awareness Office organised a weeklong temporary recycling facility for white goods, fridges, freezers, scrap metal and other large items. A nominal fee was charged on large items and the public came out in force to correctly dispose of these difficult items. The facility was such a success the Awareness Office hope to make this an annual event.

**Green Christmas Campaign**

With advertising support from Repak Ltd. Sligo County Council held its first Green Christmas Campaign where a variety of seasonal packaging/materials are collected for recycling - these included Christmas cards, trees, wrapping paper, cardboard, calendars, telephone directories etc. This is now an annual event which is greatly appreciated by all users.

**National Tree Week**

Local Authorities support the Tree Council of Ireland during this week by distributing native species of trees and organising planting events in respective counties. In total over 300 trees were planting in 2002. School talks were also given by the EAO on the value of our Native Trees.



*Mr. David O'Gara Principal of St. Aidens N.S. hoisting the Green Flag*

**Blue Flag Programme**

2002 saw An Taisce's Blue Flag Beach Programme in operation for 15 years. To mark the anniversary of this occasion the Awareness Office organised a 'Children's Discovery Day' on Rosses Point Beach (July 27th 2002). Activities included beach search, a discussion on shells and other beach creatures, a quiz, a beach sweep, facepainting and raffles. Children were asked to wear blue to mark the day. Refreshments were also supplied and despite the windy day - good fun was had by all.

As part of the open local government scheme the communications office invite secondary school students into County Hall for the purpose of seeing how local government operates. These sessions have been a great opportunity for the awareness office to promote their environmental messages. As a result of these talks some schools have signed up to the Green Schools Programme.

The Housing Section of Sligo County Council also offers an opportunity for environmental promotion through it's pre-tenancy courses. New tenants are informed of environmentally friendly practices as they take up residence in new homes.

In February 2002 'environment week' was held in co-operation with North West Radio FM. During this week the Environment Awareness Officers from Sligo County Council, Sligo Borough Council and Leitrim County Council discussed different aspects of the local environment. Radio environment week helped raised the profile of many of the difficult environmental issues facing Local Authorities, i.e. litter and illegal dumping. Many of the topics discussed during radio week require a higher level of public awareness and participation. Talking about these subjects over the airwaves helps achieve this aim.



One of the most important and useful tools for environmental awareness and promotion is the use of local media. With two weekly publications in Sligo regular press releases relating to environmental issues are published. These are aimed at promoting events and recognising the work of communities who take action on environmental issues.



## Arts Office



*L to R John Legge and George Bennett, participants in the Maughera Project with artist Catherine Fanning*

### **The Brightening Air County Sligo Arts Plan 2002-2005**

A large crowd gathered in The Foyer of Sligo County Council at lunchtime on Saturday 15th June 2002 for the launch of County Sligo's first Arts Plan. Speeches were by Cllr. Joe Leonard, Chairman of SPC4 for Housing Policy, Social & Cultural Development; Arts Consultant & Theatre Director Martin Drury who was guest speaker at the launch; and Cllr Pdraig Branley, Cathaoirleach, Sligo County Council who officially launched the Plan.

According to Cllr. Joe Leonard 'Access to the arts is a fundamental right of all citizens, essential to living a full and rewarding life.' He emphasised that it is the policy of the Council to support and facilitate increased opportunities to enhance the environment in which art is made, engaged with and received. The Plan is therefore the process through which the Council seeks to achieve its objectives.

Martin Drury, who provided the Foreword to the Plan, referred to the still embryonic relationship between local government and the arts in Ireland and that something similar could be said justifiably about the relationship between the arts and planning. He went on to say that in part, that is why this first Sligo Arts Plan is important both locally and nationally. The success of the local authorities arts development programme 'Placing Art' (1998-2001) lied not so much in the series of planned, sequenced and developmental actions it facilitated, though these were impressive. More remarkable was the yoking of the principles of better local government with those of high-quality contemporary arts planning. For it is this fusion that has resulted in strategically-driven actions rather than simply a list of random activities. He concluded that it is clear that in the town and county of Sligo, policy-led planning has provided a framework that translates values and ideals into practice.



Left: Children from Academy of Music

Below: Frank Reinecke of The Vogler Quartet with members of County Sligo youth Theatre

Bottom: Publications produced by the Arts Office

In the introductory pages of the Plan, in a piece commissioned by the Arts Office, local poet and playwright John Kavanagh maps achievements in Sligo's arts and cultural environment. He pays tribute to the many individuals, groups and organisations, past and present who, through their enthusiasm and commitment to the promotion of the arts, have made Sligo the vibrant cultural centre it is today.

**Mission Statement - Delivering the Plan**

Sligo County Council will create:

- Opportunities for the citizens of Sligo to make, share and participate in high quality artistic processes.
- Possibilities for artists to imagine, innovate and create work of excellence.
- Time, space and support for those who would create expressions of self, community and place.

A central tenet of Sligo County Council's arts policy is to facilitate and support opportunities to enhance the environment in which art is made, engaged with and received. The implementation of The Brightening Air County Sligo Arts Plan 2002-2005 is the process by which maximum impact on the local arts environment will be achieved over the coming three years. As a first step, the Arts Office has identified five key areas for development under the plan: The Artist, Social Inclusion, The Arts Sector, Physical Space Environment, Arts Infrastructure.

The Arts Plan will be delivered and managed by the Arts Office under three service areas: Information and Resourcing, Programming and Development, Linkages and Infrastructure.

**Information and Resourcing 2002**

The Brightening Air: County Sligo Arts Plan 2002-2005

Distribution of Sligo Events Quarterly: This comprehensive quick guide continues to impress with the variety, quantity and quality of arts and cultural events taking place all over County Sligo throughout the year.

Three documents about public art in Sligo were published: Placing Art: A Colloquium on Public Art in Rural, Coastal and Small Urban Environments.

A Report by the Public Art Strategy Group on the future application of the Per Cent for Art Scheme by the Sligo Local Authorities.



A Report on the evaluation of the pilot public art programme, Placing Art, by the Public Art Steering Group.

The Maugherow Project Resource Handbook & Video: Documenting the work of the project from 1998-2001.

Vogler Quartet in Sligo Resource Video: Documenting the residency programme from 1999-2002.





*Pupil from Grange N.S. at Vogler Workshop moving to the sounds of Stravinsky on the cello.*



**In 2002, €173,000 was provided by the members of Sligo County Council in support of: the arts programmes of arts organisations; community arts events; and small residency bursaries to individuals:**

Model Arts & Niland Gallery; Hawk's Well Theatre; Sligo International Choral Festival; Blue Raincoat Theatre Co.; South Sligo Summer School; Coleman Traditional Festival; James Morrison Weekend; Ballintogher Traditional Festival; Feis Shligigh; County Sligo Fleadh; All Ireland Confined Drama Finals; Maugherow Drama & Entertainment Group; Sligo Active Retirement Writers; The Caisleach Writers; West Sligo Womens' Art Group; Appleloft Gallery; Calry Show; The Benwiskin Centre; Aclare Development Council; Grange Art Workshop; Workhouse Studios; Ballymote Youth Steering Group; Stage on Fire; 4 Bars Later; Sligo Summer Festival; Gayle Norman; Sarah Cottle; Patricia Curran-Mulligan.

*'Thank you for helping provide a sojourn during which a serious body of work can be undertaken at Annaghmakerrig.'*  
-Tyrone Guthrie Centre Bursary Recipient 2002

## PROGRAMMING & DEVELOPMENT 2002

### Intergenerational Arts

Students and older members of the Maugherow community continue to work creatively together in weekly workshops in St. Patrick's National School, Maugherow. In May 2002 The Maugherow Project held its third annual exhibition 'Time and Tide'.

Informed by learning from The Maugherow Project and other models of best practice the Arts Office have developed a new intergenerational project in partnership with the North Western Health Board and the Mercy Convent Primary School, Sligo.

In 2002 the Arts Office also facilitated an intergenerational arts project between students in Strandhill National School and members of the Strandhill Older People's Group. This project involved the creation of large mosaic work, which is on display in the school.

*"The local authority and health board have nurtured an oasis of possibility in local arts development - an example from which other communities could usefully learn."* -Mike White of The Centre for Arts and Humanities in Health and Medicine, University of Durham, speaking about The Maugherow Project.



*Teacher and pupils from Ardkeen N.S. at Vogler Workshop*

### Arts and Health

In partnership with the North Western Health Board and St. Anne's Community and Youth Centre, the Arts Office has developed a new arts and health project for older people. This project is informed by learning from The Maugherow Project and other models of best practice, and includes older people from Sligo's east ward area.

### Bealtaine Festival

Bealtaine is a national festival, which encourages and celebrates creativity in older age and takes place throughout the month of May each year. In 2002 the Arts Office collaborated with Age & Opportunity and Poetry Ireland to bring the distinguished American Poet Peter Kane Dufault to Sligo for a series of events, which were designed to celebrate and inspire greater creativity in older age. Workshops and readings were developed with the support of the Model Arts and Niland Gallery; the Hawk's Well Theatre, and the Yeats Society.

### Artists in Context Programme

The Artists in Context Programme aims to facilitate and support the professional development of artists who work or would like to work in social contexts in the Sligo region. The Programme started in October 2002 and involves an introductory series of six lectures and workshops for visual artists. 2002/03 is envisaged as the first phase of a three-year programme. Year one is designed to introduce and explore models of practice in the following contexts; Community Development, Disability, Health, Multiculturalism, Education, and the Gallery as a Resource. The Programme is a collaboration between the Arts Office and County Sligo LEADER Partnership Company's Arts in Community Development Programme.

### Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency Programme

In delivering this programme, the Quartet, the Partners and the Facilitators continue to work closely with local music groups, schools/educational institutions, community centres and venues in the key areas of performance, music education and instrumental tuition. Originally planned as a three year residency programme 1999-2002, Vogler Quartet in Sligo received a two year extension to 2004.

2002 was a very successful year in all aspects of the residency including:

- Music Education Programme at Primary (17 schools) including Secondary (6 schools) and Third Level.
- Composer-in-Residence Project.
- Vogler Spring Festival, Drumcliffe.
- Sligo Music Series promoted by Con Brio.
- Sligo Early Music Ensemble.
- Vogler Quartet Performances in conjunction with Model Arts & Niland Gallery, Blue Raincoat Theatre Co., Benwiskin Centre.
- Sligo Academy of Music.

*'The little church of St Columba in Drumcliffe, Co Sligo - One might be in a composer's brainpan with the music coming from every corner of the cranial walls.'* - Douglas Sealy re Vogler Spring Festival, Irish Times, May 2002

### LINKAGES & INFRASTRUCTURE 2002 County Sligo Youth Theatre:

County Sligo Youth Theatre is now in its fifth year and has endeavoured, since its inception, to provide high quality experience of theatre and the performing arts as well as give young people opportunities for development of interpersonal and leadership skills, confidence and self-esteem. In 2002 the Youth Theatre presented two successful productions *The Woman in White*, January 23-27, Factory Performance Space and *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*, August 25-30, Hawk's Well Theatre.

The Youth Theatre was also nominated for several awards for their entry in the Mid and North West Radio One Act Plays Festival. A member (Helen Cooney) won the award for best dramatic performance in her role of Joan of Arc. Other highlights included film work, vignettes at The Model Arts Sunday lunch-time Specials and stilt performances during various street festivals including Sligo Festival, St Patrick's Day (award for best youth act) and The Model Arts Christmas Pageant.

Public Art: A new Public Art Steering Group was established to oversee the development of a Public Art Plan and the next programme of commissions funded by the Department of Environment Per Cent for Art Scheme.



Artists participating in 'Artists in context' Workshop

## Motor Taxation Office

The Motor Taxation Section is continuously examining means of improving the level of service to its customers, and in 2002 extended its opening hours; The office is now open to the public from 9.30am to 4.00 pm, including lunchtime.

The new NVDF (National Vehicle Driver File) System came into operation in March 2002 and allows the Sligo Office access information instantly on Vehicle and Driving Licences issued around the Country by its link with the VRU (Vehicle Registration Unit) in Shannon Co Clare.

A new Visual Display Unit in the waiting area provides information on the various applications forms, so customers are well prepared when they avail of our services.

### Number of Transactions 2001-2002

	2001	2002
Road Taxes	45368	46883
Roadworthiness Certs	1960	2229
Driving Licences	9614	10143
Miscellaneous	4074	6193
Total	61016	65448
Total Receipts	€7,978,987	€8,649,308

The One Stop Shop in Tubbercurry is due to open in May/June 2003. Motor Tax will have a presence in the new facility, and it is estimated that the new South Sligo base will cater for between 20% - 25% of Motor Tax customers.

## Higher Education Grants

Sligo County Council assisted 363 students under 2001 Higher Education Grants Scheme. There were 113 new applicants and 250 continuing students. The scheme is administered by the Council on behalf of the Department of Education and Science.

In 2001, the Department of Education and Science introduced a special maintenance grant payable to disadvantaged grant holders, targeted at those most in need. Sligo County Council allocated €45,988 to such grant holders in 2001.

A total of €1,153,697.85 was allocated in 2001 by Sligo County Council to students in maintenance and fees.

# Community and Enterprise



Group pictured at the Peace II forum held in November 2002



Pictured at the announcement of funding under the Peace II Programme were; Back (l-r) Michael Condren, Sligo Borough Council, Paul Cunningham, Sligo County Council, Eamon Haran, Community and Enterprise Front (l-r) Mary Foley, Sligo County Council, Cllr. Michael Fleming, Dorothy Clarke, Director of Community & Enterprise

## SLIGO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD Introduction

Sligo County Development Board was established in March 2000 to address the integration of services at local level. This was in response to the Task Force Report on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development. This partnership is unique in that it comprises of representatives from Local Government Sector, Local Development, State Agencies and the Social partners and is responsible for the co-ordination and integration of all publicly funded services in the county.

### Milestones in 2002

#### Publication of the CDB Strategy.

In 2002, Sligo CDB completed and launched the Integrated Economic, Social and Cultural Strategy for County Sligo 2002-2012 or its 'Shared Vision'.

The Strategy is built upon extensive and widespread consultation and draws on the expertise of representatives from the various State Agencies, the Social Partners, the Community and Voluntary sector (including the Community Forum), Local Government and Local Development to:

- Draft and highlight the challenges that impact on everyday life in County Sligo
- Consider ways of making the delivery of public services more accessible for everybody
- Develop the ten year 'shared vision' to shape County Sligo's future

*As a place with vibrant cultural and commercial activity, a thriving urban centre, dynamic and safe urban and rural communities, a strong sense of civic pride and a superior quality of life.*

### Key goals of the CDB process include:

- The development of a critical mass of infrastructure.
- Developments in enterprise, industry, agriculture, retail and tourism that maximise opportunities and employment potential in an environmentally sustainable way.
- The development of a co-ordinated and multi-agency approach in tackling the structural and attitudinal barriers surrounding social inclusion.
- Improve the accessibility to, and participation in, heritage, the arts, sports and recreation in the county, leading to an enhanced sense of pride in all things pertaining to Sligo.

### Implementation: The Monitoring and Evaluation System

As the Integrated Economic Social and Cultural Strategy contains approximately 388 actions/projects for which almost 50 lead agencies have accepted responsibility, it was evident that its successful implementation would require a web based monitoring and evaluation system. At a meeting of the Board in December 2002 it was agreed to use the Project Management/Project Vision Software as developed by Cora Systems.

### 2003

Currently the Board are working on the development and implementation of its Annual Action Plan for 2003. A customised series of Project Management/Project Vision training days has been arranged for February/ March 2003. These Training Days are targeted at CDB members and key individuals within the different Stakeholder agencies have agreed to liaise with the County Development Board in the implementation of its Strategy and Sectoral Plans.



*Work was carried out in Rosses Point under the Village Renewal Programme*

### TEAM Sligo

Sligo County Development Board established TEAM Sligo in October 2002 to examine how agencies can work in partnership towards improving the 'Face of Sligo Town' for potential investors and tourists and enhancing civic pride in the area. TEAM SLIGO has already agreed an Annual Action plan for 2003.

A Co-ordinated response to the National Spatial Strategy Sligo County Development Board are also involved in co-ordinating a response to the National Spatial Strategy and in doing so to maximise the potential for progress, growth and development in a more balanced way.

#### Co-ordinated Submissions

Over the year Sligo County Development Board made:

- A number of co-ordinated responses to various consultation papers including:
  - National Crime Council's 'Tackling the Underlying Causes of Crime'
  - The Future Delivery of Broadband in Ireland
  - Dept of Transport: Strategic Rail Review

- A number of submissions to the County Childcare Strategic Plan
- Prepared a Rural Transport and Service Audit and Needs Assessment
- Representations to various Government Departments on a wide range of issues including CE Schemes, Sligo Airport, Galway/Mayo Rail Crossover at Athenry
- Developed a proposal specifying the need for an integrated approach towards addressing the Housing needs of elderly persons and to pilot this approach in County Sligo
- Submitted a proposal for funding to BMW Regional Assembly for the Supply of Wireless Internet Services in the Strandhill Area.



*Pictured at the launch of Sligo County Development Board's "County Sligo Integrated Strategy 2002-2012 were l-r: Dorothy Clarke, Director of Community & Enterprise, Felim McNeela, Joe McHugh, Seamus Kilganon and member of Sligo Borough Council, Cllr. Tommy Cummins*

## SLIGO COUNTY COMMUNITY FORUM 2002

The County Community Forum had a very successful year in 2002 it has worked hard on developing the capacity of the Community & Voluntary Sector in County Sligo. It achieved this objective in two ways. Firstly through its representation on County Working Committees which include

- Sligo County Development Board
- Sligo County Childcare Committee
- Sligo Social Economy Working Group
- County Heritage Forum
- Sligo Sport & Recreation Partnership
- R.A.P.I.D.
- Sligo County Council Led Peace II Task Force
- Sligo County Council Strategic Policy Committees

The County Community Forum has been involved in the last year on drawing up and implementing a number of important Strategic Development Plans for the county. At all times the Forum has represented the views of the Community & Voluntary Sector in these plans.

The Community Forum in its second phase of work for 2002 responded to the frustrations of many community groups on the ground in relation to accessing information on funding. The Forum over a six-month period consulted with various National, Regional and County agencies on compiling a Directory of Funding Agencies for the Community & Voluntary Sector in County Sligo. In December of 2002 the Directory was completed and published along with a CD Rom and database, which will be continually updated. The Directory is due to be launched in early 2003.

The second major success of 2002 was the forming of West Sligo Community Forum as a Limited Company. The Forum comprises all Community Groups located in the District Electoral Division of Dromore West. The West Sligo Forum was established to provide a collective response and to stimulate economic and social development in the region. One of the Forum's successes over the year has included the publication of a feasibility study on small-scale enterprise development in the region.

In 2003 the County Community Forum hopes to build on its advocacy role on the various County Committees and also to continue to provide creative and practical supports to the Community & Voluntary Sector in County Sligo.

The Office of Community and Enterprise co-ordinates and administers Measures 3.3 and 3.4 of the PEACE II Programme.

## PEACE II

The overall strategic aim of the Programme is 'To reinforce progress towards a stable society and to promote reconciliation.'

- Addressing the 'Legacy of conflict'
- The Programme will address specific problems generated by the conflict in order to assist the return to a normal, peaceful and stable society.
- Taking opportunities arising from Peace.
- To encourage activities which have a stake in peace and which will actually help promote a stable and normal society where opportunities for development can be grasped.

## Sligo County Development Board Strategy

The Strategy is based on a shared vision which acknowledges the values and principles of participation, inclusion, mutual respect, openness, equality and environmental sustainability. The underpinning philosophy of the Strategy is to 'Enhance the quality of life, health and well being of all the people who live and work in Sligo'. The Community and Enterprise office in implementing PEACE II, will focus on the objectives contained in the CDB Strategy together with the measures contained in Priority 3 which targets locally based regeneration and development strategies.

The Office of Community and Enterprise co-ordinates the Urban and Village Renewal Programme

## Urban and Village Renewal

This Multi-annual Programme is reaching the halfway stage of its implementation. Work has already been completed in Ballymote, Curry, Easkey, Gurteen, Riverstown and Rosses Point. The current year will see work being carried out at Carraroe, Enniscrone and Monasteraden.

The objective of the Programme is to deal with local communities and meet their needs in so far as is possible by promoting environmentally sustainable developments in their towns and villages. As partnership relationships are developed with these groups the impact of work being carried out by the County Council is more meaningful and greater understanding of the County Council's aims and community needs is developed. Local community takes greater ownership of these projects when there is account taken of their needs and plans for their areas.

The list of approved towns/villages is :

- 2003 Carraroe, Enniscrone, Monasteraden
- 2004 Collooney, Grange, Tubbercurry
- 2005 Aclare, Strandhill, Bunninadden
- 2006 Coolaney, Ballisodare, Ballinacarrow

## Peace Programme Funding 2002

Applicant	Project Proposed	Grant Proposed €
Aughris Development Group	Feasibility study for coastal erosion	10,000
Ballisodare Community Council	Ballisodare Salley Gardens Walk	40,000
Banada/Tourlestrane Development Association	Development of John Hume Peace Park	Next year
Carney District Development Association	Village enhancement (lighting)	Deferred
Cloonloo Development Group	Development of facilities at Lough Gara	25,000
Dromore West Community Council	River Walkway	30,000
Drumcliffe Development Association	Development of amenities at Church of Ireland	25,000
Grange Community Council	Grange Village Enhancement	40,000
Gurteen Development Group	Gurteen Coleman Heritage Centre	15,000
Kilglass Community Council	Kilglass Village Enhancement	35,000
Ox Mountain Development Group	Lough Talt Amenity Area	43,000
Raghly Harbour Development Group	Raghly Harbour Phase 1	82,000
Rathbarron Group	Redevelopment of Rathbarron Hall, Coolaney	35,000
Sandyhill Community Group	Environmental enhancement project	20,900
Skreen Dromard Community Council	Village Enhancement (lighting)	Deferred
Sligo Borough Council	Cartron Peace Trail	
Sligo Borough Council	Gateways to Sligo Phase 1	
Sligo Borough Council	Kevinsfort Playground	60,000
Sligo Borough Council	Model & Niland Access Project	30,000
Templevanny Development Group	Regeneration of Toomour and its environs	10,000
Dromore West Children's Community Playground	Playground	Deferred
Skreen Dromard Community Playground Committee	Playground	Deferred
Sligo County Council	Village enhancement	Deferred
Mac Fibris Centre, Kilglass	Computer suite	Deferred
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>500,900</b>

Expressions of interest for 2003

- Soeey Development Association
- Tubbercurry Chamber of Commerce

### TASK FORCE

A County Council led task force was established as a sub-committee of the County Development Board in 2002. The Task Force draws its members from Local Government, Local Development, State Agencies and Social Partners. Funding comes from the Special EU Programmes Body and the Department of Environment and Local Government. The Task Force administers measures 3.3 and 3.4 of the PEACE Programme.

All projects are presented to the Task Force following their assessment by an independent Assessment Committee. The projects are examined by the Committee to value their compliance with the criteria laid down by the Special EU Programmes Body. Projects approved in 2002 are shown in table above.

### Everything under the same roof!

The new 'One Stop Shop' facility in Tubbercurry will deliver from one premises a range of services for the people of south Sligo. The development will cost in the region of €7.3 million and will house an area office for Sligo County Council, a new branch library, district courthouse, Motor Taxation Office, FAS Office, Citizens' Information Centre. The North Western Health Board will also have a major presence in the new facility.

The two storey building is a blend of history and innovation; the facades of some of the original buildings on the street have been retained and incorporated in the development.

The building is a concrete and steel framed structure in which imaginative use of natural lighting has been made. The façade of the building is a mixture of limestone and extensive glazing, and features a curved zinc roof.

The project is expected to be completed in summer 2003, and represents a substantial investment by Sligo County Council in the Tubbercurry area.

### RAPID Programme Report

#### Background:

The RAPID Programme was launched in early 2002 by the Minister for State for Local Development Eoin Ryan T.D. Under the Programme 20 provincial centres in Ireland were selected for inclusion in the Programme including the following areas in Sligo Town:

Cranmore Estate  
Forthill Estate/ Cartron Estate  
Garavogue Villas / Doorly Park  
St. Joseph's Terrace / St. Bridget's Place / Pilkington Terrace  
Maugheraboy / Jinks Avenue / Treacy Avenue



The RAPID Programme (Revitalising Areas through Planning and Investment) has three specific objectives in accordance with the Programme for Prosperity & Fairness.

1. To develop a specific integrated policy focus, across the Social Inclusion Measures identified in the National Development Plan, directed at the social groups who are excluded, especially where cumulative disadvantage is pervasive.
2. To tackle, in particular, the spatial concentration of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion within the 25 identified designated disadvantaged areas.
3. To stem the social and economic costs of social exclusion by developing a range of integrated measures such that the physical, social and community infrastructure of designated communities is developed to allow them harness the social capital and capacity necessary for economic and community development.

The following Principles underpin the implementation of the programme.

- Community Participation and local Ownership
- Promotion of Strategic Planning
- Co-ordination of provision of State Services
- Targeting of additional services, investment and facilities
- Building on Existing Structures

### Sligo RAPID Programme

The RAPID Programme in Sligo is co-ordinated by Bridie Conway. In 2002 an Area Implementation Team which is representative of each relevant State Agency and also representative of the local community was put in place. Their remit is to take responsibility for the planning and implementation of the programme locally. The Programme is monitored by the City/County Social Inclusion Measure group to ensure that all plans developed are fully integrated with the CDB and agency strategies.

An Interim Plan was developed and submitted nationally in October 2002. This plan involved a comprehensive needs analysis undertaken in consultation with the local communities, and an in-depth profile of the five selected areas in Sligo. **A total of 19 projects were developed with the specific aim of meeting the identified needs, these projects will be implemented over the coming year. At present a more comprehensive plan is being prepared for submission nationally in July.**



### TIDY TOWNS - Coolaney tops again!

It's the magnificent seven for Coolaney, who scooped the tidy town award in the County category for the seventh consecutive year. There is however serious competition emerging with both Ballintogher and Carney increasing their respective marks by over 5 per cent. Indeed Carney also retained their title of Endeavour Award winners for again showing the most improved performance over the previous year's result. Riverstown maintained their high standard by finishing second in the county which places them in the 'Highly Commended' category.

Coolaney amassed 231 marks; six more marks than they received last year in the competition, which is run by the Department of the Environment and Local Government and sponsored by SuperValu.

A delighted Syl Mulligan, who received the award in Dublin Castle earlier this year on behalf of the Coolaney Committee, said they were 'thrilled to win the award again' and acknowledged the "great work put in by the villagers of Coolaney".

Mr. Pat 'The Cope' Gallagher, Minister of State at the Department of the Environment and Local Government, who presented the awards acknowledged the work of the Tidy Town's Committees. He said: 'The Tidy Towns competition has developed and evolved into one of the most successful

voluntary movements in the history of the state, transforming the physical appearance of our towns and villages, fostering pride in one's own place and a sense of responsibility towards it.'

The Council assists Tidy Towns committees by grant aid and also through its Urban and Village Renewal and Peace II programmes.

The overall results of towns and villages throughout Sligo were:

#### Category A - Population 200 or less

	2001	2002	% Increase
Ballinacarrow	179	180	.56
Ballintogher	206	217	5.34
Banada - Tourlestrane	160	166	3.75
Carney	199	210	5.53
Coolaney	225	231	2.67
Easkey	191	194	1.57
Mullaghmore	188	194	3.19

#### Category B - Population 201 - 1,000

Ballisodare	203	206	1.48
Collooney	159	163	2.52
Enniscrone	169	173	2.37
Grange	195	201	3.08
Gurteen	165	171	3.64
Riverstown	216	218	0.93
Rosses Point	195	200	2.56

#### Category B - Population 1,001 - 2,500

Ballymote	176	179	1.70
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### BURIAL GROUNDS

Building on the momentum which was created by a seminar on the proper procedures to be followed in the care and maintenance of Burial Grounds, it was heartening to see additional communities coming together to set up graveyard committees during the course of the past year.

Again last year the Council gave financial assistance to those groups who are, on an ongoing basis, doing trojan work on behalf of their communities in maintaining local graveyards in good condition. It is encouraging to see the number of such groups on the increase nineteen of whom benefited from Council funding in 2002.

An interest in genealogy or indeed queries from far flung relations often lead to the records held by registrars or old headstones being checked in an attempt to establish lineage. We hope to establish a working relationship with the Sligo Heritage and Genealogy Society which can will be of benefit to both organisations in maintaining such records in future.

Considerable work was carried out in identifying and reaching agreement on parcels of land which will allow for the expansion of burial grounds in a number of locations. In particular, if archaeological assessments are satisfactory, Sligo County Council will be in a position to provide extensions at Keelogue and Calry along with proposed work at Kilglass. Investigative work has also been carried out at Dromard and Kilmacowen.

In conjunction with the local community work also commenced on some essential improvements at Kilturra.

## County Sligo Civil Defence



*Sligo Boat Team on County Exercise on Lough Gill  
l-r; Paddy Sheridan, Martin John Keaveney, Seamus Egan, Edel Mahon, John Taheny*

Sligo Civil Defence continue to raise the profile of the organisation through being actively involved in the community. This year the services of Civil Defence were called upon to cover many events held throughout the county through first aid cover, crowd control and search and recovery. This year saw volunteers attend at 16 events to date. It is through attending these type of events and being seen by the public that interest is raised in the organisation and that is evident in the number of new members that enrolled with the organisation when the Winter training sessions commence on October 1st.

At the National Exercise held in Mullingar this year the Sligo team did very well when put to the test in the various skills and came out a well deserved second.

Sligo Civil Defence hosted the Regional Fire pump drill competition, with the assistance of the staff at Sligo Fire station. This competition had been dormant for many years and it's rebirth proved very popular with the volunteers. Cavan were the winners on the day and Sligo came a close second. Both of these teams represented the region at the National competition in Carlow where only 4 secs. separated

the first 5 teams with Waterford coming first at 39secs. and Sligo at 42 secs. were placed fifth.

This year Sligo Civil Defence continued to build good working relationship with the other volunteers groups in the county who also give of their services to the community and at the County exercise this year we worked together with the Sligo Leitrim mountain rescue team and a great days training covering skills in boating, search and recovery in the woods and a heights rescue display was held on Lough Gill and in Slish Wood.

**25 volunteers were successful in obtaining their Basis first aid certificates and 5 received their certificates in Intermediate first aid.** Presently an advanced first aid course for 6 of our volunteers is in progress and it is hoped that some from this group will take the next step forward and become an instructor.

Basic rescue training program is being revamped by the Civil Defence training school in Dublin to bring it in line with the present health and safety regulations and Sligo have 2 volunteers participating in this training which it is hoped will be on stream by 2004.



Training continues in the 7 centres throughout the county for the winter and a special emphasis is being placed this winter Communications with an instructor from Donegal Civil Defence attending 3 nights per month to put us through our paces. This year saw us receive 10 new hand set radios and 4 vehicle radios which will ensure we are equipped to the highest of standard.

From our extensive advertising campaign at the start of the winter training season we had 15 new volunteers register. In the present climate of busy lives for everybody it is a great boost to get new people to join our forces. Overall another busy yet fruitful year for Sligo Civil Defence volunteers, who deserve great credit for giving of their time freely and being there when needed.

**Plan for 2003**

- Continue to maintain a high standard of training for the volunteers and to ensure that equipment etc. required to carry out their role in the time of need is of the highest safety standard. Replace / repair and purchase equipment where needed.
- Complete the advanced first aid level presently in progress in the hope that some of the volunteers taking part in this course will advance to instructor level next year.

- Complete the communications course by April, which will ensure that the majority of volunteers will have received the basic knowledge to correctly use the communications system we have, and it is hoped that the program will have encouraged some volunteers to pursue the role of communications instructor.
- Train drivers to the acceptable level in order to increase the pool of drivers who are in a position to drive the Civil Defence vehicles.
- Propose to work with Sligo Fire brigade and other volunteer groups on an exercise during 2003 to keep our skills up to date in case of a major emergency.
- Continue our recruitment drive to maintain the numbers of volunteers through being out there and being seen in action and promoting the organisation at every opportunity.

*Members of the Sligo Civil Defence team who were finalists in the National Pump Drill competition. Back row l-r; Brendan Charlton (Trainer), Pdraig O'Gara, Cathal O'Gara, John Taheny, Chris McLoughlin, Patrick Kennedy, Marion Davis (Civil Defence Officer)*



*Sligo Civil Defence and Sligo/Leitrim Mountain Rescue team at County Exercise in Slish Wood*

# Communications Office



*Open Local Government Initiative, County Hall*

During 2002, the Communications Office provided information services to the elected members and staff, general public and the media, and provided administrative support for the Cathaoirleach.

### **Cathaoirleach's Awards Scheme**

Cathaoirleach Cllr Tony McLoughlin hosted the second Cathaoirleach Awards ceremony at County Hall. This scheme has proved a very popular means of rewarding those people who give special service to their community. The category winners were:

ARTS	Sligo International Choral Festival
COMMUNITY	Lillian Fairweather
ENVIRONMENT	Sligo Folk Park, Riverstown
NATIONAL SCHOOL	St Patrick's National School, Calry
SPORTS	Terry Hayes

The winner of the overall 2002 Cathaoirleach's Award for 2002 was Lillian Fairweather, one of the best known and respected voluntary workers in Sligo.

Assisting the Cathaoirleach on the Awards Committee were - Cllr Pdraig Branley, Cllr Declan Bree, Cllr Ita Fox and Margaret McConnell, Senior Executive Officer.

### **Staff Newsletter**

Four issues of the staff newsletter 'Contact' were produced by the Communications Office in association with the Partnership Facilitator and staff of Sligo Borough Council. In 2003 it is proposed to place a public edition of the newsletter on Sligo County Council's website.

**Open Local Government Initiative**

As part of Sligo County Council's Open Local Government Initiative, the Communications Office invited students from local schools to visit our offices and attend the monthly meeting of the Council. The students are also given a presentation on the role of the Authority in their community. Among the schools hosted under the scheme were Mercy College, Sligo and Colaiste Mhuire, Ballymote.

**Website**

Sligo County Council's Official website was launched in December 2001. During 2002 the Communications Office worked with staff in the Information Technology (IT) section to enhance the site, and to ensure that our customers can access information on the full range of services offered by the Council.



*St. Attracta's, Tubbercurry display their project during their visit to County Hall*



*Cathairleach's Awards - 2002 marked the second year of the Awards scheme*



*Four issues of the staff newsletter 'Contact' were produced in 2002*

# County Library and Museum Services 2002



*Students from Knockminna Primary School visit  
Sligo County Library*

The implementation of the Library Development Plan 2001 - 2005 continued apace in 2002 with the renovation of Enniscrone Branch Library and the completion of Tubbercurry Community Library. Both new libraries provides the Library Service with an opportunity to expand our services to our growing number of customers throughout the county. One of our main objectives has been to increase access to Library services, this has been achieved with six day opening, including late evenings and Saturdays in Enniscrone.

### Customer Service Plus Survey

Sligo County Library participated in 2002 in a Public Library User Survey entitled PLUS. This Public Library User Survey is a national survey which is taking place in all public libraries in Ireland during January and February of 2002.

The first part of this survey, a visitor count, took place the week beginning Monday January 21st 2002 to Saturday January 26th 2002. The next stage involved the issuing of questionnaires to customers using the libraries. These questionnaires were designed to explore how well the library service meets the needs of the public.

The table below outlines the total number of visitors to each of the Library's five service points in County Sligo.

WEEKLY TOTALS			
	Adults	Children	Total
Stephen Street	1221	202	1423
Westward	248	----	248
Ballymote	74	63	137
Tubbercurry	21	17	38
Enniscrone	61	34	95
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1625</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>1941</b>

Sample size of Users of the Branch Network on the week beginning 22nd. Jan 2002:-

Tuesday Jan 22	333	(84 Juvenile)
Wednesday Jan 23	317	(88 Juvenile)
Thursday Jan 24	260	(60 Juvenile)
Friday Jan 25	350	(91 Juvenile)
Saturday Jan 26	730	(294 Juvenile)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>(617 Juvenile)</b>



**On foot of the questionnaire An Chomhairle Leabharlanna issued a report which indicated an overall satisfaction rate of over 80%.**

### Babies Love Books 2002

Sligo County Library launched its 'Babies Love Books' 2002 pack in January. The launch took place at Sligo Family Centre, The Mall, Sligo. Among those attending were Cllr. Tony McLoughlin Chairman of Sligo County Council, Mr. Donal Tinney County Librarian, Ms. Pauline Brennan Executive Librarian, Ms. Sheila Boles Public Health Nurse NWHBoard and Ms. Bridie Walsh Co-Ordinator of Sligo Family Centre. In addition, a number of parents and children from Sligo Family Centre's Parent and Toddler Group attended the launch.

The pack stems from a National Reading Initiative project funded by the Department of Education and Science working in partnership with the Public Libraries and Health Authorities. It contains five books which have been specially chosen for parents to share and enjoy with their baby, together with some Guidelines for Parents.

Sligo Library Service feels strongly that books should play a crucial role in children's lives from the very first months of babyhood.

### Childrens' Bookweek 2002

#### Competitions Lectures

Children's Book Festival took place in 2002 from Wednesday October 16th to Thursday October 31st.

The Children's Book Festival is a nationwide celebration of reading and books and aims to promote reading as a fun activity. The emphasis in 2002 was on bringing reading alive and making it an enjoyable experience for all children.

On Wednesday October 16th Sligo City Library hosted one of Ireland's foremost authorities on reading and literacy, Dr. Fidelma Healy Eames, who gave a very comprehensive presentation entitled 'Motivating Children to Read - What Can Parents Do?' Parents play a very important role where reading is concerned and encouraging children to develop a love of books and an interest in reading helps literacy levels and makes a huge difference to their children's future.



*Dr Fidelma Healy Eames delivering her lecture in Sligo County Library entitled 'Motivating Children to Read - What parents can do.'*

The list of activities organised for children throughout Childrens' Bookweek included, 'Fairytale Frolics', Quizzes, 'Librarian for a Day', Harry Potter Puzzlers and to celebrate 100 years of Peter Rabbit, a Peter Rabbit Colouring Competition.

There was also a special Library Competition where children could vote for their favourite children's book. Childrens votes were accepted either online on the Children's Books Ireland website or by paper ballot.

A special Book Fest recommended reading guide was also provided for Childrens Bookweek throughout the Library Branch network. This 64 page guide recommended books for various age groups and also include a section on Information Books.

### Cultural Heritage Project

Sligo County Library is playing a leading role in the National Thematic Web based project which can be viewed at [www.askaboutireland.com](http://www.askaboutireland.com). The goal is to commence a nationwide process of digitising Local History material and providing access to this material on the Internet. The theme chosen nationally was the Big House which in Sligo's case is Lissadell House and the Gore Booth sisters.

### Playschools and Summer Camps

Some of the many successful partnerships established in 2002 were with Playschools and summer camps throughout the county, many of whom were supplied with bookstock and venues for activities.

### County Museum 2002

The principal development in 2002 with regard to the Museum service was the finalisation of the plans for the new County Museum. The County Museum made strides in 2002 to improve upon its collection of artefacts, through the purchase of furniture from the Lissadell House clearance sale.



*Sligo winners of Childrens' Book Festival competition pictured with Cathaoirleach Cllr. Padraig Branley*

**Development of new Sligo Branch Library and Headquarters, County Sligo Museum, new Arts Office and new Archive**

Funding in the sum of €4.285m has been approved by the Department of the Environment & Local Government towards the putting in place of a new Sligo Branch Library and Headquarters for Sligo Town, which is expected to provide the people of Sligo and visitors to the area with a modern community based library service.

A grant of a maximum of €2,920,398 has been approved under the ACCESS Programme in respect of the provision of a new premises for the Sligo County Museum to provide a high standard dedicated institution within County Sligo to research, collect and display the museums collection.

Sligo County Council has further made application to the Department of the Environment & Local Government for a sum representing 25% of the cost of putting in place a County Archive to fulfil Sligo's need for a proper storage accommodation for its Architectural material.

As part of the development of this visionary project for a cultural corridor at this location, the Council proposes to locate its Arts Office within the cultural complex of the library, museum and archive, retaining a visibility and accessibility within the scheme. There is no grant funding available for this element of the project.

The project is proceeding on a phased basis. It is proposed that Phase 1 will consist of the new Sligo Branch Library and Headquarters and the County Museum together with the integrated strategy which will be defined by the framework plan that sets the layout for Phase 2 facilities to include civic space, future commercial development, a possible tourism flagship project and carparking. The development of the Archive and Arts Office will form the basis of the Phase 2 development.

Sligo County Council/Sligo Borough Council held a public information meeting in the Model & Niland Centre on 5th December, 2002 to inform the public on the current status of the project. The meeting was attended by a considerable number of local residents and interested parties.

The Architectural Design Competition for the project process has commenced. The advertising of the competition in local, national and EU press took place in December 2002. Stage 1 of the competition inviting interested competitors opened on 17th January, 2003, and closes on 24th March, 2003. The assessment of the Stage 1 applicants is to take place on 27/28 March 2003 following which the Stage 2 competition will be open to selected applicants. This process should close in early June 2003 with the assessment of the Stage 2 submissions. It is then intended that the project will go through the planning process.

In relation to the finances, the total net construction cost exclusive of VAT for the project has been set at €7.3m. This allows for €4.5m net construction cost for the Library and €2.8m. net construction cost for the museum.

The Council in setting these costs remains conscious of its contribution to be made over and above the grant funding (€4.285m for Library and €2.9m. for the Museum) which has been secured, while also striving to meet the objective of the provision of a high standard of cultural facilities in a framework of sustainable commercial opportunities.



## Partnership

The Partnership Committee, which consists of management and unions, received over €100,000 for Partnership projects from the Umbrella Group LANPAG (Local Authority National Partnership Advisory Group) in 2002. The following projects qualified for funding:

- Computer training for outdoor staff
- Customer service
- European Computer Driving Licence
- Health Screening Programme
- IT equipment for outdoor staff
- Mobile facilities for outdoor staff
- Return to Learning
- Staff Magazine - 'Contact'

Partnership activity in 2002 was largely project driven. Included among the initiatives was

- Flexitime/Creche working group
- Following consultations with staff and management, the group produced an interim report on Flexitime.
- Long Service Awards were hosted to honour long serving staff in the Ballymote and Tubbercurry areas.
- The 'Return to Learning' Programme commenced at the end of 2002.
- Four issues of the staff magazine 'Contact' were produced in 2002; The editorial team work with the Partnership Committee in the preparation of the publication.
- The Pilot Mobile Welfare facility was launched in the Sligo Area and deemed a success by all concerned.
- The 'Customer Service' project in the Infrastructure Directorate, carried out in conjunction with the Institute of Public Administration, concluded in 2002.

## Register of Electors

The Council prepares the Register of Electors annually. There are 46,377 electors registered on the 2002/2003 Register. The cost of preparing the Register is borne by the council and is estimated to be €80,310 in 2003.

### Number of Electors by Area

Ballymote	9,305
Dromore	5,265
Sligo/Drumcliffe	11,384
Sligo/Strandhill	13,387
Tubbercurry	6,879



# Sligo Fire Authority



*Firefighting training at Sligo Fire Station*

The Fire Authority provides a number of services ranging from the emergency response to incidents such as fires, road traffic accidents, air accidents, chemical incidents and more recently biological incidents, to ensuring the fire safety of the built environment through certification, inspection and enforcement. The Authority also provides information and training on fire safety management and fire fighting.

In order to provide this service in an efficient manner throughout the county there are Fire Brigade Stations in Sligo, Ballymote, Tubbercurry and Enniscrone. **These Brigades attended over 750 incidents in the last year.**



This reflects the continued expansion of our commercial and residential building stock and the increase in traffic using our road network.

There were several large commercial fires this year, again emphasising the need for an efficient and effective fire service and the need for preventative measures. There has been an increase in fires caused by arsonists. These pose a serious threat to life and property and the cost can also result in the loss of jobs within the community.

People must remain vigilant in the home, as this is where our most life threatening fires occur each year. The loss caused by these incidents is enormous, tragically one person died in Sligo as a result of such fires in 2002.

The fire authority attended numerous other 'special services' incidents that resulted in six fatalities and emphasises the multi functionary role of the service provided.

## Training

There is a very strict training regime in the Fire Brigade as is necessitated by the sometimes difficult and dangerous environment in which Firefighters work. Firefighters undergo over one hundred hours training every year, this includes the latest advances in techniques used to tackle the fires known as 'flashover' and 'backdraft' and the latest methods of extraction of casualties from vehicles involved in incidents. This is particularly important in view of the advances in active safety technology employed in the modern car, airbags and seatbelt tensioning do save lives the instant an accident occurs but can pose a serious threat to rescue personnel. The Brigade now holds 'block' R.T.A. training over a number of days, in which the necessary skills are learned and practised.

Sligo is now a 'hot fire' training centre and offers this facility nationally for the training of Firefighters throughout the country. This facility is used to demonstrate and train Firefighters in the latest techniques and equipment necessary for their protection and the saving of life. The fire service now has 16 nationally qualified medical first responders among its staff.

The Breathing Apparatus training centre has been used as a national training centre following modernisation and the installation of a 'gas fire system', this is used to train staff in proper search and rescue techniques and in the use of Breathing Apparatus in fire situations.

Local industries have also facilitated the Brigade in carrying out Pre-Fire Training in which various types of incidents are staged and training undertaken so that should a similar incident occur the Brigade will have the necessary skills and resources needed to deal with it in an efficient and professional manner.

### Community Fire Safety

National Fire Safety Week proved very successful and involved local schools in an art competition depicting fire safety. The prizes included computers funded by the National Safety Council. The Cathaoirleach Cllr. Padraig Branley, Mayor Cllr. Tommy Cummins and Mr Pat Forkan, Director of Services selected the best pictures for inclusion in a calendar produced for 2003.

Many other initiatives were undertaken throughout the year. Talks were given to the elderly and other groups on fire safety. **Groups of primary school students visited the stations and watched fire safety videos and demonstrations, in all approximately 600 students visited the station.** Groups from secondary schools, Sligo Institute of Technology and the local community also participated in courses held in the Fire Station.

These courses reinforce the need for vigilance when it comes to fire safety and brings this message back to their homes, schools and workplaces.

**The Fire Authority processed over 130 Fire Safety Certificate applications as required under Building Control Legislation and dealt with in excess of 200 Planning Applications under the Planning Acts.**

These applications covered a wide range of premises from Apartment Blocks, Hotels, and Shops to large commercial developments.

Inspections were carried out under the various Licensing legislation covering nearly every type of premises from petroleum stores to dance licences. The Fire Authority made comment on all transfer of licences before the courts and carried out numerous during performance inspections of dance halls, public houses and workplaces and indeed successfully prosecuted where satisfactory standards were not achieved. Generally the level of co-operation received when advice is given is very good.

### Fire Stations and Appliances

The provision of a new Fire Engine in the Sligo Fire Station Head Quarters was a welcome addition and will provide the community with the very best equipment available. The expected provision of funding for the refurbishment of the Hydraulic Platform later this year will be another milestone in the continued upgrading of the equipment provided.

Plans are being prepared for the upgrading of Sligo Fire Station in line with current requirements and this matter is being progressed as is the provision of the new Fire Station in Ballymote.

### Communications

The 24 hour Watchroom at Headquarters deals with all emergency calls for the Borough and County. The proposed Computer Aided Mobilisation Project is expected to be available later this year. The professionalism of the Watchroom Personnel, who deal with all emergency calls received and provide assistance through backup services and information to field operations, ensures that incidents are dealt with in an efficient manner.



Paul Coyle CFO, Mayor Cllr Tommy Cummins, Paul Ryan, ACFO, Cathaoirleach Cllr. Padraig Branley and Pat Forkan, Director of Services pictured at the arrival of new fire engine



Eurocopter overruns at Strandhill Airport



Joe Feeney, Sligo Fire Service, receiving his 30 year service award from Minister for the Environment and Local Government, Martin Cullen, TD.

Other Fire Services personnel who received long service awards were Brendan Lavin (30 years) and Ross Levis (20 years). Director of Services Pat Forkan (former Chief Fire Officer) received an award for 20 years service.

# Special Projects Office



*Joint meeting of Omagh District Council and Sligo County Council*

## **Omagh Sligo Partnership**

The Omagh Sligo Partnership works to contribute to the economic and social development of the Sligo and Omagh areas by promoting beneficial cross border business, enterprise, community, cultural and public sector initiatives.

In 2002 the Partnership worked to develop a four year strategy to address the needs of the two areas in an action oriented way that promotes mutual understanding and respect and ensures tangible benefits for all.

In preparing their strategy the Partnership recognised that developments in the political and economic climate both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have opened up a range of new opportunities for cross border co-operation. The Common Chapter of the NDP and the Northern Ireland Structural fund plan provided the framework for developing new and existing plans for co-operation on an all-island and a cross border basis. It is within this environment that the Omagh Sligo Partnership sees its role as a facilitator, deliverer and initiator of cross border development opportunities and initiatives. The Strategy and associated Action Plan is presented under three themes

- Enterprise and Economic Development
- Community Development
- Innovation in Cross Border Development

A funding application has been submitted to Co-operation Ireland under the EU Peace Programme and we await its outcome.

Full details of the Partnership and their proposed strategy can be obtained from the Special Projects Office, Sligo County Council.

## **Joint Meetings**

As a result of a resolution passed by Omagh District Council in 2002 a series of Joint Meetings began between Sligo County Council and Omagh District Council.

The purpose of the initiative is to develop a greater mutual understanding of common local government concerns. The first meeting, held in October, discussed the Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland and also looked at potential for collaborative actions in the future.

A series of meetings will be held in 2003 to progress the sharing of knowledge and information and development and implementation of joint projects.

## **BorderTrek 2002**

Ireland's premier cycling challenge for peace, BorderTrek took place over the 22nd and 23rd June 2002. Over 1200 cyclists took on the various Treks and despite some rain, the event finished in glorious sunshine in Enniskillen. The event was successful and considerable funds were raised in support of Co-operation Ireland's peace-building programmes for young people.

For 2002 Co-operation Ireland built on the success of previous years, with a new 'start leg' from Derry which moved down Co. Donegal, through Letterkenny, Ballybofey and Donegal town before meeting up with those on the original route in Ballyshannon. This route was designed to attract more cyclists and included a family fun cycle.

2002 also saw the introduction of MicroTrek, a 40 mile cycle from Cavan to Enniskillen. This offered the amateur cyclists an opportunity to join in the fun and perhaps prepare them for the full event in 2003.

Sligo County Council was again pleased to offer its support to this worthwhile event and plan a similar involvement in 2003.

**Sligo County Council  
- A Focus on Customer Service**

Sligo County Council recognises the importance of customer care and the need to provide a customer focused delivery. Management and staff continue to work to ensure that customer needs are met through maximising of resources and the promotion of best value and quality in service delivery.

In 2002, with assistance from the Services Initiative Fund of the Department of Environment and Local Government, Sligo County Council commenced the implementation of an initiative which would ensure a customer focus service delivery by all staff, promote the importance of communication both internally and externally, promote access to services and ensure ongoing improvements in service delivery.

Since it commenced a number of key actions have been taken including the development of an updated Website ([www.sligococo.ie](http://www.sligococo.ie)), the purchase of seven touch screen systems to be located throughout the county to provide up-to-date information on council services and activities, the publication of a number of information booklets on Community and Enterprise, Environment and Sligo City and the provision of Customer Care training to a large number of staff.

2003 will see the completion of this initiative with additional resources for training, document and imaging management and the development of a customer charter and complaints procedure.



*Launch of Sligo 'leg' of BorderTrek 2002*

# Human Resources



*Paul Cunningham showing staff around Cairns Hill Water Treatment Plant.*

With 465 staff employed at December, 2002, Sligo County Council is one of the largest employers in the North West Region. The Council recognises the importance of its workforce, and the Human Resources Section endeavours to recruit qualified staff and provide appropriate incentives and a suitable work environment to retain these staff. Benefits offered include flexible working hours, contributory pension scheme, generous annual leave, job-sharing, training and development and promotional opportunities.



Sligo County Council's H.R. Section is responsible for recruitment both for the Council and for Sligo Borough Council. **In 2002, 39 Interview Boards (93 in 2001) were set up to interview candidates to fill various vacancies in both local authorities (both external and internal competitions).** These independent interview boards were selected by the County Manager to recommend the most suitable candidates for employment or promotion in accordance with national regulations.



	Male	Female	Total
Candidates interviewed	155	143	298
Candidates appointed	52	31	83

During 2002 as in previous years, the Council operated a Work Placement Scheme for students in schools and colleges with 19 students being given the opportunity to work in various areas of Sligo County Council. In addition, 14 students pursuing engineering/planning qualifications availed of work experience programmes during the summer. These schemes are extremely beneficial to both parties involved, as both knowledge and new ideas are exchanged.

The Human Resources Section also implements on a day to day basis the following functions:

- Industrial Relations,
- Development and implementation of staff training,
- Staff Welfare.

## Industrial Relations

During 2002 Sligo County Council through the H.R. Section continued to work with Unions and staff representatives to achieve good working relationships and to reconcile conflicting demands with the minimum of conflict. This was maintained by

- Processing/negotiation of Union Claims,
- Implementing nationally negotiated or local agreements on pay and conditions of employment,



Members of staff on a visit to County Sligo Folk Park in Riverstown as part of their induction training



Brendan O'Dowd, Clerk of Works, leading a staff tour of the One Stop Shop Tubbercurry



Pat Doyle being presented his EDCL certificate from Cathaoirleach Cllr. Branley and Mayor Cllr Cummins

- Preparing cases for the Labour Relations Commission, Labour Court, Rights Commissioners or other statutory appeal tribunal hearings

**Development and implementation of staff training**

A Training & Development Officer for both Sligo Authorities was appointed in August. His role is to formulate and implement training strategies that are integrated with corporate strategies and overall Human Resource policy and to improve individual and organisational effectiveness through the identification of training needs and the provision of further education and training opportunities for all members of staff.

During September presentations were given to staff at Partnership Meetings at various venues in the County and in the Borough Council, which covered background to the training function and the role of the training officer in such areas as:

- Preparing Annual Training and Development plans
- Implementing training initiatives
- Developing in-house expertise

One of the first tasks was to set up a training Programme for the rest of the year.

The initial focus was to put together and deliver an Induction Training Programme for all staff recruited in recent years who had not received formal induction training.

This programme which included a Customer Service module was delivered over three weeks at the end of October and early November, 2002. 70 staff attended the programme and the feedback was very positive.

Other courses held were as follows:

- Effective Writing Skills
- Supervisory Skills Training
- Briefing on Building Regulations
- Workshops on Awareness of Bullying
- Quickstart Management

The year 2002 saw the completion of A Training and Development Needs Analysis by the Institute of Public Administration. Sligo County Council and three other local authorities acted as Pilots for the project. The results of this Analysis will act as a catalyst for implementing the Training and Development Plan for all staff and will be facilitated by the Training and Development Officer.

A Local Training Committee was formed in October, 2002 with representatives from the various disciplines across the organisation and its role includes co-ordinating the implementation of Training activities and ensuring that the training meets the needs of both Local Authorities. This Committee met on two occasions during the year.

Over the coming year, it is intended to focus on the following:

- Customer Service Training
- Management/Leadership Training
- Personal Development - Supervisory Skills (for Indoor & Outdoor staff)
- Staff Information Sessions i.e. Awareness of policies/Legislation.
- Computer Training (for Indoor and Outdoor Staff)
- Return to Learning Programme
- Health & Safety Training
- Technical Training (Map Info.)

Staff continue to undertake the Certificate course in Local Government Studies run in conjunction with the Institute of Public Administration. To date over 100 staff have successfully completed the course, with 23 currently studying for same. In addition, 4 staff are currently undertaking a Higher Certificate course in Local Government Studies. In addition, the Council has facilitated over 200 staff members in completing the ECDL course to date. It is proposed to offer the course to a further 50 staff in 2003.

A comprehensive programme of 'Roadwork Training' has been developed on a partnership basis by FAS, Department of the Environment and Local Government, Local Authority Personnel, The National Roads Authority and the Local Government Management Services Board. The training programmes are based on a modular format, which allows participants flexibility and facilitates the process of staff training without too much time away from operational tasks.

A key aspect of the training is that staff who complete a number of core modules will qualify for a National Certificate for Road Workers which is awarded by FETAC.

During 2002, the following progress was achieved in the delivery of the modules set out as follows:



**Staff appointed in 2002: Left: Aileen Noone, Clerical Officer; Right: Ray Lavin, Financial/Management Accountant**

Course	No. of Attendees
Safepass	90
Signing, Lighting and Guarding at Roadworks	8

In 2003, the Council will continue to deliver the above courses and also propose to add the following new modules:

- Winter Maintenance
- Flexible pavement construction

A Staff Education Scheme will be introduced in 2003 to assist staff with their self-development. Funding towards part-time courses which are relevant, and provide a recognised second or third level qualification will be provided (subject to budget).

### Staff Welfare

The Human Resources Section in 2002 continued to assist staff members in making available to them opportunities to Job-Share, take Career Breaks, Special Leave, Parental Leave, etc.

Sligo County Council's Human Resources Section has developed and put in place in accordance with employment equality legislation, policies with regard to Workplace Bullying and Sexual Harassment.

An equal opportunities policy is also in place which outlines the Council's commitment to treat and develop all its staff equally irrespective of sex, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, colour, race, nationality or membership of the travelling community.

The Human Resource Section in 2002 has continued to work with the Equality Action Team to deal with all equality issues in a fair and impartial manner.

### Long Service Awards

The Human Resources Section, in conjunction with the Partnership Committee, during 2002, organised presentations to staff in recognition of their service to the local authority. Between 2002 and early 2003, 168 awards have been presented.

### Sligo County Council Staff

Sligo County Council extends its appreciation to the following staff who retired or left the service in 2002.

- Kenneth McKenna, Driver
- Denis O'Hara, Craftworker
- Patrick Hoey, Plant Operator
- Ross Levis, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
- Patrick Carr, General Operative
- Mark Henry, Retained Firefighter
- Mickey Curran, Retained Firefighter
- Marie Casey, Student Replacement IT
- Maura Barnacle, Staff Officer



**Human Resources Staff Sligo County Council  
Back Row L-R: Joe Gethin, Cyril McNamara, Seamus de Faoite, Joe Murphy. Front Row L-R: Marcella Healy, Margaret Lambert, Hazel Clancy, Eithne Christie.**

- Patricia Candon, Clerical Officer
- Sally Ward, Branch Librarian
- Una McCarthy, Director of Model Arts and Niland Gallery
- Marian Neary, Clerical Officer
- Maureen Bloxham, Clerical Officer
- Damien Doherty, Community and Enterprise Development Officer
- Eileen Gibbons Senior Executive Technician
- Enda O'Brien, Temporary Assistant Engineer
- Catherine McGuinn Clerical Officer
- Catherine Gallagher, Clerical Officer
- Karen Kilfeather, Clerical Officer
- Paul Cullen, Architectural/Building Technician Grade 11

Sligo County Council also remembers former staff who passed away during 2002.

- William Woods
- Paul Clarke
- Michael McTieman
- Frank Kennedy

Sligo County Council welcomes the following staff who joined during 2002.

- Terry Rooney, Administrative Officer
- Patrick Clerkin, Clerical Officer
- Aileen Noone, Clerical Officer
- Bartley Gavin, Senior Executive Engineer
- Barry Ward, Assistant Planner
- Derek Sweeney, Clerical Officer
- Fionnuala Duignan, Clerical Officer
- Brian Flynn, Executive Engineer
- Joanne McGonigle, Assistant Staff Officer
- Karen Elliott, Clerical Officer
- Ray Lavin, Financial Management Accountant
- Michael Guckian, Civil Technician



**Retired, Una McCarthy, former Director of Model Arts and Niland Gallery**

# Rural Water Programme



*Lough Easkey*

## **Small Water and Sewerage Schemes**

### **Corrick**

The Corrick Group Water Scheme was completed in 2002. The scheme provides water to 84 households, and is served by 6 uphill springs with back-up supply from Lough Arrow.

The work consisted in the upgrading of the existing scheme, which was constructed in the late 1970's, and was no longer capable of providing an adequate supply of water. Approximately 6500 metres of watermains were replaced, and a new reservoir constructed.

The total cost of the scheme was €653,155 of which 85% was funded by capital grant (€555,182).

### **Castletown**

The work on Castletown Group Scheme is due for completion in 2003; Over 6000 metres of pipeline will be provided, together with a service reservoir, access road and intake works. The scheme will serve 50 households, and will receive capital grants of €342,209.98. The total estimated cost of the work is €433,219.80.

### **Ballygawley**

The Ballygawley scheme will serve in excess of 250 households, and will entail the installation of over 9000 metres of

pipelines. The scheme is estimated to cost €1.3million, of which 85% will be funded by capital grants.

### **Carrowlobaun**

Work on the Carrowlobaun Scheme commenced in 2002, and will cost €79,372. Grant assistance will amount to €64,758 - or 85% of the cost. It is proposed to extend the scheme into the village of Aclare; This will not only boost the water supply to the village, but will also enable a further group scheme to get underway in the Belclare area.

### **Caltragh**

The scheme was constructed to provide an adequate supply of water to six houses - some of the householders had no supply, others were taking water from a nearby river. 1,600 metres of pipeline were laid, with capital grant funding of €30,302.54.

### **Emlaghfad**

Before the Emlaghfad scheme was provided, householders were dependant on unsatisfactory wells. The new scheme serves 15 households, and involved the laying of 3209 metres of watermains. Capital grant assistance amounted to €97,134.96, with the total cost of the scheme being €125,167.37



**Lacken**

This scheme was completed in February 2002. It serves eleven households, and involved the laying of 1590 meters of watermain. Prior to the construction of the scheme, householders were reliant on an unsatisfactory supply from a local well. The cost of the scheme is €52,072.38, of which €44,261.52 will be met by capital grant.

**Water Metering Pilot Programme**

This initiative is being undertaken as part of the Government's 'Water Services pricing policy.' This policy has as its objective that Local Authorities will achieve full cost recovery from the non-domestic sector for the provision of water and waste water services for that sector.

The Sligo Local Authorities have been chosen to pilot the project, with the aim of the pilot programme being..

- To procure a comprehensive water metering and billing service of the non-domestic sector for Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council.
- To report on the project in a manner that will assist national rollout of water metering in the non-domestic sector.

All non-domestic consumers in the country will be metered and charged for water by 2006. Non-domestic sector will be paying for water supplied for that sector - while Local Authorities are prohibited by law for charging for a domestic supply, the deficit involved is met by the Department of Environment and Local Government.

The new system is considered more equitable in that customers will only be charged for the amount of water consumed. The charge to be levied will also be notified to consumers well in advance of its implementation in order that this cost can be factored into their business plans/projections.

While the determination of a pricing policy is a complex issue, involving apportionment of many capital and operational costs, the process is completely open and transparent - it will be open to IBEC or any of its members to examine the mechanisms and practices used in arriving at a costing.

Metering of all non-domestic consumers is due to be completed by 2006, and it is expected that on completion of the pilot programme that the new pricing policy will be implemented in Sligo in 2004.

Expressions of interest for the installation/reading of meters are being prepared with the aim of proceeding to tender stage in summer 2003.



# County Sligo Heritage Office



*Brian Rogers, thatcher at thatched cottage, Carrownacreevy, Beltra*

During 2002, the Heritage Office continued to promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in the heritage of County Sligo. The Office seeks to facilitate appreciation and enjoyment of the national heritage and in doing so co-operate with other bodies in the promotion of its functions. The Heritage Office is committed to providing high quality advice on all matters relating to heritage issues. It also seeks to assist the development of the Local Authority's heritage strategy and policy and to advise on heritage impacts and consequences. During 2002 the Heritage Office has continued to play a role in developing and implementing heritage policy in County Sligo.

The launch of the National Heritage Plan and National Biodiversity Plan during 2002 set out for the first time a

comprehensive strategy and framework for the protection and management of the heritage resource in Ireland. The National Heritage Plan recognises the increased focus on, and public support for the protection of our heritage. It recognises that heritage is valued by people not only for its intrinsic value, but for its economic, cultural and recreational benefits. Central to the delivery of both national plans is the increased role of Local Authorities in managing heritage at local level. This process has begun in Sligo through the establishment of the County Sligo Heritage Forum in 2001 and the launch of the first County Heritage Plan for Sligo in 2002. **Sligo was one of the first counties in Ireland to produce a Heritage Plan.**





*Above: Markree Castle, Collooney*

*Left: Monastic Enclosure, Inishmurray, Co. Sligo*

### **County Sligo Heritage Forum**

The County Sligo Heritage Forum membership is drawn from Local Government, Local Development, State agencies, Educational Institutes, Farming Sector, Community and Voluntary Sector and the County Sligo Heritage Groups. Through the County Sligo Heritage Plan 2002-2006 the members work to secure benefits for the heritage of County Sligo and seek to increase awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of it for all.

### **County Sligo Heritage Plan 2002-2006**

The Heritage Plan, developed by the County Sligo Heritage Forum and co-ordinated by the Sligo Local Authorities was launched in March 2002 and heralded a new period for heritage conservation at local level, based on partnership and co-ordination. Until now, the care of heritage has been the remit of different agencies, interest groups and individuals, but this has occurred in the absence of a strategic overview of the heritage issues pertaining to Sligo specifically.

In drawing up the County Sligo Heritage Plan the Forum entered a broad consultation process. Through extensive public consultation, the heritage priorities and objectives for County Sligo were identified and the actions needed to achieve these were set out over the five-year period of the Plan. It is the first time that the diverse concepts regarding the value of and future of Sligo's heritage will be co-ordinated and articulated in a strategic manner. In doing so, it will reinforce the value of preparing a single strategy and framework for heritage management locally. Four key performance areas have been established to facilitate structured heritage development over the next five years, these are:

#### **Heritage information - collection and dissemination**

To advise on and contribute to, the development of a comprehensive heritage database for Sligo and to ensure the effective use of heritage data in policy formulation and decision-making.

#### **Key Initiatives in 2002**

- Continued to collate information on Sligo's Heritage Resource
- Initiated an audit of buildings associated with Yeats in County Sligo
- Commissioned a review of papers relating to Sligo's Natural Heritage Resource

#### **Local Authorities and heritage management**

The Office provides high quality advice to the Sligo Local Authorities on policies and priorities relating to Sligo's heritage and to support them in the integration of heritage conservation into their activities.

#### **Key Initiatives in 2002**

- Heritage training for Sligo Local Authorities - Lime Workshops with Pat McAfee
- Provision of heritage advice to Local Authority Staff
- Provision of advice on Heritage policy for Development Plans
- Supported Sligo Local Authorities in the development of a Draft Record of protected Structures for the draft Sligo and Environs Plan
- Initiated the development of an Indicative Forestry Strategy with The Forest Service
- Conservation reports commissioned for Sligo Cemetery Lodge and Ballindoon Abbey
- Conservation Plan commissioned for Sligo Gaol in association with The Heritage Council



*Pat McAfee, stonemason and Sligo County Council staff participating in a two day stone wall building course during 2002*



*Wolfe Tone Street, Sligo*

### Raising awareness and appreciation of our heritage

To facilitate awareness, understanding and enjoyment of Sligo's heritage among the community.

#### Key Initiatives in 2002

- Continued to support the Local Authority in developing a county museum service
- Initiated a Pilot Monument Watch in County Sligo
- Continued to promote heritage awareness through Heritage Matters (a quarterly newsletter), the development of the Heritage Office website, a Sligo Heritage Seminar (November 2002), four exhibitions and press releases throughout the year
- Development of publications on hedgerow conservation, bat conservation and protected structures in association with the Heritage Council
- Provision of advice to communities undertaking heritage projects
- Development of the Heritage and IT programme and commissioning a heritage education audit of Co. Sligo through the appointment of a Heritage Education Co-ordinator

### Best practice in heritage conservation and management

To promote, and advise on, best practice standards for heritage conservation and management.

#### Key Initiatives in 2002

- **Two village design statements completed for Ballisodare and Grange, with a further two being commissioned in Easkey and Collooney**



The County Sligo heritage Programme is funded primarily by the Sligo Local Authorities and The Heritage Council. In each programme area, partnerships have been developed and additional funding accessed from relevant sources.

#### County Heritage Office Staff

Siobhán Ryan, Heritage Officer  
Sinead McGrath, Administration  
Lisa Henry, Heritage Education Co-ordinator  
Mark Keane, Field Monument Advisor

The County Sligo Heritage Office may be contacted through:  
**The Heritage Office, Sligo County Council, Riverside, Sligo.**  
**Telephone 071- 57444 / 57443 Fax 071-41119**  
**Email: heritage@sligococo.ie**  
**Website: www.sligococo.ie**

# Sligo Courthouse



## Sligo Courthouse re-opens its doors

The €7.3 million refurbishment of Sligo Courthouse is the most ambitious building project undertaken by the Courts Service in Ireland to date. The doors of this historic building were closed three years ago for the work to be carried out and they were officially opened to the public on 5th April 2002.

As one of the county's most striking buildings, the Courthouse remains an important landmark in both Sligo's landscape and history. It was designed by well known Dublin architect, J. Rawson Carroll, whose work also included Classiebawn Castle, Mullaghmore.

The official first opening was held on February 26th 1876. It is said that that the Courthouse was modelled on the Law Courts in London. Material employed in the construction included stone from Mount Charles, County Donegal, which is sandstone and therefore could be shaped into many ornate features that can still be admired today.

As the Courthouse was erected on the site of the old Courthouse and Gaol, an element of the Gaol was incorporated into the new building and the outline of the old cells can still be seen today.

The primary objective of the refurbishment of the Courthouse was to retain the unique style and qualities of the existing building. Architectural features were preserved, with all the original doors, wall panelling and courthouse furniture restored, but retained.

Enhancements to the historic building also included a new central staircase that leads from the front door to the Grand Jury Room - the venue for Sligo County Council's inaugural meeting over one hundred years ago - and two new court rooms, bringing the total number to four. The new Jury facilities, two new legal representatives rooms, new offices, restored Courtroom and new Family Court and High Court have been undertaken with a view to significantly improving the facilities for both the public and the legal profession.



Modernisation of Sligo Courthouse also includes the introduction of a video link system, enabling people to give evidence from other locations. Sligo has the distinction of being the first Courthouse outside Dublin to house this facility.

In addition, the new works have made the building accessible to people with disabilities and fully complies with Health and Safety Requirements.

The Design Team comprised of McCullough Mulvin Architects, Dublin, Kavanagh Mansfield & Partners, Dublin, Structural Engineers, Homan O'Brien Associates, Mechanical Engineers McCaul & Associates, Quantity Surveyors, Sligo and Historic Building Consultants, David Slattery, Dublin. Galway based company, Purcell Construction was awarded the main contract. Sligo County Council's Clerk of Works for the project was Brendan O'Dowd.

The refurbishments that have been carried out on the Courthouse have significantly enhanced the importance of Sligo as a Court venue. At the contract signing, Minister John O'Donoghue stated that he was confident that Sligo would have the best court facilities in the country. The project has further added to the civic transformation of Sligo, with the Sligo Local Authorities overseeing the development of the City Hall, County Hall and the newly refurbished Model Arts and Niland Gallery.



# Conferences and Seminars

## Attended by Councillors in 2002

**Kinsale Heritage Conference**  
Cork 4th - 6th January

**Planning Policy Seminar**  
Cavan 18th - 19th January

**Merriman Winter School**  
Cork 1st - 3rd February

**General Council of County Councils Conference**  
Cavan 7th - 8th February

**13th Colmcille Winter School**  
Gartan, Letterkenny  
22nd - 24th February

**Local Govt. Reform Conference**  
Minella Hotel, Clonmel  
1st - 2nd March

**Waste Management Conference**  
Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny  
13th - 15th March

**Association of Health Boards**  
Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney  
22nd - 23rd March

**LAMA Conference**  
Brandon Hotel, Tralee  
4th - 5th April

**Roscrea Conference**  
Cistercian Abbey, Roscrea  
5th - 7th April

**Barcelona Declaration Launch**  
Castlebar 12th April

**Rural Water Seminar**  
Longford 17th April

**Fed. of Local History Societies**  
Bray 4th - 5th April

**Survey Ireland Conference & Trade Exhibition**  
Dublin 20th - 21st May

**Cultural Tourism Conference**  
Kanturk, Cork 24th - 25th May

**18th Annual Environment Conference**  
Sherkin Island Marine Station  
Carrigaline, Cork 6th - 7th June

**Mid West Regional Authority Spatial Strategy Conference**  
Adare 14th - 15th June

**General Council of County Councils Conference**  
Donegal 14th - 15th June

**Irish Solar Energy Conference**  
Brandon Hotel, Tralee  
20th - 21st June

**Byrne Perry Summer School**  
Christian Bros. School, Gorey  
28th - 30th June

**International Humbert School**  
Ballina, 2nd - 7th July

**Planning for Alternative Rural Enterprise Conference**  
Oughterard 12th - 13th July  
**Dr. Douglas Hyde Conference**  
St. Nathy's College  
Ballaghaderreen 19th - 21st July

**Criminal Legislation Seminar**  
Trinity College Dublin 23rd July

**War Registers Triennial Conf.**  
DCU 3rd - 9th August

**Parnell Summer School**  
Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow  
11th - 16th August

**Merriman Summer School**  
Falls Hotel, Ennistymon,  
17th - 24th August

**BMW Regional Assembly Conf.**  
Portlaoise 12th September

**AMAI Conference**  
Castlecourt Hotel, Westport  
12th - 14th September

**Sport, Health & Rec. Conf.**  
Kilkee Bay Hotel, Clare  
19th - 21st September

**Urban Renewal Conference**  
Springfort Hotel, Mallow  
20th - 21st September

**Making Sense of Sellafeld**  
Royal Academy, Dublin  
26th September

**Confederation of European Councillors Conference**  
Slovakia 26th - 29th September

**IVEA Education Conference**  
Red Cow Hotel, Naas  
1st October

**Killimor Dev. Society Conf.**  
Portumna 3rd - 4th October

**Nice Treaty Seminar**  
Wicklow 11th October

**Harvest of the Sea Festival**  
Dun Chaoin, Kerry  
11th - 13th October

**Association of Irish Regions Conference**  
Tullamore 18th October

**Ireland's Transition to Renewable Energy Conf.**  
Thurles 30th Oct - 2nd Nov.

**Chambers of Commerce of Ireland Conference**  
Westport 1st - 2nd November

**Preaching in Medieval Ireland**  
Cistercian Abbey, Roscrea  
1st - 3rd November

**LAMA Winter Seminar**  
Dolmen Hotel, Carlow  
8th - 9th November

**Irish Association of Suicidology**  
Brandon Hotel, Tralee  
28th - 29th November

**Exploring Sport Tourism Conf.**  
Falls Hotel, Ennistymon,  
Clare 29th - 30th November

**IPA Finance & Policy Seminar**  
IPA Dublin  
30th November

# The Cathaoirleach's Year Photo Gallery



*Cathaoirleach with Civil Defence Officer Marion Davis and staff who received first aid certificates*



*The members of Sligo Green Dragon club visit the Council chamber*

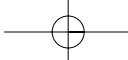


*The Cathaoirleach and Mayor Tommie Cummins welcome a visitor from Castlebay, Scotland to County Hall*



*Martin Enright signs the Visitors' Book accompanied by the Mayor and Cathaoirleach*





*The Cathaoirleach making a presentation to the Principal of Castlebay National School*



*The Cathaoirleach addressing a meeting of the Council*



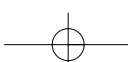
*Mickey Joe Harte visits County Hall*



*The Cathaoirleach with Michael Quigley, CEO, Sligo Leader Partnership, and Cllr. Michael Fleming*



*The Cathaoirleach welcomes the management and players of Sligo County Ladies team to County Hall*



# Séamus Egan



## **A man who is always on time, always there when needed. . .**

Séamus Egan, a fireman in Enniscrone, has built up this reputation over 25 years. He is married with three children and has just received his long service award from Sligo County Council. When pressed as to what motivates him, Séamus concedes that it is simply 'job satisfaction'. He undergoes in the region of one hundred hours of training a year, which would encompass RTA (Road Traffic Accident), BA (Breathing Apparatus), and TFH (Test Fire Hydrants). Seamus has also just finished a training course with Dublin Fire Brigade which covered all aspects of First Aid i.e. casualty handling, oxygen therapy, airway management, CPR.

Séamus has been involved for the last fifteen years with the local Civil Defence Branch, which is very demanding considering his already busy schedule. The Civil Defence organisation is called upon regularly for its skills in crowd control and ambulance duty and will have a pivotal role to play during the Special Olympics in summer 2003.

Over the last ten years Séamus has seen a lot of change within the fire service. One very significant improvement was the new fire station at Enniscrone, which opened in November 1996. The old station wasn't big enough to accommodate the Fire Engine. The new station houses a tea room, an important facility given the often traumatic nature of their line of work. Another important addition for the Fire Service was the setting up of the watchroom - or alert area - based at Sligo County Council headquarters. Originally two people had to man the phones 24 hours a day - there were no mobile phones then. Advances in technology have introduced vast improvements to the working life of the firemen.

Séamus also finds that the type of call outs have changed over the last years. The amount of chimney fires have reduced with the introduction of gas and oil heating. He also feels that road accidents have greatly reduced due to the introductions of the points system. Oil spillages and forest fires still occur regularly. One of the major incidents that Seamus recalls happened about ten years ago in a hotel in Enniscrone. If the fire had extended into the roof space it would have spread all the way down the street and caused terrible damage. Luckily the fireman got it under control and prevented it travelling.

Séamus and his team undergo a strict medical every two years. Fitness is of utmost importance as 5-10 minutes can make a big difference in an emergency. As Séamus said 'you don't put a man on your football team if he isn't fit'.

Seamus's commitment to his career is indicative of the professionalism and dedication within Sligo Fire Service, and indeed, among Fire Service personnel countrywide.

# Financial Statement

## Financial Overview



**Total expenditure on capital and revenue services in 2002 amounted to €90.4m (2001 €87.0m). Of this €42.8m. (2001 €38.1m) was spent on revenue services and €47.6m (2001 €48.9m) was spent on capital services.** Both figures indicate a very high level of activity during the year and the €47.6m spent on capital services is an indication of the Council's ongoing commitment to position Sligo and the North West region to have a good quality of physical, social and recreational infrastructure and a satisfactory range of ancillary services.

## Prompt Payments Act

The council's policy is to process payments in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

## Financial Management System

Much work continues to be done on the development of the financial managements systems in the local authorities.

As part of Better Local Government a major program was put in place to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness in local authorities. In relation to the finance function this involved enabling it to provide a more professional role in the management of its finances.

The Department of the Environment and Local Government introduced a new financial management system (FMS). This involved the introduction of a full double - entry system of accounts operated on the accruals principle which replaced the traditional approach of preparing accounts on a receipt and expenditure basis. The old system was an outdated, single entry, cash based system which contained a number of drawbacks. It is also proposed to introduce a new costing system to adequately generate information on the true cost of providing a service.

These systems will provide the financial information necessary for enhanced planning and decision making. They will also offer the opportunities for enhanced efficiencies and value for money through the automation of predominately manual processes and increased systems integration. Phase 1 of the FMS (Agresso) rolled out in April 2001 and concentrated on the purchase to pay cycle and stock incorporating creditors and accruals. Phase 2 of this new financial management system - Accounting for Income and the take on of Debtor balances is being implemented during April - June 2003.

The structure of the Annual Financial Statement (AFS) has been changed to bring it into line with modern reporting formats and structures. The notes to the accounts will support the two main schedules that now form the financial accounts (the Revenue Account Statement and Statement of Balances). All of the remaining schedules that form part of the existing format of the AFS will now be included as appendices.

These changes both to the format and content of the AFS for 2002 are as follows:

- Changes to the structure of the AFS
- Addition and deletion of a small number of schedules
- Update on accounting policies
- Inclusion of additional notes to the accounts.

A limited form of asset accounting relating to purchased assets was introduced in 2001 following the implementation of the new system Agresso. This is now being extended. The current target from the Department is to have the AFS for 2003 prepared on an accrual basis, incorporating a balance sheet that will include all assets both historical and current. The Capital Account will be de-aggregated and shown under various assets, liabilities and reserves in the balance sheet.

	Revenue Account		Capital Account		Totals	
	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001
	€	€	€	€	e	e
Expenditure	42,798	38,067	47,648	48,862	90,446	86,929
Receipts	42,726	35,699	44,577	47,689	87,303	83,388
Surplus (Deficit)	-72	-2,368	-3,071	-1,173	-3,143	3,541
Opening Balance	-1,987	381	-1,067	106	-3,054	487
Closing Balance	-2,059	-1,987	-4,138	-1,067	-6,197	-3,054

<b>Revenue Account - Adopted Estimates</b>		<b>Programme Groups</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Adopted Estimate</b>
		€	%	€
1.	Housing and Building	3,541	8	4,067
2.	Road Transportation & Safety	16,774	39	15,187
3.	Water & Sewerage	3,785	9	3,420
4.	Developmental Incentives & Control	2,458	6	1,954
5.	Environmental Protection	6,441	15	5,897
6.	Recreation & Amenity	2,480	6	2,457
7.	Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	2,927	7	2,603
8.	Miscellaneous	4,392	10	3,713
<b>Total</b>		<b>42,798</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39,298</b>

<b>Sources of Funds - Revenue Account</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2001</b>
	€	%	€	%
Local Government Fund	11,204	26	8,151	23
Other State Grants	17,047	40	14,920	42
Goods/Services	10,528	25	8,539	24
Rates	2,468	6	2,266	6
Urban Charge	1,479	3	1,823	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>42,726</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>35,699</b>	

<b>Sources of Funds - Capital Account</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2001</b>
	€	%	€	%
Local Government Fund				
Other State Grants	26,446	59	33,250	70
Goods/Services				
Rates				
Urban Charge				
Borrowing	11,046	25	10,640	22
Transfer from Revenue	663	2	429	1
Redemp. Housing Loans	1,940	4	983	2
Other Receipts	4,482	10	2,387	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,577</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47,689</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Sources of Funds - Total</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2001</b>
	€	%	€	%
Local Government Fund	11,204	13	8,151	10
Other State Grants	43,493	50	48,170	58
Goods/Services	10,528	12	8,539	10
Rates	2,468	3	2,266	3
Urban Charge	1,479	2	1,823	2
Borrowing	11,046	13	10,640	13
Transfer from Revenue	663	0	429	0
Redemp. Housing Loans	1,940	2	983	1
Other Receipts	4,482	5	2,387	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>87,303</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>83,388</b>	<b>100</b>