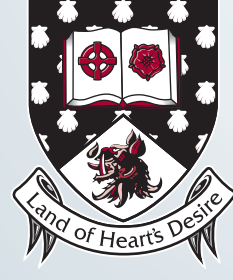


Sligo County Council



Annual Report 2006

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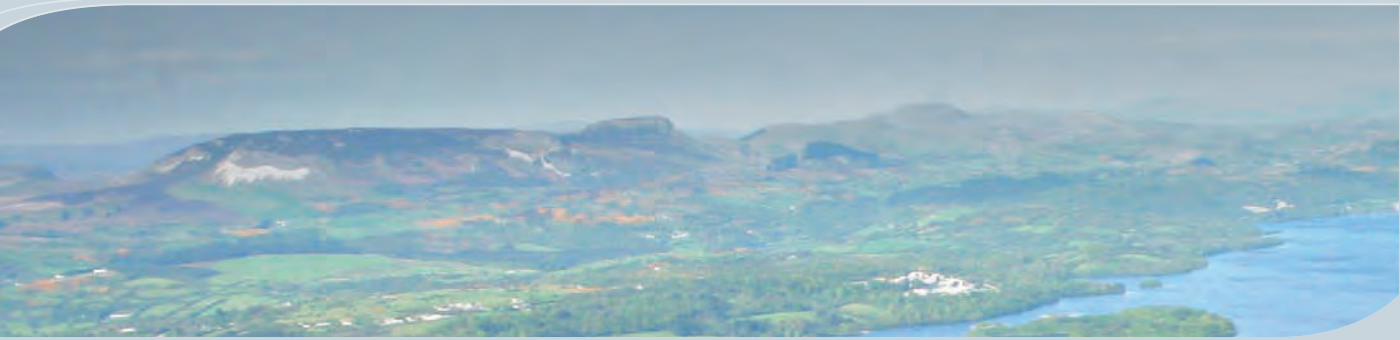


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 Design: JDK Design :: 071 912 0905

## INTRODUCTION BY CATHAOIRLEACH COUNCILLOR JIM MCGARRY



The designation of Sligo as a 'Gateway Centre for Growth' under the National Spatial Strategy forms the backdrop to our continuing development, and the discernible air of confidence around County Sligo is reflected in the ambitious programme of work being delivered by Sligo County Council. The rationale underpinning the 'Strategy' is to support a better balance of activity and development, and the delivery of a modern transport infrastructure will serve to attract sustainable inward investment to this region.

In this context there are a number of major infrastructural projects at planning or design stage which will greatly enhance our roads network, including the N17 Tubbercurry By-Pass and the N4 Collooney-Castlebaldwin Scheme. Other major roads projects which will be progressed in the coming years are the Western Distributor Road and the Eastern Garavogue River Bridge, key elements in Sligo's transportation strategy.

In 2006 the Council signed a €22 million contract for Sligo's new Main Drainage Scheme. This development will be of enormous benefit to Sligo and the northwest, facilitating housing, tourism, commercial and recreational developments. The 'state of the art' plant will also enable Sligo County Council to fulfil its obligations under EU Directives.

During my term as Cathaoirleach I have been encouraged and inspired by the role played in the community by our dedicated volunteers. These unsung heroes give generously of their time and their energy without any expectation of acknowledgement or reward. I have seen the work of volunteers at many levels - residents associations, tidy towns committees, sports, cultural, heritage and environmental groups - they all have a passionate commitment to their chosen cause. Sligo County Council has an important function in facilitating and supporting our voluntary sector and the recent establishment of our Volunteer Centre will be a valuable resource to our community volunteers.

I feel Sligo city and county are ideally placed to sustain the encouraging rate of progress of recent years. From my perspective as Chair of the Sligo County Development Board, I see many areas where we can make a real difference, from economic regeneration to social inclusion.

In the coming years Sligo County Council will plan and deliver a range of landmark projects which will be critical to the future growth of Sligo and the northwest, and we will continue to work in active partnership with other agencies and the communities we serve.

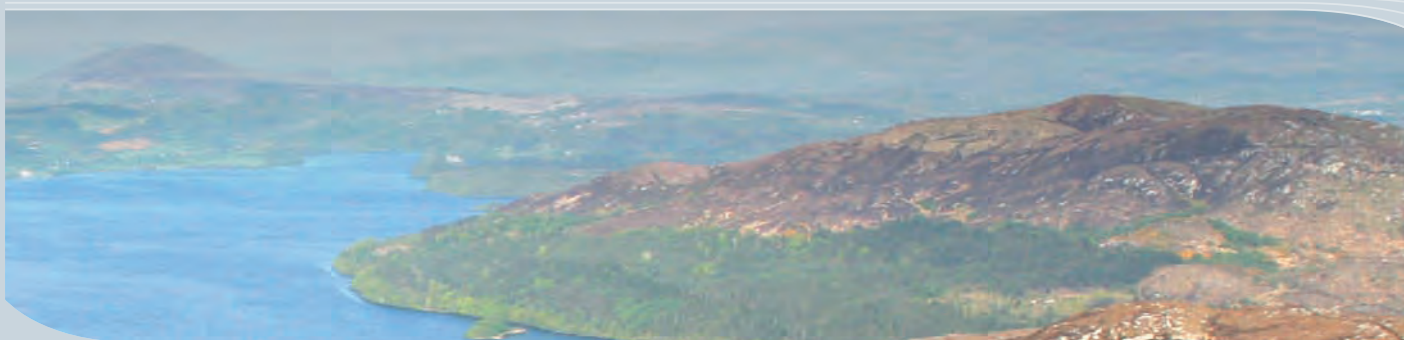


*“I feel Sligo city and county are ideally placed to sustain the encouraging rate of progress of recent years.”*

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jim McGarry".

**Councillor Jim McGarry**  
**Cathaoirleach**

## COUNTY MANAGER'S FOREWORD



“ over 40,000 people  
(circa 66% of the County's  
population) live in Sligo City  
or within 10 miles of it. ”

The recent period of sustained economic growth is against a backdrop of a notable population increase in County Sligo - 4.6% since 2002. The population of Electoral Divisions within 10 miles of Sligo has increased by 8.91% (1,810) with growth occurring principally in satellite villages (Strandhill, Collooney, Grange, Carney). The result is that over 40,000 people (circa 66% of the County's population) live in Sligo City or within 10 miles of it.

This continues to provide us with the challenge of meeting the infrastructural and service requirements of a growing population in the environs of Sligo while continuing to maximise the potential of the rest of the county. We have invested significantly in the necessary infrastructure including investment in roads, drainage projects, water treatment plants, social and affordable housing initiatives. As a local authority we must recognise the potential of Sligo and deliver plans and proposals that will ensure that the county has the necessary mix of infrastructure and services which delivers to a growing population. Officials with the Council continue to assess need and work in consultation with communities to deliver a quality service to our customers.

A pivotal area of our work is the development of networks and partnerships with other agencies and local authorities to ensure that opportunities to improve the competitiveness of the county are successfully delivered. In addition we work closely with the community sector. It must be highlighted that the level of commitment and voluntary time put into community initiatives such as Pride of Place and Tidy Towns continues to be encouraging. Too often, the tremendous time and effort that people put into community activities on a purely voluntary basis is overlooked. We continue to celebrate and support this voluntary effort. 2006 saw the further enhancement of the Volunteer Bureau Service and increasing levels of interest shown by community groups to avail of this support.

The people of County Sligo are well served by the elected Members and staff of Sligo County Council and we look forward to progressing our busy programme of work in 2007.

**Hubert Kearns**  
Sligo County Manager

# COUNCIL MEMBERS / MAP OF ELECTORAL AREA

## Sligo/Drumcliffe Area Elected Members



**Cllr. Veronica Cawley**  
**Labour** Elected 2004  
St. Martin,  
Rathbraughan, Sligo  
(071) 9170267 / 0876494723  
cawleyveronica@eircom.net



**Cllr. Patsy Barry**  
**Fianna Fáil** Elected 1999  
Grange,  
Co. Sligo  
(071) 9163168 / 087 2727588  
barrypatsy@eircom.net



**Cllr. Ita Fox**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 1985  
Colgagh, Calry, Co. Sligo  
(071) 9144932 / 0872077704  
foxita@eircom.net



**Cllr. Jude Devins**  
**Fianna Fáil** Elected 2004  
25 Beechwood Court,  
Ballytivnan, Sligo  
087 2021566  
jfdevins@hotmail.com



**Cllr. Joe Leonard**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 1985  
Cloonaghbawn,  
Ballinful, Co. Sligo  
(071) 9163443 / 9163548  
leonardjoe@eircom.net



**Cllr. Seamus Kilgannon**  
**Fianna Fáil** Elected 2004  
81 Rathedmond Estate, Sligo  
(071) 9162695 /  
086 8243121  
cillseamuskilgannon@eircom.net

## Sligo/Strandhill Area Elected Members



**Cllr. Declan Bree**  
**Labour** Elected 1974  
1 High Street, Sligo  
(071) 9145490  
087 2470802  
dbree@eircom.net



**Cllr. Albert Higgins**  
**Fianna Fáil** 1974  
Carraroe, Sligo  
(071) 9160129  
0876772049  
higginsalbert@eircom.net



**Cllr. Jim McGarry**  
**Labour** Elected 1991  
Oakfield,  
Sligo  
(071) 9161515 / 086 6007575  
mccgarryjim@eircom.net



**Cllr. Deirdre Healy McGowan**  
**Fianna Fáil** Elected 2004  
Breeogue, Knocknahur,  
Co. Sligo  
(071) 9168604  
dhmc@eircom.net



**Cllr. Tony McLoughlin**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 1974  
'Beechlawn', Barnasraghy, Sligo  
(071) 9160768  
087 2583748  
mcloughlintony@eircom.net



**Cllr. Sean MacManus**  
**Sinn Féin** Elected 1999  
5 Mountain View,  
Maugheraboy, Sligo  
(071) 9161460 / 086 8198456  
seanmacmanus@eircom.net



**Cllr. Imelda Henry**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 2004  
Blue Lagoon, Riverside,  
Sligo  
087 8177777  
imeldahenry@eircom.net

## Dromore West Area Elected Members



**Cllr. Mary Barrett**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 1991  
'Derk House',  
Skreen, Co. Sligo  
(071) 9166753 / 086 8102738  
barrettmary@eircom.net



**Cllr. Paul Conmy**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 1991  
Meenaun,  
Culleens, Co. Sligo  
(096) 36499 / 086 8406330  
paulconmy@eircom.net



**Cllr. Joseph Queenan**  
**Fianna Fáil** Elected 1999  
Lacknaslieva,  
Enniscrone, Co. Sligo  
(096) 36449 / 087 6214422  
queenanjoseph@eircom.net



# COUNCIL MEMBERS / MAP OF ELECTORAL AREA

## Ballymote Area Elected Members



**Cllr. Martin Baker**  
**Fianna Fáil** Elected 2004  
 2 Ardkeerin, Riverstown, Co. Sligo  
 (071) 9127472 / 9165650  
 086 1608334  
 bakermartin@eircom.net



**Cllr. Pat McGrath**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 2004  
 Ardnaglass, Ballymote,  
 Co. Sligo  
 (071) 9183225 / 087 6702792  
 pjmcgrath@unison.ie



**Cllr. Gerry Murray**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 1991  
 Calterane,  
 Gurteen, Co. Sligo  
 (071) 9182016 / 087 6862147  
 cllrgerrymurray@eircom.net



**Cllr. Gerard Mullaney**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 2004  
 Highwood, Kilmactranny, Boyle,  
 Co. Sligo  
 086 8221995  
 mullaneygerard@eircom.net



**Cllr. John Sherlock**  
**Fianna Fáil** Elected 2004  
 Knox Park, Ballisodare,  
 Co. Sligo  
 (071) 9167506 / 086 1775435  
 cllrjohnsherlock@eircom.net

## Tubbercurry Area Elected Members



**Cllr. Aidan Colleary**  
**Fianna Fáil** Elected 1985  
 Cully, Curry,  
 Charlestown PO, Co. Sligo  
 (094) 9254222 / 087 2610852  
 acollearyandco@eircom.net



**Cllr. Margaret Gormley**  
**Independent** Elected 1985  
 Carrowloughlin,  
 Bunninadden, Co. Sligo  
 (071) 9183239 / 086 8394795  
 gormleymargaret@eircom.net



**Cllr. Jerry Lundy**  
**Fianna Fáil** Elected 2004  
 Rhue,  
 Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo  
 (071) 9185184 / 087 2900947  
 cllrjerrylundy@eircom.net



**Cllr. Michael Fleming**  
**Fine Gael** Elected 1999  
 Carrowreagh Cooper,  
 Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo  
 (071) 9185264 / 087 6702903  
 flemingmichael@eircom.net

## County Sligo Electoral Map



# STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

## SPC 1 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING POLICY

**Cllr Tony Mc Loughlin (Chairperson)**, *Beechlawn, Barnasraghy, Sligo*

Cllr Patsy Barry, *Rinroe, Grange, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Aidan Colleary, *Cully, Curry, Charlestown PO, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Jude Devins, *34 Clara Court, Strandhill Road, Sligo*

Cllr Deirdre Healy Mc Gowan, *Breeogue, Knocknahur, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Seamus Kilgannon, *81 Rathedmond, Sligo*

Cllr Sean Mac Manus, *5 Mountain View, Maugheraboy, Sligo*

Mr Michael Keenan, *Keenan Construction Ltd., Carraroe, Co. Sligo*

Mr Gerry Healy, *Kevinsfort Ltd., 10' Connell St., Sligo*

Ms Niamh O' Driscoll, *Union Wood Road, Ballisodare, Co. Sligo*

Ms Phil Tuohy, *Kincullen, Aclare, Co. Sligo*

## SPC2 ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

**Cllr Jimmy Mc Garry (Chairperson)**, *Twin Oaks, Oakfield, Sligo*

Cllr Mary Barrett, *Ardabrone, Dromard, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Paul Conmy, *Meenaun, Culleens, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Michael Fleming, *Carrowreagh Cooper, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Albert Higgins, *Carrowroe, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Rosaleen O' Grady, *1 The Orchard, Kevinsfort, Sligo*

Cllr Gerry Mullaney, *Highwood, Kilmastranny, Boyle, Co. Sligo*

Mr Geroid O' Connor, *Cams, Ballymote, Co. Sligo*

Ms Sally Ward, *Cregg, Rosses Point, Co. Sligo*

Mr Martin Enright, *Raheen, Kilmacowen, Co. Sligo*

Mr Brendan Queenan, *Castletown, Easkey, Co. Sligo*

## SPC3 TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURAL POLICY

**Cllr John Sherlock (Chairperson)**, *Knox Park, Ballisodare, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Ita Fox, *Colgagh, Calry, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Margaret Gormley, *Carowloughlin, Bunninadden, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Jerry Lundy, *Rhue, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Gerry Murray, *Calterane, Gurteen, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Pat Mc Grath, *Ardnaglass, Ballymote, Co. Sligo*

Mr Pdraig Davey, *The Cottage, Ballure, Clogherevagh, Co. Sligo*

Mr Gerry Queenan, *Cabra, Rathlee, Co. Sligo*

Ms Rita Ann Burke, *Skreen, Co. Sligo*

## SPC4 HOUSING POLICY, SOCIAL & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

**Cllr Joe Queenan (Chairperson)**, *Lacknaslieva, Enniscrone, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Martin Baker, *2 Ardkeerin, Riverstown, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Veronica Cawley, *St. Martin, Rathbraughan, Sligo*

Cllr Imelda Henry, *Orient, Pearse Road, Sligo*

Cllr Joe Leonard, *Cloonaghbawn, Ballinfull, Co. Sligo*

Cllr Chris Mac Manus, *5 Mountain View, Maugheraboy, Sligo*

Cllr Declan Bree, *1 High Street, Sligo*

Mr Frankie Brannigan, *C/o Courthouse, Teeling Street, Sligo*

Ms Sharon Boles, *Altvelid, Ballintogher, Co. Sligo*

Mr Conor Fitzgerald, *Atlanta Place, Cluin Dara, Gurteen, Co. Sligo*

Mr Gerry Creamer, *The Blennicks, Rosses Point, Co. Sligo*





HOUSING, CORPORATE  
& EMERGENCY SERVICES  
DIRECTORATE

Photo: Bluebells in Hazelwood



# HOUSING & BUILDING



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

- ▶ Assisting 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 scheme at Ballisodare

## HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

The *Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004-2008*, as agreed with the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government in December 2004, sets targets for the Council to deliver a specified number of units per year across a range of housing options such as Social, Affordable, Voluntary and Part V Housing. This figure stands at 493 over the life time of the plan which averages at an estimate of 98 units per annum. This figure sets a challenge to the Council in terms of securing and procuring adequate land and negotiating with both developers and the voluntary housing agencies.

The Housing capital allocation from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for 2006 was €1,600,000, which was made up as follows:

- ▶ Local Authority Housing Programme €1,000,000
- ▶ Residential Caravans & Group Housing for Travellers €400,000
- ▶ Remedial Works Schemes €200,000

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

Completed in 2006		To be Completed in 2007	
Ballisodare .....	26	Grange .....	4
Bunninadden .....	6	Riverstown .....	4
Coolaney .....	18	Coolaney .....	4
Collooney .....	11	Ballintogher .....	10
Culfadda .....	6	Camross, Ballymote .....	16
Easkey .....	6	Culfadda .....	6
Grange .....	8	Tubbercurry .....	10
		Carrigeens .....	2
<b>Total: 81</b>		<b>Total: 56</b>	

## HOUSING & BUILDING

The Council has a policy of purchasing houses on the open market where the houses represent value for money and where a demand exists. In the current economic climate, it is not possible to source many houses on the open market which fall within the Department's approved unit cost budget. However, 14 houses were purchased on the open market in 2006.

### PART V

Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, has provided a welcome opportunity to Housing Authorities to secure land, housing units or money to assist with delivering the Housing Capital Programme.

The Housing Strategy states that 20% of eligible sites, which are the subject of new residential development, are to be set aside for the development of social and affordable housing. There are a variety of options for compliance with this requirement but the preferred option of the Housing Authority is to take units or land which will become available for a mix of social and affordable housing.

Negotiations on Part V take place as early as possible in the Planning process which provides an opportunity for both the Local Authority and the developer to secure an outcome to their satisfaction. Negotiations have been ongoing with developers in respect of all applications which are within the areas zoned for residential development since the adoption of the Housing Strategy. This involves a legal agreement between the Authority and the developer setting out all details in respect of the Part V offer. The environs of Sligo, Strandhill and Enniscrone have been subject to zoning for some time. In addition, since May 2005, residential development at Ballisodare, Collooney and Grange are now subject to the Part V requirements.

The Council's target in the Action Plan is to deliver 36 Part V units by the end of 2008. This figure, while dependent on a number of factors outside the control of the Housing Authority, should be achieved. The funding for the social units is obtained from the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government while the funding for the affordable units is obtained from the Housing Finance Agency. The Bank of Ireland and some of the Building Societies have now also entered the market to provide funding to purchasers of Part V affordable housing.

### PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

The Procurement and Project Management Team continue to be involved in the delivery of the PPP (Public Private Partnership) housing scheme in Carney.

The Carney Housing Scheme will see the development of 5.3 acres of County Council owned land into a mix of social, affordable and private housing together with some small scale commercial development and community facilities. Tenders have been received and are currently being evaluated.

### HOUSING MAINTENANCE

Approximately 60.38% of the maintenance budget of €366,000 was used for planned maintenance and the remaining 39.61% was used for emergency repairs. Planned maintenance involved replacing defective windows and doors and also replacing defective ranges.

The Council allocated €20,000 towards Environmental Improvements. The Environmental Maintenance Co-Op was successful in its tender for environmental improvements in various local authority estates, this involved grass cutting and maintenance work which was carried out during the summer months.

A grant of €76,800 was received from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government towards the installation of central heating, insulation, ventilation etc. in 103 no. older County Council dwellings. The Council supplemented this grant with approximately €27,796.88 from its own resources. Work has commenced in respect of 103 houses at the end of 2006.

### RENTS

Rents payable on local authority dwellings are assessed under a Differential Rents Scheme which is based on the income of the household. The Rent Scheme was reviewed in 2006 and rents were brought into line with increases in disposable income and to meet the ever-increasing demand for maintenance and estate management.

# HOUSING & BUILDING

## HOUSING LOANS

Those 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/construction loan is 95% of the cost to a maximum of €185,000. Sligo County Council paid out €462,340.66 in house purchase, construction and reconstruction loans in 2006.

### Loan Approvals 2006

Purchases .....	1
Construction .....	0
Reconstruction .....	1

### Loan Payments 2006

	No.	Amount
Purchases .....	1	€135,000.00
Construction .....	2	€293,700.00
Reconstruction .....	3	€33,640.66

## 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 financially.

In 2006, Sligo County Council issued 11 (no.) Provisional Approvals to applicants and 6 (no.) Final Approvals were granted under this scheme.

## 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. Fourteen houses were sold under the Tenant Purchase Scheme.

## IMPROVEMENT WORKS IN LIEU OF RE-HOUSING

This Scheme allows the 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 2006, 14 houses were upgraded at an average cost per house of €4,190 and 15 applications were approved under the Scheme.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

During 2006, 10 no. houses were completed in Grange and successfully allocated in late summer. Work also commenced in 2006 on Phase II of the Ballintogher scheme, (Phase 1 completed in 2003). The 6 houses in this phase are scheduled for completion in February, 2007 and suitably qualified applicants are currently being assessed.

## ESTATE MANAGEMENT

The Estate Management Officer continued to provide support to Council tenants during 2006 via pre-tenancy training, engaging with Resident Associations in relation to Estate Action Plans and acting as a liaison with Council officials regarding housing issues, e.g. maintenance, transfers, etc.

Sligo County Council received approval during 2006 for funding of €5,000 under the Clár Estate Enhancement Scheme, (€2,6125 from Clár, €2,6125 Local Authority Internal Capital Receipts and €2,750 local contribution). The Scheme operates from September 2005 to the end of August 2007 and the approved works include the provision of seating, paving, landscaping and lighting, of six specified Council estates.

Sligo Local Authorities adopted a joint policy to combat Anti-Social Behaviour. This document sets out clear policies and procedures for dealing with instances of anti-social behaviour in Local Authority housing. It was prepared in consultation with Estate Management Officers, Gardaí, Resident Associations and other interested parties. Extensive public consultation was undertaken, and feedback was positive.

To further support estate management activities, Sligo Local Authorities jointly sought and secured funding from the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government under the 2005 Housing Management Initiative Grants Scheme for the following projects:

- ▶ The employment of a Housing Investigation Officer and Community Development Officer, whose main roles will be to implement the adopted anti- social behaviour policy, facilitate the establishment of and provide support to Resident Associations.
- ▶ The development of a comprehensive Integrated Estate Management Strategy for County Sligo – a project co-ordinator will be employed for a 12 month period for this project.



## HOUSING & BUILDING

### 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 €5,523, with 2/3 of the cost being recouped from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

31 approvals were issued during the year and 21 grants were paid out under this Scheme, totalling €73,340.75.

### 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.

The maximum amount payable under the Scheme is €20,315, with 2/3 of the cost being recouped from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. 111 approvals were issued during the year and 49 grants were paid out totalling €170,785.85.

### TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

In accordance with the provisions of the Housing Traveller Accommodation Act, 1998, Sligo County Council is obliged to adopt a five year traveller accommodation programme setting out its plans for the provision of suitable accommodation for members of the travelling community.

Sligo County Council carried out an Assessment of Traveller Accommodation Needs which was concluded in November 2003. This assessment looked at the need for traveller accommodation in various forms i.e. standard housing, group housing, halting sites and transient halting sites. A comprehensive analysis of data contained in the Census figures and the Assessment of Housing Needs (2002) formed the basis of the 2005-2008 Programme. The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2005-2008 takes into account issues pertaining to the provision of traveller accommodation in the Sligo area and also considers the broader context of traveller health, education, discrimination and employment.

#### Accommodation required to meet needs:

<i>Transient Halting Site</i> .....	<b>6 units</b>
<i>Group Housing Scheme</i> .....	<b>7 - 8 units</b>
<i>Standard Local Authority/ Specific Instance/Voluntary Housing</i> .....	<b>8 units</b>



Housing scheme at Collooney

## HOUSING & BUILDING

### CLOONAMAHON TRANSIENT HALTING SITE

In 2006, Sligo County Council completed the construction of a 6 bay transient halting site at Cloonamahon, Co. Sligo, at a cost of €500,000. Facilities include light, water and sanitary and is serviced by a refuse collection. The site is well landscaped and integrates with the surrounding landscape. This site will accommodate transient travellers visiting County Sligo for short periods of time. Such transient Travellers can be either nomadic or families with permanent accommodation elsewhere but who might wish to visit the Sligo area for various reasons. Since the 1st December 2006, there have been 4 families occupying the site

Sligo County Council will continue to monitor the needs of travellers and will ensure the delivery of housing accommodation as detailed in the Traveller Accommodation Programme.

### CONNOLLY PARK DEVELOPMENT

The Part 8 planning process was completed in respect of Phase 1 of the Connolly Park re-development in September 2006. Tenders have been received and contracts were signed at the end of December 2006. It is expected that the construction of this scheme will commence early in 2007.

### RENTAL ACCOMMODATION SCHEME (RAS)

In July, 2004 the Government announced a new initiative, the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), which proposes to transfer to Local Authorities responsibility for housing persons in receipt of rent supplement who are deemed to have a long term housing need. The Scheme is to be implemented over a four year period (2005 – 2008), with the Housing Authority progressively taking over responsibility for persons who have been in receipt of a rent supplement on a continuous basis for over 18 months. At present, there are approximately 300 cases in this category in County Sligo.

The Scheme will operate as follows:

- ▶ The Housing Authority will source and lease suitable accommodation from the private rented sector.
- ▶ A three-way contract will be entered into by the Local Authority/Landlord/Tenant.
- ▶ Housing Authorities will be allocated funds that would otherwise have been spent by the Health Service Executive on paying rent allowances for households accommodated through the new arrangements.
- ▶ The Housing Authority pay the full rent to the landlord, and a contribution towards rent will be collectable from the tenant.
- ▶ Housing Authorities will be paid an administration fee per unit of €150 in year one and €100 per year thereafter.
- ▶ Tenancies will be required to be registered with the Private Rented Tenancies Board.
- ▶ Accommodation providers must be tax compliant.
- ▶ Accommodation will be required to meet minimum standards.



In 2006, approval was received from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, for the employment of a Senior Staff Officer and an Assistant Staff Officer to implement and manage the Scheme and these staff took up duty in September 2006.

Sandy Cove,  
Strandhill

## CORPORATE SERVICES



The Corporate Service Directorate is responsible for delivering a wide range of services to the general public, the elected members and staff. The Directorate is responsible for co-ordinating the various meetings of the council, preparing the register of electors, administering the Higher Education Grants Scheme, and providing information and communication services.

County Hall

### CUSTOMER SERVICES

The Customer Services Desk continues to provide a first point of contact both for telephone callers and face to face customers, and enables Sligo County Council to provide an informed and prompt response to customers. The Customer Services Desk provides general information, application forms, and brochures for every

service area of the Local Authority and dealt with in excess of 9,300 queries in 2006. The majority of contacts related to Roads, Environment, Planning and Housing.

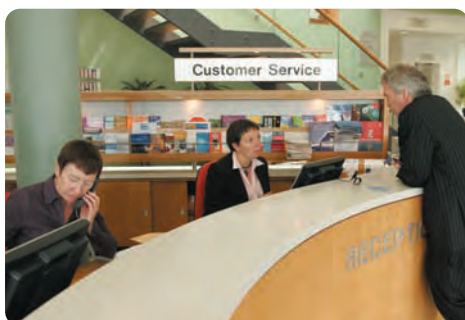
Staff from the Customer Services Desk participated in

the Sligo Access Conference organised by the Disability Federation of Ireland and provided information on the services offered by the Local Authority.

Sligo County Council continues to undertake a number of initiatives to improve its customer care such as:-

- ▶ Ongoing development of the website
- ▶ Production of information leaflets and brochures
- ▶ Installation of touch screen information kiosks at public service areas

Customers can be confident that their query will be dealt with efficiently by trained members of staff.



Customer Services Desk, County Hall

The public can contact the Customer Services Desk at **071-9111111** or by e-mail at **customerservices@sligococo.ie**

Also for information on services offered by Sligo County Council, please visit our website at **www.sligococo.ie**

### PROCUREMENT AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

#### THE TEAM:

The project team which was originally put in place in October 2005 has in 2006 been further expanded to include additional staff. This expansion is indicative of the project team's performance in developing best practice in the procurement function and overseeing some of the city and county's major capital projects.

While the team continue to be involved in the delivery of the public private partnership (PPP) housing schemes in Carney and in Ballinode, other projects include the development of a new Sligo Museum, the extension of the Model Arts and Niland Gallery, planning for the development of the associated cultural precinct at the Mall/Connaughton Road, the new Sligo Library and Library Headquarters, the establishment of Framework Agreements for specific services for use by the local authorities, the proposed Riverside One Stop Shop, the continued development of Waterpoint, Enniscrone and the establishment of a parking meter system for Sligo city and the county's other major towns.



## CORPORATE SERVICES



### NEW SLIGO MUSEUM

Sligo County Council plan to develop a new museum on a city centre site in Sligo. In mid 2006, planning permission was sought for the development of the new Sligo Museum and the extension to the Model Arts and Niland Gallery. Planning permission has since been granted and detailed design is in progress. It is anticipated that construction will commence late 2007.

The museum will have a county wide service brief, and will fulfil a range of functions in respect of the material heritage of the county, the communities living in the northwest and visitors to the region. The museum will be located within a new two storey purpose built landmark building on a prominent city centre site at The Mall/Connaughton Road, contiguous to the existing Model Arts and Niland Gallery. Both facilities will form two sides to a new high quality civic space being provided through a separate PPP project which will also feature a substantial car parking facility and commercial development. The individual facilities combine as elements of a new urban space and in the context of creating a new vibrant cultural quarter within the city. The combined facilities, located in close proximity, will enhance significantly the City and County's cultural facilities and infrastructure and form a major visitor attraction.

### NEW CITY LIBRARY

In April 2006, Sligo County Council advertised a competition to engage architectural consultants for the purpose of assessing the suitability and the potential of the existing library site at Stephen Street, Sligo to accommodate the library project. Consultants will be appointed early in 2007. The study will evaluate the capacity of the site to accommodate a library as envisaged or should that not prove feasible, the extent of facility possible thereon and propose an outline form for any new structure.

### FRAMEWORK AGREEMENTS

The Team has undertaken the lengthy process of procuring design services on behalf of both Sligo County and Borough Councils. Framework Agreements have been put in place for Architects and Quantity Surveyors, the services of whom have been made available for forthcoming projects in Sligo city and county for a maximum period of four years. Agreements in respect of Civil and Structural Engineers and Mechanical and Electrical Engineers will be completed early in 2007.

### DEVELOPMENT AT RIVERSIDE:

A masterplan for the development of the Riverside site has been completed. The plan includes the development of a One Stop Shop Facility on the site. Discussions are ongoing with Teagasc in respect of the intended project.

### PROCUREMENT:

In association with the Local Authorities' Finance Sections, preparation of a Corporate Procurement Plan has commenced. It is envisaged that this will provide a model for best practice in terms of procurement and purchasing.

Artist's Impression  
of new facility  
behind Model Arts  
Centre

## COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE



The Communications Office provides information services to the elected members, staff, media and the general public, as well as providing administrative support to the Cathaoirleach.

### CONTACT MAGAZINE

Sligo Local Authorities publish a quarterly magazine for the general public, titled 'Contact', which provides news and information from Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council. The magazine is distributed with a local newspaper, and is also available from a network of outlets throughout the county. An on-line version of the magazine is available on [www.sligococo.ie](http://www.sligococo.ie), and an 'audio file' of the magazine is also produced to assist persons with a visual impairment.

### E-CONTACT

To supplement the quarterly magazine, the Communications Office also publishes a monthly e-newsletter. e-Contact is circulated to individuals and groups who register their interest on-line. A 'hard copy' of the e-newsletter is also available to those without access to a computer.

### WEBSITE

The Communications Office works with the Information Technology section to maintain and update the Sligo Local Authorities' websites. The sites provide on-line access to application forms and guidelines, contact details for all the services, weekly roads report, monthly news digest, and all the current advertisements and recruitment notices. During 2006 the site was upgraded to ensure it was accessible to people with visual impairments and people with co-ordination difficulties, and a newly introduced content management system means the site can facilitate presentation of the information in other languages.

### OPEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

Under its 'Open Local Government' initiative, local school children are invited to County Hall to attend a monthly meeting of the Council. The children also attend a presentation on the role and services of the Council, and are given an information pack of brochures, newsletters and reports.

### CATHAOIRLEACH'S AWARDS

The Cathaoirleach's Awards Scheme was introduced in 2000 to reward the many volunteers in County Sligo who have given special service to their community. The award winners in 2006 were:

**ARTS:** South Sligo Macra na Feirme Club

**ENVIRONMENT:** Tony Clarke

**HERITAGE:** Eugene O'Connor

**COMMUNITY:** Seamus McCormack

**SPORTS:** Pegasus

**NATIONAL SCHOOLS:** Realt na Mara, Rosses Point

### CIVIC EVENTS

The Communications Office co-ordinated arrangements for a number of receptions at County Hall during 2006 including a reception for the Sligo Ladies All Ireland Junior Football Champions. The Office also liaised with other sections to host visiting Government Ministers. Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Mr Dick Roche TD. visited many of our group schemes in July 2006 and officiated at the signing of the contract for Sligo Main Drainage in September 2006. Sligo County Council also hosted a working group of the Norwegian Parliament's Standing Committee on Transport & Communications in February 2006.

## COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

### STAY IN TOUCH

To register for news and information updates from the Sligo Local Authorities, visit [www.sligococo.ie](http://www.sligococo.ie), e-mail [communications@sligococo.ie](mailto:communications@sligococo.ie) or phone 071 9111016

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI)

No of requests received 2006:	21
No of requests granted:	13
No of requests part granted:	1
No of requests refused:	1
No of requests withdrawn and handled outside FOI:	4
No of Internal Reviews:	4
No of Appeals to the Information Commissioner:	0

### DISABILITY

#### Sligo County Council is committed to providing universal access for all.

The Government launched the National Disability Strategy in 2004 to underpin the participation of people with disabilities in society. The Strategy builds

on existing policy and legislation, from the Barcelona Declaration to the Equality & Employment Laws, and reinforces the Government's commitment to social inclusion for people with disabilities. It is a framework of positive action measures to mainstream service provision for people with disabilities within the state agencies. The Strategy and the recently enacted Disability Act have placed significant responsibilities on local authorities to ensure that 'access barriers' are removed and a more integrated approach to accessing services and facilities is provided.

During 2006, Sligo County Council has embraced the challenge presented to it and this process is evolving. The Council is continually striving to improve integrated access to information, services, training, employment and the built environment for all its customers. The Council works in partnership with local disability groups to achieve best practice in service provision. A process of consultation and disability awareness is on-going within the organisation, through partnership and training.

#### Summary of 2006 activities (disability)

- ▶ Following the completion of access audits on 20 buildings and 3 harbour/beach areas, work is on-going to address any short comings identified in the audit reports which will improve access to buildings in the ownership of Sligo Local Authorities. Works were carried out in County Hall, City Hall, County Library, Market Yard Offices and on Mullaghmore Pier.
- ▶ An access audit was carried out on the new Inner Relief Road.
- ▶ The Sligo County Council website was up-graded to AA standard in consultation with members of the disability sector.
- ▶ During 2006, further disability awareness training was provided for staff. An evaluation report was commissioned to determine the impact of this training and to identify further training needs. A training programme will be put in place for 2007 to target the requirements of specific staff groupings.
- ▶ In October 2006, Sligo Local Authorities participated in a conference entitled "Sligo Access Conference" which was organised by the Disability Federation of Ireland. The Director of Services for Housing, Corporate and Emergency services addressed the Conference on behalf of Sligo Local Authorities.
- ▶ The Disability Consultative Committee forum is working well and regular meetings took place during 2006. A sub-group of the Committee was established. The role of this group is to focus on communications / information services within Sligo Local Authorities and to find ways in which access to our information and publications can be made accessible for all.
- ▶ The Communications Department commenced producing publications in accessible formats, and during 2007 it is intended to extend the range of publications and formats available in consultation with the disability sector.
- ▶ The weekly roads report compiled by the Council considered people with disabilities and the impact roadworks / footpath repairs might have on them. Works which include obstructions to footpaths or that require alternative access arrangements are now reported to the public.
- ▶ Sligo County Council has applied to the National Disability Authority for the 'Excellence through Accessibility Award'. Achievement of this award will further enhance and progress the Council's objective of providing universal access for all.
- ▶ During 2006, the Planning Department introduced a new planning condition for inclusion on certain planning permissions. This condition requires the developer to submit detailed drawings and specifications for the development which will cater for people with disabilities, in compliance with Part M.
- ▶ The Library Service continued to improve the range of services and facilities available to people with disabilities. The staff has set up an in-house group to focus on disability issues within the library services.



## REGISTER OF ELECTORS / HIGHER ED. GRANTS / INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Institute of  
Technology Sligo

### REGISTER OF ELECTORS

In 2006 the national publicity campaign undertaken by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government was complemented at local level by Sligo County Council. The campaign included a series of advertisements and press releases, the hosting of information days and the placement of the draft register on the Sligo Local Authorities websites. This ensured that eligible voters were afforded every opportunity to check their name was entered on the register.

Sligo County Council is satisfied that its intensive information campaign, and the increased numbers of field officers employed, ensured that the general public is aware of the various procedures and deadlines in relation to the compilation of the register of electors. The register of electors comes into force on 15th February each year.

### HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS

Sligo County Council assisted 489 students under the 2005 Higher Education Grants Scheme. There were 133 new applicants and 356 continuing students. The scheme is administered by the Council on behalf of the Department of Education and Science.

In the academic year 2005/2006, Sligo County Council allocated €190,540 in Social Maintenance Grant assistance. A total of €1,871,057 was allocated by Sligo County Council to students in maintenance and fees. 23

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information Technology Department provides I.T. services to both Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council.

In 2006 a major re-development of the Sligo County Council web site was carried out to facilitate the accessibility of the site by people with visual impairments. This re-development also incorporates the creation of an extranet for councillors which will allow them online access to agenda's, minutes of meetings and other documents of interest as well as links to relevant websites.

The Integrated Planning System in Sligo Local Authorities continues to be developed. The system comprises Document Imaging (iDocs), Planning GIS (geographic representation of Planning information on electronic maps), and the iPlan Planning Administration System. Developments in this area are resulting in the expansion of services and information available online.

Services currently available online which may be accessed through Sligo Local Authorities web sites are:

- ▶ Planning enquiries
- ▶ Register of Electors enquiries
- ▶ Payment of traffic fines
- ▶ Motor Tax online
- ▶ Sligo County Library Catalogue

Developments in the Planning area and the provision of online services are part of an ongoing modernisation process. This process is also being extended to other services provided by Sligo Local Authorities and will enable easier access to information and maximise the number of on-line services.

## HUMAN RESOURCES



The Human Resources Section is responsible for providing recruitment and training services for the staff of Sligo Borough Council and Sligo County Council. In 2006 HR section continued the delivery of the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) to ensure each member of staff can develop to their full potential.

### PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) was introduced to the Sligo Local Authorities in 2005. This system is aimed at examining how we plan and manage our work as an organisation, how we manage and develop our staff in a structured way and ensure that the potential of everyone in the organisation is realised.

The PMDS approach is based on the belief that everything that people do at work at any level contributes to achieving the overall purpose of the organisation. It is therefore concerned with what people do (their work), how they do it (their behaviour) and what they achieve (their results). It embraces all formal and informal measures of our Local Authorities to increase corporate, team and individual effectiveness and develops knowledge, skill and competence. It is not an isolated system that functions once a year and is then forgotten. Time and resources have been invested in the implementation of PMDS.

PMDS has provided staff with greater role clarity and has helped them to understand how their work contributes to the overall objectives of their organisation. PMDS has enhanced communication between managers and staff and it has become accepted as a key part of business planning and performance.

PMDS also incorporates the concept of identifying and fulfilling training requirements. Its aim is to enhance overall service delivery as each team within the various Directorates prioritise targets and assess progress in the overall context of the Corporate Plan. As part of this process, both the individual and the team training requirements are prioritised. PMDS will assist us in meeting and anticipating the needs and expectations of our customers while making the best use of our resources.

Staff taking part in 'Jersey Day' in aid of GOAL

### TRAINING

2006 was a busy year for the Training Department. It began with a 2 day induction programme for new staff in January, which was attended by 52 area based and office based staff. The outline of the programme was as follows:-

#### Day 1

- ▶ Introduction by County Manager
- ▶ Role of the Councillor / Cathaoirleach – Patsy Barry
- ▶ Sligo Local Authorities - Structure, Policy and Services – Fergus McNabb, A.O.
- ▶ Terms and Conditions of Employment – Joe Murphy, S.E.O.
- ▶ Superannuation Entitlements – Joe Murphy, S.E.O.
- ▶ Talk on Model & Niland by Sarah Glennie
- ▶ Geographic Information Systems / Information Technology Caroline Conmy – GIS Officer

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Day 2

- ▶ Training & Development – Joe Gethin, Training & Development Officer
- ▶ Communications – Kevin Colreavy, A.O
- ▶ Budgeting / Income Tax / Deductions – Tom Kilfeather, Head of Finance
- ▶ Sligo Gateway Status - Sean Martin, Senior Architect
- ▶ Public Private Partnership Projects – Bartley Gavin, Project Manager
- ▶ Fire Safety – Paul Ryan, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
- ▶ Customer Service – Deirdre Finnerty, Special Projects Officer
- ▶ Update on P.M.D.S. - Antoinette McLoughlin & John Owens
- ▶ The role of the County Development Board / Social Inclusion
- ▶ Bridie Conway & Siofra Kilcullen, Community Enterprise Development Officers

### INTERVIEW SKILLS

A new programme piloted this year was aimed at improving people's skills at interview. There were quite a number of interviews held during 2006, and this programme was particularly aimed at those who had not attended an interview in some time.

### HEALTH & SAFETY

During the year 25 staff from Sligo Local Authorities completed a Single Subject Certificate in Health & Safety at Sligo I.T. This course was identified by the Council's Health & Safety Monitoring Committee as part of a programme to assist staff in addressing requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. This course, which is accredited by FETAC, is recognised both nationally and internationally and included a questions and answers session with Mr. Tom Beggan, Chief Executive Officer with the Health & Safety Authority, and a visit to a construction site to view at first hand the risks and hazards associated with construction.

- ▶ During the year other Health & Safety programmes included the following training:-
- ▶ Safe use of equipment such as abrasive wheels, i.e. consaws and cutting equipment, site dumpers, rollers and chainsaws
- ▶ Location of underground services
- ▶ Driver skills training
- ▶ School warden training
- ▶ Confined space training
- ▶ V.D.U Assessors
- ▶ First Aid

The safe pass training focused on the renewal of certification for staff whose cards were due to expire.

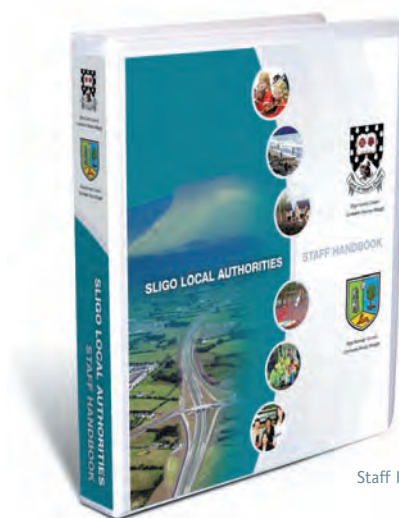
### DIPLOMA IN IRISH

As part of a programme to ensure a better availability and a higher standard of service through Irish the Council assisted 11 no. staff in completing a Diploma Course in Irish through N.U.I. Galway

During November and December a series of half day sessions were rolled out to all staff which covered the following topics:-

- ▶ Launch of Staff Handbook
- ▶ Launch of Health & Safety Handbook
- ▶ Equality & Diversity Talks

These sessions will continue in 2007 in order that all staff will have an opportunity to attend.



Staff Handbook

### STAFF EDUCATION SCHEME

A number of students were funded during the year to pursue third level courses in various colleges.

The following programmes of study have been approved for assistance for the 2006 / 2007 academic year:

- ▶ Bachelor of Business Management
- ▶ Bachelor of Business (Honours)
- ▶ Bachelor of Arts (BA Hons.)
- ▶ Bridging Course between Diploma and Degree in Local Government Studies.
- ▶ Master of Science in Environmental Health & Safety Management
- ▶ MBA in Business Administration
- ▶ Site Suitability Assessment Programme for On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems
- ▶ NUI Diploma in Archaeology
- ▶ Applied Project Management



## SLIGO LIBRARY SERVICE



2006 was another busy year for Sligo Library Service where the calendar of events for the year reflected a host of different events, activities, presentations and exhibitions. Providing a quality service and a desire to promote and foster reading for all is at the core of the Library service.

### 1837 ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS

During the year, Sligo County Library commissioned digital cartographer, Mr. Rainer Kosbi, to create an interactive map website, which would be of great interest to teachers, students, archaeologists and anyone interested in the history of Sligo. The website will enable users to explore, without charge and from their own home, every town-land in the county as it appeared before Famine times and to discover the existence and explanation of any antiquities in that townland. For this purpose each sheet of the Library's 1837 Ordnance Survey County Sligo maps was sent to Dublin to be painstakingly restored and digitised. Then all the county's townland names and sites of archaeological interest were listed and amalgamated into an extremely user-friendly database which will open up the past with today's most up to date technology. To use the site, users simply go to the Library website [www.sligolibrary.ie](http://www.sligolibrary.ie) and click on the (local maps collection) link. Then click on (search window) and use the first tip at the bottom of the page for a tutorial. This is the latest in a series of ongoing projects to make the Library's wealth of local history material more accessible to the people of Sligo and those worldwide with an interest in Sligo. The maps were officially launched by the Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council, Cllr. Jim McGarry in October.

### LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A series of training sessions were provided for library staff on the Unicorn Library Management System which was upgraded during 2006. A hyperion module was also introduced which displays archival material in an easily accessible digitised format.

### MAKING ACCESS HAPPEN

The first of a two-day training session for library staff in relation to the 'Making Access Happen' project for public library services all around the country took place in September. The day, which was facilitated by Ms. Maureen Gilbert, focused on providing services for people with disabilities.

### LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Library Development Plan 2006-2010 was presented to both Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council and adopted by the members of Sligo County Council. This document provides a strategic framework for developing the library services over the next five years. The Library's vision is 'to provide a responsive, accessible and inclusive Library Service for all our customers which fosters reading, stimulates the imagination and contributes to life-long learning and cultural recreation'.

Storytelling at  
Sligo Library

## SLIGO LIBRARY SERVICE

### WORK EXPERIENCE

Sligo Library received a number of requests during the year from second level students wishing to obtain work experience placements with the library service. A total of seven students were supported through this programme in 2006 and received placements at Sligo Central Library, the Reference and Local History Library and Tubbercurry Community Library.

### BORROW BOOKS

The Borrow Books initiative, which was launched in January, is a service whereby members of the public are enabled to search across the Irish public libraries' online catalogues to locate and request an item which is not held in the library where the person is registered. It is possible to request books, CDs, DVDs etc. via Inter-Library Loan by logging onto [www.borrowbooks.ie](http://www.borrowbooks.ie) and following the instructions provided. During 2006 a total of 221 items were supplied to other libraries and 243 items were supplied to Sligo Library Service from other libraries.

### SCHOOLS LIBRARY SERVICE

The school's van visited each of the primary schools in the county on two occasions during the year issuing over 13,000 books to the children concerned.

209,259 items were issued to members of the public and almost 31,000 people used Internet facilities provided by Sligo Library Service in 2006.

### MIGRANT WORKER'S INFORMATION NIGHT

In March 2006 a very successful information evening aimed at migrant workers living in the Sligo area was hosted by The Omagh-Sligo Partnership. The evening aimed to provide migrant workers with important information which could assist them to overcome the challenges of living and working in County Sligo. Sligo Library Service was one of 20 organisations that participated in the evening. A multi-lingual approach was taken to the evening and Sligo Library provided information and a range of books for both adults and children in a number of different languages. The evening attracted over two hundred and fifty migrant workers from the Polish, Lithuanian and Russian communities and proved to be a highly successful way of imparting essential information to all who attended the event.

### SLIGO CENTRAL LIBRARY, STEPHEN STREET, SLIGO

Early in the year, World Book Day 2006 was celebrated in style in Sligo Central Library with a visit from author and storyteller Liz Weir. A number of children from Sooley National School were invited to attend the session. In June, 170 junior infant children from the Mercy Primary and Scoil Ursula enjoyed a number of sessions conducted by storyteller Billy Teare. Billy regaled the children with stories, song and music.

In December author J.P. Rodgers, a native of Galway, conducted a 'reading and signing' session relating to his book *'For the Love of my Mother'*. The session provided a rare opportunity for book lovers to meet the author and discuss the work itself.

The '16 Rights for 16 Days' exhibition highlighting the issue of Domestic Violence, was also displayed in the library during December.



Sligo Library extends opening hours

### TUBBERCURRY COMMUNITY LIBRARY

#### Writing Group

The Leyney Writers enjoyed a very successful year. The group held a number of literary evenings, including the inaugural 'Tubbercurry Old Fair Day' literary event over the August Bank Holiday weekend which attracted a large number of writers from County Sligo and beyond. Ocean FM's 'Arts House' programme featured the writers on 'The Third Sunday' series in December joined by guest novelist Eoin McNamee as part of its 10th Birthday celebrations, the Arts Office will partner with Ocean FM to produce a unique series of radio programmes curated by writer Brian Leyden. During autumn, novelist, playwright and poet, Dermot Healy conducted a number of workshops in the library with writers from the South Sligo area.

A writing group aimed at children between the ages of 10 and 12 commenced in October. The group is facilitated by a member of the Leyney Writers, Mr. Don Urwin and they meet monthly.

## SLIGO LIBRARY SERVICE

### BOOK CLUBS

#### Adult Book Club

Due to the tremendous success of the two library book-clubs, a third book-club, 'The After-5's' commenced in September and continue to meet monthly. In January, the 'Tubbercurry Bookworms' featured on Ocean FM's 'Arts House' discussing John McGahern's 'Memoir'. The 'Active Retirement Association Bookclub' continues to enjoy meeting monthly to discuss their 'book of the month'.

#### Children's Book Club

In February, a book club for children was set up with the intention of shadowing the 2006 CBI/Bisto Awards. Shadowing is a programme designed to encourage groups of children to read, analyse and debate the 10 short-listed titles for the CBI/Bisto Book of the Year Award. Each group is then asked to present its verdict on the book which it feels should win the overall award. The whole idea is intended as a fun and interesting experience for everyone, encouraging readers to think critically about literature. Shadowing highlights the titles which the children consider to be worthy winners of the CBI/Bisto Awards and also encourages them to read titles that they may have overlooked.

The 'Booknest' bookshop hosted a special evening for the 'Bisto Kids' in Sligo in December where the children were entertained by Sligo born author and poet Mary Branley.

### EXHIBITIONS

A number of exhibitions were on display throughout the year. A particularly unique exhibition of 20 ink and acrylic works on paper by Dublin based artist Boz Mugabe featured in the library during February and March. Inspiration was drawn from cave petroglyphs, primitive art and culture, burial rites and the visual documentation of world theology. A second exhibition of works by Boz was shown in October. The exhibition also comprised a collection of colourful cartoons compiled by Boz over the last number of years.

To complement the presentation on Michael Davitt, an exhibition commemorating the life of the father of the Land League movement was displayed in the library during the month of October.

### PRESENTATIONS

A highly entertaining presentation entitled 'The Golden Era of Ceili Music and Dance, 1955 – 1970' was given in May by Mr. Brian Lawler who founded the Ardellis Ceili Band. National television commenced in Ireland in the early 60's and the Ardellis was one of the first Ceili Bands to be featured on the new service.

In October, to celebrate the centenary of the death of Micheal Davitt, an illustrated musical lecture was organised entitled 'Triumph over Adversity'. The lecture was provided by Mr. Donal Maguire. An integral part of the lecture was the inclusion of songs from Donal's latest CD entitled 'Michael Davitt – The Forgotten Hero?'

The annual open meeting for members of the public interested in studying through the Open University was held in October and presented by Mr. Pierre Tansey.

### AUTHOR VISITS

A number of authors visited the library during the year. During Children's Book Festival, children were entertained by three different authors. These included popular Irish authors, Mary Arrigan and Claire Hennessy and Shropshire based author and performer Andrew Fusek Peters. In December, adults enjoyed the company of author and former member of 'The Nualas', Anne Gildea.

### SUMMER ART CAMP

The last week in July was filled with a number of art camps aimed at children aged between 3 and 15 years old. The camps were facilitated by a local artist who looked at the subjects of illustration and design in children's books. Over sixty young people participated and they proved to be immensely popular with everyone.

### CHESS AND DRAUGHTS CLUB

The library chess and draughts club for children continued to go from strength to strength and a number of new members joined throughout the year. A competition was held in November and a club from neighbouring Charlestown participated in the friendly competition. The competition was enjoyed by all and was followed by a presentation of medals ceremony. It is envisaged that the club will participate in a number of other competitions which will be organised for the future.

### SLIGO REFERENCE AND LOCAL HISTORY LIBRARY, BRIDGE STREET, SLIGO

A total of 5741 local history queries were handled by the Reference and Local History section and 14, 419 people used Internet facilities during 2006. A restoration project for maps and documents began with the local professional restoration of three maps of Sligo Port and the Garavogue River. A valuable insight into social conditions in Sligo of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was obtained with the addition to stock of the Registers of Prisoners in Sligo Gaol between 1836 and 1939. These records were obtained from the Public Record Office and are accessible on microfilm.



## CIVIL DEFENCE



Sligo Civil Defence rose to the many challenges of 2006 with its customary professionalism and enthusiasm and this was evident in the number of community activities where its trained volunteers were in attendance.

Civil Defence personnel attended 52 events throughout the year with May to September being the busiest time. Included in this 'mix' were gymkhanas, triathlons, golf tournaments, senior soccer fixtures, charity swims, musical festivals, horse shows and car rallies.

Sligo Civil Defence is not only a service for covering community events but is ready to respond to an emergency call if and when received. For example in September it was called upon to assist with the removal of a beached whale at Culleenamore.

Demands on Civil Defence have increased greatly because of insurance requirements on community committees to ensure adequate health and safety and first aid cover at their events. Sligo Civil Defence continues its efforts to recruit, train and sustain volunteers in today's busy world in order to meet the demands on the service. Sligo Civil Defence has a core

group of around 60 volunteers willing and committed to volunteer at relatively short notice and a further 20 or so available if there was a major emergency. The volunteers enjoy the training provided and they are anxious to put their training into practice. Sligo Civil Defence strives to ensure that training is informative and varied to continue to motivate volunteers, not only to remain with the organisation, but to feel confident and useful when their assistance is called upon.

This year saw the transfer of the Civil Defence school from Ratra House in Dublin's Phoenix Park to Benamore in Roscrea as part of the Government's decentralisation plan. At the same time to promote a fresh image of the organisation the Civil Defence outerwear uniform has been changed from yellow to orange and blue. This uniform will be available to all volunteers towards the end of the year. It will ensure easy recognition of Civil Defence volunteers.

## SLIGO FIRE AUTHORITY



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 888 incidents in the last year. This is the largest number of calls for assistance on record and emphasised the importance of the service provided.

There were several large complex fires this year, again emphasising the need for an efficient and effective fire service response to emergencies and the need for preventative measures, including enforcement when advice alone is not sufficient. There has been an increase in car fires and 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 also remain vigilant in the home, as this is where our most life threatening fires occur each year.

### TRAINING

There is a very strict training regime in the Fire Service as is necessitated by the sometimes difficult and dangerous environment in which fire-fighters work.

Fire-fighters 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 when working around undeployed airbags and seatbelt tensioners.

The Brigade now holds “block” road traffic accident (R.T.A) training over a number of days, in which the necessary skills are learnt and practised.

Sligo is now a “hot fire” Training Centre and offers this facility nationally for the training of fire-fighters throughout the country. This facility is used to

Gas Fire Training



## SLIGO FIRE AUTHORITY

demonstrate and train fire-fighters in the latest techniques and equipment necessary for their protection and the saving of life. The Fire Service now has nationally qualified medical first responders (with defibrillators) in all Stations and in the Sligo Headquarters.

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. This centre has received capital funding this year for its continuing development in this area of expertise in recognition of its importance nationally.



Chemical Hazard  
Personal Protective  
Equipment

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

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. 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.

### CERTIFICATION, INSPECTION & ENFORCEMENT

The Fire Authority processed over 220 Fire Safety Certificate applications 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 laws 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 to ensure fire safety standards were being upheld.

### FIRE STATIONS AND APPLIANCES

In the last number of years, the ageing fire engines in Enniscrone, Tubbercurry, Ballymote and Sligo have been replaced with new modern appliances. The emergency tender in Sligo is in its 15th year of operational use with some of the equipment thereon over 20 years old. An application for funding has been approved by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for the replacement of this appliance.

Plans were submitted to the Department for funding and upgrading of Sligo Fire Station in line with current requirements and funding has been approved for some of the works to proceed this year, as has the provision of a new fire station in Ballymote.



Decontamination Unit



# POSITIONING SLIGO AS A KEY CENTRE FOR GROWTH

## IDA COMMENDS SLIGO LOCAL AUTHORITIES' 'PARTNERSHIP APPROACH'

The need for a critical mass of suitably qualified talent, supporting infrastructure and sophisticated business services can draw investors towards cities and regions of scale. For most of the investment IDA competes for, the competition is from city regions with a population base of over a million people. For this reason, every location in Ireland has to think and act regionally, rather than locally, if it wishes to succeed. The National Spatial Strategy sets out the framework for development in this way and needs to be actively embraced and followed by all economic and social parties.

In the North West, Sligo is a key centre for growth, designated as a Gateway location under the aforementioned National Spatial Strategy. It has an abundance of strengths to attract investment which can be seen in ongoing recruitment at Toucan's consumer telecoms operation in Sligo and Abbott Ireland's recently completed expanded diagnostic facility at Finisklin and its pharmaceutical operation on the Manorhamilton road, while nearby in Donegal Town, Abbott's new Diabetes Care is underway. Sligo continues to be a dynamic catalyst for growth in the North West. It has a plentiful skilled labour supply with nearly 230,000 people within a 60km radius, a progressive Institute of Technology producing high calibre graduates and a FAS training centre with excellent course offerings.

IDA has significantly raised the potential for regions to prosper by implementing a national programme of investment in the vital infrastructure of business park development, including Finisklin Business & Technology Park. New access via Strandhill Road has been delivered by Sligo County Council allowing IDA to proceed with the development of 12 acres on the western end of the Park with construction underway of a 2,000 square metre advance office solution. Developments of such infrastructure have created the ecosystem to meet the needs of international companies. Partnership is seen by IDA as key in this area and the Agency will continue to work closely with Sligo Borough and Sligo County Council to achieve the most beneficial outcome for Sligo and the North West Region in the coming years.



Critical to Sligo's economic prosperity and growth as a 'Gateway City is the delivery of the proposed Western Distributor Road and Eastern Bridge. This will bring with it improved access to the IDA Business and Technology Park in Finisklin and the IDA lands in the region of 80 acres at Oakfield, ensuring Sligo will be well placed to attract new investment and employment going forward.

The successes of any one year are always the product of sustained effort over an extended period by many players. The managers and workforces of existing multinational companies in Ireland are the best references for future investors, but behind the scenes national and local government, industry bodies and representatives, educational bodies, and infrastructure, utility and service providers all play a key role in creating the conditions for winning business.

In the last few years Sligo Local Authorities have progressed plans for significant housing, infrastructure and amenity projects, and have delivered many urban enhancements, including the pedestrianisation of O'Connell Street. The development of a new cultural corridor on Connaughton Road is another major initiative which will see a new and exciting contemporary arts space in our Gateway City. Other recent landmark achievements include the official opening of the Inner Relief Road and the commencement of the €22m Sligo Main Drainage Plant.

Sligo Local Authorities have always adhered to the partnership approach and the IDA looks forward to the successful continuation of a 'collaborative agency' approach in 2007.

# DRIVING PROGRESS IN THE NORTHWEST

## NATIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY THE CATALYST FOR BALANCED DEVELOPMENT

Sligo has been designated as a Gateway City under the National Spatial Strategy (NSS). As the national planning framework for Ireland for the next 20 years, the NSS aims to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development across Ireland, supported by more effective planning. Within this context Sligo is recognised as having the potential to build scale and critical mass to drive development in the North West. The approach is to make the region competitive according to its strengths while ensuring a high quality urban environment and vibrant rural areas.

## SUSTAINING STRONG COMMUNITIES

In announcing the National Spatial Strategy, the Minister has suggested the designation of "Gateways" and "Hubs" will act in three ways:

**It will bring a better spread of job opportunities:** sustaining Dublin's role as an engine of the economy while strengthening the drawing power of other areas. It will bring people, employment and services closer together in a way that sustains strong communities and strong regional economies.

**It will bring a better quality of life:** it will deliver less congestion, less long distance commuting, increased access to health, education, leisure and other services.

**It will bring better places to live in:** through ensuring a coherent national planning framework, taking care of our environment and making the most of our cities, towns and rural areas.

The local authority has taken the responsibility of ensuring that Sligo City achieves its potential under the designation.

## INTERDEPARTMENTAL TEAM

On 27th September 2006 the National Spatial Strategy Interdepartmental Crosscutting Team visited Sligo to view the development of the Gateway city at first hand and assess issues of concern and achievement.

Representatives of the following Departments were in attendance;

- ▶ Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- ▶ Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
- ▶ Department of Finance
- ▶ Department of Health and Children

- ▶ Department of Transport
- ▶ Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
- ▶ Department of Arts, Sport, and Tourism
- ▶ Department of the Taoiseach
- ▶ Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs
- ▶ Forfas
- ▶ Northern Ireland Representative

In their presentation, the officials of Sligo Local Authorities outlined details of the significant investments made in Sligo since designation with the level of public and private investment showing increasing confidence in the potential of Sligo City. The City now has a mix of residential, office, hotel and retail facilities in line with any growing city in the country.

## PRIORITIES

The Interdepartmental delegation was also given detail of Sligo Local Authorities short term priorities which include:-

- ▶ Targeted urban renewal and urban enhancement initiatives
- ▶ Delivery of strategic urban distributor routes
- ▶ Provision of regional sports and recreation facilities
- ▶ Development of Arts/Cultural facilities
- ▶ Promoting social inclusion
- ▶ Strengthening of the emerging research and innovation capacity

Specific projects within each of these priorities were highlighted and a commitment was given by all sides to work together to ensure that Sligo reached its potential under the designation.

The visit concluded with a tour of Sligo City which included viewing the locations of existing and potential projects. Sligo County Council continues to maintain contact with members of the Crosscutting Team to ensure that Sligo achieves maximum gain from any existing and potential funding packages.





# INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Photo: Nighttime on the Garavogue



## ROAD TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY



### WESTERN DISTRIBUTOR ROAD VITAL TO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF SLIGO

The proposed Western Distributor Road is considered a critical development in facilitating the continuing growth of Sligo as a 'Gateway City.' This will ensure Sligo will be well placed to attract new investment and employment by providing improved access to the IDA Business and Technology Park in Finisklin, Strandhill Airport and to the proposed IDA Business Park at Oakfield.

The 2.5km two lane road has been included in various Sligo City Development Plans since the 1970's, and it is expected to cost in the region of €40m. The road is required to provide access to residential, business and mixed-use zoned lands in the western areas of Sligo City and environs. It will also service existing residential areas and will relieve traffic congestion in western parts of the city.

During 2005 and 2006 public consultations allowed the general public to examine and comment on the project.

The delivery of the new road will facilitate the growth of Sligo in a planned and sustainable manner. The planning process for this project is expected to be completed in the first half of 2007 with construction to commence in the second half of 2007.

In a presentation to a meeting of Sligo County Council, Mr Pat Loftus, Area Director IDA, Border Region, emphasised the importance of providing a proper transport infrastructure to attract new business,

*"In line with the National Spatial Strategy, the IDA's strategy for the Northwest is to continue to promote a region that acts cohesively and the results are speaking for themselves – the evidence being the number of high quality overseas companies that have chosen Sligo and the Northwest as their location of choice".*

N4 Inner Relief

Mr Loftus went on to caution that *"we are operating in a very competitive environment. The investment that Ireland is competing for requires a critical mass of skills, services and infrastructure. In order to attract the changing type of investment, it is essential that we successfully implement the investment under the National Development Plan and the National Spatial Strategy".*

### ICBAN DELIVERS FOR SLIGO

Over the period 2003-2005 approximately €1m has been delivered by the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN) to fund various infrastructural improvements in County Sligo.

According to Senior Engineer Tommy Carroll 'This has enabled Sligo County Council to undertake much needed improvements to harbours on the West Sligo coastline including Enniscrone, Easkey and Pollnadivva. Amenity improvements have also been undertaken to resorts of Mullaghmore and Enniscrone which included upgrading of streets, footpaths and public lighting making villages more pedestrian friendly while also enhancing the attractiveness of resorts as tourist destinations'.

## ROAD TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

Improvements were also undertaken to Raghly Harbour in North Sligo including a feasibility Study which resulted in a major grant being secured from the Department of Marine and Natural Resources in 2006 allowing a major upgrade of the harbour to commence. Improvements were also undertaken to Regional Routes in the East of County Sligo.

Small realignment and resurfacing contracts were undertaken to Regional Route R290 at Ballygawley, R284 at Doonally, R287 at Correagh and R286 at Corwillick. Also enhancement works were undertaken to lay-bys on the N16 at Glencar and R286 at Corwillick.

The undertaking of these works has improved access to areas of County Sligo which have suffered greatly from population loss over the period of troubles in the North of Ireland. This was as a result of reduced access due to the closure of the Northern Railway Network and the closure of cross-border roads which served this area.

The works also enable tourism to be promoted in the region with the resorts and harbours receiving significant investment in physical infrastructure attracting greater number of tourists to the areas.



Launch of the County Sligo Road Safety Plan

### ROAD DESIGN

In the past three years there have been major increases in funding from both the National Roads Authority (NRA) and the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government for design and construction of national and non-national roads in the county. The Road Design Unit, with a staff of nine engineers, five technicians and three admin/clerical staff now carry out all design work for major and minor road schemes and bridges in the county, and provide support for the design of schemes within the Borough.

### NATIONAL ROAD DESIGN

Route selection has been carried out and a preferred route has been identified for all National Primary routes in the county, including the N4 (Dublin Road), the N15 (Donegal Road), the N16 (Manorhamilton Road) and the N17 (Galway Road).

Work on the N17 Tubbercurry Bypass in relation to Preliminary Design, Environmental Impact Statement and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is near completion and will be ready to publish in early 2007, subject to approval and funding from the NRA. In 2007 work will be continuing on the preliminary design and environmental studies on two other sections of the N17, namely Collooney to Achonry and Rathscanlon to Curry.

In 2007, preliminary design and environmental studies will be completed for the N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin and this scheme will be ready to proceed to CPO stage also, subject to approval and funding from the NRA.

A route for the N15 Sligo to County Boundary was approved in 2006 and in 2007 work will be progressing on the design of a dual carriageway for the Shannon Eighter to Hughes Bridge section.

In 2006, funding was provided by the NRA for the preparation of a Feasibility Study for a Sligo Western Bypass and this study will be completed in 2007.

### NATIONAL ROADS PROJECTS

The following Pavement and Improvement works were undertaken with grants allocated by the National Roads Authority.

- ▶ **N4** – 1.27 km of pavement strengthening/surface dressing at Doorly (€27,020 expended)
- ▶ **N15** – 1.37 km of quality pavement overlay at Shannon Eighter/Lisnalurg (€32,400 expended)
- ▶ **N16** – 5.5 km of pavement strengthening/surface dressing from Drum – Kilsellagh to the Leitrim Border (€14,900 expended)
- ▶ **N17** – 1.71 km of pavement strengthening/overlay at Templehouse/ Carrowreilly (€31,800 expended)
- ▶ **N59** – 2.29 km of pavement overlay at Dromard (€44,000 expended)
- ▶ **N59** – Hard Shoulder improvements were carried out between Carrownree and Masreagh (€200,000 expended).



## ROAD TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

### National Primary Accident Remedial Schemes

The NRA allocated a grant of €198,000 in order to carry out various accident remedial schemes throughout the County/Sligo Borough. The schemes were carried out at the following locations:-

- ▶ **N4/Markievicz Road Junction** (€25,000 allocated)
- ▶ **N4 Rosses Point Road Junction** (€25,000 allocated)
- ▶ **N4 at Cloonlurg** (€40,000 allocated)
- ▶ **N15 Scotsmans Walk/Abbott's Roundabout** (€20,000 allocated)
- ▶ **N15 at Rathaberna** (€25,000 allocated)
- ▶ **N15 at Derry** (€18,000 allocated)
- ▶ **N15 at Creevykeel** (€20,000 allocated)
- ▶ **N15 at Carrowilkin** (€25,000 allocated)
- ▶ **N59 Dromore West – Mayo Border-junction** improvements carried out at various locations (€100,000 allocated)
- ▶ **N59 Lisduff** (€20,000 allocated)

### National Primary Roads Traffic Calming Schemes

- ▶ A traffic calming scheme was carried out on the N16 junction with R286 out to the Borough Boundary (€17,300 expended)
- ▶ A traffic calming scheme was carried out on the N17 at Tubbercurry (€155,100 expended)

### Winter Maintenance

The National Roads Authority allocated a grant of €177,000 for National Primary Road Winter Maintenance and €45,000 for N59 Winter Maintenance.

Sligo County Council have five modern salt spreaders and snow ploughs for winter maintenance of roads.

### National Roads Surface Dressing

The National Roads Authority funded the cost of surface dressing all sections of roads with a bitumen macadam surface which had not been surface dressed previously. 17.71 km of National Primary road was surfaced dressed and 7.35 km of N59 was surface dressed. The expenditure on NP surface dressing was €44,800 and the expenditure on N 59 surface dressing was €19,000.

### National Roads Ordinary Maintenance

The National Roads Authority allocated a grant of €28,517 for National Primary Road Maintenance and €155,287 for N59 Ordinary Maintenance.

This grant is used for pavement maintenance, verge maintenance, road drainage, road marking maintenance, signage maintenance etc.



### NON-NATIONAL ROADS

#### Accident Remedial Schemes

A grant of €5,000 was allocated by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2006 to carry out safety improvement works at the following locations:

- ▶ Derroon Junction (R293 & L1501-45) - €20,000 allocated
- ▶ Hazelwood Junction (R286 & L74302-0) - €35,000 allocated
- ▶ Kinard Junction (R297 & R298) - €20,000 allocated
- ▶ Drinaghan Crossroads (L3502-0 and L3506) - €20,000 allocated

#### Non-National Roads Specific Improvement Schemes

##### R292 Strandhill Road (Tully – St. Annes Church) – The road construction is completed.

€119,939 was expended in 2006. This related to accommodation works/land acquisition agreements principally.

##### R292 Strandhill Road (Knappaghmore – Ballydoogan)

€66,527 was expended in 2006. This related principally to accommodation works required due to the purchase of parts of house front gardens, provision of services/ducting, footpaths and road construction.

##### R284 Drumaskibbole / Union / Ballydawley

€1,089,897 was expended in 2006. Topsoil was removed and stone placed for new road construction for a distance of 600m. Hard Rock was excavated for a distance of a further 120m and archaeology surveys/investigation were carried out. Land was also acquired for new road realignment.

## ROAD TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

### R294 Mullaghroe

€94,648 was expended in 2006. Topsoil was stripped and poor material was excavated and removed. Stone was placed for new road construction and land was acquired. Archaeological surveys/investigations were also carried out.

### R297 Muckduff, Enniscrone

€17,138 was expended in 2006. Stone was placed along 500m of the road and a bitumen macadam surface was laid on 350m of the road. A stormwater drainage system was provided and services ducting was laid.

### R286 Ballinode – Hazelwood

€79,959 was expended in 2006. This is an urban section of road and most of the improvements were carried out within the Borough area. Land was also acquired for future road realignment.

### Non-National Roads Maintenance and Pavement Improvement

#### Restoration Improvement Grant

A grant of €1,168,000 was allocated by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2006 which funded restoration improvement works on Non-National (Regional and Local) Roads. 16.43 km of Regional Roads and 87.18 km of Local Roads were improved under this programme.

#### Restoration Maintenance Grant

Grant funding of €1,106,000 was received in 2006 for surface dressing Non-National (Regional and Local) Roads. 8.4 km of Regional Roads and 79.45 km of Local Roads were surface dressed during 2006. Many local roads were also shaped and strengthened with graded crushed stone prior to surface dressing.

#### Discretionary Improvement Grant

A grant of €80,496 was allocated to carry out minor improvements on Non-National roads. Works undertaken included:

- ▶ Footpath replacement / improvement at Ballymote, Gurteen, Tubbercurry, Strandhill, Cuilbeg, Ballinacfad, Ballygawley, Collooney, Dromore West, Ballintogher and Enniscrone.
- ▶ Public lighting improvements
- ▶ Improvement of sightlines at bends and junctions
- ▶ Bridge repairs
- ▶ Drainage works
- ▶ Road safety schemes/minor improvements

Note: Footpath improvements funded out of the Discretionary Improvement Grant were augmented with matching funding from the Council's Development Levies Fund.

### Discretionary Maintenance Grant

An allocation of €805,645 was provided for the general maintenance of Regional Roads in the County. This grant is used for pavement maintenance, road drainage, verge maintenance, road markings etc.



### Class II and III Local Roads

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government allocated a grant €80,000 towards the improvement of Class II and Class III Local Roads in 2006.

Additional funding of €83,362 was provided by the Department in conjunction with the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs towards the upgrading of Class II and III Local Roads in CLÁR areas.

### Local Roads Maintenance

Funding for the maintenance of local roads comes from Sligo County Council's own resources. €51,000 was allocated in 2006.

### Flashing Amber Safety Lights at Schools

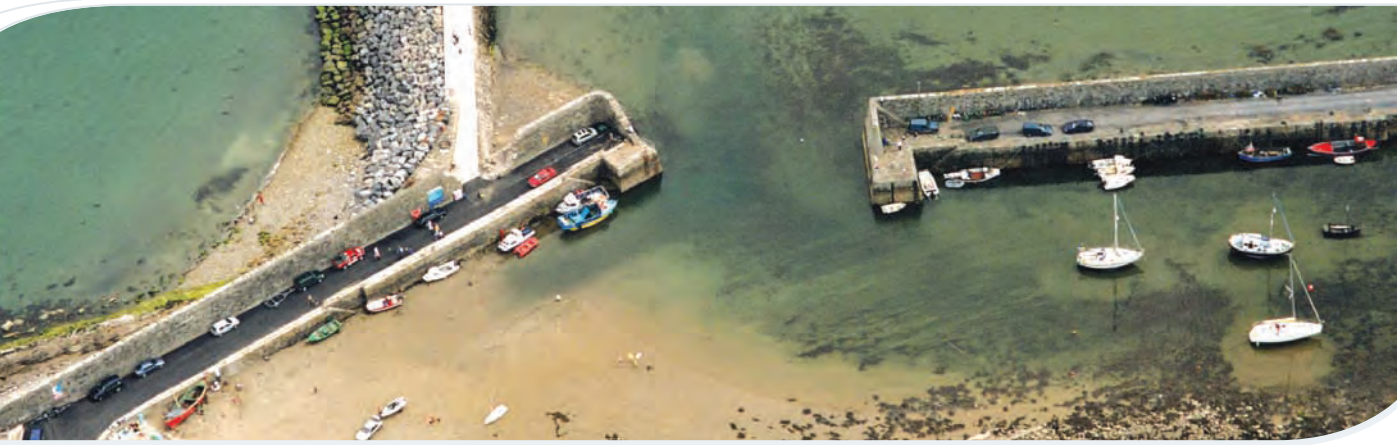
A grant of €161,595 was received from the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs towards the installation of flashing amber lights at 33 national schools located in CLÁR areas.

### Local Improvement Schemes

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government allocated a grant of €747,091 for the improvement of non-public roads, which benefit two or more landowners engaged in separate agricultural activities. Beneficiaries of the scheme must contribute towards the cost of the works – 10% for a scheme estimated to cost less than €25,393 and 15% in excess of this figure. A total of 29 schemes were carried out during 2006.

The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs provided a supplementary grant of €64,178 for Local Improvement Schemes in CLÁR areas which funded a further 15 schemes.

## PIERS AND HARBOURS



Mullaghmore  
Breakwater

### ANNAGHLOY BRIDGE

The road bridge providing access to Annaghloy Peninsula/Point had continued to deteriorate in recent years and has been replaced with a reinforced concrete matiere culvert. The structure spans a circa 100m long by 2.5m wide channel in Lough Arrow that links Lough Brick Bay and Canal Bay saving a circa 5km boat trip. The clearance for boat users at the original structure had always been of concern and was only in the order of 0.6m, (water level to bridge soffit). The bridge provides the only land access to the five inhabited dwellings and six farm holdings on the peninsula.

The totally inadequate headroom, combined with the poor bridge condition and poor road alignment at the bridge, left little choice but to replace the structure with a larger more suitable structure, where the road surface can be raised sufficiently to pass over the new bridge clearance requirements and provide tolerable stopping sight distance.

The existing road level was increased by 1m to accommodate the increase in structure height. The new bridge provides an increase in height of 750mm and in width by 2m to facilitate boat users in this area. During construction of the new bridge a temporary route was provided across the channel. Poor ground conditions and rising water levels made this work very difficult. The work included the excavation and placing of a reinforced concrete base for the pre-cast culvert, placing of the culvert, building of masonry stone spandrels walls on each side of the culvert and the surfacing of the carriageway. The project was funded by a Special Improvement Grant from the Department in 2006.

### RAGHLY HARBOUR IMPROVEMENT

During 2005 a new slipway was constructed in Raghly Harbour as the first phase of a major improvement scheme. The project was conceived with the community group and promoted in partnership with the Community and Enterprise Directorate during 2003 and 2004 who secured Phase II funding for the slipway and other ancillary works. The Infrastructure

Directorate took on the management of the contract to build the slipway which was completed in September 2006.

The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources provided funding for the much larger Phase II project involving a new quay, new jetties, extensive dredging and ancillary works. The 2006 allocation budget was €0.845m – Love Contracts was awarded the contract which has a number of difficult aspects that are being overcome. Additional funding has been sought from the Department of Communication Marine and Natural Resources to complete the project fully. The contract should be completed by the summer of 2007.

### COASTAL PROTECTION 2006

For a number of years Sligo County Council applied to the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources for funding to repair/reconstruct the Ardnaglass River outfall structure at Dunmorán Strand. In late August 2006, notification of finance arrived and a programme was immediately put in place to carry out the project. A bathymetric survey was carried out followed by numerical analysis to establish wave heights at the outfall site. This provided information for the design of the replacement structure. Subsequently tender documents were prepared, Part 8 planning permission was obtained and a contract was let following an open tender process to Ascon Ltd in November 2006.

The works comprise:

- ▶ New portion of Eastern structure
- ▶ Reconstruction of Western structure
- ▶ Reconstruction of masonry training wall along river bank
- ▶ Some rock armour terminal protection
- ▶ A footbridge and associated footpath

The project is due for completion by late spring 2007 and is managed by the Marine and Structure Section in the Infrastructure Directorate.



## BRIDGE RESTORATION AND REPAIRS



Gortnaderry  
Bridge after  
restoration

### GORTNADERRY BRIDGE – NORTH SLIGO

Gortnaderry Bridge was one of a number of bridges where repair work was carried out in 2006. The upstream masonry parapet had been partially demolished by vehicular impact.

This bridge is a fine double span segmental arch structure incorporating a substantial central pier and triangular cut-water. The internal vaults of the arches are of random rubble but the external arch rings (voussoirs) are rough dressed sandstone.

Repair works included;

- ▶ Removal of vegetation
- ▶ Reconstruction of the upstream cut-water
- ▶ Reconstruction of the upstream spandrel and parapet wall
- ▶ Improved South bound sight lines with the agreement of adjacent landowners

The result is another fine piece of work prolonging the life of our industrial and infrastructural heritage. Other bridges which benefited from some maintenance work in 2006 were:

- ▶ Culfadda Bridge – vegetation removal
- ▶ Carrowlustra Bridge – reconstruction of portion of bridge and parapets
- ▶ Lough Easkey - small bridge repair

## WATER SERVICES



### MINISTER COMMENDS SLIGO'S 'SHOWCASE' RURAL WATER PROGRAMME.

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Mr Dick Roche, TD., visited Sligo in July 2006 and paid tribute to the county's busy rural water programme. Minister Roche acknowledged the excellent work carried out by Sligo County Council, the National Federation of Group Water Schemes and the various group scheme committees. 'This programme is a showcase for what can be achieved through genuine partnership and co-operation, and a beacon for others to follow. It is also a shining example of good design, cost effective construction and care and concern for sensitive and attractive landscapes.'

#### Quality supply

Minister Roche visited a number of the new water treatment plants around the county. The recent programme of work has seen the construction of new treatment plants and the delivery of a quality water supply to twelve group schemes around the county.

The work was carried out by Treatment Services Ltd., Kilkenny. Two 'bundles' of contracts were signed in County Hall.

The Schemes included in the 'Northwest Group' are: Keelogaboy, Castletown, Drum East, Benbulbin, Ballintrillick & Beltra.

The schemes included in the 'South East Group' are: Geevagh/Highwood, Culfadda, Castlebaldwin, Corrick, Keash & Doongeela.

#### Progressive programme

Cathaoirleach Councillor Jim McGarry has commended the people driving 'one of the most progressive rural water programmes in the country. While Sligo County Council and the various agencies played a hugely significant role, pride of place must go to the various group scheme committees who have worked tirelessly to deliver for their own communities. It is hard to credit that when Sligo County Council embarked on its

Rural Water Programme in 1997, we received an allocation of £101,300 for that year. In 2006 this figure has grown to €5 million, and I feel this reflects great credit on the people involved - Group Scheme Committees, National Federation, Department of the Environment, and of course Sligo County Council.'

This view was echoed by the Chairman of the Sligo Rural Water Monitoring Committee, Councillor Gerry Murray...

"There is a great spirit of co-operation shown by all concerned. We are all working towards a common objective, the delivery of a quality water supply that meets the required EU standards. While many people made a valuable contribution, I have to acknowledge the central role by Liaison Officer Kathleen McTiernan, who has driven and guided the programme. Sligo County Council is now in the proud position of being one of the top local authorities in the country in terms of its rural water programme."

#### Partnership

Sean Clerkin of the National Federation of Group Water Schemes, acknowledged that the delivery of the new schemes was 'real evidence of partnership at work, and right through the entire process we enjoyed full co-operation from Sligo County Council. I feel the way this programme was managed could provide the impetus for other community initiatives, for instance waste management, such is the font of goodwill that exists in the various communities.'



## WATER SERVICES

### WATER METERING – A FAIRER WAY TO PAY

In 2006, Sligo County Council introduced a water metering programme for its non-domestic (business and farming) customers. This programme ensures that consumers will only pay for the water they use, and is therefore more equitable than the old 'flat' annual charge which was levied irrespective of usage.

#### Background

The water metering project is being undertaken as part of the Government's 'Water Services Pricing Policy'. The new policy will ensure that consumers will enjoy the benefit of a fair and equitable charging system, in that they will only pay for water they consume.

The charge will only relate to the non-domestic element of the water supply i.e. business, farming, institutions, and all connections not strictly for domestic use. Local Authorities are prohibited by law from charging for a domestic supply.

#### A fairer way to pay

The existing system of charging for water involves a flat rate for each category of connection irrespective of usage. The charge is exactly the same within each category regardless of the amount of water that is actually used.

An important concession under the new arrangement is that water users who have supplies with a domestic element will benefit from a **domestic allowance**. For example, this will apply in the case of a farmer whose house and land are on the same connection, or where a shop and living accommodation are in one premises.

#### Water conservation

An important benefit of the new water metering system is that it provides an incentive for consumers to identify and eliminate leaks. Any leakages detected and repaired between the public water main and the house, farm, etc could result in a substantial savings. For instance, it is not practical to use treated water for all farmyard purposes, (e.g. cleaning out yards) and farmers are encouraged to explore means of capturing rainwater as a more economical alternative.

#### Information days

Sligo County Council hosted a series of 'Open Days' throughout the county in May 2006 to advise the general public on the new water metering system, to address any concerns people had, and to promote the very important area of water efficiency actions.

### GROUPS SCHEMES TAKE THE LEAD IN WATER CONSERVATION

A €2.8m contract will be of major benefit to Group Water Schemes in their efforts to address the ongoing issue of water conservation.

The contract for the metering of Private Group Water Schemes and Critical Mains Replacement was signed at County Hall, and this development was welcomed by the Chairman of Sligo's Rural Water Monitoring Committee, Councillor Gerry Murray...

'I think the Group Schemes in County Sligo are among the most hard-working and progressive in the country. Over the next few weeks the work on the development of eleven new schemes will be completed, and this will see a quality water supply delivered to around 2,000 households, and also a number of farms, businesses and schools.'

Sligo County Council's Liaison Officer for Group Schemes, Kathleen McTiernan commended the Group Schemes for the active way in which they addressed the issue of water conservation. 'We have an excellent working relationship with the various Group Scheme Committees. They share our objective to improve water efficiency by identifying and implementing a series of water conservation measures, whether in the home, in the business or on the land.'

The €2.8m metering and critical mains contract was awarded to Carty Contractors, Sligo.



# WATER SERVICES PROJECT OFFICE



The Water Services Project Office has responsibility for project management and administration of all schemes under the Water Services Investment Programme, the Rural Water Programme and more recently Development Levy Schemes are funded entirely by Sligo County Council. During 2006, a total of 46 schemes were included on these programmes with an overall cost estimate of approximately €90m.

## WATER SERVICES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2005 – 2007

### Sligo Main Drainage Wastewater Treatment Plant (DBO Project)

Contract signing took place on 18th September 2006 for a new wastewater treatment plant with a design capacity of 50,000 population equivalent to service Sligo City and its environs. The main contractor is Anglian Water International and the contract



value for the design and build element of the works is approximately €2m. Detailed design of the new plant is well advanced and the contractor is expected to mobilise on the site at Finisklin in early 2007. The project is programmed for completion in October 2008.

### Enniscrone Wastewater Treatment Plant (DBO Project)

Contract documents were issued on 6th September 2006 for a new 5000 population equivalent wastewater treatment plant in Enniscrone and also including the operation of six other existing plants. The tender evaluation process is well advanced and the Tender Evaluation Report is due in January 2007. The design/build phase of the scheme will cost around €4m. Pending approval from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government the scheme is expected to commence in Qtr2 2007.

### Kilsellagh Water Treatment Plant (DBO Project)

Documentation for Part 8 planning approval for a new water treatment works with a throughput capacity of 400m<sup>3</sup>/hour to supply parts of Sligo City and its environs was put on public display on 13th December 2006. Pre-qualification of contractors intending to bid for this project was completed on 10th October 2006. It is anticipated that the tender period will commence early in 2007 pending approval of the contract documents from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Swans at Hazelwood

## WATER SERVICES PROJECT OFFICE

### **Tubbercurry, Grange and Strandhill Wastewater Treatment Plants (DBO Project)**

Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DOEHLG) approval of the preliminary reports for these schemes was received in April 2006. The Clients Representative to prepare contract documents for this bundled project was selected on 2nd November 2006. The procurement of third party surveys is currently underway and it is expected to substantially complete the tendering process for this project during 2007.

### **Lough Talt Regional Water Supply Scheme (DBO Project)**

Upon instruction from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DOEHLG), a Clients Representative was selected on 17th October 2006 to prepare a preliminary report on the upgrading of this scheme. Works have commenced on third party surveys and the draft Preliminary Report is programmed for completion in July 2007.

### **Ballygawley, Mullaghmore, Cliffooney and Ballinacarrow Sewerage Schemes**

The procurement process for appointment of a Clients Representative to prepare preliminary reports on these schemes ended on 2nd November 2006. Fees have been agreed and the Preliminary Report is due for completion in mid 2007.

Water Conservation and Network Management Project – Ryan Hanley Carl Bro was appointed as Consultant Engineers to carry out hydraulic modeling of the public water supply network within Sligo city and county. Data logging has been carried out on three schemes and construction of the associated models has commenced. The leakage control programme is ongoing and a mains rehabilitation programme is being developed. CiS Data Capture was completed on the water supply infrastructure and will focus on wastewater infrastructure during 2007. A modern telemetry system was installed at over 60 sites on the water supply network in the county area to facilitate remote monitoring of flow, pressure and depth. A Strategic Operational and Management Plan for water supply in Sligo city and county will also be developed during 2007.

Briefs are also being prepared for other schemes such as the expansion of the Foxes Den water treatment plant, an upgrade of the North Sligo water supply scheme and Carraroe sewerage scheme.

An Assessment of Needs for water services in Sligo City and county for the period 2007—2014 was carried out during 2006. The assessment which involved public consultation identified specific needs over the period 2007 to 2009 and examined from a strategic perspective, the main requirements for water services investment over the period 2010—2014. Following adoption by Sligo County Council this assessment was submitted to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and will form the basis for the Water Scheme Investment Programme 2007-2009.

### **DEVELOPMENT LEVY SCHEMES**

Development Levy Schemes are funded entirely by Sligo County Council from development levies charged in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. This mechanism allows the Council to provide new infrastructure thereby facilitating development that would not be feasible otherwise.

### **Coolaney Wastewater Treatment Plant (DB Project)**

A new 2500 population equivalent wastewater treatment plant – has been constructed in the village of Coolaney. The plant became operational in October 2006 and will facilitate future development within Coolaney and provide environmental enhancement to the receiving waters in the Owenbeg River. The complete project will cost approximately €1.6m.

### **Dromore West Wastewater Treatment Plant (DB Project)**

A 2500 population equivalent wastewater treatment plant is currently under construction in Dromore West. The plant, at a cost of €1.4m, is expected to be operational during March 2007.

The procurement of two other wastewater treatment plants funded from development levies was advanced during 2006, for the villages of Carney and Gurteen. The contract for Carney Waste Water Treatment Plant was signed on 16th November 2006 and the detailed design process is now well advanced. The plant is due to be operational in Qtr3 2007. Part 8 documentation for Gurteen WWTP was put on public display on 29th November 2006. Pending planning approval it is anticipated that this contract will be signed in Qtr1 2007. This plant should be operational in early 2008.

A number of water supply schemes funded by Sligo County Council from development levies have also been advanced during 2006; approximately 2.5km of new water mains have been installed at Ardnaglass and Grange. It is proposed to construct a new reservoir and approximately 1km of pipeline at Rockfield, Coolaney during 2007.





DIRECTORATE OF  
COMMUNITY, ENTERPRISE  
& THE ARTS

Photo: Aerial View of Ben Bulbin



## SLIGO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD



The review of the Sligo County Development Board's Integrated Economic, Social and Cultural Strategy 2002-2012 resulted in the publication of the County Development Board's three year Action Plan for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2006-2008.

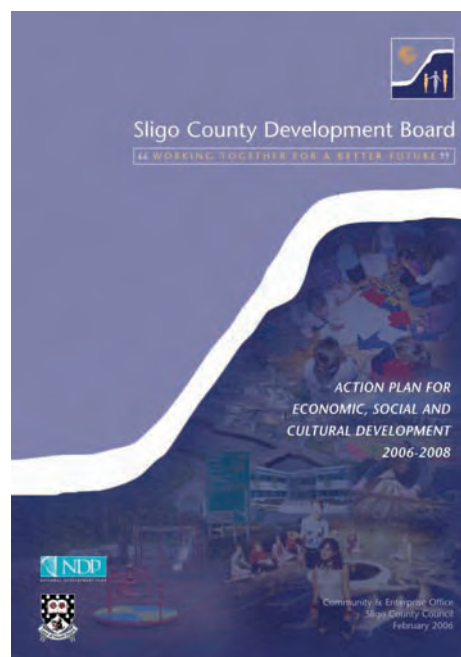
JFK Parade, Sligo

This three year plan identifies six key areas and forty actions which the County Development Board will focus on delivering over its duration. Emphasis is placed on the co-operation and integration of public sector agency activities at local level.

**The six priority areas highlighted in the County Development Boards Action Plan 2006-2008 are:-**

1. Delivering on the Gateway for Sligo
3. Ensuring Quality Childcare
4. Promoting Social Inclusion and Equality
5. Delivering on Public Safety
6. Developing on Play and Recreational Opportunities.

During 2006, significant progress has been made in relation to the implementation of the Action Plan.



Action Plan for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2006-2008

## SLIGO VOLUNTEER CENTRE



This year saw the first year of the newly established service of the Sligo Volunteer Centre. This followed the development and pilot phase initiated under an EU Peace II Task Force Measure by the Office of Community & Enterprise, in Sligo County Council.

Sligo Volunteer Centre became a Registered Company in March 2006. There were many activities throughout the year to create links with the existing community & voluntary sectors in the County as well as creating awareness amongst potential volunteers. In May 2006 Sligo Volunteer Centre provided training to 14 organisations in volunteer management. In June 2006 the Volunteer Centre held a number of outreach sessions around the county to promote volunteering in areas outside of Sligo city. In August 2006, it held an information stand in Tesco Arcade to heighten its profile.

### SPECIAL EVENTS IN 2006

#### Volunteering Fair with An Gaisce

In October 2006 Sligo Volunteer Centre assisted The Presidents Award (An Gaisce) and The Sligo Sports Partnership with a volunteering fair aimed at secondary school students participating in the Presidents Award. The young participants had an opportunity to meet with a variety of voluntary organisations and sports clubs who were looking for people to help them with their activities. A number of successful links were made through this event and it is hoped this will be an annual event.

#### Funding Seminar with Sligo County Community Forum

In October, Sligo Volunteer Centre co-hosted a Funding Seminar with Sligo County Community Forum. The aim of the seminar was to inform community & voluntary groups of the types of funding available to them, as well as how to get started on their idea, hints about filling out application forms and tips on fundraising. There was a large attendance of representatives from approximately 75 community groups around the County.



**volunteer centre**  
Ionaid d'Oibri Deonacha Chontae Shligigh

SLIGO

Volunteers  
in action

### The Community Foundation of Ireland assists Sligo Volunteer Centre to deliver Family Befriending Project

During the period September 2006 to December 2006, Sligo Volunteer Centre headed up an exciting Family Volunteering Project which saw 10 local families befriend families of the Iranian Kurdish Programme refugees who arrived in Sligo in September and made it their home. The Sligo based families have been matched under a "Befriending Programme" with Iranian Kurdish families who have members of their family of similar ages. This project was funded by the Community Foundation of Ireland and also by the Reception and Integration Agency. A number of activities were involved in the programme such as induction for the Sligo based families, a Welcome Day, an Arts & Crafts Day and an indoor picnic.

Family volunteering is a rewarding way for families to spend time together and contribute to their community. It is hoped to run further family volunteering projects in the future.

#### 2006 Facts & Figures

- ▶ We registered 109 volunteers
- ▶ We registered 10 family units to volunteer on our Family Befriending Project.
- ▶ We registered vacancies from 29 Community & Voluntary Groups which totalled 99 vacancies.



## SLIGO COUNTY COMMUNITY FORUM



After a year of intensive hard work by its voluntary management Committee, Sligo County Community Forum is proud to confirm that there are now over 580 community and voluntary sector groups affiliated, making it the largest representative body for community and voluntary sector groups in the county.

**It is estimated that at least 6000 community activists in the county are now linked into the County Community Forum.**

### **REPRESENTATIONAL ACTIVITIES: LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL**

The 22 elected/nominated members of the management group have met on a monthly basis throughout 2006, and several subgroups have committed time to ancillary activities including the production of newsletters, production of an updated community directory, continued development of the five area Fora, organising conferences and seminars, recruitment subgroup, as well as participating in:

- ▶ County Development Board
- ▶ Four Local Authority Strategic Policy Committees
- ▶ Sports & Recreation Partnership
- ▶ County Childcare Committee
- ▶ County Heritage Forum
- ▶ Regional Drugs Taskforce
- ▶ Volunteer Bureau
- ▶ Regional Border Area Forum
- ▶ Regional Western Alliance Forum
- ▶ Social Inclusion Measures Group
- ▶ PEACEII Taskforce
- ▶ Play Advisory Forum
- ▶ ICBAN – Irish Central Border Area Network – Joining up Development Programme.
- ▶ Joint Policing Committee

Two members of Sligo Community Forum were elected to the executive of the National Forum in 2005 and in 2006 were elected to Vice Chairperson and Secretary of the National Forum and they bring regular updates to the local Fora on activities at National level.

Nominations from all community and voluntary groups in County Sligo were sought in November 2006 and elections subsequently took place throughout the county to form a new committee.

### **POLICY WORKER AND SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT WORKER**

In May 2006 Sligo County Community Forum employed a Support and Development Worker to work with the Forum and its members. The salary and programme costs are funded from the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government's annual community forum budget, with office facility support from the County Development Board and the Offices of Community, Enterprise and the Arts.

#### **The work includes:**

- ▶ Supporting the work of the Forum comprising of over 580 community and voluntary organizations.
- ▶ Supporting Executive Forum members in their role on the County Council Strategic Policy Committees and County Development Board.
- ▶ Implementing a revised work plan with newly elected members.
- ▶ Implementing communications strategy



## SLIGO COUNTY COMMUNITY FORUM / BURIAL GROUNDS

- ▶ Organising seminars, information events of relevance to the community and voluntary sector
- ▶ Organising AGM, management committee meetings and Area Fora meetings
- ▶ Organising Forum elections
- ▶ Assisting in the development of the Area Fora
- ▶ Production of 4 newsletters annually
- ▶ Maintaining profile of the forum with media strategy
- ▶ Production of information packs on county forum and area fora
- ▶ Developing a 2-way information system to grass roots level
- ▶ Building linkages between the forum and County Council
- ▶ Assist in the development of a best practice guide on community consultation
- ▶ Supporting social inclusion cluster of the forum
- ▶ Supporting forum on various
- ▶ Overseeing development of website and IT strategy
- ▶ Identify funding opportunities

The work of the Support and Development worker is assisted through the LEADER CE Programme with the employment of a part time administrator. Sligo County Community Forum has a joined up partnership approach with support from the Community, Enterprise and the Arts Office and the Sligo LEADER Partnership Co ensuring the needs and issues of the community and voluntary sector in County Sligo are highlighted and acted on.

### AREA FORA

Area Fora meetings were held in each of the 5 electoral areas in the county in June 2006. Elections took place in each of the Area Foras in November 2005 and meetings will be held again in January 2007.

A strong Area Fora base is being established which will in turn ensure a strong Community Forum structure in County Sligo.



Reilig Baile  
an Mhota

### BURIAL GROUNDS

The Burial Ground Policy 2006-2010 which was adopted by the Council in March 2006 focuses on a number of key issues including:

- ▶ Condition of all Council controlled burial grounds
- ▶ Current level of plot space available
- ▶ State of buildings/structures in burial grounds

The policy identified the following 10 burial grounds which required urgent action:

- ▶ Ahamlish (Grange)
- ▶ Keellogues (Ballinrillick)
- ▶ Knockbrack (Culfadda)
- ▶ Carrigans (Maugherow)
- ▶ Killery (Ballintogher)
- ▶ Court Abbey (Achonry)
- ▶ Kilmacowen
- ▶ Dromard
- ▶ Mount Irwin
- ▶ Easkey

It is hoped to commence a programme of works in relation to these burial grounds on a phased basis throughout the life of the policy document. During 2006 progress has been made in the provision of extensions at Keellogues and Easkey.

The maintenance and conservation of burial grounds is carried out by Sligo County Council in consultation with the community. The office of Community & Enterprise promotes the establishment of burial ground committees, the aim being to involve the community in the upkeep and maintenance of the area. Each year, Sligo County Council administers a burial ground grant scheme to encourage and support these groups to maintain their local cemeteries and enhance their communities. The Council acknowledges the great voluntary efforts of community groups and local burial ground committees involved in the care and conservation of these areas. The Council is pursuing this partnership approach throughout the county, with the community taking on more responsibility in the upkeep and maintenance of these places of natural heritage.

## PRIDE OF PLACE



The Pride of Place Competition recognises the effort and hard work of local people to improve their community.

It celebrates 'community spirit': when people come together to enhance and change parts of their area for the good of the whole community.

Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council have worked together to run this highly successful competition. The development and promotion of civic pride is enshrined in the 10 year Strategy adopted by the Sligo County Development Board; which is a ready illustration of the significance of this initiative.

### Sligo Pride of Place competition

This year entries were submitted from a broad spectrum of community interests and activities (environmental, heritage, educational, cultural or social) linked by the common objective of creating or restoring a sense of pride in an area. This competition encourages people to take initiative and drive specific projects which will have a long lasting and positive effect on the locality.

Five overall category winners were selected; these winners then represented Sligo in the Co-operation Ireland National Pride of Place competition. One entry per population category can be selected from Sligo for entry to the All Ireland Competition.

This year 9 applications were received from groups involved in a broad range of community based activities.

All entrants received a certificate in recognition of their ongoing community work and a prize of €50 was awarded to the winners in each category, and all the other groups were awarded €300 in recognition of their outstanding work in their areas.

### Category 1 (population up to 500):

**Aclare Development Council Ltd**

### Category 2 (population between 501 and 1,000):

**Coolaney Development Council**

### Category 3 (population between 1,001 and 2,000):

**Enniscrone Community Council**

### Category 4 (population between 2,001 and 10,000):

**Cranmore Community Platform**

A new category was introduced by Co-operation Ireland for the 2006 competition – Single Issue Entrant, the theme of this entry is quite broad and can be very diverse, anything from a heritage project to a childcare facility but it must be developed in an innovative and participative manner by the local community.

The winner in this category was **Easkey Community Council Ltd**

The presentation of the Sligo Pride of Place awards took place in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Riverside on 16th May 2006.

Judging for the National All-Ireland Pride of Place Competition took place on 3rd and 4th July. Unlike other competitions, judging for this competition is a very visible and community orientated event and therefore the active support and assistance of people living and working in these areas is very much appreciated.

### National Pride of Place Awards Ceremony

The Co-operation Ireland Pride of Place winners were announced at a gala ceremony in the Mount Wolseley Hilton Hotel on 14th October 2006. Over 450 people from throughout the country were in attendance to hear the result including representatives from Cranmore, Easkey and Aclare. Although Sligo did not receive an overall award this year, Aclare Development Council Ltd. was shortlisted in its population category.

# RAPID PROGRAMME



## REVITALISING AREAS THROUGH PLANNING, INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT

RAPID is a Government initiative that targets 45 disadvantaged urban areas in the country. Sligo town was awarded a RAPID Programme in 2002 and this means that five designated RAPID areas of Sligo Town can receive priority:

**Cranmore; Forthill / Cartron Estate; Garavogue Villas / Doorly Park; St Josephs Terrace / St Bridget's Place / Pilkington Terrace; Maugeraboy / Jinks Avenue / Tracey Avenue.**

### Nationally, the RAPID Programme aims to:

- ▶ Increase the investment made by Government departments and state agencies in the 45 communities;
- ▶ Improve the delivery of public services through integration and coordination
- ▶ Enhance the opportunities for communities to participate in the strategic improvement of their areas.

The programme is implemented locally by an AIT (Area Implementation Team) consisting of representatives from key agencies and co-ordinated by the RAPID Programme Co-ordinator. The Programme is monitored by SIM (Social Inclusion Measures Group) at county level and the NMC (National Monitoring Committee) chaired by Minister Eamon O' Cuiv at national level.

### VISION OF SLIGO RAPID PROGRAMME AREA IMPLEMENTATION TEAM:

*"To work together with a common purpose to eliminate disadvantage within the five RAPID areas of Sligo Town"*

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE CCTV SCHEMES

After the announcement from Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform / Pobal regarding the success of the two Community-based CCTV applications a proposal for CCTV in Cranmore and Forthill was progressed through the following process:

- ▶ Formation of a Steering Group comprising Sligo Borough Council, Gardaí and Community Representatives to agree an action plan;
- ▶ Liaison with the Joint Policing Committee for its approval;
- ▶ Community consultation regarding the implementation of the CCTV projects in each community;
- ▶ A tendering process and funder's requirements;
- ▶ Developing the technical specification of the cameras and equipment to be used through consultation with colleagues.

### REVIEW OF ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

Voluntary and community groups working in RAPID areas of Sligo Town are asked by Government Departments to seek endorsement of funding applications from the RAPID AIT so as to ensure co-ordination of resources and strengthen the applications that are being submitted. During 2006 the AIT reviewed the endorsement process in Sligo and has adopted guidelines to issue to groups seeking endorsement to simplify the process. A number of applications were endorsed under the Sports Capital Programme and Dormant Accounts Fund, and many were successful. The AIT takes very seriously its

Sligo City Centre and RAPID areas



## RAPID PROGRAMME

responsibilities around endorsement and measures are being taken to revisit successful projects to remind them of their obligations towards RAPID residents.

### COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION ON AIT

Currently there are two community representatives on the Sligo AIT, who represent all five RAPID areas. Community participation on the RAPID Programme is still evolving and recommendations were made by Fitzpatrick's Consultancy to adapt policies relating to community representation. Accordingly, changes will be made to involve a Community Representatives Team, allowing communication between three community reps who will sit on the AIT.

### RAPID LEVERAGE FUNDING 2006

A number of Leverage Funding schemes have been put in place by the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in partnership with both national and local agencies for each of the designated RAPID areas throughout the Country in 2006. Sligo benefited from these schemes in the following areas:

#### Playground Scheme

Funding was announced in 2005 for the provision of Acorn Park, a children's playground in Cranmore and this was formally opened in September 2006. A code of practice was developed by the community, for the responsible use of the playground.

#### Traffic Calming

The Mercy Convent area in Pearse Road, Sligo was seen as a traffic black-spot during school collection and drop-off times, through the AIT, an application was made for the Traffic Calming Leverage Grant and provision of a lay-by was soon completed. Sligo Borough Council matched funding and this initiative was provided in a very short timeframe.

#### Housing Estate Enhancement Scheme

Preparatory works for the playground in Cranmore were necessary before the play area could be provided – so for this reason the HES grant was utilised in Cranmore in 2006.



### Educational Leverage Schemes

A new initiative was launched in 2006 relating to the provision of equipment, furniture and other small capital items. This was in response to requests by AIT's for educational funding in RAPID areas. National and secondary schools servicing RAPID areas are eligible to apply for funds from the Department of Education and Science.

### Dormant Accounts Funding

A number of applications were successful under the Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF) in 2006 including:

- ▶ Forthill Municipal Park - €200,000 was awarded under the RAPID Additionality Scheme.
- ▶ Older People's Measure – four successful projects were awarded funding namely Merville Community Centre, St. Anne's Youth and Community Centre, Sligo Leader Partnership Co and Social Services Meals on Wheels.
- ▶ ICT and Young People Measure – two projects were endorsed and both received funding for improvement of youthreach IT facilities and for multi-media upgrade for a consortium of groups including Northside CDP and Cranmore Community Platform.

### SEASIDE TOWNS INITIATIVE

The Special EU Programmes Body and the Irish Central Border Area Interreg IIIA Partnership awarded grant aid funding of €1,275,000 under Priority 1 Measure 1 to the Seaside Towns Initiative, with a minimum of 25% matching funding being provided by the local authorities involved in the project. Sligo County Council is lead partner for the project which runs until December 2007.

This funding is being used to undertake environmental improvements in specific seaside towns located in the five council areas of Sligo, Donegal, Moyle, Coleraine and Larne. This cross-border project is designed to bring together local authorities to share knowledge and technical expertise which will result in mutual economic, social and cultural benefits.

The aim of the project is to enhance the profile and significance of the Seaside towns through support, enhancement and promotion of a sustainable tourism product.

This will be achieved through joint local authority co-ordination of new product development, existing product enhancement, sectoral involvement, marketing and promotion between Sligo County Council, Donegal County Council, Larne Borough Council, Moyle Borough Council and Coleraine Borough Council.

As part of the marketing initiative a web site was established – [www.seasidetowns.ie](http://www.seasidetowns.ie). The web site will be updated with details of the various projects and currently contains information on the Sligo and Donegal projects.

# TIDY TOWNS 2006



Sligo County Council has worked in partnership with Tidy Towns groups providing advice and financial support for many years.

### This relationship has led to:

- ▶ the steady increase in group marks
- ▶ helping the physical enhancement of towns and villages
- ▶ enhancing community development.

In 2006, the Office of Community and Enterprise spearheaded a major drive to promote and attract new entrants to the competition and to focus on improving the marks of the existing entrants. A working group was established to support this effort and comprised of key staff across many of the work areas of the Council.

To provide practical advice to those involved in the enhancement of towns and villages Sligo County Council in association with the Tidy Towns Unit of the Department of the Environment Heritage & Local Government hosted a half day information seminar in February 2006.

The awards ceremony for the County Tidy Towns competition took place in July. Prizes were presented to the winners by Cathaoirleach Cllr. Jimmy McGarry;

In total 105 entries were received from across the county, with great support in particular from local schools and the business community. Judging for this event took place in late May and the judging panel comprised of staff from various departments within the Council.

Towns and villages throughout County Sligo also took part in the National Tidy Towns Competition run by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and sponsored by SuperValu since 1992.

### Winners in the 2006 County Sligo Tidy Towns Competition:

#### Best Kept Housing Estate

- Nepin Drive Residents Association
- Banada Housing Association
- Cahermore Holiday Village Res. Association
- Mountain View Housing Estate
- Cloondara Residents Association
- Castlecove Residents Association

#### Best Kept School

- Killaville National School
- St. John's National School
- Scoil Naomh Eanna
- Colaiste Iascaigh

#### Best Kept Shop Front

- Tubbercurry Credit Union
- Cullen's Pub, Collooney

#### Best Kept Bottle Bank

- Banada Development Agency
- Ballintogher Tidy Towns

#### Best Kept Street

- Enniscrone Tidy Towns
- Ballintogher Community Enterprise

#### County Award

- Riverstown Tidy Towns Committee
- Coolaney Tidy Towns Committee
- Enniscrone Tidy Towns Committee
- Collooney Tidy Towns Committee
- Strandhill Development Association
- Tubbercurry Tidy Towns Committee

Ballymote  
Brother Walfrid  
Memorial Park

## TIDY TOWNS 2006 / URBAN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL PROG.

### COUNTY AWARDS

#### Best Town/Village in the county:

- ▶ **Ballintogher** received the award for securing the highest mark in the county.
- ▶ **Coolaney** was highly commended.
- ▶ **Riverstown** was commended.

#### SuperValu Endeavour Award

This award was presented to **Banada Tourlestrane** to recognise the town or village in each county, which has made the greatest improvement on its performance over last year.

#### Landscape Award - *Sponsored by the Tree Council of Ireland*

**Ballymote Town Park, Ballymote, Co. Sligo**

#### Architectural Award - *Sponsored by the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland*

**Civic Offices, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo**

#### Promotion of Heritage Award - *Sponsored by the Heritage Council*

**Pearse Road Cemetery, Sligo Town**

Assistance to Tidy Towns committees throughout the county is provided under the Community and Voluntary Grants scheme administered by the Office of Community and Enterprise.



Tubbercurry Credit Union - Best Kept Shop Front

### URBAN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL PROGRAMME

**The current programme is coming to a conclusion with three villages being addressed in 2006/2007.**

The areas benefiting are Ballinacarrow, Ballisodare and Coolaney. Extensive local consultations took place with community representatives in each village. The increased level of development in these villages presents a challenge in coping with large amounts of construction whilst retaining the character of the area. This was recognised as a priority when the plans were being developed. The Arts Office is also involved in addressing the issue of art features, to be incorporated into, and add value to the overall plans.

**Ballinacarrow:** Situated on the N17, traffic has a major impact on village life. Following extensive consultation the primary area to be addressed is the local community centre. A playground together with extensive landscape improvement works will be carried out. The Main Street will also benefit from landscape improvement works.

**Ballisodare:** As the main traffic artery from Sligo to Ballina, Ballisodare also has a heavy flow of traffic throughout the day. In an effort to provide a village centre focus area, the lands around the Ball Alley and River are being further developed and will incorporate an Art Piece, developed in consultation with the community and local secondary school pupils. This will greatly increase the amenity value of the area. The grotto area will also be upgraded and the new playground will be completed.

**Coolaney:** The extensive development of new houses around the village has led the local community to focus on the village centre and river walk areas. The River Walk/Millennium Park will be upgraded and will also benefit from an Art Piece which will be incorporated into the local landscape. The Main Street will benefit from major landscape improvement works.

The involvement of local community groups and in the case of Ballisodare, the local Secondary School pupils, was of great benefit at planning stage and this contribution is to be acknowledged.



## THE ARTS DEPARTMENT



### The mission of the Arts Department is to 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 works of excellence
- ▶ Time, space and support for those who would create expressions of self, community and place

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

The period of *The Brightening Air County Sligo Arts Plan 2002-2005* has been marked by a substantial increase in arts initiatives, projects and opportunities for participation throughout County Sligo. The following initiatives are now part of and funded by the annual programme of work of the Arts Department.

#### ACTIVITIES DURING 2006

##### Live Music in the Classroom

Published by Sligo Arts Department in May 2006, *Live Music in the Classroom* is the title of a research report on the learning that emerged from the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency with special emphasis on the Vogler Primary School Curriculum Support Programme. The report was commissioned by The Vogler Partners Steering Group, a group made up of arts and education agencies working at regional and national level - Sligo Local Authorities, Music Network, The Arts Council, Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick and The Department of Education and Science. A researcher was commissioned by the group to carry out the research. The organising partners intend to channel their enhanced understanding of education and local music development into policy and provision at both local and national level.

#### VOGLER SPRING FESTIVAL

The successful Vogler Spring Festival takes place annually each May Bank Holiday Weekend in Drumcliffe, Co Sligo. The 2006 Festival as always revolved around the Vogler Quartet, both as artistic directors and as key performers and joined by acclaimed Irish and international guest artists in a highly distinctive programme, which boldly interweaved contemporary works with 20th century masterpieces. Through the annual *Vogler Spring Festival* the Arts Department provides ongoing support for the performance and promotion of chamber music of excellence. The continuation of the festival beyond the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency timeframe has been welcomed by chamber music enthusiasts locally, nationally and internationally. Work commenced in 2006 on a Composer in Residence type initiative in schools in Sligo Borough and County in preparation for a World Premiere by Children's Choir and String Quartet at the Vogler Spring Festival 2007.

During 2006, a successful partnership was formed by Sligo County Council with Wexford County Council, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra and the Arts Council of Ireland to undertake Research into Local Authorities Contribution to Music Development in Ireland. A Research Fellow has recently been appointed to St. Patrick's College to undertake the research which the partners propose will result in a publication and conference in 2008.

Fireworks light up  
the night sky

## THE ARTS DEPARTMENT

As a local partner in the Vogler Quartet in Sligo Residency Programme, Con Brio, a voluntary group of music promoters established in 1998, developed the very successful annual Sligo Music Series. The 2006/2007 programme is a high calibre music series, following a successful 2005/2006 programme which was possibly their most ambitious to date, with an exciting mix of orchestral, choral and chamber music from both renowned national and international performers.

### County Sligo Youth Theatre

The County Sligo Youth Theatre is to complete refurbishments on its space at the Factory Performance Space Complex on Lower Quay Street through capital funding received from the Peace II fund allocation. The Youth Theatre presented two of their own productions; 'Macbeth' in February and a summer performance of 'Gruesome Tales' as well as taking part in other community, regional and cross-border initiatives. The members also worked on their own initiative in producing 'Never Trust A Vixen', written by member Jack Kavanagh. Workshops took place in its theatre space throughout the year with professional practitioners from a wide variety of performance backgrounds including vocal and physical skills, special effects, circus, improvisation, film, dance, movement, street theatre etc.



Sinead O'Connor, relaxing before her performance at Sligo Live music festival at Sligo Racecourse, Sligo and later on stage.



### Bealtaine Festival

The Arts Department promotes the participation of older people in the arts through its Golden Years Programme and Intergenerational Arts Initiatives encouraging the integration of older people with other groups and other ages, working closely with the Health Service Executive North West. During the Month of May each year, Sligo's Bealtaine Festival celebrates creativity in older age through an exciting and wide-ranging programme of events. The Arts Department has taken the lead in initiating the Sligo Arts and Health Partnership, which takes a holistic view of health beyond the absence of illness and, working with an Arts and Health Steering Group, is currently preparing an Arts and Health Plan.

### 'The Third Sunday'

In 2006 the Sligo Arts Department partnered with local radio station Ocean FM to produce a unique series of radio programmes 'The Third Sunday', curated by writer Brian Leyden. Every third Sunday of the month from November 06 to June 07 Sorcha Crowley, presenter of 'The Arts House', meets Writers' Groups throughout County Sligo. The emphasis is on fine writing in poetry and story that at the same time explores how place connects with imagination. Each of the eight programmes present a feature writers group's own work, poetry, stories, member's profiles together with a special guest author on the craft and business of writing. Groups are being facilitated by Eibhlin Nic Eochaidh, Creative Writing Advisor to the Arts Office. The programme is an outcome of a long-term advisory role with creative writing groups in Sligo. Since the establishment of the Arts Department in 1997, Sligo Local Authorities have worked with many new and established writers groups throughout Sligo. This innovative programme aims to promote and further the work of creative writing groups throughout the county.

Sligo has a strong traditional music heritage and there are a number of annual traditional music festivals which continued to be supported by the Arts Department this year.

## THE ARTS DEPARTMENT

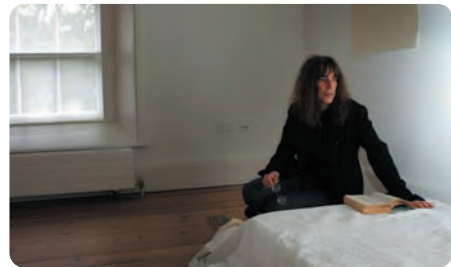
### Grants and bursaries

Each year the Arts Department invests in grants and bursaries for arts programmes and projects in the county. The call for applications is advertised through the local media in February/March. For professional artists of all disciplines, there is a bursary to spend a fortnight in an artists retreat to work on a specific project or commission.

Sligo's Public Art Policy and Programme has influenced thinking at national level. The current series of public art commissions 'Unravelling Development' was launched in May 2005. The ten commissions in the series running from 2004 to 2007 highlight the unprecedented level of capital investment in the infrastructure of the Borough and County. With change and development possibly the most striking features of contemporary Irish life, it is important at this time that artists are given opportunities to reflect on or engage with the idea of change as it affects culture, landscape and the built environment. The panel of twelve artists involved work in a variety of disciplines including writing, music composition, new media and the visual arts. They are engaging with a wide and varied public during the course of making and presenting the work.



Patti Smith at the opening of her solo exhibition (Patti Smith, Drawings and Photographs) in the Model Arts and Niland Gallery, Sligo. Patti inscribes the text from the WB Yeats poem 'He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven' into her newest work, 'A Pythagorean Traveller'



Bronzeman at Drumcliffe

### Sligo Events Quarterly

The Sligo Events Quarterly (SEQ) is a free event guide for arts and cultural events happening in Sligo. Published by the Arts Department, the SEQ is distributed in the North West, and serves to inform the public of what's on and it assist arts organisations in publicising their events.

The recently launched [www.sligoarts.ie](http://www.sligoarts.ie) is an online resource for the arts community in County Sligo. Important features of the new website are an online guide to what's on in the arts in Sligo and an Artists Directory. The Directory both profiles individual artists/groups/organisations and benefits the arts community to search for artists for commissions or projects. Other features include a monthly Sligo arts e-bulletin, a project profile section, arts news and much more.

For further information please contact Sligo Arts Department at 071 911 1980 / [arts@sligococo.ie](mailto:arts@sligococo.ie) / [www.sligoarts.ie](http://www.sligoarts.ie).



# PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE



Photo: Boats moored at Riverside

## PLANNING



### DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The Development Management Team of Sligo County Council experienced one of its busiest years to date during 2006 when 1,407 planning applications were submitted, representing an 18% increase on the 2005 intake. Applications for single dwellings amounted to 43% whilst there was a noticeable surge in the number of applications for agricultural development in the final quarter. Efficiency gains achieved through the implementation of a number of initiatives over recent years resulted in 85% of all planning applications being decided within 8 weeks, which is an exceptional performance in the national context, whilst the refusal rate was just 9%. In total only 3.5% of all planning decisions were subsequently appealed to An Bord Pleanála.

Sligo County Council's commitment to enabling the electronic provision of planning services, amongst other customer focused initiatives, progressed significantly during 2006 with the addition of new online facilities to the local authority website. This includes an electronic version of the Planning Register Map (1964 to date) and the availability of complete applications submitted from 2000 onwards, for viewing without the need to visit the planning office in Sligo, thus offering those with internet access a convenient and alternative method of engaging with the planning process.

In keeping with the trend of recent years the Development Management Team hosted a seminar for local planning agents in November, 2006 to inform them about planning policies and best practice. These types of events offer a very useful forum for collective discussion with planning agents, who represent a core customer group for the Planning Authority.

The Council is pleased to report that the establishment of a Panel of Approved Consultants to carry out site suitability assessments for on-site wastewater treatment systems has resulted in an improved standard of development proposals, which in turn is

reflected by a reduction in the number of refusals and further information requests issued. The panel has been increased during the year due to the inclusion of additional qualified consultants.

By way of recognition for recent customer focused initiatives to improve the delivery of planning services, Sligo County Council was delighted to be presented with a commendation for its *commitment to high quality planning service* by the Minister for Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Mr. Dick Roche, TD at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2006 held in Dublin, having been nominated by Sligo Chamber of Commerce.

### ENFORCEMENT

#### PLANNING ENFORCEMENT AND BUILDING CONTROL

The main focuses of this Section include: -

1. Enforcement of planning control
2. Monitoring of housing estates to ensure their satisfactory completion / taking in charge
3. Collection of financial contributions
4. Securing Bonds for Housing Developments
5. Building Control
6. Dangerous Structures
7. Derelict Sites

#### 1. ENFORCEMENT OF PLANNING CONTROL

Our role in this area involves random inspections of developments in progress, follow-up on planning conditions which have not been complied with, and investigating complaints by the public with regard to unauthorised development.

In the main, most developers are compliant with the planning laws and regulations. Where difficulties arise, the Council uses the mechanisms set out in the Planning and Development Acts 2000 as amended. In 2006 the Council carried out over 500 inspections in this area.



## PLANNING

In addition it investigated 124 complaints of unauthorised development, served 154 Warning Letters and 100 Enforcement Notices, and initiated 37 prosecutions. 45 complaints were dismissed while another 129 were resolved through negotiations.

The success of the Enforcement Section can be demonstrated by the payment of €4,530.00 during 2006 in respect of application fees for planning applications submitted to the Council for the retention of unauthorised developments.



### 2. MONITORING OF HOUSING ESTATES / TAKING IN CHARGE

Under Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, a legal obligation has been placed on Local Authorities to take in charge housing estates where certain conditions have been met. This Council, in 2004, adopted a policy on the taking in charge of housing estates. This policy is currently being implemented.

Many new housing estates are presently under construction in the County. The activities of the Enforcement Section are geared to ensuring that these estates are satisfactorily completed and to allowing the Council (where the developer or residents desire) to take these in charge. This will have financial implications for the Council in terms of ongoing maintenance costs in the future. However, the arrangements presently in place should ensure that these estates are completed to a high standard prior to becoming the responsibility of the Council. Over 100 inspections were carried out in the course of the year.

The Council, following a comprehensive survey, also drew up a list and the status (finished or unfinished) of all estates in the county during this year. This information will enable the Council to take a very proactive approach to progressing the taking in charge of estates on completion. In 2006, applications to take 8 estates (168 houses) in charge have been lodged with the Council. These applications are currently being processed.

Any request to have a housing estate taken in charge by the Council must be accompanied by the following:

- ▶ Completed application form
- ▶ Fee
- ▶ As-constructed drawings and appropriate certification
- ▶ Written confirmation of maintenance of open spaces by a management company or residents group

It is the policy of the Council, as part of the taking in charge process, to have a Close Circuit TV survey on all main runs of foul and storm sewers, carried out by an agent, on its behalf, to ensure satisfactory standards of construction.

### 3. COLLECTION OF FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

#### Development Contribution Scheme

The Development Contribution Schemes currently in operation provide the required funding to improve infrastructure throughout the County. In addition, special contributions have been levied in respect of some areas where specific exceptional costs not covered by the scheme are incurred i.e. wastewater schemes for Coolaney, Dromore West, Bunninadden, Carney & Gurteen. The Council works closely with developers to provide this infrastructure with the cost being borne by them.

A system has been put in place to ensure that financial contributions, which are levied, are paid in accordance with the requirements of planning permissions granted. Appropriate enforcement action is taken, where the contributions are not paid.

### 4. BOND AND SECURITY

The Council imposes a condition on all housing developments requiring that work shall not commence, until adequate security for the satisfactory completion of the proposed development has been lodged with the Planning Authority. This security is released when the development is taken in charge by the Council. Particular attention is given by this section to ensuring that adequate security is in place in respect of all housing developments. Phasing of the security may be permitted subject to certain conditions.

### 5. BUILDING CONTROL

The objective in this area is to encourage good building practice, to ensure that buildings are constructed correctly and that access for the disabled and elderly is provided for in building plans. The Council is required, under inspections targets set nationally, to inspect between 12% and 15% of buildings covered by valid Commencement Notices. Sligo County Council exceeded this requirement in 2006.



## PLANNING

The Council continues to pay particular attention to compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations (which deals with access for people with disabilities). A high level of compliance has been achieved in this area.

In addition, it is the policy of Sligo County Council following receipt of a Commencement Notice for two or more houses or for commercial or industrial premises, to require the developer to submit drawings showing compliance with Part M - Section 11(c) Building Control Act 1990. This has the effect of making both the developer and the architect / agent aware that Part M should be complied with at both the design and the construction stages. It is also Sligo County Council's policy to try and resolve breaches in direct discussions with the parties involved.

The new Building Control Bill currently before the Dail provides for amendments to the Building Control Act 1990. This will simplify the prosecution process for building control authorities by giving authorities the option to bring summary prosecutions for all building code offences in the District Court. In addition, it provides for substantial increases in maximum penalties for breaches of the building code. It also introduces a "disability access certificate" whereby the design of non-domestic buildings and apartment blocks will be certified as being in compliance with Part M of the building regulations, prior to commencement of work.

The Bill under the guidance of The EPBD (Energy Performance of Buildings Directive) also requires that all newly constructed buildings, and existing buildings offered for sale or rent, be accompanied by a Building Energy Rating (BER). This requirement is to be phased over a 3 year period ending 1st January 2009.

### 6. DANGEROUS STRUCTURES

This department has responsibility for dealing with dangerous structures, which come to our attention. Four such structures were dealt with by the Council during 2006.

### 7. DERELICT SITES

The Council seeks, where possible, to secure the development of such sites rather than just simply to improve their appearance. In 2006, the Council served notice on the owners of 28 such sites, of its intention to enter the sites in the Derelict Sites Register. There are ongoing discussions with the owners of the majority of these sites.

## DEVELOPMENT PLANNING UNIT (DPU)

### LOCAL AREA PLANS

The year commenced with the publication of the Ballymote Local Area Plan 2005-2011, which came into effect on 5th December 2005. The Plan sets out a range of development objectives for the desired manner and pattern of growth of the Town, including residential, recreation, community and employment uses, heritage, tourism and transport considerations. As well as guiding and promoting development, the document is a useful source of information about Ballymote and its environs.

Work progressed on the forthcoming local area plan for Tubbercurry, which will take account of ideas and suggestions voiced in the course of pre-draft public consultation conducted over the winter of 2005/2006. The DPU is working closely with several sections of the Council in the formulation of the plan and will have the benefit of the 2006 Census results before completing the draft for public consultation in spring 2007.

To balance the growth of Sligo on the northern side of the Gateway, the National Building Agency (NBA) was commissioned to prepare a masterplan for the Teesan-Lisnalgur-Shannon Oughter area of Sligo and Environs i.e. the 'North Fringe'. The initial draft was presented to the Area Committee and the Planning and Economic Development SPC before Christmas and full



The Left Bank  
Café Bar

consideration will be given to the feedback received before the draft plan is finalised for submission to the Council in 2007.

### MINI-PLANS

During 2006, the DPU focussed heavily on the preparation of Mini-Plans for Carney, Coolaney-Rockfield and Dromore West, all of which are under considerable development pressure. The process included Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) 'screening' to determine whether the implementation of the plans would have significant effects on the environment. The Draft Plans gave rise to lively debate at the well-attended public consultation meetings in

# PLANNING

June, during the public display period. On 11th September, the Members incorporated the Plans into the County Development Plan by means of the statutory 'variation' procedure, thus bringing to nine the number of settlements with land use zoning within the County area.



The Cathaoirleach Councillor Jim McGarry leading a group including the Mayor Councillor McSharry and County Manager Hubert Kearns on a visit to Sligo Port

## SLIGO DOCKLANDS REGENERATION

Sligo County Council assumed responsibility for Sligo Port in April 2006 and has earmarked docklands regeneration as a priority Gateway initiative. With a view to achieving this long-term goal, Sligo Local Authorities have worked throughout the year to identify the critical steps and inputs needed to kick-start the process. To inform Council thinking on such a major undertaking, the Planning and Economic Development SPC arranged a useful fact-finding trip to Derry in October. Having researched dockland regeneration projects elsewhere, the DPU drafted a timetable for the preparation and delivery of detailed master-planning proposals for the Sligo Docklands area. Meanwhile, as part of the ongoing urban regeneration initiative, the Council commissioned a Development Framework for the Hughes Bridge/Lower Quay Street area and urban design proposals for the Inner Relief Road corridor.



Ulster Bank in Sligo City

## RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES (RPS)

During 2006, the Minister published the National Inventory for Architectural Heritage (NIAH) for Sligo and recommended the protection of all structures with a 'regional' or higher rating on this database. Having short-listed the structures that are not currently included on the RPS for Sligo City and County, an assessment got underway to identify those that warrant protection or otherwise.

On completion of this exercise in 2007, the additions will be formally proposed under s.55 of the Planning and Development Act.

## SLIGO & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2004-2010

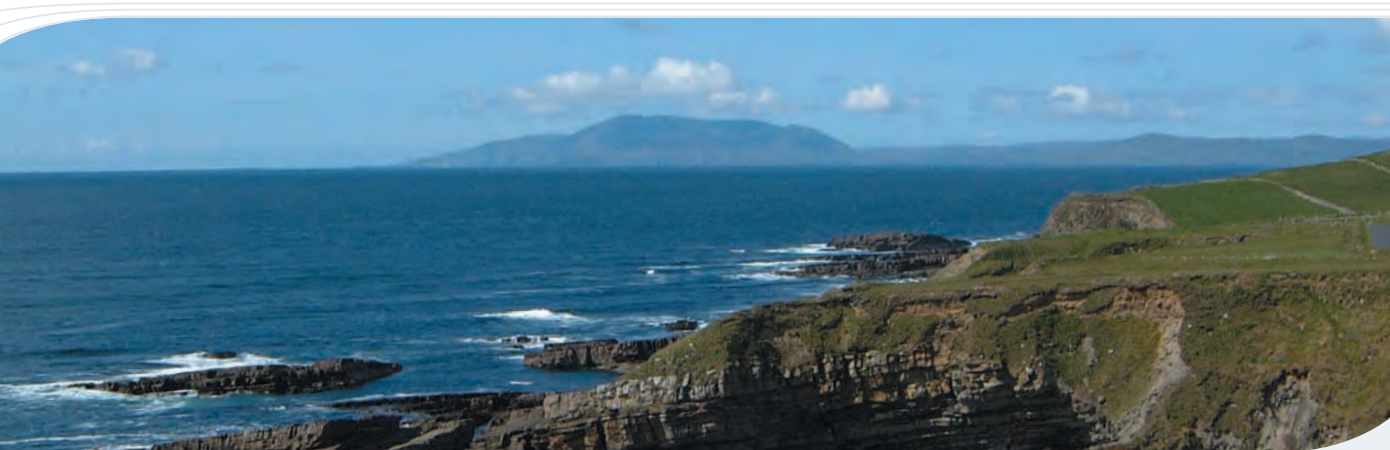
The NBA was engaged to prepare the Manager's mid-term progress report on the Sligo and Environs Development Plan. Council officials were considering the draft report at the end of 2006, with a view to submitting the final report to the Members of Sligo Borough and County Councils in early 2007.

## BRÉIFNE TOURISM

On behalf of the Council, the DPU sustained its involvement in this EU-funded cross-border marketing initiative, in which some €2.2m has been invested since 2003. Phase I of Bréifne produced a suite of quality promotional products, which were officially launched by Minister for Communications, Marine & Natural Resources, Mr Noel Dempsey TD on November 14. The products include a website ([www.breifne.ie](http://www.breifne.ie)), travel guide, documentary DVD and gateway signage. They will now be used to promote the region, both nationally and internationally, with the help of a Phase 2 SEUPB grant and ongoing support from the project partners: Cavan, Fermanagh, Leitrim, Sligo and Roscommon local authorities, the Geological Surveys of Ireland and N.Ireland, the University of Ulster, and Cavan County Enterprise Board.



# ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



The Environment Section is responsible for a wide range of services spanning three programme groups as outlined below. Objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan include the protection and improvement of water and air quality in Sligo, and to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

The focus in 2006 was to continue to implement measures to achieve these corporate objectives.

**Programme Group 5:**  
**Environmental Protection**

- ▶ Waste management
- ▶ Pollution control
- ▶ Blue flag beaches
- ▶ Water safety
- ▶ Casual trading
- ▶ Environmental awareness
- ▶ Environmental enforcement
- ▶ Litter

**Programme Group 7:**  
**Agriculture & Education**

- ▶ Food safety

**Programme Group 8:**  
**Miscellaneous**

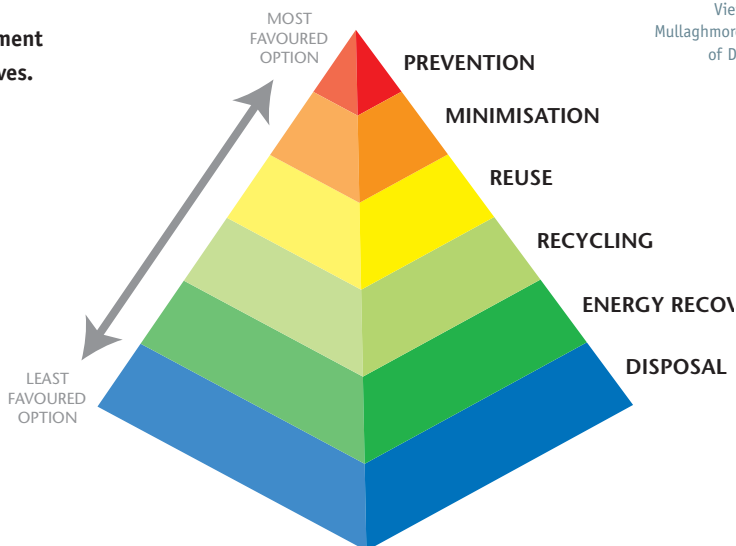
- ▶ Control of dogs
- ▶ Control of horses

**WASTE MANAGEMENT**

**Replacement Waste Management Plan for the Connaught Region 2006 – 2011**

In May 2006, the Replacement Waste Management Plan for the Connaught Region 2006 – 2011 was made by the six local authorities in Connaught. This plan sets out a framework on how waste is to be managed in the region over the next 5 years, and implementation of the plan commenced on its adoption in 2006.

View from Mullaghmore Head of Donegal



The Plan places a big emphasis on waste prevention and minimisation, the most favoured options on the EU Waste Hierarchy. It re-emphasises the targets to be achieved by 2013 as set out in the previous plan i.e. Recycle 48%, Thermally Treat 33% and Landfill 19%. The Plan sets out the infrastructure required, over the period of the Plan, in order to achieve these ambitious EU targets. Targeting the commercial sector will also be essential in helping to achieve these targets.

**Dry Recyclables**

Sligo's recycling rate increased from 18% at the end of 2005 to 28% at the end of 2006. This 55% increase was largely due to improved awareness of the recycling options available in Sligo and an expansion of the door-to-door separate collection of dry recyclable materials in the County.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

During 2006, householders had two options available to deal with dry recyclable materials. Dry recyclable materials include: cardboard, paper, newspaper magazines, tetra pak, food cans, aluminium cans, plastic bottles and plastic cartons. These materials can all be recycled and should be viewed as a raw material rather than a waste.

Option 1 is to bring materials to one of the two Recycling Centres in operation in Sligo. The Recycling Centre at Greenstar WDS in Finisklin, Sligo was upgraded during 2006 to improve its appearance and make it more user friendly. 2006 was the first full year of operation of the Recycling Centre in Tubbercurry and tonnages increased during the year. Approximately 1,350 tonnes of material was recycled via the two Recycling Centres in Sligo.

Option 2 is to participate in the door-to-door separate collection of dry recyclable materials. Householders can purchase a pre-paid recyclable bag which is collected weekly or fortnightly, depending on the contractor used. The coverage of this separate collection service for dry recyclables increased significantly in 2006, and this along with an increased awareness of the recycling facilities available in Sligo, greatly contributed to the increase in the recycling rate in Sligo.

Recycling Centre,  
Tubbercurry



### Glass Recycling

A total of 42 bottle banks for the recovery of glass and cans were in operation in 2006 throughout Sligo Town and County. The glass recycling rate continued to increase with over 1,100 tonnes of glass recycled in 2006. This equates to the recycling of approximately 3.7 million glass bottles.

Sligo ranks third in the Country in Rehab's National Glass Recycling League Table for number of bottles recycled per head of population. The busiest bottle bank in 2006 in Sligo town was the bottle bank situated at Lidl, while Grange Village boasted the busiest bottle bank in the county area, followed closely by Strandhill Village.

### Organic Waste

Organic kitchen waste makes up approximately 30% of all household waste generated. Home composting is a positive and simple option to deal with this waste. In 2006, the Environment Section continued to promote the use of home composters and offered them for sale at a subsidised rate. In urban areas that are not suitable for home composting, the ultimate solution is to introduce a third bin for the collection of separated kitchen waste only. In order to do this, a Composting or Biological Treatment Facility needs to be put in place to process this waste. This is in line with the Replacement Connaught Waste Management Plan made in 2006.

### Waste Enforcement

Since the Waste Management Act came into being in 1996, a large number of Waste Regulations have followed, covering a wide range of waste management activities. Proceeds from a number of initiatives at national level, including the Plastic Bag Levy and the Landfill Levy are funding waste enforcement teams in local authorities across the country. In 2006, Sligo County Council employed a second Waste Enforcement Officer to help the existing established Waste Enforcement Team implement regulations and ensure waste is managed in an environmentally sustainable manner.

One of Sligo County Council's main priorities in 2006 in this area was to ensure that waste is collected by a collector holding a valid waste collection permit for the type of waste they are collecting, and that all waste is transported to an appropriately licensed or permitted facility. There are 231 waste collectors permitted to collect waste in Sligo ranging from household recyclables to industrial hazardous wastes, and 28 permitted sites, mostly for the recovery of Construction & Demolition (C&D) material. During 2006 the Waste Enforcement Officers carried out regular inspections of these facilities and activities as well as any unauthorised facilities or activities that came to the attention of the Council. Road checkpoints were carried out in partnership with neighbouring local authorities to enforce regulations governing the transport of all waste types. The transport of hazardous waste was also targeted and Sligo County Council participated in a working group at national level, in this area.

Other target areas in the waste enforcement area included the illegal burning of waste, the farm plastics levy, hazardous waste storage at garages and the Packaging Regulations. The Packaging Regulations require all producers of packaging, from corner shops and pubs to major supermarkets and retail outlets to

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

separate the packaging waste produced on the premises and make it available for separate collection by a recovery operator. Implementation of these regulations has a major positive impact on the diversion of further recyclable material from landfill.

End of Life Vehicle (ELV) Regulations were introduced in 2006. These regulations put obligations on producers of vehicles to fund the recycling of vehicles at their end of life. All vehicle dismantlers are required to have specific ELV de-pollution equipment installed at their facilities as well as having standard pollution control measures in place. Car owners can recycle their old cars free of charge when brought to these Authorised Treatment Facilities. Local Authorities must enforce these regulations and work in this area commenced in Sligo towards the end of 2006.

In a bid to reduce instances of illegal waste storage and littering the employment of new technologies is constantly being reviewed with the use of covert surveillance researched in 2006 with a view to being implemented at a number of sites in 2007.

Waste enforcement was a priority in 2006 and this was reflected in the achievements made in the area of illegal waste activity. Approximately 300 inspections were made and over 30 legal notices were served for unauthorised activities.

### Waste Presentation By-laws

In 2005, Sligo County Council adopted Waste Presentation By-laws which came into effect on 1st January 2006. The purpose of these by-laws is to ensure that waste is presented for collection by the householder where a collection service is available, and to ensure that all waste that is presented for collection is segregated appropriately and does not cause an environmental nuisance. In 2006, the Waste Enforcement Team worked closely with the private waste collectors in implementing these By-laws and in optimising collection routes in rural areas to ensure maximum collection. Enforcement of these By-laws aims to reduce the incidences of illegal dumping and burning of waste and also eliminate litter generated by waste presented for collection.



Sunrise at  
Doorly Park

### Environmental Awareness

It has been widely proven in Europe that education and awareness in waste management best practice is a continuous process. Sligo County Council continued its programmes in this area, which has achieved significant results to date. Emphasis was placed on waste prevention and minimisation campaigns, along with campaigns to encourage source separation of waste. Encouraging greater use of Recycling Centres, Bring Banks, the separate kerbside collection of dry recyclable wastes and the use of home composting was a priority in 2006. Another focus was the continuation of implementing the WEEE Directive which allows householders to bring all waste electrical and electronic goods to the Recycling Centres free of charge.

The Environmental Awareness Officer organised a number of initiatives with community groups, organisations and schools but one of the most successful in 2006 was the Green Schools Campaign. A number of school visits took place with over 1530 pupils availing of talks and literature focusing on dealing with good waste management practices, the problem of littering along with water and energy conservation themes. The visits are designed to enable schools to link into local waste management services, to inform students of the difficulties with land-filling and of the need to adopt a more sustainable approach to waste. The second primary objective of visits is to equip students with information that will help affect the waste habits of their families.

In October 2006, the Environment Section organised a Green Schools Seminar and invited all schools to participate of which 51 attended. This seminar, which was hosted by An Taisce, focused on the themes of Litter & Waste Management, Energy and Water. Arising from the seminar, a total of 10 new schools registered with An Taisce for the Green Schools Programme. In 2006, 58 out of 71 primary schools and 14 out of 15 post-primary schools were registered in the Green Schools programme. To date Sligo has 33 schools flying the prestigious green flag with the remaining 39 schools working towards this achievement.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Other initiatives included the Green Christmas Campaign, anti-litter awareness competitions for community groups and schools and the Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund which helps fund a variety of community based projects on the theme of waste awareness and reduction. In March, National Tree Week was co-ordinated by the Environment Section and over 30 community/voluntary groups and schools received free saplings. The month of April was dedicated to promoting the National Anti-litter Campaign – National Spring Clean, in which 85 groups took part. Throughout the year, Tidy Towns Committees continued to receive support through the provision of bags, litter pickers and gloves.

The Environmental Awareness Officer uses the local media in the form of radio and newspaper advertisements, press releases, interviews and the Council's website, to promote the campaigns as they arise in all areas of the environment including water quality and pollution control.

Cathaoirleach  
Councillor  
Jim McGarry with  
helpers during  
National Spring  
Clean Week



### Litter

The issue of litter continues to be a major challenge. In 2006 activity was increased and particular emphasis was put on the issue of illegal roadside signage, which not only detracts from the amenity of an area, but also poses a risk to road users. The Environment Strategic Policy Committee continued with the development of a signage policy, which outlines the 'dos and don'ts' for temporary roadside signage under the Litter Pollution Act 1997-2003. The relevant Roads & Planning legislation is also included in this policy, which it is hoped, will come into force in 2007.

Sligo County Council issued 385 on-the-spot fines in 2006 for offences ranging from illegal signage to 2 or less bags of refuse illegally dumped on public property. Larger quantities of refuse dumped are dealt with under litter & waste management legislation and legal proceedings are initiated. Non payment of fines result in legal action being taken by the Council and one such case was taken in 2006 which was a successful conviction. By the end of 2006 the Council had secured 5 prosecutions for all cases with court fines ranging from €1 to €500. In addition to this, one Section 9 notice was sent to private property owners directing them to clear their lands of litter (where it is visible from a public place).

A zero tolerance approach is being taken to littering at bring bank sites. Tenders were sought in December for the upgrade of all sites in the county and for the installation of cameras at various sites. These works shall be carried out in 2007.

Under section 6 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997, occupiers of premises fronting onto the footway within town limits are obliged to keep the area in front of their premises free of litter. Not to do so is an offence and can attract an on-the-spot fine of €125. Operation Clean Sweep involves a partnership approach between Sligo County Council's Environmental Awareness Officer, Litter Warden and the business community. The Council has introduced Operation Clean Sweep to the towns of Ballymote, Tubbercurry, Enniscrone Collooney and Ballisodare and will continue to introduce it into other towns and villages throughout 2007.

In 2006, the Environment Section co-funded the tidy town's initiative, co-ordinated by the Community & Enterprise office, and carried out judging on the best street, school and bottle-bank.

A review of the Litter Management Plan took place in conjunction with Sligo Borough Council. This Plan is prepared pursuant to Section 10 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997-2003 and it aims to identify and quantify the litter problem, establish Council and Community responsibility and develop ways of tackling and eliminating the problem. It is hoped that the Draft Litter Management Plan will be put before the full Council in March 2007 before going on public display. Following this, it is envisaged that the Plan will be adopted by the full Council.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

### WATER QUALITY

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) latest water quality report confirms that Sligo's water quality remains above the national average with 95% of Sligo's river channel length categorised as unpolluted.

All 13 of the Sligo lakes, including water abstraction lakes, monitored over the reporting period, have satisfactory water quality. However, some downward trends have been observed. The water quality in Lough Talt, a major water abstraction lake, has deteriorated slightly over the reporting period, thus requiring close monitoring and control by our staff. Heavy shoreline algae observed on Lough Arrow indicates over enrichment by phosphorus. This highlights the need to reduce phosphorus inputs to this important brown trout fishery lake. Zebra mussels have been identified in both Lough Arrow and Lough Gill. Zebra mussels, although not of a health significance, are expected to have an influence on the long-term quality of these lakes. A campaign is underway which aims to reduce the risk of the spread of zebra mussels to unaffected waters. The campaign called 'Western Zebra Mussel Control Initiative', in which Sligo County Council plays an active part, hopes to achieve this through extensive media and awareness campaigns, which began in 2005 and continued in 2006.

The challenge for Sligo County Council and all stakeholders in Sligo's waters is to continue to improve the quality of unsatisfactory waters and maintain the quality of satisfactory waters throughout the County. Sligo County Council continued, in 2006, to carry out a range of measures to achieve this including enforcement measures under the Water Pollution Acts, and developing 'best practice' guidance documents for sectors that impact on water quality. All industrial discharges to waters require a licence from the Local Authority. Extensive water quality monitoring and catchment survey work continued in 2006. A particular target was the agricultural sector. Farm inspections were carried out resulting in improved measures being put in place to manage farmyard waste thus reducing the risk of water pollution from these premises.

The protection of groundwater from the risk of pollution from on-site treatment systems continued to be a priority. The panel of Site Assessors was updated during the year and the Council continued to work with these site assessors to ensure best practice was being employed in this area.

The Water Pollution Team dealt with over 500 planning applications in 2006. These large numbers were partly due to a Department of Agriculture grant initiative to improve waste management farm infrastructure. This was a very positive initiative which again should help towards reducing the risk of water pollution from these premises.



Enniscrone

Statutory implementation reports on the Phosphorous Regulations and Dangerous Substances Regulations were prepared and submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency in 2006.

Draft Source Protection Plans were prepared for the Lough Talt, Calry and Kilsellagh drinking water supplies. These plans will be put before the Council for adoption in 2007.

### Western River Basin Management Project

The approach to water quality monitoring and management over the coming years will be influenced greatly by the EU Water Framework Directive which rationalises and updates existing water legislations and provides for water management on the basis of River Basin Districts. Most of County Sligo is contained within the Western River Basin District, along with most of counties Mayo and Galway, and parts of Leitrim, Roscommon and Clare.

The overall objective of river basin projects is to establish an integrated monitoring and management system for all waters within a River Basin District, to develop a dynamic programme of management measures and to produce a River Basin Management Plan, which will be continuously updated.

The main responsibility for the implementation of this Directive lies with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Local Authorities, to be supported by a number of other public bodies. Following the preparation of the characterisation report in 2005, an extensive monitoring programme was designed in 2006. The purpose of the monitoring programme is to determine the definite risk category of all water bodies i.e. either 'at risk' or 'not at risk'. From 2007 onwards, Sligo County Council's annual monitoring programme for rivers and lakes will be determined by this River Basin monitoring programme.

During 2006 Sligo County Council continued to work with the other Local Authorities in the development of this project, and participated in Working Groups in the areas of forestry and the effluent treatment in un-serviced areas.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

As part of the River Basin District Project, Sligo County Council participated in a project titled 'Small Scheme Risk Score'. This project involved specific focused surveys of small streams throughout the county to aid in their characterisation and in the determination of the risk category they fell into.

### Drinking Water Monitoring and Laboratory

Sligo continues to enjoy a very high standard of drinking water throughout the County. Sligo County Council's laboratory staff carries out testing of all public supplies on a regular basis in accordance with the EC (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000. These regulations came into effect on 01 January 2004 and to quote the EPA: *"This set of drinking water regulations is radically different from its predecessor and will entail very significant changes in virtually all aspects of implementation, including sample number, parameters, parameter classes, extent of coverage, and so on."*

During 2006 the full programme of monitoring required for the County under the regulations, was carried out. Group Water Scheme monitoring took place towards the end of 2006 and shall be expanded in 2007. Most of the analysis was carried out in the Council's well equipped environmental science laboratory. Sligo County Council's laboratory staff also monitored the effluent discharges from all the Local Authority's Waste Water Treatment Plants in accordance with the 1994 Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations, as well as all discharges from licensed premises in accordance with the conditions of the discharge licence issued.

### BLUE FLAG BEACHES

In 2006 Sligo was again awarded 3 Blue Flags for Rosses Point, Mullaghmore and Enniscrone. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) carries out regular monitoring of these bathing waters during the summer season on behalf of Sligo County Council, in accordance with the blue flag criteria and the Bathing Water Regulations. The required water quality testing programmes were carried out in full in 2006, and the water quality conformed to the bathing water standards. Sligo County Council will again apply for three Blue Flags for the 2007 bathing season. To receive a Blue Flag, a bathing site, in addition to maintaining a high standard of water quality, must meet specified objectives with regard to the provision of safety services and facilities, environmental management of the beach area and environmental education.

### WATER SAFETY

During June, July and August 2006, Sligo County Council provided a beach-guard service on five beaches in the County. The beach-guards worked on a full-time basis at Enniscrone, Mullaghmore, Rosses Point and Streedagh beaches and at weekend's only on Dunmoran. A full time beach-warden service for Strandhill is also operated throughout the summer months.

### AIR POLLUTION

Sligo enjoys excellent air quality and is fortunate in not having heavy industry discharging to the atmosphere. The Environment Section continues to enforce legislation in relation to backyard burning of waste, and the use of smokeless fuels in Sligo City.

### FOOD SAFETY

The Council, under a service contract with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, supervises the operation of meat plants in the County. There are currently two abattoirs in operation, one having closed at the beginning of 2006. These pre and post slaughter checks on all animals take place along with continuous monitoring of hygiene and welfare standards and BSE controls. As part of the new Hygiene Package Regulations introduced at the beginning of 2006 both premises undertook training in HACCP which is a food safety management system and have introduced HACCP plans in their premises. Both will also be able to apply for full export licences. One of the two Small Meat Manufacturing Plants received its new EU number in 2006.

The inspection of liquid milk producers has continued throughout the year. The Local Authority Veterinary Service has drawn up a standardised Inspection Protocol for these inspections. A proportion of producers have been visited during 2006. The number of producers is falling as small producers in particular come under pressure.

### ANIMAL WELFARE

The Control of Dogs Act, The Control of Horses Act and the Sheep Scab Orders (Diseases of Animals Act) are the main pieces of welfare legislation for which the Council has responsibility.

The Dog Warden Service is operated by the warden under contract to Sligo County Council. This arrangement has resulted in a more efficient service for the County. The number of licences issued in 2006 was 3473. The re-homing rate for 2006 was approximately 60% which is much higher than the national average. There has also been an increased level of enforcement in problem areas. There continues to be an issue in certain areas with the numbers of restricted dog breeds being kept and with these breeds not being properly confined. The warden has been very proactive in investigating complaints and actively encourages people to surrender problem dogs.

The issue of stray horses continues to be monitored. While there were a number of complaints no horses were seized in 2006. Issues have arisen at a number of specific locations and action will be taken if problems persist.

## COUNTY SLIGO HERITAGE OFFICE



The Heritage Office is committed to providing high quality advice on all matters relating to heritage issues and is responsible for developing policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of Sligo's heritage.

Sperm Whale  
stranded at  
Cullenamore,  
September 2006

It also seeks to assist the development of the Local Authorities' heritage strategy and policy, advising on heritage impacts and consequences. Central to the services provided by the Heritage Office, is the promotion of interest, education, knowledge and pride in the heritage of County Sligo, and in so doing, increasing awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of the County's heritage for all.

The activities of the County Sligo Heritage Office are guided by the advice and recommendations of the County Sligo Heritage Forum.

2006 was the final year of the current County Sligo Heritage Plan, and the Heritage Forum met four times to complete the implementation of the 2002-2006 Plan, and for the preparation and drafting of the 2007-2011 Heritage Plan.



Siobhan Ryan with  
the Monuments of  
Sligo poster

### KEY OBJECTIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2006

#### 1. Raise Awareness & Appreciation of our Heritage

To facilitate awareness, understanding and enjoyment of Sligo's heritage among the wider community. The actions carried out to achieve this are as follows;

- ▶ Liaise with Community and Enterprise Section regarding the promotion of care and conservation of historic burial grounds. A seminar for community groups on the care and conservation of graveyards was held in February 2006.
- ▶ The Field Monument Advisor Scheme increased to 3 days a week. The promotion of the scheme is an ongoing element of the Heritage Office work plan.
- ▶ Publication of 'Monuments of Sligo' poster which was launched in January 2006.
- ▶ Promotion of heritage through funding from Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government for the Conservation Grants for Protected Structures Grants, County Council funding of the Community Heritage Grants, and the facilitating of the INTO Heritage in Schools Scheme.



## COUNTY SLIGO HERITAGE OFFICE

- ▶ Exhibitions – 3 held in County Hall, Riverside on
  - (a) Monuments
  - (b) Wetlands
  - (c) Hedgerows
- ▶ Heritage Week (Aug/Sept 2006). The promotion of Heritage Week in County Sligo involved advertisements in local newspapers. Heritage staff were interviewed on local radio outlining the many events taking place throughout the County. A guided talk at Creevykeel was also presented by the staff.

### 2. Developing Culture & Heritage

To secure benefits for the Heritage of County Sligo and increase awareness, appreciation and enjoyment for all. Actions to achieve this include:

- ▶ Field Monument Advisor Scheme - The establishment of a database for the F.M.A. Scheme (Ongoing recording carried out for all Field Monument Advisor visits and surveys). Database procurement is currently in progress with the archaeologist at The Heritage Council, Kilkenny.
- ▶ Evaluation of County Sligo Heritage Plan 2002 – 2006 through questionnaires, surveys and public consultation. Draft report complete.
- ▶ Co. Sligo Heritage Plan 2007 – 2011. The plan is complete and was adopted by the Members of Sligo County Council at the December Council meeting.
- ▶ Lowland Grassland Survey – Draft report complete.
- ▶ Archaeological Sources – Final draft in editing phase.
- ▶ Thatch Survey – Survey currently with printers with publication due March/April 2007

Carrowkeel



### 3. Promoting best practice in Heritage Conservation and Management

To promote, and advise on, best practice standards for heritage conservation and management. The actions taken to achieve this objective were;

- ▶ Conservation Plan for Carrowkeel – Report nearing completion.
- ▶ Conservation Plan for Inishmurray – Draft plan is complete. A further meeting with landowners and project team is scheduled for March 2007
- ▶ Implementation of Conservation Grants for Protected Structures – 2006 programme complete.

### 4. Local Authorities and Heritage Management

To provide high quality advice to Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council on policies and priorities relating to Sligo heritage, and support for the integration of heritage conservation in the activities of the Local Authorities. The actions taken for these aims include:

- ▶ The delivery of Biodiversity Training to Local Authority Staff and Council Members.
- ▶ The review of the registers of Protected Structures on receipt of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage recommendations – Ongoing project
- ▶ Sligo Cemetery Lodge to be made watertight - works ongoing.

### Other projects/activities of County Sligo Heritage Office 2006

#### 1. Local Authority Calendar 2007

In co-operation with the Communications Section of Sligo County Council, a calendar featuring a selection of Buildings of Architectural and Heritage Interest from Sligo town and county was published and distributed to all local authority staff, members and other selected recipients.

#### 2. Whale Stranding.

The County Sligo Heritage Office, together with the Environment Section, was involved in the operation surrounding the stranding at Culleenamore of a Sperm Whale in September 2006. Having successfully organised the safe removal and subsequent burial of the whale, some important parts of the whale (i.e. teeth and a complete jaw bone) were retrieved and the cleaning and preservation process is ongoing. It is envisaged that the conserved parts of the whale will be displayed in the new Sligo Museum for information and educational purposes.

#### 3. Natural Biodiversity of County Sligo.

A 'Natural Heritage of Sligo' poster is currently in its final preparation stage, and will be published in early March 2007. The aim of the publication is to capture some of the beauty and diversity of the natural heritage within the county and features images of the native flora, fauna and wildlife of County Sligo.

# CATHAOIRLEACH'S YEAR PHOTO DIARY



△ Ceol Civic Reception

◁ Fine Gael Leader Enda Kenny in visit to County Hall



△ Cathaoirleach makes presentation to Fr. Thomas Davitt



△ The launch of the Anti-Social Behaviour brochure



△ Cathaoirleach with Minister Roche at the official opening of the Northwest and Southeast Sligo Group Water DBO Projects

◁ Cathaoirleach reception for Community Games Winners



# CATHAOIRLEACH'S YEAR PHOTO DIARY

Cathaoirleach at civic reception for UN Personnel ▷



△ Cathaoirleach and Mayor with Abbey United team

Cathaoirleach with County Manager at a reception in County Hall ▷



△ Cathaoirleach Awards Winners

Cathaoirleach at a reception for Sligo Leitrim U15 Soccer Team ▷



Cathaoirleach leads a team during National Sprig Clean Week ▷

Cathaoirleach and his son Andrew who was nominated to represent Sligo in Dail na nÓg ▽





## CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS - 2006

UCC Commerce Conference, Cork 19 January 2006	Boyne Somme Conference, Drogheda 1 July 2006
Merriman Winter School, Westport 27 - 29 January 2006	Synge Summer School, Wicklow 2 - 8 July 2006
Antrim Tourism Conference, Dunadry, Co. Antrim 3 - 4 February 2006	Patrick McGill Summer School, Glenties 16 - 21 July 2006
AMAI Spring Seminar, Letterkenny 10 - 11 February 2006	John Hewitt International Summer School, Armagh 24 - 28 July 2006
Celtic Tourism Conference, Newtownmountkennedy 15 - 16 Feb 2006	William Carleton Summer School, Clogher, Co. Tyrone 7 - 11 August 2006
Mid West Regional Authority Conference, Ennis 17 February 2006	Parnell Summer School, Wicklow 15 - 18 August 2006
Culture, Health, Partnership & Opportunities Conference, Cork 21 February 2006	General Humbert Summer School, Ballina 17 - 20 August 2006
Colmcille Winter School, Letterkenny 24 - 26 February 2006	Merriman Summer School, Lisdoonvarna 19 - 26 August 2006
Pathfinding Conference, Dublin 3 March 2006	Local Government and the Arts, Letterkenny 24 - 26 August 2006
Zebra Mussels Seminar, Galway 9 March 2006	Galway's Mining Heritage Conference, Galway 26 - 27 August 2006
ACCC Conference, Dundalk 9 - 11 March 2006	Sport & Leisure Development, Kilkee 31 August - 1 September 2006
Safe Driving Conference, Ennis 22 - 24 March 2006	Stone Wall Symposium, Inis Oirr, Galway 8 - 10 September 2006
Nuclear Hazards Conference, London 23 March 2006	From Robin Hood to Hood Robin, Dublin 12 September 2006
Carlow Tourism Conference, Carlow 23 - 24 March 2006	Rural Water Services Conference, Cavan 13 September 2006
Opinion Polls Seminar, Rosslare 31 March - 1 April 2006	AMAI Annual Conference, Cavan 14 - 16 September 2006
Charles O'Connor Conference, Roscommon 7 - 9 April 2006	Holy Mountain & High Places, Ballintubber 23 September 2006
Defamation Conference, Tralee 8 April 2006	A Future for our Waters, Cork 28 - 29 September 2006
LAMA Annual Conference, Kilkenny 20 - 21 April 2006	The Local Government Environment Service, Youghal 28 - 30 September 2006
Rethinking Energy Use, Dublin 21 April 2006	European Territorial Cooperation Programme, Dublin 29 September 2006
Roscrea Spring Conference, Roscrea 21 - 23 April 2006	La Touche Legacy Seminar, Wicklow 29 September - 1st October 2006
Waste Management Conference, Donegal 24 - 26 April 2006	Substance & Alcohol Abuse Conference, Killarney 5 - 6 Oct 2006
Kerry Environmental Conference, Ballybunion 26 - 29 Apr 2006	Transport 21 - Making it a Reality, Dublin 12 October 2006
Rathcline Sustainable Projects Seminar, Longford 28 April 2006	Confederation of European Councillors - Annual Conference, Derry 12 - 13 October 2006
Housing Services Seminar, Rooskey 28 - 29 April 2006	Neil T Blaney Autumn School, Letterkenny 13 - 14 October 2006
A New Approach to Ageing & Ageism, Dublin 6 May 2006	Freedom of Information Conference, Dublin 14 October 2006
Anti Poverty Seminar, Mullingar 11 May 2006	Combat Poverty Conference, Dublin 17 October 2006
Potential for Local & Regional Tourism, Letterkenny, 12 May 2006	Business Improvement Districts, Carlow 20 October 2006
Training Programme for Elected Members of SPC's, Galway 12 May 2006	Douglas Hyde Conference, Ballaghaderreen 20 - 22 October 2006
Annual Partnership Conference, Mallow 18 - 20 May 2006	Role of Local Government in Combating Anti-Social Behaviour, Carrick-on-Suir 27 - 28 October 2006
Healthcare Conference, Ennis 18 - 20 May 2006	LAMA Winter Seminar, Arklow 10 - 11 November 2006
Irish Public Bodies AGM, Dublin 25 May 2006	Association of Irish Festival Events, Ennistymon 10 - 12 November 2006
Enhancing an Enterprise Culture, Ennis 25 - 26 May 2006	E-Towns National Conference, Clare 14 - 15 November 2006
Kerry Mental Health Association Conference, Killarney 26 - 27 May 2006	E-Crime - Who is Watching Over You?, Dublin 15 November 2006
Marine Tourism Conference, Dundalk 31 May - 1 June 2006	Focus Ireland - Festival of Home, Dublin 22 - 23 November 2006
Transportation Conference, Omagh 19 June 2006	Clare Tourism Conference, Ennistymon 23 - 25 November 2006
Local Govt & the Planning System, Wexford 23 June 2006	Agrivision 2015, Mallow 30 November - 2 December 2006
Regional Policy Forum, Mullingar 23 June 2006	ACCC Annual Forum for Mayors & Chairs, Enfield 1 December 2006
Byrne - Perry Summer School, Gorey 23 - 25 June 2006	Services for the Elderly, Enniskillen 8 December 2006
Peace by Pieces (Peace II), Inniskeen, Co. Monaghan 30 June 2006	Local Government - Budget 2007, Wexford 9 December 2006

# FINANCE DEPARTMENT

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2006

*The Income and Expenditure Account Statement brings together all the revenue related income and expenditure. It shows the surplus/(deficit) for the year.*

Expenditure by Programme Group	Gross Expenditure 2006 (€)	Income 2006 (€)	Net Expenditure 2006 (€)	Expenditure 2005 (€)
Housing & Building	3,968,427	3,521,365	447,062	358,746
Roads Transportation & Safety	29,616,881	23,908,039	5,708,842	4,948,407
Water & Sewerage	6,589,903	2,794,045	3,795,858	4,046,803
Development Incentives & Controls	3,350,464	1,225,372	2,125,092	1,809,746
Environmental Protection	5,591,079	1,162,703	4,428,377	3,735,692
Recreation & Amenity	3,096,920	424,615	2,672,304	2,421,295
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	4,948,954	4,788,680	160,275	356,180
Miscellaneous	5,167,293	3,509,583	1,657,710	2,167,655
<b>Total Expenditure/Income</b>	<b>62,329,921</b>	<b>41,334,402</b>		
<b>Net cost of programmes to be funded from Rates &amp; Local Government Fund</b>			20,995,520	19,844,523
Rates			3,916,266	3,473,854
Local Government Fund - General Purpose Grant			16,617,403	15,161,087
County Charge			2,716,560	2,469,600
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfers</b>			<b>2,254,710</b>	<b>1,260,018</b>
<b>Transfers from/(to) Reserves</b>			(2,066,630)	(1,120,477)
<b>Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year</b>			<b>188,080</b>	<b>139,541</b>
<b>General Reserve @ 1st January 2006</b>			(1,686,536)	(1,826,077)
<b>General Reserve @ 31st December 2006</b>			(1,498,457)	(1,686,536)

# FINANCE DEPARTMENT

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2006

	Notes	2006 €	2005 €
<b>Fixed</b>	<b>1</b>		
Operational		200,307,480	191,418,910
Infrastructural		1,399,247,467	1,400,552,301
Community		8,890,420	8,890,420
Non Operational		-	-
		<b>1,608,445,367</b>	<b>1,600,861,631</b>
<b>Work-in-Progress and Preliminary Expenses</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>66,354,871</b>	<b>89,110,602</b>
<b>Long Term Debtors</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>19,693,185</b>	<b>19,802,020</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Stock	4	233,089	228,774
Trade Debtors and Prepayments	5	9,638,290	4,781,881
Bank Investments		2,262,485	1,804,376
Cash at Bank		6,054,503	2,432,897
Cash on Hand		10,067	466
Urban Account	7	1,124,189	1,190,318
		<b>19,322,623</b>	<b>10,438,712</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Creditors & Accruals	6	7,912,036	6,635,594
Finance Leases		66,652	-
		<b>7,978,688</b>	<b>6,635,594</b>
<b>Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)</b>		<b>11,343,935</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Creditors (Amounts greater than one year)</b>			
Loans Payable	8	51,205,487	49,995,443
Finance Leases		142,691	-
Refundable Deposits	9	1,786,123	1,390,671
Other		-	-
		<b>53,134,301</b>	<b>51,386,114</b>
<b>Net Assets / (Liabilities)</b>		<b>1,652,703,055</b>	<b>1,600,861,631</b>
<b>Financed By</b>			
Capitalisation Account	10	1,608,445,357	1,600,861,631
Income WIP	2	68,505,482	64,672,643
Specific Revenue Reserve		1,103,774	1,103,774
General Revenue Reserve		(1,386,008)	(1,686,537)
Other Balances	11	(23,965,549)	(2,760,255)
<b>Total Reserves</b>		<b>1,652,703,055</b>	<b>1,662,191,256</b>



# FINANCE DEPARTMENT

## MOTOR TAXATION OFFICE

The Motor Taxation Offices at Sligo and Tubbercurry, continue their efforts in providing a quality and improved service to the public.

The Vehicle Registration Unit (VRU) in Shannon, Co Clare is directly linked with Motor Taxation Offices nationwide, in providing up to date information on vehicle and driving licences through the NVDF System. The VRU also provide on line services for the renewal of motor tax for private vehicles.

## MOTOR TAX, DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

1. Postal Applications	14.38% (9592)
2. 93% of Postal Vehicle Licence Applications are issued on the same day.	
3. 6% of Postal Vehicle Licence Applications are issued on the third day, or less.	
4. Total Vehicle Licences issued in 2006:	49,833
5. Total Driving Licences issued in 2006:	9,064
6. Tax Discs issued 'on-line' in 2006:	17.09%
7. Cumulative Total of business in 2006:	€10,421,545.50

# SERVICE INDICATORS: SLIGO LOCAL AUTHORITIES 2006

## ARTS & CULTURAL SERVICES

	Indicator	2004	2005	2006
A & C1	<b>Arts Grants</b>			
	- Number of arts grants paid	109	96	49
	- Total value of arts grants paid (per 1,000 population 04 + 05)	11,718	9,228.47	325,334

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION & CO-OPERATION

	Indicator	2004	2005	2006
CP 1	<b>Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/ Comhairle na n-Óg scheme</b>	40%	88%	52.94%

## CORPORATE ISSUES

	Indicator	2004	2005	2006
C1	<b>Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through:</b>			
	- certified leave	3.37%	3.71%	5.15%
	- uncertified leave	0.63%	0.52%	0.54%
	<i>Note: Calculation methods for 2005 include certified paid and unpaid for the first time. Unpaid was not collated in 2004 figures.</i>			
C2	<b>Expenditure on Training and Development as a percentage of total payroll costs</b>	6.4	6.5	6.5

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

	Indicator	2004	2005	2006
	<b>WATER</b>			
E1	<b>Percentage of river channel which is:</b>			
	a) Unpolluted	95%	95	*
	b) Slightly polluted	4%	4%	*
	c) Moderately polluted	1%	1%	*
	d) Seriously polluted	0%	0%	*
E2	<b>Percentage of drinking water analyses results in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to:</b>			
	- public schemes	96.1%	97.05%	*
	- private schemes (where appropriate)	89.4%	88.52	*
	<b>FIRE SERVICE</b>			
E3	<b>Average time, in minutes to mobilise fire brigades in:</b>			
	- full time stations	N/A	N/A	N/A
	- part time stations (retained fire service)	4.8	4.3	4.54
E4	<b>Percentage of attendances at scenes where:</b>			
	- first attendance is at scene with 10 minutes	65%	57%	59.90%
	- first attendance is at scene after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	26%	31%	28.00%
	- first attendance is at scene after 20 minutes	9%	13%	12.10%
E5	<b>Fire prevention total number of fire safety certificate applications:</b>			
	- received	131	212	150
	- processed	116	183	156
	<b>WASTE MANAGEMENT</b>			
E6	<b>Percentage of households provided with segregated waste collection</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
E7	<b>Household waste collected which is sent for recycling</b>			
	- Tonnage	N/A	2,742	4,003.38
	- Percentage of household waste collected	16.6	18.5	28.92
E8	<b>Household waste collected which is sent to landfill</b>			
	- Tonnage	N/A	12,135	9,839.05
	- Percentage of household waste collected	83.4%	81.4%	71.08%

\* EPA/LGCSB input

# SERVICE INDICATORS: SLIGO LOCAL AUTHORITIES 2006

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (continued)

	Indicator	2004	2005	2006
<b>E9</b>	<b>Recycling facilities</b>			
	<b>GLASS</b>			
	Number of Bring Sites	49	49	47
	Number of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2	2
	Total Number of Facilities	50	51	49
	Number of locations (per 5000 of population 04/05)	4.3	4.4	4.9
	Tonnage of waste collected for recycling (per 5000 of population 04/05)	67.99	94.3	1105.33
	<b>CANS</b>			
	Number of Bring Sites	49	49	47
	Number of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2	2
	Total Number of Facilities	50	51	49
	Number of locations per 5000 of population	4.3	4.4	4.9
	Tonnage of waste collected for recycling (per 5000 of population 04/05)	2.92	6.0	62.04
	<b>TEXTILES</b>			
	Number of Bring Sites	4	4	3
	Number of Civic Amenity Sites	1	1	2
	Total Number of Facilities	5	5	5
	Number of locations per 5000 of population	0.43	0.43	5
	Tonnage of waste collected for recycling (per 5000 of population 04/05)	2.3	3.4	56.34
	<b>BATTERIES</b>			
	Number of Bring Sites	4	4	12
	Number of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2	2
	Total Number of Facilities	5	6	14
	Number of locations (per 5000 of population 04/05)	0.43	0.5	14
	Tonnage of waste collected for recycling (per 5000 of population 04/05)	0.9	0.4	17.34
	<b>OILS</b>			
	Number of Bring Sites	0	0	0
	Number of Civic Amenity Sites	0	1	1
	Total Number of Facilities	0	1	1
	Number of locations (per 5000 of population 04/05)	0	0	1
	Tonnage of waste collected for recycling (per 5000 of population 04/05)	78	0	2.5
	<b>OTHERS</b>			
	Number of Bring Sites	27	0	0
	Number of Civic Amenity Sites	1	2	2
	Total Number of Facilities	28	2	2
	Number of locations (per 5000 of population 04/05)	2.4	0.2	2
	Tonnage of waste collected for recycling (per 5000 of population 04/05)	42.6	32.0	1061.8



# SERVICE INDICATORS: SLIGO LOCAL AUTHORITIES 2006

## LITTER PREVENTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT

Indicator	2004	2005	2006
<b>E10 Litter - Number of Litter Wardens</b>			
Total number of full-time litter wardens	2	2	2
Total number of part-time litter wardens	0	0	4
Number of litter wardens (both FT and PT) (per 5000 of population 04/05)	0.68	0.17	6
Number of on-the spot fines	305	225	400
Number of prosecution cases taken because of non-payment of on-the-spot fines	20	12	31
Number of prosecutions secured	0	4	2
<b>Percentage of areas within the local authority that are:</b>			
- unpolluted (i.e. litter-free)	15%	15%	8.9%
- slightly polluted with litter	41%	41%	39.3%
- moderately polluted with litter	33%	33%	42.9%
- significantly polluted with litter	6%	6%	8.9%
- grossly polluted with litter	5%	5%	0%
<b>Litter Analysis of Situation</b>			
- Percentage litter free and slightly polluted	56%	-	-
- Percentage significantly and grossly polluted	11%	-	-
<b>E11 Environmental Complaints and Enforcement</b>			
- Total number of cases subject to complaints concerning environmental pollution (relating to waste, litter, water pollution, noise pollution, air pollution)	1181	1239	2170
- Number of complaints investigated	1030	1138	2204
- Number of enforcement procedures taken	673	93	512
<b>E12 Percentage of Schools participating in environmental campaigns</b>			
- primary schools	40%	59%	82%
- secondary schools	70%	82%	93%

## HOUSING

Indicator	2004	2005	2006
<b>H1 Housing Vacancies</b>			
Total number of dwellings in local authority stock	1,701	1780	1815
Overall % of dwellings that are let	96.18%	94.8%	94%
Overall % of dwellings that are empty	3.82%	5.22%	6%
% of empty dwellings subject to major refurbishment schemes	29.23%	20.4%	14%
% of empty dwellings unavailable for letting	80.43%	73.5%	83%
% of empty dwellings available for letting	19.57%	26.6%	17%
<b>H2 Average time taken to relet dwellings available for letting</b>	3.5 weeks	3 weeks	1.4 weeks
<b>H3 Number of repairs completed as a percentage of the number of valid repair requests received</b>	95.56%	63.8%	53%
<b>H4 Average time taken to inform applicants of local authority's decision on applications for:</b>			
- the shared ownership housing scheme	12.5 days	9.25 days	10.53 days
- housing loans schemes	15 days	14.5 days	5.25 days
- local authority housing	13.75 days	9.5 days	7.29 days
<b>H5 Traveller Accommodation</b>			
Total number of traveller families accommodation as a percentage of the targets set in the local traveller accommodation programme	66.67%	23.1%	33.33%

# SERVICE INDICATORS: SLIGO LOCAL AUTHORITIES 2006

## LIBRARY SERVICES

Indicator	2004	2005	2006
<b>L1 Public Opening Hours</b>			
- average number of opening hours per week for full-time libraries	38	35	35
- average number of opening hours per week for part-time libraries (where applicable)	15	15	15
<i>Now averaged over 5 branches which separates County and central libraries</i>			
<b>L2 Number of registered library members as a percentage of the local population</b>	28%	24%	21%
<b>L3 Number of items issued per head of population (county/city wide) for</b>			
(a) Books (per head of population 04/05)	2.63	3.23	4
(b) Other items (per head of population 04/05)	0.43	0.09	0
<b>L4 Percentage of Libraries that offer Internet access to the public</b>	100%	100%	100%
<b>L5 Number of internet sessions provided (per 1,000 population 04/05)</b>	448.32	1232.00	573

## MOTOR TAXATION

Indicator	2004	2005	2006
<b>M1 Number of motor tax transactions which</b>			
- are dealt with over the counter			57,098
- are dealt with by post			9,592
- are dealt with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone)		7,372	**
<b>M1 Percentage of motor tax transactions which</b>			
- are dealt with over the counter	82%	74%	85.62%
- are dealt with by post	18%	13%	14.38%
- are dealt with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone)	0%	13%	**
<b>M2 Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc/driver licence issued) from receipt of the application</b>			
(a) On the same day	8118	6651	8064
(b) On the third day or less	2518	686	895
(c) On the fifth day or less	479	200	179
(d) Over 5 days	390	125	454
<b>M2 Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc/driver licence issued) from receipt of the application</b>			
(a) On the same day	71%	89%	84.07%
(b) On the third day or less	22%	8%	9.33%
(c) On the fifth day or less	4%	2%	1.87%
(d) Over 5 days	3%	1%	4.73%
<b>M3 Public opening hours:</b>			
- average number of opening hours per week	33	32.5	32.5

## PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL

Indicator	2004	2005	2006
<b>P1 Planning Applications - Decision Making</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL HOUSES</b>			
No. of applications decided	769	935	535
No. of decisions which were decided within 8 weeks	79%	719	453
No. of decisions which required the submission of further information		152	53
No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000		71	30
Average length of time taken (in days) to decide a case where further information was sought	66	91	71
% of grants	81	84	88
% of refusals	19	16	12
% of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala	87	81	69
% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	13	19	31

\*\* EPA/LGCSB input

# SERVICE INDICATORS: SLIGO LOCAL AUTHORITIES 2006

## PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL (continued)

	Indicator	2004	2005	2006
<b>P1</b>	<b>NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT</b>			
	No. of applications decided	102	118	40
	No. of decisions which were decided within 8 weeks	71%	48	22
	No. of decisions which required the submission of further information	82	58	17
	No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000		15	1
	Average length of time taken (in days) to decide a case where further information was sought		95	74
	% of grants	80	82	88
	% of refusals	20	18	12
	% of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala	37	50	73
	% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	75	50	27
	<b>Other: NOT REQUIRING EIA</b>			
	No. of applications decided	457	288	564
	No. of decisions which were decided within 8 weeks	78%	230	478
	No. of decisions which required the submission of further information		55	84
	No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000		7	2
	Average length of time taken (in days) to decide a case where further information was sought	76	86	77
	% of grants	95	93	95
	% of refusals	5	7	5
	% of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala	46	86	71
	% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala	54	14	29
	<b>Other: REQUIRING EIA</b>			
	No. of applications decided	1	5	6
	No. of decisions which were decided within 8 weeks	25%	3	3
	No. of decisions which required the submission of further information		2	3
	No. of decisions where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000		0	0
	Average length of time taken (in days) to decide a case where further information was sought	20	70	78
	% of grants	25	80	100
	% of refusals	0	20	0
	% of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala (No appeals in this category)	0	0	100
	% of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala (No appeals in this category)	0	100	0
<b>P2</b>	<b>Planning Enforcement</b>			
	- total number of cases subject to complaints that are investigated	251	152	134
	- total number of cases subject to complaints that are dismissed	0	19	51
	- total number of cases subject to complaints that were resolved through negotiations		20	130
	- number of enforcement procedures taken through warning letters	374	158	157
	- number of enforcement procedures taken through enforcement notices	34	24	100
	- number of prosecutions	17	2	37
<b>P3</b>	<b>Public Opening hours</b>			
	- average number of opening hours per week	35	35	38
<b>P4</b>	<b>Consultations</b>			
	- Number of pre-planning consultation meetings held		1524	1668
	Average length of time from request for consultation with local authority planner to actual formal meeting for pre-planning consultation	10	10	14
<b>P5</b>	<b>Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority</b>	18%	15%	39%



# SERVICE INDICATORS: SLIGO LOCAL AUTHORITIES 2006

## RECREATIONAL SERVICES

	Indicator	2004	2005	2006
Rec 1	<b>Number of children's playgrounds (per 1,000 population 04/05):</b>			
	- directly provided by the local authority	0.03	0.136	5
	- facilitated by the local authority	0.03	1.56338	2
Rec 2	<b>Number of visitors to local authority facilitated swimming facilities (per 1,000 population 04/05)</b>	3892	4182	192994

## REVENUE COLLECTION

	Indicator	2004	2005	2006
Rev1	<b>House Rent</b>			
	(a) Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	84%	88%	90%
	(b) Percentage of arrears:			
	(i) 4-6 weeks old	1%	1%	8%
	(ii) 6-12 weeks old	3%	3%	11%
	(iii) More than 12 weeks old	94%	92%	72%
Rev 2	<b>Housing loans</b>			
	(a) Amounts collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	90%	89%	91%
	(b) Percentage of arrears:			
	(i) 1 month old	3%	3%	4%
	(ii) 2-3 months old	3%	3%	3%
	(ii) more than 3 months old	93%	93%	90%
Rev 3	<b>Commercial Rates</b>			
	Amounts collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	93%	90%	91%
Rev 4	<b>Refuse Charges</b>			
	Amounts collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rev 5	<b>Non-Domestic Water Charges</b>			
	Amounts collected at year end as a percentage of amount due	52%	61%	26%

## ROADS

	Indicator	2004	2005	2006
R1	Local and regional roads surface dressed per annum (square metres)	273,607	381,100	406,810
	Percentage of local and regional roads surface dressed per annum	2.72%	3.3%	3.5%

